

QUATERMASS

By
David S. Goyer

based on the teleplay "Quatermass and the
Pit" by Nigel Kneale

14-July-97

QUATERMASS

FADE IN:

EXT. MANHATTAN - DUSK

A view of East Harlem, "El Barrio", as seen from the South Bronx. At first blush, it's a vibrant, urban area teeming with life. Upon closer examination, however, we SEE the neighborhood what it really is: a poverty-stricken, crack-infested ghetto.

ANGLE ON

The Caulder Building. Six stories of once-elegant cast-iron façade now gone to seed. Doric columns, intricate panels, sills, and plates all bolted together and covered by iron rosettes and other ornaments.

Built in the 1800s and currently being dismantled, this derelict "curtain wall" building is now a copping corner for EMACIATED ADDICTS and competing HEROIN DEALERS hawking their glassine dime bags of "green toad" and "DOA".

DOWN THE STREET,

Lexington Avenue Subway Station. We drop in with the flow of COMMUTERS taking off for parts unknown.

INT. LEXINGTON AVENUE SUBWAY STATION/TRAIN -

FOLLOWING the commuters as they board the South-bound Express, moving up through the train itself to the --

FIRST CAR

where ERNEST CASTLEMAN (50s), the beleaguered MTA motorman, is housed. Castleman gets the "all-clear" SIGNAL from his Conductor and hits the brake-release. The brakes HISS and the train grinds forward, gaining speed.

MOVING THROUGH THE SUBWAY TUNNEL (CASTLEMAN'S POV)

as the train's HEADLIGHTS slice through the shadows. Pillars flash by. Graffiti swirls. Local stops. MTA work-crews.

ON CASTLEMAN,

bored, lulled into complacency by the hypnotic rocking of the train, the strobic effect of the headlights.

CASTLEMAN'S POV (THROUGH TRAIN WINDSHIELD)

SOMETHING appears to be standing in the tunnel up ahead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Castleman leans forward, trying to get a better view. There shouldn't be anyone down here, and yet --

A TALL, BLACK CREATURE

is standing dead-center on the tracks, illuminated by the on-rushing HEADLIGHTS -- an image torn from Hell's bestiary, bat-like wings extending from its side. The figure takes flight, RUSHING towards the cabin --

Castleman CRIES OUT, hitting the emergency brake. The train SQUEALS as the steel wheels lock up --

INSIDE THE TRAIN CARS,

bodies whiplash as the lights go out. We hear SCREAMS and SHOUTS of panic --

INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL -

The train derails, careening onto its side -- a 400 ton juggernaut moving eighty miles an hour. It HAMMERS across the track into the concrete wall, causing the tunnel to cave in, exposing the water course beneath, tearing open a gas main. SPARKS commence and --

AN EXPLOSION

rips through the tunnel, sending a WAVE OF FIRE rushing back through the crippled train like the brimstone breath of the Fallen himself.

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - ATRIUM - NIGHT

A BOW-WAVE OF FIRE erupts up through the ground floor, snapping load-bearing beams, shattering most of the remaining windows, continuing on outward --

EXT. LEXINGTON AVENUE INTERSECTION - NIGHT

-- as it rips the intersection apart, sending CARS flipping into the air like match-box toys. JUNKIES and DEALERS are caught in the flames, instantly immolated --

INT. LEXINGTON AVENUE STATION - DISPATCH OFFICE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a BLINKING RED LIGHT. PULL BACK to reveal a black model board indicating the Lexington Line and the positions of its respective trains. ALARMS are ringing.

A SUPERVISOR swoops in, pointing to the light in question.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

3.

SUPERVISOR
Jesus Christ, the South-bound
express just derailed --
(turning to the others)
Get me Track and Structures,
NOW!!!

CUT TO:

INT. LEXINGTON AVENUE INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Rescue and recovery. Chaos. The FIRE DEPARTMENT is on the scene, along with EMS, the TRANSIT POLICE, MTA Track and Structures. The area has been cordoned off in a pathetic attempt to rein in the NEWS CREWS and GAWKERS.

Remember the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing? This is worse. A smoking, volcanic-like crater has opened up in the intersection, centered around the sagging Caulder Building. Even now BODIES are being dragged out from the rubble, most dead, but some still miraculously alive.

INT. LEXINGTON LINE TUNNEL - NIGHT

Smoke. A cacophony of SCREAMS and WAILS. The place is a charnel house. We FOLLOW an EMS TEAM as they work their way through the twisted wreckage of the train to --

THE MOTORMAN'S CABIN

CRASH! An EMS TECH forces the door open, SHINES his flashlight around, finding --

CASTLEMAN,

alive but catatonic, covered in blood, trapped beneath a pile of earth and rubble which has flooded in through the broken windshields.

The Tech turns back, shouts to his associates --

EMS TECH #1
We've got a survivor!

As the rest of the EMS team arrives, the Tech reaches towards Castleman --

EMS TECH
It's alright. You're going to be
okay --

Castleman recoils away, SHRIEKING like a baby. His frantic efforts cause a section of the rubble to shift, revealing -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A SKELETON

buried in the earth beyond, human. The skull breaks from the spinal column, tumbles down to the EMS Tech's feet. H crouches, picking up the skull.

EMS TECH
What the Hell is this?

CUT TO:

MAIN CREDITS ROLL.

EXT. ETHIOPIAN BADLANDS - DUSK

SUPER TITLE: "HADAR ETHIOPIA, RIFT VALLEY - INSTITUTE OF HUMAN ORIGINS CAMPSITE"

We are soaring with a bush plane along the banks of the long-dead Awash River, dropping down over the fossil-rich dreamscape known as Hadar -- birth-place of the human race.

Presently, a field-lab campsite comes into view. Nearby, a cluster of SCIENTISTS are crouched by a sedimentary deposit, painstakingly sieving for bone fragments.

CLOSE ON CATHERINE RONEY,

shielding her eyes from the setting sun as she watches the plane sweep around for a landing at a nearby airstrip. At 35 Roney is one of the world's foremost paleoanthropologists. She's attractive, brash, self-assured -- perhaps a little too impulsive for her own good.

ON THE BUSH PLANE

as it rolls to a dusty stop. CAPTAIN POTTER (30s, boyish good looks and a devil-may-care attitude) climbs out of the cockpit, looking unshaved and seriously jet-lagged. A handful of AK-47-wielding AFAR TRIBESMEN quickly gather around him, jabbering away in Ethiopian.

POTTER
I'm looking for Roney, Dr. Roney?

He tries to push through them but the rifles come up and the jabbering gets threatening.

POTTER
Whoa, easy, Chief --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 RONEY (O.S.)
 (in Ethiopian, subtitled)
 Menem, okay, aydel enie
 aderegewalehu --

Potter turns, SEES Roney pushing into the tribesmen's midst. The men lower their weapons, grudgingly deferring to her.

 RONEY
 Sorry. We've had some trouble
 with a neighboring tribe.

 POTTER
 No problem.
 (offering his hand)
 My name's Captain Potter, I'm with
 the Office of Scientific
 Intelligence --

 RONEY
 (suspicious)
 So you're a spook, then?

 POTTER
 An academic spook, actually.
 We're a black budget think tank
 based in Washington.

 RONEY
 Aren't you a little out of your
 jurisdiction?

 POTTER
 By about nine time-zones.

Roney looks back at her dig, starts walking --

 RONEY
 You mind walking with me? We're
 losing the light.

Potter nods, falls in beside her. She returns to the dig site on the river bank, barks off a few orders in Ethiopian to members of her local dig crew, then resumes brushing off a bone fragment.

 RONEY
 So tell me, Potter, what brings
 you to the cradle of human
 civilization?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POTTER

A subway derailment, actually. In Manhattan. During the clean-up, some skeletons were unearthed. Six partials, so far. Definitely early hominids --

RONEY

There were no early hominids in North America.

POTTER

It gets better. Preliminary chronometric dating puts their age somewhere around five million years.

Roney stops, looks up.

RONEY

That's impossible --

Potter smiles, knowing he has her now.

POTTER

I know. *Australopithecus* is the oldest we've found and that's just over four.

RONEY

Who did the dating?

POTTER

Fusco at Columbia University. It's been verified with radioisotopic analysis, ESR. It's not a hoax, Roney. The find is real.

Roney studies Potter, a mixture of excitement and annoyance welling up inside her. She shakes her head in disbelief.

RONEY

So you're basically saying my life's work just went down the drain?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POTTER

Exactly.

(drawing closer)

Everything we've learned about human evolution, everything we've believed up until now, just turned out to be wrong.

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST HARLEM - LEXINGTON AVENUE - DAY

A black Cadillac sedan and its police escort wind their way through heavy traffic. The sidewalks are mobbed with PRESS and LOOKY-LOOS, various STREET PROSELYTIZERS.

INT. GOVERNMENT CAR - DAY

The car moves at a crawl. Roney sits in the back with Potter, watching the hectic landscape pass by. Up ahead, more POLICE OFFICERS are trying to clear the way --

RONEY'S POV

Many of the on-lookers seem disturbingly lifeless -- vacant-eyed, haunted homeless-types, staring at us like a silent jury of ghosts.

RONEY

So many people --

POTTER

The find seems to be drawing them out of the woodwork. Religious Right are having a field day --

WHAM! As if to illustrate Potter's point, a wild-eyed, SNARLING FACE presses up against Roney's window, BANGING on the glass. Call him the PROPHET.

PROPHET

Be sober, be vigilant! Your adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour!

A TRIO OF COPS launch themselves at the prophet, hauling him back into the crowd. He struggles, SHOUTING --

PROPHET

Be vigilant! The armies of the Beast, are at hand!!!

Roney turns away from the window, shaken. Potter smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POTTER
Millennial fever. It's catching
like wild fire.

Up ahead, the Police have cleared a path for their car --

CUT TO:

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - DAY

Cordons have been set up around the building -- chain-link fencing, barbed wire, concrete barricades. Beyond the barricades, ARMED SOLDIERS stand guard -- black uniforms, no markings.

Potter offers his ID. Their car is waved through.

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

Roney and Potter are ushered into the wreckage-strewn lobby. The center of the once-grand building opens into a bombed-out atrium which is topped by a soaring glass-panel skylight, most of which has been shattered by the explosion. Despite the building's condition, however, the magnificent interior ironwork on the stair railings and long-dormant elevator cages is still quite evident.

An elaborate scaffolding has been set up, upon which workers had been systematically dismantling the cast-iron architectural elements of the building. Now it's populated by members of the Army's CORP OF ENGINEERS.

POTTER
(explaining as they walk)
The derailment happened just
beneath us, explosion ripped right
through the roof of the tunnel --

As they walk, they are met by a stout man wearing fatigues and a hard-hat, LT. COLONEL AIKENS. He offers his hand --

AIKENS
Lt. Colonel Aikens, Army's Corp of
Engineers. I'll take you down.
Watch you step, if you would.
Whole place is a death-trap --

Aikens waves them along. As they follow, Roney scans the atrium.

RONEY
What's all this scaffolding for?

(CONTINUED)

AIKENS

Building's somewhat of a landmark. From what I understand, the Preservation Society had been dismantling the cast-iron elements, shipping them off for a Japanese buyer --

(looking back)

Frankly, it's a miracle the whole thing didn't come crashing down, considering the strength of the explosion and all. We've had to shore up most of the load-bearing walls. Took us days to dig out the survivors --

Aikens stops. In the center of the atrium,

A MASSIVE PIT

has been opened up by the explosion. It leads down into the subway tunnel which runs beneath the building. Temporary ramps and railings have been built, along which various work lights have been strung.

Aikens waves them onto a hydraulic lift platform, starts their descent. As the trio is lowered into the pit, they pass even more of the black-uniformed soldiers moving up the ramps. Roney can't help but take note of the heightened security. For an archaeological dig, the whole set-up seems inappropriately militaristic.

INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL - DAY

Roney follows Potter along the tunnel. Eventually, they come upon the Lexington Station platform which has been transformed into a temporary archaeological field-lab -- an urban version of Roney's own campsite in Ethiopia.

JUST OFF THE PLATFORM,

DOZENS OF GOVERNMENT WORKERS are excavating a cordoned-off area. Some are making plaster and burlap jackets for the larger finds, others are painstakingly slaving away with trowels, dental picks, and whisk brooms. Still others are working with pneumatic chisels and electric drills.

RONEY

(admiring the work)

Quite an operation you've got going here. I'd kill for this kind of funding --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POTTER

Consider it yours.

Potter leads Roney to a table where TWO LAB ASSISTANTS are cataloging a vast array of unearthed bones.

POTTER

This is what we've uncovered so far. We should have stereolithic casts ready by tomorrow --

Roney bends down, studies a PARTIAL CRANIUM.

RONEY

The phylogeny's all wrong here. Look at the temporal and occipital crests, not to mention the dental arcade --

Roney picks up a pair of calipers, attempts to measure the width of the skull. She looks to a lab assistant --

RONEY

What's the size of this braincase?

LAB ASSISTANT #1

About 900 cc.

Roney turns to Potter, puzzled.

RONEY

This doesn't make any evolutionary sense. The specimens from Ethiopia weigh in around 400 cc. If these hominids really do date back five million years, their brains should be smaller, not larger than the ones in Africa.

BREEN (O.S.)

Which is one of the reasons we've asked you aboard.

Roney turns to see COLONEL JAMES BREEN, USAF, approaching. Breen (40s) is a dyed-in-the-wool hard-ass -- an iron-willed career soldier with reptilian eyes and a clipped, no-nonsense attitude.

POTTER

Dr. Roney, this is Colonel Breen, Director of Reclamations for U.S. Space Command.

Breen gives Roney a curt handshake, sizing her up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RONEY

Space Command? Don't tell me you
lost a satellite down here -- ?

BREEN

I wish it were that simple.
Potter here tells me you double-
majored -- mineral sciences and
paleoanthropology?

(off Roney's nod)

If you'd come this way --

Breen leads them to a portion of the tunnel that has been
tented off. A pair of ARMED SENTRIES stand outside.
Roney crosses her arms, shivering. This area is markedly
colder than the platform was. Breen looks to Roney.

BREEN

What you are about to see is
classified and compartmentalized
information. If you divulge this
information to anyone who is not
cleared, you will be subject to
the laws of treason and SAEDA. Do
you understand?

Roney glances at the sentries, nods. Breen waves the
guards aside, then pulls back a flap in the tenting --

TENTED-OFF AREA

Our trio enters. It's definitely colder in here -- chilly
enough for Roney to see her own breath.

In front of them is a large, hollowed-out cavity where a
portion of the tunnel has been further excavated. MORE
SKELETAL FRAGMENTS jut out from the earth -- a skull here,
a stray femur there. But there is also SOMETHING beyond
the skeletons --

A PATCH OF SMOOTH, SHINY SURFACE,

looking vaguely metallic, but also strangely alien. The
exposed area is about ten feet wide -- a jet-black, whale-
backed shape, clearly indicating by its gentle curve the
enormous bulk that must still lie hidden underneath.

Roney steps closer, finding herself drawn to "hull".
Without even thinking, she reaches out to touch it --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POTTER

Careful, you should use these --
 (offering her a pair of
 protective gloves)

The first people who touched it
 developed some kind of frost-bite.
 It's extremely cold, well below
 absolute zero. And the
 temperature seems to be dropping.

Roney slips on the gloves, places her hand on the shiny
 surface. We sense a low-level, nearly sub-audible
 VIBRATION coming from it. Roney turns back, puzzled.

RONEY

What is it?

BREEN

We don't know. We've done a
 series of remote sensing surveys
 via ground-penetrating radar. Our
 best estimates put the object's
 diameter somewhere around two
thousand meters.

Roney's eyes widen in disbelief.

RONEY

Two thousand -- ?

POTTER

(nodding)

From what we can tell, its
 completely spherical. The
 surface-structure appears to be
 crystalline, but whatever it's
 made of doesn't correspond with
 anything found in the periodic
 table.

Roney's curiosity is definitely piqued now.

RONEY

How many sides do the crystals
 have?

POTTER

Seven.

RONEY

Well I guess that rules out
 natural formation then.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BREEN

Why?

RONEY

Because there's no such thing as seven-sided rotational symmetry, at least not in nature.

BREEN

Which means this object has to be man-made?

Roney nods. Potter glances at Breen, pained.

POTTER

Let me ask you something -- do you think it's possible that this thing could have been buried here recently?

RONEY

How recently?

POTTER

(hopeful)

Some time this century?

Roney studies the patch of hull, shakes her head.

RONEY

No way. I'm just eyeballing it here, but judging by the geochronology of the surrounding sediment layers -- I'd say this object of yours predates these skeletons.

BREEN

Meaning it too is over five million years old?

Roney nods. The immensity of what they're discussing finally catches up with her.

RONEY

This is crazy. Five million years ago our ancestors weren't even capable of manufacturing simple tools. There wasn't a civilization on Earth that could've made something like this --

Roney stops, looking back at Breen, finally realizing --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RONEY

You don't think its from Earth, do you?

Breen slowly shakes his head. Potter turns to him --

POTTER

You realize this is just what the old man said about the Bloodstone?

Breen nods to himself, as if making a painful decision.

BREEN

We've got no choice, then. We've got to find Quatermass.

Breen exits in a huff, leaving Potter and Roney.

RONEY

What the hell is Quatermass?

POTTER

Not what, who.

(off her look)

Bernard Quatermass. He used to run NASA's exobiology program. You remember the Icarus disaster?

RONEY

The Mars mission -- ?

POTTER

(nodding)

That's right. Apparently Quatermass' wife was one of the astronauts they lost. There was some flap over culpability. Quatermass ended up taking the bullet --

(shrugging)

Years later he was back on the lecture circuit, toting around some artifact he'd dug up in Denmark called the "Bloodstone". He claimed he had proof it was extraterrestrial in origin, but he was basically laughed out of Washington.

RONEY

So why wheel him out now?

Potter looks back at the hull, tracing his gloved hand across its surface. He smiles grimly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POTTER

Let's just say this "artifact" of his had some uncannily similar properties to our find here.

CUT TO:

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY

SUPER TITLE: SAN JUAN ISLANDS, 25 MILES NORTH OF PUGET SOUND"

BERNARD QUATERMASS (50s),

a powerful, square-built man with lively eyes and a salt and pepper beard, sits in a two-person sea kayak, gliding across a gentle ocean swell. A hydro-phone cable trails behind the kayak.

Quatermass taps away at a water-resistant laptop, occasionally pausing to listen phrases of "PORPOISE LANGUAGE" coming from the hydro-phone, then making his own verbal notes via a micro-cassette recorder.

CLAUDE, his Water Spaniel, crouches in the passenger seat, BARKING enthusiastically at small pod of Dall's porpoises who are circling the kayak.

