

## Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

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Casting:

- 1: Montag
- 2: Clarisse, Fireman 2, Mrs Phelps, Hound, Clown, Hobo 1, Speaking clock
- 3: Beatty, Faber, Clown , Hobo 2, Military Announcer 2
- 4: Mildred, Fireman 1, Old Woman, Hobo 3, Military Announcer 1

For Scene changes and musical cues individuals will be abbreviated to:

MO for actor playing Montag  
CL for actress playing Clarissa  
BF for actor playing Beatty/Faber  
ML for actress playing Mildred

Show start

**Track 1: Q1 & Q2 (ML) Siren sound leading into Dog music**

BF enters through auditorium dressed as an unspecific man and wearing a mask. He is holding a book. He is being chased by MO who is blowing a whistle and trying to find him with a torch. By the end of the siren music both should have got on to the stage and exited in to the wings. MO does not catch him.

Dog music starts and we are introduced to the concept of the hound (stage blackout with 2 blue LED lights for it's eyes). The Hound (CL) has this music to do a movement sequence incorporating direct contact with the audience (sniffing them, approaching them etc). In the second half of this music cue BF should enter the stage still dressed as the man with a book and try to creep around the stage avoiding the dog. By the end of the music the Dog has discovered the man and has him pinned to the ground DSR.

As the music ends Montag enters SL and blows a whistle to 'call off' the dog.

The hound exits as Montag approaches the Man:

Montag: You know the rules my friend, books are against the law! (calling off stage)  
Hey, we got another one! (to man) You're under arrest.

Fireman 1 (ML) enters SR with a bucket which she hands to MO to burn the book in as she says:

Fireman 1: Lets get this done.

Montag: Lets do it...

Both: By the book!!! (they laugh at their joke)

Fireman 1 approaches the man and manhandles him to his feet arresting him as they exit SL.

Montag: It is our pleasure to burn. We burn the books then we burn the ashes.

### Track 2: Q3 Dog sniffing (CL)

Dog enters SR and approaches MO. The dog is behaving in a threatening manner and not responding to Montag's attempts to get him to back down.

Meanwhile Beatty has entered in the darkness to stand in the box USL. Beatty blows his whistle to back off the dog.

Beatty: Montag? What's going on?

Montag: It doesn't *like* me.

Beatty: What doesn't like you - the Hound? How can it not like you? It doesn't like or dislike. It just "functions". It's copper wire and batteries, for god's sake!

Montag: Are you sure the microchip is set to the right combination, sir? Someone could have interfered. It reacted to me...

Beatty: Really? Hell. It really reacted to you?

Montag: Not completely angry, you know, but ... irritated. With enough bad "memory" for it to growl when I reached for it.

Beatty: Who would do a thing like that? You haven't any enemies in the fire brigade. Guy Montag has no enemies! (Sudden switch.) Have you?

Montag: (shrugs) Not that I know of.

Beatty: I'll have it checked by the technicians tomorrow.

Montag: It happened once before. Last month.

Beatty: We'll fix it up. Don't worry. Go home. Forget about it.

Montag: Sure. I'm beat. What does it think? When it shuts down like that?

Beatty: Think?

Montag: Is that thing coming alive on us, Captain?

Beatty: Montag... this machine only thinks what we tell it to think.

Montag: That's tough on the dog. All we put in is killing. Finding and killing. What a waste of a ...

Beatty: Waste? Hell, no! A weapon that can collect its own target? A kill every hunt!!

It's extraordinary!!

Montag: That's why I don't want to become its next target!! Because of a bug in its system!!

Beatty: (Laughs) You got a guilty conscience about something?

(Montag and Beatty stare at each other for a moment, giving nothing away. Then Beatty breaks and laughs vigorously. He slaps Montag on the back. Montag dutifully laughs with him.)

Beatty: Hell, you're the best, the most loyal, most dutiful fireman I have ever known. Hell, Montag, you even laugh dutifully!

(He shakes his head and laughs softly. Montag laughs back, but it is not spontaneous.)

Montag: It has no cause. Not with me.

Beatty: Go home. Watch some TV. It's the Family show tonight. Eh? Watch it with your wife for once, will you? Do her a favour! Relax from the job. Do *yourself* a favour!

Montag wipes the sweat from his forehead. He shakes his head as if trying to clear it. He walks off.)

Scene 2

**Track 3: Q5 and 6 (CL)**  
**On music, S4 + G1 or 2? 50%**

Music and a physical sequence in which Montag makes his way home. CL, ML, BF all manipulate the upright cabinet and the smaller boxes to represent cars, trains etc. ML is dressed as Military Man 1 and will be carrying the megaphone at this point for later in the sequence. The blaring of adverts and public announcements. Suddenly everything is drowned out by a crushing noise from above. A massive atomic bomber glowering over Montag - public announcement about the war preparations. –

**With following speech S9 in and out at end**

Military announcer 1 (ML) with loudhailer: We will protect you! We will protect you! We will never falter in our duty! We will never turn from our work! We will never rest from our vigilance! We will never run from the fight! We will protect you! We will protect you! We have mobilized ten million men. A quick victory is ours should war come . . .

The same music as in the beginning of this scene sounds again and all resume the same movements until the sound of screeching tyres and a massive crash.

Music: Denham's Dentifrice. Denham's Dentrifrice! Denham's. Spelled: D-E-N – H – A – M!

Little Girl (CL): Look Mummy, somebody's just died!

Music: Denhams Dentifrice.

All turn to the audience and shrug suggesting nonchalance.

End of scene CL, ML, BF move their respective set pieces to the right position for the next scene.

**X fade G1 or 2 with G3**

Scene 3

**Q6 Clarissa's theme.**

(Lights change. It is darker now. The sound of wind in the trees is strong. Montag checks his watch. Montag looks about him. He slows, he crosses the stage tentatively. Then slows to a snail-like pace. He suddenly spins round, but there is no one there. He looks about him.

From the darkness a young woman, Clarisse, emerges into the pool of light. She wears a long white dress and she almost dances into the light. She kicks at the leaves – sings worldlessly. M - birdsong thru scene)

Montag: Hi.

Clarisse: (Stopping.) Hi to you.

Montag: Were you here a moment ago?

Clarisse: No, it's now I'm here.

Montag: No, I mean – were you also here before... I had a feeling someone was waiting for me here. You didn't see anyone, did you? I've had this feeling for a few evenings now... that someone waits for me...

Clarisse: What made you think that anyone was waiting for you?

Montag: I don't know. It's like... someone was here. Like I should be able to smell some perfume or feel their presence...

Clarisse: What sort of perfume?

Montag: No, that's the thing – I can't. Every night I *imagine* there's something waiting for me – you ever saw anything round here?

(The trees suddenly roar with the sound of wind in their branches.)

Montag: Aren't you one of the new neighbours?

Clarisse: And you must be... (She places her hands on one of the badges on the uniform held over his arm) ... The Fireman.

Montag: You say it as if it were the oddest thing in the world...

Clarisse: I knew you would be a Fireman.

Montag: Ah, the smell of kerosene? My wife always complains! (He laughs.) You never wash it off completely.

Clarisse: (Without irony.) Intense!

(Clarisse kicks the leaves, almost circling Montag, glancing up at him as she dances round him. Montag whirls around keeping up with her. He almost stumbles and she laughs. He's dizzy.)

Montag: (trying to recover his dignity) Kerosene is nothing but perfume to me.

Clarisse: Does it seem like that? Really?

