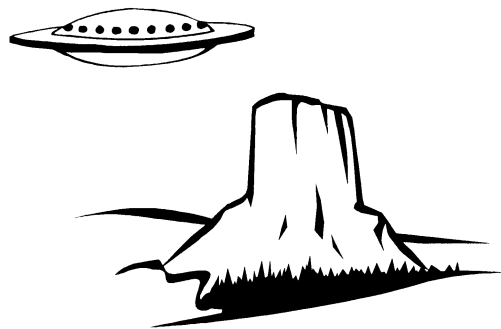


CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND



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Directed by
Stephen Spielberg

REVISED

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CREDITS ON BLACK - VERY FAST - THEN BLACK BECOMES NIGHT

1 CLOSE - DOG BARKING - NIGHT 1

2 THE SUBURBIA MODERNS 2

A cluster of pretty homes, two car garages, medallion living. The irate NOISE of what must be every dog in the neighborhood brings out a sleepy couple. A man clods out of his house with a twelve gauge trap shotgun, his wife on his heels. He aims the gun skyward.

WIFE
Don't hit anything.

HUSBAND
Plug your ears.

BLAM! BLAM!

The dogs stop barking. Everything is still. Across the street about a dozen neighbors burst into happy applause. The man smiles and takes a big bow. The dogs start barking all over again.

WIFE
I'm calling the cops.

CUT TO:

3 CLOSE - BARRY GUILER - NIGHT INTERIOR 3

Four year old Barry is having a restless night. A gentle breeze flares his bangs. A WHIRRING SOUND interrupts this. Little Barry's eyes come open as a soft red glow plays on his face.

WHAT HE SEES

On the nightstand next to his bed, one of Barry's battery toys has come on. It is a Frankenstein monster who raises his hands as if to strike when its pants fall down and its face blushes bright red.

Barry sits up in bed and looks around him.

THE BEDROOM

All of his battery toys are working in different places around the room. Tank, rocket ship, police car, 747, drunk chugging brew.

PHONOGRAPH - CLOSE

Playing a scratchy "Sesame Street" record softly.

Barry gets out of bed and looks out the window. In the distance the SOUND of barking dogs. The backyard is dark and utterly still.

4 INTERIOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT 4

The bedroom is at the far end of the hallway. Barry moves forward, curiously. He turns into the living area.

5 INTERIOR - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 5

This room is dark, save a sixty watt blue nightlight. Something, however, is out of place. All the windows are open and night is breathing through the laced curtains. Four year old Barry looks again

THE FRONT DOOR IS WIDE OPEN - THE PORCH LIGHT IS SPILLING IN.

SOUND - O.S. - RATTLE

CLOSE - BARRY

He turns ready for fun. Leaves here and

INTERIOR - THE KITCHEN - NIGHT 6

A SLOW PAN shows Barry the room. Once again the windows are open and the room is breezy. The backdoor is ajar and rattling against the safety chain. PAN DOWN to show the dog door. It is completely off its hinges and lying on the floor.

CLOSE - BARRY

He looks up and reacts ... a weak light opens across the little boy's face.

ANGLE - REFRIGERATOR

The door is swinging open. There is foodstuffs in a messy pile around the icebox door.

CLOSE - BARRY

He looks in another direction and is suddenly startled. Fear is just as suddenly replaced with a kind of shy playfulness. Barry giggles and looks away ... he turns back and laughs, slaps his side, turns away and looks back again ... bursts out laughing. A game is being played out. Little Barry rocks back and forth like a chimpanzee as if imitating what he is watching. He covers his eyes and peek-a-boos. He spins on his bare heels. He cocks his head to one side and rotates it in slow sensuous movements. He is having a wonderful time. An interior

wind begins moving Barry's clothes.

7 INTERIOR - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

7

JILLIAN GUILER, Barry's mother, is asleep in the next room. Jillian has had the flu and her bed is in a state of mild disarray. The condition of the rest of the bedroom, however, is as ransacked as that of a sloppy six year old's. Everything is everywhere but where it should be. Nothing has its place here. The same wind enters her room and blows around some featherweight clutter. The bedside table is chaotic with pills, nasal sprays, half a sandwich and a can of Coke. A few magazines and a couple of half finished charcoal sketches are by the side of the bed. Jillian is under the covers but she is still wearing a robe. The television set is on ... giving us the impression that she fell asleep before she intended. We HEAR LAUGHTER from the TV set a couple of times, a sitcom is on. During a lull in the hilarity we HEAR BARRY'S LAUGHTER OFF CAMERA. This immediately wakes Jillian up. She turns and looks at the bedside clock: "10:40 PM".

8 OUT THE WINDOW

8

Little Barry is running off in the night. He is laughing and happy .. like he's chasing after a puppy. Just as he disappears over a hill, Jillian looks out the window and sees nothing.

CLOSE - JILLIAN

9

She turns and walks to Barry's room. It's empty. She yells:

JILLIAN

Barry!

She grabs her coat and some kleenex and goes rushing out of the room to the front yard. Still no Barry. The rush of anxiety floods. She doesn't know where to look first.

CUT TO:

This is the family room of a suburban house that has been confiscated and made into a workroom that looks more like a hobby room run by the Salvation Army. Mechanized and electrical inventions rot half-forgotten on the ceiling and walls. There are enough adult toys lying around to rob a child of his childhood. The most prominent thing in the room is an HO gauge railroad layout on a large table. The tracks run through very elaborate Tryolean terrain with lots of mountains and lakes. ROY NEARY and his eight year old son, BRAD, sit side by side. Roy is sculpting miniature terrain and helping Brad with his math all at the same time. A stack of fourth grade arithmetic sits forgotten in the center of things. TOBY NEARY, six and a devil, zips into the room angry.

TOBY

You took my luminous paint.

NEARY

I did not.

TOBY

I don't steal stuff of yours.

Brad throws down his pencil.

BRAD

I hate arithmetic.

NEARY

You're not listening to me. Math is like learning a new language.

BRAD

I like English.

NEARY

You're not trying hard enough.

BRAD

Train engineers don't need arithmetic.

NEARY

You wanna bet? Say your train has five cars on it. And the stationmaster says add three more. How many cars total do you leave the station with?

Brad produces his father's pocket calculator and waves it around.

BRAD

It doesn't matter cause I'll have one of these.

NEARY

(takes calculator and picks
up toy boxcar)

Forget the calculator. Okay! Now this
boxcar here is fifty feet long. You stop
the train. Okay. Now, half of this boxcar
is across a switch. How many feet do you
move the train forward to clear the switch?

BRAD

(thinks a moment)

Hundred feet.

NEARY

(exhausted)

No, Brad ...

BRAD

Yes, Dad ... I gotta be real far away from
the switch in case there's another train
coming.

NEARY

Forget that. You don't move the train.
Alright? And another train comes along
and plows right into half of that fifty
foot boxcar. How much of that fifty foot
boxcar is left after the wreck?

BRAD

(really takes a moment
to think)

It doesn't matter cause everybody'd be
dead then.

RONNIE NEARY moves into the room with her youngest daughter, SYLVIA in
her arms. She has obviously heard part of this.

RONNIE

If there are seven days in a week. And
your Mother is home all seven of them.
How many days is left to your Mother?

TOBY

Zero!

BRAD

Engineers don't need arithmetic.

RONNIE

When you're old enough to be an engineer
everything will be electric push buttons
and run by Amtrac.

NEARY

He's eight years old. Let him want to be whatever he wants.

RONNIE

I feel like Toby's hamster. I've run out of things to do. Can't you come out and play?

NEARY

Watch this.

Neary throws a switch. A little sailboat motors toward a drawbridge as the train approaches the same bridge. Automatically, the train stops ... the bridge raises ... the boat passes under one-two-three. Neary is very pleased.

RONNIE

It'll be in the basement in two weeks along with the Auto-Golf, the Frisbee Throw, The Electric Toilet, the wife, the three children ... Jesus, can't we do something. I'm serving time in this house. It's not healthy.

TOBY

(insistent to Ronnie)
He took my luminous paints.

NEARY

C'mon, Tobe ... knock it off.

TOBY

He took all the cars. All the cars in the garage.

NEARY

(to Ronnie)
What's he talking about?

RONNIE

(in a semi-whisper)
Roy, I don't want everybody in the neighborhood knowing we're home again on a Saturday night. So, I moved the Utility Van and the Chevy wagon around to the back.

NEARY

We got out last weekend.

RONNIE

Walking across the street to the Taylor's is not getting out of the house!

Ronnie turns on the television and flicks through the channels. Suddenly, she is up and pacing again with her eyes closed.

RONNIE

Wanna see a trick? I can walk through every room with my eyes closed and find the drawers, turn on the lights, feed the cat and put out the trash. It's not healthy.

Ronnie bumps into the train set and Sylvia laughs. She watches Neary at work and casually rubs a hand through his hair. She smiles in spite of herself.

RONNIE

A grown man.

NEARY

I never had one of these when I was a kid.

RONNIE

Listen, it's better than the worm ranch you had in here.

(clapping her hands
at the kids)

To bed you guys.

TOBY

No, wait. Dad said we could finish watching the "Ten Commandments".

Across the room the telephone rings and Ronnie moves over to it.

RONNIE

(calling back at Roy)

That picture is four hours long.

(into phone)

Hello. Oh, Hi Earl.

NEARY

(almost to himself)

I told them they could only watch five of the Commandments.

RONNIE

(into phone)

I can't relay all that. You better talk to him, Roy, Earl's on.

Roy Neary pulls himself up and begins gingerly picking his way across the HO set to the phone.

RONNIE

(into phone)

He'll be here. He's crossing the Alps.

Roy gives her a silent, sarcastic "ha,ha" and gets the phone. Ronnie reverses her direction and snuggles up to Roy kissing his ear. Sylvia kisses his cheek and they take turns being affectionate while Roy listens.

EARL JACKSON

I got a call from the Load Dispatcher.
There's a drain on the primary voltage.
They've lost half a bank of transformers
at the Gilmore sub-station. It's gonna
hit the residentials pretty soon so put
on your pants while you've still got the
light.

"CLICK". Roy stands with the buzzing phone, the crying kid, the noisy train. It is at this precise moment that all the lights go out and the train winds down leaving a stunned room and ...

The entire room is blackened except for the little blue lakes on the train layout that glow green in the dark ...

TOBY

(outraged)

I told you he stole my luminous paints!

11 INTERIOR - APARTMENT BUILDING CORRIDOR - NIGHT

11

GRIMSBY, a no-nonsense type, leaves his apartment in a great rush carrying his hard hat. He confronts the elevators, pushes a button, jams it a couple of times extra even though the elevator arrives almost immediately. The doors open and Grimsby steps in. He is immediately taken aback by the presence of a lady in the elevator, attractive, cheap-glamorous. He regains his composure as the elevator doors slide closed. A moment passes and the black-out hits the corridor with the speed of no light. The mechanical whirr of the elevator winds down and we HEAR A MUFFLED VOICE from low down, behind the doors.

GRIMSBY (O.S.)

Shit!

A long beat, then we hear a husky female voice.

FEMALE VOICE

What's your name?

12 INTERIOR - NEARY COMPANY CAR - NIGHT

12

Roy is so happy to be out of the house that he begins to mumble and hum Vicki Lawrence's song, "The Night The Lights Went Out In Georgia". His civil service band radio hums police calls and signs of the growing crisis. The inside of this company car is jerryrigged efficiency. Clipboard shelf two side mirrors, a gooseneck lamp pouring onto a new issue of Popular Mechanics and plans for a backyard single passenger helicopter.

CLOSE - ROY

He eyes the design wistfully and almost smiles.

13 EXTERIOR - DARKENED CITY STREET - NIGHT

13

14 INTERIOR - MONITOR SYSTEMS CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

14

This is the brain center of the local Department of Water and Power. A bank of phones are ringing continuously with only one man to answer and holler his queries to a group of trouble technicians who keep an update on a wall display panel. A completely harried Load Dispatcher called IKE spots Neary ENTERING through the main doors.

Neary is shy about joining a squad of grizzled trouble foremen, most of whom are in their late forties. IKE is in the middle of a briefing on the other side of the room.

IKE

A 27 KV line failed at the Gilmore sub-station. All the breakers opened and we began losing feeders. We want to pick up the system before folks start shaving.

MCGOVERN

How can we pick it up? The network's still falling.

ASSISTANT

(from across the room)

Tolono is dark.

MCGOVERN

(emphatically)

Jesus, Ike, everything's comin' down.

IKE

To add insult to injury I got reports of vandalism on the line. I got 890 megawatt lines down all over.

ASSISTANT

Crystal Lake is dark. We can't carry this much load.

IKE

Call Muncipal Lighting, Ohio. Tell 'em we're cycling down and need a fix.

(back to his men)

We can't get the juice flowing until this 500 KV single circuit tower is operational. McGovern, grab a splicing crew and get out there.

McGOVERN

I'm not too familiar with the normal tension in that area.

NEARY

(volunteers softly)

If there's no wind, normal tension for the sag is about 15,000 pounds per wire. I was a journeyman out that way a couple of years ago.

McGOVERN

Good ... an expert. You take this job.

NEARY

That's not up to me. Where's the Supervisor?

The other men titter.

IKE

In an elevator and trying to run things from those little trouble phones. Neary, you're taking Crystal Lake.

NEARY

I am?

IKE

I can't help it. Everybody's everywhere. If you have any questions ... get on the horn to me direct.

ASSISTANT

Got a fresh impedance coming in. It's not an overload ... it's a drain. Lines M-Mary 10 through M-Mary 15. And Municipal Lighting is asking to be cut free.

IKE

Neary, you know where that is?
(without waiting for
an answer)

Good. I'll get a splicing crew and high wire act to meet you out there.

PUSH IN ON NEARY, weighing his new responsibilities.

IKE (con't)

(shouts to Assistant)

You tell Municipal Lighting we're going to candle power in ten minutes.

Neary snaps into action, heading out the way he came in.

INTERIOR - NEARY'S CAR - NIGHT

15

He has a network map spread out over the steering wheel as he searches for the problem coordinates, a pen light sticking out of his mouth. Police calls start squabbling through.

MULTI-CHANNEL RADIO

Unit six-ten.

SIX-TEN

Six-ten go'ed dispatch.

DISPATCH

See the woman 211 Reva Road. Something about the outdoor lighting. She's hysterical, barking dogs, go figure it out.

SIX-TEN

Thanks a heap, you guys. Tolono out.

Neary has heard this, he picks up his car phone.

NEARY

Ike! Have you restored power to Tolono over?

IKE

What! Are you kidding? Tolono was the first to go out.

NEARY

The police are reporting lights in Tolono. Don't you think you should dispatch somebody down there to check it out?

IKE

If you want my job, call me in five minutes and maybe I'll give it to you.

CLICK. Neary squints out the windshield. Ahead of him is a glow of white and amber lights. As he gets closer a yellow DWP cherry picker and other support vehicles idle in neutral off to one side of the highway. A line of power poles stretch to rural infinity. An eerie ground fog makes the area seem more remote.

16 WIDER VIEW

16

Neary emerges from his car chewing on some licorice. Twelve linemen, several grunt novices and a tall black man called JACKSON all stare at Neary as though waiting his reaction. They are buddies.

Earl.

JACKSON

I found evidence of vandalism between lines M-10 to M-12.

Jackson locks up. The linemen and grunts look up. Finally Neary looks up.

NEARY'S P.O.V.

There are no lines M-10 to M-12. Just bare poles against a splash of stars.

JACKSON

Christ, Roy ... why would anybody steal three thousand feet of transmission cable?

NEARY

Probably the high cost of copper. Stuff's worth a fortune. If they'd only lay power cable underground.

JACKSON

Where would the birds land?

NEARY

I mean it, Earl. I'll give it two more years if I'm not into design engineering in three more years.

Neary goes to his car. The radio flashes on a police call before he can report the theft.

POLICE DISPATCH VOICE

See the complainant at Tolono South. Christmas lights have started a minor brush fire.

NEARY

Ike! It's Neary.

IKE

Go ahead.

NEARY

I'm here at Mary-10. The transmission line has been stolen right off the pole. It looks like vandals made a very sloppy splice at the terminals, then backed a truck in and pulled out all the grounds.

IKE

Never mind that. We're going to try and pick up the system in one hour.

NEARY

One hour! How's that possible?

IKE

Neary, anything is possible when you've got a General Supervisor stuck in an elevator who wants to get out.

NEARY

Ike, listen to me. I think the lines in Tolono are energized and it's not showing up on your data bank. If one of our guys touches a terminal he's going to short out.

IKE

Are you nuts? Me and two back-up computers say Tolono's out.

NEARY

People in Tolono are saying there are Christmas lights now.

IKE

This is May not December! People say all kinds of things in the dark. There's no Christmas during a blackout ... only Halloween.

The enticing police calls replace Ike's thick voice. Roy stares at his dashboard making up his mind. He looks devilishly in Jackson's direction.

NEARY

Earl, I need a favor.

JACKSON

As long as it doesn't cost me - shoot.

NEARY

How'd you like to sign on this operation for about an hour?

Neary is already closing the car door and starting his engine.

JACKSON

(beginning to panic)

Me? Run this show? I'm Tower Maintenance. Who's gonna listen to me? I'm not even seniority.

Neary makes a U-turn and waves toward Jackson reassuringly as he drives off.

Jackson turns to face about seventeen veterans waiting to be told what to do. He screws up his courage and points a long finger at the naked power pole.

JACKSON

Fix it.

17 DELETE

17

18 INTERIOR Neary Car & EXTERIOR Car

18 X

Neary turns up the volume on his Multi-Channel Receiver. Police in conversation crackle out.

OFFICER LONGLY (V.O.)

U-five. Longly over.

H.Q. (V.O.)

Go'ed.

OFFICER LONGLY (V.O.)

X Responding to that 10-75 on Cornbread Road and X
X Middletown Pike I am observing distant lights at X
five hundred feet. Looks like Army Parachute
flares.

Neary pulls over on the narrow off-ramp and tears at some local road maps. He brings down a jerry-rigged roll down map and puts the pen-light in his mouth ... backwards. His cheeks glow pink and for a moment he can't figure it out. A bright group of highbeams appears over his shoulder and out the back window. Neary absently waves an arm out the window and the automobile lights pass him on the left.

OFFICER LONGLY (V.O.)

We'll need some assistance finding whoever's shooting them off. Couple of hundred neighbors in their pajamas think it's Saturday night out there.

NEARY

(pouring over map)

X Cornbread Road. Middletown Pike. D-five. M-34. X

His two fingers meet and he takes off in dust.

19 EXTERIOR - DARKENED NEIGHBORHOOD - POOLS OF FOG

19

Neary's car crawls along looking for street signs.

20 CLOSE - MULTI-BAND RADIO 20

H.Q. (V.O.)
To any unit in the vicinity of the
Mt. Pleasant foothills. Housewife reports ... X
uhm her Tiffany Lamp is flashing ...
in her kitchen window ... an upsidedown
Tiffany Lamp. Uhm ... can't make it out.
Very distraught ... see the woman.

21 EXTERIOR - DARKENED NEIGHBORHOOD 21

Neary signifies his interest by making an abrupt U-turn.

2 CLOSE - RADIO 22

OFFICER LONGLY (V.O.)
It's all lit up out here. This flare thing
we're on to doesn't want to land. It's
caught in an updraft or something ... it
goes up ... it goes down ... wait one ...
(beat ... beat)
It also wants to go a little sideways.

H.Q. (V.O.)
Longly, give us a location.

OFFICER LONGLY (V.O.)
It's on the reservoir grid, heading North-
east. Hold on. Heading Northwest on Cotton-
tail.

23 EXTERIOR - DARKENED NEIGHBORHOOD 23

Neary signifies further interest by making another U-turn.

24 INSIDE NEARY'S CAR 24

He is blanketed by roadmaps.

NEARY
Colt, Commerce ... Connecticut ...
COTTONTAIL!!!

25 DELETE 25

People standing around with flashlights. Parked cars with their headlamps shining. The rest is in the dark. A total power outage.

27 FARM COUNTY HIGHWAY - THIN GROUND FOG - NEARY

27

He turns into a rutted road, shines his spotlight on the street sign. He checks his map. It confuses him. Neary backs onto the main highway and stops, pulling the map closer, twisting the gooseneck tensor lamp close enough to burn a hole.

A bank of lights from an approaching vehicle can be seen from the rear window. They draw up very close and stop. Neary is only slightly annoyed by the glare from the rear and side view mirrors as he pours over the wrinkled map. He absently sticks out his left hand and begins to signal, "go around".

For a moment, nothing happens, then, soundlessly, the super highbeams comply ... rising vertically out of sight leaving darkness behind.

Neary hasn't seen this. Then there is this noise. It is like the rattling of tin. Neary looks around. He shines his spotlight on the road sign.

28 ANGLE - ROAD SIGN

28

It is vibrating so fast that the letters seem to multiply and superimpose. He looks again with an almost comical, "Huuuh?". On that note, his spotlight, intensor light, and headlights glow a faint amber then black. CLICK! The entire area for thirty yards around his car is bathed in the brightest light imaginable. Neary tries to look out the open side window but it hurts, his eyes cannot adjust. He ducks back in and goes for his radio. It is dead. Neary is too scared to budge. Just his eyes move. Nothing more. Falling open at the hinges, the glove compartment rattles as everything metallic begins sticking together. A box of paperclips comes undone and dozens fasten themselves to the roof of the car. The ashtray empties itself out as though sucked weightless by a current of air from outside - and CLICK! The hotlight is gone. Paperclips rain down on him from the rooftop. The sign is no longer shaking. A DISTANT RATTLING causes Neary to swing around in his seat. His highbeams, spotlight, lamp, etc. come back to life. Down the road there is a FOUR-WAY STOP. The signs are dancing to and fro, vibrating so violently that the metal around the edges curls against the force. CLICK! The intersection a hundred yards down the road is awash in the same intense light. But only for a second. CLICK! And in the dark, the signs are no longer moving. All is still. Not even a hint of a breeze.

29 FOUR-WAY STOP - NIGHT

29

The radio is making noises that sound like overload excitement.

RADIO VOICE

I don't know, I'm asking you. Is there a full moon this morning?

DISPATCH VOICE

That's a negative. New moon on the thirteenth

RADIO VOICE

Get out of here, me and my partner are seeing this thing over Signal Hill. This is the thing everybody is screaming about. It's the moon ...

(static pause)

Wait a sec. Okay. It's starting to move now. West to East.

UNIT 1011 VOICE

This is Hawthorne Police 1011. We are watching it, confirming it is definitely the moon. Be advised it is not moving. The clouds behind it are moving, giving it the illusion of movement over ...

RADIO VOICE

Where'd you study astronomy, Hawthorne? When did you ever see clouds passing behind the moon?

30 EXTERIOR - SITE OF THE OVERHEAD REPAIR - HEAVY FOG - NIGHT

30

A mini generator is servicing the area with harsh working illumination. A mammoth coil of high tension wire is unspooling toward the steel towers. Jackson is completely in control. Everyone is working under him at full speed. A workman hollers his way and holds a phone towards him.

WORKMAN

Receiving station wants the man in charge.

Jackson steadies himself. This better be good. He clears his voice with no nonsense.

JACKSON

What can I do for you?

IKE'S VOICE

Put Neary on.

JACKSON

He's indisposed at the moment.

IKE'S VOICE

Who is this?

JACKSON

Just one of the guys.

IKE

We're locked in and ready to pick up.
I told him one hour. It's only a hundred
yards of cable. Where is he?

JACKSON

Permit me to call him for you.
(Jackson puts the phone
to his lips and cuts loose)
NEARY -- !! NEARY -- !!

