

"FRICTION"

written by

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FADE IN

EXT. THE SURFACE OF THE MOON - DAY

SUPER: "MOONBASE-TRANQUILITY"

An immense, modular structure stands silently within the crater-riddled lunar landscape.

Attached to the outpost's domed nucleus are twelve enclosed walkways, radiating outward in a wagon wheel configuration, linked to twelve hemispherical pods.

A dozen Moon Rovers, several trailers and various types of scientific equipment are precisely arranged on one side of the structure.

On the opposite side of the complex, two space shuttles stand ready on angled launch pads. Six enormous radio telescopes, evenly spaced, surround the facility's perimeter.

CLOSE UP - FIVE FLAGS

A NASA flag, along with three International Research Team flags stand motionless alongside a pair of historic Moon Rovers, left behind on the Apollo 16 and 17 missions.

Nearly undetectable at first, the flags begins to gently wave from side to side. Then with a SNAP, the flags abruptly turn 180-degrees, toward the complex, and begin to FLAP with increasing intensity.

INT. MOONBASE-TRANQUILITY - GALLEY - SAME

JIM savors a cup of coffee at a tall table beside an observation window, hidden behind a set of reinforced horizontal shutters.

PAM enters the room. Jim holds up an empty cup.

JIM

Black?

PAM

Black. Thanks.

He pours her a cup.

As they quietly indulge in their morning ritual, the silence is broken with a series of small TAPS. They momentarily turn toward the window, then back to one another and shrug it off.

Pam closes her eyes and draws the cup close to her nose for a long, deliberate inhale. Her serene moment is cut short by the next round of TAPS - far more intense than the previous array.

Jim lethargically leans over and presses a switch. The horizontal shutters promptly swing open, exposing the impossible - a dust storm on the surface of the Moon.

JIM
What the Hell?

In shock, Pam spills her coffee. She feverishly shakes the hot fluid off of her hands and forearms as she anxiously stares out the window, panning from side to side.

An oscillating 'Code Red' alarm BLAST summons the remainder of the crew to their posts. The dust storm escalates.

Stones are now being hurled at the structure, several striking the glass, only inches from Pam.

She shrieks as a spacesuited crew member slams into the window's exterior, instantly forming cracks, radiating outward toward the framework.

KIM points to the rovers, which are beginning to slide in the direction of the complex. One tumbles onto its side, then another.

Momentum is building as the rovers shift closer to the structure. One by one, they are lifted off the ground and hurled in their direction.

Jim palms the window shutter switch as the airborne crafts close in on their position. The shutters slam shut with only moments to spare.

A rover breaches the wall, instantly decompressing the pod.

Two of the crew members, nearest the breach, are lifted up and hurled into the void.

Sealing the doorway behind them, the remaining crew members scramble down the corridor as an automated 'Evacuation' alarm is triggered.

Pam pauses only for an instant as two additional rovers impact the pod's roof. The door seals fail.

Pam, attempting to overpower the door frame's grip on her is mercilessly drawn through a fracture in the door, one-eighth her size, and discarded into oblivion.

INT. MOONBASE-TRANQUILITY - AIRLOCK - CONTINUOUS

The crew piles into an airlock and hurriedly grasp their spacesuits. Not yet fully dressed, the chamber explodes, catapulting them far into the yard.

Jim unsuccessfully attempts to assist two of the unsuited crew members as they writhe in agony.

He turns toward the complex and dives to the ground to evade

A LARGE SECTION OF DEBRIS

closing in on his position.

Jim rises and continues his race toward the shuttles amidst a hail of dust and stones.

He stumbles over a fallen crew member, whose face shield is split in half, with a thick section of jagged glass protruding from the center.

EXT. MOONBASE-TRANQUILITY - LAUNCH PAD - DAY

The terror-stricken crews reach the shuttles and initiate their start-up procedures. The dust creates a near blackout.

Fire streaks from the rear of the crafts as they rise from the launch pads in a seemingly futile effort to escape the surface of the Moon.

Flying full-throttle, hidden intermittently within clouds of dust, the two shuttles aim for the heavens.

Shuttle Two is struck in the nose section with a bombardment of metallic fragments from a radio telescope.

The doomed craft spirals hard to port, disappearing into a dark cloud of debris, only to return moments later - on a direct collision course with Shuttle One.

The cloud illuminates amidst a series of intense flashes as the two spacecrafts collide.

Intertwined and spinning violently, the two crafts begin to break apart, disintegrating into a cascade of sparks, flames and debris, as they plummet to the Moon's surface.

EXT. HIGH-EARTH ORBIT - DAY (IN SPACE)

SUPER: "PROJECT NIGHT-LIGHT - HIGH-EARTH ORBIT"

SUPER: "MISSION STATEMENT: TO DEPLOY AN IMMENSE MIRROR IN HIGH EARTH ORBIT. To Reflect The Sun's Rays Deep Into The Sea - 24/7 - To Accelerate The Growth Of Undersea Vegetation And Defeat World Hunger."

Several spacesuited technicians are maneuvering their one-man rocket sleds along the upper perimeter of an enormous reflective sheet, floating motionless in space.

The octagonal sheet is silver in color and measures more than twenty miles across. A sliver of Earth can be seen far below.

A mile from the site is the mother ship, the AURORA - a converted cargo ship, retrofitted with a full laboratory, an observation deck and several sophisticated telescopes.

Riding solo on his rocket sled is the developer of the Night-Light project, as well as the captain of the Aurora, JOHN COOPER. John is a handsome, slightly overweight, passably clean-shaven, thirty-nine year old marine biologist, with a good heart and a hair-trigger temper.

Clearly distracted, John fires a few quick retro rocket bursts to slow his sled to a crawl. He blinks tightly several times as he strains to focus on

A FULL MOON

floating high overhead.

A slight mist of fire trails from the back of the Moon as the leading edge begins to glow intensely.

John contacts his mission coordinator, SARAH JENNINGS.

JOHN (COMMUNICATOR)

Sarah, John here... Can you check out the Moon? Are you seeing what I'm seeing?

INT. THE AURORA - MAIN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Sarah enters the main cabin and scans the void of space.

Sarah is an attractive, slender, thirty-five year old British born astronomer with a quick wit and a 'take no prisoners' attitude toward her job.

In another lifetime, Sarah could have been a top model. But for now, she was all business - with her sensually long, light brown hair, tightly wound into a plastic hair clip and her piercing emerald green eyes, well hidden behind her dark-rimmed glasses.

SARAH
EDWARD, bring up camera nine and
zoom in on the Moon.

Sarah and Edward intently study the events unfolding on the screen - both frozen in disbelief.

Countless fragments of the Moon begin to break away from its surface, appearing as small meteors, encompassing the Moon with an array of smoke and ash.

Soon, larger sections of the Moon start to crack and peel away from its core, uniting with the smaller fragments to form an ever-increasing display of fire and smoke.

As quickly as it began, the event is over. Nothing remains but a faint dust trail, surrounded by an all-consuming darkness.

Communications of dismay suddenly erupt.

Sarah contacts the captain, John Cooper and orders the entire crew back to the ship immediately.

As they begin to make their way to the Aurora, Sarah notices a slight movement in the far edge of the mirror material.

SARAH (COMMUNICATOR) (CONT'D)
John, get your team and head back to
the Aurora right now! The mirror is
folding in, right on top of us!

John looks back, then full-throttles the rocket sled toward the mother ship, along with three other members of the crew.

The massive mirror begins to ripple and roll in the distance.

Sarah powers up the Aurora and signals her impatience with a few short retro rocket blasts.

The moment the four rocket sleds enter the cargo bay, the door is secured. The ship swings around and throttles-up in an attempt to veer out of the material's path.

Their speed is no match for the approaching material. It is soon upon them, enveloping the craft as the material picks up speed and begins to glow intensely.

The mirror material spins the craft ever faster as it becomes helplessly cocooned deep within the layers of the thin film.

Intense flames lap at the outside of the glowing mass, as the hapless ship is hurled through space within the confines of the mirrored material.

EXT. NEPAL - MOUNT EVEREST - DAY - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: "MOUNT EVEREST - CAMP 3 - ELEVATION 26,300 FEET"

A bright, sunny day welcomes dozens of climbers who have taken refuge on the frozen, southern face of the mountain.

A group of over twenty multicolored tents have been securely staked and tethered in a tight formation on a sheer 35-degree slope over 1,200 feet in height.

CLAUDE, the team leader is in radio contact with another expedition, positioned above Camp 4, about halfway between the camp and the mountain's summit.

CLAUDE

I want a report the minute you can see the south summit. Over.

PHILIPPE

(on walkie-talkie)

It won't be long now. Over.

CLAUDE

You sure lucked out on the weather. I'll contact you again on the half. Over.

Stuffing the walkie-talkie into his pouch, Claude studies the landscape, then concentrates on a wisp of snow building in size near the top of the mountain. He turns to a SHERPA.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

(pointing to the summit)

What's with that? Every report stated the conditions would be dead-calm through tomorrow.

The Sherpa (a Himalayan mountain guide) studies the ever-growing cloud of snow and shakes his head. Moments later, a look of concern blankets his face.

Within a few seconds, the entire camp is engulfed in an intense white-out as the wind begins to howl, sounding more like a fighter jet, switching on its afterburner, then a blizzard.

As the onslaught continues, their surroundings become nearly pitch black, then it's gone - as quickly as it was upon them.

Digging out from the barrage of fresh snow, Claude fumbles for his walkie-talkie.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Philippe, do you read me? Philippe?

He turns toward the Sherpa, who is gazing upward with a look of awe and bewilderment.

SHERPA

They're gone.

As Claude again attempts to contact the expedition, the Sherpa angrily grabs him by the arm and points upward.

SHERPA (CONT'D)

They're Gone!

Raising his head, Claude drops the walkie-talkie.

Horrified, he falls to his knees and begins to shake.

The top 2,000 feet of Mount Everest has been sheared off, as if by a great sickle.

Along the top edge of the newly formed plateau, the exposed stone is glowing bright orange as small fragments of molten rock cascade down the sides, steaming as they make their way through the snow and ice.

The two nearby peaks of both Nuptse and Lhotse Mountains have also met with the same fate.

One by one, the remainder of the climbers exit their tents as a somber hush comes over the witnesses.

EXT. THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA - DAY - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: "THE MEDITERRANEAN - 50 NAUTICAL MILES S.E. OF CRETE"

A 40-foot ketch, "Sailbad the Sinner" with a crew of two is effortlessly gliding through the warm waters of the Mediterranean. All sails are at full mast.

INT. SAILBAD THE SINNER'S GALLEY

Rob and Sandy are just finishing breakfast. Rob offers to clear the table.

Sandy jumps at the chance to head topside.

Moments later, Sandy's bikini top drops back into the cabin.

ROB

What? Is there a ship out there?

SANDY (O.S.)

Maybe.

ROB
(jokingly)
You tramp!

SANDY
(laughing devilishly)
We'll never see these people again.

Rob climbs the stairs and catches her parading front to back on the deck, topless. He gazes into the distance to make out a large cruise ship passing by, about two miles north of their position.

He feigns a look of disgust and begins to descend the stairs when something in the sky catches his eye.

ROB
What the hell is that?

They both look up and to the north as a long stretch of sky begins to darken - first to a deep blue, then black, complete with an array of stars.

SANDY
Rob... Something's not right.

Miles ahead of the passing ship, the water begins to rise and vaporize into torrents of steam, traveling at incredible speed toward the ship.

Moments later, the huge ship is caught up in the turbulence. The ship begins to rise and twist. Its edges begin to glow bright yellow, casting streams of sparks and fire.

Seconds later, it's hurled into the sky and gone from sight.

Rob attempts to navigate the stairs, but plummets onto the cabin's floor. He grabs a microphone

ROB
May-Day... May --

Interrupted by Sandy's screams, he heads back topside.

She frantically points to a massive whirlpool now occupying the position where the ship was, only moments before.

Their ketch picks up speed, rushing toward the void.

Unable to maneuver to a safe position, their helpless sailboat is swallowed up, and vanishes.

The sea calms and begins to flatten, completely erasing the horror that took place over the past few minutes.

Beginning as a series of small bubbles, followed with a mound of frothing seawater, the sailboat breaches the surface and rolls to its side.

Both Rob and Sandy also break the surface. They cling to the side of their mastless sailboat as they scan the serene waters and the calm skies overhead. No trace of the ship.

ROB (CONT'D)
(somberly gazing upward)
I think you're right... We won't be
seeing those people again.

EXT. MOROCCO - DAY - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: "A VILLAGE - SOUTH OF TANGIER, MOROCCO"

A group of several shepherds are tending to their goats near the top of a hill, overlooking their peaceful Moroccan village.

Simultaneously, they all begin to shout and motion towards the heavens, as the cloud-filled sky opens up to expose the dark void of space.

Their gazes are met with a blast of wind, rushing down upon the village and roaring up the side of the hill, lifting the shepherds, along with their flock up and over the summit.

Within the confines of the walled village, hundreds stand motionless, in awe, as their entire world is reduced to rubble by the invisible intruder.

As quickly as the wind was upon them, it subsides.

Nothing is left standing above the surface, leaving behind a debris field, appearing as more of a rocket blast than winds from a hurricane.

Homes, vehicles and even great trees have been jammed straight down into the landscape near ground zero, almost as if they had been pounded flat with a massive hammer.

The shepherds return to the top of the hill, only to find that their village has been completely erased.

INT. THE AURORA - MAIN CABIN - LATER

The interior of the ship is extremely dark, except for several dimly lit emergency lights.

The entire crew is unconscious and strewn about the cabin from floor to ceiling.

Sarah recovers first and attempts to revive the others, while struggling to make her way through the cabin in total weightlessness.

Sarah flips the ship's exterior lights on, then abruptly off.

She reels back in horror, staring wildly about the cabin as she hyperventilates.

Pulling herself to the floor in a fetal position, she does her best to control her breathing.

SARAH
(whispering)
Come on Sarah, get it together.

John grasps Sarah by the sleeve, turns her gently, then huddles next to her.

JOHN
Claustrophobia kicking in?

Sarah nods, wipes her eyes, then cautiously rises.

The remainder of the crew is soon revived, but severely disoriented. They continue to misjudge the confines of the ship, bumping into the walls and ceiling in their weightless environment.

Sarah turns away from the windows as JEFF flips on the exterior lighting, revealing a maze of twisted and crumpled material, tightly wound around the exterior of the craft.

Jeff methodically surveys the situation and enters a few figures into his PDA.

JEFF
We can still salvage the mirror if
we take a few days and cut through,
layer by layer.

Sarah gets right in his face.

SARAH
Screw the mirror! We have to get
out! Now! I'm afraid that the
Earth might be leaving us behind!

Their conversation is interrupted by a desperate call for help from MARY.

In their earlier rush to evade the onslaught from the approaching mirror material, Mary had been entangled outside of the Aurora, and pinned against the hull. She is uninjured, but running low on life support.

Two teams are immediately deployed - one to rescue Mary and another to free the Aurora from the mirror material.

EXT. THE MIRROR MATERIAL - CONTINUOUS (IN SPACE)

As soon as Mary is safe and secure, a glowing bubble begins to form along the front edge of the mirror material.

A bright red laser beam streaks out of the protrusion, rapidly oscillating back and forth, as the material violently splits open, exposing the nose of the Aurora.

The ship arduously squeezes through the constricted opening.

Remnants of the shredded mirror material tug on its wings and tail, but the craft eventually clears the mass.

INT. THE AURORA - MAIN CABIN - DAY

The entire crew huddles around several overhead observation windows. Earth now appears less than one-tenth the size it did only six hours ago.

Sarah approaches Jeff with a timid smile.

SARAH

Sorry about earlier. Confined spaces and I do not get along.

JEFF

Understood.

EXT. THE AURORA - CONTINUOUS (IN SPACE)

Two teams of three crew members each exit the rear of the Aurora aboard their one-man rocket sleds.

The first team BLASTS to the far end of the material and begins to securely attach tethers to the crumpled mass.

The second team begins a stem to stern inspection of the Aurora's exterior, assessing the damage and freeing the craft from any material that remains affixed to the wings and tail.

RICK

The hull checks out fine, but the antennas are gone, along with the dishes and most of the lighting.

SARAH (COMMUNICATOR)

Got it, thanks.

RICK

We've come across several pockets in the material that won't lay flat. It must be some of the anomaly we encountered.

SARAH (COMMUNICATOR)

See if someone can get me a sample of the contents, then tie it off so we'll have a good specimen of what's inside.

RICK

Roger. Can do.

INT. THE AURORA - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

While the majority of the crew prepares the Aurora for a restart, Sarah summons John and TOM to the briefing room.

SARAH

Okay, here's what I think happened. There was some sort of invisible atmosphere... an immense cloud... just sitting there, in the middle of space... and we hit it.

TOM

Wait a minute. How could a cloud just sitting there do that to us... or the Moon?

SARAH

(frustrated)

Oh... come on, Tom. What do you think? The Earth's just casually drifting through space? Basic geometry... Earth Science 101.

Sarah approaches a large, vertical computer display. She makes a selection and opens

A DETAILED SIMULATION OF THE EARTH AND MOON

orbiting the Sun.

SARAH (V.O.)

Earth's in an orbit around the Sun,
about ninety-three million miles
out. Now to complete that orbit
every year means that Earth's
traveling through space at nearly
sixty-seven thousand miles per hour!

Sarah quickly brings up another simulation, depicting the
outline of an invisible cloud intersecting the Moon's path.

The Moon enters the mass and disintegrates.

SARAH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The Moon entered the cloud faster
than many meteoroids do... that
burn up in Earth's atmosphere every
day. Ya know... Shooting Stars.

Sarah hastily adds a couple more components to the
simulation. This time the mirror material contacts the mass,
with the Aurora following closely behind.

SARAH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We hit the same mass the Moon did.
We would've also been burned to a
crisp, if the material hadn't
rolled us up like a big burrito.

(pausing)

That was our heat shield. It saved
our asses - but I'm afraid it also
slowed us down quite a bit.

BACK TO SCENE

Sarah opens up her laptop and brings up some figures.

SARAH

I ran some quick plottings against
the stars and it looks like we're
now traveling somewhere around
forty thousand miles per hour,
after hitting the cloud.

TOM

So every hour, Earth's pulling away
from us another twenty-seven thousand
miles... times ten hours. That's
over a quarter of a million miles!

SARAH

Exactly. I figure we need to make at least seventy thousand if we hope to catch Earth before life support becomes critical.

TOM

We can do that. Aurora's good for about thirty thousand and we're already drifting at forty.

JOHN

We should be able to catch Earth in around... four days.

Sarah smiles and gives him a thumbs up.

EXT. THE AURORA - DAY (IN SPACE)

The serenity of Aurora's cavernous nozzles are instantly transformed into a blaze of fire and smoke - completely devoid of sound. The Aurora quickly diminish in size.

INT. THE AURORA - OPTICS LAB - CONTINUOUS

Sarah painstakingly selects three lenses from a tray and slides them onto the stage of her microscope. Drawing a deep breath, then gazes into the eyepiece. Moments later she flops backward into her chair and rubs her eyes.

Methodically swapping out the lenses for another random set, she once again looks into the eyepiece. A smile comes over her face as she looks

THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE

at a well-defined, swirling spectrum of light and color.

BACK TO SCENE

SARAH

Gotcha, you bastard.

Sarah summons John. He enters the lab within seconds.

As Sarah fine-tunes the focus for him, a thin sliver of unfiltered sunlight works its way across the lab, momentarily crossing paths with the microscope's stage.

