“ZOMBIEsourcing”

by

D.R. Meier

9979 W Edna

Boise, Idaho 83704

dennisraymeier@gmail.com

208-866-0952

Begin with a television commercial, a cheap production, low resolution, scratchy. A muscular man, a gravel-voiced professional wrestler dressed as Uncle Sam with crossed arms and scowling face.

Uncle Sam

Some people say America has lost the ability to create good products. Some people say America has lost the will to work . . . Well, to those people, I have one thing to say . . .

A song starts in the background of the commercial, a poor quality version of John Phillips Sousa’s Stars and Stripes. Uncle Sam rips off his coat, revealing a snug-fitting singlet that exposes massive arms, chiseled chest, six-pack abs, and the words America Still Works! He points into the camera.

Uncle Sam

America Still Works!

The commercial switches to a montage of shots showing large semi-trailer trucks rolling past U.S. landmarks and icons: the Golden Gate Bridge, the Seattle Space Needle, Las Vegas, the St. Louis arch, Manhattan. The drivers wave or blow their horns, and on the side of each trailer, in huge type, are the words AMERICA STILL WORKS!

The commercial switches back to Uncle Sam, who is now standing on a mezzanine above a nondescript manufacturing bay. In the background, distant figures in blue jumpsuits mechanically perform jobs at workstations. There is something wrong with the figures: they move in a way that reminds us of robots, but we can’t see them clearly.

Uncle Sam

Business managers, if you love America, you need America Still Works!

ZOOM OUT ON TELEVISION COMMERCIAL, keeping in backgrround without sound.

ARJUN DASARI, a twenty-something account representative for the Indian outsourcing firm Happy Staff LLC is speaking off screen.

Arjun (V.O.)

It was my first year in America. My first American Halloween. My first American hurricane. My first time living so far away from my family. If I only knew then what I know now.

Well, let’s just say I still get the creeps anytime I see somebody in zombie make-up.

And to think it all started during the Cold War between the United States and the former Soviet Union . . . or, at least that is what Dr. Shevosky, who was there at the beginning, told us . . .

Fade Out

A SONG PLAYS: Black Sabbath’s “Children of the grave.”

fade up on:

Ext. - AERIAL SHOT FROM HELICOPTER, plum island – Day

Begin with loud sound of a helicopter, and slowly fade in to show a view through the helicopter window. The image has a Kodachrome look to it, like a picture shot in the 70s. (Each time we see Plum Island, it will look this way.)

A small island grows close.

SUPER: 1975, PLUM ISLAND ANIMAL RESEARCH LABORATORY, OFF LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK

SONG Fades

CUT TO: SHAKING INTERIOR OF CRAFT FILLED WITH MEN IN GREEN ARMY FATIGUES and one civilian.

CLOSE ON: DR. steven MENTZER and colonel trent masterson.

Mentzer, a bespectacled young man in his twenties studies pages in a bound report. On the deck lie two stretchers covered by bloodstained sheets; the shapes beneath are human.

Colonel Masterson, a lean, tanned man sits next to Mentzer. He chews an unlit cigar.

MASTERSON

Hope you know what you’re doing doc. Got my ass sticking way out on this one. This super-soldier project of yours flops, and my career flops.

Masterson removes the cigar from his mouth, studies it for a moment with a frown, and then reinserts it.

Mentzer continues reading.

Masterson

I’m counting on making general before I turn fifty.

MENTZER

Mentzer continues reading, showing no appearance of having heard the colonel until he suddenly responds.

We are on the verge of a new era in warfare, Colonel. If my experiments succeed, the American soldier will become virtually indestructible.

Needless to say, the officer who introduces the indestructible soldier will be invincible in his own way.

Masterson grimaces, removes the cigar from mouth, and studies it again for a moment before reinserting it.

MASTERSON

So you say, doc, but nothing good comes without a measure of bad.

MENTZER

(Still reading, still not looking up.)

The side effects have been small and easily contained. I wouldn’t worry if I were you.

Masterson studies Dr. Mentzer for a second, glancing at the report the doctor is reading. You sense that the colonel would like to grab the report and throw it out a window.

MASTERSON

My job is to worry. My orders are to make sure anything that goes wrong stays on this island.

Mentzer smiles smugly; he looks up to better share his ingratiatingly smug smile.

MENTZER

My research indicates an eighty-seven percent success rate, even with massive wounds that would normally be fatal. The failures are benign or easily handled. This project will succeed.

There are even commercial opportunities I am pursuing.

MASTERSON

Easily handled, huh? We talking monkeys?

Mentzer hesitates slightly before answering.

mentzer

Rats . . . We have been testing rats.

But the process is transferable to humans!

Signaling that he has said all he plans to say, Mentzer continues reading his report.

MASTERSON

(Speaking to himself.)

Rats! Jesus Christ!

cut TO: helicopter landING.

The door of the helicopter opens; the soldiers disembark, carrying the two stretchers. Colonel Masterson and Mentzer are last to emerge. A man in a white lab coat (DR. ARSENY SHEVOSKY) exits the nearest building, waves, and walks toward them.

MASTERSON

Can’t say I understand why we need all these damned Rooskies. I don’t trust the commie bastards.

Mentzer adjusts his glasses.

MENTZER

Science doesn’t have political boundaries, Colonel. Dr. Arseny Shevosky is one of the preeminent authorities on viruses. With his help, we will know in days if we are on the right track. I trust him—so should you.

Dr. Shevosky arrives and sticks out his hand to Mentzer. He speaks with a Russian accent.

Shevosky

Doctor Mentzer! Is beautiful day, da?

MENTZER

Indeed doctor; a beautiful day. Unfortunately, we will spend it inside, won’t we?

Shevosky shrugs and smiles in agreement. You sense that he does not like Mentzer either.

SHEVOSKY

It is the price we pay for being scientists, no? Surely, there will be other beautiful days?

We are very close this time, I think.

MENTZER

Has Ivan prepared the injections, as I instructed?

SHEVOSKY

All is ready. We are quite excited.

As if seeing him for the first time, Shevosky looks to Colonel Masterson.

SHEVOSKY

Colonel, the subjects were, I presume, chosen carefully? These were men with no families, nobody to remember them?

Masterson removes his cigar and spits, never taking his eyes from Shevosky. He does not answer.

MENTZER

Both men were orphans and had no close friends outside of the military. No one will inquire about them.

Shevosky nods, wilting under the colonel’s gaze.

SHEVOSKY

Those who are not scientists . . . they do not always understand science. They do not appreciate the sacrifices that must be made in pursuit of knowledge.

Masterson grunts, pulls out his cigar, and spits on the ground at Shevosky’s feet.

MASTERSON

Americans know sacrifice all too well Boris! I can name dozens who sacrificed everything to cut out a cancer of evil intent on dominating the world . . . They should cut deeper; pieces of the tumor have re-surfaced too close to home for my taste!

Masterson continues staring at Shevosky, who blanches and turns back to Mentzer.

MENTZER

The success of this project will silence those who believe all Russians are cut from the same cloth, Dr. Shevosky. You are writing a new history here, for Ivan and yourself.

SHEVOSKY

Da. Let us hope it is a good one... Come!

Shevosky and Mentzer walk to the building while Masterson looks on, disapprovingly.

cut to:

Int. - plum island LABORATORY - day

Shevosky, Mentzer, and DR. IVAN NEVISKY talk in front of two cloth-draped bodies that lie on stainless steel tables in b.g.

nevisky

All is ready. You are sure these men died less than six hours ago?

MENTZER

Both died in an auto pool accident in New Jersey less than two hours ago.

Nevisky

How they die?

mentzer

I don’t see what difference it makes how they died, Dr. Nevisky, but I don’t mind telling you. A truck fell on them when the lift holding it up failed. The base commander contacted us, and we flew them here immediately. Very sad.

NEVISKy

And these men, they had no . . .

MENTZER

(Briskly, annoyed.)

They were orphans . . . as I have already told Dr. Shevosky.

Ivan nods.

NEVISKy

Two orphans, working together, are killed in the same accident . . .

MENTZER

(Peevishly.)

A coincidence Dr. Nevisky! . . . A tragedy for these men, of course, but a lucky coincidence for us.

I, for one, choose not to question providence, doctor.

SHEVOSKY

Looks briefly at Mentzer and nods. He wants to leave this topic.

Da . . . I too sense a divine hand at work. Perhaps it is a sign?

Shevosky turns to Mentzer, smiles cheerily, and gestures to the door.

SHEVOSKY

Ivan and I can administer the injections, Dr. Mentzer. Surely, you must be tired after your journey; helicopters are not the most relaxing way to travel.

Mentzer’s eyes focus on Shevosky, Nevisky, the two bodies in the background, and back to Shevosky.

MENTZER

Yes. There was considerable vibration, and I had to field questions from that idiot colonel . . .

SHEVOSKY

Refresh yourself! Return once you are rested. Ivan and I will take care of the preliminary work.

Mentzer nods and slowly walks OFFSCREEN.

Nevisky turns to Shevosky. He nods at the bodies.

Nevisky

Tell me Arseny, have we escaped one master only to fall into the clutches of another? Just when we are in need of two bodies to test the human virus . . .

Shevosky raises a finger to his lips while his eyes dart about the room. He then speaks loudly, trying to project a sense of belief in what they are doing.

SHEVOSKY

Ah! You are thinking too much, Ivan! There are many soldiers stationed nearby; such a coincidence was inevitable here in the land of the free . . .

Come, let us get started!

Ivan takes Shevosky’s cue. He turns and grabs a syringe from a table next to the bodies.

IVAN

(Loudly)

Yes. Of course! I am sure I must just be imagining things. We are no longer in the Soviet Union, after all.

Let us get started!

fade out

A song plays: White Zombie’s “Real Solution #9” from the supersexy album.

fade up on:

INT. – houston KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - day

SUPER: HOUSTON, Texas

Out of frame: A spoon CLINKING in a bowl, followed by CRUNCHING; somebody is eating cereal loudly.

Song fades

CLOSE on: tv playing sacCharin morning news program (KHMX—proudly serving the houston metroplex!)

A perky young woman (HAYLEE) is speaking, interacting with MICHAEL, the easily-excitable morning news anchor.

Michael

So, Haylee, have you decided what you are wearing for Halloween tonight?

Haylee

Well, Michael, I was planning to dress as Cleopatra, but, like many other Houstonians, I will be holed up in a safe shelter tonight, riding out Hurricane Claudette.

Michael

(Laughing)

Roger that Haylee! I plan to dress in my rain poncho right here at the KHMX newsroom.

Haylee

Save me a seat!

Michael

You know I will!

Both laugh fake television laughs.

Michael

(Stops laughing and affixes serious look to his face.)

So tell us about this new downward trend in prison populations. What’s happening there?

HAYLEE

Well, Michael, it is difficult to cite a specific reason for the decline. Burglary is down a half percent in the past year, and violent crimes are down about the same, but the prison population has declined nearly five percent.

MICHAEL

Wow! That is incredible! What do the prison authorities have to say?

HAYLEE

(Frowning thoughtfully)

Interesting you should ask, Michael. I spoke with the warden of the Huntsville Prison yesterday, and he suggested that the decline is result of an overall drop in crime combined with enhanced rehabilitation programs. In particular, the warden cited a work placement program with the labor outsourcing firm America Still Works! as having a beneficial impact.

MICHAEL

(Frowning thoughtfully too)

That’s might interesting Haylee!

(Smiling!)

Thanks for the update! We’ll be back after this quick message!

The newscast switches to a commercial, a slick, professional production. On screen, a muscular man dressed as Uncle Sam, arms crossed, speaks.

Uncle Sam

Some people say America has lost the ability to create good products. Some people say America has lost the will to work . . . Well, to those people, I have one thing to say . . .

Uncle Sam rips off his coat, revealing a snug-fitting singlet that exposes massive arms, chiseled chest, six-pack abs, and the words America Still Works! He points into the camera.

Uncle Sam

America Still Works!

Cut to: spokesman in suit (oLDer MENTZER)

mentzer

Hi. I’m Dr. Steven Mentzer, chairman and CEO of America Still Works! Like you, I am an American who believes in the greatness of this country.

If you manufacture a product, and it disgusts you to have to outsource or hire illegal workers, I encourage you to contact America Still Works!

Together, we can keep America strong and prosperous!

Cut to: Uncle Sam

Now flanked by two other muscled compatriots: a man in work khakis and a woman in a tight-fitting business dress that reveals bodybuilder legs.

Uncle Sam

(Sneering) I hate the word outsourcing . . . almost as much as I hate illegal aliens taking American jobs!

Keep American strong! America Still Works!

Switch to news broadcast

Michael

In other news, Texas distributors and manufacturers seem to be continuing the strong comeback we spoke of last year. . .

Television sounds fade into the background while sounds of a spoon clinking against an empty bowl take the focus. Hands set the bowl and spoon on the table.

CUT TO: UNSHAVEN face of young Indo-Aryan man

ARJun DASARI scratches his face. He is standing, wearing a white tee shirt and boxer shorts.

He walks from the kitchen to the bedroom, past a dresser on which stands a picture of three people, a sliding closet door, and into the bathroom. A television mounted on the bathroom wall continues the morning news program; this time, the reporter is a somber-looking young Asian man

REPORTER

. . . the sudden resurgence of Texas manufacturing has been keenly felt here, in China, where factories that had been making products are now shuttered. Just behind me is a plant that used to build consumer products that are once again being made in the Lone Star State. According to a company spokesperson . . .

SOUND FADES BEHIND BUZZING OF ELECTRIC RAZOR.

A window on the television screen opens, showing the face of Arjun as he shaves. He runs the razor across both cheeks, chin, below his nose, and his neck. He appraises his work, shuts off the razor, and walks out of the bathroom. As he shuts off the razor, the window showing his face closes.

He walks back into the bedroom and opens the closet door next to the dresser.

Focus on dresser. The picture on the dresser shows Arjun, a woman, and a young girl, presumably his wife and daughter.

Focus on television

Sounds of fabric rustling in the background as Arjun dresses.

MICHAEL

Thanks Wei. I guess it won’t be long before Chinese consumers start seeing products stamped Made in America!

WEI smiles weakly.

WEI

Something like that.

MICHAEL

Speaking of other things that are declining, the federal government says illegal immigration continues to drop. CONSUELA Guerrero of sister station KVIA brings us the latest from El Paso. Consuela?