1 INTERIOR - NEARY'S CAR - NIGHT

31

CLOSE - NEARY

He is sweaty and punchy as he hears his name echoing on his DWP
radio. Another voice adds to his confusion.

TOLONO DWP (V.O.)

DWP Mobil. We're here in Tolono.
This place is completely down.

Neary registers slight relief at this.

OFFICER LONGLY (V.O.)

1022 to General Dispatch. We're onto
those lights again. Observing six orange
globes traveling southwest in a wing-like
formation.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

What's your location?

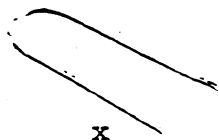
OFFICER LONGLY (V.O.)

Just off the Telemark Expressway, and east toward
McCulloch Park -- just past the Raintree
Summer Playground.

Neary blinks twice, snapping out of his daze.

NEARY

(loud to the world)
Oh my God, I know where that is.



x

TELEMARK EXPRESSWAY. ZOOOOOOOOM. There goes Neary at ninety-plus.

OFFICER LONGLY (V.O.)

No sir, still the same formation. Dewitt's getting some good pictures. You can take this for what it's worth. These things were not manufactured in Detroit.

x

Neary floors it. The CAMERA PANS UP through the windshield. The mylar green freeway sign tells us that the EAST McCULLOCH PARKEEXIT is three miles and closing.

x

OFFICER LONGLY (V.O.)

We've got the mobile radar tracking them at forty-five miles an hour. You can take this for what it's worth. This happens to be the exact speed limit around here.

33 CLOSE - EXPRESSWAY SIGN - NIGHT

33

McCULLOCH PARK EXIT- EAST. ZOOOOOOOOM! Neary trades paint with the guard rail before yawing a hard to starboard turn. Sparks fly into the air.

x

OFFICER LONGLY (V.O.)

These things are about a half mile ahead now and decelerating; they're holding steady at 15 miles an hour ... and ... Okay, Jack ... you can take this for what it's worth, but that was a school zone.

34 EXTERIOR - CRESCENDO SUMMIT - NIGHT

34

Little Barry appears under some snow fence at the side of a summit road that overlooks twenty miles of clear Indiana countryside. He has been running but stops near a blind curve and seems to lose his purpose and direction. He wanders aimlessly into the center of the two-lane country road. Above him, on a higher elevation, sits a toothless DAIRY FARMER in an aluminum folding chair. Below him is his family and a flatbed truck. A fat teenaged boy in bib-overalls stares through binoculars at the stardust overhead. Two five-year old girls lie on a mattress in the flatbed.

HEAR THE VOICE of Jillian Guiler yelling her son's name.

ANGLE - SIDE OF ROAD

Jillian bursts through the tall grass. She is disheveled and awash in tears and sweat. Her eyes go to Barry as Barry turns toward her. They both light up from headlights coming around the corner.

35 CLOSE - NEARY - INSIDE HIS CAR 35
He sees something in the road just ahead of him. He slams on the brakes.

3 CLOSE - JILLIAN 36
She screams and dives for her son.

37 CLOSE - NEARY 37
Whips the wheel to one side.
The car misses Barry and Jillian by inches and plows into the snow fence directly beneath the old farmer. Everything gets very still.

38 ANGLE - DAIRY FARMER 38

DAIRY FARMER

(slurping from a
jug)

That's a dangerous curve. Saw a damn cow
come by here one hour ago twenty
feet off the ground. I've seen things
since way back in 1927.

(takes a swig)

I couldn't tell you about 'em now.

Suddenly, Barry gets up LAUGHING. He tries to run forward down the road, his arms outstretched. Jillian stops him as Neary looks toward the farmer and observes this sweet 'Bradbury' setting through spinning eyes. Suddenly a breeze comes up and everybody's hair is swept behind them. All looks go downwind toward the magnificent valley vista.

BARRY

(calling off down
the road)

Play here

Turning also to look downwind and .. a dozen jackrabbits and several birds escape in a flurry past Neary as ... THREE CONE SHAPED ORANGE FLARES, 15 FEET ACROSS, TWO FEET ABOVE THE HIGHWAY .. SPEEDING SOUNDLESSLY. THEY BEGIN TO SEPERATE AS THEY NEAR JILLIAN, NEARY AND BARRY WHO FREEZE IN THE CENTER OF THE ROAD. THEY PASS RIGHT AROUND THEM AND AWKWARDLY REGROUP, RECEDING INTO THE DISTANCE.

BARRY

(jubilant)

ICE CREAM - !

Casually and full of pride, the old Dairy Farmer nods his head and clicks his tongue.

DAIRY FARMER

They can fly rings around the moon, but we're years ahead of 'em on the highway.

A tiny straggler objects speeds erratically after its buddies. This is too much! Jillian and Neary lock eyes, there is nothing they can say. Suddenly, Neary jerks around and grabs Jillian and Barry, pulling them off the road ... and in the nick of time.

ZOOOOOM - ! ZOOOOOM!

TWO INDIANA POLICE UNITS that Neary was monitoring break wind as fast as the turn will allow. Neary heads for his car.

DAIRY FARMER

Stick around ... You shoul'da seen it an hour ago!

NEARY

This is nuts!

A THIRD INDIANA CRUISER passes. Neary runs to his car and U-turns after them. The Old Farmer shouts to be heard.

DAIRY FARMER

I may be drunk but I know I'm here.

19 EXTERIOR - OHIO TOLL STATION - NIGHT

39

Eleven cozy toll booths bathed in ultra-modern fluorescent. An elderly watchman sits comfortably in the lane three kiosk buried in a Reader's Digest. The second hand on the wall clock ticks through 2:15 A.M. and stops on a fraction. What occurs next sends the watchman to his toes, his head spinning.

ELEVEN RED VIOLATION LIGHTS ACCOMPANIED BY A CLANGSTON ALARM IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A VEHICLE TRIES TO SNEAK THROUGH WITHOUT PUTTING THE QUARTER IN THE WIRE BASKET.

Goggle-eyed, the watchman spins around looking for numerous gate crashers. There is nobody around for miles - saving ...

WIDE ANGLE

Prewitt & Longly's police cruisers seize up their radials and stop short of Ohio. Dewitt's green police unit never even slows. It blurs Prewitt's vision and slices through Toll Gate #3.

LONGLY'S P.O.V.

Up ahead in rural Ohio, the road takes a hairpin right. But this time the tangerine lights ignore the turn and continue straight ahead. Locked in on this, Dewitt similarly ignores the turn and flies through the guard rail and into Ohio air space. An O.S. \$5,000 crash is HEARD.

REVERSE ANGLE

Neary pulls up and jumps out of his car. Prewitt and Longly are right behind and we see them CLOSE UP for the first time - - The six orange point sources appear into some low ceiling mist. The sky turns yellow-orange.

CLOSE - NEARY

He's hooked.

INTERIOR - AIR ROUTE TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTER - MIDWATCH

Two radar scopes side by side. Four controllers sit side by side, a fifth controller sits slightly behind on a high chair. There is some backtalk from speakers on the adjoining sectors. Camera closes in on controller. He is a little tired, a bit bored, yet there is an alertness sensed. The sector is a high altitude radar sector. The time is the midwatch. Across the room another controller gets up from his sector - yells mildly across the room.

OTHER MAN

Harry, keep your eye on that pointout I gave you. He's on 122.5. Be right back.

CLOSE - HARRY

Raises his hand affirming this. He peers into scope. We hear VOICE of AIREAST 31 pilot.

AIREAST 31

Air Traffic Control, you have any traffic for Aireast 31?

Harry looks more intently at scope. There are only three full data blocks and one partial data block. Two going the same direction are fifteen miles apart. The third going the other direction is quite a distance away from AIREAST. The rest of the scope is clean.

HARRY

Aireast 31 negative. Only traffic I have is a TWA L-Ten Eleven your six o'clock position, fifteen miles and an Alleghany DC-9 your twelve o'clock fifty miles. Stand by one. Let me take a look at the broadband.

Harry reaches up, pushes one button. Radar scope changes from narrow-band computer radar to broadband normal radar. Harry takes a quick glance, pushes button again, then another button, looks at primary in computerized form. There is a non-beacon target in Aireast's vicinity. Harry peers more intently. Interphone controller leans over and looks as does coordinator. While this is going on.

AIREAST 31

Aireast 31 has traffic two o'clock three to five miles, slightly above and descending.

HARRY

Aireast 31 roger. I have a primary target about that position now. We have no known high altitude traffic, Let me check with low.

Turns to interphone man:

HARRY

Call low and see if they know who this is

AIREAST 31

(cutting Harry off)

Center, Aireast 31, traffic's not in low. He's one o'clock now still above me and descending.

HARRY

Can you tell aircraft type?

AIREAST 31

Negative, no distinct outline. The target is brilliant. Has the brightest anti-collision lights I've ever seen - alternating white to red and the colors are striking.

Other sector controllers now start looking and listening. The coordinator reaches up, pushes a button, calls someone and mumbles indistinctly. A second VOICE comes on RADIO.

TWA 517

Center this is TWA 517. Traffic now looks like extra bright landing lights. I thought Aireast had his landing lights on.

COORDINATOR

What do you have here, Harry?

AIREAST 31

Say again TWA 517.

TWA 517

(Making himself clearly understood)
Do you have your landing lights on?

HARRY

(breaking in)

TWA 517, Indianapolis Center, Aireast is your twelve o'clock position fifteen miles same direction and altitude. Ident please.

(Turns to coordinator)

Aireast claims he has unusual traffic almost at his altitude. I don't know who it is.

No response - an ident appears TWA 517.

HARRY

Aireast 31 squawk ident ... break ...
TWA 517 do you have Aireast in sight?

TWA 517

Affirmative.

HARRY

TWA 517 do you have Aireast's traffic
in sight?

TWA

(saying this cautiously)

Yes ... we have it now and have been
watching it.

HARRY

What does traffic appear to be doing?

TWA 517

Just what Aireast 31 said.

HARRY

Aireast 31, I have that primary now at
your ten o'clock position five miles.

AIREAST 31

That's affirmative.

HARRY

Proceeding northeast bound. No altitude
readout.

AIREAST 31

Uh, roger. He's in a descent about 1500
feet below me, wait a second...stand by
one ... okay center. Aireast 31 traffic
has turned heading right for us at altitude.
We're turning right and leaving flight level
350.

Now all are on alert.

COORDINATOR

Get on the horn to Wright-Patterson and
see what the hell they could be testing
up there.

HARRY

Aireast 31 roger, descend and maintain
Flight Level three-one-zero ... break.
Alleghany DC-9 turn 30 degrees right
immediately ... traffic twelve o'clock
two zero miles Aireast jet descending to
FL310.

AIREAST
Luminous traffic now in angular descent
and exhibiting some non ballistic motions.

HARRY

AIREAST
OK Center - Traffic is coming on strong.
Ultra bright and really moving.

TWA 517
This is TWA 517, we're going to go a little
right to keep away from traffic also.

HARRY
TWA 517 roger deviations to right of course
approved.

AIREAST 31
Center, Aireast 31 is out of three-one-zero
and traffic has passed off our ten o'clock
500 yards and really moving.

TEAM SUPERVISOR
Ask them if they want to report officially.

HARRY
Aireast 31 roger, report level Flight
level three-one-zero. TWA 517, do you
want to report a U.F.O.?

A thoughtful moment passes...then.

TWA 517
Negative. We don't want to report.

HARRY
Aireast 31, do you wish to report a
U.F.O.?

AIREAST 31
(after a beat also)
Negative. We don't want to report.

HARRY
Aireast 31. Do you want to file a
report of any kind?

AIREAST 31
I wouldn't know what kind of report to
file.

Me neither. I'll try to track traffic to destination.

AIREAST 31

And show us level at three-one-zero now. The gals tell me that passengers were snapping pictures of traffic during that close pass.

HARRY

(to team supervisor)

Those, I'd like to see.

(into mike)

Alleghany Triple 4 turn right to intercept J-8. Resume normal navigation. TWA is level at three-one.

The team supervisor and flow controller leave the scopes as the supervisor heads for the telephone desk.

COORDINATOR

What's in the book about this kind of thing?

TEAM SUPERVISOR

Hell if I know. The Air Force started writing it 20 years ago. Let them finish it.

CAMERA pushes in on desk placard: TEAM ACTION '77.

EXTERIOR - TARMAC - NIGHT

41

A pair of blinding landing lights seem to hover just before touching down.

41

42

INTERIOR - THE FOURTH CAR - NIGHT

42

A tight squadron of four vehicles wait in the dark with their engines rumbling. A young man, DAVID LAUGHLIN, sits in the back seat with his knees pinched together. Beads of sweat dot his brow. An older man sitting next to him nods toward the window.

OLDER MAN

Here he comes.

A fifth car, a Cadillac Limousine, is speeding toward the other four. David Laughlin tries to calm himself. He draws a gallon of air.

DAVID

I heard a rumor that he's gone through five interpreters in nine months.

OLDER MAN

It's no rumor. Good luck.

43

INTERIOR - THE APPROACHING BLACK LIMO - NIGHT

43

In the backseat is MR. LACOMBE, an austere, controlled Frenchman, but with an old fashioned, almost romantic way of handling himself. (Although we come to see Lacombe is constantly surrounded by space-age technology, he lights his cigarettes with matches instead of lighters, at one point he watch may stop ... one of the last men alive without a self-winding watch). In the front seat is another man, ROBERT.

44

WIDER ANGLE

44

Lacombe's car joins the others. David Laughlin jumps out of his car and rushes to Lacombe's. David's got hustle.

INTERIOR - LACOMBE'S CAR - BACK SEAT - NIGHT

David joins Lacombe in the back seat. Their DIALOGUE IS IN FRENCH WITH ENGLISH SUB-TITLES.

DAVID

Mister Lacombe?

(Lacombe nods)

I'm your translator.

LACOMBE

You are...

(searching his pockets;
finding a scrap of paper
and trying to pronounce
what he reads in phonetic
English)

Mees-ster-Lay-oog-line?

DAVID

Laughlin.

LACOMBE

(shrugs, almost bitter
at his lack of English
and pulls out a paperback
book)

And you are on the project... two years.

DAVID

At the Wright-Patterson Facility,
Dayton, Ohio.

(he adds enthusiastically)

I attended the Montsoreau talks the
week the French broke through.

LACOMBE

Translate, please.

Lacombe begins reading the book in French, something obviously quite passionate. He varies his inflections and emotions to a great degree. As Lacombe speaks, David translates one syllable or so behind him.

As David translates we see the Air East 31, a 727, roar to a trundle and veer onto a connection where a mini brute airport vehicle with flashing lights guides it to a halt near a dead end section of runway.

DAVID

(translating into English)

"Her firm young breasts heaved with excitement as she slipped off her woolly sweater...."

(he looks to Lacombe, who
stares sternly ahead)

Her nipples were as hard, pink and round as bubblegum. She squealed with excitement as her teacher slowly pulled out a long, stiff ruler.....

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

By now David is sweating profusely and has to SHOUT to be heard over the DEAFENING NOISE of the jet landing. Lacombe puts an end to Laughlin's misery by putting the book away.

LACOMBE

Fine...fine..

DAVID

(relieved)

If I may ask, sir...why did you choose that for me to read?

Lacombe shrugs again and shows the front of a French paperback with a lurid cover and the title, in French, "The Clock Room".

LACOMBE

Something I picked up. I was sure it would have emotional value. Emotions are going to be important, Laughlin. There is an emotional and linguistic equivalent to words in every language. I expect these word equivalents. I want to be understood perfectly.

(to Robert)

Robert, how was he?

ROBERT

(approvingly)

Hot damn!

Lacombe looks confused, doesn't understand this. David jumps in, supplying the translation for "hot damn" in idiomatic French. Lacombe smiles, gets out of the car and crosses toward the 727. Laughlin follows.

46

INTERIOR - AIR EAST 31 - NIGHT

46

The wilted passengers watch bleary-eyed as the ramp extends to become metal stairs. The stewardess opens the forward door and six burly men rise into the galley area. Two of the men, officiously dressed, disappear into the pilot's cabin while the other four remain at "parade rest". They are all dressed as business executives, but something makes you wish you could see their shoulder holsters.

PILOT'S CABIN DOOR - AIREAST 31

47 x

The pilot, co-pilot, radio man and flight engineer are leaving the cockpit under escort, hurrying down the ramp to the waiting cars. The four business executives hurry to replace the crew and close the cockpit door behind them.

48 INTERIOR - PLANE

48

A public relations man and a couple of other officious looking men are at the front of the plane. They are carrying compact little stacks of IBM cards and bound clumps of test pencils. A public relations man assumes an almost laid back posture as he speaks to the passengers through the Public Address.

PUBLIC RELATIONS MAN

Folks, I apologize on behalf of the Air Force Research and Development Command for the delay in your flight schedule. On your slow descent through 30,000 feet, you flew through a restricted corridor where classified government testing was being conducted. I'm going to ask all passengers with cameras, exposed film canisters, boxes of unexposed film and tape recording devices to turn them over to me at this time.

(the passengers explode in protest but Public Relations overrides them)

In return for which you may fill out a small card with your name and address. Your slides and prints will be developed and returned to you within the next two weeks at our expense.

49 ANGLE - OUTSIDE AIR EAST 31 - LACOMBE'S LIMO - NIGHT

49

The Air East flight crew is already seated inside as Lacombe intones something in French to David. David turns to an FAA official and three of his aides.

DAVID

We want the flight recorder and don't wash the plane.

David ducks inside and the limousine speeds away down the tarmac.

CUT TO:

This is the processing room. A blizzard of mid-morning activity complimented by secretaries and uniformed policemen checking in, checking out, writing reports. And leaning into their night reports are Officers Longly and Prewitt, the team that first pursued the nocturnal phenomenon to the Ohio border. This is probably the first time these men have ever enjoyed this kind of paper work. There is still a total blackout. Lightning thunder rattles the window, but there is no rain. Everyone works by candlelight, Coleman light, flashlights and police vehicle headlights directed through the station window.

ANGLE - NEARY

Without the aid of a typewriter, Neary is penciling in his story. He still pumps from excitement. Touching his head, Neary pauses and presses back a gnawing headache.

NEARY

Got any aspirin?

PREWITT

If Longly hadn't been with me I would have gone psychiatric.

LONGLY

I don't want to file this report.
I want to publish it.

Just about now, a door bursts open across the processing room DEWITT emerges from the Captain's office, his arm in a sling and a bandaid on his forehead. The Captain has a pox on this early morning.

CAPTAIN

It's enough to outrage common sense.
(to the room)
Ordinary people look to the police department not to make bizarre reports of this nature.

DEWITT

(in his own defense)
My knowledge is God's truth.

CAPTAIN

I will not see this department pressed between the pages of the National Enquirer.

The flustered commander turns his looks on Prewitt & Longly behind their typewriters.

(loud to his secretary)
When Flash Gordon & Buck Rogers are
done, have them get their behinds
in here.

All the lights come on at this point. The blackout has ended. The
fluorescent lighting is murder on Neary's vision. Dewitt is vanquished.
Shaking his head he makes for the door. The two officers snag a piece
of him and Dewitt stops to look down, dazed.

LONGLY

What'd you do to the old man?

DEWITT

Got him to give me about thirty days
on the golf course and country club.

EXIT DEWITT. Prewitt & Longly trade nervous looks. And if fingers could
tip-toe, that's what happens next. So much for God's truth! Out from their
typewriters go the I.F. 102 file reports - in go fresh ones. Prewitt &
Longly pound the keyboard like Ferrante & Teicher.

CLOSE - NEARY

Feeling betrayed. He squints down at his pile of pencil markings and
sketches. Look's at the Captain's closed door. Looks at his digital
wristwatch which shows 3:30 A.M. and with renewed enthusiasm runs out
of the MUNCIE P.D. x

1 INTERIOR - NEARY BEDROOM - NIGHT

51

It's about 4:00 A.M. Ronnie is asleep. Neary bursts into the room, goes
to the bed and shakes her. He turns on the lights in the room.

NEARY

Honey, wake up!

RONNIE

Hhhhh

NEARY

You're not going to believe what's
happening.

RONNIE

(fighting back to sleep)
I'm not listening ...

NEARY

(shaking her)
You don't have to listen. There was nothing
but air and all of a sudden ... WOOSH ...
then WOOSH. Then a little WOOSH ... Jesus!

RONNIE
(rubbing her eyes)
The Department's been trying to reach you. They couldn't reach you

NEARY
Yeah, I know. I shut my radio off.

RONNIE
Roy, you shouldn't do that. They have to talk to you ... all kinds of crazy things are going on. The phone has been ringing off the hook. It woke Sylvia up twice and

Neary sees he can't transmit his feelings with words so he begins to pull Ronnie out of bed.

NEARY
Come on! Get outta bed ...

RONNIE
You're scaring me, Roy. What's wrong?

NEARY
Nothing. You have to see something with me. You wanted to get out of the house, didn't you?

RONNIE
Not at 4:00 A.M.

NEARY
Don't argue ... just come on.

RONNIE
We can't leave the kids.

NEARY
Leave the kids? I wouldn't leave the kids!

52 INTERIOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT - Add. INT. Childrens' Bedroom ALL Neary Child
Neary runs out of the Master Bedroom and into the hallway. work 52

NEARY
(shouting)
BRAD, TOBY, SYLVIA!

5 INTERIOR NEARY KITCHEN - OUT TO EXTERIOR NEARY DRIVEWAY 53

Neary is rushing his hastily assembled family to the family car. They are in various states of undress. Neary has his cameras, binoculars, Brad's telescope ... anything he can get his hands on that has a lense.

(muttering sleepily)
You stole my luminous paints ...

NEARY

You'll get your luminous paint! Everything's going to be luminous!

On the run, Neary stops to open the refrigerator to grab Ronnie's raw vegetable pouch. The refrigerator light is an un-appetizing green.

TOBY

That green light makes me barf.

RONNIE

I'll change it after I lose another three pounds.

BRAD

Are we going to a drive-in?

NEARY

Uh, uh. We're going to do something much more fun.

But Neary continues hustling them out of the house and toward the Chevy wagon around the back of the driveway.

ANGLE - MRS. HARRIS' HOME - NEXT DOOR - NIGHT

There is a noise below her bedroom window. She peaks out the window and down to see what all the fuss is about.

RONNIE

Roy, you've proved your point. We're out of the house. Now can we go back to sleep?

Neary opens the passenger door to the car, shoving the children in. Ronnie resists one last time.

RONNIE

This is only funny if it ends here in the driveway.

TOBY

You promised Goofy Golf.

Finally, all are in the car, kids in the back, Roy and Ronnie in the front. As the light goes on inside the car, Ronnie notices something odd.

RONNIE

Roy ... you're sunburned.

NEARY

Yeah. I took my vacation while you were asleep.

RONNIE

(insisting)

You are!

Neary looks quickly into the rear view mirror as he drives off. He does look a little red in the face. He shrugs it off and continues down the dark street.

CUT TO:

54 EXTERIOR - CRESCENDO SUMMIT - NIGHT

54

The Neary car is parked alone at the summit. The farmer has departed, leaving debris. The kids are sleeping uneasily in the back seat and Ronnie is dozing in the front as Roy paces back and forth outside the car. He's been waiting a long time for something to happen and he's pissed off at the heavens.

Ronnie opens her eyes and sees Roy's distress.

RONNIE

Why won't you tell me what you're waiting for?

NEARY

You'll know when you see it.

RONNIE

Come on. I came here with you. I'm taking this very well. Now tell me. What did it look like?

NEARY

Kind of like ... like an ice cream cone.

