

**THE MAX HEADROOM FILM**

Second Draft Screenplay

by

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Based on an original idea by George Stone, Rocky Morton and Annabel Janke1

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1. CONCLUSION OF COMMERCIAL. (TBA).

Following, cut hard and fast.

MURRAY  
(VO. Close perspective)  
Stand by studio.

2. LOGO 'CHANNEL 23'.

FX Station Ident jingle.

ANNOUNCER

Back now to Channel Twenty-three's  
'show that wants to know'. Live with  
award winning Edison Carter and his  
team, Channel 23 is out there on your  
behalf asking the big questions ...  
world wide and NOW.

MURRAY  
(VO. Close perspective)  
Run titles.

3. TITLE SEQUENCE. "THE WHAT I WANT TO KNOW SHOW"

Ends with CAM jammed in a door fitted with a chain. CAM turns  
to face the viewer. Feature the black lens.

MURRAY  
(VO. Close perspective)  
Cut to Carter. Zoom.

In the lens appears EDISON CARTER CU. ZOOM IN with titles. As  
we zoom:

GORRISTER  
(VO. Radio compress FX)  
OK Edison we are live and I have you on  
track.

EDISON  
(Live, but a formula intro. FX chopper)  
This is Edison Carter. Join me high  
above our city. Somewhere below me,  
right now, is a question waiting to be  
asked. Today, what I want to know is:  
Just what happened in apartment  
one-nine-five? Just why will no one  
tell us?

4. CONTROL GALLERY

Ranged before monitors are four CONTROLLERS behind one of whom GORRISTER stands MURRAY the producer. EDISON talks under.

MURRAY

Gorrister, do we have an update?

GORRISTER

All we have is that it is an explosion and that the area is sealed off to all but residents.

MURRAY nods. Glances at other CONTROLLERS and screens then back to EDISON.

MURRAY

Cut up the call

WOMAN

(On screen)  
Well there's reporters and metro police everywhere. There was this awful noise and she come out running. They've took her off. I think they had to scrape him off. But nobody will tell us why we have to stay indoors.

EDISON

(On screen. CU)  
To find out join me live and direct.  
OK Control, I'm going down.

GORRISTER

We're right with you.

GORRISTER switches his console and looks up to high monitors cueing the CUT TO

5. ON SCREEN SATELLITE PICTURES OF THE CITY. COMPUTER ENHANCED  
THEY CUT IN RAPIDLY AS GORRISTER OPERATES.

EDISON (VO)

I'm out of the chopper now.

GORRISTER (VO)

From your position go north three

/hundred. Building

3.

hundred. Building 84B. The block has security on the main door so I'm taking you in on the east side. I'm getting no infra red on that entrance.

6. SCREEN CUTS TO COMPUTER GRAPHICS MAP OF STREETS AND BLOCK 84B.

At position of 'main entrance' a pulsing light indicates GUARD. A green light tracks EDISON.

EDISON (VO)

Isn't it about time I had a camera check control?

7. EXT STREET. LOW ANGLE H/H VIDEO CAMERA

CAM is carried low like a bag. CAM TRACKS along the STREET strewn with debris and decay. One single remote FIGURE heightens the stillness by suddenly darting across an alleyway.

GORRISTER (VO)

Picture good. Balance fine. Your link locked and strong. I'm cutting up timecode.

TIMECODE cuts up. It reads and runs on. CAM TRACKS to side door, turns and enters. PICTURE re exposes automatically. CAM TRACKS IN then STOPS. FX a distant babble of TV as numberless stations compete for the ear. FX TAPE.

8. CONTROL SCREEN. AS 3

Picture of LARGE SCALE STREETMAP changes to BUILDING FLOOR PLAN. Screen scrolls rapidly through levels until stopping on GROUND FLOOR. In detail we see apartment numbers.

9. INT CONTROL ROOM. CHANNEL 23

A bright buzzing world of Hi-tech. CONTROLLERS talking to reporters. We hear snatches.

"your satellite will be over horizon in 25 seconds."

"Ted, your position is getting very hot. I have troop movements very close to your right. I'm putting the chopper in to you."

"Annie, I know it's an important interview but you can't just smash a window in. I mean, holy shit it's the vatican."

"Prime Minister Slater promised a full investigation into the operation of private bodybanks."

BUT all this is BACKGROUND TO CU GORRISTER.

GORRISTER

I want you to turn right.

10. BOARDROOM CHANNEL 23

BG absurd city 'window'. PAN OFF across programme credits and titles to reveal at the head of a huge table sits GROSMANN. He watches a monitor. Its light flickers on his face highlighting him in the dark room. VO we hear the programme.

EDISON (VO)

OK, I'm in the building.

GROSMANN reaches for a telephone. His eyes do not leave the monitor.

11. INT APARTMENT BUILDING. CORRIDOR. H/H VIDEO PICTURE. POV  
EDISON'S CAM (AS 7)

CAM TRACKS along corridor of dreary spiritless ghetto. A thin dawn light illuminates in patches. Timecode still runs.

TV SOUNDS (VO)

(They swell and fade as BG to dialogue)  
"... Asian premier Kysotu reports full food banks for the next quarter ... Hello Nyasaland, welcome to 'Global Song of the Century ... Molly has already found Tony too much to handle so soon after his operation and suggests a video-vacation to the Red Sea, but they can't decide which studio to spend it in ... a JINGLE - Mr Beefies Bisonburger injected at base with all the relishes.

GORRISTER (VO)

OK Edison, there is an intersection ahead. Turn left and the apartment is located seven down on the right.

EDISON (VO)

Left and seven right. Any update on this?

GORRISTER

Apparently the wife has been hospitalised.

## TV SOUNDS (VO)

"... well ha ha ha the red team is now halfway up the waterfall, but oohhh she's slipping (hysterical hoots and cheers) well ha ha ha hard luck ... maybe blue team will get up to the witches castle ... oh dear they've all gone now! Ha ha ha. And from Xixaq, the world's biggest corporation, 'Musquash' a combined deodorant and fly killer ... Yesterday 26 new sats hit orbit with only one failure ..."

CAM TRACKS round corner to reveal MS the bottom halves of TWO ENG REPORTERS and a GUARD. CAM moves MCU and STOPS.

## REPORTER (VO)

Hi Edison. Through here we no go.  
This man he say.

## EDISON

(cheerily)  
Hi Patrick.

## REPORTER (VO)

First time ever we get to a story  
before you, and Control has pulled  
us out. Typical!

TWO REPORTERS clear picture. CAM rests thoughtfully on the GUARD then PANS away and TRACKS back down the corridor. Turning the corner TWO REPORTERS seen vanishing through the street door. CAM STOPS.

## EDISON (VO)

Gorrister. Gorrister I'm calling you  
on the link.

12. CONTROL GALLERY

MURRAY is replacing a phone. An angry shrug. A query. GORRISTER sitting back in his seat.

## MURRAY

(To a Controller)  
Ted cut up your story on five.  
Continuity, cover me with a crosslink  
to this insert. It's your standby  
intro to story five. Go.

MURRAY watches the screens. CAM TRACKS IN to GORRISTER who is lighting a small cigar.

EDISON (VO)

How come this story is pulled?

GORRISTER

(Glancing to MURRAY)

It's just come down to Murray.

EDISON (VO)

I am not dropping this one Gorrister.  
Something smells. I'm going round  
back to see if I can access a window.

GORRISTER

(Fucking off the picture)

Edison, it's pulled. Come on in.

GORRISTER chucks down his cigar packet and shrugs to a colleague,  
then moves out of his seat. CAM TRACKS IN to EDISON'S CAM still on  
line.

### 13. EXT STREET. OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT BUILDING. H/H VIDEO CAM

EDISON (VO)

Gorrister. Gorrister you Fricki Kozono!  
Gorrister!

CAM TRACKS ALONG STREET. Distant perspective TV FX continue -  
words indistinct but music, jingles, gunfire, studio laughter  
penetrates. All curtains are shut. CAM turns corner, pauses then  
TRACKS INTO alleyway. TV FX swell. Feature MID DISTANCE a broken  
ground floor window. Curtains hang out. Glass on the ground, some  
hint of scorch marks. CAM TRACKS IN revealing TWO DERELICTS by an  
oily fire watching a TV set on a crate. Noticing EDISON they move  
slowly but menacingly. They attack. The fight is brief and seen  
from POV H/H CAM. CAM is used as a club and one DERELICT goes  
down. CAM falls to the ground. A struggle of legs then DERELICT  
running away. FX approaching CHOPPER. CAM is jerked off the  
ground. FX hard breathing.

### 14. INT CONTROL ROOM CHANNEL 23

MS FG GORRISTER leaning over console of fellow CONTROLLER. Feature  
door marked HELIPAD. FG GORRISTER'S empty console. The doors open  
as EDISON walks through. Several people greet him cheerfully. He  
is dishevelled and carries a forehead cut. He steps to the empty  
console placing his dented CAM by the name of GORRISTER. He turns  
and eyes GORRISTER then moves purposefully towards him. TRACK BACK  
to reveal sequentially. MURRAY on the telephone. Glances up then,  
watching, rings off. He moves.

EDISON facing GORRISTER who eyes him like a rabbit might a fox.  
MURRAY striding through the consoles.

EDISON punches GORRISTER hard and he crashes into the console. There is general stunned reaction. CONTROLLERS torn between their screens and the action.

EDISON

You do not leave me, or anybody,  
exposed out there.

MURRAY

Hey Edison ... what's the problem?  
Easy.

EDISON

The problem is this clown got off my  
tail and damn near got me killed.

GORRISTER

The job was pulled. I pulled you out.

EDISON

You cut me off. No job is over until  
I am back at base you lethal bloody  
idiot ...

MURRAY

(Interposing himself)  
Edison come over here.

