

"THE FORTY THOUSAND DOLLAR MAN"

FADE IN:

EXT. KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, CAPE CANAVERAL, FLORIDA - DAY

A Saturn V rocket stands on the launchpad as numerous NASA technicians prepare it for launch.

CHYRON: KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, 1973

INT. MISSION CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is bustling with activity as crew-cut, skinny tie-wearing TECHNICIANS prepare their stations for launch. Overseeing the operation is MAJOR COLBY STAFFORD, 30's, the clean-cut, hyper-competent mission chief.

COLBY

How we looking, Flight?

TECH 1

We are T-minus fourteen minutes, Chief. Go for launch.

COLBY

Roger that, Flight. Capcom?

TECH 2

All systems go, Chief.

COLBY

Thank you, Capcom.
(turning to another
Technician)
How's our guy, Doc?

TECH 3

Funny thing about that, Major.
Either he's not there... or he's
dead.

ANGLE ON an EKG monitor which is flatlining.

COLBY

LOM, give me video of the cockpit,
please.

TECH 4

Roger that. On main screen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We see the interior of an empty cockpit appear on the screen at the front of the room.

COLBY
Oh, shoot. Not again.
(to the room)
We are T-minus fourteen, people.
Where the hell is Buff Taggart!

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEAN - CONTINUOUS

MUSIC CUE: "Rubberband Man" by The Spinners

COLONEL BUFF TAGGART, 30's, the most famous living American astronaut, has just paddled his surfboard out to an imposing 20 foot wave.

BUFF
That looks about right.

As the wave catches him, he mounts his board and rides it in toward shore. His eye is caught by something gleaming underwater and he leaps from his board into the sea. He swims several meters down, grabs an oyster from a coral reef and heads back to the surface.

EXT. BEACH - MOMENTS LATER

BONNIE SWANSON, late-20's, suns herself on a towel. She is the quintessential 70's TV star, complete with feathered hair, savage tan and generous bosom.

BUFF (O.S.)
Got you another one, baby.

Buff stands dripping over her. He tosses a pearl onto a small mound of pearls beside her towel.

BONNIE
Oh, Buff. All these pearls...

BUFF
Let's make love.

BONNIE
Shouldn't you be at the launch?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 BUFF
 (checks watch)
 Hmm. I guess I should. Colby
 hates when I'm late.

He bends down and kisses Bonnie.

 BONNIE
 Be safe up there.

 BUFF
 Honey, I'm just going to space.
 What could go wrong?

He quickly towels off, then picks up a full NASA spacesuit from the sand and steps into it.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Now in his spacesuit and holding his helmet, Buff climbs into his gold 1973 Corvette Stingray and peels out.

Pull back to reveal he is heading toward the nearby rocket. Above him we see a large billboard showing Buff in the driver's seat of a 1973 Corvette Stingray heading toward a nearby rocket. A caption reads "Corvette: the Car of Astronauts!"

EXT. STREET - MINUTES LATER

Buff screeches to a stop at a red light. A KID in the car next to him does a double-take as he stares at Buff.

 KID
 Buff Taggart!

 BUFF
 That's right, son.

 KID
 You going to the moon, Buff?

 BUFF
 Not this time. Now, you listen to
 your mom and behave.

 KID
 I will, Buff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As the light changes and Buff zooms off, he tosses something to the boy. It's a pearl.

KID (CONT'D)
Gee, thanks!

The Kid looks at his MOM, confused. She shrugs.

EXT. LAUNCHPAD - MOMENTS LATER

Buff pulls up to the base of the rocket and is immediately surrounded by NASA TECHNICIANS. He steps out of his car and heads for the elevator leading up to the command module of the rocket.

INT. MISSION CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Colby watches Buff in the elevator on a monitor.

COLBY
(into his microphone)
Cutting it a little close, there,
aren't you Buff?

BUFF
(through speakers)
Not as bad as on Apollo 16.

Colby shakes his head, amused in spite of himself.

COLBY
Yeah. You endangered a lot of
lives on that one.

BUFF
(jokingly)
Talk to my attorney.

COLBY
(laughs)
We did.

EXT. GANGWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Buff heads toward the entrance.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
(over P.A.)
T-minus four minutes...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Buff greets various WORKERS as he goes.

 BUFF
Hey, Jimmy. Lookin' good.
 (to another worker)
Jimmy! Love the moustache.
 (to another)
Jimmy boy! See you on the flip
side.

Buff climbs into the module.

INT. COMMAND MODULE - CONTINUOUS

The door is shut behind him and Buff moves to take his seat.

SFX: A tearing sound

Buff looks down to see the sleeve of his suit has caught in the door and torn a small hole.

 COLBY (O.S.)
Everything okay in there, Colonel?

 BUFF
 (covering the tear)
Uh... roger that. Just prepping
the cabin for launch.

He latches his seat harness, then pulls out a tiny photograph from a pocket of his suit. He kisses it, then places it tenderly above his seat.

REVERSE ANGLE: We see the photo is of Buff

EXT. LAUNCHPAD - CONTINUOUS

Smoke begins to build up at the base of the rocket.

 ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Ten, nine, eight, seven...

INT. MISSION CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Colby watches the countdown.

 COLBY
Okay, people. Let's get this
right. That rocket is carrying a
national treasure.
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLBY (CONT'D)
And a personal friend of mine.
Godspeed, Buff Taggart.

EXT. LAUNCHPAD - CONTINUOUS

The rocket's engines ignite.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Three, two, one, liftoff.

The rocket gradually ascends from the launchpad.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Bonnie watches as the rocket blasts off. She blows it a kiss.

INT. COMMAND MODULE - CONTINUOUS

INTERCUT with Mission Control.

Buff's face jiggles ridiculously as the rocket ascends.

COLBY (O.S.)
You're looking good, Buff. How's
your main bus power?

BUFF
Uh, which one is that again?
(beat)
I'm just kidding.

Colby and the rest of the NASA Techs bust out laughing.

COLBY
You had us going there.

BUFF
Yeah. Anyway, main bus power is...
low. Dangerously low. Pretty much
off.

Colby and the others scramble to check their gauges.

BUFF (CONT'D)
Kidding. Just kidding around.
Power's fine. Thanks for asking.

Colby cracks a tight smile and turns to Tech 1.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLBY

Always gets me with that "main bus" gag. Funniest astronaut in the fleet.

TECH 2

Uh, Chief, we're picking up something on audio. Kind of a rattle.

COLBY

Put it on the box.

SFX: A loud rattling sound

COLBY (CONT'D)

Buff, we're getting a kind of rattling sound down here. Any idea about the source?

In the cockpit, Buff is holding a cocktail shaker. The vibrating of the rocket mixes his martini for him.

BUFF

I'm not hearing anything, Major.

COLBY

Okay. Well, let us know.

Buff takes a martini glass from a compartment and pours himself a nicely shaken cocktail, then plops an olive in. He removes his helmet and takes a sip.

EXT. SATURN V ROCKET - MOMENTS LATER

The nose of the rocket glows as it leaves the Earth's atmosphere. The command module separates from the booster rocket.

INT. COMMAND MODULE - CONTINUOUS

Buff takes the final sip of his drink as the spacecraft moves into zero gravity. The olive floats out of his glass.

BUFF

Where do you think you're going, little friend?

He chomps the olive out of the air and swallows it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLBY

Buff, we're showing you at zero G's. Stable orbit achieved. You can go ahead and remove your helmet at this time.

Buff looks up at his helmet, floating above him.

BUFF

Uh, roger that. Let me just...
(grunts)
Unhook this...
(more grunts)
Taking off the old helmet... Whew, feels good getting that thing off.

COLBY

Okay. You can start your zero grav experiments whenever you're ready.

BUFF

Roger that.

Buff empties a bag containing a stopwatch, a cage of mice and a hammer.

CUT TO:

EXT. SATURN V ROCKET - LATER

The command module orbits high above the Earth.

INT. SATURN V ROCKET - CONTINUOUS

Buff straps himself into his chair, preparing for sleep.

INTERCUT with Mission Control where it is the night shift. Colby sits at his station drinking a cup of coffee.

COLBY

Okay, Buff. Great work today. That mouse-hammer study is really going to make a difference down here in a lot of people's lives.

BUFF

Thanks, Chief.

Colby gazes thoughtfully at the video feed of Buff on his monitor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLBY
(to himself)
God, I wish it was me up there.

BUFF
You say something, Chief?

COLBY
Me? Nope.

BUFF
Okay, well, I'm gonna grab some
Z's. Don't suppose you'd consider
singing me to sleep?

COLBY
(smiling)
You got it.

Leaning into the mic, Colby sings. His voice is surprisingly beautiful.

COLBY (CONT'D)
(singing)
*Just yesterday morning they let me
know you were gone, Susanne the
plans they made put an end to you.
I walked out this morning and I
wrote down this song, I just can't
remember who to send it to...*

Buff smiles contentedly and shuts his eyes.

Tech 1 and Tech 2 exchange a look and join in singing backing vocals on their own mics.

COLBY/TECH 1/TECH 2
(singing)
*I've seen fire and I've seen rain,
I've seen sunny days that I thought
would never end...*

SFX: A LOUD BOOM

Buff's eyes open as the entire craft shudders. An alarm goes off.

BUFF
What the hell?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TECH 1

We have an impact on the hull.
Repeat, impact on the hull!

COLBY

Buff, what's happening? Can you
see anything?

Buff looks out a porthole and sees a small satellite with a
TARANTULA EMBLEM spinning off into space. A stream of gas
vents from his module.

BUFF

Appears I was struck by a
satellite. I'm venting gas into
space.

COLBY

A satellite?

TECH 2

That's impossible, Chief. We've
got positions on every licensed
satellite in Earth orbit.

COLBY

(to Tech 1, covering his
mic)
Did it breach the hull?

TECH 1

No, sir. But he's venting a lot of
O₂.

COLBY

Buff, I want you to check your
oxygen gauge.

Buff floats over to a control panel.

CLOSE ON an oxygen gauge. The needle is moving slowly
downward.

BUFF

(calmly)
Oh, yeah. We've got a leak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TECH 2

(to Colby)

Sir, it appears the breach can only be repaired from outside the module.

COLBY

How much time does he have?

TECH 2

At this rate of outgassing, I'd say fifteen minutes, max.

COLBY

(over mic)

You hear that, Buff? Looks like we're going to need you to do an unscheduled EVA.

Buff is already putting on his spacesuit. As he puts his arm in the sleeve, he notices the tear from earlier.

BUFF

Right... Hey, Chief? I forgot to mention, upon entering the craft, I acquired a small tear in my suit.

COLBY

A tear? You tore your suit and you didn't tell us?

BUFF

In my defense, I did not expect to be leaving the module.

COLBY

Damn it!

(to Tech 1)

What are our other options?

TECH 1

Uh... He could suffocate and die in space.

BUFF

It's okay, guys. I can do the space walk and patch the leak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

COLBY

With a torn suit? How? You gonna hold your breath?

BUFF

Yup.

COLBY

Are you nuts? That's impossible.

TECH 3

It might not be.

COLBY

What? In the vacuum of space? He'll burst like a Christmas goose!

TECH 3

If he can create positive pressure in his thorax and keep a tight clench on his anus to prevent intestinal explosivity, he just might be able to pull it off.

BUFF

What about my eyes, Doc?

TECH 3

You'll have to keep them tightly shut, Buff, to prevent ocular explosivity.

BUFF

Okay. Colby? Do I have a go?

COLBY

I don't know, Buff. You'll be working blind. And that's a long time to clench your anus.

BUFF

I can do it. I've trained for this.

COLBY

(sighs, then)

All right. But don't you go and die on me. I don't want to be at the helm when we lose an American hero.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

TECH 2

What about Apollo 1, Chief? You were at the helm of that one. And they all burned.

