

UNCANNY COUNTY

"Wichita Starman"

Episode 2-J

By: Todd Faulkner

INTRO:

UNCANNY COUNTY THEME MUSIC

NARRATOR: You're riding alone on a moonlit, but starless night. You just missed your exit, and now there's only one way back home. So sit back, open your ears and hold on tight, because you're about to take a quick detour—through Uncanny County...

SCENE One:

SOUND: Crickets, cicadas - nighttime summer ambience.

SOUND: Fumbling with handset – DIAL TONE – rotary dial

SOUND: RINGING – someone picks up

KAREN (phone): Hello?

RUSS: Hey, it's me.

KAREN (phone): Russ, where the hell are you?

RUSS: Where do you think I am?

KAREN (phone): Calling from your handset, at the top of a telephone pole, in the middle of nowhere.

RUSS: Give the lady a cigar. (pronounced SEE-gar)

KAREN (phone): Did you forget?

RUSS: No, I wanted to get there, but there's -

KAREN (phone): Russ, Scottie don't even like baseball, he just does it for you.

RUSS: I said I'm sorry. That hailstorm really made a mess of things. Miles of line to go yet. I ain't close to done.

KAREN (phone): Ain't safe to work so late.

RUSS: Karen, don't tell me how to do my job. You want the checks, I gotta make the money.

KAREN (phone): It's just money.

RUSS: Yeah, well, you ain't a man.

KAREN (phone): Could you at least be on time Saturday morning? It's important to him.

RUSS: I will. And tell him I'll make it up to him.

KAREN (phone): Tell him your own damn self.

SCOTTIE (phone): Hi dad.

RUSS: Hey kiddo. Sorry I missed the game.

SCOTTIE (phone): It's ok. I almost caught a pop fly!

RUSS: Aw, Scottie, you can't be scared of the ball.

SCOTTIE: I ain't too scared.

RUSS: Promise me you'll try harder next time.

SCOTTIE (phone): I promise. Oh - when you pick me up, can I have my allowance? I did my chores.

KAREN (phone –off mic): That he did.

RUSS: Hmm. What is it you want to buy now?

SCOTTIE (phone): New issue of Famous Monsters –

RUSS: Scotty...

SCOTTIE (phone): It's a hundred page spectacular, and it's got EVERYTHING in it. Frankenstein, Wolfman –

RUSS: You shouldn't waste your money on stuff like –

SCOTTIE (phone): But dad, it's my allowance...

RUSS: Make you a deal. You make one catch at the next game, we'll talk about it.

SCOTTIE (phone): But dad -

RUSS: That's my deal. (beat) Put your mom back on.

SCOTTIE (phone): OK. Bye dad. I love you.

KAREN (phone): What?

RUSS: He ever gonna grow out of this monster phase?

KAREN (phone): You ever gonna grow out of sports? It's what he likes. Monsters, Spaceships, Bigfoot... It's harmless.

RUSS: You don't think it's strange?

KAREN (phone): I don't. And if you really want to make things up to him...

RUSS: I told him we'd see.

KAREN (phone): So no, then. (beat) He's having a hard time with all this.

RUSS: Yeah. Reckon he is.

KAREN (phone): Nice. Could you at least be on time Saturday?

SOUND: CLICK. Dial tone. He dials again, one ring, someone picks up.

JUDY (phone): This is dispatch, go ahead.

RUSS: Hey Judy, it's Russ. Checking in.

SOUND: a distant, otherworldly hum begins (softly)

JUDY (phone): You still on the clock? Charlie ain't gonna like it.

RUSS: Well, that's between me and – hang on – What the – Oh my god it's - !

SOUND: THE HUM GETS REALLY LOUD

JUDY (phone): What?

RUSS: (Scared noises) Holy Crap!

JUDY (phone): Russ?

SOUND: THE HUM GETS CLOSER –as Russ scrambles

RUSS: (SCREAMS AS HE FALLS) !

SOUND: Russ hits the ground with a THUMP

MUSIC: Theme music

NARRATOR: Summer, 1975. Don't worry, he's all right. But Russ Matheson's life is about to change in some very big ways. A county lineman, Russ spends his days - and often his nights - working on telephone lines, keeping other folks connected, while he slowly but surely drifts away from the ones he loves. But a strange encounter will send him off on a new journey – one that flies straight through the heart – of Uncanny County...

