
Snake Plissken Timeline

Timeline for Snake Plissken and the Escape Films - Compiled by Sylvia "Swan" Stevens

My timeline is consistent with Carpenter's history but I have added details from interviews, from the book, scripts, other 'canon' sources, fleshed out such things as the Summer wars, etc. By 'canon' I mean that the statement was either uttered or written by John Carpenter, Debra Hill, or Kurt Russell in script or interview or recorded in the films or the book.

Canon details include the dates and occurrences mentioned in EFLA and EFNY, details of the loss of Snake's eye, the events of Cleveland and Kansas City and the Leningrad Ruse. Extrapolations include precise details of Cleveland and Kansas City dates of Snake's birth and graduations, enlistment and injuries, the abdominal wound and Taylor's presence in Kansas City. It does not contain information from the newly released filmed bank robbery scene as I have not yet seen it.

On a parenthetical note: The Purple Heart is NOT a medal for bravery, it is a medal obtained when a person is wounded in the line of duty. The "decorated by the President" would indicate the Congressional Medal of Honor and Carpenter is wrong. Snake cannot be "the youngest man ever decorated" because that honor is already taken historically by a 14 year old drummer boy in (IIRC) the Civil War or the Spanish American war. Also disregarded is the line in EFLA "S.D. "Bob" Plissken!" spoken by the USPF officer. It occurs NOWHERE else and is unsupported by ANY other evidence. It is either another alias or it is an error in continuity.

This is a timeline created by using several sources, the scripts of EFNY and EFLA, the book Escape From New York, by Mike McQuay, the films, themselves, the comics and deduction. Where discrepancies existed, I chose the most logical alternative, to reconcile them.

For example: Since Kurt Russell is about thirty when EFNY is filmed, it was logical to say that Snake Plissken was also thirty years old. In fact, that placed his birth date in an almost mythical way in 1967, March (Russell's month) and I have postulated his CONCEPTION on June 6 1966 (6/6/66) fulfilling the Beast imagery at the end of EFLA!

Thus, college dates, service dates and Leningrad dating fell into a narrow range and were placed for good effect. Other dates are "hard" dates, written in book or script, such as the date of EFNY, Oct 21-23

Without further ado...

Things which are canon are marked by **(C)**, extrapolation by **(E)**

1967:

March 3: S.D. Plissken born. (E) (not Official)

1974:

September: S.D. Plissken begins grade school. (E)

1986:

June: S.D. Plissken graduates high school

Sept: Enters college. (E)

1987:

(circa) War breaks out between America and Russia. Starts in Middle East, small, and builds. Russians launch massive gas attacks against US, New York City one of first hit. Massive 'gas craziness' breaks out, Plissken still in college. (Book lists him as "hot shot college boy") (All C)

1988:

New York uninhabitable. US Government turns it into maximum security prison and puts "crazies" inside. Crime rate quadruples, due to gas. (C) S.D. Plissken joins Army commissioned as Lieutenant. For him to do so indicates either the necessity of wartime or that he was in R.O.T.C. or military high school as a teen. (ES) He gets tattoo and nickname "Snake" around this time. (E) Snake turns 21, an adult.

1989:

United States Police Force formed to handle the onslaught of crazies and criminals. They are placed in charge of the NY Max penitentiary. (C) S.D. Plissken racking up incredible record as glider pilot and leader of Black Light Squadron. Best on Russian Front and becoming famous and a role model to Americans, war hero, earns first Purple Heart over Siberia due to injuries received in combat. (All C)

1990:

Early Fall (C), perhaps September: Plissken's parents taken hostage by 'gas crazy'. Newly formed USPF moves in with flame throwers and simply murder everyone in the household, (C) S.D. Plissken not informed due to military security. (C)

