

A L T E R E D   S T A T E S

by

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COLUMBIA PICTURES INDUSTRIES

PRODUCER: HOWARD GOTTFRIED

EX. PROD: DANIEL MELNICK

DIRECTOR: KEN RUSSELL

ALTERED STATES

FADE IN:

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thru  
6

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WIDE ANGLE SHOT of a sound-attenuated room. The walls are porous, blue steel. The lighting is hidden and subdued; the room is mostly in shadow. Dominating the room, standing as it does in the middle of it, is a large, covered, wooden tank, painted black, looking sacrificial and sinister. The CAMERA just stares at it --

NARRATION

The tank itself was nothing more than a large tomb-like bathtub made out of plywood and lined with aluminum, and half-filled with a ten percent solution of magnesium sulfate in water to increase buoyancy --

LEGEND: THE CORNELL MEDICAL COLLEGE IN NEW YORK CITY  
- 1967

ANOTHER ANGLE. Our eyes have become accustomed to the subdued lighting. We notice a few valves sticking out of the tank, a few cables and hoses trailing across the floor from it. There is a small worktable against a wall and two wooden footstools, four feet high, near the tank. We note some clothing in a shadowed corner of the room -- a pair of jeans, a T-shirt, a pea-jacket, underwear, socks, shoes, a large bath towel.

NARRATION

Inside the tank, the subject floated in utter darkness and utter silence, effectively deprived of sensory stimulation, alone, isolated. At first, it had been presumed that such conditions would produce feelings of paranoia, but for the most part, that didn't happen. Of the twenty-three students tested, only two showed signs of anxiety --

INT. THE TANK ITSELF

Cheat just enough light to distinguish the whitish form of a naked MAN, floating in the darkness, just below the surface of the inky water, like a huge dead fish with it's belly up --

CLOSEUP LOOKING DOWN on the Man's face, a white mask of a face, eyes closed, an austere Calvinist face -- a young man, twenty-eight years old. We may notice eight EEG leads issuing out of his scalp.

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thru  
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NARRATION (cont'd)

-- The others reported experiences ranging from pleasant to exhilarating.

The SCREEN suddenly goes utterly BLACK --

NARRATION (cont'd)

It seemed that depriving a man of external stimuli simply triggered a whole new set of internal stimuli --

Suddenly, the briefest of IMAGES flicks across the BLACK SCREEN, a sudden narrow band of color, mud-brown, much too brief for us to identify anything except that it happened --

NARRATION (cont'd)

Dr. Jessup found the encephalographic evidence especially interesting --

CLOSEUP of JESSUP'S monastic face again, for identification purposes --

NARRATION (cont'd)

Within minutes after the activating experience, well organized alpha waves of forty to fifty micro-volts, eleven to twelve seconds, appeared in all regions --

Again, a fleeting band of IMAGERY, a broader BAND, lasting just long enough for us to see that the grains in the wood that form the interior walls of the tank, behind the black aluminum interior lining of the tank, are SINUATING, as if they were alive --

NARRATION (cont'd)

-- After fifteen minutes, there was an increase in the alpha amplitude, as much as thirty to seventy micro-volts, predominantly in the frontal and central regions --

The SCREEN suddenly, briefly, takes on a GRAY sheen, and then, as abruptly, it goes BLACK again --

NARRATION (cont'd)

At the half hour mark, rhythmical waves of seven to eight seconds appeared, and then, suddenly --

ANOTHER FLEETING IMAGE: too quick to be really distinguishable, a vivid, baked-oranged FLASH with something WHITE and RED in it. It's on-SCREEN just long enough for us to possibly recognize the white as some kind of animal --

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thru  
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NARRATION (cont'd)

-- rhythmical theta trains, six to seven seconds, seventy to one hundred micro-volts. This EEG pattern was startlingly similar to those of Zen priests in zazen. Dr. Jessup found this fascinating, and, one Saturday afternoon in April 1967, he decided to try the experience for himself --

The IMAGES begin to come with increasing quickness now --

IMAGE: A stunted, dwarfed FIG TREE, shedding it's fruit --

IMAGE: A rocky TERRAIN, the barren Judean hills --

IMAGE: The ANIMAL we saw so briefly before, this time perhaps recognizable as a lamb, a white lamb, with seven eyes and seven horns. Its throat is slashed. It is dripping blood --

IMAGE: The entire SCREEN is suddenly WHITE, radiant white, near-to-blinding white --

SOUND: A sudden blare of CATHEDRAL MUSIC, organ music, a snatch of Bach. A second later, it stops --

IMAGE: A twisted Biblical street, empty, a crooked, narrow, cobbled street, twisting between the pitted white walls of small stone buildings --

IMAGE: The SCREEN is utterly BLACK again --

SOUND: Jessup's BREATHING --

IMAGE: A fluttering image of a GREEN VERONICA, one of those religious handkerchiefs with the face of Christ painted on it, a chalk-white face of an anguished Christ with little red kewpie doll spots on his cheeks, a crown of thorns on his brow ---

IMAGE: An expanse of surreal landscape -- an endless stretch of brilliantly white beach --

IMAGE: The sacrificial WHITE LAMB again, this time lying on a rude stone altar. A curved KNIFE, held in a white hand, comes slashing down and cuts the lamb's throat. A BURST OF BLOOD ---

IMAGE: A MAN lying dying on a white hospital bed in a lemon-colored hospital room ---

IMAGE: A CLOSER VIEW of the Man's FACE, a waxen-mask. A bubble of air forms on his lips which barely move; he is trying to say something. It's inaudible.

1  
thru  
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thru  
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IMAGE: The green Veronica with the white Christ-face painted on it.

IMAGE: Beads of red BLOOD dripping from above against a white SCREEN --

IMAGE: A hailstorm of HAIL and BLOOD --

IMAGE: The SCREEN is BLACK again, the blackness of space. A humming, droning SOUND, resonating, getting louder, the drone of primal energy. A PINSPOT of twinkling light, a distant star it would seem moving toward us. After a moment, we recognize it isn't a star, but an enormous bird, a black bird. It seems to have a human face, the face of a suffering saint, an agonized, martyr's face, complete with halo. The bird is ba, the eternal soul of pharaonic Egypt. The face is St. Sebastian's. It veers in its flight and comes swooping horribly at us, filling the screen with its enormous black wings --

IMAGE: The rude stone altar with the sacrificial white LAMB on it. The blood drips from its slashed throat. PAN DOWN the altar to the ground where a large pool of blood has formed. A YOUNG WOMAN kneels at the edge of the pool of blood. Her back is toward us. She is naked, is washing a white Biblical robe in the pool of blood. She becomes aware that she is being watched. She looks over her shoulder at us. She is exquisitely beautiful. She stands, faces us, a strikingly white young woman, holding her robe, which, despite its bathing in blood, is white and pure. PAN UP the altar to the sacrificial lamb lying atop it. Its throat is still cut, its blood still dripping, but its face is now the face of Christ that was on the green Veronica, the chalk-white face with the red kewpie doll spots on its cheeks and the crown of thorns on its head.

IMAGE: Total, silent BLACKNESS. Suddenly, an EXPLOSION, a shattering flash of brilliant whiteness fills the SCREEN. A high-pitched SCREAMING DRONE of energy. Waves of different colors pulsate and throb across the SCREEN. One such wave bends, wrinkles, pinches up, and the first particle of matter is created. The SCREEN is instantly filled with innumerable FLASHES, as the most primitive bits of matter smash and whirl maniacally. Flares of collision. The blinding luminosity of an earlier Universe fades into the soft glow of a cooling cloud of primordial hydrogen --

IMAGE: A small room with bare walls. Jessup and the beautiful young Woman in a momentary fever of sexuality. He has seized her from behind. His hands clutch her breasts. He ravishes her neck with kisses and biting. She has thrown her head back, her neck arched in voluptuous pleasure --

1  
thru  
6

1  
thru  
6

IMAGE: A quick series of flickering images as Jessup experiences an ontological dematuration -- Jessup as embryo of eight months, then as of two weeks, then as a zygote, then as a single original cell; and then back up again until, with a SCREAM, Jessup re-experiences the moment of his birth, his expulsion from his mother's uterus, gasping, suffocating, screaming --

IMAGE: The small room with bare walls. A BED. On the bed, Jessup and the Young Woman, naked, in the throes of exuberant intercourse. Jessup plunging, thrusting. Jessup's sweating face, his eyes wide open, his mouth agape, as if this experience was one of shattering metaphysicality. Beneath him, the white body of the Young Woman twists, responds, her legs lock themselves around Jessup's waist. Her head twists this way and that. Her face, we suddenly notice, is the face of Christ on the handkerchief, chalk-white with red spots on her cheeks and a crown of thorns on her head. CAMERA MOVES IN on the Christ-face. OVER this, the SOUND of Jessup's breathing, the short, staccato panting of a man on the verge of orgasm --

7  
thru  
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OMITTED

7  
thru  
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11

We are suddenly back inside the tank. Jessup's white mask of a face, eyes closed, cushioned in the BLACKNESS Of the interior of the tank. OVER this, Jessup's disembodied sexual PANTING continues, rising to crescendo. At which point, his body suddenly thrashes; his legs kick and splash the black water on which he floats. The white mask of a face remains serene and unchanged. Suddenly, everything is silent again, silent and black, except for Jessup's white, sleeping face. Slowly, his eyes open --

12

INT. ISOLATION TANK ROOM - DAY

12

13

WIDE ANGLE SHOT of the room, the black tank sitting isolated in the middle, shrouded in shadow.

13

CLOSER SHOT LOOKING DOWN onto the tank, as the lid is raised, and Jessup stands in the tank up to his waist in water. He removes the EEG leads from his scalp. The door in the back of the room opens, and ARTHUR ROSENBERG, a thin, dark, wiry young man in his late twenties, wearing casual clothes, enters, crosses down to the tank to help Jessup clamber out. The conversation is matter-of-fact.

13

ROSENBERG

13

How do you feel?

JESSUP

Not bad. I hallucinated like a son-of-a-bitch. A variety of dream states, mystical states, a lot of religious allegory, mostly out of Revelation.

He's at the corner of the room now where his clothing is, toweling himself, putting on his shorts and pants as he and Rosenberg chat.

ROSENBERG

You were in there close to five hours.

JESSUP

It felt like an hour.

ROSENBERG

I'd like to try that myself sometime.

JESSUP

You should, you'll like it.

Trousered but still toweling, he heads for the door in the back through which Rosenberg had entered. He goes into --

14

INT. MONITORING ROOM - DAY

14

-- a small room, compactly fitted up with an oscillator and a variety of recording machines, most noticeable a 16 styli EEG machine. Five hours of polygraph paper have piled into the cardboard bin at its side. Jessup rummages about in the bin for the beginning of the sheet, puts on a pair of wire-rimmed glasses, and studies the tracings --

JESSUP

(as he reads)

Did we have any communication?

ROSENBERG

(standing in the doorway behind)

Oh, sure, I kept checking you out like you told me to.

JESSUP

How'd I respond?

14

ROSENBERG

14

Very orderly. At one point, you were crying.

JESSUP

You mean, really crying?

ROSENBERG

You were sobbing, you had tears on your face. I asked you what was going on. You said you were re-experiencing your father's death.

JESSUP

Did you make notes?

ROSENBERG

(indicating a loose-leaf notebook)

It's all there.

JESSUP

I'd like to do this again next week, Arthur. Could you make it again next week?

14A EXT. CORNELL MEDICAL BLDG. - YORK AVE - LATE AFTERNOON 14A

ROSENBERG

What're we looking for?

JESSUP

Hell, I don't know. There's really very little literature on this kind of research. There's some good people in the field -- Tart, Ornstein, Deikman -- but most of it is radical-hip stuff, drug-culture apologias. Obviously, the first thing to do is set up some sensible methodology, see if we can't study these experiences under controlled laboratory conditions. It won't interfere with the work we're doing with Hobart.

ROSENBERG

What're we getting into, sensory-deprivation? Isolation studies? I mean, where will we be going with this tank stuff?

JESSUP

We're not writing up a grant, Arthur.  
(MORE)



14A

JESSUP (cont'd)

14A

Strictly bootlegging just for kicks.  
I figure as long as we've got the  
use of this tank, let's play  
around with it, let's find out  
where it takes us. This is  
fascinating stuff, Arthur, and I  
think we ought to get into it --

15

INT. ROSENBERG'S APARTMENT - SUNDAY BRUNCH - DAY

15

A party of young intellectuals of the 1960's -- a lot  
of denim and jeans, subdued Janis Joplin on the stereo  
and joints being passed around. About a dozen PEOPLE,  
all in their late twenties or early thirties, except  
for a sculptress who is a gray-haired and aggressive  
fifty. There is a geneticist and his wife, a biochem-  
ist and her husband, a couple of clinical psychiatrists.  
The Rosenberg apartment consists of four small rooms  
clustered around a central hallway in one of those  
battered old buildings on West End Avenue in the 90s.  
There is a great deal of movement in and out of the  
rooms --

16  
and  
17

INT. ROSENBERG APARTMENT - HALLWAY - DAY

16  
and  
17

Arthur Rosenberg and ALAN HOBART, a clinical psychia-  
trist in his early thirties, are sharing a joint with  
a very pretty, confident young woman in jeans who  
doesn't even look her twenty-four years. Her name is  
EMILY FULBRIGHT. She is a physical anthropologist.  
She is our heroine. In b.g., general party activity.

ROSENBERG

-- I didn't even know they had one  
of those isolation tanks at New  
York Hospital --

HOBART

Must be some guys in the psychology  
department doing sensory-deprivation  
studies. What's Jessup doing with  
it?

ROSENBERG

You got me. He's been taking  
students out of his classes and  
testing them. He's been doing  
this for three, four months, did  
you know he was into this kind of  
stuff?

HOBART

Not till you just told me.

16 In b.g. the front doorbell RINGS, and SYLVIA 16  
and ROSENBERG, who is seven months pregnant, appears in and  
17 the hallway, coming out of the kitchen, and makes for 17  
the door, calling to her husband:

SYLVIA

I'll get it, honey --

ROSENBERG

(who had started  
for the door, re-  
turns to Emily and  
Hobart)

He's the last guy in the world I  
figured to be screwing around with  
anything as flaky as altered states  
of consciousness.

HOBART

Well, let's face it, Jessup is  
pretty flaky himself.

Across the three of them down the length of the hall-  
way to the front door where Sylvia Rosenberg is now  
admitting Jessup with much hugging and affection --

ROSENBERG

(to Emily)

That's him.

Emily is clearly interested in the man. She openly  
appraises him from her end of the hallway, apparently  
likes the bespectacled, monkish, fine featured face.  
SYLVIA ROSENBERG herds Jessup into the living room.

18 INT. HALLWAY OF ROSENBERG'S APARTMENT - THE PARTY - 18  
TWENTY MINUTES LATER - DAY

19 INT. HALLWAY NEAR LIVING ROOM - DAY 19

Emily comes out of the kitchen, crosses into --

20 INT. KITCHEN - DAY 20 \*

where she stands a moment, surveying the room. We're  
having Jimi Hendrix on the STEREO now. The room doesn't  
have too much furniture -- an overstuffed chair on which  
Sylvia is heavily emplaced, and a sofa, at one end of  
which Jessup is seated. At the other end of the couch,  
the Sculptress is sort of making a play for the genet-  
icist's Wife. There is an open space on the couch next  
to Jessup for which Emily heads, not all that easy a  
journey since the rest of the people in the room are  
lounging about on Levantine cushions on the floor or  
perched on the enormous round coffee table in the middle.

20 Jessup seems a bit out of things, distracted by his own20 thoughts. A joint is being passed around. When it reaches Jessup, he declines to puff but passes it along to the biochemist sitting on a wooden folding chair at his elbow. Emily slides into the open seat beside him.

EMILY

Arthur says you're very shy, and he wants me to draw you out.

JESSUP

Draw me out? Doesn't sound like Arthur.

EMILY

Well, what he actually said was you were a high-handed, arrogant prick, a little nuts but brilliant, and that if I ever got you talking, I would find you fascinating.

JESSUP

That sounds more like Arthur.

EMILY

He says you're doing some work with him and Alan Hobart at Payne-Whitney.

JESSUP

Yes.

EMILY

What sort of work?

JESSUP

Toxic metabolite stuff.

She waits for more; he presses on with little enthusiasm.

JESSUP

We're more or less replicating Heath's and Friedhof's strategies, trying to find maverick substances specific to schizophrenia. I think we're chasing our tails. What do you do?

EMILY

I'm a physical anthropologist. I'm sweating out my dissertation.

JESSUP

Where?

EMILY

Columbia.

20

JESSUP

20

Holloway and that bunch?

EMILY

Yes.

JESSUP

You're kind of young for a Ph.D., aren't you?

EMILY

I'm twenty-four.

JESSUP

That's still pretty good. I didn't get my Ph.D. until I was twenty-five, and I'm supposed to be a whiz kid.

EMILY

I'm a whiz kid too.

JESSUP

Where's Arthur? Where's the mustard?

\*

Emily shows Jessup where the mustard is.

\*

JESSUP

Anthropology seems to attract good-looking women.

EMILY

Thank you.

\*

They smile agreeably at each other; they have obviously hit it off well.

20A

EXT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - SEVERAL HOURS LATER 20A  
- DUSK

Emily and Jessup walk across campus. They are engrossed in each other.

JESSUP

I've always been interested in interior experiences, especially the religious experience. The only reason I'm working with schizophrenics now is because the religious experience is so significant in schizophrenia.

\*

20A

JESSUP

20A

\*

... And there's just so much you can do with animals. I worked with monkeys for two years. But monkeys can't tell you what's going on in their consciousness. You need human beings for that. And you're not allowed to ablate human beings, and you can't stick electrodes in their skulls. So I have to use some kind of trance-inducing technique, and the isolation tank seemed the least risky.

Their eyes catch. There is clearly something alive between them.

JESSUP

Listen, I'd like to go home with you tonight, will that be all right with you?

EMILY

I have a roommate, we'll be confined to the living room couch.

JESSUP

What's wrong with the living room couch?

EMILY

You tend to slip off a lot.

JESSUP

I'm sure we'll manage.

EMIIY

I'm sure we will.

JESSUP

So whenever you want to go there, let me know.

EMILY

How about right now?

21 INT. EMILY'S FLAT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

21  
thru  
23

23

Dark. Two white bodies thrashing on the dark sofa. Culmination. Emily thrusts up, burying her face in Jessup's shoulder to avoid crying out. His moonlit back beaded with sweat. She subsides back onto the sofa, opens her eyes --

HER POV - Jessup's transfixed face. His eyes are wide open, rigidly staring into space, entranced.

EMILY

What are you thinking about? \*

For a moment, he doesn't seem to hear her. Then, the entranced look dissipates --

JESSUP

(mutters)

God, Jesus, crucifixions.

He rolls off her, slides down onto the floor, his back against her legs.

EMILY

Well, just so long as it wasn't another woman.

Nevertheless, it had been a curious moment and an odd thing to say. She tries to see his face in the darkness, finally slips off the sofa and joins him sitting on the floor leaning back against the sofa.

EMILY

As a rule, do you usually think about Christ and crucifixions under sexual stress?

JESSUP

(takes a moment to consider his answer)

When I was nine years old, I used to see visions, visions of saints and angels, even Christ himself. I saw him with the eyes of faith, hanging on the cross, his vesture dipped in blood. I had a whole cult that grew up around me. People came from all over to see this kid who had visions of Christ. I got mixed up with a little Pentacostal church in South Yonkers. In the middle of services, I would suddenly become transfixed, begin to babble in voices, and I would prophesy. Of course, I don't do that any more, not since I was sixteen.

21 She studies his shadowed face in the dark room.  
thru  
23

21  
thru  
23

EMILY

Were your parents religious?

JESSUP

Anything but. My father was an  
aeronautical engineer, my mother  
a clinical psychologist.

21 She watches him, fascinated.  
thru  
23

21  
thru  
23

EMILY

What happened? I mean, how did a little kid who saw visions of Christ turn into a physiologist teaching at the Cornell Medical College?

He looks at her for the first time, agreeably but strangely detached.

JESSUP

I stopped believing. It was very dramatic. My father died a protracted and painful death of cancer. I was sixteen years old and very fond of my father. I used to race to the hospital every day after school and sit in his room doing my homework. He was very heavily sedated. The last few weeks he was in coma. One day, I thought I heard him say something, I looked up. His lips were moving, but no sound came out. There was his yellow-waxen face on the white pillow, and his lips were moving.. A little bubble formed on his lips. I got up and leaned over him, my ear an inch away from his lips. "Did you say something, Pop?" Then, I heard the word he was desperately trying to say, a soft hiss of a word. He was saying: "Terrible -- terrible!" So the end was terrible, even for the good people like my father. So the purpose of all our suffering was just more suffering. By dinner time, I had dispensed with God altogether. I never saw another vision. I haven't told anybody about this in ten years. I'm telling you now because I want you to know what sort of a nut you might be getting mixed up with.

\*

\*

They stare at each other in the dark room.

EMILY

Arthur was right. You are a fascinating bastard.



24 EXT. 68TH AND YORK AVENUE - DECEMBER 1967 - DAY 24

Bright, sunny day. Emily, in winter coat and jeans, flushed a cheerful red by the cold weather, crossing the courtyard in front of New York Hospital. She turns up a pathway to Payne-Whitney; we know it's Payne-Whitney because there is a sign clearly marked: Payne-Whitney Psychiatric Clinic.

25 INT. CORRIDOR - PAYNE-WHITNEY - DECEMBER 1967 - DAY 25

Long institutional corridor. A white-coated DOCTOR (aged 45) brings a WOMAN PATIENT down the hall. The Woman is twenty-eight years old, wears ordinary street clothes, a blouse and jeans, but is manifestly mad. She has that razor-sharp look, and she giggles and shuffles as the Doctor moves her along.

A stairway door opens, and Emily enters, pauses by the door to let the Patient and Doctor pass; they disappear into a room down the hall. Emily heads for the door just before that one.

26 INT. AN OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY 26

as Emily enters. Jessup is already there, standing, observing through the one-way window. He wears a rumpled sports jacket, slipover sweater, shapeless chinos. Through the window, we can see into a family-therapy room where the Patient we had seen in the hallway a moment before is now being seated on a leather chair, the sort of chair which can unfold back into a reclining chair. Alan Hobart, in a long doctor's coat, is being reassuring to the Patient. We can HEAR his friendly voice via a speaker on the wall.