QUATERMASS

(into micro-cassette)

Friday morning, May 28th, 6:30am.
I'm in Bay Eight. Front water,
overcast skies, observing the
alpha pod --

Quatermass holds out his hand. A particularly frisky porpoise nuzzles against his palm.

QUATERMASS

Animal Six up for ten seconds,
showing dominant behavior --

The porpoise SQUEAKS in response, spewing a spray of mist from its blow-hole over Quatermass --

QUATERMASS

(wiping his face)
Thank-you, Animal Six.

EXT. ROCHE HARBOR - BEACH - DAY

Quatermass guides his kayak through the mist up onto a gravel sandbar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Claude jumps out, trots off into the woods. Quatermass hauls the kayak out of the water, shrugs off his life jacket. Then he hikes up a path to --

EXT. QUATERMASS' HOME - DAY

-- a secluded cabin nestled in a stand of old growth pines. There's an old pick-up parked out front, a pile of freshly-chopped firewood. The compound is rustic, perhaps a little lonely -- the kind of place a man looking to hide from his past might settle down.

INT. QUATERMASS' CABIN/LAB - DAY

Quatermass enters, pulls off his boots. There's a wood-burning stove, a rack of hunting rifles, assorted "outdoors" ephemera, and --

DOZENS OF AQUARIUMS,

occupied by various CEPHALOPODS -- octopuses, squids, chambered nautiluses, aerators BUBBLING away. A wonderland of strange life-forms looking decidedly out of place here.

BREEN (O.S.)

Been a long time, Quatermass.

Quatermass spins, SEES Breen sitting in the shadows. Quatermass' face hardens.

QUATERMASS

Breen.

Breen stands, drawing closer, studying the aquariums.

BREEN

Nice place you've got here, little rustic for my tastes. What have you been doing with yourself?

QUATERMASS

Since you ruined my life, you mean?

BREEN

(smiling thinly)

Seven years, Quatermass. That's a long time to be tilting at windmills.

QUATERMASS

For you, maybe. Not for me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass turns his back to Breen, dismissive. He picks up a container of food, starts feeding his charges.

BREEN

What have you been doing out here?
Aside from licking your wounds.

QUATERMASS

Building pipe bombs, plotting your
assassination --

(beat, serious)

Studying the neurobiology of
pelagic animals.

BREEN

(amused)

Why?

QUATERMASS

If you want to learn how an
intelligent, alien life-form might
behave you look to our own oceans.
The porpoises, the cephalopods --

Quatermass pauses by a tank filled with dozens of tiny
DWARF OCTOPI, watches them swirl around.

QUATERMASS

Octopi are actually quite
intelligent. They possess both
long and short-term memory.
They're capable of navigating
through mazes. They learn by
trial and error.

(beat)

Did you know their coloration
reflects their mood? Red means
fear, white means anger --

Quatermass suddenly whirls around, PUNCHING Breen in the
face. As the Colonel staggers back, Quatermass grabs him
by the wrist, twisting his arm around, shoving his hand
into a nearby tank. Breen struggles to pull his hand out,
but Quatermass keeps it pinned there.

QUATERMASS

(continuing; even)

Take the blue ringed octopus, for
example -- one of the most
poisonous animals in the world.
Its bite causes paralysis,
respiratory failure. The venom
can kill a healthy man in under
five minutes --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The small octopus in question darts into the corner, where it curls up, slowly flushing white. Breen renews his struggles, but Quatermass simply tightens his grip. His voice drips with menace now.

QUATERMASS

How healthy are you, Breen?

Quatermass finally releases Breen, who yanks his hand out with a panicked splash and stumbles backwards, wiping the blood from his bleeding nose --

BREEN

Are you insane?!

QUATERMASS

(seething with hatred)

Get out.

Breen fights to contain his fury --

BREEN

Look, I didn't come here to settle old scores --

Quatermass lifts the hunting rifle from its rack.

QUATERMASS

I said, get out.

BREEN

The Agency wants you back --

QUATERMASS

Well they can't have me!

BREEN

Damnit, Quatermass, you don't know what you're talking about --

Quatermass steps closer, training the rifle on Breen.

QUATERMASS

What I know is this: I told you to scrub the launch. I begged you not to do it. And what did I get for my efforts? I got black-balled. You made me the scape-goat, Breen. You got promoted and I lost the only human being on this planet that ever meant a damn to me!

Breen backs away, uncomfortable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BREEN

What happened was an accident --

QUATERMASS

One that could've been prevented.

BREEN

I can't bring Rachel back. But I can resurrect your career. We've found something, Quatermass, something which corroborates your work on the Bloodstone.

At this, even Quatermass' embittered eyes widen in surprise.

QUATERMASS

The Bloodstone -- ?

BREEN

(nodding)

Only bigger, much bigger. We think it might be the mother lode. A ship. Buried beneath Manhattan for the last five million years.

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST HARLEM - DAY

A phalanx of UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters sweep across the skyline, dipping down over Marcus Garvey Park which has become an ad hoc staging area for the NATIONAL GUARD and FBI'S DOMESTIC TERRORISM UNITS. Evacuation MESSAGES are being broadcast via the helicopters -- disembodied VOICES echoing across the rooftops.

Down below, FOOT PATROLS are spreading out through the streets, accompanied by the occasional Humvee or Bradley APC.

GUARDSMEN are moving door to door, escorting RESIDENTS toward waiting buses. Many of the troops are outfitted in MOPP (Mission Oriented Protective Posture) level-4 chemical protective suits -- masks, over-garments, etc.

INT. BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER - DAY

Quatermass sits with Colonel Breen, watching East Harlem unfold beneath him. A long STEEL CASE sits beside him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS' POV

of the chaos below. A skirmish has broken out between some rock-throwing YOUTHS and a cluster of Guardsmen. SOMEONE fires a round of tear-gas. The youths scatter --

QUATERMASS
(over the noise)
How many people are you
evacuating?

BREEN
Somewhere in the neighborhood of
twenty thousand. The official
story is a militia group has
hidden a sarin gas bomb in the
subway tunnels, so we've had to
take a chemical protective posture
for window-dressing --

Breen pulls out a map of Manhattan, points to it.

BREEN
We're setting up an eight-block
containment zone around the dig
site. Fifth through Second
Avenues have been shut down
between 116th and 130th. We're
sealing off the subway tunnels,
sewer systems -- any place where a
body could gain access to the
site. Until we know what we're
dealing with here, no one gets in
or out of the zone without our
say-so.

EXT. LEXINGTON AVENUE INTERSECTION - DAY

The Blackhawk touches down. Quatermass and Breen scurry from it. As a GUARDSMAN directs them towards the Caulder Building, AUTOMATIC GUNFIRE breaks out from a nearby rooftop.

BREEN
Sniper fire, get down!!!

BULLETS WHINE, chew up the asphalt. The Guardsman is HIT in the shoulder, goes down --

OTHER GUARDSMEN return FIRE as Breen takes cover behind a police cruiser. Quatermass follows, then SEES their Guardsman escort still struggling in the open. He ducks back out into the line of fire, dragging him to safety.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass turns to a FEMALE POLICE OFFICER, EVANS, crouching nearby, shouts over the NOISE --

QUATERMASS

What's going on here?!

EVANS

La Mafia Cheeba, local gang-bangers! Their leader's got 'em convinced the evacuation's bogus, says the race war is finally beginning!

A STRAY BULLET takes out the windshield, spraying Quatermass and Officer Evans with glass.

The Police and Guardsmen renew their efforts, shooting down the SILHOUETTED GUNMAN from his rooftop perch. He tumbles into the street, landing atop a parked car with a CRUNCH.

As the GUNFIRE abates, Breen motions to Quatermass, hurrying him along towards the Caulder Building.

BREEN

Let's go!

INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL -

Quatermass and Breen approach the dig site via the subway tunnel. Quatermass looks to his wristwatch -- the LED display is behaving erratically, generating anything but normal time. Presently, they arrive at --

THE STATION PLATFORM

Work has continued full-pace, even though the temperature has continued to drop. ARMY ENGINEERS outfitted in Arctic gear have cleared away a hundred foot section of the now frost-encrusted hull.

(NOTE: When we first glimpsed the hull, it was jet-black. While the surface remains smooth and shiny, the color has faded to a kind of gun-metal gray.)

Quatermass steps closer to the hull, staring in wonderment.

RONEY (O.S.)

Awe inspiring, isn't it?

Quatermass turns, SEES Roney and Potter at his side. Both are wearing parkas. Roney offers her hand.

RONEY

Catherine Roney. And you must be?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

Bernard Quatermass. I read your piece on sexual dimorphism in the Journal of Human Evolution.

RONEY

(smiling)

So you were the one, huh?

Quatermass looks to Potter, who also extends his hand -

POTTER

Captain Potter, OSI. Thanks for coming on board, Professor. I take it you've had a chance to review the back-ground material?

QUATERMASS

(nodding)

How many skeletons have you recovered so far?

RONEY

Nearly a dozen. But I'm still at a loss as to how they got here --

QUATERMASS

If I had to hazard a guess, I'd say the arrived on our mystery craft here.

Roney and Potter stop, floored by Quatermass' suggestion. In the few moments since Quatermass has arrived his easy-going, yet authoritative nature has already won him de facto leadership of the operation, something which irks Breen to no end.

AT THE SHIP HULL

The VIBRATIONS coming from within are more distinct now. Quatermass waves his hand in front of it, furrows his brow.

QUATERMASS

(to Potter)

Is it generating any background radiation?

POTTER

No. In fact, the opposite seems to be happening. The temperature drops as you draw closer to it. It also seems to have a dampening effect on our work-lights, radios -- anything electrical.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass takes a pen-light from his pocket, shines it on the hull. The beam dims as it nears the hull's surface.

QUATERMASS

It's absorbing radiant energy --
light, heat, radio signals,
anything propagated on an
electromagnetic wave --

RONEY

How can you be so sure?

QUATERMASS

Because I've studied this effect
before.

Quatermass sets the metal case he's been carrying on a nearby work-table, opens the latches --

AN ANCIENT SWORD

rests within. A stone in the hilt is clearly composed of the same material as the ship hull.

QUATERMASS

The sword is pure iron, taken from a meteorite, apparently. That's curious enough, given that meteorites are the only source of truly pure iron found in nature. But it's the stone in the hilt that's the most interesting feature, the Bloodstone --

(re: stone)

Supposedly it's capable of bestowing visions upon those who touch it, madness. Some say it fell from the Heavens, others say it was forged by demons.

BREEN

I'm not interested in legends, Quatermass. I'm interested in facts.

Quatermass lifts the sword from its case, touching the point to Breen's chest.

QUATERMASS

Fact: the Bloodstone maintains a consistent surface temperature five degrees below its environment.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS (CONT'D)

Fact: while attempts to determine its elemental composition have failed, it appears to be crystalline, possessing seven-sided rotational symmetry. Sound familiar?

Breen nods, pushing aside the point of the sword.

QUATERMASS

You want more facts? You'll get my crack-pot theories too. They're a package deal, Breen.

Breen sneers, then exits with Potter, moving on down the tunnel to consult with the FOREMAN of excavation crew. Roney turns to Quatermass.

RONEY

You two aren't exactly the best of friends, are you?

QUATERMASS

Colonel Breen is a career militarist of the worst type, cold as a corpse and half as charming.

RONEY

(smiling)
You say that like it's a bad thing.

Quatermass smiles back. These two have developed an instant, easy-going rapport.

QUATERMASS

Dr. Roney --

RONEY

Catherine.

QUATERMASS

Catherine, then. Breen is the Anti-Christ. The sooner you accept that, the safer you'll be.

Roney drops her gaze to the sword. She touches the stone in the hilt, FEELS it vibrating just as the hull did --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLASH! SHE SEES A WORLD IN FLAMES

Red skies filled with FLYING SHAPES. Armageddon by way of Hieronymous Bosch. And above it all, an ENORMOUS, SPECTRAL PRESENCE hovering above the otherworldly landscape.

BACK TO SCENE

Roney shakes her head to clear it.

QUATERMASS
What's wrong?

RONEY
Nothing, I just --

QUATERMASS
-- thought you saw something?

Roney nods, a chill running up her spine. She gestures to the work tables where the hominid skeletons are arranged.

RONEY
You really think these hominids
arrived on this --

She pauses, searching for the right word.

QUATERMASS
-- spaceship? I'd wager my life
on it.

ARMY ENGINEER (O.S.)
Colonel Breen!

Quatermass turns. An ENGINEER approaches Breen and Potter, excited. Quatermass and Roney join them.

ARMY ENGINEER
We've found some kind of opening
in the hull, an hatchway --

The Engineer leads them along the length of the hull, stopping before the "hatchway" in question. The freshly-excavated opening is ovoid, about ten feet wide. Quatermass and the others crowd in around it --

ARMY ENGINEER
It's not very deep, only about
twenty feet, then it appears to be
sealed off by some kind of inner
bulkhead --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INSIDE THE CAVITY -

TWO WORKERS with headlamps (call them BENSON and WEST) are using pneumatic chisels to clear the frozen mud away from the bulkhead.

QUATERMASS

That's enough --

The workers stop. Quatermass ducks inside. Roney, Breen, and Potter join him. Quatermass crouches by the bulkhead, his breath escaping in frosty plumes.

A PATTERN

has been revealed, etched into a shallow impression within the center of the bulkhead's surface -- a series of five interlocking circles.

QUATERMASS

Looks like a witch's star.

RONEY

A what -- ?

QUATERMASS

A pentacle. One of the ancient cabalistic signs. They were used to ward off evil. The Devil, specifically.

POTTER

Look, there are more --

Potter directs a flashlight along the cavity -- DOZENS OF PENTACLES have been scratched into the wall.

RONEY

What are they doing here?

QUATERMASS

Perhaps they were meant to keep something at bay --

BREEN

You're grasping at straws now, Quatermass.

QUATERMASS

Am I? Early settlers could have stood where we're standing now.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS (CONT'D)

They would have sensed something alien just as we have, labeled it a product of witchcraft in their ignorance --

(turning to Potter)

Bring me the sword, Potter.

Potter ducks outside. Moments later, he returns with the steel case. Quatermass removes the sword and holds it up against the bulkhead. The stone in the hilt fits within the shape of the impression -- a perfect match.

QUATERMASS

A perfect fit, just like a puzzle piece --

RONEY

(pointedly)

Or a key.

As if on cue, the low-level VIBRATIONS emitting from the hull seem to intensify. The group glance at each other, nervous. West suddenly SCREAMS, stumbling backwards --

BREEN

West!

-- but West isn't listening, he's DIVING out of the hatchway, running like hell --

INT. TUNNEL -

-- where he collapses just outside. Quatermass and the others crowd in around him. Breen grabs him by the shoulders, shaking him --

BREEN

What happened?

West stares up at them, wide-eyed with terror.

WEST

I saw something, a figure --
It went through the wall, it came right at me!

QUATERMASS

What kind of figure? Was it human?

WEST

No, I -- I'm not sure --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The OTHER MEN come running now, curious, spooked --

SOLDIER

What's wrong? What did he see?

BREEN

(annoyed)

Nothing. The confined space got him. Claustrophobia.

Breen shoots Quatermass a glance, then motions to his men.

BREEN

Get him out of here, have a medic check him out.

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - ATRIUM - DAY

Quatermass stands on the edge of the pit, watching as a group of soldiers help West up one of the ramps.

COP (O.S.)

Saw something down there, huh?
Doesn't surprise me, really.

Quatermass turns, SEES a COP helping himself to a cup of coffee.

QUATERMASS

Why do you say that?

COP

The building's haunted.

(grinning)

At least that's what they used to say when I was a kid.

QUATERMASS

You grew up around here?

COP

(nodding)

A few blocks away. Us kids used to dare each other to run up and touch the front door. There were all sorts of stories -- noises being heard, screaming, even things being seen.

(shrugging)

You know how it is, once things get started --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass contemplates the Cop's words, then returns his attention to the street where we see West being loaded into the back of an ambulance. Quatermass SEES Potter, approaches him --

QUATERMASS

The driver of the train reported seeing something similar, didn't he? Just before the crash? I remember reading something about it in the files.

POTTER

(nodding)

He's under observation at Metropolitan Hospital. Apparently he's suffered some kind of psychotic break.

QUATERMASS

I need to see him. Now.

Off Potter's curious look we --

CUT TO:

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - DAY

Quatermass, Roney, and Potter hurry towards a waiting helicopter.

DOWN THE STREET,

More UNRULY CROWDS have gathered. The National Guardsmen have erected barricades, but the mob is trying to surge past them, seemingly possessed by a kind of group madness.

Just as our trio climb aboard the helicopter, a number of people break through the barricade. They make a mad dash for the helicopter --

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

The PILOT SEES the people coming. He pulls back on the control stick, lifting them into the air even as Potter attempts to close the cabin doors --

One of the mob makes a leap for the helicopter skids, snagging it at the last second. He climbs up, trying to claw his way inside. Potter struggles with him as the helicopter banks sharply, nearly falling out himself --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass lunges forward, gripping Potter, both men trying to fend off the attacker. The man's eyes are wide, animalistic --

After a few desperate seconds, the attacker falls back, slipping from the helicopter skids, tumbling down some forty feet into the seething mob below.

Potter collapses onto the helicopter floor as Quatermass slides the door shut.

POTTER

Jesus Christ, what's wrong with them?

QUATERMASS

It's almost as if they were being drawn here, responding to some kind of call --

As Quatermass says this, Roney catches sight of a familiar face amongst the crowd below --

THE PROPHET

she saw earlier, standing there like a statue in a sea of frenzied unrest. He stares up at Roney intently, then rips open his tattered shirt, revealing his raw-boned chest -- five interlocking circles have been crudely scraped into his flesh -- a pentacle.

CUT TO:

INT. METROPOLITAN HOSPITAL - PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY SERVICES
- NIGHT

Quatermass, Roney, and Potter enter the overrun triage area adjacent to the lock-down wards where the walk-ins are evaluated. It must be a full moon tonight because the LOONIES are out in force. People are muttering to themselves, singing, dropping their drawers --

OVER BY THE NURSE'S STATION,

a haggard doctor, DEIDRE O'CONNELL (40s), and a RESIDENT are manning the fort. As Potter approaches, O'Connell looks up at them with battle-weary eyes.

O'CONNELL

Can I help you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POTTER

Dr. O'Connell? Captain Potter. I called earlier about Ernest Castleman, the subway motorman?

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - LOCK-DOWN WARD - NIGHT

O'Connell leads the group down a white-tiled corridor.

O'CONNEL

-- this isn't the first case we've seen like this. I've noticed a huge upswing in schizophrenic symptomatology. On an average night we might handle one or two walk-ins, but lately, we've been seeing dozens. The delusions Mr. Castleman and the others are suffering from, the apocalyptic visions -- they're all remarkably similar.

