

PARK RANGERS

by

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P A R K R A N G E R S

NIGHTTIME. LUSH FOREST. Sequoia trees. A national park.

A LONE CAMPFIRE. It burns bright in a secluded clearing.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

A group of PUNK TEENS lounge around the CAMPFIRE. They're jocks with letterman jackets, and slutty cheerleader-types.

JOCK #1 chugs a CAN OF BEER, then tosses it into the bushes.

JOCK #1

Man, the only thing better than underage drinking is littering.

SLUT #1

I can think of two things even better than that.

Slut #1 PUSHES HER BREASTS TOGETHER as she REACHES INTO A BAG.

SLUT #1 (CONT'D)

These two cans of hairspray I brought. Loaded with CFCs.

JOCK #2 GRABS ONE.

JOCK #2

You rock. Let's fuck up some ozone.

JOCKS and SLUTS take turns SPRAYING THE CANS, alternately LAUGHING, and COUGHING from all the spray in the air.

SLUT #2

Nature's so stupid.

UNSURE GIRL

You guys, maybe we shouldn't be doing this.

SLUT #1

What do you know, virgin?

LAUGHTER at her shame. Jock #3 STANDS.

JOCK #3

I gotta go take a piss.

EXT. TREE - NIGHT

Jock #3 finishes PISSING onto a SEQUOIA. Pulls out a KNIFE.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

JOCK #1

Hey. If you two sluts make out,
I'll totally kill some owls.

SLUT #1

Oh yeah?

Unsure Girl reads from a pamphlet.

UNSURE GIRL

You guys, this guide from the Park
Services Department says it's a
class-3 felony to have an open
flame outside of a fire pit.

Jock #2 GRABS THE PAMPHLET and THROWS IT INTO THE FIRE.

JOCK #2

Now it doesn't.

LAUGHTER.

EXT. TREE - NIGHT

Jock #3 finishes CARVING --

A PENIS THAT PISSES OUT THE PHRASE "EVAN PISS'D HERE".

JOCK #3

How do you like that, you stupid
tree? Nothing you can do about it.

VOICE (O.S.)

Wrong.

A firm HAND SLAMS JOCK #3's FACE INTO THE TREE.

It's a park ranger. He slaps CUFFS on the unconscious jock.
Turns.

This is head ranger DANNY MUIR (bearded, 30s-40s).

EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

The Sluts LEAN IN, ABOUT TO KISS. Jock #1 is turned on.

JOCK #1
Oh yeah, I'm totally gonna shoot
the shit out of some owls.

SLUT #2
You better.

TWIG SNAPS.

UNSURE GIRL
What was that?

JOCK #2
Shut up.

The Sluts inch closer to each other. Jocks watch. Closer.

DARKNESS. A BUCKET OF SAND DOUSES THE FIRE.

JOCK #1
...the fuck? Who's there?

FLOODLIGHTS ON. Light surrounds the clearing. Danny Muir
straddles the doused campfire.

JOCK #2
Park rangers!

UNSURE GIRL
Oh no!

JOCK #1
Get to the Hummer!

They take off running. Danny effortlessly TRIPS SLUT #2 with
his walking stick, and slaps PLASTIC CUFFS ON HER.

SLUT #1
Lacey!

JOCK #2
Forget her! Keep moving!

INTO THE FOREST. Jock #2 is in the lead. An ATV CUTS THEM
OFF. Jock #2 slams into it and falls.

SLUT #1
Alton!

JOCK #1
Shit!

On the ATV is RODRIGUEZ, 20s-30s, another ranger who wears
NIGHTVISION GOGGLES.

EXT. PADDY WAGON - NIGHT

A Parks Department paddy wagon. Inside sit all the kids, scuffed-up and cuffed. Danny holds the door open.

UNSURE GIRL

Please! I didn't want to be here! I didn't want to pollute, but --

DANNY

-- but you went along with it anyway. And you put the forest at risk. I'm sorry, but that can't go unpunished.

UNSURE GIRL

I have a full scholarship to Vassar, please!

RODRIGUEZ

I hear juvenile hall has a big library. You can study there.

She SOBS. Rodriguez SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT.

Danny and Hudson walk around the sides of the Paddy Wagon. Rodriguez hops onto his ATV.

The vehicles take off into the forest night.

MAIN TITLES.

EXT. RANGER STATION - DAY

The main ranger station for the park. A sign reads --

WARREN G. HARDING NATIONAL PARK

INT. RANGER STATION BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Rangers sit around the room, talking. In the middle, Rodriguez sits next to TOPP, early 20s, a rookie ranger.

Other Rangers are scattered around the room, including ANDERSON, THOMPSON, and WEST.

Falco sits on Hudson's arm. Hudson FEEDS him.

RODRIGUEZ

So I'm on my ATV, I see the slut sprinting, I aim, fire, bam! Hit her square with my net gun.

(MORE)

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

She goes down like a sack of slutty potatoes.

TOPP

Wow, really? Oh man, you guys have gotta take me out on night patrol!

HUDSON

No. No night duty until you pass the one year mark. That's Sargent Muir's rule.

TOPP

Yeah, yeah, I understand. I mean, in Garfield's first year, Jim Davis didn't really know what he was doing. The drawings were crude. The jokes were great, but not extremely great. But soon enough, he found his voice.

Danny ENTERS. Takes his spot at the PODIUM.

DANNY

All right rangers, listen up.

All RISE.

DANNY (CONT'D)

At ease, men.

Everyone SITS.

DANNY (CONT'D)

First order of business. I'd like to congratulate Ranger Topp on completion of his probationary period.

ENTHUSIASTIC APPLAUSE, as Topp takes it in.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Second order. Those campgrounds at the perimeter continue to be targets for delinquents. We need to be extra vigilant with our patrols.

RODRIGUEZ

You know Sarge, I could position some motion sensors if you like.

DANNY

You and your high tech gimmicks.
All a ranger needs is a broad-
brimmed hat and a well-honed sense
of smell.

RODRIGUEZ

Hey, gadgets come in handy. Check
this out.

Rodriguez takes out a PEN.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

Looks like an ordinary pen, right?
That is, until you press the
clicker.

Rodriguez AIMS the pen at Anderson. Presses the CLICKER.

From the PEN, a DART shoots into Ranger Anderson's NECK. He
collapses, unconscious.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

He'll be as good as new in a few
hours. Thank you, Skymall.

Danny TAKES THE PEN from Rodriguez.

DANNY

What's the matter with you?

Danny pockets the pen.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Technology is no substitute for a
ranger's will. Any other issues?

HUDSON

Fish and Game keeps hounding us
when we're by those lakefront
camps. The delinquents like those
camps because they can go skinny
dipping, skinny boating, and have
skinny sexual intercourse.

WEST

What are we supposed to do, Sarge?

DANNY

Pursue as far as you can. Would
Mutt Dandridge have sacrificed the
safety of the park because of Fish
and Game's bylaws?

RANGERS

No / No sir / No, he wouldn't, sir.

DANNY

All right. Dismissed.

INT. RANGER STATION HALL - DAY

Danny steps out of the briefing room. DECEMBER RAINES, 20s-30s, a beautiful park staffer, waits for him. They walk down the hall together.

DECEMBER

You shouldn't be so dismissive of technology, Danny.

DANNY

Were you listening in on our briefing?

DECEMBER

How else am I supposed to get any information? You're not exactly an open book.

DANNY

If I wanted to live a high-tech life, I wouldn't be a park ranger. I'd be an internet maker, or a cell phone polisher.

DECEMBER

Don't be such a cynic. Sometimes technology is about connecting people. Together.

She smiles at him. He smiles back.

DANNY

So what's on the docket this morning?

December looks at her agenda.

DECEMBER

Noise disturbance near the lakefront, camp 17. Shinra logging says they've got a protester, they were hoping you could pay a visit.

(beat)

And Supreme Commander Kleinwebber is here.

Danny stops in his tracks. Stunned.

DECEMBER (CONT'D)

She showed up unannounced. She's in your office.

DANNY

No calls.

INT. DANNY'S OFFICE - DAY

A messy office. Danny enters. SUPREME COMMANDER NANCY KLEINWEBBER, 50s, sits on the other side of his desk.

Danny SALUTES.

NANCY

At ease, Sargent. Have a seat.

Danny maneuvers around his desk and SITS.

DANNY

What brings you to Warren G Harding National Park, Supreme Commander?

NANCY

Let's cut the bullshit formalities. As you know, the National Park Service has been in dire financial straits for years. The economy has finally made things come to a head.

DANNY

What are you talking about?

NANCY

Cost cutting, Danny. People just aren't willing to spend money to go to national parks. Not in this climate. The Department of the Interior has designated 10 unprofitable parks as candidates for removal from federal protection. Warren G Harding is at the top of the list. We're going to be vetting a private investor to buy out the park grounds.

DANNY

Private investor? My God.

Danny looks at a PORTRAIT on the wall. Underneath it reads -- JOHN MUIR.

DANNY (CONT'D)

My great-great grandfather must be spinning in his grave.

NANCY

Your great-great grandfather was a great-great man. But he's a relic of a different time. The 19th century. Women couldn't vote. People shit in an outhouse, into a bucket, or, failing that, into a hole dug in the ground. Napoleon wasn't a delicious ice cream hybrid of vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry, but rather the megalomaniacal emperor of France.

DANNY

I think you mean "Neapolitan".

NANCY

Jonathan Taylor Thomas was a century away from being a megastar. If you said the word "microwave", people would think you meant a modest greeting, or what might happen in a tiny ocean. If you mentioned the phrase "world wide web", whoever was listening would assume some kind of horrifying giant spider was involved.

DANNY

Fine. Just tell me what this means for me.

NANCY

It's still in the proposal stage. If you can improve attendance and revenues, who knows. But I've got a gut feeling this is gonna go through.

Nancy TOSSES HIM A FILE.

NANCY (CONT'D)

I took the liberty of scheduling you a meeting with a prospective buyer. He's the CEO of the Global Petroleum Initiative Corporation.

DANNY

An oil company? This is insane!

NANCY

They've assured us they will preserve the sanctity of these park grounds. Now if you'll excuse me, I've gotta go take a shit. Indoors. Into a toilet. Because it's the 21st century. So before you advance your outdated philosophy, think about me taking a big creamy shit.

Nancy STANDS AND EXITS. Danny studies the FILE.

A photo of a man wearing a surgical mask. ARMEN BURROUGHS.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO CITYSCAPE - DAY

Skyscrapers tower over the bay. Focus on the tallest -- GPIC WORLD HEADQUARTERS.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The ornate conference room of a Fortune 500 company.

BUSINESSMEN and BUSINESSWOMEN pack every seat at the table.

A FIGURE sits at the head of the table. His chair is turned to the back of the rest of the room. We don't see him yet.

MR HORWITZ, a silent, stoic, imposing bodyguard, stands behind him.

A NERVOUS BUSINESSMAN finishes up a Powerpoint presentation.

NERVOUS BUSINESSMAN

And, so in conclusion, with diminished supply, margins on petroleum extraction will continue to decline. For GPIC to sustain itself, your firm must expand into renewable energy. And speaking on behalf of the entire EPA, our agency is eager to help you make that transition.

Nervous Businessman ADVANCES THE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION. There's a slide of PORKY PIG.

NERVOUS BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)

Otherwise, your investors will be saying, th-th-that's all, folks!

No one laughs. Long silence.

HEAD OF TABLE (O.S.)
 Why did you join the Environmental Protection Agency, Mr Joffrey? Are you a nature lover?

NERVOUS BUSINESSMAN
 Um, I guess so? I own both Free Willy DVDs.

Mr Horwitz starts to walk toward Nervous Businessman.

HEAD OF TABLE (O.S.)
 You know what's beautiful about nature? It's self-correcting. There's no debate over policy. No obtuse regulations. No government bureaucracies. The most efficient practices -- in hunting, gathering food, mating -- are naturally adopted. In a way, nature is the perfect free market economy.

NERVOUS BUSINESSMAN
 Sir?

HEAD OF TABLE (O.S.)
 Mr Joffrey, we need to acquire new sources of oil. There's no scarcity of supply, only government constraints on where we've been able to drill. But due to some effective, targeted lobbying, we're now in a position to pursue these sources -- in formerly so-called protected lands. THAT is how we maintain profitability. Not by complying with your useless -- unnatural -- EPA guidelines.

Mr Horwitz now stands right next to Nervous Businessman.

NERVOUS BUSINESSMAN
 What -- what you're talking about is pillaging nature.

HEAD OF TABLE (O.S.)
 No. What I'm talking about is --

The chair spins around. We see the head of the table --
 BURROUGHS. He wears a surgical mask over his mouth, always.

BURROUGHS
 Survival of the fittest!

Mr Horwitz TAPES NERVOUS BUSINESSMAN'S MOUTH and PULLS A SACK OVER HIS HEAD. He DRAGS HIM OUT OF THE ROOM.

NERVOUS BUSINESSMAN (O.S.)
(muffled screams)
Mmmff! MMMMFFFF!

The DOORS SLAM behind them. The others at the table react. Shock, but they've seen this before.

BURROUGHS
Who arranged this farce?

BUSINESSWOMAN meekly raises her hand.

BUSINESSWOMAN
The -- the EPA said it was mandatory for all energy companies. I had no choice.

BURROUGHS
Well, then you can explain to the EPA why their liaison won't be returning to his post. Make it believable. Because if they come around here asking questions -- you can find out where he ended up. Firsthand. Meeting dismissed!

All STAND AND EXIT, tense and terrified.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - DAY

Rodriguez and Topp get out of their PATROL TRUCK and walk through the campground. The lake is in sight.

They walk toward a campsite. A group of DELINQUENTS are drinking and smoking pot.

TOPP
Good afternoon, folks. A few of your neighboring camps made some complaints about the noise level over here.

DELINQUENT #1
Go fuck yourself, forest pig.

RODRIGUEZ
Sounds like you guys are partying a little too hard.

DELINQUENT #2

Sounds like you guys need to learn that partying too hard is literally impossible. That's the dictionary definition of literal.

RODRIGUEZ

All right, you fucking punks. We can do this the easy way --

Rodriguez draws his net gun.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

Or the net way.

The Delinquents react. They're not sure what to do.

Suddenly, two FISH AND GAME OFFICIALS enter, carrying a case of beer.

These are BRODSKY, head of Fish and Game, and his deputy, RYAN. They are both big and hairy.

BRODSKY

All right, you puss-puss bitches want to keep this party going?

Brodsky notices the Rangers.

BRODSKY (CONT'D)

Oh. Hey. If it isn't the tree police. What's the matter, ladies? Someone kidnap a leaf?

Ryan and the Delinquents LAUGH. Rodriguez and Topp react.

RODRIGUEZ

We've had numerous complaints about drunkenness, excessive cursing, and public urination. You have violated numerous park statutes, including C-P 824 dot --

Brodsky turns to Topp.

BRODSKY

I don't believe we've met, ranger. You must be new around here. Cody Brodsky, chief of the Department of Fish and Game. Is there a problem?

TOPP

Does Garfield kick Odie off the kitchen table?

BRODSKY

Well, you see, we're within 10 meters of the lake shore. Which means you're in Fish and Game's jurisdiction. So whether there's a problem or not -- well, I don't think that's your call to make.

RYAN

Maybe we should take these rangers into custody. Trespassing on lakefront property.

Brodsky gets in their faces.

BRODSKY

So I ask again. Is there a problem?

Rodriguez barely contains his anger. Topp is worried.

RODRIGUEZ

No. No problem. Enjoy your stay at the lake. You motherfuckers.

BRODSKY

Go home bark boys. Go stick your wiener in a knothole and rub a pinecone on your balls.

Rodriguez CHARGES Brodsky. Topp HOLDS HIM BACK.

TOPP

Let's go. He's not worth it.

They walk away, frustrated.

RODRIGUEZ

Fuckin' Fish and Game!