SCENE Two:

CONNIE (on TV): Sheriff James Rowland confirmed that the unnamed telephone lineman fell after he was startled by an unidentified flying object, the first sighting in this county in several months. We reached out to the county employee, but the Wichita Starman, as we've taken to calling him, declined to make a statement... Back to you, Steve.

SOUND: a DOOR OPENS

SOUND: Small group of applause and cheering (STARMAN! Etc.)

MAN 1: There he is!
WOMAN 1: You're famous!
TED: Hey, STARMAN!
JUDY: Smile!

SOUND: FLASH of a 70s era instant camera

RUSS: All right. Very funny, Ted. I get it. (beat) Thanks, Judy.
JUDY: (amused) Don't blame me, I ain't the one seeing flying saucers.

SOUND: She pulls out the picture from an old fashioned instant camera

JUDY: Anyhoo – you need to fill out a report – I highly recommend you stick to the part where you fell off of a telephone pole –.
RUSS: I'm fine.
JUDY: And Charlie wants to see you. In his office. Now.

SOUND: Footsteps, soft knock on the door.

SOUND: A desk fan drones

CHARLIE: Well, well. If it ain't the Wichita Starman.
RUSS: Hey, pop.

SOUND: DOOR CLOSES

CHARLIE: In here, my name is Charlie.

RUSS: The door is closed.

CHARLIE: Are you being smart?

RUSS: No sir. I am not being smart.

CHARLIE: Uh huh. So what in the hell is this?

RUSS: All right, Charlie, I was working late, -

CHARLIE: Too late.

RUSS: Probably. And I saw – something.

CHARLIE: Oh, I heard what you saw. (beat) Whole county heard. You're lucky Jim Rowland stopped them from using your name or you'd be out on the street.

RUSS: I didn't mean to–

CHARLIE: No? What did you mean? Huh? (beat) You work too late, fall asleep on the job ?

RUSS: I didn't fall asleep –

CHARLIE: Or, were *drinking* -

RUSS: I wasn't –

CHARLIE: -- and thought you saw a flying saucer!?!

RUSS: Sir. All due respect, I know what I saw –

CHARLIE: (snorts) Never could hold your damn liquor.

RUSS: Dad – Charlie, I wasn't drinking –

CHARLIE: You're a county employee. You spout a bunch of nonsense, you ain't just an embarrassment to me –

RUSS: I didn't mean to embarrass –

CHARLIE: YOU ARE AN EMBARRASSMENT TO THE WHOLE COUNTY!!! (beat) Flying saucers. You know who believes in flying saucers? Your boy. My grandson. Five years old –

RUSS: He's eight.

CHARLIE: And he still believes in flying saucers? Nice work.

RUSS: Dad –

CHARLIE: How about you? You still - you still wanna be a *jungle explorer*? No! I beat some sense into you. You just refuse to be a man.

RUSS: I'm twenty-six years old.

CHARLIE: And sleeping in your truck. Oh, I know. Grabbing cheap hotels on the rare weekends you see your boy. (snorts) What kind of man lets his wife throw him out of his own house?

RUSS: I thought it was a family tradition.

CHARLIE: That's different! Your mama's the one who left. Woman lost her damn mind after the change. And at least we held it together till after you were grown. Well, till we thought you were grown.

RUSS: I provide for my family. No one puts in more hours than I do –

CHARLIE: Everyone else gets done by quitting time --

RUSS: -- Maybe they ain't as thorough.

CHARLIE: There's that mouth again.

RUSS: I know I what I saw, and I –

CHARLIE: Hogwash. We're done here. Got it?

RUSS: Yes, sir.

CHARLIE: Good. (beat) Now, run over to Doc Hogan, he gives you the ok, I need you back out there. Responsibly. Normal hours, and no more of this nonsense. Got it?

RUSS: Yes sir.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS, CLOSES

SOUND: Footsteps. Office ambience.

JUDY: Yeeowch. You want me to get you a special cushion to sit on while that new one he tore you heals up...?

RUSS: Ain't the first time.

JUDY: Here, look at this great pic. It's going on the wall.

RUSS: I look like an idiot.

JUDY: Awww. A cute idiot.

RUSS: Thanks. (after a beat) Hey Judy? Could I borrow that camera?

MUSIC: TRANSITIONAL MUSIC

SCENE Three:

SOUND: NIGHTTIME SUMMER AMBIENCE

SOUND: Dial tone, Dialing

KAREN (phone): Hello?