QUATERMASS

Are you suggesting that whatever's happening is contagious?

O'CONNELL

Maybe. There's been some evidence linking schizophrenia to viral activity --

(disturbed)

The thing of it is, I've spoken to some of the other city hospitals. They haven't noticed an increase in schizophrenic episodes. Whatever's happening seems to be isolated to the East Harlem area.

Quatermass shoots a glance at Roney and Potter. O'Connell stops at one of the cell doors. She unlocks it, swings the door open --

INSIDE,

Ernest Castleman, the MTA motorman from the prologue, lies on a cot, his wrists and ankles secured with leather restraints. His head twists back and forth as he MUTTERS to himself.

O'CONNELL

We've had to restrain him. He's been quite violent since he was brought in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

Did Mr. Castleman have a history
of mental illness?

O'CONNELL

(shaking her head)

Not that we know of. This appears
to be an isolated episode.

Quatermass steps into the cell, approaches Castleman. He
pulls up a chair, sitting down by the bed.

QUATERMASS

Mr. Castleman, can you hear me?

For a moment, Castleman doesn't seem to notice Quatermass,
but then his eyes slowly focus in on our hero's face.

QUATERMASS

My name is Bernard Quatermass.
I've come to help you.

Castleman stares up at Quatermass, child-like.

CASTLEMAN

To help -- ?

QUATERMASS

That's right. But first we have
to go back --

(leaning closer)

You saw something in the tunnel,
didn't you? Just before the
accident. Something that
frightened you -- ?

Castleman stares off into nothingness, hesitant.

CASTLEMAN

I was there, in the tunnel -- and
then I was somewhere else --

He shudders, pulling away from Quatermass, starts to sob --

CASTLEMAN

I could see them. They were
coming. I had to run, had to get
away --

QUATERMASS

Get away from who?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CASTLEMAN

They were crooked, horrible --
wings and horns, leaping, flying
into the sky --

Roney crouches by Castleman's side, her voice tinged with
urgency --

RONEY

You said you went somewhere else,
Mr. Castleman. Where did you go?

Castleman whips his head towards Roney. He starts to
giggle, even as tears of madness stream from his eyes.

O'CONNELL

I think he's had enough for one
evening --

RONEY

(continuing, insistent)
What color was the sky in this
other place, Mr. Castleman? Was
it blue?

Castleman shakes his head, the memory of what he's seen
still horribly vivid.

CASTLEMAN

No. Dark. Dark like blood. Oh
Jesus, I saw Hell, don't you
understand?! I saw the end times!

With a sudden surge of strength, Castleman rips one of his
hands free, lashing out at Roney's throat.

Quatermass and Potter try to pry the madman's fingers free,
but they can't! Castleman's adrenal surge is overriding
their efforts and Roney is choking, eyes rolling up in her
head. O'Connell rushes into the hall --

O'CONNELL

We need help in here, NOW!

TWO ORDERLIES rush into the cell, piling on top of
Castleman, tearing Roney free. She collapses back into
Quatermass' arms, GASPING.

One of the orderlies jabs a syringe into Castleman's arm.
Castleman goes limp within a matter of seconds, quickly
slumping into unconsciousness. As the men secure Castleman
in four-point restraints, Quatermass helps Roney back out
into the hall --

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - LOCK-DOWN WARD - NIGHT

Quatermass sets Roney down in a chair, then studies her throat, concerned. Potter hovers nearby.

QUATERMASS

Are you all right?

Roney nods, anxious to put the incident behind her.

RONEY

Quatermass, that scene he described, that other place with the red skies -- I saw it too. When I touched the Bloodstone.
(suddenly frightened)
What's going on here?

Before Quatermass can continue, Dr. O'Connell approaches, looks to Roney. Her patience has been strained.

O'CONNELL

I'm sorry about what happened in there, but you really should have stopped when I told you to.

Quatermass brushes O'Connell's admonitions aside.

QUATERMASS

You said Castleman's delusions were similar to another patient's. Can you be more specific?

O'Connell looks to Potter, annoyed.

POTTER

It's important, Dr. O'Connell.

O'CONNELL

(sighing)
There's one patient in particular, Richard Boone. The imagery Castleman described is nearly identical.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR/ISOLATION CELL - NIGHT

O'Connell and the others stand at an observation window, looking in on --

BOONE,

a sinewy man with matted hair. His back is to us. He clutches himself, slowly rocking back and forth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The room itself is decorated with dozens of lurid, violent FINGER-PAINTINGS -- expressionistic images featuring horned, winged demons, just like Castleman described.

QUATERMASS

How long have you been treating him?

O'CONNELL

A few years. Normally he's catatonic, but we've made some therapeutic progress with finger-painting.

QUATERMASS

Why is he in here?

O'CONNELL

Twenty years ago he killed his entire family. He claimed he'd found the entrance to Hell in the cellar of his apartment building. He said the demons were taking over the bodies of the people around him, replacing them --

(shrugging)

So he decided to perform an exorcism. He decapitated them, cut out their hearts, arranged their entrails in the form of a pentagram --

POTTER

I hate when that happens.

Roney shoots Potter an annoyed look. Quatermass continues:

QUATERMASS

This -- entrance to Hell, where did Boone find it?

O'CONNELL

(pointedly)
East Harlem.

QUATERMASS

Do you remember where, exactly?

O'Connell thinks a moment.

O'CONNELL

The Caulder Building, I think they used to call it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A collective chill runs up our group's spine.

QUATERMASS

Could I speak to him? Inside his cell?

O'CONNELL

You're willing to do that? Even after what just happened?

Quatermass nods. O'Connell weighs his request, then shakes her head tiredly.

O'CONNELL

Try to avoid direct eye contact. Never turn your back on him. Never initiate a conversation. You have no idea who or what he thinks you might be.

QUATERMASS

Then that makes us even, doesn't it?

O'Connell keys an intercom next to the observation window.

O'CONNELL

Richard, I have someone here who wants to talk to you.

Boone's chilling VOICE drifts out of the intercom.

BOONE (FILTERED)

I know.

Boone turns, focusing his razor-gaze on Quatermass. His features are sharp, raw-boned. He approaches the window. His fingers are covered in blue paint, still wet. His arms are lined with dozens of self-inflicted cigarette burns.

O'Connell reaches for a card key that hangs from her neck. She slides it through a mag-strip reader and the outer door of the cell opens. Quatermass enters the small vestibule. Seconds later, the inner door HISSES open --

INT. HOSPITAL - BOONE'S CELL -

Boone studies Quatermass, angling his head from side to side, like an animal sizing up its prey.

BOONE

I've seen you before. In my dreams. They told me about you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass pulls a micro-cassette recorder from his jacket pocket, clicks it on --

QUATERMASS

Who told you about me, Boone?

BOONE

The voices. They're under the earth, breathing. They're waking up, you know. Hiccup. Giddyup --

QUATERMASS

What makes you think that?

BOONE

Because I can hear them, like insects, every night when I go to bed. Click-click, click-click. Radio signals. Straight on till morning, Peter.

Boone shudders. He closes his eyes a moment. Tries to recompose himself.

BOONE

I'm an avatar of chaos, you know. I hear other voices too.

QUATERMASS

Others?

BOONE

(nodding)

Old voices. Ghosts. They're in me. In my blood. Gotta keep 'em out. Out, out, out.

Boone opens his eyes now.

BOONE

Iron hinders, you know. Cold. Touch wood, no good. Touch iron, rely on.

(beat)

You think I'm crazy?

QUATERMASS

What do you think?

BOONE

(grinning)

I think, therefore I am, Sam. But I do not like green eggs and ham.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

Can't say I care for them myself.

Boone laughs, starts speaking gibberish -- a foreign language, perhaps, though one not easily recognizable. Then he switches gears, changing to yet another language. He starts spinning madly, flailing his limbs.

O'CONNELL (FILTERED)

Glossolalia, speaking in tongues.
It's a common schizophrenic
symptom --

After a few moments, Boone collapses, having burned himself out. He stares up at the ceiling, glassy-eyed. O'Connell motions. Apparently the show is over. But as Quatermass steps towards the door, Boone calls out to him:

BOONE

Professor Quatermass --

Quatermass stops, turns back.

BOONE

I know what you found down there,
under all that earth --

(beat)

You've found the Devil.

QUATERMASS

Perhaps we have.

BOONE

You know about Eschatology?

Quatermass slowly nods.

BOONE

Nostradamus, Book of Enoch. "In
the year 1999, from heaven will
come the great King of terror".

And with that, Boone turns back towards the corner, staring at nothing, withdrawing within himself once again.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR/ISOLATION CELL - NIGHT

Quatermass exits the cell. As they follow Dr. O'Connell back down the corridor, Potter looks over --

POTTER

What the hell is eschatology?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

It's the branch of theology that deals with the end of the world. Armageddon.

POTTER

Yeah, well, I think you have to take a fruitcake like that with a grain of salt.

QUATERMASS

Maybe not.

(off their looks)

When I left he called me Professor Quatermass.

POTTER

So?

QUATERMASS

I never told him my name.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

We are moving down a hallway towards a door with the following words stenciled across its frost glass window:

"DR. HANS GEHRING, Ph.D., LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT"

INT. DR. GEHRING'S OFFICE - NIGHT

DR. GEHRING (60s) holds court with Quatermass, Roney, and Potter. Boone's VOICE drifts out of the micro-cassette recorder which is playing on Gehring's desk. Gehring stops the recorder:

GEHRING

This person is speaking
Nederlandish. It's what the early
Dutch settlers spoke --

Gehring rewinds a few seconds, then starts the tape again.

GEHRING

There's a second language being
spoken here too. If I had to
guess, I'd say it was Algonquian.

POTTER

Algonquian?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 RONEY
What's he saying?

Gehring rewinds the tape, starts it again --

 GEHRING
Something about foul noises, imps
and demons -- iron hinders --
 (shrugging)
It's hard to make the rest out.

 QUATERMASS
What time period are we talking
about?

 GEHRING
Early seventeenth century. That
would have been around the time
Peter Minuit purchased Manhattan
from the Indians.

Off Quatermass' pensive nod we --

CUT TO:

INT. SPECIAL COLLECTIONS READING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON an seventeenth-century pamphlet. Under a crude
woodcut of ghostly shapes with horns and wings comes the
title:

A TRUE HISTORIE OF THE NIEUW AMSTERDAM GHOSTES

Concerning the amazing events at Nieuw Haarlem.

Quatermass, Roney, Potter and a LIBRARIAN are gathered
around a table which is swamped with documents.

SUPER TITLE: "COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS"

Quatermass picks up the pamphlet and reads from it:

 QUATERMASS
"In the winter of the year 1626
Director General Peter Minuit,
while felling trees, did strive
against an outbreak of evil. Imps
and Demons did appear. Foul
noises sent by the Devil."

 POTTER
Could Boone have read the same
account?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

And managed to learn two extinct languages?

(shaking his head)

This isn't a simple case of speaking in tongues. I think our schizophrenic friend is picking up signals --

(off their looks)

What if Castleman and the others weren't hallucinating? What if they were experiencing something real?

POTTER

How?

QUATERMASS

What if that ship were acting as a kind of history recorder, storing visual and auditory memories within its hull. Think about it. The Caulder Building is supposed to be haunted, isn't it? What if Boone and Castleman actually saw something. A glimpse of another race, another world -- that'd be enough to drive someone mad wouldn't it?

POTTER

You can't be serious --

QUATERMASS

Why not?

(to Roney)

You've experienced it too. You said so yourself. So did that other soldier, West.

Roney picks up another document:

RONEY

Wait, listen to this:

(reading)

'Alarming noises and spectral appearances', September 1762.

(skipping down further)

'Our informant further states that grievous sounds and apparitions emanating from the very earth have so afrighted certain fellows employed in the digging of a well, that one is like to die mad'.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS
Digging a well?

The three of them begin sifting through the accounts.
Potter pulls out a yellowed newspaper clipping.

POTTER
Here's another. The New York
Times, October 17, 1916 --
(reading)
'Authorities responding to a rash
of 'demonic sightings' during
ground-breaking of the new
Lexington Subway line arrived to
find themselves in the midst of a
full-scale riot. Witnesses said
the crowd seemed to go mad with
blood-lust. "It was horrible",
reported one survivor, "we weren't
human anymore. All we saw was
Hell".

Quatermass paces. A theory is beginning to formulate.

QUATERMASS
In 1626 trees were being felled.
In 1762 a well was being dug. In
1916, the subway extension. And
now -- you see? O'Connell may
have been on to something when she
said this thing was contagious.
The civil unrest, the violence --
all linked to disturbances of the
ground.

(stopping)
These images, the psychic residue
from the ship's hull -- they're
being transmitted somehow, picked
up by the people around it --

POTTER
(running with the notion)
Might explain why the locals were
being so violent.

QUATERMASS
(nodding)
And why the hospital has seen so
many schizophrenics of late.
Hearing voices, seeing things --
aren't those classic schizophrenic
symptoms?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER (O.S.)
Professor Quatermass?

The group turns, SEES a SOLDIER standing in the doorway.

SOLDIER
Colonel Breen wanted me to tell
you -- they're about to try and
drill their way through the
bulkhead.

CUT TO:

INT. LEXINGTON LINE SUBWAY TUNNEL - NIGHT

Quatermass, Potter, and Roney enter. Breen is down by the excavation site, directing his men. They are setting up a generator, running cables from it towards the hatch-opening in the hull. The hull is visibly lighter in color now, something more along the lines of a powder gray.

Quatermass approaches Breen, angry --

QUATERMASS
What the hell are you doing?

BREEN
Taking action. We've waited
around long enough.

QUATERMASS
We need more time --

BREEN
We don't have it. I've been given
a mandate to determine the threat-
assessment of this object.
Pending that, my orders are either
to reclaim it, or destroy it. And
that's what I intend to do.

QUATERMASS
We've stumbled onto some kind of
Pandora's Box here, Breen.
Whatever's beyond that bulkhead
should stay buried.

Quatermass gestures to a sheaf of papers he's brought.

QUATERMASS
What we've seen so far aren't
isolated incidents.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS (CONT'D)

I've done some checking, the area surrounding this dig has logged more violent crimes per capita than any other neighborhood in the world. Murders, suicides -- they're all here, going back hundreds and hundreds of years.

BREEN

Coincidence.

QUATERMASS

What if it's not? What if that ship is influencing people somehow, driving them mad?

BREEN

That's ridiculous! What we're dealing with here is crowd psychosis. Hysteria. The people are scared. They hear rumors of an alien ship, of course they're going to panic. It's on TV every goddamn night! It's part of their mythology now!

Breen starts away, but Quatermass reaches for his arm --

QUATERMASS

These people are being poisoned. The more we unearth that ship, the greater the risk of contamination becomes. We need to halt the excavation, we need to widen the quarantine area --

BREEN

What do you want us to do, Quatermass? Evacuate the entire island of Manhattan?

QUATERMASS

(even)

That'd be a start.

Breen studies Quatermass, drawing closer, sensing weakness.

BREEN

You're afraid of what's in there, aren't you? That's what this is really about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS
(unflinching)

Yes.

BREEN

Well I'm not. That's the
difference between you and me,
Quatermass. It always has been.

Breen tears himself free of Quatermass' grasp and continues towards the hatch-opening. After a long beat, Quatermass looks back to Roney and Potter, then follows Breen.

INT. SHIP HULL - NIGHT

Quatermass and Breen watch as SLADDEN, the drill operator, sets up his drill. It's a powerful instrument on a swiveling arm, clamped to the edge of the hull opening closest to the bulkhead.

SLADDEN

The bit is titanium carbide --
basically, the hardest substance
known to man. If we can't break
through with this, nothing can --
(stepping back)
Where do you want me to start?

Breen points to the central pentacle --

BREEN

Here.

Sladden nods, slipping on gloves and a protective face-plate. He switches on the drill, pushes it into contact with the bulkhead. A THIN SCREECH is heard as the drill-bit harmlessly skids across the bulkhead's surface. After a few seconds he shuts off the drill, peers at the spot. The bulkhead appears to be unaffected.

SLADDEN

Son of a bitch --

BREEN

Try again.

Once more Sladden brings the drill to bear. Again it skids. The SCREECH rises in pitch this time, echoing inside the hull --

Quatermass shakes his head as if to clear his brain of the sound. Sladden bares clenched teeth. Breen's eyes are pressed shut --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Now, adding to the wailing screech, comes a deep, THUDDING VIBRATION. Sladden's body arches as if twisted by pain. Quatermass doubles over. Breen clutches the hatch-opening, trying to steady himself. The whole hull is vibrating under them.

BREEN
(over the noise)
Jesus, turn it off!

Sladden tears the drill bit away from the bulkhead -- but the VIBRATION CONTINUES, increasing in power. Breen CRIES OUT in pain. Sladden claps his hands over his head, swaying --

INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

The three men stumble out of the hatchway, collapsing onto the ground. Breen is on his hands and knees, vomiting. Sladden is on the ground, MOANING. His nose is bleeding, as are his ear canals.

Potter grips Quatermass' arm, shouting over the vibration.

POTTER
What happened?!

QUATERMASS
I don't know -- some kind of freak
acoustic effect --
(gasping)
-- the drill wouldn't --

Quatermass stops dead, staring. Electrical cables are rising all around them, whipping back and forth in the air like snakes. It's as if gravity no longer had a hold on them. Now they are joined by small tools -- dental picks, trowels, all manner of items -- floating up into the air, whirling around.

The gravitational anomaly seems to be centered around Sladden, who has risen to his feet. He stumbles forward, wide-eyed with terror. As he moves, objects take flight around him, swirling about.

The other soldiers back away from him, frightened. Sladden runs towards the platform, then up the stairs towards ground-level --

EXT. LEXINGTON AVENUE INTERSECTION - NIGHT

The vibrations are felt above-ground too. SOLDIERS are clutching at their heads, falling to their knees --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SLADDEN

emerges onto the street, still surrounded by a moving field of zero-gravity. A cloud of debris is swept up in his wake, orbiting around him. Then a pair of soldiers. Then an armored personnel carrier --

INT. LEXINGTON LINE SUBWAY TUNNEL - NIGHT

Below ground, the chaos continues. Sheets of ice are cracking apart, sliding off the hull -- fragments swirling in the air like a storm of knives. The vibrations increase to a mind-numbing intensity as the work-lights stutter and SPARK, then EXPLODE, plunging the site into darkness.

EXT. LEXINGTON AVENUE INTERSECTION - NIGHT

One by one, the lights in the buildings surrounding the Caulder Building also go dark. It's almost as if an energy sapping wave was spreading out from the ship itself, causing a neighborhood-wide black-out which continues to expand in a progressively widening circle. One block, two blocks, three, then --

-- the vibrations abruptly stop. The objects which had been floating drop back to the ground.

