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Deep Impact

By Bruce Joel Rubin

Altair, Alpha Centauri, Sirius.

Matt Shepherd?

It's just a party, and he asked me.

He's really nice.

Yeah, to you, maybe.

You guys getting some
good work done over here?

- Yeah.

- Yeah.

Yeah, sounds like it.

What's the bright one?

Mizar. It's a double star.

Good. The one next to it?

Uh...

Alcor.

Good, Biederman,
and the one next to that?

Uh...

I don't know.

It's Megrez.

I don't think so.

Well, you just said you didn't know.

Well, it's not Megrez.

It's something else.

Look.

It's south about 10 degrees.

It's probably a satellite.

Let's uh, take another picture.

We'll send it to Dr Wolf.

Yes, sir.

- It's Megrez.

- Not Megrez.

It is.

It's not.

It is.

Mario Sereni And Nicolai Gedda

Well, hello there, little fella.

Do I know you?

Where are you going

in such a hurry?

And there.

Come on.

Damn it!

Biederman.

Come on, you miserable piece of crap.
Come on, come on.
You have reached
If you know the extension
of the person you're calling...
Ow, Jesus!
press that number now.
Damn it!
This is relating
to the recall
of American troops
from abroad.
Tragedy struck today as a charter aircraft
carrying an army unit
returning from duty in Japan
crashed this morning...
says Secretary of the Treasury Rittenhouse
is resigning because his wife is sick.
So who passed Rittenhouse the hemlock?
AFL/CIO wanted him off the
Council of Economic Advisors
for not supporting the pension bill,
and the president's going
to need labor next fall.
And State's still fuming
Pentagon is unhappy with his
readiness reduction proposals.
Greenspan dislikes him.
Christ, who didn't this guy piss off?
No wonder the wife's sick.
She's not sick, she's a drunk.
How do you know that?
Mike Woodward over at Treasury.
Mrs Rittenhouse started
drinking a couple of years ago
when her husband had a series of affairs.
Stepped it up last summer after
their son died of leukemia.
You want to do something on
the price that wives pay?
Mike Woodward? Wife, 3 kids?
He's been after me for months.
So I threw him a breakfast
and hit him up about Rittenhouse.

Bob Campbell's leaving,
so midnight Saturday
anchor shift is opening up.

Why would I want
to give up the White House
for a graveyard weekend--

No, no, no,
not for you, for me.

No.

Beth.

We'll talk about this later.
Very calm. The president will be
back from Camp David tomorrow.

Business news, Ira.

Just keep working on Rittenhouse.
Maybe Mike's available for dinner.

Do the usual research,
background information.

OK, that's it.

Beth, wait.

Listen, Beth, what if
it wasn't permanent?

Oh, God, Jenny, please.

Honey, this is how it works.

You've done 2 years of research.

Now do 3 as a segment producer.

another 2 in some
cholera-ridden hellhole.

And then I'll quit
if they don't give you
a weekend anchor shot.

Hello, Caitlin. There you are.

Are you protecting me
or just holding me back?

- Yes.

- OK.

Rittenhouse tape and text

on my desk by 4:

and we'll drop in the reverses for the 5.

OK.

At this moment right now--

Thank you--

The pretty little girls

are walking down the aisle.
They're spreading flowers.
The twins. What are their names?
Emma and Susanna.
They're walking down the aisles,
and they're dropping rose petals,
and everyone's smiling at them,
and now she's walking down the aisle.
Yes, and she stands beside him.
And the priest says, "Dearly beloved--"
Judge.
The judge says, "Blah, blah, blah."
"Sickness and health, blah, blah, blah."
Do you, Jason Lerner, take
Chlorine Whatchamacallit?"
Mom, Chloe.
What did I say?
You said... you said "Chlorine."
Her name's Chloe...
Oh.
Well, it's still a terrible name.
Jason says, "Lie, lie, lie,
till death do us part,
blah, blah, blah,"
and she says yes,
and he says yes,
and it's kissy, kissy, kissy,
and congratulations.
Jenny, you now have a new stepmother
who is 2 years older than you.
The check.
Well, anyway,
as much as I'd like to stay here
and get silly with you, Mom,
I can't. I gotta go.
I know, I know, I know.
I'm sorry about this.
We'll get over it.
I love you.
I love you, too.
Be good.
I was with the secretary
since he's been governor of Connecticut.
I came to Washington with him.

I moved here because I was
dedicated to his career.
I trusted the man...
and then he fucked me.
He what?
No, I didn't have sex with him.
I should say I didn't
have sex with him,
but somebody sure did.
It was about to come out, so he resigned.
But because I was hired from
outside the government pool,
I don't get conveyed
to the next secretary,
so now I'm out a job...
Because he couldn't
keep his hands off women.
Do you have proof?
He thinks he was being so clever.
Get a private phone line
Nobody else could answer it.
I picked it up once.
Said hello, and it's nobody home.
It rings, he shuts the door.
Why not hang a sign?
Do you have a name?
This is what I get for talking to the press.
I'm selling my soul right now.
I can feel it.
I can feel it.
I name a name and get
someone into trouble.
So you do have a name.
Just a first name.
Oh, my God. I'm going to say it.
Ellie.
Ellie. Nothing else?
I think the president knows about it, too.
Overheard the secretary
talking to him about her.
Isn't Washington sick?
Hi.
How you doing?
Can I help you?

Well, actually,
we're looking for your mom.
Is she around?
My mom's sick.
She's not here.
Gosh, I love boats.
Are you going on a trip?
Yeah.
That's exciting. Looks like a long trip, huh?
So, listen, do you know where you're going?
She's going back to the house.
Hey, you want to stop that?
Lily, please.
Lily, that's a pretty name.
Lily.
Do as I say. Go on.
If we could just get a minute of your time.
What do you want from me?
We'd like to talk about your resignation.
My wife is sick.
She's in the hospital.
That's why I resigned.
Everybody knows this.
We could talk about your wife,
or we could just talk about Ellie.
Turn the camera off.
If you want to talk to me, turn it off.
We know everything.
Nobody knows everything.
Well, we know about
the secret phone lines
and the whispered calls to the president
and about a secretary of the Treasury
who's kept his entire
department in the dark
about what he's really doing--
about a cover story about his resignation
that just fell through.
I mean, sir, You want me to go on?
And you're just gonna break it?
Well, that's what we do for a living.
Well, congratulations.
You now have
the biggest story in history.

