

OPPENHEIMER

 I can run the
Manhattan Project.

I turn to the blackboard. Take up my chalk.

OPPENHEIMER (CONT'D)

There's a way to balance these
things...

(I draw)

Leave the Rad Lab here at Berkeley
under Lawrence, Met Lab in Chicago
under Szilard, large-scale refining-
where'd you say? Tennessee... all
America's industrial might and
scientific innovation, connected by
rail... focused on one goal, one
point in space and time, coming
together... here.

I have drawn a cross at the centre of the diagram.

GROVES

And where's that?

INSERT CUT: A BARBED-WIRE FENCE IS STRUNG OUT...

OPPENHEIMER

A secret laboratory. In the middle
of nowhere. Self-sufficient.
Secure. Equipment, housing, the
works. We keep everyone there till
it's done.

INSERT CUT: A SCHOOLHOUSE IS ERECTED. A CHURCH. A STORE...

OPPENHEIMER (V.O.)

It'll need a school, stores, a
church...

INT. TRAIN, BERKELEY TO WASHINGTON, DC -- DAY

I talk to Groves as Nichols looks on...

GROVES

Why?

(CONTINUED)

OPPENHEIMER

If we don't let scientists bring
their families, we'll never get the
best. You want security? Build a
town, and build it fast.

GROVES

Where?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

INT. LECTURE HALL, HARVARD -- DAY

Groves and I sit talking to BAINBRIDGE and DONALD.

BAINBRIDGE
I'm not a soldier, Oppie.

OPPENHEIMER
Soldier? He's a general-
(jab my thumb at Groves)
I got all the soldier I need. Maybe
too much. I'm here because you know
isotopes, and you-
(to Donald)
know explosives better than anyone.

DONALD
But you can't tell us what you're
doing?

I glance at Groves. Then CROSS my legs.

OPPENHEIMER
It's about unleashing the strong
force before the Nazis do.

BAINBRIDGE
Oh my God.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

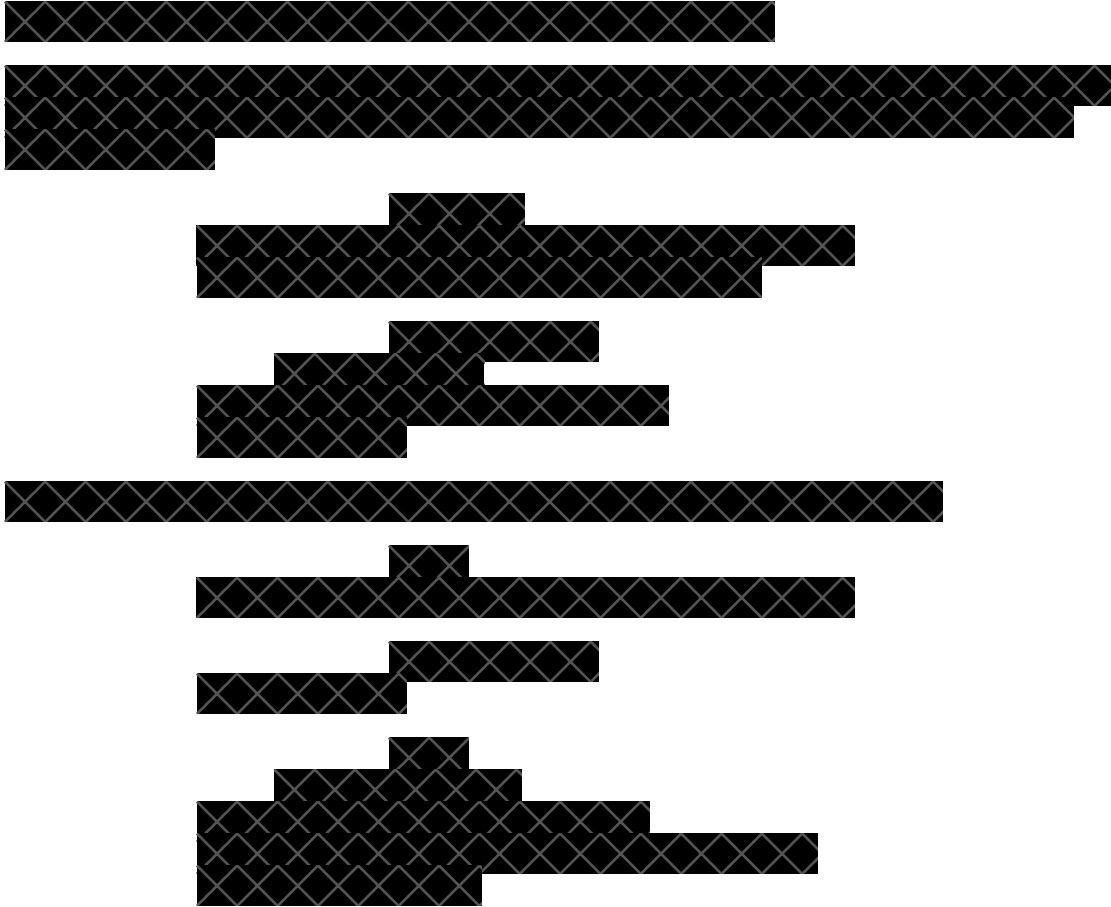
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(CONTINUED)



INT. CONSTRUCTION CABIN, LOS ALAMOS -- MOMENTS LATER

I draw on the board.

