

METEOR!

Screenplay

by

Stanley Mann

October 19, 1977

METEOR

METEOR

TO: ALL CONCERNED

FROM: RONALD NEAME

DATE: OCTOBER 31, 1977

SUBJECT: NAME CHANGES IN "METEOR" SCRIPT

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES:

"HAROLD SHERMAN" IS NOW "HAROLD SHERWOOD".

"VIKING 12" IS NOW "CHALLENGER 2".

METEOR

METEOR PRODUCTIONS

OCTOBER 19, 1977

SCENE NUMBERS OMITTED AS OF THIS DATE

53	311
54	314
56	315
57	320
58	321
59	326
76	330
77	334
78	336
81	337
129A THRU 129H	338
170	339
171	340
172	341
173	342
174	343
175	344
219	
306	345
307	346
308	347
309	348
310	349

METEOR!

FADE IN:

1 THE SKY - NIGHT

1

bedazzled with stars. CAMERA is MOVING FORWARD, swifter and swifter, until we are speeding in silence into the endless, jewelled belly of the universe.

NARRATOR

Outer space, limitless and timeless, filled with cosmic explosions and endless turbulence.

A COMET in the far distance rushes across the heavens with its tail streaming behind it.

NARRATOR

(continuing)

An infinite playground for that occasional blazing visitor -- the Comet.

Then OTHER COMETS flare INTO VIEW, hurtling in their orbits around the sun.

NARRATOR

(continuing)

At first they terrified man, he thought they were signals of impending catastrophes. But he got used to them, and waited for them to drop by like old friends. He began to analyze them and give them names, and he counted them. He has already recorded more than sixteen hundred, but he knows there may be hundreds of thousands more.

Now yet ANOTHER COMET rushes TOWARDS CAMERA, and UNDER it, and PAST, its blazing nucleus riding in front of a river of light.

NARRATOR

(continuing)

This one has come from its orbit behind the sun, moving across the heavens at a hundred and eight thousand miles an hour.

2 THE ASTEROID BELT 2

in its inexorable movement around the sun.

NARRATOR

The Asteroid Belt, a vast junkyard of metal and rock, orbiting the sun between Jupiter and Mars, thousands of fragments, some as small as a fist, some as large as a city.

3 CAMERA MOVES IN ON A PARTICULAR CHUNK OF THE ASTEROID 3

NARRATOR

And amongst these -- Orpheus -- twenty miles in diameter, and undisturbed for countless years. Until now!

4 AS CAMERA CONTINUES TO CLOSE IN ON ORPHEUS 4

There is a BURST OF MUSIC as the MAIN TITLE RACES UP and HOLDS:

"METEOR!"

5 A BRILLIANT, SUNNY DAY OFF THE COAST OF CALIFORNIA 5

where a good wind fills the sails of a dozen graceful yachts out ahead of their competitors as they challenge each other in the United States Gold Cup Yacht Race. SUPERIMPOSED:

"MONDAY, 9:00 A.M."

6 PAUL BRADLEY 6

at the helm of his sleek, fifty-two foot yawl, "BLITHE SPIRIT." BRADLEY is in his forties, a tall, sturdy man, obviously enjoying the swiftness and power of his craft. His six-member crew are expectant and exuberant. But the exuberance is short-lived as they see --

7 A COAST GUARD VESSEL 7

moving rapidly towards them, on the bucking deck of which an OFFICER loud-hails them through a bullhorn:

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED

7

OFFICER
(shouting)
Is Dr. Paul Bradley aboard?

8 THE COAST GUARD VESSEL AND YACHT

8 X

Bradley shouts back--

BRADLEY
Who the hell wants him?

OFFICER
I've got orders from NASA to pick
up Dr. Paul Bradley! Is he aboard?
(when there is no answer)
This is an emergency!

BRADLEY
So is this! We're trying to win
a race, and you're screwing up
our reach!

OFFICER
We're going to have to cut across
your bow!

Bradley grits his teeth, then accepts.

BRADLEY
All right, goddamn it, get out
of our way, we'll come in.

He turns his yacht into the wind.

9 BRADLEY AND THE COAST GUARD OFFICER WALK QUICKLY
ALONG THE JETTY

9 X

towards a waiting car, with an Air Force driver at
the wheel.

CONTINUED

9

CONTINUED:

9

OFFICER

All Mr. Sherman told me was to
get you off that boat, and start
you on your way to Houston.
There's a special jet laid on.

As Bradley ducks into the back of the car --

BRADLEY

You'd really have cut across my
bow?

OFFICER

Yes, sir.

BRADLEY

(slamming door shut)
I'd have rammed you!

OFFICER

And gone straight to the bottom,
sir!

Bradley grins as the car drives off.

10

GENERAL SHOT - HOUSTON SPACE CENTER - HIGH ANGLE
- DAY

10

CAMERA CENTERS on a jeep and MOVES IN CLOSE as it
arrives outside the administration building. Bradley
jumps down from beside the driver and goes in, shout-
ing --

BRADLEY

Now don't go away, I could be
right back!

11

INT. HAROLD SHERMAN'S OFFICE - HOUSTON - DAY

11

HAROLD SHERMAN, in his early fifties, is on the phone.
In the room with him are: GENERAL EASTON, sixty;
SAM MASON and PETER WATSON, both in their early
thirties.

SHERMAN

(into phone)
Okay, send him up.

He hangs up, turns to the others.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED

11 X

SHERMAN
(continuing)
He's got a short fuse, let
me handle it.

EASTON
Surely, when he hears what's
happened, he'll co-operate.

SHERMAN
Eventually, General, yes. But I
know the man, I've worked with him.

12 INT. SHERMAN'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

12

A SECRETARY-RECEPTIONIST sits behind a desk, typing.
She's in her middle thirties. As the door from the
corridor opens, and Bradley comes in, she looks up
and smiles.

SHERMAN'S SECRETARY
Dr. Bradley, it's good to see
you again!

BRADLEY
Good to see you. How's the golf?

SHERMAN'S SECRETARY
You owe me ten dollars.

BRADLEY
I do?

SHERMAN'S SECRETARY
My handicap's down to twelve.

BRADLEY
No wonder it's good to see me.
I'll pay you on the way out.

X

His eyes fall on a suitcase with the initials P. B. in
one corner. He looks at the Secretary.

SHERMAN'S SECRETARY
Yes, it's yours. Mr. Sherman..

But Bradley has picked up the bag, and is heading into
Sherman's office.

13 INT. SHERMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

13 X

As the door closes behind him, Bradley takes in the large office, the men present. Immediately, Sherman rises, crosses from behind the desk, and moves to Bradley, his hand extended.

SHERMAN

Paul, come in, come in. Sorry to do this to you.

BRADLEY

Not at all.

Raises suitcase for Sherman to see.

SHERMAN

Ah, yes. I--called Helen, and asked her for it. I didn't know you and she--

(then, quickly)

You've met General Easton?

BRADLEY

Once, in Washington.

(acknowledging Easton,

still standing holding suitcase)

General.

EASTON

Good of you to come.

SHERMAN

(introducing)

Sam Mason, our Cap Com; Peter Watson, Flight Director.

Bradley and the Others nod at each other.

SHERMAN

Put that bag down, Paul! Small scotch?

BRADLEY

(putting bag down)

Large.

WATSON

We could all use one, I think.

SHERMAN

(crossing to bar)

Why don't we all sit at the table?

(CONTINUED)

13 (CONTINUED)

13 X

The men seat themselves around a table in the foreground, as Sherman begins pouring drinks. Bradley looks at the men, they look at him.

MASON

How big's your boat?

BRADLEY

Fifty-two feet.

13 CONTINUED

13 X

SHERMAN

A lot's happened here. None
of it good.

BRADLEY

I left NASA five years ago.
Why am I back?

SHERMAN

(hands Bradley his drink)

Let me tell you, Paul...

During the following he pours the rest of the drinks and
distributes them:

SHERMAN

(continuing)

Seven days ago the Palomar
Observatory reported the
discovery of a comet.

(gives a drink
to Easton)

General.

(then to Bradley)

Nothing spectacular about that,
they spot about nine every year,
either themselves, or other
observatories... it's where this
one seemed to be going.

He hands a drink to Mason, who says to Bradley:

MASON

The Asteroid Belt.

BRADLEY

So?

SHERMAN

When they called me, it was a
couple of hundred thousand
kilometers from the Belt, give
or take a few. Our space probe
was in the vicinity, General
Easton's son Tom commanding.

14 THE SPACESHIP "VIKING 12"

14

on its course, moving at great speed, but seemingly stationary in the vastness of space.

SHERMAN (V.O.)

We got in touch with them. That was last Friday.

15 INT. SPACESHIP "VIKING 12"

15

Three astronauts carry out their routine work. TOM EASTON, about thirty-two; BILL FRAGER and MICHAEL McKENDRICK, a little older. All three are doing their checking and coordinating in a smooth, apparently casual way. SAM MASON'S VOICE comes through on their speakers.

MASON (V.O.)

(filter)

Viking 12, how do you feel about making a slight detour?

TOM EASTON

Anything to break the monotony...
What do you call slight?

MASON (V.O.)

(filter)

A hop, skip and a jump, two days at the most.

Tom Easton frowns, looks at the other astronauts, who return puzzled glances.

TOM EASTON

What happens to our schedule?

16 CLOSE SHOT - SAM MASON - IN THE HOUSTON CONTROL CENTER

16

He is in front of a SCREEN on which we can SEE the wavy images of the ASTRONAUTS in VIKING 12.

MASON

Don't concern yourself about that, Tom. We'll take care of everything from here. Your lunch date with Mars will have to wait.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

17

TOM EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

Whatever you say.. Where are we
going?

17 FULL SHOT - HOUSTON COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - DAY

17

Sherman and General Easton stand behind Mason. Watson
sits beside him at another console; and all around
them, the dozens of other technicians involved in the
complicated mechanics of the manned space probe.

MASON

The Asteroid Belt.

TOM EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

What for?

MASON

There's a comet about to go through
it.

TOM EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

They go through all the time.

MASON

This is a first. We figure it
was wrenched out of orbit by
Jupiter's gravitational pull.

TOM EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

How big is this comet?

MASON

Four hundred and eighty kilometers
in diameter, which makes its
nucleus large enough to do real
damage if it hit anything.

18 WITH THE ASTRONAUTS ABOARD "VIKING 12"

18

listening to:

MASON (V.O.)

(filter)

It's heading towards Orpheus, that's
the big one in the center.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

TOM EASTON

Where do you want us to park?

MASON (V.O.)

(filter)

Put a dime in the meter near
Triton, about twenty-five
thousand kilometers this side.

19 IN THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - DAY

19

as Mason continues:

MASON

You'll be there three hours before
the comet shows. We want all the
information you can give us about
its size and orbital elements.

TOM EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

Take a few pictures...

MASON

A lot of pictures. We've started
things going down here. You'll be
changing course in five minutes.

20 CLOSE ON TOM EASTON IN "VIKING 12"

20

TOM EASTON

My old man with you?

21 CLOSE ON GENERAL EASTON IN THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

21

Tiniest of smiles as:

MASON (O.S.)

He's here.

TOM EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

Tell him hello.

MASON (O.S.)

Will do.

22 WITH THE ASTRONAUTS IN "VIKING 12" 22

McKENDRICK
This comet got a name yet?

MASON (V.O.)
(filter)
Not yet. Just a number.

McKENDRICK
Well, I can make a suggestion...

23 IN THE HOUSTON COMMUNICATIONS CENTER 23

Mason smiles.

MASON
We hear you, McKendrick.

24 OUTSIDE THE SPACESHIP "VIKING 12" 24

as it slowly, gracefully, begins to move off its
course to start its half-million mile journey.

25 INT. SHERMAN'S OFFICE - DAY 25

where he is telling the story to Bradley.

SHERMAN
As I said, that was last Friday.
Yesterday, Sunday morning, at
eleven hundred hours, they started
to take up their position alongside
Triton. All systems nominal.

26 OUTER SPACE - NEAR THE ASTEROID BELT 26

"Viking 12" approaches TRITON, then "parks." It looks
like a toy hanging in the air near the massive chunk..

27 INT. "VIKING 12" 27

The astronauts stare at their SCREENS, regarding
the vision of the distant stretch of the rest of
the ASTEROID BELT with something approaching awe.

TOM EASTON
Have you got it?

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

MASON (V.O.)

(filter)

We've got it. Can you pull
Orpheus out for us?

TOM EASTON

Can do.

He makes adjustments of powerful telephoto lenses,
and on the CENTER SPACESHIP SCREEN, the twenty-mile
wide chunk of asteroid called ORPHEUS, seems to be
pulled TOWARDS US as the lens ZOOMS IN on it.

28 IN THE HOUSTON COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

28

Mason, Easton, Sherman and the others watch their
SCREENS, seeing for the first time ever -- ORPHEUS
close before them.

MASON

Let's have some information.

TOM EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

We'll do some reading.

29 VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE ASTRONAUTS AND THE PEOPLE IN THE
HOUSTON COMMUNICATIONS CENTER 29

as we HEAR:

SHERMAN (V.O.)

(continuing his
story to Bradley)

For the next hour and a half
they 'read' the Belt for us.
And then what they were waiting
for finally showed.

30 CLOSE SHOT - A SCREEN IN "VIKING 12"

30

In the center of the SCREEN, a bright, white dot,
grows steadily larger as it approaches.

31 INT. THE SPACESHIP - THE THREE ASTRONAUTS WATCHING
THE SCREEN

31

excited by the approaching dot.

(CONTINUED)

- 31 CONTINUED: 31
- TOM EASTON
Here it comes!
- McKENDRICK
Right on schedule.
- 32 FULL SHOT - THE COMET 32
streaking through space, towards the Asteroid Belt.
- 33 VARIOUS ANGLES ON IT 33
as at prodigious speed it approaches --
- 34 THE ASTEROID BELT 34
waiting for the rushing comet.
- TOM EASTON (V.O.)
(filter)
Can you see it?
- MASON (V.O.)
(filter)
We can see it!
- 35 CLOSE SHOT - THE COMET 35
tail streaming behind it. CAMERA PANS OFF it and
CENTERS on the far-distant BELT.
- TOM EASTON (V.O.)
(filter)
It'll go straight through, like
a dose of salts!
- 36 FULL SHOT - THE HOUSTON COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - DAY 36
Everyone present tensely waiting. All eyes are focused
on the Center's SCREENS, watching the COMET'S PROGRESS.
- 37 SEQUENCE OF SHOTS - INTERCUTTING THE ASTRONAUTS, THE 37
HOUSTON COMMUNICATIONS CENTER, THE COMET, AND THE
ASTEROID BELT
as the COMET hurtles at enormous velocity towards the
Belt, and the men in the spaceship and those in the
Communications Center wait with breath held, until at
last:

38 THE COMET PLUNGES TOWARDS ORPHEUS 38
on a certain collision course!

39 THE ASTRONAUTS IN "VIKING 12" 39
watch, eyes wide, and --

TOM EASTON
(yells)
It's going to hit!

40 AND THE PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER 40
set themselves as though they will feel the impact --

41 AND THE COMET PLUNGES INTO THE TWENTY-MILE-WIDE 41
CHUNK OF ASTEROID CALLED ORPHEUS

42 AND THERE IS THE MOST TERRIFIC EXPLOSION! 42
as ORPHEUS is struck and breaks and spews itself out
in a thousand, thousand pieces!

43 INT. "VIKING 12" 43
where the astronauts watch the EXPLOSION on their
SCREENS, barely able to speak, and then --

McKENDRICK
(shouts)
God, look at that!

TOM EASTON
(watching the
unearthly
fireworks)
It's exploded! It's coming
apart in a million pieces!

44 CLOSE SHOT - MASON - IN THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER 44
yelling --

MASON
Get away from there!

The others are gripped by terror as they watch on the
SCREENS the ASTRONAUTS manually setting VIKING 12's
JETS into action.

- 45 OUTER SPACE - WATCHING ORPHEUS FLAMING OFF IN ALL 45
 DIRECTIONS
- pieces streaming towards the spaceship, whose JETS
are functioning, as it tries to blast away from the
oncoming deadly debris.
- 46 SHOTS OF THE STRAINED FACES OF THE MEN IN THE 46
 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER, THE FACES OF THE ASTRONAUTS,
 THE FLYING PIECES OF ORPHEUS
- 47 AND THEN A RAPIDLY TRAVELLING CLOSE SHOT OF A CHUNK 47
 OF DEBRIS THE SIZE OF A TRUCK AS IT BARRELS INTO
 "VIKING 12"
- 48 LONG SHOT - LOOKING AT THE SPACESHIP 48
 as, hit amidships, it bursts apart!
- 49 THE MAIN SCREEN IN THE HOUSTON CENTER 49
 goes BLACK!
- 50 SHOTS OF THE MEN IN THE CENTER 50
 aghast, as they register with horror what has happened.
- 51 INT. SHERMAN'S OFFICE - HOUSTON SPACE CENTER - DAY 51
 Sherman stands looking at General Easton, his hand
 tight around his glass of scotch. Easton is expression-
 less, raises his own drink to his lips. Bradley looks
 over at him, his expression denoting sympathy.

