

IQ 83

Written by

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Based on the novel by  
Arthur Herzog

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FADE IN:

INT. SMALL APARTMENT - CAMBRIDGE, MASS. - SNOWING - NIGHT

CLOSE - A CD CHANGER revolving and clicking in a new CD:

MUSIC: "FLYING", the Beatles' hipster instrumental.

Someone is TYPING o.s. as we PAN a Harvard Square bachelor pad: dirty dishes, stacks of The Boston Phoenix, arcane movie posters; a spaghetti-stained diploma ("BOSTON UNIVERSITY - JOHN ANTHONY CERVELLO - B.S. POLITICAL SCIENCE"); a ratty Christmas tree; dog-eared paperbacks on insider-politics and sports; an open copy of How to Write a Power Resumé. PAN ENDS on --

A COMPUTER SCREEN

A resumé being typed.

ANGLE ON TYPIST

JACK CERVELLO, 23, intelligent and ambitious, types rapidly to the music as he drinks coffee and smokes a cigarette. Over the music --

SERIES OF SHOTS:

- HIS PRINTER spitting out 50 resúés.
- HIS KITCHEN TABLE - Jack stuffs and stamps 50 envelopes.
- HARVARD SQUARE MAILBOX - Jack shoves the envelopes in the slot.
- MAIL CARRIERS climbing generic marble steps.
- A DESK - Mail is opened, resúés removed and stacked.
- A BIG DESK - Two burly, manicured hands scan the resúés and stop on one. A thoughtful puff of cigar smoke. ADJUST SHOT: it's JACK'S RESUMÉ.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jack is asleep in the tub. A mermaid-shaped radio floats beside him, playing Procol Harem's "A Whiter Shade of Pale". A waterlogged copy of Kessler's Inside the White House is wrapped around his neck. His CELL PHONE RINGS. Eyes closed, he feels the floor next to the tub, finds the phone, answers groggily.

JACK

Jack here.

WOMAN ON PHONE

May I speak to John Cervello,  
please?

Eyes still closed, he feels for the mermaid, snaps her  
off.

JACK

Yes?

WOMAN ON PHONE

This is Sydney Pritchard at  
Senator Everett Biggs' office.  
Mr. Cervello, the senator would  
like to meet with you as soon as  
possible. Can you be in  
Washington this Friday morning?

His eyes open. Stunned.

INT. BOEING 747 - FLYING - DAY

Jack is reading *Hard Ball: The Politics of Power* by Sen.  
Everett Power Biggs.

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - WASHINGTON, D.C. - SNOWING - DAY

A TAXI pulls up to the curb. A light snow falls on Jack  
as he gets out and climbs the steps to the Senate.

INT. SENATOR EVERETT BIGGS' OFFICE - DAY

ANGLE ON JACK

seated in a plush chair facing a desk.

ANGLE ON SENATOR EVERETT POWER BIGGS

seated at the desk, smoking a cigar as he scans some  
papers. Biggs, 65, has a bear's physique, a Mississippi  
drawl and a shock of white hair.

ANGLE ON JACK glancing around the office as he waits.

JACK'S POV - THE OFFICE WALLS

Paintings, plaques; PHOTOS of Biggs shaking hands with  
Reagan, Clinton, Bush; PHOTO of a young Biggs as a  
paratrooper in Korea. An AQUARIUM with Bonsai trees.  
Biggs o.s. clears his throat.

ANGLE ON BIGGS

SENATOR BIGGS

Looks like you did pretty well  
at B.U.

INTERCUT JACK

JACK

Yes, sir.

SENATOR BIGGS

Says here you scored high on these I.Q. tests.

JACK

Yes, sir. Photographic memory.

SENATOR BIGGS

Is that so. I understand you saved a young girl's life. In Atlantic City?

JACK

Yes sir. She fell off the pier. I jumped in and --

SENATOR BIGGS

You ever kill a man, Jack?

JACK

No sir.

SENATOR BIGGS

Ever shoot a goddamn gun?

JACK

On a cruise ship. Skeet shooting.

SENATOR BIGGS

How'd you do?

JACK

Perfect score.

SENATOR BIGGS

So you're a good shot. Are you a homosexual or bisexual?

Jack pauses.

JACK

No, sir.

SENATOR BIGGS

Why'd you pause? Have to think about it?

JACK

No, sir. I just didn't expect you to ask.

SENATOR BIGGS

How many women you made love to,  
boy?

Another pause.

JACK

Senator, with all due respect, I  
don't think these questions are  
appropriate.

SENATOR BIGGS

You don't.

JACK

No, sir.

SENATOR BIGGS

You sure, son?

Jack pauses again, not at all sure.

JACK

I'm sure, senator.

Biggs drops the file. Stares at Jack. Thinks. Puffs his  
cigar.

SENATOR BIGGS

The interview is over.

Jack is stunned. And angry. With nothing to lose --

JACK

Look, senator, I came here to get  
a job, not to talk about sex and  
guns. If you're serious, let's  
talk about something relevant,  
like the campaigns I've worked on.

SENATOR BIGGS

Relax, boy. I know all about the  
work you've done. Your advisor at  
B.U. is an old friend of mine. He  
said you were the hardest working  
son of a bitch he'd ever met. So  
here's the deal. I need somebody  
who'll speak up - politely of  
course - when somebody's talking a  
bunch of horse shit. So far, you  
passed the interview.

JACK

So far?

The senator clicks on his intercom.

SENATOR BIGGS

Sydney, get me a car to Patterson.

EXT. PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE - WINTER - ESTAB. - DAY

EXT. B-7 ON RUNWAY - ENGINE RUNNING - DAY

ANGLE ON SENATOR BIGGS AND JACK

both wearing helmets and sky-diving gear. Biggs, still puffing a cigar, waves to the pilot, opens the cargo door and gestures for Jack to get in.

JACK

Senator, I have a thing about heights.

SENATOR BIGGS

Get in.

INT. B-7 - FLYING - DAY

The cargo door is open, blasting Senator Biggs and Jack with rushing wind. Biggs, a cigar clenched between his teeth, yells over the noise:

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

Listen carefully. After I jump, you've got ten seconds to get your ass in the air. Don't pull the cord too early or you'll land at sea. These are shark waters. Good luck, son.

JACK

Senator, wait a minute.

Too late. Biggs dives from the plane. Jack looks down.

JACK'S POV - THE SENATOR PLUMMETING DOWNWARD

ANGLE ON JACK - Terrified, he clutches the edges of the door. Five seconds left.

JACK (CONT'D)

Shit!

Two seconds. This is it. Clamping his eyes shut, he dives out of the plane.

CLOSE - JACK FALLING at ninety miles per hour.

ANGLE ON FIELD NEAR RUNWAY

Senator Biggs lands, still puffing his cigar, and watches Jack land 50' away from him.

Jack's landing is clumsy, but he quickly jumps to his feet to save face. Biggs unhooks his chute.

SENATOR BIGGS  
Were you scared, boy?

JACK  
Only a fool wouldn't be. Sir.

Biggs pulls out a flask and tosses it to Jack.

SENATOR BIGGS  
Congratulations, son. You passed the interview.

Jack takes a slug as Biggs dials his cell.

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)  
Sydney, I'm here with Jack Cervello. You tell that Harvard pussy the position's been filled.

INT. FURNISHED D.C. APARTMENT - JACK AND A REALTOR - DAY

Jack takes the keys from the realtor. They shake hands. The realtor leaves. Jack opens the shades, revealing a spectacular view of the capital.

ANGLE ON JACK - taking in the view. He's arrived.

INT. SENATE GYM - D.C. - NIGHT

A few ELDERLY SENATORS exit the sauna. A fake Christmas tree is lit up in the corner. PAN TO JACK ON A BICYCLE MACHINE, the last one still exercising. He's worked up a good sweat and pumps the machine relentlessly. FELIPE, 20, Hispanic, a maintenance man, enters with a box and begins disassembling the Christmas tree.

FELIPE  
Whoa. Chill, man. Nobody works that hard around here.

JACK  
(out of breath)  
I like to push myself.  
(offers his hand)  
Jack.

They shake.

FELIPE  
Felipe. Just started?

JACK  
Today. And you?

FELIPE

I'm third generation working the senate sweat box.

JACK

You must know the Senators by their smell.

FELIPE

They all got the same fat ass b.o. And they all got the same m.o.

JACK

Which is?

FELIPE

They fake it, man. That's how they keep their tit jobs. Runnin' this country's too complicated. Nobody knows how to do it. Especially at the top.

Jack chuckles, wipes the sweat from his face.

JACK

You should be a political analyst.

FELIPE

I'm too smart for that. See you around, man.

JACK

See you, chief.

Felipe exits with the tree packed in the box. Jack stretches, then begins pedaling again. At full speed.

INT. BIGGS' OFFICE - BIGGS AND JACK - DAY

Biggs puts on work gloves and shows Jack his aquarium.

SENATOR BIGGS

Have you met Mary Ann?

JACK

No, sir.

Biggs removes a Bonsai tree from the aquarium. On the pot is the name "Mary Ann".

SENATOR BIGGS

She's a prize-winner.

He gestures to a FRAMED PHOTO on the wall.



ON JACK INSPECTING PHOTO - It's a framed cover of Horticulture Today with Biggs proudly holding Mary Ann and a Blue Ribbon.

JACK

This must be your sensitive side.

BACK TO SCENE

SENATOR BIGGS

I suppose your interview must have seemed peculiar. But I assure you that it was far from capricious. The fact is, I need someone who can keep his head under extraordinary circumstances.

The intercom on his desk buzzes.

SYDNEY ON INTERCOM

Senator, Speaker Finch is on channel seven.

SENATOR BIGGS

Thank you, Sydney.

(to Jack)

I want you to see this.

Biggs presses a remote control. A panel in the wall slides open revealing a TV. He clicks it on.

ON TV - NEWS REPORT - ENTRANCE OF BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL

Washington correspondent CHARLES NIN is reporting.

CHARLES NIN

--the invasive procedure was a result of severe lesions to the vocal cords. After recuperating over New Years, Senator Finch was released today and responded briefly to the Press.

The report CUTS to SPEAKER THURGOOD FINCH, 70, balding, scarf around his neck, exiting hospital in a wheelchair with a young MRS. FINCH, 35. He's surrounded by reporters.

REPORTER

Mr. Speaker, will you be stepping down when Congress comes back into session?

Finch pulls the scarf down, revealing a small module attached to his throat.

As he mouths a response, the module, an artificial larynx, amplifies and digitally articulates his answer through the speaker. His processed voice is hoarse, but otherwise normal.

SPEAKER FINCH

No, Charles, I'm not a quitter.

FEMALE REPORTER

Mr. Speaker, won't the fact that they removed your voicebox affect your job as Speaker?

SPEAKER FINCH

Americans created this technology, not Asians, not Europeans. Thanks to Americans, I can, if they will have me, continue to serve as House Speaker.

The TV screen cuts to a NEWS ANCHOR.

NEWS ANCHOR

In other news, President Carson, whose campaign slogan "The Gentleman from Jersey" won the hearts of voters four years ago, will kick off his reelection campaign with a gala banquet this weekend.

BACK TO SCENE. Biggs clicks off the TV.

JACK

He can't be Speaker like that, can he?

SENATOR BIGGS

That's the least of his problems.

(tosses Jack a folder; as Jack scans it:)

His medical report. Classified. Finch is terminal. Got six months if he's lucky. And do you know who's next in line as House Speaker?

JACK

Senator Everett Power Biggs.

Biggs nods.

SENATOR BIGGS

But I'll need the President's help. Come November, it's tit for tat.

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

I'm one of the few people he trusts, so he'll be calling me every time he needs his balls scratched. How are your baby-sitting skills?

JACK

Excellent, sir.

Biggs replaces the plant in the aquarium.

SENATOR BIGGS

I thought so. Jack, Mary Ann and I have waited a long time for this. A long time.

JACK

So have I, Senator.

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ANGLE ON CLOCK: 2 A.M. CNN on TV. PAN TO JACK poring over a stack of books on the White House and the Presidency. Getting tired, he rubs his face and looks up at the TV.

ON TV - CNN NEWS REPORT

CNN REPORTER

Ever since the unexplained crash of the F-16 fighter last November, there have been rumors of other accidents at various military bases across the country. This morning President Carson briefly commented on the rumor.

The report cuts to news footage of PRESIDENT WILLIAM CARSON, 60, confident, charismatic, but surprisingly overweight. Reporters yell questions as agents escort the President into a limousine.

REPORTER 1 O.S.

Mr. President, any word yet on what caused the crash at Andrews?

PRESIDENT CARSON

The investigating committee will present its findings on Monday.

REPORTER 2 O.S.

Mr. President, what about the rumor of a cover-up of other military accidents?

PRESIDENT CARSON

The only cover-up that's going on  
in this White House is my Grecian  
Formula.

He's charming; the reporters laugh. Cut back to -

CNN REPORTER

In other news, Super Bowl Fever is  
spreading across the country --

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - SUNNY WINTER DAY

A construction team on scaffolding is sandblasting paint  
off the White House facade.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - OVAL OFFICE ANTEROOM - DAY

Biggs and Jack enter. Secret service men stand guard at  
key positions. Staff members are at desks busily  
working. Biggs kisses the hand of HENRIETTE, 50, the  
President's secretary.

SENATOR BIGGS

Hello, Henriette. How's the  
President this morning?

SECRETARY

The usual.  
(checks her watch)  
Everett, you need to get him to  
that briefing right away.

SENATOR BIGGS

I'll see to it.

Biggs and Jack approach the Oval Office. As an agent  
opens the door for them, Biggs whispers to Jack:

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

Whatever he asks you, just nod  
yes.

Jack nods yes.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

Jack follows Biggs inside. The room bustles with  
activity. Carson, his hefty stomach now informally  
ungirdled, is at his desk on the phone. A barber's bib  
is around his neck and a STYLIST is trimming his hair.  
TWO COLLEGIATE ASSISTANTS, wearing conservative suits and  
glasses, hold papers for him to sign. At the same time,  
DR. PRINCETON, 40, is setting up a model of a  
Presidential motorcade on a scale model of a city block.

PRESIDENT CARSON

(on phone; angry)

What about Julio Inglasias? The banquet's in three goddamn days....No, of course I don't want the Beach Boys. They're older than I am, for Christ's sake. I want someone hip, but not too hip... Kenny G would be perfect. Get on it.

(hangs up; to  
Princeton)

All right, Doctor, what about this new car?

Dr. Princeton shows Carson a model of a convertible and snaps a clear plastic shield over the back seat.

DR. PRINCETON

As you can see, Mr. President, the new vehicle has a removable safety shield. A new optical process makes it barely noticeable in full sunlight.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Dr. Princeton, are you suggesting that I wave to the American people from inside a plastic bubble? You want me to wear a Pope hat too? Jesus Christ! What if it rains? Do you install goddamn wipers?

DR. PRINCETON

Yes, sir. There's a wiper attachment in the event of --

PRESIDENT CARSON

I was being sarcastic. What's wrong with you people? I can't hide behind a plastic shield. The whole purpose of this campaign is to create the illusion that I'm not afraid of the public.

ASSISTANT 1

Sir, the bubble's installed. You signed for it last week.

PRESIDENT CARSON

And you boys didn't bring it to my attention?

ASSISTANT 2

Sir, with the banquet coming up, we didn't think --

PRESIDENT CARSON

Precisely. You didn't think.

(punches intercom)

Henriette, I want another personal assistant added to my staff. And no more goddamn Mormons. Get me an Ivy leaguer.

(to assistants)

You boys better watch your backs. I want that bubble dismantled immediately.

ASSISTANT 1

Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT CARSON

(to hair stylist)

The back of the car is going to be windy in the midwest. I'll need one big-ass can of hair spray with me at all times.

Waiting with Jack, Senator Biggs clears his throat.

SENATOR BIGGS

Excuse me, Mr. President. The briefing is in five minutes.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Yes, thank you, Senator.  
Everybody out please.

The stylist removes the barber's bib and exits with the others as Carson rises to shake hands with Biggs.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

Everett, let's go.

(re Jack)

Who's this?

SENATOR BIGGS

My new assistant, Mr. President.  
Jack Cervello.

Carson shakes Jack's hand as they exit.

PRESIDENT CARSON

A pleasure. Who do you like in the Super Bowl, Jack?

JACK

Patriots, sir. I'm a Boston boy.

PRESIDENT CARSON

You're loyal. I like that.

INT. WHITE HOUSE ELEVATOR - MOVING - MINUTES LATER - DAY

Carson, Biggs, Jack and two agents. Carson sizes up Jack.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

(to Jack)

Your first job in Washington?

(Jack nods)

I'll give you the same advice President Johnson gave me when I first came to the Hill. "When you don't have a clue, make them think you do." When you don't know what the hell someone's talking about, cultivate a look...

(touches his chin and  
nods to demonstrate)

Keep doing it until they leave you alone.

The President, Jack, and the others chuckle.

INT. WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The briefing has already begun. Carson, Biggs, Jack, GENERAL LANDAU, GENERAL BRILL, GENERAL LAZAR, GENERAL KOESTLER and TEN PENTAGON AND WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS are listening intently to GENERAL STANTON. Stanton flashes SLIDES of various CRASH SITES on a large screen.

GENERAL STANTON

November 18th. An F-16 crashed while taking off at Andrews. Ground crew error.

(next slide)

November 22nd. An F-16 crashed while landing at Andrews. Pilot error.

(next slide)

December 3rd. An X-4 nuclear sub off the Bermuda coast launched a missile and blew up a naval tracking station. Sub commander error.

(next slide)

December 20th. Two A-12s collided over Patterson. Air traffic control error.

INTERCUT JACK

throughout discreetly watching the reaction of --

PRESIDENT CARSON

rubbing his face in frustration.

GENERAL STANTON O.S.

On Christmas day, a Stealth crashed into an aircraft carrier during a recon maneuver. Pilot error.

ON GENERAL STANTON

GENERAL STANTON

Only the November 18th crash went public. The rest were classified. After being apprised of the crash on the 25th, the President ordered all maneuvers postponed pending an investigation. However, yesterday morning, two Stealths exploded in a hangar at Patterson.

WIDE ANGLE ON CONFERENCE TABLE

PRESIDENT CARSON

In a hangar? What the hell happened this time?

GENERAL STANTON

One of their missiles was accidentally launched by a maintenance foreman.

PRESIDENT CARSON

General Stanton, are you telling me that a goddamn janitor launched the missile?

GENERAL LANDAU

Mr. President, from what we can ascertain, the Stealth crew failed to disable the launch system, and when the maintenance staff was cleaning the controls --

PRESIDENT CARSON

Jesus Christ! General Brill, would you please brief the Senator?

GENERAL BRILL

Yes, Mr. President. Senator, since IQ scores of military personnel have dropped significantly.



GENERAL BRILL (CONT'D)

The data indicates that 94.2% of our armed forces have either abnormally low IQs or some form of, uh, mental deficiency.

GENERAL LAZAR

Because of the policies of this administration --

(to Carson)

-- because of your policies, Mr. President, our military has become a goddamn halfway house for lazy, mentally defective individuals who've enlisted for free food and free housing.

PRESIDENT CARSON

I don't think I like your tone of voice, General.

SENATOR BIGGS

I'm sure the General didn't mean any disrespect, did you, General?

Lazar, who obviously hates Carson, grunts "no".

GENERAL BRILL

The fact is, gentlemen, we now have a fighting force composed largely of idiots.

