

SPEED OF LIGHT  
Cuscheri/Paul

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INT. BEDROOM -- EARLY MORNING

CLOSE ON ALARM CLOCK - 4:59 a.m. tick/tick/tick 5:00 a.m. And it goes off. BEEP/BEEP/BEEP!...But no sooner than it does, a HAND comes crashing down on it.

Meet Dominic Coleman, 40's; looks like he should be on the cover of MEN'S HEALTH. And he's already up and ready.

DOMINIC  
Let's go, darlin'!

Wife MEHGAN is his attractive, patient wife of 19 years.

MEHGAN  
Uhggg...

Not a morning person.

AND A SERIES OF SHOTS -

As Dominic rousts his family.

INT. JOHN'S ROOM -- MORNING

POSTERS of HOT RODS and ROCKETS. And on a small single bed, sleeps the oldest Coleman boy, JOHN 18, who's a chip off his old man. The DOOR SWINGS OPEN, revealing Dominic restraining their huge OLD ENGLISH SHEEPDOG, SPEEDY. But James is already up.

JOHN  
How much time?

DOMINIC  
T-minus 30 minutes and counting.

JOHN  
I couldn't sleep last night.

DOMINIC  
You can sleep on the road. Let's do it.

INT. JAMES' ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Where we meet the youngest son; JAMES, 16. He's a gentle looking teen and as his room decor hints, has a keen interest in music. The door swings open revealing Dad and the dog.

DOMINIC

You got five seconds to be up and at'em or you get the dog.

JAMES

(from under the covers;  
groggy)  
No. Not the dog.

DOMINIC

Four...three...two...

And the DOG is let loose, slobbering all over the poor kid. What a way to wake up.

INT. SHOWER -- CONTINUOUS

As HOT WATER is running down Mehgan's weary body. She's still out of it; on the verge of sleep when from above the SHOWER CURTAIN, a PITCHER of ICE COLD WATER is dumped.

MEHGAN

AHHH!

DOMINIC

Come on. Let's move!

INT. HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

As Dominic tries to rally his troops.

DOMINIC

Let's go! We got no time! GOT TO  
MOVE...FAST...FAST...FAST.

CUT TO

MUSIC UP - PATSY CLINE'S CRAZY DREAMS -- OVER

EXT. BONNEVILLE, UTAH -- MORNING

Imagine a place so flat, that you can actually see the curvature of the planet. So barren, not even the simplest life forms can exist. And it's not an alien world far from Earth; welcome to Utah's Bonneville Salt Flats. 30 thousand square acres of nothing.

*Crazy Dreams linger on, as I face an empty dawn with no end to it all, can I see...*

On the HORIZON, something approaching. Look closer; a HUMVEE, making its way in this salt desert. We have no idea what it's up to - until we see the payload; a JET-FUELED concept CAR. Corporate logos all over it; POLAR MOLECULAR, GOODYEAR, FORD to name a few. But what stands out, is the custom paint job that advertises its driver: THE FASTEST MAN ON EARTH!

DOMINIC (O.S.)

Slow down, sweetie. We'll get there.

MEHGAN (O.S.)

You tellin' me to slow down?

INT. HUMVEE -- CONTINUOUS

Is our nuclear family - on adrenaline. THE COLEMANS. With the din of Patsy Cline heard in the b.g.

DOMINIC

I can't relax with you behind the wheel.

MEHGAN rolls her eyes; smiles at her husband.

IN THE BACK SEAT

JOHN is sleeping while his mischievous little brother JAMES is plugging his big brother's nose. John startles awake. James cracks up - until John hits him.

JAMES

OW!...Ma!

MEHGAN

(to John)

Leave your brother alone.

JOHN  
Tell him to stop buggin' me!

JAMES  
I'm not bugging you. I'm not  
bugging you.

Only, he is. A playful scrap ensues until Pa settles it.

DOMINIC  
Both you stooges cut it out. You're  
giving me a headache.

Their OLD ENGLISH SHEEP DOG, SPEEDY, hops into their seat.  
It's chaos now.

JAMES  
Get off me, Speedy. YOU STINK!

INT. ROADSIDE DINER -- MORNING

This is a place where time stands still. A classic prefabricated structure. Long and narrow with lots of stainless steel, a FORMICA COUNTER and swivelling stools which are bolted to the floor.

BEHIND THE COUNTER - The OWNER stands by silently and still as a cigar store Indian.

IN A BOOTH - Our family is digging into their breakfasts while Dominic fidgets with his watch. Suddenly, the place SHAKES briefly. But nobody even seems to notice - save for Dominic. It looks like it irritated him.

DOMINIC  
Come on guys let's go.

MEHGAN  
Let'em finish their breakfast.

Dominic rolls his eyes.

JOHN  
Hey Pa? Am I comin' today?

Silence as Pa deliberates. He looks at his disapproving wife.

DOMINIC  
We'll see. Just finish your  
breakfast.

EXT. SALT FLATS -- DAY -- SERIES OF SHOTS

Take the pits of the Indianapolis Speedway, and drop them in the middle of nowhere. Tens of thousands of fans huddled around their favorite crews and cars. *Did I say cars?* Cause these are BEASTS. It's a PARADE of souped up missiles on wheels tricked out to the max, built for super-speed.

AT A SOUVENIR BOOTH - a variety of race-related goods are being sold, including toy replicas of many of the cars.

And in the middle of it all, our Coleman family, saying hi to passersby, enjoying every second of the spectacle. They're greeted by their longtime family friend and chief engineer BUCK O'SHEA. At 50 and overweight, he may look like your favorite embarrassing uncle - only he's taught chaos theory at M.I.T. and is one of the best in the world at fluid dynamics. He's snacking on something - per usual.

BUCK  
(with mouthful)  
Hey, guys. You're late

*Hey Buck!* They greet warmly.

DOMINIC  
What are you eatin'?

BUCK  
It's a "frickle." A fried pickle.  
Got introduced to'em at an air show  
in Wisconsin. *Ain' that genius?*

DOMINIC  
They look disgusting.

BUCK  
Get saddled up. I'll be in the  
tent.

Buck rushes off.

TYLER (O.S.)  
*HEY LIGHTFOOT!*

The Colemans's look over to see Bonneville's answer to Racer X: TYLER "FLASH" GORDON. He looks like the guy who will always be Dominic's stand-in. He and his team are dressed in all GREEN DRIVING SUITS.

TYLER  
 (gloating)  
 Seven-five-zero...  
 (re: his speed)  
 You best get some heavier shoes you  
 wanna run faster than that.

DOMINIC  
 (smiling)  
 Green...That's a good color for  
 you, Tyler.

Though it's just a little professional rivalry, you can sense that Dominic is chapped. He's used to being the big dog.

P.A. (O.S.)  
*Top fuel class commence to field!*

EXT. RACE TRACK -- CONTINUOUS

The ground quivers as a PAIR of nitro-burning V-8's brace at the STARTING LINE. Thousands of FANS line the strip to watch the eruption.

P.O.V. INSIDE ONE OF THE BEASTS - CONTINUOUS

On that CHRISTMAS TREE; the calibrated light-countdown device that is perched in the middle of the lane.

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! and BURN.

This ain' no fast and furious. This is 0 to 100 in faster that you can read - GO. In another two seconds; 200. At four seconds 380mph and climbing. But this thing is over now. They've already done their 1/4 mile.

*Whew!*

The CROWD ROARS in appreciation. But we ain' seen nothin' yet.

EXT. SUPER JET-FUEL TRACK -- CONTINUOUS

As DOMINIC COLEMAN'S CAR is being carefully unloaded before a CREW that consists of about a half-dozen ENGINEERS and MECHANICS. John is next to his father.

DOMINIC  
 (to John)  
 HEY...Nozzle detail.

John looks like a reading class student who's lost his place in the text. Still, he wants so badly to impress.

DOMINIC

Go ahead.

JOHN

Nozzle formula.

(with difficulty)

Flow rate is equal to the  
discharge...times the orifice  
diameter...?

John looks for approval that doesn't come.

DOMINIC

Squared.

John sighs in disappointment. And dad piles it on.

DOMINIC

Basically; the stream area times  
the stream speed, son. If you wanna  
work on these cars someday you need  
to know this.

MEHGAN

Dominic?!

Dominic turns to see his wife calling him. She wants a word.

INT. TENT -- CONTINUOUS

In the eye of the hurricane; husband and wife talking about what matters most to them: FAMILY.

DOMINIC

The boy is 18 now, Meg. Hell,  
they're gonna be putting him in an  
F-15 in about six months. And this  
is the type of stuff they look for.  
If he's going to be a test pilot  
like me, he needs knowledge *and*  
*experience*.

MEHGAN

He can get experience later. Let  
him go to college with his friends.

DOMINIC  
 Give him blank checks for books?  
 Let'em do jello-shots for four  
 years? I don't think so.

MEHGAN  
 It worked for you.

Touché

MEHGAN  
 You know, he doesn't need to grow  
 up so fast. You can't just corner  
 them into a life. James doesn't  
 even want to be here.

Dominic moves on his worried wife, reassuring her.

DOMINIC  
 Sure he does. You think he'd rather  
 study music?

MEHGAN  
 YES.

DOMINIC  
 (determined)  
 I wanna see them reach their  
 potential.

MEHGAN  
 You know you're so concerned with  
 their potential, why don't you just  
 enjoy their presence?

DOMINIC  
 Look at me: That's why they're  
 here. And that's why I want John  
 to go with me.

MEHGAN  
 He's not ready.

DOMINIC  
 Hell, babe, that boy was born for  
 speed.  
 (then smiling)  
 Just like his old man. It runs in  
 the family. WE'LL TALK ABOUT IT  
 WHEN I COME BACK.

MEHGAN

You always say that. What if you don't come back?

Dominic hugs his wife.

DOMINIC

I always come back.

There's the fleeting hesitation in his eyes that tell us, something is bothering him. But he covers it well, hugging his wife.

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Where John is standing in front of a CLOSET filled with RACING SUITS. He's studying each one, picking out his favorite when Dominic enters and just watches a moment.

DOMINIC

You ready for this?

The kid turns to see dad; gives us an ear to ear grin, but still, he doesn't look ready. Dad steps forward. Pulls something from his POCKET.

DOMINIC

You know this thing is more of a jet than it is a race car.

JOHN

I know, pa.

Pa moves closer. He's holding a SMALL CHAIN with AMULET.

DOMINIC

I want you to have something. It's St. Joseph; patron saint of aviators; pilots. Your granddaddy was a test pilot. Runs in our family.

John takes the small piece of jewelry, studies it with reverence before looking to his father.

JOHN

Thanks, pa.

Decision time. Dominic deliberates. Then...

DOMINIC

Okay. Saddle up.

John is overjoyed; immediately starts getting ready.

EXT. TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic exits the trailer, not as confident as he was. It's clear, something is on his mind when he suddenly stops. Thinks. Looks to the sky. It's as if he feels something. Disregarding this instinct, he moves on.

CROSSFADE

EXT. DYNAMITE ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

They call this place DYNAMITE ROAD. It's where the fastest land vehicles in the world come to run. And here's where we finally get a good look at our rig. And what a beauty she is. Take a jet fighter and remove the wings. Now bump it out with the curves of a 'vette and add TWO MAMMOTH SPEY JET ENGINES at the rear. This is the coolest HOT WHEELS CAR you've ever seen - only all grown up and real.

INT. DOMINIC'S TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic is all dressed and ready, appraising himself in the mirror. Equipment-wise, not much more than your NASCAR racer. But he looks way badder. *Around his neck?* The identical AMULET he gave to his son; ST. JOSEPH. He holds it a moment, then reverentially puts on his HELMET.

It's GO TIME.

MUSIC UP - AND OVER

As Dominic moves towards his ROCKET CAR and takes his seat in the front: DRIVING.

The seating arrangement is not unlike a FIGHTER PLANE. Pa, takes the FRONT SEAT where he'll man the speed and navigate. Dominic looks back at his boy who's already seated. With his helmet on and strapped in, he's unrecognizable.

INT. CONTROL TENT -- CONTINUOUS

DOMINIC (O.S.)  
Buck, I'm in the nest...

BUCK  
 You got a worried bird over here,  
 son. You better be back soon.

INT. ROCKET CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic is smiling under that helmet.

DOMINIC  
 You tell her I'LL BE BACK. When we  
 hit about EIGHT BELLS. *You hear  
 that Tyler?*

INTERCUT - TENT

Tyler Gordon is in here. And he did hear that. Eight bells?  
 That's 800 miles per hour. Everyone in the tent starts  
 buzzing.

DOMINIC (O.S.)  
*What are you eatin' now?*

BUCK  
 Chocadile.  
 (a twinkie dipped in  
 chocolate)

BACK IN THE CAR, Dominic is smiling. He covers his mic.

DOMINIC  
 You ready for this, son?

Son John gives his "thumbs up" and they begin the ignition  
 sequence.

AT THE CAR'S REAR we see the JETS churn causing the 2,000  
 pound supersonic car to move gracefully forward.

INSIDE THE COCKPIT - Pa is all business now, going through  
 the checklist in his head like a computer.

INT. TENT -- CONTINUOUS

DOMINIC  
 Bonneville, We're a go. What's our  
 vitals? Over.

BUCK  
 Winds are light and Southwest.  
 They'll be long behind you, D.C.  
 (MORE)

BUCK(cont'd)

Temperature 84 lovely degrees;  
humidity nil. Bonneville is a go.  
Dynamite Road?

EXT. DYNAMITE ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

Here's a SMALL CREW, in the middle of nowhere. But we can see they're part of the team; a PHOTOGRAPHER and a pair of ENGINEERS with some EQUIPMENT.

ENGINEER 1

(into mic)

Dynamite Road is a go, Bonneville.

INT. ROCKET CAR, COCKPIT -- CONTINUOUS

DOMINIC

Bonneville is a go, Buck. Dynamite Road is a go. I guess that means we should go, huh son?

From behind his helmet, John smiles.

DOMINIC

Well then let's go.

AND THEY DO.

The thrust is immediate and powerful. A ROCKET taking off in front of us, leaving a burst of SALT AIR in our face.

INT. ROCKET CAR -- CONTINUOUS

ON THE SPEEDOMETER - It's a joke: 147/8/9/150/1...

We're already heading towards 200mph and it looks like Dominic is out for a Sunday spin.

DOMINIC

Runnin' through the first tick,  
feelin' real good. Gonna elevate  
just a little bit.

He does just that - and we can feel the percussive humm of the JETS pick up.

220/1/2/3/4 and rising...Pa glances at the GAUGES.

CLOSE ON GAUGES - all seem normal save ONE GUAGE, where the needle is encroaching on the RED.

Dominic doesn't seem too concerned; he covers his mic.

DOMINIC

John! How we doing back there?!

JOHN

Fine, pa! Just like the simulator!

DOMINIC

Simulator doesn't do this.

325/6/7/8/9...

DOMINIC

You ready to tip this cow, boy?

With that, Dominic drops the throttle and we really take off.  
SHHHWEWWWWW!

ROCKETING THROUGH THIS GREAT WHITE EXPANSE -

441/427/456/478...

We're approaching sonic level now. And as the car shoots past us, it looks like it's actually leaving the ground. (Because it is. This is why they are built so heavy.)

500mph

SHOCK WAVES begin to form around the car, rising up and bending outward. Even more astonishing, is the vertical "BOW WAVE" in front of it. This is the infamous "WALL OF AIR" that caused so many a test pilot to crash. It's the SOUND BARRIER - and we're approaching it.

553/554/555/556/557...

INTERCUT - TENT

BUCK

Approaching the bug nasty, Dom. You feel good?

INTERCUT - CAR

DOMINIC

I see her, Buck. And I'm gonna punch right through her.

P.O.V. DOMINIC -- CONTINUOUS

We're moving so fast, it's amazing he can see anything. But right in the middle of that BOW WAVE is a small SPECTRUM of LIGHT and COLOR. 581/582/583/584...

All the while the GAUGE is getting higher and higher.

DOMINIC

You might wanna cover your ears for this.

BACK IN THE TENT - They do.

And we watch as the car screams forward, almost chasing this SOUND BARRIER. 594/595/596...closer...597/598/599...and CLOSER.

600/601/602/603..

The car begins to cross the threshold; SHOCK WAVES surrounding it INTENSIFY, begin to SPLINTER. And with each passing moment, we get the feeling that a major eruption is coming to culmination. And just as the car passes through - the WAVES SHOOT UPWARD AND OUT, BLASTING into the atmosphere with a spectacular SONIC BOOM!

THE FOLLOWING ALL HAPPENS SIMULTANEOUSLY

IN THE TENT - Ears are covered, but the ground QUAKES from the rolling thunderclap.

AT THE RACE TRACK - The EXPLOSION rocks the flats; all eyes look SKYWARD.

IN THE DINER - DISHES RATTLE again as the place quivers. The OWNER shakes his head. *Damn sonic racers...*

And BACK IN OUR CAR - We're heading upwards MACH 1 and climbing. Only now does Dominic look serious. And John? May be nervous, but he looks cool as a cucumber.

We're goin' 7 bells now. 700 mph and rising.

BUCK  
 Dynamite Road. Should have a visual  
 any second.

AT DYNAMITE ROAD CHECKPOINT - Our TEAM awaits for the moment. the PHOTOGRAPHER readies himself. Then, the visual. And it doesn't last long. It's our ROCKET CAR, and it comes FLASHING BY. Only there's absolutely SILENCE. And just as fast as it went by, our team then covers their ears. Because we saw the lightning. Now here comes the thunder - and it does, roaring behind the car like an aftershock.

BOOOOOM !

INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

It's surreal. Searing WHITE LIGHT everywhere. Life at 10 frames per second. 720/721/722/723...

Dominic contemplates his run. He looks a little apprehensive. Almost frightened. We've maxed out at 730mph. *Is this ride over?*

That GAUGE is maxed out; in the RED.

