

# DEATH DETAIL

## Synopsis

...By 1990 the U.S.  
Coastguard was instructed  
to computerize all existing  
lighthouses

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The morning light is grey, the sea choppy. A red-and-white Coastguard cutter is moored alongside a pier in the Charleston harbor, dwarfed by the warships nearby. Sitting on their seabags near the gangplank leading to the Cutter's deck, Tom Segrue a twenty-one year old Signalman, and Sally Fiedler, a cute, blond Second Class Yeoman, watch as a jeep drives up the pier towards them. Segrue calls up to Ann Larsen, a strong-willed thirty year old Lieutenant standing on the deck of the Cutter with the ship's captain. "Hey Skipper. Here comes our replacement. Loo like we got a shitbird."

The jeep comes to a halt nearby. Larsen watches in dismay as two burly seamen pull Chief Petty Officer Frank Disalvo from the back seat. A Coastguard "lifer" with 20 years in the service, Disalvo's face is unshaven and he weaves unsteadily between the seamen, obviously suffering from the effects of a shore-leave bender.

Striding down the gangplank, Larsen says "You look a little greener around the gills, Chief. Better get onboard and sober up." But to her surprise, Disalvo "respectfully disobeys" her order. And her surprise turns to anger when she discovers the reason why. "Nothing personal, Lieutenant," he says, "but it's just that I can't see myself working under a woman, ma'am. It's not in my nature."

Barely able to control her rage, Larsen tells him that it's not in her nature to listen to this sort of crap and that he better get his ass onboard before she has him up on charges. Muttering curses, Disalvo follows her up the gangplank, dragging his seabag behind him...

Standing on deck of the cutter as it knifes through the swells of the open sea, Segrue turns to Fiedler. They've worked on half a dozen light stations already, but this is the first time they'll be stuck on a remote island for ten days with a jerk like Disalvo. What planet does he come from, anyways? Fiedler grins. "The planet Six-Pack, by the looks of him..."

Late afternoon. A dark line of storm clouds has formed on the horizon. A brisk wind whips the sea into choppy whitecaps. The Coastguard cutter sits five hundred yards off the shore of Jekyll Island as a small launch bucks through the waves towards it.

The launch's pilot, Jim Collins, is a skinny, bearded civilian. He's been running the Jekyll Light Station single-handedly for a couple of years, and it shows. But now the station's being automated. The computerized equipment arrived a couple of days ago. As Collins ferries Larsen, Segrue, Fiedler and Disalvo to the island, the Cutter heads back to the mainland.

Docking the launch in a corrugated tin boathouse, Collins helps the others unload their bags, then points out the sights as he leads them up to the house. The red-striped light tower stands eighty feet tall from its broad base to the balconied lamp room at its top. There's a water tank on steel pipe legs on a hill near the tower, and nearby, a generator shed and storage building. One hundred and fifty yards away, a tall radio antenna is bolted to the side of a grey radio shack.

As they approach the two-storey clapboard station house, Larsen notices Collins' thriving garden of marijuana plants. "Seeds just happened to blow out from the mainland, huh Collins?" He shrugs and grins. "What can you do?..."

That night, a fierce storm rages. Inside the house, Disalvo earns KP duty when he needles Larsen about the fact that her father was a famous admiral, "Lead Balls Larsen". Everyone is surprised when Disalvo turns out to be a great cook. Skipping desert, Collins puts on his slicker and goes out into the storm to check on the light. The others make themselves at home, listening to his stereo and playing video games on his home computer.

Alone in the tower, Collins makes sure the light is working properly, then settles down to smoke an after-dinner joint. But his reverie is cut short when he spots something on the far side of the island, something dimly reflecting the beam of the lamp through the storm. Armed with a flashlight, he sets out to investigate.

The wind howls, drowning out the sound of the waves crashing against the shore. The beam of Collins' flashlight bobs along the sand as he walks down the beach. Stopping just short of the surf, he shields his eyes from the rain and gazes out to sea.

A vague black shadow, barely visible through the rain, looms up in front of him. And then, a sudden flash of lightning illuminates the towering, rusty bow of a freighter grounded twenty yards out from shore.

Cupping his hands over his mouth, Collins calls out to see if there's anyone onboard. His words are lost in the storm. He tries again, straining to hear if anyone replies.

And then, he hears something. But the sound is coming from behind him. He turns in surprise, raising his flashlight. A dark shape lunges forward. Collins lets out a cry of shock -- and then, a strangled scream of pain and terror...