WHAM! Down comes the armored personnel carrier, as do the unfortunate soldiers and assorted debris. In the sudden absence of the gravitational anomaly surrounding him, Sladden also collapses.

INT. LEXINGTON LINE SUBWAY TUNNEL - NIGHT

Silence for a beat as the people pick themselves up, turn on their FLASHLIGHTS. People are SHOUTING, trying to ascertain what happened.

Quatermass extends a hand out to Breen. He takes it, muttering a gruff thank-you, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand --

-- but Quatermass is distracted now, his eyes drawn to the opening in the ship's hull. He steps towards it.

THE BULKHEAD,

which they had unsuccessfully tried to breach is now open! Pressurized air is streaming out from it. A long, seemingly endless ovoid passageway extends away from us -- plunging, no doubt, into the heart of the ship itself.

CUT TO:

INT. CHANNEL 9 NEWS DESK - NIGHT

HUGH GUNNER and JENNIFER BEAUMONT, newscasters with manufactured smiles, sit at their desks, flanking a flashy on-screen "CITY IN CRISIS" graphic.

HUGH

Good evening and welcome to our on-going coverage of the current city-wide crisis. What's happening to Manhattan? In a word, madness. Black-outs, rioting, bizarre rumors. We take you now to field reporter Patricia Gregston who has prepared a special report from the proverbial eye of the hurricane.

(beat)

Patricia?

As Hugh and Jennifer turn towards the graphic behind them, news reporter PATRICIA GREGSTON appears and we --

GREGSTON (ON-SCREEN)

Thank you, Hugh. As you said, madness is the only word that could accurately describe what I've witnessed here these last few hours --

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST HARLEM SKYLINE - NIGHT

A building rooftop, looking down upon the congested city streets below. Gregston is doing a spot-cast against a backdrop of SIRENS, GUNFIRE, and random violence.

GREGSTON

As the evacuation of East Harlem continues, reports of widespread looting and civil unrest continue to filter in from all parts of the city. As you can see below me --

(indicating streets)

-- traffic has slowed to an absolute standstill. Harlem River Drive is virtually deadlocked, as are the Triborough and Third Avenue Bridges. In some cases, people have abandoned their cars altogether, fleeing with their families on foot.

The cameraman repositions his shot to favor Gregston again.

(CONTINUED)

GREGSTON

Meanwhile, rumors concerning the origins of this crisis continue to spread like wildfire. While details remain sketchy, we have learned this: the US Army has apparently unearthed a mysterious object, purportedly some kind of explosive device -- within the Lexington Line subway tunnel. Earlier reports seemed to indicate a chemical or biological weapon. One anonymous military source, however, had this to say, and I quote:

(checking her notes)
 "We've found something down there and it's NOT ONE OF OURS."

On that cryptic note, we return to --

INT. CHANNEL 9 NEWS DESK - NIGHT

-- Hugh and Jennifer manning the news desk.

HUGH

Thank you, Patricia. We take you now to One Police Plaza where a press conference is just getting under way with Mayor Robert Elkins.

EXT. ONE POLICE PLAZA - PRESS CONFERENCE - NIGHT

MAYOR ELKINS (50s), stand at a podium, looking strained and haggard. DOZENS OF REPORTERS crowd in around him. Colonel Breen lingers in the background.

MAYOR ELKINS

-- urge everyone to remain calm. I've just finished a phone call with the President who assured me that all steps were being taken to put an end to this crisis. In the meantime, I've decided to implement a city-wide curfew from dusk till dawn --

Elkins glances at Breen, who offers a quick nod.

MAYOR ELKINS

As of this moment, Manhattan is under martial law.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MAYOR ELKINS (CONT'D)

Anyone attempting to enter the zone, anyone breaking curfew, will be arrested on sight. Your cooperation will play a vital role in putting these dark hours behind us. Thank you.

Elkins ducks away from the podium, ignoring a volley of questions which the reporters fire off. Breen follows.

INT. ONE POLICE PLAZA - LOBBY - NIGHT

Elkins glances back at the reporters, looks to Breen.

MAYOR ELKINS

Well that was just about the biggest load of horse-shit I've ever been asked to dish up. I know my constituents. We can't keep stone-walling these people.

BREEN

I don't think you fully grasp the implications of what we're dealing with here. This craft appears to be extraterrestrial in origin --

MAYOR ELKINS

I don't care where it comes from. I want it out of here. I want my city back.

BREEN

So do we. We're bringing in the 10th Mountain Division out of Ft. Drum. They're a light infantry division specializing in urban warfare. They've got air support, mortar platoons. We used them in Somali, Haiti --

MAYOR

You're talking about U.S. citizens.

GRANGE (O.S.)

That's immaterial now.

Elkins whirls, finding himself face to face with WILLARD GRANGE (40s), a sharp-eyed, diminutive politico. X

MAYOR ELKINS

And you are -- ?

CONTINUED:

GRANGE

Willard Grange, Special Advisor to the President. Let's lay our cards on the table, shall we? Manhattan is under martial law now. The only reason you've been kept in the loop at all is because of your value as a public relations figurehead. If you are even remotely interested in retaining your office, you will roll over and beg as needed. Do I make myself clear?

Elkins glares at Grange, weighing the pros and cons of punching this little gnome out.

MAYOR ELKINS

Crystal.

GRANGE

Excellent.

(gesturing down the hall)
Now, if you'd care to come this way, we'll see if we can't bring you up to speed.

INT. COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Quatermass holds court at a conference table. Behind him are a series of strategy screens and AV monitors. Among those present are Breen, Potter, Roney, Grange, as well as Mayor Elkins. Windows in the conference room look out upon the control center proper -- the crowded and hectic nerve center through which all city-wide disasters are monitored.

SUPER TITLE: "COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTER, 1 POLICE PLAZA"

QUATERMASS

This craft is absorbing tremendous amounts of radiant energy and the rate of its appetite doesn't appear to be slowing --

Quatermass points to an electronic map-board of NYC. A pulsing icon situated in East Harlem represents the location of the ship. A translucent circle extends outward from that point, encompassing a large portion of the upper East and West sides.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

The immediate area surrounding the ship experienced a total power outage when the bulkhead opened. We also experience a temporary cessation of gravity. Air temperature within this "zone of influence" continues to drop, getting progressively colder as you approach the ship itself. In addition, the zone appears to be expanding at a geometric rate --

Quatermass gestures with his light pen. The translucent circle slowly enlarges, encompassing the bulk of Manhattan.

QUATERMASS

By my calculations, the entire island of Manhattan could fall under its sway within the next twenty-four hours.

This causes a rumble of discontent within the group.

GRANGE

Any conjecture as to what's happening?

QUATERMASS

Energy doesn't just disappear. It's being channeled somewhere, used to feed something --

GRANGE

What about this corridor we found beyond the bulkhead?

Breen rises, triggering a remote. A grainy POV shot appears on the main screen. We are traveling through the ovoid passageway of this ship.

BREEN

What you're looking at is footage captured from a remote probe which was sent in. The surface temperature inside the corridor is actually quite hot, somewhere around 45° Celsius, which might explain where all that energy is going --

The image begins to break up, quickly degenerating into a blur of static. The screen goes dark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BREEN

Unfortunately, we lost transmission shortly after sending the probe in.

GRANGE

What about the atmosphere within the ship?

Potter looks to his notes for reference --

POTTER

It's essentially the same chemical make-up as our own, though the carbon-dioxide levels are significantly higher, somewhere in the neighborhood of 335 parts per million.

RONEY

Which basically makes it consistent with Earth's atmosphere five million years ago.

GRANGE

Is it breathable?

POTTER

Barring any air-borne microbes. The risk of contamination should be low, though, assuming this ship really does come from another world. In general, bacterium can only infect what they have evolved to infect.

QUATERMASS

You people are missing the most important point, here.

GRANGE

Which is?

All eyes are on Quatermass now.

QUATERMASS

If there are alien life-forms inside that ship, it appears they were capable of breathing our atmosphere. Don't any of you think that's a remarkable coincidence?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS (CONT'D)

You don't just stumble upon a world compatible with your own. That only happens in bad science fiction. You have to look for it -- a long, long time.

(beat)

Which points us towards a colonization scenario.

GRANGE

Are we talking Chariots of the Gods here?

RONEY

The theory's been put forth before. It could explain where those hominid skeletons came from.

BREEN

(impatient)

The bottom line is this: we won't know anything definitive until we go in there ourselves.

QUATERMASS

For once, in our unholy alliance, I'm inclined to agree with you, Breen.

INT. HALLWAY - ONE POLICE PLAZA - NIGHT

Roney steps out from the din of the command center conference room, moving to a refreshment station where she pours a cup of coffee.

JUST OUTSIDE,

Quatermass stands at a balcony, watching the night sky.

EXT. BALCONY - ONE POLICE PLAZA - NIGHT

Roney steps out onto the balcony, following Quatermass' gaze. He seems fixated on a particular star.

RONEY

What are you looking at?

QUATERMASS

My wife, Rachel --

Quatermass points to the South, directing Roney's attention to a particular constellation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

Can you see the constellation Orion over there? About twenty degrees above the horizon?

Roney nods.

QUATERMASS

Now look to Orion's belt, the three stars in a row? At the moment, she should be crossing that red star, Betelgeuse. I'd say she was, oh --

(mentally calculating)
-- a hundred and thirty million miles or so from Earth.

RONEY

Potter told me about the accident. I'm sorry.

Quatermass glances at Roney, sees that she's sincere.

QUATERMASS

She was on her way to Mars, you know. We were going to be apart for nine hundred and eighteen days.

RONEY

What happened up there? What went wrong?

QUATERMASS

Officially? "Pilot error".

RONEY

And unofficially?

QUATERMASS

(matter of fact)
Their guidance systems failed. They drifted off course. Eventually they starved to death.

RONEY

You think it could've been avoided.

It's a statement, not a question.

QUATERMASS

If someone had been willing to listen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass shakes his head at the senselessness of it all.

QUATERMASS

She's still up there, trapped in an elliptical orbit around the sun. Every night, at some point or another, I find myself looking up at the stars, trying to figure out where in the sky she might be. Sometimes it's Orion, other times it's Taurus, or maybe Gemini --

(beat)

It's a way of keeping her alive, I guess.

Roney studies Quatermass -- his eyes, the set of his jaw.

RONEY

You never remarried?

QUATERMASS

(shaking his head)

She'd want me to. We'd certainly talked about it -- you know, if one of us were to die first?

(beat)

After a while, though, you get used to cooking for one.

RONEY

I understand.

QUATERMASS

(an ironic smile)

It's funny -- we used to fantasize about what it'd be like to encounter an alien race. I envied her, all those years leading up to the Mars mission. At best, she hoped to find evidence of organic microbes. Even still, I thought she was so damn lucky --

RONEY

And now?

QUATERMASS

Now I can't help thinking she still might be the lucky one.

Quatermass looks to Roney, fixing her with a sobering gaze.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

I've waited my whole life for something like this. In my wildest dreams I never imagined it would actually happen. But I'll tell you something, Roney. I have a bad feeling about this -- something in my gut, something visceral. Between you and me, I'm not sure I want to know what secrets that ship is hiding. I'm not sure any of us do.

CUT TO:

INT. LEXINGTON LINE TUNNEL - NIGHT

The station environs and tunnel look more like an arctic cave now, completely bound in ice. Meanwhile, the hull of the ship is significantly lighter, having taken on a pearlescent luster. The vibratory THRUMMING coming from the hull is clearly audible, even from a distance.

ON THE HULL OPENING/HATCHWAY

The area has been sealed inside a reduced air-pressure "biosafety" zone. Racal-suited SOLDIERS move within the tented area, assisting --

QUATERMASS, BREEN, POTTER, RONEY,

and a few others, who are suiting up in modified EMU spacesuits. Rounding out the group are four members from Breen's reclamation team -- LUFFORD, POLK, DIEGO, and JENSEN -- stone-cold operatives cut from the same cloth as Breen.

Quatermass dons his helmet, locking it in place as he matches Roney's gaze.

CUT TO:

INT. ALIEN SHIP - CORRIDOR -

A hollow wind blows through the corridor as Quatermass, Breen, Roney, and Potter, lead the rifle-wielding reclamation team into the darkness. The only source of illumination are the carbide lamps mounted on the helmets.

Potter checks a read-out on his wrist monitor. Beyond the face-plate of his helmet, we can see him perspiring.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POTTER (FILTERED)
50 degrees Celsius. What are
these suits good to?

POLK (FILTERED)
A hundred. After that, we're
toast.

POTTER (FILTERED)
(unenthused)
Pretty.

UP AHEAD,

the corridor branches off into multiple directions, some heading upwards, others dipping straight down. Roney pauses, studying the geography of their surroundings. Her amplified VOICE cuts through the silence --

RONEY (FILTERED)
This doesn't make any sense. It
seems much larger in here than it
looked from the outside --

QUATERMASS (FILTERED)
Spatiotemporal manipulation. I
think this ship is a hyper-sphere.

LUFFORD (FILTERED)
A what -- ?

QUATERMASS (FILTERED)
A four-dimensional sphere existing
in non-Euclidean space. It is
larger on the inside, possibly
even infinite. Whoever built this
craft had access to technology we
could only dream about. Somehow
they've managed to warp the space
within it.

POTTER (FILTERED)
Maybe we should leave a trail of
breadcrumbs, then, huh?

Breen looks to Jensen.

BREEN (FILTERED)
Mark our position every fifty
yards with the GPS. That way, we
can retrace our steps if we need
to --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Just then, Lufford CRIES OUT, SHOOTING down the darkened corridor. The other soldiers joins him. For a few seconds the area is alive with trigger-happy GUNFIRE, then --

BREEN (FILTERED)
Cease fire! CEASE FIRE!!!

One by one, the weapons silence. Breen steps helmet to helmet with the first offender, Lufford, snarling --

BREEN (FILTERED)
What the hell are you doing?!

LUFFORD (FILTERED)
I thought I saw something. I mean, it was there for a second and then --

POLK (FILTERED)
(nervous)
I saw it too. Some kind of figure.

But Diego is shaking his head, indicating his thermal scope.

DIEGO (FILTERED)
I wasn't picking anything up on UV or infra-red --

BREEN (FILTERED)
From here on out, nobody fires unless I tell them to, understood? Quatermass here has you ass-holes shooting at your own shadows.

BREEN (FILTERED)
(waving them on)
All right, move it out. We've only got a few hours of oxygen left.

The group trudges down one of the branching corridors. Roney pauses a moment, staring back into the dark corridor they just emerged from. Was there a figure moving back there? If she saw it, she's keeping it to herself.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ALIEN SHIP - ANOTHER BRANCHING CORRIDOR

The group moves through a series of increasingly warped and surreal environments.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The design is almost Escher-esque, akin to the convoluted and vertiginous inner twistings of a seashell. As they come upon another junction of helter-skelter tunnels, the group pauses again.

POLK (FILTERED)
Looks like the Winchester house on acid.

LUFFORD (FILTERED)
I'm getting queasy just looking at it.

POTTER (FILTERED)
(re: wrist monitor)
53 degrees Celsius. Temperature is rising.

Roney spots something, moving towards the corridor wall --

RONEY (FILTERED)
Hey! There's some kind of window here --

Roney points to a smooth, indented surface, shaped vaguely like a porthole, covered with condensation. As the others gather around her, she wipes the condensation away --

A FACE

stares back at her. Ape-like, with a sloping forehead and a prognathous jaw. The ape-like figure is frozen in some kind of inert fluid, like a bug in amber. Hundreds of prehistoric hominids lie alongside this one, perfectly preserved.

DIEGO (FILTERED)
What are they?

RONEY (FILTERED)
Our ancestors.

Behind them, Jensen backs away, eyes wide with fear.

POLK (FILTERED)
What are they doing here?

QUATERMASS (FILTERED)
Being studied -- altered, perhaps?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POTTER (FILTERED)
 (nodding)
 Larger brain cases, enhanced
 intelligence -- I'm getting a bad
 feeling about this.

BEHIND THEM,

Jensen SCREAMS, dropping to his knees. The inside of his
 face-plate is awash in blood.

BREEN (FILTERED)
 Jensen -- !

As they others rush to his side, he tears his helmet off,
 GASPING. Blood runs from his nostrils and ear canals.

JENSEN (FILTERED)
 I s-saw them, hundreds and
 hundreds of them --
 (struggling)
 I knew I was one. We were flying,
 up into the sky.

The terror floods into Jensen's eyes and he gives a wild
 CRY, the suddenness and violence of it startling them. He
 rises up, backing away from the group --

JENSEN (FILTERED)
 They're in us, oh God -- THEY'RE
 IN US!!!

Jensen lifts up his rifle, aiming it at Roney --

JENSEN (FILTERED)
 -- k-kill you -- !!!

Breen FIRES, wounding Jensen in the shoulder. He spins
 around, staggers away --

BREEN (FILTERED)
 Jensen, wait -- !

But Jensen isn't listening. He's runs off into the
 darkness, FOOTSTEPS receding. Then we hear him SCREAM, his
 voice falling away from us, vanishing into infinity --

BREEN (FILTERED)
 JENSEN!!!

Silence. A beat passes. No one says a word. One by one,
 the group members edge forward, cautious --

INT. ALIEN SHIP - ANTECHAMBER -

They come upon a large, circular aperture in the floor. It appears to open up into a much bigger chamber, but their helmet lights are too weak to determine just how cavernous the chamber really is.

BREEN (FILTERED)

Fire off some illumination rounds.

Diego and Polk FIRE a series of magnesium flares into the aperture. As the flares drift down via tiny parachutes, they begin to illuminate --

A MASSIVE CHAMBER

Essentially spherical in shape, hive-like -- hundred yards in diameter. So large that clouds of condensation mist drift through it. The walls are lined with thousands of seven-sided polygonal cells, each cell having been sealed off with a translucent, resin-like substance.

Near the bottom, we can just barely make out Jensen's broken form.

RONEY (FILTERED)

It looks like the inside of a bee hive, lined with cells --

Potter lifts up a pair of night-vision binoculars, zeroing in on the cells --

POTTER'S POV (VIA MAGNIFIED NIGHT VISION)

VAGUE SHAPES can be seen beyond the translucent cell walls.

POTTER (FILTERED)

There's something in them. I can't make out what they are --

QUATERMASS (FILTERED)

(grimly)

Larvae.

(off the others' looks)

That's what you find in hive cells, isn't it? Immature life-forms undergoing metamorphosis.

For a beat, no one says a word, each team member privately grappling with the immensity of what they've discovered. Then, Breen breaks the silence:

BREEN (FILTERED)

I'm going in. You with me, Quatermass?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass nods. Breen indicates two of his men, points to a projection in the wall --

BREEN (FILTERED)
Lufford, Diego, secure some cables
over there. We'll abseil down.