IN THE TENT - Tyler Gordon listens intently; his record seemingly safe.

But Dominic looks as determined as ever.

DOMINIC  
 (sotto)  
 How's this for a heavy shoe?

Dominic then makes a fateful decision; instead of pulling back on the throttle, he hits it.

We were sonic. Now get ready for SUPERSONIC.

Like a fifth gear - the monster really gives in. 752/753/754/755...

IN THE TENT - Having passed 750, they all CHEER; everybody excited - save for ever the bridesmaid Tyler.

BUCK  
 Congrats, Dominic. You're still the  
 fastest man on Earth. Let's bring  
 her back now.

Oh, and Mehgan too. She's holding her son tightly, James, hoping this thing will be over soon.

And back on Dynamite Road, Dominic is still rising:  
784/785/786...And that GAUGE is tipped off the scale.

Yet all looks good for the moment. Until, the horrific - A  
FLASH OF LIGHT off the REAR JET ENGINE immediately SHATTERS  
THE TIRES.

INSIDE THE CAR - A sudden drop of speed. RED LIGHTS FLASHING  
Now they're dragging through the flat expanse, SPARKS FLYING.

INSIDE THE TENT - Panic

BUCK  
Lord almighty. What's going on,  
Dom?!

INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic is pulling pack on the throttle in a frenzy, trying  
to settle. He looks to the back.

BUCK  
Dominic! What's your read?!

DOMINIC  
Son! Eject! Eject!

JOHN  
I can stabilize, pa!

AN EXPLOSION rips through the car, jarring John out of his  
seat and into the PLEXIGLAS HATCH. FIRE. He's out cold. And  
now they're spinning uncontrollably.

DOMINIC  
EJECT NOW!

IN THE TENT - All listen in dread.

DOMINIC  
Bonneville! ABORT! Dammit, son  
EJECT!

BUCK  
EJECT!  
(to his crew)  
Deploy med unit!

There's immediate urgency; medics dispersing like BUCKSHOT  
out of the tent.

AT DYNAMITE ROAD - FIRE ENGULFS the entire rear of the vehicle as it screams by.

INSIDE THE CAR - Dominic desperately reaches toward the rear, trying to manually eject his son's seat. But the G-force from the spin making it nearly impossible to do.

Then - an EXPLOSION - and we go SLO MO

As Dominic is automatically jettisoned from the vehicle, leaving his son in the SPECTACULAR FIREBALL.

Dominic's PARACHUTE deploys and he desperately searches the ground; terror seizing his face as he waits to land safely.

INTERCUT - TENT - Where the mood is solemn. A worried mother and child. A desperate friend.

BUCK

Dominic! Do you read me?! Dominic!

SILENCE - save for DYNAMITE ROAD prattling in the background.

DYNAMITE ROAD

There's been a malfunction...

BUCK

(dropping the mic)

LET'S MOVE.

EXT. SALT FLATS -- CONTINUOUS

WRECKAGE of the FUSELAGE everywhere, Dominic has landed and charges towards the wreckage.

DOMINIC

John! JOHN!

Dominic desperately peels away the charred refuse, but drops to his knees.

DOMINIC

Son!

We already know the outcome. And in a matter of a moment, Dominic will know what we already do. His son is dead. As SIRENS begin to close in, we leave Dominic with this devastating realization.

FADE OUT

INT. OVAL OFFICE -- DAY

Insert: Present day.

Though dimly lit, this office is the most luxurious you'll ever see. And behind a spacious mahogany desk sits a very lean, handsome, meticulously-suited MAN, WILLIAM STEWART. He's a young 50; salt and pepper mane; determined look and the commanding presence you'd expect from the PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

But look closer and you'll see that this man is fraught with worry. And if he appears to have been up all night - it's because he has. He's knee-deep in a CLASSIFIED DOCUMENT; a SMALL STACK of the like next to him, when his phone's INTERCOM interrupts him.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

*Mr. President. They're ready for you.*

INT. WHITE HOUSE, HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Walking these corridors of power with a small phalanx of security behind him is the President who carries a small CLASSIFIED FILE. They head towards an ENTRANCE, where a PAIR of MARINES stands post.

WESTELL (O.S.)

*...Having achieved its speed, the craft would be pre-navigated by computer to return to its point of origin...*

INT. BRIEFING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Where only some of the president's MEN are here listening; a science ADVISOR, his CHIEF OF STAFF, and somebody we should know. He's an arrogant, intimidating sort; the FOUR STAR GENERAL, SAMUEL BECKER, 50ish, who looks pissed that he's not planning night raids in the Middle East. A very competent PROFESSOR, RONALD WESTELL, is in the middle of his brief.

WESTELL

*...At this point, any information appropriated, could be uploaded via satellite. Or, given the technology of the day, we might be able to do it from NASA headquarters or even here.*

There's silence and all eyes fall upon the President, who sits at the head of the long table. After a moment of silence, he finally speaks.

PRESIDENT  
So no human contact.

The professor won't answer that.

CHIEF OF STAFF  
That would be the idea, sir.

The President mulls this over.

PRESIDENT  
I don't like it.

But to be fair, the President looks at his advisors. More accurately, at Becker.

PRESIDENT  
What do you think, General?

Becker does not flinch from the invitation. And his manner and tone suggest that he is not a fan of this program. He speaks in candor.

BECKER  
Mr. President. I think we're missing a larger opportunity here. For the tremendous amount of time, money and resources and in an age of real security issues, we should we shouldn't leave this weapon in the hands of a pilot.  
(then)  
Plus, there's no compelling data that supports a manned craft. Given the uncertainty of the mission, I recommend we go virtual.

PRESIDENT  
(condescending)  
You recommend?

Becker doesn't appreciate the slight. But his opinion is echoed.

SCIENTIST  
We don't know how human physiology will react, sir. It may be too traumatic.

ADVISOR

And no human means, no human error.

Becker seems vindicated for the moment. Until the President addresses them.

PRESIDENT

Or human *touch*...gentlemen.  
They said the same thing when  
people thought it'd be safer to  
send a chimpanzee to the moon  
instead of men.

(then emphatically to all)

We are on the edge of what was once  
an inconceivable breakthrough. A  
technology that could change the  
world as we know it. Cure diseases.  
End famine. Eliminate war. Never,  
in the history of mankind, has a  
singular event meant so much to so  
many. I'm not going to leave that  
kind of responsibility up to a  
machine or computer.

There's silence in the ranks as the Commander in Chief goes  
on.

PRESIDENT

No...It will be a human that's  
responsible. Someone with the  
depth, drive and passion this  
mission will take.

This changes the mood of the room. After a moment -

CHIEF OF STAFF

So you'd like us to find you a  
pilot, Mr. President?

PRESIDENT

More than just a pilot, Dan. Think  
outside the box.

This doesn't sound the best of ideas - until the President  
sells.

PRESIDENT

The Wright Brothers made bikes for  
a living. Henry Ford was a farmer.  
And it was a doctor, who first  
broke the sound barrier. Now there  
are hundreds of qualified pilots  
all over the country.

(MORE)

PRESIDENT(cont'd)

But I want somebody more. And I think he's in this file. This man knows about loss. And he's a man that knows about speed. I want the fastest man on Earth.

The President tosses the FILE on the table, partially spilling its contents and revealing a PHOTO of DOMINIC COLEMAN.

CUT TO

EXT. RURAL UTAH/AUTO PARTS -- DAY

The sign may say "Auto Parts" but this GARAGE looks more like the entrance into a junk yard. IN THE LOT - About a half-dozen cars are on blocks. And we would swear the place was empty if we didn't hear Loretta Lynn's "Wine, Women and Song" coming from the GARAGE.

INT. GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

It's organized in that filthy, chaotic kind of way most AUTO GARAGES are. But notice near the RADIO where Loretta belts from, a PHONE is off its hook.

And here he is, under the HOOD of a souped-up '74 Chevy Vega, The fastest man on Earth. And it's hard to believe this is the same man we met earlier. This Dominic Coleman not only lacks the swagger and confidence of his younger days, he looks defeated.

As Dominic works, we hear a CAR pull up.

And exiting a '65 MUSTANG FASTBACK TWO AND TWO is a handsome man we met as a boy, JAMES, who's seemed to adopt his father's old persona; strong and confident. He approaches the garage and stares at Dad for a moment.

JAMES

*You always gotta listen to this old stuff?*

DOMINIC

The old stuff is the good stuff. We'll see if years from now people are still listening to Madonna and U2.

JAMES  
Got news for you, pa. They're old  
too.

Dominic finishes his work; shuts the hood; then moves to a  
COUNTER to wipe his hands. James notices the PHONE and shakes  
his head.

JAMES  
You know ma is trying to get a hold  
of you.

This doesn't mean much to Dominic.

JAMES  
I've been trying to get a hold of  
you too.

This means even less.

DOMINIC  
How are the kids doing?

JAMES  
They're okay. Worried about J.J.  
though...He reminds me of you.  
Back in the day.

Off dad's look.

JAMES  
He likes speed.

After a moment, James simply gives up.

JAMES  
I gotta go.  
(then)  
Go see mom. Or call her or  
something.

With that, James exits. And only when he finally does,  
Dominic turns to watch him drive away.

CUT TO

EXT. DOMINIC'S HOUSE -- DAY -- ESTABLISHING

This is a classic COLONIAL that sits on acres of land.  
Adjacent to the HOUSE is a massive BARN. On the GRAVEL  
DRIVEWAY leading to it, we see a car driving up.

EXT. FRONT DOOR COLEMAN HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Where Dominic KNOCKS. A moment later, Mehgan opens the DOOR. She seems mildly surprise at seeing Dominic standing there. *But she does not offer to let him in.*

DOMINIC

James said you were trying to get a hold of me.

MEHGAN

You got a phone call from the government. Sounded important. Like a job or something.

DOMINIC

What'd you tell'em?

MEHGAN

I gave'em your address.

Dominic becomes agitated.

DOMINIC

I'm not doing anything, Meg.

MEHGAN

I'm not asking you to.

DOMINIC

I'm serious. These people keep coming around, asking me to go back. I'M NOT GOING BACK.

MEHGAN

Fine.

DOMINIC

I just wanna be left alone. You know that. But you keep trying to push me back into something -

MEHGAN

I'm not trying anything -

DOMINIC

I just want to live out my life. Is that asking so much?

MEHGAN

I KNOW, DOMINIC.

Dominic is silenced.

MEHGAN

I get it.  
 (then)  
 And nobody's trying to get you to  
 go back. YOU'VE NEVER LEFT...You've  
 been stuck in the past while we've  
*all moved on.*

These words may hurt, but they are the truth and Dominic knows it. Then his head drops in shame, eliciting sympathy from Meg.

MEHGAN

You're not the only one that misses  
 him, Dominic. I forgave you a long  
 time ago. So did James and  
 everybody else. You gotta forgive  
 yourself.

Dominic looks at Mehgan, almost begging to come in. But it looks like that ship has sailed unfortunately. He accepts this and exits.

INT. SALOON -- DAY

This is "Boulevard of Broken Dreams" - Southwest style, where a handful of flyboys and drinkers are forgetting their problems. And fitting in perfectly is Dominic; saddled up at the bar by himself with a bourbon/rocks.

EXT. CEMETERY -- EVENING

Where Dominic stands before his son's GRAVESITE. It is a simple TOMBSTONE: JOHN GERARD COLEMAN, BROTHER, SON, April 25th 1982 - July 31, 2000.

Sadly, Dominic reaches to the MEDALLION that still hangs off his neck.

CROSSFADE

EXT. DOMINIC'S AUTO PARTS/GARAGE -- DAY

Back to Dominic's solitary business of working on cars when a dark sedan pulls up with government issued PLATES.

This time, Dominic is underneath a car when a PAIR of legs are heard walking towards him.

G MAN (O.S.)  
*Dominic Coleman?*

Dominic pulls himself from under the ride and sees a pair of real Hoover-types staring at him.

G MAN 1  
 We'd like to have a word with you.

INT. GARAGE, WORK BENCH -- MOMENTS LATER

Where the three are now standing. The pitch has just been given and all are waiting on Dominic's response.

DOMINIC  
 I don't think so, gentleman. You drive out to the flats, you'll trip over about a dozen qualified pilots.

G MAN 1  
 Oh, we've found'em, Mr. Coleman. But this isn't a test. In fact, the President himself has requested you specifically for this program.

*The President?*

DOMINIC  
 Why would he ask for me?

G MAN 1  
 You still hold the national land record. And this is a similar "speed" program.

DOMINIC  
 What kind? *Transonic? Hypersonic?*  
 'Cause I've already done it.

The G MAN leans in.

G MAN 1  
 I guarantee you, Mr. Coleman.  
 (dramatic/smiling)  
*You ain' ever been this fast.*

With this promise, there is a glint of curiosity in Dominic's eyes.

CUT TO

EXT. PROVING GROUNDS, MILITARY BASE -- DAY

This is home to some of the government's most classified programs, including the top secret NATIONAL CENTER FOR LIGHT AND AERONAUTICS. (N.C.L.A.)

INT. HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

It looks like LANGLEY. Nothing but MILITARY BRASS and suits walking these halls of power. Near the end of the hall, MARINES stand guard at an ELEVATOR. Dominic is ushered in by SECURITY.

INT. ELEVATOR -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic looks overwhelmed for the moment; doesn't know what to think. Then the door slides open, revealing an older, (and heavier), but still well-preserved BUCK O'SHEA. Surprise, he's eating.

DOMINIC

Buck?

BUCK

The fastest man on Earth.

They hug; happy to be reunited again. Dominic studies Buck with a look of apprehension.

BUCK

Yeah, I put on few pounds.

DOMINIC

A few? You look like you swallowed a Mitubishi.

BUCK

(to G men)

I'll take him from here.

As the pair proceed through the basement, we realize this is no ordinary project. The technology down here is something we've never seen; LASER ROOMS; MINIATURE PARTICLE COLLIDERS; THROGS OF ENGINEERS in lab coats.

BUCK

So damn, how have you been?

DOMINIC

I'm good.

BUCK  
Meg and James?

DOMINIC  
They're okay. What is this? What are you doing here?

BUCK  
*This?* Has been my life for the last three years.

DOMINIC  
Gave up the salt tracks?

BUCK  
Off one track, onto the other.  
(then)  
It's a special program. Right up your alley, D.C. As a matter of fact, the President himself has requested your participation.

EXT. CONFERENCE ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Our PAIR has reached the DOUBLE DOORS to a conference room.

DOMINIC  
Yeah, that's what I heard. *But why would the President request me?*

BUCK  
I don't know.  
(smiling; flatly)  
You can ask him yourself.

The DOOR is opened and the pair walk in.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

And there, via a VIDEO MONITOR that sits in the center of a LONG TABLE, is PRESIDENT COLEMAN

PRESIDENT  
Hello, Mr. Coleman. Come.

This is too surreal for Dominic. He approaches slowly, taking note of the WALL CAMERAS and SECURITY.

INT. WHITE HOUSE, OVAL OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

P.O.V. PRESIDENT -- CONTINUOUS

Who watches the various monitors as Dominic makes his way in front of the monitor.

PRESIDENT

Sit.

(then)

I'm Bill Stewart. Nice to meet you,  
Mr. Coleman.

Despite his power, his accessibility is endearing.

DOMINIC

D.C. You can call me, D.C.

The President smiles.

PRESIDENT

D.C.

INTERCUT CONFERENCE ROOM - As Dominic sits before the SCREEN.

The President then begins.

PRESIDENT

I imagine your first question is  
*what this is all about?*

It is. And the President begins.

PRESIDENT

Speed, D.C.

(then)

Since the moment man could move,  
we've been trying to do it faster  
and faster. From the wheel, to the  
locomotive, to the engine, to the  
jet, to the rocket...it's always  
been about speed.

(then)

And now this. What the Defense  
Department may think this is a  
waste of money, I see as an  
opportunity...To take the  
technology from the future, and  
bring it to the present. Something  
that's always been an impossible  
dream...Until now.

Dominic doesn't understand.

DOMINIC

What's this have to do with me,  
sir?

PRESIDENT

I was wondering that myself D.C.  
until I read your file... You were  
a damn good test pilot. In fact,  
your land speed record still  
stands.

(then)

But more importantly, I chose you  
because you have an intangible that  
I'm looking for.

Dominic waits to hear what this is.

PRESIDENT

You know what it's like to lose a  
son...And I do too.

(off Dominic's silence)

As you may know, my son has a very  
rare disease that has been killing  
him for the first 12 years of his  
life. He won't live past fifteen.  
Ironically, this disease will be  
fully curable within the decade.  
But unfortunately, for my son, that  
will be too late. Now I ask you,  
*would you have done anything to  
save your son?*

Dominic thinks.

DOMINIC

Yes. I would have.

The President smiles. Dominic isn't sure what he's asking  
yet. He looks to Buck who reassures him with a nod.

PRESIDENT

You called yourself fastest man on  
Earth at one time?

DOMINIC

A long time ago.

The President leans in; selling dramatically.

PRESIDENT

Well, how'd you like the title  
back?

(MORE)

PRESIDENT(cont'd)

Go faster than ALL THE MEN, who've  
ever raced, in ALL THE VEHICLES in  
the all the world. FOR ALL TIME.

(then)

A speed so fast; it can only be  
measured by theory, space, and  
time.

DOMINIC

How fast are we talking, Mr.  
President?

The President then leans in dramatically.

PRESIDENT

I'd like you to pilot a vehicle for  
me, D.C. that will go the speed of  
light.

Dominic looks to Buck. This is for real.

INT. ELEVATOR -- MOMENTS LATER

Dominic looks gopsmacked, incredulous. Thankfully, Buck is  
there to talk to.

DOMINIC

(incredulous)

A time machine.

BUCK

It's not science fiction, Dominic.  
It's physics.

(then)

Look, I know how it sounds. But you  
leave the science to us. *All we*  
*need is a pilot, okay?*

Dominic's wavering; uncertain.