COLBY

Larry, you know damn well I was in the bathroom when that happened.

Inside the capsule, Buff opens a plastic cover on a button labeled "DEPRESSURIZATION. EMERGENCY ONLY!"

BUFF

Preparing to depressurize capsule.

COLBY

Roger that.

BUFF

Hey, Colby? If this doesn't work, do me a favor? Tell Bonnie there's a dead astronaut floating around up here who loves her very much.

In mission control we see all the Techs, including Colby, are sniffing and passing around a Kleenex box.

Buff grabs a crescent wrench. He then takes a deep breath, lets it out, shuts his eyes, clenches up and pushes the depressurization button.

SFX: A LOUD WHOOSHING SOUND

Buff feels his way to the door of the capsule and unscrews the hatch.

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Gripping a handle outside the capsule, Buff works his way outside and over to the gas leak. Ice crystals immediately form on his skin.

INT. MISSION CONTROL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Colby watches Buff on a monitor.

COLBY

(to himself)
Oh, this is not good.
(then, to Tech 1)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLBY (CONT'D)
Tom, I'll be in the bathroom if
anyone needs me.

Colby hurries off.

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Clearly struggling to keep from exploding, Buff tightens a bolt with the wrench. The gas leak slows and stops.

Buff clambers back inside the capsule, shuts the door and hits a repressurization button.

INT. KENNEDY SPACE CENTER MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Colby stands at a sink, furiously scrubbing his hands with soap as Tech 2 bursts into the men's room.

TECH 2
Major! I think you'd better see
this.

INT. MISSION CONTROL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Colby and Tech 2 hurry in to a room of applauding Techs. On the monitor, we see Buff in the capsule from behind, checking some gauges.

COLBY
Buff! You did it!

BUFF
Why do you sound so surprised?

Buff turns to the camera revealing that both his eyes have bugged out grotesquely. One seems to be hanging on by the optic nerve. The NASA Techs abruptly stop clapping.

COLBY
Oh, sweet Jesus.

BUFF
What's that?

COLBY
Uh, you look great, Buff.
Congratulations.
(quietly to the room)
Keep clapping.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Techs resume clapping uncomfortably.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FONTAINEBLEAU HOTEL - NIGHT

Limousines pull up to the famous Miami Beach hotel.

CHYRON: "ONE WEEK LATER"

INT. BANQUET HALL - CONTINUOUS

A large AUDIENCE applauds as Vice President SPIRO AGNEW moves to the dais. Buff, now in a double-knit polyester leisure suit, sits beside Bonnie on the stage. Colby sits a short distance away.

AGNEW

Thank you. Tonight we honor a true American hero. A man who laughs in the face of fear. A man who has been to the moon more times than any other human. And he was good enough to come back down and tell us what he saw up there.

BUFF

A lot of rocks, Mr. Vice President.
A lot of rocks.

The crowd busts out laughing.

AGNEW

(chuckling)

Now, I understand our friends at NASA have prepared a kind of highlight reel of Colonel Buff Taggart's storied career. Gentlemen?

The lights dim and a screen descends as a projector rolls.

ON SCREEN:

A dramatic shot of the moon and stars. The camera tilts down to reveal a placid farm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.)
Buff was born in 1943 in the
heartland of America to Jack and
Greta Taggart. Jack Taggart had
been a World War I flyboy...

We see a young Jack Taggart standing beside a bi-plane.

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...while Greta stayed at home,
growing badly needed corn for the
war effort.

In a series of photos, Greta squats beside an ear of corn.
As it grows larger and larger, she stays in the same
position.

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
In 1951, when Buff was only eight,
tragedy struck the Taggart farm. A
powerful tornado took the life of
his father. Then, one year later,
the same tornado killed his mother.

We see a photo of Jack running from a massive tornado. Then
one of Greta running from a tornado which now has a skeleton
inside it.

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
A devastated Buff was sent to a
government home for wayward boys,
where he developed a fascination
with the heavenly bodies that
floated above his squalid quarters.

Ten year old Buff lies on the roof of an orphanage staring up
at the night sky.

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Five years later, at the age of
fifteen, Buff lied about his age in
order to enlist in the US Air Force
like his father before him.

We see fifteen year old Buff, wearing a fake beard, standing
beside several taller, older pilots and their planes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Thanks to his fearlessness and
outstanding flying skill, Buff
quickly rose to the top of his
squadron. And when the conflict in
Vietnam broke out, it was Buff who
led his fellow flyers into combat.

Twenty-something Buff sits in the cockpit of an F-4 Phantom
fighter plane, giving a thumbs-up.

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
After winning the war, Buff
returned stateside. That's when
NASA came calling. They were
looking for a few brave men to join
in the race to space.

On screen we see photos of Buff in his spacesuit, planting a
flag on the moon. Then another, driving a lunar rover.

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
In Apollo missions twelve through
seventeen, Buff became the first
man to drive the lunar rover, the
first man to throw a javelin on the
moon...

We see Buff in his spacesuit hurling a javelin.

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...the first to fire a gun...

Buff fires a pistol at a beer can on a pile of rocks in the
distance.

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...the first to plant a tree for
Israel.

Buff, wearing a yarmulke on top of his space helmet, plants a
sapling on the moon.

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Never satisfied to rest on his
laurels, Buff Taggart continues to
break records. Leaving behind his
lover, Bonnie Swanson, star of the
top rated television drama, "Lady
Soldier..."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

On screen we see a clip of Bonnie in "Lady Soldier." She wears a skimpy camouflage uniform and fires an automatic rifle at unseen foes. Her breasts shake violently.

WILLIAM SHATNER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...Buff keeps venturing out into the unknown. For that is what makes a man a hero. And a hero a legend.

On screen, Buff stands beside an American flag on the moon. At the edge of the photo we see two other astronauts looking resentfully at Buff, hogging the spotlight.

The crowd rises in a standing ovation as the vice president shakes Buff's hand. Colby embraces Buff. Finally, Bonnie gives Buff an inappropriately deep kiss.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFF'S CAR - NIGHT

Buff and Bonnie drive home.

BONNIE
I'm so proud of you, honey.

BUFF
Well, imagine how proud of me I am.

BONNIE
The vice president himself came all this way to honor you.

BUFF
And how about that plaque?
(looks around)
Did you grab the plaque?

BONNIE
No. I thought you took it.

BUFF
I didn't take it. Oh no. We forgot the plaque.

BONNIE
Do you want to go back for it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 BUFF
 No. It's just a plaque.

They drive on in silence.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 Was that a piece of moon rock in
 the plaque?

 BONNIE
 I think so.

 BUFF
 Damn. That was an expensive
 plaque.

 BONNIE
 We can go back and get it, Buff.

 BUFF
 Nah. It's late. No biggie.

 BONNIE
 Are you sure?

 BUFF
 Positive.

A long beat. Bonnie looks at Buff.

 BONNIE
 Thinking about that plaque?

 BUFF
 Yeah. Let's go back.

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The car does a U-turn then stops at a stoplight. A teenage KID in a 1970 Mercury Cyclone pulls up beside Buff. The Kid notices Buff, then says something to his companion, a FAT TEEN. Both boys laugh. Buff nods to them, uncertainly.

INTERCUT: INT. BUFF'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

 KID
 Excuse me?

 BUFF
 Yes?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KID
Are you that astronaut guy?

BUFF
Buff Taggart. You want me to sign something?

KID
Oh, that'd be great. Could you sign my balls?

Both boys crack up.

BUFF
Um, okay. Do you have a felt tip? You probably don't want me to use a fountain pen.

BONNIE
I think they're mocking you, Buff.

BUFF
What? Why would they--

KID
Astronauts are gay.

BUFF
Astronauts are not gay! They're not allowed to be.

KID
Oh, and those moon landings? Totally faked.

BUFF
(infuriated)
They were not faked! I was there.

FAT TEEN
My dad said our government faked the whole space program to make Krushev jealous.

BUFF
Your dad's gay. And you're a fatty.

BONNIE
Buff!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KID

I bet you're too scared to even
race me, spaceman.

BUFF

Are you kidding? I've pulled
twelve G's on reentry.

KID

Was that before or after you had
sex with a man?

BUFF

Okay. That's it. I'll race you to
the Fontainebleau Hotel on Collins
Avenue. I have to pick up a
plaque.

KID

You're on.

BUFF

(to Bonnie)

I'll pick you up here in a few
minutes.

BONNIE

What?! You can't be serious.
You're going to leave me out on the
street so you can race some kid?

(then, gently)

Come on, lover. You don't need to
prove anything to him. Just as
long as you believe in yourself.

Buff looks at her for a beat.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - SECONDS LATER

Bonnie stands on the side of the road in her elegant evening
dress. The Fat Teen stands beside her. Buff and the Kid's
cars peel out in a puff of burning rubber.

FAT TEEN

I love you in "Lady Soldier."

BONNIE

Thank you.

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Buff and the Kid zoom down the street, neck and neck. Buff rolls down his window and calls out to the Kid.

 BUFF
 (yelling over the wind)
 You need to learn some respect!
 And I'm the one who's going to
 teach you that respect!

 KID
 (yelling)
 What?

 BUFF
 I said, you need to learn--

Buff suddenly spots a possum crossing the road ahead. His eyes go wide as he swerves to avoid it. The car slams into a large wooden pole, demolishing the vehicle. Buff flies through the front windshield and lands on his back, badly injured.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 (barely conscious)
 --some respect...

Buff looks above him and sees the pole he hit was holding up the Corvette Stingray billboard we saw earlier. The entire thing collapses and falls directly on top of him. All that's left is Buff's smiling face on the advertisement and the slogan "Corvette: the Car of Astronauts!"

CUT TO:

BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. MILITARY HOSPITAL - HOURS LATER

CHYRON: NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER, QUANTICO, VIRGINIA

INT. MILITARY HOSPITAL HALLWAY

OSCAR GOLDMAN, late-40s, a no-nonsense government official, hurries down the hall to find Colby and Bonnie pacing tensely.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OSCAR
What's Taggart's status?

BONNIE
Who are you?

OSCAR
Oscar Goldman. Director of OSI.

BONNIE
What's OSI?

COLBY
Office of Scientific Intelligence.
(to Oscar)
What are you doing here?

OSCAR
There's no time to explain. What's
Buff's status?

COLBY
He's critical. He lost an arm, an
eye, his nose and a leg.

A nurse exits the surgical room carrying a severed leg.

COLBY (CONT'D)
Both legs.

BONNIE
Oh god.

OSCAR
I need to speak to him.

COLBY
What? Why?

OSCAR
Because I think we can save him.

COLBY
What? How?

OSCAR
I'm just going to...

Oscar gently pushes past Colby and Bonnie and enters the room.

INT. SURGERY - CONTINUOUS

The door swings open and Oscar enters to find Buff sedated on the operating table. He is missing his legs, an arm, and has bandages over one eye and his nose.

OSCAR
Buff? Can you hear me?

BUFF
(pouting)
That lady just took my leg.

OSCAR
I know. I'm sorry about that.
You've been in a terrible accident.

BUFF
I can't smell.

OSCAR
You've lost your nose.

BUFF
I don't like this.

OSCAR
Look, Colonel, the government of this country considers you an invaluable asset. And we do not intend to lose that asset. We have the ability to repair you if you'll agree to undergo an experimental procedure.

BUFF
What sort of procedure?

OSCAR
We call them bionics. We've never used them on a human before, but we've been given an unprecedented forty thousand dollars to spend on you, Colonel Taggart.

BUFF
Forty thousand dollars! That's an insane amount of money.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OSCAR

You're worth it to us, Buff. And if you say yes, you'll be the first bionic man.

BUFF

What are these bionics?