RUSS: (surprised) Hey! Hey, Karen. I don't know if you -

KAREN (phone): Well hey there, Starman.

RUSS: Yeah. So – how's Scottie? Kids giving him a hard time?

KAREN (phone): About your UFO? Why would they? Didn't use your name on the TV (*pronounced TEE Vee*).

RUSS: Small town. People talk.

KAREN (phone): Russ, it's all gonna blow over.

RUSS: So you say.

SOUND: In the distance, a coyote howls

KAREN (phone): Oh Lord, Russ. You're back out there?

RUSS: Doc said I was fine, just shook up.

KAREN (phone): It's damn near ten o'clock. You ain't supposed to work so –

RUSS: Good thing I ain't working.

KAREN (phone): Even if you did see something, what makes you think they're coming back?

RUSS: I don't know.

KAREN (phone): Russ –

RUSS: I ain't gonna be a damn joke.

KAREN (phone): Russ, no one cares. Only one who cares is you..

RUSS: Karen, they put my picture on the wall. Riding a cartoon spaceship.

KAREN (phone): That's work. They ain't your friends. Ain't your family – well, Charlie, I guess –

RUSS: You don't believe me.

KAREN (phone): (beat) Well – not exactly.

RUSS: There you go.

KAREN (phone): So now you're gonna prove it.

RUSS: These things are real. And I'm the guy who found them. If I can prove it – it's a huge discovery! A big deal!

KAREN (phone): (beat) You know, when I said you should make a grand gesture, something like in the movies, I meant some flowers or maybe take me to a *nice* restaurant..

RUSS: This ain't about us. I mean, I do want to try – I never quit wanting to try...

KAREN (phone): Then do it. If you really want to try, I can't be the only one reaching out.

SCOTTIE (distant, through phone): Mama!

KAREN (phone): Oh hell, he's still awake. I gotta go.

RUSS: Hold on –

KAREN (phone): You hold on. To that damn pole. And if you do fall off again, please try to land on your ass this time.

SOUND: She hangs up, dial tone

RUSS: Karen, Karen! (beat) Dang it. Well, great. And now you're talking to yourself. Idiot. (beat) Oh, screw this.

SOUND: He starts to climb down

SOUND: Low hum of a spaceship

RUSS: Holy crap. Oh, come on, come on, come on...

SOUND: Weird electronic beeps

RUSS: Wait – can you – can you see me?

SOUND: More electronic BEEPS

RUSS: Hold still – I just. I. Want. To Take. Your Picture.

SOUND: Two electronic beeps that sound like “OK!”

RUSS: OH - Thank you. Um. Say “cheese!”

SOUND: ELECTRONIC “REEEEEEEEE”

SOUND: Camera FLASH

SOUND: The spaceship races away.

SOUND: Russ pulls out a picture and starts shaking it – peels the cover

RUSS: (exhales) I’ll be damned.

MUSIC: Transitional music into Montage

SCENE Four:

SOUND: NEWSROOM AMBIENCE, PHONE RING

RECEPTIONIST: *Lansdale Tribune*, please hold. May I help you?

RUSS: Hi, I'm Russ Matheson. Connie Ambrose sent me to see uh *-(reading)* Barbara Mackey?

SOUND: Footsteps up.

BARBARA: You must be the Starman.

RUSS: Thank you for seeing me.

BARBARA: *(not happy about it)* Mmm hmm. She thinks you're nuts. You called her at all hours of the night.

RUSS: She thought I was asking for a date.

BARBARA: Now that's funny. All right, Starman, we're about to lock the front section, so you got five minutes. Let's see it.

SOUND: Sets down PHOTO on table

BARBARA: *(Beat, then starts laughing)* Come on!

RUSS: It's right there.

BARBARA: What's right there? That could be anything! Looks like a hubcap. Or a plate.

RUSS: It's a – it's a saucer.

BARBARA: Or a Frisbee.

RUSS: It ain't no –

BARBARA: We're done. I do thank you – for the nice bottle of wine that Connie now owes me.

RUSS: Ma'am – is there someone else I could talk to? Maybe your boss – is he available?

BARBARA: No. He ain't. Now, if you'll excuse me, I've just lost a half page ad and I've got to fill it with something other than nonsense.

SOUND: Footsteps away

RUSS: A half-page ad? (*beat*) How much does that sort of
thing cost?

