

*The Magnificent Mind of Nikola Tesla and the Doomsday Device*

by  
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FADE IN:

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

Silent blinding flashes of intense LIGHTNING.

DEPUTY MASON (V.O.)  
Genius. Engineer. Scientist. Mad  
man. Who was Nikola Tesla? That I  
cannot say for sure. For me, I just  
called him friend. One of the few.  
And as much as everyone tries to  
deny it, Tesla was THE architect of  
the 20th century. But the world we  
know... the world he helped  
create... almost never was. And  
like Tesla's own birth, it started  
with a single spark.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

SUPER: "SARAJEVO, BOSNIA"

SUPER: "JUNE 28, 1914"

Several black 1911 Graf und Stift automobiles wait as  
ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND, in full royal garb, along with his  
wife, SOPHIE, and consort disembark.

The Archduke's DRIVER preps the cloth hood to afford both  
weary travelers a modicum of privacy until --

ARCHDUKE  
(in Austrian; subtitled)  
Wait, my lovely wife would like to  
see the sun.

SOPHIE  
(in Austrian; subtitled)  
The rains have gone and the mists  
are burning away. I have been  
cooped up inside that train far too  
long.

The driver complies as the Archduke helps his wife, in her  
long flowing regal white dress, into the auto.

EXT. SARAJEVO

Dozens of LOCALS line the cobblestone streets to stare at the  
MOTORCADE winding through town.

## BRIDGE

THREE MEN will ill intentions cross the river. All three bear the same RED TATTOO on the back of their necks: an ornate skull with the words "Unification or Death" inscribed in SERBIAN.

This is the mark of the Black Hand.

## STREET

The men separate -- mixed in with the other gawkers.

One quickly jogs towards the caravan while, at the same time, removing a grenade from his jacket pocket.

He SLAPS it on a nearby post, activating the mechanism and then tossing the grenade at the caravan.

## AUTOMOBILE

the grenade hits its target but rolls down the back side of the car and EXPLODES harmlessly near the wheels. CHAOS.

## CROWD

another grenade is hurled at the Prince's auto but also misses its mark. Another EXPLOSION.

## AUTOMOBILE

the Archduke flings himself on his wife while BARKING at his driver:

ARCHDUKE  
(in Austrian; subtitled)  
Change streets! Go to the left!

## ALLEY

but the auto gets boxed in, surrounded by panic stricken RESIDENTS -- and stuck in the middle is GAVRILO PRINCIP.

## PRINICIP

reaches for his grenade but the crushing CROWD around him cuts him off -- he grasps his REVOLVER -- raises it -- THREE SHOTS RING out --

## AUTOMOBILE

the Archduke grabs his neck and collapses forward, blood spurting over his uniform. Sophie SCREAMS as she is also hit by a lead BULLET.

## ALLEY

a MAN spots Princip clutching the revolver and tackles him to the ground. Others join in as they drag the assassin down the street where police intervene before the crowd has a chance to tear him limb from limb.

## STREET

POLICE and AUSTRIAN SOLDIERS take Princip into custody and as the gate is locked on the windowless horse-drawn carriage, we are left with the haunting image of the assassin simply grinning at the majesty of his accomplishment.

DEPUTY MASON (V.O.)  
And so began the war to end all  
wars...

FADE TO:

TITLE SEQUENCE - MONTAGE - FILE FOOTAGE over NEWSPAPER HEADLINES:

- A) "WAR!"
- B) "President Wilson to Europe: We Will Not Be Involved!"
- C) "Lusitania Sunk!"
- D) "American Ships Target German U-boats"
- E) "Germany Unleashes Devastating New Weapon"
- F) "'Death Ray' Brings Down Armada"
- G) "America Declares War on Germany!"

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. MANHATTAN ISLAND - DAY - ESTABLISHING

SUPER: "NEW YORK CITY"

Humble skyscrapers dot the skyline as new metal skeletons tower over pedestrians like giant spiderwebs.

In the sky, single-prop bi-planes WHIZ around while hundreds of black, boxy automobiles putter over brick-lined avenues adjacent to chugging trolleys stuffed with commuters.

Everything has a Steampunk-esque feel to it.

DEPUTY MASON (V.O.)

I met Tesla in the summer of 1918,  
at a critical turning point in the  
war...

EXT. STREET - DAY

A short NEWSIE shouts to hurried PEDESTRIANS:

NEWSIE

Extree! Extree! Read all about it!  
Another American ship sunk in  
Atlantic! Get ya papers hea!

DEPUTY JONATHAN "JACK" MASON (30s), dressed in a gray, double-breasted sack suit and bowler cap passes by.

EXT. WORKSHOP

He stops just outside of Tesla's workshop, a modest three-story structure often described as the "golden building made of glass and light." He then opens a slip of paper --

INSERT - PAPER

Scribbled in pencil: "46 EAST HOUSTON STREET"

BACK TO SCENE

He glances at the SIGN hung on the front of building in gaudy, old style print: "TESLA ELECTRIC LIGHT & MANUFACTURING"

Jack knocks on the unassuming shop door but there is no answer. Instead, the THUNDEROUS POUNDING of millions of volts of ELECTRICITY penetrates the BUSTLE around him --

Bright flashes strobe from the upstairs windows --

Jack slowly opens the door -- a brilliant light streams into the street. He enters as if stepping into a magical world --

INT. WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Jack climbs the spiraling wrought-iron staircase to witness: BOLTS of ELECTRICITY CRACKLE around the room, hitting the walls, floor, ceiling and just about everything else.

Stuck in the middle is NIKOLA TESLA (40s) wearing a rubber apron, rubber gloves and cup style welder's goggles.

Tesla spots the Deputy near the staircase and attempts communication but Jack simply cups his hand over his ear.

Tesla WHISTLES to his helper boy, DANNY, who spots Tesla making a slicing motion across his throat, signaling for him to cut the power.

Danny flips a large three prong knife switch. The WHIRRING of the GENERATORS and the ROAR of the ELECTRICITY slowly WIND DOWN.

TESLA

It's okay, it's quite safe now.

Tesla removes his safety gear. Under the apron is a freshly pressed suit and vest with a Prince Albert coat.

He picks up his derby hat and cane and turns --

TESLA

Now, then, what can I help you with my fine sir?

He speaks with a clear Eastern European accent.

DEPUTY MASON

I am Deputy Jonathan Mason with the United States Marshal Service. It is a pleasure to meet you, Mister Tesla...

Jack holds out his hand to shake, but Tesla just looks at it. He awkwardly pulls it back.

DEPUTY MASON

... I'm here on direct orders from the President of the United States. I have some questions I need to ask you.

TESLA

(curious)

Do you now?

DEPUTY MASON

In private, please, Mister Tesla --

TESLA

-- what have you heard about me, Deputy? What do people say?

Jack glances down and watches Tesla arrange his tools in perpendicular groups of three.

DEPUTY MASON

That you are a genius... and possibly a mad man.

TESLA

Perhaps they are right... about both.

DEPUTY MASON

Mister Tesla, I --

TESLA

(checking his pocket watch)

-- I am late for an appointment. Please excuse me, Deputy -- uh --

DEPUTY MASON

Mason. Jonathan Mason. My friends call me --

TESLA

-- If you would like to continue this conversation, I suggest we do it en route.

DEPUTY MASON

Where are we --

Tesla has already reached the staircase and is descending quickly.

DANNY

Best to keep up, the professor don't like to be kept waitin'.

Danny smiles as Jack chases after, but the pleasant child-like grin vanishes from his face as soon as the Deputy is out of sight.

EXT. SIDEWALK

Tesla keeps a grueling, determined pace with Deputy Mason in tow.

DEPUTY MASON

Tesla, I really must insist that --

TESLA

-- I have a previous engagement  
that I cannot miss. Unless you wish  
to interrupt the tenuous precision  
of my daily schedule...?

Tesla stops and looks back at Jack who can only offer a blank  
stare.

TESLA

Just as I thought. I thank you for  
your understanding in this matter.  
Now, we must press on.

INT. WORKSHOP - CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

The door is ajar...

DANNY (O.S.)

We cannot wait any longer...

The boy exits and glances about, giving off an air of  
wickedness.

EXT. BUILDING (UNDER CONSTRUCTION) - DAY - ESTABLISHING

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS toil feverishly laying brick and  
hammering glowing red hot rivets into place.

INT. BUILDING

The essential framework of metal girders and concrete floors  
are in tact, but any semblance of modern living is noticeably  
absent.

Several BUSINESSMEN wait patiently in the grungy confines.

Tesla arrives in style with Deputy Mason nipping at his  
heels.

TESLA

Gentlemen, thank you for your  
patience.

He takes his jacket off and hands it to Jack along with his  
cane. Deputy Mason is befuddled, but holds them anyway.

BUSINESS MAN #1

Ah! There he is. Everybody, I would  
like to introduce you to --

TESLA

(bowing with a flourish)  
-- Nikola Tesla, the greatest  
visionary the world has ever known!  
Thank you all for coming.

BUSINESS MAN #2

This had better be good, Mister  
Tesla. I'm not one to wait around  
in such sullied surroundings for  
just any man.

TESLA

Indeed, but then again, I'm not  
just any man, am I?

Deputy Mason pulls up next to one of the businessmen, still  
holding Tesla's effects. He is given a curious glance.

From his pocket, Tesla produces a STRANGE BRASS DEVICE  
composed of two long, cylindrical tubes with a central  
gearbox encased in glass.

BUSINESS MAN #2

What is it?

TESLA

This, gentlemen, is an oscillating  
polyphase resonance amplifier.

All the men glance at each other in confusion.

BUSINESS MAN #1

Please, Tesla... English.

TESLA

It's an earthquake machine. Capable  
of bringing down any structure in a  
matter of minutes.

BUSINESS MAN #3

You must be joking!

TESLA

(very serious)  
I never joke.

Tesla affixes the device to an exposed I-beam and switches it  
on. The gears slowly turn as a DULL HUM is emitted. The brass  
tubes move in and out, back and forth.

TESLA

Everything functions on a rhythm, a natural frequency that governs all matter from the macro to the micro. The seasons, the tides, day and night, even your own heart beat, has a specific frequency. If you could isolate an object's own natural and inherent rhythm, and control it; the possibilities are endless.

Tesla adjusts the rhythm until he is satisfied. Everyone waits but after a minute -- nothing happens.

DEPUTY MASON

Is that it?

TESLA

Patience.

Still nothing.

TESLA

Can you feel it?

One businessman closes his eyes and concentrates -- a gentle swaying is detected -- it builds.

OUTSIDE

A CROWD gathers to watch the building shake. Dust and debris cloud the air.

ADJACENT BUILDING - APARTMENT

Without removing his eyes from his book, a RESIDENT lifts his drink as it shakes across the table. He holds it aloft without missing a beat.

BACK TO SHAKING BUILDING

The business men crouch down, clenching their hats as the building wobbles. The workers flee in terror.

But Tesla is giddy with excitement.

DEPUTY MASON

Turn it off!

TESLA

What?!

DEPUTY MASON  
I said TURN IT OFF!

Tesla grabs the beam to steady himself as he flips the switch.

TESLA  
Uh-oh.

DEPUTY MASON  
What do you mean "uh-oh"?!

TESLA  
I believe the increased pressure  
from the rhythmic phase amplifier  
has jammed the output device!

DEPUTY MASON  
WHAT?!

TESLA  
It's stuck!

Meanwhile, everyone has disappeared as the building threatens to shake itself apart.

DEPUTY MASON  
Well unstuck it!

Tesla spies a plethora of hand tools in a nearby wheelbarrow. He grabs a SLEDGEHAMMER.

He steadies himself and then turns his head, closes his eyes, and holds his breath as he crushes the device with a single blow -- SILENCE.

Deputy Mason wrenches the hammer away from Tesla and continues beating the thing until only a few twisted fragments remain.

He then throws the hammer down and glares at Tesla.

TESLA  
Perhaps there are a few issues to  
resolve.

DEPUTY MASON  
(wry)  
Perhaps.

Jack waves his hand to clear the air --

EXT. BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Two POLICE OFFICERS wait as Tesla and Jack emerge.

Deputy Mason pulls his badge.

DEPUTY MASON  
 Jack Mason, U.S. Marshals.  
 Everything is alright, we're fine.

TESLA  
 Sorry about the disturbance. It  
 won't happen again.

OFFICER #1  
 Don't make promises you can't  
 keep, Mister Tesla.

OFFICER #2  
 (to officer #1)  
 This happen a lot?

OFFICER #1  
 (to officer #2)  
 Everyday.

OFFICER #2  
Every day?

He can't believe it.

OFFICER #1  
 And twice on Saturdays...

EXT. WORKSHOP

Tesla returns with Deputy Mason still struggling to keep up.

TESLA  
 Well, then, thank you for your  
 assistance Deputy... er...

DEPUTY MASON  
 Mason!

TESLA  
 Right! I hope you have learned a  
 thing or two and I wish you all the  
 best of luck in the future.

DEPUTY MASON  
 (hand on door)  
 Mister Tesla, I really need to  
 speak with you.

TESLA  
 I'm sorry you had to come all this  
 way...  
 (checking watch)  
 ... but I am running a little late  
 and must press on.

DEPUTY MASON  
 Please, Tesla. I just need a  
 minute.

TESLA  
 A minute I do not have and you have  
 worn out your welcome.

He SLAMS the DOOR. Jack STUMBLES back.

DEPUTY MASON  
 Tesla! Nikola! It's about Ruminov!  
 Grigori Ruminov! He's...

It's no use. He's gone. Jack turns to leave. But --  
 The DOOR CREAKS open.

TESLA  
 What did you say?

DEPUTY MASON  
 Grigori Ruminov. You know him?

TESLA  
 I have not heard that name in  
 nearly a lifetime.  
 (thinking)  
 What has he done?

DEPUTY MASON  
 May I come in?