RONNIE

(innocently)
What flavor?

NEARY

(taking her seriously)
Orange. It was orange ... and it wasn't really like an ice cream cone ... it was sort of in a shell ... this way ...

RONNIE

Like a taco?

NEARY

No, rounder, larger ... and sometimes ... it was like ... like ... you know those rolls we had yesterday?

RONNIE

Bran muffins?

NEARY

No! Not for breakfast ... for dinner. What were those rolls? Those curvy ones?

RONNIE

You mean the Crescent rolls?

NEARY

Yeah! And it gave off a kind of neon glow.

RONNIE

I'm here to look for an orange
neon Betty Crocker roll that flies?

Neary gives up on Ronnie. He walks a few paces off, hunching near a rock. Ronnie watches him anxiously. Maybe she is too bitchy. She gets out of the car and crosses toward him.

RONNIE

(again)

Don't you think I'm taking this
really well?

ANGLE ON NEARY

Ronnie comes up and moves next to him. She stays there silently for a beat, looking at him while he looks at the sky, ignoring her. She looks up to the sky and gives a little shudder.

RONNIE

I'm cold. Could you put your arm
around me.

Roy dutifully does this. She begins to snuggle and play with his ear.

RONNIE

I remember when we use to come to
places like this to look at each
other.

Neary looks at her, remembers some good times and smiles. She smiles back and kisses him. He accepts the kiss, improves on it and pretty soon they're necking. But Roy is not so engrossed in his passion that he doesn't open his eyes once in a while to watch the skies. Suddenly, everything lights up and a blue hot whoosh tears at their clothes. Roy almost leaves his skin as red tail lights diminish in the distance. Ronnie knows it was only a semi-cruck-trailer and isn't bothered.

RONNIE

If one of those things came down
here right now and the door opened,
would you get on it?

NEARY

(thrilled at the
idea)

Jesus Christ, yes !!!

Ronnie considers this. She gets up, dusts herself off and goes back to the car, slamming the door. Roy looks up at the sky.

NEARY

(to the sky)

Thanks.

Neary has his head stuck in the sink as he brushes his teeth. Through the mirror Brad, Toby and three neighborhood kids are seen sneaking up.

ANGLE - KIDS

Brad has a polaroid camera. He adjusts the focus then nods to Toby. Toby is hesitant but tiptoes up to his father and gets a bright idea of how to get him to turn around. He pulls the elastic back on Neary's underwear and lets it fly. Snap.

CLOSE - NEARY

He's hip to this all along but wheels and screams, monster like, toothpaste dripping down his chops, half his face as red as a lobster. The boys are so startled they run away shrieking.

ANGLE - HALLWAY

Running down the hall. Brad rips out the exposed picture as Ronnie moves toward them from the kitchen.

TOBY
(to friends)

Did you see his face? Did
the picture come out?

NEIGHBOR KID

He looks like a fifty-fifty bar.

Ronnie intercepts the photograph halfway through its development.

RONNIE

This isn't your camera to play with
everytime I turn around.

x INT. Master Bathroom

A55 x

Some of the pleasure of scaring the kids lingers on as he takes a can of Rapid Shave and nozzles a mound of white lather into the palm of his right hand. He perfunctorily lifts the mountain of cream toward his face when something stops him. Neary begins to stare vaguely at the stuff in his hand. He cocks his head, brings it eye-level close and curiously begins to shape some of it with the middle finger on his left hand when Ronnie suddenly appears at the door, her mind all made up.

RONNIE

We're going to tell people you fell
asleep under a sunlamp on your
right side.

NEARY

What for?

RONNIE

The boys are asking questions.

NEARY

So what?

RONNIE

Look - Don't talk about this until
you know what you're talking about.

NEARY

That's crazy, if I don't talk about
it how am I gonna find out what's
to know? I want to know what in
the world is going on.

RONNIE

Sweetheart, it's just one of those
things.

NEARY

Which things?

RONNIE

I don't want to discuss this anymore.

NEARY

C'mon. I saw something last night
I can't explain.

RONNIE

(looking him straight in the eye)

I saw something last night I can't explain.

Ronnie leaves the doorway. Neary YELLS to her as she goes.

NEARY

You know I'm going out there again
tonight. Dammit!

Magically Ronnie appears in the doorway again, her mind made up.

RONNIE
(trying to keep it light)

No you're not.

NEARY
(like a little boy)

Yes I am.

RONNIE

No you're not.

The phone begins ringing off the hook.

NEARY

Yes I am.

Ronnie notices the mountain of foam Neary is holding so close to his face and smiles playfully.

RONNIE

No you're not.

and she pushes his palm into his face and runs off to answer the phone. Neary stands there like one of the Three Stooges and turns to the mirror to shave. He YELLS back over his shoulder.

NEARY

It ain't a moonburn, goddamit....

In the mirror Ronnie is back all of a sudden. She looks like someone who has just been told she's terminally ill. Tears begin to come and she stands there shaking. Neary turns immediately thinking it's him.

NEARY

Okay...I don't have to go.

Ronnie explodes into his arms, cheek to cheek with all the lather and tears and --

RONNIE

Oh Baby, you don't work there anymore.
They wouldn't even talk to you. What
are we going to do? What's going on?

ANGLE

On Neary's stunned reaction.

The Neary family is having late lunch of burgers and cyclamates. They're sitting at a plastic table on plastic chairs and eating plastic food. In the background two kids are playing pin ball on a gaudy machine labeled "SPACE TREK"; hitting bumpers, lighting up planets, rocketships, etc.

The Neary family are all eating in silence. Roy is having a difficult time relating to his family. He is crackling through the evening paper ... looking, looking. Ronnie is also searching the paper.

NEARY

Something's going on up there.

RONNIE

(quietly to Roy)

I don't want to know about this.

NEARY

But there's nothing in the paper.

RONNIE

There's a lot in the paper.

(reading off)

Systems Analyst Engineer, HVAC Electrical Designer; Electrical-Technician Testing Programmer ...

Brad looks at the sky. He strains his neck to see.

BRAD

Dad, are they for real?

Toby starts to stare up and Roy glances once.

RONNIE

They're not for real and stop staring.

BRAD

But Mom, I believe in them.

A couple eating at the next table look up to see what everybody is looking at.

RONNIE

(noticing others looking up)

No you don't. Toby. Look at me. Brad. Look here.

BRAD

Dad says so.

RONNIE

He does not!
(desperately)

Roy!

Another family at another table follows everyone's gaze. A third group is now looking up. Ronnie is fighting for control.

RONNIE

Look what you're doing!

TOBY

Do they live on the moon?

BRAD

They got bases on the moon so at night they can come through your window and pull the covers off!

At least twenty Sunday afternooners are watching the skies.

She is interrupted by an announcement over the LOUDSPEAKER.

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE

Number thirty-one.

BRAD

(leaping up)

That's us.

RONNIE

No, honey. We're 41 ...

She holds up a little paper to prove it.

BRAD

Forty one was our food number ...
thirty one is our golf number ...

He holds up his own stub for proof.

RONNIE

Oh ...

(to Roy)

Let's go, honey.

Roy gets up and follows his family to the first tee of the Miniature Golf course. But he is not interested in golf. He is watching the sky.

57

EXTERIOR - MINIATURE GOLF GREEN - FIFTH HOLE

57

The Neary family has arrived at the fifth hole. Neary still isn't paying much attention as he looks upward. These looks are not lost on Ronnie and she is becoming increasingly tense.

BRAD

Come on, Dad. You're up.

Roy tries to join in, putting the ball down and sighting his shot.

ROY'S P.O.V.

The obstacle he is supposed to shoot through is a miniature mountain. Obscuring the tiny cave is a waterfall that justifies this hole's par five.

SPECIAL CLOSE-UP - NEARY

He gets ready to putt when something pulls his attention back toward the mountain and waterfall. x
x

(to himself)
... That's not right ...

It is a pleasant setting and the falling water is like music. No sooner does he set himself than his attention drifts back and he begins sweating. His concentration shattered, he cannot hit the ball at the mountain no matter how hard he tries ... so he strikes out wildly and the drive caroms off a ledge and rolls back to his feet. He swings again, really driving it. It misses the hole and rebounds off a craggy ledge. Inexplicably, he swats again ... and again ...

CLOSE - RONNIE

Holding herself and absolutely motionless. Everyone is motionless as

CLOSE - NEARY

He is killing the ball.

CLOSE -- TOBY AND BRAD

Watching their father. This is no game anymore ... and the boys do not smile.

58 INTERIOR - NEARY CAR - NIGHT

58

Beyond the tinted windshield is a breathtaking display of starlife on the clear and humid evening. Roy drives with purpose and direction as he nears his special destination and

59 EXTERIOR - CRESCENDO SUMMIT - NIGHT

59

Reaching the crest of the highway, The Ohio farmer's red pickup truck is a familiar sight. But he is not alone tonight. Others have congregated. A Dodge Motorhome, an I-H tractor and several Volkswagens are parked alongside the road, beset with a red-tag assortment of star gazers comfortably ensconced in aluminum patio chairs and occasionally peering at the horizon through field glasses as if waiting for some phantom parade to pass. Two kids have erected homemade reflecting telescopes and ...

the farmer's oldest son is adjusting his firm Mikromat from the roof of the cab. As Neary opens the door of the car most of the people turn and eye him rather hostilely. He feels unwelcomed as he steps away from his vehicle. He spots the old farmer, a familiar face, and hurries over to him, taking and shaking his hand. The farmer is friendly and a little drunk.

NEARY

Hi. Remember me?

FARMER

No ... but there's lots of things I don't remember.

NEARY

I was here last night.
(looks around)
We got quite an audience.

FARMER

Beats television.

NEARY

Who are all these people?

FARMER

(pleased with himself)
This is the Society for the People
Interested in What's Going On Around
Here.

The Farmer wanders back to his jug and Neary is left alone under the stars. He feels very small and insignificant .. even though the evening is humid, he feels a chill. He looks over and sees the other people huddled in a group. He ambles over to six senior citizens seated around a card table on the greasy shoulder. Four of them are playing canasta. Eighty, if she's a year, GRACEY smiles up at Roy Neary

A SOUND makes everyone look toward the northern skies. Jet aircraft can be heard passing in the rarified distance.

ELDERLY MAN

We'll be up here all night if that
keeps up.

Roy kneels by the elderly lady who is the Queen of Needlepoint.

NEARY

(confidentially)
Are they coming over tonight?

Her whole face lights up as though he's told her the meaning of life. She becomes teary eyed.

GRACEY
Oh, I hope so. Don't you - ?

NEARY
(in all seriousness)
Yes.

GRACEY
(to her husband)
Can I show him the album?

He ignores her. So Gracey hefts a volume sized leatherette photo album and opens it to the first page.

GRACEY
I took these myself ... out by the
playground.

Neary eases close to see between the pages. Pressed beneath the protective plastic are six polaroid color snapshots. Each shows nothing more than a splash of overexposed yellow - or a slit of white - or an area out of focus blue. Simple photographic errors.

Neary leaves Gracey with a pat on the shoulder and jogs to his car. He returns with his Instamatic and finds a fence post to lean against.

NEARY'S P.O.V.

As he sights through his camera he sees Jillian Guiler and Barry. Now, without the tension of the near accident last night, she has just arrived on the scene. Roy gets up and sheaths his camera; getting ready to cross over to her. But before he can, she spots him and goes directly to him. Barry tags along behind his mother for awhile but then sort of wanders off near a section of dirt to play.

ANGLE - JILLIAN AND ROY

JILLIAN
Hi. Remember me?

NEARY
How can I forget.

They shake hands.

JILLIAN
Jillian Guiler.

NEARY
Roy Neary. Last night was really
weird.

JILLIAN

(agreeing)

It doesn't feel like it's over.

(suddenly noticing)

You're sunburned.

NEARY

Yeah, I'm hoping to tan the other side tonight.

JILLIAN

It got my whole face and neck.

She opens her blouse slightly to reveal her tan line and her neck. Roy is embarrassed at the sight of a pair of tits he's not married to. Jillian is obviously less uptight than Roy in most areas.

A genial man in a sports jacket shines a flashlight at Jillian and Roy. Their sunburns seem to stand out in his beam. He smiles and takes a flash picture before they can speak. He smiles again and moves on toward little Barry. Jillian skips over to where Barry is building a mound of dirt and blocks the flashlight beam.

JILLIAN

(angry to guy)

He's a little young to have a record.

The guy smiles and moves on. Roy is a little awed at Jillian's strength.

NEARY

Where do you think he's from?

JILLIAN

Earth.

She hunches down to wipe some dirt off Barry, turning soft and motherly.

JILLIAN

My dirty kid.

NEARY

(hunching down beside her)

He's cute under the dirt.

Some impulses makes Roy turn and begin helping Barry reshape the dirt mountain he's building. Odder than this, both the child and Jillian accept this as natural behavior.

CLOSE - MOUNTAIN OF DIRT

Roy flattens the peak and carves fluted cliff walls so that the dirt sculpture resembles a tree trunk. Jillian hunches down to be closer to him.

Jillian looks very carefully into Roy's eyes. A slow smile breaks as she senses their shared experience.

JILLIAN

You're trembling.

NEARY

(defensive)

It's chilly. We're out again in the middle of the night.

JILLIAN

It doesn't matter. So am I. Feel.

She tucks his hand against her neck then looks around. Roy secretly removes his hand as someone passes close with a Coleman lantern. Neary blanches and rubs his eyes.

JILLIAN

Your eyes burn, don't they?

NEARY

They get irritated in bright light.

JILLIAN

Today, everything was bright yellow. I went out and couldn't open them wider than this.

(she makes a squint)

Supermarket lighting is the worst.

— Jillian has struck a familiar note. Roy wonders how much he should tell her.

NEARY

I was a little crazy this afternoon, waiting for it to get dark.

JILLIAN

I couldn't wait till tonight. It's like Halloween for grownups.

NEARY

(addressing the sky)

Trick or Treat!

JILLIAN

This is so exciting and then I begin to think about it - and I get terrified ... so I try to think up natural causes and it's quite a let down.

Neary connects with everything she is saying but is less open to outspoken women he is not married to.

JILLIAN

When you were a kid, didn't you ever try to scare yourself by looking in a mirror until that person staring back wasn't you anymore?

NEARY

I look at clouds and make-up things ... you know ... animals and things.

JILLIAN

I'd do that too. I'd see faces and imagine the whole sky just opening up and
(she frightens herself
and laughs)

I'm real great at frightening myself. You're only suppose to tell scary stories when you're someplace safe.

NEARY

Don't you feel safe here?

JILLIAN

(softly serious)

I feel surrounded. Can't you tell. It's going to start all over again.

This scares Neary and now he disguises it with laughter.

NEARY

C'mon. What if we're just two wackos standing on a hill in Indiana with thirty other wackos!

JILLIAN

Is that what you want?

NEARY

I want to know what's happening.

JILLIAN

So would you be relieved if we found out all this excitement was just the government experimenting with some new secret gadget?

NEARY

(quickly & defensively)

There's more to it than that.

JILLIAN

See? - It is more exciting the other way.

Their attention is diverted by a shout from the farmer's son.

FARMER'S SON

Here they come! Out of the northwest!

A hush falls over the gathering. The two boys man their telescopes like anti-aircraft batteries. The farmboy double checks his shutter-speed. Gracey holds her camera up and stands behind her chair.

ANGLE - DAIRY FARMER

He lifts up a hand painted cardboard sign that reads:
STOP AND BE FRIENDLY.

JILLIAN

(pointing)

There!

WITHDRAW TO REVEAL

In the far distance where the black hills gather and the road melts away, two delicate pinpoints of light converge and grow relentlessly brighter as they make their low altitude approach.

ANGLE - MYSTERIOUS GENTLEMAN WITH CAMERA

He is beating a hasty retreat to his car and leaves the area.

Neary notices this and when he turns back to Jillian he sees that she is applying Coppertone to Barry's face and her own.

NEARY

(popping the question)

If something came here right now and opened its doors ... would you go?

JILLIAN

(falling apart with excitement)

No! I don't know! If they stop do you want to run?

This answer is only partially satisfactory to Neary. He looks at Barry, totally absorbed in building the dirt mountain, paying no attention to the approaching lights.

NEARY
(takes it all in and
is suddenly sane)
This is totally crazy.

ANGLE - GRACEY

Tears are running down her cheeks. She genuflects, mutters a prayer and steadies her camera like a pro.

BEYOND ALL THIS THE WHITE LIGHTS ELONGATE AND FLARE LIKE A WELDERS TORCH.

CLOSE - NEARY

His entire body is trembling out of control. He aims his camera but it refuses to steady. This is as close to a religious experience as Roy has ever encountered.

THE ASSEMBLED

The people stir as an unusual quality of SOUND permeates the air. It is a rhythmical noiseblowing against the wind - louder now. Faster, and more frenzied than anyone expected, and fear shoots through all as they interpret the internal combustive pounding and ... the two blinding lights swallow everything up.

Air is displaced - the sky whites out - and the lights become two AIR FORCE HELICOPTERS that descend upon the gathering, beating hot air on them, sucking dirt and featherweight debris up into the swirling convections as the screaming machines maneuver around each other until the ultimate man made cyclone sends aluminum chairs, card tables, blankets and picnic leavings in a violent upheaval.

NEARY
What's happening!

HIGH ANGLE

The night people run for cover. The Dairy Farmer's "BE FRIENDLY" sign beats up against his face until he is forced to hide in the cab of his pickup.

CLOSE - NEARY

Backing toward his car he spots the speed limit sign. It is vibrating beneath the severe rotor wash and reminds Roy of his first encounter. The similarity is too remarkable to discount!

ANGLE - GRACEY

Alone now and stranded beneath the pounding rotor wash, Gracey feebly attempts to gather her blown photo piece collection. She chases the snapshots back and forth, attempting to snatch them right out of the sky, missing and crying yet un mindfully determined. Neary, outraged by what's happening, runs a few steps to face Gracey. Someone else reaches her first and pulls her away to safety.

60 EXTERIOR - COUNTRYSIDE OF INDIA - DAY

60

A TITLE APPEARS: BENARES VALLEY - INDIA

On a hillside outside Benares, ten thousand Hindu followers of the Sadhu kneel in prayer, bowing and chanting to the sky. They are all chanting the same five notes over and over ... ten thousand strong. It is a haunting sound, melodic but ominous.

ANGLE - AGAINST THE THROG

Towering above the mass of worshippers move a half dozen caucasian technicians. They are laden down with recording equipment as they begin a clean sweep of the hillside, recording the chant with outstretched pole mikes.

ANGLE - FURTHER UP THE HILL

Lacombe and Laughlin stand with an ancient Brahman leader of these people. The Brahman's eyes are filled with tears of joy. He is babbling in Hindu. David translates.

DAVID

The sky sings to us! The sky sings to us!

Lacombe is filled with emotion. He embraces the old man.

LACOMBE

It sings to us too, my friend.

CUT TO:

61 INTERIOR - AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

61

Fifty conservatively dressed men and women are filing in. All of them display photo-identification on their black lapels. They are each handed what looks like fancy programs in silver leaf. The mood is less formal than the dress. In the front row a clique of twelve strong young men in Air Force blazers wait attentively. On the stage are seven high-ranking project leaders. Lacombe is one of them.

ANGLE ON STAGE

A man comes out on stage. He speaks with a Texas accent.

TEXAS

We are indebted to the people of La Societé des Lumières for their advanced research and initial success. I'd like to share the dais with Mr. Lacombe, a pioneer in the MAYFLOWER breakthrough. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Edmund Hillary of the hour, Claude Lacombe.

At this announcement the assemblage quickly, almost respectfully, take their seats. The lights dim and Lacombe comes out. He looks nervous and his English is shakey.

LACOMBE

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.
Parles vous Francais?

There is a kind of shameful mass of shrugs and "uh, uh's" from the crowd. Lacombe is pleased at his one-up-manship.

LACOMBE (Continued)

Good, then you will excuse me if my English is no good, too.

(he gets some chuckles)

Very little needs be said. The music will say it all. We start on page one and read together to the end. Please....

Lacombe steps back and the curtains on the stage part. There, in a theatrical pool of light, a tape recorder sits alone on a metal chair. This draws some laughter from the audience. A nervous musician-technician who resembles William Shakespeare makes his entrance. He takes a seat next to the tape recorder and opens some sheet music.

ANGLE - AUDIENCE

They open their programs to reveal the same sheet music.

ANGLE - SHAKESPEARE

He switches the tape recorder to playback. HEARD is the Five-tone chant from that hillside in India.

SHAKESPEARE

Next word

The recorder plays back a single Indian voice intoning a slight variation of the five tones just heard. The audience is excited.

ANGLE ON LACOMBE - BACKSTAGE

Standing just out of sight, moving his lips slightly as if speaking with the music.

SHAKESPEARE (O.S.)

Third word

We HEAR the beginning of another five chord variation. A man walks up to Lacombe and delivers a sealed Telex to him, interrupting his reverie. He lifts his eyes from the sheet music, takes the message and opens it. He raises an eyebrow ... it's obviously stunning news of some kind.

SHAKESPEARE (O.S.)

Fourth word

And another haunting five tones.

ANGLE ON CROWD

SHAKESPEARE (O.S.)

Final word

The last five note variation and the reaction is spontaneous. Everybody leaps up cheering and backslapping, like mission control when the Eagle landed on the moon. Utter pandemonium.

CUT TO:

Jillian's house is in a remote place. She is out in her back yard emptying the trash. Amidst the day's debris are a few aborted sketches of mountains that Jill has made in charcoal and pastels. From INSIDE THE HOUSE WE HEAR the same five notes we have just heard in the auditorium, only now the notes are coming from a child's toy xylophone. Jillian smiles and looks toward the house.

63

HER P.O.V.

63

She has left the kitchen door open and has an unobstructed view through the kitchen and into the living room where Barry is banging away happily on his xylophone (the same five notes). He is giggling and laughing as he plays. All this is pleasant and reassuring to her as she continues trying to get everything in the cans for trash day. As she continues her chores she HEARS the xylophone music stop but Barry's laughter increases. The child's laughter reaches a peak of joy, disturbing Jill. (Too much joy for a mother to bear). She looks back into the house. Barry, laughing hysterically, runs to a side window and looks up at the sky. Jill is afraid to follow her son's gaze skyward but she does. She is astounded.

ANGLE - SKY

64

A forbidding sky, lots of clouds moving over, hundreds of dream shaped puffs...and a lot of them are lit up from behind, Flashing colors like heat lightning. Tiny geodesic points of light skip from cloud to cloud. We're not sure whether this is a natural or supernatural phenomenon occurring but whatever it is it's like nothing we've ever seen before. It scares the shit out of us and Jillian. A LOW RUMBLE, perhaps thunder, rolls over the landscape.

65

ANGLE - JILLIAN

65

She eyes the safety of her house, turns slowly, very slowly and begins the long fifteen steps back inside. She is terrified and she doesn't want to make herself more terrified by running. She continues toward the kitchen in controlled motion.

66

INT. HOUSE

66

She enters the kitchen; very slowly and deliberately locks the back door. She goes into the living room and begins pulling down blinds. As she moves throughout the house closing all the blinds her movements become faster and faster. She goes from a walk to a trot to a run, jerking blinds down as her sense of panic increases.

ANGLE - BARRY

He is still laughing and having a great time but he can't understand why his mother is closing the blinds on all the fun. He goes to a window and opens the blind. Jillian practically dives for him.

JILLIAN

Barry, no!

She rips him away from the window and yanks the shade down. Almost instantly brilliant orange lights appear behind the blinds. The intensity is staggering, even through the opaque blinds. She steps back, stifling a scream.