SHERMAN
I don't think I'll ever forgive
myself. I should have figured--

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED

51 X

EASTON

No guilt, Harry. We'd all have
given the same orders.

There is silence, then Bradley rises, ease's out of his
fur-lined jacket, tosses it down.

BRADLEY

Who knows about this?

SHERMAN

At the moment, nobody, but we'll
have to release it right after
this meeting.

BRADLEY

(quietly)

Harry, why am I here?

SHERMAN

(takes a deep breath)

There's a chunk of Orpheus coming
towards earth. A pretty big one--

BRADLEY

Any splinters?

SHERMAN

A lot, some with it, some preceding
it. But our main worry's the big
one.

BRADLEY

Time factor?

SHERMAN

Not collated yet. Approximately
six days before impact. If figures
show it is going to hit, we have to
be prepared to divert it.

BRADLEY

Precisely why we put Hercules up
there!

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED.

51 X

SHERMAN

(quickly)

I've convened a meeting at NASA headquarters in Washington tomorrow morning. Lukas, Steinberg, Fillmore, some of the other men you know. I want you to come to that meeting.

X

They all wait for Bradley's reply. A brief moment, then --

BRADLEY

I'll come to the meeting, but --

SHERMAN

(jumping in)

We appreciate it, Paul. Thanks. We've delayed a commercial flight for you, leaving in an hour.

(then, picking up document from desk)

Up-to-date material on Hercules. You'll be met at the other end, your hotel room's booked.

Bradley takes the document, picks up his suitcase.

BRADLEY

(looking straight at Sherman)

You're sure you haven't forgotten anything?

52 SKY SHOT - A SETTING SUN THROWS THE COMMERCIAL JET
AIRLINER

52

into stark relief.

53 OMIT

X

53A INT. WASHROOM ABOARD THE PLANE - SUNSET

53A X

BRADLEY is washing his face as there is a PING! and --

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

We're heading into a little turbulence. Take your seats, please. Should be through it in a minute or two.

(CONTINUED)

53A CONTINUED

53A X

Bradley dries face and hands, and steps out of the washroom.

53B INT. MAIN BODY OF AIRCRAFT - SUNSET

53B X

CAMERA MOVES WITH BRADLEY as he goes down the aisle towards his seat. The plane begins to judder a bit as turbulence is encountered, and Passengers can be seen adjusting their safety belts. As Bradley goes--

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

You might be interested in a newscast we're picking up from Charleston regarding the space probe... we'll patch it through.

There is some atmospheric DISTURBANCE, then --

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

(filter during above)

...as for more specific information concerning the disintegration of Viking 12, there's still great reluctance from NASA to provide details. Our correspondent in Houston is waiting, as is all America, for some explanation of this tragic happening, in which three astronauts have lost their lives. And as soon as we have that explanation --

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

(interrupting)

Sorry, we thought he was going to tell us more. We'll be starting our descent in ten minutes. Weather's clear in the capital.

During the above, Bradley has seated himself beside A LITTLE OLD LADY about sixty years old, wearing a round straw hat with plastic flowers on it, and clutching onto her fastened seat belt. The plane is still shaking slightly in the rough patch of air.

X

LITTLE LADY

(to Bradley)

They shouldn't have been up there.

X

(CONTINUED)

53B CONTINUED

53B

LITTLE LADY (Cont)
 We shouldn't be up here! It isn't natural. I wanted to take the train. But my son insisted, so I said, 'All right. I'll fly, but only first class.' I always think the rich are safer, don't you? And here I am. Those poor boys in that spaceship. And now they're dead. Who cares about Mars anyway? With all the mugging going on in our parks...don't you think I'm right?

BRADLEY

Absolutely

54 OMIT

54 X

55 INT. PAUL BRADLEY'S WASHINGTON HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

55 X

PAUL has a drink in his hand, stands watching the television on which we can SEE Film of the Gold Cup Yacht Race from which he was dragged so abruptly. His expression is rueful as he watches the race he feels he could have won. As he watches, he puts down the drink after a sip, and turns to his bag which he has still not unpacked. He undoes it, opens it--and there, on top of his shirts, is a note. CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON THE NOTE. It reads: 'What's going on? Helen.' Paul picks up the note, glances at it; then making a decision, he crosses to the television and snaps it off; goes to the telephone. He dials a number, waits while it rings O.S.

OMIT 56-57-58-59

XXX

60 INT. A LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

60

In the f.g. the PHONE is RINGING. The room is simply furnished, modern, in good taste. From the kitchen in the b.g. comes an attractive WOMAN in her middle thirties. She has just finished cleaning up in the kitchen, and we see her drop a towel by the sink as she hurries in to pick up the phone, puzzled by the late call.

HELEN

Hello?

60 CONTINUED

60

BRADLEY (V.O.)
(filter)

I know it's late, I just wanted--

HELEN

Paul, where are you? Why aren't you
on your boat?

X

INTERCUTTING BETWEEN BRADLEY AND HELEN:

BRADLEY

Washington. How are the kids?

HELEN

Fine. Except we're still fighting
about homework. What are you
doing in Washington?

BRADLEY

I'm not sure yet. I was just
phoning to tell you where I am,
and ask about the kids.

HELEN

I told you. They're fine.

There is an awkward silence, then she braces herself:

HELEN

(continuing)

Paul, I'm sorry to bring it up now,
but you're on the phone, and-- it's
been three months now--

X

BRADLEY

I'm aware of that--

HELEN

Do you want a separate lawyer?

BRADLEY

No, no. Let Oscar deal with it,
he'll-- we both trust him. Why
don't you call him?

HELEN

All right. I'll do it tomorrow.

BRADLEY

How are you?

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60 X

HELEN

Oh, not bad, you know...

There is another uncomfortable silence, then--

HELEN

Paul--?

BRADLEY

Tell the kids I love them.

HELEN

I will.

They both hang up.

61 CLOSE SHOT - BRADLEY - IN HIS HOTEL ROOM.

61 X

His hand still on the phone. Then his gaze turns to the DOCUMENT Sherman gave him, which he's tossed onto the bed. He picks it up, lies down on the bed, flips the pages with a thumb, then lies still a long moment, looking up at the ceiling, almost as if seeing--

62 THE METEOR - HURTLING THROUGH SPACE

62

The jagged field of impending doom coming closer. ON the SCREEN, in COMPUTER NUMERALS: DISTANCE, SPEED, DIMINISHING TIME TO IMPACT, in hours, minutes and seconds. CAMERA ZOOMS IN until this information FILLS SHOT. The seconds click by.

63 EXT. BRADLEY'S WASHINGTON HOTEL - DAY

63

On the SCREEN is SUPERIMPOSED:

"TUESDAY, 7:45 A.M."

The city is waking up. People are driving and walking to work, going about their normal lives. Amongst them, Paul Bradley, coming out of his hotel, stopping at a stand to pick up a newspaper, then crossing to a NASA LIMOUSINE.

X

BRADLEY

(to driver)

Morning.

X

He gets into the limo which immediately pulls away from the curb.

X

64 INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

64 X

BRADLEY looks at the newspaper headline: 'MYSTERY SURROUNDS PROBE DISASTER.' Underneath, a smaller headline over Three Photographs of the smiling (but now dead) Astronauts: 'What Went Wrong?'

BRADLEY

Are we picking up anybody else?

DRIVER

Not that I know, sir.

65 INT. CORRIDOR - NASA HEADQUARTERS - WASHINGTON - DAY 65

Bradley walks along looking for Room 402. His face is set, he carries his briefcase, and the newspaper folded under his arm. He finds the room, hesitates briefly, then opens the door and goes in.

66 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NASA HEADQUARTERS - WASHINGTON - DAY 66

A big room, able to accommodate a large number of people. But no one is there, only Bradley, who looks around in some puzzlement, then tosses his briefcase onto the long table, and sits. Almost at once the door opens again, and Sherman comes in.

SHERMAN

I'm late, sorry.

Bradley turns in his chair.

BRADLEY

You and everybody else...

SHERMAN

Let me tell you about that...

He sits on a chair facing Bradley, leans forward.

SHERMAN

(continuing)

Paul, nobody else is coming. I cancelled them.

BRADLEY

Why?

SHERMAN

You know damn well why! Because we don't need them. You originated Hercules--

X

X

X

66 CONTINUED

66 X

BRADLEY

I came to give professional
advice. Since there's nobody
to give it to...

He rises, picks up his briefcase, and starts towards the
door. Sherman jumps to his feet:

X

SHERMAN

Cut it out, Paul. I know how
you feel about Hercules, but this
is no time to dredge up old--

BRADLEY

(turning towards him)

I don't have to dredge up old feelings,
because they're still on the surface.
I can taste them right now!

SHERMAN

Now look, it wasn't my decision to
turn Hercules into a--

BRADLEY

What, Harry? What did they turn it
into?

SHERMAN

Listen--

BRADLEY

Hercules wasn't designed to be a
weapon with fourteen nuclear war-
heads pointing right down on Russia!

X

67 OUTER SPACE

The HERCULES SATELLITE with its menacing rockets, moves in space, in orbit with Earth.

SHERMAN (V.O.)

X

Not just Russia--

BRADLEY (V.O.)

X

Or China, or wherever the hell!
Its rockets were supposed to point
outwards, not in!

68 BACK IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM

68 X

with Bradley and Sherman.

BRADLEY

Hercules was supposed to defend us
against the exact same goddam threat
that we're facing now, not to--

SHERMAN

X

Didn't I yell about it? Didn't I
stand up for you when you walked
out? Paul, listen, that meteor's
five miles wide, and it's definitely
going to hit us! It'll make a hole
big enough to put the Atlantic in,
unless we stop it!

BRADLEY

X

Shit. Five miles...

SHERMAN

X

Now walk out!

BRADLEY

What about General Adlon? Isn't
he running Hercules?

SHERMAN

Adlon's a good man -- technically.
But he's two-dimensional. We're
going to have to move him out.
That's one problem. Two -- there'll
be a hundred men in this crazy town
stupid enough to resist using
Hercules because of what it would
mean politically --

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED

68

BRADLEY

What am I supposed to do about that?

SHERMAN

Help me ride over them!

BRADLEY

Okay, you sonofabitch. I'll help you. But I want it straight up and down. No double-talk.

SHERMAN

Straight up and down, you've got my word.

(then)

Those rockets have got to be realigned. We've got exactly five days.

X

69 OUTER SPACE

69

The massive chunk tumbles remorselessly towards Earth.
DISTANCE, SPEED and TIME TO IMPACT SUPERIMPOSED.

70 EXT. BITTERLY COLD LANDSCAPE OUTSIDE AN OBSERVATORY

70

with RADIO TELESCOPE DISHES looking up at a thickly overcast sky. SUPERIMPOSED ON THE SCREEN:

"YAROSLAVI - IN THE U.S.S.R."

70 CONTINUED:

70

A group of fur-hatted and black-coated men move out of the observatory towards two limousines. Amongst them is ALEXEI DUBOV, in his forties, a broad-shouldered scientist whom we shall come to know as Bradley's Russian counterpart. Beside him is TATIANA NIKOLAEVNA DONSKAYA, an attractive young woman about thirty, his assistant. They are all hunched against the wind and the flurry of snowflakes, and they are concerned. Their conversation is in Russian, SUBTITLED INTO ENGLISH.

DUBOV

It took the Germans three years
to destroy Stalingrad.

(points to the
sky)

It would take our friend up there
two seconds to turn half of Rus-
sia into one huge Siberia. And
fond as I am of Siberia --

A hawk-faced, party-line MEMBER of the group cuts
across him with --

HAWK-FACED MEMBER

No frivolity, Dubov.

By now they have reached the limousines, and break up
into two parties. When Dubov, Tatiana, and his
other people, all scientists, are out of the hearing
of the others --

DUBOV

If our national budget can afford
it, we should make a telephone
call to NASA.

To his group, the Hawk-faced Member says --

HAWK-FACED MEMBER

Under no circumstances must contact
be made with the United States,
until the ramifications of this
have been discussed with the
Chairman.

71 INT. OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE - WASHINGTON 71
- CLOSE ON THE SECRETARY - DAY

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

I hope no one has been foolish
enough to make contact with the
Russians about all this.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

SHERMAN (O.S.)

No one would do that without your approval, Mr. Secretary...

CAMERA HAS BEGUN TO PULL BACK TO INCLUDE several men seated around a long table, at the head of which sits the SECRETARY. With Sherman are Bradley; General BARRY ADLON, the present head of PROJECT HERCULES, typically Army Establishment; the Air Force Director of Space Systems, General Easton; the Air Force Chief of Staff; and at least THREE CIVILIAN, high-ranking GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

SHERMAN

(continuing)

... but you can be sure they know all there is to know about the meteor by now. The only thing they wouldn't know, is what we're planning to do.

ADLON

What we're discussing doing. Because I sincerely hope it's still discussion.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

General Adlon, I assure you that no decisions have been made. That's what this meeting's been called for. To decide what to do. You're in charge of Project Hercules, and if the result of this meeting is to make use of --

SHERMAN

There's nothing else we can use. All we've got out there is Hercules.

ADLON

Damn it, Hercules isn't out there either, as far as anybody but we know, and it's got to stay that way. We've never admitted to Hercules. If we admit to it now --

SHERMAN

We have to! You can't keep the whole world in the dark about what's happening...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (2)

71

SHERMAN (CONT'D).

... and once it's known that five miles of rock is going to hit somewhere at 48,000 kilometers per hour, people are going to want to know what the hell we intend to do about it!

ADLON

(unable to repress
his rage)

So you tell everybody we've got nuclear rockets orbiting out there in direct contradiction to every international agreement we've made? It's an invitation to being called liars and warmongers by every --

SHERMAN

(shouting)

We'll be international murderers if we don't! Or maybe you'd like us all to get out there with slingshots and B.B. guns --

The Secretary of Defense slaps the table for order.
There is silence.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Dr. Bradley, would you please tell us what would happen if this meteor struck us?

BRADLEY

A mass of rock a mile wide, travelling at 30,000 miles per hour, would cause a crater fifty miles across, and five miles deep.

They all stare at him, absorbing the appalling information. Bradley takes a breath, then --

BRADLEY

(continuing)

Orpheus is five miles wide. Its striking force is equal to two million five hundred thousand megatons of T.N.T.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (2)

71

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

Ten orders of magnitude above
the largest earthquake ever
recorded. It would throw into
the atmosphere five billion tons
of earth, and reduce solar
radiation for decades to come.
It could start another ice age.

The statement is followed by a stunned silence,
finally broken by --

ADLON

Suppose the thing doesn't hit,
and there's some chance of that,
isn't there...?

SHERMAN

Every scientific facility we
have tells us --

ADLON

You've been wrong before. You
were wrong sending Viking 12 off
its course --

SHERMAN

Goddamn it, I don't have to
listen to --

Again the Secretary of Defense bangs his hand on the
table, this time more loudly. And when there is
silence, Bradley very quietly rises.

BRADLEY

Excuse me.

He begins to go out of the room. The others stare
after him.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Dr. Bradley, where are you going?

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED

71 X

BRADLEY

I need air. But before I go: I don't give a damn what Russia says about America, or vice versa. I told you what's going to happen if that meteor hits, and if you think you can prevent it by hiding your heads under a blanket of shit, fine. If you ever reach a decision, I'll be in the bar across the street.

He strides out of the room. The entire conference sits immobilized. Finally --

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

(hastily)

I'll have to discuss this at the White House. I'll get back to you.

SHERMAN

In time, because there's damn little time.

72 OUTER SPACE

72

The great METEOR continues its fall. DISTANCE, SPEED and TIME TO IMPACT, again SUPERIMPOSED.

73 INT. WASHINGTON BAR - DAY

73

Dark, as almost all bars are, and quite crowded with after-lunch drinkers. CAMERA TRACKS ALONG the bar, registering the faces of the people watching and listening to a television NEWS BROADCAST.

NETWORK ANNOUNCER

X

...Although we have finally been informed why the space probe was diverted, and how it was subsequently destroyed, what our government still seems reluctant to tell us, is what has been happening since that catastrophic event.

In the top right hand corner of the TV SCREEN appears a small IMAGE OF BIG BEN.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

CAMERA HAS ARRIVED at Bradley who sits with a large drink in front of him.

NETWORK ANNOUNCER

(continuing)

We have now received further information about this mystery, and where did we get it? From the British Broadcasting Corporation. We are going to replay a recording of a broadcast made by them earlier today.

The BIG BEN IMAGE expands, filling the TV SCREEN, and--

74 THE TELEVISION SET BEHIND AND ABOVE THE BARTENDER

74

on which we SEE a young female BBC ANNOUNCER standing in front of the Houses of Parliament, microphone in hand; her voice is very, very British!

BBC ANNOUNCER

The British Cabinet met this morning to discuss the announcement made by Jodrell Bank Observatory that a piece of an asteroid knocked out of orbit by a comet, is on a possible collision course with Earth.

