

H.G. WELLS' WAR OF THE WORLDS

Adapted by

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EXT - MARS - DAY

The plain beneath the towering mountain is covered in red weed, blowing gently in the breeze. Machines labor to haul an enormous gunmetal cylinder into a cavern in the mountain. The cylinder is pushed into a giant tube, and great cloth-covered bundles are inserted behind it. Finally, a massive door is closed. From the other side of the mountain, the huge gun barrel is elevated.

INT - OGILVY'S OBSERVATORY (1896) - NIGHT

OGILVY is peering into the telescope, while SMITH, his assistant, waits nearby. Both men are dressed warmly. In the telescope, he sees Mars centered in the lens. Suddenly a tremendous jet of smoke erupts from the planet.

OGILVY

My God. There it is again.
Look at this.

Ogilvy relinquishes the telescope to Smith. Ogilvy consults his notes. He begins sketching the eruption.

OGILVY

What time is it?

Smith finds his watch.

SMITH

Seventeen minutes past nine.

OGILVY

Perfect. We're really onto something. Mark my words, the whole world will know of this discovery.

EXT - BRITISH GUNBOAT, ODA RIVER, ASHANTILAND(1896) - DAY

The gunboat is in the middle of narrow bend in the river. It is not moving. From the shore and in canoes, Ashanti warriors fire muskets, old single-shot rifles, and throw spears at the metal gunboat. Riflemen hide behind the gunnels on the boat rising only to fire a quick shot. It is clear that if the boat doesn't move or drive back the Ashantis, it will be overwhelmed. The CAPTAIN and LIEUTENANT are at the wheel, while GEORGE ASHBROOKE crouches nearby. (George is 32. He is a writer, specializing in romantic and heroic tales of military adventure. He is passionate about the extension of the British Empire, viewing it as the ultimate triumph of civilization over savagery)

CAPTAIN

Can't go fore or back. We'll have to kedge off.

LIEUTENANT

Do it, man. We're surrounded.

CAPTAIN

I can't send out a boat with the kaffirs around.

LIEUTENANT

Sergeant. Sergeant Bourne.

A brawny man with sergeant's stripes approaches.

SERGEANT

Sir.

LIEUTENANT

Take two men and bring up one of the Maxims.

SERGEANT

Yes, sir. Watkins, Dooly, follow me.

The sergeant goes below decks with the two men. George follows. They open a large trunk containing a Maxim, tripod and water condenser. Each man takes a section. George is in the way.

SERGEANT

You, carry this.

The sergeant gives George one of the belts of ammunition. The only clear firing point is the top of the wheelhouse and the sergeant leads the group there. They are very exposed. As they kneel to set up the gun, Dooly, is killed by a gunshot. When the sergeant begins to fire, the sound drowns out all else. George watches as swaths are cut through the people on the river bank. People tumble into the river while others run. The water around the canoes erupts into small geysers as the Maxim fires. Riflemen join in. The Maxim fires until the belt runs out. The riflemen stop firing. George looks around. There are no more Ashantis standing. Steam rises from the Maxim's water jacket and condenser.

GEORGE

(voice over)

I'd never seen anything like
it.

INT - GEORGE'S PARLOR - NIGHT

Ogilvy, Smith, COLONEL JONES, CLAIRE and HERBERT listen to George tell his tale. (Claire, 28, is George's wife. She is supportive of George, but doesn't understand his desire to risk himself so much. Herbert, 48, is George's older brother. Herbert is much more introspective than George, preferring his medical practice in London to travelling) Claire has a cold and catches periodically through the evening.

GEORGE

It was incredible. They fell
like wheat before a scythe.

SMITH

Then what?

GEORGE

Once we got the boat off the
sandbar, there wasn't much of
a campaign left. We'd arrive
in a village, and if they re-
sisted, we'd give them a whiff

of the Maxim, and that would settle them right down. It was really quite anticlimactic. We quelled an area the size of Kent with fifty men and two Maxim guns.

SMITH

Sounds terribly dangerous. Not really. Besides the river, it was a great waste of six months. I'd be better off if I'd stayed home.

CLAIRE

I'll agree with that.

GEORGE

She worries too much.

CLAIRE

I do not.

JONES

I was in Ashantiland in seventy-six, you know.

OGILVY

Were you now?

JONES

Yes. And I can tell you I wish it had been anticlimactic. Back then we only had Martinis. If they got close enough, they'd rush you. All you could do then is fall back by ranks and hope they didn't get behind you. I tell you, George, if you're ever down there again, save the last bullet for yourself.

CLAIRE

Oh, Reggie. How can you say that?

JONES

A trooper of mine was slow to withdraw with the rest of us. He took a spear in the leg. The Ashanti got to him before we could. They hacked the poor man to pieces.

HERBERT

A wounded man?

GEORGE

Bloody savages.

JONES

Better do it yourself than let those blaggards have at you.

CLAIRE

I can't believe I'm listening to this.

HERBERT

Charles, why don't you tell George of your news?

OGILVY

You haven't heard? It's really quite fantastic. A few months ago, well, November, actually, we had a few very clear nights.

JONES

I suppose that is fantastic.

CLAIRE

Reggie.

OGILVY

Smith and I decided to try out a new telescope. It was a marvelous opportunity to make

more detailed drawings of the
canals on Mars. I was in the
middle of my work when I saw
this.

Ogilvy produces his sketch and hands it to George.

OGILVY

I nearly fell off my stool.

GEORGE

It looks like a giant gunshot.

JONES

A gunshot? Really.

OGILVY

Then what is it?

JONES

Possibly a volcano.

OGILVY

It happened at ten seventeen,
then nine-seventeen, then
eight-seventeen. I had no
idea
Martian volcanos were so pre-
dictable.

JONES

A geyser. They're predict-
able.

OGILVY

Once every twenty-three hours
for a few days and then noth-
ing? It's a giant gunshot.

JONES

Who built your giant gun?

OGILVY

Martians.

JONES

Men on Mars? I think not.
It's preposterous.

OGILVY
We'll know soon enough.

JONES
And how are we to know that?

OGILVY
I calculated the time necessary to reach Earth.

JONES
And?

OGILVY
The shots should arrive in a window which started last week, and runs through the end of the month.

JONES
I wouldn't bet on it.

OGILVY
I will. Ten pounds, Colonel?

JONES
For you, Ogilvy, I'll make it twenty.

Claire sneezes.

JONES
Bless you.

OGILVY
Gesundheit.

CLAIRE
It's terrible. You two are worrying about giant guns on Mars when you ought to give thought to something modest, like curing a cold. That

would get everyone's attention, Charles.

OGILVY

Give science enough time, and we'll do it.

JONES

That I'll believe when I see it.

HERBERT

No, Charles is correct. A sufficiently advanced society will cure disease. All disease. It might not occur within our lifetimes, but it will happen.

JONES

Oh why worry about a cold? You get them, you get over them. Try solving malaria or yellow fever. They killed more of my men than wounds, but the wogs seemed just dandy.

HERBERT

It's all a matter of immunity. Take chicken pox, for example. Once one has contracted it, one can never get it again. In a population without natural immunity, like your men, even minor diseases can be devastating.

JONES

I'll say. In Africa, sometimes, I've had more men on sick parade than on duty.

HERBERT

Of course, it works the same way on the natives. European

illnesses have wiped out whole populations in the New World.

JONES

Perhaps it's God's way of keeping the wogs in check.

CLAIRE

I don't want to listen to any more of this.

Jones sees that he has upset his hostess. He quickly finishes his drink.

JONES

It's late. I should go. Good to have you back, my boy. Goodnight, Herbert, Claire, gentlemen.

GEORGE

I'll walk you out.

Jones and George leave. Ogilvy looks victorious.

INT - FOYER - NIGHT

Jones is gathering his coat.

JONES

Apologize to Claire for me. It was Ogilvy's goat I was trying to get, but I seem to have shot hers by mistake.

GEORGE

I'm sure she'll understand.

JONES

I simply can't listen to the man. He's never been out of England, but he speaks as though he's seen more with his bloody damn telescope than I have with my own two eyes.

GEORGE

Remind him of that when you take his money at the end of the month.

JONES

I will. Goodnight, George.

INT - GEORGE'S PARLOR - NIGHT

OGILVY

...So I'd say Venus is another landing point.

George returns

GEORGE

What's this now?

OGILVY

We'd seen traces of similar gas plumes three months before we spotted the source. That could only mean Venus.

GEORGE

Venus? I'm beginning to agree with the Colonel.

Ogilvy begins to arrange glassware into a solar system.

OGILVY

All you must know is the velocity needed to escape Mars' gravity, the distance between the planets, and their orbital velocity. Nine months ago, the planets were here, and we saw the first sign.

CLAIRE

The traces of a plume.

Ogilvy moves his planets.

OGILVY

Yes. Six months ago they were here, and we saw the plume it-

self. Mathematically, there are only two places that would be reached at the same time if the firing points were only three months apart. Earth and Venus.

GEORGE

Oh, this makes no sense. The planets aren't even close to Mars. They're across the galaxy.

OGILVY

Solar system. Because the projectile's velocity is only slightly greater than the speed of the planets, it's necessary to shoot toward the place they'll be when the shell arrives, not where they are when you fire.

SMITH

It's like leading game birds. You shoot at them, you'll miss. You shoot ahead of them, and you'll bring them down.

OGILVY

You'll have to take his word for that; I don't hunt. However, he's essentially correct.

CLAIRE

Why would they be shooting at us?

OGILVY

It's not shooting like one of George's Maxim guns. They're coming for contact. Communication. Whatever it is, I'm

certain they'll have much to teach us.

GEORGE

What could Martians possibly teach us?

OGILVY

They can travel between planets, something we haven't even dreamed of doing. They must be incredibly advanced.

GEORGE

Even if they can fling themselves at other planets, it hardly means they are more advanced. The Chinese had gunpowder hundreds of years before we did, and they still don't know what it's for.

OGILVY

George, you sound ridiculous.

GEORGE

All right. I agree they must be highly advanced, but look at England. We've got steam engines, electricity, battleships, factories. Just as important, we have the moral rectitude to use that power wisely.

HERBERT

That depends on your point of view.

GEORGE

Not this again. We give civilized values to the lesser peoples.

HERBERT

At the point of a bayonet?

GEORGE

For God's sake, Herbert. We don't enslave them. Why won't you admit England is the greatest nation in the world?

HERBERT

One of them, perhaps, but not because we're advanced or because we're English.

OGILVY

I'd say writing those books is taking a toll on poor George.

GEORGE

What's wrong with my books?

OGILVY

A bit jingoistic, wouldn't you say?

GEORGE

From a Gladstone man, I'll take it as a compliment. It's people like you who kept us from us from saving Gordon. Your Liberal Party cost that man...

CLAIRE

Not politics, please.

Herbert consults his watch as if on cue from Claire.

HERBERT

George, I must leave soon if I'm going to make my train.

GEORGE

Of course. I'm sorry. I'll bring 'round the carriage. If you'll excuse me.

George exits.

OGILVY

Thank you for inviting us.
Smith and I can see ourselves
out. Good night.

SMITH

Good night.

Smith and Ogilvy leave.

CLAIRE

Thank you. They were getting
out of hand.

HERBERT

George does love the Empire,
doesn't he?

CLAIRE

Is that what Charles meant
when he said George's books
were jingoistic?

HERBERT

In a manner of speaking. It
really means an excessive
pride in one's nation. In
George's case, it means throw-
ing soldiers to the far
reaches of the globe.

EXT - ROAD - NIGHT

George, Herbert and Claire are riding in a buggy. There
are scattered thunderclouds in the sky, occasionally block-
ing out the nearly full moon.

CLAIRE

I thought Reggie would never
leave.

HERBERT

He had a little too much to
drink.

GEORGE

And he hates leaving the enemy
in possession of the field.

CLAIRE

He always has too much to
drink. I don't see why you
let him bully Charles like
that.

GEORGE

He's not a bad sort. Ogilvy's
a bit pretentious, and Reggie
wants to be the only peacock.
He has written several very
glowing letters of introduc-
tion for me. It wouldn't
hurt you to be nice to him,
you know.

CLAIRE

Can I blame him next time you
run off to God-knows-where?

GEORGE

If you want.

CLAIRE

George, please. You've been
away more than you've been
home. I got so lonely I went
to London and disrupted your
brother's practice. It isn't
fair.

HERBERT

I thought it was my charming
company.

CLAIRE

I'm sorry, Herbert.

HERBERT

Not to worry. George will be
home long enough to write

"Campaign in Ashantiland," or whatever he'll title it.

GEORGE

I don't believe there's enough for a book. I may have to find something else, I'm afraid.

CLAIRE

You're not going away again so soon?

GEORGE

It's what I do. You knew that when we married.

CLAIRE

It's not as exciting as it used to be.

GEORGE

It can't be helped. I'm sorry.

CLAIRE

I hate you, George Ashbrooke.

EXT - LEATHERHEAD TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

George sees off Herbert. Claire waits in the buggy.

GEORGE

I'm glad you took the time to come down.

HERBERT

It's only forty minutes by train.

Herbert enters his compartment.

HERBERT

Maybe it's none of my business, but you might spend more time with Claire.

GEORGE

Marriage advice from a bachelor?

HERBERT

Seriously, George, she loves you and misses you a great deal. It might not hurt you to miss a campaign or two.

GEORGE

We'll see.

The train whistle blows.

GEORGE

Goodbye, Herbert. Have a safe journey.

George watches the train pull away. As he walks back to the buggy, a green shooting star streaks overhead. He does not see it.

INT - GEORGE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - MORNING

George is dressing hastily. Claire enters still in her robe.

CLAIRE

Where are you going?

George leads Claire into the study.

INT - STUDY - MORNING

George and Claire enter. George sweeps back the curtains, revealing the common in the distance. The common is surrounded by low rolling hills, and the house is not quite high enough to look over them. Several wisps of smoke rise from the common. Claire is still sick.

CLAIRE

What's going on? Is there a fire?

GEORGE

I don't know. I thought I'd have a look.

CLAIRE

Aren't you going to eat first?

GEORGE

No time. It might be over before I arrive.

CLAIRE

Back two days and already I lose you to the least bit of excitement. At least be careful.

GEORGE

It's only the common, not Africa.

George leaves.

EXT - HORSELL COMMON - DAY

George crests a small hill and sees the cause of the fires. In the common is the huge cylinder. A great amount of earth has been thrown up around the cylinder, forming a large crater. Small patches of bushes around the crater still smolder. The end of the cylinder itself protrudes above the walls of the crater with an unknown amount buried. Smith and Ogilvy are looking at the cylinder amid a small gathering of people. George approaches them.

GEORGE

Charles. What is this?

OGILVY

It's my Martian projectile. What do you think now?

GEORGE

I think Reggie Jones isn't going to like this. Can we get closer to it?

SMITH

I'm not sure we should.

OGILVY

Why not? It's not going to bite.

George begins climbing to the top of the crater with Ogilvy. Smith reluctantly follows. Smith picks up a stout stick as a weapon. The three men stand on the rim of the crater looking down into the pit.

OGILVY

What's that for?

SMITH

I thought we might need it.

George climbs into the pit followed by Ogilvy and Smith. They walk around it.

GEORGE

It's enormous.

OGILVY

It doesn't look damaged.

George touches it briefly, testing the temperature.

GEORGE

It's warm, but not hot.

Smith touches it and then places his ear to it.

SMITH

I don't hear anything. If it's occupied, shouldn't I hear something?

OGILVY

Give me the stick.

Ogilvy starts tapping on the cylinder with the stick, hitting it progressively harder. The cylinder rings hollowly.

OGILVY

Can you hear me in there?
Hello. It's hollow, but no
one is inside. Is there a
door?

SMITH

I haven't see one. It could
be buried.

OGILVY

We shall have to dig it up.

They climb to the rim of the crater. A larger crowd has
gathered.

OGILVY

Telegraph Stent at the Royal
Observatory and let him know
what I've found. Then tele-
graph the Times of London and
ask them to send a reporter.
Contact some local workmen,
and we can start digging.

Two boys begin to climb the side of the crater.

OGILVY

You there. Get down. Yes,
you.
This isn't a school yard.

SMITH

Should I send for the consta-
ble as well?

OGILVY

I have a better thought.
George, could I ask a favor of
you?

INT - COLONEL JONES'S OFFICE - DAY

Jones is sitting behind his desk while George sits oppo-
site.

JONES

So the Martian expert wants the help of the professional, now does he?

GEORGE

He would like you to send a few men to keep the spectators away.

JONES

Has his Martian contraption actually done anything?

GEORGE

It's only a large cylinder, like the back half of a fired shell. Ogilvy doesn't believe there is even anyone in it.