TIME CUT TO:

BREEN AND QUATERMASS

perched on the lip of the aperture, secured to the corridor wall via belayed cables which are in turn connected to a winch mechanism on each man's chest-plate. Breen gives a signal and the two men fall back, slowly abseiling down, the darkness swallowing them up.

QUATERMASS' POV - ON RONEY,

her helmeted face slowly receding as the distance between them grows. She reaches out her hand, as if to wave good-bye, then she's gone, lost in the trailing clouds of condensation mist.

INT. ALIEN SHIP - HIVE CHAMBER -

The descent seems to take forever. Magnesium flares drift down around Breen and Quatermass, throwing grossly distorted shadows over the whole of the chamber.

Presently, Jensen's body comes into view. His open eyes stare back up at them, lifeless.

As Breen and Quatermass reach the bottom, they unclip themselves. A number of the surrounding cell walls have been shattered by the force of Jensen's impact. Breen rolls Jensen aside, inspecting the nearest --

ON THE CELL

A COCOONED SHAPE rests within, surrounded by what could only be described as a kind of viscous, royal jelly.

Breen ejects a retractable blade from his EMU gauntlet and slices into the cocoon as we --

CUT TO:

INT. PALEONTOLOGY LAB - COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY - NIGHT (SUPER TITLE)

Roney, Quatermass, Breen, and Potter (each wearing Racal contamination suits) are gathered around the alien cocoon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roney picks up a small, circular saw. The outer crust is tough and fibrous, but ultimately she's able to make a large incision. She works her fingers inside, looks to Quatermass. Together, the two of them pry the fibrous casing apart to reveal --

AN ALIEN LIFE-FORM,

covered in a viscid mucus. Our first glimpse of a race we will come to know as the Chimera. But here's the catch -- the creature looks like an insect-interpretation of the winged Devil -- twisting horns, a barbed tail, cloven hooves. Skin like basalt.

RONEY

Boone was right. It is the Devil.

CUT TO:

INT. ONE POLICE PLAZA - CONTROL AND COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

Quatermass, Breen, and the others are engaged in a free-for-all shouting match.

ANGLE ON GRANGE

taking a seat at the head of the table. The din subsides. Grange flips through a classified folder in front of him, then looks to Quatermass.

GRANGE

It appears you're the man of the hour, Bernard. What do we know about them so far?

QUATERMASS

Quite a bit, actually, none of it particularly good --

An AIDE who dims the lights. Various autopsy slides come on a screen which Quatermass points to throughout his talk. The first is a pre-autopsy photo of the alien.

QUATERMASS

We removed this specimen from a kind of cocoon. When we saw it, we were just as shocked as you.

GRANGE

It looks like a gargoyle --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

(nodding)

Or a demon. And those aren't just similes. I think these are old friends we haven't seen for a long time.

Quatermass nods to Roney, who rises. She takes the remote from him, triggering a series of images. The first couple feature various Paleolithic cave paintings.

RONEY

These are cave paintings dating back some 30,000 years. They look familiar, don't they? Horned figures with upright, human-like bodies. Here's another image -- the goat-hoofed Satyr of ancient Greece. And another, the Old Testament god-demon Baal. You've seen these images before -- in books, paintings, carved on walls in a dozen countries --

The slides continue, featuring artwork throughout the ages -- medieval statuary, gruesome woodcuts.

BREEN

What's your point, Roney?

RONEY

My point is this: these creatures have been referred to again and again as demons, not just in historical documents, but now, by our own people. And I think they're right.

This causes a stir of outrage in the room, but Quatermass waves them off, continuing, LOUDER --

QUATERMASS

These beings have been with us a long time, since well before the dawn of man. Aliens, angels, demons -- call them whatever you want, primitive man must've seen them and incorporated them into his own formative beliefs, which were in turn translated down through the ages into religious doctrine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass keys the slide control, offering up a final image taken from Milton's Paradise Lost.

QUATERMASS

Lucifer Morningstar and the rest of the angels who rebelled against God literally fell from the sky. So did our friends here. These are the monsters that gave way to the Judeo-Christian myths.

GRANGE

Do you realize what you're saying, Quatermass?

QUATERMASS

Of course I do, but the conclusion is inescapable. One of the men at the hospital I visited told me we'd uncovered Satan. For all intents and purposes, we have.

POTTER

I can't wait till the Catholic Church gets a hold of this.

A few people offer up nervous LAUGHTER.

GRANGE

Setting aside Armageddon for the moment, what can you tell us about them in practical terms?

Quatermass starts the remote again -- a series of slides appear, depicting the autopsy in chronological order.

QUATERMASS

Let's start with the similarities. They're humanoid, bilaterally symmetrical, cephalized. Their support structures are exoskeletal, which means they're invertebrates. Their physiology bears some resemblance to our own Formicidae family, which includes wasps and ants. You'll notice the narrow stalk joining the abdomen and thorax, the mandible and labial palp --

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS (CONT'D)

(pointing out features)

As far as their place of origin is concerned, weight and structure point to a low-gravity environment, possibly a methane giant like Jupiter. All this, of course, is just preamble for the most disturbing discovery --

A new slide comes up on the screen, one depicting various molecular formulae.

GRANGE

Which is?

Quatermass looks to Roney, then drops the bomb.

QUATERMASS

This creature was still alive when we started the autopsy.

To say that the group is shocked would be a severe understatement.

BREEN

That's impossible --

QUATERMASS

Apparently not. We found nanoagents in its bloodstream -- tiny, molecular-sized machines. It's body was filled with them -- clouds of nanoagents, held together by some kind of internal magnetic fields. It's been theorized that nanoagents could be used to preserve cell tissue. Some people believe they could be used to achieve suspended animation.

Grange interjects, trying to wrestle with the concept.

GRANGE

Are you saying this thing's been hibernating for the last five million years?

QUATERMASS

Yes. And I think it's safe to assume the others have been too.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS (CONT'D)

Which means they could also still wake up. We found this specimen in a cocoon. If the insect analogy holds true, then what we've got here is a pupa -- an immature life-form in a transitional stage. If the others do wake up, if they complete their metamorphosis --

Potter completes the thought.

POTTER

Then our ass is grass.

The group devolves into chaos again, a melange of overlapping, panicked discussions.

QUATERMASS

We need more information. As I've stated before, I believe the ship is projecting signals -- sound and images of the world from which it originated. Schizophrenics appear to be the most receptive to those signals. They were the ones who responded to them first --

Breen is shaking his head, about to shoot the idea down, but Quatermass pushes on.

QUATERMASS

There's a man we met at the hospital, Richard Boone. I'd like to take him inside the ship and record what he sees.

GRANGE

How in the world do you intend to do that?

QUATERMASS

With an experimental device called an optic-encephalograph.

Quatermass motions. A scarecrow of a man, DEMETRIUS JANEK, shuffles forward, carrying a aluminum camera case.

QUATERMASS

This is Demetrius Janek, from MIT.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Janek opens the case, revealing what could only be described as a monocular virtual reality visor trailing various wires and gold-plated electrical leads. He picks up the object, speaking in a thick Eastern European accent.

JANEK

The OEG is designed to locate visual impressions in the brain, whether real, or imagined. We do this by tapping directly into the subject's visual cortex. Our early results have proven to be quite astonishing. Crude, but definitely promising --

GRANGE

You've done this with a human subject before?

JANEK

No. Only chimpanzees. But the principle is the same.

BREEN

(disgusted)

Jesus Christ, we don't have time for this. We need to make a preemptive strike, now.

Grange studies the slide of the demon-like alien, weighing his options. After a moment, he stands, collects his report, looks to Quatermass.

GRANGE

You've got twelve hours. After that, we escalate.

CUT TO:

INT. LEXINGTON LINE SUBWAY TUNNEL - NIGHT

A cadre of arctic-suited Reclamation Team soldiers stand guard over the ship, nervously eyeing the hatchway in the hull.

The generator-powered work-lights flutter for a moment, slowly dimming. On a nearby table, a thermos begins to jiggle. At the same time, the ship hull begins THRUMMING again, gradually rising in volume just as it did when Sladden tried to drill through the bulkhead.

The men begin to back away, frightened.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Objects are RATTLING all around them, then -- another zero-gravity wave expands out from the hull, lifting all present into the air.

EXT. EAST HARLEM - NIGHT

The black-out area expands further, moving well beyond the Army cordon set up at the previous edge of the black-out zone.

NEAR GROUND ZERO (LEXINGTON AVENUE INTERSECTION)

Gravity is going completely haywire. Vehicles, benches, saw-horses and concrete barriers -- anything not nailed down is spinning away into the air, bobbing above the darkened buildings.

Even a helicopter circling the perimeter is caught in the wave. It whirls out of control, rotors catching on a roof ledge, then EXPLODING into shards of burning wreckage. One of the soldiers within is ON FIRE, flailing helplessly in zero-g.

The panicked soldiers on the ground back away, lest they too find themselves swept up in the expanding gravitational anomaly as we --

CUT TO:

INT. METROPOLITAN HOSPITAL - PES - NIGHT

Quatermass, Roney, Potter, and a pair of ARMED SOLDIERS enter the triage area. The power is out and the only illumination is provided by a series of ceiling mounted battery lights. In the lock-down ward beyond, we can hear VARIOUS SCREAMS.

Roney shoots the others an uneasy glance, then spots a RESIDENT manning the desk in the glassed-in nursing station. She approaches.

RONEY

We're looking for Dr. O'Connell --

The resident doesn't respond.

RONEY

Hello -- ?

Roney taps on the safety glass. Finally, the man looks at them -- his eyes are glassy, crazed. As he stands, we see that he's naked from the waist down. He starts GIGGLING, pressing his face against the glass --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLIDER #1
What the hell -- ?

POTTER
Looks like the inmates are running
the asylum.

Potter looks to the door leading to the lock-down ward,
then the numeric entry key-pad on the wall alongside.
Wisps of smoke are creeping out from beneath the door.

Potter pulls out his gun and FIRES into the keypad, once,
twice -- the keypad BEEPS erratically. Potter tries the
door, shoulders it open --

INT. HOSPITAL - LOCKDOWN WARD HALLWAY - NIGHT

-- and SEES Dr. O'Connell suspended before them, wrapped up
in four-point restraints. She's hanging from her neck via
a fire hose which has been secured around a steam pipe
running along the ceiling. The hallway is filled with
smoke. Someone has set the ward on fire.

SOLDIER #2
I'm not going in there.

QUATERMASS
We have to find Boone.

POTTER
That's assuming he's even still
alive.

Quatermass ignores the comment, reaching up to O'Connell's
neck. He snaps off the chain which her keycard dangles
from, then wades into the smoke-thick corridor.

As our team moves down the hall, we SEE that the various
lock-down cells are all open. Each doorway offers a window
onto new horror -- INMATES and STAFF dead or dying. The
walls are decorated with crude finger-paintings done in
blood, feces, whatever happened to be at hand -- jagged
portraits of the demon-like aliens --

As the group rounds a corner, a CRAZED INMATE rushes out of
the smoke at them -- it's Castleman, the deranged subway
motorman, clutching a hypodermic. He knocks one of the
soldiers to the ground, tries to force the hypodermic into
the soldier's eye --

The Soldier SCREAMS and throws Castleman aside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As Castleman scrambles back to his feet, Soldier #2 and Potter FIRE their M-16s at him, knocking his bullet-riddled body back against the wall. Castleman slumps to the floor, GIGGLING --

CASTLEMAN
They're coming --

-- as his last breath escapes him. Potter helps the fallen soldier to his feet. The group moves on --

INT. HOSPITAL - ISOLATION CELL - NIGHT

-- into the smoke-choked isolation area. Quatermass and the others find Boone in his cell, standing at the observation window as if he were expecting them, hands clasped behind his back. Quatermass keys the intercom --

QUATERMASS
Do you remember me, Boone? My name is Quatermass --

BOONE
(mimicking O'Connell)
Try to avoid direct eye contact.
Never turn your back on him.
Never initiate a conversation.
You have no idea who or what he thinks you might be.

The two Soldiers exchange uneasy looks.

QUATERMASS
We're letting you out. We're taking you with us --

BOONE
(nodding)
Taking me down, yes. Into the pit. Round and round.

QUATERMASS
(surprised)
You knew?

Boone taps his head with his index finger.

BOONE
They knew.

QUATERMASS
Stand back from the door, Boone. We're coming in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Boone steps aside. The Soldiers ready their weapons. Quatermass swipes O'Connell's card-key through the mag-strip reader. The outer door opens, then the inner door --

Boone moves towards them, then sweeps his hand out from behind his back. He's holding a canister of paint which he throws into the faces of the Soldiers, blinding them --

Potter moves to fire, but Boone blocks his arm, knocking the weapon from his grasp.

Roney SEES a fire extinguisher mounted on the wall, reaches for it --

Boone pulls a .45 from one of the Soldier's holsters, FIRES at him point-blank, then turns towards Quatermass --

Roney triggers the fire extinguisher, spraying a cloud of CO2 into Boone's face. He staggers back, choking. Potter leaps atop him, injecting him with a syringe --

BOONE'S POV

Quickly growing fuzzy, dimming around the edges. The last thing he sees is Quatermass' face -- human, then morphing into one of the Chimera. Boone SCREAMS as we --

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

FADE IN. Quatermass, Janek, Potter, and a few other scrub-clad SURGEONS are staring down at us.

POTTER
Is it working?

JANEK
One moment --

Janek reaches for a set of controls, adjusting them.

REVERSE ANGLE ON

Boone. This was his POV. The OEG monocle has been fitted over his left eye, secured by various wires which plug directly into the back of his scalp.

BOONE
(weak)
Thirsty --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK TO JANEK AND THE OTHERS

Quatermass reaches for a sport bottle and holds the straw attachment to Boone's lips. As Boone drinks, Quatermass looks to a nearby monitor where Janek continues his adjustments. Presently, the STATIC on the screen slowly resolves into a ghostly black and white image -- Quatermass and the others from Boone's POV on the surgical table.

POTTER
(amazed)
Son of a bitch.

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST HARLEM - ZONE PERIMETER - NIGHT

The city is alive with the sounds of GUNFIRE and SIRENS. A military cordon has been set up at the perimeter of the zone of influence. There are tanks, armored personnel carriers, MORTAR TEAMS on surrounding rooftops --

ANGLE ON A HELICOPTER LANDING

Breen and his men move in to meet it. Quatermass, Roney, Janek, and Potter jump out, followed by TWO SOLDIERS who assist Boone. His hands have been shackled together, then secured to his waist via a chain. He stares at the crowds of soldiers through his newly-attached OEG.

As the group is ushered towards the perimeter of the zone, Breen shouts over the sounds of battle.

BREEN
Looks like the zone of influence
is expanding faster than we
thought!

QUATERMASS

reaches the edge of the zone, which has been demarcated by a line of concrete barriers. On one side of the invisible "barrier" the lights of the city still gleam, on the other -- darkness. In some instances, even individual buildings have been bisected, half light, half dark.

But the eeriest effect is the discrepancy in gravity. A mere yard from where Quatermass stands the earth no longer maintains its hold on objects.

CARS

float in mid-air. Trash. Bodies. A dead dog. Anything that isn't nailed down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The effect of seeing these zero-g objects bob around within the context of this commercial district is deeply unsettling.

Quatermass takes a pen from his pocket and extends his hand into the zone. He lets go of the pen. It floats away from him, twirling off into the night.

LATER,

the group is donning spacesuits once again. This time, however, they wear additional nitrogen-propelled MMUs (manned maneuvering units) which are connected to their primary life support systems. A TECH debriefs them, pointing out features as he goes:

TECH

The MMUs are nitrogen-propelled. Just a tiny jolt will send you on your way. You've got your rotational and translational hand controls here --

Potter looks to Boone, who's being watched under armed guard. He, too, is wearing an EMU, his hands still bound together in front of him with manacles.

POTTER

What do we do about Lector over there?

TECH

He'll be weightless. You'll just have to tow him.

POTTER

Joy.

QUATERMASS

Let's get this over with.

Techs assist the team in donning their helmets, locking them into place. Boone is connected to Potter via a tether. As the team trudges towards the perimeter of the zone, Quatermass turns back --

QUATERMASS (FILTERED)

Janek, is Boone still broadcasting?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED.

ON JANEK,

sitting in the back of a truck, watching a monitor featuring a live-feed from Boone's OEG. He gives Quatermass the thumbs-up.

Quatermass steps into the ship's zone of influence. He gently floats into the air, hovering about ten feet off the ground. One by one, the rest of the group follow -- Breen, Potter, Roney, and Boone, along with Lufford and Diego from the previous team -- going from earth-bound gravity to weightlessness in the space of a single footstep.

Quatermass gives his MMU a tiny burst of nitrogen. He sails off into the air, floating past the storefronts and graffiti-scrawled tenements of East Harlem.

ON BOONE,

eyes wide in wonder as he floats along behind Potter. He turns back, watching the soldiers gathered just beyond the perimeter grow smaller and smaller as he ascends.

EXT. EAST HARLEM - STREET - NIGHT

As the group continues their zero-g journey, we begin to hear the familiar THRUMMING, coming from the bowels of the Caulder Building where the alien ship rests.

VARIOUS OBJECTS

are clustered around the building, drifting about like some kind of urban asteroid field -- the rings of Saturn by way of bodies, vehicles, and debris.

RONEY

pauses beside an upside-down car floating some thirty feet from the ground. The DRIVER is dead, occluded by a cloud of zero-g blood droplets. She pushes against the bumper. The car floats away from her, light as a feather.

She looks up, SEES a traffic helicopter, a news kiosk, a city bus, a tricycle, garbage cans. Among the floating debris are clouds of tiny, twinkling objects, interspersed with smaller, colored ones.

RONEY (FILTERED)

What are those things?

POTTER (FILTERED)

Crack vials. This area was drug central.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Potter holds out his hand, snagging one of them, "tossing" it over to Roney. She discards it, moves on. Behind Potter, Boone twists around, frightened --

BOONE (FILTERED)
Someone's coming --

Potter turns, SEES a pair of headlights coming at them from one of the side streets.

POTTER (FILTERED)
What the hell -- ?

A CAR

has somehow broken through the cordons. It's rushing towards them at break-neck speed --

QUATERMASS (FILTERED)
Get out of the way!!!

Quatermass and the rest of his team trigger their MMUs, desperately trying to get out of the way before --

THE CAR

breaches the invisible barrier between normal and zero-gravity, taking to the air, somersaulting towards them at something over 90 mph --

ON RONEY AND LUFFORD,

right in the juggernaut's path. She catches the edge of a building, flipping herself out of the way. The car ROARS past her, missing her by a hair's-breadth --

WHAM! The car SMASHES through the brick front of a building, pulping Lufford in the process, sending a fountain of dislodged bricks spinning towards them.

