

"SPACE 1999"

"THE VOID AHEAD"

by

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"THE VOID AHEAD"

1 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SEFX.

1

This eerie site is on the dark side of the Moon. The area is enclosed by a laser barrier projected between a ring of tall columns, each of which is topped by a bank of floodlights casting harsh illumination over the sinister scene, and over glaring warning notices - "DANGER - STAY AWAY - RADIATION. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AUTHORITY BOARD, 1999." and "BEWARE - LASER BARRIER". Inside the floodlit area we see an operation in progress.

In the background of the shot a Modular Transportation Unit (MTU) rests horizontally on the Moon surface. The MTU is Moonbase Alpha's multiple purpose short range spacecraft. Here it is a cargo unit, and from its cargo container a conveyor runs some distance over the surface. The conveyor ends above a hole in the ground. A massive container moves along the conveyor from the MTU to the hole where it is lifted down into the ground by mechanical handling gear. All about we can see there are ominous mounds rising up - mounds of concrete-like material covering holes in the Moon surface. This is a burial ground for waste earth-used atomic fuel.

2 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO.

2

At some distance from the laser barrier which surrounds this radiation-dangerous area, our camera shows us two Nuclear Disposal Area technicians, both wearing space-suits. They are working on one of the many radiation sensor units that are dotted about between the mounds, making repairs.

Over this, we hear the voice, for the first time, of Professor Bergman. The voice is a combination of science and humanity, of logic and controlled emotion - but now it is very shocked.

BERGMAN (O.S.)

September 9, 1999. It has been only thirty days since I arrived here on Moon Base Alpha ... thirty days of events almost impossible for the mind to encompass...

3 INT. BERGMAN'S QUARTERS. 3

We see this man now - intellectual, somewhat austere - with a face which has seen some time. He is writing in his notebook.

BERGMAN

...incredible events...proving,
once again, that immutable law of
nature...

4 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO. 4

Tight on one of the technicians who has just finished checking a sensor unit. He closes a panel.

5 INT. N.D.A. DEPOT. 5

We cannot tell where we are just yet because camera is holding Dr. Helena Russell in the F.G. She is a cool good looking woman in her early thirties and she is chief of the Medical Section of Base Alpha. She is looking at a monitor screen on which we can see the repair operation in the Nuclear Disposal Area. As she looks up from the screen and out of the Depot window we can see this area in the far distance. Helena Russell's face is tense. Over this....

BERGMAN (O.S.)

....every advance in our technology
brings us closer to some new
threshold of danger.....

Now we can hear the technician speak.

TECHNICIAN NORDSTROM (O.S.)

This unit's operating now and.....

There is silence - a rather sudden and unexpected silence.

C.U. HELENA

Tense - apprehensive. She peers forward at the monitors.

6 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. 6

ON NORDSTROM

Even through his bubble helmet, we can see a puzzled and confused look come over him. He turns away from the panel.

7 INT. N.D.A. DEPOT. 7

Helena leans forward....Nordstrom's voice again.....

NORDSTROM (O.S.FILTER)
Where is.....? Oh.....I.....

And a strange throaty rattle comes from his throat.

8 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. 8

On Nordstrom - and his eyes are vacant, his face tight.
He moves away, floating.

9 INT. N.D.A. DEPOT. 9

ON HELENA

She cries out.

HELENA
It's happening. Look!

FULL SHOT

Now we see the interior of this control building set up to monitor the N.D.A. It is, in fact, a wedge-shaped segment of a circular building, clean, clear and electronic. In each side wall is a computer panel. The door is at the narrow end of the wedge, and the monitor screen and control panel are mounted in front of the wide window on the outer wall which looks out over the moon surface towards the distant N.D.A. 2.

We see the Depot Chief, Gundlach - youthful but heavy-set. He peers into the monitor as well as he pales... calls into his commlock*.

GUNDLACH
Steiner...get Nordstrom. Get him in here.

*The commlock is the small personal videophone which everyone carries on Alpha at all times. It's a multi-purpose device which keeps them medically monitored, acts as a personal identification unit, is the key which allows them access to all permitted areas, and also tells them the time.

10 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO.

10

Nordstrom, eyes glazed, is drifting towards the laser barrier. Our camera zooms in to him. He tries to lift his right hand, finds it difficult - is surprised, moves on.

ON TECHNICIAN STEINER

He is moving as fast as he can towards Nordstrom. But he is dealing with gravity - and bounding.

11 INT. N.D.A. DEPOT.

11

HELENA

He just lost touch....

GUNDLACH

(very shook up)

(shouts into communicator)

Grab him....damn it!

12 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO.

12

Nordstrom has drifted dangerously close to the fence. Steiner is bounding towards him.....

Shooting towards a third technician working on another sensor in the area staring at what he sees - one man bounding towards the other - and now grabbing hold of him.

TWO SHOT NORDSTROM/STEINER

As Steiner tries to pull Nordstrom back and away. Nordstrom battles him. It is an awkward, strange sight as two men attempt to fight in these gravitational conditions. At one point, Nordstrom is able to pick Steiner up bodily, easily, hurling him over his head. Steiner lands, bounds weirdly, comes up, grabs Nordstrom now....

ANOTHER ANGLE

As both men tumble and fall very close to the laser barrier, bound, bounce over to it, fall into it.

Warning lights flash from the columns as the laser barrier is interrupted. Nordstrom is stopped by a force field. Steiner tries to pull him back, but Nordstrom bounds against the fence again. The force field flashes again, and this time Nordstrom falls, cracking his space dome against a moonrock.

CONTINUED:

12 CONTD.

INSERT. NORDSTROM'S DOME.

It smashes against the rock, cracks and splinters.

ON NORDSTROM

As his protection goes - and his eyes and mouth open wide...

ON STEINER

As he becomes aware of what is happening, he scrambles over to Nordstrom.

TWO SHOT

As Nordstrom stops struggling, his spacesuit collapses. Steiner stands up, helpless and horrified.

13 INT. N.D.A. DEPOT.

13

As Helena watches in horror the scene on the monitor. Gundlach as well. Steiner's voice comes in, breathlessly over the commlock.

STEINER

His dome's gone...God...It wasn't my fault...

GUNDLACH

Get in here.

He turns to Helena.

GUNDLACH

Doctor...

At the moment, a signal of beeps can be heard.

ON HELENA

As she touches a button on her commlock the beeps stop. Dr. Fujita - whom we have not yet seen - says...

FUJITA (O.S.)

Commander Koenig's E.T.A. is nine minutes.

CONTINUED:

13 CONTD.

HELENA
(into commlock)
Leaving now. We've had another...
"accident" here.

CAMERA PULLS BACK as she turns to Gundlach. Gundlach is white-faced. Without a word, Helena, face set, points her commlock unit at the interlock door. It buzzes. She moves purposefully to the door as it starts to open.

SMASH CUT TO:

14 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX. 14

Foreground Moon in relation to Earth.

15 EXT. MOONBASE ALPHA. SFX. 15

OPENING ON A HIGH WIDE SHOT OF THIS extraordinary Base complex and moving in slowly, inexorably to the landing pad area. TITLES START...Now, we reach the Central Control exterior and...

CUT TO:

16 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL. 16

Great excitement and hubbub here, a sense of tension, apprehension among the six permanent Main Mission operatives.

Here also are as many of the hierarchy of Alpha who are able to leave their posts to greet a new Commander.

CAMERA TRACKS PAST THEM.

They talk, excitedly, in small groups.

ON VORKONEN

A high rank on Main Mission staff, forceful-looking, young...

ON GRODNO.

Approaching middle-age, tense and worried-looking. He is the outgoing Commander and he wears the distinctive uniform with two black sleeves.

CONTINUED:

16 CONTD.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Grodno checks the time on his commlock and nods. He moves to the door. The others surge to follow. There is sound behind all this but no dialogue that we need to hear.

17 INT. MTU PASSENGER MODULE.

17

Commander John Koenig is here, uniformed as Grodno. He sits watching a video screen set into the back of the seats in front of him. Beside him is a Main Mission aide, also watching.

AND NOW MAIN TITLES FADE

John Koenig is perhaps forty - intense, intelligent, and somewhat preoccupied now as he watches the screen and listens to the Earth News Report.

ON SCREEN

Clips of a man of fifty giving some sort of interview. Later we learn he is Commissioner Symonds.

Cut in also are shots of the Moon-orbiting space dock. This is a complex structure consisting of a large central barrel out of which protrude tubular spokes. The whole has the appearance of having been constructed out of rocket components. At the end of each tube is a docking point and on many of these MTU's are buzzing to and fro, from the surface of the Moon. But the striking feature is the immensely long deep space probe vehicle which dwarfs the MTU's.

Over this is an announcer's voice, a hard-selling American newscaster.

EARTH ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Commissioner Symonds indicated that the long-prepared-for Space mission to newly discovered planet Meta would be set back only slightly by the mild stomach illness contracted by the two Probe Pilots during the latter stages of their training.

ON KOENIG

A tight and incredulous smile appears on his face.

CONTINUED:

17, CONTD.

ON THE SCREEN

As indicated shots continue, we get a C.U. of Symonds...
He speaks reassuringly.

SYMONDS

For the first time in human history,
we have identifiable signals from a
planet in our galaxy, and as soon as
our two fine Probe Men get their
appetites back, this most exciting
exploration of our...or any other
times, will begin.

18 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE.

18

The MTU Pilot calls...

MTU PILOT

Touchdown in thirty-eight seconds,
Commander.

19 INT. MTU PASSENGER MODULE.

19

Koenig nods, reaches down and shuts off the news.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. ALPHA. STUDIO/SFX.

20

High shot from the rim of the crater in which Moonbase
Alpha has been built. Koenig's MTU descends into the
shot. In the F.G., two technicians laying cables on
the rim of the crater stop what they are doing for a
moment, glance at the MTU as it descends, and return
to their work.

21 EXT. LAUNCH PAD. SFX.

21

The MTU settles to land. The travel tube telescopes
out towards the door of the Passenger Module and locks
into it.

22 INT. MTU PASSENGER MODULE.

22

Koenig, carrying a slim briefcase, moves through the
airlock followed by the aide. An attractive hostess
of the service section smiles. Koenig returns her
smile.

KOENIG

Thank you. Good trip.

23 INT. TRAVEL TUBE. 23

Koenig and the aide sit down. The door closes and the tube moves off.