OSCAR

They're super-strong replacement parts. We've had great success in animal trials. Our bionic rat was able to lift three hundred pounds with one paw.

BUFF

That's amazing.

OSCAR

Well, that's in rat pounds, of course. But still--

BUFF

What are they made of?

OSCAR

High grade steel and wrought iron.

BUFF

Steel and iron...

Buff thinks for a beat, then

BUFF (CONT'D)

Okay, I'm in.

Buff moves to extend his arm, but there's only a bandaged stump. Oscar uncertainly shakes the stump. Buff recoils in pain as the bandage starts to turn red.

BUFF (CONT'D)

Ow! Oh, god!

OSCAR

Sorry.

(calling off)
Nurse?

DISSOLVE TO:

SURGERY MONTAGE

INT. SURGERY - LATER

A team of DOCTORS perform extreme surgery on Buff. We see one doctor open a steel case and remove a bionic arm. He hands it to another doctor.

OSCAR (V.O.)

Buff Taggart. Astronaut. A man barely alive. Gentlemen, we can rebuild him. We have the technology.

A doctor carefully inserts a bionic eye into Buff's partially opened skull.

OSCAR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We have the capability to make the world's first bionic man.

Two doctors attach bionic legs to Buff's pelvis.

OSCAR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Buff Taggart will be that man. Better than he was before. Better, stronger, faster.

A doctor cleans the nostrils of a flesh-toned bionic nose with a Q-tip, then attaches it to Buff's face. They step back from their patient and shake hands with one another as we

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAYS LATER

BUFF's POV as he slowly opens his eyes. Not yet in focus, Oscar and Bonnie stand over him. Behind them is a LUTHER, a technician in a lab coat. The right half of the view seems to be ZOOMING in and out.

OSCAR

He's coming to.

BONNIE

Oh, thank goodness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OSCAR
Easy now, Buff.

BUFF
Where---

OSCAR
You're in a top secret government
facility.

BONNIE
How are you feeling, baby?

BUFF
(weakly)
I'm fine. Just a little car crash,
that's all.

LUTHER
I'm easing up on the morphine
drip...

Luther turns a dial on a tube leading to Buff's good arm.
Buff's face contorts in pain.

BUFF
Holy mother of god! No! No! NO!

LUTHER
Resuming morphine drip...

Buff's face relaxes.

BUFF
Just a little car crash.

OSCAR
Now, Buff, your body has
experienced an enormous trauma.
It'll be some time before you begin
to feel like yourself again.

BUFF
(glancing down)
Are these the bionics?

OSCAR
Yes. Your legs, your right arm,
your right eye and your nose have
all been... upgraded.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Bonnie gently pulls Oscar aside.

BONNIE

Mr. Goldman, I know it's the least of his worries right now, but I'm wondering, will everything work properly... down there?

OSCAR

Miss Swanson, on that front you have nothing to worry about. Buff is every bit the man he was before the accident. Except that his penis probably won't work anymore.

BUFF (O.C.)

So thirsty.

Oscar returns to Buff. Bonnie, looking disturbed, joins him.

OSCAR

There's a glass of juice on the table in front of you, Buff. Why don't you see if you can reach for it?

Buff reaches for the glass with his good arm.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

No, with your bionic arm.

Buff slowly extends his bionic right arm toward the glass.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Good, good...

Buff grasps the glass and immediately shatters it in his hand.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Okay. That's to be expected. Luther, could we have another glass of juice, please?

Luther fills a new glass with juice and sets it on the table.

BUFF

I don't know, Oscar--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

OSCAR
Just try again, Buff.

Buff again reaches for the glass. This time he does not break it. But he hurls it against the wall, shattering it.

BUFF
Damn it!

OSCAR
Not a problem.
(to Luther)
Little more juice?

Luther fills a new glass and sets it down. Buff immediately bats it off the table.

BUFF
This is ridiculous!

OSCAR
You're getting the hang of it.
(to Luther)
Juice.

Luther fills another glass but before he can set it down, Buff punches him in the stomach, then hurls the juice glass against the wall. Bonnie rushes to Buff's side.

BONNIE
Buff!

Buff involuntarily cold cocks Bonnie, knocking her against the wall.

OSCAR
Oh dear.

BUFF
Bonnie!

BONNIE
(checking her nose for
blood)
It's fine. I'm okay.

BUFF
I'm so sorry, baby. It's this arm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BONNIE
No, I know. It's bionic.

OSCAR
(to Luther)
Can we get another juice, please?

The now resentful Luther pours another glass of juice, nervously sets it down and backs away.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Concentrate, Buff. You can do this.

Buff furrows his brow and slowly reaches for the glass. This time he picks it up, brings it to his mouth and drinks. Bonnie watches raptly.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Good. Very good.

BONNIE
You're doing it, honey. You're doing it.

Buff finishes the juice. A beat. He smashes the glass against his own face then punches Bonnie again.

CUT TO:

EXT. RUNNING TRACK - DAYS LATER

Buff, wearing an orange tracksuit unzipped to his chest hair, sits in a wheelchair. Oscar is with him.

OSCAR
You've made great strides these last couple days, Buff. Now it's time to see what those bionic legs of yours can do.

Oscar extends his hand and Buff takes it, hoisting himself out of the wheelchair.

BUFF
It feels good to stand again.

OSCAR
Imagine how it'll feel to run sixty miles an hour.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFF

What?!

OSCAR

That's right. Your bionic legs were designed to achieve a top speed of a mile a minute.

BUFF

I thought you said sixty miles an hour.

OSCAR

That comes out to a mile a minute.

BUFF

I don't think so...

OSCAR

It does. You need to trust me.

BUFF

(still doubtful)
You're the boss.

CUT TO:

EXT. RUNNING TRACK - MOMENTS LATER

Buff jumps up and down, stretching out his new legs.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

A Technician raises a starter's pistol and fires.

In SLOW MOTION:

Buff starts to run down the track. Oscar stands with Luther who holds a stopwatch. They grin as it appears Buff's legs are working according to plan.

NORMAL SPEED:

As the image returns to normal motion, we see Buff is not actually running all that fast.

OSCAR

How fast is he going, Luther?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUTHER
Twenty miles an hour, sir.

OSCAR
Slightly faster than a normal man.
Disappointing.

Oscar picks up a megaphone and calls out to Buff.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Buff, can you go any faster?

BUFF
(yelling)
I don't think so!

OSCAR
All right. Then bring it in.

BUFF
You got it, Oscar.

Buff waves and tries to slow down but he can't.

He continues to run quickly around the track, flailing his arms, clearly not in control of his speed.

LUTHER
He's not stopping, Mr. Goldman.

OSCAR
I can see that, Luther.
(calling)
Buff? You can stop now!

BUFF
I... I can't. The legs won't stop!

OSCAR
Damn it.

Buff continues running, his arms hanging at his sides.

BUFF
Can anyone help me?!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RUNNING TRACK - ONE HOUR LATER

Buff cries softly as he continues involuntarily running around the track.

 BUFF
 (weepy)
 These legs are raping me.

Oscar watches as a pickup truck with Technicians in the bed drives alongside Buff. Luther reaches out, trying to slow Buff's pace.

 LUTHER
 Almost got you...

Just as he is about to grab hold of Buff, Buff's bionic arm punches him, sending Luther flying off the pickup onto the track.

 BUFF
 Sorry, Luther!

As Buff reaches a bend in the track, the truck continues straight towards the cement wall, forcing Buff to go straight as well. The truck comes to a stop but Buff speeds towards the wall.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 Oh no.

Bam! Buff slams into the wall and goes down. His bionic legs continue to run as Buff lies face down, groaning.

Oscar, watching from a distance, shakes his head with disgust.

CUT TO:

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Oscar stands with Buff.

 OSCAR
 Today we're going to see how well
 your bionic eye and nose function.

 BUFF
 Great.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OSCAR
I want you to start by focusing on
that eye chart with your right eye.

BUFF
Okay.

Buff closes his left eye while squinting with his right.

From Buff's POV we see the eye chart.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

Suddenly, his view ZOOMS IN dramatically till we see nothing
but the black ink of the letters.

BUFF (CONT'D)
What the--

OSCAR
Can you read the bottom line?

BUFF
All I see is black.

OSCAR
Black?

Buff looks over at Oscar. From his POV we see an EXTREME
CLOSE-UP of Oscar's lips. They flap open horribly, saliva
droplets clinging to the corner of his mouth as he speaks:

OSCAR (CONT'D)
What do you mean black?

Buff jumps back, startled.

BUFF
Ahh!

OSCAR
What is it?

BUFF
I think my eye is overzooming.

OSCAR
Overzooming?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

 BUFF
Everything's too close. How do I
pull back?

 OSCAR
Oh. It only has two settings.
Zoom. And not zoom.

 BUFF
That doesn't seem very--

Buff's POV: we zoom in on Oscar's forehead. It's a sea of
pores and blackheads.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
Sweet mother! Your skin, Oscar,
it's... terrible.

 OSCAR
Stop it, Buff.

 BUFF
I'm sorry, it's just--

CLOSE ON tiny droplets of oil on Oscar's face.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
Uch! It's so oily.

 OSCAR
It's perfectly normal to have a
certain amount of oil on the
skin...

 BUFF
Certain amount? It's like the menu
at a diner!

 OSCAR
Zoom out.

 BUFF
It's like the seat of a taxi.

 OSCAR
I said zoom out.

Buff does. His view returns to normal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BUFF

I don't get it, Oscar. What good is an eye that can only see your horrible pores and greasy skin?

OSCAR

We haven't ironed out all the kinks yet.

(then, testy)

Would you rather we had left that gaping hole you had when we found you?

BUFF

No.

OSCAR

All right then. On to your bionic nose. It's been designed to be a thousand times stronger than the normal nose.

BUFF

I hope it's not as oily as the normal nose.

OSCAR

That's enough!

Oscar indicates a row of pedestals concealed by small screens.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Now, behind each of these screens is an item. I want you to identify the items solely by their smell.

BUFF

Okay...

Oscar points to the first screen.

OSCAR

Let's start with this one. Can you smell what's behind it?

Buff inhales deeply through his nose, focusing his attention on the first screen.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BUFF

Okay, I smell something. I'm getting...

(Buff scrunches his nose)

It's kinda earthy. No, wait, funky. Ugh. It's feces. You put poop on that pedestal?

OSCAR

What? No, of course not.

Oscar lifts up the screen, revealing a lemon.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

It's a lemon.

BUFF

Oh.

Buff squints his eye.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

BUFF (CONT'D)

Wow, that is one oily lemon.

OSCAR

All right, try the next screen. Smell anything?

Buff sniffs and nods.

BUFF

Uh huh. Definitely doodie.

OSCAR

Buff, this is no time for horseplay.

BUFF

I'm not kidding, Oscar. All I smell behind that screen is poop.

Oscar sighs and lifts the screen to reveal a single rose.

OSCAR

You can't smell this rose?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

BUFF

No, all there is is an overwhelming
smell of turd. Actually...

Buff wrinkles his nose and heads toward the doorway.

BUFF (CONT'D)

It seems to be coming from outside.

Buff exits into

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Buff makes his way down the hall, sniffing the air. Oscar follows.

BUFF

Yup. It's stronger out here.
(wincing)
Ugh, how can anyone work in here?
It's like a cesspool.

OSCAR

I don't smell anything.

Buff reaches the door to the men's room.

BUFF

It's coming from in here.

Buff opens the door and enters.

OSCAR

Buff, wait.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Buff and Oscar step into the men's room. Buff immediately crosses over to one of the stalls.

BUFF

This is it! I'm sure of it.

Buff grabs the handle and using his bionic arm, tears the door off its hinges. Inside Luther sits on the toilet, his arm in a cast.

LUTHER

Hey!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OSCAR
Sorry about this, Luther.

