THE
ANDROMEDA
STRAIN

Cinescript
by
Nelson Gidding

Based on the novel
by
Michael Crichton

A ROBERT WISE PRODUCTION
PREFACE

This is a cinescript, an amplified screenplay which uses the written page in a cinematic form to convey the total "look" of a film. The method, incorporating illustrations, diagrams, "schema" technique, computerized animations, multi-screen effects, and printouts, was suggested by the unique style of Mr. Crichton's novel, and retains it in translation to the screen.

In a complex film, the advantage of a cinescript over the established screenplay format is a closer approximation for the reader of what will be seen on the screen.

R.W.
Sc. 84, p. 21: ANOTHER LETTER

Jeremy Stone's letter to the President.

This is the typed version, unsigned and bears revisions in Stone's hand as follows:

Laboratory of Jeremy Stone
Berkeley, California

February 12, 1969

The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

Recent considerations indicate that sterilization procedures of returning space probes are insufficient to guarantee sterile reentry to this planet's atmosphere. The consequence of this is the potential introduction of virulent organisms into the present ecological framework.

In a true biological crisis, which our exploration of space could bring about, the present Lunar Receiving Laboratory would prove inadequate. I, therefore, urge the establishment of a facility to deal specifically with an extraterrestrial form of life. The purpose of this facility would be to limit the dissemination of such an unknown organism from outer space and to provide laboratories for its analysis.

I recommend that this facility be located in an uninhabited region of the United States, that it utilize all known isolation techniques and that it be equipped with a device for self-destruction, in the event of an emergency.

Yours very truly,

Jeremy Stone

JS:ns
The Schema technique is the free use of diagrams and drawings in combination with live images on the multi-screen. The technique is designed to convey the size, scope, and complexity of Wildfire Lab. Equally important, it establishes, in the spirit of Mr. Crichton's novel, an air of documentary authenticity for the film.

 Appropriately labeled, the drawings -- floor plans, cross-sections, elevations, details, isometrics, etc. -- show clearly how Wildfire functions and how its separate parts relate to the whole. The use of Schema technique enables an audience to orient itself at any point within the intricate underground lab. It also provides an entirely visual method of exposition in certain sequences.

See illustration on following page.
There are four kinds of uniforms at Wildfire:

1. THE STAFF UNIFORM

worn by Administrative and Housekeeping personnel. The women's staff uniform, tailored along military lines, resembles a pant's suit rather than a skirted WAC or WAVE uniform. Except for the cut and certain details, the male and female staff uniforms are similar.

2. THE TECH UNIFORM

worn by lab and maintenance technicians. The Tech uniform is something like a coverall, but closer fitting, so that cumbersome loose ends will not interfere with the operation of intricate "hardware."

3. DIO (Disposable Immunization Outfit)

worn by all personnel while undergoing the Wildfire decontamination-immunization-sterilization process. Made of paper by a new process, the DIO is rather like a surgical uniform, loose-fitting top with a V-neck, short sleeves, elastic banded pants, and a special "slipper" which can be slipped on and off without the use of hands.

4. THE WILDFIRE JUMPSUIT

worn by the team of scientists on Level V. It is a two-piece uniform with the top portion coming in both a long-sleeved and looser, short-sleeved version, which is selected by the scientist according to his preference and rank at the moment. Wildfire jumpsuits are also worn by department heads and top administrators at the facility.

Comvoice is a live voice over the intercom system emanating from various Level Control Rooms.

The Electronic Diagram is a closed-circuit visual mapping device installed throughout Wildfire Lab.
These diagrams are electronically generated, three-dimensional, orthographic projections which can be displayed on any TV monitor in the lab, presenting a plan of all five levels of Wildfire, or any of its various sections, according to what is required.

The movement of the scientists, as represented by their initials (S,D,L,H) on the diagram, is monitored by a computer and indicated via computerized animation. The movement of the two patients and the Scoop VII capsule, represented by symbols (triangles for the patients, a circle for the capsule), can also be seen on the diagrams.

Sc. 221, p. 62: VITAL SIGNS FOR THE OLD MAN AND BABY

Constantly fluctuating a few points up and down, the old man's vital signs read:

PULSE 105: RESP 32: BP 95/50: TEMP 98.5

The temperature remains steady.

Also fluctuating a few points, the baby's vital signs are:

PULSE 132: RESP 40: BP 90/61: TEMP 98.4

The temperature remains steady.

Sc. 236, p. 67: COMPUTER READOUTS AND COMPUTER PRINTOUTS

All electronic screens deliver two kinds of computerized messages: the "readout," as used in this context, and the "printout." The computer readout is delivered letter by letter, but so fast it appears as a streak of movement which, in a second or two, can be read in its entirety.

Sc. 264, p. 75: COMPUTERIZED ANIMATION

Computerized Animation is the creation of animated forms by an electronic microfilm recorder hooked up to a computer. The computerized system, plotting and drawing lines a million times faster than human draftsmen, will accurately portray the trajectories of the one thousand and eighty-two earth satellites and interplanetary vehicles in space.
Sc. 403, p. 114: FULL ON ROOM

The radio chatter in b.g. will be as follows:

COMROE
(into radio)
Scoop Mission Control to Albuquerque Center.
Do not repeat do not send your post investigative team. We're sending ours under General Sparks. Over.

RADIO
Albuquerque Center to Scoop Mission. This is Colonel Thomson. We read you, but what's the delay? Over.

COMROE
Scoop Mission to Albuquerque Center. All personnel entering WF Area must be screened and reconfirmed, Colonel. Authority DOD, Executive Order 2918 for K Operations. Over and out.

At the same time as the above, a Sergeant talks on the telephone:

SERGEANT
(into phone)
Add these two names to the manifest, Ops: Manchek, Arthur, Major, 0-793245; Hartwell, Bruce D., Captain, 0-834478....Yeah, yeah. The General will sign it himself, my boy. Standby for immediate take-off.

Sc. 441, p. 125: ANGLE INCLUDING CONSOLE MONITOR

The following scanner readouts follow in succession after CULTURE DESIG

A) 493  CULTURE DESIG  493  POCHON'S MED.
---------------------------------------------
ATMOSPHERE DESIG  NH₃
LUMIN DESIG  LW

B) 494  CULTURE DESIG  494  TRYP'T SOY
---------------------------------------------
ATMOSPHERE DESIG  CO/NO₂
LUMIN DESIG  SW
C) 495 • CULTURE DESIG • 495 • YEAST EXT.
ATMOSPHERE DESIG • SO₂
LUMIN DESIG • X/LO

D) 496 • CULTURE DESIG • 496 • THIO SULPH
ATMOSPHERE DESIG • VACU
LUMIN DESIG • UV/VIS

Sc. 447, p. 126: CLOSE ON VIEWING SCREEN

After CULTURE DESIG • 498 snaps off, the following scanner readouts appear in rapid succession:

A) 499 • CULTURE DESIG • 499 • NITRATE
ATMOSPHERE DESIG • SO₂
LUMIN DESIG • WL

B) 500 • CULTURE DESIG • 500 • CHOCOLATE
ATMOSPHERE DESIG • CH₄
LUMIN DESIG • UV/VIS

C) 501 • CULTURE DESIG • 501 • VAN DELDAN'S MED.
ATMOSPHERE DESIG • NH₃
LUMIN DESIG • IR/VIS

Sc. 454, p. 129: CLOSE ON VIEWING SCREEN

Following scanner readouts appear in quick succession on Viewing Screen:

A) CULTURE DESIG • 500 • CHOCOLATE
ATMOSPHERE DESIG • CH₄
LUMIN DESIG • UV/VIS

B) 501 • CULTURE DESIG • 501 • VAN DELDAN'S MED.
ATMOSPHERE DESIG • NH₃
LUMIN DESIG • IR/VIS
C) 502 • • CULTURE DESIG • • 502 • • GELATIN
======================================
ATMOSPHERE DESIG • • CO₂/CO
LUMIN DESIG • • SW

D) 503 • • CULTURE DESIG • • 503 • • LACTOSE BROTH
======================================
ATMOSPHERE DESIG • • NO₂
LUMIN DESIG • • LW

Sc. 474, p. 139: ANGLE PAST LEAVITT TOWARD SCREENS

A) 126 • • CULTURE DESIG • • 126 • • GREEN'S MED.
======================================
ATMOSPHERE DESIG • • O₂
LUMIN DESIG • • IR/Hi

B) 542 • • CULTURE DESIG • • 542 • • THIOGLYC
======================================
ATMOSPHERE DESIG CO₂ + H₂
LUMIN DESIG • • X/Hi

Sc. 483, p. 144: COMPUTERIZED ANIMATION

A special computer program will be developed to generate color graphics and combinations of patterns indicating with versimilitude the way a crystalline structured organism like Andromeda might function.
ADDITIONAL DIALOGUE

Sc. 17, 18, 23, 25, 31, pp 7-9: INT. SCOOP MISSION CONTROL

2ND ARMY TECH
Rise and shine, Jonesy.

1ST CIVILIAN TECH (Sc. 18)
Cut in the AS.

1ST ARMY TECH (Sc. 23)
Me and Crane took basic together.

2ND CIVILIAN TECH (Sc. 25)
Shows a knock in the engine.

1ST ARMY TECH (Sc. 31)
Bet they could use a beer right now.

Sc. 60 & 61, p. 16: STONE PARTY

ENGLISH BLONDE
Heavens, no, we don't have smog in London; we call it smaze.

TALL MAN
Crew is the only strictly amateur sport left in the University.

OLDER WOMAN
I can't wear wool next to my skin, so Herbert had to turn down the Chair at Minnesota.

YOUNG SCHOLAR
It was one of the Latin playwrights -- Terence -- who first mentioned a generation gap.

MAN
All right, I said, sixty cents for a cup of coffee, but I want a doggie for the sugar.
TIME SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FIRST DAY:

INT. Van (Sc. 7) 8:00 PM (N.M.)
INT. Scoop Mission Control (Sc. 15) 7:05 PM (Calif.)
INT. Scoop Mission Control (Sc. 42) 7:40 PM (Calif.)
INT. Plane - Instrument Panel (Sc. 43) 8:35 PM (Calif.)
INT. Corridor (Sc. 50) 10:05 PM (Calif.)
INT. Situation Rm.-(Multi-Screen Sc. 55-B) 1:07 AM (Wash, D.C.)
INT. Stone's House (Sc. 57) 11:15 PM (Calif.)

SECOND DAY:

INT. Dutton Bedroom (Sc. 92) 2:00 AM (Ohio)
INT. Leavitt's Lab (Sc. 96) 3:15 AM (New York)
INT. Operating Room (Sc. 97) 6:30 AM (Kansas)
INT. Helicopter (Sc. 103) 8:00 AM (Calif.)
EXT. Main Street of Piedmont (Sc. 118) 11:10 AM (N.M.)
INT. Situation Room (Sc. 180) 2:40 PM (Wash, D.C.)
INT. Sedan (Sc. 187) 11:55 AM (Nevada)
INT. A Small Anteroom (Sc. 196) 12:20 PM (Wildfire)

(NOTE: In Wildfire Lab, time, real time proceeds consecutively except for the walk advancements indicated as follows:)

INT. Level I - (Sc. 205) 12:27 PM
INT. Conference Room - Level I (Sc. 209) 12:45 PM
INT. Level II - Body Analysis (Sc. 233) 5:15 PM
INT. Level III - Maroon Corridor (Sc. 251) 8:35 PM
INT. A Cubicle - Xenon Flash - Level III (Sc. 254) 9:40 PM
INT. Level IV - Green Corridor (Sc. 256) 10:00 PM
TIME SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (Cont'd)

INT. Stone's Interim Room (Sc. 260) 10:02 PM
INT. Leavitt's Rm - (Multi-Screen Sc. 268-A) 11:40 PM

THIRD DAY:

INT. Dutton's Room (Sc. 270) 2:25 AM
INT. Hall's Room (Sc. 272) 3:55 AM

(NOTE: During the above six hours, 10:00 PM to 4:00 AM, the scientists have their last sleep or rest period until the final Wildfire sequence.)

INT. Cafeteria - Level IV (Sc. 274) 4:01 AM
INT. Level V - Ward Room (Sc. 285-C) 4:33 AM
INT. Level V - Corridor (Sc. 287) 4:34 AM
INT. Main Control Lab - Level V (Sc. 288) 4:35 AM
INT. Miscellaneous Room - Level V (Sc. 299) 4:42 AM
INT. Main Control Lab - Level V (Sc. 310) 5:30 AM
INT. Autopsy Hot Room (Sc. 318) 5:40 AM
INT. Main Control Lab (Sc. 331) 5:47 AM
INT. Miscellaneous Room (Sc. 339) 6:10 AM
INT. Main Control Lab (Sc. 355) 9:50 AM
INT. Nurses Room (Sc. 390) 10:05 AM
INT. Action Control (Sc. 401) 10:15 AM
INT. Level V (Sc. 405) 12:00 NOON
INT. Level I - Delta V (Sc. 407) 12:08 PM
EXT. A Temporary Landing Pad (Sc. 416) 1:20 PM (Utah)
INT. Microchemistry Lab - Level V (Sc. 419) 3:20 PM
EXT. Site of Phantom Crash (Sc. 433) 4:30 PM (Utah)
INT. Microbiology Lab (Sc. 440) 11:45 PM
INT. Miscellaneous Hot Room (Sc. 449) 11:55 PM
TIME SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (Cont'd)

FOURTH DAY:

INT. Microbiology Lab (Sc. 450) 12:05 AM
INT. Ward Room (Sc. 456) 12:07 AM
INT. Situation Room (Sc. 461) 3:12 AM (Wash, D.C.)
INT. Delta V - Level I (Sc. 465) 1:30 AM
INT. Electron Microscopy Lab - Level V - (Sc. 467) 2:45 AM
INT. Situation Room (Sc. 475) 5:50 AM (Wash, D.C.)
INT. X-Ray Crystallography Lab (Sc. 481) 3:50 AM
INT. Miscellaneous Lab (Sc. 487) 4:30 AM
INT. Corridor - Level V (Sc. 492) 4:31 AM
INT. Main Control Lab (Sc. 496) 4:33 AM
INT. Miscellaneous Rm. on 3rd TV (Sc. 502) 4:35 AM
INT. Autopsy Lab - Close on 1st TV (Sc. 510) 4:37 AM
INT. Main Control Room (Sc. 521) 4:39 AM
INT. Autopsy - 1st TV (Sc. 526) 4:40 AM
INT. Main Lab - Angle on Stone & Hall (Sc. 531) 4:41 AM
INT. A Corridor (Sc. 536) 4:42 AM

INT. A Pair of Clocks (Sc. 539) 4:42:30 AM

At this point, time runs out on all clocks in conformity to the announce-ments of the Seductive Voice, as:

ANGLE ON HOT Rm. (Sc. 543) 4:43:00 AM

ANGLE ON HOT ROOM (Sc. 549) 4:43:30 AM

INT. Main Control (Sc. 559) 4:44:01 AM

Etc., until....

INT. The Infirmary - Level III (Sc. 587) 6:28 AM
FADE IN

UNIVERSAL TRADEMARK

CUT TO

THE FOLLOWING IN WHITE LETTERS ON THE BLACK SCREEN:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This film concerns the four-day history of a major American scientific crisis.

We received the generous help of many people attached to Project Scoop at Vandenberg Air Force Base and the Wildfire Laboratory in Flatrock, Nevada. They encouraged us to tell the story accurately and in detail.

The documents presented here are soon to be made public. They do not in any way jeopardize the national security.

CUT TO
THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL MORE OF THE DOCUMENT:

THIS FILE IS CLASSIFIED TOP SECRET

Examination by unauthorized persons
is a criminal offense punishable
by fines and imprisonment up to
20 years and $20,000.

CAMERA CONTINUES TO PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

. . . . . . . . . .
. OPENING CREDITS
. APPEAR HERE:
. .
. STARRING:
.

DO NOT ACCEPT FROM COURIER
IF SEAL IS BROKEN

The courier is required by law
to demand your card 7592. He
is not permitted to relinquish
this file without such proof
of identity.

MACHINE SCORE REVIEW BELOW

0000000000 00 0 0000 00
00000000 00 0000000000
0000 0000 0 0000 00 0
000 000000 000 00 0
000 0000000000 0000
0000000 0 0 0 0 0
THE BALANCE OF CREDITS... They appear in the same style as those just seen. The credits will be interspersed among other authentic documents from official files and presented in multi-screen technique to be designed. The final document with which the credits end is a soiled chart.
EXT. A MAN ON A HILL - NIGHT

He is slumped over a boulder. An immensity of stars above, desert all around. Everything still, motionless, timeless. It could be a vista of the Old West. The man moves.

CLOSER

Peering through a gun-like NVD-9 (Night Vision Device), he wears a parka, hood up, and gloves. He probes toward a town in the distance.

LONG SHOT THROUGH NVD - THE TOWN

A few, indistinct buildings along a single dark street. No lights, no activity; an air of hushed silence. The lens starts to fog, drawing a shroud of secrecy over the town.

ANGLE ON THE MAN

He wipes the lens with a gloved finger, then once more peers through the NVD. Nothing. With his naked eye he looks at:

THE SURROUNDING HILLS

low, blunted, an occasional withered yucca tree.

BACK TO THE MAN

He shivers. Whether it is the wind or something else will never be known. He clambers down the hillside, A dusty van, motor idling softly, is parked off the road. As he opens the rear door, a sudden red glow spills out, extinguished almost immediately by the slam of the door behind him. CAMERA CLOSES on the van. An antenna rises from the roof and starts to rotate.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Deep red light...Lieutenant SHAWN, 23, the hood of his parka now laid back, and Tech Sergeant CRANE, younger, in shirt-sleeves, bend over a chart on a navigation table. Around them are banks of electronic equipment including a radio-directional beeper transmitting a steady signal.

CRANE

How can it be, Lieutenant?

CONTINUED
SHAWN
(gesturing at equipment)
Because the monster says so.
(pointing at chart)
Hell, man, we've been closing on it the last six hours.

TIGHT ON CHART

A plotter taps a place where three lines converge. The legend across the top of the chart reads: VANDENBERG AFB, PROJECT: SCOOP (CLASSIFIED), SATELLITE RECOVERY CHART.

CRANE'S VOICE
Piedmont, New Mexico.

TWO SHOT

Crane looks up, hiding his concern behind a smile.

CRANE
Population, sixty-eight.

They share a weak laugh. Shawn adjusts a knob that brings up the volume of the beeper. Crane stares at the pulsing red lights.

CRANE
Some joker must've seen it come down and collected himself a souvenir, huh Lieutenant?

SHAWN
Yeah...Only you'd think they'd've reported it to the police or NASA, or the army, or someone.

He opens the door of the van. Crane scrambles after him.

BIRDS

Big birds, wheeling in the sky.

EXT. THE HILL - NIGHT - MOVING SHOT ON SHAWN AND CRANE

laboring up the hill. Shawn, spotting the birds, stops.
CONTINUED

SHAWN
Hey, I didn't notice them before.

CRANE
Crazy. Didn't know buzzards fly at night.

He laughs nervously. Shawn raises the NVD.

NVD SHOT - THE BIRDS

SHAWN'S VOICE
That's what they look like.

TWO SHOT

Shawn hands Crane the NVD. Crane points it toward the birds, then scans the dim outline of the town beyond. Shawn lights a cigarette, cupping his hands around the lighter.

CRANE
(returning NVD)
Some dead burg.

SHAWN
Buzzards only come when something's dead.

He raises the NVD, sweeps the town briefly, then flicks his cigarette away with an air of finality.

SHAWN
I guess we better go in and have a look.

STRAIGHT CUT TO

EXT. VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE - NIGHT

A teletype printout in white letters CLATTERS across a black band at bottom of frame:

VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE, CALIFORNIA. . . DECEMBER, 1970 . . .
SCOOP MISSION CONTROL

SHAWN'S VOICE
This is Caper One to Vandal Deca.

INT. SCOOP MISSION CONTROL - NIGHT - CLOSE ON A LOUDSPEAKER

SHAWN'S VOICE
Caper One to Vandal Deca. Are you reading? Over.
ANGLE ON LT. COMROE

at his desk. The room is large, windowless, utilitarian. Five bored TECHNICIANS including two civilians, are at their posts before various devices. An oscilloscope which monitors radio transmissions visually is in a corner. Comroe, reading a magazine, gropes for the microphone on his desk, clicks it on.

COMROE
Yes, I'm reading. Over.

SHAWN'S VOICE
We're about to enter the town of Piedmont and recover the satellite.

COMROE
Very good, Caper One. Leave your radio open.

SHAWN'S VOICE
Roger.

Comroe, eyes on magazine, sets the mike down.

ANGLE ON TWO TECHNICIANS

One is asleep. A field manual, FM 2-6 BIOLOGICAL AND RADIOLOGICAL OPERATIONS, lies face down on his chest. The sound of a radio beep from the loudspeaker begins and gradually increases.

SHAWN'S VOICE
We are now inside the town.
Kind of spooky.

The second technician, given pause, wakes his buddy.

CLOSE ON OSCILLOSCOPE

SHAWN'S VOICE
I see a church steeple ahead to the left. I mean it's quiet here.

The motion of jagged white lines across the green face of the scope indicates Shawn's tension.

SHAWN'S VOICE
Damndest thing -- there's no sign of life. The signals from the satellite are getting real strong.

CLOSE ON COMROE

giving the loudspeaker his full attention.
ANGLE ON TECHNICIAN

as he hears:

CRANE'S VOICE

Sir!

THE LOUDSPEAKER

CRANE'S VOICE

(shaky)

You see that, Lieutenant?

SHAWN'S VOICE

See what, Crane?

THE OSCILLOSCOPE

The lines indicate mounting tension.

CRANE'S VOICE

By that fence. Looks like a body.

With Shawn's soothing reply, the lines decelerate.

SHAWN'S VOICE

Easy, Crane. You're imagining things.

FULL ON ROOM

Everyone now facing the loudspeaker, also imagining things. At the sound of the van SQUEALING to a halt, a Technician half-stands.

OSCILLOSCOPE

With Shawn's voice, jagged lines leap:

SHAWN'S VOICE

Holy ---

CRANE'S VOICE

It's another one, sir.

THREE QUICK INTERCUTS

between the loudspeaker, and the oscilloscope:

SHAWN'S VOICE

You're right. Looks dead.

CRANE'S VOICE

Yes, sir. Shall I ---

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

SHAWN'S VOICE

No! Stay in the van!

ANGLE ON COMROE

sitting rigidly behind his desk, holding the mike.

COMROE

Vandal Deca to Caper One. What's happened?

HIS POV - THE LOUDSPEAKER - SLIGHTLY COCKED

SHAWN'S VOICE

We see bodies. Lots of them.

BACK TO COMROE - TIGHT

He opens a drawer, removes a booklet, MANUAL OF PROJECT SCOOP, speaking into the mike at the same time:

COMROE

Are you certain, Caper One?

OSCILLOSCOPE

With his voice, the lines leap into jagged peaks.

SHAWN'S VOICE

Dammit, Comroe, of course we're certain.

ANGLE ON COMROE

studying the manual, coming to a reluctant decision:

COMROE

Your orders are...
(a heavy pause)
...proceed to satellite and retrieve.

He looks up. The men in the room are staring at him.

SHAWN'S VOICE

(slowly)
Roger, Vandal Deca.

FULL SHOT ON ROOM

The sound of the van RUMBLING on its way fills the room. Some of the men gravitate toward the loudspeaker or the oscilloscope.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

Stay at your stations!
The men dart back to their places.

ANGLE PAST COMROE TOWARD THE DOOR

He punches a red security button on the console beside him.
A red sign -- SECURITY -- flashes on above the door.

COMROE
(into phone)
Get me Major Manchek.

A SERGEANT, buckling on side arms, stations himself at the door.

CRANE'S VOICE
Somehow they don't hardly look
dead, Lieutenant.

Following the motion of all heads, CAMERA SWIVELS TO:

THE LOUDSPEAKER

SHAWN'S VOICE
They're all over. Must be dozens
of 'em.

CLOSE SHOT - COMROE

COMROE
Dammmit, get this call through.

CRANE'S VOICE
Sort of like they just dropped in
their tracks...Sir!

CLOSE ON LOUDSPEAKER

SHAWN'S VOICE
Good Chri ---

CLOSER ON LOUDSPEAKER

CRANE'S VOICE
You see it -- that thing in white?

SHAWN'S VOICE
Yeah, coming toward us....
FLASH SHOT - TWO TECHNICIANS
exchanging a look.

OMITTED

QUICK CLOSEUP - COMROE
an air of desperation, as Manchek comes onto the line:

COMROE
Hello, Major. This sounds crazy, but---

HUGE CLOSEUP - THE GRILL OF THE LOUDSPEAKER
The VOICES ISSUE from what is now an unrecognizable object.

CRANE'S VOICE
Lieutenant, sir. I think we should get out of ---

Crane SCREAMS.

THE OSCILLOSCOPE SCREEN
Responding to the scream, the jagged lines go wild.

STROBE CUT TO

CLOSEUP - MAJOR MANCHEK
on phone in Scoop Mission Control, a heavyset, low-key man.

MANCHEK
Hello, Ops. This is Major Manchek at Scoop Control A-12. We need a flyby over Piedmont, New Mexico. Infrared. A FLIR scan. All sectors.

CAMERA PULLS BACK Slightly to reveal Comroe, tipped-in, nodding confirmation as Manchek continues on phone:

MANCHEK
Film to come direct to Scoop. Assign Gunner Wilson if he's not crooked somewhere.

STROBE CUT TO

A JET PLANE INSTRUMENT PANEL - NIGHT
ROCK MUSIC over radio before it is clicked off.
AIR-TO-AIR SHOT

As the plane swoops BELOW CAMERA

MULTI-SCREEN

A) EXT. A WING-MOUNTED FLIR CAMERA - NIGHT - UPPER LEFT
B) INT. COCKPIT - NIGHT - GUNNER'S FINGERS PLAYING THE CAMERA BUTTONS - UPPER CENTER
C) INT. COCKPIT - NIGHT -CLOSE ON GUNNER, CRANING - UPPER RIGHT
D) EXT. GUNNER'S POV - THE GROUND - NIGHT - BOTTOM HALF OF SCREEN

a blur of sand, hillocks, scrub, yucca trees -- then up ahead, buildings in the moonlight, racing at the plane.

GUNNER
(startled)

Jeez ---

With Gunner's VOICE, IMAGE D bursts into:

SINGLE SCREEN - FLASH SHOT - THE MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Bodies everywhere, sprawled, spread-eagled, lying across doorways.

INT. COCKPIT - CLOSE ON GUNNER

Recovering, he takes a second look.

FLASH SHOT - THE MAIN STREET - CRAZY ANGLE

spinning away. The bodies are still there.

