

SUPER MARIO BROS

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Registered WGAw

FADE IN:

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

An otherworldly landscape. The sky is red, the earth a bubbling stew of primordial ooze...

SUPER CAPTION: BROOKLYN... SIXTY-FIVE MILLION YEARS AGO.

Suddenly a noise is heard. The sky darkens. Then a gigantic METEORITE COLLIDES WITH the SURFACE with shattering cataclysmic impact. The SCREEN is FILLED with flying debris, smoke, fire and molten lava...

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE (1972) - MONTAGE OF CLOSE SHOTS - NIGHT

Lightning. TITLES OVER cables, steel and brick, awash in a torrent of rain. A black boot hits a puddle. TILT UP ON a dark figure, gazing at the New York skyline. He spins...

SUPER: "BROOKLYN. 20 YEARS AGO..."

EXT. BROOKLYN CHURCH (1972) - NIGHT

Lightning silhouettes the spires of a Gothic church. Rain overflows the gutters. A breathless young woman pounds on the door, glancing back. She tenderly places a bundle on the steps, then races off. NUNS open the door and look down...

EXT. STREET NEAR BROOKLYN BRIDGE (1972) - NIGHT

Headlights flare, a CAR SKIDS. The woman dodges traffic to reach the other side -- and runs smack into the dark figure. Knocked flat, she looks up: a haunted, knowing gaze. Behind the wet tangle of hair is a striking 20-year-old beauty. He offers his hand. She darts past him to a subway entrance.

INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

Down the tracks, the woman pulls away some boards and enters an abandoned tunnel, shored up by rotting beams. She moves toward a distinctive rock formation at the end. But the dark figure overtakes her, spins her around to face him. Handsome and intense, almost hypnotic, this is the YOUNG KOOPA.

The woman wrenches free and throws herself at a support beam. Rocks crash down. A timber falls and strikes Koopa. He scrambles to the end of the tunnel as the CEILING CAVES IN.

INT. BROOKLYN CHURCH - CANDLE-LIT ROOM - NIGHT

The Nuns excitedly unwrap the bundle. Inside is a decorative metal egg. It hinges open to reveal a small gleaming stone and... a real EGG. Mottled, oblong, a foot-and-a-half long. And it's moving! CRACKING...

NUN

What is it?

The SHELL CRACKS OPEN and out bursts... a tiny baby's hand.

A PEAL OF THUNDER rocks the church as the Nuns gasp.

EXT. BROOKLYN MAIN STREET - DAY

MUSIC KICKS IN -- hard-driving, contemporary. We're on a busy street, somewhere like Flatbush Avenue.

LONG LENS SHOT

SHOOTING DOWN the street INTO the face of oncoming traffic. We see a van, head-lights flashing, weaving between lanes. Cars pull over to ease access.

INT. MARIO BROTHERS VAN - MOVING - DAY

MARIO is driving. He is the eldest of the two brothers -- at least 35. He drives with a manic intensity.

LUIGI, beside him, is the younger brother, about 22. He's not happy with the way Mario's driving.

THROUGH the windshield we see stoplights change to red. Mario decides to beat them out. He puts his foot down. We hear the SQUEAL of TIRES as the van fishtails round a corner. Luigi's eyes widen.

LUIGI

Mario! This is not worth dyin' for!

MARIO

The woman said it was an emergency!

EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - DAY

TRACKING WITH the van as it heads down the street. Only now do we see it clearly -- it's a beatup, battered panel truck with rusting bodywork and a loose tailpipe.

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On the side is written: "MARIO BROTHERS -- EMERGENCY PLUMBING SERVICE. BROOKLYN'S BEST!" We can see faded lettering that's been painted over -- "MARIO AND SONS."

EXT. BROOKLYN SIDESTREET - DAY

A terrace of rundown brownstones. The front of the VAN SKIDS INTO FRAME.

INT. MARIO BROTHERS VAN - DAY

Mario reacts in frustration.

MARIO
I don't believe this!

HIS POV THROUGH WINDSHIELD

Across the street another plumbing truck is parked -- a gleaming 1992 state-of-the-art machine with gleaming paintwork and Armorall tires. On the side "RESCUE ROOTER 24 HOUR DAY OR NITE SERVICE" and about six phone numbers.

EXT. BROOKLYN SIDESTREET - DAY

The brothers get out. On the back of their coveralls is stencilled "SUPER MARIO BROTHERS."

Their rival operative leans against the cabin of his truck. He wears gleaming white coveralls with his name DOUG on the breast. He's talking to the office on the van's phone. He's amused to see the Mario Brothers -- it's obviously not the first time this has happened.

DOUG
Pretty good guys -- improved on
your last time!

His PARTNER calls from the doorway of the brownstone.

PARTNER
I need a drain snake, Doug!

Doug hands up the phone, grabs a bag and heads for the house.

DOUG
Too bad... big bucks, this job.
Flooded basement. What they gonna
do, negotiate!

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CONTINUED:

MARIO
 (steamed)
 Don't get grease on your Armani
 coveralls!

Luigi sees no reason to get an ulcer.

LUIGI
 What can we do, man? Those guys
 are a fleet. They got cellular
 phones, computers, dispatchers. We
 got an answerin' machine an' a beat-
 up panel truck.

MARIO
 Poppa loved this truck.

LUIGI
 That was ten years ago. Times
 change.

MARIO
 Values don't! Lemme tell ya,
 Luigi... Poppa wouldn'ta ripped
 people off 'cause they was knee-
 deep in sludge. Poppa believed in
 an honest day's work for an honest
 day's pay.

A female dispatcher's voice emits from the LOUDSPEAKERS in
 the cab.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 You guys are in Brooklyn -- could
 ya handle a job at the River Cafe?

The brothers look at each other. It's tempting.

MARIO
 Let's go.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - EXCAVATION SITE - DAY

On the banks of the East River a major excavation is in
 progress. Signs read "Canelli Construction."

Redneck construction workers picket the site while hardhated
 academics consult clipboards and study rocks and fossils.
 Other student volunteers are sorting plastic bags into boxes
 near a van marked Columbia University.

ANGLE ON TUNNEL ENTRANCE

A beautiful girl walks into the sunlight. It's a Madonna-like image. This is DAISY. She wears soil-covered bib overalls.

CLOSER ANGLE

Daisy looks familiar. She has the same haunting eyes of the woman we saw in the opening scene. We notice something else - the glint of a crystal pendant attached to a leather cord fastened around her neck.

A NERDY STUDENT catches up with her. He shows her what he's collected.

NERD

What do you think it is, Daisy?

He shows her a fossilized bone.

DAISY

Looks like it came from a hadrosaur.

NERD

A dinosaur bone? No shit.

She hands the Nerd her hardhat and moves away.

ANGLE ON NONDESCRIPT RENTED CAR

parked within view of the site. Two guys sit inside. They look as if their clothes are rented -- is if they're not used to wearing suits and ties. Both have long faces with an unnatural pallor to their skin. Their names are IGGY and SPIKE. Iggy nudges Spike as they see Daisy leaving the site.

IGGY

There she goes...

He STARTS the MOTOR.

EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - DAY

The Mario Brothers' truck passes a newsstand. The New York dailies have banner headlines: "ANOTHER BROOKLYN GIRL MISSING"...

EXT. RIVERFRONT (BROOKLYN) - DAY

Daisy is walking across the giant shadow of the Brooklyn Bridge. Ahead of her is a sign pointing to "The River Cafe."

INT. CAR - TRAVELLING - DAY

Iggy is curb-crawling, about 50 yards back of Daisy's figure. There's traffic but no pedestrians.

IGGY
Let's do it!

With a smile of evil anticipation Spike picks up a black velvet hood from the floor of the car. Iggy accelerates.

Suddenly the Mario Brothers' truck cuts in front of them.

Iggy stamps on the brake and hits the HORN, knowing the snatch is foiled.

INT. MARIO BROTHERS VAN - TRAVELLING - DAY

Mario hangs a right into the River Cafe parking lot, passing Daisy who's heading in the same direction.

Luigi gets a flash of her -- but it's enough.

LUIGI
Did you see her?

MARIO
(casually)
Who, the girl? Yeah, nice.

LUIGI
Whaddya mean nice...

He angles the side mirror to get another look at her.

LUIGI
... she's a vision.

INT. RIVER CAFE - KITCHEN - DAY

A high-tech kitchen full of gleaming surfaces, metal pans and simmering sauce pans.

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Underchefs are testing sauces under the critical eye of the chef. Waiters and waitresses come in and out with dishes and trays.

Mario has got his feet sticking out of an industrial-size dishwashing machine. Water has overflowed from the machine onto the floor. Luigi's attention is elsewhere -- on a waitress in a white blouse, black skirt and stockings. When she turns to pick up a tray we see it is Daisy. For a brief moment her eyes lock on Luigi's. He blushes and smiles. She smiles back and moves away.

The manager, an uptight Frenchman named PASCAL, waits impatiently as Mario slides out from beneath the machine.

PASCAL

Can you fix -- or do I call another plumber?

MARIO

Eh! First off, we ain't plumbers, we're contractors, specializin' in waste management and water supply systems. Second off, your hose is shot. You gonna need a new impeller too, probably a new motor.

PASCAL

What does this mean?

MARIO

Two hours minimum.

He turns to Luigi, like a surgeon to his head nurse.

MARIO

Wrench!

LUIGI

Five-eighths?

MARIO

Check.

INT. RIVER CAFE - DAY

Daisy comes from the kitchen with a tray of appetizers. The kitchen door bangs against Spike's chair. He and Iggy have been given the worst table in the place -- what restauranters refer to as Siberia. They have both ordered steak tartar.

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We hear the BUZZING of a FLY. Spike's eyes follow it for a moment then suddenly a long reptilian tongue uncurls, zaps the fly and retracts. It's so quick we're not quite sure we saw it...

Nor is a woman at a nearby table who is facing Spike -- a forkful of endive salad is frozen halfway to her open mouth.

IGGY
I've told you not to do that!

INT. RIVER CAFE - KITCHEN - DAY

Daisy re-enters the kitchen. She reads an order to a "sous-chef."

DAISY
Two seafood sausages, one tarragon
chicken, penna primavera...

Luigi is handing tools to Mario but his eyes are still on Daisy.

LUIGI
Did you hear that? She speaks
Italian!

Suddenly, Daisy's feet slip on the wet floor. She flings out an arm to try and regain her balance. Instead she tumbles against a counter where stacks of expensive CHINA are waiting to be washed. They CRASH to the floor, splintering into fragments.

Luigi reaches out a hand to Daisy. She looks into his eyes as their hands touch.

LUIGI
Are you okay, miss?

Pascal appears, horrified.

PASCAL
Merde alors -- what have you done,
you stupid girl?!

Before Daisy can stutter a reply, Luigi pushes past her.

LUIGI
It wasn't her -- I did it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PASCAL

Do you know what those plates
cost?!

LUIGI

So knock it off what you owe us.

Mario looks up from his work -- what?!

EXT. RIVER CAFE PARKING LOT - DAY

It's late. The only vehicles left on the lot are the Mario Brothers' van and Spike and Iggy's rental. They watch from behind the windshield as the brothers leave the restaurant.

ANGLE ON BROTHERS

MARIO

What's wrong wid you? We work
three hours and we owe them fifty-
seven dollars!

They hear Daisy's FOOTSTEPS RUNNING behind them. She's back in the bib overalls she wore on the excavation site.

DAISY

Excuse me! You saved me. I mean
you saved my job back there. But I
can't let you do this. How much do
I owe you?

MARIO

Well, with time and labor --

LUIGI

Nothing! Can we offer you a ride
somewhere er...

DAISY

Daisy.

LUIGI

I'm Luigi, this is my brother
Mario.

DAISY

I'm doing volunteer work at the
excavation site -- if it's not out
of your way.

Luigi is thrilled Mario is still upset about the lost work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO

Hop in, we got nuthin' else to do.

INT. MARIO BROTHERS' TRUCK - TRAVELLING - DAY

Luigi is very aware of Daisy's presence squeezed in between the two brothers.

LUIGI

So what's with this tunnel?

DAISY

When the excavators when in, they turned up some bones, fossils. So the university got a stop order on the work. They think it's a major discovery.

LUIGI

(fascinated)

Wow!

DAISY

There's iridium in the rocks. They think... well, it's a theory... this could be the site where a giant meteorite hit... That could be what wiped out all the dinosaurs.

LUIGI

Isn't that cool, Mario? There used to be dinosaurs in Brooklyn!

MARIO

(sourly)

There used to be Dodgers -- look what happened to them!

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - EXCAVATION SITE - DAY

The truck pulls up at the cordoned-off site. Beyond them the ranks of picketing construction workers have swelled and more black and white police cars have pulled up to subdue any confrontation.

Luigi gets out and helps Daisy from the cab.

DAISY

Thanks again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI

Any time...

He wants to say more but he's tongue-tied. She smiles and moves away.

ANGLE ON MARIO

Behind the wheel. He reacts as a black limousine pulls up in front of his truck.

Three guys climb out. The main man is EDDIE SCAPELLI. He reminds us of a younger John Gotti, whose designer clothes he emulates. His two ASSOCIATES are also dressed like businessmen, but they have faces like guys who've run a hundred meter dash on a sixty meter track.

Mario recognizes Eddie.

MARIO

Yo, Eddie, what's happenin'?

EDDIE

What's happenin' is, I'm dyin' here. I got the construction contract on this job. And now some paleo-proctologist tells me I gotta stop blastin'.

He moves on, calling out to the COPS.

EDDIE

Is this the best deployment of your manpower? There's girls going missin' all over Brooklyn and there's six of New York's finest standin' scratchin' their balls!

COP

We're here to stop any trouble, Eddie.

Eddie points indignantly to the picketers.

EDDIE

These are honest men with families to feed. They have a right to express their opinion.

COP

Not with baseball bats.

RESUME LUIGI

He's still watching Daisy as she rejoins her strident friends.

INT. BROTHERS' APARTMENT - SITTING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON a black and white photograph of the boys' father -- an artisan's face, proud, stubborn, with a curly moustache. The picture is flanked by two framed citations for excellence in plumbing.

ANOTHER ANGLE

shows the room. It's filled with older persons' furniture which the guys inherited from their parents. At opposite sides of the room are two doors. From one comes the sound of NEIL DIAMOND; from the other NIRVANA.

Mario comes from the first door. His hair is wet from the shower and he's sleeking it back with a metal comb. He wears trousers and a white singlet which shows off his tattooed forearms and a chunky ID bracelet.

Luigi comes from the other door, BLOWING his hair with a portable DRYER. He wears baggy pants, an Eco T-shirt and round his wrist is a woven "wish" bracelet.

MARIO

I thought you were goin' out -- why aren't you changed?

LUIGI

I am changed!

MARIO

So where you goin', a farm aid concert?

LUIGI

The look is loose. Keep wearin' those tight Sinatra pants you may not have children.

MARIO

I'm seein' Daniella. A girl like that expects a man to look sharp.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI

Where you takin' her?

MARIO

Somewhere they won't bounce my plastic. Problem with workin' for yourself is you got no one to beef to when you don't get paid.

LUIGI

Maybe we should try another business.

MARIO

What's wrong wid you? I'm thirty-five years of age, what am I gonna be an aerospace engineer?

LUIGI

Gotta be somethin'. When you tell people you unblock drains for a livin' it's... y'know... not too cool.

MARIO

No one forced you into this. I'm the one who was forced.

He point to their father's picture.

MARIO

When Poppa was on his deathbed and he's aksin' me to carry on the line, what was I supposed to do? Tell him I didn't think it was a glamor profession?

LUIGI

It's just... that girl today -- Daisy. She's really special.

MARIO

You just met her and already in your mind she's a princess.

LUIGI

She just might be... And what would she ever want with a plumber?

MARIO

Just wait till her toilet's blocked.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A large sprawling time-warp of a restaurant -- the kind of place that serves meatballs in thick red sauce and has never heard of arugula or sun-dried tomatoes.

There are red vinyl booths with teeny table lamps.

On the walls are framed photographs of Italian-American legends: Tony Bennett, Perry Como, Rocky Marciano and Sinatra's rat pack. Most of the clients look like wise guys with their coiffured dates.

We FIND Mario with DANIELLA in a corner booth. She's dark, ballsy, very Brooklyn with long crimson nails. Her fork is toying with spaghetti as he hops up her wine glass.