BUFF
Oh. Hi, Luther.

OSCAR
Well, the good news here is that
your arm seems to be working.

BUFF
Oh, yeah. Look at that.

OSCAR
And your bionic nose is able to
detect faint odors from a great
distance.

BUFF
But the only thing I can smell
really well is shit.

OSCAR
At least it's a starting point.

They consider this for a beat.

LUTHER
Do you guys mind...?

OSCAR/BUFF
Right./Sorry, Luther.

They move away from the stall.

CUT TO:

INT. OSI OFFICES - A FEW DAYS LATER

Buff, now wearing civilian clothes (silk shirt, bell
bottoms), enters Oscar's office.

BUFF
You wanted to see me, Oscar?

OSCAR
Buff. Yes, come in.

Buff enters and sits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OSCAR (CONT'D)

It's been two weeks since your accident. How are you feeling?

BUFF

A lot better than when that sign fell on me.

OSCAR

I can imagine. And how are you adjusting to the bionics?

BUFF

Well, it was hard at first. But they're really starting to feel like a part of me.

He gives Oscar a thumbs-up with his bionic arm.

OSCAR

I'm glad to hear it.

Buff's thumbs-up remains up. Buff glances at it nervously. He obviously can't put it down.

SFX: Bionic sound effect continues over the following

BUFF

So, am I ready to go home? I sure do miss Bonnie.

OSCAR

That's actually what I wanted to speak to you about.

Buff casually tries to pull down his right arm with his left. It won't come down.

BUFF

What, uh, what do you mean?

OSCAR

You see, Buff... are you okay?

BUFF

I'm great.

He indicates the thumbs-up to emphasize his point.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUFF (CONT'D)

Please, go on.

OSCAR

The thing is, we didn't spend forty thousand dollars of taxpayer money just to save a dying astronaut...

With his good hand, Buff grabs Oscar's nameplate off the desk and tries to hammer down his frozen bionic arm with it.

BUFF

You didn't?

OSCAR

(re: arm)

Do you want me to get someone?

BUFF

No, I've got this.

Buff grunts as he wrestles with his "thumbs-up" arm, finally forcing it down, breaking off the chair's armrest in the process. He grins sheepishly.

OSCAR

The bionics program was designed to create a kind of super-agent. An agent who could carry out classified missions that no ordinary man could.

BUFF

What sort of missions?

OSCAR

I'm glad you asked.

Oscar presses a button on his desk. The lights dim, and a projection screen descends from the ceiling.

BUFF

Neat.

Oscar narrates the images we see on the screen.

OSCAR

For the last several years, our government has been tracking this man: Luis Guzman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

We see a squat, nefarious looking man in a flashy white suit.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Guzman's company is the number one provider of disco balls and disco-related paraphernalia in the world. OSI believes that this is merely a front.

BUFF

For what?

OSCAR

We raided one of Guzman's warehouses and found that each of his disco balls was packed with ten pounds of pure Columbian cocaine.

BUFF

Why not arrest him?

OSCAR

We've tried, but Guzman always gets wind of our plans. Our hope is that by sending in one lone agent, we can capture him before he even realizes we're there.

BUFF

And I'm that agent?

OSCAR

If you think you're ready.

BUFF

I know I'm ready.

Buff gives a thumbs-up again with his right hand. There's a beat as he realizes.

BUFF (CONT'D)

(shaking his head)
Stupid...

CUT TO:

INT. BUFF'S HOTEL ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Buff sits Indian-style on the bed. He is on the phone with Bonnie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFF

Well, I thought I would be home tomorrow, baby, but something came up.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. "LADY SOLDIER" SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

Bonnie stands at a phone cart, holding the phone in one hand and a rocket launcher in the other. She wears a sexy, tattered soldier's uniform as a MAKEUP LADY powders her cleavage.

BONNIE

What could be more important than being here with me? I haven't seen you in two weeks.

BUFF

I know. But Oscar asked me to do something for him.

BONNIE

What?

BUFF

I can't say. It's classified top secret.

BONNIE

Classified? Is it something dangerous?

BUFF

I really can't say. All I can tell you is I have to capture Luis Guzman who's smuggling cocaine in disco balls. And I don't even know if I can tell you that.

BONNIE

Luis Guzman?

MAKEUP LADY

The disco ball guy?

BONNIE

Yeah. Apparently, he's smuggling cocaine in them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 BUFF
Hon, who are you talking to?

 BONNIE
Janice, my makeup girl.

 MAKEUP LADY
Hi, Buff.

 BUFF
Okay, please don't tell anyone else
about this. It's highly
classified.
 (beat)
Bonnie? You there?

We see Bonnie is relating the information to a group of
people on the set.

 BONNIE
...isn't that crazy? Guzman, the
disco ball guy...
 (into phone)
Hi. Sorry.

 BUFF
I'll be home as soon as this
mission is over. I love you.

 BONNIE
I love you, too. Be careful.

 BUFF
Careful is my middle name. But
it's pronounced "car-u-fal." It's
Danish.

 BONNIE
I know your middle name, Buff.

They hang up.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT

Buff, dressed in his best disco outfit, struts toward the
entrance of a bustling dance club. He makes his way to the
front of the line where a large BOUNCER stops him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOUNCER
Hold up, grandpa. You on the list?

BUFF
What? Of course. I come to...
(looking up at the club's
sign)
Disco Very all the time.

BOUNCER
It's Discovery.

BUFF
Right. Well, I'm on the list. So,
you don't need to worry about that.

BOUNCER
Name?

BUFF
(deliberately slow and
unclear)
Miiiiichaelllll....angello...

BOUNCER
Michelangelo?

BUFF
No. Baaaaaaa...rrrrrr....

BOUNCER
I can't understand you.

BUFF
It's right there on the list.
Laaaaaaaaa....

BOUNCER
(off list)
Larry?

BUFF
Yes. Larry.

BOUNCER
Larry Morton? He already went in.

BUFF
Not Larry. Gllllllehhhh....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Another BOUNCER notices Buff.

BOUNCER 2
Hey, aren't you that astronaut?

BUFF
Uhhh...

BOUNCER 2
You're Buff Taggart. This guy went
to the moon. Let him in, Kenny.

BUFF
Thank you, Kenny.

The Bouncer moves aside a rope and Buff heads into the club.

BOUNCER
(to Bouncer 2)
That guy's an astronaut? I thought
he was retarded.

INT. DISCO - CONTINUOUS

Buff surveys the crowded room and bustling dance floor.

OSCAR (V.O.)
Now, our intelligence informs us
that Guzman wears a distinctively
spicy cologne with leathery
overtones. Your bionic nose should
direct you straight to him.

Buff sniffs the air.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

He seems to catch a scent and moves toward the edge of the
room.

INT. DISCO HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Buff slowly makes his way down a hall, sniffing the air as he
goes. The smell grows strongest as he approaches a closed
door.

BUFF
All right, arm. Let's see what you
can do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He winds up and slams the door off its hinges. He bursts into the room.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

 BUFF
 Freeze, scumbag!

Pull back to reveal Buff is in an empty bathroom. The toilet in front of him is overflowing.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 Aw, come on!

EXT. DISCO - MOMENTS LATER

Frustrated, Buff crosses to the bar and signals a BARTENDER.

 BUFF
 Give me a Cutty Sark with a splash
 of plum wine.

The Bartender prepares the drink.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 I don't suppose you could tell me
 where I might find a guy by the
 name of Guzman? Luis Guzman.

 BARTENDER
 Never heard of him.

 BUFF
 Is that so?

Buff puts his hand on the Bartender's and begins to squeeze.

 BARTENDER
 What are you... ow!

 BUFF
 Have you heard of him now?

 BARTENDER
 Oh god, you're really hurting my
 hand!

 BUFF
 Just give me a location and this
 will all be over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARTENDER

Okay, okay, he's upstairs in the
VIP area! Owwww!

Buff looks toward the VIP area and squints his bionic eye.

POV: Buff's view zooms in to where Guzman is sitting but once
again zooms too far. All he can see is a close-up of
Guzman's nostril hair.

BUFF

Useless.

Back to normal view. Buff turns back to the Bartender.

BUFF (CONT'D)

That wasn't so hard, was it?

He moves to release the man's hand but instead keeps
squeezing harder.

BARTENDER

Why are you doing this?! You said
it would be over!

BUFF

I'm sorry. I'm trying to let go
now...

BARTENDER

Oh sweet mother! Someone please
help me!

Other disco patrons notice them. The Bartender starts to
weep.

BUFF

Gosh, this is embarrassing. I am
really doing some damage.

BARTENDER

I don't want to live!

Finally, Buff wrenches himself free leaving the Bartender
with a mangled hand. A bone juts out from one knuckle.

BUFF

Wow. That is a bone. I feel
terrible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Buff backs away and hurries up the stairs.

INT. VIP AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Buff enters to see a group of thuggish MEN and slutty GIRLS lounging on sofas. In the center of the group sits LUIS GUZMAN.

OSCAR (V.O.)

Once you ID Guzman, you'll need to lure him outside where he can be apprehended.

Everyone turns to look at Buff.

BUFF

Hi. How is everyone? Stayin' cool?

LUIS

Who the hell are you?

BUFF

My name is... Michelangelo. Okay if I just...?

He goes to join them on the sofa.

LUIS

No, it's not okay.
(to Bodyguard)
Get him out of my room.

BUFF

Wait. I think you're going to want to hear what I have to say, Mr. Guzman.

LUIS

How do you know my name?

BUFF

You're the king of disco balls. I'm the king of... lights that shine on disco balls. We need each other.

LUIS

I'm listening.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 BUFF
I propose a joint venture. Shall
we step outside?

 LUIS
We can talk here, Mr.
Michelangelo.

 BUFF
 (sitting)
Okay. Outside would've been great.
But here is fine.

 OSCAR (V.O.)
And be careful, Buff. If Guzman
suspects you're an agent, he won't
hesitate to kill you.

 BUFF
 (clears throat nervously)
Now, we have a variety of bright,
shiny lights that, when combined
with your mirrored balls, will
create some terrific disco effects.

 LUIS
What kind of effects?

 BUFF
What kind of effects? Stars.
Diamonds. Stars. You name it.

 LUIS
What are you talking about?

 BUFF
I'm talking about a joint venture--
is it hot in here? I am parched.

Buff goes to sip his drink but his hand shakes, sloshing some
of the liquid onto his legs.

 LUIS
Why are you so nervous?

 BUFF
I'm not nervous. I just wish you'd
come outside with me...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Buff looks down and notices a puff of smoke rising from his lap. His legs appear to be shorting out.

LUIS
What's happening to you?

BUFF
Nothing's happening to me. What's
happening to you?

He tries to casually pat down his legs but the short circuit only gets worse.

BUFF (CONT'D)
So, do we have a deal?

LUIS
A deal? You're crazy, man.

BUFF
I don't think that's--

Buff's legs are now burning. He tries to stay calm.

LUIS
Your legs are on fire!

BUFF
You know what these legs could use?
Some fresh air. Come on outside.

Buff stands. By now his pants are in tatters. The fire continues to burn.

LUIS
Doesn't that hurt?

BUFF
I'll tell you what would hurt. You
and I not going outside. That
would hurt.

BODYGUARD
Mr. Guzman, look.

The Bodyguard points to Buff's leg. His pants have burned away and the fake skin has seared off revealing a metal part on which "Property of OSI, Made in China" is engraved.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LUIS
OSI? He's an agent. A robot
agent! Kill him!

Guzman's THUGS surround Buff and move toward him.

BUFF
I'm warning you. Stay back. I am
unpredictable at best.

Three Thugs charge him. Buff swings his bionic arm, knocking them all across the room and over the railing. They fall to the dance floor below. Other disco patrons scream.