GENERAL STANTON

Who are unable to operate our more complex weapons systems.

SENATOR BIGGS

I see. I assume the mandate is to simplify the operation of these systems.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Exactly. At our last meeting I ordered a report on the cost. General, I assume you have those figures for me?

GENERAL KOESTLER

Yes, Mr. President.

(passes out reports)

A two year plan to reconfigure control panels and reduce manuals to a 3rd grade reading level will cost roughly 60 million. A one year plan will cost roughly 100 million.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
General Koestler, how much will it  
cost to have a complete overhaul  
operational by mid-August?

GENERAL KOESTLER  
Ballpark figure, 120 to 150  
million.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
Senator, how long would it take  
your committee to get these  
gentlemen what they need?

SENATOR BIGGS  
That's tricky. But if it's for  
national security --

The President rises.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
Then do it. I want that money  
appropriated by tonight.  
Gentlemen, I'm signing the Bill  
for a Stronger America this week.  
If this gets out I'll look like a  
complete jackass. You have six  
months to give me a working army.  
Do we all understand each other?

THE GENERALS  
(variously)  
Yes, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
General Stanton, I want to be  
copied on this every step of the  
way.

GENERAL STANTON  
Yes sir.

The Generals and staff members quickly rise, MURMURING as  
they gather their reports.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
Senator, let me show you some of  
the renovations we've been doing  
around here.

Biggs signals Jack, who follows them into the elevator.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE ROOF - SUNNY WINTER DAY

The construction crew is sandblasting the facade. The sound is deafening. Carson, Biggs and Jack, in hard hats, wave to workers.

JACK

(to Carson; yelling  
over the noise)

Sir, what's this construction for?

PRESIDENT CARSON

(yelling)

To get rid of the bullet holes.  
Those knuckleheads keep firing  
through the gates.

Carson leads Biggs and Jack to the sandblaster and uses it as a sound cover.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

I brought you here so that we could talk privately. As you know, Everett, I gained a lot of goddamn weight last year. It's not going to help me in the election. Tanner says I might be out on my ass unless I pull off some kind of strong military action. A shoe-in would be to start a war. But I can't win a war with an unskilled army. I need this problem solved immediately. What the joint chiefs don't know is that I'm playing the CIA against the Pentagon to see who comes up with the solution first.

SENATOR BIGGS

What are the CIA doing about it?

PRESIDENT CARSON

Col. Carl Hitchcock used to head the pentagon's biological weapons team at Andrews. When he retired, the CIA hired him to run their biological division. Hitchcock said his staff have been working for a year on engineering a brain virus to boost intelligence. He said he could have an "IQ pill" for the military ready in one month for 30 million. I paid him from a slush fund.

SENATOR BIGGS

An IQ pill? Is that possible?

PRESIDENT CARSON

How the hell do I know? This morning, Hitchcock hands me this report.

(gives Biggs report)

It says he needs another month and another goddamn 10 million.

SENATOR BIGGS

Didn't you tell him a deal's a deal?

PRESIDENT CARSON

Of course I did. But the bastard hung tough. He's a goddamn troublemaker. I don't trust the son of a bitch.

SENATOR BIGGS

Why not?

PRESIDENT CARSON

Last year I cut funding for his division in half. He raised a big stink, caused me a lot of trouble with the Joint Chiefs. Now the cocksucker knows my ass is on the line. So before I give him another dime, I need someone to verify this report.

SENATOR BIGGS

I understand. I'll take care of it. Cervello here will be my point man.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Cervello, we'll discuss your findings Monday morning after I put this banquet behind me. Do we all understand each other?

Assuming a look of intelligence, Jack and Biggs nod yes.

EXT. CIA HEADQUARTERS - LANGLEY, VA - ESTABLISHING - DAY

INT. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE - 8x10 PHOTOS - We hear a HUSKY-VOICED MAN examining surveillance photos of Carson, Biggs and Jack on the White House roof.

HUSKY-VOICED MAN O.S.

And the video?

AGENT 1 O.S.  
It's in lipreading now.

He points to Jack's picture.

HUSKY-VOICED MAN O.S.  
What do you have on him?

AGENT 1 O.S.  
John Anthony Cervello, Biggs' new  
executive aide. B.S. in poly-sci  
from B.U. He's green. A nobody.

TILT UP TO DRAMATICALLY REVEAL --

COL. CARL HITCHCOCK

seated at his desk. Hitchcock is 35, lean, mean and pure  
American Indian, his head shaved bald. He stares at the  
photo.

HITCHCOCK  
I'd like him to stay a nobody.

SERIES OF SHOTS WITH VOICE-OVER:

• EXT. APARTMENT WINDOW - D.C. - NIGHT

Through a window we see Jack studying the report, books  
stacked around him. Taking notes, marking pages, working  
late.

SENATOR BIGGS V.O.  
Son, if Carson loses this Fall,  
there's no way in hell I'm House  
Speaker...

• EXT. BIOTECH INSTITUTE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Jack's car parks in the lot. In another car, Hitchcock's  
agent uses a walkie-talkie as Jack enters the building.

SENATOR BIGGS V.O. (CONT'D)  
... Tomorrow morning get your ass  
over to the lab where Hitchcock's  
team is developing the brain  
virus...

• INT. BIOTECH INSTITUTE - DAY

Jack's photo ID is taken; he's issued a security card;  
his palm-print is scanned; he takes an elevator.

SENATOR BIGGS V.O. (CONT'D)  
...and find out if this IQ pill is  
for real or if it's just a  
shakedown.

INT. BIOTECH R & D DIVISION - HALLWAY - DAY

Jack threads through the busy hallway. As he passes, we  
STAY ON AN OFFICE WINDOW. We glimpse DR. DEERBORN,  
female, 25, arguing with DR. PITT, 45, and Hitchcock's  
CIA AGENT. She's angry.

INT. BIOTECH LABORATORY - DAY

Jack enters, looks around. Dozens of scientists are busy  
at arcane genetic research. Dr. Deerborn enters, looking  
upset, and begins checking charts on a wall. Jack  
approaches.

JACK  
Excuse me, are you Dr. Deerborn?

She's unfriendly, severe-looking, with glasses, no  
makeup, hair pulled tightly in a bun.

DR. DEERBORN  
Yes, what is it?

JACK  
Doctor, I'm Jack Cervello.

DR. DEERBORN  
I know who you are. I'm afraid I  
can't help you.

She moves away. Puzzled, Jack follows.

JACK  
If you know who I am, then you  
know I work for Senator Biggs.  
He's interested in Col.  
Hitchcock's project.

DR. DEERBORN  
My sister worked for Senator  
Biggs. I'm well aware of what his  
interests are.

She keeps walking. Jack speaks up:

JACK  
Doctor, I'm here to verify Col.  
Hitchcock's report. I'm not  
leaving until I see the data.

Deerborn stops and stares at him, wishing he would go away. She checks her watch, flustered.

DR. DEERBORN

All right, look, I supervise a number of projects here. Many of them, like the IQ project, are classified. I can show you the animal test data, but not the DNA files, all right?

JACK

For now. Why don't we start off with the facilities?

She sighs and walks away abruptly, expecting him to follow. A little pissed off, he follows.

INT. LOW SECURITY LAB - DAY

Dr. Deerborn and Jack are wearing surgical masks as she reluctantly gives him a "tour".

DR. DEERBORN

This floor is sealed off from the rest of the building, which is largely administrative. Here we engineer viruses for our various projects. Over here, the electron microscopes where we slice and dice, the ovens where we shake and bake; the decontamination room where we rub and scrub; at the end of the wing is animal research.

JACK

Where we spray and spay?

She rolls her eyes and quickly leads him to --

INT. BIOTECH HALLWAY - DAY

As she leads him to an office door.

DR. DEERBORN

Dr. Pitt designed the project with Colonel Hitchcock.

(KNOCKS on door)

Dr. Pitt? It's Dr. Deerborn.

She knocks again. The door slowly opens, revealing --

DR. STUART PITT

a slovenly, intense, unpleasant man in a lab coat.

DR. PITT

What is it?

DR. DEERBORN

This is Mr. Cervello from Senator Biggs' office.

JACK

(extends his hand)

A pleasure, Doctor.

DR. PITT

I don't shake hands. I work with diseases.

Pitt suddenly sneezes while Jack's hand is still extended. Jack wipes his hand off on his pants.

JACK

Bless you.

DR. PITT

My allergies. Mr. Cervello, as I told Dr. Deerborn, starting today I'm leading a week-long symposium on the web. You're inquiring about the intelligence enhancement program?

JACK

Yes, I went through the report and I've put together a few questions.

DR. PITT

Under the circumstances, Dr. Deerborn will be happy to go over the project with you.

Pitt starts to close the door, but Dr. Deerborn stops him and steps into his office to speak privately. Jack pretends he's not listening but can hear them whispering:

DR. DEERBORN

(sotto to Pitt)

Not to pull rank on you, but you work for me, remember? Now, I have a thousand things to take care of before I leave on Saturday, so I'd appreciate it if you'd show him the data.

DR. PITT

(sotto)

I'm in the middle of a symposium on behalf of this Institute. If you don't like it, fire me.



A beat. Then she emerges from the room and SLAMS the door. She turns and storms off down the hall, leaving Jack in the lurch.

JACK

Dr. Deerborn?

DR. DEERBORN

(furious)

This way.

INT. ANIMAL TESTING LAB - DAY

Deerborn shows Jack the lab. Cages of rats and chimps; behavioral test equipment, including a maze and a Haight Box. Four rats are being tested; each rat has a different colored collar (red, blue, green, yellow) and a spot of matching dye on its back. DR. TUCCI, 25, DR. BLAINE, 30 and three researchers are testing the rats.

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

(rapidly; still  
angry)

Dr. Pitt has recombined the DNA in four different ways for this set of experiments. Each rat is injected with a different viral combination. Once it takes effect, we test for an increase in intelligence.

She shows Tucci testing the red rat in the Haight box.

ANGLE ON HAIGHT BOX

Colored lights flash in the box; the red rat responds to each color by pressing a different lever; when the rat chooses correctly, the box extrudes food as reinforcement.

BACK TO SCENE

JACK

After injection, how long does it take for the virus to reach the brain?

DR. DEERBORN

In one way or another, brain functions are affected immediately.

A CHIMP starts rattling one of the cages.

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

She goes to feed the chimp a banana, patting it to calm it down. Jack notes her gentleness with the animal. He turns to Tucci.

JACK

How's it going, chief? Making much progress?

DR. TUCCI

It's going. The intelligence testing is fairly straight forward. It's recombining the DNA that takes years to sort out.

JACK

Years? The report claims we'll have results within a month.

Dr. Tucci shrugs and moves away, as if he's said too much. Jack takes this in. FOLLOW JACK TO THE MAZE - Dr. Tucci begins testing the yellow and blue rats, which expertly thread the maze.

Jack thumbs through Hitchcock's report, which he has marked up. He walks over to Deerborn.

JACK (CONT'D)

Here's my problem. Hitchcock says he needs more time and more money. The President doesn't want to commit unless you can deliver an IQ pill within a month. Is that possible?

Uncomfortable at being put on the spot, she signals him to a corner and whispers:

DR. DEERBORN

Mr. Cervello, this is not my project, nor am I an advocate of this approach to IQ enhancement.

JACK

What approach would you suggest?

She whispers fiercely:

DR. DEERBORN

Real IQ enhancement. Schools, libraries. Things your senator knows nothing about. The tour's over, Mr. Cervello.

She turns to leave.

JACK

Wait. I almost forgot. Here.

He pulls two engraved envelopes from his jacket and hands her one. She opens it.

JACK (CONT'D)

For helping me with my report.  
It's an invitation to the White  
House.

DR. DEERBORN

I'm not voting for Carson. And  
I'm not helping you with anything.

She exits. Jack turns to Dr. Tucci.

JACK

Is she always this miserable?

DR. TUCCI

Well, I could lie to you.

JACK

What's her problem?

DR. TUCCI

She was a child prodigy.

JACK

Really.

DR. TUCCI

Her parents made a deal with the  
devil. Her soul for a high IQ.

Jack takes this in.

JACK

Thanks.

Jack exits. Tucci watches him go, then hears a THUMPING sound in the room. He moves to --

THE MAZE - The blue rat in the maze is behaving strangely. The blue rat stupidly bumps into a dead end, backs up, then THUMPS into it again. And again. And again.

ON DR. TUCCI

He records this behavior on a color-coded graph. ADJUST SHOT to show graph: the blue line declines dramatically.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE PITT'S OFFICE - DAY

Jack is about to knock, then reconsiders and slides an engraved envelope under Pitt's door.

INT. BIOTECH - ELEVATOR LOBBY - DAY

Jack's alone as the elevator DINGS open. THREE MEN appear out of nowhere and enter the elevator with him.

INT. ELEVATOR - GOING DOWN - DAY

Jack, Col. Hitchcock and two CIA agents are in the elevator. They stare at him in silence. Not knowing who they are, Jack doesn't want a confrontation. But he's not going to take any shit either.

JACK (CONT'D)

What's up, boys?

COL. HITCHCOCK

(quiet and intense)

My name is Col. Hitchcock. I understand you're advising the President on whether to continue funding our project.

JACK

That's right.

COL. HITCHCOCK

I'd urge you to give my division your full support.

JACK

Why?

COL. HITCHCOCK

These are dangerous times. Did you know that every twelve hours a deadly virus is created by a military lab somewhere in the world?

JACK

No, I didn't.

COL. HITCHCOCK

My division supplies intelligence on what those diseases are, where they are and how to defend against them. The President knows this. But he needs to be reminded. That's your job.

JACK

My job is to find out if you padded your report.

Hitchcock smiles humorlessly.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
Cervello. That's Italian, isn't  
it? I'm pure Apache. I'm more  
American than Ronald fucking  
MacDonald. I love this country. I  
really love it. And unlike the  
President, I'm prepared to do  
whatever it takes to protect it.

The elevator DINGS. Its doors part to reveal the lobby.

JACK  
My floor.

Jack goes to exit, but the agents block his way. Jack  
glares at Hitchcock, who takes a beat, then signals his  
men. They part. Hitchcock moves closer to Jack.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
Before you go, I want you to  
listen. There's an Apache prophecy  
that after the millenium, an eagle  
with a mouse gripped in its talons  
will fly over the land and  
sprinkle it with dust. Dust that  
purifies the world. This is the  
millenium, Mr. Cervello.

Ignoring him, Jack exits the elevator. As he walks away:

COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)  
I'll be watching you.

Jack turns to see the elevator close on Hitchcock's  
unpleasant smile. Jack tries to shake it off, but is  
clearly spooked.

INT. SENATE GYM - NIGHT

Jack is the last one exercising. Hard. Again.

EXT. BIOTECH INSTITUTE - SNOWING - ESTAB. - MORNING

INT. BIOTECH HALLWAY - DAY

Jack sees Dr. Deerborn bustling ahead through the crowded  
hall. She continues walking as he catches up to her.

JACK  
Dr. Deerborn, we need to talk.

DR. DEERBORN  
I told you I'm busy. Talk to Dr.  
Pitt.

JACK

He told me to talk to you.

She stops, exasperated.

DR. DEERBORN

I've accrued two years of vacation days, and I'm leaving early today to start enjoying them --  
 (checks her watch)  
 -- in exactly ten minutes.

JACK

Good. Then we've got ten minutes.

DR. DEERBORN

Good-bye, Mr. Cervello.

She loses him in the crowd.

INT. BIOTECH ANIMAL LAB - DAY

Jack, Dr. Tucci and Dr. Blaine are alone in the lab. Tucci is testing a rat in the maze. Blaine is feeding the rats in the cages. Jack is at a desk studying test data. He's missing something.

JACK

Dr. Tucci, where are the test scores for the blue rat?

DR. TUCCI

Dr. Pitt removed him from the experiment.

JACK

Why?

DR. TUCCI

The vector was a failure. He replaced it with a new recombinant and another rat.

(gestures to orange rat in)

(in the maze; sotto)

Please refrain from any more questions. I'm not supposed to talk to you.

Tucci exits. Thumbing through report, Jack approaches Blaine.

JACK

Excuse me. Who's been measuring the test rats?

DR. BLAINE

I have.

He shows Blaine a page of the report.

JACK

I'm curious. A year ago, growth was measured in centimeters. But about a month ago, you started using inches. Why is that?

Blaine gives Jack an evasive look.

DR. BLAINE

I believe Dr. Pitt suggested the change.

He moves away. Jack follows him.

JACK

One more question. How long do you think it will take Dr. Pitt to engineer the right virus?

DR. BLAINE

The slicers would know that better than I.

JACK

The slicers?

DR. BLAINE

The DNA team. In Hell's Kitchen.

INT. HIGH SECURITY VIRAL LAB - DAY

ON COMPUTER-PRINTOUT TAPED TO WALL: "HELL'S KITCHEN".  
TILT DOWN to scientists working in decontamination suits. Jack, also suited up, questions THAD, 25, who works at an electron microscope. They communicate via helmet mikes.

JACK

Well, if you had to estimate, how many man-hours does it take to recombine the DNA for each test virus?

Thad continues working and mutters:

THAD

I assume you've heard of a confidentiality clause?

JACK

Thad, I'm not asking how you do it.

JACK (CONT'D)  
I'm asking how long it takes. The  
President wants to know.

THAD  
(sotto)  
I can't talk to you.

JACK  
Why not?

INT. BIOTECH SECURITY ROOM - SAME TIME

Hitchcock's agent is at a cassette recorder taping their  
conversation:

THAD V.O. ON TAPE  
I'd like to keep my job. Talk to  
Pitt.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE DR. PITT'S LAB - DAY

Jack knocks on Dr. Pitt's door.

DR. PITT O.S.  
Not now!

A muffled CRASH inside. Silence. Another CRASH. Jack  
knocks again.

JACK  
Dr. Pitt, I need to talk to you.

Footsteps. The door creaks open and Dr. Pitt peers out  
at him. He looks disheveled. We subtly note that there  
is a band-aid around his thumb.

DR. PITT  
I told you to address your  
questions to Dr. Deerborn.

JACK  
She told me to address them to  
you.

DR. PITT  
Then that puts you in a pickle,  
doesn't it?

JACK  
Did you tell your staff not to  
talk to me?

DR. PITT  
This is a classified project. Our  
funding's been cut.



DR. PITT (CONT'D)

My staff is overworked and doesn't have the time to educate you in the fundamentals of genetic science. And neither do I.

Pitt SLAMS the door. Jack yells through it:

JACK

I'll be back, doctor.

He hears a SNEEZE inside. Jack angrily exits down the hall.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - SNOWING LIGHTLY - NIGHT

Limousines glide into the circular drive. Couples and dignitaries enter the White House in military dress, tuxedos and gowns.

INT. WHITE HOUSE BALLROOM - THE BANQUET - NIGHT

ANGLE ON BANNER ON WALL: "REELECT PRESIDENT WILLIAM CARSON"

TILT DOWN to the magnificent ballroom. Famous politicians, military officials and White House staffers are being seated at lushly appointed banquet tables. KENNY G is playing onstage with a band.

ANGLE ON JACK - entering, tuxedoed, looking sharp. FOLLOW HIM through crowd to --

THE BAR - where Biggs is autographing copies of Hard Ball for two sexy YOUNG WOMEN. He hands them a card.

SENATOR BIGGS

This is my direct line. Call me and we can discuss internships over lunch.

YOUNG WOMAN

Thank you, Senator.

They leave as Jack and Biggs shake hands.