GUNNER'S VOICE
(incredulous)

Man oh man....

CLOSEUP - THE WING-MOUNTED FLIR CAMERA

FLASH SHOT - INFRARED - MAIN STREET ON RETURN RUN

The infrared film shows anything warm -- the bodies as white blobs; anything cold -- the buildings -- as black.

STROBE CUT TO
INT. A CORRIDOR - NIGHT - ANGLE ON A DOOR

marked FILM DATA PROSSEX, and underneath in red, ADMISSION BY CLEARANCE CARD ONLY. The door, guarded by an MP, opens. Manchek and Comroe emerge.

MANCHEK
(to Comroe)
I'm declaring a state of emergency.
All personnel confined to base.
(pointing to door)
Everything seen and heard in that room is top secret.

Manchek hurries off to a steel door, painted white and marked: EMERGENCY ONLY. He opens it with one of two keys attached to a plastic tag.

INT. A SMALL SOUNDPROOFED BOOTH

The door locks behind Manchek. He pauses before a telephone, suddenly indecisive, regarding the keys in his hand.

INSERT - THE KEYS

The lettering on the attached tag reads: IN CASE OF FIRE, Notify Division 21 - Emergency Only.

CLOSE ON MANCHEK

Inserting the smaller of the two keys into the phone, he rapidly dials the number 21 four times...A series of mechanical CLICKS and a LOW HUM...As the trunk sounds stop, from the other end comes:

A WOMAN'S VOICE
This is a recording. State your name and your message and hang up.

MANCHEK
Major Arthur Manchek, Scoop Mission Control A-12. I recommend calling a WILDFIRE ALERT. We have evidence on film here of unnatural death caused by Scoop VII returning to earth. Time check zero one four seven inclusive.

Manchek pauses. The mechanical CLICKS start. He hangs up, the mechanical SOUNDS CONTINUING OVER...

EXT. THE WHITE STEEL DOOR OF THE BOOTH - FILLING SCREEN

REVERSE ZOOM TO:
MULTI-SCREEN

A) THE WHITE DOOR, NOW SMALL, AT CENTER OF BLACK SCREEN

B) IMAGES of different SHAPES and SIZES, accompanied by a torrent of ELECTRONIC NOISE, proliferate across the rest of the BLACK SCREEN. They depict the network of computers, scrambler units, decoders, message centers, set in motion by Manchek's call. The sequence is keyed around the Situation Room, which shows increasing activity. In seconds, it is all over; the intricate machinery falls silent.

C) A TELTYPEWRITER - THIS IMAGE SNAPS ON TO REPLACE THE STEEL DOOR AT CENTER OF SCREEN. As teletypewriter CLATTERS, CAMERA MOVES IN TO:

SINGLE SCREEN - THE TELTYPEWRITER

FILLING THE FRAME, it prints out:

TOP SECRET
MESSAGE FOLLOWS
AS
WILDFIRE ALERT HAS BEEN CALLED
PRESS BLACKOUT
POTENTIAL DIRECTIVE 7-12
FURTHER NOTATIONS
AS
THE FOLLOWING AMERICAN CITIZENS PLACED ON ZED
KAPPA STATUS. NAMES:
STONE, JEREMY 81
LEAVITT, RUTH 04
DUTTON, CHARLES 51
KIRKE, ALEXANDER 39
HALL, MARK 142
TOP SECRET CLEARANCE
RECONFIRMED FOR:
STONE 81
OTHERS IN PROCESS

END MESSAGE END MESSAGE
DISENGAGE

With the SOUND of a DOORBELL:

CUT TO
INT. VESTIBULE AND LIVING ROOM OF STONE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Stone's wife, ALLISON, 26, cool, stylish, answers the doorbell. Behind her in the living room a party of some thirty people is in full swing. She opens the front door to be confronted by an Air Force CAPTAIN and an MP SERGEANT.

CAPTAIN
We'd like to see Dr. Jeremy Stone, please.

ALLISON
(a quizzical smile)
I'm Mrs. Stone. We're having a party. May I --
(looking o.s.)
Does that man have a gun?

HER ANGLE - TOWARD AN AIR FORCE LIMOUSINE

in the driveway. A soldier, with a rifle, stands by the car.

RESUME ALLISON, CAPTAIN, AND MP

CAPTAIN
Ma'am, we must see Dr. Stone.

She now notices both men with her wear side arms.

ALLISON
What is this?

CAPTAIN
Please call Dr. Stone to the door.

MP
Otherwise, we'll go get him, ma'am.

The Captain smiles.

ALLISON
Just a minute.

She starts to close the door, but the MP holds it with his foot. The Captain slips inside.

CAPTAIN
I'll just wait here, ma'am.
ANGLE ON DOCTOR JEREMY STONE

in the living room at the center of a group, which includes a shrunken man with thick glasses, PROF. IRVING SCHWARTZ, and a beefy scientist in a double-breasted suit, MURRAY. Stone, in his mid-forties, not handsome in a conventional sense, has great charm -- a high-domed, urbane, gracious, confident man with a keenly intelligent face.

STONE
Sorry you won't benefit from it, Irving.

SCHWARTZ
All the same, Jeremy, I'm glad I'm not a biologist. Are you people still working on defoliants?

MURRAY
I'll come to Berkeley any time, Stone. That four million must be your largest Federal grant.

ALLISON
(tapping Stone)
Can I see you, Jeremy?

STONE
(to group; humorously)
The SDS has arrived no doubt.

He steps to one side with his wife.

TWO SHOT - STONE AND ALLISON

ALLISON
(gripping his arm)
Jeremy, there's some army type in the hall. Two others are outside with guns. They want to see you.

Stone shows only momentary surprise, then nods, turns to leave.

STONE
I'll take care of it.

Allison, annoyed, holds onto his arm.

ALLISON
If you knew about this, you might have told ---

STONE
I didn't.
(disengaging himself)
I'll explain later.
by the front door in the vestibule. Stone, trailed by his mystified wife, comes up to him.

STONE
I'm Dr. Stone.

The Captain glances down at a small photo for positive identification.

CAPTAIN
(slipping photo in pocket)
Yes, sir, I'm Captain Morton. There's a fire, sir.

A beat, then:

STONE
(to his wife)
I've got to leave.

ALLISON
For God's sake, Jeremy -- (controlling herself)
When will you be back?

STONE
I'm not sure.

ALLISON
The guns...is it....?

CAPTAIN
(opening the door)
Mrs. Stone, it's our job to protect your husband. From now on, nothing must be allowed to happen to him.

STONE
I'll be as safe as in your arms.

He kisses her and moves quickly OUT THE DOOR.

ALLISON
(incredulous)
Jeremy...?

The MP blocks her, reaching across to shut the door behind Stone, who doesn't look back.
INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Stone in back, the Captain and Sergeant on jump seats.

STONE
What've you got for me?

CAPTAIN
Got, sir?

STONE
(impatiently)
Yes, damn it. They must've given you something.

CAPTAIN
Oh. Yes, sir.

He hands Stone a file from a portfolio.

INSERT - THE FILE

Stenciled on the brown cardboard cover is:

PROJECT SUMMARY: SCOOP

THIS FILE IS CLASSIFIED TOP SECRET

Examination by unauthorised persons is a criminal offense, punishable by...

(See Appendix)

BACK TO STONE AND CAPTAIN

With a puzzled frown Stone settles back to read. The Captain flicks on an overhead light, touches a button which slides up an opaque window, cutting off the front seat.

CLOSE ON STONE

Already absorbed.

INT. THE STONE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Allison talks urgently into the phone.

ALLISON
You tell the Senator it's his daughter.

She waits nervously, reaching down to pull off a tight shoe.
CLOSE ON ALLISON holding the phone. The Senator's voice comes on:

SENATOR'S VOICE

Allison?

ALLISON

Dad. Something very peculiar has just happened -- even for Jeremy. A few minutes ago....

There is a sharp CLICK and a BELL SOUNDS on the line.

ALLISON

Dad? Are you there? What's going on?

A WOMAN'S VOICE

(over phone)
This communication is being monitored. The connection has been broken for reasons of national security. You will be briefed at the appropriate time. Thank you for your cooperation, Mrs. Stone.

A CLICK, the line goes dead. Allison stares at the phone in amazement and near horror.

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT - INSERT - THE PASSAGE STONE READS IN FILE

"...THE SCOOP PROJECT is under the command of Major General Thomas C. Sparks, U. S. Army Medical Service, Director of Biological Research Division."

(See Appendix)

CLOSEUP - STONE

as the passage is underscored in his mind. He turns the page.

INSERT - ANOTHER PAGE

TWO WORDS FILL SCREEN:

"...PROTECTIVE MEASURES."

(See Appendix) As the SOUND of a teletypewriter begins: 

CUT TO
EXT. SENATE OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

The Capitol dome, or some establishing landmark, is in the b.g. A teletype printout, in white letters, CLATTERS across a black band at bottom of frame:

THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON SPACE SCIENCES...CLOSED HEARING...
FEBRUARY, 1971

CAMERA ZOOMS IN until the date fills screen.

VOICE OF SEN. FROM VERMONT
(New England accent)
It appears to me, General, that Dr. Stone put one over on you. In fact, he made us all think his Wildfire Lab could handle any contamination from outer space.

INT. SENATE HEARING ROOM - DAY - ANGLE ON ROSTRUM

where five senators (N.M., Iowa, Ark., N.J., Vt.), and Counsel sit.

CHAIRMAN FROM N.M.
(southwest accent)
I disagree with the Senator from Vermont. Dr. Stone, a Nobel Prize winner and twice President of the National Academy of Sciences, has been well known here in Washington. Is the implication that Dr. Stone deliberately misled us?

CLOSE SHOT - GENERAL SPARKS

a bespectacled, scholarly looking two-star General at the witness table. With a careful gesture, his hand closes the Scoop File in front of him.

SPARKS
Perhaps not deliberately, Senator. I'm reasonably sure that before the night the Wildfire Team was mobilized, Dr. Stone didn't know Scoop existed.

CHAIRMAN FROM N.M.
I'm astounded.

SPARKS
(tersely)
Reasons of national security.
UP ANGLE TOWARD ROSTRUM - GENERAL'S POINT OF VIEW

Camera rakes the rostrum. Hold on Senator from Vermont.

SENATOR FROM VERMONT

Very smart. We've had experiences with scientists before.

(flourishing a document)

Now, let's talk about this famous letter Stone sent to the President some two years ago. From what you're saying, General, it was just a shot in the dark.

OMITTED

and

VERMONT'S POINT OF VIEW - DOWN ANGLE ON SPARKS

SPARKS

(smiling faintly)

Maybe that's a little unfair, Senator. Dr. Stone and I were consultants with NASA on the Lunar Receiving Lab. He wasn't completely satisfied with it. He felt a more advanced Lab was required.

UP ANGLE ON VERMONT

SENATOR FROM VERMONT

You mean more expensive, don't you?

(handing letter to Clerk, waving it on to Sparks)

I call that Dr. Stone's ninety-million dollar mash note to Uncle Sam.

CLOSE ON SPARKS

smiling, as he is given the xeroxed letter, which must be glimpsed. (See Appendix)

INSERT — ANOTHER LETTER

the same as the xeroxed one, but in its original manuscript form, which Stone holds, reading aloud the final paragraph:

STONE'S VOICE

In a true biological crisis, which our exploration of space could bring about, the present Lunar Receiving Laboratory might prove inadequate. I, therefore, urge the establishment of a facility to deal specifically with an extraterrestrial form of life.
The purpose of this facility would be to limit the dissemination of such an unknown organism from outer space and to provide laboratories for its analysis.

They sit over coffee in a corner of the Faculty Club.

I recommend that this facility be located in an uninhabited region of the United States, that it utilize all known isolation techniques and that it be equipped with a nuclear device for self-destruction, in the event of an emergency. Yours very truly, Jeremy Stone.

He hands the letter to Dutton, a pudgy, unkempt pathologist in his early sixties, who regards it and whistles softly.

Don't encourage the President to think scientists are wizards, Jeremy. If things get out of control—end they might -- even you can't work miracles.

I'd expect to have your help, Charlie.

To the SOUND of screaming jet engines,
EXT. AN AIRPORT RUNWAY - NIGHT
A Boeing 727 hurtles PAST CAMERA on take-off.

INT. BOEING 727 - NIGHT
Stone looks around the empty cabin, smiles with a sense of absurdity at Captain Morton who, carrying a phone, lurches down the aisle of the climbing plane.

STONE
I feel like Onassis.

CAPTAIN
It was the fastest thing we could arrange, sir.

He hands Stone the phone, withdraws beside an MP at the galley.

STONE
(into phone)
Yes?

INT. A FAST MOVING ARMY SEDAN - NIGHT
On the back seat, Sparks talks into a phone:

SPARKS
General Sparks here. I just wanted to inform you all members of your team have been cleared and are now being called in...
(an aide shows him a clipboard)
...except for Professor Kirke. He's in the hospital. Appendectomy. You'll get complete details on everything when your team is assembled.

CUT TO

INT. THE DUTTON BEDROOM - SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT
Solid comfort, heirloom furniture, family pictures. Books and manuscripts overflow from the night table to the floor by one of the twin beds. Dutton hurriedly gets dressed. MRS. DUTTON, a charming, silver-haired woman in a dressing gown, sets a suitcase on the bed, starts to pack.

CONTINUED
MRS. DUTTON

(upset)
You don't make sense. You act like
you've been brain-washed.

DUTTON
You don't understand....

His daughter, PAM, 30, wearing a bathrobe, enters, bringing
him a cup of coffee.

PAM
Is it the germ warfare people, Dad?
A lab accident?

DUTTON
No. It's different this time.
(to his wife)
Don't pack, Claire. I won't need
anything.

MRS. DUTTON
(staring at him)
A hippie. He's going to a love-in.

Dutton plays mum.

MRS. DUTTON
I give up.
(fixing his collar)
One minute, you're fed up, you talk
of retiring -- to Alaska yet -- and
now, you turn into a Cloak-and-Dagger
man. At least tell me who phoned at
this ungodly hour.

DUTTON
(checking pockets)
My glasses.

Pam picks them up among the litter of books by his bed.

PAM
Here.

BOY'S VOICE
Gran'pa!

ANGLE ON A SIX-YEAR-OLD BOY IN PAJAMAS
Carrying a security towel, he traipses into the room.

CONTINUED
BOY
Gran'pa, there's a car and they got guns.

DUTTON
(picking up boy)
Do they now? That's serious. I'll watch out.

PAM
(patting boy)
Honey, you've been dreaming.

CLOSE ON MRS. DUTTON
staring apprehensively out the window.

MRS. DUTTON
I wish I were.

HER POV - DOWN TOWARD DRIVEWAY
TWO ARMY OFFICERS, under side arms, approach the house. A SERGEANT, with a tommy-gun, patrols in front of a military car. The DOORBELL JANGLES.

CUT TO

INT. LEAVITT'S LAB - NIGHT
DR. RUTH LEAVITT, 45, a sharp-mannered microbiologist, snaps:

LEAVITT
Get someone else.

Wearing glasses, and a white coat, she continues to work at the lab bench. Just inside the door are an AIR FORCE MAJOR and an MP SERGEANT. Leavitt's Lab ASSISTANT, a young woman, looks in confusion from the military men to her boss. Frost on the window indicates a northern climate. The most striking equipment in the lab is an X-ray Diffraction unit.

MAJOR
Dr. Leavitt, I told you; there's a fire.

LEAVITT
(gesturing)
My experiment's at a critical stage. I've been working around the clock. I just can't leave now.
CONTINUED

The Major and MP exchange a look.

MAJOR
My orders come from Dr. Robertson, the President's Science Adviser in Washington.

LEAVITT
(pointing at phone)
Go ahead, phone Robbie. Tell him I burned my draft card.

Picking up a slide, she crosses the room. She stops, presses a hand to her forehead, sways, apparently experiencing a dizzy spell. She extends the slide toward her assistant.

LEAVITT
Put this under diffraction, Bess.

The Assistant takes the slide, steers Leavitt to a stool, gives her a tablet and a glass of water.

MAJOR
Are you sick, Ma'am? We have a physician on call.

ASSISTANT
All Dr. Leavitt needs is rest.

LEAVITT
Knock it off, Bess.

MAJOR
If the physician certifies you're unable to ---

LEAVITT
No. (pauses, looking at him)
I'm fine.

She heads for the door. The Sergeant goes to block it. Leavitt lifts her alpaca-lined coat from a wall peg.

LEAVITT
Relax. I'm going with you. (to Bess)
Freeze the samples, then close up shop. Tell my husband ---

CONTINUED
CONTINUED - 2

MAJOR
You don't have to tell him anything, Miss.
(to Leavitt)
He was contacted ten minutes ago.

As he pulls open the door:

CUT TO

INT. AN OPERATING ROOM - DAY - CLOSE ON HALL

A nurse ties shut his gown while he plunges his hands into the rubber gloves a 2nd nurse holds for him. He is tall, slim, has cool, steady eyes. He steps forward to look at the patient. The anaesthetist nods. Hall palpates patient's abdomen.

ANGLE ON PATIENT'S EXPOSED ABDOMEN

HALL'S VOICE
Skin knife.

As the knife is placed in his hands, the INTERCOM CRACKLES:

DIRECTOR'S VOICE
Hold it, Mark. Sorry to disturb you again.
(the knife poises)

GROUP SHOT

The others around the operating table -- several nurses, the anaesthetist, assistant surgeon, etc., all in surgical masks -- instantly look up. Hall takes his time.

HALL'S POV - THE GALLERY

The DIRECTOR of the Hospital stands between two Kansas STATE TROOPERS by an intercom in the empty gallery.

DIRECTOR
There's just been a call from a Dr. Robertson at the White House. Your orders are to break scrub.

HALL
(sharply)
Orders? I've got a patient here, ready to go.

DIRECTOR'S VOICE
Kelly will take over for you.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

Another SURGEON comes up beside Hall. Hall pauses, looks from him to the patient to the gallery.

DIRECTOR'S VOICE
It's all arranged. You're expected in the Surgeons' Room in thirty seconds.

Hall glares. No one moves. He sets down the knife, pats the patient, heads for the door, angrily stripping off his gloves. As he reaches the door, he pulls down his mask.

STRAIGHT CUT TO

EXT. VANDENBERG AFB - DAY - CLOSE ON ROTORS
whirling, clattering. CAMERA ZOOMS BACK TO:

LONG SHOT - THE HELICOPTER
taking off. With a startling BLAST, a jet fighter plane comes out of nowhere and SLAMS PAST CAMERA.

INT. THE HELICOPTER PASSENGER COMPARTMENT - DAY
Modified in an unusual way, the helicopter is divided by plexiglass into two isolated compartments: cockpit, and passenger-cargo. Each has a separate exit. The occupants, Stone, Hall, and the PILOT, wear protective plastic suits. Stone and Hall put on their life support systems.

HALL
Any chance the satellite is radioactive?

STONE
No. Manchek showed me the telemetry reports. Presumably, it could be some form of space germ.

HALL
(touching suit)
Presumably this stuff is non-porous...
(a pause)
Why'd you pick me?

STONE
You're an M.D., a talented surgeon who knows blood chemistries...and you're single. The Odd Man Hypothesis.

HALL
What in hell is that?

CONTINUED
STONE
Didn't you read the Wildfire material I've been sending you?

HALL
Very little. Never went in much for science fiction.

STONE
Nor do I.

EXT. LIMITLESS SKY AND NEW MEXICO DESERT - DAY - PANORAMIC
The helicopter heads INTO CAMERA and CLATTERS o.s. above it.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

PILOT
(reaching for bubble-helmet)
Piedmont approaching, gents.

STONE
Go over and give us a look first, Dempsey.

Stone and Hall put on their bubble helmets.

THEIR POV - AIR-TO-GROUND - PIEDMONT - DAY - COCKED ANGLE
Buzzards are clustered around several bodies in the street.

STONE'S VOICE
I was afraid of that. The birds will eat the infected flesh, then fly off and spread the disease.

INT. HELICOPTER - CLOSE TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL
at the window.

HALL
If it is a disease.

STONE
(into intercom)
Drop the gas cannisters, Dempsey.

HALL
(disturbed)
Someone's supposed to be alive down there.
108 AIR-TO-GROUND - QUICK HEAD-ON SHOT - THE MAIN STREET

109 INT. HELICOPTER - CLOSE ON PILOT
eyes riveted ahead.

    PILOT
    Somethin' did somethin', that's
    for sure.
    (toggling
    switches)
    Let's give it a double dose.

110 AIR-TO-GROUND - THE MAIN STREET

    Fading back as the cannisters stitch into it; one, two,
    three, four -- obscuring it under a blanket of pale blue
    gas.

111 INT. HELICOPTER - TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

    Hall looks back worriedly.

    STONE
    That gas will only kill the
    birds. Okay, Dempsey. Drop
    the ladder. Do not land. Is
    that clear?

112 CLOSE ON PILOT

    surveying the area beneath them.

    PILOT
    Clearer all the time.

113 AIR-TO-GROUND STRAIGHT DOWN SHOT - THE MAIN STREET

    slowly rising to meet them -- the gas clearing. Dozens of
    dead birds lie on the ground among the corpses.

    STONE'S VOICE
    When we climb down, lift off
    to a thousand feet and hover
    at a safe distance. Return when
    we signal. If anything happens
    to us, you have your orders.
INT. HELICOPTER - CLOSE ON PILOT

turning around into camera, with a sardonic grin.

PILOT
Proceed directly to Wildfire,
then ---

He makes a hissing sound and snaps open his fingers.

ANGLE ON STONE AND HALL

Hall looks questioningly at Stone.

STONE
If we're eliminated, the aircraft and pilot will have to be sterilized.

CLOSE ON PILOT

turning.

PILOT
Wait a minute. That's not what they told me. Just incinerated.

EXT. THE HELICOPTER - DAY

hovering above the ground, raising dust. A metal ladder is released and dangles into the swirling dust. CAMERA PUSHES IN on the brown cloud and holds.

EXT. MAIN STREET OF PIEDMONT - DAY

SOUND of departing helicopter...the dust settles. Stone and Hall stand motionless in their protective suits and helmets, looking up and down the street. Silence except for a gentle wind that whines softly through the houses. Bodies everywhere, sprawled in frozen attitudes. It is an eerie, stopped-motion world. No shouting children, no barking dogs -- only dead ones.

MOVING SHOT - ON STONE AND HALL

Clumsy in their protective suits, they start down the street.
THEIR POV - BRIEF PANNING SHOTS OF THE TOWN PUNCTUATED BY QUICK CUTS OF THE CORPSES

Except for the bodies, the aspect of everything else -- signs, cars, store windows, flapping laundry -- is hideously normal.

CLOSE ON HALL
glancing up, stopping abruptly.

HALL'S POV - THE SKY
A glinting object flashes in the sky, disappears.

STONE'S VOICE
Hall....

ANGLE ON STONE
standing over a body, pointing down.

STONE
Look at this.
(as Hall joins him)
Coronary?

THEIR ANGLE ON BODY
The dead man's hand clutches his chest, but his face is peaceful.

HALL'S VOICE
Doubt it. They should grimace.
A coronary's painful.

MOVING SHOT - STONE AND HALL
passing bodies. Hall glances into the sky. Nothing.

STONE
If it was fast enough, they wouldn't have time.

HALL
Fast? These people were cut down in mid-stride.

THREE QUICK CLOSEUPS - FACES OF THE DEAD
A man and a woman show surprise; a little girl grins.
FULL ON STONE AND HALL

as Hall suddenly points into the sky.

    HALL
    Up there -- look!

POV

the glinting object in the sky.

TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

Stone turns back to Hall with a thin smile.

    STONE
    It's an Air Force jet. If we don't
    make it to Wildfire, he'll see that
    the helicopter does -- or shoot it down.

    HALL
    (sardonically)
    For Dempsey's sake, we'd better not
    slip up.

They head for the nearest house.

SHOCK CUT TO

INT. A MODEST DINING ROOM - DAY

A grotesque tableau...A man, woman, teenage girl and ten-year-old boy sit in frozen attitudes around the table. The woman, head thrown back, staring at the ceiling, has her hand pressed to her chest. ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE Stone and Hall circling the table.

    HALL
    (bending close
to man)
    Even if you slit a man's throat,
you won't get death this fast.

    STONE
    Don't touch anything. Not until
    we have a better line on what
    we're dealing with.

    HALL
    (stepping back)
    No marks on any of them.
CLOSEUP - AN OLD LADY

eyes open, her head archly to one side, smiling.

STONE'S VOICE

Not a mark on her either.

A SCRAPING SOUND...CAMERA PULLS BACK TO:

INT. A FLIGHT OF STAIRS - DAY

The old lady swings from a noose tied to the bannister. Stone and Hall mount the stairs. A dead cat with a note tied by a ribbon to its tail, lies beneath her. Although Stone stretches out a warning hand, Hall detaches the note, reads it aloud:

HALL

'The day of judgment is at hand.
Have mercy on my soul and to hell
with all the others. Amen.'

STONE

Senile.

HALL

This took time. Regardless of what
made her do it, it took time.
(turning to go)
There's a chance someone's still
alive.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY - LONG SHOT

Deathly silent except for the whisper and whine of the wind. Stone and Hall hurry down the street, searching for a survivor. They peer into windows, open doors, check cars.

MULTI-SCREEN

IMAGES, SOMETIMES FRAGMENTED, APPEAR IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES - ON THE BLACK SCREEN

A) A man's face on the floor by a dog dish.

B) A teenage couple in a tangled embrace on a porch swing.

C) A woman propped up between the open refrigerator door and the refrigerator.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

D) A pretty girl in bathrobe and hair-curlers in the street.
E) Reaction shots of Stone and Hall inside their bubble helmets.
F) A hearing-aid in a man's ear, intense silence all around.
G) Youthful hands on a typewriter with several keys raised and stuck.
H) The flash of the jet in the sky.
I) Sunlight glinting from a peace medal on a girl's breast.

The sequence is designed to suggest the phantasmagoric quality of the search, climaxed by:

SINGLE SCREEN - BIG CLOSEUP - AN OLD MAN'S HEAD
submerged in water, his face distorted by refraction.

INT. A BATHROOM - DAY - FULL ON WWI FIGURE

in a doughboy's uniform, doubled over an old-fashioned bathtub. For puttees, he has wound toilet paper around his legs. The roll trails behind him. Stone and Hall appear.

STONE
I wouldn't believe you could commit suicide that way.

HALL
Most of them died instantly, but a few of them had time to go quietly nuts.

STONE
Let's find that damn satellite.

CUT TO

EXT. THE REAR OF THE VAN IN THE STREET - DAY

CAMERA CLOSING ON rear doors. Stone's hands pull them open. Lieutenant Shawn's body tumbles out.