BUCK

You'll be trained by the best of  
the best. And everybody has the  
same goal.

(then)

But one thing. This is the  
government's most highly classified  
program. The pentagon's top brass  
doesn't even know about this. Need  
I remind you: keep a lid on it.

CUT TO

EXT. COLEMAN'S HOUSE, FRONT PORCH -- NIGHT

We've been here before; Dominic KNOCKING on the front door. But he's a little more self-assured now. A moment later, the door swings open. It's Mehgan.

DOMINIC

I can't.  
(off her look)  
Forgive myself.

Mehgan studies him. This time, *Dominic will be let in.*

EXT. COLEMAN'S HOUSE, BACKYARD -- MOMENTS LATER

Underneath the stars, Mehgan and Dominic sit quietly on a YARD SWING. There may be a disconnect, but there's still love there. For the first time since we've seen him after the accident, Dominic seems to be opening up.

DOMINIC

A piece of me died that day, Meg. He would've been 26 now...I feel like I'm still there. Right at that moment. And I can't move forward.

MEHGAN

You can't move forward, Dominic, if you keep running away. You know you lost a son that day. But I lost a son and a husband. And James lost a father.

This is the truth. And it applies an even heavier guilt than Dominic already carries.

DOMINIC

It hurt to be around you. And I couldn't look at James.

MEHGAN

Because he reminded you of John?

DOMINIC

No...Because he *reminded me of me.*

Dominic looks sorry, but helpless.

DOMINIC

I just feel if I can do this one thing...maybe I can begin to move forward.

Mehgan understands.

MEHGAN

If you're going to do it, just talk to James before you go. He deserves to know.

CROSSFADE

EXT. BASE CAMP, PROVING GROUNDS -- DAY

On the TARMAC outside a HANGAR, Dominic is led by Buck and a PAIR of SCIENTISTS towards a small GROUP OF MEN; his TEAM.

INT. SURVEILLANCE TOWER ABOVE -- CONTINUOUS

Where the MILITARY BRASS that has so much to lose from the success of this program are watching.

P.O.V. BECKER -- CONTINUOUS

Who watches closely as Dominic is about to be introduced to his team.

ROWDY

Captain Rowdy Bennington; West Point class of '83. Test pilot F-16 Stealth, Gulf War Veteran. TACTICS and RECON.

And.

MIMM

Mimm Anderson. Doctorate M.I.T. United States Navel Academy. ENGINEERING AND PHYSICS.

And.

DALLAS

Dallas Trent; National Aeronautics and Space Administration. SPACE AVIATION.

And another - this guy's a real cowboy. Complete with STETSON.

TUCKER  
Tucker. United States Air Force  
Academy. SPEED.

EXT. RUNWAY -- DAY

Where Dominic is dressed for flight walking with the cocky TUCKER TAYLOR.

TUCKER  
Gotta get you reacclimated to g-force. What was your highest Mach?

DOMINIC  
(proudly)  
One-point-four.

TUCKER  
Flyin'?

DOMINIC  
It was a land record that stood for about four years.

Tucker ain' impressed.

TUCKER  
(re: jet)  
Used to test that ol' Blackbird. The SR-71. But, hell, this X-43 I'm puttin' you on makes it look like a the Goodyear blimp. She'll do Mach 10.

Mach 10? (10 x's the speed of sound) Dominic's eyes go wide.

CUT TO

INT. X-43 COCKPIT -- MOMENTS LATER

A SONIC BOOM announces our presence to this experimental aircraft. The pilots sit low behind the console, but unlike the traditional "bobsled" style of seating, Dominic sits along side Dallas. He looks on the verge of being nauseous too, but he's trying to keep his composure. They're going MACH 7, rocketing through the sky.

TUCKER  
You eat them bananas like I told  
you?!

DOMINIC  
Yeah, why?!

TUCKER  
'Cause they taste the same comin'  
up as they do goin' down!  
(then)  
MAC X, BIG DADDY!

Dallas flips a switch that takes the X-43 towards the  
staggering speed of Mach 10.

TUCKER  
Yeehaw!!

MUSIC UP - AND OVER A SERIES OF SHOTS - Of Dominic preparing  
for his mission.

- Dr. Mimm Anderson tutors Dominic with the aid of an  
OVERHEAD PROJECTOR: Complicated equations of relativity and  
thrust are projected onto a SCREEN.

- Dominic sits in the WELLS 3 SIMULATOR; an identical  
reproduction of the actual cockpit he'll be manning; Dallas  
Trent next to him, explaining each GAUGE.

- Dominic taking a stress test; hooked up to number of  
ELECTRODES, monitoring his heart, pulse, etc. A TRAINER next  
to him, pushing him to his physical limit.

- In what looks like a CLASSROOM, Dominic is seated front and  
center as Buck is explaining the EQUATION for LIGHT SPEED.

- At home, it's craziness again, Dominic, holding his  
grandchild, going over the equations he has learned with his  
ever-ambitious son, James. Their wives and other children in  
the background.

- In the MEDIA CENTER, Rowdy Bennington is going over a MAP  
of NEW MEXICO/UTAH with Dominic. On a VIDEO SCREEN is the  
acronym S.U.R.V.I.V.E Rowdy explains.

ROWDY  
Size up your situation; Use your  
senses; Remember your mission;  
Vanquish fear; Improvise; Value  
your life; Employ your wits.

- In the FUSION ROOM, Dominic watches from behind glass the ENGINEERS in full RADIATION SUITS at work. Schematics of the WELLS 3 system are plastered about the place with warning signs everywhere. This is clearly NUCLEAR.

BUCK  
You didn't think it ran on  
gasoline, did you?

INT. MEDIA CENTER -- DAY

CLOSE ON - SLIDE-SCREEN - A MAN, mid 40's. His long hair and dark, good looks are unbecoming of his doctor's status

BUCK  
This is Dr. Steven Timmis; was head  
of the Mayo Clinic's genetic  
research and engineering for almost  
a decade...

Dominic is seated before the screen, studying the picture as Buck continues to educate.

BUCK  
He's been working on a cure for the  
president's son for the past four  
years out of a classified location  
in Salt Lake City and is on the  
precipice of the disease's  
discovery...

- And Dominic is monitored doing a complicated "hand/eye" coordination test. Remarkably, he seems quite competent, even impressing the SCIENTISTS who monitor him.

- Testing G-FORCE - in what looks like an amusement park ride, Dominic is being spun at incredible speed.

P.O.V. BECKER -- CONTINUOUS

Who watches with THROUGH THE GLASS; hatred coursing through his veins. He stands next to another well-decorated but dour GENERAL. Think Dick Cheney wearing Colin Powell's uniform.

BECKER  
(grumbling)  
Thirty percent of our defense  
budget. And they're handing it to a  
civilian.

A different thought is occurring to the General.

GENERAL

Maybe it's time you stop looking at this as a waste of money. And start looking at it *as an opportunity*.

With that, the General walks away, leaving with Becker with food for thought.

CROSSFADE

INT. MILITARY HOSPITAL, ROOM -- NIGHT

Where here, "the reason" lay asleep. He's a slender, cherubic BOY, laying in what looks like the most antiseptic setting imaginable; a room quarantined by transparent walls.

ADJACENT to his bed, a PLASTIC ENSCONCED ARM with HAND reaches through the wall and tenderly rubs the boy's back, awakening him. It's the President.

PRESIDENT

Hey, champ.

The boy smiles wearily before fading back to rest.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF WALL - The President is with his attractive wife, HELEN, sharing a brief moment together in front of their ailing son. Both look fraught with concern. But the President is on the verge of tears as he pulls his arm out.

PRESIDENT

My own son, and I can't even hold him.

Helen leans her head on his shoulder, comforting him.

HELEN

(whispering)

You will some day. And so will I.

(then)

You have to believe that.

PRESIDENT

I do.

Helen studies her husband with penetrating eyes.

HELEN

Do you think you're doing the right thing?

PRESIDENT

I don't know...Sometimes I think we're tampering with something that we shouldn't. But then I think of him.

(re: his child)

Their focus returns to the boy.

PRESIDENT

We may only get one shot at this.

CROSSFADE

INT. COMPUTER ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Dr. Mimm Anderson mans the computers where a series of TIME LINES appear on the MONITORS. On one of the MONITORS, a computer simulation of time passage is generated and explained.

BUCK

...Once you achieve light speed, every four seconds you travel, will be the equivalent of one year's Earth time. You then must maintain the 186 thousand mile per second speed MANUALLY.

On Buck.

BUCK

DO NOT DEVIATE. The Wells 3 is equipped with an atomic timer, set to go off 24 seconds into lightspeed. When it goes off, you must pull out immediately.

INT. SIMULATOR -- CONTINUOUS

You wouldn't know, but Dominic is in simulated space now, traveling what looks like their vision of the speed of light.

BUCK

It takes 8 minutes for the sun's light to reach the Earth. Traveling light speed in your journey you will be no farther from the Earth than the moon. On your first trip, you will be traveling away from the sun.

(MORE)

BUCK(cont'd)

Mark your course using the Wells  
3's navigation system.

The simulator drops out of light speed and Dominic "marks his  
course" via the mock-controls.

BUCK

You should have a visual on our  
planet -

Dominic does so. And we move towards EARTH.

BUCK

Once at the point of re-entry, you  
will rendezvous with our space  
station, to receive all of the  
pertinent information to be  
downloaded for your return  
flight...

With the help of Dallas Trent, Dominic navigates the WELLS 3  
simulator towards a SPACE STATION.

INTERCUT -- BACK TO MEDIA CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

Where Buck is speaking to Dominic.

BUCK

It is here, you will then retrieve  
the necessary information from the  
N.C.L.A. There will be NO CONTACT  
between you and the future world.  
After the retrieval, proceed back  
to your end mark and make your  
return flight, with the sun's  
gravity.

(then)

IT IS IMPERATIVE, that you can not  
travel at the speed of light for  
more than the allotted time. If  
the ship's atomic clock  
malfunctions, you must manually  
abort IMMEDIATELY.

This seems a quite a bit to handle. But Dominic looks game-  
worthy.

DOMINIC

*Or what?*

This is the 64 thousand dollar question.

BUCK  
You'll go back in time.

CUT TO

INT. ELEVATOR -- LATER

As Dominic waits in the elevator, General Becker enters just as the doors are about to close. Even silent, the Colonel is one imposing man. After an uncomfortable moment, he breaks his silence.

BECKER  
Mr. Coleman. I want you to understand something: the speed of light is a weapon unlike the world has ever known. Like the Atomic bomb of years ago or today's stealth fighter, it will ensure our military superiority for generations. It is a weapon.

The DOOR OPENS and Dominic moves to exit but Becker blocks him with his arm -

BECKER  
And make no mistake, Mr. Coleman: I take my weapons very seriously.

Becker stares down Dominic before allowing him to pass.

CROSSFADE

INT. BUCK'S CAR, MOVING -- NIGHT

Both men are quietly lost in thought. As Buck pulls over to stop before Dominic gets out, he leans in; looks like he needs to speak his mind.

BUCK  
(with difficulty)  
Dom...You know there's another aspect of the mission we haven't talked about.  
(off Dominic's attention)  
That's the *ethics of light speed*.  
(then)  
Now, I know what you've been thinking; and you can't.  
(go back in time and change history)  
This is a one way trip.

(MORE)

BUCK(cont'd)

You can only return at the point of origin. And even if you could...light speed/time travel...is more disruptive to the order of things than cloning or anything man has ever done. And if you miss your mark on the re-entry, you'll be messing with the Almighty's space/time continuum. And I don't know what that will do. But I do know this: A man can not have two souls.

Buck can't explain, but we get the urgency. And so does Dominic, who gently nods his head. Dominic gets out of the car and Buck watches him leave not fully convinced that he understands.

CROSSFADE

INT. DOMINIC'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A spartan room; almost a studio. In bed, a thoughtful Dominic is wide awake, thinking about Buck's words. After a moment, he reaches out to his BEDSTAND and picks up a PHOTOGRAPH.

CLOSE ON PHOTO - OF the COLEMAN FAMILY back in the day at the Salt Flats. Together. Happy. He takes it for a closer look. Studies it.

CUT TO

EXT. ROCKET CAR GARAGE, SALT LAKE CITY -- DAY

It's a beehive of activity with PROTOTYPES taken out and towed in; JEEPS rolling by. Dominic makes his way towards the GARAGE and for the first time since the accident, he seems to have purpose.

INT. GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

About a DOZEN JET-FUELED CARS at varying degrees of assembly are scattered about with workers hovering around them. In the middle of the hanger, is a sleek TURBO JET THRUSTER with TYLER GORDON'S GREEN CLAD MECHANICS working it. Tyler makes eye-contact with Dominic. No words spoken, but a nod of his head out of respect.

NEAR one of the CARS is JAMES, who works away while listening to music via his headphones.

P.O.V. DOMINIC -- CONTINUOUS

Who watches his son with buried pride.

Dominic wants to approach his son, but he can not muster the courage to do so. After a moment, he simply slips away. And James is never the wiser.

CROSSFADE

EXT. MILITARY BASE, TESTING GROUNDS -- MORNING

It couldn't be a more beautiful day. 75. Not a cloud in sight. And nestled up to a HUB, parked majestically between a half DOZEN F-14's, is a SPACE SHUTTLE.

INT. NATIONAL CENTER FOR LIGHT AND AERONAUTICS -- CONTINUOUS

A beehive of activity where a DOZEN TECHNICIANS are situated NASA-style. The technology here coupled with the professionalism ensures us that nothing will be left to chance. Buck is the Queenbee, surveying the BIG SCREEN MONITOR that charts the course for WELLS 3.

OVERSEEING THE CENTER -- Military brass is present, and led by a very anxious COLONEL BECKER.

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

As Dominic appraises himself in the mirror, mentally preparing himself. He is now wearing a snug neoprene body suit, black as anthracite. Nothing but the American Flag and his name stitched into it; Captain Dominic Coleman.

As he does so often when summoning courage, he touches the AMULET around his neck. It's go time.

EXT. HALLWAY LEADING TO SHIP -- MOMENTS LATER

Dominic is proceeding towards the GATE leading to the SHUTTLE where he is saluted by a PAIR OF SERVICEMEN that stand post.

INT. HALL LEADING TO WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic walks solemnly towards the shuttle's entrance where Buck awaits.

BUCK  
Welcome to the WELLS 3.

DOMINIC  
I won't ask what happened to the  
Wells one and two.

BUCK  
Remember; you're here to make  
history, not change it. Godspeed.

Dominic smiles and the two old friends shake. No, hug.  
Dominic then enters into a darkened HULL and the SHUTTLE  
DOORS are SEALED behind him.

INT. HULL -- CONTINUOUS

It may be dark, but inside this hull, is the hatch to the  
spacecraft WELLS 3. We can't see it just yet, but Dominic  
climbs in.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

From what we can make of it, this doesn't look unlike the  
COCKPIT of a fighter jet - but without the full gallimaufry  
of switches and gauges. In fact, it's quite Spartan. Dominic  
takes his seat front and center; places on his HELMET; pulls  
its attached MIC into place. It's like he's back in the  
simulator.

DOMINIC  
Command, this is Wells 3; situated  
and readied for flight.

INT. COMMAND CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

TECHNICIAN 1  
This is ground control.  
Resurrection, cargo is in place and  
you are cleared to initiate take-  
off.

EXT. RUNWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The SHUTTLE RESURRECTION rumbles towards the runway.

INT. RESURRECTION -- CONTINUOUS

Where pilots TUCKER TAYLOR and DALLAS TRENT man the controls of what looks to be a rudimentary take-off for them.

TUCKER

Thank you, ground control...  
Attention passengers. The seat  
belt sign is on; you are not free  
to walk about the cabin. This is a  
"non-smoking" flight. If we catch  
you removing any smoke detectors on  
the premises, we will be forced to  
throw you from the spacecraft. You  
get that, cargo?

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

As Dominic listens in, smiling.

DOMINIC

Is there an "in flight" movie?

DALLAS

No movie, Cargo. But there's some  
salted peanuts on the dash and  
you'll get quite a view at the bus  
stop.

The PILOTS then initiate take-off and the SHUTTLE begins speeding down the runway.

Inside WELLS 3, the cabin shakes as the shuttle picks up speed.

OUTSIDE - We watch as it accelerates down the RUNWAY - and there's LIFTOFF; the shuttle smoothly rising into flight.

EXT. RURAL ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

Where Dominic's FAMILY have driven and are watching the SHUTTLE rocketing upwards towards the firmament.

All in GROUND CONTROL all are seriously listening in. Although this is years of work coming to its fulfillment, it could also be a catastrophe. After all, the engines that drive the WELLS 3 are nothing shy of NUCLEAR BOMBS.

Yet inside the WELLS 3, Dominic waits patiently in his seat. He may look calm and cool, but as he reaches out to clutch the AMULET, ST. JOSEPH, we know otherwise.

Inside the SHUTTLE, it's all business; another THRUST is triggered.

But Dominic is in the dark, waiting, listening.

*SHHHHWEWWWWWWWWW!*

We're going up, up, UP. Pulling away from the planet, soaring towards the stratus. And suddenly, there's a VIOLENT JARRING within the ship, making it VIBRATE so furiously that it HUMMS.

DALLAS  
Hitting a little turbulence on the  
entry, ground...

It's starting to get a little scary in the WELLS 3 for a second; shaking and bumping, when just as suddenly - IT STOPS.

And the Shuttle is smoothly flying on the outer edge of the atmosphere.

SHUTTLE PILOT 1  
Ground control; Resurrection has  
made its mark and is prepared for  
drop.

The Shuttle's HULL begins to OPEN beneath the SPACECRAFT.