Montag: Sure.

Clarisse: Wow. (She thinks.) Do you mind if I walk with you? My name's Clarisse McClellan.

Montag: Sure, Clarisse. It's Guy Montag. If neighbours can't walk on the street together, hey? How d'you come to be wandering around so late? How old are you?

Clarisse: Do you smell those apricots? And strawberries!

Montag: This late in the year?

Clarisse: I'm young and I'm crazy. My uncle says the two go together, right? When people ask your age, he says, always say young and insane. What's wrong with this time of night for a walk? This is when you can look at things, I sometimes stay up all night, walking, and then I watch the sun rise. You ever did that? Don't answer – you'll disappoint me. (Quickly.) You know, I'm not afraid of you at all.

Montag: Why should you be?

Clarisse: A lot of people are. But you're just a man, aren't you?

(Montag stops and stares into Clarisse's eyes, as if he could suddenly see himself through them.)

Clarisse: Do you mind if I ask how long you have been a fireman?

Montag: For ten years.

Clarisse: And do you ever *read* any of those books you burn?

Montag: (He laughs.) That's against the law, honey!

Clarisse: Oh, yes.

Montag: It's good work. Monday we burn Shakespeare. Wednesday Whitman, Friday Goethe. "We burn 'em to ashes and then we burn the ashes." That's our slogan. "we burn the ashes..." - ... our brand.

(Clarisse suddenly dances off into the shadows as if she is not coming back, Montag slumps in disappointment and surprise.)

Montag: Hey...

(Clarisse stops, pirouettes and returns.)

Clarisse: Is it true that long ago firemen put fires *out* instead of starting them?

Montag: Who told you that?

Clarisse: I heard that a long time ago houses used to burn by accident and they needed firemen to *stop* the flames.

(Montag laughs.)

Clarisse: What's so funny?

(Montag gestures in happy confusion. He's becoming infatuated by Clarisse.)

Clarisse: You laugh when I haven't been funny and you never stop to think what I've asked you.

(Montag stops.)

Montag: You're a strange one. Don't you have any respect for my position?

Clarisse: O, hey, I didn't mean to be rude. (She shrugs.) I love to know about people - too much, I guess.

Montag: Doesn't *this* mean anything to you? (Montag taps the numerals 451 on his coat sleeve. She nods.)

Clarisse: I sometimes think drivers don't know what grass is. If you show a driver a green blur, he'd say, o yeh, that's grass!

Montag: You're changing the subject!

Clarisse: White blurs are houses. Brown blurs are cows. My uncle drove slowly on a highway once. He drove sixty miles an hour and they jailed him. Isn't that funny - and sad, too? People should walk.

Montag: (Brusquely.) You think too many things.

Clarisse: I don't watch TV so I've lots of time for crazy thoughts. Have you seen the two-hundred-metre billboards in the country outside town? Did you know they were once only ten metres long? But when the cars started going faster they had to stretch the advertising!! Did you know that!!!

Montag: (Cracking and laughing) No! No, I didn't! I didn't know that!!

Clarisse: Bet I know something else you don't. There's dew on the grass in the morning!

Montag: (Unsure.) Yeh... maybe... really? ... yeh, dew... yeh, in the morning... I know that...

Clarisse: And if you look real close (She nods at the sky) there's a man in the moon.

(Montag freezes.)

Montag: (Not amused.) OK. Not funny. This your house, yeh? I'll see you around... What the hell's going on in your house? I never saw so many lights!! How can they see the TV screens?

Clarisse: They can't. My mother and father and uncle sit around... and they talk.

(Montag is blank.)

Clarisse: It's like being a pedestrian, only rarer. Oh, we're the weirdest family!!

Montag: You're kidding me though. About the talk, yeh? (She shakes her head.)

Clarisse: (Laughing.) Good night!

(She walks away towards her house. Then stops.)

Clarisse: Hey, Mister Fireman! (Then seriously.) Are you happy?

Montag: Am I what?

#### **Track 4: Q 7 and 8 (BF) Crow sounds leading into music for next scene**

(She turns and runs and exits into the house. He looks after her for a few moments, then turns on his heels and exits.)

#### Scene 4

(Inside Montag's home. Lights flash across a screen. M - A soothing ambient music. Lights up to reveal Mildred lying on her front as if asleep. There is an empty bottle of pills hidden about her)

Montag: Mildred! The girl next door asked me if I was happy!! She admits she's crazy herself!! Eh? Where are you?

Montag: O, there you are! Happy! Of course I'm *happy*!! Like, show me someone who's not? Beautiful girl! But a head full of nonsense – they walk and they talk!! That's what they do next door! They walk they talk! Haha!! Can you hear me with those phones on? (She doesn't react.) Hmm. But the girl's clever, she knows how to tell you what you want to hear, you know the type? (Puzzled at himself.) Like talking to a mirror. She could read me. I can hear the music from those things, Mildred. It must be... deafening. (To himself:) Am I a character in the world you're in tonight? Eh? Who am I? The girl says to me – "you're the Fireman" – like I'm a character in one of your TV shows. I'm talking to myself!!!

Montag: Mildred! Mildred!! O, no!!

(An atomic bomber flying overhead drowns out his cries. He grabs a communication phones and jabbars into it desperately, but his desperate call is drowned out for the audience by the sound of the bomber, which only recedes when he puts down the phone. He goes to Mildred, lifting off the headphones and taking the material from her eyes. He checks her eyes for signs of life, checks her pulse. He slumps down beside her.)

Montag: They're coming. Hang on. They've got a squad nearby – they'll be here any minute.

(Montag puts his head in his hands. There is a thunderous knocking.)

Montag: Hell, they're everywhere!!

**Track 5: Q9(BF) - a heartbeat that speeds and fluctuates – is it Montag's is it Mildred's? – eventually it settles when Mildred is pumped out. The music then includes lots of mechanical sounds as the machine is turned on and used.**

(Montag staggers to his feet and opens the door and in rush two overalled 'Handymen' (CL, BF), each dragging a 'machine'. During the following dialogue they seize Mildred and begin to work on her as if she were a machine. Once the two Handymen have got the machines working they relax.)

Handyman 1: Where's the bathroom? Where's the bathroom?

Montag: What?

Both Handymen: Where's the bathroom, sir?

Montag indicates.

Handyman 1: (lighting a cigarette) Got to clean 'em out both ways. No use getting the stomach if you don't get the blood. Leave that stuff in her it hits the brain like a mallet, bang, a couple of thousand times and the brain just gives up, just quits.

Montag: OK, OK - that's enough, thank you!

Handyman 1: I'm just saying. Public information.

Montag: Then don't. How long does this take?

Handyman 2: Good as done now.

Handyman 1: That's fifty bucks.

Montag: First, why don't you tell me if she's going to be all right?

Handyman: Sure, she'll be all right. We got her problem in our suitcase there, we're taking it away! Everything's OK.

Montag: How do I know? You're not doctors!!

Handyman 2: Man, we get these 'situations' nine or ten a night. We get so many now we've got our people – Handymen - waiting on every street corner. Look, man, this isn't brain surgery – get my meaning? (Holds his hand to his earpiece.) We gotta go, another call. Ten streets from here. Someone else just jumped off the cap of a pillbox. Call if you need us again.

Handyman 1: Keep her quiet. We got a contra-sedative in her. She'll wake up – and, boy, hungry!! (He winks.) So long.

(The Handymen exeunt.)