DANIELLA

Everyone thinks the grass is greener, Mario. Take my job at the tanning salon. I mean I think it's a growth industry, but my boss is such a jerk. Like today, I go to get my hair done...

MARIO

Looks nice, Daniella, did I tell you that?

DANIELLA

Thank you -- so anyway I get back an' straight off he's on my case.

MARIO

I guess he was teed off 'cos you did it on company time.

DANIELLA

It grew on company time.

MARIO

Not all of it.

DANIELLA

I didn't get all of it cut off!

Mario laughs. Then he notices something. Eddie has entered the restaurant, flanked by his two Associates. He gets a big hello from the maitre d'. He spots Mario and comes toward their booth.

Mario half rises. Eddie waves him back into his seat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

I'm happy you're taking out my
sister, she's a very special girl.

DANIELLA

(embarrassed)

He knows that, Eddie.

EDDIE

I know he knows that. And I know
you'll respect her, Mario.

He pauses while he takes a bread stick from the table. He
gestures with it for emphasis.

EDDIE

You touch her, you die!... Have a
nice evening.

He slaps Mario affectionately on the shoulder and leaves him
with less appetite than he had a few moments before.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE EXCAVATION SITE - DUSK

Temporary floodlights illuminate the site. The Professor,
Daisy and a bunch of students are emerging from the tunnel at
the end of their last shift. It's raining. They put on
raincoats and unfurl umbrellas. Daisy's is red. She reacts.
To her surprise she sees Luigi standing by his van. She
walks toward him. He's shy and embarrassed at being this
obvious.

LUIGI

Hi... I happened to be passin'.
Thought you might need a ride. Lot
of weird things been happenin'
recently. Missin' girls 'n' stuff.

Daisy hesitates, she smiles and climbs in.

ANGLE ON CAR PARKED UNDER STREET LIGHT

Within we see the darkened shapes of Iggy and Spike. They
react in frustration -- stalled again.

INT. MARIO BROTHERS VAN - TRAVELLING - NIGHT

Past the windshield wipers we see Luigi and Daisy and
headlights reflected in the glass. Daisy fingers the crystal
hanging around her neck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI
So you're a student?

DAISY
I will be when I've saved the money
to go to college. Paleontology.

She smiles at his puzzled look.

DAISY
You must think I'm weird being into
fossils and old bones. It's just
as long as I can remember it's what
I wanted to do.

LUIGI
Did you find that down there?

DAISY
What?

LUIGI
That thing 'round your neck.

DAISY
This? No. It was with me when I
was found.

LUIGI
Found? Most people are born.

DAISY
I was abandoned. I was brought up
in St. Teresa's on Fulton Street.

LUIGI
Hey, that's my neighborhood. Maybe
we saw each other as kids
an'...y'know -- never knew.

INT. IGGY AND SPIKE'S CAR - NIGHT

Iggy and Spike are caught at a stop light in Saturday night
traffic. The RAIN is POUNDING ON the ROOF of their car.

IGGY
You've lost her, Spike! He's gonna
kill us!

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Mario and Daniella shelter under the canopy of the restaurant. Rain is pouring from gutters and hammering on the sidewalk. He hails a passing cab in vain.

MARIO

We could walk -- it's only a few blocks.

Daniella fingers her new hairdo.

DANIELLA

I spent eighty bucks on this!

Mario notices something. He runs out in the street, holding up his arms.

MARIO

Hey -- hey!!

The Mario Brothers' VAN SKIDS to a halt.

MARIO

Gret timing, bro.

Luigi's face tells us that it's anything but.

INT. IGGY AND SPIKE'S CAR - TRAVELLING - NIGHT

The car is cruising down a residential street.

Through the windshield we see the Mario Brothers' van cross the intersection ahead.

SPIKE

We got 'em, Iggy!

He makes a left to pursue the van.

EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK - NIGHT

The Mario Brothers' van pulls up. The door opens and we can see Mario, Daniella, Daisy and Luigi packed together in the front seat. Daisy hands Daniella her red umbrella.

DAISY

Take this please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANIELLA
Thanks. That's real nice of ya. Ya
wanna come in, Mario?

Mario would like to but remembers Eddie's warning.

MARIO
Maybe not tonight, Daniella...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Daniella's heels click across the wet sidewalk, her figure hunched under the red umbrella. She waves as the van drives off into the darkness.

CLOSE ON DANIELLA

She heads down a narrow alley to a side entrance of the building. She stops at the door and fumbles in her purse for keys. She reacts to a sound and looks around.

FROM HER POV

We see the silhouette of Iggy and Spike, a street lamp behind them. They move towards her.

DANIELLA
(squinting)
M-Mario?

INT. MARIO BROTHERS' APARTMENT - DAY

Mario is pouring espresso in a mug with one hand while his other one checks the sports page.

He reacts to a HAMMERING on the front door and goes to open it.

Eddie enters, his Goons behind him. Mario backs up, spilling his coffee in alarm.

MARIO
She's not here, Eddie, I swear! I
wouldn't bring Daniella here!

Eddie looks around the room with distaste.

EDDIE
I can see why. I'm not here about
Daniella.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I gotta get my guys back to work.
We need a little accident, like
maybe the tunnel gets flooded.

MARIO

(nervously)

Why are you telling me, Eddie?

EDDIE

This is your field. You know about
pipes, valves, water.

MARIO

I couldn't do that. They're
diggin' up history down there.

Eddie pulls a thick roll of bills from his pocket.

EDDIE

I hear business is lousy. Think
about it.

Mario does. He can see all his debts wiped off. Then he
shakes his head.

MARIO

No way.

EDDIE

Then think about this.

He unholsters a gun and presses the barrel against Mario's
nose.

INT. RADIOLOGY ROOM - DAY

No clue to day or night in this windowless white-walled room
which is dominated by a large machine reminiscent of a CAT
scanner.

We see female feet protruding from a hemispherical metal
cover. We hear the WHIR of its MECHANISM.

ANOTHER ANGLE ON FACES OF IGGY AND SPIKE

Anxious, worried. Spike's long tongue protrudes and
nervously flicks perspiration from his forehead.

IN GLASS-PANELED BOOTH

We see a female lab technician analyzing the magnetic resonance imagery of the brain scan. She shakes her head -- negative.

RESUME IGGY AND SPIKE

This is terrible news.

ANGLE ON MACHINE

As the patient's body re-emerges on a moving belt.

We recognize Daniella. Her hair has been pinned back and she wears a high-collared white tunic. Her arms are strapped to her sides but none of this has intimidated her. She is steamed.

DANIELLA

D'you people know who my brother is? Lemme tell ya -- your balls are history!

INT. TUNNEL - EXCAVATION AREA - DAY

A flare of light illuminates a darkened recess of the tunnel.

REVERSE SHOT

reveals Daisy with Luigi. She is in her bib overalls and hard hat, a laminated pass pinned to her shoulder strap. She tilts a work light toward a layer of rock strata.

DAISY

This layer here is carboniferous sandstone. It doesn't crop up on any geological map of the area. And here, I want to show you something.

He follows her and the bobbing light. She shines it on a fossil of a strange creature. The head looks fiercely reptilian, the body beside it looks oddly humanoid.

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CONTINUED:

DAISY

The proportions of the bones here,
the opposable thumb... It's like
the skeleton of an early human.
But...

She points to the thrusting jaw full of sharp teeth.

LUIGI

I hope he had a dental plan.

DAISY

It's beautiful. It's almost as if
he was a monster trying to be a
human being...

EXT. EXCAVATION SITE - DAY

The site is roped off but idle.

There's a black and white parked out front. But the two cops
are drinking coffee and talking to one of Eddie's Goons.

Beyond and behind them the other goon is escorting Mario into
the entrance of the tunnel. Mario is carrying a bag and has
a heavy-duty tool belt strapped around his waist.

INT. TUNNEL - DAY

We're deep in the bowels of the tunnel -- deeper than we've
been before. It's pitch black -- then two twin pencil beams
of light criss-cross in the darkness. A moment later we see
the faces of Iggy and Spike. They carry flashlights and
they're not coming from the tunnel's entrance but from deep
inside.

Suddenly Iggy reacts -- clamping his fingers in Spike's arm.
His nostrils flare.

IGGY

It's her! She's here! I know her
smell.

They drop into crouches and begin to move forward. For the
first time we get a clue to their dino-carnivore ancestry.
Their heads swing from side to side, as though they're
hunting here as much by smell as sight. Their faces
momentarily become more feral -- it's almost as though they
have regressed a couple of notches -- eyes a touch more
slitty -- tongues a bit more pointy.

INT. TUNNEL PUMPING AREA - DAY

Mario is prodded forward by the Goon. They both carry flashlights. Mario shines his against a panel of controls, valves and pipes rusting with age and disuse. He looks very unhappy.

MARIO

I really have a problem with this.

GOON

Get on with it -- I gotta take my mother to church.

INT. TUNNEL EXCAVATION AREA - DAY

Luigi watches as Daisy tenderly brushes soil from the dinosaur skull.

DAISY

Could you give me some more light on this?

He moves across to a tangle of cables and other work lights. He bends over.

WHACK! A black rubber truncheon descends on the back of his neck. He slumps to his knees, his hard hat rolling across the rock-strewn ground.

ANGLE ON DAISY

Working intently. Some sixth sense alerts her. She turns round and screams as she sees the figures of Iggy and Spike looming at her.

They grab her. Daisy fights back. She squirms, she bites, she kicks, she yells.

But she's no match for both of them. They start to drag her into the depths of the tunnel.

INT. TUNNEL PUMPING AREA - DAY

CLOSE ON the rusting valve of the pipe as it gives under Mario's wrench. There is a RUMBLE and a ROAR from deep inside the PUMPING MACHINERY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mario looks deeply disturbed by what he's been forced to do. The Goon prods him with the gun. They step through the door, closing it behind them.

INT. TUNNEL EXCAVATION AREA - DAY

Luigi is getting groggily to his knees, his hand rubbing the pain at the back of his neck.

LUIGI
Daisy?... Daisy?!

He sees something lying on the ground. Daisy's shoe...

INT. TUNNEL - FORK - DAY

Mario and the Goon are heading uphill toward the surface. They reach a point where another tunnel forks off toward the excavation area. Mario reacts as he hears Luigi's VOICE ECHOING in the distant darkness.

MARIO
That's my brother!

GOON
What's the dumbass doin' down
there?

ANGLE ON DOOR

as it bursts open from the pressure of water built up behind it. The tunnel starts to flood.

RESUME - MARIO

as he realizes his brother is in danger. He drops the tool bag and runs off.

INT. TUNNEL EXCAVATION AREA - DAY

Luigi reacts in surprise and relief as Mario rounds the bend in the tunnel. The water begins to flow behind him.

LUIGI
Mario!

MARIO
Gotta get out of here, kid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI
I gotta find Daisy!

He grabs the flashlight from Mario and heads off down the tunnel. Mario reacts in exasperation, calculating the odds and the rising water. But he has no choice. He chases after his brother.

INT. TUNNEL - GATEWAY AREA - DAY

The tunnel ends in a cave. Mario catches up with Luigi.

The water is deepening and swirling around them. -- duckboards, scaffolding and cables swept in its torrent.

Luigi looks around wildly -- where can she be?

In the darkest recesses of the cave, they see a portion of the rock which seems to glow and vibrate in the darkness.

Suddenly -- it ripples! Then Daisy's face appears -- through the solid surface! She sees Luigi and her hand reaches out -- like a drowning person going down for the third time.

DAISY
Hee-ee-lp me-eeee!

Luigi reaches out for her. His fingers clasp the pendant round her neck. Then solid stone hands reach through the wall and pull her back. The rock swirls and shudders, closing over her. Luigi is left with the pendant clutched in his hand.

The brothers exchange looks, unwilling to believe what they've just seen. Then Luigi starts thumping the rock with his fist.

LUIGI
She's in there!

MARIO
And we're in here and we're gonna drown!

At that instant the wall becomes fluid again and gulps at Luigi. He is snatched through. Mario reacts in consternation.

MARIO
Oh shit!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He moves toward the wall and examines the surface with his torch. It glistens and swirls -- specks of mica sparkle like distant galaxies. He blinks and reaches out to touch the wall. It is solid but the mica specks seem to be rushing towards him like a starfield. Mario braces himself and throws his shoulder against the wall. He hits rock and bounces off. Ow!

He reels in pain and leans back against the wall... THWUP!
Mario is sucked through.

INT. GATEWAY CHAMBER

For a few moments the guys are caught up in a cosmic vortex -- a bizarre distortion of shifting dimensions. Then shapes solidify and focus clears. They find themselves in an underground chamber.

The walls are rough-hewn, deeply etched with a series of pictographs that depict a meteorite crashing to earth.

Some are filled with a fluorescing moss that makes them look like a cross between cave drawings and graffiti.

LUIGI

Did we die? Is this hell?

MARIO

I don't think so. I always figured
in hell there'd be accordion music.

A hairline crack appears between two doors to reveal a mean-eyed wizened face. The CUSTODIAN enters. He's extremely old, but his clothes aren't. They're an oddball mix, some too large, some too small -- and all of them too young -- a warm-up jacket, baggy jeans, Nikes and a Mets cap.

CUSTODIAN

I wasn't told no one else was
comin' through. You bring me
anything?

The guys stare at each other, their heads still reeling.

CUSTODIAN

They always bring me things.
(yanks his sweater)
Benetton. And see?
(shows them a Swatch watch
with a fake granite face)
'Sposed to work underwater.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI
(urgently)
Did a girl come through here?
Where'd she go?

CUSTODIAN
Cute, ain't she?

He laughs unpleasantly.

MARIO
(threateningly)
He said where?

The old man raises a finger with a long, dirt-encrusted nail and wiggles it in the direction of a door.

LUIGI
Thanks.

They open the door. Beyond it is a black void. For a second the guys are silhouetted against it.

The Custodian presses a switch. There's a sound like a TURBINE. Then the brothers are sucked upwards through the door in a violent AIRSTREAM.

CUSTODIAN
You're welcome! Heh heh heh...

INT. AIRSTREAM

The guys' faces are distorted by the G-force, their bodies spinning in the updraft.

INT. ACCESS TUNNEL

Luigi arrives first, propelled through an opening in the floor into a tunnel. It's filled with a labyrinth of different colored pipes and ducts. He picks himself up and is looking around when Mario is hurtled through the hole and crashes into him.

They help each other to their feet. Mario registers the tangled network of pipes.

MARIO
Okay -- reality check. We were
somewhere beneath the East River,
we were sucked through a wall and
meet Freddy Krueger in a Mets cap --
What does this tell you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Luigi has no idea. He shrugs.

LUIGI

I give up. What's the answer?

The floor and the pipes begin to vibrate. Then they hear a SOUND, GETTING NEARER, and LOUDER. It's like the rumble and rattle of a subway train and seems to be the other side of the wall. Flakes of rust and paint drift down from above.

They see a door and head towards it.

INT. SUBWAY STATION (PARALLEL NEW YORK)

We're on the other side of the door on which is written "No Admittance Maintenance Crews Only!" The noise of the TRAIN here is LOUDER.

It opens and the brothers come through.

A SUBWAY TRAIN CLATTERS right past their faces as it enters the station! They're at the extreme end of the platform.

It looks like New York -- but not quite. Maybe this is what it will look like if it goes the way of the South Bronx. There's a feeling of neglect and decay. The walls are not only cracked, they're covered in a seeping fungus, half-obscuring the graffiti. The lights are different, the trash receptacles are different -- the advertisements are different.

Mario looks around, trying to figure it all out. Luigi sees something else. He sees Daisy, further up the platform, with Iggy and Spike.

She sees him. She breaks away and runs toward him.

DAISY

Luigi!

LUIGI

Daisy!

He runs toward her, Mario following. She falls into his arms, his face pale, frightened and confused.

LUIGI

How did you get here -- what's happening?

She looks over her shoulder where Iggy and Spike are approaching fast.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAISY

Those two reptiles brought me here!

The train comes to a halt and its doors open. We get only a HALF-SEEN GLIMPSE of the passengers within.

Iggy takes out a "stun-stick" and levels it at the brothers.

IGGY

Back off, Brooklyn.

Luigi won't let go of Daisy. Mario mutters:

MARIO

Do what they say, kid. I don't know what that thing is but I'm bettin' it's loaded.

