

OUTBREAK

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December 1993 Draft

**FOR EDUCATIONAL
PURPOSES ONLY**

OUTBREAK

FADE IN:

EXT. JUNGLE

HIGH-PITCHED WHINES. LOUDER AND LOUDER. MORTARS race through the air and EXPLODE in the distant jungle. Soldiers -- black, white, Oriental -- curse and mutter in French, German, Australian and American as they reload.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND -- the letters leap across the screen:

THE MOTABA RIVER VALLEY, BELGIAN CONGO (ZAIRE), 1960.
THE CAMP OF FORCES LOYAL TO MOISES TSHOMBE - DAY

BLACK MALE NURSE

carrying a bucket of water from the Motaba River rushes past the Mercenary Army to --

CAMP INFIRMARY

Where he replaces the towel on the forehead of a feverish, delirious AUSTRALIAN MERCENARY with a cold new one.

AUSTRALIAN MERCENARY

Gimme somethin' for the bleedin' pain. C'mon, mate, help me.

The Mercenary tries to lift himself out of his stretcher. Can't. He's too weak. His skin is yellow and covered with blisters that look like chicken pox.

NURSE

(checking the
soldier's temp)

He's still over a hundred and six. Why can't we bring it down?

The black African army physician, DR. RASWANI, looks on, helpless. Suddenly, the Australian emits a sharp cry. His eyes roll back, and he begins convulsing. Before Raswani can even reach into his bag for medicine, the Mercenary is dead.

Raswani and his Nurse stare with horror.

The DRONE of a CHOPPER grows LOUDER as a Bell Z180 appears over the edge of the forest and kicks up a storm of dust as it lands. Raswani and the Nurse run to meet it. In their eyes, hope.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Two space-suited figures emerge from the chopper, their faces hidden by thick green plexiglass shields. The U.S. flag is emblazoned on the side of their helmets, which also display their ranks. The much taller man is a lieutenant whom we'll know as McCLINTOCK. Through his visor, we can just make out his pock-marked, angular face. The shorter, pear-shaped man is a CAPTAIN. We can't see his features, only the reflection of horn-rimmed glasses.

RASWANI

Have you brought the medicines?

CAPTAIN

Soon.

RASWANI

Why the hell didn't you bring them?

CUT TO:

INFIRMARY

The two space-suited figures follow Dr. Raswani past soldier after soldier infected with the same disease.

RASWANI

Thirty deaths yesterday, eighteen the day before, the disease is killing our men faster than enemy bullets.

The Captain stops at a young AMERICAN MERCENARY'S cot. He's shaking with fever. His skin is mottled and looks like the pulp of an orange. His voice is a whisper:

AMERICAN MERCENARY

Take me home, Captain... Get me outta this shithole. Please, I wanna see my girl.

The American Mercenary reaches out with his arms to the Captain, who shrinks back, not wanting to be contaminated.

CAPTAIN

We'll get you home, soldier.
First, I need a tissue sample.

He pulls from his black bag a long metal syringe and plunges the biopsy needle deep into the man's liver. He places the needle in an aluminum test tube and seals it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMERICAN MERCENARY

Promise me you'll get me home.
 Promise me, Goddamit!

A long uneasy beat.

CAPTAIN

We'll get you home.

CUT TO:

TWO SPACE-SUITED U.S. ARMY FIGURES

boarding their chopper, Dr. Raswani and his Nurse
 standing by.

RASWANI

Not just supplies, but doctors
 and nurses. And suits like yours
 to protect us. This disease
 spreads too fast.

CAPTAIN

The plane tonight will bring
 everything.

CUT TO:

INSIDE CHOPPER

ascending above the camp.

Lt. McClintock and the Captain look out the window at the
 campsite.

McCLINTOCK

It's viral. There's no way to
 stop it. It could spread all
 over the world.

We can't see the Captain's face, but feel his remorse.
 So can McClintock:

McCLINTOCK

If you'll excuse my bluntness,
 sir, you can't go halfway on this
 one.

CAPTAIN

Don't ever -- ever -- tell me
 what I have to do.

CUT TO:

TSHOMBE CAMPSITE - DUSK

Dr. Raswani gives a shot to the American Mercenary, who looks terminal.

DR. RASWANI
This will help the pain.

The Male Nurse rushes up.

MALE NURSE
They're coming.

AMERICAN MERCENARY
I knew... they'd come back... I
knew. Help me up. Help me --

CUT TO:

RASWANI

The Male Nurse, and dozens of soldiers rush across the forest to the makeshift runway beside the camp. In the distance a camouflaged DC-3 is rapidly approaching.

INT. DC-3

The PILOT, no more than 21, sees the soldiers celebrating their arrival down on the runway. His hand is on the green bomb release lever.

PILOT
I can't.

McClintock is in the copilot's seat.

McCLINTOCK
It's either them or us.

He puts his hand on the green release lever. Hesitates.

PILOT
You can't either.

ON GROUND

Dr. Raswani and the soldiers stare at the plane, coming in too high for a landing.

INSIDE PLANE

McClintock squeezes the green lever.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The bomb cannisters under the wing open up, releasing a thick cloud of yellow cyanide gas.

ON GROUND

Screams of agony rip out as Raswani and the soldiers convulse and die.

The plane shoots over the treetops, spraying the ground below like a crop duster.

Then the plane arcs and approaches again.

OVER RUNWAY

littered with the dead, the plane releases a waxy grey cloud. One second. Two seconds. An eerie stillness.

The CLOUD EXPLODES in a huge inferno.

The plane releases more and more napalm, burning the jungle for miles.

The CRIES of ANIMALS caught in the fire pierce the night. Flames shoot up trees a hundred feet high.

PULL BACK to show the whole forest ablaze. A long beat, then at the very LEFT CORNER OF the FRAME, a MONKEY with a black and white coat (a Colobos monkey) emerges from the fire, looks back at its mate, threatened by the flames. The Colobos jumps up and down, baring its teeth, SCREAMING. The fire moves relentlessly forward. The monkeys dart to safety.

CUT TO:

MOTABA RIVER VALLEY - NEXT MORNING

A metal syringe burned to a molten shard lies beside a mortar launcher, twisted and deformed like some bizarre modern sculpture. PULL BACK to reveal acre after acre, mile after mile of nothing but ashes and carcasses of burnt-out trees. Not a single living thing remains.

FADE OUT and ROLL CREDITS.

FADE UP:

TREETOPS

A wind rippling through treetops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "THE MOTABA RIVER VALLEY, AUGUST 12, 1994."

SHOCK CUT TO:

ABOVE RAINFOREST

Brilliant streams of orange and purple, the last rays of the setting sun, dance across the sky and penetrate the vapor cloud above the rain forest. Unworldly silence. Shattered by:

Giant TREES CRASHING to the ground. TRACTORS ROAR, CHAINSAWS REV with a penetrating whine. Huge trees living undisturbed for hundreds of years topple to earth, their roots ripped from the soil.

REVEAL the army of construction workers clearing a path for the new road linking Kinshasa with Bangui. White foremen bellow orders in French at their black workers, including:

MORAZU: a seven-foot tall Goliath with mischievous eyes. He PUNCHES on his CHAIN SAW and RIPS into another tree. A cloud of wood dust envelops him.

OVERHEAD - ZAIREAN ARMY HELICOPTERS

ROAR by overhead, their machine gunners searching for guerilla activity.

INTERCUT - TWO COLOBOS MONKEYS

a mother and her daughter, whom we'll know as Betsy. Betsy plays with a fat, round jackfruit, kicking it and rolling it every which way. Her mother watches the construction workers warily.

Morazu hums as he pulls a huge tree limb off the road and into a thick patch of brush where he comes face to face with Betsy. Morazu smiles. He takes a long piece of sweetened bread from his pocket and lays it down right in front of the young monkey.

Betsy eyes it warily.

MORAZU
(softly)
Take it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A long beat. Betsy takes the bread, examines it carefully, finally takes a bite.

Morazu grabs her. BETSY struggles, thrashing and SCREAMING. Morazu pins her hands behind her back. She spins around and sinks her teeth into his finger.

He lets go with a shriek and swears at Betsy, who disappears with the bread.

STAY WITH Morazu as he returns to his work. He sucks the blood out of the small wound.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTABA RIVA VALLEY (AUGUST 15)

Morazu gets off a bus by a small muddy river and walks slowly toward his village of about fifty mud-thatched huts. Pain in his back makes him wince. We see him UP CLOSE: his eyes are red and his skin is pale. He's sweating.

He stops at the village well and takes a drink. Other villagers come up to say hello, and Morazu greets them wearily, dipping his cup back in the water for another drink. The villagers drink too.

DISCOVER in the background: the tribal medicine man, the "ju-ju man." Streaks and circles of paint cover his skin. He watches the excitement surrounding Morazu's return.

CUT TO:

RAIN FOREST - LATER THAT NIGHT

A small group of Colobos monkeys including Betsy and her mother run swiftly through the forest. Suddenly, BETSY CRIES OUT. Her foot is snagged in a trap. Before her mother can respond, she's pulled high into the air into a bamboo cage. The DOOR SNAPS SHUT. BETSY SCREAMS in fear and pain, hanging upside down --

CUT TO:

SAME - FOLLOWING MORNING

The Colobos monkeys scatter as VOICES APPROACH, REVEALING two TRIBESMEN pulling a small wagon. The men chatter as they lower the cage holding Betsy onto the cart.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FADE UP LUCIANO PAVAROTTI singing a love song from "La Boheme" and...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON HUMAN SKULL

wearing Porsche sunglasses and an Army Colonel's hat.
COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Frederick, Maryland, August 19."

INT. GILLESPIE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FADE UP the VOICE of a MAN SINGING along with the GREAT TENOR. CONTINUE PANNING OVER the room: the skull gives way to a full skeleton wearing a star-spangled red-white-and-blue bow-tie and carrying an umbrella over its forearm. CONTINUE PAST the oak rolltop desk.

MIKE GILLESPIE, about 40, keeps singing as he reads through a lengthy typed report, making notes in the margin.

LUCIANO hits a high C. Gillespie reaches for it... and misses badly. DOGS WHINE O.S., probably in closer harmony to Luciano than Gillespie. He's not pleased.

GILLESPIE

I rescue you from certain death
and instead of gratitude, you mock
me.

His two WOLFHOUSES, Olser and Harvey, GROVEL on the floor contritely, each with a worn shoe in his mouth. Behind them we see the rest of Gillespie's living/dining room. His townhouse is spartan; it needs a woman's touch. Unpacked boxes stand in the corner beside a treadmill.

GILLESPIE

That can't go unpunished. No
Letterman for three nights.

The dogs wag the running shoes.

CUT TO:

OLD CREEK PARK (FREDERICK, MARYLAND) - NIGHT

Gillespie, puffing, a weekend runner, strains to keep up with the DOGS. They BARK excitedly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE
 (reaching into his
 pockets)
 Okay! Okay!

Without breaking stride, he throws what look like sticks high into the air. The dogs jump and catch the objects in their mouths and race back to Gillipsie.

We see they're old stethoscopes with thick rubber tubing. Gillespie lets them fly again. He laughs at their eagerness and keeps running, sprinting now, trying to prove to himself that he's still young. Suddenly -- a PHONE RINGS. Without breaking stride, he pulls a cellular phone from his pocket:

GILLESPIE
 (into phone)
 Dr. Gillespie... How many dead?...

INT. BILLY FORD'S OFFICE (FORT DETRICK, MARYLAND)

Gillespie's boss, GENERAL BILLY FORD, MD, is a heavy-set man in his early 60's with thinning hair, piercing, intelligent grey eyes and a warm smile. Scattered all around his office are cages filled with frogs and reptiles. As he talks on the phone, he's feeding a green-horned toad some dead flies.

FORD
 Almost an entire village.

INTERCUT WITH:

FORD WITH GILLESPIE

still running.

GILLESPIE
 Is is Lassa Fever? Ebola? What?

FORD
 How the hell do I know? I'm the bureaucrat, you're the detective, remember? All I know is State wants us to lend a hand and when the Secretary talks, I listen. And when I talk, you listen. You're Code Red. The plane's leaving at 01:30.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

Yes, sir.

Gillespie hangs up, out of breath... excited.

CUT TO:

EXT. GILLESPIE'S OLD BMW - LATER THAT NIGHT

Gillespie and the dogs pull into the driveway of a comfortable two story colonial home, passing a "For Sale" sign on the front lawn pasted with a "Sold" sticker.

EXT. COLONIAL HOME

Gillespie knocks. The DOGS BARK excitedly.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Who is it?

The dogs recognize the voice and jump against the door.

GILLESPIE

Mike.

ROBERTA "ROBBY" KEOUGH, an attractive, intelligent woman in her mid 30's, opens the door a few inches, until the latch LOCK CHAIN SNAPS tight. The dogs try to push inside.

ROBBY

(smiles; delighted)

Hey, guys!

But when she looks at Gillespie, she's guarded.

GILLESPIE

Robby, I know I'm the last guy you'd do a favor for, but I've got no one else to ask.

ROBBY

My lawyer said not to talk to you anymore.

GILLESPIE

Then just listen. I gotta go to Zaire.

Robby shakes her head, "No, no way."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBBY
Put 'em in a kennel.

GILLESPIE
So they can die of some weird
disease like Stripes did?

She mouths the word "no."

GILLESPIE
-- Look, Robby, if I had any other
choice, I wouldn't be here.

ROBBY
You should've let me have them.
You can't take care of them.

Beat. Robby's torn. The dogs nuzzle against her leg.

GILLESPIE
I won't be gone long.

ROBBY
You know I'm moving to Atlanta --
they want me to start in four days.

GILLESPIE
I'll be back before that.

ROBBY
(sharply)
Four days is four weeks -- to you.

Silence.

GILLESPIE
It wasn't all my fault, Robby.

ROBBY
(quietly)
I know.

A long beat.

ROBBY
I'll look after them on one
condition: if you're not back in
four days, they're mine.

Gillespie doesn't like it.

GILLESPIE
Okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBBY

In writing.

She unlatches the door and moves inside. The dogs race after her. Gillespie enters...

FRONT HALL

overflowing with moving boxes, some sealed, others waiting to be packed. Gillespie feels awkward, a stranger in his own home.

She hands him a prescription pad. He crosses off her nameplate, "Roberta Keough, MD," and starts writing while Robby enters...

KITCHEN

ROBBY

Hey, guys, c'mon!

They follow her in.

ROBBY

Guess what I got?

The DOGS BARK excitedly.

ROBBY

Damn straight!

She opens the freezer, grabs a couple of frozen bagels and flips them to the DOGS. They catch the bagels and start CHOMPING.

ROBBY

I missed you guys so much.

Gillespie hands her the note.

ROBBY

(reading it)

'I, Michael Gillespie, agree that if I'm not back in exactly four days from now, the ownership of my dogs, Osler and Harvey, will go to Roberta Keough.'

(handing it back)

Time and date it.

He does. She points to a huge box on the kitchen table:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBBY

That's stuff from med school...
Some of it's yours. I don't know
if you want any of it.

He fishes through it, shoving aside old medical books and equipment. He finds an old wood stethoscope with thick rubber tubing. He shoves it into his pocket.

GILLESPIE

Got a place yet?

ROBBY

An apartment.

GILLESPIE

The first thing you'll do is spend
the whole night unpacking...
You'll stay up 'til dawn but
you'll get everything in its
place.

ROBBY

(smiles)
Probably.

GILLESPIE

Nothin' in my life has been
organized since you left, Robby.

Beat. She's surprised at his admission. And uncomfortable. So's he. He continues searching through the box and pulls out...

A photo taken during their honeymoon cruise: they're both smiling radiantly as they hold between them a trophy of a dancing couple.

GILLESPIE

Y'know, this is the only evidence
on Earth that I was ever graceful.

He checks her reaction. There is a hint of a smile.

ROBBY

Take it.

GILLESPIE

Nah, people might see it... get
the wrong impression.

He drops the photo back in the box and moves toward the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBBY

Four days.

GILLESPIE

Or less.

As we hear the front DOOR OPEN and SHUT, HOLD ON
Robby: a hint of regret.

CUT TO:

ANDREWS AIR BASE, MARYLAND

COMPUTER KEYS POUNDING: "Andrews Air Base, Maryland."

Flood lights illuminate a huge C5A transport plane waiting on the runway, its nose cocked open exposing its innards to the pouring rain. Several enlisted men rapidly wheel equipment into the open hatch. A private pushes a dolly loaded with boxes with the red cross emblem up the ramp.

DR. ISAAC "IZZY" BERMAN, a short, bald Army Major in his late 30's directs traffic.

IZZY

Blood in the freezer over the
right wing. C'mon! Gut it!
We're late.

The private grunts and pushes the dolly slowly up the ramp. Izzy lends a hand, and the two of them run it up the ramp.

Mike Gillespie, dressed in a uniform, climbs down from the cockpit. Now we see his rank: Colonel.

GILLESPIE

Where the hell's Yaffe?

IZZY

His wife... she's due tomorrow.
I put him on leave.

GILLESPIE

We need him now! Who's going to
read the electron micrographs?

IZZY

I will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

You can't even read a Playboy pinup.

IZZY

He said he'd get a guy to fill in.

GILLESPIE

We can't wait.

A Jeep drives across the tarmac, toward them and comes to a park a short distance away. The Driver scurries out to open the passenger door to let --

General Ford get out.

IZZY

What does he want?

The driver pulls two suitcases out of the Jeep and follows Ford into the plane.

FORD

I'm comin' along, Mike.

GILLESPIE

Sir, we're going into very dangerous territory.

FORD

I'm well aware of the dangers.

GILLESPIE

Beggin' your pardon, General, I don't think you are. You've had only the most cursory training on how to avoid contamination. Concerns for your safety would distract us.

FORD

Nothing distracts you, Colonel. You won't even know I'm there.

GILLESPIE

Sir, I'm not comfortable --

FORD

Mike, have a little compassion for an old man who's been rotting behind a desk.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD (CONT'D)

For once I'd like to be there
when one of these buggers hits.
You're not going to tell me I
can't go, Colonel, are you?

GILLESPIE

No, sir.

FORD

Good. I feel wanted, now.
(beat)
I get airsick in the back. I'll
be up with the pilot.

As they watch him move forward and out of sight:

IZZY

The guy wouldn't know a virus from
a Barbie Doll. I'm not lookin'
after him. He's yours.

GILLESPIE

Bullshit.

IZZY

All of a sudden, playing golf and
pushin' papers isn't good enough.
Damn, when I'm his age, that's all
I'm gonna want to do.

Gillespie flips a coin, covers it over his wrist.

IZZY

Heads. No! Tails.

Gillespie lifts his hand and smiles.

IZZY

Fuck!

Gillespie grabs the phone to the cockpit.

GILLESPIE

(into phone)
Rafferty, rock and roll with this bird.

INT. COCKPIT

The Pilot, CAPTAIN RAFFERTY, checks General Ford,
nestled in safely behind him.

RAFFERTY

(into headmike)
T minus sixty seconds.

