“THE CHECKLIST” Test Scene

Finding Stops and Movement
Finding Moves and Transitions
Finding Keyframes and Deep Staging
Finding Coverage
Connecting Keyframes
Finding Lead-Ins and Extensions
Coordinating Foreground and Background

Blocking diagram © 2004 Hollywood Camera Work
“CHANGE OF PLANS” Script

INT. CYGNI - ADJACENT ROOM

On monitor: Colonel Steven Boutell, an aging officer speaking from behind a desk. The transmission occasionally breaks up.

BOUTELL
...No matter what we try, we’re not getting through. It might just be the atmosphere, but I think we’re being blocked.

Pulling out from the monitor, we’re in a small crew quarter. Jeremy picks up archeological artifacts while he waits. A Guard stands watch outside the door.

BRADLEY
Have you tracked down the cause of the explosion?

BOUTELL
(shakes his head)
... It’s inconclusive. But we also have a survey team missing below the planet surface. I don’t think this is a coincidence.

BRADLEY
Colonel, we can be at your position in less than a day.

BOUTELL
Are you trying to get out of those negotiations?

BRADLEY
Of course not.

BOUTELL
Anyway, you’re not equipped for this sector. We... are having some problems...

BRADLEY
What kind of problems?

BOUTELL
A strange phenomenon. This whole sector is engulfed in some sort of blackout. It’s like the space just absorbs energy.
Bradley and Jeremy become puzzled.

BOUTELL (CONT’D) (cont’d)
We are using 35% of ship’s power
just for this transmission. Anyway,
we need those logs.

BRADLEY
We’ll send them. Good to hear from
you again.

BOUTELL
Likewise. Boutell out.

The screen returns to a logo. Jeremy has walked over to the
captain’s desk. Bradley gets up.

BRADLEY
Send him the logs.

Jeremy acknowledges.

BRADLEY (CONT’D)
(to Guard)
Overman...

GUARD
(steps into room)
Sir?

BRADLEY
(walks to door)
Report to the mediator that I won’t
be able to attend the remaining
negotiations. Urgent matters.

GUARD
Sir!?

BRADLEY
Carry on, that’s an order.

The Guard looks mystified, then leaves. Jeremy walks over to
Bradley.

JEREMY
Sir?

BRADLEY
(quiet)
How soon can we end this without
ticking off the delegates?
(MORE)
I want to stop by sector 481 on our way to Rana 4.

They... are in different directions, sir...

You don't say...?

I'll make the necessary preparations.

Jeremy leaves. Bradley ponders her next move, then walks out.
“CHANGE OF PLANS” Blocking Diagram

Script and blocking diagram © 2004 Hollywood Camera Work
INT. CYGNI - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Bradley and Ashida rush onto the bridge as the ship shutters.

BRADLEY
Status.

JONATHAN
We can’t see a thing. The shots are coming from empty space. There could be more than one ship.

JEREMY
(at control panel)
We lost latitude controls at the first hit and the shields are crumbling. We’re a sitting duck, sir.

BRADLEY
Any other ships nearby?

JA’AN
All com energy is being absorbed by the blackout.

The ship shakes heavily...

BRADLEY
Ja’an, prepare full spectrum neutron shells. All bays on my mark.

JA’AN
But Sir, we’ve got nothing to aim for.

ASHIDA
I’ve reconfigured the forward grid to emit a stream of axion particles. By these readings, it should light up their shields.

BRADLEY
Do it.

Ashida pushes the final button. On the viewscreen, two warships suddenly become visible.
JEREMY
There they are!

JA’AN
Locked and ready.

Bradley steps forwards.

BRADLEY
Fire!
1. SHIFT -> JA'AN
2. STEP IN
3. HAND-OFF
INT. SURGICAL WING - ICU 2 - AFTERNOON

Henry, dressed in scrubs, walks past the stationed guard, into the ICU, and approaches Solomon who is preparing some instruments.

HENRY
(irritated)
Sol, they refused me at the door. You know, I was told to be here this morning and...

SOLOMON
Who refused you?

HENRY
Hoskin and Slater.

SOLOMON
Sorry Henry, you know that Slater has the final word.

HENRY
But why? I passed all the tests, it is preposterous at this point to assume I pose any danger.

SOLOMON
We can’t take any chances Henry.

HENRY
I didn’t cause it, Sol.

SOLOMON
You’ve got to understand that this is a routine investigation, it’s not about you personally.

HENRY
Then why am I not in there operating right now?

SOLOMON
Nobody suspects you, Henry.