IGGY

Listen to your big brother.

As Luigi releases Daisy, Spike grabs her, pulling her toward the open doors of the train. Iggy backs toward it, keeping the stun-stick trained on the brothers.

Luigi is angry at Mario's compliance.

LUIGI

We can't just stand here!

MARIO

(camlly)

Nothin' we can do, kid.

But behind his back he's loosening a wrench from his work belt. Suddenly he underhands it, like a knife thrower. It hits Iggy's elbow and the WEAPON CLATTERS to the ground.

Things happen fast. Spike forces Daisy through the open doors of the train. Before he and Iggy can follow her the brothers grab them and yank their asses across the platform.

Daisy tries desperately to squeeze off the train, but she's caught in the crush of people and the doors close.

Iggy and Spike take on the brothers. But they guys are brass knuckle brawlers from Brooklyn. Within seconds Iggy is bleeding from the nose and Spike's on the ground clutching his groin.

The commuters ignore them as if rucks and muggings are a familiar sight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The train starts to move. Luigi reacts in dismay. He's saved her and lost her in the same moment.

Mario joins him and they watch helplessly as Daisy's pale face pressed against the window is taken into the depths of God knows where.

Mario clasps his brother on the back.

MARIO

C'mon -- we'll get a cab to the next stop!

EXT. KOOPA SQUARE (PARALLEL NEW YORK) - NIGHT

The brothers run up the steps of the subway into the street. They react in astonishment. They've been thrust into the pulsing madness and mayhem of the city that's not New York.

They seem to be at its hub, a grotesque twisted version of Times Square. The place is ablaze with light and NOISE: Neon blinking. ROCK 'N' ROLL. A large crowd swirls and shoves aggressively. Somewhere, a WOMAN SCREAMS. TWO GUYS SCREAM back.

Atop the bulidings, huge brightly-animated billboards feature ads for "Bullet Bill's REALLY Used Cars," and for shoes -- "Air Stompers" by THWOMP... "Just Stomp it."

Suspended high over the streets is a wire mesh.

SPARKS RAIN DOWN as some kids try to skateboard over the net on a dare.

The net powers the zipping cars below, which have telescoping rods tipped with spring-mounted Tesla balls. The cars are battered beyond recognition, painted in Indian war colors.

The brothers' faces take all of this in. Luigi's voice is a whisper.

LUIGI

Where is this?

MARIO

It's like New York but it ain't New York.

LUIGI

It's like New York on acid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO

How would you know, you don't even
do Bufferin?

There's a blue flash on the grid above and a sound like an
INSECT ZAPPER.

Two battered cars collide. The drivers react with
indifference as if they were driving bumper cars.

A COUPLE OF HOOKERS twirl spiked handbags and eye they guys:

HOOKER #1

Hey, boys, wanna step on the
scales? Wanna get flayed?

LUIGI

Excuse me?

HOOKER #1

What are you, a pair of herbivores?
C'mon, read my hips...

The brothers move along. Above them a commercial on a giant
TV SCREEN reads: "RE-ELECT KOOPA THE STUD." This is
superimposed over a macho-figure with mini-skirted bimbettes
clutching his thighs.

A strange vehicle comes to a halt. It's like a tow truck
with a mechanical claw mounted on the rear. Nearby is a car
on an expired meter. The claw scoops up the car, CRUNCHING
the ROOF as it hoists it into the air.

MARIO

Did you see that?

They see an OLD LADY coming toward them. She wears a knitted
cap and a long skirt and looks like a street person. But at
least she's friendly as she greets the brothers.

OLD LADY

You guys from out of town?

MARIO

Brooklyn.

She frowns -- never heard of it.

OLD LADY

Dangerous part of town here, boys.
Shouldn't wander 'round without a
weapon. D'you got one?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI

No.

OLD LADY

Good -- gimme all your money.

She pulls out an evil-looking stun stick from her coat. She moves blindingly fast, frisking the brothers, lifting their wallets.

Mario resists. He gets zapped with the stun stick. He reels back as if stung by a cattle-prod.

The Old Lady pulls dollar bills from their wallets -- they mean nothing to her. She tosses them aside.

OLD LADY

I need coins, you drexes. Got any gold koopons?

MARIO

That's two hundred bucks!

She turns the dial on her stun stick from "STUN" to "FRY."

There's a sudden sound of a POLICE SIREN -- different again. It's more like the "whoop whoop" of an all stations alert on a submarine.

OLD LADY

Hell, Kuffs!

She hitches up her skirt revealing strange pneumatic hi-tops - - Air Stompers. She slams two air cylinders into them. A HISSING sound accompanies a rising series of BEEPS, then --

SCHWOOM! The Old Lady's Air Stompers catapult her into the air. She bounces across the street, off the roofs of cars and buses.

The cop car cruises to a halt. One of TWO COPS gets out. He has the look of a gnarled veteran. Mario retrieves their wallets and cash from the gutter.

MARIO

(gracefully)
Thanks, Officer.

LUIGI

Yeah, really.

COP #1

You dumboids or somethin'? You get took by a turnstile jumper?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI

We didn't know what he was. Jus' seemed like a regular little old lady in very large basketball shoes.

COP #1

Lemme see some face-fit.

MARIO

Some what?

LUIGI

(whispering)

I.D. maybe.

MARIO

Oh sure -- here's my driver's license.

The Cop looks at it. It means nothing.

COP #1

What is this?

MARIO

It's expired, I know. I been meanin' to take care of it.

The Cop yells at his buddy in the car.

COP #1

Y'ever hear of a driver's license?

COP #2

Log 'em!

COP #1

In back.

MARIO

What's the charge?!

COP #1

Failure to offer a bribe!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

We FIND Daisy in another part of the city.

There's less neon here than in Koopa Square, but more cracked windows, fungus-rotted walls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Some distance away a tower rises into the night sky.

Daisy leaps back from the curb as a posse of hophead bikers rocket by.

She takes refuge in a dark alley. SOMETHING SCUTTLES in the shadows. To her horror she sees an enormous "allosaurus" rat. She backs away. From the darkness a long, scaly reptilian hand curls 'round her ankle.

Daisy screams.

EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

The cop car speeds down a ramp into the bowels of a building whose flickering neon sign informs. "Police H.Q. -- Metro Division."

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - ARRIVALS AREA - NIGHT

Inside the police car, Mario and Luigi react in panic. The car seems to be hurtling towards a solid wall without braking.

ANOTHER ANGLE

SHOWS the car stopped by arrester hooks, like fighter planes on an aircraft carrier.

The guys get out, looking 'round in astonishment. This is more hellish than any precinct in New York. There's NOISE and chaos. They see a pound for crunched cars. The one they saw snatched is being unloaded onto a pile of other vehicles. An attendant spray paints a number on the windshield.

MARIO

See what you got us into? You knew nothin' about that girl but you go chasin' after her. You had to be a hero!

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DOCUMENTATION - NIGHT

As they enter prisoners tear off a number from a dispenser and wait their turn on metal benches riveted to the floor -- if they can find one. Booking officers sit at separate stations behind wire mesh windows. In front of each is a revolving turntable where detainees turn over their possessions.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We FIND the brothers side by side in separate lines.

LUIGI

What were you doin' in the tunnel,
mario?

MARIO

Whaddya talkin' about? I was
savin' your ass!

A guard signals for him to unclip his work belt and put it on the turntable.

LUIGI

So how come you were wearin' your
work belt? And how come the place
is floodin' all of a sudden?

This is an uncomfortable memory. Mario wishes he hadn't brought it up.

MARIO

Eddie asked me. I didn't have no
choice. I had a gun up my nose.

Mario registers the BOOKING OFFICER inspecting his belt.

MARIO

Take care of those, those are
grade A tools. That's my
livelihood there.

OFFICER

Zip it!

Luigi steps to the next window, emptying his pockets. He puts down a watch, a wallet, a St. Christopher's medallion -- then reluctantly Daisy's crystal pendant on its broken leather cord.

When it goes through it's seized by a broad-shouldered busty cop called BERTHA. She picks it up and ties it 'round her neck. She turns to a sister officer.

BERTHA

Waddya think?

LUIGI

I want a receipt for that.

She laughs -- fat chance.

An officer whacks their backsides with a night stick and herds them together with a bunch of other prisoners.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ahead of them sits a lard-ass, barrel of guts SERGEANT behind a booking desk as big as Union Station. He growls into a microphone in front of him.

SERGEANT

Names!

MARIO

Mario Mario.

LUIGI

Luigi Mario.

He rifles through a pile of charge sheets.

SERGEANT

Bail is fixed at five hundred
koopons.

MARIO

What're you talkin' about, grocery
coupons?

His mouth gets him another belt with the night stick.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DE-FUNGUS UNIT - NIGHT

The prisoners stand in line. Luigi nudges Mario in the ribs as they see their first Goombas -- de-evolutionized creatures whose reptilian features are more pronounced.

They understand but never speak. Mario turns to an OLD LAG.

MARIO

What are they?

OLD LAG

Goombas.

Before they can ask more, Goombas in gas masks grab them, yank open their trousers and shove large garden spraying-type devices down them and give them a burst of powder.

LUIGI

What's happenin' here?

OLD LAG

De-fungus. First time or
somethin'?

Another Goomba throws a switch and jets of yellow chemicals spray down, drenching them. They recoil at the smell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Coughing and retching, they're prodded into the next area containing huge drying machines. Except they're out of order...

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - PROCESSING ROOM - NIGHT

We FIND the brothers shackled to a wall, numbers above their heads. It looks like a rifle range. FROM behind a screen a menacing looking gun appears. A Goomba adjusts the height so that a red dot appears between Mario's eyes. The guys think they've had it.

Then there's a flash of light and the machine spits out instant mug shots.

EXT. KOOPA'S TOWER - NIGHT

The black tower which Daisy saw stands out against a starless sky.

INT. KOOPA'S TOWER - KOOPA'S SUITE - NIGHT

A vast room: towering crystalline windows overlook the city. One side is Koopa's command center: a lone computer console. The other is Koopa's bedroom: a spacious bed, a banquet table, a sunken pit with bar.

The marble floor is strewn with torn sheets, gutted pillows and empty bottles. A fiercely sexual female creature lies stretched on the floor, panting with exhaustion, her reptile skin dress clinging in tatters. This is LENA.

Across the room is KOOPA, whom we will recognize from the prologue. His face is glowing with sweat. He's dressed in a black warlord's robe and his hair tangles in dark strands across his shoulders.

LENA

That was incredible. Now... let's have sex.

Koopa takes a hit from an ornate curved pipe. He walks to the window and looks down philosophically.

KOOPA

We're losing our backbone as a nation, Lena! There are citizens down there eating vegetables! Even fruit! When a species stops devouring flesh it's headed straight for the museum.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LENA
(sulkily)
You think when you find your
princess you can change all this?

KOOPA
If I don't, we are lost.

A DISCREET BUZZER sounds. On a closed circuit TV screen we see the nervous faces of Iggy and Spike. He nods to Lena who uncoils herself from the bed and presses a switch.

Doors slide open and the two hapless emissaries enter, still showing the bruises and scars from their fight with the brothers.

KOOPA
If you have failed again, I shall
have you de-evolved.

IGGY
We've found the girl.

KOOPA
Another girl? I didn't ask you to
stock me a harem. I asked for one
girl. The right girl. The girl
who came from that!

He indicates a pedestal on which stands the decorative metal egg which was left at the convent.

IGGY
We know it's her. Except...

He hesitates.

LENA
Except what?

SPIKE
It wasn't our fault. She was
followed through the gateway. They
were big guys -- two of them. They
jumped us.

LENA
What a pair of invertebrates!

IGGY
They've already been picked up.
Look!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He produces the mugshots of the brothers which were taken in Police Headquarters.

KOOPA

Put out an all-points trawl in the metro section. Bring in every girl between sixteen and twenty-five. Immediately.

Iggy and Spike back out, bowing, mumbling their gratitude. Lena looks at the mugshots. Her reptilian tongue licks her lips expectantly.

LENA

I'm told mammals have a lower threshold of pain than we do. Let me find out.

KOOPA

Later, Lena.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

The "cells" are small cramped cages, piled one upon the other, each lit by one pale fluorescent tube. Fork lift trucks are used to detach and replace the cells.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - CELL - NIGHT

Mario and Luigi sit disconsolately in the cramped, claustrophobic space. In the corner is a sleeping figure, like a bundle of soiled rags.

The Brothers check out the cages on either side. It's not a pretty sight. They're filled with vicious, cutthroat sociopaths with reptilian features and dagger-like teeth.

LUIGI

There's a lot of unexplained stuff in the world, Mario. U.F.O.s, psychic phenomena, out of body experiences.

MARIO

I don't buy that bullshit.

LUIGI

That's 'cause you have a very closed mind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO

An' you believe everything you read
at the check-out counter. Maybe
Elvis is in the same tank.

(calling out)

Yo, King! Give us a few bars of
'Jailhouse Rock'!

LUIGI

So where are we?

Mario can't answer. Then the bundle in the far corner stirs
and turns into the light. He has an old, grizzled face,
lined and weathered. He stares at them with pale, watery
eyes. His name is TOAD.

TOAD

You're in a subdimension. Least
that's my theory. The real
dimension is all around us. Only
we don't get to see it on account
we're sub-dimensional. Get it?

The guys look at each other -- they don't.

TOAD

That's why everything's so out of
whack here. It's lousy with
fungus, the system's corrupt and
the music just isn't happening.

LUIGI

Who are you?

TOAD

The name's Toad. I live in the
desert. Once in a while I come in
to scavenge only. This time they
bust my ass -- Where you guys from?

LUIGI

Brooklyn.

Toad's eyes light up.

TOAD

Brooklyn! That's a mythological
place.

MARIO

Not to me it isn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI

No, listen to him! You mean like there's your world an' our world an' somehow we've crossed over?

TOAD

Like I said it's only a theory.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - CELL BLOCK

A guard comes down the metal walkway.

His name tag reads: "SGT. SIMON." He shouts up at the stacked cells.

SIMON

Mario Brothers?

FROM BELOW we see Mario scramble to his feet and look down.

MARIO

That's us! An' we want a lawyer to get us out of this chickencoop!

SIMON

You got one!

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

A HIGH SHOT FROM a metal walkway LOOKING DOWN ON a ceilingless rectangular room. There's a table and chairs, bolted to the floor. A male figure rises as the brothers are ushered in by Simon.

ANOTHER ANGLE

REVEALS the figure to be Koopa. But his long, sleek hair is tied in a ponytail. He wears a suit and looks like he could grace a G.Q. cover. On the table is a lizardskin briefcase. He flashes an ingratiating smile.

KOOPA

Hi, guys, come in, siddown. I'm Lazard of Lazard, Conda, and Dactyl.

He hands them each a business card.

LUIGI

What is this place? Who's in charge? Who's the head honcho?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KOOPA
You mean the main man? El Supremo?
That's President Koopa.

MARIO
We want to see him.

KOOPA
I don't think you do.
(checks the walls and
drops his voice)
Koopa is one mean evil egg-sucking
son-of-a-snake. Trust me on this.

The guys look at each other. What choice do they have?

KOOPA
I need to ask some questions.
Procedure, you understand. I
believe the reason you're here is
you were following a young lady.

LUIGI
What young lady?

KOOPA
Don't slither me, man. Her name is
Daisy, I just want to verify some
facts. Age?

LUIGI
I never asked. 'Bout twenty I
guess.

KOOPA
(silky)
Parents?

MARIO
She's an orphan.

LUIGI
(quietly)
Shut up.

MARIO
That's what you told me. Left on
the steps of a convent, you said.

They hear the CLATTER of FEMALE FEET on the metal walkway
above them. Dozens of young girls of all shapes and sizes
are being herded by female officers.

Koopa gets up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KOOPA
Can you see her?

Luigi takes advantage of the moment to sidemouth his brother.

LUIGI
I don't trust this guy. He's too
slick, too slimy.

MARIO
He's a lawyer!

KOOPA
The sooner we find her the sooner
you can all go home.

Daisy appears on the walkway, looking lost and pale among the
crush of the girls.

MARIO
There she is!

Daisy looks down and sees Luigi -- again, so near and yet so
far.

DAISY
Luigi!

Koopa drops his role-playing. He points upwards.

KOOPA
Release the others!

One of the female guards seizes Daisy and drags her
protesting body across the walkway.