We may be moving at about 1400 mph, but this looks like slow-motion as the WELLS 3 slips out, drifting beneath the Shuttle. As it drops into full view, we finally get to see the WELLS 3 in all its engineering majesty. Make no bones, it's like no spacecraft we've ever seen. A hybrid of sorts; a DIMINUTIVE STEALTH FIGHTER on steroids. Small, sleek, and sinewy at the front end gradually increasing in muscle towards the rear where a trinity of NUCLEAR ENGINES power it.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Now Dominic finally gets the magnificent view he was promised - our PLANET EARTH; its turquoise, oval sphere, luminescent.

DOMINIC  
(sotto)  
Good God.

Spectacular from above. We can see the WEST COAST of North America and the horizontal shadow that divides day from night. As Dominic admires this -

TUCKER (O.S.)  
We're gonna get this bus back into port, son. We'll rendezvous with you on the other side. Good luck, D.C.

Dominic is momentarily lost in the beauty of the view as the space shuttle RESURRECTION moves out of sight.

BUCK  
Are you there, Wells 3?

Silence.

AT THE CONTROL CENTER - All are on hold.

BUCK  
Dominic.

DOMINIC  
I'm here, Buck.

BUCK  
You ready for this?

Dominic thinks for a second now focused on the task at hand: the speed of light. All at GROUND CONTROL are listening in.

DOMINIC  
Yes, I am.  
(then)  
Let's tip this cow.

Dominic then reaches out and initiates the first non-nuclear THRUST and the ship bursts forward, rocketeering into the vast expanse of space. Even minus its atomic power - this ship is the fastest ever built.

At the CONTROL CENTER, the MONITORS chart the ship's speed. But not in miles per hour. Miles per second. We're only a few hundred in, but rising fast.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Where that look of worry is matched on President Coleman's face as he sits by himself, watching his wife read a book to his quarantined son.

IN THE CONTROL CENTER --

BUCK  
Set course for Proxima Centauri.

TECHNICIAN 1  
Computing Parsec at 1.31.

This means it would take 19 years, traveling at light speed to reach the star. A safe distance.

INT. WELLS -- CONTINUOUS

Our ship is zooming along, pulling away from EARTH. Ground control droning in the background.

BUCK  
Mark WELLS 3.

TECHNICIAN 1  
Wells marked at -

10,500 miles per second.

TECHNICIAN 1  
10.5

INTERCUT - CONTROL ROOM

Buck looks concerned for the moment. He's deliberating. This seems to be the point of no return.

BUCK  
Ten point five, over.

DOMINIC  
I hear you.

BUCK  
Well you won't for long, Dom. We'll go silent when you go atomic. Are you ready for this?

INTERCUT - WELLS 3

Where it doesn't look like Dominic is ready.

INTERCUT - CONTROL ROOM

Cause for concern. Buck looks like he wants to pull the plug.

BUCK  
Dominic?

INTERCUT - WELL 3

BUCK  
Can you here me?

Obviously, Dominic can. But he's not listening. Instead, he reaches forward and begins punching numbers on the KEYPAD at his CONSOLE. This triggers a series of tests; lights blinking; radiation indicators; external pressure; temperature.

You can hear the CHURNING of the NUCLEAR REACTION about to take place. It begins with a low, steady, flat bass.

And the TRINITY OF ENGINES ignite; blazing BRIGHT ORANGE GASSES spinning from within. It's as if the power of the sun has been harnessed here and is about to be unleashed.

There's an eerie calmness for the moment, before the nuclear reaction begins - and we can see it. MILLIONS and MILLIONS of PHOTONS, QUARKS, ELECTRONS, PROTONS, swirling about from within the engines.

Dominic sits readied; hand on the THROTTLE that will push the speed of the WELLS 3 into HYPERSPACE.

Then, the particles begin to COLLAPSE and COLLIDE with one another. The ship is pushed forward ever so slightly, like a car in too high of gear.

ALL AT THE COMMAND CENTER wait with breathless anticipation.

Until finally, the inevitable - A CHAIN REACTION.

DOMINIC  
Marking Atomic clock at 3, 2, 1...

Like a VOLCANIC ERUPTION, the TRINITY OF ENGINES EXPLODE in a spectacular detonation, shooting out a LASER PRISM of LIGHT and COLOR.

The WELLS 3 reaction is simultaneous, firing forward with a MATRIX-LIKE bullet blast into the deep.

Inside the WELLS 3, there's a look of apprehension on Dominic's face. Gone is the determination we saw out in the Salt Flats. In fact, he looks downright frightened.

THE SPEEDOMETER - is off the chain. 20...60...80...thousand m.p.s. and exponentially rising.

AT THE COMMAND CENTER - Communication is no longer possible. Buck and his crew can only wait and watch.

TECHNICIAN 1  
Sir, approaching 100 thousand.

That's miles per second.

IN THE WELLS 3 - No sign of slowing down; though it is getting hot in here. Dominic surveys the ship's vitals. Temperature on the outside is stable. Inside? About 90. Not dangerous - yet.

As the spacecraft Wells 3 races through the void, like a celestial hydroplane, it leaves a ZIPPER LIKE WAVE in its wake.

But INSIDE THE SHIP - We're at 131,000 m.p.s. and maxing out?

INTERCUT - CONTROL CENTER

TECHNICIAN 1  
Sir. Stabilizing at 133.

ON BUCK - Who seems to understand what's happening.

BUCK  
He's gotta break the Sun's gravity.  
It'll be okay.  
(sotto)  
Come on, Dominic.

INTERCUT - SPACE - As the Wells 3 blasts towards us, we can see the mighty SUN behind it. But it's about to be eclipsed by the Earth.

INSIDE THE WELLS 3 - It's over 100's degrees in here now and Dominic is feeling it, profusely sweating. The SPEEDOMETER has maxed out at 137,000 m.p.s. And the ship seems to be struggling, like a TRUCK moving uphill.

But the hope is, with the SUN soon to be FULLY ECLIPSED any moment, the WELLS 3 will be released from its gravitational pull and accelerate forward with one final burst.

And so we watch...As the temperature inside rises...

The SPEEDOMETER not only grounded, but retreating.  
135,764/134,721/133,650...

And EARTH ever so slowly, shading the SUN behind it.

INTERCUT - COMMAND CENTER

TECHNICIAN 1

(concerned)

Sir, the interior temperature is  
searing.

BUCK

She'll hold.

(sotto)

C'mon, Dom. Hang in there.

INTERCUT - WELLS 3 - Where the temp is now upward 120;  
seemingly unbearable.

Just as the last RAY OF LIGHT is eclipsed, it's as if a  
mountain has just been climbed. Because the moment the WELLS  
3 clears the light of the sun's gravity - BOOM!

We jump to 140,000 m.p.s. and rising.

INTERCUT - COMMAND CENTER - They're cheering.

And INSIDE THE WELLS 3 - Temperature is going back down, as  
the speed keeps going up.

152,143...158,935...164,277...

IN SPACE - All we can see is the DISTANT STARS as suddenly, a  
swath of energy pierces the cosmos. The Wells 3 is traveling  
so fast, it's invisible.

171,342...177,855...180,000 MILES PER SECOND

INTERCUT - COMMAND CENTER

TECHNICIAN 1

Sir, 1.8!

Only six thousand more. But then, suddenly - NOTHING.

POWER OUTAGE.

INSIDE THE WELLS 3 - There's no sign of letting up in this ship. And the view? Imagine an OCEAN with every color of the spectrum parting before you like Moses before the RED SEA.

183,155...184,933...185,471

AT THE COMMAND CENTER - Panic sets in. *What happened?*

And then the incredible. Remember that wall of air out in the Salt Flats? Well multiply it by a thousand. Because up ahead, is SPACE NEGATIVE. Where the vast expanse of darkness is now becoming albescent and the stars that light up heavens are dimming.

185,773...185,821...185,900.

The ship itself is now becoming albescent; the entire spectrum of LIGHT and COLOR coursing through it.

But as we inch towards that magic number, LIGHT starts to collapse into the ship like a horizon sunset - only at breakneck speed. It begins with the COLORS, all of them, in staccato like fashion; BLUES, GREENS, YELLOWS, all sucked in and out of sight, until we are left with nothing but a negative film; void of any shade.

INSIDE THE COMMAND CENTER - There's confusion. Worry. All are waiting with breathless anticipation; scrambling for power; nobody knowing what to expect.

AND ON THE WELLS - AS IT HAPPENS - 186,000 m.p.s.

The ship WELLS 3, barely visible, fades into the BRIGHTEST LIGHT ever. By now, all the stars of the sky are a direct contrast to the space between them; they're all jet-black. Everything: the SUN, MOON, PLANETS.

AND INSIDE THE SHIP - Dominic can actually touch the light around him. It bends to his whim, floats before him, surrounding him like spirit.

And the ATOMIC CLOCK begins to move forward. Slowly at first; days, months, years, 07/27/07...03/18/08/...05/09/09...

As the SPEED keeps increasing: 190,000/191/193/197,000...

EXT. SALT FLATS -- CONTINUOUS

Empty. Peaceful. *But up in the sky?* This LIGHT WAVE, looks like a RIP. At first it seems no bigger than something left behind a SKYWRITER. But this RIP stretches across the SKY. As if the cosmos is being cut with a giant razor.

In fact, all over the country, this RIP can be seen. It's something of a PHENOMENA.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY, MANHATTAN -- CONTINUOUS

Where it's grabbing everyone's attention, causing CAR ACCIDENTS. All CIVILIANS are LOOKING UP.

EXT. ST. LOUIS, MO. -- CONTINUOUS

High above the ARCH, the RIP is commanding attention here as well.

All over the country; Los Angeles; Dallas; Seattle; are experiencing the same - a HORIZONTAL TEAR cutting across the sky.

The RIP can even be seen in the dark skies above PARIS, MADRID, ROME, JAPAN.

There seems to be a problem. For the moment. Because the speed of light is nature's last law not meant to be broken. It comes with a cosmic retribution. You thought a SONIC BOOM was big? Get ready for a SOLAR BANG.

IN SPACE, all that is left behind from the WELLS 3 is A LIGHT WAVE, extending across the heavens.

The LIGHT WAVE calmly retracts and FADES AWAY. But before completely disappearing, it explodes like astronomical tsunami, rolling throughout the cosmos. At first, it seems to restore the nature of things. Stars light up; color is returned; space dims to the void that it is.

But the second SHOCK WAVE is apocalyptic, rocking the sky with an enormous magnetic swell - sweeping over everything, including our planet.

ON EARTH - the RIP in the sky SEPARATES, and a FLOOD OF LIGHT pours through it as if a giant dam has been broken. The light cascades out, blasting over the globe in one instant FLASH - as if God has taken a photograph.

AT THE COMMAND CENTER - the room goes dark before MONITORS EXPLODE. Screams of panic ring out as -

The LIGHT WAVE washes over the entire planet.

EMERGENCY SIRENS SOUND OFF.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic is still in HYPERSPACE. He's concentrating on the SPEED. Not the ship's ATOMIC CLOCK - TIME BLAZING FORWARD 04/25/08...07/31/11...

Dominic readies himself to pull on the throttle, but he can't bring himself to. He's having a flashback to that fated day in Bonneville.

FLASHBACK - SALT FLATS OF BONNEVILLE -- YEARS AGO

As a younger Dominic is about to pull back on the throttle but doesn't.

Dominic looks disoriented as the ATOMIC CLOCK continues onward. Then, finally, it goes BLANK and the NUCLEAR ENGINES shut down.

IN SPACE - The WELLS 3 suddenly appears from within the ENERGY WAVE it's created.

INTERCUT -- WELLS 3 -- The temperature has inexplicably dropped, leaving the entire ship's interior with a thin coat of ICE. Dominic chips away at the console, trying to figure out what might have happened.

INTERCUT - COMMAND CENTER

Where the entire room has been BURNED OUT. But despite the pluming smoke off broken monitors and small fires, these men and women are professionals; already in moving into damage control. For Buck, this was not a monumental failure. It was a monumental loss. He looks devastated. His first order of business is to call it in.

BUCK  
(to an engineer)  
Get me the President on the phone.

As Buck waits for the call, notice the look of vindication on Becker's face. As we -

FADE OUT

INT. WELLS 3 -- LATER

Approaching Earth now - and it appears normal. But up ahead, the GARGANTUAN SPACE STATION/ATMOPORT is nestled between the atmosphere and space. It sits suspended on the stratus like a GIANT FUNNEL; ships taking off and landing on it.

DOMINIC  
(sotto)  
Good God.

As Dominic tries to comprehend this - radio silence is broken and a HOLOGRAM APPEARS in front of his ship. It is a middle aged BLACK MALE dressed in military command uniform. This is COMMANDER WORTHY.

COMMANDER  
Attention spacecraft. You are  
violating International Airspace.  
Identify yourself.

DOMINIC  
This is Wells 3. Requesting  
permission to...approach.

The HOLOGRAM disappears for a moment. SILENCE. Then returns.

COMMANDER  
Identification number?

*Number? What number?*

The HOLOGRAM FIGURE flashes a VERTICAL LASER into the Wells 3, scanning it much to Dominic's amazement.

As the Wells 3 drifts into the GIANT FUNNEL, it's obvious, we ain' in 2007 no more. HUNDREDS of MODERN FIGHTER JETS are DOCKED along the sides and it has a WIDOW'S WALK that runs across it.

COMMANDER  
Wells 3, you are unidentified, and  
will be categorized "hostile" if  
you do not dock immediately.

DOMINIC

Look; I'm an American and this is  
an American spacecraft. Call the  
N.C.L.A.

COMMANDER

Non compliance will result in  
international tribunal...

As the Commander drones on, Dominic studies the HOLOGRAM  
closer. Along its side, run a series of calculations and  
information. But what grabs his attention is the last line:  
04/18/2020.

Dominic then realizes that he passed his mark.

COMMANDER

Do you choose to comply?

Dominic becomes lost in thought.

DOMINIC

(sotto)

Let's see...Size up my situation.

COMMANDER

COMPLY OR WE WILL TAKE ACTION.

DOMINIC

Doesn't look too good...Use my  
senses.

WEAPONS ARE DRAWN and concentrated on the Wells 3.

DOMINIC

I'm usin'em, I think...Remember my  
mission.

COMMANDER

This is your final warning.

DOMINIC

Value my life.

And with no other choice.

DOMINIC

Improvise.

Dominic simply flips the THRUST on the console, blasting  
through the hologram.

SHOTS are fired at the WELLS 3 as it takes off, but this thing is the MILLENNIUM FALCON on crank. It's so fast, it's out the other end of the funnel before the shots come near it.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Adrenaline fuels Dominic as he desperately navigates his way out.

EXT. SKY, CLOUDY, RAINY NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

The Wells 3 may have made it out of the SPACE FUNNEL and into the Earth's atmosphere, but about HALF A DOZEN FIGHTER JETS are mobilizing out.

DOMINIC  
VANQUISH YOUR FEARS!

Easier said than done. As Dominic tries to get a bearing of where he is; searches the sky; his RADAR goes off. INCOMING.

A MISSILE at THREE O'CLOCK.

Dominic makes a desperate move, dropping the Wells 3 into a helix maneuver to avoid the MISSILE. And by the time he recovers his craft, at least four of the ships are on his tail - and his RADAR is going off again.

DOMINIC  
(sotto)  
Alright. That's what you  
want...Let's see how you handle  
atomic.

This is a no-no. But Dominic reaches out and punches it anyway.

The Wells 3's acceleration is so intense that it blasts a WALL OF AIR from its wake, rattling his pursuers violently off course - and sending him to speeds never achieved on Earth. But it also renders the Wells 3 virtually uncontrollable.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Hyper...sky? No longer in a vacuum, the Wells 3 can not structurally take the heat or friction of this incredible speed. It looks like it's going to explode.

ALERTS - ring out on the CONSOLE

Dominic reaches out to kill the atomic thrust, but it's too late now. He's moving too fast and out of control.

FROM THE GROUND - The Wells 3 looks like a streaking METEOR.

BACK IN THE WELLS 3

All looks hopeless for the moment, but somehow, Dominic manages to PULL UP with all his might and steady the craft, scouring the ground for a safe place to land while struggling with the controls. HE HITS the SWITCH for EMERGENCY BRAKE.

And the A PAIR OF JET THRUSTS on the WINGS blast out.

Dominic's SHOULDER BELT keeps him from smashing into the WINDSHIELD - but thankfully, the WELLS 3 is now not only manageable, but with the navigation system working, Dominic seems to know where to go.

CROSSFADE

EXT. RURAL UTAH, JUST OUTSIDE SALT FLATS -- DAWN

Out here, it's still the middle of nowhere. And here comes the WELLS 3 - a little too fast.

EXT. RURAL UTAH -- CONTINUOUS

Where the Wells 3 is rocketing downward...colliding into the ground with such incredible force that Dominic is nearly knocked unconscious.

INT. DINER NEAR SALT FLATS -- CONTINUOUS

This place just doesn't change. Even the OWNER looks the same. He's enjoying a quiet cup of coffee when a THUNDEROUS SCREECHING interrupts him. As his restaurant quivers. Per usual, he's unflappable - even as his place rattles around him.

EXT. RURAL UTAH -- CONTINUOUS

The ship stays in one piece, rolling to a stop near the old DINER.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic can't believe he's alive. He pops his HATCH and struggles out.

EXT. RURAL UTAH -- CONTINUOUS

A light RAIN falls. And though this may be the future, it could very well be today. This place hasn't changed at all. He walks toward the DINER.

INT. DINER -- MOMENTS LATER

We've seen this place before, rattling with the SONIC BOOM years ago. *And guess what?* It hasn't changed a bit. Strangely, there's a curious CHIMP, wearing an APRON behind the COUNTER. This is surreal.

DOMINIC  
(sotto)  
No...It can't be.

*Planet of the apes part two?*

DOMINIC  
(to the chimp)  
Do you speak English?

And nothing.

DOMINIC  
I'm an American test pilot. My name is Dominic Coleman.

OWNER (O.S.)  
Who are you talking to?

Dominic turns to the doorway; sees the OWNER of the place. And he looks miffed as usual.