CONSUELA

Michael, here in El Paso, just across the border from Ciudad Juárez, we continue to see the effects of the rapid decline in illegal border crossings. In fact, some Homeland Security officials I spoke with are suggesting that the movement appears to be *from* Texas *to* Mexico . . .

A phone rings.

Arjun

Pick up!

The television screen switches to a head-on image of ANOTHER indo-aryan man (Daman, president and ceo of happy staff outsourcing, LLC)

ARJ

I’ll be there in two minutes

daman

You were supposed to be here five minutes ago! They’re hinting about dropping us. Get in here now if you want to keep your job!

ARJ

I’m there!

DAMAN

And clear the mess off your desk!

Arjun

Yes. Yes, of course!

Daman hangs up.

Arjun tightens his tie, looks down briefly, sighs, and springs out the bedroom still wearing only his boxer shorts beneath his dress shirt. He skids down a short hall and slides through an open doorway into his home office.

On the wall, a large screen shows a weather reporter who is discussing a large hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico.

WEATHER REPORTER

. . . because of its size, covering much of the gulf, some observers are already comparing Claudette to Hurricane Ike, which came ashore near Galveston in 2008. The big difference is intensity: Ike made landfall as a Category 2 storm, while Claudette looks to be a strong Category 3 when it hits the Texas coast tomorrow morning. Authorities advise all those remaining in the metroplex to leave . . .

In front of the screen is a desk, on which can be seen a keypad atop stacks of paper, magazines, and fast-food packages. In one corner of the desk is another picture of Arjun, a woman, and a small girl.

ARJUN picks up the keyboard and uses his other hand to sweep everything except for the picture onto the floor. He sits in a chair in front of the desk, facing the large screen on the wall, and types.

The news broadcast ends abruptly, replaced by the unsmiling face of Daman in one pane and the equally unsmiling faces of two Caucasian men in two other panes. The men are dressed for Halloween: the older man is wearing a Lone Ranger outfit; the younger man is dressed as Tonto.

ARJUN

Sorry for the inconvenience, gentlemen. I was doing a little last-minute research on ways to trim costs for Prost! Distributing!

Focus on: Middle pane of the screen.

Super: Robert “Bob” Bruner, 62. Chairman of the board of Prost! Distributing.

BOB

That’s a good thing, but unless you’re trimming with a dadgum cleaver, I don’t see the numbers working. . . Besides, we want to staff our customer service centers with people who, if you will pardon my saying so, speak the way our customers do.

ARJUN

(Affecting a bad Texas accent) Well, shoot, pardners, speaking the lingo is one of our specialties at Happy Staff! We have operators trained in all the local dialects . . . dadgummit!

Normally, we charge extra for talking the talk, but, for a long-time partner like Prost!, I’m sure our head honcho can make some adjustments; right Daman?

Daman smiles and nods. He opens his mouth to speak, but the man in the right pane of the screen speaks first.

focus on: right pane

Super: Robert Bruner II, AKA “zwei”, 37, president and CEO,Prost! Distributing.

Zwei

I don’t think you’re picking up on our vibe here, honcho. What Daddy is trying to say is that the days of outsourcing are over for Prost! Distributing.

We can now afford to staff our own call centers, right here, close to our new distribution warehouse . . . We’re pulling the plug on ya’ll.

ARJUN

Wait . . . What? . . . How? Just last month you said real estate costs were too high, fuel costs were too high, and labor costs were simply impossible.

zwei

All true.

Arjun

Nothing has changed! Real-estate costs are down, but fuel costs are still high, and labor costs, what with health care premiums going through the roof, are higher than ever.

Unless you’ve convinced people to work for nothing, your labor costs alone would prohibit U.S-based distribution.

BOB

(Beat) Let’s just say we found a way to slash those labor costs.

ARJUN

But Prost! and Happy Staff have had a long and mutually-prosperous history of working together! You can’t just cut us off like this!

ZWEI

Heck yeah we can! Our high-priced Ivy League lawyers tell us either party can unilaterally decide to end the agreement at any time. Ain’t that right Daddy?

BOB

It’s the dang truth! We can, and we are.

ARJUN

Wait a minute! Let’s talk about this . . .

Arjun stands up, notices everybody staring at his underwear, and promptly sits back down.

BOB

Ain’t nothing left to talk about.

zwei

Aside from the fact that you need to get some big-boy pants there pardner!

bob

We’re pulling the plug. The bathtub is a draining!

ZWEI

Pulling the plug, baby! Glug, glug, glug!

ARJUN

Bathtub? What . . . wait!

The panes showing the Bruners abruptly close, leaving Arjun staring at a glowering Daman.

ARJUN

(Shaking head)

This is not my fault, man. Not my fault. You heard them: they figured a way to cut labor costs.

DAMAn

Which is why I’m not firing you on the spot.

arjun

(Relieved)

You’re not? Thanks man. I won’t forget this. My family and I owe . . .

Daman

Find out why they don’t need us anymore. There is something going on with our Texas accounts. We’ve lost others, and I want to know why!

Arjun

Sure man. No problem. I’ll check out a couple of sources I know, and . . .

Daman

You’ll go to their distribution center personally and see what they are doing!

Arjun

Sure . . . I can do that. No problem. I’ll just bop over there after the storm and . . .

Daman

During the storm!

Arjun

(Beat) Are you crazy? There’s a big-ass hurricane hours away from hitting this place. Everybody with any sense left two days ago.

Daman

Exactly! Nobody is going to be there, so you should have no problem getting in.

Arjun

That’s breaking and entering! I could get arrested. They have alarms.

Daman

(Smiling)

Thousands of alarms must go off during a hurricane. I suspect the overwhelmed authorities ignore most of them.

Arjun

I could get killed!

Daman

(Shrugs)

There’s always that chance.

Arjun stares for a second at Daman’s image, at the picture of his wife and daughter, and slowly realizes he has no choice.

Arjun

Damn!

fade out

a song plays: Black sabbath’s “war pigs.”

fade up on:

Ext. - Plum Island Testing Field - Day

SUPER: October 1976

We see a grassy field, about the size of a football field, lined with tall fencing topped with concertina wire. On one side is the ocean and on the other an observation tower sits just beyond the fence. At either end are recessed concrete bunkers with metal doors.

Song fades

CUT TO:

A cigar-chewing Colonel Masterson and Dr. Mentzer stand together in the tower, watching as pale re-animated soldiers advance from one bunker into machine gun fire coming from the other bunker. Making no efforts to protect themselves, the slow-moving soldiers are cut to pieces. The pieces keep trying to move after being shot off.

Masterson grunts in disgust.

Masterson

Mother of Mercy on a Monday! Is this the best you can do, doctor? All those things would accomplish is to gross the enemy out.

mentzer

The virus . . . It works at a lower body temperature, so the reanimated soldiers are . . . slow.

Masterson

Worthless! Absolutely worthless!

Mentzer

All great advances take time.

Masterson grunts in disgust.

Fade out

Fade up on:

Int. – Nightclub – Houston – Night

A song plays: white zombie’s “electric head part 1,” from the supersexy album.

A Texas nightclub, big as a warehouse. Loud, energetic, filled with people in costumes partying their way through a Halloween hurricane.

In the background, dancers in bikinis, cowboy boots, and cowboy hats perform on a mechanical bull, lasso each other, and get ridden by other dancers in a raunchy rodeo pantomime.

On all of the walls of the bar, large-screen televisions soundlessly show news, football, World Series baseball, and the Weather Channel.

Zoom in on:

Arjun, sitting at a table with other people directly beneath a television showing the news. Arjun is dressed as Jawaharlal Nehru, with white cap and Nehru jacket.

Close on: Billy and Bobby Nguyen

The brothers are both in zombie makeup and their normal garb: Brushpopper shirts, Wrangler jeans, Tony Lamas boots, and black Resistol cowboy hats.

Super: Billy and bobby Nguyen. known as the “win” brothers, because their last name sounds like “win.” first-generation Texans of Vietnamese heritage, veterinarians who studied at Texas A&M university. riding out the hurricane because only a pussy would run from a little wind and rain.

close on: Pedro Martinez.

Pedro is dressed up as General Antonio López de Santa Anna from the waist up and in long, heart-clad shorts and boots down below, representing the Mexican general being caught with his pants down during the decisive Battle of San Jacinto.

Super: pedro martiniz. fifth-generation Texan of Mexican heritage. engineer for the texas commission of environmental quality. Spends 1,940 hours each year reviewing plans and specifications for drinking water systems. hopes to die in hurricane so he doesn’t have to go back to work.

close on: Rosa Ruiz

Rosa is dressed as a computer nerd: white shirt, fake glasses, pocket protector, and black jeans.

super: rosa ruiz. Mexican national, illegal alien. computer programmer. riding out hurricane because running into redneck vigilantes away from the city is even scarier.

close on: Oscar Poehl

Oscar is dressed as Luke Skywalker, a fake light saber dangling from his waist.

Super: oscal Poehl. seventh-generation Texan. son of founder of BigTex Garage Doors. dropped out of Rice university to write science fiction. riding out hurricane because he is getting paid doubletime for the security guard job he is not doing.

Song fades to background

Arjun

So, I’m stuck here with a hurricane on the way, the same as you guys.

Bobby Nguyen

(Chewing on a toothpick).

Should be smiling, happy be working. You don’t see me running from little hurricane. Only pussy run from thunder and lightning and a little wind.

Billy Nguyen

That right! Only pussy!

Oscar

(Looks at the two cowboyed-up Vietnamese brothers and shakes his head.)

So say the Ho Chi Minh twins.

Bobby N

Hey! Hey! We no commie revolutionaries!

Billy N

That right! Grandpa Nguyen VC, but we one-hundred-ten percent American now!

Bobby N

That right flying saucer man! We live American dream while you writing about aliens coming through wormholes to attack America. America kick their alien asses!

Rosa

(Startled from private reverie)

Aliens? America is kicking out aliens?

Pedro

Jesus, guys! Don’t be dropping the A-word around Rosa like that.

Bobby N

(Looking at Rosa)

No worry. I not talk about your kind of alien. I talk about alien from outer space who come, kill people.

Billy N

And sometimes fuck people in ass just for fun . . . Most times fuck people in ass just for fun.

Rosa

(Sighing in relief) Oh.

oscar

You guys are a piece of work.

Bobby N

(Smiling proudly) Fucking-a! One hundred-ten percent American!

Billy N

Maybe one-hundred twenty percent!

Oscar

(Looking at Arjun and shaking his head)

Unbelievable!

Arjun points to the television.

Arjun

Check this out!

On the screen is a satellite image of Hurricane Claudette, which fills the entire Gulf of Mexico. The leading edge of the gargantuan storm is touching the Texas shore. An arrow pops up to show the direction in which the eye of the hurricane is moving. The tip of the arrow is on Houston.

Arjun

The biggest hurricane since Carla in ’61 is heading straight for us!

Billy N

(Makes a motion as though clearing a nostril.)

I blow Carla out my nose!

Bobby N

(Makes a motion as though wiping his butt.)

I wipe my ass with Carla!

Oscar

You morons weren’t even alive in ’61! What are you talking about?

Arjun continues watching the television while the dancers gyrate to the strains of white zombie’s “i’m your boogie man,” from the supersexy album.

The Weather Channel guy can’t be heard, but a graphic on the screen shows Claudette has reached Category 3 and seems to be strengthening.

Song fades to background

Arjun

We are in some deep shit here my friends. Some very deep shit.

Billy N

Stands up and motions to the bartender.

Fucking right. Need more beer.

Bobby N

More beer!

Pedro

(Morosely)

I’ll drink to that.

Rosa

You drink to anything that helps you forget your job.

Pedro

(Happily)

I’ll drink to that!

Billy N

You like Oscar. He create nothing too!

Oscar

I’m a writer, man! I create science-fiction stories.

Bobby N

Like Billy say, you create nothing.

Oscar

Drinks.

(Muttering)

Fuck you guys!

Billy N

Glaring at Arjun.

At least you not send American jobs overseas like some people.

Arjun

(Lifts head and looks at Billy N.)

Happy Staff helps American companies provide cost-effective services they can’t provide here because of high labor costs.

Bobby N

Sound like communist propaganda. American workers best in world, deserve best pay!

Pedro

Maybe they could have more if American executives didn’t pay themselves hundreds of times what their workers make.

Billy N

That true. American executives mostly dickheads!

Bobby N

I rather deport them than illegals!

focus on rosa, who is blushing.

Oscar

(Loudly.)

Damn you guys! Can’t you have any sensitivity? Rosa is an illegal!

Rosa looks even more uncomfortable.

Arjun

Shout it, why don’t you? I don’t think everybody in the bar heard you.

Oscar blushes and quickly looks about.

In the background, the dancers are now gyrating to the strains of Korn’s “Y'all Want a Single Say Fuck That,” punctuating the key line by flipping the bird at the satellite image of Claudette on the television.

Pedro

I don’t think anybody here is sober enough to hear or remember anything.

As they watch, the news shifts to a story titled “Illegals streaming back across border.” A reporter is standing at the border between El Paso and Juarez. In the background, people push to get across the bridge into Mexico.

Arjun

What is up with this crazy rush to leave Texas?

Focus on Rosa, who swallows hard.

Rosa

I hear stories about bad things happening to illegals.

Arjun

What could they possibly do except deport you? It costs too much to keep illegals in jail.

Rosa

I heard people say they do experiments on illegals.

Arjun, Pedro, Billy N, Bobby N, and Oscar contemplate what Rosa has said and then burst out laughing.

On the television, a muscular young man wearing a white tee shirt with the words American Still Works! shoves his way into view behind the reporter and points to his chest.

oscar

(Looking at Rosa)

Experiments? Really? You don’t believe it do you?

Rosa looks at the television. On the screen, the faces of those fleeing the country show stark terror. The man with the tee shirt grins maniacally.

Rosa

They do.

Laughter stops.

Focus on eyes of all as the possibility that something bad is happening sinks in.

Fade out

a song plays: black sabbath’s “supernaut”

fade in on:

Int. - Plum Island Laboratory - day

Super: December, 1976

Shevosky and Mentzer look at a dead body strapped to a table. Nevisky stabs the corpse with a syringe and pushes the plunger. On the other side stands a soldier with a rifle at the ready.

Another table, oriented 90 degrees to the table holding the body, supports a camcorder recording the experiment. Next to the camcorder is a television and a remote control.

Nevisky finishes and steps back, next to the television.

Song fades

Nevisky

This new variant should give the re-animates more speed.