MURRAY persuades the blazing EDISON away. GORRISTER recovering.

GORRISTER

I don't need this prima donna crap even  
from the great Edison bloody Carter.

A fellow CONTROLLER tries to calm him as EDISON whips round - but is manoeuvred away by MURRAY.

EDISON

Get him off me Murray. It's my ass  
out there not his. Just get me a  
controller who can keep me alive out  
there.

MURRAY

Listen Edison. I was out there once.  
I know how you feel. But it stops  
there.



EDISON

This is a big one isn't it?

MURRAY

(Long evaluating pause)  
I don't know. It was pulled from high up.

EDISON facials enquiry.

Very high.

15. INT BOARDROOM CHANNEL 23. 18.10 hrs

The room is dominated by a vast black conference table. At its head is GROSMANN. SIX EXECUTIVES, each with a console, sit round the table. There is the constant sound of musical bleeps and clicks as keyboards and screens reveal facts and figures. We hear MURRAY'S show. "We seem to have lost Edison Carter. So now, direct from Alaska Anita Clarke reports". The SOUND is CUT.

GROSMANN

Turning now to ratings. We have every cause for satisfaction.

He selects a channel on his keyboard. All eyes turn to a screen.

VOICE

Overnight ratings for Channel 23.  
Low at one one five million. High  
at two three six million. We hold  
top ratings. Projections for the  
next hour ...

A ripple of satisfaction as GROSMANN kills the screen.

GROSMANN

Comment?

EXECUTIVE

Can we take a current two-way sampler  
on the Polly Show?

GROSMANN touches keyboard and all turn. CUT TO

16. INSERT. TWO WAY SAMPLER INT DOMESTIC ROOM

All chairs face CAM. On one a man sits and stares TO CAM. VO we hear the show he is watching. SCREEN SUPERED is 'Two-way sampler. Polly Show. Viewers locked 169,122,601'.

FEMALE AMERICAN (VO)

(Rasping)

Well Polly if that doesn't beat all!

SECOND VOICE

(As above but hysterical)

Well, it certainly beats me !!!

Howls of VO studio laughter and applause. THE MAN beams inanely  
 SUPERED ON SCREEN "Status C3 capacity 2000 credits per week.  
 Vulnerability high. He signals OFF SCREEN. A WOMAN (of sorts)  
 bends into SCREEN. Smiles at us. The VIEWERS LOCKED figure spins  
 to 169,122,602. She hands THE MAN a huge burger and leaves FRAME.  
 The figure rolls back to ... 601. She peeps in again and the  
 figure rolls to 602.

GROSMANN (VO)

Comment?

17. INT BOARDROOM. (AS 15)

EXECUTIVE

We stay with it. It has a good  
 rating and excellent consumer holding.  
 It's cheap, it's dumb, and they love it.

GROSMANN

Let's move to the Blipvert problem.

Murmurs of assent. A signal or two of concern.

We may have to suspend the use of  
 Blipvertisements temporarily. There  
 have been, as you know, these side  
 effects on a few viewers. However,  
 returning to conventional 30 second  
 advertisements will give viewers  
 time, once again, to switch channels  
 when they appear ... with the  
 consequent dips in our ratings. The  
 very thing that Blipverts were designed  
 by Bryce to prevent. The Xixaq  
 Corporation is very keen to press  
 ahead buying airtime using Blipverts.  
 We cannot stall them for long. I do  
 not intend to lose a client of this  
 global importance.

ASHWELL

These few people are obviously sick.  
 Probably no connection with Blipverts.

MS FORMBY

This is only the second generation to have viewed television daily from birth. There may be some effect.

EDWARDS

Not our problem. Don't see the connection. Anyway we want them to watch all day. And night.

ASHWELL

I read about this somewhere. People sort of 'go off'. Spontaneously combust you know.

GROSMANN

No, I don't. We need some informed opinion on this so I have asked Bryce to meet us on the videolink. Now he's our top man. Leave him absolutely to me.

FEMALE VOICE

(VO phone FX)  
The head of Research and Development on the link sir.

ALL turn to their screens. BRYCE appears. He is sixteen. He wears a T-shirt. A murmuring of obsequious greeting.

GROSMANN

Hello there Bryce. I need to talk about your Blipverts.

BRYCE

(Bored)  
Well I'm rather busy. I have succeeded in computer generating a parrot on screen that squawks.

GROSMANN

My congratulations. Whatever next. I wonder could you just spare a moment to illustrate to the board here this little hitch on Blipverts.

BRYCE

(Reluctant)  
Well it's simple enough I suppose. Look.

His GRAPHICS illustrate the following.

BRYCE (cont'd)

The human body has millions of nerve endings. Each carries a tiny electrical charge but added together a surprisingly large one. Now, because I designed Blipverts to compress a huge amount of advertising information into the brain very quickly, the brain appears to violently stimulate these nerve endings simultaneously. In some subjects it causes a short circuit. Some very inert viewers literally explode. I've got a rather good tape of one. Simple as that.

A long stunned silence. GROSMANN scanning the EXECUTIVES' reactions.

BEN CHEVIOT

Simple. It won't be simple when Blipverts go global. My God!

GROSMANN

I'm sure Bryce can handle the problem ...

BRYCE

It's not my problem. My brief was to find a way to stop channel switching. I mean, you know, I only invent the bomb, I don't drop it. Ha ha.

He gives that quick shrugging grin of the uncertain adolescent.

GROSMANN

We think it might affect sales if people thought ... well.

BRYCE

Well don't tell them then.

The BOARDROOM is horribly silent. Everyone checks everyone else for reaction.

GROSMANN

Well, one of our reporters may have got quite near the truth. We have to be careful.

BRYCE

Pull his show off. Or you could  
always kill him.

No one knows whether to take this as another joke. GROSMANN  
blanches.

18. INT CONTROL ROOM CHANNEL 23

MURRAY

Theora I'm putting you with Edison  
Carter. He's the best we have at  
twenty-three. A bit volatile but good.

THEORA

Yes. I heard. What was the story he  
was pulled out of?

MURRAY looks at THEORA and facials - leave it.

MURRAY

Hi Edison. This is Theora. I've  
pulled her from World One. I've  
warned her you're a charmer!

EDISON is standing by the console. Non committal. He has cleaned  
up and changed. He has a bruise round the forehead cut. He is  
tinkering with his CAMERA.

THEORA

Hello. How's the head?

EDISON

It's fine. How's yours?

He glances at MURRAY who facials 'be nice'. THEORA puts her  
clipboard on the console unintentionally near the 'Gorrister'  
nameplate.

THEORA

Where do you want to start?

MURRAY

I'll leave you two together. No  
trouble or I stop your pocket money.  
You know the rules!

EDISON

Right. You can start by breaking one;  
See what you can get through Security  
on this rash of reporters being pulled  
off hot stories for no reason. Let's  
see if you can access the inaccessible.

MURRAY

Edison leave it! Now back off. I  
mean it.

THEORA works unfazed at the console. She is busy scrolling through  
on screen. She speaks into her headset. She is cajoling, sweet  
talking. Her face resets having achieved her objective. She works  
on, ignoring the others.

Christ, after the kind of material you  
normally bring in what's so special  
about some microwave oven going pop?

EDISON

Since when did people guard exploded  
microwaves Murray?

THEORA

Right, I've got the inaccessible.

CUT TO: EDISON and MURRAY TWO SHOT look down at screen. MURRAY  
breaks into a huge grin. EDISON almost smiles but holds it. CUT  
TO.

# 19. ON SCREEN. A MEN'S LOO

It is empty. The stalls range along the wall OPPOSITE and BELOW.  
Screens flicker at eye level.

MURRAY (VO)

How the hell ... ?

THEORA

I accessed the security system as Mr  
Carter asked. This place is about as  
inaccessible as I can get.

CUT TO: MURRAY is impressed and amused. Grinning and making faces  
at EDISON he moves away. He looks back - he is loving the joke.  
MURRAY is OK. THEORA has broken the tension and EDISON  
acknowledges it.

EDISON

Alright Theora. What's on the line  
apart from dirty pictures.

THEORA scrolls through, cuts up input on her screens. The L00  
remains forgotten on one screen.

THEORA

We've got a sniper in D17 ... there's  
the intersection collapse locking  
the traffic on orbital route one.  
Query sabotage. It looks as if the  
derelicts are active again.

CUT TO EDISON shrugs.

There's a missile missing from AKG.  
That's hot. Fancy that? (THEORA  
jesting) There's a guy going to sing  
the whole of Shakespeare for charity.  
A nuclear waste space disposal shuttle  
has gone ape over Asia. Assassination  
of a whole medic team in Bolivia. Do  
you want to get down there Edison?

EDISON

Give it to Joe.

She looks up to him. But his eyes are back on the L00 screen. He  
motions to look. A 'record' light blinks corner of frame. CUT TO  
ON SCREEN. A MEN'S L00. GROSMANN and BEN backs to CAMERA.

GROSMANN

Bryce is a problem. Now he's onto this  
'Computer Generated People' business  
he doesn't want to know about Blipverts  
and we need them on air Ben.

BEN

They can't be used any more. Unless  
Bryce can sort out this effect they are  
unusable.

GROSMANN

We have no choice. We are committed  
to the programme. The Xixaq Corporation  
have a massive contract with us.

BEN

Massive or no if this gets out Channel 23 is in very serious trouble. They got too damn close to the story twice already.

EDISON stares at the screen as the men exit.

EDISON

Theora, run that again. The last bit.

She rewinds and runs the last moments.

BEN

... they got too damn close to the story twice already.

EDISON

Did they now.

EDISON glances at other input screens. On ONE a crew and reporter stand at a HELIPAD. They check their watches.

Theora, what's that crew doing on the roof?

She checks a clipboard.