LUIGI
You sonovabitch!

Simon whacks him on the back of his knees with his
nightstick.

SIMON
On your knees when you speak to
President Koopa!

MARIO
You're Koopa? But you said --

LUIGI
He's a mean evil egg-sucking son of
a snake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KOOPA

Did I lie?

He turns on his heel and walks away. Simon hauls Luigi to his feet.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DE-EVOLUTION CHAMBER - NIGHT

A high-roofed, sinister, windowless chamber. There is a bank of controls and gauges and in the center of the room, an elevated track leads to an enormous metal pod. It opens and a chair is catapulted forward on the rails. It's like an old-fashioned dentist's chair with arm rests and a neck brace. A Goomba is strapped in.

ANOTHER ANGLE

REVEALS Koopa with the brothers, looking up at the device with apprehension.

The Goomba is helped from the chair by two others. He's groggy, jelly-limbed.

KOOPA

This is our devo machine.
Evolution is a process of change.
Things move on -- from primeval
slime -- to single-celled organisms
-- to intelligent life.

He glances sideways at a particularly dumb-looking Goomba. The Goomba smiles brightly.

KOOPA

Devolution, of course, works the
other way.

MARIO

What the hell did you evolve from?

KOOPA

Tyrannosaurus rex -- the lizard
king...

He turns to two white-coated technicians manning the controls. BLOOBER is small and stout with an Einstein haircut, WART is small, stoop-shouldered and pop-eyed.

KOOPA

Wart -- a demonstration for our
visitors.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WART

Certainly, sir. Any preference to sex or age? Lot of gorgeous babes just been trucked in.

KOOPA

Let's save time. Why not you?

Wart's face pales.

WART

Me?

KOOPA

Don't worry. We'll only give you a light zap. A couple of gens. You won't even feel it.

Wart is horrified as Goombas strap him into the chair. Bloober is concerned about the readiness of his machine.

BLOOBER

There's been a lot of overloading tonight, I really ought to change the stabilizing circuit.

Koopa waves away his objections. He turns to the brothers.

KOOPA

My kingdom has limited resources so recycling is very important. We take people from the prisons -- third time offenders, psychopaths, people who slurp their food -- and we turn them into loyal, Koopa fearing Goombas.

MARIO

You turn them into those!

Bloober moves a switch. Wart screams as the chair hurtles backwards into the pod. Its doors close. The MACHINE starts to HUM with electronic impulses. Sparks fly from the control panel. Bloober gets a shock from a short.

He shakes his head and moves faders on a console. The pod starts to vibrate.

BLOOBER

See, it shouldn't do that.

Koopa leans over and turns a dial, all the way to "Primordial."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KOOPA

All right, that's enough.

The pod doors open. This time the CHAIR doesn't shoot out -- it judders forward, HISSING and sparking.

The Brothers watch to see what unspeakable horror will emerge.

Their fears seem groundless. Wart looks much the same as he did when he went in, except for a faint fluorescent glow. Koopa looks dissappointed.

Then, Wart slides out from under the straps, almost like Jell-0 coming out of a mold. He hits the floor and his body splatters into a puddle of primeval gunk.

Everyone reacts in horror, except for Koopa who prods what's left of Wart with the toe of his shoe.

MARIO

You obliterated that guy!

KOOPA

Not at all. I turned him into slime mold. It's practically immortal. It will be interesting to see how it works on mammals.

This is it for Mario. He rushes Koopa and slugs him with all he's got.

Nothing. Koopa doesn't even flinch.

KOOPA

What was that, a rabbit punch?

Mario hits him again. Same result.

Luigi steps forward to help his brother but a Goomba zaps him with his stun stick, sending him reeling to the floor.

The Goomba swivels his stun stick toward Mario.

Mario leaps aside as he FIRES. The shot hits Koopa in the knee. This knocks him back. His foot slips on the gunge that was once Wart. He clings to the edge of the chair.

Mario sees a chance. He kicks Koopa's feet away from him. With a scream, Koopa falls into the chair.

Mario kicks the chair and it slides back down the rails and into the pod.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CRACKLES and sparks from the machine. The Goombas rush forward to help their leader.

KOOPA
Off! Turn it off!

Simon starts yanking power cables from meter sockets.

SIMON
Who knows how to fix this thing?

BLOOBER
He's on your shoe!

In the confusion, Mario hauls Luigi to his feet and they tear-ass out of there.

Koopa is pulled from the pod. He pushes the Goombas away, seeming relatively unscathed by his experience.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

A bare cinder block corridor. The Brothers run down it. ALARMS begin to SOUND. BELLS, a SIREN.

LUIGI
We gotta find Daisy!

MARIO
If we stick around we'll be pond
life!

A door opens ahead of them. Two Goombas appear. They have bazooka-like weapons at their hips and they let fly with FIREBALLS. The Brothers duck as huge chunks of masonry are carved from the wall. They head down a flight of metal stairs.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - STAIRCASE - NIGHT

The Brothers' feet clatter on the metal staircase as FIREBALLS RICOCHET around them. The stairs bottom out with a metal door ahead of them. Mario slams into the crossbar and they run into:

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - UNDERGROUND LOT - NIGHT

There are about a dozen bumper cop cars and a meat wagon parked under the gridwork, their antennae sparking against the overhead power mesh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The cops are preoccupied with the disembarking prisoners. The guys duck down, bobbing and weaving between the lines of parked cars.

The pursuing Goombas burst through the staircase door. They scope the area -- no sign of their quarry.

ANGLE ON GUYS

as they crawl into one of the cars. The exterior shows signs of electrical scarring. The interior is heavily insulated.

Mario inspects the unfamiliar controls.

LUIGI
You don't know how to drive this.

MARIO
A car is a car.

He throws switches. Above them the electrical rod sparks on the grid.

LUIGI
Way to go!

MARIO
Let's hit the bricks!

The car speeds forward. The Goombas react to the sound and spray fireballs in its direction. The car hits a ramp.

Ahead a huge yellow and black gate arm is descending. Mario and Luigi crash through it sending splinters everywhere. The gate arm goes crazy, thrashing around madly.

EXT. STRET - NIGHT

The police car fishtails into the heavy traffic.

INT. POLICE CAR (TRAVELLING) - NIGHT

MARIO
Find the siren.

Luigi begins punching buttons. He activates the radio.

RADIO (V.O.)
... Alien species escaping from
Metro Central. Use of unreasonable
force is recommended.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The SIREN bursts into life. Cars swerve to one side, clearing a path.

EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - EXIT RAMP - NIGHT

A pursuing cop car is clubbed by the still-spinning gate arm, SHATTERING its WINDSHIELD.

INT. POLICE CAR (TRAVELLING) - NIGHT

The car is careening through the traffic, side-swiping other vehicles that don't get out of the way fast enough.

They hear TWIN SIRENS. To their dismay the Brothers see police cars pulling level with them on either side.

EXT. EXPRESSWAY - NIGHT

Both cars train vicious-looking weapons on the Brothers.

INT. POLICE CAR (TRAVELLING) - NIGHT

Mario stamps on the brakes.

EXT. EXPRESSWAY - NIGHT

The police cars FIRE simultaneously as the Brothers' cars' tires lock and it skids OUT OF VIEW. The two police cars annihilate each other.

INT. POLICE CAR (TRAVELLING) - NIGHT

LUIGI

Whoa!!

Mario hits the pedal again, swerving to avoid the carnage in the road ahead. Even so, debris rains down on the windshield.

Their relief is short-lived as they hear the radio.

RADIO (V.O.)

Aliens heading west on Koopa Boulevard. Approaching Koopa Parkway near offramp to Avenue of the Koopas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO

Let's get off the freeway.

Ahead is a fork. One way is the parkway, the others an entrance to a tunnel, closed off by trestle barriers. There are warning signs "DANGER! -- NO THRUWAY!"

LUIGI

Which way?

It's a major decision.

MARIO

I dunno, whaddya think?

Simultaneously they point in different directions.

BROTHERS

That way!

Mario goes for his choice -- the blocked-off tunnel.

LUIGI

So why did you ask?!

EXT. EXPRESSWAY - NIGHT

The police car splinters the barrier as it hits it at speed and disappears into the darkness of the tunnel. The rod waves uselessly in the air as it breaks contact with the power grid.

INT. POLICE CAR (TRAVELLING)/TUNNEL - NIGHT

The windshield is crazed web of glass. Luigi leans back and smashes it away with the heel of his boot.

Ahead of them the lights of the car illuminate the tunnel. The ground and walls are encrusted with thick layers of fungus. But the headlights start to fade, as does the motor.

LUIGI

We're not on the grid, we've lost power!

Mario's eyes scan the dashboard. There's a control marked "Auxiliary Power Unit." He tries it.

There's the HUM of a DYNAMO. Then the lights come on again and the MOTOR KICKS IN. Luigi points to a digital printout.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI
We got twenty miles...

INT. KOOPA'S TOWER ADMINISTRATION SUITE - NIGHT

Koopa examines his features in a mirror. Lena observes him curiously.

LENA
(delicately)
Since you came out of the machine,
do you feel different?

KOOPA
Better if anything. Energized,
invigorated.

LENA
The plumbers are headed out of the
city.

KOOPA
Let them rot in the deser. I'm
more interested in the girl.

He picks up a print out of a computerized brain scan.

KOOPA
She is the one. The brain scan
confirms it.

Lena's eyes flash with jealousy.

LENA
So you don't care that these men
made a fool of you?

KOOPA
No one makes a fool of Koopa! They
escaped because I'm surrounded by
incompetents!

During this moment, something happens to Koopa. For a moment his features take on the reptilian characteristics of his ancestry. Lena is startled -- and it shows.

KOOPA
What are you staring at?

His hand fingers his face. He turns to mirror, but by the time he reaches it his features have returned to normal.

INT. TUNNEL/POLICE CAR (TRAVELLING) - NIGHT

The fungus is thicker now and long tendrils of it fly in through the smashed windshield. The Brothers push it out of their faces -- recoiling from its texture and smell.

MARIO

I can't see where I'm going...

LUIGI

Look out!

EXT. DESERT - TUNNEL'S END - NIGHT

The tunnel ends, like a sewer outfall above a sloping desert landscape.

The police car arcs out the pipe into clear air. A trail of fungus clings to it like a bungee rope.

INT. POLICE CAR (TRAVELLING) - NIGHT

The Brothers are panicked, helpless, out of control. They yell against the sudden rush of wind through the broken screen.

Then the car comes to a shuddering landing. In the beams they get a quick glimpse of scrub and sand and cacti.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

We see the tail lights of the police cars disappearing into the shadows of this wasteland...

INT. KOOPA TOWER - KOOPA'S SUITE - NIGHT

We hear the PURR of an ELEVATOR. Two lacquered doors open to reveal Daisy, accompanied by a Goomba. His name tag identifies him as HARK. He prods her forward into the room.

The elevator doors close behind her, leaving her alone. Since we saw her last she has been bathed, her hair washed and combed. She looks especially vulnerable and virginal in long, white ankle-length robe. The lights have dimmed, casting an eerie, seductive glow around the suite.

Something startles her -- a football? She can hear the FAINTEST kind of ANIMAL NOISE. She looks around, trying to detect its source.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She hears the SOUND again -- then sees a shadow against a wall. It's the shape of a creature she has never seen before.

Then the animal breaks cover. Daisy screams at the sight of a four-foot tall tyrannosaurus rex. It stops moving, eyes fixed on Daisy, as afraid as she is.

Then it starts to move toward her. Daisy backs away, terrified. Koopa's voice comes out of the darkness.

 KOOPA (O.S.)
 Don't be afraid -- Yoshi won't hurt
 you.

He appears. His skin seems ghostly pale against his black warlord's robe.

 KOOPA
 Go ahead -- touch him. Just try
 not to move your fingers around
 like a small wounded animal.

 DAISY
 (softly)
 I can't believe it. Dinosaurs died
 out millions of years ago.

 KOOPA
 Correct, Daisy. A meteorite did
 that. And it did more. It split
 the world into parallel universes.

 DAISY
 Who are you?

 KOOPA
 I am Koopa. I have the privilege
 of being the supreme being of...

He gestures out of the window.

 KOOPA
 ... everything I can see, really.

 DAISY
 If you saw your city from the
 street you might have a different
 view of it.

 KOOPA
 Oh, I rarely venture so low.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAISY
It's disgusting. It's decayed and rotten.

KOOPA
Welcome home, Daisy!

The word startles her.

DAISY
Home -- what are you talking about?

KOOPA
Your mother came from here.

DAISY
My mother? Is she alive?

KOOPA
I'm afraid not. Your mother's family had an elite position in our society. Guardians of the gateway to the other side. She betrayed that trust.

He presses a dimmer and an overhead light illuminates the metal egg. Daisy recognizes it.

DAISY
That was in the convent where I was brought up! How did you get it?

KOOPA
I had it stolen. But look -- something's missing. That's why I needed you.

There's a crystalline pattern on the lid with a piece missing -- exactly the size and shape of Daisy's pendant. Her hand goes involuntarily to her neck. He sees this.

KOOPA
Do you have it?

Daisy shudders as his hand reaches out and strokes her hair and cheek. Then swiftly and savagely his hands rip open her dress.

Daisy reacts -- pushing him away. His eyes narrow and he hisses venomously:

KOOPA
Did they take it from you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAISY

Who?

KOOPA

The ones who brought you through?
Or the guards below?

For a brief moment his features "regress" again. Daisy sees this and recoils in horror. His hands go round her throat.

Yoshi reacts to Daisy's fear. He bares his teeth, hissing at Koopa.

Koopa's composure returns as quickly as it went. He releases her and laughs.

KOOPA

Maybe your friends know where it
is...

EXT. DESERT - DAY

It's morning. There's no sun, just a sickly yellow sky. A bird of prey is circling. As the SHOT DEVELOPS we see it is thermalling above the police car. WIND is the only NOISE -- it's strong enough to have half buried the spent vehicle in sand during the night.

ANGLE ON CAR

Through the shattered windshield we can see the Brothers. They are fast asleep.

CLOSE ON MARIO'S FACE

A fluttering shadow passes over it. His eyes open drowsily, then widen in terror.

HIS POV

Another bird of prey is perched upon the hood of the wrecked car, its cruel beak about a foot from his face.

MARIO

Gid-outa-here!!

The bird soars skyward. Luigi wakes up with a start, his head jerking backward against the headrest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI
Sheesh, Mario, what is it?

MARIO
We were nearly breakfast.

He points upward. We see several of the birds circling above.

LUIGI
Where are we?

MARIO
You keep askin' me that. Last time I knew it was Sunday morning in Brooklyn. I was gonna have lunch at Carmine's and watch the Knicks on the tube.

Luigi opens the door, pushing it against the sand. They look around them. Nothing but arid desert and the MOANING of the WIND.

EXT. DESERT SAND DUNE - DAY

The Brothers' heads COME INTO VIEW as they crest a ridge of sand. They reach the top and hold up their hands against the glare of the yellow sun.

THEIR POV

In the distance they can see the city. It's the first time we've seen it in perspective. Like Manhattan, it's an island, except it's smaller and encircled by sand and waste. We can see Koopa's tower, its top obscured by a soup-like smog.

BACK TO SCENE

Luigi shakes his head in despair, taking in the arid landscape and the distant city.

LUIGI
Looks like someone nuked New Jersey.

Mario's thoughts are elsewhere.

MARIO
I feel a jerk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI

C'mon, it was me got us into this mess.

MARIO

Yeah but it was me fingered your girl. I was suckered by that Koopa creep and it pisses me off! You don't mess with Brooklyn guys. An' you especially don't mess with their women! There's a line, an' they've crossed it!

LUIGI

So what're we gonna do? We got no water, no food, no juice.

MARIO

Whatever it takes -- 'cause who are we?

LUIGI

We're the Mario Brothers.

MARIO

We're the Super Mario Brothers!

WIDER ANGLE FROM BELOW

at the two brave figures standing on the crest of the dune, the desert beyond them, the sky behind them.

There's a small break in the clouds and a ray of sunlight shines down upon them as they clasp hands. MUSIC SWELLS for the heros' moment.

The mood is shattered by the CHUG-CHUG-CHUG of a HELICOPTER. A moment later it comes INTO VIEW.

CLOSE ON BROTHERS

Their confidence quickly evaporates. They run, looking desperately for cover -- rocks, a ravine. There isn't any.

