

Almost History

Original Screenplay By:

Will Nicholson

First Draft
November 25, 2000

2311 East Avenue H #1110
Grand Prairie, Texas 75050
817.614.9167
972.206.1184
ldreamsia@home.com

FADE IN:

EXT. SCHOOL CAMPUS - DAY

The grounds of the University of Texas at Arlington bustle with students passing in every direction across a vast courtyard. From high above the crowd we see, in the distance, a lone runner...frantically making his way across the campus. He's wearing a white lab coat and glasses, and though he's a young man, he appears to be an instructor.

Tucked under the arm of DOCTOR FREDERICK SEYMOUR WAGNALL is a white cardboard box that is obviously very important. He guards it carefully as he scampers through the maze of people. As he nears us, we fly down to get a closer look.

As he finally finds his way over, we get a good look at him when he stops, looks both ways, and behind him, then continues on his way.

INT. SCIENCE BUILDING - HALLWAYS - DAY

From quite a distance down the hall, we see the instructor enter the building and slams the doors shut behind him. He checks out the window to make sure nobody follows, then on down the hall.

We wait in front of the DEAN'S office as we hear Dr. Fred coming, the sound of his feet SLAPPING the floor can be heard for a mile. He nears the dean's office door and appears...

As he crosses in front of the office, he almost instantly reduces his sprint to a casual stroll. He saunters by outside the door of the dean's office, then immediately returns to a sprint after he's past it.

INT. LAB OFFICE - DAY

From inside the office we hear the JINGLE of keys outside. Suddenly the door bursts open and Dr. Fred enters, out of breath. He doesn't even slow down to shut the door, it just closes behind him. Instead, he flies right towards the table in front of us where he reveals the box and lays it gently down.

As he retreats to lock the door, we move in to get a better look at the mysterious white cardboard box. The music SWELLS the closer we get. Then the doctor returns and spins the box to a favorable position. Carefully, he opens the lid towards us. We cannot see what he sees, but whatever it is, it lights up his eyes.

Then, as though reaching into a box of kittens, Fred begins to remove something from inside.

Just as he reaches in, the phone RINGS, scaring the bajesus out of him. Fred slams the lid shut and walks away.

Answering the phone roughly...

FRED
(angrily)
Hello!...

His anger turns quickly into retreat

FRED
(continued)
Oh, hello sir, yes this is Doctor
Wagnall.

He listens for a moment while eyeing the box nearby.

FRED
(answering)
Yes, actually, well, almost. I'm
very close, you see, I...

He's obviously interrupted.

FRED
(defensively)
I assure you, Dean Stewart, my
machine will be operational by the
end of the semester.

As he listens, he reaches for the box. It's too far away.

FRED
(continued)
No, I will not abandon this
project, I've thought of everything
and I will finish it whether you
like I or...

Another interruption.

FRED
(sincerely)
I'm sorry sir, It's just...you see,
I'm...
(beat)
Dean Stewart, I'm so close...
Please, remember our agreement. If
you just allow me to the end of the
semester...I'm sorry?...A meeting?
(beat)
Who are they? Listen, Dean
Stewart, I can handle this on my
own, I don't need any
babysitters...

This interruption is met with a regretful face, he's overstepped his
boundary of authority.

FRED
(backing off)
Yes, sir...Yes, sir...
(long beat; Excitedly)
Oh, thank you sir, you won't regret
this. You'll see, I'm going to

make this school proud. I'm going
to be the first person ever to...

Something's wrong...

FRED
(quizzically)
Hello?...He...Hello?

A DIAL TONE can be heard as he lowers the receiver.

Frustrated he hangs up the phone and sits down at a computer nearby.
We sneak around behind the monitor to watch as him work. His face
illuminated by the monitor, he takes a photograph from his pocket.

ANGLE ON PHOTO:

It's a beautiful young lady.

BACK TO SCENE:

FRED
(continued; to picture)
I know I can do it. They say I
haven't thought of everything...
How would they know what I've
thought of.
(beat)
You believe me don't you. You
always did believe in me.