Good luck to you.

Personally...

I think it's a mistake to run the story,
but hey, what the hell?

Why not?

What difference does anything make any more?

Look.

I know you're just a reporter,
but you used to be a person, right?

I wanted to be with my family.

Can you understand that?

OK, Secretary of the Treasury

Alan Rittenhouse

resigns because of a mistress named "Ellie".

"The biggest story in history"?

What an ego.

Now, if it was the president--

Whoa, whoa, whoa.

The president has a mistress named Ellie,

and Rittenhouse pretends

that he's having the affair

and takes the fall and resigns,

and the president buys him a yacht?

Son of a bitch.

Oh, shit.

Oh, shit.

Right! OK, OK!

Oh, God. Oh, God.

FBI. If you would, please, ma'am.

What do I do with my car?

We'll take care of your car.

Just step back to my car.

- Get her car here.

- Got it

Let's go.

Would you come this way please?

Morton Entrekin, Ms Lerner.

I'm expected back at MSNBC at 6:00.

I think I should be there.

People knew about the Manhattan

Project, you know,

and they kept it a secret.

That was just the creation

of the atom bomb.

Hmm.

Ms Lerner, Tom Beck.

I understand you've come
into some information.

Ms Lerner was just expressing
her lack of enthusiasm
for matters of national security where
journalistic competitiveness is at stake.

Mr President, I'm not interested
in using Ellie to further my career.

What do you know about E.L.E.?

I know you should have picked a
better cover story than a sick wife.

See?

What did I tell you?

We'd always thought
the deadline for going public
was the publication of the budget,
since we've spent more
money than we can hide.

The budget comes out in 2 weeks.

I don't suppose I could convince
you to sit on this for 2 weeks.

No such thing as 2 weeks
in the news business.

And I can't appeal to your sense
of what's in the nation's best interest?

I always thought the truth was
in the nation's best interest.

You want to hold her?

What if we go public in 48 hours?

Now that's doable, isn't it?

That would be very difficult, Mr President.

Morton, if she knows, how long can it be
before CNN or the Post breaks the story?

This was never gonna be a secret
as long as you wanted it to be.

Give us 2 days, Ms Lerner.

You'll get second row, centre, at
the White House press conference.

Now, from what I know of your
career, that's a promotion.

I want exclusivity.

Now, listen, young lady.

This is a presidential favor.
I'm letting you go because
I don't want another headache.
And I'm trusting you because I know
what this can do for your career.
It might seem that we have each other
over the same barrel, Ms Lerner,
but it just seems that way.
I want--
Want?
May I...
May I have the first question?
We'll see you Tuesday,
Ms Lerner.
Come on, come on.
E.L.E., E.L.E.
Paleontology?
Paleontology?
What's paleontology
have to do with anything?
Come on.
Hey.
Hey.
Look who's working late.
How's Rittenhouse going?
No sign of the wife yet.
Is she missing?
No. We're still working on it.
We'll get there.
I know, it's a dull story.
Next time we'll get you
something more exciting.
Great.
Are you OK?
- Yeah.
- Want to come to dinner with us?
- I can't. I can't. I got my plans.
- Well, OK. We'll see you tomorrow.
Thank you.
Ah, here she is.
Jenny.
Hello.
Hi, Chloe.
Would you like some champagne, miss?

Martini...big.
I missed you.
I mean we missed you yesterday.
I must say, I'm...
I'm disturbed that you didn't come
to our wedding.
Jason, you promised.
I know I promised,
but it was a beautiful event,
and I missed her.
You should have been there.
The twins, they were
running around like mad
and throwing flowers.
It was wonderful, especially Emma.
You know, the little one.
She loves you.
It was beautiful.
She missed you, too.
All right.
This is from us for you.
Are you not going to open it?
I knew she wouldn't...
You can exchange them
if you don't like them.
Jenny, I know this is hard.
I just want you to be happy.
Happy.
Well,
I would like to propose
a toast to happiness
and to--
Are we going to have an evening or not?
Jenny, I know that you hate me.
I know that you have terrible things
that you want to say to me.
You have to get over it.
Life goes on.
Life goes on? OK.
What's so funny?
Life...
We'll see.
What's so funny about "life goes on"?
Life going on?

I don't think it's funny that life goes on.

Dad, you need to get

back together with Mom.

She's all alone in the world,

and she needs you right now OK?

Jenny.

I just got married.

I know, I know, and I'm sorry.

Chloe, this has nothing to do with you.

Well, it has to do something

for me, for Christ's sake.

This is insane.

- I have to apologize for my daughter.

- That is not your fault.

I'm sorry. I have to go.

I know you think I'm a bad person.

I'm really not.

And I don't hate you.

I just--I gotta go.

'Cause for her, it doesn't--

Excuse me.

Jenny. Hey.

What are you doing here?

Uh, yeah.

Did Stuart send you here

without telling me?

No.

If Stuart thinks he can push

me out of the White House--

Ms Lerner. Hi, Beth.

Right this way.

I've got you right down here.

Excuse me, please.

OK.

He'll find you for the first question.

Then you're on your own.

Hey, how are you?

Ladies and gentlemen.

Ladies and gentlemen, please

The president will begin

by addressing the nation.

Please hold your questions

until he's finished his remarks.

Ladies and gentlemen,

the President of the United States.

Hello, everybody.

- Mr President.

- Hello.

Good evening.

A few minutes ago

the United States ambassadors

to every country in the world

told the leaders of those nations

what I am about to tell you.

It's a bit complicated,

so it will take some time,

so I hope

you will bear with me,

hear what I have to say.

A little over a year ago,

Marcus Wolfand Leo Biederman,

working on a mountain top in Arizona...

Nobody say anything.

saw something in the night sky

that caused them great concern.

A comet.

But the comet was, well...

There was a remote possibility

that the comet was on a path

that could bring it into

direct contact with the Earth.

Now...

we get hit all the time

by rocks and meteors,

some of them the size of cars,

some no bigger than your hand.

But the comet we discovered

is the size of New York City.

From the north side

of Central Park to the Battery.

About 7 miles long.