Montag examines the cap of Mildred's pillbox, then goes to Mildred. )

Montag: Good God, they used you like a handkerchief!! Who were they? Strangers come and they take your blood! Mildred, we're two of billions. Just two of billions. None of us know each other. (Laughter floats across from the house of Clarisse and her family.)

Montag: What are they laughing at next door? What do they find to laugh at?

(Mildred reaches up and takes his hand. She opens her eyes.)

Montag: You all right?

Mildred: Yes. (She is bright and unaware of what has happened. She sits up.) I don't know *why* I'm so hungry.

Montag: Mildred, this afternoon...

Mildred: I'm starving!!

Montag: You... well, you...

Mildred: Me? What about me?

Montag: This afternoon – do you remember?

Mildred: Remember what this afternoon? Did we have a wild party or something? God, I'm so hungry. Who was here?

Montag: A couple of people just now.

Mildred: I didn't do anything foolish, did I?

Montag: No...

Mildred: You don't look so good yourself. I hope you haven't made me miss my TV play – I'm in it this afternoon.

Montag: You took all the pills in your bottle this afternoon! Mildred! Did you hear that? You took all the pills in your bottle.

Mildred: Oh, I wouldn't do that. (She really wants to know.) Why would I?

Montag: Maybe you took two pills and forgot and took two more, and forgot again and took two more, and in the end you were so dopy you kept right on until you had thirty or forty of them in you.

Mildred: That's awful. A person could kill themselves like that. (She looks at him.) I wouldn't do that, you know. Not in a billion years.

Montag: OK. Fine. What's on the screens this afternoon, then?

Mildred: O, it's going to be wonderful... the play starts in ten minutes! I've been reading my part all morning! I sent in an application from the back of the cereal packet.

They send you a script with just one part missing. Just for you. It's a new idea. I'm the home-maker, that's my part. When it comes to my speeches they all look at me out of the screens. Here, for instance, the man says, "Do you think we should buy a new automobile, Mildred?" and he looks at me sitting here, see? And I say, I say – (she searches for the line)... "I think that's fine!" And then they go on with the play until he says... you read it, there! Read it: "Do you agree to that, Mildred?"

(She hands the script to Montag.)

Montag: Where?

Mildred: There. Go on.

Montag: (Reading.) "Do you agree to that, Mildred?"

Mildred: And I say... where is it? – there - "I sure do!"

Montag: For real?

Mildred: Of course and then they say (fumbles cue cards) "Thanks, Mildred. You know that Mildred (laughs with amazed delight) is real smart!" They say I'm real smart on TV! Isn't that fun, Guy?

Montag: Fun is what it is. What's it about?

Mildred: I just told you. There's these people... that's it...

Montag: Oh.

Mildred: It's really fun. It'll be even more fun when we can afford to have a fourth screen installed. It'll be all around. Like life!! Better than life!! Life without the bits you miss!! It's only ten thousand real-dollars, you know.

Montag: Mildred, that's a third of my annual pay!

Mildred: Everyone else is getting them. I think you should consider me sometimes, Guy. Why, it'd be just like this room wasn't ours at all, but all kinds of exotic people's! Please! We could do without a few things...

Montag: Whatever makes you happy.

Mildred: Yeah!! You are not going out now, are you, not when I am on TV?

(Montag leaves Mildred to perform her piece.)

Montag: I'm just going for walk.

ML uses the remote to 'turn on' the TV.

A (CL): Something must be done!

B (BF): Yes, something must be *done!* Don't you think so, Mildred? ( M a sound like a cue – Mildred fumbles sheet, drops one and as beeps rise just manages to say):

Mildred: We could clean the car – (More beeps) sorry, oh hell, where is the card? - I

mean – Yes, I think something must be done. (Beeps stop).

A: Well, let's not stand and talk, eh Mildred!

Mildred: Let's buy it!

A: That Mildred is one sharp broad!

ML screams in delight and uses the remote to call her friend Marjory. ML moves to the DSL spot during the following dialogue whilst MO, BF, CL do the scene change.

Mildred: Marjory? Hey Marjory guess what! I've just been on TV!..Ah ha, yeah, but guess what they said. They said 'that Mildred is one sharp broad'... Yeah they said I was real smart, right there on the TV! ... Ah ha...My husband thought it was just swell...There's a sale on where?... Oh, hold on I'll be right over....Ah ha.....Ah ha etc as she exits

### **Track 6: Q10 (BF) Bombers sound fading to Faber's Theme**

#### Scene 5

(A park. Green light. M Birdsong. Clarisse enters into the park during the birdsong. She is dancing. She exits before the Faber theme starts. Faber's theme – Faber enters, shuffling and slow but with dignity. It might even be the green edge of the city. He wears an old, dusty black suit. He looks about him, furtively. Only when he is certain that he is alone does he sit down and take from the jacket a small book. He opens it and begins to read, glancing up after every sentence. But soon he becomes fascinated by the story and engrossed in the book, he no longer looks up. Montag enters, he has been wandering aimlessly. At first he does not see Faber. Seeing the old man seated he slowly ambles over to him and sits down beside him. Faber suddenly becomes aware of him.)

Faber: Ah! Ah!

(Faber hides the book in his jacket. He leaps up to run. )

Montag: No, wait!!!

Faber: (Terrified.) I haven't done anything wrong!

Montag: No one said you did.

(Faber sits down again. Terrified, resigned to catastrophe. First with his head in his hands, then looking terrified at a self-absorbed Montag, and finally gazing out over the green surrounds as if taking them in for the last time.)

Montag: Wonderful to see the sun come up, just for its own sake.

Faber: Yes...

Montag: It's been hazy in the mornings recently, I think, haven't been able to see a thing through the windows of the shuttle. But this morning it's so clear.

Faber: It is usually clear here.

Montag: Live far away?

Faber: No...

Montag: I do. I've had a tremendous walk. Name's Montag.

Faber: Well, it's good to meet you, Montag. My name is Faber, Professor Faber really... but when they closed the Arts College - lack of students! - they took away my title.

Montag: You sound like a... you sound like an educated man, Mister Faber.

Faber: Then you hear my burden. And my joy.

Montag: You talk like a poem, but no rhyme.

Faber: Nor reason, some say. (Faber holds his hand over his jacket, where the book is hidden.)

**Track 7: Q11 (CL) Birds then Faber's theme again and Bombers. Needs to be timed so Faber's theme in the Q starts as the poem ends.**

"Ah, love, let us be true  
To one another! for the world, which seems  
To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
So various, so beautiful, so new,  
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,  
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;  
And we are here as on a darkling plain  
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,  
Where ignorant armies clash by night."

(They sit for a moment in silence. M Whilst Faber's theme emerges from the birdsong again and is played under the rest of the scene – this could be a live theme – since Clarisse and Faber ARE alive. Montag looks up to the sky. Faber reaches in his pocket. Montag is aghast, thinking he will take out the book. But the man takes out a pen and paper and writes on the paper, handing it to Montag.)

Faber: I'm not a good conversationalist. I don't talk *things*, sir, I talk the *meaning* of things. I just sit here and *know* I'm alive. That's my address. For your security file at the fire station. In case you decide to be angry with me.

(Faber gets up and walks away.)

Montag: (Shouting after him.) I'm not angry with you! Hey wait!! (He stands watching Faber exit and disappear out of his sight. Shouting after him.) I'm not angry!! Do I look angry?