He kisses and puts the photo away and reaches for the box once again,
and finally succeeds in retrieving something from it. Out comes a
jelly doughnut.

He turns around to view his masterpiece, which is revealed to us for
the first time. A large pod, big enough to enclose a single person.
It resembles a telephone booth, only far more complex.

He takes a bite and leans back in his chair and thinks out loud.

FRED
(confidently; with a mouth
full of jelly doughnut)
I'm going to be remembered as the
greatest scientist that ever lived.

He eyes his machine and leans back a little farther.

Then WHAMMO...He falls back out of his chair and out of sight.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NEXT DAY - DAY

Though the letters on the door are backwards when read from the inside,
it's obvious that we're in the Science building's Conference room. The
room is filled with muffled conversation. As the door opens and Dr.

Fred appears, the conversation hushes. This makes him visibly nervous. An older man, regal and stylish, greets him.

DEAN STEWART
(unconvincingly happy)
Ah, there he is... Gentleman, I'd
like you to meet our very own Dr.
Frederick Seymour Wagnall, resident
Quantum Physics Genius.

Fred, carrying a very guarded briefcase, is reluctant to enter. He does, and commences with a few careful handshakes.

DEAN STEWART
(continued)
Dr. Wagnall, these are the men I
told you about over the phone.
They're here to help you with your
project.

This catches Fred off-guard.

FRED
(to the Dean)
Wait a minute, I thought we
agreed...

DEAN
(calmly)
Just hear them out...

An awkward moment passes in the room and Fred reluctantly sits in the chair nearest the door.

Fred looks around the room and spots a familiar face. DR. BILL BROWN sits across from Fred, watching the briefcase carefully.

FRED
(angrily)
No, no...you can just forget it, I
know why you're here, you just want
to steal my research.
(to Dean)
He's done it before, I've read
about him in the journals...

Dean Stewart recognizes the situation and tries to reassure Dr. Fred.

DEAN
Frederick, I realize why you think
that, but you're wrong. Dr. Brown
no longer works with the
Government. He's part of a
research and development firm
sponsored by Berkley.

FRED
(to Dr. Brown)

Yeah, I'd like to see the kind of research you do. Phone taps, hidden cameras, am I getting warm here?

Dr. Brown leans in closer to Fred. He is an intimidating person up close. Fred retreats a bit.

DR. BROWN

(softly)

I know what you must think of me, and I don't blame you. However, you must believe the Dean. I'm here to help you...if what he says is true, then you have nothing to worry about in terms of your future...So to speak.

Fred listens, but still isn't completely convinced.

DEAN

Frederick, I think you should hear them out.

Another awkward moment passes, and Fred looks around the room at the other scientists.

Nervously, he sets his briefcase on the table, admitting submission.

DEAN

Good...Henry will you get the door please.

The Dean goes on to introduce the rest of the gentlemen as one of them, HENRY WORDSWORTH, gets out of his chair and heads towards the door behind Fred. Fred keeps a careful eye on Henry not listening to the Dean's introductions.

EXT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

We see Fred through the door. He's in there, amidst the wolves. He throws us a pitiful and sad gaze as the door shuts, imprisoning him within.

The sound of a DEADBOLT sliding into place is the last thing we hear...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPUS COURTYARD - NIGHT

The hustle and bustle of the daily campus life has been replaced by a peaceful evening in the moonlight as Fred exits a building in the distance. Solemnly, he drags his feet to a bench nearby, under one of the few lights in the courtyard.

There he sits for a moment. Pondering. Fred removes something from his pocket.

ANGLE ON OBJECT:

It's a ragged out photograph of that same beautiful young woman.

BACK TO SCENE:

This is obviously somebody he misses. He reluctantly returns the photo to his pocket. He looks at his briefcase and shakes his head.

FRED
(to himself)
I can't let them take my discovery.

Fred looks into the millions of stars in outer space.