Put another way,

this comet is larger than Mount Everest.

It weighs 500 billion tons.

Now, chances are...

Astrophysicists, geologists

and climatologists.

Where the hell

is Science?

Check with Tokyo, Tel Aviv.

I want everybody.

The Hale-Bopp stand-ups.

Graphics! I need graphics!

Comets begin far out in space.

They're what's left over

from the creation

of the solar system

after the planets were formed

billions of years ago.

These chunks

of space debris

are in an elongated orbit

around our sun,

but every now and then

one of them gets bumped

Like a billiard ball

on a pool table

and is knocked

into a different orbit.

If this comet continues

on its path around the sun

and keeps its present course,

sometime on August 16,

roughly a year from now,

there's a chance

that we might have impact.

So for the past 8 months,

the United States and Russia

have been building the largest

spaceship ever constructed.

It's being built in orbit

around the Earth.

And we call it the Messiah.

Right now a team of American astronauts and

one Russian are at Cape Canaveral in Florida.

In 2 months, they will leave

on the shuttle Atlantis

to board the Messiah.

This is the crew that will stop the comet.

I'd like the world to meet

some extraordinary people.

First is Mission Commander

Oren Monash.
Commander, would you
introduce us to your team?
I'd be honored, sir.
Pilot Andrea Baker.
Medical Officer Gus Partenza.
From Russia, nuclear specialist
Colonel Mikhail Tulchinsky.
Navigator Mark Simon
and Rendezvous Pilot
Spurgeon Tanner.
Hello,
Mr President.
Captain Tanner,
you flew 6 shuttle missions.
You were the last man to walk
on the moon, weren't you?
Yes, sir, but,
Oren here will be doing
most of the flying on this one.
I'll just be taking us down
to the comet's surface.
Well, it's good to know
we're going to have
your kind of experience up there, Captain.
Thank you, sir.
Godspeed to you all.
We're counting on you.
Thank you, sir.
Got Beijing, Rome,
Sao Paulo, Cairo, Berlin!
Does anyone know how big the one
was that killed all the dinosaurs?
Something majestic, mysterious,
with a fanfare for the intro
and a theme for the longer promos.
You want it hitting the goddam Earth?
Well, that's what he's saying.
Bring that up again.
It'll scare the shit out of them.
We will not tolerate any
disruption four way of life.
Our society will continue as normal.
Work will go on.

You will pay your bills.
There will be no hoarding.
There will be no sudden profiteering.
I'm freezing all wages, all prices.
What a bottle of water
cost you yesterday...
it will cost you tomorrow.
Now we'll take a few questions.
Mr President!
Ms Lerner.
Ahem.
Ahem. Uh, Jenny Lerner, M--MSNBC.
Jenny Lerner?
Son of a bitch.
Um, Mr President,
why wasn't this announcement
made sooner?
Well, until we knew
we could build the rocket
and the comet could be intercepted,
we saw no reason to alarm the planet.
- Sir!
- Mr President!
Do you have another question, Ms Lerner?
Yeah. Um...
Is--Is there a connection between the comet
and the recall of American troops from abroad?
Our fighting men and women are coming home
because we felt it prudent, in light
of domestic security concerns,
to have them available.
Although I certainly hope
we don't need to use them.
Next question.
Mr President!
Actually, Mr President,
if--just one final
question, sir. Um...
MSNBC has learned that
Secretary Rittenhouse
did not leave for the reasons
announced by your administration.
In fact, isn't it true, sir, that not
everyone in your administration

is convinced that the
Messiah will save us?
Secretary Rittenhouse served
his country with full devotion.
He resigned
for personal reasons.
Now, I can promise you this,
Ms Lerner, all of you,
everyone in this room and
everyone listening to my voice,
that at some point over the next 10 months,
all of us will entertain
our worst fears and concerns.
But I can also
promise you this.
Life will go on.
We will prevail.
Mr President!
Please!
Sally.
Sir, what is the comet's name?
The 2 scientists who found the comet
were killed in a car crash
while racing from their
observatory to alert the world.
So we named it for them.
Wolf-Biederman.
Leo Biederman, they said it again.
Leo, is he talking about you?
He is, isn't he?
Can you get that, please?
Janie, get the door.
Well, we have the technology to build the ship.
They have the technology
to make it go.
There's someone at
the door for you, Leo.
You've been watching live
coverage of President Tom Beck...
I can't believe this.
This is so weird.
- Dr Wolf from Astronomy Club?
- Yeah, I guess so.
I think it's really neat.

Nobody on our block discovered
the world was gonna end before.
He's still very much alive.
He's still alive, everyone.
He's right here,
and he's still alive.

OK?

Hey, Leo, cool!

As far as we know,
what happened was that Doctor Wolf
saw the comet in my photograph,
so he shared the discovery with me,
and then he was killed in that crash and
everything got mixed up in Washington,
so the president
thought I was dead, too.

- Leo!

- Leo!

Jasmine.

How does it feel having your name on it?
I don't want anyone to think
that I'm trying to take
something away from Dr Wolf,
because I'm not, but it's kind of cool.

- Leo!

- Leo!

Jason.

You know, you're gonna
have sex a lot more now
than anyone else in our class.

Really?

Thank you for your sexual
insight, Mr Thurman.

You can sit down now.

Famous people always get sex, Mr Perry.

That's the main reason
it's good to be famous.

Fruit--a reactor, bottle--a rocket, OK?

A nuclear reactor in space?

Yes.

Isn't that dangerous?

No, no, no. This is all Russian design.

Russian science.

Uh, the same people

who designed Chernobyl.
Chernobyl?
Chernobyl almost worked.
So what happens after you plant the bomb?
Well, we have 7 hours.
We're gonna put the bombs inside the comet.
I'm gonna follow these two.
I don't trust that combination.
After 7 hours, the 14-hour rotational cycle
of the comet spins.
We're gonna get married.
God knows I want
to marry you,
but the day I get back,
the last thing I'm gonna do
is step inside of a church.
I don't do churches well.
'Cause there's only 7 hours of darkness.
Then the sun starts hitting
the surface of the planet...
These are your orders.
Upon first entering Earth's atmosphere,
proceed immediately up the exterior
of the mother ship.
When the sun hits the surface,
there's gonna be explosive out gassings
that are very dangerous--
Gus, he's 7.
Brittany.
You boys were, what,
Yeah.
Now, you saw me go into space
I came back every time, didn't I?
Yeah.
Your mother and I used to play
a game when she was still alive.
Now, the game was,
if there was a chance
I might not be coming back,
she wouldn't say it,
and I wouldn't say it.
OK?
- Yes, sir.
- Yes, sir.