SOUND: UPBEAT GUITAR MUSIC BEGINS

SCENE Five: MONTAGE

MUSIC: UPBEAT GUITAR MUSIC CONTINUES

SOUND: RADIO DIAL and STATIC

DJ ONE: Did you see this morning's *Tribune*?

DJ TWO: How could I not see it? It's all anybody's talking about.

DJ ONE: Half Page ad with a message from the "Wichita Starman" saying "They're coming back. See for yourself – tonight." Along with a hand-drawn map.

DJ TWO: Signed The Wichita Starman, a.k.a. Russ Matheson.

DJ ONE: You think he really saw something?

DJ TWO: I hope so. Cause after everyone sees this, he's gonna wish he was on another planet.

SOUND: RADIO STATIC

SOUND: Opening newspaper

JUDY: (*reading*) "They're coming back. See for yourself – tonight." (*beat*) Oh my lord.

CHARLIE (OFF): Judy? You got my paper?

SOUND: Newspaper rustles

JUDY: Um. Hold on – (*hushed*) Ted – give me your coffee.

TED: But –

SOUND: Coffee cup spill.

JUDY: Oh! Clumsy me! I just spilled my coffee all over it.

SOUND: Judy wads up paper, throws it in trash.

CHARLIE (off): Dang it, Judy!

JUDY: I'll see if I can find another one on my lunch break.

SOUND: PHONE RINGS, she grabs it.

JUDY: Charlie Matheson's line. No. He's out. I don't know when he'll be back, I don't know everything. Bye!

SOUND: She hangs up.

CHARLIE (off): Who was that?

JUDY: Wrong number. *(beat, to herself)* Oh lord, this is gonna be a day.

SOUND: Door opening, BAR ambience, TV anchorman under (low)

RICH: Well hello stranger! Starting early today?

RUSS: None for me, Rich. I'm off the sauce. Just wanted to make sure you and the boys saw this.

SOUND: Drops paper on bar.

RICH: Seen it? Hell, you're on the TV!

ANCHOR (TV): *(as Rich turns up the volume)* ...that this is all some sort of an elaborate practical joke. But the question remains: who will be watching, and more importantly – what will they see? Coming up next *(trails off...)*

RICH: So you just lost your damn mind, then?

RUSS: Why don't you come out tonight and find out?

SOUND: ANALOG TV – STATIC, CHANNELS CHANGING

ANCHOR 2 (TV): That's him on your screen there. *(continues under following)* He's been a county lineman for five years, been chasing UFOs for - well, the past couple of days., I guess...

SCOTTIE: Mom. MOM!

KAREN: What, baby?

SCOTTIE: Dad's on the TV.

KAREN: Oh lord.

ANCHOR 2 (TV): Whatever happens, we'll bring you updates from our roving reporter Connie Ambrose, tonight at 10.

SOUND: TRUCK DRIVING

SOUND: RADIO STATIC

DJ TWO (radio): You actually think we're gonna see something, don't you?

DJ ONE (radio): Well - never say "never."

SOUND: He rolls down the window. CROWD NOISES get louder

RUSS: Well I'll be damned. *(beat)* Now where the hell am I gonna find a place to park?

MUSIC CONTINUES

SOUND: CROWD NOISE

CONNIE: *(over the crowd)* It's an unbelievable turnout tonight, hundreds, maybe a thousand people, and there is something in the air. It feels like anything could happen...

SOUND: TRUCK DOOR opens, A couple people cheer & applaud

RUSS: *(a little humbled)* Hey, Hey there everyone...

SOUND: TRUCK DOOR closes,

TED: *(from a distance)* Rock and roll, Starman!

RUSS: *(shouting)* Rock and roll, Ted!

SOUND: Applause, cheers

JUDY: *(from a distance)* Russ – Russ! We really gonna see those things?

RUSS: *(shouting)* You just stay tuned, there Judy!.

SOUND: More cheers, a woman shouts "WE LOVE YOU!"

MUSIC CONTINUES

CONNIE: I see that Russ Matheson, our very own Wichita Starman has arrived – turn the camera over there –

SOUND: Russ starts to climb the telephone pole

CONNIE: There he goes, up to the top of that telephone pole – I
 assume for a better vantage point – and now – well,
 now I guess we wait.

MUSIC ENDS on a bright chord.