OWNER  
It's a chimp, you idiot.

Oh...

DOMINIC  
When are we?  
(off the man's confusion)  
What year is it?

OWNER

2020.

Just as Dominic thought. He missed his mark.

DOMINIC

I need a phone.

INT. BUCK O'SHEA'S KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Where it looks like a breakfast is being prepared for dozens. Thing is; Buck's the only one here. Bacon frying; bread cooking; microwave beeping...and the PHONE RINGS. Buck is an old man now. Still heavy. Still happy. He stuffs a biscuit into his mouth and answers.

BUCK

Hello?...

(silence, then matter of  
fact)

Where are you?...Alright...I'm on  
my way. I'll bring a trailer...See  
you soon.

Buck hangs up; thinks; looks at a CALENDAR; studies his watch. It looks as he's on the verge of solving a tough trig equation. After a moment, he smiles, having solved it. Then faints.

CROSSFADE

INT. DINER -- LATER

Dominic is at the COUNTER, puzzling over a NEWSPAPER when the DOOR'S BELL announces more customers. Dominic looks over and sees -

Buck O'Shea, who stands front and center next to a pair of kids; late teens. One is an attractive FEMALE TOMBOY. The other looks like a TEST PILOT in training; a young Dominic; same age. Buck looks like he's on the verge of tears.

BUCK

My God...we thought you were gone.  
But I held out hope.

At seeing how old Buck looks and staring at these strangers, it's finally settling into Dominic. And he moves in for an emotional embrace.

BUCK  
It's great to see you.

Off of everybody's incredulous looks. There's absolute silence as Dominic realizes he's seeing his GRANDKIDS who are young adults now. They're not sure just yet.

DOMINIC  
J.J.?

Dominic moves towards the boy, all smiles.

DOMINIC  
You're so big.

Turning to Amy.

DOMINIC  
And Amy?...How beautiful are you?

Uncertain, she looks over to Buck, who's smiling.

BUCK  
Say hello to your -

JAMES  
DAD?

All eyes turn to James who has just stepped in. He's aged into a very handsome man like his father. He can not believe his eyes.

DOMINIC  
SON?

AMY/J.J.  
*Grandpa?*

INT. JAMES' HOUSE, KITCHEN -- MORNING

It's a welcome party. And Dominic is like a celebrity; the center of attention regaling the folks of his epic flight. Buck listens in closely. With his old age, he's become a real softy. But James sits off to the side. He's got something to say, but is holding it in.

DOMINIC  
...At about 180 thousand miles per second, it looked like space was splitting apart and I was entering a new dimension.

BUCK  
A wall of light.

Dominic nods.

GREAT GRANDKID 1  
Did you crash?

DOMINIC  
No, I didn't. But I certainly  
thought I would. I had to punch the  
atomic engine once I re-entered the  
atmosphere.

BUCK  
*You went atomic? Here?*

DOMINIC  
Had too. I was being chased down.

Everybody begins talking at once, overwhelming Dominic. Dominic is trying to sort this thing out as best he can, but while this is happening, son James is brooding in the corner. We now realize that he and his father are roughly the same age. It looks like he's had enough of this reunion.

JAMES  
Alright, alright...Everybody out of  
here.

They all want to hear more.

JAMES  
No. No. Clear out.

They all begin to do so, complaining on their way out. After a moment, the room is empty - save for Buck, who look at the guys. *Me too?* Yeah, him too. He exits, leaving father with son. There's then a long moment between the two. After all, it's been a long time for James and he still can't believe his eyes.

JAMES  
(sotto)  
My God...

Dominic smiles.

DOMINIC  
Where's ma?

JAMES  
I can't believe it. You look the same.

DOMINIC  
Son. Where's your mother?

James is silent at first.

JAMES  
(candid)  
She's dead, pa.

James lets this settle for a moment.

JAMES  
She died about five years after you left...waiting for you to come back. We thought she was crazy.

This just begins to sink in.

JAMES  
You didn't tell us.

Dominic's pain is suffused with determination.

DOMINIC  
I didn't think I had to.

James looks at his father, confused.

CUT TO

INT. BUCK'S GARAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

Everyone is here as a BEDSHEET is pulled off the garage's centerpiece revealing the banged up WELLS 3. They all start gawking. Buck is like a proud father. He can't believe it. He's caressing the ship, in awe of its craftsmanship; kids are climbing all over it.

J.J.  
(to kids)  
Get down from there.

JAMES  
*What kind of ship is this?*

DOMINIC  
It wasn't just about speed son.

JAMES  
What are you talking about?

Dominic looks to Buck; takes a deep breath and begins.

CUT TO

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE -- DAY

The great seal of the President of the United States tells us we are in the oval office, where the Commander from the atmoport is standing before the figure of the President.

COMMANDER  
We had it radar locked, sir, but underestimated the ship's thrust. It shot past us.  
(then)  
It had no serial number and no recognizable features.  
(flummoxed)  
I've never seen anything like it before.

PRESIDENT (O.S.)  
*I have.*

The figure pauses momentarily. We then reveal that the President is now non other than General Samuel BECKER, who's managed to ascend to power.

INT. HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Where Becker is walking with the dour, but decorated GENERAL who is now the SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
Every rogue pilot in the world has heard of the Wells. It doesn't mean anything.

BECKER  
The pilot asked to contact the N.C.L.A.

The Secretary is stunned. *Could it be?*

BECKER  
You do realize, if this is in fact Coleman...

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
The technology worked.

Exactly. The Secretary now knows the gravity of the situation.

BECKER  
I'm giving you an executive order.  
I WANT IT FOUND. PERIOD. DO YOU  
UNDERSTAND?

The Secretary does.

BECKER  
Consider it a matter of national  
security.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
Yes, sir.

CUT TO

INT. BUCK'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic and Buck are huddled in a private conversation while the TV drones in the b.g.

BUCK  
You may not have a say, Dominic.  
(then)  
First off, the landing gear is  
shot. Secondly, obviously the  
atomic timer doesn't work. Now  
this may be the future, but it  
doesn't mean they sell'em at Wal-  
mart. Thirdly, we don't even know  
where the doctor is - or if he's  
alive for that matter. Finally, you  
gotta make it out without being  
shot down. And even if you do, I  
don't know if you have enough  
enriched uranium left to make the  
jump to lightspeed.

DOMINIC  
We can fix the landing gear.  
I'll find the doc. And I'm not  
worried about the calculations.  
I'll leave the science to YOU.

Buck looks like he might not be up to the challenge.

BUCK  
 What about your family, Dominic?  
 You just got here.

Dominic thinks for a moment; looks over to James, who is studying the WELLS 3 with J.J. and Amy.

DOMINIC  
 I'll make it right with them.

BUCK  
*When?*

Dominic shows that stubborn resolve he used to possess.

DOMINIC  
 I'll go back up without you if I  
 have to. But I need your help.  
 (then)  
 Please.

Suddenly, a COMMERCIAL draws their attention.

ON TELEVISION - A slickly edited piece featuring...

SPOKESMAN FOR CAMPAIGN (O.S.)  
*For a quarter of a century he's  
 been fighting for our country...And  
 for the last three, he's been  
 fighting for you...*

Becker appears; phoney smile and all. Followed by a series of well-orchestrated "photo-ops"; Becker at a hurricane site; Becker giving a speech; Throwing out a the first pitch at a ball game.

SPOKESMAN FOR CAMPAIGN (O.S.)  
*For accountability...fiscal  
 responsibility...and a the  
 strongest national defense in the  
 world...Re-elect Samuel Becker for  
 President in 2020.*

*Paid for by the re-elect Samuel Becker for President  
 campaign!*

When we pull back from this commercial, Dominic has a shocked look of disgust on his face.

DOMINIC  
 You gotta be kidding.

CUT TO

INT. SITUATION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Where the Secretary of Defense, his job on the line, is front and center of a state of the art meeting room where DOZENS of his FIELD TEAM are waiting directives. He stands before a HOLOGRAM featuring a picture of DOMINIC COLEMAN and the ship WELLS 3.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

All of the following stays classified. The pilot of the ship is Dominic Coleman. He's already a cult-figure to many and we don't want to add to his myth.

(then)

Based on our information, we've calculated that he landed somewhere in this region of the Southwest.

The FOUR CORNER AREA is displayed; satellite shot of its pancake landscape.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

I would bet the four-corner area. It's what he knows.

A picture of the Wells 3 appears.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

But our priority is the ship.

(then)

Remember: Dominic Coleman is a dangerous threat. And the Wells 3 must be secured. Though he has been off the radar for some time, make no doubt, he has access to an incredible cache of brain-trust that is currently trying to undermine our national security.

CUT TO

INT. BUCK O'SHEA'S BARN -- CONTINUOUS

Hardly a cache of brain-trust. It's CHAOS with kids running around.

AT A WORKBENCH - Dominic is rifling through YELLOW PAGES. Nearby, a very uncertain James approaches.

JAMES  
Hey, Pa. *What are you doing?*

DOMINIC  
Looking up that doc.

Dominic tears a PAGE out; folds it.

JAMES  
*You're telling me the key to the government's most secretive program in its history is in the yellow pages?*

DOMINIC  
All doctors have to be listed. It's the law.

BUCK (O.S.)  
*GUYS! OVER HERE!*

AT THE WELLS THREE -- MOMENTS LATER

With a MAP OF UTAH laid out in front of J.J., Buck, Dominic and James.

J.J.  
What about Wildcat?  
(re: Wildcat Salt Flats)

BUCK  
Not smooth enough. Glue'll still be drying on that landing gear.

DOMINIC  
Skull Valley?

BUCK  
Too far. Plus, they've been closed off for years.

Buck finds the spot. He's reluctant to say at first.

BUCK  
HERE.

Buck looks at Dominic seriously.

DOMINIC  
*Dynamite Road?*

Buck nods. This is a solemn place for everyone.

DOMINIC  
They still run there?

BUCK  
They will today.

A RUMBLING SOUND reverberates through the bar. Something's coming.

INT. STEALTH SURVEILLANCE JET -- DAY

Flying above the FOUR CORNER area, the PILOT, with the help of his considerable tracking devices, is calculating where the Wells 3 landed.

On one of the jet's MONITORS - has a closer look at the landscape. It's MAGNIFIED and ZOOMED ON - close enough to see the TIRE TRACKS from the previous night's landing.

EXT. BARN -- CONTINUOUS

A TRIO of RECONNAISSANCE PLANES whizzing towards us.

INT. BARN -- CONTINUOUS

The barn quivers from the fly-by, all hurry to the DOOR to see what the commotion is all about -

INT. STEALTH SURVEILLANCE JET -- CONTINUOUS

As it flies over the trading post and SNAPS a series of PHOTOS.

CLOSE ON MONITOR - As the AERIAL SHOT is FROZEN; goes INFRARED on the BARN'S INTERIOR.

EXT. BARN -- CONTINUOUS

Our guys have rushed outside only to catch the tail end of it. And Buck already knows, they've been made.

BUCK  
We don't have much time.  
(then)  
Bring that Winebago in here. Let's  
get to work.

All head back in save for Dominic and James, who's looked lost ever since his father has been back. Dominic takes the brief moment to apologize.

DOMINIC

Son, I'm sorry. I know it must've been tough. But I'm going -

JAMES

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, PA.

DOMINIC

I'm going to go back.

JAMES

*For what?*

James is serious.

JAMES

To erase everything I've done in the last 10 years?

DOMINIC

You working on a cure for cancer or something?

JAMES

That's not the point.

DOMINIC

*Then what's the problem?*

JAMES

IT'S MY LIFE, PA.

Dominic is hurt.

DOMINIC

Well don't you want me to be a part of it?

JAMES

You never were before you left.  
*How's it going to change?*

DOMINIC

We can get it back, to the way it was. And I'll do things differently this time. I'll -

JAMES  
 - YOU DON'T GET IT.  
 (then)  
 I don't want it back.

This silences his father It's the first time he's realized how unhappy James was.

JAMES  
 And neither should you.  
 (then)  
 You know, for as long as I can remember, you've been stuck in the past. *And now after all these years?* You still are.

Both stop. Now James realizes that he's hurt his father in return. Still, he walks away, leaving Dominic to wonder.

MUSIC UP - AND OVER A SERIES OF SHOTS

Of this strange multi-generational family and their friends as they prepare the WELLS 3 for its second flight.

The WELLS 3 is hoisted like a car in a garage as J.J. and Amy work on its LANDING GEAR.

Buck calibrates the ATOMIC CLOCK, calculating the speed of light/time ratio as Dominic explains his trip.

And the WELLS 3, down now, and being PAINTED by the CHILDREN.

While inside the WELLS 3 Dominic is showing James how the controls work. James, being the test pilot that he is, seems to grasp it.

Buck goes over the route with Dominic via the MAP.

The family covers the WELLS 3 with a tarp; tightly wrapping it.

MOMENTS LATER

It's pulled out of the garage by the WINEBAGO.

ON THE HOOD of a late, late model S.U.V. Buck is finalizing the plans with Dominic and James; followed by good-byes.

All parties take off.

CROSSFADE

INT. SITUATION ROOM -- DAY

Where a concerned Secretary of Defense stands front and center; the eye of the hurricane. One of his AGENTS rush towards him, hand the AERIAL SHOTS from the surveillance jet. Becker studies them for a moment. A rush of recognition seizes him. He knows.

COMPUTER MONITOR - Of the AERIAL SHOT as it is MAGNIFIED.

Amazingly, the images are detailed, taking us into and out of the entire picture, seeing anything in the frame with absolute clarity.

The Secretary is only interested in the MACHINE being worked on.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Closer.

The TECHNICIAN does so...revealing what is undoubtedly the WELLS 3.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Get me the President.

INT. S.U.V., MOVING -- DAY

There's silence in the car as James seems searching for the right words to say. But dad seems a bit overwhelmed by it all, playing with the radio, listening to strange news and sounds. He settles on a station that's playing Madonna's "Celebrate". He looks at James and remembers his earlier prediction.

DOMINIC

No way...

Finally, James breaks the silence.

JAMES

Hey, pa, I'm sorry about what I said earlier...

(off his father's attention)

It's just that, *how would you feel if your dad showed up in time machine years after you thought he was dead?*

DOMINIC  
I would be surprised.

JAMES  
Right. I mean this whole thing is weird. We're practically the same age now.

The two look at one another. *They are.*

DOMINIC  
Well I'm still your father.

This doesn't sell James.

DOMINIC  
C'mon, son. Let's just make the best of it. Enjoy me while I'm here.

JAMES  
(sarcastic)  
Yeah, sure, pa. We'll just bond over this before you leave again - or get thrown in jail.

DOMINIC  
Told you, I'm not leaving. I'm comin' back.

James rolls his eyes.

EXT. ALLIANCE PROVING GROUND -- CONTINUOUS

If you were wondering where all the 21st century technology is; here it is. DOZENS and DOZENS of sleek, state-of-the art AIRCRAFT. Under BECKER'S command, they're mobilizing up, blasting towards the horizon, headed towards the SALT FLATS.

CROSSFADE

EXT. DOWNTOWN, SALT LAKE CITY -- DAY

In the heart of the city, there is a post-modern expressionist structure like none we've ever seen. It's an angular high-rise with sloping roofs and constructed entirely of GLASS. For the first time since Dominic has been back, he's slack-jawed.

But DOWN THE STREET from this architectural feat, is a ramshackle BUILDING;

certainly doesn't look like office to one of the premier rare disease researchers of our day. And James looks at it with credulity.

JAMES

You sure this is the address?

Dominic is studying the TORN YELLOW PAGE.

DOMINIC

That's what it says.

James stares at the building with disappointment.

JAMES

You know the more I find out about this program, the chintzier it gets.

INT. DR. STEVEN TIMMIS' -- MOMENTS LATER

Dominic and his son enter into nothing but barking DOGS and wounded CATS. This Dr. Timmis is a veterinarian. Dominic approaches the receptionist.

DOMINIC

I need to see the doctor. It's an emergency.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Where Dominic and James are waiting in what clearly is an "animal patient's" office. After a moment, Dr. Timmis enters. He's a mild-mannered, bookish young man with glasses. Clearly, not our guy.

DOMINIC

(seriously)

Are you Dr. Steven Timmis?

DR. TIMMIS

Yes, I am. How can I help you?

DOMINIC

I'll get right to the point.

(matter of fact)

I'm Dominic Coleman. I've broken the speed of light and arrived from the past. I'm here to retrieve the antidote for President Coleman's son you've been working on.

(MORE)

DOMINIC(cont'd)

He's probably dead by now, but we can save him if I can complete the mission, which is to make the speed of light again and get back to where I came from. So if you could, doctor, we're in a hurry.

Dr. Timmis looks at Dominic vexed. James' head is down; ashamed.

JAMES

I'm sorry, doctor. My father, I mean, brother, isn't feeling well. Our family dog is ill and -

DR. TIMMIS

WAIT.

(then)

Let me get this straight. You're saying that you only now - just arrived to the present day, to retrieve an antidote for the President's son, who's already dead -and you're going to bring it to him, in the past...to save him by breaking the speed of light?

DOMINIC

Yes.

But now even Dominic knows how ridiculous this sounds.

DOMINIC

That's about right.

The doctor thinks about this. Then removes his glasses.

DR. TIMMIS

You're late.

(off their astonishment)

You were supposed to be here years ago.

EXT. SOUTHWEST SKY -- DAY

Souring over the countryside 24hundred m.p.h. A SQUADRON of AIRCRAFT are closing in.

INT. RECON-PLANE, MOVING -- CONTINUOUS

Pilots are focused and determined, watching the MONITORS in front of him.

INT. SITUATION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Where MONITORS are synced-up; the Secretary and all his men seeing what the pilots see.

EXT. BARN -- DAY

It's APOCALYPSE NOW, with DOZENS and DOZENS of JET FIGHTERS approaching on the horizon, screaming towards him.