Tesla stands aside as Jack removes his hat out of courtesy.

INT. WORKSHOP - LIBRARY - DAY

Jack wipes his brow with his handkerchief... Tesla stands at  
 a line of podiums, each holding a book. He pauses, flips a  
 page, and moves on to the next... he is reading them all!

TESLA  
... we were just colleagues,  
partners of sorts. Wanted to change  
the world. But I'm afraid there was  
a bit of a falling out...

He disappears into thought.

DEPUTY MASON  
What happened?

TESLA  
There was an accident...

Pause.

DEPUTY MASON  
I bet he's smart...

TESLA  
Brilliant! More so than me in some  
ways... What is all this about?

DEPUTY MASON  
Several days ago we intercepted and  
decoded a message from the Kaiser  
to a Grigori Ruminov about a new  
weapon, something the Krauts have  
referred to as "The Hammer." This  
thing has been wiping out British  
and American merchant ships for  
months.

TESLA  
What is it?

DEPUTY MASON  
I was hoping you can tell us. Here,  
I have --

Jack removes a crude schematic drawing of a FUTURISTIC  
CANNON. Tesla picks it up and lays it on a podium.

TESLA  
(to himself)  
It can't be...

DEPUTY MASON  
Do you recognize it?

TESLA  
I should. It's mine.

DEPUTY MASON  
What do you mean it's yours?

TESLA  
I designed it. But I was never able to procure the proper funding for construction to test my hypothesis.

DEPUTY MASON  
Well, Mister Tesla, I think somebody built the damn thing.

TESLA  
(gravely)  
Grigori, what have you done?

INT./EXT. WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

The front door unlocks and opens. Outside, TWO MEN in BLACK SUITS step inside. They both help carry in a STRANGE-LOOKING DEVICE, complete with copper wire and glass tubing.

The door closes.

FOYER

The men smile and nod, Danny does the same, signaling his association with the men and the evil deed to come.

The boy presses a finger to his lips. He then hands them a gold key and points upstairs.

In turn, they give Danny a leather bag full of gold coins.

BLACK SUIT #1  
Run away little boy... and forget  
all that you saw here.

He speaks with a thick, Eastern European accent.

Danny complies as they trudge up the twisting staircase.

BACK TO LIBRARY

DEPUTY MASON  
Tesla? We need your help...

TESLA  
I am just a scientist, an engineer.  
Nothing more. What can I do?

DEPUTY MASON

If you designed this... this...  
Death Ray... you can stop it. Or  
help build something that can.

Tesla takes another look at the drawings. He notices an  
INSIGNIA stamped in red in one of the corners.

TESLA

What's this?

DEPUTY MASON

That... is the mark of the Black  
Hand - a secret society under  
Ruminov's control with weaponry  
that is far beyond anything anyone  
has ever seen before. We believe  
they are aiding the Central Powers  
and tipping the scales in Germany's  
favor. Unless something is done  
soon, the rest of Europe will fall.  
Mister Tesla, we turn to you  
because you are the only one who  
has a chance to stop this... The  
fact that I am here, now, telling  
you all of this, shows you how  
desperate things have become.

A sudden THUMP from upstairs breaks the tension.

TESLA

What is that boy doing?

LOFT

Tesla looks around -- nothing appears out of place.

He then walks past his study and notices: the dust on the  
edge of one of the drawers has been disturbed.

STUDY

Tesla marches over and forcefully pulls the drawer open. The  
faded wood inside marks where a rectangular item once rested.

DEPUTY MASON (O.S.)

What is it?

TESLA

They took the notebook.

DEPUTY MASON

Notebook? What notebook.

TESLA  
My notebook...

LAB

Tesla walks past his work table before reversing course. He finds the strange-looking device on a workbench.

TESLA  
This is not mine.

A wheel turns on one side.

DEPUTY MASON  
So... what is it?

TESLA  
If I would have to guess... I would have to say... It's counting down to something...

Tesla is very measured and careful in his inspection.

The PENDULUM TICKS lower with each swing.

DEPUTY MASON  
Is that good or bad?

TESLA  
Bad. Very bad.

DEPUTY MASON  
How do you know?

TESLA  
Because... it's a bomb!

Both men glance at each other and then back away.

DEPUTY MASON  
Okay, I'm trained to handle things like this --

Tesla holds his cane across Jack's chest.

TESLA  
DON'T -- touch it! You have no idea what you are dealing with, and you are going to get us both killed.

An intensifying reaction burns inside the glass chamber.

DEPUTY MASON  
What are you going to do?!

TESLA  
Do? Nothing.

Tesla gathers his belongings and then opens a window.

DEPUTY MASON  
What do you mean "nothing"?

TESLA  
When faced with mounting odds  
against success sometimes the best  
course of action is a gentle  
retreat.

Tesla places the curved end of his cane over a rope  
stretching down to the ROOF of a neighboring building.

TESLA  
Are you coming?

DEPUTY MASON  
What are you doing?

TESLA  
I mean to spoil the plans for my  
premature death.

DEPUTY MASON  
This will never work!

TESLA  
Of course it will, it's simple  
physics!

Tesla pushes off and both men slide towards --

EXT. ROOF - DAY

Tesla descends gracefully while Jack loses his balance and  
rolls through the white gravel.

BACK TO WORKSHOP

The reaction inside the jar reaches a critical point, the  
glass fractures as the copper melts.

BACK TO ROOF

Deputy Mason dusts himself off. Tesla removes his watch.

DEPUTY MASON

Well?

Tesla says nothing.

DEPUTY MASON

Maybe you were wrong about --

The building EXPLODES.

Jack drops to his knees and curls up in a ball, but Tesla stands his ground as debris rains down around him.

TESLA

I am never wrong...

JACK'S POV: Up at Tesla, holding out his cane...

TESLA

...and I never lie.

...Jack takes it and is helped to his feet.

The workshop WALLS tumble inwards with a CRASH.

TESLA

Oh, the neighbors are never going to forgive me for this one.

ROOF EDGE

Tesla searches the busy street below.

DEPUTY MASON

I don't understand. What is so important about your notebook?

TESLA

(still searching)

My dear boy, that book holds every invention and idea I have ever conceived of. You think that death ray is something to fear, it is nothing compared to what is contained in that notebook if it should fall into the wrong hands.

DEPUTY MASON

My God... is it in your nature to design such horrendous things, Mister Tesla?

TESLA

What I do is neither inherently evil nor inherently good. It is the man who uses the tool that decides its purpose.

Tesla spots a Man in Black hiding in an alley across the street. They make eye contact.

TESLA

Gotcha!

Deputy Mason lowers his COLT SERVICE REVOLVER into view.

Immediately, though, Tesla knocks his arms up with his cane, causing the GUN to FIRE into the air.

The Man in Black spins around the corner and disappears.

TESLA

Not every situation can be easily solved with your mechanical violence. We still do not know who he is or where my notebook has gone to!

DEPUTY MASON

Mister Tesla, we have a certain way of doing things --

TESLA

-- Yes, I can see that! Shoot first and ask questions later. Try to keep your American cowboy ego in check!

Tesla jumps over the edge of the building and grabs the fire escape ladder with his cane which slows his momentum to a gentle hop.

STREET

he then runs after a TROLLEY passing by. He uses his cane again to pull himself aboard.

BACK TO ROOF

Meanwhile, Deputy Mason starts climbing down, and not very gracefully either, to follow...

BACK TO TROLLEY

Tesla approaches the fleeing Man in Black. He pummels him over the back of the head with his cane causing him to stumble and fall. Tesla hops off --

ALLEY

The Man in Black picks up his hat and glares at Tesla.

TESLA  
 (waving cane)  
 Return to me what is mine or the  
 foul end of my cane shall meet the  
 good end of your head!

The Man in Black draws a SWORD concealed inside his jacket.

TESLA  
 So, it is a fight you want!

Tesla takes up a fencing stance -- his cane as his weapon of choice.

TESLA  
 I will have you know I was the four-  
 time fencing champion at Oxford.

The Man in Black unleashes a CHAIN WHIP, grabbing Tesla's cane and throwing it away.

TESLA  
 Well that's just cheating!

Unarmed, Tesla backs away when a GUNSHOT to the leg sends the Man in Black down.

Just up the street, Deputy Mason re-holsters his weapon.

DEPUTY MASON  
 Protocol, Mister Tesla.

TESLA  
 (unamused)  
 Quite.

DEPUTY MASON  
 Now that he is wounded... and  
 stopped, we can question him.

Tesla recovers his cane and confronts the man.

TESLA  
Give me back what is mine you  
thief!

The Man in Black stumbles backwards, holding his bloody leg.

Jack raises his revolver again -- but the Man in Black disappears behind a trolley -- Jack lowers his gun as both men walk into --

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - STREET

-- and watch as the Man in Black climbs aboard the trolley RUMBLING away.

TESLA  
Perhaps the services of automated  
transportation would be in order?

Jack gives Tesla the "look" and then darts into the street to give chase on foot.

Tesla shakes his head at the futile move. He then spots a vacant AUTO parked on the side of the street.

TESLA  
Ah... fortune smiles...

He approaches --

NEAR AUTO

He places his hat on the roof and then opens the side hood.

Tesla's extraordinary mind disassembles the simple two-stroke combustion engine piece by piece, allowing every component, every screw, nut, and bolt to be seen in vivid detail in his mind's eye. This is "Tesla Vision."

Tesla retrieves his tools from inside his jacket pocket -- tweaks things here and there -- removes parts -- puts them back -- slams the hood closed -- grabs his hat -- starts the engine -- takes off.

STREET

Deputy Mason is breathing hard and losing the chase -- he stops -- out of breath -- he HEARS a HORN HONK behind him.

Tesla slides up in the jalopy and pushes the door open.

TESLA  
Get in!

DEPUTY MASON  
 (half in half out)  
 Do you know how to drive?

TESLA  
 Simple... just depress the  
 accelerometer and --

Jack is nearly swept off his feet as the car takes off --

STREET

against all logic, the auto dodges through traffic -- but the  
 poor automobile was never meant to operate at this capacity --

ENGINE

smoke and flames pop out from under the hood --

AUTOMOBILE

TESLA  
 Oh dear.

They approach the trolley.

Jack leans out -- hands grab the railing -- he jumps to the  
 deck -- stretches for Tesla -- they struggle to connect --  
 the auto wobbles back and forth -- the flames spread -- Tesla  
 pushes out for Jack's hand -- he is snatched from the jaws of  
 death as the engine EXPLODES --

STREET

the poor jalopy rolls and burns --

INT. TROLLEY

The Man in Black limps over and jams a knife into the  
 controls -- passengers and the conductor disembark while the  
 tram is still in motion.

Jack and Tesla close in --

The Man in Black draws his sword -- slashes at Tesla who  
 holds up his cane for defense -- the out of control trolley  
 rocks violently -- Tesla falls towards the edge -- Jack grabs  
 his jacket and pulls him back while avoiding the injured Man  
 in Black.

TESLA  
 That was close!

The Man in Black slashes Jack's suit, cutting his arm -- He winces and pulls back -- The Man in Black HEARS his CUE above and SALUTES before scrambling up to the roof.

TESLA

Deputy Mason! He is fleeing!

EXT. TROLLY ROOF

The Man in Black glances up and reaches for a rope fluttering over his head -- his partner in crime encouraging him to reach from above --

BACK TO TROLLEY

Tesla and Deputy Mason lean out only to see a Zeppelin lumber into view from behind several buildings. The airship blots out the sun like a huge forboding monolith.

Giant smoke stacks belch their black poison into the air as steam powered GEARS THUMP, THUMP, THUMP in the bg.

TESLA

Remarkable!

Jack shimmies up a brass pole to --

BACK TO ROOF

with the trolley jostling around and a fierce wind battering both men, the Man in Black extends his arm for the rope -- Jack grabs his leg, tripping him -- the notebook spills from his pocket and slides towards the edge of the trolley --

BACK TO TROLLEY

Tesla strains against the railing --

TESLA

(catching notebook)

Got it!

BACK TO ROOF

Deputy Mason gets to his feet and reaches for his revolver but --

Jack's shoulder holster has been cut -- he looks up at the The Man in Black holding the FIREARM as he takes off -- Jack leaps after him -- too late!

Jack watches the Man in Black as he smiles and waves "goodbye" holding his service revolver.

The airship plods away -- but Jack glances ahead and sees a bigger problem -- a quickly approaching dead end at the river.

DEPUTY MASON

Tesla!

BACK TO TROLLEY

Tesla tucks his notebook away as he glances up at the same problem. Jack joins him.

TESLA

I suggest we vacate this trolley before it's undesirable destination is reached!

DEPUTY MASON

You'll get no arguments from me!

STREET

Tesla and Jack both jump from the speeding trolley --

HAND CARTS

Tesla lands in a pile of feather down pillows pulled by an ASIAN IMMIGRANT -- while Jack dives head first into a baker's cart filled with flour and yeast -- a giant cloud erupts into the air --

PIER

The trolley collides with the concrete barrier and shatters into a million pieces before tumbling into the water.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Tesla brushes himself off. A few feathers fly here and there.

The ghostly white figure of Jack Mason joins him.

DEPUTY MASON

(coughing)

Normal day for you?

TESLA

You'd be surprised.

Jack collapses to the sidewalk, exhausted.

TESLA (O.S.)  
 C'mon along, Deputy Mason, no time  
 to rest! We have work to do!

Jack grabs his hat off the ground, dusts it off, and then follows Tesla -- a white dust cloud streaming behind him.

EXT. WORKSHOP (RUBBLE) - DAY

FIREFIGHTERS douse the few charred remnants and bricks.

DEPUTY MASON  
 I'm sorry, Mister Tesla.

TESLA  
 I always thought I was safe. I  
 wanted so desperately for America  
 to be my new home. But I see now  
 that war has followed me even here.