JONES

I see. So I am being asked to send my lads to watch a bunch of civilians dig up a bloody Martian dud, is that it? I'm sorry, I'm not sending anyone.

GEORGE

I understand.

George gets up to leave.

JONES

It's not your fault, my boy. You simply were asked to come here because Ogilvy has no spine for it himself. You will have him let me know if he finds a man from Mars, won't you?

EXT - HORSELL COMMON - LATE AFTERNOON

George walks onto the common. There is a very large crowd gathered to watch the excavation. Vendors have brought

small carts with snacks and fruit. The atmosphere is almost festive. STENT stands on top of the cylinder giving directions to the workmen. Smith and Ogilvy stand on the edge of the crater as George makes his way through the crowd. Ogilvy sees George.

OGILVY

Where are my soldiers?

GEORGE

They're not coming.

Ogilvy comes down to meet George.

OGILVY

Doesn't that fool understand what I'm dealing with? Look at this rabble.

GEORGE

I understood you thought the cylinder wasn't dangerous.

OGILVY

I have no concern the cylinder might be dangerous, but I do have a concern the cylinder might be harmed by this lot.

GEORGE

That monstrosity? I don't think they could harm it if they tried.

ON TOP THE CYLINDER:

There are a series of sharp metallic noises from the top of the cylinder.

STENT

(to workmen)

Stop. Stop what you're doing.
Quiet.

There is no sound. Stent knocks on the cylinder.

STENT

Hello in there. We're trying
to get you out.

There is a loud clank, and the top of the cylinder begins to slowly turn. Stent loses his balance and falls on top of the cylinder. He crawls for the ladder.

ON THE COMMON:

Workmen flow over the top of the crater and join the front ranks of the crowds. The crowd is focused on the cylinder. Smith and Ogilvy seem surprised. They watch the ladder fall away, trapping Stent on top.

GEORGE

Jump.

Stent does not. The top completely unscrews, falling into the crater with Stent still on top. A few moments later the first Martian appears briefly. It is as large as a bear, with leathery skin, two dull eyes, and a thin lipless mouth. In place of limbs, it has two bundles of eight tentacles. At the sight of the Martian, the crowd panics and runs for the edge of the common. Smith, Ogilvy, and George resist for a moment and then withdraw with the crowd. George sees a small girl fall to the ground. She is in danger of being trampled. He runs to her, picks her up, and carries her to the edge of the common. Smith and Ogilvy have fled to the other side of the common from George. Stent appears climbing out of the crater. He is suddenly jerked back. A moment later comes a scream.

SMITH

Good God. Did you see that?

OGILVY

We'd better make contact.

George has finished handing the small girl off to her mother when he turns around and sees Ogilvy and Smith crossing towards the pit. George starts down the rise to join them.

Ogilvy pulls part of a banner from one of the abandoned fruit carts and wraps it around a stick.

SMITH

What happens if the Martians don't know what a white flag means?

OGILVY

The fact it means anything is enough. Because we use symbols, they will understand that we are intelligent and rational. It's merely a matter of communication.

SMITH

I would feel much better if they knew what it meant.

They have reached the base of the crater. Ogilvy is waving the flag.

OGILVY

Stent. Can you hear me? Are you hurt?

From the cylinder itself, a pole rises with a box-like device mounted on top of it. It turns and points at Ogilvy.

OGILVY

We don't wish to harm you.

Ogilvy bursts into flames, followed by Smith as the device tracks over him.

WITH GEORGE:

George watches in horror. The device changes elevation and sweeps the common. Those not fortunate to be behind something, or above the elevation of the ray, burst into flames. George watches the heat ray sweep toward him, igniting trees, carts, grass, and people in its path. It sweeps past George, burning the grass a few feet down slope from him. The survivors flee. The heat ray stops, and the

device disappears back into the cylinder. George staggers away with the survivors.

INT - GEORGE'S STUDY - NIGHT

Claire is pacing in the study. Fires are still burning in the common. She hears the front door, and a moment later George enters. He's sweaty and disheveled.

CLAIRE

Oh, my. George, what happened?

GEORGE

The Martian shell in the common. It killed Ogilvy and Smith.

CLAIRE

Oh, no.

GEORGE

I telegraphed Colonel Jones. He's on his way.

CLAIRE

Are the Martians coming?

GEORGE

No. Ogilvy said...

EXT - HILL NEAR THE COMMON - NIGHT

George, Jones, and his AIDE, are looking at the smoldering common. Flashes of light and noise come from the pit.

GEORGE

...the Earth's gravity is too great. The Martians are trapped in the pit.

JONES

Good. What about their weapon?

GEORGE

I have no idea how they do it. They seem to focus heat in a tight ray and project it. I'd never seen anything like it. It was incredible.

JONES

That settles it. Place the cavalry out of sight, and telegraph Captain Elliot. Have him send me his horse artillery.

AIDE

Yes, sir.

The aide hurries away. Jones and George retreat from their observation point.

JONES

There's not much more for you to do here, George. You might as well go home and get some sleep. I'll send for you before we get started.

GEORGE

What of the Martians? Aren't you going to finish them tonight?

JONES

Heavens no. Tomorrow's when the big show will happen. The cavalry is just my reserve. If the buggers in the pit are silly enough to get out, I'll run them down. If not, by evening, I'll have blasted them back to Mars.

George leaves. A green shooting star streaks overhead.

INT - GEORGE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

George sits on the edge of the bed still dressed. He looks tired and anguished.

CLAIRE

It must have been terrible to see them die.

George does not respond.

CLAIRE

You couldn't have done anything.

GEORGE

I know. He was a brave man, and I accused him of terrible things last night.

CLAIRE

I'm sure he'd forgive you. Tomorrow they'll be killed, and that will end it.

George still does not seem comforted.

CLAIRE

There's no need to be here tomorrow. Why don't we visit Herbert. It'll take your mind off today.

GEORGE

No. I want to see them die. I want to see them in terrible agony. See if their blood is red.

CLAIRE

George, that's barbaric.

GEORGE

What they did on the common was barbaric.

CLAIRE

You're not. You're a decent man.

GEORGE

I'm too angry to be decent.

CLAIRE

You will be. I know you.

INT - GEORGE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

George and Claire are wakened by a rumble and shouting voices.

EXT - ROAD BORDERING GEORGE'S HOUSE - MORNING

The artillery has arrived. In the road, one of the gun carriages is stuck in a ditch. Several GUNNERS, an ARTILLERY OFFICER on horseback, and gunner ATKINS, try to figure what to do. (Atkins, 25, though only a private, fancies himself as much more. Appearances and plans replace action for Atkins.)

Several other gun teams are stuck behind this one.

GUNNER 1

(to officer)

I told him to watch it.

(to gunner 2)

You got too bloody close, didn't ya?

GUNNER 2

It ain't my fault. Atkins here's supposed to be the driver.

ARTILLERY OFFICER

Look here, unhitch the gun, pull the limber back on the road, hitch the horses directly to the (continuing) gun, and pull it out of the ditch. Do it quick! You're holding up the column.

The officer rides back to the rear of his column.

GUNNER 1
You heard him.

The crew begins their work. Atkins notices George and Claire at their window, still dressed in their bed clothes.

ATKINS
Morning, ma'am.

Claire covers herself and steps back.

GUNNER 1
Let's go, Atkins. Man thinks
he's a bloody Lothario.

INT - GEORGE'S STUDY - LATE MORNING

George is unable to work. He is anxious.

INT - FOYER - LATE MORNING

Claire finds George putting on his jacket. Claire is still sick.

CLAIRE
You're not going yet, are you?

GEORGE
I can't stand to wait any
longer.

CLAIRE
Can I stop you?

GEORGE
No.

CLAIRE
Then be careful, please.

George gives her a quick kiss and is out the door.

INT - CHURCH STEEPLE - DAY

George comes up the stairs of the steeple. Jones and his aide are there. The entire common is visible, but the pit is too far away to actually see down into it. There are three large metal dishes set up in the pit.

JONES

Oh, George. Good afternoon.

GEORGE

I decided not to wait for your man and came up. I didn't want to miss the show. Didn't come at a bad time, I hope?

JONES

Not at all. Take a look at the pit.

Jones motions for his aide to give George his binoculars. George looks at the pit. There are three large disks, equally spaced, in the pit, forming a squat three sided pyramid.

JONES

What do you make of that?

GEORGE

Are they building a shield?

JONES

If they are, I doubt it will do them much good.

GEORGE

Probably not. I saw the guns arriving this morning.

JONES

Only half. The rest went with Elliot, down to the other cylinder.

GEORGE

There's a second?

JONES

Arrived last night.

Jones begins to head down the stairs, followed by George and Jones's aide.

JONES

The second cylinder is part of the problem. Since I only have three batteries, not six, I'm bringing up more ammunition, and that won't be here until late in the afternoon.

They reach the bottom.

JONES

(to his aide)

Certainly easier going down than coming up.

GEORGE

You can still destroy them, I imagine.

JONES

Of course. It may take a little longer, but the outcome hasn't changed.

GEORGE

When will you start?

JONES

Just before dusk, I'd say.

AIDE

Assuming the ammunition arrives on time and the Martians don't get up and move.

GEORGE

Ogilvy said...

JONES

They can't get out. He also believed the cylinder empty. However, I sincerely hope poor Ogilvy was right. It's what I told the man from the Times.

AIDE

He understood it to be Ogilvy's opinion, sir.

JONES

I suppose it doesn't matter, then. Nevertheless, George, I'm considering an evacuation of dwellings around my guns, just in case.

INT - GEORGE'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Claire has finished packing. She has a suitcase and a small trunk, with her maiden name on it. George enters.

GEORGE

Good, Lord. You're only staying a day or two.

George picks up the baggage and heads out of the room followed by Claire.

EXT - FRONT OF GEORGE'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

George and Claire emerge, load the baggage into a buggy, and drive off down the road. Thunderstorms threaten overhead.

EXT - ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

George and Claire drive by the battery they saw in the morning. It is getting close to being set up. They pass Atkin's gun and continue down the road. Atkins and the two gunners are stacking ammunition for immediate use. Both gunners' tunics are slightly soiled from the work. Atkins is not wearing his tunic. The artillery officer approaches on horseback.

ARTILLERY OFFICER

(to Atkins)

You there, gunner. Why aren't you wearing your tunic?

Atkins puts down his shell and approaches the officer.

ATKINS

It's hot work, sir. Dirty too. I didn't think it looked right, wearing a dirty jacket in front of these civilians, and all.

The other two gunners stop work to listen to the exchange.

ARTILLERY OFFICER

It doesn't look right to be half out of uniform, either. Be a good lad, put it on.

(to the gunners)

I didn't tell you to stop working.

GUNNER 2

Nearly finished, sir.

ARTILLERY OFFICER

(to Atkins)

Can you ride?

ATKINS

Yes, sir.

The officer dismounts.

ARTILLERY OFFICER

Take my horse. Go to Colonel Jones, he's at the church, and tell him "B" battery is ready to fire on command, then hurry back.

Atkins mounts the horse.

ATKINS

Yes, sir.

ARTILLERY OFFICER
Now what are your instructions?

ATKINS
Go to Colonel Jones in the church, tell him B's ready on command and come back.

ARTILLERY OFFICER
Right, off you go.

Atkins rides off around the edge of the common. The officer walks toward the rest of the guns.

EXT - LEATHERHEAD RAILROAD STATION - DUSK

George is helping Claire onto the train. The train has not yet arrived.

CLAIRE
Come with me.

GEORGE
I can't.

CLAIRE
Then let me stay.

GEORGE
They're up to something. It's too dangerous.

CLAIRE
But Colonel Jones said it wouldn't matter.

GEORGE
Never mind.

There is the sound of thunder in the distance, mixed with it is the sound of distant gunfire.

GEORGE

Oh, hell. I think they've started. I've got to go. The train should be here soon.

CLAIRE

Please. I'm worried.

GEORGE

If anything happens, I'll be on the very next train, tomorrow's at the latest.

They hug.

GEORGE

I'll be alright.

CLAIRE

I love you.

GEORGE

I love you, too.

George drives the buggy toward the common, leaving Claire waiting on the platform. It begins to rain.

EXT - ROAD - NIGHT

George is in a fierce thunderstorm. Driving rain makes it difficult to see much, unless illuminated by lightening. The horse is difficult to control. In a brief flash. George sees something above the trees. He stops the horse. A moment later a much longer flash illuminates a Martian war machine crossing the road fifty yards away. The machine is three legged, with a disc top, and made of bright metal. The sound of its footfall suggests great weight. George is shocked. The thunder from the lightning bolt frightens the horse, and George loses control. The horse runs the buggy into a ditch and breaks the harness. The horse escapes into the night. George watches as other flashes illuminate the war machine until it disappears. George walks off in the direction of his horse.

EXT - COUNTRY - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

George stumbles across fields in the heavy rain.

EXT - HORSELL COMMON - NIGHT

The storm has broken. He can see many destroyed houses and burning buildings. Many of the trees are scorched or burnt. There are many bodies in the common. There is much evidence of the heat ray. The shields in the pit are gone, and it is silent. George walks slowly to the pit, passing the dead cavalry. He creeps to the top of the pit and peers down. The Martians are gone, but a strange red weed is growing all over the inside of the pit. George finds part of the workmen's scaffolding and manages to climb to the top of the cylinder. The cylinder appears empty, except for several lumps at the bottom. Clouds obscure the full moon and keep George from seeing what they are.

INT - MARTIAN CYLINDER - NIGHT

George climbs into the cylinder, using the Martian hand holds. The Martians have stripped every piece of interior out of the cylinder. Half way down he stops. One of the lumps looks like a man.

GEORGE

Stent? Stent, are you here?

George reaches the bottom. At this time the clouds part for the moon, and George sees the bodies. They are humanoid, but not human. All appear frail and long dead. All have large puncture wounds in the chest. As George examines one, a shadow falls over him. Clouds have hidden the moon. George climbs out.

EXT - HORSELL COMMON - NIGHT

George emerges from the pit and hurries toward his home.

EXT - MULBERRY HILL - NIGHT

George comes up the road to his house. It is unscathed. Surrounding houses aren't so lucky.

INT - GEORGE'S STUDY - NIGHT

George enters, immediately pours himself a drink, and gulps it. He repeats the act until he stops shaking. He looks out toward the common. Movement in his yard catches his eye. He hides for a moment, before drawing his revolver from his desk and going to the french doors.

GEORGE

Show yourself. I warn you,
I'm armed.

Hesitatingly, a man comes forward. It is Atkins. His uniform is dirty and wet. He has lost his helmet. He stumbles in and sits down.

GEORGE

Are you hurt? What's your
name?

George pours Atkins a drink. Atkins must be prodded to drink it.

GEORGE

What's your name? Name?

Atkins slowly comes around.

ATKINS

Atkins. Private Atkins, as-
sistant gunner.

GEORGE

What happened?

George pours Atkins another drink.

ATKINS

The Martians, they could walk.
They burned the guns. They
killed everyone.

GEORGE

How'd you escape?

ATKINS

I wasn't with them.

EXT - HORSELL COMMON - DUSK (FLASHBACK)

Atkins is circumnavigating the common. In the pit, one of the shields begins to move. It becomes level. Atkins turns his horse and begins to ride back toward his battery. A flare is fired from the steeple. All around the common, guns begin to fire. The shield stands and becomes a war machine. It steps from the pit and moves toward the church. It fires the heat ray at the church and burns it. Shells hit the tripod but do no damage. It begins to burn other buildings. Atkins has nearly reached his battery as it gets dark. He can see the battery through the trees. Suddenly, a heat ray is swept across it. Men burst into flame, ammunition and the limbers explode. Atkins is thrown from his horse. He runs from the burning woods and finds cover behind a loose stone wall. He watches as other tripods rise from the pit. A few guns still fire. The tripods step clear of the pit and begin across the common. From a stand of trees, three rockets fire above the tripods. They explode, becoming illumination flares. A line of cavalry charges from the woods. The tripods fire their heat rays and kill many of the cavalry. Some manage to get under the tripods and fire their carbines into the bottom of the war machines with no effect. Steel tentacles drop from the bottom of the machines and jerk men from their saddles and break them. The remaining cavalry scatter, chased by the heat ray, until each is dead. The tripods then continue their march, directly toward Atkins. He pulls stones and mortar from the wall and hides under it. The Martians stride across him and into the night.

INT. - GEORGE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The blackness of the study is broken as Atkins lights himself a cigarette.

ATKINS

I laid still until the storm
and the Martians were gone.

GEORGE

What about the others?

ATKINS

I didn't see nobody else. The Martians even burned horses what had no riders.

GEORGE

We can't hope to find anyone tonight.

ATKINS

We can't stay here. What if the Martians come back?