Buff turns to see Guzman making his escape.

BUFF (CONT'D)
Stop!

Guzman bolts down the hall. Buff, now in his underwear, turns to chase him. He fails to notice that his burning pants have ignited a tablecloth.

INT. STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Guzman rushes down the stairs with Buff in hot pursuit. Buff grabs hold of Guzman's collar with his bionic arm.

BUFF
Game over.

Guzman continues to run and Buff's arm detaches from its socket. The arm stays attached to Guzman's shirt.

BUFF (CONT'D)
That's great. That's just great.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Guzman emerges from the club and jumps onto the back of a waiting motorcycle.

GUZMAN
Go, go!

DRIVER
You got an arm on you!

GUZMAN
Ahhh!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Guzman pulls the arm off and tosses it behind him. The motorcycle pulls away as Buff bursts out of the disco. He sees his arm on the ground and picks it up.

 BUFF
 Not so fast, Guzman.

Buff runs after Guzman's motorcycle.

SFX: Bionic sound effects

Without much effort, Buff catches the bike and stays alongside it for a couple blocks.

 DRIVER
 This is impossible. How is he
 running this fast?

 GUZMAN
 How fast are we going?

 DRIVER
 Twenty miles an hour.

 GUZMAN
 Well, drive faster, you moron!

 DRIVER
 Right.

The bike begins to pull away from Buff.

 BUFF
 Hey, come on! Wait!

The motorcycle turns a corner. Buff has lost it. He stumbles on a fire hydrant and rolls to a stop.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 Damn.

As he brushes himself off with his remaining arm, he notices the disco behind him is in flames. Panicked patrons stream out.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 Damn.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OSCAR (PRE-LAP)
Obviously, forty thousand dollars
simply wasn't enough.

CUT TO:

INT. OSCAR GOLDMAN'S OFFICE - DAYS LATER

Buff, his arm reattached and legs repaired, sits glumly
across from Oscar.

OSCAR
Do you have any idea of the damage
you did in New York?

BUFF
The fire?

OSCAR
The fire. The months we spent
gathering intelligence on Guzman,
all for nothing. That poor
bartender whose hand you crushed!

BUFF
It's these bionics, Oscar. They
don't work right.

OSCAR
I know. I'm not blaming you, Buff.
We really thought we could do it on
the budget we had. We were wrong.

BUFF
Well, now that we know they don't
work properly, we can fix them.
Upgrade them. Right?

OSCAR
I wish it were that simple. The
hard reality is, we just don't have
any more money. How can I go to
Congress after this debacle and ask
them for even more funding of the
bionics program?

BUFF
What are you saying?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OSCAR

I'm saying we're shutting it down,
Buff. The bionics program is
finished. I'm sorry.

BUFF

And what happens to me? I just go
back to the space program?

OSCAR

I wish it were that simple. NASA
has no use for an astronaut with
faulty arms and legs. And a nose
that smells nothing but shit.

BUFF

Can you give me back my old parts?

OSCAR

I wish it were that simple.

BUFF

Why do you keep saying that?!

OSCAR

I'm sorry. Luther will validate
your parking.

Oscar stands.

BUFF

So, that's it? You're just
shutting it all down? What am I
supposed to do? How am I supposed
to live like this?

OSCAR

I'd try and keep your legs dry.
Good luck, Buff.

Buff stands and slumps to the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES TELEVISION STUDIO - A FEW DAYS LATER

Buff gets out of a taxi carrying a suitcase and heads into
the lot.

INT. "LADY SOLDIER" SOUNDSTAGE - MINUTES LATER

Buff enters and sees Janice, Bonnie's makeup woman.

MAKEUP LADY

Buff. Hi. How did it go with your
classified mission?

BUFF

Not great, Janice.

MAKEUP LADY

Oh. Did Luis Guzman get away?

BUFF

Yeah. Don't tell anyone, okay?

MAKEUP LADY

Of course not.

BUFF

Thanks.

Buff crosses away as Janice turns to a group of CREW MEMBERS and points at Buff, obviously telling them.

Buff spots Bonnie, in her sexy soldier uniform, chatting amicably with a young MAN.

BUFF (CONT'D)

Bonnie?

Oblivious, Bonnie and the Man laugh at something, then the Man opens a jewelry box and offers a ring to Bonnie. Bonnie appears to be surprised but smiles as the Man slides the ring on her finger.

Buff, stunned, uses his bionic eye to ZOOM IN on the ring, revealing a sparkling diamond.

BUFF (CONT'D)

No.

Without thinking, he bolts across the stage toward them.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

In SLOW MOTION Buff tackles the Man, knocking him to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BONNIE
(slow motion)
Buuuuuuffffffff!

Buff hoists the Man in the air with his bionic arm and hurls him violently into a fake tank which collapses under his weight.

Back to normal speed.

Bonnie rushes up and grabs Buff's arm.

BONNIE (CONT'D)
What are you doing?!

BUFF
I could ask you the same question!
Who is that man?!

BONNIE
That's Chuck!

BUFF
Are you in love with him?!

BONNIE
What? Of course not.

BUFF
Then why did he give you a diamond ring?

BONNIE
He's the prop guy! It's his job.

BUFF
It's his job to propose to my girlfriend? I don't like that job.

BONNIE
You idiot. Lady Soldier gets married in this episode. The ring is a prop!

BUFF
The ring is a-- Oh. I see.
(calling off)
Sorry, Chuck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BONNIE

What's gotten into you?

BUFF

OSI shut down the bionics program.
I'm a failure, Bonnie.

BONNIE

You're not a failure. You're a
national hero.

BUFF

Not anymore. Now I'm just an
unemployed robot freak.

BONNIE

This doesn't sound like the Buff
Taggart I know. The Buff I love.

BUFF

That's because that Buff died in a
car accident while racing with a
sixteen year old.

BONNIE

It's not true.

Just then, Bonnie's director, REED, hurries over.

REED

What the hell is going on here?
Who broke my tank?

BONNIE

It's okay, Reed. It was a
misunderstanding.

REED

Misunderstanding my balls. We're
already a week behind schedule on
"Lady Soldier Gets Married." The
last thing I need is some washed up
flyboy terrorizing my set.

BUFF

Washed up? Flyboy?

REED

Look, Taggart, we all know what
happened at the disco.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BUFF

Doesn't anybody know what
"classified" means?!

REED

You're a danger to yourself and
others. The best thing for
everyone here is if you just
disappear.

(calling off)
Security!

BONNIE

Reed--

REED

I'm sorry, Bonnie. You can do
better than this loser.

Two SECURITY GUARDS hurry over.

SECURITY GUARD

Let's go, Colonel.

BUFF

Take your hands off me!

SECURITY GUARD

(to his partner)
Call for backup.

As they attempt to subdue Buff, his bionic arm goes on the
fritz and begins swinging around madly.

BUFF

Oh no. Look out!

The Security Guards pile on top of Buff. Reed and Chuck, the
prop guy, join in the melee.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. TELEVISION STUDIO - MINUTES LATER

Two POLICEMEN load Buff into a squad car as flames come out
of the stage behind him. From the back seat, Buff looks out
to see a devastated Bonnie watching the car pull away. She
turns and walks off.

CUT TO:

INT. JAIL CELL - LATER

Buff paces in a holding cell. From the reception area in the next room he can hear COPS talking.

COP 1 (O.S.)
Did you see the "hero" we got back there?

COP 2 (O.S.)
(laughs)
Yeah. Some hero.

Buff grimaces. He looks down at the bars of his cage, then at his bionic arm. After a moment, he takes hold of the bar and begins bending it to the side.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

Just then, he hears a familiar voice from outside.

COLBY (O.S.)
I'd like to post bail for Colonel Buff Taggart.

BUFF
(to himself)
Colby?

Buff quickly bends the bar back into place.

COP 1 (O.S.)
Okay. Bail is set at five thousand.

COLBY (O.S.)
Five thousand? I don't think I have that much with me.

Buff sighs and starts to bend the bar of the cage again.

COLBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Nope, wait, I have it. Here you go.

Buff bends the bar back into place again.

CUT TO:

INT. COLBY'S CAR - SHORT TIME LATER

Colby drives Buff to his hotel.

 BUFF
Thanks again, Colby.

 COLBY
No. Don't thank me. The way this
government treated you after all
you've done for it makes me sick.

 BUFF
I can't believe they would just
shut down the program like that.

 COLBY
They didn't shut down the program,
Buff.

 BUFF
What are you talking about?

 COLBY
There's something I need to show
you.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Colby sets up an 8MM film projector as Buff sits on the bed.

 COLBY
This was given to me by a friend of
mine at OSI. You're going to want
to sit down.

 BUFF
I am sitting down.

 COLBY
Good. You're going to want to.

Colby switches off the light and starts the film.

ON SCREEN we see a MAN in a tracksuit step onto a treadmill.
He begins to run and the speedometer attached to the
treadmill climbs: 10 MPH... 20 MPH... 30... 40... 50...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

60 MPH! Another man steps into frame, smiling. It's Oscar Goldman.

 BUFF
What is this?

 COLBY
Steve Austin. The astronaut. Your successor.

 BUFF
What are you talking about?

 COLBY
Oscar lied to you, Buff. Not only didn't they shut down the bionics program, they put six million dollars into building a new, better version.

 BUFF
A six million dollar man?! Oscar told me they had no more funding.

ON SCREEN, we see Steve Austin throwing a football an impossible distance, leaping over a brick wall and hoisting an imposing dumbbell.

Throughout the film we hear the familiar "Six Million Dollar Man" theme.

 COLBY
After we pulled our troops out of Vietnam, there was a sudden surplus. OSI got their share.

 BUFF
Why didn't they use it to fix me?

 COLBY
They considered you "damaged goods."

Buff takes a moment as this sinks in. Then,

 BUFF
What is that music? Did they give him a theme song?

 COLBY
They had some money left over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

 BUFF
 It's not fair.

 COLBY
 No, it's not. I thought you had a
 right to know the truth.

Buff sits silently watching the screen as his last shred of idealism dissolves. And we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SATURN V ROCKET COCKPIT - DAY

CHYRON: One year later

CLOSE ON a porthole behind which we see a black field of stars. A hand reaches out and wipes the window. PULL BACK to reveal it is Buff. His hair has grown long, he is unshaven and slightly paunchy. He takes a spray bottle and a rag and wipes the porthole clean.

Suddenly, a bald head pops up in the porthole.

 MR. NAGOPIAN
 Taggart! I told you not to go
 inside the exhibits!

 BUFF
 Oh, sorry, Mr. Nagopian. I just
 thought I would clean in here.

 MR. NAGOPIAN
 No cleaning! Now get out of there!

Buff sighs, gathers his cleaning supplies and climbs out the hatch.

INT. SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL AIR & SPACE MUSEUM - CONTINUOUS

Buff emerges in a display hall of the museum. We see the field of stars was just a backdrop.

 BUFF
 You know, I used to work in one of
 these.

 MR. NAGOPIAN
 And I used to be finance minister
 of my country.

 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. NAGOPIAN (CONT'D)
Now I boss janitors. We're both
pathetic. Go clean up the puke in
the Hall of Heroes.

BUFF
Yes, sir.

Buff heads off.

INT. MUSEUM HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Buff wheels a bucket and mop down a row of displays. Each one shows a smiling photograph of a different NASA astronaut in front of a backdrop of the Earth.

Buff spots the mess and begins to mop it up. A YOUNG GIRL gazes up at a display that is dedicated to the career of Buff Taggart. She looks at the photo, then at Buff, then back to the photo. The girl tugs on her MOTHER'S hand.

GIRL
Mommy, isn't that the astronaut?

MOTHER
What, the janitor?

GIRL
Yes. It looks just like him.