Cross fade to

SCENE Six:

SOUND: NIGHTTIME SUMMER AMBIENCE, CICADAS, CRICKETS

SOUND: CROWD NOISES – they're getting restless.

RUSS: Come on, come on, don't let me down.

SOUND: Russ fumbles for a tiny radio, flicks the switch

DJ ONE (radio): Well we're almost to midnight, and still – nothing.

DJ TWO (radio): Well, unless you count blood lust.

DJ ONE (radio): Yeah, this crowd is getting ugly. Well, the ones who are still here.

MAN 1: *(from a distance)* Hey Dumbass! Thanks for wasting my Friday night!

RUSS: *(quietly)* Oh damn it.... No, no, no, - no no no no no no no...

SOUND: People laugh, and jeer – they're getting rowdy.

WOMAN 1: *(from a distance)* SCREW THIS NONSENSE!

DJ ONE (radio): And it looks like that's it. Folks are starting to bug out.

DJ TWO (radio): Why the heck are we still here?

DJ ONE (radio): You're the one who wanted to –

DJ TWO (radio): Don't blame this on me...

SOUND: He switches the radio off, and climbs down quickly.

RUSS: No, hang on – Wait - WAIT!

SOUND: He hits the ground. Footsteps.

MAN 2: *(from a distance)* SCREW YOU, DUMBASS!

RUSS: Hey! Calm down, everybody – gonna have to wait!

WOMAN 2: *(from a distance)* Oh, the hell with this!

SOUND: Crowd leaving. Car doors. Cars starting, driving away. Car horns.

RUSS: Ted – Judy where are you - ?

JUDY: I'm tiiiiired.

RUSS: No...

MAN 4: Thanks a lot, jackass.

RUSS: No, no, no - NO! Y'all gotta trust me! Maybe – I don't know, maybe they're shy - maybe there's too many of us – look, look if some of y'all come back tomorrow.

SOUND: LAUGHTER, “Knock it off” “Get Out of here” You have got to be kidding!”

MAN 5: SHOW'S OVER FOLKS! LET'S GO HOME!

WOMAN 2: It's all a big joke –

RUSS: It ain't no joke –

VOICE: Just like RUSS.

SOUND: struggling through crowd

RUSS: You take that back. TAKE IT BACK!!

ANOTHER VOICE: Or what?

RUSS: Or THIS

SOUND: SMACK of a PUNCH

ANOTHER VOICE: Ow! God damn it!

VOICE: Grab him –

SOUND: A fight breaks out. Rowdy cheers.

SOUND: Sirens.

SCENE Seven: JAIL

SOUND: DOOR CREAKS open. FOOTSTEPS.

DUNCAN: Here he is. I'll go get his personal effects.
(*pronounced E-fex*)

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS away

KAREN: (*light, but admonishing*) You're late.

RUSS: Reckon I am. Sorry kiddo.

SCOTTIE: That's ok. We saw you on the TV. (TEE vee)

RUSS: Was it as bad as I think?

KAREN: Probably a bit worse.

RUSS: Yeah.

SCOTTIE: Grampa Charlie called!

RUSS: Did he? (*to Karen*) I'm fired, right?

KAREN: He wants the keys to your truck on his desk first thing Monday.

RUSS: (*chuckles*) Guess the old man has a heart after all, letting me hang onto it for two whole days...

KAREN: It's just 'cause he wants you to clean it out real good.

RUSS: That sounds right.

SOUND: Creak of the bedsprings in the cell cot as Russ RISES.

KAREN: (*beat*) So what now?

RUSS: Find another job, I guess.

KAREN: I mean about the –

RUSS: Ain't nothing else. I was a fool. I imagined I'd seen something cause I wanted to see something and I went off acting like a jackass until I turned into one. What now? I - We don't talk about it. Anybody asks, anybody brings it up, the whole thing was a big joke. A big damn joke. Just like me.

KAREN: You're not a joke, hon. *(beat)* At least not a funny one... *(beat)* That was supposed to be a joke.

RUSS: Mmm hmm.

SOUND: RUSTLE as Scottie pulls a magazine out of his backpack

SCOTTIE: Here, dad. I got you something...

SOUND: Scottie hands him the magazine.

RUSS: What's this?

SCOTTIE: It's a magazine about UFOs –

RUSS: *UFO Monthly?*

SOUND: Russ opens the magazine.

RUSS: This supposed to be a joke? Cause it ain't goddamn funny.