Hey, Fish.
How about a beer?
You remember my boys, don't you?
Steve and Dwight.
Of course I do.
Gentlemen, welcome to Houston.
Let me steal your old man for a second.
Can I take your picture, please?
OK.
Thank you.
So, what do you think of the crew?
Heroes all.
That's the finest group
I ever had the privilege
of working with.
Yeah, yeah.
Off the record, huh?
Well, they've been trained
in ways I'll never understand.
They're smarter and in better shape
than we ever were in the old days.
They're sober, serious.
I guess I'd be a little happier
about this whole thing
if I thought that any of them
were as scared as I am.
Well, they're not scared of dyin'.
They're just scared of looking bad on TV.
Now, look, I wish I'd been to the moon.
I got respect for everybody
who's gone to the moon,
but this mission ain't going to the moon.
That's right. Frank Gifford,
he was a great football
player in his time,
but if he played now,
he'd get his ass busted.
That's right.
All I'm saying is, the moon did not have
a rotational cycle of 14 hours.
I mean, we only have 7 hours of dark
when the sun's not up
to land on this thing.
It was light when he landed.

This is gonna be dark.
We're not gonna be able to see.
You can't see now, Gus.
Don't worry, don't worry, don't worry.
We what?
We can do it.
No, no, no. Sit down.
I woke up this morning,
and I realized...
none of you want me here.
You don't even really know
who I am, which is OK.
I walked on the moon,
but I didn't belong to you.
I belonged to your daddies.
Now, if I ask you
to ask your daddies
what I meant to them,
to explain to you what I'm doing here,
that's only gonna make things worse.
So...what do we do?
You haven't trained for this mission.
We respect you.
I appreciate that.
But you're here...you're here
because the powers that be
think we need a familiar
face on this trip.
You're here for public relations.
No, no. I'm here because
the powers that be
know that I'm the only
person on this mission
who's ever landed on the moon.
And I have 500 landings
on aircraft carriers.
We've trained on--
On flight simulators.
Right?
I mean, this is not a video game, son.
It really isn't.
It really isn't. No.
We are go for auto-sequence start.
Atlantis' 4 on-board computers

now have primary control
of all the vehicle's critical functions.
OK, all flight controllers,
we're at T-minus 30 seconds
and counting.
Let's take a close look.
APUs look good,
LOX and LH2 are pressurized.
We're go for auto-sequence.
Roger, Jerry.
Good luck and Godspeed, Atlantis.
Thanks, Mitch.
3, 2, 1 .
Propelled by 500,000 pounds of liquid fuel,
the shuttle crew heads toward
their initial destination.
When the crew enters the Messiah,
they will find a payload
of 8 nuclear devices
that will eventually be
used to blow up the comet.
The Messiah itself will be powered
by an experimental
nuclear propulsion system
that was originally created
for a very different purpose.
That program was called Orion.
Now, with the help
of Russian engineers,
a technology designed to propel
weapons of mass destruction
will power the ship
that will intercept
the greatest threat
our planet has ever faced.
Orion burn...
in 10, 9,
OK, Beth, White House reactions.
Marianne, the whole world watching.
We have enough
satellite space?
Tim, Mission Control in Houston.
Ira, the science guys lined up?
If they got a Ph.D., we own them.

All right, this is the most important story four lives. Let's not muck it up. Stuart, what about me?

- You're on the anchor desk.
- Whoa!

And you could have been there a lot sooner. What are you talking about? You know what I'm talking about. Don't ever hold back a story from me again. Messiah, Houston. Transfer trajectory is go. We'll cancel MCC-1 . You're go to configure for coast. Roger, Houston, we're looking good here. Jesus, that's big. Holy shit. Wow. Sweet mother of God. All circuit breakers are open. Master arm is off. Roger. And the detonator system is safe. Messiah, Houston. Stand by for an uplink of the final mole coordinates. Confirm when complete. Wilco, Houston. Hey, how's it comin'?

Loading first nuke now.
R-dot 3, 5-X, 2-Y.
R-dot point 3...3-X,
Go for auto trajectory.
We're there.

- Residuals are mulled.
- Disengage Orion.

Orion disengaged. You're on bi-prop. This is a special presentation of MSNBC News with Jenny Lerner. Good evening.

Sometime in the next hour,
the Messiah mission will
enter its most critical phase:
the interception of Wolf-Biederman
and the setting of the nuclear devices
that will deflect it off its
collision course with Earth.
But first, Captain Spurgeon Tanner
will have to guide the spacecraft
through the blizzard of rocks, sand, and ice
that make up the comet's tail, or coma.
The crew will have to complete
its work before the sun rises.
Sublimator looks good, Mick.
Disengaging auto now.
I'm eyeballs out
from here on in.
How come that doesn't
make me feel any better?
I heard that.
Light's on.
Camera's on.
On the Mississippi River
in Mark Twain's time,
there were riverboat pilots
who only knew a few miles of the river.
I mean, conditions changed so much,
you couldn't know the whole trip.
Floods, sandbars, fallen logs--
It was all a riverboat pilot could do was to
know his little piece of the puzzle.
So for the next few hours,
this is my ship.
We start our approach.
are images from cameras
mounted inside the cargo bay
of the Messiah.
Now, these images are delayed
by approximately 20 seconds,
due to the distance
they must travel.
OK, you can see that the image
is breaking up a bit.
Uh, Houston is prepared

for this.

They've informed us that
due to the uncertain make-up
of the comet's coma,
they're unsure whether or not
transmission will be possible.

OK, now, now, it ap-appears
we're losing reception here.

OK, we've--we've
lost picture now.

But we will stay on the air.

We'll stay with you
through all of this.

Dap is in descent.

Roger, descent.

Oh, my God.

Look at these. They're the size of houses.

Yeah, I know.

I see.

Jesus Christ.

Cabin press, 5.7

Negative guidance errors.

Whoa!