THEORA

Apparently they're covering Ben Cheviot's departure to Tokio on this big Xixaq contract.

EDISON looks back at the empty LOO, then at the HELIPAD SCREEN. He moves rapidly. Grabbing his CAMERA he takes off. THEORA watches intrigued.

## 20. HELIPAD ROOFTOP. CHOPPER FX

The CREW have CHEVIOT ready for interview. REPORTER about to speak. EDISON arrives. Speaks to the REPORTER.

REPORTER

OK Mr Carter. All yours. Sorry sir.

The CREW shuffle questioningly away. EDISON pulls CHEVIOT aside.

BEN

What the hell ...



EDISON

I understand sir that you are off to  
Tokio to finalise the Xixaq contract?

BEN

Why yes. Er, this is a major partnership  
between our Channel and the world's  
largest corporation, it is a momentous ...

EDISON

What is the Blipvert problem?

BEN

What! Good God man. Look, this is  
absolutely out of order ...

EDISON

... too damn close twice already, Mr  
Cheviot?

BEN

How the hell ...

EDISON

Just something I picked up in the gents.

BEN is astonished. He struggles with real fear and a need to  
unburden. He squirms as EDISON stares at him unblinking.

BEN

I have a problem.

EDISON

So I see.

BEN

My problem is whether I can trust you.

## 21. CONTROL ROOM CHANNEL 23

THEORA at her console. EDISON'S voice on radio link.

EDISON (VO)

I don't know how much of that you got  
control. Are you busy tonight. Maybe  
all night?

THEORA

Mr Carter, we hardly know each other.

EDISON (VO)

Well you soon will.

THEORA grins to herself.

22. INT CONTROL ROOM CHANNEL 23. NIGHT

The room is dark. A dim distant glimmer reveals the whereabouts of THEORA at her console. We hear her voice.

THEORA

Hold your position. Standby. We have the level.

CUT TO

23. THEORA'S SCREEN. PLAN OF BUILDING

'Channel 23. Level 126. Section D'. SCREEN cuts closer to an intersection. Computer enhanced diagram. SCREEN PANS along corridor. Stops. PANS back. Tries next corridor. Sees words. CUTS CLOSER to reveal 'Research and Development'. POV H/A SECURICAM B/W INTO SHOT comes EDISON. He carries his CAMERA. He walks confidently UNDER CAM which PANS to follow him. He pauses at the door.

EDISON

(sync but via radio link)  
I have a problem here. I am at the target but I need the vidilock code.

THEORA

I know, I can see you.

EDISON looks around then up to CAM. EDISON'S POV the SECURICAM. Pilot light indicates 'on'.

EDISON

How the hell did you access into that?

THEORA

(VO and FX bleeping)  
OK. Now the day code is B.R.Y.C.E/  
126D/ and let's try his birthday -  
seventeenth of the tenth, 1.7.1.0.  
Libra. Might have guessed.

18.

EDISON enters numbers on the doorpanel. A light flashes green. He pushes the door open. Enters. CAM PANS through 180 and back to the door. THEORA 'just checking'.

24. INT BRYCE'S WORKSHOP. NIGHT

A hi-tech environment curiously humanised by some of BRYCE'S personal effects. A ski jacket. Jogging shoes. Photograph of himself with an award. Copy of 'Access to Inner Worlds - Colin Wilson'. 'Teach Yourself Judo', etc etc. EDISON moves around the room. There is a sudden weird fluttering. EDISON spins round, a PARROT flaps in a cage. Strange devices surround it. EDISON switches a SCREEN on. A COMPUTER GENERATED PARROT appears. It squawks. The real PARROT cocks it's head. "Who's a pretty boy then".

25. BATHROOM. A BATH

BRYCE sits bolt upright. He stares ahead. His rubber duck motionless in his hand. Reveal he is watching a blank monitor. A red light flashes above it. A picture forms. It is of EDISON prowling the lab. BRYCE reaches out to a frog shaped wallphone.

26. A VAN INT

MAHLER snoozing as BREUGHEL replaces a buzzing phone. He starts the vehicle.

MAHLER

Got a nice accident?

BREUGHEL

It was the parrot man again.

MAHLER

Another one! He must eat them by the dozen. Where we going to get one this time of night?

BREUGHEL

Not a fresh parrot. A nasty little burglar man to be cornered. And perhaps hit.

27. BRYCE'S WORKSHOP. INT

THEORA (VO)

Camera check please.

EDISON switches on.

28. THEORA'S SCREEN

SCREEN flashes on. Picture clears. EDISON'S CAM POV of BRYCE'S WORKSHOP. It roves around, then he places it on a bench. CUT TO

29. THEORA'S CONSOLE. SCREEN CONTAINS EDISON'S CAM POV

She watches as EDISON can be seen searching. He is having trouble. He checks a jacket, behind things, under things.

THEORA

How about the playback unit?

EDISON moves over and selects 'Eject'. A tape flops out. He examines it. This is it.

EDISON

How did you know?

THEORA

Tell me a kid that ever puts things away. Even clever ones. I know all about little boys.

EDISON

I just bet you do.

The CAM PICTURE tumbles as EDISON moves it to view a screen.

30. BRYCE'S WORKSHOP

EDISON adjusting the CAMERA to face the playback unit. He enters the tape and selects switches. He removes his headset. The CAM is set up too far away from the replay unit to enable him to reach both. He switches ON. The SCREEN lights with a test card.

31. THEORA'S SCREEN. EFFECT A BIT LIKE ASTRONAUTS WORKING TO CAMERA

EDISON CAMERA POV. EDISON moves to the CAM, his hand moves OUT OF FRAME. Focus changes. SCREEN sharpens. PICTURE SNATCH PANS to centralise SCREEN IN SHOT, moves, looks back, then settles towards SCREEN. PICTURE flahses. Rolls with very slight break-up. THEORA tries to rectify picture fault. C/Ws of her increasing anxiety with picture.

THEORA (VO)

Edison. Edison for Christ's sake.

She is now frantically trying to regain PICTURE

THEORA (Sync)

Edison for crying out get that headset on. Shit!

32. C/WAY POV EDISON'S CAM POV

PICTURE clears. Prominently FG his headset on the bench.

THEORA (VO)

Edison. Edison.

The PICTURE breaks up very badly. Shash and noise. Suddenly it clears. The MAN gazing at SCREEN.

MAN

(To off screen)  
Jeannie is that my burger?

He takes a burger from a plate.

Got any more beers?

33. BRYCE'S WORKSHOP

EDISON viewing. We hear the tape.

VOICE

Yes indeedie. Xixaq homediner pack just heats itself on your lap. Zip the ring and wow! Oven fresh munchies. Real taste that's HOT. And now the very latest from the very greatest. Xixaq gives you a chance to win a million.

EDISON watching. Suddenly the Blipvert screek. EDISON physically reacts. On SCREEN the man swells then explodes - it is a startling effect. There is no blood and bits - an electrical disintegration. He starts to rewind the tape. There is a penetrating alarm. Instantly he moves to his CAMERA and clamps on the headset.

EDISON

Shit. Did you get all that it's unbelievable ...

THEORA (VO)

I'm pulling you out! Move! Through the main door. Turn right. Get the hell out of there.

There is no hesitation. EDISON heads for the door.

34. INT CORRIDOR OUTSIDE BRYCE'S WORKSHOP

From POV SECURICAM he exits, turns RIGHT and moves swiftly away.  
Ident 'Securicam 763. Level 126D'.

35. INT ANOTHER CORRIDOR. POV ANOTHER SECURICAM. IDENT AS 764.  
LEVEL 126D

EDISON comes into shot. Pauses. Looks up.

EDISON

What's the problem Control?

THEORA

Intruders. Two. They activated the alarm in the express lift. Keep your ENG rolling so I can track you in case I lose the Securicam access. By the way, they're armed.

EDISON

Oh. Great.

THEORA

Go ahead. Go left. Fourway intersection. Don't cross that intersection until command.

36. INT CORRIDOR. PRINCIPAL CAMERA

TRACK with EDISON as he strides along. He turns left and approaches an intersection. We see Securicam light blink on. It is pointing down the corridor at 90° to EDISON

37. INT CORRIDOR SECURICAM AS ABOVE

POV SECURICAM. At end of corridor a cross corridor. A long pause. CAM TILTS 180 under to look BACK down a corridor INVERTED, then TILTS back. A pause. BREUGHEL and MAHLER cross the far corridor.

38. ESCAPE FROM TOWER 23. INTERCUT B/W SECURICAMS, STRESSED H/H  
EDISON CAM, PRINCIPAL CAM, MONITORS OF 'GAMEBOARD', KEYBOARDS

EDISON'S journey to the basement car park becomes a lethal battle as THE TOWER fights to prevent his escape. Lifts, escalators, automatic doors and systems, lights, heating systems, electrical components conspire to stop him. THEORA accesses the TOWERS control computer and engages it in mind to mind fighting. She realises an awesome truth. 'Edison, there's somebody else in the system'.

It is eventually revealed that BRYCE is the OPPONENT. The games develop, BRYCE playing with concentrated but childish glee, THEORA in deadly earnest. As the game increases in speed and complexity BRYCE reaches out and accesses the staff list. He finds he is playing GORRISTER.

EDISON is finally delivered to the underground car park. As he drives away, hood down, BRYCE triggers the fire sprinklers. Line after line trigger as he drives furiously through. His ENG CAM jammed on the dash gives added pictures as he slithers through the roadways.

THEORA in perspiring fury navigates EDISON towards the exit barrier. As he approaches that level BRYCE and THEORA play an electronic game of arm wrestling - the exit arm thrashing up and down as they try to out think each other. It jams triumphantly up. But L/A as car approaches BRYCE plays the ace. The metal ramps edge menacingly up. Too late THEORA realises. The CAR hits the ramps and the back end is catapulted up. EDISON'S head smashes into the exit arm.

