

The Last Drop
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

A FUEL TANKER TRUCK shifts into 3rd. Painted with words:

"US NATIONAL OIL & GAS - A Division of the DOE"

It kicks into 5th. In its wake, a lane going nowhere.

Front of the line FOLKS emerge from camping tents,
CELEBRATING as it steams ahead for a--

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Waiting DRIVERS stress out, as the DIGITAL PRICE BOARD races
past "\$76.93/gallon" and "313 gallons remaining" plummets.

A HOMELESS DAD and SON, 9, both sporting grimy Nationals ball
caps, hold onto hope on cardboard signs.

Drivers shout as the TANKER TRUCK drives up.

DRIVERS

Yeaah!!

And drives off.

DRIVERS

Ooohh.

Some give chase. Two PUNKS hurl Big Gulps as they peel out,
DRENCHING Homeless Dad in humiliation.

AUDI TT COUPE HYBRID - PUMP 7

BENJAMIN BAXTER, 47, cringes at their cruelty. Tops off a
gas can, under a sign "LIMIT 5 GALLONS."

Packs it in back, next to 4 others. He wears Chuck Taylors
and a ThinkGeek T-shirt with an image of the molecular
structure for caffeine. Coffee in hand.

MADISON, 9, and ABIGAIL, 5, pop up over the backseat.
Maddy's ThinkGeek T: "I'm blogging this.", Abby's: "v2.0"

MADISON

Can we get a snack?

ABIGAIL

A snack.

MADISON/ABIGAIL
Puh...leeeeeease?!

A SUV SOCCER MOM fumes behind.

A DOOLEY DRIVER slams his HORN.

BENJAMIN
What makes you sure they have any?

MADISON
(pointing)
It says, "Snack Station."

He smiles, glances over at the soda-soaking man.

BENJAMIN
Alright.

His girls light up, fly out.

SUV Soccer Mom throws up her hands.

Ben unplugs his car charging cord, gives them the "sorry, one second" hand, and follows his girls into the--

EXT./INT SNACK STATION - DAY

As he strides inside, an ATTENDANT steps out with a ladder on one arm, and *something else* tucked under his other.

Abby shadows her sis through near-empty aisles. Ben calls out to the CASHIER.

BENJAMIN
Do you have any--

Spots some paper towels and a spray bottle of Windex.

BENJAMIN
... nevermind.

CASHIER
Ran outta "nevermind" last week.

They share smirks. He takes the last two bottles of Aquafina.

BENJAMIN
Maddy, whatever you girls find, can you grab a couple extra?

MADISON
Sure!

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Dooley Driver beats his horn, as the price board races.
Homeless Dad stands in a sticky mess. When Ben pulls up.

INT./EXT. AUDI TT COUPE HYBRID - DAY

ABIGAIL
I don't wanna.

BENJAMIN
Abigail.

She pouts.

MADISON
C'mon, Abby.

ABIGAIL
No.

He fires back a look of fatherly disappointment.

Ben and Maddy step out. Abby peers out the window.

EXT. GAS STATION - ENTRANCE - DAY

BENJAMIN
(offering his hand)
Hi there.

HOMELESS DAD
Sorry, I'm all--you know.

BENJAMIN
I think we can help.

Maddy offers the boy some of her snacks. Ben unscrews the Windex spray bottle, dumps it, re-fills it with Aquafina. Breaks open the paper towels.

BENJAMIN
I'm Ben, that's Madison, Abby's my youngest. She's a little shy.

HOMELESS DAD
George. My boy Will.

SUV Soccer Mom approaches, offers them fresh cups of coffee, and a sheepish smile to Ben.

SUV SOCCER MOM
 If things are this bad now, what
 happens when we run out?

Abby whimpers, studies her dad helping.

HOMELESS DAD (GEORGE)
 Thank you.

BENJAMIN
 Sure. We have to run, it was nice
 meeting you, George. Take care.

MADISON
 Bye.

Ben and Maddy pile in the car, wave goodbye, drive off.

INT. DOOLEY SILVERADO TRUCK - DAY

Dooley Driver lays off his horn.

DOOLEY DRIVER
 What is ...

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

SUV SOCCER MOM
 ... he doing?

Every face follows the attendant to the--

DIGITAL PRICE BOARD

He scales his ladder, surveys all the EYES on him. Tears off
 some duct tape, pulls a SQUARE from under his arm.

He gulps. Then secures the number "1" to the price board.
 Now, "\$193.12/gallon" and "36 gallons remaining."

The DOOLEY roars out of line, floors it.

Smashes into his ladder. Scrambles out, screams up. The
 attendant HANGS onto the price board for dear life.

More cars break out of line, jockey for position inside.

EXT. STREET - AUDI TT COUPE HYBRID - DRIVING - DAY

Abby looks back, as chaos rages, not far behind.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Abby's face fades into frames of digital family photos. A clock blinks "12:27." SARAH BAXTER, 43, weeps prostrate, her forehead planted in plush carpet, when SCOTTY, 11, shouts up.

SCOTTY (O.S.)

Mom!

She rises, revealing tear-drenched pages of an open Bible.

KITCHEN

SCOTTY

We're outta milk!

His hand returns a bag of coffee beans.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

The President's historic announcement last night of a new energy source is being overshadowed this morning by OPEC's decision to cut off oil exports, permanently.

Scotty slides his arm out of the FRIDGE, turns away.

SCOTTY

(over shoulder)

Fridge: close.

It does.

Revealing CNN's own CAMPBELL BROWN, on their fridge TV.

CAMPBELL BROWN (ON FRIDGE TV)

The White House has promised to follow up with more details behind "project AERO", and when Americans will start to see some relief from the power problems plaguing the country. Tune in tonight where we'll cut through the bull.

Scotty flies around the center island. His impatient HAND taps the counter. A power LIGHT glows. Coffee grounds fill a cup fast, he grabs it, DUMPS THE GROUND into a pot's top.

EXT. OPEN-PIT COAL MINE - WYOMING - DAY

DIRT FALLS from an excavating bucket, lands in the world's largest truck, the Liebherr T282B.

As the dust settles, the MINE FOREMAN doesn't even flinch. He stands proud, the truck towers behind.

CASSIUS CARVER, 48, African-American, ANDREW HASTINGS, 35, and THOMAS CHRISTOPHER, 60's, all in jeans, shiny hard-hats, and brand new boots, wipe dust from their faces.

TOM

Imagine pulling up to the pump in that thing.

ANDY

You drive three feet and you're out of gas.

The truck's enormous bed lifts, dumps its load onto the dirt.

CARVER

What's interesting about the T282, 1,800 gallons of fuel actually powers a diesel-electric motor.

ANDY

Why would anyone find that interesting?

Carver shrugs, Tom and Andy smirk.

FOREMAN

(calling out)

Alright ya' all, c'mon now.

DUMP PILE

They gather 'round. The foreman plants his foot on the pile. He's burly, unkempt beard, filthy gloves.

ANDY

(whispers to his left)

You shoulda' saw the last guy.

The foreman scoops up a handful.

FOREMAN

We usta' clear this to find the veins. Problem is, ain't no more veins, not for a while now.

Tears off a glove with his teeth, searches his handful.

CARVER

You're saying you've got it all?

Scoops up another, looks through it, still doesn't find it.

FOREMAN

Yes, sir.

Drops to his knees, digs in. Tosses dirt left and right.

CARVER

You're sure. You've scraped every square inch of this place?

FOREMAN

I'm fifth generation. We got it all, I promise you that.

Finally finds a tiny piece of COAL, holds it up proudly.

FOREMAN

Just scraps left now. Can't make a livin' off scraps though.

Flings it. Carver bare-hands the catch.

CARVER

Okay. Thank you for your time.

A STAFFER hands the foreman an envelope. The big man weeps at the helping hand of cash inside.

FOREMAN

I got two boys ya know.

CARVER

We know. Hang in there, new jobs are on the way.

(to GROUP)

Let's go.

The foreman climbs up the monster truck, waves gratefully.

The MASSIVE MACHINE drives off, revealing a fleet of unmarked HELICOPTERS. Blades begin to spin.

CARVER

(jogging)

U.S.G.S., D.O.E., everyone agrees?

TOM

(jogging)

Yes, sir, it's just like the others.

EXT./INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

They trade hard-hats for headsets.

CARVER
I need the numbers.

TOM
(over the noise)
Sorry?

CARVER
Our reserves, get me estimates.

ANDY
Mr. President, we're wheels up in
twenty.

President Carver turns, gives one last look before boarding.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Let's go home.

The helicopter lifts out of the pit.

INT. HELICOPTER - 3,000 FEET - DAY

Andy taps his Netbook, President Carver laments out at the--

EXT. OPEN-PIT COAL MINE - 3,000 FEET - DAY

A vast landscape, an endless canyon cut deep into the earth.
The rusted copper colors fade into--

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Bright fall foliage adorns noble monuments.

EXT./INT. AUDI TT COUPE HYBRID - STREET - DRIVING - DAY

Ben's car glides through Georgetown, its side painted with:

"NASA RESEARCH - Official use vehicle"

BENJAMIN
Maddy, I'm proud of you for helping
today.

Abby plays with her belly button, pulls lint out, regards it.

ABIGAIL
Daddy.

BENJAMIN
Yes?

ABIGAIL
Daddy, I like your Inny TT.

Ben and Maddy look confused, then laugh.

MADISON
Abby.

ABIGAIL
What?

BENJAMIN
Sweetie, it's not an Inny, it's an Audi.

They laugh, pull into the drive of their two-story Colonial.

EXT. SHED - BACKYARD - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Ben stacks the last gas can next to a HUNDRED OTHERS.
Secures the door.

INT. BATHROOM - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Water SHOWERS down. Purple panties drop on painted TOES. A frigid hand pulls back fast. Sarah shivers.

SARAH
(calling out)
Benjamin!!

KITCHEN

COFFEE fills two identical tumblers, one child size.

CAMPBELL BROWN (ON FRIDGE TV)
... will be the first night game in five years, for those lucky enough to live in the D.C. area.

Scotty knocks around a virtual air-hockey puck on the island's multi-touch surface. He sports a Nationals cap, his ThinkGeek T: "Come to the dark side, we have cookies. -V."

The puck skims over a CHAT with CHASE, 11, Yankees ball cap.

SCOTTY
He promised.

CHASE (ON ISLAND SURFACE VIDEO)
He always promises. Anyways,
Washington's goin' down, bro.

Sarah steps in, showing at 5 months, her T: "geek inside."

SARAH
Fridge: Pause TV, Milk, how much?

FRIDGE
Milk: Emp--

The power cuts out.

SARAH
Wonderful, let's go.

Scotty grabs his Netbook and the two coffees. The power snaps back to life. Fridge clock blinks "12:00."

EXT. BACKYARD - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Abby sprints after Maddy, both wearing Fly Jumper Jumping Stilts. Maddy stops, turns, Abby collides. The girls splash on a pile of leaves, giggling like goofballs.

Sarah and Scotty stroll in.

SARAH
There's no hot water, *again*.

Ben hops on his Jumping Stilts, wipes leaves off solar panels and mini wind turbines with a long-poled brush.

BENJAMIN
Problem... solved.

SCOTTY
Sorry, dad, we're outta milk too.

Scotty offers the large coffee up, Ben reels it in.

SCOTTY
What time you think we should get there? Chase is goin' at six.

BENJAMIN
You really want to stay all nine innings? All I could get were the nosebleeds.

SCOTTY
That's okay.

BENJAMIN
(big sip)
That's still pretty good. Alright.
Who's ready for Fun-day Monday?

Scotty celebrates. Maddy raises her hand, Abby mimics her. They splash back on the leaves. Ben hops down, kisses Sarah.

EXT. CITY BUS - STREET - DAY

The Baxter family piles in, each with their pair of Jumping Stilts folded up, strapped to their backs.

BENJAMIN
Lizzy's not coming?

SARAH
Don't ask.

BENJAMIN
(re: no shower)
Do something new with your hair?

Sarah play punches Ben. He reaches back, holds her hand as they push inside. No longer room for luxuries, like seats.

The bus glides away, its side painted with:

"HYDROGEN. NOT HYPE, HOPE - POWERED BY EXXON"

INT. LOWER PLATFORM - UNION STATION - DAY

A subway train waits. White-gloved WORKERS cram COMMUTERS inside, pushing hard on their backs, so doors can close.

A Yankee ball cap flies out, onto the ground. A lone hand searches, finds it, sucks it inside. The train zips away.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - DRIVING - DAY

Bodies packed tight, gulping for air. The guy in the cap, DR. PI TRAN, 29, plays a crazy game of stand-up Twister. His Netbook sings a SportsCenter theme song RINGTONE. He struggles to see the screen, finally manages.

"INCOMING CALL... VICE PRESIDENT CHRISTOPHER"

A COWBOY with a COMB-OVER and a 10-GALLON HAT comments.

COMB-OVER COWBOY
You better get that.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL - DAY

CAMPING TENTS flood the park from the Capitol to Washington's Monument. PROTESTERS prep their signs.

The CROWD points up as MARINE ONE and TWO DECOYS fly over.

INT. MARINE ONE - FLYING - DAY

PRESIDENT CARVER
Tom, what's the verdict?

VIDEO CONFERENCE - INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. US SPR - SAME

SUPERTITLE: STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE - GULF OF MEXICO

Tom, the Vice President, peers down into one of many mammoth salt-dome storage caverns of crude. Consults with ENGINEERS.

VICE PRESIDENT CHRISTOPHER
At current levels, 60 days. If people panic, that figure could erode quickly, sir.

PRESIDENT CARVER
I understand.

Press Secretary FELICITY FRANKLIN, 45, takes notes on board.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Andy, give me some good news.

EXT. US SCR - SAME

SUPERTITLE: STRATEGIC COAL RESERVE - WYOMING

Andy, his Chief of Staff, stands before massive piles of coal. He confirms with MEN in hard-hats.

ANDY
We're looking at 90 days here.

PRESIDENT CARVER
That'll have to do. Thank you, gentleman. Fly safe.

VP CHRISTOPHER/ANDY (ON VIDEO)
Thank you, Mr. President.

The video conference fades out.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Well, it could be worse. They're
meeting us there?

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN
Yes, sir.

EXT. SIDEWALK - JEFFERSON DRIVE (EAST OF 7TH) - DAY

The Baxters stride down the sidewalk on their Jumping Stilts,
maneuvering through the crowd with ease.

MADISON
We are total dorks.

EXT. NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM - DAY

They pack up their Jumping Stilts, head for the doors.

BENJAMIN
No lines, no security. This is my
kind of vacation.

MADISON
You mean *stay*-cation.

INT. NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM - DAY

The kids gather 'round. Maddy pulls a shoelace out of her
pocket, Abby regards hers as unfamiliar, Scotty smells his.

MADISON
Hey, dad, like why'd we halfta'
bring our nasty shoelaces?

BENJAMIN
You'll see. Line up, laces out,
Netbooks on.

Sarah hands out strips as Ben duct-tapes shoelaces to the
backs of their Netbooks. Everyone wears them around their
neck, built-in cameras facing out. Abby twirls.

BENJAMIN
Can you see us, Paigey?

INT. PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM - GW HOSPITAL - DAY

PAIGE BAXTER, 17, rests in her hospital bed. Smiles as her sisters make silly faces into their cameras. She gives a big thumbs up to her room camera, wears a BREATHING RESPIRATOR.