DOWN BELOW

Gillespie pulls a lever and the hatch starts to close.

IZZY

Wait!

Mike follows his eyes out to the --

TARMAC

where a BLACK MAN carrying a duffel bag is sprinting toward them at incredible speed, like a ghost through the pelting rain.

Berman swings the lever down and the hatch starts to open but the Man doesn't wait for it to lower completely. Without breaking stride, he leaps the four feet onto the plane and slides to a stop right in front of Gillespie. He steadies himself and salutes:

SALT (BLACK MAN)

Captain Walter Salt reporting, sir.

Izzy smiles. He looks at Gillespie, who is impressed but won't show it.

SALT

I'm sorry to be late, sir. I was wrapping up some tests in my lab --

GILLESPIE

-- Strap in.

The huge JET ENGINES come to life. Gillespie, Berman, and Salt strap themselves into the row of jump seats along the fuselage.

Issy is filled with the excitement of a young kid who can't believe his luck:

IZZY

You're not the football player from West Point, that Salt?

SALT

The same, sir.

IZZY

I thought you had the Heisman sewed up 'til you hurt your knee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT

You and my mother, Major... I was never that good. But thank you for saying so, sir.

IZZY

Don't call me sir. The only one who does that is the Colonel here. Everyone else calls me Izzy.

SALT

Izzy, sir?

IZZY

My mother calls me Isaac, but I hate it. I pitched for my high school team. My dad thought I was gonna be another Dizzy Dean. So he called me 'Izzy.'

SALT

Yes, sir, Izzy, sir.

The plane surges forward and taxis down the runway.

GILLESPIE

I want to know just one thing. Can you read electron micrographs as well as you can run?

SALT

I'm not sure how to assess the question --

IZZY

-- Just say 'yes, sir,' Captain. Whatever the Colonel asks, you just say 'yes, sir.' That's how we keep him under control.

GILLESPIE

Have you ever seen filovirus infection in a human being?

SALT

No, sir.

GILLESPIE

It's about as pretty as goin' naked up the middle against the Dallas Cowboys.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT

I grew up on the South Side of Chicago, sir. Whatever it is, I can handle it.

GILLESPIE

I hope so, because if you can't, you'll make a mistake. You'll be holding a needle and it'll slip. Or your glove will have a crack in it and you won't notice. You work with filoviruses, it's like working with plutonium. A single drop of blood can hold six billion... That's more filoviruses than there are people in the world. You get a single one of those inside you, you're infected. Say you're lucky and it's one of the few filoviruses we have antiserum for. Then we can treat you and you'll probably live. But say you're unlucky. And you get one of those filoviruses we don't have an antiserum for, which is most of them. There's no medicine, no cure, nothing we can do to help you. Your body gets so hot, your liver, your kidney, all your vital organs melt, and your skin turns into tapioca pudding.

Stunned silence.

IZZY

(smiles)

He means chocolate pudding.

Salt smiles slowly. He likes Izzy.

The WHEELS come up with a THUMP. The giant jet shakes and rattles and soars into the air.

SHOCK CUT TO:

TWO U.S. ARMY HUEY HELICOPTERS - DAY

flying low over the rain forest. The first carries Gillespie and his crew, the second is a gunship flying escort. They pass over the wide Motaba River that snakes for miles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the river: a Zairean Army patrol boat cruises downstream, looking for guerrillas. The machine gunner swivels his cannon around at the two choppers.

The machine gunner looks up at the U.S. Army insignia and waves.

INT. BACK OF CHOPPER

Izzy slips the clear helmet over General Ford's head.
PULL BACK to reveal:

The General covered from head to toe in BL-4 bio-safety suit. Salt, dressed the same, looks on, amused.

FORD
(panicking)
How do you breath in here?

IZZY
(laughs)
With a respirator. Positive pressure's what you want. Keep those buggers out.

Izzy flips the switch on Ford's respirator, which sucks air out of the atmosphere, filters it, and pumps it into the suit. Ford starts to swell up like the Pillsbury doughboy.

FORD
And I thought it was a hassle wearin' a tie all day.

INT. FRONT OF CHOPPER - A LITTLE LATER

Gillespie, now suited up in full biosafety gear, but holding his helmet in his hands, sits beside the CHOPPER PILOT. In the distance, we see a village in which numerous huts are burning.

GILLESPIE
We got a lot of equipment.
You're gonna have to get us in close.

PILOT
I... I don't want to get no disease, sir.

GILLESPIE
Then don't kiss me, Sergeant.

CUT TO:

CHOPPERS

throwing up a storm of dust as they sweep down to the ground on the perimeter of the village.

INT. CHOPPER

Gillespie, Salt, Berman and Ford stand by the door, ready to get out as soon as the chopper puts down. Gillespie has to shout at Salt over the sound of the WHIRLING CHOPPER BLADES:

GILLESPIE

Captain Salt, if you fail to observe strict decontamination protocol, three things can happen. First, you can be court-martialed. Second, you can die from this horrible disease. Third, and worst of all, you can incur my displeasure. You got it?

SALT

Yes, sir.

GILLESPIE

If one of us gets sick, we all get sick.

(turns to Ford)

And I didn't come here to die.

BURNING HUTS - WIDE ANGLE SHOT

juxtaposed against the U.S. Army choppers disgorging the U.S. Army Infectious Disease Team -- blue space-suited figures with the U.S. flag emblazoned on their arms and helmets.

The ju-ju man remains high on the cliff above the village, chanting and wailing, burning an offering to the gods.

The U.S. Army Team approaches the village through the smoky haze, and we see --

Two different worlds juxtaposed -- men in spacesuits and a man in a loincloth.

Gillespie, followed by Berman, Salt and Ford, moves across the village which now looks devastated and deserted except for a few remaining huts and a small cinder block building with an old Volkswagen van, marked with a red cross, parked out front.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ford walks slower taking everything in, appalled at what he sees.

The U.S. Army team enters the cinder block hut.

INT. CINDER BLOCK HUT

A short, slender, bespectacled black man in his late forties -- DR. IWABI -- head of the Zaire Infectious Disease Health Agency -- and his NURSE, protected only by a smock, a surgical mask, and gloves, gives comfort to a young woman who's dying.

GILLESPIE

Doctor Iwabi? I brought blood,
plasma --

DR. IWABI

-- You're too late.

GILLESPIE

I came as soon as I could.

DR. IWABI

It wouldn't have mattered when you came. This one is different -- worse than Lassa, worse even than Ebola. It strikes and kills so fast. The young, the healthy, everybody.

GILLESPIE

Who was the index case?

DR. IWABI

A road construction worker.

IZZY

How did he get it?

DR. IWABI

We don't know. He died three days ago.

Salt moves ahead to the next bed and pulls aside the thin mosquito curtain to inspect the patient. Ford is right behind him.

SALT

God...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The corpse's eyes are yellow and his flesh, speckled with hemorrhages, looks like pulp. Blood oozes from his nose and his nipples. Ford turns away in horror.

SALT

(retches)

I'm gonna be sick.

He starts to rip off his mask. Gillespie grabs his arms.

GILLESPIE

Keep you helmet on, Goddamit!

SALT

I can't breath.

Salt vomits in his helmet. Rips it off. He rushes out. Izzy moves after him.

GILLESPIE

Put him in quarantine. Now!

DR. IWABI

You don't need to.

GILLESPIE

Why?

DR. IWABI

It's not spread in the air.

GILLESPIE

How do you know?

DR. IWABI

(pulls down his mask)

There's no cough. Or we'd all be dead. For days we've been working with only these masks. They can't keep out a particle as small as a virus.

GILLESPIE

Could any infected person have gotten out of this village and spread it?

DR. IWABI

The incubation period is only one or two days. The mortality is one hundred percent.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. IWABI (CONT'D)

If anyone got out, they are dead, or will be soon. And if they have spread the disease, we will know rather quickly.

GILLESPIE

Finding the host is the only way to control the spread. Our only hope is that this is like most viruses and that it has to live in a host, an animal, to which it's adapted over thousands of years. And that animal host has developed antibodies to protect itself against the virus. If we can identify that animal host, and harvest its antibodies, we can use them to fight the disease in humans.

DR. IWABI

There are a hundred thousand species of animals and insects in this rain forest. The construction worker could have been in contact with any one of them. Where do I start?

GILLEPSIE

General, tell him that our government will help with money, personnel supplies, whatever it takes.

Ford hesitates.

FORD

Of course, we'll do whatever we can.

CUT TO:

EXT. OVER MOTABA RIVER VALLEY - DAWN

In a SINGLE-FRAMED TIME LAPSE SHOT, dawn arrives in the Motaba Valley. FADE UP the hundreds of sounds of the rain forest ANIMALS. There is something primeval about this vista; this surely must be what the Garden of Eden looked like, except for the...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Plumes of black smoke which waft up from the blackened,

smoldering huts, each one the home of someone who has now died from this terrible virus.

Two African orderlies carry a stretcher bearing the dead body of a villager. They slide it onto a funeral pyre already burning with bodies.

Gillespie, Ford and Dr. Iwabi make their way to the choppers where Berman and Salt are loading into the hold plexiglass cases of blood samples.

ON CLIFF OVERHEAD

The ju-ju man chants. He seems to float above the funeral pyre like a mirage.

GILLESPIE

What's he saying?

DR. IWABI

He's asking for forgiveness from the Gods of the forest. They're angry because they've been awoken from their sleep by the men building the road. These deaths are their punishment.

FORD

Why isn't he sick?

DR. IWABI

He stayed in his cave all week and greeted his visitors with poison darts.

GILLEPSIE

(a sense of
foreboding)

It was as if... as if he knew what was coming.

CUT TO:

INT. C5A COCKPIT

Heading home. Ford reads a hand-written paper Gillespie's just handed him and gets irate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD

A memo to the CDC to issue a warning to every physician in the United States to be on the look-out for this disease? What the hell is this?

GILLESPIE

A safeguard, sir.

FORD

Are you nuts? Within a week we'll know if this thing burned itself out in that village, just like Iwabi said --

GILLESPIE

-- And if Iwabi's wrong? American doctors should be warned so cases can be quarantined. Sir, this one is different --

FORD

-- You're a smart guy, Gillespie, but you can't write a memo to the CDC which says the sky is falling.

GILLESPIE

(sharply)

We should do nothing?

FORD

Did I say that, Colonel?

(beat)

We will monitor the situation in Africa, and if this virus reappears, we will act with all our resources, not just to protect the American people but the people of the world. You will destroy this memo. That's an order.

Gillespie's frustrated.

GILLESPIE

Yes, sir.

SMASH CUT TO:

NATIONAL AIRPORT (WASHINGTON) - DELTA GATE - DAY

Robby is moving forward in the boarding line, and Mike is walking beside her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBBY

You asked for four days and four days it was... last night.

GILLESPIE

It was a bad virus... Cut me some slack.

ROBBY

I cut you ten years of slack. I'm not giving you the dogs.

GILLESPIE

Stop joking. Where are they?

ROBBY

I shipped them this morning.

GILLESPIE

You did not.

ON her face: a triumphant smile.

ROBBY

It's better for them. And for you. I'll be there to feed them and take care of them. You won't have to feel guilty.

She moves past the gate. Gillespie's stuck behind it. Screaming after her:

GILLESPIE

I'm coming to Atlanta... I'm takin' 'em back.

ROBBY

Dream on.

HOLD ON Gillespie's dismay as she disappears.

CUT TO:

INT. MAIN CORRIDOR OF M.I.D.U.

Mike walking briskly down the main corridor. Two M-16 toting security guards salute as he passes by. He reaches six-inch thick metal doors, closed tight. He slides his ID card into the optical reader.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The computer screen above it prints out the words,
"Colonel Michael Gillespie." A digitized voice booms
from the WALL SPEAKER:

WALL SPEAKER (V.O.)
How-are-you-today-Doctor-Gillespie?

GILLESPIE
Piss ass good. And you?

ON COMPUTER SCREEN

We see Gillespie's voice print.

The doors spring open.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR

Gillespie going up in the elevator past the four floors of
glassed-in laboratories. At the first level, workers wear
civilian clothes. At the second level, they wear respir-
ators. At the third level, they wear body suits, and at
the fourth level they wear biosafety suits.

CUT TO:

INT. M.I.D.U. - SMALL LOCKER ROOM OUTSIDE BL-4 LABS -
STEADI-CAM SHOT

Mike and Izzy strip off their clothes.

IZZY
Admit it, for chrissakes: The dogs
will get better care with her than
they got with you.

GILLESPIE
That really cheers me up.

IZZY
You think cause we're friends I
should ignore reality.

GILLESPIE
I think cause we're friends you
might show some tact.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IZZY

You were gone so often that when you were home... you spoiled 'em. Robby keeps an even keel.

GILLESPIE

Hey, she's available...

IZZY

Don't think I haven't thought about it.

GILLESPIE

You're just what she's looking for. Mr. Stability. Three wives in five years.

IZZY

Two. I never married Sherry. I liked her too much...

Izzy pulls a red air hose down from the ceiling and inflates his space suit before he puts it on; this is standard safety procedure. Mike steps right into his suit.

IZZY

What are you doing?

GILLESPIE

What?

IZZY

You forgot to test your suit. Look! It's torn.

There is a small tear on the left leg of Gillespie's suit.

They both realize Gillespie's mistake could have cost him his life.

IZZY

(beams)

If I let you die, who've I got to rag on?

FADE UP the sound of furiously RUSHING AIR, then:

CUT TO:

INT. FT. DETRICK MILITARY INFECTUOUS DISEASE UNIT (M.I.D.U.) - BL-4 LAB - AIR LOCK

Gillespie and Berman, dressed in their BL-3 suits, stand in the air lock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There's no sound other than the FILTERED AIR RUSHING from a WALL JET into the long red tubing attached to the back of their helmets. These red tubes are called umbilical cords. Gillespie disconnects his, punches the wall plate and enters...

MAIN ROOM OF LAB

Quickly he connects to another umbilical cord; they hang from the ceiling at ten foot intervals.

PAVAROTTI and SUTHERLAND singing the duet from "Lucia de Lamamoore" BLASTS from the SPEAKERS. Whenever Gillespie's in the lab, he's listening to opera. He approaches...

The space-suited figure working under the hood. The figure turns and smiles; it's Salt. Gillespie's surprised. Salt salutes.

SALT

Good afternoon, Colonel, sir.

GILLESPIE

I thought you were doing your thesis at Walter Reede.

SALT

A lot's been published on Herpes B but nothing on this new virus.

GILLESPIE

So you were hoping to change subjects and get your name on my research papers?

IZZY

Our research papers.

SALT

I would do my share of the work, sir. More.

IZZY

And you wouldn't have to worry about anybody publishing the same thing cause there ain't nobody else crazy enough to work with this dangerous a virus.

Salt hesitates, then beams.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT

Yes, sir! Have you given the virus a name, sir?

GILLESPIE

Motaba... after the valley where we found it.

SALT

I like it, sir.

IZZY

Like it? Listen to the way it rolls off your tongue. Mo-ta-ba. Like a perfume.

He lifts up a vial labeled MOTABA and puts it close to his body as if he's putting on perfume.

Salt watches with horror. In spite of their BL-4 suits, you just don't play with these things. Salt checks Gillespie, expecting the same reaction, but...

Gillespie's enjoying the moment. He expects these things from Berman.

Izzy rubs the vial against his chest, savoring the experience.

IZZY

One drop and you feel... so different... Your lover will never recognize you again.

(shoving the vial
at Salt)

Have some, Captain.

Izzy tosses the vial of Motaba to Wally, who, terrified, doesn't know whether to catch it or not. But he does.

IZZY

Good hands... That's important for working with level 4 viruses.

Salt, trembling, notes that the vial is made of plastic.

SALT

This plastic is unbreakable, right?

IZZY

So far.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A short, husky SPACE-SUITED FIGURE pushing a cart of test-tubes round the corner. The name Owigatsuyama is emblazoned above his breast, Sergeant Major stripes on his arm. THROUGH his visor we see the face of a Japanese-American man in his early 60's with a warm friendly grin. We'll know him as Owi.

OWI (SPACE-SUITED FIGURE)
(saluting Gillespie)

Sir.

(gesturing to Salt)
He's here early. No coffee breaks.

GILLESPIE
Should we let this guy horn in on our new virus, Owi?

Owi hesitates.

OWI
I don't think so.

GILLESPIE
Well, that's that.

Salt nervously eyes Izzy: "Is this a joke?"

IZZY
Captain, Sergeant Owigatsuyama here not only looks after everything in this lab, but since he knows the birthday of every great tenor and soprano who ever lived, Dr. Gillespie looks to him for supreme guidance on all matters.

SALT
Just a minute! I could've changed the radio to jazz. I love jazz. But I didn't. Whaddya haveta do to get on here?

GILLESPIE
Get me a blood test for the Motaba Virus.

SALT
With a PCR catalyst I should be able to have a crude -- and I underscore crude -- screening test in a few weeks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IZZY

Excellent. But nobody's asking you to work a hundred and fifty hours a week...

GILLESPIE

A hundred and twenty will be plenty.

IZZY

Welcome aboard, Captain.

CUT TO:

INT. FORD'S OFFICE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Ford feeds flies to the Gila Monster. He looks out the office window at the BL-4 lab where Salt is working late.

Ford moves on to the frog cages and feeds them too. He looks back at the BL-4 lab: sees Salt exiting. The lights go out.

CUT TO:

INT. FORD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Ford watches the bank of video monitors behind his desk: one shows Salt in the parking lot, getting into his old Fiat and leaving.

CUT TO:

INT. BL-4 LOCKER ROOM

Ford, naked, slips on his suit with the ease of Joe Montana pulling on his helmet. He buckles the suit without even looking, as if he's done it five thousand times.

FADE UP the sound of RUSHING AIR and...

CUT TO:

GILLESPIE'S BL-4 LAB

Ford steps out of the air lock, disconnects his red hose and reconnects. He moves quickly across the room. Suddenly, his air tube snags on the side of the lab bench. Ford stops, freaked. Quickly checks his hose. Indented, but not broken. He breathes again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD

The world is round, Gillespie.
Didn't anybody fucking teach you?

He grabs a metal file off the tool board and files down the side of the bench until it's perfectly smooth and round. Then moves on to...

One of the huge circular freezers in the center of the lab. He punches in a seven-digit code on the keypad and the LOCK SNAPS OPEN. He lifts the heavy lid. VAPOR RUSHES OUT. He looks inside, sees the 65 aluminum test tubes labeled "Motaba."

CUT TO:

NEGATIVE PRESSURE HOOD - FORD - MINUTES LATER

opening one test tube after another, expertly withdrawing from each only a tiny sample of the virus, then putting it into a large test tube. Suddenly --

The air lock opens and three BL-4 figures approach Ford. We recognize the tall lean figure although he's 35 years older: McClintock, now a Lieutenant General. Ford hands him the large test tube.

FORD

Tell the boys the Old Man wants
the answer tonight.

McCLINTOCK

Yes, sir.