Overhead the roar of bombers. M - Faber's theme drowned out. Montag looks up. Military announcer 1 (ML) comes on and repeats the same speech as before staning

in the DSR spot.

## Scene 6

The sound of birdsong. Montag is still in the park.

Montag: Clarisse?

( M. It begins to rain. The sound of the rain on the trees.

Clarisse enters (M - her sung theme) – she holds her face to the sky to feel the rain upon it. Montag watches her. She apparently notices him – though she may have been aware of him for some time, this may all have been for his benefit.)

Clarisse: O, you! Hello!

Montag: Hello. What are you up to?

Clarisse: O - still crazy. The rain feels good.

Montag: I don't think I like it.

Clarisse: Why don't you give it a try?

Montag: I've never done it...

Clarisse: (Catches the rain on her tongue.) Mmmm. Tastes good.

Montag: What do you do all day? Go round trying everything once?'

Clarisse: No. Sometimes twice. Its stopped (the rain). Try it.

(She looks at something in her hand.)

Montag: What've you got there?

Clarisse: A flower. Have you ever heard of rubbing it under your chin? Look. (She rubs the flower under her chin.)

Montag: What does it mean?

Clarisse: If the colour rubs off it means I'm in love. Has it?

(Montag hesitates. She stares at him.)

Montag: (Looks.) Yes. There's colour.

Clarisse: You now?

Montag: It won't work on me.

Clarisse: How do you know? Now, hold still!!! (She puts the flower under his chin. He draws back and she laughs at him.) Keep still!!

(She peers under his chin and frowns.)

Clarisse: O.

Montag: I told you.

Clarisse: What a shame. You're not in love with anyone.

Montag: I'm in love with Mildred. (Clarisse laughs. He has tried to conjure up an expression to fit his words, but failed.) You exhausted it. You drained the flower.

Clarisse: I've upset you...

Montag: No. I don't upset.

Clarisse: Say you forgive me – I have to go... I don't want to leave you angry.

Montag: I'm not angry.

Clarisse: I've got to go to see my psychiatrist. I have to think up things to say! My psychiatrist thinks I'm very odd!! He says I'm a regular onion! I keep him busy peeling away the layers.

Montag: Maybe you need him more than you think.

Clarisse: You don't mean that?

Montag: (letting out a long breath.) All right. I don't mean it.

Clarisse: They want to know what I do. I tell them I *think*. Then they want to know what! I won't tell them. I tell them – “sometimes I like to put my head back, like this, and let the rain fall into my mouth.” You *haven't* forgiven me, have you?

Montag: I have, actually. You're... irritating... but you're easy to forgive. Did you say you're seventeen?

Clarisse: Soon I will be...

Montag: You seem older. Much older.

Clarisse: You're peculiar, Mr Montag. I forget you're a fireman. Can I make you angry again?

Montag: You can try.

Clarisse: Why are you a fireman when you're not like the others? I said something about the moon and you looked at the moon. You have time for people...

Montag: You'd better get along to your appointment...

(She suddenly runs off. He stands there, looking after her. Then, very slowly he lowers

his coat, tilts his head back in the rain. She re-enters and watches him. He guesses that she is there without looking over to her. )

Montag: Why is it I feel I've known you forever?

Clarisse: Because I like you...

Montag: You make me feel like something very old.

Clarisse: What is it that has shocked you?

Montag: Go on. You'll miss your appointment...

Clarisse: They won't mind. It will confirm their suspicions. I'm "anti-social". But it all depends on what you mean by "social", doesn't it? I don't think it's social to get a bunch of people together and then not let them talk, force them to watch TV and sports and baseball... and never ask questions. That's not social! No wonder everyone heads out in their cars and races! Just because I don't have any friends – what's that supposed to prove? Everyone I know is either screaming all day or dancing like wild or beating up each other! People hurt each other nowadays...

Montag: You sound like an ancient god.

Clarisse: I am ancient. People my own age scare me. They kill each other all the time. Six of my class have been shot in the last year, another ten dead in car wrecks. And they all hate me for being afraid. My uncle says his grandfather remembered when children didn't kill each other. Wow. But that was a long time ago. I ride the subway and watch people. I like to figure out what they want. When I listen to the kids you know what?

Montag: What?

Clarisse: They don't have anything to say. No one does.

Montag: O people do...

Clarisse: Maybe the names of cars, the labels of clothes: Benetton; Jaguar; Gucci. "How swell!" "Wow!" They all say the same things. How does the government organize that? In the cafes people play the same music, tell the same jokes, the video walls never show any actual thing, anything real – ever noticed that? It's all pretty people doing stupid things. Uncle says a long time back pictures, even TV meant things, even showed real things!

Montag: Your uncle must be a remarkable man.

**Track 8 (BF) Clarisse theme leading into ticking.**

Clarisse: (Running off.) Good-bye, Mr Montag.

Montag: Good-bye.

Clarisse: Hey Mr Montag, Good-bye.

Clarisse spots a flower on the ground as she is about to exit. She picks it up and runs back and hands it to MO before running off.

He looks at it for a moment then starts to rub it under his chin. As the music ends Montag fumbles in his pocket for his 'phone' which has silently gone off. He speaks in to it.

Montag: Captain? Yeah hold on, I'll be right there.

MO goes to the SR box as the scene changes and opens the in-stage door as if it is a locker. We are now in the firestation.

## Scene 7

Music changes to a rhythmic ticking. CL is speaking clock over the top (live on mic) and announces the time at the top of the scene.

ML enters as fireman and places MO's helmet by his locker. She goes to the SL box and opens the in-stage door. ML places her helmet in front of it representing her locker. During this Beatty enters and bids them all 'good morning'.

Firestation. Montag and Fireman (ML) are playing cards. Montag's mind wanders.

Beatty: What's wrong Montag?

Montag: Oh...er....oh...

Beatty: Your play Montag.

Montag: I've been thinking, trying to imagine just how it would feel to have fireman come and burn our houses, our books.

Beatty: We have no books.

Montag: No, but if we did have some.

Beatty: You got some? (he laughs)

Montag: No! Was it always like this? The firehouse? Our work? I mean, well, once upon a time...

Beatty: Once upon a time? Where did you read that?

Montag: At the last fire a book fell open. I mean...um...er

Beatty: what?

Clarissa (on mike): Didn't fireman used to put out fires rather than starting them?

Montag: didn't fireman used to put out fires rather than starting them?

Fireman 1: That's rich, Mntag!

Beatty: A brief history of the fireman of America. Established?

Fireman 1: 1790, captain!

Beatty: To burn British influenced books in the colonies. First fireman?

Montag: Benjamin Franklin, captain!

Beatty: Rule 1?

All: Answer the alarm fast.

Beatty: Rule 2?

All: start the fire fast.

Beatty: Rule 3?

All: Burn the books, burn the library, burn the house.

Beatty: rule 4?

All: Report back to firehouse immediately.

Beatty: Rule 5?

All: Stand alert for other alarms.

Beatty: What do we do?

All: we burn the books then we burn the ashes.

Beatty: I can't hear you ?

All: we burn the books then we burn the ashes!!

Beatty: at ease gentlemen.

**Track 8b ticking. CL over the top announcing the time again.**

A siren sounds (CL on the megaphone through the mic). We see the firemen quickly getting ready and heading out to form a fire engine to go to the scene of the alarm.