MADISON (ON VIDEO WALL)

Hi, sissy!

SCOTTY (ON VIDEO WALL)

I'm hungry.

ABIGAIL (ON VIDEO WALL)

I gotta go potty.

JOHN GOODE, 18, book in hand, chuckles with Paige.

SARAH (ON VIDEO WALL)

What are you kids reading today?

JOHN

Uh, today's CS Lewis, Mrs. B.

SARAH (ON VIDEO WALL)

That's the Narnia fella, right?

JOHN

Yes, ma'am.

Abby's video view spins as she twirls again.

SARAH (ON VIDEO WALL)

I like him. Abby, stop that, you're gonna give your sister a headache. Alright, troops, move it or lose it.

The multiple video views highlight several space-age attractions simultaneously as each person explores.

JOHN

Your family's ten kinds of crazy.

SARAH (ON VIDEO WALL)

I heard that.

JOHN

Sorry, Mrs. B.

Paige just grins, thankful for every minute.

INT. NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM - DAY

The kids explore, point in awe. Sarah steals Ben's arm.

SARAH
 It's not Barbados, but it'll do.
 They gave you the whole week,
 right?

BENJAMIN
 The whole--

Ben's Netbook busts a beat, his RINGTONE: Intergalactic by
 the Beastie Boys.

SARAH
 You promised.

BENJAMIN
 (into Netbook)
 This is Ben.

SARAH
 It's not like you're the one *going*
 to Mars.

SECRET SERVICE AGENTS flood in from every direction.

SECRET SERVICE #1
 Dr. Baxter, vacation's over.

SCOTTY
 W.T.H. man!

EXT. NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM - DAY

Black Suburbans surge the curbs, sirens chirp.
 A storm of black suits pour from the doors, Ben in tow.
 AGENTS pop the Suburban doors open.

EXT. AERO FACILITY - WEST VIRGINIA - DAY

A dozen pairs of legs step out of a long line of Suburbans.
 Ben plants his feet, surveys his surroundings. An ENORMOUS
 DOME structure rises fifty feet. Steam gushes out the top.
 The group of SCIENTISTS gather. Ben spots--

EXT. MARINE ONE - HELICOPTER #2 - FLYING - DAY

Their shell game flight patterns are standard security.
 President Carver reflects out at--

EXT. WEST VIRGINIA - 3,000 FEET - DAY

Fall colors flourish over rolling hills. Nestled snug inside nature's finest, the modern metallic dome finds form.

EXT. AERO FACILITY - DAY

ARMED SOLDIERS, SECRET SERVICE, and the usual acronyms keep security unusually tight.

The PRESIDENTIAL HELICOPTERS land on a grassy helipad.

President Carver and Felicity jog out, toward the group.

UNLOADING AREA - ENTRANCE

Ben approaches JIMMY CHAN, 40's, PAMELA INGWALD, 50's.

BENJAMIN

Ben Baxter, Mars 4.

JIMMY

Jimmy Chan, JPL.

PAMELA

Any idea what's going on?

BENJAMIN

One hypothesis, the President's big announcement last night was probably, premature.

JIMMY

Fusion energy, give me a break.

Dr. Pi Tran, Yankees cap, and NATALIA, 30's, ripped body, glide out the entrance, joining Felicity and the President.

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN

Everyone if you want to--over here.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Let me begin by welcoming you to the most sophisticated engineering project mankind has ever attempted. Let me tell you, Apollo was a moonwalk compared to this. The L.H.C., a stroll around the park. So, ready to see what two-and-a-half trillion buys you?

They all stride toward the--

EXT. ENTRANCE - DAY

PRESIDENT CARVER
Welcome, to AERO.

A minimal nameplate reads:

"ADVANCED ENERGY RESEARCH ORGANIZATION"

The doors slide open, revealing--

INT. AERO FACILITY - DAY

Light streams in, fills the atrium from high overhead. Five minimal floors circle a large center column, connected by catwalks. Glass elevators glide along the center column.

Everyone gazes up in awe at the scale and space of the place.

PRESIDENT CARVER
This is, Pi, one of our prodigies.

SCIENTIST #1
Like the dessert?

PI
Like the mathematical constant.

Felicity hands out tour flash drives, they snap them into their Netbooks. Pi and the President lead the tour.

PRESIDENT CARVER
He'll fill you in on some of the science. Natalia oversees our security.

NATALIA
Hi.

2 ENGINEERS in red lab coats wheel a big metal box, PI NODS.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Everything okay?

PI
Oh, yeah, we just have to replace the cooling apparatus on magnet 31 tonight. I'll take care of it.

PRESIDENT CARVER
As long as we stay online.

A beam scans Natalia's vascular system, a door slides open.

INT. GLASS ELEVATOR - DAY

PRESIDENT CARVER
We've had literally thousands of
the smartest people on the planet
working on this night and day.

Pi trips on his way in, the door slides shut behind.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Including my friend Pi here.

Pi stabs a button, the glass elevator glides up. Everyone surveys the RESEARCHERS working on various floors.

PI
Right. Each floor is dedicated to
a specific area of research.
Solar's on five, hydrogen's on two,
wind three, you can read the rest.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Yeah, but who's on first?

Crickets. Pi shakes his head, taps "B3", the elevator drops.

PI
The heart of AERO is below, as well
as offices and rooms to rest.

PRESIDENT CARVER
For anyone burning the midnight
oil. Unless, it's actual oil,
that's on one.

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN
He tells everybody that joke.

The group chuckles. Carver shrugs.

PRESIDENT CARVER
The First Lady likes my jokes.

The door slides open, everyone spills out into the--

AERO CONTROL ROOM

All four walls are multi-touch video screens. OPERATORS control the system standing, interacting with real-time data.

On VIDEO WALL FRONT: Plasma glows bright blue inside the tokamak's toroidal chamber.

PRESIDENT CARVER

These people keep this place
cookin'.

Slight smiles, everyone gazes in awe of the technology. The
tour continues around the room, video-views of each floor.

PI

Okay, I'm sure everyone here knows
inside our Sun's core, hydrogen
fuses into helium forming plasma
around 15 million degrees. Well,
we do it with water and really big
magnets. Capture the heat, turn
some turbines, and out comes
electricity. Currently, about a
1,000 gigawatt hours a day.

PAMELA

Pam Ingwald, Lawrence Livermore.
What's your E.R.O.E.I.?

PRESIDENT CARVER

Sorry?

PI

Energy returned on energy invested.
We're running 100:1 right now.

The group buzzes with amazement.

JIMMY

D&T cycles?

PI

That's right.

PAMELA

That's remarkable.

BENJAMIN

Ben Baxter, NASA HQ, a 100:1 return
is impressive, but that means on a
1,000 GWh output, your input is
around 10 million KWh.

PI

That's right, did you have a
question, Dr. Baxter?

BENJAMIN

My question is, where is that
energy coming from?

PI
Right now, the grid.

The group stirs with disapproval.

BENJAMIN
Fossil fuels.

PI
Right.

BENJAMIN
The same source we're running out
of.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Right, so this is where you all
come in. We need your help with
two fundamental challenges. And
that's the first. Ideas?
(silence)
I'm really asking.

PAMELA
Well, we could off-load some of
your output, split some water,
stick it in hydrogen.

PRESIDENT CARVER
We really need it all, remember
this has to power the country now.

Jimmy pops apart his Netbook, pulls a panel out.

JIMMY
You said 15 million degrees?

PI
Give or take.

JIMMY
What if we surround the tokamak
with thermoelectric? With panels
like this. Convert the heat into
electric directly.

PAMELA
And use that to split some water.

PI
Yeah, but if we run out of
hydrogen, and the grid's gone, we
won't be able to get AERO back up
again. We need a source.

MARY ROMO, 26, a stunning, slender brunette steps up.

MARY

Mary Romo, M.I.T. What about wind, or solar?

PI

Intermittency, low energy density, as Ben pointed out, we need a lot of input energy here. Solar could work in conjunction with hydrogen, but we'd need to completely cover a major desert somewhere.

BENJAMIN

What about triple junction?

PRESIDENT CARVER

I'm not familiar with--

BENJAMIN

Traditional solar cells, the consumer kinds, only capture one color of sunlight. The ones I use, the ones NASA use, capture three. More colors means more energy.

PAMELA

Look.

Pam holds up her diamond wedding ring, the cut, a PRISM. Light flashes through it, a RAINBOW spills out.

PAMELA

In theory, the earth's hit with enough solar energy in a single hour to power the world for a year. We're talking terawatts.

MARY

And what if we could capture every color? A full spectrum junction.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Is that possible?

BENJAMIN

With enough time, and funding, and--

PRESIDENT CARVER

Funding we have, time though--

BENJAMIN

How long do we have?

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN
 (reading notes)
 60-90 days.

The group reacts with shock and dismay.

JIMMY
 That's impossible.

PRESIDENT CARVER
 That's all we have left.

PAMELA
 Left? Of what?

BENJAMIN
 Our strategic reserves.

The group starts to panic, except Ben.

BENJAMIN
 You said *two* challenges. What's
 the second?

PRESIDENT CARVER
 We've managed to connect AERO up to
 D.C., but the grid needs some work
 to reach any further.

JIMMY
 How much work, Mr. President?

PI
 A total upgrade. We're talking
 replacing everything with super-
 cooled, superconducting
 transmission lines, substations--

PRESIDENT CARVER
 We're talking the largest public
 works project of our generation.
 And at least one of those jobs is
 going to a big guy with an even
 bigger heart I met this morning.
 Anyhow, I need to get back. Can
 you help us out?

The group processes the daunting challenge ahead.

PAMELA
 I'm in.

MARY
 Yeah, totally.

JIMMY

We're so screwed. But I'm in.

PI

Dr. Baxter?

BENJAMIN

It's just--I was supposed to take my boy to the game tonight.

PI

A bunch of us are already going. You're welcome to join us.

NATALIA

Pi scored amazing seats.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Actually, that's good, why doesn't everyone spend tonight with friends and family, you may not see them for a while. Start fresh in the morning. Thanks, everyone.

Natalia authenticates the elevator.

The President pats Pi on the back. Pi checks the time.

PRESIDENT CARVER

You did good.

(quieter)

Between you and me, I was starting to get worried there.

PI

It's not over yet.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Well, I appreciate everything you've done, seriously. We'll have to name a day after you, something.

Pi smirks, checks the time again on his Netbook.

The group piles into the elevator.

PRESIDENT CARVER

What time's the game?

NATALIA/PI/BENJAMIN

Seven.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Need a lift?

EXT. AERO FACILITY - WEST VIRGINIA - SUNSET

MARINE ONE lifts off, followed by the TWO DECOYS. That big ball of plasma, the Sun, sets over rolling hills.

INT. MAIN CABIN - MARINE ONE - FLYING - NIGHT

Natalia caresses Pi's hand, gives him a seductive look.

Ben video chats with Scotty over Netbooks.

BENJAMIN

I'll see you soon.

The President beholds the MOON, it shines over--

EXT. WASHINGTON NATIONALS STADIUM - STANDS - NIGHT

Bright light floods the field. 41,000 FANS do the wave.

A VENDOR shouts.

VENDOR

Peanuts! Cracker jack.

The vendor spots a 747 pass overhead, very rare these days.

INT. PASSENGER CABIN - UNITED FLIGHT 776 - NIGHT

Andy, Tom, a FATHER, and SON, 7, are the only passengers on the entire flight, the rest are EMPTY SEATS.

ANDY

Think we'll make it?

VP CHRISTOPHER

What time's his address?

Andy glances down, his Netbook time reads: 6:40 PM.

ANDY

20 minutes.

VP CHRISTOPHER

Probably not. Do you ever put that thing away?

ANDY

Why?

VP Christopher shrugs, FLIPS a page of his book.

INT. PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM - GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

John closes his book, puts it aside.

JOHN

They should be here soon.

Paige nods, her eyes growing heavy. Her VENTILATOR pumps.

John taps on the TV news, Campbell reports.

CAMPBELL BROWN (ON VIDEO WALL)

Again, if you're just joining us,
details are still coming in, but
the AP reports a second major...

INT. CITY BUS - DRIVING - NIGHT

Sarah monitors video of the same channel on her Netbook.

CAMPBELL BROWN (ON NETBOOK VIDEO)

... address related to the ongoing
energy crisis.

Maddy and Abby look zonked, they can barely stand. Out the window, Sarah sees a sign that reads:

"REAGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - EXIT 10 MILES"

CAMPBELL BROWN (ON NETBOOK VIDEO)

We go live now to our Senior White
House Correspondent. Brooke, what
can you tell us?

EXT. FRONT GATES - THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

Thousands of PROTESTORS shout behind BROOKE as she reports live in the middle of complete chaos.

BROOKE

I'm told we're minutes away from
answers to the many questions
raised by last night's speech.

MARINE ONE roars in overhead. Brooke's VIEW swings around, tracks it. MARINE ONE lands, the two decoys THUNDER off.

INT. FUSION CHAMBER REAR ACCESS - AERO FACILITY - NIGHT

Machines CHUG. Beside a gigantic magnet, the engineers in red lab coats unscrew a side of their metal box. LEDs dance.

EXT. REAGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - RUNWAY - NIGHT

Two lines of lights blinking, for no one in particular.

INT. CONTROL TOWER - REAGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

A CONTROLLER picks his nose, digs out a good one, studies it on the end of his finger. He looks around. All alone.

He eats it. Washes it down with a swig of soda. Feet up, when he hears something surprising, a PILOT.

PILOT

Tower, this is United 776 on approach, please advise.

He falls out of his chair, recovers, picks up the mic.

CONTROLLER

Roger, United heavy, you're, uh-- free to land on one-one-three touchdown with two-two-zero degrees at nine knots, becoming two-five-zero degrees at ten. Over.

INT. COCKPIT - UNITED FLIGHT 776 - NIGHT

The CO-PILOT spots the runway, still far off.

PILOT

Roger, tower, two to land at runway one-one-three cafe two-fifty.
(to CO-PILOT)
Gear.

EXT. PLANE UNDERBELLY - NIGHT

Massive wheel carriages unfurl.

EXT. WASHINGTON NATIONALS STADIUM - VIP PARKING - NIGHT

Suburban 20" tires screech to a stop.

SECRET SERVICE AGENTS pop open doors.

The scientists hop out: Pi, Natalia, Ben, Jimmy, Pam, Mary, and several OTHERS.

Scotty dashes out of a waiting Suburban, runs to Ben. Chase follows not far behind.

SCOTTY

Hey, dad, can Chase sit with us?

Ben looks to the man with the VIP tickets.

PI

Of course, plenty of room.

SCOTTY/CHASE

Yes!

PI

Follow me.

Pi leads the way, glances a nervous glimpse at a cigar-end glowing orange in the distance, from an open window of a--

EXT. LIMO - NIGHT

The Comb-Over Cowboy blows some smoke, pumps the cigar back in his mouth, studies the group, and raises his window.

EXT. WASHINGTON NATIONALS STADIUM - STANDS - NIGHT

Pi ushers everyone into an empty front row, 1st baseline.

SCOTTY/CHASE

Sweet!

MARY

Wow.

PI

There's a skybox too if you prefer.

CHASE

No way.