McClintock places the test tube into a clear plexiglass container which is contained within a large plexiglass container, each with its own combination lock. He twirls the tumblers. The LOCKS SNAP into place.

CUT TO:

GILA MONSTER

Its eyes darting back and forth, ever watchful, trusting nothing.

EXT. BALCONY - FORD'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ford leans on the bannister oblivious to the Gila Monster beside him. He's depressed and worried. In the distant sky,, traces of orange and pink announce the new day. From inside the office, a BEEP. Ford rushes...

INT. FORD'S OFFICE

to his computer terminal. A message ratchets across the screen: "ANALYSIS FINISHED"

He punches a computer key and swivels around in his chair to see the huge video screen on the wall. It shows two viral structures that look like DNA double helices. One is labelled "CD-40 1960 (Motaba Valley)"; the other is labelled "Motaba Virus - Gillespie - 1994."

Letters flash across the screen.

Ford puts on his horn-rimmed glasses and stares at the screen. He doesn't breathe. A long beat.

FORD

You fucker, why couldn't you stay dead?

CUT TO:

MOTABA RIVER VALLEY - DAY (AUGUST 24)

Deep in the rain forest, a trapper wheels a cage containing a baboon to a clearing where other trappers and Government Health workers have lunch. Scattered around them are cages filled with other animals they've caught for Motaba Virus testing.

The DRONE of approaching PLANES builds. The animals hear it first and grow restless. The Army troops guarding the workers scan the sky but can't see the planes because of the treetops. They scream into their walkie-talkies.

On the river, the Machine Gunner on the Army Patrol-Boat, hears their reports and swivels his cannon around, scanning the sky. But he can't see the planes either. The DRONE becomes DEAFENING. Suddenly:

Over the treetops, three camouflage-painted DC-3 gunships emerge, CANNONS FIRING right on target.

The Patrol Boat explodes into a shower of splinters.

The DC-3 Gunships turn and arc high into the sky.

On the ground the soldiers sight the planes. They OPEN FIRE but the planes are out of range.

The ju-ju man comes out of his cave and watches the planes circle back and release a waxy grey cloud.

The ju-ju Mmn raises his arms defiantly. He bares his teeth and screams, and his cry fuses with:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EXPLODING NAPALM. The planes press on relentlessly, extending the fireball mile after mile, extinguishing all life.

CUT TO:

INT. FORD'S OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

Gillespie bursts in. Ford looks up from his desk.

GILLESPIE

The rebels hit Iwabi's camp.

FORD

I know.

He swivels around in his chair to the world map on the wall.

FORD

They hit Kisangani, Bukavu, and Mbandaka as well. Three hundred thousand acres of forest burned, at least thirty-seven dead. I'm trying to find out about Iwabi.

GILLESPIE

He's all right, thank God. He was in Kinshasha at his clinic but his entire field staff was killed. His whole lab destroyed.

FORD

Terrible.

GILLESPIE

I want to continue working on Motaba, sir.

FORD

Look, as a scientist, I appreciate the fact that this one fascinates you --

GILLESPIE

-- It scares the shit out of me, sir.

FORD

Colonel, the Pentagon's biting my ass cause we're months behind on the Anthrax studies. Get 'em finished. Take the heat off me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD (CONT'D)

Then you can fiddle with Motaba as much as you like.

GILLESPIE

Sir, if this virus came to America --

FORD

-- Then it'd be outside our mandate. The CDC takes care of civilian problems. Christ, now you've even got me buying into your paranoia. We can't protect everybody against everything. We've got to make decisions based on the odds, and the odds of Motaba causing us any more trouble are a billion to one.

INT. BL-4 LAB

Gillespie, Salt and Izzy search through the round freezer.

IZZY

Every sample of Motaba gone...
Where the fuck did he put it?

Owi looks contrite.

OWI

General Ford ordered me to move all tubes to the sealed vault in A wing... Only he has access. He said you weren't gonna need it for months.

Gillespie and his men are despondent.

GILLESPIE

Those were the only samples in the world of Motaba, Iwabi lost all his in the fire.

(to Owi)

There's got to be a way to get that access code from Ford's computer.

OWI

Sir, I don't want any more trouble.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OWI (CONT'D)

It's bad enough that I already made one mistake and forgot to transfer one of the tubes of Motaba. I seemed to have mixed it up with a tube of common cold virus. If I give you the tube, I'm sure you'll fix my mistake, sir.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a gleaming aluminium test tube with the words "Motaba #48" written on the side.

GILLESPIE

I love it when you make mistakes, Owi.

OWI

How do you know? I never made one before now.

Hold on their grins, FADE UP the sound of FURIOUSLY RUSHING WIND and:

CUT TO:

EXT. PACIFIC SEAS

A Dutch freighter plowing through the heavy seas.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "THE DUTCH FREIGHTER APELDORN. AUGUST 29."

INT. FREIGHTER

In a cramped dark hold, Betsy stares sadly through the bars of her cage at her captor, SEAMAN SECOND CLASS DIETER JANS, 21-years-old and making his first trip.

SEAMAN JANS

(in Dutch)

What's the matter, girl?

Dieter pushes a banana through the bar of the cage, and Betsy snatches it. Then she retreats with it to the far corner of the cage and studies Seaman Jans with plaintive eyes. PULL BACK to show the ship headed for the Golden Gate Bridge.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. DOCKS (SAN FRANCISCO) - DAY

Betsy stares out from her cage as it swings down from ship to wharf.

CUT TO:

BIOTEST ANIMAL HOLDING FACILITY (SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA)

We're in a long aisle with monkey cages stacked two high on both sides. A translucent skylight gives this place a greenhouse glow.

A forklift putters down the aisle with Betsy's cage in front. Betsy's cage is lifted up and placed into a slot. Betsy stands out from all the other monkeys because she is the only black and white Colobos -- the other monkeys are all brown rhesus.

Betsy's cage slides into place. BETSY SHRIEKS at the man in the forklift.

JIMBO SCOTT, 23-years-young, long, scraggly hair, an aspiring rock and roll drummer working here to make ends meet. Jimbo's BEEPER SOUNDS. He checks the message, then looks puzzled.

CUT TO:

EXT. BIOTEST GUARD GATE - NIGHT

Jimbo's red Nissan pulls up to the exit lane of the guard gate. The GUARD leans over.

GUARD

Hey, Jimbo, I saw your band last night. Hot! I didn't know you were such a good drummer, man.

JIMBO

Wait'll I get my new traps. The world'll never be the same.

The Guard raises the gate and Jimbo drives forward.

CUT TO:

SIDE OF DARK ROAD

Jimbo opens the trunk to reveal Betsy, drugged, asleep in her cage. Jimbo slides Betsy's cage out of the trunk and places it in the back seat.

CUT TO:

INTERSTATE FIVE (OREGON) - DAY

Jimbo speeds along in his red Nissan.

INT. RED NISSAN

In her cage in the back seat, Betsy moves back and forth restlessly, a baby bottle of water in her hand.

JIMBO

Cars put babies to sleep, why
not you?

Betsy takes a mouthful of water and spits it on Jimbo. His reaction is instant rage. He slams the cage:

JIMBO

You stupid fucking monkey!
Why'dya wanna go and do that?

He shoves the cage further away. Then he sees it - a small cut on his hand, caused by a couple of wire protrusions on the cage. He rubs the blood off on his shirt. The Nissan roars down the road.

CUT TO:

EXTREME CLOSEUP - TISSUE CULTURE - THROUGH ELECTRON
MICROSCOPE

A normal cell.

SALT (O.S.)

A normal healthy liver cell.

The image changes.

SALT (O.S.)

Infected cell.

The infected cell is swollen and filled with black brick-like structures.

SALT (O.S.)

Bricks of virus. They multiply
until...

The image changes: the bricks have completely overrun the cell, shattering its outer membrane so that bricks run rampant inside and outside the cell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT (O.S.)

They explode the cell and destroy it. Then they move on to the next healthy cell. And the next. 'Til there's nothing left to kill.

INT. BL-4 LAB - M.I.D.U.

Gillespie, Berman, and Salt, dressed in their biosafety suits, peer at the video monitor hooked up to the electron microscope. Salt flicks a switch on the console to change the magnification. The fuzzy brick-like structures are computer enhanced and enlarged to razor-sharp crystalline structures that look like huge ominous steel balls climbing up the sides of thick pillars.

IZZY

There's our guy, Mr. Motaba.

GILLESPIE

Ugly bastard, isn't he?

SALT

I wouldn't let him date my sister.

CUT TO:

EXTREME CLOSEUP - MICROSCOPE FIELD

as the image comes INTO FOCUS we see a wavy purple outline of a cell.

SALT (O.S.)

The blood test. Normal is this -- pure purple. But if you're infected...

Focus changes and another image fills the screen: the field is filled with wide patches of red circles.

Gillespie and Berman each peer into the scope.

GILLESPIE

If you're red, you're dead. Is that what you're telling me?

SALT

That's right, Colonel. The virus doesn't know the Cold War is over.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT (CONT'D)

(beat)

But the rest is just a quickie; I haven't had time to refine it. There are false negatives, purples that should be red. I don't know why yet.

GILLESPIE

How long to fix it?

SALT

Hard to say.

GILLESPIE

How long?

IZZY

Hey, don't pressure the kid! It took the NIH guys eight months to get the kinks outa the AIDS test... And they didn't have to put up with your nagging.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SMALL ANIMAL TESTING ROOM - TRAVELING SHOT

Gillespie, Berman and Salt moving rapidly through the room within the BL-4 lab.

IZZY

This bug definitely ate its Wheaties.

ANGLE ON FOURTEEN CAGES

each contains three or four different small mammals -- rats, guinea pigs, small lab mice, hamster, and rabbits. All stone dead.

IZZY

It survives in air for twelve hours, and it survives in water for two hours.

GILLESPIE

(incredulous)
Bullshit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IZZY

Hey, this little bugger's so hardy
it can read the whole Sunday NY
Times and not die, it can run the
hundred in nine flat, and it can
kill fish faster than my cat.
Voila!

A fish tank with a dozen dead fish floating on top.

IZZY

No test species has survived, even
when I've treated them with all
antivirals, including every damn
antiserum. What's even worse is
there's a latency phase. Iwabi
didn't see this in Zaire, I don't
know why, but some of the animals
I've tested had the infection a
long time before they showed any
symptoms. They even tested
negative but had the disease. If
this is true of humans... why we
could have it ourselves and not
know it.

SALT

Yet be spreading it.

IZZY

Exactly.

SALT

Holy shit.

INT. RUDY'S PET SHOP (BONNEVILLE, OREGON) - DAY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "BONNEVILLE, OREGON... FRIDAY,
AUGUST 31."

Jimbo slides a cage containing Betsy into a space beside
a cage containing a male brown RHESUS MONKEY. He grabs
the bars of his cage and HISSES. Betsy cowers.

RUDY ALVAREZ, the owner of the shop, slips on a pair of
gloves and opens the cage, reaches in for Betsy. She
tries to avoid his grasp.

RUDY

You got the papers and all?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIMBO

Yeah, sure... I got the papers.
She's legal.

RUDY

Whaddya mean 'she'?

Betsy takes advantage of the opening and bolts out of the cage, heading for the window. As Rudy and Jimbo both chase after her, Rudy is steaming.

RUDY

I told you a male.

JIMBO

You said 'she'.

RUDY

Bullshit! I said 'he'. The customer's already got a female Colobos. He wants to breed 'em.

Betsy slams against the glass. Rudy grabs her.

RUDY

C'mon, baby... c'mon.

She lashes out at his naked forearm, digging her nails into him, drawing blood. He yelps and lets go, and she runs away to the other side of the room, passing the brown rhesus, who eyes a half-eaten banana in Betsy's cage. He grabs it and scarfs it down.

Jimbo finally grabs Betsy from behind. Rudy grabs her from the front and they thrust her back into her cage. Rudy wipes the blood off his arm.

RUDY

Get this bitch outa here.

JIMBO

What about my money?

RUDY

Go back and get me a male Colobos.

JIMBO

We ain't got one. This was the only Colobos we had... Look, I'll sell her cheap.

RUDY

I wouldn't take her for free.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUDY (CONT'D)
 (indicating the
 Brown Rhesus)
 I can't even sell this one.

JIMBO
 (depressed)
 Hey, I need some money now, man.

Rudy hesitates.

JIMBO
 I done you a lot of favors.

Rudy pulls out a billfold.

RUDY
 All right... Fifty bucks for
 your expenses. A lot more when
 you bring me a male.

JIMBO
 What am I going to do with her?

Rudy shrugs.

CUT TO:

SMALL ROAD DEEP IN FOREST - LATER THAT DAY

Jimbo opens the cage which is sitting on the side of the road by the Nissan, but Betsy shrinks back in a corner of the cage. Jimbo feels sorry for her.

JIMBO
 Look at all the trees. It's like
 home.

Jimbo jabs her lightly with a drumstick. She runs out of the cage but stops at the edge of the road, afraid of the forest she doesn't know.

JIMBO
 (flicking pebbles
 at her)
 C'mon, get. Get!

She scampers off into the forest. Jimbo follows her with his eyes, a little saddened.

CUT TO:

INT. 757 CABIN

Jimbo Scott is asleep against the window in the back row of the plane.

BILLY BOY (O.S.)

Bang, bang! You're dead.

Jimbo bolts up, and looks groggily at the four-year-old boy standing on the next seat: he's dressed in a cowboy's outfit with a huge sheriff's star pinned to his chest. He sneezes right in Jimbo's face. His mother puts down her Cosmo.

BILLY BOY'S MOTHER

Billy!? Say you're sorry.

(to Jimbo)

He's so excited; he's going to see his cousins.

BILLY BOY

My uncle's a real cowboy at a rodeo.

Jimbo looks terrible. His eyes are red and he's having trouble swallowing. He grabs his pillow and blanket and gets up. Billy jabs his six guns into Jimbo's belly:

BILLY BOY

Where d'you think you're goin', mister?

JIMBO

Someplace they don't have lawmen.

He goes to the back of the plane where's it's deserted, and lies down across three seats. His body shakes with a chill. He pulls the blanket tight against his chest.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOGAN AIRPORT (BOSTON) - DAY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: LOGAN AIRPORT, BOSTON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1.

The 757 glides almost silently over Boston Harbor as it sweeps in towards Logan Airport.

LOGAN AIRPORT - GATE

Jimbo lumbers out and is greeted by a young woman with long scraggly hair who wears blue jeans and an old, faded T-shirt that says "Metallica." Her name is ALICE, and she puts her arm around Jimbo and hugs him.

ALICE
What'sa matter, honey?

JIMBO
Some little brat gave me his cold.

She plants a kiss on him and pats his ass.

ALICE
Too many late nights, that's all.
Come home to bed.

Jimbo smiles and pulls her close.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN FOREST - NIGHT

Betsy's eyes glow in the moonlight. She looks hungry and sad. She hears the SHRIEK of a HAWK and freezes. These are foreign sounds. She moves stealthily across the forest floor.

CUT TO:

MOUNTAIN FOREST - LATER THAT NIGHT

A patch of wild blackberries grow in a thicket. Betsy begins eating them ravenously. Then she HEARS SOMETHING and turns to see --

A coyote poised to leap. Betsy races up a pine tree.

HER POV

The COYOTE BARKS below. He's joined by his mate. The coyotes settle in for a long, hungry wait.

Betsy is terrified.

CUT TO:

MOUNTAIN FOREST - FOLLOWING MORNING

Betsy, still high up in the pine tree, looks down on --

The COYOTES, still waiting. One of them pricks up his ears and GROWLS. Suddenly a SHOT rings out, and the coyotes bolt.

In the distance a hunter takes aim and FIRES again. Betsy cowers behind the tree, hiding herself from this new danger.

The hunter runs under Betsy's tree, rifle in hand, cursing to himself, hell bent on killing the coyotes.

CLOSE ON BETSY IN TREE

She waits as TWO more SHOTS ring out in the distance, then slowly climbs down.

INT. DR. DREW REYNOLDS' OFFICE - DAY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC), ATLANTA, SEPTEMBER 1."

DR. DREW REYNOLDS, 55, dressed in a doctor's coat, paces in front of a bookcase filled with medical tomes and topped by tennis trophies. Reynolds has a restless energy; he squeezes a tennis ball as he listens to Robby, sitting in a chair across from his desk, with a folder of fax papers in her papers. She's clearly intimidated by him, which is his intended effect on everyone.

ROBBY

Dr. Gillespie wants us to send out a special bulletin warning all physicians to watch out for any symptoms of a virus from Zaire named 'Motaba.' He thinks it's serious enough to warrant emergency reporting nationwide, that it can't wait for our regular monthly report.

DREW REYNOLDS

Which will be released next week, correct?

ROBBY

Wednesday.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DREW REYNOLDS

To get out a special bulletin for four hundred thousand health professionals is about a hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

ROBBY

Dr. Gillespie says it's the worst virus he's ever studied --

DREW REYNOLDS

-- Forgive me, Robby, but this is the guy who found three cases of Congo Fever in Nairobi in '87, and suddenly it's in every American kid's lunch box --

ROBBY

-- You're not being fair --

DREW REYNOLDS

In '91 he said Tsutsugamushi Fever was coming. In '92 it was Ebola. His panics cost us plenty. Around here he's known as Doctor Doom.

ROBBY

He could've been right about any of them. Rule out the worst first... that's what my father always taught.

DREW REYNOLDS

Your father was one of the greatest Surgeon Generals this country ever had. He took me under his wing and let me fly. I've always been grateful. And I've always had a special feeling for you, Robby. The... pain it gave him to see you working under Gillespie... all your promise... the man never gave you a chance to show it.

A long silence. Drew has hit home.

DREW REYNOLDS

Look, is there a shred of evidence that Motaba is more transmissible than the other filoviruses we've seen in the past?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBBY

No.

DREW REYNOLDS

Then as long as the bulletin goes
out next week, we're covered.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR (DESCENDING) - ROBBY

alone, very depressed, leans against the wall. We
sense, if somebody walked in and said hello, she'd cry.
The doors open into her floor and she gets out, not
making eye contact with anyone. She enters...

HER EXPANSIVE OFFICE

Her young assistants, DR. JULIO SANCHEZ and DR. LISA
ARONSON, faxes in hand, join her from their neighboring
offices.

LISA ARONSON

An E-Coli outbreak in Michigan at
a couple of Ronny's steakhouse
franchises.

JULIO SANCHEZ

And -- a couple of fevers of
unknown origin at Boston Municipal
that the infectious disease docs
can't figure out. That's all
we've got on the log.

ROBBY

(jesting)

The Boston case is not some guy
out of Zaire... with Motaba, is it?

LISA ARONSON

(laughs)

Yeah, right! Nah, it's a couple
of Americans. No unusual travel.

JULIO SANCHEZ

They've probably got some atypical
strain of Lyme and the Boston
doctors have just missed the boat.

ROBBY

Then let's see if we can throw
them a lifeline.