ANGLE ON HELICOPTER

On the side we read the markings KBC. A door slides open. But it's not a gun that sticks out. It's a news crew's videocam. We see its lens focusing.

AERIAL SHOT OF BROTHERS

running and tumbling down the dune.

INT. BOOM BOOM BAR (INNER CITY) - DAY

It's a long bar, very basic, with a row of metal stools and shabby booths. Even though it's early in the day the place has several groups hunkered at the bar over yards of ale and carniburgers. Several of them are in uniform. This is a hangout for off-duty cops and Goombas.

On the giant TV SCREEN we see the aerial shot of Mario and Luigi running across the desert. It's replaced by a head and shoulders shot of Koopa wearing a warm-up jacket over a polo shirt.

KOOPA (V.O.)

Citizens, friends, sports-fans!
This is President Koopa. The
aliens were spotted at dawn this
morning but I called off militia.
In the interests of healthy
competition and fair play I decided
to make their capture a sporting
event.

This gets a growl of interest from the drinkers. Among them we recognize the cop who processed Luigi.

BERTHA

I processed those guys. The young
one gave me this.

From her tunic she pulls Daisy's crystal. Even in the dingy bar it glows with a special aura.

COP

It's real nice, Bertha. You should
get a nose ring to match.

Bertha takes exception to this. She short arms the Cop. He doesn't see it coming and flies back off his barstool.

RESUME TV SCREEN

KOOPA (V.O.)

The competitors are at the starting
grid. The only rule is to bring
the fugitives back alive.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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

Apart from that the teams can maim,
they can kill, they can blow each
other's heads off. It's gonna be a
bloodfest, folks, so stay tuned to
K.B.C.'s Violent World of Sports!

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The brothers are heading toward the city. But they cast
anxious glances above them, where the KBC helicopter is still
hovering. They're exhausted, dehydrated, their lips cracked
and parched.

Mario is carrying the flame thrower from the police car.

They react. In the middle distance they see a shimmering
cloud, like a locust storm. They shield their eyes against
the smoggy glare.

MARIO

I hope that's a mirage.

But it isn't. They start to hear the sound now -- the DEEP-
THROATED ROAR of ENGINES. A moment later vehicles appear
THROUGH the cloud of dust.

CLOSER ANGLE

We see an assortment of vehicles from Trans-Ams to tanks.
The drivers' uniforms are as bizarre and individual as their
vehicles -- helmets, fatigues, leather jackets, bandanas,
wrist spikes, cartridge belts.

RESUME BROTHERS

LUIGI

Holy cow...

MARIO

We're chewed, screwed and tattooed.

He ignites the flame thrower, cradles it in his arms and they
start to march resolutely toward the oncoming armada.

MARIO

I just wanna say somethin', kid.
I'm sorry I dragged you into the
plumbing business.

LUIGI

Whaddya talkin' about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO

You coulda done something better
with your life. Gone to college or
joined a band. I shouldn't've
pressured you.

LUIGI

Mario, I wouldn't've had it any
other way...

The moment unifies them. Mario's said what he had to say and
shed the last residue of guilt. They face what looks like
imminent destruction with stoical resolve.

ANGLE ON ARMADA

Two frontrunners have broken away from the pack. They turn
their attention to each other. A gun turret swivels, and a
moment later SHELLS BLAST into the ground around the leading
VEHICLE.

It RETURNS FIRE, catching the other CRAFT in its fuel tank.
It EXPLODES in a ball of flame and black smoke.

EXT. SPIKE AND IGGY'S VEHICLE - TRAVELLING - DAY

We find Spike and Iggy in an improvised motorbike and side-
car, strung together with leather straps and cable, over
rusting metal plates. They're wearing matching Formula One
type coveralls, embroidered with sponsors' stickers. Iggy
has binoculars. THROUGH them we see the distant figures of
the Brothers.

IGGY

(delightedly)
Plumbers!

SPIKE

(fired up)
Let's skin the snake, dude!

IGGY

No! Let the crazies take each other
out. Then we'll make our move.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The guys are trying to avoid the leading vehicle, zig-zagging
in the sand. The team are now visible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They're Goombas driving an armored car. Mounted on the back is what looks like a harpoon gun.

One of the Goombas scrambles out of his seat and positions himself behind it.

He fires. It catapults a net which unfolds as it spirals through the air. It enmeshes Luigi and he's dragged along behind the vehicle.

Mario runs desperately in pursuit.

The Goomba team reacts with malicious pleasure. They don't notice that another team is approaching on the blind side.

WHOOSH! A ROCKET FIRES across the space between them and scores a direct hit on the right hand caterpillar track. The vehicle loses control. Unable to go forward it can only move in a series of crippled circles.

The Goombas TRADE FIRE with the other team.

Mario reaches the net. He uses the flame thrower to torch through it, releasing his brother.

The exchange has given the slower vehicles a chance to catch up. It starts off a BARRAGE of ARTILLERY between them all.

Iggy and Spike sneak up from the flank. They release a barrage of smoke canisters.

Soon the air is filled with noxious fumes and the sounds of CHOKING, RETCHING DRIVERS.

INT. HELICOPTER (DESERT) - TRAVELLING - DAY

BELOW we can see billows of smoke and hear the CRUNCH of METAL as vehicles on the perimeter collide. An "Eye in the Sky" REPORTER paints the scene.

REPORTER

It's crazy out here. The Goombas are certainly out of it...

There's an EXPLOSION below.

REPORTER

... and the team from Death Row have just bought it... at least it saves the State some juice.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Thick smoke. Taking advantage of the confusion, Luigi releases Mario from the net. They start to run.

Then the smoke clears and they find themselves face to face with Iggy and Spike. Both have weapons pointing at them. Mario raises the flame thrower, but they train their guns on Luigi.

IGGY

Torch us and your brother's
hamburger!

Mario has no choice. The flame thrower drops in the sand.

Iggy and Spike climb out, chuckling with triumph.

IGGY

Taste it, Spike. The winner's
laurels, the president's embrace,
the cheering crowds...

SPIKE

The endorsements!

Suddenly there's the sound of a DEEP-THROATED ENGINE. They turn, shielding their eyes against the glare. A dune buggy with out-size wheels crests the sand dune. For a moment it's suspended in mid-air. We get a glimpse of a figure in bandana and goggles.

Iggy and Spike fling themselves out of its path. The buggy lands, its fall cushioned by the sand. The driver raises a blow pipe to his lips.

POP! POP! Iggy and Spike take DARTS in the neck. They reel back.

The Brothers react -- are they next? Then the driver takes off the goggles and we recognize Toad!

TOAD

Hop aboard, guys!

MARIO

Thanks, man!

Luigi shoots a look toward the inert bodies of Iggy and Spike.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI
Are they dead?

TOAD
Naw, just tranked. They'll be real
mellow for an hour or two.

He floors the pedal and the BUGGY ROARS away...

EXT. PARALLEL MANHATTAN - DAY

A sinister black helicopter is leaving the city. Lettering identifies "Sky Force One."

It passes a gigantic statue, standing in a swamp at the outer limits of city.

It resembles the Statue of Liberty, only the lower hand holds the torch, and the upper one thrusts up a burning book. The spikes on her crown continue down her back to her tail...

EXT. QUARRY - HIGH SHOT - DAY

ESTABLISHES Toad's hide-out. It's a disused quarry. We can see the dune buggy under an improvised carport -- a tarp strung over four poles.

INT. TOAD'S HOLE - DAY

Every inch of the walls is piled with paraphernalia, and what isn't on the ground is suspended from the ceiling: miners' lamps, bicycle frames, bizarre musical instruments, pick axes.

The Brothers sit on rickety kitchen chairs while Toad moves to an old rusting mine cart, filled with bottles. He selects one black with age, brushes some cobwebs from it and pops a stopper like the kind on a Grolsch beer bottle. He passes it to Mario.

TOAD
The last of the seventy-two.

MARIO
Do you have a glass?

TOAD
Just sniff it. If you drink it
you'll suffer profound melancholia
for a week.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mario takes a careful sniff and tries to hide his distaste.

LUIGI
How'd you get out of jail?

TOAD
I found a bribe-bondsman.

He points to an old TV set.

TOAD
Saw you guys on the tube. You sure
got up Koopa's nose.

MARIO
What's the deal with this guy
Koopa? We seen his picture
everywhere. Vote for Koopa the
Sportsman, Koopa the Cruel, Koopa
the Stud. Doesn't anyone run
against this guy?

TOAD
Koopa the Sensitive ran four years
ago, he only got two percent.

LUIGI
I mean somebody other than Koopa.

TOAD
No no. Koopa wouldn't like that.

MARIO
So you can elect anyone, so long as
it's Koopa?

TOAD
That's the way it works.

LUIGI
What kinda system's that?

TOAD
Democracy.

MARIO
An' that's how it's always been?

TOAD
Naw, in the good old days we had a
dictator. Koopa threw him in his
machine. De-evolved him back to a
single-cell organism and lost him
on the rug. Now he's everywhere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO

What're you talkin' about?

TOAD

He's the fungus... And he's gettin' his revenge. That's why we got no vegetation, 'cause he's takin' all the water. Least that's my theory.

Mario and Luigi exchange looks as Toad takes another sniff from the bottle.

MARIO

How much of that are you doin'?

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The black helicopter lands near the spot where the Mario Brothers were rescued. The landscape is littered with the smoking carcasses of burnt-out vehicles. The dead and wounded are being stretched into battery-operated ambulances.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The hapless Iggy and Spike are spread-eagled, their ankles and wrists strapped to wooden frames propped against each other, facing opposite directions. Spike can see Koopa coming, Iggy can't.

SPIKE

It's Koopa.

IGGY

How's he look? Is it Koopa the Sportsman?

SPIKE'S POV

Koopa is striding TOWARDS them flanked by Goombas. Anger has regressed his features still further. He reacts at the sight of a TV camera covering the scene.

KOOPA

Kill that camera.

A Goomba obliges, BLASTING both camera and crew to oblivion.

RESUME IGGY AND SPIKE

SPIKE

Looks more like Koopa the Merciless
to me...

Koopa approaches them. Everyone else hangs back.

KOOPA

If you please me with your answers
you will die less painfully. When
you seized the girl did she wear a
crystal around her neck?

Iggy raids his memory.

IGGY

I think there was something.

KOOPA

Did you keep it as a trinket for
one of your horrible wives?

SPIKE

We wouldn't do that. We're single.

IGGY

Footloose and fancy free.

SPIKE

Maybe the plumbers took it.

KOOPA

And you let them go...

He looks towards the setting sun.

KOOPA

The fire snakes will be out at
sunset. The carrion hawks can
finish what's left of you.

At the mention of the fire snakes Iggy and Spike quiver in
terror.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - SUNSET

The sun sinks below the horizon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In the orange light we see the sand moving. A moment later the heads of dozens of fire snakes wriggle and squirm to the surface. They resemble moray eels, their mouths filled with pointed piranha-like teeth.

We DISCOVER Iggy and Spike, struggling uselessly against the straps securing them.

SPIKE

Can you hear them yet?

IGGY

You don't hear them. You just feel them. They start at the ankles and... work their way up.

Spike looks down. The first snake wriggles INTO VIEW. It pauses for a moment at his lace-up boot. Its scaly tongue licks at the leather. Then it starts to slither toward the flesh concealed under his trouser leg.

Spike's eyes widen in horror and he and Iggy's screams fill the night air. A moment later they're answered by distant ECHOING HOWLS of COYOTES.

Suddenly a flaming arrow lands between Spike's spread-eagled legs. We see the fire snakes recoil from the flame, sliding back into the shadows.

ANOTHER ANGLE ON BROTHERS WITH TOAD

who is cradling a crossbow.

TOAD

Little buggers don't like fire.

Mario and Luigi recognize Iggy and Spike.

LUIGI

They're the ones who took Daisy!

Iggy and Spike give an anguished plea.

IGGY/SPIKE

Help us! Please!

Toad's gloved hand grasps the tail of the snake that's halfway up Spike's trouser leg. His eyes lock on Spike's.

TOAD

What d'you guys do to upset Koopa?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IGGY

He thought we had the crystal! The one the girl wore 'round her neck!

MARIO

What's so special he needs it that bad?

TOAD

I've heard they cure hemorrhoids but it's only a theory.

LUIGI

We could help you find it! Then you got somethin' to trade!

Toad looks at Mario -- what d'you think?

MARIO

Aw, let 'em live!

Toad laughs. He pulls out the snake, whirls it round his head a few times then hurls it into the closing darkness.

EXT. DESERT - REFUSE DUMP - NIGHT

We're nearer the city now. Floodlights illuminate mountains of garbage and filth.

Huge dumper trucks -- sludge gulpers -- are spilling loads of Dino-Yawk's excrement, while bulldozers push it further into the pit.

The drivers wear gas masks and protective clothing like people handling toxic waste. On the backs of their coveralls are stencilled "SNIFF-ITS."

ANOTHER ANGLE

In the shadows we FIND the brothers, Toad and a subdued Iggy and Spike. The Brooklyn boys gag and choke from the smell and fumes.

TOAD

Just be glad we're up-wind.

ANGLE ON ONE OF THE TRUCKS

The word "SLUDGE-GULPER" is written on the side. The driver is raising the rear end to tip his load. Two of his crew are behind helping out the refuse with long poles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POP! POP! They clutch their necks and fall to the ground.

Toad appears from the shadows, the blow pipe in his hand.

ANGLE ON DRIVER

He reacts as a gas-masked figure taps on the window of his cab. He opens the door. We can see from the clothes that the figure in the mask is Mario. He grabs the driver's tunic and hauls him out of the cab.

WHACK! BOSH! Mario pulls off the driver's gas mask. He hands it to Luigi, who appears at the side of the truck.

EXT. CITY DUMP CHECKPOINT - NIGHT

The empty sludge-gulper arrives at a barred gate where the guards also wear gas masks. They register the figures inside the cabin and wave them through.

INT. SLUDGE-GULPER - TRAVELLING - NIGHT

As they clear the checkpoint the "crew" remove their gas-masks to reveal the Brothers and Toad. Iggy and Spike are crouched at their feet.

EXT. CITY LIMITS - NIGHT

A convoy of sludge-gulpers is heading back toward the city. They pass the ominous figure of the statue which Koopa's helicopter passed earlier.

INT. SLUDGE-GULPER - TRAVELLING - NIGHT

The Brothers react to the looming shape of the statue.

LUIGI

What is that? It looks... almost familiar.

TOAD

It's the Statue of Repression.

IGGY

Listen, if the cop who took your crystal was female, she'll probably be wearin' it. We should check out the Boom Boom Bar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPIKE

It's a hangout joint for cops and Goombas.

LUIGI

We don't look like either.

MARIO

And we smell. I haven't took a shower since Brooklyn.

It's true. The guys' clothes are torn and stained and stink.

IGGY

We'd better drop by our place.

INT. BOOM BOOM BAR - NIGHT

Now that it's night the bar is leaping. Off-duty cops and Goombas are thronged together with civilians.

ANGLE ON DOOR

A group squeezes in. It takes us a moment to realize that it's Mario, Luigi, Iggy and Spike. The brothers are in borrowed clothes, trying to look sharp in oversized zoot-like suits. Their hair is sleeked back and shining with grease. Iggy and Spike, like them, are sharply dressed. They wear a lot of chunky turquoise jewelry and look like Aztec pimps.

A fight erupts nearby between a Cop and a Goomba.

MARIO

Real redneck joint.

IGGY

Cops hate Goombas, Goombas hate cops. Know what I mean?

LUIGI

I can't see her...

SPIKE

Maybe she's in the club prive.

He points to the ceiling.

EXT. BOOM BOOM BAR - FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

Iggy leads the way up metal steps. Only a FAINT sound of MUSIC from above gives any clue there's a club.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The masonry is rotted from fungus and the alley below it littered with garbage. 'Allosaurus' rats scurry past them.

MARIO

There's a club up here?

SPIKE

Tres exclusive. Creme de la creme.

They reach a door.

INT. DISCO - NIGHT

Lights flash and MUSIC pounds.

Above, the ultimate hi-tech lighting system swoops over the dancers like a choreographed robot arm. This is where fashion is at in Parallel New York -- anarcho-dino-sado-chic.