SOUND: Russ throws the magazine across the cell.

SCOTTIE: I – I got it for you because –

RUSS: Oh I know why you got it. Ha, ha. Kick me while I'm down why don't you?!?

KAREN: Russ –

RUSS: Eight years old and you're one upping your old man, huh? You ever learn to catch a god-damned baseball?

SCOTTIE: Dad?

RUSS: No! And you probably never will, cause you're just a little coward!

SOUND: Scottie starts to cry.

RUSS: OH! Here he goes!

KAREN: That's enough –

RUSS: Don't you cry. Don't you dare cry. You want to act like a man, you take the consequences like a –

KAREN: ENOUGH!!!

SOUND: Scottie runs away, upset

KAREN: Scottie, Scottie!

RUSS: Don't you take his side!

KAREN: His side? He's eight years old!

RUSS: Yeah? And when I was eight years old –

KAREN: I don't CARE, Russ. I don't care. *(beat)* Your bail's paid. You're free. Just – stay the hell away from us.

RUSS: You think you're better off without me...

KAREN: I don't THINK it, Russ *(as she goes)* Scottie – Scottie!

SOUND: She walks away.

MUSIC: TRANSITIONAL Music

SCENE Eight:

SOUND: TRUCK DRIVING

SOUND: Truck PULLS OVER, PARKS

SOUND: OUTDOOR AMBIENCE, CRICKETS, CICADAS

RUSS: I'm back! Did you miss me...? Or is this a big joke?
(beat) IS THIS A DANG JOKE?!? CAUSE IF IT IS,
YOU GOT ME REAL GOOD!!!

SOUND: Russ sits down heavily

RUSS: Ahhh. I hope you're happy. I hope you're god damn
happy. (beat) If y'all are up there – you're cowards.
BUNCH OF COWARDS!!! Why don't you come on
down here and face me like a man!?!? COME ON! I
DARE YOU! I DOUBLE dare ya. (beat) WHERE ARE
YOU?!?!?

SOUND: SAUCER SOARS in quickly

RUSS: Aw hell.

SOUND: New sound – TRACTOR BEAM

RUSS: Hey, HEY! Let go of me, put me down! How the hell
are you - ? (struggles) Let me – let me gooooo
(screams)

SOUND: He is BEAMED into the ship

SOUND: Spaceship ambience

RUSS: Holy crap.

ALIEN 2: The colloquialism is unfamiliar. Explain.

RUSS: It's uh – where am I?

ALIEN 1: Onboard the vehicle.

ALIEN 2: You requested what you call a "face to face". "Faces"
are a foreign concept – but the ship's projectors have
created facsimiles that are hopefully acceptable.

RUSS: You did see me. You – you been watching me?

ALIEN 2: For some time.

ALIEN 1: You, Russ Matheson, are a candidate for interstellar exploration.

ALIEN 2: Of surveyed humans, you alone have the strength required to explore the stars.

ALIEN 1: The strength to be alone. To reject the needs of others.

RUSS: Hang on, I don't –

ALIEN 1: The vehicle's systems can support only one human. You will be alone.

RUSS: *(a little sadly)* Don't sound so bad.

ALIEN 2: And colloquially it is what you would call a "one way ticket".

RUSS: You mean it's gonna kill me?

ALIEN 2: Novas no! The ship's biological systems will keep you in peak health for all time.

ALIEN 1: Literally.

RUSS: I'll live forever?

ALIEN 1: Perhaps.

RUSS: Can I come back?

ALIEN 2: Yes. And No.

RUSS: What?

ALIEN 1: Time will travel far faster on earth than it will for you.

ALIEN 2: By the time you reach your first interstellar destination, everyone and everything you have ever known will be long dead and gone.

RUSS: Everything...?

ALIEN 1: A large decision, even for one with such minimal planetary ties. One who is so – as you put it – "manly."

ALIEN 2: One must decide by the time your sun again crosses
your horizon.

ALIEN 1: Sunset, in your vernacular. The ship will arrive at
sunset.

ALIEN 2: Tardiness is not allowed.

SOUND: A few BEEPS as the aliens push buttons

ALIEN 1: Prepare for the adventure of –

SOUND: A couple more buttons are pushed

ALIEN 1: well – many lifetimes.

SOUND: He is BEAMED back down

SOUND: Night ambience, crickets/cicadas

RUSS: Wow.