Roney clings to her perch, but there's no time for respite, because even now a series of SHRILL CRIES echo out from --

A ROOFTOP

where a cluster of PEOPLE emerge from the darkness. At the front of the group is the crazed street Prophet we saw earlier. All are carrying weapons of some fashion or another -- knives, make-shift clubs, chains.

They take to the air, having acclimated themselves to urban, zero-g warfare, diving down at our group. Diego reaches for his rifle, taking aim --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BREEN (FILTERED)

Diego, no -- !!!

But it's too late. Diego FIRES, the recoil from his rifle sending him flying backwards, end over end down the street.

THE PROPHET

launches himself at Potter, snagging one of his boots. He pulls himself up, trying to plunge a knife into Potter's chest-plate --

ON QUATERMASS AND BREEN,

battling with two others. Breen unclips a magnesium flare, IGNITES it, shoves it in one of the attacker's face. The other attacker kicks himself off a building ledge, drifting out of Quatermass' reach.

ON POTTER,

fighting a losing struggle with the Prophet. In his EMU, he just doesn't have the mobility that the Prophet does.

Suddenly, the Prophet is jerked backwards, pulled away by Boone, who has somehow managed to wrap a slack portion of his tether around the Prophet's throat. He pulls the tether tighter, choking him --

After a moment, the Prophet goes slack. Boone releases him, watching the street preacher's emaciated body drift off into the night.

Potter floats nearby, trying to catch his breath. Finally, he looks up at Boone.

POTTER (FILTERED)

Thanks.

Behind his face-plate, Boone smiles.

BOONE (FILTERED)

Never turn your back on him.

As our team regroups, the rest of the crazed attackers fall back, disappearing into the shadows.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - ATRIUM - NIGHT

Our team enters through one of the broken panes in the atrium roof.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The interior of the lobby is covered in frost, a testament to the ship's growing appetite for thermal energy. The group slowly jets down towards the mouth of the pit, disappearing inside.

INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL -

The team continues down the dark subway tunnel, which is now fully encased in ice. BODIES are everywhere, forcing Quatermass and the others to pick through them, push them aside. Its gruesome, unnerving work. Finally,

THE SHIP

comes into view. As the group draws near, they begin to drift towards terra firma..

BREEN (FILTERED)

Looks like gravity is returning.

Quatermass nods. One by one, the group touch down. They linger at the mouth of the hull. A DIM LIGHT can be seen within, gently pulsing.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ALIEN SHIP - CORRIDOR -

The corridor walls are faintly luminescent now. The periodic THRUMMING is quite loud, and with each pulse, the level of luminescence increases, keeping time with the thrumming. Roney touches the wall, looks back at them --

RONEY (FILTERED)

You feel that? Almost like it's alive.

Potter checks the read-out on his wrist monitor.

POTTER (FILTERED)

71 degrees Celsius. This thing is heating up.

UP AHEAD,

the corridor branches off into multiple directions. Breen refers to his GPS, indicates a right-branching corridor.

BREEN (FILTERED)

We went this way before.

He starts down the corridor. The group follows.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ALIEN SHIP - ANTECHAMBER -

As the group enters, Boone freezes. The THRUMMING, bone-jarring in its strength, is clearly coming from the hive.

BOONE (FILTERED)

No --

QUATERMASS (FILTERED)

You have to look, Boone. You have to show us what you see.

Within his helmet, Boone shakes his head, terrified. He tries to back-pedal, but Potter and Breen grip his shoulders, tugging him towards the opening. They wrestle Boone to the ground, forcing him to look --

BOONE'S POV

We are looking down into the hive chamber. Behind the resin-like walls of each of the polygonal cells, we SEE movement -- like fetuses shifting within a womb.

BOONE (FILTERED)

(shivering)

Oh G-god --

QUATERMASS (FILTERED)

What do you see, Boone? What do you see?!

Boone tears free of Potter and Breen, SCREAMING uncontrollably --

BOONE (FILTERED)

They're alive! THEY'RE ALIVE!!!!

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST HARLEM - ZONE PERIMETER - NIGHT

Boone, having been stripped of his EMU and sedated, is being loaded into the back of an ambulance. Breen motions to a SOLDIER.

BREEN

Take him back to the command center, keep him under lock and key.

ANGLE ON QUATERMASS,

exhausted, climbing out of his own EMU. He hurries over to truck where Janek had been monitoring their progress. Janek looks shaken, pale.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS
Were you able to record anything?

JANEK
(nodding slowly)
God help us.

CUT TO:

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

To establish.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - OPERATIONS - NIGHT

SUPER TITLE: "WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM"

A meeting is underway, chaired by PRESIDENT FATCHER, a quiet, deliberative man in his 60s. Grange, Quatermass, Potter, Roney, are present, along with various NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISORS (VP, Secretaries of State and Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Director of the CIA, etc.)

Quatermass holds center stage, indicating an audio-video screen.

QUATERMASS
What you are about to see is a
memory, stored for millions of
years in the hull of that ship --

Quatermass cues the video. The lights dim. STATIC fills the primary screen, then we are in the hive chamber once more, watching from --

BOONE'S POV

The aliens are hatching, furiously chewing their way through the cell membranes, dragging their mucous-slick forms free of their prisons -- only these aliens are images, sexually mature versions of the one Quatermass and Roney dissected. They have wings, this time. Each adult Chimera is spreading them wide, testing them --

Suddenly, the scene shifts. We're not in the ship anymore. We're on another world -- a world of fire and brimstone. Jagged spires of sulfurous rock. Rivers of lava.

THE ALIEN SWARM

takes flight, rushing towards us in one furious, SHRIEKING cloud. They fly through the air, savagely tearing into one another.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Shiny carapaces bob and scuttle over one another, driven, stampeding. Like a large-scale plague of locusts. Some fall, only to be trampled beneath the on-rushing horde. Others stop to cannibalize their own brethren.

QUATERMASS

The Wild Hunt. It appears in legends the world over. The phantom ride of devils and witches, supposedly fatal to even witness. That's the legend. This is the fact that may have given rise to it.

In the distance, half-hidden by the storm of flying nightmares, SOMETHING ENORMOUS is rising into the air -- a LUMINESCENT ENTITY, spreading its multiple limbs, ROARING towards us like a living thunderhead. Just as the massive shape becomes more clear, the picture mercifully degenerates into STATIC.

A beat. The lights come up again. The group is silent, sobered by what they have seen.

QUATERMASS

I think we may have just witnessed a race purge, a ritual slaughter designed to preserve a fixed society. That's what the Wild Hunt is all about. It's a compulsion. A control. Kill every mutation away from the set pattern. Destroy anything that doesn't belong.

(beat)

You'll find similar analogues on Earth, among certain termites and wasps. Periodic hive cleansing like this are crucial to any species functioning with a collective intelligence. They can't afford any disruptive anomalies within their gene pool.

PRESIDENT FATCHER

What does that have to do with us?

QUATERMASS

I believe the aliens are empathic, Mr. President. The madness gripping New York isn't just a by-product of the ship's energy, I think these creatures are actually feeding off it --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass crosses over to the case containing one of the partially reassembled hominid skeletons.

QUATERMASS

When the Chimera arrived some five million years ago, however, our brains were half the size they are now. We weren't capable of speech or complex thought. We weren't a particularly good source of energy for the aliens.

(beat)

But we are now. The question is; why? We know the Chimera used nanotechnology on themselves. I think they did the same with us.

PRESIDENT FATCHER

But in order to do that, they would have to have --

QUATERMASS

(nodding)

-- altered us. On a massive scale. We're talking about the genetic manipulation of an entire species.

The audience utters a collective GASP.

QUATERMASS

(re: skeleton)

That's where these hominid skeletons came from. That's why they don't fit in the human fossil record --

GRANGE

But why? What could they possibly hope to gain?

QUATERMASS

Perhaps their world was dying. Having exhausted all their energy coming here, they decided to recreate us in their own image. A colonization by proxy --

Quatermass gestures to a stereolithic cast of the hominid cranium.

QUATERMASS

Look at it this way.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS (CONT'D)

Imagine your brain was a hard-drive. There's programming on it, information --all the thoughts and higher functions that make us human. But imagine there was something else on there too, something slipped in by the programmers, hard-wired into our neocortexes. Memories of another world, another race -- passed down through our DNA from one generation to the next.

This causes yet another uproar amongst the members of the Security Council. Quatermass raises his VOICE to be heard over the din.

QUATERMASS

The aliens altered us. They seeded our race with genetic time bombs, then they sat back and waited for us to evolve. And we did, by their design, never suspecting what we carried within us, coded within in our own DNA --

By now, Quatermass has gained the Council's undivided attention once again.

QUATERMASS

The Holocaust. Cambodia. Armenia. A pattern of genocide. The compulsion to kill and to cleanse, erupting again and again, all building towards a single, final race purge.

(beat)

The signal has been sent, people.
The Wild Hunt has begun.

Silence settles upon the group. President Fatcher finally breaks it:

PRESIDENT

We don't have a choice, then. We have to proceed with God's Hammer.

QUATERMASS

God's hammer?

GRANGE

"Bunker-busters".

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRANGE (CONT'D)

Hyper-velocity missiles loaded with low-yield mini-nukes designed to penetrate deep underground. We've had a squadron of B-52s flying continuous sorties over the area for the last twelve hours.

PRESIDENT FATCHER

What kind of damage are we talking about?

Grange refers to a map of New York City. He uses a light-pen to draw a circle around the proposed ground-zero site - - from 59th to the George Washington Bridge and from Fairview, New Jersey out to La Guardia Airport.

GRANGE

A 1.2 megaton blast would produce a kill-zone somewhere in the range of 25 square miles. That encompasses all of Harlem, Central Park, the Upper East and West Sides, as well as portions of New Jersey, Queens, the Bronx --

Grange draws a second circle around the first -- stretching out to Hackensack, Jersey City, Mount Vernon, Long Island, etc.

GRANGE

We can expect third-degree burns for anyone in line of sight of the fireball up to about 8 miles away. Then, of course, there's the hazard of flying glass, radioactive fall-out --

PRESIDENT FATCHER

And the death-toll?

GRANGE

Conservatively? Two to three million.

Quatermass steps forward, alarmed --

QUATERMASS

Mr. President, you can't send in a nuclear strike. The hull of that ship is photovoltaic! If you drop those bombs, you may end up giving the aliens just the intake of energy they've been waiting for!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

President Fatcher studies the light-map of New York, then slowly shakes his head.

PRESIDENT FATCER
 We appear to be out of options,
 Quatermass.
 (sighing heavily, to
 Grange)
 Send in the planes.

Quatermass turns, disgusted, pushes his way towards the exit. Roney follows --

INT. WHITE HOUSE - WEST WING HALLWAY - NIGHT

Roney catches up with Quatermass at the end of the hall. He's pacing back and forth, furious.

QUATERMASS
 Idiots. They never learn --
 (to Roney)
 It's happening again, Roney. It's
 falling apart and I can't do a
 damn thing to stop it!

CUT TO:

EXT. MANHATTAN - NIGHT

A SERIES OF DISSOLVES featuring the ravaged city, moving progressively closer and closer to ground-zero. Full-scale war has broken out between the 10th Mountain Division and the city's inhabitants. Helicopters buzz over the streets, FIRING upon residents. APC's and tanks spew shells. It's like Baghdad during Desert Storm.

OVER EAST HARLEM NOW,

Into the ship's zone of influence. The entire area is dark, all power having been sapped up by the ship.

AT THE ZONE'S PERIMETER,

HUNDREDS OF VACANT-EYED PEOPLE have gathered, like pilgrims drawn to Mecca. One by one, they look to the sky, hearing the sound of JET-ENGINES closing in --

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Four B-52 bombers burst through a wall of clouds, banking down towards the city below.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT

Breen stands before an A/V console, pulling on a headset. Despite the situation, he is obviously excited -- relieved to finally be taking action. One of the screens offers us a view of the White House Sit Room. Another features the electronic map-board of Manhattan, FOUR GLOWING ARROWS closing on the target.

A nervous-looking soldier, PRIVATE COOPER, eyes the map.

PRIVATE COOPER

Colonel, are we going to be safe here?

BREEN

Private, this command center was built to withstand a direct nine megaton hit. We've got food, water, independent power. Short of Cheyenne Mountain, there isn't a safer place we could be.

Breen speaks into his headset, his VOICE broadcasting over the P.A. of the command center.

BREEN

This is Colonel Breen. Stations, please. We are good to go.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - OPERATIONS - NIGHT

All gathered are watching the A/V screens which feature various aerial views of East Harlem. Additional screens feature Breen at the Control and Command Center as well as a flight-deck view of the lead bomber's pilot, MUSTANG.

Quatermass and Roney enter as Grange points to the main screen:

GRANGE

(re: screen)

What you're seeing here is a real-time, thermal-enhanced view of the target, taken from one of our Key-hole 11 satellites, which we brought down into low-orbit.

Grange points to a second screen which features a moving, under-cockpit aerial view, quickly closing in on the Caulder Building.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRANGE

The image here is being fed to us
from our lead bomber, Mustang 1 --

CUT TO:

INT. LEAD BOMBER - FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

MUSTANG 1 checks his bearings, keys his radio:

MUSTANG

Utah, Condor, Grizzly, this is
Mustang. We are just over IP in-
bound.

The other pilots respond via radio:

UTAH (FILTERED)

(over radio)

Roger that, Mustang. Utah
following.

CONDOR (FILTERED)

(over radio)

Condor following.

GRIZZLY (FILTERED)

(over radio)

Grizzly following

The CO-PILOT signals to Mustang.

MUSTANG CO-PILOT

We're armed, Sir. Target locked.

MUSTANG PILOT

(nodding)

Mustang is armed and hot at this
time.

UTAH PILOT (FILTERED)

(over radio)

Roger that, Mustang.

MUSTANG

Stand-by.

CO-PILOT

Stand-by.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - OPERATIONS - NIGHT

President Fatcher looks to the aerial view of Manhattan, approaches the screen featuring Breen.

BREEN (FILTERED)
(on-screen)
Ready when you are, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT FATCER
Do it, Colonel.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT

Breen glances at the people gathered behind him, takes a deep breath, keys his headset mike:

BREEN
Mustang, this is Alpha. Let the Hammer fall.

CUT TO:

INT. LEAD BOMBER - FLIGHT DECK - NIGHT

Mustang nods to his Co-Pilot.

MUSTANG
Drop.

CO-PILOT
Drop.

The Co-Pilot triggers his missiles --

EXT. EAST HARLEM SKYLINE - NIGHT

As the B-52s bank sweep over the Caulder Building, they FIRE their missiles.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - OPERATIONS - NIGHT

Quatermass and the others watching with bated breath as the two missiles streak away beneath the lead bomber --

CUT TO:

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - NIGHT

Down come the mini-nukes, EXPLODING around the building in a BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT which --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- collapses back into itself, split-seconds after it started to expand. Like a mushroom cloud in reverse.

Moments later, gravity abruptly resumes. All the objects which had been floating above the Caulder Building, come CRASHING DOWN, one after the other, large and small alike.

Beat. Then the THRUMMING starts anew. Louder than ever before. From within the skeletal remains of the Caulder Building, an EERIE LIGHT begins to pulse in time with the THRUMMING, expanding with each beat.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - OPERATIONS - NIGHT

Confusion. Security advisors are murmuring back and forth, trying to figure out what happened. PHONES are ringing. The serial views of the Caulder Building and surrounding area clearly show that the missiles had no effect.

PRESIDENT FATCHER

What happened! What the hell is going on?!

BREEN (FILTERED)

(on-screen)

We don't know, sir. I've got confirmation from each of the pilots. The payloads hit their targets --

-- but Quatermass is shaking his head. He knows. Roney looks at him, worried.

QUATERMASS

(sotto)

You fools. You've given them what they wanted all along.

CUT TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING ATRIUM - NIGHT

Alive with light. The ice which had been coating every surface is melting, sublimating into steam --

INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL -

Down in the tunnel, gravity has also resumed. The bodies which had been floating lie where they fell, submerged in the run-off of melting ice. The hull of the ship is PULSING, alive with light, nearly transparent. As we rush through the hull opening --

INT. ALIEN SHIP - HIVE CHAMBER -

-- we find ourselves inside the hive chamber, where the THrumming and WHining have reached an ear-splitting pitch. We SEE movement behind each polygonal cell wall, then --

SCREEEE! A horrendous fingernail on chalkboard SOUND repeated again and again as the individual cells tear open, gushing royal jelly-like stasis gel.

THOUSANDS OF ADULT CHIMERA

Are hatching, birthing themselves. They cling to their cells, spreading their still-wet wings to air them, CRYING OUT. One by one, they take flight --

INT. ALIEN SHIP - CORRIDOR

A swarm of chimera rush towards us, flapping madly --

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - NIGHT

The Chimera swarm bursts from the Caulder Building in one furious, SCREECHING eruption. Like bats emerging from a cave at dusk. They take to the air en masse, thousands and thousands of them --

EXT. MANHATTAN - VARIOUS ANGLES - NIGHT

-- a whirling, apocalyptic storm cloud, winging its way past the landmarks of Harlem. The Apollo Theater, Ulysess S. Grant's Tomb, the Watchtower in Marcus Garvey Park -- all under siege.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - OPERATIONS - NIGHT

Quatermass and the others stare in silence, watching the various monitor screens. One enhanced spy-satellite view after another, Manhattan coming apart at the seams. From the spy-eyes' aerial perspectives, the chimera look like a swarm of black locusts spreading out through the city.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT

The Command Center is in chaos, PEOPLE rushing back and forth. Suddenly, a DEEP THrumming is heard, just like the sound coming from the ship. It's vibrating through the walls, shaking the building to its foundations.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

One by one, the Soldiers and desk jockeys drop, clutching at their ears. They stumble blindly, blood bursting from their nose and eardrums.

Breen reels around, shouting at his staff, trying to restore calm -- then he, too is caught by the spell. He shudders, vision blurring --

BREEN'S POV

Private Cooper stares at him, eyes glazed over. He reaches down for his gun, draws on Breen --

Breen FIRES first, shooting Cooper in the head before he can fire as we --

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE - SIT ROOM - OPERATIONS - NIGHT

On-screen, Breen is clearly in agony. We can SEE the violence erupting behind him, people attacking one another, FIRING indiscriminately. Breen strains, trying to focus, trying to fight the compulsion which is overwhelming him. He CRIES OUT, blood welling up within his eyes --

BREEN (FILTERED)

-- oh G-god --in our heads, trying
to --

A BRIGHT FLASH whites out the screen, then we're watching nothing but static. An ADVISOR wearing a headset turns to Grange, shaking his head.

ADVISOR

We're getting reports in from all
over the city, Sir. Nothing seems
to be affecting them -- bullets,
mortar shells, nothing!

President Fatcher falls back into his seat, ashen. Quatermass' dire prediction have come to pass.