75 AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE BAR

75

Sherman comes in, and starts across to Bradley, CAMERA TRACKING with him. We HEAR the BBC ANNOUNCER O.S.

BBC ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Should this be the case, it would seem that in less than a week, this giant object could strike our planet causing untold damage and great loss of life.

Sherman seats himself next to Bradley, who catches his reflection in the bar mirror, but makes no move to acknowledge him.

BBC ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

(continuing)

It is understood that the Prime Minister is in close consultation with the American President, and has volunteered any assistance the British Government can give.

BARTENDER

Like sending us a load of umbrellas.

ANNOUNCER is back on the TV SCREEN:

X

NETWORK ANNOUNCER

We consider it deplorable that the American people should be dependent on the BBC to supply us with these facts. And that's the way it is today -- unfortunately. (), (), New York.

SHERMAN

I find it deplorable I haven't got a drink.

BRADLEY

(to Bartender)

Double scotch

(then to Sherman)

What happened?

SHERMAN

They're calling the President.

BRADLEY

What if he says no?

There is a pause, SHERMAN helps himself to an olive, then:

SHERMAN

(continuing)

A few years ago my kid Andy started complaining he had pains in his stomach. With all the junk food kids eat, that wasn't a big surprise. But he kept on complaining, so I talked to my wife and we took him to a doctor -- just for an opinion, you understand. 'Appendix,' says the doctor, and my wife says: 'We'll wait until tomorrow, the pains'll go away.' You know what Miriam's like, can't stand the thought of an operation.

X

The Bartender puts Sherman's drink down in front of him. Sherman picks it up, gets off the stool and starts to cross to a booth. Bradley follows.

X

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED

75 X

SHERMAN

That night, after she's cried herself to sleep, I go into Andy's bedroom, pick him up and drive him to a hospital. Six hours later, appendix is out, he's fine and having an ice cream, and Miriam's all smiles.

During this they have sat down. Sherman looks at Bradley --

SHERMAN

You get my point?

BRADLEY

Yeah, but how do you sneak me into a position where I can fire off a dozen nuclear warheads...without Miriam knowing?

SHERMAN

I'll do it, if I can't do it any other way.

BARTENDER (O.S.)

Is there a Mr. Sherman here?

SHERMAN

That's me.

The Bartender holds a telephone.

BARTENDER

Telephone.

Sherman looks around the room, then to Bartender.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED (3)

75 X

SHERMAN

Can I take it over there?

He indicates another phone in an alcove.

BARTENDER

Sure can.

Sherman rises and crosses to alcove. Bradley sits watching and sipping his drink while Sherman talks on phone. After a few moments of what seems to be a serious conversation, Sherman hangs up and returns to Bradley. Bradley reacts to his worried expression--

SHERMAN

Put those olives in your pocket,
you're not going to have any dinner.

OMIT 76, 77, 78

78A INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

78A X

CLOSE SHOT - THE PRESIDENT

behind his desk.

PRESIDENT

You're telling me that even if we
admit to Hercules, we still need
more firepower, more nuclear mega-
tonnage, more rockets?

BRADLEY (O.S.)

That's right, Mr. President.

President rises and moves around the desk, CAMERA MOVING
WITH HIM, to reveal Bradley, Sherman, and Adlon, also the
Secretary of Defense.

PRESIDENT

Well, Mr. Secretary, do we have more
rockets?

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Not in space, sir.

(CONTINUED)

78A CONTINUED

78A X

PRESIDENT

Then what the hell are we supposed to do? Conjure them out of the air?

SECRETARY OF DEFENCE

Something like that...Mr. Sherman would like to ask you a question.

PRESIDENT

(to Sherman)

Go ahead.

SHERMAN

Mr. President, would you confirm what I'm about to say? The Russians have their own equivalent of Hercules in space -- true or not true?

There is a slight pause on the President's part before he answers, then --

PRESIDENT

True.

BRADLEY

We're going to need it, we're going to need their rockets, to add to the power of our own.

ADLON

They'll never admit they've got the thing.

SHERMAN

We have to make them admit it.

ADLON

How?

PRESIDENT

General Adlon, for the time being, until this crisis has been resolved, I'm going to put Dr. Bradley in charge of Operation Hercules. I rely on you to give him every aid and assistance.

This is clearly a setback for Adlon, but he pulls himself together and says:

ADLON

(frostily)

Mr. President, I hope I'm public spirited enough to do whatever --

(CONTINUED)

PRESIDENT

I'm sure you are. Now listen, I think I may have a solution to this. Make sure you hear my broadcast at ten o'clock.

79 INT. WHITE HOUSE PRESS ROOM - NIGHT

79

Packed with Reporters, Television Cameras, etc. CAMERA PANS ACROSS the alert faces as they listen to the President--

PRESIDENT (O.S.)

You are going to ask what steps have been taken to make sure that this meteor never comes anywhere near the earth's surface. And I am happy to tell you, that realising that such an emergency as this could arise--

CAMERA IS NOW ON THE PRESIDENT--

PRESIDENT (Cont)

--your government, in collaboration with the best scientific brains at its disposal, developed a project to deal with this emergency, and that project has been named Hercules.

79A AN EXECUTIVE JET

79A

Inside the comfortable private aircraft Sherman, Bradley and Adlon are speeding to New York. They are listening to a broadcast.

PRESIDENT (V.O.)

What is Hercules? Hercules is an armed, orbiting satellite, its nuclear weaponry aimed toward Outer Space --

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED

79 X

BRADLEY
(with a wry smile)
He's got the name right, and the
direction wrong.

80 BACK TO THE PRESS ROOM

80 X

Individual SHOTS of the listening Reporters, the
President continuing--

PRESIDENT (O.S.)
What can Hercules do? It can send,
at the press of a button, enough
power to destroy any foreign body
on a collision course with our planet.

OMIT 81

X

81A CLOSE SHOT - THE PRESIDENT

81A X

Very carefully--

PRESIDENT
But in this case, a special
circumstance has arisen. The
meteor is of such size and
velocity that even this
powerful weapon cannot do the
job entirely.

82 INT. EXECUTIVE JET

82

Bradley, Sherman and Adlon listen carefully.

PRESIDENT (V.O.)
Fortunately, the Russians, with
the same foresight we ourselves
possessed, also mounted their own
defense weapon.

SHERMAN
(a look at Bradley)
You don't get to be President for
nothing....

(CONTINUED)

83 EXT. THE KREMLIN - MOSCOW - NIGHT 83

While we HOLD on the SHOT a moment --

PRESIDENT (V.O.)

We do not know what the Russians have called their weapon, but we know it exists.

84 INT. A ROOM IN THE KREMLIN - DAY 84

The RUSSIAN PREMIER watches the broadcast. Surrounding him are other officials, and amongst them are Dubov and Tatiana. The President is being translated into Russian.

PRESIDENT

And we are going to ask them to add their nuclear power to ours, so that together, we will be able to deal with the meteor, to strike it with irresistible force, and end forever its potential danger to us all. I will myself be speaking to them as soon as I have finished this broadcast.

85 INT. EXECUTIVE JET - NIGHT 85

Sherman switches OFF the RADIO

BRADLEY

Hook and bait down, let's hope the fish bite.

86 INT. THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS ROOM - NIGHT 86 X

The media listen intently to the President's closing words.

PRESIDENT

One last thing, I ask you not to panic. You must go on with your lives as you normally do. Your safety is in our hands, and I promise you, they are capable hands. Goodnight, and God bless you.

(CONTINUED)

87 BACK WITH THE RUSSIANS IN THE KREMLIN

The Hawk-faced party-line Member turns OFF the set.
When the Russians speak, we SUBTITLE them in English.

RUSSIAN PREMIER

The Americans elected an alchemist
for President. He can turn
hypocrisy into diplomacy.

Dubov laughs. Tatiana smiles. Even the Hawk-faced
party Member manages a smile.

RUSSIAN PREMIER

(continuing)

Now, any minute the Alchemist
will be calling us. My suggestion
is, we permit him to initiate dis-
cussions, which you, Dubov, will
attend. But be quite clear, they
are to be only discussions.

DUBOV

(a sigh)

The Volga is about to overflow
its banks, and we are discussing
swimming lessons.

The PHONE RINGS. They all look at it in silence,
Then the Russian Premier reaches out a hand to
pick it up.

88 EXT. AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY
BUILDING - NEW YORK - MORNING.

88

ESTABLISHING SHOT. On the SCREEN is SUPERIMPOSED:

"WEDNESDAY, 8:30 A.M."

The building is windowless. It's two blocks from
the Hudson River. On the north side, towards Fulton
Street, is St. Paul's Church, with its little grave-
yard; and on the south, towards Dey Street, is the
World Trade Center. The address is 195 Broadway.
The day is blustery, with some snow.

89 INT. MAIN LOBBY OF THE BUILDING - MORNING

89

Enormous, with banks of elevators, already bustling
with early morning activity.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

Sherman and Bradley enter through the street doors, and start across the entire length of the lobby, heading towards a security post at one end of it.

90 ANGLE AS THEY ARRIVE IN FRONT OF THE SEMI-CIRCULAR COUNTER

90

behind which a GUARD in civilian clothes sits, a huge book of names open in front of him. He looks up to see Sherman whom he recognizes, but even so, Sherman shows his pass.

SHERMAN

Has General Adlon come in?

GUARD

Half an hour ago.

SHERMAN

This is Dr. Bradley. I think you've got a pass for him.

The Guard looks in a drawer and finds Bradley's pass. He hands the pass to Bradley. Sherman leads Bradley behind the counter towards two stainless steel elevator doors. He thumbs a button on one of them, at once the door opens, and they step inside.

91 INT. ELEVATOR - TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY BUILDING - DAY

91

Sherman presses the single button on the panel, and the elevator starts to descend.

BRADLEY

How far down?

SHERMAN

Next to the old subway system, the section that runs under the Hudson. Made it easy to bring in all the equipment. Nobody saw us, and it saved millions.

BRADLEY

Why not some sensible place like Houston?

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

SHERMAN

Easy access to a total telecommunications setup right over our heads, and nobody in their right minds would put their most important emergency striking power under the busiest city in the world.

They continue down until Bradley is forced to smile.

BRADLEY

Where do we come out? Australia?

Finally, the elevator stops, and the door opens.

92 A LOBBY OFF THE ELEVATORS - DAY

92

Bradley and Sherman come out of their elevator. Bradley looks around. The lobby is semi-circular, with passageways running off each side, to offices and sleeping quarters, etc., and directly in front of them a door, metal, with only a little slot in it. There is another guard sitting at a desk.

BRADLEY

What happens if there's a power failure?

SHERMAN

Plenty of ways out down below.

He crosses to the door, inserts his plastic pass card in the slot -- and the single door slides open. He steps aside. Bradley looks in and down and sees --

93 LONG SHOT LOOKING AT THE HERCULES COMMUNICATIONS CENTER BELOW

93

A staircase leads down to a large area filled with scientific equipment. Elaborate banks of computers, an array of monitoring screens, open doorways leading off to support rooms and canteens, glass-enclosed booths with smaller computer consoles in them.

A vision of great intricacy and quiet efficiency. And at the bottom of the stairs stands General Barry Adlon.

- 94 NEW ANGLE AS SHERMAN AND BRADLEY START DOWN THE STAIRS 94 X
with ADLON stiff and uninviting below.
- 94A CAMERA CRANING DOWN THE STAIRS WITH BRADLEY AND SHERMAN 94A X
O.S. we hear muffled rumbling noise which grows in
intensity then diminishes.

BRADLEY

What's that?

SHERMAN

Train. We hear them all the time.

(throughout Center Sequences we are always aware of Trains
coming and going)

- 95 ANOTHER ANGLE AS BRADLEY AND SHERMAN ARRIVE AT THE 95
FOOT OF THE STAIRS.
and shake hands with Adlon.

BRADLEY

Quite a setup.

ADLON

(tight-lipped)

Thank you. Normally we work with
twenty-five, but since it's been
called an emergency, I've brought
in the full crew.

Bradley looks around at the forty or so technicians
in the center. At least ten are women.

ADLON

(turning a closed
face to Sherman)

I have a message here.

He hands Sherman a note. Sherman takes it, looks at it,
while Adlon watches expressionlessly, and Bradley con-
tinues to look around. Sherman turns a pleased face to
Bradley.

SHERMAN

Good news. 'The Russians are
coming.'

He hands the note to Bradley who starts reading it.
Adlon cannot control himself any longer --

ADLON

I would like to go on record
that I consider allowing the
Russians to come into this Center
to be a grave error which one day
the United States may bitterly regret.

BRADLEY

I'd like to meet some of your people.

95 CONTINUED

95 X

ADLON
(pulling himself together)
Of course.

SHERMAN
I'd like to use your office for
a moment, General.

Without waiting for a reply, he goes back up the stairs
to where ADLON'S office is. Meanwhile, ADLON has
started to lead BRADLEY over to the Center Console where
A MAN in his fifties is flanked by TWO YOUNGER TECHNICIANS.

ADLON
(introducing)
This is our Chief Technician,
Rolf Manheim.

MANHEIM turns, rises, and puts out his hand to BRADLEY.

MANHEIM
Dr. Bradley, you have been teaching
a nephew of mine at the Massachusetts
Institute of Technology... he thinks
you're a very intelligent man.

BRADLEY
You have a very perceptive nephew.

They smile at each other. ADLON leads BRADLEY away to
ANOTHER CONSOLE where JAN WATKINS stands; a YOUNG
AMERICAN GIRL, pretty, and bright. There is a YOUNG
MAN standing close to her, with whom she has been talking.
His name is ALAN. As BRADLEY and ADLON arrive, ADLON is
saying:

ADLON
Our Trajectory Analysis Officer,
Jan Watkins.

JAN
Hello.

BRADLEY shakes her hand.

BRADLEY
I'm going to be asking you and
your Computers a lot of questions.

JAN
We're going to give you a lot of
prompt answers.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED

95

ALAN
Triple-checked.

JAN
My assistant, Alan Marshall.

As BRADLEY and ALAN shake hands--

HUNTER (O.S.)
Dr. Bradley--

Bradley and Others turn and look towards--

95A BILL HUNTER

95A

who stands a few paces away. He is a black, in his thirties.

HUNTER
Sorry to interrupt, but I've got Sir Michael Hughes from the Jodrell Bank Observatory on the monitor. He wants a word with you.

BRADLEY
(to Others)
Excuse me.

He crosses to Hunter, and they both walk briskly across the Center towards another bank of Monitors. As they go--

HUNTER
I'm Bill Hunter. In charge of tracking.

BRADLEY
Hello. Who else are you linked with besides Sir Michael?

HUNTER
Hong Kong, Arecibo, and New South Wales.

X

They arrive in front of the Tracking Station Monitors. Bradley positions himself in front of a LOCKED TV CAMERA operating in conjunction with the monitors, and transmitting his image to the stations. He looks down at Sir Michael whose image is already on the screen.

(CONTINUED)

95A CONTINUED

95A X

BRADLEY
(with a smile) ?
Good morning.

SIR MICHAEL X
Morning, Paul. I wasn't expecting
to see you until Wimbledon, assuming,
of course, there's going to be a
Wimbledon.

BRADLEY X
Or anything else, for that matter,
What have you got for us?

SIR MICHAEL X
In twenty-four hours we can expect
the first splinters. Almost impossible
to track, unless they arrive in clusters,
then their density will register.

BRADLEY X
Anything else?

SIR MICHAEL
Not for the moment. I'll be here
until it's over. We'll keep in
touch.

BRADLEY X
Day or night.

SHERMAN comes into Shot.

SHERMAN
They're arriving 7:30 this evening,
Washington.

BRADLEY
We're not in Washington!

SHERMAN
They've got to touch base with
their Embassy first. Paul, I'll
get them here as fast as I can.

96 CLOSE SHOT - THE RED STAR OF RUSSIA - NIGHT

96

emblazoned on the tail fin of an executive jet which
has just landed at an airport.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

CAMERA PULLS BACK and we SEE, in the cold darkness, a group of people, all dressed against the chill, moving away from the plane towards black limousines waiting for them. In the group we can PICK OUT Dubov, a scarf wrapped around the upturned collar of his coat, a fur hat on his head. Tatiana is with him; and Sherman, surrounded by both Russian and American embassy officials, is shaking hands with the scientist. They continue moving towards their respective limousines, and OVER all this, RUSSIAN MUSIC emphasizes the important moment.

97 CLOSE - A MODEL OF THE WORLD

97

featuring the vast land mass of the USSR. CAMERA BEGINS TO TRACK AROUND AND BACK TO SHOW that the model also includes a replica of Hercules, with its fourteen nuclear rockets, facing down on the Russian land mass. SUPERIMPOSED:

"THURSDAY: 9:20 A.M."

It is now REVEALED we are in General Adlon's Hercules Center office. Dubov is standing with his back to the others, looking at the model. Sherman is present, and General Adlon, and Tatiana -- and a YOUNG MAN in Army uniform, with crewcut and rimless glasses. He stands next to Adlon.

DUBOV

(in Russian)

I presume this is an accurate replica of your satellite, and its alignment? Or is the direction of the rockets just accidental.