24 EXT. ALPHA. SFX. 24

CAMERA PANS ALONG travel tube.

25 INT. CORRIDOR. 25

ON GRODNO, VORKONEN AND THE OTHERS.

They are gathered now in this open corridor area, waiting to receive Koenig. A light flashes above the travel tube door. There is a hush as they move forward.

ON KOENIG

The door opens with a hiss and he steps out.

ON THE GROUP

As it surges forward to meet Koenig...Helena hangs back...Behind the group, two men, with strange movie-type equipment start filming all this. Grodno puts his hand out...but it is most apparant that the man is extremely nervous and worried, still.

GRODNO

Commander Koenig -- welcome to Alpha -- officially.

KOENIG

(shakes hands, looks everyone over)

Thank you, Commander Grodno.

GRODNO

Yes -- and I hope your command of this base will be as satisfying to you as mine...

KOENIG

(brusquely)

Excuse me...Dr. Russell?

HELENA

(quietly)

Commander.

CONTINUED:

25 CONTD.

KOENIG

(looks at her)

I want to see you at fifteen hundred hours.

HELENA

I'll be at my section.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Vorkonen tugs at Koenig's arm.

VORKONEN

Commander, I'm...

KOENIG

(slight impatience)

Vorkonen, my adjutant. I know. We talked from Earth station. I haven't forgotten your face.

VORKONEN

(tightly)

May I take you to your quarters, sir?

CUT TO:

26 INT. KOENIG'S QUARTERS.

26

A plain, modular, empty living quarter. Space luggage awaits unpacking. Koenig's slim document briefcase is on the table. Koenig glances round the room. Vorkonen speaks urgently, almost secretively.

VORKONEN

So far security about the situation has been maintained, but you never know. Grodno's in a panic, however. He's been paralyzed for days...When orders came you were to take over, he almost fell apart with relief...

KOENIG

What about Earth News people? I saw Holograph Picture cameramen, back there?

VORKONEN

We're watching their Earth transmissions very carefully.

CONTINUED:

26 CONTD.

KOENIG

Where's the head of the Probe
Mission right now?

VORKONEN

Catani's at the Tech Section.

(a beat)

Even he doesn't know the truth...
Symonds orders..through Grodno.

CUT TO:

27 INT. TECHNICAL SECTION. STUDIO/SFX.

27

A modular control room which monitors the operations of the Technical Section. A Communications Post in one corner. Computer programming and read-out facilities connected with the Central Computer. On one side of the room an observation window looks down on the vast hangar which houses the MTU fleet and all the engineering facilities of Alpha. The MTU's are seen, twenty or thirty of them, lined up into the distance at the back of the shot. Development, repair and maintenance work is going on in the foreground. An MTU is lowered on a lift into the shot. On the opposite wall of the room, another window looks out onto the Moon surface, and up into the space sky.

CLOSE SHOT

Probe Captain Catani - a muscular young astronaut type - but with a keen intelligence. He is at the Communications Post with

WIDER

Murneau, a dry, precise French scientist, head of the Technical Section, and

WIDER

Koenig. Their attention is on the monitor screen in the Communication Post as they talk enthusiastically to Koenig.

CATANI

It's a great ship...really
advanced..

CONTINUED:

27 CONTD.

MURNEAU

The new drive makes it very flexible...We feel we will make the META Probe with very few problems.

CATANI

Once the men come out of Medical we can have them out there within seventy-two hours...

(he grins)

I know Commissioner Symonds wants it going as soon as possible.

KOENIG

Suppose there were a -- delay of some kind..How long would it take to train back-up people, do you think?

ANOTHER ANGLE

Catani is puzzled and unhappy at this.

CATANI

Four months maybe. Why?

KOENIG

Just checking.

CATANI

(brightening again)

Would you like to see her?

He punches up some buttons...as he does, Murneau talks.

MURNEAU

Those Meta signals are tantalizing...
Incredibly clear here, out of
Earth atmosphere...

KOENIG

What's the progress on establishing
meaning of the signals?

MURNEAU

Computer Section is trying to break
them down. No report yet.

CONTINUED:

27 CONTD. 2

ON CATANI AND KOENIG

In the B.G. is the window, with just a pinpoint of light in the sky..star-like.

CATANI

The Space dock's just that pinpoint out there. But we can bring her in on bounce-off from the Video Satellite.

And now, on the screen in front of them, that happens, as we see the SPACE DOCK, the platform in space, resolve itself. A number of MTU's can be seen, about. And the deep space Probe Ship itself nosed into the dock...CAMERA CLOSES IN ON THE SCREEN to hold...Over this...

CATANI (O.S.)

There she is. Wait a minute. I'll get transmission from up there.

28 EXT. SPACE STATION. SFX.

28

As close a shot as possible of the Deep Space Probe Ship docked onto the orbiting space station. MTU movement around it.

KOENIG (O.S.)

Far cry from the first ship I took up there.

29 INT. TECHNICAL SECTION. STUDIO.

29

As Koenig turns away, Catani snaps off the Video...

MURNEAU

We've had an amplitude development of the Meta signals in the last week...It's orbit is moving in closer....Listen..

He switches on a button... And through the speaker now as Koenig and Catani listen raptly, comes a strange series of serial sounds...Noises, but more...in a specific rhythm..

ON THE SPEAKER..

CONTINUED:

29 CONTD.

As the sounds come through...almost musical...some hiss behind.

ANGIE WIDENS...Catani and Murneau and Koenig listen.

CATANI

They're trying to get to us. I know they are...

(to Koenig)

Get those guys out of Medical and we'll find out who they are and what they are...

ON KOENIG

His expression just goes tighter at that.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. ALPHA. SFX.

30

CAMERA PANS ALONG TRAVEL TUBE.

31 INT. TRAVEL TUBE.

31

Koenig in C.U. His brow is knitted. The moonscape moves beyond him. Koenig is talking into his commlock.

KOENIG

He's here on the base..for a visit.

I just learned that. His name is Bergman..Professor Victor Bergman...

The tube stops...Koenig replaces his commlock, takes a deep breath, starts out.

CUT TO:

32 INT. HELENA'S OFFICE.

32

Another Alpha modular office, but with decoration peculiar to Helena's medical profession. A Communications Post in one corner, but there are also additional video screens set into the wall on which Helena can punch up information from all parts of the Medical Section. At the moment, sober-faced, she tells Keonig...

CONTINUED:

32 CONTD.

HELENA

Ten people have contracted this, Commander, eleven with the man this morning. It's an unusual form of brain damage that I have not seen before, ever.

KOENIG

(laconically)

And you feel it's radiation, I understand.

HELENA

Commander, nine of the eleven worked at the Nuclear Waste Depository on the dark side. In five cases, people just lost control of themselves and had fatal accidents.. In three cases, we brought them in and they had the damage, causing death....The two current cases...

KOENIG

You had a recovery, however.

HELENA

One. A recovery as mysterious as the attack. So it's possible, but...

She pushes a button. In startling clear, almost three-dimensional X-Ray, we see a brain... One hemisphere seems grotesquely swollen out of proportion and shape.

HELENA

This is what the..."radiation" does. You can observe how the right hemisphere comes under attack. Confusion sets in - Disorganisation.. which eventually destroys life processes.

KOENIG

You keep using the word "radiation". Yet reports from the Disposal Depot indicate there is no rise in atomic radiation whatsoever. Absolutely none.

She clicks the monitor off, faces him.

CONTINUED:

32 CONTD. 2

HELENA

I have no other way of explaining it.

KOENIG

We've been shipping atomic waste up here for twenty years now, and there has never been any kind of serious accident before.

HELENA

It is a cell affecting process, Commander -- some kind I don't understand -- similar then, if you will, to radiation.

TWO SHOT.

The heart of the matter now.

KOENIG

And you're sure that's what the two Deep Probe pilots have?

HELENA

Yes.

KOENIG

May I see them, please?

Helena gets up and goes to the door. She directs her commlock at it and it slides open. Koenig follows her through.

33 INT. CORRIDOR.

33

Helena leads Koenig across the corridor to another door. Again the commlock, again the door slides open. They enter.

34 INT. CARE UNIT.

34

They enter an observation area. Behind a glass screen on one side are the two patients. Each is festooned with monitoring equipment. At a console in front of the glass screen sits Dr. Fujita, a small Japanese man of thirty or so, closely watching the patients and the instruments which record their vital signs.

CONTINUED:

34 CONTD.

ON THE PATIENTS

The right halves of their faces seem waxy - shrunken - quite repellant.

ON KOENIG

He reacts, controlling his surprise and shock at the sight.

WIDE SHOT.

KOENIG

(to Helena)

Can I...communicate with them?

She nods, leans forward and presses a button on the console.

KOENIG

Frank? Boris? It's John Koenig here...John Koenig...

Through the glass, vaguely, the men seem to respond. They look ahead - small crooked smiles - start to mouth something - which we hear simply as a babble. Koenig freezes, tries not to show it.

KOENIG

Listen, Dr. Russell's working hard to...get you well again...

Another babble and a confused movement from the one called "Boris".

KOENIG

(not knowing what to say)

Rest easy...Just..rest easy now...

He nods at Helena, who calls...

HELENA

Thank you, Dr. Fujita.

Dr. Fujita leans forward and presses the button again. He gets up and goes out.

ON KOENIG

He's visibly shaken.

CONTINUED:

34 CONTD. 2

TWO SHOT.

KOENIG

They're both..top men..highly-
trained...I knew them in the
Earth-Alpha program....

(he looks up at her, now)

They never went near that N.D.2
waste depot, Doctor...They have
standing orders to avoid it.

HELENA

I've been told that by the former
Commander...who became greatly
agitated only when the two Probe
Men were stricken...setting back
the program.

KOENIG

(defensively)

He's under Earth Control, doctor,
the same as I am.

HELENA

(quietly)

Very much under their command --
yes.

Koenig looks at her -- for this is subtly challenging.

KOENIG

Dr. Russell, I am concerned with
the well-being of everyone on this
Moon Base. I worked on the first
establishing settlement ten years
ago. I set up the first deep space
probes from here..

HELENA

I know all about your efforts.
That's what gives me some hope.

This again challenges Koenig.

KOENIG

If the N.D.2 is at fault here, as
you claim, what about everyone else
who works there..or has visited..
even you?

CONTINUED:

34 CONTD. 3

HELENA

(she shrugs)

We know that there are differing
radiation tolerances among human
beings.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Helena moves closer to him, a sense of urgency in
her voice.