Sarah reels back in agony as she covers her eyes from the blinding flash.

John swipes the microscope aside and kneels to her left. He coaxes her into moving her hands and studies her tightly closed eyelids and singed lashes.

Sarah slowly opens her eyes.

SARAH (CONT'D)

John... I can't see! I'm blind!

John moves in closer, pauses for only a moment, then stands her up and heads for the infirmary.

INT. AURORA - INFIRMARY - CONTINUOUS

The SHIP'S DOCTOR is examining Sarah's eyes, then leans back and addresses both her and John.

SHIP'S DOCTOR

Well, the good news is that I don't think it's permanent. The microscope's made to limit the brightness, so it shouldn't do any permanent damage.

John gives Sarah a couple squeezes on the back of her neck as she gives a sigh of relief.

SHIP'S DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Now for the other news... There's some very odd discoloration in your eye's intraocular fluid... that I've never seen before. So, we'll see if there's any change in that. You'll also have to take it easy and wear some dark tinted glasses for a few days.

INT. AURORA - REAR OBSERVATION ROOM - LATER

Sarah is poised in front of a large observation window, facing rearward, with an unobstructed view of the mirror material, protruding from the Aurora's cargo bays.

Still wearing her pair of oversized, ultra-dark glasses, she momentarily tilts the glasses up and squints tightly.

Rocking in her seat, she rises and moves toward the window, resting her forehead on the glass.

SARAH

What the...

Sarah presses a call button and summons John.

SARAH (CONT'D)

John, I think there's a leak in the mirror material. I can see some of the sample drifting out.

John studies the slight bulge in the material and gives her a bewildering look.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Seriously, I can see it just as plain as you standing there.

John presses the call button and summons the ship's doctor.

After a quick eye exam, he looks out of the observation window.

SHIP'S DOCTOR

Do you still see the vapors?

Sarah nods. The ship's doctor holds up a finger, signaling her to wait.

Blocking her view, he hastily assembles a line of eight specimen jars on her desk. He steps aside.

Almost instantly, Sarah points to the jar containing the specimen. John and the ship's doctor look at each other in amazement.

The ship's doctor pulls out a light and takes another look deep into her eyes.

SHIP'S DOCTOR (CONT'D)

That sunlight flash... how was the microscope set up when it happened?

SARAH

I had the sample of the cloud on top of a back-light, with three or four filter-lenses on the microscope's stage.

SHIP'S DOCTOR

Well, whatever you did, you now seem to be able to perceive some visual wavelengths that are way outside the parameters of normal human perception.

SARAH

So I'm not crazy?

The ship's doctor gives her a smile and shakes his head.

INT./EXT. THE AURORA - APPROACHING EARTH - DAY (IN SPACE)

The view of the Earth now fills the Aurora's observation windows

The Aurora swings around, repositioning the ship for the firing of its retros.

Once the Aurora is sufficiently slowed, a low-orbit security vessel glides up alongside the Aurora. The two spacecrafts veer to the right and initiate their reentry procedures.

INT. SARAH AND JOHN'S HOME - MORNING

Sarah and John are in the midst of dressing when there are several decisive knocks on the front door.

John opens it and is taken aback by the sight of several uniformed officers gathered on his front porch. A pair of black SUVs are parked on the street, engines running.

OFFICER ONE

Good morning. We're looking for a Dr. Sarah Jennings and a Mr. John Cooper.

John pauses and turns slowly toward Sarah who is frozen several feet behind him.

OFFICER ONE (CONT'D)

Don't worry Ma'am, we're here because we need your help.

He smiles and takes a few steps back.

INT. NASA CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Sarah and John are seated in a large room with several massive wall-mounted LCD screens. They are in the midst of more than a score of military-uniformed men and women.

The door swings open. Silence blankets the room. GENERAL PARSONS enters, returning salutes from the military personnel, then motions for them to be seated.

GENERAL PARSONS

OK, enough of that. I'd like to first welcome Dr. Jennings and Mr. Cooper to our discussion.

The General gives them a quick smile and a nod.

GENERAL PARSONS (CONT'D)

I'd also like to thank you for recovering some sample material with your craft. I understand it was a pretty bumpy ride.

JOHN

Yes sir. We're lucky the ship stayed together.

General Parsons motions to MAJOR TOMPKINS to take over.

Turning toward Sarah, she makes quick eye contact, then brings

A PAIR OF LCD SCREENS

online, taking no time to dive into the heart of the matter.

MAJOR TOMPKINS (V.O.)

Just to get you up to speed, we've compiled the latest intel from the five assault locations.

The first video is a surveillance-satellite's POV of the destruction of the Moon and Moon Base Tranquility.

The second clip is of the Aurora's encounter with the anomaly, chronicling the material engulfing the craft, spinning it violently and slowing its orbit around the Sun.

The third clip is again from space, showing the destruction of Mount Everest and the surrounding mountain range, all within thirty seconds.

The fourth segment is from high over the Mediterranean Sea, displaying the complete erasure of a massive cruise ship from the face of the Earth - along with an eighty mile strip of the Mediterranean Sea.

The final clip is another high-orbit view of a small Moroccan village being decimated by an invisible assailant.

Nothing is left standing - leaving behind only a great depression where once was a home to hundreds of families.

BACK TO SCENE

John and Sarah look at each other, awestruck.

MAJOR TOMPKINS

Unbelievable, isn't it?

(pausing)

(MORE)

MAJOR TOMPKINS (CONT'D)

I assume by now you've analyzed the mass and found it to be mostly carbon dioxide, with a touch of nitrogen, argon and oxygen.

SARAH

Yes, but there's another element that we can't define. Except for that, I'd swear it's a sample of the Martian atmosphere.

MAJOR TOMPKINS

Good call, and we think that one additional element is what makes the mass so invisible to our sensors... and so cohesive.

General Parsons rises and addresses Sarah.

GENERAL PARSONS

That's where you come in. We can't see this "Intruder", but I understand that you can.

Sarah looks to John, then back to the General.

SARAH

Yes I can... and we're doing everything we can to develop lenses that will make it visible to anyone.

General Parsons takes a deep breath. He scans the room and motions for BILL SMITH to take the lead.

BILL SMITH

We feel that these attacks represent only the smallest tip of the iceberg.

The entire room reacts to his opening statement with a low rumble.

Making his way to the podium, he activates

A PAIR OF LCD SCREENS

BILL SMITH (V.O.)

Some of you are aware that we lost contact with our Martian colony over fifteen days ago.

(pausing)

The official statement from NASA was a massive meteorite strike.

A video opens from the Martian colony's perimeter POV.

Without warning, a series of large meteorites streak across the screen, obliterating every structure within the colony. Moments later, a black screen is all that remains.

BILL SMITH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Here's where it gets pretty hairy.

A second video begins from the vantage point of an orbiting Mars research satellite.

A series of closely grouped meteors home in on the Martian colony, striking it in an unrelenting attack. Every structure in the complex is quickly rendered uninhabitable.

The camera then pans up to an enormous spacecraft, floating motionless above the colony.

Major Tompkins momentarily pauses the video, allowing the attendees to study the craft and regain their composure.

The craft's exterior is fitted with heavily braced propulsion systems, top and bottom.

Extending from the front of the craft are two massive mechanical arms, each fitted with fully articulating claws.

Across the top, is a trio of enormous cannons and another trio of cannons across the bottom.

To the rear of the craft is a pair of siamesed tanks, measuring more than twenty miles in length. Their shape is reminiscent of high-pressure welding tanks.

With the camera still trained on the ship, it slowly maneuvers in the direction of the satellite.

Moment later, the top-center cannon fires, hurling projectiles directly toward the satellite.

The screen turns black.

BACK TO SCENE

General Parsons and Major Tompkins join Bill Smith on the stage. The questions begin to fly.

NASA SCIENTIST ONE
So, what is that thing anyway?

BILL SMITH
Based on the way the craft's equipped, the current hypothesis is that it's part of a mining fleet.

JOHN

So how does this have anything to do with the events on Earth?

BILL SMITH

Within two days of these strikes, the entire atmosphere of Mars had vanished.

(approaching the screen)

We think that this ship removed it, compressed it, then stuffed it into those giant tanks... and transported it here.

Sarah rises and walks toward the screen, studying the ship.

SARAH

So pockets of the Martian atmosphere is what has been doing all the damage on Earth?

(pondering)

Why go to all the trouble of siphoning off Mars' atmosphere when there's so much more, right around the Earth?

BILL SMITH

The element of surprise. We think these first encounters were tests to verify the Earth's orbital trajectory... and that the real danger may still lie ahead... in our orbital path.

MAJOR TOMPKINS

I think what we might be facing here is a type of global-scale strip-mining operation... and unfortunately, Earth has the minerals they're after.

Major Tompkins brings up another simulation.

ON THE LCD SCREEN

Depicting the Earth's orbit around the Sun.

The simulation displays the outline of an immense, invisible cloud, lying directly in Earth's path. As the Earth penetrates the mass, at nearly 67,000 miles per hour, it bursts into flames, worldwide.

MAJOR TOMPKINS (CONT'D)

Worst case scenario... they could place a large enough cloud directly in our orbital path, to burn off the Earth's entire crust...

(MORE)

MAJOR TOMPKINS (CONT'D)
right down to the mantle, using
nothing but our own momentum
against us.

GENERAL PARSONS
And they'll never even have to make
contact with us.

SARAH
If I may...
(approaching the screen)
There's no way that there's enough
atmosphere from Mars to produce a
cloud of that size... with any
dangerous levels of density.

MAJOR TOMPKINS
Agreed. But Mars could have just
been the last stop in a long list
of planets.

NASA SCIENTIST ONE
True... take Venus... its atmosphere
is ninety times denser than that of
Earth's, with a chemical composition
quite like that of Mars.

MAJOR TOMPKINS
Plus, we have no idea how much
there is of that unidentified
element --

SARAH
-- and who knows what kind of
pressure those tanks can withstand?

JOHN
Right. We have no idea of their
technology. The contents in those
tanks could be compressed to a
million PSI for all we know. That
would be more than enough volume.

NASA SCIENTIST ONE
So they can spread out the cloud,
then just sit back and wait. Then
once the Earth is destroyed, they
swoop down with an army of
excavation ships and collect all
the natural resources they want!

MAJOR TOMPKINS
That appears to be their plan.

NASA SCIENTIST ONE
Where is this craft now?

GENERAL PARSONS
We have no clue. Within two days
of the Mars incident, there was no
trace of it... anywhere.
(Pausing to scan the room)
And so you, my friends, are the
brilliant minds that get to figure
it all out.

INT. NIGHT-LIGHT LABS - DAY

Sarah is huddled over a stack of lab reports, with a blank
look on her face. John walks in with a couple of coffees.

JOHN
Can you make anything out?

SARAH
Of course... not. We need to go up.
(pointing to the heavens)
I can't do anything from here. How
will we know if we'll even be able
to actually detect this cloud
before it's too late?

JOHN
Well... the Aurora's ready to go
and I'm sure getting clearance
won't be a problem. I'll call over
to see if Parsons, Smith or
Tompkins want to go along.

John hurries out of the room as Sarah gathers some equipment.

He returns and raises his eyebrows a couple of times.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Ever heard of the Vanguard?

SARAH
You mean NASA's upper-stratosphere-
launching, super-fast military
assault craft?

JOHN
Uh... yeah, those guys.

SARAH
Of course, why?

JOHN

Because we've got two tickets and
it leaves in an hour.

(a double thumbs up)

Six hundred and fifty thousand
miles per hour, here we come!

EXT. - EARTH'S UPPER ATMOSPHERE - DAY

Beneath a colossal dirigible, measuring nearly a quarter-mile in length, a razor-sharp stealth-type spacecraft hangs from a series of cables. It's the Vanguard - the fastest craft ever built by NASA.

A pair of tether lines, attached to the huge lighter-than-air craft disappear from view as they make their way back to the Earth's surface.

Suddenly, the cables disengage. The Vanguard is in a free-fall - but only for a second.

The aft nozzles burst into flames, thrusting craft in front of the dirigible. It then silently races upward, into the void of space.

INT. - THE VANGUARD'S MAIN CABIN - SAME

A pair of NASA pilots are at the Vanguard's helm. In a row behind them sit Sarah, John and three of the Night-Light crew. Major Tompkins and Bill Smith are also on board.

The entire crew is pressed tightly into the backs of their seats.

The Pilot leans forward and flips a switch, killing the engines. Simultaneously, everyone lunges slightly forward, still restrained by their harnesses.

With the engine shut down, all is quiet - and all is weightless.

PILOT ONE

I figure that we should probably
set up and make some long distance
scans before too long.

Sarah, along with the Night-Light crew have assembled several sophisticated long-range telescopes at the window, as have the contingent from NASA.

Sarah rises from the eyepiece and rubs her eyes.

SARAH

Nothing within the range of this scope.

BILL SMITH

But what if there is something and we just can't see it? Hell, we could run into it five seconds from now. Game over!

Everyone gathers together for a brainstorming session.

SARAH

Bill has a point and it's creeping me out.

(pondering)

Now... when I first was able to see the anomaly, it was backlit by the Sun.

JIM enters the main cabin with a small, clear specimen jar and hands it to Sarah. She nods a 'thank you'.

Sarah proceeds to the observation window and holds the jar up to the pure black background of space.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Just as I thought. I can just barely make it out.

She moves the jar to the left, lining it up with the Sun's rays and smiles, then lowers the jar.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Bright as day. Which means Bill's on to something. There might be a patch of this in front of us right now, but I just can't see it.

JOHN

What if we plotted a course to run parallel to Earth's orbit, but... let's say five or ten thousand miles farther out. Then we could use the Sun as a backlight... Right?

Sarah breaks into a smile.

SARAH

Perfect!

EXT. - THE VANGUARD - CONTINUOUS (IN SPACE)

The Vanguard's retro rockets fire a few quick bursts, then the craft slowly begins to swing slightly to starboard. Moments later, it powers up and heads off on a new course, outside the path of the Earth's orbit around the Sun.

INT. - THE VANGUARD'S MAIN CABIN - DAY

With the Vanguard now gliding through space, most of the crew are gathered at the observation windows.

Sarah rises from her telescope, looks out of the window then drops back to the eyepiece.

SARAH

Oh my God! Those bastards! They really did it! There's something out there... and it's massive!

John motions for her to give up the eyepiece and gazes through the lens. A few moments later he rises.

JOHN

Are you sure? I can't see anything.

Sarah looks at him and grimaces.

SARAH

Seriously?

Sarah takes another look and confirms her findings. As she reaches for a digital plotter, the ship is violently buffeted.

Several of the crew stumble and fall.

Sarah picks up her telescope and yanks it from the tripod.

She angles it forward, while still managing to include a portion of the Sun's rays.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Better come to a full stop... There are little bits of that crap all over the place. It's like a minefield!

Instinctively, everyone reaches for something to hold on to, as the pilot fires the retros and veers away from the mass.

Encountering a few more small bumps, the Vanguard soon finds a patch of clear space and the engines are powered up.

With more distance between them and the mass, they decide to travel on and plot what may still lie ahead.

JOHN

Radio back, tell them the threat is real and we'll follow up with the coordinates. As far as I can tell, it's about forty-four days out from Earth.

INT. VANGUARD - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - LATER

John, along with several crew members are gathered around the radio in conference with several NASA technicians on Earth.

NASA (RADIO)
We're finally able to see a few of the specimens, but nothing close to what Sarah can see.

BILL SMITH
I realize that too much of the cloud is CO2 to ignite it, but what about a series of explosions to at least nudge it along?

NASA (RADIO)
Won't work. Since space is a total vacuum, there's no way to transfer the explosive force from a bomb to the mass. It literally won't make a dent!

INT. SARAH AND JOHN'S VANGUARD CABIN - NIGHT

Both John and Sarah are sound asleep when John suddenly sits fully upright.

Startled, Sarah joins him - instantly awakened.

JOHN
(enthusiastic)
Get everyone up! Wake up the crew and get NASA on the horn!

INT. VANGUARD - MAIN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The entire crew is gathered in various stages of consciousness. The Vanguard is in contact with a couple techs from NASA on the radio.

JOHN
NASA... you copy?

NASA (RADIO)
We copy, go ahead, Vanguard.

John makes eye contact with Sarah as a smile creeps up on his face. She returns his expression with a half-hearted grin.

JOHN
OK... So we can't combine any elements to ignite it...
(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)
 and an explosion won't work... but how
 about if we just PULLED this cloud out
 of the Earth's path?

Sarah gives him a look of concern, as the other crew members
 look at each other, puzzled.

NASA (RADIO)
 Pull a gaseous mass that measures
 three-thousand miles in width by over
 eight-thousand miles in length?
 (leaning in)
 With what?

SARAH
 That's what I'd like to hear, too.

John pauses, smiles and holds up one index finger.

JOHN
 Our mirror material!

INT. - NASA CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

The scene opens with the conference already in session. The
 room is filled to capacity. Many attending are world leaders
 and scientists.

Major Tompkins takes a deep breath, as she rises.

MAJOR TOMPKINS
 To be blunt, I want you all to
 consider the Moon's encounter as a
 wake-up call for Earth.

A hush comes over the members of the assembly.

MAJOR TOMPKINS (CONT'D)
 In a little over forty days, the Earth
 will make contact with a massive,
 stationary cloud, floating in space...
 and it will be catastrophic. Its
 official designation for reference is
 'THE INTRUDER'.

Major Tompkins holds the microphone at her side, then turns
 away and activates

A LARGE LCD SCREEN

with a simulation of the Earth as it contacts the Intruder -
 off-center.

MAJOR TOMPKINS (CONT'D)

It will be a glancing blow... and has the potential to increase the speed of Earth's rotation by over ten percent, in a matter of minutes.

The collision removes a portion of Earth's land, sea and atmosphere in the Far East.

MAJOR TOMPKINS (V.O.)

We're officially calling this encounter 'FIRST CONTACT'.

The simulation zooms in to detail the effects of the contact, focusing on the hypothesis that the speed of the Earth's rotation may actually increase - within minutes.

Simultaneously, worldwide, buildings collapse, oceans rise and portions of the Earth's land masses shift and crumble.

MAJOR TOMPKINS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It will almost be as if the entire planet had the rug pulled out from under it!

She pauses the simulation as her tone changes to one of compassion.

MAJOR TOMPKINS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Look... we've all seen how devastating a Category Five Hurricane can be, with winds of a hundred and sixty miles per hour...
(taking a deep breath)
Now just try to imagine... a SIXTY-SEVEN THOUSAND mile per hour tempest.

BACK TO SCENE

Major Tompkins closes her folder and offers an inaudible thank-you. General Parsons takes over.

GENERAL PARSONS

Our job is to make sure that doesn't happen.

The General motions for the attendees to remain seated. He looks around the room, waiting for relative calm.

GENERAL PARSONS (CONT'D)

We have several plans in the works to avoid such a catastrophe.

(MORE)

GENERAL PARSONS (CONT'D)

But we're not at liberty to make anything public yet. PROF. YAMATO will explain some viable survival options.

The room erupts in a deafening roar as questions arise from every corner.

Prof. Tamatoa rises and takes over, as he motions back to

THE LARGE LCD SCREEN.

PROF. YAMATO (V.O.)

In the event the Intruder can't be diverted, your best chance of survival is to find a way to ride out First Contact in space.

The LCD screen depicts several space-bound crafts, streaking upward, into the heavens.

The presentation proceeds with a view of Earth from space.

PROF. YAMATO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Earthbound citizens can survive as well... First, remember that the planet's speed of rotation may increase from west to east.