JIMMY

The first night game in five years.
I heard it sold out in, minutes.

BENJAMIN

You must be doing something right.

Pi checks the time on his Netbook, pockets it.

PI

I guess sometimes, it pays to have
friends in powerful places.

Natalia kisses Pi. Pi flags down the peanut vendor.

EXT. PRESS BULLPEN - WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

A SENIOR WRITER, 70's, shells a peanut from his handful, grows grouchy at a printer that says:

"WARMING UP"

SENIOR WRITER
(hitting the printer)
Warming up? You've been here all
day!

Felicity zips by. Her assistant ZAHIAH, 25, a Middle Eastern beauty who goes by Zee Zee, follows her into the--

INT. PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - WHITE HOUSE - SAME

Standing room only, electric. Felicity steps up.

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN
The President has a few remarks,
then we'll have his Senior Science
Advisers, along with folks from
State brief after that. Heather.

REPORTER #1 (HEATHER)
Felicity, can you tell us, what is
this administration doing right now
to resolve the energy crisis in
this country?

Zee Zee nods to Felicity.

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN
You're about to find out. The
President of the United States.

The room rises fast as the President strides in, motions to--

PRESIDENT CARVER
Keep your seats. Good evening.

Senior Writer finds a spot in back, paper pad in hand.

PRODUCTION queues POTUS and we're a go...

PRESIDENT CARVER
My fellow Americans. Tonight, we
reach a historic moment. Tonight,
I declare to you the days of fossil
fuels, are over.

INT. PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM - GW HOSPITAL - SAME

Paige and John look on.

PRESIDENT CARVER (ON VIDEO WALL)
 Since their discovery a century
 ago, coal and crude have made...

INT. CITY BUS - DRIVING - SAME

Sarah, Abby, and Maddy stand together watching.

PRESIDENT CARVER (ON NETBOOK VIDEO)
 ... advanced society possible.
 Everything we have come to know...

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - SAME

SAUDI ROYALS STUFF LIMOS with lavish new purchases, as
 clueless CROWDS gaze up at the JumboTrons.

PRESIDENT CARVER (ON JUMBOTRON)
 ... everything that has driven the
 American dream itself...

INT. PASSENGER CABIN - UNITED FLIGHT 776 - SAME

Andy and Tom watch, the boy peers over their seat.

PRESIDENT CARVER (ON NETBOOK VIDEO)
 ... depended on this discovery.

EXT. WASHINGTON NATIONALS STADIUM - STANDS - NIGHT

PRESIDENT CARVER (ON JUMBO TRON)
 Friends, the source of our progress
 is about to change. One day a
 President stood and said ...

A baseball careens to the plate, the BATTER CONNECTS, fans
 leap to their feet. Scotty celebrates, Ben smiles.

CROWD
 Yeaahh!!

Back, back, back. An OUTFIELDER leaps, FANS stretch to catch.

Pi covertly glances at his Netbook, **it reads: "3...2..."**

The MASSIVE STADIUM LIGHTS SHUT OFF.

CROWD

Ooohhhh.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - SAME

Lights drop out around the city, fast approaching the--

INT. WHITE HOUSE - PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - SAME

PRESIDENT CARVER

... in this decade, a man will walk
on the moon. And one did. And we
did. And tonight, we do it agai--

A black shroud cuts him off. Confusion. Darkness.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Guys? Are we on? What happened?

INT. PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM - GW HOSPITAL - SAME

Backup-power lights kick on.

JOHN

Paige! Are you okay, is everything
okay?

A blue power light on her lung machine still glows, for now.

EXT. WASHINGTON NATIONALS STADIUM - STANDS - NIGHT

41,000 fans find their way with Netbook lights.

SCOTTY

What the eff, man.

BENJAMIN

Scotty.

SCOTTY

Sorry.

BENJAMIN

Should we wait?

PI

I think Nat and I are gonna jet,
but you're welcome to stay.

BENJAMIN
Can you believe this?

PI
I know, crazy, right?

EXT. PLANE UNDERBELLY - UNITED 776 - NIGHT

Massive wheel carriages extended, ready to land.

CO-PILOT (V.O.)
Plus eleven, one-thousand. Plus
eleven, seven-fifty.

EXT. RUNWAY - REAGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SAME

Lights sparkle showing the way.

CO-PILOT (V.O.)
Plus nine.

INT. CITY BUS - DRIVING - SAME

Sarah looks out, up ahead as the plane comes in to land.

SARAH
Girls, look.

MADISON
No way, an airplane!

Darkness sweeps across, surrounds them in seconds.

To their left, the AIRPORT SNAPS PITCH BLACK.

EXT. RUNWAY - REAGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SAME

One of the plane's wheels misses the strip, sticks in the
soft grass, snaps off.

The airliner spins, careens down the runway at 300 MPH, belly
ablaze, sparks flaring and flashing in the night.

Blazing wreckage shoots through the fence, jumps the ditch.
A fireball headed straight for--

EXT. CITY BUS - BRAKING - FREEWAY - SAME

The BUS DRIVER brakes hard, swerves.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

Darkness floods downtown, washes over the Hollywood sign.

EXT. OUTER SPACE - NIGHT

An ASTRONAUT hangs over earth as blackouts sweep across America.

ASTRONAUT (BOB)

Uh, Houston, I think you have a problem.

INT. HOUSTON COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

A TECH solves a Rubik's Cube in backup power light.

TECHNICIAN

Thanks, Bob. Keep up the good work.

He blasts another TECH with a Nerf gun.

INT. FUSION CHAMBER REAR ACCESS - AERO FACILITY - NIGHT

An engineer pulls a 9MM out from under his red lab coat, sets it on a table next to the electric screwdriver.

ENGINEER #1

What's that for?

ENGINEER #2

You never know. Ready?

They reach inside their big metal box, heave out a second HUMAN SKELETON. Lay it down right next to the first.

ENGINEER #1

Something's off.

Engineer #1 considers, and arranges the limbs of one skeleton like the person fell accidentally. Opens one mouth like it died screaming. Both old skeletons have PERFECT WHITE TEETH.

ENGINEER #2

Better.

INT./EXT. LIMO - NATIONALS STADIUM - VIP LOT - NIGHT

Natalia pops out her dentures, rubs her gums.

NATALIA

Mine itch.

Pi pops his out.

PI

Wanna trade?

NATALIA

Sure.

They do.

NATALIA

Not bad. Thanks, love.

The Comb-Over Cowboy snuffs his cigar out.

COMB-OVER COWBOY

And we have the world's best oral surgeon waiting for you when ya all land. Don't you worry.

PI

I'm not worried.

COMB-OVER COWBOY

Alright then. Driver.

The limo speeds away.

INT. FUSION CHAMBER REAR ACCESS - AERO FACILITY - NIGHT

Engineer #2 sets the last timer, it counts down from "4:59" next to a sign "CAUTION: COOLANT -271 Celsius."

#1 loosens metal pipe-plugs with THICK GLOVES from the backs of the super-cooled magnet coils. Liquid helium pours out.

ENGINEER #2

Ready to rock and roll?

ENGINEER #1

Always.

Engineer #2 drops 2 sets of METAL KEYS by the skeletons.

Engineer #1 drops his gloves, grabs his gun.

They boogie out of there.

AERO CONTROL ROOM

The Operators respond to the crisis.

OPERATOR #1
We lost the grid.

OPERATOR #2
Demand's spiking.

OPERATOR #3
Balance the load.

ON VIDEO WALL FRONT: Blue plasma turns red.

OPERATOR #3
Containment's breached!

OPERATOR #1
Everyone out. Now!

Emergency ALARMS sound, STAFF evacuates.

OPERATOR #2
What about the grid?

Operator #3 spots the inner chamber wall MELTING on video.
Titanium turns to butter. They face fear, and book it fast!

FUSION CHAMBER - SAME

The backs of the massive, super-cooled magnet-coils begin to
break apart. Coolant puddles on the floor.

Steam explodes out of joints. Metal shards fly.

The timer counts down from "00:44."

EXT. ENTRANCE - AERO FACILITY - NIGHT

Evacuated. Staff chats, smokes, checks news over Netbooks.

The two saboteur engineers calmly stride out unnoticed.

ALARMS fall silent, lights shut off.

STAFF #1
I'll call you back.

Some investigate, when--

An EXPLOSION erupts from the DOME'S TOP.

INT. ATRIUM - AERO FACILITY - NIGHT

Operators race for the doors, an explosion rips up through the floor, tosses them aside like rag-dolls, and tears into--

FLOOR ONE - OIL

BARRELS of crude catch fire, shoot up like fireworks into--

FLOOR TWO - HYDROGEN

Mylar balloons, steel storage tanks, everything hydrogen, ignites in succession.

FLOOR THREE - WIND

Massive windmill propellers come crashing down.

EXT. ENTRANCE - AERO FACILITY - NIGHT

A seismic shockwave of fire, concrete, and rebar explodes out the sides. The foundation lost, it collapses.

Everyone looks on from a distance in complete horror. Their work, the country's only hope, burns down before their eyes.

Staff comforts each other, some weep.

STAFF #1

What now?

STAFF #2

I don't know.

STAFF #1

I hope someone does.

EXT. PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM - GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Sarah, Abby, Maddy, John, and Paige sit in backup light.

MADISON

And then, it came on the road, and we 'most crashed, and this boy waved at us, and I was like--

SARAH

Okay, Maddy, take a breath. Suffice it to say, it was quite the day.

ABIGAIL
Quite the day.

Paige smiles, adjusts her breathing respirator a bit.

JOHN
Sounds like it, have ya heard from--

BEN bursts in, Scotty follows.

BENJAMIN
Everyone okay?

He makes a beeline directly for Paige's lung machine, just to see for himself, that it's really on. Then kisses Sarah.

SARAH
We're fine.

BENJAMIN
Okay, I'll be right back.

MADISON
Hey dad, wanna hear 'bout our story?

BENJAMIN
Absolutely. Give me two seconds.
Love you.

Ben dashes out.

HALLWAY

He searches the halls, considers an elevator.

STAIRS

He races down steps.

BASEMENT

Machine NOISE churns, hums. A MAINTENANCE WORKER pours diesel into a tank that fuels the BACKUP POWER GENERATOR.

Ben stumbles in, spots the stockpile of FUEL CANS.

MAINTENANCE WORKER
Can I help you?

BENJAMIN

I hope so, one of my girls, she's a patient here. Anyhow, your generator. If you don't mind, how long can you last off the grid?

MAINTENANCE WORKER

Long as we got diesel. Shouldn't be long, they usually give us first go, bein' a hospital and all.

BENJAMIN

That's good to hear. Can I ask, do you know where your inventory's at?

MAINTENANCE WORKER

Got a shipment today. I'd wager we can last least two, three weeks.

BENJAMIN

Listen, this might sound crazy, but could I give you my number, I mean, could you call me, if you get low, you get worried, or you just need more? Any more at all.

MAINTENANCE WORKER

Yeah, sure.

BENJAMIN

Thank you. Really, thank you.

Ben shakes his hand gratefully.

PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM

Ben stumbles in, collapses in a chair. Abby climbs up to be held, hugs him. Sarah sits by Paige's side, holds her hand.

MADISON

It's a good story.

Abby nods in agreement.

SARAH

Wonder how long this one'll last.

BENJAMIN

Yeah.

SARAH

I need the car tomorrow.

BENJAMIN

Really.

SARAH

Yes, I still have to pick up some things for the party, and then--

BENJAMIN

Party?

ABIGAIL

Daddy, you forget again?

BENJAMIN

Oh, no, of course not.

SARAH

Uh-huh.

ABIGAIL

Uh-huh.

Paige grins, some things never change.

BENJAMIN

Quick, Maddy, tell me your story.

INT. THE WHITE HOUSE - BASEMENT CORRIDORS - NIGHT

Big men in suits march down the hall in a hurry in back-up light. Carver leads the DIRECTORS of DNI, DOE, OICI, FBI.

DNI

We lost it.

PRESIDENT CARVER

What do you mean we lost it?

They stride into--

SECURITY ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

President Carver scans his hand, opens a secure door.

DNI

We lost the link.

FBI

We have teams in route, E.T.A. seven minutes.

MARINES open double-doors, they burst into the--

SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Video streams in from around the country, floods across a multi-touch conference table, video wall.

Waiting are: NSA, CIA, the JOINT CHIEFS, SECDEF, and STATE. Everyone stands, multi-tasking, passing video streams around.

NSA
Sat's online, zooming, 50 meters.

Video of the AERO facility in rubble, burning in the night. Soberness of the moment sets in.

DOE
Mr. President.

President Carver plunges into his chair, the room follows.

CIA
Sir?

PRESIDENT CARVER
(beat)
Can we tell if everyone made it out safely?

NSA
Switching to thermals. Tracking now.

Computer tracking identifies heat signatures, a tally counts to "1,384", against the total expected "Scanned in: 1,389".

NSA
We're missing five.

FBI
We'll find them.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Thanks, Terry. Coordinate with ATF and local EMTs. We need all the help we can get on this one.

FBI (TERRY)
Yes, sir.

DOE
Mr. President.

DOE passes the President a video stream across the table. President Carver uses his two index fingers to enlarge it.

Live video of the national power grid. Most of the nation in darkness, stats show "Online: 3%."

PRESIDENT CARVER

I don't understand, we only connected AERO up to D.C. How was the rest of the grid affected?

SECDEF

I think it's prudent to consider the possibility this was no accident.

JCS ARMY

Terrorism?

STATE

Oh, we're not there yet.

SECDEF

Just as the President announces the end of fossil fuels? I can think of several motivated players--

PRESIDENT CARVER

You think the Saudis are involved?

JCS MARINES (CHAIRMAN)

Maybe all of OPEC, I don't know. But until we do, I advise upgrading our threat-con posture.

STATE

Mr. President, they barely have enough oil left for their own people, much less--that's why they cut off exports.

JCS ARMY

I agree with the General.

STATE

Sir.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Do it.

Specs glow, largest concentrations in Western deserts.

PRESIDENT CARVER

What's this over here?

OICI

Could be solar.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Solar? Now?

DOE
They may store some of their energy
in thermal salts, or hydrogen. It
allows them to provide power
through the night.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Well, that's something I guess.

DOE
Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT CARVER
You wouldn't believe how hard big
oil lobbied us to switch over to
hydrogen when we were nationalizing
petroleum.

DOE
I still get calls.

Carver gazes in awe at the technology lit up around him.

PRESIDENT CARVER
I imagine I'll get one first thing
in the morning. All this. How
much energy do you think this uses?

DOE
I--I can't say for sure.

The President rises, the rest of the room follows.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Let's find out. From this day
forward, gentlemen, we will know
precisely how much energy we
consume, at all levels of
government. At all levels of this
country. I'm talking down to the
watt. We will conserve. We will
make every drop count, and not one
of us will rest until we find out
what happened tonight.

EXT. ROLLING HILLS - WEST VIRGINIA - SUNRISE

The sky glows vivid violets, fuchsia, the kinds of colors you
reached for in a box of Crayolas, but could never quite find.

EXT. DEBRIS SITE - AERO FACILITY - DAY

ATF and FBI FORENSICS TEAMS investigate the rebar rubble.
FIREMEN and EMTs search for survivors.

FIREMAN #1
(calling out)
I think I've got someone.

The rescuers converge.