DEPUTY MASON  
 And it won't stop, Tesla.

Pause.

TESLA  
 Gracious, Danny! Danny?!  
 (to himself)  
 Now where has that boy gone off  
 to...?

DEPUTY MASON  
 Tesla?

TESLA  
 Deputy Mason, in light of recent  
 developments I believe your offer  
 is quite acceptable.

DEPUTY MASON  
 Well that's a relief...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ENGLISH CHANNEL - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Several SHIPS of the Royal British Naval fleet CHUG across the cold, glassy waters.

A SAILOR in the crow's nest keeps a weather eye out for any German U-Boats.

INT. BUNKER - NIGHT

The silhouette of GRIGORI RUMINOV watches the ships through a spyglass. His face hidden throughout the scene.

GRIGORI (O.S.)  
They think they are safe by hugging  
the shore... They are mistaken.

He turns towards his LIEUTENANT.

GRIGORI (O.S.)  
Destroy it!

LIEUTENANT  
Sir, there are women and children  
aboard.

GRIGORI (O.S.)  
No mercy will be given! Our justice  
will be swift and terrible. The war  
machine will press on at all costs.  
Or shall I tell the Kaiser of your  
moral hesitations?!

LIEUTENANT  
No, sir!

GRIGORI (O.S.)  
Destroy them! Destroy all of them.

The lieutenant CLICKS his HEELS and salutes.

LIEUTENANT  
(in German; subtitled)  
Prepare to fire!

OUTSIDE BUNKER

Two massive bomb bay doors open and the barrel of the death ray extends. A vast static build-up can be felt, resulting in the CRACKLE of LIGHTENING and BOOMING THUNDER.

EXT. SHIP DECK

An officer sips his tea as several flashes of lightning catch his eye in the distance.

OFFICER  
Bugger. It appears a storm may move  
in.

BACK TO BUNKER

Grigori peers through his spyglass.

GRIGORI (O.S.)  
 (whisper)  
 Fire.

BACK TO SHIP DECK

The officer's tea cup SHAKES across the railing before falling over the edge and SMASHING on the deck below.

His hands VIBRATE resting on the ships railing.

A blinding white light grows on the sailor's horror-stricken face in the crow's nest.

BACK TO BUNKER

THROUGH SPYGLASS: the orange hue of a fireball just on the horizon.

VON BRAUN, a special mediator in full military uniform and signature Pickelhaube hat, CLEARS his THROAT.

VON BRAUN  
 They have failed.

GRIGORI (O.S.)  
 I told you it would not be so easy.  
 Where is he now?

VON BRAUN  
 With the American... and they have  
 the notebook.

GRIGORI (O.S.)  
 I think it is time to force his  
 hand. Alert Mister Brown in  
 Washington for the go ahead.

Von Braun CLICKS his HEELS before leaving.

Grigori removes a small LOCKET from around his neck.

INSERT - LOCKET

The faded photo of a RAVEN-HAIRED WOMAN, placid, staring, in a frilly Victorian dress.

BACK TO SCENE

GRIGORI (O.S.)  
 (longing)  
 Nadia...

Grigori closes the locket and grips it tightly.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TRAIN - DINING CAR - NIGHT

Tesla sits alone, enjoying his meal, deep in thought.

IN FRONT OF HIM: three cotton napkins stacked neatly to his right, three glasses of water at 12, 2, and 10 around the three plates that contain his meal with each portion set aside from the rest so as not to touch.

WOMAN (O.S.)  
 Excuse me, sir. Are you Nikola Tesla?

TESLA  
 (glancing upward)  
 I am.

WOMAN  
 I hope you would not find it too forward of me, but I was wondering if I may join you?

Tesla pauses as he dabs the corners of his mouth with his napkin.

TESLA  
 My young lady, while your appearance is visually stunning, I would find your company to be both intellectually monotonous and socially inappropriate. Now, if you don't mind, please remove yourself from my sight so that I may go about enjoying my meal in peace.

The spiritually broken young woman turns a hue of crimson before turning and bumping into Jack as he passes. He sits.

DEPUTY MASON  
 Do you always eat alone, Mister Tesla?

TESLA  
 I find it difficult to keep worthy company around.

DEPUTY MASON

What about your family? Surely you have somebody of a blood relation?

TESLA

My father passed away when I was 3, my mother fourteen years, six months, and twelve days after.

DEPUTY MASON

And your home?

Pause.

TESLA

Gone... forever.

DEPUTY MASON

How?

TESLA

War, Deputy Mason. War.

DEPUTY MASON

I'm sorry.

(hesitates)

I have a wife... Marie. She just gave birth to our second daughter this past September. Our oldest is six.

He holds up a small picture, but Tesla is inattentive.

TESLA

Living the American Dream?

DEPUTY MASON

Trying... I guess.

TESLA

Tell me, Deputy Mason... Why would a man with such valuable possessions choose such a dangerous line of work?

DEPUTY MASON

To serve my country.

TESLA

No... that's not it...

A WAITER delivers Jack's meal. He takes his utensils and then peers around, searching for something. He STEALS one of Tesla's napkins.

Immediately, the scientist's mood changes. He tosses the napkin from his lap down, stands and buttons his jacket.

TESLA

I have suddenly lost my appetite, I  
hope you have a pleasant evening,  
Deputy Mason.

Jack is left to wonder what he had done to anger the brilliant man.

He uses his knife to slide a crystal glass of water out of the way and then notices Tesla's meticulous place setting.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GOVERNMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

A MAN in a three piece suit walks swiftly down the empty hall adorned with presidential paintings. He approaches a door but stops and turns, checking to make sure he was not followed.

His collar lowers and the mark of the Black Hand is clearly visible on the back of his neck. He then slips through, unnoticed. The writing on the door reads:

INSERT - DOOR

DIRECTOR WILLIAM H. MORAN

UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE DEPARTMENT

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

DIRECTOR MORAN is bent over his desk, signing orders and reading reports when his door is thrown open.

The Director looks up at the man. He squints.

DIRECTOR MORAN

I know you...

The man holds up Deputy Mason's service revolver and fires TWO SHOTS -- one in the chest and the other in the head.

Director Moran falls backwards out of his chair dead.

The man NEVER FLINCHES as he lays the gun down where he stands before leaving.

INT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - MORNING

The train pulls in and expels a giant cloud of steam. Hundreds of passengers mull around on the crowded platform.

Jack and Tesla are carried along towards the exit.

Three PLAIN CLOTHES AGENTS line up behind the oblivious duo and keep a safe distance. But both Jack and Tesla get a hint of the danger when several POLICE OFFICERS form a line up ahead.

TESLA

Gracious, there are a lot of officers of the law up there. I wonder who they're waiting for?

Jack's eyes then lock onto an artist's rendering of both he and Tesla on a wanted poster. He snatches it.

DEPUTY MASON

(showing Tesla)

I think us.

TESLA

I say, not a very good likeness.

DEPUTY MASON

C'mon!

They turn, but Jack instantly recognizes the agents.

DEPUTY MASON

Wait! Not that way either. U.S. Marshals.

They turn again.

TESLA

(looking back)

Are you sure?

DEPUTY MASON

Pretty sure. I went to the academy with that one!

Both Tesla and Jack take off through the crowd. The agents and police give chase.

As Tesla passes a waiting train, he uses the curved end of his cane to pull a lever, releasing a scorching plume of steam, repelling their pursuers.

TRAIN STATION - MOMENTS LATER

POLICE CAPTAIN  
Any sign of them?!

OFFICER #1  
No sir!

POLICE CAPTAIN  
Well, keep searching. They have to  
be around here somewhere!

TRAIN PLATFORM - AT THE SAME TIME

A few rail lines away, A WOMAN and her THREE SMALL CHILDREN huddle together. They are startled as Tesla and Jack roll out from underneath a train.

The woman clutches her children to her bosom.

DEPUTY MASON  
Economy class?

WOMAN  
(showing tickets)  
C-C-Coach.

DEPUTY MASON  
Good choice.

TESLA  
(tips hat)  
Ma'am.

Both men RUSH off.

EXT. ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Tesla and Jack duck out of sight as more police jog past.

TESLA  
Well, this is a tad inconvenient.

Jack swipes a paper from a nearby newsstand.

DEPUTY MASON  
(reading)  
...Deputy Jonathan Mason and  
Nicholas Tesla...

TESLA  
(to himself, in bg)  
Nikola. My name is Nikola. N-I-K...

DEPUTY MASON  
 (reading)  
 ...considered armed and  
 dangerous... wanted for treason,  
 sedition and the murder of Director  
 Moran!

TESLA  
 Gracious!

DEPUTY MASON  
 What the hell is going on?

TESLA  
 It seems the hands of fate are  
 being manipulated to work against  
 us. And I know who is behind it. I  
 just did not realize how far his  
 reach had gotten, or how  
 treacherous he had become. I fear  
 we are all in grave danger...

DEPUTY MASON  
 Marie!

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jack thrusts the front door open of his modest home.

DEPUTY MASON  
 Marie!

He frantically searches each room.

DEPUTY MASON  
 MARIE!

A young woman casually walks out coddling a baby. This is  
 MARIE MASON.

MARIE  
 What are you doing home?

Jack immediately hugs both of them.

MARIE  
 Is something wrong? Jackie?

TESLA (O.S.)  
 Perhaps I can explain...

Marie is taken back by the odd scientist standing in the  
 doorway.

TESLA  
I am afraid it is all my fault...

MARIE  
Honey, who is this? What is going  
on?

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack laces up his suspenders over a fresh collard shirt. He then puts on his double gun shoulder holster.

MARIE  
What if you don't come back?

DEPUTY MASON  
I'll come back.

Jack brings up a BOX from under the bed and removes two sparkling 1851 Navy U.S. Marshal .44 Caliber Revolvers.

MARIE  
What are we supposed to do?

He checks each gun before sliding them into their holster under each arm.

DEPUTY MASON  
Take the auto. Stay with my parents  
in Ohio.

Marie hands him his jacket and he slips it on.

MARIE  
Jack?

DEPUTY MASON  
It's not safe here.

She's not convinced. Jack HUGS her.

DEPUTY MASON  
It's going to be alright. I'm not  
going alone.

MARIE  
I know, but... There's something  
about him...

DEPUTY MASON  
Honey, I know what I'm doing.

MARIE

What are you doing?

DEPUTY MASON

Looking for my chance to become a full-time agent... maybe even the head of my own team. Which could mean a better life for you... and for the girls.

MARIE

I just want you... here...

DEPUTY MASON

I don't just want to be another no-name-hick with rock's in his head! I can be somebody, Marie! I can be something more...

Jack feels a little tug on his pants. He looks down at his oldest daughter, ELIZABETH (6), peering up. He scoops her into his arms.

DEPUTY MASON

Hey there, sunshine, are you going to be good for mommy?

She nods while fiddling with his tie, never making eye contact.

DEPUTY MASON

You're not going to give grandma and grandpa too much trouble, are you?

She shakes her head "no," still looking down.

She finally lifts her head up.

ELIZABETH

Why do you have to leave again?

Jack can only kiss her on the forehead and hold her close.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - AT THE SAME TIME

Tesla is sitting, waiting.

The LITTLE BABY starts crawling towards him. Tesla watches, nervously -- his eyes darting to her, back, to her, back...

TESLA  
(nervous)  
Deputy Mason?

Nothing. The baby gets closer.

TESLA  
(whining)  
Jack?!

She gets within a few feet and Tesla uses the end of his cane to gently push her back. She sits up and stares at him.

TESLA  
Stay. Stay. Bravo. I would give you  
a treat if I had one. Perhaps a  
token?

He removes a SILVER DOLLAR from his pocket.

TESLA  
Here you go.

The baby takes it and puts in her mouth.

Jack returns.

DEPUTY MASON  
Where to first?

TESLA  
I have a friend in Paris that may  
be able to shed some light on  
things. I just hope we can find  
him.

Jack kisses his wife and leaves her holding the baby with Elizabeth clinging to her summer dress.

The baby coughs up the silver dollar on the floor. It spins.

FADE TO:

EXT. SHIP - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

The OCEAN LINER slowly cuts through the choppy waters of the Atlantic heading east.

BRIDGE

The CAPTAIN wanders about, checking on his CREW.

CAPTAIN  
How are we looking?

FIRST MATE  
We should make port in a few hours.

CAPTAIN  
Excellent. Keep her on our current heading, twelve knots. No rush.

FIRST MATE  
Yes sir.

He then steps outside for some fresh air.

DECK

Jack stands near the railing, watching the water as it churns past... deep in thought.

TESLA (O.S.)  
I envy your life, Deputy Mason.

Jack turns and gives Tesla a surprised look.

DEPUTY MASON  
The grass is always greener...

TESLA  
Quite...

DEPUTY MASON  
Well, if it makes you feel any better... I marvel at all the things you can do.

TESLA  
Don't.

DEPUTY MASON  
Tesla... you're brilliant. You're on magazine covers -- and -- and known all over the world. It shall be your name they inscribe on statues and buildings. It will be your name people remember.

TESLA  
But these things do not make a good life. It is the simple things, the intangible: love, family, friendship.

(MORE)

TESLA(cont'd)

Such abstract ideas have no place  
in a life of science and reason...  
in my life.

(swallows hard)

You don't know how lucky you are...  
If you haven't noticed... I have a  
hard time controlling myself...  
around people...

DEPUTY MASON

Really?

TESLA

No, it is a fact.

(he doesn't get it)

I just find it bothersome... even  
tiring to put on all the fakeries  
of socialization. I want to get  
better. I believe I can get better.

Long pause.

DEPUTY MASON

Tell me more about your friend...