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST HARLEM STREETS - NIGHT

PEOPLE are panicking, staring up at the sky in open-mouthed horror as the Chimera swarm descend upon them -- a vision from the Book of Revelations come to life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON PATRICIA GREGSTON

And her camera crew, mid-way through another spot-cast. The crew flee for their lives as a trio of chimera swoop down on them --

SCREEEE!!!! ONE OF THE CHIMERA

dive-bombs Gregston, swooping her up in its claws like a hawk snatching up its prey. As it spirals back up into the sky with her in tow, one of the CAMERAMEN tries to steal a live-shot --

CHAOTIC VIDEO CAMERA'S POV

We catch a few outrageous seconds of Gregston being flown to her doom before a second chimera fills the screen, spiraling straight at the camera man as our POV cuts to STATIC and we --

CUT TO:

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - NIGHT

A military ambulance weaves its way through the streets, dodging PEOPLE and cars alike --

INT. MILITARY AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Inside, Boone has been strapped to a stretcher. He's awake now, tugging at his bonds, trying to free himself.

BOONE

Let me go! He's coming! The King
of Terror!

Behind the wheel, the DRIVER SEES a Chimera touch down in the street just in front of him. He stands on the brakes, whipping the steering wheel to the right --

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - NIGHT

The Chimera spins as the ambulance veers around it, spreading out its wing like a scythe, knocking the ambulance over onto its side!

The ambulance slews sideways, SMASHING into a telephone pole. After a beat, one of the back doors is flung open.

BOONE

climbs out of the ambulance, standing atop it, staring in wonder. He starts to LAUGH. It's the only sane response.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE STREET

is filled with people, Chimera descending on them like a school of blood-maddened sharks.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - CONFERENCE - NIGHT

Roney enters the darkened conference room adjoining the hectic operations area, shutting the door behind her, trying to momentarily drown out the din. She closes her eyes a moment, tries to collect herself --

When she opens them again, she SEES Quatermass at the end of the room, watching the footage of Boone's vision taken with the OEG, his face awash in video light. The monitor has been muted. Only the apocalyptic images are flashing by, one freeze-frame at a time.

ON THE MONITOR

a blurred image of a Chimera rushes at us.

RONEY

What are you doing?

QUATERMASS

Lateral thinking --

Quatermass freezes the image with a remote, then looks to a series of photographs taken of the ship. He flips through them, stops at a PHOTO of the interior bulkhead, the pentacle scratched in its surface. Quatermass stares at the pentacle, entranced, then looks to the open case where the Bloodstone sword rests.

With a newfound sense of urgency, Quatermass sits forward, reaching for his coat, pulling out his micro-cassette recorder.

RONEY

What is it?

QUATERMASS

Hold on --

Quatermass hits "PLAY". We hear BOONE'S VOICE, recorded during Quatermass' first meeting with him.

BOONE'S VOICE (FILTERED)

" -- I can hear them, like insects, every night when I -- "

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass fast-forwards a few seconds, hits "PLAY" again.

BOONE'S VOICE (FILTERED)

"Iron hinders, you know. Cold.
Touch wood, no good. Touch iron,
rely on."

Quatermass stops the tape, murmurs to himself.

QUATERMASS

Iron hinders. Cold. Cold iron.
Cold iron --

Quatermass stands, starts pacing, trying to work out the problem in his head. He looks to Roney --

QUATERMASS

"Touch wood, no good. Touch iron,
rely on." Sound familiar to you?

RONEY

That's an old hop-scotch rhyme,
isn't it? Touching something iron
brings you good luck --

QUATERMASS

Legend gave us the first clues
into this business and they may
get us out of it.

(excited)

Get Potter in here.

Roney moves to the door, waving Potter into the conference room. Quatermass looks back at them, grinning triumphantly.

QUATERMASS

Boone was trying to tell us how to
defeat them. Cold iron. Iron
ore.

POTTER

What are you talking about?

QUATERMASS

Haven't you ever studied the
legends, Potter? That was the
Devil's traditional enemy. People
used to put something iron under
their doormat to keep evil spirits
away --

Quatermass gestures to the Bloodstone sword.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

The legends are true. This sword, it's wrought from pure iron. The people who forged it knew.

(laughing)

It makes sense in a way, both scientifically and historically. You fight the Devil with iron. If these Chimera really are clouds of nanoagents held together by magnetic fields, then a blow to the body using cold iron just might disrupt them.

RONEY

If that's the case, then why don't bullets hurt them?

QUATERMASS

Bullets are made of lead, Teflon. Even steel bullets are composed of alloys, commercially purified. They'd be too diluted to disrupt the Chimera's magnetic fields --

(nearing an epiphany)

But cast-iron --

Quatermass stops pacing, grins. He looks to the nearest light-map featuring East Harlem, traces his finger to ground-zero, an object labeled "CAULDER BUILDING".

QUATERMASS

That's it. That's the answer.

POTTER

What is?!

QUATERMASS

Don't you get it, Potter? The façade of the Caulder Building is iron. This whole thing started because the building was being dismantled. The iron walls must have been acting like a kind of cage, dampening the energy of the ship, somehow grounding it and keeping the Chimera dormant --

POTTER

(catching on)

Then the people who built it must've known --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

(his mind racing now)

If we were able to collapse the building, design some kind of controlled implosion, we just might be able to bury the ship again. Imprison it in iron.

POTTER

Even if you bury the ship, the Chimera would still free --

QUATERMASS

Yes, but they'd be cut off from their source of power. The ship's more than just a vehicle, it's a transmitter -- a kind of nexus through which the swarm's collective intelligence is funneled. I don't think the Chimera can function on their own. Most social species can't. Ants, wasps -- they need a "hive-mind" to guide them.

(beat)

Disrupt that mind, and you'll
disrupt the entire swarm.

CUT TO:

EXT. MANHATTAN CITYSCAPE - NIGHT

The greatest city in the world is in flames. Above it all, hordes of Chimera whirl through the night sky in widening gyres, like vultures hovering above an impending kill.

In the midst of this, a single Blackhawk helicopter navigates its way through the dense smoke.

INT. BLACKHAWK HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Quatermass, Potter, and Roney sit in the back, while a CREW OF THREE man the flight deck. Potter opens a backpack, revealing a series of C4 PLASTIQUE CHARGES (they look like bricks of white putty wrapped in polythene).

POTTER

(over the noise)

All right. We've got enough C4 here to take down the entire block.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RONEY

Won't the ship just absorb the energy of the explosion?

Potter shakes his head, grinning.

POTTER

Not this energy. C4's been dusted with iron pyrite.

(re: Quatermass)

If you're right, our friends won't be able to stomach it --

RONEY

That's a big if.

POTTER

(pointedly)

It's also the only one we've got.

PILOT

(over his shoulder)

Heads up! Looks like we've got some bogeys on our tail!

Quatermass looks out through the cabin window --

QUATERMASS' POV (OUTSIDE HELICOPTER)

Sure enough, a TRIO OF CHIMERA are diving towards them.

The Co-Pilot and Navigator adjust their positions, gearing up the M-60 side-firing machine guns on either side of the helicopter. As they OPEN FIRE on the Chimera --

EXT. MANHATTAN CITYSCAPE - NIGHT

-- the Pilot takes evasive action, banking left, guiding the Blackhawk down through a narrow canyon of skyscrapers. The Chimera follow, collapsing their wings, pitching into a dive.

What happens next has to be one of the most incongruous dog-fights ever -- an aerial chase through clouds of smoke and flame, dodging Chimera and buildings alike. Under viaducts, over grid-locked avenues --

At one point, the skids of the helicopter clip a rooftop neon sign, SHOWERING SPARKS and threatening to send the Blackhawk into a tailspin, but the Pilot pulls out, rising higher and higher until --

WHAM! One of the Chimera SLAMS into the side of the helicopter, causing it to SHUDDER VIOLENTLY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It clings to the outside, working its mandibles and SHRIEKING as it bursts a clawed foreleg through the side window.

As the Pilot fights the control stick --

A SECOND CHIMERA

SMASHES through the canopy windshield, wrapping itself around the hapless Pilot.

EXT. MANHATTAN CITYSCAPE - NIGHT

The Blackhawk spins out of control. A rotor blade catches one of the Chimera in the torso, cutting it in half, but crumpling the drive shaft in the process. The rotor blades seize up, snapping apart --

Down goes the Blackhawk, slewing sideways as it plummets towards a gas station, taking one of the Chimera with it. We catch just a glimpse of the street below, filled with PEOPLE milling about and then --

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

-- KER-RASH!!! The crippled helicopter SMASHES through the cashier's booth, shearing off a number of gas pumps in the process. As a fountain of fuel geysers out onto the concrete driveway, what's left of the helicopter SCREECHES to a stop amidst the carnage.

IN THE BLACKHAWK FLIGHT DECK,

Roney GROANS, trying to extricate herself from the wreckage. She's upside down, tangled in her shoulder harness. Various wires are SPARKING, smoking. The Pilot next to her is dead. The Chimera which had been attacking him has been thrown clear.

Roney frees herself, tumbling from the shattered canopy. Somewhere behind her, Quatermass and Potter stir, but Roney can't focus on that at the moment. Instead, she's focusing on --

THE CHIMERA

Surely it should be dead, but it's not. It drags its broken body upright, locking its obsidian eyes on Roney. Its mandibles open, extruding its labial palp as it lets loose a bone-grating STRIDULATION.

Roney scuttles backwards, but it's too late. The Chimera is upon her, pinning her to the floor, lowering its mandibles towards her face --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS (O.S.)

NO!!!

ANGLE ON QUATERMASS,

rising from the helicopter's wreckage, clutching the Bloodstone. The Chimera ROARS, charging them. Quatermass stands his ground, ducks a raking claw --

-- and plunges the sword into the creature's chest! The Chimera rears its head back, letting loose a high-decibel DEATH-CRY as it vaporizes in a CONCUSSIVE WHOOSH OF ENERGY, literally unraveling on the sub-atomic level.

Quatermass is thrown backwards by the force of the explosion, losing grip of the sword which spins away across the concrete driveway.

DOWN THE STREET,

A MOB OF PEOPLE are amassing, having been drawn by the crash. They have the same glassy-eyed, dead-soul stare as the others who've been "possessed" by the Chimera's genetic spell.

Roney drops by Quatermass' side, helping him up --

RONEY

We'd better get out of here.

Quatermass nods, rising --

THE MOB

starts towards them, running now, HOWLING as one.

QUATERMASS

Potter! Let's go!

POTTER

The C4 -- !

Potter crawls back inside the wreckage of the helicopter, trying to retrieve the backpack. The flight deck is on fire now, wires continuing to spit SPARKS --

Potter tugs the backpack nuke free of the wreckage just as one of the SPARKS ignites the puddle of fuel pooling beneath the helicopter --

WHOOSH! A WALL OF FLAME rises between Potter and the oncoming mob.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Potter shrugs the backpack over his shoulder, then runs for his life, falling in behind Quatermass and Roney, desperate to put more distance between himself and --

THE EXPLOSION

which rips the gas station apart, erupting into a mushroom of fire. As the flames subside, a large portion of the mob keeps coming, running right through the waist-high flames.

FOLLOWING

Quatermass, Roney, and Potter as they duck into an alley.

EXT. ALLEY/LEXINGTON AVENUE - NIGHT

As our trio makes their way towards the other end of the alley, we hear the DISHEARTENING SOUND of civilization unraveling. Looking back the way they came, Quatermass and the others have no choice but to head out into the street.

A FULL-SCALE RIOT

is underway. PEOPLE, having been consumed by violence and fear, are running like lemmings, colliding with one another, milling around any object obstructing their path. Their eyes are glazed, unseeing, as they re-enact the Chimera's murderous Wild Hunt.

Some are struggling with one another, beating themselves to death with anything at hand. Most just run, crushing those unfortunate to fall beneath their feet --

A MAN

Has climbed atop a overturned city bus where he waves a handgun around, taking pot-shots at the people below him.

TWO MORE MEN

Are fighting like hungry jackals over the half-naked corpse of a woman.

A CAR

Comes SCREECHING around a corner at high-speed, weaving erratically. It jumps a curb and flips over, PLOWING along the sidewalk, SLAMMING into the corner of a building. The DRIVER CRASHES through the windshield, landing next to Roney in a shower of windshield glass --

-- and above it all, the VIBRATORY THRUMMING which we had previously heard coming from the ship's hull.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's in the very air now, the city itself. The masses are literally being driven senseless by it. Roney looks up --

THE SKY

is laced with sheet lightning, roiling with smoke and flame, clouds of circling Chimera. The VIBRATORY HUMMING grows louder. Thunderous vibrations follow like a tidal wave, spreading outwards in rhythmic BOOMINGS that shake the earth around them.

Quatermass clamps his hands over his ears, trying to blot out the noise even as a portion of the street in front of them gives way, swallowing a half a dozen people in a widening sink-hole.

A BUILDING FAÇADE

collapses nearby, raining debris on the street. Potter leaps at Roney, knocking her out of the way just as wall of mortar and brick come RUMBLING down.

As the dust clears, Roney looks up and SEES Quatermass a few yards away, separated from her by a throng of SCREAMING PEOPLE. He seems lost, disoriented, being pulled further and further away by the panicked crowd --

RONEY

Quatermass!

If he hears her, he doesn't acknowledge it. He's vanishing from sight now, disappearing --

Then, suddenly, Potter and Roney find themselves being swept along in the crush too. Roney looks wildly about and starts to struggle. She tries to reach for Potter, grasps his hand for a brief second --

POTTER

Hang on!!!

-- but loses her grip. Potter, too, disappears from sight. Roney is alone now, being pulled this way and that by the WAILING, mindless throng. Suddenly, she trips, falls to her knees --

She tries to fight her way back up, but she's being crushed and trampled upon. SOMEONE claws at her shirt, grasps at her breast, someone else tugs at her hair. A HAND clamps over her mouth --

Roney SHRIEKS, renewing her efforts, lashing out blindly, but she's sinking, being smothered, then --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A PAIR OF HANDS SEIZE HER,

pulling her out of the stampede into the safety of a narrow alleyway. Roney coughs, trying to catch her breath. She looks up at her savior --

IT'S BOONE,

eyes wild, but somehow energized by the madness around him. He grins, clutching the Bloodstone.

BOONE

It's ending. Now.

As Boone raises the sword above his head we --

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET/CAULDER BUILDING - NIGHT

CROWDS OF PEOPLE are making their way to the ship, hundreds and hundreds of them, flooding into the building from every conceivable direction, drawn like moths to a flame, responding to the call within their genes. All sense of individuality as been wiped out. These people are as one, insect-like in their orderliness.

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - NIGHT

An EERIE LIGHT pulses from the open pit, casting itself over the people as they continue down the excavation ramps. The THRUMMING coming from the open tunnel below is bone-jarring, nearly palpable.

ABOVE THEM,

Chimera cling to the exposed beams and open framework of the atrium, perched upside down like bats.

INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL - NIGHT

Blinding light suffuses everything as the people gather around the PULSING, THRUMMING ship.

One by one, they drop to their knees, staring up at it in vacant-eyed adoration. The color of the hull is like white gold now, nearly translucent, revealing a tracery of pulsing, organic circuitry within its walls.

Meanwhile, the HUM its generating has continued to rise in frequency. It's obvious that the ship is no longer absorbing energy, but rather, emitting it.

CUT TO:

EXT. LEXINGTON AVENUE - NIGHT

As the sky continues to shimmer and CRACKLE with lightning, a MOB OF PEOPLE come streaming around the corner, running like terrified animals.

QUATERMASS

is among them, clothes torn and covered with dust. His eyes see nothing as he finds himself being mercifully jostled towards the edge of the crowd. Suddenly,

POTTER (O.S.)

Quatermass!

POTTER

appears before us, blocking Quatermass' way. He shakes him, looking for recognition in his blank eyes --

POTTER

It's me, Potter! Don't you know me?!

Quatermass doesn't respond, instead, he tries to move around Potter. Potter grips Quatermass by the shoulders, dragging him further back from the stream of bodies. Quatermass struggles fiercely --

Above them, the VIBRATORY THRUMMING increases. Quatermass CRIES OUT, clutches at his head. When he looks up again, his nose is bleeding, as are his ear canals. His eyes are filled with hate, focused on Potter --

POTTER

Quatermass --

Before Potter can even finish, Quatermass lashes out, clamping a hand around his throat, SLAMMING his head back against the wall. Potter winces, GASPS, tries to free himself --

-- but Quatermass has his other hand wrapped around his neck now too, choking the life from him, SLAMMING his head against the wall repeatedly --

Potter blindly flails his hand out, searching for a weapon, anything to strike back with. His hand brushes a chunk of masonry. He grips it, SMASHES Quatermass across the face with it --

Quatermass staggers back, weaving on his feet. The murderous expression on his face seems to blur. He seems lost for a moment, disoriented.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He looks back towards the flood of people, compelled by the call of the Wild Hunt, starts towards them again,

POTTER

No!

Potter lunges after Quatermass, wrestling him away from the street. He shakes him violently --

POTTER

You've got to fight it,
Quatermass! FIGHT IT!!! Use your
memory for God's sake! THINK!!!

Quatermass stares at Potter. Slowly, his eyes begin to clear, recognition finally dawning --

QUATERMASS

Potter -- ?

Potter sighs, relieved, he helps Quatermass through a darkened doorway --

INT. BAR - NIGHT

We're inside a bar now, tables and chairs overturned. Potter releases Quatermass, warily edging away from him. He moves to the door, SLAMS it shut, throws the dead-bolt - - all the while keeping an eye on Quatermass.

POTTER

Are you free of it?

Quatermass drops into a chair, exhausted, clutches his head in his hands.

QUATERMASS

I -- think so --

POTTER

What happened? What was going
through your head?

QUATERMASS

Pain. Like nothing I've ever felt
before. It grips you, and then --

Quatermass starts shaking. He can barely manage to go on.

QUATERMASS

-- and then you can't see this
world any longer. I wasn't me
anymore. I was somewhere else.
Their world --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POTTER
(still suspicious)
Is it like that now?

QUATERMASS
A little. It comes in waves, with
the vibrations --

Quatermass looks up at Potter. The spell is subsiding.

QUATERMASS
I wanted to kill you. I would
have done it if you hadn't stopped
me --

POTTER
Do you know why?

QUATERMASS
Because you're different. I could
feel that. You weren't -- one of
us. You had to be destroyed.
(beat)
Don't you feel it?
(hand to head)
Here? Anything?

Potter shakes his head, then reaches into his shirt,
pulling out a chain with a medic alert tag on it.

POTTER
I'm diabetic. Kill every mutation
away from the set pattern, isn't
that what you said they're doing?
Purifying the gene pool? Guess
they consider me a threat --

Potter looks back towards the curtained windows of the bar,
grim. Only now can Quatermass really focus on the man's
condition. He looks like he's been through Hell.