Delinquents throw BOTTLES at them and LAUGH.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

Danny drives his patrol truck, solo. He passes a SIGN.

It reads -- NOW EXITING PROTECTED FOREST

The forest abruptly thins. He's in the midst of a commercial logging area. LOGGERS and LOGGING TRUCKS are all around.

Danny turns off road and drives through the logging area. He reaches a clearing where one REDWOOD TREE stands alone.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Danny steps out of his truck. There are loggers looking up at the TREE.

HIGH UP IN THE TREE,

There's a makeshift TREEHOUSE and PLATFORM.

A logger FOREMAN approaches Danny.

FOREMAN
You the ranger?

DANNY
Yeah. Sargent Danny Muir, National
Park Service. She up there?

FOREMAN
Yeah.

DANNY
Give me a second to talk to her.

Danny walks up to the tree. He yells up to it.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Hello up there!

A hippie girl emerges from the makeshift house. This is SALLY, 20s, beautiful.

SALLY
Hey! Are you another one of those
tree murderers?

DANNY
No. I'm a park ranger. My name's
Danny Muir.

SALLY
Oh, cool. I'm Sally. And as for the
rest of you, you're all torturers
at this tree Gitmo! End the tree
holocaust!

LOGGERS
Shut up / Dumb hippie / Go listen
to Phish / Idiot

Danny motions for them to back off. They all step back.

DANNY

Listen, we got a complaint that you were up here. Now, park grounds end about a click up the road. This territory is legally leased by the Shinra corporation for commercial logging. I told them I'd talk to you as a favor, because they told me you refuse to negotiate. Instead, you call them things like, well, wood rapists.

SALLY

Well, that's what they are!

DANNY

Well, no matter what you think about THEM, I'm someone who cares about trees just as much as you do.

SALLY

Oh yeah? Do you love trees?

DANNY

Of course.

SALLY

Do you consider chopping down a sapling the moral equivalent of forced abortion?

DANNY

No. But I certainly would never intentionally chop down a sapling.

SALLY

Okay. Would you either marry or gay-marry a tree, and then try and have half-human, half-tree children, and love them even if they were functionally retarded?

DANNY

Probably not. I see numerous problems with that idea.

SALLY

Yeah, me neither. Just wondering where you draw the line. Wow, I guess you do care about trees.

DANNY

Yeah. So -- do you think you can come down from there? Let these loggers cut down the tree they own?

SALLY

No! This tree is over 90 meters tall! That means it's over --

DANNY

600 years old.

SALLY

Yeah! So you know. I mean, it's beautiful. I can't let them turn this into the wood paneling for a hot tub that some fat swingers are just gonna have fat sloppy swinger sex in.

DANNY

I understand. But can you at least stop calling them things like --

Danny reads from some notes.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Axe-wielding footsoldiers for the anti-tree Gestapo?

SALLY

Yeah, I guess so. Hey, you know, you seem like a really cool guy. Plus you're ruggedly handsome. Like the Brawny paper towel mascot, only you're not an empty corporate shill. You know, if you're ever bored and you want to chat, you should come on by!

DANNY

Maybe I'll do that.

Danny returns to the Foreman.

DANNY (CONT'D)

I tried. She's not coming down.

FOREMAN

Goddamnit! Stupid hippies. All right boys, let's move to another sector for now.

The loggers GRUMBLE as they gather up their equipment.

Danny looks back up at Sally. She WAVES enthusiastically.

Danny smiles.

INT. RANGER STATION - DAY

Topp, Hudson, and Rodriguez watch through the window as a BLACK ESCALADE WITH TINTED WINDOWS approaches the station.

TOPP

Who is that?

HUDSON

A prospective investor. He may end up being our new boss.

The car PARKS.

RODRIGUEZ

Private investor. I don't like it! You can't run a national park like an amusement park! It'll turn into a circus!

CHAUFFEUR helps Burroughs and Mr Horwitz out of his car. A Japanese personal chef, NOBUO, also gets out.

TOPP

Why does he wear a mask?

HUDSON

Allergies.

RODRIGUEZ

He has allergies that serious and he wants to buy a forest? Doesn't make any fucking sense.

TOPP

Yeah. That'd be like Nermal posing for a non-cute calendar.

Outside, December SHAKES HANDS with Burroughs and Mr Horwitz, and BOWS to Nobuo.

HUDSON

Something about this. Doesn't feel right.

INT. RANGER STATION MEETING ROOM - DAY

A cozy meeting room, with a conference table and chairs.
There's a PROJECTOR SCREEN.

Burroughs sits at head of the table. Mr Horwitz and Nobuo the chef stand behind him.

Danny ENTERS.

DANNY

Good day, gentleman. Sorry to keep you waiting, had a call out in the forest. I'm Sargent Danny Muir, I'm head ranger of this facility.

Danny SHAKES HANDS with Burroughs.

BURROUGHS

Armen Burroughs, CEO of GPIC.
Pleased to make your acquaintance.
This is my bodyguard, Mr Horwitz.
And my personal chef, Nobuo.

DANNY

Can I get you all something to drink? Cocoa? Hot Toddy?

BURROUGHS

Actually, we were just about to have lunch.

Nobuo slaps down a huge CUTTING BOARD with a THUD. It startles Danny.

Nobuo opens up a BAG, and pulls out a LIVE SALMON. He slams it down on the cutting board.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

The dish is sashimi.

Nobuo hovers a BUTCHER KNIFE over the squirming fish.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

I prefer it fresh.

Danny reacts as the chef SLAMS THE KNIFE down onto the fish.

DANNY

So, Supreme Commander Kleinwebber told me you were interested in possibly taking an ownership stake.

Nobuo continues preparing the dish as they talk.

BURROUGHS

I'll be honest. I'm eager to buy,
Sargent. Let me show you our plans
for the park. Mr Horwitz?

Mr Horwitz starts a VIDEO on the projector.

ON VIDEO

EXT. NATIONAL PARK - DAY

Shots of the park. NARRATOR speaks over the imagery.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Empty campsites. Falling revenues.
Forest animals that are just plain
ugly.

Close on a normal-looking RACCOON.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

These days, Warren G Harding
National Park seems more like
Warren G Harding National Crap. But
what can we do to turn it around?

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

INFOMERCIAL ACTRESS looks through her medicine cabinet. She
finds a BOTTLE OF PILLS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

That's it! I've got the
prescription! A wonder drug called
PRIVATIZATION!

She turns toward the camera and holds the BOTTLE out. The
label reads -- PRIVATIZATION

EXT. PARK ENTRANCE - DAY

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Introducing --

Sign reads -- WARREN G HARDING NATIONAL PARK

MAGIC WIPE synced to Narration.

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Warren G Amusement Park!

Sign now reads -- WARREN G AMUSEMENT PARK

A BRONZE STATUE OF RAPPER WARREN G stands by the entrance.

PLAY SONG - WARREN G'S REGULATE

IN THE MEETING ROOM

Danny reacts, horrified.

ON VIDEO

SERIES OF SHOTS - BEFORE AND AFTER

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Fully endorsed by R & B artist
Warren G, the revamped park will
provide the hip facilities needed
to attract today's youth.

MAGIC WIPE - HIKING TRAIL TURNS INTO EXTREME BMX TRAIL

Edgy EXTREME CYCLISTS do tricks down the trail.

MAGIC WIPE - CAMPGROUND TURNS INTO HOT TUB

The dirt lot turns into a party-sized hot tub, filled with
alcohol -swilling youths. A SLUT pulls up her bikini top
while FRAT GUYS film it.

MAGIC WIPE - FIRST AID CENTER TURNS INTO INTERNET CAFE

Under the sign it reads - SPONSORED BY MONSTER ENERGY DRINK

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And best of all, it's all
sustainable -- supported by the
vast untapped energy resources on
the grounds of the park.

MAGIC WIPE - REDWOOD TREES TURN INTO OIL WELLS

IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM

Danny is astonished.

ON VIDEO

EXT. FOREST - DAY (OBVIOUS GREEN SCREEN)

WARREN G addresses the camera.

WARREN G

I'm Warren G. And if you want a park that will regulate with the G-Funk, you'll partner up with G-prick, the illest energy company around.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

(...inaudible)

WARREN G

That's what I said! G-PIC!

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

(...inaudible)

WARREN G

Fuck you, I know what I said!

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

(...inaudible)

WARREN G

I'm not doing another take!

INSERT - CONCEPT ANIMATIC

A full animated map of the proposed Warren G park, filled with BREWPUBS and SKATEBOARD RAMPS. The park LOGO in front of a RAINBOW comes over the screen.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Warren G Amusement Park. The future is --

SFX - CASH REGISTER CHA-CHING

END VIDEO

Burroughs turns away from the screen without hesitation.

BURROUGHS

As head of operations at the revamped park, you'll draw a substantially increased salary.

(MORE)

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

And your existing staff will be retained, given full benefits and GPIC stock options. And most importantly -- you'll have the good feeling of being proud members of the private sector.

DANNY

I'm, sorry, Mr Burroughs. This is contrary to everything the name Muir stands for.

BURROUGHS

The name Muir stands for conservation of resources. Preservation of land. I'm offering you both -- with some minor caveats for the sake of profitability.

DANNY

What you're offering is tantamount to the destruction of this forest. I'm sorry, I can't stand for it.

BURROUGHS

Very well. But I know your finances. You're hemorrhaging money. If you lose federal support, this park goes bankrupt. And once that happens -- you go from being a negotiating partner --

Burroughs picks up a slimy bit of salmon. He pulls his mask forward just slightly, and slurps the fish into his mouth.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

To being easy prey.

INT. ESCALADE - MOMENTS LATER

CHAUFFEUR closes the back door for Burroughs and Mr Horwitz.

BURROUGHS

You're wondering what I'll do now, Mr Horwitz.

The car starts up and drives through the forest road.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

I didn't get where I was without planning for every contingency.

(MORE)

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

Our internal numbers estimate two billion barrels of oil underneath this forest -- that's half as much as in ANWR, in one-twentieth of the area. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for domestic oil exploration. You're wondering what I'll do now, and I'll give you the answer I always give -- I'll do whatever I have to. In fact, I've already started.

ON THE ROAD AHEAD

There's a SQUIRREL idling in the middle of the road.

IN THE CAR

Burroughs sees it. He barks at his driver.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

Speed up!

The car accelerates toward the helpless squirrel, plowing over him with a THUMP.

Burroughs LAUGHS under his mask. Mr Horwitz looks at him.

INT. DANNY'S OFFICE - DAY

Danny fumes. December enters.

DECEMBER

Are you okay?

DANNY

This, Burroughs. I can't believe anyone could disrespect nature like that. It's like he was barfing on my family name -- and he was barfing up barf he'd eaten earlier.

DECEMBER

I know. But -- we are losing money. Maybe a buyout would be for the best.

DANNY

No. Never. Non-profit is the only way a park can be run. We'll do what we can to boost our numbers. Promotions. Tamale day. Free hat weekend. Kids love comic books.

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)

How about a new slogan -- "Come meet a real wolverine"? We can recruit a celebrity -- imagine "Meet TV's Balki" week!

DECEMBER

We can try. We should try. But if it ends up not being enough -- then please, think about your future. Think about -- our future.

She puts her hand on his. He looks up.

EXT. HUDSON'S TENT - NIGHT

A simple canvas tent. A DELIVERY TRUCK idles.

Hudson steps out of his tent. DELIVERY MAN approaches. He wears sunglasses and a hat and holds a box.

DELIVERY MAN

Mr -- Hudson? Are you the owner of a hawk named Fucko?

HUDSON

Falco. Why?

DELIVERY MAN

We have a delivery from the Pacific Hawk Supply Store.

HUDSON

Really? I don't remember placing an order.

DELIVERY MAN

Says it's a thank you gift for a frequent customer. If I could just get your signature.

Delivery Man hands over a clipboard. Hudson looks down at it.

INSERT - CLIPBOARD

The paper on it reads, simply -- HOPE YOU LIKE BALLS!

Hudson looks up. The Delivery Man has the BOX open, and inside are his exposed BALLS.

HUDSON

Oh my God!

Delivery Man takes off his HAT and GLASSES. It's Brodsky.

BRODSKY
Pranked, bird boy!

Behind Hudson, two other FISH AND GAME OFFICIALS pull the POLES from Hudson's tent, COLLAPSING IT.

Hudson turns in surprise. The others RUN AND JUMP INTO THE TRUCK. Ryan is driving. HONKS.

RYAN
(from truck)
Fish and Game for life!

The truck starts to drive off, as others FLIP OFF Hudson.

BRODSKY
Tell him how we rock Ryan!

From the truck's RADIO, the song TAKE MY BREATH AWAY PLAYS.

BRODSKY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
No, no, that's the wrong song!

Hudson shakes his head as the truck DRIVES AWAY.

EXT. SALLY'S TREE - DAY

Danny parks his truck at the base of the tree.

The loggers are gone.

DANNY
Hello up there!

Sally peeks out of her shed.

SALLY
Hey! Ranger Muir!

DANNY
You can call me Danny. Looks like the loggers took off.

SALLY
The second I leave they'll be back to chop it down. They're like vultures. Big, fat, hairy, human, axe-wielding vultures, who wear flannel shirts and are loggers.

DANNY
Well, then, in the meantime, I brought something for you.

Danny HOLDS UP A BOX.

SALLY

Oh, wow! That's so sweet. Let me just lower you my supply bucket!

Sally DROPS A BUCKET TETHERED TO A ROPE. It hits the ground.

Danny picks it up. Reacts to a DISGUSTING SMELL.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Sorry about the smell! It doubles as my urine bucket.

Danny puts the BOX in the bucket. Sally PULLS IT BACK UP.

DANNY

No problem. I was just thinking I'd get you something in case you ever need a little help. You know.

Sally opens the box. It's clearly a WALKIE-TALKIE RADIO.

SALLY

Whoa, cool, a grenade! I hope I never need this kinda help, but I am willing to use it if I have to!

DANNY

(into radio)
Uh, actually, it's a radio.

Danny's VOICE comes out of Sally's RADIO.

SALLY

Ahh! The grenade is talking!

DANNY

(into radio)
No Sally, it's not a grenade. It's a radio! That way you can let me know if you're ever in trouble.

SALLY

(into radio)
Wow, cool! A radio!

DANNY

(into radio)
Or if you just ever have something on your mind. And want to chat. Or whatever.

SALLY
 (into radio)
 Cool! Thanks, Danny!

Sally puts down the radio and turns to the treehouse.

SALLY (CONT'D)
 Hey Bobby, come see what I got!

BOBBY, a hippie male, comes out of the treehouse.

BOBBY
 Whoa, far out baby, a radio!

Bobby puts her arm around Sally.

SALLY
 Bobby, this is Ranger Muir! He's
 really cool for a member of the
 establishment!

Danny reacts. Waves, weakly.

BOBBY
 Flower power, Ranger!

EXT. CAMPSITE 401 - NIGHT

A young middle-class family. DAD sets up a tent. MOM unpacks their minivan.

MEAN KID, a little boy (7-9), sits on a log.

MEAN KID
 This is boring. Why'd we have to
 come on this stupid camping trip?

DAD
 Corey, please. We're trying to
 reconnect with nature.

MEAN KID
 I wish we'd taken a real vacation.
 Donnie McCabe's parents took him to
 Laughlin. He got to play videogames
 in his hotel room the whole time!

MOM
 Son. Please. Just give it a chance.

MEAN KID
 But it's so boring! Nothing ever
 happens in nature.
 (MORE)

MEAN KID (CONT'D)

That's why YouTube was invented.
Screw it, I'm going for a walk in
the woods. Maybe that'll be less
like playing tetherball with the
gay kid.

Mean Kid walks into the WOODS.

MOM

Be careful, sweetie!

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Mean Kid wanders through the woods, with a FLASHLIGHT.

He sees a SQUIRREL. He CHUCKS A ROCK at it.