Use your primary thrusters.

Primary thrusters.

What's the descent rate?

Fire tether pitons.

Pitons fired.

She's leveling out.

Depressurizing bay.

Opening payload doors.

Don't let that little bit of gravity
down there go to your heads.

OK.

Start the clock.

If all is going according to schedule,
the astronauts should
now be placing the moles
on the comet surface.

The moles are, well,
they're what they sound like.

They are drilling machines that
burrow to a depth of 100 meters,
where they wait to be detonated.

Each one carries
a 5,000 kiloton warhead.
How's our time?
It's getting tight.
It's taking too long.
Yup.
What happens if they do not get off
the comet's surface in time?
The sun striking the comet
will cause the temperature
to rise 350 degrees in just a few minutes
and activate the high-speed gas jets.
Well, if that happens, it will be
like trying to work in a minefield.
Mark, what's your mole 4 readout?
Mole 4 running true at 75 feet.
Son of a bitch.
What?
It's stuck.
Try backing it up.
What's your depth?
Is that enough?
No. That'll just break
pieces off the surface.
That's not deep enough.
Yeah, Fish, I know that's not deep enough.
I'm going in.
- Oren, no.
- No, I'm gonna see if I can free it up
Stand by, tether attached.
All right, I gotcha.
Oren, suit pressure, 3.5
Come on, come on.
How's my time?

23:

Another 6 minutes, they won't
have time to get back to us.
Blow the tethers.
Let's go get 'em.
If we go after them,
we may not have enough fuel
to get off the surface.
Blow the goddam tethers.

Mole 3 at depth.
We're heading your way, Oren.
Calculate exactly how much prop
we need to get off this rock.
We'll shut it down when we hit it.
Will do.
It opens up into a cave down here.
Mole got jammed against the side.
OK, Fish, team 2 at location 4
Give me your hand.
- What the hell happened?
- I don't know. I don't know.
Everything was going great, and
we got jammed up at 75 feet.
OK, hold up.
All right, try backing it up.
Roger that.
- That's it.
- A little more.
Shut it down.
No, they always put
extra in these tanks.
Fish, shut it down.
OK.
Come on, you bastard!
Come on! Time!
Figured we'd better pick
you kids up after school.
Check your 6, 100 yards.
I think we'd better hurry, boys.
All right, it's going! It's going!
Mole's at 125 feet.
The sun's rising behind you.
It's coming up fast.
Face shields down!
Oh, Christ!
Get the hell out of there!
Oren, get your visor down.
Get your visor down!
Oh! My eyes!
Ohh!
All right, we got him.
Oh, God! My eyes!
Oh, God, we're losing one.

He's got escape velocity.
Aah!
Mark, Mikhail, get
the hell out of there!
Firing primary thrusters.
Payload doors still open.
Close 'em as we go.
Houston, all moles are at depth.
Nukes hot and ready.
We lost Partenza
to explosive outgassing.
And Monash is injured.
We have to go get Gus.
There's no time for that.
Repressurize the cargo bay.
He's going to die out there!
We can still find him.
He has a beacon.
I don't have time to argue with you.
Just sit down and be quiet.
Turn on the fuckin' locator!
We've used most four propellant
to get us out of the coma.
We can't just leave him.
We have to go back!
If we go back for Gus,
we all die.
We can't just
leave him in space!
Sit down, Mick. Sit down.
It's OK
The Messiah has safely
lifted off the comet.
But sadly, Gus Partenza has been lost.
Gus Partenza, a native of
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania,
and graduate of Carnegie-Mellon University,
joined the NASA Space Program
shortly after completing his
medical training at Duke University.
Dr Partenza was selected
specifically for this mission,
not only for his
medical expertise,

but also for his dedication to the advancement of space technology.

Yeah.

With the loss of Dr Gus Partenza and with Oren Monash injured, Captain Spurgeon Tanner is now in charge of the mission.

The Messiah

has successfully docked with the Orion-powered boosters

and is now prepared to detonate the bombs planted on Wolf-Biederman.

The Messiah's exterior-mounted camera will show us the detonation, but not before being temporarily blocked out by the nuclear blast.

Once again, let me remind you, there is a 20-second delay, so when the picture

comes back to us,

the comet should already have been knocked off its present course.

Prepare to remove safeties and fire.

Safeties removed.

Weapons armed.

Now.

So now we're just waiting for the picture to come back.

Decompression in area 6.

Mick, I'll get the halon!

Aah!

Yes. I'm still here.

We're live in 10 seconds.

Cue the president.

Mr President,

Hello, America.

It is my unhappy duty to report to you that the Messiah has failed.

This computer-enhanced radar image from Houston

shows how the detonation succeeded, however, did not destroy the comet.

There are now 2 pieces--

one 6 miles wide,
the other, a mile and a half.
Both are still on a path
towards Earth.
We've lost communication with
the Messiah spacecraft,
although we continue to track it visually.
We don't know how many are alive.
We don't know their condition.
Now, we have to make
some decisions together.
What do we do?
You have a choice.
We have a choice...
Right now.
Ever since the comet was discovered,
we've been hoping and working for the best,
but we've also been
planning for the worst.
Our strategy has been twofold.
First, our strategic missile command
is preparing to coordinate with the
Russians a massive strike of Titan missiles
to intercept the comets.
If we can deflect these comets enough,
they will bounce harmlessly
off our atmosphere
and head on out into space.
Unfortunately, the Titans cannot be launched
until the comets are only a few hours away.
And while we are confident
the missile attack will succeed,
it is only prudent that we
now take cautionary steps
to ensure the continuation
four way of life,
to guarantee that there
will be enough of us left
to rebuild a new world
in the unlikely event that
the comets do strike the Earth.
So, in the soft limestone of Missouri,
we've been preparing
a network of immense caves,

and they're almost finished.
And we can put
a million people in them.
And that million people can
survive there, underground,
for 2 years,
until the air clears
and the dust settles.
Now, the cave is more
than a dormitory.
It's our new Noah's Ark.
We're storing seeds and seedlings,
plants, animals,
enough to start over.
On August 10th, a computer
will randomly select
to join the 200,000 scientists,
doctors, engineers,
teachers, soldiers, and artists,
who have already been chosen.
Other countries
are preparing similar caves
along whatever lines
they feel are best
to preserve their way of life.
This is ours.
Beginning tonight and continuing
until the crisis passes,
I am declaring a state
of martial law.
The armed forces
and the National Guard
are working
with local law enforcement.
A national curfew begins
at midnight tonight.
Now, wherever you are,
go home.
Stay off the roads
after sunset.
Crimes against persons
or property
will be dealt with
swiftly and harshly.