INT. RUDY'S PET SHOP (BONNEVILLE, OREGON) CLOSE ON
RUDY - DAY

He doesn't look good, his face is flushed and sweaty, his eyes glassy. He turns the "Closed" sign around to "Open" and unlocks the door for an elderly lady, MRS. FOOTE, standing impatiently outside with her fat Persian cat in her arms. The BELL TINKLES as the door opens and she enters.

MRS. FOOTE

Rorshie didn't like the shredded veal wafers. I asked her and she said, 'Can we change it for the beef chips?'

He's not up for this today.

MRS. FOOTE

Are you okay, Rudy?

RUDY

I'm fine, Mrs. Foote... it's hot. That's all. Lemme open a win--

Suddenly his face twitches, his body stiffens, his eyes roll back and he falls to the floor, convulsing violently.

Mrs. Foote screams.

CUT TO:

INT. BONNEVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM

COMPUTER KEYS POUNDING: "EMERGENCY ROOM, BONNEVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL - SEPTEMBER 1, 08:50."

DR. MASCELLI, 43, a local G.P. auscultates Rudy's chest with his stethoscope. A nurse, EMMA, starts an IV. A second nurse, Jim, puts an oxygen mask over Rudy's face. The lab tech, HENRY, 23, very serious, wraps a tourniquet around Rudy's arm and draws some blood into three colored tubes.

DR. MASCELLI

C'mon, Rudy, talk to me!

No response. Dr. Mascelli rubs his knuckles into Rudy's chest. Rudy groans.

EMMA

They said he was fine yesterday.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. MASCELLI
 (rattled)
 And now he's in shock with
 pneumonia.
 (to Henry)
 Get me some blood cultures.

Henry nods as he fills a lavender-topped tube with Rudy's blood.

DR. MASCELLI
 I've been reading about real bad
 strep cases. I bet this is one of
 'em. Emma, don't leave him alone.
 His heart could stop any minute.

CUT TO:

LAB - CLOSE ON LAVENDER-TOPPED TUBE - MINUTES LATER

spinning in a centrifuge. Henry turns it off. In the b.g., the RADIO BLARES with the MARINERS -- ANGELS game:

BASEBALL RADIO
 ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 Johnson's ready... Checks the
 runners... Salmon is waiting.
 Johnson delivers.
 (a LOUD CRACK)
 That ball is hit. Deep... deep...
 it's gone. The Angels win!

HENRY
 Damn!

Without thinking he reaches into the centrifuge, but it's still spinning. The lavender tube shatters, spraying Rudy's blood everywhere.

Henry squints. He's got blood in his eye. He rushes to the sink and washes it out.

CUT TO:

EMERGENCY ROOM OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Dr. Mascelli trying to calm Henry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. MASCELLI

You washed it out. Don't worry.
But just in case, I'll put you
on some penicillin
prophylactically.

HENRY

I wouldn't want to give it to my
girl friend.

DR. MASCELLI

(nudging Henry)
Cheer up, the penicillin'll kill
that, too.

Henry manages a smile.

CUT TO:

INT. VICTORIA STREET THEATRE

COMPUTER KEYS POUNDING: "VICTORIA STREET THEATRE,
BONNEVILLE, OREGON - SEPTEMBER 1, 20:25 PDT."

Henry sits with his girl friend, CORINNE, watching
a showing of the Warner-Kopelson blockbuster, Thief
Of Araby. Henry starts to cough violently, then
stands up.

CORRINE

Honey, what's wrong?

He's sweaty and pale.

HENRY

Nothin'. Just thirsty... Lemme
get something to drink and I'll
be okay.

Henry heads up the aisle in the darkened theatre.

INT. THEATRE LOBBY - CONCESSION COUNTER

Henry hits the concession stand line just as it's
filling up before another movie in this multiplex.
He's still coughing. He covers his mouth as he coughs
again and again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Movie patrons, children and adults, on all sides of him are exposed to his "cold." HOLD ON each of their faces for a second as Henry pushes his way to the front of the line and grabs a handful of napkins.

HENRY

Could I please get something to drink?

TRACY, the salesgirl with a spiked haircut regards him with a hostile glance.

TRACY

You'll have to wait your turn, sir.

HENRY

Please -- I'm not feeling too good. A large Coke. Or Pepsi. I don't care.

At the front of the line, a black woman (MRS. LOGAN) with a streak of purple in her hair holds her toddler in her arms. She sees that Henry is ill.

MRS. LOGAN

That's okay, let him go first.

Henry, coughing violently, slaps down three dollars. Tracy serves him.

INT. DARKENED THEATRE

Henry walks down the aisle with his drink in hand. He stumbles and falls forward, spilling the drink all over a MOVIE PATRON sitting on the aisle.

MOVIE PATRON

Hey?! Watch what you're...

When he sees Henry sprawled face down on the carpet, he's scared. He touches Henry's back:

MOVIE PATRON

Hey, buddy...? Usher!! Usher!!

SHOCK CUT TO:

INT. BOSTON MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL

COMPUTERS KEYS POUND: "BOSTON MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dr. Julio Sanchez from the CDC and THREE OTHER DOCTORS, dressed in full surgical smock, cap, foot covers, and gloves, stride briskly down the hall and approach double-doors marked "Quarantine: Protective Clothing Required" in red letters. They put on positive pressure respirator face masks and we hear the sound of RUSHING AIR. They push through the double-doors.

INT. QUARANTINE WARD

Jimbo lies near death in one bed, and his girl friend --

Alice lies near death in another. Plastic drapes have been placed over both beds, holding the air inside.

CLOSE ON JIMBO

The scarlet hemorrhagic rash can be seen on his cheeks. Blood trickles from his nose and his mouth, and soaks his sheets. Dr. Sanchez is shocked at how far gone Jimbo is.

JULIO SANCHEZ

(loudly)

Mister Scott -- Jimbo... We're trying to figure out how you got this disease. It's important, so try to help me. You work at an animal facility in San Jose --

Jimbo's eyes are blank. He's dead.

BOSTON DOCTOR #1

What's this guy got?

JULIO SANCHEZ

I don't know. That's why we'll need a post.

BOSTON DOCTOR #2

No way. I'm not gonna slip and cut myself and get what he's got.

BOSTON DOCTOR #1

Me neither.

Suddenly from under her plastic protective shield, Alice stares over at Jimbo's bed. She calls out, her voice a whisper:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE

Jimbo -- Jimbo? Honey, are you
all right...? Answer me, please.

Alice has just spoken her last words. FADE UP the
WHIR of a SUCTION PUMP and...

CUT TO:

INT. BOSTON MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL - PATHOLOGY LAB

Boston Doctor #3, in a biosafety suit, stares at Jimbo's
naked body lying on the autopsy table. Dr. Sanchez,
also in a biosafety suit, stands opposite.

JULIO SANCHEZ

Go very carefully, very slowly.
Maximum sharps precautions.

Sweat drips off Boston Doctor #3's face, fogging his
visor. He starts to make the first cut, but his hand
is trembling too much.

JULIO SANCHEZ

Don't let your eyes leave the
blade. Ever. And you'll be okay.

Doctor #3 cuts deep into Jimbo's ribs but no matter
how slowly he cuts, the sharp edge of the scalpel
seems too close to his fingers. PULL BACK to reveal
they're doing the autopsy in a plastic tent using
negative pressure suction pumps. As the PUMPS WHIR...

CUT TO:

AUTOPSY TENT - LATER

BOSTON DOCTOR #3

Jesus -- the liver, spleen,
kidneys -- they've turned into
jelly.

CUT TO:

OPERATING ROOM NURSING STATION

JULIO SANCHEZ

(into phone)
It's as if they swallowed a bomb
and it went off inside them.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIO SANCHEZ (CONT'D)

I don't know if it's Motaba but it sure looks like what Gillespie described.

INTERCUT WITH:

ROBBY

at her kitchen table. Petrified. We see she's been working late: her laptop's on, papers are strewn about.

ROBBY

(into phone)

How many were exposed?

JULIO SANCHEZ

Too many. The medical staff didn't know what they were dealing with so they didn't take precautions. They're scared outa their minds.

Julio gazes through the glassed-in walls at the half-dozen pathology residents and nurses, peering at him with worried expressions. He spins around in his chair so he doesn't have to see them.

JULIO SANCHEZ

That's just the beginning. Patient zero -- this guy Jimbo Scott -- worked in an animal quarantine facility in San Jose, California. That's probably where he picked it up. Probably the whole place is infected by now and is gonna have to be nuked.

(beat)

It gets worse. Jimbo here takes a goddamn plane from Portland to Boston. The plane stopped in Chicago. Two hundred and eight people on the first leg, and Christ, something like two hundred and fifty on the second! If this guy was infectious, by now the whole country's been exposed. And Gillespie says there's no treatment for this mother, nothing to do but pronounce people dead. What are we supposed to do, Robby? Christ, what the hell are we supposed to do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBBY

(coolly)

Gillespie said Motaba only spreads by direct contact, that the disease isn't airborne. Was patient zero coughing?

Sanchez flips through Scott's medical record.

JULIO SANCHEZ

I don't see anything about his coughing.

ROBBY

Then the people on the plane are probably okay. But we're going to have to check every one of them out. Plus all the medical staff who worked on him and his girl friend. Plus all their recent contacts.

JULIO SANCHEZ

-- That's thousands of people --

ROBBY

-- I don't see a choice --

JULIO SANCHEZ

-- This whole hospital is buzzin' with rumors... it's gonna hit the press real soon. What are we gonna tell them?

ROBBY

That the C.D.C. is investigating the situation, but we do not feel there's reason for alarm. I know it's scary, Julio, but the truth is we don't know what it is yet.

JULIO SANCHEZ

Gillespie's the only one who can tell us.

Robby has mixed emotions: the last person she wants to involve is her ex-husband.

ROBBY

Send him everything by stat courier.

JULIO SANCHEZ

Got it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He hangs up. STAY WITH Robby: her mind racing. She punches in a speed-dial key. An operator answers:

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Center for Disease Control.

ROBBY
This is Dr. Keough. Put out a stage three alert.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Your password, Doctor?

ROBBY
Zebra, Apple, Charley, Kill.

CUT TO:

WAR ROOM OF C.D.C (23:00)

A wan Drew Reynolds enters this large, frenetic room crowded with doctors and staff man the phone banks and fax machines that take up an entire wall. Along another wall is a huge electronic map of the U.S. A red circle blinks on Boston. Reynolds knows that if Motaba Virus rips through America, he's scapegoat number one. He makes his way to --

Robby at the large desk in the middle of the room.

ROBBY
(into phone)
Great! Now get the list of all his friends in San Jose. I want to know every contact the last last five days.

She hangs up, turns to Lisa Aronson, on the phone at the next desk.

ROBBY
Paitent Zero didn't take a commercial plane to Portland. Presumably he went by car. Fax every emergency room in the Portland area a description of the disease. Then hit every hospital along every freeway from San Jose to Portland.

LISA ARONSON
Right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Drew Reynolds sits down at Robby's desk. Suddenly he looks much older.

DREW REYNOLDS
We don't even have confirmation.
This could all be for noth --

ROBBY
-- Worst first. My father never
made the same mistake twice.

Reynolds is humbled.

CUT TO:

INT. BONNEVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

Corinne stands at Henry's bedside. She's getting sick too: pale, sweating, starting to cough, but she's more worried about Henry, who's barely conscious.

DR. MASCELLI
Henry, we got it early, and you're
gonna make it. But I need you to fight.

Henry stares at him with blank eyes.

CORRINE
Fight, Henry. Fight hard.

The OVERHEAD PAGING SYSTEM GOES OFF.

PAGING OPERATOR (V.O.)
Dr. Mascelli, E.R. stat. Dr.
Mascelli, E.R. stat...

Dr. Mascelli rushes out.

CUT TO:

EMERGENCY ROOM

Two paramedics wheel in Tracy, the Movie Counter Sales-girl with the spiked haircut. Her father runs alongside.

TRACY'S FATHER
Doc, she got sick so fast. I
thought it was the flu, then she
fainted in the bathroom. She's
hot, Doc, so hot.

HOLD ON Dr. Mascelli's fear, then --

CUT TO:

E.R. HALLWAY - MASCELLI - MINUTES LATER

He's searching through a thick book on infectious diseases. Nurse Emma approaches, near tears:

EMMA

What's wrong with these people?

DR. MASCELLI

I don't know.

INTERCUT EMERGENCY ROOM - B.G.

We see a roomful of people waiting to check in, including Mrs. Logan (the black woman with purple hair) and her toddler. Suddenly the toddler starts coughing and coughing. His lips turn blue.

MRS. LOGAN

(screams)

My baby. My baby!

Dr. Mascelli throws down the book and rushes out, past --

The FAX MACHINE, spitting out a sheet of paper. The words at the top declare: "Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, Emergency Bulletin."

FADE UP the ROAR of a CHOPPER and --

CUT TO:

FT. DETRICK - HELIPORT (23:50)

As the BELL CHOPPER emblazoned with the Boston Police logo hits ground, Gillespie, Berman, Salt and Owi yank open the doors and pull out the two shiny aluminum coffins.

INT. GILLESPIE'S BL-4 LAB

The aluminum coffins containing Jimbo Scott and Alice still lie open. Gillespie, Berman, and Owi anxiously watch Salt slip a slide under the scope and peer through the eyepieces. A long beat. He moves carefully from one field to the next.

IZZY

C'mon, for chrissakes.

Salt shifts to another field, looks at it long and hard. Pulls his head back: hopelessness in his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. FORD'S OFFICE

A fuzzy, bright fluorescent glow FILLS the SCREEN. As the image comes INTO FOCUS, we see the ugly, large red circles of Motaba.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A shaken Bill Ford pulls back from his scope. He tries to project an air of calm:

FORD
P.C.R. tests are tricky. It's
easy to make a mistake --

GILLESPIE
-- Yeah, I followed your orders
instead of my gut.

He grabs the phone and punches in a long distance number.

GILLESPIE
I should've blasted our African
findings across every newspaper
in the country.
(into phone)
Robby.

INTERCUT C.D.C. WAR ROOM - ROBBY

One person after another sees her on the phone and realizes what this is about. Within seconds the room is silent. Drew Reynolds squeezes his tennis ball. Robby's shoulders sag with dismay.

ROBBY
(into phone)
You're sure?

Reynolds drops the ball. Around the room: shock; even though they all anticipated the positive result, nobody can quite believe it.

GILLESPIE
(into phone)
You need my help, Robby.

Robby, flustered, doesn't answer.

GILLESPIE
I know this virus, you don't.
I've worked this virus, you
haven't. How many people are
infected?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She's afraid to tell him.

GILLESPIE

How many?

ROBBY

We don't know. We've only got a whole emergency room full of people in Bonneville, Oregon, and we don't know what they've got.

GILLESPIE

(dismayed)

How could that many people get infected so fast?

ROBBY

We're not sure.

GILLESPIE

Robby, don't get anywhere near this thing.

Robby doesn't answer.

GILLESPIE

You've been in an office for years. You've forgotten what these things are like.

ROBBY

I worked with the A.I.D.S. virus.

GILLESPIE

That's level two, nothing! This is level four. Stay the fuck away, Robby.

ON ROBBY

She is scared.

BACK TO SCENE

GILLESPIE

Please, Robby. Stay away.

ROBBY

I need to be able to test a lot of people and quickly. I need the primer --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

Why has it always been so hard for you to admit that you need anything from me?

ROBBY

I don't have time to fight with you. I'll have a courier pick up the primer at 01:00.

She hangs up without giving him a chance to respond.

GILLESPIE

Robby!

Hands trembling, he hangs up the phone. Ford says nothing, but in his eyes -- pity.

GILLESPIE

Request permission to bring my team to Bonneville, Oregon, sir.

FORD

Request denied. Civilian infections are not within our mandate --

GILLESPIE

-- A Presidential order can override --

FORD

Let the C.D.C. do its job. If they need help, they know we're here.

GILLESPIE

The Goddamn fuse is lit! What're you gonna do? Wait for the bomb to go off?

FORD

We don't live in the African bush. We don't crap in our streets, we don't drink dirty well water filled with spit. The disease will be stopped.

GILLESPIE

Yeah? Today, maybe they've got a handful... By tomorrow they could have a hundred, and the day after that, a thousand. When the President and Congress ask why you didn't bring in one group, the only group in the entire world with experience in fighting this disease, what're you gonna say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD

You don't obey orders, Gillespie.
You're the last person I'd send.

GILLESPIE

I'm sending a letter to the Surgeon
General right now. I'm going to
create a paper trail. You will fry.

Gillespie storms out. Ford remains unruffled.

INT. GILLESPIE'S SMALL, CLUTTERED OFFICE

Gillespie bursts into the room and slams the door.

He grabs the glass PAPERWEIGHT off his desk and throws it
against the wall. It SHATTERS.

He stops. A moment of hesitation.

INT. FT. ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - CONTROL TOWER

SERGEANT MUCIA picks up the phone. The wall clock reads
midnight.

SERGEANT MUCIA

Fort Andrews. Air traffic control.
Sergeant Mucia.

INTERCUT MUCIA WITH GILLESPIE IN HIS OFFICE

GILLESPIE

Sergeant, this is Colonel Gillespie
at Fort Detrick. We're on code
red status for Bonneville, Oregon.
Time of departure 01:00.

SERGEANT MUCIA

That's not possible, sir.

GILLESPIE

Is that Mucia with a 'C' or an
'S'?

SERGEANT MUCIA

(nervous)
'C,' sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

Get it done, Sergeant. That's a direct order from General Ford.

SERGEANT MUCIA

Yes, sir.

CUT TO:

EXT. FT. ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE

Flood lights illuminate dozens of enlisted men rapidly wheeling equipment into the open hatch of the huge C5A standing on the tarmac.

Gillespie, Salt, and Berman approach the plane, Gillespie in the lead, the others two steps behind.

SALT

The C.D.C. asked us? That doesn't sound like them.

GILLESPIE

They're going to have to show the President they did everything possible.

There's a nervousness in Izzy's face, something we've seen before.

GILLESPIE

Get a bunch of paper pushers scared enough, they'll do anything.

CUT TO:

INT. FORD'S OFFICE

He punches the words "Bonneville, Oregon" into his computer. The computer answers: "Population: 1218. Portland Metropolitan Area: Population: 532,000." He punches another key. A TELEPHONE speed dial WHISTLES across the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. DUGWAY (UTAH) - NIGHT

A gila monster hunts for prey, its eye darting back and forth, its tongue twitching hungrily. It runs off, vanishing in the dry chaparral and desert that stretches for hundreds of miles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We're seemingly in the middle of nowhere until we find --

An electrified barbed-wire fence emblazoned with signs warning: "U.S. Military Property: Trespassing Strictly Prohibited."

Behind the fence stand rows of huge satellite scanners. Behind them are rows of duplexes. Inside one of the duplexes a light comes on.

INT. DUPLEX

McClintock grabs the PHONE RINGING by his bed.

INTERCUT FORD AND MCLINTOCK

FORD

The genie's out of the bottle in Bonneville, Oregon, Donny, and we've got to get him back in.