GEORGE

I don't think they will. The pit is empty, and I think I saw one heading north west.

ATKINS

You was in the pit?

George nods.

ATKINS

What's it like? Was there Martian kit?

GEORGE

Nothing.

Atkins seems more relieved.

ATKINS

Good. You don't mind?

Atkins pour himself another drink. George doesn't object.

GEORGE

You'd better get what sleep you can. We may have a long walk tomorrow.

ATKINS

Where?

GEORGE

North, to the railroad station
and London. I've got family
there.

ATKINS

I can't go there. The army
will think I deserted.

GEORGE

I'm sure you'll find them
along the way. I'll bring you
a blanket.

George exits. Atkins sets in the dark, looking out over
the common. The green shooting star does not interest him.

INT - HERBERT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Herbert and Claire enter the apartment, with Herbert loaded
down from all of Claire's luggage. Claire is getting bet-
ter.

CLAIRE

It's bad enough that he runs
all over the world looking for
danger, now he has to chase it
at home.

HERBERT

It isn't the danger, Claire,
and you know that.

CLAIRE

Well its danger that's fore-
most in my mind.

HERBERT

Even as a boy, George couldn't
stand not knowing something.
What was at the top of a tree,
over a hill, or what he was
getting for Christmas. I was
constantly saving him from his
curiosity.

CLAIRE

I wish you could save him now.

HERBERT

He's a grown man now, not a boy, Claire.

CLAIRE

At least this time I won't have to listen to any stories of him helping slaughter poor savages. It's not their fault we're superior to them. It's our burden to help them, not kill them.

HERBERT

Now you're being as jingoistic as George. Scientific advancement doesn't make one civilization superior to another.

CLAIRE

Are you saying there's no difference between the Zulus and the English?

HERBERT

That's not what I said. Why didn't you marry Col. Jones instead of George? Jones certainly had a bright future in the army.

CLAIRE

He was a brute! George is a decent man. George is the man I love.

HERBERT

Right, it's not money or goods; it's who the man is, what he believes in that matters.

CLAIRE

Exactly.

HERBERT

It's the same with cultures.
It isn't their wealth, or
weapons that elevate or lower
them, but their beliefs. Free-
dom, compassion, mercy, these
are the traits of a truly
great people.

CLAIRE

I don't think George would
like that.

HERBERT

Probably not.

INT - GEORGE'S STUDY - MORNING

Atkins is asleep. George enters carrying a rucksack and
leather shoulder pouch. He is dressed properly for hiking.
His sun helmet gives him a slight military look. George
wakes Atkins.

GEORGE

Come on. On your feet, At-
kins.

Atkins stirs, but does not get up.

GEORGE

Private, get up.

ATKINS

(groggily)

Yes, Sergeant.

George laughs. Atkins realizes where he is and gets up.

ATKINS

What's so funny?

GEORGE

You called me 'sergeant'.

ATKINS

Habit. I was asleep. 'Sides,
what am I supposed to call
you?

GEORGE

George. I've got a little
bread and cheese if you're
hungry.

George hands Atkins the food. Atkins smells it, then be-
gins to eat ravenously.

GEORGE

The bread's a bit stale.

ATKINS

Water.

Atkins speaks with his mouth full, and George doesn't un-
derstand. He finally gets his message across.

GEORGE

Oh, water. Here you go.

George hands Atkins a decanter of water and then searches
for a glass. Atkins finishes his food and drinks from the
decanter. George puts down the glass.

GEORGE

Ready?

ATKINS

If we're gonna walk, we're
gonna need more than your hel-
met.

George points to the rucksack.

GEORGE

Already packed.

ATKINS

What's in there?

GEORGE

The rest of the bread and
cheese, my Webley, and a can-
teen.

ATKINS

Only one canteen?

GEORGE

It's all I've got, but there's
also a bottle of port just in
case.

ATKINS

Right, then. I guess we're
off.

Atkins is about to leave through the french doors.

GEORGE

This way. And I thought you
might carry the pack.

Atkins doesn't look happy, but complies. George shoulders
his bag. They head for the front door.

EXT. - MAYBERRY HILL - MORNING

As they walk away from the house and down the hill, they
view the destruction of Mayberry Hill. Many house are gone,
just smoking ruins left where they stood. Some are only
damaged, partially burned or collapsed, and a few, like
George's house, are even intact. No one is visible.
George stops.

ATKINS

This way's north.

GEORGE

I thought we might look for
survivors.

ATKINS

What for? They can't help us.
Army Medical Corps will be
here sooner or later.

GEORGE

Do you think anyone survived
in the church?

ATKINS

Not a chance. First thing
they burned. Pretty tricky of
'em, killing off the command,
if you ask me.

George looks saddened.

GEORGE

It took men from Mars to bring
war to Mayberry Hill.

EXT. - ROAD - DAY

George and Atkins have been on the road for a short time.
The smoke rising from Mayberry Hill can be seen rising to
the sky behind Atkins and George. On the road are occa-
sional bundles dropped by fleeing citizens. Atkins stops.

ATKINS

Hold up a minute. Let's take
a rest.

GEORGE

We've only come two miles. We
can reach the train station in
half an hour.

ATKINS

I'm the one carrying the
bloody damn pack.

GEORGE

It's not that heavy. If you
can't carry that, how can you
march with full kit?

ATKINS

I can march if I have to, but I'm artillery. I ride with the gun. It wouldn't be so bad if they gave us quality boots. These things is bloody awful.

They stop. Atkins sits in the grass on the side of the road.

Atkins opens the pack and takes out water and food.

GEORGE

I marched three hundred miles in the Sudan with a pair like that.

ATKINS

Quartermaster must have given me the wrong size or something.

GEORGE

You might go easy on that.

ATKINS

Only another half hour, right? Then why worry?

GEORGE

Well, finish up, and let's get going.

Atkins finishes and gets up.

GEORGE

Here, I'll carry that for a while. Be careful with this.

George exchanges the pack for the shoulder bag. Atkins is surprised at the weight.

ATKINS

You really walk three hundred miles?

GEORGE

Yes. I was with Wolsey, on the Gordon relief column.

ATKINS

You was in the army?

GEORGE

Not exactly. I'm a writer, and sometime correspondent. I was just along to watch.

ATKINS

You lucky bastard. I'd give up my first born to go on campaign. What's it like?

GEORGE

A lot like this, only hotter. But when you got to where you're going, you have a fight.

ATKINS

Were they tough?

GEORGE

Not especially. The Sikhs were worse.

ATKINS

India, too?

GEORGE

Yes, but only once. I've been to Africa twice.

ATKINS

Twice! Crimeny. I'm in almost four years and can't get more than fifty miles from London.

GEORGE

What did you think when you joined? You didn't believe the posters, did you?

ATKINS

I just thought by now I would've seen something different. My pop grew up in the same Welsh town as his pop, and his pop before him. Worked the same trade. Never went no where. I thought I'm better than that. I'm going places. I'm joining the army.

GEORGE

Should have joined the navy.

ATKINS

Don't like boats. Could never keep my breakfast down. Don't look too good, an officer getting sick front of his men.

GEORGE

Fancy yourself an officer, do you?

EXT - ROAD - DAY

George and Atkins can see wisps of smoke over the trees.

ATKINS

I was the gun driver, number two in the team. Lieutenant Hamilton picked me as his messenger. That ought to mean I'm better than the others.

GEORGE

You seem to have a good head on your shoulders. I don't see why, in time, you wouldn't make...

They round a bend in the road and can see the train station. The station itself is gone, burned to the ground. A train stands on the tracks. The passenger cars are burned and the engine is partially melted. There are bodies of the passengers lying nearby. Several Hussars are inspecting the wreckage. George stops in mid sentence.

ATKINS

Looks like we're following the Martians.

George cannot speak. He drops to his knees.

ATKINS

What's wrong? George, what's wrong?

GEORGE

My wife was on that train.
God, no. No. No. No.

ATKINS

George. George. You sent your wife to London, didn't you?

George nods, but doesn't speak.

ATKINS

The locomotive's on the wrong end. George, that train was heading south. London's north.

GEORGE

South?

ATKINS

Look.

George looks and slowly realizes it's the wrong train. He is genuinely happy and relieved.

GEORGE

It was heading south.

George suddenly becomes more concerned.

GEORGE

What if the Martians followed the railroad all the way to London? They'd destroy every train on the track.

ATKINS

They couldn't catch a locomotive what's got a head of steam. Come on. Looks like there's cavalry in the station.

EXT. - TRAIN STATION - DAY

The dozen Hussars are looking over the wreckage. A few are dismounted and checking the bodies for signs of life. George and Atkins walk into the station.

HUSSAR 1

Ay, you there. What you think you're doing.

GEORGE

I was going to catch a train.

HUSSAR 1

Ain't no more trains here. None since last night.

The HUSSAR OFFICER notices the conversation and approaches on horseback.

OFFICER

Who are you men?

ATKINS

Private Atkins, 'B' battery, Surry Light Horse, sir.

OFFICER

Where's your battery?

ATKINS

The Martians destroyed it. I can't find no one else, sir.

OFFICER

And you?

GEORGE

George Ashbrooke. I live on Mayberry hill, near where the Martians landed. Can you tell me if the Martians have reached London yet?

OFFICER

They're no where near London. Still somewhere west of Weybridge, I suspect.

GEORGE

Thank God.

OFFICER

I think I've heard of you. You write books.

GEORGE

Yes.

OFFICER

Didn't have to go far for this one, did you? What are they like, the Martians?

GEORGE

They're great ugly beasts. They seem to have a lot of trouble with our gravity. But they've got walking machines and beams of incredible heat. You can see what they did to the station.

OFFICER

Machines that walk?

GEORGE

I only saw one briefly, but it must have been a hundred feet tall.

OFFICER

Ha! Ha! Ha! That's clever. No, what are they really like?

GEORGE

This is not a jest.

ATKINS

It's true, sir. I've seen them.

OFFICER

That's not possible.

GEORGE

Then how do you explain this?

George motions around to the destruction, including the melted engine.

OFFICER

It's not believable. I'll have to see them for myself.

A Hussar approaches on horseback.

HUSSAR 2

Can't find any survivors, sir.

OFFICER

Very well.

ATKINS

Sir, where am I to go?

OFFICER

General Colley is setting up defensive positions around Weybridge. It's a few miles

up the tracks. I'm sure they'll know what to do with you. You might travel there as well, Mr Ashbrooke. I think the trains are still running.

GEORGE

Thank you.

OFFICER

(to his troops)

Hussars, mount.

(to George and Atkins)

Good luck.

(to troops)

Single column, advance.

The Hussars begin down the road toward Mayberry Hill. George and Atkins begin walking along the road.

EXT - ROAD - DAY

The station is a short distance behind them.

ATKINS

How come that officer's heard of you?

GEORGE

He probably read one of my books.

ATKINS

How many'd you write.

GEORGE

Five.

ATKINS

How come I never heard of you?

GEORGE

I take it you don't read?

ATKINS

I read. I just don't *read*.

GEORGE

Whatever you do, hold on to that bag, or no one will be able to read about the Ashanti campaign.

ATKINS

What was that like?

EXT. - ROAD - DAY

Atkins and George top a small hill. From the top of the hill they can see Weybridge not far from them. Weybridge is divided into two by a river that flows through the town. A stone bridge can be clearly seen crossing the river. Near the bridge is a church with a tall steeple on the river's edge. The town is a hive of activity. The military is clearly digging in, and refugees are heading towards Weybridge, trying to carry far more baggage than is possible. From the southwest and south, there is a steady stream of people entering the town. The one bridge in the town is badly crowded as the refugees converge on it.

ATKINS

Looks like full house tonight.

George and Atkins start moving towards Weybridge again. Part of the way down the hill they come across gunners placing their guns. Powder and shells are being stacked as the ground is broken to accept the guns.

EXT. - WEYBRIDGE - DAY

The streets of Weybridge are full with the refugees. On the streets and corners, people are selling food and water to the refugees.

REFUGEE #1

Seven shillings for a gallon of water! That's robbery.

PROFITEER #1

You don't have to buy it.
There's plenty who will.

George watches as a man who is overloaded with valuables deals with another profiteer selling a wheelbarrow.

REFUGEE #2

All I've got is a pound six.

PROFITEER #2

All right, I'll take the pound
six and this here tea pot.

The man starts to protest as the profiteer snatches up the tea pot.

PROFITEER #2

If you want it, it's a pound
six and the tea pot. Period.

Refugee #2 nods and lets the man take the tea pot. Refugee #2 then starts loading his valuables into the wheelbarrow he just bought. George and Atkins move along until they reach the town square. The square is packed with refugees. Soldiers are here and there almost lost in the crowd. The bridge crossing the river is packed to the point where people are barely moving. Small boats ply the river taking passengers, for a price. On one side of the square, near the bridge, a VICAR has set up a box and is standing on it. Behind him are more than a dozen people on crutches or in chairs. None appear self mobile. He is trying to get people to help take the sick and crippled with them as they evacuate the town. He approaches a man with a cart of goods.

VICAR

Sir, you look like a good man.
Can you help take one of these
unfortunates across with you?
You can see they'd never make
it alone.

The man with the cart ignores him.

VICAR

Sir, please. Show your Christianity.

CART MAN

It's full.

VICAR

Leave some of the goods here. Surely a life is more important than...

CART MAN

It's full, I tell you. Leggo.

VICAR

Then a shilling. Help buy a passage.

The man ignores him and works his way into the crowd. The vicar returns to the group and tries to get them to sing a hymn. Few join in. He continues singing while holding a collection plate out to those in the crowd.

ATKINS

The tribal dances must go on.

GEORGE

Let's find the railroad station.

EXT - WEYBRIDGE RAILROAD STATION - DAY

Surprisingly, the station is nearly deserted. Only a few troops remain, loading boxes of equipment onto wagons. The troops ignore Atkins and George.

GEORGE

Excuse me. When's the next train to London?

SOLDIER

Is no train. You'll have to walk.

GEORGE

Do you know if the last train
from Woking made it or not?

SOLDIER

Go find an officer.

EXT. - WEYBRIDGE (COMMAND POST) - DAY

The streets surrounding the command post are closed by soldiers. George and Atkins approach.

GUARD

Sorry, sir. This area's
closed to civilians. You'll
have to go 'round.

GEORGE

I need to see a senior officer.

GUARD

For what purpose?

GEORGE

I put my wife on a train last
night. and I need to know if
it reached London.

GUARD

We can't do that. You'll have
to move on.

A young officer has noticed and approaches.

LIEUTENANT

What's going on? Haven't you
told him the street is closed?

GUARD

He wants to find out about a
train, sir.

GEORGE

Lieutenant, my name is George
Ashbrooke, and I'd like...

LIEUTENANT

Are you Ashbrooke the writer?

GEORGE

Yes.

LIEUTENANT

Here to write about the Mar-
tians, I bet. I'm Mills.
Parker Mills, Eighty-ninth
foot.

ATKINS

He reads.

GEORGE

Could you take us to see your
commanding officer?

INT. - COMMAND POST; HAWTHORNE-WAITE'S OFFICE - DAY

The command post has taken over the town hall and offices.
Atkins and George are shown into the office by the Lieuten-
ant

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Good afternoon, Mr Ashbrooke.
I'm Captain Martin Hawthorne-
Waite, General Colley's aide.
How can I help you?

(to Lieutenant)

Thank you, carry on.

The Lieutenant exits.

GEORGE

I'd like to know if all the
trains from Woking made it to
London.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

I see. Mills was under the impression you were here to write something.

GEORGE

I am, but my wife was on one of those trains.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

As far as I am aware, the only train we've lost arrived from London during the Martian attack. Since then, we've stopped all civilian traffic in the area.

GEORGE

Thank God.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Why aren't you with your unit, private?

ATKINS

Wiped out, sir. By the Martians.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Then why aren't you dead?

ATKINS

I was delivering a message. I couldn't get back before they was gone, sir.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

I can use another messenger. The sergeant outside will fix you up with new kit and find an assignment for you.

ATKINS

Sir.

Atkins exits.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Perhaps you'd like to join the
general and myself for lunch,
Mr. Ashbrooke?

EXT - TRAIN STATION, LONDON - DAY

Claire and Herbert are waiting on the platform. The train
has not yet arrived.

CLAIRE

What time is it?

HERBERT

Five minutes of noon.

CLAIRE

How can it be an hour late?

HERBERT

I'm sure it's something down
the line. Why don't we go
home? When George does ar-
rive, it's the first place
he'll go.

CLAIRE

Just five more minutes,
please.

INT - GENERAL COLLEY'S OFFICE - DAY

The office has been taken over from a local official. Maps
and a large table have been added hastily. Colley,
Hawthorne-Waite, and George are already there.