HELENA

Commander, as of now, Security
says no mention of what's happened---
routine as usual.

KOENIG

(a bit defensively)

At the moment...

HELENA

(breaks in)

It may be politically expediant,
but I feel it's dangerous,
potentially, for everyone on
this Base...everyone..

And Koenig knows it.

CUT TO:

35 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

35

Very busy...as Koenig comes in, on way to office, the
doors to which are partly open. Vorkonen stops him.

KOENIG

Did you get Professor Bergman?

VORKONEN

Coming over. There's an Earth
Call for you on the scrambler...
Commissioner Symonds.

Koenig says nothing. The look he gives Vorkonen is
enough. He strides on to his office. The doors slide
closed behind him.

36 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE.

36

Spacious, but with an intimate feeling. Koenig is striding to his Communications Post where light is going on. He seats himself before it...Bar scrambling lines appear on the screen. Bleeps are heard. Now the picture clears. Commissioner Symonds himself is here, on the screen..

SYMONDS

Koenig, I hope this isn't a bad time to call, but I wanted to get your first impressions of the situation.

KOENIG

Tense. There was another death, this morning, at the N.D.2.

SYMONDS

Oh Lord...

KOENIG

I haven't had a chance to go out there yet, but Dr. Russell talks about a kind of radiation brain damage..

SYMONDS

(tightly)
I know all about that, from Grodno. But she's misdiagnosing..we're all certain of that down here. As a matter of fact, but under strict confidence, we're flying up a team of top medical people who will take her out of the case..expect them.

KOENIG

(protests)
I don't think that's necessary.

SYMONDS

(soothingly)
She's very competent in certain kinds of Space Medicine, Commander, but this situation is beyond her, we think.

CONTINUED:

KOENIG

Could there be escaping radiation at the base? Could the sensors be wrong?

SYMONDS

Possibly. Why don't you get a crew to check it out..as quickly as possible..go right to the piles themselves...

KOENIG

(slowly)
That's a little risky...

SYMONDS

Time..Commander..Time...If it's that, let's know it...

KOENIG

(nods)
Will you suspend sending more waste up here, for the time being?

SYMONDS

(accommodating)
If you think so..of course...Until we clarify the situation...Now, most importantly, how are the Probe boys?

KOENIG

No change.

SYMONDS

(frowning)
That's what's important. We have to hold the story in, Commander...have to. We have an International Lunar Finance Committee meeting coming up on the fifteenth. It's all based on the Meta signals and our Probe..

KOENIG

(uneasily)
This kind of politics...

CONTINUED:

36 CONTD. 2

SYMONDS

(a bit sharply)

Koenig, you're a marvellous Space Adventurer, but it takes political manoeuvring and vast sums of money to support that adventure. And any hint of failure chops us dead. Remember that.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. MOON SURFACE. SFX. 37

Three MTU's overflying the moon surface...

38 INT. MTU. COMMAND MODULE. 38

Koenig is piloting. Professor Bergman is looking out of the window.

KOENIG

(angrily)

You can't protect against atomic radiation at the source point, Professor, he knows that...

BERGMAN

(as Koenig shakes his head)

He takes these risks with other lives. That is why he is a Commissioner -- and why I have never even come up here before.

KOENIG

(smiles at that)

And why am I, at the moment, Alpha Base Commander?

BERGMAN

(smiles back)

I am an ex-teacher of yours, John, not your ex-analyst.

(looks out the window, up)

Somewhere, up there, is Meta...

39 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX. 39

R.O.V. Bergman.

CONTINUED:

39 CONTD.

The stars...and one possible small planet standing out...

BERGMAN (O.S.)

For the first time to actually know, that, from across the universe, a hand is being held out to us...

40 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE.

40

ON BERGMAN

As he looks down, now..

BERGMAN

Is that the Waste Depot down there?

41 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 1. SFX.

41

And down below (we should be quite high) we can see a strange enclosed area...with gravelike mounds, quite high, in the moonscape. Eerie lights, somewhat dim, are set over it. It looks primitive, barren.

KOENIG (O.S.)

Hardly. That was the first nuclear waste area up here. It was closed down five years ago.

42 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE.

42

KOENIG

It was a pilot operation basically, and they learned a lot. It's all closed and sealed now.

BERGMAN

By the time we're finished, earth will have pocked and polluted this too...all in the name of survival.

KOENIG

There's where we're going...Just a hundred miles on...

He points out the window.

43 EXT. MOONSCAPE. SFX.

43

And, in the darkness, we can see the hot lights of the Nuclear Disposal Area 2, glaring in the distance.

/

CUT TO:

44 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO.

44

A strange sight here, as four technicians, wearing space-suits, get out of their moon-buggy and move towards the laser barrier which warns them to keep away. Each of them carries a radiation meter which they hold out in front of them.

ON TECHNICIAN ALLISON.

His face is tense as he leads the others. He stops at one of the columns which project the laser barrier. He directs his commlock at it and green lights flicker down the column, indicating that the barrier is interrupted and that it is safe for them to pass.

45 INT. N.D.A. 2. DEPOT.

45

Gundlach is explaining the set-up to Bergman and Koenig, whose attention is divided between the hardware of the Depot and the monitor screen on the Communications Post which carries the pictures of the four technicians as they walk into the radiation zone.

GUNDLACH

The waste ships come up, twice a week, average. All the used up U-392 atomic fuel on Earth is collected at Keyes Point Energy Center in Australia and the launch is from there, directly to here.

KOENIG

(shakes his head
unhappily)

Those synthocrete containers are five foot thick, but even so....

BERGMAN

At a 'scope bank.

BERGMAN

These monitor the depot.

CONTINUED:

45 CONTD.

ANGLE WIDENS...

Gundlach comes over...

GUNDLACH

Yes..Escaping Nuclear Radiation
and any consequent heat rise. But
you can see for yourself, there's
no variation from normal base.

BERGMAN

(looks at him)
How do you account for...what's
been happening here?

GUNDLACH

(a beat)
I don't try...

46 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO.

46

As Technician Allison and the others approach the
capped holes where the used fuel is stored. Now,
they bend down, clumsily...

ON ALLISON..

He hesitates...And, with a special tool, he opens up,
part of the capped top...He puts his meter on it...
a red light flashes intermittently.

47 INT. N.D.A. 2. DEPT.

47

Koenig looks out the window at the distant lights of
N.D.A.2., silently...Bergman passes him by...Koenig
doesn't even notice him...CAMERA GOES WITH BERGMAN...
HOLDS as he examines an instrument. He calls.

BERGMAN

Is this measuring magnetic
fluctuations?

GUNDLACH COMES INTO THE FRAME.

GUNDLACH

Yes..We produce our own environment
here, independent of the Base...We
have atmosphere Production and Gravity
control with a Bergman effect machine
which...

(he hesitates...as he
realizes to whom he's talking)

CONTINUED:

47 CONTD.

BERGMAN

(points to instrument)
 These levels are a point higher
 than ordinary..have you noticed
 that?

GUNDLACH

(a little upset now)
 Professor...so long as we don't
 go below the Red Zone, gravity
 operation is satisfactory...so
 we've been told.

BERGMAN

That's below. But what about above?

48 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO.

48

ON A TECHNICIAN. As he opens up another cap -- puts
 his meter near it...watches...rises..

ON ALLISON

As he opens up another cap, puts his meter near it.

ON THE METER (INSERT)

A red light flashes. Then two, three. They become
 constant.

ON ALLISON

Watching this --- and worrying.

ON THE METER (INSERT)

Further lights flash red until the handle of his meter
 is a bar of constant red.

ON ALLISON

In his earphones we can hear a clacking rapidly increase
 until it sounds like a buzzing.

ON THE METER (INSERT)

The red lights flare and burn out.

ON ALLISON..

In terror, he drops the meter, bounds away...

49 INT. N.D.A. 2. DEPOT. 49

Koenig has seen this...

ALLISON (O.S. FILTER)
Leakage...Leakage at the point!

50 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO. 50

As all the men bound away and try to race as quickly as they can back through the laser barrier to the Moon buggy. They jump in and drive off away from the area at speed.

51 INT. N.D.A. 2. DEPOT. 51

Koenig, Bergman and Gundlach watch the monitor screen.

ALLISON (O.S. FILTER)
Red zone...Red zone at that point!

KOENIG
(to Gundlach)
They're hot! Decontaminating units.

GUNDLACH
(white-faced, presses
button, calls into commlock)
Move into decontaminate procedure.
Enter the door with the red light.

Through the window a red light floods the moon surface. The moon buggy carrying the four technicians comes close past the Depot window and out of shot.

Koenig turns to Bergman.

KOENIG
There is a leakage. The sensing
units are way off.

BERGMAN
(quietly)
I'm...not so sure that's true.

And as Koenig looks at him, with question, we.....

FADE OUT:

END ACT ONE

"THE VOID AHEAD"

ACT TWO:

FADE IN:

52 INT. N.D.A.2. DEPOT.

Allison is seated here, breathing heavily, very frightened, as Gundlach goes over him with a hand counter. Bergman and Koenig stand near.

GUNDLACH

Point Six ... Point Five ... Point Six ...

ALLISON

Blasted right off the scale out there; right off.

KOENIG

Well, it would, if there was any leakage at all.

GUNDLACH

(Shuts off counter)

No damage. The level couldn't have been excessive.

ON KOENIG AND BERGMAN ... Moving away from Allison.

BERGMAN

I agree ... There is some leakage at the cap, certainly...and the meter would go into Red Scale.. But that's only inside the fence limits. The sensing units operate outside. As they should.

KOENIG

(Understanding)
He panicked.

BERGMAN

(Shrugs)
A reasonable reaction.

KOENIG

But it doesn't help us. There's no really active nuclear radiation here, then.

BERGMAN

It would seem.

CONTINUED:

52 CONTD.

KOENIG.

KOENIG

So. The Probe men have radiation damage --without radiation, according to her.

And he is stumped by the mystery.

CUT TO:

53 INT. HELENA'S OFFICE.

53

A tough-faced Security Officer faces an angry, but controlled Helena..

SECURITY OFFICER

I'm sorry, Doctor. I'm really sorry, but

HELENA

Dr. Turner's tour was up ten days ago. Her employment contract, as you well know, gives her the right of return to Earth within forty-eight hours of termination...