General McClintock looks dumb.

FORD

Cancel all leaves. Mobilize all personnel. I'm going to want wind conditions and transmission rates -- for all insects, animals, marine, and human vectors. If this virus is spreading, I want to know how fast and where.

He looks at his computer monitor, which projects a map of Western Oregon: the town of Bonneville is close to the Columbia River.

FORD

Bonneville's only five miles from the Columbia River and if this mother gets there, we're in big shit trouble.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. C5A

Flying in heavy weather.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: September 3, 02:30.

The Radioman turns to Gillespie, seated with Izzy and Salt in the back of the cockpit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RADIOMAN

We've got the Secretary of Defense on the radio. They had to wake him up.

Gillespie unstraps himself and takes hold of the microphone.

GILLESPIE

(into mike)

Tell him it is Colonel Mike Gillespie, Commander of the U.S. Army Motaba Virus Task Force.

INTERCUT WITH:

SMALL OAK-LINED STUDY (VIRGINIA)

where PHILLIP GOODELL, the Secretary of Defense, is dressed in his pajamas.

GOODELL

Give that to me one more time, Colonel.

GILLESPIE

We've got to quarantine the entire town of Bonneville and do it quick. Morning will be too late -- people will panic and try to leave. If even one infected person gets out, the entire effort could be for nothing.

GOODELL

Why can't the State Police do it?

GILLESPIE

They can shut down the major roads, but we need a much larger force to encircle the town.

GOODELL

Where would I get troops at this hour and have 'em in Bonneville, Oregon before sunrise?

GILLESPIE

Fort Lewis, Washington, or Ford Ord, California. Closer is better. Sir, this is a doomsday disease.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE (CONT'D)

As deadly as A.I.D.S., but it kills within days. It could spread over the entire country.

Goodell's wide awake now.

GOODELL

Does your commanding officer know about this?

GILLESPIE

Yes, sir, of course. He asked me to call you.

GOODELL

Colonel, all I can do is refer the matter to the National Security Council. An action of this scope would require the President's approval.

GILLESPIE

Then get it, sir. Right away, please.

They break radio contact. Salt looks at Gillespie with awe.

IZZY

If the C.D.C. asked us to help, why did you have to call the Defense Secretary? Why didn't General Ford make the call?

Gillespie shifts uncomfortably. Salt realizes he's in trouble.

IZZY

You bet your ass, Captain. Colonel Gillespie has taken it upon himself to circumvent the entire chain of command.

The plane bounces in the turbulence. Salt turns to Gillespie.

SALT

You're shitting me?... Sir?

GILLESPIE

I'll take full responsibility for whatever happens.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IZZY

That only means they'll hang you first.

GILLESPIE

Don't worry, the C.D.C. -- and the President -- will invite us to Bonneville.

(beat)

They'll invite Mary and Jesus too.

CUT BACK TO:

DEFENSE SECRETARY GOODELL'S OAK-LINED STUDY

GOODELL

(into phone)

I just got a disturbing call from one of your officers, General.

INTERCUT WITH:

FORD IN HIS OFFICE

sitting at his desk. As we hear Goodell go on, a look of anger builds on Ford's face.

GOODELL

I can tell the President we're looking at a situation you can contain with minimal loss of life, can't I?

FORD

Of course.

CUT TO:

GILLESPIE'S BL-4 LAB (02:30)

TRACK PAST the open aluminum caskets holding the remains of Jimbo and Alice to Owi working under a negative pressure hood. He removes a rack of test tubes, suddenly freezes.

Facing him are General Ford and four men dressed in BL-4 suits and carrying automatic weapons in plastic sheaths.

One soldier closes the caskets and starts moving them out. The others start unpacking the freezers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OWI

Are you crazy? Don't touch them.
Those are Level Four viruses.

The lead soldier raises his rifle at Owi.

FORD

Sergeant, I want every specimen of
Motaba Virus in this lab and this
time no 'mistakes.'

FADE UP COUNTRY MUSIC with a real twang like the JUDDS'
"Red Cadillac" and...

CUT TO:

RED PICKUP

with chrome wheels racing along a deserted country road
in the dark of night.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "BONNEVILLE, OREGON, TUESDAY --
05:00."

INT./EXT. PICKUP - NIGHT

TOMMY HULL, 28, a construction worker, sings along. The
windows of his pickup are wide open and the wind blows his
long hair straight back. There's an empty gun rack in the
back. He rounds a turn and BRAKES to a SCREECHING HALT.
The glare of flashing red and blue lights crosses his
face.

TOMMY

What the hell?

TOMMY'S POV - THREE HIGHWAY PATROLMEN

wearing gas masks and toting shotguns in their latex-
gloved hands, stand in front of their patrol cars whose
emergency lights flash off and on, creating an eerie
glow. Down the road, is a second checkpoint where the
patrol cars are facing the other way.

BACK TO SCENE

Tommy Hull climbs out. The HIGHWAY PATROLMAN raises his
shotgun and aims it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOMMY
What's goin' on?

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN #1
Stay inside your car.

Tommy Hull freezes.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN #1
Turn around, go home, and stay
there.

TOMMY
What's goin' on? Why are you
wearin' all that stuff?

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN #2
Go home and you'll be all right.
Move it.

Tommy Hull ain't gonna argue with three loads of buckshot. He STARTS his TRUCK, then stops and gapes, as rapidly approaching from the opposite way towards town is...

CONVOY OF THREE STATE POLICE CARS

They ZOOM by him. In the back seat of the lead car, we see Robby and Lisa Aronson.

CUT TO:

EXT. BONNEVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL (TUESDAY, 6:15 AM)

The convoy of police cars pull in the parking lot where local police, wearing respirators, hold back a crowd of about twenty people, the families of those who are sick inside.

Robby and Lisa and the state police officers climb out wearing their respirator/helmets and biosafety suits. The twenty people react as the realization sets in that whatever their loved ones have, it's awful.

Tracy's Father pushes forward.

TRACY'S FATHER
Nobody's tellin' us what's goin'
on.

Robby turns to the local POLICE CHIEF, Ray Fowler, a stringy, taciturn man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBBY

I'm Dr. Roberta Keough from the
C.D.C. I'm in charge.

POLICE CHIEF

I thought he was in charge.

She follows his gaze to the main entrance of the hospital. Standing at the top of the stairs, dressed in his bio-safety suit is...

MIKE GILLESPIE

Robby is shocked, but not shocked. She moves up the steps. He blocks her path.

GILLESPIE

I've got people inside. They can
do what needs to be done. Set up
your command post outside the
town, where you'll be safe.

She tries to go around him. He grabs her arm.

ROBBY

(quietly)
Let me do my job. Please. I know
what I'm doing.

A beat. He reluctantly lets go. She goes inside.

INT. HOSPITAL

Robby, followed by Mike, moves down the corridor.

ROBBY

On whose authority are you here,
Michael?

GILLESPIE

Want me to leave?

She doesn't answer. We hear only the RUSH of AIR in their SUITS, drowning out the horror we see as they pass room after room of Motaba patients, screaming and moaning in pain. They pass...

Izzy in a room with Henry, the lab tech. Lips blue, gasping for every breath, he fights against the ventilator. Streaks of blood line the wall. In the next bed is his girl friend, Corinne, comatose and near death.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A MOTHER'S cry of agony rips through the RUSH of AIR as Robby and Mike pass the room where Mrs. Logan is holding her dying toddler in her arms. Her body is covered with the fine red vesicular rash of end-stage Motaba. She pleads with Salt, standing there in a biosafety suit, completely helpless.

MOTHER

Save my baby... Please... Save my baby.

Robby exchanges a glance with Gillespie. She's devastated.

GILLESPIE

I tried to warn you.

But nothing he could have said could have prepared her for this. She moves on into...

SMALL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

crammed with ten patients on gurneys, all sick with end-stage Motaba.

Nurse Emma and Dr. Mascelli, in biosafety suits, pack Tracy, the movie-counter girl, in ice.

TRACY

(delirious with fever)

Daddy... Daddy! Where's my daddy?

Robby looks at Rudy, lying in the next cubicle, eyes completely yellow and lifeless, face and body covered in black-and-blue splotches. His chest rises and falls in short gasps.

GILLESPIE

Bonneville patient zero. He never regained consciousness so we don't know how he got infected.

Suddenly Tracy starts convulsing.

DR. MASCELLI

More Valium. Quick.

EMMA

We're out.

ROBBY

Where's the crash cart?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Nurse Emma nods to a Sears Roebuck-style tool cabinet in the corner.

Dr. Mascelli starts for it, but Gillespie's already there. He punches off the plastic lock, rips open a drawer and grabs a small box labeled Valium. He flips it to...

Robby, who in a second, pops it open, pulls out the syringe of Valium and shoots the yellow liquid into Tracy's IV. She stops seizing.

Dr. Mascelli and Nurse Emma are impressed.

ROBBY

Dr. Mascelli, we spoke on the phone, I'm Dr. Keough from the C.D.C.

One of the patients starts coughing. Gillespie and Robby are alarmed.

ROBBY

How many of your patients are coughing?

DR. MASCELLI

(indicating Rudy)
Except for him, all of them. Why?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MASCELLI'S OFFICE

And a grid map of Bonneville with cases of Motaba marked in red. They're spread out all over the town.

DR. MASCELLI

The common bond is the movie theatre.

GILLESPIE

This isn't the same virus --

ROBBY

-- It's mutated --

GILLESPIE

-- To an airborne form --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. MASCELLI

My God, if it's spreading through the air, person to person, by droplets, it's... it's the plague. Everybody in the town's gonna die.

GILLESPIE

They may not all be infected.

DR. MASCELLI

But they will be. And if one person gets out --

ROBBY

The quarantine has to be ironclad --

DR. MASCELLI

People are gonna get out over the mountains -- it will be impossible to stop them.

GILLESPIE

You're wrong.

FADE UP the ROAR of CHOPPERS. An OVERWHELMING DIM.

Dr. Macselli moves to the window, pulls back the shades. Can't believe his eyes.

In the distance, against the dawn half-light... the sky is filled with Sikorsky Blackhawk helicopters from the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force.

ROBBY

(astonished)

How...

GILLESPIE

... Don't ask.

CUT TO:

EXT. BONNEVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL (06:40)

A giant helicopter maneuvers a mobile BL-4 lab into the parking lot behind the hospital. Another chopper flies behind it, carrying a portable pre-fab hospital. Another sets down and begins disgorging combat troops wearing chem-warfare suits.

CUT TO:

SOLDIERS

dressed in chemical warfare gear and carrying M-16s ride in a Jeep through the center of the town.

The SOLDIER with a megaphone bellows at a group of townspeople gathered in front of a donut shop:

SOLDIER

Go home and stay there or you will
be placed under arrest.

The townspeople stare at these terrifying figures, then quickly disperse.

REVEAL the next street over, and the next. Soldiers blast out warnings.

CUT TO:

TOMMY HULL, HIS WIFE, DARLA, AND TWO KIDS (06:40)

barreling along a gravel road in their pickup.

In the hazy light, Tommy sees...

Two infantry men in chem-war gear move into position on the road and raise their guns toward the pickup.

Tommy does not slow down. His wife screams:

DARLA

They'll shoot us!!

TOMMY

They won't.

But he can't be certain.

The soldiers take aim.

Tommy brings the PICKUP to a SCREECHING stop, throwing up gravel on all sides. He whips the vehicle around and heads back toward town.

A Chinook HELICOPTER THUNDERS overhead.

Tommy scans the horizon for an escape.

TOMMY

I know one place they won't think
to go.

CUT TO:

RED PICKUP

bouncing along an overgrown creek bed, splashing water everywhere, careening into the big rocks which litter the creek bed. Suddenly --

A helicopter gunship emerges over the tree-tops.

DARLA

Stop!

But Tommy doesn't stop. The PICKUP keeps going -- SMASHING and BASHING its way up the creek. The GUNSHIP OPENS FIRE, shredding the tires. The PICKUP THUMPS to a halt. Inside, Darla and the children cry, Tommy is shaken. The helicopter hovers above them as the Hulls climb out and head back toward town.

CUT TO:

STATE POLICE CAR

coming to a fast stop at the highway checkpoint outside Bonneville as...

GUNFIRE RINGS OUT from the distance.

Inside, Mike and Robby react with alarm and climb out. CHOPPERS ROAR by overhead, create a DEAFENING BLAST. The line of cars trying to get out of town is a quarter mile long. They're held back by a...

Long line of infantrymen in chem-war gear who look like futuristic insects. This area will become the front lines of a war. Robby and Mike race by the soldiers...

To the command where LIEUTENANT COLONEL RONALD BRIGGS is on the radio, coordinating his units.

ROBBY

You're using rubber bullets,
aren't you?

Briggs salutes Gillespie. He speaks with a Georgia accent.

LT. COLONEL BRIGGS

No, ma'am. My orders are that no
one is to get out of this town.

ROBBY

You're operating under civilian
control in a civilian disaster.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A monster Chinook comes down, sending up a torrent of dust.

LT. COLONEL BRIGGS
No, ma'am, we're not.

He turns to...

The figure emerging from under the WHIRLING BLADES:
General Billy Ford.

Gillespie braces himself. Robby's surprised. Billy hands Robby a sealed document.

FORD
The Secretary of Defense and the President have made this a joint operation between the C.D.C. and the United States Army. I've been placed in command.

Ford goes straight over to Gillespie. Briggs intercepts him halfway there, salutes, and reports:

LT. COLONEL BRIGGS
Sir, since we established our perimeter at 06:20, nobody has penetrated our line. Before that, I can give no guarantees.

FORD
There are one thousand two hundred and eighteen people living in this town. I want every one of them accounted for by 09:00.

LT. COLONEL BRIGGS
Yes, sir.

He moves off. Ford and Gillespie square off.

FORD
You're under arrest. With Major Berman and Captain Salt --

ROBBY
-- He was right. We were wrong --

FORD
-- Stay out of it, Robby.
Gillespie, you violated a direct order --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

-- The virus is airborne.

FORD

Motaba is only spread by direct fluid contact.

GILLESPIE

Since it left Africa, it mutated.

FORD

That's crazy.

GILLESPIE

Go to the hospital and see for yourself. Leave your face bare.

Ford starts away from Gillespie.

ROBBY

You can't put him in jail. I need him. I need his whole team.

Ford thinks for a moment.

FORD

Very well. Colonel, you, Major Berman, Captain Salt... can help Dr. Keough for the duration of this crisis, but you cannot leave this town and as soon as we get this under control, you'll be taken into custody.

GILLESPIE

Major Berman and Captain Salt were following my orders -- I am the only one at fault.

FORD

We'll let the court martial decide that.

Suddenly Robby's walkie-talkie squawks:

LISA ARONSON (V.O.)

We got the host!

FADE UP the cacophony of SHRIEKING ANIMALS and --

CUT TO:

INT. RUDY'S PET SHOP

The brown rhesus sits in the back of his cage, staring at Biosafety suited doctors crowded around his cage. The other ANIMALS SCREECH with hunger.

LISA ARONSON

I found this note on the desk...

She holds a post-it with the words scribbled across it:
"Scott - Monkey - 8/31."

LISA ARONSON

This must be the monkey Scott brought up from Biotest.

SALT

And if he is the host, his blood will give us a treatment.

LISA ARONSON

He's so cute it's hard to believe he's caused such destruction.

IZZY

Hitler's girl friend used to say the same thing.

Ford stands in the back of the room, disinterested, as if he knows already the brown rhesus is going to lead nowhere. Robby peers into the rhesus's cage.

ROBBY

Why is he so quiet?

GILLESPIE

Monkeys get quiet when they get hungry...

FORD

... Or sick.

SMACH CUT TO:

INT. BIO-TEST ANIMAL QUARANTINE FACILITY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "BIOTEST ANIMAL QUARANTINE FACILITY
-- SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA"

McClintock hurries down the long aisle filled with monkey cages stacked two high on both sides. Keeping pace is FELDER, the president of Bio-Test.

FELDER

These animals are all healthy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

McClintock turns to a dozen biosafety-suited figures, each carrying a doctor's bag.

McCLINTOCK

Fan out.

They each go off in a separate direction, leaving McClintock and Felder opposite a cage of African Green monkeys. McClintock opens his black bag, takes out a strange looking pistol and feeds in a cartridge containing a turquoise-blue liquid (amobarbital).

McCLINTOCK

One of these animals may be the host of the worst virus the world has ever known.

Felder shudders. McClintock thunders into his walkie-talkie.

McCLINTOCK

Make sure the animals are completely tranquilized before specimens are drawn. Use all level four precautions.

Felder squirms as McClintock aims the pistol at the Green MONKEY, who grabs the bars of the cage and HISSES. As one GUN after ANOTHER GOES OFF --

SMASH CUT TO:

HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NEAR PORTABLE BL-4 LAB

ChemWar-suited infantrymen standing with M-16s held ready. Behind them is a pre-school with a yardful of toys now abandoned.

The infantrymen stare at the brown rhesus, held tightly in a "squeeze cage." Robby, Mike, Lisa, and Wally look on anxiously as Izzy approaches the monkey with a needle attached to a long syringe. The rhesus strains with every muscle to lash out. Izzy moves quickly, jabbing the needle into the monkey's thigh. He pushes the plunger. The rhesus suddenly jerks his arm.

ROBBY

Izzy!

NEEDLE HEADS FOR IZZY'S HAND (SLOW MOTION)

but he yanks it back just in time.

ON IZZY

trembling. A long beat.

BACK TO SCENE

The rhesus falls asleep. Izzy draws blood as a Jeep carrying Ford pulls up, followed by an Army truck. Soldiers empty the truck, piling up crates of plastic IV bags filled with brown fluid.

FORD

Filo-four antiserum. Antitoxin. Anyone with symptoms or positive blood tests will get it stat.

GILLESPIE

What for?

FORD

It kills twenty-five percent of filoviruses.

IZZY

Not Motaba. We tried it.

FORD

In the lab. People react differently.

Gillespie and Izzy exchange a skeptical glance: is Ford losing it, or what?

FORD

We have nothing to lose -- the disease is incurable.

ROBBY

General Ford is right.

FORD

Thank you.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) A school classroom, empty.
- B) A factory, empty.
- C) A supermarket, empty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D) The center of town --

Not a sign of life except for the Jeep carrying ChemWar troops bearing M-16s.

ROBBY (V.O.)
The Army will begin emergency food deliveries once a day...

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL ONE STORY HOUSE - KITCHEN

SHERRY listens to a RADIO with her three young children. She coughs and exchanges a worried look with her husband.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. LOCAL RADIO STATION - GLASSED-IN BROADCAST BOOTH - ROBBY AND MIKE

ROBBY
(into mike)
... If you have special needs, such as medicine you take, let them know and it'll be delivered to you. But please -- stay inside. Do not go out for any reason.

GILLESPIE
(into mike)
This disease looks like a regular flu in its early stages, but if you have flu symptoms, don't panic... It's probably just a normal virus and not Motaba.