HOBART'S VOICE

(on speaker)

You're looking really fine today,  
Phyllis, much less agitated than  
last time. Are you feeling better?

The Patient giggles, shuffles her feet, stares vaguely at the floor.

Emily joins Jessup at the window; they exchange a brief smile.

In the therapy room, Rosenberg, also in a long white doctor's coat, is reading from the Patient's records on a clipboard. A MEDICAL TECHNICIAN, (young woman, aged twenty-five), also in doctor's coat, is preparing the EEG leads. They also greet the Patient affably; the Patient sits, giggling, her head bobbing.

26

HOBART'S VOICE (cont'd)  
(on speaker, affable,  
reassuring)

We're going to do all the tests we did last time, do you remember them? Doctor Antonini is standing right here in the room with you, so there's nothing to worry about. We'll put the EEG leads on you now, if it's okay with you.

The Patient responds to nothing, stares emptily at the floor. Hobart tells the Technician to go ahead with the application of the leads, which she does. Rosenberg, holding blood pressure equipment, pulls up a chair with an amiable --

ROSENBERG'S VOICE  
(over the speaker)  
How's it going, Phyllis?

He wraps the blood pressure cuff around her arm, takes her pressure.

In the Observation Room, Emily and Jessup stand silently, side by side at the window, observing.

EMILY  
(after a moment)  
Well, it's settled. Metcalfe spoke to Spencer again this morning, and it's definite -- the job's mine. So I'll be in Nairobi doing my post-doc work May, June and July, and, in September, I'll be teaching at Harvard.

JESSUP  
Terrific.

EMILY  
So it looks like we'll both be teaching at Harvard in September.

JESSUP  
Looks that way.

Unable to keep her cool any longer, Emily turns to face Jessup, her face glowing with delight.

EMILY  
My God, Eddie, you can't get any tidier than that! We're going to be together in Boston and I think we should get married.

JESSUP  
I wish you hadn't said that.

#

26

EMILY

26

The idea had to come up sooner or later, you must've known that.

JESSUP

You know, of course, I'm supposed to be at least a little bit nuts.

EMILY

A little bit! You're a mad monk, an unmitigated madman. -- So you don't have to tell me how weird you are. I know how weird you are. I'm the girl in your bed the last three months and even sex is a mystical experience for you. You carry on like a flagellant, which can be very nice, but I sometimes wonder if it's me that's being made love to. I feel like I'm being harpooned by some raging priest in the act of receiving God.

She would go on but is interrupted by VOICES issuing from the loudspeaker.

HOBART'S VOICE

-- the same? --

ROSENBERG'S VOICE

(rewarpping the  
sphygmomanometer)

-- Yeah --

Hobart makes a note in his notebook.

EMILY

-- You're -- a Faust freak, Eddie. You'd sell your soul to find the great truth. Well, human life doesn't have great truths. We're born screaming in doubt, and we spend our lives persuading ourselves we're actually alive. One of the ways we know we're alive is we love each other. Like I love you. I can't imagine living without you. So let's get married, and if it turns out to be a disaster, it'll be a disaster, and we'll shake hands and say good-bye.

In the therapy room, Rosenberg is giving the Patient a shot.

JESSUP

(to Emily)

He's giving her dimethyltryptamine.  
It takes effect in about a minute,  
and she'll trip out for about  
half an hour.

He abruptly leaves Emily's side and exits into the therapy room, visible instantly through the one-way window, moving in the b.g. of the room to stand over the portable EEG machine, watching the tracings. In f.g., we begin to see a noticeable change in the Patient. She stops her giggling and shuffling, sits stiffly, more controlled, and the vaguely terrified vacuity of her expression abruptly changes to one of intense concentration, almost trance-like. Hobart is asking her his soft questions again --

HOBART'S VOICE

(over the speaker)

Do you feel different now?

PATIENT

(startlingly re-  
sponsive)

Yes.

HOBART

Less anxious?

PATIENT

Much less.

HOBART

Do you have any special feelings?

PATIENT

(after a moment)

I feel like my heart is being  
touched by Christ.

Jessup is back again in the monitoring room. They watch Hobart draw a triangle on a slate and ask the Patient to duplicate it. She manages to draw one leg of the triangle but seems stumped after that.

JESSUP

There's a lot of religious  
delusion among acute schizophrenics.  
Some guys say schizophrenics are  
physically different from the rest  
of us. It's almost as if they were  
trying to change their physical  
selves to adapt to their  
schizophrenic image of themselves.

(MORE)

26

JESSUP (cont'd)

26

Look, we'll get married since it's that important to you. I don't want to lose you. I'm not comfortable with women, and I'm not likely to find anyone half as remarkable as you again. I think I can make a reasonably good husband. You understand I'd rather not get married, but I'll go along with it. I don't want to lose you, you see.

EMILY

I suppose that's the closest thing to a declaration of love I'll ever get out of you.

JESSUP

Am I really that weird in bed?

EMILY

Sometimes.

JESSUP

Shall I try to change?

EMILY

No, I kind of like it.

\*

26A EXT. PINCKNEY STREET - BOSTON - APRIL 1975 - SATURDAY - DAY

26A

Jessup is walking down Pinckney Street. He is seven years older, and, when we see him closer on, we will see he is beginning to bald just a bit. At the moment, he is trundling his two-year-old DAUGHTER in a stroller with his left hand and holding a large supermarket bag of groceries with his right. Hopping along behind is his five-year-old DAUGHTER. Jessup is in animated discussion with a big, fully bearded, booming bear of a man, aged thirty-eight, MASON PARRISH. Two young professors on a Saturday afternoon, and they look every bit of it. Parrish smokes a pipe. Jessup wears a sleeveless sweater and neatly pressed slacks. They pause for a KID on a bicycle to wheel his way past them out onto the street. Jessup even waves to a NEIGHBOR sitting on his stoop.

27 EXT. BOSTON - MYRTLE STREET - APRIL 1975 - SATURDAY P.M. - DAY

27

A pretty, tree-lined block in the Beacon Hill district, red-brick, ivy-covered townhouses, Volkswagens and station wagons parked along the curbs.

27 Arthur Rosenberg, seven years older, and a bit less Bohemian, leans against a station wagon. He wears a sports jacket with leather patches, a tieless shirt, is bent forward amiably engaged in conversation with his six-year-old SON. He cuffs the kid affectionately. The kid trots back and up the stoop and into the house they are standing in front of. Rosenberg looks up the block --

ROSENBERG'S POV - Down at the end of the block, Jessup can be seen turning the corner off Revere. It is simply too suburban for words, and Rosenberg can't help smiling. The two men are so engrossed in their talk they don't notice Rosenberg, even when they are practically on top of him --

ROSENBERG

If I didn't see this, I wouldn't believe it.

Jessup stops, stares --

JESSUP

My God! You weren't supposed to be here till next week! You got bald.

\*

ROSENBERG

So did you.

\*

They pump each other's hands.

ROSENBERG

Are these new?  
(refers to  
Jessup's glasses)

\*

JESSUP

My God! This is sensational!  
(to Parrish)  
Mason, this is the Rosenberg I'm  
always telling you about!

PARRISH

(an ebullient good  
old boy from West  
Virginia, grabs  
Rosenberg's hand)

It sure is!

JESSUP

When did you get into town?

ROSENBERG

About three days ago. Are these  
your kids?

27

JESSUP

27

They are. Where's Sylvia, is she with you?

ROSENBERG

She's inside with Emily --

28

thru OMITTED

37

28

thru

37

38

thru

40

INT. THE JESSUP APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

38

thru

40

Sylvia Rosenberg, pregnant again, rising from the kitchen table where she's been having coffee with Emily, shrieking with delight as Jessup, Rosenberg, (carrying the two-year-old Jessup kid who is crying) Parrish, the groceries, the stroller are all making their way in from the entrance foyer. Sylvia tears across the living room to embrace Jessup, tears in her eyes. Everybody talks at once --

SYLVIA

Oh, my God, oh, my God, you look so wonderful!

JESSUP

(notices as he embraces her, she is pregnant)

When did this happen? Have you found a place yet?

\*

ROSENBERG

Yeah, we got a nice little place near Huntington Field --

SYLVIA

Oh, my God, it's been seven years! Since we moved to San Francisco!

EMILY

(to Parrish, who is bearing the groceries to the kitchen)

Arthur's going to teach at Boston U --

PARRISH

(exiting into the kitchen as a beam- ing Emily comes out)

So Eddie's been telling me --

38 The Rosenberg BOY comes out of the kids' room,  
thru silently regards all this adult effusion. At that  
40 moment, the Jessup five-year-old slips into the  
room. Parrish, back from the kitchen, swoops her  
up to her shrieking delight.

38  
thru  
40

SYLVIA

(releasing Jessup)

I can't believe it's been seven  
years since we've actually seen  
you people.



38 Rosenberg stands and beams at this jolly scene of re- 38  
 thru union. The apartment -- the ground floor, three rooms, thru  
 40 two baths, kitchen -- is a scholarly shambles. Piles 40  
 of books clot the entrance foyer and are strewn around  
 the floors in every room. Emily apparently has set up  
 a corner for herself in the living room, a bridge table  
 for a desk, a typewriter barely visible among the welter  
 of papers, periodicals, scholarly journals, students'  
 theses, one of which is now fluttering off the bridge  
 table down onto the floor. Everybody is talking at  
 once --

ROSENBERG

(across the room  
 to Emily)

I hear you just got associate  
 professor --

EMILY

Yeah, terrific!

ROSENBERG

(to Jessup)

You guys must be loaded, two  
 professors in the family --

EMILY

Listen, we've got a place in Maine  
 you can use for the summer. I'm  
 going to Africa again in June.  
 Eddie'll be in Mexico. :

JESSUP

(plunking himself  
 down in one of  
 the torn over-  
 stuffed chairs)

Listen, do you know a guy named  
 Eccheverria, University of Mexico,  
 says he worked with you in California?

ROSENBERG

(removing some books,  
 so he can sit in  
 the other chair)

Sure. A very bright young guy. \*

JESSUP

He's here in Boston at the Botanical  
 Museum. We'll all have to get  
 together. I'm going back to  
 Mexico with him in June.

ROSENBERG

What's in Mexico?

38  
thru  
40

JESSUP

38  
thru  
40

Well, Eccheverria's got this witch doctor down there, the Hinci Indians. An isolated tribe in Central Mexico who still practice the ancient Toltec rituals, sacred mushroom ceremonies, that sort of thing. Apparently, they use some kind of hallucinatory drug that's supposed to evoke a common experience for all users.

ROSENBERG

Sounds improbable.

EMILY

(enters)

Eddie, Maggie has fallen asleep on the couch. Will you take care of her?

JESSUP

(takes a beat  
to register)

Sure.

Jessup scoops up his two year old daughter sprawled on the couch.

JESSUP

Did you ever get into an isolation tank since New York?

ROSENBERG

No, have you?

JESSUP

No, but I've just found out they've got one here at the medical school.

ROSENBERG

No kidding. I thought those things went out in the sixties.

He carries the sleeping child across the living room toward the back corridor. Rosenberg gets up to follow. Behind them, Emily comes out of the kitchen with a tray of coffee cups and Toll House cookies. Parrish is lying on the living room floor pretending to have been knocked cold by the Rosenberg boy and the older Jessup girl; the kids are amused.

JESSUP

(en route carrying  
his kid)

I thought we did some pretty interesting stuff in that tank in New York...

(MORE)

38  
thru  
40

JESSUP (cont'd)  
... for the couple of months we  
played around with it. When I  
come back from Mexico, maybe  
we'll get into it again.

38  
thru  
40

ROSENBERG

Why not?

38 Jessup disappears into the kids' bedroom. Rosenberg 38  
 thru pauses outside the master bedroom to watch his preg- thru  
 40 nant wife tidying up in front of the mirror. This room40  
 isn't much more orderly than the living room. Jessup's  
 work area is here, an honest three-drawer filing cabinet,  
 an escritoire, a wall lined with bookshelves and packed  
 with texts and journals and Jessup's own notes, thick  
 hardbound looseleaf notebooks, neatly labeled. The  
 rest of the room is in chaos. The large double bed  
 is still unmade, and yesterday's clothing is flung  
 over the backs of chairs or piled on the floor.

ROSENBERG

(notes to his wife)

A terrific housekeeper she's not.

Sylvia beckons him into ---

41 INT. THE MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

41

Rosenberg joins his wife at the bureau.

SYLVIA

They're getting divorced, you know.

ROSENBERG

(startled)

Who? What're you talking about?

SYLVIA

I don't know if they're actually getting divorced; they're splitting up. She and the kids are moving to a furnished place in Cambridge, and that's why the place is such a mess. They're moving her stuff into storage tomorrow. Then she's going to Africa with the kids for a year, and he's going to Mexico, and, when she comes back, she's going to live in Cambridge, and he's staying here. It's him wants the divorce, not her. Listen, I'm surprised they stayed together this long.

ROSENBERG

When did all this happen?

SYLVIA

She just told me five minutes ago.

Rosenberg stares at his wife, then leans out into the corridor and looks down to the kids' room where Jessup can be seen gently covering up his two-year-old daughter with a blanket.

41

ROSENBERG

41

What happened to all those letters she kept writing us how happy they were?

SYLVIA

Don't ask me. She's still crazy about him, and he's still crazy.

ROSENBERG

(mutters)

Jesus Christ --

He goes into --

42

INT. THE BACK CORRIDOR - DAY

42

and down that to --

43

INT. THE KIDS' BEDROOM - DAY

43

-- where he stands in the doorway watching Jessup, now at the window lowering the shade, darkening the room. Even in the lesser light, the room is obviously in a state of being packed. There are opened cardboard cartons here and there and little girls' dresses still on their hangars on the beds and toys piled in haphazard heaps.

ROSENBERG

Listen, Sylvia just told me you're getting divorced.

JESSUP

Well, we're separating anyway. We probably won't get around to the divorce till next year.

ROSENBERG

Look, it's none of my business, but why? You're married to one of the great women of the world, who adores you. You're obviously a devoted father. My God, if anybody's got it made, you have. You're a respected and admired figure, a full professor on the faculty of the Harvard Medical School --

JESSUP

(good-naturedly)

Oh, for God's sake, Arthur, is that how you imagine me -- a respected and admired figure?

(MORE)

43

JESSUP (cont'd)

43

A devoted father? A loving husband? Well, I've also published nearly two papers a year for the last seven years, and not a fundamental piece of work in the lot. And I don't know why you're so startled we're getting divorced. You're the one who thought she was crazy to marry me in the first place.

ROSENBERG

Well, that's true.

JESSUP

Well, don't be too upset. It's an amicable separation. Nobody's mad at anyone, and the marriage itself was sufferable, as sufferable as any of the others around. I think I've played my part well. I take the kids to the zoo. I stay up with them when they're ill, I romp with them when they're well. I sit around the living rooms of other young married faculty members talking infantile masturbation, who's sucking up to the head of the department and whose tenure is hanging by a thread. Emily's quite content to go on with this life. She insists she's in love with me, whatever that is. What she means is she prefers the senseless pain we inflict on each other to the pain we would otherwise inflict on ourselves. But I'm not afraid of that solitary pain. In fact, if I don't strip myself of all this clatter and clutter and ridiculous ritual, I shall go out of my fucking mind. Does that answer your question, Arthur?

ROSENBERG

What question was that?

JESSUP

You asked me why I was getting divorced.

ROSENBERG

Listen, it's your life. I'm sorry I even asked.

43 He turns to go. Behind him, Jessup stands on the far 43 side of his daughter's bed, his eyes suddenly white in the grayness of the room. The monkish, zealot cast of his face has never been more evident.

JESSUP

I want to be alone again, renounce the rubbish of it all, mortify my flesh, scourge my spirit. I want to get down to the embedded rock of life, what Saint John would call the bare and barren soul.

He suddenly smiles, emerges out of the grayness of the room to where Rosenberg stands in the spill of light by the doorway. He is honestly fond of Rosenberg. He rests his hand on his friend's shoulder.

JESSUP

Why don't I call Eccheverria, and we'll all go out and have dinner --

44 INT. DOM'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

44

A noisy, cheerful table, eight voluble academics, all in their mid and late thirties, gabbling away, swilling their wine, stowing their pasta down. They are all talking at once, and we don't need to hear anything clearly, but this is what they are saying --

EMILY

(to Parrish's girl for the night, a second year med student from

Massachusetts General)

-- What differentiates man from the chimpanzee, for example, is that man needs tools for survival and therefore evolved a cortical structure that could make use of tools --

(to Rosenberg who is thrusting a petition form and a pen at her)

Oh, for God's sake, Arthur, you haven't been in Boston a week, and you're already a member of the Committee of Concerned Scientists --

ROSENBERG

Just sign the damn thing, Emily --

EMILY

(signing and rattling  
on to Parrish's girl  
as she does)

A chimpanzee might use a stick to dig into a termite hill, but he can survive as a species without it. A baboon, whose diet is almost exclusively vegetarian, will take half an hour to dig up a root. It's just never occurred to baboons they could shorten that time to five minutes if they used a stick. Originally, man was just another savanna-living primate like the baboon --

PARRISH

(flirting with  
Eccheverria's girl,  
a botanist from the  
Botanical Museum)

-- Nobody really knows how memory works. Apparently, we remember everything we sense for about fifty milliseconds. Then it disappears or is selectively fixed in our consciousness. Now, you being a botanist, sure as hell know puromycin can wipe out a memory, and sympathomimetic drugs like strychnine, dextroamphetamine, et cetera can stimulate the retention of memory. But these are all poisonous, addictive, induce convulsions, and are alien to the body. The fact that a small chain of amino acids, ACTH four to seven, a natural substance of the body, is instrumental in fixing memory is, I think, particularly interesting. This, however, raises another question. ACTH is a peptide. Its secretory rates are influenced by stress. Does ACTH actually code learning or does it only relate to hormonal substances that formed due to stress? You really interested in this shit, honey? Because, if you are, I'll be glad to go into it more deeply any night this week --



ROSENBERG  
(now around to harras-  
sing Eccheverria, an  
elegant senor, with  
his petition)

-- We scientists have a moral obligation to the public as well as to our own research. Some of those shotgun fragments could augment a bacterium's ability to produce disease. For God's sake, they're chopping up fruitflies and inserting the segments into E coli and mass-producing bacteria. We're dealing with a fistful of unknowns. We can only identify a couple of the genes. And now there's a lot of talk about sticking a P-3 lab here in Cambridge. They've already got them at Stanford and the U of M, and the whole thing with tumor viruses is already out of hand at Woods Hole. We could wipe out the planet if we don't watch out, so just sign the damn thing,  
Eduardo --

If we can make anything out of all this esoteric jabber, it will be Jessup's discourse to Sylvia Rosenberg, sitting at his right. Jessup, who is having a lot more wine than he usually does, is loaded and talking loudly --

JESSUP  
(to Sylvia  
Rosenberg)

-- As a matter of fact, the year I spent in India was disappointing. No matter how you slice it, yoga is still a state-specific technology operating in the service of an a priori belief system, not much different from other trance-inducing techniques. What dignifies the yogic practices is that the belief system itself is not truly religious. There is no Buddhist god per se. It is the Self, the individual Mind, that contains immortality and ultimate truth --

EMILY

44

(interrupting her  
own colloquy to  
shout from her end  
of the table)

What the hell's not religious  
about that? You've simply replaced  
God with the Original Self!

JESSUP

(shouts back)

Yes, but we've localized it! At  
least, we know where the Self is!  
It's in our own minds!

(he stands, not  
too sturdily)

It's a form of human energy! Our  
atoms are six billion years old!  
We've got six billion years of  
memory in our minds! Hell, our  
hydrogen atoms are even older!

(he has begun to  
weave a bit in  
and out of his  
place at the  
table)

Memory is energy! It doesn't  
disappear! It's still in there! --

(he wheels to  
Rosenberg, ig-  
noring the ner-  
vous interest he  
is causing at  
neighboring tables)

There's a physiological pathway to  
our earlier consciousnesses! There  
has to be! And I'm telling you it's  
in the goddamned limbic system -- !

PARRISH

(roaring happily)

Jessup, you are a whacko!

JESSUP

What's whacko about it, Mason?  
I'm a man in search of his true  
self. How archtypically American  
can you get? Everybody's looking  
for their true selves. We're all  
trying to fulfill ourselves, under-  
stand ourselves, get in touch with  
ourselves, face the reality of  
ourselves, explore ourselves, expand  
ourselves. Ever since we dispensed  
with God, we've got nothing but our  
selves to explain this meaningless  
horror of life.

(MORE)

45 EXT. ZAPATECUS PROVINCE, MEXICO - JULY 1975 - LONG  
SHOT - DAY

45

The terrifying sierras of Central Mexico. As far as the eye can see, from horizon to horizon, rugged crags and violently plunging gorges, seemingly uninhabitable.

46 EXT. MOUNTAIN TERRAIN (ON THE WAY TO SACRED MUSHROOM FIELDS)- DAY

46

Precipitously surrounded by the brutal mountains. Shattering splashes of color -- blue agave and yellow chaparral, and the crags of the blue-black mountains are almost orange in the sun.

ANOTHER ANGLE ACROSS Jessup in T-shirt and khaki shorts, and Eccheverria, talking while they climb. Making their way up the mountain, Jessup carries a Sony tape recorder. Eccheverria is holding samples of leaves and roots --

ECCHEVERRIA

(while climbing)

-- the mushrooms are almost certainly certainly amanita muscaria, a very powerful psychedelic and a little dangerous. It contains some belladonna alkaloids, atropine, scopolamine. The sinicuiche plant is highly regarded among a number of Indian tribes. I've seen it as far north as Chihuahua. It should be especially interesting for you. The Indians say it evokes old memories, even ancient ones. The Hinchis call it the First Flower.

JESSUP

First in the sense of primordial?

ECCHEVERRIA

Yes, in the sense of the most ancient.

Jessup and Eccheverria have reached the top and WE SEE THEIR POV a plateau-like valley, precipitously surrounded by the brutal mountains. Shattering splashes of color --

JESSUP

I'd like to try it. Do you think they'll let me join in their ritual?

ECCHEVERRIA

They seem like agreeable people.

47 EXT. THE HINCHI HOME VALLEY - DAY  
48

47  
48

Moving slowly across the plateau like cotton-pickers, the Hinchí tribe, all sixty of them, in their loincloths and cotton shirts and print dresses, are filling their burlap bags with mushrooms, branches of small slender trees, leaves, petals, seed pods and white tuberous roots, the last of which have to be dug out of the ground with bare hands.