News stations around the nation
are being faxed copies
of the lottery procedure as we speak,
and they'll be broadcasting the
details to you in a few moments.

I wish...

No.

Wishing is wrong.

It's the wrong word right now.

That's not what I mean.

What I mean is...

I believe in God.

Relax.

I know a lot of you don't,

but I still want

to offer a prayer...

for our survival.

Mine included.

Because I believe that God,

whomever you hold that to be,

hears all prayers,

even if sometimes the answer is no.

So, may the Lord bless you.

May the Lord keep you.

May the Lord lift up His divine

countenance upon you...

and give you peace.

And in 5, 4, 3, 2...

We now have the details

for the national lottery.

"Those of you

who have been preselected

will be notified

within the next few minutes.

For the rest, on the night

of August 10th,

those whose social

security numbers

have been randomly selected

by computer will be notified.

While some Americans...

over 50 years of age

have been preselected

for the ARK

due to their expertise
in a necessary field of study,
no men and women over 50
in the general population
will be included
in the lottery.

The...

The evac--The evacuation
of those

who have been selected
for the ARK

will take no longer
than 2 days,

beginning on August 12th.

During this 2-day period,

no unofficial travel
will be permitted.

Those selected will be
taken by bus and train
to the underground ARK site
by military personnel.

Civil defence teams
have been formed in every town
with a population over 5,000.

They will distribute supplies
and organize group shelters

in underground
parking facilities

and other

appropriate sites.

Construction plans..."

"Equipment lists,
and locations for securing
the necessary provisions..."

Hello?

Yes, this is

Ellen Biederman.

"...on how to grow your own food underground
and how to purify water

are now available on

We've been preselected.

"...fcda.gov."

Chuck? Chuck?

Where are you going?

Our phone.
They could be calling.
"...beginning on August 9th.
The only phones that ring
will be those of the people selected."
That's it.
That's all there is.
The interior camera circuitry is shot.
So, Andy, can we get back
into the cargo bay
to reroute the video functions?
Starboard cargo porthole's blown.
We could go in with the EVAs, but there's
not much left in the life-support packs.
We should be able to raise Houston
on the low band once we get closer.
And the Orion is still functioning?
System check was OK,
but I don't know about
the radiation shielding.
So, if we fire it up, we beat
the comet back to Earth, but
we may end up glowing
in the dark. Right?
OK, so, uh...
Anybody?
Let's go home.
OK.
I have to say it's liberating
knowing that I'm not
going to be called.
I don't think I've ever been happier.
I've even stopped smoking.
What are you gonna do with
all that extra money you save?
Do you know the National Gallery
is saving all of the art?
They're shipping it to the caves.
I've given them my beautiful
from New England and
all the Sheraton silver.
I really feel like I'd protected
something when I gave them.
You should see my apartment.

There's nothing there.
It's practically Japanese.
Seems kind of unfair
that I got picked.
You know, I'm not
a doctor or a scientist.
People need continuity.
Everyone knows you.
And they trust you.
But I...can't help you.
Don't worry about me.
I'm gonna be happy
as long as I know
you're going to live.
Mr Hotchner?
Who did I think I was gonna be
when I bought that bike?
Well, every kid on
the block wants one now.
Every parent on the block
hates you for it.
Thank you Leo, that's the
best news I've had in years.
Um, sir?
Could you give me a hand
over here for a second?
Yes, sir.
I just want to get
these bars up.
Hi, Mrs Hotchner.
A mob attacked and killed
a Miami rental yard operator
who was charging \$5,000 an hour
for backhoe and tractor rentals.
Marines intervened to stop the violence.
Arizona...
Mrs Hotchner?
Sarah's on the hill.
Thank you.
Where were you today?
I've been looking all over for you.
Why weren't you at school?
My dad said I didn't have to go.
He said there's no point.

I talked to Civil Defence. They said
if you and I got married
we'd be family, and I could get you in
What about my parents?
They're not your family.
I don't want to go
without my parents.
You don't have to. I'm
the famous Leo Biederman,
and I haven't used
my fame for anything,
but I got them to let
your family go, too.
You--This is your
only chance to survive.
Across the country,
Looters continue to set fire
to abandoned stores.
The fires have been left to burn
since many fire fighters
have been called
to help prepare shelters.
Throughout Latin America's
major cities,
business districts have been
abandoned to looting gangs...
Airlifts have been ruled out
as too dangerous.
More street fighting in Moscow
as food and fuel shortages continue.
Believes all things, hopes all things,
endures all things.
When I was a child,
I spoke like a child,
I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child.
When I became a man,
I gave up childish ways.
For now we see in a mirror dimly,
but then face to face.
Now I know in part,
then I shall understand fully,
even as I have been
fully understood.
Do you, Leo, take Sarah

to be your wife...
to have and to hold
from this day forward...
for better, for worse...
for richer, for poorer...
to love and to cherish?
I now pronounce you
husband and wife.
Here, let me help you.
I'll get it.
Yeah. How you feeling?
All right.
I want to tell you something.
You children didn't bring
any real books to read,
did you know that?
I brought Moby Dick
and Huckleberry Finn
and Baker and Simon
had never read them.
Now, I'm afraid to ask you,
have you ever read Melville or Twain?
Hmm?
Hey, I'm a child of the movies, Fish.
OK, I see.
So...
You got a shitty deal,
Oren, you know that?
You really did.
Don't worry about me.
Yeah.
I mean that. Really.
Don't worry about me.
My whole life l...
You know how it is for guys like us.
You--You and l, we're the same.
What do you mean
by that?
Gotta be the best.
Oh, I see.
Be...the best.
Sometimes I see...
flashes of light...
You know, like...colors.