INT. SHERRY'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

GILLESPIE (V.O.)
(on radio)
But the way to protect your family is to detect it early, before you spread it.

ON SHERRY

Terrified.

BACK TO SCENE

SHERRY'S HUSBAND

You don't have it, honey.

HER FOUR-YEAR-OLD SON

What do you have, Mommy?

SHERRY

Nothing. Mommy's fine.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTABA HOSPITAL WARD - SIMULTANEOUSLY

Ford walks through the Motaba ward, now overflowing with infected patients, some of them unconscious and some of them moaning. Their loved ones have not been allowed into this infected ward, so most of these people are alone and scared.

In Ford's eyes we see pain.

From a RADIO in the nursing station.

ROBBY (V.O.)

(on radio)

If you're feeling sick in any way, you should hang a pillowcase or other piece of cloth on your front door. Soldiers will take you somewhere safe for a test. You'll know the result within a few hours. If you're positive, you'll go into one of our isolation hospitals, so bring clothes and personal things you might need.

INT. TOMMY HULL'S SMALL HOUSE

Darla and her two kids gather 'round the radio. In the b.g. Tommy takes a swig of whiskey. He's still trembling from his encounter with the chopper.

TOMMY

Turn it off!

DARLA

No.

Tommy grabs the radio and throws it across the room, breaking it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOMMY

We don't have it, goddamn it. But
if we stay here, we'll get it.

DARLA

They're doctors. They know more
than you.

CUT BACK TO:

RADIO STATION BROADCAST BOOTH

ROBBY

(into mike)

I know you're scared. We're all
scared. But together we're going
to get through this.

CUT TO:

BONNEVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL

A room full of Motaba patients, all with antiserum running
through their IV's. Dr. Mascelli and Izzy listen to the
RADIO. Mascelli's eyes are blood-shot. He sneezes and
sniffles.

DOCTOR MASCELLI

And now I've got it too. I'm
going to die along with the rest
of them, aren't I?

The look in Izzy's eyes confirms Dr. Mascelli's worst
fear.

INT. SHERRY'S HOUSE

Sherry slowly opens the front door, puts a white pillow-
case over the door. Her kids run into her arms crying.

SHERRY

(hugging them)

I'll be back in a few hours. It's
like I'm goin' to work.

She wipes the tears from her eyes; she's trembling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHERRY

(to each kid in turn)
 Now, promise you won't fight.
 Promise you'll do what your
 father tells you.

They each promise - nodding "yes" in order from the oldest to the youngest. It's a very solemn moment as Sherry steps onto:

EXT. PORCH

She walks slowly down the small path, knowing this could be the last time she ever makes this walk, ever sees her family. She stops, wipes a tear off her cheek. She wants to look back so bad, to get one last look at her kids, but doesn't want them to see her scared. She climbs into the waiting Army Jeep.

Sherry waves as the Jeep pulls away. But she's sitting next to a soldier in full ChemWar gear, and this only amplifies the fear in her children's eyes.

The Jeep drives past other houses with pillowcases over the door.

SHOCK CUT TO:

SHERRY'S ARM

Her fist clinches as Lisa Aronson finishes drawing blood.

INT. TESTING TENT

Lisa carefully slips the test tube of blood into a plexi-glass case and locks it. As she exits the tent, we see:

TENT CITY

Tent after tent -- at least four hundred of them -- a tent city set up on the high school football field. Housing people in isolation who have had or are about to undergo the blood test. This is purgatory, where you wait for judgment.

CUT TO:

MOBILE BL-4 LAB

Izzy carefully withdraws a syringe of clear liquid from a rubber capped bottle labeled "DNA PRIMER." He mixes this into a blood sample from a test patient. At the bench, Robby is doing the same. Izzy looks under his scope. The field is filled with red circles.

IZZY

Positive.

He takes another tube of blood from a different patient. Looks under the scope.

IZZY

Positive.

Robby looks under her scope.

ROBBY

Positive.

IZZY

The whole fucking town's infected.

A sense of despair.

IZZY

Double check it! Triple check it.

CUT TO:

INT. SHERRY'S TENT

Sherry Templeton tries to come to terms with the fact she's positive.

SHERRY

Does this mean my children have it, too?

GILLESPIE

(shaken by her pain)

No...

But she sees he's not sure.

SHERRY

Oh my God.

CUT BACK TO:

BL-4 LAB - IZZY AND ROBBY

working. Izzy looking under the scope. Everything is purple.

IZZY

How can this be? Doctor Mascelli
can't be negative. I know he's
got it. Something's wrong.

CUT TO:

BL-4 LAB - LITTLE LATER

Izzy concentrates on Mascelli's blood test. His eyes
are bloodshot from fatigue.

EXTREME CLOSEUP - AIR HOSE COUPLING

at Izzy's side. The red umbilical cord connected to the
ceiling catches on the sink handle in the center island;
it slowly slips out of its coupling and drops. The sound
of RUSHING AIR suddenly STOPS.

BACK TO SCENE

... but Izzy doesn't hear it. He continues looking
through the scope. Suddenly, he spots the red umbilical
cord lying on the floor.

IZZY

No!

Robby grabs the cord and re-inserts it into Izzy's suit;
the RUSH OF AIR quickly fills the suit, but --

Izzy - panicked - runs out of the lab into:

FORMALDEHYDE SHOWER AREA

and blasts himself with formaldehyde. As the frothy
liquid bath pours over him:

CLOSE ON IZZY'S FACE

terrified: Did he breath in the virus?

CUT TO:

LOCKER ROOM - MINUTES LATER

ROBBY

It was only a few seconds, nothing got in.

IZZY

I know. I'm fine.

Silence.

ROBBY

I can finish the tests --

IZZY

-- I'm fine.

She nods, worried.

CUT TO:

HOSPITAL WARD - NIGHT

Ford checks Henry's (the Lab Tech's) pulse. Nothing. He looks at McClintock, staring at Henry's corpse into which the antiserum is still flowing. In the next bed, Corinne, Henry's girl friend, also lies dead.

McCLINTOCK

The Motaba antiserum doesn't work.

FORD

(devastated)

The virus has changed enough so that the antibodies can't recognize it. We've got to find the host, Donny.

McCLINTOCK

How? The San Jose animals were all negative.

(sharply)

For thirty years you've thought it was a breath away. And we looked, and tested and tested. And we couldn't find it.

(beat)

What good would it do anyway? The virus has mutated. The host would carry the antibodies against the African strain -- before it mutated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD

Nature is more generous than man, Donny... it creates more variability in the antibodies. If we find the host, its antibodies may be effective against the mutated strain.

McCLINTOCK

That's a guess. And there's no time, no cure. We have no choice but to implement the Emergency Containment Plan.

ON Ford's troubled reaction --

CUT TO:

BL-4 LAB - LATER THAT NIGHT

Gillespie, Robby, Lisa, and Izzy peer...

Into the Brown Rhesus's cage. The monkey looks dreadful: he's crouched in a fetal position and his nose drips puss.

SALT

He's dying of Motaba. His blood doesn't have any protective antibodies. Nothing.

Gloom and defeat sink over the room.

ROBBY

But where did this monkey get the disease?

LISA ARONSON

Christ, it could have been anywhere... Maybe he was on a boat from Africa, next to the host.

IZZY

Then there's no hope.

GILLESPIE

No. Unless Jimbo Scott had close contact with the host and that animal is somehow traceable. There's got to be something at Bio-Test.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBBY

Lisa, go back there. There's got to be something that was missed.

Lisa nods.

CUT TO:

BL-4 LAB - LATER

Salt looks plaintively at the Rhesus. He opens the refrigerator and takes out a bottle labeled morphine. He's about to close the fridge, but stops and stares...

Inside the refrigerator: a unit of antiserum just lying around. He looks at the antiserum, then at the monkey, sick in its cage.

CUT TO:

QUARANTINE PERIMETER - DAWN

The line of troops and tanks stretches for miles. HUEYS THUNDER overhead, keeping watch.

Behind the tanks are a swarm of figures wearing red BL-4 suits. They're moving cages filled with insects and animals toward a huge series of trailers.

INT. GENERAL FORD'S COMMAND CENTER - DAWN

The Command Center is buzzing with activity. Along one wall is an array of supercomputers all feeding data to...

The big board -- a computerized map of the Quarantine Area.

DR. FRANKLE, a Biowar Defense expert, an intense, bearded man of about 50 -- paces in front of the big board. As Frankle briefs Ford and McClintock, we literally see the epidemic spreading out from the center of Bonneville -- more and more terrain is colored red each time the big screen redraws. The red gets larger and larger, until it comes within three miles of the Columbia River, which cuts a big blue swath through the map.

FRANKLE

Mosquitoes are picking up this virus. An hour ago a squirrel with Motaba was trapped just three miles from the river.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD

(angry)
Increase the spraying, Goddamnit!

FRANKLE

The best stuff we've got won't kill every last one. Eventually one bug, one animal's going to get through to the river. Worst case is the virus penetrates the ecosystem. Then we can't stop it.

FORD

There's got to be a way to deal with it --

FRANKLE

-- The only similar case I know of is the Influenza Epidemic of 1918. It circled the globe in two weeks.

Silence.

McCLINTOCK

People can be asymptomatic, for weeks. The tests are faulty. We have to assume everyone in this town is infected and will get this disease sooner or later.

Silence. Finally:

FORD

I want the most rapid-acting nerve gas. Something so quick they'll never know what hit 'em.

INT. BIO-TEST MAIN OFFICE (SAN JOSE) - DAY

The office is a small, chaotic room filled with old filing cabinets and ancient PC's. The company President, Felder, and Lisa Aronson sit near a speakerphone.

LISA ARONSON

(into phone)
And I've been through all the files... No animal's been removed in the last fourteen days.

FELDER

If Jimbo Scott got an infected animal, he didn't get it here.

INTERCUT WITH:

SMALL OFFICE IN BACK OF BL-4 LAB

Gillespie, Robby, and Izzy are running out of options as they converse with Lisa Aronson in San Jose, California, on the speakerphone:

GILLESPIE

Could Jimbo Scott have deleted all traces of an animal stored at your facility?

FELDER (V.O.)

Don't be absurd, he was a good employee --

GILLESPIE

Mr. Felder, don't take this personally, but either you're a horrible judge of character or the world's in deep shit. Could Jimbo Scott have erased all records on an animal stored at your facility? Yes or no?

Felder hesitates.

Suddenly Gillespie's WALKIE-TALKIE BEEPS:

SALT (V.O.)

Colonel, come quick.

INT. BL-4 LAB

Robby, Mike and Izzy enter the animal lab and stop cold.

The brown rhesus is sitting up in his cage, weak but eating some lettuce.

SALT

He should be dead.

The last of the antiserum drips into the animal's arm.

SALT

I gave him the antiserum.

IZZY

It doesn't work on people. It shouldn't work on simians either.

SALT

So how come it worked on this one?

Gillespie's mind is racing:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

He was infected with the first strain, before it mutated.

IZZY

It still shouldn't work. This Korean Filo4 doesn't cross-react with the Motaba virus. We checked!

GILLESPIE

Maybe it's not Korean Filo4.

SALT

What else could it be?

Izzy leans against the wall; he's pale, feverish. The others pay no attention.

IZZY

I need some air.

He takes a step, then starts seizing, his whole body shaking in one convulsive wave after the next.

Gillespie, Robby and Wally rush over.

SALT

(checking his pulse)
He's slowin' down. He's gonna arrest.

GILLESPIE

Let's go. Now!

With extraordinary effort, he heaves Izzy over his back.

CUT TO:

CROWDED MOTABA WARD

Gillespie gently drops Izzy onto a hospital bed.

GILLESPIE

Ice, fluids, blood, oxygen...
Let's go!

Gillespie puts a probe in Berman's mouth, shudders when he sees the reading.

GILLESPIE

A hundred and eight. Ice... I want ice... I mean now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Wally runs in with ice, packs it around Berman's neck.

GILLESPIE

Open your eyes. Open your fuckin' eyes, Izzy. Nobody's lettin' you off so easy. Pressure?

ROBBY

Comin' up.

A long, long beat. Berman slowly opens his eyes. Gillespie smiles.

GILLESPIE

You were a hundred and eight. Not too long... but long enough...
(an evil grin)
You musta lost a billion brain cells.

IZZY

Now I'm only as smart as you.

Gillespie grins.

Berman tries to smile. His lip twitches... uncontrollably. His whole body seizes.

GILLESPIE

We need a line.

Robby flips Gillespie a catheter set. He looks for a vein. Robby and Wally try to keep Izzy flat while Gillespie works, but...

SLOW MOTION SHOT

Izzy's arm jerks free, pushing Mike's hand and the razor-sharp needle right at Mike's other hand.

ROBBY

Watch out!

She shoves Mike's hand out of the path, but the needle nicks her glove.

Mike and Wally are horrified.

GILLESPIE

Lemme see it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBBY
 (yanks her hand away)
 It didn't get past the outer glove.
 (to Wally)
 Hold him down.

Wally pins Izzy's arm down as Robby sticks in an IV and injects medicine. Izzy stops seizing.

CUT TO:

INT. SURGERY LOCKER ROOM

Robby, alone, peels back her triple-thick glove, and...

The second layer is cut, too! She rips off the second layer and...

The third layer is cut, too! She pulls it off to reveal:

Her finger -- we see just the tiniest thin line of crimson blood.

Terrified, she runs into...

SURGICAL SCRUB ROOM

and squeezes her finger, trying to expel any virus. She pours iodine into the tiny wound and frantically scrubs, as if her life depended on it. It does.

She turns at the sound of the DOOR OPENING. It's Gillespie.

GILLESPIE
 (anguished)
 You took the hit for me... Why?

Tears fill her eyes. Her mouth opens. She can't talk. Only a low moan of terror.

Gillespie cradles her head against his.

CUT TO:

PROP PLANE (07:45)

spraying over the forest outside Bonneville.

Huge wafts of smoke drift over the birch and pine forest like a thick fog.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hidden in the dense woods, Tommy Hull takes a slug of whisky and watches the plane. Between him and the plane are Armed Personnel carriers, their gas-masked personnel unaffected by the poison. Tommy coughs.

He stands up on the hood of an old blue van and screams at the troops.

TOMMY

That's right. Kill us all. C'mon!

They can't hear him or see him. He finishes the last of the bottle and climbs into...

HIS BEAT-UP VAN

We see on the floor a half dozen guns including a shotgun and an AK-47. He STARTS the ENGINE and ROARS off.

CUT TO:

PERIMETER CHECKPOINT (08:00)

CHECKPOINT GUARD #1

I'm sorry, Colonel. You can't proceed.

Gillespie's Jeep is blocked by THREE GUARDS armed with M-16s.

GILLESPIE

Get the hell out of my way. I'm going to see the General.

CHECKPOINT GUARD #1

Strict orders, sir. Anyone with direct patient care is contaminated.

GILLESPIE

That's a load of crap. Get him on the line, soldier. Now!

CHECKPOINT GUARD #1

(punches on the radio)

Checkpoint three to base. Colonel Gillespie to speak to General Ford.

Suddenly, Tommy Hull drives up and brakes to a stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHECKPOINT GUARD #2

Go home.

TOMMY

You go home.

Before Guard #2 can react, Hull raises his SHOTGUN and FIRES.

Gillespie dives under the dashboard of his Jeep.

The other Guards react. Too late. Tommy Hull pulls an AK-47 out from behind his seat and CHEWS them UP.

The RADIO BLASTS:

RADIO (V.O.)

Base to checkpoint three: what's goin' on?

Tommy Hull FIRES the SHOTGUN again, ANNIHILATING the RADIO. He ROARS ahead.

Gillespie races over to soldiers. They're dead. He looks at...

The van, racing toward the crest of the hill. Suddenly, from the other side of the hill:

Two Apache helicopters appear.

Hull sticks the AK-47 out the window and FIRES at the choppers.

They keep coming.

Red sparks erupt from their bellies. HELLFIRES.

The VAN EXPLODES into tiny pieces.

Gillespie GUNS the JEEP toward the wreckage.

A Jeep driven by General Ford comes over the hill and pulls up on...

OPPOSITE SIDE OF WRECKAGE

Ford and Gillespie both survey the charred remains of the van. Both are appalled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

You had the antiserum to the original African strain, you could've made it available right away. The virus would've never had a chance to mutate. You could have stopped this whole epidemic before it got started. Why?

Ford says nothing. He stares at the wreckage as if somehow he could find an answer there he himself believes.

GILLESPIE

Why?

Silence. Finally:

FORD

It's so strange... You look at these viruses under the electron microscope... They're like... like beautiful symmetrical crystals, so cold, so pure. You think you're looking at some fabulous piece of sculpture behind a museum wall... till you see the blood and people dying all around you. I stopped it once. I thought I could stop it again.

GILLESPIE

You ordered the attack on Iwabi's people in Africa?

Silence. Ford neither confirms nor denies the accusation. Then with sadness and remorse, Ford tells the truth:

FORD

We had to ensure that we had the only live samples of the virus.

GILLESPIE

Biowarfare research is illegal. We signed a treaty...

FORD

... What do you know about the real world, Gillespie? Even the air you breathe is artificial. Why do you think Saddam Hussein didn't kill our boys with his anthrax and his botulism and all the other crap he created in his labs? 'Cause he knew we had something worse --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

-- One mad man --

FORD

-- Every fucking dictator of the future's going to use biological weapons that you can manufacture cheap in a test tube with technology you can buy at the newsrack. Deterrence works.

Gillespie, horrified, steps away from his boss as he begins to understand the scope of the deception which he has been the victim of.

FORD

We spent years synthesizing an antibody that worked with the original African strain. We assumed it would work with this Bonneville strain. We gambled. We lost. We can't afford to lose again...

GILLESPIE

So you're going to wipe out this entire town -- kill everyone in it?

FORD

The virus is going to reach the river.

GILLESPIE

Take the people who are well and get them out!

FORD

If even one were sick, no matter where we were, the disease would start again.

Beat, Gillespie knows he's right.

GILLESPIE

Your only hope is to look for the host.

FORD

I did -- for thirty years.

GILLESPIE

Let me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD
You might be contaminated.

GILLESPIE
I know I'm not.

FORD
We have facilities to hold a few
people in quarantine. Get out
now. Take your team.

GILLESPIE
Izzy is sick, Robby infected.

Beat.

FORD
I'm sorry.

Beat.

GILLESPIE
Wipe out the town, wipe out Motaba.
And you're still the only one in
the world who's got the virus. No
matter what, your program's
secure.

FORD
That's not a consideration.

GILLESPIE
Bullshit!

CUT TO:

BL-4 LAB - OFFICE (09:10)

Pages spit out of the fax. As WALLY gathers them up, we
see the cover page:

INSERT - COVER PAGE

From: Lisa Aronson, M.D.
To: Colonel Gillespie, M.D.
RE: Biotest Animal Inventory

Mike -- Here is the list of every animal
imported by Biotest during the last six
months...