The squirrel RUNS AWAY. Mean Kid LAUGHS.

MEAN KID

Stupid cat.

Suddenly --

A BEAST jumps out and TACKLES HIM.

MEAN KID (CONT'D)

Auugh!

INT. DANNY'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Danny drives on the forest road, on night patrol.

In his REARVIEW MIRROR, HEADLIGHTS get closer and closer. The
sound of a SPEEDING VEHICLE approaches.

The vehicle rapidly gets closer. Tailgates. A MINIVAN.

It HONKS, repeatedly.

DANNY

Whoa, where's the fire?

The minivan pulls into the other lane, and pulls even with
Danny. Minivan ROLLS DOWN its window. Danny does the same.

IN THE MINIVAN

As Dad drives, a frantic Mom holds the BLOODIED Mean Kid.

MOM

Help us! He was attacked by an animal! You have to help us!

DANNY

Okay, just stay calm! The hospital isn't far from here!

MEAN KID

(wounded)

Mom...

MOM

What? What, pumpkin, what?

MEAN KID

This... vacation... sucks....

DANNY

Follow me.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

Danny flicks on a SIREN and ACCELERATES.

INT. RANGER STATION LOBBY - DAY

The next morning. The station is buzzing. Rodriguez, Topp, and Hudson are watching a news report. December walks up.

DECEMBER

Have you guys seen Sargent Muir yet? We need damage control.

HUDSON

What could have done this? We've never had problems with bears, or coyotes -- and how did the media find out already?

RODRIGUEZ

Shh -- here we go.

ON THE TELEVISION

IN STUDIO

ANCHOR

Details are still emerging about last night's vicious wild animal attack at Warren G Harding National Park. Amid already plunging revenues, this is tough news for the struggling park.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Footage of the Mean Kid on a GURNEY, wheeled out of an AMBULANCE and into an ER.

ANCHOR

The victim -- 8-year-old Corey Mitchell, is now hospitalized in stable condition, after being attacked by an unidentified animal.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Dad holds Mom as she's being interviewed.

CHYRON - DAVID AND LINDA MITCHELL, PARENTS

MOM

He's the sweetest, most loving, most polite little boy. An angel who walks on earth. He never did anything to deserve this.

REPORTER (O.S.)

Mr Mitchell, what would you say to anyone planning on camping this weekend?

DAD

Well, let me put it this way. You've heard of the band Death Cab for Cutie. Well, Warren G Harding National Park is a Death Camp for You-ie.

BACK TO SCENE

RODRIGUEZ

Fuck! We're doomed with a catchphrase that memorable.

TOPP

Yeah, the right label goes a long way. "Garfield Tips the Scales" outsold "Garfield Rolls On", despite the latter being a better anthology. Why? Catchier title.

RODRIGUEZ

Shit! Well, looks like ordering these hats for free hat weekend was a big fat waste of money!

Rodriguez kicks over a CARDBOARD BOX. TRUCKER HATS spill out. Close on one. It reads -- "RANGERS DO IT IN THE FOREST"

DECEMBER

It's okay. We'll get through this.

Danny enters.

DANNY

Briefing room. Now.

The rangers STAND and walk to the BRIEFING ROOM.

DANNY (CONT'D)

December. Why don't you sit in on this?

December smiles and nods.

INT. RANGER STATION BRIEFING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Danny addresses the rangers from his podium. December sits among them.

DANNY

As you know, last night, we endured a near-fatal animal attack. As such, we will be stepping up night patrols. Effective immediately, and lasting indefinitely, we will need every eligible ranger patrolling every night of the week.

GROANS from the rangers.

DANNY (CONT'D)

I know, I know. But look, this is a PR disaster when we need it least. Nothing drives campers away faster than unsafe conditions.

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)

And more importantly, ensuring park safety is a ranger's sworn duty.

DECEMBER

Sargent, I don't understand. Over the past ten years, we've had the best animal attack record west of the Rockies.

RODRIGUEZ

Isn't that a bad thing?

HUDSON

No, she means best meaning least number of attacks. I think. Right?

DECEMBER

Yes, that's what I meant.

RODRIGUEZ

See, to me, when you say, best animal attack record, I'm thinking, that's who had the most attacks. Which would make the worst one the best one.

WEST

Yeah -- that makes sense to me.

HUDSON

How does that make sense?

DECEMBER

Look, what's important is -- how do we stop this?

DANNY

We won't know how until we ID the animal. Which means we're gonna have to catch us one.

Danny smiles. The others look at him. Amazed.

THUMP THUMP THUMP -- on the briefing room's shaded WINDOW.

Rodriguez steps over and RAISES THE SHADES.

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW

Giant, BURNING LETTERS that read -- FUCK YOU

Brodksy, Ryan, and other Fish and Game officials stand by, taunting. Brodksy and Ryan talk through MEGAPHONES.

BRODSKY
 What's up, Rangers? Hey Ryan, knock
 knock.

RYAN
 Who's there?

BRODSKY
 A little boy on a camping trip.

RYAN
 A little boy on a camping trip who?

BRODSKY
 A little boy on a camping trip
 who's getting eaten by an animal
 cause those shitty idiot rangers
 are too busy giving each other
 bubble-bath massages and jacking
 each other off while thinking about
 trees and also being dumb as shit
 in general!

Fish and Game LAUGHS and continue to laugh.

Inside the rangers are furious.

Ryan leans against the "U", too cool for school. His arm
 CATCHES FIRE.

RYAN
 Shit! Shit! Augghh!

Others BEAT RYAN WITH JACKETS to put out the FLAMES.

RODRIGUEZ
 Fucking Fish and Game.

Outside, as they try to put out the fire on Ryan, other Fish
 and Game officials CATCH FIRE.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - DAY

Danny's voice is on Sally's RADIO.

DANNY (O.S.)
 Sally, come in Sally. This is
 Danny. Over.

Sally runs out of the house and picks up the radio.

SALLY
 Sally here. Over!

She loves saying "over".

INT. DANNY'S OFFICE - SAME

Danny is on the radio.

DANNY

Sally, I just wanted to let you know, there was an animal attack in the park. I doubt you're in any danger, but I just wanted you to be on the lookout. Over.

INTERCUT - DANNY AND SALLY ON THE RADIO

SALLY

Oh no! How terrible. Was it a bear?

DANNY

We don't know yet.

SALLY

Was it a wolf?

DANNY

We really don't know, it could be anything at this point.

SALLY

Was it a badger?

DANNY

We're just not sure, like I said, it --

SALLY

Was it a mountain lion?

DANNY

Sally, we don't --

SALLY

Was it a minotaur?

DANNY

Okay, that I can rule out. That's a mythological creature.

SALLY

Okay. Well, hey. Whatever it is -- be careful, okay? I don't want you to get hurt.

DANNY

Don't worry, Sally. It's my job.
Well, okay, nice talking to you.
Say hi to, uh -- Billy for me.

SALLY

Bobby. And he's not up here right
now. He comes and goes.

DANNY

Really?

SALLY

Yeah. He said it's too much
commitment if we live in the tree
together, and commitment is what
the establishment wants. So I
understand. But I'm glad I have a
friend like you to keep me company!

DANNY

So am I, Sally. So am I.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - LATE NIGHT

It's a sting operation. Danny, Hudson, and Anderson are
undercover, disguised as naive campers.

A single LANTERN lights the campground.

DANNY

What do you say we turn in for the
night, boys?

HUDSON

Sounds like the thing to do. After
all, we can't watch any late night
television out here.

ANDERSON

It's a shame we couldn't get a fire
started, but hey, in the city,
machines start your fires for you.

Danny wears an EARPIECE. He gets a message.

RODRIGUEZ (V.O.)

I'm in position.

EXT. FOREST - SAME

Rodriguez scopes the perimeter with his night vision goggles.

He talks into his HEADSET.

RODRIGUEZ
But no signs of life yet.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - SAME

Danny gives a HAND SIGNAL. Hudson and Anderson NOD.

HUDSON
I guess we should move all of our
food out of our car. This cold air
will keep it fresh.

Hudson and Anderson move a cooler and open it up. It's filled
with BLOODY MEAT.

EXT. FOREST - SAME

RODRIGUEZ
I've got movement.

THROUGH HIS NIGHT VISION GOGGLES

We see a shadowy beast move through the forest.

RODRIGUEZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)
North-northwest of camp.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - SAME

DANNY
(into radio)
Stay in position.

A bush RUSTLES.

HUDSON
Something's moving.

More RUSTLING. Anderson grabs the LANTERN and wanders over.

DANNY
Anderson! Stay in position!

ANDERSON
I'm not letting that thing catch us
off guard.

Anderson approaches the bush. RUSTLES.

Steps forward. Holds the lantern up to it. RUSTLES.

RUSTLES.

...A small RACCOON runs out of the bush.

Anderson SIGHS, relieved.

A BEAST JUMPS DOWN FROM A TREE and LANDS ON ANDERSON.

ANDERSON (CONT'D)

Auuuggghhh!

The LANTERN falls into the dirt, KILLING THE LIGHTS.

DANNY

Shit!

Danny and Hudson turn on FLASHLIGHTS.

Danny sprints over and JUMPS AND LANDS ON THE BEAST'S BACK. Light from flashlights give brief illuminations of the melee.

The beast drops Anderson. Hudson runs over to help him, shines his light on him. He's bloody -- clawed-up and bitten.

Danny holds on for dear life. Struggles. The beast flails and ROARS. He's about to lose his grip.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Hudson -- now!

Hudson points toward the melee.

A distant SCREECH quickly becomes deafening.

FALCO THE HAWK SWOOPS ONTO THE BEAST and attacks him.

The beast ROARS and throws off Danny. Bats at Falco, as Falco claws and pecks at him from all angles.

Beast runs INTO THE FOREST.

DANNY (CONT'D)

(into radio)

He's on the move!

EXT. FOREST - SAME

Rodriguez STARTS UP HIS ATV.

NEAR CAMP

The beast SPRINTS through the forest, Falco in pursuit.

DANNY
Damn he's fast!

RODRIGUEZ (V.O.)
I'm on him!

THROUGH THE FOREST

Rodriguez rides his ATV. Approaches the beast. Spies him through his night vision goggles.

Rodriguez aims his net gun. FIRES.

The beast collapses with a ROAR.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
Gotcha bitch!

Danny and Hudson run through the forest. Falco SCREECHES.

HUDSON
This way!

They follow the SCREECH and quickly find the source.

The beast is caught in a net. Falco hovers overhead. The beast continues to ROAR and GROAN.

Falco flies onto Hudson's glove and rests there.

Rodriguez's ATV arrives, just as Danny is examining the subdued beast with his FLASHLIGHT.

RODRIGUEZ
The hell kind of animal is it,
Sarge?

Danny keeps examining.

DANNY
This is no animal.

We see the beast. It's a man.

He's completely naked, with a wild beard. He GNASHES AND GNAWS at the net, totally feral and wild.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Inside a room with an observation window, the man/beast is held in place with psychiatric patient RESTRAINTS. He's still violently thrashing, as a PHYSICIAN examines him.

We now see the man/beast is the same Nervous Businessman who Burroughs had taken away in the boardroom.

Danny and Hudson observe from outside.

PHYSICIAN steps out of the room.

DANNY

He said anything yet?

PHYSICIAN

No. And I don't think he ever will. He responds to visual stimulus like a rabid squirrel. He's as oblivious to language as a really stupid baby. Something snapped in his brain.

HUDSON

Can't you recondition him? De-program him?

PHYSICIAN

I've worked with traumatic brain injury patients, people with neurological diseases. This man is as far gone as you can get and still be conscious. Getting him to be normal again would be like training a bear to drive a car.

DANNY

You can do that.

HUDSON

Yeah, I've seen that at the circus. It's a little car, but still.

PHYSICIAN

Okay, then -- like getting a dog to drive a car.

DANNY

Well, I've seen them ride skateboards. Not much of a leap.

PHYSICIAN

It's not important. What's important is, whatever happened to him, he's not ever coming back. He's not a man anymore.

INT. RANGER STATION BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

A press conference room. December quiets the REPORTERS.

DECEMBER

Everyone, please. Thank you. Last night, an elite unit of park rangers captured the suspect we believe responsible for the recent attack on a camper.

REPORTER #1

Suspect? I thought this was an animal attack.

DECEMBER

If you'll allow me to finish. We believe these attacks have been carried out by a human being. From fingerprints matched to federal databases, we have identified him as Scott Joffrey, a former employee of the EPA.

December cues up a POWERPOINT SLIDE. It's a PHOTO of the Nervous Businessman. It's an attempt at a sexy self-portrait, where he's obviously holding the camera, like the kind teen girls put up on social networking sites.

DECEMBER (CONT'D)

This is a picture of the suspect we acquired from his Facebook profile. It's dated February of last year, and captioned "Hope I got my good side! LOL."

Next slide -- the feral Nervous Businessman restrained in the hospital room. Ferocious, animalistic.

GASPS from the room.

DECEMBER (CONT'D)

And here he is last night after his capture. Perhaps due to mental illness, Mr Joffrey has completely crossed the line separating animal and man.

Next slide -- The word MAN on the left side, and the word ANIMAL on the right side.

DECEMBER (CONT'D)

He has become --

Slide animates -- the words MAN and ANIMAL move toward each other, until the "AN" in MAN and the "AN" in ANIMAL overlap.

DECEMBER (CONT'D)

A beastperson.

She advances the slide. It changes to the word BEASTPERSON.

Reporters BARK OUT QUESTIONS.

INT. DANNY'S OFFICE - DAY

Danny looks over a map. Hudson enters, with a VIDEOTAPE.

HUDSON

Excuse me, Sargent. I thought you should see this.

Danny looks up. Hudson PUTS THE TAPE INTO A VCR.

HUDSON (CONT'D)

Before last night's raid, I borrowed one of Rodriguez's night vision cameras and attached it to Falco.

Hudson presses PLAY.

ON THE TELEVISION

We see video of an aerial shot of the park in night vision. Hudson points out map details as he narrates.

HUDSON (CONT'D)

This is us at the campsite.

Danny observes carefully. Hudson points at an ATV.

HUDSON (CONT'D)

This is Rodriguez.

Hudson points at a TRUCK idling in the forest. There's a large CRATE in the truck bed.

HUDSON (CONT'D)

And look here. Just north of the camp.

Two MEN get out of the truck.

DANNY
What the hell? Who is that?

HUDSON
Keep watching.

The men open the truck GATE, then open the CRATE and RUN.
BEASTPERSON jumps out.

DANNY
My God. Someone dropped him off.

ON VIDEO

The frame flickers, and the video switches to --

CLIP - A SCENE FROM THE FILM LADYHAWKE

Hudson quickly STOPS THE TAPE.

HUDSON
Oh, that's Ladyhawke. Must've been
what was on this tape beforehand.

DANNY
Is that the movie about the hawk
that turns into a beautiful woman?

HUDSON
Uh, uh, yeah. Yeah it is.

Awkward beat. December enters.

DECEMBER
I just got off the phone with my
contact at the EPA. Scott Joffrey
went missing last month. Eight days
ago, they found his car abandoned
on the side of Highway 37.

DANNY
So, he has a psychotic break, pulls
over, runs into the wilderness?
Migrates into our grounds?

HUDSON
Textbook case of Margot Kidder
syndrome.

DECEMBER

Hold on. He disappeared while on a business trip. A scheduled audit with an energy corporation. GPIC.

HUDSON

Burroughs. My God -- you think he could somehow be behind this?

DANNY

If he is, Joffrey's not the only one like this, I assure you. We can't let up, thinking we caught the only beastperson. We have to think: We caught the first of a new master race. Of beastPEOPLE.

INT. ESCALADE - NIGHT

Burroughs's SUV idles in the park wilderness.

Brodsky and Ryan sit, looking into a BRIEFCASE FULL OF CASH.