Early morning. The sea is calm and the sun has just risen, clearing the sky of clouds. Wearing a red bikini, Fiedler runs down the beach and into the surf. She swims out, cutting through the water with smooth, expert strokes. And then, fifty yards from shore, she stops swimming and floats on her back to regain her breath. As she starts to turn back to shore, she sees it -- almost a mile away, the distant silhouette of the freighter rises from the end of the island, a rusted metal chip between the white sand of the key and the blue ocean beyond. Fiedler swims quickly back to shore...

Larsen, Segrue and Disalvo are just finishing breakfast when Fiedler bursts into the kitchen. "Skipper, there's a ship out there." Disalvo is unimpressed. "It happens on oceans sometimes. But when Fiedler explains that the ship is aground on the island, they head for the light tower to take a look.

Standing on the balcony of the lamp room, Disalvo studies the freighter through binoculars. "She's a floater. A derelict. Doesn't look like anyone's onboard, but I better run out in the launch and take a look." Larsen stops him. She's in charge, and she'll decide who will investigate the ship. She tells Fiedler and Disalvo to start an inventory of the lighthouse equipment. She and Segrue will check out the wreck...

Larsen manouevers the launch up to the side of the freighter. Across its stern, in rusted letters, are the words "S.S. Paraibo" and "Belem". The ship is eerily quiet. Segrue scrambles up a frayed rope dangling from the lifeboat davits and disappears on deck. Larsen glides the launch to the sand bar, strips off her pants and wades into the waist-deep water to check the angle of the freighter's list.

Segrue walks along the steeply canting deck, then pulls open a door and steps into a passageway. In the gloom, soft light filters from a row of open cabin doors. Debris is scattered everywhere. Reaching the end of the passage, he unclips the dog-latches of a ladder well-hatch and pulls it half-way open. A nauseating stench rises up from the hold. Segrue backs away, gagging, then switches on his flashlight and climbs down through the hatch.

In the darkness of the hold, the flashlight beam plays over a jumble of broken crates and boxes. One of them looks like a coffin. Steeling himself, Segrue pushes the shattered lid aside. To his relief, it's empty. Then, he hears a creak, and a quick scuttling sound. He whirls around. Nothing. But the place is beginning to give him the creeps. Especially when he sees a cracked metal container with the words "DANGER. RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL" stencilled on its side.

He heads back to the ladder, but just as he's about to climb it, there's another noise. He looks up, then dives aside just in time as a crate topples down towards him. Shaken, he gets to his feet -- then gasps in shock as a dark figure steps towards him, silhouetted in the flashlight's glare. "Sorry about that, Segrue" says the figure. "You okay?" Realizing that it's Larsen, Segrue tells her about the crate of radioactive material. She decides they better get out of the hold, fast.

In the rusted-out bridge, they find the remains of the ship's log, a sodden, waterlogged mass of paper. Carrying it with them, they climb back down to the launch. There's something very strange about the S.S. Paraibo, and they're both eager to get back to dry land. Somehow, neither Larsen nor Segrue can shake the feeling that they weren't alone onboard...

Back in the house, Larsen types a request for information on the S.S. Paraibo on the computer. The data from the Ship Registry file appears. The Paraibo went missing six years ago. It was presumed to have been lost in a storm. There were no survivors. Larsen is mystified. Why hasn't anyone sighted it before now? "Must've got lost in the Triangle" mutters Disalvo. The others are surprised that he believes all that nonsense about the Bermuda Triangle. But they can't help feeling uneasy when Fiedler manages to decipher a few words in the last entries of the ship's log: "plague of insanity", "murder", "they will not die" and "God save our souls"....

Larsen tells Disalvo to get on the radio and report back to Coastguard HQ. She's pissed off to learn that he's already tried, without waiting for orders. But it doesn't matter now. The antenna blew down in the storm and the radio's out. She tells Fiedler to wake up Collins so he can help them get the antenna back up, then goes outside with Segrue and Disalvo to inspect the damage.

Fiedler knocks on the door to Collins' room, then, getting no reply, pushes it open. The room is empty, the bed made -- it obviously hasn't been slept in.

Larsen is starting to get flustered. No radio, no Collins, and Disalvo's starting to get pretty damn insubordinate. Plus, they've got a job to do. She tells Segrue to start unpacking the equipment. Disalvo will repair the antenna. She and Fiedler will search the island for Collins.

Segrue starts to pry open crates of equipment stacked beside the generator in a storage shed. The roar of the generator engine is deafening, and he wads up some kleenex and stuffs it in his ears to keep out the sound. Meanwhile, Disalvo lugs a toolbox out to the radio shack and starts working on the antenna. As it fell, it ripped a hole in the base of the shed. Disalvo cuts his hand on a rusty nail as he tries to repair the damage. Cursing, he heads back to the house to get a bandage.