49 EXT. THE HINCHI VALLEY - OUTSIDE THE BRUJO'S SHACK - DUSK

49

A SHOT or TWO showing some of the HINCHI TRIBE sprawling around their shacks and tents, swigging corn beer and getting smashed. A couple of mangy dogs lope in and out of view.

ACROSS THREE CHOSEN WOMEN in their shapeless cotton dresses, squatting and kneeling, grinding roots and buds and leaves and petals into varying degrees of fineness. In b.g., the BRUJO'S shack, a ramshackle clapboard shanty with a shaky overhang held up by two rotting pilasters. Around a fire in a little clearing in front of the shack sit Jessup and Eccheverria and FOUR ESCOGIDOS, the chosen men.

50 ACROSS the men around the fire with the shack in b.g.,  
thru from which the fifth escogido, the man of power, the  
56 BRUJO, is emerging, carrying a small burlap bag. He is  
a shaggy old man in his late 60's, whose earlier contact with white civilization is affirmed by the shapeless gray single-breasted jacket he wears, the white like-the fringes of a prayer shawl. The fire they are all sitting around is actually a primitive hearth ground. Jessup has his notebook out and is putting a fresh cassette into the tape recorder --

50  
thru  
56

The Brujo smooths out the small blanket lying near the fire and then begins to empty his burlap bag item by item and, spacing them with some ceremony on the blanket. The first item is a hunting knife, nearly a foot in length and glistening blue in the fading afternoon sunlight; then a soft, brown leather pouch; with age, from which he extracts the ceremonial pipe, a dark-reddish stem about ten inches long and a blackened bowl.

Before placing each item on the blanket, the Brujo addresses the four directions with the object, chanting in a low whine. The other Escogidos, squatting and sprawling around the fire, have been and are biting peyote buttons, and they are stoned out of their skulls. Jessup's tape recorder WHIRS and turns. DUSK is now descending quickly; the valley is in heavy shadow now --

(CONTINUED)

50 The Brujo takes the last item out of the burlap bag,  
thru a bundle of bound, white plant roots. He draws one  
56 of them out, splits it down the middle with his knife  
till it forms a Y, humming his droning chants as he  
does. He leans to Eccheverria --

50  
thru  
56

THE BRUJO  
(to Eccheverria)

Quierene su amigo participar aun?

ECCHEVERRIA  
(to Jessup)

He wants to know if you still  
want to participate.

JESSUP

Yes, of course.

The old Brujo goes back to his soft chant, now binding  
together the forked ends of the split root with  
tendrils of a vine. Behind them, two of the Chosen  
Women are bringing a large iron pot out of the house  
and set it on the hearthstones over the fire. Jessup  
leans forward to examine the yellow sludge-like substance  
inside it.

JESSUP

Ask him what kind of an experience  
I can expect.

ECCHEVERRIA  
Que clase de experiencia pude  
esperar mi amigo?

THE BRUJO  
Su alma regresara a su primera  
alma.

ECCHEVERRIA  
(to Jessup)  
Your soul will return to the  
First Soul.

JESSUP  
Ask him what this First Soul  
will look like.

ECCHEVERRIA  
Como es le primera alma?

THE BRUJO  
Es la Materia Increada.

ECCHEVERRIA  
(to Jessup)  
It is Unborn Stuff.

(CONTINUED)

50 Jessup looks up to study the Brujo and finds himself  
thru being studied in return by the old man's cat-like eyes.  
56 The Brujo begins to speak, Eccheverria translating  
quickly between --

50  
thru  
56

THE BRUJO

Entonces, usted se lanzara en  
el vacio --

ECCHEVERRIA

Then, you will propel into the  
Void --

THE BRUJO

Usted vera una mancha --

ECCHEVERRIA

You will see a spot --

THE BRUJO

La mancha se convertira en una  
grieta --

ECCHEVERRIA

The spot will become a crack --

THE BRUJO

Esta es la Grieta Entre la Nada --

ECCHEVERRIA

This is the Crack Between the  
Nothing --

THE BRUJO

De esta Nada saldra su Alma  
Increada --

ECCHEVERRIA

Out of this Nothing will come  
your Unborn Soul --

Jessup nods. The last of the sun has disappeared. The  
valley is in heavy shadow.

CUT TO VILLAGE with JESSUP and ELDERS in a procession through  
the stone mushrooms toward the BRUJO'S CAVE which they ENTER.

(CONTINUED)

50 INT. BRUJO'S CAVE - NIGHT

50  
thru  
56

THE BRUJO

Digale que extienda la palma  
de la mano --

ECHEVERRIA

He wants you to hold the root.  
Put out your hand with your palm  
up --

Jessup edges closer to the old man and sticks out his hand palm up. The Brujo carefully places the root across the flat of Jessup's palm. Suddenly, he separates Jessup's third and fourth fingers and deftly slashes the joint with his hunting knife. Jessup, shocked, screams. He is so startled, he just squats there with his bleeding hand outstretched. The Brujo seizes his wrist and pulls the bleeding hand over the pot. He twists Jessup's wrist so that the stark white root falls into the pot. He holds Jessup's hand over the pot until a few drops of blood fall into the blackness of the ground behind him, shocked and spent, sick with a sense of outrage --

ECHEVERRIA

(leaning over him)  
Are you all right?

Jessup nods.

The Brujo and one of the other men are now carrying the pot to the ritual blanket. In the night, they seem like monstrous shadows. Jessup tries to examine his bleeding hand in the darkness --

JESSUP

(mutters)  
Jesus Christ --

A form looms over him. He looks up. It's the old Brujo holding out a cup of the liquid, expressionlessly. Jessup sits up, takes the cup, and drinks. He gets up on his knees and then stands and EXITS THE CAVE INTO EXTERIOR the darkness. Behind him, he hears the Brujo and Echeverria mumbling in Spanish --

THE BRUJO (VOICE OVER)

(referring to the tape recorder)  
Esta trabajando la grabadora?  
Esta fumando tres partes de  
polvo de honguitos con una parte  
de polvo de sinicuiche y una parte  
de pipoloxochital --

50 Jessup's body suddenly becomes two bodies. 50  
 thru One remains huddled on its knees vomiting; the other thru  
 56 slowly takes shape outside the first body and then 56  
 as suddenly WHOOSHES UP into the sky until he is  
 hardly more than a spot, visible only because of a  
 curious LUMINOSITY about him. Down around the fire,  
 the other men seem entirely innocent of this extra-  
 ordinary event. A mangy dog wanders into the ring  
 of sprawling men, sniffs at Jessup's first body, still  
 on its knees, in the darkness a few yards away from  
 the others --

The SCREEN is now a dull, matted WHITE, streaked, as  
 if painted on with heavy impasto wipes of a big  
 brush. The yellow of the lizard slowly leaks out into  
 the whiteness, staining it. Losing its color, the  
 lizard disappears --

On the yellowing whiteness of the screen, a strange  
 pulpy shape appears, fissured and creviced, a grayish  
 blob, recognizable perhaps to biologists as a human  
 brain, which instantly folds and slithers into itself  
 to take on other pulpy shapes, changing into soft,  
 pulsating globules of matter, insinuatingly sexual in  
 appearance, oleaginous in movement; what we are, in  
 fact, watching is a de-evolution of the brain, as it  
 passes backward across the evolutionary continuum  
 through the brain of an alligator, to that of a cod-  
 fish, until it oozes into the primitive, linear ridged  
 nervous system of a worm -- It all disappears --

Another biological dematuration process -- blobs of  
 substance, grayish in color, slowly, constantly fold-  
 ing and unfolding into different momentary shapes,  
 from the curled up, loaf-like cracked and creviced  
 adult brain, oozing into the more simplified shapes  
 of the brain of a 6-month embryo; to the bulging  
 vermiform structure of the brain of a 7-week embryo;  
 a bulbous, shapeless thing; turning into -- finally  
 -- the brain of a 3-week embryo, hardly more than a  
 hose-like structure with something stuck in its  
 gullet, the bulging tip of a prosencephalon hanging  
 down at the end of the thick snake-like thing as if  
 it were ashamed --

The SCREEN, all of everything, begins to get DARKER  
 and DARKER until everything, all of the SCREEN, is  
 silently, impenetrably BLACK --

Infinitely down below a tiny flickering spot, per-  
 haps the last conscious image of the fire Jessup had  
 been sitting around --

Then -- suddenly -- an unbearable, blinding FLASH of  
 pure white light incandesces the entire SCREEN, a  
 fraction of a second of explosion of pure energy --

Then, it is all BLACK again --



50  
thru  
56

Enormous FLAMES, unbelievably hot, out of which emanate sudden, violent EXPLOSIONS and flares --

50  
thru  
56

Suddenly, one of these white-orange flares zigzags across the flaming face of the SCREEN, like a crevasse opening up in arctic ice --

Suddenly, nothing is left to see but this jagged crack stretching obliquely up and across the SCREEN, as if the screen were about to crack open --

Everything else is BLACK --

The crack is flaming red, then purple, then blue --

A violent series of sudden images, none of which last longer than a second --

A flaming cloud of gases, hydrogen and helium, WHOOSHES across the black screen at 90,000,000 mph, throbbing as it cools and contracts with gravity -- another such cloud -- another --

A huge spiral-shaped cloud WHOOSHES across the SCREEN, condensing into blue, condensing into trillions of stars, an embryo galaxy --

A blue cloud of gases, now getting hotter and hotter and redder and redder as its trillions and trillions of atomic bits crush in on each other because of their mutual gravitational attraction -- the cloud is now a flaming ball -- a star, a sun. At the critical level of 20,000,000°F. it ignites and burns -- nuclear EXPLOSION follows nuclear explosion --

One of the spiral arms of the Mikly Way galaxy -- the swirling tendrils of the primal mist -- a water molecule freezing into a crystal of ice -- a flaming yellow globe-like mass, the sun, surrounded by an iridescent halo of ice crystals and grains of rock or iron -- the coalescence of small fragments into a larger fragment as the central fragment sweeps its neighboring fragments into its gravitational pull --

An endless expanse of cold, airless, waterless rock -- It begins to leak bubbles and beads of boiling radio-activity -- a cloud of yellow sulphurous steam -- A falling of yellow rain --

A silent, sable SEA of water, motionless, fills the SCREEN --

All the above flickering imagery has taken place across the blue, jagged crack that seems to be splitting the SCREEN. The crack never disappears, it is a constant presence --

50 The crack suddenly ERUPTS spewing blinding light out 50  
 thru like lava, the First Cabalistic emanation of thru  
 56 light -- 56

Everything abruptly condenses back into BLACKNESS again. The blue crack has disappeared. In its place, a brownish figure, if it could be called a figure, more of a molten mass of substance which appears to have arms and legs and a head, but so protean of form that the limbs and other distinguishing features keep dissolving into itself and extruding out of itself, bubbling up here and there, swelling and contracting. It moves in surf-like emanations of itself, expanding and lapping out of itself in slow exorable waves --

A high-pitched SCREAM of exultancy --

The molten mass emerges larger and larger. Its substance seems to be iridescent, flaring with tiny flames --

Behind it, the SCREEN is now GOLD --

A sudden CLOSER VIEW of the molten mass -- The tiny flames are tiny exploding neural matter.

At his feet, the large yellow iguana, its pre-historic jaws slightly agape, its tongue flicking in and out --

The lizard waddles across the expanse of GOLDEN SCREEN towards the pulsating, flaring mass of brown substance -- It stops about halfway; the lizard is suddenly wary, frightened -- It edges on slowly, cautiously --

Suddenly, it is engulfed by the flaming molten substance -- Its limbs are wrenched, ripped with a sickening SCREAM of bone and muscle, out of their sockets. The pieces of the lizard are lifted up within the molten substance by the improvisations of arms, and the shapeless head bows to devour the lizard --

It slowly surges around him --

The golden SCREEN takes on a reddish hue. The brown, orange, yellow objects on it lose their definition in the merger of colors --

Again, the high-pitched SCREAM of exultancy --

The SCREEN is totally BLACK again --

There is the feeling of a bottomless shaft -- a WHOOSH of precipitous descent --

We seem to be seeing things now in a BLACK LIGHT. The SCREEN seems filled with the branches of a tree -- In the black distance, there seems to be a campfire flickering in the wind --

Jessup's white face, squinting to avoid the poking of the branches --

57 EXT. THE HINCHI VALLEY - OUTSIDE THE BRUJO'S SHACK - 57  
 thru NIGHT 57  
 59 thru 59

Nighttime in a valley in the mountains of Central Mexico. Eccheverria, the Brujo, the other four Escogidos, sprawled around their fire, a couple of them asleep. About 20 yards away in the darkness, just on the fringe of the light of the fire, barely visible, Jessup is standing in a bosk of bushes. He is urinating. --

REVERSE ACROSS Jessup as he zips up his shorts and shuffles back to the others around the fire. Eccheverria looks up briefly. Otherwise, nobody notices his return. In b.g., under the overhang of the Brujo's shack, two of the Chosen Women sit in shadowy bundles of sleep. A dog drifts through the bodies around the fire, momentarily illuminated by the firelight.

Jessup silently joins the group, sinks onto the ground, lies back and is instantly asleep --

60 EXT. OUTSIDE THE BRUJO'S HOUSE - NEXT A.M. - DAY 60  
 thru 60  
 65 thru 65

Cheerful bright sunlight floods the valley. Jessup, stripped to the waist, is doing his morning wash from an improvised tin washtank beside the Brujo's shack. He is chatting with Eccheverria who is leaning against the shack. Jessup seems in excellent spirits. Two of the Escogidos are still sleeping it off around the dead fire. A third Escogido is off in b.g. urinating. The Brujo comes out of his shack, watches Jessup towelling his face off, ambles over to where Jessup and Eccheverria are standing --

THE BRUJO

Obtuvo la experience predicha?

ECCHEVERRIA

He wants to know if you had the experience that was predicted for you.

JESSUP

(nods hello to the  
 Brujo, smiles)

Tell him I did, and I also had an experience that was not predicted for me.

ECCHEVERRIA

El tuvo una experiencia que no habio sido predicha.

THE BRUJO

(smiles briefly)

El se comio una lagartija.

60  
thru  
65

ECCHEVERRIA  
(to Jessup)  
He says you ate a lizard.

60  
thru  
65

JESSUP  
(glances at the  
Brujo)  
How does he know I ate a lizard?

ECCHEVERRIA  
Como sabes que el se comio una  
lagartija?

THE BRUJO  
Yo lo vio comerse la lagartija.  
Todos lo vimos comerse la  
lagartija.

ECCHEVERRIA  
He says he saw you, they all saw  
you.

JESSUP  
Does that mean he was with me in  
my hallucination? Does he have  
the ability to get into another  
man's mind?

ECCHEVERRIA  
Estaha usted con mi amigo en  
su sueno?

The Brujo stares blankly at him.

ECCHEVERRIA  
Tiene usted la habilidad de entrar  
en el sueno de otro hombre?

THE BRUJO  
(to Jessup)  
Yo lo vio. Todos lo vimos.

ECCHEVERRIA  
He says they all saw you.

JESSUP  
But I ate the lizard in my  
hallucination. I didn't actually  
eat the lizard around the fire  
here. If he saw me eat the  
lizard, he must've somehow joined  
me in the hallucination.

ECCHEVERRIA  
El se comio la lagartija en su  
sueno.

60 The old shaman scowls at Jessup and then shuffles 60  
 thru off for the bushes where Jessup had returned from thru  
 65 his hallucination, some 15 yards away. He turns 65  
 back after a few steps and clearly wants them to  
 follow. Jessup and Eccheverria start after him. The  
 Brujo pushes his way into the scratchy bosk, spread-  
 ing the branches, holding them aside for Jessup and  
 Eccheverria to pass by. After a few paces, the Brujo  
 stops and points to the ground about ten yards to  
 their right. Jessup and Eccheverria turn to look --

ACROSS Jessup and Eccheverria. It is not quite clear  
 just what it is that is lying on the ground, somewhat  
 shrouded as it is by all the network of branches and  
 hidden by four dogs who are swarming over it, eating  
 it with the savagery of jackals. Jessup pushes into  
 the thick tangle of bush, a few more paces, followed  
 by Eccheverria. Then, they both stop, as the realiza-  
 tion of what they are going to see strikes them both.  
 They both involuntarily close their eyes for a moment.  
 Eccheverria turns away. The Brujo behind them shouts  
 at the dogs who back slowly away snarling. One of them  
 has the leg of something in his mouth --

JESSUP'S POV. Lying in a gel of dried blood and  
 leaves is the ravaged dismembered torso of what had  
 been a green crested iguana, terrifyingly legless, the  
 empty white bone of the leg sockets white and flecked  
 with blood. Half the torso has been stripped of its  
 greenish skin, and gobbets of raw flesh and exposed  
 viscera are open to view. Over this, the SOUND of a  
 man wretching, and the shouts of the Brujo keeping  
 the dogs off. The dogs can't wait to get back to the  
 feast. A dog lunges in, grabs one of the lizard legs  
 lying a foot away and makes off with it --

Eccheverria is bent over, holding onto a branch of a  
 bush, vomiting. Jessup has turned aside and is shad-  
 ing his eyes against the sight. The dogs immediately  
 plunge back to the feast. The Brujo turns and makes  
 his way back out of the bushes into the clearing --

66 EXT. OUTSIDE THE BRUJO'S HOUSE - DAY 66  
 thru 66  
 68 Jessup is checking out his gear, his sleeping bag, thru  
 68 tape recorder, notebooks. Eccheverria is packing his  
 sleeping bag. In b.g., occasional signs of tribal  
 activity --

JESSUP  
 (no longer in  
 good spirits)  
 First of all, iguanas are not  
 mountain lizards.

ECHEVERRIA  
 I know.

66  
thru  
68

JESSUP

They are shore and jungle lizards. Somebody must've brought that iguana up here, and this whole hideous business is just a joke the Indians have played on me just to make the gringo look like a fool --

66  
thru  
68

ECHEVERRIA

You asked me what happened, and I told you. You were crawling around on your hands and knees for awhile. Then, around seven-thirty, you got up and went to those bushes, to urinate, I thought. Then it sounded like some of the dogs had jumped you. There was a great deal of yelping and snarling and growling. Then you screamed. Or something screamed. And I and a couple of the women went to see if you were in any trouble. We had just about gotten to the bushes when the screaming stopped, and the old Brujo yelled at us to come back and forget it --

Jessup scowls, frowns, packs all his gear into one bundle, lashes it tightly --

JESSUP

Do you think they'd let me take some of that mixture I smoked back to Boston?

ECHEVERRIA

We can only ask.

JESSUP

I'd like Arthur to analyze, maybe synthesize it --

ABRUPT SHOCK EFFECT CUT TO:

69  
thru  
84

INT. A BIO-FEEDBACK ROOM

69  
thru  
84

A vast volcanic terrain wrenches and crevasses -- Agonizing SOUND of rock being wrenched out of place -- suddenly, out of one of the crevasses, an enormous, boiling white, steaming shaft of rock roars up, immediately followed by another shattering emergence of rock, the size of a small skyscraper, crushing the first shaft of rock, forcing it to fold and crack and bend under the new weight --

69  
thru  
84

JESSUP'S VOICE (OVER)  
My God! It's cracking, it's  
cracking, the whole thing is  
cracking! Enormous masses of  
rock!

69  
thru  
84

ROSENBERG'S VOICE (OVER)  
Are you okay, Eddie?

JESSUP'S VOICE (OVER)  
I'm fine! Get this stuff! This  
is new! --

The black water of a vast lake is heaving and bubbling;  
suddenly out of this sable sea, an enormous volcanic  
cone of rock surges up, ERUPTING with flame and boiling  
rock, hundreds of tons of plutonic EXPLOSION, a fantastic  
fountain of rock and scalding water rising two thousand  
feet into the air -- another plutonic EXPLOSION --

JESSUP'S VOICE (OVER)  
-- Deafening! The noise is  
deafening! Can you hear me  
above this noise! My God! --

DEAFENING, VIOLENT, AGONIZED SOUND -- Everywhere now,  
out of the sea, throughout the expanse of breaking land,  
monumental ERUPTIONS of earth crust, rupturing of rock  
and mantle -- each eruption of rock, piling on top of  
each other, steaming, white hot, folding, buckling,  
building. The air is filled with poisonous gases --

JESSUP'S VOICE (OVER)  
-- the most unbelievable thing  
I've ever seen! I'm watching  
the birth agony of a mountain!  
I can't believe this! --

INT. A BIO-FEEDBACK ROOM - BRIGHAM HOSPITAL - 8TH  
FLOOR - NIGHT

ACROSS Jessup lying on a large leather relaxing chair.  
He wears a T-shirt and jeans; his feet are bare. 8 EEG  
leads issue from his scalp. His face is contorting into  
fierce grimaces, his mouth opening into silent, strangu-  
lated rictus. The room is sound-attenuated, empty  
except for the chair. The lighting is subdued. In b.g.,  
through the observation window (2-way), we can see  
Rosenberg and Parrish in the observation room --

JESSUP  
-- My God! Can't you hear it!  
The noise is stupifying --

#

69 INT. THE OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY 69  
 thru thru  
 84 84  
 Compactly and densely fitted out with all kinds of recording equipment. Three sheepskin-lined coats are piled on the floor. Rosenberg fiddles with some controls. Parrish stands at the window observing Jessup in the sound-proofed room. Parrish is a little disturbed by what he's observing --

JESSUP'S VOICE  
 (over the amplifier)  
 -- A whole mountain range is being  
 born in front of my eyes! --

INT. THE BIOFEEDBACK ROOM - DAY

REVERSE across Jessup, eyes wide open now, bulging, staring madly out --

JESSUP  
 -- And the sun became black as sackcloth! The full moon became like blood! And a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea! And the beast ascends from the bottomless pit! And the angel of the bottomless pit -- his name in Hebrew is Abaddon!

Sudden silence.

INT. THE OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Sudden silence. Through the window, we can see Jessup's face is serene again. The wheels of a cassette in a Sony tape-recorder slowly whirr.

ROSENBERG  
 (clicks the intercom)  
 Are you okay, Eddie?

JESSUP'S VOICE  
 (calm, disembodied,  
 dispassionate)  
 I'm fine. Really, I'm fine.

PARRISH  
 (disturbed by the  
 experience)  
 Jesus Christ --

ROSENBERG  
 (into intercom)  
 Do you want me to bring you down?

There is no response, an uneasy silence settles over the room.



69  
thru  
84

PARRISH

What happens now?