Fall/October: Leningrad Ruse. Snake and squadron fly in over Russian Supply point Leningrad. They are not told by the mysterious "Captain Berrigan" (C) that this is a suicide mission. During the hopeless battle, Lt. Plissken's left goggle cracks and gas begins damage to his eye. (C) He manages to call retreat and when the gliders land, back in Helsinki, only he and Sgt. William "Bill" Taylor are left. (C) Taylor and Snake hospitalized. Snake loses use of left eye and is given black eye patch to protect the damaged eye from light, which is painful due to the paralyzed iris. (EC)

November: Taylor visits Snake in hospital, tells him of the trick. Snake begins to turn away from society. He is still unaware of the death of his parents. (C)

December: President gives S.D. Plissken the Congressional Medal of Honor and his second Purple Heart. (EC) Plissken throws the medals away and resigns from the Army. About this time Hauk also resigns from the service, leaving his medals behind. (C)

1991:

January: Snake returns home, a civilian, to find that his parents have been killed and all their possessions and money have been taken by IRS for taxes and "restitution". House burned out, and parents buried in pauper's grave. "Snake" Plissken snaps completely. He blows up a US Government vehicle and never looks back on his old life. (All C)

Snake Plissken's career is at first just sabotage and vengeance, but he turns to crime (bank robbery) directed at FEDERAL targets, not civilian (E), to support himself and Bill Taylor who is with him,(EC) and disabled with a severe knee injury and limp. Snake takes the risks, Taylor is backup. They stay together, Snake protecting Taylor, his last and only friend. (EC)

1992:

Snake comes to the attention of the USPF as his crime career picks up speed. He is as talented and effective as a criminal, a bank robber, as he was a Lieutenant.

He teams up with Fresno Bob and Harold "Brain" Helman.(EC)

1993:

Snake Plissken, "Fresno" Bob (last name unknown) and possibly Bill Taylor as remote backup, rob bank in Kansas City. (C) Harold Helman drives getaway car. Helman deserts them, leaving Snake and Bob to their fate. (EC) Snake escapes, but "Fresno" Bob is caught and killed by USPF by being skinned alive. (C) Snake indicates in EFNy that he witnessed it (possibly from hiding). Snake possibly flees with Taylor.

1997:

Oct 13-14: Marrs, an accomplice of Snake's, plants a computer virus into the databases of the "Dead Presidents Casino" in Atlantic City to facilitate a planned heist by Marrs and Plissken, Deimos, Phobos (and possibly Taylor) of the Kennedy death car which is on display there in two weeks' time. (Comic)

Oct 21: Snake robs Denver Federal Reserve Depository, gets away with several billion dollars in credit discs. Meets with Taylor in Atlanta hummer station several hours later and they travel on the hummer (underground tube-train) to San Francisco. This is the famous missing "Bank Robbery" scene in EFNy. (All C)

Oct 22, 4:00 AM Pacific Time (C): They are ambushed in the hummer station by USPF. Taylor is shot and Snake tries to go back for him, tries to talk him into giving up to save his life. Taylor refuses to surrender. William Taylor is killed. Snake surrenders, grieving. NOTE that he could have left Taylor to his fate, but he did not. This conflicts with the statement that Snake has no compassion. When Taylor dies, a large part of Snake's humanity dies with him! Snake is 30 years old. (All C)

Oct 23, 7:00: President Harker's jet crash lands in New York Max. (C)

Oct 23, 7:45 PM: Snake arrives at New York Maximum Security Penitentiary.

Events of **Escape From New York** occur. (C)

Oct 24 Evening: S.D. Plissken escapes, is pardoned, and the Hartford Summit is destroyed by the substitute tape Plissken gave the President. (C)

Oct 25th-27th Snake drives down New Jersey Turnpike to Atlantic City to the Snake Pit Bar where he meets with Marrs to discuss planned heist. Instead, Deimos and Phobos attack him and Snake is dropped into the ocean in a crab cage by Marrs, Deimos and Phobos so that they may take the Presidential death car themselves the next evening. (Comic)

Oct 27-?: Snake escapes the crab cage, continues the mission, successfully stealing the Presidential death car.