Immediately both Tatiana and the Young Army Man standing beside Adlon begin translations into English. As they do so, they look at each other, both slightly annoyed. Dubov is amused by this, but Adlon is very cold faced. When the translations are done:

ADLON

I am not prepared to volunteer such strategic information.

Tatiana translates this into Russian for Dubov, and Adlon asks his man:

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

ADLON
(continuing)
Is that what I said?

ARMY TRANSLATOR
Yes, sir.

DUBOV
What striking power does it carry?

Tatiana is about to translate this into English, but stops, and allows the Army man to do it. When he does:

ADLON
I would prefer you got that information from Dr. Bradley.

98 CAMERA ZIP PANS OVER TO THE OFFICE DOOR - AND THERE IS BRADLEY!

98

looking at Dubov whose back is still to him:

BRADLEY
Fourteen rockets, each carrying a one-hundred-megaton bomb.

99 NEW ANGLE

99

as Adlon winces, and Dubov turns to see Bradley at the door. Tatiana and the young Army man both translate together again, and Bradley looks from one to the other. Then he and Dubov cross to meet in the center of the room, where they shake hands warmly.

BRADLEY
Welcome to New York, Dr. Dubov.
I'm glad you're here.

Once more, Tatiana and the Army man translate, and Bradley laughs.

BRADLEY
(continuing)
What the hell is this?

SHERMAN
(stepping forward)
This is Tatiana Nikolaevana
Donskaya, astrophysicist --
and Dr. Dubov's English voice.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

TATIANA

How do you do?

BRADLEY

How do you do?

SHERMAN

(not unaware of
the humor of it
all)

And this is General Adlon's
Russian voice...

ADLON

It's the recognized procedure.
How do we know we're being
properly interpreted?

As Tatiana translates for Dubov, and Adlon looks at
the young Army man --

BRADLEY

I think we all trust each other
here. If we don't, there's no
point. So -- if it's a matter
of choosing one or the other,
I'll take the pretty one.

Tatiana tries not to laugh as she translates, and
meanwhile --

ADLON

Since we're redundant here...
please excuse me. Mr. Sherman,
I'd like a word with you.

He turns and walks stiffly out. The young Army man
follows.

SHERMAN

I'll go and calm him down.

He points a thumb after Adlon, and goes out after him.

DUBOV

General Adlon is not pleased
to see me.

After Tatiana translates --

BRADLEY

He's ecstatic to see you.

100 OUTSIDE ADLON'S OFFICE - DAY

100 X

Adlon and the young Army man have stopped, a few paces away from the door, waiting for Sherman.

SHERMAN

(moving up to them)

General, I know this isn't easy for you --

ADLON

Mr. Sherman, fifteen minutes ago I spoke to the Secretary of Defence, who seems more aware of the complexity of this situation than you do --

SHERMAN

General, please --

ADLON

His orders are, and I quote: 'There will be no change in the direction of our rockets until the Russians admit they've got their own rockets, and until they also agree to realign them!' Is that understood?

SHERMAN

(barely able to contain himself)

Look, why don't you Xerox a hundred copies of those orders, and send them to a hundred guys in Washington, and then take a hundred meetings to discuss them, and by then the meteor will have hit, and there won't be any more problems!

ADLON

Nevertheless, I would appreciate it if you would pass that information on to your friend Doctor Bradley!

X

101 THE MODEL OF THE HERCULES SATELLITE - DAY

101

and OVER this we HEAR Dubov say something in Russian.

102 INT. ADLON'S OFFICE - DAY

102

Dubov at the model, Bradley a few paces to one side, and Tatiana between them.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

DUBOV

(with Tatiana
translating)

I don't mean to criticize, but
you will find it difficult to hit
a meteor with your warheads
pointing towards the U.S.S.R.

BRADLEY

We call ours Hercules, what do
you call yours?

Tatiana doesn't bat an eyelid as she repeats this in
Russian to Dubov. And Dubov answers in Russian:

DUBOV

How can we have a name for
something that does not exist?

Tatiana translates this for Bradley who gives a half-
smile and crosses to an illuminated map on a wall which
shows all the orbiting satellites. He picks up a
pointer and taps a little red dot.

BRADLEY

Then who the hell put up this
thing called Peter the Great?
Its warheads trained towards
the U.S.

Dubov slowly walks over and stands beside Bradley,
looking up at the little red dot. Tatiana follows.
Dubov regards it for a long moment. Dubov has few
words of English, and very occasionally uses them:

DUBOV

(in English)

Chinese perhaps.

BRADLEY

I didn't know they had anything
up there.

Tatiana translates and Dubov answers in Russian:

DUBOV

You can never tell with them.
They do not say much, do they?

Bradley hears Tatiana's translation, turns from the
map, begins walking away, almost as if he doesn't wish
to embarrass Dubov.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED: (2)

102

Tatiana remains by Dubov's side, translating quietly.

BRADLEY

Dr. Dubov, we've got a slight problem. If Peter the Great doesn't exist, we're out of business.

(turning to face
Dubov)

If Peter the Great did exist, I'd have to know what weapons it would be carrying, where it was, and what frequencies we'd have to use to align it with Hercules. Now, for purposes of discussion only...

As Tatiana finishes translating, Dubov says through her ---

DUBOV

I can see the importance of your questions. If I had been involved in the construction of such an illegal weapon --- for purposes of discussion only -- I could theorize answers to those questions.

BRADLEY

Then, would you be prepared, academically, of course, to work out the details with me as to how we would link the satellites?

After translations:

DUBOV

(in English)

Academically ---

(then in Russian)

-- Yes, I would be prepared.

BRADLEY

(after Tatiana's
translation)

Before we do that, what would you have designed your striking power to be?

This is a decisive moment for Dubov, but he barely hesitates, after the translation.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED: (3)

102

DUBOV

Sixteen rockets, each carrying
the same megatonnage as your own.

BRADLEY

That would have given us -- a
billion plus. Too bad it's only
academic.

103 EXT. U.S.S.R. - A BARREN LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

103

SUPERIMPOSED on the SCREEN:

"ZAISAN --- CENTRAL SIBERIA"

The landscape is hard to decipher at first, but gradually emerges from the darkness. It is a desolate, almost barren region of ridges and crags. There is some tough vegetation, just enough to keep the herd of goats alive, which is at rest now in the darkness. CAMERA PANS OVER the landscape TOWARDS a dimly-flickering source of light and finally DISCOVERS a makeshift shelter, a thing constructed of goatskins and wood, in which a sputtering fire burns.

104 INT. THE SHELTER - NIGHT

104

Around the fire are the GOATHERD, his WIFE, and two small children. The children are asleep, the Man and Woman are eating from bowls, using wooden cutlery to spoon up a thick mixture of goat's milk and bread. All are dressed in worn, heavy garments against the bitter cold. One of the children stirs, and the Woman, not pausing in her eating, lays a comforting hand on its brow.

105 OUTSIDE THE SHELTER - THE SKY

105

a dark canopy speckled with pinpoints of stationary lights. Then we SEE that one of these pinpoints is moving! Coming DOWN TOWARDS CAMERA, growing larger by the instant, changing in color as it comes!

106 IN THE SHELTER

106

The Man and Woman stop eating as the growing light from outside begins to shine through the skins of the shelter. The Woman mutters something, the Man mutters a reply, rises, and starts out of the shelter.

107 WITH THE GOATHERD

107

outside the shelter, looking up at the sky -- which is rapidly brightening, turning white! He calls out loudly, and in a moment his Wife has come out of the shelter, and stands beside him, looking up and around fearfully. The whiteness is glaring, frightening. The Man and Woman exchange panicked questions, and she dives back into the shelter, and as the Goatherd continues looking around in fear and wonder, we can HEAR the Woman waking the children, O.S. He calls to her "Hurry, hurry!" as if there could be somewhere for them to run to escape the plunging splinter of asteroid as it plummets down in the earth's atmosphere. The Woman comes bolting out of the shelter, carrying one child, and dragging the other by the arm. The children look at the sky which is turning pink, then red, until a terrible summer has come to the winter landscape!

108 SLOW MOTION - THE SPLINTER

108

hurtling down!

109 BACK TO THE GOATHERD AND HIS FAMILY

109

who are wild with fear now, and running for all they're worth, the terrified goats plunging around them.

110 ANOTHER ANGLE FROM AFAR - SLOW MOTION

110

as the splinter strikes with the concussive impact of an atomic EXPLOSION, and the Man and his Wife and children are swallowed in the gigantic mouth opened by the explosion, the animals going with them -- and the SCREEN fills with flame and smoke and billowing clouds of stone-filled dirt!

111 EXT. THE UNITED NATIONS BUILDING - NEW YORK - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

111 X

SUPERIMPOSED:

"FRIDAY, 11 A.M."

UNITED NATIONS PRESIDENT (V.O.)

I give the floor to the first speaker
on my list, the distinguished representative from Canada.

112 INT. UNITED NATIONS - SECURITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - DAY

112

The CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE is speaking:

(CONTINUED)

CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE

We have information that a disturbance of earthquake proportions has occurred somewhere in Siberia. Would the Russian Delegate kindly tell us what was the cause of the disturbance?

The RUSSIAN DELEGATE sits silently, moodily. He has nothing to say.

U. N. PRESIDENT (V.O.)

The Representative from Zambia has asked for the floor on a point of order.

The REPRESENTATIVE from ZAMBIA leans forward to his microphone.

ZAMBIA REPRESENTATIVE

Two days since the President of the United States made his appeal to the Soviet Union, and we still have silence from them. Are they facing imminent catastrophe with such equanimity? They may be, but the rest of the world is not!

Still, the Russian keeps his silence.

U. N. PRESIDENT

The Representative from the United Kingdom has asked for the floor on a point of order.

U. K. DELEGATE

You could at least tell us, since it was in your country, whether that disturbance was caused by an earthquake, or a splinter from the meteor.

113 ANGLE ON THE RUSSIAN DELEGATE

He feels the pressure he is under. A pause, then he speaks--

RUSSIAN DELEGATE

Mr. President, it was a splinter. We would like to request a recess, while we consult further with our government.

114 THE METEOR AGAIN

SUPERIMPOSED: DISTANCE, SPEED and TIME TO IMPACT. The headlines of three newspapers ZOOM UP and PAST CAMERA. They read: "ORPHEUS SPLINTER HITS SIBERIA." "FIRST STRIKE FROM SPACE -- WHAT NEXT?" "HERE THEY COME -- ARE WE PREPARED?"

115 CLOSE SHOT - JAN WATKINS

115 X

She is working at a computer, feeding a complicated mathematical analysis into it, and stripping the reaction to it out of a Telex. CAMERA PULLS BACK as she starts away towards MANHEIM, sitting at the central Console. He takes the readout from her, runs a pencil down it, makes an adjustment, and gives it back. She starts across the center towards Bradley's office.

116 NEW ANGLE

116 X

Alan, sitting at another Console, looks up and sees Jan. He rises and joins her as she walks.

ALAN

Get any sleep last night?

JAN

Couple of hours. How about you?

ALAN

Played Gin Rummy and lost. What's the Russian girl like?

JAN

Very nice. And very bright. And forget it!

ALAN

(laughs)

I miss you.

He gives her a quick kiss on the cheek, and she continued on.

117 INT. BRADLEY'S OFFICE - HERCULES CENTER - DAY

117 X

Dubov sits beside Tatiana who is typing on an IBM machine. Bradley sits opposite them, running a pencil over a sheet of calculations. Jan comes in and hands Bradley her piece of paper.

JAN

With compliments.

X

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED

117

BRADLEY
Thanks.

JAN
(to Tatiana)
I had them strip the Army blanket
off your bed, and put on some
proper sheets.

TATIANA
That's very kind.

JAN
I've also got some decent soap
for you, because using the stuff
they give you here is like washing
your hands with a rock
(with a nod at
the men)
Got to watch them, you know.

TATIANA
I know. That's a very pretty scarf.

X

JAN
(touching at neck)
Thanks. Takes a girl to notice.

X

BRADLEY
(friendly)
Go on, scram.

Jan smiles and exits. Bradley reads the paper, makes adjustments on his own calculations, and hands them over to Dubov. Dubov reads them, nods, and hands them to Tatiana to feed into the computers. As she types, Dubov says something to her in Russian, then rises and crossed to throw himself on a couch in one corner of the room.

TATIANA
(in explanation)
Jet lag.

BRADLEY
How about you?

TATIANA
I'm all right.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED: (2)

117 X

While she continues typing, Bradley rises, picks up his coffee cup, crossed to Tatiana, and picks up hers. Goes to a table on which stand coffee pot, and plates of sandwiches. He glances at Dubov, as he refills their cups. He goes back to Tatiana, puts her cup down beside her, then sits again, and watches her.

TATIANA

(continuing;
after a moment)

It's done. Shall I wake him?

BRADLEY

Let him sleep, he's earned it.

Gratefully, she leans back, closes her eyes.

BRADLEY

(continuing)

How long have you been with him?

TATIANA

I've know him for ten years, but
I have only worked with him for
five.

She watches Bradley twisting a pencil in his fingers.

TATIANA

(continuing)

You're nervous. You're waiting
for the next splinter.

BRADLEY

(throwing down
pencil)

I'm waiting for my 'employers' to
give me permission to realign the
satellites!

(then)

Why did you choose Astro-physics?

TATIANA

It chose me.

She rises, crosses towards the sandwiches.

(CONTINUED)

TATIANA

(continuing)

I was a telephone operator at the Center for Control of Flight in Kalimin, near Moscow. I was bilingual, because even when I was a child, my mother kept giving me books in English and saying -- 'One day you will be grateful for this.' And I suppose I am. Would you like a sandwich?

BRADLEY

Thanks, no.

She takes one for herself, and begins to cross back to her chair, chewing it.

BRADLEY

(continuing)

What's this got to do with Astro-physics?

TATIANA

About ten years ago, some British Scientists came to Russia to talk to some of our people. Alexei -- Dr. Dubov -- needed someone to translate for him. And they asked me.

She sits again.

BRADLEY

Dr. Dubov's English voice.

TATIANA

When I had finished, he asked me to stay on with him, as interpreter and secretary.

(smiles, remembering)

He was married to Eva then, his first wife.

BRADLEY

How many has he had?

TATIANA

He's on his fourth.

(laughs)

He's sleeping alone now, but it's not often.

BRADLEY

You know, it's nice talking to you.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED (3)

117 X

TATIANA

(puzzled)

Thank you, but we've been talking
for almost two days--

BRADLEY

No, I've been talking to you-Dubov.
This is you-you. Very attractive.

TATIANA

Oh. Thank you again.

BRADLEY

Then?

TATIANA

Than?

BRADLEY

Astro-physics.

TATIANA

I found out that space fascinated
me. Alexei saw this, and he
encouraged me. He arranged for
me to go to school. And when I
came back to him, I was his second
assistant.

(CONTINUED)

X

118 MED. SHOT - DUBOV ON THE COUCH

118

His reading glasses fall out of his extended hand.

BRADLEY (O.S.)

What wife was he on then?

TATIANA (O.S.)

His third, Elena.

119 THREE SHOT

119

as Tatiana rises, crosses to Dubov and bends to pick up the glasses, and puts them back in his shirt breast pocket:

TATIANA

She danced in the ballet, very beautiful, but he once said: 'In most people, the brain occupies almost all of the cranium; in her cranium, there is still room for a football field.' After a while, I became his First assistant.

BRADLEY

Promotion for brilliance.

TATIANA

(crossing back to desk)

Oh, no. He married his First -- promotion through wedding.

(sitting)

I met my husband then.

BRADLEY

Your husband...

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED:

119 X

TATIANA

He was an astronaut. Three years
... and then he went on an exploratory
flight... and he didn't come
back.

BRADLEY

Sorry.

TATIANA

Yes. I was sorry. He was a nice
man. And I went back with -- our
sleeping beauty. He was just
leaving the ballet dancer.

BRADLEY

And now--? I mean, with you.

TATIANA

Nothing serious. Not really.

A VOICE comes over the SPEAKER SYSTEM.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED: (2)

119

HUNTER (V.O.)
 Dr. Bradley, Sir Michael's
 reporting on the Jodrell Bank
 Monitor. There are meteors
 coming in over Central Europe..

Dubov has awakened, and is sitting up, as Bradley at
 once rises and heads out of the room. With Tatiana
 translating, Dubov and she follow Bradley.

120 LOOKING UP FROM THE CENTER FLOOR AT THE WINDOW OF 120
 ADLON'S OFFICE ABOVE

He has heard the emergency call, and is looking down at
 the activity below. He sees --

121 FROM ADLON'S POV 121

Bradley, Sherman, Tatiana and Dubov moving up with
 others to stand around HUNTER, a black in his thirties,
 in charge of communications, who is facing SIR MICHAEL
 HUGHES appearing on the JODRELL BANK SCREEN.

122 SHOOTING UP AT ADLON AGAIN 122

as he moves quickly away from the window.

