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Desperation

By Stephen King

Oh, God!
What?
Didn't you see that?
There was a dead cat...
hanging from that sign
we just passed.
Really? Cool.
Don't you even think
about going back there.
What color was it?
Tiger-striped.
What difference
does it make?
Well, I thought it might
be black, you know?
Satanists out in the desert.
Marielle said the Nevada desert
was full of oddballs.
I just don't know who could kill
a living creature like that.
You're traveling through
another dimension...
A dimension not only
of sight and sound, but of mind.
Very funny.
I can't wait to get back
to Salt Lake City, at least.
Too much nature out here.
I'm starting to miss civilization.
What? What is it?
A car. Really movin', too.
Get over.
Give him the road.
It's a cop.
Why is he going so fast
with his flashers off?
Who's he gonna
run them for out here?
Well, there's us.
What's he doing?
I don't know.
Hi.
What does he want?
Well, I guess he wants

to get back behind us again.
Well, why didn't
he just pull over...
and let us pass then,
if that's what he wants?
I don't know.
Why is he stopping us,
Peter? Why?
These asses have
a quota to make.
They keep the posted limit at 55
so they can make it.
Don't pull over.
I don't have a choice, Mary.
Great.
Holy God, it's Sasquatch!
Guess I was going
a little fast, officer.
Had the hammer
down a little, huh?
Can I see your registration
please, sir?
No problem.
But the car's not mine.
It's my sister's.
We're driving it back
for her to New York.
She's... she goes
to school in Oregon.
Rand College.
Have you ever heard of it?
Mar, could you get
the registration?
I think it's in
the glove compartment.
I don't believe this...
I can't find my license.
Sorry, officer, I...
Oh, wait a minute, here it is.
OK, and, um, here's
the registration.
Oh, good.
I see you're
an organ donor.

Think that's wise?
Well...
Is there a problem, officer?
Your name is Jackson?
The one on the pink slip
says Deirdre Finney.
That your sister?
Right.
She's been divorced
for about a year...
but she kept
her husband's last name.
Deirdre's a bit of a flake.
Bit of a flake, huh?
Tak.
Can I ask you to step
out of the car, Mr. Jackson?
What for?
Of course.
Come around back, Mr. Jackson.
Hell!
Peter, what is it?
Our...
our damn license plate fell off!
I doubt it.
Did you stop in Fallon?
Yeah, we got gas
at the Conoco there.
Why?
They got some
light-fingered kids hang out there.
I reckon your license plate
is hangin' in their clubhouse right now.
You know this and
it still goes on?
Oh, Fallon is not my place.
Those are not my ways.
Gosh, no.
What should
we do about that, officer?
Well, you just take
the plate off the front...
and put it in the back.
That's should get you

across the country.
You got a tool kit?
These are yours.
Thanks.
I think I saw a tool kit
in the trunk.
Yeah, OK.
There, behind
my make-up case.
Hey.
What is this?
Damned sister!
Officer, I know what
this looks like.
But we checked her stuff...
But we're not
customs officers!
That... that is not our dope!
No.
Let me have your keys.
Get in the car.
But...
Are you deaf?
Get in the car!
Get in the car!
OK, we'll get this
taken care of.
In Desperation.
Get in the car, folks.
Tak.
Slow down,
you'll flip us!
What are you doing?
Are you crazy?
Officer, you saw
our registration.
You know that isn't our car,
and it's not our dope either!
Do you think
we'd be so stupid...
Shut up, you
New York deviant.
Wh... wh... what
did you call me?

I'm arresting you
for possession of marijuana...
with intent to sell.
You can't be serious!
You have the right
to remain silent.
If you choose
to not be silent...
everything you say
can be held against you...
In a court of law.
You have the right
to an attorney.
I am going to kill you.
If you cannot
afford an attorney...
One will be
provided for you.
Do you understand
your rights...
as I have explained them
to you?
Do you understand
your rights?
Just... Act normally.
I don't think he understands
what he just said.
Do you understand your rights?!
Do you or not?
Answer me...
you smart-aleck blue state
unisex swingles!
Do you or not?
Do you or not?
Yes! Yes,
we understand.
Please, just watch the road.
Don't worry about me.
I got eyes in the back
of my head.
You'd do well
to remember that.
Up there on the horizon's
the china pit.

Gotta go
all the way to Peru
to find a bigger one.
Yeah, we just started
working her again.
They got some kind
of technology...
that makes even
the tailings valuable.
Science, huh?
Gosh.
Yeah, I think we're gonna
be a boom town again...
just like in the old days.
Officer, please don't kill us.
We'll do whatever you say.
Just don't kill us!
Shut your quackin'
yuppie pothead mouth!
We're not potheads.
You look like potheads to me.
Yuppies killed
Princess Di, you know.
Wasn't she beautiful?
Officer...
Shut up and walk.
Where is everybody?
Disneyland.
Come on, walk,
hay foot, straw foot.
You're Peter.
You're Mary.
So where's Paul?
I mean, how can you sing
Puff the Magic Dragon
without Paul?
Wait a minute.
Peter Jackson.
I love Lord of the Rings!
You are useless.
You at least look healthy.
Get in there, girlfriend.
Forgot all about her.
You can never remember