SENATOR BIGGS

Welcome to the Mad Tea Party. Make any progress at the lab?

JACK

Yes sir. But I may need more time.

SENATOR BIGGS

You tell the President that and he'll serve your balls in an hors d'oeuvres basket with capers.

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

You have a definitive answer for him by Monday, understand?

JACK

Understood.

SENATOR

Well, are those fine folks from the lab joining us tonight?

JACK

I wouldn't bet on it, sir.

DR. DEERBORN O.S.

Then you'd lose.

Jack turns to see --

DR. DEERBORN

She's wearing a tight, black, strapless dress, an eccentric hat, no glasses, her hair flowing down her shoulders. Her cynical attitude, while still present, is muted by the drink in her hand.

BACK TO SCENE

JACK

Dr. Deerborn.

DR. DEERBORN

Hello, Senator.

She holds out her hand and Biggs kisses it.

JACK

Dr. Deerborn is the project manager at Biotech.

DR. DEERBORN

We've met.

SENATOR BIGGS

Indeed? Hmm, I'm certain I would remember someone as lovely as yourself.

DR. DEERBORN

At the mediation hearing. My sister is Samantha Van Duren. She was suing you, Senator, for --

SENATOR BIGGS

Yes, spirited woman, your sister. Charming to see you again. Now if you'll both excuse me.

Giving her an icy smile, he glides away through the crowd.

JACK

What was that about?

DR. DEERBORN

He bought my sister some underwear.

JACK

There must have been more to it than that.

DR. DEERBORN

He tried to put them on her. They settled out of court.

ANGLE ON COL. HITCHCOCK

seated at a table with General Koestler and General Lazar, with whom he is obviously friendly. Hitchcock spots something through the crowd.

COL. HITCHCOCK'S POV - JACK AND DR. DEERBORN AT BAR

BACK TO COL. HITCHCOCK RISING

COL. HITCHCOCK

Would you excuse me, gentlemen?

Hitchcock signals two attachés who follow him through the crowd.

INT. BALLROOM ENTRANCE - SAME TIME

Dr. Pitt enters in an ill-fitting tux. We subtly note the bandaid still on his thumb. Scanning the crowd, he doesn't see anyone he knows. FOLLOW PITT to the buffet table where he loads a plate with canapés. He SNEEZES over the punchbowl, pops an allergy pill, then resumes loading up his plate.

ON JACK AND DR. DEERBORN

JACK

I thought you weren't a fan of President Carson.

DR. DEERBORN

I'm not. But I was stood up tonight. So I bee-lined to the closest free bar.

JACK

Most people wouldn't admit they were stood up. You must have a secure self-image.

DR. DEERBORN

I don't care about my image, and I'm not interested in you romantically or sexually. So I have nothing to hide.

JACK

Not in that dress anyway.

The music stops. They turn with the crowd towards the stage.

ANGLE ON SENATOR BIGGS ONSTAGE holding a cocktail.

SENATOR BIGGS

Ladies and gentlemen... President Carson and our delightful First Lady, on behalf of all of Congress, and in honor of your first reelection banquet, I offer a simple but telling toast...

Biggs raises his glass in a toast.

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

"My Daddy told me when I was a boy, 'Hitch your wagon to a star, son!' And now as a man, I finally can With a vote for William Carson!"

INTERCUT BIGGS / THE CROWD / PRESIDENT CARSON & WIFE

toasting to APPLAUSE and a BAND FANFARE.

ON JACK AND DR. DEERBORN

She turns away rolling her eyes.

DR. DEERBORN

God help us. A limerick.  
(gulps down the rest  
of her drink)  
I needed that more than I thought.

JACK

You don't strike me as a needy person.

She takes another cocktail from a passing waiter's tray.

DR. DEERBORN

We all have our needs.

She sips her drink and stares at him. There is a distinct and lingering moment of sexual tension... broken as Col. Hitchcock appears beside them, his men in tow.

COL. HITCHCOCK

Fraternizing with the enemy, Dr. Deerborn?

She obviously dislikes Hitchcock.

DR. DEERBORN

Just small talk, Colonel. Excuse me while I powder my nose.

She hands Jack her glass and disappears through the crowd. Hitchcock is intimidating.

COL. HITCHCOCK

Do you remember our little talk in the elevator?

JACK

You mean your Fractured Fairy Tale?

COL. HITCHCOCK

Apache prophecy shouldn't be taken lightly. Choose your words to the President wisely. What you say may impact your future in this town.

(intensely)

And if anything happens to my program because of you, remember this: I'm the eagle - and you're the mouse.

He stares at Jack. Jack checks his watch and looks concerned.

JACK

Isn't it time for your Prozac?

One of the agents grabs a fistful of Jack's shirt, but Hitchcock stops him.

COL. HITCHCOCK

It's all right. He gets the point. Don't you, Mr. Cervello.

Col. Hitchcock straightens Jack's shirt and exits with his men. Jack stares at him leaving, then gulps down Deerborn's cocktail.

ON DR. PITT - SAME TIME

reaching another buffet table with a large paté. He uses a knife to spread paté over a chip, surreptitiously licks the knife, then sticks it back in the paté. Now he dips a celery stick in a tureen of spinach dip, takes a sloppy bite, dips it again.

ON JACK AT THE BAR

as Deerborn returns wearing her coat.

DR. DEERBORN

Well, goodnight. I've seen enough  
and I have an early flight.

JACK

I'll walk you out.

DR. DEERBORN

I'd prefer that you didn't.

JACK

Those White House steps are  
slippery.

DR. DEERBORN

You should know.

(beat)

You realize there's not a chance  
in hell we're ever getting  
together.

JACK

After you.

She buttons her coat and exits through the crowd. He quickly finishes his drink and follows her.

AT THE PUNCHBOWL where Dr. Pitt sneezed: Servers are ladling out glasses of champagne punch to Biggs, General Lazar, General Koestler and other dignitaries.

GENERAL LAZAR

Senator Biggs, congratulations on  
mobilizing the appropriations  
committee so quickly.

SENATOR BIGGS

I simply put 'em in that ol'  
Louisiana bear-hug till they  
coughed up the cash.

They laugh, drink down their punch and are served refills.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE ENTRANCE - SNOWING LIGHTLY - NIGHT

Jack and Deerborn wait for a valet to bring her car.  
She's loosened up a bit by the cocktail.

JACK

I'm glad you changed your mind and  
showed up tonight.

DR. DEERBORN

Mercurial is my middle name.

JACK

You mean schitzzy.

DR. DEERBORN

Psychologists say it comes with a  
high IQ.

JACK

Is it impolite to ask a woman her  
IQ?

DR. DEERBORN

Last I checked, 170, off the map.

JACK

That's smart.

DR. DEERBORN

I balance it out. I make a point  
of doing irrational things. Bunjy  
jumping, white water rafting, sky  
diving.

JACK

I just did my first sky diving  
yesterday. The Senator made me  
jump.

DR. DEERBORN

Senator Biggs? He doesn't fit the  
profile.

JACK

He was a paratrooper in Korea. So  
was Hitchcock in Nam.

DR. DEERBORN

They don't need to balance out  
their IQs. They're both morons.

JACK

Not smart like us. We work for  
morons.

DR. DEERBORN

Touché. When I was a little girl, they put me three grades ahead with the big kids. I used to pray every night that God would make me dumb like everyone else. So I could be with kids my own age. So I could be normal.

JACK

It's tough being smart.

DR. DEERBORN

Sometimes, like tonight, a few drinks lowers my IQ to a point where people can tolerate my mood swings. I think I think too much.

JACK

Then stop thinking.

He moves closer, then goes to kiss her. She stops him.

DR. DEERBORN

What are you doing?

He realizes he read her wrong.

JACK

Sorry.

DR. DEERBORN

Keep your hands to yourself, all right?

JACK

All right.

They break eye contact and wait in an awkward silence.

INT. BANQUET - BUFFET TABLE - SAME TIME

Biggs talks to an ATTRACTIVE WOMAN at the bowl of spinach dip we saw Pitt eating earlier. He hands her his card.

SENATOR BIGGS

This is my direct line. Let's continue our discussion over lunch.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN

Thank you, Senator.

She leaves as the President and his assistants reach the buffet.



PRESIDENT CARSON

That was a catchy little toast,  
Everett. Don't be shocked if I  
steal it.

They laugh and gobble down chips and dip. A shadow  
eclipses the table. It's Col. Hitchcock. The atmosphere  
becomes tense.

COL. HITCHCOCK

Mr. President, Senator Biggs.

(to Carson)

Sir, I wondered if you had an  
opportunity to read the project  
report.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Yes, I did. I'll have an answer  
for you by Monday afternoon.

The President breaks eye contact abruptly. The  
conversation is over. Hitchcock remains cool.

COL. HITCHCOCK

Thank you, Mr. President.

Hitchcock walks away with his men. Carson watches him  
uneasily.

PRESIDENT CARSON

(sotto)

Everett, the timing's going to be  
tight on that military problem we  
discussed. If your boy finds out  
anything this weekend, you let me  
know right away.

SENATOR BIGGS

Yes, sir.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE DRIVEWAY - SNOWING - NIGHT

A valet pulls up with Deerborn's car. She tips the valet,  
who leaves.

DR. DEERBORN

Well, good night, Mr. Cervello.

JACK

Sure you're OK to drive?

DR. DEERBORN

I only had three drinks. And I  
have the ability to sober up  
instantly. Want to see me?

JACK

Yeah.

She passes her hand over her face like a magic trick.  
She suddenly seems sober.

DR. DEERBORN

There. Just a matter of focus.

JACK

Teach me that sometime.

DR. DEERBORN

Sorry. You need a high IQ.

She's about to get in the car, then turns to look at him  
with a strange expression.

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

You're new in town. Are you  
leasing your car?

JACK

Yeah. Why?

DR. DEERBORN

If you ever think of buying, be  
sure to comparison shop. Here's a  
dealer I'd recommend...

She grabs a pad, thinks, jots down something and hands it  
to him. Puzzled, he takes it and reads:

INSERT - THE NOTE which reads: "FALKAN LTD MH-6852-  
163362"

BACK TO SCENE - She gets in her car, revs the engine,  
opens the drivers window.

JACK

(re the paper)

I don't get it. What kind of --

She gives him a look that says "shut up" and subtly  
gestures to the White House steps.

HIS POV - THE STEPS - HITCHCOCK'S AGENT

is watching them. He looks away as Jack spots him.

BACK TO SCENE

She revs the engine again and loudly changes the subject.

DR. DEERBORN

You know, you don't seem the type  
to be working for Senator Biggs.  
How did you get the job?

JACK

I passed his test.

DR. DEERBORN

Which was?

JACK

You won't believe me.

DR. DEERBORN

Try me.

JACK

He made me jump out of a plane,  
gave me some whiskey, then he  
quizzed me on how many women I've  
slept with.

She tenses. Without knowing it, he's pressed her worst  
button.

DR. DEERBORN

That's how you got the job?  
Bragging about your conquests?  
Jesus Christ almighty.

JACK

Calm down. It wasn't like that.

DR. DEERBORN

What was it like? Were any women  
up for the job?

JACK

No, but --

DR. DEERBORN

I didn't think so.

She angrily grabs the paper she gave him out of his hand.

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

I've changed my mind. Why don't  
you go back inside and brag about  
how you almost scored.

She peels out. Furious, he yells after her:

JACK

What the hell is wrong with you?

She SCREECHES through the gates.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Mercurial my ass.

He climbs back up the White House steps, slips on the ice and falls on his ass.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Shit!

He gets up, brushes himself off and goes back inside.

HITCHCOCK'S ATTACHÉ IN BUSHES

watching Jack and whispering into a walkie-talkie.

INT. BANQUET - BUFFET TABLE - SAME TIME

Carson is sampling the buffet with his wife TIFF, 50, as THREE TRADE NEGOTIATORS approach them.

NEGOTIATOR 1  
Magnificent party, Mr. President,  
Mrs. Carson. It bodes well for  
our meeting next week.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
I couldn't ask for more of a crack  
team than you boys to hardball  
those inscrutable Chinese.

They chuckle and begin sampling the paté and the dip.  
(Note: This is the same dip Dr. Pitt ate before.)

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)  
(sotto)  
When we're at that negotiating  
table, boys, let's kick some  
oriental butt, what do you say?

Laughing, the negotiators ad-lib agreement as they eat.

ANGLE ON SPEAKER FINCH - SAME TIME

in a wheelchair, seated alone with Mrs. Finch, his young wife, at a small table. Hooked to an I.V., Finch eats a steak dinner as Senator Biggs approaches.

SENATOR BIGGS  
Good evening, Mr. Speaker, Mrs.  
Finch. It's inspiring to see you  
looking so well. You do feel  
well, don't you?

Finch, his mouth full of steak, mouths an answer. His artificial larynx sounds his response, but the answer is garbled.

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

Pardon me, Mr. Speaker?

Finch turns up the voicebox and tries to answer again, but the module CRACKLES.

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, sir, what was that?

Finch begins coughing as we cut to --

DR. PITT - SAME TIME

standing and eating by a table filled with politicians and military brass. Unnoticed by anyone, Pitt SNEEZES over their table and quickly pops another allergy pill.

ON SENATOR BIGGS AND SPEAKER FINCH - AS BEFORE

Biggs is still trying to hear what Finch is saying as Jack enters the scene.

JACK

Excuse me, Senator, but unless you need me for something, I'd like to make it an early night. I've got a big day tomorrow.

Jack notices Finch GASPING and clutching his throat.

JACK (CONT'D)

Mr. Speaker? Are you all right, sir?

Finch's face drains of color; he begins convulsing.

MRS. FINCH

My God, he's choking. He's choking!

JACK

(to Biggs)  
Help me lift him!

Jack immediately lifts Finch from his chair. Biggs helps hold up Finch as Jack Heimlichs the old man. The surrounding tables turn in shock to watch. Jack again Heimlichs Finch, who spits a piece of steak into the air. Now able to breathe, Finch WHEEZES and collapses into his wheelchair. Jack rips open Finch's shirt for air while Mrs. Finch checks his pulse.

MRS. FINCH

He's breathing. Thank God. You saved him!

Jack is stunned as onlookers pat him on the back and Finch clutches his' arm in gratitude. Biggs, pretending to look happy, whispers to Jack.

BIGGS

(sotto)

Do you have to be so efficient?

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Jack is eating a bowl of Lucky Charms while reading the paper. Suddenly he stops, remembering something. He grabs a pad of paper, stares into space and concentrates.

CLOSE - THE PAD

as he slowly writes down the series of digits from Dr. Deerborn's note: "FALKAN LTD MH-6852-163362"

BACK TO SCENE - He stares at the strange number.

EXT. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS ENTRANCE - MORNING

Jack enters with his briefcase.

INT. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS - DAY

A sign: "SCIENCE RECORDS DEPT." TILT DOWN to Jack seated at a table poring over a stack of books.

CLOSE - COLUMN OF HEADINGS

His finger scans down the list and stops on a name: "Falkan, Ltd. Biological Research. Juchitan de Zaragoza, Mexico."

JACK AT A MICROFILM SCREEN - AN HOUR LATER

He's scrolling through a scientific report numbered "6852-163362". He finds what he's looking for: a series of diagrams of recombined viruses. Opens the Biotech report and puts one of its diagrams next to the one on screen.

CLOSE - THE TWO DIAGRAMS

Identical.

ON JACK - remembering:

JACK

Be sure to comparison shop...

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jack is at his computer, scrolling through a web site. Seated next to him is Felipe from the senate gym. Felipe, now wearing glasses, peers at the screen and translates a Spanish report for Jack.

FELIPE

OK, this is it... you just want the conclusion, right?

JACK

Right.

FELIPE

OK, scroll down...  
 (Jack scrolls down)  
 ...down... keep goin', man...OK, stop.  
 (Jack stops)  
 It says here...

[INSERT SPANISH PHRASE FOR "RESULTS INCONCLUSIVE"]

JACK

What's that mean?

FELIPE

What the fuck do you think it means? Inconclusive. It didn't work.

INT. SENATOR BIGGS' BEDROOM - DAY

Senator Biggs is drunk and disheveled as he makes love with the TWO YOUNG WOMEN we saw together at the banquet. They are on top straddling his legs and MOANING as he cups their breasts in his hands. His CELL PHONE goes off.

SENATOR BIGGS

Shit!

He removes one hand and answers the phone.

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

(to phone)  
 What is it?

JACK ON PHONE V.O.

Senator, the report's bullshit.

SENATOR BIGGS

What? Are you positive?

JACK ON PHONE V.O.

I'm positive.

SENATOR BIGGS

Jesus Christ. All right, listen, I'm in conference with some new interns right now. Call Henriette, tell her I'm detained and that you have to see the President immediately. Get right over there and don't wait for me.

JACK ON PHONE V.O.

Yes sir.

Biggs hangs up and replaces both hands on their breasts.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - HENRIETTE'S OFFICE - DAY

She's typing. Her headset buzzes.

HENRIETTE

White House. This is Henriette.

JACK ON PHONE V.O.

Henriette, it's Jack Cervello. I have to see the President immediately.

INT. INDOOR GOLF DRIVING RANGE - DAY

The President tees off, slicing ineptly to the side. BOB TANNER, 50, his Chief of Staff, three assistants, and two caddies watch. EIGHT SECRET SERVICE AGENTS stand guard at key positions.

ANGLE ON JACK

waiting on the sidelines with one of the agents.

ON THE PRESIDENT setting another ball on a tee.

PRESIDENT CARSON

One shitty swing after another. Bob, I thought having my Chief of Staff back in town is supposed to bring good luck.

Tanner and the agents CHUCKLE.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

Where's that kid? Bring the kid over here.

An agent escorts Jack to Carson as he practices his swing.



PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

What did you find out, son?

JACK

Sir, three years ago, your administration approved funding for a classified project in a CIA lab in Mexico. They spent two years recombining the DNA of different viruses to find a vector that increased brain function, exactly as in Hitchcock's project. After two years, the results were inconclusive and funding was cut.

PRESIDENT CARSON

What the hell are you saying, boy?

JACK

I'm saying that Hitchcock didn't have this project on the line for a year. He started it the day after he talked to you. He had his team engineer viruses copied from blueprints in the old experiment. The entire first year of the report is a fake.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Shit! Bob, get over here! Listen to this!

Tanner approaches them.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

You mean Hitchcock is making me pay for what I already bought two years ago from some goddamn beaner lab? Shit! That red-skinned son of a bitch bastard must be using the money to keep his own department alive! All that goddamn bio-death shit, the stuff that screwed up our boys in the Gulf! I don't believe this! Jesus H. Christ!

Furious, he swings his club, misses the ball, violently WHACKS Tanner's head, knocking him unconscious.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

Jesus! Bob, are you all right?!

Jack and Carson kneel over Tanner's body.

JACK

He's bleeding.

Agent 1 begins CPR. Agent 2 applies a hankie to the wound while AGENT 3 punches a cell phone.

AGENT 3

Get an ambulance to the driving range.

Carson gets up and shakes his head regretfully.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Shit! He'll be all right, he's one tough son of a bitch. Goddamn it, get me Henriette on the horn!

An assistant punches a number and hands the cell phone to Carson.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

(to phone)

Henriette! Get me what's his name, head of the C.I.A., um, the tall guy, Henson! Hurry up about it!

(to Jack)

Hitchcock thinks he can fuck with the President? I'm pulling the plug on his entire sicko program.