SCENE Nine:

SOUND: SUMMER EVENING AMBIENCE (birds)

SOUND: DOORBELL. FOOTSTEPS up, DOOR OPENS

KAREN: I told you to stay away.

RUSS: I just want to see my boy.

KAREN: No.

RUSS: Karen.

KAREN: No.

RUSS: Five minutes.

KAREN: It's suppertime. Besides, he don't want to see you.

RUSS: Maybe he don't get a vote.

KAREN: He does get a vote, and I get a vote and you're outvoted!

RUSS: Fine. *(beat)* Will you at least give him something for me?

KAREN: What is it?

SOUND: A rustle as he hands her a magazine

KAREN: *Famous Monsters* magazine.

RUSS: Got him a three-year subscription. Longest one I could buy.

KAREN: I'll see that he gets it. *(beat)* Russ, are you ok?

RUSS: Yeah. Yeah, I just – I gotta go. Somewhere to be.

KAREN: Give him some time to cool off. Couple days.

RUSS: Yeah. Time to cool off. Reckon I can do that.

SOUND: Door closes

MUSIC: TRANSITIONAL MUSIC

SCENE Ten:

MUSIC CONTINUES

SOUND: Nighttime ambience

SOUND: Truck drives along

SOUND: Truck slows, stops. Idles, then turns off.

RUSS: (cries quietly)

SOUND: Truck starts. Drives away

MUSIC: Last chord CROSS FADES INTO

SCENE Eleven:

SOUND: Spaceship Drone

ALIEN 1: The time for departure has arrived.

ALIEN 2: The instructions to the earth-man were clear.

ALIEN 1: And yet, he has not returned. Disappointing.

ALIEN 2: His ties to this planet must have been stronger than he believed.

ALIEN 1: The earth-man is weak. He cannot stand alone.

ALIEN 2: Perhaps. Although...

ALIEN 1: Although?

ALIEN 2: Premise: You and I do not travel alone. You and I have each other.

ALIEN 1: I do not understand.

ALIEN 2: We occupy the same vehicle. We converse. We explore. We -

ALIEN 1: “We?” what is “we?”

ALIEN 2: We. You and I. Together, we are we. We have each other. Do you understand?

ALIEN 1: I believe you have picked up a colloquialism from the earth-man.

ALIEN 2: Perhaps.

ALIEN 1: Upon return to Xanthizon 12, we should get that checked out. (beat) I just said it, didn't I.

ALIEN 2: You did. I believe that means we had “a moment.”

ALIEN 1: And now I observe that an appendage of yours is holding an appendage of mine. Query: Why?

ALIEN 2: Answer: Uncertain. It is a behavior I have observed during our visit here. I will stop if you –

ALIEN 1: No, no. It is pleasurable. We like it. Don't we?

ALIEN 2: We do.

SOUND: Ship starts to power up.

ALIEN 1: We should go now. We should. Go, I mean. We should –

ALIEN 2: Now you're just being annoying.

ALIEN 1: Apologies.

SOUND: DOOR slides shut, ship RACES away.

SCENE Twelve:

SOUND: SPACESHIP FLIES AWAY

SCOTTIE: Whoa...

RUSS: I know.

SCOTTIE: Yeah, but - damn. (beat) Oh. Sorry – language.

RUSS: It's all right. I believe a sight like that deserves a little language.

SCOTTIE: They really wanted you to go with them?

RUSS: They did.

SCOTTIE: Why didn't you go?

RUSS: Cause I never would have seen you again. And that I could not do.

SCOTTIE: I can't believe they're really real. I mean – I believed you, but –

RUSS: I know it was hard to believe. It's OK.

SCOTTIE: Dad, seriously -I believed you. That's why I got you the magazine. So you'd know there's other folks like you.. So you'd know you're not alone.

SOUND: UPBEAT Acoustic Guitar music begins

RUSS: Come here.

SOUND: They hug

SCOTTIE: I love you, dad.

RUSS: I love you, son.

MUSIC: Acoustic Guitar Continues

NARRATOR: Russ Matheson will never travel to another planet, he'll never meet another alien, and he'll never get to be a jungle explorer. But with Scottie's hand now firmly in his, Russ is finally ready to embark on the adventure of his life. And now he's armed with the knowledge that he has the power to do things a different way, a kinder way, and see things through the eyes of a child who just happens to be fortunate enough to live... in Uncanny County