SECURITY OFFICER

Of course I know, but there's a Security Clause in the contract and that's what we're invoking. She's not to leave the Base until specifically given permission.

Suddenly, the Communication Post in this office, speaks...

DR. FUJITA (O.S. FILTER)

(Tense tones)

Dr. Russell....One Nine....and One ten...

Helena rises suddenly..

HELENA

(To Security Man)

Excuse me....

She moves quickly to the door.

54 INT. CARE UNIT.

54

Dr. Fujita is here, standing, watching the two probe men closely through the glass screen. Helena enters

CONTINUED:

54 CONTD.

and stands at his side. The patients' breathing is very laboured..The Vital sign indicators flash along on the oscilloscopes in the console. Helena glances at them.

FUJITA

Vital signs started slipping,
very suddenly...

HELENA

(looks down at console)
Emergency C.F. 3 - full dosage...

FUJITA

(presses a control)
Presets C.F. 3 ...Nine and ten...

HELENA

She watches tensely, through the glass.

ON PATIENTS

A small light goes on over their heads...They hardly react.

TWO SHOT - FUJITA AND HELENA.

They watch...

HELENA

Heart massage...Quick!

ON PATIENT BORIS

A vibrating light beam points down to his heart. It pulsates with increasing intensity.

ON FUJITA AND HELENA

FUJITA

(reads out the signs)
Losing pressure...Losing nerve
response...

CAMERA MOVES TO HELENA'S FACE...

FUJITA (O.S.)

Brain waves going...

HELENA

So fast....

ON A 'SCOPE...

CONTINUED:

54 CONTD. 2

Brain waves indicated...Now suddenly, there is just a flat line...utterly flat...

ON THE PATIENTS..

Rigid, staring....

ON HELENA AND FUJITA....

Nothing they can do....CAMERA ANGLE WIDENS...as a Computer Printout hammers...Fujita looks at it, tears it off, hands it to Helena...

FUJITA

Central Statistics confirming the deaths...With Special Instructions.

HELENA

(looks...reads...)

"Most Secret...This statistic is not to be reported elsewhere."

She crumples up the sheet of paper.

CUT TO:

55 INT. KOENIG'S QUARTERS.

55

Luggage partly un-packed. Clothing, personal effects scattered. It is night. The mood is quiet. Koenig is alone here. He is bone-tired. He is trying to write a report, throws down a pill...There is a buzz. He reaches over, presses a button on his CommLock Unit which is plugged into a socket on his table.

KOENIG

Yes?

Koenig looks at the screen on his CommLock.

GRODNO (O.S. FILTER)

Good evening, Commander. Are you in -- for a minute or so?

KOENIG

(tiredly)

I guess..

He points his CommLock at the door.

ON THE DOOR.

As it opens and Grodno comes in...

CONTINUED:

GRODNO

I'm leaving tomorrow and I thought
I'd say goodbye.

KOENIG

It's a good time to leave.

GRODNO

(laughs nervously)
I wish you very well up here, but
I'm not certain you understand how
complex it all is.

KOENIG

I'm learning.

GRODNO

It becomes even more complex with
the death of the two Probe Men.
Commissioner Symonds now has..very
real problems.

KOENIG

So do we all up here, Mister Grodno.

ANOTHER ANGLE.

GRODNO

(hastily)
No doubt...No doubt...when do the
earth doctors arrive?

KOENIG

I'm not sure they will now.

(a beat)

You've been keeping Symonds up to
date on Doctor Russell, haven't you?

GRODNO

(quickly)

I hesitate to criticise Dr. Russell's
competence---but she has some personal
prejudices---problems..I have found,
which tend to affect her judgement...
sometimes.

KOENIG

You think she's misdiagnosing, too?

CONTINUED:

55 CONTD. 2

GRODNO
 (quite smoothly)
 She's Medical—I am not. But I do know, for instance, that she was married to someone in the Space Program and he was lost on a mission five years ago.

KOENIG
 Which means what?

GRODNO
 She has prejudices, as a result—possibly anxieties...
 (now it comes out)
 I understand, for instance, that she doesn't understand the need for Security in all of this...It would be...wrong to be influenced by her....

ON KOENIG

KOENIG
 I see...Well...Goodbye. Have a good trip back.

CAMERA ANGLES BACK FOR TWO SHOT.

GRODNO
 Good Luck.

KOENIG
 Oh..before you go...just tell me, between ourselves...Grodno...Did Symonds suggest this little...farewell heart-to-heart?

And Grodno just blinks his confusion.

CUT TO:

56 INT. TECHNICAL SECTION.

56

We are on a shot of Catani— and his face is filled with amazement.....

CATANI
 They died ? The men..died ?

ANGLE SWIFTLY WIDENS....Koenig is here with him.

CONTINUED:

56 CONTD.

KOENIG

Yes, it's been kept under wraps.
I have orders not to tell even you,
just yet...but I'm doing that, anyway.

CATANI

.(still bewildered)
Of what? They told me...

KOENIG

They told you lies. They died of an
illness no one can really explain.

CATANI

I don't understand it. I thought
they'd get well and we'd...

KOENIG

Earth Command wanted you to think
that.

CATANI

The Probe...
(with real anguish)
It will be set back for months, now...

KOENIG

Till you can train another crew, yes.
But I want to know what happened to
the men who died. They were
prohibited from flying over the
Nuclear Disposal Area weren't they?

CATANI

Of course...And they never did...You
can check their Flight Recorders.
They're fed into Central Computer...
(a beat)
Months...and maybe more months...
(now, with agitation)
And maybe never...

He presses a button, and we hear the Meta signals now.
They hold for an impressive beat and...

CUT TO:

57 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

Vorkonen and Koenig...

VORKONEN

No word from Symonds, yet. I can't
understand it, either, commander.

CONTINUED:

57 CONTD.

KOENIG

He's freezing everything till he can figure a way out...And we're frozen right along with it.

CAMERA GOES WITH KOENIG as he moves to Computer Chief OUMA. Ouma is high ranking in the Technical Section. An impressively brilliant African, Ouma knows every inch of his computer system.

KOENIG

Mr. Ouma, I want you to extract all the Flight Recorder records of the last Training Flight made by Probe Pilots, Marsdale and Spassman...

OUMA

(notes on a pad)
That's Codes 362 and 384 ...I'll get them immediately..You want the repro tapes.

KOENIG

Yes....

Starts back to his office...As he does so, Vorkonen stops him for a moment...

VORKONEN

You had a call from Professor Bergman. He wants to see you. He'll be here shortly.

ON THE DOOR.

As Helena comes in...She sees Koenig.

AROUND KOENIG

As he sees Helena...

WIDE ANGLE

As Helena moves to him.

HELENA

Might I see you, privately, commander? It won't take long.

KOENIG

Of course.

He moves to his office. She follows.

58 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE. .

As he and Helena enter. He closes the door, faces her.

KOENIG

Sit down--please.

HELENA

(as she does so)
I have a young assistant...a woman.
Dr. Dorothy Turner...English National.
Her tour of duty was up ten days ago
and she's not being allowed to go back
to Earth...

KOENIG

Oh...

HELENA

It's a hardship case, particularly
because she's meeting her husband
and they're going to go off to...

KOENIG

(breaks in)
I can't do a thing. I'm sorry.

HELENA

I thought perhaps...

KOENIG

I would like to let her go, doctor,
believe me...I'd like to lift all
the restrictions...but...I can't...
I don't have power in those
directions. I'm under Earth Command.

Helena absorbs that, nods...

HELENA

Well, I thought I'd try...She's
pregnant, you see...got that way
on her last Earth Holiday...
(she stops..rises)
I'll have to tell her nothing can
be done.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Koenig stops her with his hand.

KOENIG

Have we gotten off on the wrong foot,
you and I?

CONTINUED:

HELENA

(carefully)

That wouldn't be politic with
a Base Commander, would it?

KOENIG

May I ask you a non-Medical
question?

(she waits...nods)

Did you and the..ex-Commander
here have any friction---on a
personal or professional level?

HELENA

(slight hesitation)

Did he say we had?

KOENIG

He made certain references...

HELENA

To my lack of judgement?

KOENIG

In a sense.

HELENA

I see..

(a beat)

Well, he indicated a certain...
interest in me, at one point. I
did not reciprocate. That, perhaps,
was my lack of judgement.

Before Koenig can react...there is a buzz...and a worried
voice over the Communications Post from Ouma...

OUMA (O.S.)

Commander...Those Probe Recorder
tapes...

KOENIG

(into Communications Post)

What about them?

OUMA (O.S.)

There's something very strange.
We have two hundred blank feet
on them.

CUT TO:

59 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

59

Ouma is at a tape bank, worry across his face...Koenig is with him...

OUMA

They go normally...over the flight pattern...and suddenly, they blank out...No image...

KOENIG

How can that be? There's backup track.

OUMA

That's wiped out too.

KOENIG

That's impossible...Unless your computer's blanked out that footage.

OUMA

No...We would have had notation if that happened.

KOENIG

(very angry)

That flight record is a key, Mr. Ouma...a key...I have to see every foot of it...

ON OUMA

Very shaken by this...

OUMA

This has never happened before... never...

ANGLE WIDENS...

OUMA

Unless it was fed in that way.

KOENIG

You damn well better find out what happened...We need to know. We need to know fast.

ON A SENSOR TECHNICIAN.

She runs into Central Control, goes straight to a centre console and starts punching buttons. She is a pretty female, Sandra Sabatini, of the Technical Section. Now

CONTINUED:

59 CONTD.

she stands before the console reading instruments and she is patently worried. She takes a read-out and calls...

SANDRA

Can I get a check on this reading?
I have a level Nine on the old N.D.1
and I can't believe it.

WIDE SHOT.

Suddenly, all attention is focussed here...The Chief Sensor Tech--an American named McDonald...runs in and joins her at the console.

McDONALD

(calls quickly)
Check Sensors on the N.D.A. 1.

Professor Bergman comes in the door now. He sees the tension...moves to Koenig.

ON KOENIG AND BERGMAN.

KOENIG

(tightly)
Emergency reading on the old N.D.A.

WIDE SHOT.

A voice comes through the L.S. system.

L.S. VOICE (O.S.)

Sensors all check...

Koenig moves quickly to Sandra. Bergman follows.

AROUND SANDRA.

SANDRA

They just started to click off.
We don't have too many sensors
on that old depot, just for
emergencies. But look ...