Scene 8

**Track 9: Q13 (CL) A Fire engine.**

BF, MO and CL run on and form a fire engine SC.ML runs off during siren to get ready as the Old Lady. MO sits on a small box and has the steering wheel, BF just behind holding two torches for headlights and CL at the back with the red flashing light.

(A hammering – real against a door that is two doors open from both large boxes and pushed together to create a double door effect. CL and MO stand by one each and move them away as BF rams through them)

An old woman (OW) is discovered and dragged out, holding a book, which she brandishes at everyone. She is dumped on the floor)

OW: (Quoting from memory.) "Play the man, Master Ridley; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out."

(Beatty and another Fireman have entered. Beatty snatches the book from the OW and throws it to Montag who hides it about his person during the following dialogue.)

Beatty: Enough of that! Where are the rest? (No answer. He slaps the woman's face with cold objectivity.) I hate having to repeat myself.

OW: You wouldn't come if you didn't think you could find them, Captain.

Fireman 1: (Holds up his notebook.) "Have reason to suspect attic; 11 No. Elm, City. Informant: E.B."

OW: That would be Mrs Blake, next door.

Beatty: Very well, men, the literary lady here says we'll find her books. So let's try and prove her right!

OW: "...we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall **never** be put out."

Montag: Why's this old girl still here? Our job is with things, not people. Things. She's wittering on... like...

Fireman 1: She can read you like a book, Montag! Ha ha ha!! She can see she's got you rattled!!

Beatty: Montag!

(Beatty throws down more books.)

Beatty: Montag! (Montag jerks around.) Don't stand there like an idiot! Spray!!

(Using a small canister Montag sprays the books and the house in general with kerosene. He reels from the fumes.)

Montag: Come on, old woman! Get out.

(But the OW kneels among the books, touching the drenched leather and cardboard, reading the gilt titles with her fingers while her eyes accuse Montag.)

OW: You can't ever have my books.

During this exchange the OW has managed to get herself back in to her house and her books.

Beatty: You know the law, madam. Use your common sense. Now get the hell out of it!!

(She shakes her head.)

Montag: Please, madam. The whole house is going up.

(Fireman and Beatty begin to exeunt. They glance back at Montag and the woman.)

Montag: We're not leaving her, are we?

(Beatty shrugs.)

Beatty: She won't come.

Montag: We'll have to force her then!

Beatty: Come on! Leave her. We're late already. These fanatics want us to kill them. It's a pattern! It's suicide by fireman. It's not our responsibility.

Montag: (Placing his hand on the Old Woman's elbow.) You can come with me.

OW: No.

Beatty: I'm counting to ten. One, two...

Montag: Please, madam... (Montag pulls at the woman.)

OW: I will stay.

Beatty: Five. Six...

OW: You can stop your counting.

(The OW opens the fingers of one hand slightly and in the palm of the hand is a cigarette lighter, which she strikes, so a flame burns.)

Beatty: Run! She's got a lighter!

(Fireman and Beatty run to a safe distance. Montag backs away.)

OW: We shall this day light such a candle....

**Track 9b: Q14 (BF) OW burning. Leads straight into 15 and 16.**

MO and BF close the set to signal her death

Scene 9

(Fire engine created (BF and MO only) – siren flashing light M a steady engine with screeches – sound worked into text. They are racing through the streets, late for a job. Beatty driving. Montag behind him.)

Beatty: (Suspicious.) I saw you come in the back door of the station this morning, Montag? Why did you do that?

Montag: (Shrugs.) Just for a change.

Beatty: That Hound still bothering you?

Montag: No, no.

Beatty: I heard a funny thing. Fireman in Seattle, purposely programmed a Mechanical Hound with his own chemical i.d., and then let the thing loose. What kind of suicide would you call *that*, Montag? Huh? Is that what you would call poetic?

Montag: How would I know?

Beatty: A fireman must understand his enemy, Montag. No suspicion would fall on a fireman who has ... remembered these things... what do you say?

Montag: You're the Captain.

Beatty: Yes. Yes – good answer. (Beatty slams on brakes) Damn Kids! Slow Down!

Montag: "Master Ridley".

Beatty: What?

Montag: The old woman said, "Master Ridley." "Play the man," or something. She said: "Master Ridley... something,

Beatty: "'We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.'"

Montag: Yes! You know it! What is that?

Beatty: I'm full of bits and pieces, Montag. Most fire captains are. "... such a candle... in England... as I trust shall never be put out" – a man named Latimer said that to a man named Ridley hundred of years ago, as they both waited to be burned alive... for reading from what they thought was the word of God... nothing has changed, Montag, men always burned.

Montag: Yes I suppose so captain. Look out!!

Beatty: Hell – kids!!

Montag: You'll hit them!!

Beatty: I can't... get the...

( M - Beatty throws the wheel, but there is a sound of crunching steel. A flash of light. Smoke. Montag and Beatty are thrown forwards and then backwards. A sound of shattering glass and a young woman in a white dress crashes through a windscreen and hangs lifeless, a string of blood from her neck. Her face covered by her hair. Silence. Stillness. Beatty and Montag slowly come to and extricate themselves from the wreck.)

Beatty goes to the back of the stage and calls for back-up/assistance for the accident. Then leaves.

Montag meanwhile goes to the body. He turns it over and reveals to himself and the audience that it is Clarisse. He holds her.

Reprise of Clarisse theme.

It has started to rain

The handyman enter (ML (dressed as a fireman), BF). They extract Montag from the body uncaringly and carry it off stage leaving Montag alone in the rain.

Sounds of rain.

He looks up to the sky and opens his mouth, drinking in the rain.

Lights to dark.)

( INTERVAL.)



Scene 10

**Track 10: Q17 (MO) Military music followed by music for Mildred.**

Military announcer 2 (BF) crawls through large box to speak through pre-set megaphone.

Military Announcer 2: You are all perfectly safe. You are all perfectly safe. The Government has placed Nuclear shelters beneath the city streets. In the event of Nuclear emergency take cover. You will hear a siren sound 6 times. Repeat 6 times. You will all be perfectly safe.

Military Announcer 2 finishes crawling through tunnel and runs off stage with siren sounds.

**Visual cue – Waggy sounds siren and jumps in to audience, bring up G2 50% + S3 & fade out S5**

Music fades to Ambient music and Montag enters his darkened house. Mildred is not around. Montag fetches the pillow, remote and flutake and sits on the 'bed'. He uses his torch to read the bible passage quoted at the end from the book before settling down to sleep.

Scene 11

**Q19 Loud music, CL on mike as 'hoover' noise**  
**Snap with music to G1, (G2 & S3 out)**

(Lights fade up. Music playing loudly as Mildred hovers. Montag is just waking. Mildred is up and about. The tv screens are out and every now and again fragments of drama appear as actors emerge from the shadows, asking unanswered questions. But Mildred is doing housework.)

During the scene ML and MO will use a real remote control to turn the music on and off.

Montag: Mildred. Mildred?

Mildred: You're awake. Did you get in late you naughty boy?!

Montag: Mildred, did you see that girl? The girl next door.

Mildred: What girl next door?

Montag: The high-school girl. Clarisse, our neighbour.

Mildred: Oh, yes.

Montag: [turns off music] Well, she had an accident on the freeway. I...

Mildred: Oh kids, crazy kids. They get killed all the time. [turns on music]

Montag: She wasn't crazy. Well not in that way

Mildred: What way then?

Montag: You wouldn't get it.[turns off music] Look Mildred, I think I should go over to the family. Say something. I mean they are our neighbors.