Fiedler and Larsen split up, each following the shoreline in opposite directions as they search for Collins. Reaching the sandy key at the far end of the island, Larsen gazes out at the derelict freighter. She calls out Collins' name, but there's no answer. As she turns to head back, she sees Collins' flashlight lying half-buried in the sand. She picks it up, then looks around worriedly. What could have happened to him?

On the other side of the island, Fiedler walks along the beach, disturbing a group of seagulls scavenging through the rotting seaweed on the tideline. Most of them fly away, but one just hops along the sand in front of her. She shoos it away. It flutters into the tall seagrass, out of sight. Fiedler walks on for a few steps, then stops as she hears the sound of a mad scramble in the grass, then a tortured squawk. She turns just in time to see a puff of feathers float up into the air above the grass. She turns to head back to see what happens, then suddenly gasps in shock as a man lurches out of the grass towards her. Wearing the rotting remnants of a captain's uniform, his flesh is deathly white and spotted with crusty, running sores. He holds the dead seagull in his hand, and fresh blood drips from his mouth.

Barely able to find her voice, Fiedler stammers out "Who are you...?" But even as she speaks, more living corpses appear out of the grass, first two, then three, then a dozen of them. Horrible, misshapen creatures, their faces are dead and expressionless. One of them takes a bite from the dripping human forearm he holds in his hand. Snarling and moaning, the others start to close in on Fiedler, reaching out for her with bloody, claw-like hands. She lets out a scream of terror...

His hand freshly bandaged, Disalvo steps out of the kitchen. He hears a faint scream and looks down towards the beach to see an incredible sight -- Fiedler racing through the grass, pursued by a lurching, shambling pack of men. Disalvo runs back into the kitchen, yanks open a cabinet door and pulls out a service revolver and ammunition belt.

Hurriedly loading the pistol, he runs towards Fiedler. As he reaches the crest of the dunes behind the light station, he takes aim at the men chasing Fiedler and yells "Hold it right there!" But they ignore him. He lets off a warning shot. Still no reaction. Fiedler stumbles and falls into the grass. One of her pursuers is almost on top of her. Disalvo takes careful aim and fires. Hit squarely in the chest, the man staggers and falls -- then gets back on his feet and keeps on coming, as if nothing had happened. Disalvo can't believe his eyes. He fires another shot. Same thing. A direct hit, but his target refuses to go down. Desperate, he yells to Fiedler -- "The radio shack! Shut yourself inside!"

Scrambling to her feet, Fiedler runs for the shack, about a hundred yards away. One of the creatures rears up in front of her, blocking her way. Then a shot rings out, and he drops in his tracks. But as Fiedler runs past him, he springs back to his feet, drenched in blood.

Finally reaching the shack, Fiedler pulls open the door and leaps inside. A grotesque hand reaches in before she can slam the door. Sobbing in terror, she kicks the hand away and manages to shut and bolt the door...

Outside, Disalvo crouches and fires at the inhuman pack of men as the last few of them disappear behind the shack.

Segrue hasn't heard anything -- his earplugs and the throb of the generator have drowned out the sound of the shots. But on the far side of island, Larsen hears the faint echoes of gunfire carried on the wind. She starts to run back towards the light station...

Disalvo races to the side of the shack, reloads his gun, then leaps around the corner, ready to blast away at the creatures. But they've disappeared. He tries the door. It's locked. "Fiedler! Open the door!" No answer, just terrified sobs that suddenly increase to a horrible wail. Disalvo runs around to the rear of the shack, just in time to see the last one of them squeezing in through the gap torn in the wall by the fallen antenna. He fires half a dozen shots into the quivering body, stopping it temporarily.

Then, from the other side of the building, he hears Fiedler's voice. "Chief...help me...please!" Disalvo races around the shack. He sees Fiedler's head and one arm sticking out of a ventilation window. Her eyes are glazed and her head jerks convulsively. From inside the shack comes a terrible sound, like a pack of hyenas in a feeding frenzy. Disalvo grabs Fiedler and tries to pull her out, but it's no use. Gasping in agony, she looks into Disalvo's eyes. "Chief...they're eating me... my legs...I can't stand it..." Disalvo knows what he has to do. He raises his gun, shuts his eyes and pulls the trigger...