TESLA

Grigori? Well, first he's Russian  
by birth, not German. He was born a  
bastard to a prostitute mother who  
later contracted Syphilis when he  
was 13 and died a year later, he  
never knew his father... but the  
rumor was he was a drunkard in the  
Russian Army. After roaming the  
streets for much of his teenage  
life, he found his way to Austria.  
After proving his intelligence, he  
was awarded a scholarship to the  
Institute in Graz. That is where I  
met him. We had such high hopes...  
silly hopes it turns out.

DEPUTY MASON

Why's that?

TESLA

There was something else inside  
him, something darker he could not  
control.

(recounting)

He would always play these games  
with me and the other students.

DEPUTY MASON

Games?

TESLA

Mind games, god games. I don't know. But whatever he realized, whatever he achieved, it never seemed to be enough.

BACK TO BRIDGE

The captain is just about to retire for the night when a few flashes of lightning catch his eye.

FIRST MATE

What is it, captain?

CAPTAIN

I haven't the foggiest...

BACK TO DECK

Tesla and Jack's conversation is suddenly interrupted when several PASSENGERS point in stunned amazement at the SKY and remark "Look at that!" "What is it?" "Are they fireworks?"

DEPUTY MASON

I have never seen anything like it. Lightening without a cloud in the sky?

Tesla looks down, deep in thought and MUMBLING.

DEPUTY MASON

What is it?

He then charges for the stairs.

BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Tesla thrusts the door open.

TESLA

I need to see the captain immediately!

The FIRST MATE steps forward.

FIRST MATE

Passengers aren't allowed on the bridge.

Deputy Mason finally arrives. He flashes his badge.

DEPUTY MASON  
Deputy John Mason of the United  
States Marshal Service.

FIRST MATE  
I don't care if you're the King of  
England, there are no passengers  
allowed on the bridge.

CAPTAIN  
I'm the Captain, what's all the  
ruckus?

TESLA  
Captain, you need to turn this ship  
immediately on a different heading,  
any heading.

CAPTAIN  
What's he talking about?

FIRST MATE  
I tried to tell him sir --

DEPUTY MASON  
Captain, you should listen to him,  
no matter how crazy it sounds.

CAPTAIN  
I don't even know who he is.

TESLA  
I am Nikola Tesla, and I'm trying  
to save your life.

The First Mate puts his hands on Tesla's shoulder.

FIRST MATE  
Okay, to the brig, both of ya.

DEPUTY MASON  
Please don't do that...

FIRST MATE  
And why not?

Deputy Mason pulls both his revolvers.

DEPUTY MASON  
Because he doesn't like to be  
touched...

The crew put their hands up.

CAPTAIN

Okay, easy now young sir. Let's not do anything rash.

This whole time, the lightning has been growing in intensity.

DEPUTY MASON

Okay, Tesla, do something.

TESLA

I'm too late...

THROUGH WINDOW: With lightning fast speed, the death ray cuts across the water towards the ship. Time slows.

SHIP

is bifurcated. The bow dips into the water, BOARDS SNAP, METAL CREAKS.

BRIDGE

Jack, Tesla, and the crew launch forward violently, sea water pours in.

SHIP

lists to one side as people jump OVERBOARD and grab whatever is floating nearby. ALARM BELLS BLARE and PEOPLE SCREAM in panic.

FADE TO:

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Four oars dip in and out of the water -- a small craft floats through -- a light darts around, surveying the wreckage.

A SOLDIER spots something.

SOLDIER

(in German; subtitled)

I see one!

The light lands on a desperate figure slung over a piece of drifting furniture. It is Nikola Tesla.

FADE OUT.

MAN #1 (O.S.)

I think he's coming around...

TESLA'S POV: blurry images of a few men and women hovering over him come into view.

INT. HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

Tesla sits up. A portly man with a thick CHISWICK ACCENT helps him.

CHISWICK  
Are you alright, mister --

TESLA  
Tesla, Nikola Tesla, The world's  
greatest --

Everyone stares blankly.

TESLA  
Nevermind.  
(gathers himself)  
Where is this? Where are we?

CHISWICK  
Yer guess is as good as mine. They  
snatched us from the water...  
(indignant)  
Some rescue...

TESLA  
Who?

CHISWICK  
Who do you think?  
(nodding/pointing)  
The Krauts.

Several SOLDIERS keep watch, wearing their traditional leather Pickelhaube and palleets.

TESLA  
They're not German.

CHISWICK  
What?

TESLA  
They're not German, they're  
Serbian.  
(he doesn't believe him)  
Trust me.

CHISWICK

Well, whoever they is... they ain't  
the most friendly blokes I've met.

Tesla glances around the cell at the huddled masses: scared,  
dishevelled, and in shock.

TESLA

There was a man. Blond. American.  
Have you seen him?

CHISWICK

Can't say that I have...

TESLA

Is there anyone else?

CHISWICK

Nah. None that I can tell.

Tesla sits back down.

CHISWICK

Was he a friend of yours?

TESLA

Not yet...

EXT. SHOAL - CONTINUOUS

Unconscious and clinging to a piece of the ship, Deputy Mason  
washes ashore near the fortified bunker.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

Several soldiers arrive. The prisoners stand.

SOLDIER #1

(in Serbian; subtitled)  
Escort them to the train for  
disposal.

TESLA

(in Serbian; subtitled)  
You shall not! The Hague Convention  
of 1907 prohibits the execution of  
prisoners in time of war.

SOLDIER #1

(in Serbian; subtitled)  
Ah, some intelligence.

The soldiers continue to take a few of the prisoners.

TESLA  
You will cease this foolish  
endeavor and release us to the  
proper authorities.

The SOLDIER looks at his buddies and they all smile and lightly chuckle. He then strikes Tesla, knocking him back.

SOLDIER #1  
Keep your lips closed!  
(spits)  
Peasant!

Tesla is helped to his feet. The door slams and the Soldier points at him, threateningly.

TESLA  
Listen to me! LISTEN! Be  
reasonable!

But his words fall on deaf ears.

TESLA  
I do not understand...

EXT. BUNKER - NIGHT

Deputy Mason crawls along the rocky exterior and peers in through one of the access ports.

HE SEES: A FIGURE just out of sight surrounded by a group of SOLDIERS, all of them saluting and CHANTING.

DEPUTY MASON  
Well this is just all kinds of  
ugly, isn't it?

A RIFLE is thrust into his view. Jack looks up.

SOLDIER #2  
Guten tag.

Jack rolls his eyes as he gets to his feet with his arms raised.

DEPUTY MASON  
(pointing)  
Der Kaiser!

The soldier turns and Jack wrenches the rifle away using the butt end to knock his captor unconscious.

DEPUTY MASON  
I can't believe that worked.

INT. HOLDING CELL

Tesla is sitting and thinking.

A COMMOTION just out of sight grabs his attention.

The prisoners wait apprehensively... a SOLDIER appears.  
SOMEONE then smashes the soldier's head into the bars from  
behind, knocking him out.

Behind him, Deputy Mason smiles.

TESLA  
Jack!

DEPUTY MASON  
Miss me?

TESLA  
No, I uh...

DEPUTY MASON  
Yeah, I missed you to.

TESLA  
Really?

DEPUTY MASON  
Like a father misses his annoying  
brat of a child.

Tesla's face drops.

Chiswick takes Jack's hand.

CHISWICK  
I cannot thank you enough! Bless ya  
fine sir!  
(to Tesla)  
Take care and good luck.

An ALARM BLARES.

TESLA  
Go! We'll draw them off!

Jack and Tesla go the other direction.

INT. BUNKER - MOMENTS LATER

Both men twist their way through the maze of tunnels and inner workings of the fortification.

As Tesla turns a corner, a rifle is stuck in his face.

Jack tries to react but two guns are shoved in his face. He can only hand over both weapons to the soldiers.

SOLDIER #3  
(in Serbian)  
Walk!

INT. BUNKER - MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

Tesla and Jack are ushered inside. Tesla notices the two giant iron doors closed on the far end, a set of train tracks leading under the doors.

GRIGORI (O.S.)  
Hello... old friend.

Tesla slowly turns.

Grigori descends a set of stairs. He is younger than Tesla, with nearly white bleach-blond hair and shallow eyes. He is wearing a military-style dress uniform.

TESLA  
I wish this meeting were under better circumstances.

GRIGORI  
So do I... Ah, and the Marshal. Welcome.

Jack gives a half sarcastic grin.

GRIGORI  
Oh, and I am terribly sorry to hear about your trouble at home. Pi-ty.

DEPUTY MASON  
You...

TESLA  
Still playing games, Grigori?

Grigori reaches into Tesla's jacket pocket and removes the leather-bound NOTEBOOK.

GRIGORI

Don't worry, Tesla. I did get you something in return.

A MEMBER of the Black Hand steps forward and presents him with his cane. Tesla reaches for it, but the man drops it on the ground. Tesla is forced to bend over to retrieve it.

Grigori is quite amused.

His attention then turns to the notebook. He savors the moment until Von Braun BARKS at him in German, snapping Grigori from his trance. He begrudgingly hands over the precious item.

TESLA

I must say, they certainly do have you on a short leash. I never knew you to be anyone's pet --

GRIGORI

SILENCE!

TESLA

(to Jack)

I think I hit a nerve.

GRIGORI

You have no idea how I've suffered! What I have had to do to survive... to be reborn.

TESLA

I loved her too...

GRIGORI

NO! No! Don't even try to compare your suffering to my own!

TESLA

And this is how you deal with your grief? By turning to madness?

GRIGORI

I will show you just how mighty I have become.

(command)

Der Keilförmige!

On the opposite side of the room, the heavy iron doors open and the Death Ray is RATCHETED into position.

TESLA  
Extraordinary...

His "Tesla Vision" kicks into gear, dissecting the hulking machine until every bolt, wire, and screw is drawn out. He travels inside and out... and finds a weakness.

TESLA  
(to himself)  
Got-cha.

DEPUTY MASON  
Stop admiring the giant killing machine.

TESLA  
Sorry.

The Ray is locked into place. The cables are attached as MEMBERS of the Black Hand slave over the contraption.

TESLA  
(to Grigori)  
May I?

Grigori's vanity gets the best of him.

TESLA  
Most impressive!

He pokes his head inside and his derby pops off "accidentally".

TESLA  
Oops.

Grigori rolls his eyes. Tesla roots around inside for his hat.

GRIGORI  
Enough!

Two SOLDIERS pull him back as he replaces the hat on his head.

TESLA  
Sorry. Sorry about that.

GRIGORI  
And now, for the full power.

Grigori SNAPS his fingers and the bomb bay doors open.

TESLA  
What are you doing?

GRIGORI  
Showing you the future.

LIEUTENANT (O.S.)  
Merchant ship bearing 0 2 1 5.  
Distance: Two point two kilometers.

TESLA  
Grigori...

GRIGORI  
Lock on and prepare to fire.

TESLA  
Grigori!

GRIGORI  
Not this time, Nikola! You can't  
stop me this time.

A low HUM and WHIRRING builds as the generators amass the proper charge. ELECTRICITY CRACKLES -- flashes of lightening. The Ray extends through the doors.

TESLA  
Grigori, I'm asking you nicely,  
please don't do this.

GRIGORI  
Do you beg?

TESLA  
I plead.

GRIGORI  
Do you bow?

TESLA  
I submit to the better! Just stop!

GRIGORI  
I know and I will show you.  
(in Serbian; subtitled)  
Fire at will!

Grigori stares at Tesla -- both unresponsive in their gaze -- Grigori breaks first.

Tesla takes a few steps back. He then takes a few more.

Deputy Mason looks at the empty space next to him. He sees Tesla backing up.

Slightly alarmed... he decides to join him.

DEPUTY MASON  
What are we doing?

TESLA  
I warned him. Didn't I warn him?

DEPUTY MASON  
What did you do?

TESLA  
I didn't want it to come to this.

DEPUTY MASON  
What did you do?!

TESLA  
Am I a bad person, Jack? Am I the  
traitor?

Deputy Mason glances at the MACHINE. There's a problem.

TESLA  
Whatever happens, run.

DEPUTY MASON  
Tes --

TESLA  
-- Run, Jack. Just run.

The countdown begins.

Grigori glances back at the empty space -- then Tesla and Jack crouching down -- he puts everything together.

The TECHNICIAN reaches zero --

GRIGORI  
Stop! NO! STOP!

Too late -- the Death Ray fires -- sparks -- mechanical failure -- the cables blow off -- a magnificent holocaust -- explosions -- pieces of metal scatter everywhere --

Tesla and Deputy Mason are blown back along with Grigori.

SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Men SHOUT and flee as fires rage.

Deputy Mason wanders over to Tesla as he gets to his feet.

TESLA  
I thought I told you to run.

DEPUTY MASON  
Protocol - never leave a man  
behind. Are you alright?

TESLA  
Still in one piece... fortunately.

Jack can see his revolvers under a flaming piece of debris.  
But before he can get to them --

Von Braun leaps out and draws his sword.

DEPUTY MASON  
What is it with you people and  
swords?

He lunges at Jack, causing him to trip and fall.

VON BRAUN  
American swine!

But just before he strikes, Tesla pummels the German over the head with a heavy pipe.

DEPUTY MASON  
Good - Job - Tesla.

Tesla drops the pipe and cleans his hands with his  
handkerchief.

TESLA  
Good God that was awful.

DEPUTY MASON  
Grab the book!

Tesla yanks his notebook from Von Braun's belt while Deputy  
Mason risks burning his hand to grab his revolvers.

Tesla then spots Grigori through the flames.

GRIGORI  
What have you've done?!

TESLA  
I warned you.

GRIGORI  
Do you think you have stopped me?!

Tesla holds up the notebook.

TESLA  
You want it?! You'll have to come  
and get it!

GRIGORI  
A challenge I accept.

Grigori backs away and vanishes in the flames and smoke.

DEPUTY MASON (O.S.)  
Tesla! C'mon!

Tesla pulls his hat down and chases after Jack.

EXT. BUNKER - MOMENTS LATER

Jack and Tesla emerge from the chaos but are left without recourse.