everything, now can you?
I don't care if you're
a Jew, a Hindu, or Mr. Magoo.
In Desperation...
We don't care about
those things much.
Peter!
Peter! Let me go!
Peter!
Shotgun, get the shotgun!
Shoot him, shoot him!
Get it!
Get it, woman!
Pick it up,
for God sakes!
Don't do that.
Drop it, Mary.
Put it down, Mary.
Put it down.
Drop it.
Now, if you don't
want to see your liver...
come squirting
out of your nose...
I'd put it down, Mary.
Kill me if you're going to.
Now, why would
I want to kill you...
when things are
just starting to get interesting?
He killed my husband!
He killed our little girl.
Three billion red Chinese
don't give a damn.
How they hangin', old timer?
Don't you hurt him!
I'm warning you.
Who are you, boy?
I'm David Carver.
I live at 248 Poplar Street
in Wentworth, Ohio.
Yeah, but...
who made thee?
Canst thou say

who made thee? Tak!
I guess my folks did.
And God.
There's no god
out here, little Dave.
Leave him alone!
Haven't you done
enough to our family?
Even bald-headed
hoppin'-Satan...
don't step his split-foot
much west of Tonopah.
This is Desperation.
Only thing out here
is can tah and can tak.
And don't you forget it!
You're mine.
David, what's wrong?
What's... what's
wrong with him?
There's nothing
wrong with him.
What do you mean?
Are you blind?
I think your son
is praying.
Well. Hey there.
Are you a nice person?
Well, I like to think so...
but, then again,
if I was Ted Bundy...
do you think I'd tell you?
I'd know.
I got a psychic streak.
Up yours!
That's pleasant.
So what's your name,
young lady?
Cynthia Smith.
Smith? Oh. Smith.
That's a likely story.
No, really, it is.
Sure.
Honest!

OK.
Who are you?
Me? Steve Ames.
A noble moniker.
So, haul your psychic
streak on up here...
Cynthia Smith...
And let's make
some miles, OK?
Yeah, I guess you'll do.
Oh. Well, thank you
very much, cookie.
Don't call me cookie,
and I won't call you cake.
Oh, my.
You gonna smoke that
or gum it to death?
Yeah, I quit.
Never hurts to keep
in practice, though.
What you lookin' at, huh?
Your T-shirt.
Yeah, right!
I'm lookin' at your t-shirt!
Come on, that's OK!
We're all animals, right?
Oh, come on, now!
Give me a break.
I worked with Dylan back in '95
when, uh, he did Unplugged.
No way!
Yeah, yeah way. Yeah.
I was doin' amps
and guitar tech...
back in those days.
Are you a roadie?
Well, this truck looks too small
to carry a band's gear.
No, I'm workin'
for this writer...
And he's, uh, he's driving
cross country...
doing little speaking things,
you know?

And he does one
every couple of days or so...
and when he gets back
to the west coast...
he's gonna write a book about it.
Is he famous?
Have you ever heard of
John Edward Marinville?
No.
Well, he's famous
amongst book people, I guess.
Yeah, I pretty much
stick with Dean Koontz.
Is he cool?
Is he cool? Yeah...
you know, once you
get past the ego...
which is like,
the size of Tibet.
Yeah, I mean, he gets cranky
every so often, but I like him...
you know.
People drive across
country everyday.
Why is he writing
a book about it?
Ah, well, it's like he's got
this midlife crisis thing...
You know, the guy's 60 years old.
He's been everywhere,
he's done everyone, you know.
The guy rides a big
Harley soft tail.
Hey, hey! Is his bike
red and cream?
Yeah, red and cream.
I think I saw him
this morning!
Yeah, yeah, yeah,
you probably did.
Lookin' all handsome
on his bike.
Handsome man, yeah!
Yeah, and he knows

it, too, believe me.
Well, he's got
to be what...
like, 50, 70 miles ahead of you.
Yeah, about that.
You know, I catch up to him
when he has a gig...
And I set up the sound systems
for him...
And I, you know...
Make sure he's got
the names straight, stuff like that.
And I'll have dinner with him
if he wants somebody to talk to.
Not with, to.
But the guy's having the time
of his life.
Yeah, he likes to play
the lone wolf, huh?
Yeah. That's...
that's the boss.
Lone Wolf McQuade.
A film before your time.
Come on, come on. Go.
Water in the desert.
Thank you, Lord.
You want to
come up here, sir?
I think we need
to have a talk.
Afternoon, officer.
A wise man once told me...
no matter how much
you squirm and dance...
last two drops end up
in your pants.
Sir. Are you aware
that parking your vehicle
on a state road
is against the law?
And that relieving
yourself in public...
is also against the law?
Well, I didn't see any crowd

gathering to watch me, so...
Sir.
Yeah. Well,
listen, you can...
write me up
if you have to...
and I will take it with a smile
and apologize...
if that will
improve your day.
I'm not gonna
write you up, sir.
Just a warning
will do this time, but...
What?
Something wrong?
Holy God.
Holy God!
You're John Edward Marinville,
aren't you?
- Oh, I...
- Damn!
I'm busted.
You got me again.
Damn!
Glad to meet you.
I am shaking hands
With the guy who wrote Delight!
Yeah.
With the guy who wrote
Song of the Hammer!
- Yeah.
- This is...
Wow!
What are you
doing out here?
And on such an unsafe
mode of transportation?
I mean, they don't
call them murder-cycles for nothin'...
and I'm a wolf.
Are you workin'
on anything new, sir?
Yeah, a book of essays.