ANGLE ON STONE AND HALL
recoiling. They exchange an embarrassed look.
Sergeant Crane is slumped over the wheel. Stone opens the door. Hall hesitates, then pushes Crane's body back from the wheel. He stops, peering closely at a large arc-shaped cut across Crane's face.

HALL
This injury -- there's no bleeding.
A cut like that -- torn veins,
broken capillaries -- it should bleed
like hell....

STONE
Yes, it --
(wheeling; staring)
There's no blood on any of them.

Hall follows his gaze. Crane's body slides slowly from the van. Stone moves to another body a few feet away. With his foot, he pushes a dead buzzard off the outstretched arm, points.

STONE
Even where they've chewed -- no bleeding.

CLOSE ON HALL
He stares, shaking his head, beckons, climbs behind the wheel, tries to start the van. The engine doesn't catch. As Stone comes up, Hall grinds the starter again.

STONE
Out of gas.

Hall fumes, sits back, stymied and disgusted.

STONE
This we can solve.

EXT. A GAS STATION - ANOTHER OF PIEDMONT'S WEIRD TABLEAUS
A sign proclaims: "ROY'S FRIENDLY SERVICE." Roy is tilted forward, his head under the open hood of a car. A woman's head rests on her arm which is extended out from the window, holding a credit card. A boy sits on the ground, slumped against a gas pump, putting an air hose to his bike tire. Roy's friendly service station has every aspect of life except movement.
REVERSE ANGLE - DOWN THE MAIN STREET - DAY

The van, antenna rotating, rumbles along, swerving around bodies.

INT. VAN - DAY

A steady BEEPING...Stone, in the rear, operates the radio-directional equipment. Hall drives.

STONE
(checking a dial)
Left.

EXT. VAN - LONG SHOT

The van turns o.s. at the end of the street.

QUICK SHOT - A SECOND STORY WINDOW

as the shade snaps up with a BANG. Something white seems to move behind the window.

INT. THE VAN - DAY - SHOOTING PAST HALL THROUGH WINDSHIELD

The BEEPING is LOUDER...Modest houses, no stores. A body is sprawled on a porch, another is draped over a yard gate. The BEEPING hits a SHRILL, CONTINUOUS note.

EXT. THE SECOND STREET - DAY

The van jolts to a stop. Stone and Hall emerge, regard two houses on opposite sides of the street. One has a shingle on a picket fence: DR. ALAN BENEDICT.

HALL
I'll bet they took it to the Doc.

They head up the path, enter through the open, creaking door.

INT. DR. BENEDICT'S OFFICE - DAY - ANGLE PAST STONE AND HALL

Benedict, a white-haired man, in a plaid shirt with rolled sleeves, sits at his desk, arms propped on the blotter. He wears a surprised expression as though the entrance of Stone and Hall in plastic suits had just caused it.

WHIP TO
in a corner of the room. The capsule is seared and cracked from the heat of re-entry. The "Scoop" device on the top has been pried open with pliers and a chisel that lie on the floor beside it. Stone and Hall approach.

STONE
Damn fool opened it.

HALL
(sarcastically)
Yeah, every country doctor should run his office like the Lunar Lab.

Stone takes a folded plastic bag from an ankle pocket. Pulling the bag over the capsule, he shoots Hall a look. Hall touches closed Benedict's eyes, then topples his body. He unbuttons his shirt and loosens his trousers.

STONE
The capsule first, Hall. We've got about forty minutes of oxygen left.

HALL
(examining body)
Have a look at his buttocks.

STONE
Not funny.

HALL
(crossing to autoclave)
Not meant to be.
(returning with scalpel)
Normally, blood in a dead person seeps to the lowest points. There should be marks of lividity. Right?
(crouching)
You see any purplish marks on his butt?

STONE
(interest caught)
No....

Hall, kneeling, works with the scalpel on part of the body blocked from CAMERA. Stone stands over him.

STONE
Careful you don't puncture your suit.

Hall works a moment longer, stops, raises the dead man's wrist which he has cut open.
CLOSE ON THE INCISED WRIST

A crumbling red-black material falls out, onto the floor.

HALL'S VOICE
Clotted blood...Powdered!

CLOSEUP - STONE

STONE
I'll be damned....

FULL ON ROOM

Hall stands, drops the scalpel on the desk.

HALL
No wonder they didn't bleed. It's
clotted throughout the entire system.
Five quarts of blood...turned to powder....

STONE
In theory, I suppose, a single organism
could do it.

HALL
But, in fact, there isn't an organism
on earth ---

STONE
You mean there didn't used to be.

A clock CHIMES the quarter hour. With a hasty glance at the
clock, Stone grasps the capsule, pauses, picks up pliers,
starts to close Scoop device on top.

EXT. THE SECOND STREET - DAY - ANGLE ON REAR OF VAN

As Stone and Hall emerge, the capsule can be seen upright on
the floor, its base wedged around by blankets. Moving to the
front seat, Hall pauses, cocks his head in the bubble helmet,
listening. Stone looks at him. Hall raises his hand for
quiet. Now we hear a thin unidentifiable SOUND. Hall points
O.S. CAMERA MOVES WITH THEM as they run in their clumsy suits
up the street. The SOUND is FAINT, hard to localize. It
ceases. Hall looks at Stone.

STONE
We heard it all right.

They wait. It begins again, a little louder -- the SOUND of
CRYING. They gaze around. The CLATTER of the approaching
helicopter drowns out everything. Frantically, they try to
wave off the copter.
INT. HELICOPTER - CLOSE ON PILOT

stabbing at his watch, then his back, pantomiming that their oxygen will run out.

HIS ANGLE - AIR-TO-GROUND - CLOSING ON STONE AND HALL

They signal desperately for him to go away.

REVERSE - GROUND-TO-AIR - THE HELICOPTER

pulling up and sweeping o.s.

TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

With the departure of the 'copter, they hear the CRYING again. ANGLE WIDENS as they run to a house on the right. A man lies in the open doorway. They plunge past him into:

INT. THE HOUSE - DAY

CRYING...MOVING POV SHOTS: a dead woman on the floor...a hallway...a cuckoo clock at 11:40...an unmade bed...an ornate, garlanded picture of a saint...their reflection in a mirror.

A CRIB

They lean over the crib, pulling the blankets from a bawling INFANT. The baby stops to survey the faces in the bubble helmets, then starts to howl again. Hall picks him up.

HALL
(as baby bellows)
Scared and hungry as hell. Can't be more than six months old.
(looking around)
There's probably a formula in the kitchen.

STONE
Don't feed it.

HALL
He hasn't eaten for at least twelve hours.

STONE
We don't do anything until we get that kid out of here and into a controlled situation.

Hall, with the baby, shoulders past him.
160 ANGLE DOWN HALLWAY

Hall goes along it, passing the dead woman. Stone appears from UNDER CAMERA, following him calmly.

STONE
Maybe feeding is part of the disease process; maybe those who hadn't eaten yet lasted longest.

161 CLOSE ON HALL

pausing in the kitchen doorway. He stares at the baby, who stops crying. The baby sucks his thumb, looking at Hall.

STONE
(coming up to them)
Whatever it is, with our oxygen running out, we can't take a chance. This is a major break -- a survivor.

As the point sinks in, Hall hurries with him to the front door. The baby whimpers.

STONE
Too bad he can't tell us what happened.

HALL
Maybe he can -- if he lives.

The baby starts to bawl. OVER the ROAR of the helicopter:

162 EXT. MAIN STREET WITH CHURCH - UP ANGLE ON CAPSULE

dangling in a cloud of dust, being hoisted in a sling into the copter by Stone, already aboard, operating the power winch.

163 ANGLE ON HALL

by the van in the street, looking up. A church is prominently in b.g. Hall holds the baby. A plastic bin now descends in a sling from the copter. The dust limits visibility. Hall, shielding the infant's face with a blanket, deposits him in the bin. As the sling lifts, the ladder tumbles to the street. The CLATTER from the copter is all-engulfing.

164 OMITTED

165 CLOSE ON BABY

in the bin, being hauled into the 'copter.
ANGEL ON HALL

relieved, relaxing. The ladder sways. Hall grapples for it, then sets himself to mount. Some instinct makes him glance over his shoulder.

A FLASH OF WHITE

LOOMING behind Hall.

FLASH CLOSEUP - HALL'S FACE

A startled shout, drowned out by the helicopter.

FULL ON HALL

He spins to grab the ladder. It jerks from his grasp, lifting o.s. He stumbles, falls, the SOUND of the 'copter fading.

HEAD-ON SHOT - FROM LOW ANGLE - A WILD-EYED FIGURE

Spittle and blood on his chin, dirty white robes flapping, advancing with a cleaver.

FIGURE
(croaking)
You...you did it....

As CAMERA is OVERWHELMED:

INT. THE HELICOPTER - CLOSE ON STONE

STONE
Go back, damn it. He's almost out of oxygen.

OMITTED.

EXT. THE MAIN STREET - DAY - ANGLE ON HALL

Lurching to his feet, he faces an OLD MAN. The dust settles. The old man is emaciated, barefoot, spectral in a nightshirt, smeared with blood and dust. His chest heaves.

HALL
Give me that knife.

OLD MAN
(backing away)
You're not human. Everyone's dead.

CONTINUED
He doubles up in pain, sinks to his knees.

HALL
What is it?

The SOUND of the helicopter approaches. The old man topples over. Hall leans close to him. Gasping, covered with sweat, the old man stares back at the face in the bubble.

HALL
What happened?

The old man contorts, presses his face to the ground, starts to retch. The helicopter ROARS above them.

CUT TO

INT. SCOOP MISSION CONTROL - DAY - ANGLE ON MANCHEK

at the radio. Comroe and others press around him.

MANCHEK
(into mike)
That bad, is it?

EXT. PIEDMONT - DAY - AIR-TO-GROUND

The main street, littered with bodies, is falling away.

STONE'S VOICE
The town is finished, contaminated beyond all ---

MANCHEK'S VOICE
(cutting in)
Careful, sir. This is an open transmission.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY - SHOOTING PAST STONE AND HALL

Still wearing plastic suits and helmets, they're in the passenger compartment. A line is plugged into the base of Stone's pack. The old man on a litter and the baby in his bin are on the floor.

STONE
I'm aware of that, Manchek. Order up a 7-12.

MANCHEK'S VOICE (radio effect)
Only the President ---
CLOSE ON STONE

Precisely. Get on it. The town must be neutralized immediately.

EXT. PIEDMONT - AIR-TO-GROUND

FADING back into the distance.

MANCHEX'S VOICE

You have the satellite?

STONE'S VOICE

Yes, and two survivors.

STROBE CUT TO

OMITTED

INT. SITUATION ROOM - DAY

A teletype printout, in white letters, CLATTERS across a black band at the bottom of frame:

WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM...2:40 PM EST

A basement room, it is the crisis center for the President, manned by three technicians in shirtsleeves. They monitor news wires, decode secret messages from the teletype, etc. As the door opens, two conservatively dressed men, studying files at a conference table, look up expectantly. They are SECRETARIES of STATE AND DEFENSE. A third man, DR. ROBERTSON, the President's Science Advisor, springs to his feet.

ROBERTSON

Has the President made his decision on Directive 7-12 yet?

ANOTHER ANGLE

A stout, bald man in a hunting shirt, smoking a stubby cigar, breezes into the room. He is GRIMES, a top Presidential Aide and Director of the Situation Room.

GRIMES

(checking teletypes)

He doesn't jump into things, Dr. Robertson. First, I've got to put together a briefing for him.

CONTINUED
He talks as he drags a typewriter over, inserts paper.

GRIMES
The President's main concern is the international consequences.
(to Sec. of State)
What do you think, Mister Secretary?

SECRETARY OF STATE
It's against the Moscow Treaty of 1963 to fire thermonuclear weapons above ground. The Russians will have to be privately informed we're going to cauterize the area. Then, they'll have a flock of questions.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
Some we don't want answered.

ROBERTSON
That'll take hours. God knows how far the infection can spread in that time.

A blue phone, marked No. 1, among many on the table, CHIMES. Grimes picks it up...the BUZZ of a voice on the other end.

GRIMES
Yes, Chief...Yes, sir...Yes, Mister President.

He hangs up, turns to Robertson.

GRIMES
The President's decided to postpone Directive 7-12 for 24 to 48 hours. Instead, he'll call out the National Guard to cordon off the area around Piedmont.
(to Sec. of Def.)
That's your department, Ed.

ROBERTSON
(appalled)
But ---

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(reaching for a phone)
Safe and sound.

Grimes, tearing up his typed notes, goes to a locked trash bin, drops the paper through the slot. Robertson follows him.
ROBERTSON
(hotly)
It should've been left up to the
scientists! It's a colossal mistake.
Tell the President I said so.

GRIMES
(smiling)
No. But I'll get you an appointment.

He stuffs a cigar into Robertson's pocket and hustles out.
With the overlapping sound of a voice:

CUT TO

A MAP OF NEVADA FILLING SCREEN

VOICE OF CHAIRMAN FROM N.M.
By whose decision, General, was the
site for Wildfire chosen?

SPARKS' VOICE
Largely Dr. Stone's. It seemed
ideal to him because of its remoteness.

CAMERA CLOSES on the site of Wildfire in Flatrock County,
marked on the map. A head occasionally bobs into frame,
giving the sense the map is displayed in the Senate Hearing
Room.

SPARKS' VOICE
(over the above)
There's no inhabited area near
Wildfire for a radius of one hundred
and twelve miles.

VOICE OF CHAIRMAN FROM N.M.
Las Vegas is to the north, Phoenix
to the south, Los Angeles west.
Weren't you worried the infection
might spread to them?

CAMERA, now tight on Wildfire, HOLDS.

SPARKS' VOICE
Yes, sir, I was. But Dr. Stone and
Dr. Robertson assured the President
Wildfire was foolproof because of
its device for atomic self-destruct....
(a beat; sudden silence)
The military had to take a back seat.

CUT TO

184 OMITTED
185 EXT. DESERT COUNTRY - DAY - CLOSE ON BUZZARDS
feeding on a dead coyote. They fly off at the SOUND of a car.

186 LONG SHOT - TOWARD A 1967 BLUE SEDAN
A dot of blue trailing dust, it bumps along an ancient road.

187 INT. SEDAN - DAY
Leavitt bounces beside Dutton at the wheel.

LEAVITT
At least they could've sent a licensed driver to meet me at that crummy airstrip.

DUTTON
They keep personnel to a minimum -- for obvious reasons.

LEAVITT
(gritting her teeth)
You're lost. Nobody's been down this goat path for years.

Dutton grins; he gets a kick out of Leavitt.

DUTTON
That's how it's supposed to look. They spent fifty-thousand dollars on it.

LEAVITT
(suffering a bump)
Putting in the potholes?

DUTTON
Getting rid of the tread marks. Those big tractors leave a lasting impression. A lot of heavy equipment has passed this way....

188 EXT. THE ROAD - DAY
The car turns off the potted road onto a dirt track.

189 INT. CAR - DAY
LEAVITT
(lighting a cigarette)
Where's our leader?

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

DUTTON
We'll catch up to him and Hall very very soon now.

LEAVITT
Why'd they pick Hall? He's no scientist. Who needs an over-priced M.D.?

DUTTON
Relax and enjoy your cigarette. It's your last.

She gives him a look.

POINT OF VIEW - THROUGH WINDSHIELD - A WEATHERBEATEN SIGN

DUTTON'S VOICE
It starts here.

Camera pans the faded, hand-lettered sign:

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY...KEEP OFF...FED. ORD. 6817

OMITTED

EXT. THE DESERT - DAY - PANORAMIC SHOT

A desolate expanse. The car disappears over a rise.

ABRUPT CUT TO

EXT. A FIELD OF BARLEY - DAY

The car appears from UNDER CAMERA and brakes.

INT. CAR - SHOOTING PAST DUTTON AND LEAVITT

She peers through the windshield at the unexpected greenery and farming activity. The area is surrounded by a wire fence.

LEAVITT
Farming here? Well, it's a great place to grow pot.

DUTTON
(a knowing smile)
Just a plain old crop of barley. Still, it's rather clever, I think.

CAMERA PANS to a frame building with a sign:

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Research Center
194 CONTINUED

A man in dungarees and a farmer's hat, munching a sandwich, approaches the gate, unlocks it, waves them in.

195 EXT. THE AGRICULTURAL STATION - DAY

The sedan pulls up in front of it. Dutton and Leavitt get out. Nearby a red light on a stanchion flashes over a hole. Protruding is a section of half-sunk pipe. As they pass the flashing red light, Leavitt shields her eyes.

DUTTON

Something wrong?

LEAVITT

Never liked red lights...reminds me of my years in a bordello.

Dutton chuckles, ushers her into the frame building.

196 INT. A SMALL ANTEROOM - DAY

A man in a stetson, plaid shirt, and string tie, looks up from a rickety desk where he eats lunch, reading a newspaper.

STETSON

Howdy.

DUTTON

Howdy-do-dee.

Leavitt shoots Dutton an odd look.

STETSON

Got the time?

DUTTON

My watch stopped at eleven forty-six.

STETSON

Durn shame.

Leavitt eyes the two men curiously.

DUTTON

Must be the heat.

The man in the stetson nods, presses a button under his desk. WE HEAR the CLICK of a lock released on a side door. Dutton opens it, gestures Leavitt into:
INT. A CORRIDOR - DAY

The doors along it are marked: SEEDLING INCUBATION, MOISTURE CONTROL, SOIL ANALYSIS, AND VITAMIN CONTROL. The staff members who circulate are casually dressed and busy. Leavitt jockies for a good look into one of the rooms.

DUTTON
It's no fake, believe me. When I retire, I'd like to have an agricultural station like this.
(grimly)
In Alaska.

LEAVITT
You, a sourdough? Ha.

DUTTON
(nodding)
The sourest.

He opens a narrow door marked: STOREROOM

DUTTON
This way.

Leavitt, facing a storeroom full of rakes, hoes, and other farming equipment, hesitates.

DUTTON
Step in.

Leavitt shrugs, walks ahead of him into:

INT. THE STOREROOM

Dutton closes the door, finds a hidden button, pushes it. He steps back. The floor starts to sink, leaving behind the equipment hanging on the walls. They are on a platform, as in some freight elevators, lowering them down a shaft. Leavitt looks sharply to either side, then up, smiling.

HER ANGLE - STRAIGHT UP THE SHAFT

The farm tools on the sides of the now floorless storeroom remain dimly outlined.

LEAVITT'S VOICE
Cute.

MULTI-SCREEN - SCHEMA TECHNIQUE

SCHEMA TECHNIQUE is the free use of diagrams and drawings in combination with live images on the multi-screen -- (see Appendix).

CONTINUED
A) INT. AGRICULTURAL BLDG. CORRIDOR - LINE SKETCH HORIZONTALLY ACROSS TOP THIRD OF SCREEN

B) STOREROOM ELEVATOR AND SHAFT - LINE SKETCH DOWN CENTER OF SCREEN TO LEVEL I

C) A STEEL-PLATED CHAMBER (LIVE IMAGE) - BOTTOM LEFT OF SCREEN
Stone and Hall enter, still wearing protective suits and helmets. Stone plugs attachments from their suits into an instrument panel. He adjusts several dials.

D) SECURITY ROOMS 1 & 2, LEVEL I - FLOORPLAN BOTTOM RIGHT OF SCREEN

E) CLOSEUP - DUTTON IN ELEVATOR - A ROUND IMAGE AT LEFT CENTER

F) CLOSEUP - LEAVITT IN ELEVATOR - A ROUND IMAGE AT RIGHT CENTER

      DUTTON (ROUND CU "E")
      The whole thing -- what a world we're making...I can see why kids become dropouts. We should've.

      LEAVITT (ROUND CU "F")
      It's an emergency, Dutton, and we got tagged. Period. Until I saw those photos from Vandenberg, I ---

      DUTTON
      They brought it on themselves.

      LEAVITT
      Who -- the people at Piedmont?

CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON IMAGE C:

INT. STEEL-PLATED CHAMBER - FILLING SCREEN AT END OF ZOOM

Stone checks Hall beside him, then pushes a button on the panel... There's a FLASH of blinding light. For an instant, in pure white BRILLIANCE, Stone and Hall are seen as silhouettes, their protective suits and helmets vanished.

STRAIGHT CUT TO

OMITTED
INT. ELEVATOR - CLOSE ON DOORS IN SHAFT

opening on a modern, bare room with stainless steel walls and cold fluorescent lighting. The only furnishing is in the center of the room: a waist-high box with a glowing green glass top. Dutton and Leavitt emerge, CAMERA going with them.

LEAVITT
What you said before -- you don't think the infection in that capsule was brought back deliberately, do you?

DUTTON
Skip it, skip it. I hope I'm talking through my hat.  
(indicating device)
Put your hands on the glass, palms down. It's a ---

LEAVITT
(hands on glass)
--finger-and-palm-print analyzer.  
Reads a composite of ten thousand dermatographic lines.

DUTTON
(as device buzzes)
How'd you know?

LEAVITT
(stepping back)
Dutton, I've got a long criminal record.

DUTTON
(hands on glass)
Then you're in trouble. This machine --
(it buzzes)
-- has a long memory.  
(stepping back)
It gives you final clearance to enter Wildfire.

Despite the bantering tone, there's an undercurrent of worry in Leavitt. A green light comes on over the door.

DUTTON
(opening door; lightly)
Reprieved.

Immediately behind it a steel door marked ENTRANCE TO LEVEL I slides back. Leavitt, looking relieved, follows Dutton into:
INT. LEVEL I - A CURVING CORRIDOR

charcoal colored, lit with fluorescence. One wall is blank, the other has three widely-spaced doors marked: RECREATION, HOUSEKEEPING, and DELTA V. Stone and Hall, wearing desert suntans, hurry up to Dutton and Leavitt.

DUTTON
How was Piedmont?

STONE
I had to order up a 7-12.

Dutton grimaces. Stone guides them along the corridor.

STONE
No other way to halt the infection spread.

(over shoulder)
You two know each other, don't you?

HALL
(pleasantly)
Only by reputation.

LEAVITT
(a sarcastic edge)
Ah, yes. Up to now we've had to worship from afar.

STONE
(gentle admonishment)
Be good, Ruth.

Turning back, he seems about to walk into the door marked DELTA V, but it slides open automatically, admitting them to:

INT. DELTA V - LEVEL I

The Main Computer Complex, it also functions as a fully computerized communications switchboard. This part of the giant system is run by one man, Tech Sergeant BURKE. Surrounded by blinking lights and multiple TV monitors, he sits before a console on a platform. The cavernous room has a hushed, reverential atmosphere.

STONE
Any messages for me from the White House?

CONTINUED
BURKE
Not a thing, Dr. Stone, or you'd have it.

LEAVITT
No personal messages?

BURKE
No, ma'am.

STONE
Nothing from Dr. Robertson? Are you sure, Sergeant?

BURKE
Dr. Stone, sir, I have one thing to do. Just one.
(moving from the platform)
Everything else is fully automatic, computerized, self-regulating.
(patting a console)
I listen for a little bell -- in here. Ting-a-ling. That means a message coming in is for the Wildfire Team.

STONE
Precisely. An MCN communication. I'm expecting one.

BURKE
Yes, sir. Top priority. Ting-a-ling. I push a button. All five level control centers are notified the same time you are. The bell hasn't rung, sir.

STONE
(dryly; opening door)
Thanks for the tour, Sergeant.

INT. THE CURVING CORRIDOR - LEVEL I

As Leavitt emerges first, a girl in a charcoal colored, staff uniform waits (See Appendix).

UNIFORMED GIRL
Follow me, Dr. Leavitt. May I have your glasses, please?

LEAVITT
What for?
CONTINUED

UNIFORMED GIRL
They'll be treated and returned,
Dr. Leavitt.

LEAVITT
(handing over
glasses)
They'd better be or I'll need a
white cane.

(X)

The girl, smiling politely, puts the glasses in a case marked with Leavitt's name.

INT. A LOCKER ROOM - LEVEL I

Four of the lockers bear the names of Drs. Jeremy Stone, Charles Dutton, Alexander Kirke, and Mark Hall. Stone, Dutton, and Hall have nearly finished changing into charcoal DIO's (Disposable Immunization Outfit).

HALL
Who picked Leavitt? Talk about
the Odd Man Hypothesis -- which
we haven't yet -- she's really
an odd ball.

STONE
We're lucky to have her. She's
the best equipped of us to double-
up for Kirke in Microbiology.

COMVOICE (See Appendix)
When dressed, the team will proceed
directly to Conference Room Seven.

Stone and Dutton go to a door on which a sign lights:

CAUTION!
REMOVE ALL ARTICLES
FROM YOUR PERSON

After the sign flashes three times, the door slides back, Stone and Dutton exit. Hall hastily pulls off his watch, tosses it in the locker, hurries after them.
lying in an open box. One is red with a chain, the other silver without a chain. Stone's hand picks up the red key.

standing at the head of a conference table. Leavitt and Dutton sit to the left of Stone. Before each of their places is a copy of the Wildfire File. Stone hangs the red key on the chain around Hall's neck.

STONE
Keep this with you at all times.

Hall, examining the key, perches on the edge of the table.

HALL
What's it for?

STONE
You are the Odd Man. The key man.
Quite literally.
  (picking up
    the silver key)
This other key -- and Wildfire, itself -- depend on your key.

Stone goes to a waist-high pedestal supporting a black, covered case. He dials the combination lock. The lid flips back, revealing a gold-colored metal plate. He inserts the silver key in a lock, twists it. A green light flashes on.

STONE
  (indicating pedestal)
Wildfire is equipped with a nuclear device for self-destruct. In an emergency, it's automatically activated. I've just inserted the key in the main station that arms the mechanism. The device is ready for detonation.

HALL
When?

DUTTON
Never, we hope. It only goes off if there's a danger of infection breaking out from here.
STONE
The silver key can't be removed.
You're the only one who can disarm
the mechanism by inserting your
red key in one of the substations
which are located throughout the
facility. There's a five-minute
delay between the time detonation
locks in and the bomb explodes.

DUTTON
That gives you a chance to think,
and please God, call it off.

HALL
I'm the new boy here. Why me?

STONE
Because you're single. We had to
have one unmarried man.

ANGLE ON LEAVITT
at the table, thumbing through the Wildfire file.

LEAVITT
You should've done your homework,
sport.

(rising)
Page 255. Robbie's Odd Man Hypothesis.
(approaching; reading)
'Results of testing confirm the
Robertson Odd Man Hypothesis: that
an unmarried male should carry out
command decisions involving thermo-
nuclear destruct contexts.'