Henry spies Taylor giving some fluid medication to a patient, and storms over.
HENRY (angry)
What did you just do?

TAYLOR
What?

HENRY
That's my patient, nurse. You better have a damn good reason for what you just did.

TAYLOR
I was taking the patient's pulse.

HENRY
No, you were giving her something.

TAYLOR
Just her vitamins.

HENRY
Tell me what you gave her.

TAYLOR
Nothing, just the vitamins.

HENRY
Don't you dare lie to me, I saw the whole thing!

Solomon enters.

SOLOMON
What is going on in here?

TAYLOR
Nothing Dr. Solomon.

HENRY
I caught her giving something to my patient!

TAYLOR
Only vitamins, Dr. Solomon, just the daily routine.

HENRY
Give me the bottle.

Taylor gives him the bottle.
Henry (cont'd)
Aha! No label!

Henry races over to a pile of medical paperwork and digs through it, looking for the label.

SOLOMON
(warning)
Henry!

Henry finds a vitamin label. He gets up and slowly moves a couple of steps backwards.

HENRY
I'm sorry, I thought... Sorry nurse, will you please excuse me.

Henry turns around and leaves, embarrassed.

CUT TO:
Raymond stares flabergasted at the computer screen as rows of warning lights flare up.

**RAYMOND**
Hang on, what the hell is going on here?

**HOWARD**
What?

**RAYMOND**
The security perimeter is going down across the board.

**HOWARD**
(to John, annoyed)
Go find Nigel.

**RAYMOND**
OK, the power is going down.

John stops short of the door as the whole control room suddenly shuts off. They all freeze in their tracks, realizing the seriousness.

**HOWARD**
(to Raymond)
Well, get it back up! Use Nigel’s terminal.

Raymond quickly rolls his chair to Nigel’s screen.

**RAYMOND**
Why’s this one still on?

John steps forward, alarmed.

**JOHN**
Tell me the containment field isn’t down.

**RAYMOND**
(checks)
No, it’s still on.

**HOWARD**
Why the hell would he turn the perimeter off?!
“CUSTODY” Script

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Rawlings addresses Martin.

RAWLINGS
Mr. Sanford, were you in any way forced out of your home or pressured by your wife to leave?

MARTIN
No.

RAWLINGS
(addressing the jury with a wry smile)
I am sure we all can see the logic of why Mr. Sanford, without any prior warning, would leave his wife and children, to go off somewhere and vanish for five years!

HEYDEN
Objection.

RAWLINGS
(changes direction)
Mr. Sanford, now that you, suddenly, and out of the blue, have returned to Chicago, do you plan to be a responsible parent?

MARTIN
Yes, I do.

RAWLINGS
How can you expect anyone to believe you, given that you abandoned your own children?

MARTIN
I don't know...
(suddenly defiant)
Does it matter? They are still my children... I made a mistake, but now I want to be there for them 100%.

RAWLINGS
Do you Mr. Sanford? Will you please tell us all
(MORE)
RAWLINGS (cont'd)
(motioning towards the jury)
how you came to the conclusion, that you all of a sudden are ready for that kind of commitment. Did your many affairs leave you lonely? Your last girlfriend ditched you less than a month ago, isn’t that correct Mr. Sanford?

Heyden jumps up from his seat.

HEYDEN
Objection!

JUDGE
Overruled. The witness will answer the question.

MARTIN
(barely audible)
That has nothing to do with it.

RAWLINGS
And isn’t it true, Mr. Sanford, that your constant philandering has started to bore you and that ‘responsible parenting’ is nothing but your latest fad?

HEYDEN
(furious)
Objection!

JUDGE
Objection sustained, please rephrase the question Mrs. Rawlings.

RAWLINGS
Mr. Sanford, is your wish to resume your role as a responsible parent a fad?

MARTIN
(loud)
No!

RAWLINGS
(a new attack)
Mr. Sanford, how can you expect this court to grant you full custody of two children you barely know?

(MORE)
RAWLINGS (cont'd)
Your wife is, and has been, an excellent mother, so doesn’t that strike you as a crazy demand? (jokingly)
And I don’t recall you having plead temporary insanity, at least not yet.

HEYDEN
Objection! The prosecution will stop harassing the witness.

JUDGE
Sustained. Please make your point.

RAWLINGS
No further questions, Your Honor.

JUDGE
The witness may be excused.

Rawlings sits down next to Karen.

KAREN
(leaning over and whispering)
Did you really have to ridicule him like that?

RAWLINGS
(tough and businesslike)
If you want to keep full custody of your children, Mrs. Sanford.