Mildred: Not anymore they're not. They're gone. Whole family's moved out somewhere. Yesterday. They left for good. The army was here, at least I think they were. The TV was on, I wasn't really looking. [turns on music during end of speech]

Montag: But you're not sure.

Mildred: Pretty sure.

Montag: I can't go to work. I've got a fever.

Mildred: You were all right yesterday.

Montag: No, I wasn't. I haven't been well for...[turns off music]

Montag: Can you turn that thing off (indicating hoover which is still making lots of noise) and get me some aspirin and water?

Mildred: You've got to go to work. You can't stay here all day. You'll disturb me.

Montag: Will you please turn that thing off?

Mildred: But I've got to keep the place nice and clean. It's my job! You're the fireman, I'm the homemaker.

Montag: Please, Mildred, I can't think, I can't do anything.

Mildred: I'll turn it off.

(She turns the hoover off .)

Mildred: Better? Even though there's dust and there might still be bugs. (she exits with hoover and returns with a duster and proceeds to clean the boxes/screens)

Montag: Call Beatty. Tell him I'm sick.

Mildred: Did something happen yesterday?

Montag: (Shrugs.) A fire. An accident. What about you?

Mildred: O, I had a nice evening.

Montag: What was on?

Mildred: Things. Programmes. Comedy.

(He suddenly begins to retch.)

Mildred: What's the matter?

Montag: Sorry. Can't get this kerosene out of my lungs.

(He continues to retche)

Mildred: Poor Honey Bunny.

Montag: O god, Mildred. Yesterday, we burned an old woman with her books.

Mildred: Really

Montag: We burned a thousand books. We burned a woman. We burned. We burned

Dante. We burned Kafka. We burned . Shakespeare

Mildred: Mr Shakespeare? Wasn't he a ... terrorist? It was on the screens?

Montag: I don't know...

Mildred: He was a terrorist. In the olden times...

Montag: Mildred, how would it be if I give up my job for a while?

Mildred: Because of some silly woman and a load of books?

Montag: You should have seen her, Millie! O god, Millie, hold me...

Mildred: Ok. (he hugs her though she does not really respond). Better? Oh Honey, your hair is really dirty...

**Track 11: Q20 (CL)(The sound of the house's door alarm.)**

Speaker: "Mrs Montag, Mrs Montag, someone here, someone here, Mrs Montag, Mrs Montag, someone here."

Mildred goes to the door.

Montag: Who is it?

Mildred: There's a fire engine in the road – and a man in a fireman's uniform is coming up the path!!

Montag: Is it the Captain?

Mildred: Yeah.

Montag: Tell him I'm sick.

Mildred: Tell him yourself! (She lets Beatty in during the next doorbell chime.)

**Track 12: Q20a (CL) Doorbell again**

Speaker: "Mrs Montag, Mrs Montag, someone here, someone here, Mrs Montag, Mrs Montag, someone here."

(Montag checks the book is well hidden behind the pillow, then lies back on it.)

Beatty: Thought I'd come by and check on the sick man.

Montag: How'd you guess that?

(Beatty smiles and moves the small box to SC and invites Montag to sit there, he does.)

Beatty: I've seen it all before, Montag. You might as well take the day off! (Takes out his lighter, tests the flame and puts it away.) Every fireman, sooner or later, hits this. The only way to get over it is to learn a few lessons. (during this Beatty goes to sit in the cushion causing Montag much worry and stress)

Beatty: When did our profession begin? Not till the invention of photography. Motion pictures, radio, television. As soon as things began to have *mass*. That's when. Things became simpler, boiled down – you follow me. Books condensed. Digested. Everything comes down to the twist at the end. Biff. Bang. Snap ending and get out of there! Till the only thing you know about 'Hamlet' is the title.

(Mildred begins to tidy up Montag and involves herself in the scene)

Beatty: Editing speeded up. Movies were all action. Politics? Nothing more complicated than a headline. Then, in mid-air – voooof!! - everything vanishes! Whirl a man's head fast enough and nothing sticks.

Montag: No need for that, Millie.

(Mildred ignores him.)

Beatty: School hours shortened, rules relaxed, exams scrapped - philosophy, history, languages dropped, English and spelling quietly allowed to fade.

Mildred: Honey, let me fix your...

Montag: (To Mildred) No...

Mildred goes over to the cushion and begins to straighten it.

Beatty: You like sports, Montag? (without looking down, Beatty grabs the cushion and throws it to Montag, revealing the book to Mildred, who silently freaks out, torn between screaming at Montag and hiding it from Beatty. Beatty and Montag continue to throw cushion back and forth during the next lines, Montag getting increasingly uncomfortable as he can see Mildred and her actions)

Montag: Sure.

Beatty: Sure you do... Baseball's a fine game, eh?

Montag: yeah.

Beatty: Bowling?

Montag: Fine game.

Beatty: Golf?

Montag: A thinking game...

Beatty: Basketball?

Montag: Sure?

Beatty: Your opinion on billiards, pool? Football? Beach Volleyball?

Montag: Fine games, all of them. (Montag throws the cushion over Beatty's head to Mildred who puts it down and hides the book underneath. Just as she does this,

Beatty turns around and sits on the cushion and book)

Beatty: Sports for all, group spirit, and fun! Speed, organization, competition. Thoughtlessness. Highways full of crowds going somewhere, anywhere, nowhere. And all the minorities taken out, soothed and washed in the giant currents. No *wonder* books stopped selling, Montag! The public knows what it wants!

**Track 13: Q21 (CL to set up, BF to turn on using remote control)**  
**Snap blackout with music cue**

(Beatty has turned the tv screens on. The screens are flooded with green and yellow and orange lights, the sizzling and bursting of fireworks, music composed almost completely of trap-drums, tom-toms, and cymbals. Mildred oohs and aaahs to the fireworks, her recent stress forgotten with the comfort of the beloved TV.

Beatty knocks his pipe into the palm of his hand, studies the ashes.)

**Visual cue – fireworks end, fade back to G1 100%**

Beatty: We are born with bodies, Mr Montag – for pleasure (gesturing to the enraptured Mildred). Please tell me – does our culture provide this pleasure? I think it does. Come on, you don't want to see a book about how bad firemen are, how they can't love their wives? Burn it then. Burn inequality. Burn unhappiness. Call the fireman! We are the flame in the heart of everyone. When we burn everything else is quiet.

Montag: The girl in the crash. She lived next door. She was unlike anybody I've ever... How did she *happen*?

Beatty: Ah. Clarisse McClellan. We've watched her for a very long time. We had some false alarms with the McClellans – never found a book, mind. Yet, somehow they knew things in a way that people know things when they have books. The girl was a time bomb. We didn't want her going off in **your** hands, did we? Kept asking "why?", eh? She's better off dead.

Montag: She was so young.

Beatty: Yes nipped in the bud. Can't build a house without nails, Montag. Well, I must be going. Lecture over! I hope I've clarified things. Remember, Montag, we're the Happiness Boys!!

(Beatty shakes Montag's limp hand.)

Beatty: At least once in his career, every fireman gets an itch to see for himself what the books say *inside*. Take my word for it, the books say *nothing!* Non-existent people screaming nonsense.

Montag: (desperately) Sir. What if a fireman accidentally took a book home with him?

Beatty: A natural error? Curiosity alone? We don't get over-anxious. We let the fireman keep the book for twenty-four hours. If he hasn't burned it by then, we simply come and burn it for him.

Montag: Of course.