In a matter of seconds, it's like an invasion with AIRCRAFT landing all over the place; SOLDIERS pouring out like buckshot.

EXT. BARN -- CONTINUOUS

As it becomes surrounded by an entire battalion of MILITARY. Moving through the arsenal stands BECKER, who confidently approaches the DOOR; gives the order and watches as SOLDIERS lift it OPEN before rushing in.

INT. BARN -- CONTINUOUS

As the BATTALION enters to - nothing. The news is relayed to the Secretary of Defense.

AIRBORN RANGER  
It's empty, sir.

BACK IN THE SITUATION ROOM -- The Secretary of Defense looks vexed.

CUT TO

EXT. HIGHWAY TO SALT FLATS -- DAY

Where a lone WINEBAGO is towing a TARP-COVERED VEHICLE.

EXT. AERIAL SHOT -- CONTINUOUS

On the WINEBAGO making its way towards the SALT FLATS.

EXT. SALT LAKE CITY -- DAY

In the future, Salt Lake City looks like New York City - only cleaner. GLASS SKYSCRAPERS with MONORAILS connecting them;

WIDE STREETS where only "official" vehicles can travel. An ELEVATED TRAIN SYSTEM acts as MASS TRANSIT. The Doctor is leading James and Dominic to the HOSPITAL on foot.

DR. TIMMIS

...After what was assumed to be a failure, the government shut down the N.C.L.A. and prosecuted the engineers for "tampering with unknown technologies." For his involvement in unauthorized medical research; He was temporarily dis-boarded. But not before he finished his work.

DOMINIC

He?  
(then)  
Who are you?

DR. TIMMIS

I'm Dr. Steven Timmis. Junior.  
(then)  
The Dr. Timmis you're looking for is my father.  
(smiling)  
But he told me this might happen.

INT. SITUATION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Where a greater urgency is settling in. The Secretary of Defense is studying the SURVEILLANCE PICTURE via the COMPUTER MONITOR.

CLOSE ON MONITOR - which has SERIES OF WINDOWS in CLOSE UP, including Dominic, James, Buck, the Map of Utah.

A SOLDIER enters to await orders.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Contact the locals; set up checkpoints on all the major roads.

SOLDIER

Yes, sir.

TECHNICIAN 1

General, I might have something.

Becker turns his attention back to the MONITOR.

CLOSE ON MONITOR - As we get closer, and closer to the WORK TABLE until we can see what's on it.

It's the YELLOW PAGES.

TECHNICIAN 1  
Telephone book.

*Telephone book?*

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
Take me in...CLOSER.

And he does so, hovering on the book...ON THE PAGE...ON THE  
GUIDE WORD: PHYSICIANS.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
Scroll down.

TECHNICIAN 1  
Doctors...Maybe he's injured?

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
No...He's not injured.

Doctors Simmons...Smith...Spahn...Tannen...T...T...T... The  
next page has been removed.

TECHNICIAN 1  
Missing a page, sir.

The Secretary is on the verge of a revelation.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
(sotto)  
Of course...

He knows.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
Show me the map.

The technician clicks on the MAP; it's now filling the  
screen. The Secretary smiles at his realization.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
He's trying to get back.  
(then with urgency to  
Pilot)  
Get us to Salt Lake City Hospital.  
And alert officials to be on the  
lookout for an unidentified male.  
Send them Coleman's picture.

CUT TO

INT. HOSPITAL/HEALTH CARE CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

This is a gigantic facility and looks nothing like a hospital. More like a SUPER MALL with a waterfall in lobby.

The MEN approach the ELEVATORS as Dominic rubbernecks the place.

ON ONE SIDE - of the "hospital" is an OLYMPIC SIZED POOL complete with 10 and 20 METER BOARDS.

Adjacent to this, is an array of ELLIPTICAL MACHINES and TREADMILLS. In fact, it looks like a full-scale GYM.

Because the exterior of the structure is GLASS; we can see the happenings outside too. It's like one huge ATRIUM.

AT THE ELEVATORS - our guys wait with a handful of pedestrians.

JAMES

Hospitals are all equipped with health care centers. It became law when they nationalized medicine.

Dominic can not believe it. He's smiling.

JAMES

Why are you smiling?

DOMINIC

You and your brother were born here.

Just for a fleeting second James lets his guard down and the two exchange a smile.

THE ELEVATOR DOORS OPEN and our guys walk in.

INT. GLASS ELEVATOR -- CONTINUOUS

As our trio is headed up; oblivious to the HIDDEN CAMERA in front of them and trouble they're about to run into.

JAMES

So what's the plan?

DOMINIC

Don't know. Don't have one yet.

P.O.V. HIDDEN CAMERA IN ELEVATOR -- CONTINUOUS

Capturing the men on video.

MATCH CUT

INT. SECURITY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Where ALL are identified by their THUMBPRINTS. DR. STEVEN TIMMIS JR., address, personal info. JAMES GERARD COLEMAN, address, personal info. And...UNIDENTIFIED MALE, 35-45.

The MONITOR ALERTS security.

SECURITY GUARD

Sir, we have an unidentified male on the West elevators.

SECURITY SUPERVISOR

Where is he headed?

SECURITY GUARD

18th floor.

SECURITY SUPERVISOR

Cross him with the redlights.

ON THE MONITOR - Dominic's image is frozen and MAGNIFIED. The screen then runs through THOUSANDS OF STILLs of "redlit" or wanted individuals. In a manner of seconds, DOMINIC COLEMAN'S PICTURE is seen. EYES; HAIR ANALYSIS; EARS.

IT'S A MATCH.

CUT TO

INT. WINEBAGO, MOVING -- DAY

All seems fine for the moment as our folks are making their way to the Salt Flats - when Buck sees something he doesn't like.

P.O.V. BUCK, -- CONTINUOUS

Who watches the road slows. *Up ahead?*

A ROADBLOCK with POLICE.

CUT TO

INT. ALLIANCE AIRCRAFT -- SAME

Soaring by the landscape below with state-of-the-art tracking devices, SALT LAKE CITY is ahead. The S.O.D. is alerted via radio.

CAPTAIN

Sir...Coleman is in the hospital.

And at the speed they're going, they'll be there in a moment.

INT. HOSPITAL/HEALTH CARE CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

As our guys exit the elevator and step into what looks like no hospital we've ever seen. It's a modern Goliath of a place; 20,000 square feet; WIDE OPEN with no CEILING. It's also naturally lit and BRIGHT from the daylight pouring through the transparent GLASS WALLS.

This floor also seems to serve as the EPICENTER of the health center; complete with LONG ESCALATORS and MONORAILS running through it.

IN THE MIDDLE of the floor, is a large, circular RECEPTIONISTS desk.

P.O.V. SURVEILLANCE CAMERA -- CONTINUOUS

From high above, our trio is being tracked as they walk past the RECEPTION DESK.

EXT. HOSPITAL/HEALTH CARE CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

Here they come, landing in a blitz; Soldiers charging out of their crafts and charging towards the hospital.

INT. 18TH FLOOR LAB -- CONTINUOUS

Where the AIRCRAFT and COMMOTION outside is drawing everyone's attention. Including an OLDER DOCTOR, who moves to the WINDOW. This is Doctor Timmis Sr. A look of paranoid seizes his face. *Why would they be here?*

INT. HOSPITAL/HEALTH CARE CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

Shock ripples through the lobby as the MILITIA move in, taking over the place.

BECKER steps in and is met by HOSPITAL SECURITY.

SECURITY SUPERVISOR  
Eighteenth floor.

Without so much of a nod of thanks, Becker is off, followed by his soldiers.

INTERCUT - 18TH FLOOR LAB -- CONTINUOUS

Sensing something is wrong, the elder Timmis makes his way to the hall when he is spotted by his -

DR. TIMMIS  
Dad?

DR. TIMMIS SR.  
What are you doing here?

The younger doctor nods to Dominic. His father can not believe his eyes.

DR. TIMMIS SR.  
Dominic Coleman?

Dominic nods.

A JET/COPTER HYBRID appears outside the hospital.

DR. TIMMIS SR.  
You've been followed. We've got to get you out of here.

INT. ROAD LEADING TO SALT FLATS -- CONTINUOUS

As the Winebago pulls up to the POLICE at the ROADBLOCK, there's a foreboding moment that things aren't going to work out.

BUCK  
Just play it straight, kids.

An officer approaches.

ROADBLOCK COP  
Where you headed to?

BUCK  
Salt flats.

The cop looks in the back, sees the TARP over the WELLS 3.

ROADBLOCK COP  
What are you haulin'?

BUCK  
Just a salt racer.

ROADBLOCK COP  
Can I see her?

BUCK  
Sure.

CUT TO

EXT. REAR OF WINEBAGO -- MOMENTS LATER

As the TARP is pulled from the WELLS 3. It's been PAINTED BRIGHT ORANGE - with BLUE SPRAY PAINT "The Fastest Man On Earth!" It's obvious, this rig looks a little different than the usual sort - but with the paint job, it doesn't look a heckuva lot different than one of the ROCKET CARS we've seen before.

ROADBLOCK COP  
She fast?

BUCK  
She's pretty fast.

The ROADBLOCK COP thinks about this.

ROADBLOCK COP  
We're lookin' for an unauthorized rig. You got registration on this?

BUCK  
(uncertain)  
Sure. In the car. Let me go grab it.

Buck eyes James and Amy.

CUT TO

INT. 18TH FLOOR -- CONTINUOUS

As ALLIANCE SOLDIERS are flooding the place, racing through the floor, creating chaos.

OUT FROM A SURGERY ROOM -- Dr. Timmis and his son are pushing James, who lay covered on a HOSPITAL BED. DOMINIC pushes along dressed as a doctor, complete with SURGICAL MASK.

They breeze by the first wave of SOLDIERS, heading towards the GLASS ELEVATORS.

AT THE RECEPTIONIST DESK - A PAIR OF SOLDIERS who are obviously looking for Doctor Timmis, stand by a NURSE, who spots him pushing the HOSPITAL BED with his son and Dominic.

NURSE

There he is.

(then)

Doctor Timmis...DOCTOR TIMMIS.

ON THE DOCTOR, who tries to ignore this.

NURSE

DOCTOR TIMMIS!

With no other choice, he turns.

DR. TIMMIS SR.

(sotto)

Keep moving. Take'em to the bottom floor. We'll go out emergency.

The Doctor stops; turns to the approaching SOLDIERS as the others move closer to safety.

DR. TIMMIS SR.

(stern)

I'm in the middle of dealing with a patient, gentlemen. Can it wait?

SOLDIER

We have information that someone very dangerous is trying to contact you.

DR. TIMMIS SR.

(playing along)

What can I do to help?

Our guys look they're going to make it when the ELEVATOR DOOR OPENS and out pour SOLDIERS. Dominic makes eyes with the first out.

Dominic's instincts tell him to run. He does so, taking son James with him like a bobsled racer. James pops his head up off the bed.

JAMES

What the...?!

DOMINIC

STAY DOWN!

As he runs, Dominic tears off his surgical mask and cloak; looks behind him. SOLDIERS are charging and with no bed to push - they're gaining fast.

Dominic doesn't know where to go; UP AHEAD, there's a WIDE TURN that leads to the MONORAIL. But just as Dominic makes that turn -

A SOLDIER tackles him onto the rolling HOSPITAL BED, rolling recklessly toward the GLASS WALL.

With all the weight and momentum on it -

CRASHES THROUGH -

EXT. HEALTH CARE CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

As Dominic, SOLDIER, James, and the HOSPITAL BED SHATTER THROUGH the GLASS in spectacular fashion; DROPPING to the nearby GLASS ROOF, which angles downward and out.

Because the building is so ANGULAR, the FALL isn't that far, but they're at a STEEP INCLINE and begin SLIDING DESPERATELY DOWNWARDS.

A scrap ensues: Father versus Soldier. And with son James hooked onto the hospital bed, he's being dragged towards his death.

17 stories up...it's wrestling match; both rolling around, locked in battle...16 stories...blows exchanged...nasty kidney shots for the general and a head-butt for dad....15 stories...and dropping.

A HELICOPTER/JET HYBRID appears, sweeping over them.

What Dominic lacks in technique is made up for with heart and sheer will to survive.

But the Soldier, fueled by years of military training, gains the upper hand. He manages to pin Dominic as they slide and pounds away.

And they're still slipping downward; the COPTER/JET HYBRID hovers at the edge; ropes dropped; SOLDIERS prepared for an airborne rescue.

P.O.V. LOBBY -- CONTINUOUS

As the trio slide down the glass roof.

BACK ON THE ROOF -

The Soldier draws his gun and tries to point it at Dominic, but it's slapped away. Dominic follows with a double tomahawk blow to the chest, forcing the soldier off him.

Dominic frees himself, hurls his body, scrambling for the GUN - all while reaching for his son, who's being dragged by the bed, closer and closer to the edge; the soldier all over him.

It looks like they're all gonna slide off the roof, but somehow, Dominic manages to position himself; GRABS FOR THE GUN.

Son James wrests himself from the HOSPITAL BED which quickly rolls off the edge.

SMASHING TO THE PAVEMENT BELOW

Dominic and James desperately scrape at the glass roof to slow their momentum, But with the soldier hanging all over them, it's nearly impossible.

Dominic raises the GUN. We think he's going to plug the guy, but instead, he kicks the soldier, sending him on his way before SHOOTING THE ROOF beneath them.

The GUN is no ordinary piece. It sends out a massive PULSE, obliterating the GLASS, sending he and his son -

CRASHING THROUGH the GLASS CEILING much to the shock of the innocents that stand below.

And they plummet downward...fortuitously towards the POOL.

SPLASH!

INT. WINEBAGO, SPEEDING -- CONTINUOUS

There's a sullen mood in the R.V. as Buck is flooring it.

AMY  
Is this playing it straight?

BUCK  
Call your father. Tell'im we may be  
late.

EXT. HIGHWAY LEADING TO SALT FLATS -- CONTINUOUS

As the WINEBAGO speeds by - it's being followed by a PAIR OF COP CARS with their lights flashing and a HELICOPTER.

CUT TO

INT. HOSPITAL/HEALTH CARE CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

As Dominic and James struggle to the side of the pool and pull themselves out. Exhausted and overwhelmed from their brush with death, they sit on the coping for a moment.

DOMINIC  
Is this the kind of bonding you had  
in mind?

JAMES  
That wasn't smart.

DOMINIC  
Maybe you would've rather flown off  
the roof?

James CELL PHONE RINGS. He digs into his pocket and pulls it out.

JAMES  
Yes, sweetie...  
(listening)  
We're not doing much better. I'll  
call you when I can.

James hangs up; looks at his father.

DOMINIC  
They finally make a phone that's  
waterproof?

JAMES  
Yeah, it comes in handy.

James rises, helps his father up.

DOMINIC  
How much time we got?

James checks his watch.

JAMES  
Less than an hour.

A MAN'S WHISTLE draws their attention.

OUTSIDE AN EMPLOYEE DOOR, it's Doctor Timmis Sr. He's  
frantically signaling them over.

EXT. HOSPITAL/HEALTH CARE CENTER -- CONTINUOUS

Having lost Dominic again, Becker looks as driven as ever;  
headed back into the hospital, but stopping for a debrief.

SOLDIER 1  
They must've survived the fall,  
sir, but we haven't located him  
yet.

INTERCUT - SITUATION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Where the S.O.D. is on top of everything.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
Cover every exit; start sweeping.  
He's in there somewhere.

Another SOLDIER approaches; has news.

SOLDIER 2  
General, local authorities think  
they found the ship. They're headed  
towards the Salt Flats.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
SEND BACK UP FOR CONTAINMENT. It's  
not going anywhere without its  
pilot.

SOLDIER 2

Yes, sir.

INT. HOSPITAL/HEALTH CARE CENTER EMERGENCY -- CONTINUOUS

Much busier here. This is, after all, the EMERGENCY WING of the hospital. The Doctor is leading a drenched Dominic and his son; briskly walking down the hall.

DOMINIC

Where are we going?

DR. TIMMIS SR.

I'm getting you out of here. I don't know what else you want from me.

DOMINIC

You know exactly what I want from you, Doc: The antidote.

DR. TIMMIS SR.

I don't have it.

(then)

I gave it to your wife, years ago, when I knew authorities would link us.

Dominic stops the doctor.

DOMINIC

My wife is dead.

The doctor pauses; sees the desperation in Dominic's eyes, but there's nothing he can do.

DR. TIMMIS SR.

I'm sorry.

The doctor then leads Dominic and his son through DOUBLE DOORS.

INT. EMERGENCY WING GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Where a small fleet of EMERGENCY VEHICLES are parked. But make no doubt, these are no ordinary AMBULANCES. These are souped up HUMMERS.

DR. TIMMIS SR.  
This is the best I can do.  
(re: Emergency vehicles)  
GO. You don't have much time.

EXT. EMERGENCY WING GARAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

Where DOZENS of ALLIANCE SOLDIERS form a human chain,  
blocking the exit, guarding the perimeter of the building.

INT. EMERGENCY TRANSFER VEHICLE -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic sits in the passenger seat. He looks to be at the end  
of his rope. Almost catatonic. Son James drops the car into  
drive.

INT. EMERGENCY WING GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

As TWO EMERGENCY DRIVERS are walking towards the PARKED  
VEHICLES they notice that theirs is pulling away.

INT. EMERGENCY VEHICLE -- CONTINUOUS

James is driving slowly, careful not to draw attention to  
themselves. He can sense his father's disappointment and  
tries to alleviate it.

JAMES  
It's not so bad here, pa, you know?  
Why don't we just turn it in?

Dominic is defeated.

DOMINIC  
Can you take me to see her first?  
(re: mother)  
Please.

James nods.

INT. HOSPITAL SECURITY -- CONTINUOUS

It's been taken over by SOLDIERS. And news of the missing  
emergency vehicle has just been called in.

SECURITY GUARD  
An E.T.V. has been taken.