Wiping his hands on a rag, Segrue steps out of the storage shed. He sees Disalvo running towards him, gun in hand. "Hey Chief, what's happening?" Disalvo shouts at him to get the launch fueled and ready. They're getting off this godforsaken island. Puzzled, Segrue stares at Disalvo. "What are you talking about, man?" In no mood for a discussion, Disalvo points his gun at Segrue. "Move your ass, sailor!" Raising his hands, Segrue backs away, then turns and runs for the boathouse.

Disalvo jogs towards the house to get water and supplies for the trip. But he stops on the porch when he hears a crash coming from inside. He peers in the window. The place is swarming with corpse-like marauders, searching for food... human food. Disalvo backs away, reloads his gun, then starts firing methodically.

Running breathlessly, Larsen reaches the station and sees Disalvo blasting away at the house. "What the hell do you think you're doing, Disalvo?" He turns and yells at her to get to the boathouse. Infuriated, she orders him to give her the gun before he causes any more damage. He refuses. She tries to take it away from him. He grabs her, and despite her struggles starts dragging her down towards the launch.

But just then, Segrue appears, running scared out of his wits. "Go back! Go back!" Then, several yards behind him, another group of the death ship's crew appears. Larsen stares in bewilderment. "Now do you see?" says Disalvo. "They're from the ship..."

Larsen still doesn't realize what they're up against. As more of the creatures start spilling out of the house, she orders them to keep back. When they don't respond, she tells Disalvo to fire a warning shot. He obliges by shooting the nearest one in the face. Then, to Larsen's amazement, with half its head blown away, it staggers to its feet...

The inhuman mob starts to close in on Disalvo, Larsen and Segrue, moaning and snarling. Larsen realizes that with their way to the boathouse blocked, there's only one safe place on the island. They run for the light tower, pursued by the horde of living dead men...

Reaching the safety of the tower, they slide the steel door closed behind them and lock it. Segrue looks around wildly. "Where's Fiedler?" Disalvo can't meet his gaze. For a long moment, he doesn't say anything. Then, he tells them what happened, how he had to kill Fiedler. "You killed her?" says Segrue, shaking with grief and rage. Something inside him snaps and he lunges for Disalvo. Larsen breaks up the struggle. They've got enough to worry about without fighting among themselves. They've got to figure out what to do.

"I've already got it figured out" says Disalvo, holding up the gun. "We're going to blast our way out of here. Bullets don't kill them, but they stop them for long enough to let us get away." He starts to go through the ammo webbing on the gun belt, then turns to the others, crestfallen. In his hand he holds all the ammunition that's left -- two bullets.



Outside, the un-dead creatures mill about the station yard, drawn towards the light tower by the knowledge that there's living human flesh inside. Gazing down at them from the lamp-room balcony, Disalvo theorizes that they're walking dead, corpses somehow brought back to life. He gives the radioactive material and empty coffin Segrue saw in the ship's hold as evidence. Larsen refuses to believe his theory, but she can't explain why they won't die...

Later. In the third-storey storage room, Segrue lays out the food he has found in the tower -- one and a half melted chocolate bars, an almost full bottle of rum, and a red fire-bucket of tepid water. They discuss their options. Disalvo argues that the water will run out long before help comes -- all the ships in the area have been warned to stay clear of Jekyll Island for ten days. But Larsen insists that they go by the book. "We secure our position and attempt to establish communication." "What happens if those things down there haven't read your book?" asks Disalvo with a sneer...

Night. The moon has risen, full and bright. Lights twinkle from the house and outbuildings and a soft hum comes from the generator shed. High above the station, the powerful light from the tower flashes on and off, blinking out an S.O.S.

In the lamp room, Segrue manually operates the light. Disalvo turns to Larsen. "You sure as hell ain't nothing like your old man. Lead Balls Larsen wouldn't have gone by the book." Lighting a cigarette, Larsen tries to control her anger. She asks Disalvo what he thinks her father would've done. "He'd have fought his way outta here" says Disalvo. "Made torches to scare those buggers off and headed for the launch..."

Just then, the light goes out -- and stays out. There is a cough and sputter from the generator shed, then silence. Larsen looks out to see the whole station in darkness. She realizes that the fuel tank for the generator must be empty. With no way of signalling for help, she has no choice but to go along with Disalvo's plan. "But how do you know they're afraid of fire?" she asks. Disalvo grins. "Don't they teach you nothing in the academy these days? Those things down there are un-dead, and everyone knows that the un-dead are scared shitless of fire." Larsen remains skeptical. "Maybe we should wave some crucifixes around too, huh Disalvo...?"