Bertha is on the dance floor. She's out of uniform, squeezed into a rubbery dress with snakeskin tights. As she twists and turns we see the crystal swinging 'round her neck, the facets of its surface catching the strobe lights.

We FIND the four guys near the edge of the dance floor watching her dance.

SPIKE

Leave this to me.

They stare at him -- you?!

SPIKE

Here's the run. I ask her for a dance, then we share some tubes, we booze and shmooze. I take her back to her place. She slips into something snakey and I do it.

MARIO

You do it with her?!

SPIKE

I mean I get the crystal.

IGGY

Give him his shot.

ANGLE ON BERTHA

Spike moves in between her and her partner, a cop almost as big as her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPIKE
Mind if I cut in?

The cop laughs.

BERTHA
Who are you?

SPIKE
Your main man, babe, your ram-a-
dam, your can o' spam.

She short-arms him. He hurtles backwards off the floor, to be caught by the others.

MARIO
So... Plan B. Let's dance.

He grabs Luigi and leads him onto the floor.

ANGLE ON BAR

Lena appears, looking deadly in a centerfold dress. She squirms onto the stool, looking 'round the room with a mixture of curiosity and contempt.

The BARMAN leans in. He doesn't get many like this in here.

BARMAN
Haven't seen you in here before.

LENA
I'm slumming. Give me a viper's
fang. Straight up.

The Barman goes off. Lena's eyes narrow.

FROM HER POV

We see Mario and Luigi on the floor, lit by the strobing disco lights.

CLOSER ANGLE ON BROTHERS

As they try to get the hang of the dance and maneuver themselves near Bertha.

Lena cuts between them facing Mario. She gyrates her body provocatively and gives him a seductive smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LENA
Let's Dactyl down!

This is okay by Mario -- he's on familiar territory.

He hits a pose. She copies him. He pivots, swivels a hip. She copies this too. Mario smiles -- this babe's up to speed.

ANGLE ON LUIGI

as he rejoins Iggy and Spike.

IGGY
D'you know who your brother's
dancin' with?

LUIGI
She married or somethin'?

SPIKE
That's Koopa's main squirm. His
significant other!

They react to a ripple of applause from the dance floor. Other dancers -- including Bertha, have drawn back allowing Mario and Lena more room. They're hot, they're happening. The MUSIC pulses, the floor jumps with stomping feet. Mario's caught on to the main moves of the Dactyl. It's more like a mating ritual than a dance. Facial movements are as important as swivelling hips. Voices shout encouragement.

VOICES
Snake out, man! Slither down!

RESUME LUIGI, IGGY AND SPIKE

IGGY
(alarmed)
She's telepathed the Goombas!
She's giving out the signals, man.
Look!

Sure enough, a posse of Goombas are positioning themselves around the perimeter of the dance floor.

IGGY
Soon as the dance is over, they're
gonna collar him.

Luigi looks around -- how do they get our of this? The MUSIC is BUILDING to a crescendo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Above the dance floor is a whirling glitter-ball. Luigi judges its height and position. He moves away, pushing through the crowd.

ANGLE ON DANCE FLOOR

Rising hysteria as the dance climaxes. Sweat is rolling down Mario's face and trickling in rivulets down the cleavage of Lena's breasts.

Luigi heads for the Dee-Jay behind his console.

Lena's body is one with Mario's but her eyes are elsewhere.

The leading Goomba catches her vibe. Time to move in. Luigi sees this. He runs up steps towards the Dee-Jay's booth. He leaps in the air. For a moment his feet crunch on the spinning turntables. Then he launches himself into space. His hands clutch the glitter-ball.

The crowd gasps, looking at his figure as it arcs over the dance floor. He sails over their heads, like Errol Flynn dangling from a chandelier. His legs kick out, straight into the jaws of the leading Goombas moving in on Mario.

Luigi arcs into a backward swing, his heels taking out another couple of Goombas. He drops to the floor and grabs his brother.

Iggy runs up to the Dee-Jay's booth. He knocks him off his stool and hits faders. The MUSIC goes to DOUBLE-SPEED and the whole room is suddenly strobing.

Pandemonium on the dance floor. Smelling a fight the cops move in, automatically taking on the Goombas, like marines and infantry head to head in a World War Two Hollywood canteen brawl.

In the flickering strobes the fight is almost psychedelic. We see Lena's face, pointlessly screaming orders to the Goombas.

Bertha joins in the fight, swinging at everything and everybody.

Mario and Luigi head towards her. Just before they reach her a Goomba grabs her throat, snapping the cord which secures the crystal. It falls to the floor.

The Brothers drop to their knees. It's hard to know what's real or imaginary in the hallucinatory mayhem. Now they see it, now they don't. Luigi's almost got his hand on it when a foot kicks it away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mario crawls through kicking legs and flying bodies. He sees the crystal. His hand reaches out and curls around it -- then a leather boot slams down on his wrist.

He looks up. Above leathered boots, leathered thighs, a spiked belt, a bare midriff to the taunting triumphant face of Lena.

Luigi grabs the collar of Mario's jacket and yanks him to his feet.

MARIO

I don't have the pendant!

LUIGI

Forget it!

They see Iggy gesturing towards them and head in his direction.

They push through the frenzied mob, avoiding head butts, karate chops and kick to the groin.

We FIND Lena scanning the room to see where they've gone. She screams at a Goomba captain and separates him from the fight. She points to where the Brothers are heading out of a rear door.

INT. DISCO - CLOAKROOM - NIGHT

The four guys push past a startled hatcheck girl. There are coats on hangers and air stompers stacked on shelves.

IGGY

Grab these!

They follow his example, ignoring the protests of the girl and CRASH through a rear DOOR.

INT. DISCO - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The guys head to a metal door. It's locked. They double back to a staircase. They have no choice but to go up. Their feet disappear up the stairs.

INT. DISCO CLUB - STOCK ROOM - NIGHT

The four fugitives enter a room packed with crates of bottles, metal trays, towels -- all the service items of the club. It's a dead end. There's no way out except for a skylight fourteen feet above them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They head back onto the landing -- to be met with a barrage of FIREBALLS from the pursuing Goombas.

They dive back into the stock room and barricade the door with crates and boxes. They follow Iggy's lead and start pulling on the stompers.

MARIO

How do we work these shoes?

Iggy unclips a handful of cartridges from his belt. Some are blue, some are green.

IGGY

The blue ones are full stomp.

MARIO

Gimme.

He grabs two and slots them into the shoes. They make a HYDRAULIC SOUND. Outside Goombas start BATTERING the door.

LUIGI

You can't go through glass!

MARIO

Watch!

He grabs an empty metal bottle crate. He holds it over his head like a wrap-around shield.

IGGY

Click your heels three times.

MARIO

You gotta be kidding!

But he does it. SCHWUNKUNKK! He blasts upward and rockets THROUGH the SKYLIGHT. The others duck as SHARDS OF GLASS RAIN down.

EXT./INT. DISCO - ROOF - DAY

Mario lands upon the roof. He looks down through the broken skylight. The other guys are looking up.

WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH!

They come whizzing through the aperture, just as the door collapses under the Goomba assault.

They run to the parapet of the roof.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Goomba reinforcements are arriving outside the club.

Mario looks, measuring the distance to the next roof.

He hits the stompers again and bounces into space, making a landing on the opposite roof. The others follow his lead.

A barrage of FIREBALLS is released from below, SPLINTERING BRICKS, WINDOWS and TV ANTENNAE.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The four figures leap down from the rooftop into a deserted, garbage-strewn, dimly-lit back alley. They hit the bricks and catapult up again as if on a trampoline. One more bounce and all four jack-knife into the open rear end of the garbage truck.

ANGLE ON TOAD'S FACE

behind the wheel. He smiles -- "neat" -- and engages the CLUNKING GEARS.

INT. KOOPA'S SUITE - NIGHT

We FIND Koopa in a sunken Roman bath. He's up to his neck in a black, bubbling mass of steaming mud. A white robe lies on the marble steps which lead down to it.

Lena enters, dressed as she was in the discotheque. There's an arrogant smile on her lips as she walks into the light and looks down on Koopa.

 KOOPA

I told my guards I did not wish to be disturbed.

 LENA

I ignored them.

 KOOPA

They shall pay for that.

 LENA

I think not.

She holds up her hand. His eyes narrow. What is that, glinting between her fingers? She opens them and swings the crystal on its cord -- back and forward, back and forward...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Koopa is entranced, his eyes mesmerized by the crystal. Lena walks down the steps toward him. She doesn't shed one ounce of clothing, sinking deeper and deeper into the mud. She reaches him, her face a foot from his. She holds the crystal tantalizingly above his head for a moment, then fastens it around his neck.

Their eyes lock, their lips part and their tongues caress each other...

EXT. SIDE STREET - NIGHT

The street is a darkened refuge from the buzz of the city. Mario and Luigi, Iggy and Spike step out from the shadows and look upwards.

THEIR POV

Looming above the skyline is Koopa's tower.

BACK TO SCENE

IGGY

They got electronic surveillance.
Goombas on every floor. And the
girls are gonna be at the top.

The guys look at each other -- it's a daunting prospect.

LUIGI

It's not gonna be easy.

MARIO

Yeah, I thought that two years ago
when I was called in to check this
boiler in Bensonhurst. First I
thought, no way Jose, this needs a
specialist, a contractor. Then
something inside me --

LUIGI

Mario, Mario -- This is bigger than
a boiler!

IGGY

Listen, take this. It's cute but
it's baaad!

He hands him a tiny clockwork device. It's round and has legs and could be concealed within a fist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO
I don't have kids.

IGGY
This isn't kid stuff. This can
blow your head off. Better than
Koopas gettin' you alive.

Mario pockets it.

MARIO
Thanks, guys.

They trade street shakes. A manhole cover is pushed aside in
the center of the darkened street. Toad's face appears.

TOAD
Let's go!

INT. MAINTENANCE TUNNEL - NIGHT

The Brothers descend a metal ladder. Luigi replaces the
cover. They're in a large tunnel, the walls covered with
cables and pipes.

We can hear the HUM of an ELECTRICAL GENERATOR. Toad
indicates a row of hooks on which maintenance crew coveralls
hung.

MARIO
That's more like it. I felt like a
dork in these clothes.

TOAD
I gotta surprise for you. I know a
couple quirks that work in Metro
Central.

MARIO
Quirks?

TOAD
Subversives like me. One of them
owes me -- here!

From behind his back he produces Mario's toolbelt. Mario's
eyes light up and there's music in his heart. It's a potent
moment. He can't speak. Luigi explains.

LUIGI
You don't know what his means to
him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI (CONT'D)

It's like Wyatt Earp gettin' back
his gunbelt. Or Batman findin' his
cape.

Mario straps it on, flexes his chest and swells with blue-collar pride.

MARIO

Nothin' can stop us now!

INT. KOOPA TOWER - DAISY'S ROOM - DAY

Daisy is alone and frightened, looking every inch the princess locked in the tower. She looks off into the night sky, wondering where her friends are, and whether she will ever see them again.

There's a WHIMPERING sound at her feet. She looks down to see Yoshi. There's a tray of untouched food by her side. She takes some meat from it and feeds it.

DAISY

Here you are, Yoshi.

She turns at the sound of the DOOR being UNLOCKED. Hark, the Goomba, enters.

DAISY

I can't eat this, I'm a vegetarian!
I won't eat anything with a face --
do you understand?

Hark shakes his head.

DAISY

You realize I'm being held against
my will? It's a flagrant violation
of my civil liberties.

He gestures "follow me." There's something sympathetic about his expression, as if he's trying to convey they she shouldn't be afraid of him.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - BOILER ROOM - NIGHT

The door gives and the guys enter.

Mario holsters a pry bar. They could be in the engine room of an ocean-going ship. There's heavy metal, stairs and walkways, gigantic boulders, brass and copper gauges and controls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There's the THRUST of PISTONS, the HISS of STEAM and the occasional BLAST of a FURNACE. The room controls the building's water, heat and ventilation.

The guys look around with professional interest. There's a lot of rust, greening copper and still more fungus.

LUIGI

Look at the state of those pipes!

MARIO

Non-union work, that's for sure.

They move to a control panel. On it is a computerized schematic of the Tower illustrating floor plans, stairwells, elevator shafts and the entire complex heating and ventilating structure.

Mario stabs a finger at the screen.

MARIO

There -- that's the main vent pipe.

He swivels and points to the pipe behind him.

MARIO

Goes right to the top of the building.

TOAD

How're you gonna get up to it?

MARIO

They gotta clean that sucker somehow...

He crosses over to the giant pipe and walks around it. He finds a hinged metal door, opens it and peers inside.

HIS POV

An endless circular shaft and at the side of it a metal ladder.

BACK TO SCENE

As a SIREN starts to SOUND.

TOAD

They're on to you -- look!

There are flashing red lights above the doors.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO

Let's see if we can slow them down.

The Brothers race across the room, ducking more pipes, dodging past HISSING VALVES and finds the main electrical circuit board. Mario whistles as he scopes the spaghetti of different colored wires and fuses. His fingers make selections, this one no, this one no, that one -- why not?

He pulls wires out in a shower of blue sparks.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - MAIN LOBBY - NIGHT

Red alarm lights are flashing. Goombas race into the lobby from different directions where a SECURITY CHIEF stands.

SECURITY CHIEF

There are intruders in the building. Check every floor, check the elevators, check the supply bays!

INT. KOOPA TOWER - BOILER ROOM - NIGHT

The Brothers continue their sabotage. Toad dives over a labyrinth of pipes, taking cover. There's an incredible EXPLOSION. Cracks appear in the pipework, instrument panels go crazy, circuits fuse, gauges oscillate wildly as the entire power system for the building malfunctions.

LUIGI

Someone's gonna make triple overtime fixin' this lot!

The Brothers and Toad embrace.

MARIO

You take care, man.

TOAD

You too. Just remember, 'he who leaps last goes without saying.'

MARIO

Damn right!

Then he frowns -- what does that mean? The Brothers climb into the shaft.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - FUNGUS ROOM - CLOSE ON KOOPA - NIGHT

as he enters a dimly-lit room. He hesitates. There seems to be a tangible presence in the room -- something is moving and living and rustling in the darkness.

ANOTHER ANGLE

REVEALS the room. It is filled with the fungus that we have seen in different parts of the city. But in the pale overhead lights it glistens and sparkles with an inner iridescence. The fungus writhes constantly, a living intelligence. The center of the room seems to be its nucleus. Koopa appears, fingering the crystal round his throat. He looks down at the heart of the fungus.

KOOPA

My old adversary... I shall be rid
of you soon... Take the city...
choke every last ounce of life from
it... I shall be beyond the reach
of our venomous tendrils.
Dimensional integration is no
longer a dream. It is about to
become a reality.

The fungus writhes and twists under Koopa's malevolent glare.

INT. KOOPA'S TOWER - KOOPA'S SUITE - NIGHT

Daisy is alone in the room except for the silent Hark who stands dutifully by. She runs her fingers curiously against the decorative inlay of the metal egg.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Koopa has materialized from the shadows. He watches Daisy quietly for a moment. There's more than curiosity in his look. He desires this young girl. She turns to Hark.

DAISY

I wish you could talk. I think
you'd like to be my friend.

Hark hesitates before responding, as if wanting to reassure her. Then his expression changes to fear as he senses Koopa's presence.

Koopa steps forward into the light. He ignores Hark as if he didn't exist and addresses Daisy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KOOPA

For sixty-five million years we have been exiled. Now it's time to regain our rightful place on this planet. Reptiles were the most successful species ever known when mammals were little shrews crawling in the undergrowth.

He fingers the crystal around his throat. Daisy reacts, recognizing it.

KOOPA

This is the key. With this I have the power to reunite the dimensions.

Koopa presses a button in an oval table. The leaves fold back revealing a hologram of his city.

KOOPA

My world is dying. Our resources consumed. But here -- here at the center of it all -- is the gateway to another world. The world where you grew up.

DAISY

That is my world. I don't belong in yours.

KOOPA

But you do! Deep inside you've always known that you were different from everyone else. Known that you were a stranger.

Daisy is almost hypnotized, reluctantly but irrevocably drawn to his sensuous voice and reptilian eyes.

KOOPA

Weren't you always excited by things you didn't understand? Wasn't there something missing from your life? Some unfulfilled need?

Hark reacts, powerless to help her.

Koopa reaches out a hand, fingering Daisy's hair.