He tosses debris, drops to his knees. Finds a HAND.
Rescuers clear more debris. They pass a rescue sled down.

INTERVIEW AREA

EMTs wrap the distraught masses in mylar space blankets. A
legion of FBI interviews evacuated staff, all exhausted.

The Director hands his card to one.

FBI DIRECTOR
Right, okay then, if you think of
anything, you can email us at--on
second thought use whatever form of
communication you have available.
Thank you.

He checks his Netbook: "Battery 88%."

DEBRIS SITE

Rescuers uncover the lifeless, mangled body of Operator #3.
Their spirits wilt.

The defeated fireman plants his shovel, and cops a squat.

INT. BATHROOM - 2ND FLOOR RESIDENCE - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

The President sits on his throne, boxers around his ankles,
clinging to a fresh piece of toilet paper. And weeps.

MASTER BEDROOM

The FIRST LADY, 40's, KNOCKS on the bathroom door.

FIRST LADY
Honey? Is everything okay?

She opens the door into the--

BATHROOM

And comforts him in a private moment. He recovers.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Everything we worked for.

FIRST LADY
I know.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Gone. It's all gone. I don't know
what to do.

The First Lady takes his hand, holds it against her cheek.

FIRST LADY
Do what you do best.

PRESIDENT CARVER
What's that?

FIRST LADY
Inspire those, who do.

INT. R&D LAB - NASA HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Depressed ENGINEERS lament internet news coverage of AERO's
demise on dozens of multi-touch workstations.

SUPERTITLE: NASA HEADQUARTERS - WASHINGTON D.C.

A solar array sits rigged up on a workbench near a borrowed
satellite. Ben works a soldering iron. Pam holds a digital
microscope for him. Mary monitors a voltmeter.

MARY
A little more. More. Right there.

PAMELA
We got it?

The soldering iron slips. They sigh, Jimmy fumes.

BENJAMIN
Sorry, I can do better.

MARY
We'll get it.

PAMELA
Imagine if we got green, the first
quad color junction.
(MORE)

PAMELA (CONT'D)

In theory, we could reduce a roof full of solar panels down to the size of, something like a mattress.

JIMMY

In theory.

BENJAMIN

Everything helps.

JIMMY

We don't have time for everything.

MARY

Why do you have to be so negative?

JIMMY

Because this is useless.

PAMELA

Don't say that.

JIMMY

It's useless. How many breakthroughs have we heard of, that never make it out of the lab? These things never materialize. I mean, where's my flying car? And now, that place is gone. Face it, people, it's hopeless.

PAMELA

Do you have a better idea?

Ben sets the soldering iron down.

BENJAMIN

Let's get some air.

They stroll past the NASA ADMIN, 50's, who scans his screen.

NASA ADMIN

(to ENGINEER)

They're here.

(calling out)

Everybody, listen up. We're taking a little field trip.

The sun-shy engineers gape from behind their monitors.

EXT. 300 E STREET S.W. - NASA HQ, WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

30 POLICE BICYCLES escort 12 CITY BUSES, they glide in.

INT./EXT. CITY BUS #1 - DAY

An American flag sticks to the dash. A MAN in shades parks. The presidential entourage stands among SECRET SERVICE.

SECRET SERVICE

One second while we clear it, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CARVER

This isn't so bad.

ANDY

Where are the seats?

The President shrugs.

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN

It's usually a little more, you know, crowded.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Fair point. Have we heard back from Pi?

ANDY

We've been trying all morning.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Keep trying.

ANDY

Yes, sir.

Secret Service opens the door.

SECRET SERVICE

We're clear, Mr. President.

The entourage spills out onto the sidewalk.

The scientists emerge, the Admin greets the President.

PRESIDENT CARVER

I know everyone's pretty upset over what's happened. You're not alone. We thought we'd help put some wind back in your sails with something special.

NASA ADMIN

NASA style. C'mon.

They pile into buses buzzing with curiosity.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL - DAY

Protestors emerge from camping tents, grab their signs.

A semi-truck parade beats their horns nearby.

INT. CITY BUS #1 - JEFFERSON DR. SW - DRIVING - DAY

PRESIDENT CARVER
Let's hope no one panics.

ANDY
Not much chance of that.

PRESIDENT CARVER
I want the Saudi Ambassador in my
office, today.

DOE
They're in town.

VP CHRISTOPHER
They?

DOE
I toldja' I still get calls.

INT. 747 - DAY

A BODYGUARD drops off packages. The 747 full, not with
passengers, but the bounty of a royal shopping spree.

ANDERSON COOPER (V.O.)
What does this mean for average
Americans?

EXT. RUNWAY - AIRPORT - DAY

A DOZEN BODYGUARDS haul shopping bags out of a fleet of
limos. Another limo pulls up.

CAMPBELL BROWN (V.O.)
Things, everyday things we buy in
stores may soon be gone.

INT. LIMO - DAY

It drives past the 747, up to a waiting PRIVATE JET. In the
back seat, Pi and Natalia monitor the news on TV.

CAMPBELL BROWN (ON LIMO TV)
 Our way of life, the American dream
 itself, may very well be over.

Pi and Natalia step out to board the jet, GREETED by the
 Saudi Royals and the Comb-Over Cowboy.

INT. KITCHEN - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

CAMPBELL BROWN (ON FRIDGE TV)
 For most, OPEC's announcement to
 end oil shipments is frightening.
 But what comes next, is truly
 terrifying.

On Fridge TV: Segment title "NO OIL, AERO GONE, NOW WHAT?"

Sarah whips up a salad with one finger, drags images of
 vegetables into a virtual bowl on the multi-touch island.

SARAH
 No kidding, hot pants. Fridge:
 pause TV. House: power, how much?

The center island lights up: "Power: 16%" She gazes out the
 window, a cloud encroaches on the sun. The island readout
 drops: "Power: 11%". She flips a page of her Bible.

Scotty strolls in, searches cabinets, finds a can of peaches.

SCOTTY
 Hey, mom.

SARAH
 Hey.

ABIGAIL'S ROOM

A brush strokes canvas, painting bricks of her home, family.

SARAH (O.S.)
 Girls, let's go!

Abby sits with perfect posture, talent beyond her age. She
 stuffs her painting in a box, scoots out passing--

CHANEL'S ROOM

ELIZABETH, 18, picks up her crying baby, CHANEL, 1. Liz's
 ThinkGeek T: "meh", Chanel's ThinkGeek onesie: "newbie"

SARAH (O.S.)
Lizzy, you're coming too.

She rolls her eyes, and rolls out passing--

PAIGE'S ROOM

Mothballed for months. In a corner, a box with piles of disassembled electronics. Bookshelves stuffed. Trophies, blue ribbons, and framed PHOTOS OF PAIGE AND BEN.

SARAH (O.S.)
You're not wearing that. How many times do we have to do this?

MADISON (O.S.)
But, mom.

SARAH (O.S.)
I said no.

MADISON (O.S.)
Why?

SARAH (O.S.)
It's fall for one, you're nine for another.

KITCHEN

MADISON
There's heat. Hello?!

SARAH
For, the, moment. Do what I say or you may stay home.

Abby waits in the next room, sits listening to her music.

Maddy storms off, as Liz hands Chanel to Sarah.

ELIZABETH
Can you watch her for a sec?

MADISON
(calling back)
I hate you.

SARAH
(calling after)
Welcome to the club, we're having T-shirts made.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)
 (to CHANEL)
 Can you believe her?

Sarah blows a raspberry on Chanel's baby belly, she giggles.

GARAGE

Liz trips over a bunch of bikes, unplugs her beat-up compact car's charging cord.

SARAH (O.S.)
 Lizzy, we're waiting on you.

KITCHEN

Scotty runs a can of peaches through an electric can opener.
 Madison appears again, dressed more conservatively.

SARAH
 Much better, thank you for obeying.

MADISON
 Whatev. We goin' or what?

SARAH
 Soon.

MADISON
 Whensies?

SARAH
 Nowsies.

MADISON
 I don't want tomatoes on mine.

SARAH
 I know, I know. All I have to do
 is move this here and press--

Her finger dives down to the "Send Order" button when--
 THE SCREEN GOES DARK, everything electric stops.

SARAH
 Elizabeth!!

MADISON
 (over shoulder)
 Thanks, mom.

Maddy joins Abby in the next room, as Liz strolls in.

ELIZABETH

Sup.

SARAH

I'll tell you what is up. I spent forty-five minutes on this order. Picking, who likes this, who doesn't like that. And at the very moment I'm about to finalize delivery, you know what happened?

ELIZABETH

You forgot the address?

SARAH

No, you, blew the power.

ELIZABETH

That's one way to look at it.

SARAH

That's the only way to look at it.

ELIZABETH

Whatever, it goes out like a million times a day.

SARAH

Did you charge your car?

ELIZABETH

No, no, no. A little bit.

SARAH

Lizzy.

ELIZABETH

It was low.

SARAH

So.

ELIZABETH

I gotta go.

SARAH

Oh? I see. You know, mi amore, it seems more and more, we see less and less of you these days. You're worse than your father. And by the way, you're riding with us.

ELIZABETH

But I'm s'posed to see Bryan after.

SARAH

You're supposed to be helping get the girls in the car. Unless you want to forage for tree bark, I suggest you worry about your social life, a little later.

ELIZABETH

Fine, but I ain't milkin' no goats!

Abby and Maddy share a crinkly-nosed "that's gross" face.

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

The private jet lifts off. The 747 shopping cart follows.

INT. PRIVATE JET - DAY

Pi and Natalia clang champagne glasses. Kiss over their new Swiss account balance on his Netbook: "+2,000,000,000.00"

Five rows up, SAUDI ROYAL WIVES compare new luxury purses. Up further, SAUDI ROYAL MEN try on new leather shoes.

EXT. DEBRIS SITE - AERO FACILITY - DAY

Black leather shoes on a mission march through dirt to the--

CRATER EDGE

The FBI Director extends his hand, flanked by a few agents.

The fireman hands up to him, two sets of keys.

FBI DIRECTOR

Anything else? Any ID?

FIREMAN #1

Must have burned up in the blast.

The Director drops the keys in an evidence bag.

EMTs haul out the pair of skeletons, perfect teeth.

FBI DIRECTOR

(to AGENT #1)

Get me full dental work-ups.

AGENT #1

Yes, sir.

EXT. CITY BUSES - S. CAPITOL ST SW - DRIVING - DAY

The buses cross the bridge over the Potomac, into Maryland.

INT. CITY BUS #2 - DRIVING - DAY

PAMELA

Any idea where we're headed?

A C-9 NASA aircraft roars in, buzzes the treetops.

Their eyes raise, then find the sign for:

"ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE: 4 miles"

BENJAMIN

That's not Air Force One.

EXT. CITY BUSES - SUITLAND PKWY E - DRIVING - DAY

Above, a long line of NASA KC-135As begin their approach.

EXT. COSTCO - PARKING LOT - DAY

Another NASA KC-135A passes overhead.

The Baxter Audi waits in the lot, filling up fast. A Mississippi river of subcompact cars surge in.

A wave of SHOPPERS flood the front doors.

INT. GREETING CARD AISLE - COSTCO - DAY

Sarah browses birthday cards, chuckles at one. Her cart near empty. Her girls hang out, picking out cards.

SARAH

This is a good one, look.

MADISON

Hey, mom, is there like a big sale or something, cuz--

Sarah sees the CROWDS storm in.

SARAH

Lizzy, grab another cart. Fast.

DRY FOODS AISLE

A FIREMAN heaves a 25-pound bag of rice into a cart for an ELDERLY COUPLE, 70's. She kisses his cheek.

ELECTRONICS SECTION

Campbell reports on shelves of paper-thin OLED TVs.

CAMPBELL BROWN (ON TV SETS)
We're already receiving reports of
looting breaking out. Law
enforcement however--

A TEENAGER rips the TV off the shelf mid-sentence, the power plug dangles behind.

A MOM, 40's, hauls out a pile of video games.

CEREAL AISLE

Liz's cart leads, with Chanel buckled in. Sarah strolls behind, with Abby riding shotgun. Abby pulls down boxes, Maddy and Scotty toss things in, and Sarah pulls them out.

SARAH
Stick to the list.

ELIZABETH
Yeah, yeah.

ABIGAIL
And this?

SARAH
No.

ABIGAIL
And this?

SARAH
No sugar.

Sarah searches for items on her list. Abby squirms to reach something higher.

SARAH
Sweetie, sit down please. Lizzy,
did you finish the thing?

ELIZABETH
The thing?

SCOTTY
What thing?

SARAH
Nothing.

ELIZABETH
Which thing?

SARAH
The thing for the thing, for you
know who.

ABIGAIL
(standing in cart seat)
I know who.

SARAH
I know who's not gettin' anything
if she doesn't sit back down.

ELIZABETH
Oh, yeah, yeah.

SARAH
(mimes wrapping a present,
tying a bow)
Did you?

ELIZABETH
Yeah.

SCOTTY
I saw that.

SARAH/ELIZABETH
Scotty!

SCOTTY
Sorry, sheesh.

MADISON
Hey, mom.

SARAH
Abigail Marie, do I have to count?

MADISON
Hey, mom.

SARAH
What?!

CROWDS fly by them on a free-for-all shopping spree.

MADISON

Like, we kinda halfta hurry, else
stuff's gonna be gone.

SARAH

You know what, you're right.

Sarah chucks her list, corrals a half-dozen boxes of oatmeal
in her cart in one fell swoop. Takes off past Liz.

ELIZABETH

That's more like it.

Liz follows fast.

Abby clings to the cart's handlebar, her hair blows back.

ABIGAIL

More like it!

SNACK AISLE

The race is on! Everyone throws things in left and right.
Ahead, the STORE MANAGER cleans up on cookies.

MADISON

This?

SARAH

Sure.

SCOTTY

How 'bout this?

SARAH

Why not.

They swerve around the corner, one side of wheels in the air.

BREAD AISLE

Chuckling in more and more. They speed side-by-side with a
CASHIER, who's filling up too.

SARAH

Which way's your coffee?

CASHIER

Aisle 3.

SARAH

Thanks.

CASHIER

No prob.

COFFEE AISLE

They race down, grabbing can after can. Swerve around a POLICE OFFICER stocking up, donuts already in his cart.

MADISON

Hey, mom

SARAH

Yeah?

MADISON

If there's no power, how's the coffee gonna get hot?

SARAH

I'm sure your father'll think of *something*.

FRONT OF STORE

The Baxters and a swarm of SHOPPERS with full carts, roll right past abandoned checkout stands, pushing through the incoming MASSES, who eye their loot.

EXT. COSTCO - ENTRANCE - DAY

HORDES fight their way in as the Baxters squeeze out into a sea of subcompacts. Racks packed with scooters, bikes.

AUDI TT COUPE HYBRID - PARKING LOT

They arrive at their mid-sized car, both carts overflowing.

MADISON

Hey, mom.

SARAH

I know.

ELIZABETH

We shoulda' brought both cars.

SARAH

Yeah.

A HOMELESS MOM, and her DAUGHTER, 9, both in filthy Nationals jackets, trudge closer.

Abby glances at the bounty in the carts that spillith over, watches to see if Sarah will help, as Ben did earlier.