His POV we see SUBJECTIVE CAM the approach of 'MAX HEADROOM 1.3m'.

#### 39. INT UNDERGROUND CAR PARK. NIGHT

THEORA racing through the drenching spray finds the CAR. It has crashed down. Above it she sees the dented arm 'MAX HEADROOM 1.3m'. The spray stops. EDISON is gone.

#### 40. BRYCE STUDIO INTERCUT WITH GROSMANN'S BEDROOM

They speak on vidiphones. BRYCE FG, GROSMANN on SCREEN BG plus CU GROSMANN on SCREEN.

GROSMANN

Why?

BRYCE

He saw the Blipvert tape.

GROSMANN

Bryce he is the best known reporter on air. His show is prime time top rated. He satellites globally.

BRYCE

And he saw the tape Mr Grosmann.

BRYCE

How did he penetrate security?

BRYCE

He seems very resourceful. And he has a good controller.

GROSMANN

You know what you are saying Bryce?

BRYCE

Someone had better kill Gorrister.

GROSMANN looks long and hard. He is having trouble believing all this.

GROSMANN

Just kill an employee. Fine, fine. Then what? Total our top reporter, fix the two guards? I run a television network not a goddam hit squad Bryce.

BRYCE

It's quite rational. One. Kill Gorrister. Two. Forget the heavies - Breughel and Mahler work for me.

C/W to reveal BREUGHEL and MAHLER GUARDING A PRONE EDISON.

Three. Keep Carter on ice in the cryogenic unit and thus claim he is with Gorrister on a story in the Arctic War. Four. Carter returns eventually and dead. Preserved in ice of course.

GROSMANN is staring at the SCREEN. This kid is calmly suggesting mayhem.

GROSMANN

In ice.

BRYCE

Meanwhile his reports keep coming in for a while so no one will question his sudden disappearance. Five ...



GROSMANN

Bryce, I don't want to appear  
ungrateful - but how do we keep his  
reports coming in - a seance?

BRYCE

No. I compute the physical characteristics  
of his head. Then I print his memory,  
his synaptic circuits, his mind, you know.  
The brain is only a binary computer, a  
series of on/off switches. It's very  
easy.

GROSMANN has his head in his hands. He fingers his lips. He looks  
ill.

Then, Mr Grosmann, I can generate this  
man onto a screen straight out of my  
computer. Just like a parrot.

#### 41. CONTROL ROOM CHANNEL 23. NIGHT

THEORA approaches her console. Soaked and exhausted she considers  
her next move. She leans forward and operates her keyboard.  
CONSOLE SCREEN. SCREEN cuts up 'Hospitals. Area 5 District 23.  
Admissions. 0100.' SCREEN pages through admissions. SCREEN cuts  
up 'Emergency units. Area 5 District 23.' SCREEN pages  
admissions. THEORA selects one unit, keys in.

THEORA

Supervisor please. Hi. I'm tracing  
Mr E Carter. Personal Ident Code  
7-4928B-dg6629. Auto accident section  
area 5 district 23 ...

#### 42. EXT HIGH ANGLE. THE CITY AT NIGHT

CAM PANS across the nightscape. It comes to rest on Channel 23  
BUILDING.

#### 43. BOARDROOM CHANNEL 23. WIDESHOT

The ratings screens carry constantly changing displays. The night  
viewing figures are huge. The teleworld never sleeps. Market  
figures reflect the endless teletrading. 'Viewers locked' figures  
jitter, Satellite positions roll. FX a silence with the lightest  
hint of electronics. Reveal GROSMANN pacing. Checking the time.  
He sits in a control chair at the screens. CUT TO.

MS GROSMANN. He slowly flips broadcast channels. Nothing appeals.  
He switches to a news channel. We study him as:

## NEWS VOICE

... while the Arctic War remains stalemated. The computers predict no advantage possible and all parties are standing down. While over the Red Sea the two 'Cooler' satellites have drawn a bead on both parties on a fourteen hour ultimatum. Unless countermanded by accords they will autofire simultaneously. The Xixaq Corporation announces record territory holding, placing them firmly at the top of the superleague of world giants ...

GROSMANN moves to the huge wall window and stands back to CAM looking out over the city.

... with major market shares in all continents. Nearer home the Streetguards record low onstreet crime. Isolated incidents include 116 murders and 423 assaults. Four unaccounted domestic explosions finish the roll. These figures citywide and overnight. Next up, Market trends.

He leaves.

44. CONTROL ROOM CHANNEL 23

THEORA. She is tired, still sodden, drained. She selects a channel. An orchestra play 'Concierto Aranjuez' (2nd movement). She worries to it.

45. BRYCE'S STUDIO

GROSMANN is seated before the SCREEN array watching BRYCE with a mixture of scepticism and admiring incredulity as he adjusts the equipment.

The following conversation is heard as if by EDISON. On SCREEN a medley of images - war zones, riots, interviews, airline desks, 'Max Headroom 1.3m', a GIRL - a surreal montage of EDISON'S mind and experience; the strange land of the subconscious being mapped by BRYCE'S technique. It is heard in hypnotic trance, like a coma or those last seconds before unconsciousness induced by anaesthetic. The dialogue will drift in and out. And mix voices.

## BRYCE

... all the information in the mind and replay it at will ... old gramophone records had a complete ... orchestra in a groove ... parrots squawk ... research funds not to be starved.

BRYCE

We can record all the information in his mind and replay it at will. Just like the old gramophone records captured the sounds and colours of an entire orchestra on a single groove, I can record all the information and detail of his mind. It is a stunning breakthrough. Think of the implications .... TV presenters, admen, politicians ... My early experiments with the parrot have proved the system works. I can make him squawk whenever I want. My research funds must not be starved now.

GROSMANN

..... do you ever sleep Bryce?

BRYCE

Only physically. I learned the trick at a school for specially gifted children. Quite simple really. Yes. Mr Carters sexual memory is most illuminating. They didn't teach that. It's a pity that I can't generate all his body on screen yet, only the head and shoulders. But one day I will be able to computer generate the whole person. Holograms may be the answer. A whole person who exists only in a computer!

GROSMANN

Real people who don't exist .... how far ahead are you with this?

BRYCE

Very far. I am very far ahead with this....

EDISON'S VOICE AS IN  
CHILDHOOD (FX)

..... very far ahead. Very far. Over the hills and far away ....

WOMAN'S VOICE (FX)

Over the hills and far away. Sleep tight now. Sleep. Sleep.

GROSMANN (BACK TO REALITY)

Does this thing reproduce him as a reporter is all I am concerned about? This whole situation is deeply worrying.

GROSMANN

... do you ever sleep Bryce?

BRYCE

Only physically ... image the difficulty  
... specially gifted children for  
nothing ... his sexual memory is most  
illuminating ... rest of the body not  
needed ... yet only head and shoulders  
... one day the whole person ...  
holograms the answer perhaps ... a whole  
person walking but only a computer to  
make him ...

GROSMANN

Real people who don't exist. How far  
ahead are you with this?

BRYCE

Very far, very far.(EDISON'S voice  
mixes through) Very far away and  
over the hills. Sleep tight now.

GROSMANN

(Back to reality)  
Does this Thing reproduce him as a  
reporter is all I am concerned about.  
This whole situation is deeply  
worrying.

He checks his watch. BRYCE gets the hint and operates his  
keyboard. He stands back and watches the central screen. The  
electronics hum up to a peak of activity. Graphic displays carry  
undefined but copious information. THE SCREEN. Picture noise.  
Half frame pictures (perhaps distorted childhood images - very  
brief) Then clears and settles. A computer generated form of a  
head builds. BRYCE. Alert. Excited. He knows he is looking at a  
miracle, GROSMANN is staring ahead. He looks like a man reading  
his overdraft. The head babbles, breaks down, rewinds. CUT TO  
GROSMANN gapes at this demented half likeness. He stares at BRYCE  
who adjusts the monitor.

BRYCE

These circuits are randomising a little.  
It'll settle though. I need more time  
on the recall generator, it's bouncing.

GROSMANN boggles at the gibbering wreck. He is going to blow up.  
MAX sounds: "Ma Ma Ma Ma Mmmmm! Ah! Mama Mama Ma Head Head!"

GROSMANN

Goddam it! Get that babbling clown off those screens. Kill it. What kind of a screw up is this! This is a joke Bryce.

GROSMANN leaps at the keyboard jabbing keys hysterically. BRYCE intervenes.

BRYCE

Leave it alone. Don't you dare touch him.

GROSMANN

(Suddenly utterly cold and controlled)  
Him! This junk is a machine. That is not Edison Carter. It is a computer generated geek. It is useless. Do you understand me?

CUT TO: BRYCE, a cold implacable glare. Truculent, adolescent but an unnerving power.

BRYCE

I understand your opinion Mr Grosmann.

GROSMANN

(Choosing to miss the barb)  
Then understand this. You abandon that garbage. You apply this unit to the immediate and now even more crucial matter of the Blipvert problem. I want that resolved and I want it fast. This parrot project terminates now.

They face each other. Each wordlessly evaluates the other. 'MAX' on SCREEN is frozen, his head cocked as if listening.

BRYCE

Perhaps you do not understand the potential of this development.

GROSMANN

I understand the potential of this situation. That electric oaf has a record of what Carter saw - a man exploding during a Blipvertisement. Smash it. Carter here has the same information. However reluctantly, we,

/somehow, have to ...

GROSMANN (cont'd)

somehow, have to ... get rid of him.  
I do so hate wasting an employee.

BRYCE

(Suddenly co-operative)  
I will have my people handle it.  
They relish performing good works.

GROSMANN eyes him, then mid gesture nods. BRYCE picks up a telephone. At the door GROSMANN punches in numbers on the lock. Vidiphone voice 'I'm sorry, that is incorrect. Please try again'. GROSMANN glares at BRYCE while punching again.