I fall asleep...
and I dream.
But there's a part of me
that's always awake.
And I can see myself dreaming.
I'm seeing things differently, Fish.
Well, that's good.
Fish...
why the hell do they call you "Fish"?
Well, I...
Spurgeon, sturgeon, fish.
They took about 15 minutes of my
first day at the Naval Academy.
Yeah.
Your kids go there?
Yeah, they did.
They did.
And they're good men, both of them.
I don't see as much of them as
I used to when Mary was alive.
You don't have to talk
about it. It's OK.
No, it's OK. It's OK.
You're a married man.
You know what it's like.
Every marriage has its
good years and bad years.
We ended on a great year.
Yeah.
Anyway, let's get started.
Moby Dick. Chapter one.
"Call me Ishmael.
Several years ago, never
mind how long precisely,
having little or
no money in my purse...
grim about the mouth...
Whenever it is a damp,
drizzly November in my soul,
whenever I find myself...
...knocking people's hats off, then,
I account it high time
to get to sea as soon as I can."
Listen up!

Hold it right there!
- Biederman?
- That's us.
IDs, please.
Yeah. Got them right here.
There's 4 of us.
Lewis?
This is my wife Sarah.
We have a marriage license.
Um, I have it right here.
OK.
All right. Let's go.
Let's move it out!
Mom? Sir? My parents
are coming, too.
Wait! The Hotchners.
H-O-T-C--
H-N-E-R.
It's not here.
No no. It has to be there.
FCDA sent their names
to the White House.
- They're not there.
- Just check the goddam list again.
- Give me your bag
- They must be there.
Give me your bag, sweetie.
- No, they're not on the list. I'm sorry.
- Wait, wait...
Let's go!
Sir! Could you check
it one more time?
I put you on the list.
They said you're on the list.
- Sarah, I put them on the list!
- We're not on the list.
I need the Biedermans on the bus now.
- What?
- I want to stay with you.
No, no, no, no!
I need to stay with you!
- Sarah! Sarah, you need to go.
- No. I have to stay with you, dad
I'm not going anywhere without you!

- Honey, get on the bus!
- Sarah, you don't know what you're doing
Young lady, this bus is moving out.
Son, on the bus! Get on the bus!
Chuck, we'll work it out
when we get there.
Jenny? There's a phone call for you.
Yes?
This is she.
Is Robin Lerner my mother?
When?
Uh, 61 .
I'll come down there then.
Thank you.
Thank you very much.
Jenny, do you want us
to do something?
You're too late. I already
took care of everything.
Come. Inside the car.
You're getting sick. Please.
I want to talk to you.
Please, come.
I don't give a shit.
Go home and tell it to Chloe.
I can't. She left me.
She's with her mother.
They both got scared.
Come. I want to talk to you.
I need you.
How does it feel?
I feel like an orphan.
Jenny! Jenny!
Stop.
Welcome to the ARK. I'm
section leader for Orange 254.
Remember that. That's where you'll
be calling home the next 2 years.
So gather your things and follow
me to the orientation gallery.
If you have been designated
as a civilian section officer,
report to section Red 116 upon entering.
Once again, if you have been

designated as a civilian section officer,
report to section Red 116 upon entering.

Leo...

I'm not coming.

Leo, come with us right now.

I have to go back for Sarah.

Leo--

Mom, I'm going.

Don, what are you doing?

Giving him something to trade,
that's what I'm doing.

I want you to take this.

Dad, that's enough.

Goddam it.

You take care of yourself, OK?

I'm gonna make it.

What about Entrekin?

I don't know. He hasn't
returned my call in 2 weeks.

- Excuse me, Jenny?

- Yeah?

Your father's here.

Hello.

Hello.

I can't stay long.

I'm leaving the city,
but I wanted to show you something.

I wanted to show you that
you're not an orphan.

I have proof that
you're not an orphan.

Here.

Look.

Where's Mom?

Behind the camera.

She took this?

Mm-hmm.

And this one, too.

She was such an artist,
don't you think so?

You don't remember
when we take them, hmm?

I'm 5 years old. How
would I remember that?

Some people do remember
when they were 5 years old.
It was such a beautiful day.
All alone on the beach.
And, of course, she would
have been in the picture,
but there was no one else
to hold the camera,
and...she insisted.
You know how she is.
How she was.
Jenny.
It was such a good day
for all of us.
Don't you remember?
Keep them.
Goodbye.
We have now confirmed the
launch of all the Titan missiles
from their positions in
North Dakota and Wyoming.
The comets are now approximately 14 hours
outside of Earth's atmosphere,
and we are told it should
take these missiles
Less than 20 minutes
to reach their target.
OK, here's what we're looking at.
All of the Titans have been launched.
We still won't know if
they've made a difference.
The comets have to travel for a while
before the radar tracking
stations can see
if they've been pushed to a safe
course that'll bypass the Earth.
So, one more time
we have to wait.
Are we on?
We're on, Mr President.
Our missiles have failed.
The comets are still headed for Earth...
and there's nothing
we can do to stop them.

So, this is it.

If the world does go on...

it will not go on for everyone.

We have now been able to calculate

the comets' final trajectories,

and we have determined where

they're going to strike.

The smaller of the 2 comets,

Biederman, will hit first,

somewhere along

the Atlantic Seaboard

probably in the waters off

the coast of Cape Hatteras

in just under 12 hours at

The impact of the comet

is going to be...

Well, disastrous.

There will be a very large tidal wave

moving quickly through the Atlantic Ocean

It will be 100 feet high,

traveling at 1,100 miles an hour.

That's faster than the speed of sound.

As the wave reaches shallow water,

it's going to slow down,

but the wave height,

depending on the depth

of the shelf off the coast,

will be anywhere from

Where the land is flat, the wave

will wash inland 600 to 700 miles

The wave will hit our nation's

capital 40 minutes after impact.

New York City, Boston,

Atlanta, Philadelphia...

all will be destroyed.

If you have any means of getting

away from the path of this wave,

Leave now.

The impact of the larger comet

will be nothing less than

an extinction-level event.

It will strike land

in Western Canada

3 hours after Biederman.