FRED
(dreamily)
They're going to name a
constellation after me!

Fred looks back to his briefcase and gets a devious smile on his face.

He grabs the satchel and tears off into the night, running full speed across campus.

INT. FRED'S LAB - NIGHT

We're already there when Fred crashes through the door. There's obviously no time to waste.

He tosses the briefcase aside and begins tearing through the many drawers in his office. He's looking for something.

FRED
(out loud)
Where is that damn thing...

He tries one more drawer... there it is.

We look into the drawer to find he's removing a small handheld video camera. It is in amongst a huge pile of loose tapes.

He sets the camera up on a tripod and plugs it in. Aiming it towards his chair, rearranges a lamp to better illuminate himself.

He plugs in a nearby monitor and hits the record button. Like a flash he zooms over to his chair and takes a deep breath. Here goes...

FRED
(to camera)
Hello there, my name is...

He is interrupted by a very obnoxious noise emanating from the camera. Frustrated, he gets up and checks the viewfinder.

ANGLE ON VIEWFINDER:

It is blinking a warning saying "No Cassette".

BACK TO SCENE:

Fred grabs his hair in frustration. Then spins and shuffles through the tapes in the drawer.

One by one, he reads the labels on the tapes, but nothing is reusable.

FRED
Where did all my blank tapes go?...

Finally, he pulls one with no label.

FRED
Ah-HA! What's this?

He crams the tape into the camera and hits play. He waits for a moment for the image to appear. When it does...the result is a bit embarrassing.

The TV monitor naively shows a man and a woman passionately embracing and making WAY too much NOISE. Fred frantically stops the tape and turns back to us and blushes. A smile, then he turns back to his business.

FRED
(Hitting Record)
This one will do.

Again, Fred leaps back into his chair ready for his interview with himself. He begins...

FRED
Hello there, my name is Doctor
Frederick Seymour Wagnall. You've
probably never heard of me, but
that is of no matter, because in a
few years, your children will be
learning about me in school.

We watch through the camera as he continues.

FRED
(continued)
You see, I have solved one of the
problems known to mankind. I can
nullify one of the oldest
restrictions ever placed on this
planet.

Fred is very into himself at this point, he's getting very excited thinking about it.

FRED
(continued)
And at noon on Friday, just four
days from now, I'm going to be the
first to test my machine. Although

I realize that immediate human testing is unorthodox, I'm not worried.

(beat; he gets a wild look in his eyes)
It's foolproof. I've thought of everything.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BUSINESS OFFICE - DAY

People sit in a waiting room, waiting for who knows what while office personnel wander back and forth doing their daily duties. PHONES ring in the distance as office assistant race to answer them. Among them is a familiar face. It's the young lady from the picture.

She seems sweet by the way she interacts with the other people. Amidst the mass confusion she somehow finds it within herself to be cordial. She is working on some papers when we notice someone come through the door in the distance.

He looks around the room then looks towards us. As though his glance was enough to get her attention, ANNE MORGAN finally notices the man for herself. It's Fred.

Fred sheepishly waves as she turns away, cringing. She looks back to him and gets up to leave her chair.

CUT TO:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Anne is coming out of the door first, closely followed by Fred, who is already knee deep in explaining his situation. Anne seems uninterested.

FRED
(already in mid-sentence)
...So I went to the meeting and there were all these guys in there with the Dean, but one of them was this guy named Dr. Brown...and see I read about him once in one of my science journals, he's like, some kind of "science and technology bounty hunter" for the government...

All the while Fred is following Anne across the parking lot as he tries to plead for her attention. She still doesn't seem interested. Until...

ANNE
(interrupting harshly)
I haven't seen you, heard from you, or known if you were alive for the

last 6 months. Would you care to
explain THAT?

Fred is shocked by the realization that she's just given him.

ANNE
(softer)
Please, just give me something. I
really thought we had something
going there. Just give me some
reason you disappeared...anything.

Fred has trouble answering, so he doesn't.