Martin gets down from the witness stand and walks to the prosecution’s table, momentarily exchanging looks with Karen.
“A TERRIBLE MISTAKE” Script

INT. AVX - SAMANTHA’S OFFICE - NIGHT

The rain beats the window pane. Anthony is sitting on a sofa, Samantha is walking around restlessly.

ANTHONY
Just for the record, I didn’t come on to you, YOU came on to ME.

SAMANTHA
I most certainly did not.

ANTHONY
Did too.

SAMANTHA
Did not.

ANTHONY
Did too.

SAMANTHA
We can’t handle this like babies, Anthony.

ANTHONY
What’s there to handle?

SAMANTHA
You know just as well as I that this can never happen.

ANTHONY
You didn’t like it?

Samantha sits down opposite Anthony.

SAMANTHA
I didn’t say I didn’t like it.

ANTHONY
You didn’t act like someone who didn’t like it.

SAMANTHA
(more serious)
Anthony... I need you to not tell anyone about this.
ANTHONY
Why not?

SAMANTHA
You just can’t.

ANTHONY
You’re gonna have to do better than that.

SAMANTHA
Anthony, I’m happily married, I have two children, I’m CEO of a Fortune 500 corporation.
(understatement)
This wouldn’t look good on my resume.

Anthony gets up and walks around, agitated.

ANTHONY
Well, crap, you should have thought of this a little sooner. Is this some standard corporate procedure? Bring in the up-and-comer, mess around with his feelings and then issue a gag-order? What about me, huh? Where do I fit in?

SAMANTHA
I’m really sorry.

ANTHONY
Yeah, you’re sorry all right. Just for the wrong reasons.

SAMANTHA
I made a terrible mistake, OK?

He’s not used to being labelled a “terrible mistake”.

SAMANTHA (cont’d)
Anthony, if people find out, I’m ruined. The stock will plummet, I’ll be forced to resign, my family will break up, I’ll have to sell my house. I’ll lose everything. I can’t believe that’s what you want.

He’s still angry, but that’s a heavy consequence.
ANTHONY
I should blackmail the hell out of you.

SAMANTHA
I’m hoping you won’t.

CUT TO:
“THE CURSE” Script

EXT. FOREST CLEARING – NIGHT

Helen and Edward are sitting close together near the campfire. The forest is getting chilly as night falls.

HELEN
Why do you think they took off like that?

EDWARD
(slightly drunk)
Probably late for a dentist appointment. Have you ever seen their teeth?

Helen giggles.

The sound of moving foliage and branches cracking. Helen and Edward turn around, startled. They are relieved to see James emerge from the bushes.

JAMES
It looks like the German expedition is having some trouble of their own. All their porters have disappeared too.

HELEN
Don’t tell me... The curse.

JAMES
The curse.

HELEN
I can’t believe it, you are grown human beings! How can you believe in some bloody superstition?

JAMES
Doesn’t it strike you as odd that everybody who’s seen the statue is dead?

EDWARD
(drunken interruption)
Except us.

JAMES
I’m very aware of that fact.
HELEN
Maybe they just tripped and fell.
Look, it’s the same with the people
who uncovered the Pharao’s grave.
There’s always a perfectly sensible
explanation.

James gives her a look while he gets some large bullets and begins loading his rifle.

EDWARD
(sarcastic)
Woohoo! Look, I am big ugly statue
of some guy who’s been dead for
10,000 years.

Helen giggles.

EDWARD (cont’d)
Fear my wrath!

JAMES
Shhh!

EDWARD
What?

They hear intense wood-cracking from above. Louder and louder. Suddenly, a massive log of rotten wood whooshes down and SLAMS into the ground, scattering the campfire. It becomes darker.

EDWARD (cont’d)
(leaps back)
Aaaaaa! Holy crap!

James looks intently to Helen.

HELEN
What? Oh, come on, branches break all the time.

JAMES
Edward I told you not to harrass the Gods.

EDWARD
Sorry.

HELEN
What, you can’t seriously believe this is caused by a curse?
(MORE)
For Christ’s sake Jim, you are a civilized man.

James cocks his rifle.

JAMES
Not so civilized I’ve lost my instincts.

James suddenly turns around. A beat. Then gunfire is heard coming from the German camp.

JAMES (cont’d)
Stay here!

He disappears into the bushes. Helen stands for a moment, then runs after him.

EDWARD
Helen, come back here. Didn’t you hear what he just said?

Edward realizes how dark it is, then runs after them, scared.

CUT TO: