RANCORIUM By Darren J Seeley

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INT. SERER LABS. HALLWAY - DAY

The sunlight sparkles in from cracked windows.

The hall lights are OFF in an apparent effort to be environmentally friendly.

A corkboard in the middle of the hallway has a flyer announcement regarding such a policy.

The door to Lab Room 11 closes.

The far end of the hallway :

One man stumbles forward.

Curious, he pivots towards the sound of the closing door. His movements and deep moan are practically whispers compared to the growing sound of stampede that follows him.

Spinach-like soup drips out of the man's mouth.

The mob of people knocks him to the floor, along with a few of their own who trip and fall. They storm onward, trampling him down like drugged fans at a out of control rock concert.

There are an estimated thirty of them, more that follow. They stop for nothing.

Those who slip and fall struggle to get back up and rejoin the collective. They are men and women of various sizes and backgrounds.

Among the zombie mob, a gaunt faced man, hard cheekbones, skull like, thinning hair near balding. His eyes are distant, stares through time and space. This is ROYCE (40s).

They all have the same symptoms as Royce: only as the stampede gets closer to Lab Room 11, more legions, cuts and marks of gangrene become more visible on their skin. SERER LABS. ROOM 11 - DAY

The infected mob on the other side scrapes at the door as ROBERT (30's) holds it closed, locking it.

LAURA (30s) pushes a desk towards him, and while it probably won't do much good, it will be an obstacle for the swarm about to enter.

Both Robert and Laura look like they have been through hell and back, neither one of them are as bad off as those in the hallway.

One of them manages to break through part of the door.

Two arms belonging to two different people poke out. Both frantically snatch at anything near them.

> ROBERT Just get it...!

Laura backs into JEFF (30s), who already has a jagged cut in the top of his right shoulder.

Jeff rips off part of his tattered shirt, and wraps the shreds into a makeshift tourniquet.

He gives Laura a look of anger.

Laura brushes past him, and gets to a desk. She opens the drawers, searches...

LAURA Where is it!

ROBERT Phosphocreatine Alcyone! Phosphocreatine Alcyone!

LAURA I'm looking, damn it!

Jeff rams himself into another desk, rips out the drawer too hard. The contents spill out all over the floor.

He drops to his hands and knees, scrambles to look over the loose contents.

Laura finds a small bottle marked "Phosphocreatine Alcyone"

The arms manage to grab Robert by the head, jerk him back. They pull his head forcefully through the door. His neck snaps.

Laura throws the bottle hard down on the floor, it breaks open.

A white gas forms, spreads out quickly through the lab.

The infected crash through the door. Robert's lifeless body slumps to the floor.

Laura rushes to the far end of the lab. Jeff scoops up whatever he can, follows her.

Hands grab his feet, pull him back into the gas cloud. He fights them off, comes forward. He finds one additional bottle of "Phosphocreatine Alcyone".

Jeff looks into Laura's eyes as he's pulled back yet again, but not before he smashes his bottle hard on the floor.

The glass cuts into his hand.

Laura closes her eyes.

Out of the cloud, on all fours:

One of the diseased men lunges forward like a rabid dog, letting a snake's hiss. Right up to her face.

The infected man stops short of biting off Laura's face.

He slowly cocks his head in light curiosity, takes a slow step back, and falls like a rag doll to the floor.

Jeff climbs over him, and stops short of reaching Laura. He smiles at her.

Then his face goes blank. He goes to sleep.

Her eyes open.

SERER LABS. ROOM 11 - LATER

The mist lightly covers up most of the bodies on the floor, including Jeff.

Laura carefully steps over them.

One of them comes to life:

A blood streaked hand lightly grabs her right ankle as she goes by.

Laura takes a short, small breath as that same hand slides away back to the floor.

She dares to look back to Jeff, who gives a light twitch himself.

She glances to the broken door, hurries.

The cloud dissipates; she finds herself stepping in a few streaks of blood and dark green puss.

She reacts to the stink, covering her mouth and nose as she moves ahead.

She makes it to the broken door, is about to get out.

She notices that the exit is blocked by the additional pileup of bodies behind it in the hallway.

JEFF

(horse) We did it.

She cranes her neck back. Jeff remains on the floor, his back to her.

SERER LABS. HALLWAY

Like a worm through soil, Laura pushes her way through the pileup of men and women in front of the lab entrance.

As she emerges, her dirty face gets additional streaks of blood and dark green slime.

She slides down across the floor, takes a moment to gather herself.

The moment of silence is short. Jeff's hand lurches from the body pile; the rest of him follows.

Giving birth a second time, the pile expands outward, making room for Jeff as his bony jaw cries in agony as he frees himself.

But his action isn't of threat or malice.

His arm stretches out in plea for help.

SERER LABS. BREAK ROOM. - LATER

Seated, a deformed Jeff's bloodshot eyes follow every Laura's every movement. He's calm and quiet.

Laura gathers an assortment of chips and cookies from the broken up vending machines. She takes a candy bar, opens it.

The heat in the building has caused the candy's chocolate to melt. She discards it.

Jeff presses against his Adam's apple with his left thumb.

JEFF (raspy voice) Alighieri? That's twenty two miles from here, Laura.

LAURA

I know.

JEFF The rest of Detroit could be infected. Could have spread out. We wouldn't have enough between here and there.

LAURA

We can chance it.

JEFF Wouldn't it be easier to find some here, create a synthetic? Buy us time?

LAURA Look at your hands, Jeff. Even if we had the time, we don't.

JEFF What's that supposed to mean?

She only nods her head slightly, catching a glimpse of his reflection in the broken Plexiglas.

JEFF Don't ignore me. Not now.

LAURA

Even if we could replicate whatever is left here, it's only short term. I don't know how long it will last.

JEFF Should I tell them? Or you?

Laura goes over to a double door entrance to the break room, opens the doors.

HALLWAY

Crammed elbow to elbow in the outside hall: Eighty people, all with the same problem as Jeff, await the news from Laura. Laura can barely look at them.

INSERT SERIES OF SHOTS:

--One of the eighty infected people puts on a lab coat;

--Laura wraps a white linen gauze around Jeff's zombielike head;

-- a blue towel cuts in two with sharp scissors, held by infected hands.

-- white gauze wraps around a diseased zombie arm, up to the wrist, then the hand..

-- Laura cuts open part of the white gauze around Jeff's eyes. His bloodshot eyes stare back at her.

-- rubber gloved hands scoop up a few small bottles of "Phosphocreatine Alcyone", and put them on a lab table.

SERER LABS. ROOM 110 - DAY

Scientists, all covered in lab coats, some in fishnet head coverings filter masks.

A few others are wrapped like mummies with various colors of torn, ripped linen covering arms, fingers, faces.

All of them in the room have access to the "Phosphocreatine Alcyone" that was put on the lab table a short time ago. They are busy, studying under microscopes, taking notes etc.

One of them confers with JEFF, his back to Laura.

She can't make out what either person is saying, but like Jeff, the infected scientist presses down on his neck in order to speak.

The scientist gives Laura a look of doom.

The scientist's face, though partially wrapped, still exposes part of a half- grape skin like color and part of his lower jaw.

The scientist breaks his stare, as he goes back to the research.

LAURA Even if they manage to make a synthetic, it's only temporary. Might not even last an hour.

JEFF If they can make enough, they can make more. Bit here, bit there.

HALLWAY

She takes Jeff aside, out into the hallway. The door to Room 110 remains open.

Some of the infected scientists occasionally glance towards the pair with bitter stares.

LAURA

(low)
This is costing us time.
Wrapping them up, dressing
them. A day ago people were...
They came after us. Or did you
just forget all of that?

JEFF

No. That's not the point. Going to Alighieri will save me, for sure, others. Maybe it will last only an hour, but if it's enough to keep them from reverting- they'll keep working.

LAURA Who's coming with us?

JEFF Seven more people.

LAURA Infected people.

JEFF

That's right.

She shuts the door, escorts Jeff away further down the hall.

LAURA

These people can turn back at any time. We can move faster if it's just you and me.

In the upper corner: a spider walks along its web. HANSON (30s) curiously watches it.

Hanson's face and both hands are badly burned by napalm and chemical, covered up with torn tied up pieces of a blue towel.

Besides Jeff and Laura, he's the only one in the hallway.

JEFF

Chances are there are more infected out there. If there's a group of us, there's less likely chance we'll be attacked.

Laura shakes her head no.

JEFF If we get attacked, maybe a bite from one of the turned changes a normal person into one of them, maybe it will work the same way, only in reverse.

LAURA We don't know if works like that.

Laura glances toward Hanson, who briefly looks back. Hanson then looks back to the spider. He reaches out, the arachnid crawls on his fingers.

> LAURA Do they know about that possibility?

INT. SERER LABS. LOBBY - DAY

Broken glass, tables and chairs among blood, green infection and cut up bodies litter the lobby.

Her half-eaten head a few feet away, the receptionist, remains on the floor next to her chair.

Laura looks down to her, the dead woman's nametag reads LUCY.

One of the "seven" tests his new toy, a fire axe, blood still on the edge.

He has his head bandages decorated with a crude color marker of blue stars. The red stripes are jagged, streaks of dried blood.

STARS (late 30's) also notices the corpse, looks to Laura.

He puts his free hand to his jugular.

STARS It wasn't me.

LAURA It's fine. Might not be the same axe.

Stars offers it to her.

STARS

Here.

Laura slowly reaches out to take it.

Jeff approaches with six other infected up people, but one of the six, Royce, wears no gauze bandages.

> ROYCE Take it from him if it makes you feel better.

Steps closer to Laura.

ROYCE

I understand you thought about leaving us behind.

Stars brings the axe closer to him, inspects the craftsmanship of the oak handle. What a prize.

Laura's eyes glance back to the blood on the axe blade.

ROYCE Hey I'm talking to you...

JEFF That's enough, Royce. (to Laura) Here's our entourage.

The other five:

ΡО

A woman in her late 20's. She has the letters PO drawn in black marker over her right gauze covered cheek. C rack and long raven hair. The virus effects deforms her beauty.

VICTOR

Detroit Vipers tee shirt, blue jeans. White hair, white goatee. (50s)

STEVE

40-something Big Man at 6'4 and 220 pounds. Cross tattoo on his bare chest, covered only by a denim jacket that reads BIKERS 4 JESUS.

There seems to be light goofing between him and Victor. They clearly know each other.

ANDREA

A 30 something woman about 6'0. Her right wrist is severed at the hand.

And Hanson, who has made himself a crude white peace flag, attached to a broken mop handle.

On closer inspection, the surrender flag has a few random spots of dried blood on one side.

Royce steps up once more, closer.

Presses his neck.

ROYCE Before I step foot outside of this place, and you know who's who, let's get a few things out of the way right now.

LAURA You have to understand. It's not that I don't trust you, any of you, it's just that-

ROYCE We are on the same side here, aren't we?.

LAURA It's not like that. Up until a few hours agoROYCE Hours ago. How about yesterday?

STARS Hey, she don't mean anything by it -

ROYCE Hell you say. (back on Laura) You want to be in charge here, little lady? Fine. I got no problem with that.

He takes another step forward, more angry with each word. His crooked teeth spits out drops of salvia.

ROYCE Yeah, we did this. We all did it. Some remember, some don't. I don't. Not that I want to.

JEFF Come on, Royce. Time to go.

ROYCE Yeah. Time to go. (nods to Jeff) Just keep your "girlfriend" away from me.

EXT. SERER LABS. PARKING LOT - DAY

The parking lot is full of cars with bodies of dead people and birds around them. A few of the cars have been smashed and trashed.