BURROUGHS

There's more where that came from if you keep me happy. You have no idea how much oil is buried beneath that forest.

RYAN

Hey, we just like socking it to those park ranger jackasses. The money's just the icing on the "fuck you, rangers" cake.

BRODSKY

So, uh -- where do you find those crazy wild men anyway? They seem pretty crazy and wild. They from an asylum or something?

BURROUGHS

You know, in psychology, there's a ongoing debate about nature versus nurture. I consider nurture more important. Because no matter the nature of a man, if you nurture him right -- you can change him to whatever you like.

Burroughs LAUGHS.

BRODSKY

All right. Cool man. Hey, you know, it's our game night, we were gonna go play Scattergories. You guys want in? Me, and Ryan here, some of the guys -- should be a lot of fun!

Burroughs and Mr Horwitz stare them down.

BRODSKY (CONT'D)

All right, well you have a great night. And you guys know how to get out of here, right?

Burroughs and Mr Horwitz keep staring.

BRODSKY (CONT'D)

Cool.

INT. RANGER STATION LOBBY - NIGHT

Topp approaches Rodriguez. He's got all his gear packed up.

RODRIGUEZ

Have a good night, Topp.

TOPP

Yeah, you too. Wow, so you going out on patrol again tonight?

RODRIGUEZ

Yeah, Sarge says nightly patrols have to continue indefinitely. If GPIC might be behind this, who knows how many other beastpeople might be out there?

TOPP

Must've been pretty cool to catch that beastperson. Pretty cool.

RODRIGUEZ

Yeah. It was intense.

Topp idles for a beat.

TOPP

Hey, Rodriguez. This may sound crazy, but -- what if I came out with you tonight on night patrol?

RODRIGUEZ

What? No! Not until you hit the one year mark. It's Sarge's rule.

TOPP

I know. But, you don't have enough men as it is. You guys have to patrol solo. What happens if you're out there and you get ambushed? You'd have no one to radio for backup. I could have your back.

Rodriguez thinks about it.

RODRIGUEZ

I don't need any help.

TOPP

Like Garfield doesn't need Jon or Odie, right? That's what he thought. Until he had a nightmarish dream sequence of what life would be like without them, in a famed series of strips starting October 23, 1989. Garfield ended up starving, alone, in a filthy, abandoned house. Jim Davis WILL go dark if he has a point to make.

(beat)

Look, just let me ride along with you, okay? I'll just observe.

Rodriguez thinks about it. Thinks hard.

INT. RODRIGUEZ'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Rodriguez drives. Topp is in the passenger seat.

Rodriguez's ATV sits in the bed of his patrol truck.

RODRIGUEZ

This is crazy. This is stupid. Don't do anything stupid. Don't fuck this up.

TOPP

Okay, I won't!

RODRIGUEZ

You got it? Cause if something happens, it's my ass, not yours!

TOPP
I know, I know!

INT. HUDSON'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

HUDSON
(into radio)
Okay, guys -- little trivia. What
movie is this line from. I'm a
dancer!

INT. THOMPSON'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

THOMPSON
Showgirls! Easy!

HUDSON (V.O.)
(on radio)
You got it.

INT. RANGER STATION - CONTINUOUS

December speaks into a radio.

DECEMBER
Base to all units. We received a
complaint about rowdy delinquents
in campsite thirty-seven. Recommend
dispatch. Over.

INT. DANNY'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

DANNY
(into radio)
Got it, December. Rodriguez, go
take a look at that. Over.

INT. RODRIGUEZ'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

RODRIGUEZ
Copy that, proceeding to campsite
thirty -- uh, what was it --

TOPP
Thirty-seven!

Rodriguez silently FLIPS OUT.

DANNY (V.O.)
Who was that?

RODRIGUEZ
Uh, uh, no one!

Rodriguez SMACKS Topp.

TOPP
I'm sorry!

DANNY (V.O.)
Who was that?

RODRIGUEZ
No one! It was me. I'm working on
voices.
(Topp's voice)
Thirty-seven! I'm sorry!

Topp gets really self-conscious.

TOPP
Oh my God, is that really what I
sound like?

DANNY (V.O.)
Who was that?

Rodriguez SMACKS HIM.

RODRIGUEZ
Uh, sorry, you're cutting out
Sarge! Losing you, over!

Rodriguez FLIPS OFF HIS RADIO.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
What's the matter with you?

TOPP
Sorry!
(beat)
Do I really sound like that?

INT. WEST'S TRUCK - NIGHT

WEST
Okay, I got one. The line is --
Give me the fluffy rabbit!

INT. HUDSON'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

HUDSON
Darkman -- the TV edit!

THOMPSON (V.O.)
(on radio)
Nice!

INT. DANNY'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

DANNY
Let's try and keep the trivia to a
minimum, boys.

OTHERS (V.O.)
Sorry boss / Sorry Sarge!

EXT. CAMPSITE 37 - NIGHT

Rodriguez drives his truck onto the campsite. Parks.

In the campground, there's a parked VAN, blasting HEAVY METAL. The van is ROCKING BACK AND FORTH.

IN RODRIGUEZ'S TRUCK

Rodriguez holds his hand over Topp's mouth.

RODRIGUEZ
(into radio)
This is Rodriguez. I'm at the site.
Looks like the delinquents are
having some illicit activity in a
vehicle. Over.

Rodriguez puts down his radio. Turns to Topp.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
Stay in the car. I'll be right
back.

TOPP
Okay. Sure. It's just -- Can I come
outside? I promise I won't do
anything!

RODRIGUEZ
No! You stay in the car!

TOPP

I know, but -- I just, it'd be really cool to actually, you know, go on foot patrol.

RODRIGUEZ

No. Absolutely not. No. You stay in the truck.

EXT. CAMPSITE 37 - MOMENTS LATER

Rodriguez walks, with Topp beside him.

RODRIGUEZ

This is nuts. This is fucking nuts.

They approach the shaking VAN. The sounds of a MAN AND WOMAN HAVING SEX come from inside.

TOPP

I'll stay out of the way. I'll just observe.

On the van, a BUMPER STICKER reads -- "IF THIS VAN'S A-ROCKIN', DON'T COME A KNOCKIN'."

Rodriguez RIPS OFF the sticker in disgust. They walk around to the van's side door.

RODRIGUEZ

Okay. I'm gonna knock on the van door. Anything happens, you run back to the truck and lock the doors. Okay?

TOPP

Okay. I'll do that. I'll just stay out of the way.

Rodriguez readies his flashlight, and is about to knock.

TOPP (CONT'D)

It's just --

RODRIGUEZ

What?

TOPP

It's my first time on night patrol. It'd be really cool if I got to confront the suspects. You know, I'd feel like a real big shot.

RODRIGUEZ
Come on. What the fuck? Do you
think I'm stupid?

TOPP
No!

RODRIGUEZ
Do you think I'm fucking stupid? No
way, absolutely not. No. Way.

EXT. CAMPSITE 37 - MOMENTS LATER

Topp stands right next to the van. Rodriguez stands a few
feet back.

RODRIGUEZ
This is stupid. This is real
fucking dumb.

Topp KNOCKS on the van's side door.

TOPP
Park Rangers! Open up!

No response. The sex sounds and rock music continue.

Topp tries the HANDLE.

TOPP (CONT'D)
It's unlocked!

Rodriguez unholsters his NET GUN.

RODRIGUEZ
All right. Open it slowly.

Topp opens the SLIDING VAN DOOR. Shines his FLASHLIGHT in the
interior. Doesn't see anyone.

TOPP
Park Rangers! Identify yourself!

No response.

Topp steps into the van.

He shines his FLASHLIGHT on a BOOMBOX. Switches off the
boombox. The heavy metal stops.

The sex sounds continue. He shines his FLASHLIGHT on the
source. A PORN MOVIE playing on a PORTABLE DVD PLAYER.

TOPP (CONT'D)
What the heck?

Out of nowhere, a shadowy figure TACKLES TOPP.

EXT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

The door SLAMS SHUT. The van STARTS UP. HEADLIGHTS ON.

RODRIGUEZ
Fuck! It's an ambush!

TOPP (O.S.)
What's happening?

Rodriguez PULLS AT THE SIDE DOOR HANDLE. It's locked.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Topp, a sack over his head, is SHACKLED to a rear seat.

TOPP
Help! Help! Rodriguez!

Topp starts SOBBING, terrified.

TOPP (O.S.) (CONT'D)
They're gonna mail me to Abu Dhabi!

EXT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Rodriguez GRABS AT THE LOCKED PASSENGER DOOR.

INSIDE, a Fish and Game Official FLIPS HIM OFF.

The van ACCELERATES. His net gun FLIES AWAY. Rodriguez hangs on for dear life, as the van heads INTO THE FOREST.

The van swerves near a redwood, on Rodriguez's side. He releases his grip. Falls to the forest floor.

The van abruptly BRAKES, in front of Rodriguez.

The rear doors OPEN.

From the darkness inside, A BEASTPERSON JUMPS OUT.

RODRIGUEZ
Fuck!

Rodriguez GETS UP AND RUNS. The VAN drives into the forest.

Rodriguez SPRINTS TO HIS TRUCK, the beastperson in pursuit.

INT. RODRIGUEZ'S TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

He closes his DOOR just as the beastperson arrives. The beastperson SLAMS AGAINST THE DOOR, repeatedly. GROWLING.

Rodriguez STARTS HIS TRUCK. He turns and drives toward the exit, picking up his radio as he goes.

RODRIGUEZ
(into radio)
It's a trap! Repeat, it's a trap!

INT. WEST'S TRUCK - NIGHT

WEST
Ooh! Return of the Jedi!

INT. RODRIGUEZ'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

OTHERS (V.O.)
(on radio)
Nice! / Way to go! / Good one,
Rodriguez!

RODRIGUEZ
(into radio)
No you fucking idiots, it's a trap!
It's a trap!

INT. THOMPSON'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

THOMPSON
I'm pretty sure it is Return of the
Jedi. And watch the potty mouth.

INT. RODRIGUEZ'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Rodriguez throws down his RADIO.

Rodriguez drives toward the exit of the campsite.

Just as he's about to exit the camp, he's boxed in by a FISH AND GAME TRUCK that STOPS IN FRONT OF THE ENTRANCE.

Rodriguez SLAMS ON THE BRAKES.

RODRIGUEZ
 Fuck! Goddamn Fish and Game!

FISH AND GAME (V.O.)
 (over loudspeaker)
 Hey Ranger, looks like you're
 trapped -- stupid!

They LAUGH over the loudspeaker.

Rodriguez looks in his rearview mirror. Sees his ATV.

He looks outside the driver side door. The beastperson is
 clawing at the door.

He climbs to the other side of the cab. The beastperson is
 already at the passenger door.

FISH AND GAME (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 (loudspeaker)
 Nowhere to run -- stupid!

They LAUGH some more. Rodriguez looks around his cab. Looks
 up. Sees his SUNROOF.

He reaches below the seat and pulls out a TIRE IRON.

Rodriguez SHIELDS HIS FACE and SMASHES OPEN HIS SUNROOF.

EXT. RODRIGUEZ'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Rodriguez CLIMBS ONTO THE ROOF OF HIS TRUCK CAB.

FISH AND GAME (V.O.)
 (loudspeaker)
 Hey, why'd you break your own
 sunroof -- stupid!

More LAUGHTER.

Rodriguez CHUCKS HIS TIRE IRON at the Fish and Game truck.
 They duck in fear as it SMASHES THROUGH THEIR WINDOW.

Rodriguez jumps onto his ATV. He tries to START IT UP. It
 doesn't work at first.

RODRIGUEZ
 Come on, come on -- fuck, fuck!

The beastperson runs around to the rear of the truck,
 CLIMBING UP THE GATE.

The ATV STARTS UP. Rodriguez REVS it.

Beastperson pulls himself into the truck bed. Grabs the front of the ATV.

Rodriguez HITS THE GAS.

Rodriguez SHOOTS OUT OF HIS TRUCK BED and DRIVES OVER THE BEASTPERSON, CRUNCHING HIS BONES, and KILLING HIM.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

Now that's what I call roadkill.

(beat)

That was in poor taste, that's a person.

EXT. RANGER STATION - NIGHT

Rodriguez DRIVES UP ON HIS ATV.

INT. RANGER STATION LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Rodriguez storms in. Other rangers are there.

RODRIGUEZ

He's gone!

HUDSON

Gone? Who?

RODRIGUEZ

Ranger Topp! Topp! I took him out on patrol, and they got him!

DANNY

What? Why the hell was he with you?

RODRIGUEZ

I messed up, okay!

HUDSON

Who got him? Who took him?

RODRIGUEZ

Fish and Game! They were waiting for me! There were no delinquents -- the whole thing was a setup! They even knew which direction we'd be coming! They blocked the exit!

HUDSON

They must know our routes.

DANNY

How could they know our routes?
Only internal personnel are told
our patrol routes!

HUDSON

I know.

Hudson looks at him knowingly. Danny thinks about what it means. Realizes it.

DANNY

Emergency meeting. I need all
rangers in the briefing room in
five minutes!

INT. RANGER STATION BRIEFING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Tension. Hudson, Rodriguez, and the other rangers are scattered around the briefing room. Anderson is bandaged.

Danny enters.

DANNY

All right, everyone -- listen up!
I just got off the phone with the
Stanislaus county sheriff. They'll
be handling the investigation into
Topp's abduction.

OTHERS

What? / You kiddin' me? / The fuck?

WEST

Stanislaus couldn't catch a cold in
a cold factory. We know it's Fish
and Game. We oughta go get him
ourselves!

DANNY

What are we supposed to do? It's
not our jurisdiction! You wanna go
to jail? Help him from there?

(beat)

Look, we got bigger fish to fry!
Fish and Game, and whoever they're
working for, knew a lot more than
they should. They staged that
delinquent orgy, and phoned in a
phony report, knowing we'd respond.
They knew our escape routes and
were lying in wait to cut us off.

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)

The only way they could've pulled all this off, is if someone in this very park -- is a rat.

Pandemonium. The rangers STAND AND SHOUT at each other.

Rodriguez shouts over everyone.

RODRIGUEZ

Enough! Whoever this fuckin' rat is, come right out and say it -- right here, right now, so I can deal with you myself!

HUDSON

You seem pretty agitated, Rodriguez. Maybe you're looking to deflect attention. After all, weren't you the one who was with him when he got nabbed? Maybe you know more than you let on!

Rodriguez stands up out of his chair and charges Hudson, who eggs him on. The others hold both of them back.

HUDSON (CONT'D)

Come on!

DANNY

Take it easy! Take it easy!

They calm Rodriguez down.

WEST

Everyone take it easy! Let's not start pointing fingers!

THOMPSON

Why is that West? Afraid they might get pointed at you? I guess I'd be nervous too if I got implicated in a corruption probe!

West charges Thompson. Others hold him back.

ANDERSON

Lay off him, Thompson!

THOMPSON

Why? You crooked too?

Anderson charges Thompson.

DANNY

That's it! That's it! No more rat talk, period! This is what they want! Let's stop trying to piss each other off!

ALL

Okay / Fair enough / I agree / Yeah

WEST

All right, all right. Just so fucking mad at Fish and Game. Only thing more pathetic than those assholes is those losers with pet birds, am I right?

Hudson charges West, and is held back.

DANNY

Easy, take it easy! He must've forgotten you were a hawk handler!

RODRIGUEZ

Yeah, West has a lot on his mind -- what with taking care of his wheelchair son and all.

West charges Rodriguez.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

I wasn't judging, it was just a statement of fact!

ANDERSON

Yeah, a statement of fact! Like that Short Circuit is a bad movie.

Rodriguez and Thompson both charge Anderson.

THOMPSON

It wasn't great but it was better than the sequel!

West charges Thompson.

WEST

My dad wrote the sequel!

DANNY

Take it easy! Take it easy!

The cops continue to charge each other, as Danny makes a futile attempt to separate them.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Stop it! Stop this shit!