HALL
(grabbing the file)
Lemme see.
SUMMARY OF THE ROBERTSON ODD MAN HYPOTHESIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>INDEX OF EFFECTIVENESS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married Males</td>
<td>.343</td>
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<tr>
<td>Married Females</td>
<td>.399</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single Females</td>
<td>.402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Males</td>
<td>.824</td>
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</tbody>
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INDIVIDUALS

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<td>Kirke</td>
<td>.614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leavitt</td>
<td>.601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall</td>
<td>.899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of testing confirm the Robertson Odd Man Hypothesis: that an unmarried male should carry out command decisions involving thermonuclear destruct contexts.

OVER the above:

VOICE OF SEN. FROM N.M.

My point, Dr. Robertson, is that your so-called Odd Man wasn't sufficiently familiar with the layout at Wildfire. Was that your responsibility or Dr. Stone's?

212-A SEVERAL QUICK SHOTS

Hall reading...Stone, Dutton, and Leavitt watching him.

ROBERTSON'S VOICE

(over the above)

My only responsibility in that area, Senator, was to find the person best suited for the job. Unfortunately, the extra-insurance substations weren't completed in time. The nuclear modification had to be cleared through the Chief Executive, the Departments of State and Defense, the AEC, NASA, and the National Park Service.

CONTINUED
VOICE OF SEN. FROM VERMONT
That strikes me as passing the buck. Surely, you can't blame the whole government for what happened to Dutton and Leavitt. Once the team entered Wildfire, Stone was in charge, wasn't he?

ROBERTSON'S VOICE
That's correct, Senator.

GROUP SHOT - FAVORING STONE
As Stone speaks, he pushes a button on the console and moves to a large viewing screen where an Electronic Diagram of Wildfire Lab is displayed.

STONE'S VOICE
It's of vital importance, Hall, that you always know where you are in relation to the nearest substation.

CLOSEUP - HALL
concentrating on the screen.

STONE'S VOICE
To do that, you have to be familiar with the entire facility. It can be studied as a whole or by sections on this electronic diagram.

CLOSE ON VIEWING SCREEN

STONE'S VOICE
We're on Level One of a five story cylindrical underground structure surrounded by solid rock. Each level has three nuclear substations, indicated by the yellow lights. In the event the nuclear device is triggered, you can still cancel self-destruct by inserting your red key in a substation. After our last simulation run we decided to add two more substations per level, but they're not finished yet. Don't confuse them with the functioning ones. The central core of the building contains service units -- plumbing, wiring, air conditioning, a service elevator, and so forth. At the bottom of the central core is the apparatus for self-destruct.
215-A ANGLE PAST HALL TO VIEWING SCREEN

Hall makes sure the key chain around his neck is secure.

STONE
Each level is a different color, based on a Navy study of the psychological effects of color in environments.

215-B CLOSE ON VIEWING SCREEN

STONE'S VOICE
Also, each level is biomedically cleaner than the one above it. We don't want anything to contaminate a possible organism. That would make it twice as hard to isolate and characterize. It will take us sixteen hours to descend through the programmed decontamination procedures on the first four levels to Level Five where the main labs are.
GROUP SHOT - FAVORING HALL

HALL
(toying with red key)
Where, exactly, are we now?

STONE
There's one way you can always locate yourself, or any of us, instantly. Simply by calling up projections from the Electronic Diagram on any video monitor anywhere in the lab -- like this.

He presses a button. The screen now displays an Electronic Diagram of Level I.

STONE
This shows we're in Conference Room Seven, Level One. Each of us is indicated by our initial. Our movements are continuously monitored on the electronic diagram.

CAMERA CLOSES ON ELECTRONIC DIAGRAM

The various initials (S,D,L,H) move according to the movement of the scientists.

BACK TO GROUP

HALL
Where are the patients?

LEAVITT
Where's the capsule?

STONE
(pushing a button)
The patients are the yellow X's.

CLOSE ON ELECTRONIC DIAGRAM

now showing the Central Core. Two yellow X's and a red circle below them slowly descend in the central core outline on the diagram.

STONE'S VOICE
The red circle is the capsule -- almost at the bottom. On Level Five the capsule and patients will be isolated in biologically secure set-ups.
BACK TO GROUP — FAVORING DUTTON

DUTTON

Are you sure the old man and the baby are still alive?

Stone presses a button on the console.

PAN FROM ELECTRONIC DIAGRAM TO TV SCREENS

The 1st TV glows into life. It shows the capsule in the plastic bag on a freight platform making its descent down the central core. The 2nd TV screen lights up showing the old man on a litter on a platform being slowly lowered down the core. Intravenous lines run into his arms. His eyes are closed and his breathing labored. Readouts of the old man's pulse rate, respiration, blood pressure and temperature flash onto his image. (See Appendix) Markings on the shaft wall indicate Level III. The 3rd TV comes on. The baby, in a plastic bin, crying, descends into view. An intravenous bottle runs into a vein in his scalp. Readouts of the baby's vital signs flash across his image.

ANOTHER ANGLE — INCLUDING GROUP AND TV SCREENS

DUTTON

What are their chances, Hall?

HALL

Uncertain. I'm hoping the intravenous dextrose and saline will hold them until we get to them.

A bell chimes.

STONE

We start decontamination and immunization procedures now.

He pushes buttons turning off the TV screen and electronic diagram.

ANGLE ON HALL

moving to the self-destruct main station and staring at it.

HALL

You really expect me to fire that thing?

CONTINUED
STONE
I'm afraid you don't understand. All you can do is stop it. In a biological emergency, the bomb is activated automatically. It will then go off within five minutes, unless you get to a substation and lock in your key.

HALL
(touching key)

Oh....

Stone snaps the lid over the metal plate.

INT. A CHARCOAL-COLORED, TILED ROOM

As the team enters, Leavitt is immediately conducted o.s. by a nurse.

CLOSE SHOT AT DOOR

through which the team has just entered. Stone watches as the self-sealing door clanks shut and makes a hissing sound. CAMERA MOVES up quickly to a sign on the door: NO RETURN TO LEVEL 1 THRU THIS ACCESS.

AN UNIDENTIFIABLE OBJECT

CAMERA ZOOMS back to show a disposal device and three charcoal outfits being dropped into it...a flash as they are incinerated.

ANOTHER SELF-SEALING DOOR

This door is marked: EXIT TO

DECONTAMINATION-IMMUNIZATION

As the three scientists, now naked, come from behind camera, the door hisses and clicks open.

COMVOICE (x)
Proceed to Infrared Radiation,
Decontamination Room 1D.

As the scientists move through the doorway, CAMERA PULLS BACK TO:

SPLIT-SCREEN

LEFT HALF - A CONTINUATION OF SC. 224-C

showing the door closing with a hiss behind the scientists.
A DIAGRAM NOW FILLS RIGHT HALF OF SCREEN

It is a DETAIL OF A GASKET labeled:

U. S. POLYMER CORPORATION
PROJECT WF10-013 (T CLASSIF)

GASKET, POLYCRON, TYPE 49AG
PART 04-2633 FOR AD-7 airtight self-sealing door.

CAMERA SQUEEZES ON Diagram until it FILLS FRAME

INT. THE INFRARED RADIATION ROOM

Under the infrared radiation, there are three featureless, somewhat transparent, white shapes. They move about among the oddly shaped contours of what must be special chairs.

SHAPE 1 (DUTTON)
Also, it could be an organism from another planet, released deliberately.

SHAPE 2 (STONE)
To wipe us out? Really, Charles....

SHAPE 1 (DUTTON)
Just the opposite. To make friendly contact. A kind of messenger to show us life exists elsewhere in the universe. It could be benign in its own environment.

SHAPE 3 (HALL)
Pretty far-fetched.

SHAPE 1 (DUTTON)
We can't ignore any possibility.

A BELL CHIMES.

A FEMALE RECORDED VOICE
You are about to undergo long-wave radiation. A buzzer will sound. Close your eyes and stand still or blindness may result.

With the drawn-out sound of the BUZZER, the shapes turn black.

A SHALLOW TROUGH

It serves as the floor of a narrow passageway....CAMERA ON Leavitt's legs wading through a flow of black solution.
227 THE WALL OF THE PASSAGEWAY

The head and shoulders of Leavitt pass a tiled sign on the wall:
IMMERSE FEET ONLY - AVOID EXPOSURE TO EYES AND MUCOUS MEMBRANES

228 and

229 OMITTED

230 A CHARCOAL-COLORED DOOR

inscribed: EXIT TO LEVEL II. As the door slides open, the four scientists, changed into blue outfits, appear from UNDER CAMERA, and proceed through the doorway into:

231 INT. A NARROW CHARCOAL CORRIDOR - LEVEL I

CAMERA on their backs, they move, two abreast, down a tunnel-like passage toward a door at the end.

STONE
We faced quite a problem: how to disinfect the human body -- one of the dirtiest things in the known universe.

LEAVITT
That is, without killing a person at the same time.

STONE
It gets tougher as we go, I'm afraid.

The door slides open and Stone gestures them into:

232 INT. A BLUE ELEVATOR

The door closes and the elevator starts to descend.

HALL
Hard on the taxpayers, isn't it -- the way we burn up uniforms?

STONE
They're paper.

CONTINUED
DUTTON  
(Feeling shirt)  
I'd swear it was cloth.

STONE  
New process.  
(abruptly)  
Where's the next substation, Hall?

HALL  
Left of elevator on Level Two.

STONE  
Right.  
(as doors open)  
Across the corridor from Body Analysis, our next port of call.

LEAVITT  
(exiting first)  
Not for my alabaster body.

CUT TO

INT. LEVEL II - BODY ANALYSIS - ANGLE ON LEAVITT  
in one of six opaque cubicles. After a swift glance at the  
complex equipment, including a highly advanced automatic  
examination table which now is in the "chair" position, she  
turns for the door.

LEAVITT  
(heatedly)  
I mean it, Stone. You can take  
your Body Analyzer and ---

The door slides shut in her face.

INT. SECOND CUBICLE - HALL  
looking around fascinated by the extraordinary equipment.

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE  
Sit down, please.

He sits in the "chair," which faces a large, blank, oval,  
electronic screen.

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE  
Please look at the screen in front  
of you.
HIS ANGLE - ON ELECTRONIC SCREEN

Points of light simulating a human form appear on it.

* *

* * *

* * *

* * *

* *

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
Please place your body so that all points are obliterated.

ANGLE INCLUDING HALL AND SCREEN

He shifts around until all the points of light disappear.

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
That is fine. We may proceed. State your name for the records, surname first.

HALL
Mark Hall.

SCREEN FLASHES
SUBJECT HAS GIVEN UNCODABLE RESPONSE
(See Appendix)

HALL
Hall, Mark.

SCREEN FLASHES
ANALYZER CONFIRMS IDENTITY: HALL, MARK

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
Thank you for your cooperation.

HALL
(resigned)
Yes, dear.

SCREEN FLASHES
UNCODABLE RESPONSE
INT. CUBICLE 1 - ANGLE INCLUDING SCREEN AND LEAVITT

seated in the examination "chair."

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
Please answer the following questions
yes or no. Have you any allergies?

LEAVITT
Yes...to ragweed pollen.

SCREEN FLASHES

UNPROGRAMMED DATA

LEAVITT
Okay, I'll repeat it for your memory
cells: 'Rag ---'

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
(interrupting)
Please repeat your response for our
memory cells.

LEAVITT
(with an edge)
Ragweed pollen.

SCREEN FLASHES

RAGWEED POLLEN CODED

INT. CUBICLE 3 - CLOSE ON DUTTON

in the "chair."

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
This ends the formal questioning.
Please undress.

Dutton's eyebrows raise.

INT. CUBICLE 4 - STONE

naked, lying on his back on the now raised and extended
examination "table."

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
This is a scan for fungal lesions.

An ultraviolet lamp and a scanning eye move over his body.

CONTINUED
CAMERA PANS to the screen showing a computerized version of the scan, beginning with Stone's left foot.

VOICE OF LEVEL II SUPERVISOR
Dr. Stone, this is Level Two Control. The answer is affirmative. Major Manchek contacted the White House at 11:23 our time this morning.

ANGLE ON STONE
nodding with satisfaction.

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
Now lie on your stomach, please.

INT. CUBICLE 1 - ANGLE ON LEAVITT - FROM THE WAIST UP
She lies naked and prone on the examination table.

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
You are not aligned with the points. Lie quietly. Do not be nervous.

LEAVITT
(hostile)
I'm not nervous.

A variety of leads are attached to her. She glances nervously at the mechanical hands fastening the last of the wires to her head.

VOICE OF LEVEL II SUPERVISOR
Physical parameters are being measured. There's no need to be nervous, Dr. Leavitt.
242 CLOSEUP - LEAVITT

Her brow is covered with fine perspiration. She closes her eyes, clenches her hands beside her face.

243 INT. CUBICLE 2 - HALL

prone and naked like the others. A Thermograph Scanner examines Hall's raised hand.

244 CLOSE ON ELECTRONIC SCREEN

showing the thermograph of the interior of Hall's hand, which will be seen in seven colors:

THERMOGRAPH SCAN
SUBJECT CODED HALLMARK
THERMOGRAM HM-1

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
Please sit up facing the scan screen and watch carefully.

245 ANGLE ON HALL AND ELECTRONIC SCREEN

He sits up, regarding the screen which now gives a brief display of unidentifiable, but amusing patterns. Hall is fascinated, unaware of a thick cable gliding toward his back and stopping an inch behind his shoulder. It strikes with a sharp HISS. He starts, spins around.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
You have received pneumatic injections comprising booster immunizations.

Hall grimaces in wry disapproval of the machine's sneaky tactics.

RECORDED FEMALE VOICE
You may get dressed. Thank you.
This recording is now ended.

INT. A CURVED BLUE CORRIDOR - LEVEL II.

The team emerges from Body Analysis, rubbing their shoulders. A girl, in a blue uniform, holds open the door, hands Dutton and Leavitt eyeglass cases, leads the team down the corridor.

HALL
(to Stone; grinning)
That machine -- I want to be there when the AMA gets wind of it.

STONE
So far, it's only been used by NASA to diagnose astronauts in space.

LEAVITT
(to Hall)
You doctors better start making house calls again.

Moving along the curving corridor, they pass from view.

A DAZZLING FLASH OF LIGHT (in a BLUE TILED ROOM)

The outline of a DisposaDevice, in which the blue outfits have just been incinerated, appears for an instant.

WATER - DOWN ANGLE

An iridescent play of light on the water's surface...FULL BACK as Stone, Dutton, and Hall, naked, appear from UNDER CAMERA, entering a small pool and wading out until they are almost over their heads. CAMERA TILTS UP TO:
A FLASHING RED SIGN

on the wall. It reads:

EXIT TO LEVEL III
TOTAL IMMERSION
KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN

SEVERAL UNDERWATER SHOTS - STONE, DUTTON, AND HALL

undergoing total immersion. They negotiate an underwater passage to which the pool was the entrance. The solution, away from the flashing lights, is a milky color.

CUT TO

INT. LEVEL III - A MAROON CORRIDOR - LONG SHOT

Silent. Stone, Dutton, and Hall, in maroon bathrobes, appear at a point where a long straight corridor joins the curving perimeter corridor. They hesitate. They seem tired and a little numb.

COMVOICE

Proceed to Chamber 4, Sector B
Dr. Stone.

Stone looks o.s., leads the way.

A STARTLING UNDERWATER SHOT OF LEAVITT (LEVEL II)

floundering. The heads and shoulders of two nurses, coming to her aid, appear beside her.

OMITTED

INT. A CUBICLE LINED WITH ALUMINIZED MYLAR - LEVEL III - CLOSE

hanging in a recess.

RECORDED MALE VOICE

This is a Xenon Lamp Apparatus.
Place your feet in the harness on the floor.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO SHOW Hall looking from the helmet to the harness on a lucite section of floor where he stands. He installs his feet in the harness.

RECORDED MALE VOICE

To protect scalp and facial hair, place the metal helmet securely on the head.
Hall removes the helmet and puts it on. The lucite section of floor on which he stands rises, becoming a small platform. A button can now be seen in front of him on the wall.

RECORDED MALE VOICE
Make sure the helmet is firmly seated, and the visor lowered; then push the button, and raise your arms.

Hall makes sure -- twice. He pushes the button. A pause, then...a brief, searing BURST OF LIGHT. As the platform descends, he looks o.s. sharply.

POV - THE XENON LAMP ON WALL
A sort of afterglow still burns inside it.

BACK TO HALL
The mylar foil covering the walls has become clouded. He pulls off the helmet, looks worriedly down at his body. It is covered with a white powder-like substance.

RECORDED MALE VOICE
You will notice a fine white ash on your body.

INT. ANOTHER MYLAR-LINED CUBICLE - CLOSE ON LEAVITT

RECORDED MALE VOICE
(continuing OVER)
This is the outer epithelial layers of your skin that have been burned away.

Leavitt tries unsuccessfully to see herself in the cloudy foil wall. She pulls off the helmet and touches her hair.

RECORDED MALE VOICE
Please replace the helmet in compartment and proceed through shower in next room. Then you may dress and descend to Level Four.

Leavitt glares around for the invisible speaker, chucks the helmet on the floor with a CLANK.

INT. LEVEL IV - A GREEN CORRIDOR - CLOSE ON STONE
dressed in a green uniform, turning TO CAMERA. The door at his back is marked with his name.
256 CONTINUED

STONE

We're required to rest six hours on Level IV after exposure to the Xenon lamp. Go to your rooms and sleep.

At the end of the corridor is the cafeteria. We'll meet there at 0400 hours --

(thin smile)

-- tomorrow.

257 FULL SHOT - THE CORRIDOR

The team members proceed to their marked rooms. The corridor ECHOES faintly with electronic signals from the intercom.

COMVOICE

Watchdog to all levels. Scoop Seven capsule secure. Biocheck...66 plus 9 minus 0L five.

258 ANGLE ON HALL

pausing before an oblong niche gouged into the wall. Contemplating it, he fidgets with the key around his neck. Scrawled above the ragged opening is: SUBSTATION 13A - LEVEL IV. Partially installed conduits and wires protrude in the opening.

259 REVERSE PAST HALL - TOWARD STONE

his hand on the door, looking at Hall, then stepping into:

260 INT. HIS INTERIM ROOM ON LEVEL IV

Modern, spartan, furnished with a bed, desk, console, TV screens. Stone sits at the desk, touches a button on the console.

261 THE TV SCREEN SHOWING: INT. HOT ROOM OF MAIN CONTROL LAB LEVEL V

The capsule stands in a jig on the floor. Two sensor devices, like watch dogs, constantly circle it.

262 ANGLE PAST STONE - TOWARD TV SCREEN

As he looks at the capsule, he doodles on a pad, sketching SCOOP VII with collection device deployed.

263 INSERT - STONE'S CRUDE SKETCH OF SCOOP VII IN INTERPLANETARY TRAJECTORY.
A) INT. STONE'S ROOM - UPPER LEFT - BALANCE OF SCREEN BLACK

As Stone glances from the TV screen to his doodling, the IMAGE DIMS.

STONE'S THOUGHTS
Something - something knocked it off course and effected entry angle. Collision? One thousand and eighty-two of them up there.

B) A COMPUTERIZED ANIMATION FILLS REST OF SCREEN (See Appendix)

It shows various earth satellites and interplanetary vehicles in space (1082). Large and small, they are marked by appropriate symbols to indicate American or Russian origin, and one is the Red China satellite recently put into orbit. Scoop VII is designated by Stone's crude drawing of it.

Scoop Mission Control to Sunnyvale.
Our computer indicates a system malfunction. We wonder about a collision.

SUNNYVALE RADIO
Negative, Scoop. Air Force Space-tracker confirms no other vehicle near your baby. No meteor showers either.

Scoop Mission Control to Sunnyvale.
Our computers show capsule unstable with bad telemetry.

THOUSANDS OF ORBITING DOTS SUDDENLY PEPPER THE ANIMATION

SUNNYVALE RADIO
Condolences, Scoop. Maybe she hit a piece of space junk.

AN ABRUPT ZOOM SHOT OF PIEDMONT STREET LITTERED WITH BODIES
At end of ZOOM, SNAP TO:

STONE'S ROOM - DIMMED DOWN - UPPER LEFT - BALANCE OF SCREEN BLACK
Stone is stretched out on the bed, one arm over his face.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

FLASH SHOTS ACROSS REST OF SCREEN - WHAT STONE SAW AT PIEDMONT

A) The bloodless gash on Sgt. Crane's face.
B) The old lady hanging above the stairs.
C) The family in frozen attitudes around the dinner table.
D) The aged "doughboy" drowned in the bathtub.
E) The stopped-motion gas station.
F) A FROZEN TABLEAU OF THE PARTY IN STONE'S HOUSE. Allison has been stricken while pouring coffee for Prof. Schwartz and several others. As CAMERA PUSHES IN ON IMAGE F, until it FILLS SCREEN:

SUPERIMPOSE OVER "F": CLOSE SHOT - DR. BENEDICT'S WRIST WITH THE CLOTTED BLOOD falling from the opened artery. The powdery substance becomes a massive red landslide obliterating everything behind it.

LEAVITT'S VOICE
A new form of life....

BIG CLOSEUP - LEAVITT
Her eyes are shut, her face mask-like. As she smiles faintly in response to her thoughts, CAMERA PULLS BACK TO:

MULTI-SCREEN

A) INT. LEAVITT'S ROOM - UPPER RIGHT - BALANCE OF SCREEN BLACK
She sits in the lotus position on the bed. Image DIMS as:

B) A HIGHLY MAGNIFIED LIVE BACTERIUM SNAPS ONTO A PORTION OF THE BLACK SCREEN
The organism is ring-shaped, undulating.

LEAVITT'S THOUGHTS
Like Rudolph Karp's bacteria....

C) LEAVITT AND DR. KARP SNAP ONTO ANOTHER PART OF THE SCREEN
They appear as smallish figures in white lab smocks, surrounded by blackness.

CONTINUED
KARP

(foreign accent)
Fools! They refuse to believe life exists in meteorites. I showed them at the Astrophysics Conference what I just showed you. But no, even with a microscope they are blind. What do I have to do, hit them over the head?

269 SINGLE SCREEN - INT. LEAVITT'S ROOM - CLOSE ON LEAVITT

sitting on the bed in the lotus position, eyes closed, nodding "yes" to the question.

270 INT. DUTTON'S ROOM - CLOSE ON DUTTON

tossing on the bed. Sneak in sound of LAUGHTER, PULL BACK TO:

271 MULTI-SCREEN

A) LEVEL IV - DUTTON'S ROOM - DIMMED DOWN - UPPER LEFT

Dutton now lies still on the bed. LAUGHTER continues.

B) A CARTOON, WHITE ON BLACK, SNAPS ONTO MIDDLE OF BLACK SCREEN

The cartoon shows a man looking down a microscope at a slide. On the slide bacteria are formed into the words:

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL the cartoon is drawn on a blackboard. Dutton signs it in chalk with a flourish, turns to a classroom of a dozen grinning graduate students.

DUTTON

I'm glad you're amused, gentlemen, but it just might turn out to be true. During this symposium, we'll discuss the possibility that intelligent life on a distant planet may be no larger than a flea.

Several students laugh.

DUTTON

Perhaps no larger than a bacterium.

STROBE CUT TO
SINGLE SCREEN - INT. HALL'S ROOM - LEVEL IV - CLOSE ON TV

MECOM DATA OUTPUT
AS
SEQUENCE FOR BLOOD CLOTTING
1. PLATELETS SURROUND INJURY
2. PROTHROMBIN $\text{Ca}^{++}$ THROMBIN
   THROMBOPLASTIN
3. FIBRINOGEN THROMBIN FIBRIN
4. FIBRIN POLYMERS FORM CLOT

MORE DATA REQUIRED FOR
APPLICATION TO CASE CITED

SEDUCTIVE FEMALE VOICE
Time to wake up, sir.

HALL
asleep at his desk, his head resting on his arms. Beside him
is a pad covered with notes.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Time to wake up, sir.

He sits up, looks around, sees he's alone.

HALL
Hello?

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Time to wake up, sir.

HALL
(standing, smiling)
Who are you?

No answer. He goes to the night table where a light burns on
the panel, pushes a button. The light blinks.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Do you wish something, sir?

HALL
Your name.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Will that be all, sir?

HALL
For the moment.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

The light blinks off. He goes to the console, pushes a button, making the TV screen blank, looks over his notes. Abruptly, he pauses, feels for the key on his chest under his suit. Not there. A bad moment. He zips down the top of his jumpsuit. Relieved, he finds the chain pressed to his throat. The key has been worked around to his back.

MALE VOICE
This is the answering service supervisor. We wish you would adopt a more serious attitude, Dr. Hall.

HALL
Sorry. Her voice is quite luscious.

HALL
(sourly; leaving)
Much obliged.

INT. CAFETERIA - LEVEL IV

Stone, Dutton, and Leavitt sit at a table, drinking a dark brown liquid from juice glasses. Another table in b.g. is occupied by green-clad TECHNICIANS. The cafetería has one peculiarity: no food. A counter, trays, silverware in the boxes, even napkins in dispensers, but no food.

STONE
(to Leavitt)
Let's not get side-tracked on Rudolph Karp and his meteorite theories. His technique was worthless.

DUTTON
I still think we should contact him.

STONE
Fair enough. Where is he, Ruth?

LEAVITT
Behind the Iron Curtain. Couldn't get a research grant here.
as he enters. He nods to his colleagues, heads for the counter. He picks up a tray, sets silverware on it, slides it along the counter rail until he realizes no food has been set out. Quizzical, he carries the empty tray to their table.

LEAVITT
(setting brown liquid on his tray)
Hemlock. All for you, Hippocrates.

HALL
Not your own venom?
(sipping)
Tastes like orange juice.

STONE
Nutrient forty-two-five. Developed for the astronauts. Eight ounces satisfy all daily nutritional requirements.

HALL
(at coffee dispenser)
Except coffee.

LEAVITT
And lipid soluble vitamins.

CLOSE ON TABLE - FAVORING STONE
as he opens a covered sugar bowl full of pills.

STONE
For that we have these. Help yourself. They do.
Hall returns, wryly regards the pills.

HALL
So what's the point of a cafeteria?

STONE
Wildfire isn't always on crash status.

HALL
Then maybe there's some sugar still around.

DUTTON
Nope. Nothing that might provide a bacterial growth medium.

STONE
Precisely. No sugar in the gut.
LEAVITT
God, how I'd like a cigarette.
(facetiously)
It's after meals you really miss 'em.

STONE
Then you should have no problem on Level Five. You won't even get this close to a meal. We'll be entirely on high-protein nutrients.
(pyramiding fingers)
I've planned our work in three stages. One, Detection. The first step is to confirm that an organism is present. Two, Characterization. How is it structured and how does it work? Three, Control. How to contain and exterminate it.