69  
thru  
84

ROSENBERG

He's blacked out. These blackouts can get very freaky. Sometimes, they last as long as four hours. When he comes out of it, he's as chipper as a bird, but he doesn't remember a thing.

\*

Parrish checks the EEG recording machine.

ROSENBERG

All the vital signs are normal. He just blacks out.

PARRISH

How did you explain my coming over here tonight?

\*

ROSENBERG

I told him you called and asked how everything was since we hadn't seen each other in so long and I said, why don't you come over tonight and bullshit for awhile and you said terrific.

\*

JESSUP

(cutting him off)

Just how dangerous is this stuff he brought back from Mexico?

ROSENBERG

I didn't say dangerous; I said it was weird. It hangs around too long. It goes to all the wrong places. This stuff doesn't degrade. I must've shot up two dozen rats by now. We're retrieving sixty, seventy, sometimes eighty percent. And what's really screwy is it heads straight for the brain. I never saw a psychoactive drug that didn't wind up in the liver or in the kidney. There's nothing in that stuff I don't know. A lot of alkaloids. Principally cryogenine, some harmine --

\*

ROSENBERG

They're all known hallucinogens.

\*

PARRISH

(snorts, cuts  
Rosenberg off)

Well, I don't believe this!

\*

(MORE)

69  
thru  
84

PARRISH (cont'd)

69  
thru  
84

You guys are shooting up with an untested drug that stacks up in the brain and works in the nucleus of the cell -- and you don't call that dangerous?

ROSENBERG

For the record, we don't actually shoot up. Eddie drinks a ten milligram per cc solution of the stuff.

PARRISH

Well, it's going to stop right now!

ROSENBERG

What're you yelling at me for? I've been trying to get him to stop for months.

PARRISH

You guys are supposed to be reputable scientists, for God's sake, not two kids in the dorm freaking out on Mexican mushrooms!

ROSENBERG

Let's see you stop him. What do you think I called you for?

85 INT. THE OBSERVATION CHAMBER OF THE BIOFEEDBACK ROOM 85  
- DAY

They're cleaning up the room, getting ready to leave, gathering up the rolls of polygraph paper, putting on their sheepskin coats. Parrish already has his on --

PARRISH

(who has been arguing  
for some time and  
with some temper)

-- This ain't LSD, goddammit! This ain't no serotonin antagonist you're drinking! How many grams of that stuff do you figure you've already got in you -- two, three? You could be working up one hell of a case of cancer with a truckful of antimetabolites in you like that!

JESSUP

(heading for the door)

The Minchi Indians have been smoking that stuff for centuries with no special incidence of cancer.

Parrish follows Jessup out into --

86 INT. FOURTH FLOOR CORRIDOR - DAY

86

-- where Jessup slips into his sheepskin coat --

PARRISH

Fuck the Hinch Indians. You don't know anything about those mushrooms. It sounds to me like they have fantastic staying powers.

\*

Rosenberg turns off the lights in the biofeedback room and comes out into the corridor, the tape recorders slung over his shoulder and carrying his airline bag. Jessup locks up. They all head up the corridor --

JESSUP

We've shot up at least thirty rats with that stuff. Some of them have a whopping load in them, and none of them have been noticeably affected --

He leans into the Departmental Office, which is the only lit room the floor. He drops off the key --

JESSUP

(to whomever is inside)

Thanks --

87 EXT. HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL - CENTRAL COURT - DAY

87

The three coated, dark figures of our heroes crossing the quadrangle for B Buildings. Parrish is still quite exercised --

PARRISH

-- Now what's all this shit about an isolation tank now! For God's sakes! You guys get flakier every time I see you! I thought all that isolation tank stuff went out in the Sixties with Timothy Leary and all the other gurus! Where is this dumb isolation tank! --

They plod up the steps of B Building and into --

88 INT. HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL - B BUILDING - ENTRANCE FOYER - DAY

88

-- and head for the stairway, where they pause as Jessup expounds --

88

JESSUP

88

Mason, shut up for a minute, and let somebody else say something. What happens during this blackout period is you get the feeling of phenomenal acceleration, like you're shot out over millions, billions of years. Time simply obliterates. You sense the hallucination is going on, but you get no images. Well, I want to break through that blackout barrier, I'd like to know what those images are that I know are going on but I can't see --

He opens the door to --

89

INT. THE STAIRWELL - DAY

89

-- as they go clattering down the steps --

JESSUP

-- We can't raise the dosage of the drug because we're close to toxic levels now. So the only way we can intensify the experience is to take the two hundred milligrams in conjunction with the tank --

90

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - B BUILDING - DAY

90

They go striding up a long broad tiled basement corridor stretching the length of B Building with similar corridors debouching off to connect up with the other buildings of the Medical School and eventually to the Brigham Hospital.

90A

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR - DAY

90A

It has a basement look, a row of lockers along one wall here, some cartons and crates spotted along that wall there. It's about 9:00P.M., so there aren't many other people about, perhaps two or three --

PARRISH

There's a lot of things I'd like to do to that drug before you take any more. We should do a half-life determination. I'd like to know the transport system. I'd like to find some analogues.

90A

JESSUP

90A

And that could take us a year! All I know is this Mexican stuff is an extraordinary substance, and every instinct I have says I'm on to something hot here. And another two hundred milligrams isn't going to kill anybody.

He's found the room. He tries the door; it's locked. He inserts one of several keys he's brought out of his coat pocket. It turns. He opens the door. He enters --

91

INT. THE ISOLATION TANK ROOM - DAY

91

He flicks the wall light on. Overhead fluorescent lighting comes on. To the left, a brightly lit observation room, small and emptied of most of its equipment. With the exception of an EEG machine and its panel running up one soundproofed wall, the aluminum shelving around the room that once was compact with equipment is all bare. Directly in front, the door leading to the tank room itself. Jessup inserts another key, opens it. The room is pitch black. He finds the switch on the wall, one of those round ones that allows for graduated levels of light. Subdued, hidden light comes up slowly. There seems to be a bed with a naked striped mattress and pillow in the middle of the room --

JESSUP

They were doing sleep studies here.

The lights in the tank room have been brightening steadily until the room is well lit. Beside the bed in the middle of the room, there are some cartons and empty animal cages along one wall, and, along the back wall, a coffin-shaped black box, four by four by eight feet long --

JESSUP

There it is.

ROSENBERG

Oh, it's horizontal. It's smaller than the one we had in New York.

\*

JESSUP

I don't think anybody's used it in years. But I connected it up yesterday, and it works. It won't take a week to get this place cleaned out and functioning.

91

PARRISH

91

You could get your ass in a sling  
if it ever gets out you're using  
an untested drug on human subjects.

JESSUP

Don't worry so much, Mason. Nothing's  
going to happen to me -- Let's go get  
a quick hamburger. I told a kid in  
one of my classes I might see her  
tonight --

He heads back to the door, turning the light switch.  
The room darkens --

PARRISH

(exploding as he  
follows)

All right! Do what you want to do!  
I think you're both irresponsible  
as hell! So don't call me any more,  
Arthur, to tell me you're worried  
about Eddie putting all this shit  
into him! I'm telling you now -  
don't put any more of that shit into  
him till you find out a hell of a  
lot more about it! I offered you  
the use of my lab and all the rats  
you can use! And that's as much as  
I want to be implicated in your dumb  
experiments! And go get your own  
hamburger! I got my own date I'm  
already an hour late for! --

He storms out into the outer corridor --

92

thru OMITTED  
97

92

thru  
97

98

INT. C BUILDING - HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL - TWO WEEKS 98  
LATER - PARRISH'S LAB - DAY

An endocrinology lab. A small Christmas tree is in  
evidence. Parrish, a Grad Student, and an Endocrino-  
logy Fellow are standing by a scintillation counter, a  
large square aluminum contraption that looks like a  
dishwasher except it has a digital recording device  
which is rattling off red digits at the moment. In  
b.g., a Second Grad Student and two Lab Technicians,  
each at their desks, cutting microtomal sections or  
tending to the rats (there are five cages of them),  
or whatever one does in endocrinology labs. They are  
variously dressed. Parrish has his long, white  
doctor's coat on.

98 He has been doing rounds today, a stethoscope sticks 98  
out of his side pocket, an ophthalmoscope, a pen light,  
fountain pens stick out of his breast pocket. In one  
hand, he holds a stack of computer programming cards.  
Parrish glances at his watch on his free arm, scowls --

PARRISH

(to the endocrinology  
Fellow, extending the  
computer cards)

You want to do these today?

ENDOCRINOLOGY FELLOW

(taking the cards)

Sure.

99 OMITTED

99

100 INT. ISOLATION TANK ROOM - BASEMENT - B BUILDING - 100  
thru DAY 100  
102 thru 102

Brightly lit. The bed is gone, the crates and cages  
are gone. There is nothing in the room but the black  
tank. Rosenberg is on a footstool bent over the tank  
checking the EEG leads on Jessup's skull. The open  
doorway in b.g. suddenly fills up with Parrish, un-  
buttoning his coat. Rosenberg, backing off the foot-  
stool, carefully leading out the wire leads, notices  
him --

ROSENBERG

Couldn't resist, right?

PARRISH

(moving into the room)

Somebody's got to keep an eye on  
you two sorcerers.

He looks down into the tank, CAMERA looks with him.  
Jessup lies in the tank, floating nakedly just below  
the surface of the inky black water, motionless, a  
faint almost imperceptible shimmering of white. His  
ankles are resting on what seems to be a surgical dam,  
his head on a headrest. He smiles up at Parrish.

PARRISH

What have you got in there, some  
kind of salt solution?

ROSENBERG

Ten percent magnesium sulfate, for  
buoyancy. \*

(bringing the lid  
of the tank from  
the wall)

Give me a hand with this, Mason.

100 REVERSE looking up from Jessup's POV. Parrish and  
 thru Rosenberg loom up over the tank, carefully fitting  
 102 the lid into its hinges. They slowly lower it.  
 The SCREEN goes shocking BLACK --

100  
 thru  
 102

Parrish stands looking down at the covered black  
 coffin of a tank --

PARRISH

Weird, man --

103 INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

thru  
 105

The lights suddenly dim to a very subdued level.  
 Rosenberg has flicked them off and is already back  
 in the observation room.

103  
 thru  
 105

There is a polygraph paper in the EEG machine, and the  
 styli are already scrawling. An audio speaker is  
 perched on the top shelf in a corner. A one-way  
 window looks out into the tank room where the black  
 coffin-like tank lies in penumbral shadow. Jessup's  
 and Rosenberg's sheepskins are piled on the floor in  
 a corner. Parrish adds his to the pile. Rosenberg  
 clicks the intercom on.

ROSENBERG

(into the mike)

One-two-three-four --

JESSUP'S VOICE

(on the speaker)

One-two-three-four --

ROSENBERG

(on the mike)

Okay, you're fine --

(clicks the tape

recorder on,

murmurs into it)

Wednesday, January seventh, four  
 twenty-eight PM.

Jessup's VOICE chants over the speaker perched on the  
 top shelf --

ROSENBERG

(indicates the EEG  
 recording machine)

He went into theta like a shot, no  
 spindling, nothing.

JESSUP'S VOICE

(overriding)

Hey, this is terrific!

(MORE)

\*

\*



103 thru 105	JESSUP'S VOICE (cont'd) A plateau or a lowland, grasslands, savannas -- I feel I'm actually alive and inside this landscape --	103 thru 105
--------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------

Parrish stands, looks through the one-way window. The black coffin-like tank lies silently in the subdued shadows of the tank room. He can see his own and Rosenberg's reflections superimposed on the tank.

JESSUP'S VOICE

-- a density of woodlands about a mile away, beyond that mountains that seem to be smoking, newly-born mountains, Cenozoic, latter Tertiary, I'm in an edge-area -- utter tranquility, but alive, life in the trees, life in the sedge, paradise, the Garden of Eden, oh, my God! the birth of man! That's it! The birth of man! That's got to be it!

REACTION SHOT of Parrish getting nervous. To his left, Rosenberg writing notes in a notebook...

JESSUP'S VOICE

-- My God! There it is! A proto-human! The first and original truly human form! Tiny! Perhaps four feet high! Barely visible above the sedge grass! Completely furred, chimp-like, but erect, no knuckle-walking, shorter arms, moving along rather gracefully -- there's two, three of them! bipedal, tiny, little furred humanoid creatures, a rock, some kind of basaltic rock, a chunk of lava in their hands, they're stalking or hunting, that's it! It's a hunt, they're hunting something -- it's me! It's me they're hunting! It's me! --

Parrish looks nervously over to Rosenberg who is preparing a new cassette in a second tape recorder --

JESSUP'S VOICE

-- Beautiful! Beautiful! I'm racing through the grass! I'm trying to get to the trees! They're on my flank! I'm struck by a stone! I'm down! They're on me! No, just one of them! It's his kill! The others have to wait their portion! He's beating me with the lava! He's gouging me.

103  
thru  
105

PARRISH  
For Chrissakes --

103  
thru  
105

ROSENBERG  
(clicking his mike)  
Are you okay, Eddie?

JESSUP'S VOICE  
-- Ripping at my flesh! I'm the  
hunter now! I'm the killer! I'm  
killing! I'm eating! I'm eating  
the blood -- hot flesh of a giant  
goat! I'm eating a goat I just  
killed! I'm eating a goat! --

\*

The hysterical fluency of Jessup's report abruptly deteriorates into a curious CROAK and then a series of quick CLICKING NOISES and then a strangulated sort of HOWL. It's too much for Parrish. He wrenches the door open, strides into --

106 INT. TANK ROOM - DAY

106

-- wher he crosses to the tank, pulls the hinged head-section up.

PARRISH'S POV -- Jessup's white mask of a face, cushioned in the rectangle of blackness, as serene as a saint's.

PARRISH  
Are you okay?

JESSUP  
(murmurs)  
It's beautiful, beautiful --

ROSENBERG  
(now right behind  
Parrish)  
Do you want to come down?

106

JESSUP

106

No.

Rosenberg lowers the hinged lid. Parrish pulls out his cigar case, extracts a cigar, heads back to the --

107 INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

107

-- as Rosenberg enters --

PARRISH

Sounded like he was having a bad trip to me.

ROSENBERG

Some of these tank trips can get pretty creepy.

Suddenly, the speaker emits another of the croaking GRUNTS, a series of CLICKING SOUNDS and then some LIP-SMACKING SOUNDS. Parrish rises nervously from his chair.

PARRISH

What the hell was that?

ROSENBERG

(into the mike)

You okay!

JESSUP'S VOICE

(softly)

Beautiful.

Parrish lights his cigar --

ROSENBERG

Do you want to stop this?

JESSUP'S VOICE

No.

ROSENBERG

Do you want me to leave you alone?

JESSUP'S VOICE

Yes.

108 OMITTED

108

109 INT. CORRIDOR - B BUILDING - BASEMENT - NIGHT

109

Parrish coming out of the men's room, adjusting his trousers. He comes walking back down the corridor, glancing at his watch. He goes into --

110 INT. ISOLATION TANK ROOM - ENTRANCE - NIGHT 110

-- and left into --

111 INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT 111

-- where Rosenberg is perched on his stool, reading a mystery novel --

PARRISH

I thought you said these things  
don't last more than four hours.  
It's a quarter to nine --

A strange GRUNT suddenly erupts from the speaker.

ROSENBERG

(into mike)  
Are you okay, Eddie?  
(looks through one-  
way window)  
He's coming out --

112 INT. THE TANK ROOM - NIGHT 112

ACROSS the isolation tank as Jessup stands up in it, holding the lid and setting it down on the floor against the side of the tank. Parrish and Rosenberg come in. Rosenberg helps him clamber out of the tank.

ROSENBERG

(removing the  
EEG leads)  
I don't like being out of contact  
for these long periods of time,  
Eddie.

Parrish hands Jessup a hooded terrycloth robe. Jessup slips into the robe, begins towelling his hair. He nods at Rosenberg, a strange monkish figure in the dark room, shrouded in the dark robe, its hood cowed over his head, only his white, wet eyes visible in the coped blackness of his face. He seems to be trying to say something. His jaws move, but nothing comes out except a rasping kind of GRUNT. His eyes stare mutely at them. He tries to talk again but can only produce CLICKING SOUNDS. He sinks slowly to his knees, his faceless white wet eyes staring in blank shock out of the black oval formed by the robe's cowl.

ROSENBERG

I think he's in shock.

He turns the light switch on. Light slowly rises. Parrish pulls the hood of the robe back.

112 As the LIGHT comes on increasingly strongly, we see 112  
 Jessup on his knees in the middle of the room, his  
 robe hanging limply on his white body, his face staring  
 blankly up, his cheeks and mouth wet with red blood,  
 smeared where he had towelled his face, looking for  
 all the world as if he had recently ravened a carcass.

PARRISH

He must've bit his lip.

He towels away some of the blood, then slips out of  
 his lab coat, strips off his shirt, leans over to the  
 tank,, wets it in the tank, uses it to clean Jessup's  
 face. By now, the LIGHT is fully on, and the room is  
 well lit. Parrish fetches his examining light from  
 his lab coat, pokes it into Jessup's mouth and up his  
 nose.

PARRISH

(mutters)

Must've had a seizure, hit his head  
 or something.

Jessup seems to be coming out of his shock. He is  
 trying to talk again. All that comes out is a WHISTLE  
 and a CLICKING SOUND. He reaches out his hand to  
 Rosenberg to be helped up. His two friends finally  
 get him standing. The shock is clearly gone now. His  
 eyes respond intelligently; in fact, they glisten with  
 excitement. He is smiling. He heads for the observa-  
 tion room, indicating that since he can't talk, he  
 wants to communicate by writing --

113 INT. THE OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

113

By the time Parrish and Rosenberg get there, Jessup is  
 seated on Rosenberg's chair and has scrawled something  
 in Rosenberg's notebook. Rosenberg leans over to  
 read the message --

ROSENBERG

What do you want blood tests for?

PARRISH

Can you hear me? Can you understand  
 me?

Parrish reaches forward to palpate his neck. Jessup  
 angrily brushes Parrish's hand away, scrawls a long  
 message in Rosenberg's notebook --

PARRISH

What's he say?

113

ROSENBERG

113

(reading as  
Jessup writes)

He says: 'A buccal smear and blood  
for a karyotype. Also blood samples  
for the Goodman and Sarich labs.  
Pictures of my neck. A whole series  
of films. Now. Before I  
reconstitute. Exclamation point.'

PARRISH

(slipping back  
into his long  
white lab coat)

Before he what?

ROSENBERG

Before he reconstitutes.

PARRISH

Well, take his damn blood, and then  
maybe he'll let me take a look at  
him.

Rosenberg, who carries his stuff around in an old air-  
line bag, fetches out a vacu-tainer and some tubes and  
a rubber tourniquet. He sets about taking blood  
samples from Jessup's left arm.

PARRISH

(to Jessup)

Do you mind if I examine your neck  
for a moment?

Jessup, who is clearly in a state of high excitement,  
rolls his eyes in exasperation but allows Parrish to  
palpate his neck.

ROSENBERG

(inserting the  
syringe)

Any masses?

PARRISH

No.

Parrish auscultates Jessup's neck, shines his ophthal-  
moscope into Jessup's eyes. To all this, Jessup sub-  
mits with little grace and only because he is confined  
by Rosenberg drawing blood. He is obviously in con-  
siderable inner turmoil. He sits on the chair in his  
bulky robe, his legs crossed, one swinging nervously.  
He finally pushes Parrish aside and begins scrawling  
in the notebook again with his right hand. Parrish  
leans over to read the message.

113

PARRISH

113

(losing his own temper)  
Oh, stop talking shit! Are you saying your dumb hallucination has externalized?

ROSENBERG

(inserting a new tube)

What'd he write?

PARRISH

(reading)

Not common aphasia. Time-space fallout from the hallucination.

\*

(bends so that he is nose-to-nose with Jessup)

You are a fucking flake, Jessup, so get dressed, and I'm taking you over to the Brigham to do a complete work-up on you!

(as Jessup shakes his head, Parrish explodes)

You are a very sick dude, you dumb son of a bitch! And I want to look down your throat, get some skull films, do a CAT scan, maybe even an arteriogram, and I'd like an unbiased eye to look at those EEG tracings!

Jessup shakes his head a very arctic and imperious no. He writes a brief message in Rosenberg's notebook and stabs it with two exclamation points.

ROSENBERG

(inserting a new tube)

What's he say?

PARRISH

He says he just wants x-rays. Okay, finish up with him, Arthur, and let's get him over to x-ray.

114 INT. THE TANK ROOM - TEN MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

114

Parrish, wearing his sheepskin jacket now, is cleaning up in the tank room. He rolls his torn shirt into a ball with Jessup's bloody robe, then goes over to make sure the valves have been shut tight, then goes into --

115 INT. THE OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT 115

-- where Rosenberg and Jessup are also tidying up, packing the stack of polygraph paper, etc.

PARRISH

(indicating  
Jessup's robe)

I'll be right back. I just want to get rid of this stuff.

He exits.

116 INT. SUB-BASEMENT TUNNEL - NIGHT 116

Empty except for the three of them, a quixotic trio, shambling, bulky Parrish, tiny Rosenberg carrying his airline bag, Jessup in Levis, his shirttails not entirely tucked in. They are moving through the bowels of the building. The walls are lined with huge, thick, hot water pipes. They pass the open incinerators, wells dug deep into the foundations of the buildings. Flames leap up from the depths.

ROSENBERG

(as they go)

Is it possible it's purely mechanical?

PARRISH

Well, neurologically, he's grossly intact, and, if it isn't neurological, then it's got to be mechanical --

They push through swinging doors. Parrish pulls an exit door open --

PARRISH

I'd like to get a look at his cords and do a barium swallow --

117 INT. A STAIRWELL - NIGHT 117

-- as they head upstairs --

PARRISH

Maybe I'll run down to Emergency and pick up an ENT bag --

118 INT. THE BRIGHAM HOSPITAL - A CORRIDOR - NIGHT 118

The three of them coming down the otherwise empty yellow-tiled hospital corridor to a door which has a little wooden marker sticking out of the wall above it, reading X-RAY. They turn into --



119 INT. THE BRIGHAM - X-RAY DEPARTMENT - OUTER ROOM - 119  
NIGHT

A TECHNICIAN looks up at this late interruption --

PARRISH

I want some plain films of this  
guy's neck, a PA, a lateral and an  
oblique.

TECHNICIAN

Jesus, Doctor, I'm backed up to my  
ass for tonight --

PARRISH

(snapping)

Take the damn pictures! This is  
an emergency!