Beatty: Will we see you tonight? I think you should.

Montag: I'll be at work.

Beatty: I'll see myself out, Mrs Montag!!

(Beatty exits. Mildred screams maniacally round the room, terrified.)

Mildred: He knows you've got it.

Montag: Shhhh!! No. He's guessing.

Mildred: Oh my god! Oh my god! (etc etc)

Montag: No. I want to feel like this.

Mildred: They'll put you in jail...

Montag: I'm not happy living this way. I'm not happy. You heard the Captain – happiness is what we want!

Mildred: I'm happy.

Montag: Mildred. It's only fair that I should tell you something. I should have told you before. I've been putting something away for a while...

(Montag puts his hand under the backdrop and pulls out a book .)

Montag: I didn't know why... I wouldn't have known what to tell you.

(Montag goes and gets a bucket of books he has been hiding.)

Montag: I'm sorry. But it looks as if we're in this together.

(Mildred backs away from the books as if they are poisonous snakes.)

Mildred: O, Montag, Montag... what have you done!!

(Mildred grabs a book and starts to tear it up. Montag grabs her.)

Montag: No! Millie, no! Wait! Stop it, will you? (Montag grabs her and shakes her.) Please. Give me a second, will you? I want to look at them, at least once. *Then* we'll burn them together, one by one, OK? You have to help me here, Millie. We're heading right for the cliff now. I don't want to go over. I need you so much right now, I can't tell you. If you love me at all give me twenty-four hours that's all I ask, then it'll be over. I promise, I swear!

(Mildred sags away from Montag and slides to the floor.)

**Track 14: Q21a and b (one track) (CL) doorbell.**

Speaker: Mrs Montag, Mrs Montag, someone here, someone here, Mrs Montag, Mrs Montag, someone here.

Mildred: He's come back!

Montag: Don't answer.

Speaker: Mrs Montag, Mrs Montag, someone here, someone here, Mrs Montag, Mrs Montag, someone here.

Mildred: It sounds like a dog.

(Dog Growls)

**Fast fade to black.**  
**Visual cue – dog exits, fast fade up to G1 100%**

Mildred: What was there?

(Montag shakes his head. Turns to the books.)

Montag: Where do we begin, Millie? (He opens the book.) At the beginning I guess. We'll start at the beginning...

(He begins to read from the book. Lights fade.)

Montag: "We cannot tell the precise moment when friendship is formed. As in filling a vessel drop by drop, there is at last a drop which makes it run over, so in a series of kindnesses there is at last one which makes the heart run over."

Mildred: Is that what it was with the girl next door?

Montag: Let's talk about something living, please.

Mildred: Books aren't alive. They're dead words. I like pictures... o, and the Comedy Killer Clowns are on tonight! I want to watch the Comedy Killer Clowns... I'd forgotten!! Marjory Phelps is coming over!!! I forgot to tell you – She's coming over to see the Comedy Killer Clown show – you know the one where they keep cutting off bits of each other - like legs – (Becoming animated) and arms just chopped off and – you are not listening to me – it's FUN!

Montag: When did we meet? Where was it?

Mildred: When did we meet for what?

Montag: I mean – originally, when did we meet? Where was it?

Mildred: O.

(Pause.)

Montag: Can't you remember either?

Mildred: I'm trying to think. (She laughs an odd little laugh.) Funny, not to remember where or when you met your husband.

Montag exits. Mildred uses the real remote to turn on the next cue then sits and watches the clowns.

**Track 15: Q23 (ML) Killer clowns music interrupted by sirens then fades out to faber theme.**

### As music starts S1 (lights screen) and general cover out

CL and BF are the clowns and do a movement sequence in shadow behind the screen. When the sirens start BF fades away to come back with megaphone as the Military announcer 2 and says:

Military Announcer 2: We briefly interrupt this programme for a public service announcement: just a few moments ago war was declared... war was declared - atomic projectiles have been targeted on the main cities of our enemies. Any act of provocation will cause them to be fired. No response is expected. Victory is assured. Victory will be total. And now back to the Comedy killer Clowns!!

CL is still dancing as a clown as the scene changes.  
(ML and MO to take off large box that represents bed to SL)

Scene 12

### X fade S1 to G3

(The park. M Faber's theme and birdsong – sung - Faber is sitting on the park bench. Montag enters and hands him a book )

Faber: So it's true. Where did you get it?

Montag: I stole it.

Faber: You're braver than me.

Montag: No. I'm not brave. You're the only one who can help me - what the hell is going on, Professor?

Faber: Ahhhh. A Bible. I'm not a religious man. But it feels good to hold one of these again. (Faber turns the pages, stopping here and there to read.) Ha! It's as wonderful as I remember. Lord, how they changed it for the TV screens!! Have you seen it? Christ is one of the "Big Family" now! I wonder if God recognizes him? Hmm. I loved to smell books when I was a boy. Mr Montag, you are looking at a coward. I saw the way things were going, a long time back. I said nothing. I did nothing. What do you think I'm going to do to help you now?

Montag: I want you to teach me to understand what I read.

Faber: You're a hopeless romantic. It would be funny if it were not so dangerous. I hardly think a very old man and a fireman gone bad can *do very* much this late on in the game, eh?

(Faber starts to get up.)

Montag: I can *get* you books.

Faber: You're running a very big risk.

Montag: When you're already dead you can run any risk you want.

Faber: There, you've said an interesting thing, and without having read it!

Montag: I thought that if it turned out that books *were* worth while, we might get a press and print some extra copies –

Faber: Who's this "we"?

Montag: Us.

Faber: If you insist on telling me any more, I'll have to leave.

Montag: But aren't you *interested*?

Faber: Not if I'm going to be burnt for my trouble. The only way I could *possibly* listen to you would be if you somehow have an idea how the whole damn Fire Brigade structure itself could be burnt to the ground! Now if you suggest that we print books and hide in firemen's houses all over the country, create chaos among the arsonists... then I'd listen!!

Montag: Yes!! Plant a book, turn in an alarm, and see the firemen's houses burn! Wow!! Is that what you mean?

Faber: I was half-joking.

Montag: But you think it's worth trying? Do you give me your word it would work?

Faber: You can't guarantee things like that! Even when people *had* all the books they needed they still insisted on jumping off the highest cliff!!

Montag: Please?

Faber: You're deadly serious, aren't you?

Montag: Absolutely.

Faber: To see the firehouses burn across the land, destroyed as hotbeds of treason. The salamander devours his own tail! Ho, God! Yes!! Things transform!!

Montag: At the Station I can get a list of firemen's home addresses.

Faber: Have you some money?

Montag: A few hundred real dollars.

Faber: Bring it here. I know a man who printed our college papers half a century ago. I think he's still alive. He might help.

Montag: I want to say something to the Captain. He's read enough. He might be on our side.

Faber: Be very careful what you say.

Montag: I'm a Fireman, Professor. You've got to help me. Train me to use words.

Faber: All right, but there isn't time to teach you how to use words...

Montag: Please...

Faber: Just listen. There isn't time to *teach* you... but there may be a way... I didn't know whether to trust you. I can help you more than I've let on. In a coward's way. Here. Put this on – as if it were an earshell radio.

Montag: What is it?

Faber: It's a transmitter/receiver. I have the other. (Slips it into his ear.) They slip frequency simultaneously to avoid detection. I can hear everything that's said to you, you can hear everything I say. I could feed you things to say to your Captain Beatty. The security clearance of a Fireman, and the brain of a Professor, eh? How can we fail?