DUTTON
Jeremy, on this matter of extermination, we should go slowly. Without ever realizing it, we might destroy a highly intelligent form of life.

HALL
(restlessly)
Why don't we get going? I've got two patients down there.

STONE
The team has two subjects.

HALL
They're not guinea pigs, Stone!

A BELL CHAMES.

SEDUCTIVE FEMALE VOICE
You may now proceed to Level Five, gentlemen.

Leavitt sardonically raises her brows at the omission of "ladies" by the voice. Stone, leading the group, stops at a container.

CLOSE ON STONE AT THE CONTAINER
removing some small cylindrical objects wrapped in foil.

STONE
(distributing them)
Stop by your rooms and insert these before taking the elevator.

GROUP SHOT - FAVORING LEAVITT
She weighs the silver cylinder in her hand, then:
LEAVITT
I've risked drowning in that foul bath, I've been irradiated, parboiled, and Xenon flashed. But when you ask me to ---

STONE
I have to. We haven't done a thing about the GI tract yet. On Level Five we must be as nearly germ-free as possible.

Leavitt stares at the suppository, then, holding it between her fingers like a cigarette, draws herself up.

LEAVITT
(exiting with style)
Anybody care to join me for a smoke?

STRAIGHT CUT TO

OMITTED

MULTI-SCREEN - SCHEMA TECHNIQUE

A) FLOOR PLAN OF LEVEL V - RIGHT HALF OF SCREEN
On it, appropriately labeled, are the Main Control Lab, Autopsy Lab, Microbiology Lab, Miscellaneous Room, etc.

B) A LINE DRAWING - LEFT HALF OF SCREEN
A sectional perspective labeled STERILE CONVEYOR SYSTEM, the rendering makes clear how contaminated material can be safely transferred from lab to lab via a biologically secure system. The rendering includes a detail INSERT of a sterilization lock equipped with nozzles for spraying paracytic acid solution.

DUTTON'S VOICE
Off the main corridor on the outer rim are the living quarters, conference room, cafeteria, Bio-safety Maintenance, etc. Inside are the labs.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal:
C) LEVEL V - THE WARD ROOM - BOTTOM HALF OF SCREEN
Dutton and Hall, dressed in light gray jumpsuits, study the Electronic Diagram displayed on a TV screen. The light gray ward room has a club-like atmosphere...several all-metal easy chairs, a teleprinter in the corner, a small console, and TV screens.

HALL
Where's the library?

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

DUTTON
Don't need books. Everything's in the computer.
(pointing)
Notice the capsule's already been delivered by the Sterile Conveyor System to the Main Control Lab here.

SINGLE SCREEN - CLOSE ON ELECTRONIC DIAGRAM

On the Diagram the red circle (capsule), the yellow triangles (patients), and the initials "D" and "H", are stationary. "S" and "L" are seen moving to the Main Control Lab.

DUTTON'S VOICE
(his finger points)
Your patients are here, in the hot room of Miscellaneous -- poor souls. We can't have any direct contact with them. Most labs are divided into two sections: a Hot Room for contaminated material -- or people -- and a Safe Room where we work. The Safe Rooms are kept biologically secure from the hot rooms by an elaborate system of plate glass windows, negative air pressure, and other devices.

COMVOICE
Dr. Dutton and Dr. Hall are wanted in Main Control immediately.

The initial "D" hurries off.

HALL'S VOICE
Hey ---

"H" pursues "D" on the Diagram.

INT. LEVEL V - CORRIDOR - DUTTON AND HALL

Hall catches up to Dutton, grabs his arm.

HALL
If the patients are sealed off, how do I get to them?

DUTTON
Have you ever used a glove box?

Hall shakes his head.

DUTTON
Wildfire has gone a step further -- whole rooms that work like glove boxes. You'll be working in one, shortly.

He opens a door marked: MAIN CONTROL LAB.
Large, but cramped, crowded with electronic equipment...Stone and Leavitt stand at the controls behind a massively thick window which separates them from the adjacent hot room. To one side, beneath the window, is an extensive computer console. On the walls are both closed circuit TV screens and special Viewing Screens that are hooked up to scientific apparatus. Viewing Screens are DIFFERENT in size, shape and quality from TV screens. Stone and Leavitt are too absorbed to acknowledge the entrance of Dutton and Hall. Stone manipulates a pair of mechanical hands.

The mechanical hands open the cap sealing the Scoop collection chamber.

He relaxes on the controls, turns to Dutton and Hall.

STONE
I wanted you here while we find out if there's anything still biologically active in the capsule. Suggestions?

DUTTON
Use a Norwegian.

Hall looks to see if they're kidding. They're not.

The mechanical hands move to the rear wall, where experimental animals -- mice, rats, guinea pigs, rabbits, monkeys, and one pig -- are kept in airtight compartments similar to an automat. The hands stop at the door to a caged white rat.

STONE

Leavitt pushes a button on the console opening the sound system between the chambers. Now we hear the WHIRRINGS and CLICKS of the hot room machinery.

They open the compartment door, remove a cage clearly marked in red "N1," carry it across the room and set it down by the capsule. The rat sniffs once and flops over -- dead.
ANGLE ON GROUP

DUTTON

Incredible....

STONE

(grimly)
Whatever killed them at Piedmont is still there, and still as potent as ever.

LEAVITT

If potent is the word... Let's try a rhesus.

STONE

Yes. We'll want a post mortem on it, anyway.

He regrips the controls.

POV - THROUGH WINDOW INTO HOT ROOM

The mechanical hands return to the far wall, remove a cage containing an adult rhesus monkey. This cage is marked in black "Ri." Before there is even time to set the cage beside the capsule, the monkey dies with a SCREECH.

REVERSE ON GROUP

staring in troubled silence.

LEAVITT

So okay. Isolate and Identify.

STONE

Right. You and I will scan the capsule, Ruth.

(operating the hands)

Charlie, you work on these in Autopsy.

Leavitt, sitting at the console, presses a button.

CLOSE ON STERILIZATION LOCK (SL) IN HOT ROOM

Two doors in the wall slide open with a HISS, revealing a sophisticated "dumbwaiter" device, which is part of the sterile conveyor system (SCS). The mechanical hands pull out two open lucite boxes, set the cages containing the dead animals in them.
CONTINUED

The "hands" close and seal the boxes which are equipped with a variable pressure air supply system and gauges. The boxes are deposited in the SL whose doors slide shut.

STONE'S VOICE
Run an initial vector study, Charlie, and find out how the disease enters the body.

CAMERA CLOSES ON the heavy glass porthole in one of the doors to show an arrangement of nozzles spraying a solution (paracytic acid) over the lucite boxes inside the SL. Now the "dumbwaiter" starts to descend.

ANGLE FAVORING DUTTON
who abstractedly watches the boxes lowered from sight.

STONE
Charlie?

DUTTON
Yes, yes. The vector study first, then autopsy.
(a beat)
Incredible....

Dutton, running his hand through his hair, starts out.

LEAVITT
Dutton...
(as he turns)
Careful.
(ironically, at Hall)
Let our distinguished surgeon handle the knife.

HALL
Fine, but not for a while. First, I'm a pediatrician and geriatrist.

He pats Dutton and leaves.

CLOSE ON LEAVITT

swinging around for a sharp reply.

STONE
(touching her arm)
Take it easy. Charlie will have a technician with him.
INT. MISCELLANEOUS ROOM - LEVEL V - CLOSE ON TWO PLASTIC SUITS
inflated and standing upright in the hot room. From each suit
an accordioned tunnel device is attached to the entry-exit
port to the safe room. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL the old
man and the infant in hospital beds in the hot room.

ANGLE ON HALL

staring uneasily from behind the glass window of the "safe"
room. Smaller, though less cramped, the layout is similar to
Main Control with a major difference: the plastic suits are
evidently used instead of mechanical hands.

HALL
(concerned; brusque)
What's been done for 'em?

He turns to an attractive Negro girl, KAREN ANSON, at a special
console. In the act of rising politely to greet him, she pauses
at his tone.

KAREN
(snapping back)
Plasma for the old man. Dextrose
for the baby.

HALL
(smiling approval)
Your therapy?

KAREN
No.
(indicating
console)
Medcom's.

HALL
Do I call you Miss Medcom?

KAREN
(re relenting)
If you like, Dr. Hall. My name's
Karen Anson.

HALL
Good. I couldn't cope with two
machines.
(regarding
console)
How does this thing work?

CONTINUED
KAREN
(a twinkle)
We're lucky. Medcom's got one of the best minds here. It's a medical data analyzer that can diagnose and prescribe. It's hooked up to the main computer on Level One. Every console and instrument in Wildfire is plugged into the main computer on a time-sharing basis. Our key lab studies are done on automated machines.

HALL
I prefer the personal touch.

KAREN
It's hard to come by in those suits.

HALL
Have you worked in them?

KAREN
Not for real, but I've been drilling three months.

HALL
Thank God for an expert. This sort of thing's new to me.

KAREN
It's new to all of us. Until now, Wildfire's been like a game. We've even had simulation Biowar games here. (looking into hot room) With live subjects -- volunteers.

He stares at her.

KAREN
I mean I'm scared. I never believed it could really happen.

HALL
Well, it has happened. (briskly) I'll need some lab tests.

Karen turns on the Medcom console, hands him a small "light-pen."

KAREN
Use this to check off what you want.

She pushes a button.
CLOSE SHOT - THE MEDCOM GLASS INPUT SCREEN

MEDCOM PROGRAM
LAB/ANALYS

BLOOD

COUNTS RBC
RETIC
PLATES
WBC
DIFF
HEMATOCRIT
HEMOGLOBIN

PROTEIN

ALB
GLOB
FIBRIN
ESR
PROTIME
PTT

KAREN'S VOICE
Just touch the pen to the screen.

CLOSE ON HALL

touching the tests he wants with the light-pen.

CLOSE ON GLASS INPUT SCREEN - INCLUDING THE LIGHT-PEN

in Hall's hand, now checking tests on the bottom of list.

CHEMISTRY

I
IBC
NPN
BUN
CEPH/FLOC

Hall's hand touches off the last test. The input screen goes blank for an instant, then the following appears:

TESTS ORDERED WILL REQUIRE FOR EACH SUBJECT

4 CC CLOTTED BLOOD
2 CC OXALATED BLOOD
3 CC CITRATED BLOOD
15 CC URINE

ANGLE ON KAREN AND HALL

HALL

You draw the bloods. I'll do physicals.

He goes to the tunnel entrance to a suit, pauses. Karen, approaching the other tunnel, smiles encouragement.
CONTINUED

KAREN
Use the bar. The tunnel seals off automatically behind you. The only way you might possibly break your suit is with a scalpel --
(smiling)
-- and a surgeon isn't likely to do that.

With a small wave, she grasps the overhead bar, swings feet-first into the tunnel.

OMITTED

ANGLE ON HALL

grasping the bar, swinging into the tunnel.

INT. THE SUIT - LOW ANGLE ON HALL

as he positions himself in the plastic suit.

POV SHOT - THE ROOM

seen from inside the bubble helmet.

CLOSE ON HALL

Standing up inside the suit, he reacts to an abrupt HISSING SOUND as the suit is sealed off.

INT. MAIN CONTROL LAB - LEVEL V - CLOSE ON MICROSCAN SCOPE

The Microscanner, suspended on rods and wires, operates automatically, circling slowly around the capsule's surface.

CLOSE ON A VIEWING SCREEN

On the walls of the safe room, there are two Viewing Screens, as well as TV screens. Only one Viewing Screen is lit. The field of view sliding by, magnified twenty times, is labeled briefly: 20 X

ANGLE ON STONE AND LEAVITT

seated at control panel, fixedly watching the Viewing Screen.

LEAVITT
(stretching)
Second scan completed. Score, nothing to nothing.

CONTINUED
STONE
Go to one hundred power.
Leavitt resets the controls.

ANGLE ON VIEWING SCREENS
The image BLURS, then sharpens, briefly labeled: 100 x. As the field slides by, the 2nd Viewing Screen lights up, each displaying a different field of view.

CLOSE ON STONE
turning around quickly.

HIS POV - THROUGH WINDOW
A 2nd Microscanner circles the capsule.

ANGLE ON STONE AND LEAVITT
Leavitt plays her hands deftly over the controls.

STONE
No, Ruth, use only one Microscanner.

LEAVITT
You being paid by the hour? We can cover the capsule in one-half the time.

STONE
There's less chance of missing something when we both concentrate on one screen.

LEAVITT
Let's go directly to the inside. We can assume they put that scoop on the thing to scoop something inside. Brother, they sure got what they were looking for.

STONE
We're not here to make accusations. We have a job to do purely as scientists.

LEAVITT
(eyeing him)
Maybe not so pure.

STONE
(expressionless)
Continue the scan, Ruth -- on the outside.

Their eyes hold. She shrugs it off, presses a button.
CLOSE ON CAPSULE

One Microscanner lifts o.s., the other slowly scans the scorched heat shield.

INT. THE AUTOPSY HOT ROOM - LEVEL V

A plastic suit, similar to the ones in the Miscellaneous Room, arranges two airtight plastic boxes with variable pressure air supply systems on a stainless steel table. The boxes, marked N58 and N59, each contain a live Norway rat. Next the suit moves to a table where the dead rat and monkey lie in their cages, marked "N1" and "R1," inside the plastic boxes also equipped with variable pressure air systems.

DUTTON'S VOICE
No! Don't touch them. We'll use the hands.

SUIT
Nothing can happen, sir. I'm faster than the hands.

INT. AUTOPSY SAFE ROOM - DUTTON AT WINDOW

DUTTON
I want you out of the hot room.

The suit flaps its arms, stops, sags as it is evacuated. CAMERA SWIVELS with Dutton's gaze to the tunnel entrance in the safe room. We hear a sharp HISS as the tunnel seals off. Dutton's technician, TOBY, a young man with a jaunty manner, crawls out.

TOBY
No sweat, sir. The cages are airtight.

DUTTON
I wish you would sweat a little more, Toby. Sweat is a safeguard against some kinds of bacteria -- and carelessness.

(pointing)
Use the hands.

Toby salutes cheerfully, stations himself at the controls. Dutton sits at the console.

ANGLE ON THE HOT ROOM

The mechanical hands carry the dead Norway in Cage N1 to the stainless steel table, set it between the two boxes with live rats. The hands hook up Cage N1 to the one on the left.
CLOSE ON CONSOLE PANEL

A RED LIGHT, marked, "AIRFLOW 1" BLINKS ON. Dutton's finger presses a button. The LIGHT turns GREEN.

CLOSE ON HOOKED UP CAGES

The adjacent walls rise slightly, allowing air to pass freely from Cage N1 to the other. The live rat flops over -- dead.

ANGLE ON DUTTON AND TOBY

TOBY

Wow....

DUTTON

(nodding)

Transmitted by air, as we thought. Now we've got to determine its size. Could be a gas or some kind of virus. We'll use a hundred angstrom filter to begin.

TOBY

(operating hands)

'Bout the size of a small virus.

ANGLE ON CAGES

The hands hook up Cage N1 to a filter wheel. The cage on the right, containing a live rat, is then attached and sealed to the filter wheel.

TOBY'S VOICE

All systems go, sir.

CLOSE ON DUTTON AT CONSOLE

He presses a button.

TIGHT ON CAGES

A filter marked "100A" revolves into position between the cages.

CLOSE ON CONSOLE PANEL

Dutton's finger presses the "AIRFLOW" button. The LIGHT on the panel turns from GREEN to RED.
While the filter stays in place, the adjacent plastic walls rise. The rat on the other side of the filter remains alive.

ANGLE ON DUTTON AND TOBY

DUTTON
Whatever it is, it's larger than a virus. We'll try a one micron filter.

TOBY (addressing rat)
Hang in there, baby.

Dutton presses a button.

CLOSE ON CAGES

A filter marked "1M" revolves into place. The rat continues to live.

TOBY'S VOICE
Hey, must be pretty big. I'm going to get me a fly swatter.

DUTTON'S VOICE
Do that. Here goes with two microns.

The "2M" filter revolves into position. The rat dies.

DUTTON'S VOICE
Uh-huh. Nasty. At least we'll be able to get a good look at it.
(pause)
Dutton to Stone....

INT. MAIN CONTROL LAB - ANGLE ON A VIEWING SCREEN

displaying at 44⁰ x the field of view on the capsule surface, as transmitted by the microscan. A TV screen, above and right of the Viewing Screen, lights up, showing Dutton.

DUTTON (ON TV)
We've just found out its size. About two microns in diameter.

TWO SHOT - STONE AND LEAVITT

seated at the console, looking INTO CAMERA.

STONE
Big enough to be a complete cell.
Interesting.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

LEAVITT
There's a good chance it's alive.
Airborne transmission?

ANGLE PAST STONE AND LEAVITT - TOWARD TV SCREEN

DUTTON (ON TV)
Yes. What have you found?

LEAVITT
So far, nothing. Our Nobel laureate here won't scan on the inside because ---

STONE
All right, Ruth.
(to Dutton)
Thanks, Charlie. Keep at it.

He presses a button, fading out Dutton on TV.

CLOSE ON LEAVITT AND STONE

LEAVITT
It's pointless to keep scanning the outside. If it's two microns in diameter, it would've showed up at 440.

STONE
True, but we didn't know that before, did we? We'll start with five power on the inside.
(as she grimaces)
Stick to established procedure.

LEAVITT
(smiling wolfishly)
Establishment gonna fall down and go boom.

Stone coolly swings around to look into the hot room.

STONE
Switch to manual, Ruth. The interior is too irregular to probe on automatic.

Leavitt touches a button that lights up one of the small viewing monitors on the console, then places her hands in the pistol-grip manual control for the viewer.

ANGLE PAST THEM - THROUGH WINDOW INTO HOT ROOM

The Microscanner moves down into the scoop opening.
REVERSE - THE VIEWING SCREEN ON THE WALL

The field of view darkens.

TWO SHOT - LEAVITT AND STONE

She bends to the monitor viewing screen on the console while operating the manual controls. Manipulating the Microscanner inside the capsule is like writing while watching in a mirror. Stone looks in the opposite direction at the Viewing Screen.

STONE

More light.

Leavitt's hands move out deftly touching buttons.

ANGLE ON CAPSULE IN HOT ROOM

A Cyclospot (light) positions over the Scoop opening.

INT. MISCELLANEOUS HOT ROOM - CLOSE ON A TV SCREEN

As a readout appears:

KAREN'S VOICE

Here's his blood value now.

SUBJECT CODED GRAMPS
LAB/ANALYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEST</th>
<th>NORMAL</th>
<th>VALUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HEMATOCRIT</td>
<td>38-54</td>
<td>21 INITIAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANGLE ON HALL

in a plastic suit, examining the unconscious old man. Hall glances up at the TV screen. Karen removes two blood sample tubes from the SMA 6/60 Auto Analyzer. The baby cries on his bed beside "Gramps."

HALL

(regarding TV screen)
Half normal. Severely anemic.

He wipes bloody drool from Gramps' chin. Gramps stirs.

HALL

(instantly bending)
Wake up, sir. Can you hear me?

Gramps moves his arms feebly to push him away.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

HALL
(loud; in his ear)
What's your name?

GRAMPS
(faintly)
Jackson....

Karen hurries over, props the pillows behind the old man.

HALL
(shaking him)
Stay awake, Mister Jackson.

Gramps (Jackson) goes limp. Hall turns to the baby.

CLOSE ANGLE ON HALL

trying to examine the baby. When he tries to look at the baby's eyes, the baby closes them. If he tries to look down the baby's throat, the baby howls. Karen can't help being amused at Hall's frustration.

DUTTON'S VOICE
You can tell you're a bachelor.

HALL
(looking up at Karen)
What was that?

KAREN
(smiling)
I didn't say anything.

She points o.s.

THEIR ANGLE - A GLOWING TV SCREEN ON WALL

It shows Dutton grinning at Hall, then sobering.

DUTTON (ON TV)
We're doing a Curioscopy experiment,
Hall -- how the bugs get into the body.
Thought you should watch it.

ANGLE PAST HALL - TOWARD TV SCREEN

HALL
(glancing at patients)
I assume it must be inhaled. Not likely it's absorbed through the skin.
CAMERA CLOSES ON TV FOR CLOSEUP OF DUTTON

DUTTON (ON TV)
That's what we'll find out now --
the mechanism of death.

MULTI-SCREEN

A) DIAGRAM OF CURIOSCOPY EXPERIMENT - LEFT HALF OF SCREEN

Fig. 1 shows how blood proteins are tagged with a complex labeled "Urokinase+I 131." Fig. 2 outlines the necessary steps for calibrating and operating the Magnascanner. Fig. 3 shows the infusion of the tagging substance into the subject positioned beneath the scanner.

B) INT. AUTOPSY LAB - CLOSE ON A RHESUS MONKEY - RIGHT HALF

The monkey is tied down to an operating table in the hot room. Attached to its arm is a tube leading into a vein. A scanner now moves into position over the monkey. The mechanical hands set the dead rat in lucite-boxed Cage N1 in a rig by the monkey.

SINGLE SCREEN - INT. AUTOPSY SAFE ROOM

Dutton at the console pushes a button marked "INF." He waits for Toby to release the mechanical hand controls, then pushes a button marked "SCAN." A series of five human block outlines appears as a readout on the console monitor screen.

ANGLE ON VIEWING SCREEN

The same series of block outlines appears on the viewing screen.

ANGLE ON SCANNER DEVICE IN HOT ROOM

It lowers to twelve inches above the monkey and stops.

CLOSE ON DUTTON

He pushes the AIRFLOW button on the console.

CLOSE ON THE DEAD RAT IN CAGE N1 BESIDE THE MONKEY

The air port in the outer lucite cage opens with a HISS. The gauge on the variable air pressure system drops.
SWIFT PANNING SHOT ACROSS VIEWING SCREEN

Immediately, the graphic printout from the computer is projected onto the Viewing Screen. It is all over in seconds.

NO CHANGE, PROGRAM ENDS,
END PRINT ON 03.50
CLOSE SHOT - THE MONKEY

dead on the table, the scanner above it.

INT. THE MISCELLANEOUS ROOM - ANGLE ON HALL

in the safe room. Astonished, he regards the projection of the scan on the glowing TV screen.

DUTTON'S VOICE

That tells us what we want to know, Hall. The organism is inhaled. The clotting begins in the lungs and spreads outwards.

Hall moves closer to screen.

HALL

I didn't think it possible. I didn't think the total volume of blood could solidify that fast. I hoped maybe one crucial clot might form in the brain -- which was what made them go insane -- and the rest of the blood clot more slowly. We'd have a chance to cure that.

The adjacent TV screen lights up with Dutton's image.

DUTTON (ON TV)

(angry; frustrated)
Cure what? We don't know what it is. Stone and Leavitt haven't been able to isolate the hellish thing.

(more temperately)
Of course, they will in time.

HALL'S ANGLE - THROUGH WINDOW ON HOT ROOM

Karen rocks the baby in her arms. He coos, fascinated by the plastic suit. Jackson wheezes in his sleep.

HALL

(unconvinced)
Of course....

INT. THE SCOOP CAPSULE - MAIN CONTROL LAB - LEVEL V

The Microscanner explores the Scoop collection chamber. It glides among the irregular shapes and contours like the head of a creature prowling the ocean depths. Beams of light are directed only where it probes, leaving the rest in shadow and darkness.
The interior of the capsule appears on Leavitt's monitor screen. She manipulates the Microscanner by watching the monitor screen. It's exacting, delicate work. She raises her glasses for an instant, rubs her eyes, looks o.s. at:

**356-A THE TWO VIEWING SCREENS ON WALL**

The screens display the identical slowly moving field of view inside the capsule as shown by the scanner, labeled: 20 x.

**356-B CLOSE ON STONE**

watching the screens o.s. Behind him, seen through window, is the capsule in the hot room. The Microscanner extends down into the scoop.

**STONE**

Hold it!

**356-C ANGLE INCLUDING THE TWO VIEWING SCREENS**

The field of view on them becomes stationary.

**356-D TWO SHOT - STONE AND LEAVITT**

looking at Viewing Screens, o.s.

**STONE**

It's an indentation.

**LEAVITT**

(slowly)

Yes...about the size of a pencil point.

**STONE**

Go to sixty.

Leavitt pushes a panel button.

**356-E TIGHT ON 1ST VIEWING SCREEN**

The field of view BLURS, then comes into sharp focus at 60 x on the indentation. A tiny, black fleck of jagged material lies in the indentation. Faintly visible bits of green are mixed in with the black.

**CONTINUED**
LEAVITT'S VOICE
(suppressed excitement)
Jeremy, I think, maybe ---

STONE'S VOICE
(cutting her off)
Maybe it's just a grain of sand.

TWO SHOT - LEAVITT AND STONE
Leavitt jerks her eyes from the Viewing Screen to Stone.

LEAVITT
What about the bits of green?

STONE
Paint.

LEAVITT
For God's sake....

STONE
Pistachio ice cream. There's no basis to assume it's anything yet.

LEAVITT
You're too good a scientist not to be thinking the same thing I am.
(looking at screen)
If it's really something new, some brand new form of life....

STONE
The best hope of cracking it is to be grindingly thorough -- with the help of computer number one.
(taps her head)
Okay? Now let's get on with it.

Leavitt swings around to the scanner controls.

CLOSE ON 1ST VIEWING SCREEN
Some green specks, still tiny at 60 x, slide into view.

STONE'S VOICE
Hold.

The field of view HOLDs.

LEAVITT'S VOICE
More pistachio?
ANGLE ON STONE AND LEAVITT

Leavitt, seated at the controls, and Stone, standing, study the screens o.s.

STONE
I count four patches. Keep going.
I'll computerize the coordinates.
Let's take a look at the rock at 100.

Stone sits beside her. Half-swung around toward the screen, he punches several buttons. Leavitt manipulates the Micro-scanner, glancing frequently at the screens.

CLOSE ON 1ST VIEWING SCREEN

as the image at 100 x comes INTO FOCUS. The "grain of sand" now looks like a rock in a hole. The flecks of green imbedded in the "rock" surface appear brighter.

ANGLE ON STONE AND LEAVITT

at the console, looking o.s. at screens. Both are disappointed.

STONE
(turning from screens)
Well, I doubt that's what knocked the capsule off trajectory.

ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE capsule in hot room. Leavitt turns toward hot room.

LEAVITT
Unless the rock was going at tremendous speed, or is very heavy.

STONE
(smiling)
For Pete's sake, Ruth, it can't be that heavy. Hall and I could lift the capsule.

Leavitt, with a glance at him, adjusts the controls, turns to screen.

CLOSE ON 1ST VIEWING SCREEN

The angle is changed so that they look down into the indentation.
Its shape does not conform to the shape of the object. The hole seems too big to have been made by the "rock."