She points urgently at an instrument reading.

WIDE SHOT.

BERGMAN

Is that neutron emission?

SANDRA

That's the point...Neutron
emission is normal.

CONTINUED:

59 CONTD. 2

She points to another instrument.

KOENIG

You mean the pile isn't fissioning?

SANDRA

The heat level is building...and every now and then there's something happening I can't make out.

KOENIG

(calls)

Bring in the N.D.A.L. on video...

AROUND THE CONSOLE.

A technician punches up buttons. The main screen begins to light.

ON THE SCREEN.

60 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 1. SFX.

60

Quite high. The ground seems very strange. Trembling. A blue flash suddenly bursts out of a mound, then another.

61 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

61

ON SANDRA.

SANDRA

There's incredible heat in the bottom layer...

AROUND CONSOLE.

BERGMAN

And still no radiation high?

ON SANDRA

SANDRA

No...Fission is within normal range.

AROUND CONSOLE.

KOENIG

It's incomprehensible. Heat with no atomic action...Professor, that pile of U-392 is inactive. Inactive.

CONTINUED:

61 CONTD.

SANDRA

But it's burning up, somehow...
look at it.

ON THE SCREEN

62 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 1. SFX.

62

More flashes. More earth heaving. Suddenly, the
picture flares, and disappears.

63 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

63

AROUND CONSOLE

SANDRA

Burnout. The camera's gone...

There is frantic clicking. She looks up.

ON THE CONSOLE.

A series of red lights flash furiously. Then they go
constant, and stay there.

AROUND THE CONSOLE.

SANDRA

The sensing units are burned out too.

She presses buttons, but nothing happens.

ANGLE WIDENS.

Great tension.

BERGMAN

If we could, at least, see what's
happening there....

KOENIG

(calls to comm man)

Get a message to Captain Catani.
I want him on the launch pad in
ten minutes.

(to Bergman)

We'll fly over with a relay camera
and tape the information.

TWO SHOT. BERGMAN AND KOENIG.

BERGMAN

Koenig, we don't know what's
happening there; stay well up.

CONTINUED:

63 CONTD.

Koenig just looks at him and:

CUT TO:

64 INT. M.T.U. COMMAND MODULE

64

Catani is at the controls this time. Koenig is at the window, looking down.

KOENIG

Suddenly, after all these years...

(breaks off)

Here it is...

65 EXT. MOON SURFACE. SFX

65

The MTU flies towards the flashing N.D.A. 1

66 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 1. SFX

66

P.O.V. MTU. Now we can really see the ground quiver and shake. ZOOM IN on one area and some kind of explosion rocks the interior. Blue and yellow flashes streak out.

ANOTHER ANGLE

From low on the surface, close to the N.D.A. 1
More heavings and flashes. Some of the lights go out.
Columns collapse.

ANOTHER ANGLE

High now, looking down on the N.D.A. 1 in torture below.
And the MTU flying over it, just coming to the centre.
Streaks reach up towards it like lightning.

67 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE.

67

ON CATANI

As he controls the ship. Looks at scopes.

CATANI

That heat is fantastic down there ...It must be burning up inside.

WIDER ANGLE.

KOENIG

We're coming right over it, now...
Better go up so we don't get
burnout on the video, too...

CONTINUED:

67 CONTD.

ON CATANI

Starts adjusting.

CATANI

Right.

But he seems to be having trouble. Something doesn't seem to be happening right.

KOENIG

Get up!

ON CATANI.

Getting more worried as now the M.T.U. begins to pitch and yaw.

CATANI

The guidance system's gone wild.
We can't ...

And at that moment, the M.T.U. heaves dreadfully. Catani almost falls from his chair.

ON KOENIG

He is not strapped in and he does fall. The M.T.U. gyrates, out of control.

68 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX

68

The MTU gyrates in space.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The MTU moves wildly, out of control, and falls down towards the raging inferno below.

69 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE.

69

CATANI

(shouting wildly)

Backups failing. All guidance is out ... We ...

And as he says this, the module gives a mighty shudder and commences to drop. Catani breaks free of his straps, rises, slams against the roof, falls, stunned.

ON KOENIG

CONTINUED:

69 CONTD.

He grabs a handhold as the ship drops, manages to keep himself level. Camera moves with him as he makes his way pitching and reeling, towards the control panel. Now we are on a wide shot as Catani is out, unconscious, bleeding slightly at the temples. Koenig grabs switches, manual switches, throws them.

70 EXT. MTU COMMAND MODULE. SFX. 70

A thrust unit fires weakly.

71 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE. 71

Koenig presses switches again, and again, and again.

72 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX. 72

The MTU veers upwards slightly, only to stall and fall back.

73 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE. 73

Koenig grimly pushing a lever, fighting gravity, fighting everything. A lurch. He is knocked sideways. Gets up, grabs the lever again.

74 EXT. MTU. SFX. 74

As it shoots sideways, then hovers, with a modicum of lift.

ANOTHER ANGLE.

P.O.V. Koenig. The M.T.U. hovers over the N.D.A.1. All lights are out now except for the continuing flashes.

ANOTHER ANGLE.

Now the MTU suddenly lurches down, past the N.D.A. 1, but towards the rim of a deep crater.

75 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE. 75

Koenig is winded. Almost sapped of strength. He knows he has no control, but still he fights.

COMMUNICATIONS TECH. (O.S. FILTER)

Command Ship ... Command ship ... video
is out...Are you alright? Please report.
Please report.

Koenig reaches for a button, but a sudden lurch flattens him against the back of the module.

76 EXT. MOON CRATER. SFX.

76

The MTU swoops low over the surface, cuts through the rim of the crater sending up a column of dust. It slows, and topples down inside the crater, slewing and churning to a stop at the bottom.

77 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE.

77

Koenig, dazed, picks himself up and reaches towards the console. He presses a button.

KOENIG
Mayday Alpha. Send out a
rescue ship.

FADE OUT:

END ACT TWO

"THE VOID AHEAD"

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

78 INT. DIAGNOSTIC UNIT.

78

This is the general accident and examination area of the Medical Section. Dr. Fujita and Helena have been working on Koenig. He still has some sensors attached...Fujita is calling out numbers as they come off a 'scope..

FUJITA
Lobe Four Area..Normal...
Intermuscular response..Over
Five..Thermal measurement...
Within range...

He switches off units...

HELENA
(to Koenig)
That's about it, Commander.

FUJITA
(releasing him)
We'll get you out of these.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Koenig sits up, puts his shirt back on..

KOENIG
How's Catani?

HELENA
We think he'll be all right. He's
had bad shock...simple physical
shock...though...We can't find
anything else..so far..

KOENIG
You seem to have done a big test
run on me.

HELENA
(shrugs)
Just..being careful...You're fine,
though.

CONTINUED:

78 CONTD.

KOENIG
(after a beat)
Checked for brain damage, didn't
you?

HELENA
Just...making sure.

KOENIG
You've had no new reports on that
condition.

HELENA
No..

KOENIG
That's something...anyway.

HELENA
I'd say it was because they've
stopped the waste shipments and
there are no crews around there...
wouldn't you?

Koenig says nothing..

CUT TO:

79 INT. TECH SECTION.

79

CLOSE ON BERGMAN.

He is examining a burnt out component...

BERGMAN
Look at it.

CAMERA ANGLE WIDENS. Murneau, the Tech Chief is with
him.

BERGMAN
This was metering, magnetic output
at the N.D. 1 area when it erupted...
It burned right out...

MURNEAU
A twentyfold increase in Magnetism?

BERGMAN
Interesting, isn't it.

CONTINUED:

79 CONTD.

Murneau looks to the door, moves to it, calling...

MURNEAU

Get me the printout!

AROUND THE DOOR.

Koenig has just come in. Murneau approaches...

MURNEAU

Nothing serious with Captain
Catani, I hope.

KOENIG

Nothing that wasn't there before.
What did you find?

MURNEAU

That you were very lucky. You had
only two thrusters operating.

A technician comes into frame, with a computer printout
Murneau takes it...

MURNEAU

This is the diagnostic report.
It indicates Navigation system
just blanked out on overload.
And the first back-up too...

TECH SECTION TECHNICIAN

And it wasn't heat..All cables
were clean..No insulation burns.

Bergman comes into frame now...overhears..

KOENIG

How could the Navigation system
just go?

BERGMAN

How could a flight recorder become
blank, equally?

(a moment)

I get a vague glimmer of something,
but I want to check with Earth
Library. I'll call in to you later.

And he leaves the frame.

CONTINUED:

79 CONTD. 2

ANOTHER ANGLE.

As Murneau is worried.

MURNEAU

Commander, if it happened once..
could it happen again with our
MTU's?

KOENIG

My report from the N.D.A.1 is that
the flare-up is subsiding, heat
levels are going down.

MURNEAU

Even so.

KOENIG

(he nods)

Let's have no more flights over
that area.

MURNEAU

Is Catani to start Probe Pilot
training immediately?

KOENIG

I don't know. I haven't received
any word from Earth Command yet.
Not a word on anything!

TWO SHOT

MURNEAU

We had better do something. The
Meta signals have been getting
noticeably weaker...It's on its
way away from us. I've sent that
report to Earth Command too -- and
they haven't even acknowledged.

CUT TO:

80 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL,

80

Koenig is with Tech Sensor Sabatini..

KOENIG

I want that N.D.A. 1 watched like
a hawk.

CONTINUED:

SANDRA

We've got new units in, Commander.
And the readings are going down.

ON KOENIG.

As he goes to McDonald.

KOENIG

There's nothing much happening
at the H.D.A. 2, now, I know, but --

MCDONALD

(breaks in, puzzled)
But there is...

KOENIG

What do you mean?

MCDONALD

The Earth Waste Shuttle...It
started up again, yesterday.
And there's a shipment scheduled
for later today at...

KOENIG

(shocked)
I was not informed of this.

MCDONALD

Neither were we...We just learned
about it from TeleCom...in routine.

ON KOENIG

Very grim, calls..

KOENIG

Vorkonen...

ANGLE WIDENS...As Vorkonen comes into frame.

KOENIG

Book a call to Commissioner Symonds..

Vorkonen nods, moves away...

ON BERGMAN

Who has just come in...He is very serious, almost grim.

CONTINUED:

80 CONTD. 2

BERGMAN

Commander!

ANOTHER ANGLE.

As Koenig turns to him, still grim.