Mentzer

It better. Masterson keeps reminding me that our first demonstration was not promising from a military perspective. Frankly, I agree with him.

Nevisky

I should expect at least a ten-fold increase in energy . . .

Shevosky

Look out!

The reanimated body tears restraints on far side and lunges. It grabs Nevisky’s arm and bites ferociously.

The soldier aims his rifle but cannot fire because Nevisky is in the way.

Instinctively, Nevisky leans away, his free hand coming to rest upon the remote control.

CLOSE ON: light emitting from end of remote control.

The body gnawing Nevisky’s arm suddenly relaxes, becomes almost passive. It still stares at Nevisky’s arm and licks the blood on its lips, but it does not move otherwise except for periodic shudders.

CLOSE on: soldier’s finger tightening on the trigger.

Menzter

Stop! Don’t shoot!

Shevosky

Goddammit it! It attacked Ivan!

Mentzer

Yes. But it stopped. Why?

INTERCUT BETWEEN: Body’s face, Nevisky’s bleeding arm, soldier waiting to fire, Nevisky’s free hand smashed upon the television remote that is pointed at the reanimated body.

Shevosky moves forward, motioning the soldier to the head of the table where he will have a clear shot. The body’s eyes follow the motion, but the body does not move.

Mentzer

Don’t shoot unless I give the order!

SHEVOSKY.

If it moves, shoot it.

Soldier

Yes sir!

SHEVOSKY

Ivan! I am going to take the remote control from beneath your hand. Keep the button pressed down.

Nevisky nods, his eyes wide in shock.

CLOSE on: SHEVOSKY’s trembling hand.

Sliding his hand beneath Nevisky’s, Shevosky presses down on the button Nevisky had inadvertently pressed. Shevosky slowly pulls the remote out, keeping it pointed at the body. He steps between Nevisky and the body, pushing Nevisky out of the way.

Nevisky, grasping his arm, stumbles out the door of the lab.

Shevosky steps back, keeping the remote pointed at the body, which watches with passive interest, until he stands next to the soldier.

SHEVOSKY

I will try something.

Soldier

Yes sir!

Shevosky

I will release this button . . . for a moment. If the creature reacts, don’t shoot immediately; I will press the button again. I think signal from this remote calms him, but I want to be sure. Do you understand?

Soldier

Yes sir! I will give you a chance to control him . . . But if he starts to come over that table . . .

shevosky

If he comes over that table, shoot him.

Mentzer

No! You are not to shoot! This is government property!

Neither the soldier nor Shevosky pay any attention to Mentzer.

Shevosky

Here is going nothing.

Split screen: Shevosky’s finger, Zombie’s face.

As the finger moves off the button, the button rises, and the body’s face goes from passive to snarling. The finger moves back down, and the snarl disappears. The body has not moved, but it continues to jerk periodically, as though not under perfect control.

Shevosky and the soldier heave a sigh of relief; Shevosky looks at the remote.

Shevosky

Most interesting.

Soldier

Yes sir! Whatever you say!

fade out

A SONG PLAYS: Leningrad’s “Zvezda Rok-n-Rolla”

fade in on:

Establishing shot: skyline of NYC at night, looking at Manhattan from the south.

Ext. - radio shack store – night

CUT TO:

Int. Dimly lit room with a desk, a computer, what appears to be a vintage transister radio, and the remote control used in the previous scene.

On the computer, Pandora is playing the song we hear. An older Arseny Shevosky is reading a Russian newspaper on an iPad and occasionally sipping from a snifter filled with a brown liquid.

A younger man in a shirt with the Radio Shack logo opens the door and walks in.

Song fades

Young Man

(Speaking with Russian accent) Arseny?

Shevosky looks up.

Da?

Young Man

Something on news. CNN. Perhaps you should see? A couple of minutes ago.

Shevosky touches settings on his iPad.

Focus on iPad

A reporter identified as CONSUELA Guerrero of KVIA is speaking before a crowd of agitated people standing on a road. Just beyond is a bridge and a sign over the road that reads, Bienvenedos a Mexico.

Consuela

. . .trying to leave the United States. A huge crowd has gathered, overwhelming border officials. Let me see if I can find out more.

Consuela turns to the crowd behind her, singling out a wild-eyed man who is seems to be in shock.

Consuela

Senor? Do you speak English?

Man

Si. A little.

Consuela

Can tell us why so many people are trying to return to Mexico?

The man looks at the camera, reluctant.

Consuela

You know something, don’t you?

Man

Los muertos!

Consuela

The dead? What it is about the dead that makes people want to leave?

Man

Caminan! Los muertos vivientes!

Consuela

The walking dead? What walking dead? Where?

Man

Los muertos vivientes! Houston first, but now . . . everywhere! Here too!

Shevosky looks up.

Shevosky

It is finally happening!

He reaches over and grabs the old transistor radio, contemplates it for a moment.

Shevosky

I must go to Houston.

fade out

a song plays: the introductory sequence to black sabbath’s “bloody sabbath”

Fade in to:

Ext. - Plum Island Test Field – Day

Super: October 1977

A cigar-chewing Colonel Masterson and Dr. Mentzer stand together in an observation tower, watching two emaciated re-animated soldiers emerge through the open doors of a bunker.

In the center of the field is a tall pole atop which sits a box from which a dozen cylinders protrude radially, covering 360 degrees.

Song Fades

mentzer

Today, I will show you the fast virus we developed following last year’s trial.

Masterson

Was this before or after your Rooskies left?

mentzer

(Beat) Doctors Shevosky and Nevisky were involved in the discovery, but we have managed quite well without them.

Masterson

(Looking at field)

Those poor bastards don’t look any faster than before. Skinny buggers too.

The two re-animated soldiers are slowly wandering about near the bunker from which they emerged. They seem weak, disoriented.

Mentzer

They are being controlled. We were, ah, fortunate to discover that we could turn off the fast mode using electromagnetic signals of a certain frequency. That tower you see contains transmitters that are broadcasting on that frequency.

Focus briefly on tower.

Masterson

(Grunts)

I suppose that’s good.

Well, doctor, are you going to show me something new, or are those two going to just drool on themselves?

Menzter

Watch what happens when I turn off the signal.

Mentzer reaches to a switch mounted on the front of the observation tower and flips it.

CLOSE ON: FACES OF RE-ANIMATED BODIES

First, we see that one of the bodies is the soldier who stood with Shevosky in the laboratory.

Second, we see the re-animated soldiers go from slow-walking automatons to terrifyingly fast and nimble aggressors. They spot the machine gun emplacement a hundred yards distant, scream, and sprint toward it, taking hits but weaving to avoid fire. They make it about seventy yards and then fall down, their eyes still locked on the machine gun nest, their mouths opening and closing.

Masterson spits out his cigar.

Masterson

What in God’s name was that? Why did they just fall down?

Mentzer

Ah . . . in fast mode, they quickly run out of energy.

Masterson

Why?

Mentzer

(Beat) Well . . . they don’t eat. That is to say, we haven’t found anything they like to eat . . . yet. They just attack anything living.

Masterson

(Beat) Worthless! Absolutely worthless!

Menzter

We have a few more details to work out. Give us another year.

masterson

I’ll give you a month, doctor! If this project doesn’t pan out by then, I’ll personally pull the plug! . . . This country has wasted enough money on this farce.

FADE OUT

a song plays: white zombie’s “blur the technicolor from the astrocreep 2000 album.

FADE IN ON:

Int. - JFK Airport – night

Shevosky, wheeling a carry-on bag walks up to an airline counter. Behind him are three large unsmiling younger men dressed in jeans, black leather coats, and black combat boots.

The young man behind the counter smiles pleasantly.

Song fades

Shevosky

Houston. Four tickets.

Airline Employee

(Frowning slightly) Let’s see if we can do that; some flights into Houston have been cancelled because of the hurricane . . . Well, okay, I guess I can get you on the last plane into Houston! . . . It leaves in thirty minutes.

Shevosky places a credit card on the counter.

Cut to: security

Shevosky is shoeless, standing next to a TSA agent who is looking at his opened bag. The agent points to the old transistor radio.

Security Agent

What’s this?

Shevosky

Is radio. (Shrugs) I like listen news.

Security Agent

Looks old.

Shevosky.

Was present I got as young man. Here—I show you.

He picks up the device and turns a wheel on the side. The display lights up, and static is heard. Shevosky turns a wheel on the other side, and the static resolves into voices.

Security Agent

Motions for Shevosky to move along.

Fade out

a song plays: black sabbath’s “lord of this world”

Fade in to:

Int. - PLUM ISLAND Laboratory – day

Super: November 1977

Colonel Masterson sits at a table in a large laboratory, impatiently tapping his fingers and chewing on his cigar. To one side is a student’s desk at which sits a women pecking at a typewriter, her back to the room and a scarf tied around her head. In the background, cloth-covered bodies lie on examining tables.

Dr. Mentzer enters through a sturdy metal door.

Masterson

Looks at Mentzer taking his seat and scowls.

Good of you to join me doctor. I’ve only been waiting twenty minutes in this stinking morgue of yours.

MENTZER

My apologies, Colonel. I was checking the results from the last series of injections; it looks quite promising this time.

Masterson

Not sure it matters, doctor. My orders are to close this money-wasting exercise in futility. Until this country has a need for mindless automatons or freaks that faint from hunger, I see no future for this life-sustaining virus of yours.

Mentzer nods as though expecting to hear what the colonel just said.

mentzer

I will admit that the results were not all that we hoped for, but we had our successes. The faster re-animates . . .

Masterson

Re-animates? Is that what you call them?

(Laughs)

For God’s sake, doctor! You are creating zombies!

Masterson rises and walks over to the pale typist. He grabs her shoulders and wrenches her around so that she is facing the table. He then removes the scarf; the head is disfigured by a bullet wound under her chin and a gaping hole in the top of her head.

Masterson

Your own secretary killed herself rather than continue working in this house of horrors, and you use her dead body to make her an example of what this project has become!

Mentzer shakes his head and raises his hands imploringly.

Mentzer

Miss Bartlett was overwrought. Her untimely death had nothing to do with this project . . . I merely sought what was best for her family; they are devout Catholics.

Masterson frowns, not buying a word of what the doctor says.

close on: colonels’s hand, which clinches miss bartlett’s shoulder.

In the background, Miss Bartlett stares at the hand. Her lips part.

Masterson

Best for whom, doctor? Even your Roosky accomplice, Shevosky, had the humanity to run away when he realized what is going on here! There’s something fundamentally wrong with bringing the dead back to life!

(Beat) He called me yesterday.

Mentzer’s eyes widen.

Masterson

Shevosky said Nevisky wasn’t just killed in an accident.

Mentzer jumps to his feet.

Mentzer

He lies!

Masterson

Did he? We didn’t speak long. He said he wanted to meet. Then he hung up.

Mentzer sits back down. He is wary but more relaxed.

Mentzer

So, you haven’t met him yet?

Masterson

Not that it is any business of yours, doctor, but no. I have not met with Shevosky.

You told me Nevisky was caught in a crossfire caused by one of your . . . zombies. I questioned the wisdom of putting weapons in the hands of those things, but I trusted you; I hope my trust was not misplaced.

Mentzer nods.

Mentzer

Yes. It was most unfortunate . . .

Mentzer smiles and suddenly changes the topic.

You know, colonel, you were right on one point: the Russians cannot see the potential for this project. They lack the . . . entrepreneurial spirit.

Maybe you have to grow up in a capitalistic economy to understand. Even if military applications of this project don’t pan out, the commercial opportunities . . .

Masterson laughs.

Masterson

Commercial opportunities? Have your lost your fucking mind, doctor? Your slow zombies are too stupid to get out of their own way, and your fast zombies have all of the staying power of a teenage boy getting his first piece of pussy! What commercial opportunities can there be?

Momentary close on colonel’s hand and miss Bartlett’s mouth, which opens and closes in an unsettling pantomime of chewing.

Mentzer

Well, colonel, we . . . ah . . . recently discovered what the fast “zombies,” as you call them, like to eat. They can stay animated indefinitely when they are fed. . . It, um, was something that Dr. Nevisky—Ivan—discovered actually.

Masterson crosses his arms.

Masterson

Now you tell me?

Mentzer

(Shrugs) It took some time to confirm the finding. By then we . . . I, could no longer ignore the commercial ramifications of . . .

Masterson

What the fuck are you babbling about, doctor? What commercial opportunities?

Mentzer stands up. He shrugs.

Mentzer

(Talking to himself more than the colonel.)

Dr. Shevosky just couldn’t seem to grasp the potential after what happened to Ivan. He became so . . . emotional. He wasn’t thinking like a scientist!

Mentzer walks slowly, head down, hands behind his back, seemingly lost in thought. When he stops and turns back to the table, he is close to the door.

Masterson

What commercial opportunities, doctor?

mentzer

Mentzer looks up. He seems to be looking through the colonel, at something beyond.

I know people, colonel. People with money who have a long-range economic vision of the world. They predict that soon the U.S. will no longer be a manufacturing economy; it will be a service economy.

Masterson opens his mouth to speak, but Dr. Mentzer holds up a hand.

Mentzer

The vibrancy of our economy will drive wages to the point where cheaper foreign labor is required if American products are competitive.

In fact, we will reach the point where services will have to be . . . now what is the term they used?

Masterson

Doctor! Have you flipped?

Mentzer’s face brightens as he recalls the word he was looking for.

Mentzer

Outsourced! They say that services will be outsourced to other countries, like, like . . . India. In twenty years, when you call your insurance company to ask a question about your policy, your call will be answered by somebody in India who will answer your questions as though they were just down the street and not half a world away.

Masterson

You’re mad! A raving lunatic! No wonder Shevosky left.

Mentzer

(Talking to himself again, growing angry) Taking the place of an American worker! Weakening our economy!

Masterson

You’ve become a loony!

Mentzer’s head snaps up.

Mentzer

Have I?

Mentzer points to the zombie that was his secretary.

Miss Bartlett no longer requires a salary at all, and she works longer hours. She can, in fact, work around the clock if she is fed!

Masterson looks down at Miss Bartlett, who is staring at him and slowly licking her lips.

Masterson

(Beat) What the devil . . .?

MENTZER

She has a faster gear. I just have to release her.

Masterson looks around the room, and then up. Mounted to the ceiling is a black half -globe from which cylinders protrude. On the bottom a green light glows.

Masterson

You bastard! What game are you playing?