MOTHER
Nancy, don't be ridiculous. Why would an astronaut become a janitor? Astronauts are heroic, successful men. Janitors are repulsive social outcasts.

Having heard every word, Buff sadly continues his mopping.

GIRL
Uh oh.

MOTHER
What is it, Nancy?

GIRL
I think I'm going to be sick again.

MOTHER
Well, you go ahead. This man will clean it up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As the girl prepares to upchuck on the floor, we

CUT TO:

INT. MUSEUM BREAK ROOM - LATER

Buff deposits coins into a Coke machine and selects an item. Nothing comes out.

BUFF

Oh, come on.

He shakes the machine. Still nothing. He shakes it harder. Nothing. At last, he slams the front of the machine with his bionic arm. The front panel shatters and dozens of cans roll out onto the floor. Buff looks around self-consciously, picks up one can and walks off.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC STREET - A FEW HOURS LATER

Buff walking home. With each step we hear a noticeable squeaking noise. He looks down at his bionic arm and moves his elbow. The squeak is coming from there.

He notices a newspaper box. The front page shows a photo of Steve Austin beneath a headline: "Six Million Dollar Man Defeats Bigfoot." Buff grimaces and continues walking.

He goes into a supermarket.

INT. SUPERMARKET - MINUTES LATER

Buff pushes a cart down an aisle. He stops when he sees a shelf of "Six Million Dollar Man" breakfast cereal. The box says "Now with bionic marshmallows!"

BUFF

Bionic marshmallows.

He continues down the aisle, passing boxes of "Six Million Dollar Man rice," "Bionic Artichoke Hearts," "Six Million Dollar Man Feminine Napkins."

Buff arrives at the checkout counter and the CHECKOUT GIRL rings him up. As he waits he notices a People magazine cover with a story about "Steve Austin's Greatest Enemy: Dyslexia."

CHECKOUT GIRL

That'll be sixteen fifty-five.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFF

Oh, okay...

Buff takes out his wallet and pulls out a five dollar bill.
It's all he has.

BUFF (CONT'D)

Um, you know what? I actually
don't have that much on me right
now...

CHECKOUT GIRL

Do you want to remove some items?

BUFF

That'd be great.

The PEOPLE behind him on line grumble impatiently.

BUFF (CONT'D)

I guess I don't need deodorant.
It's not like I'm seeing anyone.

He laughs half-heartedly as he removes the item from the
belt.

CHECKOUT GIRL

That makes it fifteen twenty-one.

BUFF

Oh. Okay, let's get rid of the
bread and the mustard.

CHECKOUT GIRL

Ten eighteen.

GUY IN LINE

Come on, buddy.

BUFF

Sorry. Uh, what if I lose the
bologna, the toothpaste and the
toilet paper?

CHECKOUT GIRL

Six ninety-three.

BUFF

Can I break up these eggs?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHECKOUT GIRL
Sure. Whatever.

BUFF
Great.

Buff snaps the carton in half, leaving a half dozen eggs.

CHECKOUT GIRL
(rolling her eyes)
Five sixty.

GUY IN LINE
Get a job, deadbeat.

BUFF
Can I take out individual eggs?

CHECKOUT GIRL
Fine.

Buff removes one egg from the carton and gently sets it back in the shopping cart.

CHECKOUT GIRL (CONT'D)
Five forty.

Buff takes out another egg.

CHECKOUT GIRL (CONT'D)
Five twenty.

Buff takes out one more egg.

CHECKOUT GIRL (CONT'D)
Five dollars.

BUFF
Super.

He hands her his five and takes his three eggs, trying to maintain his dignity.

BUFF (CONT'D)
This will make a great omelette.

Buff exits the store as the impatient guy in line reaches the checkout counter. He puts one egg on the belt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GUY IN LINE
Hi. Just the egg, please.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Buff continues down the street past a ball field where some KIDS are playing kickball. Suddenly, a kickball rolls up to Buff's feet.

KID
Hey, mister! You mind kicking that back to us?

BUFF
Sure.

Buff picks up the ball and kicks it. It flies past the kids, over a fence and lands on the roof of a distant building.

There's a beat. Then,

KID
Asshole.

BUFF
Sorry.

He sadly continues on his way.

EXT. BUFF'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - SHORT TIME LATER

Buff climbs the stairs of a dilapidated building. He unlocks and enters one unit.

INT. BUFF'S APARTMENT - THAT EVENING

Buff, wearing a ratty bathrobe, crosses into his tiny bathroom.

INT. BUFF'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Buff stands under the shower. He has garbage bags wrapped around his legs and arm, secured with rubber bands to keep them dry. It is a pathetic sight.

INT. BUFF'S BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

Now wrapped in a towel, Buff opens the medicine cabinet which looks more like an auto repair shop: WD-40 cans, hydraulic fluid, bolts and screws, oil, etc.

He takes out a bottle of Armor-All and spreads a layer of it over the rubber skin of his legs. We see the "skin" has cracked and discolored.

INT. BUFF'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Buff sits in front of the TV, wearing boxers and a T-shirt. He has rolled back the skin on his elbow and is spraying the bionic joint with WD-40. A half-eaten omelette sits on the coffee table in front of him.

Buff lifts the can and sprays himself in the right eye.

SFX: A knock at the door

Buff stands, crosses to the door and opens it.

 BUFF
 (eyes narrow)
 You.

REVEAL Oscar Goldman standing before him.

 OSCAR
 Hello, Buff. Can I come in?

 BUFF
 Why would I let you in?

Oscar holds up a bag from The Palm steakhouse.

 OSCAR
 I brought dinner.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFF'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Oscar watches as Buff devours a steak dinner on the coffee table.

 OSCAR
 I know we haven't always treated
 you as well as we could have.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFF

(snorting)

You mean when you gave me these useless metal parts and lied that you didn't have the money to repair them?

OSCAR

Yes, that's what I meant.

BUFF

(re: his bionic parts)

Look at this... the rubber skin turned beige. I have to oil myself like the Tin Man. I can't get a good job. My girlfriend left me, and I can't walk a block without seeing your precious Steve Austin and his second generation bionics. Bet his legs don't catch fire.

OSCAR

Steve Austin is the reason I'm here.

BUFF

What do you mean?

OSCAR

He's missing, Buff.

BUFF

Missing? He just defeated Bigfoot.

OSCAR

That was a cover story. Two weeks ago we sent Steve to a remote island where we believe a notorious terrorist known only as the Tarantula has set up operations. One week ago we received the last radio contact from Steve. Since then, nothing.

BUFF

Well, I'm sorry to hear that. I'd hate to think you wasted six million dollars. Now, if you'll excuse me, I've got to lube my ankles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OSCAR

We need your help finding him,
Buff.

BUFF

My help? What, does he smell like
shit?

OSCAR

We're prepared to upgrade your
bionics.

BUFF

(excited)

You're going to give me six million
dollar bionics?

OSCAR

No. Unfortunately, we spent nearly
everything on Steve. We do have a
discretionary fund.

BUFF

How much are we talking?

OSCAR

Five thousand dollars.

BUFF

Five thousand?! That won't even
replace my toe. My toe fell off,
did I tell you?

OSCAR

Fine. Ten thousand. But we'll
have to go into petty cash.
There's going to be less coffee
around the office...

BUFF

So, you're saying you'd turn me
into a fifty thousand dollar man
just to save Steve Austin? Why me?
Why not send in an army?

OSCAR

The Tarantula's defenses are too
sophisticated. They'd never make
it onto the island. And if they
did, Steve would already be dead.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

OSCAR (CONT'D)

(beat)

Look, I know we're asking a lot of you, but don't do it for me. Don't even do it for your country. Do it for yourself, Buff. This is your chance to be a hero again.

Buff considers for a beat, then

BUFF

Get out.

OSCAR

What?

Buff leads Oscar to the door.

BUFF

I died once. I'm not going to let you guys kill me again. Thanks for the steak.

OSCAR

But--

Buff shuts the door on Oscar.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BUFF'S LIVING ROOM - HOURS LATER

Buff snores on the sofa as the TV plays.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

And now we return to "Lady Soldier."

Buff snorts and wakes up. He wipes spittle from his chin and turns to the television.

ON SCREEN we see:

EXT. FOXHOLE - DAY

Bonnie, as Lady Soldier, crouches over a wounded comrade, JIMMY, 20's. Explosions detonate all around them.

JIMMY

It's pointless, Lady Soldier.
We're surrounded! There's no hope.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LADY SOLDIER
Shut up, Jimmy. I don't want to
hear that kind of talk.

JIMMY
Just let me die.

LADY SOLDIER
Not today, Jimmy. I know the odds
are bad for us. Krakauer and his
mercenaries are stronger than we'd
thought and our air support never
arrived, but there's still hope.
There's always hope. Without hope
there's no hope.

JIMMY
But my leg is all shot up.

LADY SOLDIER
Just because you've lost a leg
doesn't mean you can't stand up for
what's right, Jimmy.

Buff sits up. This is getting to him.

JIMMY
I'm afraid.

LADY SOLDIER
So am I, Jimmy. But it's here,
when we're most afraid that we have
to rise to the challenge. That's
what makes us men.

JIMMY
You're right.

Jimmy struggles to his feet and grabs his weapon.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
I'm behind you, all the way, Lady
Soldier.

LADY SOLDIER
I'm proud of you, Jimmy.

They share a touching beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Then they both begin madly SCREAMING and firing their automatic weapons at dozens of oncoming foes. Blood and entrails are everywhere.

The show abruptly cuts to a very 70's producer's title card for Kanga Productions. A cute animated kangaroo hops in and pulls a typewriter out of its pouch, then winks at the camera.

BACK TO:

INT. BUFF'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Buff has tears in his eyes. We see a new-found determination sweep over him. He grabs the telephone and dials as the music begins to swell dramatically.

 BUFF
 (on phone)
 Oscar Goldman, please.
 (beat)
 It's a residence. Thank you.

The music continues to swell. After a beat,

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 No, Goldman. With a G. No, G. As
 in golf. Oscar. Yes. Um, I don't
 know which neighborhood, Dupont
 Circle? Thanks.
 (beat)
 Nothing? Try Georgetown.
 (beat)
 That must be it. Thank you.
 (beat)
 Hello, Oscar, it's Buff. I'm in.

The music reaches a climax.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 Buff. Taggart. Is this Oscar
 Goldman? Oh, I'm sorry. I must
 have the wrong Oscar Goldman...

CUT TO:

BIONIC UPGRADE MONTAGE

MUSIC CUE: "Hold On" by Santana

INT. SURGERY

Buff lies on an operating table as DOCTORS reattach his newly refurbished legs. After a moment, the doctors realize they have the legs reversed. They switch them around.

INT. OSI BRIEFING ROOM

Oscar goes over blueprints and schematics with Buff as enormous 1970's computer reels spin behind them.

A MAN leads Buff up onto a tailoring podium and puts a large-labeled leisure suit jacket on him. He marks it with chalk.

EXT. RUNNING TRACK

Oscar and Technicians watch nervously as Buff runs. He comes to a stop and they all cheer. After a second, he involuntarily runs forward again. The cheers stop. Buff stops again and gives them a wave: "I'm okay." They cheer again.

INT. SURGERY

Buff sits self-consciously on the examination table clenching a doorknob in his fist as a DOCTOR adjusts cables inside his opened forearm. Buff's fist unclenches and he drops the doorknob. He thanks the doctor and tries to exit, but sees the doorknob is missing.

END OF MONTAGE

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OSCAR GOLDMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Oscar is at his desk as Buff enters. He now wears a handsome leisure suit with a wide collar shirt open to his chest.

OSCAR
Come in, Buff.

Buff enters and sits.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
I'm really glad you chose to come back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFF

Well, as a friend of mine once said, it's when we're most afraid that we have to rise to the challenge. That's what makes us men.