KOENIG

Symonds has resumed Depot delivery.

BERGMAN

(comes to him, quietly)

We have to talk. It is urgent.
And it must be private. Call
Murneau.

Koenig looks at him and turns to his office.

CUT TO:

81 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE.

81

Bergman is holding up the burnt-out component. Koenig
is listening intently. Murneau as well.

BERGMAN

I believe we are facing a new
effect, an effect arising from
the Atomic Waste deposited,
thoughtlessly here, over the
years. An effect consisting of
Magnetic Energy outputs of
unprecedented violence.

CAMERA MOVES BACK.

MURNEAU

Magnetic?

BERGMAN

We expected some Nuclear radiation
leakage from the Depots. And we
controlled that problem very well.
But the unexpected always comes up
like a nightmare. And the
unexpected here...

CONTINUED:

81 CONTD.

KOENIG

Are you seriously saying that
Magnetic Energy is responsible for
the Flareup at N.D.A1?

BERGMAN

I am. I believe that surge in
Magnetic output wrecked your
Command Navigational system when
you flew over and went out of control.
I also believe it explains the two
hundred feet of magnetic tape
blanked out by the Probe Flight
recorders. I believe that they
overflowed that site at low altitude...

MURNEAU

That's directly against orders.

KOENIG

(quietly)

Probe Pilots always play games,
always...

MURNEAU

(still fighting)

Every precaution was taken. That
depot was sealed, synthcreted,
buried.

BERGMAN

And it erupted, nonetheless...
Because we sealed it against Nuclear
radiation but not Magnetic.

(a beat)

I believe the abandoned depot burned
itself out in some terrible
electromagnetically induced subsurface
firestorm. But I'm not concerned
with that now. I am concerned, with
the same exact processes unquestionably
going on with the N.D.A2.

KOENIG

(surprised)

There's been no problem, so far --
with that.

CONTINUED:

81 CONTD. 2

BERGMAN

The calculations support the fact that there will be -- very soon.

MURNEAU

With all due respect, professor, to your knowledge of theoretical physics, you tell us about a magnetic effect that no one has ever discovered before.

BERGMAN

The science is explainable.

(to Koenig)

But more important, right now, is the question of time. I think it imperative to check the magnetic energy levels at N.D.A.2.

MURNEAU

(protesting)

The sensor pattern is laid out...

BERGMAN

(breaks in)

For atomic radiation...not for magnetism. We need solid data on magnetic levels.

KOENIG

(to Murneau)

Let's get it.

82 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO.

82

A moon buggy in the B.G., in the F.G. are four technicians in space suits. They hold hand scopes and they are moving about, checking levels.

ON TECHNICIAN ONE

He holds up the scope and we can see him react as green lights flicker and there are intermittent red flashes. These become constant as he points the scope at a particular area, and the technician moves off.

83 INT. N.D.A. 2 DEPOT.

83

Bergman, Murneau, Koenig, Gundlach and a depot technician. Koenig is looking at the monitor on the Communications post. Bergman is watching a bank of warning lights and oscilloscopes which reflect the computed data from the scopes out on the site. Gundlach joins him.

GUNDLACH

(excitedly)

Those levels are much higher than anything we get on the sensors. Much.

BERGMAN

(watching quietly)

Yes.

AT THE COMMUNICATIONS POST

Murneau joins Koenig. Koenig just looks at him, looks down again, at the screen.

84 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO.

84

A technician, another one, moves to an area, with his 'scope. It suddenly reacts very strongly...

CLOSE TECHNICIAN 2

He looks at the 'scope -- and suddenly, we see that vague look come over his eyes, the 'scope drops from his hands...

85 INT. N.D.A. 2. DEPOT.

85

Koenig has seen the technician drop the 'scope... he calls now, quickly into the Communications Post.

KOENIG

Get to that man. Disable him!

86 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. STUDIO.

86

As one guard technician, alerted for this, bounds to the dazed tech.

CLOSE SHOT

As the guard (for that is what he is) pulls out his stun gun and presses the activator. The disabled, dazed tech. goes down.

CONTINUED:

86 CONTD.

WIDE SHOT

As the guard starts to pick him up, with the aid of another man and move him away.

87 INT. N.D.A. 2 DEPOT.

87

KOENIG

Number Twelve...and we're lucky at that.

GUNDLACH

Look!

INSERT A SCOPE.

It is the "heat" meter, and it jumps up now...flutter..

BACK TO SHOT.

GUNDLACH

Look at that heat go up! Look at it.

BERGMAN

(to Koenig and Murneau)
One thing we must remember --- this installation holds one hundred and forty-two times the atomic waste that N.D.A.1 holds...

He stops there...Everyone freezes.

CUT TO:

88 EXT. LAUNCH PAD. SFX.

88

An MTU settles to land and the travel tube telescopes out towards it.

89 INT. TRAVEL TUBE.

89

Koenig gets to his feet as the tube slows to a stop. He moves towards the door, followed by Vorkonen.

The door opens. Koenig waits. At the end of the air-lock from the MTU passenger module appears Commissioner Symonds. Behind him is his aide, briefcase in hand. He is a little surprised to meet Koenig quite so soon.

CONTINUED:

89 CONTD.

KOENIG

Commissioner.

Symonds looks up, cold-eyed, extends his hand. Koenig shakes it.

SYMONDS

Commander...

Koenig turns back into the Travel Tube. He directs his commlock at the selector panel. The door closes as soon as Symonds and his aide are in the tube.

As the tube accelerates, Koenig indicates a seat for Symonds. They both sit down.

SYMONDS

My office tried to query you on your Code Six Emergency request for my presence...You didn't seem to be available.

KOENIG

(coldly)

I am now.

CUT TO:

90 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE.

90

On Bergman

BERGMAN

Simply put, in the early years we used Expensive U-392 as fuel. But in the last seven or eight we have mixed it with Cesium, good cheap Cesium. But what do we know about the long-term effects of that mixture? Very little.

During this CAMERA WIDENS and we see where we are. And Koenig and Murneau are ranged around Bergman. Symonds is on the opposite side. An Aide, tight-lipped, is near him.

CONTINUED:

90 CONTD.

MURNEAU

Because we had little of it to experiment with...Now, up here, we have a...sizeable mass..

KOENIG

And it's there, reacting -- though not as we expect it to.

ON SYMONDS

SYMONDS

(great scepticism)

Magnetism -- causing brain damage?

WIDE SHOT

BERGMAN

(he shrugs)

Magnetism is energy -- all energy radiates...

KOENIG

Before we knew that atomic radiation caused cancer, what did we think?

Symonds is still stubborn.

SYMONDS

Well, get a comprehensive report together and I'll take it back to Earth with me and ...

KOENIG

(enraged)

Report?

He slams a button on his desk. The screen on the Communications Post lights up.

ON THE SCREEN

91 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX.

91

A remote camera pans the desolate and deserted area.

92 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE.

92

ON SYMONDS

CONTINUED:

92 CONTD.

As he stares at the screen.

WIDE SHOT

KOENIG

Commissioner, the heat rise on the interior of that depot is murderous. And over a hundred times the waste of Depot One is stored in the ground, there... Over a hundred times the danger.

SYMONDS

(now he's nervous)
Depot One burned itself out.

KOENIG

This Depot could go up! It could explode in the biggest blast that ever happened.

MURNEAU

(worriedly)
If it went up...if it did, there is no way of knowing the magnitude.

ON SYMONDS

Still he fights.

SYMONDS

Well...now let's look at the whole picture.. This is all guesswork, it seems to me.

ON KOENIG

KOENIG

(very near to rage)
Guesswork? You send this atomic garbage up here for years because it's the cheapest way to get rid of it, and the most political and you just shrug it off, don't even think about it, and now all this breaks loose and you talk about guesswork?

WIDE SHOT

CONTINUED:

92 CONTD. 2

SYMONDS
(trying to stem the
flow)
Koenig..

KOENIG
If that Depot goes up.....

SYMONDS
(his real concern)
It would affect the Meta probe...

KOENIG
(can't believe this)
Meta? It might have some over-
whelming effect upon this entire
installation. Did that ever
occur to you? I'm the Commander
here. I have the responsibility
for over three hundred people and
billions of dollars in equipment,
tens of years of work and development
to make this base damn near self-
sufficient.

Symonds is visibly nervous now.

SYMONDS
What..do you suggest? What can
be done?

BERGMAN
We can try to break the pile apart...
Rip up the fuel rods, destroy the
mass.

ON SYMONDS AIDE

The first and only contribution he makes...

SYMONDS AIDE
We could shoot the stuff up into
space. Get rid of it that way.

Camera widens out...Koenig looks at him, with disgust.

KOENIG
Just as we got rid of it up here.

CONTINUED:

92 CONTD. 3

BERGMAN

If we could spread the mass over a dispersed enough area, we might have a chance...

SYMONDS

Then do that. Do it.

KOENIG

(to Bergman)

What's the time factor?

BERGMAN

Very poor. Very. And the computer can't help because we have no data to go on. None at all...But we have to try anyway.

CAMERA PANS about at the tense faces and finally, over to the screen. A kind of tremor shakes the ground..

ON BERGMAN AND KOENIG

They have seen it and know what it may mean. All is silence.

FADE OUT:

END ACT THREE

"THE VOID AHEAD"

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

93 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 93

The synthocrete caps which have covered the waste disposal caverns in previous shots have now been ripped aside and they lie about the area, overturned and broken. Now much bigger holes in the moon surface have been revealed, and inside these are stored hundreds of blocks of atomic waste. The whole area is now floodlit to the full, and above one of the gaping holes hovers a specially adapted lifting MTU. The passenger compartment has been removed, leaving only the girder framework connecting the main motors and the Command Module. Suspended from this framework a cable runs down to the surface, and down into the waste store. On the end is a remotely controlled grab which now disappears into the hole in the ground.

94 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE. 94

The Co-pilot watches closely his monitor screen, on which is a close shot of the grab going down towards one of the waste blocks. He operates a remote control grip, manoeuvring the grab towards the block.

ON THE SCREEN

95 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 95

The grab settles over a waste block, closes and starts to lift it.

96 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE. 96

The pilot blasts the main engines.

97 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 97

The MTU rears up and swoops off over the site, with the waste block hanging from the cable beneath it.

Another MTU comes into shot to take its place over the waste store.