A few minutes later, Larsen, Segrue and Disalvo stand by the hatchway on the staircase leading to the ground floor, armed with makeshift torches soaked in kerosene. "We'll light them when we get down" says Disalvo. They start to descend the staircase, bumping into each other in the dark.

When they reach the final landing, Larsen hears something and whispers a warning. She takes her lighter from her pocket and flicks it on. The flame is reflected in dozens of ghastly eyes staring up at them -- the creatures have gotten into the ground floor chamber through a broken window high on the wall.

They quickly light their torches. "Don't worry, they'll keep back" says Disalvo as he starts down the stairs towards the waiting creatures. But instead of backing away in fright, they surge forward with a chorus of inhuman snarls. One of them rips the torch from Disalvo's hand and sends it flying across the room. "Quick! Back up the stairs!" Larsen and Segrue turn and run, with Disalvo right behind them, the bloodthirsty ghouls at his heels.

Halfway up the iron staircase, Segrue trips and tumbles down past Larsen and Disalvo. He tries to fend off the horde of un-dead with his torch. One of them catches on fire, but keeps on coming, clutching at Segrue. He screams in agony as his shirt begins to burn. Disalvo manages to kick the creature away, then grabs Segrue and heaves him up the stairs.

Somehow, they make it to the top. Segrue rolls on the floor, moaning in pain as his clothes continue to burn. Disalvo slams the hatch shut and locks it, then looks up to see Larsen reaching for the water bucket. "No!" he yells, but it's too late. She pours the water over Segrue, dousing the flames, then kneels down and tears off his smouldering shirt. "What did you want me to do? Let him burn?" she asks. "There's more than one way to put out a fire" says Disalvo.

They bandage Segrue's burns as well as they can. "There you go" says Disalvo. "Take two aspirins and call me in the morning." Segrue smiles weakly and accepts Disalvo's offer of a swallow of rum from the bottle he found. Then, over Larsen's objections, Disalvo proceeds to polish off the rest of the bottle by himself...

Later. Disalvo sits on the balcony, singing drunkenly as he gazes down at the monsters in the dark station yard below. "Well, my gal Sal was a spunky li'l gal...till you fucking bastards killed her!" He heaves the empty bottle down at the Captain of the dead crew. It smashes on the gravel. The Captain stares balefully up at him...

Morning. Crashing sounds come from inside the house. A few of the living corpses wander aimlessly around the yard. Then, a carton of canned food smashes out through a window of the house and breaks open on the ground. One of the creatures picks up a can, inspects it, then tosses it away. It rolls towards the base of the light tower.

Watching from above, Larsen has an idea. She finds an old fishing rod, then searches through a box of machine parts until she sees what she wants, a magnetized rotor from a small electric motor. Segrue wakes up to see her heading for the ladder leading to the lamp room with the fishing rod in her hand. "Going fishing, Skipper?" Larsen explains about the can. She's going to try and raise it with the magnet.

Segrue and Disalvo watch as Larsen casts the magnet down towards the can. In this heat, they need liquid. Maybe it's orange juice. Or canned peaches. Finally, after several futile attempts, Larsen "hooks" the can and carefully reels it in. They rush down to the store-room to open it, but their hopes are dashed when they discover that it contains hot sauce. With a curse, Larsen kicks the can, spilling its contents over the floor.

Later. Disalvo stares out from the window of the lamp room at the nearby water tower. Then, he has an idea. He pulls a strip of foil from the lamp reflector, tests it, then begins to wrap it around his chest...

Hearing Disalvo moving around, Larsen goes up to investigate. She stares at him in amazement. His body is wrapped in foil held in place with tape. Only his head and hands are bare. "What the hell are you doing, Chief?" He explains that he's going to go out and get some water. And when Larsen orders him not to, he gathers up some more foil, pushes past her and starts down the ladder. "I respectfully disobey that fucking order, Lieutenant. And I don't want to hear anymore shit about us sitting on our asses until we die of thirst."

Lying on the floor, soaked in sweat, Segrue looks up to see Disalvo as he climbs down the ladder and shuffles into the store-room. "I need a hand, Segrue. Get me those batteries on the shelf..." Not sure what's going on, Segrue reaches for the batteries, then freezes as Larsen orders him to stop. He turns to see her standing with the pistol held in both hands, aimed at Disalvo. "No one's going anywhere!"

But Disalvo simply ignores her threats. And when Segrue sides with him, Larsen realizes she's lost control of the situation. Lowering the gun, she slumps against the wall, watching as Disalvo explains his plan to Segrue. "I've got it all figured out. I go down below and get a hose. You toss a rope out the window. I attach it to one end of the hose, and you pull it up. I take the other end to the water tower..."