Right in front of the building:

A yellow van, streaked with blood and grime. Back boors busted out, two back tires flat. The windshield a spiderweb maze.

Jeff glances briefly at the dismembered, torn up body close to the van. Laura also gives the body a good once over. PO (presses her neck) Friend?

LAURA

Sister.

On one of the cars, Hanson pulls a dismembered zombie corpse off the hood, leaving a streak of blood and dark green goo.

Hanson caresses the hood. Even though the car is a junk heap, he treats it like a long lost friend.

Behind him, Victor starts to put his fingers to his throat, but changes his mind. Instead of speaking, he simply watches Hanson go through the ritual.

Hanson props his flag on the smeared car roof, opens the passenger side door, and creeps inside the car.

I/E. HANSON'S CAR.

He checks the visor, and cautiously takes a small picture from it.

He is careful with it, acting like it is something so delicate that even a small smudge would destroy it.

It is a picture of a woman smiling back at him. She's average mid-thirties.

He stares into her eyes for a few moments, then puts her picture into his breast pocket.

PARKING LOT

Victor's gaze shifts to:

Andrea, who hits another car on the trunk, not too far from them.

With another pounding with her good hand, she breaks open the trunk of the other car, which is in better shape than Hanson's car, not by much.

She fishes around.

She finds a tool kit. She frantically opens it with her good hand, dumping the contents. Screws, nuts. One big screwdriver. She takes a moment, then something else in the trunk gets her attention. Jumper cables. Victor comes up behind her. Shakes his head. Puts his fingers to his throat. VICTOR Good luck finding something to jump around here. He gives her a light smile. She pays him no attention. STEVE Hurry it up, people. We have to go. STEVE They had all this time to do this. STARS Did they? STEVE Could have at least checked the cars. Got to be at least one in the lot that runs. STARS Some people are ready. Some not. Puzzled. STARS Yo, Jeff! JEFF What? STARS Been meaning to ask. What's with the birds?

JEFF

Not sure.

A few car isles over:

Royce lightly smiles when he walks up to a slightly rusted Cadillac, parked near a sedan with inverted bumper stickers all over the windows.

Other than the bit of cancer on the right passenger side door, and a dead, bloody bird on the roof, the Cadillac is unscathed.

He casually reaches into his pants pocket.

EXT. SERER LABS. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

A car's engine ROARS, a lion awakened from slumber. It gets the attention of the other six members of the party.

Seated in the car, Royce looks over the gas gauge. Half a tank. No emergency lights, nothing wrong with the car. Static on the radio.

Po walks up next to the car.

PO This yours?

ROYCE No, it's Jimmy's. He gave me the keys a little while ago.

Po glances back to the building, then to everyone else, who are heading in this direction. Andrea has her jumper cables hanging around her neck.

Royce reaches over, curiously takes an unmarked CD, puts it in.

Royce cranks it.

As the other five approach, Steve glances at the car with the inverted bumper stickers. He breaks off from the group and inspects it.

ANDREA

Who's this?

ROYCE

Strauss.

Andrea ties part of the cable around her neck. Part of the cable is already cut, wires poke out, press into her neck.

As she does this, she no longer has to press her fingers to her neck to speak clearly.

The two clamps on this end dangle over her chest like an industrial necklace.

The other part of the cables Andrea ties up like a snake around her bad arm. Two metal claws hang down tentacles as they lightly swing in the wind.

ANDREA

Who?

STARS It's classical.

Notices her bizarre attire.

STARS

That's interesting.

His gaze shifts to Victor; Victor puts a strip of reflective silver gauze tape over his neck and a small screwdriver.

VICTOR (deep and raspy) Testing One - Two - Three.

He rips off another bit of tape, wraps it completely over his neck. Po glances to Victor, but then leans in closer to Royce.

> PO We can't all fit in this.

ROYCE We'll improvise.

Victor does it again, repeats his words, which are now more clear. Stars motions for what he has.

Victor tosses him the tape.

Stars, still able to hold his prized axe with one hand, catches the tape effortlessly with the free hand.

VICTOR Share in her genius.

EXT. SERER LABS. PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

The music no longer plays. Everyone but Stars and Hanson is in the Cadillac.

The six inside of the car all have a somber look as they leave the parking lot of Serer Labs.

Seated in the ripped open trunk, axe by his side, Stars refuses to glance around at the carnage they leave behind.

Following them on foot, the nomadic Hanson, who carries a crowbar with a torn white cloth tied around it, a flag of truce.

I/E. CADILLIAC - DAY

Shop windows busted out, bodies twisted, broken, burned.

The Cadillac cautiously drives down the street, avoiding random bodies, both dismembered and whole.

Turned over, half burned cars greet them with the initials B M K spray painted red and white S O S on random others.

ANDREA Royce, put the Strauss back in. Royce glances to her from the rear view mirror. Royce nods to Po, seated next to him in the center. She reluctantly presses his neck.

> ROYCE Why? It won't take us long to get to Alighieri.

> > ANDREA

Either that or we talk about what we seen back there.

ROYCE

Rather not.

Po removes her fingers from his neck.

ANDREA Someone here has to say something.

Jeff wraps gauze tape over his throat, several layers.

Po reaches out again to Royce, who waves her off.

ANDREA

We didn't do any of this!

Nobody challenges her, but no one confirms it either. The only response she gets is Jeff slowly tearing off tape.

> ANDREA We don't even know how it all started.

LAURA Nobody knows.

ANDREA "Nobody knows". Somebody knows. Somebody should know something.

LAURA

Yes. Just not us.

Victor closes his eyes tight. Whispers a quick prayer.

ROYCE (deep rasp) What the hell?

In the road ahead of them: a barricade of barbed wire, held up between two defunct DON'T WALK street signs.

Between the signs and the buildings rest a smashed up truck on one side, a demolished van on the other.

Victor opens his eyes.

Stars, still in the open trunk, steadies himself, takes a look.

Stars taps on the Cadillac lightly with his axe. Royce slows down even more.

With his axe in one hand, Stars hops out of the trunk, investigates.

Jeff gets out of the car and follows.

LAURA

Hey, wait...

Royce stops the Cadillac entirely.

Shifts it into park. Nobody says a word.

In the street of death, Stars and Jeff observe that in addition to the wall of barbed wire, rows of spikes line up to the right side of the street.

To the left:

the street is clear up to the next intersection, a hundred plus bodies of the dead, stacked up on each other like sandbags.

In the Cadillac, Po bites down on red licorice as she looks around.

Victor glances up to the building apartments above the trashed out stores.

No signs of life, save for one open window.

Victor's eyes follow down to the pavement, where a huge splash of dried blood marks a point of impact.

The body isn't there.

ANDREA You sure you guys didn't come this way before, right?

LAURA

Very.

Victor steps out of the Cadillac, casually walks over to Stars and Jeff.

VICTOR We should go back. Find another way around.

Then he sees the pile of bodies from afar.

VICTOR Has to be another way.

JEFF There isn't any. Not by car.

VICTOR It's been what, almost fifteen miles? Not much farther to go, even if we keep driving slow.

A woman's scream echoes through the streets.

The three men look around, focus back to the wall of the dead on the left.

In the same direction of the Woman's cry:

A shriek of several voices, belonging to an unholy echo of several unseen zombies.

A shotgun blast echoes. Automatic gunfire follows in a cadence of sound.

Stars holds his axe in a defensive position, ready to go. Royce pulls the Cadillac up a few notches to see the action.

Steve gets out of the Cadillac, armed with a tire iron. Po and Andrea follow.

Everyone waits, watches...

The gunfire ceases.

The screams continue, the echo bounces around in the streets.

Stars tightens his grip on the axe.

A WOMAN (20s) frantically climbs over the barricade of the damned, she glimpses towards the Cadillac.

She spills to the pavement, bangs her right knee in the process. Scrambles up and sprints with a new limp.

A MAN (20's) - with a SAWED OFF SHOTGUN, comes over the wall of the dead.

The wall comes alive, half of the bodies thrust up, spill out and cover him.

Prune skinned hands grab the man, hold him down. Something beneath him stabs him in several places head to toe.

The Woman gets closer, her panic increases at the sight of the motley crew in the street a short distance from her.

She slows down, darts towards one of the buildings.

A dark figure jumps out from one of the busted up store windows.

This zombie is at a far worse stage than seen yet: dark blue prune skin, shirtless.

The arms and legs stretched forward like a human tartantula. Double-jointed rag doll like limbs are not the only differences.

The chest briefly opens up like a bird's talon. The rib cage is a mutation itself that pops outward, an open vice.

The zombie-thing pounces on her, a tiger on prey.

Jeff and Stars rush up to the nasty thing and the woman.

The monster and the woman wrestle, roll once over. The prune skin zombie grabs her by the head and pulls her up to tear out her neck with his jagged teeth.

Jeff!

Stars throws him the axe; Jeff catches it. Swings.

The Zombie eyeless face glances up once before the edge of the edge smacks him in the jaw. The blow knocks him off the woman.

Jeff shuffles his hold on the axe, turns it around so the blade faces forward.

The scared woman gets up, runs into Stars, pushes him away..

The street becomes alive, two dozen or so of the prune zombie things, some on two feet. Others on all fours..

Royce backs up the Cadillac the moment he sees this event. He turns the Cadillac around.

In reverse, he speeds down the street, catches up to the fleeing woman.

She catches a glimpse of Royce, backs away.

LAURA

(shouts to the Woman) You! In the trunk!

Po grabs the screaming woman from behind, roughly dumps her into the open trunk.

The car roars, muscles forward as Royce shifts gears.

The Zombie who was knocked around by Jeff stands up and spits out an unholy hiss.

Jeff charges, pushes the monster backward with the axe handle, and forces the thing to trip.

Impaling it on a store front shard of glass. Out of the chest, around the new wound: blood, dark puss and...maggot like parasites.

Thousands of them.

The thing's talon like rib cage opens up and lets out an unholy moan.

Jeff takes a few moments, staring down at the sight. Stars yanks his arm.

STARS

Let's go...

Dismembered bodies that formed the wall get to their feet.

STARS

Come on!

With the rest of the Prune Zombies right behind them, they run.

Half of the bodies of the broken wall also come to life in a blood frenzy; a dozen just became doubled.

CADILLAC:

Royce comes back to the intersection. He and Laura witness various multitudes of prune skinned zombies pouring out from the left side alleyways onto the street.

Royce makes a choice: his foot slams on the metal, and the Cadillac zooms right for the part of the street where the spikes await.

STREET:

Jeff and Stars join Victor, Steve, Po, and Andrea.

They all observe the Cadillac swerve away from the ground spikes, but not getting clear of them all; all tires POP and shred away.

The Cadillac skids on bare rims, sparks shoot up from friction. The momentum carries the rows of ground spike into a madman's collection.

When the Cadillac comes to a stop at a full 360, Royce frowns as he faces his new friends heading towards him, and the horde that follows them.

He attempts to open the driver's side door.

Jammed.

In a fit of rage, he shifts himself in the seat, and kicks. The door clunkers off the hinges.

Royce casually steps out into the road among the spikes surrounding the tireless Cadillac.

Briefly looks to the door next to him.

He steps down between spikes, rips one spike out, and STICKS IT IN HIS NECK.

Laura stumbles out, amazed at the new sight for a moment. She helps the woman out of the open trunk. The rest of the group catches up to them...

Royce rolls up a string of spiked wire around his right wrist.

ROYCE You fellas better hustle on. I'll be right behind you.

VICTOR You can't hold them all off by yourself.