#### 46. CHANNEL 23 LIFT

BREUGHEL and MAHLER with EDISON supported between them. A whisky bottle now prominently stuck in his pocket. 'MAX' on the floor.

MAHLER

Don't like him. Too clean. Gives me  
the creeps.

BREUGHEL

Cleanliness is next to godliness.

MAHLER

Nice head though. Our Mr Bryce's head  
would be worth something eh? A boffins  
bonce. Good money.

BREUGHEL

Not a great payer our Mr Bryce.

MAHLER

Nice head though.

#### 47. THE BREUGHEL/MAHLER VAN

MAHLER removes oxygen mask from EDISON. Sniffs the mask and grins  
reactively. BREUGHEL drives, takes the mask, returns it.

BREUGHEL

Is the body still alive?

MAHLER shoves the mask over EDISONS face. He breathes.

MAHLER

He's a bit alive. Nasty knock on the head thāt. Brain banger.

BREUGHEL drives on. He flicks up a monitor bolted to the dash. Spins channels. Glances at EDISON. MAHLER grins back. He is strapping a wristwatch on his arm above many others. BREUGHEL scans the SCREEN. MAHLER is about to smash EDISON'S hand to get CAMERA. BREUGHEL stops him.

BREUGHEL

Silly. Hands are rare and expensive items. Right. That's it. They're short at Nightingales.

MAHLER

I got a mate works there. He does contact lenses. Better than watches but a bit fiddly.

BREUGHEL

Mr Bryce didn't say kill him did he.

MAHLER

Not at all. He said get rid of him.

#### 48. NIGHTINGALES BODYBANK

BREUGHEL at a booth. BG EDISON is wheeled through doors. MAHLER wrenching at the CAM still in his hand checking his pockets, to the mild disgust of the porters.

BREUGHEL

(Checking papers)  
The bonus for a live dead body?

WOMAN

Clinical brain death only carries 20 points.

BREUGHEL

Yea but he's still warm. Got to be value in that.

WOMAN

There is. 20 points. Goodbye.

BREUGHEL gives his best 'bloody civil servants' look mixed with what he takes to be a murderous stare. The WOMAN does not notice.

49. INT VAN. DAWN BREAKING

BREUGHEL prepares to start and leave.

BREUGHEL

Live on Arrival. Very tasty angle that.

MAHLER

Opens up possibilities.

VAN moves away. BREUGHEL selects CITYMAP on SCREEN.

Where we going to store Mr Bryce's little toy?

BREUGHEL

Well he said he wanted it safe and he wanted it in good hands until he needed it.

MAHLER

He did yeah. He said that.

BREUGHEL eyes MAHLER. As they drive they spot a MAN crossing the road carrying a stack of video tapes. MAHLER points. BREUGHEL checks his watch - no time. They just miss him. MAHLER disappointed.

50. INT BIGTIME TELEVISION. DAY

FX MUSIC (TBA). DOMINIQUE seated at table at rear of truck. Windows give out onto semi-derelict area. DOMINIQUE fiddles with an ancient desk calculator and a pile of paper. She smokes tremendously. She puzzles over a bill. She wears a dressing gown.

DOMINIQUE

Reg!

No response, she turns and calls again. Louder. She knocks over a cup of coffee which spills on the calculator. She wipes it casually, then enters more figures. CAM PANS off and finds REG seated in a lethal array of paleolithic electronics, his eyes shut and his head nodding to the music. An adjacent monitor shows a truly bad promo. REG is a 50 year old punk. He sports a green mohican.



DOMINIQUE

Reg!

REG opens his eyes, gestures 'hush' as the promo ends. He presses a mixer button. He appears on the monitor over his shoulder BG a rotating symbol 'BTTV' on SCREEN. REG revolves it with his finger.

REG

Right. Great. Wunnerful. Here's another one. 'Ave a nice day.

CUT TO CU DOMINIQUE. She watches REG (off SCREEN RIGHT) with a despairing sigh. Her head rises to his eyeline as he approaches off SCREEN. He comes into FRAME RIGHT. CU.

REG

Wassup?

DOMINIQUE holds her stare then turns to the paper.

DOMINIQUE

What is a cross hatch generator?

REG

Dunno.

DOMINIQUE

Well we've been billed for one.

REG

Oh yea, well they stick anything down. I think it was some bent cabling gear Poncho slipped me.

DOMINIQUE

Reg, how can I keep the business straight like this. You don't help you know.

REG

They were cheap. Why don't you write down 'money in - money out' leave it at that.

DOMINIQUE

What do I say to the licencing bureau? 'This old envelope is the accounts, can I renew my licence please'. Christ Reg.

REG

Wot licence? You smoke too much.

DOMINIQUE

Reg if you didn't nail your jeans to the floor every night they'd escape. Don't talk to me about personal habits. Anyway, look we've got to get something on better than those old 1980's promos.

REG is about to bite back when a loud buzz erupts. Both whip round and stare at the door. A vidilock voice.

VIDILOCK VOICE

Hello. This is (buzz crackle) television. Please state your name your state your name and code. (Fast rewind. Hiss crackle - fast forward - tape spools out of the instrument on to the floor. Silence. Some light arcing FX).

REG motions quiet and peers out of the window. Cannot see. He moves up the truck quietly.

CUT TO CU REG'S POV through front window into WING MIRROR. All that is visible is 2 pairs of boots standing by a horrible swimming sinkdrain bucket.

51. EXT BIGTIME TELEVISION. DAY. (DAWN +)

Top half of divided door swings back and REG glares out.

REG

What?

BREUGHEL is about to speak. MAHLER salutes with his watch arm. REG scowls at him then motions them away towards their van.

52. INT VAN

BREUGHEL

Nice to see you Reg.

MAHLER

We got something for you.

BREUGHEL

A very special bit of gear. You being an expert.

MAHLER heaves over MAX.

MAHLER

You just press this white button here and ... er ... key things in.

REG

Things. What the bloody hell is it?

BREUGHEL

Actually it's the red button. There's the manual.

MAHLER

No the white. Anyway you got to plug it in Reg.

REG

Thanks toadbollocks I'd never have thought of that. How much?

BREUGHEL

Ah well ...

The VIDIPHONE bleeps. MAHLER picks it up. BREUGHEL takes it from him. OV we hear 'Nightingale Bodybank here Mr Breughel'. BREUGHEL kills the sound and leers dreadfully.

Look. Business Reg. Talk about the transaction later. Try the goods first sort of thing.

REG takes the MAXBOX. MAHLER hangs onto it. REG wrenches it away and pokes his finger in MAHLER'S nose. He facials 'watch it squire'. He vanishes. MAHLER looks wounded. No payment. Very nasty.

BREUGHEL

Leave it. We've got a deconvenience.

53. INT OLD BUILDING. DAY (DAWN)

Distant gabble of TV sound accentuates the silence. A sudden crash. CAM seeks source of sound. A FIGURE moves across harsh light and shadow. Reveal EDISON. He is in shock, unco-ordinated. He grasps his CAMERA. CU he stares outside. A siren causes him to withdraw to shadow. He sits uncharacteristically nervy and unsure. A noise startles him. Voices.

54. VAN. INT

BREUGHEL and MAHLER cannoning along. MAHLER using binoculars.

MAHLER

If I'd smashed his hand he'd still be there. Going to cost us this is.

BREUGHEL

(Singing strangely)  
'How terrible they are, the lordly ones,  
who dwell in the hill, in the hollow hill'.

55. OLD BUILDING. DAY

EDISON moving out, keeping to shadows. He pauses and attempts to use the CAMERA to call up THEORA. It is dead. He is exhausted. He passes a group of DERELICTS viewing several TVs - all with different Features running. Favour one - a western. 'You and the boys go on, me and Jake will cut him off at the pass'. EDISON is now seen to be dressed in a weird surgical gown. Moving towards him a group of DERELICTS seemingly performing a Mediaeval Mystery Play. Spotting EDISON they draw him into their insane performance. They dance around him.

LEADER

He is the one. He must be the piper.

ALL follow some un-named theatrical routine. Sometimes seen from EDISON'S POV it has a surreal lunacy about it.

56. THE VAN. DAY

The VAN seen moving through dereliction. It pauses. MAHLER speaks to a group of DERELICTS. They spread out swiftly. The VAN moves on. It slowly disappears. (Repeat as C/W later)

57. INT BUILDING. DAY

EDISON awaking. Still dressed in the weird surgical gown - he was obviously about to be dismantled when he escaped. Tape labels are attached to his limbs. He rips one off. It reads: 'Right Arm. Male 28. Tissue match 10A67. Freezer 6'. He moves stiffly. There is evidence of a struggle. He looks out of the window. He is totally lost. Returning to the CAMERA he begins to dismantle

it. A pilot light flickers on - then off. He gets a picture then fades - but it is alive.

58. VAN INT

MAHLER snoringly asleep. A fly crawls across his gaping mouth. BREUGHEL wide awake finger tapping the steering wheel. FX we hear.

BRYCE (OV)

Hello Mr Breughel, Mr Mahler, come in please. Hello?

59. CONTROL ROOM CHANNEL 23

THEORA asleep at her console. A digital clock reads 06.10 hours. A TX channel is on. Monitor has Channel 23 logo.

VOICE

A bright broadcasting dawning to you. Following Xixaq's Star Quiz Under the Stars next up Dr Duncan At Dawn, the Video Symptom Show. Call us now and show us your problem. First a nasal pustule from Sector 69. (A man prepares to show C/U his nostril)

THEORA jerks awake during this as a BUZZER penetrates. She flicks the console. A broken up but recognisable picture of EDISON. He stares to CAM.

EDISON

Morning.