P.O.V. FRONT SEAT OF EMERGENCY VEHICLE -- CONTINUOUS

The guys are getting a little nervous so James flashes his LIGHTS/SIREN. The SOLDIERS SEPARATE.

EXT. HOSPITAL EXIT -- CONTINUOUS

Just as our guys sneak past the SOLDIERS in the "borrowed" E.T.V., the SERGEANT that just let them past is getting a notice via his radio.

SERGEANT

Yes, sir.

INT. EMERGENCY VEHICLE -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic, looking in his PASSENGER SIDE WINDOW can sense something is up.

DOMINIC

GO.

INTERCUT -

As that SERGEANT has just gotten his order and looks to exiting E.T.V.

INTERCUT -

DOMINIC

HIT THE GAS, SON. NOW.

INTERCUT -

SERGEANT

STOP THAT VEHICLE!!

INTERCUT - ETV

James looks in his SIDE VIEW and sees SOLDIERS BRACED FOR FIRE. He steps on the gas -

Just as they do so, blasting the back of the ETV, sending glass flying. But this thing is a tank. And it speeds off.

INT. EMERGENCY VEHICLE -- CONTINUOUS

Both James and Dominic are down and braced from the shots. It looks like it's out of harm's way for the moment and sighs of relief cross their faces - until James looks in the REAR VIEW.

EXT. SALT LAKE CITY ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

Where FOUR MOTO-COPS are closing fast, riding the coolest ROCKET-CYCLES you've ever seen.

SIRENS BLARING.

INT. EMERGENCY VEHICLE -- CONTINUOUS

Suddenly, determination seizes James.

JAMES  
Hang on, pa. We're gonna have to  
tip this cow.

And he FLOORS IT.

INTERCUT -- SITUATION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Where the Secretary of Defense is following the action; pleased that he finally sees this coming to a close.

INT. WINEBAGO -- CONTINUOUS

Where they're still in trouble, speeding down the highway with the authorities hot on their tails.

EXT. HIGHWAY LEADING TO SALT FLATS -- CONTINUOUS

Cops. Winebago. Painted Wells 3. And a HELICOPTER hovering closely above.

FROM THE HELICOPTER

POLICE (O.S.)  
PULL YOUR VEHICLE OVER, NOW!

INT. WINEBAGO -- CONTINUOUS

Where the trio is remarkably calm and cool. But they've got to do something. J.J. makes an executive decision.

J.J.  
Stay the same speed, Buck. I'll  
meet you at Dynamite Road.

J.J. gets up.

BUCK  
Where you think you're going?

J.J.  
I'm a test pilot.  
(shrugs)  
No better time to test it.

He's right. And Buck knows it.

BUCK  
Stay low. And give us time to get  
there first so we can set the  
table.

J.J. nods before turning to his sister.

J.J.  
Amy, I'm gonna need your help.

EXT. HIGHWAY LEADING TO SALT FLATS -- SECONDS LATER

As the BACK DOOR to the WINEBAGO swings open; J.J. and Amy standing in the rear of the winebago; 70 m.p.h.

EXT. AERIAL OVER CITY CHASE -- CONTINUOUS

As the General's ship speeds over the action below, waiting for the E.T.V. to be stopped.

BUT DOWN BELOW -

It's quickly become a CHAPLIN SCENE; MULTI-LEVELED ROADS that weave upward and downward with the ROCKET CYCLES all over our E.T.V.

But James is no Joke. Indeed, speed runs in this family because he's weaving through traffic like a champion NASCAR driver.

JAMES

If we can get to the lows we might have a chance.

P.O.V. SECRETARY OF STATE -- CONTINUOUS

Via the monitors, confidently watching as James and Dominic are in pursuit. But UP AHEAD - The ROAD SEEMS TO DISAPPEAR INTO THE GROUND. Panic strikes.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

DO NOT LET THEM REACH THE TUNNELS.

INTERCUT - HIGHWAY LEADING TO SALT FLATS

J.J.

(to sister)

AFTER I'M IN THE SHIP, UNHITCH IT!

She nods and J.J. carefully moves towards the ship like a HIGH WIRE performer. A fall most certainly means death.

FROM THE HELICOPTER - A CABLE IS DROPPED; and with it comes a PAIR of BOLD POLICEMEN, shimmying downward. They're not going to let J.J. get on that ship.

INTERCUT - SALT LAKE CITY CHASE

It looks like they're going to miss those TUNNELS, or "LOWS", (a lowered highway system), because they're on the wrong side.

But James swerves lanes. Now they're going AGAINST TRAFFIC -

INTERCUT - SITUATION ROOM --

Where the look on the S.O.D.'s face tells all - as they have disappeared into the tunnels.

INTERCUT - CHASE

The Bikers follow orders, though one pays the penalty, clipping an oncoming car and flying out of sight, they're right behind. And -

INTO THE LOWERED HIGHWAYS -

Where it's a labyrinth of ROADS; the heart of what is an extensive underground freeway system - complete with mass transit.

Fortunately for the bad guys, the remaining bikes have the edge. They climb walls IN LOOPS to evade traffic, gaining on their target.

While James relies on his SIREN to clear the way and his excellent instincts at averting head-on collisions. Dominic looks petrified.

DOMINIC  
You drive like your mother!

INTERCUT - HIGHWAY LEADING TO SALT FLATS

J.J. is making his way to the WELLS 3. But moving at this speed, every undulation in the road is like a CRATER, making a difficult task absolutely harrowing. And the POLICE swinging towards him via their cables aren't helping either.

But somehow James gets to the ship and Amy quickly undoes the HITCH that holds it in place - just before the POLICEMEN drop onto the trailer.

The BACKSTOP of the TRAILER suddenly drops. Released from its hitch, the WELLS 3 SLIDES OFF - onto the HIGHWAY - only feet from the POLICE CARS that chase it, rolling on its wheels by momentum.

INTERCUT - THE LOWS

It's like a game of "FROGGER" with a BULLET MONORAIL running between OPPOSITE LANES as James is trying to get over.

UP AHEAD - THERE'S AN EXIT

James makes the hairpin turn, barely...Bikers follow. He's got to do something to shake them. But at least he's not driving against the grain now.

HIGH ABOVE THE CITY - A HELICOPTER anxiously follows the chase scene via COMPUTER MONITOR, which is tracking the remaining BIKERS.

CLOSE ON MONITOR - A MAP of THE LOWERED HIGHWAY SYSTEM with THREE RED BLIPS, indicating the MOTORBIKES' progress.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Like a seasoned pro, J.J. hits the series of ignition switches. And just like that...THE LIGHTS GO ON.

P.O.V. JAMES -- CONTINUOUS

The POLICE are caught on the trailer now; between the ship and the winebago.

Amy UNHOOKS the trailer and the WINEBAGO pulls away, leaving the POLICE in no man's land. They retreat towards the HELICOPTER above.

J.J. punches the thrust -

And uses the TRAILER AS A RAMP, rocketing over the WINEBAGO, blasting the HELICOPTER with its wake.

P.O.V. BUCK -- CONTINUOUS

From inside the Winebago, who marvels at the power of the ship watching with Amy as the Wells 3 takes off and out of sight.

AND ON THE ROAD - The crumpled RAMP tumbles, causing the pursuing POLICE to collide with it. Buck and Amy are free now.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Loving the speed and power of this ship, J.J. screams with joy.

INTERCUT - THE LOWS

Flanked by BIKERS, it looks like they have our guys dead to rights. And UP AHEAD -

THE ROAD RISES to the surface; the LIGHT OF DAY pouring in.

INTERCUT - SITUATION ROOM --

Where the S.O.D. is watching the MONITOR; waiting for the E.T.V. to make its exit.

IN THE LOWS -

With MOTORBIKES on both sides of them and a BULLET MONORAIL headed their way - a rash move is made.

James drops the E.T.V. into neutral, SLAMS ON HIS BRAKES and makes a sharp RIGHT TURN.

The E.T.V. flies over the median just as the BULLET TRAIN passes, leaving the MOTORBIKES behind.

BUT HE'S IN THE OPPOSITE LANES NOW - skidding out, doing a 180 degree turn, dropping the E.T.V. back into drive and peeling off in the opposite direction. Off dad's horrified reaction to this move.

JAMES  
*Mom drive like that?*

INTERCUT - SITUATION ROOM --

As the Secretary of Defense is absolutely flummoxed watching the THREE MOTORBIKES exit the TUNNELS but with no E.T.V.

And to make matters for him worse, news.

SERVICEMAN (O.S.)  
Sir. They lost the ship. It went airborne and was flying under radar.

You can see the S.O.D.'s temperature rise. And now the cherry.

COMMUNICATIONS SOLDIER  
Sir. The President is on the line. He would like an update.

The Secretary of Defense picks up a nearby PHONE.

CUT TO

INT. WHITE HOUSE HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Urgency has set in, as President Becker and a phalanx of SECRET SERVICE and ADVISORS is walking briskly down the hall. He moves directly towards the -

INT. SITUATION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Barging in with authority. He's met by the now very nervous Secretary of Defense.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
The ship was headed towards the  
Salt Flats, flying under radar.  
(then)  
No sign of Colemsn.

PRESIDENT BECKER  
Issue a N.F.A. for the Southwestern  
board. Anything that takes off:  
SHOOT IT.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
Yes sir.

EXT. CEMETERY -- DAY

After all action of the day, both father and son seem weary, walking amongst the hundreds of headstones at this picturesque gravesite.

DOMINIC  
She must've wanted to be next to  
John.

JAMES  
And you.

Off his father's inquisitive look.

JAMES  
You were declared dead after the  
test, pa.

DOMINIC  
What happened to your mother?

JAMES  
We were surprised how well she took  
it first;

(MORE)

JAMES(cont'd)

said that she thought you'd be back someday. But as time went on; the realization sunk in...and it just killed her. But it was like she knew; even picked out her own headstone.

(then)

I didn't think you could die of a broken heart.

DOMINIC

Tell that to Johnny Cash.

They've reached the gravestone and James pauses as his father proceeds towards the HEADSTONES.

JOHN GERARD COLEMAN, Brother, Son. 1984-2002.

DOMINIC ANTHONY COLEMAN, Father, Husband. 1967-2007

MEHGAN MARIE COLEMAN, Wife, Mother, Friend. 1968-2012.

Beneath Mehgan's name is the FAMILY PICTURE of the Colemans Dominic so coveted.

At seeing his wife's gravestone, Dominic drops to his knees and breaks down, weeping. And as James watches, it finally occurs to him how much his father has gone through.

JAMES

She waited right up until the end for you, pop. Hoping you'd make it back. She loved you.

(then, quietly)

I did too.

Dominic reaches out to the FAMILY PICTURE above the quote. It moves. In fact, Dominic starts playing with it, pulling it out. He does so...and behind it?

A small VIAL with miniature CD: THE ANTIDOTE.

Dominic's demeanor tilts towards hope. He turns to his son, rises and moves towards him.

DOMINIC

I love you too, son. And I'm proud of you and the man you've become. I'm sorry I wasn't a part of it.

JAMES

(thoughtfully)

Maybe you still can.

Finally, an emotional connection between the two.

JAMES

There's still time. But we gotta  
move fast.

DOMINIC

Speed runs in this family.

A HELICOPTER can be heard closing in. Both look to the sky.  
Not much time.

JAMES

I got an idea.

CUT TO

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER, FLYING, SALT LAKE CITY -- CONTINUOUS

Where a determined PILOT is scouring the ground for the  
E.T.V.

P.O.V. JETCOPTER -- CONTINUOUS

Finding the parked E.T.V. below.

CLOSE ON MONITOR - Which magnifies the picture; identifies  
it.

JETCOPTER PILOT

We have a match on that missing  
E.T.V. Northeast at Telegraph and  
Grand River. On the rim of the  
Flats.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (O.S.)

Any sign of Coleman?

INTERCUT -- SITUATION ROOM

As the President is studying the MONITORS he takes notice of  
something.

JETCOPTER PILOT (O.S.)

Negative.

PRESIDENT BECKER

(with urgency re: monitor)  
What's this?

ON THE MONITOR - A very small BRIGHT SPOT on the infrared screen. The Technician does a "timed back-up" of the screen: An IDENTICAL PICTURE APPEARS - only missing the small variance. The Secretary of Defense studies it.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
Whatever it was - it wasn't there a half hour ago.

PRESIDENT BECKER  
Where is it?

TECHNICIAN 1  
Salt Flats...Near Dynamite Road.

The Secretary realizes, *this is where they will be.*

PRESIDENT BECKER  
GET THERE.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Where J.J. is flying at a very low altitude.

P.O.V. J.J. -- CONTINUOUS

On the horizon, is the familiar sight that is the vast expanse of the SALT FLATS - and the small city of folks who make the pilgrimage to watch the races.

J.J.  
(sotto)  
You better be there, grandpa.

EXT. SALT FLATS -- CONTINUOUS

As the WELLS 3 WHISTLES IN.

INT. WELL 3 -- CONTINUOUS

This looks like a struggle for the young test pilot. But he's up to the challenge and the sketchy landing gear beneath him -

HOLDS.

Drawing the attention of the CROWD, who watch the other races.

CUT TO

EXT. ROCKET CAR GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

We've been here before. This is where team TYLER "FLASH" GORDON are working away on some new spec rides. They're all wearing their trademark GREEN JUMPERS. And all stop what they're doing when they see James and this stranger approaching.

After a moment, the oldest of the bunch, an aged Tyler himself, steps up. He can't believe his eyes.

TYLER  
Dominic Coleman?

Dominic nods. Tyler is speechless.

DOMINIC  
I need a favor.

SIRENS and HELICOPTERS are heard closing in.

TYLER  
They comin' for you?

DOMINIC  
Yeah.

There's a moment of deliberation. Tyler, after all, was Dominic's biggest rival.

TYLER  
C'mon.

EXT. FRONT OF GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Where POLICE CARS and MOTO-HYBRIDS are arriving by the DOZENS.

EXT. GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

In the rear of the garage, is a MASSIVE PATIO that opens up to a PRIVATE TEST TRACK that merges into the great SALT FLATS. It's empty.

Tyler leads the guys towards a CUSTOM MADE SUPER CAR.

TYLER

You hop them tracks and hit the gas, you'll be at Dynamite Road in less than three minutes.

(then)

If you drive like me, that is.

A GORDON COLLEAGUE appears. As does the JETCOPTER overhead.

GORDON COLLEAGUE

(calmly)

Cops are here.

He tosses the guys a PAIR of HELMETS.

TYLER

I know.

James puts his helmet on; takes his place in the car.

TYLER

So, Dominic...  
(eagerly leaning in)

How was it?  
(re: light speed)

DOMINIC

(smiles)

It was fast.

TYLER

You know they came after me first?  
(re: NCLA)  
My shoes were too heavy.

DOMINIC

(smiling)

I know they did.

Tyler then helps Dominic into the rig.

TYLER

You better get.

DOMINIC

Thank you.

The two shake hands warmly.

EXT. GARAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

Tyler returns to the other side where the POLICE are locked and loaded on him. There's a fleet of MOTO-COPS poised for chase; Police cars; Airborne Recon Vessels. Tyler puts his hands up in the air as if to surrender. Smiles.

And the sound of a rocket engine EXPLODING is heard. Like the tone of a rocket ship fading into the sky it quickly fades away.

TYLER

Sorry, you guys. You just missed him.

INT. TYLER'S ROCKET CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Its ACCELERATION now; Dominic laying on the power with son James in the rear.

250/280/310...

EXT. TYLER'S GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Where the entire battalion is mobilizing out; MOTO COPS zipping away; Airborne vessels shooting out; Helicopters chasing.

INT. TYLER'S ROCKET CAR -- CONTINUOUS

400 miles per hour rising and Dominic drops another thrust.

DOMINIC

Hang on, son!

EXT. SALT EXPANSE -- CONTINUOUS

As the car jets through the great salt flat.

NOT TOO FAR BEHIND - They're all in hot pursuit; Motocops;  
Copters; Jets.

CUT TO

EXT. SALT FLATS -- CONTINUOUS

Where all look nervous; Buck checking his watch, waiting for  
Dominic to show.

EXT. SALT FLATS -- CONTINUOUS

It's no contest. Dominic is going approaching 600 mph now;  
HELICOPTER losing ground. MOBILE POLICE UNITS the same.

FROM ABOVE - the ROCKET CAR IS PULLING AWAY, leaving a swath  
of salt dust in its path. And breaking the SOUND BARRIER...

*BOOM!*

EXT. DYNAMITE ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

From the sky...the unmistakable sound of a SONIC BOOM sweeps  
over the grounds. Buck, with the family, smiles. He knows  
his man his near.

AND ON THE HORIZON -

Blurry, from the heat drifting out of the salt Earth - THE  
ROCKET CAR blazes towards us.

INT. ROCKET CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Where Dominic is poised behind the wheel; born to do this.

P.O.V. DOMINIC -- CONTINUOUS

Who has a visual of FOLKS standing next to the Wells 3 up  
ahead.

He applies the brake sequence -

EXT. SALT EXPANSE -- CONTINUOUS

And A PARACHUTE deploys behind the ROCKET CAR, decelerating it significantly.

EXT. DYNAMITE ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

As the ROCKET CAR arrives without a hitch; Dominic and James hopping out with the help of Amy and J.J. There's a brief, happy reunion; hugs all around. And APPLAUSE from the CROWD, who've clearly gotten more than they came for.

J.J.

(smiling)

Hope you don't mind, I took it out for a spin.

Dominic tussles his hair. But there's no time.

BUCK

Let's go, Dominic.

ON THE HORIZON - There's a FLEET approaching by land and air.

Buck hands Dominic his NEOPRENE JUMPSUIT and Dominic hastily throws it on, zips up, turns to his family. Amy is the first to get a hug. Followed by J.J. And finally, son James. We've been here before. Father and son face each other.

DOMINIC

This is the first time I've ever wanted to slow down, and I can't.