OPPENHEIMER
Four divisions- Experimental,
Theoretical, Metallurgical,
Ordnance.

RABI
Who's running Theoretical?

OPPENHEIMER
I am.

RABI
That's what I was afraid of. You're
spread too thin.

OPPENHEIMER
So you take Theoretical.



(CONTINUED)

INT. RAD LAB, BERKELEY -- DAY

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I sit at the front, one long leg tucked under my ass. The scientists include Lawrence, Serber, Teller, BETHE, Condon, Tolman, Feynman, Donald, Bainbridge, NEDDERMEYER and Alvarez.

OPPENHEIMER

We'll work here until the T-section
at Los Alamos is finished-

I see Teller waving a piece of paper-

OPPENHEIMER (CONT'D)

Edward, can I get through my
summary?

TELLER

This is more important.

Teller's paper is passed around the room, scientists
PALING...

TELLER (CONT'D)

Calculating chain reactions... I
found a rather troubling
possibility.

Hans Bethe hands me the paper, turns to Teller.

(CONTINUED)

BETHE

That can't be right. Show me how
you did your calculations.

TELLER

Of course.

I look up from the paper, grave. Teller watches the ruckus
he's caused with evident satisfaction. Bethe approaches.

BETHE

Oppie, this is fantasy. Teller's
calculations cannot be right.

OPPENHEIMER

Do them yourself while I go to
Princeton.

BETHE

What for?

OPPENHEIMER

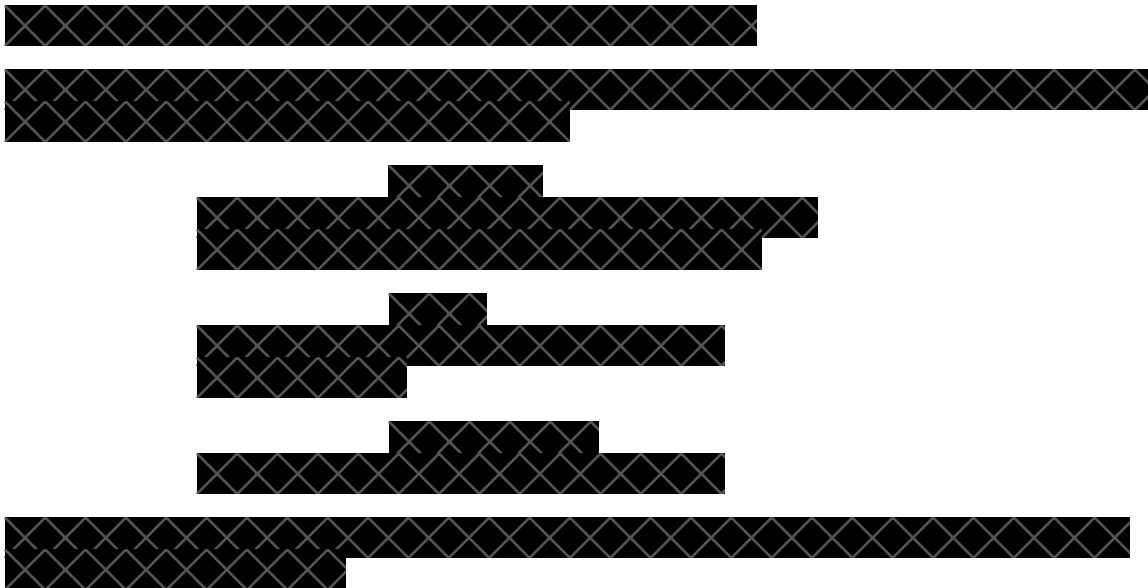
To talk to Einstein.

BETHE

There's not much common ground
between you two.

OPPENHEIMER

That's why I should get his view.



(CONTINUED)

INT. RAD LAB, BERKELEY -- CONTINUOUS

Bethe runs to the cabinet- takes out some papers- hands them to me, excited. I start to scan them, GRINNING-

BETHE
When you narrow Teller's critical
assumptions the real picture
emerges-

OPPENHEIMER
Bottom line?

(CONTINUED)

BETHE

The chances of an uncontrolled
nuclear reaction are near zero.

OPPENHEIMER

Near zero?

BETHE

Oppie, this is good news-

OPPENHEIMER

Can you run more calculations?

BETHE

You'll get the same answer. Until
we actually detonate one of these
things, the best assurance you're
going to get is this-

(jabs paper)

Near zero.

OPPENHEIMER

Theory will take you only so far.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(CONTINUED)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

INT. LECTURE HALL, T-SECTION, LOS ALAMOS -- DAY

I step up to join Serber- throw up a slide. Condon, Neddermeyer, Kistiakowsky, Donald, Tolman, Bainbridge and Feynman, amongst other SCIENTISTS, are in attendance.