President Harker's career is destroyed and he remains in office a 'lame duck' president. Conservative factions grow more restive. Harker is indicted in a multitude of scandals and finally, resigns in favor of his vice president. (ES)

1998: (circa)

War between US and Russia simply 'peters out' because both sides are financially ruined. American economy has been all but destroyed by the long war. (EC) Moral chaos descends on the land. (C)

1998:

Forces hostile to the United States begin encroachment, growing strong in the climate of exhaustion and moral decay. Third World countries begin hostilities, encouraged by the US' weakened borders. Snake Plissken lays low, keeping out of sight. (C)

1998:

Breakdown of the US Justice System. (EC) United States Police force becomes substitute Justice System, replacing courts and other police forces. (E) (This removes script inaccuracy which gives USPF two formation dates!) USPF doubles in size, country effectively under martial law.(C)

1999:

Population of Los Angeles reaches 48 million. (C) Most are from Third World countries or very poor. A new candidate for President arises, predicting disaster for the California city. He runs on a morality ticket, decrying the inefficiencies of the previous (Harker's) system. (C)

2000:

Aug 23, 12:59 PDT(C): Los Angeles destroyed by major earthquake. Presidential candidate claims prophecy. Election becomes merely a formality. (and very probably illegally 'fixed') (S) In November he is elected by landslide. Constitution is swept away as President becomes President-For-Life. Old administration destroyed. (All C)

2001:

January: First (E) order by new President (Directive 17) is to wall off Los Angeles and turn it into a deportation center.(C) With New York Max in the East and Los Angeles in the West (E we don't know if NY Max still exists), America becomes a totalitarian country, ruled by theocracy. Tobacco, red meat, fur coats, all sorts of immoralities is made illegal. (C) Snake again becomes active in sabotage and terrorism. Snake kidnaps bank president, but releases him, unharmed. (C)

2003:

Possibly following the murder of an IRS agent, Snake Plissken named "Most Wanted" by USPF. His picture is on the Police Channel and Wanted Posters. (EC)

2004-2009:

Sometime in here, Snake teams up with Texas Mike and Carjack Malone. (EC)

2007:

Snake turns 40

2009:

In Cleveland, Snake, Carjack Malone, and Texas Mike O'Shay commit unspecified action.(C) Carjack turns Snake in and runs out on him(EC), leaving Texas Mike and Snake at the mercy of the USPF. Carjack is captured anyway and sent to LA. Mike possibly killed but Snake escapes in a fashion that has USPF utterly baffled (hence Malloy's comment "We thought we HAD you...How'd you DO that?!"). Snake is possibly badly injured, shot in lower abdomen (scars in EFLA). (EC)

2010-2013:

Snake goes underground and drops from sight. (C) People lose interest. He is convicted, in absentia, of "27 moral crimes". (C)

2013:

Aug/Sept: Snake in New Vegas Thailand (? Script says off coast of Oregon *and* Thailand). Since Snake later refers to "Bangkok Rules" I say it's Thailand!. Gunfighting for profit. He is captured by USPF and held for two weeks. (C- EFLA Script) First week in September: Utopia, President's daughter, steals prototype satellite activation device and hijacks Air Force Three, going into Los Angeles. She meets with Cuervo Jones. (C) Snake is held by USPF, interrogated, beaten, and tortured. (C - EFLA Script)

Mid September: Snake sent to Los Angeles for deportation. (C)

Events of **Escape From LA** occur. (C)

Mid September, Snake Plissken activates Sword of Damocles Satellites and ends technology(C). Invading forces sweep in and take country(E). Snake Plissken walks away. He is 46 years old.

©2003-2004
Matt Huston.
Original
contents of
this page
may not be
used,
published or
reproduced
without the
written
permission of
Matt Huston.
Escape from
New York
and Escape
from LA
content are
copyright of
their
respectful
owners.
They're used
only for
public and
publicity
purposes for
the films.