JILLIAN (Continued)

Not now! Not now!

Barry is still howling with laughter as Jill races to the phone book. With trembling hands she begins scrambling through the book, searching for the "N's"...searching for Neary. Before she can even find the number there is a rattling at the side door. She forgot to lock it! She dashes to the side door.

JILLIAN (Continued)

(through tears)

Not yet!

She bolts the side door as the noise reaches a crescendo outside. She is back in the living room just in time to see Barry open the front. There's a chain lock on the door so the door only opens a crack, but through that crack comes Orange light so intense it could set the furniture on fire. Jill slams the door from behind, grabs Barry and drags him back toward the phone. She is near hysteria and she begins ripping pages from the phone book, searching for Neary's number. She HEARS scratching SOUNDS on the roof, terrible scraping noises. With dread she sees soot and ashes fall from the chimney onto the iron log holders. She renews her search for the number when suddenly the room GOES BLACK. She is totally enveloped in darkness for a moment when the TV suddenly goes ON. This is enough light for Jillian to zero in on Roy's number and dial it. Her skin is white, her eyes are aflame as she waits for the number to ring. And it's not over...suddenly every electrical appliance in the house goes on: the stereo, the vacuum cleaner in the closet, all the kitchen appliances. She is near trauma when a voice at the other end answers. It's Ronnie.

CONTINUED

RONNIE (O.S.)

Hello.

JILLIAN

(a croak)

Roy

RONNIE (O.S.)

He's not here. I'm his wife.
Who's calling, please?

Before Jillian's trembling mouth can form a syllable, the lights go on again. Then they suddenly dim to a low red glow, then a burst of blue even more brilliant than the orange and quickly back to the dim red glow. This phantasmagora sends Jillian to her knees, dropping the phone and crawling under the desk shielding Barry with her body. She is almost epileptic with fear and it's not over yet. The TV, stereo, various appliances and individual lamps take turns in various degrees of loudness and intensity.

As suddenly as it began, the cacophony of sounds and the light STOP. The room is returned to normal. Whatever was there is gone and the room is so quiet Jill's labored breathing sounds almost too loud. She is a burnt-out mass of nerve endings under the desk. Little Barry crawls out from under her to see where the fun has gone. The phone dangles uselessly and from it we HEAR Ronnie's voice....

RONNIE (O.S. Continued)

Hello...hello...

INTERIOR NEARY CAR - DAY

Roy is driving somewhere in the Indiana countryside with a purpose. Ronnie, kind of dressed up, is with him. We come in in mid-conversation.

RONNIE

Well, it was in Cosmopolitan. The fact that these things came closer and closer represents your mother's breast with its promise of food. When satisfied, you, the infant, lose interest in the breast which goes away, getting smaller and smaller. The shape of the female breast is....

CONTINUED

NEARY

Ronnie, I did not see my mother's tits
coming in low over the Mt. Pleasant foothills!

x

This and the sight of the Air Base they're approaching makes Ronnie
sink down in her seat.

RONNIE

Roy, I'll never forgive you if I run
into anybody here I know.

3 EXTERIOR - DAX AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

68

x

Neary approaches the first check point on DAXES outer extremities.
He pulls up to the guard kiosk in his Chevy wagon and leans out the
window where a stoical, skin headed Corporal greets him mechanically.
Just to one side of the kiosk, Ronnie is quick to notice a 'space
junkie' wearing a fringed leather trapper coat over a T-shirt filled
with op-pop-art of the solar system.

x

JUNKIE

There have always been differences
between parents and their off-springs.
... but the teenager of the middle
1960's was a completely new phenomenon
on this planet.

CORPORAL

(to Roy)

Yes sir.

NEARY

The Civilian Information Center, please.

CORPORAL

New Air Force recruiting?

NEARY

Not today, thanks.

CORPORAL

(pointing his thumb)

Recruiting station and information central
are in that tall structure. Parking is in
the lower levels.

The Corporal crams a green civilian visitor card under the windshield
wiper.

JUNKIE

The Beatles changed the world ... but
some cosmic occurrence created the Beatles.

The Chevy wagon motors past a copse of pussy willow trees to a super modern building, twenty stories of cubicle window space and smoked glass.

70 INTERIOR - AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

70

Starting CLOSE on Neary. He is obviously in a sitting position. It seems as though a thousand critical eyes are bathing over him.

As the ANGLE WIDENS, the room is jammed with thirty witnesses. We see half the citizens, some with families who were on Crescendo Summit the night of the helicopters. Jillian sits in a chair just to the right of Ronnie. She has a pounding headache. The fluorescent lighting is giving Neary a headache too. Jillian leans over and offers Roy some Excedrin, then offers a tablet to Ronnie, who smiles smugly .

No, thank you. I'm just fine.

On collective inspection, these people are stereo typically the types of UFO reporters that one would imagine exists in the world today.

RONNIE

(whispers to Roy)

These people are all crazy.

NEARY

Shsssh!

RONNIE

I knew it would be just like this.

Ronnie nods toward the farmer who is looking around the room smiling at everybody.

RONNIE

Look at him - almost over the edge.

NEARY

(through clenched teeth)

You don't know what you're talking about.

Ronnie jabs Roy with her elbow and motions him in the direction of a sixty year old, white haired, extremely paranoid looking woman sitting by herself in a corner and staring into space like she's dead.

RONNIE

And that one over there ... on her way to the rocks below.

Suddenly, the corridor door bursts open and a silver haired Air Force Colonel emerges in his full regalia. He smiles at the Receptionist.

COLONEL

Goodnight Marian.

RECEPTIONIST

Goodnight Colonel _____.

x

The Colonel turns and extends a hand toward the paranoid looking woman Ronnie had pointed out earlier. She rises tiredly and takes the Colonel's hand, turns to the Receptionist.

WOMAN

Goodnight Marian.

RECEPTIONIST

Goodnight Mrs. _____.

(she turns her sight to Neary)

x

CLOSE - NEARY

Roy turns to Ronnie with a big shit eating smile.

RECEPTIONIST

Folks ... you can go in now.
Room 3655.

A secretary appears at the double glass doors. The Tolono Group, led by Neary, Jillian and Ronnie, heads for the corridor. TV NEWS CAMERAS ARE WAITING JUST ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOORS. On go the quartz lights, the cameras begin to turn and Ronnie jerks her purse to cover her face.

RONNIE (through her teeth to Roy)

Damn you!

71 INTERIOR - AIR FORCE CONFERENCE ROOM - LATE DAY

71

The country folk are in sharp contrast to the Army brass; buttoned up and steel grey men who face the crowd from design research swivel chairs and illuminated from low slung overhead arena lights and facing the civilian gathering seated on folding aluminum chairs on all four sides. It looks like Theatre in the Round.

The media is in full evidence; portable TV equipment, newsmen with flash-bulbs, giving the whole affair the feeling of a media-carnival instead of a serious exchange of information.

Neary and Jillian are near the front of the table. He is on his feet in heated debate with the officer in charge, MAJOR BENCHLEY.

(NOTE: Also in this crowd are a LANDOWNER, a friendly civilian with the brass, and the curly haired guy who was taking pictures on Crescendo Summit).

MAJOR BENCHLEY

I'm not attacking your credibility. We get incredible reports from very credible people all the time. We also get silence from millions of others who are watching the same sky.

NEARY

I'm not talking about millions of people! I'm talking about us ...

(gesturing to group)

Why doesn't someone tell us what's going on?

MAJOR BENCHLEY

We're not sure. But why must you assume it has to be an excursion vehicle from off planet?

NEARY

It wasn't the Goodyear blimp!

The TV cameras are grinding during all of this.

MAJOR BENCHLEY

So call it foreign technology. Why assume ...

(gesturing to sky)

... it's that foreign.

NEARY

Fine! Great! Russia builds them! So what are they doing in Delaware County violating Indiana air space?

x

This gets a laugh from the Air Force personnel and television staff. A few of the Crescendo Summit sighters laugh too. But Gracey is taking all of this very seriously.

GRACEY

What the young man means is they were like nothing you'd ever see around here.

(opening her photo album)

Have you seen my pictures?

MAJOR BENCHLEY

Yes I have. Have you seen mine?

Major Benchley pulls from under the conference table a large color blow-up of an impressive grey disc blurred, apparently moving very fast. A few AUDIBLE GASPS from the sighters.

MAJOR BENCHLEY

(pleased at the audible
reaction)

Ladies and gentlemen, this is a flying saucer. Made of peuter. Made in Japan. And thrown across the kitchen by one of my children.

(he puts it away. To Gracey)

I wanted to toss that in to show you we're not all polished brass about these things .. and also demonstrate there's no trick to faking a snapshot. Faking motion picture film, that's something else. Yet we've never seen anything impressive from the more than twenty million Americans who own home movie equipment.

GRACEY

(sadly)

I can't afford a movie camera.

An older respectable man raises his hand. He smokes a pipe.

REASONABLE MAN

Do your people feel the human race is not prepared to live with the cultural impact that the truth could have on mankind?

MAJOR BENCHLEY

If indeed this were true, I'm certain we could live with it. We live in the shadow of atomic annihilate in nine minutes. However, in all of my twenty years with the Air Tactical Intelligence and the Office of Special Investigations, there has been no indisputable proof of the physical existence of these things.

LANDOWNER

Who's gonna pay for the damage to my land?

MAJOR BENCHLEY

Pardon me?

LANDOWNER

I own the land these people was squatting on. They busted down a fence, put out my cattle crossing lights and left Kentucky Fried Chicken all over. Who's gonna pay for it?

MAJOR BENCHLEY

Did you see anything that night?

LANDOWNER

I've owned that property for fifteen years and I've never seen one damn thing!

All the TV cameras are quick to pick up this statement. Neary is losing the thrust of the meeting. Jillian is upset and looks to Roy helplessly. Ronnie seems quietly pleased it's going this way.

NEARY

Wait a minute! Wait a goddamn minute! I saw something! This thing cost me my job. This woman is terrified to walk into her home! This is happening to us and we want to know what on earth it is!

MAJOR BENCHLEY

We've already mentioned our night reconnaissance mission and last night the high build up of static electricity, the heat lightning activity ...

JILLIAN

(working herself up)

They were using the clouds ... they were using them to hide.

MAJOR BENCHLEY

M'am, heat lightning can look like the Fourth of July.

JILLIAN

It wasn't ... it was something real. It was on top of my house. They wanted to play.

MAJOR BENCHLEY

The only way to convince the scientific community is to present scientific evidence concisely ...

JILLIAN

(mutters - upset)

They're turning it all around ...

MAJOR BENCHLEY

... if the evidence is good the case will stand up and this existence of extraordinary phenomenon will have to be taken seriously.

NEARY

(final outcry)

We are the evidence! We want to be taken seriously!

(Roy steps forward just opposite the Major)

Major Benchley, I saw something that didn't seem real ... but dammit ... it was!

MAJOR BENCHLEY

Can you be more articulate, Mr. Neary?

NEARY

I can't be as articulate as you. I didn't spend the last twenty years preparing some of the answers you're dishing out here. There's something important going on and you're in on it.

MAJOR BENCHLEY

Mr. Neary, what would you like to believe is going on?

NEARY

I'd like to believe I'm not going crazy. I see seven people in this room who'd also like to believe that.

A new man steps forward, a civilian who seems to outrank the brass. He speaks to the crowd in a much more familiar and reassuring manner than the Major. He reminds one of Buzz Aldrin, the astronaut. Ronnie approves of this man.

CIVILIAN

Folks, there are all kinds of ideas that would be fun to believe in ... mental telepathy, time travel, no state and federal taxes. It's no fun to go home and say, "You'll never guess what happened. I was in this restaurant, there was a bright light, I rushed outside, it was an airplane".

NEARY

What I saw didn't have any wings.

CIVILIAN

I'd wish I'd seen it. For fifteen years I've wanted to see one of those things without having to account for it. I believe in life elsewhere. The odds are against there not being ... but the expectation that we are going to be saved from ourselves by some interstellar intervention works against the necessity for us to solve our own problems.

NEARY

I won't be told that I'm seeing things.

CIVILIAN

Good. Because I wouldn't tell you that.
I don't know what the truth is.

NEARY

You're not going to fool me by agreeing
with me.

This gets a burst of laughter, even from Roy's allies. He is flustered
and confused. At this low moment of credibility the old Farmer gets
bored with the rigamarole. So, out of the blue ...

FARMER

I saw Bigfoot once.

The whole room turns in surprise at this. The TV cameras swing around.
The old Farmer's got the group in the palm of his hand. He enjoys this.

FARMER

It was up in the Sequoia National Park.
Nineteen fifty-one.

NEARY

(losing the crowd -
shouting to be heard)

Can't you just tell us, is this base
conducting classified tests in the Mt. Pleasant
foothill area? x

FARMER

(overlapping)

It had a foot on 'em, thirty-seven
inches, heel to toe.

CIVILIAN

It would be easy for me to lie and say
yes. You'd walk away with a down to earth
answer in your pocket. This isn't the case
and I won't mislead you.

ANOTHER LISTENER

What about the little star to Bethlehem
that led the three wisemen to Jesus? This
star have never been satisfactorily
explained by astronomers.

JILLIAN

(persisting)

How will you classify our reports?

MAJOR BENCHLEY

For now ... unidentified.

NEARY

What you're saying is these unidentified objects have been identified as unidentified.

SECOND LISTENER

We had a ghost out at our summer place in Westchester.

THIRD LISTENER

Sir, is there any truth to all this Loch Ness monster crap ...

INTERIOR - CORRIDOR - EVENING

72

The meeting has just adjourned. Some people have already left. The ones remaining have the look of not having accomplished much. Neary, with Ronnie and Jillian, is waiting for the express elevator. He is alone with his shredded thoughts. He knots a fist and 'bops' the down button again.

RONNIE

Well. I feel alot better about this.
Don't you?

73 SUBTERRANEAN LEVEL - ELEVATOR

73

The elevator door opens and Roy charges out, fizzling mad, Ronnie and Jillian behind him. He stops at the soft drink machine looking for a way to cool off and buys all of them cokes. Pausing to refresh he catches sight of an opening in the wall. It is a master control circuit panel. It is used by the maintenance department as an easy access to office lighting. Neary's eyes light up. He starts for the panel - Ronnie tries to detain him but he shakes her off. He leans into the circuit breakers and is instantly familiar with the office diagram on the adjacent panel. Roy is smiling now. He flips a switch ... reads the diagram and flips another. As his smile overflows and his fingers dance along the hundreds of switches.

EXTERIOR - THE GLASS ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - NIGHT

74

Roy's car comes roaring out of the flourescent subterranean garage, Jillian's car is just behind.

The Crescendo Summit folks are beginning to congregate. The skin-headed Corporal wanders dizzily, squinting through the dusk. Others gawk and shuffle as our attention shifts to what they are looking at.

ANGLE - 20 STORY GLASS TOWER

Specific windows have been turned on .. others darkened. What remains spells UFO across the entire face of the DAX Force Administration Facility.

Air x

75 A BLAST OF SUNLIGHT

75

White sand dunes oscillate to the vanishing point. A title appears in the lower portion of the picture.

"GOBI DESERT - MONGOLIA"

CONTINUED

75 (Cont'd)

75 (Cont'd)

The sky sucks heat waves from the white sand. It must be 135 degrees in the shade ... if you can find any.

A military sand ROVER with its rather stupified crew waits for an unmarked helicopter that is just now setting down behind it. x
everything goes white as the chopper descends and

ANGLE - UNMARKED CHOPPER

Lacombe and Laughlin emerge wearing safari fatigues. Lacombe carries a small camera wrapped in protective cellophane. He gasps at the furnace heat and quickly covers his eyes with a pair of Rommel goggles. Emerging from behind him are at least twenty American plain clothed soldiers, officials and Army engineers. They are all looking in the same direction. They are all carrying the same expressions - UTTER CHAOTIC SURPRISE - !

Lacombe squints with awe through his double-tints.

One man actually genuflects his disbelief and ...

Everyone walks forward finally ... taking the ANGLE TO INCLUDE ...

In the worst reaches of the desert wasteland is an impossible sight.

There is a 425 foot ocean freighter lying on its starboard side against the flattened dunes ... undefineable, strangulating and strange ... It is the M.S. MARINE SULPHUR QUEEN.

A member of the Army Engineers is locked in argument with a project Official.

ENGINEER

What do you mean, move it in tact!
This looks like a job for Superman
... not the Corps of Army Engineers!

David Laughlin steps forward to be along side Lacombe. He is completely aghast. Strangely, Lacombe is walking forward away from the ocean freighter and toward an encampment of Mongolian families, their camals and belongings. SUB-TITLES FOLLOW:

LACOMBE

The more light we throw on this,
the longer the shadows spread

DAVID

But it has to mean something.

LACOMBE

Perhaps it means nothing like a
child running a stick along a fence.

Cont'd)

DAVID

75 (Cont'd)

(to himself)

That's some stick!

Another project member, an American, is already down on his haunches at the perimeter of the Mongolian Base Camp. Men, women and children seem to be holding a vigil. They stare hopefully as Lacombe and David approach.

LACOMBE

(to project member
in English)

This is not a nomadic tribe.

PROJECT MEMBER

(his hands full)

They're just folks from Sain Shanda and Mandal Gobi. No trade routes go through here. There is no water. There is no reason for these people to be anywhere within 100 miles of this sandtrap.

Many of the Mongols are rising to their feet and begging questions. They surround Lacombe, touching him, crying to him.

DAVID

They want you to tell them what happens now.

All Lacombe can do is reach out for their hands and squeeze them back, reassuringly.

ANGLE - UNMARKED HELICOPTER

The pilot speaks a reply into his radio, then turns toward a project member shouting to be heard above the spinning propellers.

CHOPPER PILOT

I've got an urgent for Mr. Lacombe.
Return to America now. The trucks are rolling.

76

EXTERIOR - A WAREHOUSE SOMEWHERE IN U.S. - DAY

76

Coming out of a seemingly military facility, a formation of semi-truck trailers leaves the building one at a time. They bear markings of the Piggily Wiggily Supermarket & Baskin Robbins 31 Flavors. The end is not in sight as camera pans and these heavy duty giants rumble into a neon American night.

Ronnie is cooking supper over a steaming oven console. Water boils, steam pours everywhere, electric can opener turns, and other madhouse activity. Ronnie is talking on the telephone. She is close to the end of her tether.

RONNIE

(aside to Toby)

Go tell your father dinner's almost ready.

Toby hesitates - just stands there.

RONNIE

Please, Toby, tell your father.

(into phone)

No, Mother, I can handle this. You're not helping me Mother. You're not helping. We have Master Charge till the end of the month. He won't see a doctor. He won't see anybody.

THE CAMERA PULLS OUT THE WINDOW AND SLOWLY RISES UP, KEEPING RONNIE IN SIGHT AS LONG AS POSSIBLE.

RONNIE

(cont'd)

Yes, he's looking. He's looking all the time but not for work. I'm doing that... for me Mother. Of course he loves us.

CAMERA WITHDRAWING TO THE ROOF OF THE HOUSE. AN OVERVIEW OF THE INDIANA NEIGHBORHOOD AT DUSK. FOR THE FIRST TIME THERE IS NEARY, SITTING IN AN ALUMINUM CHAIR WITHIN A HOMEMADE SKY-WATCHING PLATFORM WITH TINY TELESCOPE AND GUARD RAILS. TOOLS FROM THIS RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECT STILL GLITTER THE SHINGLES. NEARY IS SCANNING THE HEAVENS. FROM BELOW A TINY VOICE IS HARDLY AUDIBLE.

TOBY'S VOICE

Dad...Dad.

DOWNSHOT - AT THE BOTTOM OF A LADDER

Toby is ever so small down there afraid to raise his voice much more.

TOBY

Mom's got dinner ready.
Dad...

NEARY'S P.O.V.

The sky is dusted with starlight.

CLOSE - NEARY

He watches a little longer and his eyes go cloudy. Tears are coming reflecting the brightest stars.

ANGLE - NEXT DOOR

Mrs. Harris pulls her car into the driveway and turns the engine off. She looks up at Neary beyond her shopping bags. He is watching the stars coming out. She looks where he is looking. NONSENSE! Mrs. Harris hurries toward her house.

78

INT. NEARY DEN - LATE DUSK

78

He comes into the house and passes his train layout on the way to the dining area. He stops to fixate on a little brown mountain built into the middle of the miniature countryside. He is obviously not happy with the way it looks. His eyes are red-rimmed and Neary has the prickly beginnings of a beard and looks wiped out. His eyes linger a while longer...he picks up some shrubs and tries to find a place for them like a chess player reconnoitering the board for his next move. He doesn't know.

NEARY

It's not right.

A78

INT. DINING AREA - NIGHT

A78

The line has been drawn. Neary sits alone at the end of the table while Brad and Sylvia and Toby are positioned closer to their mother at the other end. Not a word is being said. The children are too frightened to speak.

CONT'D

INT. DINING AREA - NIGHT - CONT'D

A78 Continued

Only the sound of silverware and tupperware as Neary is handed his plate of salmon croquettes, niblet corn and asparagus. Neary's eyes are vacant. He isn't really aware of anything. He picks up his fork. Cocks his head. Fixates on something on his plate.

CLOSE - DINNER PLATE

Neary is moving his fork around the plate, piling the corn around the base of the croquette.

CLOSE- NEARY

So vague as he rearranges the food on the plate. Ronnie makes a disgusted sound and Roy looks up at his family. They are frozen into place staring at him. Roy wants to talk to them... he wants to touch them and make everything better. He folds his face into his hands and when he looks up again his eyes are red. He smiles weakly and tries to make a funny face about himself. This fails. He wants so to offer something.

NEARY

(laughing behind his own understatement)

By now you've noticed something
goo-goo about Dad. Don't worry.
I'm still Dad.

He reaches out toward Sylvia who moves closer to Ronnie.

NEARY

(to the kids)

It's like when you know the
music but you just don't get
the words? I don't know how
to say it, what I'm thinkin.

(to Ronnie, just mouths the
words silently)

I'm alright. I'm alright.

Moonlight spills through the picture window. Running water can be heard.

ANGLE - HALLWAY

The water sounds can be traced to the end of the hall.

CLOSE - BATHROOM DOOR

The water is at its loudest point. But another more disturbing sound comes from within. A man is crying.

Ronnie appears, having just come home. She listens at the door. She knocks twice ... very softly.

RONNIE

Sweetheart.

(no answer)

Roy, please open the door.

BRAD & TOBY, in their pajamas, stand in the hall next to their bedroom.

BRAD

Is Dad alright?

RONNIE

(her late night confusion
makes her snap at them)

Get in your room and close the door!

Both youngsters hop back inside, leaving the door open just a crack. Ronnie shoots by them and into the kitchen. She rattles around in a darkened drawer, returning with a butter knife. Inserting the blunt end into the knob, she springs the lock and the door swings open.

CLOSE - SHOWER

Falling full tilt into the tub.

CLOSE -SINK

Tap water overflowing.

CLOSE -NEARY

Frozen in a darkened corner, crying like a baby.

NEARY

(trying to smile through
choked tears)
It's like the hiccups. I started,
and I can't stop.

RONNIE

(her sympathy turns to
coal)
... you're bombed out of your skull.

NEARY

I'm scared to death and I don't know
why.

Neary sticks his head under the shower. When he pulls out, Ronnie hands him a towel but is too scared to go over and hug the tears away. Another spasm of silent crying vibrates through him as he forces aspirin into his mouth.

NEARY

What's happening to me - !

RONNIE

All this nonsense is turning this
house upsidedown.

NEARY

I think, maybe ... it's all a joke.
Except look how I'm not laughing.