123 CLOSE SHOT - SIR MICHAEL ON THE JODRELL BANK SCREEN - 123 x
 DAY

He carried himself with the usual British composure
 in the face of emergencies;

SIR MICHAEL
 The Observatory in Frascati is
 reporting as I speak. There's a
 cluster -- I repeat -- a cluster
 big enough to track -- coming in
 over Italy, south of Pisa.

He is handed a piece of paper which he scans --

SIR MICHAEL
 (continuing)
 They're approaching at fifteen
 thousand meters per second.
 Impact time, seventy-four
 minutes --

124 GROUP SHOT - FEATURING BRADLEY, TATIANA, DUBOV AND HUNTER 124

looking down and O.S. at Sir Michael on his Screen.

SIR MICHAEL (V.O.)

-- that's seventy-three now!

Bradley's muttered four-letter word sums up their reaction. There's nothing they can do.

125 GENERAL SHOT - PISA - NIGHT 125

The sky above the ancient Italian city is blood red! We SEE the silhouette of the Leaning Tower.
SUPERIMPOSED:

"PISA, FRIDAY, 8:15 P.M.
EUROPEAN TIME."

126 EXT. NEAR THE LEANING TOWER OF PISA - NIGHT 126

CAMERA PANS OVER a crowd of hundreds, as they stare up at the sky, almost all of them chattering, as the red heavens above them change color, growing lighter, pinker. A television mobile unit van pushes its way into the center of the crowd, and technicians hurry out to set up their cameras.

127 VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE METEOR CLUSTER ABOVE PISA - NIGHT 127

The pinpoints of light define themselves in the sky. Dozens of them, flowing with the seconds, changing color, red to orange to yellow to white, as their temperature and size increase with the rush into the earth's atmosphere.

128 BACK TO TELEVISION CREW AND CROWD SURROUNDING THEM 128
PISA - NIGHT

An ANNOUNCER is staring up at the sky, as are all the others, shouting into his microphone, volubly describing in Italian what is happening.

129 SEQUENCE OF SHOTS 129

of the REACTIONS of the people of Pisa, OVER which the Italian Announcer's VOICE CONTINUES, dramatically and almost hysterically.

(CONTINUED)

OMIT 129 A-B-C-D-E-F-G-H

129I THE SKY - THE METEOR SHOWER AT ITS CLOSEST

129I X

And suddenly, the dazzling light over the city begins to darken!

129J VARIOUS SHOTS - THE PEOPLE IN THE CROWD AND THE ANNOUNCER

129J X

intercut with the fragments of the Cluster as they burn up in the earth's atmosphere, and normal night begins to replace the unreal brightness.

129K A MAN AND A WOMAN WITH TWO CHILDREN BEHIND THEM

129K X

huddle in a doorway looking up. As the darkening continues, the MAN starts to move forward, losing his fear. The others start following.

129L MORE SHOTS OF THE PEOPLE

129L X

as fear starts to drain from them, and they realise what is happening.

130 NEAR THE LEANING TOWER

130 X

with the sky growing ever more dark, more normal. CAMERA PANS over faces, COMING to the ANNOUNCER who is yelling:

ANNOUNCER
(in Italian)
Saved! We are saved!

130A BIG SHOT - THE CROWD

130A X

with the sky once again true night. And all the people taking up the Announcer's cry, and cheering in relief!

(CONTINUED)

131 BIG CLOSE SHOT - SIR MICHAEL ON HIS SCREEN IN THE
HERCULES COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - DAY

131

SIR MICHAEL

(shouting)

They've burnt up! The cluster's
evaporated. Frascati tells us
not one of them made it through.
Everything's back to normal.
We've been lucky this time, the
whole damn thing's been nothing
more than a fireworks display!

132 CAMERA ZOOMS BACK FROM THE SCREEN

132 X

TO REVEAL Bradley, Dubov, Tatiana, Jan, Manheim,
Sherman and others watching Sir Michael on the
monitor.

BRADLEY

Thanks, Sir Michael, that's the best
news we've had yet.

SIR MICHAEL

That was an easy one, old boy. Try
to do even better next time.

Now CAMERA PANS FROM the group TO a --

133 CLOSE SHOT - GENERAL BARRY ADLON

133

standing apart from the others.

ADLON

I think we can assume the emer-
gency is over. This particular
one, and the emergency in general.
It's a pity the world has been
sent into a state of unnecessary
panic. There's your threat, Dr.
Bradley, 'a fireworks display.'

134 GROUP SHOT FEATURING BRADLEY

134

trying vainly to keep his temper down:

BRADLEY

What about the meteor in Siberia?

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

ADLON
(not even looking
at Dubov)

My opinion is that that explosion
was caused by an underground
nuclear test, in contradiction
of --

BRADLEY
(explodes)

X

Tell this asshole once and for all
that the main chunk will not burn,
it's too damn big!

ADLON freezes, the Others stare, appalled. SHERMAN
immediately turns to Adlon --

135 NEW ANGLE INCLUDING ADLON

135

Sherman turns to the General.

SHERMAN
We've got enough to deal with
here, General, we don't need any
additional aggravation from you.

Adlon is stunned, embarrassed in front of his staff.
With great effort, he tries to take control.

ADLON
Not one promise of calamity has
come true, and as far as I am
concerned, not a single one will.
When good sense is restored, and
when the President has returned
the control of the Center to me,
I shall return to the Center!

There is a moment's embarrassed silence on the part of
everyone present as Adlon stands a further moment
trembling with rage, then stalks out, all eyes follow-
ing him.

136 NEW ANGLE FEATURING DUBOV

136 X

He launches into a furious and voluble speech in Russian

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED:

136 X

to which all present listen with eyes wide until he has finally finished, and everyone turns to Tatiana, who speaks quietly:

TATIANA

Dr. Dubov says he is very upset.

There is some laughter at this understatement, and the tension is partially relieved.

TATIANA

(continuing)

He would like to make a telephone call to the Russian Embassy in Washington.

SHERMAN

Follow me!

He moves off, and Dubov storms after him, continuing his tirade against all the fools in the world, and particularly those in Moscow.

137 INT. THE UNITED NATIONS -- FRIDAY, 5 P.M.

137 X

The Russian Delegate leans forward to his microphone:

RUSSIAN DELEGATE

The U.S.S.R. is not unaware of the seriousness of the situation. We have therefore decided to add to the power of Hercules the considerable power that we ourselves possess-- a Satellite developed before the United States developed theirs, and which we designed and constructed for the purpose of defence against possible disasters such as the one facing us now, and for that purpose only. Our scientists are at this very moment advising their American counterparts, and have now been granted permission to add the striking power of our Satellite to that of the American one. To this Assembly we say: 'As we have

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED:

137 X

RUSSIAN DELEGATE (cont)
 done before, and will continue to
 do, the U.S.S.R. will always support
 any exercise, the primary object of
 which, is the the benefit of mankind.'

There is APPLAUSE.

137A INT. COM. CENTER - CLOSE SHOT ONE OF THE LARGE SCREENS
 with PETER THE GREAT established as an entity for the
 first time.

137A X

BRADLEY (V.O.)
 To Peter the Great.

138 SHOT OF FOUR SMALL GLASSES FILLED WITH CLEAR LIQUID
 clinking together. CAMERA PANS WITH one of the
 glasses as it is pulled away INTO a:

138

139 CLOST SHOT - SHERMAN

139

He holds the glass up, ready to drink.

SHERMAN
 To our Russian scissors, for the
 cutting of the -- Red tape.

140 INT. ADLON'S OFFICE - GROUP SHOT--BRADLEY, SHERMAN,
 TATIANA AND DUBOV -- NIGHT

140 X

All standing with their glasses raised. They drink down
 the fiery contents in single gulps. They hold out their
 empty glasses, and Tatiana refills them. As once again
 they hold them aloft, Dubov says something in Russian,
 and Tatiana turns to Bradley and Sherman:

TATIANA
 Dr. Dubov would like to tell you
 an English expression he learned
 when he was in America last time.

DUBOV
 (drawing himself up)
 'Where there is a way, there is a will.'

BRADLEY
 (raises glass, smiles)
 Or words to that effect.

(CONTINUED)

There is a grand SURGE of PATRIOTIC RUSSIAN MUSIC which
HOLDS OVER --

141 THE ARMED SATELLITE PETER THE GREAT IN SPACE

141

its Russian markings clear, as it begins to revolve,
turning its array of deadly nuclear weapons slowly
up and away from Earth, and aims them into outer
darkness. They fix on their target --

(CONTINUED)

142 THE METEOR

142

hurtling down, its jagged shape huge and threatening.
And then there is ANOTHER SURGE OF MUSIC which sup-
plants the Russian orchestration -- this time, AMERICAN
MUSIC which HOLDS and CONTINUES OVER --

143 HERCULES

143

its American markings visible as it, too, begins to
turn and line up its fourteen rockets until they, too,
are fixed on:

144 METEOR

144

continuing down, unaware of the potent defense awaiting
its close approach!

145 INT. THE HERCULES COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NIGHT

145

Bradley, Dubov, Sherman, Tatiana and others stand near
Manheim at his console as he watches indicators on the
monitor in front of him. He taps out two sets of sig-
nals, one for each satellite, and then, after a short
pause --

MANHEIM

Attitude correction complete.
Situation nominal.

SHERMAN

Now we wait until we see the whites
of its eyes.

146 CLOSE SHOT - BRADLEY

146 X

BRADLEY

O-seven hundred, Sunday.

147 A PICTORIAL SHOT OF A VILLAGE - DAY

147

nestled deep amongst snow-clad mountains. SUPERIMPOSED:

"ZUKSTEIN, AUSTRIAN ALPS, SATURDAY,
10 A.M., EUROPEAN TIME."

- 148 EXT. THE SIDE OF A MOUNTAIN - A SKI RUN - DAY 148
- WITH a figure flashing down gracefully and at full speed. Blonde hair flies out from under a green helmet. She bends easily and takes the turns with the zest of a professional.
- 149 VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE SKIER 149
- as she negotiates the run, passing others, hurtling over the crisp snow, not slowing for a minute. The sky is sparkling blue, the side of the mountain shines in the sunlight.
- 150 THE BOTTOM OF THE RUN 150 X
- as the skier arrives, comes to a halt spraying snow, and jams her poles into the ground. She takes off her helmet, removes her sunglasses, and we see how young and attractive she is. She wipes a sheen of thin snow from her happy face, and then, taking up her poles again, and bending forward slightly, she starts down the final gentle slope towards the village below.
- 151 TRACKING SHOT WITH THE GIRL 151
- as, skis over her shoulder now, she walks along through the pretty village, face shining as she remembers the thrills of the skiing descent. CAMERA FOLLOWS her until she comes to a hotel with an outdoor terrace on which a couple of dozen people sit having breakfast. She parks her skis, and climbs a short flight of steps.
- 152 ON THE HOTEL TERRACE - FOLLOWING THE GIRL 152
- as she looks for a table. Four young people, TWO BOYS and TWO GIRLS are breakfasting. One of the Girls sees her, and calls in English, with an Austrian accent --
- AUSTRIAN GIRL
Here, come eat with us.
- Our Girl starts over to them, as the Boys rise, and they all greet each other.
- AUSTRIAN GIRL
(continuing)
There was a telephone call for
you, from New York.

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED:

152

YOUNG GIRL

Oh --

She hesitates --

AUSTRIAN BOY

Keep him waiting, isn't that the rule? Have a croissant first.

YOUNG GIRL

(laughs)

I'm starved.

(she sits)

It's smooth as silk up there.

SECOND AUSTRIAN BOY

We'll show you one that's not so smooth, but much more interesting.

As the waiter approaches and our Girl says:

YOUNG GIRL

Oh, good. Bacon and eggs, and some sausages, too --- and loads of toast --

There is a terrifying, ROARING SOUND O.S. Everyone looks up and over the terrace at the mountain beyond the rooftops of the village.

153 AS ANOTHER ORPHEUS SPLINTER PLUMMETS DOWN

153

into the side of the mountain and the skiers. Immediately, it is as though some terrible, buried giant has burst up out of the ground, scattering enormous, murderous gouts of snow in all directions!

154 BACK ON THE TERRACE

154

where most of the people are on their feet, others rising.

AUSTRIAN BOY

Avalanche!

Our Girl runs with her friends and others down off the terrace to the main street of the village, heading towards the mountain, to get a closer look at what is happening.

- 155 VARIOUS SHOTS - THE MOUNTAINSIDE AND REGIONS AROUND 155
as trees are torn out of the ground, and fly like matchsticks into the air; great crevasses suddenly appear, and brightly clad figures are sucked down to their deaths. Ski lifts are shot into the air and hurtle down to be engulfed by suddenly rushing oceans of snow.
- 156 TERRIBLE CRACKING, RENDING NOISES FILL THE AIR 156
as tides of grinding ice and snow rush down on the peaceful town below!
- 157 IN THE TOWN 157
people scream in fear and run hopelessly for their lives as an avalanche of unbelievable proportions grinds down at prodigious speed towards the helpless village.
- 158 OUR GIRL AND HER FRIENDS 158
coming to a halt as they become aware that they are running into the oncoming sea of snow. They register this with horror, then turn and run with others all around away from the white doom.
- 159 MORE SHOTS IN THE VILLAGE 159
as the snow begins to engulf it, cracking houses and hotels like so many matchboxes, covering them in rocks and trees and snow.
- 160 ON OUR GIRL AND HER FRIENDS 160
as with others, they bolt into the hotel they came from, seeking refuge. Many are caught and smothered in the roaring snow before they can get inside.
- 161 INSIDE OTHER BUILDINGS IN THE VILLAGE 161
Men, women and children cling to each other, or cry out in fear, as the walls around them crumple and they go down under pounding assaults of snow and boulders.

- 162 OUR GIRL AND FRIENDS AND OTHERS IN THE HOTEL 162
backing against the wall of the restaurant inside the hotel, as the avalanche hits the tables of the terrace, and continues, sweeping everything before it, across the restaurant itself, burying our Girl and others. Their screams are drowned in the greater NOISE of the avalanche.
- 163 THE WHITE DESTRUCTION CONTINUES 163
for a long while, until the town and the area around it lie under thousands of tons of snow and debris.
- 164 THE BRIGHT SKY LOOKS DOWN 164
on acres of glittering devastation, and all SOUND CEASES.
- 165 INT. BRADLEY'S OFFICE - HERCULES COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - DAY 165
In the b.g., it is business as usual, but in the f.g., Bradley, Dubov and Tatiana watch a television screen. At the moment, CAMERA HOLDS ON their faces:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
... five hours since the splinter struck, and the enormity of what has happened has only begun to sink in.
- 166 THE TELEVISION SCREEN WITH THE ANNOUNCER 166
standing in the snow somewhere near the devastated Austrian village. Behind him, stretcher bearers are carrying casualties to ambulances.

ANNOUNCER
There has never been anything like this before. There have been avalanches, and storms, which have destroyed whole villages, but nothing on the scale of what has happened here.

DURING this, CAMERA HAS MOVED IN ON the screen until we are actually ON the LOCATION itself, watching the rescue operations.

(CONTINUED)

166 CONTINUED:

166

ANNOUNCER

(continuing)

For twenty miles around, not a tree stands, not a house can be seen, and the mountain itself is no more!

167 THE DEMOLISHED HOTEL AND TERRACE - DAY

167

Bulldozers have cleared away most of the snow, and bodies are being brought out. CAMERA FOCUSES ON the dead face of our Girl, as she is pulled clear of the crushed tables and chairs. CAMERA TRACKS WITH the ambulance people as they carry her along.

168 EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

168

with the Announcer's VOICE CONTINUING OVER:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Help is coming from every corner of the world. Helicopters, ambulances, supplies; but whatever help comes, this village is forever gone.

169 INT. OVAL OFFICE - WHITE HOUSE - DAY

169 X

CLOSE ON another television set as the NEWSCAST of the disaster CONTINUES.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And in the minds of people everywhere is the question -- 'Where next?' And what about the big one closing on the earth at thirty thousand miles an hour?

DURING the above, CAMERA HAS PULLED BACK TO REVEAL the Situation Room and the people in it. The room is filled with maps and charts, a room used in emergencies, a war room. Seated in it with the television set in the background are the semi-silhouetted figures of: The President, Sherman, the Secretary of Defense -- and others.

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED:

169

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

(continuing)

We can only hope, as the
President has assured us,
that we are in safe hands.

The President's hand CLICKS OFF the TELEVISION remote
control.

PRESIDENT

My God...

(then, pulling
himself together)

As simply as you can, Mr.
Sherman, what is the procedure
now?

SHERMAN

X

The Satellites are orbiting earth
22,500 miles out in space. Since
they're in different orbits, in
order to make the rockets arrive
on target together, they'll have
to be fired at different times:
Peter the Great first, and Hercules
forty minutes later. Two hours after
that, they'll explode at a designated
distance from the meteor, knocking it
off its orbit, and sending it away
from earth.

During the above we have CUT TO Peter the Great and
Hercules and then to the approaching meteor.

PRESIDENT

Can anything go wrong?