DEPUTY MASON  
Now what?

A HORN HONKS and a truck RUMBLES up. Chiswick throws the passenger door open --

CHISWICK  
Well, c'mon lads! Don't just stand  
there plum on yer arse!

Tesla and Jack look at each other and then bound into the truck.

INT. BUNKER - AT THE SAME TIME

The soldiers do their best to quell the fires as Grigori watches the truck disappear in the distance.

VON BRAUN  
Your orders?

GRIGORI  
There is only one place he can  
go... and do not return empty  
handed!

Von Braun salutes and CLICKS his HEELS together.

VON BRAUN  
Ya vohl!

GRIGORI  
(to himself)  
One more piece -- that is all that  
is needed -- just one more piece...

FADE TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Jack and Tesla DISEMBARK without incident but --

Near one of the rivet-studded columns, a man with black, WINDSOR-STYLE eye glasses watches. WINDSOR lowers his newspaper to spy on Tesla and the Marshal before RAISING it again to hide his face.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jack and Tesla round a corner and the full view of early 20th century PARIS is seen in all its glory.

SUPER: "PARIS, FRANCE"

DEPUTY MASON  
This friend of yours... can we  
trust him?

TESLA  
Of that I am most certain.

DEPUTY MASON  
And what exactly is your  
relationship...?

TESLA  
He's a former professor... very  
gifted... if not a little peculiar.

DEPUTY MASON  
You think he's peculiar? I gotta  
meet this guy.

AROUND THE CORNER --

Tesla and Jack are stopped by a large CROWD as hundreds of  
troops march past, off to war.

FRIENDS, FAMILY, and FELLOW COUNTRYMEN have all gathered to wish their brave young men off to a "glorious death."

DEPUTY MASON

They're so young...

TESLA

If they only knew the futility of their actions...

(softly)

What a waste...

EXT. VILLA - DAY

Tesla's cane WIPES away the IVY that has grown long and wild.

Underneath: a set of CRYPTIC CHARACTERS -- a message to a secret group of people.

TESLA

This should be it.

Tesla KNOCKS -- no answer -- he knocks again. Jack checks the door -- it's unlocked -- he pushes it open.

They each give the other a QUIZZICAL look.

TESLA

After you.

Deputy Mason removes one of his guns and takes the lead --

INT. VILLA - CONTINUOUS

Newspapers and notes covered in equations are arranged in a dishevelled mess while formulas have been scribbled on the table tops and walls. Stacks of books, ordered from largest to smallest decorate the house like little towers. The bookshelves lay empty.

DEPUTY MASON

Okay, that's just weird.

TESLA

Professor! Professor?

BATHROOM

TESLA

Professor?

A light behind the shower curtain casts a FAMILIAR SHADOW.

EINSTEIN (O.S.)  
Pay no attention to za man behind  
the screen.

Tesla peels back the curtain and finds PROFESSOR ALBERT  
EINSTEIN (50s) reading in the bathtub.

TESLA  
Professor?

EINSTEIN  
(shrugs)  
I van out of places to sit and  
vead.

TESLA  
Professor, it's me.

Einstein puts on the EYE GLASSES dangling around his neck.

EINSTEIN  
Und mine eyes deceive me... Nikola?

TESLA  
Hello, Professor.

Einstein stands up, still in the tub, and takes Tesla by the  
shoulders.

EINSTEIN  
Nikola, my most endearing pupil!  
Tell me, how is America? What is it  
like?

Jack enters, gun drawn. Einstein gives him a once up and  
down.

EINSTEIN  
(to Tesla)  
Friend of yours?

SITTING ROOM

Einstein throws his papers to the floor to clear the sofa.

EINSTEIN  
Ack, excuse zee mess. I have such a  
hard time getting around to  
cleaning... so many zoughts, so  
many ideas...

TESLA  
It's quite alright.

Tesla places his handkerchief down and then sits.

Einstein continues to YAMMER as he walks into the kitchen for tea cups, sugar, and the kettle. He returns.

EINSTEIN  
(pouring tea)  
Zo, what brings you all the way to Paris?

TESLA  
Grigori Ruminov.

EINSTEIN  
Ya?

TESLA  
I'm sorry to say that we had a most unhappy reunion.

EINSTEIN  
It does not surprise me. He was a troubled soul even before the accident in Graz.

TESLA  
What have you heard about him?

EINSTEIN  
Very little...

DEPUTY MASON  
I-I'm sorry... but what happened in Graz exactly?

EINSTEIN  
Nikola tried to stop Grigori during an experiment... they lost someone very close to them and they both paid a huge price.

(gathers his thoughts)  
It broke Grigori. He turned on Nikola and then fled. His hate probably would have consumed him if it were not for his brilliant mind. Once the Kaiser heard what he could do, what he could think of... There waz no going back for him.

TESLA  
It is a sad day, indeed, when one of our own crosses that line.

(MORE)

TESLA(cont'd)

And now he seeks to do more harm,  
spreading war and weaponry across  
the farthest reaches of Europe and  
Asia.

EINSTEIN

Oh, I'm afraid it is much worse  
than that my friend. I think he  
means to complete what you two  
started.

Tesla is reserved -- pregnant pause.

DEPUTY MASON

What's that?

TESLA

(chilling)

The Doomsday Device.

DEPUTY MASON

What Doomsday Device?

TESLA

It was something that Grigori and I  
had envisioned... in our reckless  
youth. Something to prevent the  
human race from destroying itself.  
The concept is simple - what  
warring nations fear more than each  
other, is extinction, and this fear  
would force peace.

DEPUTY MASON

You bastard! You knew.

TESLA

I had a feeling... nothing more. I  
had to be sure.

DEPUTY MASON

What have you done?! Whose side are  
you on anyway?!

Jack's blood boils.

TESLA

I am truly sorry for the mistakes  
that have been made, but we are  
beyond blame. Just allow me to fix  
what I have wrought.

DEPUTY MASON  
And what happens when he finishes  
it? What then?!

Tesla smiles.

DEPUTY MASON  
(also smiling)  
What?... You know something. You  
sly dog... You have a secret that  
will get us out of this mess. Tell  
me!

TESLA  
He still needs the key... a key he  
most likely did not know about  
until recently. A key I hid --

DEPUTY MASON  
-- in the notebook.

Tesla nods.

DEPUTY MASON  
Bully!

Tesla gets to his feet.

EINSTEIN  
What do you intend to do now,  
Nikola?

TESLA  
Stop him.

DEPUTY MASON  
And how are we going to do that?

TESLA  
No idea... But I'll think of  
something... I always do...

EINSTEIN  
Is there anything I can help with?

TESLA  
You have done more than enough.  
Thank you. I am just sorry my visit  
has to be so brief... and under  
such dire circumstances. I hope to  
see you again.

EINSTEIN

Ve will. Soon, this war will be over and I will return to Germany and continue my work in peace till my end of days.

TESLA

I hope you are right.

EINSTEIN

What more could happen? How much worse could it get?

Einstein leans in close to Jack.

EINSTEIN

Take good care of him.

DEPUTY MASON

It ain't him you have to worry about.

They leave.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Tesla stops at an intersection.

TESLA

There is something I need to see to... in private...

Tesla wanders off in one direction. Jack hesitates... but decides to leave him alone. He heads off in the other direction.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TRAIN - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

A lone locomotive traverses the barren landscape. A few stray NOTES from a VIOLIN float through the air.

INT. CABOOSE

Inside his lavishly decorated private parlor, Grigori is deep in thought as he pounds out Modest Mussorgsky's "Il Vecchio Castello" in G Minor.

A MEMBER of the Black Hand enters. He waits and then CLEARS HIS THROAT. Grigori stops, slightly annoyed.

BLACK HAND  
 (handing note)  
 Urgent message from the Kaiser.

INSERT - TELEGRAM

In plain, black type: "LOSS OF WEAPON A GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT  
 STOP CONSTRUCTION MUST BE EXPEDITED STOP FAILURE WILL NOT BE  
 TOLERATED STOP DOUBTING ABILITIES END"

BACK TO SCENE

GRIGORI  
 (crumples telegram)  
 Increase speed and do not disturb  
 me further, I need time to think.

The member bows and quickly exits.

Grigori resumes playing... the somber piece filling the  
 spaces without... and within.

FADE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jack slips off his jacket and lays both sidearms down. He  
 pours some water from a pitcher in the basin and splashes it  
 on his face.

He is drying off when -- KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK

CONCIERGE (O.S.)  
 Monsieur, telegram.

Jack grabs his gun and PULLS the HAMMER back before opening  
 the door a crack.

A little Frenchman with greased hair peers up.

CONCIERGE  
 Pardon e mois, telegram for  
 Monsieur Nikola Tesla.

DEPUTY MASON  
 Slip it through.

Jack puts the gun down to reach for the telegram.

At that time, a huge BRUTE of a man forces his way in.

Jack reaches for his gun -- the Brute grabs that hand -- Jack is forced against the wall -- the Brute's other hand on Jack's throat --

BRUTE  
Where is Tesla?

The Brute bashes his head against the wall for emphasis.

BRUTE  
Where is Nikola Tesla?!

DEPUTY MASON  
Little guy, right? Walks funny?

The Brute heaves Jack up over his head -- tosses him across the room -- broken furniture -- the Brute returns -- Jack pops up swinging -- a right-hook across the jaw -- two quick shots to the kidneys -- No effect --

DEPUTY MASON  
Ah, damnit.

HALLWAY

Jack explodes through the door -- bounces off the opposite wall -- GROANING --

The brute storms after -- kicks Jack -- lifts him up --

BRUTE  
All I want is the notebook, my little American friend.

DEPUTY MASON  
(choking)  
Sorry, can't help ya.

The Brute pulls his fist back --

HENCHMAN #1 (O.S.)  
Stop! He can still be useful...  
Bring him along.

The Brute knocks Jack unconscious and heaves him over his shoulder. He carries the Marshal's weapons in the other hand.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - LATER

Tesla enters. The man in the Windsor Glasses watches from a couch near the fireplace. He peers around his newspaper.

As Tesla passes the front desk --

CONCIERGE (O.S.)  
Monsieur, monsieur Tesla.

He is handed a NOTE. He opens it -- Tesla's face turns ASHEN and drops. He bolts for the door.

Windsor tucks his paper away and gives chase.

EXT. HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Tesla HAILS a cab. Windsor waits as a black sedan picks him up and follows.

EXT. TEXTILE FACTORY - NIGHT

The taxi drops Tesla off and quickly leaves. Tesla inspects the factory. Dark. Empty.

INT. TEXTILE FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

The door CREAKS as Tesla pushes it with his cane.

TESLA  
Hello?

Along the dark corridors, row after row of steam-powered machines and their massive steel swing arms and gears now lay dormant.

He enters.

TESLA  
Hello! -- Anyone here?!

To his left -- a large two-prong knife switch. He SNAPS it into place.

With a spark, the factory comes to life -- MACHINES begin CHUGGING -- the overhead lights illuminate -- steam fills the air.

Tesla ducks and dodges the machinery in action as he ventures further inside. He turns and is met by a pistol held by a HENCHMAN who speaks with a THICK COCKNEY ACCENT.

HENCHMAN #1  
Well, hello there govna.

CONTROL ROOM

Tesla is prodded near the wall filled with switches, dials, analog meters and buttons.

TWO MORE HENCHMAN stand over Jack: bruised, bloody and cuffed to a large pipe with a GAG over his mouth.

TESLA

Now, now, gentlemen. Perhaps we can talk about this.

HENCHMAN #1

The notebook... please.

Jack struggles, showing his disagreement.

Tesla fumbles inside his jacket, his hand shaking. The men approach, threateningly.

TESLA

If I give you the book... then you will let him go?

HENCHMAN #1

Of course...

Tesla stumbles around the equipment, falling over levers and accidentally hitting switches. He cringes and tries to correct his blunder.

TESLA

Y-y-you promise?

HENCHMAN #1

We do... wit a cherry on top.

He grins - little YELLOW CHICKLETS show between chapped lips.

HENCHMAN #2

Some genius he is, he's nothing but a scared little pussy cat.

HENCHMAN #1

He's a coward.

TESLA

Yes, yes. You are certainly right about that. I have no desire to fight or die, both options seem repulsive and if it were possible that, perhaps, we could come to a mutual agreement, then this whole situation could be resolved without incident.

Tesla continues bumping into switches -- stumbling around like a drunk -- stammering and stuttering --

HENCHMAN #1

We have orders to bring you in,  
with the book, alive. But no one  
said nothin' about unharmed. I vote  
we beat 'im just fo the fun of it.

TESLA

Please, just take it and leave!

The henchmen look past the notebook --

TESLA

Take it!

-- The Henchman reaches for it but pushes back.

HENCHMAN #1

Nah, we aims to bring you in right  
proper, just as ordered.

Tesla holds up his cane to the henchman's chest --

TESLA

(piss and vinegar)  
Pity you did not take my kind  
offer...

Tesla shoves the henchman back while flinging the keys from  
his belt into Jack's lap using his cane --

TESLA

... because if there is one thing  
you shouldn't have let me do, it's  
flip all those switches.

Tesla pushes one last button with his cane, sending the steam  
system into overload. A RUMBLING builds as a few caps blow  
from the pressure.

Jack frees himself and removes the gag.

HENCHMAN'S POV: the dominating shadow of Tesla lording over  
him.

TESLA

Tell me where he is!

The Henchman is too frightened.

TESLA

I can stop it! Tell me where  
Grigori is!

HENCHMAN #1  
We can't, he'll kill us!

Tesla points at them with his cane.

TESLA  
What do you think I'm going to do?!

Another group of HENCHMEN set up a machine gun from behind --

Jack tackles Tesla as a barrage of bullets SHATTER WINDOWS and RICOCHET overhead.

FACTORY FLOOR

Both men take cover behind some equipment.