INT. INDUSTRIAL WAREHOUSE - DAY

The Comb-Over Cowboy roams forward by towering STOCKPILES OF HYDROGEN FUEL CELLS. He walks with the SAUDI KING, 60's, followed by six SAUDI PRINCES.

A forklift drops off another pallet full, and zips out.

SAUDI KING
When will they be ready?

COMB-OVER COWBOY
End of the week, you have my word.

The SAUDI AMBASSADOR greets them.

SAUDI AMBASSADOR
We're ready, your highness.

The group follows the Ambassador out to--

EXT. INDUSTRIAL WAREHOUSE COMPLEX - DAY

A waiting limo idles, doors open and ready.

Forklifts empty semi-trucks, ten warehouses line the complex.

EXT. ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - ENTRANCE - DAY

The parade of police and city buses clears through SECURITY.

INT. CITY BUS #2 - ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - DRIVING - DAY

JIMMY
You work at NASA, and you've never
been on a plane?

BENJAMIN
Ironic, huh?

JIMMY
Well, yeah.

EXT. ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

Both Air Force One planes rest in their hanger.

NASA C-9s and KC-135As, line up on the runway, engines ready.

INT. CITY BUS #1 - ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - DRIVING - DAY

PRESIDENT CARVER

This is gonna be great.

Felicity grins.

EXT. RUNWAY - ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

The buses park in formation.

SECRET SERVICE secures the bus doors, everyone exits. NASA SENIOR STAFF directs the teams onto adjacent planes.

Andy and Felicity cut through the crowds to--

EXT. CITY BUS #2 - DAY

ANDY

Dr. Baxter?

BENJAMIN

Yes?

ANDY

Your team's riding with us.

They all share a smile and follow him to--

EXT. PLANE #1 - NASA C-9 - DAY

The President and his team boards.

JIMMY

Your team?

Ben shrugs.

BENJAMIN

I'm just trying not to throw up.

Ben and his team boards.

PAMELA
You know what the astronauts
nicknamed these don't you?

JIMMY
Vomit Comets.

BENJAMIN
It just gets better and better.

EXT. RUNWAY - ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

RUNWAY CREWS secure the doors, direct the planes for takeoff.

INT. PLANE #1, PLANE #2, PLANE #3 - PASSENGER SEATS - DAY

FLIGHT CREWS ensure excited PASSENGERS are strapped in.

FLIGHT COCKPITS

The CAPTAIN taps multi-touch controls for takeoff.

PLANE #1 - PASSENGER SEATS

PRESIDENT CARVER
I've always wanted to try this.

NASA ADMIN
Glad to help.

RIDERS rubberneck at the President as he buckles in.

PLANE #1 - FLIGHT COCKPIT

The Captain taps the touch-dash for the: "INTERCOM."

CAPTAIN
We are now Air Force One.

The CO-CAPTAIN beams with pride.

CO-CAPTAIN
Please prepare the cabin.

PLANE #1 - PASSENGER SEATS

Applause breaks out. Ben clings to a barf-bag, just in case.

PAMELA
(chewing; offering)
Gum?

BENJAMIN
Absolutely.

Puts it in his front pocket, pats it, saving it for later.

EXT. RUNWAY - ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

The NASA planes lift off in succession.

INT. PLANE #1 - PASSENGER SEATS - DAY

VP Christopher relays a message from his Netbook.

VP CHRISTOPHER
They're waiting for us.

PRESIDENT CARVER
They can wait.

ANDY
We should at least hear them out.

PRESIDENT CARVER
I never heard the end of it.

VP CHRISTOPHER
We seized their source of revenue
overnight. I'd be pissed too.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Be that as it may, I hope someone
comes up with something. The last
thing I want, is to climb back in
bed with big oil.

DOE
They're pushing hydrogen now.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Whatever.

ANDY
Sir, we may not have a choice at
this point.

PRESIDENT CARVER

(beat)

Fine, have Zee Zee make them comfortable until we return.

One of several ZERO-GRAVITY COACHES enter.

ZERO-GRAVITY COACH #1

Mr. President, we're ready for you.

ZERO-GRAVITY COACH #2

Everyone, if you want to follow us.

Passengers unbuckle, and follow the coaches into the--

ZERO-GRAVITY CABIN

White padded walls encapsulate nothing, but space to fly.

Everyone buzzes with excitement as they're led inside.

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN

Everyone, listen up.

Coaches signal it's time to lay down as G-forces kick in.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Okay, I trust you all have had an opportunity to get acquainted, so, where do we go from here?

They begin to adjust to no gravity.

Jimmy does a superman over to the President.

JIMMY

Sir, it's all about energy density.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Talk to me, guys.

Ben tries to balance, and not blow chunks.

BENJAMIN

The bang for your buck.

Pam drives over in an imaginary car.

PAMELA

I think what matters is EROEI.

BENJAMIN

You want more then you put in.

JIMMY

Ideally, but we need to address
transportation out of the gate.

Mary floats in.

MARY

What about distribution?
And conservation?

Back in the corner.

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN

This may take some time.

VP CHRISTOPHER

I thought it was hard for Congress
to agree on something.

ANDY

Maybe someone's having better luck
on another plane.

EXT. PRIVATE JET - RUNWAY - DUBAI - DAY

Pi and Natalia kiss at the top of the steps. They gaze out
at luxury in every direction.

A sparkling black Bentley idles at the end of red carpet.
The DRIVER opens the door to their new life.

NATALIA

I could get used to this.

PI

You haven't see anything yet.

Below, several Saudi Royals are greeted by FAMILY. Their
bodyguards load up limos with bags from the 747.

EXT. DUBAI - DAY

The extraordinary aftermath of hundreds of billions invested
in constructing unprecedented architecture.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

The city of power, grows weary without it.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

PROTESTORS picket, a semi-truck parade beats their horns.

INT. ROOSEVELT ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

The Saudi King strategizes with the Comb-Over Cowboy. The Saudi Princes sit at the table with the Saudi Ambassador.

Zee Zee carries in water, assorted beverages. STAFFERS follow with a tray of pastries, candy bars.

ZEE ZEE
Sorry they're warm.

STAFFER #1
The fridge is down.

ZEE ZEE
And we're outta ice.

COMB-OVER COWBOY
I reckon this'll have to do.
(cigar in hand)
Okay if I smoke?

ZEE ZEE
Sorry. You'll have to go outside.

COMB-OVER COWBOY
Outside? When's the big man
expected back?

ZEE ZEE
I apologize, I'm not exactly sure.

COMB-OVER COWBOY
Why don't ya all quit apologizin'
round here and round us up some
grub. Might as well have some
supper if we're gonna be waitin'.

ZEE ZEE
Yes, sir, I'll see what I can find.

COMB-OVER COWBOY
You do that.

Zee Zee and the staffers dash out.

SAUDI KING
(rough English)
What are chances?

COMB-OVER COWBOY
 Our chances? Well, King, I reckon
 it'll be like taking...

The Cowboy takes a 100-Grand candy bar, tears it open.

EXT. AUDI TT COUPE HYBRID - PARKING LOT - COSTCO - DAY

They cram their loot from the carts into their car.

ABIGAIL
 Mommy?

SARAH
 Hold on, Abby. Alright, if you'll
 take the bus, that should give us
 enough room for most of this.

ELIZABETH
 And I can go out tonight?

SARAH
 Yes.

ABIGAIL
 Momma.

SARAH
 What?

ABIGAIL
 The people.

SARAH
 What people?

Homeless Mom and Daughter pass.

ABIGAIL
 (pointing)
 Aren't you gonna help?

MADISON
 She saw dad help this guy, when we
 were gettin' gas.

SARAH
 Sweetie, we can't help everyone.

ABIGAIL
 But maybe they need it.

Abby takes off after them.

SARAH
 (calling after)
 Abby.

Abby tugs on Homeless Mom's dirty Nationals jacket.

ABIGAIL
 Do you need help?

Sarah catches up.

SARAH
 I'm sorry, she's--

HOMELESS MOM
 She's fine.

SARAH
 (considers)
 You know, we do have some extra, I
 mean if you--

Homeless Mom looks back, considers the size of their family.

HOMELESS MOM
 That's okay, I'm sure we can find
 something.

SARAH
 Are you sure?

HOMELESS MOM
 Yes, ma'am.

Sarah notices Homeless Mom's little girl looks exhausted.

SARAH
 What about money for a bus? I
 imagine you do a lot of walking.

Sarah hands her a few bucks. Abby grins.

HOMELESS MOM
 Thank you.

SARAH
 Good luck in there.

Homeless Mom and Daughter trudge into Costco.

Abby skips back, Sarah follows, Maddy and Liz loading up.

INT. PLANE #1 - ZERO-GRAVITY CABIN - DAY

Passengers launch M&M's, catch them in their mouths.

PRESIDENT CARVER

So maybe we can't fix everything right away. Maybe we tackle paint and plastics and so on, later on. But why can't we just build out more renewables? Wind, solar--

JIMMY

All of the wind and solar in the country combined make up less than 1% of our energy sources. To scale that up now--maybe if we had started 20 or 30 years ago.

PRESIDENT CARVER

But we agree this has to be electric, right?

BENJAMIN

I think so. You know, we could actually look at what happened, as helpful.

JIMMY

I think you hit your head. This is a disaster. This is hopeless.

BENJAMIN

No, this is the process of discovery. You try something, it fails, you try something else. Hopefully having learned something in the process.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Have we? Learned something.

BENJAMIN

I hope we've learned we can't depend on a centralized source. It's too vulnerable. We have to have a highly-distributed solution.

MARY

On-site power?

PAMELA

We wouldn't need to upgrade the grid.

MARY

Plus, we'd save at least 20% on losses over long-line distribution.

JIMMY

But what's the solution?

BENJAMIN

You were right earlier.

JIMMY

He's just getting that now.

BENJAMIN

We have to get out of the lab. Whatever we come up with, it has to be something we can easily replicate in the real world.

PAMELA

Yeah, something a guy can explain to his neighbor. Something they could put together in their garage.

BENJAMIN

Right, no nanotech, no antimatter, or trillion-dollar fusion reactors. We need something simple, something built with every-day tools, from every-day things. From something that surrounds us every day.

PAMELA

Like what?

BENJAMIN

I don't know. But I know where to start looking.

President Carver grins to Tom encouraged.

EXT. ARABIAN SEA - DAY

The view skims a vast ocean. On the horizon--

EXT. THE WORLD ISLANDS - DUBAI - DAY

Paradise. This astonishing place is only matched by the mansions that call this part of "the world" home.

EXT. LUXURY YACHT - THE WORLD ISLANDS - DUBAI - DRIVING - DAY

Pi and Natalia gaze out over tropical waters.

PI
Remember when you said you wanted
to travel the world someday?

NATALIA
And you said you were buying us an
island. I remember.

PI
I figured, why not do both.

INT. MISC AISLES - COSTCO - DAY

Homeless Mom and Daughter wander by cleaned-out shelves,
through abandoned aisles.

Fellow LOOTERS snatch up scraps.

HOMELESS DAUGHTER
Momma?

HOMELESS MOM
Yeah, Babushka?

HOMELESS DAUGHTER
What now?

Homeless Mom pulls out the few bucks in her pocket Sarah gave
her. She studies it, considers.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Liz applies fresh lipstick, waits with Chanel for the next
bus. Brand new bags of diapers by her side.

INT. PLANE #1 - ZERO-GRAVITY CABIN - DAY

Everyone parties in zero gravity to some fresh music.

Ben lounges back on nothing but air, his Netbook buzzes,
finds Sarah on VIDEO CHAT.

BENJAMIN
Hey, babe.

SARAH (ON NETBOOK)
Hey, what's going on?

Jimmy spins around, curled up in a ball. On top of Pamela's finger, as she pretends he's a basketball.

BENJAMIN

Still at work, we're just hangin' out.

SARAH (ON NETBOOK)

Hanging out? Are you getting close, hun?

Felicity floats over him.

BENJAMIN

Well actually, something's come up.

SARAH (ON NETBOOK)

Can't you tell your boss you're supposed to be on vacation?

The President benches Andy like he's a free-weight.

BENJAMIN

I think he has his hands full at the moment.

SARAH (ON NETBOOK)

Okay, fine, any idea when you'll be home?

BENJAMIN

Well, this one could take a while.

SARAH (ON NETBOOK)

Ben, I need you home, things are starting to crazy out there.

BENJAMIN

I know. I'm working on it.

INT. AUDI TT COUPE HYBRID - DRIVING - SUNSET

Shopping spree loot crammed in every crevice, the car filled to the brim like the inside of a gum-ball machine.

SARAH

Well, work a little faster, would you please?

BENJAMIN (ON CAR DASH VIDEO)

I will, babe.

SARAH

Uh-huh. Well, dinner's at 6, her party's at 7. It would be nice if *this year*, you were actually there.

BENJAMIN (ON CAR DASH VIDEO)

I know, we'll catch up soon, love you.

She hangs up.

SARAH

Sometimes I get the feeling your father isn't telling me everything.

SCOTTY

Maybe he's working on somethin' important.

SARAH

It's your father.

ABIGAIL

Momma, who does daddy love the mostest?

They drive past the gas station being looted.

SARAH

He loves all you kids the same.

MADISON

No way, Paige is dad's fave.

SARAH

That's not true.

ABIGAIL

I'm hungry.

SCOTTY

I'm famished.

SARAH

You're famished. Look around, I'm sure you can find something.

Abby spots Homeless Dad, and his boy, plodding away empty handed. The sun fading after a long hard day.

EXT. ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE - NIGHT

Ben calls out to his team, as everyone steps off the plane.

BENJAMIN
I'll print out directions.

Pam and Jimmy nod.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Ben, hold up a second. Take a ride
with me.

A Presidential motorcade idles, lights dance in the darkness.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL MOTORCADE - DRIVING - NIGHT

The President drops in, an AGENT closes the door.

PRESIDENT CARVER
You were saying?

BENJAMIN
This is nice. Particularly since
my wife has the car today.

PRESIDENT CARVER
You're married, that's great. Any
kids?

BENJAMIN
Five, and one on the way.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Wow, Catholic?

BENJAMIN
I'm sort of between religions right
now. Sarah's Christian.

PRESIDENT CARVER
I can relate. Listen, I have this
meeting. They're going to pitch me
hydrogen, and I could use a guy
like you in the room. Are you up
for it?

BENJAMIN
Well, I'm supposed to--yes, sir, of
course.

PRESIDENT CARVER
You don't sound so sure.

BENJAMIN
It's my oldest's birthday, there's
a party.

PRESIDENT CARVER

I tell you what, shouldn't be more than an hour. I'll have one of my guys take you wherever you need to go after. Sound good?

BENJAMIN

Yes, sir.

INT. CITY BUS - GEORGETOWN - DRIVING - NIGHT

Liz holds Chanel, gazes out the big bus window.

Homeless Mom and Daughter, keep a low profile in back.

INT. KITCHEN - BAXTER HOUSE - NIGHT

Sarah and Maddy stuff the cabinets. Scotty cranks a can open with a manual can opener.

SARAH

Where's Abby?

MADISON

In the car.

SARAH

Why?

MADISON

I think she's sick.

INT. PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM - GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

JOHN

Think he'll show this year?

Paige frowns, shakes her head, a tear drops.

JOHN

He better have a good excuse.

EXT. ENTRANCE - THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

Secret Service Suburbans storm the driveway, blue lights blazing, horns chirping.