OPPENHEIMER
Halifax, 1917. A cargo ship
carrying munitions exploded in the
harbor...

(CONTINUED)

INSERT CUT: WOOD AND CONCRETE FRAGMENTS FLY...

OPPENHEIMER (CONT'D)
A vast and sudden chemical
reaction...

INSERT CUT: A SHOCKWAVE DRIFTS ACROSS THE TOPS OF THE CHOPPY
WATER...

OPPENHEIMER (CONT'D)
The biggest man-made explosion in
history. Let's calculate how much
more destructive it would have been
with a nuclear, not chemical,
reaction. Expressing power in terms
of tons of TNT-

BETHE
But it'll be thousands.

OPPENHEIMER
Then, *kilotons*.

I switch the lights on, step down to let Serber-

SERBER
Using U-235, the bomb-

He sees me wave.

SERBER (CONT'D)
Sorry- the *gadget* will need a
thirty-three-pound sphere, about
this size...

Serber reaches below the table, brings up a GOLDFISH BOWL-

SERBER (CONT'D)
Or using plutonium, a ten-pound
sphere...

He puts a large BRANDY GLASS next to the aquarium.

SERBER (CONT'D)
Here's the amount of uranium Oak
Ridge refined all of last month.

Serber drops THREE MARBLES into the bowl. The scientists
stare at the almost-empty goldfish bowl.

SERBER (CONT'D)
The Hanford plant made this much
plutonium...

(CONTINUED)

He drops TWO MARBLES into the brandy glass.

SERBER (CONT'D)

If we can enrich these amounts...
we need a way to detonate them.

Teller is at the back folding a paper plane.

OPPENHEIMER

Are we boring you, Edward?

TELLER

(without looking up)
Yes.

OPPENHEIMER

May I ask why?

TELLER

We came *into* this room knowing a
fission bomb was possible. Let's
leave it with something new.

OPPENHEIMER

Such as?

TELLER

A 'super' atomic bomb. Instead of
uranium, or plutonium, we use
hydrogen.

MURMURS of dissent-

TELLER (CONT'D)

(shutting them down)
Heavy hydrogen- deuterium. We
compact the atoms together under
great force and induce a *fusion*
reaction. Not kilotons... *megatons*.

A HUBBUB develops- I process quickly, then-

OPPENHEIMER

Hang on. How do you generate enough
force to fuse hydrogen atoms?

Teller smiles a self-satisfied smile.

TELLER

A small fission bomb.

GROANS all around...

(CONTINUED)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

INT. LECTURE HALL, T-SECTION, LOS ALAMOS -- DAY

Bethe, Teller, Condon, Kistiakowsky, Donald, Bainbridge,
Fuchs and Feynman and other scientists listen to-

SERBER

I call it 'shooting'- we fire a
chunk of fissionable material into
the larger sphere with enough force
to achieve criticality.

INSERT CUT: A URANIUM "BULLET" IS FIRED INTO A SPHERE-

TOLMAN

I've been thinking about implosion.
Explosives around the sphere blast
inwards, crushing the material.

INSERT CUT: A SPHERICAL ARRAY OF EXPLOSIVES BLASTS INWARD-

NEDDERMEYER

I'd like to investigate that idea.

OPPENHEIMER

I'll talk to the Ordinance division-
we'll get you blowing things up...

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

INT. LECTURE HALL, T-SECTION, LOS ALAMOS -- DAY

I vacantly preside over a shambles- the goldfish bowl is FILLED with marbles. As is the glass tumbler... Donald, Bainbridge, Feynman watch the others squabble-

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(CONTINUED)



KISTIAKOWSKY

The implosion device is
nowhere.

NEDDERMEYER

You can't rush everything,
Oppie.

KISTIAKOWSKY (CONT'D)

There's rushing and there's
getting on with it- pick one,
will ya?

BETHE

Teller's not helping- I've
been asking for calculations
on the implosion lenses for
weeks-

TELLER

The British can do it- Fuchs-

FUCHS

Absolutely.

BETHE

It's *your* job, Teller!

TELLER (CONT'D)

I'm engaged in research-

BETHE (CONT'D)

On a Hydrogen bomb we're not even
building!

Teller simply walks away. As he passes me-

TELLER

I won't work for that man.

BETHE

Let him go. He's a prima donna-

SERBER

I agree. He should leave Los
Alamos.

I sigh. RISE, clear and direct-

OPPENHEIMER

Kisty, you replace Neddermeyer.
Seth, I'm putting you on plutonium.
Lilli, go work for Kisty.
(off her look)
Because he needs you.
(to Fuchs)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

OPPENHEIMER (CONT'D)
Fuchs, take Teller's role- you're
exclusively on the implosion
device.

I head for the door-

OPPENHEIMER (CONT'D)
And *nobody* is leaving Los Alamos.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(CONTINUED)