CONTINUED
LEAVITT'S VOICE
Maybe it has elastic properties we
don't know about yet.

STONE'S VOICE
Let's have a look at the green
patches. They must've come off
the rock -- if it is rock.

A SWIFT BLURRING MOTION on the screen... a patch of green comes
INTO VIEW. The spots are larger than on the rock. They are
also luminous with rounded, regular borders.

ANGLE PAST STONE AND LEAVITT - TOWARD SCREENS

LEAVITT
Hmm. Know something? They do look
like spatters of paint.

STONE
Let's go back to the rock and see
it at 440.

Leavitt sets in the higher magnification.

ON 1ST VIEWING SCREEN

BLURRING, then coming INTO FOCUS at 440 x. Now the surface
irregularities of the rock have become jagged peaks and valleys.
The spots of green are nestled in the depressions like shining
mountain lakes.

STONE'S VOICE
If that's a meteor, it's a damned
peculiar one.

OMITTED

ANGLE PAST LEAVITT - TOWARD 1ST SCREEN

as Stone presses right up to the 1st screen.

STONE
This left border, over here...
(touching spot)
... it's smooth, almost like an
artificial surface.

LEAVITT
(kidding him)
Painted, maybe? Luminous paint?

She turns, removes her glasses, rubs her tired eyes.
CLOSE ON STONE

his face very near the viewing screen.

STONE
If I keep watching it, I might think so -- wet paint sign and all.

He turns, moves back o.s. On the screen the smooth surface BLINKS and instantly returns to normal.

REVERSE ON LEAVITT FACING SCREEN

reacting, her glasses poised to be slipped back on.

LEAVITT

Jeremy....

STONE
(coming up to her)

What?

Leavitt hesitates, then discouragedly rubs her eyes again.

LEAVITT

Nothing.

STONE
(observing her closely)

You okay?

LEAVITT

My eyes are getting tired. We've been at it five straight hours.

STONE
We'll take a caffeine break in a minute. First, though, I'd like to see one of the separate patches of green at 1000.

He pats her back, sits at the console, facing screens. She puts on her glasses, turns back to the controls.

ANGLE INCLUDING VIEWING SCREENS

A patch of green slides into the field and HOLDS. The borders appear to be notched, like gears. Abruptly, the green spot turns purple for an instant, then green again.
TWO SHOT - STONE AND LEAVITT

She snaps her eyes from the screens to him.

LEAVITT
Did you see that?

STONE
(watching screens)
I saw it. You didn't change the lighting?

LEAVITT
Didn't touch it.

CLOSE ON SCREEN

It happens again: green, a flash of purple, green again.

ANGLE ON STONE AND LEAVITT

She stares, excited, avid. He purses his lips thoughtfully.

LEAVITT
It looks alive....

STONE
Yes.

LEAVITT
It's bigger than two microns.

STONE
Which means the infection is spread by a mere fraction of the green.

(punching buttons)
I'm bringing down cameras. Let's have the other Microscanner.

Leavitt turns from the screens, touches buttons on the console.

STONE
(flicking on intercom)
Stone to Level Control. I need a MIC T.

INTERCOM
Roger. Will send.

Stone flicks off intercom, punches two buttons, looks o.s.
HIS ANGLE - TOWARD TWO SMALL MOVIE CAMERAS
positioning themselves to film the screens and starting to whirr.

CLOSE ON THE VIEWING SCREENS

They now switch to different views of the green spot. Again the spot changes from green to purple to green again, but more slowly this time.

TWO SHOT - STONE AND LEAVITT

She throws him a questioning look.

STONE
Jump it up to 1500.

LEAVITT
The Microscan doesn't go any higher.

STONE
We can get 1500 light magnification in Microchemistry. I'll send the rock through.

He moves to the mechanical-hand controls, swings out a small monitor screen, turns it on. Positioned near his head, it is like the console screen used to monitor the Microscanner operating inside the capsule. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO:

MULTI-SCREEN

A) CLOSE ON STONE - UPPER LEFT PORTION OF FRAME

He operates the mechanical hands, his head BLOCKING the small monitor screen.

B) MOVING SHOT ON A MECHANICAL HAND - UPPER RIGHT OF FRAME

A fine forceps is held by the "fingers" of the hand. It descends into the capsule. HOLD ON capsule.

C) CLOSE-ON A TV SCREEN SHOWING THE ROCK INSIDE CAPSULE - A ROUND IMAGE LIKE A BULL'S EYE AT THE CENTER OF THE FRAME

The forceps, looking like girders beside the rock, pick it up and remove it from the capsule. Image labeled 100 X.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

D) ANGLE PAST LEAVITT'S HEAD - TOWARD 1ST VIEWING SCREEN
LOWER LEFT PORTION OF FRAME

1st screen displays the green spot at 1000x. This is what
the 1st Microscanner inside the capsule is focused on.

E) ANGLE ON STERILIZATION LOCK IN HOT ROOM
LOWER RIGHT OF FRAME

The doors slide open. A glass dish, marked M A-1, is
inside an open plastic box on the "dumbwaiter." As the
mechanical hand DIPS INTO SHOT, CAMERA SQUEEZES TO:

SINGLE SCREEN - CLOSE ON GLASS DISH

The forceps deposit the invisible rock in the dish. The
second "hand" closes and seals the box. The SL doors slide
shut.

ANGLE PAST STONE - TOWARD HOT ROOM

Sweating, he returns both sets of mechanical hands to rest
position.

A MAN'S VOICE
Beautiful, sir.

Stone turns as a solemn young TECHNICIAN comes up to him.

MIC T
I'm the MIC T. You're real sharp
on the hands.

STONE
Thanks.
(glancing back)
It's nice to know one hasn't lost
one's touch. Next step is to find
out what makes it grow. We'll need
samples from the scoop to send
through maxcult for culture and
isolation.

MIC T
Roger, sir. In work.

Stone sits beside Leavitt at the console

OMITTED
ANGLE ON MIC T

moving to control panel, reaching for a button.

LEAVITT'S VOICE

Good God!

FLASH SHOT - THE MIC T

astonished at what he sees on the screen o.s.

QUICK TWO SHOT - LEAVITT AND STONE

Leavitt coming to her feet; Stone's eyes squinting.

CLOSE ON 1ST VIEWING SCREEN - WHAT THEY SEE

The green patch swells, turns purple, and remains purple. During the brief process, the v-shaped notches around the border fill in and disappear. The now purple patch enlarges to a complete circle, then turns green once more.

ANGLE PAST STONE AND LEAVITT

staring at the screen.

LEAVITT

(a small voice)
It's growing....

INT. MISCELLANEOUS ROOM - CLOSEUP KAREN

beaming.

HER POV - ON MEDCOM MONITOR SCREEN

displaying a readout:

SUBJECT CODED INFANT
ALL LABORATORY VALUES NORMAL

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

It flashes off to be replaced instantly by another readout:

SUBJECT CODED GRAMPS
RECODED JACKSON

DIAGNOSTIC PROBABILITIES:
1. ACUTE AND CHRONIC BLOOD LOSS
   ETIOLOGY GASTROINTESTINAL .884
2. ACIDOSIS
   BLOOD PH 7.31

HALL'S VOICE

Not so good.

CLOSE TWO SHOT - HALL AND KAREN

Now both frowning at the Medcom Screen.

HALL
(irked)
Naturally he has acidosis. His blood pH is nine points off normal. But why?
(slapping console)
Stupid machine. What makes his blood too acid?

KAREN

Ask the patient.

ANGLE THROUGH WINDOW - TOWARD JACKSON IN BED IN HOT ROOM

The old man stirs, sticks a finger in his ear, scratches.

ANGLE ON HALL

moving swiftly to the tunnel port, swinging into it.

INT. THE HOT ROOM - CLOSE ON JACKSON

He opens his eyes, shifts them around suspiciously, closes them. Hall, in a plastic suit, appears beside him, shakes his arm.

HALL

Mr. Jackson....

CONTINUED
The old man takes one look at the plastic suit, snaps his eyes shut.

HALL
Don't be scared. I'm a doctor.

JACKSON
(squinting from one eye)
Bull.
(with difficulty)
Where -- am I?

HALL
A special laboratory in Nevada. We brought you here from Piedmont. You're sick.

Jackson nods with calm acceptance, closes his eyes.

JACKSON
Damn stomach of mine.

HALL
Bleeding?

JACKSON
Hell, yes, bleedin'.

HALL
Bleeding in your stomach? You have an ulcer?

JACKSON
Damn tootin'.
(bragging)
Two years.

HALL
But you must have pain. What do you do for it?

JACKSON
(a crooked grin)
Aspirin and squeeze.

HALL
Squeeze? What's that?

JACKSON
(foxy grandpa)
Ain't gonna tell you.

As Hall glances up in frustration, he sees the TV screen on the wall behind the bed light up.
CLOSE ON TV SCREEN

displaying the Medcom Monitor screen which reads:

MEDOX INDEX OUTPUT
AS
SQUEEZE
AS
ALSO CALLED RED-EYE AND PINKLADY
TRADE NAME D.D. STERNO
COMPOSED OF ETHANOL AND METHANOL

ANGLE ON HALL - INCLUDING SAFE ROOM WINDOW
toward which he turns. He sees Karen getting up from the console. He signals thanks to her, turns back to Jackson.

HALL
So you're a sterno drinker, eh?

JACKSON
(the crooked grin)
Works good.

The baby, just o.s., erupts in a fit of crying.

JACKSON
(glaring toward baby)
Give him squeeze.

ANGLE TOWARD CRYING BABY

In b.g., Karen, in a plastic suit, goes to the SL as the doors open. She picks up a bottle, approaches baby.

KAREN
What's the baby's name, Mr. Jackson?

CLOSE ON JACKSON

as Karen comes between the beds. He struggles to sit up.

JACKSON
You the nurse?

KAREN
Uh-huh.

JACKSON
Shoot, can't see your legs.
Jackson lies back.

HALL
Do you know the baby's name?

JACKSON
(sly)
Give us a butt first.

HALL
Smoking isn't allowed here.

JACKSON
Then go fish.

He glares at the bawling baby, closes his eyes, buries his head in the pillow. Karen feeds the bottle to the baby. Hall comes over to her.

HALL
When you're finished, we'll transfuse Jackson and start ice-water lavage.
(cheerfully)
He has a two-year history of bleeding ulcers.

KAREN
You seem delighted.

HALL
It may be the reason he survived.
(regarding baby)
If only our young gourmet weren't so normal.

KAREN
Let's hope nothing changes that.

HALL
(moving o.s.)
We might have to before this is over.

Karen reacts sharply, inadvertently pulling the bottle from the baby's mouth. The baby starts to howl. With the SOUND of his crying blending into the high WHISTLE of a jet,

SHOCK CUT TO

INT. COCKPIT OF A PHANTOM JET - CLOSEUP ON PILOT

His oxygen mask, disintegrating on his face, causes a hideous mottled effect. He crumples BELOW FRAME. HOLD for an instant

CONTINUED
on the instrument panel, tilting to a CRAZY ANGLE, the instruments going wild, the SOUND of the diving jet CONTINUING OVER the:

STROBE CUT TO

INT. SCOOP MISSION CONTROL - DAY - A MAP FILLS SCREEN

PIEDMONT is marked in black letters in the middle of a shaded overlay circle designated: WF AREA. Beyond the circle, over the Utah border, is another overlay handlettered with a red X and the words: CRASH SITE. CAMERA CLOSES on the red X.

ANGLE ON MANCHEK

by the map on the wall; grim, turning INTO CAMERA.

MANCHEK

They should've dropped the bomb.

FULL ON ROOM

Manchek goes up to General Sparks at the main desk. The room is busy with extra men...SOUND OF teleprinter and RADIO CHATTER... Comroe supervises the communications desk (see Appendix).

MANCHEK

They should've dropped it two days ago, General.

SPARKS

That Phantom crashed a good sixty miles beyond the cordoned area.

MANCHEK

Men on the ground can't cordon off air space, sir. I just don't understand why the Wildfire Team hasn't beefed about the delay in 7-12. It's been almost two days and not a word from them.

SPARKS

(going to map)
I don't believe Piedmont has anything to do with this crash, Manchek. It was a fluke.

(pointing at pins)
The plane was only over the WF Area for two minutes -- at 23,000 feet. A routine training-mission accident, betcha. Pilot error.

(heading for door)
All set?

CONTINUED
A Medic Captain jams some papers into a briefcase and tags behind Manchek and the General.

as he cuts over to Comroe at the communications desk.

MANCHEK
Check with Wildfire Message Center, Delta V. Make sure everything there is nominal. Send me the word on scrambler at Big Head crash base.

Manchek hurries after the General.

INT. LEVEL V - THE WARD ROOM OFF THE CAFETERIA

...The muted ticking of the teleprinter in the corner...Dutton sits at the table set for four with glasses of brown liquid and a meal consisting of three pills. As Hall enters, Dutton looks up.

DUTTON
I'm convinced we're being held incommunicado.

HALL
(sitting)
Very flattering. We don't know much more than when we got here.

DUTTON
We know about Scoop now. It's possible what Scoop found was no accident. I suspect they were looking for the ultimate biological weapon.

HALL
Sounds like you're getting a little paranoid in this funhouse. What does Stone think --

(smiling)
-- about the ultimate weapon, I mean?

as Stone and Leavitt enter. They appear keyed-up.

STONE
We've isolated the organism. It's in Microbiology. We'll show you.
406 CONTINUED

Dutton looks at Hall, rises quickly. Stone and Leavitt gulp down the brown liquid and pills before leaving.

407 INT. LEVEL I - DELTA V COMPUTER CENTER - FULL SHOT

A programmer, Captain Morris, sits before the main console punching through a Checklim program. Sgt. Burke, a diagram in hand, regards the exposed circuitry of the MCN console from which the side panel has been removed. The various computers hum and click softly. As a row of green lights blink on across the main console, Morris sits back.

MORRIS
Checklim program completed. All circuit banks nominal.

A teleprinter starts to clatter.

408 CLOSE ON MCN CONSOLE TELEPRINTER

as it prints out:

MACHINE FUNCTION ON ALL CIRCUITS WITHIN NOMINAL LIMITS

409 ANGLE ON BURKE

He tears off printout, hands it to Morris who comes over.

BURKE
Same on the MCN Console, Captain.

Morris, nodding, reads printout, then looks at:

410 THE MCN CONSOLE

with side panel removed.

VOICE OF SEN. FROM VERMONT

\Just a minute, Dr. Robertson. You're saying Stone's ninety-million dollar facility, which you recommended, was knocked out by a sliver of paper? You tell that to the taxpayers.

411 TWO SHOT - BURKE AND MORRIS

crouched by the exposed circuitry in the console.

CONTINUED
ROBERTSON'S VOICE
(defensively)
These were highly trained electronics men, Senator, looking for an electronic fault. The trouble was purely mechanical of the simplest kind.

CAMERA PUSHES in on the exposed circuitry and explores.

ROBERTSON'S VOICE
But for them, it was like trying to see an elephant through a microscope.

CAMERA SQUEEZES tighter on a bell and clapper beneath the circuitry -- so tight, the bell becomes unrecognizable.

ROBERTSON'S VOICE
The sliver had peeled from the roll and wedged between the bell and striker, preventing the bell from ringing.

BIG CLOSEUP - A SLIVER OF PAPER
between the bell and the striker.

CLOSE ON BURKE
snapping the panel back into place on the console.

BURKE
I don't know what those jerks at Scoop are beefing about.

STROBE CUT TO

and

OMITTED

EXT. A TEMPORARY LANDING PAD - SPECTACULAR UTAH COUNTRY - DAY
A helicopter lands. Before the rotors stop, General Sparks, Manchek and the Captain jump down. Several officers lead them over to a table in front of the operations tent. Their voices are drowned out by the 'copter.

GROUP SHOT - SPARKS, MANCHEK, THE CAPTAIN, AND OFFICERS
On the table is a radio and tape recorder. There's an exchange of talk drowned out by the 'copter. As the 'copter's engine is cut, the tape recorder is turned on:

PILOT'S VOICE
Albuquerque Center, Albuquerque Center.
This is Air Force 446. Something's wrong.

ALBUQUERQUE
Go ahead 446. We read you.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

PILOT'S VOICE
My airhose is coming apart, like
it's dissolving.

ALBUQUERQUE
446, can you ---

PILOT'S VOICE
Everything made of rubber is ---

Abruptly the transcription ends, followed by unidentifiable
NOISES, then silence. The men stare at the spinning tape.

SPARKS
A fluke. Vibration effect, maybe.
(looking o.s.)
Let's get up there.

Followed by the captain, he goes to a waiting jeep.

CLOSE ON MANCHEK

turning to an officer who only now clicks off the tape.

MANCHEK
Has Wildfire been informed?

OFFICER
You mean the germ people?

MANCHEK
Yeah.

OFFICER
It went out to them on the scrambler
an hour ago.

From o.s., the jeep honks impatiently.

MANCHEK
This they can't ignore.

He runs to the jeep, climbs aboard.

STROBE CUT TO

INT. LEVEL V - THE MICROCHEMISTRY LAB

It has three small chambers, true glove boxes. Each glove box
contains a piece of apparatus inside it, and on the outside, has
its own computer console and viewing screen. Stone, his hands
in the pressurized gloves, works with Hall at the first with a
microtome and a microscope. Leavitt works with a mass spectro-
meter in the second glove box. Dutton and the MIC T operate an
Amino-Acid Analyzer in the third. There's a burst of light from
the spectrometer in the 2nd glove box.
CLOSE ON SPECTROMETER
Another burst of light....

ANGLE ON LEAVITT

Blinking, she turns from the spectrometer and punches a button on her console. She shields her eyes and looks at the viewing screen where a readout appears. Stone, Dutton, and Hall gather behind her to read the results. Leavitt hastily unshields her eyes. Stone gives her a quick glance. Dutton starts to smile at what he reads.

LEAVITT
(eyes on screen)
Shucks, nothing so unusual after all, our rock. Hydrogen, carbon, oxygen, sulfur, silicon, et cetera.

THEIR ANGLE ON VIEWING SCREEN

MASS SPECTROMETER DATA OUTPUT
ELEMENTAL PERCENTAGE SAMPLE SD05 - BLACK OBJECT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>21.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>54.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>16.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Si</td>
<td>0.20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cl</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STONE'S VOICE
Except the black rock isn't rock at all. It's some kind of material similar to plastic.

The readout on the screen flashes off to be replaced by:

MASS SPECTROMETER DATA OUTPUT
ELEMENTAL PERCENTAGE SAMPLE SD05 - GREEN OBJECT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>H</td>
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<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>00.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>00.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

END PROGRAM

LEAVITT'S VOICE
How about that? The green is even simpler. Hydrogen, carbon, nitrogen and oxygen.
ANGLE ON GROUP

regarding screen. Stone is pleased.

STONE
The four basic elements of life on earth. Nothing else. That's a relief.

DUTTON
I'd have been happier if it turned out not to be alive.

LEAVITT
(toward glove box)
Green stuff, you sure had us going for a while.

MIC T'S VOICE
AA Analysis results are ready, Dr. Dutton

The others move with Dutton to the 3rd glove box containing the Amino-Acid Analyzer. The MIC T gives place to Dutton, who sits at the console, pushes buttons.

CLOSE ON AA ANALYZER IN GLOVE BOX

A pen records on graph paper in a window on the device. The graph print appears as a lengthening, straight line.

DUTTON'S VOICE
Something's wrong. It's not registering.

CLOSEUP - MIC T
worried, his face pressed against the glove box glass.

MIC T
Yes, it is, sir. It's just registering double zero, double zero.

CLOSE ON STONE

STONE
Switch to computerized analysis.

CLOSE ON VIEWING SCREEN

The straight-line graph is replaced by a readout:

CONTINUED
AMINO ACID ANALYSIS DATA OUTPUT

SAMPLE 1 - BLACK OBJECT
SAMPLE 2 - GREEN OBJECT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amino Acid Type</th>
<th>Sample 1</th>
<th>Sample 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Amino Acids</td>
<td>00.00</td>
<td>00.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aromatic Amino Acids</td>
<td>00.00</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulphuric Amino Acids</td>
<td>00.00</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Amino Acids</td>
<td>00.00</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dicarboxylic Amino Acids</td>
<td>00.00</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Amino Acids</td>
<td>00.00</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL AMINO ACID CONTENT: 00.00 00.00

430 REVERSE ON GROUP
acting with astonishment.

LEAVITT
No amino acids!

DUTTON
No proteins, no enzymes, no nucleic acids. Impossible! No organism can maintain life without them.

HALL
You mean no earth organism. It must've evolved in a totally different way.

LEAVITT
You got it. It doesn't come from here.

DUTTON
Without chemical reactions, there can't be life. But it grows, reproduces....

STONE
The infection at Piedmont has been stopped by the bomb. We're secure at Wildfire and have everything we need to achieve a breakthrough. All we have to do is attack this problem like any other in science.

DUTTON
You could spend years working on a thing like that without solving its structure.
ANGEL ON THREE TV SCREENS

Side-by-side, they show: 1) THE SPECTROMETER DATA OUTPUT, 2) THE GREEN SPOT AT 1500 x turning green to purple, etc., 3) THE AMINO-ACID GRAPH.

LEAVITT'S VOICE
(enthusiastic)
But when you do, there'll be some red faces around. It could change everything.

BACK TO GROUP

HALL
(Feeling for key)
Great....

STONE
Ruth, since Kirke isn't here, you take over the growth program in Microbiology. We're half-way home if we find out --
(pointing)
-- what will keep that from growing. Charlie, you work with me on the EM. Hall ---

HALL
Lemme get back to my patients. I'm sure they were protected by the same thing; some simple mechanism I just don't recognize yet. There's got to be something the old man and the baby have in common.

STONE
Hall.....

Hall turns. Stone holds up his hand, spreads his fingers.

STONE
Five minutes.

HALL
You told me before.

DUTTON
(gently)
We wouldn't want you to get too far from a substation now.

With the SOUND of a VOICE over a bullhorn: STROBE CUT TO
EXT. SITE OF THE PHANTOM CRASH IN UTAH - DAY - PANNING SHOT

SPARK'S VOICE ON BULLHORN
Men, keep a sharp eye out for pieces of rubber.

National Guardsmen sift through the scattered wreckage. One detail digs up part of an engine. Other men collect pieces of twisted metal in sacks. CAMERA HOLDS on a soldier waving a white object in his hand.

SOLDIER
Major Manchek!

Manchek runs up to the soldier who thrusts the object at him.

CLOSEUP - A BONE
bare, smooth. It is turned over in Manchek's hands.

ANGLE ON MANCHEK
handing the bone to Sparks in front of the HQ tent on the site.

MANCHEK
Just found this, General. Human bone. Arm, I think.

Tagged bits of debris are laid out on a table. Several men pack the fragments in cases. A lab-trailer is next to the tent. Sparks puts down the bullhorn, examines the bone.

SPARKS
Looks picked clean, almost like it was polished.

MANCHEK
(expressionless)
That's right.

SPARKS
I don't get it....

ANGLE ON A WHITE-COATED TECHNICIAN
emerging with a plastic bag from the lab-trailer.

TECHNICIAN
There is no actual rubber on the Phantom F-4, General. It's all a synthetic plastic compound called polycron.

CONTINUED
TECHNICIAN (Cont'd)
(displaying transparent bag)
Has some of the characteristics of human skin.

MANCHEK
What the hell is that?

CLOSE ON PLASTIC BAG
Inside the bag is the pilot's oxygen mask, eaten away except for the plexiglass eye-holes.

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE
An oxygen mask. Polycron.

THREE SHOT - MANCHEK, TECHNICIAN, AND GENERAL looking at the plastic bag.

TECHNICIAN
I'd say it was done by a chemical reaction of some sort. Or maybe a microorganism.

GENERAL
(taking plastic bag)
Meaning?

MANCHEK
Meaning there was something in that plane that consumes plastic.

Sparks gingerly sets down the plastic bag.

THEIR ANGLE - THE REMAINS OF THE OXYGEN MASK beside the smooth, polished bone on the table.

STROBE CUT TO

INT. LEVEL V - MICROBIOLOGY LAB - CLOSE ON A GLOVE BOX CHAMBER
A steady line of petri dishes flows through the chamber on a moving belt. Each dish pauses briefly under a photo-electric scanning system.
441 ANGLE ON LEAVITT - INCLUDING CONSOLE MONITOR

The lab is small, equipped with only one glove box, the console, and usual TV screens. Leavitt, shielding her eyes, sits in front of the console viewing screen checking the results of the Maxcult program. They flash on and off in the form of scanner readouts.

(See Appendix)

STONE'S VOICE

How's Maxcult coming, Ruth? Will you be finished by the midnight conference?

442 ANGLE PAST LEAVITT TOWARD TV SCREEN

on which Stone's face appears. Leavitt quickly drops the hand shielding her eyes, but stays fixed on the viewing screen.

LEAVITT

Easy.

STONE (ON TV)

Good. You can give us the results then.

His image dims out. Leavitt slants a look at the now dark TV screen, shields her eyes again as she regards the viewing screen.
CLOSE ON PETRI DISH INSIDE GLOVE BOX

It STOPS under the scanning eye, in contrast to the other petri dishes which PAUSED only briefly, then moved on at a good clip. A cyclospot illuminates the dish.

CLOSE ON CONSOLE VIEWING SCREEN

showing the petri dish scan and readout.

```
CULTURE DESIGN || 497 || ACID

ATMOSPHERE DESIGN || N₂
LUMIN DESIGN || IR/Hi
```

A printout in red flashes repeatedly across the top of the screen:

```
NO GROWTH    NO GROWTH    NO GROWTH
```

REVERSE CLOSEUP - ON LEAVITT

eyes glazed, motionless, the red light flashing on her face.

CLOSE ON PETRI DISH UNDER SCANNER IN GLOVE BOX

The belt begins to move again, taking the dish away. The next petri dish to go under the scanner also stops.

CLOSE ON VIEWING SCREEN

```
CULTURE DESIGN || 498 || ALKALINE

ATMOSPHERE DESIGN || N₂
LUMIN DESIGN || UV/Hi
```

Again the printout in red flashes repeatedly:

```
NO GROWTH    NO GROWTH    NO GROWTH
```

It snaps off. Other scanner readouts, consecutively numbered, now appear rapidly, one after another, as before (See Appendix).

ANGLE ON LEAVITT

rigid, staring sightlessly at screen, obviously blanked out.
Hall, in a plastic suit, helps Jackson to a sitting position. Karen, also in a plastic suit, fluffs pillows behind him. Jackson puts hand on her bottom.

KAREN
(removing his hand)
Feeling better, aren't you, Mr. Jackson?

JACKSON
Yup. You always have to wear that iron suit?

KAREN
Yup.

The baby behind them wakes, starts to howl.