The Technician leads Jessup into an x-ray room, closes  
the door. Parrish leans back against a wall --

ROSENBERG

I guess we had better not tell  
Eddie he had blood on his face when  
he came out of the tank. He'll  
claim it was goat's blood from  
that goat he was eating in his  
hallucination.

PARRISH

Oh, for Chrissakes! You really are  
getting as weird as he is.

ROSENBERG

Well, what do you think happened?

PARRISH

(fishes a cigar from  
his cigar case)

He's not the type for an hysterical  
conversion, so I'm thinking seizure.  
He came out of the tank in a fugue  
state, and he had blood all over  
his face. He must've had a seizure  
in the tank, bit his tongue while  
convulsing and is post-ictically  
aphasic. I thought maybe he had  
a vascular insult, a stroke or  
flipped an embolus. But  
neurologically, he's intact, so  
I'm thinking seizure now --

120 INT. X RAY ROOM - NIGHT 120

The Technician clipping up the x-rays to be examined.

120 Parrish, Rosenberg and Jessup huddle in front of them. 120  
 Jessup points with excitement to the throat area --

PARRISH

(growls)

Take it easy. None of us are so  
 terrific at reading x-rays.

TECHNICIAN

What're you guys looking for?

PARRISH

(indicates the x-rays)

Put these things in an envelope,  
 and who's reading tonight in  
 radiology?

TECHNICIAN

Doctor Wissenschaft.

Jessup puts his hand on Parrish's arm and shakes his  
 head.

PARRISH

(just about control-  
 ling his temper)

I want someone to look at those  
 x-rays who can read them, Eddie.

Jessup indicates he wants to talk outside. He and  
 Parrish go out into --

121 INT. THE CORRIDOR OUTSIDE - NIGHT

121

The two of them standing in a long, empty hospital  
 corridor --

JESSUP

I'd rather not have everybody in  
 the Brigham in on this. It's bad  
 enough we've got this nosy x-ray  
 technician.

It takes Parrish a moment to realize Jessup is talking  
 again.

PARRISH

Are you all right?

JESSUP

I'm fine, Mason. I tried to  
 indicate this was just a transient  
 thing.

PARRISH

A transient ischemic attack, that's  
 what it was --

(MORE)

121

PARRISH (cont'd)

121

(leans into the  
x-ray department,  
says to Rosenberg)

He's got his voice back.

Rosenberg comes out into the hallway carrying the large manila envelope containing the x-rays.

JESSUP

It wasn't an ischemic attack, it wasn't a seizure. You saw the x-rays, Mason. There was a clear fusion of the digastric muscles to the hyoid bone, and the larynx was in an unusually forward position. I'm not sure, but I think the digastric muscles which are looped in humans, are fused directly to the bone in apes. I obviously regressed to some quasi-simian creature.

Parrish takes the envelope of x-rays from Rosenberg.

PARRISH

(trying not to explode)

I'm taking these over to someone who can read them right. We're reading them wrong, that's all there is to it. Because nobody's going to tell me you de-differentiated your goddam genetic structure for four goddam hours and then reconstituted --

(the more he tries  
to keep his voice  
down, the more  
apoplectic he gets)

I'm a professor of endocrinology at the Harvard Medical School. I'm an attending physician at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, a consulting editor to the American Journal of Endocrinology, a fellow and vice-president of the Eastern Association of Endocrinologists, the president of the journal club --

(he erupts into  
full-blown rage)

-- and I'm not going to listen to any more of your cabalistic, quantum, frigging, dumb, limbo mumbo jumbo!

(he brandishes  
the envelope)

I'm going to show these to a radiologist!

121 He turns, strides down the hallway to the next door 121  
 which is marked RADIOLOGY, thrusts the door open,  
 strides into --

122 INT. DEPARTMENT OF RADIOLOGY - NIGHT 122  
 where DR. WISSENSCHAFT, an unhappy resident, is poring  
 over a stack of x-ray pictures --

PARRISH  
 (getting himself back  
 in control, extends  
 the envelope to the  
 radiologist)  
 Do me a favor, take a look at these.

WISSENSCHAFT  
 (extracting the films)  
 What's the story in this case?

PARRISH  
 Thirty-five year old white man,  
 acute onset of aphasia, no history  
 of trauma.

WISSENSCHAFT  
 (affixing the x-rays  
 against the light)  
 What're you looking for?

PARRISH  
 It looks to me like the architecture  
 is somewhat abnormal.

WISSENSCHAFT  
 (peers at the film)  
 Somewhat? This guy's a fucking  
 gorilla.

122A INT. JESSUP'S FLAT - BEDROOM - NIGHT 122A

Dark. CLOSEUP of Jessup, asleep. His eyes slowly  
 open. Despite the heavy shadow, we can see his eyes  
 glisten with terror. His mouth opens slowly till it  
 is agape with terror, as if he were about to scream.  
 CAMERA SUDDENLY PULLS BACK as he abruptly half-rises,  
 simultaneously throwing the blanket from off him.  
 He stares horrified at his body. He is wearing only  
 his pajama trousers, and something terrible seems to  
 be happening to his body. It seems to be swelling  
 and contorting as if forces inside his body were try-  
 ing to break out.

We can see now that a young woman, presumably the  
 Medical Student mentioned above, is asleep on the  
 other side of the bed, turned with her back to us.

122A She is naked, and, in her sleep, tries to cover her exposed back with the blanket Jessup had pulled away in his terror. 122A

CLOSER ANGLES of Jessup's body. His arm suddenly shrivels into a bent little furred arm, much like a rat's paw. Suddenly, his feet are webbed; a split-second later, they are furred as well; a split-second later, they are back to normal. His face is a mask of pain. He touches his head, feeling the bones of his skull -- his jaw, the bones just above his eyebrows, which seem to be moving under his skin, reassembling into new formations. He suddenly bends forward, clutching the back of his neck as if he had been brutally struck there. His chest surges into massive musculature and subsides. Cracks appear and suddenly spread throughout his body. The Med Student stirs, still trying to cover her nakedness --

MED STUDENT  
(murmurs drowsily)  
Are you okay, Dr. Jessup?

JESSUP  
(on his elbows, no longer in pain, merely observing the changing deformations of his body)

Yes.

He forces himself into a sitting position, his legs hanging over the side of the bed. He almost falls to his knees beside the bed. Slowly, carefully, he makes his way around the bed to the bathroom, all the while his body crumbling, crackling and buckling, as if he were made of dry earth, as if seismic forces were at work within him. He gets himself into the --

122B INT. THE BATHROOM - NIGHT 122B

-- closes the door, flicks on the light and stares at himself in the full-length mirror on the back of the bathroom door.

His POV -- what he sees in the mirror in the dull yellow bathroom light. A series of disjunctive evolutionary images of himself, flickering one after another, none of the images lasting longer than a fraction of a second. The images are mostly hominid and protohuman, Ramapithecine figures, in which he is no more than three feet tall. Several of the reflections show him in the shape of a delicately-fingered, insect-eating, lemur-like animal, perched in a tree, clutching a branch, and staring out through enormous soft eyes.

122B Suddenly, he is his realistic self in the mirror, a 122B  
slight, white-skinned young man in his late 30s, wear-  
ing pajama pants. The whole thing lasted perhaps five  
seconds.

MED STUDENT (o.s.)  
(calling from  
behind the door)  
Are you all right, Dr. Jessup?

JESSUP  
(staring at his  
reflection)  
I'm fine.

He opens the door, comes out into --

122C INT. THE BEDROOM - NIGHT 122C

-- where the Med Student stands, holding the blanket  
vaguely around herself, more asleep than awake. Jessup  
heads for his desk on the wall facing the bed --

JESSUP  
I just want to make a few notes --

He sits at the desk, clicks on the desk lamp, reaches  
for a notebook, opens it, begins to write. Behind him,  
the Med Student sinks back onto the bed and is in-  
stantly asleep again. Jessup writes -- then pauses to  
stare at his naked right arm on the desk. CAMERA PANS  
DOWN to the arm. A protoplasmic substance bulges out  
and moves up his arm under the skin like a mole and  
disappears into his elbow. He regards this phenomenon  
in blank astonishment and then returns to his meticu-  
lous writing down of what has just happened to him --

123 EXT. LOGAN AIRPORT - APRIL 1976 - SUNNY DAY 123

A KLM jumbo jet touching down on the runway --

124 INT. LOGAN AIRPORT - CUSTOMS AREA - ARRIVAL GATE 124  
thru thru  
126 Emily and the kids, browned by a year of African sun. 126

A great deal of luggage, a year's worth, plus cartons  
and crates and bags --

A Porter wheeling a handtruck filled with just their  
luggage, heading for the arrival gate where a crowd  
is awaiting the arriving passengers --

REVERSE from Emily to the gate where Jessup can be  
spotted among the pack of waiting greeters. Emily  
points out their father to the girls who break into a  
run and race to him.

124 He seizes them both, hugs them individually, then to- 124  
 thru gether, then turns to Emily who has just come through thru  
 126 the gate and embraces her. 126

JESSUP

My God! You all look so marvelous!

Emily studies his face. There is a feverish quality  
 in all this enthusiasm.

EMILY

How've you been, Eddie?

He takes a moment to answer.

JESSUP

I don't know. Strange things have  
 been happening.

He whirls, seizes both squealing kids, one under each  
 arm and strides off.

GRACE

Are you going to drive us to our  
 new house?

JESSUP

(striding along)

You bet your life. And I'm going  
 to help you unpack, and, depending  
 on how nice you are to me, I may  
 take you all to a Chinese restaurant.

Emily, concerned, made anxious by the strange, almost  
 mad, uncharacteristic exuberance of her husband,  
 follows along with the Porter and the luggage --

127 INT. EMILY'S NEW HOME - LIVING ROOM - SEVERAL HOURS 127  
 LATER - DUSK

The room, indeed the whole flat -- the bottom floor of  
 a Cape Cod house on Avon Hill in Cambridge -- is a  
 wild disarray of packed and unpacked luggage. Cartons,  
 small crates, valises, carrying bags lay open in every  
 room, half-emptied; clothing is piled on beds, in  
 heaps on the floor; books and notebooks, cans of film  
 and stacks of tape recorder cassettes and reels are  
 massed in mounds on beds, chairs and tables. Through  
 the windows, we can see dusk is descending outside. We  
 might even catch glimpses of the Jessup children on  
 the front porch. Through all this disarray, Emily  
 moves following her own private pattern of efficiency,  
 piling this bunch of things here and carrying that  
 pile of clothing across the entrance foyer of the house  
 into the bedrooms where she dumps them on other piles  
 of clothing. She turns on a lamp in the room.

127 It has an orange shade, and it casts an orange light. 127  
 All the while she chats away with Jessup whom we can  
 see in the kitchen to the rear of the living room,  
 sitting at the formica-topped table, legs crossed, sip-  
 ping a cup of coffee --

EMILY

(as she goes through  
 all the above)

-- Anyway, don't let anybody tell  
 you baboons aren't occasionally  
 carnivorous. I personally observed  
 two instances of predation which  
 involved the unmistakable behavior  
 of hunters. A pair of baboons  
 killed young Thomson gazelles and  
 ate them. There was a rudimentary  
 communication between the two  
 baboons that was noticeably  
 different from the usual baboon  
 vocalizations. So I've become  
 fascinated with the work on non-  
 verbal communication being done  
 with apes. I've been corresponding  
 with the Gardners at the University  
 of Nevada. I may just go out and  
 spend a couple of weeks there this  
 summer. I've got nothing else to  
 do except write up my report.

JESSUP

I don't suppose you recorded any  
 of those baboon sounds.

EMILY

Yes, of course, I did, why?

She comes into --

127A INT. THE KITCHEN - DUSK

127A

-- where she pours herself a cup of coffee --

JESSUP

I'd like very much to hear them.

EMILY

Of course.

She pulls up a chair, joins him at the table.

JESSUP

Mrs. Tully said she'll be here  
 tomorrow morning at ten-thirty to  
 help you put everything away.

(MORE)



127A

JESSUP (cont'd)

127A

She wanted to know if you wanted her to come back to work steady, and I said I was sure you would.

She nods. A silence falls between them. They sip at their cups. She steals a glance at him.

EMILY

I got a letter from Mason about a week ago, just before we left Nairobi. He says that over the past year you've taken about two grams of that drug yourself and that you had a very unusual instance of genetic regression about three months ago, which he thinks was an incipient neoplastic process, and that you've probably got leukemia or lymphoma. He's been trying to get you into the hospital for a complete workup, but you refuse to go. He's worried stiff that you're cracking up. He thinks you're behaving very strangely, and he begged me to talk to you about this when I got back.

\*

JESSUP

Mason is pathologically incapable of keeping his mouth shut about anything.

\*

EMILY

He's worried about you.

JESSUP

He's also a stupid, starched, doctrinaire idiot.

EMILY

Mason is a first-rate doctor.

JESSUP

It's not leukemia or any other kind of cancer!

He stands, flushed with fury, his hands visibly trembling with the effort of controlling his mounting rage.

JESSUP

I let him do a liver-spleen scan on me and a CAT scan. I've been probed, scoped and palpated!

(MORE)

127A

JESSUP (cont'd)

127A

Parrish has had a mirror down my throat or up my ass every half hour for three months! And there is no evidence, no suggestion whatsoever of cancer!

She says nothing; he strides off into the living room and is as suddenly back.

JESSUP

What else did he write you? What else did he tell you about that genetic regression I went through three months ago?

She says nothing for fear of provoking another outburst. Jessup disappears into the living room. After a moment, she stands, goes to the doorway.

127B INT. EMILY'S LIVING ROOM - DUSK

127B

ACROSS Emily looking into the living room where Jessup is hunched over by the porch window, trying to read the labels on a stack of audio cassettes by the fading daylight.

JESSUP

Which of these has the baboon vocalizations on them? I'd like to hear them.

EMILY

Why?

JESSUP

(smiles briefly)

Did Mason write you that during that incident of regression I went through, I had an aphasic experience for about four hours? The only sounds I could get out were clicks and grunts. I've got a gut hunch they're very much like the baboon vocalizations you have on your tapes.

EMILY

Mason says that you took blood tests, and the lab report showed some characteristics of simian blood group systems.

JESSUP

They also picked up antigens, specific to man.

EMILY

I'd like to see that data.

JESSUP

We also took a buccal smear. The chromosomal count was forty-eight --

EMILY

Are you serious?

JESSUP

And the structure of the karyotype was also non-human.

They stand, staring at each other across the room. Three year old Margaret straggles into the room and wraps herself around her father's knees. Jessup fondles the tow head absently.

127B

JESSUP

127B

Look, Emily, an incomprehensible instance of regression has occurred, literal, physical regression: muscles, bones, chromosomes and genes. We have a small body of evidence that cannot be explained away as leukemia or lymphoma. There was a transformation of biological structures, that's clear. Beyond that, all we've got is a singularity, a physical event that is out of context of all known theory.

(picks his daughter up, clutches her to him, whispers into her hair)

Everybody thinks your father's going nuts --

(strides around the room, clutching the child, talking in bursts like a man out of breath)

I mean, for God's sake, the thing to do is for me to get back in that isolation tank and try it again! Let's see if it happens again! I mean, none of us really believes it happened! After three months, I'm beginning to wonder if it ever happened myself! But, oh no! They won't go back in the tank! Mason's taken over the whole project! He's got Arthur up in his lab every day, fractionating rats' brains! What the hell am I supposed to do while they're fractionating rats' brains! I am convinced the regression was triggered by an act of consciousness! While I was in the tank, I entered another consciousness! I became another self! A more primitive self! And the drug, in some way, triggered the externalization of that other, more primitive self!

\*

127B His daughter begins to cry.

127B

EMILY

Put her down, Eddie. You're  
frightening her.

Jessup gently restores the girl to the floor. Emily  
picks up the frightened child. When she looks up to  
her husband, he is sitting on the soft chair under the  
lamp, his eyes closed, his face masklike.

JESSUP

At least, look at my data.

EMILY

Of course. Maybe tomorrow afternoon.  
Would tomorrow afternoon be all  
right?

JESSUP

Don't patronize me.

EMILY

I'm not --

JESSUP

(stands, shouting)

It's just possible I'm not mad, you  
know! I'm asking you to make a  
small quantum jump with me! To  
accept one deviant concept -- that  
our other states of consciousness  
are as real as our waking state  
and that that reality can be  
externalized!

EMILY

You're screaming.

JESSUP

I know! But I've been getting this  
patronizing shit from Arthur and  
Mason for three months now, and I'm  
sick of it. We've got millions of  
years stored away in that computer  
bank we call our minds! We've got  
trillions of dormant genes in us,  
our whole evolutionary past!  
Perhaps I've tapped into that!  
For God's sake, all I'm saying is  
I want to get back to that tank  
and repeat the experiment! The  
most elementary laboratory behavior!  
Repeat the experiment! Confirm it!  
I would like other responsible  
scientists with me when I do it!

(MORE)

127B

JESSUP (cont'd)

127B

I'd like a little consensual validation on this! We may have demonstrated a whole new force in nature. My God, don't you agree it merits further investigation? We're talking about an achievement comparable to Newton, Darwin, Einstein!

He sits again, crosses his legs, folds his hands in his lap. The orange light of the lamp slashes across his face.

JESSUP

(dementedly calm)

I've got all the tapes, notes and everything at my place. What time would you like to come over and look at the stuff tomorrow?

EMILY

Two, two-thirty?

(smiles nervously)

I just want to get Grace. I'll be right back.

Carrying Margaret, she goes out into --

128  
thru  
132

OMITTED

128  
thru  
132

133 INT. ENTRANCE FOYER - DUSK

133

She is very nervous, a little frightened. She opens the front door and goes out onto --

134 EXT. FRONT PORCH - EMILY'S HOUSE - DUSK

134

-- where she stands scouring the area for her other daughter. She spots her down the block a bit and across the street talking to a woman, a NEIGHBOR, with a small BOY. She moves quickly down the porch steps and out to --

135 EXT. AVON HILL - DUSK

135

-- where she sets Margaret down and heads across the street.

EMILY

(calls)

Grace --

135 The woman turns to her smiling --

135

NEIGHBOR

I'm Linda Sandys. I belong to that house over there --

She points to a gray clapboard house down the block.

EMILY

I'm Emily Jessup.

NEIGHBOR

And you've just come back from Africa today. Grace has been telling me and Georgie all about it. My husband's in French Classics.

EMILY

I'm in Anthropology.

NEIGHBOR

Would you like to come over and have some coffee?

EMILY

(forcing a smile on)  
I'd love to really, but I've got a hungry husband back in the house.  
(to her daughters)  
We're going to a Chinese restaurant.

The children race back to their house.

EMILY

We're still unpacking --

NEIGHBOR

Of course.

EMILY

I'll take you up on that coffee tomorrow morning, if I may.

NEIGHBOR

Please. The gray house there.

EMILY

Thank you, excuse me.

She hurries back down the street. When she gets to the front path, both kids are coming out of house onto porch.

EMILY

(frightened)  
Is your father all right?

GRACE

Where is he?

135

EMILY

135

Oh, God --

GRACE

Are we still going to the Chinese restaurant?

EMILY

Yes, of course. I just want to make a few phone calls -- Let's get inside.

136

INT. ISOLATION TANK ROOM - NIGHT

136

The SCREEN IS BLACK. A door in the back of the blackness opens, and Jessup enters silhouetted in the rectangle of light made by the open doorway. A moment later, soft, subdued lighting comes on. We are in --

137

INT. ISOLATION TANK ROOM - NIGHT

137

-- looking across the black tank to Jessup entering in b.g. He is wearing the jacket, sweater and shapeless chinos he was wearing in the previous scenes and is carrying Rosenberg's airline bag. He turns on a water valve. Water RUMBLES into the tank. He checks the thermostat, opens the airline bag, extracts a jar of magnesium sulfate, pours it into the gathering spume at the bottom of the tank. He strips off his jacket and sweater, keeps checking the water level in the tank. He takes a Mason jar of clear liquid out of the airline bag, measures off 4 cc of the liquid into a syringe, squirts that into a beaker. He drains the beaker in one gulp, walks to a shadowy corner of the room where a white porcelain bowl is sitting, stripping off his shirt as he goes. He drops the shirt on the pile made by his jacket and sweater. He goes into --

138

INT. THE OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

138

-- where he sits, checks the time on his watch and makes a notation in a notebook. He unclips his watch, stands, walks back into --

139

INT. THE TANK ROOM - NIGHT

139

-- where he drops the watch on his clothing, checks the water level in the tank.



140 EXT. #22 AVON HILL - EMILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 140

A taxi pulls up. The door opens, and Grace and Margaret come tumbling out and race up the path to the porch. A moment later they are followed by their mother.

141 EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT 141

EMILY  
(unlocking the  
front door)

It's eight-thirty, so get washed and changed right now, and I'm in no mood for any trouble from either of you tonight, do you understand?

The phone is RINGING inside. She gets the door open, and the kids scoot in. Emily hurries across --

142 INT. FRONT FOYER - NIGHT 142

-- and into --

143 INT. THE LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT 143

The phone is still RINGING. She picks it up, flicking on the lights as she does --

EMILY  
(on phone)

Yes, hello... Oh, Mason, thank you for calling. I assume you've spoken to Arthur... No, I just got back from dinner with the kids... Well, I just don't know what to say. I think you're absolutely right. I think he's on the verge of a breakdown. He was here all afternoon and carried on like a madman and then just disappeared. Ordinarily, I wouldn't be this panicky, but I just am --

144 INT. THE OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT 144

We are looking through the one-way window into the tank room, where the black coffin-like box of the tank sits shrouded in shadow. We just watch it for a moment. Then the lid starts to rise. It's being raised by what seems to be a furred arm --

145 INT. THE TANK ROOM - NIGHT

145

ANGLE SHOT looking down on the tank as the lid is raised completely out of its grooves and pushed thudding to the floor, revealing standing waist-deep in the water in the tank a small, perhaps four foot high creature, finely furred, human stance, bipedal if perhaps a bit sloping in the shoulders, definable human features except for a massive projecting ridge of bone above the eyebrows and a prognathic jaw, a somewhat flattened skull, a low brow, chinless; a creature just tall enough so that its little red eyes can barely see over the walls of the tank. It GRUNTS, makes a CLICKING SOUND --

146 INT. B BUILDING - MEDICAL SCHOOL - CADAVER ROOM -  
AN HOUR LATER - 9:30 P.M.

146

HECTOR ORTEGA, 39 years old, one of the janitors' staff at the medical school, gathering the trashbags in the room. This is the room where they keep the cadavers hanging on hooks like sides of beef for the morning's dissection classes. There are two such naked, death-white cadavers hanging now. Ortega carries the trashbags out into --

147 INT. B BUILDING BASEMENT - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

147

-- where he unloads them into the can of his cleaning cart. Then he trundles the cart down the corridor, trying doors as he goes. They are all locked until he gets to the door of the Isolation Tank Room, which is marked Electroencephalography and is unaccountably open. Interested, Ortega goes into --

148 INT. THE ISOLATION TANK ROOM - ENTRANCE FOYER -  
NIGHT

148

The lights are on here and in the observation room. The door to the tank room itself is closed. Ortega goes into --

149 INT. THE OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

149

He looks through the one-way window into the tank room which is barely lit, just enough light to make out that sinister coffin-like uncovered tank. Ortega shrugs, starts to go back into the corridor, opens the corridor door, changes his mind, turns and opens the door to the tank room. He is immediately knocked against the wall by a hurtling, ferocious little animal, which, in his confusion, Ortega takes to be a dog; at least, he mutters imprecations in Spanish as to who the hell is keeping a fucking dog down here.