ANNE
(giving up)
That's about what I figured.

She brushes past him and heads back towards the building.

Fred is still pondering what he's done to her when he finally spins
around.

FRED
(calling out)
I made a discovery...I didn't
just...

Anne stops but doesn't turn around.

Fred seizes the moment as best he can.

FRED
(drawing nearer)
I finally discovered something that
could change everything. Make the
world a better place.

ANNE
(still turned)
For you?

FRED
(continued)
For both of us...for everyone on
the planet.

Anne finally turns around. She has tears in her eyes.

ANNE
What happened? We were so close.

Fred comes to meet her.

FRED
I can't say I'm sorry for what I
did, enough. It was wrong. I just
got so caught up in my work.

Before I knew it, it had been a week since I'd seen you and at that point, I figured it was too late.

(beat)

You have to understand I was pouring my entire life into my work at that time.

Anne looks him coldly in the eye.

ANNE

I understand that quite well...

Fred gets the message as Anne again, turns to walk away.

Fred chases to follow, catches up, and positions himself in front of her to keep her from going inside.

FRED

Just listen to me for a second. I don't have anyone else to turn to.

ANNE

I wonder why...

FRED

(interrupting)

Please...I'm desperate here... They're going to take it away!

Anne finally realizes from Fred's face that he truly is desperate.

ANNE

What's going on here, what have you gotten yourself into now?

FRED

Like I said, I made a discovery, and now the government...

Something catches his eye over Anne's shoulder.

Across the street is a parked car, very suspicious looking. The driver is wearing sunglasses and looking right towards Fred.

FRED

(continued)

Look...I can't talk about it right now. Can I meet you later?

ANNE

I don't think that's a very good idea, ok, now I have to get back to work...I...

FRED

Please, I need to see you...

Anne is scared at this point.

ANNE
Listen, I just don't...

FRED
(interrupting)
Please...

Anne sees something in him that she remembers from a time long past...and gives in.

ANNE
(to herself)
I must be crazy...I...I get off in
a couple of hours, meet me here at
5:30. We'll talk, then you'll
leave.

Fred hugs her strongly.

FRED
Oh, I promise you, you won't regret
this.

Fred backs off and holds Anne by her shoulders stiffly, looking her right in the eyes and smiling.

FRED
(continued)
This is the start of realizing
dreams like you never could have
imagined.

Anne has a confused look on her face after that one. Fred realizes it.

FRED
(continued)
I'll explain later. Go on, I'll
see you tonight.

Fred steps aside so Anne can go on into the building.

She starts past him then turns to look at him one more time. Then continues on into the building.

Just before she enters, Fred yells out...

FRED
Anne...I missed you.

She pauses... then enters without looking back. The door shuts in our faces.

Fred keeps his eyes on the door for a moment then turns to find his followers in the car.

The car is gone.

Fred gets a nervous look on his face and leaves the scene, constantly checking over his shoulder.

Somewhere in the darkness nearby, lurks a shadowy figure who is obviously interested in Fred.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ANNE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

All the lights in the building seem to be out except the one over Anne's desk. She is on the phone speaking to somebody she trusts.

ANNE

He's not crazy, he's just under a lot of stress right now.

(beat)

I'm not defending him, it's just...

(beat)

So what, at least he acts like he's interested, not like that mannequin you set me up with last month. He talked about his hair for thirty minutes.

Anne plays with some paper clips on her desk. He glance over a bit and there on her desk is a picture of herself...with Fred. They look happy in this picture.

ANNE

(continued)

Look, it's getting late, and he's probably waiting on me...I really need to go.

(beat)

Mom, I'm not going to let him try anything...he's got a lot of making up to do before he even gets dinner.

(beat)

Ok...I love you, too. Bye.

Anne hangs up the phone and grabs the picture.

ANGLE ON PICTURE:

She holds it under the light.

ANNE

(to Photo)

This is your last chance, fella...
I'm not doing this again.