ROYCE

Life sucks.

Royce steps onto the hood of the Cadillac...then on the roof.

Victor hesitates, he joins the others in a mad dash around additional road spikes and into a narrow, nearby alley.

Royce's muscles constrict, as he lifts up part of the spiked wire from the ground.

With an unholy yell, he turns his entire body.

Spiked wire acts like a massive whip, IMPALING five of the eyeless dark prune zombies, all in the side of the head.

Royce runs to his right, dragging the spiked wire behind him.

The five that were caught by the attack stumble forward, and fall in front of four other zombies, causing a grotesque domino effect.

The spikes latches onto other wires of spikes on the street.

INT. CORTWELL'S FLOWERS - CONTINUOUS

What was the last standing full storefront window joins the rest of the block in a symphony of glass shards as Royce smashes through and into the store.

Flowers and plants of all colors and kinds surround him. He runs over red roses already scattered all over the floor with the glass.

Halfway in, the wire of spikes TIGHTEN, and Royce strains to continue on. Finally, he wins the tug of war.

He realizes that the spiked wire is lighter. He pulls it closer, reels it in. He finds it is like fish on a hook. Literally.

Streaks of blood, body parts, skin.

EXT. STREET - SUNDOWN

The silent, busted up Cadillac remains still,

Fifty something mutilated, dismembered zombies lay in the street alongside older carnage and destruction.

Rose pedals soak in puddles of blood.

Hanson surveys the destruction, follows the trail of carnage.

ALLEY

A severed zombie hand impaled with a jagged edge of a broken metal jumper jaw, rests upside down on the right side of a building...

Spiked wire connecting backs of heads, shoulders, legs of random immobile prune zombies.

The dumpster showered with both dried and fresh blood, and a severed zombie left arm, axe blade planted in the plastic lid and zombie skull.

Maggots all around.

A pair of mangled, torn jumper cables.

HANSON'S HAND...closes the back door of the Greek restaurant.

INT. ARCADIA GREEK RESTAURANT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

A still working cracked flashlight sits upright on a metal table among streaks of blood, pots, cutting utensils etc.

The light illuminates the room with reflections bouncing off the various sources of metal.

The mystery woman, lies dead on the floor. Next to her, a mutated zombie, hacked up.

Hanson looks around:

Everyone but Laura, Jeff and Royce are present.

Victor sticks out his boot, carefully turns the head of the lifeless zombie to another side.

VICTOR Just in time, brother.

Hanson steps forward, Po hands him a butcher knife. He studies it, sees his own reflection.

VICTOR Give us a hand?

ARCADIA GREEK RESTAURANT. DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Laura and Royce, seated alone, apart from each other, both with different thoughts.

Outside of partially smashed, boarded up window. The streets are empty of life, full of death.

Led by Jeff, the rest of the bunch emerges somberly from the kitchen. Royce barely glances in their direction, focusing more on his crude spiked glove and wristband. Jeff sits down in front of Laura. She looks into his bloodshot eyes. JEFF (to everyone) We keep going. There's still a chance. We're not that far from Alighieri. ROYCE Right. That's most likely ground zero right there. STARS Most likely. ROYCE And you all still want to go there? STARS I do. Come on, you were good out there. Mad dog off a leash. ROYCE You miss the point. Yesterday I took my kid to school, kissed my wife, walked my dog. STARS And maybe one of those things ate your kid. Turned us, we ate ROYCE You all can go to hell. STEVE Hey! JEFF Everyone knock it off. Be cool.

Victor and Hanson walk in the diner.

VICTOR Hanson's here. And we're ready.

ANDREA You actually cut that thing up?

VICTOR Got to know what we're dealing with here.

JEFF (to Laura) A moment of your time?

Laura nods, she moves to get up, but Stars backs her off.

STARS We'll be in the back.

ANDREA Need a couple more knives.

Her one liner is met by silent glances from Royce and Nelson; who don't find the joke funny.

Royce shrugs, leaves his booth.

They leave Laura and Jeff alone...once Jeff is sure they have the privacy...

JEFF When we leave, I want you near the center of the group.

LAURA They go for the un-infected.

JEFF

So far.

LAURA

"So far"

JEFF Do you want to go back?

LAURA

Royce is right. The fact that Alighieri isn't that far from here, and they supposedly have what we're looking for..

JEFF

Supposedly?

LAURA

I don't think it would shocking in the least if we got to where we want to go and someone else took the cure for themselves. Hides it, destroys it.

JEFF

Then we'll find it. Find what we can.

LAURA

We already have some of it. It's not the best, but it's enough to reverse the virus. We don't have to hunt for that.

JEFF

I understand.

LAURA

I think Royce could be right about signs of remission.

JEFF

Then you should stop trusting me, too, right?

LAURA

I didn't say that. But if excessive violence, anger, rage-If that's a trigger-

JEFF

All the more reason to go on. We get the stuff, we get better. There are other survivors out there. We can still save them too. LAURA I'm just saying, why wait for one of us to turn into one of those eyeless-

JEFF It's not going to happen.

LAURA How can you be sure?

JEFF Weren't you? Between you and me, I think there's few in our little group that would rather do their own thing.

LAURA All due respect, they look to you more than me.

INT. ARCADIA GREEK RESTAURANT. KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

Everyone gathers around the body of the human crab like monster, sprawled out on a metal table. The prune zombie is ready for autopsy.

Victor cuts the skin with the edge of a machete. The dead thing reacts in reflex.

Hordes of maggots and worms spew out of the hole, the talon ribs closes back up like a vice. Instead of red blood, a pea colored soup spits out.

Steve makes the sign of the cross; Po averts her eyes.

Laura puts on rubber gloves.

LAURA It's alright. We should be safe from the infection.

ANDREA This is new. LAURA

No, an advanced strain, a mutation maybe, but not a new strain.

STARS Just the same, it springs another leak-

LAURA We all been out there, we would have already been exposed.

Victor reacts first, takes a clear cake lid, and closes off the escape of the maggots and mutant zombie blood.

VICTOR

Parasites.

LAURA Not the cause. But a part of the puzzle. Look-

She reaches to the prune zombie head.

LAURA

No eyes. No teeth.

She lifts up the arm, bends it back and forward carefully.

LAURA

Multiple joints, back, forward. The arms and legs are broken. The prune skin, the bodies have been decomposing. This body has been dead for at least a year.

She eyes Royce.

LAURA Hold it down for me. Victor-? Cut here, and over here. Carefully.

Victor makes more cuts. More green junk, a few worms.

LAURA We aren't looking at the dead coming to life... She reaches down, pulls.

Out of the body the talon mouth emerges, the rest of it revealing to be a lobster like creature without the pinchers..but with five slender flexible arms.

White and green mucus drip down the thing's body.

LAURA Something alive using the dead as a shell. Like a snail.

STEVE Is it still alive?

LAURA

No.

ANDREA And you know this how?

Laura locks eyes with her for a moment.

Victor hacks into the thing, the machete lodges deep in the creature's body. With no further reaction from the beast, Victor holds it like a hunter's trophy.

ANDREA

Does this cure work on that?

LAURA

Nobody here has the parasite or anything like it, but it can't be random chance.

ROYCE

I think where Andrea's getting at is this a before or after? Were we infected by something like this? Or will we become something like that, the cure only slowing down the process?

LAURA

Doesn't work like that. If it was the body itself, that's one thing. Not one of you is going to change into a crab like starfish. STEVE One of those things isn't in me.

ROYCE

How would we know, until it's too late? Maybe that's just stage one.

STEVE Nothing like <u>that</u> is in me. Or anyone of us.

The thought breaks, as a loud RINGING PHONE echoes out from the nearby one room office.

ARCADIA GREEK RESTAURANT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A single machete on a scattered desk.

More unanswered rings.

Stars and Jeff enter the office.

Takes a moment...Jeff picks up the phone. Listens.

STARS

Anybody?

Jeff shakes his head.

JEFF

Nobody.

STARS

Nobody?

Jeff stares right back, then looks away, looks to the plaque on the wall, an award for the owner and the restaurant.

STARS Least it's ringing. EXT. ARCADIA GREEK RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The restaurant is empty once again. Some short distance away from the door, Royce's chain of spike wire trails behind the group.

Royce follows a few steps behind them, occasionally looks around across the street. There is no sign of additional survivors or eyeless prune skin zombies.

As promised, Laura travels with the group, near the center of the Wild Bunch. She's flanked by Jeff and Steve, Po in back of her,

Stars, who carries a rolled up tablecloth with something in it tied to a busted broom handle like a hobo's goodsjust ahead of her.

A few paces ahead of Victor, Andrea with new tools: an entire half set of knives, prongs, machetes, anything she can possibly carry.

On point: Hanson and his white flag.

Stars walks a little faster, taps Hanson on the shoulder.

Hanson glances back to Stars for a moment. Stars has his right hand out, holds out a small assortment of spikes.

STARS Got these off Royce. Sure you don't want one?

Hanson shakes his head no.

STARS

Okay, but I'll offer again later on if we get jammed up again with another delay.

VICTOR It's alright, man. Leave him be.

STARS

Maybe he seen someone, something. Maybe I want him to open up.

VICTOR

All the same, don't need to force it on him.

STARS

I'm offering.

VICTOR Why don't you offer me one?

STARS

We got drivers taped up tight to our necks. That's different.

VICTOR

Is it? When we get there, get cured, having a piece of metal taped to the neck is one thing. Having a homemade spike trachea is something else.

STARS

We're out of drivers, tape. I just want to know if he seen something we didn't.

VICTOR

Course he did.

STARS That's what I want to know.

VICTOR

Why?

ANDREA You two, knock it off.

STARS

Don't you want to know?

ANDREA

If he wants to talk about it, he'll talk about it later.

STARS

Well then he can talk about something else.
STEVE

Those things are blind, they'll use smell, sound. More we raise our voice, more we announce where we are.

STARS

They weren't after us. They were after that one person we found. Nobody else.

ANDREA

They'd go after Laura too.

STARS

Would they? She was exposed to the Phospho stuff whatever it's called, she's been around us, contaminated blood, she hasn't even gotten a skin itch.

ANDREA

All just the same, maybe it's better idea for those discussions to wait until we're all good to go.

STARS

How many of them did we fight? Estimated?

ANDREA I don't know. Fifty. Sixty. Somewhere around there.

STARS

There should be more, right? Where are they? Not on this street.

STEVE

That's an interesting point. Why question it, and be glad that they're not?

PO And maybe there's the chance that we haven't woke up that extra fifty yet.

ANDREA

See? That's what I'm talking about. That's exactly what I mean.

STARS

Well, if we don't talk, how are any survivors going to hear us?

ANDREA

True, but if we find some on the way, what are they going to do? Spill on out, say hello?

STARS

At least we can save someone this time.

VICTOR

Hey. We make to the place, we'll do just that.

STARS

Bust a few more heads. You both would be down with that.

VICTOR

Got that right.

STEVE

Not me.

VICTOR

What do you mean, not you? You mean all that faith stuff of yours?

STEVE Self defense is one thing; revenge is another.

Hanson glances back to Victor for a second, as if to protest, but says nothing. His gaze returns to the street ahead.

Nobody notices the brief stare but Stars.

STARS

Well, tell you what. I'll keep smiling. After a while I'll start to hum and sing. I'll crack some jokes. And any of you guys can join in, talk about something, tell me to shut up. Call me stupid, anything you want. But between here and there, somebody is gonna engage me in some conversation, so help me God.

VICTOR

All just the same, if a fella don't want to jam a spike into his neck, he don't have to. Especially if he's not infected.