ASSISTANT 1

Sir, that might not be advisable. Intelligence on biological weapons is becoming increasingly important to our national defense.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Are you the goddamn President?

ASSISTANT 1

No sir.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Then shut the hell up.

(to Jack)

You. You saved Senator Finch's life last night. You've got a good head on your shoulders. I want you to get over to that lab and shut down that operation personally, do you understand me?

JACK

Yes, sir.

(hesitates)

Sir, don't I need some paperwork or --

PRESIDENT CARSON

That's an order from the  
President, son. You get your ass  
over there.

JACK

Yes, sir.

INT. JACK'S CAR - MOVING - WINTER - DAY

Jack dials the phone as he drives. We hear the line  
picked up by a MACHINE.

DEERBORN'S PHONE MESSAGE V.O.

I'm not here. Leave a brief  
message.

BEEP.

JACK

Well, Dr. Deerborn, that's a very  
warm and endearing message.  
Really sums up your personality.  
This is Jack Cervello. Even  
though you changed your mind, I  
did some comparison shopping. As  
a result, the President wants to  
shut down the project and --

BEEP. The machine cuts him off.

EXT. BIOTECH PARKING LOT - DAY

Jack gets out of his car when his eye catches something  
above.

JACK'S POV - UPPER WINDOW - A chimp's face appears in the  
window for an instant, then disappears.

JACK - PUZZLED REACTION

INT. BIOTECH R & D - HALLWAY - DAY

Jack exits the elevator to the hallway, now noticeably  
sloppy: papers on floor, smudges on walls, fluorescents  
flickering. Jack passes several scientists reading  
reports as they walk. One trips on his own feet, bumps  
into a wall, walks away.

JACK - PUZZLED REACTION

INT. ANIMAL LAB - DAY

Jack enters. The room is empty. Several of the cages  
are wide open. He closes them, hears a noise from --

THE CEILING - A chimp SHRIEKS at him through an open ceiling tile, then scrambles away into the ceiling recess.

JACK - PUZZLED REACTION.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE VIRAL LAB - DAY

Jack peeks through a window into the lab where a dozen scientists are working. HIS POV: Thad places test tubes in a centrifuge; he turns it on; the test tubes fly off shattering everywhere. Thad and others duck and scramble to turn off the machine.

JACK - PUZZLED REACTION.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE EMPLOYEE LOUNGE - DAY

Jack peeks in and sees Dr. Tucci and Dr. Blaine watching Wheel of Fortune on the lounge TV. They don't notice him as they ad-lib wrong answers to the show's inane puzzle.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE DR. PITT'S OFFICE - DAY

Jack KNOCKS.

JACK (CONT'D)

Dr. Pitt, it's Jack Cervello.

There's a CLATTER inside. Footsteps. The door opens and Pitt peers out, his smock smudged with chocolates and buttoned incorrectly. His thumb is still bandaged. He looks dazed.

JACK (CONT'D)

I'm here in an official capacity. The President wants me to shut down the IQ enhancement project immediately.

DR. PITT

What? Do you have a form from business affairs signed by Dr. Deerborn?

JACK

As you know, she's on vacation. I just came from the President.

DR. PITT

Then I suggest you wait till she returns from her vacation and submit the proper paperwork through the proper channels. Now is there anything else you could waste my time with?

They HEAR the voices of Tucci and Blaine from the lounge at the end of the hall.

TUCCI AND BLAINE O.S.

(chanting)

Buy a vowel! Buy a vowel!

JACK

(re chanting)

Since you asked, is something wrong with your employees?

DR. PITT

What are you talking about?

JACK

Well, cages were left open and a chimp got loose --

DR. PITT

Have you ever seen an overworked staff before? Overworked because our budget was slashed? Go away and stop wasting my time!

He SLAMS the door on his own fingers and SHRIEKS in pain.

DR. PITT (CONT'D)

Shit!

(to Jack)

Get out! GET OUT!

Pitt SLAMS the door.

INT. BIOTECH - EMPTY OFFICE - DAY

Jack is alone talking on the phone.

JACK

Senator, this is Jack. I'm at Biotech. The President asked me to shut down the project... No. There's a problem.

EXT. VERMONT SKI SLOPES - ESTABLISHING - DAY

INT. SKI GONDOLA - MOVING UP SKI SLOPE - DAY

Seated in the gondola, Dr. Deerborn is listening to her cell phone.

CELL PHONE VOICE V.O.

You have three messages.

BEEP.

JACK V.O.

Well, Dr. Deerborn, that's a very warm and endearing message. Really sums up your personality. This is Jack Cervello --

She deletes the message. The second message begins:

DR. PITT V.O.

Dr. Deerborn, this is Dr. Pitt. I, uh, I'm afraid I've forgotten the precise reason for this call. I know something came up, I, uh, just can't bring it to mind at the moment, uh, I'm unclear on this point, um, perhaps it had something to do with -- (BEEP)

She's puzzled by this. The last message begins:

JACK V.O.

This is Jack Cervello again. Dr. Deerborn, The President wants the project shut down immediately. I'm afraid you're going to have to cut your vacation short.

She listens, furious.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

The President is about to sign a Bill while posing for the Press. Biggs and three assistants surround him. Biggs makes an announcement:

SENATOR BIGGS

Ladies and gentlemen of the Press, the President has a brief statement before signing into law the Bill for a Stronger America.

Biggs leads APPLAUSE.

CLOSE - PRESIDENT CARSON'S EAR

revealing a radio earpiece hidden inside. We faintly hear ASSISTANT 1 whispering through the earpiece:

ASSISTANT 1 ON EARPIECE V.O.

Thank you, Senator Biggs.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Thank you, Senator Biggs.

INT. SECRET ROOM ADJOINING OVAL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Through a two-way mirror, ASSISTANT 1, flanked by two other assistants, watches the President and whispers into a microphone:

ASSISTANT 1  
With the signing of this historic legislation...

INT. OVAL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

as the President repeats exuberantly:

PRESIDENT CARSON  
With the signing of this historic legislation, known as the "Bill for a Stronger America", I am fulfilling my pledge to the American people that the military of the United States of America will continue to be the finest fighting force in the world!

The President signs as cameras flash. APPLAUSE as Carson and Biggs shake hands for more pictures.

BACK OF ROOM

Jack quietly enters.

BACK TO SCENE - Biggs wraps up the photo op.

SENATOR BIGGS  
Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

Biggs escorts the Press out of the room. As soon as the door closes, Carson furiously removes the ear piece hidden in his ear, slams it on the desk and yells at the mirror.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
How the hell am I supposed to think straight with this thing squealing in my ear? You boys keep screwing up like that and you're out on your Ivy League asses.  
(to intercom)  
Henriette, hire another assistant, somebody who can operate a goddamn microphone!  
(to Jack)  
You! Did you shut down that project like I told you to?

JACK

Yes, sir. All I need is the project manager's authorization.

PRESIDENT CARSON

You don't need squat. I'm firing that bastard. Get whatever you need and close those sons of bitches down immediately.

JACK

Yes sir.

Biggs reenters.

PRESIDENT CARSON

(sits at his desk)

The trade meeting is tomorrow...I need to concentrate...my Chief of Staff's in a coma... my own CIA's trying to shake me down! Christ! Everett, you tell that goddamn Apache asshole that he's through, do you hear me? Through!

With this, the President SLAMS his left palm on the desk. He lifts his hand. He has stabbed himself with a letter spear which is stuck through his palm. He freezes for a long beat and stares at his hand, too confused to scream.

FULL SCREEN TV - LIVE FOX NEWS BULLETIN

NAN YUNG CH'U, 50, a Chinese dignitary and his staff enter the White House, shaking hands with Carson and the three negotiators we saw at the banquet. Carson's left hand is bandaged. GERALDO RIVERA reports

GERALDO RIVERA

Despite the reported weight-lifting injury to his hand yesterday, the President is preparing for tomorrow's breakfast meeting with China's Trade Minister Nan Yung Ch'u and what some say will be a grueling, week-long face off on international trade. The election ten months away, President Carson wants to make a strong showing in this important negotiation.

Cut back to the NEWS ANCHOR.



## NEWS ANCHOR

After the first trade meeting tomorrow morning, the President begins a nonstop day of campaigning --

INT. COL. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - LANGLEY - DAY

PAN WALL PHOTOS of Hitchcock's military career, including one of the Colonel as a Nam paratrooper. Over this:

SENATOR BIGGS O.S.

You're lucky we're not pressing charges for fraud, Colonel. As of this moment, by order of the President...

PAN ENDS ON HITCHCOCK at his desk as Biggs finishes:

SENATOR BIGGS

...you're relieved of your post and your department is dissolved.  
(gets up to leave)  
The paperwork will arrive later today for your signature. Good-bye, Colonel.

HITCHCOCK

Aren't you forgetting someone, Senator?

He stops.

SENATOR BIGGS

Forgetting someone? Who?

Hitchcock takes out a manila envelope and hands it to Biggs. Biggs opens it and removes an 8x10 PHOTOGRAPH.

HITCHCOCK

Mrs. Finch.

Biggs stares at the PHOTO (which we glimpse) OF BIGGS MAKING LOVE TO MRS. FINCH. He sits down. Hitchcock takes out a neatly typed document and hands it to Biggs.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

I want the President's signature on this. It supersedes any directive from Henson to close my division or relieve me of my post.

Biggs stares at Hitchcock, defeated.

COL. HITCHCOCK

I also want Speaker Finch on my side. Your aide saved his life. Talk to him. And there's one more thing.

SENATOR BIGGS

What's that?

COL. HITCHCOCK

Get rid of your assistant.

SENATOR BIGGS

You dirty son of a bitch.

FULL SCREEN TV - CNN REPORTER

CNN REPORTER

In a bizarre twist of events, the Chinese Trade Minister Nan Yung Ch'u left the negotiation table this morning under protest. In the closed-door meeting, President Carson and his team apparently offended the Chinese trade delegation. Minister Nan Yung Ch'u made a brief statement outside the White House.

Cut to footage:

REPORTER

Why are you leaving the table, sir?

NAN YUNG CH'U

(angry)

They give away everything. Agree to all Chinese demands. No counter negotiation. No one is that stupid. This can only be a trick!

INT. JACK'S CAR - MOVING - AIRPORT - WINTER - MORNING

Jack takes the ARRIVALS exit. His radio is on.

RADIO REPORTER V.O.

Time will tell if this gaffe in U.S.-China relations proves to be a setback in the President's bid for reelection.

JACK - PUZZLED REACTION as he pulls up to --

EXT. AIRLINE ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Deerborn is waiting at the curb, arms folded, scowling at him.

INT. JACK'S CAR - MOVING - LATER - DAY

The car pulls into the Biotech lot. Jack and Dr. Deerborn are in the middle of a screaming match.

DR. DEERBORN  
I never told you about Falkan  
Limited, understood?

JACK  
All right, just calm down! Do  
that sobering up trick!

She angrily passes her hand over her face like a magic trick and seems to calm down. But she's seething inside:

DR. DEERBORN  
Now what is your question?

JACK  
The IQ viruses were engineered to  
increase brain function, correct?

DR. DEERBORN  
Of course they were! So what?

JACK  
Is it possible that one of them  
could decrease brain function?

DR. DEERBORN  
Of course it is! So what?

JACK  
Well, what would that mean?

DR. DEERBORN  
Obviously, it would mean that  
instead of getting smart, you'd  
get stupid. Although in your case,  
there'd be no effect at all.

A car pulls out in front of him and he barely swerves around it.

JACK  
Shit!

DR. DEERBORN  
Case in point. Now slow down.

JACK

Don't tell me how to goddamn  
drive.

He screeches to a stop at the Biotech Entrance.

JACK (CONT'D)

Get the paperwork and sign it and  
give it to Dr. Pitt. Please. I  
have to meet Biggs at the  
hospital.

DR. DEERBORN

(as she grabs her  
bag)

After I shut down the project, I'm  
getting back on that plane and I  
don't ever want to see or hear  
from you again, agreed?

JACK

I couldn't agree more.

She gets out and SLAMS the door. He peels out without  
looking at her and drives away, cursing.

EXT. BETHESDA NAVAL HOSPITAL - ESTABLISHING - DAY

INT. PHYSICAL THERAPY ROOM - DAY

Jack enters. Senator Biggs is crouched next to Speaker  
Finch, who sits in a hospital hot tub. Finch, in a  
bathing suit, is feebly exercising his legs on underwater  
foot-pedals. Biggs poses with him for a handful of  
photographers.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Big smile, senators.

Biggs and Finch both smile as CAMERAS FLASH.

SENATOR BIGGS

That's enough, boys. We don't  
want to tire out the Speaker.

Biggs winks at Finch, then strides over to Jack and pulls  
him aside. Jack knows something is wrong.

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

(sotto)

Jack, I'm afraid there's been a  
change in plans.

CLOSE - HOT TUB - FINCH'S BATHING SUIT

As the old man continues pedaling, his bathing suit string becomes tangled in the foot pedals, a disaster in the making.

BACK TO JACK AND BIGGS

Jack is angry at their whispered conversation:

JACK

(sotto)

What do you mean we're not shutting down the project? I just made Dr. Deerborn cut short her vacation!

There a garbled SCREAM behind them. They turn to see --

FINCH - yanked underwater by the pedals tangled in his shorts.

BACK TO SCENE

SENATOR BIGGS

Jesus Christ!

Biggs and Jack rush to the hot tub. Biggs rips the tub's plug out of the wall as Jack jumps into the water, scoops Finch out of the tub and onto the floor. Jack tries to give the unconscious Finch mouth to mouth resuscitation, but the air blows the artificial larynx off his neck and splutters out the neck hole.

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

Cover the goddamn blow hole!

Jack puts his thumb over the neck hole and tries again but the air still escapes. So Jack covers Finch's mouth with his hand and starts blowing air into the neck hole. CAMERAS FLASH as Finch revives, spluttering water. Suddenly realizing what he's done, Biggs whispers angrily to Jack:

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

(sotto)

Shit! Who are you working for?!

Jack's cell phone BEEPS; he grabs it.

JACK

Senator Biggs' line. Yes, Mr. President. He's right here.

Dripping wet, he hands the phone to Biggs. As Biggs talks to the President, Jack helps two nurses carry Finch to his bed.

## ON JACK AND FINCH

As the nurses check his vitals, the old man clutches Jack's hand and points vehemently to his neck hole. Understanding, Jack quickly replaces the artificial larynx.

SPEAKER FINCH

(via voicebox)

Thank you. You saved my life.

JACK

You're welcome, Mr. Speaker. Can you breathe, sir?

SPEAKER FINCH

As well as I can with this box in my throat.

JACK

You sound fine to me, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER FINCH

You're too kind. But this machine is hideous. I would give anything to have my real voice. To be able to talk again.

JACK

It must be tough, sir.

Biggs enters shot, tactfully takes Jack aside.

SENATOR BIGGS

(sotto to Jack)

Get your ass over to the White House and pick up a spare ear piece from Henriette. The President sat on it.

JACK

(sotto)

What ear piece?

SENATOR BIGGS

(sotto)

His aides read his speeches to him through an ear piece. He couldn't memorize a goddamn McDonald's menu.

JACK

(sotto)

He's got a hundred aides. Why doesn't he send them?

SENATOR BIGGS

(sotto)

Because he only trusts me. And he needs it right away.

JACK

Sir, about the project --

SENATOR BIGGS

Never mind that now. Just hurry.  
The old boy's on a rampage.

JACK

Yes, sir.

Jack leaves; Biggs goes to Finch's bedside, smiles and poses with Finch for the photographers.

EXT. N.R.A RALLY - D.C. FAIRGROUNDS - DAY

A large crowd of gun and second amendment enthusiasts are picnicking and waiting for the President to appear. Reelection banners and pro-gun signs pepper the crowd.

INT. DRESSING ROOM TRAILER - BEHIND RALLY STAGE - DAY

Carson is on the phone. His left hand is bandaged. The crushed ear piece is on the make-up table. Six collegiate assistants, two agents and his hair stylist are absorbing his rage.

PRESIDENT CARSON

(on phone)

You mean Biggs didn't come himself? Well, when did he leave? Thank Christ! Henriette, get me another assistant immediately! Somebody who won't put equipment on a chair when I'm about to goddamn sit down!

(hangs up; to  
stylist)

It's windy out there! Get that big-ass can of hair spray!

The President sits. As the stylist begins spraying his hair, Jack rushes in and hands Carson the ear piece.

JACK

Here's the ear piece, sir.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Thank Christ.

As Carson fits it into his ear:

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

Now listen, son. General Stanton just called. He said Hitchcock showed up at a meeting ten minutes ago. The Senator was supposed to fire his ass yesterday!

JACK

I'm sure he's handling it, sir.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Well, you tell Biggs to get over to that goddamn meeting and throw that son of a bitch out.

JACK

Sir, Senator Biggs is still at Bethesda at Senator Finch's bedside.

PRESIDENT CARSON

How's the old boy doing?

JACK

I'm afraid not very well, sir.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Too bad. All right, then, I know you know how to handle yourself. You get over there and fire Hitchcock yourself.

JACK

Me?

PRESIDENT CARSON

(ignoring Jack; to  
Assistant 2)

You. Call the Pentagon and authorize a security clearance so the kid can access that meeting. Now give me a test on this goddamn thing!

Assistant 1 sits at the radio console and microphone and tests the ear piece.

ASSISTANT 1

Test, test, test --

PRESIDENT CARSON

We're in business. Let's rock and roll.

He strides out, followed by his entourage, as Jack waits for Assistant 2 who is on line to the Pentagon.



EXT. SIDE OF STAGE - BEHIND CURTAINS - DAY

The crowd cheers for Carson to come out. Carson's assistants quickly check his makeup, hair and ear piece as he peeks out at the crowd.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)  
 Listen to those yahoo assholes.  
 (to his bodyguard)  
 I got an idea. Gimme that piece.

Carson takes the agent's gun out of its holster and stuffs it under his belt.

AGENT 1  
 What are you doing, sir?

PRESIDENT CARSON  
 Becoming one with my audience.

EXT. N.R.A. RALLY STAGE - DAY

President Carson walks onstage to APPLAUSE, goes to the podium, begins a rousing speech.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)  
 Thank you! Fellow Americans! The  
 right to bear arms...

INT. TRAILER - SAME TIME - INTERCUT Assistant 1 at the microphone feeding Carson the speech.

ASSISTANT 1  
 ...equates to the right to be an  
 American.

EXT. N.R.A. RALLY STAGE - DAY

PRESIDENT CARSON  
 ...equates to the right to be an  
 American!

(CHEERS)  
 A gun is the great philosophical  
 leveler of ideologies, the cold  
 steel insurance policy against  
 tyranny!

(CHEERS) (CONT'D)  
 America wants this insurance  
 policy! America needs this  
 insurance policy! And with William  
 Carson in the White House, it will  
 have this insurance policy!

The audience goes wild.

INT. TRAILER - SAME TIME

Jack listens to the muffled applause. Assistant 2 hangs up the phone, writes something on a piece of paper and hands it to Jack.

ASSISTANT 2

You're cleared. Hurry.

Jack nods and leaves.

EXT. N.R.A. RALLY STAGE - DAY

Carson, improvising, whips out the gun, holds it up to the crowd.

PRESIDENT CARSON

This is what we're talking about,  
my friends!

ANGLE ON SECRET SERVICE AGENTS

at the sides and front of the stage reacting.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 1

(sotto)

What the hell is he doing?!

They quickly creep closer to the stage.