I thought I'd cycle
across America...
and get in touch
with the common folk.
You know,
get back to my roots.
That's amazing.
Sir, can I
can I have your autograph?
I mean, that'd... that'd...
that'd make my whole day.
Hell, that'd make
my whole year.
Yeah, that'd be fine.
Right here and?
- Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- All right.
Could you just make it out
to Collie Entragian...
your number one fan.
Thank you.
I heard you saw some
pretty hairy stuff in the 'Nam.
I was just
a correspondent, officer.
Just one more
ink-stained wretch.
But, I must say...
that the Vietnam experience
defined me.
Nobody wrote about
'Nam like you.
I heard you saved some soldiers...
when some suicide gook
blew up a restaurant.
Well, it was gut check time
for a lot of us.
We did what we could.
Yeah, well, some people
don't do anything.
Some made the bread
of forgetfulness...
and drank the wine
of cowardice. Tak.

Hey, you don't want to ride around
like that, Mr. Marinville.
That thing gets caught
up in your back wheel...
you're toast.
How'd that get like that?
It can't be.
I always check these buckles
before I get on the cycle.
It's the last thing I do.
Well, they say the memory's
the first thing to go.
What's that
supposed to mean?
What the hell is that?
That's a wolf!
Shoot it!
Ah, that's just a wild dog.
They're not dangerous.
Ordinarily.
Tak!
Tak ah lah!
Tak ah wah!
What the hell
did you say to it?
Is that some kind
of Indian dialect?
Well, it's a lot
older than that.
Now, since you can't
take care of yourself...
You big baby...
Hey.
Gosh.
Houston, we have a problem.
That's not mine.
You put that in there
when I was off doing my business.
Yeah.
Blame the cop, just like in
your lefty New York stories.
Tak.
Why do you keep
saying that?

Why do you keep
saying "tak"?
I didn't say tak.
You said tak.
You say tomato,
I say tomat-oh.
You say potato,
I say potat-ah.
What the hell's
the matter with you?
Tomato...
Tomat-oh.
Potato.
Potat-oh.
let's call
the whole thing off #
My nose!
That's not all I'll break.
My children of the desert.
Can toi.
What music they make.
Get up!
On your feet, Lord Jim.
Upsa-daisy, you
worthless piece of crap.
You've been redefined.
Watch what you're
doing to me.
Shut up!
You're in my house now!
You're in the house
of the wolf and the scorpion...
and don't you forget it!
You really did wet
your pants this time.
You're a sorry excuse
for a writer...
and you're a sorry
excuse for a man.
Your whole life is a lie...
and I could just kill
you right here.
Yes.
Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

No. No. No. No.
It's still showing.
I can still see it.
Cover it up more!
More, please.
Yes.
Thank you for using Sky.
Your call is now
being routed.
Have a great day.
Oh, damn it.
I was in a literary commune
in Chicago.
Yeah, that's
a new one on me.
Well, when you have
a bunch of people...
sitting around
in a roach motel...
smoking crystal meth,
they're addicts.
- Nice.
- But!
If they've been to college,
they're a literary commune.
For a while, though,
it wasn't bad...
But then I realized
I was getting old before my time.
So, I split.
OK, all right...
Do me a favor.
just don't say anything, OK?
He's... he'll
be cool about it.
But his agent
made a huge stink...
about picking up,
wayward hitchhikers.
Hey, boss, that you?
Steve...
Steve, I'm...
Johnny?
Boss, is that...

Trouble...
I hear you, boss.
What's wrong?
Boss?
About a mile and...
about a mile and a half...
Boss?
Boss? Boss!
Steve...
Boss? Boss?!
Steve, can you...
can you hear me? S...
S...
Shoot.
Lost him.
Miss me?
Where you taking me?
The old calabozo,
my friend...
Where anything you bray
will be abused against you...
in the court of caw.
Well, aren't you going
to at least say gesundheit?
He's in trouble isn't he?
Said something
about the cops.
Oh, God.
Bad.
Not good.
Big ego. Big temper.
Just hope he hasn't
killed anybody.
All right,
brace yourself, Cynthia.
There might be blood.
Yeah, I will.
I'm a woman.
I can deal with blood.
Look, John.
What in the name of God
is going on?
What's up
with the praying, David?

I've been doing it since
Bryan's accident.
Everyone thought he'd die.
Your sister died.
I'd say that's
a pretty lousy bargain.
Honey, leave him alone...
I want to know about this!
He's praying.
That's all.
He's not hurting
anybody.
Praying is great.
Without it, the crusades would've
never gotten off the ground.
Do you do this
all the time, son?
Or is it special?
I ask for help in the morning
and give thanks at night.
In the middle I just
take a few minutes...
and try to...
get open.
Sort of like a football
receiver or something.
It's hard to explain.
Bryan got you going on this?
Bryan's accident.
You remember
the doctor saying...
how his recovery was
almost miraculous?
I saw him, Mom.
It wasn't "almost."
Bryan, look out!
Bryan!
Bryan!
Bryan, are you OK?
Bryan, are you...
Help me! Somebody help me!
I think he's dying!
Come on, please.
God, please don't

let him die.
If you save him,
I'll do something for you.
Anything you want,
I promise.
Only don't let him die.
Please don't let him die.
God could work a miracle
on your friend...
but not on your baby sister?
He couldn't save her
from that cop?
What kind of a god is that?
I don't know what kind
of god he is.
Look, leave him alone.
I want to know how you
can get on your knees...
and pray to a god
who killed your sister!
Lady, he's your son...
and I don't mean
to interfere.
But why don't you take
it easy on the boy?
I know you lost
your little girl.
I lost my husband.
It's been a tough day
on everyone.
Tough day.
Listen.
Maybe it's help.
No. It's Collie.
I recognize the engine.
His name is
Collie Entragian.
He's been on the force
here for...
about 12 years.
I'm... I'm the vet
in these parts...
and I took care of
Collie's dogs.