An overlay of a huge arrow, pointing east, appears across the Equator of the Earth.

PROF. YAMATO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Second, migrate toward the poles. The G-force effects along the Equator will be two and a half times greater than at the Arctic or Antarctic Circles.

Two smaller arrows, also pointing east, appear near the north and south poles.

PROF. YAMATO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Third. Keep away from the west side of all elevated natural or man-made structures.

The next simulation depicts many buildings, structures and natural formations shaking, then shifting and cascading to the ground.

PROF. YAMATO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Forth. Vacate the East Coast of all land masses - whether the adjacent body of water is large or small.

This simulation depicts a large body of water rising relentlessly along a picturesque coastline with tsunami force waves, devastating everything in its path.

PROF. YAMATO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Finally, search the US Geological website for an area with little or no volcanic or earthquake history. This event will, most likely, trigger every fault and fissure line on the planet.

The final simulation shows a series of fault lines and fissures cracking open, shifting the landscape and swallowing up entire buildings, vehicles and other structures.

INT. - NASA DIRIGIBLE HANGER - DAY

SUPER: "NASA DIRIGIBLE HANGER - AKRON, OHIO"

Sarah and John are standing at the opening of an incredibly large facility, originally built to house several of NASA's immense lighter-than-air crafts.

Standing with them are several production technicians, pointing out various stages of the process.

The facility has been converted into a production plant for the mirror material. More than a dozen machines are running at full capacity. On the opposite side of the building, huge rolls of the material have already been spooled, ready for shipment.

JOHN
 Impressive, but there's no way enough of this can be produced --

TECHNICIAN ONE
 There's another NASA facility in Florida using the shuttle's Vehicle-Assembly-Building.

John turns to Sarah with a look of deep concern.

TECHNICIAN TWO
 Don't sweat it. Ya know, not all of it has to be produced before you go. We can ship a lot of it directly to the site.

John smiles calmly and nods in affirmation.

INT. NIGHT-LIGHT FACILITY - WASHINGTON STATE - NIGHT

SUPER: "NIGHT-LIGHT FACILITY - WASHINGTON STATE"

The facility's upper-level office is functionally appointed and sparsely decorated with several "Feed the World" promotional posters, complete with Night-Light logos.

The far wall of the office is glass, overlooking a warehouse filled with spooled racks of the mirror material.

Sarah and John are feverishly compiling documents, when Sarah comes across some forgotten information. She rises, concentrating on the tech sheet.

She opens the refrigerator and removes a couple wine coolers.

SARAH

They're not too cold. I'll throw them in the macro-wave.

She places them in the appliance for a few seconds, then retrieves the frost-covered bottles and hands one to John.

She motions toward the balcony, opens the sliding door and steps out, followed by John.

EXT. NIGHT-LIGHT FACILITY - BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

SARAH

Remember that place called Pulse-Electronics?

John ignores her question and TAPS her wine cooler with his. They slide into a double-wide lawn chair.

JOHN

Too bad the only mirror we'll ever get to test was that little one.

SARAH

Maybe someday we'll get that big one back up there.

JOHN

Maybe not, Sarah. The world's food supply isn't going to be such a big problem with ninety percent of the population... wiped off the face of the planet.

Sarah pushes away from him. Her peaceful expression turns into one of disdain.

SARAH

God, John, you sound like you're giving up. What's with you lately?

JOHN

Running the numbers, I don't think we're going to be able to move enough of that... Intruder... before we make First Contact.

Sarah reaches for the tech sheet.

SARAH

As I asked earlier, do you remember a place called Pulse-Electronics?

JOHN

(concentrating)

The force-field people? Yes, I do.

SARAH

Well, they've developed a working electromagnetic force field. But they can't figure out how to generate a perimeter that's conductive enough to run long distances on solar energy. So I was thinking --

John suddenly stands and extends his hand toward the heavens.

JOHN

The mirror!

SARAH

That's what I was thinking... and it's super conductive, isn't it?

JOHN

Hell yes! Remember all the problems we've had with static when we were unrolling it?

John gives her a smothering kiss, then concentrates for a moment.

JOHN (CONT'D)

We've got four-hundred miles from the Aurora... and they've already produced over five thousand miles in Ohio and Florida. If we can augment the mirror with the force field...

Sarah, immersed in thought, nods an obligatory response.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Let's fly some material down to Pulse-Electronics tomorrow!

INT. PULSE-ELECTRONICS LABS - THE NEXT DAY

Sarah and John are standing alongside hundreds of coils, diffusers and wire, conferring with JENNY.

SARAH

This could be the answer to our prayers.

A forty by forty foot section of the mirror material has been hoisted vertically within an arena-sized warehouse.

The material's center has been hastily removed, leaving only a two-foot wide perimeter. There are several high-voltage cables affixed along its silver, polished surface.

In the center of the void, a lone metallic sphere has been suspended by a single hyper-conductive, insulated cable.

A technician passes every observer a pair of deeply shaded safety glasses. As soon as everyone's eyes are safely hidden behind the lenses, Jenny smiles, then flips the switch.

JENNY

Clear!

Suddenly the entire facility is awash with an intense, crimson red glow. The geometric grid fills the material's void with a seemingly infinite number of sparkling points of light, swirling and throbbing, almost as if it were alive.

JOHN

Cool as Hell! Not at all what I expected. I was envisioning more of a series of laser beams.

John moves in for a closer look.

JENNY

The laser beams would only sever the Intruder into smaller pieces. This configuration will push it along as if it were a solid material. Go ahead... touch it.

Jenny studies John's apprehension, hands her clipboard to an assistant and charges the grid.

She slams against it, full force, with her shoulder. The entire assembly sways several feet, as if it were made up of a single element.

JENNY (CONT'D)

(adjusting her clothes)

I only wish we had the time to test it in a weightless vacuum, with solar power.

SARAH

I'll make that a priority. Shall we say... two days?

JOHN

Also, bring a couple techs. They're loading the Aurora as we speak, so we can load your stuff right along with it.

(handing her a card)

We need to get your equipment specs to these guys right away. They'll need to get into production.

JENNY

Is the Aurora fast enough to transport it all in time?

Sarah makes quick eye contact with John and he nods in affirmation.

SARAH

The Aurora's just lifting cargo off-planet. Believe it or not, we've got SALVATION ONE for the operation.

Jenny stares at Sarah for a moment in disbelief. She looks at John, then turns back to Sarah.

JENNY

'THE' Salvation One? The Mars colonization project? Mankind's last hope for survival? That Salvation One?

(shaking her head)

Wow, that's putting all their eggs in one basket!

EXT. - LOW EARTH ORBIT - DAY (IN SPACE)

The Aurora is floating motionless. It's dwarfed by an immense two-by-two-mile section of the mirror material.

Drifting more than ten miles from the mirror is a huge communications dish, discarded from an abandoned satellite.

John, Sarah and Jenny are poised at the Aurora's observation window for the initial test of the grid, using only solar energy to power the force field.

Several of Night-Light's technicians are laser-cutting a mile-wide square out of the mirror material. The void is positioned near one of the mirror's corners, leaving approximately fifty feet in width along the perimeter.

With the aid of several additional techs, the wiring is quickly strung. The metallic sphere is then positioned in the center of the opening.

Visors are lowered and the countdown commences. The switch is flipped and the light show begins.

Two rocket sleds stand ready with the satellite debris cradled firmly in a sling between them.

JOHN

Okay, ram that dish into the middle
of the grid.

The sleds throttle up to well over two-hundred miles per hour and release the scrap, several hundred yards from its target.

The debris spins on a controlled trajectory, colliding with the center of the force field, amidst a shower of sparks.

The impact severely crumples the dish. The mirror material's grid arches back several feet, but not a single fragment makes it through.

The entire team erupts with cheers.

EXT.- INTERMEDIATE CIRCULAR ORBIT - DAY (IN SPACE)

SUPER: "THE SALVATION ONE - INTERMEDIATE CIRCULAR ORBIT"

Cautiously approaching the Salvation One spacecraft from the rear, the Aurora slows in preparation for its docking procedures.

The retros are firing in a rhythmic pattern, jolting the craft with each pulse of the rockets.

LOOKING OUT OF THE COCKPIT WINDOWS

John explains the various components of the immense Salvation One spacecraft, as Sarah silently stares in awe.

JOHN (V.O.)

It's over a half a mile long.

They slowly drift past the eighteen massive rocket nozzles at the rear of the craft.

JOHN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The twelve outer nozzles are the main engines. The six inner nozzles are for the external combustion drive. At around ninety thousand, the inner nozzles will begin to spray a mist of fermented fuel and oxygen behind the craft and ignite it. In theory --

Sarah turns to John with a look of trepidation.

SARAH

In theory?

JOHN

Yes... in theory. The ensuing explosions should throw the craft ahead of the shock wave at a speed of around five hundred thousand miles per hour.

As they pass the network of cylindrical fuel cells directly in front of the nozzles, John continues to explain.

JOHN (V.O.)

There are four rows of twenty fuel cells. The rear set is filled with the fermented fuel, which they nicknamed 'The Wine Cellar'. The other sixty cells are filled with conventional fuel for the Salvation One, the shuttles and the rocket sleds.

Drifting silently past the middle section of the ship, John continues with his tour.

JOHN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The blue sections are the cargo bays. We'll have new and used mirror material in there, plus the force field generators, coils, tether lines, provisions, air reserves and thirty rocket sleds.

Next, are the external shuttle launchers. There is a circle of six shuttles, plus one in the middle on each side.

SARAH (V.O.)

My God, It looks like a gigantic Gatling Gun!

JOHN (V.O.)
 Yep, fourteen shuttles total, and
 all can be launched in less than
 five minutes.

SARAH
 Can you name them all?

John pauses and closes his eyes.

JOHN
 Let's see there's the Argo, the
 Centurion, the Constellation, the
 Defiant, Freedom, Horizon, the
 Independence, Intrepid, Kitty Hawk...
 the Liberty, the... Pathfinder,
 Pegasus, Tango and... the Voyager.

SARAH (V.O.)
 OK, I'm officially impressed!

Finally, they approach the Salvation One spacecraft module.

Although huge in comparison to most crafts, it's dwarfed by
 the immensity of the cargo bays and fuel cell complexes.

JOHN (V.O.)
 Here it is... The Salvation One.

Sarah concentrates on the craft as they slowly approach it.

Suddenly, their forward motion is interrupted. The Aurora
 pauses for a moment, then begins to back up and swing around.

JOHN
 I guess the tour is over... Feels
 like we're in tow.

From the cockpit windows, Sarah and John observe in silence,
 as one of the immense cargo bay doors begins to open.

The Aurora's controls begin to move on their own as John
 instinctively raises his hand from the joystick.

SARAH
 No way... tractor beams pulling us
 inside to unload?
 (looking around)
 This thing is huge!

JOHN
 And this is only the airlock. Wait
 'till you see the cargo bays!

INT. - SALIVATION ONE'S CARGO BAY - CONTINUOUS

The Aurora is completely inside the airlock. The cargo bay doors close behind them.

Moments later the red 'CAUTION' sign is replaced with the words 'ATMOSPHERE STABLE'.

Sarah, John, Jenny and a couple other crew members cautiously step out of the Aurora and through the cargo bay's doors.

They are met by several teams assigned to the task of unloading the mirror material and force field equipment.

SARAH

My God, John, it's like a pair of football stadiums!

John is too busy looking around to answer.

Scores of forklifts are raising equipment, supplies, and tools onto shelving that rises nearly a hundred feet.

JOHN

I thought I was ready for this...
but it suddenly got real!

INT. NIGHT-LIGHT LABS - THE NEXT DAY

The Manager's Office door swings open, slamming against the doorstep. Sarah steps in, spots John and begins pulling up the left side of her shirt.

SARAH

Well, I got it, so now I'm part cyborg.

John is momentarily taken aback, then attempts to stifle a laugh.

JOHN

Your government issued locator?

Sarah's shirt is now pulled high enough to expose the very bottom of her bra and a prominent gauze pad taped to her skin, barely an inch below it.

SARAH

Yeah. Creepy. Did you know the wearer is the power source? It runs off your heartbeat. This way they can monitor your location right along with your vitals. It dies when you do.

JOHN
 (tapping his chest)
 I've had mine for a few years and
 pretty much forgot all about it.

INT. SARAH AND JOHN'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

Sarah jumps on the bed, waking John from a deep sleep. She slaps a small package with her open hand, bringing him to full consciousness in an instant.

SARAH
 Guess what... you'll never guess.

No response. Sarah slaps the package a couple more times.

John arduously rises to a full sitting position.

JOHN
 What?

Sarah tears open the package, removes a thumb drive and plugs it into her laptop, then concentrates on

HER LAPTOP SCREEN

SARAH (V.O.)
 That information, the classified stuff,
 it's already been leaked and they're
 protesting all across the planet.

JOHN (V.O.)
 (rubbing his head)
 Doesn't surprise me. General
 Parsons is probably having a cow.

Sarah opens up several more pages on her laptop, then scrolls up and down to see what information it might hold.

SARAH (V.O.)
 Thousands of people have known
 about 'First Contact' for weeks!
 (rolling her eyes)
 Listen to some of the ideas they've
 come up with to survive.

Sarah rocks John a couple of times to get his full attention.

SARAH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 OK... riding it out in helium balloons
 along the fringes of the atmosphere.
 (MORE)

SARAH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Submarines resting on the bottom of the sea, steel bunkers on the plains, and of course there's still thousands that swear they'll never leave their homes.

JOHN (V.O.)

Sometimes I think the colonists on Moonbase-Tranquility might have been the lucky ones... one minute everything's fine, the next...

(snapping his fingers)

Gone.

BACK TO SCENE

Sarah glares at him with disgust.

SARAH

Why do you say things like that?

John shrugs his shoulders and returns her concerns with an uncomfortable smile.

Sarah scrolls all the way down and produces some additional pages.

ON HER LAPTOP

SARAH (V.O.)

Ah, the best for last! Have you heard about the Rafters?

JOHN (V.O.)

Um... I've heard the term, but I didn't pay any attention --

She opens a page with a dozen different raft designs. Everything from tunnel hulls to cubes and spheres. She begins scrolling down as John shakes his head in utter disbelief.

JOHN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

No way!

SARAH (V.O.)

They're actually looking forward to riding out 'First Contact' in these things... these rafts... in the ocean, ya know, for the thrill.

JOHN (V.O.)

Idiots.

(studying intently)

(MORE)

JOHN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

OK, I understand their concept and as long as there's no breach, they'll float... But they've got no idea of the turbulence that'll be generated by 'First Contact'.

(pondering)

These rafts are gonna be filled with corpses when it's all over.

SARAH (V.O.)

Oh, and John... their motto is, 'Survival is Secondary'.

INT. NASA BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Sarah and John enter the room to find over thirty people assembled. The briefing is already in progress.

STEELE

(agitated)

So, this fermented fuel on the Salvation One may be crystallized already?

So... what... it could self-destruct the second we deploy the external-combustion drive?

GENERAL PARSONS

No one knows. There's no real way to tell. This organic, fruit based fuel is still in the experimental stage. We've run out of time for any further testing.

There is a dull rumble throughout the room.

GENERAL PARSONS (CONT'D)

Nobody will be looked down upon if you decline. But you have to do it now. We'll be shuttling you up to the ship at 16:00 hours tonight.

General Parsons surveys the room to find that everyone is standing firm to their convictions.

GENERAL PARSONS (CONT'D)

I salute you all.

EXT. SALVATION ONE - HIGH EARTH ORBIT - LATER (IN SPACE)

The Salvation One floats motionless amidst several support crafts, including the Aurora.

Gliding silently past the armada, is a large passenger spacecraft. Several BLASTS from its retros begin to slow the vessel, which is preparing to dock with the Salvation One.

INT. AURORA - CONTINUOUS

John resumes his tour of the ship for Sarah, right where he left off, as they both peer out the window.

JOHN (V.O.)

The Salvation One is equipped with its own rocket engines and internal fuel cells, in the event that it's necessary to separate the main ship from the rest of the components.

(checking his orientation)

The aft section houses the ship's navigation, computers and arsenal... complete with a laser cannon. The mid section is the crew's quarters and communications. Up front is the cockpit, main cabin, briefing room, and observation areas. Wait until you see the main observation deck's windows!

A decisive jolt accompanied by a sharp, metallic CLANG reverberates throughout the spacecraft, signifying that their link-up is complete.

INT. - SALVATION ONE - MAIN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Several other crew members enter the hatch ahead of Sarah and John.

Sarah and John step through the hatch directly into the main cabin. The room contains ten rows of twelve seats, with an isle down the center.

There is a subtle, low-pitch hum resonating throughout the ship. Sarah takes a couple cautious steps.

SARAH

Artificial gravity. Nice.

At the front of the main cabin's center aisle are three steps leading up to the elevated cockpit area, yielding an unobstructed view of the two pilot's seats from nearly anywhere in the cabin.

Overhead and to the rear of the pilot's seats is large LED countdown clock. Currently it reads:

"FIRST CONTACT: 31-DAYS 16-HOURS 23-MINUTES 08-SECONDS"

There is a conspicuous, forty-foot void between the last row of seats and the main cabin's rear wall.

Running lengthwise behind the rows of seats are a series of recessed tracks in the floor, coinciding with the legs of the crew's seats.

John notices Sarah's preoccupation with the tracks. He motions to a pair of seats in the third row as the intercom blurts out a quick request from COMMANDER RUTTGENS.

COMMANDER RUTTGENS (O.S.)

Pick any seat you want, but get into 'em quick. The gel will need a few minutes to conform to your shape. Short... tall... skinny... fat... it don't matter.

(clearing his throat)

I'd also like to welcome you aboard the Salvation One. I'm Commander Ruttgens... and this capable gentleman to my left goes by Steele.

Once they're strapped in, John turns to Sarah.

JOHN

Those tracks in the floor --

SARAH

Yes, a couple of the crew were telling me about them. They're like huge shock absorbers for the seats.

Sarah runs her foot across the tracks several times.

SARAH (CONT'D)

This entire block of seats is going to slide to the back of the cabin when they engage the external-combustion drive, aren't they?

John answers her concerns with a grimace and a quick nod.

JOHN

So... you're OK with that?

SARAH

It's better than looking like a bug on a windshield.

In the cockpit, Commander Ruttgens along with Steele run through a long list of last minute diagnostics, referring repeatedly to their crumpled cheat-sheets.

Giving a quick nod to Steele, Commander Ruttgers rises from his seat to make his final rounds in the main cabin.

Even with the weight of the entire Earth on his shoulders, he was standing tall, his six-foot-four stature exuding authority.

MISSION CONTROL (RADIO)

We have your trajectory coordinates and are ready for uplink to your computers.

STEELE

Roger. We're closing in on departure... just need to make sure everyone's strapped in.

Last minute adjustments are being made to the crew's restraints as Ruttgers finishes his rounds.

COMMANDER RUTTGENS

I'd kinda like to get this show on the road.

John and Sarah check the tension on their harnesses.

COMMANDER RUTTGENS (CONT'D)

If you're strapped in, with all five straps, then you're ready.

Sarah makes a quick inventory of the crew.

SARAH

There's a lot of empty seats.

JOHN

This ship was designed to carry a crew of over four hundred... and we only have about one fifty. Remember, this was originally outfitted for the colonization of Mars.

Sarah nods in acknowledgment.

COMMANDER RUTTGENS

Looks like we're ready. Mission Control... let's light the fuse.

MISSION CONTROL (RADIO)

Quick count?

COMMANDER RUTTGENS

Why the hell not?