BACK TO SCENE - Seeing the agents nervously moving towards him, Carson smiles and waves them back.

PRESIDENT CARSON

(to agents)

Take it easy, boys!

(to crowd)

Some of my men here are getting a  
little jumpy! It's OK, boys! It's  
just a gun!

(CROWD CHEERS)

And we all know what a gun does!  
It goes - bang!

Carson FIRES the gun into the air. The crowd CHEERS, going absolutely wild. Overconfident, Carson lowers the gun, fumbles with it and accidentally SHOTS himself in the right foot.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

God damn it!

Secret service agents rush the stage as Carson jumps up and down on his left foot, accidentally SHOOTING the gun repeatedly into the stage.

The agents grab the gun from Carson and check his foot.  
Assistant 1 hurries to the microphone.

ASSISTANT 1

The President is all right!  
Everyone is all right!

The Agents instantly have Carson on a stretcher. As they carry him offstage, he waves to the crowd. Playing down his injury, Carson smiles and FIRES into the air repeatedly.

ANGLE ON CROWD

They CHEER in a rousing standing ovation.

FULL SCREEN TV - NEWS REPORT

showing the SURGEON GENERAL, 50, in front of Bethesda Naval Hospital.

SURGEON GENERAL

Fortunately, the bullet passed through the sole of the President's foot without any arterial damage. President Carson is fine and will be released later today.

Footage cuts to COKIE ROBERTS on the scene:

COKIE ROBERTS TO CAMERA

That was the Surgeon General on the President's condition. Bethesda Naval Hospital itself was the scene of a startling drama today. While in physical therapy, House Speaker Thurgood Finch was dragged underwater by malfunctioning equipment. Congressional Aide Jack Cervello administered C.P.R., saving the Speaker's life for the second time this week --

PAN TO SENATOR BIGGS' DESK. The ATTRACTIVE WOMAN from the banquet is straddling him in his desk chair. They are making love with their clothes on as he watches the TV report.

SENATOR BIGGS

Shit!  
(punches his head  
with his fist)  
Twice! Twice!

She kisses him and they resume making love.

EXT. PENTAGON - ESTABLISHING - DAY

INT. PENTAGON - HALLWAY - DAY

Jack is being led down a corridor by an adjutant. Jack's cell phone BEEPS; he answers it.

JACK

Cervello.

DR. DEERBORN ON PHONE

This is Dr. Deerbourn.

JACK

(sotto)

Hi. I'm a little tied up right now. I'm supposed to fire one of the two morons we discussed the other night.

DR. DEERBORN ON PHONE

(urgently)

Listen to me. You were right. There's been an outbreak at the lab.

Jack stops.

JACK

I'm listening.

DR. DEERBORN ON PHONE

I took blood tests from the staff. It's a virus that affects the mind. Get over here as soon as you can.

CLICK. Jack stares at the phone, stunned.

INT. PENTAGON - STRATEGIC COMMAND - DAY

The adjutant ushers Jack into the darkly lit room. The Joint Chiefs and other military personnel are seated at a conference table. Technicians are fixing wiring at the head of the table. Among those present are General Stanton, General Lazar, General Koestler and GENERAL HALFORD, 55. In front of each is a console with buttons. The adjutant seats Jack next to Col. Hitchcock.

COL. HITCHCOCK

You're full of surprises, Mr. Cervello.

JACK

Colonel, I just came from the President.

Hitchcock shushes him as General Lazar rises to speak.

GENERAL LAZAR

Gentlemen, the system appears to be ready now. When the President is in transit, one instant of indecision could cost us the war. This new system allows us to reach consensus quickly while keeping our votes unanimous.

GENERAL HALFORD

(correcting him)

Anonymous.

GENERAL LAZAR

What?

GENERAL STANTON

(getting it wrong)

You mean unanimous. You said anonymous.

GENERAL LAZAR

I said unanimous.

GENERAL HALFORD

No, he meant anonymous, but he said unanimous.

GENERAL LAZAR

That's what he just said.

GENERAL STANTON

Who?

GENERAL HALFORD

You. But you said the reverse. You said that he meant --

ON COL. HITCHCOCK

COL. HITCHCOCK

Excuse me, gentlemen, but wasn't the point of this to test the voting console?

BACK TO SCENE

GENERAL LAZAR

Correct, Col. Hitchcock. Gentlemen, to test their functionality, observe the voting screen...

General Lazar presses a button. A vast SCREEN illuminates on the wall behind them with 3 headings: YEA - NAY - ABSTAIN.

GENERAL LAZAR (CONT'D)

Very well. When I direct you to do so, please press the YEA button on the console in front of you.

About half of the men immediately press the YEA button. The Screen BUZZES and tabulates: "YEAS - 12"

GENERAL LAZAR (CONT'D)

No, not yet!

GENERAL HALFORD

Don't press YEA until he tells you to, damn it!

GENERAL LAZAR

Let's try it again. Let me clear the screen, which I believe is this button...

GENERAL HALFORD

No, not that one!

General Lazar presses the wrong button and the room goes dark. Confused WALLA from the crowd in the dark.

GENERAL HALFORD V.O.

What's wrong with you?

GENERAL LAZAR V.O.

Just help me find the right button.

GENERAL HALFORD V.O.

I can't see a damned thing.

GENERAL KOESTLER V.O.

I've got some matches somewhere.

ON JACK - Illuminated by the glowing console buttons, he whispers to Hitchcock:

JACK

Colonel, we have to talk.

COL. HITCHCOCK

Make an appointment.

JACK

I spoke to the President. You're fired.

Hitchcock leans close to Jack.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
No, Mr. Cervello. You're fired.

There's a sudden commotion; they turn to --

HEAD OF THE TABLE

General Koestler accidentally lights an entire book of matches. The flame flares up and catches his sleeve on fire.

GENERAL KOESTLER  
Damn it!

General Stanton tries to hit the flames out with his military hat, but accidentally catches his hat on fire.

GENERAL STANTON  
Shit!

General Stanton panics and tosses the hat, which hits the big screen and sets it on fire.

GENERAL HALFORD  
My God, fire! Fire!

The sprinkler system HISSES on overhead, spraying everyone as they YELL confusedly.

ON JACK

Soaked, he sees Hitchcock's chair empty and the generals scrambling in the dark. MOVE IN ON JACK thinking the unthinkable:

JACK  
(mutters)  
They couldn't all have it...

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - ESTABLISHING - DAY

INT. SENATE CHAMBER - DAY

TWELVE SENATORS, all perplexed, are seated around a table going through stacks of reports. Among them are Senator Biggs, SEN. TAYBACK, 60, SEN. ZWERGE, 50 and SEN. UNSON, 40.

SENATOR UNSON  
This figure can't be right.

SENATOR TAYBACK  
What figure?

SENATOR UNSON  
The figure we're looking at.

SENATOR TAYBACK  
The figure at the top?

SENATOR ZWERGE  
No, that's the page number.

SENATOR BIGGS  
Senator, we're talking about how much we owe the banks when Congress goes back in session.

SENATOR UNSON  
How can we possibly owe this much money?

SENATOR BIGGS  
Because we spent four trillion dollars in the eighties.

SENATOR ZWERGE  
The bottom line, gentlemen. If we don't have the money in three days, we have to shut down the government.

The all burst out in an angry WALLA. Tayback waves his arms.

SENATOR TAYBACK  
Quiet please! I have a plan!

They quiet down and listen.

SENATOR TAYBACK (CONT'D)  
The answer is simple. The government is a business. And we'll do what any other business does when it runs out of money.

SENATOR BIGGS  
What's that, Senator?

ON SENATOR TAYBACK

SENATOR TAYBACK  
We raise the prices.

INT. BIOTECH - ANIMAL LAB - DAY

Jack and Deerborn are alone in the lab. She takes a pin-prick of blood from Jack's finger.



DR. DEERBORN

When I got the results from their blood tests, I sent everybody home and told them to stay there. I told them the project was shut down.

She smears Jack's blood on a microscope slide.

JACK

Where's Dr. Pitt?

DR. DEERBORN

Nobody's seen him all day. I left messages but he hasn't called.

She examines Jack's blood under the microscope. She sighs and stares at him.

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

You and I have it too.

JACK

(shocked)  
Have what?

DR. DEERBORN

Look.

He looks in the microscope.

INSERT - MICROSCOPE VIEW - BLOOD SAMPLE WITH VIRUS

DR. DEERBORN V.O.

The angular corpuscles are the virus. It's airborne, I'd say mildly infectious, but with a short incubation period. You and I must have gotten it after the others. Just like the common cold, everybody's susceptibility will vary.

BACK TO SCENE - Jack takes this in.

JACK

Jesus. We've all got it?

DR. DEERBORN

Everyone I checked. You'd need a tough immune system to resist it.

JACK

Are we - are we going to die?

DR. DEERBORN

Worse. Your guess was right. It slowly shuts down the neurotransmitters that regulate higher brain functions, but otherwise causes no pathology.

JACK

How do you know all this?

DR. DEERBORN

Everyone here took an IQ test last Fall. I gave them the same test this morning under a pretext. The scores dropped at least thirty points. I was able to extrapolate that the virus keeps lowering the IQ until it levels out at approximately 83.

JACK

How bad is 83?

DR. DEERBORN

Moron level.

JACK

That explains the President.

DR, DEERBORN

In my opinion, he was already a moron.

JACK

How come you're so smart?

DR. DEERBORN

It's just my trick.

She passes her hand over her face as before.

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

I'm forcing myself to look intelligent. Inside I'm on the verge of hysteria.

Jack touches her shoulder comfortingly. She looks at him, suddenly vulnerable and afraid. He touches her face. She's trembling. He leans forward to kiss her. Fighting herself, she suddenly slaps him.

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

JACK

Nothing!

DR. DEERBORN

We're facing an epidemic and  
you're trying to make out with me?

JACK

Jesus, you've got a problem, you  
know that?

DR. DEERBORN

We've both got a problem. We've  
got to find the host immediately.

JACK

The what?

DR. DEERBORN

The host. One of these forty nine  
rats and chimps. If we find it, we  
can develop an antibody serum from  
its blood. That's the cure. I  
asked if anyone was bit or  
scratched or jabbed themselves  
with a needle. Nothing.

Jack looks over the rows of cages.

JACK

I've got to tell Biggs.

INT. BIGGS' OFFICE - DAY

Jack enters. Outer office filled with busy interns. He  
goes to enter the inner office when Sydney stops him.

SYDNEY

He's not in. He left this for  
you.

She hands him an envelope. He opens it takes out a check.

JACK

Final paycheck? What the hell is  
this?

SYDNEY

I'm very sorry. I'll need your  
cell phone and your security  
badges back.

JACK

Where is he?

SYDNEY

I can't tell you that.

Jack takes over her computer, clicks on Biggs' meeting calendar.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Stop that!

He scans the calendar as she tries to stop him. He quickly finds what he's looking for, mutters:

JACK

Emergency meeting at the White House.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

The President, his left hand and right foot in bandages, is meeting with TWENTY MEN AND WOMEN, including Biggs, Tayback, Zwerge and Unson. Unson is showing a pie graph on a computer.

SENATOR UNSON

-- as a result of the escalating debt, .01% of every tax dollar goes to run the country, and 99.99% goes to pay the interest.

The door opens and Henriette whispers to the President.

HENRIETTE

(sotto)

Excuse me, Mr, President. Senator Biggs' assistant is --

SENATOR BIGGS

Henriette, ask him to wait outside.

PRESIDENT CARSON

No, send him in! Give him a taste of how our government works first hand.

She lets Jack in, then exits. Biggs eyes Jack uncomfortably.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

Have a seat, son.

(Jack sits; Carson turns back to the group)

Now get to the point, gentlemen.

SENATOR TAYBACK

The point is, Mr. President, we need to pay this off now or we're in deep shit.

SENATOR TAYBACK (CONT'D)

The fact is, each citizen owes his fair share. That works out to 13 thousand apiece for every man, woman and child in America.

PRESIDENT CARSON

So?

SENATOR TAYBACK

So if somebody owes you money, you send 'em a bill.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Thirteen thousand each?

SENATOR TAYBACK

Mr. President, that's how much they owe.

A pause; they wait for the President's reaction. A look of anger ripples across his face. He slams his good hand on the table.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Now, wait just one goddamn minute!  
(thinks hard for a beat)  
What kind of a payment plan did you have in mind?

SENATOR UNSON

No payment plan, sir. We need the money now or the country's bankrupt. But we've figured out a way to lessen the tax burden on the public.

(indicates five officials)

These gentlemen and ladies are from Master Card, Exxon, Citibank, Visa and American Express. They've agreed to lower their interest rates for what we'll call "Special Deficit Loans" and arrange payment plans to fit the public's pocketbook.

ON THE PRESIDENT - Carson touches his chin and nods.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Interesting plan.

ON JACK - Before he can stop himself, he blurts out:

JACK

But - but that's idiotic!

BACK TO SCENE - They all turn to him.

JACK (CONT'D)

(tactfully)

I mean, Mr. President, that's not the American way. In effect, everybody will be working for the government. That's a socialist state. This is a democracy.

PRESIDENT CARSON

You show some respect, son. These gentlemen have worked all their lives to preserve our democratic way of life.

JACK

I know that, I'm sorry, sir.

PRESIDENT CARSON

(winks playfully)

Besides, son, if the Founding Fathers were alive today, they'd all owe on their gold cards.

Everyone (except Jack) chuckles.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

But hold on here...

(to credit card executives)

That's a lot of payment plans. How are you going to keep track of when each payment is due? Nowadays you gotta call people. You'd need to hire a shitload of new employees.

SENATOR UNSON

Exactly, Mr. President. That's the beauty of it. No one below the poverty level will be required to pay. They'll work off the money. Which is the name of our bill...

Unson shows a graphic on monitor: "The Full Employment Act."

SENATOR UNSON (CONT'D)

The Full Employment Act. Every homeless or unemployed person will have a government job keeping track of all payment plans.

SENATOR UNSON (CONT'D)

And they'll be on the cutting edge of telemarketing, the fastest-growing industry in America, processing payments and working with consumer complaints.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Now wait just a minute, boys. This is a goddamn election year. Everett, is this going to hurt us come Fall?

SENATOR BIGGS

It's a gamble, Mr. President. But if you sign this into law, it will be the first time that every citizen in America will be employed. You'll make history.

Henriette quietly enters and whispers to Carson.

HENRIETTE

Excuse me, Mr. President, but you're late for the Pentagon.

PRESIDENT CARSON

All right, boys. You work out the details and I'll sign it tomorrow.

INT. WHITE HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

As everyone hurries out in a WALLA of excitement, Jack corners Biggs and pulls out the envelope Sydney gave him.

JACK

(sotto)  
Senator, what is this?

Biggs tries to snow him.

SENATOR BIGGS

I'm sorry it didn't work out, son. I'm sure you'll have great success elsewhere.

He hurries away. Jack stays with him, whispering fiercely.

JACK

(sotto)  
Senator, listen to me. A virus got loose at Biotech. It shuts down brain functions and we've all got it. I need you to authorize a task force so we can find the host and synthesize a serum before --

Biggs interrupts him and whispers fiercely:

SENATOR BIGGS

(sotto)

Son, being fired hurts like hell,  
but I thought you'd take it like a  
man. Just understand that I had no  
choice. Good-bye, Jack.

He hurries away. Jack starts to lose it.

JACK

Damn it, did you hear what I just  
said? We've all got a disease!  
The President has it! I have it!  
You have it, Senator!

Biggs signals secret service agents who violently grab Jack.

SENATOR BIGGS

(to agents)

This boy's been fired and he's  
having trouble handling it. Will  
you gentlemen please escort him  
out and see that he stays out?

They drag Jack away as Jack tries to fight them off.

JACK

Damn it, Senator! It's the truth!  
Call the lab!

Biggs hurries down the hall.

INT. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE

Agent 1 is playing a recording for Hitchcock.

JACK ON TAPE

Senator, a virus got loose at  
Biotech. It shuts down brain  
functions and we've all got it. I  
need you to authorize a task force  
so we can find the host and  
synthesize a serum before --

SENATOR BIGGS ON TAPE

Son, being fired hurts like hell,  
but I thought you'd take it like a  
man. Just understand that I had  
no choice. Good-bye, Jack.

JACK ON TAPE

Did you hear what I just said?  
We've all got a disease!



JACK ON TAPE (CONT'D)

The President has it! I have it!  
You have it, Senator!

The agent switches off the tape.

AGENT 1

What do you make of it, sir?

MOVE IN ON HITCHCOCK

COL. HITCHCOCK

An opportunity.

FULL SCREEN TV - EVENING NEWS

NEWS ANCHOR

We've just gotten word that the President was in another accident, this time at the Pentagon. If there are small children watching, please use parental discretion for the following graphic news footage. Let's go to Carey McWilliams live on the scene.

Cut to Carey live on the Pentagon lawn where people are yelling and running about chaotically.

CAREY MCWILLIAMS

Only moments ago, a bizarre accident came to a close when the President's finger was accidentally cut off during a ceremony here dedicating a new wing of the Pentagon. Our cameras caught this footage...

Cut to news footage: Carson uses giant scissors to cut a ceremonial ribbon over an entrance. A large crowd watches as camera flash. As he cuts, we hear a sickening CRUNCH.

CAREY MCWILLIAMS V.O.

As you can see, the President was cutting the ribbon when his hand slipped and his finger literally flew off into the crowd.

Chaotic handheld footage shows Carson's finger flying through the air and caught by a dog in the crowd. We hear chaotic dialogue:

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 1 O.S.

Get the finger! Get the finger!

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 2 O.S.

The dog's got it! Get him!

Agents chase the dog through crowd. Cut back to Carey.

CAREY MCWILLIAMS

The finger was recovered and a team of surgeons at Bethesda Naval Hospital worked for two hours to sew it back in place.

Footage cuts to the Surgeon General making a statement:

SURGEON GENERAL

The finger was successfully reattached and we have every reason to believe that the President will recover full use of the finger within a year.

The news cuts back to the anchorman.

NEWS ANCHOR

The President is resting at Bethesda Naval Hospital in a room next to House Speaker Thurgood Finch.

EXT. BIOTECH - NIGHT

Jack's car SCREECHES to a stop at the entrance, one wheel over the curb. Jack gets out, SLAMS the door, goes inside.

INT. BIOTECH EMPLOYEE LOUNGE - NIGHT

Jack enters and sees --

DEERBORN - sitting on the lounge sofa holding a cup of hot coffee, her eyes closed. The TV is on, showing a wrestling match.

BACK TO SCENE. Jack touches her shoulder. Startled, she jolts awake, spilling the coffee on his crotch. Jack's eyes widen.

JACK

Shit!

DR. DEERBORN

Oh, God, I'm sorry!

She grabs a handful of paper towels, goes to wipe his pants, then stops, embarrassed to touch his crotch. Seeing this, he grabs the towels and wipes it up himself. She sits back, depressed.

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

I'm an idiot, aren't I. I thought the virus would take longer for me, considering. But maybe a high IQ makes the neuron shut-downs seem more extreme. I mean, you know, by contrast.

Calming down, he sits next to her on the sofa and tries to make her feel better.

JACK

That was a pretty smart analysis. You couldn't be too dumb, right?

She thinks, becoming alert.

DR. DEERBORN

You're right... Thanks. What did Biggs say? Where's the task force?

JACK

There is none. The Senator fired me.

DR. DEERBORN

Oh, God. I'm so sorry. Are you all right?

She touches his shoulder. They look at each other.