THEORA

Edison! My God, where are you? Keep transmitting. I'm locating you.

The SCREENS flicker as she scans the city map.

EDISON (VO)

I need your address. I'm in a bad way Theora.

60. INT BUILDING. CONVERTED WAREHOUSE

THEORA drives out of a huge goods lift and pauses by a car sized door. She leans out and enters a plastic card into a vidilock slot. It moves in then shoots out onto the floor. She clambers out and picks it up.

THEORA

Idiot!

She re-enters the card and thumps the vidilock. It accepts it. A light comes on.

VOICE

Hello! Welcome home. Hope you had a nice day.

The door 'clicks' and she drives through.

61. INT APARTMENT

THEORA moves through a warehouse apartment. On a SCREEN flashes 'messages'. She switches a coffee maker on places two cups and then moves to the SCREEN pressing a button. A face of a MAN appears.

MAN

(Pleasant faced)  
Hello darling. Just called to say hello. How's the new job? Will you be home at the weekend? How about I come over for the weekend? It's been a while since we got together. Call me. Ball me. Bye!

Another OLDER MAN appears on SCREEN.

MAN

Hi there! Beauty comes from inside but glamour - that's different! I'm in your area with a man - grabbing range of night attire.

THEORA shuts off the screen. She sneezes. She is still soaked.

THEORA

Oh hell.

She moves to chair facing her home console, places her hand in a pad and with the other switches on some music. The SCREEN prints up 'temperature 99.5. Pulse 84. Respiration high. Blood pressure 18 over 20'. A pause then 'take a hot shower. Take two bio-pods, blue. Go to bed and rest. Symptom mild but rest advised. Check with me in four hours'. FX of shower. Music continues. CAM rests on room. Shower stops. A sneeze.

62. INT APARTMENT. BEDROOM

THEORA is asleep. She sleeps on her side her back to the centre of the large bed. A clock in a bedmodule indicates 07.20 hours.

63. INT BIGTIME TELEVISION

REG is fiddling with the MAXBOX. DOMINIQUE now dressed lighting a cigarette.

DOMINIQUE

But you don't even know what it is.  
Might be anything. It might be a bomb.  
Plus what did it cost Reg?

REG

Free. If it doesn't work, we throw  
it back.

DOMINIQUE

Doesn't work at what! God Reg we can't  
afford decent programme software let  
alone another cross-patch Rotouater  
or whatever.

REG pokes a bare wire into a cracked socket. The SCREEN lights.

REG

Geronimo!

The SCREEN settles after some demented fiddling and banging.  
Suddenly a blinding array of images. A fast spool through a medley  
of chaos. DOMINIQUE looks glum. She hands REG an imposing folder.  
He opens it, considers, then enters some instructions. Promptly a  
rudimentary head appears and builds.

DOMINIQUE

Go on. Go on!

REG peers at the manual and pokes more buttons. A voice (now MAX).

MAX

Hi. Hello and welcome to: Information  
please. Station identity, and channel.  
Murray when are we on air. Hello?

DOMINIQUE

Go on Reg. Enter Bigtime.

REG keys in.

MAX

Hi. Hello and welcome to Bigtime  
Television. How am I doing?

REG

Bloody hell!

MAX

What?

DOMINIQUE

(Warily)  
Reg it's talking to us. Say something.  
Go on, talk to it.

REG depresses a key. He feels a bit silly but is genuinely amazed  
at what he recognises as a fascinating machine.

REG

Hello mate. I'm Reg. This is my  
partner Dominique.

DOMINIQUE indignant but lets it pass.

MAX

Hello Reg. Hello Partner Dominique.  
I'm Bigtime Television. How am I  
doing.

REG

Great. Terrific.

He grins at DOMINIQUE

I'm going to put a tape on.

REG fumbles in his old cardboard boxes. DOMINIQUE despairing. REG  
inserts the tape, checks the manual and keys in. He waits.

MAX

(cueing in pre-programmed lines, not  
yet fluent)  
Say hello to Bigtimes. Big Bigtime  
Television. Next up more of the same.  
What I want to know today is - if it's  
true that the best things in life come  
in small packages how come we are  
Bigtime?



REG and DOMINIQUE are transfixed.

DOMINIQUE

Where's it get all this stuff from?  
Reg?

REG neither knows nor cares. He is hypnotised.

REG

Unbelievable!

64. EXT STREET

EDISON in almost empty street. It is a pleasant part of the city - evidence of trees. No DERELICTS. An oasis. Even in winter it is pleasant. He looks up at the apartment building squinting to make out the name. He is very tired.

65. INT APARTMENT BLOCK. OUTSIDE THEORA'S APARTMENT

EDISON at the door in gown. He presses the entry button.

VOICE

Hello. Nice to have you visit.  
Please enter code. Thank you.

EDISON presses the buttons with some hesitation. He obviously was given the code but is having trouble remembering it exactly.

I'm sorry. That is incorrect.  
Please try again.

EDISON

Oh come on.

He tries again.

VOICE

I'm sorry. That is incorrect. Please  
try again.

EDISON

(To the door)  
Theora! Shit.

He tries once more, with feeling.

VOICE

I'm sorry. That is incorrect.  
Please try again.

EDISON curses and punches the unit with the side of his fist. There is a 'click' and the door opens. EDISON signals despair. He pushes the door open and steps inside.

66. INT APARTMENT

Noticing the coffee and a cup placed ready he pours a cup. He notices the bottle of blue capsules and looking round sees the SCREEN. It still has the diagnoses on it. He swallows two capsules and looks around finding the shower. Shower FX.

67. THEORA'S APARTMENT. BEDROOM

THEORA is awake. EDISON is peacefully asleep alongside her. She examines his bruised forehead then eases herself out of bed.

EDISON

If you are making coffee I'd appreciate one.

THEORA

I thought you were asleep.

EDISON

I make a habit of pretending that.  
Come here.

68. THEORA'S APARTMENT. BREAKFAST

They sit at a peninsular table by a window. EDISON is wrapped in a borrowed rather dashing dressing gown. THEORA likewise. Breakfast is almost finished. THEORA reads her mail. EDISON scans a dataprint - the morning newspaper from the TV.

EDISON

What's a Mitzoguchi? Was that shoes  
or a motor cycle.

THEORA

Neither. He was a Japanese film  
director.

EDISON

Oh. How's the cold?

THEORA

Fine. How's the head?

EDISON gestures 'so-so'

THEORA (cont'd)

Edison I'm sorry about the studio tape. The camera was fine this morning. It must have been my end. Shit we needed that tape. Can't you recall anything

EDISON gives her a genuinely affectionate smile.

EDISON

Nothing. Bits ... Bryce's lab ... then just flashes: The car park ... the barrier arm ... some weird stuff like voices, Bryce and somebody ... then the next thing there's some creep with a scalpel over me in a bodybank. Damn it Theora there's something going on inside 23 and they're not stoking the warm glow of corporate affection.

THEORA

Well whoever was in the system last night knew what they were doing. I nearly lost you.

EDISON

Well you can have the chance to lose me again tonight.

THEORA

Edison, are you fit enough? OK, OK! Right, I'm going into 23. I'll pick up stuff from the realfood store for dinner. And I'll get you some clothes.

EDISON

I'll borrow yours. They'd never suspect a transvestite.

THEORA

Edison, I think I'm rather scared. Bodybanks are for dead people.

She picks up her things and heads for the door.

EDISON

I think I left them one. And you need to get that vidilock fixed. It's a left brain freak - all logic and no emotion.

She grins cheerio and leaves.

VIDILOCK VOICE

Have a good day. Are you sure you haven't forgotten anything.

69. INT BOARDROOM CHANNEL 23

EXECUTIVES standing. Everyone very heated. There is a row going on. All yelling their views.

GROSMANN

Chaos is not helpful. Please be seated. Ben, what exactly have the Xixaq Corporation said?

BEN

Their whole campaign is designed to use our Blipverts to prevent viewers channel switching. Ordinary ads are going to allow channel switching. Their view is that they could buy time on any channel for that. No Blipverts no deal.

MS FORMBY

This contract is huge. We can't just reject a transglobal campaign. We cannot withdraw Blipverts now.

Eruption of agreement and argument. BEN shouting. GROSMANN steaming.

BEN

We can't use these things. They're lethal goddamit!

ASHWELL

That isn't proved.

EDWARDS

If that tape wasn't proof, what the hell do you need - a live demonstration?

GROSMANN

Edwards I find that tasteless. It is very clear: Mr Bryce's Blipvert is a brilliant breakthrough; Half a minute of selling in a fraction of a second. It is magnificent.

Rumbles of approval.

BEN

It is. It is also killing people.

Cries of 'Maybe/A few/Some/That's not proven/Exactly!'.

GROSMANN

Ben, we live in a command society. We buried that kind of crap decades ago. I am not prepared to risk my channel over this! Dammit I am talking business Ben.

BEN

And I am talking people.

GROSMANN

Same thing.

BEN

We're coming clean on this. If you won't then I will.

Howls and yells. Everyone on their feet shouting 2 ways.

GROSMANN

(In spitting rage, dangerously blazing)  
I really wouldn't do that Ben.

## 70. EXT STREET

Three DERELICTS watch an old TV perched on a wrecked truck. On SCREEN is MAX. The image is rough. REG presumably still fiddling. But the DERELICTS love it.

## 71. INT BIGTIME TELEVISION

DOMINIQUE bangs down the vidiphone. It stays on. She thumps it. It goes off.

72. EXT BIGTIME TELEVISION

DOMINIQUE at the window. She is jubilant.

DOMINIQUE

Hey come in quick. We've got a client!  
Some TV repair outfit think old thingy  
in there is perfect for them. This is  
it. Come on quick.

73. INT BIGTIME TELEVISION

DOMINIQUE

He could have his own show. They love  
him. What do you think.