MISSION CONTROL (RADIO)

Then let's go in...

INT. SERIES OF SHOTS - SARAH'S MEMORY - (NUMBERS ARE V.O.)

"10" The Moon - disintegrating in the starlit sky.

"9" The Mirror Material - rolling over the Aurora.

"8" The Aurora - wrapped within in the mirror material.

"7" Mount Everest - The top of the mountain disintegrating.

"6" The Cruise Ship - Being hurled into space.

"5" Morocco - The devastation from a direct impact.

"4" The Aurora - escaping from the mirror material.

"3" The Grid - Being tested at the Pulse-Electronics Lab.

"2" The Grid - Holding back the satellite dish.

"1" The Salvation One - Being approached from the rear.

"IGNITION" A CLOSE UP of Sarah's face - with a look of unwavering determination.

EXT. SALVATION ONE - SAME

A BLACK SCREEN

Amidst total silence, the Salvation One's twelve outer nozzles simultaneously burst into flames.

The Earth steadily diminishes in both size and clarity as the craft accelerates toward its destiny.

INT. SALVATION ONE/MAIN CABIN - SAME

In the cockpit, Commander Ruttgers and Steele are squeezed deep within their gel-filled seats.

The Salvation One begins to shake violently as it accelerates.

As the speed increases, the shake and shutter of the craft also intensifies.

COMMANDER RUTTGRS

(buffeting)

Mission Control. We have ignition.

MISSION CONTROL (RADIO)

Roger. God be with you. There's about seven and a half billion people down here, praying for your success.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS
 (buffeting)
 Tell 'em not to worry. We got this.

Several warning lights are flashing on the instrument panel. Steele motions to Commander Ruttgers, who looks, then shrugs them off.

Soon, the main engines are shut down, diminishing the rate of acceleration.

Freeing himself from the grasp of the gel, John gazes at Sarah.

JOHN
 You can open your eyes now.

Sarah attempts to turn toward John only to find that her head is hopelessly wedged, deep within the gel.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 You ready for the next phase?

SARAH
 As ready as ever. How long --

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS (V.O.)
 Rigging external drive. Dumping
 fuel in 3...2...1... Ignition.

Sarah clamps down on the sides of her seat, grits her teeth, and closes her eyes.

EXT. SALVATION ONE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The Salvation One glides swiftly by, without a sound. A faint vapor trail can be seen forming closely behind the craft.

Within an instant, the ever-widening cloud of vapor ignites with a near-blinding flash, accompanied by total silence, accelerating the Salvation One quickly from view.

Seconds later, something is awry. A portion of the vapor trail directly behind a port side nozzle begins to sputter and flash erratically.

INT. SALVATION ONE/MAIN CABIN - SAME

The Salvation One's forward momentum fiercely thrusts the crew's pneumatically mounted seats perilously close to the main cabin's rear wall.

The craft begins to shudder destructively, veering hard to port, compressing the entire crew to the starboard side of their seats.

STEELE
 Abort! Abort!

The Salvation One's acceleration immediately diminishes. The rows of seats begin to inch their way forward.

SARAH
 Oh... what was that?

JOHN
 I have no clue. You okay?

Sarah nods to him and attempts to look about the cabin. Breathing heavily, she begins to nervously bite her lip.

COMMANDER RUTTGER
 We didn't get a clean burn. The fuel ignited just fine, but, let's see... we're now traveling at...

Commander Ruttgers hastily searches the instrument panel.

COMMANDER RUTTGRS
 ...a little over ninety-five thousand, but about three degrees off the heading we should be on. Damn!

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)
 Salvation One. What's your status?

Commander Ruttgers motions for Steele to respond.

STEELE
 We had to abort. The external drive fired erratically. Felt like we were inside a centrifuge.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)
 Sounds like a clogged nozzle.

STEELE
 Roger that. I guess we'll just have to suit up and take a look.

COMMANDER RUTTGRS
 Get team Alpha out there. They're the pros from MIT.

EXT. SALVATION ONE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Approaching the outside perimeter of a massive port side nozzle, a four-man technical team confronts an array of translucent amber and red crystal formations.

Thousands of knife-like, razor-sharp crystals are jutting outward in every direction. Some measuring over forty feet in length, extending well beyond the confines of the nozzle.

TEAM LEADER

Sir, we found the problem. There's a frickin' mountain of fuel that's crystallized in nozzle number three.

STEELE (V.O.)

Any way to remove it?

TEAM LEADER

Affirmative. I think the sonic-blasters should do the trick.

STEELE (V.O.)

Any estimates?

TEAM LEADER

We should have her clean as a whistle within an hour.

Powering up their sonic-blasters, they begin the arduous task of removing the debris from the nozzle.

TEAM LEADER (CONT'D)

Whoa... Take it slow. There could still be a ton of pressure built up behind --

BOOM!

The nozzle instantly discharges the remaining debris from its inner walls, causing the Salvation One to lunge forward.

INT. SALVATION ONE - MAIN CABIN - SAME

The sudden jolt from the nozzle's discharge simultaneously sends every standing crew member to the floor, sliding them toward the cabin's rear wall.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS

Everyone okay? Better strap in. Right now.

STEELE

(into microphone)

Team one, what happened out there? Come in. Come in.

The entire crew waits impatiently for a response.

COMMANDER RUTTGERS

Damn it! Someone's going to have to get out there and see what the Hell just happened.

Commander Ruttgers promptly selects two of the crew for a space-walk.

EXT. SALVATION ONE - CONTINUOUS

The two crewmen reach the rear of the craft and inspect the port nozzles, which are completely clear. They then turn to survey the void of space behind the craft.

Telescopic heat sensing lenses are affixed to their helmets. They continue their scan of space for several minutes.

CREWMAN #1

Sir, the nozzles are clear, but there's no trace of the men.

COMMANDER RUTTGERS

One more sweep, then get back in here. We'll have some sort of a memorial service en route.

INT. SALVATION ONE - MAIN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The entire crew is strapped back in and ready to go.

STEELE

Mission Control, we have altered course point one six degrees.

MISSION CONTROL (RADIO)

Confirmed. Good luck.

COMMANDER RUTTGERS

We'll call you on the other side of five hundred thousand.

(turning to the crew)

This may have a little more kick than before. Ignition in... 3... 2... 1!

EXT. SALVATION ONE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Once again, the Salvation One glides swiftly and silently by, as a faint vapor trail begins to form closely behind the craft.

The cloud of fuel vapor suddenly ignites with a near-blinding flash, accompanied with complete and total silence.

As the Salvation One accelerates quickly from view, it's traveling on course and in a straight line - with a clean, even burn behind all six nozzles.

INT. SALVATION ONE - MAIN CABIN - SAME

As if it were rear-ended by a train, the Salvation One lunges forward with more force than the previous launch, slingshotting the rows of seats firmly to the rear of the cabin.

As the acceleration continues, the craft once again begins to shake and shudder violently - nearing the intensity of certain self-destruction.

Then suddenly, without warning, a surrealistic calm blankets the entire craft and crew. All is quiet. The rows of seats begin to inch their way forward.

SARAH

Are we dead? Did we just die?

JOHN

I'm... I'm really not sure.

An announcement from Commander Ruttgers fills the air with the reassurance that they are indeed, still alive and well.

COMMANDER RUTTGRERS

We're there. Five hundred thousand... plus. External drive is off-line.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Congrats on crossing the threshold.

COMMANDER RUTTGRERS

Roger that. This baby hauls ass!

INT. SALVATION ONE - DAY

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT - T-MINUS 27 DAYS AND COUNTING"

After firing its retro rockets intermittently, the Salvation One comes to a full stop several miles from the Intruder.

Sarah has taken the co-pilot's seat for an unobstructed view of the Intruder.

Cautiously, at her command, the Salvation One approaches the Intruder's coordinates.

SARAH

This is good. It gives us some space for staging, without having to worry about the cloud.

Sarah turns to address the crew, then scans the nearly empty main cabin with an expression of surprise.

SARAH (CONT'D)

That was fast. I assume they're all in the cargo bays.

Commander Ruttgers shakes his head and unstraps himself. Sarah also releases her harnesses and begins to rise.

COMMANDER RUTTGRERS

Nope, the briefing room. You stay here. We don't want anything to shift into the path of a rocket sled or cargo.

Sarah affirms his command, with a look of disappointment, then resumes her survey of the mass, slowly sliding back into the seat.

Commander Ruttgers stops and turns toward her.

RUTGRERS

Of course, we'll contact you before the meeting starts. I value your input.

Sarah nods with a simile.

INT. SALVATION ONE - BRIEFING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Adjacent to the rear of the main cabin is a sophisticated briefing room. The front wall is outfitted with several large LCD screens, monitoring equipment and vertical, transparent plotting charts.

The Night-Light team has assembled for a briefing to discuss the deployment and joining of the mirror material.

They are coordinating with Jenny and her team from Pulse-Electronics to integrate the mirror material, force fields and tethers.

A large, three-dimensional holographic image of the proposed grid floats vertically amidst the crew.

The grid's perimeter is octagonal, with hundreds of triangle shaped segments dividing up the middle, each with its own centralized sphere to generate the force field.

INT. SALVATION ONE - OBSERVATION DECK - LATER

At the panoramic observation window, Sarah installs an experimental lens on the ship's telescope. She eases herself down to the eyepiece, then smiles confidently.

Rising from the scope, she backs into Commander Ruttgers. Startled, she wheels around.

COMMANDER RUTTGERS

Mind if I take a look?

Sarah smiles and motions him to the eyepiece.

LOOKING THROUGH THE SHIP'S TELESCOPE,

with the Sun now positioned directly behind the Intruder, it is now slightly visible.

Although not well defined, it can be detected as a dark gray mass, masking the stars positioned behind it.

COMMANDER RUTTGERS (CONT'D)

Impressive -- but you can see it better than this, correct?

SARAH

Yes, I can see it as if it were a beautiful, vivid sunset on this other scope... without any special lens.

COMMANDER RUTTGERS

How poetic. Too bad it's out to kill us.

John walks up behind Sarah and holds her snugly, as they silently gaze out of the massive observation window.

SARAH

John... remember when I used to say that the Sun was nothing more than a bright star in the nighttime?

(she pauses)

I take it back.

John takes his turn at the ship's telescope.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Isn't it amazing how something so incredibly breathtaking can also be so deadly?

EXT. THE GRID - LATER (IN SPACE)

The cargo bay door is wide open. The mirror material is being spooled out, in fifty foot widths, with the aid of several rocket sleds.

It now extends hundreds of miles into the distance.

As the perimeter sections are being bonded together, a TECHNICIAN notices a major concave imperfection in part of the material.

TECHNICIAN (COMMUNICATOR)
BENEDICT, are you in a good position to iron out that buckle in section thirty?

BENEDICT (COMMUNICATOR)
Roger. I see it. Please advise.

TECHNICIAN (COMMUNICATOR)
Take PHILLIPS and see if you can nudge it back in line with the rest of the material.

BENEDICT (COMMUNICATOR)
Copy that. Phillips, let's go.

Without a word, BENEDICT takes off, followed by PHILLIPS. Reminiscent of jet skis frolicking on the water, the two rocket sleds reach the outer edge of the material, slide into a hairpin turn and disappear over the top.

Behind the material, on its sunny side, the two rocket sleds make their way toward the convex buckle.

They fire a few quick retro rocket bursts to slow their approach.

Closing in on the center of the convex bulge, they ease the noses of their rocket sleds against the material and slowly throttle up.

As the material flattens out, they again fire their retros to halt their forward momentum.

The retro blasts send the material over-center. It begins to reconfigure into a concave indentation, concentrating the Sun's deadly rays on their position.

The intensified rays take the two men off guard. They raise their hands to shield their eyes from the welder-bright flash, but it's too late.

The two men, along with their crafts, spontaneously combust within a flash of flames and smoke, sending burned slivers of ash in all directions.

Back on the front side, the Technician observes the buckle drifting too far forward.

TECHNICIAN (COMMUNICATOR)
The mirror is drifting too far forward.
Can someone fly over the top and see
what's going on with those two?

STEVE (COMMUNICATOR)
I'll take a look.

STEVE blasts up and over the top, slows and cautiously surveys the area.

Passing slightly off center of the indentation, he is greeted with a blinding light and a heavy puff of smoke from the right elbow of his spacesuit.

He swats the source of the smoke several times in an attempt to extinguish it, causing his glove to ignite.

He fires his retros, backs up, then comes to a full stop.

Steve rummages through his tool kit and removes an adjustable wrench. He lightly tosses it directly across the center of the indentation.

Spinning slowly, it nears the center of the buckle and begins to glow - first red, then white, then it vaporizes.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Holy shit.

Returning to the top of the material, he opens communications.

STEVE (COMMUNICATOR) (CONT'D)
No trace of them. That area where
the buckle is... It's gotta be ten
thousand degrees. They're gone!

TECHNICIAN (COMMUNICATOR)
Understood.
(somberly)
My God, what a way to go.

INT. SALVATION ONE/BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT - 21 DAYS AND COUNTING"

There is an air of excitement in the briefing room. The entire crew has assembled to receive their final assignments.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS

This is the day we've been working
toward ever since the Moonbase-
Tranquility incident.

Sarah waves a pencil in the air and is acknowledged by
Commander Ruttgers.

SARAH

I can't get a definitive answer
from Earth on this, but there's a
good chance that our trajectory
calculations are a bit off.

Sarah makes her way to the transparent chart to illustrate.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Earlier contacts with the first...
Intruders may have pushed Earth out
into a slightly higher orbit.

(looking at some notes)

I would advise that we pull the cloud
an additional thousand miles past our
original projections, just to be safe.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS

I'm all for going along with Sarah
on this. Let's do it.

INT. SALVATION ONE - OBSERVATION DECK - DAY

At the observation window, Sarah is rapidly pacing, back and
forth, the length of the window. She briskly wipes the palms
of her hands against the side of her jumpsuit.

Through the window, a silver octagonal grid can be seen,
filled with innumerable triangle-shaped segments, stretching
hundreds of miles into the distance.

The force field generators are also in place, as are the
metallic spheres.

Eight shuttles are in position to commence their Herculean
effort, tied off with a series of tethers at each of the
grid's eight corners.

John scans the entire labyrinth and flashes Commander
Ruttgers a thumbs up.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS

Let's light 'em up.

The force fields are activated, lighting up the voids with a crimson red glow and producing a high-frequency hum that permeates the ship, pulsating in unison with the Salvation One's subtle vibrations.

JOHN

Okay... we're just going to ease into this thing and see what happens.

Sarah concentrates through the observation window, then drops down and gazes into her telescope.

The shuttles ease their way forward. Trailing behind, the mirror begins to bow slightly.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Sarah... can you see any contact?

SARAH

Not yet, John. The mother lode is just about a half a mile ahead.

John and Commander Ruttgers stand breathless, rotating their focus between the shuttles, the tethers and the mirror.

SARAH (CONT'D)

3... 2... 1... Contact.

Sarah looks up through the window as the tethers twist and tighten. The grid bows severely in the middle as all eight shuttles come to an abrupt halt.

Reminiscent of an immense parachute, the grid takes hold of the invisible mass and begins to ease it forward.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I see some movement. It's working!

INT. SALVATION ONE - OBSERVATION DECK - LATER

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT - T-MINUS 16 DAYS AND COUNTING"

The overall scene from Sarah's observation window is showing some progress.

The shuttles have moved over a third of the cloud three thousand miles, without mishap.

Within the blink of an eye, everything changes, as a series of tether lines SNAP.

The recoiling lines slam into the rear of the Argo, severing its aft nozzles and fuel cells.

Inside the Salvation One, Sarah freezes in shock as the Argo spins out of control, closing in on her position.

It barely avoids a collision with the Salvation One.

EXT. ARGO - CONTINUOUS (IN SPACE)

The Argo shoots past the Salvation One. The crew feverishly fires their retro rockets in an attempt to slow its uncontrolled flight into the void of space.

The Argo finally comes to a complete halt, forty miles past the Salvation One.

ARGO (COMMUNICATOR)

We're okay... What does the damage look like from your position?

STEELE (V.O.)

The tethers took out your fuel cells... nozzles... everything.

INT. SALVATION ONE - OBSERVATION DECK - CONTINUOUS

Sarah is intensely studying the situation through the scope.

SARAH

The rest of you have to come to a full stop. The cloud is slipping out where the tethers broke.

INT. SALVATION ONE - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

The crews have been assembled to assess the situation. The long days and stress are now wearing heavily on their faces.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS

We need to inspect every tether in the network. That could have been catastrophic.

STEELE

Agreed. Nothing moves until it's been tested and certified.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS

Remember, this only leaves us with five spare shuttles - and we're only thirty percent through the mission. At this rate, the Earth's still going to plow into the leading edge of this damned thing!

Commander Ruttgers motions to Sarah to take over the briefing.

Sarah hesitantly approaches the hologram, studying it in more detail with every step. She suddenly stops and spins around, facing the crew.

SARAH

If I may... I've been tracking our progress and our turnaround time is vastly improving...

(a little smile creeps onto her face)

...and remember, the Aurora, along with several other crafts will be here in two days.

JOHN

She's right. And there's a lot more material, crew and sleds on board them. We could set up two complete teams to move this stuff!

Almost in unison, the entire crew rises and approaches the image.

SARAH

Now that we've got accurate coordinates from Earth, we can make sure it won't collide with any portion of the Intruder.

A confident smile widens on Sarah's face. She turns back to the hologram and begins to plot some preliminary coordinates.

INT. SALVATION ONE - OBSERVATION DECK - DAY

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT - T-MINUS 9 DAYS AND COUNTING"

Sarah is peering

THROUGH HER TELESCOPE,

positioned at the observation window.

Eight shuttles are tethered to the main octagonal grid, now positioned at the near end of the Intruder.

On the far side, four of the remaining shuttles, the Aurora and two smaller rescue crafts have been tethered to another, smaller hexagonal grid, which is also up and running.

BACK TO SCENE

Steve is facing the opposite direction, studying the Earth via a pair of electron binoculars.

STEVE

It's hard to believe that little spot is coming toward us at nearly sixty-seven thousand miles per hour.

Sarah studies Steve for a moment, then approaches John. She gazes lovingly into his eyes.

SARAH

John... do you think we'll ever make it back to Earth?

John turns toward Sarah.

JOHN

I have no doubt.

INT. SALVATION ONE - OBSERVATION DECK - DAY

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT - T-MINUS 6 DAYS AND COUNTING"

Sarah is studying their progress through the observation window.

She turns to update a hologram of the original cloud with their current coordinates superimposed on top of it.

Turning toward John and Steve, she winces.

SARAH

Good... but not great.

The Earth can now be seen with the naked eye, appearing as a blue-green sphere, looming ever closer in the heavens.

Steve is taking a turn with the electron binoculars, while John and Sarah stand beside him, looking through the window at the overall picture.

STEVE

I think that's the States.

JOHN

What? OK, I really need to see this.

SARAH

(through her telescope)
He's right. I can see the West Coast --

A moment later and completely without warning, there is a loud BANG on the outside of the Salvation One's hull, followed by several additional POPS and CLANGS.

Streaking past the observation window, hundreds of meteoroids are penetrating the Intruder, disintegrating as they come into contact with the mass.

Unable to move, Sarah, John and Steve stand helplessly in awe at the magnitude of the event unfolding before them.

A new wave of impacts is upon them as a huge fragment glances off the Salvation One, with a resounding CLANG, jolting it severely and sending Sarah, John and Steve to the floor.

The fragment passes through a portion of the Intruder and strikes the Pathfinder head-on, obliterating it on impact.