RONNIE

None of our friends call here anymore.
You don't care. You're out of work.
(a burst of panic)
You're wrecking this house!!

Suddenly, the bathroom door is thrown open the rest of the way and little Brad screams hysterically, defending himself against the image of his broken down father.

BRAD

You cry baby! Cry baby! Cry baby!

Hurling himself towards his room, he slams the door five times wanting to crack it loose. Toby runs after his brother, hysterical, tramatized.

81 INTERIOR - THE BEDROOM

81

The crying has stopped but his trembling intensifies as he collapses ont the bed. Ronnie has no idea how to deal with this. She beats on the mattress with her tiny fists.

RONNIE

There is nothing wrong with you!
C'mon ... walk it off. I'll make
the coffee while you walk it off.

Neary grabs her right hand and won't let go.

NEARY

I'm scared.

RONNIE

(her bravado is weakening
... she attacks through tears)
I hate you like this.

Neary reaches out and pulls her into bed.

NEARY

Hug me. That's all you have to do.
Hold onto me ... you can really
help now.

He folds her into his arms and his trembling seems to pulsate right
through her and Ronnie is really incapable of bearing up to this.

RONNIE

Oh don't. Let me call someone.
Oh, Roy ... please don't.

His fingers rip at her clothing, opening them at the back.

RONNIE

(just empty words through
her flowing tears)
I hate you. I hate you. I hate you.

Next, Roy grips the material around her shoulder and pulls. The tattered
remnants pin her arms to her sides and Roy slides down to her breasts
and, oddly enough, his anxiety flows out of him ... and ...

Ronnie starts to tremble now ... her teeth chattering, silent sobs
wracking her body. She is helpless and horrified ... like a child
being raped.

82

INTERIOR - THE WORKROOM - MORNING

82

CLOSE - THE MINIATURE MOUNTAIN

Neary is half dressed and staring at the remains of the toy mountain he
ruined the night before. From outward appearances, he has been sitting
like this and staring for hours and this is when the inspiration seizes
him. It is a stunning visual re-birth of a man sunken to his lowest depth.
His whole world is falling into place. He is a thousand watt light bulb
snapping back and

NEARY

(at first, barely
audible)

I got it.

(much louder this time)

I got it!

Roy looks around the room, desperate for something. He rushes out of the house.

3 INTERIOR - CORRIDOR - DAY

83

All this shouting has awakened Brad and Toby and they come sleepily out of their bedroom just in time to see their father rushing out to the front yard. Neary looks at his garden of Azaleas, Hydrangeas and Geraniums. This maddening inspiration overpowers him. Using both hands to twist, yank and shake loose, Neary uproots the geranium, whipping the soiled plant around his head to loosen the clodded topsoil. The FAMILY ROOM WINDOW is barely open but Roy inserts a hand and raises it all the way. He hurls the uprooted bush as he is attacking another shrub. Ronnie and the kids tumble out into the yard. She is horrified at what she sees. The kids are kind of pleased, especially Brad.

NEARY

(happier than we
have seen him)

C'mon, guys.

The two boys give a cheer and begin helping throwing clods of dirt through the window as their father hands them to them. Ronnie is stunned speechless by this.

BRAD

After this can we throw dirt in
my room?

RONNIE

Stop it! Stop it!

ANGLE TOWARD MRS. HARRIS' - NEXT DOOR

Her hair is sopping wet as she watches from her second story window. Sure enough, the Neary family is tossing dirt and shrubbery through an open window and into the house. Mrs. Harris looks again ... harder.

ANGLE - NEARY FRONT YARD

Ronnie knocks the dirt out of the boy's hands and confronts Roy.

RONNIE

You're turning everything upside-
down.

Roy looks around her, into the den.

ANGLE - MRS. HARRIS' BATHROOM WINDOW

Now Mrs. Harris is blowing her hair dry. Suddenly, she spots Roy, soiled and wild-eyed, charging into her garage and taking her chicken wire. She opens the window and shouts at him as he is about half way home. By now Ronnie and the kids (who have stopped enjoying all this) have arrived on the scene.

MRS. HARRIS

Whatever you're doing is against the law.

Roy stops, but he's not exactly sure how to answer what he is doing.

RONNIE

(trying to cover)

He's putting it back, Mrs. Harris.

NEARY

(shaking his head "no")

I'll pay you for it ...

Mrs. Harris brandishes her hot air blower like a gun, not wanting Roy to climb in her window.

MRS. HARRIS

Take it! Take it!

Roy skips off, passing a cement pond encircled by chickenwire and sporting a dozen pet ducks and their noisy chicks. He pauses at the duck pond and measures the situation. He grunts his approval and rips the chickenwire from its stakes and staples, rolling it into an underarm slab and dashing off. Mrs. Harris is enraged. Ronnie tries to help, pointing a hard finger at the wandering fowl.

RONNIE

Stay! Stay!

Roy is wrestling with the wire and trash cans, stuffing them through the window. Ronnie is crying at her husband's insane behavior, holding her three children around her like a mother hen protecting her brood.

RONNIE

I'm taking the kids to my sister's house.

CONTINUED

NEARY
 (this stops him)
 That's crazy ... you're not dressed.

RONNIE
 (that does it)
 That's what? What - ? You said what!!

She grabs the kids and hurries for the car. Roy goes after her.

NEARY
 Wait!

RONNIE
 I've done that!!

She gets to the car, shoving kids in every door. Norman tries to stop her, but she's determined.

NEARY
 Ronnie, please stay here! Please be with me now.

RONNIE
 For what? To see them take you away in a straight jacket?

She gets in the car and slams him out. He tries to yank open the door but she locks it, quickly starts the car and puts in reverse. Roy gives up yanking at the door, but he leaps on the hood as the car begins backing out of the driveway through the left over garbage.

86 INTERIOR - CAR - RONNIE AND THE KIDS P.O.V.

86

It's a disturbing sight for Ronnie and the kids to see Roy lying on the hood, pounding his fists and yelling. And to see various neighbors coming out of their houses and onto their lawns to see what the hell is going on.

NEARY
 Stay with me!

But she accelerates and he is forced to jump off. He watches them speed off down the suburban street. Only after Roy watches his family lurch around a corner does he notice half the people in the neighborhood are staring at him, standing in the middle of the street in his pajamas, dirty and deranged.

NEARY

(to crowd)

'Morning.

Neary heads back toward the open den window. Stopping to pick up the garden hose and turn on the water. He uses a nearby ladder and climbs in the house, splashing water on himself and the inside of the house. Once in, he pulls the ladder in after himself, slams the window and pulls the drapes, shutting out the world.

87

INTERIOR - NEARY DEN - LATER
CLOSE - TELEVISION SET

87

On the screen we see some type of banal game show.

ANGLE - ROY

He is a shambles. His face and body are congealed in mud as he sits cross-legged staring up. He looks like a spent and withered artist at the foot of his creation. He can't take his eyes from it.

88

ANGLE - NEARY'S CREATION

88

A spiralling mountain rises out of the family room rug, covering the entire HO train set. Made from chicken wire, garbage cans, garden stakes and lacquered over with paper mache, sculpted from garden earth and sediment, this towering model fills the 18 x 15 foot living area and reaches the full nine feet to the beam ceiling. It is at once terrifying and inspired. It could pass for the real thing if it weren't for an occasional newspaper headline showing through the coating of mache and mud. The detailing is impeccable - a stand of fir trees planted from his own garden shrubbery - four fluted vertical walls forming a plateau at the top, and on the down side of the mountain, a box canyon enclosing a peaceful Shangri-la valley. Beyond this Roy, himself, sags breathlessly beneath this grotesque citadel.

CLOSE - TV SCREEN

A mid-day soap opera. Life is tough everywhere. Neary is on the telephone, defeated and scooped out.

NEARY

Don't hang up again. What do you want me to do? Can't you come home now? Yes - Yes, I'll talk to him. Anything .. please, Ronnie don't hang up ... Ronnie ... CLICK!

0 CLOSE - TV SCREEN 90

The TV set acts like the face of a clock ticking the hours. Talk show host and guest celebrities watch the Amazing Kreskin perform feats of magic and extrasensory perception. x
x
x

1 CLOSE - ROY 91

Listless and full of surrender, he lets the TV carry through the day.

2 CLOSE - TV SCREEN 92

Alan Ladd is stalling for time while he shares a cigarette and gung ho patriotism with Sen Young, an Imperial Japanese officer in the movie, "China". There is an earthshaking burst of TNT and the surrounding cliffwalls bury the Japanese column and Alan Ladd in smoking rubble.

ANGLE - ROY

Eyes drifting to sleep, he half listens to

93 CLOSE - TV SCREEN 93

Gomer Pyle being chewed out by his Sargeant, or whatever.

CLOSE - ROY

His eyes are almost closed. Time passes in micro-seconds.

4 FULL SCREEN - TELEVISION 94

Condensing hours into seconds, the images tick on ...cartoons. syndicated episodes, local news ... disaster trivia ... people, places, commercials ... it all melts into a tasteless purée of terrestrial pabulum. Over end credits on an old show we hear: x

TELEVISION (V.O.)

Poison Gas disaster in Wyoming.
Details at seven...

ANGLE ON JILLIAN who has almost the same look of stunned creation that Neary had.

ANGLE - HER CREATION

Jillian has painted an exact duplicate of Neary's mountain. Scattered around are several crumpled up and torn earlier, less detailed sketches of the same picture.

Barry is very excited as he watches television. He is fondling the screen as he calls to his mother...

BARRY

Mommy!!! Mommy!!! Mommy!!!

Jillian ENTERS. She has a tremendously emotional reaction to what she sees on the television set. She kneels down next to Barry and they both watch in rapt attention as news anchorman reports: x

NEWS ANCHORMAN (TV V.O.) x

Another chemical gas derailment has forced the widest area evacuation in the history of these controversial army rail shipments.

Bleary eyed and in a state of grave depression, he looks at his mountain and holds the telephone with both hands like it's his only lifeline.

NEARY

(on phone to Ronnie)

Whenever you want - don't hang up - I'll meet you there. I don't know what I did. At these fees let him tell me. Please, don't hang up, Ronnie. Can you come home first ... will you meet me there?

(he panics)

Why not?

O.S. News Anchorman is doing his 7:00 PM network newscast. x

NEWS ANCHORMAN VOICE

Devils Tower, Wyoming is the victim of this latest U.S. Army railroad mishap. Charles McDonnel is on the scene for a live report.

CLOSE - NEARY

He looks at the TV picture, a passing glance, but reacts as if hit by a jackhammer. At first, Roy refuses to believe what he is seeing. But there it is again. Roy rises to get a better look and tips over the coffee table on which rests what looks to be enough spent beer to fuel a Super Bowl crowd. He slides in front of the TV picture with the telephone and Ronnie barely audible lashing out at him.

Thousands of refugee civilians are flooding the outlying districts spurred on by rumors that the seven tankercars that overturned at the Walkashi Needles junction were filled to capacity with escaping G-M nerve gas.

Minutes before we were forced to evacuate what is being called the hot zone - our binocular cameras took these pictures of the disaster scene.

A super telephoto news camera captures the demolished string of tank cars and hundreds of yards of twisted cross timber and rails. And just beyond this sizeable disaster, anchored in a blue mist and rising gently out of the lowlands, we view a uniquely familiar sight. IT IS A ROOTED IN LIFE DUPLICATION OF THE MOUNTAIN THAT NEARY WAS CONSTRUCTED IN THE TV ROOM ... TRUE IN EVERY DETAIL BUT MOST TELLING BY ITS TREE TRUNK APPEARANCE AND OTHER TOPOGRAPHICAL TWISTS AND TURNS.

9 CLOSE - NEARY

99

This mindboggling revelation just about transforms him. He looks again at his own scale model recreation. More energized than dazed, Roy begins to laugh. He cannot stop himself. He pulls himself right up to the TV and eyeballs the mountain - looks at his own - back to the TV ... then his own ...

NEARY

(into phone)

Never mind.

(he hangs up on her)

100 BACK TO THE TV SCREEN

100

One last CLOSE UP look to confirm that the mountain is called DEVILS TOWER and is as far away as WYOMING.

MATCH CUT:

101 A BLACK AND WHITE TV SET - FULL SCREEN

101

A carry on bag is being x-rayed at the Cox Municipal Airport. The luggage just scanned feeds out an opening onto a conveyor belt. A hand reaches around the strap and it is Roy. Turning to go, he almost knocks a female security agent to the ground as he hurries past her and double times it down the sterile corridor to the boarding gates.

2 INTERIOR - NEARY DEN - MACHE MOUNTAIN - DAY

102

The TELEPHONE is blasting out at the empty room. The huge mountain stands alone in all of its makeshift majesty.

03 INTERIOR - JILLIAN'S HOUSE - DAY

103

She is perspiring, out of breath, as she waits for Roy to answer his phone. It keeps ringing and ringing. Slamming the phone into its cradle, Jillian bends down and picks up a plaid travel bag. She crosses over to where her old and helpless MOTHER is keeping a watchful eye on Barry. Jillian's mother is worried, anxious and a little angry at her daughter.

JILLIAN

I'll be back as soon as I can, Mom.

BARRY

(very distressed)

Take me, Mommy.

JILLIAN

I can't, Pumpkin. I just can't.

She kisses Barry. He clutches her tightly.

BARRY

Mommy!

JILLIAN

(a vow)

I'm coming back, honey. I'm coming back.

She EXITS as quickly and painlessly as possible.

04 EXTERIOR - TARMAC

104

The TWA jet thunders down the runway and blasts into the Indiana night. x

05 EXTERIOR - HERTZ RENT-A-CAR GARAGE - MORNING

105

A Chevy wagon ... just like the home model ... rockets down the ramp with Roy at the wheel and blasts out of the dark garage and into a splended Wyoming morning.

Roy is driving on the interstate at sixty. At the same time he is pouring over a Shell map that covers the steering wheel and part of the dash. A flexible straw punctures the map through which Roy slurps his strawberry milkshake breakfast and with his one free hand outlines travel routes in green pencil. Whistling LEAVING CHEYENNE, Roy pushes the speedometer over the 70 M.P.H. mark. He witnesses the first wave of escaping refugees. A lineup of trucks, jeeps, station wagons and recreational vehicles loaded with luggage and belongings pass Roy in the oncoming lanes. Neary fiddles with his car radio and finds some local news:

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

... and thousands of others are homeless. The U.S. Army Material Command has issued these new area restrictions: All roadways north of Crowheart on Interstate 25. All roads leading into the Grand Tetons west of Meetetse. All multi-lane undivided full traffic interchange, gravel, local and historic stage roads south of Cody and as far east as Burlington, as far west as Yellowstone Lake.

DISSOLVE

A Panavision panorama of people, panic and pandemonium. We are on the outskirts of a small town, at a railroad and highway intersection near the railway depot. The train yard is swarming with the homeless and displaced who are being loaded into every available railway car by Army Personnel. Everywhere there are abandoned vehicles.

P.A. ANNOUNCER

We are now boarding all passengers with Blue Boarding Cards - D-K. D-K only. All evacuees with Red Boarding Cards - Please wait behind the yellow barriers.

Two or three hundred yards from the train depot is another mad house - a major military roadblock, herding all cars out of the area ... not permitting anyone into the open brushland beyond. Roy's is the only vehicle going against the flow - toward the brushland perimeter and road block.

107 (Cont'd)

107 (Cont'd)

To add to the confusion and delay, thousands of beef cattle are being herded out of the area by panicky ranch hands. The big-time wealthy rancher sits in his chaffuered limo, screaming at men and cattle.

OWNER

Move 'em! Move 'em!

108 ANOTHER ANGLE

108

Approaching the refugee cattle and actually merging with them are hundreds of spring sheep. They salt the cattle herd making the saddle back drivers crazy and turning the rancher beet red.

OWNER

(to sheep boss)

Get your woolly faggots away from my prime cuts!

SHEEP OWNER

(in a pickup truck)

You spook a single sheep and there will be beef by-products from here to Jackson hole.

Neary parks near the makeshift barrier and gets out. An Air Force Cargo chopper heads into the danger zone. Neary shades his eyes and follows its northerly direction when a shadow rises over him and cuts off the view. A lumberjack of a soldier is facing him down.

SOLDIER

You have next of kin in the red zone, buddy?

NEARY

(intimidated by his size)

Sure ... my sister.

The soldier produces a clipboard and a list of names alphabetically.

SOLDIER

What's her name?

NEARY

I'm sure she's outta there by now.

SOLDIER

We got everybody out before noon yesterday. What's the name and I'll tell you where she's relocated.

NEARY

(starting back to the car)

I'll find her.

SOLDIER
 (intuitively suspicious)
 Not likely. There's more'n twenty
 evacuation stations across the
 state. What's your name?

Neary ducks into his car and starts the motor.

NEARY
 Smith.

SOLDIER
 We've got orders to shoot anybody
 looting around here, Smith. Pass
 it on.

As Neary peels away another soldier sidles up to his lumber jack buddy.

SOLDIER #2
 Another scavenger?

SOLDIER
 Sweetheart, I can smell 'em in a
 hurricane.

109 ANGLE - NEARY IN CAR

109

He looks around and his eyes fasten on another oddity. On the curb next to the divided highway is a Hawker and his stringbean family selling parakeets and canaries to a brisk 'north-south' trade. He also has some cardboard boxes with dual nozzled gas masks. (SEE "Time" magazine, February 16, 1976).

110 ANGLE - HAWKER

110

HAWKER
 (a grandiose spiel)
 Folks, I don't wish to alarm you, but
 G-M nerve gas is colorless and odorless.
 When your eyes dialate and your nose
 begins to run, you're gonna regret not
 owning one of these early warning systems.
 When you got bloody discharge from the
 nose and mouth. When your muscles seize
 up so's you embarass yourself in your
 pants, you'll regret not havin' a canary
 guarantced to fall off his perch hours
 before you do.

People begin to buy eagerly. The hawker takes the money while his wife hands out birds. Roy goes up to the Hawker.

Synopsis

During a power blackout, Water and Power employee, Roy Neary, has an encounter with unidentified Flying Objects which leaves him profoundly moved. He tries desperately to get someone to believe him. But no one does, particularly the Air Force, who have sent representatives to check out reports of "flying saucers". He discovers a group of people who have had experiences similar to his and he can relate to them. Other than this small group of believers, however, he is regarded as a nut.

A TV Station learns that Roy has reported sighting a UFO and tries to interview him. The interview is a disaster but it's on the 6:00 News anyway and then Roy's whole life begins to go to pieces. He loses his job, his neighbors won't talk to him, his wife tries to get him to see a psychiatrist, his children are afraid of him and he finally does behave as if he is unhinged....

He frantically begins to build a mountain in the family room of his house. This is a totally compulsive act and yet he seems to know just where each shrub and rock should be placed as he shovels in dirt, shrubs, rocks and whatever else is needed to complete his project. Finished, he sits back, rest in front of the tv set and suddenly realizes that he is looking at an exact replica of his mountain. It is an area in Wyoming which is being evacuated as a result of a poisonous chemicle gas shipment being derailed. A Norman rushes for the airport, we see another believer, Jillian Guiler preparing to go to the mountain. She has seen the newscast also.

In his attempt to get to the mountain, Roy almost succeeds in getting past the Army roadblocks but is caught and taken to Lacombe, an Army PR office for questioning. Lacombe has been involved in searching for answers to UFO's for a long, long time and is genuinely interested in Roy's story. He suspects that Roy and several other "gate crashers" like Roy (including Jillian Guiler) have a right to be here and tries to prevent the army from airlifting them out of the area but he doesn't succeed.

The "gate crashers", led by Roy's escape from the helicopter and fan c over the side of the mountain in a last desperate attempt to fulfill what ever destiny has brought them to this place. As Roy and Jillian reach the crest and gaze into the box canyon they are amazed.

The entire area is taken up with men and equipment of every possible kind including ~~Hand~~ Moog Synthesizers upon which certain chords are being played to which "something" is responding. As they watch, the stars in sky begin to rearrange themselves as if in response to the chords and unfolds an unimaginably spectacular scene which culminates in the landing of the Mother Ship, a space ship of unbelievable proportions.

And at this meeting of the worlds, Roy Neary leads a select group of volunteers onto the Mother Ship... perhaps to be the first human representatives to visit an alien world.

NEARY
How far are we from the train wreck?

(77)

HAWKER

Not far enough. My wife heard an Army guy say this gas can be lethal as far as fifty miles from the spill. A puff of wind and we all could be twitchin' in the street by morning."

NEARY

Alright. I'll take one of these ... and two of those ...

HAWKER

(indicating birds)
Whole tanker load of Anthrax and Q-Fever upset itself too. Now, that's just a rumor but it pays to be safe.

Just as Neary is about to turn he HEAPS

JILLIAN (O.S.)

Roy! !

He turns.

1 NEARY'S P.O.V.

111

As he searches the throng near the train depot. He recognizes JILLIAN'S VOICE calling his name, but he can't find her in the crowd of people streaming into the railroad cars. It's hard to trace her by sound because of the din of the crowd and the insistent honking of the people behind him. Suddenly, he does see her! She is in the middle of a swarm of people, moving against the tide of humanity, trying to get to Roy. He takes off and plunges into the crowd. Disgusted, the guy in the car behind him peels out on the dirt shoulder, bypassing his car. Others follow suit.

112 WIDE ANGLE

112

The people, the livestock, the army, the terror ... all these work against Roy and Jillian as they try to join each other. Roy is having a slightly easier time of it since he's more or less moving with the flow, but Jillian is struggling, panicky, and making almost no headway. Roy arrives at her side just as she's about to slide under the feet of the mob. He grabs her, saves her. They hold on with people streaming all around them. Tears of relief stream down Jillian's eyes as Roy cuts crossways through the crowd to get them out of danger. WE CAN'T HEAR THEM OVER THE MADHOUSE but we can see them eagerly swapping information on how they got there as they reach the edge of the mass.

113 ANGLE - FRINGE OF CROWD

113

They're out of danger and heading toward Roy's car.

NEARY

(finishing a theory)
... I don't even think there really is poison gas out there.

He opens the passenger door to let her in and turns back the way they came.

JILLIAN

Where are you going?

NEARY

To get you a gas mask.

114 EXTERIOR - DIVIDED HIGHWAY - LATER

114

Neary and Jillian are some miles from Reliance. He motors slowly along the empty asphalt, looking for an avenue inland. He passes a dirt stage road but blocking it is an Army jeep and a couple of tired G.I.'s. Observing them out of the rear view mirror, Roy keeps looking ahead until the jeep is out of sight. He pulls off the road and stops next to the barbed wire fencing. He looks up and down the highway listening for traffic. There is none. Very nervous, Roy approaches the wire fencing and plows the auto right through it. SNIP! BONG! The fence starts to unravel.

115 EXTERIOR - WIDE OPEN SPACES - DAY

115

Roy battles the steering wheel. The tires pump over potholes and arroyos. The two canaries huddle together in a corner of the cage, fighting to stay upright on their perch. CRUNCH! Roy's head smashes against the hardtop. THUNK! Jillian's chest bumps against the dash. Just ahead is the stage road. Roy turns onto it and stops, looking over his shoulder back the way he came. The jeep and Army sentrys must be miles away. He checks the canaries for signs of weakening.

116 CLOSE - CANARIES

116

Dazed and blinking from the hairy cross country detour. One of the birds starts to chirp but his partner pecks him on the beak to keep him quiet.

117 EXTERIOR - OLD STAGE INTERSECTION

117

A modern roadsign puts DEVILS TOWER ten miles further on. The Chevy wagon shovels dust as it gathers speed for the big plunge ahead, but then brakes speed suddenly and

ANGLE - NEARY & JILLIAN

They see something up ahead that almost makes them whisper "amen".