JACK

I stopped and had a few drinks.

Suddenly, unexpectedly, there's sexual tension between them. They stare at each other for a long beat. Imperceptibly, they draw closer in a slow magnetic pull. Finally, they kiss. It's loving and passionate. Then they stop & stare at each other in amazement.

DR. DEERBORN

I really like you.

JACK

I think I love you.

They kiss again. More passionately. As they continue kissing:

JACK (CONT'D)

It was when you patted the monkey.

DR. DEERBORN

What?

JACK

That's when I fell in love with you. You calmed down the chimp.

DR. DEERBORN

It was when you said I had a secure self-image.

JACK

What?

DR. DEERBORN

That's when I fell in love with you.

JACK

This is more like it.

DR. DEERBORN

I only made love two times before.

JACK

That's very sweet.

DR. DEERBORN

Let's not make love yet.

JACK

That's very stupid.

DR. DEERBORN

It is?

JACK

Yes. Your IQ must be plummeting.

DR. DEERBORN

How can we fall in love so quickly?

JACK

I don't know. Do we have to discuss it now?

She stops kissing him. They are both out of breath.

DR. DEERBORN

Yes. We have to make sure we're really in love, that it's not just the virus. Do you understand?

JACK

Yes. Yes. Yes.

Exhausted, Jack lies back with her on the sofa and closes his eyes. She puts her head on his shoulder and closes hers.

FULL SCREEN TV - NEWSCAST - LATER

A REPORTER in front of Bethesda.

REPORTER

Never has stranger series of events happened in and around the Presidency since the final days of Richard Nixon. With his finger sewn back on, President Carson has insisted on signing into legislation a new bill from his hospital bed.

Cut to footage of Carson in a hospital bed with his right middle finger extended in a splint. He is surrounded by senators, including Biggs, as he signs the bill to scattered APPLAUSE and camera FLASHES. Over this:

REPORTER V.O.

The Full Employment Act purports to employ every American citizen, and at the same time pay off the national debt in one fell swoop. In a press release signed by the president, I quote, "The American way is for everyone to pay his or her fair share."

Cut to footage of homeless already stuffing envelopes.

REPORTER V.O. (CONT'D)

The Full Employment program began hiring the homeless immediately upon the signing of the Bill. The public will get their bills tomorrow. How much do we each owe? That's a secret the government hasn't told us yet.

INT. COL. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Hitchcock is alone typing online on his computer.

INTERCUT HIS COMPUTER SCREEN as he types: "FOOTBALL POOL - TOMORROW 3 P.M. R.S.V.P."

INT. GENERAL LAZAR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Lazar reads the message on his computer and types: "COUNT ME IN."

BRIEF MONTAGE: GENERAL KOESTLER AND C.I.A. OFFICIALS

At computers reading Hitchcock's message, typing responses.

INT. BIOTECH EMPLOYEE LOUNGE - MORNING

Jack is alone sleeping on the sofa. There's a CLATTERING noise and he wakes up. He sees Dr. Deerborn washing her thumb in the sink. She dries her thumb and puts a bandaid on it.

JACK

You all right?

DR. DEERBORN

Yes. The coffee. I was too stupid to realize I burned my thumb.

ON JACK staring at the bandaid on her thumb.

FLASH TO JACK'S MEMORY: THE BAND-AID ON DR. PITT'S THUMB.

BACK TO JACK - REACTION - Stunned.

INT. BIOTECH SECURITY ROOM - MINUTES LATER

There's a BANGING at the door. The door bursts in, broken in by Jack, followed by Dr. Deerborn. They rush to the shelf of security camera tapes and quickly scan the dates. She grabs one.

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

This is it!

ON A VIDEO MONITOR - MINUTES LATER

Jack and Dr. Deerborn are fast-forwarding in search mode through a security tape of the Animal Lab.

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

Stop! There he is!

Jack stops the fast-forward.

OTS - THE TAPE - On tape, Dr. Pitt enters the Lab alone, takes the Blue Rat from its cage and is about to put it in the Haight Box -- when the rat bites his thumb. Pitt is seen sucking on his thumb, then angrily replacing the rat in its cage. FREEZE FRAME.

BACK TO SCENE - Jack REWINDS and points to the rat's collar.

JACK  
The blue rat. He's the host.

INT. ANIMAL LAB - MINUTES LATER

Jack and Deerborn run into the lab to where the Blue Rat's cage should be. Gone. They hear a noise in the hall and look out.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

It's a JANITOR mopping the floor.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Excuse me. Did you see anyone carrying a cage?

JANITOR  
Yeah. Two guys around four in the morning. Flashed a badge, said they were Feds.

INT. JACK'S CAR - MOVING - MORNING

Jack and Dr. Deerborn are driving.

JACK  
Hitchcock's got the blue rat. Pitt must've talked. And if they're making the serum at Langley, that means they're keeping it a secret.

DR. DEERBORN  
But why?

JACK  
I don't know.

EXT. C.I.A. HEADQUARTERS, LANGLEY - DAY

INT. C.I.A. R & D - GENETIC LAB - DAY

ON BLUE RAT lying on a lab table. WIDEN to reveal Dr. Pitt drawing the rat's blood with a syringe.

INT. C.I.A. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Col. Hitchcock is talking to EIGHT SCIENTISTS who are seated reading a report.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
Team A will synthesize an antibody serum to neutralize the virus.  
Team B will synthesize the virus itself.

COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

As the report specifies, the project requires liters of the virus, and 4 liters of the serum. When the serum is completed, I want it brought directly to me.  
(checks his watch)  
You have till 0200 hours.

INT. C.I.A. R & D - MAIN LAB - DAY

In assembly-line fashion, Dr. Pitt supervises the two teams of scientists synthesizing the virus and the serum.

INT. FELIPE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Felipe is eating breakfast with his wife ANNA and their two kids as she opens the mail. It's their Full Employment Act bill. She reads it in shock:

ANNA

Honey... this says we owe thirteen thousand dollars...

FELIPE

What?

ANNE

Apiece! Fifty-two thousand dollars total with the kids!

He grabs the bill and reads it in disbelief.

FELIPE

"Payment Plan Hotline - \$2.99 a minute."

Furious, he grabs the phone and begins making the call.

FULL SCREEN TV - BRIEF CLIP - "THE MCLAUGHLIN GROUP"

JOHN MCLAUGHLIN

Morton, your opinion of the so-called Full Employment Act?

MORTON KONDRACKE

The most absurd legislation in the history of this country.

JOHN MCLAUGHLIN

Correct. The government has gone completely, utterly haywire.

EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN U.S. CITIES - DAY

MONTAGE OF DISSENT: Citizens angrily receiving their deficit tax bills in the mail; students demonstrating by burning their bills.



EXT. C.I.A HEADQUARTERS - MAIN GATE - DAY

Jack and Deerborn pull up to the gate behind a school bus. They flash their ID and park in the lot, trying to look casual.

INT. JACK'S CAR - DAY

JACK

Let's hope security is infected.

They exit the car and fall in behind a line of children following their teachers to the entrance.

INT. C.I.A. LOBBY - DAY

The lobby is filled with people coming and going through security check-points.

ON SECURITY OFFICERS

They seem unable to operate the security equipment, pressing wrong buttons and making ALARMS go off.

BACK TO SCENE. In the hubbub, Jack and Deerborn follow the kids through security, pretending to be their teachers.

FULL SCREEN TV - NEWSCAST

NEWS ANCHOR

Outcry today against the Full Employment Act has been disrupting business as usual throughout the country.

Cut to NEWS FOOTAGE showing crowds with SIGNS - "IMPEACH CARSON", "IMPEACH CONGRESS", "THE JERK FROM JERSEY", etc. - chanting in different cities.

PROTESTERS CHANT 1

Carson's a leech - we must  
impeach!

PROTESTER CHANT 2

Pay them dough? Just say no!

PROTESTER CHANT 3

No more taxes - no more bills!  
Carson, Congress - imbeciles!

PAN from TV to Carson and his assistants watching in --

INT. OVAL OFFICE - DAY

Carson paces and tries to think.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
 Shit! I want everyone employed  
 and the debt paid off! What the  
 hell do they want from me?

ASSISTANT 1  
 I'd have a press conference, sir.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
 Are you the goddamn President?

ASSISTANT 1  
 No, sir.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
 Then shut up!

ASSISTANT 2  
 Sir, don't you think you should  
 make a statement?

PRESIDENT CARSON  
 Shut up! I have to think!  
 (paces)  
 I can't give some boring, phony  
 speech. They'd crucify me. I've  
 got to relate to those assholes on  
 their own level. I've got to be an  
 upbeat, party President...

ASSISTANT 1  
 (meekly)  
 Sir, if you and Mrs. Carson decide  
 to go to the Super Bowl, perhaps  
 we could arrange for you to  
 address the crowd and --

MOVE IN ON CARSON, thunderstruck.

PRESIDENT CARSON  
 That's it.  
 (points to Assistant  
 1)  
 You. Write me a speech on how the  
 Full Employment Act will make  
 everyone a millionaire. Make sure  
 Tiff and I have two padded box  
 seats. That's where I'll talk to  
 the people!

INT. COL. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - DAY

Hitchcock is at his desk. Agent 1 enters and hands him a  
 document.

AGENT 1

Sir, the blood tests came back  
from the lab. They all have the  
virus too.

Hitchcock studies the paper for a beat, then rips it in  
two.

HITCHCOCK

No, they don't.

AGENT 1

(confused)  
Sorry sir?

HITCHCOCK

As far as they're concerned, they  
all have natural immunity. And so  
do we, understood?

AGENT 1

(after a beat)  
Not really.

INT. C.I.A. HALLWAY - DAY

Jack and Deerborn slip away from the line of children and  
go down a busy corridor. They hear VOICES behind them  
and turn to see --

HITCHCOCK AND BIGGS

heading their way with a group of officials.

ANOTHER ANGLE - JACK AND DR. DEERBORN

In front of them, TWO WORKERS carrying files collide,  
scattering papers all over the floor. Jack and Deerborn  
quickly kneel beside them, pretending to help pick up the  
papers. They peek up to see Hitchcock and the others  
insert RED SECURITY CARDS in a slot and pass through a  
door.

JACK

(sotto to Deerborn)  
Biggs is in on it. They'll lead  
us to the rat.  
(points)  
We'll need those.

Jack points to RED SECURITY CARDS clipped to the belts of  
the workers kneeling in front of them. Jack gingerly  
unclips the first badge; she almost unclips the second  
badge when the workers finish picking up the files and  
quickly rise. Jack and Deerborn get up and whisper:

DR. DEERBORN

(sotto)  
I couldn't get it!

JACK

(sotto)  
It's OK. I'll follow Hitchcock  
and find the rat. If I'm not back  
at the lab by morning, find Biggs.  
He'll know where I am.

DR. DEERBORN

(sotto)  
Be careful.

He nods and hurries to the security door. He inserts the card in the slot and enters --

INT. A LONG CORRIDOR - DAY

Jack sees Hitchcock et al far ahead: they are passing through double doors protected by guards. Jack reaches the door and shows the guards his White House badge. The guards nod and open the door for him. Jack enters --

INT. C.I.A. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - DAY

A vast and dimly lit room. Alcove lights illuminate a large circular table. Fifty OFFICIALS take their seats and are passed out reports. Among them are Hitchcock, Biggs, Finch, Lazar, Koestler and Princeton. On one wall, THREE LARGE SCREENS show aerial views from spy satellites. In an alcove separated from the main room by glass walls, banks of communication equipment are manned by dozens of workers with headsets.

ANGLE ON CONFERENCE TABLE

Hitchcock takes the central seat and calls the meeting to order.

COL. HITCHCOCK

Ladies and gentlemen, we all understand the urgency of this matter. As you can see from this report, everyone present is free from the virus. The White House and Congress, however, are infected and completely incapacitated. Obviously, we who are not infected must take charge. For the time being, the President can remain a figurehead. In all other respects, the C.I.A. will be in total control.

The officials MURMUR. This is serious.

ON SPEAKER FINCH

thumbing through the report. His digital voice pipes up:

SPEAKER FINCH

Colonel Hitchcock. Regarding this virus, has a host been discovered from whom an antibody serum could be synthesized?

BACK TO SCENE

COL. HITCHCOCK

You've been misinformed, Senator. There is no host and no known cure. Therefore, our only defense is to attack. Biochemists in my division are presently synthesizing large quantities of the virus itself. Our enemies must be neutralized. I recommend that the Agency deploy the virus as a weapon immediately.

The officials MURMUR.

GENERAL KOESTLER

(puzzled)

Enemies? Who are our enemies?

Col. Hitchcock presses a button on a console, bringing up a MAP OF THE U.S. on the big screen. Hundreds of RED DOTS cover the map.

COL. HITCHCOCK

The red dots indicate segments of the population which are working at this moment towards overthrowing the government of the United States. The intelligence of the American people is our enemy. If they cause the government to collapse in impeachment hearings, our nation will dissolve into anarchy and revolution. The solution is clear. To save the union, we must put a stop to the impeachment process.

OFFICIAL 1

How do you intend to do that, Colonel?

COL. HITCHCOCK  
By importing the virus to the  
public.

The officials MURMUR loudly.

ON JACK watching from the shadows. He's in shock.

BACK TO SCENE - Hitchcock gestures for silence.

COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)  
Consider that those individuals  
who have the virus suffer no  
effects other than decreased  
intelligence. Our only recourse  
is to import the disease. With a  
lower IQ, the public would be  
unable to organize an impeachment.  
The Union would survive.

OFFICIAL 2  
Do you have a plan for importing  
the virus, Colonel?

Hitchcock nods to DR. CHERNOFF, 40.

DR. CHERNOFF  
I am Dr. Alan Chernoff, senior  
strategist from the Rand  
Institute. Our problem was to  
determine where the virus could be  
deployed most efficiently and as  
soon as possible. There was only  
one locale which fulfilled all  
requirements for deployment...the  
Super Bowl.

The officials MURMUR loudly. Chernoff presses a button  
on the console. The big screens show the U.S. MAP with  
animated lines radiating from Miami to every major U.S.  
city.

DR. CHERNOFF (CONT'D)  
This week-end's Super Bowl at  
Miami's Pro Player Stadium is a  
nexus point for a vast cross-  
section of the population. The  
computer model shows how quickly a  
disease caught there en masse  
would spread to the entire  
population.

The animated lines show the disease spreading to every  
part of the country. Chernoff hits another button.

The screens wipe to a DIAGRAM OF THE PRO PLAYER STADIUM, showing an animated flow-chart of wind turbulence in the stadium.

DR. CHERNOFF (CONT'D)

This model shows how air turbulence in the stadium will effectively spread the virus through the entire crowd, inside and outside.

OFFICIAL 3

Exactly how will the virus be deployed?

COL. HITCHCOCK

Our plan involves a B3 dropping three radio-controlled aerosol bombs that will be timed to detonate during the half-time fireworks display.

The officials MURMUR loudly again. INTERCUT JACK sneaking closer as Hitchcock stands and signals again for silence.

COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Since I was one of the original test pilots for the B3, I will personally pilot the mission.

OFFICIAL 4

Colonel, assuming the deployment is effective, how can you be sure it will stop the impeachment process?

COL. HITCHCOCK

Along with deployment, we've worked out a sting operation, insuring that our chief enemies are infected. Our intelligence has compiled the names of all dissident journalists and liberals who are leading the cry for impeachment. We've already sent free Super Bowl tickets to everybody on the list.

OFFICIAL 5

How do you know they'll go?

COL. HITCHCOCK

Perhaps you didn't hear me. I said they were free tickets to the Super Bowl. It's foolproof.

COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)  
(rises, begins moving  
around the table)

To say that the timing for this mission is perfect would be an understatement. This is nothing short of destiny. With the Super Bowl as ground zero, the same virus which has destroyed our nation will be our nation's salvation.

PAN THE OFFICIALS as they eye each other and MURMUR. The enormity of the plan is slowly sinking in.

MOVE IN - DRAMATIC UPSHOT ON HITCHCOCK

COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)  
Ladies and gentlemen, I propose we code-name this maneuver...  
Operation Punt.

ON JACK

He can't stand any more. He shows himself and yells at Hitchcock:

JACK  
Listen to me! You can't bomb the Super Bowl! This gentleman is - is psychotic. He doesn't even work here anymore.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
Get him!

Agent 1 grabs Jack.

COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)  
You're under arrest, Mr. Cervello.

Jack breaks free and they wrestle against the table, sending reports flying.

BACK TO SCENE

Jack punches Agent 1. Another agent grabs him. Jack throws him off and a FIGHT begins. Not one to go down easily, Jack does some serious damage before one of the agents finally knocks him out.

COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)  
Take him to the Andrews stockade.  
(as they drag Jack  
out:)  
Ladies and gentlemen, this room will be our command post. Meet back here at 0600 hours.



COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

At that time, you'll have the pleasure of tracking the mission that will save our country from anarchy - while at the same time be able to watch the Super Bowl on a really big screen.

EXT. ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

INT. ANDREWS STOCKADE - NIGHT

Two soldiers escort Jack to a cell and lock him inside.

INT. BIOTECH LOUNGE - NIGHT

Dr. Deerborn has again fallen asleep on the sofa while holding a cup of coffee. The TV is on, showing Jay Leno's monologue.

JAY LENO ON TV

Well President Carson's in trouble with the Full Employment Act and whenever he's in trouble he starts eating. I just heard that the new Presidential portrait was being done by Rand-McNally.

The audience LAUGHS.

INT. COL. HITCHCOCK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Hitchcock is at his desk studying a B3 Manual as Biggs enters. Biggs looks uncomfortable.

SENATOR BIGGS

Look, the President is going to be at the Super Bowl. I don't think it's right to bomb the President.

COL. HITCHCOCK

Let me remind you that the President attempted to strip this country of its defense against biological weapons. I think it's fitting that he should become the victim of his own crime.

The door opens. Agent 1 enters, sets a plastic case on the desk.

AGENT 1

The serum's ready, sir.

SENATOR BIGGS

What's that?

COL. HITCHCOCK

Nothing. Will you see the Senator out please. I have to prepare for the mission.

The agent escorts Biggs out. Alone, Hitchcock opens the plastic case, revealing a syringe and four plastic liter-bags filled with serum. He rolls up his sleeve, injects himself, then leans back and closes his eyes.

EXT. LINCOLN PERFORMANCE CENTER, D.C. - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

INT. LINCOLN CENTER - MAIN THEATER - NIGHT

ANGLE ON PRESIDENT CARSON AND HIS WIFE

in balcony seats overlooking the magnificent stage. The wealthy, gown-and-tuxedo crowd MURMUR excitedly as the lights dim and a sonorous-voiced ANNOUNCER intones:

ANNOUNCER O.S.

Ladies and gentlemen, in command performance, by special request of the President and First Lady, please welcome in repertory at the Lincoln Center... Carrot Top!

APPLAUSE. CARROT TOP bursts through the curtains with his prop trunk and begins his act.

ON THE PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY - crying with laughter.

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

INT. SENATOR BIGGS' OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Seated at a desk, Biggs scribbles on a piece of paper.

INSERT PAPER: He's writing the phrase "HOUSE SPEAKER BIGGS" over and over to see how it looks. His handwriting becomes increasingly primitive towards the bottom.

BACK TO SCENE - He suddenly stops, eyes the page in disgust and crumples it. He hears something and looks up to find Dr. Deerborn standing in front of his desk.

DR. DEERBORN

All right, Senator, where is he?