Sarah, John and Steve once again attempt to stand as the Salvation One is again mercilessly assaulted with a sustained barrage of stones and fragments.

The ship is sent into an erratic roll, precariously exposing the huge observation windows to the onslaught.

In an emergency evasive maneuver, Steele fires every port side retro simultaneously in an attempt to reverse their direction... It works.

When the smoke clears, the Constellation, Intrepid, Liberty and Pathfinder shuttles are gone. All that remains are the crippled Kitty Hawk, Horizon, Tango and Voyager shuttles, still tethered to the shredded remnants of the grid.

Miraculously, the hexagonal grid has sustained only minor damage. Several smaller passenger crafts also remain intact, having been positioned behind the Salvation One during the onslaught.

Inside the Salvation One's massive cargo bay, the Defiant and Pegasus shuttles had both been tucked safely away, undergoing routine maintenance.

The attack resulted in some minor cosmetic damage to one of the Aurora's wings, but nothing structural. The ship's fuselage and propulsion systems were fortunately spared from any damage.

EXT. SALVATION ONE - DAY

The Salvation One's hull has sustained heavy damage. Several clouds of escaping air can be seen near the aft section of the ship.

Numerous panels along the length of the ship have been pounded relentlessly.

One of the cargo bay doors has been twisted and torn open. Cargo is drifting from the doors, entangled within miles of mirror material and frayed tether lines.

Nearly half of the fuel cells have been collapsed or split open, spilling their contents freely into the void of space.

Six of the eighteen immense rocket nozzles at the rear of the Salvation One have been nearly hammered shut.

INT. SALVATION ONE - BRIEFING ROOM - 48 HOURS LATER

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT - T-MINUS 96 HOURS AND COUNTING"

Steele and several other crew members are gathering their composure in the briefing room.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS (V.O.)
Damage report! Casualties!

STEELE
We had a breach in the rear corridor, but it's blocked off for now. One of the main cargo doors is wasted, but we closed it off by sealing the starboard air lock.
(calculating)
Six of the nozzles are gone... so the external drive is no longer an option.

Commander Ruttgers is pacing as he wrings his hands, avoiding eye contact with anyone.

STEELE (CONT'D)
So... we lost at least six of our shuttles, but we still don't have an accurate assessment of the remaining shuttles, crew or grids.

JOHN
Inform Mission Control of our situation... and see if they can locate the source of that attack.

SARAH
That wasn't any sort of natural occurrence, was it?

JOHN
(scowling)
Not a chance.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)
All quadrants have been under constant surveillance around the clock. No crafts of any type have been detected from here to Saturn - not by us on Earth, or any outer defense satellites.

STEELE
Then if this attack was from the same vessel that dumped this atmosphere in our path...
(running the numbers)
...these fragments had to be incoming for three days or more.

Sarah turns on her heels and raises an index finger.

SARAH
Could they be cloaked?

STEELE
Doubtful. Especially when you think about their technology. Hell, they've basically been throwing rocks at us!

EXT. SALVATION ONE - DAY

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT - T-MINUS 72 HOURS AND COUNTING"

Every scrap of salvageable mirror material has been hastily stitched together to form a makeshift grid.

Two of the grid's corners are tethered to trios of rocket sleds to replace the missing shuttles.

The Salvation One remains the base of operations. Although severely damaged, life support and navigation systems are intact and functioning properly.

The severely damaged shuttles have been pulled far from the Intruder as to not interfere with the task at hand.

Continents on the Earth can now be seen with the naked eye, as it looms ever closer in the heavens.

INT. SALVATION ONE - OBSERVATION DECK - CONTINUOUS

Sarah is anxiously pacing at the panoramic observation window. She pauses, glancing over her shoulder, across the room to another window for a glimpse of Earth.

John, Steve, Commander Ruttgers and Steele enter the room in the midst of a heated discussion.

JOHN

Sarah, we've got word that NASA has compiled enough mirror material and pulse generators to nearly double what we have up here.

Before she can smile at the news, John continues.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Problem is, we'll have to take the Aurora all the way to the surface. It's the only thing still flying that can handle the payload.

Sarah sprints toward the men, inserting herself into the conversation.

SARAH

I'd like to go back to the lab. I have some data --

COMMANDER RUTTTERS

That's a no can do. You're the only one can see this cloud.

SARAH

Not so! The telescopes I've rigged are more than adequate to move the fleet. I need to gather some final telemetry information myself.

(pleading)

I don't just want to do this... I need to do this.

EXT. HENDERSON'S AIRFIELD - SUNRISE

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT - T-MINUS 24 HOURS AND COUNTING"

The Aurora is taxiing toward a gigantic hanger, surrounded by NASA vans and flatbeds, overstuffed with parts and equipment to be loaded onto the Aurora.

Sarah and John exit the craft down a towering mobile stairway.

Before they hit the tarmac, maintenance, repair and loading teams have already surrounded the Aurora.

John takes both of Sarah's hands, pulls her close and looks deep into her eyes.

JOHN

Be at the baseball field on Willow by five o'clock. Be early. A chopper will bring you back here, to Henderson's.

Sarah nods, gives him a quick peck on the cheek and attempts to leave, but he refuses to let go. He frowns at her.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Promise me you'll be careful... and stay out of the city.

SARAH

OK... Five o'clock. Got it. You worry too much. What could go wrong?

He releases his grip. Sarah bounds across the runway and jumps into an SUV. She waves to John as she speeds off, screeching her tires.

INT. NIGHT-LIGHT LABS - THREE HOURS LATER

Sarah is feverishly rummaging through several piles of technical data while viewing a monitor. Three printers are simultaneously spitting out reams of technical data. Her cell phone RINGS. She answers it immediately.

SARAH

Sarah Jennings.

JOHN (V.O.)

(on the phone)

Sarah... Please don't tell me you're still at the lab. If you're not at that field when that chopper touches down, his orders are to lift off and not look back... do you understand?

SARAH

(checking her watch)

Got it! Quit worrying. I've got two hours for a ten minute drive.

JOHN

No you don't! I just heard the seventh street bridge is closed.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

You're going to have to cut through
the city!

Sarah snatches her flash drive and puts it in her pocket. She then scoops up as much printed data as possible and crams it into her briefcase, as she scurries out the door.

EXT. INNER CITY - CONTINUOUS

The Sun's late-day rays filter through the drizzle and soot of an inner city that has been thrown into chaos.

Hordes of desperate people, with nowhere to go, roam the streets.

En route to Willow Street, Sarah is threading her way through neighborhoods littered with smoking debris and wrecked cars.

Without warning, a resounding BANG startles her. Her SUV veers hard to the left, breaking her grip on the steering wheel, as the vehicle bounces onto a curb.

Climbing out, she is greeted by an ominous wind accompanied with a slight mist. She brushes her dampened hair to one side and surveys her surroundings. She is alone.

Sarah cautiously peers around her door to assess the situation. Her front left tire is completely flat, with a jagged piece of rusty metal protruding from the tread.

SARAH

Oh God! Please... Not now!

Approaching the tire, she lowers herself to take a closer look. Placing her hand on the ground, she immediately recoils in pain.

She turns her palm upward to discover the head of a roofing nail sticking out of her hand.

As she slowly removes the nail, she notices that all four of the tires are flat!

Backing away in horror, her attention is drawn to thousands of roofing nails strewn on the street.

Voices can be heard behind her. She whirls around as two large, raggedly dressed men, MAN ONE and MAN TWO, approach, their faces tarnished with ash and sweat.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Oh, thank God... can you please
help me? My tires --

MAN ONE
We already helped. We put them
nails there.

Sarah looks back at the ground and her SUV in disbelief.

SARAH
Why in God's name?

MAN TWO
(turning)
We got us a hot one here!

She can now make out three other men rapidly approaching -
MAN THREE, MAN FOUR and MAN FIVE.

As the second group acknowledges, she makes a break for her
SUV, manages to get inside and locks the door.

Man Three forcibly knocks on her side window with a baseball
bat as Sarah turns the key.

As the engine begins to turn over, she glances to her left
only to be ambushed with an impact to the window, showering
her with fragments of glass.

Shrieking, she shelters her eyes with both hands.

Her assailant stealthily reaches through the shattered window
and removes her keys from the ignition switch.

She again attempts to start the vehicle, only to find that
her keys are missing.

Quickly sliding across the seat, she is again showered with
glass fragments as the passenger window meets the same fate.

The driver's side door suddenly bursts open, nearly shearing
it from its hinges.

Struggling, she attempts to grasp the steering wheel as she
is pulled from the vehicle and dropped to the street,
directly onto several more roofing nails.

Her face filled with agony, she rises to confront a total of
five men, encircling her, and closing in.

She slowly backs away, only to encounter the side of her
vehicle, hopelessly blocking her path of escape.

Man Three dangles the keys, taunting her.

SARAH

Give me the keys... Please! I have
to be somewhere... You don't
understand, I'm already late.

Sarah lunges forward, taking a swipe at the keys, only to be
blocked by Man Two.

Man Two seizes her arm, as Man Three entangles a fistful of
her hair, wrenching her head relentlessly backward.

Standing dangerously close, Man One slowly looks her over,
smiles and spits.

MAN ONE

You gonna be even later girl. You
is definitely in the wrong place at
the wrong time.

Man One spins Sarah around and wraps his arms around her, as
he whispers in her ear.

MAN ONE (CONT'D)

Now, we gonna have a little party... and
when we done, we let you go...maybe.

The men simultaneously break into laughter.

But the laughter is cut short by the sound of shattered glass
being ground under the heel of a boot.

The men whirl around in THOMAS' direction, to be met by the
silhouette of a formidable man standing a mere ten feet away.

THOMAS

(nearly inaudibly)
Party's over.

He briefly makes eye contact with Sarah, her face now soaked
with tears.

SARAH

(silently mouthing)
Please help me.

MAN ONE

Who the hell is you?

THOMAS

I'm the guy that's been tracking
you for the past four hours.

(gritting his teeth)
You know... right after you
murdered my wife and daughter.

Without warning, Man Three charges Thomas with a baseball bat. Effortlessly, Thomas reaches into his pocket, removes a semi-automatic pistol and severs the bat in half with a single shot.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Big mistake. You brought a bat to a gunfight.

Three more of the men begin to cautiously approach Thomas.

Man Two opens a switchblade and begins to toss it confidently between his hands.

Suddenly the switchblade is in the air, hurling toward Thomas.

He swipes the knife out of the way with the barrel of the pistol and drops Man Two with a single shot to the head.

Thomas then opens fire on Man One, Man Four and Man Five, as they charge, again dropping them all to the pavement.

Thomas lightly kicks the shoes of one of the motionless bodies, then turns back to Sarah, who is now being held in a choke hold by Man Three, with a knife blade across her neck.

MAN THREE

Stand back man! I mean it! I'll ram this blade right through her neck!

Thomas looks directly at Sarah, who is now trembling uncontrollably.

MAN THREE (CONT'D)

Hey man... if I even flinch...

Thomas surveys the situation, then raises his pistol and focuses directly on Man Three.

THOMAS

Hell, I doubt you'll flinch... Only one way to find out...

BANG!

Thomas drops Man Three with one shot to the head.

Thomas cautiously approaches Sarah, still trembling, as she attempts to make sense of the past several minutes.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Are you alright, ma'am?

SARAH
I think so. Are you a cop?

THOMAS
No ma'am, Marine.

He offers her his hand and she reluctantly takes it.

She stands and dusts herself off. She eyes Thomas top to bottom. There is a kindness in his face, instantly putting her at ease.

Thomas scans the five motionless bodies and takes a deep breath.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
They'll never hurt anyone again.

SARAH
I'm so sorry about your family...
and thank you.

Thomas nods, then makes a quick scan of the area.

Sarah looks at her watch in horror. She anxiously begins to back away, toward her SUV.

SARAH (CONT'D)
I have to get to the ballpark on
Willow.

THOMAS
You'll never make it there with
four flats.

SARAH
I have to meet a chopper to get to
Henderson's Airfield. There's a
ship, the Aurora, waiting to take
me off planet.

THOMAS
I thought I recognized you. You're
Sarah Jennings, with Night-Light.
You're all over the news.

Thomas looks around to get his bearings.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Come with me. I know a place that
will have just the right kind of
transportation for you.

Within minutes, they are standing inside a custom truck shop, next to a Monster Truck. Thomas checks out the cab and jumps to the ground.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

This thing's got the keys in it and a full tank of gas. Any problem driving a stick?

SARAH

I fly spaceships. I should be able to figure it out.

THOMAS

(sincerely)

No offense.

SARAH

None taken... By the way... what's your name?

THOMAS

Thomas.

SARAH

Come with me... We could use a good man like you, Thomas.

THOMAS

Can't. Unfinished business. You go and save the world. I'm going to try and save a small piece of it down here.

As Sarah begins to climb in, she is halted by Thomas.

He removes his pistol from its holster and slides in a full magazine. He begins to hand it to her, then pauses.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Know how to use one of these?

Sarah momentarily studies the weapon and shakes her head.

Thomas hastily demonstrates how to cock and release the hammer, how to sight the target and the proper way to hold the firearm. He then hands it to her.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Pretty simple. Keep the hammer down 'till you want to use it... Now at least you won't be alone.

SARAH

Thank you for everything.

Sarah stuffs the pistol into her pocket and climbs into the truck. She starts it up and puts the pedal to the metal.

EXT. CITY OUTSKIRTS - CONTINUOUS (17:00 HOURS)

Sarah is able to make up some time with the big truck. But the moment she begins to execute her turn onto Willow Street, she is assaulted with the unmistakable sound of a helicopter powering up for lift-off.

Only yards from the playing field entrance, she watches helplessly as the helicopter takes to flight.

She mashes the pedal to the floor, cuts the corner, and plows through the baseball field's perimeter fence.

For a fleeting moment, it almost seems as if she will reach her target.

Pacing the chopper, she orchestrates a desperate barrage of horn BLASTS, to no avail. The chopper is too loud and climbing fast.

Hopelessly losing ground, the truck begins to sputter and stall, coasting toward the middle of the field, coming to rest on top of the pitcher's mound.

She glances at the fuel gauge only to find that the needle is resting on empty.

Realizing that the fuel tank had been punctured by the fence, she mercilessly pounds the steering wheel while screaming hysterically.

EXT. HENDERSON'S AIRSTRIP - CONTINUOUS

A helicopter lands. John lowers his head and rushes to the craft.

Several people climb out, but Sarah is conspicuously missing.

As the helicopter begins to throttle up, John swings the door open and leans in to speak to the PILOT. The pilot motions to close the door.

The two of them briefly converse over the noise and wind generated by the aircraft.

JOHN

Where's the woman from the playing field on Willow?

PILOT

There wasn't anyone there.

JOHN

You'll have to go back.

PILOT

No can do. Got my orders.

He again motions to close the door. John reluctantly obliges.

The helicopter throttles up and swiftly disappears into the distance.

John attempts to contact Sarah by cell phone, Her line is dead.

He scrambles across the tarmac to the Aurora, now surrounded by a chain-link fence.

He threads his way through a throng of desperate people, flashes a pass to an armed guard, and is quickly allowed to pass.

The Aurora is positioned horizontally atop a massive articulating launch pad.

Nearly filled to capacity, several huge forklifts are attempting to force in some additional, last minute cargo.

General Parsons meets John at the base of the stairs as the craft's four engines are warming up in preparation for launch.

JOHN

Sarah wasn't on the chopper.

GENERAL PARSONS

Look, John, I know what she means to you, but the mission has to come first. You're the pilot, you have to go.

JOHN

Hell, half my crew can fly this thing as well as I can, but Sarah is absolutely vital. She can see far more than even our most advanced equipment ever will.

General Parsons agrees. John whirls around and points to a lone cargo plane.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I told Sarah to be at the ballpark and that's where I'll find her. If we don't make it back in time, I'll commandeer that cargo plane and head due north. We'll make it.

General Parsons nods as he heads up the stairs, then turns back to John.

GENERAL PARSONS

Right now, our priority is relocating the entire fleet far enough out of Earth's path so we don't add to the problem. We'll keep moving the cloud up until the last minute... Officially, we've only moved just little over fifty-five percent of our original goal.

John acknowledges the stats as he opens his GPS locator.

He rushes to his car and heads off in the direction of the city.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

John is frantically searching for Sarah's vehicle while keeping an eye on his GPS locator.

Upon reaching the baseball field, he notices a monster truck, resting on the mound.

Arriving at the truck's side, he gives the horn a couple quick BEEPS.

They both burst out of their vehicles and rush into each other's arms.

SARAH

I didn't think I'd ever see you again.

JOHN

I'd never leave without you. Besides, there's still time to catch the --

In the distance, John spots the Aurora as it streaks skyward. Sarah spins around and gasps.

SARAH

I'm so sorry.

JOHN

Don't worry, there's a cargo plane at Henderson's. We'll fly north. Remember the survival list?

SARAH

Get close to the poles and stay away from fault lines.

EXT. HENDERSON'S AIRSTRIP - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT - T-MINUS 17 HOURS AND COUNTING"

Arriving at the airstrip, Sarah and John drive past a deserted, near vertical launch pad, still smoldering from the heat of the Aurora's engine's blast.

Sarah looks somberly into the sky. A faint vapor trail is quickly dissipating.

John proceeds to the lone camouflage painted cargo plane. He yanks on the emergency brakes before they are completely stopped, screeching the tires.

INT. CARGO PLANE - CONTINUOUS

The two of them quickly board the abandoned plane.

Much to their surprise, they find it nearly loaded to its weight capacity with a massive rocket engine, secured within the cargo bay.

Sarah closes the cargo hatch as John makes his way to the cockpit.

As John commences with the start-up procedure for the first engine, several people begin to run across the tarmac toward the plane, shouting and waving. Soon there are a dozen more.

John continues with the start-up procedures on the second engine.

Sarah peers out of the port-side cargo windows at the crowd, now numbering nearly forty.

SARAH

John, we can't just leave them.

JOHN

There's no way we can take them all.
We'd never make it off the ground!

Sarah scans the group of forlorn faces.

SARAH

My God, John... we can't just leave
them here to die!

JOHN

Sarah, nobody's going to die, just
because they're stranded here at
Henderson's!

SARAH

Look at them. They know we're their
only hope... and they have children!

JOHN
Don't you dare open that hatch!

SARAH
Go to Hell, John!

Ignoring John's continuing protests, Sarah unlocks the rear cargo hold door and swings it wide open.

The desperate crowd, now numbering well over sixty, storms the plane.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Women and children only...
please... there's not enough --

Amidst the pandemonium, Sarah is forcibly pulled outside the plane, thrown to the tarmac and nearly trampled unconscious.

Unaware of Sarah's plight, John inches the plane forward, dispersing the remainder of the crowd.

JOHN
Sarah! Close the hatch!

The SLAM of the hatch signifies that the time has come to leave.

John throttles up and taxis to the runway in preparation for takeoff.

EXT. THE TARMAC - CONTINUOUS

As the plane builds speed, Sarah painfully rises from the pavement, standing within a small group of people.

She watches in silence as the plane laboriously increases its speed, roaring off the end of the runway and into the air.

Sarah falls to her knees, breathing heavily. She surveys her surroundings, then bows her head in despair.

INT. CARGO PLANE - CONTINUOUS

John is trying to control his ascent as well as scan the cargo hold. He seizes the sleeve of PASSENGER ONE.

JOHN
Go in the back and find a woman
named Sarah. She's pretty, about
five-eight, with long, brown hair.

Passenger One nods and disappears, only to return a few moments later, shaking his head.