STARS

Well, he's with us now, ain't he? And if he's not infected, all the more reason for him to open up, am I right?

Taps Hanson on the shoulder.

STARS C'mon, friend, say something.

LAURA

Cut it out.

STARS

I'm just saying-

Hanson takes out a harmonica, and while holding the white flag, strains to blow a few bars. Not too bad overall. The music echoes off, carries.

STARS

So now you're social.

Some of the group have a mild laugh out of it.

STARS Comedian slash harmonica player in our midst.

EXT. MONROE AVENUE - NIGHT

A short time later, the heroes have strolled a good two miles down the street.

The group crosses over into

GREEK TOWN, where several buildings on both sides of the street have storefronts and other businesses that have passing resemblances to Greek architecture, mythology, historical landmarks etc.

Farther down the street a CASINO can be seen.

Aside from a small handful of street lamps, and still smoking cars and scattered, burned up dead bodies of man and random doves.

Hanson has put away his harmonica; Stars has kept his promise.

STARS

Jessie Welsh, she wasn't the prom queen, she was the second runner up. But she was my queen, my girl, a treasure on the eyes. Long legs, she was a great swimmer. That's how we started dating, my high school treasure. Her family didn't approve of me much, account of my father doing time for armed robbery. I wasn't a saint either, been in a few things. Some things I got caught with, some not. Bad seed, they called me. Bad seed and bad news. Never mind that I got my act together, got clean, went to church, got Jesus, things like that.

STEVE

What Church? Denomination?

STARS

Saint Paul. It's a Lutheran church, about fifteen minutes from here. Towards North Side. Anyway Don't even bum a smoke anymore, Still, Never was clean enough for 'em. Jessie's family.

JEFF We are being watched.

STARS Guys who tried to buzz us up awhile ago?

JEFF

Most likely.

STARS

Let 'em watch. Anyway, back to my sordid past, more interesting. They tried to break us up three times straight, if it wasn't for her old man working the shop, they would have packed up and left for Pittsburgh where they have some relatives.

Shadows move on the other side of the street. Human or otherwise, it isn't clear.

STARS They figured, with her getting accepted into State, the distance and time apart would do the work for them. So they waited, and they waited.

PO (off) Three o' clock. LAURA How long they been with us?

JEFF Since we left Brick town, stepped into the Greek.

LAURA See something?

JEFF Movement. Out there.

Laura looks to where Jeff and Po nod to; she doesn't see a soul. The shadows are gone for the moment.

Stars glances, shrugs, and continues his story.

STARS

It worked, alright. But not the way they thought. Not the way they wanted. She fooled around on me, frat guy she replaced me with was an asshole. Knocked her up, she dropped out, miscarried. He moved on to his next girlfriend.

VICTOR

Happened to her?

STARS

Don't know. More of the same cycle, I guess. Anyway, she didn't talk to me for five years, with the exception of the occasional Happy Easter or something like that, or bumping into each other in the supermarket and not knowing what to say. Five years. Then that sixth year, Happy Easter I bump into her in the store. I knew what to say then, We forgave each other, talked more. We got engaged three months ago. Her parents still hate me.

STARS (cont.) (pause) Okay Joker (meaning Hanson) How about you? Ready to share yet, or are you into taking requests? Hanson ignores him. STARS Alright. Suit yourself. Let's talk about something else. VICTOR Like what? STARS The Lions. VICTOR The Tigers. STARS Not into baseball. VICTOR Okay, does it have to be the Lions? STARS No. VICTOR Okay. I'll pick the subject. I'll talk for awhile. Alright? STARS Be my guest (brief glance back) Not like anyone's going to stop you anyway. Most of the group ignore the challenge. Most eyes watch

for signs of movement around them as they march on.

Only Jeff gives Stars a silent glance of disapproval. Jeff's eyes then motion to the other side of the street, upward. Back on Stars.

Everyone keeps moving forward. One big family.

VICTOR Barricades, barbed wire and detour signs. And we're headed to ground zero. Aren't we bright as bulbs.

STARS

Come on, why talk about that?

VICTOR

You said, any subject. Figure if we're going to risk talking, might as well be a topic regarding our situation. Besides, I just want to speculate, it isn't gospel. Just thinking aloud, nothing more.

STARS Not much else to say about it.

VICTOR I think there is.

ROYCE

(far back) I'll hear him out.

VICTOR

Again, it's probably nothing. But here it is: to me, how did a group of survivors put up all that stuff?

STARS

They did it before it got out of control, most of it was to stop people coming this way by car.

ANDREA Vic, Y'all was better off with the Book, quoting verse.

STEVE He's not the only one. VICTOR Right. I'm just more Catholic. You all probably think I'm full of it.

STEVE Oh, I think there may be something to it.

VICTOR Only speculating.

STEVE Speculating...

VICTOR Just saying, you know.

ANDREA

You both can knock it off. Talk about something else.

STARS How about you talking about something?

ANDREA

Alright. Who would win in a fight: Lady Gaga or Nelly Furtado?

VICTOR That a trick question?

STEVE

Must be.

STARS You mean who's hotter, right?

VICTOR

I don't know. I'll take the latter. My son, he liked the Lady Go-Go-

STARS

Gaga.

Whoever.

STEVE On the advice of counsel, I refuse the answer the question.

Stars glances over to him.

STARS • Who do think is hot?

Come on. Who do think is hot?

STEVE I dig the blondes from Fox News.

VICTOR

My son, he's more into the current pop music scene than me. I'm more into country and bluegrass.

ANDREA

I asked who would win in a fight, not who's more attractive.

ROYCE It is a trick question.

STARS You want to chime in Royce?

ROYCE I'll take both.

STARS Who asked you anyway.

ROYCE One gets even days, other odd.

STARS You're odd. Okay, who wins in a arm wrestling contest? Earthworm Jim or Q- bert?

VICTOR That's easy. Earthworm Jim. Q-Bert's got no arms. This time, small figures appear in the distance. Human or walking corpse, it isn't easy to tell. They walk among fire and lots of smoke.

JEFF

Whoever they are, they're getting closer. We still got some tape or gauze left?

STEVE

A little.

JEFF Give it to Royce.

ROYCE

You think I'm putting all that on and around my head, you're crazy. I don't hide who I am.

LAURA

You are the one of us who stands out.

ROYCE Look who's flapping. (to Hanson) Where's the harp?

LAURA

Maybe we should call out to them.

ROYCE

Why?

LAURA What can it hurt?

Hanson steps to the side, and waves his white flag like a patriotic Fourth Of July.

PO Here's a better question. Why haven't they called out to us?

LAURA (loud) Hey! Can you hear me? Don't be afraid! Hanson lowers his flag. Jeff stops the group from moving forward.

ACROSS THE STREET

Three figures appear like dark shadows behind smoke, fire and burned out rubble. Small dancing lights appear around their midsections.

A fourth figure appears, same as the other four. This one cocks his head, as if cranking his neck.

Then there were six. When they casually approached, they become EIGHT. They all wear the same black and green camouflage suits and combat boots.

All eight carry FLAMETHROWERS. They aim them forward.

The only thing that separates them from one another is the masks.

The one in the center has a GAS MASK; all the others have animal themed Halloween masks: PIG, GOAT, RAM, BULL, WOLF, TIGER, and ANTELOPE.

ANDREA

What the hell?

Jeff splits off from the group, Hanson is about to follow him, but Stars waves him off, and takes his place behind Jeff.

> STEVE (low) I don't like this.

VICTOR (low) Be cool, brother.

Hanson steps back, puts his peace flag beside him, leans on the side of the building. Watches.

Jeff and Stars stand in the middle of the street and stop as The Eight Flamethrowers form a semi circle around them.

> GAS MASK (calm) Where are you going?

JEFF Couple of blocks in that direction.

GAS MASK Nothing down there. Nothing and nobody.

JEFF

Alighieri.

GAS MASK The science research facility?

JEFF

That's right. I don't expect anyone to be there, but someone might be. In any case, that facility may have a cure for the virus.

GAS MASK Cure? It isn't a cure. What do you think started.. Are you all infected?

JEFF

No.

Glances at the flamethrowers.

JEFF There is a cure. We've all had exposure to a small dose of it, over at Alighieri's subsidiary branch.

PIG

Serer?

JEFF

That's right. There's also... Hey, do you want to lower those things, aim them somewhere else?

PIG

What if I don't want to?

Stars waves a little, getting Pig's attention.

STARS

We got people at Serer. Right now. They are replicating the formula, just enough to keep a temporary cure cycling. All we want is for you guys to let us pass. If you guys want to help, that's okay too. But all this...

Motions to the flamethrowers.

STARS That's not needed.

JEFF We don't want any trouble.

GAS MASK You aren't trouble yet.

JEFF (motions to Stars) Show them.

GAS MASK Show us what?

Stars takes off the hobo stick carefully, opens up the tablecloth. The lobster like monster within.

JEFF What can you tell us about that?

GAS MASK They hate the smell of smoke. Roast them up just the same. What do you think?

JEFF We aren't them.

PIG Bitch is dead, right? Leave it here, we'll fry it up.

JEFF We need it. GAS MASK I told you. There's nothing down there. You're wasting your time.

JEFF Fine. We'll go there, waste time. What's it to you?

Everyone shuts up, nobody moves for a minute. Then:

ROYCE (calls out) You all posing for pictures, or are you gonna do something?

BULL cocks his head to the side, looking out, spots Royce. Bull turns, aims, and presses the trigger down.

A side street banner WELCOME TO GREEK TOWN becomes a temporary torch in the night.

ROYCE Ooh. Impressive. Got marshmallows to go with that?

Behind BULL's mask: crazy eyes, infuriated. Gas Mask steps closer to Jeff and Stars.

GAS MASK Your friend back there has a serious attitude problem.

STARS Considering recent events, everyone's entitled to at least one. Right?

PIG (lightly mocking) "Can we all just get along?"

Gas Mask waves off his posse. They lower their flamethrowers.

GAS MASK It's understandable. If you guys weren't talking we'd have toasted you. STARS

You guys are wearing masks. Are you like us?

PIG

Fuck You.

A moment...

Of Silence.

Then:

GAS MASK Like you said, what's the harm?

Waves them on.

GAS MASK It's your time to waste, not ours.

PIG (under his breath) Ain't nothing like you, spinach faced motherfucker.

Jeff and Stars slowly back away, then head towards the rest of the group.

The Eight Flamethrowers remain where they are, watching them go. Hanson, however, remains in the shadows, peace flag beside him.

> STARS I don't trust them.

JEFF There's more.

STARS More to what they told us or more of them?

Hanson stares at The Flamethrower Eight, focuses specifically on Goat.

JEFF Watch your back. (glances to Royce) Don't give them an excuse.

Royce nods towards Hanson...Jeff looks to Hanson. But Stars is the one who comes back for him.

STARS

Hey, Hanson.

Hanson without breaking his gaze on the animal-themed group in the street, takes out his harmonica. This note is different from earlier. The tune is long and somber.

The entire group slows down, stops.

Stars taps Hanson on the shoulder. Hanson gives him an angry look back.

Stars looks back to the street. Gas Mask and his cronies silently watch back...their eyes on Hanson.

GOAT slowly raises his flamethrower...

STARS (to Hanson) Man, if there's something to it, now's not the time.

Royce steps up.

ROYCE What I said back there, forget all that. You're one of us. Come on.

Hanson stops his song without breaking his gaze on the Flamethrower Eight.

Picking up his flag, he follows Royce. Hanson keeps a small glance towards the Eight freaks in the street.

ROYCE Just keep walking.

Royce looks back briefly.

ROYCE Forget them. They're just all show, acting tough. His expression contradicts that statement. Royce turns his attention back to the street ahead. He tightens his grip on his handful of spiked wire.

Po drops back, whispers something in Royce's ear. Royce nods, and walks with her and Hanson.

EXT. MONROE AVENUE - MINUTES LATER

Stars leads the way. They come to a small section of Greek town that still has a working WALK DON'T WALK sign.

Steve looks around, the traffic lights are still functioning too.

Further up ahead: a few handful of businesses still have lights on, and one specifically stands out among the rest.

The Casino.

JEFF They still with us?

Royce glances over his shoulder. The Flamethrower Eight are still about the same distance as they were when Royce last eyeballed them.

ROYCE

Yes.

He looks ahead, walks on, quickly spins around. He catches them: The Flamethrower Eight stop walking forward, and they all pause in sync with one another.

Royce smiles a little, walks backward.

Hanson halts, Royce bumps into him.

ROYCE Damn it, man, we're on the same page...

Hanson sprints away towards the Casino. Within a few seconds, it is clear what Hanson has seen.

Under white and yellow flashing lights: a row of parked, blood streaked limousines. On top of the hood, roofs and trunks of the cars: severed heads.

EXT. GREEK TOWN CASINO - CONTINUOUS

Hanson looks closely at the heads, one by one. He stops at a WOMAN'S HEAD. Her look of terror isn't less shocking than the others, it is her looks overall.

He reaches out, parts her hair to see her face more clearly.

Hanson digs out of his pocket the picture, and holds it up for a quick comparison. Stars comes up to Hanson, looks over the picture, then the head.

JEFF

Let's go.

INT. GREEK TOWN CASINO - NIGHT

While some of the bright neon sparkles from outside, the interior of the casino is another story.

The decor of unlit wall torches and an Olympian essence take on a more surreal feel in the darkness.

Not one light on inside the casino, save for a few dimming flashlights sprawled around the floor alongside dead, headless security guards.

The Flamethrower Eight come in through the revolving doors, slightly spread out on the casino main floor.

They hear a clacking sound far ahead; Royce's spiked wire. There is no visual sign of him or the others.

A cackle of STATIC off in the darkness.

PIG heads towards the source of the sound.

He finds a walkie-talkie on one of the slot machines. More brief sets of static. Morse code for S.O.S. He takes one hand off his flamethrower to reach for it... pauses, withdraws his hand and puts it back on his weapon.

GAS MASK takes the walkie-talkie instead. Casually presses down on the button...holds it for a few moments before speaking:

GAS MASK

Face fate with courage.

Gas Mask puts the walkie-talkie back where he and Pig found it. There are no more Morse codes for SOS or anything else.

The Flamethrower Eight move on, down the lobby, towards the stairway. A shadow far behind them becomes alive, comes closer.

It's a prune zombie, with a parasite in him. Goat catches the action, lights him up.

Gas Mask pulls out a concealed hunting knife with an astrological symbol as part of the handle.

GAS MASK Kill them all.

INT. GREEK TOWN CASINO. THIRD FLOOR - NIGHT

Royce walks to the People Mover station, and waits. The moonlight greets him from the windows above.

He turns in surprise as the indoor lights flicker. Red and white neon pop on, illuminating the floor.

The rest of the group joins Royce.

They notice that the floor is littered with trash, broken tables, lots of blood, fresh and old.

Some poor guy's ripped shirt stands out, half of it is still with his severed mangled left arm.

They are not alone.

From out of the corners of darkness, a small group of the walking dead spring up, the parasites controlling them like puppets.

There is something else among them. The light exposes the horrible truth.

A giant centipede, with severed human body parts and bones, linked together by hundreds of the lobster-like parasites.

Royce unravels his spike wire bracelet, and grabs part of the other end with his other hand like a rope.

The women come close to him, ready to defend themselves. Everyone has weapons ready to chop and slice.

The cult of the dead conducts a shrieking battle cry, charges forward.

Stars, Victor, Steve, and Jeff face off against them, they hold the line.

It does not take long before they get the upper hand.

STEVE Blessed be the Lord my Rock, who trains my hands for war, so says the psalm!

VICTOR

Amen!

The centipede thing raises up, and the head, a severed female human torso with broken human legs as antennae, screams unholy hell through rows of a shark toothed mouth.

Six doll eyes gaze down on the heroes.

Despite the numerous blood smears across the floor in every direction, severed hands and heads from past victims, the centipede thing moves after Royce and the women.

Another centipede thing emerges from the skywalk a short distance away from Royce. It shrieks in the same manner the first one did. One of the crab parasites rips out of a host's chest; Victor hacks away at the thing as it growls in anger.

The Flamethrower Eight appear.

From behind, Gas Mask plunges the knife into Jeff's chest.

PIG whips out a forty-four magnum.

Empties the entire gun into Victor, splattering his Vipers hockey shirt with red tatters.

Victor, knocked back, gets up, raises one of his machetes, defiant.

One of the centipedes catches him, chomping down on his head.

The thing lifts Victor up, and thrashes him like a shark eats a fish. Rips him up, tears the head off. The rest of the body falls to the floor.

Stars smacks down WOLF, but GOAT lights him up. Stars backs away engulfed in flames, and falls over the railing.

Goat sees the bigger threat.

Goat and the rest of the Animals blast away fire and bullet at the first centipede, keeping it away.

Gas Mask pulls his knife out of Jeff, plunges it down once again, twists, takes it out.

The knife sails downward once again, Jeff, soaked in blood, catches the arm, and struggles with Gas Mask.

STEVE (loud) Not by might, but spirit!

Gas Mask, distracted, looks up, finds Steve's boot connecting to his head.

Hanson swings the burning peace flag at Pig, who backs away, retreats with his buddies.

The PEOPLE MOVER comes towards the station; it surprises the heroes, and the centipedes as well.

ROYCE (sarcastic) It's about time!

Steve picks up Jeff in a fireman's carry. Jeff grabs the bag with the parasite on the way.

The doors to the mover open; the women get in as Royce whips his wire towards the second beast, keeping it back.

Steve, Hanson and Jeff dash toward the People Mover.

I/E. PEOPLE MOVER

They are welcomed by three man Police SWAT unit mixed in with a few members of The National Guard.

One forty-five gun aims towards Po, Andrea and Laura, but all the rest poke out of the busted out windows of the People Mover.

OFFICER JONES, (40's) the one with the Desert Eagle, nods to his mixed unit, and they fire away.

The first centipede explodes in a dance of blood and bone around Steve, Hanson and Jeff.

They all make it to the People Mover, where Royce has their back. Royce Is the last to board.

OFFICER JONES We're good to go!

The People Mover revs up and moves forward.

OFFICER JONES Don't know what you folks are doing down in Greek Town...what the...

NATIONAL GUARDSMAN #1 Son of a bitch!

The panicked part-time soldier has his machine gun aimed directly a blood covered Royce. His buddies also get weapons on him. Laura steps in front of Royce. NATIONAL GUARDSMAN #1 Lady, get out of the way!

OFFICER JONES

INFECTED!

JEFF (steps forward) Hey, we're-

OFFICER JONES God help us!!!!!!

Officer Jones puts a bullet into Jeff's head. Jeff falls to the floor.

The rest of Jones' crew reload as fast as they can, one of them even pisses himself in the process.

NATIONAL GUARDSMAN #1 You ain't taking me! You ain't taking me!

Hanson, Po, Laura, Andrea make a run for it, retreating back into the People Mover as far as they can.

The officers unload ammo in their direction. Steve's BIKERS FOR JESUS shreds in blood more than ever before, his head bursts open many times over from the gunfire.

In the panic, not one gun fires even near Royce. Royce, shocked at the bodies of Jeff and Steve beside him, looks back in absolute rage at the cause.

With a scream to shatter eardrums, he swings his spiked wire laced arm.

It gets the first National Guardsman right in the mouth. The impact shoves the rest of the man's head through the rest of the shattered window.

Jerks it back, the impaled Guardsman comes with the wrist.

Royce tosses the human rag doll in front of the rest of the gunfire. The body is torn to pieces.

The rest of the Jones' crew pause and all have the same look of shock over their faces. Frantic, they reload. The Second Guardsman drops his clip. Royce grabs him, and throws him to the other side of the Mover. Unlike his friends already in the next car, Royce approaches forward in a ticked off swagger.

OFFICER JONES Bring it, bitch!

He whips his spiked wire down across the hands of one of the SWAT guys, who howls in pain as he drops his gun.

The gun goes off as it smacks the floor, and blasts the former owner in the left foot. Royce does not let him fall before punching him in the face.

Two left.

The SWAT officer next to Officer Jones gets his gun on Royce.

Royce yanks the officer's arm up as it fires away into the ceiling above, then in a downward arc away from the intended target.

Royce gives him an elbow in the face. Barb wire cuts across at the same time, blood streaks out over the terrorized man's neck and face. He falls, holding his neck as blood gushes out.

Now for Jones:

Puts his gun in his mouth, pulls the trigger. His brains streak the wall behind him.

Royce storms forward. Another gunshot, somewhere up ahead.

PEOPLE MOVER. THIRD CAR.

Hanson and the women slow down and glance back in the direction from where they came.

PO Stupid idiots...

LAURA

Quiet.

With only the sounds of the People Mover in motion, there is nothing but silence.

PEOPLE MOVER. FIRST CAR.

Royce comes up to another soldier, who has already followed Officer Jones' lead in the same manner, a bullet in the brain.

Next to the dead man: a static cracking walkie-talkie.

PEOPLE MOVER. SECOND CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Laura doesn't cry, but her look of disappointment is hard to mask as she reaches down for Jeff, caresses his dead body.

Po stares down at the pair and the bullet riddled Steve beside them.

Hanson swallows his spit upon the sight of the carnage. He feels the pulse of the National Guardsman sprawled out in front of him. Then the next one.

> ANDREA Still alive? Wake that ass up.

LAURA What are you going to do?

ANDREA What the hell you think? I'll finish the job.

LAURA

No you're not.

ANDREA This was your idea. Hell, you and the Gimp (meaning Hanson) weren't even infected with the virus to begin with. (to Hanson) No offense. But I'm right. Hanson takes the downed man's handgun, checks it.

ROYCE (next car) Any of those sons a bitches still alive?

Royce enters, clearly without a pot to piss in.

ROYCE His ass is mine.

LAURA This man lives.

ROYCE Not for long. Last soldier in the car behind me snuffed himself. Lost half our team. Time for some payback.

Hanson aims the gun right in Royce's face.

ROYCE What the hell.

Laura stands up, leaving Jeff dead on the floor.

LAURA Back up, Royce.

ROYCE He won't do it.

LAURA I don't want anyone doing anything right now... (approaches Hanson) Put it down.

ANDREA Yeah. Put down that motherfucker, we ain't pulling this shit.

LAURA Andrea- Shut up.

She looks back to her in anger.

LAURA

You heard me. You and Royce back up, because Hanson isn't going to shoot anyone, and everyone's going to be cool.

ANDREA

News flash: your friend, our humbled leader and the preacher is dead on the floor, or didn't you notice?

Laura gets in her face.

LAURA Yes, and I count five us left. Do we want to make it four? (to Hanson) Or three?

Hanson calmly lowers the gun away from Royce. Offers it to Laura, who takes it.

Royce steps up.

ROYCE

Then he better pull his weight. Crazy harmonica playing comedian. Points a gun at me. Think I'm turning back? Look at your own self. And you're not even infected.

LAURA

Royce...Enough.

Royce gives Hanson a light shove.

Walks away.

Laura comes over, and strips down one of the dead men of a shoulder holster.

She puts it on, puts the gun in the holster. She keeps her eyes on Hanson the entire time.

LAURA

Jeff's gone. (to everyone) Which means from now on I'm calling the shots.

ANDREA I think Royce should -

LAURA It's not open for discussion.

Nobody says a word after that, so she goes on:

LAURA

Royce. The dead soldier in the other car. He call anybody? Someone at D T C has to be keeping an eye on this.

ROYCE

I wouldn't be shocked if we had a welcome home party at Gratiot and Library, if they don't put us back near Beaubien. If they stop us there. They could stop us anywhere they like.

PO

That's right. Cadillac Center was the previous stop. We're going in a circle.

ANDREA

Those waiting for us might be just as trigger happy paranoid as these fools.

Royce nods in agreement.

ROYCE More than likely.

LAURA

Hanson, Royce, Po come with me. Andrea, hang back. If that Guardsman comes to, we'll need him if we back it back around to Cadillac Center. ANDREA

Jerk us off first chance he gets.

LAURA

We'll deal with it then. Right now, I want to get as much of the guns here as we can.

PO

Knives are one thing. Guns are another. I never fired a gun before. Have you?

LAURA

All we need to do is hold them back if they show up. Nobody has to be an expert marksman, nobody has to go all Rambo.

A brief glance towards Royce.

LAURA That goes double for you, friend.

ROYCE Oh no, you're breaking my heart.

I/E. PEOPLE MOVER. BRICKTOWN STOP - MOMENTS LATER

They slow down and stop. The doors open.

In car eleven: Hanson and a shotgun

Eight: Po waits, machetes ready.

Six: Royce and spiked wire.

Four: Laura and two 45 magnums.

Three: Andrea aims her new gun around, sees nobody around the platform.

Silence.

Moments pass, nothing but a soft wind. A new sight gets the attention of them all: it isn't an attack from any army. Off in the distance, a building goes up in flames, the smoke billows out from the source.

The doors close. The Mover goes forward towards the Renaissance Center.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A short passage of time, with the five watching the fires of Serer Labs miles away.

They remain where they are.

INT. RENAISSANCE CENTER. STATION - MOMENTS LATER

The People Mover enters the Renaissance Center stop.

Soon the car doors open again. The interiors of the Renaissance Center are partially lit, there was someone here recently.

There are streaks of blood over some of the marble walls, smeared bloody handprints.

Nobody in sight.

Hanson takes a breath, exhales. He takes a step forward, looks around.

He remains silent. Steps back.

The doors close.

The Mover goes on..and as they leave, nobody follows them.

INT. PEOPLE MOVER. THIRD CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Andrea glances to the Guardsman, who comes around.

WEST

Damn...

ANDREA

What's your name?

WEST West. Richard West, National Guard. Me and my team hooked up with a couple of stranded Detroit SWAT...

ANDREA

Stay down and save it. We just passed Renaissance. We supposed to say something, do something?

WEST Renaissance Center?

ANDREA

What I said.

WEST No. Nobody there.

ANDREA

Sure?

WEST That's what I said. Where's my gun?

ANDREA

Confiscated.

West looks around, sees the bodies around him, blood.

WEST

Oh god...

ANDREA

God got up and left. Fella to
your side there
 (meaning Steve)
That was the preacher... Biker
for Jesus, anyway. Other two
God fearing folk also left us.
God took 'em and left.
 (loud)
Laura!

He was one of them, infected.

ANDREA

Like me.

Laura enters. She looks down to West, who backs up closer to the wall, scared.

LAURA

I'll take it from here, Andrea. What's his name?

ANDREA Dick West. I was going to ask Dick something.

She locks eyes with her.

ANDREA Making conversation.

LAURA Send Royce back, clean up some of this, make sure he brings the walkie.

Andrea sighs, exits to the next car.

LAURA

I'm Laura.

WEST Get away from me.

LAURA

I'm not infected. Now, listen: are there anymore police or military types?

WEST

Two Detroit SWAT, snipers. Left behind in Cadillac Center. Compuware.

LAURA

Just two?

WEST

With civilians. About sixty, including kids. Everyone's pretty much armed though.

LAURA

I thought Cadillac was ground zero.

WEST Ground zero?

LAURA We're from Serer Labs. On our way to Alighieri Science Division.

WEST

Why?

LAURA

They have a cure for the virus, Phosphocreatine Alcyone. Serer had some, but not as potent.

WEST I don't know anything about a cure.

LAURA It's possible some of those survivors do.

Royce enters, West breaks a nervous sweat. Royce ignores him, hands Laura a walkie-talkie. Royce goes towards the dead bodies, selects Officer Jones.

WEST

No, no, no. There's no cure.

LAURA

There is.

WEST I'm telling you...

Royce drags the body of Officer Jones across the floor, and goes into car two with it. West watches the cleanup nervously. Royce gives him a quick glance back, then continues on his task.

Laura lightly slaps West on the shoulder.

LAURA

Hey-!

West focuses his attention on Laura, who puts the walkie talkie in front of him.

WEST What's he doing?

LAURA

What I asked him to do. Listen to me. Someone's running this mover. I want you to take this, talk to them. No more stops until we get back to Cadillac Center.

EXT. CADILLAC CENTER - NIGHT

The doors to the People Mover are open, not a soul on board.

EXT. COMPUWARE PARKING GARAGE

With a forty-five handgun in a used, bloody shoulder holster, Laura leads the party through the dimly lit area.

Everyone moves in a cross formation. West is right behind her, with Hanson and Andrea flanking him left and right, Po behind West.

Royce covers the back, making sure nothing pops out from the shadows.

West glances over to Andrea, notes the bag she carries.

WEST What's in that? LAURA

Dead crab.

WEST You had that with us the entire time?

LAURA What do you know about it?

WEST

Not much. They started showing up before the virus spread out. Nobody knows where they came from.

LAURA

Could these things have started the virus?

WEST Asking the wrong guy.

LAURA

Take a guess.

WEST Are you kidding? What do you think? Two plus two equals four?

ROYCE

(from the back) Don't be a smart ass.

WEST

What do you want me to say? I
don't know anything. All I know
is that these things show up,
grow into the crabs, then grow
bigger like giant centipedes.
 (pause)
Where's this place you're
looking for?

LAURA The new building, phase two. Where are your people?
WEST

In Compuware. Some are in and around the Hard Rock, other floors, but most everyone's on the 14th.

ANDREA

Makes sense. Atrium's a good view. All directions.

WEST

That it is. You guys would have to cross Campus Martius though, right?

LAURA

Is that bad?

WEST

That's where half the dead are, between there and the ice rink.

ANDREA Notice some cars, vans. Any of

them work? Anyone got keys?

WEST

Going on a trip?

ANDREA

Maybe someone drove over to Serer.

I/E. COMPUWARE PARKING GARAGE - MINUTES LATER

The bars of Amazing Grace lightly echo out.

Smashed cars, trash, more obstacles block the entrance.

As the group passes by that maze of metal, they find a wall of sandbags with random small spaces in between.

The muzzle of an M-16 comes out of one of the spaces; a pair of eyes peer through another.

The pair of eyes belong to a young man called BROWN.

A huge spotlight clicks on overhead, blinds West, Laura and Hanson.

ROYCE Son of a bitch...

BROWN

Alright, now. That's far enough. You can call me Mister Brown. My buddy next me, that's Mister Red. That's all you need to know. Who are you?

LAURA We called in. What we want-

OFFICER BROWN (looks to Royce) Some of you are infected. You all could turn at any time.

WEST Now wait just a minute.

BROWN

Yeah. I remember you. Man just happens to have new friends, but where's the old ones? Still on the Mover?

RED Kill them all. Save ourselves.

BROWN Quiet. What's in the bag?

WEST

Crab.

BROWN You planning on bringing that thing in here? You crazy?

ROYCE We don't have to come in there. Just going next door. RED Freak can talk. Look at that.

BROWN Enough. Dead don't blink.

WEST Whoa. This guy (meaning Hanson) He's not infected.

BROWN

Looks like one to me. They all look alike, think alike, EAT alike. You're all walking with dead men. You already dead, all infected.

LAURA

Who's in charge here? Let me talk to someone...

BROWN Take the crab with you.

LAURA

We're on your side. If you don't want us in, fine. All we want is safe passage from here to the next building, through the park.

OFFICER BROWN

Why?

LAURA We can stop the virus, reverse it.

OFFICER BROWN

What?

ANDREA

It's true. A small dose puts the infected somewhere in between. A stronger doseBROWN There is no cure.

RED (lightly mocking) They are the infection.

BROWN

Enough. Now I'm going to give you a choice. You all can stand there and wait until we send you all back to hell. Or you just go away. Come around here again I swear to God we'll cut you down. You sons of bitches killed my friends. My son. You want to come in here, with death? You go back to hell.

The group takes a few steps back. Head toward the ground level ramp that leads out into the park.

BROWN

Yeah, keep going that way. Hope you all don't trip over something. Wouldn't want that.

Royce glances back towards Brown's direction.

BROWN What you looking at, green beans?

As the near the end of the first floor parking ramp, Po looks out across the park, the graveyard of the unburied bodies litter over sidewalk and grass.

Royce surveys the challenge ahead, mentally notes West swallowing his own spit.

West raises his eyes upward towards the adjoining Compuware Building next to the parking garage.

> LAURA What is it?

WEST You asked for the person in charge. There is nobody in charge. And those guys just let us go. It takes only a few moments of silence until everyone is on the same page as West. Royce nods, rolls up his wires around his arm... ROYCE How many? WEST Let's just get it overwith. ROYCE That bad? WEST Bad enough.

EXT. CAMPUS MARTIUS PARK - NIGHT

The heroes quickly estimate the distance from here to the next building. It is about the length of two football fields.

> WEST (takes a breath) Well, who wants to live forever?

And he darts forward.

ANDREA Yeah, screw it.

She follows him, followed by Po, Hanson, Laura and Royce. Almost immediately they are greeted below by the obstacles of bodies and broken bones.

A few seconds later another welcome of bullets and arrows that whiz down from above.

As the six make through the gauntlet, West gets shot in the back side of right leg by an arrow.

He stumbles in pain as a sniper's bullet blows into his head, and he goes down.

Andrea slides down in front of a monument, takes cover.

Laura and Hanson keep going, just as an arrow from above shoots through the wrapped up sack, ripping into the crab within.

The broom handle gives way, snaps, but doesn't break off.

Royce and Po join Andrea behind the monument.

Royce glances back towards the fallen West, whose lifeless body lies with the rest of the dead.

Royce unravels his spiked wire...

ANDREA That won't make a difference. (looks around, changes his tune) No you're not.

ROYCE (pissed) Damn right I am. I don't think he's going to mind.

INT. COMPUWARE BUILDING. 14TH FLOOR. ATRIUM - MOMENTS LATER

From his position, one of the SNIPERS waits. With the exception of the echo of automatic gunfire bursts from the 9th floor, all other gunfire has ceased.

INSERT: SNIPER'S SCOPE

The green hazed night sight doesn't help the Sniper as much as it should.

Royce, Andrea and Po are pinned down behind the monument, but it is heard to tell exactly what they are doing.

SNIPER (muttering to himself) Get up and smile, son of a bitch.

He can make out Royce's right hand, slamming down part of his spike wire into something, but the Sniper can't make out what that is.

> SNIPER What are you doing, blood eyes? What the hell are you...Jesus Wept...!