149 The animal has gotten out the corridor door just before it closes. Ortega goes back out into -- 149

150 INT. B BUILDING CORRIDOR - NIGHT 150

What he sees now about fifteen yards down the corridor is an apelike creature, covered with a fine fur, that is, however, unmistakably human. It stands upright. Its eyes are small and red, but not deep-socketed like an ape's, and seem to have a human intelligence in them. The creature is no bigger than Ortega's own nine-year old son, but it is fierce-looking and is making a threatening, savage, rumbling NOISE, curling its lip and baring its teeth which are yellow, even, and very human in appearance. Ortega is getting a little scared. He reaches for his janitor's broom and begins to unscrew the long handle --

ORTEGA

(calling to a colleague hopefully nearby)

Hey, Jameson! Hey, Jameson, are you still there? Come here!

His voice echoes in the empty basement corridors. There is no response. Holding the broom pole, he takes a step toward the strange animal, which watches him carefully.

ORTEGA

Hey, Jameson, in the name of God, come over here and see this!

(brandishes his pole at the creature)

Es mejor que salgas de aqui antes que cometa una locura!

The creature's face suddenly flares with rage. It raises both furred fists and screams in fury. Ortega turns and bolts back up the corridor to the first corridor that debouches to the left and leads to D Building --

151 INT. CONNECTING CORRIDOR TO D BUILDING - NIGHT 151

Ortega comes tearing halfway down to a door marked Security Office. Behind him, he can hear enraged SCREECHES bouncing off the walls. He knocks on the door of the Security Office, looks back up the connecting corridor, clutching his broomstick. The corridor is empty but still echoing. The door opens, and the bulky figure of Sergeant GEORGE OBISPO, a tall, uniformed man, appears.

151

OBISPO

151

Que pasa?

ORTEGA

(still breathing hard,  
takes a moment to  
figure out just  
what is the matter)

Hay un animal suelto en el edificio  
B.

OBISPO

Que clase de animal es?

ORTEGA

(takes a moment  
to sort his  
answer out)

Un mono, creo.

From the distant bowels of B Building, the echoing  
SHRIEK of rage sounds again, caroming off the walls  
of the empty corridors.

OBISPO

(mutters)

Carajo.

He goes striding up the corridor, unbuckling his night-  
stick. Ortega follows, holding his broom pole. Half-  
way down, they both pull up short because about twenty-  
five yards in front of them, where their corridor is  
crossed by the B Building corridor, the strange little  
creature suddenly lopes into view, silhouetted in the  
diffused yellow light. It regards the two men a  
moment, then bursts into a shrill BARK or SNARL,  
clearly signifying frustration with its situation.  
It moves off with startling quickness. Obispo and  
Ortega break into a trot to get to --

152 INT. B BUILDING CORRIDOR - NIGHT

152

They pause, look down the length of the corridor to  
the right. It is empty. There is an exit door at  
the far end.

OBISPO

(pulls out his walkie-  
talkie, talking as he  
slowly moves up B  
Corridor into the set)

Charlie, Charlie Thomas, where are  
you, in the library?... Who you with?  
...Okay, listen, we got an animal  
loose in B Building basement, so  
you and Mingus come over here right  
away.

(MORE)

152

OBISPO (cont'd)

152

We'll be in the north corridor that goes back to the nurses' residence, so you guys come down the other way, and we'll meet you at the door. We'll keep him cornered, but he's a pretty good-sized ape, and I better call the animal rooms and see what he's doing down here. But be very careful because he looks dangerous. And come in fast because I don't know how long we can hold him down here.

Obispo and Ortega have reached --

153

INT. NORTH CORRIDOR - NIGHT

153

Empty. This area is poorly lighted. One of the overhead neon tubes is blown. This corridor also serves as a sometime storage area. A corrugated metal door leads to the Longwood Street loading platform on the left side. Several huge empty cardboard cartons stand against this door. The area is also an auxiliary changing room for the students, and both walls are lined with green and gray lockers. About sixty yards down, there is a set of doors with wire-reinforced windows in the upper halves.

ORTEGA

He's hiding in there somewhere.

OBISPO

No se.

(nods at the  
exit door)

You think he could've got out that way?

Ortega tugs at the door, which is heavy and stuck. It takes all of Ortega's strength to get it open.

ORTEGA

He could never open this door.

Nevertheless, he leans into the stairwell and looks up to the street level and down to the sub-basement level. Behind him, Sergeant Obispo has put his walkie-talkie back into its case, and, holding his club, moves slowly into the shadows between the enfilade of lockers, poking each locker with his club. CAMERA DOLLIES with him. Suddenly, with a terrifying SHRIEK, the creature leaps down upon him from the top of the lockers. Sergeant Obispo falls to the floor with a shout of terror, his club clattering on the cement --

- 154 INT. THE STAIRWELL - NIGHT 154  
 Ortega, who has gone half a landing down, stops, petrified by the SHRIEKS. He starts climbing back up the stairs, tugs open the heavy door and bolts into the --
- 155 INT. THE NORTH CORRIDOR - NIGHT 155  
 -- where he stops, stares --  
 ACROSS Ortega to where fifteen yards down the corridor the hideous little creature is battering away at the fallen SCREAMING Sergeant Obispo with the Sergeant's own nightstick. The creature spots Ortega, whirls, and comes charging at the poor man, who bolts for his life down the B Building corridor --
- 156 INT. THE NORTH CORRIDOR - THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOORS - NIGHT 156  
 Security Officers THOMAS and MINGUS breaking into a run as they hear Obispo's SCREAMS. Thomas is pulling out his chain of keys as he runs, tries to unlock the doors. It is difficult for them to tell what is going on on the other side of the doors because the wire-reinforced windows deform the view.
- 157 THEIR POV through the windows -- a confused flux of shapes on the floor. We hear the creature's high-pitched SCREAM and Obispo's BELLOWS of pain. Suddenly, the rectangular window in one of the doors is filled with a savage, hairy face, made even more horrible by the deforming quality of the glass. 157
- 158 Thomas and Mingus startle back from the door. Mingus starts pulling at his gun holster. Thomas finally gets the door open. The two guards fling themselves into the other side of the corridor. Obispo is on his knees, a hulking black silhouette, holding his head which is bleeding badly. He slowly sinks unconscious to the floor. Down at the juncture of the corridors, the heavy exit door is slowly wheezing shut. The creature, whatever it was, is gone. 158
- 159 EXT. ROXBURY - CEDAR STREET - NIGHT 159  
 Three wild DOGS slink along the black streets of this black Boston ghetto. The houses are one-family frame and old brick. The houses are lit, and we hear the faint sounds of television. Cars are parked at the curb. There is a row of shops along one side of the street. On the corner, a bar with a neon sign.

159      The rain has almost stopped. A handful of BLACKS      159  
 lounge in the doorway of the bar. One of them throws  
 an empty beer can at the dogs slinking down the  
 street. The can misses the dogs, clanks tinnily on  
 the street. The dogs barely notice, slink on, wet,  
 dangerous, scruffy. They pad softly down the street  
 past the row of store fronts. After they have gone  
 about thirty yards, almost disappearing into the dark-  
 ness of the night, a form slips out of one of the  
 recessed store fronts and goes trotting along after  
 the dogs. It is the creature last seen clubbing  
 Sergeant Obispo.

160      EXT. ROXBURY - ANOTHER STREET - NIGHT      160  
 &      &  
 161      A burn-out area. An occasional six story tenement      161  
 with smashed, gaping black windows. One side of this  
 street has been demolished to rubble and scree. The  
 three dogs pick and slink their way across this open  
 expanse. Some thirty yards behind them comes Jessup,  
 loping along, pausing to pick up a piece of jagged  
 brick. A strange, savage surreal scene in the derelict  
 heart of the city, three wild dogs and a small apelike  
 creature, slinking through the black, abandoned streets  
 hunting for prey.

162      EXT. ROXBURY - BLUE HILL STREET - FRANKLIN PARK ZOO      162  
 - NIGHT

On the west side of the street, the high iron fence of  
 the Franklin Park Zoo; on the other side of the street,  
 a row of small apartment houses. Jessup stands hold-  
 ing his club and his piece of brick. He is standing  
 on the zoo side of the street. Behind him, on the  
 other side of the fence, he hears the TRILLS and CROAKS  
 of birds. The dogs on the other side of the street  
 are marauding some garbage cans and plastic garbage  
 bags and sniffing up alleys and down basement steps,  
 looking for rats.

There is suddenly a small, snarling flurry among the  
 dogs as they threaten each other over something they  
 have found. It's over in a few seconds. A car goes  
 by, headlights, windshield wiper whisking back and  
 forth, and is gone. The dogs come slinking across the  
 street to the zoo side, filthy, skulking animals.  
 Jessup watches them, not moving a muscle, tense, alert.  
 They are some twenty yards to the south of him, poking  
 about at the foot of the zoo's fence, looking for a  
 hole. One of them suddenly wheels toward Jessup, its  
 yellow eyes wide and its lip drawn back, exposing  
 the teeth. The other dogs snarl softly, turn their  
 heads to regard the curious little apelike figure.

162 With a shrill SHRIEK, Jessup dashes a few steps at the dogs, brandishing his stick and stone. The dogs scatter, slink back, keeping their distance. Jessup's shriek rouses the birds in the zoo. There is a sudden FLUTTERING of distant wings and birds CALLING danger to their fellows. 162

The lead dog, a MONGREL MASTIFF with white markings on its brow, growls softly, pads into the street, moving up on Jessup's flank. Jessup watches him warily, makes a threatening SNARL of his own. The mongrel attacks, leaping for Jessup's throat. Jessup batters at the red-tongued maw of the dog's throat. The other two dogs lunge in. Jessup wheels on them, SHRIEKING with fury, smashing at them with his club and piece of brick. There is a SCREECHING of tires, and a car, headlights blazing, comes wheeling around the corner, dispersing the dogs and interrupting the feral little battle. The car disappears up the street.

A moment of silence, and then the dogs come slinking back to continue the battle. But the apelike creature is gone. They spot him soon enough; he is perched, squatting on the stonework that forms the top of the zoo fence, and, apelike, taunts the dogs with CACKLING. He tires of this after a few moments and then climbs down the fence on the zoo side with agility.

163 EXT. THE ZOO - NIGHT

thru  
166

Jessup finds himself on ground and grass. Spill from the street lights of Blue Hill Street allows Jessup to see bushes and trees. It is familiar terrain; he GRUNTS with pleasure. 163  
thru  
166

He can see a low wattled fence and grass receding upward into blackness and silence. The zoo is asleep, hushed. There seems to be a RED GLOW on the crest of the slope, and Jessup stands stock-still, listening, for he thinks he has just heard the distant BURR of a crane. He shuffles forward through the grass, finds himself on one of the walkways that wind through the park. He is puzzled by the hard feel beneath his feet, but he follows the path for a few moments. He sees a small body of water (the wild fowl pond), glistening blackly in the night. He stands, waits, senses. The air hangs heavy and fetid with the smell of animals, silent with the massive sensation of sleep.

He moves further along, cutting between trees and bushes. He is suddenly in an open area, startled by the abrupt rearing up of a stone building, faintly visible only by the relative lightness in color of the stone.



163 He moves on. He sees the RED GLOW again, off to his 163  
 thru right. He slips softly in that direction. What he 163  
 166 comes to see are the night lights of a building 166  
 which glows red because of the tinting of the  
 windows and the glass of the doors (the small mammals  
 building). He slowly approaches this long low stone  
 building, rising in a soft, red haze out of the night.  
 He peers into the interior --

His POV. A long empty hall bathed in a soft red light  
 that shows rows of cages on each side. In the cages  
 are mice, porcupines, sloths and shrews, curled up in  
 balls of sleep with an occasional movement here and  
 there as one of the small animals slithers across its  
 cage to its watering trough. It is all incompre-  
 hensible to Jessup; he is quickly bored.

EXT. THE ZOO - ANOTHER SECTION - NIGHT

Jessup making his way around large empty round cages  
 with thick iron bars (the great apes building), down  
 macadam paths lined with protective iron railings.  
 He hears the croaking BURR of a crane, much closer  
 now. He stops, freezes, waits, listens. To his left,  
 a large stone outcropping, barely discernible;  
 directly ahead, a large, round, iron-fenced area (the  
 giraffe cages). On his right, suddenly, behind the  
 fence of wooden wattles, he senses movement, and then  
 a CROWNED CRANE moves stiffly into his vision, nearly  
 invisible in the darkness, lit sufficiently by the  
 red reflections of the building behind it to be recog-  
 nized by the glistening red and white spots on its  
 face and the stiff, large, straw-colored topknot of  
 feathers on its head. It stands, staring blankly  
 out of its button eyes, then turns and disappears  
 into the darkness. Jessup stands unmoving, holding  
 his club and bit of brick. He moves softly to the  
 low wooden fence and peers into the darkness trying to  
 see the crane again, but it's gone. He moves on.

EXT. THE ZOO - THE AFRICAN PLAINS - NIGHT

Jessup stands in front of what seems to be a four-foot  
 hedgerow but which actually disguises a wooden fence  
 that encloses this section of the park. It is almost  
 impenetrably dark, but he can hear SOUNDS -- the sounds  
 of the East African grasslands, the movements of  
 animals, the sudden, startled flurry of veering herds.  
 He forces his way through the bramble of the hedgerow,  
 crawls between the horizontal poles of the fence, finds  
 himself on the edge of a shallow moat, about four feet  
 deep and ten feet wide. Now there is some spill of  
 STREETLIGHTS from the Beaver Street side of the park,  
 so that Jessup can make out that he is on high ground,  
 and a tract of savanna stretches out before him, dark  
 and silent.

163 Far down at the bottom of the slope, he can see a 163  
 thru waterhole. On his right, a slight slope of sparse thru  
 166 woodland and a sleeping group of blesboks. He 166  
 grunts with pleasure.

He lets himself down into the moat, which is as high as he is tall. It is utterly black in here. He walks along the moat a number of yards till he finds an overhanging limb by which he pulls himself up onto the other side. He is on a small stone outcrop. His appearance startles a herd of perhaps forty mouflon that are huddled for the night near the wooden palisade of their paddock. The whole herd of sheep skew madly out into the open grass. Jessup stands stock still, holding his club and broken bit of brick, waiting for his presence to become part of this world. Silence. On his left, the waterhole, and what seems to be a single hartebeest humped forward, lapping quietly at the water.

Jessup moves silently through the wet grass, heading for the end of the waterhole furthest from the hartebeest. He pauses at the edge of the waterhole, trying to sense the presence of predators. The hartebeest raises its head, watches him, ready to bolt. Jessup gets down on his knees, bends forward and begins to lap the water. After a moment, the hartebeest returns to its own drinking. For a moment, we watch the two animals, sharing the waterhole, each drinking silently, warily.

EXT. THE ZOO - THE AFRICAN PLAINS - NIGHT

Jessup, standing on the dark slope, watching the herd of mouflon, huddled in a sparse little grove of trees, about twenty yards off, edgy, trembling even as they sleep, a skittish few on the periphery of the flock, flicking here and there like butterflies. The zoo sleeps.

Nothing moves anywhere. The air is heavy and wet. He waits. A flicker of movement in the sheep herd. A lamb leaps and bounds this way and that, rejoins the herd. Abruptly, three sheep leap, run, whirl, fluttering shadows of movement. Silence. Jessup waits. He holds his club and his bit of brick in one hand. In his other hand are two round stones which he suddenly pitches into the trees where the herd lies. With the first rustle of leaves, the herd explodes dementedly, racing, leaping, scattering. Half a dozen leap and skitter wildly past Jessup. He is after them with a SHRIEK, driving their agitated mad shadows before him, past the waterhole, straight for the moat. At the lip of the moat, all but one veers and shoots off into darkness. The one tries to leap the chasm.

163 It falls in a heap to the bottom of the moat, 163  
 thru crippled. Jessup jumps into the moat and with one thru  
 166 stroke of his club smashes in the animal's skull. 166

EXT. THE ZOO - THE MOAT

Jessup scrapes away at the sheep's hide with his jagged chip of brick, stripping a good-sized piece off the sheep's haunch. He stops, pauses, looks up, senses danger. He hears a low GROWL not too far away. He stands, picks up his kill by a leg and moves softly, quickly up the wide, dark moat. He finds an overhanging branch. He puts the sheep carcass on the lip of the moat and hauls himself up beside it. He picks up his club and brick, stands, checks the terrain. Nothing. He squats down, raises the carcass to his face, clamps his teeth into the hot, wet, bloody flesh. He twists his head back and forth, wrenching the goblet of flesh free, and chews at it. He looks up again sensing danger.

The three dogs, led by the mastiff with the white markings, are moving up the slope from the waterhole, lumps of black movement, in the black grass. They halt a few yards from him, moving around, GROWLING. Jessup makes a threatening NOISE of his own, brandishes his club. They keep their distance. CAMERA PULLS BACK just enough so that we get the image of Jessup, squatting in the wet grass, eating the sheep in the night with a great, sullen satisfaction, occasionally warding off the snarling dogs with a snarl of his own, a primal animal at one with his elemental world.

167 EXT. THE ZOO - 2:00 A.M. - NIGHT - CLEAR - MOON 167

A jeep crawling along the pathways in the night, parking lights only. A zoo SECURITY GUARD on night duty. He spots some movement on the African Plains. He stops the jeep, lets it idle, gets out, peers over the Rotterdam (wire) fence that encloses the area on this side.

ACROSS the Guard looking up the slope. There is certainly something going on. The rain is long over. The moon is out. The activity up on the slope looks like three dogs ravening at something.

The Guard up on the slope climbs over the fence and starts up the slope, drawing his revolver. The dogs see him and scatter. He moves on further to see what they were ravening at. It is the remains of the mouflon. The Guard looks around to see if the dogs are still skulking around; they are gone.

167 The Guard's eye is caught by a WHITE BLUR in the dark 167  
grass under a tree about twenty yards away. He cocks  
his gun, moves cautiously forward. It is a naked  
man. He continues forward. It is Jessup. He is  
sleeping. His chest rises and falls evenly. There is  
a beatific smile on his face.

168 INT. THE FRANKLIN PARK PRECINCT STATION SQUAD ROOM 168  
3:30 A.M. - NIGHT

Typical battered old police station house. A COP  
brings Jessup out of the bowels of the building,  
dressed and carrying an empty overnight bag which he  
hands to Emily who, with Parrish, has been anxiously  
waiting for him --

JESSUP

(murmurs)

See what you can do about getting  
me out of here.

EMILY

It's all done. Mason has his car  
outside --

169 EXT. THE PRECINCT STATION - NIGHT 169

Jessup getting into the front passenger seat --

JESSUP

(he seems vague,  
stunned)

I'd like to stop by the medical  
school. I left all my clothes  
in the tank room.

EMILY

(sliding into the  
car beside him)

Let's just get you home. It's  
three-thirty in the morning.

JESSUP

I have my watch and my wallet there.  
My keys are there. I'll need  
them to get in the apartment.

EMILY

I've got my keys. I had to stop  
off to get you some clothes.

PARRISH

(sliding behind  
the wheel)

I'll go back and get your stuff later.

Parrish starts the motor, and they move off --

170 INT. PARRISH'S CAR - EN ROUTE - NIGHT

170

Emily steals an anxious glance at her husband, who is sitting between her and Parrish. He seems to be in a state of shock, distracted, oddly placid, lobotomized, staring through the windshield, almost unaware of her or Parrish.

EMILY

What were you doing in the tank room?

(he doesn't seem to hear her)

Do you remember anything at all about last night?

He stares at her blankly.

JESSUP

(after a moment)

I remember large fragments of what happened, but not all of it.

You'll have to be patient with me.

He turns back to stare out the windshield again.

EMILY

I've had Mason looking all over Boston for you all night.

#

She lets her head sink onto his chest and cries.

JESSUP

(murmurs into her hair)

It's okay, I'm alright --

171 INT. JESSUP'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

171

Emily sitting at the kitchen table, sipping coffee and nibbling at cookies from a box. She looks up as Jessup enters, swathed in a towel-robe, patting himself dry. He makes himself a cup of instant coffee. He seems in a very good mood, excited, exhilarated.

JESSUP

(affably)

I suppose getting a call from the police at three o'clock in the morning to the effect your husband has been found sleeping naked in the city zoo might have caused you some concern.

EMILY

Yes, I think you could say that.

171

JESSUP

171

And Mason's been writing you all this time telling you I'm having a nervous breakdown, and you figured I finally flipped out altogether.

He sits down across from her and would say something, but he begins to laugh, a full, open, exuberant laugh. After a moment, he wipes his eyes.

JESSUP

I'm sorry, Emily, forgive me. I know what a harrowing day I've caused you. I'm sure you've been sitting here all this time while trying to figure how to get me to a psychiatrist.

EMILY

As a matter of fact, I have.

JESSUP

I don't know how you've put up with me all these years.

EMILY

I loved you.

He stands, cries out in exultation --

JESSUP

Oh, my God, Emily! I don't know how to tell you this! I really don't! Bear with me, Emily! The implications are staggering!

He strides off into the living room. She follows to the doorway --

172 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

172

&  
173

He is moving erratically around the room with such intense inner exhilaration that his arms and legs seem out of control --

&  
173

JESSUP

(trying to keep  
his voice calm)

I don't remember all of it. Apparently, I entered a very primitive consciousness, and all I can remember of last night is what was comprehensible to that consciousness.