PASSENGER ONE

There's no one back there named Sarah.

John leaps from his seat, grabs Passenger One, spins him around and plants him firmly at the controls.

JOHN

Just keep the wheel right here. We want to keep this...
(pointing at the compass)
...due north.

John frantically searches the hold of the plane.

Outraged, John returns to the cockpit, extricates Passenger One from the pilot's seat, drops the nose and initiates a tight starboard turn, heading back to the airfield.

EXT. THE TARMAC - SAME

Motionless, Sarah concentrates intently on the plane, as it nearly fades from view.

Suddenly, the aircraft abruptly banks hard to the right and begins its descent.

As the plane approaches, a smile envelops her face as she races toward the runway, waving her arms and screaming at the top of her lungs.

INT. CARGO PLANE - CONTINUOUS

John is nearly through his 180-degree course correction when PASSENGER TWO along with several others rush him and attempt to turn the plane back to its original course.

The struggle diverts the plane into a quick nose-dive, slamming almost everyone into the top of the fuselage.

John fights to regain control of the plane, as Passenger One comes to his aid in an attempt to keep the other passengers at bay - but the two men are soon overpowered.

With several passengers on either side of him, John is forced to maneuver north, away from Sarah's position, once again.

EXT. THE TARMAC - SAME

Sarah is pacing nervously as the drama unfolds in the sky.

Still focused on the plane, she nearly collapses at the sight of it turning away from her.

She watches in silence as it fades from view.

Sarah makes her way back to John's car. She sits behind the wheel and probes for the keys. They're missing.

SARAH

Perfect.

She arduously pulls herself from the vehicle and scans the skies. Nothing. Gently opening the door, she slides onto the seat. Reclining slowly, she begins to cry.

EXT. THE TARMAC - DAWN

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT T-MINUS 8 HOURS AND COUNTING"

Sarah wakes at the first sign of light, disoriented.

She slides out of the car, studies her surroundings and begins an aimless trek down the airfield's access road.

Nearing the main road, she pauses, looking left and right. She digs into her pocket and extracts a flash drive.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Happy face - West. Blank side - East.

She flips the flash drive into the air, concentrating on it as if her very life depended on it. She catches it and slowly opens her fist, exposing the 'happy face' decal.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Happy face... West.

She apprehensively turns left and begins shuffling West, with the Sun at her back.

EXT. TWO LANE ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Trudging slowly westward, Sarah snaps from her trance, revolving swiftly as the RUMBLE from a group of motorcycles is upon her.

Realizing their presence too late to run for cover, she turns away to shield her face from the pack.

As they pass, their downshifting sequences signal their interest in her. They come to a complete stop several hundred feet ahead.

She freezes in mortal terror as, one by one, they return to her position, blocking any hope of escape.

BOBBY, their leader, rolls close to Sarah as if to intimidate her. He slowly swings out his kickstand and rests the bike.

He removes his helmet, exposing his weathered face, complemented with a mustache reminiscent of a push broom.

BOBBY

What's a pretty girl like you doin' walkin' in the middle of nowhere...
 (looking at his watch)
 ...four hours before the end of the world? Need a lift?

SARAH

No thank you.

BOBBY

Better take me up on it... not a lot of traffic out here today.

Bobby swings his leg over the bike and leans back against the seat. Looking down, he taps his boot on a couple small stones, then kicks them to the side.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

You just going to walk for the next four hours? Come on, we have a camp west, the same direction you're going. You've got a better chance near the coast than out in the woods.

Sarah, her chest now heaving, puts both hands in her jacket, clutching the pistol with the right one.

SARAH

I said, no! I'm not in the habit of being picked up by biker gangs.

A low rumble sets over the crowd. Several of them answer her contemptuous remark with a series of quick REVS.

BOBBY

And I ain't in the habit of picking up rude little hitchhikers either, so I guess that makes us even. Now come on! I can't leave you out here alone.

As Bobby turns to obtain approval from the other bikers, Sarah seizes the opportunity and bolts for the woods.

Bobby winces at his friends, then takes off after her, as the rest of the group begins to LAUGH and CHEER him on.

Catching up to Sarah, Bobby wrestles her to the ground then quickly rises in front of her, dusting himself off.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Come on lady, I ain't got time --

Sarah swiftly snatches the pistol from her pocket and aims it directly at his groin. She cocks the hammer, tilts her head to the side and closes one eye.

SARAH
(very calmly)
Just... Leave... Me... Alone.

Bobby raises his arms and cautiously backs away.

BOBBY
Look lady, you can't stay here.
Keep the gun if you don't trust me,
but let's go.
(somberly)
If you wanna live... come with us.

Sarah scans her surroundings, then eases the pistol's hammer forward. She nods to him.

Bobby holds out his hand, but Sarah rises unassisted. They proceed back to his bike. He climbs on and she follows suit.

He turns to give her a comforting smile and a wink.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Bobby... my name's Bobby.

He begins to turn away, then swings around decisively and snatches the pistol from her.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
You won't be needing this... and I
ain't goin' anywhere with some
crazy woman on the back of my bike,
holding a gun to my head.

SARAH
I'm not crazy!

BOBBY
So you say... but you gotta be a
little crazy, just being out here,
all alone. I'll tell you what...

Bobby hands the pistol back to Sarah.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
I'll trust you, if you'll trust me.

Sarah smiles insincerely and shoves the pistol into her pocket. Bobby turns forward, eases the bike back into gear and speeds off as Sarah hangs on for dear life.

Every few seconds an AEV launches in the distance, their smoky trails signifying that the big event is not far off.

Sarah watches longingly as they climb.

As they turn off the main road and head down a gravel path, a BLAST of fire wheels Sarah around. A hot air balloon rises over a bluff directly behind them.

EXT. OREGON COASTLINE - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT T-MINUS 2 HOURS AND COUNTING"

Arriving at the surf, Bobby and Sarah slow to a stop near a golden spherical 'raft' measuring over twenty-five feet in diameter.

The raft's exterior is highly polished, reflecting the afternoon Sun's rays onto the surrounding landscape in a rhythmic pattern, as it gently rocks in the surf.

One side of the craft's outer skin has been dropped to form a small deck adjacent to the entry hatch. There are eight portholes surrounding the perimeter of the craft. The top sports more than a dozen radio antennas.

Sarah climbs off the bike, stretches, and looks around, concentrating on the Pacific Ocean's horizon.

Suddenly, she is brought back into the moment, as her mouth drops open in disbelief.

SARAH

Oh... My God! You're Rafters!

Bobby turns to momentarily eye the raft, then returns his full attention to Sarah.

BOBBY

You say that like it's a bad thing.

SARAH

It's just that I've run Rafter scenarios a hundred times on my computer and you've got about a fifty to one chance of survival.

Insulted by her assessment of their chances, Bobby SNARLS at her and points to his spherical-shaped raft.

BOBBY

Fifty to one there... or fifty to nothin' on the beach... take your pick, but make it snappy.

Sarah looks at the raft, then around at the surrounding area. Bobby eyes her up and down with a look of frustration.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

In or out?

Sarah cautiously steps into the raft's uninviting hatch and takes a quick look around. She then takes an unsteady step backward, her chest heaving.

SARAH

I'll take that one in fifty, thank you.

Taking another deep breath, she once again enters the craft. Looking up, she grimaces as she spots a sign over the door proclaiming "Survival is Secondary".

BOBBY

Maybe you're not so crazy after all.

INT. THE RAFT - CONTINUOUS

Sarah and Bobby step into the center of the raft where four other crew members are making last minute preparations for launch.

The lighting is dim, aided insufficiently by the craft's eight portholes.

There are six adjustable, padded seats mounted sturdily to the floor, each equipped with roller-coaster-type safety harnesses.

A table has been lifted and locked into place on the forward wall, surrounded by padded metal lockers, filling the remainder of the interior's perimeter.

BOBBY

Hey guys... this is Sarah.
(pointing individually)
That's Paul, Norm, Pete and Patty.

They all acknowledge Sarah's presence with a quick nod.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

That'll be your seat, over by that porthole. Why don't you take a quick sit down and see how it fits.

Sarah hesitantly steps over to the empty seat and slips into it, as she concentrates on the nearby porthole. She rocks back and forth several times to check the fit.

SARAH

Perfect... and it's nice to have that porthole here too, thanks.

Bobby warily studies Sarah's preoccupation.

BOBBY

You claustrophobic?

She answers his inquiry with a sheepish smile and a wince.

SARAH

Thanks for saving me a seat.

Bobby looks at her, studies the seat for a moment, and turns quietly away.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Did I say something wrong?

PETE

That was his wife, Susan's seat... About a month ago she went near the city for some provisions. Never came back. All we ever found was her jacket, in a dumpster.

Bobby reenters the raft and does a quick once-over, checking the raft's interior components and seats.

BOBBY

If anyone wants to take another stretch, better do it now. We're gettin' close to showtime.

EXT. OREGON COASTLINE - CONTINUOUS

The shoreline is lined with rafts and campfires as far as the eye can see in either direction. Every few moments, fireworks explode overhead, raising the level of anticipation even higher.

Bobby steps from the hatch of the raft and scans his surroundings, then lights up a cigarette. He takes a long, deep drag on it as he looks toward the heavens.

He tosses a tightly rolled, bright red jumpsuit to Sarah, takes another drag on his cigarette, then checks his watch.

BOBBY

Here's a jumpsuit for ya... We're
leavin' in five.

Sarah waves insincerely in his direction. She firmly
clutches a locket on her necklace, holding it close to her
heart as she makes another quick scan of the sky.

SARAH

John, I love you. Wherever you
are, may God be with you.

EXT. CARGO PLANE - SAME

The drone of the four-prop aircraft, flying at full throttle,
can be heard over the torrential rainfall.

Intermittent flashes of lightning reveal the hapless cargo
plane, as it arduously makes its way through the outermost
fringe of a seemingly endless thunderstorm.

INT. CARGO PLANE - CONTINUOUS

John is still at the controls of the aircraft. He is
surrounded by several other passengers, all doing their best
to keep their footing.

The plane is being severely buffeted by the turbulence within
the storm, continually lifting the passengers into the air
and abruptly slamming them back to the floor.

John flips on the cargo bay lights and turns to survey the
passengers within the hold.

He makes intense eye contact with a young girl of about
twelve, with fear deeply engraved in her face.

Returning her stare with a comforting smile, she attempts to
do the same.

John takes a quick glance at the instruments then removes a
small, crumpled photo of Sarah from his shirt pocket.

Holding it near the instrument panel for illumination, he
longingly studies the image for a moment, kisses it, then
slips it back into his pocket.

INT./EXT. CARGO PLANE - ARCTIC CIRCLE - YUKON TERRITORY -
CONTINUOUS

As the Sun begins to rise, John drops their altitude to just
above the treetops.

They soon happen upon an open, snow-covered plain, stretching for miles.

John banks hard and makes another pass over their potential landing site.

JOHN

(over the intercom)

We need to dump our remaining fuel and this rocket engine before we land. Unhook all of the tie-down straps and hang onto something. I'm opening the rear door.

With an 'all-clear' from the passengers, John opens the rear door and puts the plane into a steep climb.

Within seconds, the engine is ejected, tumbling toward the ground.

John closes the door and makes a hard starboard turn to line up another pass over their potential landing site.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Okay, everybody, we're going to touch down in a few minutes. Grab on to anything you can.

He dumps the fuel reserves and lowers the landing gear.

As the front tires make contact with the snow, the plane is drawn in deeply.

After a couple of short bounces, the the aircraft settles into a snowbank.

The plane's abrupt halt slides all of the passengers to the front bulkhead of the cargo hold, piling them on top of one another.

No injuries.

Once safely on the ground, John activates his GPS locator and finds that Sarah is now somewhere near the Oregon coastline.

He grabs the collar of Passenger Two and draws him in close.

JOHN (CONT'D)

We should have turned this plane around and picked up Sarah.

John releases him with a deliberate shove, sending him crashing to the floor.

INT./EXT. THE RAFT - NORTHERN PACIFIC OCEAN - SAME

SUPER: "FIRST CONTACT - T-MINUS FIFTEEN MINUTES AND COUNTING"

After motoring forty miles from the shoreline, the raft's engines are shut down. They are adrift.

Bobby rises and makes his way around the perimeter of the cabin for a final safety check.

BOBBY

Good to go.

Sarah grips steadfast to the rails that run from top to bottom on her seat. Her eyes are closed.

Beads of sweat begin to accumulate on her forehead. Her moving lips signify that she is praying.

The raft is nearly motionless as it floats atop the ocean's mirror-like surface.

Beginning as a slight rocking motion, the raft is suddenly hammered hard by a nearly vertical, fifty foot wall of water, rolling the craft several times.

Some of the massive, fast-moving waves actually submerge the raft for several moments, but it continues to breach the surface, righting itself after each consecutive assault.

The raft takes a terrible beating, losing most of its antenna array. As the turbulence subsides, the raft rises to the surface, amidst a sea covered with whitecaps and debris.

Floating panels from another raft slam into the side of the craft with a deafening CRASH, severely cracking one of the portholes.

INT./EXT. CARGO PLANE - ARCTIC CIRCLE - YUKON TERRITORY - SAME

A surrealistic calm comes over the plane's occupants, as each second ticks slowly by. Passenger Two looks at his watch.

PASSENGER TWO

4... 3... 2... 1...

Nothing. Seconds later, starting as a low rumble, then becoming nearly deafening, the entire landscape begins to shift toward the west, carrying the hapless aircraft with it.

Outside the plane, a thundering wall of snow crashes into the side of the defenseless craft.

The plane is mercilessly slid sideways, its port wing cutting a ragged trench in the snow ahead of the fuselage.

It rolls, shearing off the port side wing, closely followed by the loss of the starboard wing.

The passengers are tossed about the cargo hold like clothes in a dryer as the plane is pummeled by the approaching mass, rolling time and time again.

The fuselage continues to roll unencumbered, ahead of the snow's leading edge, eventually coming to rest, upside down, nearly a quarter-mile from its original landing site.

EXT. WORLDWIDE LOCATIONS - SAME

SHOTS: SOME ARE LAND-BASED - SOME ARE FROM SPACE - STARTING AS FULL SCREEN, THEN SPLIT-SCREEN WITH MANY AT A TIME.

The Far East comes into direct contact with the Intruder.

A calm blue sky, intermixed with feathery white clouds is instantly transformed into a nightscape filled with fire and blackness.

Portions of the Asian continent are swept into oblivion.

Within a three minute period, the Earth's rotation is accelerated eastward by nearly ten percent.

Buildings are simultaneously obliterated worldwide. Their fragmented remains strewn for miles as their foundations are ripped out from under them.

Oceans, lakes and rivers simultaneously shift to the west.

East Coast cities worldwide are assaulted by unfathomable tidal waves, disbursting even the mightiest structures within seconds.

West Coast cities are instantly toppled onto the barren floor of their formerly water-covered coastal reefs.

Cities are leveled, including Tokyo, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Sydney, Dubai, Moscow, Paris, London, New York, Toronto, Chicago, Saint Louis, Las Vegas, Seattle and San Francisco.

Enduring landmarks, such as The Great Wall of China, the Eiffel Tower, the Taj Mahal, the Pyramids, the Parthenon, the Roman Colosseum and America's Mount Rushmore are quickly reduced to rubble.

INT. THE RAFT - NORTHERN PACIFIC OCEAN - CONTINUOUS

The crew wakes to the savage waves, still pounding the raft's exterior, ominously resonating within the craft.

BOBBY

Everybody still with us?

The entire crew answers exuberantly, except Sarah.

Bobby strains within the confines of his harnesses to get a look at her. Sarah is quickly nearing a state of panic.

SARAH

I can't breathe... I need some air.

Sarah quickly unbuckles her harnesses and warily rises to her feet. She takes a few unsteady steps toward the porthole.

BOBBY

No Sarah! Sit down! This isn't over!

His warning arrives too late.

A huge wave impacts the raft, propelling Sarah face-first into an insufficiently padded wall.

Seconds later, another collision throws her flat on the floor, severely knocking the wind out of her.

As she attempts to regain her sense of balance, the raft again lunges forward, tossing her down like a bundle of rags.

Sarah lies motionless on the floor. All the crew begin frantically shouting at her, but she doesn't move a muscle.

On the count of three, Pete and Norm hastily unbuckle their harnesses, pick Sarah up and irreverently SLAM her back into her seat, bringing her back to a groggy consciousness.

SARAH

I'm sorry. I just needed to --

NORM

Man, you took a Hell of a header!

Paul tugs on her safety straps a couple times. She screams, prompting him to give her a quick once-over for any injuries.

MARK

You seem okay! Now stay put, until we tell you differently!

INT. THE RAFT - LATER

The five crew members are seated at a fold-away table, picking at their MRE, (Meals, Ready-to-Eat) dinners. The hatch is partially open, along with several portholes.

Bobby points to Sarah with his fork as he chews.

BOBBY

She's been out long enough. We'd better wake her up and make sure she's okay.

The other four men turn and focus on Sarah, who is still asleep and strapped in her seat.

She has several minor facial bruises, but no apparent serious injuries.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Sarah... Sarah!

Sarah wakes from her near-comatose sleep and looks around. She undoes her harnesses and shifts to a more comfortable position.

Rubbing her face, she winces slightly as she tenderly touches a couple bruised areas.

She then gazes downward to see that the front of her jumpsuit and both of her hands are covered with blood.

Raising her hands in shock, Bobby comes to her side.

Sarah quickly unzips her jumpsuit as Bobby begins to probe a dense bloody area directly under her left breast.

Out of instinct, Sarah immediately SLAPS his face.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Damn it, Sarah. Calm down. I just want to take a look at --
(pulling up her shirt)
What the hell is that?

Sarah and Bobby simultaneously look down at her chest to find a severed portion of her GPS locator protruding from her flesh.

SARAH

Oh my God. It's my locator!

Sarah grits her teeth as she pulls the locator the rest of the way out, causing the blood to flow freely from her wound.

She studies the locator, then FIRES it against the wall.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Damn that stupid thing!

Bobby returns to her side with a sterile pad.

BOBBY
Here, put this over it and keep
some pressure on it.

INT. CARGO PLANE - ARCTIC CIRCLE - YUKON TERRITORY - LATER

After searching much of the plane, John spots his jacket, jammed under the instrument panel. He yanks it out and rummages through the pockets.

Removing his hand-held GPS locator, he types in Sarah's locator code.

There is a moment's pause, followed by the word, "DEACTIVATED." Horrified, he enters her code repeatedly, to the same end.

Without warning, John lunges at Passenger Two.

They plunge to the ceiling of the inverted plane's cargo hold. It takes several other passengers to eventually pull them apart.

JOHN
You Idiots! Sarah was the only person
who could help us out of this mess...
and you made me leave her behind! Now
she might be dead!

INT. THE RAFT - NORTHERN PACIFIC OCEAN - SAME

Bobby is kneeling next to Sarah. His face is deeply engraved with a look of concern. Her breathing is extremely labored.

There is a leather jacket draped over her torso with the words "Survival is Secondary" embroidered on the back.

Patty is fiddling with their radio when suddenly there is a response. After a brief conversation, she approaches Bobby.

PATTY
There's a couple of Noah's Arks
about two hundred miles north --

BOBBY
Noah's Arks? Damn it, Patty, we
need a medic, not a vet.

PATTY

No silly, these are converted aircraft carriers, with full surgical hospitals.
(shaking the mic at him)
They've got choppers working their way south, but there's a lot of casualties still north of us.