Everyone calms down.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Everyone go home. Get some sleep.

HUDSON
What can we do about Topp?

DANNY
Pray he's still alive.

INT. CONCRETE ROOM - NIGHT

DARKNESS. Topp wakes up tied to a chair. Struggles.

LIGHTS ON.

Topp's eyes adjust to the light. His mouth is TAPED OVER. He sees two people in front of him.

Burroughs and Mr Horwitz.

BURROUGHS
Good evening.

Topp gets scared. Tries to free himself. It's futile.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)
Ranger -- Topp, is it? Capturing you was almost too easy. Maybe you rangers don't have the stomach for a real fight.

Burroughs NODS. Mr Horwitz PULLS THE TAPE off Topp's mouth.

TOPP
Can I go? I really have to go number two.

BURROUGHS
Tell me, Topp. Do you believe in Danny Muir?

TOPP
I really gotta poop, man.

BURROUGHS
Do you believe in Danny Muir?

TOPP

Yes. Sarge helps protect nature.

BURROUGHS

Nature doesn't need his protection. But what would you know. See, I'm a lion, at the top of the food chain. And you -- your salary paid by tax dollars -- you are a leech.

TOPP

I'm not a leech. I'm a cat. A cat who likes lasagna.

Burroughs CHUCKLES.

BURROUGHS

Do you know why I wear this mask?

TOPP

Everyone told me it was allergies.

BURROUGHS

Allergies. Allergies. No, no. See, when I was a small boy, I was visiting a national park much like yours. I wandered off from my family and stumbled upon something, shiny. Yellow. It was a honeycomb. Not knowing any better, I brought it up to my mouth to have a taste of sweet honey. And just when I'd gotten my face good and sticky -- That's when the bees attacked. They swarmed my face, stinging me over, and over, and over again. And then a bear arrived. He clawed at the bees on my face -- to get to the small amount of honey on my lips. He clawed and scratched and bit, they swarmed and stung, the bees and bear warring over honey on the battlefield of my face. And then, the badgers showed up.

(beat)

I woke up after nineteen hours of surgery. And my face looked like this.

Burroughs RIPS OFF HIS MASK. We don't see what's underneath. It's more horrifying than anything Topp's ever imagined.

TOPP

AUUGGGHHHHH!

Topp keeps SCREAMING. Burroughs talks over him.

BURROUGHS

Nature is ruthless! Nature will disfigure a small boy's face over a morsel of food! Nature doesn't need protection! Nature needs to be subdued by man!

TOPP

Oh, I'm poopin' everywhere! You owe me a new pair of pants Burroughs! You owe me a pair of pants!

Burroughs PUTS HIS MASK BACK ON. Topp calms down.

BURROUGHS

See? When confronted with fear, you resort to raw emotion. Just like an animal. Well, let's unleash the animal inside of you.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL FACILITY - NIGHT

Blindfolded and in shackles, armed guards escort Topp toward an abandoned -looking urban warehouse.

BURROUGHS (V.O.)

To become an animal, you have to live like an animal.

INT. LOCKER ROOM SHOWER - NIGHT

Topp stands naked. He trembles.

BURROUGHS (V.O.)

No clothes. Animals are naked.

Mr Horwitz SPRAYS HIM WITH A HOSE.

INT. BEASTPEOPLE CAGES - NIGHT

Mr Horwitz carries Topp into a massive kennel. Inside chain-link cages, other naked men claw and growl like wild dogs.

Each cage is lined with newspaper, and has a human-sized hamster water bottle.

Mr Horwitz pushes Topp inside, and locks him in.

BURROUGHS (V.O.)
 No freedom. Animals must live under
 the supervision of man.

Topp cowers in his cage, scared of the other beastpeople.

EXT. DIRT COURTYARD - DAY

An enclosed dirt yard. A white circle designates the borders
 of a fighting ring.

ABOVE THE COURTYARD

Burroughs and Mr Horwitz observe from an elevated platform.

BURROUGHS (V.O.)
 You fight for survival. Like in
 nature, you win, or you die.

Two guards OPEN a cage, then quickly run away. Topp reacts as
 a creature walks out. He's confused. Scared.

IN THE RING --

-- We see the creature. It's a small, white bunny.

Topp hesitates, then JUMPS AND ATTACKS THE BUNNY.

EXT. GRASS FIELD - DAY

Topp and beastpeople are lined up in rows. As Mr Horwitz
 instructs them with a WHISTLE, they do simple dog tricks --
 sit, roll over, shake.

BURROUGHS (V.O.)
 Behavior must be conditioned.
 Animals must be obedient to their
 masters.

INT. TOPP'S CAGE - DAY

Topp is becoming more feral. Burroughs throws a hunk of
 bloody, uncooked meat into Topp's cage. Topp devours it.

EXT. DIRT COURTYARD - DAY

In the ring, Topp wrestles a GORILLA to the turf. The gorilla
 is on his belly, subdued. Topp stands over it, triumphant.

We see there's also a subdued LION and RHINO on the ground.

Burroughs and Mr Horwitz look on.

BURROUGHS (V.O.)
You just may be --

INT. TOPP'S CAGE - DAY

Topp GNASHES HIS TEETH and GROWLS.

BURROUGHS
My greatest creation yet.

Burroughs closes Topp's cage and locks it.

The other beastpeople cower in the corners of their cages, fearful of Topp's dominance.

Topp sits down on the NEWSPAPER. On the comics page.

Close on a Garfield strip.

INT. DANNY'S OFFICE - DAY

December KNOCKS and enters. Tears stream down her face. She holds a box.

DECEMBER
Have you heard from Rodriguez yet?

DANNY
Called in sick. Said he needed some time to think.

DECEMBER
I took a drive into town on my lunch break. Picked these up.

Out of the box, she takes a GARFIELD WINDOW PLUSH, with suction cup feet.

DECEMBER (CONT'D)
I was thinking we could put them on the trucks to remind us of Topp.

She BREAKS DOWN, SOBBING.

DECEMBER (CONT'D)
This wasn't supposed to happen!

Danny STANDS and PUTS HIS ARMS AROUND HER.

DANNY

I know. But we're dealing with an adversary who's malicious. Evil. I don't think it's overstating it to say Burroughs is much, much worse than Stalin.

(beat)

But we can stop him. We just need to pull together right now. We need to pull -- together.

They look in each others's eyes. An inch away from a kiss.

EXT. DANNY'S CABIN - NIGHT

A simple, modest cabin. Danny's home. Rodriguez KNOCKS on the door. Danny OPENS UP.

Danny notices Rodriguez's getup: full leathers, helmet in hand. A fully-packed TOURING MOTORCYCLE behind him.

RODRIGUEZ

I gotta leave, Danny.

DANNY

Why?

RODRIGUEZ

Topp getting nabbed was my fault.

DANNY

No. No. It wasn't you. It was those sons of bitches who took him.

RODRIGUEZ

Doesn't matter. All that matters is my friend is gone. So I was thinking, I should be gone too.

DANNY

Rodriguez....

RODRIGUEZ

Look, I'm a city boy at heart. I was born in the city.

DANNY

How long since you've gone back, Rodriguez? Fifteen years? You're not fit for the city anymore. Maybe you've forgotten how they disrespect nature there.

RODRIGUEZ

Maybe. But I gotta find myself. So
I'm going home. To the big city.
Sacramento.

DANNY

All you'll find in Sacramento is
intolerance of our way of life.
This is your home now.

RODRIGUEZ

Well, maybe it shouldn't be.
(beat)
I appreciate everything you've done
for me, Sarge. Thank you.

They SHAKE HANDS.

Rodriguez WALKS to his CYCLE. GETS ON.

DANNY

I'll save you a spot on the ranger
hat hat rack, so when you get back
you'll have a hat rack for your
ranger hat.

Rodriguez LAUGHS and STARTS HIS MOTORCYCLE.

Danny WATCHES AS RODRIGUEZ RIDES AWAY.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

As Rodriguez rides, a RANDY NEWMAN SONG starts up.

RANDY NEWMAN (V.O.)

(verse)

Town I love called, Sacramento /
It's the kind of place a man can't
resent, no / So far inland from the
coast that it feels so right /

- Rodriguez passes a sign: NOW LEAVING WARREN G. HARDING
NATIONAL PARK.

- Riding on the highway, he TAKES OFF HIS HELMET and lets the
wind blow in his hair.

RANDY NEWMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(verse)

Driving through those capital
streets / Waving friendly waves at
everyone you meet / Wonder if the
Kings are playing b-ball tonight /

- On the side of the road, a cop gives him a ticket for violating the helmet law.
- Back on the road, he rides by a burrito shack.

RANDY NEWMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(bridge)

Big city lights / Big chested
broads / Governor lives there /
Signs things into law / Affordable
housing / Not too much smog / Cause
Sac-Town will never get you down /
It's another wonderful day / So
come on let's --

- He rides, eating a burrito with one hand and holding a soda in the other.
- On the side of the road, a cop gives him another ticket.

RANDY NEWMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(chorus)

Sac it up! / It's our town! / Sac
it up! / It's our home! / Sac it
up! / It's the best / Sac it up! /
Sacramento, oh Sacramento here we
go / Sac it up! Sac it up! Sac it
up! Sac it up! Sac it uuuuuuppp!

- He passes a sign that says: WELCOME TO SACRAMENTO - THE LARGEST CITY IN NORTH AMERICA.
- He launches into a wheelie as he passes the sign.
- A cop pulls from behind the sign.

EXT. SECLUDED CABIN - NIGHT

Danny drives his patrol truck up to the tiny mountain shack. He parks and gets out.

Danny KNOCKS.

AGED VOICE (O.S.)

Let yourself in.

INT. SECLUDED CABIN - NIGHT

Danny walks inside. The place is in shambles, clutter everywhere, and everything covered with dust.

Inside, MUTT DANDRIDGE, an extremely old man, sits in a rocking chair. He looks too old to take care of himself.

MUTT

Danny!

DANNY

Hey, Sargent Dandridge.

MUTT

Please, I'm retired. It's just Mutt. Your daddy was my Sargent Muir, after all. And now that's you! How about that.

DANNY

Look -- I've got a big problem.

MUTT

Someone take a shit on the floor in the gift shop?

DANNY

No. No, it's big. Someone wants to destroy the park.

MUTT

Oh. I see. Yeah, I had that problem once. Goddamn hippies.

DANNY

Hippies? No, Sarge -- hippies love nature. You must be confused.

MUTT

Oh, I've lived a lot of years, and I do get awful confused sometimes. The other day I thought the television was my dead wife! And I never even married. But no, I remember this clear as the invisible man's Johnson.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - DAY - FLASHBACK

CHYRON - 1969

PLAY MUSIC - IF I HAD A HAMMER

YOUNG MUTT pulls up in his PATROL TRUCK. There's a vintage VW BUS in the campground.

Mutt walks up and waves to HIPPIES.

MUTT (V.O.)
 Summer of love, those hippies came
 in droves to the campground. At
 first I was happy to have 'em. They
 said they loved nature.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - DAY - FLASHBACK

MUTT (V.O.)
 But then I started to see what was
 really going on.

Mutt sees the VW Bus is just idling. No one is inside. Thick
 plumes of EXHAUST come out of the TAILPIPE.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Mutt walks up to edge of the lake.

A HIPPIE is mixing TIE DYE in the lake. The hippie pulls out
 a T-SHIRT and admires it.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Young Mutt sees two HIPPIES braiding FLOWERS into their hair.

YOUNG MUTT
 Hey, excuse me folks. Not sure if
 you realized, but those flowers you
 picked are actually a protected
 species of flora.

FLOWER HIPPIE
 Not sure if you realized, but
 you're killing our buzz, narc!

They LAUGH AND IGNORE HIM. Mutt fumes and walks away.

MUTT (V.O.)
 They wouldn't listen to reason.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

A LIT DOOBIE lies on the ground, igniting some BRUSH.

Mutt DUMPS A PILE OF DIRT ON THE SMALL FIRE with his SHOVEL.

He PICKS UP THE DOOBIE. Angry.

MUTT (V.O.)
 These hippies were the worst kind
 of hypocrites.

Mutt looks between the DOOBIE and TWO HIPPIES DANCING, with
 flowers in their hair. He's furious.

He looks at the dancing hippies. Loses control.

MUTT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I snapped.

Mutt walks up and SMASHES THE HIPPIES IN THE FACE WITH HIS
 SHOVEL. They GO DOWN HARD. He KEEPS HITTING THEM.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Close on Mutt holding down an unseen HIPPIE VICTIM.

YOUNG MUTT
 You want to tie dye my lake? Well,
 how about I tie-dye your brains!

We see Mutt has CARVED OFF THE TOP OF HIPPIE VICTIM'S SKULL.
 He POURS TIE DYE ONTO HIS EXPOSED BRAIN.

HIPPIE VICTIM
 Whoa, bad trip, man!

INT. MUTT'S OFFICE - DAY

It's what is now Danny's office. HIPPIES sit on the floor.

MUTT (V.O.)
 They tried to stop me by staging
 sit-ins and singing protest songs.

HIPPIES
 (singing)
 All we are saying / Is give peace a
 chance

MUTT (V.O.)
 That just strengthened my resolve.

Mutt grabs a SHOTGUN off the wall. Cocks it.

INT. SECLUDED CABIN - DAY - PRESENT DAY

Danny is enraptured. Stunned.

MUTT

The ones I didn't bury left forever. Word spread to all their hippie friends. They came to know this park wasn't a place they could get away with their hippie crap.

Danny doesn't know what to say.

MUTT (CONT'D)

I learned two things from that. One, you can't trust first impressions. Sometimes the people who seem best on the surface are the most rotten at the core. And two -- if you want to defeat a threat to your way of life -- You have to be willing to do anything.

Mutt pulls a NECKLACE out from under his shirt. It's a chain that holds a HUMAN FINGER BONE with a PEACE SIGN RING ON IT.

MUTT (CONT'D)

Anything.

INT. GPIC HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

An executive office. Burroughs talks into his phone, as he plays a HUNTING COMPUTER GAME.

BURROUGHS

How could he know there's an internal leak? You said you were in a position to be undetectable.

As Burroughs listens to an unheard response, in the game, he KILLS A DEER.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

Very well, but I won't tolerate any more careless mistakes. Your position can't be compromised.

In the game, Burroughs SHOOTS A DUCK.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

Topp is fine! Shut up and listen. There's too much oil at stake for you to fail. Make sure Danny Muir signs over the rights to the park at all costs. At. All. Costs.

In the game, Burroughs ANNIHILATES A KITTEN.

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Rodriguez PULLS HIS BIKE past a valet and PARKS AT A METER.
The nightclub sign reads -- POSHTIQUE.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - MOMENTS LATER

Rodriguez walks through the hip club. The place is packed
with opulent hipsters wearing flashy fur coats.

He walks up to the bar.

RODRIGUEZ
Gimme a Hot Toddy.

BARTENDER
The fuck is that? Some country
drink? This is the city, asshole.

RODRIGUEZ
Uh, haha, just joking. I meant your
trendiest cocktail.

BARTENDER
Oh, gotcha. For a moment there I
thought you were some guy who
doesn't live in a city. And to be
clear, I think anyone who doesn't
live in a city is a fucking idiot.

Bartender FETCHES HIS DRINK.

ANABELLE, sexy woman in FUR, approaches.

ANABELLE
Haven't seen you around here
before.

RODRIGUEZ
Well, I usually go to hipper, more
urban bars. Or loft parties in
densely populated areas.

ANABELLE
A real city boy, eh? I'm Anabelle.

RODRIGUEZ
Rodrig -- Rod. Just Rod.

ANABELLE
You know, my friends have a table
over there. Care to join us?

LATER

Rodriguez is at a table with GLAMOROUS CITY FOLK.

CITY BOY #1

Just bought myself one of those hybrid cars. Pollutes less, unfortunately. But, the plus side is, that's more money I can spend on pouring gas directly into the river.