SHERMAN

Once the rockets are launched, they
switch to their own decision-making
systems. If these systems perform
properly, everything's fine. If they
malfunction--

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED: (2)

169

PRESIDENT

What are the odds?

SHERMAN

(considers a moment)

We've never done this before. There's no saying.

PRESIDENT

If you fail --

SHERMAN

The meteor will hit two hours later.

PRESIDENT

When will you know the area.

SHERMAN

If you're asking will there be time to put out a warning and evacuate, the answer is -- no.

The President rises and crosses to the fireplace. He puts his hands on the mantelpiece, leaning forward a bit, feeling the heavy burden.

PRESIDENT

Hit it, Mr. Sherman. Get rid of it.

OMIT 170-171-172-173-174-175

175A INT. TATIANA'S LITTLE ROOM IN THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER- 175A NIGHT

TATIANA enters, she looks tired. She crosses to a small dressing table, and sits down to brush her hair. As she looks in the mirror she sees something lying on the bed behind her. She turns, rises, and goes to the bed. She smiles as she sees JAN'S pretty scarf with a ribbon around it, and a NOTE which reads: 'I washed it and ironed it, thought you might like to have it. Jan.' TATIANA puts the scarf on in front of the mirror, then goes out of the room.

175B INT. CORRIDOR WITH BEDROOMS OFF-ABOVE COM. CENTER - NIGHT 175B

TATIANA crosses to JAN'S door and knocks on it. It opens almost at once. JAN looks at TATIANA, and the scarf around her neck.

JAN

Very nice!

(CONTINUED)

175B CONTINUED

175B :

TATIANA
It's lovely. But are you sure--

JAN
Of course! We've got to stop them
from thinking we're just one of the
boys!

TATIANA
Thank you so much. I was just going
to have something to eat, will you
come with me?

JAN
I'm going to wash my hair while
I've got a second! See you later.

TATIANA
Yes, and thank you again.

TATIANA starts down the corridor as JAN shuts the door.
and is about to go down the stairs, when she stops and
turns back, heading towards ADLON'S office.

175C INT. ADLON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

175C :

BRADLEY sits alone in the office, legs extended, hands
behind his head. His gaze is on the BIG SCREEN down in
the COM CENTER on which is the simulated diagram of
Hercules, its rockets facing into space- waiting. There
is a mild knock on the half-open door behind him. He
turns, hands still behind his head. TATIANA comes in.

BRADLEY
(immediately)
What is it? What's happened?

TATIANA
(calmly)
Nothing. Nothing. I wanted to
know if you've taken time to eat.

BRADLEY
(turning back to look
at Hercules diagram again)
I had some coffee...

TATIANA
That will only make you more
nervous.

BRADLEY
It's sitting here hour after hour
doing nothing while that things comes
down at us...

175C CONTINUED

175C x

TATIANA

Then don't just sit. Come with me. I'm going to the canteen.

BRADLEY rises, crosses to the door.

BRADLEY

(pointing at her scarf)

Haven't I seen that somewhere before--?

TATIANA

I can't think where.

They go into the corridor.

175D INT. CORRIDOR-NIGHT

175D x

CAMERA TRACKS AND CRANES WITH THEM, as they cross to the iron staircase and start down into the Center.

TATIANA

(as they go)

My suggestion is, you forget about the meteor for a little while, and we talk about something quite different. How many children do you have?

BRADLEY

(looks at her)

Two. A boy and a girl. How do you know I'm married?

TATIANA

I asked Mr. Sherman. He also told me that you and your wife are separated.

BRADLEY

(wry smile)

I'll have to talk to Mr. Sherman.

They are now crossing the CENTER, moving towards the CANTEEN, CAMERA TRACKING WITH THEM.

TATIANA

I hope you don't mind that I asked him about you.

BRADLEY

No, no. I would have asked Dubov about you, if we could speak the same language. What else would you like to know?

TATIANA

It would be too rude to ask....

175D CONTINUED

175D X

They enter the CANTEEN.

175E INT COM. CENTER CANTEEN - NIGHT

175E X

BRADLEY and TATIANA pick up trays and utensils, start along the counter, choosing cold cuts, salads, etc.

BRADLEY

(during above)

My life's an open book, ask what you want.

TATIANA

Why are you and your wife separated?

BRADLEY

...it just happened. Came to a halt. No specific reason. No more talks together, no more interests together. It's what we here in America call -- incompatability.

TATIANA

That's what we call it in Russia.

BRADLEY

And probably in Swahililand as well.

They cross to a table. CAMERA TRACKING WITH THEM.

BRADLEY

(as they go)

Ever thought of living anywhere but Russia?

TATIANA

Not often.

BRADLEY

But sometimes.

TATIANA

Yes...sometimes.

They sit, arrange their plates.

BRADLEY

You'd like it here, you know. We've got power shortages, a terrific crime rate, strikes, droughts, unemployment, and race riots. Never a dull moment.

(CONTINUED)

175E CONTINUED

175E X

TATIANA
(laughs)
It sounds lovely. Do you think
my little boy would like it?

BRADLEY stares at her.

BRADLEY
Aren't you full of surprises

Suddenly HUNTER'S VOICE comes over the LOUDSPEAKERS --

HUNTER
Dr. Bradley, we've got Yamashiro
on the monitor from Hong Kong.

BRADLEY
(rising at once)
I'm glad I had the coffee that
made me nervous.

176 BIG CLOSE SHOT - YAMASHIRO

176 X

on his monitor in the Hercules Center. He is speaking
with great urgency.

YAMASHIRO
We have just received a
transmission from a TWA
passenger jet over the
Pacific. There was an
explosion somewhere at sea,
heavy enough to knock out
two engines!

CAMERA ZOOMS BACK TO REVEAL Bradley, Tatiana, Sherman,
Dubov as they move up to the Monitor.

YAMASHIRO (V.O.)
(continuing)
The plane's heading for Taiwan
to make an emergency landing.

(CONTINUED)

- 177 BACK TO YAMASHIRO ON THE MONITOR 177 X
- YAMASHIRO
They have reported a tidal wave
one hundred feet high, heading
directly toward Hong Kong.
- Sherman and Bradley exchange glances
- SHERMAN X
Splinter number four.
- 178 EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY 178
- The tidal wave, immense, powerful, moves ACROSS the
SCREEN at great speed.
- 179 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOR - DAY 179 X
- A police motor launch moves among the boats vying for
slips at the piers. The adjacent streets swarm with
sailors, dock workers, fishermen. Instructions from
the launch are shouted in CHINESE and SUBTITLED in X
English.
- LAUNCH'S LOUDSPEAKERS
(blaring out)
Immediate evacuation from the
area is ordered! This is urgent!
Leave the dockside! Get inland!
Get inland!
- 180 CAMERA FINDS A YOUNG CHINESE FISHERMAN 180 X
- in a striped T-shirt, still on the deck of his little
boat. He is listening to the warnings. Then he jumps
onto the dockside, and starts running with others,
heading for the streets nearby.
- 181 FAST TRAVELLING SHOT - WITH THE YOUNG FISHERMAN 181
- as he runs up a side street leading away from
the harbor, dodging between cars and bicycles.
- 182 THE TIDAL WAVE 182
- growing in menace as it approaches land!

183 EXT. MAIN THOROUGHFARE - HONG KONG - DAY 183 X

Police vans try to make their way through the enormous crowds of people. Their speakers are on full blast.

POLICE VANS' SPEAKERS

Do not panic! Move inland! But
do not panic!

The people are terrified and dash helplessly this way and that. The crowd is so dense the vehicles cannot move. Men and women are knocked to the ground and trampled underfoot.

184 WITH THE YOUNG FISHERMAN AGAIN - DAY 184

pushing his way through people, and dashing into a building.

185 INT. BUILDING - UP THE STAIRS 185

The Young Fisherman going up at top speed. He reaches a door on the first landing, throws it open, and runs in.

186 INT. FISHERMAN'S LITTLE APARTMENT - DAY 186

His young wife is looking out the window, watching and listening to the PANIC below. His four-year-old boy is playing on the floor. She turns a frightened face to her husband.

FISHERMAN

(in Chinese)

Get the baby!

X

While she runs into an adjoining bedroom, he crosses the room and picks up his son. As he turns towards the door, his wife comes out of the bedroom with the baby in her arms. They run out of the room.

187 EXT. BUSINESS SECTION - HONG KONG - HIGH SHOT - DAY 187 X

People rush out of the BUILDINGS to get as far away as they can. Cars and pedestrians tangle in panic below. The DIN is ear-splitting, the crowds are frightened and hostile.

X

188 ON THE STREET OUTSIDE THE YOUNG FISHERMAN'S BUILDING 188

He and his wife join the stream of fleeing people. They try to keep together, and not be jostled apart in the panic.

189 INT. HONG KONG TRACKING STATION - DAY 189 X

With Yamamoto and his assistants.

YAMASHIRO X

Radar contact with the wave establishes height stabilized at one hundred feet plus.

CAMERA BEGINS TO SWING off him and over to a bank of monitors on one screen of which we SEE Bradley in the New York Hercules Center.

YAMASHIRO X

(continuing)

Speed is constant, six hundred miles an hour. Fifteen minutes before it hits us!

BRADLEY

(shouting)

How far are you from the bay?

YAMASHIRO (O.S.) X

Twenty miles.

BRADLEY

Do you have some way of getting out of there?

YAMASHIRO (O.S.) X

Where are we getting out to?

190 EXT. HONG KONG SUBURBS - DAY 190 X

Thousands of people, vehicles of all kinds, stream away from the city. The people are rushing headlong, they know not where, but desperately trying to put distance between themselves and the bay.

191 EXT. THE CENTER OF CITY - THE YOUNG FISHERMAN, WIFE AND CHILDREN 191

She is tiring now, dropping back in the crowd. Carrying his son, he fights to get to her. But she is pushed and falls, holding tightly on to her baby. He reaches her, helps her to her feet. They struggle on.

- 192 EXT. HONG KONG BAY - DAY 192 X
 as it hits the almost deserted bay. The noise is incredible. Boats are picked up like straws and smashed into the buildings. The world of water begins to roar across the city!
- 193 VARIOUS SHOTS 193 X
 as the wave destroys the city: People are drowned in the streets; buildings come down. A broken boat carried by the wave is like a projectile, hurled through a department store window. Everywhere, cars, and bicycles and trucks and people are engulfed in the watery horror.
- 194 EXT. A STREET - FOCUSING ON THE FISHERMAN AND HIS FAMILY
 FROM A HIGH ANGLE, people stream TOWARDS and PAST CAMERA. In the b.g., above their heads, the wave bursts through the buildings and falls on them! The Young Fisherman and his wife and children are engulfed and drowned!
- 195 EXT. HONG KONG COUNTRYSIDE - DAY 195 X
 The wave, diminishing now, but still tremendous and unstoppable, roars across the fields, taking trees with it; whatever is in its way is uprooted and carried along, just so much debris.
- 196 EXT. HONG KONG TRACKING STATION - DAY 196 X
 directly in the path of the wave. Now some of Yamashiro's people start running from the station, joining the hundreds of others, running, running, running.
- 197 INT. THE TRACKING STATION - DAY 197
 Trying to make himself heard above the ROAR:
 YAMASHIRO
 (into microphone)
 Can you hear it? X

(CONTINUED)

197 CONTINUED:

197

BRADLEY

(on monitor)

We can hear it. Get out, get
out of there!

YAMASHIRO

No use! Get the meteor, get it,
kill it!

And the wave strikes the station, demolishing it.
Yamashiro is swept away through the tumbling walls.

198 CLOSE SHOT - A BLANK MONITOR SCREEN

198

CAMERA PULLS BACK and we are in the Hercules Communica-
tions Center in New York. Dubov, Tatiana, Sherman,
Bradley and others stare at the dark and silent screen.

BRADLEY

(after a pause)

That's what we'll do. We'll
kill it.

199 THE METEOR IN SPACE - SEVERAL CUTS

199

And for the first time we SEE in the far, far distance,
the tiny circle of the planet earth.

PRESIDENT (V.O.)

... fifteen minutes from now,
the Russian rockets will be
launched, and forty minutes
after our own rockets will be
sent to join them. They will
strike the meteor, sending it
into a harmless orbit, never
again to menace earth.

199A INT, OVAL OFFICE - BIG CLOSE SHOT - PRESIDENT

199A

At a bank of microphones.

PRESIDENT

It is Sunday. There is nothing
we can do but wait. Stay in your
homes, have faith, and we will
let you know when the danger is
past.

During the above, the background MUSIC which illus-
trates the meteor has gradually changed into a steady,
METRONOME-LIKE beat as the seconds go by.

200 EXT. STREETS OF THE WORLD - SERIES OF SHOTS 200 X

- A) FIFTH AVENUE -- usually bustling with traffic and people -- deserted.
- B) SAN FRANCISCO-- NEAR THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, empty.
- C) The THAMES (in London) with St. Pauls in the B.G., no one about.
- D) The CHAMPS ELYSEES with the Arc de Triumphe in the B.G. --also deserted.
- E) The A.T. and T. MAIN LOBBY--empty except for the lone guard of the Com. Center.

201 INT. HERCULES COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - NEW YORK - DAWN 201

Bradley, Dubov, Tatiana, Sherman and others stand around Manheim watching the monitor on which we can SEE seconds flicking by. 25, 24, 23... The Metronome-like MUSIC indicates the seconds.

202 CAMERA PICKS OUT THE INDIVIDUALS IN CLOSE SHOTS 202

as they wait, silent and tense. Finally we are back ON Manheim and his monitor -- 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 -- ZERO! The METRONOME MUSIC SURGES INTO A GRAND THEME as --

203 IN SPACE THE MASSIVE FIREPOWER OF PETER THE GREAT 203

is unleashed. The rockets stream from their pods, one after another, thrust forward on tongues of flame, streamlined and deadly, reaching out across the darkness for the meteor.

204 VARIOUS CUTS OF THEIR PROGRESS 204

DIFFERENT ANGLES on the weapons as they seek their far-off target.

205 GROUP SHOT - FEATURING MANHEIM 205

who looks up from the monitor.

MANHEIM
(calmly)
Progress nominal.

There is a slight release of tension amongst them all.

(CONTINUED)

205 CONTINUED:

205

Dubov is smiling very slightly, he feels a kind of strange mixture of triumph and loss. He speaks in English, half to himself.

DUBOV

My babies... good babies.

And then he sees something O.S. which causes his eyes to widen slightly. Bradley follows his look and sees...

206 ADLON

206

standing a short distance away! He holds himself erect, remains where he is as he says to Eva:

ADLON

Would you please be good enough to convey my congratulations to Dr. Dubov.

207 NEW ANGLE

207

as Eva does this, and Dubov nods in reply. Then Adlon turns to Bradley, as the other people in the Center try not to look at what is happening.

ADLON

My apologies, Bradley. I was very wrong. If there's anything I can do...

BRADLEY

Thank you.

208 AGAIN THE RUSSIAN ROCKETS IN SPACE

208

serene but deadly, already thousands of miles closer to their target.

209 A GIANT RADAR DISH

209

faces up to the skies. SUPERIMPOSED: GOLDSTONE TRACKING STATION, CALIFORNIA. The dish is sending and receiving signals, "reading" the rockets' trajectory. This is emphasized on SOUND TRACK with the BEEP-BEEP of radio signals.

210 INT. HERCULES CENTER - CLOSE SHOT - ONE OF THE THREE 210
ILLUMINATED SCREENS

Printed above: PETER THE GREAT. On the illuminated screen is simulated the Goldstone radar dish sending and receiving its signals. CAMERA ZOOMS IN on a section of this screen, and we SEE in CLOSE SHOT: TIME IN FLIGHT: 36 MINUTES, 34 SECONDS.

211 GROUP SHOT - FEATURING MANHEIM 211

at his console. In front of him the Hercules monitor reads: TIME FROM FIRING: 3 MINUTES, 12 SECONDS. Tenths of seconds are also registering.

212 ANGLE ON HUNTER AT HIS MONITORS 212

Reacting to a SIGNAL, he brings up Sir Michael Hughes on the Jodrell Bank Tracking Station screen.

HUNTER

Yes, sir -- ?

SIR MICHAEL

I'm afraid I've got some rather serious news... I'd like a word with Doctor Bradley.

HUNTER

(calling over)

Dr. Bradley. Urgent.

213 MOVING AWAY WITH BRADLEY FROM MANHEIM 213

and TRACKING with him over to Hunter. He sees Sir Michael on the screen, positions himself in front of the locked camera.

BRADLEY

What's the urgency?

SIR MICHAEL

We've picked up another splinter, a big one...

BRADLEY

Heading where -- ?

SIR MICHAEL

The U.S., the Eastern Seaboard.

(CONTINUED)

213 CONTINUED:

213

BRADLEY

You mean... us?

SIR MICHAEL

Near enough.

BRADLEY

Arriving when?

SIR MICHAEL

Just about now. Can you advance
Hercules' firing?

X

BRADLEY

(tiniest pause)

No way.

He turns, starts to move back to Manheim and others,
stops as he sees --

214 BRADLEY'S POV - FULL SHOT - THE CENTER

214

All faces turned. They have heard the above exchange
between Bradley and Sir Michael, and are staring at
him, tensely silent.