COLLEY

I'll have you know you cost me
a good officer, Mr. Ashbrooke.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Captain Williamson?

COLLEY

Yes, that was the fellow's name. Good man.

GEORGE

I'm sorry, but I never met the man. I don't see how.

COLLEY

Books, Mr Ashbrooke. The books you write. Chap got it in his head India would be more interesting than England.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

I'd wager he'd kick himself now, sir.

COLLEY

Yes, quite right that he should.

George is looking at the maps. There is a large topographical map showing the suspected landings of three cylinders. The path of destruction is toward London, and Weybridge stands between the Martians and the capital. A more detailed map shows the gun and infantry positions around Weybridge.

GEORGE

Is this your deployment?

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

(pointing on the map)

Yes. You see here are the gun batteries, and the supporting Maxims and infantry.

GEORGE

I'm not sure I understand it.

COLLEY

Look at where they landed. None is more than fifty miles from the capital. They seem

to be converging on the most recent site, and Weybridge is directly between the Martians and London. They intend to seize London and dictate their peace terms.

GEORGE

We're not even sure why they're here. What if you're wrong?

COLLEY

Then they won't do much harm mucking about in the countryside.

GEORGE

I don't think you understand.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

See here, Mr Ashbrooke. The general knows how to deploy the troops.

GEORGE

That's not what I mean. How are you certain of their intentions?

COLLEY

Because it's what I'd do.

GEORGE

But you're not a Martian.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

What inscrutable Martian secret are you privy to that we're not?

GEORGE

I simply feel that your defense might not be proof against the Martians.

COLLEY

Mr. Ashbrooke, I appreciate your concern, but the situation is in hand. Those symbols are my artillery. Six full batteries of twelve pounders, not those useless six pound horse guns Jones had. They're supported by two thousand infantry and nearly twenty Maxims. The river protects all but two batteries from direct assault, and all six batteries are situated to lend supportive fire. I could stop a continental army, so I'm quite certain we can despatch a few wogs from Mars, can't we, Martin?

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Of course, sir.

EXT. - TRAIN STATION, LONDON - DAY

Claire is standing at the window for tickets and information. Herbert is with her. There is a CLERK in the window.

CLERK

No, m'am, I don't why, but none of the trains from Mayberry Hill have arrived. I guess with all the excitement things are a little confused.

CLAIRE

None of the trains have arrived?

CLERK

I wouldn't be concerned, miss.

Herbert purchases a paper from a boy selling them on the platform. He scans it quickly. The headlines read "MEN FROM MARS LAND IN MAYBERRY!"

CLAIRE

Thank you.

HERBERT

Look at this.

Claire goes to Herbert and takes the paper from him.

HERBERT

This part here.

CLAIRE

(reading out loud)

'Col. Jones informed the TIMES that because of Earth's much heavier gravity, the men from Mars were unable to leave the pit in which the shell fell. Col. Jones expects that his artillery batteries will deal easily with the Martians.'
If that so, what's taking so long?

HERBERT

It's nothing. You know George; he's probably climbing through the debris and having a marvelous time. He'll telegraph soon.

CLAIRE

No, Herbert, something's happened. I know it.

INT - COLLEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Lunch has been served. George picks at his food. An orderly stands in the background.

COLLEY

Everything to your taste, I hope, Mr Ashbrooke.

GEORGE

Yes. Just preoccupied.

COLLEY

Perhaps a whiskey?

(to orderly)

Three glasses.

The orderly begins to pour. Outside, the church bell begins to ring.

COLLEY

Inconsiderate lot, aren't they?

The three men begin to exit.

EXT. - WEYBRIDGE - DAY

In the distance to the south, four Martian war machines can be seen moving towards the town. Occasionally from a spot in front of the Martians flame and smoke erupts.

ON THE BRIDGE:

People are pushing and shoving their way across the bridge. The Vicar is trying to protect the cart with two sick children.

VICAR

Help me, please. I must get them across.

Two soldiers try to clear the way for the cart.

SOLDIER 1

Make way. Make way.

EXT. - CHURCH STEEPLE, WEYBRIDGE - DAY

Marvin, Hawthorne-Waite, and George emerge at the top of the steeple. Marvin has a pair of binoculars with him. He starts to bring them to his eye, but the Martians are plainly visible to him without them.

MARVIN

My god!

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

They're damn fast.

Between the Martians and Weybridge, cannons begin opening fire, revealing their positions with fire and smoke.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Front line batteries are opening fire.

Shells begin exploding in the air around the Martians. Puffs of smoke hang like little clouds around the towering war machines. Some shells speed past the Martians to explode in the hillside beyond in great explosions. Suddenly several shells impact and explode on the lead Martian. The war machine staggers, but does not fall. The heat-ray on the lead Martian swings around towards the front lines.

EXT - GUN BATTERY SOUTH OF WEYBRIDGE - DAY

The gunners quickly reload and fire. The war machine is close. Gunners raise the elevation.

GUN AIMER

Too close. I can't get it high enough.

GUN CAPTAIN

Shoot for the legs.

As the war machine approaches, it begins playing the heat ray on other guns in the battery. The gun crew watches as other crews burst into flame, ready shells and limbers explode. The ray sweeps closer.

GUN CAPTAIN

Run!

The crew runs. The gun is hit by the heat ray. Shells explode, knocking the gun captain to the ground. He gets up and begins to run. The heat ray quickly focuses on him. He screams. His front appears unhurt. He falls face down and is still. The flesh on his back is burned to his spine.

MAXIM POSITION NEAR THE BATTERY:

The gun aimer runs past the Maxim gunner. The gunner is firing in short bursts. The gunner fires ones long burst as the war machine focuses on him. Both the gunner and his assistants are burned. The dead gunner still grips the gun, and it continues firing. Ammunition along the belt and in boxes begins cooking off.

EXT. - CHURCH STEEPLE, WEYBRIDGE - DAY

Colley and Hawthorne-Waite are looking in shock at the approaching Martians. Behind the war machines, smoke rises from the ruins of the front lines.

COLLEY

Good, Lord.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

They didn't even slow down.

GEORGE

"Bows and arrows against the lightning."

A sudden high pitched whistle is heard that quickly drops in pitch as it passes the church. Hawthorne-Waite turns about and looks across the river. A puff of smoke can be seen being blown away by the winds. There is another puff of smoke and another whistle of cannon shot going past.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

The 54th has opened fire, sir.

COLLEY

Signal the batteries to concentrate fire. Attack one invader at a time.

EXT - OUTSIDE WEYBRIDGE - DAY

A war machine has reached a line of entrenched riflemen. The riflemen fire without effect. The war machine stops momentarily and points the heat ray at the trench. Riflemen duck into the trench. Several are too slow and are incinerated. Ammunition in their bandoleers cooks off on their burning bodies. The war machine moves on. One man

emerges from the trench and tries to climb out. He screams as the hot earth sears his hands.

EXT - BRIDGE CROSSING - DAY

The top of the nearest war machine can be seen over some houses.

REFUGEE 2

Martians. Martians are here!

The crowd panics. They surge across the bridge, pushing the Vicar's cart onto the railing.

VICAR

No. Please stop. Don't panic.

The crowd continues to push, spilling the cart and the vicar into the river on the up-stream side of the bridge.

EXT - EDGE OF WEYBRIDGE - DAY

The first war machine has reached the edge of the town. Several soldiers fire rifles from behind a supply wagon. The heat ray ignites the wagon. The soldiers scatter and the heat ray chases each one until he is down. The war machine abruptly turns and tries to track a horseman racing past. The heat ray burns a trail as it closes on the horseman. The ray does not reach him before he finds shelter behind a wood frame house. The house is set ablaze. The horseman is Atkins. He hesitates behind the house until he spots an open well. The well is exposed to the Martians. He jumps off his horse, points it in the opposite direction and slaps its rump. The horse runs into the open where it is chased by the heat ray. Atkins, taking advantage of the diversion, runs and slides down the rope into the well. The Martian advances toward the bridge, walking along the edge of the river.

EXT - BRIDGE CROSSING - DAY

The vicar has dragged himself out of the water and onto a stone ledge under the bridge. The war machine advances on the bridge. As it advances, it ignites a boat. The boat

and people bursts into flame, and steam rises from the water around the boat.

ON TOP THE BRIDGE:

The war machine is close. People jump from the bridge. The war machine plays its heat ray over the bridge. People die in terrible heaps.

UNDER THE BRIDGE:

The vicar can see the war machine approaching. It moves close enough so that only the legs are visible. A man who has jumped from the bridge reaches out to the vicar.

VICAR

Take my hand.

The man reaches the vicar's hand, and the vicar begins to pull him closer. There are terrified screams from the people on the bridge. Just as the vicar takes his hand, the water around him steams and bubbles. The man's face burns away. his clothes above water ignite, but the burn stops halfway along his forearm. The stone bridge has shielded the vicar. He lets go in horror and lets the dead man float down river.

AT THE RIVER'S EDGE:

The war machine is under heavy fire. Shells strike it and the surrounding buildings. A shell strikes the cupola on its top, tearing it apart.

EXT. - CHURCH STEEPLE, WEYBRIDGE - DAY

Colley, Hawthorne-Waite, and George watch the shells hit the Martian. When the cupola is hit, the war machine suddenly wheels out of control. The machine runs erratically about like a child's top. The tentacles whip madly, smashing the walls of building here and there. The war machine ricochets into the city square and heads towards the church. The heat-ray spins out of control, starting fires haphazardly. George freezes as he sees the war machine heading towards the steeple out of the smoke. It is clear that the machine is going to crash into the church.

COLLEY

Oh, hell. It's going to hit us.

Hawthorne-Waite pulls his revolver and calmly starts firing at the machine. Marvin straightens his uniform and stoically waits for the impact. George is broken out of his shock by the sound of Hawthorne-Waite's firing. George starts digging through his pouch of writing materials for his revolver. He looks up, with the revolver in hand, in time to see the machine impact against the steeple. The bottom of the steeple is destroyed by the impact, and the machine bounces off into a new direction. The men are knocked off their feet. The steeple falls, maintaining its vertical stance. It almost balances on the rubble underneath it, then slowly falls over into the river. As it falls, George manages to jump free into the center of the river. The machine also heads into the river, loses its balance, and falls into the water at the river's edge. The steeple nearly falls on top of it. The water explodes as the heat-ray is submerged under it. A huge wave of scalding water and steam speeds up and down stream from the fallen Martian. The water above the heat-ray continues to boil away into steam. A powerful current is created as water is sucked toward the heat ray.

EXT. - WEYBRIDGE - DAY

The Martians open fire on the far side of the river with their heat-rays. Gun positions explode; buildings are turned instantly into infernos. The Martians wade into the river.

EXT. - RIVER - DAY

George is lost in the white cloud of steam on the river. He fights to keep his head above the chaotic waters. He is clearly suffering from burns and exhaustion. George takes off his jacket and lets it float away. He also throws away his shoes, but keeps a tight hold on his bag of writing materials. He is almost over run by an empty small boat. He grabs the gunnel and hides behind the hull of the boat. George watches as the heat-rays, clearing paths through the steam, are fired across the river.

ON THE STEEPLE'S WRECKAGE:

Hawthorne-Waite is clinging to part of the structure. He moves rapidly to a section that is broken open and climbs

inside to avoid the Martians. Colley tries to follow but loses his grip. He is caught in the swirl of water being pulled to the downed Martian's heat ray. He is swept into the boiling waters above the heat-ray and is cooked alive. The steam on the river thins, and George sees the outline of the war machines standing in the river. Suddenly the Martians stop firing their heat-rays. Using their tentacles, they stop the heat ray of the wrecked war machine and lift it between them. They ignore the remaining guns on the north side of the river and retreat to the south. George pulls himself into the small boat and collapses into the bottom of it. The boat drifts downstream away from the burning town of Weybridge.

EXT. - RIVER - LATE AFTERNOON

George is still unconscious in the boat. The boat itself is caught in reeds along the bank. The boat rocks gently and begins to move toward shore. George awakes suddenly. The vicar, who was dragging the boat, is startled. He jumps back, falling in the water, and thrashes for a moment.

GEORGE

Are you all right, Father?

George steps out of the boat and helps the vicar to his feet. The boat is close to the outskirts of Weybridge. There is a cluster of small homes nearby that have not been destroyed. The town of Weybridge smolders in the distance.

VICAR

I. I thought you were. I thought you'd passed on.

GEORGE

I should be, but I'm not.

The vicar begins to climb into the boat.

GEORGE

What are you doing?

VICAR

We can travel in the boat.

GEORGE

There are no oars.

VICAR

The current. The current will
take us to the Thames.

GEORGE

It's too exposed. If a Mar-
tian sees you, you've had it.
There's no place to hide.

VICAR

It's easier.

GEORGE

It's too dangerous.

George helps the man to shore. George begins leading him
back to Weybridge.

VICAR

That's the wrong way.

GEORGE

I need to rest. That's the
closest place.

VICAR

We should take the boat.

The vicar starts to wade back into the water to retrieve
the boat. George follows him to the edge of the water but
does not enter.

GEORGE

No. They'll see us. Come out
of there. We can find food in
one of those dwellings.

The vicar relents and comes ashore.

VICAR

It'd be easier.

GEORGE

I know. Come on. We'll find
some dry clothes.

INT - FIRST HOUSE, KITCHEN - DUSK

The house has been hastily abandoned. The cupboards are open. On one wall is an amateur painting of Weybridge, featuring the bridge prominently in the picture. Two silhouettes are outside the window. One opens the door, and the vicar and George enter.

GEORGE

Hello? Is anyone here? See
if you can find some food.

George exits.

WITH GEORGE:

George looks through the rooms of the small house. In one of the bedrooms, a large crucifix hangs on the wall behind a bed. There is a rosary on the night stand. George returns to the kitchen.

The vicar is looking at the painting and crying.

GEORGE

Did you find anything?

VICAR

So many people.

GEORGE

Try not to dwell on it.

VICAR

I can't help it. I tried. I
tried to save them. I
couldn't.

George helps the vicar to his feet. The vicar recovers some of his composure.

GEORGE

You need some rest, too.

VICAR

Thank you.

George leads him to the bedroom with the crucifix.

BEDROOM:

GEORGE

Here you go.

VICAR

This. This is the house of a papist. I'll not stay here.

GEORGE

I sure he wouldn't mind.

VICAR

No. We must find another immediately.

The vicar walks back through the house with George following.

GEORGE

It's getting too dark. Don't be a fool. I'll take it down.

EXT - GARDEN - NIGHT

The vicar walks through the garden toward another house. The property line between the houses is marked with a thick hedge. The vicar tries to find a way around it.

GEORGE

Come back inside.

George tries to grab an arm, but is shaken loose. The vicar pushes through a thin part of the hedge. The garden of this house contains a greenhouse and several trees with hanging vines. George pushes through the hedge. The vicar

reaches the back door, but it is locked. He starts to go around. George breaks a pane in the door.

GEORGE

Wait. It's open.

The vicar returns.

INT - SECOND HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

The interior is dark. It has not been disturbed or abandoned. George enters, followed by the vicar. Both search silently until George finds a candle and matches, which he lights. He goes to look around the house.

INT. - HERBERT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Herbert and Claire are in the drawing room. Herbert is going from point to point in the room packing his medical bag, getting his coat, etc.

CLAIRE

The trains should have been running by now.

HERBERT

For all we know, the army could keep the trains a week or more.

CLAIRE

Why hasn't he telegraphed? He could have done that.

HERBERT

Not if the wires are down. Even without the Martians, that storm could have torn down the wires. George will be here as soon as he can.

INT. - HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

George enters. The vicar is sitting at the table, calmly eating a piece of bread.

GEORGE

Where did you find that? Is there more?

VICAR

On the table.

George looks around but finds no more bread.

VICAR

I'm afraid this was the last piece. You were very kind to have helped me.

GEORGE

It was no trouble.

VICAR

I should have saved a piece for you. I'm very sorry.

George points to a closed door.

GEORGE

What's in there?

George pushes open the door. There is a stairway leading down.

INT. - HOUSE; BASEMENT - NIGHT

The basement is a simple earthen box. The walls are lined with crude plank shelves. On the shelves are jars of fruits and preserves. George opens a jar and consumes the fruit. He finds two more and carries them up the stairs.

INT. - HOUSE; KITCHEN - NIGHT

George emerges from the basement with the jars. He quickly sets them down on the table in front of the Vicar. There are more candles burning.

GEORGE

Look at these. Preserves.

The vicar eagerly takes one, opens it, and begins to eat.

GEORGE

There are probably fifty more jars down there.

The vicar stops eating and prays aloud.