TESLA  
I dare say, that was rather rude of them.

Jack dumps the spent rounds from his revolver and reloads.

DEPUTY MASON  
Allow me to return the favor!

He flicks his wrist, closing the cylinder.

Another pipe BURSTS as the RUMBLING increases.

TESLA  
Perhaps now is the time for a hasty retreat?

Jack FIRES a few more shots giving both men enough time to lose the gunmen in the confusion of the factory.

AISLE

The duo run for their lives -- Jack grabs a chair at one of the work stations -- tosses it at the scum frosted window ahead -- both men jump through the opening safely.

EXT. TEXTILE FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

As both men get to their feet they are met by several heavily armed German soldiers with Von Braun.

They raise their hands.

DEPUTY MASON  
(to Tesla)  
Any more ideas?

TESLA  
 (to Jack)  
 Sorry, I just ran out.

VON BRAUN  
 Za notebook, heir Tesla.

Tesla nervously looks back at the factory --

TESLA  
 Um, well, see, there is a slight  
 situation developing and I think it  
 would be best if --

VON BRAUN  
 Kill him. Wait! TESLA

Tesla tosses the German his notebook.

VON BRAUN  
 Wunderbar!

From a side exit, several yards away, the three thugs that  
 tried to kill Jack and blackmail Tesla flee.

The soldiers are temporarily distracted and Jack grabs Tesla.

TESLA  
 (running past)  
 Don't say I didn't warn you!

VON BRAUN  
 Shoot zem, please.

The SOLDIERS turn to fire -- the factory explodes -- huge  
 pieces of shrapnel tear through the group -- seconds later  
 the confusion subsides -- the soldiers start to give chase --

VON BRAUN  
 Nein! We have what we came for.

Von Braun tucks the notebook under his belt.

VON BRAUN  
 Let's go!

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Jack and Tesla watch as the Germans depart.

TESLA  
 We must do something.

Jack watches several soldiers pile into a truck.

DEPUTY MASON  
Okay, get ready...

Both men prepare to run when --

They are yanked from behind by three men and dragged away.

INT. TOY SHOP - NIGHT

Little wooden puppets, wire airplanes, stuffed dolls and crank-style automatons adorn the shelves around both Jack and Tesla as they sit, staring, at WINDSOR, unbound.

WINDSOR  
(flipping through a file)  
We've been following you for some time... Mister Tesla and Jonathan Mason of the United States Marshal Service.

DEPUTY MASON  
My friends call me Jack... you can call me Deputy Mason... twit!

WINDSOR  
Charmed. You're quite popular back in the States... Deputy Mason.

Tesla and Jack give a worried glance at each other.

WINDSOR  
Don't worry. We know you weren't the one that pulled the trigger. We're working our contacts to clear your name.

DEPUTY MASON  
(not sure what to believe)  
Thank -- you?

TESLA  
And tell me who you might be my fine friend?

WINDSOR  
Danbury. Rupert Danbury. M.I. Five.

He opens his jacket and shows them the logo: a black triangle with "M" "I" "V" in each corner and the royal crown centered.

RUPERT DANBURY

We're the good guys.

DEPUTY MASON

Never heard of ya.

DANBURY

Yes, well, we are a new branch of his majesty's secret service specializing in foreign espionage and counter-espionage activities. We know about Germany's weapon, we know about their dealings with the Black Hand. Unfortunately, we've been unable to establish a network inside. But for some reason, Germany is very, very interested in you.

DEPUTY MASON

What do you want?

DANBURY

Only to help. In any way possible. You have a lead in, we need your assistance to exploit it.

TESLA

You can help, first, by telling us where that German went with my notebook.

DANBURY

Ah yes, Helmut Von Braun, bullish-fellow. I'd stay clear if I were you.

DEPUTY MASON

We'll take that under advisement.

DANBURY

We'd be happy to provide the information you seek, and transportation. But what happens if we do?

TESLA

I still need to find Grigori... and hopefully stop him.

DANBURY

And if you can't?

DEPUTY MASON  
I wouldn't make that bet.

Pause.

DANBURY  
Very well, Mister Tesla, Deputy  
Mason. We'll keep our distance...  
for now. But we'll be watching...  
and waiting...  
(to MI-5 agent)  
Get them whatever they need.

AGENT #1  
(whispering)  
... and the King's orders?

DANBURY  
(whispering)  
We'll wait. He may lead us straight  
to him.

EXT. TOY SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Jack and Tesla are shown their "transportation" OFF SCREEN --

TESLA  
Mister Danbury certainly has a  
sense of humor...

DEPUTY MASON  
Are you kidding? I've always wanted  
one of these!

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Tesla sits in the sidecar of a motorcycle, wearing goggles  
and a helmet as Jack drives -- a grin on his face.

EXT. CHATEAU - NIGHT

The German's arrive and quickly unload as Von Braun exits --

VON BRAUN  
(in German; subtitled)  
Inform the Kaiser we have the book!  
Get the ship ready, we leave at  
dawn!

He walks straight through the Chateau to the --

COURTYARD

The enormous Zeppelin is anchored just out of sight in a grove of trees.

ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Tesla and Jack pull up and watch from a distance. They then drive around back.

COURTYARD - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Two German SOLDIERS loiter outside the airship, smoking with their weapons slung over their shoulders.

Tesla and Jack peer around the corner of a supply truck.

DEPUTY MASON

Well?

TESLA

Not good.

DEPUTY MASON

I've got an idea.

Jack removes his revolver.

TESLA

Put that away... unless you wish to blow us all up!

DEPUTY MASON

Listen Tesla! Who's running this show?! You or I?

TESLA

I.

Jack grumbles.

TESLA

See if you can get around from the other side...

DEPUTY MASON

Stay here! Here. Okay?

Tesla nods.

Jack sneaks around the other side of the truck. Tesla returns his gaze to the Zeppelin entrance but this time the guards have vanished. He looks around the courtyard -- nothing.

Tesla hesitates and then quickly bolts towards the airship.

INT. GONDOLA

Tesla peers inside -- his notebook rests on the edge of the main counsel. He enters. But as he snatches the book and turns, VOICES from OUTSIDE can be heard.

Tesla quickly hides among the mechanics of the cramped space.

VON BRAUN (O.S.)  
(in German; subtitled)  
Take off!

COURTYARD

Jack returns.

DEPUTY MASON  
There are two guar --  
(what the hell?!)  
-- Tesla! Tesla!

Deputy Mason looks around.

He then HEARS the DOORS LOCKING and the ZEPPELIN POWERING UP.

DEPUTY MASON  
He wouldn't be that stupid...

The GEARS of the massive airship WIND UP and smoke pours from the back as it gains altitude.

Jack spots Tesla through one of the rear windows crouched down.

DEPUTY MASON  
...he would...

Deputy Mason tucks his gun away and bolts for the airship.

Just as the tie ropes are almost beyond his reach, he jumps and grabs the very end of the line and goes for a ride.

INT. GONDOLA - MORNING

The morning sunlight streams in as Von Braun slowly reaches over to the empty space on the console.

VON BRAUN  
Die pistole!

TWO SOLDIERS draw their weapons.

VON BRAUN  
You can come out now. There is no  
place for you to go.

TESLA (O.S.)  
Go ahead, shoot. Abhobeln!

VON BRAUN  
Nein!

TESLA  
(stands)  
You can't. You won't. Not unless  
you want to blow us all to kingdom  
come.

VON BRAUN  
Very clever! But --

Tesla hears the CLICK of a GUN in bg.

VON BRAUN  
Point blank would not be a problem.

The SOLDIER leads Tesla to face Von Braun.

VON BRAUN  
Za notebook...

Tesla doesn't move.

VON BRAUN  
Don't make me kill you.

Tesla removes the notebook.

VON BRAUN  
This is the second time I've had to  
collect this. There will not be a  
third.

TESLA  
I wouldn't be so sure about that.

In Von Braun's blind spot Jack swings towards the gondola --  
he explodes through the windows -- both soldiers are knocked  
through the opposite side -- their SCREAMS FADE --

Deputy Mason lands with a THUD.

TESLA  
Jack!

DEPUTY MASON  
 (pointing at Tesla)  
 You! I told you to stay!

Von Braun holds his pistol to Jack's head.

VON BRAUN  
 Marshal --

DEPUTY MASON  
 -- just a second.  
 (to Tesla)  
 Is it too much to ask you to just  
 do what I tell you. Is it?!

TESLA  
 If I had wanted to take orders from  
 an idiot, I'd work for the Germans!

DEPUTY MASON  
 Idiot? IDIOT?! I am a United States  
 Marshal!

Jack levels his elbow into Von Braun's chin -- the German  
 falls back -- Jack grabs his pistol and kills the soldier  
 behind Tesla -- Tesla grabs his notebook back.

DEPUTY MASON  
 There. Can an idiot do that?!

TESLA  
 Any idiot can do that!

DEPUTY MASON  
 American cowboy ego?!

TESLA  
 Precisely!

Jack holds up a finger and opens his mouth but is left  
 without rebuttal.

Von Braun quickly gets to his feet and draws a knife from his  
 boot. He takes Jack hostage, holding the blade to his throat.

VON BRAUN  
 The notebook or I kill him!

TESLA  
 Yeah, go ahead.

DEPUTY MASON  
Tesla!

VON BRAUN  
Fine.

Just as the German is about to sink the knife into Jack's throat the ship is rocked -- several biplanes BLOW past the WINDOWS.

Tesla loses his notebook -- it slides across the cabin floor -- Von Braun drops his knife.

Jack punches Von Braun -- he collides with the controls -- the zeppelin tilts violently.

TESLA  
Jack! My notebook!

Deputy Mason falls to his belly -- the notebook passes between his fingers -- Von Braun crawls after it.

Tesla quickly grabs the controls as the planes continue to circle -- BULLETS RIDDLE the gondola.

Von Braun grabs the book -- Jack pummels him again -- he drops the book -- it slides between Jack's feet as the zeppelin continues to roll and pitch.

DEPUTY MASON  
Tesla!

TESLA  
I am doing my best to correct the situation!

Von Braun retrieves his knife and lunges at Jack -- Jack loses his balance and falls -- Von Braun stands over him ready for the kill -- the notebook slides between his feet -- he glances down -- Von Braun jams the knife into Jack's collar pinning him to the floor -- he is stuck.

Von Braun picks up the notebook and opens the zeppelin door -- a sudden rush of air --

VON BRAUN  
We'll continue this later... auf wiedersehen!

DEPUTY MASON  
Tesla! The notebook!

EXT. ZEPPELIN - DAY

Von Braun tumbles out and deploys a hidden parachute.

It unfurls a few seconds later with The Emblem of the Iron Cross emblazoned on the canopy.

GONDOLA

Tesla struggles to control the airship --

DEPUTY MASON  
Tesla! Help me!

Tesla climbs up the sloping floor and removes the knife.

DEPUTY MASON  
He took the notebook... again!

TESLA  
We have bigger worries at the moment, Deputy Mason.

Tesla watches a squadron of black Fokker Eindecker led by a red Fokker DR I triplane piloted by the Red Baron circle around.

TESLA  
Do you think they know we're not German?

The planes bank straight for the helpless airship.

DEPUTY MASON  
They do now... hasty retreat?

TESLA  
You will get no arguments from me, Deputy Mason.

Both men keep low as more BULLETS PEPPER the gondola.

INT./EXT. ZEPPELIN - UNDERCARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS

Tesla and Jack find a Nieuport 11 single-winged plane attached to the belly of the airship.

PLANE

Both men climb in the open air cabin with Tesla piloting.

DEPUTY MASON  
Do you know how to fly this thing?!

TESLA  
Who do you think helped Orville and Wilbur?!

DEPUTY MASON  
The Wright Brothers?! Didn't they  
crash the first dozen times?!

TESLA  
I think I have it figured out now!

DEPUTY MASON  
Think?!

Tesla releases the plane and it goes into a steep nose dive.

DEPUTY MASON  
TESLA!

EXT. SKY - DAY

The German planes circle their prey -- they open fire -- the  
dangerous hydrogen gas ignites --

The airship becomes a scorching blaze as Jack and Tesla fly  
through the smoke --

PLANE

Both men watch the Zeppelin disintegrate -- Jack turns back -

DEPUTY MASON  
Look out!

Tesla whips back just in time to pull the nose of the plane  
up -- a swarm of German and English fighters rush past them --

RED BARON

circles around to place the Nieuport in the cross hairs -- he  
fires --

NIEUPOINT

bullets WHIZ by Jack and Tesla's head --

JACK

pulls his revolvers and fires back --

TESLA

attempts to out maneuver the triplane, but he's unshakable.

TESLA  
His aeronautical skills are quite  
impressive!

DEPUTY MASON

I'm glad you approve! If we live through this, you can ask him for lessons!

Tesla looks down -- WHAT HE SEES: a low valley through breaks in the clouds.

TESLA

Hold on!

He jerks the stick and the plane dives. Jack is thrust back into his seat.

The Red Baron follows.

SKY

as they pierce the cloud deck, the European countryside comes into view.

TESLA

continues to push the plane into a steep dive. The ground rushes up on them -- with certain death only seconds away, he finally pulls up --

RED BARON

narrowly avoids being splattered on the green pastures and continues to give good chase, spraying bullets --

NIEUPORT WING

shreds -- severely crippling the aircraft --

NIEUPORT

dips lower towards the thick pine forest --

RED BARON

closes in for the kill --

SKY

a squadron of the Royal Flying Corp swoop down from above --

NIEUPORT

both men watch as they scream past, the air currents tear Tesla's hat from his head and send it flying --

RED BARON

Tesla's hat flies into his face, temporarily blinding him --  
he loses control and slams into the side of a large hill --

TESLA

smiles but loses control --

TESLA

Hang on!

FOREST

the plane disappears into a grove of pine trees.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Tesla regains consciousness. Both men sit strapped in and  
upside down -- Tesla's view is obscured because of it -- the  
engine and wings lay in a shattered mess fifty feet below.