Mentzer

I intend to reshape how America does business, colonel . . . and protect her status as a leader of commerce.

masterson

You won’t get away with killing me!

mentzer

It is difficult to prove murder without a body, colonel, and my creations eat everything: flesh, organs, even bones . . .

Oh, in Miss Bartlett’s desk is a gun. I believe you will understand what to do.

Masterson frantically pushes Miss Bartlett to the floor and retrieves a gun from the book bin of her desk. He jacks a shell into the chamber and points the gun at Dr. Mentzer, across the room.

By the time he has turned, Dr. Mentzer has opened the door and is standing behind it, with only his head showing.

Mentzer

There is only one bullet in that gun, colonel. . . I would choose wisely if I were you.

Animals typically kill their prey before eating them.

Close on: panic-stricken eyes of Masterson.

Mentzer

Zombies prefer their meat alive.

focus on door closing, Sound of lock clicking.

Masterson sprints to the door and frantically twists the knob, which refuses to turn. He points the gun at the lock.

Focus on green light at bottom of the radio frequency transmitter—it goes out.

SHRIEK from direction of room.

close on: crazed face of Miss Bartlett and several other zombies behind her, standing on their examination tables.

Miss Bartlett jumps atop the table with inhuman speed and agility, shrieks, and jumps into the camera as the other zombies bound forward.

cut to: mentzer

Mentzer walks away from a metal door that has painted on it the words, “Authorized Personnel Only.”

Masterson (OS)

Jesus! . . .What are you? . . .Oh God!

Sounds of bones breaking, smacking noises, more screams, followed by a single gunshot.

Fade out

a song plays: rob zombie’s “perversion 99” from the Hellbelly album

Fade in to:

Int. - texas state penitentiary, Huntsville – night

super: texas state penitentiary, Huntsville texas

close on face of guard, woody.

Song fades

A voice is speaking off screen—the warden.

Warden (OS)

I find it hard to believe.

Close on: mouth of Woody.

It’s true.

Close on: mouth of warden

Warden

I’m glad you came to me. I need somebody who can get to the bottom of this thing . . . Can I count on you?

mouth of Woody

Yes sir!

mouth of warden

Prisoners taken out without proper orders? I don’t like the sound of it. I don’t like it at all.

mouth of Woody

The warehouse of Prost! Distributing.

Mouth of Warden

Tonight? You’re sure they plan to do it tonight?

Mouth of Woody

Yes sir!

mouth of warden

Goddamn hurricane’s coming ashore. Hell of a night to be out.

Mouth of Woody

(Beat) Yes sir.

Mouth of Warden

A good night for doing something illegal . . . Okay, let’s bust this thing! Call me when it’s ready to go down. I’ll have a squad waiting. Here’s my number.

Focus on hand of warden, which holds a slip of paper.

Mouth of Woody

Yes sir!

Focus on woody’s hand taking the slip of paper from the warden’s hand.

Focus on warden’s empty hand as sounds of Woody walking away come from the background. A door opens and closes.

the hand of the Warden presses an intercom button.

focus on mouth of Warden.

He’s coming with you. See he doesn’t come back.

Voice from intercom

Yes sir!

Fade out

a song plays: rob zombie’s “spookshow baby” from the hellbelly album

Fade in on:

Ext. - Prost! Distributing Warehouse, Pasadena, Texas – night

WIND HOWLS. A large warehouse is seen through light wind-pushed rain. In the foreground are trucks. Half have the words “Prost! Distributing” emblazoned on their trailers; the other half display “America Still Works!”

Close on:

Six people (Arjun, Billy N, Bobby N, Pedro, Rosa, Oscar) huddle near the massive bay doors of the warehouse. At a standard door next to it, Oscar is pressing keys on a pad.

Song fades

Billy N

What take so long?

Bobby N

Yeah. Thought you got combination from loser security guard friend.

Oscar turns, his face wet, his longish hair plastered to his head.

Oscar

Anybody ever tell you guys you are real assholes? I should be working instead of breaking and entering.

Oscar turns back to the key pad. He punches a few more numbers, and the door unlocks with an audible click.

Arjun

Finally! Let’s get out of this rain!

All move through door into a warehouse filled with shelves and boxes. Sounds of the WIND and RAIN BEATING on the roof and walls are heard.

pedro

(Whisper) Nobody’s here.

Arjun

(Whisper) This is the incoming shipments side. There aren’t any shipments coming in with that hurricane out there; we want to see what’s happening at the outgoing doors.

Arjun motions with a hand and starts down an aisle. The rest follow, with Rosa at the rear, looking anxious.

Rosa

What are we doing here?

Oscar

Helping Arjun for reasons that made a lot more sense while we were drinking.

Rosa

Yeah. That’s what I thought.

Billy N

(Loudly) This stupid snipe hunt, you ask me.

Arjun cringes and stops.

Arjun

(Whisper) Why don’t you just run to the other end and tell them we’re coming?

Bobby N

Yeah! Try not be stupid.

Arjun starts walking again. POUNDING WINDS of the hurricane outside become louder; the building CREAKS.

Rosa

I hear something!

Everybody looks at her with an expression of incredulity as the wind POUNDS and the building CREAKS.

Rosa

(Sighs) Something other than the wind and rain. . . Ahead and to the right.

Arjun nods and pads forward to the end of the shelf on the right. He moves between two large boxes to an opening. The rest crowd in behind him.

Close on opening.

Just beyond the opening is a large room filled with people dressed in matching blue coveralls with the Prost! logo who are moving slowly, like sleepwalkers. The people are pale and somehow different.

Oscar

What the hell? Is this some kind of meth lab or something?

Pedro

Do they look like meth-heads to you?

Oscar shrugs.

Oscar

Okay, ‘ludes then.

Pedro

Dude, nobody is making ‘ludes here. They’re moving boxes onto crates. Boxes of beer!

Rosa

How cute! They’re dressed as zombies for Halloween.

Close on one worker whose head seems to have a gaping wound in it. Close on wound, which has maggots squirming in it.

Close on Rosa’s face.

Rosa

Ewww!

Close on widened eyes of Arjun, who spins and clamps a hand over Rosa’s mouth.

Close on three workers who slowly turn toward the noise.

Focus on Arjun’s eyes and sweating upper lip.

Close on three workers, who slowly turn back to their work.

Arjun

(Whisper) Let’s get out of here!

The group slowly backtracks until they are out of earshot, and then they start quietly running back toward the door through which they entered.

The sound of a DOOR BANGING followed by LOUD INDESCERNABLE VOICES stops them. The voices are heading their way.

Arjun points at boxes with an opening between them; the group squeezes into the gap just as a group of prison guards holding shotguns come striding past; just behind is a gang of a dozen prisoners in orange jump suits, with more guards in the rear.

Cut to:

Guard 1 (same voice who spoke to the warden earlier)

Step lively, bitches! I want my ass out of here before that storm arrives!

Prisoner 1

How ‘bout us man? We don’t want to be here neither?

Guard 1 stops, and the procession stops behind him. He steps up to the prisoner who spoke.

Guard 1

You’re paying your debt to society, asswipe!

Prisoner 1

My debt to society don’t include getting killed during a hurricane, man!

Other prisoners mumble agreement.

Guard 1

You fucking killed a family of five in cold blood, Rodriquez. You should be glad you’ve lived this long.

Prisoner 1

I wasn’t loved as a child. I was the product of my fucking environment.

Guard 1 looks pensive, as though seriously weighing the merits of Rodriquez’s ridiculous excuse for murder.

Guard 1

Well, how about a bite first? It’s lunchtime if you work the late shift.

Guard 1 looks to the other prisoners, selling the ridiculous idea that he is actually trying to do something nice for them.

Guard 1

Any of you stains on humanity object to a good meal?

The other prisoners look to Prisoner 1.

Prisoner 1

(Shrugs) Sure. We can eat.

Guard 1

Okay, crotch-stains. The cafeteria is this way.

Guard 1 leads the group down the aisle and through an opening. He cuts across several aisles and turns toward two swinging doors with head-high round windows. He pushes through into an industrial cafeteria. At the other end is another set of doors.

Guard 1 steps aside and waits for the prisoners to enter. The guards stand close to the doors.

Prisoner 1

What kind of shit you dealing, man? Ain’t nobody in here! I don’t smell no fucking food!

Guard 1

I didn’t lie, Rodriquez. I asked you if you wanted a bite. I guarantee you’ll get a bite.

The guards back out. Woody and Guard 1 are the last inside the room; Guard 1 looks at Woody.

Guard 1

You stay and watch.

Woody

What?

Guard 1

Stay and watch. (Chuckles) How many guards do you need to watch guys get a bite?

Woody has no response, but he senses something bad is about to happen.

Guard 1 backs out, and then comes the distinctive CLICK of the doors being locked. Guard l looks through one of the windows briefly, grinning.

Close on Wood’s face, alternating with the faces of the prisoners. Everybody is trying to decide what is going on and what they need to do.

Sound of the other doors opening.

Everybody looks at the other doors, seeing figures in blue jump suits amble through the opening.

Prisoner 1 steps close to Woody, wrenches the shotgun away, then steps back and trains the gun on Woody. Woody backs up, his back against the freezer door.

Prisoner 1

(Points with shotgun at the freezer)

Inside!

Woody opens the freezer door and steps inside.

POV Woody, looking out the open freezer door at Rodriguez, who slams the door, plunging woody into darkness.

cut to: cafeteria

As the last of the zombies enter, the other doors close. CLICK of lock. There is a momentary silence, with the prisoners watching the zombies and the zombies watching the prisoners.

Prisoner 1

What the fuck is this shit? Freaks in Halloween costumes?

A song plays: white zombie’s “i, zombie” from astrocreep 2000, starting with the scream at the end of the introductory sequence.

The snarl and rush toward the prisoners with inhuman speed, biting and clawing. Prisoner 1 fires once and is bowled over by the mad rush of the zombies, the shotgun flying from his hands and banging against the window on the cafeteria door.

Song fades to background.

Cut to: guards standing outside cafeteria, watching the windows on the cafeteria doors.

Sounds of guttural noises, cracking bones, smacking, and screams are heard. A gunshot is heard, and then the shotgun and a gout of blood cross the windows.

Guard 1

Warden said to tell you bon appetite, shithead!

Guard 1 turns to other guards, all of whom stand transfixed.

Guard 1

Let’s roll!

Guard 1 turns and walks briskly back the way they came. The other guards hesitate for a moment and then follow.

cut to: Woody, in dark freezer by himself, lit now by woody’s flashlight.

Shaking, Woody pulls out his phone and the slip of paper the warden gave him; he frantically punches the number. He hears ringing.

Muffled sounds of screaming and growls come through the thick walls.

A voice answers.

Guard 1 (V.O.)

Why the fuck aren’t you dead yet?

Woody hangs up. The SCREAMS outside continue and, after a minute or so, slacken off.

Woody places his ear against the door; he hears scattered pieces of conversation:

“Jesus! Fucking mess . . .”

“…do a good job of eating everything, even the bones.”

“…lot of blood, still. ..”

“…good thing those bastards are easily controllable. . .”

“…right frequency…”

“Mop?”

“Nah. Hose it . . . get the windows.”

And then silence.

cut to: Arjun et. Al.

rosa

Sorry. I never saw such a realistic zombie outfit before. I mean, can you imagine putting maggots on your face? Ugh!

Arjun

I still need to figure out what is going on, and now there are armed guards. Why?

Pedro

I have to pee!

oscar

(Ignoring Pedro)

Isn’t it obvious? They make prisoners work. Prisoners are cheap labor.

Pedro

I really have to pee!

Distant sounds of men YELLING, SCREAMING, and a muffled SHOTGUN BLAST.

Arjun

Jesus! Now what?

Rosa

Let’s get out of here!

Oscar

Are you kidding? Those guards could come back by any second.

Pedro

(Whining)I still really have to pee.

Arjun

Shh!

Sounds of footsteps approaching. A group goes by. Arjun eases up to see the guards headed out. The footsteps fade, followed by the sound of a door slamming.

Arjun

Okay, that was the guards.

Pedro

Can’t take it any more.

Pedro stands and bolts out of the opening between the pallets and trots in the direction of the cafeteria.

Arjun

(Stands)

I’m following him! Maybe I can get some pictures of the prisoners working.

Billy N and Bobby N, after briefly looking at each other, follow Arjun.

Oscar

(Standing and looking at Rosa) You still want to leave or . . .

Rosa stands and moves after the others.

Rosa

I don’t want to split up. Let’s just get this over with.

Oscar and Rosa walk down the aisle and then cut across an opening. Ahead, they see Arjun, the Nguyen brothers, and the swinging doors of the cafeteria.

Oscar and Rosa are last to enter the cafeteria. They stand next to the Nguyen brothers, who are looking at the room: the concrete floors are wet and shiny, and the walls are also wet. Across the room, Arjun is peering though the windows on the other entry, holding up his phone to record. Pedro is nowhere to be seen.

Oscar

(Looking at the wet walls and floor)

Messy eaters, huh?

I wonder what all the screaming and the gunshot was about?

billy n

Maybe somebody not eat all his vegetables.

Rosa

(Irritated)

I’m going to tell Arjun to hurry it up.

Rosa walks over to Arjun, followed by the others. As they approach, Arjun holds up a finger to his lips. Oscar and the Nguyen brothers immediately ease up to the window and look, then pull away, startled expressions on their faces.

Rosa is the last to look. On the other side the workers they saw earlier are loading boxes onto pallets.

Focus on fresh blood on faces and clothes of zombies.

Rosa

(Loudly)

Jesus! What . . .

Billy N

Maybe they eat?

Oscar

Yeah? But eat what?

ARJUN

Where are the prisoners the guards marched in here?

Oscar

What? You aren’t suggesting . . .

Rosa

I want to get out of here!

Oscar

(Looking at Arjun) He’s just trying to get us to stay long enough to find out where the prisoners went.

Rosa

But the blood . . .

Oscar

Hello! Halloween?

On the other side of the cafeteria, Pedro comes out of the toilet, smiling. He walks toward the others but pauses as he passes by the freezer door.

Pedro

Hey! I think there’s somebody in here.

The others walk over. Sporadic THUMPING comes from the door.

Pedro

Sounds like somebody is trapped inside.

Pedro reaches for the door handle.

Bobby N

Maybe that where they put prisoners.

Pedro’s hand stops.

Arjun

If it is, then we close the door again real fast.

Pedro

(Looks at the Nguyen brothers)

The Viet Cong will help me.

Billy N

We not VC! We Americans!