(MORE)

172  
&  
173

JESSUP (cont'd)

172  
&  
173

I don't remember, at least not clearly, how I got out of the tank room. The first thing I remember are the dogs. I remember the dogs very well.

(he perches on the arm of the overstuffed chair)

On a strictly physiological level, I suspect we achieved an observable momentum at enough nuclear locations to alter the actual form. The drug probably affects the bonding.

He is up again, excited, moving around the room in a gathering frenzy of creativity.

JESSUP

But even if we could establish a biochemical setting for this, so what? Suppose we get some cells, crack them open, get some assays. Okay, so we get all kinds of whacked out polyribosomal profiles. Fantastic enzymatic activity. I'm making protein at an unbelievable pace. I mean, let's face it! This whole thing is biologically impossible! We're not just talking about one cell or even a colony of cells going wild. We're talking about a massive mutation of my entire biological system, a process that took millions of years to evolve reversing itself in a matter of hours if not moments! Some extraordinary transfer of energy has occurred. We may be into some kind of exotic relativistic physics here in which consciousness snapped me into some new sharp attribute. Don't we have a physicist in our circle of friends? I'd like to bounce this off a quantum guy. Because, you see, Emily, what I think happened is I somehow got into a quantum state where there is no matter, only the potential of matter. It makes sense, doesn't it. Some original and universal state of energy potential. I somehow tapped into that original consciousness of pure potential. My God, what an implacably beautiful thought!

172 He stands slowly, glowing, radiant. He stands 172  
 & frozen by his vision, his eyes closed, staring into &  
 173 eternity, his face as masklike as an ikon's. He 173  
 mutters:

JESSUP

It must be true. Anything that  
 beautiful must be true.

(doesn't even know  
 she's in the room  
 any more)

He sighs as if in sexual consummation and sinks back  
 into the embrace of the soft chair.

EMILY

You still haven't told me what  
 happened tonight.

He sprawls in the soft chair, seems almost to be  
 asleep.

JESSUP

(murmurs)

After I left you this afternoon,  
 I went to the isolation tank room,  
 took two hundred milligrams of the  
 stuff, got into the tank, and at  
 some point during the evening, I  
 transformed my matter into some  
 form of early human life.

EMILY

(nervous)

What the hell do you mean you  
 transformed your matter?

JESSUP

I followed a pack of wild dogs to  
 the zoo. That's how I got there.  
 In the zoo, I hunted down, killed  
 and ate a small sheep. I was  
 utterly primal. I consisted of  
 nothing more than the will to  
 survive, to live through the  
 night, to eat, to drink, to sleep.  
 It was the most supremely  
 satisfying time of my life.

The doorbell RINGS.

EMILY

That must be Mason.

She sits, frightened by the madness she has just heard.  
 The doorbell RINGS again. Emily stands, starts for  
 the door.



172  
&  
173

JESSUP

172  
&  
173

I may have killed a man tonight,  
or damn near killed him. I remember  
beating somebody bloody.

Emily pauses at the door, sighs, then opens it.  
Parrish booms into the room, carrying Jessup's cloth-  
ing over his arm.

PARRISH

Man! You don't know the trouble  
I had getting these clothes! I  
had to go to the security office  
for them! They want you to call  
them right now. There was some  
kind of ape in your isolation tank  
room tonight, do you know anything  
about that? This ape almost killed  
a security guard. You didn't  
bring an ape down to the tank room  
tonight, did you? Your watch and  
stuff are in the jacket pocket.

(dumps the clothing  
on a chair, senses  
something is wrong)

Is everything all right? Is he  
okay?

EMILY

(moving to the  
kitchen)

If he's okay, the rest of us are in  
a lot of trouble.

(pauses in the  
doorway)

Tell Mason what you've been telling  
me. I'd like to hear Mason's views  
on all this.

JESSUP

I think Mason's views will be  
predictable.

174

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - TWO DAYS LATER  
- SUNDAY - DAY

174

Pleasant Sunday afternoon in April. Emily, Parrish,  
the Rosenbergs lounging on the stoop and porch.  
Sylvia Rosenberg is nursing an infant. The Jessup  
kids and the Rosenberg boys are occasionally seen  
in b.g. Parrish's predictable views are being ex-  
pounded by him at the moment --

PARRISH

(to Rosenberg)

-- He wiggled out, had a toxic  
delirium ...

(MORE)

174

PARRISH (cont'd)

174

... ran around the streets of Boston naked and wound up sleeping in the zoo. This is hardly the first instance of drug-induced delirium any of us have heard of.

EMILY

What worries me is he actually believes his hallucination. I mean, he actually thinks he turned into an apeman. He can't tell hallucination from reality any more.

PARRISH

As for that strange ape they found in the tank room that night, I'm sure it'll turn out to be some local kid who broke in to steal some drugs, or something like that.

EMILY

I called him yesterday morning and last night, and I spoke to him this morning again. He sounds absolutely fine. He's going over to M.I.T. to brainstorm with some physicists on Wednesday. I told him he ought to spend some time with the kids. He hasn't seen them in a year, they've been asking for him. This has got to be the most hideous weekend I ever lived. I'm still not unpacked. My husband has had a breakdown, and do you know the only thing I can think about right now is I've got to place the kids in a school tomorrow morning?

PARRISH

And now he wants to do it again, and he wants us to watch him.

EMILY

For God's sake, you're not going to let him do it again.

ROSENBERG

How do you plan to stop him? Listen, if you're worried about his flipping out again, we can always bring him down with a little benzodiazepine.

(MORE)

174

ROSENBERG (cont'd)

174

But the point is there is no way we're going to talk him out of going into that tank again. He's going to do it with us or without us, and I think it'd be a hell of a lot better if it was with us.

The point is unarguable.

PARRISH

(to Emily)

When're you going over to look at his data?

EMILY

Thursday, while he's with the kids.

175 INT. JESSUP'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

175

Emily on the sofa, reaching up to turn the standing lamp on. It's still daylight outside, but the room is getting dark for reading. Emily is reading a sheaf of papers -- the blood analysis reports from the Goodman labs. Jessup's notebooks, x-rays and stacks of audio cassettes are stacked on the coffee table in front of her. There is a tape playing now, as she studies the Goodman lab report. It is the tape of Jessup's aphasic experience --

JESSUP 'S VOICE

(on cassette)

-- He's beating me with his chunk of lava! He's gouging gobbets of me with his chunk of lava!

ROSENBERG'S VOICE

(on cassette)

Are you okay, Eddie?

JESSUP'S VOICE

(on cassette)

No pain! No pain! I tell you, no pain! --

We can see now that Emily is not actually reading, that her entire interest has been caught by the theatricality of the tape --

JESSUP'S VOICE

He's devouring me! Ripping at my flesh! Of course! It's me! It's my primordial me devouring me! I'm returning to my original me! Unbelievable sensation! Ineffable!

(MORE)

175

JESSUP'S VOICE (cont'd)

175

Beatitude! Absolutely transcendental!  
 I'm it, and it's me! I'm the hunter  
 now! I'm the killer! I'm killing!  
 I'm eating! I'm eating the blood-  
 hot flesh of a giant goat! I'm  
 eating a goat I just killed! I'm  
 eating a goat!

Jessup's voice breaks into a CROAK and some CLICKING  
 NOISES, then a HOWL. Emily lets the tape run just  
 long enough to know there's nothing more. She quickly  
 rewinds and plays the GRUNTS and CLICKING SOUNDS and  
 HOWL again. She rewinds again, plays it back again,  
 listens with the most intense interest --

176

INT. A McDONALD'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT - 9:30 P.M.

176

The Jessups, a typical American family in a large  
 dining room of typical American families. It's late;  
 Emily and Jessup are down to their coffee, and  
 Margaret is cranky and whining and Jessup has to hold  
 her. He is talking, and Emily is fascinated --

JESSUP

Physicists see the whole thing in  
 terms of particles and energy states.  
 You get situations in particle  
 physics, where you have something  
 in one state and then suddenly  
 you'll find it appearing in another  
 state. It has apparently zipped  
 through a forbidden region between  
 the states. What I may have done  
 is reduce my uncertainty in energy  
 to zero or near enough to zero so  
 that the time available to me to  
 tunnel through had been infinite.

In b.g., Grace, who has been roaming around the  
 restaurant, falls and cries. Jessup rises and gets  
 her, talking as he does --

JESSUP

Where I differ from the physicists  
 is they conceive of consciousness  
 as a particular force exerted by a  
 particular person. I see it as a  
 cosmic, perhaps the cosmic force.  
 Our universe exploded into being  
 some twenty billion years ago, a  
 fantastic explosion of hydrogen,  
 so it all began with an actual act  
 of creation. What did the creating?

(MORE)

176

JESSUP (cont'd)

176

That original creative force is what I call consciousness. You can call it God if you like, but there's a difference. Consciousness is not a noumenal process; it's phenomenological, it can be reached, tapped, manipulated. Lord knows, I believe I tapped into it.

EMILY

I think I better get the kids home.

She moves about getting the sleepy kids jacketed and standing. Jessup watches her movements -- the saucy ass, the long legs, her natural physical sensuality.

JESSUP

I'd like to go home with you tonight, would that be all right with you?

She pauses, turns, smiles at him.

EMILY

Do you know, I think that's exactly what you said to me the first night we met, do you remember? In Arthur and Sylvia's apartment back in New York?

JESSUP

Yes, and you said we'd have to make do with the couch. The couch is still okay with me.

EMILY

(slipping into  
her own jacket)

I've finally made my peace with this divorce, Eddie. It's been a very painful year for me, and I think it would be dumb to reintroduce sex between us. So thank you for what really has been a fascinating day. I'll drop you off.

177

INT. EMILY'S APARTMENT - HER BEDROOM - NIGHT

177

Dark. Emily asleep. Suddenly she sits bolt upright, propelled out of her sleep by what must have been an insufferable nightmare, for the terror lingers in her eyes. After a moment, she lies back again, but her eyes are open; there is no sleep for her now.

177 She sits, swings her legs over the side of the bed, 177  
just slumps there in her pajamas, trying to subdue  
her fear. She looks at her watch on the bedtable,  
stands, goes out into --

178 INT. THE HALLWAY - NIGHT 178  
-- and goes down to the door of her kids' room where  
she stands, watching them sleep. After a moment, she  
heads back down the hallway and across the entrance  
foyer into --

179 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 179  
-- where she slumps into a soft chair; but she is  
immediately up again wandering around the dark room,  
distraught, until finally she goes to the phone and  
dials --

EMILY

(on phone)

Did I wake you? It's Emily...  
Eddie, I'm in kind of a wild panic.  
I need to talk to you --

180 EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - CAMBRIDGE - NIGHT 180  
Jessup's Toyota pulls into the driveway, and he gets  
out, cuts across the lawn to the porch, up the stoop  
to where Emily is waiting for him with the front door  
open. They go into --

181 INT. THE ENTRANCE FOYER - NIGHT 181  
Dark, but the lamplight from the living room spills  
over a bit.

EMILY

I don't know how even to put this  
into words, but I'm beginning to  
think that what happened to you  
last Friday night was not just a  
hallucinatory experience. I've  
got this gut feeling something  
phenomenological did actually  
happen, that there was some kind  
of genetic transformation. I  
don't know why I think that in  
defiance of all rationality, but  
I do. And now that I do, I'm  
terrified, I mean, really  
terrified, petrified.

181

JESSUP

181

So am I.

EMILY

(has no sooner  
closed the door)

I don't want you doing this  
experiment again next week.

JESSUP

We've got to find out if it actually  
happened, Emily.

They move to the threshold of the living room, where  
they pause again in the half-shadow.

EMILY

I'm suggesting that you put the  
experiment off until we understand  
a little more in order to minimize  
the risk.

JESSUP

There is no way we can understand  
this before the event. We can only  
work back from the event itself.

EMILY

You may be causing yourself  
irreversible genetic damage.

JESSUP

I don't think we're dealing with  
genetics. We're beyond mass and  
matter here, beyond even energy.  
What we're back to is the first  
thought.

EMILY

Something monstrous is going to  
happen.

JESSUP

All our evidence indicates nothing  
irreversible is going to happen.  
None of my experiences have lasted  
longer than four hours, and I have  
always reconstituted completely.

EMILY

I'm trying to tell you I love you.

JESSUP

I know that. And I'm trying to  
tell you this is an all-bets-are-  
off sort of thing!

(MORE)

181

JESSUP (cont'd)

181

We may be opening a black box that could scrap our whole picture of space-time! We might even have a link to another universe! For God's sake, Emily, you're a scientist! You must know how I feel!

And, of course, she does.

EMILY

(sighs)

Yes, I know how you feel. It's very late, Eddie. Would you like to stay here tonight? I could do with a little love and a little reassurance right now. You'll stay, won't you?

182

EXT. EMILY'S HOUSE - FRIDAY, APRIL 30 - 7:30 P.M. -  
RAIN- THUNDER - NIGHT

182

A befittingly Gothic night. Thunder RUMBLES. Rain lashes through the streets. Lightning bleaches the SCENE. Emily comes out of her house, raincoated and umbrellaed, braves her way to her car.

183

INT. MEDICAL SCHOOL - B BUILDING - BASEMENT - NIGHT

183

Emily comes in through the exit door at the end of the corridor, raincoated and shaking her umbrella out.

183A

INT. CORRIDOR TO THE TANK ROOM - NIGHT

183A

She heads up the corridor to the tank room. There is considerable traffic of hospital personnel on this rainy night, all going about their individual businesses. Emily turns into --

183B

INT. THE OBSERVATION ROOM

183B

where Rosenberg is standing beside an examining table with an attached IV stand; Rosenberg is loading up the IV. On the examining table, there are a marrow tray, a biopsy tray, a prep kit, a 35 mm Nikon and a video-tape setup, camera and console. Also two gooseneck standing lamps. Through the window we can see Parrish standing by the isolation tank talking to Jessup who is stripping off his shirt. He smiles at her. She responds with a nervous smile of her own.



183B

ROSENBERG

183B

(indicates the IV  
he's loading up)

If it happens, we'll give him a  
big bolus of amytal for starters --

EMILY

(raw nerves,  
explodes)

What do you mean if it happens, if  
it happens! Everybody keeps saying  
if it happens. Do you think some-  
thing's going to happen, Arthur?  
Because if you do, then I think --  
I'm sorry, Arthur. I'm nervous  
as hell.

ROSENBERG

Listen, so am I.

She goes in --

184

INT. THE TANK ROOM - NIGHT

184

Subdued, shadowed lighting. Parrish is standing by  
the uncovered tank, staring down into the water. Jessup  
is taking off his clothes.

JESSUP

(to Parrish)

If I come out of that tank  
anthropoid, I'll be in a very  
primitive consciousness and  
impossible to relate to, so  
sedate me while I'm still in the  
tank. Otherwise, you'll have to  
chase me around and subdue me.

PARRISH

(mutters)

Okay.

184 Jessup goes into the observation room to continue undressing. Emily comes down to examine the tank which she's seeing for the first time -- 184

PARRISH

(mutters)

I'll tell you this, if he comes out of that tank looking like an ape, I'm going straight over to Mass Mental and commit myself --

185 OMITTED 185

186 INT. ISOLATION TANK ROOM - OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT 186

-- where Emily and Parrish are sitting, Emily just lighting up a cigarette. Rosenberg enters with brown paper bag.

ROSENBERG

Anything happen?

PARRISH

(shakes his head)

I just checked him ten minutes ago.

187 Parrish has apparently just come back from the local deli. He is unloading containers of coffee and sandwiches and Danish. Emily abruptly goes into -- 187 & 188

INT. THE TANK ROOM - NIGHT

-- where she goes down to the tank, lifts the hinged headpiece, looks down.

Her POV. From deep within the square blackness exposed by the open lid, Jessup's white face stares blankly out, framed, cadaverous, like a plaster cast sunk into a cushion of blackness.

189 INT. MEDICAL SCHOOL - B BUILDING - CORRIDOR - SEVERAL HOURS LATER - NIGHT 189

Emily, manifestly agitated, walks aimlessly about the corridor smoking. She looks at her watch, crushes out the cigarette, goes back into --

190 INT. ISOLATION TANK ROOM - OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT 190 &

191 -- where Parrish is cleaning up the mess of the deli, gathering half-eaten sandwiches and Danish, empty containers of coffee, etc., into the brown paper bag; Rosenberg is reading a mystery novel -- 191

190  
&  
191

EMILY  
(no longer even  
trying to control  
her agitation)

190  
&  
191

Look, I've got nearly ten. That's more than two hours now. Is there any way we can stop this? I tell you frankly, I'm really frightened. We could be screwing around with his whole genetic structure. How do we stop this? --

192  
thru  
195

SUDDEN HALLUCINATORY BLIP - a WHITE-ORANGE JAGGED FLAME shears diagonally across the entire length of the screen, seeming to rip the screen in half, the same JAGGED CRACK that occurred in Jessup's Mexican hallucination. Neither Emily, Rosenberg nor Parrish seems aware of this extraordinary invasion of their reality.

192  
thru  
195

PARRISH

Can you bring him down, Arthur?

ROSENBERG

He's going to be sore as hell.

EMILY

(in full-fledged panic)

We never should've let him do it! How did we let him talk us into this! We were humoring him. But we know he's not crazy! And we all know deep in our hearts he may be on to something that is beyond our own comprehension. Because I believe him! I want this stopped!

SUDDEN HALLUCINATORY BLIP -- Suddenly, out of a sable sea, an enormous VOLCANIC cone of ROCK surges up, ERUPTING with FLAME and boiling ROCK, hundreds of tons of plutonic EXPLOSION, a fantastic FOUNTAIN of ROCK and SCALDING WATER rising two thousand feet into the air -- Again, the others seem unaware they are being invaded --

Rosenberg clicks on the mike --

ROSENBERG

(on mike)

How're we doing, Eddie?

He waits for a response; there is none.

EMILY

Oh, Jesus --

192 SUDDEN HALLUCINATORY IMAGE -- an EXPLOSION, a shat- 192  
 thru tering FLASH of brilliant WHITENESS fills the 192  
 195 SCREEN. Emily, Rosenberg and Parrish are made thru  
 195 almost invisible, bleached out. We see just enough 195  
 of Emily to realize she is slowly becoming aware of  
 the reality of her husband's hallucination.

A high-pitched SCREAMING DRONE of energy. The WHITE-  
 NESS has disappeared. We are back to the reality of  
 the observation room again, except that WAVES of  
 different COLORS pulsate and throb across the SCREEN.  
 Neither Rosenberg nor Parrish seem aware of this or  
 of the SCREAM: but Emily is staring blindly ahead  
 seeing and hearing it all. The SCREAM abruptly stops.

Suddenly, over the speaker on the top shelf, we hear  
 a rasping kind of GRUNT and a series of CLICKING  
 SOUNDS. Emily turns to the two men, her face drawn  
 in panic and pleading --

EMILY  
 (almost screaming)

Please!

Parrish unwinds himself from his sprawled position,  
 stands and goes into -

196 INT. THE TANK ROOM - NIGHT 196  
 thru -- where he moves to the tank and lifts the head- thru  
 200 piece. 200

ACROSS Parrish looking down into the tank. This time,  
 we are looking down into the sleeping mask of a some-  
 what gorilla-like face, its skin a black and shining  
 hide. There is almost no brow, the close-cropped  
 scalp hair coming down almost to the heavy simian  
 ridge that bulges slightly across the brow. The  
 facial fur is finer than that found on apes and does  
 not entirely cover the ears. The lower part of the  
 face is prognathic, the lips extended and open, re-  
 vealing strong yellow but very human teeth. The eyes,  
 even closed, are also more human than apelike, larger  
 and not sunken into deep sockets. The neck, shoulders  
 and that part of the chest that can be seen are  
 covered with a fine, short fur.

REVERSE REACTION SHOT looking up to Parrish. His  
 only reaction is a sigh.

PARRISH  
 (to himself)

There is no way no how that this  
 can be explained on any physical  
 level.

(MORE)

196  
thru  
200

PARRISH (cont'd)  
(raises his voice,  
but keeps it calm)

196  
thru  
200

Have you got your needle ready,  
Arthur? He said to nail him while  
he was still in the tank.

A moment later, the door behind Parrish opens and  
Rosenberg stands framed in the brighter light behind  
him.

ROSENBERG  
(nervous)  
What do you mean?

ACROSS Parrish looking down into the tank. The eye-  
lids of the creature are slowly opening, revealing  
malevolent little red eyes.

PARRISH  
(staring down into  
the tank)  
Goddammit, Arthur, bring your goddamn  
syringe over here.

201 INT. THE OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

201

Emily, who is standing at the one-way window, peer-  
ing into the tank room, reaches over to hand  
Rosenberg his airline bag. We HOLD on Emily just  
long enough to see tears are streaming down her face.

202 INT. THE TANK ROOM - NIGHT

202

&

&

203

203

As Rosenberg, unzipping his airline bag, comes  
quickly down to join Parrish at the tank, where he  
stops and just stares at the proto-human face staring  
out at him.

ROSENBERG  
(begins to babble)  
How -- how do you define this?  
I mean, there is no coherent schemata  
for this. We need a whole new  
language, holy God Almighty, we  
need a whole new space-time picture.  
We --

He abruptly stops because of a penetrating DRONING  
SOUND emanating from somewhere about them. He and  
Parrish both look up to face in growing terror a  
line of BLUE LIGHT moving across the increasingly  
darkening room towards them.

202 Then suddenly the BLUE light sweeps through the tank 202  
 & in SHOCK WAVES, and the four walls of the tank fly &  
 203 apart, as if a nuclear blast had been detonated in- 203  
 side of it. Both Parrish and Rosenberg are flung  
 back against the walls. The water in the tank GEYSERS  
 up to the ceiling in a SCREAMING MUSHROOM CLOUD,  
 CRASHING with a CLAP as loud as thunder, and then  
 floods through the room to ankle depth. INFRA-RED  
 WAVES of light sweep back and forth across the room,  
 accumulating in intensity to ORANGES and YELLOWS that  
 seem hotter than the sun, and the whole of the tank  
 room FLARES molten with heat.