OSCAR

Your friend sounds like quite a guy.

BUFF

Oh, she is.

Beat. Oscar's confused. Then,

OSCAR

Now, we've done all we can to prepare you for the mission. I'm sorry we couldn't improve your bionic nose, but there is one thing I want to give you.

Oscar slides a small box across the desk to Buff. Buff opens it, revealing a shiny new eyeball.

BUFF

(jumps)
Ahh!
(then)
A new eye?

OSCAR

This one has a zoom that works. Try it out.

BUFF

Okay.

Buff sticks his thumb in his bionic eye and plucks it out with a "POP." It rolls onto the desk. He takes the new eye and squishes it into his eye socket.

We see from his POV as the new eye comes into focus. He zooms in and out effortlessly to different distances. The center of the view is obstructed by a thick cross-hair.

BUFF (CONT'D)

Wow. This is great. It really works.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OSCAR

I paid for that one myself. It's my gift to you. A small way of saying I'm sorry.

BUFF

Well, thank you, Oscar. I really appreciate it.

(beat)

The cross-hair's pretty thick, huh?

OSCAR

That's right. It will allow you to zoom in on your target with great precision.

BUFF

Uh huh. Kind of hard to see around the cross-hair, though...

OSCAR

I'm sure you'll get used to that.

We again see Buff's POV. The cross-hair does take up most of his field of vision.

BUFF

I guess so.

(beat)

So, there's no way they can make the cross-hair any thinner...?

OSCAR

I don't think so.

BUFF

Okay, not a problem. Thanks again.

OSCAR

You leave tomorrow, Buff. You'll be airdropped onto the island and you'll have to make your way into the Tarantula's fortified facility. We assume that's where he's holding Steve.

BUFF

Got it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

OSCAR

I will be in continual contact with you over this miniature earpiece.

Oscar hands Buff an earpiece the size of a naval orange.

BUFF

Wow. These things just keep getting smaller and smaller.

OSCAR

Now, get some rest. You've got a big day ahead of you. It's good to have you back, Colonel.

BUFF

It's good to be back.

They shake hands, and we

CUT TO:

EXT. MILITARY AIRFIELD - NEXT DAY

The sun rises as Buff, wearing his leisure suit and a parachute, approaches a waiting C-7 transport plane.

A pilot salutes him as he climbs the stairs.

INT. TRANSPORT PLANE - CONTINUOUS

Buff enters the dimly lit aircraft.

COLBY (O.S.)

Welcome aboard, Buff.

Buff squints his eyes and sees Colby, arms outstretched. Buff gives him an awkward hug.

BUFF

Colby? What are you doing here? Oscar didn't tell me you were coming.

COLBY

That's because I just volunteered this morning. I told Oscar there was no way Buff was going in there alone. You and I have been through too much together.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFF

Well, this will be great. The Tarantula will be no match for the two of us.

COLBY

Let's get this plane off the ground.

He bangs on the cockpit door and we hear the engines start up.

EXT. MILITARY AIRFIELD - CONTINUOUS

The plane taxis down the runway and lifts off.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRANSPORT PLANE - HOURS LATER

The plane flies over water.

INT. TRANSPORT PLANE - SAME

Buff and Colby await their arrival at the jump location.

PILOT (OVER INTERCOM)

(badly garbled)

Uh, greshem hangred darble mento.

Buff and Colby look at each other, confused.

BUFF

Did you get that?

COLBY

I couldn't make it out.

BUFF

Did he say we were over the jump site?

COLBY

I can ask.

Colby yells through the cockpit door.

COLBY (CONT'D)

Excuse me? We didn't hear what you said.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A long beat.

PILOT (OVER INTERCOM)
Ramah clockstemper dosho lemming.

BUFF
I am just not hearing him.

COLBY
(calling into cockpit)
Did you say it was time to jump or
not?

Beat.

PILOT (OVER INTERCOM)
Yes.

BUFF
Yes it's time to jump or yes it's
not time to jump?

PILOT (OVER INTERCOM)
Roger that.

COLBY
Roger what?

Suddenly, the rear hatch of the plane begins to open.

BUFF
I guess it's time to jump.

As Buff and Colby tighten their straps and make their way to
the rear of the plane, Buff's earpiece crackles to life.

OSCAR (O.S.)
Colonel Taggart, do you read me?

BUFF
Oscar. Yes, I read you. We're
approaching the jump site now.

OSCAR (O.S.)
Good luck, Buff. But before you
jump, there's someone here who
would like to speak to you.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. OSCAR GOLDMAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Oscar stands with Bonnie at a radio console. He hands her the microphone.

BONNIE
Hello, Buff.

BUFF
Bonnie?!

BONNIE
Oscar told me what you were doing
and I want you to know I've never
been more proud of you.

BUFF
It's great to hear your voice
again, baby.

BONNIE
When this is all over, I want you
to know, I'll be waiting for you.

BUFF
That's great to hear.
(beat)
So, you're not dating Richard
Dawson?

BONNIE
That was one time. It was
completely blown up in the press.

BUFF
Good. Bonnie?

BONNIE
Yes, Buff?

BUFF
I love you so much.

BONNIE
I love you too, baby.

PILOT (OVER INTERCOM)
(garbled)
Cranford hellion tomtom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 BUFF
 I've got to go, hon.

EXT. SKY - MOMENTS LATER

Buff and Colby jump from the rear hatch of the plane. Below them they can see an isolated jungle island with a large, walled complex of buildings in the center.

Buff points to the complex and Colby nods.

 COLBY
 (yelling over the wind)
 So, is this what it's like to be in
 space?!

 BUFF
 (yelling)
 No!

Colby looks disappointed. Buff points to his altimeter, then deploys his chute. Colby does the same.

EXT. BEACH - MINUTES LATER

Colby and Buff descend onto a remote beach. They gather their chutes and remove their harnesses.

Buff takes out a map.

 BUFF
 OSI thinks the Tarantula is holding
 Steve in this central complex.
 We'll have to make our way there
 over land.

 COLBY
 Okay. I'll lead the way.

 BUFF
 (unsure)
 Uh... Okay.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE - MINUTES LATER

Buff and Colby struggle to escape from a deep pool of quicksand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLBY
Help me!

BUFF
Stop struggling! You're making it worse!

COLBY
(panicked)
I don't want to die! Not like this.

BUFF
I think I should be able to slither out of here...

Buff attempts to slither toward solid ground.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

BUFF (CONT'D)
It's working!

Buff sinks deeper and deeper into the muck.

COLBY
Buff, you're sinking!

BUFF
Damn. So, slithering isn't the solution.

Buff spots a tree root nearby and reaches for it but it is too far away. He has an idea. He reaches into the quicksand with his left hand and after a moment pulls out his detached bionic arm.

BUFF (CONT'D)
Now, if I can just...

He extends his bionic arm toward the root. When the hand touches the root, it grips it tightly.

BUFF (CONT'D)
Quick, Colby, grab me around the waist. Good and tight.

Colby grabs onto him beneath the quicksand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

 BUFF (CONT'D)
No, my waist. That's not my...
Okay, fine. Hold onto that.

Buff pulls both of them onto dry land. They flop onto the ground, exhausted. Buff reattaches his arm.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
Good thing I stopped slithering.

 COLBY
We make a good team, huh?

Buff just looks at him.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE - SHORT TIME LATER

Buff pushes through dense growth as a ridiculously sweaty Colby struggles to keep up.

 COLBY
 (panting)
You think we're almost there?

 BUFF
We've only been walking for a few minutes.

 COLBY
Okay, sorry. I can do this.

They emerge at the foot of a twelve foot high electric fence.

 COLBY (CONT'D)
Whoa. That's pretty high.

 BUFF
I think I can jump it.

 COLBY
Yeah, I think I can too.

 BUFF
All right, look, Colby, maybe I should just go on ahead. You can circle around and we'll rendezvous inside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLBY

What are you talking about? We're a team. I can do whatever you can do. I'm staying with you.

BUFF

Fine.

Buff leaps over the fence.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

Colby waves to him from the other side of the fence. He bends at the knees, prepares to jump but discovers he is ankle deep in another pool of quicksand.

COLBY

Oh, hell. Okay, you know what? You go on ahead. I'm going to circle around and we'll rendezvous inside.

BUFF

Great. Good plan.

(beat)

Do you need help getting out of the-

COLBY

I got it.

Buff shakes his head and takes off at a jog.

CUT TO:

EXT. TARANTULA'S COMPOUND - MINUTES LATER

Buff slowly makes his way toward the buildings. Suddenly, his leg disturbs a tripwire.

BUFF

Uh oh.

A few feet in front of him, a panel slides open and dozens of tarantulas crawl out, heading towards him. Buff backs away nervously. He stomps on a couple of the spiders that get close to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 BUFF (CONT'D)
Tarantulas! I guess now we know
why they call him The Tarantula.

Suddenly, another panel opens and dozens of scorpions creep out in his direction.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
Scorpions. Kind of muddies my
tarantula theory.

As Buff backs away, a third panel opens and cobras slither out.

The creatures have backed Buff into a corner. It looks like he's in real trouble.

Gradually, the tarantulas, scorpions and cobras begin attacking each other, forgetting all about Buff.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
Poor little guys.

He gingerly steps around the seething mass of fighting creatures and continues on his way.

EXT. TARANTULA'S COMPOUND - MOMENTS LATER

Buff spots two guard towers in the distance. He uses his new bionic eye to zoom in on one.

Buff's POV: despite the annoyingly thick cross-hair, he manages to zoom in on an armed GUARD in a jumpsuit. The pocket of the jumpsuit is embroidered with a distinctive tarantula logo.

Buff reacts. Why does that look familiar?

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BUFF'S COMMAND MODULE -- A YEAR AGO

SFX: A LOUD BOOM

Buff's eyes open as the entire craft shudders. An alarm goes off.

 COLBY
Buff, what's happening? Can you
see anything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Buff looks out a porthole and sees a small satellite with a TARANTULA EMBLEM spinning off into space. A stream of gas vents from his module.

BACK TO:

THE PRESENT

Buff activates his earpiece.

BUFF

Oscar, are you there?

OSCAR (O.S.)

Yes, Buff. Where are you?

BUFF

I'm inside the Tarantula's compound.

OSCAR (O.S.)

Good work. Any sign of Steve?

BUFF

Not yet. But the logo on the guard's uniform. It's the same one that was on the satellite that hit my ship last year.

OSCAR (O.S.)

That means the Tarantula's reach is even greater than we thought. You need to find out what he's planning, Buff.

BUFF

Roger. First I need to take out this guard.

Buff quietly approaches the base of the guard tower. He spots a small rock, picks it up and takes aim at the guard.

BUFF (CONT'D)

Time to say good night.

Buff hurls the rock with his bionic arm.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The guard appears unhurt. Buff looks around to see where the rock went, then notices his hand is still clutching it.

Buff tries throwing the rock again, but it remains stuck in his clenched fist.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
Oscar, I thought you said you
upgraded my arm.

 OSCAR (O.S.)
We did, Buff.

 BUFF
Well, I can't unclench my hand.

 OSCAR (O.S.)
That's because we didn't upgrade
your hand.

 BUFF
...I see.

CUT TO:

INT. GUARD TOWER - MOMENTS LATER

The guard looks out over the complex. Suddenly, Buff leaps up through the entrance door in the floor. He springs at the guard and pounds him on the head with the rock that is still clenched in his fist. The guard goes down.

Buff pries the rock out of his hand and surveys the complex below.

 BUFF
Oscar, this place is enormous. I
don't know how I'll find Steve.

A walkie-talkie on the unconscious guard's belt crackles to life.

 GUARD 2 (OVER WALKIE)
I'm taking the prisoner to the
toilet. Will report in shortly.