Royce, Andrea and Po stand up and make themselves perfect targets, if it were not for the strung up three dead corpses slung over their backs.

SNIPER

Sweet Lord Jesus!

He takes a shot, hits one of the dead bodies.

The guns from throughout the building erupt in fury again.

EXT. CAMPUS MARTIUS PARK - CONTINUOUS

Royce, Po and Andrea firemen carry the dead corpses as those shields of flesh tear open by rows of new gunfire. Shattered bones and bits of brain splatter over the trio, none of it their own.

EXT. ALIGHIERI.

They reach Hanson and Laura, who wait for them. A stray bullet zings across the wall and misses Hanson. A small cloud of dust fills the air.

The rag doll tattered corpses fall off the shoulders of Royce, Po and Andrea. With a hard yank, the spike wire rips out of dead meat.

The doors to Alighieri are boarded up.

Royce shakes his head.

INT. ALIGHIERI. MAIN FLOOR.

A dead body smashes through glass and board. It falls over a propped up couch and onto the floor. Royce smashes out some more glass before shoving the couch aside with fury.

As they enter...

ROYCE (loud and VERY clear) Listen up all you suckers and listen good! If there's anybody - ANYBODY - left in this bitch and you don't want to come out...

Storms forward. His spike wire drags beside him...

ROYCE Don't! I don't want to see you! No cowboys, no Einsteins, no problems! We are NOT after YOU.

UNKNOWN VOICE (hidden in the hallways) What...

ROYCE

You do not ask questions! <u>We</u> have one question, and it will be answered, <u>and then</u>, I don't want to hear a peep out of any of you sons of

ROYCE (cont)

bitches in here! I'm running out of friends, running out of time, and I'm all out of patience. You jokers understand all that? GOOD! Here is the question, I'm NOT repeating it! ALIGHIERI. THIRD FLOOR. LAB - NIGHT

The overhead fluorescent light flickers on.

Reveals several empty large cylinder containers, large biohazard stickers over the glass.

Other containers on the other side of the room are another story.

Computers are smashed or toppled over.

The floor : among bits of trash, a ton of scattered note paper and fallen over chairs, random puddles of something that looks like spilled potato soup.

Hanson puts the bag with the crab parasite carefully down on a metal slab, which has smears of that soup like substance.

Hooks and restraints connected to the slab, not for a human subject. Not for a dog.

Hanson unravels the bag, exposing the dead thing within. Hanson figures out the hooks and straps down the crab. This discovery causes a beat of curiosity and marvel.

ANDREA

Piece of a puzzle.

Andrea looks around, finds more biohazard chemical marked cannisters on the far right of the lab.

In these three cannisters are hundreds of small moving worms. She looks closer.

A crab parasite, as big as her hand, moves out from the worm barrier and taps the glass with spider like pinchers.

Royce. Laura and Po scan tables, shelves, the floor.

Po beelines to a cabinet, opens it up. She studies the contents. No luck. She looks over the next cabinet. Opens the glass panels, looks closely.

One bottle marked "Phosphocreatine Alcyone".

Po readies a syringe, and extracts part of the "Phosphocreatine Alcyone" into it. She offers it to Royce, who calmly takes it from her..

ROYCE

No. You first.

He gives the syringe to Laura.

Po nods, rolls up her left sleeve. Laura finds her vein, inserts the needle. A shot rings out, destroys the syringe. Laura jumps back.

Another shot rings out. Another cracked hole in the window.

ROYCE

God!

Andrea closes the blinds in front of the window.

Po looks down to the floor. A small mist rises from the broken syringe.

ANDREA Everyone alright? Royce?

ROYCE

I'm cool.

Po nods. Laura looks around to the others. Hanson gives a thumbs up. Then waves them on over.

The crab on the table slowly dissolves into a slime puddle, like those around the floor and equipment. Everyone is amazed at the sight.

Hanson lightly holds up a discarded bottle of "Phosphocreatine Alcyone". He carefully opens up one of the cannisters.

The crab thing moves to escape, but stops when Hanson lets a few drops fall on it. Everyone observes in silence.

The thing squirms, jumbles around the cannister, and lets out a nasty squeal of anguish. Like the dead brother, it also dissolves away. The new slime also consumes the worms around it as they likewise slowly steam into nothing.

After a few moments of silence, Hanson, Laura, Po and Royce comb the floor and tables again, only this time scooping up as much loose paper as they can.

THIRD FLOOR. HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Laura storms out of the lab, a small portion of those notes in her hand. She sees a few SHADOWS of PEOPLE at the far end of the hallway.

LAURA

What is this!

The only response she hears back are closing doors and scuffling feet. Whoever those people were, they avoid her and her query.

LAURA

Hey!

There is no point in it. They are gone. She goes after them.

ALIGHIERI. MAIN FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The stampede of the small handful of people hustles out of the broken doors. Laura runs after them, but stops short of the lobby.

Gunfire.

Laura stands, looking out, dumbfounded. The rest of the group falls in behind her.

She kicks over the last standing chair, screams in anger. She slams her collected paperwork down on a messy reception desk.

LAURA Son of a bitch! ROYCE There might be someone else in here, shed some light.

LAURA

There is nobody else, Royce. There is nobody else. Just us.

ANDREA

We gave it our best shot. There is no more antidote, it probably wasn't even enough. Everyone we ran into said it all along. Nothing here.

LAURA

Either that or it's somewhere else.

Royce immediately looks out towards the entrance.

LAURA That's right. We just passed it.

Andrea is about to debate the idea, but closes up. Laura is spot on.

LAURA So why would they have it?

ROYCE That's easy. Kills those things.

LAURA Why not just leave them here?

ROYCE Other building's easier to defend. Has the garage, Mover access.

PO Having armed people on the Mover supports that. ROYCE

Plus a small patrol with flamethrowers out in the street, crazy enough to burn up the dead, infected.

A brief glance over towards Hanson. Then back to Laura.

ROYCE

Or whoever who gets in the way.

PO We can't go back across the park. Not with four people.

LAURA

I know.

PO And then the barricade.

LAURA

I know.

ROYCE We just can't wait. We got

Looks for a wall clock. Sees one. Cranks his neck. Frowns.

ROYCE

Time's up.

LAURA You haven't turned all the way back, neither has Po or Andrea.

ANDREA

Maybe you and Jeff were wrong about the time limit, We don't even know for sure if those nuts over there even have the stuff. West didn't know.

LAURA

Then he didn't know.

ROYCE

No, he had to. Just kept his mouth shut.

ANDREA Nobody has it. It is gone.

ROYCE I say, screw it. We come up with a plan, take a risk knock on the door.

ANDREA

Those paranoid idiots don't give a damn.

LAURA

Alright, knock off the shit! We are going back-

ANDREA

You insane?

LAURA

We are going back, We will find a way in.

PO Alright. So what do we do?

LAURA

First, Andrea's right about one thing. There's only four of us. Even if we went out of this building another way, they'd see us. So, we search this place top to bottom. Any other survivors, get them out of hiding and down here.

Pause.

LAURA

We also might get lucky and find more of the bottles of antidote around. Bring that down here if you find any. Next We have a head count. Inventory. Weapons, antidote, everything and everyone.

Points to Andrea.

LAURA

Andrea, I want you to read these notes. If there are any files we can find on working computers, or if we have any working internet connection or cell phones, I want you to be the eyes, ears and voice. The more information we have and more information they have the better.

ANDREA Everything's smashed.

LAURA

We found a working car in a parking lot we can find at least something else that works.

ROYCE

Fair enough.

INT. GREEK TOWN CASINO. THIRD FLOOR - EARLY MORNING

Smashed glass, streams of fresh blood.

Remains of Victor.

One of the centipede creatures smokes up in a pyre of death.

A severed head with a torn up Tiger mask.

Wolf next to him, not moving.

Ram in a pool of blood.

A discarded, partially melted mask of an Antelope.

Goat watches as Gas Mask and Pig turn over the body near the Antelope mask.

Pig stands up to Goat, defiant.

PIG

Damn it. You and Orpheus better think next time, I don't care if you are leading up this crew. Can you count? Four of our brothers down here, one more with the other beast dead outside on the street.

GOAT

(<u>a woman's voice</u>) We faced our fears; We had to take action.

PIG

You and Orph (meaning Gas Mask) You want some action? I say we go after them, fry them up.

GAS MASK We know where they were headed. Chances are they're dead by now.

PIG

And what if they're not? We know what they have. If they get the stuff, you know what happens next. You aren't the least bit concerned?

GAS MASK

No. Should you be? The bugs are wiped out, dead are ashes.

PIG

They haven't sent back the Mover. They haven't been taking calls. We could be the only ones left.

GAS MASK

It's not our job. We are the exterminators, man. Sons of Sodom. We only follow orders.

PIG I'm a fucking electrician, at least I was four days ago. Screw this.

Pig takes off his mask. He's young guy, early 20s. He tosses his mask on the smoking monster's remains.

PIG I'm going back there, hunt them down my own damn self. We cannot let them put that stuff anywhere near those creatures.

GOAT

He's right.

She takes off her mask. a rugged young woman, but High School Musical reject.

GAS MASK They didn't like us, they'll turn us away, Eurydi.

GOAT Not if we do what they can't.

GAS MASK

Alright.

He removes his gas mask, revealing himself to be a young eighteen year old, and could very well pass a football for the local High School Varsity team.

> GAS MASK Let's do this.

> > GOAT

Wait.

The fact that some of their good friends lay among the carnage at their feet seems invisible to the pair as they taste each other's lips during the Big Red moment.

They give each other a smile.

GAS MASK (out to Pig) Hey, Jason! Wait up. INT. COMPUWARE BUILDING. HARD ROCK CAFE - MORNING

A new song plays over a loudspeaker: Morning Has Broken.

On the bar: liquor meant for drinking, liquor turned into Molotov cocktails, ready to be lit.

Music that played moments before is quickly interrupted by a swarm of men and women who grab random weapons in a first come first serve basis.

Baseball bats. Machetes. Steak knives. Pipes. And guns. Lots of guns.

Random members of The Militia slam in clips to guns as they quickly move.

A small child grabs a homemade slingshot; his playmate buddy one of the cocktails.

To up his friend, Young David takes a twenty-two pistol to better confront the coming Goliaths.

4TH FLOOR HALLWAY.

A woman, lean and mean, shows another woman how to put an arrow in a hunting bow.

A man with a Uzi ignores them, waits in the darkness for the battle to come.

9TH FLOOR. OFFICE.

A BUSINESS EXECUTIVE, (mid 20s) nice tie, his white shirt grimy and decorated in light dry blood splatter, releases the safety on his M-16.

He does not like the sound of his own actions. He takes a breath, and moves around hacked up, bullet ridden dead people.

Takes a long look out of the office window.

His co-worker pumps a shotgun, loud and clear, ready for action, much more eager for payback than the other man.

In a corner: a young SECRETARY, (20s) terrified, holds a pair of scissors close to her chest.

14TH FLOOR. ATRIUM.

A teen couple embrace, the young man comforts his worried girlfriend. His fears are eased with one hand around her and the other on his 38 snub nose handgun.

> YOUNG MAN It's okay. If it comes to that, I'll do us both.

Around them, children huddle together as one as NATIONAL GUARDSMEN and POLICE OFFICERS in SWAT gear arm themselves, check their automatic weapons and sniper rifles.

SNIPER Here they come!

EXT. ALIGHIERI - MORNING

They are not alone.

Roughly twenty men, women and children march with them. Different ages, backgrounds, creeds. None of them are infected with the virus, but quite a number of them look like they been through hell and back.