215 ON BRADLEY

215

looking out over the faces confronting him.

BRADLEY

No way... we're not firing early.
(to Manheim)

How long.

216 SHOT FEATURING MANHEIM

216

Looks at his screen, then:

MANHEIM

Two minutes, fifteen seconds.

217 SHOT FEATURING SHERMAN

217

who speaks quite quietly, but not without challenge --

SHERMAN

If we don't fire them, Paul, and we
go out of action -- the Russian
rockets aren't enough to do the
job, you know that.

X

218 FULL SHOT

218 X

Bradley looks at Sherman, but addresses them all--

BRADLEY

We wait.

He starts again to cross over to Manheim. CAMERA GOES WITH HIM as he arrives at the central console and looks at the screen. It reads: TIME TO FIRING: ONE MINUTE, 40 SECONDS.

219 OMIT

219 X

220 CLOSE - SHERMAN

220

eyes looking up instinctively --

221 THE NEW SPLINTER

221

coming straight AT CAMERA at terrible velocity, making a frightening ROAR as it goes PAST. The splinter is very different in shape to the main meteor.

222 A REVERSE SHOT

222

SEES it moving rapidly away towards the entire Eastern Seaboard of the United States.

223 THE CENTER AGAIN - FEATURING DUBOV AND TATIANA

223

looking at Manheim's monitor on which the countdown to the firing of the Hercules rockets has reached FORTY-TWO SECONDS.

- 224 CLOSE SHOTS OF THE REST OF THE PEOPLE IN THE CENTER 224
Jan and Alan, Hunter, Adlon, Bradley, other tense
faces.
- 225 HERCULES IN SPACE 225
Its rockets waiting for their orders.
- 226 A SHOT OF THE ENTIRE ISLAND OF MANHATTAN 226
FROM the AIR, two miles up. Unconscious of impending
doom.
- 227 THE NEW SPLINTER 227
charging down, but beginning to glow, as it approaches
the outer fringes of earth's atmosphere.
- 228 THE CENTER AGAIN - GROUP SHOT FEATURING MANHEIM 228
The monitor reads: TIME TO FIRING, TWENTY-TWO SECONDS.
MUSIC creeps in, the METRONOME RHYTHM ticking off the
seconds.
- 229 DUBOV AND TATIANA 229
eyes glued on the screen.
- 230 JAN AND ALAN 230
CAMERA PANS DOWN -- their hands are tightly gripped.
- 231 CLOSE - SHERMAN 231
breath held.
- 232 CLOSE - BRADLEY 232
silently counting...

BRADLEY
(to himself)
Six, five, four...

- 233 CLOSE SHOT - THE HERCULES MONITOR 233
Countdown approaching zero. 3, 2, 1 -- ZERO, and a BURST OF MUSIC.
- 234 THE ARMED SATELLITE HERCULES IN SPACE 234
Its ROCKETS BLAST OFF! One follows the others, streaking away to rendezvous with their Russian counterparts.
- 235 THE NEW SPLINTER 235
White hot now and ready to strike!
- 236 MANHATTAN 236
Its tall buildings reaching up TOWARD US. A part of the splinter occupies SCREEN RIGHT as we ZOOM DOWN with it towards the unsuspecting island!
- 237 THE WORLD TRADE CENTER 237
CAMERA LOOKING UPWARDS as the splinter, VISIBLE TO CAMERA, strikes! disintegrating the top thirty stories of the buildings.
- 238 CENTRAL PARK 238
The violently shock-bent treetops as the splinter passes over, and the treetops ignite, bursting into flames.
- 239 CENTRAL PARK NORTH 239
as the splinter EXPLODES into the earth with the force of a nuclear device! The SHOCK WAVE is prodigious! It expands to BLAST --
- 240 THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING 240
which trembles and collapses!
- 241 ROCKEFELLER CENTER 241
The RCA Building begins to disintegrate, it comes apart.

- 242 THE BUILDING HOUSING THE HERCULES COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - THE A.T. AND T. BUILDING 242
- trembles like a giant tuning fork smacked by a gargantuan finger. It begins to cave in!
- 243 INT. HERCULES COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - DAY 243
- The whole place shakes and cracks, and everyone present is hurled against the walls, or down onto the floor. The ceiling partially bursts open, and debris rains down.
- 244 VARIOUS CUTS 244
- The wall with the illuminated panels breaks in and falls on Mannheim at his console, half-burying him.
- On the floor, Bradley tries to shield Tatiana and himself against the fall of debris from above.
- Hunter struggles under a spill of monitors, BROKEN GLASS, and shattered electronic equipment.
- There is the RENDING NOISE somewhere in the Center of a section of wall splitting and caving in, immediately followed by a HIGH-PITCHED SCREAM!
- Another section of ceiling comes crashing in, bringing with it electric cables which tear and tangle, causing a massive short circuit, and the lights go out! The torn cables continue to erupt, eerily illuminating the ruined Center, showering out sparks and flames.
- 245 IN SPACE - THE RED-TIPPED ROCKETS OF PETER THE GREAT 245
- surge towards their distant target; we can SEE the Red Star on their sides.
- 246 AND NOW THE HERCULES ROCKETS 246
- with blue tips and U.S.A. printed on their sides, moving to augment the Russian ones.
- 247 IN THE HERCULES CENTER - SEQUENCE OF CLOSE SHOTS OF THE FACES OF OUR PEOPLE 247
- as they stare in shock at the devastation around them, their faces intermittently lit by the crackling, arcing spurts of flames and sparks from the HISSING cables.

248 THE CABLES

248

break, the short-circuiting ceases, and where the two ends of the broken cables hang down on the floor, there is the beginning of a smoky fire. Apart from the light from this, the room is in total darkness.

249 BRADLEY AND TATIANA

249

SEEN in the flickering light of the fire. He gets to his knees, and helps her up beside him.

BRADLEY

Are you all right?

TATIANA

Yes, I think so...

Suddenly, on impulse dictated by the shock of the explosion, Bradley reaches out a hand and touches Tatiana's cheek. He would like to say: "If we ever get out of here, stay awhile," but he rises, starts to struggle through the demolished consoles and other wrecked equipment, pausing only to wrench an extinguisher from the wall, heading towards the fire as fast as he can go. Meanwhile Tatiana gets to her feet and starts over to Dubov, who is being helped to his feet by Sherman, blood running from a cut on the Russian's head.

250 ADLON

250

at a cracked wall near the fire, tearing a second extinguisher from its bracket. He begins to spray the growing fire with foam, as Bradley reaches him and starts helping to put out the fire. Hunter, who has extricated himself from under the monitors etc. which fell on him, hurries to join them --

BRADLEY

We need light!

Hunter rushes off into a nearby support room.

ADLON

Did they go.

BRADLEY

Let's hope!

251 INT. SUPPORT ROOM

251

which has been badly damaged. Hunter crosses to some lockers, wrenches a door open, and brings out three neon flashlights. He starts back out of the room.

252 BRADLEY AND ADLON

252

They have almost got the fire under control. Hunter arrives with the flashlights. Bradley puts down his extinguisher, and turns to him --

BRADLEY

Give me one of those.

He takes a flashlight --

BRADLEY

(continuing)

Get the injured into the center of the room!

And he starts away towards the staircase leading to the elevators above.

253 TATIANA WITH SHERMAN AND DUBOV

253

While she holds a handkerchief to Dubov's wound, Sherman has looked around and spotted Manheim lying trapped under the remains of the illuminated screens and other debris. Sherman hurries to him, where two technicians are already trying to free the German scientist.

DUBOV

(in Russian,
to Tatiana)

I'm all right, Taty, don't worry...

TATIANA

(in Russian)

Sit, Alexei, sit for a moment.

She helps him to sit.

254 CAMERA GOES WITH BRADLEY

254

as he reaches the partially-collapsed and twisted metal staircase. He is forced to "climb" rather than to walk up it.

- 255 ON SHERMAN, THE TWO TECHNICIANS AND MANHEIM 255
- who they are pulling free. The scientist is clearly in pain, but not even permitting himself an audible moan. After a moment, the main mass of rubble on top of him is lifted away, and Manheim is dragged back into a clear area of the floor. He looks down at his broken and useless legs.
- 256 WITH BRADLEY 256
- coming into the little lobby with the elevator doors. The guard behind the desk has been crushed by part of the fallen ceiling. Bradley moves by him to the doors of the two elevators. One pair of doors has come apart in the explosion, and Bradley looks in to see if it's possible to climb out of the escape hatch in the ceiling.
- 257 HIS POV - THE ELEVATOR CEILING 257
- buckled in and split, showing debris on top.
- 258 BACK TO BRADLEY 258
- going to the second elevator doors. They have come slightly apart, enough for him to get a grip and begin pulling them open. When he does, we SEE that the elevator has come halfway down to the floor, and the guard from the lobby above, lies in it, dead!
- 259 BACK TO SHERMAN AND TECHNICIANS 259
- who are depositing Manheim in the center of the room where there are already other injured.
- ALAN (O.S.)
(calling)
Mr. Sherman... will you come
here, please.
- Sherman looks over to where the voice is coming from, and starts away, leaving Manheim to the care of the technicians.
- 260 NEW ANGLE 260
- as Sherman reaches Alan who stands in shock, looking at something O.S. With a trembling nod of his head he indicates to Sherman what he is looking at.

261 CLOSE SHOT - A GIRL'S HAND 261
sticking out from a pile of rubble.

262 TWO SHOT - SHERMAN AND ALAN 262
looking down at the hand O.S.

ALAN
It's Jan...

SHERMAN
(very low)
Go away, help the others.

ALAN
But it's Jan...

Bradley comes INTO SHOT, his flashlight splashing white light --

BRADLEY
No way out by the elevators --

He sees Alan still standing in shock, then turns to Sherman who gives him a look, and points at Jan's hand. At once, Bradley puts the flashlight down, and he and Sherman go forward to pull at the debris covering the girl. Alan watches, dazed. After a moment, the dead face of Jan is uncovered.

ALAN
Oh, my God...

Sherman moves quickly to him, grabs him by the shoulders --

SHERMAN
Go help the others!

ALAN
I've got to get her out!

SHERMAN
There's nothing you can do!

He turns to a TECHNICIAN who has come to stand nearby, watching.

SHERMAN
(continuing)
Get him away from here.

(CONTINUED)

262 CONTINUED:

262

TECHNICIAN

Alan, come on.

He leads the boy away. Bradley has come back to Sherman. They stand for a moment, looking around the devastated room, in which the survivors are beginning to get themselves together, waiting for someone to take the lead. First aid equipment has been brought out of a support room, and we SEE Tatiana bandaging Dubov's cut head; Manheim's legs are being splinted, etc.

BRADLEY

I hope to God Houston's monitoring.

263 THE HERCULES ROCKETS IN SPACE

263

The powerful flock of twenty-foot-long rockets are performing perfectly, as are --

264 THE SIXTEEN ROCKETS FROM PETER THE GREAT

264

But --

265 THE METEOR

265

is still coming closer and closer!

266 INT. HOUSTON COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - GROUP SHOT -
FEATURING GENERAL EASTON - DAY

266

He is on the phone. In the b.g. we can SEE Mason and assistant technicians at their monitors.

EASTON

(into phone)

The situation is A-1 functional.
Sixty-six minutes to impact.
We'll keep relaying information
until conclusion.

267 INT. OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE - WASHINGTON - DAY

267

There is a speaker phone on the Secretary's desk. He sits near, and surrounding him are at least fifteen people, military and civilian.

(CONTINUED)

267 CONTINUED:

267

EASTON (V.O.)
(filter; through
speaker phone)
Have you heard from New York?

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
Nothing from the Center. They've
got to be out of action. The
rest of the city's a shambles.

268 HIGH SHOT LOOKING DOWN ON MANHATTAN - DAY

268

The whole city seems ablaze. Clouds of black smoke
drift ACROSS CAMERA.

269 INT. CENTER - CLOSE SHOT - ADLON

269

His face bathed in the white light of neon flashlights.

ADLON
The exits from the Canteen, and
Support Room Two are blocked,
but it's possible through the
computer room.

270 GROUP SHOT - FEATURING BRADLEY

270

BRADLEY
(to all)
Follow us.

He and Adlon start off, with Sherman staying where he
is, ushering people past him, waiting to take up the
rear position.

271 VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE COLUMN

271

as they move off. Manheim being supported by the two
technicians; Tatiana and Dubov behind them. She sees
something O.S. For a moment she leaves Dubov, and
CAMERA FOLLOWS her as she approaches Alan, who still
sits in a state of shock, unaware of what's been going
on.

TATIANA
Come with us, come, please.

She puts out a hand. Alan looks at her, registers the
others beyond her, rises, and goes with her to join
Dubov.

272 INT. COMPUTER ROOM

272

as people pile into the room after Bradley and Adlon who approach the emergency door which Adlon has opened earlier. Bradley follows Adlon out onto --

273 INT. SUBWAY - THE LOADING PLATFORM

273

between the door and the tracks below of the branch line of the old subway system. Dim emergency lighting in the roof of the tunnel gives a soft, general illumination. Bradley and Adlon take a few steps along the platform, then come to a halt when they see ahead of them --

274 THEIR POV - A PREVIOUS SUBSIDENCE

274

has created a pile of rubble about twenty yards ahead of them which almost fills the tunnel -- except for a gap of about six feet at the top.

275 BACK TO BRADLEY AND ADLON

275

with others coming in behind them.

BRADLEY

What's on the other side?

ADLON

The tracks run on to the functioning line.

At this moment there is a RUMBLING NOISE from beyond the subsidence, and an earthquake-like VIBRATION, accompanied by the SOUND OF DISTANT FALLING RUBBLE. Bradley and Adlon stop and pull back as clouds of dust come pouring through the gap in the subsidence! When the SOUNDS and QUAKING have STOPPED, Bradley holds up a hand to the others --

BRADLEY

Wait here.

276 CAMERA GOES WITH BRADLEY

276

as he jumps down from the platform onto the subway line and starts forward to the subsidence. He begins climbing up to the gap above.

277 BACK WITH THE OTHERS 277
watching and waiting.

278 WITH BRADLEY AGAIN 278
already climbing through the gap.

279 ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SUBSIDENCE 279
Bradley climbs down to the tracks, trying not to cut himself on the torn and twisted wires and knife-like edges of the broken pipes sticking out of the rubble. When he reaches the tracks below, he turns to look forward up the tunnel.

280 HIS POV - THE TUNNEL BEYOND 280
where the old rails join the functioning subway at an angle, gloomily lit by the emergency lighting, broken and twisted, is a subway car! Its sides have been caved in, and its windows broken.

281 BACK TO BRADLEY 281 x
absorbing this further obstacle. He knows they will have to go through the car to reach possible safety beyond. He is about to turn back when-- he becomes aware of the sound of TRICKLING WATER. He turns the flashlight onto the wall of the tunnel, and we SEE that the wall has begun to crack, and mud and water are oozing through. He registers this potential threat, then turns and begins climbing back up the subsidence to the gap. When he has reached it, he leans over and shouts--

BRADLEY
All right, come on, you have to
climb over, be careful!

282 OTHER SIDE OF THE SUBSIDENCE 282
with Adlon, others.

ADLON
After me!

He hurries towards the rubble.

283 VARIOUS SHOTS - THE PEOPLE COMING AFTER HIM 283
Tatiana and Dubov, Mannheim and the technicians helping him, Alan, others, with Sherman coming onto the platform, and urging people along, and helping them down

284

BRADLEY

284

who has dropped down again on the farther side of the rubble, and is heading for the caved-in subway car. He clambers into the car through the gaping hole in its side which has been torn open in some earlier explosion.

285

INT. THE SMASHED SUBWAY CAR - WITH BRADLEY

285

who stands looking around at the devastation inside. There are at least a dozen dead in the broken, twisted seats, and down the glass-strewn center aisle. They are in grotesque positions, some have been cut to death, some smashed to death. All the windows are broken in on both sides of the carriage, and at the far end the roof of the carriage has been buckled in and split. He begins to push along the half-blocked aisle, past the dead, towards the doors at the farther end.

286

SEVERAL CUTS OF THE MAIN GROUP OF SURVIVORS AT THE SUBSIDENCE

286

as they negotiate the pile of rubble, and go through the gap, to clamber down the other side. We SEE Tatiana and Dubov go over; and watch as Hunter and Alan help the women and the injured survivors. And we WATCH as the two technicians, with Sherman's help, begin the difficult ascent with Manheim.

286A

SHOT OF THE WALL OF THE TUNNEL

286A X

and the SPLIT which seems to have widened, the mud and water increasing.

287

ANGLE ON BRADLEY IN THE SUBWAY CAR

287 X

He manages to wrench one half of the end doors open. He jumps out of the car onto the rails below, and vaults up to the platform in front of which is an archway and stairs beyond. He looks up to see if the stairs are clear. They are. He is satisfied. He turns to retrace his steps, when there is a rumbling indicating a new subsidence of some kind, and a juddering which shakes the ground. He turns and looks back at the stairs. The far wall beyond the escalator has CRACKED, and mud and water has started to ooze through. He takes in this ominous sign, then jumps down on the rails again, and moves towards the door of the car.