Secret Service pops open doors. Ben steps out, gazes in awe, and is escorted inside with the President's team.

BENJAMIN
(into NETBOOK)
Honey, I think I'm gonna be late
for dinner.

EXT. BAXTER HOUSE - NIGHT

Liz steps off the bus with Chanel toward--

EXT./INT. AUDI TT COUPE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Sarah and Maddy grab more loot. Abby flops back nauseous,
surrounded by stacks of empty snack wrappers.

SARAH
You feeling sick, sweetie?

Abby shakes her head "no."

SARAH
C'mon.

Sarah helps her out of the car. As Liz strolls up, Abby
blows chunks all over their feet.

MADISON
Gross!

SARAH
It's okay, c'mon, hun.

Sarah attends to Abby as they all head inside.

SARAH
Can you stay with her tonight?
Please.

ELIZABETH
I guess.

The city bus glides away, Homeless Mom peers out.

INT. CITY BUS - DRIVING - NIGHT

She scratches down the address with a pencil nub.

INT. ROOSEVELT ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

The Saudi King jots down numbers with a Mont Blanc pen.

SAUDI KING
They will accept?

COMB-OVER COWBOY
He has no choice now.

The President strides by the window with Ben, senior staff.

Zee Zee steps in through a door behind.

ZEE ZEE
Gentleman, if you'll follow me.

OVAL OFFICE

The President, his Senior Staff, and Ben settle in.

PRESIDENT CARVER
(to BEN)
Thanks for doing this.

Zee Zee opens the door for the Saudi King, Saudi Princes, the Saudi Ambassador, and the Comb-Over Cowboy.

SAUDI AMBASSADOR
Mr. President, his majesty, King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, the second, his eldest sons, and of course, you know Barry Duncan.

COMB-OVER COWBOY
Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Barry.

SITUATION ROOM

On VIDEO: An FBI AGENT closes a report.

FBI DIRECTOR
Thanks, Roger.

CIA DIRECTOR
It's confirmed?

FBI DIRECTOR
I'll brief the President.

DNI
I'll brief the President.

FBI DIRECTOR

Yes, sir.

JCS MARINES

I think it's time we put this investigation behind us. It's time we ask ourselves, what are we prepared to do if these science geeks can't figure this out?

STATE

Are you suggesting--

JCS MARINES

Taking what's left. Yes.

STATE

Wait.

SECDEF

What's left? Do we even know?

STATE

(to SELF)

I can't believe we're considering this.

CIA

We don't know.

SECDEF

How much does OPEC have left?

CIA

We don't know.

NSA

We think a year at most.

SECDEF

General, how does this all play out on the international stage?

JCS MARINES

When it comes down to it, I expect--

INT. WAR ROOM - CHINA - NIGHT

The CHINESE COMMANDER pounds his fists, flanked by GENERALS.

CHINESE COMMANDER

We must fight--

INT. WAR ROOM - INDIA - NIGHT

The INDIAN COMMANDER points at a map of the Mideast.

INDIAN COMMANDER
For every last drop.

The room of OFFICERS take in the moment.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

PRESIDENT CARVER
You already have them?

COMB-OVER COWBOY
That's what I said.

PRESIDENT CARVER
The fuel cells.

COMB-OVER COWBOY
Enough for every car, built right
here in the good ol' U.S.A.

Ben smirks impressed.

PRESIDENT CARVER
How much?

COMB-OVER COWBOY
Sorry?

PRESIDENT CARVER
How much do you want?

COMB-OVER COWBOY
50 billion, Mr. President. That's
for 300 million units.

PRESIDENT CARVER
What's that--

BENJAMIN
About 160 bucks a pop.

PRESIDENT CARVER
That sounds reasonable.

COMB-OVER COWBOY
I thought so.

PRESIDENT CARVER
That's not like you, Barry. What's
the catch?

BENJAMIN
It's not an energy source.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Right. Where are we getting the
hydrogen, Barry?

SAUDI KING
From us.

PRESIDENT CARVER
I figured.

The DNI knocks, steps in.

DNI
Mr. President?

The President motions him over to another part of the room.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Excuse me.

The President and the DNI huddle.

DNI
Sir, dental forensics id'd the
remains of Pi Tran and Natalia
Ratushe from the accident site.

PRESIDENT CARVER
We're sure?

DNI
Yes, sir. Should I make the calls?

PRESIDENT CARVER
No, I'll do it. Thanks.

DNI
Thank you, Mr. President.

The DNI hands the President a next-of-kin call sheet, leaves.

The President rejoins the group.

PRESIDENT CARVER
How much for the hydrogen, King?

SAUDI KING
A modest price, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CARVER
I'm sure. How much?

COMB-OVER COWBOY
In GGE--

PRESIDENT CARVER
GGE?

BENJAMIN
Gasoline gallon equivalent.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Right.

COMB-OVER COWBOY
In exchange for a reasonable price
on them fuel cells, we'd like
exclusivity to distribute, and a
GGE, let's call it, a hundred even.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Per gallon.

COMB-OVER COWBOY
That's right.

BENJAMIN
But where are you getting the
hydrogen?

SAUDI KING
Our deserts will be covered with
the solar.

ANDY
Will be?

COMB-OVER COWBOY
With the right investment, I figure
we can break ground--

VP CHRISTOPHER
You haven't even broken ground?

COMB-OVER COWBOY
No, but that there Arabian dessert
is nuthin' but sun. Can you think
of a better place to stick 'em?

PRESIDENT CARVER

I can, but we're in the Oval, and the First Lady tells me I should work on my manners. More to the point, I've learned the hard way putting all our eggs in one basket is a risk we can't afford. What if there's a sand storm? Or some rag-bunch of criminals sabotage it.

They pause like a deer in headlights, then cover.

SAUDI KING

We spread them around.

COMB-OVER COWBOY

With all due respect, what choice do you have? You and I both know your reserves won't get you through winter. Mr. President, you're out of options.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Which is a topic, I assure you, we will return to.

VP CHRISTOPHER

Sir.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Out of curiosity, how sizable of an investment were you looking for?

COMB-OVER COWBOY

We figure with 50,000 men, we can cover 100,000 acres by end of year for, roughly, 3 trillion.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Trillion, let me see I have this. You want 50 billion for the fuel cells, 3 trillion for a solar farm you haven't broken ground on, and the exclusive right to charge Americans \$100 a gallon.

The king nudges the Comb-Over Cowboy.

COMB-OVER COWBOY

Oh, and there's one more thing.

PRESIDENT CARVER

More?

SAUDI KING
We want your Hawaii.

PRESIDENT CARVER
The state?

COMB-OVER COWBOY
The King here wants the Big Island,
and he wants to give the rest of
'em to his boys.

A spoiled Saudi Prince admires his Rolex.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Would you excuse me?

The President pulls Ben aside.

PRESIDENT CARVER
They are out of their minds if they
think--Ben, no kidding, you guys
have to figure something out.
Whatever it takes, we're running
out of time.

BENJAMIN
Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Next thing I know he'll want me to
throw in Epcot for his 800
grandkids.

BENJAMIN
Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr.
President.

The President shakes his hand, Ben marches out on a mission.

The President returns, flabbergasted.

PRESIDENT CARVER
I don't even know where to start.

INT. PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM - GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

John comforts Paige, holds her hand when--

Sarah, Maddy, Scotty burst in bearing gifts, hugs, and cake.

MADISON
Paigey wagey! Happy Birthday!

SCOTTY
Yo, yo, yo. Sup, sis.

SARAH
How's my birthday girl?!

Paige lights up, still muted by her breathing respirator.

Maddy hands Paige her first gift: Abby's painting.

SARAH
Abby wasn't feeling well, but she made you this.

MADISON
She totally blew chunks.

SARAH
Maddy.

MADISON
What? She did.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BAXTER HOUSE - NIGHT

Abby slumbers on the sofa. Her eyes pop open. At the sound of a KNOCK. She investigates. Opens the--

EXT. FRONT DOOR - BAXTER HOUSE - NIGHT

Abby peeks her head out.

The Homeless Family emerges from the shadows. Mom and Daughter in filthy Nationals jackets. Dad and Son in dirty Nationals ball caps. Shivering in the autumn night.

HOMELESS MOM
Hi, honey, sorry to bother you. We were wonderin' if ya all might have anything extra?

ABIGAIL
Sure! We got lots.

Abby motions to come in quick.

HOMELESS MOM
Maybe we should go 'round back.

ABIGAIL
Kay.

BACK DOOR

Abby slides up on her socks, carries snacks piled high.

HOMELESS MOM
This is too much.

ABIGAIL
We got more.

HOMELESS MOM
You're an angel.

The Homeless Family shares, inhales their food.

HOMELESS MOM
Are your parents home?

ABIGAIL
My sissy Lizzy.

HOMELESS MOM
Oh.

INT. PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM - GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

ALL - EXCEPT PAIGE
... to you.

SARAH
Maddy, you want to help blow out
the candles?

MADISON
Yeah!

Ben sneaks in unnoticed.

SCOTTY
Can I help?

Sarah nods "sure". Together, they take a big breath and--
the ROOM GOES DARK. Candle flames burn in the darkness.

Ben steps back from the wall, and light switch, flips it on.

BENJAMIN
Sorry, must've brushed up against
it.

The kids laugh and blow out the candles.

Ben steps over to Paige, kisses her forehead.

BENJAMIN
Happy Birthday, babygirl.

Sarah steals his arm.

SARAH
Nice to see you actually made it.
Kids, will you excuse us? Your
father and I need to talk.

She pulls him out into the--

HALLWAY

BENJAMIN
Any word on the transplant list?

SARAH
She's closer, 3-4 months. We're
you able to get off work?

BENJAMIN
Not exactly, it's time I show you
something.

Ben leads her down the hall, and down the--

STAIRS

BENJAMIN
Babe, we're going to be working
around the clock, so I need you to
start doing something for me. For
Paige, until we find a donor.

SARAH
What's going on? Ben, you're
scaring me.

BASEMENT

They maneuver past noisy machines.

BENJAMIN
You know those cans I've been
saving up? The red ones, out in
the shed.

SARAH
Yeah.

The Maintenance Worker dumps diesel into the generator.

BENJAMIN
Honey, this is Jose.

EXT./INT. BLACK TOWN CAR - DOWNTOWN D.C. - DRIVING - NIGHT

The car cruises through dead stop lights.

Ben rides in back, opens his Netbook, "LOW BATTERY."

He scans ahead at the city buses pulling up to, and hundreds of engineers streaming into--

EXT. ENTRANCE - NASA HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Jimmy opens the door for Pamela.

INT. R&D LAB - NASA HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Hustle and bustle. Engineers huddle around dozens of multi-touch screens, workstations.

Mary works through a glass glovebox, a little label promotes radiation awareness.

The NASA Admin dictates to an ENGINEER what to draw on a huge multi-touch white board.

NASA ADMIN
Ground Transportation. Basic
electric. Let's break this out
into home and business, cars and
trucks by weight class.

Jimmy and Pamela stroll in.

JIMMY
If we can get a bounce on thermo,
add that to a full spectrum ...

Ben rolls in, surveys his surroundings, the technology whizzes all around. He marches toward a large roll printer, tears off a massive sheet.

NASA ADMIN
We need average consumption
targets.

BENJAMIN
We need to write this down.

Ben hands him a marker.

NASA ADMIN

Yeah.

Ben rips off a strip of duct tape. They turn off the multi-touch white board, cover it up with the big sheet of paper.

BENJAMIN

Everyone, over here. We need to put things on paper now.

NASA ADMIN

Whatever research you need, print it out, and turn it off. I'll give you two hours. After that, all power-on's will require approval. I need a search party to go around and turn off every unnecessary device in the building sucking juice off our genny.

(to BENJAMIN)

Thanks.

BENJAMIN

No problem.

Ben catches up with Jimmy and Pamela.

JIMMY

What'd the President have to say?

BENJAMIN

(handing out notes)

Help. Here's the directions.

They glance over them.

JIMMY

How far is this?

BENJAMIN

Not far.

JIMMY

That's easy for you to say.

BENJAMIN

We can use a couple of the kid's rooms to rest. We should rotate 12-hour shifts.

JIMMY

I'll tell Mary.

BENJAMIN
 Okay, so we'll load up what we can,
 haul it over there?

PAMELA
 Sounds good.

BENJAMIN
 I don't know about you, but I could
 use some coffee.

Pam nods over at the unplugging search party forming.

PAMELA
 We better find it before they do.

Ben leads the way, opens the door.

INT. HALLWAY - GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A NURSE opens the door into--

PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM

And disappears, and reappears, into trails of fading VISITORS
 around Paige. Sunshine rolls in and out, leaves fall.

EXT. BACKYARD - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

And fall, until bare branches wear white sweaters.

INT. SHED - BACKYARD - DAY

Gas cans disappear, the stockpile shrinks to nearly nothing.

EXT. ROOFS - BACKYARD - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

SUPERTITLE: "THREE MONTHS LATER"

Snow blankets solar panels, freezes mini wind turbines.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Plundered pumps, a looted convenience store.

EXT. BIG BOX STORE - DAY

Plastic-bag tumbleweeds. Deserted lots.

INT. BIG BOX STORE - DAY

Litter, desolate aisles. A cat races after a rat snack.

EXT. REAGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Empty tarmacs, graffiti decorates pillaged planes.

INT. REAGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Dilapidated check-in counters, lifeless terminals.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL - DAY

Snow-capped tents, CAMPERS huddle over oil-barrel bonfires.

EXT. ARLINGTON, VA - DAY

Etched in granite, an inscription inspires:

"Uncommon Valor was a Common Virtue"

Bronze heroes plant freedom into the earth at the USMC IWO JIMA MEMORIAL. Fresh snow graces their helmets. As dawn thaws, their flag pierces the sky.

EXT. BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Snow stuffs sidewalks, overflows the drive. A worn-out American flag, starts to flutter to life.

INT./EXT. SHED - BACKYARD - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Maddy clutches the last two gas cans, hauls them out, trudges through deep snow, back up to the house.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Silence. Experiments everywhere. Counters covered with every imaginable bottle of household spray and chemical, opened, mixed in juice glasses. Everything electronic disassembled, and re-assembled in strange combinations.

PAIGE'S ROOM

Jimmy and Mary rest on a pair of cots. Stacks of notebooks. Big sheets of paper taped to the walls, covered in equations.

GARAGE

Both cars torn apart, connected to tech gear.

Pam tinkers with a solar panel on a large workspace.

Ben's forehead rests on piles of paper. His beard overgrown. Plump books and stale coffee cups strewn about. A calendar with X'd out days, today circled in red, hangs over his head.

Abby pokes him.

ABIGAIL

Mommy says it's time.

Maddy stumbles in. Heaves the gas cans into a ragged cardboard box, strapped to the back of a bike.

MADISON

Hey, dad.

Abby shakes his shoulder. Nothing.

ABIGAIL

Think he's dead.

Abby opens his eyelids, squints for signs of life. Maddy checks his pulse, measures time on her Hello Kitty watch.

ABIGAIL

Definitely dead.

MADISON

Hey, dad, we're leav--

Ben FALLS out of his chair, collapses to the ground.

Abby and Maddy share an eyes-wide-open moment, until--

Ben springs to life, tickles them. They laugh like crazy.