THEIR P.O.V.

The ragged tree trunk appearance of DEVILS TOWER peak balanced on a downslope of Shasta fir and at the scarred base, the smoking remnants of some railyard disaster. But they are still too far away to make out machinery, let alone railroad track. Roy is elated at having made it this far and pours on speed.

CONTINUED

Almost immediately he is confronted by the eerie sight of an abandoned gas station/eatery in the totally deserted area. The place is called "BESSIE'S" and country and western music pumps out of the cafe even though we can see through the windows the place is empty. Roy checks his gas gauge at the sight of the gas station and sees he's near empty.

ANGLE - GAS PUMP

Gallons and dollars are adding up in a rotating whir. Jillian is manning the hose.

118

INTERIOR - BESSIE'S CAFE

118

Roy is inside, moving quickly along the pie counter, stockpiling goodies (including some cokes). He pockets all sorts of caramels, Mars Bars, Slopokes, Certs from the cash register counter. In the kitchen he finds a king-sized Hebrew National salami hanging from the ceiling.

ANGLE - CASH REGISTER

He passes it, his mouth full of salami and cheese. A casually delinquent urge seizes him. He balks at the idea at first. Then gently reaches out to open the cash box. Roy presses the NO SALE button. ALARMS GO OFF ALL OVER THE DINER. Besides that, the cash box is empty. Roy runs outside, dropping foodstuff from his pockets.

119

EXTERIOR - BESSIE'S CAFE

119

Roy hurries to share the calories with Jillian. She begins wolfing down a candy bar. They're both oddly happy and close. A mood that is quickly altered by a sight that freezes the marrow in Roy's bones. Jill follows his gaze and has trouble swallowing.

THEIR P.O.V.

A tiny meadow lark is twitching spasmodically by the side of the road. It flies into the air a few feet, then plops back to earth, its wings working backwards.

Roy suddenly remembers the canaries. He rushes to the car and pulls the door open.

CLOSE - CANARIES

Frightened by his sudden appearance, they flutter all over the cage and it's hard to tell if they are just scared or actually dying. And as if all this were too much to handle, a third distraction makes Roy stand away from his car and look down the highway.

SOUND -Chop-chop-chop-chop-chop

A squadron of transport helicopters, flying hazardously low to the ground grow from mosquito pinpoints to roaring dragonflies and zoom overhead.

Flying somewhat higher than the rest are two flanking choppers that carry clusters of portable chemical toilets from their undercarriage supports.

Roy and Jillian watch as one of the helicopters, an Air Force huey, breaks formation and returns, HEADING STRAIGHT FOR them. The look up through the swirl.

WHAT THEY SEE

The two fliers, as seen through the sun tinted bubble, are wearing oxygen masks and sealed goggles. One of the operators picks up a camera and snaps pictures of them below. Neither of them know what to do. So Roy waves at them, reaches into his pocket and takes out a ten dollar bill. He shows it to the hovering machine and points to the gas pump. He picks up a rock and uses it to put the ten dollars on top of the 'low lead' pump. Even from here Roy can see the man in the chopper reach for a phone to report their whereabouts. He scurries to the car, yanking Jillian with him and peels off.

INTERIOR - CAR

As Roy zooms away he checks the birds. They seem to have recovered but their nerves are shot, their little breasts fluttering. They continue ripping the road at ninety miles an hour. Suddenly the side of the highway is dotted with dead animals: Cows and crows, sheep and sparrows.

JILLIAN

Roy, turn back!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NEARY

I'm telling you this whole thing
is a put-on.

They sit silently for a beat. Then, almost in unison, they both
put on their gas masks.

121

ANGLE - WIDE

121

Four drab econoline vans with military serial numbers and special
blue grill lights cut him off. A dozen men in self-contained
comfort suits, with helmets and oxygen packs, all of this
hermetically sealed in a kind of foil, come pouring out of
everywhere and....

ANGLE - MEDIC

A golden soldier with medical insignia holds up a small black- x
board on which is written: "HOW DO YOU FEEL"?

Neary steps out of his car:

NEARY

Fine. According to my canaries the
only gas in the air is from you guys
farting around.

Two medics exchange a look. A third medic has opened the
passenger door and reaches across Jill to remove the
bird cage. He walks out of sight around the front of the car with
the birds. By the time he reaches Roy the birds are dead on
the bottom of the cage.

ANGLE - NEARY

All at once he doesn't feel so well. The tinfoil soldiers
assist him in through the rear doors of the van, then close them
on Roy. Two others politely but firmly assist Jillian out of
the car and into another van. Engineering a U-turn, the vehicle
motors back toward DEVILS TOWER.

122

EXTERIOR - BASE CAMP - DEVILS TOWER - LATE DAY

122

The sun flares, then dips behind the mountain crest casting a
purple pall over the makeshift bivouac area consisting of her-
metically sealed, windowless trailers and a fleet of drab green,
unmarked econoline vans (also the P.O. and Baskin-Robbins

CONTINUED

trucks). One of the vans pulls to a stop and the rear doors swing wide. Neary, now dressed in a life support suit, is whisked away by the two golden medics. A helicopter swoops low and Neary has only seconds to observe that it is transporting dozens of low slung crates labeled COCA-COLA, before he is sealed off inside a coffin-sized room in an adjacent eighty foot trailer.

123 INTERIOR - TRAILER

123

Roy sits across from a golden medic in these cramped quarters. We get the feeling the medic is more of a guard than a man of medicine. Neary has been here some time; he feels uncomfortable in his breathing apparatus. He tries to smile at the medic through his gas mask. The medic does not return the smile.

NEARY

(playing with suit)

What do I do if I have to take a leak?

No response. A LOUD CLICK and the trailer door springs open. LACOMBE AND LAUGHLIN ENTER BRISKLY and the medic exits even quicker. (Lacombe and David are, of course, in protective suits too).

We have precious little time, Mister Neary.

(pointing)

This is Mr. Lacombe. We need answers from you that are expressly honest, direct and to the point.

Before Roy can respond the stage has been turned over to Lacombe, who takes the vacated chair across from him.

LACOMBE

(speaks in French,
David translates almost
simultaneously)

Aren't you aware of the danger you and your companion risked by exposing yourselves to the toxins in the air?

NEARY

We chanced it.

CONTINUED

123 (Cont'd)

LACOMBE
(wanting direct
communication)

123 (Cont'd)

Why?

NEARY
(tightening up)
Where's Jillian?

LACOMBE
(in halting English)
Your friend is in no danger. Certainly
less than when you were wandering around
outside.

ROY
I'm alive. We're talking.

DAVID
(in English after
translating from
French)
If the prevailing winds were blowing
south instead of north this
conversation wouldn't be worth having.

NEARY
There's nothing wrong with the air.

LACOMBE
(sharply interested)
What makes you say that?

NEARY
Oh ... just something I happen to know.

Lacombe glares at Roy . He reaches out and opens the trailer
door.

LACOMBE
Remove your mask and make of me
a liar.

CONTINUED

Roy looks out the open door. Maybe the air does seem rarified ... or is it the dusk hour. He screws up his courage but something begins to change. For the first time Roy shows doubt. In seconds he sifts through everything that has happened to him ... and samples defeat at all the sorrowful alternatives.

Lacombe closes and locks the door. He next dips into a manilla envelope and produces a dozen color polaroids ... each shows a face through the facemask of a life support suit.

LACOMBE

(carefully displaying the pictures, in English)

Friends of yours?

Lacombe carefully scrutinizes Roy - scrutinizing the pictures... nobody he knows. There is a knock at the door, instantly followed by a key in the lock. The door swings wide and two golden chemical engineers step inside.

CHEMICAL ENGINEER #1

Com-Sec says take them to Evac Reliance and a bus ride home.

LACOMBE

I must have one more minute!

The two engineers exchange a look and make a quick decision.

CHEMICAL ENGINEER #1

We'll be outside.

They exit. Lacombe rushes through his routine. He removes a heavy sheet of poster paper and unravels it. Turning it toward Roy, careful to note his reaction.

CLOSE - PAINTING

A watercolor of DEVILS TOWER Exactly as it really exists. X
This is a skilled lifelike rendering, the only incongruity existing in the sky overhead where three yellow suns have been included.

CLOSE - NEARY

The instinctual implanted reaction. Roy is drawn into the watercolor.

CLOSE - LACOMBE

Lacombe is smiling.

LACOMBE

Good boy. You imagined the mountain ...
even before discovering its existence.

NEARY

Yes. We both did.

DAVID

And felt compelled to be here?

NEARY

(a plaintive exchange)
What am I suppose to do now that
I'm here?

LACOMBE

(too excited to stay out
of this conversation, in
English)
By being here ... what did you expect
to find?

NEARY

The answer.
(leans forward,
touching Lacombe)
There's more ... isn't there?

LACOMBE

(in English)
What more did you expect?

NEARY

Something a hell of a lot better than
sitting around talking to a bunch of
guys in Saran-Wrap. Is there more?

LACOMBE

How much more are you ready for, Roy?

NEARY

Stop the games!
(tapping his head)
Do you know what's been going on up
here? If I gave you six hours to climb
inside my head you'd spend the first
hour getting all your answers and the
next five looking for a way out.

Roy's tirade takes him beyond the edge a little. He lowers his head to
regain himself. Lacombe pats him on the shoulder and says ...

LACOMBE
(quietly, utterly
serious)
I envy you.

He hurriedly exits the room with David. As they go out the door the waiting engineers come in to get Roy.

124

EXT. TRAILER - DUSK

124

The dual rotors of the assault Huey slice through the air, purring at idle. Neary is led to the sliding fuselage loading door.

NEARY
(wildly)
Is this it? Look, I have a couple
of thousand goddamn questions.
There's more to it that this?

LACOMBE
(to the two engineers)
Don't let him leave until I
see Wild Bill.

CHEMICAL ENGINEER #1
That's o.k. by me. All we gotta
do is stick him on board.

Lacombe goes to the cockpit and waves his arms, shouting through his suit.

LACOMBE
Five minutes - !

The pilot knows Lacombe and shrugs his helplessness pointing to his headsets, indicating that is where his orders are coming from.

Lacombe persists in a five-finger exercise until the pilot nods despite himself and Lacombe hops toward a small quonset hut where a Cadillac Limousine is parked.

CLOSE - HELICOPTER DOOR

A gloved hand slides it open - nine faces look out at us. The snapshot faces. Roy steps aside and joins the party.

WILD BILL WALSH is talking at the 'box' phones when Lacombe swoops in. Wild Bill has a slightly monotonous drawl that reminds us of Space Center technicians.

David Laughlin will interpret when necessary and as indicated some of their conversation will be sub-titled.

WILD BILL

(an anger tempered by
a respect for Lacombe's
accomplishments)

I can hardly believe what you did. Bringing unauthorized civilians into the basecamp is in violation of Com-Sec...

LACOMBE

(in English)

I will be responsible.

WILD BILL

Half a minute sir! You have no responsibility this side of Mayflower. This is security's operation.

Lacombe begins pacing around the room. He is full of new information and wants to be clearly understood in Wild Bill's language, not his own. Laughlin tries to help on his own, in his own words.

LAUGHLIN

This is Mr. Claude Lacombe from --

WILD BILL

(cuts it off)

Tell him I know and respect who he is. But the goddamn chain of command around here is three weeks long. This unauthorized incursion into basecamp by local residents is...

CONTINUED

LACOMBE

(in English)

You must see...they are not local.

Lacombe reaches out and Laughlin hands him a large envelope. Lacombe removes a watercolor painting, folded many times, and a palm - sized woodcarving of the Devil's Tower. Lacombe begins his explanation using English - struggling with it - whenever he wants to pound home a point. David Laughlin is magnificent supplying the emotional and linguistical word equivalents when Lacombe's excitement forces him to explode in French.

LACOMBE

(in English)

Here you have this small group of people who shared in common, in their minds, a vision.

(he walks to the window and points to the Devil's Tower)

This is what they imagined...that mountain! It is to me still a mystery but they are here and they do not know why!

WILD BILL

(to Laughlin)

Will you tell him I don't know how they run things where he comes from but in this country we have a thing called 'departmentalization'.

LACOMBE

(in French to Laughlin)

What?

LAUGHLIN

(in French to Lacombe - subtitled)

Buracracy.

CONTINUED

(cont)

WILD BILL

Tell him this isn't his damn job. He's supposed to be at the D.S.M. If he wants to go over my head for a clearance, he'll have to helicopter the directives because we're blacked out down here to the point where even I don't know what's going on.

125 (cont)

LACOMBE

(in strong English)

They give up their lives to come here.

WILD BILL

Could be someone is trying to subvert these operations by sending fanatics and cultists through here.

LACOMBE

(in French)

I think it takes very little social dislocation to make a fanatic of someone. I also believe that for every one of those confused people there must be hundreds also touched by the implanted vision but could not be here tonight. How many others in this country missed the television news and never made the...psychic connection!

WILD BILL

This isn't a respectable science.

LACOMBE

(in English)

It is a sociological event!

WILD BILL

I'm terminating this conversation. And I'm sending them back.

CONTINUED

25 (cont)

LACOMBE

(in failing English,
he is so frustrated
at Wild Bill's ignorance)

You do not understand!

(in French)

The mountain was the key. And
the gift in the desert was
a clue. For us, to open our
minds and let them in.

(in English)

THEY WERE INVITED!

125 (cont)

For a moment it looks as though this has sunk in. Slowly,
Wild Bill starts.

WILD BILL

You have a job I am told is
among the high rungs around here.
My work isn't so lofty but
without the services we perform
you'd miss a step and fall
through. There are no star
pitchers in this bullpen, no
boss cows...(etc., etc.)

LACOMBE

(to Laughlin)

Translate?

Laughlin is red with rage. As Wild Bill rants on, Laughlin
turns to Lacombe and utters in French.

LAUGHLIN

(English subtitle)

A lot of shit.

126 INTERIOR - HUEY HELICOPTER - DUSK

126

No one talks. Roy and Jillian are seated next to each other. He looks at her then does the most courageous act of his life. He starts unsnapping the sealing fasteners which connect his breathing helmet to his body suit. Every eye is glued on activity. He pulls hard and his helmet slides over his ears. He pushes his hair back and takes a breath. The others are horrified. He breathes again. Suddenly, Jillian's fingers are at work. She takes off her helmet, shakes out her tumble down hair and waits for the worst.

CLOSE - BESSIE AND IRA FOGELSON

Husband and wife. Maybe mid-seventies. They are shocked at Neary's actions.

IRA

You'll be poisoned.

NEARY

There is nothing wrong with the air. The military is herding everybody out of here. They don't want any witnesses.

BESSIE

But if the Army doesn't want us here, this isn't our business.

IRA

We only wanted to see the mountain. It was such a coincidence when I painted it. No one bothered to tell us about the air.

JILLIAN

How did you locate this spot?

IRA

No problem. I looked it up in Famous Mountains of the Western Hemisphere. Did you know that Pres. Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed this our countries first national monument on September 24, 1906?

LARRY BUTLER'S VOICE

Oh, Christ - it's better than the air
in Los Angeles.

PAN TO LARRY BUTLER

A guy in his forties, long hair and dressed a little too hip for his age, has already taken off his helmet. He looks and acts like a guy with money. He takes a deep breath.

CLOSE - FOUR OTHERS

Two other men and women take their helmets off. Like most everyone else they are desperate in appearance, the look of having been socially criticized and scooped out for maybe months. They never make eye contact and are on the downside of physical exhaustion. Only Jillian and Neary and Larry Butler seem to have any spirit left.

127 EXTERIOR - QUONSET HUT

127

Two transport helicopters fly overhead. They are carrying prefab modules in their heavy duty slings. Reaching toward the mountain, they soon descend to the other side revealing for the first time a rather unusual formation of puffy white clouds, drifting with the prevailing winds. This observation pleases Wild Bill.

WILD BILL

It's starting to cloud up. There is very little time left. Take down their names and addresses and have yourself a backyard seminar when it's over.

LACOMBE

You'll never reach Nirvana standing on your head.

Wild Bill signals to the helicopter pilot to increase rotor pitch and get the hell out.

128

128

CLOSE - ROTOR BLADES

They approach high R.P.M.'s.

129 CLOSE - NEARY

129

He wheels on the gathering and shouts above the noise.

NEARY

Who's for staying?

Jillian raises her hand. Butler, Bessie and Ira follow suit.

NEARY

You will have to keep up with me
and run very fast.

Suddenly, the door slides closed behind them. Neary desperately uses his arm as a door jam. The medic opens the door to find everyone without protective helmets. His eyes widen and he looks at Wild Bill and Lacombe.

MEDIC

SIR - !

The medic is fighting with Neary over which direction the door should travel.

NEARY

(to the gathering)

NOW - ! RUN FOR THE MOUNTAIN - !

Neary strikes out and smashes the medic in the neck with his foot. Lacombe and Wild Bill turn just in time to see this and ...

As they're running they pass the P. W. and Baskin-Robbins trucks that are being unloaded with giant speakers bigger than Elton John's.

Neary and Jillian and Butler vault over the fallen soldier sprinting toward the heavy timber brush 300 yards uphill at the base of DEVILS TOWER. Ira and Bessie hobble after them with no chance of escape. Wild Bill runs to the helicopter and sees the five remaining travelers, each without their helmets. He slams the metal door on them and spins on Lacombe, angrily pulling off his helmet. Lacombe removes his and at once all ground personnel remove theirs.

WILD BILL

Oh horseshit, have we got problems!

130 ANGLE - OPEN FIELD - STEEP GRADE

130

Roy falls to the ground to catch his breath and give Larry and Jillian time to catch up.

(cont)

NEARY
(through gritted teeth)
Hi ya. Name's Roy.

130 (cont)

BUTLER
Larry Butler.

NEARY
(out of shape)
We can't stay here. Go on to the
tree line and wait for me there.

They obey without a moment's hesitation. Roy, catching his
breath, looks back over his shoulder to the Chemical Salvage
Operations below.

1

CLOSE - WILD BILL

131

Looking at the treeline through binoculars. In the background,
three helicopters rise vertically, each testing its powerful
Quartz-Iodide searchlights. About a dozen special forces units
load their ordnances. They carry gas operated semi-automatic
M-14's with infared sniper sights.

WILD BILL
(to special forces chief)
I want them off the mountain
in one hour.

Lacombe has a field phone that he speaks into. He is talking
to someone who is more compassionate and respectful, but
strong-willed by the book.

LACOMBE
(in English)
We cannot pretend to understand all
that is happening or about to
happen. It is a festival of
absurdity.

(in French)
And we must be receptive to it,
innocent of it, and child-like in
our openness and behavior.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

11 (cont)

TEAM LEADER'S VOICE

We need you here, Claude. Let's delay this discussion until I see you. Major Walsh!

131(cont)

Wild Bill spins on a dime.

WILD BILL

Yes sir.

TEAM LEADER

Do a photogrammetric analysis of the northern face. Use infared.

WILD BILL

It's already ordered.

TEAM LEADER

I want you to know how they penetrated your security blanket. We are assuming the principles in question are out of adjustment and without reason. If they are not off the mountain by 0800 hours, dust the northern face with E-Z-FOUR. Get back to me.

LACOMBE

What is ...E-Z-FOUR?

WILD BILL

A sleep aerosol. It's fast acting, extremely local, and should detoxify in several hours.

LACOMBE

(in careful English,
a final plea)

We did not choose this place. We did not choose this time. We did not choose these people. To stop them is not for us to choose.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

3 (cont)

WILD BILL

131 (cont)

This was a perfect strategic vacuum until you siphoned air into it. They should not have been brought this far.

LACOMBE

(sadly, knowingly)

They belong here more than we.

2 UP ANGLE- DEVILS TOWER - (N)

132 x

Through the fir trees the top of DEVILS TOWER stands out against the full moon. From this perspective it appears insurmountable.

Below it, three weary travelers trudge up 38 degrees of loose topsoil and pine needles. They can see their way clear until a cloud covers the moon.

THE VISUAL QUALITY OF NIGHT BECOMES TOO DARK TO REGISTER.

Jillian walks into a tree and slides down to its roots, losing precious yards before catching hold of some undergrowth. Larry also stumbles and falls. Roy HEARING this stops dead in his tracks and watches the sky.

THE MOON SLIPS OUT OF THE CLOUD AND THE AREA IS AGAIN DISCERNABLE.

Suddenly the trio of helicopters light up the uppermost region of the mountain top way ahead of them and begin to manuever in and out of hard to see areas.

LARRY

They've given us a lot of credit.
That's a good two hours on foot.

NEARY

(pointing)

Do you see that notch in the mountain?

Sure enough - off to one side is another passage to the other side.

NEARY (Continued)

We can probably make that in an hour and a half.

LARRY

(starting to run
and puffing)

I should've never given up jogging.

NEARY

We'll rest in the dark - and make double time in the moonlight. We'll pace ourselves. Let the clouds decide how long it'll take.

JILLIAN

(pointing at the peak)

There go four more.

A formation of red and green helicopter lights and the accompanying SOUNDS hover above the plateau and descend to the other side of the mountain.

JILLIAN (Continued)

There's another ravine that leads up hill.
...and it's an easier climb. I remember from my painting... it starts on the north-east face and.....

CONTINUED

NEARY

That's no good. It falls off at the top three hundred feet straight down. We'd have to be experienced climbers. This way, it's a gradual roll to the other side.

LARRY

What do you think is on the other side?

NEARY

There's a box canyon. It's rimmed with trees and hiking trails.

JILLIAN

I never imagined that. I just colored the one side.

LARRY

There was no canyon in my doodles.

NEARY

Next time, try sculpture.

Jillian smiles warmly just as the moon appears to show Neary how really lovely she is.

NEARY (Continued)

(has to tear himself
away)

Double time. C'mon.

EXTERIOR - BIVOUAC AREA AND HELOPAD - NIGHT

A clutch of Army engineers relay ten gallon stainless steel canisters of E-Z-Four to the waiting helicopter. The men work gingerly and in silence. Wild Bill stands nearby watching the operation. He checks his watch and looks up at the mountain.

CLOSE - A SNIPERSCOPE

A young soldier of the special forces aims his M-14, squinting through his infrared scope. He paints the forest region with graceful sweeps of his ordinance.

- 135 WHAT THE INFRARED SEES 135.
 Multiple swirls of color. Organic heat-giving matter registers a bright orange and red. A thousand birds sleep in the branches of hundreds of fir trees. The faint luminosity makes the solarized trees look like Christmas.
- 136 TIMBER LINE - SOLDIERS 136
 The dozen special forces have fanned out and move steadily up the mountain.
- 137 ANGLE - THE PLATEAU SUMMIT 137
 The moon is masked by a thick cloud.
- 138 ANGLE - STEEP TERRAIN 138
 All at once, Neary, Larry and Jillian fall to the ground, exhausted, breathless.
- LARRY
 I hope it's a slow cloud.
- 139 THROUGH INFRARED SCOPE 139
 Three red figures running uphill against a royal blue background. It is only deer.
- 140 THE SOLDIER 140
 He picks up his walkie talkie and speaks in a low voice.
- SPECIAL FORCES
 Pyramid to Bahama.
- WILD BILL'S VOICE
 Bahama..... go'ed.
- SPECIAL FORCES
 Nothing to report from mid-station. I'd need three times the ground force to cover this whole mountain in one hour.
- WILD BILL'S VOICE
 (after a pause, he continues grimly)
 Return to base-line.

CLOSE - WILD BILL

141

He speaks to an aid who snaps to.