288

THE ROCKETS IN SPACE

288

First the Hercules rockets, bunched together, a solid phalanx of nuclear power. Then those from Peter the Great, seemingly untroubled -- when two of the rockets start to drift away from the others! MUSIC emphasizes the moment.

as they move AWAY FROM CAMERA, and also gradually away from the main pack, which continues properly on its way.

290 INT. THE HOUSTON CENTER - GENERAL EASTON

290

He is talking into his phone, urgently --

EASTON

Goldstone tracking station reports
Peter the Great has lost two.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (V.O.)

(filter)

How bad is that?

EASTON

There's a safety margin of five.
Time to impact, thirty-five
minutes, forty-two seconds.

291 INT. THE SMASHED SUBWAY CAR

291

where Bradley has worked his way back to the original entrance. The first of the survivors, led by Adlon have arrived outside the car.

BRADLEY

(to Adlon)

There are stairs at the other
end. But it's a slaughterhouse
in here. Start them coming.

292 SHOT OUTSIDE THE CAR - FEATURING ADLON
as more and more survivors arrive.

292

ADLON

There are dead in there. Get
going.

He begins to help them through the gaping hole into
the car, when--

X

292A THE SPLIT IN THE WALL NEAR THE SUBSIDENCE
finally BURSTS! and an absolute cascade of mud vomits through.

292A X

292B ANGLE ON THE TAIL END OF THE SURVIVORS
Including MANHEIM, the Two Technicians and SHERMAN helping
him. They are caught in the pouring mud, and struggle
towards ADLON and the car.

292B X

293 INSIDE THE SUBWAY CAR

293

as it begins filling with people, and Bradley turns
to lead them to the other end. Suddenly, there is a
RENDING NOISE which brings everybody to a halt!

294 ABOVE THE ROOF OF THE CAR 294x

The vaulted ceiling of the tunnel cracks open, and through the crack pour mud and silt and water -- a torrent! It pours down through the jagged hole in the subway car roof. X

295 BRADLEY AND GROUP 295

reacting to the new menace!

296 ANGLE INSIDE THE SUBWAY CAR 296

The RUMBLING CONTINUES, and the side wall of the tunnel also cracks open, and watery mud bursts through the broken windows.

297 DIFFERENT ANGLE ON BRADLEY AND GROUP - INCLUDING HUNTER 297

facing the gushing mud.

BRADLEY

It's only a shower! We'll go through. Hurry them up!

XX

He starts forward, with Hunter just behind him, and the others following. CAMERA ZOOMS after them, as they fight their way through the in-rushing mud at the other end.

298 OUTSIDE THE OTHER END OF THE CAR 298

with the rails and platform, an archway through which the stairs can be SEEN. Bradley jumps down to the rails, Hunter jumping after him. Others follow.

BRADLEY

(to Hunter)

Get on the platform, help them up.

Hunter climbs onto the platform, and turns to assist others up.

(CONTINUED)

298 CONTINUED:

298

Bradley remains below the car door, helping survivors down, then becomes aware of mud flowing along the tracks towards him from a section of tunnel beyond them.

299 AT THE OTHER END OF THE CAR

299 X

Adlon continues helping people into the car, including Dubov and Tatiana. By now the mud coming through the cracked wall near the subsidence has almost filled the tracks, and is lapping at the car.

300 ANOTHER ANGLE

300 X

SEEING Sherman and the Two Technicians almost reaching the car with Manheim.

301 INT. THE CAR

301

Tatiana and Dubov are up to their knees in mud, and look with trepidation towards the mud gushing in ahead of them, through which they must pass.

DUBOV
(in Russian)

Ready?

TATIANA

I'm ready...

And they run forward, and plunge through the frightening shower. CAMERA GOES THROUGH with them, until they arrive at the open door, below which is Bradley. Others follow. X

302 ANGLE OUTSIDE THE CAR

302 X

as Bradley helps Tatiana and Dubov down to the rails. They are covered head to foot in mud and filth.

DUBOV
(to Bradley, in
English)

America very nice... we come
again...

BRADLEY

Any time.

Then he turns to Tatiana, takes her by the shoulders--

(CONTINUED)

BRADLEY

Keep going, there's a way out
up there, we'll be all right!

She nods, starts to go past him, Dubov following.

303 INT. THE SUBWAY CAR

303

Another group, including Alan, are fighting their way
through the mud and in-pouring silt.

304 ANGLE ON ADLON AND OTHERS OUTSIDE THE SUBWAY CAR

304

MANHEIM is almost unconscious as Sherman and the Two
Technicians get him to ADLON. ADLON jumps up into the
car and reaches down to help Manheim in, when One of the
Technicians slips! and in so doing drags Manheim down
with him into the stream of mud! Before anyone can grab
them, they are swept under the subway car and out of
reach! Sherman and the remaining Technician strive
helplessly to reach them, but it is clearly useless!

ADLON

(realising the hopelessness)

Get in! Get in!

Absolutely covered in mud, Sherman and the Technician
start to climb up into the car.

305 AT THE STAIRS AND THE STATIONARY ESCALATOR

305

Looking down on the platform and the rails below. The
straggling line of survivors have begun to mount the
stairs to what they hope will be safety, with HUNTER
SEEN below, helping people onto the platform. But the
mud from the wall at the side of the escalator is pouring
down the stairs, impeding them. TWO PEOPLE are swept
down the stairs, off the platform, and onto the mud-
covered rails--and are lost! TATIANA and DUBOV turn back
from their position on the escalator stairs, to see this
happen below them! Then they struggle on up.

OMIT 306-307-308-309-310-311

XXI

311A FEATURING BRADLEY

311A

still in the mud up to his chest, helping people across
to Hunter and up to the comparative safety of the
escalator beyond.

(CONTINUED)

311B INSIDE THE CAR

311B

Adlon, Sherman and the last of the survivors, pushing their way through the car, which is almost impossible to negotiate. They have almost reached the far end of the car, with some of them already jumping down to Bradley below, when Sherman slips! and the force of the mud sweeps him back again, towards the other end of the car!

311C CLOSE SHOT ADLON

311C

See this, shouting--

ADLON

Sherman's gone!!

311D CLOSE SHOT-BRADLEY

311D

Reacting, straggling up into the car, joining Adlon. They see--

311E CLOSE SHOT-SHERMAN

311E

Almost submerged, drowned in the mud, clinging on to a seat.

311F ANGLE IN THE CAR

311F

as Bradley and Adlon fight their way towards Sherman, the rushing mud pushing at them with great force, almost knocking them under. They manage to get to him, grab him, pull him up, and then the three of them turn and struggle back to the end of the car, Sherman spluttering and spitting mud, trying to regain his breath.

331G ANGLE OUTSIDE THE CAR

311G

Where Hunter has come across to reach up and help Sherman out, as Bradley and Adlon hand him down. Then they jump down, too, and assist Hunter to get Sherman to the platform and up onto it. Climbing up after him, utterly exhausted, they flounder over to the escalator steps, and begin dragging themselves up.

(CONTINUED)

311H CAMERA WATCHES AS THEY NEGOTIATE THE FIRST FLIGHT OF STEPS 311H

and Bradley and Sherman stop to rest, breathing hard, covered in filth. Suddenly Bradley remembers, wipes the mud from the face of his watch. Sherman looks at him--

SHERMAN

How long?

BRADLEY

About fourteen minutes.

SHERMAN

My watch is broken...

312 OUTER SPACE - WITH EARTH 313

a tiny dot in the far b.g. Coming TOWARDS US the red-tipped rockets from Peter the Great. They zoom! PAST CAMERA, with a tremendous ROAR. And following them, the rockets from Hercules. One of Hercules' rockets is trailing a long distance behind!

EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

We're losing one from Hercules.

313 THE METEOR 313

coming DOWN TOWARDS CAMERA from far distance.

EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

Time to impact, thirteen minutes
twenty-nine seconds.

OMIT 314 XX

314A INT. TICKET AND TURNSTILE AREA - DAY 314A

Above the Escalator, where Dubov and Tatiana stand looking around at the Center survivors--and the HUNDRED OTHER PEOPLE there who have escaped earlier from the subway below.

OMIT 315 XX

(CONTINUED)

316 THEIR POV - THE AREA

316

where most of the people are standing or sitting despondently, while others are tearing at the rubble blocking the exit up to the street.

317 BACK TO DUBOV AND TATIANA

317

as a WOMAN in her fifties, still carrying a shopping bag, approaches them.

WOMAN

Where've you come from?

TATIANA

We were trapped in the tunnel.

WOMAN

Well, you're trapped here, too, honey, because unless you happen to have a bulldozer with you, there's no way up those stairs.

She walks away

318 ANGLE ON SHERMAN, BRADLEY, HUNTER AND ADLON

318

coming into the ticket area. Sherman immediately slumps down on the ground, resting against a wall. Adlon bends to help him. Bradley and Hunter look around, taking in what is happening.

HUNTER

(seeing the people
scrabbling at the debris)

I'll see if I can help...

He starts away. BRADLEY sees TATIANA and DUBOV, and heads towards them.

319 TATIANA AND DUBOV AS BRADLEY

319

joins them. Dubov says something to Bradley in Russian.

BRADLEY

What was that?

TATIANA

'One day you will come to Moscow,
and you will see real subways.'

DUBOV

(in English)

I... sit down.

He walks a few paces away, and sinks down onto the ground, resting his head back against a wall.

BRADLEY looks over at Hunter who is helping the people at the Exit.

BRADLEY

We'll get out.

She looks at him. He kisses her on the cheek, then heads towards Hunter and the Others. TATIANA goes to Dubov and kneels beside him.

DUBOV

(looking up at her)

Three minutes.

OMIT 320-321

322 IN SPACE

322

For the first time we SEE the two packs of rockets on the SCREEN together, travelling in tandem now, perfectly aligned.

EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

Two minutes and fifty seconds.
Tracking stations report no
more loss. Keep your fingers
crossed.

323 THE METEOR

323

and the earth, SEEN in the SAME SHOT, much larger than we've seen it before. Then:

324 THE SURGING FLIGHTS OF ROCKETS

324

The reds of the Russians seeming to intermingle with the blues of the United States. MUSIC combines themes of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., building in tension.

325 INT. THE TICKET AREA

32

CAMERA TRACKS in and out amongst all the survivors, as they sit or stand waiting patiently while those at the exit pull away more and more rubble. Gradually we begin to HEAR A VOICE coming from a transistor RADIO.

RADIO VOICE

(faint at first)

... rescue teams are moving into
New York from all directions.
Helicopters flying over the city
are reporting tremendous damage.
All local radio and television
stations are still not functioning.
Here at WVNK, Newark, we'll
keep you informed throughout the
day.

321 CONTINUED:

321

A small silence, then Bradley looks at the watch on his free wrist --

BRADLEY

Three minutes.

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(CONTINUED)

325 CONTINUED:

325

By now the CAMERA has PANNED on to a seventeen-year-old boy who sits with the transistor in his lap, and the VOICE has grown much STRONGER.

RADIO VOICE

(continuing)

We will continue with our on-the-spot reporting directly after this message from our sponsor.

OMIT 326

XX

326A ON BRADLEY AND HUNTER

326A

tearing away at the rubble, amongst others. Bradley stops to look at his watch. Hunter sees this, understands--

HUNTER

When--?

BRADLEY

Any second.

They both look up and over at Dubov who is looking at his watch. He glances up and sees Hunter and Bradley. He raises an encouraging thumb.

327 IN SPACE

327

The background MUSIC BUILDING the tension of the last minute before impact. VARIOUS CUTS of the rockets and the meteor.

328 FROM BEHIND CAMERA

328

the rockets stream AWAY FROM US, heading towards the meteor which we now SEE IN the SAME SHOT!

329 FROM THE METEOR'S POV

329

with the meteor in the f.g. as the packs of rockets come closer and closer!

EASTON (V.O.)

(filter)

...6, 5, 4, 3 ...

OMIT 330

XX

331 THE METEOR AND THE ROCKETS

331

And now the rockets EXPLODE! The force of the explosion sends a monumental shock wave at the meteor, which shudders, cracks, but remains intact, and is thrust off its deadly orbit into a harmless one. CAMERA WATCHES as it recedes away, away, into the distant reaches of space!

332 A LARGE CLOSEUP OF THE TRANSISTOR RADIO

332

The announcer's VOICE loud and clear:

RADIO VOICE

... We're interrupting our coverage of the New York disaster to bring you an official announcement just received from Houston.

333 GENERAL SHOT OF TICKET AREA

333 X

Everyone present silent, tense, waiting.

RADIO VOICE

Three minutes ago, at ten thirty-eight, the combined rockets of the United States and the U.S.S.R. struck the meteor which has for five days been coming towards us. It has been deflected from its course, and is now on a harmless orbit moving away from earth. The danger is past!

A cheer goes up!

OMIT 334

XX

334A DUBOV AND TATIANA

X

On their feet now. They embrace.

334B ADLON AND SHERMAN

X

Also standing.

SHERMAN

We did it!

- 335 BRADLEY AND HUNTER 335
They shake hands. Bradley looks away over the Area towards Tatiana.
- 335A DUBOV AND TATIANA 335A
She turns away, looks over to Bradley.
- 335B HIGH SHOT LOOKING DOWN 335B
As Bradley and Tatiana push their way through the people, finally reaching each other. They embrace, O.S. there is a rumbling noise, and then the SOUND of falling stones, etc. They turn and look.
- 335C THE EXIT. THEIR P.O.V. 335C
People are backing away as Boulders and rubble tumble down to reveal a beam of dust-filled daylight. A cry goes up--

PEOPLE INCLUDING HUNTER

We're out!

There is A CRASH OF MUSIC on the SOUND TRACK!

OMIT 336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-345-346-347-348-349 XX

- 350 AN AMERICAN MILITARY BAND
playing the Russian National Anthem.
- 351 THE RED STAR OF RUSSIA ON THE TAIL FIN OF A JET 351
The Anthem continuing over. CAMERA PANS and TRACKS BACK TO REVEAL the send-off being given for Dubov and Tatiana as they walk towards the red-carpeted stairs leading up to the open door of the plane. They are surrounded by well-wishers, amongst them our group, Adlon, Sherman, Hunter, etc. and particularly Bradley who walks beside them. There are Newspaper and Television people, and Other American and Russian officials, military and civilian. When they get to the foot of the steps, DUBOV turns to shake hands with each member of the group, holding Bradley for the last. At the same time, he says something to TATIANA in Russian, and as BRADLEY takes his hand--

TATIANA

(translating for Dubov)

He says, in the future, may all our rockets point in the right direction.

BRADLEY

Tell him, if they don't, there may not be any future.

She translates, DUBOV nods, then throws his arms around BRADLEY. After which, he turns, and strides up to the top of the steps. TATIANA and BRADLEY stand a moment, looking at one another, then she breaks away, and hurries up to join DUBOV.

352 ANGLE ON DUBOV AND TATIANA

352 :

At the top of the steps, waving.

353 THEIR POV

353

Their well-wishers waving back.

354 CLOSE SHOT - BRADLEY

354

holding up his hand in a kind of mid-air salute, then lowering it as he focuses on --

355 TATIANA

355

not waving now, looks out O.S. at Bradley. CAMERA MOVES BACK TO INCLUDE Dubov who looks at her -- and we SUBTITLE:

DUBOV

(in Russian)

I think you'll come back one day, eh?

TATIANA

(in Russian)

Perhaps...

X

They turn to go into the plane.

356 FULL SHOT OF THE RUSSIAN JET

356

as it leaves the ground lifting off, and roaring away into space. As it streaks away into the distance, SUPERIMPOSE:

"IN 1968 THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DESIGNED A PLAN TO DEAL WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF A GIANT METEOR ON A COLLISION COURSE WITH EARTH. THIS PLAN IS NAMED:

'PROJECT ICARUS.'"

With the sky and fleecy clouds as a b.g. --

END TITLES.

FADE OUT.

353 THEIR POV 353

Their well-wishers waving back.

354 CLOSE SHOT - BRADLEY 354

holding up his hand in a kind of mid-air salute, then lowering it as he focuses on --

355 TATIANA 355

not waving now, looks out O.S. at Bradley. CAMERA MOVES BACK TO INCLUDE Dubov who looks at her -- and we SUBTITLE:

DUBOV

(in Russian)

I think you'll come back one day, eh?

TATIANA

(in Russian)

I think so...

They turn to go into the plane.

356 FULL SHOT OF THE RUSSIAN JET 356

as it leaves the ground, lifting off, and roaring away into space. As it streaks away into the distance, SUPERIMPOSE:

"IN 1968 THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DESIGNED A PLAN TO DEAL WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF A GIANT METEOR ON A COLLISION COURSE WITH EARTH. THIS PLAN IS NAMED:

'PROJECT ICARUS.'"

With the sky and fleecy clouds as a b.g. --

END TITLES.

FADE OUT.

THE END