MADISON

We're leavin'.

BENJAMIN

Alright.

He crosses out today on a calendar titled: "DAYS OF GAS."

LIVING ROOM

The fireplace sputters, dies. Sarah laments out at the sterile sky. Wrapped in a blanket, she clings to her Bible and a picture of Paige. Her face long worn with tears.

Resilient Maddy pops in.

MADISON
Ready. Mom? Mom.

SARAH
What?

MADISON
Ready.

SARAH
Last two?

MADISON
Yep.

SARAH
Okay.

EXT. BACK DOOR - DAY

Abby passes cans of soup to her NEIGHBORS, they scurry away. She carefully closes the door, tiptoes back to the--

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sarah strolls in yawning.

SARAH
Scotty.

SCOTTY
What?

SARAH
I know exactly how much is left.

SCOTTY
It's not me.

SARAH
Uh-huh.

Abby looks away, fakes it.

ABIGAIL

Uh-huh.

SARAH

(to SCOTTY)

I'm watching you.

(calling out)

Madison, let's go!

GARAGE

A ready Maddy straps on her bicycle helmet, rolls her eyes.

Ben heaves up the garage door for them. And returns to his Audi, leans in under the hood, brushes off the fuel cell.

Pam monitors voltmeter output, on their improvised prototype laid out on the work table. Solar panel leads feed into a bucket of water, a tube vents out to a compressor, run on a car battery, feeding a hydrogen storage tank.

BENJAMIN

So it's a complete system. Solar to water, split it, compress it, and run it through the cell, charge the battery. But this always comes back to the source. What happens when the sun doesn't shine?

PAMELA

Or we get six inches of snow.

BENJAMIN

Yeah. Not to mention, is all this too much for Joe down the street?

(to MADISON)

Where's your mother?

Maddy shrugs.

LIVING ROOM

Ben searches for Sarah. Finds her Bible, and a framed photo of Paige, before the accident. Worries over her.

Sarah steps in, arms crossed.

SARAH

Is it ready?

Ben sets Paige's photo back down.

BENJAMIN
It's not that simple.

SARAH
Are you close?

BENJAMIN
I think if we can set up our system, attach the solar panels to the *inside* of her windows, and wire it directly to the ventilator--

SARAH
What happens at night?

BENJAMIN
There's some hydrogen storage, but--

SARAH
Some?

BENJAMIN
A few hours.

SARAH
That's it?

BENJAMIN
Babe, I'm trying. We all are. I can't just wave a magic wand.

SARAH
Well, you better wave something, because this is it.

Ben loses it, hurls her BIBLE across the room.

BENJAMIN
I'M NOT MOSES!! I can't pull water from a rock, babe. Science doesn't work that way. It doesn't. Science is observation. Science is research. Breakthroughs can take years, decades even.

SARAH
We don't have decades.

BENJAMIN
No kidding.

SARAH
What about Penicillin?

BENJAMIN

What about it? Fleming was sloppy,
so what.

SARAH

So he saved millions. There's
Rayon, Teflon, X-Rays, Gamma-Rays,
the microwave, even Viagra--

BENJAMIN

An engineer was working on radar,
walked past his machine, pulled a
candy bar out of his pocket.

SARAH

A *melted* candy bar.

BENJAMIN

By accident, it's ancient history.

SARAH

The microwave changed history, for
millions of moms like me. Where
you see accidents, I see
serendipity. My point is,
sometimes, when you're looking so
hard for something in one
direction, you might miss God,
waving His arms right behind you,
trying to get to you see, what
you've been looking for all along.

BENJAMIN

Now that would be a sight to see, I
mean--

SARAH

Benjamin. Do I need to drop a
piece of fruit on your head? Look
for the accidents.

Ben smirks at her naivety.

BENJAMIN

Yeah. Hey, how did you know those--

SARAH

Science serendipities? Paige used
to go on and on about 'em. After
you told her.

BENJAMIN

She did, huh?

SARAH

All the time. You know I believe
in you. We all do.

BENJAMIN

Okay.

Sarah retrieves her Bible, kisses him goodbye.

EXT. STREET - DAY

PEDESTRIANS travel on streets like they were sidewalks.
Bikes, horses, sled dogs. Forgotten stop lights.

Sarah and Maddy cruise along on bikes. The cardboard box on
the back of Sarah's. Both bundled up for winter.

MADISON

Race ya.

SARAH

Mommy doesn't feel like racing
today.

Maddy does anyway, circles back around.

MADISON

Hey, mom.

SARAH

What?

MADISON

If we ever like take a real
vacation, I wanna go somewhere hot.

SARAH

At this point, sweetie, I'd settle
for hot water. But all that
matters to me, is your sister
getting her transplant, while it's
still even possible.

INT. BATHROOM - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

The shower head drips. Homeless Daughter shivers, combs her
wet hair. Abby peeks in, motions "come quick."

CHANEL'S ROOM

Liz nurses Chanel.

ELIZABETH

Abby?

HALLWAY

Abby races down the steps with her new friend into the--

KITCHEN

The rest of the Homeless Family feasts, inhales the last of the food. Cabinets ransacked, fridge gapes open, emptied.

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

Abby?

ABIGAIL

What?

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

What are you doing?

Homeless Mom browns some hash in a skillet.

ABIGAIL

Nothing.

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

It doesn't sound like nothing.

GARAGE

Ben, Jimmy, Mary, and Pamela work on their prototype.

PAMELA

Any benefits from storing hydrogen, we're losing by the energy needed to compress it.

BENJAMIN

Yeah. You're right.

JIMMY

Something smells good.

BENJAMIN

(suspicious)

Yeah. You're right.

KITCHEN

Abby motions the homeless family over to the back door when--

Ben, Jimmy, Mary, and Pamela burst in.

Homeless Dad freezes, his Son stops chewing. Mom drops the skillet on the counter, sticks her hands up.

BENJAMIN

Abigail.

ABIGAIL

Hi, daddy.

BENJAMIN

Don't daddy me, what's going on?

ABIGAIL

Nothing.

BENJAMIN

Is that your final answer?

(to HOMELESS FAMILY)

Stay right there.

Ben searches the cabinets.

BENJAMIN

Abby, what have you done?

Ben stares wide-eyed into the abyss of the empty fridge.

ABIGAIL

I helped the people. Member the man?

Homeless Dad scratches his head, adjusts his ball cap.

BENJAMIN

Abby, you can't just go--

(to HOMELESS MOM)

You can put your hands down.

HOMELESS DAD

Should we leave?

BENJAMIN

Yes, no, I don't know. Abby.

ABIGAIL

Member the man? Member that one time?

BENJAMIN
George, right?

They shake hands.

HOMELESS DAD
Sorry about this.

BENJAMIN
Yeah. Well, don't worry about it.
It's just--I thought we had enough
to last us, but now.
(to SCOTTY)
Did you know about this?

SCOTTY
I just knew about the Hendersons
from across the street.

BENJAMIN
Abby, how many people have you been
helping?

ABIGAIL
I dunno. It was an *accident*.

BENJAMIN
It was no--

Ben fixes his sights on the SKILLET, the penny drops.

JIMMY
Ben?

BENJAMIN
Can I see that? It's okay.

Homeless Mom hands him the skillet.

BENJAMIN
Anybody know the serendipitous
story behind PTFE? Better known as
Teflon, for non-stick pans.

JIMMY
That was Plunkett, over at DuPont.

Ben hands her back the skillet, heads for the fridge. He
starts tearing the fridge apart.

BENJAMIN
Ladies, I need all the screwdrivers
you can find. And a crowbar.

Pam and Mary race out. Homeless Mom follows.

HOMELESS MOM

Need help?

PAMELA

Sure.

Back in the kitchen.

BENJAMIN

Kids, can you clear some of this off? Guys, give me a hand.

Jimmy and Homeless Dad help Ben pull the fridge out.

BENJAMIN

Before Plunkett found PTFE by accident, he was looking for a safer refrigerant.

They flip the fridge around.

The ladies return, pass out the tools. They all start unscrewing screws, handing them to the kids to hold.

BENJAMIN

Have you ever wondered how refrigeration works? It's really remarkable. It keeps things cool, yet you never have to refill the refrigerant.

Ben pries off the back to reveal the series of coils.

BENJAMIN

The system recycles itself. As it compresses and condenses, the system sucks heat out in a continual loop. See here, for the freezer, more coils means more cooling.

JIMMY

And this helps us how?

BENJAMIN

I have an idea.

Ben marches out, they follow him into the--

GARAGE

They stand around their prototype, the car, fuel cell.

BENJAMIN

This is so simple. How did I miss it? We all know a fuel cell takes in hydrogen and oxygen to create electricity. But what are the two things, that come out?

JIMMY

Heat.

MARY

And water.

BENJAMIN

And what is water made of?

PAMELA

Hydrogen and oxygen.

BENJAMIN

So we recycle.

JIMMY

What?

BENJAMIN

Everything. We cut the fuel cell in half, run one side in reverse. Jimmy, find every thermoelectric panel you can, see if we can mold them into an outer shell.

HOMELESS DAD

I was a fabricator at GM, before they shut down.

BENJAMIN

I knew there was a reason I liked you, George. Okay, we'll go from heat, to electric, to hydrogen, run it through, reverse it, and do it all over again. A closed loop.

PAMELA

A regenerative fuel cell.

BENJAMIN

How's that for recycling?

JIMMY

I hate to be that guy, but--

MARY

Here we go.

JIMMY

This is nice for you, but where are we supposed to find enough fuel cells, for the rest of us?

Ben grins.

BENJAMIN

According to someone with the worst comb-over you've ever seen, we've already got 'em.

JIMMY

Really.

BENJAMIN

Really. Let's get to work.

PAMELA

Man, when the President hears about this.

BENJAMIN

This, isn't anything yet.

PAMELA

I know. Just saying.

BENJAMIN

I hope when the time comes, we can still reach him.

Ben glances at all their lifeless Netbooks.

INT. SITUATION ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Everyone huddles around a single 7" screen, on their last working Netbook, "BATTERY 9%". The President SQUINTS to see--

INT. E-3 SENTRY - ARABIAN GULF - 30,000 FEET - DAY

The COMMANDER on video conference.

COMMANDER

You have to see this.

PRESIDENT CARVER (ON VIDEO)
I'd like to.

COMMANDER
Yes, sir. Feeding video now.

EXT. E-3 SENTRY - ARABIAN GULF - 30,000 FEET - DAY

A wide-angle camera mount adjusts to see 30,000 feet below.

The INDIAN and CHINESE NAVIES converge on Saudi Arabia.

Two F-22s, and two RQ-4A Global Hawk UAVs flank the E-3. A KC-135 Stratotanker lines up to refuel the E-3 mid-air.

INT. SITUATION ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

PRESIDENT CARVER
They'll burn through more fuel on invasion than whatever they might recover. At best, they'll only buy a few months.

JCS MARINES
A few months may be all we need.

PRESIDENT CARVER
This country cannot afford another war, General.

JCS MARINES
I'm not advocating invasion. We have more convincing measures in our arsenal. Mr. President, if we fail to act, in a few months, there may not be much of a country left.

EXT. STREET - WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

A DAD hacks a wooden bus bench with an axe for firewood. A MOM recoils at rancid milk, their BOYS sift through garbage.

A MAN chases another MAN with a handgun, SHOOTS, wounds him.

He falls, his bag spills out fresh bread and AA batteries.

EXT. GW HOSPITAL - ENTRANCE - DAY

The snowstorm blows. Sarah and Maddy park their bikes.

SARAH
Just like last time.

They slog through the--

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - GW HOSPITAL - DAY

A packed, chaotic place as PEOPLE seek warmth and shelter.
NURSES tend to frostbit feet, noses.

Sarah clings to her ragged box. Maddy clutches Sarah's coat.
They squeeze through the chaos.

The GUNSHOT VICTIM is carried in by the Mom and Dad
bystanders. Their Boys follow, still in shock.

The CHIEF RESIDENT rushes over, a NURSE helps lift onto a
gurney. They rip open his shirt, nothing, flip him over.
Blood floods from wounds. He listens for internal injuries.

CHIEF RESIDENT
Low breath sounds, drop a tube, and
grab an x-scan for a chest.

NURSE #1
It's out.

CHIEF RESIDENT
Then help me put pressure on these
wounds!

They race him into the--

OPERATING ROOM

NURSES attend with warp speed.

NURSE #1
BP's 77 palp. Falling.

CHIEF RESIDENT
Type and cross him for ten, gas 'em
and bag 'em.

NURSE #2
With what?

The Chief Resident fumes.

All major equipment without power.

BASEMENT

Sarah unloads the last two gas cans out of the cardboard box.

MAINTENANCE WORKER

This is the rest?

SARAH

Yes. How long?

MAINTENANCE WORKER

(beat)

Another hour, maybe two.

Maddy watches Sarah worry.

HALLWAY - FIRST FLOOR

The heart-wrenching sound of a mother WAILING. A HOSPITAL ADMIN, 40's, steps out of the room, plummets back against the wall, her heart breaks, her hand shakes, as she pumps a cigarette into her mouth, fails to light it. Lighter empty.

The wailing resumes inside--

ROOM 117

As a DOCTOR powers off life support, JEFFREY, 15, dies. The WAILING MOTHER weeps, clings to the lifeless body of her son. The boy's DAD drops to his knees, sobs by his bedside.

ROOM 118

A NURSE covers a PATIENT with a sheet.

ROOM 119

A PRIEST prays with another FAMILY.

HALLWAY

The Hospital Admin recovers, treads toward--

ROOM 120 - PAIGE'S ROOM

Paige's ventilator pumps, the power light flickers.

John reads to Paige, as Sarah and Maddy stumble in.

SARAH
How is she?

JOHN
Worried.

As the other Mother WAILS from room 117, terror fills Paige's EYES. Sarah and Maddy comfort her.

The ventilator plods slower, the machine's power light flutters, Paige takes heavier breaths.

The Hospital Admin KNOCKS, enters.

HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATOR
It's time.

Paige and Sarah face fear.

HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATOR
Are you ready?

A group of NURSES file in, with grim faces.

From behind her back, the Admin pulls out: a bag valve mask.

HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATOR
I'll show you how to use it. When the machine quits, we'll all help pump as long as we can. Okay.

The Hospital Admin removes the machine's respirator.

Paige struggles to breathe. The Admin quickly attaches the BVM. Pumps it steady, by hand.

Sarah reaches to take over, and practices.

HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATOR
There you go. You're gettin' the hang of it.
(beat)
How do you tell a parent, we can no longer keep your son's heart pumping, all because we can't keep the lights on?

Paige's eyes plead with Sarah for a real solution.

SARAH
Maddy, find your father. And reinforcements.

Maddy nods, races out.

EMERGENCY ROOM

Maddy zips past the Chief Resident, through the ER chaos.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Maddy bolts down the street on her bike, pedals through snow.

EXT. VILLA - THE WORLD ISLANDS - DUBAI - DAY

Pi and Natalia soak up sunshine, sip fruity drinks on their villa's beach-front. MASSEUSES rub their shoulders.

NATALIA

When's the dentist arriving?

PI

Whenever.

They watch warships cruise past in the distance.

EXT. SAUDI ARABIA - DAY

SUPERTITLE: PORT OF RAS TANURA, SAUDI ARABIA

The Indian Navy arrives first, in full force. FIRING.