Within a week, the skies will be
dark with dust from the impact
and they will stay dark for 2 years.
All plant life will be dead within...
Animal life within...
a few months.
So that's it.
Good luck to us all.
Could I bother everyone for a minute?
Let's take a look at the big one.
Now, the outgassing has created a vent
a half mile wide and
at least 2 miles deep.
Comet gets closer to the sun,
sun melts the ice,
ice turns to steam,
we get a big hole, OK?
So, how many nukes do we
have left in the back?
If we can get the remaining
bombs in that vent,
there shouldn't be anything
left bigger than a suitcase.
We can't do anything about the little one,
but it just might give them a chance.
Without the arming codes,
we're going to have to wait
to set the bomb timers
until we get closer to Earth
to raise Houston.
We may not have enough
life support left
to get back into the
cargo bay for the nukes,
much less to go down to the comet.
We sure as hell don't have
enough propellant left
in the Messiah to maneuver with.
How are we supposed to get
back off the surface
once we've gotten down there?
We don't.
Well, look at the bright side.
We'll all have

high schools named after us.
Houston, this is Messiah.
Houston, this is Messiah.
Nice of you to call, Messiah.
We were beginning to wonder
what you were doing up there.
Admiring the view, Houston.
Fish, is that you?
Yep. We don't have time
to talk, Houston.
There's nothing we can do
about the smaller one,
but we do have a plan.
We need the arming codes
for the last 4 nukes.
Arming codes?
What the hell for?
Mitch, we can do or we can teach.
What's your pleasure?
Get the arming codes!
Get the goddam codes!
We have one helicopter.
Holds 7 people.
We can ferry 6 people to
high ground in West Virginia
and take Jenny to the ARK.
Short stick goes.
I thought it was women
and children first.
If you get the short one,
you can give up your seat.
Thank God.
Well, that makes sense.
I got a stick.
I got a stick.
I'm sorry, Beth.
OK, honey, here we go.
Let's go now.
Beth...
There's always the road.
We'll be OK.
Come on. Ah, that's my girl.
OK, that's it.
Sarah!

Sarah!
Where's that key?
Where's the key?
Come on!
Hurry up! Come on!
No, wait.
What are you doing?!
We have to go now.
Come on! Come on!
Beth, what are you doing?
The road was so crowded.
We weren't gonna make it.
I thought if the wave comes,
we should be here
because she likes it here.
And we're on the 15th floor,
so maybe we'll be OK.
Say goodbye to Jenny--
What are you doing?!
Move! Come on! Go!
Jenny! Oh, my God! Caitlin!
- Come on!
- Caitlin! Catie!
Come on!
Faster! Faster!
No! No!
Come on! Let's go!
Hang on.
No room for this!
She's going with you!
You're taking my seat!
Come on!
Go! Go!
- Jenny, thank you!
- Go, let's go
- Get her in there!
- That's too many
- I'm not going.
- What do you mean you're not going?
I'm not going, Erik.
Go!
Sarah!
Sarah!
Sarah, look!

Leo!
Leo!
Leo Biederman!
Leo!
Leo!
- Leo!
- Oh!
You don't have any time.
You have to go now.
No! Put this on!
Daddy, what are you doing?
I want you to take the baby.
What? No! Mom!
No arguments, please!
I don't want to go!
Grab his foot, honey.
Let's go.
Mom? Mom!
Sweetheart, listen to me.
Let go. Put this on.
- I love you, too.
- I love you.
I've always loved you.
I love you.
I don't want to go!
Take care, honey.
Put this on.
I'll see you soon!
I'll see you soon!
Get out of here. Go
Go to high ground.
When I was 11 , I took
\$32 from your wallet.
When you were a baby...
I once dropped you
on your head.
When you came to the studio
and you brought those pictures,
I lied when I said
I didn't remember.
I remember everything.
I remember that we
were right over there,
and that's when Mom got

that picture of the house.
It was a perfect, happy day.
I came down here
to let you know that.
Thank you.
I've missed you since then.
I missed you, too.
Biederman.
Daddy.
Hold on!
This is Messiah.
We're ready to begin our run.
Are our families there yet?
They're on their way,
Messiah.
Disengage auto path.
Here we go.
We're at perigee.
Wolf contact in 4 minutes, 45 seconds.
We'll never be closer to home
than we are right now.
Come on!
Messiah, we got some people here
that want to talk to you.
Wendy, honey...
you promise me you'll keep
doing your church thing,
and I'll be there
right next to you,
haunting you.
You better come back
and haunt me.
I love you.
There's Mommy.
Hello, Mommy.
Hey, you take care of Daddy for me, OK?
She does a good job.
- She misses Mommy.
- I miss you
I love you, Mommy.
I love you. Very, very much.
David.
You know what I want to say.
I know.

Come on!
Wolf contact in 2 minutes, 30 seconds.
Oren, Mariette's up at
your folks' place in Utah.
We sent a plane,
but she isn't here yet.
Fish, your sons are
both on active duty.
We tried to get them back,
but we couldn't
get them here on time.
I'm sorry.
Well, Mitch, uh...
I want to say
goodbye to Mary.
I want to tell her I love her...
and that ever since we've been apart,
every day, I think about her.
Mary, I'm coming home.
Coming up on target, 625 miles.
Range 600 miles.
Wait! Oh, God, wait!
Wait!
I'm coming!
Oren? Oren, are you there?
Mariette? I'm here.
I can hear you.
Hi, sweetie.
This is your father.
His name is Oren.
I named him after you.
Hello, Oren.
Show him what you brought him.
He's holding up a little rocket.
That's a mighty powerful
rocket you got there.
He's laughing.
I can hear him. I know.
Mariette...
I'm hugging you both right now.
I'm holding you.
Prepare to synchronize the nukes.
It's been a pleasure
serving with you, Commander.

The honor's all mine, Andy.
Be good, Oren.
Be good.
We watched as the bombs
shattered the second comet
into a million of pieces
of ice and rock
that burned harmlessly
in our atmosphere
and lit up the sky for an hour.
Still, we were left with
the devastation of the first.
The waters reached as far inland as
the Ohio and Tennessee Valleys.
It washed away farms and towns...
forests and skyscrapers.
But the water receded.
The wave hit Europe and Africa, too.
Millions were lost.
Countless more left homeless.
But the waters receded.
Cities fall...
but they are rebuilt.
And heroes die...
but they are remembered.
We honor them with every brick we lay...
with every field we sow...
with every child we comfort
and then teach to rejoice
in what we have been regiven.
Our planet.
Our home.
So now...
Let us begin.