CITY BOY #2

Fuck yeah bro. Fuck nature.

RODRIGUEZ

Ha ha, yeah. Uh, nature is so stupid, huh guys.

CITY GIRL #1

Did you know in public schools they're now celebrating Arbor Day? I mean seriously, a holiday for trees? They might as well celebrate Bin Laden's birthday.

OTHERS

Unbelievable / Bullshit / What's wrong with the world? / Come on

CITY GIRL #2

You guys wanna get outta here? I was thinking we could go to my place, have some hip, high-end vodka, start a fire in my fireplace -- just to hurt the atmosphere.

RODRIGUEZ

Actually, if you really want to pollute, your average open-air campfire will produce three times the emissions of a chimney fire.

CITY GIRL #1

Wow. You really know your fires.

ANABELLE

You know, my fur coat's getting itchy. I think I need some help getting out of it. Rod?

Rodriguez reacts. Tempted.

INT. TRENDY APARTMENT - LATER

Rodriguez and Anabelle STUMBLE INTO HER APARTMENT.

They DRUNKENLY MAKE OUT. Anabelle PULLS AWAY.

ANABELLE

I should get changed into something more comfortable. And by something more comfortable, I mean something more likely to give you an erection so you'll be eager to penetrate me.

She WALKS AWAY.

Rodriguez SITS ON A CHAIR.

He looks down. His feet are on a BEAR-SKIN RUG.

He notices a PIANO.

RODRIGUEZ

You play the piano?

ANABELLE (O.S.)

No. I just bought it cause all the keys are ivory. Two rhino's worth.

RODRIGUEZ

Ah. Huh. Cool.

He looks at the wall. There's a mounted SEAL SKIN.

He picks up a DVD CASE from an END TABLE. It's labeled "FACES OF DEATH: ANIMAL EDITION". He grows more and more disturbed.

He sets it back down on the END TABLE. He sees it's actually made from an ELEPHANT LEG.

He stands from the chair. He steps back and sees the chair is actually a STUFFED PANDA.

Anabelle re-enters.

ANABELLE (O.S.)

Okay, city boy. Hope you're ready to fertilize me. Because I'm all full of eggs.

Rodriguez LOOKS at her.

We see she wears SEXY LINGERIE -- that's made entirely out of BIRD FEATHERS and CLAWS.

Rodriguez focuses on the CLASP between her breasts. It's made of the HEAD OF A HAWK.

MATCH CUT - FALCO RESTING ON HUDSON'S ARM

BACK TO SCENE

RODRIGUEZ
Auuugghhhh!

Rodriguez RUSHES OUT OF THE APARTMENT.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Rodriguez STUMBLES OUT OF THE BUILDING and down the SIDEWALK.

He trips, stumbles. He grabs a TRASH CAN, and PUKES INTO IT.

ACROSS THE STREET

The horrified DINERS at a SIDEWALK CAFE watch as Rodriguez continues to VIOLENTLY PUKE into the trash can.

MOMENTS LATER

Rodriguez STUMBLES into a group of guys.

VOICE
Whoa man, you okay?

It's the City Boys from the club.

CITY BOY #1
Hey, it's Rod everyone! Man, you're pretty wasted!

CITY BOY #2
Wow, you already banged that broad?

CITY BOY #3
And he just took off afterward! The old hump and dump!

CITY BOY #1
The old nail and bail!

CITY BOY #2
The old -- there's gotta be more.

CITY BOYS
Gotta be / Yeah there's more

They walk together for a second. City Boy #1 STOPS as he NOTICES SOMETHING UP AHEAD.

CITY BOY #1
Well what have we here?

CITY BOY #2
Ah shit, here we go.

CITY BOY #3
You looking for trouble?

CITY BOY #1
This is the city! We don't want
your kind around here, boy!

We see what they're yelling at --

It's a TREE.

The three crowd around the tree, BULLYING it, SHOVING it.

CITY BOYS
What are you doin' boy? / You made
a big mistake / Shouldn't be coming
around here / This is the city!

RODRIGUEZ
All right guys. Let's go. Leave the
tree alone.

The City Boys GET IN RODRIGUEZ'S FACE, suspicious.

CITY BOY #2
What are you, some kind of fucking
twigger lover?

RODRIGUEZ
Nah man, I just --

CITY BOY #3
Then give this tree a little
message to remember you by.

City Boy #3 PRESSES A SWITCHBLADE INTO RODRIGUEZ'S HAND.

Rodriguez hesitates. Hesitates more. Closes his eyes.

CITY BOY #1
Come on, what are you waiting for?
Carve that fuckin' tree!

Rodriguez opens his eyes. Hesitates. Turns to City Boy #1,
and PULLS UP HIS SHIRT.

City Boy #1 is startled.

RODRIGUEZ
How about I carve something else?

Rodriguez starts CARVING INTO CITY BOY #1'S CHEST.

CITY BOY #1
AUUUGGGGHHH!

CITY BOY #2
This guy's crazy, man!

The other City Boys are paralyzed with fear, as City Boy #1 keeps SCREAMING.

Rodriguez finishes cutting. City Boy #1 turns to his friends.

Into his chest is the bloody carving -- RODRIGUEZ WAS HERE

Rodriguez addresses the other City Boys.

RODRIGUEZ
Spread the word. If you disrespect
nature, you'll feel its wrath.

They nod, terrified.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
Now if you'll excuse me, I've got a
forest to protect.

Rodriguez tosses down the switchblade and coolly walks away.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Rodriguez cruises down the highway on his motorcycle. Purpose on his face.

EXT. PARK ENTRANCE - DAY

The next morning, he drives by the WELCOME TO WARREN G.
HARDING NATIONAL PARK sign.

Taped to the park sign is a photocopied "HAVE YOU SEEN ME?"
flier, with TOPP'S PHOTO on it.

EXT. DANNY'S CABIN - DAY

Rodriguez KNOCKS on Danny's door.

Danny opens his door.

RODRIGUEZ
You guys hiring?

Danny SMILES and hugs him.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
Any leads on Topp?

Danny shakes his head.

DANNY
We've been coordinating our own searches. We look for him every night patrol. But he could be anywhere in the world right now.

RODRIGUEZ
Fuck. Those Fish and Game motherfuckers need to pay for what they did.

DANNY
Now that, we've got covered. They should be getting a taste of their own medicine, right about -- now.

INT. FISH AND GAME CABIN - DAY

Ryan carries a BOX over to Brodsky.

RYAN
Hey Chief, you got a package of peanut brittle from the Peanut Brittle of the Month club.

BRODSKY
I didn't join that shit.

Ryan opens the box. Takes out a CARD. Reads from it.

RYAN
Says it's a gift from a Mr "Manny Duir". You want some?

BRODSKY
Fuck it, I do love peanut brittle.

Ryan takes out a CAN of peanut brittle.

RYAN
All right, let's dig in, I bet --

Ryan OPENS IT. Two SPRING SNAKES pop out of the can.

Ryan and Brodsky FREAK OUT. They're horrified -- this is the scariest thing that's ever happened to them, ever.

RYAN & BRODSKY
SNAAAAAKES!

Brodsky collapses, and clutches his left arm, convulsing. Ryan takes out a GUN and EMPTIES HIS CLIP at the snakes.

Ryan drops his gun, cowers, and SOBS. Brodsky figures it out.

BRODSKY
Goddamn it. They're not real snakes!

RYAN
WE got pranked?

Brodsky looks up at the sky, ready to scream.

EXT. FISH AND GAME CABIN - SAME

BRODSKY (V.O.)
(screaming)
Park Rangers!

Birds FLY AWAY from the sound.

INT. DANNY'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Danny drives his patrol truck.

ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

A HIPPIE VW VAN is parked. The windows are STEAMED UP.

DANNY
Hippies.

EXT. HIPPIE VAN - NIGHT

Danny pulls his truck behind the van. Gets out. Walks up.

Danny KNOCKS ON THE WINDOW.

DANNY
Park Ranger. Open up.

The window ROLLS DOWN. A HIPPIE CHICK pulls her shirt on in the driver's seat.

DANNY (CONT'D)
You folks gotta take your free love
elsewhere. Move it along.

MALE VOICE comes from the passenger seat.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Yo, Ranger Muir!

The passenger leans forward. It's Bobby (Sally's boyfriend).

BOBBY
How's it hangin', Sarge?

HIPPIE CHICK
Whoa, you're friends with this pig?

BOBBY
Easy with the hog-talk Sasha, this
cat's wavy as gravy!

DANNY
Step out of the vehicle please sir.

EXT. HIPPIE VAN - MOMENTS LATER

Bobby CLIMBS OUT OF THE VAN. Danny walks him back over to his patrol truck.

DANNY
What are you doing?

BOBBY
Just hangin' with a fly female,
rangey. Why, is that not groovy?

DANNY
Does Sally know about this?

BOBBY
Hey man, no need to --

Bobby leans in and abruptly DROPS HIS HIPPIE VOICE.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Look man, I'll be honest with you.
I'm not a fuckin' hippie, okay? I
just pretend for the chicks.
(MORE)

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'd rather see the top 1% get tax cuts than some loser animal get a handout. Endangered animals are nature's welfare queens. See, I like a chick with a nice, full bush. And hippie chicks -- they've got big, unshaven, ungroomed, smelly, bushy-bushes. Not even 70s porn can top a hippie chick's bush, I tell ya. It's a wilderness.

DANNY

I'm letting you off with a warning. Just move your vehicle.

BOBBY

You got it man. And hey -- Sally doesn't need to know about this, okay? Dicks before chicks man.

He SLAPS DANNY'S SHOULDER, then JOGS AWAY.

DANNY

It's bros before hoes.

HIPPIE CHICK (O.S.)

Everything yin-yang?

BOBBY (O.S.)

(hippie voice)

Oh yeah, it's cool like Woodstock!
Let's get back to the love-in!

INT. FISH AND GAME CABIN - NIGHT

Brodsky sits at his desk, looking over PLANS. Ryan stands behind him.

Burroughs and Mr Horwitz stand on the other side of the desk.

BRODSKY

Water pumps, hoses -- this is a lot of equipment. I don't know how we'll be able to set all this up.

BURROUGHS

I'm confident you'll figure out the logistics, Chief Brodsky.

RYAN

Look, draining all that water is gonna ruin the lake's ecosystem.

BRODSKY

Yeah. I mean, if that happens, the lake will never be the same.

BURROUGHS

That's the plan. We drain the lake, flood the park, and render it uninhabitable. Then, we sell all the dead fish to pet food companies in Mexico. And then, we pave over our privately owned lake bed. It will make an ideal storage reservoir for surplus oil barrels. Far more profitable than a stagnant, filthy, puddle of water.

RYAN

You can't do that!

BURROUGHS

Yes I can. And you're going to help. That's why I'm making you rich beyond your wildest dreams.

RYAN

My dreams involve jetskis and beer. What good are those without a lake to ride around and get drunk on?

BRODSKY

Yeah. We can't stand for this, Mr Burroughs. I'm sorry.

Burroughs steps toward them. Stares them down.

BURROUGHS

You'll stand for whatever I tell you to. You don't have a choice.

Burroughs LAUGHS. Brodsky and Ryan are stunned.

INT. FISH AND GAME CABIN - LATER

Brodsky sits, shellshocked. Ryan comes up to him.

RYAN

We have to do something.

BRODSKY

We're fucked, Ryan. We made a deal with the devil and now he's got us by the balls with his devilly lobster claws.

(MORE)

BRODSKY (CONT'D)

But we can't go to the cops. And
there's no one else we can talk to.

RYAN

There's someone.

Brodsky thinks. Figures it out.

INT. DANNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

MARCHING SOUNDS in the distance. They grow closer.

DANNY

What is that?

Danny walks to the exit.

EXT. RANGER STATION - NIGHT

A massive procession of FISH AND GAME OFFICIALS march in
formation toward the cabin.

INT. RANGER STATION LOBBY - SAME

Danny, December, and the other rangers watch this scene.

DANNY

Stay indoors. Take defensive
positions.

Danny EXITS.

DECEMBER

I'm not letting him face this
alone.

They all RUSH OUT AFTER HIM.

EXT. RANGER STATION - NIGHT

December and the rangers stand behind Danny, unsure of what
is about to happen. The Fish and Game officials get closer.

The Fish and Game officials GO TO ATTENTION.

BRODSKY

Column right, march!

All TURN IN LOCKSTEP to FACE THE RANGERS.

Brodsky stands at the front of them.

BRODSKY (CONT'D)
Sargent Muir. In the time of our
great-great grandfathers, there
existed an alliance between park
rangers and the Department of Fish
and Game. We come -- to honor that
alliance!

The Fish and Game Officials RAISE THEIR FISTS as they CHEER.

FISH AND GAME OFFICIALS
(together)
Yahhhh!

The rangers RETURN THE FAVOR.

RANGERS
Yahhhh!

FISH AND GAME OFFICIALS
Yahhhh!

RANGERS
Yahhhh!

Beat.

FISH AND GAME OFFICIALS
Yahhhh!

RANGERS
Yahhhh!

Beat.

FISH AND GAME OFFICIALS
Yahhhh!

INT. DANNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Danny talks with Brodsky. Brodsky sips COFFEE.

DANNY
So what's he planning next?

BRODSKY
Something big. Very big.

DANNY
Big?

BRODSKY

Oh, it's big all right. It's so big, if it was a Tom Hanks movie, it'd be Forrest Gump. I mean, that film was a blockbuster success. Burroughs wanted to run pipelines and hoses from the lake. Flood the forest. Make it uninhabitable so you'd have no choice but to sell.

DANNY

I need your men on high alert.

BRODSKY

You know, this sick fuck was gonna drain the lake if you sold. If I told my men that's the guy we've been helping, I'd have had four suicides, minimum. So yeah, we'll be on high goddamn alert. He wants to ruin our way of life, that son of a bitch can find another way.

Danny puts a FIRM HAND ON Brodsky's SHOULDER.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Armed FISH AND GAME OFFICIALS patrol the lake on SPEEDBOATS.

INT. ESCALADE - DAY

The backseat. Mr Horwitz watches the lake through BINOCULARS.

BURROUGHS

So they've reneged on their deal. Very well. We can find another way to meet our goal.

Burroughs turns in his seat. Talks to the rear of the car.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

You're lucky. You get to witness the transformative power capitalism. If you encounter a rival, invest in their destruction. Their void becomes your avenue for expansion. The market prevails.

IN THE BACK

In a large kennel, a shadowy BEAST GROWLS.

INT. HUDSON'S TENT - DAY

Early morning. Hudson sleeps.

CAW. Hudson snaps awake. Walks outside.

EXT. HUDSON'S TENT - CONTINUOUS

Hudson emerges from the tent. He's camped on a hillside, overlooking the forest and lake below.

CAW. Hudson walks forward.

Falco sits atop a simple wood PERCH driven into the dirt.

Falco CAWS again. Hudson takes out JERKY and FEEDS HIM.

HUDSON
What is it, Falco?

Falco TAKES OFF INTO THE SKY. Hudson watches his flight path.

Sees where he's going. To a small FOREST FIRE, burning in the distance.

HUDSON (CONT'D)
Oh no. Fire!

INT. DANNY'S OFFICE - DAY

Danny SLEEPS AT HIS DESK.

HUDSON (V.O.)
(on radio)
Hudson to base! Hudson to base!
Fire! Repeat, fire!

Danny WAKES UP.

DANNY
(into radio)
Read you, Hudson. Inform fire
patrol immediately, over.

INT. HUDSON'S TENT - SAME

HUDSON
Already did. They're sending out a
unit, over.

INT. DANNY'S OFFICE - SAME

DANNY

Good work, Hudson. We should evacuate the park -- a wildfire can spread like -- wildfire. Uh, what's the location, over?

EXT. HUDSON'S TENT - SAME

HUDSON

Southeast perimeter. Near the Shinra logging territory.