98 EXT. MOON SURFACE. SFX. 98

An MTU drops a waste block into a small crater.
Clouds of moondust. The MTU swoops away.

99 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE. 99

Koenig sits at his desk. Vorkonen stands before him,
making a report.

VORKONEN

Contingency plan "B" has been put
into effect. All hardware on Manual
Over-ride. Back-up systems checked.
Deep stores doors lowered to shock
levels...

Koenig hits a button on his desk, and turns round in
his chair. The wall which divides his office from
Central Control divides and slides right back.
Koenig is now standing in front of the console from
which he directs operations in the Control Room. Here,
there is tense, concentrated activity. Commissioner
Symonds is watching, as the Main Mission staff go
about their work.

KOENIG

(hits a button)

Okay - let's see it.

ON THE SCREEN

100 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 100

An MTU rips another block from a waste store and swoops
away with it. Another MTU comes to take its place.

101 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL. 101

Symonds hastens up to Koenig, calling, with almost
manic belief..

SYMONDS

It's working. It's working fine.

KOENIG

(keeping his contempt in)
They have a hundred more to disperse...
Commissioner.

CUT TO:

102 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 102

An MTU rips off the cap from another waste store. Clouds of moondust settle. The sinister blocks of waste are revealed below.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Another MTU, grab ready, hovers over the store. The grab goes down.

103 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE. 103

The Co-pilot operates the grab. Pilot calls into mike.

PILOT

Number twenty-six...dispersing
to Grid C-9.

104 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 104

The MTU lifts up from the store, but turns too quickly. The swinging block shatters against the rim of the hole. Clouds of dust.

105 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE. 105

Co-pilot turns to Pilot with a flash of nervous anger.

CO-PILOT

Steady....!

106 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 106

CLOSE SHOT

The slightly damaged block swings ominously at the end of the cable.

107 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE. 107

The doors to the Control Room are open, but a meeting of Section Chiefs has been taking place in the office. Murneau, Ouma, Helena, and Catani are here.

KOENIG

I want the C.A.I. fed with
everything possible, constantly.

OUMA

We're doing that.

CONTINUED:

107 CONTD.

MURNEAU

We've had module failure on two lift units, but Repair Section has them under control.

HELENA

There's been nothing unusual in Medical. That Tech. who went into shock is still indecisive.

KOENIG

We're all indecisive...except maybe Commissioner Symonds ...

(turns to Catani)

At least the Probe ship's out of trouble, up there in the Space Dock.

CATANI

Should I get up there with it, sir?

KOENIG

No. But you can get up in orbit and keep an eye on us from there.

(turns to Murneau)

Can you spare a ship?

MURNEAU

There're two or three we haven't had time to convert.

KOENIG

(to Catani)

Okay. Start now.

(he pushes his chair back)

That's it. Thank you.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As everyone moves out of the room, except Helena, who hangs back. Meanwhile, Koenig calls into his commlock.

KOENIG

What do we have on levels?

108 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

108

At the central console are Bergman and Tech. Sabatini. She calls..

CONTINUED:

108 CONTD.

SABATINI

Heat level holding. Magnetic
level the same. No movement.

BERGMAN

(almost to himself)
That's what worries me.

109 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE.

109

He becomes aware, suddenly that Helena has not gone.
He looks up at her, shakes his head.

KOENIG

Holding...so far.

HELENA

(quietly)
What are the chances of the M.D.A.
going up?

KOENIG

Bergman calculates one in three
point four.

HELENA

Better than the other way around.

KOENIG

(smiles wryly)
He's also careful to say he doesn't
know all the factors.
(a beat)
I owe you an apology.

TWO SHOT. CLOSE

Helena shrugs now...

HELENA

The illness was completely unknown.
It's hard to deal with that.

KOENIG

Maybe...But that's what we get paid
to do up here.

CONTINUED:

109 CONTD.

HELENA

(looks at him, with a
small smile)
That sounds a little bit like a
recruiting poster for an Alpha
Base job.

KOENIG

Does it? Well, look what you did.
You tried to deal with it. You
gave us a warning. I'm grateful
for that.

CUT TO:

110 EXT. LAUNCH PAD. SFX.

110

An MTU blasts off.

111 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE.

111

Catani is at the controls, and calls into mike.

CATANI

MTU 4 calling in to Base.

COMM UNIT. (FILTER)

Call in, Four.

CATANI

(calling in)
Blastoff complete.. Travel plot
computed and programmed. I'll
hit orbit in eight minutes.

He clicks off..goes back to controls.

CUT TO:

112 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX.

112

An MTU hovers. It lets down a line.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The grab closes round the block and begins to lift.

113 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

113

Bergman is tensely watching the main screen which reproduces what we have just seen.

ON SCREEN

114 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX.

114

CLOSE ON. The block of material. But this time a small blue flash seems to come from it.

115 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

115

Bergman stares, not certain of what he has seen.

ON SYMONDS

He is more sure of himself now, takes Koenig away from the control console back into his office.

SYMONDS

All levels are holding steady.
We're going to lick this.

KOENIG

I'm glad you think so.

SYMONDS

(comes closer)

Now we come to the real business...

Koenig looks at him astonished.

SYMONDS

...the practical side. How we handle it so far as Earth is concerned... what we say; who we invite up here for first-hand looks.

KOENIG

I don't give a damn who you invite. All I care about is that there's something to invite them to.

SYMONDS

You're letting off steam. Fine. That's all right with me. But, we have other responsibilities, you and I...

CONTINUED:

115 CONTD.

KOENIG

... Not to the politicians...
not to the monkeys in dress suits.
Commissioner, there are people
dead..There are Techs out there,
dealing with fantastic heat levels...
we're breaking our backs and all you
can do is run true to form...Wheeling
and dealing...

He stops because a flash has caught his eye from the
screen of the Communications Post which carries the
same picture of the operation as the Main screen in
the Control Room.

ON THE SCREEN

116 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 116

A waste block flashes jagged light as it hangs at the
end of a grab line from the MTU.

117 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL. 117

Bergman and the others watch the screen, shocked.

ON THE SCREEN

118 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 118

The waste block emits arcs of light reaching way up
to the MTU which plummets, out of control to the
surface.

119 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE. 119

Koenig jumps up and runs back to the Control Room.

KOENIG

It's going up...get those crew-
ships away...

ON COMMUNICATIONS TECHNICIAN

She shouts into a mike.

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNICIAN

Crew ships...leave the area...get
away...Crew ships...get away...

- 120 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 120
- Two MTU's with blocks on the ends of their lines, release them. The blocks smash back on the surface. The MTU's swoop up and away.
- ANOTHER ANGLE
- Jagged flashes of light leap up from the open waste holes.
- HIGHER ANGLE
- Great arcs of light flash up from all over the area. And now, with a tremendous roar, the ground begins to erupt. Blast.
- 121 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2 DEPOT BUILDING. SFX. 121
- As the ground beneath it erupts the buildings shower up into the sky.
- 122 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX. 122
- An MTU is caught in the blast. It flips right over and drops out of frame.
- 123 EXT. MOON SURFACE. SFX. 123
- An MTU hurtles into the edge of a crater and disintegrates.
- 124 INT. CONTROL ROOM. 124
- It is rocked by shock waves. It shudders. Everyone tries to stand, falls.
- 125 EXT. ALPHA. SFX. 125
- LOW ANGLE.
- The base hit by shockwaves. Transmitting and receiving antennae collapse.
- ANOTHER ANGLE
- An unstressed building falls in. Fragments of it blast out into the vacuum.
- 126 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX. 126
- More spot explosions flash across the area.

127 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX.

127

A segment of the Moon. An MTU in orbit. Pulses of light flash out from behind the Moon.

CATANI

(into his mike)

Alpha...Alpha...Can you read me.

Alpha...this is Captain Catani.

128 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

128

Still shaking, but from somewhere can be heard Catani's voice.

CATANI (O.S.)

Alpha...How are you down there?

Alpha... Alpha...

129 EXT. NUCLEAR DISPOSAL AREA 2. SFX.

129

HIGH ANGLE

A build of explosions now. Pockets first, but they increase in number and intensity, until suddenly the whole area, and the screen, is whited out in a terrific explosion.

130 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE.

130

ON CATANI

His face, and the whole of the interior of the Command Module are lit by the flash from the explosion. He turns away, shocked and temporarily blinded.

CATANI

My God ... My God ...

131 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX.

131

LONG SHOT

The Moon, back lit by the explosion on the far side.

132 EXT. MOON SURFACE. STUDIO / SFX.

132

Two technicians working on cables on the rim of the crater around Alpha are hurled to the ground. They look up to see the pulsing light from over the horizon.

133 INT. TECHNICAL SECTION.

133

Suddenly it shivers. Things begin to fall. Four men inside suddenly fall to the ground.

134 INT. MEDICAL SECTION.

134

Doctor Fujita suddenly falls to the ground.

135 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

135

Some things shiver and fall. Some lights go out. And everyone inside suddenly falls. The Computer falls silent. Spot explosions. Short circuit fires.

ON KOENIG

On the ground, Helena is near him. Bergman near. Koenig tries to rise but can only get to his knees. He tries to push up, but cannot.

CAMERA WIDENS and we see others are unhurt but can only get to their knees.

HELENA

I can't.... get up...

KOENIG

I can't either...

The Computer starts again, but slowly.

AROUND KOENIG

He sniffs.

KOENIG

We still have atmosphere - but..

BERGMAN

(panting very hard)
Gravity control's been affected...
G forces are pushing us... down

KOENIG

It's like...pushing up against a ceiling.

BERGMAN

My...heart feels like a...lead weight inside.

CONTINUED:

135 CONTD.

He falls to the floor. Helena crawls to him.

HELENA

Don't expend energy...Don't
move....

ON KOENIG

He crawls, painfully to the Console. But cannot reach the switches. He reaches instead for his commlock.

KOENIG

Catani...Can you hear me? This is Commander Koenig. Our... gravity has been affected. Can you report on a visual sighting?

136 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE.

136

ON CATANI

He hears Koenig's voice.

KOENIG (O.S.)

Can you report on visual sighting?

CATANI

(into mike)

Commander.. that explosion...
It ripped a tremendous piece of
the moon away.

137 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

137

Catani's voice comes through. The crouching figures listen intensely.

CATANI (O.S.)

From the far side...just ripped
it away...

KOENIG

(shocked - into commlock)
Ripped us away?

CONTINUED:

137 CONTD.

CATANI (O.S.)