BACK TO SCENE:

She replaces the photo and gathers her things. Turning out her lamp, she heads for the door.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Anne is making her way across the long and empty parking lot away from the door of the building when she stops in mid-stride. There's something wrong here.

She looks around the parking lot. There's nobody there.

Yet from somewhere in the distance...from the shadows...someone watches Anne carefully.

Anne can feel the eyes on her. Though she's not sure where they are...she knows they're there.

She starts walking again...this time a little faster.

Elsewhere, a shadowy figure stirs.

Anne quickens her pace. She can't hear her footsteps for her heartbeat. She knows it now, she's being followed.

Her car is close, she's almost there.

The shadowy figure makes his move. Still cloaked in darkness, his form is revealed. A tall man, wearing a hat and trench coat emerges from the back-lit trees.

Anne makes it to the car. She fumbles with the keys as she tries to unlock the door.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The foggy windows make her difficult to see from in here. Nevertheless, the sound of her labored breathing is very evident.

We look over, through a no-foggy spot on the front windshield, we see the figure coming this way.

Back to Anne, she still can't get the door opened. Wait, that's the sound of the key entering the keyhole.

ANGLE ON LOCK:

It snaps open.

BACK TO SCENE:

Anne opens the door and gets in the car with us. She slams the door hard and locks the doors quickly.

We look towards the follower. He stills nears.

Anne switches on the lights and begins honking the horn violently.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

This racket can be heard and seen for miles in the stillness of this night.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Anne continues with the noise and attention-seeking. We check again, he's now stopped. He's still there, but no longer moving. After a moment. He looks around and retreats into the darkness again.

A brief moment of fear holds as Anne makes sure the shadow is gone.

Then, a sigh of relief.

Anne leans forward to lay her head on the steering wheel. This is too much for this poor girl.

ANNE
(shaky)
I gotta get out of here...

She inserts the key in the ignition and starts the car, then sits up straight to drive.

The shadowy figure in the back seat appears three inches from her face.

Anne screams bloody murder before being silenced by a hand covering her face.

FRED
SHHH...It's me... It's just me.

Anne is still scared out of her mind, but at least she stops screaming.

ANNE
Fred, what the hell are you doing,
you scared the crap out of me.
Jeez... what is this?!

Fred cowers to the back seat.

FRED
I got cold when I was waiting for
you, so I decided to wait in here.

Anne is still catching her breath and looking out all of the windows.

ANNE
How did you get in here?

Fred holds up a key and shows it to Anne.

FRED
You gave me the key.

Anne grabs the key from him and throws him a dirty look.

ANNE

(angrily)
Where were you when that crazy
stalker was after me, huh?

FRED
(softly)
I was asleep until you started
making all that racket. I thought
you were mad at me. Are you saying
there was somebody out there?

ANNE
(sarcastically)
Uh...Yeah!

FRED
With a hat and a trench coat?

Anne is settling down a bit now.

ANNE
Yeah...what's going...

FRED
I knew it. They followed me. I
didn't think they'd wait me out
this long.

Anne is thoroughly confused now.

ANNE
Wait a minute...you know this guy?

Fred is climbing over the seat to join Anne on the front.

FRED
Not exactly, but I know who they're
with.

ANNE
Who...?

FRED
(hesitating)
I'll tell you about it, later.
Let's get out of here.

Anne tries to shake off the strangeness of the situation, then shifts
into gear and takes off.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Anne's car finally leaves it's parking place and heads out of the lot.

Elsewhere nearby, more taillights illuminate. The second car pulls
away.

WIPE TO:

INT. ANNE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Anne hands a tattered Fred a cup of something steamy. She draws the shades and moves around the table to sit in the chair across from him.

Fred takes a sip and sits back to relax.

Anne starts...

ANNE
What in the blue blazes of hell
have you gotten me into?

Fred glances up

FRED
(answering straight up)
A struggle for the rights to the
greatest discovery in the history
of mankind...

Anne raises her brow.