Bobby N

That right. Grandpa Nguyen only VC in family.

Pedro

(Sighs)

Just get over here and help me close this door fast if we need to.

Billy and Bobby move in next to Pedro, their hands on the door.

Pedro

I’ll open on the count of three. If we need to close, I’ll shout “shut!” Okay?

One, two, three!

Pedro yanks opens the door to expose Woody, who is holding his flashlight at them and blinking in surprise.

Woody

Who the fuck are you?

Arjun

You’re one of the guards. What’s going on here?

Woody

(Defiantly) You tell me!

Bobby N slams the door shut. They immediately hear thumping on the other side. Pedro pulls the door open.

bobby N

Man in freezer no demand explanation from people nice enough let him out!

Billy N

Man in freezer say “Thank you” and hope not be left locked in freezer.

Woody

(Apologetic)

Okay, thanks.

I was set up. The other guards left me with the prisoners, and the prisoners took my gun and locked me in here.

Arjun

And where are the prisoners now?

Woody

(Shrugs)

I don’t know. I didn’t see anything. . . I just, uh, heard stuff.

Arjun

We heard a gunshot and some screams. What was that all about?

Woody

(Beat) I don’t know. All I know is that there were prisoners locked in this cafeteria, and (looks around) now there ain’t no prisoners.

Arjun

I need to find them.

WOODY

Man, I think we need to get out of here. (Beat) I heard some weird shit.

Rosa

Yes! Listen to the security professional! I agree.

Arjun

Look, we already guessed that they use the prisoners as a source of free labor. I just want to document that fact.

Woody

I don’t think they make the prisoners work.

Arjun

Then what do they do with them? We saw them come in here.

Woody

(Swallows hard) I think they were all killed while I was in the freezer.

And I think I was supposed to have been killed with them. If they catch us here . . .

Rosa

Yes--They’ll kill us all!

Okay, we’re going.

a song plays: white zombie’s “electric head part 2” from the supersexy album

cut to:

Ext. - Prost! Distributing Warehouse - Night

Arjun, Bobby N, Oscar, Pedro, Rosa, and Woody are running through the warehouse, out the door, across the pavement, and past the trucks with “America Still Works!” on the side. The rain is pelting down, propelled by strong winds.

A huge bank of clouds is moving overhead, bringing lighting and thunder. The winds start gusting even stronger.

Song fades

arjun

I don’t see why I couldn’t have stayed for just a little longer.

rosa

(Panting) Fine! Go back inside then.

They are almost to an 80s vintage panel van with a fantasy paint job and a late model four-wheel drive extended cab pickup with a metal storage bin when a voice calls out.

Guard 1

Hold it right there shitsticks!

They stop. A flash of lighting illuminates a truck parked with its back facing them. On the sides are painted the words “America Still Works!” Standing to the side of the truck is Guard 1, pointing an assault rifle at them in one hand; with the other hand, he opens the doors and pulls out a ramp that CLANGS on the pavement.

Another flash of lightening reveals a black half-globe mounted to the ceiling of the truck, black cylinders sticking out from it. Underneath the globe are about a dozen zombies, slowly rocking back and forth.

Guard 1 (OS)

See you met some friends Woody.

I’m glad, you know, because not everybody got to eat.

Lightning shows a second guard behind the zombies, prodding them down to the pavement with his shotgun.

Woody

I don’t like this. Move! We need to get out of here! Now!

Woody thrusts them forward. Oscar opens the door of the van, and everybody except for the Nguyen brothers pile inside; the Nguyen brothers climb into their pickup.

Cut to truck

Guard 1 takes a small box from his pocket that has a green light on top and grins.

CUT TO VAN

Oscar searches his pockets for the keys he just used to open the doors. They aren’t there.

Cut to outside

Lightning flashes; Guard 2 is still pushing the zombies in their direction as a rain squall hits, hiding them from view.

Cut to van

Oscar sees the keys on the ground outside. He opens the door, lunges, and grabs them, then straightens and jams the ignition key into the switch. RAIN POUNDS ON THE VAN. He turns the key, and the engine ROARS.

He turns on the lights, but they see nothing out the front window because of the rain cascading down. Oscar JAMS the transmission into drive and turns on the windshield washers to reveal very active zombies chewing on the twitching body of Guard 2 as blood washes over the pavement. Three of the zombies jump up and start running toward the van.

Arjun

Good God! What is that? Are they . . . eating him?

Cut to: american still works truck

Guard 1 looks at the device in his hand, which still shows a green light. He had not turned off the infrared transmitter.

Guard 1

What the fuck?

Lightning flashes, showing five zombies rushing at Guard 1. Guard 1 tosses the box down and levels his rifle.

Cut to: van

The van’s wheels SQUEAL as it fishtails out of the parking lot, hitting two zombies and then barreling down the road. Right behind it is the Nguyen brother’s truck.

POV Van back window:

Flashes as Guard 1 fires his assault weapon, followed by darkness. A final bolt of lightning reveals zombies tearing at something on the ground next to the America Still Works! truck.

Fade out

a song plays: rob zombie’s “the ballad of resurrection joe and rosa whore,” from the hellbelly album.

Fade in on:

ext. - building along I-45 – night

A large black automobile is parked next to a building with a sign that reads “God Will Sort Them Guns and Ammo.” Distant flashes of lighting illuminate the interior of the car. Shevosky is sitting in the passenger’s seat, alone.

Lightning flashes again, revealing the three men who were with Shevosky at JFK. They come around from the back of the building. Each man is carrying a large black bag.

Song fades

The trunk opens. Sounds of three heavy clunks, followed by the sound of the trunk closing.

The men pile into the car. The driver starts the car and pulls out onto the freeway, heading south. A flash of lightning illuminates a towering bank of clouds ahead.

Fade out

a song plays: rob zombie’s “return of the phantom stranger,” from the hellbelly album—starting with the organ music

Fade in on:

ext. - houston freeway – night

Oscar, Arjun, Pedro, Rosa, and Woody are driving north toward Houston in gusting winds with light rain. The Nguyen brothers, in their truck, are following.

Song fades to background

Oscar

What the hell was that, man?

Arjun

(Staring straight ahead.) Those were . . . zombies.

Woody

(Chuckles) Yeah. Zombies. That’s your cheap labor—the fucking living dead.

Rosa

Ew!

Arjun

But . . . then what are the prisoners for?

woody

Food. (Beat) My old boss—that was the prick with the gun—said as much. He said not everybody had eaten.

Arjun

(Shaking his head) I don’t know guys. Zombies eating prisoners . . . It all sounds too . . . You don’t really think it could be, do you?

woody

(Staring off into the distance)

Fucking zombies! We’ve been bringing them dinner!

oscar

Hey guys, check this out!

Song volume back to full

Everybody turns to look out the front window as they pass a sprawling warehouse. In contrast to neighboring businesses, which are darkened and empty, this warehouse is lit up and swarming with figures loading pallets onto trucks.

To one side are several trucks emblazoned with “America Still Works.”

Pan as camera slowly moves even with and then beyond warehouse.

Song fades to background

Arjun

Those are the same type of trucks we saw at Prost!

I’ve seen their ads on tv.

Arjun turns to Woody.

Arjun

You know anything about this America Still Works?

Woody

(Shakes head)

Nah. But the other times we escorted prisoners to work sites, those trucks were there.

Rosa

(Incredulous) You mean you’ve done this before?

Woody

(Beat) I’m not a bad guy!

The other times I rode back on the prisoner transfer bus. This is the first time I’ve seen what goes on . . . well, I haven’t actually seen anything, but . . .

Rosa

Did the prisoners come back those times?

Woody

(Sheepishly) I don’t know. (Break) I don’t think so.

Rosa

And that didn’t make you suspicious?

Woody

(Hotly) Of course it did! That’s why I spoke to the warden before this trip. . . I thought something funny was going on. He gave me a number to call when things started . . .

Rosa

And?

woody

And it turned out that the number was for the guard a-hole who tried to sic those things on us in the parking lot.

Bobby N

Sound like warden probably getting nice cut of action. Not want you to mess up good thing.

Woody

Yeah. That’s what I figure too.

Oscar

I see another warehouse operation going full bore in the middle of a hurricane. . . And this one is a biggie!

Song volume back up

Just ahead, a sea of lights grows alongside the mostly darkened city as they roll past clusters of buildings that are lit up and operating. Dark figures can be seen hauling boxes and crates off of and onto trucks. Off to one side are dozens of America Still Works! trucks.

Pedro points at trucks parked alongside each of the operations.

Song fades

ARJUN

Jesus! Are all these businesses being operated by zombies?

Fade out

a song plays: iron maiden’s “the man who would be king” from the final frontier album

Fade in on:

int. - houston office – night

focus on Large office with wood desk behind which a window reveals stormy weather.

Outside, lightning flashes. Rain splatters the window.

A man in his sixties (MENTZER) sits at the desk, speaking excitedly to two other men, gesturing with a glass of amber fluid. He talks to two men seated in tall chairs with their backs to the camera.

Song fades

Mentzer

This hurricane will be the best thing that ever happened to American Still Works!, the state of Texas, and the United States of America.

Gentlemen, when this storm is over, everybody will see that companies who had the foresight to use America Still Works! contracted labor didn’t just survive when other companies shuttered up their doors—they thrived!

Focus on man in left chair (SENATOR BINGHAM)

SENATOR BINGHAM

I am sure, Dr. Mentzer, but people are starting to ask questions about how American Still Works operates. Some executives aren’t comfortable turning over their warehouse operations to a work force they are contractually obligated not to see.

It is . . . odd.

Mentzer

(Smiling) For their own good, senator, for their own good. If they don’t know the details, then they have nothing to say when anti-business liberal reporters ask questions.

There are proprietary interests at stake here, gentlemen.

The other man (Congressman Monson) leans forward.

Congressman Monson

Granted, but I’ve gotten similar questions from constituents, Dr. Mentzer. People are concerned that American Still Works is replacing American workers with . . . robots.

Mentzer

(Laughs)

I can absolutely assure you that America Still Works! is not replacing American workers with robots! (Beat) We are simply taking back the kinds of jobs that have either been filled by illegal immigrants or outsourced overseas. We want to protect American business—not run it into the ground!

Congressman Monson

Yes, but people see those trucks of yours, yet nobody ever sees any people except for the drivers, so they get curious as to who your people are.

I am sure I don’t need to remind you that the government-backed loan guarantee your company received for business expansion comes with an obligation to be somewhat transparent, Dr. Mentzer.

Mentzer

We will eventually reveal all. But, for now, we need to maintain our competitive edge. (Beat) Would you ask Coca Cola to reveal their secret ingredient, or would you just enjoy drinking their product?

Senator Binghman

Coca Cola doesn’t have a problem with people who disappear without a trace, Dr. Mentzer. I have heard a disturbing report about state prisoners, who seem to be a part of your work groups in some mysterious way. I got a call from the mother of a missing prisoner who demands that I account for her son’s sudden disappearance.

Mentzer

Tell me, senator, what was her son incarcerated for?

Senator Bingham

Well, first degree murder, but I don’t see . . .

Mentzer

So a convicted murderer has gone from being a drain on society to being an integral part of restoring our industrial base.

I don’t see any negatives.

Senator Bingham

But he’s unaccounted for, and . . .

Mentzer

I assure you, this miscreant cannot possibly pose any future threat to society. He has paid his debt in full by playing a vital role within America Still Works!

Congressman Monson

How? The prisoners you use may be murderers and pedophiles, but what purpose do they serve within America Still Works!?

Senator Bingham

People want to know what American Still Works! does with those prisoners. Even prisoners have rights.

Mentzer

Sighs and leans back in his chair, realizing that these two idiots are not getting the message.

(Smiles) You know what? Why don’t I just show you?

Fade out

Fade in on:

a song plays: tool’s “die eier von satan” from the aenima album

ext. - El Paso/juarez border – night

Slowly zoom in on a crowd of people

The man in the America Still Works! tee shirt who was seen earlier is standing, speaking to a crowd of Hispanics in a parking lot. Behind him are three America Still Works! trucks. Beyond the trucks is a large tent. A banner atop the tent reads “Workers Needed! America Still Works! Needs You!”

Song fades

Man in tee shirt

If you are looking for work, amigos, America Still Works! is looking for you! We need all kinds of workers, all kinds of skills!

Man in Crowd

I hear stories about bad things happening to illegals.

Man in tee shirt

(Smiling)

We have the complete and total support of key senators and legislators. I can assure you that you will have work in this country for as long as you are able to work!

Man in Crowd

I need work.

Man in Tee Shirt points to the tent.

Man in Tee Shirt

(Smiling bigger)

The work you need is just steps away.

Man in Crowd

(Sighs)

I guess it can’t hurt to take a look.

Man in Tee shirt

(Grins)

Trust me: this is the last job you’ll ever take.

Fade out

a song plays: rob zombie’s “how to make a monster,” from the hellbelly album

Fade in on:

Ext. - Houston Freeway – night

Oscar’s van pulls off freeway, with the Nguyen’s truck following.

Song fades

Arjun

Where are you going?

Oscar

I’m hungry. There’s Waffle House open over there.

Cut to: Waffle house

Int. waffle house

The party is seated in a large booth. Oscar is eating waffles drenched in butter and syrup. Woody is eating a stack of hotcakes with a side of sausage. The Nguyen brothers are eating French toast. Everybody else is just drinking coffee.

Rosa

I don’t see how you can eat after what we’ve seen.

Oscar

(Shrugs) I eat when I’m hungry. What I’ve seen has got nothing to do with it.

Arjun

How certain are we that American Still Works! is using zombies as workers?

Pedro

I’m pretty damn certain. We saw the trucks; we saw the zombies, right?

Arjun

We’ve only seen one group of “zombies.” (Arjun punctuates the word with finger quotes.) For all we know, the workers at the other places are normal.

We’re just speculating.

Billy N

(Looks up, with powdered sugar on his upper lip.)

I speculating you crazy! They zombies!

Arjun

I think you’re making a hasty generalization.

Bobby N

I making informed conclusion: too many fucking zombies!

Woody

(Finishes eating and looks thoughtful.)

You know, I hate to say it, but I’m with Gandhi; we don’t know for sure.

Arjun

(Scowling)

My name is Arjun.

Woody

Whatever. The point is, we only know for certain that one location is using zombie workers; we should check out some of these other places before saying American Still Works! is using zombie labor.

Oscar

(Putting down his fork and looking at Arjun and Woody)

Like hell we do! We don’t have to do anything other than pick up a phone and call the authorities!