The spell is broken as Lena strides into the suite. Her eyes flash angrily as she sees Daisy and Koopa together.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He is even more angry. His face regresses, his eyes narrowing to slits.

KOOPA

What do you want?

LENA

There are saboteurs in the building. I think the situation requires your undivided attention.

She flashes a venomous look at Daisy. Koopa regains his composure. He nods to Hark. He steps forward and escorts Daisy toward the private elevator.

LENA

What do you want with her? You have the crystal. And you have me!

KOOPA

She's royal blood, me dear. And you are not!

INT. KOOPA TOWER - VERTICAL SHAFT - NIGHT

HIGH ANGLE LOOKING DOWN the cylindrical shaft. The Brothers have climbed about eighty floors up the narrow metal ladder. The drop below them seems to stretch to infinity.

Mario pauses for breath, sweating from the exertion of the climb. Luigi stops too, below him on the ladder.

LUIGI

What?

MARIO

This filthy stuff is gettin' thicker.

It's true. Above them the ladder is enveloped in tangled coils of the stuff. Beyond that there's a dark mass of it.

LUIGI

It's only fungus -- it won't hurt you.

MARIO

You're not the one gettin' it in your face.

He starts up again, repulsed as the tendrils touch his face. He climbs a little further, then as he grabs the next rung it snaps off in his hand. Mario yells.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO

It's eaten through the metal!

LUIGI

Look!

He points. At the opposite side of the shaft is an opening to a horizontal ventilation tunnel.

MARIO

Great. Got a quarter?

LUIGI

How will that help?

MARIO

I'll spin you for who jumps first.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - LANDING - NIGHT

Goombas hack open elevator doors to release their trapped colleagues, supervised by the SECURITY CHIEF.

He stiffens as Koopa appears.

KOOPA

What in Koopa's name is happening?

SECURITY CHIEF

The whole system's immobilized, sir. Power, heating... The people downstairs are boiling, the people up top are freezin' their asses off.

KOOPA

Then get someone to fix it!

SECURITY CHIEF

Where we gonna find a plumber this time of night?

INT. KOOPA TOWER - VERTICAL SHAFT - NIGHT

Luigi has backed down the ladder, away from the fungus. Fifteen feet above him, Mario is loosening a section of the ladder from the shaft.

LUIGI

Are you sure that's long enough to reach across?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO

We'll soon know, won't we?

CRACK! He finds out sooner than he'd bargained for. The section comes away from the wall and his weight propels it into space across the terrifying void. The end settles -- with inches to spare -- on the lip of the ventilation tunnel. Mario is left hanging beneath it, feet dangling in space.

LUIGI

Mario!

MARIO

Get yourself across, fast! I dunno how long this thing will hold!

Luigi scrambles up the ladder and cautiously climbs onto the precarious bridge. He edges forward on his hands and knees. His weight causes it to buckle. The far end inches terrifying near the lip. Slowly and agonizingly, he inches forward until he's over Mario's white knuckles hanging beneath him. He hesitates.

MARIO

Move! One of us has to make it!

Luigi carries on. He reaches the comparative safety of the tunnel and turns to help his Brother.

Mario edges toward him, hand-over-hand. He reaches the lip of the shaft but the ladder prevents him from swinging himself into it.

MARIO

Take my wrist. Then kick the ladder away!

LUIGI

I dunno if I can brace myself.

MARIO

Luigi, my arms are tearin' out my sockets!

He releases one hand and Luigi grabs it. He presses his feet against the side of the tunnel to give himself some purchase. Then he takes a deep breath.

LUIGI

Now!!!

Mario lets go of the ladder with his other hand and Luigi kicks it away. Now there's only Luigi's strength and will preventing his Brother from hurtling to certain death.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His biceps bulge, the veins stand out on his forehead. Then with a superhuman effort he hauls his Brother into the tunnel.

They lean against opposite sides of the tunnel, catching their breath, exhausted, spent.

LUIGI

When we get home, I'm takin' you to the gym... you need to lose a few pounds...

INT. VENTILATION TUNNEL - NIGHT

The guys come INTO VIEW. In the narrow, cramped space there's only room for them to crawl. Ahead of them the tunnel spirals downwards. Mario notices ice forming on the sides.

MARIO

It's icin' up. We sure did a number on their heating system.

Luigi is looking through an inspection plate in the floor.

HIS POV

The grid obscures most of his view but he glimpses details -- woman's clothing strewn across the floor, a bed and the outline of a figure under the covers.

BACK TO SCENE

LUIGI

We've found her!

Mario slaps his hand over his mouth. He's noticed something else.

THROUGH the grid he can see the figure of a Goomba.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - DORMITORY - NIGHT

The room is lit only by the moonlight through the outside window. The Goomba reacts as something METALLIC HITS the FLOOR. He picks it up. It's a screw. He swivels his weapon, registering the inspection plate above him.

CRASH! It FALLS to the ground, followed a moment later by Luigi. His body lands heavily on top of the Goomba, spread-eagling him on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mario drops down a moment later. The Goomba slumps, unconscious.

DANIELLA

Mario! You came for me!

The guys get up, dazed and confused. Daniella isn't the only girl in the room. There's about five others, of various shapes and sizes, but all the same age. They're wearing all their clothes with blankets wrapped around them for warmth.

GIRL #1

You know this guy, Daniella?

DANIELLA

Sure this is Mario, his brother Luigi. They came to rescue us, right, guys?

The Girls cheer and holler.

LUIGI

These are the missin' Brooklyn Girls?

DANIELLA

Angelica's from Queens -- but she's okay.

ANGELICA

I was okay till somebody turned the heat off. Now I'm freezin' my ass!

The Brothers exchange glances -- this is more than they'd bargained for.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - DAISY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The temperature has dropped here too. Daisy shivers.

Hark places a blanket around her shoulders. She smiles her gratitude.

They both turn as the door opens and Lena enters. She dismisses Hark.

LENA

Get out!

Hark reluctantly withdraws, looking concerned for Daisy's safety. Daisy recoils as Lena approaches her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LENA

Don't be afraid. No one will hurt
you...

She circles Daisy, touching strands of her hair. Then pulling aside the blanket, letting her fingers rest on her bare exposed shoulder. Daisy shudders.

LENA

You have beautiful skin. Soft...
smooth... No wonder Koopa wants you
for his queen.

DAISY

I'd rather die!

Lena takes a long silver pin from her hair.

LENA

If that's your preference...

She caresses a point near the nape of Daisy's neck. Then she raises the pin, bracing herself to plunge it into the soft flesh.

There's a sudden GROWL from the shadows. Yoshi appears, his mouth open, exposing rows of lethal pointed teeth. He lunges upwards, burying his jaws in her forearm.

Lena screams as the pin drops to the floor.

Daisy leaps to her feet, registering the pin, realizing her narrow escape.

Lena writhes in pain and anger in Yoshi's grip.

LENA

Get it off!!!

But Daisy sees her chance and runs for the door.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - DORMITORY - NIGHT

The Brothers are surrounded by Daniella and the Girls.

DANIELLA

So what's the plan, Mario? How're
ya bustin' us outa here?

The guys look at each other -- they don't have a clue.

LUIGI

We gotta find Daisy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANIELLA
She doesn't room with us.

ANGELICA
The little princess is up in the
penthouse.

Mario looks at Luigi. It's obvious his Brother is not going to stop now. He scoops up the Goomba's weapon.

MARIO
Hang loose, girls. We'll be back!

INT. KOOPA TOWER - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

A door opens. We see Daisy, desperately looking for a way out. Beyond her is a glimpse of stairwell.

HER POV

The corridor is infested with fungus.

BACK TO SCENE

She grimaces, repulsed, but pushes on, brushing tendrils from her face and hair.

The floor beneath her is spongy and rotten. Suddenly, it caves in! Daisy DISAPPEARS FROM VIEW.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - FUNGUS ROOM - NIGHT

The room we saw earlier -- the very nucleus of the fungus. Daisy plunges into the tangled mass of the fungus tendrils. She screams!

INT. KOOPA TOWER - ANOTHER CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Mario and Luigi react to the SOUND.

LUIGI
Daisy!

He sets off at speed, Mario following. They reach a door. Beyond it the SCREAMING is LOUDER. They try it. It's locked. Mario pulls the pry-bar from his belt.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - FUNGUS ROOM - NIGHT

Daisy is enveloped by fungus as it writhes and twists, coiling tighter around her.

The door bursts open and the Brothers enter.

DAISY
Luigi! Help me!

Mario tries to figure how the weapon works. Suddenly a jet of flame shoots from the barrel.

MARIO
Whoa...! Perfect. I'll barbecue the sucker.

LUIGI
(urgently)
No! Turn it off!

MARIO
What's wrong with you?

LUIGI
Lemme talk to it!

MARIO
Let you what?!

DAISY
Luigi, please!

Luigi concentrates, talking directly to the core of the fungus.

LUIGI
Listen to me! We are Koopa's enemies. We are here to destroy Koopa -- let her go!!

MARIO
I don't believe this. You're like one of those weirdos in Central Park who hugs trees.

LUIGI
Don't you remember what Toad said? The fungus hates Koopa. Which makes it our friend!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As if to demonstrate his trust he gently picks up some of the twisting coils. The fungus responds! Slowly it starts to release its stranglehold on Daisy.

Mario is staggered. Luigi is not surprised. He steps into the tangled parting mass. He reaches out his hand and pulls Daisy into his arms. She hugs him.

Mario is now a convert. His eyes scope the room and he addresses the fungus self-consciously.

MARIO

I er... I don't know who I'm talkin' to here, but thanks.

LUIGI

We found the other girls. Now we gotta figure a way outta here.

DAISY

No! Koopa has my crystal. With it he can merge this city with ours. Millions of lives will be lost!

The Brothers look at each other. They have no choice.

MARIO

We gotta stop him.

LUIGI

No argument.

Mario opens the door carefully.

HIS POV

The corridor is teeming with armed Goombas. He quickly closes it.

MARIO

Not that way.

They look around -- what now? They're trapped.

Part of the fungus starts to move where it's embedded in the cracks of one wall. The cracks widen. Chips of plaster fall to the floor. The fungus strains and writhes. Then a section of wall collapses providing another way out of there.

Relieved, they scramble through. Mario brings up the rear. He hesitates. He grabs a scaly offshoot of the fungus and gives it a "handshake."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO
Thanks again.

EXT. TOWER - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

The Black Sky Force One helicopter sits on the rooftop, its ROTOR WHIRLING.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - KOOPA'S SUITE - NIGHT

The Security Chief is addressing Koopa.

SECURITY CHIEF
All the main systems are down, sir.
And I don't know how long the
auxiliary will hold.

KOOPA
Where is the girl?!

Before he can receive a reply his eyes are distracted by a movement on the closed circuit screens. We see Mario, Luigi, and Daisy in the corridor. Koopa cannot believe what he's seeing. The Security Chief backs off in alarm as he sees his leader's features regress for a moment.

KOOPA
Plumbers...!

INT. KOOPA'S TOWER - KOOPA'S SUITE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The group reaches a fork -- another moment of decision.

MARIO
Left, I guess.

LUIGI
No. Right.

MARIO
What makes you so sure?

LUIGI
I just am. I got a gut thing about
it.

MARIO
You had a gut thing about the Mets
winning the pennant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUIGI

Mario -- just this once -- trust me!

Mario is about to overrule him when he realizes that Luigi is asserting himself in front of Daisy. He defers to his judgement.

MARIO

Okay -- lead on -- I'm right behind you.

Luigi enjoys the moment. He takes Daisy's arm and steers her forward.

WHOOSH!! A barred gate descends from above with the speed of a guillotine. It misses Mario by inches! He finds himself looking through the bars, cut off from Luigi and Daisy.

Luigi's side of the corridor is suddenly flooded with light. The Security Chief appears, flanked by Goombas.

LUIGI

Mario, get out of here!

Mario hesitates -- 'til he sees the fire power walking toward them. Then he hare-tails out of there.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - KOOPA'S SUITE - NIGHT

The Security Chief and his Goombas drag Luigi and Daisy in front of Koopa. Hark watches anxiously as Daisy pleads for Luigi.

DAISY

Don't hurt him. Spare his life and I'll be your queen.

Koopa considers her request.

KOOPA

I have a better idea. I'll kill him and you'll still be my queen.

Daisy flings herself at him, her fingers clawing at his face. Luigi is powerless, held in a vice-like grip by two Goombas. Koopa grabs Daisy's hair and pulls her head backwards. She gasps with pain.

Hark involuntarily steps forward. Every weapon in the room is instantly trained on him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KOOPA
How dare you!

His face regresses once more. His anger invests him with awesome power. He picks Hark up and hurls him at the window with such force that the GLASS SHATTERS and the Goomba's body disappears into the dark void of the night.

Daisy screams.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - DORMITORY - NIGHT

Mario enters, to be met by a barrage of questions, the Girls all talking at once, wanting to know what's happening, complaining about the cold.

MARIO
Girls, hold it down, okay? Koopa's got my brother, I gotta find him.

The Girls react to a SOUND. A moment later the black helicopter is seen banking away.

DANIELLA
Too late...

Mario's face is a mask of despair.

DANIELLA
We gotta get out of here.

MARIO
(recovering)
Okay -- the power's shot. We'd better take the stairs.

ANGELICA
In these heels?

DANIELLA
The building's crawlin' with slug heads.

ANGELICA
Let's do somethin' before the frost attacks my extremities.

Daniella shoots a look at Angelica's well-endowed chest.

DANIELLA
It's got plenty to work with.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The word "frost" triggers Mario's memory. He looks upwards to the open ventilation shaft which he and Luigi came through.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - VENTILATION SYSTEM - NIGHT

An ice-encrusted pipe, somewhere within the building's heating and ventilation system. We hear a SWISHING SOUND.

SAME SCENE - MOMENT LATER

Mario and the Girls appear, corkscrewing through the pipework on a mattress, like an overloaded bobsled team. They whizz round a hairpin bend, picking up speed as they hurtle downwards...

INT. KOOPA TOWER - DORMITORY - DAY

Goombas burst in. They register the empty room and the open shaft. The leading Goomba FIRES his WEAPON, BLASTING the hinges off the door.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - VENTILATION SYSTEM - NIGHT

RESUME Mario and the Girls on their crazy Cresta run. Ahead is a curtain of stalactites. Mario pulls Daniella backwards - the other Girls follow suit, like dominoes. The mattress flies under the stalactites, the lethal points missing their faces by inches.

ANGLE - ANOTHER PART OF SYSTEM

The Goombas' "sled" in the door. Its surface moves faster over the ice than the mattresses. They skewer round a bend.

Ahead of them -- the stalactites! They're too big and bulky to get out of the way. The lances of ice shatter against them.

RESUME - ANGLE - MARIO AND GIRLS

They're on a straight run. Ahead is the black hole of a horizontal shaft.

MARIO

Lean!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His "crew" all lean to the right. The "bobsled" executes a brilliant hair-raising maneuver. It banks to one side as they reach the hole then completes a 360' corkscrew turn. The Girls scream as if they're on a roller coaster.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The Goombas' door sled whips into the same stretch. They can't control it. The weight of the door hits the lip of the hole, turns over and the Goombas are tipped into it.

RESUME - ANGLE - MARIO AND GIRLS

They're on the final stretch. All that's ahead of them is a wire mesh cover. He leans back and holds up his air-stompered feet to take the impact.

MARIO

Hold tight!

The Girls scream again. Coney Island was never like this.

EXT. KOOPA TOWER - POWER GRID - NIGHT

The mesh grid is ripped away as the mattress ploughs through it.

CLOSE ON FACES OF GIRLS

They don't know where they are... it's in space, surrounded by lights, NOISE and neon.

WIDER ANGLE

REVEALS they've come out in the hub of the city. But their fall is cushioned by the wire grid that powers the city's traffic. They've missed one of the spaces in the grid by inches. They can see traffic and street life beneath them. All around them are the sparking telescopic rods of the cars below.

MARIO

Everyone alive?

ANGELICA

I've broken two nails!

DANIELLA

Medic!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mario recovers his weapon and takes his bearings... The tower behind them, the street below. One of the Girls screams. They turn to find they're only feet away from a giant image of Koopa's face.

ANOTHER ANGLE

FROM BELOW. We see that the image is part of a giant TV commercial for Koopa, the Statesman. Mario and the Girls look like bugs on the screen.