DEPUTY MASON (O.S.)

(groaning)

Oh, my head...

TESLA

Deputy Mason, are you alright?

DEPUTY MASON

No... you're a horrible pilot.

TESLA

We are alive, no?

DEPUTY MASON

And stuck.

TESLA

I concur that we are in quite a  
predicament. Though I suspect our  
situation could not get much worse.

SEVERAL GERMAN SOLDIERS COCK their WEAPONS below.

The LIEUTENANT SHOUTS at them in GERMAN.

Both men look down... or up depending on your perspective.

DEPUTY MASON  
You were saying?

The Lieutenant repeats his orders.

TESLA  
I believe that is quite impossible  
my friend!

DEPUTY MASON  
What did he say?

TESLA  
He wants us to put our hands up  
which is preposterous in our  
current declination.

They FIRE a warning SHOT into the fuselage. Jack focuses on the smouldering bullet hole inches away. He lowers his hands above his head.

DEPUTY MASON  
Word to the wise: don't argue with  
guys with the guns, no matter how  
stupid it sounds.

Jack smiles and nods, showing his compliance.

EXT. TRAIN - DAY

Von Braun presents Grigori with the notebook again. But as he reaches out for it the German pulls it back.

VON BRAUN  
Ah... patience...

He places the notebook in a metal trunk a SOLDIER is carrying. It is then locked with a large iron padlock.

VON BRAUN  
...to guard against any further  
interruption... by order of the  
Kaiser.

GRIGORI  
Of course... and Tesla?

He hands him a COMMUNIQUE.

VON BRAUN  
Your friend and his companion were  
captured near Stuttgart.

GRIGORI  
Have them brought here.

They walk.

VON BRAUN  
He is very dangerous. He should be  
killed now while we have the  
chance.

GRIGORI  
He may still be of use.

VON BRAUN  
We do not need him, we have the  
book!

They stop.

GRIGORI  
I want him to see!

VON BRAUN  
Do not forget your place, or who  
you serve. You are losing focus of  
the goal.

GRIGORI  
Do not lecture me as if you can  
even begin to understand me. I have  
beaten the brilliant Nikola Tesla!  
And I will have my glory!

VON BRAUN  
The Kaiser is tired of your games.

GRIGORI  
Perhaps the Kaiser would like to  
find someone else who can do what I  
do?!

Pause. Grigori walks away.

VON BRAUN  
You would stare down an army of  
thousands...

Grigori stops.

VON BRAUN  
...but this man he frightens you...  
Why?

GRIGORI  
It's not just any man... it's  
Tesla!

INT. TRUCK - CARGO BAY - DAY

Tesla and Jack have their hands bound in front, allowing for limited movement in their windowless prison.

DEPUTY MASON  
Well, this can't be good.

Tesla stretches and takes out his pocket watch.

DEPUTY MASON  
What is so important about that  
watch?

TESLA  
(tucking it away)  
Time is an important matter.

DEPUTY MASON  
No, it's something else. It's  
always something else when it comes  
to you.

TESLA  
Very good, Deputy Mason. You're not  
as dumb as you think you are.

Tesla gives Jack the watch.

INSERT - WATCH

Adjacent to the clock face is a picture of a young woman in a Victorian dress -- the same as from Grigori's locket.

BACK TO SCENE

DEPUTY MASON  
It's her, isn't it?

TESLA  
Nadia... she gives me strength...

DEPUTY MASON  
She's beautiful.

TESLA  
She was...

Tesla takes it back.

TESLA  
...she is no longer... except in  
time.

Pause.

DEPUTY MASON  
I'm sorry.

TESLA  
Do not feel pity for me, Deputy  
Mason, for I feel pity for those  
who never knew her... in her short  
time on this Earth.

Both Tesla and Jack sit back to REST.

DEPUTY MASON  
What's gonna happen next?

TESLA  
I do not think Grigori is finished  
with us just yet. Though, I  
conceive that my friend may be as  
much a prisoner as we are at the  
moment, in which case, I am  
doubtful of chances for survival.

DEPUTY MASON  
You know what Tesla? Just lie to me  
once in a while...

TESLA  
My apologies...

Pause.

DEPUTY MASON  
I guess I'm gonna to break that  
promise to my family, then.

TESLA  
Do not lose hope so quickly, Deputy  
Mason. We are still far better off  
than most in our same predicament.

DEPUTY MASON  
How do you figure that?

TESLA  
They don't have me.

Tesla gives a confident smile.

FADE TO:

INT. TRUCK - CARGO BAY - DAY

The truck lurches to a stop -- GERMAN VOICES outside.

The cloth draped over the back is pulled open. Tesla and Jack squint in the light.

Several soldiers climb in and help them out --

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Outside: mud, gray, smoke-filled skies, charred remains of old brick buildings -- a world torn apart by war.

DEPUTY MASON

Where are we?

TESLA

Home.

The Germans lead Tesla and Jack towards --

EXT. CLOCK TOWER - CONTINUOUS

Near the center of town, the battered old structure has cracked and missing windows, but new structural modifications have been made of a peculiar sort. Tesla makes note of this.

INT. CLOCK TOWER

The giant gears dominate the view as both men enter. The old world architecture has been augmented by "modern" 20th Century technology.

TESLA

He's turned the clock tower into a giant electromagnetic resonant transponder. Fantastic!

DEPUTY MASON

Well, that's, uh -- something.

Tesla and Jack continue to wander.

DEPUTY MASON

Is this it? I mean... I don't get it. No explosives. No gunpowder. How do you expect to destroy the world with this?

GRIGORI (O.S.)  
Excellent question...  
(walking into view)  
Hello, Nikola. I'm glad you could  
join us.

Grigori hops up to the "brain" of the device.

GRIGORI  
Welcome to a front row seat to the  
end of civilization as we know it!  
And in it's a wake, the dawning of  
a brave new world. My world!

DEPUTY MASON  
You're a lunatic...

GRIGORI  
Sticks and stones my friend.

DEPUTY MASON  
Yeah? Prove me wrong.

GRIGORI  
Do you know what Alpha Waves are?

Jack shakes his head.

GRIGORI  
Nikola, perhaps you would like to  
explain it to our dim-witted friend  
here whose head is like a scarecrow  
filled with straw.

Jack is perplexed by the mad Russian's vocal hopscotch.

GRIGORI  
No? Okay, allow me.  
(clears throat)  
Alpha waves are all around us, and  
more importantly, they are in us.  
Every living organism on the planet  
operates via the use of alpha  
waves. It is this electrical  
resonance that controls the  
biological functions of all living  
things, even the human brain. When  
we eat, drink, sleep, laugh, cry  
are all driven by alpha waves. And  
they operate in a range between six  
and eight hertz. Now, if you were  
to somehow send out a signal at...  
(MORE)

GRIGORI(cont'd)

oh, I don't know, six to eight hertz and channel it through a region of the atmosphere called the Schuman cavity which just so happens to operate on the exact same frequency, you would have the power to interrupt those electrical impulses... and bend them to your will. It doesn't take much... just a little monkey wrench in the natural order of things... and you can dominate the human race.

DEPUTY MASON

That is impossible...

Grigori smirks as he paces around the motionless gears.

GRIGORI

Tell him, Nikola. Tell him how real it is.

TESLA

(defeated)

I am afraid it is quite possible. Lightning from a thunderstorm originates from the Schuman cavity. It is the perfect electrical conduit. It's just a matter of finding the correct frequency.

GRIGORI

And you found that frequency, didn't you?

DEPUTY MASON

(to himself)

The key...

Short pause.

DEPUTY MASON

Wait! What about us? What about you and your men?

GRIGORI

The eye of the storm. We'll be quite safe right here.

TESLA

We'll see...

GRIGORI

Give it up, Nikola, I have won.

TESLA

If you are so confident, then why  
do I detect a quiver in your voice?

Grigori's nostrils flare. He then nods at the Black Hand, who  
strike Jack with the butt end of the gun, dropping him.

VON BRAUN (O.S.)

That is enough!

Von Braun joins them, along with a German SOLDIER carrying  
the locked metal trunk.

VON BRAUN

(to Grigori)

We have done all that you have  
requested... We want results!

GRIGORI

It will take time to build up the  
necessary --

VON BRAUN

-- how long?

Grigori looks at the MEN working.

GRIGORI

One hour.

Tesla checks his pocket watch.

Von Braun nods and turns --

GRIGORI

And the notebook?

VON BRAUN

When you are ready... Not before.

Grigori fumes at the mockery of his current predicament.

GRIGORI

(to Tesla)

Would you like to join me for tea?

Tesla cannot believe it.

GRIGORI

Just because we are enemies does  
not mean we can't be civil.

(points to Jack)

Tie him up!

Tesla looks back at the partially conscious Jack as they lash him to a truss.

GRIGORI

Don't worry about your companion,  
my friend would just like a word  
with him... that's all...

VON BRAUN

We did not get a chance to finish  
what we started last time...

Von Braun steps down and removes his uniform jacket.

VON BRAUN

...I trust der will be no more  
interruptions this time.

TOP FLOOR

A table and two chairs have been set up in front of the giant soot-covered windows of the clock face. The setting sun has ignited the devastated city in golden sepia.

GRIGORI

Please... sit.

Tesla doesn't move.

GRIGORI

SIT!

Tesla hangs his cane from a nail sticking out from one of the many wooden beams and takes his seat.

GRIGORI

Just like old times...

Tense pause.

TESLA

(he can't help himself)  
No sugar?

GRIGORI

(smiling)  
Yes, I forgot. It's three lumps,  
isn't it? Always three. I apologize  
but we do have to make certain  
sacrifices during this perilous  
time.

TESLA

I don't suppose I could talk you out of this?

GRIGORI

(chuckles)

I am afraid not. But I must thank you for making this day possible.

TESLA

I never meant for this to happen.

GRIGORI

Ah, now we are arguing over purpose. What was the purpose, Nikola? What was your intent?

Tesla remains silent.

GRIGORI

Or perhaps you and I are not that different after all? Perhaps I am the only one brave enough to pull the trigger.

TESLA

What do you want, Grigori?

GRIGORI

For you to suffer as I have suffered... and show the world the monster you truly are.

TESLA

Her death was not my fault.

GRIGORI

LIAR!

Heavy pause.

GRIGORI

Does it bother you? To be so alone?

He gets up.

GRIGORI

Does it not vex you to see these... these people who have so much -- family, love, life -- and yet they are so willing to throw it all away.

(MORE)

GRIGORI(cont'd)

For what?!  
 (mocking)  
 Death and glory.  
 (emotional)  
 We were happy once, Nikola. We had  
 it all and fate was cruel to us.  
 But we have a chance to teach all  
 of them a lesson. To show them how  
 thankful they should really be.  
 That is why we are here. That is  
 our power.

TESLA  
 By destroying the world?

GRIGORI  
 By reshaping it.

TESLA  
 There must be another way.

GRIGORI  
 There is NO OTHER WAY!

TESLA  
 You do not know what you are doing.

GRIGORI  
 Oh, I think I do.

Tesla glances at his watch -- Grigori snatches it and sees  
 the picture -- he tears it out, crumples it up and throws it  
 away.

GRIGORI  
 Times up.

A line has been crossed.

GROUND FLOOR - AT THE SAME TIME

A bloody and sweaty Jack takes another punch from Von Braun,  
 still strapped to the truss. The German takes a break.

Jack spits blood on the floor.

DEPUTY MASON  
 So when do we begin?

VON BRAUN  
 (panting)  
 Patience. I enjoy taking my time.

He wanders over and PICKS up one of Jack's revolvers.

DEPUTY MASON

Hey! Get away from those!

VON BRAUN

Fine craftsmanship. I respect a man who takes such good care of his weapons...

DEPUTY MASON

Good ol' American ingenuity... nothing you would understand... you and your butter knives.

VON BRAUN

I like zee sword because it is personal. It is honorable. It is the way our forbearers settled their arguments. War has become messy... detached. You can tell a lot about a man by his weapon of choice. For instance, I know you are proud of your country for which you serve so bravely... if not foolishly. But you are also a man with a lot to lose... why else would you be so armed... and protected? So quick to kill? So, what is it? A wife? A son? A daughter?

DEPUTY MASON

Stay away from her!

VON BRAUN

Ah... A daughter -- No! Wait! -- Two daughters. A family. How does it feel to be so far from home... knowing the fate that awaits them?

Von Braun puts the revolver down and turns.

DEPUTY MASON

You know your friend, the Kraut in the red plane?

(that got his attention)

Yeah. You know him. Well, he had a little run in with the French countryside thanks to me and Tesla. Which is probably for the best... you know what they say: the only good Kraut is a dead Kraut.

Von Braun pummels him with two quick body blows. He lifts Jack's head up by his hair.

VON BRAUN

When this is over... I will make you my slave... and by my sword I will destroy everything you love... all while you bear witness.

He throws Jack's head away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLOCK TOWER - EVENING

The coal powered steam generators ROAR as the MACHINERY POWERS UP. The giant GEARS CREAK and GROAN as they start to turn. Electricity arcs across the two massive generators.

Grigori looks on like a proud father witnessing the birth of his son.

Tesla is now tied up with JACK.

Von Braun brings out the chest. It is unlocked and opened. Grigori reaches in and brings out the notebook.

GRIGORI

...at last.

(to Tesla)

Can you feel it? Can you feel the end? How does it feel to have everything you worked for slipping away?

(savoring)

Now you will suffer as you watch.

BLACK HAND #1 (O.S.)

Full power!

VON BRAUN

The frequency!

Grigori walks to the controls.

GRIGORI

The frequency is...

He slowly opens the notebook. He quickly flips through it, frantically searching.

Tesla winks at Jack.

Grigori throws the book away -- it falls open mid-chapter of a children's book. Von Braun picks it up.