INT. THE RAFT - LATE AFTERNOON

Faintly, the unmistakable WHOP-WHOP of a helicopter can be heard in the distance.

Paul bursts into the hatch, trips over the bulkhead, falls, and skids to a stop.

Gathering his composure, he darts to a locker, throws it open and begins rummaging through the equipment. Finding a small case, he runs back out of the hatch.

EXT. THE RAFT - CONTINUOUS

Paul opens up the case and loads the flare gun.

In the distance, the faint shape of an approaching helicopter can be seen through the early morning mist.

Patty, Norm and Pete have joined him and nervously wait as the craft approaches. Still more than a mile from their position, it begins to turn away.

DAVE

Shoot the damn thing... shoot, damn it!

Paul points the flare gun skyward and pulls the trigger.

Nothing happens. He brings it down to study, fumbles, and it falls to the deck.

Bobby steps out of the raft and calmly picks it up, flips the safety off, points it skyward and fires off a flare.

He then quickly reloads and fires another.

They wait as the helicopter nearly fades from view, then swings around, homing in on their position.

Four of the men are waving and shouting as it approaches, while Bobby goes inside to tend to Sarah.

BOBBY

Hey, a little help here.

Paul and Norm rush inside to assist Bobby in gently easing Sarah from her seat.

Outside, the helicopter is now hovering within a hundred yards of their position.

As they exit the hatch with Sarah, the chopper immediately shifts closer and begins to lower a rescue basket.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Sarah, they're here. Can you stand?

Sarah slowly rises with his help, but the rescue basket BUMPS the side of the raft, ricocheting into them, and knocks them both to the deck.

Bobby steadies himself and assists her into the basket, as the others attempt to stabilize it.

Bobby picks Sue's jacket off the deck and drapes it over Sarah's shoulders.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Here, I'm sure Sue would have wanted you to have this.

Sarah looks at the jacket with the name of Bobby's wife, Susan Davis, embroidered over the pocket.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Now, just get well. When you wear this, think of us.

SARAH

(clutching it firmly)

I will cherish this always.

Sarah is strapped into the rescue basket and immediately hoisted to the helicopter, as all five of the raft's crew wave and shout their good-byes and good-lucks.

Bobby does his best to shout over all the commotion.

BOBBY

Might be a punctured lung!

The basket operator nods in affirmation and gives him the thumbs up signal.

Sarah's basket is pulled inside the helicopter. Seconds later, it performs a banked 180-degree turn and quickly fades into the mist.

INT. NOAH'S ARK NUMBER FOUR - NORTH PACIFIC - NIGHT

Sarah wakes on a gurney, alone in a dimly lit hallway. She scans her surroundings. Nothing familiar.

She scoots to the side of the gurney, misjudges its dimensions and slips over the edge, tumbling to the floor.

She strains to recover to her perch. An ORDERLY arrives and assists her back onto the bed.

SARAH

My locator is gone. I need a new one, so someone can find me.

Sarah pulls up her shirt to expose the wound. The orderly acknowledges her concerns, then eases her back down, onto the pillow.

As she is wheeled down the corridor, she slips into a deep sleep. Arriving outside the operating room, the orderly unsuccessfully attempts to revive her.

He frisks her front pockets, then rolls her partially over and repeats the process with her rear pockets.

Poking around for clues, he spies the leather jacket stuffed on a shelf, under the gurney. Fluffing it, he spots the name embroidered over the pocket as he covers Sarah.

He picks up a clipboard hanging from the footboard of the gurney, prints the name "SUSAN DAVIS" on the 'Name of Patient' line, then hangs the clipboard back on the hook.

INT. NOAH'S ARK NUMBER FOUR - RECOVERY ROOM - LATER

Sarah partially wakes, disorientated, in a room with a dozen other patients. She feels the left side of her chest and winces.

NURSE ONE enters the room and comes to her side. The nurse picks up her chart and studies her information.

NURSE ONE

You're lucky to be alive, young lady. You had significant blood loss, but we're taking care of you now. You're in Noah's Ark, number four, in the North Pacific.

Sarah is fighting to stay conscious, but is losing her battle with the medication.

SARAH
 (faintly)
 Someone's looking for me.

NURSE ONE
 Relax, Susan. It's standard procedure.
 We post everyone's name and stats on our
 missing person's site... Right now, all
 you need is a little more rest and --

The nurse stops short as Sarah drifts back to sleep. She makes a quick check of Sarah's IV and heads out of the room.

INT./EXT. CARGO PLANE - ARCTIC CIRCLE - YUKON TERRITORY - SAME

John is huddled in a dark corner of the cockpit, still typing Sarah's code into the GPS locator, staring at the word, "DEACTIVATED."

Rising up and over an adjacent knoll, a military helicopter is suddenly upon them, resonating within the interior of the cargo plane with its powerful presence.

It lands directly outside the plane, kicking up a tremendous amount of snow, causing a near whiteout.

John shields his eyes as he steps from the plane's torn fuselage, into the torrent of wind and icy snow.

GENERAL PARSONS
 John... John Cooper?

JOHN
 Right over here, sir.

General Parsons surveys the condition of the plane, resting upside down, nearly buried by the snow.

GENERAL PARSONS
 Any landing you can walk away from, huh?

John nods as they step inside for shelter.

JOHN
 So I've been told.

GENERAL PARSONS
 We've got an AEV all fueled up and
 ready to go. I'll brief you on the
 way... We need to get you and Sarah --

JOHN

Sarah wasn't on the plane. She's still south. Can you take me?

GENERAL PARSONS

No, but we can send a detachment. Got her coordinates?

JOHN

I'm not completely sure.

GENERAL PARSONS

Don't worry. First Contact completely scrambled the GPS grid. We're still in the process of reinitializing everything... so if her coordinates are fluctuating --

JOHN

No, it's coming up "DEACTIVATED."

With that, a look of concern blankets General Parson's face.

GENERAL PARSONS

John... do I have to remind you what that means? You know as well as I do that half the reason we've got these damn things --

JOHN

Look, she's alive. I know it. She was along the Oregon coast at First Contact. She knows how to survive.

General Parsons removes his hat and scratches his head.

GENERAL PARSONS

I can put out a Priority One bulletin to all our personnel to contact you directly at the first sighting of anyone named Sarah Jennings.

JOHN

I'll take it.

The two men jog to the helicopter, as they shield their eyes from the blast of snow from the accelerating blades.

GENERAL PARSONS

(turning toward the plane)
We have more rescue choppers coming today, to take you all to a safe location... so hang in there.

The helicopter throttles up and climbs skyward.

INT. NOAH'S ARK NUMBER FOUR - RECOVERY ROOM - EIGHT DAYS LATER

DOCTOR ALAN and Nurse One enter the room. They find Sarah conscious, but unresponsive, staring blankly into the distance. Picking up her chart, the doctor smiles.

DOCTOR ALAN
Welcome back, Ms. Davis. It looks
like you're recovering quite
nicely... Ms. Davis?

Snapping from her semi-catatonic state, she gazes up, inquisitively.

SARAH
What did you call me?

Doctor Alan spins the chart toward her and points to the name "SUSAN DAVIS" printed across the top.

DOCTOR ALAN
Susan Davis. Admitted ten days ago
with multiple lacerations and a
puncture in the left lung. No I.D.,
but we found your name on your jacket.

Sarah feverishly scans the room and catches a quick glimpse of Susan Davis' jacket, folded neatly on her nightstand.

SARAH
That wasn't my jacket! My name is
Sarah Jennings!

She makes a quick inspection of her left chest. Her expression instantly transforms into a look of horror.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Oh my God. Everyone must think I'm
dead!

Without a word, Nurse One removes a cell phone from her pocket and hastily enters some data.

NURSE ONE
Well, I'll be... here's a Priority
One Bulletin, initiated by a Mr.
John Cooper, regarding a Ms. Sarah
Jennings... complete with a photo
of our little patient.

Holding back the tears, Sarah intensely focuses back and forth between the two caregivers.

NURSE ONE (CONT'D)
He's stationed on the... Salvation
One. I'll notify him immediately.

Doctor Alan scans her chart, then abruptly halts the nurse.

DOCTOR ALAN
Hold that thought. She should be
well enough to travel... even
weightless travel.

NURSE ONE
I agree. Her vitals are good.

The doctor turns toward Sarah with a warm smile.

DOCTOR ALAN
There's still several cargo ships
leaving every day for the fleet.
How about we put you on the schedule
for tomorrow's transport, so you can
surprise him... in person?

Sarah breaks into a hearty smile, throws her arms around Doctor Alan and gives him a kiss. She makes eye contact with the nurse and mouths a sincere thank-you.

INT. SALVATION ONE - LOW EARTH ORBIT - CARGO INVENTORY ROOM - DAY

The floor of the room is cluttered with inventory.

John's workbench is surrounded by pegboard walls, filled with clipboards, as many as three deep on some of the posts.

He is sitting on an office chair, with his back to the door of the room, coffee cup in hand. He's in a heated telephone conversation with one of his suppliers.

JOHN
(talking on a phone)
I don't care where you get it. We
need another fifteen hundred miles
of tether line... or equivalent.

He covers the phone's mouthpiece and turns to his ASSISTANT.

JOHN (CONT'D)
See if London found that line.

ASSISTANT

You got it.

Behind him, without a sound, Sarah enters the doorway, but is overcome by the sight of John and begins to tremble.

John's assistant rotates toward her, his eyes widening in disbelief. His mouth drops open.

Sarah raises an unsteady finger to her lips. The assistant acknowledges.

They simultaneously turn their attention to John, who is oblivious to her presence.

Sarah takes several deep, quivering breaths.

SARAH

Excuse me...

John freezes, coffee cup midway to his mouth. His eyes are fixed. Slowly, he turns his head to the right, homing in on her voice.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Excuse me... sir... is this where
I sign up to partner with the
legendary John Cooper?

John swivels ninety degrees on his chair. He gasps at the sight of Sarah standing near the doorway.

John's drops his cup. It strikes the floor and shatters, sending coffee and fragments in every direction.

JOHN

Sarah!

They run to each other and embrace.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Your last location was near the
Oregon shore... how did you --

Sarah steps back and executes a flawless pirouette, revealing the back of her jacket's "Survival is Secondary" slogan.

JOHN (CONT'D)

No way! Rafters! You're joking?

SARAH

(shaking her head)
No joke... and they were wonderful
people.

John stutters for a moment, desperately trying to find the proper words to ease his conscience.

JOHN

Sarah, the day I left you at
Henderson's... I did everything I
could to turn that cargo plane --

SARAH

(touching his lips)
Say no more. I saw the plane starting
to turn, then drop. I have a pretty
good idea of what was going on inside.

John scoops her off her feet. For a moment, they lovingly gaze into each other's eyes in silence. John smiles, then draws her closer and tenderly kisses her.

Their reunion is abruptly sidetracked with the arrival of General Parsons. Smiling broadly, he reaches for Sarah's hand, clamping down in a vice-like grip.

GENERAL PARSONS

Welcome back. I'm glad you're
still with us.

INTERCOM (V.O.)

Briefing in twenty minutes.

INT. SALVATION ONE - BRIEFING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Morale is low. The entire crew has been assembled to discuss the latest developments.

Sarah steps into the room with John and is greeted with a spontaneous applause and a standing ovation. She blushes.

A three-dimensional holographic image, displaying a second Intruder's position and contour, floats near the end of the conference table.

The image also details a mirror-force-field grid, with its proposed dimensions and stress calculations. Around the perimeter are eight spacecrafts, ready to be tethered.

Sarah looks at it, puzzled, and turns to John.

SARAH

Why is this still up here?
(pausing, then horrified)
Don't tell me there's another --

JOHN

Yes, Intruder Two... and it's quite a bit larger... and different. Whereas the first Intruder was cylindrical, this one's a near perfect sphere.

John catches her as her legs begin to give out.

JOHN (CONT'D)

We're now sure that Intruder One was purposely placed off-center, on the inside of Earth's orbit, to spin us up... and shatter the bond between the Earth's crust and mantle.

(pausing)

This next Intruder's been positioned dead center --

SARAH

To peel everything clean off... right down to the mantle!

JOHN

Exactly!

Sarah studies the scope of the operation in front of them, then turns to General Parsons.

SARAH

Why was there no mention of this on the surface?

GENERAL PARSONS

It's strictly on a need to know basis.

SARAH

How many days out?

GENERAL PARSONS

Sixty-one. But it's going to take twelve just to get there, then another ten to set up the grid.

SARAH

(studying the general's face)

You don't think we can move it in time... do you?

General Parsons replies with a somber shake of his head.

GENERAL PARSONS

It's already being referred to as... 'Final Contact'.

Sarah hesitantly approaches the hologram, studying it in more detail with every step.

SARAH
(turning toward John)
So you're pulling the mass from the center... to form a tunnel.

JOHN
Yep... that's a whole lot less cubic miles to disburse than trying to shove the entire cloud... being that it's over fifteen thousand miles in diameter.

SARAH
But, if we pull it through the center, won't it just roll back into place once the grid moves forward... past it?

JOHN
It shouldn't. This is where its cohesiveness should work to our advantage.
(pondering)
Think of it like a snowplow... clearing a parking lot. With each pass, we can shove the mass farther out from the center of the tunnel.

Major Tompkins bangs firmly on a clipboard several times, to get everyone's attention.

MAJOR TOMPKINS
As you're all aware, we've got about double the volume, less time, and fewer ships... We've gotta pick up the pace or it's... game over.

INT. SALVATION ONE - OBSERVATION DECK - TWENTY-TWO DAYS LATER
(NEAR INTRUDER TWO)

SUPER: "FINAL CONTACT - T-MINUS 39 DAYS AND COUNTING"

From their POV, Intruder Two can be seen as a faint cloud within the endless backdrop of space.

Twelve new shuttles have been added to the fleet, housed in an armor plated hangar within the Salvation One's cargo bays.

Fifteen thousand miles across Intruder Two, on the distant side, a group of a dozen ships, including the Aurora, have gathered to pull the massive grid through the center of the mass.

Every scrap of mirror material is in play, along with every available pulse generator - resulting in a grid complex larger than anything previously assembled.

Since the Sun is in a poor position to backlight Intruder Two for Sarah, a series of LED flares have been positioned around the mass, as well as a series through the center, to aid in plotting the best possible course.

From Sarah's vantage point, she has an unobstructed view of all twelve crafts, the tethers and the grid, now aglow with the pulse generators.

A live feed to and from every ship has been set up to monitor their progress.

Sarah rises from the eyepiece, then turns to John and Commander Ruttgers to give them a thumbs up.

EXT. THE DISTANT SIDE OF INTRUDER TWO - CONTINUOUS (IN SPACE)

With the flares and LEDs activated, the cloud is now easily visible to Sarah, but has become far too dense to see through to the other side.

Observing the armada from behind, the grid seems almost flat across its six-hundred mile diameter.

As the order to commence is issued, blasts from all twelve ships are evident, almost simultaneously.

As the grid moves forward, it once again takes on the shape of an immense parachute.

In unison, the crafts are slowed and pulled slightly nearer each other as the tethers twist and turn. The forward motion continues.

Picking up speed, the armada moves deeper into the cloud, leaving behind a clear, unobstructed section of empty space.

EXT. INSIDE THE TUNNEL - LATER

Several hours later, the group of spacecrafts can be seen nearing the Earth's side of Intruder Two.

Nearly undetectable at first, the area in front of the crafts begins to darken, soon giving way to the welcome sight of a pitch black, starlit void. They have made it through!

Pulling their nearly invisible cargo to the side of the tunnel, they waste no time in reversing course and heading back inside Intruder Two for a second pass.

INT./EXT. THE AURORA - LATER

SUPER: "FINAL CONTACT - T-MINUS 36 DAYS AND COUNTING"

Approaching the midway point of the tunnel, on their way to the Earth's side of Intruder Two, Sarah looks

THROUGH HER TELESCOPE,

at the fairly defined walls of the tunnel.

Ahead, the black void of space is clearly visible, as their massive tunnel grows ever larger.

SARAH

This will be eleven passes, John.

Also ahead is the Salvation One, which has taken a position, lined up with the very center of the tunnel. The craft lies four-hundred miles out, as to not interfere with the tunneling process.

INT./EXT. THE AURORA - OBSERVATION DECK - 35 DAYS LATER

SUPER: "FINAL CONTACT - T-MINUS 24 HOURS AND COUNTING"

The Aurora, along with seven shuttles are nearing the end of the tunnel with the massive grid in tow. The Earth can now be seen with the naked eye as a constant reminder that time is running out.

After ninety-seven passes, the black void of space is clearly visible, as the tunnel nears its final dimensions.

Remnants of the tunnel have been pulled to both sides of the Intruder, far enough away as to not obscure the Earth's passage through the mass.

SARAH

By my calculations, we've made it, but
I wish we had time to run a couple more
full passes along the outside wall.

John raises his hand and crosses two of his fingers.

Suddenly, an incoming message from Mission Control sends panic through the entire armada.

NASA (AURORA'S RADIO)

Salvation One, we have confirmation
on an incoming bogey closing on
your coordinates.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
 (fumbling his headset)
 Roger that. Multiple blips?

NASA (RADIO)
 Negative. One large, closing fast.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
 How far out?

NASA (RADIO)
 Deep space, but moving fast.

An alarm begins to BLAST as crew members scramble to their posts.

NASA (RADIO) (CONT'D)
 Increasing bogeys... Multiple.
 Smaller. Faster.

The Salvation One remains easily visible from Sarah's POV, aboard the Aurora.

Suddenly, The Salvation One lunges sideways, rocking violently as a large group of fragments ricochet off its hull.

As quickly as the assault had begun, it's over. Sarah gives a quiet sigh of relief.

Within an instant, the Salvation One is slammed with a massive fragment amidships, nearly severing it in half.

SARAH
 (hysterically)
 Oh God! No!

John grabs the microphone from the communications officer who is frozen in place.

JOHN
 NASA, we are under attack.
 Salvation One is gone and we're
 taking heavy fire!

Suddenly, scores of small fragments begin to bounce off of the Aurora's hull, accompanied by several louder CLANGS.

EXT. INSIDE THE TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Five of the shuttles burst into flames and nearly disintegrate, while four more are severely damaged.

JOHN (V.O.)
Shuttles, abort the mission! Cut
loose and close formation with us.

The Aurora severs its tether lines and executes several evasive maneuvers, as the two remaining shuttles come up alongside.

The crafts throttle up and head toward the Earth's side of the tunnel.

As they exit the tunnel, two fragments strike the aft section of the Aurora, piercing the starboard wing and tearing off the tail fin.

Closing in on the Salvation One, the severity of the damage becomes increasingly evident. A dozen wisps of escaping steam and smoke can be seen from stem to stern.

The Aurora, along with the two shuttles slip alongside of the Salvation One, well hidden from the alien ship's view.

INT. AURORA - BRIEFING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Crews from the two shuttles have been welcomed aboard the Aurora.

Steele and several other crew members are gathering their composure. John enters the room.

JOHN
Damage?

STEVE
Besides the starboard rudder, we
had a small breach in the rear
corridor. The hatch is closed, but
there's still some minor leakage.

Sarah runs into the briefing room, studying a printout as she proceeds.

She stumbles as she passes through a bulkhead, scattering her paperwork in all directions as she contacts the floor.

SARAH
(rising to her feet)
OK... we're still at a good position
for Earth, it's adequate... but that
could all change in an instant.

Sarah is rummaging through her paperwork.

SARAH (CONT'D)

The alien craft... if they're still carrying enough of the Martian atmosphere... they could refill the tunnel in a matter of hours --

JOHN

Then all this would have been for nothing.