A few minutes later, the un-dead things in the yard turn to see the iron door at the base of the tower creaking open. With a big coil of hose slung over his shoulder, Disalvo steps out into the sunlight. He's completely encased in foil, with only his eyes visible through a thin slit. The batteries are in a knapsack strapped to his back, and he carries a three-foot long steel pipe in his hand. As the creatures start shuffling towards him, he quickly ties one end of the hose to the line Segrue has lowered from the window, then yells at him to haul away.

Larsen watches as Segrue strains to pull up the hose. Seeing that he doesn't have the strength left to do it, she goes to help him, pulling the nozzle up through the window and securing it over a bucket.

The creatures start to close in around Disalvo as he heads for the water tower, paying out coils of hose behind him. Larsen yells out a warning as one of them leaps at him from behind. Disalvo whirls around and hits it with his pipe. There is an explosion of sparks. Dazed, the creature falls to the ground. A second ghoul grabs at Disalvo. It gets a tremendous shock when its hands touch the foil suit and staggers away, stunned.

Larsen and Segrue exchange a hopeful look -- it's working! They watch as Disalvo reaches the water tower, keeping the un-dead at bay with his electrified pipe, then starts to climb the ladder leading to the tank.

Reaching the top of the ladder, Disalvo secures the hose, then struggles to shove the heavy lid off the tank. One of the things climbs up the ladder behind him. He kicks it away. Others are scrambling up the steel legs of the tower. Finally, the lid topples to the ground. Disalvo sticks the nozzle of the hose in the water, then looks up to see the Captain watching him from the other side of the tank. Something almost resembling a smile appears on the Captain's face. He reaches down and splashes water on Disalvo. Disalvo's body stiffens. He lets out a gasp of pain.

Larsen and Segrue's smiles turn to expressions of horror -- something has gone terribly wrong. The water has short-circuited Disalvo's electrified suit. His body jerks and shudders uncontrollably as the Captain splashes him again. Sensing Disalvo's weakness, the creatures swarm up towards him, attacking in force. With a tortured scream, Disalvo falls into the tank. There is a sizzling sound, then a burst of steam. Larsen and Segrue can only watch in helpless anguish as the creatures dive into the water after him. There is a brief, frenzied struggle. Then, all is quiet. Larsen buries her face in her hands and starts to cry...

The only sound in the store-room is the plunk plunk plunk of water dripping into the metal pail. Soon, a thin trickle streams from the hose into the bucket. The water is pink, then gradually clears. Segrue cups his hands under the hose and drinks thirstily. He offers some to Larsen. She shakes her head in disgust...

Night. Dark clouds slice across the moon. Inside the store-room, Larsen and Segrue doze fitfully. The bucket is almost full of water. Then nozzle of the hose begins to move, tapping gently against the side of the bucket.

Then, a ghastly white hand appears on the window ledge. One of the death ship's crew has hauled himself up the hose from the water tank. He crawls through the window, pauses for a moment, then drops to the ground with a soft thud. Larsen stirs in her sleep, but doesn't wake up. The creature looks around, spots the service revolver and picks it up, accidentally cocking the hammer.

Just then, another corpse crawls onto the window sill. The first creature turns, swings the pistol around, and unintentionally pulls the trigger. The sound of the shot is deafening. The bullet hits the creature on the window sill in the chest and sends him tumbling back out the window. Larsen and Segrue wake up as fast as humanly possible. "Jesus Christ! It's got a gun!" screams Segrue. He leaps to his feet, kicking over the bucket, then runs panic-stricken towards the open doorway, leaps through it and slams it shut behind him.

Larsen races after him and desperately tries to open the door. But Segrue has locked it. In the next room, he ignores her pleas and cowers in a corner, whimpering in terror.

Trapped in the store-room with the crazed, gun-toting corpse, Larsen circles warily. She manages to back towards the window and glances outside. Standing on top of the water tank, the Captain stares up at her as he urges another creature to climb the hose leading to the window. Larsen quickly unfastens the hose, sending the creature hurtling to the ground, then turns to face the living corpse in the store-room. It edges closer, raising the pistol. Larsen realizes that there's still one shot left. She has no weapons, no way of escape. So she does the only thing she can think of. Letting out a karate yell, she kicks the creature in the groin. It grunts and doubles over, dropping the gun. Larsen leaps for it, picks it up, takes aim and shoots the creature in the head. Then, before it can recover, she unlocks the hatch, shoves the corpse across the floor and dumps it down the stairwell, then re-locks the hatch-cover.