REG

He goes on the blink too much.

DOMINIQUE

But that's the point. They want to  
use that.

REG fiddles with the keyboard. MAX breaks down. DOMINIQUE keys in  
ratings on adjacent SCREEN.

Look. A thousand! This is incredible.  
Reg you might get paid this month.

REG amid unpleasant arcing has fixed another duff circuit. He keys  
in MAX. A terrific set of images on SCREEN news reports,  
interviews, war zones, a gents LOO containing BRYCE. REG points  
then it's gone. Then on SCREEN comes 'MAX HEADROOM 1.3m'. STOP  
FRAMING then FREEZING. FX crash.

DOMINIQUE

What the hell is that?

REG

His ratings?

DOMINIQUE

You're kidding.

REG

Well why not. Max Headroom 1.3 million.  
That's what you want isn't it.

REG keying in. MAX as if listening. REG presses 'enter'. Then -

MAX

OK now here it comes. Bigtime Television.  
So let's go global village with the  
show that puts the rap in crap. The Max  
Headroom Show comin' atcha with  
Kajagoogoo. Kaga what? This is beyond  
me. (promo)

DOMINIQUE

Keerist. He's amazing! Amazing!

REG

Go for it Max. You beautiful  
bastard, go for it!

#### 74. EXT STREET. PLAYED LONGSHOT

MLS SIX DERELICTS stand around a television. MAX is on. As he  
chatters METROCOPS appear LS and approach. SOUND is heard  
distantly. Promo stops abruptly.

MAX

Now that was something else. I wish  
it had been something else. It was  
awful. What I want to know is, who  
makes this stuff? Who buys it?  
Listen to this. 'Vidart offers the  
Complete Shakespeare in ten minutes.'  
Wow. Hamlet? Who needs him? Me -  
I prefer Chocofigs, real socks on  
your teeth. Next up, more Bigtime  
music on the only channel that bends  
your ears not your minds it says here.

During the latter part the METROCOPS have moved in.

COP

Maximum assembly is four, assholes!  
Now move! Right, your numbers.

Cries of opposition.

DERELICTS

Why? We're watching TV. Come on,  
this isn't an assembly we're just  
having fun.

TWO DERELICTS are snatched and clubbed heavily. One other DERELICT struggles to help them. He is kicked. The others turn and grab weapons. It becomes ugly. A METROCOP lashes out at the set. The final outrage. He is instantly clubbed.

75. CONTROL ROOM CHANNEL 23

A CONTROLLER at his console. Before him a SATMAP.

CONTROLLER

OK Hodder you are linked on camera now. Go live in your own time and I will route to Network Selector. Murray I got a hot one on.

CAM TRACKS to REVEAL THEORA at next console and PANS BACK to retain action. THEORA looks on, her own screens just full of icebergs.

You're live. Go Hodder.

HODDER

(On screen)  
The metrocops just left here. The rumpus was law of assembly. There is doubt about the motive. Your name is ... ?

DERELICT

Andy. Me and Toby, Will and the guys were just watching TV and these pigs busted in. I mean watching TV what's the hassle. Shit.

HODDER

What show is this?

CAM PANS off MAN.

DERELICT (VO)

Take a look, Max Headroom on Bigtime.

CAM approaches set. MAX mute babbling. The DERELICT adjusts the volume.

MAX

... so here you go and do se do, bow to your partner and kick him low. Now up and roaring your way the fastest growing channel in the history of the

/globe, and all we sell



globe, and all we sell is music ...  
 Not a Blipvert in sight, so no big  
 bangs around your TV! Get it! Me  
 neither. Who writes this stuff?

CUT TO

CONTROLLER  
 (Switching screens. Finding ratings)  
 He just talks nonsense but just look  
 at that. Those ratings are zooming.  
 Theora look. The robot even looks  
 like Edison!

EXTREME CU

THEORA  
 (Looking in, intrigued)  
 He does doesn't he.

#### 76. BRYCE'S STUDIO

BRYCE seated. BREUGHEL and MAHLER standing awkwardly in The  
 Presence.

BREUGHEL  
 We'll get the carphone fixed. Probably  
 just a grilled microchip. Mr Bryce.

BRYCE  
 You were supposed to come back and  
 report. I should have had no need  
 to call you on the vidiphone.

MAHLER  
 My mum wasn't feeling too good and  
 we just popped round ...

BRYCE  
 ... you did exactly as I asked?

BREUGHEL  
 To the letter. One got rid of and  
 the other locked away.

BRYCE  
 (Eyes fixed on them. They uneasy)  
 Oh good. Locked away. I admire the  
 clarity and precision of your response.

/Perhaps therefore you

BRYCE (cont'd)

Perhaps therefore you could clearly  
and precisely explain this.

Without moving his eyes from them he jabs a button. On SCREEN  
behind him pops up MAX in full flow. CUT TO BREUGHEL and MAHLER in  
a marathon of shifting eyes, gapes, gestures and amazed horror.  
BRYCE lets them squirm.

MAHLER

Very like that other bloke. Film of  
him is it?

BREUGHEL longing to get out before he blunders dangerously. BRYCE  
however hooked on the enquiry, the enthusiast ever ready to gush.

BRYCE

It is very clever and it is not 'a  
film'. That, Mr Mahler, is a complete  
person. In that machine is the coded  
mind of the dead Mr Carter. I will  
soon be able to reconstruct anybody  
on a screen. Even you Mr Mahler. So  
accurately that even your 'mum' would  
know it was you.

MAHLER dumbly disturbed at the awesome prospect. BREUGHEL listens  
with sharp interest. Ingratiates an enquiry.

BREUGHEL

You might call it the Phoenix Mr Bryce.  
My word. You could have all your  
politicians in little boxes. Very  
handy.

BRYCE sensing he has overstepped professional discretion.

BRYCE

Now Mr Breughel, just where is my  
machine?

# 77. CHANNEL 23. BOARDROOM. NIGHT

Pandemonium in suits. Everyone talking at once. GROSMANN coldly  
calm, eyes everywhere - especially his SCREEN.

ASHWELL

(To conference console)  
How soon can we get Sat 70 cleared for

/that Scumball game

ASHWELL (cont'd)

that Scumball game from Moscow? Well hell route it through the medical satellite. Listen this is more serious than a goddam earthquake Frank.

MS FORMBY

We could move up the Polly Show. Pull in an extra episode. Get the standby show on line.

EDWARDS

(Waving schedules)

No good. We'll get a vacuum by midnight.

GROSMANN

What do the analysts say Ben - What did it? Christ, look at that dip!

BEN

They don't know yet. Combination of factors - a statistical freak I guess. It's only 2%

GROSMANN

2% is 26 million consumers Ben. Once they start switching channels, it's war, you know that.

BEN

We're used to it. Happens all the time.

GROSMANN

If we were running Blipverts instead of regular adverts there would be no channel switching. I am going to re-instate Blipverts. That is final.

ASHWELL

We could re-run the Rat Killers. It went megabucks last global.

MS FORMBY

We could go porno early.

EDWARDS

Hell this is a big one. Check through channel outputs.

ASHWELL

It's across the board. Soon as the ads show up the Consumers switch like crazy.

GROSMANN eyes BEN. He is scoring a BLIPVERT point and we know it.

78. INT BIGTIME TELEVISION. FX PROMO. NIGHT

There is evidence of a clean-up. DOMINIQUE has adopted new clothes. There is an imposing new Ratings Computer ticking away. A new Vidilock. REG unchanged.

DOMINIQUE

Look at this. More clients. Reg I take it all back, you're brilliant. And this Max thing is mega.

REG

I'm starving. I'm going to micro some spaghetti hoops. Want some?

DOMINIQUE does not.

There's something very bent here. Those two wallies having Max. Not their league. Doesn't add up Dom.

DOMINIQUE

Adds up on my figures Reg. Max is making this station.

REG

What if the real owner wants him back.

DOMINIQUE

Over my dead body.

REG

It might be.

DOMINIQUE suddenly watches REG. She scoffs but a touch uneasily. REG is ladling sauce onto a spaghetti conglomerate. He eats and speaks.

REG (cont'd)

Max has got a weird facility. His datastore is huge, right. So he can access a load of info, right. Key in a command and away with the mixer. But he doesn't just build data, you know 2, 4, 8, 16, 32. He jumps. And it's not random Dom. It's more than information - it's like intuition.

DOMINIQUE

Reg, it's a bloody voice box with a lot of bytes. Route him and off he goes. It's only other peoples phrases he uses Reg.

REG

Then how come he's got a sense of humour?

A beat or two then DOMINIQUE with paperwork being too-busy-to-think-about-that-sort-of-thing-blimey.

#### 79. CONTROL ROOM 23

THEORA at the console. As she operates we move in to her SCREEN. On SCREEN. EDISON moving along corridor.

THEORA

You are clear to the door. Securicams isolated. Code as before. Good luck.

EDISON moves to the door, punches numbers into the vidilock.

#### 80. BRYCE'S LAB

BRYCE working with the PARROT. His hands operating the equipment. He catches sight of a reflection in his SCREEN. He whips round in horror. EDISON stands behind him. BRYCE gapes terrified at the 'dead' EDISON.

EDISON

One move. One twitch little brother and I'll plug you into something very electric.

EDISON rips a handful of jackplug cables from the console. The SCREENS splutter out. He binds BRYCE to the chair, sits on the console.

EDISON (cont'd)

Now, you tell me what happens here and what happened to me two nights ago.

81. A LIFT

EDISON with his CAMERA.

EDISON

OK I've got that location. Now Theora, get out of there and meet me at this Bigtime Television. Watch out for an armoured van. It seems the gents inside are Bryce's men. My God, that little turd has invented a way to recreate people onscreen. Not only that, the tape we were after is the key to that story I was on when I was clobbered. It was Bryce in the system Theora.