INT. DANNY'S OFFICE - SAME

HUDSON (V.O.)

Repeat. Near the border of the Shinra logging territory.

DANNY

Sally!

Danny JUMPS UP and RUNS out of his office.

INT. DANNY'S TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Danny speeds along the mountain road.

DANNY

(into radio)

Come in, Rodriguez, over.

RODRIGUEZ (V.O.)

Read you loud and clear, Sarge, over.

DANNY

Forest fire in progress. I need you down at the station, evacuating staff. Dispatch the other rangers to evacuate the camps. Avoid the eastern exit. I'll join you at the station after I evacuate the southeast section. Over.

RODRIGUEZ (V.O.)

You got it, chief. Over and out.

Danny SWITCHES BANDS on the radio.

DANNY
Sally, this is Danny. Come in,
Sally.

Radio silence.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Come in Sally! Sally, are you
there?

More silence. Danny is visibly upset.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Goddamn it, come in Sally! Over!

SALLY (V.O.)
I'm here! I was just waiting for
you to say over! Over!

DANNY
Sally, listen carefully. Look
outside. Do you see smoke? Flames?

SALLY
Uh, no. It all looks clear.

EXT. SALLY'S TREE - DAY

SALLY
Nothing unusual here.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Two FIREFIGHTERS get out of their TRUCK.

They look toward the FIRE. It's small, bonfire -sized.

FIREFIGHTER #1
This is it? We won't even need the
hose.

Firefighter #1 grabs a FIRE EXTINGUISHER.

FIREFIGHTER #2
Let's douse this birthday candle
and get outta here.

Firefighter #1 and #2 walk to the FIRE. There are wood crates
stacked all around the area.

FIREFIGHTER #1
What the hell are all those crates?

FIREFIGHTER #2

Probably just park storage. It's so remote out here, it's like a free warehouse.

FIREFIGHTER #1

Wonder how it started. No lightning recently, no campers in the area who might've thrown a cigarette. I hate to assume the worst, but given the circumstances, you have to think this might be intentional --

He TRIPS OVER A TRIPWIRE.

The crates EXPLODE. FIERY EXPLOSIONS SURROUND THEM.

EXT. FOREST LANDSCAPE - SAME

MASSIVE EXPLOSIONS surround the perimeter of the forest.

Suddenly, the ENTIRE EASTERN FOREST IS ABLAZE.

EXT. SALLY'S TREE - DAY

Abruptly, FLAMES SHOOT UP ALL AROUND THEM.

SALLY

(into radio)

Whoa, there is definitely fire now!

A whole lot of fire!

(beat)

Over!

She's still clearly tickled that she gets to say "over".

INT. DANNY'S TRUCK - DAY

DANNY

Okay, stay calm! I'm coming to you!

Danny SWITCHES BANDS on the RADIO, as he ACCELERATES.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Fire patrol, come in fire patrol!

This is Sargent Muir! We need air

support! Repeat, need air support!

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Fire Patrol's airstrip in the forest. AIR RAID SIRENS blare.

A SUPER SCOOPER aircraft sits on the airstrip.

TWO PILOTS run out of the LODGE and scramble to the plane.

PILOT #1

We'll approach the lake from the west! That way we can scoop and drop in one pass!

PILOT #2

Got it. Easy as pie!

PILOT #1

You know, this job reminds me of that sitcom Wings for some reason.

PILOT #2

Really?

PILOT #1

Yeah. Something about this place. Maybe it's the planes? I don't --

A BEASTPERSON JUMPS OUT from the shadows UNDER THE PLANE. He TACKLES PILOT #1.

PILOT #1 (CONT'D)

Auuugghhh!

PILOT #2

Beastperson!

Pilot #2 runs over and JUMPS ON the beastperson.

INT. AIRSTRIP LODGE - DAY

AIRSTRIP RADIO GUY watches the scene FROM HIS WINDOW. He grabs his radio.

AIRSTRIP RADIO GUY

(into radio)

Mayday! Mayday! The airstrip is under attack by beastpeople! I repeat --

INT. HUDSON'S TRUCK - DAY

AIRSTRIP RADIO GUY (V.O.)
 (on radio)
 The airstrip is under attack by
 beastpeople!

Hudson SPINS HIS TRUCK AROUND.

EXT. SALLY'S TREE - DAY

Sally and Bobby are out on their landing. Bobby is frantic, panicking, melting down. He's dropped the hippie voice.

BOBBY
 Oh my God! Fire! Fire! Fire! What
 do we do what do we do? Oh Jesus!

Bobby SHAKES Sally by the shoulders.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
 What do we do you hippie bitch?

SALLY
 Bobby, it's okay! We can climb --

BOBBY
 Shut up! Shut up! There's a fire!

Bobby grabs a BUCKET OF WATER and THROWS IT AT THE FIRE.

SALLY
 That's not gonna do anything!

BOBBY
 What do you know, granola skank?

INT. ESCALADE - DAY

The Escalade is the only vehicle going into the park. Other cars zip by as they try to flee the fire.

Burroughs and Mr Horwitz sit, stoic.

EXT. RANGER STATION - DAY

Rodriguez evacuates STAFF from the station. Frantic gift shop employees and janitorial staff CHARGE OUT OF THE STATION.

RODRIGUEZ
 Keep moving! Get to your vehicles!
 If the main road is clogged get to
 the service road! Do not head east,
 repeat, do not head east!

December runs out of the station and stops at his side. They both watch as the Escalade approaches the station.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
 What the hell?

EXT. SALLY'S TREE - DAY

Bobby, frantic, grabs a BLANKET and THROWS IT AT THE FIRE.

BOBBY
 Blankets! Blankets put out fires!

SALLY
 Bobby! We need to climb --

BOBBY
 Auuggggh!

Bobby grabs a MATTRESS out of the treehouse and THROWS IT AWAY FROM THE FIRE. It lands on the ground.

SALLY
 What the hell are you doing?

BOBBY
 Mattresses catch fire! Gotta keep
 this thing away from us!

Bobby grabs a BOX OF SUPPLIES and THROWS THEM INTO THE FIRE.

SALLY
 Stop it!

BOBBY
 We have to lighten the load or
 we'll sink!

SALLY
 It's not a boat! You're delusional!

BOBBY
 What do you know?

SALLY

Bobby! Calm down! We can climb down the bucket rope and go through the clearing!

BOBBY

Yes! Yes! The rope will save me!

Bobby takes out a KNIFE and starts to CUT THE ROPE.

SALLY

Bobby, no!

BOBBY

Stay away, you crazy cunt! I need the rope to save me!

Bobby turns and PUNCHES SALLY IN THE VAGINA.

SALLY

Ow!

Sally COLLAPSES, in pain, WHEEZING.

Bobby finishes cutting the rope. He holds it aloft, a mad, maniacal grin on his face. He turns to Sally.

Bobby JUMPS OFF THE TREEHOUSE, INTO THE FIRE, HOLDING THE LENGTH OF ROPE.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Bobby!

Smoke starts to swell around her. She keeps COUGHING. Can't get the strength to stand.

EXT. RANGER STATION - DAY

Chauffeur lets Burroughs and Mr Horwitz out of the car. Burroughs wanders over.

BURROUGHS

Ranger -- Rodriguez, is it? Pleased to meet your acquaintance.

RODRIGUEZ

What the hell are you doing here?

BURROUGHS

I come with a proposition. I have retained the services of a privately funded fire brigade. They can be here in 20 minutes.

(MORE)

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

All you need to do is get Sargent Muir to sign over the rights to the park.

Burroughs pulls out a DOCUMENT.

RODRIGUEZ

You started this fire!

BURROUGHS

What's important now is that it gets put out. What say you?

DECEMBER

Rodriguez, maybe we should think about it. We can call Danny back. We can save the park!

RODRIGUEZ

No. No way.

(beat)

Burroughs, you piece of dogshit. What's stopping me from tearing your balls off and making a nice sauce for them and serving them over penne with a side of lightly-dressed mustard greens?

Burroughs LAUGHS. Mr Horwitz opens the Escalade's BACK DOOR. Inside is a CRATE.

BURROUGHS

What's stopping you? I've been two steps ahead of you this entire time. You don't think I had a contingency plan for this?

The crate SHAKES. HOPS. RATTLES INTENSELY. We hear GROWLS.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

I'll show you what's stopping you.

Mr Horwitz OPENS THE KENNEL and sprints away. A beastperson instantly JUMPS OUT.

Rodriguez reacts to what he sees.

It's Topp. The least human-looking beastperson yet.

RODRIGUEZ

Mother of God. Topp?

EXT. HUDSON'S TRUCK - DAY

Hudson PULLS HIS TRUCK onto the airstrip.

AT THE AIRSTRIP

Beastperson is on top of Pilot #2, clawing at him. Pilot #1 lies on his back, badly wounded.

Hudson rolls down his WINDOW. Holds out RAW MEAT.

HUDSON

Hey beastperson. Come get a real meal.

Beastperson turns toward Hudson.

Beastperson goes into a four-limbed sprint.

Hudson OPENS THE LATCH on his door.

Beastperson RUNS faster.

Beastperson LEAPS INTO THE AIR toward the window.

Hudson KICKS THE DOOR OPEN, perfectly timed. It clobbers beastperson in the face, KNOCKING HIM TO THE GROUND.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - CONTINUOUS

Hudson jumps out of his truck. He BEATS beastperson hard with his hawk-handler's glove.

He picks the beastperson up. Beastperson ROARS.

Hudson SLAMS the beastperson's open JAW down onto the top of the car door. Hudson reaches INSIDE THE CAR and ROLLS THE WINDOW UP.

Beastperson GAGS as the car window goes all the way up, pinning the back of his throat against the top of the door.

Beastperson gags. Struggles.

EXT. RANGER STATION - DAY

Rodriguez and Topp circle each other.

RODRIGUEZ

Hey Ranger Topp. It's me, Rodriguez. Remember?

Topp ROARS. December WINCES.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
Take it easy. Think about your
favorite Garfield characters. Jon.
Jon's family. Mom. Dad. Doc-Boy.
His love interest, Dr Liz.

Topp seems to relax.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
There you go. There you go --

Topp ROARS AND CHARGES at Rodriguez.

Rodriguez DRAWS HIS NET GUN and LAUNCHES A NET AT TOPP.

The net KNOCKS TOPP TO THE GROUND. December cowers.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
Sorry I had to do that buddy.

Topp STRUGGLES, GROWLS, STRUGGLES MORE, and then --

TEARS APART THE NET with his own strength.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
No -- that's impossible!

Topp stands, emboldened. Rages harder.

They lock eyes. Close on Rodriguez. In his head --

DANNY (V.O.) (FLASHBACK)
Technology is no substitute for a
ranger's will.

Rodriguez drops his holster. Throws off his hat.

RODRIGUEZ
You want to test my will? I'll show
you my will.

The two combatants start to circle each other, as Rodriguez
undresses. Unbuttons his shirt. Kicks off his shoes.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
Let's make this a fair fight.

He's shirtless. He drops his pants. Pulls off his underwear.

He stands COMPLETELY NAKED.

Topp ROARS. Rodriguez ROARS BACK.

The two naked warriors LUNGE at each other.

EXT. SALLY'S TREE - DAY

Danny sprints out of his truck.

DANNY
Sally! Sally, can you hear me?

In the tree, Sally is passed out. SMOKE engulfs her.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Damn it!

Danny looks around. He sees the MATTRESS.

Looks past it. Next to an abandoned LOGGING TRUCK --

Is a stack of construction equipment, including a long piece of PVC PIPE.

Danny's eyes focus on the PIPE.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

Throat still pinned by the window, the beastperson struggles. Smashes his hands down and SHATTERS THE WINDOW.

He falls to the ground, bloodied. Turns to Hudson.

Hudson stands, ready. Beastperson ROARS.

Hudson goes down to one knee and lowers his head.

Beastperson charges Hudson.

SCREECH.

Falco FLIES IN RIGHT OVER HUDSON'S HEAD. He SMASHES into the beastperson at full speed, and starts to viciously CLAW AT and PECK his face and throat.

Beastperson COLLAPSES in a heap. Falco continues to PECK at him, as he WRITHES ON THE GROUND.

Hudson runs to the Pilots. Pilot #2, beaten and bloodied, has crawled over to check on Pilot #1.

PILOT #2
You're a goddamn hero!

HUDSON

Look, I need you to focus! We need to get that plane in the air!

PILOT #2

He's in no condition to fly.

Pilot #1 is UNCONSCIOUS.

HUDSON

What about you? Can you fly solo?

PILOT #2

I think so. Yeah. Let me --

Pilot #2 tries to get up, then COLLAPSES, unconscious.

Hudson WHISTLES at Falco, who's pecking at the dead beastperson's face.

Falco SWOOPS OVER and lands on his glove.

HUDSON

Falco. For years I have taught you. Obedience. Commands. Language. Ethics. US History. Names of NFL quarterbacks. Well, now I need you to teach me. Teach me to fly.

Falco SCREECHES and takes off into the air, out of sight.

Then -- Falco swoops down and LANDS on the nose of the plane.

Hudson smiles.

EXT. SALLY'S TREE - DAY

Danny has positioned his truck next to the tree. The MATTRESS is in the BED OF THE TRUCK.

Danny waits on the other side. He holds the PVC PIPE like a pole vaulter.

He closes his eyes.

EXT. TRACK AND FIELD ARENA - DAY - FLASHBACK

Match on a 17 year-old Danny with his eyes closed, standing in the same position, holding a pole vaulting pole. He wears a track and field uniform with a number on it.

He opens his eyes.

His grizzled high school COACH calls out to him.

COACH
Come on, Muir! All you gotta do is
clear this bar and we clinch state!

His TEAMMATES cheer him on.

TEAMMATES
You can do it! / You got it, Danny!
/ Go Danny! / You got this one!

The crowd ROARS. A PRETTY GIRL blows him a KISS.

Danny takes a deep breath. Starts his run.

Runs. Plants. Vaults.

As he goes over the BAR, he grazes it. Just barely.

The bar WOBBLES. FALLS.

COACH
Nooooooooooooo!

Danny watches as the bar falls to the ground.

The crowd BOOS, viciously. They hurl CUPS and BOTTLES at him.

TEAMMATES
You suck! / Go to hell, Danny! /
You asshole! / We lost state!

PRETTY GIRL runs up to him.

PRETTY GIRL
You can forget about prom!

She SPITS IN HIS FACE.

Coach grabs a STARTER PISTOL from a referee. Others try to stop him, but he succeeds in BLOWING HIS HEAD OFF.

Teammate comes up to him.

TEAMMATE
You did this! You killed our coach!

Danny CRIES. Closes his eyes.

EXT. SALLY'S TREE - DAY - PRESENT DAY

Danny opens his eyes. Breathes deeply. Starts his run.

He runs, accelerates. Approaches the tree.

Digs his pole into the ground. Vaults.

In one motion, he grabs Sally with both arms, and flops backward toward the ground.

Holds her in his arms as they land on the MATTRESS in the BED OF THE TRUCK. After a beat, Sally's eyes open.

SALLY

Ranger Muir. You saved me.

She KISSES HIM, deeply.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Oh, God. Get your dick out.

She reaches for his belt buckle.

DANNY

Whoa, whoa, not now, Sally! We've gotta go save the forest!

EXT. RANGER STATION - DAY

Naked, Rodriguez and Topp continue to fight. They BITE and CLAW at each other.

Burroughs LAUGHS. December is terrified.

Rodriguez PUSHES TOPP BACK.

RODRIGUEZ

You think you're the alpha male.
Well, you need to be dominated.

Topp ROARS, goes to a FULL SPRINT, and CHARGES RODRIGUEZ. He JUMPS AT HIM.

At the last possible second, Rodriguez DUCKS. Topp SOARS OVER HIM and LANDS IN THE DIRT, FACE DOWN.