RESUME - ANGLE - MARIO AND GIRLS

as he scans the street below.

DANIELLA

Whaddya lookin' for, Mario?

MARIO

Friends of mine. They're drivin' a garbage truck.

DANIELLA

Excuse me -- garbage truck?

ANGELICA

She's used to limos.

INT. SLUDGE-GULPER - TRAVELLING - NIGHT

Toad is driving, Iggy and Spike beside him. They're scanning the street. Toad suddenly spots them, ahead and above him.

TOAD

There they are!

EXT. POWER GRID - NIGHT

The Sludge Gulper comes to a sudden halt right beneath Mario and the Girls. It causes a multi-vehicle pile up behind it. Drivers start to harass each other.

EXT. STREET (PARALLEL NEW YORK) - NIGHT

Mario and the Girls start to jump down from the grid onto the roof of the Sludge Gulper. They recognize Iggy and Spike as their abductors.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANIELLA

Those are the creeps who snatched me!

The others chorus "Me too!" "Yeah!" "Right!"

ANGELICA

I was at Carmine's with Tony! I went to the powder room an' they jumped me! Copped a feel as well!

Iggy and Spike cower in the cab, petrified. Mario tries to quiet the Girls.

MARIO

Girls, please! We need these guys! Trust me! They're ex-creeps. Born again creeps!

Suddenly -- weirdly -- IMAGES from Manhattan start to SUPERIMPOSE themselves OVER the SCENE... Yellow cabs, a pretzel vendor, a bag lady pushing an overloaded supermarket cart... There are neon signs for Broadway shows --

A New York cop finds himself in the middle of the Parallel New York traffic snarl-up. Everyone, collectively, thinks he or she is hallucinating.

For several moments everyone is frozen in mid-dimension, trapped in a fluid distortion of time and space.

INT. KOOPA'S TOWER - DAISY'S ROOM - NIGHT

It's happening here too. The walls ripple and distort like fun house mirrors. Yoshi is frightened and hides beneath a table. Lena takes the chance to escape.

EXT. STREET (PARALLEL NEW YORK) - NIGHT

RESUME the group in the street.

Just as suddenly, the IMAGES DISAPPEAR.

DANIELLA

What was that?!

MARIO

It's started...

INT. METEORITE CHAMBER - NIGHT

A bluish-white light FILLS the SCREEN. As the CAMERA PULLS BACK we REVEAL an underground chamber. The walls and ceiling are natural rock. The entire floor is the source of this strange pulsing energy.

ANOTHER ANGLE

REVEALS Koopa's face, glowing in the strange fluorescent light below him. He's kneeling on the surface of the meteorite, his face taut with intensity.

Beyond him, we see the faces of Daisy and Luigi corralled by armed Goombas.

CLOSE SHOT

REVEALS crystal in Koopa's hand. He's trying to force it into a crevice within the meteorite. He is met by a force field as waves of incandescent energy resist his attempt to replace the crystal. The veins stand out on his neck, his muscles bulge... he will not be refused.

EXT. STREET (PARALLEL NEW YORK) - DAY

RESUME Mario, and the girls scrambling into the Sludge-Gulper.

Toad slams it into gear and moves off.

It happens again. Suddenly they're on Forty-second Street and Broadway. The sidewalk is crowded with pimps, dealers, hustlers, hookers, and pan-handlers, huddled in the rain outside the porno theaters.

DANIELLA

Are we home already?

Mario shouts to Iggy and Spike.

MARIO

Where's Koopa doin' this?

IGGY

Has to be the Gateway!

INT. METEORITE CHAMBER - NIGHT

Koopa's body is convulsed by a high-voltage shock. Then a moment later a pulse of energy catapults him across the chamber.

EXT. KOOPA SQUARE - NIGHT

The Sludge-Gulper brakes to a halt outside the entrance to the subway station. It's the one where the Brothers first arrived in the city. Everyone piles out and follows Mario down the steps.

INT. SUBWAY STATION (PARALLEL NEW YORK) - NIGHT

Mario leads the group onto the platform, scattering commuters. Then the strange hallucinatory VIBRATIONS START again. New Yorkers materialize -- A New York transit cop, Brothers with boom boxes, red-bereted Guardian Angels.

There's a SHUDDER and a kaleidoscopic effect as the faces of New Yorkers and their opposite numbers merge and distort. Then it's over again.

Mario reaches the maintenance door through which he and Luigi entered the subway station. He hands the weapon to Toad and yanks out the pry-bar from his tool belt.

INT. METEORITE CHAMBER

For a second time Koopa is catapulted across the room by the pulsing force of the meteorite. He screams with fury, his eyes flashing red, his features regressing. It takes several seconds for him to regain his composure.

KOOPA

What is happening?!!

Daisy supplies the answer.

DAISY

Only gate-keepers have enough
tolerance to withstand the force.
Give it to me!

Koopa stares at her, realizing the significance of her words. She holds out her hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 LUIGI
 (horrified)
You're gonna help this guy?!

 DAISY
You shouldn't have followed me,
Luigi. I don't belong in your
world. I've learned that here.

Koopa smiles with malevolent triumph and hands her the crystal. Luigi is gutted by this betrayal.

Daisy climbs down onto the meteorite.

CLOSE SHOT ON HER HAND

Her fingers turn it so that it is the wider end which she inserts into the crevice.

Her body goes rigid as the energy flows from her into the crystal into the meteorite. Her face is bathed in a ghostly white light.

BACK TO SCENE

Koopa watches, transfixed. In spite of her betrayal Luigi's concern is for her safety.

EXT. NEW YORK - NIGHT

HIGH AND WIDE ON the East River and Brooklyn Bridge. A bubble of energy, like an exploding nuke, appears beneath the water.

EXT. NEW YORK - UPPER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

A floodlit Harlem playground. Wire fences, graffiti basketball hoops. A pickup game in progress.

A kid makes a pass.

The ball is caught by a parallel New York kid in air-stompers! There's a bunch of other kids behind him. The two groups freeze, staring at each other like rival gangs.

The kid flips the ball to one of his friends. He takes off and 'stomps' from his half of the court. WHOOSH! He makes the most spectacular slam dunk in the history of the game.

EXT. NEW YORK - TOLL BOOTH - NIGHT

Several drivers toss in change to the scoop. The next vehicle is an armored personnel carrier, filled with Goombas.

INT. KOOPA TOWER - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Lena is running down a deserted corridor. The power has failed, the walls are icing up. But ahead of her she can see light and hear MUSIC...

INT. NEW YORK THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Lena runs onstage -- to the astonishment of the audience and the actor wearing the Phantom of the Opera's mask. Lena is equally bewildered. Then the building starts to VIBRATE. Screams of panic. Actors run for cover.

The giant chandelier comes CRASHING to the stage, skewering Lena.

INT. GATEWAY CHAMBER

The Custodian reacts in alarm as the door is kicked open and Mario and the others enter.

CUSTODIAN

Don't shoot, I'm an old man!

MARIO

Where's Koopa?

He nods -- they look. There's an opening in the rock and beyond it a tunnel sloping downwards. Mario turns to Iggy and Spike.

MARIO

Get the girls through the gateway.

INT. METEORITE CHAMBER

RESUME Daisy.

Every muscle in her body is contracting in spasm.

SNAP! The CRYSTAL in her hand BREAKS in two. There is a fork of blue lightning. The METEORITE starts to RUMBLE and QUAKE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KOOPA

What have you done?!

The whole ROOM starts to VIBRATE. Cracks appear in the walls. Earth and rocks start to fall from the roof.

LUIGI

Daisy!

Daisy scrambles off the meteorite.

With an anguished roar Koopa leaps onto it, desperately trying to undo what she's done.

Daisy looks around, half blinded by the choking dust. Luigi grabs her and hauls her out of the way of a giant rock descending from above which certainly would have killed her.

Mario enters among the falling rock, dust and confusion. A half-concussed Goomba tries to get to his feet. Mario saves him the bother, his boot sending him back to sleep.

Another Goomba lunges at him. Mario pivots, sidesteps, swinging the butt of his flame thrower into the Goomba's groin.

MARIO

Luigi!

LUIGI

Mario!

Mario sees his brother, cradling Daisy in his arms. Beyond them something else -- Koopa on the meteorite, his venomous hate-filled eyes fixed upon them. From the folds of his tunic he takes a silver-barreled weapon.

MARIO

Hey -- turtle-breath!

Koopa's head swivels. He gets one glimpse of Mario before the plumber hits the flame thrower.

He screams as the ball of flame jets into the side of his head and shoulder. He falls back onto the surface of the meteorite.

MARIO

Get her out of here!

Luigi pulls Daisy towards the entrance.

Mario leaps into the pit to finish off Koopa. A sudden landslide of rock engulfs them both.

INT. GATEWAY CHAMBER

Iggy, Spike and Toad are helping the girls through the gateway.

IGGY

It's still flooded the other side,
you're gonna have to swim for it.

TREMORS from below hit the chamber. The WALLS and FLOOR start to SPLINTER and CRACK. A WIND starts to HOWL around them. The girls scream.

Toad sees Luigi carrying Daisy into the chamber.

TOAD

Let's go, guys! Last exit to
Brooklyn!

LUIGI

I gotta help Mario.

But as he turns the entrance to the tunnel caves in. There's another frightening RUMBLE and the chamber starts to disintegrate.

INT. METEORITE CHAMBER

Mario and Koopa are locked in combat. Suddenly the METEORITE ERUPTS, spitting out a shower of spinning asteroids.

INT. TUNNEL EXCAVATION AREA

We're underwater in the flooded tunnel. Luigi and Daisy swim INTO VIEW. All around them, dinosaur bones are swirling in the current.

Then their heads break the surface and they suck air into their bursting lungs.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - EXCAVATION SITE - DAY

Dawn is breaking over the city. There is a lot of activity by the site. Cop cars and ambulances are arriving.

The crowd includes relatives having tearful reunions with the bedraggled Brooklyn Babes who have blankets round their shoulders, sipping cups of hot coffee. TV units are jostling for exclusive interviews.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGELICA is enjoying the limelight.

ANGELICA

We were locked up in this weird
fungus-infested tower and guarded
by lizards. They weren't all bad --
one of them was kinda cute.

ANOTHER ANGLE

ON Eddie and Daniella.

EDDIE

Did anyone touch you? 'Cos if so
they're answerin' to me.

DANIELLA

I've been in a sub-dimension,
Eddie. It's not your sphere of
influence!

A shout goes up. All heads swivel to the tunnel entrance
where Luigi appears supporting Daisy. They're followed by
Iggy and Spike.

CLOSE ON LUIGI

As he reacts to the unaccustomed sunlight, the surge of
people, the cameras and the microphones thrust in his face.
He's bombarded with questions.

REPORTER #1

You one of the Mario brothers?

REPORTER #2

A lot of these girls are saying
that you're the guys who defeated
this Koopa and saved the Earth --

REPORTER #1

A pair of plumbers?

DAISY

Sure they did!

LUIGI

If anyone's a hero, it's my
brother. An' he's still down
there!

He shoots an anguished look back in the direction of the
tunnel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The first Reporter turns his back, freezing them out.

REPORTER #1

The plumbers who saved the world!
Uh-huh -- I think the cops are
going to wanna talk to them later
but undeniably the kidnap victims
are free -- and just who is
responsible remains to be
determined by the courts...

The moment is interrupted by CRIES OF ALARM from people near the river.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - DAY

The water is churning again. Something is moving beneath the turbulent surface. There's a RUMBLING, then a WATER SPOUT ERUPTS beneath the bridge.

ANGLE ON SUPERSTRUCTURE OF BRIDGE

As the water subsides we see a figure clinging precariously to one of the main support cables beneath the bridge.

CLOSE ON MARIO

As he realizes where he is. His face registers the terrifying drop below him. Then he registers something else.

SOME DISTANCE ABOVE HIM

Koopa is spread-eagled against a metal stanchion, like a lizard on a wall. Their eyes lock.

Koopa has only one goal. The death of this tiresome adversary. He starts to crab downwards across the metalwork towards Mario.

ANGLE ON MARIO

He gets a foothold on a girder and lets go of the cable with one hand. He's more secure but he still has no escape.

He checks his toolbelt. Is there any possible weapon? He grabs a wrench and hurls it at the oncoming Koopa. It bounces off him harmlessly and spirals downwards toward the still churning waters of the river.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Koopa laughs and continues his descent.

Mario remembers something. He takes the mechanical toy which Iggy gave him from his pocket. With one hand clinging to the cable he puts it in his mouth and with his free hand he winds it up.

He places it on a metal beam that curves upwards toward the descending Koopa. The little toy starts to move up the beam, its feet moving, its MECHANISM WHIRRING.

MARIO

I hope you're right, Iggy. This better not be kid stuff.

Koopa doesn't even notice the device as he continues to slither down the metal framework toward his prey. His feet miss contact as he moves past it.

Mario reacts as he realizes his last chance has gone.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - EXCAVATION SITE - DAY

Luigi and Daisy, Iggy and Spike, look upwards toward the distant figures against the metalwork of the bridge.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - DAY

Koopa reaches Mario. His reptilian tongue flicks out of his mouth. A scaly, claw-like hand shoots out, grabbing Mario by the throat, squeezing the life out of him.

ANGLE ON CLOCKWORK DEVICE

It reaches the end of the girder and "walks" into space.

RESUME KOOPA AND MARIO

Koopa's head tilts backwards in triumph, the mouth opening wide showing rows of pointed teeth.

The little toy drops from above, twisting and turning -- straight into the savage jaws of Koopa's mouth.

Koopa chokes and gags. He releases his hold on Mario.

Mario takes his chance. Grabbing the cable with both hands he arches his back and swings both feet into Koopa's belly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Koopa loses his hold and falls, tumbling into space.

As he hits the water the BOMB EXPLODES within him, blowing the reptilian body to pieces.

Mario's face is a mixture of relief and revulsion.

Below him, Koopa's remains are flushed out of existence into the whirlpool of water below...

INT. KOOPA TOWER - FUNGUS ROOM - DAY

There's a dry rustling within the room as the last tendrils contract, curl and wither. The fungus is dying...

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Something is happening in the arid landscape. Water bubbles from an underground stream. Small desert flowers are blooming...

We hear the CHUG of a MOTOR. CAMERA WIDENS to show Toad cresting a dune in his buggy. He looks younger, hopeful -- recharged by the new world around him.

As he drives off we CRANE UP to see the skyline of the city beyond. The smog is gone and it's bathed in sunlight.

EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - CLOSE ON BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE - DAY

SHATTERING against the side of a vehicle.

WIDER ANGLE

reveals the scene. It's a block party in the middle of quintessential Brooklyn. Daisy has just smashed a bottle of domestic champagne against the side of a streamlined, custom-built, state-of-the-art plumbing truck.

The paint is hardly dry on the letters which read "Super Mario Brothers -- Brooklyn's Best!"

The crowd applauds Mario and Luigi. They include the Brooklyn Babes and their families, Daniella, and Eddie.

Mario holds up a hand to silence the applause.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIO

(modestly)

Look, all that happened was, there was a job to do and we did it.

More applause. Luigi wraps his arm around Daisy.

Mario notices two Japanese gentlemen on the sidewalk. They bow politely in his direction. He turns to Daniella.

MARIO

Who are those guys?

DANIELLA

They wanna talk to you. Very big contract, very big bucks.

MARIO

What are we talkin' here? Clogged drains? Slab leaks? Copper repipes?

DANIELLA

They want the rights to your life story.

MARIO

Plumbing is my life! Poppa was a plumber, I'm a plumber, my brother's a plumber.

The HORN sounds from the truck. Mario turns.

ANGLE ON IGGY AND SPIKE

They wear gleaming white overalls with the Super Mario Brothers logo. Iggy has the phone in his hand.

IGGY

Burst boiler, boss! Flatbush and Third!

MARIO

Tell 'em some other time! Emergency!

EXT. BROOKLYN AVENUE - DAY

TRACKING WITH the Rescue Rooter truck we saw earlier in Brooklyn. ZAP! WHAP! Another vehicle flashes past it!

INT. RESCUE ROOTER TRUCK - TRAVELLING - DAY

The driver is Doug. He reacts in dismay as he's left eating the dust of the other vehicle.

THROUGH the windshield we see its rear doors and the legend "Super Mario Brothers."

FADE OUT.

THE END