



FADE IN:

EXT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - NIGHT

Over there, a BOLT OF LIGHTNING FLASHES a few miles away, lighting up the bleary sky and sweeping gusts of rain...

Dr. EDWARD CRANDON, early forties and in good shape, hurries over to the idling YELLOW CAB and gets in.

INT. TAXI - SAME

The DRIVER looks into the back seat, smiles, and gently lifts up his service cap, revealing his kind eyes.

DRIVER

Good evening, sir. It sure is a bad one tonight.

EDWARD

It sure is.

The Driver turns back to the windshield wipers working at full speed and drives.

DRIVER

I'm surprised those things even run, on a night like tonight.

EDWARD

For my first trip ever, it's something I'll never forget.

DRIVER

Your first flight?... Jeez Mister, maybe you should, you know, think about tomorrow. The weatherman's calling for sunny skies all day and all night long.

EDWARD

I tried. But they're booked solid. And if I don't get to this... this convention first thing, It'll be bad news for my practice.

DRIVER

You a doc?

EDWARD

A Psychiatrist.

DRIVER

Yeah? Okay, now I get it. Guess you must've talked to your brain and made it all okay.

EDWARD

It's a little something like that, but I'm still a little nervous.

EXT. HANGAR - NIGHT

Beside the hangar, the howling wind and sideways rain roars in concert with an AIRPLANE'S MOTORS.

The taxi cab escorting Dr.Crandon, rolls to a stop in front of an AIRPORT ATTENDANT holding onto an umbrella.

He opens the door, takes Dr. Crandon's suitcase, and ushers him over to an ATTRACTIVE HOSTESS waiting by the bottom steps leading up to the airplane.

HOSTESS

To Chicago, sir?

EDWARD

Yes.

INT. AIRPLANE - SAME

Is it a Boeing 247? No... It's just a Douglas DC-3 passenger airliner with all the fixins from the 1930's.

The Hostess leads Dr. Crandon to his seat, then tends to a MIDDLE-AGED MAN reading a newspaper with a cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth.

Dr. Crandon settles back against the cushions and studies the other Passengers:

He sees a LAUGHING COUPLE, talking softly.

A LADY, rather old, wiping her eyes.

A YOUNG MAN writing on the back of an envelope.

A GIRL using her compact.

...

Without warning, and without a courtesy announcement, the lights suddenly just flashes out.

A moment later, the plane moves for take off.

Dr. Crandon turns to the window-pane and sees drops of water striking the glass, forming miniature rivers...

Then pulls the blinds down and eases back into his seat.

In the air, the plane LURCHES WILDLY, causing the Middle-Aged Man to projectile VOMIT chunks of tar and red bits of food into the seat next to him and carpeted aisle.

The LIGHTS FLASH BACK ON, after the airplane recovers -

HOSTESS

Everyone, there's no need for concern. We just stumbled into a bit of an Air-Pocket.

The Hostess starts doing her job and calms the Old Lady down by adjusting her pillow.

She then finds the Middle-Aged Man a new seat and brings him a glass of water to wash down his remaining vomit.

Next to Dr. Crandon, she appears with a lovely smile -

HOSTESS

And for you sir, is there anything you need?

Dr. Crandon glances at his watch and sees: 20:30

EDWARD

Time for the news broadcast.

HOSTESS

Would you care to listen to the radio, sir? We've installed a small set at each seat with earphones attached, instead of listening to the loudspeaker.

EDWARD

Thank you. I believe I will.

Dr. Crandon slips the earphones over his head and watches the Hostess hike towards the cockpit.

He SPINS a dial on the radio and hears a -

VOICE

At this time we bring you the news dispatches received over our special leased wires.

EDWARD

(murmurs)
Just in time.

VOICE

The Hindenburg, famous German dirigible, crashed in flames at Lakehurst, New Jersey, late today. The great ship, while attempting to land, and only several hundred feet in the air --

Dr. Crandon sits upright with a perplexed look -

EDWARD

(to himself)
What!?!... That thing crashed months ago... I remember listening to those very words the night of the tragedy.

Dr. Crandon sees the Hostess and calls her over -

EDWARD

(removes headphones)
Excuse me, but is the news report I'm listening to being repeated?

HOSTESS

No, sir. It's live.

EDWARD

Are you sure?

HOSTESS

Of course.

EDWARD

Okay, thank you.

HOSTESS

You're welcome.

She leaves for the galley.

Dr. Crandon slips the headphones back onto his ears and turns the dial on the radio.

He hears a soft, haunting murmur of an orchestra, another voice, and another -

VOICE

We interrupt this program for a special news bulletin.

VOICE (CONT'D)

The Japanese forces have seized control of Shanghai. All foreigners have been warned --

The Voice fades out...

EDWARD

(to himself)

Impossible. Shanghai was taken the night Kellar, my heart-disease patient died. That was weeks ago. I wonder if... Maybe somehow, this electrical and magnetic storm is picking up broadcasts made weeks before. It is kind of plausible. Because every radio program ever broadcasted is still vibrating in existence somewhere out there, in space. Mmm. I wonder.

Dr. Crandon returns his attention back to the radio and hears a strange HUM fade into MUSIC, weird music, unlike anything he's heard before.

Abruptly, it stops.

...

VOICE

Special news flash. The United States Of Europe has declared war on the Federation of South American States. President Mary Dixon, in an official statement, has announced that refusal to grant trade --

Static.

VOICE

Increased meteoric interference may cause officials to stop all space traffic between Mars and Venus. The solar system will move out of the danger zone within two weeks. The scenic Spaceways Company tonight canceled all weekend trips to planets beyond Mars and --

EDWARD

(to himself)

Jesus... Is this the future?

EDWARD (coNT'D)

(to himself)

Am I listening to broadcasts yet to be made!?!... Time, the fourth dimension. Do these events really exist somewhere, due to some freakish law of nature?... Wow, this discovery would truly rock the goddam scientific world.

Dr. Crandon glances over at the Passengers.

Are any of them using their radios?

He observes:

The Old Lady staring into space.

Sees the Couple talking and having fun.

Notices the The Middle-Aged Man snoring...

Finds the Young Man reading a magazine.

And sees the Girl working on her fingernails.

EDWARD

(to himself)

Seems like this little secret is mine. And mine alone. Jesus, just think of the possibilities. Stock market reports. New discoveries. Race results. The tide of wars. I could make millions, become a prophet, a great inventor...

Slowly, Dr. Crandon turns the radio dial and listens.

Suddenly, the ROARING MOTORS DIES.

Followed by a series of JOLTS.

EDWARD

(to himself)

What!? We're landing?

He looks at his watch and reads: 20:30

Smiling ear to ear, the Hostess appears.

He notices the Passengers all rising and preparing to leave by grabbing their bags and things.

EDWARD
(to himself)
Can't be.

Dr. Crandon reaches for the blind covering the window-pane and is stopped by the Hostess.

She gently lowers his forearm back to his side -

HOSTESS
(still smiling)
Wait.

She opens the top of the radio, turns something inside, fiddles with a wire and steps back...

Immediately, a voice booms into his ears -

VOICE
Special news bulletin. The 20:15
New York-Chicago airliner crashed
tonight shortly after leaving the
airport. Seven passengers, two
pilots, and a hostess were on
board. All were killed instantly.

In shock, Dr. Crandon removes the earphones from his head and follows the other Passengers to the door... Silently.

FADE OUT:

VINCENT GADDIS`

SPECIAL NEWS BULLETIN

REEIYAD