Rodriguez TURNS, LEAPS, and MOUNTS TOPP. He DRY-HUMPS HIM.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

I am the alpha male! I am the alpha male!
I AM THE ALPHA MALE!

Burroughs, Mr Horwitz, and December watch, all horrified.

Topp CURLS INTO A BALL and WHIMPERS. Rodriguez stops humping.

Rodriguez turns to Burroughs and ROARS like an animal.
Prepares to charge.

Burroughs is frozen.

Suddenly, Mr Horwitz GRABS December and points a GUN at her.

BURROUGHS
Keep your distance, Ranger. I'd
hate for things to escalate.

Rodriguez backs off. Burroughs RUNS INTO HIS ESCALADE. Mr
Horwitz THROWS DECEMBER inside.

INT. DANNY'S TRUCK - DAY

Danny drives with Sally in the passenger seat.

RODRIGUEZ (V.O.)
(on radio)
Sarge, come in, Sarge! Over.

DANNY
I read you, Rodriguez. Over.

INT. RODRIGUEZ'S TRUCK - DAY

Rodriguez drives, still completely naked. Topp is tied up and
subdued in the back.

RODRIGUEZ
Burroughs is in the park. He's in a
black Escalade, proceeding north-
northwest down the main road. I'm
in pursuit but I don't think I can
overtake him. He -- he's got
December, Sarge. Over.

INT. DANNY'S TRUCK - DAY

Danny reacts. Steels himself.

DANNY
Roger that.
(to Sally)
Buckle up.

Danny and Sally put on their SEATBELTS.

SALLY
December? That's a neat name.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Danny TURNS HIS TRUCK OFF-ROAD.

The truck speeds downhill through trees down a bumpy mountain landscape. Fire is all around.

INT. ESCALADE - DAY

Burroughs sits in the backseat. December is sandwiched between Burroughs and Mr Horwitz, scared.

BURROUGHS

Drive faster.

CHAUFFEUR

These roads are pretty curvy, I don't want to lose control.

Mr Horwitz points his gun at Chauffeur.

CHAUFFEUR (CONT'D)

Yes sir.

The SUV ACCELERATES.

INT. DANNY'S TRUCK - DAY

Danny sees the Escalade on the road below.

Danny PUTS HIS FOOT ON THE GAS.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

The Escalade accelerates around a curve.

Danny's truck PULLS ONTO THE ROAD, blocking the road.

It's too close for the Escalade to brake.

Danny and Sally BRACE FOR IMPACT.

INT. ESCALADE - DAY

CHAUFFEUR

Shit!

Chauffeur TURNS THE SUV HARD to avoid the truck.

EXT. ESCALADE - DAY

The SUV SPINS OUT OF CONTROL and slams into a TREE.

INT. DANNY'S TRUCK - DAY

DANNY

Wait here.

Sally nods. Danny GETS OUT.

Sally waits for just a moment. Then, she GETS OUT too.

INT. ESCALADE - DAY

FIRE is all around the Escalade.

Chauffeur gasps for air. December is dazed. Mr Horwitz is severely wounded.

CHAUFFEUR

I didn't -- have time -- to stop.

BURROUGHS

You're allowed one mistake.

Burroughs grabs Horwitz's GUN and SHOOTS CHAUFFEUR DEAD.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

And then you're killed.

A wall of fire blocks the door on Burroughs's side. Burroughs climbs over December and Mr Horwitz and gets out of the vehicle.

INT. RODRIGUEZ'S TRUCK - DAY

Rodriguez arrives on the scene, parking near Danny's truck. He jumps out, hurriedly.

EXT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

Burroughs climbs out of his car. Danny is behind him. Presses a STICK into Burroughs's back.

DANNY

Don't move. Drop the gun.

Burroughs drops the GUN and puts his hands up. Danny knocks away the GUN with his STICK.

BURROUGHS

Well, you got me. Fair enough. It's just a shame the flames are about to engulf that poor, wounded squirrel.

DANNY

I'm not gonna fall for that.

DECEMBER (O.S.)

But you fell for so much already.

GUN COCKS. December, bruised and bloodied, has picked up the gun. She holds it at Danny.

Rodriguez, still naked, and Sally stand nearby.

RODRIGUEZ

What are you doing, December?

DECEMBER

I couldn't let you destroy the park. I couldn't let you destroy our future. This is the only way.

RODRIGUEZ

You bitch, you've been in on it this whole time! You were the rat!

DECEMBER

Call me what you will. But a GPIC buyout is our only chance. Sign over the rights to the park.

Burroughs pulls out the DOCUMENT. Hands it to Danny. Danny reluctantly grabs it.

Sally cheerfully extends her hand to December.

SALLY

I don't think we've met. I'm Sally.

Danny pulls a PEN out of his pocket.

BURROUGHS

You're doing the right thing, Ranger Muir. After all, why let perfectly good oil go untapped, when you can drill here, drill now, and still keep your park.

RODRIGUEZ

Don't do it, Danny. Don't you fucking do it.

(MORE)

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)
 If you do it, holy shit, I'll
 fucking flip out, like the Flash,
 coked-up, in fast-forward.

DANNY
 What choice do I have? If you want
 to preserve what's really
 important, you have to be willing
 to do anything.

Danny puts the pen to the contract.

Then, abruptly, he points the pen upward and presses the
 CLICKER --

And SHOOTS A DART IN DECEMBER'S NECK with the SPY PEN.

She falls to the forest floor, unconscious. Others react.
 Sally still has her hand held out, and pulls it back.

DANNY (CONT'D)
 Anything.

Burroughs picks up his GUN, and FIRES A SHOT at the others.
 They all hit the deck. Burroughs runs deeper into the fire.

Danny stands. Gives chase.

SALLY
 Danny!

Rodriguez restrains her.

EXT. FOREST FIRE - CONTINUOUS

Danny follows Burroughs into the fire. Burroughs has
 disappeared into the flames.

DEEPER IN THE FOREST

Burroughs gets to a tree. Sees it. Ducks behind it. Ready
 with his gun.

EXT. ESCALADE - DAY

Rodriguez opens the door. Mr Horwitz moves his mouth.

SALLY
 He's trying to say something!

Mr Horwitz looks like he is about to speak. Then, he DIES.

EXT. FOREST FIRE - DAY

Burroughs waits. Hears FOOTSTEPS.

Danny surveys the landscape. Sees the tree. Looks past it.

BEHIND THE TREE

Burroughs squats. The FOOTSTEPS get closer.

Burroughs POPS OVER and AIMS HIS GUN.

There's no one there.

Danny grabs him from behind.

DANNY

You think you know my park better
than me?

Danny grabs his gun arm and BREAKS IT, giving Burroughs a
COMPOUND FRACTURE.

BURROUGHS

Auugggh!

The GUN flies out of his hand. Danny PUNCHES him, repeatedly.

A final punch makes Burroughs's MASK fly off of his face, and
KNOCKS BURROUGHS TO THE GROUND.

We don't see his face. Danny reacts. Controls his horror.

BURROUGHS (CONT'D)

You fool. If you could've just
accepted reality, you'd be a very
rich man right now.

DANNY

I am rich. Rich with the
satisfaction of protecting nature.

With his one good arm, Burroughs points at his FACE.

BURROUGHS

This is what nature does. Nature
doesn't need your protection! But
you're too blind to see that. So go
ahead and kill me.

DANNY

I'm not going to be the one who
kills you. Let's let the free
market decide your fate.

Danny stands and walks away, leaving Burroughs alone, beaten and bloodied, on the ground.

Burroughs LAUGHS.

Danny keeps walking.

Suddenly, TWO FLAMING BEASTPEOPLE emerge from the fire, and start to MAUL Burroughs, lighting him ON FIRE.

BURROUGHS
Auuuuggghhh!

Burroughs's SCREAMS are mixed with LAUGHS.

INT. SUPER SCOOPER - DAY

The plane flies through the air. Falco sits on the nose, SCREECHING direction as Hudson pilots.

HUDSON
Really? That seems like a really sharp angle of decline.

Falco SCREECHES.

HUDSON (CONT'D)
Okay, you're the expert, I guess.

Falco SCREECHES.

HUDSON (CONT'D)
I didn't meant to sound sarcastic.
I'm sorry.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

The super scooper DESCENDS toward the lake. It scoots along the river surface, scooping up WATER, and then ASCENDS again.

EXT. FOREST LANDSCAPE - DAY

As the fires RAGE, the super scooper DROPS MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF WATER on the blazes. The fires SUBSIDE notably.

EXT. FOREST LANDSCAPE - EVENING

Later, the super scooper makes another pass, DROPPING WATER.

On the ground, FIREFIGHTERS are now on hand to hose down the fire. It's now visibly under control.

EXT. GRASS FIELD - DAY

Danny's TRUCK parks in the center of the deserted field.

Danny, Hudson, and Rodriguez GET OUT.

They have Topp, restrained. They PULL HIM OUT OF THE CAB.

Hudson walks him on a LEASH away from the truck. The others follow. Danny holds a SHOTGUN.

RODRIGUEZ

Why'd we come out here guys? Come on, you can tell me. Come on, guys.

They reach a spot away from the truck. Danny and Hudson stop.

DANNY

You know what that doctor said. There's no turning back once a man becomes a beastperson.

HUDSON

It's the only humane thing to do.

RODRIGUEZ

What are you talking about?

Rodriguez figures it out.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

No. No! He -- he's still our friend! Look, he's still our friend! I can prove it, I know!

Rodriguez takes out a crumpled PIECE OF PAPER.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

Look, Topp! It's Garfield! This is one of the strips you put up on the fridge in the station! Since you went away, I've been keeping it in my pocket. To remember you by!

Rodriguez UN-CRUMPLES THE STRIP and shows it to Topp.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

Look, here! In the third panel, Jon says, okay, who put the lemon wedge in the fishbowl? Get it? Garfield wants to eat the fish! Get it?

Topp does not react. He just GROWLS, animalistic.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

My God. He doesn't find Garfield funny. He's not even human anymore!

DANNY

I know, Rodriguez. I know.

HUDSON

This is the only way.

Danny RAISES HIS SHOTGUN at Topp. Cocks it. Topp flinches, like a scared dog. Hudson holds his leash tight.

RODRIGUEZ

No. It was my fault. I should be the one who does it.

Danny and Hudson look at each other. Consider it.

Danny hands his SHOTGUN to Rodriguez. Rodriguez takes it.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Topp. You were my good friend.

Rodriguez raises his shotgun to Topp's head. Holds it there.

DANNY

Time of death. 12:43PM. June 28th.
Monday.

Rodriguez puts his finger on the trigger. His arms shake.

Topp GURGLES and GROWLS as he struggles to form words.

TOPP

Garrghh -- I -- barraghhh -- hate --
agguugh -- Mondaysss....

They react. Topp's eyes look tortured -- but human.

DANNY

Oh my God. He's still our boy. He's still our little boy!

All three WEEP and SCREAM IN DELIGHT, as they all take turns HUGGING the naked Topp tightly.

TITLE CARD - ONE WEEK LATER

EXT. RANGER STATION - DAY

A BANNER hangs in front of the station, reading -- MEET THE HEROES OF THE PARK FIRE.

Supreme Commander Nancy Kleinwebber speaks from a podium on a stage. Danny stands behind her. A crowd watches.

NANCY

In all my years with the National Park Service, I have never seen such leadership and bravery on display in the face of danger. As such, it is my sincere pleasure to introduce the Secretary of the Interior, Mr Ken Salazar!

Danny sees Sally in the crowd. She WAVES. He WAVES back.

Secretary KEN SALAZAR steps forward, to APPLAUSE.

KEN SALAZAR

Thank you, Supreme Commander. Sargent Muir, I would like to present you with the Department of the Interior's highest honor -- the Tree-ey!

Ken takes the AWARD and PINS IT ON DANNY'S UNIFORM. Danny SALUTES. Ken RETURNS IT.

KEN SALAZAR (CONT'D)

I would also like to announce, that in the wake of this near-tragedy, the necessity to protect our National Parks has become more clear than ever. As such, we are announcing the immediate reversal of all plans to privatize any National Park!

Stunned and elated reactions. Danny and Nancy didn't know about this.

KEN SALAZAR (CONT'D)

And to all those who seek to
privatize to exploit nature, hear
me loud and clear -- you can
privatize this!

Secretary Salazar GRABS HIS DICK.

THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE.

EXT. AUTOGRAPH BOOTH - LATER

Hudson and Rodriguez sign autographs. Falco rests on Hudson's
arm. Rodriguez's net gun is in his holster.

Two KIDS are getting autographs.

KID #1

Whoa, is that a real hawk?

HUDSON

Yes. His name is Falco. He played a
big part in saving this forest. And
he is my good friend.

KID #2

Cool! Wow, is that a net gun?

RODRIGUEZ

Yeah, comes in handy when you're
battlin' beastpeople.

KID #1

Whoa! Uh, hey, will you do to us
what you did to the beastpeople?

HUDSON

I don't know, you'd have to ask
your mom.

The Kids turn to be their MOM.

KIDS

Please! / Please Mom! / Oh, you
gotta! / Please, please Mommy!

MOM

Oh. All right!

KIDS

Yayy!

Mom, Rodriguez, and Hudson SMILE.

Rodriguez BLASTS THEM WITH A NET, violently taking them down.

HUDSON

Falco, go!

Hudson RELEASES FALCO, who PECKS AT THEM VICIOUSLY.

KIDS

Ow! Cool! Ow!

EXT. WARREN G BOOTH - SAME

WARREN G sits at another booth, signing autographs.

WARREN G

All right, stay in school, bro.

Danny walks up to him.

DANNY

Hey, thanks for showing up, Warren.
I think you really boosted turnout
among 90s Long Beach hip-hop fans.

WARREN G

Hey man, it's the least I could do.
I had no idea I was almost
partially responsible for the
destruction of this beautiful
forest. That Burroughs was one
crazy motherfucker.

DANNY

It's not your fault. He was
exploiting your good name just like
he was exploiting nature.

WARREN G

Yeah. And what the fuck was up with
that guy who was always with him,
never saying shit? That didn't make
a lick of sense. Man fuck that guy.

EXT. RANGER STATION - DAY

Danny walks through the park, away from the station.

TOPP (O.S.)

Hey, Sarge!

Topp runs up to Danny. He still moves like a beastperson, but
he's elegant, smooth, controlled, like a trained lion.

TOPP (CONT'D)

Hey, I just wanted to say, thanks.
For giving me a second chance.

DANNY

Don't mention it. Hey, so I thought
I'd get you a little welcome back
gift.

Danny takes OUT A FRAMED PHOTO and HANDS IT to Topp.

Topp looks at it. It's JIM DAVIS.

TOPP

(reads the inscription)
To my number one fan Ranger Topp!
May your lasagna pans always be
never-ending!
(to Danny)
Oh, Sarge! This is the sweetest
thing anyone's ever done for me!

DANNY

You deserve it. Who's a good boy?
Who's a good boy?

Danny SCRATCHES Topp's NECK AND EARS, like a dog.

TOPP

Aw, Sarge!

Topp LICKS DANNY'S FACE like a dog.

EXT. SHADY TREE - DAY

Under a secluded tree, Sally waits for Danny. He approaches.

SALLY

Hey there, Tree-ey Award winner!

DANNY

It's just a medal.

SALLY

That's like saying the Muir trails
are just some dirt paths.

DANNY

I guess so. You know -- I think
your tree burned down. I'm sorry.

SALLY

It's okay. I stood up for it as best I could. And I met someone really special in the process. Someone who will always protect what's important to me.

(beat)

Now how about you get that dick out.

Danny leans in, and they KISS.

AERIAL SHOT. Amidst the scorched trees, the park is thriving.

A SCREECH gets closer and closer.

Falco SWOOPS IN FRONT OF THE FRAME.

ROLL CREDITS.

PLAY SONG - WARREN G'S REGULATE