BACK TO SCENE

Salt looks outside, worried:

SALT'S POV

A Black Hawk helicopter takes off. Soldiers gather around a second Black Hawk and start to load their gear. The BioWar Defense Unit is pulling out of the town.

BACK TO SCENE

HOLD on Salt's face: scared.

Robby has as yet no sign of the fever. She and Gillespie pour over the fax from Lisa Aronson.

WALLY
Colonel, we gotta go now.

Beat. Mike and Robby exchange a glance, knowing this may be the last time they're together.

ROBBY
No goodbyes. It's bad luck.

ANOTHER ANGLE - ON GILLESPIE

desperately torn, not wanting to leave her.

ROBBY
I'm glad you were here.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL HELICOPTER LANDING AREA

Salt carries a decontamination unit on his back, Gillespie a cellular phone and a black duffel bag as they reach --

BLACK HAWK

Where soldiers finish loading under the watchful eye of SERGEANT MEYER.

SERGEANT MEYER
Atten-shun!

The soldiers salute Gillespie and Salt.

GILLESPIE
Sergeant, General Ford has ordered us to decon all aircraft before takeoff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SERGEANT MEYER

But we've been doing it at the base, sir.

GILLESPIE

Vector transmission is increasing and airborne contamination must be minimized. Pretty soon, Sergeant, even that suit won't protect you.

SERGEANT MEYER

(scared)

Yes, sir.

Salt takes hold of Sergeant Meyer's walkie-talkie. The Sergeant is puzzled by this but says nothing as Salt sprays it thoroughly with disinfectant before handing it back. He sprays the outside of the chopper, then moves inside.

SERGEANT MEYER

The pilot is inside, sir!

GILLESPIE

I'll get him out.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE CHOPPER - SECONDS LATER

Sergeant Meyer reacts as the big rotor blades start to turn. The chopper begins to rise:

SERGEANT MEYER

What the hell?

Sergeant Meyer reaches for his walkie-talkie, but it won't work. He slams it down.

INT. CHOPPER - FLYING OVER COMMAND CENTER

The pilot, WARRANT OFFICER DETERICH barks into his radio:

WARRANT OFFICER DETERICH

Den mother, this is Naked Zulu.
Going to decon.

RADIO (V.O.)

Roger, that, Naked Zulu.

PULL BACK to reveal Gillespie holding a gun against Deterich's head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

Nice and easy now.

The Black Hawk cruises over the camp, blending right in with half-a-dozen other choppers going in all directions.

CUT TO:

COMMAND CENTER - FORD'S OFFICE

Sergeant Meyer stands nervously at attention, trying to avoid the eyes of General McClintock, who's fit to be tied.

In a rapidly moving DOLLY SHOT, McClintock leaves Meyer and approaches General Ford, who is on the phone.

McCLINTOCK

Your Colonel Gillespie has commandeered one of our helicopters.

CLOSE ON FORD

Just the hint of astonishment. Then he regains his usual composure:

McCLINTOCK

Gillespie has become a vector of the disease. Mobilize all resources to find him.

CUT TO:

EXT. ISOLATED STRETCH OF OREGON COAST (10:00)

Warrant Officer Deterich, dressed in underwear, huddles against a huge rock. A pile of rations lie beside him.

GILLESPIE

There's food and water for two days. They'll find you by then.

Gillespie slips on Deterich's uniform, Salt pulls on Gillespie's.

GILLESPIE

You never expected to make Colonel this fast, did you, Salt?

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. BLACK HAWK

Hovering above Deterich. Salt opens the throttle; the CHOPPER ROARS down the coast and Deterich becomes nothing but a dot in a cove shut off by soaring cliffs on one side and the ocean on the other.

Salt keeps the chopper just feet above the whitecaps.

GILLESPIE

Not bad for somebody who hasn't flown in six years.

SALT

Seven. Want to see my loop-d-loop?

He pulls the wheel, brining the nose up to a high angle of attack.

Gillespie looks panicked. Salt levels out the chopper.

SALT

Just kidding, sir.

Gillespie studies the air map of the Pacific Ocean.

GILLESPIE

Cut inland at Klamath River and keep this mountain ridge between us and Oregon.

SALT

To San Jose, sir?

GILLESPIE

No. Ford will anticipate that.

SALT

Lisa Aronson sent us all the shipping records...

GILLESPIE

No, not all... Just the ones Biotest had.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND.

SUPERIMPOSE: KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON -- 10:10

TWO F-15 EAGLES

SCREAM down the runway and lift off. Within seconds, more follow.

EXT. ABOVE OREGON COASTAL FOREST

McClintock's Apache sweeps above the forest. The radar screen indicates a return. McClintock picks up the radio:

McCLINTOCK
Portland regional, please
identify transponder 2CAW442.
Over.

TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (V.O.)
That's another light plane, number
86221 Zebra, registered
Corvallis...

McClintock grimaces.

McCLINTOCK
Where the hell's that A.W.A.C.S.?

PILOT
Sir, they're comin' from Oklahoma.

The radio crackles:

F-15 PILOT (V.O.)
Got a low target sitting on the
coast. Going down for visual.

INTERCUT WITH:

INSIDE BLACK HAWK HELICOPTER

Where Salt sees a blip on the radar screen.

SALT
Problems.

He pushes the wheel down, and the camouflaged-painted chopper descends into a tight ravine between two rocks. The blades whirl inches from disaster. Gillespie holds his breath; so does Salt who tries to hold the Black Hawk motionless. We hear a SONIC BOOM. The F-15 streaks overhead.

Gillespie and Salt exchange a glance. Have they been seen or not?

F-15 PILOT (V.O.)
I've lost it. Possible bird
flock.

The plane turns inland. Gillespie and Salt breathe again.

INT. McCLINTOCK'S APACHE

McCLINTOCK

(into radio)

General, Gillespie could now be anywhere inside a thousand mile radius, and if he's landed, we got no way to track him.

INTERCUT the Command Center.

Ford is angry and frustrated.

FORD

You're Gillespie, you don't trust the C.D.C., you don't trust anybody... you'd want to look at all the data yourself.

Ford turns to an aide, Lieutenant Richardson:

FORD

Issue an all-points bulletin to every police department on the West Coast. Start with San Jose. Colonel Gillespie and Captain Salt are armed, and assumed to be contaminated until proven otherwise...

CUT TO:

FAX MACHINE

Photos of Gillespie and Salt roll into the reader, then --

CUT TO:

EXT. BIOTEST ANIMAL FACILITY (SAN JOSE)

It is pouring RAIN. At first, everything looks normal. Until we realize there aren't any people on the sidewalks. And no moving cars on the streets.

Snipers with .22 rifles and telescopic sights straddle the rooftops.

SMASH CUT TO:

FEDERAL BUILDING - MAIN OFFICE - DAY (12:05PM)

A long line of people wait for a single clerk; it's lunch hour.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gillespie storms in and goes right to the front of the line. The others glare. The clerk, ARMISTEAD, a 50-ish man with long grey hair tied in a pony tail, continues to help the lady in the front of the line.

GILLESPIE
(sharply)
Excuse me.

ARMISTEAD
Just a minute, soldier.

He continues helping the lady.

GILLESPIE
I am Warrant Officer Deterich of
the United States Army --

The NEXT PERSON in line reacts:

NEXT PERSON
Hey -- end of the line, asshole --

GILLESPIE
I just came from the site of the
virus epidemic in Oregon and you
will help me now!

Armistead's supervisor, MRS. PANAMIDES, comes out of her office as the other persons waiting in line, fearful of the dreaded Motaba Virus, edge away from Gillespie rapidly.

MRS. PANAMIDES
What do you need?

GILLESPIE
Bills of lading for all ships which
arrived from Africa during the last
six months.

MRS. PANAMIDES
What are you looking for?

GILLESPIE
An animal.

MRS. PANAMIDES
What kind of animal.

Beat.

GILLESPIE
I don't know.

CUT TO:

INT. RECORD ROOM

A shaggy, sloppily dressed COMPUTER JOCK types.

COMPUTER JOCK
Biotest is very methodical about
their paper work.

The printer spits out pages of animals. Gillespie cross-checks them against the fax pages from Lisa. They match perfectly.

COMPUTER JOCK
That's it. Sorry.

Gillespie leans back: In despair. Not sure what to do next.

A long beat. The Computer Jock walks over to the printer.

COMPUTER JOCK
Damn! Jammed again!

He hits a reset button. One more page prints out.

At the top of the page: An entry that Lisa's list doesn't have. Gillespie circles it in red.

GILLESPIE
That's it. The Apeldoorn, a Dutch
freighter. One monkey. But what
kind of monkey?

COMPUTER JOCK
There's no way to tell.

CUT TO:

GILLESPIE

climbing into the Black Hawk. The RAIN is much heavier now.

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK HAWK

as it rises off the rooftop of the Federal Building.

From this vantage, Gillespie and Salt can see a threatening rain storm sweeping in over the San Francisco Bay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

I tried to radio. All static.
'Cause of the storm.

SALT

So 'cause of the storm, you want
me to fly twenty miles through a
gale and hover while I drop you on
board a ship at sea?

GILLESPIE

Yes.

SALT

Sir, with all respect -- no fuckin'
chance.

Beat. Gillespie is dead serious.

GILLESPIE

The storm won't break 'til
tomorrow.

Salt is torn.

GILLESPIE

If you want, I could try to hover
and drop you on board.

SALT

No way.

CUT TO:

PACIFIC OCEAN

The chopper fighting the gale, trying to find the ship in
the storm. The sky is so dark it's like night. RAIN
POUNDS the windshield; the wipers can't keep up.

SALT

Colonel, I couldn't find my
umbrella in this rain.

Despair. A long beat. Then: In the distance through
the mist, a red light flashes.

CUT TO:

BLACK HAWK

hovering above the Apeldoorn, riding rough on twenty-
foot swells. The winds rock the chopper.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Wally fights to hold it steady.

SALT

Ready for drop.

GILLESPIE

Speak for yourself.

On the deck of the Apeldoorn: Four crewmen hold tight onto their lifelines and wait for --

Gillespie, who emerges from the belly of the chopper. He hangs tight onto the winch, which strains in the wind, thrusting Gillespie over the waves. One breaks on top of him.

A crewman grabs the line with a hook and reels Gillespie in.

SHOCK CUT TO:

FREEZER DOOR

opening. Gillespie isn't ready for this:

Frozen on a shelf, is Seaman Dieter Jans. Even under a layer of ice, the yellow skin, blood streaking from his nipples, and other signs of Motaba are all too clear.

GILLESPIE

How long has it been since the monkey was on the ship?

One of the seamen translates Gillespie's question to the CAPTAIN in Dutch. The Captain answers in halting English:

DUTCH CAPTAIN

How long? Six days.

GILLESPIE

When did Seaman Jans first get sick?

DUTCH CAPTAIN

Yesterday -- he is sick yesterday night. He is dead early this morning.

CLOSE ON GILLESPIE

alarmed. This is ominous information.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

Captain, your ship will have to be quarantined at sea. No one is to go near this freezer. Do you understand?

The Captain nods, overwhelmed by sudden fear.

GILLESPIE

Someone else must have seen the monkey --

The First Mate steps forward. As he begins to jabber in Dutch...

SHOCK CUT TO:

BLACK HAWK

racing back to shore. Gillespie's on the cellular PHONE. The storm fills the line with STATIC.

GILLESPIE

The monkey was small, black and white...

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: KINSHASA NATIONAL HOSPITAL, ZAIRE.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DR. IWABI

DR. IWABI

(into phone)

A colobos monkey. The highways have chased them deeper and deeper into the jungle. But there are still a few left.

GILLESPIE

Find as many as you can.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CDC WAR ROOM - DREW REYNOLDS

On the phone. Drew Reynolds listens with rapt attention.

GILLESPIE (V.O.)

(into phone)

-- But you have to help me --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REYNOLDS
 (into phone)
 -- I will do whatever they let me
 do...

GILLESPIE (V.O.)
 (desperately)
 If they implement the containment
 plan --

Reynolds is angry, flustered -- terrified his worst
 nightmare has come a reality.

REYNOLDS
 It's out of my hands!

GILLESPIE (V.O.)
 If we can find the host, we can
 obtain an effective antibody
 against the virus, and reproduce
 it. We can present them with a
 credible alternative...

Reynolds squeezes his tennis ball.

REYNOLDS
 My people have been doing
 everything humanly possible
 to help.

GILLESPIE (V.O.)
 Drew, Robby's infected.

Reynolds squeezes his tennis ball tighter.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: MOLALLA, OREGON - 14:45

EXT. PRE-SCHOOL

Four and five-year-olds play happily in a sandbox outside
 their pre-school which borders the Columbia National
 Forest. Their teacher, MRS. JEFFRIES, carefully watches
 over them.

Betsy hides behind a nearby tree. She's hungry and can't
 take her eyes off the half-eaten sandwiches lying in the
 kids' snack boxes.

Sean is distracted by a glimpse of Betsy and spills his
 juice all over Geneva.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GENEVA

You dodohead.

(breaking
into tears)

Mrs. Jeffries, look what Sean
did.

SEAN

I didn't... mean to!

MRS. JEFFRIES

(taking her by
the hand)

We'll clean you up right away.

(heads inside)

The rest of you come in, too.

All the children follow her except Sean, pouting. Betsy runs up and starts gobbling a sandwich. Sean stares at the monkey, then moves toward her:

SEAN

Hey, that's mine!

BETSY HISSES. Sean, scared, runs.

INSIDE

SEAN

A monkey stole my sandwich.

He points to the sandbox but there's no trace of Betsy. Mrs. Jeffries kneels.

MRS. JEFFRIES

There are no monkeys in this
forest, Sean. It's okay.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMAND CENTER (14:55)

Dr. Frankle paces nervously.

DR. FRANKLE

The storm's blowin' up the coast
faster than we thought. That's a
problem. The wind's going to
hasten vector transmission and
the rain's going to absorb the
gas.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. FRANKLE (CONT'D)
 Jesus Christ, Colonel, you'd have
 to hit the town two, three times
 to be sure you got everybody.

The thought of this troubles Ford deeply.

FORD
 What time's that storm going to
 hit?

Frankle wavers.

FORD
 Goddamnit, you got every computer
 in the world here, what time's it
 comin'?

DR. FRANKLE
 Any time before dawn you should be
 okay.

FORD
 Then we go at midnight.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA - 17:00

EXT. HELIPAD

In the pouring RAIN, the Black Hawk carrying Gillespie
 and Salt lands on the helipad next to the television
 station: WNER.

ON NEWSROOM SOUNDSTAGE

The ANCHORMAN looks grim:

ANCHORMAN
 The governor of Oregon this
 morning extended the evacuation
 zone another five miles.

INT. STATION LOBBY

The security guard watches the NEWSCAST: The governor of
 Oregon is giving a press conference.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOVERNOR (V.O.)

(on T.V.)

General Ford and the Army physicians have assured me there is no threat of spread of this disease at the present time. This is strictly a precautionary measure...

REPORTER FROM FLOOR (V.O.)

(on T.V.)

Why have all communications in and out of Bonneville been cut off?

GOVERNOR (V.O.)

(on T.V.)

There is apparently some kind of computer malfunction in that area...

The guard suddenly freezes.

Salt and Gillespie burst inside holding M-16s.

INSIDE NEWSROOM

ANCHORMAN

In a related story, the Army has released the names of two men who escaped from Bonneville and are infected with this virus.

The pictures of Gillespie and Salt fill the screen. Suddenly there's a RUCKUS O.S. and the Anchorman gasps as the security guard, hands held high, moves toward the news desk.

SALT

Nobody move!

Gillespie sits down beside the Anchor. He shrinks back as Gillespie leans over, grabs his lapel mike and pins it on himself.

GILLESPIE

I am not infected.

One of the two cameramen backs away from his camera and bolts toward the door. Salt points the gun at him, but doesn't pull the trigger. More and more people stampede out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT
Shake it, Colonel!

Gillespie talks into the camera with the red light on.

GILLESPIE
We need help to find the animal carrying the Motaba Virus. It is a small black and white monkey and it was brought to Northern California or Oregon within the last two weeks. If you have any information about this monkey, please call this number at the C.D.C. in Atlanta.

He holds up a crude sign with the numbers "1-800-888-0000."

GILLESPIE
Many people are going to die. This is their only chance. Please... Help us...

Gillespie bolts up. He and Salt run out of the newsroom.

FADE UP POLICE SIRENS and --

CUT TO:

EXT. STATION - HALF-A-DOZEN POLICE CARS

pull up to the station, but --

The Black Hawk is half a mile away, running full-throttle.

The OFFICER in the lead car grabs his radio.

OFFICER
(into radio)
Suspects heading northwest...

CUT TO:

INT. COMMAND CENTER - FORD'S OFFICE

Ford and McClintock watch Bernard Shaw on CNN. Behind them we see the computerized map of the quarantine area. The red perimeter is within one mile of the Columbia River. The clock reads: 17:12.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BERNARD SHAW (V.O.)

(on T.V)

Colonel Gillespie's action --
commandeering this news room at a
California television station in
order to get his message out --
raises troubling questions about
what is really going on inside the
quarantine area.

McCLINTOCK

Great, now we've got the whole
fucking world watching. You
should've locked him up when we
got here. People'll be calling
Washington... The President won't
be able to make up his mind, and
the whole fucking planet will go.

Outside, it's starting to SPRINKLE.

CUT TO:

PRE-SCHOOL CLASSROOM (MOLALLA, OREGON)

Empty except for Mrs. Jeffries who's cleaning up. A pile
of paintings. One is of an enormous black and white
monkey towering menacingly over a little stick figure.
Mrs. Jeffries smiles.

INT. PRE-SCHOOL OFFICE (17:45)

Other staff idly watching the NEWS. Mrs. Jeffries enters
and grabs a cup of coffee.

On TV, we see the face of Mike Gillespie, and we hear
the tail end of his plea:

GILLESPIE (V.O.)

(on T.V.)

If you have any information about
this monkey, please call...

HOLD ON Mrs. Jeffries' face.

SMASH CUT TO:

BLACK HAWK (POURING RAIN) (18:50)

flying low over the redwoods of Northern California.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gillespie clicks off the phone. Salt is dumbfounded:

SALT

I'm gonna fly into the heaviest radar surveillance on Earth on account of something that might have been seen by a toddler?

GILLESPIE

We know that Jimbo Scott took an animal up to Bonneville to sell. This place, Molalla, would be right on the way to the airport.

Gillespie studies the map.

GILLESPIE

To get back up there we're gonna haveta fly through everything the Air Force has got. Are you feelin' lucky, Captain?

SALT

Luck ain't gonna be enough.

Salt pushes the wheel down, until the Black Hawk is just a few feet above the tall redwood trees. He veers to avoid --

A particularly tall redwood -- and misses it by inches, whacking off a few of its upper branches with the rotor blades.

SALT

'Course -- a little luck won't hurt us any.

He and Gillespie exchange a tense, worried glance. That was close.

As the chopper skims low over the redwoods --

CUT TO:

AWACS PLANE (AT 10,000 FEET)

cruising high above the clouds which now blanket the terrain below.