HALL
Maybe you'll give us the baby's name now, Mr. Jackson?

JACKSON
(good accent)
Manuel Rios. Mex.
(glaring)
A real little heller. Squalls mornin', noon and night. Neighbors wouldn't let 'em keep the windows open.

HALL
Do you sleep with your window closed?

Karen picks up the baby, rocks him. He quiets down.

JACKSON
No siree bob. Fresh air fiend.

HALL
(gently)
Tell us what happened, Mr. Jackson

Jackson lies back, turns his head away.

JACKSON
Don't want to think about it.
(closes eyes)

HALL
You know what people will say? Piedmont was bad. That's why it was punished. First the town went crazy and then was destroyed.

CONTINUED
Karen, holding the baby, shoots Hall a swift, puzzled look.

JACKSON
(eyes snapping open)
You're crazy. Folks at Piedmont was good, decent, normal folks.

HALL
The man we found all dressed up in his doughboy's uniform -- call that normal?

JACKSON
Pete Arnold? Who used to work at the store?
(firmly)
It was the disease.

HALL
How do you know?

JACKSON
'Cause the only thing ever wrong with him before that night was sugar.

HALL
quickly)
Diabetes? Did he take insulin?

JACKSON
Coupla times a day. Hated the needle. I tried to talk him into using Squeeze.

HALL
(to Karen; thoughtfully)
Insulin...If he missed his treatment, he'd ---

The GONG CHIMES.

HALL
(patting Jackson)
Thanks, Mr. Jackson.

Jackson blinks at the suit which sags as Hall evacuates it.
Below the scanner readout, the data reads:

```
566  ●  CULTURE DESIG  ●  566  ●  BLOOD AGAR
============================================
ATMOSPHERE DESIG  ●  N2
LUMIN DESIG  ●  M/L
FINA SCANNER PRINT
END PRINT
END PROGRAM
-STOP-
```

The GONG CHIMES twice.

```
CLOSE ON LEAVITT
fixed motionlessly on the monitor, apparently not hearing the signal. Now she stirs, coming out of the trance-like state, rubs her eyes under the glasses. She reads the scanner readout, finds the program has ended, swings around quickly to:

A CLOCK ON THE WALL - 12:05

CLOSE ON LEAVITT
Her face crumples.

LEAVITT
(whispering)
Oh, my God....
```