He was a nice fellow.
Yeah, a real sweetheart.
Till this, I mean.
I'll tell you
something, though.
He's bigger.
What do you mean,
"he's bigger"?
Bigger.
Taller.
A few inches at least.
That's impossible.
I know.
Look at us, would you.
Just one big happy family.
Tak.
I don't even know
what I'm looking for.
His bike...
Skid marks, or just anything
out of the ordinary.
- Wait, wait... what is that?
- What?
He said something about an R.V.
Hey!
What? What is it?
Just a reflection,
I guess. Go slow.
Hello?
Anybody home?
Look.
This is some little
girl's favorite.
See how the dress
is patched?
So why was it left
in the sand?
Yeah. And why...
Why are all the tires flat, you know?
Like, not just one or two
of them, but all of them.
Eeny, meeny, miney, mo.
Catch a tourist by the toe.
Don't you scream.

Don't you shout.
Time has come
to take you... out.
Leave them alone!
Haven't you done
enough to us?
In a word...
No.
Come on out, hon.
Or this no chin,
pencil neck, paper pusher...
gets it right
between the eyes.
Ellie, no.
And the boy goes next.
No!
I'll be all right.
OK.
That's right, hon.
Fine as fiddlesticks.
If you want that...
take me where my son
won't have to see.
Oh, don't worry, hon.
I don't want "that."
Especially not from "you."
Mom, no!
Leave her alone,
you bastard!
Leave my mother alone.
Don't worry, honey.
I'll be back. OK?
Make him stop.
Dad, make him stop.
Oh, God.
I'm warning you.
If you hurt her, you'll be sorry.
Maybe.
But I doubt it.
You're just a little
prayboy, aren't you?
Yes, yes, you are.
You just little prayboy
in a baseball shirt.

Well, go ahead and pray.
See what good it does.
But God ain't here
any more than he was...
when Jesus was dying
on the cross with flies in his eyes.
Tak!
Tak! Ah lah!
Him en tow!
If you set a hand
or a foot outside your cell...
he'll have it off before you
even know it was gone.
Leave her alone.
Son!
I will put a stick through
your mother and spin her...
until she catches fire
if I so desire.
And you'll not stop me.
And I'll come back for you.
Collie!
Don't hurt her!
Carver. Carver.
Well, there was boy here
as well as a girl.
David Carver. Carver.
What do you got?
Jewelry.
Earrings and rings.
You know, not Tiffany,
but not cheap either.
Not the kind of stuff
you'd leave behind...
unless you were in a hurry.
Time for the cops, isn't it?
Well, I'm pretty sure
the boss said something...
about being like
a mile from the R.V.
So...
Before we start
yelling for the cops...
You're crazy.

Cynthia!
Why are you
taking me here?!
It's beautiful, isn't it?
Oh, God.
Please, don't kill me.
Just...
Now what?
Well, there's a town
not too far far east of here...
Desperation.
They got some cute names
out here, don't they?
Yeah, I don't
care about the name.
I just care about if they have
at least one working phone...
and maybe
one working cop.
Yeah.
Wouldn't that be nice.
Mother Mary #
What's the story #
Save my soul
from Purgatory #
Pie.
Murder God.
That's what it really says.
Pie, I'm sorry
he killed you.
Never mind.
I have something for you.
Tak ah lah!
Tak!
Look, David.
David, are you OK?
Could you
please turn around?
This is a little
embarrassing.
David, whatever
you have in mind...
It can't be a good idea.
It's the only idea.

Who says so, son?
My sister...
God.
Are you going to stop this...
before you son does
something he regrets?
David, you don't
have to do this.
The cop's bleeding out.
He can't last much longer.
It won't take him long...
to kill my mom
if decides to.
David, I don't know
what you're planning...
But I forbid it.
Sorry, Dad.
What's he doing?
David! David,
you don't have to do this.
You'll get stuck.
Even if you do get out,
That thing'll eat you
from the feet up.
Lord, close its mouth
like you did with the lions...
When Daniel was cast
into their den.
Amen.
Stop it!
Get away from him
you ugly bastard.
Here, here. Here! Here!
Hey! Hey, come on!
Get over here,
you mutt.
Come to me!
Come to me!
Come on,
take another bite!
Come this way!
Come to me!
David, there's no time!
Come on, move!

Get out of there, David!
David, pull it!
Get out of there!
Come on, come on!
David, push!
Get out!
Get out!
Call the police!
Run, run, David!
Please help me
take care of my mom...
and do what
I'm supposed to do.
Hello?
Anybody home?
Tasteful.
Operators are standing by.
Hello?! Anybody there?
It's dead!
It's got to be the...
Hey, wait! Wait! Wait!
Wait.
There are some garbage cans
lined up against the wall.
The wind just knocked
one down. That's all.
I don't care.
I want to get out of here.
This place is empty,
and it gives me the creeps.
There's trucks out there.
Where is everybody?
I don't know.
But I just think...
we ought to just keep...
I know, just tell me...
we're going to be
laughing at each other...
and feeling stupid
in a few seconds. OK?
OK. A few seconds.
Good enough.
Let's see what we see.
Do you hear that?