The sound of the shots has brought Segrue back to his senses. He slowly gets up and opens the door. With cool, deliberate fury, Larsen advances towards him, and before he can try to explain, socks him on the jaw with all her strength...

Leaving Segrue sprawled on the floor holding his jaw, Larsen strides back into the store-room. Her hand shakes as she lights her last cigarette. She paces back and forth as she smokes it. Then suddenly, she stops and looks down at the floor. Dozens of ants have swarmed over the pool of blood. Taking a final puff of her cigarette, Larsen drops it onto the blood and crushes the butt and the ants with her foot...

She finds Segrue sitting in the lamp room, nursing his sore jaw and injured pride. "Hey Segrue, have you got any condoms in your wallet?" Segrue is flabbergasted -- first she slugs him, now she wants to make love? She laughs and shakes her head. That's not what she had in mind. He listens as she outlines

her plan. First, she'll turn the station house into a bomb. Then she'll lure those things into the house, and blow them all to kingdom come. "I want to waste every last one of them. This is my light station, my command, and no one's taking it away from me..."

Segrue thinks it's the stupidest idea he's heard yet. "How do you blow up the house without blowing yourself up with it?" he asks. Larsen smiles. "That's where your condom comes in." Segrue is still puzzled. "How do you get to the house without getting yourself killed?" "That's where you come in" says Larsen...

Ropes creak through pulleys fastened to the railing of the balcony. Seated in a bosun's chair used to paint the light-house, Segrue lowers himself down the side of the tower. Stopping about ten feet above the ground, he lights the kerosene lantern hanging over his head, turns it up as bright as it will go, and shouts out "Lights! Cameras! Action! It's showtime, gals'n'ghouls!"

Slowly, the un-dead creatures begin appearing out of the shadows, until the whole mob of them is clustered below Segrue. Swinging over their outstretched hands, he tries to keep them interested by singing, telling jokes, anything he can think of..

Seeing that the coast is clear, Larsen quickly rappels down the other side of the tower on a rope. Reaching the ground, she runs to the house and quietly closes all the shutters. Then, she grabs a can of naphtha gas from the shed at the rear of the house and goes inside.

While Segrue keeps his un-dead audience entertained, Larsen works quickly. First, she blows out the pilot lights on the range and oven and turns on the gas. Then, uncapping the can of naphtha, she lays a trail of fuel from the kitchen to the lounge, then up the stairs, along the hallway and into one of the bedrooms. Then, she fills Segrue's condom with the remainder of the naphtha and suspends the swollen balloon on a string so that it hangs about a foot above a table. Then, she hurries back down to the lounge area...

The creatures are getting bored with Segrue's performance. Desperate, he lowers himself closer to the ground -- too close. One of them leaps into the air and grabs his leg. With a cry of terror, Segrue just manages to kick it away before he is pulled to the ground, and quickly hauls himself up out of the others' reach...

Fumbling in her haste, Larsen connects Collins' stereo to the computer's emergency DC power supply. Then, she grabs a cassette and jams it in the tape player, turns the volume right up and presses the "play" button. Ear-splitting rock music pounds from the speakers.

With a grin of relief, Segrue hears the music. He quickly hoists himself up to the balcony. Below him, the creatures have also heard it. They start heading for the house...

Standing on the porch, Larsen yells "Suppertime! Come and get it!" The mob of un-dead appears, crazed with bloodlust as they scramble across the yard.

Larsen runs back into the kitchen, through the lounge, up the stairs and into the bedroom. Closing the door, she waits tensely.

The creatures burst into the lounge, drawn by the sound of the music. Some of them wander up the stairs. Larsen shudders in dread as she hears the shuffling sound of their approaching footsteps.

Meanwhile, Segrue runs down the staircase in the light tower and peers out into the yard. Seeing the last of the living corpses disappear inside the house, he sprints to the porch and starts to close the door. But one of the ghouls inside sees him and turns back, shoving against the door. Segrue pushes with all his strength, finally managing to close and lock the door. They're all trapped inside now. He backs away and signals to Larsen.

In the upstairs bedroom, she gives the swollen naptha-filled condom a push so that it swings back and forth in a wide arc, then lights a candle and sets it on the table below the swinging balloon.

Then, she goes to the window and heaves it open. The curtains flutter in the wind as she begins to climb out. And suddenly, the room is plunged into darkness -- the wind has blown out the candle.