SENATOR BIGGS

You? What are you doing here?

DR. DEERBORN

I want to know where Jack is right now.

SENATOR BIGGS

Jack? I'm sure I have no idea. Now if you'll excuse me, I have to feed Mary Ann.

He goes to the aquarium, removes Mary Ann. She follows.

DR. DEERBORN

I saw you at Langley with Hitchcock, Senator. Now where's Jack, damn it!

SENATOR BIGGS

I'm sorry. National security.

Deerborn grabs the tree out of Biggs' hands.

SENATOR BIGGS (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

She grabs pruning shears from his desk and positions them as if to cut the tree in two.

DR. DEERBORN

I'll ask you again.  
(screams)  
Where is he?

SENATOR BIGGS

(shocked)  
You wouldn't.

She closes the clippers more tightly against the plant.

DR. DEERBORN

Where - is - he?!

SENATOR BIGGS

Stop! He's at the Base! In the stockade!

DR. DEERBORN

Take me there.

SENATOR BIGGS

Hitchcock would kill me!

She closes the shears tightly over the tree trunk.

DR. DEERBORN

Do it or I swear Mary Ann gets it.

SENATOR BIGGS

All right! Don't hurt her!

DR. DEERBORN

Move.

Terrified, Biggs goes out the door. Holding the clippers to the tree, she follows him.

EXT. SENATE PARKING LOT - DAY

Dr. Deerborn forces Biggs into her car while holding the plant as a hostage. Making him drive, they peel out.

INT. CIA COMMAND CENTER - DAY

The same officials MURMUR as they file in. They approach a buffet and take their meals to the conference table. Speaker Finch hobbles in with his walker. Seeing the others eating, he moves into a dark corner under the screen to sneak a smoke.

ANGLE ON FINCH

Finch surreptitiously removes his artificial larynx, revealing the neck hole. He inserts a cigarette in the hole, lights up, inhales. He removes the cig and exhales a wobbly smoke ring (CGI) -- which glides towards the big board and encircles the Super Bowl icon.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PRO PLAYER STADIUM, MIAMI - AERIAL - ESTAB. - DAY

A sunny day. The stadium is packed and teeming with excitement. The game is about to begin.

SPORTS ANNOUNCER V.O.

Welcome to a beautiful day at Pro Player Stadium where the New England Patriots will face the Carolina Panthers in the Super Bowl!

INT. PRO PLAYER STADIUM - SATELLITE BROADCAST CENTER - DAY

A bustle of activity as techs test the satellite feed.

ANGLE ON PRESIDENT CARSON

in a separate area. Surrounded by secret service agents, Carson and TWELVE COLLEGIATE ASSISTANTS test his ear piece as he practices his speech. (Both of Carson's hands and one of his feet are bandaged.)

EXT. ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - MAIN GATE - DAY

Sen. Biggs and Dr. Deerborn pull up to the gate. Biggs shows his badge and they pass through.

INT. STOCKADE - DAY

Jack is in his cell struggling to do a crossword puzzle. The virus is taking its toll. To himself:

JACK

Five letter word for "children's jolly benefactor"... what's a "benefactor"?

He stops as he hears VOICES echoing down the hall:

SENATOR BIGGS O.S.

Col. Hitchcock sent me to interrogate one of your prisoners, a John Cervello. This is my associate, Dr. Deerborn.

GUARD O.S.

ID, please?  
(beat)  
All right. This way.

Jack registers surprise as the guard leads Biggs and Dr. Deerborn to his cell. Dr. Deerborn is still carrying the plant. The guard unlocks Jack's cell as Biggs winks at him. Dr. Deerborn suddenly grabs the guard's pistol from its holster and shoves the guard into the cell.

GUARD

What the hell -- ?

Jack jumps out. Keeping the gun on the guard, Deerborn hands Mary Ann to Biggs and locks the guard in the cell.

DR. DEERBORN

The Senator told me about Operation Punt. We've got to stop Hitchcock. But I'm having trouble focusing. I think we're at IQ 90 and dropping.

JACK

(shows crossword puzzle)  
What's a five letter word for "children's jolly benefactor"?

She's stumped.

SENATOR BIGGS

Will this help?

He pulls a serum bag from his jacket pocket.

DR. DEERBORN

What's that?

SENATOR BIGGS

It's the serum. I forgot I had it. I snuk into Hitchcock's office and stole it from a plastic thingie.

DR. DEERBORN

I've got a med kit in the car!

INT. STOCKADE GUARD'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Deerborn loads a syringe from the serum bag, then rolls up Jack's sleeve. He stops her and rolls up her sleeve as Biggs watches.

JACK

No, you first.

DR. DEERBORN

No, you first.

JACK

You first.

DR. DEERBORN

You first.

SENATOR BIGGS

Quit fighting and do it!

She relents. About to inject herself, she pauses, eyes Jack with the same vulnerable expression as before.

JACK

What's wrong?

DR. DEERBORN

I don't know if we should get smart again.

JACK

Why not?

DR. DEERBORN

(to Biggs)

Can you give us a moment, Senator?

SENATOR BIGGS

What? Oh, certainly, child.

He moves out of earshot, but eavesdrops as they whisper:

DR. DEERBORN

(sotto)

Jack, we hated each other when we were smart.

JACK

(sotto)

No, you hated me. I was just playing along. I liked you from the moment I saw you.

DR. DEERBORN

(melts )

You did?

(snaps out of it)

The point is, what if we get smart and hate each other again?

JACK

I promise that won't happen.

DR. DEERBORN

Then, as soon as this is over, let's do something really stupid together. Really, OK?

JACK

(with conviction)

OK, really. Now can you hurry up?

She injects her arm. As she reloads the syringe from the serum bag, the syringe slips out of her fingers and clatters on the floor. Jack picks it up. The needle has broken completely off.

JACK (CONT'D)

Shit! Do you have another one?

DR. DEERBORN

No.

(stares into space)

Santa.

JACK

What?

DR. DEERBORN

Child's jolly benefactor, five letters, Santa.

JACK

That stuff works fast. Look, it doesn't matter. You two have to get to the President and have him stop that plane. I'll stay here and try to stop them from taking off.

DR. DEERBORN

But we can't get to the President. He's at the Super Bowl.

JACK

Shit! I forgot!

SENATOR BIGGS

Air Force 1 is being maintained here. The pilot's in my cigar club. We can be in Miami in no time.

Jack takes the gun from her.

JACK

I might need this.

DR. DEERBORN

Are you sure you should carry a gun? In an hour, you might be down to complete moron.

SENATOR BIGGS

She's right, son.

JACK

I know what I'm doing.

He drops the gun and it FIRES wildly, almost hitting the guard, who ducks.

GUARD

Watch it, you idiot!

Jack picks up the gun and stuffs it in his pants.

JACK

I know what I'm doing.

EXT. STOCKADE - DAY

Deerborn and Biggs get in the car, drive to the gate and exit. Jack skulks towards a security fence surrounding the largest hangar.

INT. MILITARY MEDICAL CENTER - ANDREWS COMPOUND - DAY



Col. Hitchcock watches as Dr. Pitt injects Hitchcock's navigator, CAPT. STURZEN, 30, and his co-pilot, CAPT. NIEMAND, 30, with the antibody serum.

EXT. HANGAR - DAY

ANGLE ON JACK IN BUSHES by the fence. He sees an army truck stop at a gate, sees his chance, jumps onto the tailgate of the truck. He tries to open the rear of the truck, but it's locked.

ANGLE ON GATE GUARD - checking the driver's ID, then checking the back of the truck. Jack is no longer there. The guard nods at the driver and lifts the gate.

ANGLE ON JACK - lying spread-eagled on the roof of the truck, having climbed up unseen.

FOLLOW TRUCK parking by the hangar. Jack peeks down to see soldiers unloading equipment from the truck. Jack quietly climbs down, sneaks through a door and into --

INT. HANGAR - DAY

Hiding behind crates, Jack scans the expansive hanger. The activity is mind boggling. Hundreds of soldiers briskly prep the B3 Stealth for takeoff. General Lazar, wearing a plastic decontamination suit and barking orders into his headset, is in a large PLASTIC ENCLOSURE with his suited weapons team. Plastic tunnels connect the enclosure to the plane.

INSIDE PLASTIC ENCLOSURE - The team funnel the virus plasma into THREE FOOTBALL-SIZE DETONATOR MODULES screwed into THREE LARGE AEROSOL BOMBS. The bombs are forklifted through a plastic tunnel to the stealth's open bomb bay. There the ground crew load them into the plane.

ANGLE ON JACK

Behind crates, he spots a jump suit hanging on a hook.

ON THE HANGAR FLOOR

Hitchcock arrives with Capts. Neimand and Sturzen. As ground crew yell out status reports, Jack sneaks closer to the plane. General Lazar emerges from the enclosure and meets Hitchcock.

GENERAL LAZAR

Ground crew reporting all systems go. Good luck, gentlemen.

He shakes their hands.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
Captain Neimand, Captain Sturzen,  
prepare for take-off.

As his crew don helmets and board the Stealth, Hitchcock turns and enters a room labeled OFFICER LATRINE.

GENERAL LAZAR  
All personnel clear the floor!

An ALARM goes off. Hundreds of soldiers sprint in different directions while others roll up the plastic containment tunnels.

ANGLE ON JACK BEHIND CRATE

He's now wearing a jump suit. INTERCUT the bomb doors beginning to slowly close. It's now or never. Jack grabs a flashlight from one of the crates and jogs out amid the bustling men, blending in. Unnoticed, he boldly leaps into the open bomb doors as they are closing and scrambles up inside. No one notices as the bomb doors seal shut, trapping Jack inside.

ANGLE ON CLOSING BOMB DOOR

A fold of cloth from the ass of Jack's jump suit gets stuck in the bomb door. STAY ON DOOR as the cloth is jerkily pulled inside.

INT. STEALTH BOMB BAY - DAY

Jack finds himself squashed between three bombs.

JACK  
(to himself)  
I must be stupid.

He crawls over the bombs, finds a nook in the machinery. Secure for the moment, he closes his eyes and waits.

INT. OFFICER LATRINE - DAY

Alone at the sink, Col. Hitchcock takes out shaving cream and a razor. He shaves the stubble on his head clean and smooth, puts on his helmet and exits the latrine.

INT. HANGAR - MAIN FLOOR - DAY

The ground crew clear the floor. Col. Hitchcock climbs into the Stealth cockpit next to Capt. Neimand. Sturzen sits at a navigation console behind them. General Lazar barks orders into his headset. The hangar doors RUMBLE open. A tram pulls the Stealth out onto the airfield.

INT. STEALTH COCKPIT

Hitchcock and Capt. Neimand engage the engine systems.

INT. BOMB BAY

Jack nervously clutches his handhold as the engines turn on, vibrating him up and down with a deafening ROAR.

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY

The Stealth lifts off in a threnody of flames.

INT. BOMB BAY

Vibrated wildly by the engine, Jack hangs on for dear life. In a minute the vibrating calms to a smooth hum.

COL. HITCHCOCK ON INTERCOM V.O.  
Cruising speed. We will intercept  
our objective in approximately  
ninety minutes.

Jack shines his flashlight on the bomb placement, the wiring, sees the sealed hatch above him. He climbs to the hatch, tries to listen through it, hears nothing.

INT. CIA COMMAND - DAY

General Koestler addresses the group seated at the table.

GENERAL KOESTLER  
Assuming that Operation Punt is  
successfully deployed, we need to  
look to the future. First, since  
we are the only citizens exempt  
from the virus, we will need to  
restrain the masses from key  
geographical areas. Dr. Princeton?

Princeton presses a console button. The Super Bowl wipes to high-tech diagrams augmenting his speech. First is a detailed blueprint of a BUBBLED DOME enclosing downtown d Washington D.C. Dr. Princeton uses a laser pointer:

DR. PRINCETON  
We propose that all officers of  
the Central Intelligence Agency  
and their families, as well as  
select members of the Joint  
Chiefs, reside in bubbled  
structures in the heart of all  
major U.S. cities. To avoid  
contamination, the exterior of the  
bubbles will be disinfected daily  
by sprinkler systems.

DR. PRINCETON (CONT'D)

Once the sprinklers are in place, our plan is to use the low IQ masses to clean the exterior of the bubbles by giving them squeegees. This will keep our area disease free, as well as employ hundreds of otherwise unemployable mental deficients.

The diagram wipes to a DRAWING OF A MAN cleaning dome with a squeegee.

DR. PRINCETON (CONT'D)

As this diagram shows, an average size man can wipe clean an area of approximately six feet. If the bubble's circumference is six miles or less, this would require only two hundred men to clean the base circumference of the bubble.

CIA OFFICIAL 1

What about the circumference of the upper areas?

DR. PRINCETON

Our thought is to give the infected masses shoes such as this mock-up...

He displays a Nike sneaker with suction-cups on the bottom.

DR. PRINCETON

Using this technique, the infected workers can climb the sides of the bubble and, using the squeegees, can clean areas in six foot sections. The beauty of this system is that the dome will be disinfected and the masses will be kept occupied at minimum wage.

GENERAL KOESTLER

And this brings us to another important matter.

He presses a console button, wiping screen to a list of new tax figures.

GENERAL KOESTLER (CONT'D)

-- taxes. Since our projections show that the low IQ masses will be unable to fill out tax forms, our plan is to pass legislation that taxes be paid in cash in simple bi-weekly payments.

GENERAL KOESTLER (CONT'D)

Our plan will fund soldiers in protective suits to go door to door and collect taxes every other Tuesday. If families with two or more children are unable to pay, we propose a scholarship program, wherein we would accept low IQ newborn infants in lieu of payment, to be trained by the government as either tax collectors or bubble washers.

The group MURMUR approval of this innovative tax plan.

INT. STADIUM VISTA - DAY

ANNOUNCER ON LOUDSPEAKER

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the President of the United States, William Carson!

ON PRESIDENT CARSON rising and waving as the crowd respectfully CHEERS; but within seconds, a wave of BOOS begins, growing louder. To his horror, the President is being BOOED by the entire Super Bowl crowd. To his credit, he waves for them to stop and powerfully yells them down, his voice booming:

PRESIDENT CARSON

Wait a minute now! Pipe down for a minute! Listen to me, all of you! LISTEN TO ME!

(BOOS taper off)

Now I had a speech prepared to tell you how the Full Employment Act will wipe out debt and unemployment within six months!

(BOOS resume loudly;

again he stops them)

But I'm not going to give that speech! I'm starting to understand that you people don't care about canceling the debt and putting people to work! Am I right?

VAST CROWD

YES!

PRESIDENT CARSON

Because none of you want to pay for it! Am I right again?

VAST CROWD

YES!

PRESIDENT CARSON

Well how can I disagree with that?  
If there's one thing the  
Constitution of this great land  
guarantees, it's that the  
President of the United States  
must listen to the voice of the  
people! So are you people telling  
me you don't want the Full  
Employment Act?

VAST CROWD

YES!

PRESIDENT CARSON

Then, by God, as President of the  
United States, I hereby repeal it!  
You don't have to pay a dime!

The response is incredible. As Carson waves his bandaged hands and smiles, they rise to their feet and give him the greatest and loudest standing ovation in history.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

Let's play ball!

INT. ANNOUNCER BOOTH - SAME TIME

PAT SUMMERAL and JOHN MADDEN (or comparable sports announcers) overlook the frenzied cheering.

PAT SUMMERAL

Well, I've never seen anything  
like that at any Super Bowl or  
anywhere else for that matter.

JOHN MADDEN

Pat, the President was supposed to  
say something about the 50th  
anniversary of the space program,  
but instead made a political  
statement that seemed to backfire.

PAT SUMMERAL

But what a come-back by President  
Carson. John, if that's any  
indication, this should be one  
hell of a football game.

INT. STADIUM - ON THE FIELD - ACTION SHOTS - DAY

The crowd CHEERS as STEVE KASAY kicks off for the Panthers and the game begins.

EXT. THE STEALTH ROARING THROUGH CLOUDS - DAY

INT. STEALTH COCKPIT - DAY

CAPT. STURZEN

Col. Hitchcock, navigation report.  
We are forty-one minutes from  
target. Now switching targeting to  
your computer.

INSERT - PILOT CONTROL PANELS: A computer screen  
displays crosshairs fixed on a target icon.

INTERCUT HITCHCOCK & NEIMAND OPERATING THE CONTROLS.  
They align a second set of crosshairs (representing the  
plane) over the first set. When the two patterns mesh,  
the display reads "TARGET ACQUIRED".

INT. STEALTH BOMB BAY - DAY

Jack is squeezed against the raft, trying to focus, to  
think. He looks around, sees a metal locker, opens it.

INSIDE LOCKER

He sees a handle labeled "DO NOT PULL".

BACK TO SCENE. Unable to resist, he pulls it. There's a  
loud HISSING sound. Suddenly a GIANT RUBBER RAFT bursts  
out of the compartment, inflating and pinning Jack  
against the wall. Now inflated, the raft fills the bomb  
bay, almost smothering him.

JACK

Idiot!

EXT. PRO PLAYER STADIUM - V.I.P. CHOPPER PAD - DAY

A military helicopter lands. Senator Biggs and Dr.  
Deerborn get out and rush towards the stadium entrance.

INT. STADIUM - THE FIELD - ACTION SHOTS - MATCHING  
DIALOGUE:

PAT SUMMERAL V.O.

About 9 minutes left in the 2nd  
quarter. Brady back to pass, and,  
no, he's pulled down at the  
Carolina 42nd yard line.

ANGLE ON SCOREBOARD: "NEW ENGLAND: 7, CAROLINA: 14 - 2ND  
QUARTER - 4TH DOWN - TIME LEFT: 7:53"

INT. STEALTH BOMB BAY - DAY

Jack squeezes through the raft to the bombs. He tries to  
open a panel in the housing but can't. He stops, out of  
breath, and begins to babble:

JACK

What am I doing...think...what am I trying to achieve...I'm trying to stop the plane...how do I do that...I don't know...why am I talking to myself... because that's what morons do...

He sees another locker and opens it. There are tools inside. He grabs a pair of long-handled iron clippers.

JACK (CONT'D)

When in doubt...smash things.

He squeezes past the raft to a small screen lit up with system icons. He SMASHES it. He crawls to another area, smashing and ripping up anything he can reach.

INT. COCKPIT - DAY

COMPUTER VOICE

Twenty minutes to target.

INTERCUT WARNING LIGHTS flashing on their control panels.

CAPT. NEIMAND

Malfunctions, Colonel.

Capt. Neimand makes a quick series of checks:

CAPT. NEIMAND (CONT'D)

The payload's not responding, sir.  
Circuits shorted out.

They hear BANGINGS coming from the bomb bay.

COL. HITCHCOCK

Something's loose down there.

CAPT. STURZEN

I'll go check.

INT. STADIUM - ON THE FIELD - ACTION SHOTS - DAY

New England intercepts a pass. In an exciting play, they score a touchdown just as the 2nd quarter ends.

INT. ANNOUNCER'S BOOTH - DAY

PAT SUMMERAL

Well, with that stunning play, the first half ends with a tie score, fourteen to fourteen. And get ready, folks, for what should be a spectacular half-time show!



INT. STADIUM FIELD - HALF-TIME SHOW - DAY

DEBBIE ALLEN and her dancers, in astronaut costumes, rise from trap doors and begin dancing amid a flashy pyrotechnic display.