All of Mare Cantabrium is gone.
All of the Great Lunar Sea...All
of the Alta Mountains... I can
see it from up here... It's
impossible to believe...

138 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE. 138

Catani looks out at the Moon below.

139 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX. 139

P.O.V. CATANI. He looks down, now, at the far side
of the Moon. The whole area of the Nuclear Disposal
Area is still pulsating with explosions and covered
with a plasma cloud.

140 INT. MTU COMMAND MODULE. 140

Catani catches sight of something else which
surprises him. He looks out in a different direction.

141 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX. 141

P.O.V. Catani.

The Moon in the foreground of the shot. In the
distance, Earth, slowly moving away.

CATANI (O.S.)

The Moon has been pulled out of
orbit... It's moving in a different
direction.

142 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL. 142

As Catani talks:

CATANI (O.S.)

It's a fantastic sight...

KOENIG

We're out of orbit. The gravity
force is unbalanced.

HELENA

It must be terrible..back home.

CONTINUED:

142 CONTD.

ON BERGMAN

He clutches Koenig. Speaks in laboured tones.

BERGMAN

Can you programme a change in G.
inputs?

KOENIG

We just have low back-up power.

BERGMAN

It may be enough.... Try raising
the levels by two... Do it quickly...
The G forces are bearing down on
our blood flow.

ANOTHER ANGIE

As Koenig crawls to the Computer Control... Camera
with him. He reaches it.

Camera holds on him as he inches his way to the
keyboard input, slowly, painfully, he presses four
keys. And grabs, holds on, breathing heavily.
Waits.

WIDE. The central control.

Lights now seem to brighten. The hum of the computer
machinery increases, but is still low.

ON BERGMAN

He tries to stand now...finds he can...camera widens...
everyone sees this is happening. Now, they all,
warily, try to stand, find they can.

ON HELENA

As she stands...

ON KOENIG

As he stands now too...

ON OUMA

Rising...he moves to the board... looks, calls.

CONTINUED:

142 CONTD. 2

OUMA

We have six point three gravity
output now...

WIDE SHOT

BERGMAN

We're compensating.

Koenig, himself now, takes command, calls to the
Commun Tech.

KOENIG

(calls to Comm Tech)
See what contact we have.

The Comm Tech goes to the console, throws a switch.
There is a hum...

COMM TECH

The auxiliary system's working..
(calls)
This is Central Control - will
all sections report in?

143 EXT. ALPHA. SFX.

143

Low angle.. showing some damage...antennae collapsed
minor outlying building damage. Twisted travel tubes.
Over this...

VOICE (O.S.)

Security Section, we have contact...
Video system gone, though...

VOICE (O.S.)

T and E. Section... We have contact.
Female Technician hurt by falling
machine.

VOICE (O.S.)

Maintenance has contact.. We
have power here, but only sixty
percent...

144 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

144

VOICE (O.S.)

This is stores... Some of the
freeze power is off, but we're
checking it now.

CONTINUED:

144 CONTD.

AROUND KOENIG, BERGMAN AND HELENA

Koenig is amazed bu happy.

KOENIG

I think we've come through it.

CLOSE. A COMM TECH.

He has been punching buttons and now almost shouts
as a screen lights up..

COMM TECH.

I'm getting Video. We're
bouncing off the Mars satellite!

ANGLE WIDENS...as everyone crowds around..

ON THE SCREEN.

145 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX.

145

As we see the Moon now... from P.O.V. satellite, as
it moves slowly, inexorably away from Earth.

146 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

146

As everyone reacts as they watch this never before
seen sight...and know they are watching themselves.

ON KOENIG

KOENIG

Can we get long range positions?

ANOTHER ANGLE

As the Comm. Tech. tries to turn dials and bring a
longer picture in. Finally, he does... And the
picture changes.

ON THE SCREEN

147 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX.

147

The moon in relation to the earth gleaming below and
away from it. And the moon is moving on a line away
from the earth, more obviously now, in this long shot.

148 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL..

148

ON KOENIG AND BERGMAN

Koenig is shocked. Bergman peers...

KOENIG

We're moving away...

BERGMAN

(quietly)

Yes, we're losing earth. We've
been blasted loose...

KOENIG

The Space Dock.

BERGMAN

Gone. Certainly. And the ship.

CAMERA ANGLE WIDENS...We become aware of everyone
knowing, feeling doom hanging over their heads...
Murneau moves closer to them.

MURNEAU

Can we...abandon?

Koenig hesitates. He turns to Ouma.

KOENIG

I want a Comp. A. One decision
on Contingency Plan D-Twelve.

OUMA

(looks at him worriedly)

Commander — the power is low.

KOENIG

(angrily)

Try it. Damn it, we don't have
any time to waste.

Ouma nods, moves to the Computer input desk.

AT COMPUTER DESK

OUMA

Get a readout on Plan D-Twelve.
Percentage of success possibility
and recommendation.

CONTINUED:

148 CONTD.

The Operator looks at him, says nothing..types the code into the machine.

ON THE COMPUTER

As it operates

ON KOENIG AND BERGMAN

Knowing what this means. Into the frame comes Helena. She understands what this is about as well..Angle Widens..As Koenig leans forward to look at the readout chattering from the machine. He reads it, stands up.. says nothing.. Bergman leans over to read it

INSERT. PRINTOUT...

Boldly printed... "INSUFFICIENT DATA -- HUMAN DECISION"

WIDE SHOT

No one says anything. They look at Koenig...he hesitates and moves to his office.

149 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE.

149

As he comes in..Symonds sits in a chair here, totally dazed, wiping some blood from his temple. He doesn't look at Koenig...Koenig barely glances at him...now is the time for final decision. Koenig stands at his desk. Above it is a beautiful photo, huge..of the earth, in space...he looks at it..he sags now.

ON KOENIG

He is agonizing over this...slams his fist down - but finally, he knows he must decide. And he does...he moves to the door.

150 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

150

As Koenig comes into it. It is so quiet one can hear a pin drop, save for the hum of the Computer. Camera closes in on him.

KOENIG

At this moment, it appears that we have been cut off from our mother planet...As we are, we have power, environment and the...

CONTINUED:

150 CONTD.

KOENIG (Contd.)
possibility of survival. If we
try to improvise an escape back to
earth, without travelplots, without
full resources, I think we'll fail...
so...in my judgement, we don't try.

ANGLE WIDENS again as the implications sink in.

HELENA
Are you saying we're here - we'll
die here, we'll never see home
again?

BERGMAN
Doctor, we have come through this..
catastrophe, by some minor miracle.
We are alive still although moving
into an unknown void.

KOENIG
And very lucky to be able to
survive.

HELENA
Can we?

KOENIG
We'll find out.

Suddenly, there is a speedup in the tempo of the hum.
The tape machines move faster.

ON A COMM TECH.

As another screen near him lights up...He calls
excitedly.

COMM TECH.
Power's up -- it's almost full.

WE ZOOM BACK FROM HIM, PAN AROUND THE ROOM, AND WE
END ON BERGMAN who stands with Koenig and Helena.

BERGMAN
(slight irony--and yet)
Ah--perhaps God has spoken to us.

And now, as everyone, decision made, starts to put
things to rights, we....

FADE OUT:

END ACT FOUR

"THE VOID AHEAD"

EPILOGUE

FADE IN:

151 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

151

The Communications Technician is calling, pressing key after key.

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNICIAN

Earthbase, this is Alpha...Earthbase,
this is Alpha ... Can you read us,
Earth?

(he waits...no answer)
We're not getting there ... we're
not hitting Earth...

ON THE SCREEN

152 EXT. SPACE SKY. SFX.

152

A shot from the satellite. Moon in the foreground,
moving away from Earth. Between them is a vast,
iridescent plasma cloud left by the explosion.

153 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

153

ON KOENIG

He watches the screen, wordlessly. He turns to go back
to his office.

154 INT. KOENIG'S OFFICE.

154

Bergman is here - jotting down some figures. As
Koenig comes in and shakes his head.

BERGMAN

We must be rushing away at an
enormous speed.

Helena now comes in through the open door.

HELENA

It's so very hard to believe...
Things are somewhat normal - yet...

CONTINUED:

154 CONTD.

BERGMAN

Reality dictates that we accept
the present as our only possible
existence.

KOENIG

I don't accept that. Not for the
rest of our lives - artificial
gravity, environment - all the rest.

BERGMAN

I see little you can do.

KOENIG

We have operating ships, a working
system...

HELENA

We have ourselves.

KOENIG

We can go out and search for some
place compatible with our anatomy.

HELENA

Someplace in the Universe there must
be another earth, must be.

Their attention is attracted by the screen on the
Communications Post which begins to flicker.

ON THE SCREEN

A newsreel...of Earth ... Tidal waves, buildings
crashing over ... much damage. Over this an
Announcer's voice.

ON KOENIG

As the pictures materialise, he is excited and moves
forward.

KOENIG

It's an Earth transmission.

ON THE SCREEN

Earth images continue.

CONTINUED:

154 CONTD. 2

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

...totally unforeseen accident on the lunar surface has caused very serious repercussions here on earth. The gravity disruption, the earthquakes in the United States along the San Andreas fault and in Yugoslavia as well as Southern France has caused enormous damage to property and life...

KOENIG

If we can get this, maybe we're getting closer to earth, not farther away.

But now, the picture and sound both begin to flicker - fade.

ANNOUNCER

The International Lunar Commission with it's new Chairman is in executive conference, at this moment, deciding what steps might be taken, if any, to rescue the three hundred men and women of the Alpha Base Project...little hope is held however, that there are any survivors, even now... For a short time it was thought...

And now the screen is dead entirely and the audio is gone as well...Bergman, Helena and Koenig look at each other.

The last earth link has gone. And suddenly, over the audio comes the unmistakable sound of the Meta Signals...quite loud...quite clear...seeping in.

ON KOENIG

As he reacts...

ON BERGMAN AND HELENA...

Looking at each other in surprise..CAMERA ANGLES BACK as the signals continue...Koenig looks at them..

KOENIG

Maybe there.

He moves to the Central Control.

155 INT. CENTRAL CONTROL.

155

As Koenig comes in, followed by Helena...And there is the picking up of the activity...Over this Meta sounds and...

BERGMAN (O.S.)

Alpha Base. September 9, 1999...

Meta signals increase. Yes.

Maybe there.

FADE OUT:

THE END