VON BRAUN  
What is this?!

GRIGORI  
(to Tesla)  
Where is it?! Where is your notebook?!

TESLA  
Somewhere very far away where you'll never find it!

Grigori grabs a revolver from a nearby SOLDIER.

GRIGORI  
You think you are so clever! But while we may not have your notebook, we still have the great and mighty Nikola Tesla... who remembers everything.

TESLA  
Whoops.

DEPUTY MASON  
(alarmed)  
Whoops?

GRIGORI  
(to Von Braun)  
I told you he would come in handy.

TESLA  
It would appear I have overplayed my hand... slightly.

VON BRAUN  
(to Grigori)  
Fix this!

DEPUTY MASON  
Tesla?

TESLA  
I'm thinking...

Grigori COCKS the WEAPON.

GRIGORI  
 (to Tesla)  
 The frequency!

DEPUTY MASON  
 Tesla!

TESLA  
 Some silence would be nice!

A sudden EXPLOSION outside rocks the tower as the war suddenly intervenes.

VON BRAUN  
 What was that?!

TESLA  
 Ah... it would appear Mister  
 Danbury has come through... and not  
 a moment too soon.

EXT. TRENCHES - CONTINUOUS

A BRITISH SERGEANT inspects his regiment's aim with the aid of a spyglass. He is quite prim and proper, a real dandy.

SERGEANT  
 I say lads, a few more degrees to  
 the North should do it.

Men in doughboy helmets scatter around him, loading shells.

SERGEANT  
 We must not let his Majesty down...  
 for King and Country!

The soldiers make the appropriate adjustments to the artillery cannon and fire again.

BACK TO CLOCK TOWER

Another MORTAR EXPLODES nearby, blowing out all the windows and sending everyone scrambling.

VON BRAUN  
 You! I will kill you!

He points Jack's revolver at Tesla. Jack lifts himself up and kicks Von Braun away. He then kneels down and uses a piece of shattered glass to cut his way to freedom.

Von Braun draws his sword and swings at Jack -- he ducks --  
 Von Braun hacks again -- misses -- Jack puts the truss  
 between him and Von Braun, using it for cover -- but Tesla is  
 still tied up --

TESLA  
 I would prefer you play somewhere  
 else Deputy Mason!

DEPUTY MASON  
 I'm workin' on it!

Finally, Jack outsmarts Von Braun, who cuts Tesla's ropes --  
 Tesla holds up his cane, blocking Von Braun's sword --

TESLA  
 En Garde!

Von Braun hacks at him again, slicing through his cane --

TESLA  
 (inspecting cane)  
 Oh dear.

VON BRAUN  
 And now, I vill do what should have  
 been done all along! I vill kill  
 Nikola Tesla!

He raises Jack's revolver --

GRIGORI  
 NO!

Grigori grabs the gun.

GRIGORI  
 You will not harm him!

Both men wrestle for control.

VON BRAUN  
 You are weak! You have always been  
 weak! And so easy to control!

A GUNSHOT -- two shocked faces -- Grigori stumbles back and  
 raises a blood covered hand. He looks down.

HE SEES: blood soaks through his black vest, a hole torn  
 through the fabric near his belly.

GRIGORI  
I always knew this was the end for  
me.

He falls back -- Tesla catches him and cradles his head on  
the floor.

TESLA  
You fool!

Another mortar tears through the clock tower but both men  
enter their own world --

GRIGORI  
Nikola... I am ready...

TESLA  
No Grigori.... Please.... I need  
you... I don't want to be alone...

Grigori tears the locket from his neck -- hands it to Tesla.

GRIGORI  
She -- she always did love you the  
most...

TESLA  
Please.... Don't leave me....

GRIGORI  
This world is too small for the two  
us... old... friend...

He is GONE.

Tesla clutches his limp body and wails in agony.

Von Braun's REVOLVER COCKS.

VON BRAUN  
Finish it!

TESLA  
It's over. Leave! NOW!

VON BRAUN  
(pointing the gun at Jack)  
Finish it or you will lose two!

TESLA  
(rage)  
So be it.

He lays Grigori's body down.

Tesla approaches the controls and begins hitting switches, dials and knobs.

The clock gears increase their pace as steam and smoke shoot out from difference places. The output increases one hundred fold as a pulse of electricity blows the top of the tower off, sending glass and shrapnel raining over them.

TRENCHES

The British troops stop and STARE slack-jawed as electricity POURS from the tower, a deep blue glow igniting the city at night.

BACK TO CLOCK TOWER

VON BRAUN

What are you doing?!

TESLA

Giving you what you wanted...

VON BRAUN

(gun shakes)

Stop it!

TESLA

Do you think there is anything you can do to me that has not already been done? Anything you can take from me that has not already been taken?

(facing him)

Do you think death frightens me anymore?

VON BRAUN

You're mad!

TESLA

I am Nikola Tesla, the greatest visionary the world has ever known!

VON BRAUN

Please! I'll give you whatever you want!

TESLA

I want you to go back to Germany. I want you to tell the Kaiser to stop this damned war, to make peace!

(MORE)

TESLA(cont'd)

Or I will come for him. I will come for him and I will bring Armageddon to his front door and I will not stop until the whole of Germany is but a smouldering wasteland of ash and death. You know this to be true.

Time slows in Jack's mind as he bears witness...

DEPUTY MASON (V.O.)

It suddenly became clear. This man, this wonderful man, who hid himself in thought, who refused to involve himself in the petty differences of mankind. He wasn't doing it out of selfishness or spite or vanity. He was doing it to protect us. For in his fury he could destroy us all without lifting a finger...

Von Braun backs away and then makes a run for it, SHOUTING to the Black Hand in GERMAN. They all run.

Jack puts his hand on Tesla's arm.

DEPUTY MASON

(calmly)

You can stop... Tesla!

(he reaches him)

You can stop now.

BACK TO TRENCHES

Members of the Black Hand race across the muddy fields outside of town when -- a platoon of British soldiers pops up from a trench with weapons drawn -- the Black Hand stop dead and surrender.

Two SOLDIERS escort Von Braun to face Danbury who removes his pickelhaube helmet.

DANBURY

Hallo, Helmut.

VON BRAUN

(struggling)

Get away! Run! We are all doomed!

DANBURY

Oh, I think your cousin would like a word with you first... You remember him, right? His majesty King George the fifth.

Von Braun's eye grow wide.

DANBURY  
Take him away!

But --

A sudden DISCHARGE of electricity RIPPLES into the sky.

BACK TO CLOCK TOWER

TESLA  
Oh no.

Tesla runs around checking gauges.

DEPUTY MASON  
Can you stop it?!

TESLA  
Who do you think you're talking to?

Tesla takes off running again.

TESLA  
(fading)  
Follow me Deputy Mason! I may need  
your assistance...

BASEMENT

Tesla runs down the stairs and finds a locked panel.

TESLA  
I need -- I need something to pry  
the panel off --

A loud BANG pierces all other SOUNDS. The panel lock has been shattered.

Tesla looks at Deputy Mason holding his revolver. He blows the wafting smoke away.

TESLA  
I am certainly glad I brought you  
along...

Tesla sets to work -- he connects wires to other wires -- flips knife switches -- changes screw-in fuses -- sparks -- He pulls out the male and female end of two cables --

TESLA  
Hold these! And whatever you do,  
don't let them touch.

DEPUTY MASON  
And what would happen if I do?

TESLA  
You will kill every living thing on  
the planet!

Deputy Mason looks at the two cables -- he then holds his hands out to the sides as far as they will go.

TESLA  
There! Now, Jack, when I give you  
the word, I want you to connect  
those cables... but NOT BEFORE!

Tesla takes off running again.

DEPUTY MASON  
What about the killing everything  
on the planet... thing?!

TESLA (O.S.)  
(fading)  
Trust me!

BACK TO GROUND LEVEL

Tesla reaches the control panel and makes a few adjustments.

The clock tower continues to shake itself apart as more electricity CRACKLES into the sky and arcs away from the conductor.

TESLA  
Now, Deputy Mason!

BACK TO BASEMENT

Jack takes a deep breath and then connects the cables -- a jolt of electricity shoots him back out of frame.

BACK TO GROUND LEVEL

Tesla throws a switch.

The power pulsates into the sky.

## SERIES OF SHOTS

The soldiers (with their prisoners) stare at the beam of bluish white light pumping into the air.

A mother cradling her children in the dead of night without electricity is shocked when her lantern begins glowing brightly. The children wake, stare, and smile.

Electric lights strung along the front lines begin glowing as the soldiers in the trenches on both sides emerge from their darkened hiding places to stare -- and greet each other.

Dimmed street lamps in Europe increase in intensity as battle weary Europeans emerge from their homes in wonderment.

Light bulbs in shops, not even attached to the grid, glow brightly, sending out ribbons of pure white light into the streets. A HOMELESS MAN stares wide eyed.

From space, the whole of Europe, Asia, Africa, are SPOTTED with little white dots in a perfect circle from a central origin point in Eastern Europe.

## BACK TO CLOCK TOWER

A smoking and smouldering Deputy Mason joins Tesla.

DEPUTY MASON

What did you do?

TESLA

I made them see.

DEPUTY MASON

Is this what it does?

TESLA

(coy)

Maybe.

DEPUTY MASON

You knew it. You knew the whole time.

He grabs Tesla and shakes him.

DEPUTY MASON

You son of a bitch! You knew!

The scientist is slightly put off.

TESLA

Grigori saw only what he wanted in the machine. But it is the user that decides its purpose. That is what it was meant for, that is why I designed it.

DEPUTY MASON

(amazed)

You are the greatest visionary in the world.

Tesla looks down at Grigori's body.

TESLA

I am now.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOWN - NIGHT

On a chilly, European night, in the middle of town, Jack and Tesla managed to scrap enough wood together to grant Grigori a decent funeral pyre.

The British soldiers have joined them, dirty and shaken, still wearing all their gear.

Jack lights a torch with a lighter and then hands it to Tesla, who walks over and ignites the wood. The men watch as the flames engulf the Russian scientist.

Tesla turns, unable to watch -- he then opens his hand and looks at the open locket -- he has his picture back.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. CAPITAL BUILDING - DAY

SUPER: "NOVEMBER 18, 1919"

SUPER: "ONE YEAR LATER"

PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON and other DIGNITARIES have all gathered on the gleaming white marble steps.

Tesla and Deputy Mason are in attendance just behind the President.

Marie and the two girls, dressed in their Sunday best, watch from the CROWD.

MARIE

There's daddy, look at daddy.

Marie holds up the baby's little hand and shakes it.

PRESIDENT WILSON

... and so it gives me great pleasure to grant Mister Nikola Milutin Tesla with full U.S. Citizenship and to award him the Distinguished Service Cross, this nation's highest honor for a civilian.

Tesla steps forward as the President hands him the medal, framed neatly in a clam shell box. Tesla accepts it as the AUDIENCE CLAPS and FLASH BULBS POP. Both men pose.

President Wilson holds out his hand to shake. But Tesla just looks at it. The AUDIENCE GASPS.

DEPUTY MASON

(shout whisper)

Tesla! Shake his hand!

TESLA

Oh, that is quite impossible I'm afraid.

DEPUTY MASON

Tesla!

The scientist closes the box and bows to the audience.

TESLA

Thank you all, very much. I shall hold this award and this country in the deepest honor of my heart. Mister President, good day to you.

Jack puts his hand over his face in embarrassment as Tesla walks off stage.

PRESIDENT WILSON

What was that all about?

DEPUTY MASON

That was Nikola Tesla, sir.

EXT. THE NATIONAL MALL - LATER

Jack's family joins both men in mid-conversation.

MARIE

Honey, what's this?

She hands Jack a package done up in brown paper with twine tied around it. Several stamps and markings have been slapped on it from its long journey.

DEPUTY MASON

I don't know but... It's for you.

TESLA

Ah! It finally arrived.

Tesla quickly opens it and takes out his leather-bound notebook, no worse for wear.

DEPUTY MASON

So, that's what happened to it...

TESLA

I knew Grigori would pursue it to the ends of the Earth. I had hoped I could save him from himself first though.

DEPUTY MASON

Maybe... in the end... you did...

TESLA

Comforting words, Jack. I thank you for that.

Tesla then hands the notebook to him.

TESLA

Keep it safe for me.

DEPUTY MASON

I can't take this.

TESLA

Nobody knows where it is. And I certainly can't take the chance of keeping it with me anymore.

DEPUTY MASON

What am I supposed to do with it?

TESLA

When the world is ready, you'll know.

DEPUTY MASON

Tesla, I can't --

TESLA

I'm the last of my kind, Deputy Mason. The world is growing up and moving on. The place for extraordinary minds, extraordinary ideas and inventions, is slowly disappearing in light of a new, cold, hard, reality. This time is passing, we're passing. There is no more room in the world for men like me... for dreamers. That book is all that remains and perhaps it is for the best...

(faces Jack)

Be thankful for what you have, Deputy Mason... always.

Jack is left speechless. He lunges at Tesla and hugs him. Tesla is quite put off, his arms HELD OUT to the SIDES. He then RELAXES and gives Jack a little PAT on the BACK.

Jack finally releases him.

DEPUTY MASON

Where will you go?

TESLA

West. Colorado maybe.

DEPUTY MASON

Colorado? What's in Colorado?

TESLA

Peace... Quiet... Emptiness... I've also been receiving some strange signals.

DEPUTY MASON

Signals?

Tesla points up.

DEPUTY MASON

You're kidding, right?

TESLA

Good luck, Deputy Mason...

(tips hat)

...Miss Mason...

(MORE)

TESLA(cont'd)  
(air pats her head)  
... young Elizabeth.

He walks away.

DEPUTY MASON  
You're kidding, right? About the  
signals. I mean, there's nothing  
out there... Is there? Tesla?  
Tesla?!

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END