FRED
(continued)
Look, I don't know what
happened...everything was fine: I
figured out a few things, made a
few calculations and whammo, the
thing worked. I guess they found
out and now they what it for
themselves.

Anne leans forward, toward Fred and listens closely.

ANNE
(seriously)
What have you done.

Fred looks up from his drink, solemnly.

FRED
I figured out time travel.

Anne seems to shake the disbelief from her head.

ANNE
Figured it out? Like, as in you
can prove its possible?

FRED
Like, I built a machine that can do
it.

Anne's eyes widen...then a smile purses her lips.

ANNE

(half-laughing)
Tell me you're not serious...

Fred seems insulted.

FRED
It's the truth...why do you think
they want it so bad.

ANNE
THEY...Who is "They", and what do
they want with me?

FRED
They...The government guys I told
you about, don't want you at all.
They came after you when they
couldn't find me.

Now Anne is insulted.

ANNE
Oh great, so now I'm apart of this
thing...

A realization comes over Anne.

ANNE
(continued)
Have you done something illegal?
If you've done something illegal,
then I don't want...

Fred stops her there.

FRED
I haven't done anything wrong.
That's just it, everything I did
was right. That's why they want
it. It actually works.

ANNE
So why don't you just give it to
them... make them a deal on it or
something. Is it really worth this
kind of trouble.

FRED
These guys aren't interested in
making deals. They want credit.
MY credit. They want to steal my
invention and take all the glory.

Anne is having trouble taking all this in. She sits down. Fred sits
down next to her.

FRED
(continued)

Don't you see what this means. If I prove this thing works, then I would be considered one of the greatest minds that ever lived. Think about it...fame, wealth, recognition.

Anne looks sadly upon her guest.

FRED
(continued)
All that could be yours, too. If you want it. This is what I've worked so hard for. For us. To give us both a future so rich, we could never have imagined...and it's all right here for the asking.

Fred indicates the tattered briefcase he's been carrying around. Anne notes the case and looks back to Fred.

Fred's eyes are tired, sad.

ANNE
(sadly)
All I ever wanted was you. I never asked for a perfect life...just you. Once upon a time you felt that way, too.

Fred doesn't seem to know how to react to this.

FRED
I just wanted...

ANNE
You just lost sight of what you really wanted.

Fred thinks about this. The realization of lost and wasted years is hard to deal with.

ANNE
(continued)
It's not too late. You just have to promise me you won't forget why you work so hard.

Reactions are hard to come by for Fred.

FRED
I never wanted to hurt you.

ANNE
It's behind us, now... we have all the time in the world.

This gives Fred an idea...his eyes light up.

FRED
You're right...we DO have all the
time in the world.

Fred gets up from his seat and starts thinking so hard you can almost hear it. Suddenly, it hits him.

FRED
I've got it...

Anne looks as though she's loosing him again.

FRED
I can make it all up to you...

Anne looks confused again.

FRED
(continued)
I'll prove my machine works and
we'll be rich beyond our wildest
dreams. After that there won't be
a need to work. It'll just be you
and me, living like royalty.

ANNE
Fred, what are you saying?

FRED
(very excitedly)
I'm saying, come with me...into the
machine. We'll step through and
six months will pass. By then
everyone will know about the
success and we'll be met with
parades and...tennis shoe
endorsements.

ANNE
Well...when?

FRED
Tonight!

ANNE
Fred, you can't just test that
thing on us.

FRED
I've tested the machine it's
perfectly safe on rats.

ANNE
(hysterically)
RATS?

FRED

(calmly)
Look...
(indicating briefcase)
...my research shows some testing
where I successfully sent rats one
minute into the future. They came
out fine on the other end.

ANNE
I don't know...one minute is a lot
different than six months.

FRED
It's not different. It's the
same...Anne. You gotta come with
me.

Just then, a loud knocking breaks the moment in two. There's someone
at the door.

Fred and Anne react in total fear. They're frozen.

The knocks come again. After a second Fred nods to Anne. Anne nods
back.