VICAR

Dear Lord, thank You for providing this bounty. Thank You for sparing the life of this wretched sinner. Please, Lord, reveal to me why my life was spared when so many others died. And if it be in Your divine plan, save us from those horrible machines. We shall always look to You for guidance and inspiration. Amen.

GEORGE

Amen. We'll take some of these with us, tomorrow. I'll see if I can find something to carry them.

INT. - HERBERT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Herbert is standing by the door. He has his medical bag in one hand and an overcoat over his other arm.

HERBERT

I can't take you with me.

CLAIRE

Herbert, I'm frightened something's happened to George. Please don't leave me alone. Let me go with you.

HERBERT

Claire, I can't take you with me. It would seem unprofessional.

INT. - MARSHALL'S PARLOR - NIGHT

Herbert is sitting on a stool examining MARSHALL's ankle. The ankle is swollen, but not discolored. Marshall is wincing in pain, but hides it fairly well. Claire is nearly well.

MARSHALL

I think it's wonderfully professional and quite compassionate. I like that in a doctor. Too many of you chaps just want to get done with it.

Marshall winces in pain as Herbert examines his ankle.

MARSHALL

That's it.

HERBERT

I don't think it's broken.

MARSHALL

That's good to hear, I think.

HERBERT

Oh, it is. Feel fortunate that you didn't come down with the flu that's going around. Quite a nasty one. I'm glad you didn't mind that I brought Claire. With George still gone watching the Martians, I wasn't comfortable leaving her alone.

MARSHALL

Of course not, my boy, of course not.
(grunts in pain)

And naturally nothing takes a man's mind off pain like a lovely woman.

INT. - HOUSE;KITCHEN - NIGHT

George comes back up into kitchen. There are many lighted candles, making the kitchen bright. The vicar is lighting more.

GEORGE

Put those out. What are you trying to do? There are Martians about.

VICAR

I'm making light.

George begins putting out the candles.

VICAR

Stop that. Stop that I say.

GEORGE

That Martians will see it.

VICAR

We're perfectly safe here. Now I must relight them.

GEORGE

You'll do no such thing.

VICAR

I. I must. There's no danger.

GEORGE

It's insane.

VICAR

Light drives away the evil.

GEORGE

It attracts the Martians.

George takes the matches from the vicar.

VICAR

Please. Please let me light the candles. Our souls may depend upon it.

GEORGE

Understand this. It is too dangerous.

VICAR

He will protect us.

GEORGE

No.

VICAR

He. He spared my life at Weybridge when everyone perished. He led us to this house, and you found food.

The vicar tries to take the matches from George. The attempt is neither energetic or successful. A dull green light comes from the kitchen windows.

VICAR

Please. Please, sir. Allow me to light the candles.

GEORGE

Quiet. Don't you understand?

The green glow is much more noticeable and accompanied by a growing howl. Both notice the change. The light becomes very bright and the howl terrible.

GEORGE

Martians. The basement.

George pushes the vicar toward the basement door. Outside there is a loud boom. The windows blow inward, and part of the ceiling falls on George and the vicar. When the debris stops, the kitchen is dark and silent. The green glow slowly vanishes.

INT. - MARSHALL'S PARLOR - NIGHT

Herbert is wrapping up Marshall's ankle.

MARSHALL

There is nothing to worry about, my dear. Look here; the evening's TIMES has a wonderful account of how the army turned the Martians back at Weybridge.

CLAIRE

The Martians have gone from Horsell Common to Weybridge. Just this morning, the TIMES said they couldn't escape the pit in which they landed.

MARSHALL

They surprised us with a few tricks. Now that the army knows what they're dealing with, this will be over rather quickly.

CLAIRE

George said that, too.

MARSHALL

He was right. I'm right. If I weren't, the Martians would be marching up the road on their way into London as we speak.

EXT. - COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Hawthorne-Waite is standing on top of a hill. There is a bright full moon lighting up the night. Through a pair of binoculars Hawthorne-Waite watches as Martian war machines march forwards towards him. Hawthorne-Waite nods to an officer next to him. A flare soon shoots up into the night sky. Almost at once a battery of cannons opens fire on the Martians, betraying their positions with the flash of their shots. Shells burst around the war machine with no visible effect. The Martians turn towards the battery, and the bat-

tery soon falls silent. No flame, no heat-ray, just no more shots from the cannons.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

What the devil is going on?

Another battery opens fire on the Martians. It too soon falls silent.

EXT. - STAND OF TREES - NIGHT

A battery of cannons and gunners are concealed here in the trees. The gunners aim their cannons and open fire on the Martians. Quickly the gunners start the process of swabbing and loading their guns. The gunners stop working as they hear a high pitched whine in the air. A large black cylinder crashes into the stand of trees. A inky black cloud starts erupting from the cylinder. The men panic and run, but are overtaken by the black smoke.

EXT. - COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

From the vantage point on the hill, Hawthorne-Waite can see the inky black smoke spreading from several batteries. No more cannon fire can be heard.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Signal all batteries to open fire.

Another flare shoots into the night sky. Several seconds pass with nothing happening except the Martians getting closer.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Again.

Another flare, the same results. Atkins comes riding up the hill on a horse. He comes to a stop in front of Hawthorne-Waite.

ATKINS

Martians have been spotted to the south-west, sir.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

I know that.

ATKINS

Yes, sir.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Bloody hell. Private, ride to "F" battery, in that stand of trees, and tell them to open fire. If they can't, find out why and report back.

ATKINS

Sir.

Atkins rides off in a hurry in the direction Hawthorne-Waite pointed. As Atkin gallops down the hill, he hears a high pitched whine pass overhead.

EXT - COUNTRYSIDE -NIGHT

Hawthorne-Waite is standing amid he officers and men when a high pitched whine is heard. A large shell lands on the hill top. At once black smoke begins erupting from the shell. As soon as they are exposed to the smoke, men gasp and fall to the ground thrashing.

HAWTHORNE-WAITE

Run!

Hawthorne-Waite starts to run, but the smoke over takes him.

Atkins gallops away from the hill, towards a stand of trees. He pulls his horse to a stop as he sees the black smoke pouring out of the stand of trees. A soldier emerges, wheezing, from the cloud. The soldier falls to the ground thrashing violently, then lies still. Atkins turns his horse around and starts back for the top of the hill. Atkins has not traveled far when he sees the thick black cloud rolling down from the top of the hill. He stops his horse again. He quickly looks around; from in front and behind, the cloud is closing in on him. Atkins wheels the horse around and whips all possible speed out of it towards a near-by house.

EXT. - COUNTRYSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT

Atkins charge full speed on the horse for the house. He stops along side a trestle covered with roses going up the side of the house. He leaps from the horse to the trestle and starts climbing for the roof. Atkins ignores the blood coming from his hands, cut by the thorns, as he climbs. He looks below him to see the black smoke engulf the bottom of the house and the horse. There a short painful cry from the horse, then nothing. Atkins climbs faster for the roof of the house. He reaches the roof and throws himself on it. He lies there gasping for breath for several seconds. Then he sits up and looks over the edge of the roof. The cloud is rising quickly. Atkins looks around the roof, but the chimney is only a few feet taller than the rest of the house. Atkins looks back at the cloud; it has almost reached the level of the roof. Atkins looks around almost in panic. He spies a tree much taller than the house eight to ten feet away from the roof. Atkins moves to the far end of the roof and runs towards the tree with everything in his body. Atkins launches himself at the tree. He flies through the air and crashes into the branches. At first he fails to get a hold and starts to fall towards the black smoke. His fall is stopped by a large branch, only one or two feet above the cloud. Atkins starts climbing at once, never stopping until he is at the top of the tree. The cloud stops rising four or five feet below Atkins' place at the top of the tree. Atkins is white with fear and exhaustion as he grips the tree. As Atkins clings to the tree, a war machine approaches. Atkins cowers behind the trunk trying to hide from the Martian. The war machine marches past the tree; the cloud comes up to just under the belly of the war machine. The war machine doesn't react to Atkins as it passes the tree; it just goes marching towards the lights of London in the distance. Far off in the night, Atkins can see several more war machines moving towards London.

INT - HERBERT'S APARTMENT - PRE DAWN

Claire and Herbert are packing. There is a knock on the door. Claire runs to it and opens it. It is a messenger. Claire is well.

MESSENGER

This city's being evacuated,
Mr. Marshall wants that you
should ride with him.

HERBERT

Excellent.

CLAIRE

I can't leave without George.

HERBERT

Claire, the train station will
be a madhouse. We can't go
there.

CLAIRE

I have to see if George has
arrived. You can go with Mr.
Marshall, I am going to the
train station.

Claire starts trying to gather up all her luggage. Herbert
turns to the messenger.

HERBERT

Thank Mr Marshall for his kind
offer, but we shall find our
own route out of the city.

MESSENGER

He won't be happy with me,
sir. Leaving you like this.

The messenger leaves.

Claire continues packing. She has both her large trunk and
her small case.

HERBERT

I'm not certain we should take
that much.

CLAIRE

I'm ready then. Leave the big
one, if you must.

They exit, Claire carrying her smaller bag and Herbert carrying a small suitcase and his doctor's valise

INT - TRAIN STATION, LONDON - MORNING

The station is literally packed with people all trying to get out. Claire and Herbert fight their way into the crowd. They are still a dozen deep from the platform. A railroad official with a megaphone warns the people.

OFFICIAL

Stand away from the train.
Please stand away.

The train whistles and begins to pull out. People are on top of cars, between cars, and some desperately cling to the sides. Police try and hold back the people. A man reaches through the police line and grabs at the official.

MAN

When's the next one?

OFFICIAL

There are no more trains.

People in the crowd hear the conversation and spread the information. The crowd begins to riot. Herbert and Claire are separated.

CLAIRE

Herbert.

Herbert struggles his way back to Claire, losing his suitcase in the process.

HERBERT

We've got to get out of here.

CLAIRE

Perhaps those offices. There
might be a window.

Claire and Herbert work their way to the side offices.

EXT - SIDE STREET OUTSIDE TRAIN STATION - MORNING

Herbert stands outside a window, helping Claire climb through. The street is busy, but the major street past the corner is badly crowded.

HERBERT

We'd better stay on side streets.

Herbert begins to leave.

CLAIRE

Where are you going?

HERBERT

This way. The Thames will be worse than the station. We'll have to find another way.

INT - KITCHEN - DAY

Part of the roof has collapsed, sealing the kitchen from the rest of the house. Dirt has poured in through the outside kitchen door. George begins pulling himself from the rubble. He is cut and bruised. He clears enough debris to open the basement door. He hears a noise behind him. It is the vicar. He is under the table. The vicar is also dirty and has a head injury. George helps him out.

GEORGE

Are you hurt? Of course you're hurt. How bad is it? Can you stand?

The vicar stands with George's help.

GEORGE

Can you speak to me?

VICAR

He. He saved us. You doubted Him, and He saved us. Thank You, Lord. I. I know he had his doubts, but he believes

now. You believe now, my son.
Say you believe. Say. Say
it.

GEORGE

I believe.

George begins to lead the vicar into the basement. The basement is dark.

VICAR

We. We are ready to do your
work. Show us.

George lights a match. The shelves holding the fruits have fallen. Most of the jars are broken.

EXT - LONDON ALLEY - DAY

Herbert and Claire walk down an alley. People still scurry past the intersections on the main streets. A coach turns down the alley. Herbert stands in the center of the alley. He is nearly run down before the cab stops.

COACHMAN

Get out of the way.

HERBERT

We need transportation.

COACHMAN

I'm full. Get away or I'll
run you down.

Herbert takes hold of the horse's bridle.

COACHMAN

Leggo the bloody horse.

He threatens Herbert with the whip.

HERBERT

I can pay you.

COACHMAN

I'm full I tell you. Leggo.

HERBERT

She can ride next to you.
Please.

COACHMAN

What about you?

HERBERT

Not me, just her.

CLAIRE

I won't go without you.

HERBERT

You must.

A passenger leans out the window.

PASSENGER

Let us go. The Martians are
coming.

CLAIRE

You promised, George. I'll
not lose you both.

COACHMAN

Get on with it. Is she riding
or not?

HERBERT

Yes.

CLAIRE

I won't leave you.

HERBERT

I'll ride the step.

COACHMAN

Five pounds, and I won't stop
if you fall off.

CLAIRE

That's inhuman.

HERBERT

It's fine.

Herbert helps Claire aboard. He begins to take out money. The coachman sees many bills in the wallet.

COACHMAN

Five each, and no room for the bag.

Herbert pays him and climbs onto the step, wrapping his arm around the door post.

COACHMAN

Hang on close now.

He whips the horse, and the coach rolls down the alley and turns another corner.

INT - BASEMENT - DAY

George and the vicar are sorting the few intact jars. There is a distant metallic clanging.

GEORGE

Do you hear that?

VICAR

Yes. Yes, I do.

He begins to get up.

GEORGE

No, you stay here.

VICAR

But. But I want to go.

GEORGE

You're hurt. Stay here and pack the good ones in here. I'll go look.

George gives the vicar his bag and goes up the stairs.

INT - KITCHEN - DAY

George emerges cautiously from the stairway. The noise is much louder. He creeps to the open door and climbs over the mound of dirt that has been pushed into the house. He peeks outside. The dirt is from the unmistakable side of a crater. Trees and the green house have been pushed up on the top of the house and helped collapse the roof. The wreckage is slightly higher than the walls of the crater. There are noises and flashes coming from the crater and the open tail of a Martian shell. The shell landed on the first house George and the vicar visited. The vicar emerges from the stairwell, eating preserves with his fingers. George pulls back.

GEORGE

(whispering)

The Martians are here. They
hit the house next to us.

VICAR

I. I knew it. He's punishing
the Catholics.

GEORGE

(whispering)

Quiet. They might hear.

VICAR

We're protected here. The
Lord wants us here.

George grabs the vicar and places his hand over the vicar's mouth. The vicar is startled and drops the bag and his preserves.

GEORGE

(whispering)

Quiet!

George waits a moment, then releases his hand.

VICAR

Do. Do you doubt again?

George clamps his hand down hard enough to cause the vicar pain.

GEORGE

We are not safe. Do you understand.

From outside there is the sound of small branches being broken and a fleshy thud against the house. Both watch as more dirt falls into the doorway. There is a shadow. George pushes the vicar into the basement.

INT - BASEMENT - DAY

George closes the door. He grabs a section of board and wedges it under the door handle as a brace. George is still holding the vicar as he does this, but not covering his mouth.

VICAR

Why. Why are you doing this to me?

George clamps his hand over the vicar's mouth and holds his firmly. George leans against the door for extra bracing. The vicar is in pain and beginning to cry. Behind the door is breaking glass and debris being moved around. The sound is getting closer to the door.

EXT - COUNTRY ROAD - AFTERNOON

London is visible in the distance. The coach is part of a long stream of refugees. The road is bordered by drainage ditches on either side and separated from private property by a combination of wooden fences and stone walls. Vehicular traffic is stalled by a cart up ahead. The coachman maneuvers close to the edge of the ditch and tries to make progress through the people.

COACHMAN

Out of the way! Get out of the way, or I'll lash you.

The coachman whips at several people in front of and around his coach.

CLAIRE

Stop that!

COACHMAN

Mind your business, or I'll
throw you off.

He whips the horse and works his way up to the cart, but can't get passed. The horse drawing the cart has collapsed.

COACHMAN

Move that thing out of the
way!

CART DRIVER

I can't.

The coachman addresses the crowd.

COACHMAN

You men there. Push that
damned cart into the ditch.

He gets no response.

COACHMAN

I'll lash any man who doesn't
help.

CLAIRE

You will not.

PASSENGER

Throw her off.

The coachman whips the horse and the surrounding people, but only manages to get the coach half on and half off the road. Claire grabs the whip and tries to pull it from the driver's hand. The driver is much stronger than she. There is a very brief tug of war; then the driver simply shoves

Claire, violently, off the coach. Herbert leaps from the step and rushes to her.

HERBERT

Are you injured?

CLAIRE

I'm fine, just very, very upset.

The coach is in danger of falling into the ditch. A war machine becomes visible near London, although it is not heading for the refugees. A refugee sees it.

REFUGEE 3

Martians! Martians!

The crowd panics and starts pushing forward. The cart is pushed, but into the coach. The coachman stands and whips at the crowd. The coach is pushed farther off the road by the panicking people. The coachman loses his balance and falls. The passengers try to get out but can't. The coach tips over, landing partially on the driver, pinning him. The harness breaks, and horse is free.

COACHMAN

Help me.

Herbert and Claire try to free the injured driver. Passengers climb out. The cart is pushed farther, and the coach begins to slide to the bottom of the ditch. Claire and Herbert scatter and are not hurt. Herbert loses his valise. The driver is crushed. With the road open, people and vehicles flow past. Those on foot keep to the sides to avoid being hit by the recklessly driven cabs and coaches.