The SAUDI NAVY speeds out, defends oil supertankers.

SIRENS blare along the coast, the SAUDI ARABIAN ARMY establishes a perimeter. LOCALS flee for cover.

EXT. RAS TANURA OIL COMPLEX - DAY

SECURITY sprints to their positions. ALARMS scream.

A laser-guided missile SLAMS into the command center.

Missile after missile STRIKES with surgical precision.

EXT. RAS TANURA - 20,000 FEET - DAY

The ROYAL SAUDI AIR FORCE swoops in, FIRES on Indian MiGs.

The Indian jets ENGAGE with everything they've got.

Below: INDIAN TROOPS breach the complex gates, the shore.

Over the horizon, the Chinese Navy closes in.

EXT. BACKYARD - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Mary and Homeless Mom hop on Fly Jumper Jumping Stilts, brushing and scraping snow off solar panels.

GARAGE

An empty car-engine compartment awaits its cargo.

Ben assembles the fuel cell back together, one half reversed.

Pamela monitors voltage on a house POWER INVERTER BOX.

PAMELA
(calling out)
Ready!

A orange extension cord extends from the inverter box to the--

KITCHEN

To a single power strip, powering the oven.

Homeless Dad constructs a wooden box.

Liz fills a milk jug with water, a plastic tube connects out.

Netbooks in pieces. The kids help Jimmy unscrew gadgets. He pulls the last thermoelectric panel out of a flat-screen TV.

Hands it to Homeless Dad, who puts it in the box, secures it.

They stick it in the oven.

HOMELESS DAD
15 at 350 should do the trick.

JIMMY
I sure hope this works.

EXT. BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Maddy's bike surges the curb, she sprints inside.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Maddy bursts in.

MADISON
Dad!!

EXT. NATIONAL MALL - DAY

CAMPERS fight over the last burning oil-barrel bonfires.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

POLICE push back CROWDS. They breach the barriers, scale the White House gates. Police fire SHOTS.

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - DAY

The President flinches. A sat-phone to his ear, he grimaces.

VP CHRISTOPHER
Did you get an answer?

PRESIDENT CARVER
They called our bluff.

JCS MARINES
Then we have to go all in.

INT. KITCHEN - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Ben charges inside.

BENJAMIN
Where are we?

HOMELESS DAD
Half-way there.

They pull it out of the oven, unplug, plug in a shop-vac.

BENJAMIN
Maddy, take Abby.

Maddy and Abby dash out.

BENJAMIN
Liz, we need you there too.

ELIZABETH
Okay, here.

She hands him the milk-jug of water, Ben races back to the--

GARAGE

He feeds wires into the jug, connects the tube to the cell.

KITCHEN

Homeless Dad vacuum forms the thermopanel with the shop-vac. They pull the box apart, take the finished shell to the--

GARAGE

And secure it into the car's empty engine compartment. The team heaves their creation inside it. Connect wires.

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - DAY

Abby and Maddy stand at their NEIGHBOR'S doorway. A group of already recruited NEIGHBORS behind them, on their bicycles.

NEIGHBOR #1

Let me grab my coat.

EXT. DRIVEWAY/GARAGE - BAXTER HOUSE - DAY

Mary and Homeless Mom drop their shovels, the AUDI BACKS OUT. They hop in, the car takes off, the rest follow on bikes.

INT. STUDY - 2ND FLOOR RESIDENCE - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

The First Lady slams a TOP SECRET folder on the table.

FIRST LADY

This is you, right now, choosing what is right, right now.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Right now, I don't have the luxury of choices.

FIRST LADY

Even choosing to do nothing, is choosing something.

PRESIDENT CARVER

Not when you're president.

He plants his feet, grabs his Netbook, marches out.

INT. AUDI TT COUPE HYBRID - DRIVING - SUNSET

The digital dash trip computer climbs, "MILES REMAINING: 200... 250... 325... 375..."

JIMMY

Ben look.

PAMELA

It's really working.

Ben slams on the breaks, the numbers race higher.

BENJAMIN

I forgot the inverter box.

MARY

I'll get it. I'll meet you there.

MARY jumps out, takes off.

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDORS - THE WHITE HOUSE - DUSK

State and Andy hustle past candles to catch VP Christopher.

ANDY

He's made up his mind.

STATE

On what?

VP CHRISTOPHER

On this.

STATE

He can't.

ANDY

He has.

They stride into --

SECURITY ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

State and the VP pass, Andy is held at bay by MARINES.

VP CHRISTOPHER

He *is*.

A MARINE opens a double-door for the two to burst into--

THE SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

STATE

Mr. President!

INT. GARAGE - DUSK

Mary shoves the power inverter box in a backpack, spots a--

EXT. STREET - DUSK

Pair of Fly Jumper Jumping Stilts, Mary races down the road.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT

Darkness consumes the city.

EXT. GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Hopeless MASSES peer into extinguished oil barrels when--

The car headlights pierce the night, they skid around to the--

INT./EXT. AUDI TT - REAR ENTRANCE - GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

BENJAMIN

His name is Jose.

Ben bolts out, Liz follows him with Chanel.

Pam bursts out carrying the orange extension cord.

INT. PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM - GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The ventilator machine off, a NURSE pumps the bag valve mask.

ROOM 117

The Wailing Mother who lost her son, gazes at him, considers.

WAILING MOTHER

Okay.

Sarah embraces her as only a desperate mother can.

SARAH

(weeping)

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

PAIGE'S RECOVERY ROOM

Ben explodes through the door, races to Paige's side.

BENJAMIN
Hold on, babygirl.

Sarah dashes in, followed by the Chief Resident, and Liz.

CHIEF RESIDENT
Let's go, let's go.

Sarah and Ben embrace. NURSES wheel Paige out, down the--

HALLWAY

Ben clears a path for BOTH gurneys, Chief Resident pumps Paige's BVM. Both mothers by their child's sides.

BASEMENT

Pam runs the extension cord. Jimmy rips open a switch panel for the: "OPERATING ROOM." Lit by lanterns.

OPERATING ROOM

They rush Paige and Jeffrey inside. Room ready, for power.

BENJAMIN
She'll be here.

EXT. ENTRANCE - GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Mary leaps over a dead oil-barrel bonfire, lands. Into a FIST to her FACE. She topples back.

A MAN eyes her BACKPACK. Wrestles it off her. She struggles, tries to unlatch her Jumper Stilts, when--

The gang of NEIGHBORS on bicycles surround them. The man pulls a GUN. Mary KICKS it away. He wilts at their numbers.

They help Mary to her feet. Clear a path through the--

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Maddy leads, Mary pulls the power inverter out of her pack.

OPERATING ROOM

MARY
I've got it.

BENJAMIN
They're downstairs.

Ben snatches it, races out. A NURSE checks on Mary.

EMERGENCY ROOM

Ben steers through the chaos. Darts outside.

EXT./INT. REAR ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Ben rushes in, feels his way through the darkness.

INT. SITUATION ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

JCS MARINES
It's wrong, it's reprehensible, but
it's our only hope.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Listen, India has nukes too.

EXT. GW HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Abby sits on her bike with her neighbors. In pitch black.

NEIGHBOR #1
If they fix it, how will anybody
know?

NEIGHBOR #2
I don't know, but after that ride,
I need a smoke.

Neighbor #2 flicks his lighter, and again, and--

LIGHT FLOODS THROUGH THE HOSPITAL, room after room.

His jaw drops, his cigarette falls out his mouth.

INT. BEDROOM - 2ND FLOOR RESIDENCE - THE WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

Candles light the First Lady, on her knees, praying when--

A breeze snuffs the candles out, and awakes her. She turns
to see Zee Zee at the open door pointing--

ZEE ZEE
Ma'am!

The First Lady rises from her knees, gapes out the window.
 She springs into action, grabs her Netbook, out of battery,
 tosses it aside. She snatches up the house phone, no tone.

FIRST LADY

Follow me.

The First Lady zips out with Zee Zee.

EXT. B-2 SPIRIT BOMBERS - 30,000 FEET - DAY

Bomb-bay doors open on the bellies of three B-2 bombers over
 China, India, and Saudi Arabia.

INT. COCKPITS - B-2 SPIRIT BOMBERS - 30,000 FEET - DAY

The PILOTS monitor their fuel gauges on "EMPTY." And a video
 conference with the White House Sit Room.

PILOTS

On your order, sir.

INT. BASEMENT CORRIDORS - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

The First Lady hurries down the candle-lit hall, for the--

SECURITY ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

And MARINES stop her.

MARINE #1

I'm sorry, ma'am, you're not
 cleared for this area.

FIRST LADY

I have to speak to my husband!

SITUATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The President and the Joint Chiefs surround the Netbook.

JCS ARMY

Mr. President.

The Netbook's power drops to: "BATTERY 1%"

JCS MARINES

Sir!

FIRST LADY (O.S.)
Cassius.

The President turns to her muffled voice.

JCS MARINES
Mr. President, we're going to lose
them! Mr. President!

SECURITY ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

FIRST LADY
Cassius, wait!
(to MARINE #1)
You have to let me in there!

MARINE #1
I can't do th--

The doors blow open, the President storms through.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Let her through.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT

The hospital's beacon of light cuts through the darkness, of
an otherwise powerless city. Everyone stands in awe.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Find out how they did it.

VP CHRISTOPHER
Yes, sir.

VP Christopher rushes off with staff.

FIRST LADY
I told you to have a little faith.

PRESIDENT CARVER
Guess I just needed to see the
light.

Andy rolls his eyes.

FIRST LADY
You know nobody else likes your
jokes, right?

PRESIDENT CARVER
As long as I still make you smile.

She does.

PRESIDENT CARVER
 Although, after tonight, I imagine
 history will remember something
 other than my sense of humor.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NATIONALS STADIUM - DAY

Semi-trucks BEEP, backing in. Forklifts unload in mass.

A river of PEOPLE flood into--

EXT. NATIONALS STADIUM - DAY

The President directs the Joint Chiefs.

PRESIDENT CARVER
 Start in the North and the East,
 then make your way west and south.
 Wrigley Field, Yankee Stadium,
 here's the list.

JCS MARINES
 Yes, sir.

JCS ARMY
 Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CARVER
 Don't thank me, thank them.

Ben and his team instruct a sea of VOLUNTEERS, modifying the
 pallets of cells into regenerative fuel cells.

The President's staff rolls up their sleeves, helps hand them
 out to the massive line of PEOPLE, explains instructions.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - GEORGETOWN - DAY

SUPERTITLE: "THREE MONTHS LATER"

Spring sprouts to life.

Groups of MEN huddle around popped hoods in every driveway.
 A finished Chevy slides onto the street, roars down the road.

EXT. RAS TANURA - SAUDI ARABIA - DAY

The massive oil infrastructure lies in ruins.

The Indian Navy escorts the last supertanker away.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

An American flag rises proudly atop the White House.

INT. OVAL OFFICE - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

The Saudi Ambassador, King, and Princes sit with the President.

SAUDI KING

How much?

PRESIDENT CARVER

(beat)

I hope you've been saving up.

The Saudi King whispers into the Ambassador's ear.

SAUDI AMBASSADOR

There is something more we can offer you.

EXT. PRESTON HOLLOW, TEXAS - DAY

A sterile McMansion broods alone in an affluent neighborhood.

INT. FOYER - MCMANSION - DAY

The Comb-Over Cowboy quietly peers out dreary windows, at neighborhood KIDS playing tag across the street.

The kids look around, and then at him in surprise as--

A storm of FBI, ATF, and SWAT swarm over his lawn.

EXT. E-3 SENTRY - ARABIAN GULF - 30,000 FEET - DAY

A RQ-4A Global Hawk UAV breaks formation from the E-3.

EXT. VILLA - THE WORLD ISLANDS - DUBAI - DAY

Pi and Natalia look up, and see a MISSILE.

PI

Son of a--

INT. PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - THE WHITE HOUSE - DAY

SCOTTY

Mother?

SARAH

Shhh...

Ben's family shine smiles from the front row.

Ben and his team beam with pride at the podium.

VP CHRISTOPHER

We are happy to present you each with the first, of which I'm sure will be many, royalty checks on your invention. On behalf of the President, and a grateful--well, all of us, thank you.

Andy hands out checks. Shutters fire off in burst mode.

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN

Questions?

The room of REPORTERS shoot their hands up.

ALL REPORTERS

Felicity!!

PRESS SECRETARY FRANKLIN

Campbell.

CAMPBELL BROWN

You've just earned millions of dollars, and set the world free from fossil fuels, what are you going to do next?

Ben looks to his family. The kids consider, and answer--

MADISON/ABIGAIL/SCOTTY

Road trip!!

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - DAY

A minivan cruises down the coast.

INT./EXT. MINIVAN - DRIVING - MAGIC HOUR

The whole family wears Mickey Mouse ears.

MADISON
Hey, mom, how much longer?

SARAH
Much, much longer.

MADISON
Really?

BENJAMIN
No, not really. We're coming up on
Bixby Bridge.

Paige snaps a photo. Maddy and Abby look out at the drop.

ABIGAIL/MADISON
Whooooaa.

SARAH
How are we doin' on gas?

BENJAMIN
Gas?

SARAH
Sorry, water?

Ben looks out at the ocean, grins.

BENJAMIN
I think we're good for a while.

MADISON
Remember when we like always had to
take stay-cations?

SARAH
I'm so glad I don't have to hear
about that anymore.

BENJAMIN
I've got one. Remember when the
news lead every evening with ...
(mocking impression)
"Gas prices, were up today"

SARAH
Haha, yeah. What do ya think all
those royal princes will do now?

BENJAMIN
Maybe they'll have to get jobs like
the rest of us.

ELIZABETH
 Seriously, it's so hot back here I
 think I'm gonna die.

MADISON
 Hey, dad, will cars ever fly?

Ben's curiosity peeks through.

SARAH
 Benjamin.

BENJAMIN
 What?

SCOTTY
 I know what.

SARAH
 Don't get any bright ideas.

BENJAMIN
 You know...

SARAH
 Here we go.

PAIGE
 (to JOHN)
 Welcome to the family.

ELIZABETH
 Please, somebody, put the top down.

Ben obliges, touches the touch-screen dash to: "OPEN ROOF"

As the minivan's roof slides back, the view drifts back too.

A rear bumper sticker boasts: "Powered by H2O". The vast
 open ocean hugs the PCH.

MADISON
 I wanna see Mickey.

SCOTTY
 I'm hungry.

ABIGAIL
 I gotta go potty.

SCOTTY
 Abby tooted.

ELIZABETH
I gotta get outta here.

MADISON
Hey, mom?

ABIGAIL
Did not.

SCOTTY
Did too.

ABIGAIL
Hey, mom?

SARAH
What?!

MADISON/ABIGAIL/SCOTTY
Are we there yet?!!

The family sails down the open road. Together, at last.

FADE OUT.

TITLE CARD:

"The prospect of a peak in oil production presents problems of global proportion whose consequences will depend critically on our preparedness."

"Ultimately, however, the consequences of a peak and permanent decline in oil production could be even more prolonged and severe than those of past oil shocks. Because the decline would be neither temporary nor reversible."

"According to the DOE, there is no formal strategy for coordinating and prioritizing federal efforts dealing with peak oil issues."

-- US GAO Report