ANNE
(calling out)
Who is it?

DEAN
(o.s.)
This is Dean Stewart from the
University...I'm here with some men
from Berkely. We're looking for
Doctor Frederick Seymour Wagnall.

Fred whispers to Anne.

FRED
(whispering)
That's them. They've come for me.

Anne looks very worried. She tries to calm Fred, who appears even more
nervous.

ANNE
(yelling)
Just a minute...

She turns back to Fred.

ANNE
Go out the back. I'll stall them.

FRED
I need to get to my lab.

ANNE

Fred, don't do anything yet. Wait
for me.

Fred is hesitant...but agrees.

FRED
I have to go. I'm gonna...
(beat)
I'm gonna miss you.

ANNE
Fred, wait. Please don't do
anything crazy.

FRED
I have to go...I can't let them
take it.

Fred seems delirious as the knocking on the door persists.

Anne tries to stop him as he leaves. Just before heading out the
window, he turns to her.

FRED
I'm sorry for hurting you... but
things will be better soon. I
promise.

Anne can't help but catch a tear as her man disappears into the
darkness outside.

The pounding on the door reminds her of the present. She heads to the
door.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Fred makes his way away from the building in stealth. He takes a few
steps out of the trees onto a roadway, then stops and searches his
person... he's forgotten something...

INT. ANNE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The Dean and a few of the gentlemen from the conference room before are
standing in her living room. The Dean is speaking with Anne off to the
side about the whereabouts of Fred. She shakes her head in denial.
However, Dr. Brown...looking around the room spots something of great
interest.

Next to the couch, lay a tattered out briefcase. One that this
scientist has seen before. In fact, just today, in a conference room.

EXT. SCHOOL CAMPUS - NIGHT

Fred is out of breath as he makes his way finally across the campus
towards the science building. He looks behind him to make sure he
hasn't been followed.

Nobody's there.

He enters the building and locks the door behind him.

INT. HALLWAY OF BUILDING - NIGHT

Fred makes his way down the hall. In one of the distant hallways, a NIGHT-WATCHMAN recognizes Dr. Wagnall and calls out...

NIGHT-WATCHMAN
(calling out)
Hey, Dr. Wagnall...working late
tonight?

Fred doesn't answer... the Night-Watchman just watches him disappear and shakes his head.

INT. ANNE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The scientists are all sitting around watching Fred's videotape when one of the scientists, Henry, gets a call on his cell phone. He steps aside to take the call.

In the background the scientist speaks inaudibly, while right in front of us, Dr. Frederick Seymour Wagnall rants on like a crazy person about stepping into the future.

Henry rejoins the group and interrupts the viewing.

HENRY
Sir, a night-watchman just spotted
Wagnall entering the lab.

DR. BROWN
Let's move. There's not much time
now.

Anne is not going to be left alone, now. She tags along for the ride.

INT. LAB - NIGHT

Fred is bustling about trying to get everything prepared for his departure. Preparing computers, setting dials, clicking mouse-buttons.

Suddenly, the machine erupts in a collection of flashing lights and whirring noises as it warms up.

Fred readies his video camera to capture the history-making occasion.

All at once, outside the door, banging indicates unwanted visitors.

He speeds his actions.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE LAB - NIGHT

The band of scientists with Anne in tow and outside the door. Dr. Brown leads the charge on the door.

DR. BROWN

Dr. Wagnall, don't do this...we
just want to make sure it's safe
first.

INT. LAB - NIGHT

Fred chuckles.

FRED
Sure, safe for you mean. I've
tried this thing out, it's safe
enough.

ANNE
(o.s.)
Fred, please listen to them,
they're telling the truth...

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Anne is behind Dr. Brown, who's now trying to force his way into the
lab.

ANNE
(continued)
They explained the whole thing to
me...They just want to help make
sure you've thought of everything.
This could be dangerous. PLEASE!!!

Dr. Brown crashes shoulder-first into the door.

INT. LAB - NIGHT

This attempt almost brings the door down.