JAMES

Maybe when you get back.

They reach out to shake each other's hands. But then Dominic pulls his son close, embraces him tenderly.

DOMINIC

Love you.

James looks like he could melt in his father's arms.

JAMES

Love you too, pa.

BUCK

DOMINIC.

Dominic turns; looks to the opposite sky.

WHERE ANOTHER DOZEN JETS are closing in. These ones, the most modern of which we've seen; sleek nu-age fighters.

INT. JET -- CONTINUOUS

Where the PILOTS have their man and his ship in sight.

INTERCUT - FLATS

BUCK  
Alright! Everybody clear out!

Dominic hops in the ship. Before he shuts the hatch -

BUCK  
Careful on your airspeed. She doesn't have the dimensional stability until you reach space...AND DOMINIC!  
(off his attention)  
Good luck.

Dominic smiles. Shuts the hatch.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

As Dominic begins a launch sequence as quickly as possible.

INTERCUT - SITUATION ROOM --

Where the President sees that they have the WELLS.

PRESIDENT BECKER  
Get me that ship's frequency.

INTERCUT -- SALT FLATS

Where the Wells is about to launch.

INTERCUT - WELLS 3

As Dominic initiates take off.

INTERCUT - SITUATION ROOM --

PRESIDENT BECKER  
Captain Coleman, this is Colonel Becker.

INTERCUT -- THE WELLS 3 --

Where Dominic listens.

PRESIDENT BECKER (O.S.)  
*If you attempt to take off; YOU  
 WILL BE SHOT DOWN.*

Dominic realizes this threat is real. And now Becker gets personal.

PRESIDENT BECKER (O.S.)  
*Coleman. You've already missed too  
 much of your life. Do you want to  
 miss the rest of it? You can  
 salvage it, Coleman. Stop living in  
 the past. Turn yourself in.*

INTERCUT - SITUATION ROOM --

Where the President thinks he's making his point.

PRESIDENT BECKER  
 Think of your family, Dominic.

INTERCUT - THE WELLS 3

Dominic switches on the SPEAKER, makes his statement.

DOMINIC  
 Always do.

And Dominic HITS THE THRUST.

The ground swell of power from the Wells rattles the salt Earth like a Richter 7 quake, sending those on the ground rolling with its wake.

AND IN THE SKY

The ship ROCKETS PAST.

INTERCUT - SITUATION ROOM --

Becker's face contorts to hatred -

PRESIDENT BECKER  
 SHOOT IT DOWN!!

AND IT'S ON -

Dominic wastes no time maxing out. Buck's final advice meaning nothing. But he has no choice -

There's ships all over him, trying to get a lock to shoot him down.

As the WELLS 3 blasts on - its ORANGE PAINT is PEELING AWAY. It's going way too fast.

A SUPER SONIC CHASE ensues at 30,000 feet. And make no doubt, this is the fastest chase you've ever seen; Twentyfirst century technology at its apex.

Each CRAFT leaves its own distinct hue of EXHAUST behind it.

UNDER FIRE

Dominic makes hairpin turns and vertical drops to evade.

While the sky is SCRIBBLED like a POLLACK PAINTING come to life.

Dominic makes his way to the STRATUS and punches through to SPACE.

EXT. SPACE -- CONTINUOUS

In a vacuum now, this ride is smoother, quicker as it accelerates. But he's not alone.

BEHIND HIM - One ship. And it looks up to the task.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Knowing that he is still under chase, Dominic looks around frenetically. He then veers the ship

And an INCREDIBLE LIGHT POURS IN. Up ahead? THE SUN.

INTERCUT - CHASING SHIP

They're zeroed in on their target have it locked...and FIRES, what can only be described as a LASER BLAST towards the Wells 3.

INTERCUT - SITUATION ROOM -

Where President Becker finally looks vindicated, knowing that they're about to destroy this ship.

But just as the projectile is about to hit, DOMINIC, staring at THE SUN - GOES ATOMIC

AND DISAPPEARS, right before the incredulous eyes of President Becker.

PILOT (O.S.)  
(vexed)  
*Sir...It disappeared.*

Becker has no explanation for this. He's speechless.

CUT TO

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

With the SUN'S GRAVITY, the WELLS 3 is running downhill.

130000/131589/145477/153211...

Making the race towards this magic mark much quicker, but more painful...as the mighty RAYS of the SUN are blinding him.

But up ahead, the ship merges into that WALL OF LIGHT. And we break the speed of light for the second time -

TRAVELING AT LIGHT SPEED AGAIN, Dominic's eyes are on the ATOMIC CLOCK.

One...Two...Three...As the YEARS/MONTHS/DAYS/HOURS are racing backwards.

September/August/July...2010/2009/2008...

Four...Five...Six...

Dominic's hand is on the switch, ready to disengage.

Seven...EIGHT!

Not yet. Point one/two/three!

And...STILL DOMINIC WAITS.

The Atomic Calendar is counting down the time; months and years fading back.

9 SECONDS! Point 2/4/...SEVEN!

FINALLY...Dominic disengages; pulls out of light speed and away from the SUN.

The ATOMIC CALENDAR READS - JULY 31, 2000

CUT TO

EXT. SALT FLATS - JULY 31, 2002

*Is this a flashback?* We've been here before.

INT. TENT -- CONTINUOUS

In the eye of the hurricane; husband and wife talking about what matters most to them: FAMILY.

DOMINIC

I wanna see them reach their potential, Meg.

MEHGAN

You know you're so concerned with their potential, why don't you just enjoy their presence?

DOMINIC

Look at me: That's why they're here. And that's why I want John to go with me.

MEHGAN

He's not ready.

DOMINIC

Hell, babe, that boy was born for speed.

(then smiling)

Just like his old man. It runs in the family. WE'LL TALK ABOUT IT WHEN I COME BACK.

MEHGAN

You always say that. What if you don't come back?

Dominic hugs his wife.

DOMINIC

I always come back.

There's the fleeting hesitation in his eyes that tell us, something is bothering him. But he covers it well, hugging his wife.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

With EARTH close at hand, we've never seen Dominic so determined as he pushes the throttle.

EXT. SPACE -- CONTINUOUS

As the Wells 3 blazes towards Earth; on the outskirts of its atmosphere.

INT. TRAILER -- MOMENTS LATER

Where John is getting ready, pulling up his RACER'S SUIT, primping. Father enters; just watches a moment.

DOMINIC  
I hope you're ready for this.

The kid gives us an ear to ear grin, but still, he doesn't look ready. But Dad is so overwhelming. He steps forward. Pulls something from his POCKET.

INT. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

We're racing across the continent now. And Dominic is clutching the same AMULET; ST. JOSEPH.

DOMINIC (O.S.)  
*...Patron saint of aviators;  
pilots. You're granddaddy was a  
test pilot. Runs in our family.*

John takes the small piece of jewelry, studies it with reverence before looking to his father.

JOHN  
Thanks, pa.

INTERCUT - P.O.V. WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Approaching the great expanse that is BIG SKY country. And EXPLODING towards its SALT FLATS.

INT. DINER -- CONTINUOUS

Where the EXPLOSION shakes the place. And the OWNER, who seems trapped in his own timeless zone just shakes his head again.

P.O.V. DOMINIC/WELLS 3 -- CONTINUOUS

Coming in way too hard...

EXT. SALT FLATS -- CONTINUOUS

And smashing into the ground; the LANDING GEAR SNAPS; Nose diving into the salt. And dragging for what seems like a mile.

Dominic pops his hatch. He's just a 1/4 mile short. In fact, he can hear all the commotion in the distance.

He hops out; a look of defeated desperation on his face.

P.O.V. DOMINIC -- CONTINUOUS

Who looks at the DINER.

INT. DINER -- MOMENTS LATER

As Dominic barges in. The OWNER LOOKS UP.

DOMINIC  
I need to borrow a car.

All of a sudden, a miracle. The old grouch of an owner simply reaches into his pocket, tosses Dominic the keys, doesn't say a word. The second Dominic leaves, the guy shakes his head.

DINER OWNER  
Test pilots.

EXT. DRESSING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Dominic exits the trailer, not as confident as he was. It's clear, something is on his mind when he suddenly stops. Thinks. It's as if he feels something. Disregarding this instinct, he moves on.

Note: From here out, the two Dominics will be referred to as "OLDER DOMINIC" from the future, and "YOUNGER DOMINIC" from the past.

EXT. RACE GROUNDS -- CONTINUOUS

As the "OLDER DOMINIC" is here now, zipping through the crowd. He knows exactly where to go too.

EXT. DRESSING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Stopping outside the trailer, the "OLDER DOMINIC" looks around; enters cautiously.

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

As soon as OLDER DOMINIC enters, he is awestruck. It's almost surreal. In front of him is the child he lost all those years ago. He approaches slowly; eyes welling up.

OLDER DOMINIC

John?

Son John turns; smiles widely.

JOHN

Yeah, pa.

Older Dominic is stunned. Silent for the moment.

JOHN

*You okay?*

OLDER DOMINIC

Yeah...I want you to do something for me.

(then)

I need you to stay back.

JOHN

But, pa, you just -

OLDER DOMINIC

(stern)

I know what I just said, alright? You're not going. There'll be other times for you. I'm sorry.

Older Dominic reaches out to his son and gives him a warm embrace; the embrace he was never able to give his son before.

INT. DOMINIC'S TRAILER -- CONTINUOUS

"YOUNGER DOMINIC" is all dressed and ready, appraising himself in the mirror. Equipment-wise, not much more than your NASCAR racer. But he looks way badder. Around his neck? ST. JOSEPH. He holds it a moment, thinks, then reverentially puts on his HELMET. It's GO TIME.

EXT. DYNAMITE ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

As Younger Dominic moves towards his ROCKET CAR and takes his seat in the front: DRIVING.

As we recall, the seating arrangement is like a FIGHTER PLANE. He takes the FRONT SEAT, manning the speed and steering. In the back seat, the doomed co-pilot is already sitting in the rear of the vehicle. Younger Dominic looks back.

With his helmet on and strapped in, the co-pilot is unrecognizable.

INT. CONTROL TENT -- CONTINUOUS

Where old friend BUCK O'SHEA runs the show.

DOMINIC  
Buck, I'm in the nest...

INT. ROCKET CAR -- CONTINUOUS

DOMINIC  
WE'LL BE BACK. When we hit about  
EIGHT BELLS. *You hear that Tyler?*

INTERCUT - TENT

Everyone in the tent starts buzzing.

BACK IN THE ROCKET CAR

DOMINIC  
(covering mic)  
You ready for this, son?

John gives his "thumbs up" before beginning the ignition sequence.

AT THE CAR'S REAR we see the JETS churn causing the 2,000 pound supersonic car to move gracefully forward.

INSIDE THE COCKPIT - Pa is all business now, going through the checklist in his head like a computer.

DOMINIC  
Bonneville, we are a go. What's our  
vitals? Over.

INTERCUT TENT

BUCK  
Winds are light and Southwest.  
They'll be long behind you, D.C.  
Temperature 84 lovely degrees;  
humidity nil. Bonneville is a go.  
Dynamite Road?

EXT. DYNAMITE ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

Here's a SMALL CREW, in the middle of nowhere. But we can see they're part of the team; a PHOTOGRAPHER and a pair of ENGINEERS with some EQUIPMENT.

ENGINEER 1  
(into mic)  
Dynamite Road is a go, Bonneville.

INT. ROCKET CAR, COCKPIT -- CONTINUOUS

DOMINIC  
Bonneville is a go, Buck. Dynamite  
Road is a go. I guess that means we  
should go.

AND THEY DO.

INT. ROCKET CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

We're already heading towards 200mph and it looks like Dominic is out for a Sunday spin.

DOMINIC  
Runnin' through the first tick,  
feelin' real good. Gonna elevate  
just a little bit.

INTERCUT - DYNAMITE ROAD

As we see the salt racer accelerate towards sound speed.

INTERCUT - ROCKET CAR

As Dominic drops the throttle. SHHHWEWWWWW!

ROCKETING THROUGH THIS GREAT WHITE EXPANSE -

441/27/56/78...And we're approaching sonic level now.

AND...Moving closer to that moment of truth.

INTERCUT - TENT

BUCK  
Approaching the bug nasty, Dom. You  
feel good?

DOMINIC  
I see her, Buck. And I'm gonna  
punch right through her.

INTERCUT - CAR

DOMINIC  
You might wanna cover your ears for  
this.

Another spectacular SONIC BOOM resonates through the sky.

INTERCUT - TENT

As the CAR rockets towards its record speed. Meghan still  
worried, holding her son.

INT. ROCKET CAR -- CONTINUOUS

We're at that moment now. That moment of fateful decision for  
Dominic. We're upwards 700 mph and Dominic wants more.

Only this time, Dominic pulls his hand away from the switch. This ride will end here.

OLDER DOMINIC  
What are you doing?

Dominic can not believe his ears. He looks to the back - and sees himself.

OLDER DOMINIC  
Let's tip this cow and go home.

BUCK (O.S.)  
*Dominic, who are you talking to?*

INTERCUT - TENT

Where there's confusion. And to top it off, John is here, moving closer to his mother and brother.

JOHN  
He wouldn't let me go. Said to give him this when he came back.

In John's hand, the VIAL.

INTERCUT - CAR

Inexplicably, the younger Dominic seems to understand. *A man can not have two souls, right?*

With this final advice, the younger Dominic reaches out to the final thrust and releases it.

And just like before - the monster really gives in.  
752/3/4/5...

BUCK (O.S.)  
*You just broke your old record, Dominic.*

But it means nothing to him. He's braced for the inevitable explosion.

OLDER DOMINIC  
You take care of that family of ours.

And so it comes. Suddenly, and as horrifically as we last remember. THE EXPLOSION.

CROSSFADE

EXT. DYNAMITE ROAD CRASH SITE -- MOMENTS LATER

Where the younger Dominic stands - almost catatonic as he surveys the wreckage of his vehicle. Moments later, the CARAVAN of MEDICS and FIREMEN approach. But the first to make it to Dominic are his WIFE and TWO BOYS.

And we go supercool SLO MO -

As the patriarch moves from the wreckage towards his family; and all engage in the most emotional group embrace we've ever seen.

FADE OUT

EXT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, ARIZONA -- DAY

The stunning architecture and manicured grounds indicate to us that this is one of the best hospitals in the land.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Where a YOUNG BOY, hooked up to an I.V.; poked and prodded by a group of concerned DOCTORS. Off to the corner is a would-be attractive WOMAN. But her face is swollen with worry. This is his MOTHER, HELEN.

CLOSE ON BED IDENTIFICATION - Michael Stewart O.U.I. (Of undiagnosed illness.)

Look closer at the boy's hands. He's playing with a small TOY. It's a HOT WHEELS CAR - an exact replica of Dominic's ROCKET CAR complete with the phrase "The Fastest Man on Earth" etched into it.

INT. HOSPITAL CHAPEL -- CONTINUOUS

Where a MAN is kneeling in prayer. It looks like he's been up for days too - just like his WIFE. But look closer. This is SENATOR Bill Stewart - years before he ever became President. As he stares at the unitarian altar; a place where all faiths come to mourn, pray and hope, the Senator seems lost in the LIGHT that reflects through the STAINED GLASS WINDOWS. He mumbles a desperate plea to his Creator just as -

Dominic enters.

As he sees the senator's BODY GUARDS, he knows he's in the right place and walks up the center, genuflects and takes a seat behind the senator.

DOMINIC  
(quietly)  
Senator Stewart.

The Senator turns to face this stranger. Bodyguards perk up.

DOMINIC  
I know what you're praying for.

Dominic then pulls out the ANTIDOTE from his jacket and hands it to the future President. The BODYGUARDS look like they may make a move, but the Senator signals them off. *It's okay.*

DOMINIC  
(off the senator's  
quizzical look)  
Don't ask.

The Senator can not believe this. It is a miracle. But before he can even address it, Dominic is on his way out. Suddenly, the Senator rises.

PRESIDENT/SENATOR  
EXCUSE ME, SIR. BUT WHO ARE YOU?

Dominic smiles.

DOMINIC  
I'm the fastest man on Earth, Mr.  
President.

With that, Dominic is out the door. And the BODYGUARDS look at one another, *President?* But before he makes the door, Dominic stops for one more thing.

DOMINIC  
*Oh, and sir. You ever come across a  
General Samuel Becker in your  
travels?*  
(then)  
FIRE HIM.

CUT TO

EXT. PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL -- MOMENTS LATER

The boys are playing with their dog Speedy outside their S.U.V., waiting for their father while mom is sitting patiently on the passenger's side. Dominic approaches.

DOMINIC  
 Alright, boys. Let's go.

INT. COLEMAN S.U.V., MOVING -- MOMENTS LATER

With the chaos of a big, hairy dog bouncing about and the boys playing in the back, Dominic couldn't be happier. And Patsy is back on the radio singing her same number from the opening, "Crazy Dreams."

*Crazy Dreams linger on, as I face an empty dawn with no end to it all, can I see...*

Dominic reaches over to his wife and takes her hand. She wasn't expecting the warmth, but appreciates it.

MEHGAN  
 What?

Nothing. Just love, that's all.

MEHGAN  
 I suppose you're going to tell me what happened some day.

Dominic nods. Smiles.

MEHGAN  
 And I suppose that something has to do with what we're towing around...

Another nod and smile.

MEHGAN  
*What is it?*

DOMINIC  
 Let's just call it a "family project."

MEHGAN  
 Does it have anything to do with speed?

DOMINIC  
Actually, I'm thinkin' about  
slowing down.

Fair enough. And so we leave the Coleman family, watching them head down the highway. And as we pull away, listening to a family at play -

EXT. HIGHWAY -- CONTINUOUS

And we see the S.U.V.'s payload; the remnants of this ramshackle spaceship that broke the last physical law known to man: THE SPEED OF LIGHT.

*For I've surely reached the end...Just another Crazy Dream for me.*

THE END