POTTER
It's not just you, Quatermass.
They all sensed I was different.
You should have seen them out
there. If I hadn't gotten away
when I did --

Potter's voice trails away. Quatermass looks around at
their surroundings, urgent.

QUATERMASS
Where's Roney -- ?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Potter waves a tired hand toward the street.

POTTER

Out there somewhere. We got separated.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Boone stands above Roney, striking down at her with the Bloodstone. She has just enough time for one, startled CRY before --

-- the sword-point sinks into the chest of a Chimera which had been rising up behind her. The creature SQUEALS, then vaporizes into a cloud of dispersing nanoagents.

Boone lets loose a WHOOP, pleased with himself.

BOONE

Iron hinders.

RONEY

(confused)

Where did you -- how did you get the sword?

BOONE

Saw you fall from the sky.

RONEY

Our helicopter -- ?

Boone nods, then starts down the alley, a man with a mission. Roney has no choice but to follow. Presently they come upon a wooden fence. Boone hacks at the wooden slats with the sword. As he uses the flat of the blade to pry a number of slats free, a flicker of distant flames strikes their faces --

BOONE AND RONEY'S POV

Lexington Avenue looks like Dresden after the bombing now. At it's center stands the hulking, iron skeleton of the Caulder Building, virtually the only structure in the area that hasn't been flattened by the ship's gravitational pull. It pulses like a miniature sun, other-worldly light pouring out from within. A bonfire hot enough to wake the gods.

We hear a DEEP RUMBLING. Boone looks up into the sky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOONE

Devil's coming back soon. Not
much time left.

CUT TO:

INT. LEXINGTON LINE SUBWAY TUNNEL - NIGHT

The tunnel is filled to capacity, swash in SOUND and light. Dust is swirling around. The crowds that have gathered seem to be in a state of catalepsy as they stare fixedly at the ship. Those closest to the hull look like they've been staring into the face of the sun for too long. Their skin is bright-red, beginning to blister. But they don't seem to care.

THE SHIP

is completely transparent now, vibrating, HUMMING, alive with life. Shimmering patches of light are appearing above it, coalescing along the tunnel ceiling in a kind of writhing, luminous cloud. Suddenly, the HUM from the ship becomes an ear-splitting whine as an EERIE GLOW quickly engulfs the crowd.

A MAN

at the front of the crowd reaches out to touch the hull --
and is all but vaporized as a WAVE OF EXPANDING ENERGY
melts the flesh from the faces of those behind him.

No one screams. No one tries to run as the energy reduces the kneeling supplicants to a host of grinning skeletons. Then the skeletons begin to collapse into themselves, crumbling into dust. One after another after another as --

EXT. LEXINGTON AVENUE INTERSECTION - NIGHT

-- the street before the Caulder Building buckles and violently erupts, sheets of asphalt flinging every which way. Water mains are sheared in half, spewing their contents --

AN ENORMOUS CRATER

opens up, exposing the now fully-unearthed and white-hot ship to the night air. Steaming, shimmering tendrils of light wind their way up into the sky, where they intertwine and begin to take shape --

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The noises come with a rush, vibrations in the earth rising like THUNDER. A violent tremor SHUDDERS through the building, sending everything around Potter and Quatermass RATTLING. Quatermass clutching at his head again, fighting the compulsion --

QUATERMASS

This ship -- it's changing. I can feel it, getting stronger --

A section of ceiling gives way, plaster showers down. The floorboards stir under them. The exposed laths of the wall are quivering. Everything around them seems to be moving. A block away or so we hear a building collapse with a ROAR.

Suddenly, the windows of the bar BLOW INWARD, ripping the curtains apart. The door flies open, tearing off its hinges, offering us a view of a street in flames.

QUATERMASS

We have to stop it, Potter!
There's no more time!

Quatermass staggers towards the door, Potter following --

EXT. LEXINGTON AVENUE - NIGHT

Quatermass and Potter emerge from the bar, smoke and dust swirling around them. The earth shakes under their feet as they struggle towards the center of the madness.

A violent burst of CREPITATION, explosive in its onset, SHUDDERS through the earth. Quatermass throws up his arm as a shower of rubble flings itself at them. Bricks and lath are being flung about helter-skelter, dust and dirt, treacherous winds --

-- yet they stagger on, guided by the immense cloud of living light which is gathering above the city. Presently, the Caulder Building and the crater housing the ship come into view --

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - NIGHT

Quatermass and Potter climb over a pile of rubble, finding themselves looking down upon ship. The mass of light hovering above it is nearly blinding, yet despite this, Quatermass is just able to make out TWO FIGURES standing there.

QUATERMASS

Roney!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON BOONE AND RONEY

having arrived at the lip of the crater. The incandescent hull is almost gone now -- sublimated into a MONSTROUS SHAPE that hangs above the city. The severed water mains continue to send water gushing out. It's filling the crater around the ship, creating a shallow lake --

IN THE SKY,

clouds of Chimera swarm around round and round the luminous shape, SHRIEKING.

Boone turns to look at Roney, shouts over the noise --

BOONE

WE'RE TOO LATE! HE'S HERE!

Boone SCREAMS and heads into the Caulder Building. But before Roney has a chance to follow, a brick wall collapses nearby, crushing her leg beneath a pile of debris. She SCREAMS, trying to free herself even as --

THE SHIMMERING FORM

above the ship bursts rhythmically into a blinding glare. It extends upwards for a hundred feet or so, and it's outline is clearly defined --

RONEY

(horror-struck)

My God --

A TERRIBLE, HORNED THING

hangs there. Like Doré's medieval etchings of Satan and Lovecraft's elder god C'thulu rolled into one. A multi-limbed horror, so primal and epic in its proportions that the sight of it alone is enough to instill madness.

This is the thing that Roney, Boone, and all the others glimpsed during their visions. Genesis of the Wild Hunt. This is the face of our collective, ancestral fears, its very image encoded in our DNA. We fear it because we were programmed to.

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

Boone looks back at the creature of light, then studies the lobby with determination -- the staircase and cast-iron banisters have been removed and disassembled, but the network of scaffolding remains.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Slinging the sword over his shoulder, Boone reaches for the nearest scaffold and pulls himself up --

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - NIGHT

Roney stares up at the Satan manifestation, hypnotized by it, shaking like a person with acute fever.

THE ENTITY

towers above her, a living cyclone of light, writhing as the Chimera swarm swoop in and out of it in ever more intricate flight patterns.

QUATERMASS (O.S.)

Don't look at it, Roney!

Roney forces her eyes away from the vision, tears streaming down her face. She SEES Potter and Quatermass making their way towards her. As Quatermass reaches her, she clings to him, GASPING in pain --

RONY

My leg, I can't -- I think it's broken!

Quatermass and Potter lift the debris off her crushed leg, then help her up, hurrying her inside the relative shelter of the Caulder Building entrance.

CUT TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - UPPER LEVEL - NIGHT

As Boone climbs, he hazards a look down. He's three stories up now, halfway to the top of the atrium and it's a vertigo-inducing drop.

Beneath him, the network of scaffolding GROANS, having been weakened by the various forces tugging at the building. Suddenly, one of the wooden planks snaps, sending Boone tumbling back into space. One of the iron cross-bars falls along with it --

Boone flails, snags a tentative handhold. He hangs there for a moment, gasping, then renews his climb.

CUT TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

The building is filled with smoke, sporadic fire. Quatermass sets Roney down, inspecting her leg. It's in awful shape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She grits her teeth, trying to work through the pain. Quatermass looks to a broken window where Potter sits, transfixed by the hellish vision outside.

RONEY

What is that thing out there?

QUATERMASS

The Horned Devil. Mass into energy, hovering there like a great fireball. The focus of it all, the still center --

POTTER

(looking back)

But where did it come from?

Quatermass joins Potter's side.

QUATERMASS

The ship -- somehow the hull has sublimated. That's what it was intended to do all along -- absorb enough energy to reawaken the swarm, then transform itself into this --

(shaking his head)

That thing up there -- it's some kind of psychic projection, the collective consciousness of the swarm, amassed and personified into a single being --

POTTER

Then it's over --

QUATERMASS

No! Don't you see, Potter? It's still grounded here. Mass into energy, electrical energy -- it can't escape this place, yet!

Another tremor shakes the earth, and with it, the writhing light construct hovering outside seems to grow even larger. Quatermass tugs at Potter, pointing to the water which continues to rush from the broken mains --

QUATERMASS

You see that water down there?! We'll take the explosives, place them on the East side of the building.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS (CONT'D)

If we can collapse all this iron into the center of that thing, make contact with that water -- we just might be able to discharge it.

Potter nods, understanding --

POTTER

We'll ground the energy, like a lightning rod --

Potter crouches, shrugging off his backpack. He opens it, pulling out bricks of C4. He hand a cluster of them to Quatermass, along with a detonator --

POTTER

You take the East corner, I'll take the West. Shape the charges around a load-bearing beam, just like Play-Doh! Wire the charges into the detonator --

(pointing to a numeric key-pad)

Activation code is four numbers -- nineteen seventy-seven, then enter, got it? The year Elvis died.

Quatermass nods. Potter continues.

POTTER

You enter the sequence twice. Wait for your light to go green, then run like hell. Yours is slaved to my detonator. Once the count-down starts, we'll have two minutes to get out of here!

Another tremor rocks the building. The NOISE is horrendous. Potter claps Quatermass on the shoulder --

POTTER

(shouting)

Good luck!

-- and jogs off across the wreckage-strewn lobby. Quatermass returns to Roney's side, kneeling next to her. She grips his arm, matching his gaze --

RONEY

Quatermass, whatever happens --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

QUATERMASS

It's too early for eulogies,
Roney.

He reaches out, touching her face -- an unexpectedly gentle gesture given the circumstances. The awkward silence that follows says volumes. She sits forward, filling the void, kissing him full on the lips. As they part, Quatermass looks at her, torn --

QUATERMASS

I'll come back for you, I promise.

She nods, smiling bravely, not believing it for a second. And with that, Quatermass rises, disappearing in the haze.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Boone emerges through one of the broken panes in the glass roof of the atrium. He's roughly eye-level with the amorphous demon creature. He begins crawling across the framework of the atrium roof, balancing himself on the rusted iron cross-beams, moving one step at a time --

His foot slips, SMASHING through one of the remaining glass panes. Boone scrambles to regain his balance, then looks down, watching the broken pieces of glass tumble away --

CUT TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

Quatermass hears the sound of BREAKING GLASS, looks up --

-- just in time to see the deadly shards falling towards him. He ducks aside as the glass SHATTERS on the lobby floor, then continues on, finding the East corner of the building. Quatermass sets the device on the floor. starts entering the activation code.

CUT TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - WEST CORNER - NIGHT

Potter crouches, setting his charges, wiring them into his detonator. He punches in the first sequence, hits "ENTER", then starts on the second as a SHADOW falls across him. Potter looks up --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLONEL BREEN,

stands over him, battered and bleeding, but still very much alive. His face has been scorched by radiation-like burns while his eyes bear the same tell-tale gaze of possession. He's holding a gun. He FIRES into Potter's chest. Once, twice, three times --

CLICK! Breen's clip is empty. As Potter falls back, GASPING, Breen efficiently ejects his clip, then reaches for another one secured to his belt --

Potter struggles to sit up. With the last of his ebbing strength, he extends a palsied hand towards the detonator even as Breen slams the second clip home, aims at Potter's head --

Potter hits "ENTER". The activation light glows GREEN.

Breen FIRES.

CLOSE ON THE BOMB TIMER

as the count-down towards zero begins.

CUT TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

Quatermass watches as the ready light flashes GREEN. He rises, heading back through the tremor-rocked building. In the few minutes since he's left Roney, the smoke and flames have spread.

Quatermass dives headlong into the gloom, navigating his way through an increasingly dangerous maze of burning debris. The smoke stings his eyes, disorients him. Within moments, he's lost!

QUATERMASS

(nearly blind)

Roney!

BEYOND A WALL OF FLAME,

a ghostly figure appears -- Colonel Breen. Quatermass sees Breen and freezes.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Boone has made it across the atrium. He's at the edge of the roof now, climbing atop a gothic spire.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE SATAN MANIFESTATION

turns, seeming to cast its terrible gaze upon him.

Boone waves the sword above his head, SCREAMING at the top of his lungs --

CUT TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - WEST CORNER - NIGHT

The timer continuing its count-down. Seventy seconds left.

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

Breen is also SCREAMING, emitting the same high-pitched stridulation of the Chimera. He starts towards Quatermass, charging through the fire, seemingly oblivious to the pain.

Quatermass tries to back away, but there's no time. Breen is upon him, knocking him to the floor, savagely tearing into him --

Quatermass rolls to the side, pitching Breen off him. He regains his footing, but Breen is back in seconds, raining one blow after another down on Quatermass.

Quatermass reels, spits blood, tries to counter. Breen kicks him in the side. We hear the sound of Quatermass' RIBS SNAPPING --

Forget science, forget humanity, this is naked aggression at its most primal -- and Quatermass is fighting a war of attrition against Breen's genetically-induced rage.

CUT TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - WEST CORNER - NIGHT

The timer; half a minute left.

CUT TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

Quatermass shoves Breen back. He staggers to his feet, clutching at his side. He's never felt such pain before. He tries to block it out, tries to focus on finding an exit and --

-- CRACK! Breen strikes Quatermass across the back of the head with a piece of shrapnel he's wielding --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quatermass falls face forward, tries to pick himself up. He manages to roll over onto his back, looks up at Breen through blood-clouded eyes --

Breen stands over him, a gaze as blank and pitiless as a statue. As he raises the piece of shrapnel up for the killing blow we RACK-FOCUS to --

ONE OF THE SCAFFOLDING CROSS-BARS,

torn free by the tremors, tumbling down straight towards them and --

-- Quatermass kicks out with his feet, forcing Breen back just as -- THUNK!-- the scaffolding bar SLAMS through Breen's chest.

QUATERMASS

(glaring up at Breen)

That's for Rachel, you son of a bitch!

Breen teeters there a moment, supported by the iron bar, then collapses over onto his side.

Beat. Quatermass drags his broken body back up and staggers onward, using the wall for balance --

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - WEST CORNER - NIGHT

The timer; twenty seconds left.

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - FOYER - NIGHT

The flames are rising, nearly engulfing Roney. She drags her body up the steps towards the entrance, looking back into the gloom --

RONEY

Quatermass!!!

-- and Quatermass appears, struggling towards her. He all but collapses next to her, wraps her arm around his neck, heaves himself back up --

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - NIGHT

As Quatermass and Roney stagger out of the building entrance we --

CUT TO:

INT. CAULDER BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

Potter's timer, the last digital second clicking to zero and --

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - NIGHT

-- Roney looks back over her shoulder, SEES --

BOONE

on the edge of the Caulder Building roof, silhouetted against the night. He raises the sword above his head, waving it in victory and SHOUTING to the Heavens as --

BA-BOOM!!! A massive fireball EXPLODES OUT from the ground-floor of the building.

QUATERMASS

drops to the ground, pulling the two of them behind a pile of rubble, shielding Roney as best he can. Clouds of dust billow outward, enveloping them, debris rains down --

ON BOONE,

falling forward as the Caulder Building collapses beneath him, rushing headlong into the proverbial mouth of the Satan entity itself. The look on Boone's face should be one of horror, but it's not -- it's one of release, St. George facing his final dragon.

He grips the pommel of the sword in both hands, extending it in front of him as he falls -- and then is swallowed whole, disappearing into the energy creature's whirling maw.

PULLING FURTHER BACK

as the building continues its forward momentum. As the GROANING, twisted cast-iron elements pierce the energy creature's heart, they CRACKLE, sending out violent waves of DISRUPTIVE FORCE which riddle its immense body.

The VIBRATORY THRUMMING increases in pitch and frequency, warping into a sky-splitting TONE as the Chimera horde circling the demon entity also react in pain, SHRIEKING en masse, their flight-paths becoming increasingly erratic.

One by one, the Chimera topple from the sky, their wings catching fire, plummeting like mythical host of Heaven's Fallen. As they tumble earthward, their bodies disintegrate, chains of nanoagents unraveling like so much subatomic yarn --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON QUATERMASS AND RONEY,
watching the Chimera, awe-struck.

EXT. CITY - VARIOUS SHOTS - NIGHT

All around the city, the Chimera are falling, disintegrating, letting loose a collective DEATH-WAIL that echoes back and forth across the concrete valleys of Manhattan.

EXT. CAULDER BUILDING - NIGHT

The demon entity continues to writhe, veins of lightning-like energy CRACKLING through its form. It swells, getting brighter and brighter, then --

-- everything goes white as a BLINDING FLASH blots out all vision, followed a split-second later by a deafening ELECTRICAL DISCHARGE.

ON QUATERMASS AND RONEY,

their faces vanishing from view in the nuke-like pulse of expanding light.

Beat.

Slowly, images return. Like a landscape taking shape on a developing photograph.

THE CITY,

devastated, but eerily silent. Beyond the jagged horizon, the sky is growing lighter, heralding dawn.

THE CAULDER BUILDING

Gone.

QUATERMASS AND RONEY,

clutching one another. Still. Covered in a fine-powdered dust. After an eternity, they stir. Quatermass blinks, focuses his gaze -- the first thing he sees is Roney's face, staring back at him. He sits up, wincing at the effort --

QUATERMASS

It's over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RONEY

How can you be sure?

Quatermass touches his hand to his head.

QUATERMASS

Because I can't hear them anymore.

Quatermass stands, limping his way to the edge of --

THE CRATER

No trace of the ship. No trace of the Chimera. The surface of the crater is smooth, like sand that's been fused into radioactive glass. At it's center stands the Bloodstone sword, it's point embedded in the earth. On that final image we --

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROCHE HARBOR - BEACH - NIGHT

The ocean is calm, mist-shrouded. Out of the mist, a FIGURE appears, gliding along in a kayak. It's Quatermass. He pulls his kayak up on the shore, shrugs off his life jacket.

EXT. QUATERMASS' CABIN - NIGHT

As Quatermass approaches his cabin, his dog trots down the path to greet him. Quatermass smiles, then mounts the front steps, dropping into a bench which hangs from the rafters by chains.

He lets loose a long sigh, lifting his head to watch the stars. At first, we think he's alone, having slipped back into his solitary routine. But then --

RONEY (O.S.)

The stars will still be there tomorrow, you know.

Quatermass turns, sees Roney framed in the doorway, lit by warm firelight. He smiles.

QUATERMASS

Sorry. Old habits die hard, I guess.

RONEY

I'm not in any hurry.

Quatermass stands, taking her hand in his own. The two share a kiss, then disappear within the doorway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON THE STARS OVERHEAD

The constellation of Orion. The red star of Betelgeuse,
SHIMMERING.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END