She buries her face in her hands, sits huddled at the console. She rallies, wipes her glasses, punches two buttons.

```
CLOSE ON VIEWING SCREEN

●● PARTIAL PLAYBACK ●●
COMMENCING WITH:

500  ●  CULTURE DESIG  ●  500  ●  CHOCOLATE

It flashes off to be replaced by the scanner readout of CULTURE DESIG 500, and then others, consecutively numbered 501, 502, etc., which are displayed in a steady stream (See Appendix).
CONCENTRATING ON THE SCREEN.

COMVOICE
Dr. Leavitt, you have a midnight conference. The signal has struck twice.

SHE LOOKS SURPRISED, THEN:

LEAVITT
I heard, I heard. I've been busy.

SHE PUSHES A BUTTON, TURNING OFF THE CONSOLE, AND RISES.

INT. WARD ROOM OFF THE CAFETERIA - LEVEL V

STONE SITS AT THE TABLE, DOWNING HIS PILLS. DUTTON, TIRED, SPRAWLS IN A METAL LOUNGE CHAIR. HALL FACES RESTLESSLY.

HALL
The important thing is that something can slow it down. I think it's some kind of blood disorder. If the old soldier missed his insulin treatment he'd go into acidosis, same as Jackson on Sterno. I'll bet Leavitt finds that the organism shows no-growth on some of the blood cultures.

DUTTON
What's wrong with the baby's blood?

HALL
Nothing -- so far.

STONE
Then you're back where you started.

HALL
No. Somehow they're all inter-related. I'll have the answer when I know why a 69-year-old sterno drinker with an ulcer is like a normal 6-month-old baby.

ANGLE ON LEAVITT

ENTERING THE ROOM.

HALL
(instantly)
Did you get any no-growth readouts on the culture?

CONTINUED
LEAVITT
No, but I'm not finished yet.

STONE
(surprised)
You told me you'd be finished by conference time, Ruth.

LEAVITT
(curly)
I decided to play back part of it.

HALL
What for? The first time around should be enough to ---

LEAVITT
Knock it off, Hall.

STONE
We're all tired. Tired people make mistakes, draw wrong conclusions, drop things. That mustn't happen. Starting now, I want the team to get six hours sleep out of every twenty-four.

DUTTON
(standing, stretching)
Suits me. But before turning in, shouldn't we file for a code name?

STONE
Good idea.

Stone goes to the teletypewriter in the corner.

CLOSE ON TELETYPewriter - INCLUDING STONE'S HANDS ON KEYS

The message he types appears in lower case on a roll of paper that flows back into a bin filled with yards of messages:

wildfire to central codes

His hands lift. The machine spits back in capitals:

SEND

Stone's hands type:

have isolated organism wish coding

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

The hands lift. A beat... The machine CLATTERS back:

MESSAGE FROM CENTRAL CODES FOLLOWS
OPENING NEW CATEGORY
CODE FOR YOUR ORGANISM WILL BE ANDROMEDA
CODE WILL READ OUT ANDROMEDA STRAIN

- END MESSAGE

ANGLE ON GROUP

considering the name from central codes.

DUTTON

Why Andromeda?

LEAVITT

Andromeda's our closest ---

ANGLE ON HALL AT THE MESSAGE BIN

Stone!

STONE

What?

Hall rips a message from a sheet, hands it to Stone.

STONE

(reading aloud)
'Directive 7-12 has not been acted upon. Alternative Directive 7-11 now in effect.'

(a stunned pause)
They didn't drop the bomb. The idiots!

HALL

(pointing)
It's an MCN transmission. Sent yesterday.

Stone moves swiftly to the console, activates a TV screen showing Delta V.

CONTINUED
STONE  
(hard, clipped)  
Put me through to Dr. Robertson.

BURKE (ON TV)  
In work, sir.

STONE  
Burke, you didn't special alert an  
MCN message to us.

BURKE (ON TV)  
There haven't been any, sir. The  
bell didn't ---

STONE  
Don't argue, damn it all. I've got  
one in my hand.

CLOSE ON ANOTHER TV SCREEN — ROBERTSON  
in the Situation Room, hurrying forward into a CLOSEUP.

ROBERTSON (ON TV)  
Well, well. About time we heard  
from you.

MULTI-SCREEN  
A) BIG CU — ROBERTSON — UPPER RIGHT QUARTER OF FRAME
B) INT. WARD ROOM — LEVEL V — OCCUPYING REST OF FRAME

The scientists turn toward the TV screen with Robertson's  
image. Burke fades out.

STONE  
There's been a communications foul  
up here. Never mind that now. Why  
in hell hasn't the bomb been dropped  
on Piedmont?

ROBERTSON (ON TV)  
The decision on 7-12 isn't final.  
It's just been postponed forty-  
eight hours.

DUTTON  
By then the disease could spread  
into a world-wide epidemic.
SINGLE SCREEN - BIG CLOSEUP - GRIMES

The Presidential Aide stabs his cigar INTO CAMERA.

GRIMES
It's because of rash statements like that the President doesn't trust scientists.

MULTI-SCREEN

A) BIG CU - ROBERTSON - UPPER RIGHT OF FRAME
B) BIG CU - GRIMES - UPPER LEFT OF FRAME
C) INT. WARD ROOM - LEVEL V - BOTTOM HALF OF FRAME

The effect is to make the scientists seem insignificant beneath the dominant figures over them. Leavitt answers Grimes with a disparaging gesture.

STONE
Warn the President it may already be too late. Stay on his back, Robbie. You've got to make him call a 7-12.

ROBERTSON (ON TV)
Can you get me another appointment tonight, Grimes?

GRIMES (ON TV)
Now, let's all just keep our heads screwed on.

(into CAMERA)
Any thoughts about the Phantom crash? We sent you a coupl'a messages on it.

The scientists look at each other in confusion.

ROBERTSON (ON TV)
A Phantom jet strayed over the cordoned area around Piedmont.

STONE
Any other information?

CONTINUED
ROBERTSON (ON TV)
The pilot said all the rubber on
the plane was dissolving. His last
communication was pretty weird.

HALL
Like he was crazy?

GRIMES (ON TV)
He was mighty confused, that's for
sure.

STONE
(strongly)
Robbie, it's your job to make the
President activate 7-12 immediately.
If he doesn't, there's no guarantee
anyone west of Piedmont will be alive
in the morning.

GRIMES (ON TV)
Simmer down, Professor. I'll wake
the boss, but General Sparks says
the crash was just a fluke.

CAMERA STARTS CLOSING ON Images A and B (TOP HALF OF FRAME).

STONE
Forget the crash, Robbie. Stay on
that 7-12. Get back to me.
(as CAMERA decap-
itmates him)
We'll be working around the clock.

STROBE CUT TO

INT. LEVEL I - DELTA V - CLOSE ON BELL INSIDE MCN CONSOLE

from which the side panel has again been removed. Fingers
pick a sliver of paper from between the bell and clapper.

BURKE'S VOICE
I've found the trouble, sir!

ANGLE ON BURKE

beside the console, holding up the fragment of paper.

CONTINUED
This sliver of paper kept the bell from ringing.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Of all the bollox-ed-up, stupid....

BURKE
No harm done, Captain. The machine's fine.

CUT TO

INT. LEVEL V - ELECTRON MICROSCOPY LAB - STONE AND HALL

Stone's arms are inside the set of pressurized gloves for the glove box chamber; he and Hall concentrate on the interior of the glove box. The lab is equipped with the usual console and TV screens, a large EM viewing screen, a small microtome viewing screen and an electron microscope in a glove box chamber with outside controls.

TIGHT ON 1ST GLOVE BOX - A MICROTOME

The moving blade of the microtome cuts from a tiny pyramid of plastic.

STRAIGHT-ON SHOT - SMALL MICROTOME VIEWING SCREEN

as the blade cuts curling slices from the block of plastic.

STONE'S VOICE
No good. We'll have to use a different block.

STONE
(adjusting apparatus)
Damn microtome...Okay.

A green slice peels into the water receptacle and floats.

STONE'S VOICE
Good slice, but too thick.
STONE
(adjusting microtome)
I'm setting it at 800 angstroms,
Hall, and I'm going to a higher
magnification.

Stone punches a button.

STONE'S VOICE
Now we're getting somewhere.

HALL
Yeah. These can't be more than a
few molecules in depth.

After a few seconds:

STONE'S VOICE
That's the one -- that silver one.

HALL
I've picked up a few ideas from this
about microsurgical techniques.

Stone, already at work, grunts.

Stone's gloved hand lifts the colored slice carefully with
forceps and sets it onto a small round copper grid. This,
in turn, is inserted into a metal button. The button is then
placed inside the electron microscope and sealed.
467-K FULL ON LAB - FAVORING STONE

He withdraws his arms from the glove ports, turns toward Dutton seated by the outside controls of the EM.

STONE
Sample in the button and sealed, Charlie. Start the vacuum pump.

Dutton hits a switch setting off the odd chugging sound of a vacuum pump.

467-L CLOSE ON EM - FEATURING ITS NAME PLATE

SOUND of vacuum pump OVER....

LEAVITT'S VOICE
(from TV o.s.)
Stone, can I see you?

468 ANGLE ON LAB - FAVORING TV SCREENS

LEAVITT
(on TV)
I have the results of the growth cultures.

STONE
No, we can't leave now. We have an Andromeda cell in the EM.

The TV goes dark.

468-A FULL SHOT - LAB

Stone looks toward the large viewing screen.

STONE
Okay, Charlie, let's put it on the screen.

Dutton clicks on EM beam.
CLOSE ON EM VIEWING SCREEN

A B&W image comes INTO FOCUS labeled: 79,000 x. It is a perfect hexagon interlocked with other partially visible hexagons on either side. A faint fluoroscopic effect shows the interior divided into wedges.

STONE'S VOICE
Run it through the computer for contrast expansion, Charlie.

The screen goes blank an instant, then the hexagon image reappears in green and black, labeled: CON EX: 79,000 x.

ANGLE ON LEAVITT

entering, the door closing behind her.

LEAVITT
(urgently)
Stone....

STONE
(gesturing
at screen)
What do you think?

Leavitt, instantly caught up in what she sees, smiles.

LEAVITT
Looks like a crystal.
(turning, gesturing)
Well, gents, there's our answer.

GROUP SHOT

Everyone turns from the Viewing Screen to Leavitt.

HALL
To what?

LEAVITT
How Andromeda functions without amino acids.

STONE
The crystalline structure?

Leavitt steps up to the large Viewing Screen.

CONTINUED
LEAVITT

Yes. I've often thought living matter might be based on crystals of some sort.

(pointing)
All these wedge-shaped compartments -- they'd serve to separate biochemical functions very well.

CLOSE ON VIEWING SCREEN

showing EM projection of Andromeda. The hexagons suddenly undergo several lightning changes into other configurations, returning in final form to a larger group of interlocked hexagons.

DUTTON'S VOICE

It's dividing....

STONE

In a vacuum? Bombarded by electrons? It shouldn't even be alive.

LEAVITT

That's what I wanted to tell you. The growth program shows Andromeda can live on anything. Only gas or light affect it.

HALL

You didn't get any no-growth results on the cultures?

LEAVITT

None.

Moving to the console, she punches two buttons.

ANGLE PAST LEAVITT TOWARD TWO CONSOLE MONITOR SCREENS

lighting up. They show the scanner readouts of growth cultures numbered 126 and 542. The three men hurry over. (See Appendix).

LEAVITT

(pointing)
The poorest growth occurs in pure oxygen incubated under infrared light.

(turning to 2nd Monitor)
Andromeda grows best in carbon dioxide and hydrogen incubated under X-rays.

CONTINUED
DUTTON
(peering closely)
No excretions, no waste of any kind.

STONE
You'd expect that. Andromeda's
perfect for existence in outer space.
Consumes everything, wastes nothing.
(stops; jolted)
Good Lord!

It hits Dutton and Leavitt at the same time.

HALL
What?

STONE
(into intercom)
Stone to Delta V. Put me through
to Robertson, immediately.

HALL
What?

LEAVITT
I hope we're not too late.

HALL
(grasping Leavitt)
Tell me.

LEAVITT
(pointing at monitors)
It functions like an atomic reactor.

STONE
An atomic blast could provide it
with enough energy to grow into a
gigantic super-colony.

DUTTON
In one day.

CLOSE ON TV SCREEN
lighting up with Robertson's image.

ROBERTSON (ON TV)
Relax, gentlemen. We just left the
President. He agreed to drop the ---

CLOSE ON STONE
STONE
No! You've got to stop 7-12 from
being carried out.
ANGLES ON GROUP AND TWO TV SCREENS

The second screen lights up with Grimes.

GRIMES
(waving cigar)
Now wait a minute, boys. We're not playing ping-pong. We just got through telling the President that ---

LEAVITT
Go back, for God's sake. It grows when exposed to x-rays or any energy source.

DUTTON
Tell him no nuclear device must be detonated anywhere near it.

STONE
We just found out Andromeda works like a little reactor. Converts matter to energy and energy to matter -- directly.

CLOSE ON TV SCREENS

Robertson whistles softly.

ROBERTSON (ON TV)
The bomb would only provide a fantastically rich growth medium.
(to Grimes)
Understand?

GRIMES (ON TV)
No, but I'll pass along the recommendation.
(grinning
into CAMERA)
The boss'll be pleased to know he made the right decision on 7-12 in the first place.

REVERSE ON SCIENTISTS

LEAVITT
Congratulate him on his scientific insight.

STONE
And Robbie --
(his tone casual)
-- better get the atomic self-destruct in here disarmed as soon as possible.
480 ANGLE PAST SCIENTISTS TOWARD TV SCREENS

On one Grimes now waits in b.g. of Situation Room; on the other, the CU of Robertson.

ROBERTSON (ON TV)
Right. I'll start on the clearances now. It'll be done by morning.

Hall, pulling out the key, starts to Stone.

DUTTON (stopping him)
No. That won't work until the damn thing's going.

The room still in semi-darkness, the scientists look at each other uneasily.

STROBE CUT TO

481 INT. CRYSTALLOGRAPHY LAB - FULL ON DIFFRACTION PHOTO

Dots outline three interlocked hexagons. Other dots indicate partial hexagons. The overall effect is clouded, mysterious.

LASER ENLARGEMENT 113.050 x

X-RAY CRYSTALLOG DATA OUTPUT
AS
DIFF PHOT ANALYS
AS
ANDROMEDA MOLECULES
AS
2ND GEN

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

Stone and Dutton appear from UNDER CAMERA. Overshadowing them, the viewing screen takes up one wall.

DUTTON
All the molecules appear to be the same.

ANGLE ON LEAVITT

She moves to the Viewing Screen from the control panel of a glove box chamber that projects into the lab and houses the X-ray Crystallography unit.

LEAVITT
Yes, Andromeda isn't composed of different substances like a normal cell. The subunits are all the same.

STONE
Damndest thing I've ever -- (snorts) -- a single substance.

DUTTON
Then how the hell does it operate? How does anything so simple utilize energy for growth?

STONE
No way of telling from that structure.

LEAVITT
Yes, there is. With this new data we can now get a computerized version of how Andromeda functions.

She returns to the console, punches buttons.

FULL ON VIEWING SCREEN

going blank, then displaying another readout on the left.

COMP SIMULATION

ANDROMEDA 0 0 FUNCTIONS
CONTINUED

Now the green hexagons appear on the Viewing Screen in the same pattern as on the B&W photo. Abruptly the hexagons are triggered into a chain reaction (See Appendix). Beginning at the center, the hexagons explode and implode into hundreds of smaller, vari-colored geometric shapes. As they proliferate, they form into contiguous, purple bordered hexagons. When the entire structure becomes one giant hexagon, it turns green to purple to green, undergoing lightning configuration changes. This bursts into smaller, vari-colored geometric shapes and the chain reaction begins again.

STONE'S VOICE

Not uniform. Could be mutations.

Abruptly, there's a BUZZING sound. The screen goes blank, then flashes a number: 601

GROUP SHOT

DUTTON

What the devil....

STONE


Leavitt disgustedly slaps the console panel. Dutton holds the side of his face as though it ached.

DUTTON

Dividing and mutating at the same time.

LEAVITT

And there's nothing to stop it. Normal earth checks and balances don't exist for it.

STONE

We'd better get a biomath mapping of its new growth potential and spread.

He punches buttons on the panel.

CLOSE UP TWO CONSOLE MONITOR SCREENS NEXT TO EACH OTHER

1st Monitor shows a map of the U.S. southwest (see Appendix) overlaid with computer coordinates and labeled:

SCOOP PROJECT SCENARIO A-1-L
AS WILDFIRE BIOWAR MAP
SIMULATED TOXIC EXCHANGE
AS WEAPONRY - ANDROMEDA D D D
PRINT AS: STANDARD

2nd Monitor shows a distorted projection of the southwest (See Appendix) weighted for wind and population factors. The readout is the same as the other map except for the last line:

PRINT AS: WEIGHTED FOR WIND AND POP.
STONE
According to this, there'll be a
colonization of Andromeda over the
tree trail in ----

DUTTON
Jeremy! These are biological
warfare maps!

STONE
(surprised)
Yes, so they are. Simulations,

LEAVITT
That isn't the point, for God's
sake.
(stabbing map)
Wildfire was built for germ warfare.
Wildfire and Scoop.
(whirling)
You knew about this, Stone! You knew.

STONE
Not true, Ruth. I learned about
Scoop the same time you did.

DUTTON
(appalled; pointing)
They've already got Andromeda pro-
grammed. The purpose of Scoop was
to find new biological weapons in
outer space, then use Wildfire to
develop them.

LEAVITT
(contemptuously)
It stinks, Stone.

STONE
You're blowing your tops. We've no
proof.

DUTTON
The map ----

STONE
(angrily)
Don't be an ass. This map only
shows what Andromeda could do in
the hands of an enemy.

DUTTON
Enemy? We did it to ourselves.

CONTINUED
STONE
Perhaps, but this is hardly the time to organize a protest.

LEAVITT
(sweeping a hand past maps)
Another giant leap for mankind.

She stabs down on a button. As the monitor screens go dark, she faces Stone again.

LEAVITT
I wish I could believe you.

STONE
Whether you do or not, the only important thing now is to find the antidote.
(turning)
Let's get on with it, Charlie. You test the cultured organisms for biologic potency.

Dutton pauses, then:

DUTTON
(sighing; leaving)
All right. I'll run them against a rat in Autopsy.

STONE
(following him)
I'm going to seal up the capsule.

LEAVITT
Watch it. Andromeda has altered. Its effect might be radically different. I'll try to get us a photo of the mutated form.

STONE
(a smile)
Good. Later you can carry it on the picket line.

INT. MISCELLANEOUS LAB - LEVEL V - CLOSE ON BABY

crying hard. ANGLE WIDENS to show Hall, in his plastic suit, making the baby cry by offering and withdrawing the bottle. Jackson is burrowed under his pillows.
ANGLE ON KAREN IN SAFE ROOM

She watches Hall tormenting the baby, can't stand it any longer, scrambles into the plastic tunnel.

CLOSE ON HALL AND BABY

Hall continues to provoke him into a howling tantrum. Karen comes up in her suit, tries to grab the bottle. Keeping the bottle from her, Hall points at the gasping infant.

HALL

This may be the key to beating Andromeda.

KAREN

By starving him to death?

HALL

No, but don't you feed that baby until ---

THE EMERGENCY BELL GOES OFF WITH A SHATTERING SOUND. Hall and Karen spin around.

THEIR ANGLE - A BRIGHT YELLOW LIGHT

flashing in the safe room.

TWO SHOT - HALL AND KAREN

KAREN

(pointing)

Contamination!

INT. THE CORRIDOR - LEVEL V - ANGLE ON A FLASHING YELLOW LIGHT

The MIC T and another technician tear past.

A RECORDED MALE VOICE

A seal has broken in Autopsy. A seal has broken in Autopsy. Emergency procedures are in effect.

Hall, appearing on the run, hesitates at a self-destruct substation. He pulls out the key around his neck, keeps going. Leavitt emerges from Crystallography, runs after him.

LEAVITT

What is it?

HALL

Infection spread.

(pointing)

There.

Leavitt stops dead.
A red light flashes above it. Toby struggles with the door. The MIC T, other technician, and a girl technician mill around.

HALL
(rushing up)
Is he alive?

TOBY
I should've been with him!
(pounding the door)
Dr. Dutton!

MIC T
(pulling him back)
No use. It's sealed off.

Hall turns to continue down the corridor.

VOICE OF GIRL TECH.

Dr. Hall!

Hall looks over his shoulder, stops, comes back, puzzled.

She stands riveted, staring straight ahead at the flashing red light above the door, arms loosely at her sides.

MIC T
(inching away)
She's in trouble.

HALL
(coming up to her)
Ruth, are you ---

He stops, passes his hand rapidly in front of her face. No reaction. He glances back at the flashing red light.

GIRL TECH.

She's got the germ!

The technicians scatter. Leavitt's knees buckle. Hall catches her, stretches her out on her back. Her whole body begins to vibrate. He darts to the substation in the wall. Beside the substation is an intercom. He pushes his hand flat against the cluster of buttons.

HALL
(into intercom)
Someone bring a hundred milligrams of phenobarb in a syringe -- fast.
ANGLE ON LEAVITT

Her head starts to hammer the floor. Hall springs back to her, puts his foot under her head.

HALL
(shouting up corridor)
There's no danger. She isn't contagious.

SILENCE, except for Leavitt's moans, the red light flashing across her. Spittle dribbles from her mouth. Now her entire body raps like a tense rod against the floor. Karen appears running with a syringe in her hand. At the frightening sight of Leavitt, she slows.

HALL
Come on, come on. She can't hurt you.

KAREN
(approaching warily)
Wasn't she with Dr. Dutton?

Leavitt's convulsions slacken.

HALL
No. It's epilepsy. Give her the injection. She'll be all right.
(running down corridor)
Good girl. Thanks.

INT. MAIN CONTROL LAB - LEVEL V - CLOSE ON TV SCREEN

Dutton, trying to control his terror, looks out from the screen.

DUTTON (ON TV)
I'm scared. O Lord, I'm scared.

REVERSE ON STONE

at the computer console, looking INTO CAMERA.

STONE
(reassuring)
You'll be okay, Charlie. We're pumping pure oxygen through your lab now. We know Andromeda doesn't do well in oxygen.

ANGLE ON HALL

entering, spotting Dutton on TV screen.

HALL
He's alive!

CONTINUED
STONE
Where've you been?

HALL
Leavitt had a seizure.

STONE
(flicking off intercom)
What?

HALL
Epilepsy. The light flashing at eight per second brought on a fit. Why in hell didn't she tell us?

STONE
Probably no top lab would have her if they knew. Insurance, prejudice, all that crap.

HALL
(snorting)
Middle Ages...
(indicating TV)
Amazing he's still alive.

STONE
(pointing to stop-clock)
It's been three minutes. He's on pure oxygen. I don't know how long that can hold him.

ANGLE PAST STONE AND HALL TOWARD TV SCREEN
Dutton, sitting at the console in Autopsy, covers his eyes.

STONE
(on intercom)
We're working on some ideas, Charlie.

DUTTON (ON TV)
Ask your germ warfare friends. They have lots.

STONE
Try to stay calm.
Dutton turns his back. Stone flicks off intercom.

HALL
What happened?

CONTINUED
STONE
Seal must've broken in there. They had the same thing at the Lunar Lab. That's why we used polycron gaskets here. At least the rest of Wildfire's secure.

Now Dutton stares back at them from the screen -- a man waiting for death to strike, breathing in rapid gasps.

HALL
Poor devil. Look at the way he's breathing.

STONE
He's scared to death. The oxygen should relax him, slow down his breathing.

HALL
No! We want him to breathe fast. In Piedmont, Jackson was crooked on sterno. Sterno, acidosis. Acidosis, rapid breathing.

As Hall reaches for a knob, Stone grabs him.

STONE
What in hell are you doing?

HALL
Turn off the oxygen. Put him on room air.

STONE
(still gripping Hall)
But the baby, he's normal.

HALL
Cries all the time, can't catch his breath.

STONE
(releasing Hall)
Rapid breathing -- it just can't be that simple.

HALL
It isn't.
(turning on intercom)
Dutton, I think rapid breathing helps. Don't let the bug in your lungs long enough to penetrates blood vessels...I want to turn off the pure oxygen. Then you start breathing room air as fast as you can.
CLOSE ON TV SCREEN

DUTTON (ON TV)
No! I was running a test in here.
The air's thick with Andromeda.
Experiment with your own life, damn it.

TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

Looking INTO CAMERA.

STONE
We won't do it, Charlie. Take it easy.

HALL
I know I'm close... I'm sure it has something to do with blood chemistry and breathing.

The abrupt WAIL of the baby, then:

KAREN'S VOICE

Dr. Hall....

ANGLE PAST HALL - TOWARD 3RD TV SCREEN

It is separated from the one showing Dutton by a dark screen. The 3rd screen shows Karen, in a plastic suit, holding the baby's bottle, standing by the crying baby's bed.

KAREN (ON TV)
May I feed the baby now, Dr. Hall?
He's been crying steadily for ---

HALL

KAREN (ON TV)
(slamming down bottle)
Yes, Doctor.

3rd TV goes dark. 2nd TV, showing LS Auto Analyzer, glows on.

TWO SHOT - HALL AND STONE

HALL
(turning to Stone)
With all the yelling, blowing off carbon dioxide, the kid should have too little acid. Alkalotic. A blood condition just opposite from the old man. Too much alkali.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

STONE
What good does that do Dutton?

HALL
(to TV screen)
Karen, where's that blood test?

CLOSE ON 2ND TV SCREEN - LS TOWARD KAREN

at Auto Analyzer. She pushes a button.

KAREN (ON TV)
Coming through now on your console.

The baby cries harder than ever. She proceeds past the old man to the baby, picks up the bottle. Jackson sits up, shakes his fist at CAMERA.

JACKSON (ON TV)
Hell of a way to run a hospital.

TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

bent over the test results on the console monitor.

CLOSE ON CONSOLE MONITOR:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT CODED INFANT</th>
<th>RECODED MANUEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEST</td>
<td>NORMAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLOOD PH</td>
<td>7.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIAGNOSIS: ALKALEMIA</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

Stone spreads his hands.

STONE
Just what you expected. Opposite blood chemistries, the baby and the old man.

HALL
One of them should be a dead opposite.

STONE
But he's not.

HALL
(pounding console)
There must be a connection.
CLOSE ON 3RD TV SCREEN

Karen feeds the baby his bottle. In b.g. Jackson sips milk.

HALL'S VOICE
They both stayed alive at Piedmont -- breathing the same air. One's blood too alkaline, the other too acid.

CLOSE ON HALL

as he stares at the screen, then:

HALL
Yes...
(explosively)
YES!

He spins around to the console, hits the intercom switch.

HALL
Dutton, I'm turning off the oxygen. Breathe fast and hard.

CLOSE ON 1ST TV SCREEN

Dutton springs up with a cry:

DUTTON (ON TV)
No! Jeremy, don't let ---

TWO SHOT - HALL AND STONE
Hall cuts the intercom, stretches for a button. Stone reaches out.

QUICK SHOT - TIGHT ON HALL'S HAND
pinned down by Stone's grip, inches from the "OXYGEN" button.

CLOSE TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

STONE
No. The air in the room ---

HALL
Air doesn't matter. Blood does. That's the answer.

Stone hesitates, releases Hall's hand.
CLOSE ON 1ST TV SCREEN

Dutton shouting SOUNDLESSLY.

TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

Stone looking into CAMERA, watching Dutton, Hall faced the other way at the console panel, punching off the oxygen.

HALL
I need thirty seconds to run a growth program.

STONE
He could die in thirty seconds.
Besides, Leavitt checked all the growth programs.

QUICK SHOT - 1ST TV SCREEN

Dutton, chest heaving, watches them in near panic....

ANGLE FAVORING HALL

inexpertly punching in directions on the console.

HALL
She might've missed something.
Epileptics blank out. I want to see how the growth of Andromeda is affected by blood chemistry.
The pH -- Damn!!

CLOSE ON CONSOLE MONITOR SCREEN

ERROR MADE ON INPUT
ERASE ERASE ERASE
REPROGRAM ADP.

ANGLE ON STONE AND HALL

Stone shoots a glance o.s. at Dutton on TV.

HALL
(standing)
You do it.

Stone, watching Dutton, hesitates, then swings into the chair, swiftly punches through the program.
CLOSE ON CONSOLE MONITOR SCREEN

A printout takes the shape of a graph:

ACID-ALKALI TOLERANCE RANGE

GROWTH OF ANDROMEDA
AS FUNCTION OF BLOOD PH
CORRECTED FOR SKEW
REVIEW CHECK
END PRINT
HALL'S VOICE
Excellent.
(finger pointing)
The graph's practically straight up and down. That means Andromeda can only exist within a narrow range of pH.

STONE'S VOICE
A very narrow range.
(hand gesturing across graph)
On either side of the tolerance range, no growth -- nothing. Right? It's exterminated.

CLOSE TWO SHOT - HALL AND STONE
Their faces relax.

HALL
Our troubles are over.

STONE
(punching buttons)
Charlie, look at your console.

CLOSE ON 1ST TV SCREEN
Showing the CONSOLE MONITOR in Autopsy. The graph glows onto it. Dutton's face DIPS IN.

HALL'S VOICE
If your blood's abnormal -- if it contains high levels of acidity or alkalinity -- Andromeda can't survive in the body. So breathe as fast as you can. Go into respiratory alkalosis.

ANGLE PAST STONE AND HALL TOWARD DUTTON ON TV
Stone nods encouragement.

STONE
Fine that will shoot your blood chemistry to hell.

HALL
It's what happens to the baby when he cries too much or the old man on sterno. How do you feel?

DUTTON (ON TV)
Okay. A little dizzy, but okay.
CLOSE TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

HALL

(low)
He can't keep breathing like that forever. He'll hyperventilate, pass out. We've got to get him something to alkalize his blood.

STONE
(looking)
Can't in there.
(suddenly; pointing)
Charlie, behind you -- that cage....

FLASH SHOT - CLOSE ON 1ST TV SCREEN

Dutton about-faces to look into the hot room.

CLOSEUP - A RAT

The rat sniffs. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal the rat on the 2nd TV screen beside the 1st, which shows Dutton staring into the hot room. Six petri dishes are around the rat's cage. 3rd TV is dark.

ANGLE ON STONE AND HALL - INCLUDING TV SCREENS

HALL
It's alive....

DUTTON (ON TV)
(shakily)
The rat's been exposed as long as I have -- longer. I exposed it to the cultures before the seal broke.

STONE
(smiling back)
Precisely. Andromeda has mutated to a non-infectious form.

A sudden red glow tints their faces. They swivel to:

CLOSE ON THE CONSOLE MONITOR SCREEN - RED

A black printout streaks across the red screen:
EARLY DEGENERATIVE CHANGE IN GASKET L5Y-001
529  TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

STONE

Holy....

He looks o.s. toward Dutton on TV, punches off the TV.

HALL

(fixed on monitor)

Where does that gasket lead?

STONE

Central Core, which connects all the labs.

The red glow blinks as though to get their attention.

530  CLOSE ON CONSOLE MONITOR SCREEN

Another printout streaks across the red screen:

DEGENERATIVE CHANGE IN GASKETS

L5Y-003
L5Y-004
L5Y-009

531  ANGLE ON STONE AND HALL

apprehensively watching monitor.

532  CLOSE ON CONSOLE MONITOR SCREEN

More gasket numbers streak on at an accelerating pace:

L5Y-0011, L5Y-0012, L5Y-005, L5Y-0013, etc.

533  ANGLE ON STONE

sorting out data as lights flash on and off the panel.

STONE

The gaskets are --

(hesitates)

-- decomposing. It's Andromeda....

The printouts stop. A SIREN GOES OFF.

534  CLOSE ON CONSOLE MONITOR SCREEN

It turns black. A readout in red flashes onto it:

GASKET INTEGRITY ZERO
LEVEL V CONTAMINATED
ANGLE ON STONE AND HALL

Hall, gripping the key, looks around hurriedly. A red light on the wall starts to flash.

STONE
(moving to door)
Next sector. There's no substation in this lab.

Hall rushes behind him into:

INT. CORRIDOR - ANGLE ON A SUBSTATION

in the wall some thirty feet from Main Control Lab. As they emerge, they instantly find themselves in a foot race with a steel door that slides out from the wall with a HISSING SOUND. Hall sprints, but the steel door closes in front of him with a THUMP. He turns to race in the opposite direction, pulls up sharply.

HIS POV

A steel door blocks off that end of the corridor.

A RECORDED MALE VOICE
Level Five is sealed. Level Five is sealed. Emergency procedures are in effect....

ANGLE ON HALL

Two red lights in the corridor stop flashing and burn steadily. Hall sweeps his eyes from one end of the corridor to the other. Stone comes up to him, shaking his head.

STONE
When the bomb goes off, there'll be a thousand mutations. Andromeda will spread everywhere. They'll never be rid of it.

A HORN cuts in, an ugly, ominous sound.

CLOSE SHOT - A PAIR OF CLOCKS NEAR THE CEILING

The hands on the stop-clock snap back to twelve. The segment on the face, indicating the first five minutes, glows red. The second hand begins to sweep out the time detonation will occur.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE OF GLADYS STEVENS
There are now five minutes to self-destruct.
BACK TO STONE AND HALL

HALL
(clenching the key)
What about the other levels?

STONE
(eyes on ceiling)
Can't tell. Each sector seals off when it's contaminated. Even the elevator.

THEIR POV - SWIFT PANNING SHOT

the equipment, the clocks, the red light, the door to the Miscellaneous Room, etc. HOLD ON an uncompleted substation, marked SUBSTATION 16B - LEVEL V, in the wall.

TWO SHOT - HALL AND STONE

exchanging a look of bitter irony. Hall, with sudden hope, shoots his glance o.s.

HALL
The ventilator ducts....

POV - A VENTILATOR DUCT

in the floor. The grilled opening is sealed.

BACK TO STONE AND HALL

at bay.

STONE
(sardonically)
The defense system is perfect, Mark. It will even bury our mistakes.

HALL
(running o.s.)
What about the central core?

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
There are now four minutes and thirty seconds to self-destruct.

ANGLE ON DOOR TO MISCELLANEOUS ROOM

as Hall, with Stone just behind him, pulls it open.

STONE
It's equipped with safeguards.

INT. MISCELLANEOUS ROOM

Hall and Stone plunging up to the window.

HALL
Like what?
THEIR ANGLE ON HOT ROOM

Karen hugs the baby to her, looking back at Hall in mute despair. The old man, with his bare feet sticking out, is buried under a pile of covers.

STONE'S VOICE
Gas and lasers. To prevent escape of lab animals.

TWO SHOT - STONE AND HALL

HALL
What are my chances?

STONE
They don't exist for anyone, anywhere, if you stay here.

HALL
How do I get into the core?

STONE
(pointing)
Through the service port.

POV - PAST THE EMPTY PLASTIC SUIT - TOWARD SERVICE PORT in the rear wall of the hot room.

STONE'S VOICE
Go ahead. I'll ride shotgun for you in Main Control. Can't monitor the lasers here.

ANGLE ON STONE AND HALL

Stone runs o.s. Hall climbs into the tunnel.

HALL'S VOICE
Karen, get me a scalpel.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
There are now four minutes to self-destruct.

ANGLE ON HOT ROOM - FAVORING PLASTIC SUIT

Jackson sits up in bed, ringing out his ear. As Hall stands up in the suit, Karen, still holding the baby, comes to him from the autoclave with a scalpel. Hall gestures behind him. Karen thrusts the baby into Jackson's hands, cuts away at Hall's suit where it joins the tunnel. A rush of air... Hall turns, rips the tunnel off along the incision.
CLOSE ON KAREN
watching Hall with dread.

HER POV - HALL
Free of his suit and helmet, he tentatively gulps in air.
With a nod to Karen, he signifies it's okay and hurries off.

ANOTHER ANGLE ON HALL
swiftly passing the old man who still holds the baby.

JACKSON
(beamng)
Hey, Doc, y'ain't leavin' us here, are ye?

INT. MAIN CONTROL LAB - ANGLE ON STONE
seating himself at the console, flicking on the intercom:

STONE
The lasers are tuned low for small animals, Mark. You can make it if you're not hit along the spinal cord.

INT. MISCELLANEOUS HOT ROOM - FULL ON HALL
Hall, now in front of the service port, turns the wheel in place of a knob and pulls. As the door swings open, the dis-integrated gasket around the port crumbles. He scrambles through the opening.

INT. MAIN CONTROL - CONSOLE MONITOR SCREEN - STONE TIPPED IN
A readout flashes onto the monitor:
ESCAPED ANIMAL
CENTRAL CORE

The readout blinks off, to be replaced by a crosshair gunsight pattern, moving as though to locate a target.

INT. CENTRAL CORE - CAMERA EXPLORING
Dim, silent...Machinery is enclosed in casings up the sides. The SIREN and HORN sound muffled and distant here. HOLD ON Hall as he peers around desperately.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

STONE'S VOICE (INTERCOM)

Ladder to your right. Go, man,
before the gas starts.

Hall lunges for the ladder, climbs. A piercing SOUND, like escaping steam...His foot slips. He hangs on, glances down.

POV - A PALE BROWNISH BLANKET OF FUMES

spreading up from the floor.

STONE'S VOICE

That's the gas. Keep going.

UP ANGLE ON HALL

climbing.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE

There are now three minutes and thirty seconds to self-destruct.

INT. MAIN CONTROL - CLOSE ON CONSOLE MONITOR SCREEN

Stone's face looms beside it. Hall's body is indicated by an outline of red dots against the green background. The superimposed crosshairs center on the spine.

STONE

The sensors have picked you up,
but you're almost there.

Stone's head blocks the monitor screen as he turns to:

CLOSE ON A TV SCREEN

It shows a laser device taking aim.

STONE'S VOICE

Duck!

A light-beam, so brief and fine as to be almost subliminal, glints from the lens.

INT. CENTRAL CORE - THE LADDER - CLOSE ON HALL

ducking...A truncated HISS...On the wall near his head a spot the size of a quarter (where evidently the laser struck) turns ash-white.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

STONE'S VOICE

Keep going!

Hall climbs.

UP ANGLE - TOWARD A CATWALK AND A DOOR

marked: TO LEVEL IV. Hall swings onto the catwalk.

STONE'S VOICE

Duck!

The HISS...A spot on a ladder rung where his head was turns black.

CLOSE ON HALL

As he grabs the door handle, a red light over the door begins to flash. He rams against the door. It won't budge.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE

There are now three minutes to self-destruct.

INT. MAIN CONTROL - CLOSE ON STONE

at the console, watching TV screen o.s.

STONE

No good. The level's contaminated.
Go to three. Sway, weave. You're zeroed in.

QUICK SHOT - THE CONSOLE MONITOR SCREEN

Hall's figure, an outline of red dots, bobs in the crosshairs.

INT. CENTRAL CORE - LONG DOWN ANGLE ON HALL

SHOOTING along the laser lens which tracks him. Hall bobs and weaves. The barely visible thread of light glints from the lens.

CLOSE ON HALL

The HISS...He thrusts in the opposite direction...HISS...and a white spot blossoms on his cheek.
grimacing, closing his eyes, touching the spot, wincing.

STONE'S VOICE
Keep going. You'll make it.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
There are now two minutes and thirty seconds to self-destruct.

Hall opens his eyes blearily.

HIS POV - UP LADDER

The ladder now appears to him to be almost horizontal rather than vertical. He hangs on to keep from tumbling sideways off it.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
(far away)
There are now two minutes to self-destroy.

BIG FUZZY CLOSEUP - HALL

closing his eyes.

STONE'S VOICE
(faint and fading)
No, Mark. You've got to....

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
(almost immediately; very faint)
There are now sixty seconds to ---

The FUZZY CU almost blurs out completely.

STONE'S VOICE
Mark...Mark....

As FOCUS starts to clear, ANGLE WIDENS. With effort, Hall moves his arms, pulling his body behind them.

INT. MAIN CONTROL - ANGLE ON TV SCREEN

Stone, now on his feet, watches Hall making slow progress up the ladder. Hall falters.

STONE
Fight the effects. It's mostly shock. You've lost a minute, but you can still do it. See the door?
572 INT. CENTRAL CORE - CLOSEUP HALL

His head turns INTO CAMERA. His eyes are glazed.

573 CRAZY ANGLE ON A DOOR

The door, nearly horizontal, is marked: TO LEVEL III

SEDUCTIVE VOICE

(fainter)
Forty-five seconds.

574 CLOSEUP HALL

He turns his head back slowly.

575 HALL'S POV - DISTORTED - HIS HANDS

His left hand grips the ladder, his right hand is clenched and pressed against a rung. An ash-white spot materializes on the back of his right hand. NO SOUND. The fist opens slowly. The key drops from it, FLOATING down WEIGHTLESSLY, down and down. It STOPS -- at the end of the chain fastened to his wrist.

576 STRAIGHT DOWN SHOT - ON HALL

pulling himself onto the catwalk, reaching for the door handle, missing it, groping, his depth perception off.

577 CLOSEUP - HALL

Pressed against the door, he pushes.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE

(faint)
Forty seconds.

578 REVERSE ANGLE

The door opens inwards. Hall stumbles into a small chamber, sways, the void of the central core behind him.

579 INT. MAIN CONTROL - ANGLE PAST STONE

standing before the TV screen, watching Hall.

STONE
You're in an airlock. Turn the wheel on the door.

Stone swivels to:
THE STOP-CLOCK ON THE WALL

The minute hand is almost at the red detonation line. The second hand passes the thirty-five second mark.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Thirty-five seconds.

INT. LEVEL III - THE AIRLOCK CHAMBER

Hall endlessly turns a wheel in place of a handle on the door to LEVEL III...A sudden SOUND of rushing air...The door flies open. Hall staggers forward, comes to a halt, looking around for a substation. None in sight.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Thirty seconds.

ANOTHER ANGLE - PAST HALL TO A GIRL TECHNICIAN

against the wall, looking at him in terror. He takes a step forward, extending a puffed, wounded hand that holds the key.

HALL
(hoarsely)
Where is it? Help me.

The girl gasps, runs from him, revealing a substation in the wall where she stood. A red light glows on it. Hall stumbles forward, goes to his knees two feet short of the substation.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Twenty-five seconds.

CLOSE ON HALL

He braces his left hand against the wall, forces himself to his feet. He tries to raise the key. His right arm won't move.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Twenty seconds.

He gets the key into his left hand, raises it, pulling along the right hand by the chain fastened to the wrist.

TIGHT SHOT - THE SUBSTATION AND HALL'S HANDS

the right one dead...The key in his left fumbles for the lock.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Fifteen seconds.

Finally the key plunges home, but nothing happens; the red light stays on. HOLD forever on it.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Ten seconds.

CONTINUED
Hall's left hand twists the key in the lock. The red light goes OUT, a green light blinks ON.

SEDUCTIVE VOICE
Self-destruct has been cancelled.

FULL SHOT - THE EMPTY CORRIDOR - LEVEL III
Hall slides to the floor at the foot of the substation.

STROBE CUT TO

A SATELLITE'S VIEW OF NORTH AMERICA AND PACIFIC OCEAN

Photographed from an orbiting satellite, the area displayed is the west coast of the continent and the Pacific Ocean, partly covered by cloud formations. A continuously shifting, computerized symbol {_< -->} outlines the shape and movement of the Andromeda aerosol (computerized animation).

VIA NIMBUS 3 WEATHER SATELLITE
1400 HRS GMT
ANDROMEDA DESIGN: _< --

TIROX GRID
AS
WORLD METEORLOG ORG

KAREN'S VOICE
...severe shock, but he's doing fine now.

CAMERA PULLS BACK from a TV screen and TILTS DOWN TO:
in a hospital bed. His face and right hand are bandaged. Karen, a male technician and the girl who fled in fear tend him. Stone, Dutton, and Leavitt, dividing their attention between Hall and the TV screen o.s., gather around the bed.

STONE
Congratulations.

LEAVITT
Eight seconds to spare. Hardly even exciting.

HALL
(glancing at TV)
What's happening?

ANGLE PAST GROUP TO TV SCREEN
They turn their full attention on it.

DUTTON
The supercolony's now off the coast and moving southwest across the Pacific.

STONE
But apparently Andromeda hasn't turned lethal again. At least there haven't been any reports of bizarre death.

CAMERA begins to MOVE IN slowly on TV picture.

LEAVITT
Yet. As far as we know, she's still mutating.

STONE
We're applying an adaptation of your antidote to it, Mark. Cloud-seeding.

As the TV screen FILLS FRAME, the first photo snaps to the right, to be overlapped by another, oriented further west and showing nothing but ocean. The printout on this second photo is the same as the first except for: 1430 HRS GMT.

STONE'S VOICE
We're seeding the clouds above Andromeda with silver iodide. The rain drops will carry the organism into the ocean. The alkaline reaction from sea water should kill it.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

DUTTON'S VOICE
Just like acids or alkalis in the
blood stopped it.

EXT. A SHALLOW PACIFIC OCEAN LAGOON - DAY - DOWN ANGLE

The clear, tropical waters permit a view of the coral formation,
plant life, etc., on the ocean floor. A few drops fall, then a
gentle rain shimmers the glassy surface.

EXT. THE MID-PACIFIC - DAY - PANORAMIC SHOT

Rain....

VOICE OF SEN. FROM VERMONT
This cloud-seeding business, Stone...
Are you absolutely sure it worked?
You better be.

STONE'S VOICE
All reports continue to indicate
the experiment was successful, Senator.

EXT. PIEDMONT - DAY - FULL ON MAIN STREET

littered with bodies.

VOICE OF SEN. FROM VERMONT
Then we can feel confident your so-
called biological crisis is over.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING CHURCH AND PARKED VAN

Perhaps the bodies of Shawn and Crane can be seen.

STONE'S VOICE
As far as Andromeda is concerned,
yes. We have the organism at
Wildfire and continue to study it.

INT. THE WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

Quiet...Just a few shirt-sleeved technicians present, sifting
trough special mail pouches, decoding messages, monitoring
idle teletypes, etc.

STONE'S VOICE
We've characterized a variety of
mutant types, none dangerous.
Andromeda's rather astonishing in
its versatility.
EXT. WILDFIRE LAB - DAY - THE CORNFIELD AND AGRICULTURAL BLDG

STONE'S VOICE
We know now beyond a doubt that other forms of life exist in the universe.

VOICE OF SEN. FROM VERMONT
Thanks to Scoop.

INT. SENATE HEARING ROOM - ANGLE ON STONE

STONE
(dryly)
Yes...however, with this new knowledge, there's no guarantee another --
(a slight edge)
-- 'so-called biological crisis' won't occur again.

UP ANGLE - SENATOR FROM VERMONT

on the rostrum.

SEN. FROM VERMONT
Hmph...What do we do about that?

CLOSEUP - STONE

STONE
Precisely, Senator. What do we do?

MULTI-SCREEN - THREE IMAGES

A) ANDROMEDA - MAGNIFIED 100 x - LEFT THIRD OF SCREEN

looking like a green-flecked "rock" in a hole. (All projections of Andromeda are labeled: 100 x, 440 x, 1000 x, etc.)

B) ANDROMEDA - MAGNIFIED 440 x - MIDDLE THIRD

craggy peaks and green valleys that blink.

C) ANDROMEDA - MAGNIFIED 1000 x - RIGHT THIRD

the green patch swelling, filling in notched borders, turning purple, etc.

ANOTHER MULTI-SCREEN - TWO IMAGES

A) ANDROMEDA - MAGNIFIED 79-000 x - LEFT HALF OF SCREEN

the green and black hexagon interlocked with others... fluoroscopic effect showing crystalline structure, etc.
B) ANDROMEDA - MAGNIFIED 113,050 x - RIGHT HALF
the clouded, mysterious, B&W X-ray diffraction photo.

SINGLE SCREEN - ANDROMEDA - MAGNIFIED 113,050 x
exploding and imploding into smaller, vari-colored geometric shapes, proliferating, etc. SNEAK IN SOUND of computer printout starting ....

ANDROMEDA - MAGNIFIED 310,138 x
Large, FULL SCREEN, individual, infinitely various geometric configurations HURTING INTO CAMERA. SOUND of computer printout BUILDS....

ANDROMEDA - MAGNIFIED 712,003 x
The organisms are so hugely enlarged, and mutating so fast, they appear simply as STROBOSCOPIC FLASHES OF JAGGED, COLORED LIGHT. SOUND of computer printout CRESCENDOS....

ANDROMEDA - MAGNIFIED 989,000 x
Just a PULSATING LUMINOUS GREEN GLARE ON THE SCREEN. The SOUND of the computer printout, racing faster and faster, roars to a CLIMAX. Abruptly SCREEN GOES BLACK...UNEARTHLY SILENCE. Three digits flash onto the middle of the black screen:

Then:

The characters:

- STOP -
Stenciled on the cover is:

PROJECT SUMMARY: SCOOP

THIS FILE IS CLASSIFIED TOP SECRET

Examination by unauthorized persons is a criminal offense punishable by Fines and imprisonment up to 20 years and $20,000.

and funded through the PARPA.

The SCOOP PROJECT is under the command of Major General Thomas C. Sparks, U.S. Army Medical Service, Director of Biological Research Division.

The purpose of the project, contracted to the Advanced Jet Laboratory of the Wisconsin Polytechnic Institute in Madison, is to collect any organisms that might exist in outer space. The program includes the study and evaluation of actual or potential injuries, illnesses, or damage caused by new extraterrestrial forms of life, should any be discovered.

Consult CROSSFILE: Project Clean, Project Zero Contaminants, Project Wildfire. Copies Detrick, Hawkins, Dugway, NIH, Filed under NTK basis.

The probability of contact between man and an extraterrestrial life form is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORM</th>
<th>PROBABILITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Unicellular organisms</td>
<td>.7840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicellular organisms, simple</td>
<td>.1940</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multicellular organisms, complex</td>
<td>.0140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicellular with integrated organ systems</td>
<td>.0078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicellular with human capability (7+ data)</td>
<td>.0002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.0000
The full text of Jeremy Stone's letter to the President follows:

This is the Xeroxôed form, a clean copy and signed:

Laboratory of Jeremy Stone
Berkeley, California

February 17, 1969

The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

Recent theoretical considerations suggest that sterilization procedures of returning space probes may be insufficient to guarantee sterile reentry to this planet's atmosphere. The consequence of this is the potential introduction of virulent organisms into the present ecological framework.

In a true biological crisis, which our exploration of space could bring about, the present Lunar Receiving Laboratory might prove inadequate. I, therefore, urge the establishment of a facility to deal specifically with an extraterrestrial form of life. The purpose of this facility would be to limit the dissemination of such an unknown organism from outer space and to provide laboratories for its analysis.

I recommend that this facility be located in an inhabited region of the United States, that it utilize all known isolation techniques and that it be equipped with a nuclear device for self-destruction, in event of an emergency.

Yours very truly,

Jeremy Stone

JS:ns