THEORA (VO)

I'm on my way.

82. BOARDROOM CHANNEL 23

ASHWELL

Give me a graphic.

ALL watch their SCREENS. Numerous pages of channel statistics. 23 is isolated. It has levelled. Print-out reads "Viewers locked on 1,475 M. Stable. Small rise anticipated at junction".

We're holding. It's OK we've steadied. 28 and 42 have taken the dive. Get analysis on this.

GROSMANN sitting back. Strained. He pops a pill as do several others. MS FORMBY relaxes in the lotus position. GROSMANN sighs.

GROSMANN

That was unpleasant.

BEN

Well, we're through it.

A reassuring smile. GROSMANN collects it but doesn't respond beyond a twitch.

ASHWELL

Hey look at this!

EVERYONE examines their SCREENS.

Look down on page 14.

Switches are flicked. ONSCREEN Channel 1894 showing a terrific climb.

That climb is exponential.

EDWARDS

The figures are minute. Down in the thousands.

MS FORMBY

Let's take a look anyway. They may have something worth chasing.

The SCREENS switch through channels to 1894. There is the end of an appalling promo. ALL look perplexed. Then MAX appears.

MAX

A brief hi there from Bigtime Television.  
High hot and full of great sounds from  
the Globe your home. Don't vote for  
them folks, it only encourages them.  
Ha ha. Listen, I only read this stuff.  
I don't write it.

EXECUTIVES relieved laughter. ASHWELL turns to look towards GROSMANN his grin fading as CAMERA finds GROSMANN. He is staring at the SCREEN half out of his seat. REACTION ASHWELL.

MAX (VO)

Next up - and what I want to know is  
why? - Yodelling. Can you believe  
this?

FX yodelling plus EXECUTIVES' guffaws. GROSMANN staring. His eyes on SCREEN as he picks up the phone.

GROSMANN

Get me Bryce.

A pin dropping silence falls over the BOARDROOM. Only SCREENS beep and stutter

83. BRYCE'S LAB

The vidiphone buzzes; it's light flashes. BRYCE unable to respond.  
The PARROT is sitting on his head.

84. CONTROL 23

THEORA closing down the console. She picks up a small portable radiophone. Checks it. Scribbles a note. It is addressed to MURRAY. She thinks twice then leaves it.

85. BRYCE'S LAB

The door bursts open. GROSMANN pushes past TWO very mean armed GUARDS.

GROSMANN

You arrogant little creep! I told you  
to destroy it.

BRYCE

(Squeaking)  
It wasn't my fault. I couldn't destroy  
it.

GROSMANN

Damn you! I told you to fix the  
Blipvert problem.

BRYCE

But they are encoded on the same tape.  
I couldn't destroy it. Everything is on  
that tape.

GROSMANN

My God! Where is it Bryce?

BRYCE

At that pirate station. I think  
Edison Carter might have it.

GROSMANN

Carter! But he's ... you told me he  
was ...

An awful dawning suspicion. Undoing BRYCE.

Who did this to you?



BRYCE

Carter.

GROSMANN turns an unusual hue. He wrenches BRYCE out of the seat.

GROSMANN

How do we find him. How damn it?

BRYCE

Breughel and Mahler. They know.

PARROT

Who's a silly boy then?

86. THE VAN. EXT

GROSMANN, BRYCE with BREUGHEL and MAHLER. Eyes sussing the situation. BREUGHEL and MAHLER diplomatically ignoring BRYCE.

BREUGHEL

Destruction's our delight. Delight  
our greatest sorrow. But it is a  
significant distance ...

GROSMANN

How much?

MAHLER

Oh I should think ...

BREUGHEL

At speed it will be much fuel.

GROSMANN scattering a huge strip of credit cards. BREUGHEL rips off a section. MAHLER takes the rest. GROSMANN smouldering but pushes BRYCE toward the rear of the VAN. GUARDS leap in first. All action and thuggery.

87. THE VAN. INT. THE BACK. GROSMANN, BRYCE, GUARDS, CRAMMED IN

Rocketing along. In the dismal light appalling artifacts sway and wobble. Plastic bags with limbs. Watches and rings, bracelets. Several brassieres. Feet. A box full of wallets. The GUARDS eye a huge weapon. Nasty photos. Gross pin-ups - some are male. A loathsome gallery of perfidy. FX clattering truck and engine roars. Gear changes. Distant singing of BREUGHEL.

BREUGHEL (VO)

Here we are again, happy as can be ...

88. VAN. CAB. INT

BREUGHEL

... all good friends and jolly good company.

Coming towards them BIGTIME truck. Both flash lights. MAHLER makes to speak. BREUGHEL exchanges a look. MAHLER collects it and grins crocodilic. REG seen waving. And is gone.

89. BIGTIME SITE

EDISON and THEORA. Near a derelict building they look round.

THEORA

There's nothing in these buildings.  
Where are they?

EDISON shrugs enquiry. A long pause. Time to breathe. An exchange of unspoken queries. Eventually the lights of a vehicle - like a directed neon strip rather than two headlights. EDISON and THEORA withdraw into shadow instinctively. BREUGHEL and MAHLER'S VAN draws up and reverses.

90. VAN. CAB. INT

BREUGHEL watching rear view mirror as he reverses close to a wall. He looks at MAHLER. A beat. Something understood. MAHLER nods a grin.

91. VAN. REAR. EXT

MAHLER moving to double doors. Opens them.

MAHLER

We're here.

GROSMANN then BRYCE emerge. They move away. MAHLER almost stops them then withdraws significantly to the side of the VAN. The TWO GUARDS emerge together.

MAHLER

Close the doors lads.

TWO GUARDS simultaneously close the doors.

92. VAN. CAB. INT

BREUGHEL hawk eyeing the mirror. Two BANGS ON VAN FX. He drops the clutch and the VAN hammers backwards. FX short screams.

93. VAN. REAR. EXT

VAN pulls forward. TWO FLAT GUARDS crumple. CUT TO GROSMANN and BRYCE horrified. CUT TO THEORA and EDISON moving. THEORA speaking into RADIO HANDSET.

94. VAN. MLS

MAHLER pulling corpses towards rear doors. BREUGHEL emerges. Lights cigarette and moves to rear.

BREUGHEL

(Sings)

Ecissa dies tonight and Carthage  
flames tomorrow.

CUT TO GROSMANN and BRYCE staring. BRYCE reaches for GROSMANN'S hand. They stand transfixed. GROSMANN begins to move, pulling BRYCE. Suddenly a blaze of light. THEORA holding SUNGUN. EDISON, CAMERA on shoulder.

EDISON

Don't try it. Just don't. There's  
nowhere to go. Murray, you getting  
this?

BG MAHLER and BREUGHEL heaving bodies into VAN. Closing doors. Moving. VAN draws away. FX disappearing VAN.

95. CONTROL ROOM 23

MURRAY on PHONE. BG LEADER running down from 10-9-8- VOICE counting FX.

MURRAY

What do I do Ben?

96. BIGTIME SITE

GROSMANN and BRYCE against wall, pinned by the light.

GROSMANN

It won't happen Carter. They'll never  
do it.

97. BOARDROOM CHANNEL 23

BEN in GROSMANN'S seat.

BEN  
(Resigned with effort but certainty)  
Do what you have to do Murray.

98. ONSCREEN

GROSMANN staring at CAM. BRYCE like a terrified rabbit. LOGO  
SUPERED.

EDISON (VO)

Mr Grosmann, head of Channel 23, you  
are going to tell me what I want to  
know about Blipverts - the whole story.  
Mr Bryce, the little genius who is  
going to rule the world with computer  
generated people - you are going to  
tell us all about your very clever  
scheme. The world is watching. Live  
and now on every channel there is.  
I'll start with you Grosmann ...

OVER the foregoing CAM is pulling back to reveal REG watching.  
Obviously on the move.

REG

What a load of bollocks.

He reaches out and kills the SCREEN. On an adjacent SCREEN MAX.

MAX

I don't know about you people but I  
think I'm getting the hang of this.  
Soooo. Next up. Culture Club. Oh  
dear dear.

FX CULTURE CLUB

REG

Where are we Dom?

DOMINIQUE (VO)

If I knew that Reg I'd make the movie.

CUT TO

99. BIGTIME TRUCK. REAR. EXT. HEADING AWAY DOWN THE ROAD. CAM  
TRACKING AFTER AND SLOWING TO FINAL HALT. ROLL CREDITS

Meanwhile VO: (Slowly fading + promo)

REG (VO)

Dom you're the tops. The Mona Lisa.

DOMINIQUE (VO)

Reg you're the tops, the Tower of Pisa.

REG (VO)

Ha! Hey, when Max here has made us  
rich and famous where d'you want to  
go?

DOMINIQUE (VO)

Somewhere sunny. How's the ratings?

REG (VO)

(FX pouring drink)  
Climbing a treat. There's a punter  
on the line wants to buy thirteen  
weeks airtime.

DOMINIQUE (VO)

Take the money. I don't know if this  
truck'll last thirteen weeks.

REG (VO)

(Oiled)  
Oh yes it will!

DOMINIQUE (VO)

Reg. Look. About your jeans. We  
can afford a washing machine now.

REG (VO)

One of these days I'm going to fancy  
you Dom.

DOMINIQUE (VO)

You were always hasty.

REG (VO)

Head for the hills! I know this great  
pub in Wales.

DOMINIQUE (VO)

We could buy a farm ...

60.

The TRUCK recedes and the VO fades with it as credits end. A decent pause. CAM now stationary watching the glow of MAX in the back of the TRUCK vanishing to a speck.

SIDE FRAME a VEHICLE cruises down the road behind them. It is the VAN of BREUGHEL and MAHLER. Two awful, bloody, stains on the doors.

THE END