WILD BILL

Get everybody off the northern face. Call
the dark side of the moon and tell 'em
we're going to dust.

Wild Bill lights a Havana, then watches the wooden match burn slowly toward his fingers. Just as it is about to singe, the SOUNDS of propeller blades put out the flame. Rotor-wash slicks back his hair and he looks towards

142 CLOSE - LACOMBE

142

He is sitting with five other nondescript Proctor and Gamble types in the black Cadillac limousine.

Suddenly, the car he sits in starts to rise vertically ... going higher and higher until the sling is visible and the helicopter transporting it. Lacombe rolls up the window as the Cadillac makes a mid-air starboard turn and heads toward the other side of the mountain.

143 MOVING ANGLE - THE TRIO

143

Stumbling, sometimes crawling, they torture themselves in an intuit race against time.

144 ANGLE - WILD BILL

144

He points to an Army engineer who in turn gives the dual thumbs up helicopter.

WHIP PAK takes the angle to the Huey Assault chopper. It lifts vertically and pivots toward its mission. The six potent canisters sparkling in the moonlight.

145 RUNNING ANGLE - NEARY

145

He digs into the mountain, his expression indicating that their goal is in sight.

145 (Cont'd)

145 (Cont'd)

CLOSE - JILLIAN

She looks up and sees the summit notch, turns to Larry.

CLOSE - LARRY

Larry is in such poor physical condition that he trails them by fifty yards. He stops to catch his breath, but changes his mind and races after them.

146

ANGLE - THE TIMBER LINE AT THE FURTHEST END OF THE NORTH FACING MOUNTAIN 14

A perfectly terrible explosion of noise and the assault chopper trims the tree tops, its powerful belly-light shining the way.

147

ANGLE - NEARY & JILLIAN

147

Already they can hear the distant rotor-blades when the mountain is plunged into darkness as the moon hides from them. They stop and look back for Larry.

NEARY

It's just up aways. C'mon.

LARRY'S VOICE

(panting hard)

No wait ... the deal was
we take cloud breaks.

The chopper SOUND grows louder by the second.

NEARY

You're in the clearing ... he'll spot
you.

LARRY'S VOICE

Screw 'em ... So what's he gonna do?
Land on me?

148

CLOSE - TREE TOPS

148

The helicopter flies low over a tree top ... moments later Meadow larks begin dropping from the branches like flies capped by Black Flag.

ANGLE - THE SKY

149

The moon is taking its time, teasing the tip of the meandering cloud and

CLOSE - NEARY & JILLIAN

150

Slowly moonlight begins to play on their faces. They turn and break into a final headlong crawl for the top.

ANGLE - LARRY

He slowly stands up and brushes himself off. Even now the light of the helicopter is closing in over his shoulder.

NEARY'S P.O.V. - THE SUMMIT

It is only fifty yards uphill. A carpet of loose bedrock welcomes them. Roy takes two steps and falls ... he slides past Jillian and back the way he came up ... gathering speed until his hand catches a loop of underbrush and breaks his fall.

Jillian doesn't know what to do ... she hears the approaching helicopter and looks up at their goal. She decides to walk down the mountain and help Roy.

NEARY

NO - ! STAY THERE - ! STAY THERE - !

Neary has recovered and is leaping with all he has in reserve up the mountain side. Now the helicopter can be seen over Roy's right shoulder.

Jillian extends her hand ... and waits.

Roy pouring it on ... he reaches out with his.

CLOSE - LARRY

He couldn't care less. He is walking. The helicopter is so close it totally outlines him in a corona of light.

He turns and confronts the helicopter, sticking out his thumb like a hitchhiker.

LARRY

Los Angeles?

0 (Cont'd)

CLOSE - ROY & JILLIAN

Their hands unite and they fight the loose bedrock toward the notch summit - the searchlight just now outlining their strobing shapes, and

CLOSE- LARRY

The assault chopper zooms over him and in a blast of after-wash the musses his hair and clothing, he continues to walk and probably doesn't even notice that his head is involuntarily twitching to one side.

ANGLE - THE SUMMIT

15

Roy and Jillian make it to the top. The knoll on the other side of the mountain is fresh with dew, and very steep. Jillian and Roy lose their footing and start to coast down on the seat of their pants.

ANGLE - SLIDING

15

It is a wild ride. They spin, bump, revolve around each other all while heading towards a snarl of timberline vegetation. They stop and rise slowly to their feet on ground deeply cushioned by many season's worth of fallen hemlock needles.

And through a dense blind, maybe fifty yards over flat ground, comes a haze of light. It is certainly new and perhaps a final goal that encourages Roy and Jillian and prevents them from resting.

HEAVY BRAMBLED AREA

15

Leading the way, Roy ignores the pain from his inert left arm as he tears a passage through the thicket while Jillian dodges and hops over branches that whip back at her face and body.

P.O.V.

1

And the light grows steadily brighter ... the deep growth beginning to thin out. Always that glow just a few yards further and ...

55

CLOSE - NEARY

11

Ripping his way along, groaning and wheezing and challenging the pain ...

156

TRAVELING P.O.V.

156

A headlong advance against a latticework of weeds until they have cleared any further obstacles and can count the shafts of light stabbing at the mist from a source just below the tip of this outcropped plateau and...

157

CLOSE - NEARY & JILLIAN

157

Cheeks almost touching they peek over the edge and look down upon....

158

FLOOR OF THE BOX CANYON

158

Giant fluted granite shafts that terminate into millions of mansized granite boulders. An area of exact size and artificially flattened has been cleared to recieve a scientific area. It is circumscribed by a boiler plate steel retaining wall six feet high divided into three concrete levels and defined by a flourescent blue light inlaid in each elevation. On the first level there are fourteen cubicles in a module design. There is also a large radar tracking device of the latest design. These cubicles are filled with varicus scientific experiments such as lazars, spectrographic analyzers, electromagnetic equipment, thermal measuring devices, bio-chemical equipment, etc. Furthest upfield and centermost in the arena is a color-sound scoreboard which is 40 ft. long. 6 feet high, and standing on a 16 ft. scaffold. Many cables and conduits run from this to a Stevie Wonder type moog synthesizer which sits below and downfield. On the second level are four monitor control consoles with video recievers and two camera bleachers with three levels of still cameras mounted in various positions, some telescopes, etc. The lower level is an open concrete area with a light pattern (landing lights making a configuration pattern designating spots), and running from this area are blue landing lights which go off into the distance. Far into the distance are 2 high outpost cubicles. From the outside of the retaining wall are 10 stadium type lights notched out of the wall. Approximately 150 technicians wearing white jumpsuits are making preparations.

159

CLOSER ANGLE

159

Two spectometers and a photoelectrical camera resembling big bazookas encased in cement and piloted by a couple of men smoking cigarettes. Most of the personnel resemble white collar workers and on closer inspection it doesn't look like there is a military man amongst them.

160

CLOSE- NEARY

160

He can't digest this as his eyes chug-a-lug the jigsaw layout 50 yd. below.

161

BOX CANYON OPERATION

161

A gentle chime is the signal for everyone to stop what they are doing and look into the sky. Immediately, the bank of overhead lights is doused leaving only tiny red working lights to color the field below.

162

CLOSE - JILLIAN AND NEARY

162

They turn around and look at the sky also.

163

UP ANGLE TO THE NIGHT SKY - MOUNTAIN IN FOREGROUND AS PRINCIPLE P.O.V

163

Planet, stars, and constellations. It is still and magnificent. Particularly visible at this hour of night is the constellation ORION THE HUNTER, made up of twelve stars of varying degrees of magnitude.

It is one of the most popular star groupings in our universe.

So it will come as a broad shock when these stars begin to rearrange themselves before our very eyes. Orion's belt, sword, shoulders, and legs converging to a very bright point before splaying off in twelve directions forming the most popular of all constellations, THE BIG DIPPER.

APPLAUSE IS HEARD from the assembly in the box canyon area and...

164

ANGLE BLUE LANDING STRIP LOOKING BACK TOWARD TOWERS-AND MOUNTAIN 164

Two foreground technicians in NASA jumpsuits look up as the Big Dipper formation tips over, handle forward until an aurora of color seems to spill out of it like celestial milk.

AAHS AND OOHS can be HEARD from the box canyon area. It's just like a half time show.

165

ANGLE TIGHT ON JILLIAN

165

She rises and steps away and overlooks the operations and the sky. Some clouds blow in much too fast to appear natural and are soon escorted by points of light. As Neary joins Jillian in the f.g. the light sources begin swirling around the cloud turning it into a facsimile of the spiral nebulae.

Their backs are to camera as they begin absorbing light.

CLOSE NEARY & JILLIAN

Jillian begins to visibly tremble. Neary is struck down with wonder. Clouds are moving in from left to right in some higher elevation drafts. Jillian and Neary turn in time to duck low as three brightly illuminated multi-colored objects skim the rocks on a close to camera approach. They are spaced thirty yards apart and moving fast. Everything "oranges" out.

The burning objects move on down toward the middle of operations, one at a time. Neary and Jillian are still in the foreground. The entire experience area can be seen below them. The lights create shadows and human movement below.

166

INT. LOWER LEVEL CUBICLE

166

Lacombe and Jean Claude watch from inside as the lights flare passing low to the ground, heading toward the blue runway. Lacombe opens the door and we follow him out to witness three strafing lights. From inside this watch place, camera is angling in a bee line toward the runway lights.

The third object swooshes low over the heads of a lineup of 50 technicians lighting each one as it goes.

167

ANGLE TOWARD THE MOUNTAIN

167

As the third object passes the industrial camera bleachers, a technician pushes a switch and all the cameras flip over automatically and begin photographing noisily.

168

ANGLE TOWARD MOUNTAIN GROUND LEVEL OF LEVEL WITH LOW POSITION CUBICLE

168

Out walks Jean Claude and we see the Stevie Wonder organ and the three lighted objects downfield.

JEAN CLAUDE IS IN HIS THIRTIES, FRENCH AND RESEMBLES WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. IT IS HIS JOB TO INTERPRET THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INTO MUSICAL STATEMENTS.

169

ANGLE NEARY

169

He shifts positions and moves higher up on the outcropping which overlooks the base of the operations in a full comprehensive down angle. The three objects are seen hovering and shifting positions downfield amongst the blue landing lights.

INTERIOR - ANGLE HIGHTOWER DOWNFIELD

170

The three objects are seen super close and super bright as the investigators in the tower work.

ENGINEER

How about a slow alternating pattern toward the cool range please, with hesitation on chroma red 14, chroma yellow 12 and the illuminant point.

JEAN CLAUDE

(to musician behind organ)

Four-sixteenths plural on five. Four-eighths on 5-6-3-5. Three raise 5-7-1-5. Lower three.

The sweaty musician engineer poises his fingers and plays a number of atonal sounds. The music blares out of the Concord Speakers. (NOTE: these are the same chords that were heard in India (Page 48), in the Auditorium (Page 49-A) and on Barry Guiler's xylophone (Page 50).

The three objects respond through the color scale.

ANGLE

171

Past a metal detecting device and a computer analogue unit, the lights are seen beyond and downfield as the analyzer returns with data gold. The f.g. technicians discuss the results softly while the musical exchange begins and continues.

172

WIDE ANGLE - THE ORGAN AND JEAN CLAUDE AND THE MUSICIAN - ENGINEER

The three lighted objects are reflected in the metal surfaces and smoked glass windows of nearby cubicles. The angle is upraised slightly to include the 'light board'. As the musician goes through the first solfeggio the light board begins its display backlighting everything. The last tone creates a weak ultra violet pulse from the light board. Lacombe walks forward as the backlight fades from his shirt collar. Everyone is tense and waiting.

173

ANGLE - LACOMBE

173

Walks forward facing downfield where three globes highlight the foreground figures. Suddenly the three acknowledge and imitate our color pattern. The two flanking globes separate rapidly and take up positions far to the sidelines where the center globe displays most of the intensity.

CONTINUED

173 (Cont'd)

173 (Cont'd)

Everyone in the area recognizes the first gesture of contact and responds joyously ala Houston Mission Control when they achieve successful booster separation.

174

GROUND ANGLE - MIDFIELD - THE THREE BRIGHT OBJECTS

174

The two end lights flash a series of rapid color signals and begin to move up the field about fifteen feet above everyone's head.

175

PAN WITH OBJECTS

175

At midfield they begin to lay "cuboid eggs". The far object squirts blue phosphorous like cubes spinning from all sides. The object closest to camera deposits white hot cuboids that form a blazing blue and white knot twenty feet in the air and midfield.

176

ANGLE - BASE OF OPERATIONS

176

The bright circle objects moving upfield depositing cuboid eggs. The eggs start to stir from the middle of the cluster exciting neighboring cuboids until the entire mass seems to revolve as if blown by some sort of cosmic wind. The two oval objects go through the color spectrum pausing on sunset red then back to yellow as they return downfield, taking up positions far to the left and right of the single center downfield communication object...this begins the cuboid hustle.

177

ANGLE

177

Past the industrial camera bleachers and angling up, the operator makes adjustments and the camera clicks away. The cuboids begin to unite and a three dimensional rush occurs...right down from the sky and passing close to the camera technician who turns away as a gust of displaced air tears at his clothes and his features overexpose in short bursts as each cube races past him.

178

ANGLE - DOWNFIELD TOWARD LIGHTED OBJECTS IN END ZONE

178

The cuboids overhead are flowing out of the overhead cluster and single filing in a three dimensional rush toward camera before making an abrupt hard turn as they begin a ground level circle in front of all the technicians assembled. The first formation is white. A second circle is pouring from the tangle above and the color is heated blue. This strong line of light rushes toward camera heading directly for the lense before making another hard turn..

179

PAN RIGHT

179

The blue circle is completed behind the first row of technicians.

185 ANGLE - NEAR ORGAN LOOKING DOWNFIELD 185

The departing cuboids race in a knot past us until they are in a face off with the upfield camera bleacher. The cuboid corral renews their symphonic act as the fresh cameras grind and click hungrily.

186 ANGLE - TIGHT F.G. 186

The circle of cuboids flashes past our view and the wind effect and strobe effect colors everyone.

187 ANGLE - COMPUTER MONITOR READOUTS 187

The cuboid circle seems to rush the view headon. It is a speed show as well as a light display. Once again six cubes leave the circle to explore the monitors and the men working them. Several cuboids run circles around some of the technicians working the area.

188 MEDIUM C.U. - LACOMBE 188

He is reacting to all of this. The cubes race counter-clockwise behind him in blue and clockwise in front of him burning white. His glasses and the double glass windows behind him make all of this movement seem like a fever dream.

189 WIDE ANGLE BEHIND LACOMBE 189

We see the spectacle at ground level. The circle splits again and now we show three circles, each one whipping air in a different altitude, independent of each other. THIS IS MULTI PLANAR AND MOST SPECTACULAR. The circles start to rise up and converge and the wind dies down.

190 ANGLE - PAST NEARY & JILLIAN TO OPERATIONS BELOW 190

The triple circle gains some altitude and begins to wind together like a freeway cloverleaf... the light gets brighter and the knot begins to fuse and glow.

191 WIDE ANGLE - SIDELINES 191

A technician from the music-communications cubicle must run messages back and forth. He runs out right into the cuboid traffic. Instead of a headon collision, the cuboids simply form a quick arch and continue their straight line once he has passed.

192 NEW ANGLE 192

We are now tracking with the technician as we clearly see him "stepping into traffic". It resembles a narrow escape as the cuboids almost slam into him but intuitively leap frog him.

193 CLOSE- NEARY & JILLIAN 193

Jillian takes pictures as the cuboids reflect into her lense.

194 JILLIAN AND NEARY P.O.V. 194

- We see the cuboids rising, knotting, binding, squeezing, bleeding, glaring and finally bursting with golden galactic dust that races in all direction and right into us.

195 ANGLE - BETWEEN NEARY & JILLIAN 195

The galactic golden dust explosion makes them flinch and they cover their faces as the particles storm the camera splashing all over them.

196 ANGLE- PAST LACOMBE 196

He turns away from the snowy blast that passes him and rushes toward us.

197 ANGLE - MOUNTAIN 197

A group of 75 technicians turn away and blanch as a rush of gold tinkerbelle dust passes them on all sides.

198 WIDE VIEW - GROUND LEVEL 198

It is gently snowing golden high points. F.G. technicians are aglow in the stuff. The scientists are running frantically, trying to preserve samples before the elements dissolve into thin air. They help pick them off each other with tweezers and conventional soup spoons. Some of these specks are being photographed on the play dirt field by microscope cameras.

199 ANGLE - LACOMBE - F.G. 199

He is catching specks in his hand and watching it curiously. He cups his hands and watches wonderously.

NOTE: THE GOLD POINTS OF LIGHT CHANGE COLOR FROM GOLD TO RED TO GOLD. THIS HAPPENS IN RESPONSE TO OUR THREE DISTANT OBJECTS FIRST GOING FROM ORANGE TO RED... THE DUST FOLLOWS SUIT... THEN THE OBJECTS REVERSE TO ORANGE AND THE DUST REVERSES FROM RED TO GOLD.

200 EXT. TOWARD SIDELINES - GROUND LEVEL 200

We see this golden glowing wonderland of falling points. Technicians are running back and forth collecting samples and racing toward us. Inside one of the cubicles microscopes are ready to analyze. The glowing material brought in in cupped hands, plates, spoons, etc. is distributed for viewing but the dusty light is starting to fade. The snow stops falling in the b.g. windows, and faces are beginning to grow dark.

NOTE: THE GOLD CHANGES COLOR TWICE HERE. GOLD TO BLUE...BLACK TO GOLD

201 ANGLE - PROFILE OF NEARY & JILLIAN 201

Like everyone else down below, their hair is lit up from the sprinkles. Neary is delirious with discovery. He watches his cupped hands as light reflects off their faces. He watches until the light fades sadly. Roy and Jillian turn to face each other then look back toward the base of operations awaiting the next episode.

202 INSERT- NEARY'S HANDS 202

One final micro-cube remains. It is so bright that his cupped hands reflect light off his face. The micro cube does something extraordinary. It finds its way underneath the skin in Roy's open palm without causing the slightest tinge of pain. He watches it travel around the inside of his hand, up a finger, down to the wrist, into a vein. The vein glows bright blue as the speck of light runs its course around the hand and finally, sadly, fades out leaving everything dark and silent and mystical.

203 WIDE ANGLE- NEARY & JILLIAN - MOUNTAIN AND SKY 203

The mountain is tickled with color and mist from the foreign point sources. Clouds are moving in behind Roy and Jillian, and they are displaying a kind of heat lightning that should not appear supernatural at this moment.

204 INT. RADAR LOWBASE CUBICLE DOWNFIELD 204

Starting on a radar scan some new airborne phenomena is apparent. The men can't figure it. One of the team supervisors leaves the hut and goes onto the field. He stops by some portable radar pans that at once stops revolving and all begin to readjust at varying intervals to the mountain tower. The three globes appear awfully bright and large as the team supervisor exits. They dim their lights as if in respect for everyone's new source of attention.

205 WIDE ANGLE- PAST JILLIAN AND ROY OF THE BASE 205

Jillian turns and reacts to something in the sky o.s. She shifts around and turns uphill. Roy follows. We now see the sky and moving clouds that are aflame with heatlightning and steady intensifying glows. The clouds become so bright and wild that Neary and Jillian are silouetted against them.

206 ANGLE UP PAST THE MT. 206

Technicians come out to look into the sky. The clouds continue to move and are breathtaking.

207 COMPREHENSIVE ANGLE FACING MT. FROM 2 MILES OUT 207

The base of operations looks like a pool of light at the foot of the tower. The clouds are at their most spectacular in this angle. The stars are visible and you can see for twenty miles.

208 ANGLE 208

Past the organ and on downfield where the three objects go through a color pattern communique. Lacombe is in the f.g. He turns to look into the sky.

209 LACOMBE'S P.O.V. 209

Past the tower of mountain the lights in the clouds return the signal and the cloud begins to glow yellow-orange.

210 ANGLE - LACOMBE 210

Looks back at three objects and they turn yellow-orange. Then in a flashbulb popping effect they explode to red. That is the signal.

211 C.U. LACOMBE 211

Lacombe turns back and takes a few steps.

212 ANGLE- ROY & JILLIAN 212

-Silhouetted against the fireworks cloud, Jillian and Roy observe a step down formation of ten convex planar objects burning out of the clouds and pouring light around them as they fill the air. Again, the two duck into the rocks as the lights over-expose the immediate area.

- ANGLE - TIGHT ON ROY & JILLIAN 213
- The convex planar lights disperse in all directions as they converge on the base of operations. They fan out and light everything with multiple shadows.
- 214 ANGLE- POOL OF LIGHT BENEATH THE MOUNTAIN 214
- The point source lights move from the clouds to the base of operations. In addition to the ten light points another four emerge and conduct a kind of "quicker than the eye" display in the space to the left and right of the mountain.
- 215 ANGLE- DOWNFIELD 215
- We see the organ and Lacombe in the f.g. The ten convex planar lights move with amazing swiftness two hundred feet in the air performing impossible feats until they arrive over runway in end zone and form a collection of excited figgity sources.
- 216 ANGLE - OVER ROY & JILLIAN 216
- Watching these "impossible" feats.
- 217 PROFILE - LACOMBE 217
- He warns of a low altitude approach. We see 75 technicians and then a low flying convex planar light with a bottomside resembling a multicolored electric griddle beginning to approach. As it gets closer, men duck or hide. Another object does the same at the opposite end of the field.
- 218 ANGLE - PAST TECHNICIANS 218
- The huge lighted grill passes five feet overhead creating our 'static electricity' effect with its passing.
- 219 ANGLE - HIGH TOWER WINDOW 219
- The convex planar grill object passes so close with its lighted rim that it overexposes everything inside the room. But as it passes we see out the door the object and its true size: approx 30" in diameter.
- ANGLE 220
- Twenty technicians. Their hair stands on end and follows the path of the flat bottomed light overhead. Windows and other reflective surfaces 'white out' and 'travel' to indicate its passing.

CONTINUED

The electric grill machine passes low over Lacombe and Jean Claude's head and their hair reacts and follows the passing. The windows in the music decoding room reflect the objects light display in less flared detail due to the tinted window glass. The grill object carries with it a rainstorm of floating paper clips, pens, clipboards, etc.

Roy must get closer. He starts to climb down the lip of the plateau ridge but Jillian stops him. The grill lights head downfield and rejoin the cluster of 13 objects above the blue runway area.

JILLIAN

They'll see you.

NEARY

Watch me. Step where I step. C'mon.

JILLIAN

It's good from here.

NEARY

It isn't enough. Come with me.

JILLIAN

I can't... I have Barry.

Roy thinks about this. He looks at the woman who has become the closest person on earth to him. Her cameras dangle from her neck. There are empty film packages everywhere. She is a frantic, disheveled mess. Tears are starting in her.

NEARY

I wouldn't drop that stuff off at a Fotomat if I were you. Get it done yourself.

She leans over and kisses him. NEARY STARTS TO LOWER HIMSELF. It's a ten foot drop to another grassy outcropping. He chances it and lets go. Neary falls awkwardly, flopping down on his back and biting off a scream.

They do not see what we see. The communication object flashes color. The musician engineer responds with the light board and organ and imitates the color pattern. The 13 objects leave the downfield zone and take up positions surrounding the base of operations.

223

ANGLE- NEARY

223

As he drops out of sight over a rock we see twenty cuboids separating from the overhead cluster and forming a cordon at the end of the zone area.

224

ANGLE - LACOMBE AND OTHERS

224

They are confused. Lacombe walks forward to reveal the bright cordon at the far end of the base. Suddenly each cuboid flashes and turns yellow. Men are shouting toward Lacombe from downfield. Alarms go off as men run back and forth hurrying to get out.