Fred realizes this and begins working faster. He's almost there.

FRED
(to the people in the hall)
This is all going to be over
soon...at least for me it will.
You'll have to wait six months to
see me gloat in your faces about
how I was right all along.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dr. Brown tries again to take down the door.

The Dean stands and watches as the night watchman approaches to inspect
the commotion.

DEAN
(to Fred)
Be sensible, man. We're only doing
what's best for you and for
science.

Dr. Brown crashes into the door again.

INT. LAB - NIGHT

Fred laughs out loud at this last remark.

FRED
Ha...in the last 10 years, Dean
Stewart, you haven't done one thing
in the name of science except order
new textbooks.

Fred flips one last switch and hits a button on the keyboard on his computer, thus starting some kind of countdown.

FRED
(to the people in the hall)
...And now, gentlemen, I must bid
you farewell. I'll see you in six
months.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The people in the hall hear this and all take on somber looks. The night watchman looks confused.

Dr. Brown musters up everything he has and heads for the door one last time...

The night-watchman finds this a good time to volunteer...

NIGHT-WATCHMAN
I have a key...

Just as he finishes his sentence, Dr. Brown crashes through the door in a violent explosion of power.

INT. LAB - NIGHT

The break-in is violent indeed, but for Dr. Wagnall it is too late. The countdown reads 2 seconds and the men can't stop him now. Dr. Frederick Seymour Wagnall utters his last request.

FRED
(softly)
Remember me...

Just then Anne screams for him to wait but is answered only by a magical energy field that emanates from the inside of the machine.

An unjustified wind rushes around the lab, carrying papers and debris with it.

Eventually in envelopes Fred and before their very eyes, the scientists, Dr. Brown, the dean, the night-watchman, and Anne all witness history as Fred dematerializes and vanishes in a flash of light so brilliant it seems otherworldly.

And then...it's over.

A hush befalls the small crowd. The air is calm and silent. Only heartbeats can be heard by their respective owners.

Dr. Brown eyes the machine in wonder.

Finally, the silence is broken when Henry approaches the computer and sits at the terminal. He checks the screen and comes to a conclusion.

He turns to Dr. Brown.

HENRY
(to Dr. Brown)
He did it.

Dr. Brown is intrigued enough to examine the findings for himself.

DR. BROWN
(to Henry)
How far ahead did he go?

Henry gives the screen a once over.

HENRY
Six months.

Anne lets out a sigh of relief. She half beaks down.

Dr. Brown seems unconvinced. He takes a walk closer to the machine. Looking around, he spots something on the desk near him. It's an old mechanical mock-up of the solar system. Dr. Brown comes to a grave conclusion.

HENRY
(o.s.)
He's probably sippin lemonade at
the beach in Maui by now.

Dr. Brown shakes his head.

DR. BROWN
(coldly)
No...

Henry is a little confused.

HENRY
Excuse me?

Dr. Brown turns to face the others.

They're all waiting for an explanation.

DR. BROWN
He didn't think of everything...

ANNE

No...what do you mean...of course
he thought of everything...look you
saw.

The dean tries to console her.

DEAN

What are you saying?

Dr. Brown turns back to the mock-up of the solar system. He reaches down and flips a switch causing the contraption to come alive. The ball representing the earth orbits around until its right in our face where it stops as Dr. Brown deactivates the machine. He looks back to the crowd.

DR. BROWN

The earth is in a different place
six months from now.

Henry slumps in his chair and eyes the mock-up.

Anne faints and the Dean doesn't even try to catch her. He's too shocked at the idea. The Dean just looks off into space as though visualizing the scenario.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DEEP SPACE - NIGHT

The Earth and sun are in the distant deep darkness. There is no sound. Just movement, though slight it may be. Stars twinkle, the Earth rotates...and out of nowhere, a frozen, forgotten scientist floats by.

The greatest scientist that ever lived, remembered as a successful failure.

FADE TO BLACK:

ROLL CREDITS

THE END