204 INT. THE OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT 204

Emily stands stunned to stupefaction, staring into the  
 tank room. We see what she sees --

205 Where the tank had been is a pulsating MASS of 205  
 thru WHITE SUBSTANCE, rising out of the thin layer of thru  
 210 BOILING WATER. An enormous gouge has been ripped 210  
 out of the front of this grotesque, unformed white  
 thing, showing a section of skeletal structure.  
 Emily SCREAMS, beside herself with terror. SCREAMING,  
 she lunges at the door that separates her from the  
 tank room, and SCREAMING, she wrenches it open and  
 plunges into --

INT. THE TANK ROOM - NIGHT

-- splashing ankle deep into the room to stop and --  
 like Rosenberg and Parrish pressed against the far  
 wall -- gape stupefied at what is going on in the  
 middle of the room.

The MASS of SUBSTANCE seems to be trying to assume a  
 form. Stumps of arms and legs, misshapen and mis-  
 placed, BULGE out of the mass and RECEDE back into  
 it. The substance itself changes color, begins to  
 BUBBLE and BOIL as if cooked by an interior fire.  
 It begins to SCREAM a PIERCING and AGONZIED SCREAM.

Emily's hysterical immobility is ended by this SCREAM.  
 She splashes towards her husband. The room has  
 become COSMIC BLACK, a BLACKNESS that PULSES with  
 WAVES of force, SHUDDERING BANDS of RADIATION. The  
 room DRONES with ENERGY. The space RESONATES and  
 RIPPLES. Jessup's form, still recognizably human,  
 seems to be caught in a PINCH of ENERGY WAVES and  
 temperature differences, twisting and swirling  
 around him, changing his coloration from LUMINOUS  
 WHITE to FOGGY INFRA-RED to the BURNING RED of ultra-  
 violet radiation to blurred CHIAROSCURO BLACKS and  
 GRAYS of the quality of x-rays.

205 His form appears to be DISSOLVING in SHIMMERING 205  
 thru VIBRATIONS into the pulsating waves of energy thru  
 210 penetrating him. Suddenly, his body SWELLS until it 210  
 DISTENDS into a sphere of gas, a shocking YELLOW GAS  
 turning RED, and, as suddenly, collapsing in under  
 the crushing weight of its own gravity. His bowels  
 erupt into flames, rekindling the maniacal CARNAGE  
 of COLORS, now so phenomenally hot he is BLINDING  
 WHITE. He begins to SCREAM again in hideous terror,  
 sinking to his knees as if he were melting, imploding  
 as if he were being sucked into a black hole of his own.

Emily flings herself upon this SHUDDERING, increas-  
 ingly SHAPELESS anti-matter of her husband and embraces  
 him. Not fifteen seconds have elapsed since the first  
 explosion.

In Emily's arms, Jessup's form THROBS and CRACKS and  
 RESONATES, and he SCREAMS his anguished primal SHRIEK  
 again. His eyes stare blindly out on some existential  
 and unspeakable horror. Then, the fluctuating ex-  
 tensions of matter that still retain the barely dis-  
 tinguishable shape of arms flow out and unfold them-  
 selves around his wife, and they kneel together on  
 the flooded floor of the room, two terrified figures  
 alone in the dense black spaceless DRONE of energy,  
 clutching each other against the horror of human  
 origins.

Abruptly, the demented throbbing HUM of entropic  
 forces stops. The COSMIC BLACK recedes as if it had  
 been snatched up. Emily holds pressed against her  
 the now entirely reconstituted naked form of her  
 husband. They remain locked in their desperate  
 embrace amid the wreckage of the tank room. Fragments  
 of the wooden tank are everywhere, the smaller pieces  
 floating listlessly in the several inches of water  
 that covers the floor. Jessup is no longer screaming.  
 There is NO SOUND at all; the silence is palpable.  
 Emily looks down at the ashen face resting on her  
 breast; he is breathing but manifestly in coma. She  
 turns her own harrowed face to where Rosenberg and  
 Parrish are slowly lumbering to their feet, mutely  
 asking them for help. Parrish sashes over to her.  
 He disengages Jessup's limp form from his wife's  
 embrace and carries it to the door.

211 EXT. MYRTLE STREET - JESSUP'S HOUSE - 45 MINUTES 211  
 LATER - NIGHT

Parrish's car pulls up to the curb at the nearest park-  
 ing spot he can find. Between him and Emily, they  
 get Jessup, now clothed, out of the car so that  
 Parrish can pick him up. Jessup is still in total  
 shock.

- 211 PARRISH 211  
Bring my bag.
- 212 Emily reaches back into the car for Parrish's doctor's bag, leads the way up the walk. Parrish follows, carrying Jessup. Emily opens the front door. They go in -- 212
- 212A INT. JESSUP'S HOUSE - FRONT FOYER AND HALLWAY - NIGHT 212A  
Carrying Jessup, Parrish follows Emily to the door of the apartment, which she unlocks. They go into --
- 213 INT. JESSUP'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - BEDROOM - NIGHT 213  
Emily flicks on the living room lights, then the bedroom light. Parrish follows, carrying Jessup.  
He lays him down on top of the bed, opens his black bag, gets out his stethoscope et al, perches on the edge of the bed, takes Jessup's pulse and begins to examine him. Emily goes out into --
- 214 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 214  
-- which she crosses to the --
- 215 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 215  
-- where she rummages about for the instant coffee makings and then just stands there in the middle of the kitchen, dazed and with tears streaming down her face.
- 216 INT. LIVING ROOM - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER 216  
Mason sprawled on the couch, sipping from a mug of coffee which he rests on his stomach between sips. Emily moves aimlessly around the room; hysteria is imminent --

PARRISH

His signs are all good. He'll probably sleep a day or two, come out of it a little stuporous. He's got a whopping load of drugs in him. It's not uncommon for a psychedelic experience to whack you out for a couple of days.

EMILY

You'd hardly call this just a psychedelic experience.

She goes into --



217 INT. THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

217

Dark. She stands looking down at her husband who lies, eyes closed, absolutely motionless and yet somehow not asleep. She turns back to --

218 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

218

PARRISH

His heart's good, his pulse is good,  
his pressure's good. I'm more  
worried about you than I am about  
him.

EMILY

(sinks into the  
soft chair)

I'm all right, Mason.

Obviously, she's not; she is suddenly racked by a spasm of shudders and she doubles forward as if gripped by cramp, her head on her knees, and she cries. Parrish slowly rises, moves to her, places a comforting hand on her back; and she starts to her feet like a frightened doe.

EMILY

(crying out)

Of all the Goddamned men in this world, why do I have to love this one! I can't get him out of me! Do you know how many men I tried to fall in love with this past year? But it won't work! No matter whom I'm in bed with, I have to imagine it's him, or nothing happens! No matter whom I'm eating with or walking with, there's always that pain because it isn't him! I'm possessed by him! It's crazy!

PARRISH

I think that's the way it's supposed to be.

EMILY

He doesn't give a damn about me.

PARRISH

Oh, Emily, you're the only thing he really cares about outside his work.

She sits momentarily contained, but the sensation of hysteria remains imminent.

218

EMILY

218

No, Mason, he's a truth-lover, a God-fucker. I was never real to him. Nothing in the human condition was ever real to him. Reality to Eddie is only that which is changeless, immutably constant. What happened to him tonight -- that was Eddie's idea of love. That was consummation. He finally got it off with God. He finally embraced the Absolute, was finally ravished by Truth. And it fucking near destroyed him!  
 (she's on her feet  
 again, yielding  
 to the hysteria)  
 He never loved me! You knew him as well as I did! We were all bits of transitory matter to him!

She sits abruptly on the couch, frozen, staring rigidly down at the floor. Parrish observes her a moment.

PARRISH

You're going into shock, I'm going to give you something.

219 INT. JESSUP HOUSE - ENTRANCE FOYER AND CORRIDOR -  
 SEVERAL HOURS LATER - NIGHT

219

Rosenberg coming down the hall to the apartment door, starts to ring the bell, thinks better, knocks. Waits. After a moment, just as he's about to knock again, the door opens and Parrish stands in the doorway. They murmur:

ROSENBERG

How is he?

PARRISH

Same. She's a wreck though.

ROSENBERG

Who isn't?

He goes into --

220 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

220

Emily is stretched out on the couch, resting.

PARRISH

Did you get the place cleaned up?

ROSENBERG

Yeah. What a mess.

220

EMILY

220

(from the couch)

There's sandwich stuff and coffee  
in the kitchen, if you want  
anything, Arthur.

ROSENBERG

No, I'm okay. How're you doing?

EMILY

I'll be all right. I called  
Sylvia to tell her not to worry  
about you.

ROSENBERG

Thanks.

He sits. Parrish sits. They are all of them silent,  
subdued, still overwhelmed by the extraordinary events  
of the night. All the lights in the room are on, the  
overhead lights and the two lamps, but it does little  
to relieve the tenebrous sensation that makes the air  
around them dense.

ROSENBERG

(suddenly)

Look, it's got to be said. What  
the three of us witnessed tonight  
was one of the most fantastic  
instances in the history of science.  
Analagous perhaps to the first  
time somebody looked through a  
microscope lens and discovered  
solid matter wasn't solid. We  
reached a point tonight where  
physical science just breaks  
down. We're in blue skies.  
Tonight was history, and what're  
we going to do about it?

PARRISH

I'm doing nothing about it.  
Tonight scared the hell out of me,  
and all I want to do is go home  
and go to sleep and wake up and  
forget about the whole Goddamn  
thing.

ROSENBERG

Maybe you're right. Maybe we  
ought to drop it till tomorrow.

He stands, goes into --

221 INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

221

-- where he starts to slap together a cheese sandwich from the bread and cheese and mayo on the kitchen table, but the suppressed excitement within him takes over, and he drops the sandwich and comes back into --

222 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

222

ROSENBERG

(getting increasingly  
excited)

That tank just blew up. Whatever happened inside that tank released a hell of a lot of energy.

PARRISH

(flaring)

For God's sake! Let's drop the Goddamn thing! I don't want to talk about it!

ROSENBERG

(flaring in return)

I can't help it! You may want to go to sleep, but the way I feel right now I don't expect to go to sleep for a year! I'm on fucking fire! I'm in there mopping up that Goddamned tank room, and I've got to know why! Do you believe in supernatural agencies, Mason?

PARRISH

No!

ROSENBERG

(shouting)

Then what we saw tonight was a physical phenomenon, an inexplicable physical phenomenon, and, if it's phenomenological, it's got to be explicable, and I've got to know why! Let me talk, for Chrissakes! I've been in there mopping up that tank room for three hours, and I want to tell you what I'd like to do.

PARRISH

Arthur, I've had all I can take tonight! Just leave me alone!

ROSENBERG

We've got to repeat this! We've got to repeat this with other human subjects!

(MORE)

222

ROSENBERG (cont'd)

222

We need a selective sample! We'll put up a notice for volunteers in the Student Union, something like that, get five or six subjects, and just go back to square one with them, step up the doses of the drug in a graduated fashion, check them against Eddie's values! I'll bet you we could even get a grant! We'll give them some kind of bullshit about checking this drug for renal clearance, some shit like that!

PARRISH

(bellowing)

God Almighty! This is Arthur Rosenberg talking, right! The conscience of the scientific community! The guy with all the petitions against genetic engineering and protests against nuclear power! The big, moral, science-for-the-people man! And here he is, ready to test an untested drug on innocent human beings!

EMILY

(stands, cries out)

Please stop shouting!

The others subside grumpily. She moves across the room into --

223 INT. THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

223

-- to see if all the yelling has had any effect on Jessup. Apparently not; he lies as motionlessly as he had before. She closes the door, the room darkening. She moves silently around the bed to the window, raises the shade and looks out into the sleeping dark backyards of the houses on the next street. After a moment, she turns to look at her husband.

ACROSS Emily to Jessup on the bed. He has turned his head on the gray-shadowed pillow, his eyes are open, and he is looking at her. For a moment, she is immobilized by the fact he is awake; they just look at each other. Then she kneels on both knees by the bed and examines his long, ashen face.

EMILY

(murmurs)

How are you?

223

JESSUP  
(barely whispers)

223

Wiped out.

EMILY

Would you like to go back to sleep?

JESSUP

Yes.

EMILY

Would you mind if Mason had a quick  
look at you?

JESSUP

(can barely  
whisper)

Good idea.

His eyes close. She gets to her feet, gently touches  
his face, starts for the door to Parrish. She opens it.

224

INT. LIVING ROOM - DOORWAY

224

EMILY

(to the others  
in the living  
room)

He's awake. Maybe you ought to  
have a look at him, Mason.

225

INT. THE BEDROOM - SEVERAL HOURS LATER - 6:00 A.M. - DAY 225

The shade on the window is still up, and the first gray  
passionless light of day filters into the room.

On the bed, Jessup awakens; his eyes open, and he lies  
there letting the sanity of daylight enter into him.  
The door to the living room is open, but the apartment  
is utterly still, the stillness of sleep. He sits up  
slowly, moves his legs over the side of the bed and  
stands. He seems okay. He is barefooted, wearing  
the T-shirt and jeans he had slept in. He moves to  
the door to the living room --

226  
thru  
228

ACROSS Jessup from the doorway, looking into the  
living room. Rosenberg and Parrish are obviously  
gone. His wife lies sleeping on the couch, one  
long white leg protruding from under a twist of  
blanket which is half on the floor along with a  
small puddle of her clothing, her blouse, jeans and  
sneakers. The blinds are drawn and she seems very  
white in the still darkness. Her face is drawn in  
pain. Her sleep is clearly not a pleasant one.

226  
thru  
223

226 REACTION SHOT on Jessup, filled with solicitude for 226  
 thru her. There is even a tear on his face. He wipes it thru  
 228 away. 228

He moves to the stuffed chair just to his right on the wall opposite her and sinks down into it and watches her.

She turns in her sleep, and what little part of the blanket that had covered her slips down onto the floor. She curls up into herself, feeling the sudden chill of her nakedness, even in her sleep. He gets up, crosses the room, picks up the blanket and covers her again, and, then, lifting her head, squeezes onto the couch under her, taking her into his arms, warming her with himself. She shudders and, still desperately asleep, she begins to whimper and cry, and, sleeping still, she suddenly clutches at him out of the terror of her own nightmare, fevered by some frightened sensuality, making awkward, strangulated cries and arching panic-stricken up within his embrace, her cheeks streaked with tears, her eyes clenched closed, until she is sucking at his mouth with the rapacity of a vampire. He locks her in his arms. Quickly, the moment is over. Her head sinks back onto his chest and then back down to his lap again, instantly, innocently asleep.

229 INT. THE KITCHEN - TWO HOURS LATER - DAY 229

Jessup in the kitchen, sitting at the table, legs crossed, eating a sandwich, sipping coffee. He is in the depths of thought. He doesn't even know he's eating. The sun is higher and brighter now and breaks through the slats of the blind on the window. The phone RINGS in the living room. It takes a moment for the sound to penetrate Jessup's brown study. It RINGS again. He starts from his seat, moves to the living room door but --

230 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY 230  
 thru -- Emily is already sitting up on the couch. She thru  
 247 smiles briefly at him, sighs -- 247

EMILY

Oh, God, I hope it isn't the kids --

She stands, crosses the room, gracile, shamelessly naked except for her almost indiscernible panties, picks up the phone, ending its THIRD RING, perches on the arm of the chair.

230  
thru  
247

EMILY  
(on phone;  
listens)

230  
thru  
247

Everything's fine, Arthur. He's fine.

(to Jessup)

It's Arthur. Are you fine?

Jessup nods, goes back into the kitchen.

EMILY

(on phone)

I was sleeping... No, I don't know if he's eaten anything...

She looks up as Jessup returns from the kitchen, bringing her a mug of coffee. She nods her thank you --

EMILY

(to Jessup)

Arthur, the indestructible Jewish mother, wants to know have you eaten anything.

JESSUP

Yes.

EMILY

(on phone)

Arthur, I'll call you back when I'm more awake. Everything's fine.

She returns the phone to its cradle, notes the sun fragmenting itself through the slits of the blinds.

EMILY

God, what time is it? I should call the kids. Eddie, could you throw that blanket over here? I'm freezing.

JESSUP

I can't tell you how much you mean to me, how much I need you and the kids. I just wanted you to know that.

EMILY

Why don't you just come back to us?

JESSUP

It's too late.

He picks up the fallen blanket, brings it to her, drapes it across her and the chair. She tries to read his shadowed face as he bends over her.



230  
thru  
247

JESSUP

I think it's too late. I don't  
think I can get out of it any more.

230  
thru  
247

The silence hangs between them; she doesn't quite know  
what he means.

JESSUP

I've committed myself to it. I  
don't think there's any way out.

He tucks the blanket around her and returns to his  
dark corner of the couch. The widening shaft of  
slatted sunlight divides them. She looks down at her  
coffee mug.

JESSUP

The point is what happened last  
night was more of a religious  
experience than a scientific one.

EMILY

Yes, I know.

JESSUP

You saved me. You redeemed me  
from the pit. I was in it, Emily!  
I was in that ultimate moment of  
terror that is the beginning of  
life! I found the final truth!  
I found it, touched it, ate of its  
flesh, drank its blood! I've seen  
it face to face, and it is hideous!  
It is insufferable! The pain  
cannot be described! It is nothing,  
simple, hideous nothing! The final  
truth of all things is that there  
is no final truth! Truth is what's  
transitory! It's human life that  
is real!

He emerges out of the cucullate shadows in the far  
corner of his couch to stand in the band of dust-moted  
white light streaking across the floor from the  
slatted window.

JESSUP

I don't want to frighten you,  
Emily, but what I'm trying to  
tell you is that that moment of  
terror is a real and living  
horror living and growing within  
me now, eating of my flesh, drinking  
of my blood. It's real because I  
have made it real. It's alive.  
It's in me. It is me. And the  
only thing that keeps it from  
devouring me is you.

230  
thru  
247

EMILY

I think you're trying to tell me  
you love me.

230  
thru  
247

JESSUP

I'm trying to tell you why I love  
you, that without you I would  
have disappeared into unspeakable  
terror.

She stands, pulling the blanket around her.

EMILY

I suppose that's why anybody loves  
anyone.

JESSUP

For God's sake, Emily, don't be  
so facile.

EMILY

I'm not being facile! My God, do  
you think you're the only one  
who has experienced despair? The  
only one who has felt the utter  
nothingness of life? We are all  
creatures of despair, Eddie!  
Life for all of us is a flight  
from the unspeakable terror!  
Life is an act of faith for all  
of us! That's why we love each  
other! It's the only act of  
faith most of us are capable of!  
At least, it's the only act of  
faith I'm capable of!

JESSUP

I can't live with it, Emily. The  
pain is unbearable.

EMILY

We all live with it. That  
unspeakable doubt is what makes  
us such singular creatures. We  
hide from it, we flee from it,  
we succumb to it, mostly we defy  
it! We build fragile little  
structures to keep it out. We  
love, we raise families, we work,  
we make friends. We write poems,  
we paint pictures, we build  
beautiful things. We make our  
own universe, our own truth, we  
believe in our own reality. And  
every now and then, someone like  
you comes along who goes out and  
challenges it face to face.  
Passionate men.

(MORE)

230  
thru  
247

EMILY (cont'd)  
Poets, philosophers, saints and  
scientists. What the hell do you  
think makes me love you so much?

230  
thru  
247

JESSUP

You don't understand.

They stare at each other. He is openly crying, his face glistening with tears.

JESSUP

It's too late, you see.

He slowly raises his right arm and extends it for her to see. The vivid sunlight bleaches it, makes it look sepulchrally white. A bulge of protoplasmic substance is moving slowly up his arm under the skin like a mole. She stares, stunned. We hear a HUM, a resonating drone, the throbbing SOUND of the pulsing primal energy forces we had heard in the tank room the night before.

EMILY

(screams)

Defy it, Eddie! You made it real!  
You can make it unreal! If you  
love me, Eddie, defy it!

He stands immobilized, crying helplessly. His body begins to RUMBLE, CRACK and buckle as if forces inside it were about to break through the surface. He begins to rapidly change forms, some recognizable, some merely monstrous. He seems to have no more substance than a photograph, a projected illusion, a demented kaleidoscope of instant, transitory, transparent images, flackering madly in the wide shaft of sunlight. The hideous DRONE has become insufferably penetrating. She clutches her ears. She sees a quick fleeting image of her husband reaching out his arms to her for help, but she is petrified, utterly immobilized. His arms turn into stumps. She finally forces out a hissing sibilant SOUND --

EMILY

(barely a whisper)

If you love me, Eddie!

She is suddenly convulsed herself, clutching at her stomach as some great pain explodes with her. The blanket falls from her shoulders to the floor at her feet. Her arms begin to bulge and swell and discolor. A jagged crack appears on her forearm and shoots up the length of her arm as if it were splitting open. She slowly forces her arm up as if to show it to her husband. It is now a stump, and even that stump is losing its definition as the lines that define it become wave-like and seem to melt into the shrieking air.

230 She feels a massive shock just inside her skull above 230  
 thru her eyes. A RED-HOT FLAME erupts from her bowels. thru  
 247 She seems to be burning alive. Her EYES DISAPPEAR. 247  
 She would scream except her mouth has disappeared as  
 well.

The SCREEN has become total, impenetrable BLACKNESS.

Then, out of the blackness, we HEAR a distant echo of  
 a scream, lightyears away in the ultimate blackness.  
 It grows louder. It is no longer a scream; it is now  
 rather a roar of rage, the fury of a raging animal.

Light begins to penetrate the total blackness. Forms  
 begin to take shape. We begin to recognize Jessup's  
 human form, flickering in and out of the madness of  
 all his other shapes, reasserting itself.

The blackness is all gone now. We are back in the  
 living room of Jessup's flat. He is standing, a  
 completely human form again, naked, as immobile,  
 enmarbled as a statue, stark white. He is staring at  
 his wife, who is disintegrating into the shapeless  
 anti-matter that had been his condition the night  
 before. With a shocking wrench of effort, he takes a  
 step toward her, forcing humanness into himself. One  
 step, two -- he reaches out to embrace the shapeless-  
 ness of his wife.

It is instantly, abruptly over. The drone, the lunacy  
 of illusion, the whole shattering moment is done. What  
 we see, standing in the sunlight in the middle of their  
 living room is a young married couple -- a slight,  
 light-haired man of thirty-seven, beginning to bald  
 just a bit but looking boyish at the moment in his  
 jeans and T-shirt; and a slim, gracefully naked young  
 woman, her face pressed against her husband, her arms  
 wrapped around his waist, a pair of young living  
 humans, standing embraced in the white sunlight of their  
 living room.

JESSUP

(after a moment)

I love you, Emily.

ROLL CREDITS

THE END