Arjun

And say what? We can’t go reporting this to the authorities without being sure.

Oscar

Yeah we can. We pick up the phone and say, “Hey, there’s a bunch of zombies working at Prost! Distributing” . . . and those other places we saw. Then we hang up.

Arjun

And the authorities do nothing.

Oscar

Send ‘em the video you shot using your phone.

Woody

They’ll assume it was a prank. A fake. It’s Halloween, bro!

The door BANGS open. Shevosky enters, followed by his three Russians in black leather coats and combat boots. The three men are carrying tactical shotguns.

Shevosky holds up something that looks like an old transistor radio and points to the kitchen.

Screams of people running for the door as the men pass through.

Woody

What the hell? Are we in some kind of B movie here?

The Russians pass through the doors to the kitchen; a moment later, two cooks come running out. A shot is heard, followed by two more shots in quick succession.

Stunned, Arjun and the others are rooted to the spot in the now-empty Waffle House. They are still there when the old man and the men with guns come back out. The one in back is dragging a body by the shirt collar: a zombie with three holes in its head.

Woody

Another fucking zombie? Jesus! Are they everywhere?

Shevosky stops and looks at Woody’s uniform.

Shevosky

You see other zombies? Where?

Woody

Warehouses south of here. At least three or four.

Shevosky

(Breaths sign of relief) Four zombies? Only four?

Woody

No man. Three or four warehouses; dozens of zombies. . . Probably more.

Shevosky’s face goes ashen.

Outside, the sounds of the storm intensify as a squall POUNDS against the windows and the power goes out.

Shevosky

Rain is bad. Very bad.

He looks at the device he has been holding.

Signals fading. Rain breaks them up.

Arjun

Signals? What signals? That’s just an ancient transistor radio.

Shevosky

(Scoffs)

This is EHF receiver. I use it to track Extremely High Frequency transmissions. Where EHF transmissions are found, zombies are likely to be.

EHF frequencies calm the beasts but are easily interrupted by atmospheric disturbances, such as rain.

Arjun

(Swallows) Is that bad?

Shevosky chuckles bitterly.

Shevosky

Only if you are human.

Fade out

a song plays: iron maiden’s “wasted years”

Fade in on:

Int. - Warehouse in Houston – night

Mentzer is escorting Senator Bingham and Congressman Monson. They have seen nothing unusual in the front offices, which are mostly deserted; only a few workers and security guards are present because of the hurricane.

Song fades

Congressman Monson

It’s very nice Dr. Mentzer, but I don’t see anything out of the ordinary. So far, America Still Works! looks like the rest of America.

Senator bingham

I have to agree with my colleague: I don’t see anything that smacks of paradigm-breaking efficiency here.

Mentzer

(Smiling)

You want to see paradigm-breaking efficiency, senator? Follow me. Let me show you the secret to America Still Works.

Mentzer walks through the front offices to a gray metal door marked “Authorized Personnel Only” and presses buttons on a key pad. He holds the door open while Bingham and Monson pass into an enormous warehouse that CREAKS and GROANS as the WIND BUFFETS it. Inside are shelves filled with goods and workers in blue coveralls moving those goods around.

Focus on faces of workers

Workers turn to look at the camera: a ghastly white zombie with a gash in his cheek that exposes teeth; a zombie missing a hand, tendons dangling from the damaged wrist; a zombie with sections of spine showing through at the neck.

Focus on faces of Senator Bingham and Congressman Monson

Bingham and Monson react with revulsion.

Focus on Mentzer

Mentzer is beaming, enjoying this opportunity to finally shock the two politicians to whom he has been sucking up. His delight is short-lived.

Congressman monson

Is this your idea of a joke—a Halloween prank?

Mentzer’s smile evaporates.

Senator Bingham

I have to agree with the congressman, Dr. Mentzer. This display is in bad taste and rather juvenile: zombie makeup? Really?

Mentzer

(Dismayed) But these are real zombies.

Here, let me show you.

Mentzer walks over to the zombie with the gashed cheek, grabs it by the arm, and pulls it over to the two politicians. He pulls open the zombie’s mouth and then sticks his fingers through the opening in the mouth.

Mentzer

See?

Senator Bingham

(Wrinkling his nose) What is that smell?

Mentzer

Decaying flesh.

He grabs the opening in the cheek of the zombie and tears off a strip that has turned chalky gray.

Circulatory issues can result in localized necrosis.

Congressman Monson

Good God! You truly are using zombies!

Are you insane?

Senator Bingham

I agree with the sentiments of my colleague: you are a lunatic if you think the American public will support using dead people as workers! You can kiss your federal loan guarantees goodbye doctor!

Mentzer

(Looks at watch, smiles grimly)

But I haven’t answered your question about how prisoners fit into our strategy here at America Still Works!

Follow me.

Mentzer walks toward double doors with small windows near the back of the warehouse, beckoning for the others to follow. Going though the doors are a small group of orange-clad prisoners shepherded by guards.

Mentzer steps up to the head guard.

Mentzer

Got room for a couple more? They want a bite.

The guard glances at the two elected officials. If he recognizes them, he doesn’t indicate it; he simply nods in the direction of the cafeteria door.

Mentzer holds out his hand and moves aside.

Mentzer

After you, gentlemen!

Senator Bingham

We’ll stay just long enough to get to the truth of the matter, sir!

The senator steps inside.

Congressman Monson

I will stay only long enough to learn how the prisoners are used in your scheme!

Mentzer

(Motioning inside) You’ll learn everything in just about a minute from now.

The congressman steps inside, next to the senator, and appraises the room. Seated at a table in the middle are the prisoners, who look about anxiously at a group of zombies standing in a dispirited cluster on the other side of the room.

A door SLAMS!

POV Outside cafeteria, looking through one of the windows.

The two politicians spin about and crowd the door, peering out and shouting at Mentzer, who smiles back at them. In the bg, we see the blurred images of the prisoners, blobs of orange.

We hear a loud CLICK.

In the bg, behind the politicians, we see a sudden blur of motion, flashes of blue converging on the orange, and then SCREAMS.

The two politicians spin around, their backs to the door, as several zombies leap at them and pull them down, out of sight.

A gout of blood spurts up onto the window.

Cut to: Mentzer walking back through a gray door that connects the front offices to the warehouse.

Mentzer

(Talking to self) I’ll bet that was paradigm-breaking even for you senator!

Fade out

a song plays: white zombie’s   
super-charger” from the astrocreep 2000 album

Fade in on:

Int. - Waffle House – night

Shevosky (wearing reading glasses), Arjun’s group, and Woody are talking while Shevosky’s men (LEV, YAKOV, and GRISHA) sit at a table in the darkened Waffle House, loading their weapons by the light of several battery-powered lanterns. Lev and Yakov load tactical shotguns with slug shells, and Grisha is loading belts of shells into what look like small Gatling guns.

Song fades

Shevoksy

The fast variant of the virus made the reanimate capable of great speed and violence, but at the price of huge energy expenditure: they must eat frequently to sustain such bursts.

Arjun

(With disgust)

But . . . human flesh? Why not hamburgers or steak for crying out loud?

Shevosksy

Oh, they will eat other living flesh—dogs, cats, cows, birds—but, in an urban environment, human flesh is the food most readily available.

As to why they only eat living flesh, we do not know. It may be a reaction imposed by the host virus. Memories of being alive could cause the host to seek a return to the way it used to be. Perhaps eating living flesh seems like a way to return.

Billy N

Speaking as veterinarian, that sound like crackpot theory to me.

Shevosky

(Shrugs and grins)

Sounds more educated than, “I haven’t a fucking clue, doesn’t it?”

Rosa

(Nodding at Shevosky’s device)

What about this radio frequency thing? Why doesn’t it work in the rain?

Shevosky picks up the device.

Shevosky

We initially thought the fast zombies are calmed by infrared radiation, but that was a just a fluke; the transmitter we used that first time—quite by accident--was not precise. It leaked other frequencies.

Further experiments showed that an extremely high frequency signal of 275 gigahertz works best. Unfortunately . . .

Oscar

. . . EHF signals are easily disrupted by atmospheric disturbances, such as rain.

Shevosky

(Looks over reading glasses at Oscar)

You know your radio frequencies my friend.

Oscar

(Shrugs)

My dad’s company makes garage door openers and infrared sensors. I kind of grew up around radio stuff.

Shevosky

Most interesting. (Beat) Could you manufacture something small that continuously broadcasts at 275 gigahertz? A lot of them? Slowing down the zombies is our best hope of controlling them.

Oscar

Sure, but if it’s battery powered, it will eventually run down.

Shevosky

(Shrug)

It doesn’t matter. We just need enough transmitters to blanket an area; even in a strong rain, some signals should make it through.

If we can keep the zombies slow, we have a chance to disable them. If they are fast, well . . .

Lev

They disable us instead.

Shevosky nods in agreement and looks back at Oscar.

Oscar

I’ll go to my dad’s plant and get started.

Oscar looks at Rosa

I could use some help.

Rosa

(Eagerly)

I would love to help you!

Arjun looks at Pedro and the Nguyen brothers; all raise an eyebrow.

Lev tosses keys to Oscar.

Take our car. We could use van to carry all of us and our guns.

Oscar hesitates momentarily, taking in the size of Lev, the two other Russians, and their many weapons.

Oscar

Sure, man; no problem.

Oscar takes out his key ring and removes the van key. He gives it to Lev.

Oscar

Don’t wreck it, please.

Lev

Turns hands palms up.

I treat it like my own.

Oscar and a beaming Rosa walk out and get into the rental car, smiling at each other.

Billy N

Those two procreate soon.

Bobby N

Maybe on way to dad’s plant?

As Oscar and Rosa drive off, the Russians gather their bags of weapons and carry them to the van, followed by Arjun, Pedro, and Woody.

The Nguyen brothers walk to their truck. Billy N vaults into the bed and removes keys from a pocket.

Billy N

Wait moment. Need get guns out.

Pedro

Figures. I imagine those two Asian rednecks would have their deer rifles with them at all times.

Billy N unlocks the storage unit in the bed of the truck, and removes two well-worn AK-47s and several spare ammo clips. He hands these to his brother, while Arjun and Pedro stand with their mouths open.

BILLY N

(Looks at puzzled faces)

Family keepsakes. Grandpa Nguyen bring guns when immigrate to U.S. after war over.

Lev gently takes one of the rifles from Bobby N, looks it over, nods, and then hands it back.

Lev

Nice gun.

(Looking up and around at the others)Okay, let’s roll!

Lev takes the wheel of Oscar’s van; Yakov, Grisha, Arjun, and Pedro take seats. Lev starts the van, slams it into drive, and fishtails out of the parking lot, taking out a stop sign on the way.

The Nguyen’s truck follows.

Fade out

a song plays: white zombie’s “blur the technicolor” from the astrocreep 2000 album

Fade in on:

ext. - houston freeway – night

Mentzer is speaking on the phone from the back seat of a limo. Seated next to him is a figure in a black rain parka with the hood up, obscuring the face.

Song fades

Mentzer

(Speaking to person on phone.)

I want every camera you can get at Prost! Distributing. Prost! is the latest company to sign up with America Still Works, and I want to show you what that means.

Mentzer listens to the person on the other end for a moment, frowning.

Mentzer

Goddammit! Hurricanes aren’t news! They happen every year. Businesses that keep running even during hurricanes are news! The news story of the generation is happening at Prost! Distributing!

Mentzer listens again.

Mentzer

Prost!! P-R-O-S-T and an exclamation mark!

Trust me; you are going to see something the likes of which you have never seen before.

Mentzer hangs up and quickly dials another number.

Mentzer

Are we ready?

Mentzer listens.

Menzter

Just make sure we have plenty of our trucks out front. I don’t want anybody to forget the name America Still Works!

Fade out

song plays: white zombie’s “real solution #9” from the supersexy album

Fade in on:

Ext. - houston i-45 – night

Oscar’s van ROARS south on I-45, WINDSHIELD WIPERS SLIDING AND THUMPING as winds gust across the empty road. At the wheel is the big Russian, Lev. Next to him sits Shevosky.

Song fades

Shevosky

He looks at the device in his hand.

No heavy rain yet. That at least is good.

Wait! I am getting signal . . . there is something ahead.

Song back up

They close on a cluster of warehouses lit up brightly. Figures move slowly, carrying boxes.

CLOSE ON: Figures at warehouse. All wear blue jumpsuits.

Song fades

Shevosky

Idiots! They let them out in the rain!

Lev

Is exit ahead. We take.

Song back up

Without slowing, Lev slews the van down the exit ramp, cuts across the intersection, taking out the stop sign, cuts right once more, and then they are northbound on the feeder road that leads back to the warehouse. A large sign out front proclaims “New World Distributing.” Just beyond the sign are four America Still Works! trucks.

The van squeals into the lot and stops. The Nguyen’s truck pulls in next.

Yakov and Grisha exit and begin pulling weapons out of the bags. Lev hands shotguns and pistols to Arjun, Pedro, and Woody.

The Nguyen brothers walk over with their AK-47s.

Song fades

Shevosky

We need to disable all zombies!

Arjun

(Frowning in thought.)

By ‘disable,’ I assume you mean . . .

Lev

(Loudly)

Shoot in head! Twice to be sure. Three times to be even more sure if ammo and time permit.

Arjun

Oh.

Woody

They’ll have guards, won’t they?

lev

Guards no problem. I show you.

Lev walks forward briskly, a shotgun in his hand and two more strapped across his back. He kicks open the locked glass doors of the warehouse offices and advances on a guard station where FAT GUARD watches with wide eyes.

fat Guard

Hey! You guys can’t just . . .

Lev jacks a shell into the chamber, shoots the communication console, and smoothly jacks another shell into the chamber.

Lev

Get out!

Fat Guard bolts, holding onto a belt that supports a sagging belly. His small revolver bangs against his hip as he disappears through the doors.

Lev turns to a gray door marked “Authorized Personnel Only,” shoots out the door lock, and kicks the door open, revealing a large warehouse in which many zombies are working. The zombies are all dressed in blue coveralls on which “NWD” has been embroidered in large block letters.

Pedro

How cute: their outfits tell you where they work.

Focus on faces of zombies looking at intruders momentarily before resuming their work.

Focus on Shevosky.

Shevosky

Shevosky points to the ceiling.

Focus on a box planted high in the warehouse’s rafters. the box displays a green light.