Sarah opens up a laptop and within seconds, a hologram of the alien spacecraft appears in their midst.

SARAH

What if we could puncture those huge pressure tanks? Then they'd have no way refill the tunnel.

STEELE

We could use the Vanguard... stuff it right in the side of their ship!

John takes a look out of the observation window at the Salvation One's damage.

JOHN

I wonder what the status of the Vanguard is.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS

It's in the Salvation One's cargo bay... Probably not good.

INT. SALVATION ONE - MAIN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: "FINAL CONTACT - T-MINUS 6 HOURS AND COUNTING"

A resounding CLANG resonates through the heavily damaged ship. The Aurora can be seen through a couple of the Salvation One's side portholes.

The forward boarding hatch cautiously opens and John steps into the main cabin.

An alarm is sounding in conjunction with a warning panel, stating, "CAUTION: PARTIAL DECOMPRESSION".

He looks at his monitor, then slowly cracks the seal on his helmet. After a brief HISS he removes it completely.

JOHN
We've got life support... and even
the artificial gravity seems to
still be online.

The remainder of the crew members step in and remove their helmets.

Several severely battered Salvation One crew members are lying about the cabin, barely alive.

The wounded are quickly moved to a secure area where a triage is immediately staged to tend to their injuries.

Another group of crew members split up to survey the ship's damage. They return within fifteen minutes.

JONES
You can forget about the Vanguard.
It's totaled... nothing salvageable.
Beyond the galley everything is
caved in and destroyed.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS
What about the laser cannon?

JONES
No way to access the armory. Like
I said, everything's destroyed.
Hell, I doubt the laser's still
functional anyway.

Sarah begins to nervously pace.

SARAH
Could we access the laser from the
outside? We could cut a hole --

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS
The entire arsenal is heavily
armor-plated. Even if you could
cut through it, you'd depressurize
the entire ship within a few --

JOHN
We gotta do something... those
aliens are closing in.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS
Let's bring up the ship's blueprints.

On the main computer, several of the crew begin to search for alternative access to the Salvation One's armory.

STEVE

(pointing to the monitor)
 There's some ducting that runs from
 the galley, parallel to the corridor
 that was hit... but it's on the
 starboard side, so there's a chance --

Several of the crew head toward the aft of the ship.

INT. SALVATION ONE - GALLEY - CONTINUOUS

The crew members arrive at the access panel in the rear of the galley, to find PETERSON disappearing into the ductwork. He returns moments later to his point of entry, jumps to the floor, and dusts himself off.

PETERSON

There's no way. The ducting is
 nearly closed off.

SARAH

I'm smaller. Maybe I could make it.

All eyes are suddenly on Sarah.

Sarah presents her hand, palm up, in front of Peterson. He digs the communicator out of his pocket and slaps it into her hand, followed by a flashlight.

STEELE

If you reach the laser, I'll talk
 you through the procedures.

Sarah nods in affirmation. John pulls her to the side.

JOHN

Sarah, what about your --

SARAH

(breathing heavily)
 I can do this. Just give me a leg
 up. Trust me.

John takes her in his arms and gives her a kiss. He then hoists her up into the duct.

John watches intently as Sarah nearly fades from view, then hastily retreats back to the safety of the opening.

He helps her out, to find her transformed into a ghostlike figure, sweating heavily and shaking with every breath.

SARAH (CONT'D)

John... I can't --

JOHN

It's okay. You gave it your --

Sarah glares at him indignantly.

SARAH

No, that's not it. I mean I'm still too big. I can't squeeze through the damaged section with this stupid thermal jumpsuit. I can do this. Just get me a can of shortening or a bottle of cooking oil.

Sarah immediately begins to unzip her jumpsuit. Out of respect, the remaining crew members vacate the room.

John quickly joins in and begins peeling her out of it.

Several crew members begin tearing open every pantry door within the galley and eventually find a full bottle of clear cooking oil.

Sarah, now donning only her undergarments, stuffs the communicator into her bra and motions to John for a leg-up.

With a flashlight in one hand and the bottle of oil in the other, Sarah immediately plunges back into the darkness.

She quickly disappears from view.

INT. SALVATION ONE - DUCTING - CONTINUOUS

Sarah is pinned tightly against the walls of the ductwork.

She begins to shake. She pours a handful of oil into her palm and hurriedly smears it on the wall at the restriction.

Doing her best to keep her fears at bay, she arduously pulls herself past the collapsed section, adding generously to the oil slick as necessary.

She takes a moment to gather her composure, then continues toward the aft of the ship on all fours.

She soon comes upon an intersection in the ducting, running straight downward.

Cautiously attempting to cross the void with her hands still covered with oil, she loses her grip and slips over the edge, head first.

Dropping nearly eight feet, she becomes hopelessly trapped upside down within the cramped ductwork.

With no room to turn around, she does her best to push herself back up, to no avail.

Panic immediately sets in as she begins to thrash about within her tomb.

The communicator falls from her bra, landing only inches from her face. She manages to push the call button.

SARAH (COMMUNICATOR)
John, I've fallen into a vertical
duct! Someone help me, please!

JOHN
(into communicator)
Sarah, can you push yourself up?

SARAH (COMMUNICATOR)
No! I'm too far down. I can't
even touch the top with my toes!

Steve closes his eyes and shakes his head. Suddenly, he perks-up and rushes out of the room.

STEVE
Tell her to hang on. I'm going to
kill the artificial gravity for a
few seconds.

JOHN
(into communicator)
Sarah. We're shutting down the
gravity. When you feel it go off,
get the Hell outta there!

There is no response.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Sarah... do you copy? Sarah!

Again, there is no response.

Sarah begins to hyperventilate. She is losing consciousness.

For an instant, the ship's humming ceases and Sarah is weightless. She pushes off in a state of utter panic, slamming into the top of the main horizontal ducting.

Regaining her orientation, Sarah positions herself at the edge of the vertical ducting.

She pauses to take several deep breaths as the ship's gravity is switched back on, without warning.

She nearly slips over the edge once again, but manages to catch herself.

Regaining her balance, she feverishly searches for her communicator, then shines the flashlight into the duct, only to find it resting at the bottom.

She shouts to John, but the hum of the ship has drowned out any hope of voice communication.

JOHN (CONT'D)
(into the communicator)
Sarah... Sarah!

No response. John bows his head in silence. He drops to his knees and looks up at the access panel, as he begins to pray.

INT. SALVATION ONE - OBSERVATION DECK - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: "FINAL CONTACT - T-MINUS 1 HOUR AND COUNTING"

The remaining crew members have gathered at the panoramic observation window.

In the distance, the alien ship is slowly closing in on their position.

Nearing a full stop, it swings to starboard about thirty degrees, lining up its massive cannons with the crippled shuttles, then fires.

The projectiles pass through the invisible mass, bursting into flames as they come into contact, striking the remaining shuttles, tearing them to shreds.

INT. ALIEN SHIP - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

The ship's bridge is dimly lit with a greenish hue.

Several of the aliens are observing the battle through the forward windows.

Humanoid in basic body layout, and standing over seven feet tall, their slumped stature diminishes their overall height by nearly a foot.

Their heads are more of an upper protrusion, sporting a set of six eyes - four up front and two more, articulating on the sides.

They are equipped with four double-elbowed arms and hands that have long, slender, multi-jointed fingers, appearing similar to tentacles.

Two legs and triple pod-type feet keep them upright and steady.

Every inch of their skin is transparent, displaying every vessel, muscle and organ in their bodies.

They have no hair whatsoever.

Lining up another pair of Earth's ships through the front glass, a nearly deafening screech resonates through the ship.

ALIEN (SUBTITLE)

Fire! or VRUC! In their dialect.

Overhead, a mix of stone and debris can be seen, shooting from the alien ship's upper cannons, into Intruder Two, once again homing in on the disabled ships.

With this final attack, the remains of the shuttles are scattered clear through Intruder Two and into the void of space.

INT. SALVATION ONE - OBSERVATION DECK - CONTINUOUS

Every crew member on the Salvation One is intently focused on the alien ship as it slowly comes about in their direction.

Swinging back over thirty degrees starboard, several blasts from the alien ship's retros line it up perfectly with the Salvation One.

With no real chance of escape, Commander Ruttgers attempts to bypass the Salvation One's controls in hopes of firing a momentary burst from its secondary engines.

COMMANDER RUTTGRERS

OK, everyone, we're going to try --

BOOM!

Suddenly, there is a decisive jolt from the aft section of the Salvation One, as a red, glowing ball of fire streaks toward the alien ship.

The crew watches as the laser cannon's projectile closes in on the alien ship.

It's a direct hit, sending fiery fragments of the ship in every direction!

John immediately jumps into the air.

JOHN
Sarah! She's alive!

Sarah then fires several more well placed shots, within a tight cluster across the top of the ship.

The Salvation One crew erupts in CHEERS.

But their jubilation is short lived.

The alien ship fires up its engines and plows through a layer of dense smoke.

The laser has taken out two of the three upper cannons, as well as the right articulating claw - but the ship remains functionally intact.

Starting slowly, the alien ship builds up speed as it closes in on the Salvation One.

COMMANDER RUTTIGERS
Brace for impact!

INT. SALVATION ONE - ARSENAL - SAME

The room is dark, except for the light emitting from the controls within the laser cannon's transparent turret.

The weapon's instruments cast an eerie glow across Sarah's face, now soaked with oil and sweat, and nearly covered with dampened hair.

She intensely focuses on her target with an expressionless, trance-like stare. She calmly pulls her hair to one side.

Her breathing becomes labored as she slowly lowers herself to the weapon's sight.

She tilts her head to the side and closes one eye.

SARAH
It's payback time... Fuckers.

Sarah squeezes the trigger. The cannon kicks back with a resounding BOOM as a crimson ball of fire streaks from the barrel.

The turret is suddenly awash with a spectrum of colors, highlighting Sarah's slender silhouette.

She covers her eyes with her forearm and turns away.

EXT. THE ALIEN SHIP - CONTINUOUS

A single red projectile streaks by the alien craft, violently piercing the nose of the port side pressure tank, resulting in a catastrophic decompression of an epic magnitude.

The alien ship is thrust rearward with enough force to clear all of the remaining equipment from its outer surfaces.

Several of the alien ship's components erupt within a barrage of explosions, pummeling the Salvation One with hundreds of fragments, as it lights up the main cabin as bright as day.

Spinning violently, amidst another series of explosions, the alien vessel quickly fades into the distance, leaving only a faint trail of smoke behind.

INT. SALVATION ONE - GALLEY - SAME

John is standing at the opening of the ductwork. The faint beam of a flashlight can be seen darting from side to side as Sarah makes her way back to safety.

Nearing the opening, she pauses and smiles.

SARAH

Did you miss me?

John reaches into the duct and slides her from the opening. He wraps her in a robe and looks deep within her eyes.

JOHN

I thought I lost you... again.

Sarah smiles and gently touches his lips with a finger.

SARAH

You're not getting rid of me that easily, John Cooper.

John holds her tightly in his arms. She rests her head against his chest and sighs.

EXT. EARTH - APPROACHING - CONTINUOUS

The Earth can be seen as it converges on Intruder Two. There are sporadic outbreaks of flames as it enters the Earth's side of the tunnel.

The sporadic contacts continue as the Earth barrels its way through the mass.

Seeming more like an eternity, the Earth passes through Intruder Two in less than fifteen minutes, returning mostly unscathed, back into the welcome void of unrestricted space.

INT. SALVATION ONE - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - CONTINUOUS

John and Sarah arrive at the communications room to find the entire crew huddled around the radio, anxiously awaiting a message from Mission Control.

Tension is on the rise as their efforts to contact Earth are answered only with static.

STEELE

Salvation One to Mission Control...
Salvation One to Mission Control...

MISSION CONTROL (RADIO)

We read you, Salvation One. Well done!

The entire crew spontaneously erupts in CHEERS. In a bittersweet moment, Sarah and John look into each other's eyes and embrace.

Realizing that Sarah has entered the room, she is met with a standing ovation and congratulations from the entire crew.

Commander Ruttgers leans close to the microphone.

COMMANDER RUTTGRERS

How bad was it down there?

MISSION CONTROL (RADIO)

Only about zero point two Gs.

COMMANDER RUTTGRERS

Wonderful!

MISSION CONTROL (RADIO)

A few AEVs are on their way. There's a full surgical hospital for your injured, plus two with food, beverages, air, fuel, clothing and repair parts - along with a dozen additional technicians.

STEELE

Affirmative.

MISSION CONTROL (RADIO)

Then hang tight. We'll be in contact.
Once again, Salvation One... well done!

Communications are severed with Mission Control as the speaker momentarily squeals out a shrill feedback whistle.

INT. SALVATION ONE - SARAH AND JOHN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Sarah and John are lying motionless on their bed, looking out into space through their cabin's window.

They have an unencumbered view of the Earth as it gently fades into the star-filled tapestry of space.

SARAH
I could sleep for a week.

JOHN
(smiling)
Why just a week?

For a moment, they lovingly gaze into each other's eyes in silence.

As Sarah pulls John close, she is distracted by a slight movement outside the window.

Sliding out of bed, she gazes into the eternal serenity of space and sighs, when suddenly...

Rising rapidly into view - the alien ship is back, and only several feet from the Salvation One!

The alien craft has sustained heavy damage and is now flying unrestricted, without its massive tanks to slow it down.

Caught completely off guard, Sarah momentarily locks eyes with the alien ship's captain.

Sarah shrieks as she turns toward John, who is instantly snapped back into full consciousness. They both scramble toward the cabin door.

The moment her hand touches the door handle, the Salvation One is impacted by their attacker.

The ship lunges violently sideways, slamming them both into the wall.

Alarms sound shipwide as the life support and artificial gravity systems shut down.

John is barely conscious. Sarah snatches his weightless body and pulls him into the main cabin.

INT. - SALVATION ONE - MAIN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

As Sarah and John enter the main cabin, they are met by four additional crew members, floating and dazed, but still conscious.

SARAH

Get to the hatch... get into the
Aurora. Go, go, go!

The crew shoots across the cabin, pushing off anything they can within their weightless environment.

Still in a state of shock, the survivors cram into an airlock and seal the door.

Suddenly, a series of deafening blows to the Salvation One's hull culminates with a massive claw protruding through the top of the main cabin.

Moments later, another jack-hammer type assault is upon them, as the Salvation One is shaken violently.

John forcibly turns the Aurora's entry handle as Sarah quickly assesses the situation.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Careful John, we're not completely
pressurized --

John continues to open the Aurora's main hatch and is met with a powerful BLAST of air.

The hatch swings open wildly, slamming everyone into the rear wall of the airlock.

Recovering immediately, they pile into the Aurora and slam the hatch.

Sarah motions everyone to the floor.

The alien ship releases the Salvation One and stealthy passes by the side of the Aurora, with dozens of probing search lights homed in on their position.

The moment the aliens pass the Aurora, Sarah flips on every switch in the cabin - as many as four at a time.

She glances at the rearview screen, panicking as the alien ship begins to turn toward them.

Sarah fires all four engines simultaneously.

With the gangway still attached to both ships, Sarah full-throttles the Aurora, which slams it hard into the Salvation One.

Sarah fires every starboard side retro rocket simultaneously, shifting the Aurora sideways and severing the gangway.

They are free - but only for a split-second.

Once again, coming to an abrupt halt, Sarah glances at the rearview monitor, confirming her worst fears.

The alien ship has clamped onto the Aurora's remaining tail fin, and is reeling them in!

Sarah again fires every starboard retro, then alternates to the port side retros and back again, creating a powerful motion that severs the entrapped fin.

Breaking free from the alien ship's grip, Sarah full-throttles all four main engines and heads for open space.

While strapping in, Sarah shouts a command to the computer.

SARAH (CONT'D)

This is commander Sarah Jennings.
Verification code 0-7-2-8-0-0-
Omega. Manual override now!

Sarah wiggles the joystick from side to side to verify that she has control.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Hang on everyone. I'm going to try
and shake these bastards.

Several pieces of stone and debris shoot past the port side of the Aurora as Sarah banks hard to starboard.

A loud BANG at the rear of the ship puts the Aurora into a slide, but Sarah quickly recovers.

With the attackers closing the gap, Sarah yanks the joystick completely back, sending the Aurora streaming upward and the entire crew to the floor.

She then rolls hard port, then hard starboard, to no avail. She still can't shake them.

She diverts the thrusters into full reverse and fires every forward retro. The alien ship shoots past them, nearly grazing the Aurora.

Sarah SLAMS it back into forward thrust, banks hard to starboard and throttles up. But within moments the alien ship is back on their tail.

Frustrated to the point of screaming, Sarah desperately searches for a way out.

Midway through a hairpin turn, she catches a glimpse of the nearly invisible mass that had been dredged from Intruder Two.

Sliding into another tight, 180-degree turn, the sound of sixteen retros firing at once is nearly deafening inside the Aurora.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Hold on to whatever you can! Now!

Sarah fires everything the Aurora can muster, engaging every propulsion system on the ship and speeds up to maximum velocity.

She makes a few minor course corrections to line the Aurora up with the nearly invisible mass - as close to perpendicular as possible.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Stay down. Flat. Hold on!

As the Aurora builds speed, she continues to increase the distance between the Aurora and their assailant.

She squints, concentrating on a dense section of the mass.

Still at full-throttle, she checks her rear-view screen, then throttles down momentarily, allowing the alien ship to close the gap. It nearly collides with the rear of the Aurora.

JOHN

Sarah! Why are you slowing --

SARAH

I've Got this, John. Just stay down!

Relying on her acute ability to accurately detect the outline of the Intruder, Sarah throttles up to full power, heading straight for the dredged mass.

Pausing only for a moment, Sarah jams the joystick to the rear, nearly ripping it out of the console.

The Aurora shoots upward, barely grazing the outer edge of the mass, while causing the Aurora's entire crew to blackout from the extreme G-forces

EXT. AURORA AND ALIEN CRAFT - SAME (DISTANT POV IN SPACE)

From a vantage point several miles away, the Aurora can be seen heading at full-throttle toward Intruder Two.

The much larger, alien ship is less than a ship-length behind the Aurora, and still closing.

With less than a second before the Aurora will enter the dredged mass, it pulls up, barely grazing the cloud.

With no time to change course, the alien ship plows directly into the mass at maximum velocity.

The alien craft's outer hull begins to glow red, then yellow, as it plunges deeper into the mass.

Small fragments begin to break away from the craft, followed by its engines and remaining claw.

Moments later it disintegrates in a shower of sparks, flames and debris.

INT. AURORA - MAIN CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Sarah wakes, momentarily disoriented, then snaps to full consciousness. Frantically hunting for the alien ship, she homes in on hundreds of fragments streaking through the mass.

She gives a little sigh and smiles confidently.

A firm squeeze on her shoulder wheels Sarah around in John's direction.

JOHN

Where in the Hell did you learn to fly like that?

SARAH

Uhhh... On the job training?

The rest of the crew makes their way to the cockpit. Sarah points out the glowing fragments within the mass.

The crew members gaze out into space for a moment of quiet reflection.

EXT. OVERVIEW - NIGHT (IN SPACE)

The Aurora is floating motionless in space, several miles from the crippled Salvation One.

Soon a squadron will arrive with food, supplies, medics and technicians.

The Salvation One's hull will be repaired and life support reinstated, to serve as the crew member's home for an entire year - until the Earth returns on its next orbit.

The LED flares, placed around and through the Intruder will continue for a thousand years, to serve as warning buoys for passing space travelers.

THE END