CLAIRE

Oh, my God.

HERBERT

There's nothing we can do now.
We'd better go.

They begin slogging through the ditch with the rest of the refugees. Ahead, an old man carrying a money purse is

grazed by a man on horseback. The old man falls, spilling coins in the roadway. He begins to collect his coins, ignoring the danger. Herbert and Claire notice him. They try and get up to him.

HERBERT

Leave the coins.

OLD MAN

It's all I've got.

CLAIRE

Watch out.

The man is narrowly missed by a cab. Herbert runs into the road and tries to pull the man back. He resists.

OLD MAN

Get away. It's my money.

Claire sees two cabs racing toward them. The old man pushes Herbert away.

CLAIRE

Herbert. Look out.

Herbert narrowly avoids being struck. The old man is knocked to the ground. He stands, dazed. The second cab hits him and runs over him. Herbert and Claire pull the man past the side of the road. He is dying.

OLD MAN

It hurts.

HERBERT

Try and be still. I'm a physician.

OLD MAN

My money. I want my money.

CLAIRE

We'll get it for you later.

Herbert takes off his coat and makes it into a pillow for the man.

HERBERT

I've got to go back and find
my bag.

OLD MAN

Don't leave me.

CLAIRE

I'll be with you.

He tries to grab at Herbert as he leaves. The old man is
strained and begins coughing blood.

CLAIRE

Herbert. Herbert.

Herbert rushes back.

CLAIRE

It's blood.

The old man gurgles and dies. Herbert places his coat over
the man.

CLAIRE

We can't stay on the road.
It's too dangerous.

HERBERT

Can you climb the wall?

CLAIRE

If you help me.

Herbert and Claire climb the wall and begin walking off
into the field.

INT - BASEMENT - NIGHT

A single candle burns in the basement. The vicar sits near
the pile of broken jars, picking through it. George re-
mains near the door. It is silent.

VICAR

I'm. I'm so hungry. Can't we find the bag?

GEORGE

The Martians might be up there.

VICAR

But. But I'm hungry. Oh, please. Let's look.

George glances around the basement and finds a hammer. He listens at the door, then removes the brace. The vicar is right behind him.

GEORGE

Go down and put out the candle.

The vicar goes down the stairs, but hesitates at extinguishing the candle.

VICAR

It. It will be dark.

GEORGE

Put it out, or I won't open the door.

The candle is put out. The basement is totally black.

VICAR

I. I can't see.

GEORGE

Stay where you are.

VICAR

I. I want food.

GEORGE

You'll get it. Now stay there and keep quiet.

George carefully opens the door.

INT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

George peers into the kitchen from the stair well. Moonlight illuminates the room. The kitchen has been disturbed. Much of the debris is scattered around. Dirt from the exterior doorway covers the floor. The bag is intact, but George's papers are strewn over the floor. Most of the fruit jars are broken. George enters the kitchen. He looks outside, and then begins to collect his papers. A moment later the vicar emerges. He finds the lid from a broken jar and tries to wipe off some of the remaining preserves with his fingers. He looks disappointed.

VICAR

They. They broke them.
Wasted. Wasted all the beautiful food.

GEORGE

(whispering)

Quiet! Do you want them to come back?

VICAR

(whispering)

Perhaps. Perhaps they're gone. I. I hear nothing.

George listens.

GEORGE

(whispering)

You're right. Stay here.

George goes back to the exterior door. The wreckage of the greenhouse and the fallen trees might allow him to climb to the edge of the pit without being observed.

EXT - BACKYARD - NIGHT

George dashes out the door and to the cover of the greenhouse. He begins climbing up the pit's slope. Red weed has displaced much of the vegetation of the greenhouse. Half way up the slope, he notices there is no cover for twenty feet, until he reaches the crest of the pit. There

he can hide in the top of a fallen tree, now covered in red weed. He makes his dash. He finds cover. He looks into the pit.

EXT - PIT - NIGHT

The interior is literally covered in red weed. The Martians have set up the discs that will become tripods. There are only two, but space is present for the third. George can see through the gap left by the missing war machine. There are no Martians visible, but much in the way of equipment he didn't see in the first pit. There is also a wire mesh enclosure on the perimeter.

EXT - GEORGE'S TREE AT THE CREST OF THE PIT - NIGHT

George hears the distinctive thud of a war machine on the move. He covers himself in foliage and red weed. The sound gets closer. George watches through the branches as the war machine walks toward him. On its back, he can see it is carrying something. The machine nearly steps on George as it climbs into the pit.

EXT - PIT - NIGHT

The war machine stops near its appropriate position in the pit. Martians appear from the cylinder and from around other would-be war machines. The Martians seem agitated and make a shrill hooting noise. The war machine twists a tentacle over its back and takes an object out of the cage it carries. The object is a person, who screams and thrashes. The person is lowered into the enclosure. Martians gather around the enclosure in a high state of agitation. Three more people are lowered into the enclosure. One Martian hoots loudly to the war machine. This Martian seems to suffer from a breathing disorder and is wheezing. It also holds a small metal cylinder in one of its tentacles. The war machine reaches into the enclosure and picks up one of the people, making specific effort to get the right one. The person is lifted to a machine in the pit with two hoses attached. The first Martian lumbers to the machine, while two others hold the person's arms. One of the holding Martians takes a tube attached to the machine. The end of the tube is gleaming metal. The Martian stabs the tube into the person's chest. The first Martian places the machine's other tube into its mouth. The machine be-

gins to whir and blood flows from the person's chest, through the machine, and into the Martian's mouth. The person slumps. A holding Martian works the tube around in the person's chest before removing it. The tube makes a sickening slurping sound until the machine is turned off. The body is dumped nearby. The first Martian moves away and lies down in the weed, softly cooing.

EXT - GEORGE'S TREE AT THE CREST OF THE PIT - NIGHT

George is horrified. He looks back to the house and the twenty feet of open ground he must cover. The war machine is only fifty feet away and has a clear view of George's escape route. George watches as the scene is repeated with a new screaming victim. George hunkers deeper into the tree, holds his hands to his ears, and tightly closes his eyes. The screams suddenly stop.

EXT - CHATHAM - NIGHT

Claire and Herbert join a stream of refugees walking into the town. They walk past several buildings with signs indicating they will rent out a room for an exorbitant price. Claire and Herbert continue on until they reach a church already holding many refugees. A priest greets them at the door.

PRIEST

I'm sorry. We don't have any more food.

HERBERT

We just need a place to rest.

PRIEST

Come in, then. I think we can fit two more.

INT - CHATHAM CHURCH - NIGHT

The church is filled with people. Many are sleeping are sleeping on the pews.

PRIEST

You may have to make do on the floor. It's as if the whole

of England expects to get out tomorrow. Here's a nice place.

HERBERT

Thank you.

CLAIRE

Yes, thank you.

PRIEST

You're welcome. When the boats arrive, we'll wake you.

CLAIRE

What boats?

PRIEST

You are here for the boats, aren't you? For evacuation to France? No matter. You can make your choice in the morning.
Good night.

The priest leaves.

CLAIRE

I don't want to leave. Not until I know what's happened to George.

HERBERT

It might not be possible. If George reached London after we left, he'll have no idea where to find us, or us him. They're bound to set up some means of reuniting families when we get to France.

CLAIRE

Do you believe he's still alive?

HERBERT

Yes, and so must you. George has been in danger all over the world. He knows how to take care of himself.

EXT - GEORGE'S TREE AT THE CREST OF THE PIT - NIGHT

The war machine is gone. The Martians are working again. George is still shocked by what he saw. He creeps back toward the house.

INT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

George comes into the kitchen. The vicar is sitting in a corner getting the last out of a jar of fruit. Another jar stands empty next to him, along with three full ones.

GEORGE

(whispering)

Is that all that's left?

VICAR

(whispering)

I. I couldn't find any others.

Most were. Were broken.

George picks up the remainder of the jars and puts them in his bag.

GEORGE

(whispering)

No more. These have got to last until the Martians leave.

VICAR

(whispering)

They're. They're so small.

One more. Please.

The vicar reaches for the bag, but George pulls it out of reach.

GEORGE
(whispering)
No. I mean it.

George goes into the basement. The vicar resumes scraping out the fruit jar.

INT - BASEMENT - NIGHT

George is asleep in the basement. The door to the kitchen is open and a little light is streaming down into the basement. From the kitchen the sounds of pounding can be heard. George awakens to the noise and groggily moves to the kitchen.

INT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The vicar is putting together a small altar. He has a hammer and is pounding the nails without any concern. He has lit candles for the altar. George rushes over and snatches the hammer from the vicar.

GEORGE
What the bloody hell do you
think you're doing?!

VICAR
Tomorrow. Tomorrow is Sunday.

GEORGE
(realizing how much noise he is making)
Be quite.

VICAR
The Lord. The Lord is protecting us. We must observe His day.

George sees the bag next to the altar. He grabs it and checks it. All three jars are full.

GEORGE
(whispering)
Get back into the basement.

VICAR

I. I won't.

George raises the hammer threateningly.

GEORGE

(whispering)

Get into the basement.

The vicar cowers under the threat and retreats to the basement with George following him.

EXT - CHATHAM COAST - MORNING

Claire and Herbert are part of a vast number of people streaming towards the beach. The beach is already crowded with refugees. In the bay numerous ships are anchored, the vast majority are steamships, but a few sail can be spotted here and there. Farther out to sea are three armored cruisers patrolling the scene. Small boats are moving back and forth from the surf, filled with the fleeing English. Scattered all along the beach are the abandoned possessions of the refugees. One boat, returning to the surf is nearly swamped by people trying to board it. The crew beats off the people with the oars, while crew men standing on the beach rush to the boat's aide. As Claire and Herbert approach the surf, it becomes clear that a few men are directing the loading of the small boats. Herbert pushes his way through the crowd toward one of the men.

HOLT

(looking at Herbert and Claire)

Passage is thirty for the both of you.

HERBERT

(shocked)

Thirty pounds! I don't have that much.

Herbert looks past Holt and sees that Holt has large seaman acting as a bodyguard. The seaman is armed with club and pistol. Herbert then notices that Holt has a pistol as well. Herbert looks around and sees that the story is the

same with each of the boats being loaded. Claire follows Herbert's gaze.

CLAIRE

What are we going to do now?

HERBERT

What ever we must. What ever we must.

SEAMAN

(to Holt)

The boats are filling up very fast, Mr. Holt.

HOLT

Thank you.

Holt looks at an empty boat coming to him that is almost in the surf. Holt turns back to the crowd.

HOLT

(shouting)

Passage is now twenty pound apiece!

BEACH REFUGEE

You're leaving us to die you bastard!

The beach refugee throws a punch at Holt, which connects and knocks Holt to the sand. The seaman swings his club and brings down the striking refugee. The other refugees swarm the seaman and start beating and kicking him and Holt. A shot fired from the boat fells a member of the mob. Herbert pulls Claire quickly to the ground and covers her with his own body. More shots are fired and the mob scatters and runs. The sailors from the boat have now reached Holt and the seaman. Holt, bloody and bruised, gets up as Herbert helps Claire to her feet. The seaman doesn't get up. A dark red stain is quickly spreading on his tunic.

SAILOR
(examining the seaman)
He's been stabbed, Mr. Holt.

HOLT
You there, doctor. I need
your help.

Herbert looks at the situation, but does noting.

HOLT
Well do something, man!

HERBERT
I want passage.

HOLT
You'll get your damned pas-
sage!

HERBERT
For both of us.

HOLT
Fine. He better live.

Herbert kneels down and starts tending to the injured sea-
man.

INT - KITCHEN - DAY

Outside is the sound of the Martians working. The vicar is kneeling by his makeshift altar. He is eating more fruit, not praying. There are two empty jars next to him. George comes up from the basement. The vicar hears him and hides the half consumed jar in his pocket.

GEORGE
(whispering)
What are you doing?

VICAR
(whispering)
Praying. Praying.

GEORGE
(whispering)
You were eating.

George finds his bag. It is empty.

GEORGE
You ate it all.

VICAR
(whispering)
I was...I was hungry.

GEORGE
There's no more food.

VICAR
(whispering)
shhhs... the Martians.

GEORGE
You stupid glutton!

George pulls the vicar to his feet and slaps him.

GEORGE
What are we supposed to do for
food now!?

VICAR
(crying)
I'm. I'm sorry.

George strikes the vicar.

GEORGE
We'll stave here.

The noises outside have stopped. George notices. The vicar is whimpering loudly.

VICAR
Don't. Don't hurt me.

GEORGE
(whispering)
Stop that. Shut up.

The vicar is becoming hysterical. His cries become louder.

VICAR
No. No more.

GEORGE
Shut up shut up shut up.

George is on the verge of becoming hysterical himself. He slaps the vicar trying to silence him, but this only makes the vicar's cries louder.

VICAR
Please please stop.

There is a dull fleshy thud outside the door. A tentacle pushes open the door to the kitchen. George drops the vicar to the floor in terror.

VICAR
Thank you thank you thank you

George runs from the room before the Martian can get inside. George runs down to the basement, closing the door behind him, trapping the vicar.

INT - BASEMENT - DAY

George closes the door and braces it with his body. He can hear the fleshy thuds of the Martian moving about. The vicar's scream can also be clearly heard. The vicar starts pounding on the door.

VICAR
(o.s.)
Help! Help! Let me in!

George does not. The vicar screams again. The pounding stops. George hears the vicar's hysterical cries as he is dragged away. George collapses at the door, crying.

EXT - STEAMSHIP - DAY

Claire is pressed against the rail of the steamship by the massive crowd standing on the weather deck. She is looking back at the Chatham coast. Small boats continue to move people from shore to the waiting ships.

HERBERT

Claire!

Claire turns and sees Herbert fighting his way through the crowd looking for her. She waves.

CLAIRE

Over here!

Herbert sees Claire and fights his way through the crowd to her side.

CLAIRE

How is he?

HERBERT

I did what I could.

CLAIRE

Would you really have refused to help him? Would you?

HERBERT

I don't know.

EXT - CHATHAM BEACH - DAY

A tripod can be seen moving towards the coast. At first it appears alone, but then, one by one, a half dozen appear on the horizon. Fire and smoke erupt from the village of Chatham. All semblance of order and reason have vanished on the beach. People dive in the water trying to swim to the ship. Boats are swamped and overturned as they are overloaded. Here and there gunshots are heard across the water.

INT - STEAMSHIP BRIDGE - DAY

The bridge can best be described as controlled bedlam. Officers are barking orders to enlisted men and people are constantly coming and going.

FIRST OFFICER
Lookouts have spotted the Martians, sir.

The captain blows the ship's whistle.

CAPTAIN
Up anchor.

The captain blows the whistle again. Other ships are also sounding off.

FIRST OFFICER
Sir, we still have four launches on the beach.

CAPTAIN
I know that.

INT - BRIDGE, HMS INVINCIBLE - DAY

The captain, first officer Oswald, signal officer Milner and helmsman are present.

CAPTAIN
(to first officer)
Clear the ship for action, Mr. Oswald. All ahead full.

OSWALD
Very well, sir.

CAPTAIN
Helmsman, left standard rudder.
(to Milner)
Send a signal to Thunderchild and Revenge.

INT - BRIDGE, HMS THUNDERCHILD - DAY

The captain waits as the signal officer reads the signal flags.

SIGNAL OFFICER
Invincible is attacking.
We're to follow, sir.

CAPTAIN
Very good.

EXT - HMS THUNDERCHILD - DAY

Alarms sound and men race to their gun positions. The ship turns to port and follows Invincible. The gun turrets turn toward the beach.

EXT - CHATHAM COAST - DAY

The war machines are almost upon the beach now. Everyone is fleeing into the surf trying to escape the Martians. The war machines fire their heat rays and start boiling the water, forcing the people back onto the beach.

EXT - STEAMSHIP - DAY

Claire and Herbert watch the terror on the beach. There is a tremendous boom behind them. They turn and see smoke clearing from Invincible's guns. The Invincible passes close by. The people on the steamship cheer.

EXT - CHATHAM COAST - DAY

Dirt and sand explode about the war machines as the shells land. Many shells land behind the war machines.

INT - BRIDGE, THUNDERCHILD - DAY

FIRST OFFICER
They're too fast and too small
for volley fire. We didn't
hit one of them.

CAPTAIN

All guns, independent rapid
fire. Helmsman, port two
points. We must get closer.

HELMSMAN

Aye, sir.