Shevosky

That’s the EHF transmitter. There should be more outside, mounted on poles. Do not shoot them!

Pedro

Duh!

Lev

Remember: two shots in the head!

Arjun

Wait! I thought you said three.

Lev

No waste ammo. We might need it later.

A song plays: White Zombies “More Human than Human” From the Supersexy album

The Russians walk straight up to the zombies and begin shooting at point-blank range: first, a single shot in the head. Once each zombie has fallen, they put another slug into the head. Woody jacks a shell into the chamber of his shotgun and joins in. Pedro and the Nguyen brothers hesitate a few seconds, but then join as well, shooting zombies zestfully.

Song fades

Focus on Arjun.

Arjun

I don’t know if I can do this!

Shevosky

Follow me.

Shevosky walks over to one of the zombies with Arjun in tow. He fiddles with the setting of his EHF device.

Shevosky

Arm your weapon and point it at the zombie’s forehead. I will disrupt the controlling signal temporarily.

Arjun

He’s just standing there!

Shevosky

Do as I say!

Arjun reluctantly jacks a shell into the chamber of his gun and points it at the zombie.

Shevosky

Finger on trigger!

Focus on Arjun’s finger, which hesitates and then settles on the trigger.

Focus on zombie’s blank expression, the mouth twitching slightly, as though chewing in slow motion.

Focus on Shevosky’s device. Shevosky’s finger presses a button.

Focus on zombie’s face, which goes from blank to animated, the mouth gaping wide, uttering a primal scream.

Focus on Arjun’s finger, which flinches, squeezing the trigger.

Focus on zombie’s head, which now sports a hole as the zombie slowly falls backward to the ground. The zombie continues to twitch, trying to rise even though the body’s motor controls have been disrupted, the eyes maniacally locked on Arjun.

Shevosky

Another shot in the head! These things aren’t people anymore—just hosts for the controlling virus.

Arjun slowly chambers a second shell and looks at the zombie.

Arjun

Sorry brother.

The gun FIRES.

Shevosky

Come on. There are more outside.

song returns to full volume

Shevosky, Arjun, and the others continue working their way through the distribution center yard, blasting away at zombies until there are no more left standing.

Fade out

a song plays: White zombie’s “blur the technicolor”

Fade in on:

Int. - Van heading down I-45

Focus on lights of another warehouse through the front window of the van, followed by a sheet of rain that obliterates the view.

Song fades

lev

Fucking rain! Let’s do this quick!

The van roars down the next exit ramp, taking out another stop sign.

Fade out

a song plays: white zombie’s “super-charger heaven” from the supersexy album

Fade in on:

Int. - Offices of BigTex Garage Doors – night

Oscar and Rosa are walking down a darkened hallway toward a lighted alcove when a voice calls out.

Song fades

Voice (OS)

Stop right there!

Oscar and Rosa stop and slowly turn. In the alcove behind them is a picture of a man who looks very much like an older Oscar.

Focus on: darkened hallway.

A figure emerges: a guard (BIGTEX GUARD) holding a gun.

BIGTEX GUARD studies the faces of the two intruders, looks at the picture, and then sheepishly lowers his gun.

BIGTEX GUARD

Jesus Mr. Poehl! You scared me near to death. I thought the two of you was looters for sure!

Oscar

We’re, ah, here to do a special job for my daddy.

BIGTEX GUARD

(Shaking head)

You sure picked a bad time for it, if you don’t mind my saying so sir. This storm is liable to bring the whole place down on our heads.

Oscar

We’ll work fast.

BIGTEX GUARD

Looks at Oscar for a moment, obviously hesitant to say something.

I’ll walk with you to the manufacturing area. . . Your dad made some changes, but you probably already know that.

They continue down the hall to a gray metal door emblazoned with the words “Authorized Personnel Only.” The guard presses numbers on the cipher lock, and the door unlocks. He turns the knob, opens the door, and ushers them inside.

Focus on eyes of Oscar and Rosa, which widen instantly. They look at each other. Focus on Adam’s apple of Oscar as he swallows hard.

BIGTEX GUARD

Ya’ll call if you need anything.

The door SLAMS shut.

POV behind Oscar and Rosa. slowly elevate to show a large manufacturing area, with conveyors and belts ferrying devices to work stations at which sit workers in blue coveralls.

Quick sequence of close ups on faces of workers: all are zombies!

Oscar

(Whispering)

Dad . . . what have you done?

Fade out

A song plays: white zombie’s “el phantasmo and the chicken-run blast” from supersexy

Fade in on:

Int. - Distribution center warehouse – night

Shevosky, the Russians, Arjun, Pedro, Bobby N, and Woody sweep through, blasting away at zombies.

SONG FADES as the last shot is fired by the big Russian and sheets of rain begin to fall.

They all trudge to the vehicles in silence and pile inside. The van fishtails out of the parking lot and down the road, the truck right behind.

Cut to:

ext. – van traveling south on i-45 - night

Inside the van, Shevosky points to a region of glowing light in the midst of the rain.

Lev nods. When the exit ramp comes into view, he roars down and sweeps through the intersection without stopping, agan taking out the stop sign. They roar up to the parking lot of Global Distributing; there are many America Still Works! trucks.

Pedro

Damn. That’s a shit load of zombies.

Yakov

Take two-three gun and carry more ammunition this time!

The vehicles stop, and everybody gets out. Yakov and Grisha carry the big black bags with them.

cut to:

Int. - Global Distributing offices - night

Inside, all is quiet: nobody is around--not even at the guard console. Lev walks over to the console and looks behind it.

Focus on pool of blood and what looks like an ear on the floor and chair.

LEV

Shit!

LEV chambers a shell, as does everybody else.

Woody:

If you like that, you are simply going to love this.

He nods. Everybody follows his gaze.

Focus on: the metal door that separates office spaces from warehouse spaces.

The door is open, hanging from its hinges, with multiple scratches across the surface. Light from the warehouse streams inside.

lev

Shit doubled!

Woody moves next to Lev, his shotgun pointed at the door, as a shadow flickers across the opening. An instant later, two zombies wearing blue jumpsuits with the word “GLOBAL” embroidered on the front burst through, moving quickly toward them.

The Russian and Woody fire. They chamber new shells just as three more zombies burst through; they shoot both and Lev has chambered a shell when a third shot from the side takes it out.

Pedro stands next to Lev, his shotgun smoking.

Pedro.

You’re welcome.

Lev grunts his appreciation and turns back to the door as more zombies come at them, howling. The Nguyens start firing on full automatic, and the pile of zombie bodies grows.

Lev yells at Grisha

Grisha! The miniguns!

Grisha throws down his shotgun and dashes back to the bags. He pulls out two multiple-barreled machine guns and hurries back, belts of ammo trailing behind him. He hands the miniguns to Lev and Yakov, and then retrieves the third for himself.

A song plays: Rob Zombie’s “Meet the creeper,” Hellbelly Deluxe

The Russians begin firing the miniguns. The bullets rip through bone and sinew, tearing the zombies to pieces. The pile grows to the point where the zombies have to climb up to get at them, and they still keep coming. Finally, as the guns are almost out of ammo, the onslaught stops.

Song ends

Arjun

Think we got them all?

Lev

Why don’t you check?

arjun

(Beat)

I’m good.

Shevosky

No. We need to check.

Shevosky walks over to the pile and begins pulling zombies aside with one hand, holding his shotgun in the other hand. Now and then, one moves and he shoots it.

Pan up and focus on a gaping hole in the rooF that the wind has torn away.

Shevosky

No wonder they are loose: the transmitters are gone.

The Russians move to the perimeters, with Lev and Yakov up front while Grisha protects the rear. As they move through the warehouse, a few zombies rush them and are quickly put down. Finally they hear WIND HOWLING and come out of the shelves to a wall, a section of which is missing.

Focus on hole: Outside is the freeway.

Dozens of zombies are bounding over the wall and onto the pavement.

Shevosky

Lev! We can’t let them get away!

Lev points to Woody.

Lev

You drive. We shoot.

The three Russians and Woody sprint back through the warehouse.

Cut to:

EXT. – limousine heading south on i-45 – night

Mentzer is talking to his driver as they head down I-45. They come to Global Distributing, a sea of light in the darkness.

Mentzer

Look at it Jimmy! That’s American business might right there, working in the middle of the biggest fucking hurricane to hit this place in seventy years. God! What a magnificent sight!

Jimmy squints through the driving rain.

Jimmy

Don’t see nobody Mr. Mentzer.

Mentzer

Of course you don’t, Jimmy! It’s pouring buckets out there! Our workers must be inside in this kind of weather.

Mentzer looks at his watch.

Mentzer

We have time. Pull in for a quick look. God! What an opportunity this storm turned out to be!

Fade out

Fade in on:

Ext. - houston Freeway - night

Three television vans hurtle down the freeway.

POV driver of first van, who suddenly sees Figures running across the road

van Driver 1

Jesus Christ!

Van Driver 1 slams on the brakes, causing the second van to slam into the first van, and the third into the second. Van 1 flips and rolls as does Van 2.

Van 3 spins but remains upright. When it stops spinning, it has passed the other two vans and is facing back at them. The engine has stalled.

van Driver 3

Everybody okay back there?

Van Driver 3 looks back at his passengers: Cameraman and Reporter.

Cameraman

What the fuck happened?

van Driver 3

I don’t know. I saw red lights, and then I was on them. I have no idea why they stopped . . .

Reporter

(Gasps)

Wait! What is that?

Through sheets of rain, they see figures run up to the vans and tear open the doors. The people in the vans react, trying to fight the intruders off, and then something red coats the van windows.

reporter

(Beat) Get us the fuck out of here. . . . Now.

van Driver 3

Yeah . . . Good idea.

Van Driver 3 turns the key, and the engine turns over, and over, and over.

cameraman

Pump the pedal!

van Driver 3

It’s fuel-injected, pumping doesn’t . . .

Out of the rain, three zombies emerge.

Focus on faces of zombies as they spot the van and scream.

Focus on the faces of the people in the Van as they spot the zombies and scream.

Focus on foot of van Driver 3 as he turns the key and pushes the pedal to the floor.

The van ROARS to life. Van Driver 3 drops it into reverse, and they PEEL OUT just as the first zombie tries to clamber onto the short hood as the van accelerates backward.

Van Driver 3 STOMPS on the brake and spins the wheel; the van spins about, slinging the zombie to the ground.

Van Driver 3 SLAMS the van into drive and PEELS OUT only to find headlights closing in.

van Driver 3

Mother of mercy! Now what?

The van carrying the Russians and Woody flashes by, with Woody at the wheel.

Slow motion as cameramen whips around and begins recording the scene.

Lev fires a minigun out the passenger window while the other Russians fire out open side doors. The van disappears into the rain, the hammering of the miniguns still heard.

reporter

Whatever this is, it’s a bigger story than a hurricane all right.

Cameraman

Stops filming and puts down camera.

Yeah . . . But what story is it?

Fade out

Fade in on:

Int. - Global Distributing Warehouse - night

Arjun, Pedro, Bobby N, and Shevosky walk through the warehouse, back to the offices.

Shevosky

I left shortly after I realized the extent of Mentzer’s madness. I’ve been waiting for him to surface.

Arjun

I have to admit, using zombies as cheap labor is, frankly, genius. You don’t have to pay them. Just feed them murderers, rapists, and pedophiles, which reduces overcrowding of the prisons. It’s a win-win situation.

Pedro stops next to a twice-shot-in-the-head zombie.

Pedro

Where does American Still Works! Get all these creeps?

Mentzer (VO)

(Speaking loudly)

Terminal patients! The hospitals are loaded with them! They’ll try anything to live a little longer.

Angle on Mentzer, Jimmy, and Hooded Figure

All look up to see Mentzer, Jimmy, and the hooded figure standing in the doorway to the offices. Jimmy is pointing an assault rifle at them.

Mentzer

Guns on the floor, please!

All lower their guns.

Mentzer speaks to the hooded figure.

Collect them!

The hooded figure advances and gets their guns. As he is picking up Arjun’s shotgun, Arjun reaches out, grabs the gun and the hooded figure, and points the gun at the back of the hooded figure’s head.

Arjun

Drop it, or I’ll shoot!

Mentzer

(Snickering and exchanging a grin with Jimmy)

You can’t kill a dead man.

Arjun

What?

Arjun pulls back the hood of the hooded figure.

Focus on face of zombie that is clearly an older Dr. Nevisky.

Arjun drops the gun and shivers in disgust.

Jimmy

(Motioning with gun)

Back up! . . . Now!

Everybody steps back.

Jimmy walks over, kicks the guns out of the way, and then backs up to stand by Mentzer.

Shevosky

(With great sorrow, talking to zombie)

Ivan. You should have been allowed to die my old friend. What has he done to you?

Mentzer

You were wondering where our workers come from. You would be fascinated, Dr. Shevosky, to know what the virus does when you give it to a patient with a terminal disease.

Shevosky

You monster!

Mentzer

(Clicking tongue)

Oh, quite the contrary, doctor.

(Pointing to bodies on floor) They sung my praises! The virus cured these people who were dying, giving them additional years to spend with family and friends.

Mentzer lifts his arms to the heavens.

I cured cancer!

Shevosky

Nonsense! We long suspected the virus might attack cancer cells that threaten the host. But we would never use the virus as a cure, knowing what would happen after the body dies. The virus exists to propagate! It resurrects its host because doing so gives it the best chance of passing to other hosts.

Mentzer

Sure sounds like a cancer cure to me!

Shevosky

How did the families of your “cured” patients react when their loved ones came back to life shortly after dying?

Mentzer

(With look of mock surprise)

Dr. Shevosky, do you assume that we made no advances after you abandoned us? My researchers discovered a way to inhibit the spread of the virus for several days—long enough for us to recover the bodies.

Shevosky

I still call you “monster” for injecting virus into living patients.

Mentzer

(Waving hand in dismissal)

Sticks and stones, doctor. All entrepreneurs have their detractors.

(Appears to think for a moment)

Let me give you an example of another innovation I introduced. Do you realize that America Still Works! cannot meet the growing demand for cheap labor simply by injecting terminal patients and waiting for them to die?

(Looks at Shevosky and others as though expecting a rely)

No? Well, let me assure you that we cannot. Consequently, we have had to be much more aggressive in finding and recruiting workers.

Billy N

What you mean? You kill people?

Mentzer

(Shaking his head)

The fundamental principles of capitalism are seldom grasped by those who come from third-world countries. No, Charlie, I would never dream of just “killing people.”