They all exit ALIGHIERI along with:

Hanson- Who has a new flagpole and a new white flag of peace alongside Andrea who carries the stars and stripes over her shoulder.

Royce - also with them, but without his spikes.

Po close by.

And Laura.

The five come more forward, lead the way.

LAURA

Now.

The CROWD around them, as one all start a soft repeated chant:

CROWD Please do not fire. Do not be afraid. We come in peace. There is a cure.

ROYCE This was a lousy idea.

LAURA You wanted to say hello.

ROYCE I was thinking a bit more like Mission Impossible Man From Uncle sort of thing.

LAURA I didn't hear you object.

ROYCE Yeah, well I didn't think I'd walk out here with the peace walk with my fly unzipped.

They get closer, and step over the streams of blood. Slightly ahead of them, the open graveyard.

Some of the CROWD see the sight, get nervous. The closer to the dead bodies, the more scared they become. A few break chant.

LAURA

Keep going.

But there are fresh bodies before her. She looks to them briefly, averts her eyes.

Closer...

Then she looks to them again, a closer inspection.

Infected.

One of the crowd cries out, rushes to the bodies.

LAURA No! No! No! Stay back! Don't touch them, go around.

The person does as asked, but the body language gives Laura a morbid curiosity. She studies the dead as the crowd avoids them and the other dead.

LAURA

These are the people from last night. The ones who ran out of the door, got shot down. I'm sure of it.

The group moves on, pass the bodies...

LAURA

Andrea, was any one of our gathering here on our floor at the time we tried to give Po the injection?

ANDREA

Not sure.

LAURA They weren't, were they? Me and Hanson, we would already be...

She trails off in thought.

LAURA The batch at Serer. It was the stronger version of Alcyone all along.

ROYCE Doc, you're making no sense at all.

LAURA What if the formula here destroys one kind of creature, but the remains of the creature causes the virus?

ROYCE

That's interesting. And because you and Hanson were not infected, but exposed to-

Glances over to Laura.

ROYCE

Wow. What a kick in the rear. Any other cheerful revelations you want to share before the folks upstairs get itch fingers?

LAURA

Yes. You guys being around me and Hanson keeps you from turning back.

ANDREA

Yeah, right. Now you're suggesting that you and Hanson are immune to the virus as a result of what happened at Serer.

LAURA

Which is why me and Hanson were not infected when the crab things dissolved away. But anyone else nearby would be.

They come up to the fountain, the body of West. Like the other bodies, the crowd steps away from them.

The crowd keeps up the chant, now get a little boldness in the words, defiant. Louder.

I/E. COMPUWARE PARKING GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Dumbstruck Gas Mask, Goat and Pig watch the proceedings. Pig shakes his head in disbelief. Gas Mask's grip tightens on his flamethrower. GAS MASK Okay. That's okay. I know exactly what to do.

Goat girl grins. She reaches in her pocket, a can of black spray paint. She tags on the side of a pillar :

B M K - SOS

Pig glances to this action, but then sees Gas Mask, already headed towards the barricade with Red and Brown behind it.

RED

You guys are supposed to be in the Greek. But since you're here you can give us a

Red never finishes his thoughts, Gas Mask doesn't give him the chance.

The crazy man presses down, and sets the potato sack filled barricade in an instant bonfire.

Red and Brown scream in death, and in the panic, Brown fires off a round that goes right into a wall.

The second that sound echoes out, is the same instant the villain cranks his neck to look out...

Sure enough, he hears the long delayed orchestra.

EXT. CAMPUS MARTIUS PARK - CONTINUOUS

It takes only a moment for several of the survivors from the ALIGHIERI building to scatter.

A small handful of gunfire comes from above, corpses on the ground tear up with bullets and arrows.

A few of the living are caught in the gun smoke.

I/E. COMPUWARE PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Laughing, Gas Mask runs back to his friends.

PIG Crazy shit!

GAS MASK You really want to see some crazy shit? Cross your fingers! Here comes the video game!

Gas Mask and his pals get ready, wait. Sure enough, they don't hesitate as the first wave of people sprawl out towards them in screams of panic.

The trio spit dragon breath, toast up two people at random. They can't burn up everyone, but the chaos causes many to fall over each other

Pig turns to fry the next person; finds a closed fist in his nose.

As Pig stumbles back, Hanson swings his new peace flag at the young man's feet, and sweeps him.

Goat steps up to defend her friend; Old Glory flaps in her face.

Andrea body slams her. A knife flies right into Andrea's neck, rips a new hole. Blood flows out. She falls down.

Goat pushes her and the flag out of the way.

Scared people run by them. Those people stop upon seeing the flaming barricade. There is nowhere to go.

In amusement, Gas Mask reaches down and twists his knife out of Andrea's throat.

He helps his girlfriend up. They then look over to Pig, who's getting the shit kicked out of him.

Hanson kicks once more, Pig mutters some cry for mercy before passing out.

Hanson turns to face Gas Mask and Goat. Behind Hanson, Royce and Po. Royce is ready to pounce.

> ROYCE Guess what? I got an attitude problem.

Hanson blocks him, silently waves him back. Royce nods, understands.

The crowd closes around them, a few help out those burned, smother out the flames around their friends.

Goat steps up to fry Hanson for good. She stops as Laura puts a gun to her head.

GAS MASK Relax, Eurydi. She won't do it.

LAURA

He's right.

Laura lowers the gun, shoots her in the leg. Goat cries out buckles down in pain. Laura aims the gun down at Goat's chest, knocks away the flamethrower.

Gas Mask stares directly at Hanson.

Hanson tosses away the white flag, it clatters on concrete. Gas Mask drops his flamethrower, dangles his blade.

Hanson holds out his hand, Po gives him a butcher knife.

GAS MASK Am I supposed to know you?

Gas Mask lunges and pokes his opponent in the shoulder, Hanson backs away.

Two more strikes, Hanson blocks both with his knife. The next attack have both men at a stalemate, with each wrestling for the kill.

Shouts in the distance, fires around the barricade die down, as a handful of people from the Compuware building get the flames under control. Now just smoke, something else grabs their attention.

It isn't the small crowd watching the knife fight. It is something else that bothers them. A small echo.

Moans.

The sound causes a distraction for Gas Mask as well. Hanson tackles him to the floor. Has the butcher knife to Gas Mask's throat. Hanson hears it too.

GAS MASK

Infected!

The result has more panic effect than any sudden gunshot. The CROWD reacts accordingly, storms towards the barricade.

Laura, pushed away, cannot stop them. The stampede keeps Goat on the ground.

It is the next armada that has her more concerned.

A good hundred infected in the street on the other side of the garage.

Out in front are the infected SCIENTISTS from Serer who did not produce more of the cure for themselves.

They all are reversed back into the mindless mob from a few days before. Some of them are fast enough to go into the garage first.

Royce blocks one of them, then gets in the way of another.

The infected trample over Goat, killing her in the process. Gas Mask reaches out, but his actions are in vain.

Instead he picks up his knife instead of the flamethrower- it is too far away, and gets up as quickly as he can.

GAS MASK I'll be back!

No, he won't. His promise is broken as he bounces in between the infected mob like a human pinball. He falls and shares a similar fate as his girlfriend.

Screaming, Laura fires a few rounds in the air, but fails getting any attention.

Ahead: the barricade is no more; people, both normal and infected, spill over like maggots over trash.

INT. COMPUWARE BUILDING. 4TH FLOOR HALLWAY - MORNING

Several SURVIVORS, including THE BUSINESS EXECUTIVE, lock and load, ready to defend. They quiet down. All that is heard are the SHOUTS of the inevitable stampede both inside and outside of the buildings.

I/E. COMPUWARE PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Hanson looks down on the fallen Gas Mask. Hanson reaches in his breast pocket, shows Gas Mask the picture of the smiling woman.

Gas Mask coughs for air.

GAS MASK

Oh. Her.

Passes out dead.

Laura picks up Gas Mask's knife. Cuts her hand, and holds it high.

LAURA

Hey!

ROYCE What are you doing!

LAURA

Hey!!

The infected slow down, and take a good hard look in her direction. Royce sees the potential threat, takes a boxer's stance, ready to fight.

The infected who made it through the barricade, now come back, as if attracted to a beacon.

ROYCE That was not a good idea.

LAURA It's the only solution.

ROYCE

What?

LAURA Time to test a theory. Goodbye.

ROYCE

There has to be another way!

She runs. The infected mob goes after her.

Royce and Po attempt to push away the masses, but they can't stop everyone.

Hanson joins in the fight, his picture of the woman left behind.

Focused on Laura, the crowd ignores him,

INT. COMPUWARE BUILDING. 4TH FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Everyone ready to unleash bullets of hell.

Faces of fear, cold sweat.

UNKNOWN VOICE We are NOT infected! Coming up the stairs! Don't shoot!

EXT. CADILLAC CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Laura slows down until she confronts the infected SCIENTISTS from Serer. Within seconds, she is surrounded.

Royce, Po and Hanson mingle among the infected crowd. Most of them ignore the three, only a few look over Hanson with curiosity.

Laura sees this.

Laura steps forward towards the infected scientists. As she approaches, she drops her guns and knives. She nods to them, and they understand.

Hanson protests the action, but Po stops him, holds him back.

It's too late. The army of the diseased swarms over Laura like bees on a log. They rip up her clothes and tear her body apart.

As they feast on her arms, blood streams out on the pavement.

Royce looks over from his inner war zone, and becomes expressionless. The sight stuns him. He's about ready to head over to her and take some heads.

Then the infected mutants who drank her blood and ate her flesh gag.

They fall like lifeless rag dolls, and even those around them who did not partake of the meal also choke..

Vapors rise from Laura's blood; the vapor thickens up and rolls down the street like a mist.

Steam rises from various faces; boils fade away, eyes go from bloodshot to nothing more than a serious case of pinkeye. Deep moans turn into deep breaths.

The mist surrounds Po. She slums down, falls into Hanson's arms. Her face also alters.

Royce breathes in the mist. Unlike the rest, he does not fall. When the mist fades, his anger is gone, his infected face remains.

INT. COMPUWARE BUILDING. 14TH FLOOR. ATRIUM - AFTERNOON

Hands and scissors snipe away the bandages a piece at a time.

Hanson watches his work in the cracked mirror, as he helps reveal Po's face a bit at a time. She doesn't have super model looks, but considering the last few days she might as well get her magazine cover.

She doesn't say anything. Her smile says it all.

The rest of the facility has been transformed into a makeshift clinic; hundreds upon hundreds of cots, on the floor haphazard bedding for the masses.

All of the people lying on them are normal. Only a slight trace of the infection remain in a few, they are all cured.

A DOCTOR (late 20s) comes up to Hanson.

DOCTOR

It's time.

Hanson rolls up his sleeve, sticks out his arm. The DOCTOR takes a blood sample. Hanson looks over to another patient, and takes the harmonica...

DOCTOR

Not now.

Frustrated, Hanson shakes his head, puts it away.

In a corner, Royce sits alone, slightly depressed. A small group of children with tears and smiles come to cheer him up.

The children surround Royce, giving him a hero's welcome. Royce is their own personal celebrity. He may look like the walking dead, but he gets a small bit of satisfaction deep inside himself.

All that's missing on him is a gold medal and a cape.

Until a grimy SURVIVOR in her early 20's storms up, gun pointed right at him.

SURVIVOR

Monster!

She squeezes off a round...

Witness to this, Po slumps down in shock.

The scared children weep.

FADE TO BLACK