225

ANGLE - SIDE VIEW DOWNFIELD

225

The cordon of now yellow cuboids moves slowly but relentlessly to push all ground personnel upfield. Men in the f.g. are brightly lit from the cuboid push and step back as cuboids pass close to our camera view.

226

ANGLE - HIGH TOWER

226

Two cuboids leave the cordon and enter the hightower cubicle. The windows glow hot yellow and seven technicians hurry out and down the ladder... we move down with them and arrive at a low cubicle that is just beginning to glow hot yellow. Three men evacuate followed by two cuboids.

CONTINUED

We see a video console operator who weighs about 250 pounds. Evacuees pour past him carrying whatever equipment they can get out. He refuses to move as he slowly puts his pocket sized gear into a briefcase at his feet. He begins to heat up in yellow as the cuboids approach. One cuboid enters the frame and prods. The chap doesn't move. Another cuboid joins to help its buddy prod. The guy just sits there, finishes packing. A third cuboid joins the group and the technician just stares at them. The cuboids are flustered as they jump around each other. Finally, they stop jumping and bunch close together. The technician is more tentative now but just won't budge. Finally, the three cuboids turn to bright red and start to buzz. The technician blinks and moves his chair nodding goodbye. The cuboids turn yellow again and quickly celebrate by flashing through the spectrum.

228 ANGLE OVER THE VIDEO OPERATOR'S SHOULDER 228

As he watches this happen.

229 ANGLE- THE CUBOID CORDON 229

Displaced personnel mingle in the f.g. Equipment is still being evacuated and technicians are coordinating their relocation.

230 ANGLE - CREVASSE IN ROCKS 230

NEARY negotiates his perilous climb down the side of the mountain. He makes another move and slides dangerously close to falling over the cliff.

231 ANGLE - HIGH SHOT OF BASE OF OPERATIONS 231

The effects of the cuboids are clearly evident. All of the technicians have been forced to wait midfield. The yellow cuboid cordon is still in effect.

232 REVERSE MASTER SHOT TOWARD MOUNTAIN 232

The puddle light beneath the mountain tower is the base of operations surrounded on all sides by thirteen of the planar convex objects. The stars are bright and more clouds are rolling in overhead. It is an eerie moment of silent anticipation. Nothing stirs. Suddenly each convex planar object jumps back a few hundred feet. Their colors change again... different hues of amber. The rocks and terrain reflect this.

233

ANGLE - NEARY CLIMBING DOWN

233

He stops to rest with the base just beyond him and much closer. Suddenly the overhead cuboids (not the cordon) scramble around in a tight arch and race for Neary. They explode over his head creating a violent strobe display as they pass him going out of frame.

234

ANGLE - JILLIAN

234

The mountain is above her. The same violent strobe kick is followed by the massive exodus of the cuboids past Jillian and up the face of the mountain, then around to the other side. The side of the mountain reflects the rapid procession of lighted cuboids.

235

ANGLE - CENTER OF BASE

235

Lacombe steps out of one of the cubicles. We follow Lacombe and aides as they walk in circle trying to figure out what to say. Lacombe regards each convex planar object high in the far sky. The floor manager comes over with sheet music, paper and pencil at the ready. The two of them are joined by Jean Claude.

JEAN CLAUDE

Start again on the Solfeggio. Play the tonic 1-3-5-1. 1-3 plus 5. One minus plus three minus.

The floor manager scribbles as fast as Jean Claude can speak and hurries the scale to the musical engineer. He sight reads it with the loudspeaker key on the off position to make certain no mistakes are heard. Then he flicks the speakers to on and plays the configuration. Lacombe has arrived at the organ as it plays the five notes. The signboard in the air blazes away. Nothing. He orders a repeat. The signboard colors the night.

236

ANGLE - BEHIND JILLIAN

236

We can see the entire base of operations and the night horizon and clouds beyond the blue landing lights. The thirteen hovering objects can be seen coloring the areas beneath them. One by one they fade out leaving on tiny red perimeter lights. As they fade the base of operations seems to grow darker.

237

ANGLE - MIDFIELD TOWARD THE MOUNTAIN

237

Lacombe walks midfield. The signboard in the b.g. lights up the area to no avail. It is very dark now.

- 238 ANGLE - BASE OF OPERATIONS 238
 Groups of darkening faces...looking around and at each other.
- 239 ANGLE- JILLIAN 239
 Looks around her.
- 240 ANGLE - NEARY 240
 Stopped by the utter silence below him.
- 241 ANGLE - TECHNICIANS 241
 Huddling before the lights of their instruments. No readings
 as if the night had stopped dead.
- 242 ANGLE - NEARY 242
 Climbing down the box canyon. Slipping. Back peddling. Edging
 along a narrow split in the mountain. He is a small figure
 inching his way down. A lot of sky is above him and thousands
 of stars are out. This is our first look at it. Something
 moves into the sky from the blind side of the mountain. It
 erases stars, the absence of which gives the first indication
 of size and shape. It is elliptical and it is horrifyingly
 huge. YOU COULD HEAR A PIN DROP.
- 243 ANGLE - OVER JILLIAN 243
 All the personnel look up in Jillian's direction. Jillian
 can't figure this...unless. She looks behind her and up as
 a night shadow moves across her.
- 244 CLOSE - NEARY 244
 Almost to the valley flats he pauses in the harsh glow and looks
 toward the east rim of the box canyon cliffs.
- 245 ANGLE - JILLIAN 245
 Like a phantom freighter slipping through the night. It looks
 as if a lid is sliding over Jillian, blocking out the b.g.
 stars and clouds and pulling a veil of muddy darkness over
 everything.

46 ANGLE - TOWARD SHOULDER OF MT. 246

The massive black shape spreads its perimeters and everything below it becomes stylistically more bleak and indiscipherable.

47 ANGLE - BASE OF OPERATIONS 247

A stark group of seventy technicians with Lacombe in f.g. angling slightly down on them a sullen shadow draws over them until one can hardly make out their expressions.

48 ANGLE - PAST MT. AND A HIGHTOWER 248

The full shape overhead stops. Seconds pass. Something is happening within the black shape. A surgical sliver of light describes a circle. The ever brightening circle brings to mind a solar eclipse. Dots of red-star-like points materialize around the corona, some hotter than others. Suddenly the sliver of lights opens wide and everything flares like an explosion of daytime.

49 ANGLE - PAST JILLIAN 249

We can see the explosion of light and the flaring of the ground below. The mass should be closer to Jillian than anyone else. Just beneath the super nova effect a horizontal curtain of blue cuboids rushes in from below the crest, displacing air and setting dust and Jillian's clothes and hair in violent motion.

250 ANGLE - NEARY 250

He is inching his way down a verticle crevasse. The cuboid rush can be seen at the high end of this vertical tunnel. It overexposes rocks and brush and causes Neary to turn away from the hurricane blast of wind. A minor stone slide rushes toward us, sticking Neary all over.

251 ANGLE - DOWNFIELD TOWARD THE MOUNTAIN 251

This view shows the phantom mass in all its glory as lights explode all over it and negotiates an aerodynamically impossible cartwheel maneuver. The cuboids form landing coordinates that should resemble a perpetually moving digital scaffold. The entire operation begins to move downfield... toward us. Men race to get out of the cuboid's path. We can see the phantom mass and cuboid scaffold moving directly over us. The depth and moving perspective is exciting.

We see thier shadows elongating as 200 feet of phantom mass lowers from top of frame to the ground at the end zone. THE CUBOID LOWERS THE PHANTOM AND FORM A CUSHION OF EXTRABRIGHT PLASMA. THIS IS AWESOME.

259

ANGLE - JILLIAN

259

The final descent of the phantom mass. Jillian takes pictures.

260

CLOSE - NEARY

260

Having arrived at the bottom of the canyon. He is watching all of this only fifty feet behind the first row of scientific personnel.

261

WIDE VIEW TOWARD MOUNTIAN

261

F.g. technicians obscure the view but after a moment, Neary appears on the concrete and walks toward camera squinting in the heat of the night. The cubicle windows reflect the pomp and splendor far downfield. Neary walks forward and watches behind a light standard.

262

ANGLE - NEARY

262

He is careful not to be seen but wants desperately to get a closer look. He starts forward nonchalantly. A hundred frozen human heads block his view.

DUST is rising in a 15 foot circle and twelve technicians in the downfield vicinity step into the area to investigate. They take a short bounce of the balls of their feet and as if on a trampoline, sail several feet into the air.

TECHNICIAN

(yelling)

Got a negative gravity zone...about 30%.

Other technicians are getting into the act even though they are scrambling away from the negative gravity zone. Instruments and gauges are rushed to the spot to probe, measure and document.

Other men can be seen bouncing up and down into the air. They are helped out of the zone by ropes which are suddenly produced and thrown out.

Five technicians are rolling the organ toward the fifty yard line.

The phantom mass of lights diminishes the organ. Technicians spread out to give it room. Other technicians follow pushing ahead of them the concord speaker units. Shadows are sharp and extremely long. The phantom mass pulses, flickers, and waits.

Nobody even dares to move a muscle. The quiet grows unnerving.

The organ and the technicians look like a drop in the bucket by comparison to the phantom mass.

BLASTING FROM THE MOTHER SHIP COMES FIVE MUSICAL TONES.

And everybody just about jumps out of their clothes.

The lighting changes giving the impression that the shape of the mass is changing as well.

The computer digests these tones and prints out the message. A young technician speaks into a pencil mike.

YOUNG COMPUTER TECHNICIAN

Greetings. Greetings. Hello. Hello.

Lacombe looks to Jean Claude. Jean Claude looks at the musical engineer.

JEAN CLAUDE

Repeat the tone row. Four-six-one-four.

The moog beats back the simple greeting.

BLASTING OUT OF THE FLASHING MOTHER SHIP COMES ANOTHER SERIES OF NOTES. THIS TIME IN INTERVALS AND RHYTHM.

YOUNG COMPUTER TECHNICIAN

(he looks at the read out)

Greetings. Greetings. Hello. Hello.
Hello. Greetings. Hello. Greetings.

LACOMBE

(hearing this)

I don't get it.

WILD BILL

Give it back to them. Note for note.

The musician doesn't understand any of this either. He does what he's told. THIS TIME THERE ARE THE SAME NOTES BUT THE RHYTHM AND THE INTERVALS SOUND MORE ENTHUSIASTIC.

268

ANGLE- MOTHER SHIP

268

All is still. BLASTING FROM THE MOTHER SHIP AGAIN COMES THE SAME NOTES.

LACOMBE

(to musician)

Again. Turn up your volume.

THE MOTHER SHIP REPEATS HERSELF EVEN BEFORE THE MOOG IS FINISHED.

LACOMBE

Go on and jam.

269

ANGLE- ORGAN, WILD BILL & LACOMBE

269

In the background we see the lighted communications board and the mountain.

Yamaha repeats the greeting stepping on MOTHER SHIP'S LAST NOTES. MOTHER SHIP OVERLAPS the last two notes at the end of the Yamaha and repeats herself. Yamaha cuts off MOTHER SHIP's last three notes, and my God, they are actually jamming.

270

ANGLE - WILD BILL & LACOMBE

270

Watching the massive wonder of light and sounds. They communicate with musician through headsets and pencil microphones.

Everything stops! You could hear someone swallow. The musician looks over his shoulder for instructions. He is shining with sweat.

The phantom object and organ and cluster of staff are visible through the double glass curved windows.

272 NEW ANGLE

272

It is only now that part of the MOTHER SHIP BEGINS TO OPEN.

The condition of light inside the mother ship is only slightly better than looking point blank into a sodium vapor searchlight.

Everyone adjusts his polaroids as the rising light crawls up their legs to their faces and whites out all expression.

THERE IS A FIGURE STANDING IN A FLOOD OF BACKLIGHT SO HARSH THAT IT CAUSES IMAGE DISTORTION, MAKING THE FIGURE APPEAR LIKE PIPE CLEANERS IN THE SHAPE OF ARMS AND LEGS.

THE FIGURE BEGINS TO MOVE FORWARD OUT OF THE MOTHER SHIP, GAINING POSTURE AND GIRTH AND...

IT LOOKS HUMAN. ARMS AND LEGS AND WEARING AN OUTDATED UNITED STATES NAVY FLAK JACKET.

273 CLOSE - NEARY

273

He has found an opening in the sideline crowd and sees...

Lacombe turns to a man seated next to him.

LACOMBE .
Can you tell who it is yet?

The man seated next to him quickly looks at the figure through a set of tripod binoculars. In front of him is a posterboard with TWO HUNDRED SNAPSHOTS OF PEOPLE'S FACES. He speed scans the photos.

SPEED SCANNER

U.S.N. Hijacked December
5th, 1945, south of Chicken Shoals, Bermuda.

z

274

WIDE ANGLE - THE MEETING

274

Wild Bill steps forward to greet the man.

TAYLOR

(extending his handshake)

Flight Leader _____ United
States Navy.

x

WILD BILL

Captain W.B. Walsh, United States
Tactical Intelligence. Welcome home
son.

Taylor has a euphoric ease in the manner in which he speaks. He is surprised by none of this. EIGHT OTHER FIGURES APPEAR IN THE OPENING OF THE MOTHER SHIP. All of them are young Naval Airmen and are dressed in post WWII flying outfits.

Wild Bill begins shaking their hands. All of them are mildly at ease about being back home.

A DOZEN OTHERS APPEAR AT THE SHIP'S OPENING. A FEW WOMEN NOW, BUT MOSTLY MEN. AND BEFORE TOO LONG A VERITABLE EXODUS OF HUMANS COME POURING OUT OF THE MOTHER SHIP AND INTO THE WYOMING EVENING.

THE MOTHER SHIP REPEATS HER TONE POEM. THE YAMAHA REPEATS HIS AND THE MUSIC GIVES POMP AND CEREMONY TO THE RETURNING PRISONERS OF TIME.

Every scientist and technician who can leave their posts does so to shake hands with the heroes. It is a welcome home celebration only slightly subdued in the enormous presence of the MOTHER SHIP.

LACOMBE

(to Wild Bill while
shaking hands)

They haven't even aged. Einstein was right!

WILD BILL

(during handshakes)

Einstein was probably one of them.

(back to the P.O.T.'s)

Greetings. Enjoy the trip? Some fun,
huh? Congratulations!

Three MEDICAL PERSONS are waving the evacuees toward the waiting cargo helicopters parked on the grassy outskirts.

MEDICAL OFFICERS

Gentlemen. Debriefing is this way ...
right this way. Debriefing over here.

SPEED SCANNER

Not all the abductees are accounted for.
We have no way of knowing whether some
sre still being detained or have died
from natural causes.

CLOSE - NEARY

He is just one of the crowd now. He appears a little touched, but finally and quietly at home. He stops as five Naval Airmen arrive next to a military ambulance. One young flyer stops by the license plate.

YOUNG FLYER

This is a joke, right?

CLOSE - LACOMBE

He turns, watching this and becoming very interested.

YOUNG FLYER

It says '76'.

MEDICAL OFFICER

Debriefing over here gentlemen ... right
this way.

YOUNG FLYER

(suddenly lost & frightened)
But it can't be '76'. My wife's waiting for
me in Palm Beach. I have children in Florida.

MEDICAL OFFICER

You'll know more at the debriefing.

ANGLE - FIVE AMBULANCES - LOW SHOT

All of the license plates say '76'. Just as suddenly half a dozen h
enter the shot and press adhesive tape over the year.

LACOMBE & WILD BILL

WILD BILL

You can take down your
nudie calenders. Recorded
history starts right here.

But Lacombe is watching something beyond Wild Bill.

275

ANGLE - NEARY

275

As he explores the area, heading in the direction of the phantom mass. He threads his way in and out of technicians. The lights in the end zone grow brighter with every step.

He is approaching the organ. The phantom mass is a huge lighted form in between the organ and Neary and beyond.

276

CLOSE - NEARY

276

Roy wanders by a cubicle and wanders in.

277

INT. CUBICLE - NEARY'S P.O.V.

277

A Catholic priest is administering last rites to a clique of 12 seen before men wearing jumpsuits. They are sitting on wooden benches with their heads bowed in thought, prayer, or meditation. All of them carry synthesizers.

THE SOUND OF REVVING HELICOPTERS OVERRIDES THE CHANTING OF THE LAST RITES.

ANGLE - NEARY

278

He ducks out of the cubicle and bumps into Lacombe who has been standing right behind him

LACOMBE

(paternally)

What is it you want Roy?

Neary is not startled by him. He gives no indication of looking for a way to escape. He simply smiles at Lacombe and says in the most ingenious manner:

NEARY

I want to know that it's really happening.

Something makes Neary stop. The mass begins turning off its lights. They change from hot tones to cool blue. The entire form suddenly resembles a soothing nightlight. Neary walks forward until he is a dramatic silhouette. At this moment a sliver of white light begins to open across the entire base of fifty feet. It is incredibly white violent light. It opens further sending a shadow of sixty people a hundred yards along the ground. Technicians begin pressing forward blocking our view of the opening.

279

ANGLE - LACOMBE. ORGAN, WILD BILL

279

As the lights go out they darkern only to flame again in the spilling of rays of bottom light from the virgin opening. The technicians press forward - a variety of uneasy profiles. Someone points "look there" and Lacombe walks forward.

280

ANGLE - LACOMBE

280

He stands silhouetted against the blazing opening, light eating away the shape of his body...something begins to materialize from the flooding lights. It looks like A SHAPE...A HUMANOID FORM. Too far to tell from this angle.

281

ANGLE - LACOMBE

281

He has walked forward to look. A hundred technicians and half the site back him up. Neary can be seen in the background. Lacombe adjusts his glasses and steps forward again...closer...brighter. He sees...steps back.

282

ANGLE

282

The musician is handed some complicated sheet music and at first is too awestruck to perform. A harsh command from somewhere within the stunned gathering loosens his fingers and starts to play the sometimes melodic comminque.

283

CLOSE - OVER LACOMBE'S SHOULDERS

283

We see the white hot opening and the figure suspended there. It starts to come out ... materializing more and more with every step.

284

ANGLE - SUDDENLY

284

ONE HUNDRED HUMANOID OCCUPANTS LEAVE THE MOTHER SHIP AND FAN OUT IN ALL DIRECTIONS. THEY SEEM TO BE FLOATING TOWARD THE APPREHENSIVE HUDDLE OF AMERICAN OFFICIALS.

THERE IS NO ORDER OR SYMMETRY IN THEIR BEHAVIOR. THEY ARE LIKE CHILDREN LET LOOSE IN A TOY FACTORY. THEY SWARM LIKE ANTS ALL OVER THE FANCY TERRESTRIAL HARDWARE AND THE FROZEN "UPTIGHT" SCIENTIFIC PERSONNEL. THEY REACH OUT AND TOUCH WITH SPINDLY ARMS TWICE THE LENGTH OF THEIR TAPERED PHYSIQUES. A FEW OF THE AMERICAN TEAM BREAK AND RUN WITH FEAR. THEY ARE PURSUED BY THE CURIOUS OCCUPANTS WHO CAN MOVE WITH FLUID LIGHTNING SPEED. NOBODY EVER GETS A GOOD LOOK AT THE UFO-NAUTS - THE MOTHER SHIP IS TOO BRIGHT AND THEY ARE IN SILHOUETTE IN MOST PART. "CREATURE HANDS" REACH OUT AND FONDLE LOVINGLY.

SEVERAL OCCUPANTS ARE EXPLORING THE GROIN AREAS OF THREE STATELY OFFICIALS TOO FRIGHTENED TO EVEN RESIST THE FOREPLAY.

THIS IS BOTH BEAUTIFUL AND DISTURBING TO WATCH. A FEW PEOPLE CONNECTED WITH THE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES ARE TOUCHING BACK AND WHEN THIS HAPPENS, THE OCCUPANTS SEEM TO PERK AND SWOON.

CRATES OF COCA-COLA ARE OPENED BY MEMBERS OF THE MARY GROUND CREW AND AS THOUGH THE DINNER BELL WERE RUNG, DOZENS OF OCCUPANTS GATHER AROUND. ONE BRAVE CREW WORKER POPS THE PULLTOP AND HANDS A CAN TO A THREE FOOT TALL OCCUPANT WHO IMMEDIATELY DRAINS THE CONTENTS INTO HIS HAND AND BOUNCES ALL OVER THE PLACE IN THE MOST TURNED ON MANNER IMAGINABLE. LAUGHING, THE GROUND CREW WORKER POPS MORE TOPS AND PASSES THEM OUT LIKE THEY WERE GOING OUT OF STYLE.

285

ANGLE - CUBICLE

285

Those twenty young men in their jumpsuits and carrying duffel bags parade bravely out of the tent heading toward the MOTHER SHIP.

They pass a frightened priest who is on his knees genuflecting his salvation. THREE TINY OCCUPANTS CAN BE SEEN JUST BEYOND HIM Imitating his every pious gesture in perfect unison.

ANGLE - LACOMBE

28

Being much more receptive than most anyone else, Lacombe is the most popular recipient of creature behavior. He is smothered by two dozen pairs of 'feelers' and is returning the gestures as fast as he can. He looks up and smiles towards something. He waves.

37

CLOSE NEARY

28

He is smiling back, CAMERA PULLS AWAY revealing that Neary is wearing a jumpsuit and marching toward the MOTHER SHIP with the twenty young volunteers. WE HAVE NEVER SEEN HIM SO ELISSFULLY RESOLVED. AT ONCE, THE TINY OCCUPANTS FORM A CORDON AND STOP THE TWENTY ASTRONAUTS FROM ENTERING THE MOTHER SHIP. A GAGGLE OF NEW OCCUPANTS SURROUND NEARY AND ESCORT HIM TOWARD THE ASTHEDLIN BRIGHT OPENING TO BE THE FIRST TO BOARD.

SOUND TRACK - MUSIC

We hear the original 40's recording of JIMMINY CRICKET singing "WHEN YOU WISH UPON A STAR".

JIMMINY CRICKET

When you wish upon a star
Makes no difference who you are
Anything your heart desires will come
to you.

ANGLE - MOTHER SHIP

28

The inside light burns brighter and brighter as one after another of the twenty volunteers disappear into the brilliant opening.

NEARY TURNS BACK ONE LAST TIME AND LOOKS UP TOWARD THE MOUNTAIN RIDGE.

JIMMINY CRICKET

If your heart is in your dreams
No request is too extreme
When you wish upon a star as dreamers do .

HIGH ANGLE - THE SITE

28

Neary disappears into the MOTHER SHIP as the occupants touch and brush and caress each other and everybody.

CHORUS

Angels high - she brings to those
who love - the sweet fulfillment
of their secret longings.

28

HIGH ATOP DEVIL'S TOWER

290

JILLIAN STANDS NOW. She looks down at the playful, loving, frightened chaos and feels some of the fulfillment...She raises her camera and takes the most important photograph in the history of the world!

JIMINY CRICKET

Like a boat out of the blue...
Fate steps in and sees you through...
When you wish upon a star your dreams...
come...true.

291

INT. JILLIAN'S FARM HOUSE - BARRY - NIGHT

291

The Pinnocchio record is playing on Barry's victrola. Barry is preoccupied with a coloring book. As the song folds over into a haunting instrumental rendition, Barry is suddenly alert - his eyes dart about the room, a smile breaks, a laugh erupts and...he runs to the nearest window - happier than he's ever been.

ROLL END CREDITS...AND REPRISE OF SONG OVER FIFTEEN HIGH RESOLUTION COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS OF JILLIAN'S "INDISPUTABLE PROOF".