We recruit from an enemy population that has been stealing American jobs for decades. We capture them and make them work for nothing.

Pedro

Are you talking about illegal aliens?

Mentzer

Yes! Exciting isn’t it? We are recruiting illegals all across the country and putting them to work in a way that doesn’t sap the resources of this great nation! All we ask is that they accept an “inoculation injection” before starting their new jobs. The injection actually contains both the virus and a potent toxin.

Shevosky

Murderer!

Mentzer

(Shaking head)

Where would civilization be if nobody pushed the envelope now and then? We took lemons—in the form of job-stealing illegals—and made lemonade!

Now, doctor Shevosky, I know the whole “injecting healthy people” thing, even if those people are illegals, seems to run contrary to your high Russian ideals, so let me assure you that the toxin we administer to our wetback friends results in a painless death; we are not animals.

Pedro

You bastard! You are an animal!

Mentzer smiles at Pedro

You’ll be glad to know, Pedro, that America Still Works! also takes volunteers. I have a spot waiting for you.

Pedro

(Confused)

How do you know my name?

Billy N

He not. He call you Pedro as racist insult—just like he call me Charlie.

Menzter

Oh, I’m not racist, Charlie: we’ll grab our share of illegal Canucks before we are finished, and then there are all those billions of Chinks.

Shevosky

Monster!

Mentzer

(Turing to face Shevosky and smiling)

Dr. Shevosky, how can I thank you and Dr. Nevisky? You not only invented the virus, but you also discovered the means to control the infected.

Mentzer holds his hand near a small black object that dangles from a lanyard around his neck: an EHF transmitter A small green light indicates that it is operating.

Without you, none of this would have been possible. Isn’t capitalism freaking wonderful?

Dr. Shevosky looks at the zombie Dr. Nevisky. The zombie turns his eyes to Mentzer and pantomimes chewing; when he turns his eyes back to Shevosky, he stops.

Shevosky

I . . .

Shevosky stops talking as Dr. Nevisky again turns to Mentzer and chews, then turns back to Shevosky and stops.

Mentzer

Speechless, Dr. Shevosky? Well, I suppose all has been said that needs to be said.

(Bows slightly)

Gentlemen, I bid you adieu. I trust Dr. Nevisky will entertain you in my absence after I turn off my device.

Mentzer and Jimmy lower their weapons and walk back through the doors. A moment later, Dr. Nevisky screams and bolts through the door in pursuit. Shortly thereafter come screams and snapping of bones.

Shevosky runs to the door to see Dr. Nevisky tearing out the throat of Jimmy, the driver. Nevisky SCREAMS at Shevosky then runs the other way, in pursuit of Mentzer.

Fade out

A song plays: white zombie’s “creature of the wheel” from astrocreep 2000

Fade into:

Ext. - houston freeway - night

The Russians and Woody are still fighting zombies on the rain-slicked freeway. They have downed many, but more keep coming from wind-damaged warehouses, running through the driving rain.

Woody stops the van and grabs a shotgun as the Russians step out to better direct their miniguns on all sides. Woody joins them, firing repeatedly.

Song fades

They crowd in on one side of the van as Grisha continues firing, the zombies clambering over and through the van.

Grisha points his minigun at the van and fires a final burst that punches holes; as the last zombie falls, his gun runs out of ammo, the motor whirring uselessly.

Fade out

Fade into:

A song plays: white zombie’s “Super-charger heaven”

Ext. – I-45 – Night

The Nguyen’s pickup is roaring along a darkened freeway. Winds buffet the truck, rocking it back and forth, and the rain is coming down in torrents. Sitting in the back of the cab with Arjun and Pedro, Shevosky is talking on his phone.

Shevosky

We are heading south, to the next warehouse. . . If you run into Mentzer, shoot first and ask questions later!

Shevosky hangs up.

Arjun looks out the window. Debris is everywhere: the smaller pieces FLYING through the air; here and there are sections of roofing material ripped from buildings alongside the freeway.

Suddenly, the freeway lights go out.

ARJUN

Oh good! I thought this was way too easy up to now.

Billy N

I turn on running lights . . .

LIGHTS SHINE FROM THE TOP OF THE TRUCK.

Bobby N

Something up ahead!

Bobby N slams on the brakes as they close fast on a dark limousine lying on its roof, next to a Van 3 lying on its side. In the bg, a man carrying a camera vaults over the freeway barrier and disappears into the dark. Swarming over the van and the limousine are dozens of zombies.

Several zombies, their mouths smeared with blood poke their heads out of the door and window of the van as the truck pulls closer.

Flashes coming from the interior of the limo indicate somebody is putting up a fight.

Focus on: figure wriggling out of the limo.

Shevosky

Mentzer!

A SCREAM from behind them causes them all to turn. The Dr. Nevisky zombie is standing in the truck bed. He jumps out and begins running toward Mentzer, who has wriggled out of the limo. Mentzer runs to the edge of the freeway, climbs over, and disappears into the darkness. The Nevisky zombie vaults after him.

ANGLE ON: limo and van. The lights of the Nguyens’ truck shows a solid wall of zombies running toward them, SCREAMING as they come.

Arjun

Maybe we should get out of here?

Lights hit them from behind as Woody and the Russians arrive; the three Russians disembark and immediately start firing with their miniguns. Woody emerges with an assault rifle and two shotguns strapped across his back—he starts firing. The rest join them, firing whatever they have.

Arjun

Okay, we stay and fight instead.

Arjun starts shooting his shotgun. In seconds, the zombies are all put down.

Lev

I think that’s all, but we need to check behind the vehicles.

Billy N

I shine light.

He walks over to the truck, reaches inside, and turns on a set of running lights that bathes the freeway. At the far reaches of light, something is moving.

Pedro

What’s that way down there?

Bobby N

I hit with spot.

Bobby N pulls out a spotlight and shines it at the dark area beyond the reach of the running lights; it illuminates zombies walking up the freeway.

Arjun

Good god! There are hundreds!

The zombies SCREAM and begin sprinting forward.

A song plays: white zombie’s “el phantasmo and the chicken run blast-o-rama”

The Nguyen brothers position themselves between the Russians and start firing their AKs. Arjun and Pedro position themselves in a couple of openings and wait, holding their shotguns until the mass of zombies comes into range; as the first ones come even with the limo and van, they begin firing.

A ridge of zombie bodies begins forming in the roadway, but the zombies keep coming, climbing over their fellow undead to get at warm flesh.

Lev’s minigun is the first to run out of ammo, followed by Grisha and then Yakov. Each grabs an assault rifle from the pile at their feet and continues blasting away, but the wave of zombies keeps coming, and coming, and coming.

Lev throws down his empty rifle and picks up one of the tactical shotguns at his feet. He chambers shells, shoots, and chambers again until he is out of shells; then he picks up the second shotgun, chambers a shell, and takes a moment to look at the wave of zombies.

Focus on: zombies continuing to come into range of the spotlight; there appears to be no end to them.

Lev

(Shouting)

There is no shame in shooting yourself if there is no other way!

Woody

(Spits)

Fuck that!

Woody, who is also using a shotgun now, fires, pumps, and fires at a faster pace than before.

Lev, smiles, then yells as he continues firing. The other Russians join him in a war cry as they prepare to fight to the death.

a light comes from behind the zombies, followed by the SOUND OF an ENGINE ROARING.

push IN:

A white cargo van hurtles up behind the zombies, spinning to present the passenger window. Hands emerge from the window, clutching two full black plastic garbage bags.

SLOW MOTION as the bags release hundreds of small black spheres that get picked up by the wind and swept forward.

Focus on zombies: They go from fast to slow.

Little black balls come rolling past the feet of Lev as the van pulls forward slowly and comes to a stop. On its side are the words, “BigTex Garage Doors.” Oscar emerges from the passenger side, Rosa from the driver’s side.

Woody

You made it!

Oscar

(Smiling at Rosa)

Yeah.

Fortunately, Dad’s . . . staff . . . were still working through the hurricane.

(Quickly, as though wanting to change the subject.) We found some unused plastic balls to encase the transmitters; they roll everywhere. Nice, huh?

(Nods at van)

I have more.

The Russians cheer and walk forward to take out the slowed down zombies. They are joined by Woody and the Nguyen brothers, who have taken a real shine to zombie slaying.

The wind slows. Arjun and the others look up.

Arjun

I think the worst is over.

Oscar

Good. The way it was blowing, I was afraid we wouldn’t get here in time to . . .

He finally sees his van, which is a mess.

Oscar

Dudes, what did you do to . . .

Shevosky

(Picking up one of the rolling EHF transmitters.)

You say you have more of these?

Oscar

(Beat) Yeah—in the back of the other van . . . but what happened to my . . .

Shevosky takes out his phone and taps in a number. In the background, we see Lev answer his phone.

Oscar

(Looking at Arjun and Pedro)

Guys, what happened to my van?

Pedro

Been kinda crazy here, man.

Arjun nods in agreement.

Lev, Yakov, Grisha, and Woody come walking up. In the background, sporadic shots indicate the Nguyen brothers mopping up the remaining zombies.

Lev

(Speaking to Shevosky)

We go now.

(Turning to Woody)

You drive and shoot good! You like Mexican food?

Woody

(Perplexed) Yeah. Sure.

Lev

Good place eat in El Paso. We go and continue saving America, da?

WOODY

(Chuckles) Me and a group of Russians will save America?

(Shrugs) Sure. Why not?

Lev turns to Oscar, tosses him the keys to his nearly demolished van and holds out a hand.

Lev

(Motioning with head at Oscar’s beat-up van) Old van kaput.

(Motioning with head at BigTex Garage Doors van.) We take new van instead. You make more little balls, yeah?

Pedro

(Whispering to Arjun)

Talk about balls . . .

Oscar looks at the big Russian for a few moments, sighs, and tosses over the keys.

Lev hands the keys to Woody, who climbs into the driver’s seat of the new van while the Russians pile in with their gear. They gently toss one bag of transmitters out.

Lev climbs into the passenger’s seat, leans out the window, and yells to Shevosky.

Lev

Take care of Papka for me!

Shevosky nods.

Arjun

Wait. Did he say take care of his papa? Who . . .

Shevosky

Dr. Nevisky. (Beat) Lev is his son.

The white van fishtails away.

Shevosky rubs his hands together, picks up the bag of transmitters, and gives it a shake. He looks at Oscar.

We will finish cleaning up here while you make more of these? Da?

Oscar

Looking at his van, the departing BigTex van, the carnage all around, and Shevosky

My vans!

Pull back to reveal a freeway strewn with bodies of zombies, bullet-ridden vehicles, and debris.

Fade out

Fade into:

Int.– Newsroom (KHMX—proudly serving the houston metroplex!)– day

Close on: Morning news anchor Michael

Michael

In the aftermath of Hurricane Claudette, reports continue to come in about deranged cannibals.

In fact, there were even reports that one of KHMX’s new crews captured footage of such a scene, but, apparently, that was not true, as Haylee Johnson reports.

Cut to Haylee, on the scene, standing next a pipe-smoking, smiling man in a suit. They are located on the freeway, from which debris is being removed by distant people in hazmat suits.

Haylee

Yes, Michael. Although there were widespread reports of footage showing some sort of “zombie” attack last night, it has now been confirmed that it was all an act of imagination.

I am joined here by Dr. Glopton of the Department of Homeland Security, who has confirmed that the footage was undeniably fake.

Cut to Dr. Glopton, who smiles and removes his pipe.

DR. Glopton

That’s correct, Haylee! In times of stress, people’s imaginations can run wild. They see Bigfoot, aliens, Elvis . . .

Haylee

Or even zombies?

DR. Glopton

(Chuckling)

Yes. On Halloween, they may even see zombies, Haylee.

(Frowning slightly) Not that I want to make light of the situation. This city was dealt a terrible blow by last night’s storm. A terrible blow!

Haylee

We are fortunate the National Guard was on hand to help with the cleanup, aren’t we?

Dr. Glopton turns slightly to regard a handful of soldiers in the distance.

Dr. Glopton

(Smiling) Very fortunate indeed.

Two quick gunshots are heard, and the camera pans in the direction of the sound.

Haylee (OS)

Goodness! What do you suppose . . .

Dr. Glopton

Glopton pulls the camera back around to focus on himself.

(Smiling)

Vermin of some sort, probably. All sorts of vermin are loose after a big storm.

(He pauses dramatically) Why, I’m surprised we haven’t see werewolves.

Haylee

Werewolves?

Dr. Glopton

(Pointing off screen.) There . . . wolves.

(Beat) Both Dr. Glopton and Haylee laugh at this cheesy homage to Young Frankenstein.

Haylee

Oh Dr. Glopton! You had me there for a moment!

(Looking serious again.) Any last advice for our viewers?

DR. GLOPTON

(Looking into the camera)

Well, Haylee, I can only suggest that if the story sounds too fantastic to be true, you can be sure it is not!

Glopton smiles his biggest smile yet and touches his tie clip.

CLOSE ON: Tie clip, which has a small green light in the middle.

Haylee

Back to you Michael!

Michael

Thanks Haylee.

Speaking of the Department of Homeland Security, that department announced today that all U.S. borders are closed to outgoing traffic, pending a review of border crossing protocol requested by the Mexican government.

The shutdown is expected to be temporary.

Fade out

Fade into:

Int. - apartment, houston. – Day

Arjun is looking at the images of his wife and daughter on the screen in his office.

Arjun

My apartment was little damaged, but with so much carnage to the city, Daman suggested a little R and R might be in order.

Wife

We will be so glad to have you home!

Daughter

Get here soon, Daddy!

Arjun

I am chatting with a ticket agent even as we speak.

A small window opens on the screen, following by the message: “This is Andrew. How may I help you?”

Arjun types: “Is flight 775 to Mumbai still leaving on schedule?”

After a slight pause comes the message, “Yes.”

Arjun types “Thank you.”

Cut to: uNATURALLY WHITE FINGERS SLOWLY TYPing ON A KEYBOARD, IN FRONT OF WHICH APPEARS THE CHAT DIALOGUE WITH ARJUN.

Zoom out just enough to reveal a chalky white neck with a horrific gash in which maggots crawl.

The fingers type, “Have a nice trip.”

A song begins: White zombie’s “blood, milk, and sky”

Continue slowly zooming out

The zombie airline agent is revealed, sitting in a cubicle. As the camera continues to move back, we see more and more cubicles filled with zombies sitting in front of computer screens.

Fade to Black