 BUFF
Toilet.
 (lightbulb)
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 Never mind, Oscar. I think I have
 a lead.

Buff sniffs the air with his bionic nose.

SFX: Bionic sound effect

Buff leaps from the tower down onto the roof of another building. He hurries over to a ventilation duct, tears the metal cover off and shimmies inside.

INT. TARANTULA'S COMPOUND - CONTINUOUS

A dimly lit hallway. Suddenly, Buff falls from the ceiling and lands in a heap on the floor. He picks himself up and sniffs the air again.

 BUFF
 He's close.

Sniffing as he goes, Buff turns a corner and sees another Guard in a jumpsuit standing outside a bathroom. The Guard spots him.

 GUARD 2
 Hey, you! You're not supposed to
 be in here.

The Guard pulls out a billy club and swings at Buff, who blocks it with his bionic arm. The club bends harmlessly against Buff's arm.

 GUARD 2 (CONT'D)
 What the...?

The guard takes off down the hall toward a red button labeled "Alarm."

 BUFF
 Not so fast.

Buff takes off after the guard.

In SLOW MOTION, we see Buff gradually catch up with the guard and overtake him before he can get to the alarm button. Buff punches the guard in the chest, causing him to fly into the button, setting it off.

 BUFF (CONT'D)
 Oh, shoot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The guard falls to the ground, unconscious. Buff hurries back to the bathroom.

INT. COMPOUND BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Buff bursts into the room to find STEVE AUSTIN flushing the toilet.

STEVE
All right, all right, I'm finished!

BUFF
Steve Austin?

STEVE
Yes...

BUFF
The six million dollar man?

STEVE
That's right. Who are you?

BUFF
My name is Buff Taggart. I'm the forty thousand dollar man. And I'm here to rescue you.

As Steve reacts, we

CUT TO:

INT. TARANTULA'S COMPOUND - MINUTES LATER

Steve and Buff stealthily make their way down a hall and into a large control room area. Buff contacts Oscar.

BUFF
Oscar, I've got Steve.

OSCAR (O.S.)
Is he okay?

BUFF
Yes.

OSCAR (O.S.)
Good. What happened to him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 BUFF
 (to Steve)
What happened to you?

 STEVE
I was closing in on the Tarantula
and was about to capture him when
everything went black. Next thing
I knew, I was in a holding cell and
I couldn't get my bionics to work
properly.

 BUFF
Been there.

 STEVE
We need to stop the Tarantula.
He's planning something big. I
just don't know what.

 BUFF
All right. Colby should be around
here somewhere.

 OSCAR (O.S.)
Colby? Major Colby Stafford?
What's he doing there?

 BUFF
He told me he cleared it with you.

 OSCAR (O.S.)
I knew nothing about this.

 BUFF
Why would Colby come here without
authorization?

 COLBY (O.S.)
Why indeed?

Steve and Buff turn to see Colby, now wearing a white lab
coat, standing beside some oversized 1970's computer banks.

 STEVE
The Tarantula!

 BUFF
What?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

COLBY

That's right, old friend. Colby
Stafford is the Tarantula.

STEVE

I've got him.

Steve moves to grab hold of Colby but before he can, Colby pulls a control box from his pocket, pulls out the antenna and pushes a button. Steve immediately freezes and stands stiffly immobile.

BUFF

What have you done to him?

COLBY

Oh, he's fine. I simply implanted
an RC chip in his bionic neural
core. With this device, I can
control Steve's every move.

Steve flails in Colby's direction with his left arm.

COLBY (CONT'D)

Well, not his every move. His left
arm isn't bionic.

BUFF

But why? Why would you do this?

COLBY

I needed Steve out of the way.
Just as I needed you out of the
way, Buff. Your bionics made you
two the only ones capable of
stopping my plan.

BUFF

What plan?

COLBY

My plan to destroy the moon.

BUFF

Wait, what?

COLBY

That's right. The moon. I'm going
to bring it down. And the best
part? You helped me do it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

COLBY (CONT'D)
You, Armstrong, Aldrin, all of you
Apollo hotshots.

FLASHBACK TO:

GRAINY VIDEO FROM VARIOUS LUNAR MISSIONS

NEIL ARMSTRONG plants a flag on the moon.

COLBY (V.O.)
I ran those Apollo missions and I
saw to it that every one of those
flags you planted on the surface
contained a powerful nuclear
device.

The video of Armstrong zooms in and we see a small, blinking
light in the flagpole.

In another video, ALAN SHEPARD plants a flag.

COLBY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I made sure the location of each
flag would align with the moon's
natural fault lines.

A final video: The image we saw earlier of Buff planting a
flag on the lunar surface. Zoom in to see another blinking
light on the pole.

COLBY (CONT'D)
And now that I have you both here,
you will be witness to this great
moment. The moment when it'll be
one small step for man, one giant
boom for moonkind.

BUFF
You're insane, Colby.

COLBY
A little, maybe. But wouldn't you
be too if you'd spent your life
watching your pals go on to fame
and glory, while you sat there on
the ground, monitoring heart rates
and singing them to sleep? Didn't
it ever occur to you that I might
want to go to the moon just once?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFF

Well, that wasn't really up to me--

COLBY

It was up to NASA! And they rejected my application to join the astronaut corps. Again and again they told me I wasn't astronaut material. Well, I'm going down in history one way or another.

BUFF

How did you get the money to do all this?

COLBY

My dad invented the yo-yo with the light in it.

BUFF

Oh, nice.

(then)

And what do you think is going to keep me from stopping your crazy plan?

COLBY

That's easy. He is.

Colby pushes a button on his remote control and Steve suddenly lurches towards Buff.

COLBY (CONT'D)

Goodbye, Buff.

Colby hands the controller to an ASSISTANT and crosses off to the detonation room as Buff backs away from an advancing Steve Austin.

BUFF

Easy, Steve, easy.

Steve takes a bionic swing at Buff. Buff dodges the blow.

BUFF (CONT'D)

Okay, I know that wasn't you.

Buff looks over at the Assistant with the controller and lunges towards him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Before Buff can reach him, Steve tackles him and hurls him against a wall, fifty feet away. Buff goes down hard.

BUFF (CONT'D)
Man, those are good bionics.

CUT TO:

INT. DETONATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Colby hurries in to the room where another Assistant, VINCE, is waiting.

COLBY
Is everything ready, Vince?

VINCE
Yes, sir.

COLBY
Very well. Let's blow up that damn rock.

He turns to a wall on which we see two keyholes set more than arm's length apart.

COLBY (CONT'D)
Insert your key.

Colby takes a key from his pocket and inserts it into one keyhole while Vince does the same at the other keyhole.

COLBY (CONT'D)
Now, on my mark, we turn our keys simultaneously. Three, two, one...

Vince turns his key before Colby.

COLBY (CONT'D)
I didn't say "mark."

VINCE
Oh, I'm sorry. I thought we were doing it on "one."

COLBY
No, on "mark." Let's try it again...

BACK TO:

INT. TARANTULA'S COMPOUND - CONTINUOUS

Buff gets up and spots a fire extinguisher on the wall. He grabs it and throws it as hard as he can at Steve. Steve swats it away effortlessly and starts to cross toward Buff.

BUFF

This is so unfair.

Buff looks up and notices a large electromagnet hanging from a crane directly above where Steve is walking.

BACK TO:

INT. DETONATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Colby and Vince are as we left them.

COLBY

(frustrated)

Come on, Vince. I gave you three Mississippis.

VINCE

I'm sorry. I thought you were going to say "go" after the third Mississippi.

COLBY

No, we were going to turn them on the third "pi." Mississippi. How do you expect us to blow up the moon if we can't work as a team?

VINCE

Okay, how about if I do the countdown?

COLBY

You've never done a countdown before.

VINCE

I can do this.

COLBY

You better. This is huge day for me, you know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VINCE

No, I totally get that. Now let's just turn them on "one."

COLBY

All right.

VINCE

Three, two, one.

Colby and Vince simultaneously turn their keys. Nothing happens.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Wait. Do I turn to the left or the right?

Off Colby's frustration,

BACK TO:

INT. TARANTULA'S COMPOUND - CONTINUOUS

Buff sprints toward the crane. Before the Assistant controlling Steve can react, Buff activates the electromagnet. Steve is hoisted into the air and held fast by the magnet. Buff jumps out of the crane and walks toward the Assistant, who shrieks and runs away.

BACK TO:

INT. DETONATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Colby now stands, arms outstretched, holding both keys. He tries desperately to reach both keyholes at the same time. Vince pouts nearby.

VINCE

(whiny)

I can do it, Tarantula.

COLBY

You've demonstrated that you can't. So now you'll sit there and I will do it.

Suddenly, the door flies off its hinges and Buff bursts in.

COLBY (CONT'D)

What?! How is this possible?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFF

Let's just say Steve Austin has a magnetic personality.

COLBY

You used the magnet out there?

Buff nods.

COLBY (CONT'D)

(to Vince)

Didn't I tell you to put that away?

VINCE

(sheepish)

Sorry...

BUFF

Drop the keys, Colby. It's over.

Colby drops them.

COLBY

It doesn't have to end like this, Buff. We can work it out. That's what friends do.

BUFF

Sorry, Colby. Not this time.

(into earpiece)

Oscar, it's Buff. The Tarantula's been caught. You can send in an extraction team.

COLBY

(pathetically)

Oh, come on. Don't extract me. I promise I won't blow up the moon.

OSCAR (O.S.)

(over earpiece)

That's great news! Is Steve all right?

BUFF

He'll be fine.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. OSCAR GOLDMAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Oscar stands with Bonnie.

OSCAR
Good work, Buff. You've got a very grateful government waiting for you here.

BONNIE
Not to mention a girl who loves you.

BACK TO:

INT. DETONATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BUFF
(into earpiece)
I love you, too.

COLBY
I love you, Buff.

BUFF
Stop it.

Colby grabs Buff's sleeve imploringly.

COLBY
(singing)
Just yesterday morning they let me know you were gone--

BUFF
Stop that!

COLBY
(tearing up as he sings)
Susanne the plans they made put an end to you--

BUFF
(into earpiece)
Oscar, how long till that extraction?

Colby, now lying on the floor, clutches Buff's legs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLBY

(singing)

*Oh, I've seen fire and I've seen
rain... Come on, Buff. You know
the words. I've seen sunny days
that I thought would never end...*

Vince has been watching all this.

VINCE

This internship sucks.

Off Buff's disgusted look, we

CUT TO:

EXT. BONNIE'S MALIBU BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

CHYRON: ONE WEEK LATER

A full, intact moon hovers over the Pacific. We pan down to find Buff and Bonnie canoodling in a hot tub on the deck.

BONNIE

So, when do they want you to go
back into space?

BUFF

Oh, NASA's got some crazy plan for
a kind of "space shuttle." Lands
like an airplane. They want me to
captain the first mission. I told
them I had to clear it with the
wife first.

BONNIE

The wife?

Buff reaches into the water and pulls out a dripping ring box. He opens it and shows her a diamond ring.

BUFF

Will you marry me, Lady Soldier?

BONNIE

Oh, Buff! Of course I will!

He puts the ring on her finger. She admires it for a beat, then a shadow crosses her face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 BUFF
What is it, babe?

 BONNIE
It's nothing. I was just thinking
about what Oscar told me about
your... your-- we'll work around
it.

 BUFF
Oh, right. About that. Turns out
Oscar had just enough money left in
the budget for one last upgrade.

MUSIC CUE: "Rubberband Man" by The Spinners

He takes Bonnie in his arms and kisses her passionately, as
we tilt back up to the moon.

SFX: Bionic sound effects

 BONNIE (O.S.)
Ohh, Buff!

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END