Sounds like a kid blowing
bubbles through a straw.
Do not worry, Little Nell,
for I shall save you.
Dork.
Yeah.
It's just an aquarium.
No, look.
Look.
What?
Behind the boat.
It's a hand.
My God, what happened here?
I love you, Pie.
Please help me not to freak.
Oh! Oh, God!
- Oh!
- Oh, God.
Whatever
happened here is over.
It's over. It's over.
Oh, God.
OK. All right. OK.
The blood's dry.
It's... it's gone brown.
It's gone brown.
OK. It's all right.
It's all right.
It's all right.
I wanna get out of here.
Yeah.
Yeah, we better...
What's the matter
with you?
You think this is
Anthropology 101?
What is it?
What the...
What...
I don't know.
Whatever.
Wait!
I think I just...
What?

Never mind.
Look at its tongue.
Do you think that
that did all of this?
I don't know
and I don't care.
I just wanna
get out of here.
Come on.
No way!
David, son.
If that's you,
don't come in!
That thing's right
in front of the door!
How close?
About five feet.
And looking right at
the sound of your voice.
I have a gun.
I'm gonna shoot it.
No, don't even
think about it!
I think you all better
get under your bunks.
Have you ever shot
a gun before, kid?
Not a real one.
Oh, Jesus wept.
You don't even
know if it's loaded!
Or if it has a safety!
I have to do this.
I tried the phones.
They're dead.
David, count to five,
so we'll know.
Hey, you're gonna
get my son killed!
What the hell's
the difference?
If big daddy
comes back here...
we're all dead.

Dad, get down!
- Please.
- OK, David.
One!
Is my dad under cover?
Yeah.
- Be careful, son!
- And shoot up!
Remember,
he's gonna jump!
OK.
Two!
Three!
Four.
Five!
David!
David!
You OK, son?
Please, David.
Answer me!
David...
David...
David...
It... twitched.
It was horrible.
You did a good job, pal.
An amazing job.
Yeah, it was, David.
Would you check
for a key here and let us out?
Maybe in the desk?
Look in there.
I'm so proud of you.
Seeing Pie was the hardest.
I covered her
with a jacket.
You did the best
you could, my boy.
You did the best
you could.
I'm scared for mom.
Look, I don't
mean to rush you...
But the sooner we

get out of here...
Where is everybody?
Look! Look! Look!
Lights.
Where there's lights,
there's phones.
What was that?
You wait here.
Yeah, right!
Eat me, said
the cake to Alice.
It's hot in here.
The air conditioning's off.
It smells funny.
Hey...
Now, look, forget this.
Forget this, please.
We came here to find
people, all right?
So let's find 'em.
OK.
OK.
Let's go.
Hello?
Anybody here?
Hello?
Hey. Hey, Steve,
there's somebody there.
No, no, no.
She's... dead.
No, she's not.
I can see her head moving.
No, Cynthia...
- Hey, ma'am?
- No! It's... Don't!
Ma'am?
Wait, wait, wait!
Wait, wait.
A phone. A phone.
We got a phone.
Go back.
Boss! Oh, my God,
we thought you were dead!
We found your bike

underneath this...
What happened to your face?
Same thing that
happened to mine.
The cop.
The market!
It's full of...
things!
It's not just
the market!
Never mind that.
We got wheels.
Let's get the hell
out of here. Come on!
Somebody's coming!
It's Collie!
He's coming back!
We gotta get
out of here!
Come on, let's go!
We gotta get that truck
off the street, too!
What? Make a run
for the highway?
Son, we'd never make it!
All right. Come on,
let's go! Hurry up!
Take them round the back!
Hey, you know
where we're going?
Yeah.
All right,
you're coming with me.
Let's go.
You got it?
That damn little prayboy.
Where are they?
Show me.
Hey!
It's just a rope.
You're OK.
I hate narrow places.
It'll get better soon.
Gather around.

I want you all
to have the full effect.
Come on over here.
Watch your step, though.
Wow, this is amazing.
Theater's been closed
over twenty years now.
Few of us got tired
of the hoorah...
down at the Owls' Club
and bought it.
Hey, Steve.
Watch.
No, no, no, no, no, no,
Old-timer. Maybe later.
Here. Check this out.
Who the hell
are you to tell me...
I can't have a drink out
of my own liquor cabinet?
Somebody who knows
what you are.
Somebody
who's been there.
And while that crazy cop
is still out there somewhere...
That is off-limits...
You got that?
Fine.
Well, what about
these lights?
The cop gonna
see 'em out there?
The theater's boarded up,
your majesty.
No light
shines through.
We're as safe here
as anywhere.
I reckon.
The cop'll find
us sooner or later.
- You know he will.
- You saw him.

Time is not
on his side.
Where's... where's
everybody else?
Dead.
He killed 'em.
Yeah, some of 'em, I'm sure.
But where are
the rest of 'em?
You're not hearing me.
Anything that got into his road...
he killed it.
Oh, that's nuts.
He couldn't have killed 'em all.
Well, look around,
smart aleck.
How come
he didn't kill you?
I don't know.
He come for me
a couple of days ago.
I had been on a ranch job...
and I slept a little bit late.
Slept in my coat, actually.
I might...
had too much to drink, too.
Now, he came right
into my bedroom.
First I knew...
Collie Entragian
was dragging me out of bed...
and snapping
his damn handcuffs...
and dragging me off to jail.
He pulled me all the way
through the house...
and across the yard,
and into his car.
Locked me in the back
of the cruiser...
and hauled my ass
off to jail.
He was talkin' all kinds
of crazy stuff...

in some other language.
And they weren't all dead...
Then, you know...
the folks in town, I mean.
He got half a dozen on
the way back from my place.
Shot them down
in the streets, ran over them.
The waitress...
in the Desert Rose
was screaming...
looking over his shoulder...
and she tripped.
That thump when
we went over her...
and him... Laughing.
That little bear
on the dashboard...
nodding his head
up and down.
And him...
laughing.
Some people must
have escaped.
He's not human.
I know that
sounds crazy, but...
Yeah, I know
what you mean.
They reopened a mine,
the old China Pit.
Whatever's
happening here...
I think it came
from over there.
What are you,
the town historian?
I guess...
Guess you might say so.
In an unofficial way.
I like history.
Local history, especially.
Up until now, that is.
I found some stuff to eat.

Well, this
should certainly...
Take care of
hunger in America.
It's sardines.
Not great, I guess.
Bet this boy and I'd settle...
for woodchuck pt.
Pass it around, David.
Would anybody mind if
I said a prayer first?
Sort of like a Grace?
Go for it, Davey boy.
God bless this food
we're about to eat.
Bless our fellowship.
Take care of us.
Deliver us from evil.
Especially my mom.
Please let her be OK.
Please.
Amen.
Amen.
You really believe
this, don't you?
Don't you?
Well, there's enough
for everyone.
Honest.
Appears he's right, ma'am.
We were headed to Tahoe...
when all the tires
went flat.
And then
he pulled up behind us...
and gave us
some story about...
a crazy in the desert...
who was disabling vehicles, and...
and shooting folks.
And... and then
he looked at Pie.
When he smiled at her...
Your...

Your daughter
dropped her doll.
Ellen couldn't
stop her from crying...
But...
David made her feel better.
He always could.
So how do we
get out of this?
I mean, do we just...
wait for the wind
to die down, or what?
Waiting's a bad idea.
Why do you say that?
Well, because...
somebody should've
gotten out of here...
and nobody did.
There's something...
Loose here...
and if we hang around...
I think it's... its
apt to eat us alive.
I'm not going anywhere
until I find out...
what happened
to my mom!
- No, David, no.
- No!
It won't do
your mom any good...
for you
and the rest of us...
to die trying to find her.
It's true, son.
It's a crock!
That's what it is!
None of you care
about my mother.
Not even you, Dad.
You know that's not true.
If we leave, it'll be
too late to save her.
I know that just like...

I knew how
to use the soap...
To get us out
of the cell.
Why don't
you pray?
I can't.
Right now,
I'm too pissed.
At God?
At Santa Claus.
Is that really how
it was, Mr. Billingsley?
All those white miners...
and Chinese miners
working together?
Pretty much, I guess.
Oh, come on.
They didn't call it...
The Chinese-American pit, did they?
Why don't you
tell us about it?
You think
you know it all...
Mr. High and mighty!
Why don't you tell it?
You're the big
storyteller.
I'll tell you about Vietnam.
You tell us
about desperation.
Talk about it.
Every... town has a sister.
And every town
has its secrets.
We're here. We want
to know about it.
Tell us about it.
Well, you'll all
think I'm crazy.
After what we've seen?
Anybody think Tom's crazy...
raise their hands.
Well, about a month ago...

An A.N.F.O. crew uncovered...
the old Rattlesnake Shaft...
while they were
shooting blast holes.
They dug the Rattlesnake...
a good 150 years ago.
It caved in
about three months later...
And the miners...
All but two of the Chinese...
were buried alive...
along with
whatever they dug up...
when they started working
the mine again last month.
Whatever they woke up.
I think it's...
a waisin.
An earth demon.
Now that the shafts
are open again...
All of those animals
we're seeing...
I think...
They're its eyes and ears.
Now, the Chinese
were treated badly...
in California,
but here in Nevada...
they were damn near
part of the community.
They were working to support
their families back home...
and to buy land
of their own.
Nobody forced them
down into the mines.
What about
the two survivors?
How'd they get out?
Well, they just
beat the cave-in.
Pure luck.
Then they left town, I guess.

And nobody tried to pin
the cave-in on them?
Now, why would they
try to do that?
Well, from my experience...
The best scapegoats
are those...
who can't
speak English.
You know, that's all
ancient history.
But they've been finding
some damn strange stuff...
down in that hole...
in the last couple of weeks.
Carvings and such.
I think...
something came
out of that mine.
Something that...
never died.
And never will.
Now, I know
how that sounds...
but you asked for it.
I...
I have
to take a leak.
I'll be back
in a minute.
Take this with you.
Thank you.
If you know he's
got a bottle stashed...
In the boy's room,
why didn't you stop him?
Because I think
he needs a drink...
to steady himself...
and one's all he's
gonna take, for now.
Did you used to drink,
Mr. Marinville?
No, David,

I used to drown.
It was a way
of putting out...
the dreams after the war.
David?
This god of yours
performed a miracle...
on your friend, right?
Yes.
Have you stopped
to ask yourself...
why god would want
to hurt a child...
to say hello?
I asked Reverend Martin
about that.
and I asked him how
to keep my promise.
What promise is that?
That if God saved Bryan,
I'd do something he wanted.
Anything he wanted, really.
And this is it?
That something?
You think this
is for the best?
That God is good and
this is for the best?
I don't know anymore.
It's so much harder now.
Reverend Martin says...
that faith isn't
just believing in God.
Believing God is sane.
I think I understood that.
But he killed my sister!
He took my mom!
We have to get
out of here, David.
That's what
I have faith in.
We have to.
What was that?
My, God!

It's the old man!
David!
Pie...
Pie, wait up!
Oh! Oh, my God!
Shoot it, Steve!
Blow its head off!
I don't want
to hit the old man!
Then blow its ass off!
It's killing him!
John Ford said...
"If you have a choice
between truth or legend...
print the legend."
Come on!
There's not much time.
Hey!
Come on!
Somebody get it!
Shoot it!
Kill it! I...
I can't get it!
Somebody
shoot this thing!
Get it off me!
- Shoot him, Johnny!
- Don't hurt Steve!
Somebody shoot
the damn thing!
Thanks, boss.
Where's David?
Where's my boy?
David?
David!
You, go find David.
I'll stay with him.
David!
David! Where are you?!
What if the cop's got him?
Why are you here?
For the same reason
everyone's here.
To love God and serve God.

What am I
supposed to do?
Look, David. See.
David?
David?
He's in there.
Oh, s-s-scared.
Oh, gosh.
Tom.
It's OK.
Please,
somebody help me.
Ellen, is that you?
Who else would it be?
Trouble with these bodies
is how fast they wear out...
but you should last a while.
Come on, David.
Come on back.
Tom is dead.
Mary's gone.
You think
it was the cop?
Course it was.
I just don't know why
he didn't trash us.
He's afraid of us.
And there is no "he."
It's a thing
from the mine.
Collie Entragian
is dead.
So is my mother.
David, honey, we
can't give up hope.
I have a lot to tell you.
Just don't want
to do it in here.
Yeah, it is
pretty creepy here,
But he... it's
out there some place.
No.
It's in the pit.

It took the head
of the assay crew...
That uncovered
the Rattlesnake Shaft.
His name was Cary Ripton.
That's how it started.
He followed a trail of
those little stone animals...
The can tahs
to tak's place.
That's its name...
Tak.
There's a hole
that goes...
I think it goes into
another dimension...
or something.
Tak got into Cary Ripton...
and from him
it jumped to the cop.
It wears out bodies fast.
God showed you this
on that editing machine?
You dog my cats.
Listen...
I know you're
a famous writer.
You're...
used to being the center
of attention and all...
but that doesn't
give you the right...
to make fun of my boy.
He's just afraid, Dad.
That's all.
That's it, I'm afraid.
I'm terrified
as a matter of fact...
But there is a certain
hopeful geography...
about this situation.
You said Tak the magnificent
is in the mine.
That's south of here.

The highway is north of here.
The truck is right here!
We get in the truck.
We fire it up.
We get the hell
out of Dodge.
Mary's alive.
Tak's got her stored...
like a spider stores
flies to eat later on.
Damn it.
Is anybody here?
Oh, God... Please.
Oh, god.
Oh, god.
Oh, god.
No!
Oh, God!
Oh, God.
Oh, god!
Please!
Oh, my god.
You gotta be joking.
You seriously think...
we can just drive up
to that open pit mine...
and save the lady fair?
We have to get out of here...
You wanted
to know about God.
I'll tell
you what I know.
He works through people...
and right now,
he's trying to work through us.
I say we give it a try.
Who asked you?
Listen!
It has to be all of us.
Tak's not just
a man or a woman...
No matter what
it looks like.
It's a Can Tak,

The big god,
the heart of the unformed.
Only all of us
can stand against it.
Can't you feel that?
I can't feel anything.
You learn a lot
of crap watching movies.
You know that kid?
Tak's like you.
It wants us to leave.
Well, then why don't
we give it what it wants?
Well, there's Mary.
You know, I didn't
bring her here...
and I didn't take
her up to that mine...
If that's where she is...
So don't give me that
guilt-tripping stuff.
Now you people want to fly...
Trans-God airways
with the boy...
Go right ahead.
I think I'll pass...
and not even God
can stop me.
No.
He gives us free will.
That's right,
good old free will.
God bless God, huh?
I think I'll go out and find a car
with some keys in it...
and resume...
my interrupted trip.
You folks have a good day...
and send me
a postcard...
when it's time
for the reunion.
You know what?
I have lost

all my respect for you.
I've lost the respect
of a man...
Who once carried out
Steven Tyler's barf bags.
Shucks.
David,
tell me something.
If Tak wants us to leave...
why'd he bring us here
in the first place?
It didn't.
It thinks it did,
but it didn't.
This is God's will,
Not Tak's.
And if you leave now...
You'll smell Tak on your skin...
for the rest of your life.
Well, I better go heavy
on the aftershave, huh?
Hey...
Anybody make it
to San Jose,
I'm at the Sea Cliff.
Drinks on me.
Thought you quit drinking.
That was a mistake.
Wish I didn't
run into this kid.
Johnny!
Mr. Marinville...
We were put
on earth to love God...
to serve him.
And what else are you
doing tonight anyway?
It's not... it just
isn't working, kid.
It's not working.
Just shut up.
Just shut up, will you?
Bite me.
You can't, can you?

You can't hurt me, can you?
Because I'm supposed
to be next.
Tak ah lah.
Murder your god.
So, he says to his wife,
this frog can cook...
you're outta here.
Are you Mr. Marinville?
What the hell
are you doing?
Everything blow sky high.
You got five, maybe ten second,
big boy, then...
boom!
Tak.
Tak ah lah!
Tak ah lah.
Ran like a rabbit.
Didn't warn a soul.
Fraidy boy.
Tak ah lah.
Tak a wan.
It was him...
It...
Tak.
That was 35 years ago
in Saigon.
Why, I don't...
So, you'd know
when you saw it.
When you saw it
the next time.
We can still
travel, David.
Drive to highway 50,
head west.
Never look back.
Free will, right?
Yeah.
Good old free will.
Oh, God.
Eighty-seven people died in that bar.
Eighty-seven.

And I never tried
to save anyone.
Not a one of them.
I only saved
my own sorry ass.
And here?
How many in this town?
Sometimes God is cruel.
What good is he then?
He wants us to love him...
and to...
Serve him?
Right?
Come here.
Come on.
You're crazy.
I like that in a person.
Where do we start?
Mary?
Let's go get her.
Come on.
Try the dryer, Mary.
Mi him!
Can de lach.
Min en tow.
Tak!
Mi him.
Can de lach.
Oh, God, it's the cop.
It's the cop!
Come on!
Wait! It's Mary!
It's Mary!
It almost got me!
It was so close.
It was in Ellen.
I'm sorry, David.
I know.
It's dead.
It's lying
back there dead.
No, Ellen's dead,
not Tak.
It's still in the mine,

isn't it?
The pirin moh.
That's where
it really is.
Wh... what is that?
The well of the worlds.
This well...
If it's in there, David...
can we block it up
somehow?
I don't know.
Yeah, we can... we can
block up that mine shaft.
And that's what we're
going to do right now.
So what does this Tak want?
It doesn't matter.
It doesn't matter?
No, all that matters
is what God wants.
No, we don't have
time for that.
Let me do this.
Are you nuts? This is
an explosive shed.
Either it works
or it doesn't.
Now get back.
Everybody get back.
David, get back
and pray.
Everybody get back!
What is all that stuff?
Ammonium nitrate.
Tim McVeigh used it
in Oklahoma City.
What the hell
are we doing here?
You got a better idea?
No.
Let's just say
I got hit by a God bomb.
Never mind about God.
I'll settle for bombs.

Steven, hold on.
Dave's getting
a little antsy.
Pretty soon now you're
going to have to grab him.
Hold him tight.
Don't let go.
All right.
So what's the plan?
We do what God
tells us to do.
That's the plan.
Come on.
We ought to pray.
Our father
who art in heaven...
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done...
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day
our daily bread...
and forgive us
our trespasses...
as we forgive those who
trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation...
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom...
The power, and the glory
forever and ever.
I think
I'm supposed to go on...
from here by myself.
David, no.
That's a load of crap, Dave.
What do you mean?
Exactly what I say.
And don't give me that
"God told me to"...
'cause right now, he's not
telling you anything, is he?
All right,
you can lead the way.

How about that?
Let's go.
Let's get this over with.
Sorry, kid.
Sorry, kid.
Sorry. Sorry.
Just got a bad back.
It's all right.
It's all right.
Too much alcohol
and too much cigarettes.
Do you want me
to take those bags?
No.
Not far to go.
What do you know?
What do I know?
I want to get out of
here before dawn.
Let's move it.
Come on.
There's something
in there.
Someone help him!
Help him!
I can't get him!
It's going to tear
its head off!
Kill it!
Stop! Stop, please!
He can't.
God can't take them all.
He can.
He's God.
And God is cruel.
He's no better than Tak.
Steve, get him!
He can't take them
all and leave me!
He can't take them
all and leave me!
You want to know
how cruel your god is?
How fantastically cruel?

Sometimes he makes us live.
Get him out of here.
There's going to be
a big bang.
- Boss?
- No time.
David, you find
your friend Bryan.
Make him your brother.
Then keep telling yourself...
there was an accident
out in the desert.
A bad one.
And you're the only survivor.
That's not
what happened!
That's exactly what happened.
Now, get him out of here.
Go on. Move it.
Come on.
Right!
Holy God...
You're John Edward Marinville,
aren't you?
You down there, Tak?
Because I've
come for you.
Come on, big brave
American writer.
Tak ah lah!
Stop!
I command you to stop!
Tak commands you to stop!
The heart of the unformed
commands you to stop!
Donald Rumsfeld
demands you stop.
Adam Sandler
demands you stop.
Anne Coulter
demands you stop.
Even if he can get to it,
how can he set that stuff off?
I think he knows a way.

I can give you anything
if you stop.
Anything!
Anything?
Anything?
Oh, man...
Norman Mailer
burned my ass...
in a New York Times
book review.
What more
can a man want?
You can't!
Os pa! You can't.
You untalented bastard!
Man, you said
the wrong thing there.
You're useless.
You're a drunk.
You're a no good
for nothing piece of crap.
No. Don't do it.
You're a joke,
and you always have been!
See, I hate critics.
Come on!
Run for me now!
Come on!
It won't die, will it?
It'll just keep
coming for us.
Look...
It's going away already.
See?
Let's get out
of here.
Wait! Stop!
Pull over.
What is it?
There's an overnight bag
in the backseat...
if no one's stolen it.
David, I think you
should come here.

Any idea how
your school album...
got in the backseat
of my car?
That's, um,
my boss' handwriting.
Are you sure?
Are you kidding me?
After a month of looking
over his shoulder...
while he wrote "good luck"
and "best wishes"
and "could you come up
to my room" in people's books?
Yeah, I'm sure.
The Bible reference.
Do you know it?
Sure.
"God is love."
What do you think, David?
Is he love?
Yeah.
I guess so.
I guess God's
sort of everything.
That's what makes him God.