INT. STADIUM STANDS - SERIES OF SHOTS - DAY

The music blasts as Dr. Deerborn and Senator Biggs are talking to a Military Guard. The Guard points to the Presidential Box across the stadium and begins urgently escorting them through the crowd.

INT. STEALTH BOMB BAY - DAY

Jack sees the hatch opening and squeezes behind the raft to hide. Capt. Sturzen looks down into the bomb bay.

CAPT. STURZEN

(on headset)

What the hell--? Colonel, somehow the sea raft got inflated.

COL. HITCHCOCK ON INTERCOM

What? Well deflate it. We need those bomb cradles free.

Sturzen squeezes down, takes out a knife, stabs the raft repeatedly and begins deflating it. Jack's hiding place begins shrinking, and in a moment he's in plain view facing Sturzen. Sturzen can't believe it.

CAPT. STURZEN

Who the hell are you?

Jack punches Sturzen, stunning him. Jack leaps up towards the hatch, but Sturzen grabs his feet. Jack kicks and struggles, knocking off Sturzen's helmet. Losing the tug of war, Jack is slowly being pulled down.

INT. COCKPIT - DAY

Furious, Hitchcock wonderis what the hell is going on.

COMPUTER V.O.

Fifteen minutes to target.

COL. HITCHCOCK

Sturzen! Return to your position. Captain Neimand, retract bomb doors.

ANGLE ON NEIMAND pushing a button: "OPEN BOMB DOORS".

INT. BOMB BAY - DAY

Instantly and shockingly, the bomb bay doors EXPLODE open beneath Sturzen. He hangs over the abyss, clutching Jack's foot.

CAPT. STURZEN

Help!

Jack reaches down, grasps Sturzen's hand and struggles to pull him up. But the powerful wind suction rips Sturzen out of Jack's grip -- and Sturzen plummets below. Horrified, Jack huddles amid the wheel mechanism as the bomb doors, wide open, flap wildly in the winds.

INT. STADIUM - HALF-TIME SHOW - DAY

The dance number ends spectacularly. APPLAUSE.

SPORTS ANNOUNCER V.O.

And now, ladies and gentlemen...  
Elton John!

ROCK MUSIC blasts as ELTON JOHN flies across the field on wires outrageously dressed as a rocket. The crowd CHEERS.

INT. STADIUM - THE PRESIDENTIAL BOX - DAY

The music blasts as Biggs and Deerborn reach the President, who greets them warmly. They whisper to him ominously. Carson's face darkens. He snaps his head to scan the skies, sees nothing, signals them to follow him.

INT. COCKPIT - DAY

COL. HITCHCOCK

Captain, return to the cockpit!  
(no answer)  
Sturzen, report!

No answer.

COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Come in, damn it!

COMPUTER V.O.

Ten minutes to target.

COL. HITCHCOCK

What the hell is going on?

CAPT. NEIMAND

Want me to go down and check, sir?

COL. HITCHCOCK

No. You hold the target. I'll go down.

INT. STADIUM - SATELLITE BROADCAST CENTER - DAY

President Carson, Biggs and Deerborn, surrounded by agents and assistants, burst into the booth and rush to the PRODUCER supervising the broadcast feed.

ASSISTANT 1

(checks code book)

Mr. President, I've got the code for two-way video to Langley command.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Good.

(to Producer)

You! I need an emergency break in to C.I.A. headquarters at Langley Virginia. This is a matter of national security.

(re Assistant 1)

This gentleman has the codes to patch us through.

PRODUCER

One moment, sir.

(on headset)

Brad, the President's in the booth. He needs our feed for an emergency.

(beat; worried, to President)

Sir, he's going ballistic. He says we'll be fired if we interrupt the half-time show.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Who'll fire you?

PRODUCER

The sponsor. Budweiser beer.

Carson rips the headsets off the producer, puts them on.

DRAMATIC UPSHOT ON THE PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT CARSON

This is the President of the United States. Get me the President of Budweiser.

INT. STEALTH BOMB BAY - DAY

The hatch door opens and Jack ducks again. Hitchcock drops into the bomb bay, scans the smashed equipment, the deflated raft, tries to manually release the hydraulic arm holding the bomb cradle. It won't budge. Tries the others. No luck. Slams his fist into the bombs in a fury.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
Release! Release!

COMPUTER V.O.  
Five minutes to target.

Hitchcock rips off his helmet, unsheathes his Swiss Army knife and uses it to snap open one of the bomb casings.

ON BOMB CASING

Inside is the DETONATION MODULE holding the virus. He unscrews the detonator.

BACK TO SCENE - Hitchcock's eyes catch something above; he spots Jack peeking down through a gap in the equipment. Their eyes lock intensely.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
You.

Jack grabs a shaky handhold and boldly shows himself.

JACK  
Me.

Hitchcock stares, stunned, then does something we've never seen him do. He throws his head back and LAUGHS.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
Perfect. Don't you see?

JACK  
See what?

COL. HITCHCOCK  
The prophecy is coming true. I'm the eagle. And you're the mouse.

Jack takes out his gun and aims it at Hitchcock.

JACK  
Wrong. I'm the idiot with the gun.  
Now get away from the bomb.

Hitchcock smiles defiantly and removes the detonator. Jack leans down and puts the gun to Hitchcock's head.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Put it down. Or I'll ventilate  
your head like a piece of cheddar  
cheese.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
That's swiss cheese.

JACK  
Even a moron can pull a trigger.

Ignoring him, Hitchcock turns the detonator until it  
CLICKS. A "MANUAL IGNIT" button begins blinking. He  
slides the detonator into his jacket pocket. Jack  
suddenly understands.

JACK (CONT'D)  
You're not thinking of jumping  
with that, are you? This thing  
shoots, chief.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
A mouse isn't a hunter.

Suddenly Hitchcock snatches the gun, pulls Jack down next  
to him and casually tosses the gun out of the plane.

COL. HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)  
A mouse is a victim.

COMPUTER V.O.  
Four minutes to target.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
Apocalypse time.

Grabbing a fistful of Jack's jacket, Hitchcock jumps out  
of the plane, dragging Jack with him.

JACK  
No!

At the last instant, Jack grabs the end of a CABLE on the  
bomb bay floor as they plummet through the open doors.

ON CABLE BOLTED TO WALL - The bolts snap off one by one  
as Jack yanks it downward. POP!-POP!-POP!-POP! Suddenly  
the cable snags and pulls taut.

EXT. BELLY OF BOMBER - DAY

The cable stretches 50 feet and suddenly stops. Jack's  
grip on the cable slips down almost to the end, then  
catches on a mooring bolt. Hitchcock holds on clutching  
Jack's jacket.

Losing his grip as Hitchcock's weight pulls him down, Jack manages to wrap the cable around his waist. The weight of Hitchcock's body spins Jack's head upside-down. The scene is insanely precarious.

JACK'S POV - STADIUM SPINNING CHAOTICALLY MILES BELOW

INT. STADIUM - HALF-TIME SHOW - DAY

Elton John is at a grand piano singing a rock version of "STARDUST". He gestures to the stage where THREE MOCK ROCKETS rise from below. Over the music, he announces:

ELTON JOHN

Ladies and gentlemen, from NASA's  
Apollo mission, Astronaut Michael  
Collins!

A door in the mock rocket EXPLODES open. MICHAEL COLLINS emerges in a space suit and waves to the crowd. CHEERS. Elton introduces TWO OTHER ASTRONAUTS who emerge from the other rockets. The crowd goes wild as the song ends and the astronauts leave the stage. Now Elton begins his finale, an elaborate arrangement of "ROCKET MAN".

INT. STADIUM - SATELLITE BROADCAST CENTER - DAY

Assistant 1 is on the phone as Carson waits impatiently.

ASSISTANT 1

The President is ordering a  
national security emergency  
breakthrough, code blue niner  
niner delta --

INT. CIA STRATEGIC COMMAND - NIGHT

General Koestler shows another diagram of the bubbled city on the Big Screen. To the officials:

GENERAL KOESTLER

To discourage the low IQ masses  
from tunneling under the dome,  
shovels will be made illegal.  
For punishment, we will return to  
public whippings instead of jail  
terms. Once a week houses will be  
searched for shovels and --

The Big Screen CRACKLES and Carson appears on screen.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Hello, boys. I was told you were  
having a little Super Bowl party.  
Strange that I didn't receive an  
invitation.

Shocked, General Koestler begins to babble.

GENERAL KOESTLER

Well, Mr. President! We were just, um, about to call you, weren't we, gentlemen?

INT. STADIUM - SATELLITE BROADCAST CENTER - SAME TIME

Via the two-way hook-up, the President watches the CIA officials on a Super Bowl monitor.

PRESIDENT CARSON

Shut up!

(holds up "finger";  
the Generals are  
silent)

This is Dr. Deerborn of the Biotech Institute. She's informed me that Col. Hitchcock synthesized a cure for the virus and used it only on himself!

The officials MURMUR in shock.

PRESIDENT CARSON (CONT'D)

As President of the United States, I order you to abort the bombing of the Super Bowl. Yes, gentlemen, I know all about it! Our highest priority now is to get this cure to all infected branches of the government!

The officials, looking guilty, MURMUR again amongst themselves. A strange voice pipes up through the walla.

SPEAKER FINCH O.S.

Mr. President.

Everyone in the room turns to see --

SPEAKER FINCH

staggering to his feet with his walker. Although he is frail, his powerful charisma energizes the room. His artificial larynx intones:

SPEAKER FINCH

Since you know about Operation Punt, let us be frank. Perhaps the virus is worth more to you than you think. Consider. Twenty three foreign nations owe the United States a total of 958 billion dollars.

SPEAKER FINCH (CONT'D)

The virus is your leverage. Either they pay what they owe-- or we deploy the virus and transform them into a nation of subnormals. Collecting foreign debt could balance the budget during your Presidency! You would be the greatest president -- since Gerald Ford!

INTERCUT THE PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT CARSON

Interesting, Speaker Finch. Very interesting indeed.

SPEAKER FINCH

On the other hand, Operation Punt is already irreversibly in motion, therefore, after its success, think of the advantages of deploying the virus unilaterally across the globe...

Finch shuffles around the table with his walker.

SPEAKER FINCH (CONT'D)

There are 79 wars going on at this very moment around the world. With the virus, all wars will slowly dissipate like an inconceivable mist. An unprecedented peace will envelope the planet. We can tailor the living requirements of daily life to fit the low IQ imbeciles, or "imbies" as we may call them. Television can be used to distract and hypnotize the imbies with sex, gambling and sports to keep them from thinking, shall we say, dangerous thoughts?

The officials MURMUR in response.

ON LAZAR AND KOESTLER WHISPERING

GENERAL KOESTLER

(sotto)

I thought that was already happening.

Lazar shrugs.

ON FINCH

He lights up a cigarette in his neck hole and inhales.



EXT. JACK AND HITCHCOCK HANGING UNDER BOMBER - DAY

Jack tries to wrap the cable tighter around his waist while Hitchcock tries to pull him down. Jack grabs the clippers from his belt and WHACKS Hitchcock hard in the head. Hitchcock is doing anything he can to rip Jack free from the cable.

INT. C.I.A. COMMAND - AS BEFORE

Finch excitedly puffs his cigarette and sips a cocktail via a straw through the neck hole. He resumes:

SPEAKER FINCH

Television is the key, gentlemen!  
The glass teat is already in  
place! Through it, the imbies can  
be induced to buy anything we  
wish! They will become mindless  
cows grazing the marketplace and  
excreting a strong economy! And  
intelligence dictates that only  
the uninfected should control the  
economy, and thus exclusively  
enjoy the splendor of earth's  
monetary riches...

The officials are riveted by Finch's hyperbole.

SPEAKER FINCH (CONT'D)

Since the low IQ's will in effect  
serve as our machines of flesh, we  
may classify them as we do our  
meat. Instead of upper, middle and  
blue collar classes, imbies will  
be sorted into Prime, Choice and  
Grade A. Imbies will voluntarily  
donate their organs and body parts  
to us, the uninfected ones, and in  
this way we will virtually -- live  
forever!

Yelling, his voicebox SQUEALS with feedback. Finch whacks it with his fist, trying to make it stop.

EXT. JACK AND HITCHCOCK ON CABLE UNDER BOMBER - DAY

Hitchcock sees the Pro Player Stadium directly below. He steels his jaw. This is it. He powerfully kicks the cable off Jack's waist.

Almost falling, Jack slips down to the end of the cable and clutches it with both hands. Hitchcock, hanging onto Jack's jacket, unsheathes his knife and puts the blade to Jack's throat.

COL. HITCHCOCK  
 You're too clingy, Mr. Cervello.  
 Time to let go.

Jack spots the detonator sticking out of Hitchcock's pocket. Seeing his chance, Jack grabs the detonator and SLAMS his knee into Hitchcock's groin with all of his might. Taken by surprise, Hitchcock reels backwards into the air and falls into a cloud below.

CLOSE - JACK

Holding the cable with one hand and fumbling with the bomb, Jack nervously reverses the dial on the detonator with his teeth; it CLICKS and the "MANUAL" light goes out. He sighs, stuffs the detonator under his belt and, running on pure adrenaline, begins climbing the cable.

FALLING WITH COL. HITCHCOCK

Col. Hitchcock breaks through the bottom of the cloud and glides like a bald eagle towards the stadium.

INT. C.I.A. COMMAND - NIGHT

Finch, sweating profusely with excitement, alternates puffing the cigarette through his neck and using his voicebox. Now in a demented frenzy:

SPEAKER FINCH

Not only will everyone in this room be a billionaire many times over, but our old sagging bodies will be replaced, piece by piece, until we all possess shiny smooth luscious Las Vegas pecs and buttocks in picture-perfect Jack LaLane health!

CLOSE - SWEAT ON FINCH'S NECK

dripping into his artificial larynx. The electronic box CRACKLES, short circuits and catches fire.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FINCH

He rips it off his throat and, obsessed with his speech, continues talking with his real (raspy) voice:

SPEAKER FINCH (CONT'D)

(wheezing old man's  
 voice)

We shall all be rich, magnificent,  
 immortal, veritable gods on earth!

MOVE IN ON FINCH - CLIMACTIC SHOT

Grabbing his throat, he realizes he's speaking without the machine. His eye widens. He rises to his full height, turns to the President on screen, and SHRIEKS in joy:

SPEAKER FINCH (CONT'D)

Mr. President! I can TALK!

INT. STADIUM - HALF-TIME SHOW - DAY

Elton John, dressed as a rocket, sings the "ROCKET MAN" chorus as the dancers swirl around the stage and FIREWORKS are BLASTED into the sky.

EXT. SKY OVER STADIUM - FALLING WITH HITCHCOCK - DAY

Hitchcock flies towards the stadium, his bald head reflecting the BURSTING FIREWORKS.

INT. STEALTH BOMB BAY - SAME TIME

Jack hoists himself back into the plane and looks down through the bomb doors at --

HITCHCOCK FALLING - The FIREWORKS and Elton John's song build as Hitchcock plummets faster and faster.

EXT. STADIUM - HALF-TIME SHOW - SAME TIME

As Elton sings the final note of the song, Col. Hitchcock suddenly crashes down into his grand piano at 90 mph.

ANGLE ON GRAND PIANO TWANGING and shattering to splinters!

ANGLE ON STADIUM CROWD

Giving a standing ovation. As far as they know, the falling man in the piano is part of the show.

ON ELTON - Not knowing what else to do, he bows as sports doctors rush to the shattered piano.

INT. STEALTH BOMB BAY - SAME TIME

Jack looks down at the stadium.

JACK

The eagle has landed.

(beat)

Really fucking hard.

UPSHOT FROM STADIUM - THE FIREWORKS CLIMAX

The crowds CHEER as hundreds of fireworks are shot off in a rousing finale of massive explosions.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ANDREW'S AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS:

- The Stealth is being pulled by a tram into the hangar.
- Jack jumps unseen from the bomb doors, tumbles next to the hangar.
- Looking like a crewman in the jumpsuit, Jack steals a truck, rides past the guard and through the gate.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

INT. WHITE HOUSE MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

Members of Congress, the Pentagon and the White House staff are seated waiting their turn to be injected with the serum by a team of doctors. Dr. Deerborn is supervising, checking a clipboard as Jack enters.

JACK (CONT'D)

Is everything under control,  
Dr. Deerborn?

DR. DEERBORN

Yes. The tests came back positive  
for almost everyone working for  
the White House. Even the  
celebrities.

She gestures to a table.

ANGLE ON TABLE - Kenny G and Carrot Top are being inoculated.

BACK TO SCENE

DR. DEERBORN (CONT'D)

But there's one strange thing.

JACK

Only one?

DR. DEERBORN

Yes. The President. His blood  
came back clean.

JACK

Clean?

CLOSE - DEERBORN

DR. DEERBORN

Jack, the President never had the virus.

CUT TO:

BLACK SCREEN

CAPTION: NINE MONTHS LATER

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

It's a madhouse as supporters cheer the appearance of President Carson and his wife onstage at the podium. Carson's finger and hand and feet are still bandaged.

PRESIDENT CARSON

To you my supporters I owe the greatest landslide victory in the history of the United States of America!

The crowd bursts into CHEERS and APPLAUSE.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN - FORTY IDENTICAL ASSISTANTS

stand around a mike, drinking champagne, getting drunk.

ASSISTANT 1

And my friends, I couldn't have done it without your big hearts...

PRESIDENT CARSON O.S.

(in b.g. on  
loudspeaker)

And my friends, I couldn't have done it without your big hearts...

ASSISTANT 2

(whispers to  
Assistant 1)

...and my big-ass can of hair spray...

ASSISTANT 1

(into mike)

...and my big-ass can of hair spray...

ON CARSON

PRESIDENT CARSON.

(echoing on  
loudspeaker)

And my big-ass can of hair-spray!

Carson sells the line for all it's worth and the crowd  
CHEERS.

ON ASSISTANTS BEHIND CURTAIN

They collapse in each other's arms in gales of drunken  
laughter as the crowd outside goes wild.

EXT. ARLINGTON CEMETERY - DAY

In an elegant state funeral, the President and Chiefs of  
Staff have gathered around Finch' casket about to be  
lowered into the earth. Finch's wife and his nurse are  
weeping. Biggs is concluding his eulogy:

SENATOR BIGGS

And being with the late Senator  
Finch often in his final days, I  
became his closest confidante,  
advising him as House Speaker, a  
position for which many say that,  
as a result, I am uniquely  
qualified...

DISSOLVE TO:

FULL SCREEN TV - NEWS REPORT

NEWS ANCHOR

And finally in the news...

A GRAPHIC appears behind the anchor showing Jack being  
presented with a prestigious award by Biggs.

NEWS ANCHOR V.O.

Senate aide John Cervello was  
awarded the Congressional Medal of  
Honor for Valor today by House  
Speaker E. Power Biggs.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A SHIMMERING CLOUD OF MIST - NIGHT

PUSH THROUGH the moonlit mist to reveal the crisp  
SILHOUETTES of TWO SKYDIVERS soaring towards us.

FALLING WITH THE SKYDIVERS - DR. DEERBORN AND JACK

Plummeting side by side, their faces are illuminated by moonlight. He yells to her through the rushing winds:

JACK

Now that you're smart, do you hate me again?

DR. DEERBORN

Don't be stupid.

He holds out his hand. She takes it. They WHOOP like children, their voices echoing, and sail through a cloud towards the giant face of --

THE FULL MOON

The two figures, holding hands, fall together. Silhouetted against the Moon, the image is eternally stupid, eternally beautiful, as we slowly --

FADE OUT