EXT - CHATHAM COAST - DAY

The Martians fire their black smoke canisters at the ships, but the smoke disappears quickly on the seas and the ships speed on. The war machines then starting walking out into the surf, closing on the cruisers. On the beach, people are killed by the falling shells as the beach continues to explode from the bombardment of the cruisers. Suddenly one of the war machines is shattered by a hit and crashes into the surf. The guns on the cruisers continue to fire as the war machine close and the ships carrying the refugees build speed. Now much closer, the war machines fire their heat rays at the Invincible.

EXT - HMS INVINCIBLE - DAY

Sailors take cover behind splinter shields as the heat ray sweeps the ship from fore to aft. Exposed men burst into flame, but the ones behind the splinter shields are saved. The decks smoke, but do not burst into flame.

EXT - CHATHAM COAST - DAY

Another war machine falls to fire from the cruisers. Any hit from the naval guns destroys the war machines. The remaining four Martians, all fire their heat rays together at the lead ship, the Invincible. The Invincible's midships starts to glow and then very suddenly and violently the Invincible explodes. The bow and stern are blown in different directions. For a moment the firing from the other two ships ceases.

INT - BRIDGE, HMS THUNDERCHILD - DAY

The bridge is silent as the crew views the wreck of the Invincible. Then the guns begin firing again.

CAPTAIN

Close splinter shields. Helmsman, hold your course.

HELMSMAN

Y..aye, sir.

CAPTAIN

It'll be alright, lad. Mind your course.

With the splinter shields closed, the bridge becomes very dark. Only narrow slits allow light into the compartment. The bridge becomes very bright very quickly. The captain, who had been peering out a slit, screams and falls back. his eyes burned.

EXT - CHATHAM COAST - DAY

Like the Invincible before it, the Thunderchild explodes. The remaining ship, the Revenge, begins making dark black smoke and starts a tight turn away from the war machines. The smoke helps obscure the civilian ships from the Martians as the Revenge heads back out to sea. The war machines turn away from the sea and head back onto shore.

EXT - STEAMSHIP - DAY

There is no more cheering. Many people are crying.

HERBERT

We've lost England.

The wrecks of the warships are still burning and sinking as the Revenge disappears around horn of the coast. The smoke of the screen created by the Revenge hides the beach as the steamer heads towards sea.

EXT - HOUSE - DAY

The red weed has spread far from the pit, turning the area around it into a very Martian-like scene. Flashes of light and sharp reports issue forth from the pit. Here and there tripods move into and out of the pit.

INT - BASEMENT - DAY

George is dirty and bearded. In the light of a very small candle, he moves around the basement searching through the broken remains of the fruit jars for something to eat. Every now and then he finds a bit of old fruit and eats it. When he has finished searching he blows out the candle plunging the room into darkness.

SOMETIME LATER:

George relights the candle. His beard is larger. He is grinning very madly. He has in his fist a large mouse.

GEORGE

Got you!

He breaks the mouse's neck and starts eating it at once. A noise comes from the kitchen and George blows out the candle quickly.

INT - KITCHEN - MORNING

A heavy fog has rolled into the kitchen through the broken wall. The early morning light gives a dim illumination to the room as the door to the basement slowly opens. George carefully looks around the room before entering the kitchen. He starts searching the kitchen looking for something to eat. He finds nothing. He starts going through more of the broken glass from the fruit jars, licking the pieces trying to get some nourishment. He cuts himself on one and in violent anger throws it across the room. It shatters very loudly in the morning silence. The sound fills George with terror, he freezes, but hears nothing more. Slowly George moves to the way out of the kitchen, towards the pit.

EXT - HOUSE (PIT) - MORNING

George has crawled back to the place where he had watched the Martians feeding before. All is quite. The pit is filled with a more dense fog, but it is clear that the Martians have left. George climbs down into the pit. Here at the bottom of the pit he finds the bodies of the Martian's victims. The red weed around the pile of corpses has started dying and turning brown. He hesitates, then starts searching through the pockets of the corpses. He finds the

body of the vicar. He goes through his pockets as well, finding the half empty jar of fruit. After eating the fruit George climbs out of the pit and starts walking away.

EXT - ROAD - DAY

George is walking down the side of the road. Scattered possessions mark this road as one where people once fled. Everywhere is the red Martian weed. It covers ground, field, and hedge. It even grows up the sides of trees. George comes to a small stream crossing the road. The red weed has choked the stream into stagnation, but George doesn't hesitate in dropping to his knees and drinking deeply from the stagnate water.

EXT - ROAD HOUSE - DUSK

The light of the day is fading as George finds a house along side the road. The door stands open as George enters the house.

INT - ROAD HOUSE - DUSK

The house has clearly been ran sacked. George searches, but finds nothing. By the time his search is done, it is dark. With only the light of the moon coming in through the windows, George finds a bedroom. There he wraps himself in a blanket and falls asleep on the bed.

INT - ROAD HOUSE - DAY

George is still asleep on the bed when the quite air is shattered by the sound of wood breaking. George is startled awake by the sound. He can hear more wood being broken. He quickly rushes to a window and looks out.

EXT - NEIGHBORING HOUSE - DAY

At the house next to the one George is in is another Martian machine. This one is not a tripod, but looks more like a giant mechanical crab. With strong tentacles, the machine is tearing apart the wood frame house. On the machine's back is a large cage. Several people can be seen in the cage. In the distance behind the machine, the ruin of other houses can be seen.

INT - ROAD HOUSE - DAY

George drops his blanket and flees to the back door of the building.

EXT - ROAD HOUSE - DAY

There is open field beyond the door, with no cover but a single outhouse. In the distance, a small wood can be seen. George creeps out of the house, keeping against the side of the building to hide himself from the Martian. When he has reach the corner, he steadies himself, then makes a dash to the outhouse. He slides quickly around the outhouse, putting it between him and the Martian. The Martian has finished with the neighboring house, and now moves onto the one George has just vacated. The Martian stands between George and the house, looking at the outhouse. It turns and begins tearing apart the house. George runs into the woods.

EXT - HILLSIDE - DAY

It is much later in the day. George is no longer moving on the road. He stays in the woods, moving from cover to cover. In the woods he comes across a house with several large rose bushes. He starts pulling the petals from the flowers and eating them. He also stuffs his pockets full with the petals. A loud rumbling is suddenly heard in the air. George runs from the house, back to the cover of the wood. A large, heavier than air, flying machine appears from the north. It flies past the house, makes a turn, and disappears into the distance. George is clearly shocked at the sight of the flying machine, and runs deeper into the wood.

EXT - WOOD - DUSK

George has come upon the site of an artillery position. everything here is cover in a very fine black dust. In the dust are the tracks of small animals, dogs, and an occasional person. The bodies of the dead gunners are covered by the black dust. In the distance, George can see a house still standing. He moves cautiously towards the building.

EXT - HOUSE - DUSK

It is the same house where Atkins encountered the black smoke. The rose bushes on the side are as dead as the horse now rotting by the building. George enters the building.

INT - HOUSE - DUSK

George searches the house and find a covered pitcher of water. He sits down in the house's parlor and eats his flowers from his pocket and drinks deeply of the water.

EXT - HOUSE - MORNING

Two dogs are snarling and fighting over the remains of the dead horse. George appears at the window and sees the dogs. George appears at the door of the building wielding a large kitchen cleaver, the dogs stand their ground, now both growling at George. George advances on the dogs, threatening with the cleaver. The two dogs attack. George swings at the first dog, wounding it severely with the cleaver. The second dog, forces George to the ground. He struggles with it, cuts it with the cleaver, and the dog runs away. The first dog is still there, dying of it's wound.

INT - HOUSE - DAY

George is at the fireplace of the house. There is a fire burning and the body of the dog is over the fire. It is being more burnt than cooked. George tears off a piece and starts eating at the hot meat. He takes the meat off the fire, wraps it newspaper and leaves the house.

EXT - LONDON - DAY

George is walking through dead London. The same fine black dust is covering everything here. Bodies, dropped items, everything is covered in this shroud. Tracks in the dust show that people have been here, but none are visible. Many of the buildings are either burnt or smashed. Stone streets are torn up by the movement of the war machines. London is like a ghost town. Down an alley George sees signs of human sized movement.

GEORGE

Who's there?!

A man quickly runs away from George, disappearing in the twists and turns of the London alley. George continues on his own path.

EXT - HERBERT'S APARTMENT - DUSK

The building that housed Herbert's apartment is no longer standing. It has been torn apart like the house George has seen the Martians search. The apartment itself is still there, with only the front wall torn off. George goes in. He looks around and sees Claire's monogrammed trunk. George sits down in the dirty street and begins to softly cry. He cries for several moments. He stops when he hears the sound of a war machine moving about. George looks about and see the top of tripod moving up another street. George is quickly on his feet and running away from the area.

EXT - LONDON STREET - NIGHT

George is running from the war machine. In front of him, a figure in the shadows steps out. He is still mostly hidden, but his sword is very visible.

ATKINS

Halt right there! Or I'll kill you where you stand.

George stops.

ATKINS

Go back where you came. Don't go leading them here.

GEORGE

Gunner? Gunner Atkins? Is that you? It's me, George Ashbrooke.

ATKINS

Who?

GEORGE

Ashbrooke. The writer. Campaigns to Africa.

ATKINS

Good Lord. Come on then, double quick.

Atkins leans out from around some rubble. George hurries to him and the two men disappear.

INT - LONDON DRAINS - NIGHT

Atkins is leading George through the drains and sewers under London. Atkins has a small shielded lantern to light the way. He has the shutter on the lantern closed nearly all the way down, letting very little light through. The appearance between Atkins and George could not be any greater. Atkins is clean shaven, well groomed, still looking very civilized. After a few twists and turns Atkins stops in front of a break in the drain walls that has been covered with a heavy blanket. He pulls the blanket with a flourish.

ATKINS

Sorry about the sword, but a man can't be too careful these days.

INT - ATKINS' BASEMENT - NIGHT

Atkins enters and lights a lamp on a table in his basement. He then quickly insures that the blanket is back over the hole, guaranteeing that no light escapes.

ATKINS

Welcome to my palace!

George looks around the partially collapsed basement. Entrance is only possible through the drain Atkins used. It is clear that Atkins has been very busy setting the place up. There are a bed and chairs, lamps, even portraits of Victoria, Wellington, and Roberts on his wall. It has a very parlor-like appearance.

ATKINS

Look at you! Straight from the Black Hole itself. Isn't this

a bit of luck, meeting you.
Thought you bought it at Wey-
bridge. This calls for a
celebration.

Atkins exits to an adjoining room. George sits down, heav-
ily, into one of the cushioned chairs. Atkins returns very
quickly. Under one arm he has a bottle of champagne, and in
the crook of his other arm are several tins of food.

ATKINS

Try this. It's not half bad.
No more bully beef for this
lad. All top quality.

George eats greedily at the tin of food given to him.

ATKINS

Here now, slow up or you'll be
sick and waste it all.

George nods and slows his eating.

GEORGE

I've been eating dog.

ATKINS

They'll be no more of that, I
tell you. London's full of
food for the taking. Drink,
too. More than we can ever
need now that everyone's left.

GEORGE

What of the Martians?

ATKINS

More Martians than people.
They got themselves a camp
here in London. But if a man
stays careful, well, you see
how I've done alright for my-
self.

Atkins pours George a glass of champagne.

ATKINS

Cheers.

Atkins drains his glass. George doesn't drink.

ATKINS

Come on, now. Drink up. We just started and I'm up on you already.

GEORGE

Not really in the mood.

ATKINS

Why not? We're alive. We're safe. We got everything and then some. That's good reason to me.

Atkins drains his glass and pours another.

ATKINS

Now I'm two up.

GEORGE

The Martians killed my wife, my brother. They've killed everyone I know.

George drinks. Atkins refills the glass.

ATKINS

You survived, George. You're like me. We're the ones what got to carry on. Drink up, George. It'll help you sleep.

INT - ATKINS' BASEMENT - DAY

George is standing at a basin shaving off his beard. Atkins is standing not far from him.

ATKINS

Shaving kits my extra. We'll see about getting you a proper kit of your own. Today is clothing day. We find you a

couple nice new suits. Make you look like a proper man, not some Irish beggar. Pick your spirits right up. Top quality, too. Keep clear the Martians, and all Londons here for us. There you are. Starting to feel better already.

INT - LONDON DRAINS - NIGHT

Atkins and George are again moving through the drains. George is looking much better having shaved and washed.

ATKINS

The human race has had it, George. Not that they didn't have it coming. There weren't enough real men left. All gone soft. Bankers, Lawyers, book-keepers, lord and ladies, Not one proud dream or proud lust among 'em. And a man who don't got either is just funk and fear. Give them a few years and that type will be happy the Martians came.

GEORGE

I doubt that very much.

ATKINS

After a few weeks of fighting over scraps and sleeping in the rain? They'll be ready. The Martians will give 'em a warm place to sleep and plenty of food. The Martians didn't come here for a snack, they came to stay. They got a plan. They smashed our army, and our civilization, now they'll domesticate us. We'll be sheep.

INT - SHOP - NIGHT

Atkins is finding clothes for George while George changes.

GEORGE

It won't work. People won't
put up for it.

ATKINS

Sure they will. People are
happy to have someone else
take care of 'em. They won't
have to do no work, get plenty
of food. They'll take to it so
fast they'll wonder how they
did without.

INT - LONDON DRAINS - NIGHT

George and Atkins are making their way carefully through
the drains.

ATKINS

I'll wager that some of 'em
even become pets. You'll have
Martians boo hooing over the
pet human who had to be
slaughtered. No, George, make
no mistake about it, this
here's the end of mankind.
From now on, there's only go-
ing to be two kinds of people;
them, the Martians pets, and
men like us. We're the ones
who've got to carry on. Now
we can't fight them. We try
to fight 'em, and they'll just
burn us down. That's clear. We
got to survive down here, and
keep clear of 'em.

GEORGE

You'll be a Martian sewer rat.

ATKINS

You gotta have vision George.
We won't always be rats. Not
me, I got plans.

INT - ATKINS' BASEMENT - NIGHT

George is sitting on his sofa eating a tin of food and drinking more champagne with Atkins.

ATKINS

There's hundreds of miles of drains down here. With London empty and the rains coming, they'll be clean and fresh. A whole city could live down here. And that's exactly what's going to happen. We're goin' start all over again from scratch. It ain't going be people crying about the past. Everyone like me and you. Men of action. To take back England and make it right. That's where we've got to be smart. Lay low and not cause no problems while we figure things out. We gotta figure out how to make one of them heat rays ourselves, maybe capture a fighting machine and take one apart. I've been thinking a lot about this down here. We need to get books. Not poems and that trash; science. We need to get the right people down here with us. The ones who'd rather die than be some monster's pet. Then we can started building a new society, a society of real men. After we've figured things out, then the best parts come. Imagine four or five of their war machines suddenly come to

life. Heat rays firing left and right, but no Martians are in 'em, men. Men who learned how. Fancy having one of them things, with the heat ray wide and free! It'll be their turn to burn. Their turn to run and hide. Men like us can make it happen!

GEORGE

By God you're right! We can be men again!

ATKINS

We'll make them sorry. We're not just men, we're Englishmen!

INT - ATKINS' BASEMENT - DAY

George is asleep on the sofa, still dressed. The ruin of several tins of food and even more champagne bottles litter the room. Atkins is in front of a mirror. He has on a uniform of his own devising. It is made up of the gaudiest parts of many different kinds of uniforms from the British forces. On his chest are rows of many medals, including a cross hung about his neck. George stirs.

ATKINS

Morning. This'll clear the cobwebs. We've got a big day today.

Atkins gives George a cup of tea. George sees the uniform Atkins has on for the first time.

GEORGE

I don't think those uniforms were ever meant to go together.

ATKINS

After we get things going again, I can have one sewn, but a leader's got to look the

part. It helps to inspire people.

George gets up and moves closer. He sees the cross hanging around Atkins' neck.

GEORGE

Victoria cross?

ATKINS

And why not? They were giving them out for fighting the darkies. I've been fighting Martians. Who better to wear one. When we save England, they'll bloody well want to give me one, won't they?

GEORGE

I suppose Victoria isn't giving out any more.

ATKINS

You'll get one, too, I'll bet. But today, today is book day. We'll get all the books on math and science we can find and bring them back here before the Martians burn anymore of London.

GEORGE

Do you have a map?

ATKINS

Of course. I told you I've got a plan, and that means I got a map.

Atkins disappears for a moment, then returns and lays a large map on the center table, sweeping off the old tins and bottles with one arm. George comes over to the table and looks at the map. It is a large street map of London.

GEORGE

How about the drains? Do you have a map of them?

Atkins shakes his head.

ATKINS

We'll get one, but this'll do for today. This is where we're going. The biggest library in London. Can't go there direct. Martians got a giant pit where two cylinders came down. We got to go 'round. Take side streets with lots of alleys. Lots of places to hide.