Segrue watches in dismay as Larsen climbs back inside and shuts the window. "Jesus! What the hell is she doing?" Larsen re-lights the candle, then steps to the door, knowing that if she tries to get out through the window, the candle will blow out again. She opens the door slightly and looks out. There's half a dozen un-dead in the upstairs part of the house, but she has no choice but to make a run for it. Gathering her courage, she steps out into the hallway, closing the door behind her. The creatures see her and lurch forward. Terrified, Larsen dives for the nearest room and leaps inside, slamming and locking the door.

But as the creatures begin clawing and pounding at the door, she realizes that she's trapped. She has locked herself in the bathroom, and the window is too small to climb through. The door begins to splinter apart. Hands reach through the cracks. Desperate, Larsen looks for an escape route. She sees a small hatch set in the ceiling above the toilet...

The door bursts apart and bloodthirsty ghouls spill into the bathroom. They don't see Larsen crouched in the narrow crawlspace overhead. She quickly replaces the hatch, then starts to crawl, stumbling over the exposed joists as she heads for a dim light at the end of the narrow passageway.

The condom is swinging very slowly over the candle. Any second now and it's going to explode. The creatures in the house ramble around in confusion as rock music blares from the speakers.

And outside in the yard, Segrue starts to run for the boat-house, then turns back -- he can't bring himself to desert Larsen. "Get out of there, Skipper! Goddammit, get out!"

Reaching the end of the tunnel, Larsen kicks desperately at a metal grill blocking the opening. And in the bedroom below, the gas-filled balloon settles over the flickering candle, begins to blister, then explodes, showering burning fuel everywhere. The naptha on the floor bursts into flames...

The ventilation grill finally breaks free. With a grin of relief, Segrue sees Larsen struggling to crawl out through the opening, ten feet above the porch roof. "Hurry, Skipper! Jump!"

A tongue of fire shoots out from under the bedroom door and races along the hallway. Following the trail of naptha, flames spill down the staircase like a river of molten lava. In the room below, one of the creatures is standing right in the path of the fire. Engulfed in flames, it lurches through the shambling crowd of corpses...

Larsen jumps, landing on the porch. Her foot smashes through the shingles. She tries to pull it free, but can't. "Run for it, Segrue!" she urges. But he climbs up onto the roof to help her...

Just as he pulls her free, the flames reach the kitchen. The room is filled with gas whistling from the jets on the stove. For a second, nothing happens. Then, a tremendous explosion rips through the house, completely demolishing it in a churning holocaust of smoke and fire.

Larsen and Segrue are hurled to the ground by the force of the blast. As the debris settles, Larsen looks back to see the remains of the house going up in flames. Nothing inside could have withstood the explosion. She staggers to her feet. Segrue lies nearby, barely conscious, blood trickling from a wound on his head. She hauls him to his feet and begins to drag him down the path towards the launch.



Finally, they reach the boathouse. Larsen pulls the door open, then gasps in shock as a dark figure looms out of the darkness.

But her shock turns to relief when she realizes that it's Disalvo. "Chief! You made it!" And then, a scream of horror as Disalvo lurches out through the doorway -- his clothing is torn and bloodsoaked, half his face has been eaten away, and his eyes have the unmistakable dead look of a walking corpse. He has become one of them...

With an unearthly snarl, Disalvo knocks Segrue aside, then leaps for Larsen, knocking her down. They roll on the ground, locked in a life and death struggle. Straining to keep Disalvo's gnashing teeth from her neck, Larsen finally manages to break free. She staggers away, backing against the boathouse as Disalvo closes in for the kill.

Larsen looks around desperately for a weapon, anything. Sprawle on the ground nearby, Segrue is slowly regaining consciousness, and is too dazed to help her. And then, as Disalvo leaps for Larsen, her fingers close around the rusted shaft of a big anchor leaning against the boathouse. With superhuman strength, she lifts it and swings it at Disalvo. With a sickening crunch, one of the spikes buries itself in his chest. He falls to the ground, impaled on the anchor, pinned beneath it.

Larsen stands over him, waiting for the next onslaught. But it doesn't happen. As blood oozes from Disalvo's chest, a pitiable look of truly human suffering appears on his face. His body shudders, and then he dies.

Shaking, Larsen turns to Segrue and helps him up. "Come on sailor. Let's ship out..." Supporting each other, they stumble into the boathouse...

As dawn approaches, the sound of the launch's engine shatters the silence. Larsen steers the small craft out into open water, heading for the mainland as Segrue gazes back at the smouldering ruins of the house...

And on the rocks by the boathouse, Disalvo's eyes suddenly blink open. There is a terrible sound of ripping flesh as he wrenches the anchor from his chest then staggers to his feet. Staring at the departing launch with his dead eyes, he rears back his head and lets out a blood-curdling scream of defiance...