INT. AWACS PLANE

Inside, the RADAR OPERATORS scan. They're pissed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RADAR OPERATOR
Where the hell did it go?

CUT TO:

BLACK HAWK (DIRECTLY BELOW ON INTERSTATE 5)

flies just thirty feet above the freeway, at the same speed as the traffic. The Black Hawk's RADAR DETECTOR SQUAWKS each time the AWACS radar scans it, every two seconds.

INSIDE BLACK HAWK

Salt flies anxiously. One moment of inattention could bring the Black Hawk down on top of one of the cars on the freeway.

SALT
It moves like a truck, it reflects
radar like a truck, but guess what?
It ain't a truck.

ON INTERSTATE BELOW BLACK HAWK

An IRATE DRIVER is watching Salt and yelling into his cellular phone:

IRATE DRIVER
That's right, Sheriff -- flying
too Goddamn low --

INT. COMMAND CENTER (19:05)

Ford hangs up the phone.

FORD
We got him!

McClintock smiles, grabs his flight helmet and races --

EXT. COMMAND CENTER

His squadron of Apaches takes off. A FAX MACHINE WHINES O.S.

INT. COMMAND CENTER

Ford scans the fax.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The other officers in the room grow silent as they see his face grow grim and serious.

FORD

Gentlemen, I have in my hand the final authorization to proceed, signed by the President. I know that each of us has doubts about what we are about to do. It is only human to have doubts when you are commanded to take the lives of other human beings. Remember your wives, remember your children... they will all get the disease and die if we let fear govern our hearts. We are doing what is right, and what the nation requires of us.

PAN ACROSS the grim faces.

FORD

I expect each man to do his duty. I know you won't fail.

CUT TO:

BLACK HAWK (19:20)

Gillespie standing beside the open door aiming an infrared heat-sensing device down at the forest which is so thick with trees you can only rarely catch glimpses of the forest floor.

ON COMPUTER MONITOR

Swirls of colors -- like gases moving on the surface of the sun -- diffuse across the screen. Gradually, we see that one bright red band is moving faster than the others.

SALT (O.S.)

The monkey!

GILLESPIE (O.S.)

No, it's moving too fast.

FOREST BELOW

A deer scurries across a clearing.

ANOTHER ANGLE

DISCOVER Betsy: Only a few hundred feet away from the deer. Afraid of man and his loud machines, she runs deeper into the forest, hiding herself under the branches of trees.

GILLESPIE

picks up another swirl of red on the infra-red sensing device. He points to it.

GILLESPIE

Circle in.

ANOTHER ANGLE

OPEN WIDE to show the chopper moving in a tight circle.

BETSY

hearing the ROAR of the CHOPPER LOUDER AND LOUDER, scurries up a tree and tries to hide.

GILLESPIE

stares at the monitor. A faint red band appears in the corner of the screen, then disappears.

GILLESPIE

Starboard!

The chopper veers to the right and the red band glows brighter and brighter.

GILLESPIE

Lock!

The chopper hovers, then starts to descend straight down. Gillespie looks through binoculars at:

GILLESPIE'S POV

Nothing but trees... trees... more trees... Stop! A patch of black and white. A pair of frightened eyes.

Betsy hisses at the terrifying monster.

BACK TO SCENE

SALT

Drive her down! She falls from
that height, she'll bleed out.

Gillespie jams cartridges containing turquoise liquid
into the M-16. He FIRES. The bullets land above Betsy.
She jumps onto a lower branch. The bullets keep coming.
She jumps onto:

ON GROUND

Gillespie FIRES. Misses. The blue liquid splatters
against a tree trunk.

BETSY

caught in the open, darts toward a thick patch of trees --
safety. She's only a step away.

GILLESPIE

FIRES again.

ANGLE ON BETSY - SLOW MOTION SHOT

Betsy's hit. She spins, grabbing her arm in pain, then
gets up. Tries to make it to the next tree. Goes down
on one knee. Then the other. She reaches out. Cries
for freedom. Then collapses.

As Gillespie lowers himself out the door --

CUT TO:

HORIZON

The Apaches approaching fast.

INT. CHOPPER

Gillespie stows Betsy in the back. Salt sees the
glistening lights of the Apaches.

GILLESPIE

Up! Fast!

Salt yanks the wheel back. The Black Hawk starts
climbing.

The Apaches quickly surround it. INTERCUT:

COMMAND CENTER - LEAD APACHE

on a radar screen, Ford can see Gillespie's chopper and the Apaches. He and Gillespie and McClintock converse through their radios:

FORD
Give me the monkey, Mike.

The Black Hawk climbs higher and higher, through the thick layer of clouds, now absolutely black in the darkness of the night.

GILLESPIE
If the antibodies work, we'd have a way to stop the epidemic by medical means --

FORD
-- We have no way to produce them in quantity --

GILLESPIE
-- Dr. Iwabi --

FORD
There's no time for that now.

In the lead Apache, snipers lean out the window. Their telescopic sights lock on Gillespie and Salt.

McCLINTOCK
Give me an order to fire, sir. We don't need the monkey.

GILLESPIE
You do. Because if you fail to contain the virus, you're going to be racing to synthesize an antiserum. How long did it take you to do the last one? A year? Two years? Five?

Ford's torn.

GILLESPIE
If the monkey's antibody is effective, you could use it as a template. Maybe you could save Europe.

Ford hesitates.

McCLINTOCK
Sir, let me --

The Black Hawk blasts through the cloud cover and emerges:

ABOVE CLOUDS - NIGHT

A full moon illuminates the Black Hawk.

The Apaches burst through the clouds, too.

INT. BLACK HAWK

GILLESPIE

Fire away! Nothing's going to survive the crash.

ANGLE ON FORD

a long beat. Gillespie's got him.

FORD

You've got until midnight, Mike.

CUT TO:

FOREST SURROUNDING TOWN

The forest looks dark and primeval in the damp night. The sounds of BIRD CALLS and CRICKETS CHIRPING can be heard in the background. This is what a biological meltdown looks like -- nothing at all. Then suddenly a deer drops to its knees, stricken with the Motaba Virus. It struggles to rise, but fails. The deer keels over, barely breathing.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE QUARANTINE PERIMETER - STAGING AREA

Large canisters of deadly nerve gas are loaded onto Chinook helicopters. The canisters are clearly marked with the skull-and-crossbones for "poison" and big red "CAUTION!" labels.

CUT TO:

HOSPITAL HELIPORT - BLACK HAWK

settling down.

CUT TO:

HOSPITAL LAB

Tubes run from Betsy to a blood separator as Salt works feverishly to separate the antibodies out. As the centrifuge spins faster and faster --

CUT TO:

HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - GILLESPIE

moving rapidly past the patients 'til he gets to:

IZZY'S ROOM

Gillespie's alarmed. Izzy looks terrible, his voice a whisper:

IZZY BERMAN

Mike... I know you never liked my name.

GILLESPIE

What?

IZZY BERMAN

My nickname -- Izzy. You never really liked it.

GILLESPIE

I like it all right.

IZZY

(smiles)

It's okay, 'cause from now on you can call me Hurricane.

GILLESPIE

(smiles)

I like it.

IZZY

Good, 'cause I'm giving you a new name, too. Guess what it is?

Izzy's lips go dusky, his breathing only short gasps.

GILLESPIE

Tell me.

IZZY

Guess.

Gillespie's voice breaks:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILLESPIE

I can't.

Izzy's dead. Tears stream down Gillespie's cheeks.

CUT TO:

ROBBY'S ROOM

She's lying in a bed, her face flush with fever, her skin covered with the rash. She's just barely conscious enough to see him at the door, watching her.

ROBBY

I'm scared. So scared.

He comes toward her.

ROBBY

No false hope. No games.

GILLESPIE

You can't give up.

ROBBY

Just be with me.

He cups her hands in his gloved hand.

ROBBY

How's Izzy?

GILLESPIE

He's gonna be okay. You're both going to be okay.

Her eyes start to close. Gillespie, horrified, shakes her:

GILLESPIE

Stay with me! Fight!

She half opens her eyes, her voice a murmur.

ROBBY

Hold... me.

He puts his arms around her. Screams into helmet radio:

GILLESPIE

Salt, where the hell are you?
Salt, answer me!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

No response. A long beat. Then Gillespie... with more tenderness than we've ever seen:

GILLESPIE

Remember the first time we made love? In France. Behind the haystack. And we were so worried that the little boy on the bicycle might see us.

She smiles, remembering.

GILLESPIE

I never felt anything except with you, Robby. I was so stupid to let it slip away.

She closes her eyes. A cry of anguish:

GILLESPIE

Salt!

Beat. Then Salt appears in the doorway holding a large plastic bag of Betsy's antiserum.

Gillespie connects it to Robby's IV and the brown fluid flows into Robby. Gillespie sits down beside her. A long beat. Then he does:

Something crazy. He removes the glove from his biosafety suit so that his own bare hand can touch Robby's skin. He touches her face gently.

HOLD ON Gillespie, sitting beside his wife's bed, holding her hand.

EXT. QUARANTINE PERIMETER - NIGHT

Massive Chinook HELICOPTERS RUMBLE over the staging area, loaded down by the weight of the nerve gas they carry in their bellies and the spray rigs which protrude on both sides of the fuselage.

CUT TO:

ROBBY'S ROOM

The wall clock declares 11:30. Robby's still comatose.

GILLESPIE

I was wrong. The antiserum doesn't work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Salt shares his despair.

A long beat. Gillespie hands Salt a paper.

GILLESPIE

Take this. A signed declaration by me that at all times you were following my orders -- Now get out of here.

SALT

-- No, sir.

Gillespie's moved:

GILLESPIE

You'll be the only person left alive who knows the truth --

SALT

-- But, sir --

GILLESPIE

-- You will leave! You will not disobey an order.

SALT

(very emotionally)
Yes, sir.

MONTAGE - EXT. COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT (23:45)

- A) In the pouring RAIN, Ford surveys the vast machine he's assembled:
- B) Soldiers in Chemwar gear pile boxes of body bags into trucks.
- C) Tractor drivers REV their ENGINES and THUNDER forward to the front line of Chinooks carrying the poison gas.
- D) Corpsmen check their watches and flash their signal lights.
- E) The CHINOOKS THUNDER into the air.

FORD

All the parts move with such precision he should be proud. But he's deeply troubled. He moves:

INT. COMMAND CENTER

BUZZING with activity. Dr. Frankle and McClintock stand beside the computerized map of the quarantine area which shows the red perimeter is within a half mile of the Columbia River. The clock reads 23:47. The RADIO CRACKLES with a Louisiana drawl from the Squadron Commander of the nerve gas team; we'll know him as Sandman One.

SANDMAN ONE (V.O.)
 General, we got a problem. It's
 rainin' pitchforks up heah. The
 damn rain will dilute it down,
 barely be strong enough to kill a
 cat.

Frankle's troubled too:

DR. FRANKLE
 He's right.

Ford agonizes.

FORD
 To implement the plan and to kill
 only a portion of the population...
 That would cause great harm and
 solve nothing.

McCLINTOCK
 Sir!! The nerve gas rapidly loses
 its potency after it's mixed. The
 choppers have got enough to make
 two runs. The virus is a quarter
 mile from the river. You've got
 to go forward.

Ford wavers. He grabs the radio mike:

FORD
 Stand down!! Return your squadron
 to base and stand down until you
 receive further orders.

SANDMAN ONE (V.O.)
 Acknowledge. Return to base.

Ford moves into:

HIS PRIVATE OFFICE

a highly secure area, sound-proofed for top-secret communications. McClintock follows him in and slams the door shut. They're completely alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

McCLINTOCK

How are you going to stop the virus from reaching the river?

FORD

Napalm everything from the town outward.

McCLINTOCK

In the rain, the napalm will burn unevenly.

FORD

I'll take that chance.

McCLINTOCK

The virus will escape and we'll have to use nuclear weapons to sterilize the area.

FORD

I gave you my orders.

Beat. Then quietly:

McCLINTOCK

Let's say the antiserum did work, General. You'd bus out the people, move 'em somewhere, and treat 'em. And with luck some of them would live. But it's not going to work and in the meantime you don't understand what you've done.

FORD

I understand perfectly.

McCLINTOCK

No, you don't. We can't fool the media forever. They'll ask questions... there'll be inquiries... What we did was important. What we did was right, sir.

A long beat. Ford knows he's ruined either way he turns.

McClintock's despair is deep and profound.

Ford feels sorry for him, but:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD

I'm sorry, but my decision stands.
If there is any hope of avoiding
this horrible contingency, I've
got to...

McClintock has slowly drawn his belt out of his trousers. He quickly throws it around Ford's neck, crosses it, and pulls violently on the two ends. Ford kicks and struggles, but he's no match for McClintock's strength.

McCLINTOCK

I am relieving you of command on
the basis of cowardice in the face
of a national emergency.

Ford's dead. McClintock lays him out on the floor. Opens the door and screams into the main room.

McCLINTOCK

Help!

He starts doing CPR as aides rush in.

McCLINTOCK

Call the medics quickly. The
General's had a heart attack.

One aide grabs the phone and calls the medics. Two more take over CPR. McClintock straightens his shirt and moves back into:

INT. MAIN ROOM

McCLINTOCK

I am assuming command under the
authority of the Secretary of
Defense.

PAN AROUND the room: Faces of uncertainty and fear.
McClintock grabs the radio mike:

McCLINTOCK

Sandman One, this is General
McClintock. You are to proceed
with nerve gas dispersal. You
will make two runs.

INT. LEAD CHOPPER - ON SANDMAN ONE

He shares a look of concern with his co-pilot.

BACK TO COMMAND CENTER

A long beat. Then:

SANDMAN ONE (V.O.)
Yes, sir.

CUT TO:

EXT. COMMAND CENTER

Salt drives up in a Jeep. Immediately he's surrounded by MP's, and taken into custody.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. ROBBY'S ROOM

Gillespie stares out the window at the rain. Just visible in the distance: The blue and red lights of the approaching Chinooks.

He moves back toward Robby, still comatose. The bag of Betsy's antiserum is empty.

He reaches for Robby's hand. Her finger twitches. Beat. Her eyes open.

CUT TO:

NURSING STATION

Gillespie grabs one phone. The line's dead. He grabs another. Dead. He throws it aside. Races to the window. The choppers' lights burn brighter.

GILLESPIE
Stop!

But nobody's listening. He runs down the hall screaming.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMAND CENTER

SANDMAN ONE (V.O.)
General McClintock, we are ready to commence phase one.

McCLINTOCK
Proceed.

CLOSE ON YOUNG MAJOR

agonizing. He leaves his post.

YOUNG MAJOR
Sir, General Ford ordered --

McCLINTOCK
Sit down, Major, or I will have
you arrested.

The Young Major hesitates. McClintock draws his pistol.

Salt enters, escorted by two MP's. The MP's survey the situation, with the General facing off against a young Major. What the hell is going on?

EXT. HOSPITAL HELIPORT - GILLESPIE

paces for the Black Hawk. Throws the door open and grabs the RADIO. A beat, then it FLICKERS to life.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. COMMAND CENTER

Gillespie's voice rings out over the radio:

GILLESPIE (V.O.)
Stop! The antiserum works.

McCLINTOCK
Turn it off!

The radioman hesitates.

INTERCUT Sandman One in his chopper.

GILLESPIE (V.O.)
This is Colonel Gillespie. And I'm
ordering you... begging you... to
stop. We can save these people.

McClintock punches off the radio.

ON FACES OF OFFICERS

in the room, wavering.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALT

You do this, every night for the rest of your life you will wake up screaming.

INTERCUT Sandman One. A long beat.

SANDMAN ONE

This is Sandman One... we are returning to base.

McCLINTOCK

(into radio)

You will be shot for dereliction of duty in a national crisis. Do you understand?

Sandman One doesn't answer. McClintock turns to the Young Major.

McCLINTOCK

Order him to proceed.

The Young Major hesitates. McClintock points the gun at his head. The Young Major trembles, but shakes his head "no."

SALT

No!

McClintock turns the gun to Salt.

YOUNG MAJOR

No, sir... Please.

McCLINTOCK

I cannot allow a catastrophe to occur --

He puts the PISTOL into his own mouth and PULLS the TRIGGER.

Dead silence. Then:

SALT

(to the Young Major)

As the ranking officer, you are in command...

(punching on the radio)

Until --

AT BLACK HAWK

Gillespie has heard this entire action on the radio.

SALT (V.O.)
Colonel Gillespie gets here.

Gillespie pulls his coat up over his head to shield himself from the driving RAIN and begins to run toward the quarantine perimeter.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BONNEVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT (03:00)

The rain has stopped, as if for a brief moment man's battle with nature has been suspended. Buses loaded with the townspeople of Bonneville pass by. We recognize the Police Chief, Tommy Hulls' wife and children, Sherry Templeton's kids. All the windows and doors of the buses have been sealed with tape.

TRACK PAST Betsy being loaded into the back of a van TO:

GILLESPIE

pushing Robby on her gurney into an Army truck. He seals the back tight with tape. Then climbs inside:

CAB

Salt turns the key and the ENGINE ROARS to life.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLUMBIA RIVER - NIGHT (03:10)

Eerie silence. A PLANE CRUISES over the forest on the Bonneville side. A waxy grey cloud fills the air. One second. Two seconds. The forest erupts in a wall of fire.

CUT BACK TO:

CONVOY OF TRUCKS AND BUSES

heading out of town. The fire burns in the b.g.

As the end of the convoy leaves the town, PLANES ROAR by.

As they drop a waxy grey cloud over the town of Bonneville --

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A C-5A transport gliding to a landing on a runway carved out of the desert.

Waiting anxiously for the plane to disembark:

Wally, Mike, and Robby, in a wheelchair. They move forward to greet the small African man who emerges from the plane. Dr. Iwabi smiles and quickens his pace.

The cargo hold doors open to reveal cage after cage of Colobos monkeys.

SHOCK CUT TO:

BLACK SCREEN

COMPUTER KEYS POUND; the letters leap ACROSS the SCREEN:

November 21 -- the CDC announced that no evidence of aquatic spread of the Motaba Virus had ever been obtained, and that its intensive monitoring of the Columbia River would be scaled back.

March 14 -- researchers at the University of San Francisco announced the production of the first synthetic antibodies effective against the mutated Motaba Bonneville strain. Mass production of the antibodies began four weeks later at the CDC and at the Military Disease Institute.

May 12 -- Dr. Roberta Keough and General Michael Gillespie were married for the second time.

ROLL CREDITS and --

SHOCK CUT TO:

EXT. DUGWAY (UTAH) - DUSK

A gila monster hunts for prey, its eye darting back and forth, its tongue twitching hungrily. It moves past:

The barbed-wire fence emblazoned with the sign warning: "U.S. MILITARY PROPERTY: TRESPASSING STRICTLY PROHIBITED."

Behind the fence the duplexes are dark and abandoned.

The gila monster catches a fly and disappears into the night.

FADE OUT.

THE END