EXT - LONDON ALLEYS - NIGHT

George and Atkins are moving slowly and carefully through the alley. Both are carrying empty sacks. Atkins is wearing his sword. The night is very quiet. When the alleys they are in reach major streets, the two stop and take very careful survey of the area, before sprinting across the street to another alley. They often see war machine several blocks away, and thus are able to avoid them. At one intersection they are forced to take cover under an old pile of garbage as a war machine lumbers past their position. The war machine walks with an uncertain gait. It doesn't crash into anything, but it doesn't have the steady stability that the others have possessed. After the war machine has walked well past them, George and Atkins crawl out from under the garbage.

ATKINS

(whispering)

Recruit. Can't even drive properly. Probably veterans beating the Frenchies. If all the ones here like that one, it'll be a piece of cake.

Atkins and George continued moving through the alleys.

INT - LIBRARY - NIGHT

The library is enormous. The tiny, shielded, candles held by George and Atkins can illuminate only the tiniest fraction of its size. The rest is black void.

ATKINS

(whispering)

Look at the place. It's got everything. One trip. How about that, George? My plan working or what?

GEORGE

(whispering)

First things first, we should find a map of the drains and sewers.

ATKINS

Book day, George. Book day.

GEORGE

If we had a map, we'd be a lot safer than on the streets.

ATKINS

Now don't go changing the plan. Today's book day. We'll make tomorrow map day, if you want.

GEORGE

Atkins, I don't think you understand.

ATKINS

Help me find the machine books, George.

Atkins walks into the darkness with George following.

EXT - LONDON STREET - NIGHT

A light fog has formed. George and Atkins are walking past row houses without concern. A standing Martian would tower over the houses. Atkins comes to an intersection and walks into it. Twenty feet away is a war machine sitting on the ground. Atkins back pedals quickly and falls. The sword and scabbard make a sharp rattle on the pavement. The Martian comes alive. A tentacle snakes out and tries to grab Atkins but misses. George comes to Atkins aid and helps him up. The tentacle knocks George to the ground. A second tentacle tries to grab George but misses even though George did not dodge. Atkins is already running back down the street. George is up and running as the Martian gets up. It is not steady as it gives chase. Tentacles extend out to the buildings and keep the machine from crashing into them. Atkins sees an open door and runs into the house. George is still running.

INT - ROW HOUSE - NIGHT

ATKINS

In here. In here.

George makes it inside before the Martian can grab him. Almost immediately the front of the house is torn away. Atkins leads George upstairs to the rear of the house. They reach the back of the house and climb out of the window, jumping to the ground. The Martian is still tearing down the front.

EXT - ALLEY BEHIND ROW HOUSES - NIGHT

They run down the alley and around the corner. They take cover behind an abandon carriage as other Martians are attracted by the search. When the other Martians are involved in tearing down the row houses, they sneak away down the street.

INT - ATKINS' BASEMENT - NIGHT

Atkins and George enter the basement from the drains, each with and sack full of books. There is no doubt that George's sack is the larger and the more full of the two. Atkins tosses his bag aside almost at once.

ATKINS

That was a good nights work!
Completed our task. Cheated
death. This calls for a bit
of celebration. What do you
think, George?

Atkins gets out a another bottle of champagne and a deck of
cards.

GEORGE

We'd better make plans to find
those sewer maps. I don't
want to be caught in the open
like that again.

ATKINS

Plenty of time. Plenty of
time. We have to let the Mar-
tians settle in some more. Get
comfortable and lazy. Like the
ones tonight. I tell you,
George, if the ones what
landed first was like these,
we'd have walked over them
from the start.
It could barely walk.

GEORGE

All the same, let's make to-
morrow map day.

ATKINS

Map day it is.

Atkins reaches into a box and pulls out two bound stacks of
bank notes. They sit at the table as Atkins hands out the
cash and the cards.

ATKINS

Thousand pounds? We'll start
at five pounds a point.

MUCH LATER:

The champagne bottle is nearly empty. Atkins is clearly under the influence of the alcohol, George not nearly so. Atkins slaps his cards down on the table. George's money pile has shrunk considerably

ATKINS

My luck is running good tonight. That's another hundred five pounds for me. This keeps up and you'll make me the richest man in London. Another stack?

Atkins reaches into the box and produces another bound stack. An impact tremor shakes the room. George and Atkins freeze. It was a small tremor, there are a few more, but each is fainter than the one before.

ATKINS

Some bloody fools gotten seen. Serves 'em right. It's probably morning outside. You won't catch me out after sunrise, I tell you.

George is clearly disturbed by the thought of the Martians out hunting.

GEORGE

We nearly got caught this morning. I know what the Martians do. I wouldn't wish it on anyone.

ATKINS

If they can't keep their heads right, we don't want them. Most likely bankers, or clerks, or parsons. Men what don't serve no purpose. Deadwood. We're better off without 'em. Another thousand?

George sets down his card and moves to his sofa.

GEORGE

I think I'll cut my losses.

EXT - LONDON STREET - NIGHT

The night is dark and foggy. Atkins and George walk along the side of the street, carrying empty sacks. They are talking in hushed tones.

ATKINS

I've seen the machines, never what's in them. Heard they look like bears with tentacles, though. Ever seen one, George?

GEORGE

Not clearly. Mostly at night.

ATKINS

Must be a horrible way to go, caught by the Martians.

They walk a little farther and a war machine stands in the fog. They begin backing away cautiously. The war machine gives chase. This machine is coordinated. They dash through an alley too narrow for the machine to follow. They make a few more turns before entering a multi-story building separated into individual flats. Both are out of breath.

INT - APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

They go upstairs to the third floor and enter a ransacked flat.

ATKINS

No damn recruit, that one. He almost had us. We'll rest here for bit.

GEORGE

That was too close.

Outside is the sound of war machine approaching. Atkins peeks out a window.

ATKINS

Get back. It's coming this way.

George and Atkins go to the back of the flat and hide behind furniture. They peek out toward the window. The war machine stops directly in front of the building. The machine's cupola looks directly into the window. The cupola is too dark to see anything inside the machine. The machine hoots like the Martians. The tentacles pull down the wall and expose the men. They bolt out of the room and head down the stairs. The machine pulls down walls, always exposing them as they run from one part of the building to the other. Atkins is in the lead and takes the stairs much faster than George. Atkins reaches the first floor and tries the rear door. It is locked. George reaches the first floor as Atkins dashes past.

ATKINS

Locked. Find the basement.

They try several doors. The machine opens the first floor. They stare up at the machine and its waving tentacles. The next door Atkins opens is the basement.

ATKINS

Found it.

Atkins rushes in. The door closes. George reaches the door, but it is locked.

GEORGE

Open the door. For God's sake open the door.

George pounds on the door. The tentacles move slowly toward him and grab him. George screams. The machine lifts George into the basket on its back. George can see only the machine and a dark silhouette of the Martian inside. The machine moves rapidly through the fog. George can see only fog. The machine stops. It picks George out of the basket and lowers him into the fog. As he gets lower, he can see he's being lowered into a cage in a Martian pit. The pit looks identical to the one George observed outside of Weybride.

EXT - MARTIAN PIT - NIGHT

George is standing in the cage looking into the pit. Dark Martian shapes come out from behind the cylinder and gather around the feeding device. They are dimly visible. They hoot excitedly.

GEORGE

No. Please no. Please, God,
don't let them kill me.

HERBERT

God can't help you.

George turns and sees Claire and Herbert in the cage with him. They are both dressed exactly the same as when George last saw each one.

HERBERT

You left God to die.

Herbert points to a patch in the red weed. The vicar's body lies there.

CLAIRE

That was a terrible thing to
do, George.

GEORGE

I. I tried.

CLAIRE

You left him. You're not hu-
man.

The tentacle reaches in and grabs George. He is lifted to the waiting shapes. He only sees the sharp metal hose.

INT - BASEMENT - NIGHT

George awakens with a start and falls off the sofa. Atkins stirs, but does not awaken. George softly cries to himself.

INT - LIBRARY - NIGHT

George and Atkins are back in the library. The space is lit with only their candles. The sacks are already full of books and maps. George is still looking at one map. Atkins is nervous. There is the hint of a lightening sky in the window.

ATKINS

Come on, damn you. It's nearly dawn. They'll see us.

GEORGE

Do you have room for one more?

George tries to find a place for the rolled up map in one of the sacks.

ATKINS

Leave it. You're going to get us killed.

George tucks the map into his waistband and they leave the library.

EXT - LONDON ALLEYS - PREDAWN

George and Atkins are moving quickly down the street. Suddenly a loud rumbling noise is heard. George and Atkins freeze. The rumbling gets louder. Slowly a shape appears in the fog. It is a Martian flying machine. The machine is flying slowly and unsteadily. It is dropping in altitude as it passes George and Atkins. It flies past, makes a quick, uncoordinated turn and flies back at them. They scatter as the flying machine shoots past. It tries another turn, but clips a building. It loses control, crashing to the street and skidding out of sight into the fog. There is a loud crash and the sound of falling bricks.

ATKINS

It flew. It flew. They can fly. We got to hide.

George stands and listens. There is no sound.

GEORGE
I don't hear them.

ATKINS
Come on. Let's go. Now,
while it's clear.

GEORGE
I want to look at it.

ATKINS
You're bloody daft.

GEORGE
You wanted Martian weapons.
Blast the heat rays. We could
have a flying machine.

George walks into the fog with Atkins following.

EXT - CRASH SITE - PREDAWN

George and Atkins find the flying machine. It has skidded into a building and the front of the building has collapsed on it. The cockpit is crushed. They begin inspecting it.

GEORGE
I wonder how it works. That's
where the Martian sits.

George points to the place and ooze runs out from cracks in the cockpit.

GEORGE
It's dead.

ATKINS
Good. Let's go before more
come.

GEORGE
If there are any weapons, we
can take them.

The sound of a war machine echoes in the fog. It is coming closer.

ATKINS
They're coming.

GEORGE
In here.

George goes into the damaged building.

ATKINS
This is where they're coming.
You're mad.

Atkins starts running down the street. He stops suddenly as the machine comes out of the fog. Atkins looks for a place to hide but the Martian sees him. Atkins starts running back toward George. A tentacle knocks him to the ground. A second, then a third reach to pick him up. They succeed. Atkins is screaming and thrashing as he is dumped into the basket. The machine moves to the flying machine. George peeks out. Atkins sees him.

ATKINS
Help me. Help me. Don't let
it take me. Help. George.
Help.

The machine removes masonry from the cockpit and pries it open. The Martian is just a fleshy lump oozing Martian blood. The machine picks up the body with the tentacles and begins moving back where it came. Atkins pounds on the basket and pokes at the machine with his sword.

ATKINS
Stop. Stop you stupid bas-
tard. There's one more. Get
him. Get him.

Atkins looks back at George.

ATKINS
You killed me. You killed me.
God damn you, bastard. You
killed me.

The machine slowly disappears into the fog, but can be heard. George comes out of the building, dumps his sack and runs after the machine.

EXT - LONDON STREETS - DAWN

The fog is starting to burn off and getting thinner. George continues to follow the war machine, staying a block or two behind it. The war machine's gait becomes more unstable as it walks. It nearly topples more than once, bouncing off a building like a drunk man.

EXT - GREAT PIT - DAWN

The war machine has reached a pit that is much larger than the one seen on Horsell Common. The war machine slows considerably and attempts to cross the rim of the pit. It places each foot carefully before shifting the weight. The machine works its way to the opposite side of the pit. It begins to descend, but it is too unsteady for even that and the war machine falls, tumbling into the great pit. George, cautiously, climbs up the rim of the pit and peers inside. The pit is covered with the red weed, but weed has now turned brown and dead. The war machine is a pile of wreckage at the bottom of the pit. Near the center of the pit are two cylinders, with some sort of covering drawn over between them, creating a huge tent. Several other war machines are either incomplete or lowered to the ground as in storage. Only one war machine stands guard over the pit. George looks closely at the war machine. Birds can be seen flying up to it and flying off again with bits of flesh in their beaks. George stands. The machine does not react. George starts down into the pit. George reaches the covered area. He looks in cautiously. Inside there are Martians laying against each wall. They are not moving. George notices a bad smell. He enters.

INT - MARTIAN HOSPITAL - DAWN

The room is lit with glowing panels. Many Martians have feeding tubes in their mouths. The other end is stuck in small metal cylinders, like the one George saw with the wheezing Martian near Weybridge. There is a stack of cylinders at the other end. George walks through, careful not

to touch the Martians. He examines the cylinder and opens one. The fluid is clear and doesn't smell badly to George. He exits.

EXT - GREAT PIT - DAWN

As George works his way toward Atkins, he sees many dead humans piled haphazardly. Near where Atkins' Martian fell is a line of several clearly dead Martians as well as a trench dug for them. A dog tears at the flesh of one. George reaches the machine. Atkins is alive and startled by George.

ATKINS

You. I thought. I thought you left me to the bastards. Help get me out. I can't open it.

George and Atkins' combined strength pulls open the cage.

ATKINS

Let's go. Before another one comes.

GEORGE

It doesn't matter. They're dead, or they're dying.

ATKINS

You really are mad.

GEORGE

There's a hospital full of them. They're sick. That's why they can't operate the machines.

The top of the war machine's cupola falls off, startling them. Inside is a Martian. It is wheezing badly, coughing and choking. The cylinder falls from its tentacle and rolls to George's feet. The creature looks pathetic.

GEORGE

It caught a cold. It's dying from a cold.

Atkins pushes George out of the way and begins hacking at the Martian with his sword. Atkins is screaming like a mad man and the Martian shrieks in pain. George grabs Atkins and pulls him away.

GEORGE

Stop that. Leave it alone.

George throws Atkins to the ground and takes his sword. Atkins is furious but doesn't get up.

GEORGE

Stop behaving like a bloody savage and let it die in peace.

ATKINS

Why...but...kill it. Kill it.

GEORGE

Here.

George picks up the cylinder and holds it out to the Martian. The Martian takes it slowly and begins pouring it into its mouth.

ATKINS

What?

GEORGE

Show some mercy.

ATKINS

To that?

GEORGE

To that.

George turns at the sound of the falling cylinder. The Martian is dead.

ATKINS

I'll tear it apart and cut its guts out.

GEORGE

We're not as different from them as I thought. We went to Africa for empire. They came to earth for blood. We, at least, had the virtue of being humane.

George breaks Atkins' sword and begins walking away. Atkins picks up the broken sword.

ATKINS

You're soft. Soft like all the rest. We'll see how far men like you get. How are you going to live without me? You'll see. You'll need me. What are you going to do without assistant gunner Thomas Atkins?

EXT - MAYBERRY HILL - DAY

George is walking up the street to his home. The houses around him are still as wrecked as when he left. He reaches his home, and enters.

INT - GEORGE'S STUDY - DAY (MONTAGE)

The study is a wreck. His desk is turned over, the curtains are missing from the window. George slowly goes to work righting his desk and chair. Then he sits down with pen and paper and begins to write.

GEORGE

(voice over)

'No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's. Yet across the gulf of space, minds that are to our minds as ours are

to the beasts that perish, intellects vast, cool, and unsympathetic regarded this Earth with envious eyes and slowly and surely drew their plans against us.'

As we hear what George is writing, the study slowly changes. Day and night come and go. The study become more and more in repair. Curtains on the windows and such.

GEORGE

(v.o.)

'Never before in the history of the world has such a mass of human beings moved and suffered together. This was no disciplined march, it was a stampede - a stampede gigantic and terrible - six million people unarmed and unprovisioned. It was the beginning of the route of civilization, of the massacre of mankind.'

The study is looking very normal now.

GEORGE

(v.o.)

'The torment was over. even that day the healing would begin. the thousands who had fled by sea would return...'

Claire enters bringing George lunch and tea.

GEORGE

(v.o.)

'the pulse of life would return, growing stronger and stronger.'

INT - GEORGE'S PARLOR - NIGHT

Herbert, Claire and George's publisher are here as George is reading to them aloud from his manuscript.

GEORGE

'If the value of a man is in his character, then the value of a people can not be in their achievements, but in their hearts and ideals. The only achievement that places one man, or one country, or one people above another are ideas and the commitment to live by them.'

George puts down his manuscript and waits to see the reaction it has brought forth from his audience.

PUBLISHER

A very different book for you, George. I like it, but I'm not sure you following will.

GEORGE

You are going to publish it, aren't you?

PUBLISHER

I think we'll manage. Good night everyone.

The publisher picks up the manuscript and exits.

HERBERT

You wouldn't have written that three months ago.

GEORGE

I didn't believe that three months ago. I'm not the same man.

CLAIRE

Yes you are. You're the decent man I always knew you were.

THE END