(Montag laughs.)

Faber: See what a coward I am?

Montag: I heard that in my head. (Rubbing his head.)

Faber: Go to the Fire Station. Get the addresses. Let me hear what your Captain speak for himself. Maybe he is one of us, maybe not. I'll tell you how to respond. We'll give him a good show, whatever!

Montag: (Putting the Bible into Faber's hands.) I'll hand in another book.

Faber: I'll speak with that unemployed printer.

Montag: Thank you. Goodbye.

Faber: I'm afraid it's not goodbye, Montag.

Montag: (Suddenly frightened.) Why not?

Faber: I'm going to be in your head from now on.

Montag: O, that. Sure.

Faber: Good luck.

(The two men part and exit their separate ways, checking that they are not observed, Faber carefully concealing the Bible in his suit.)

### **Track 16: Q25 and 26 (CL) Bombers to clown music.**

Scene 13

### **X fade G3 to G1**

(The Montags' home. M - we hear but not see The White Clowns play in the background.)

Mildred sets up scene by bring on the small box from SL with the martini glasses and a full pill bottle during the music. When it is set she watches the TV screens and eats some pills until the doorbell where upon she hides the pill box before answering)

Speaker: Mrs Montag, Mrs Montag, someone here, someone here, Mrs Montag, Mrs

Montag, someone here.

Mrs Phelps enters followed by Mildred. Mrs Phelps is a grotesque of domesticity and plain style.)

Mildred: O, Marjory!! You're nearly too late for the Comedy Killer Clowns... but you've only missed the start... did you hear about the war? Awful isn't it? But it means they've delayed the programme so you haven't missed so much!

Mrs Phelps: I didn't hear about the war... What happened?

Mildred: Well, first the big clown hit the small one and then - it was **very** funny! Here's your martini!

Mrs Phelps: Thank you so much!

Mildred: – the big one took the little one's arm clean off!

Mrs Phelps: Oh!

Mildred: No. It sounds so terrible, but it was very funny!

Mrs Phelps: (Looking around her.) Doesn't everything look nice! And you look good, Millie.

Mildred: I'm swell! Let me look at you, Marjory! I think we're both just swell!!

Mrs Phelps: You're right. You're absolutely right. We're fabulous.

Scene darkens to Montag outside. He is speaking in his ear to Faber.

Montag enters the house.

Montag: Oh Millie...Not alone? I came home to...

Mrs Phelps: Why, good day Mr Montag!

Montag: Is it good?

Both women: Well, we think so.

Both Sing: It's the right one, it's the bright one, It's Martini.

Montag: I notice you haven't brought Mr Phelps!

Mrs Phelps: Oh, you know what husbands are like - they come and they go. In again out again Finnegan, the Army calls Pete. He'll be back next week. The Army said so. Quick war.

Montag: There's going to be an exchange of tactical nuclear weapons, Mrs Phelps. Ten million men have been mobilized.

Mrs Phelps: Pete called yesterday. They'll be finished by next week.

(Montag looks at Mrs Phelps, waiting for her to grasp what she has just said.)

Faber: Careful, Montag.

Mrs Phelps: I let old Pete do all the worrying!

Mildred: Yes, you know what they say - it's always someone else's husband gets killed.

Mrs Phelps: I've heard that, too. I've never known any dead man killed in war. Killed jumping off buildings, yes, like Gloria's husband last week, but from wars? No. Anyway, Pete and I always said, no tears, nothing like that. It's our third marriage each and we're independent. He said, if I get killed off, you just go right ahead - don't think of me.

Mildred: That reminds me. The 'Big Family' show starts in 5 minutes.

Montag: Does Big family care for anyone? Anyone real?

Faber: Montag...

Montag: Or the Comedy killer Clowns? Do they love you?

(Montag stands panting from anger. The woman regard him, half irritated, half scared.)

Faber: Walk away, Montag. Walk away.

Montag: Let's talk, ladies. How are your children, Mrs Phelps? Did you leave them at the launderette creche again?

Mrs Phelps: I think so...

(Montag opens his coat and takes out a book.)

Mrs Phelps: Is that a book, Mr Montag? Are you reading up on fireman theory?

Faber: What are you doing? Montag...

Montag: It's poetry, Mrs Phelps.

Faber: Montag...

Montag: Ah, love, let us be true.  
To one another! for the world, which seems  
To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
So various, so beautiful, so new,  
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,  
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;  
And we are here as on a darkling plain  
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,  
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

(Mrs Phelps starts to cry)

Montag: I'm sorry I...

Mildred: Sh, sh! You've done enough damage! (To Marjory.) You're all right, Marjory, now, Marjory, snap out of it! Marjory, what's *wrong*?

Mrs Phelps: I don't know, don't know, I just don't know, oh, oh . . .

Mildred: You see what you've done? I've always said, poetry and tears, poetry and suicide and crying!!

Mrs Phelps: (Suddenly finding tearful anger) And awful feelings, poetry and sickness; *all* that mush! You're nasty, Mr Montag, you're *nasty*! Well at least you've proved me right!!

Faber: Now take care, Montag... try and get yourself out of this. Give them a reason to forget all this.

(Montag is trying to think.)

Mrs Phelps: Silly, silly words, silly awful hurting words! Why *do you* people want to hurt us? Not enough hurt in the world, you've got to tease people with stuff like that!

Mildred: Marjory, now, Marjory. Come on, let's be happy, we'll turn the "big family" on! Let's laugh and be happy, now, stop crying, we'll have a party!

Mrs Phelps: No, I'm trotting right straight home. You want to visit my house and "family", well and good. But I won't come in this fireman's crazy house again in my lifetime!

Mildred: O, Marjory...

(Montag loses it.)

Montag: (Mrs Phelps into floods of tears. To Mrs Phelps:) Just go home! Go home and think of your first husband divorced and your second husband killed in a car crash and your third husband blowing his brains out, go home and think of your children who hate your guts! Go home and think how it all happened and what did you ever do to stop it?

(Mrs Phelps runs out).

Faber: You fool, Montag, you fool! You've destroyed everything!!

Montag: No, I have not destroyed enough!!!!

**Snap black out, add S3**

**Track 17: Q26b (FB) Sneaky music.**

ML and MO do scene change. Move the small boxes to line up SL and then bring in the Large box 777 sign from the wings to sit on top (a filing cabinet).

Scene 14

It is dark and we are in the Fireman's headquarters. Montag is snaking across the stage and heading towards the filing cabinet to take pictures of the Fireman's files,

talking with Faber over their transmitters.)

Montag: I'm in the file room. The addresses are in the filing cabinet...it's classified.

Faber: Not so fast. Take your time. You won't get away with a mistake here.

Montag: What if somebody comes in?

Faber: Calm down!!

Montag: I'm calm.

Faber: Right. Now, twice as calm. Now copy the files.

(Montag forces himself to relax.)

Montag: (Sighs.) OK. When do I start working things out on my own, Professor? I don't want to change sides just to be *told* what to do by someone else.

Faber: You don't need me to teach you anything. You're wise already.

Montag: Well, keep on the line. And keep talking to me. Keep me calm.

Faber: Would you like me to read something to you? No one can hear me. The signal goes direct to the hearing part of your brain.

Montag: Yeh, do that...

(Montag begins to slowly move a fire hose around, unrolling and then rolling it as Faber reads.)

Faber: (interesting Shakespeare bit)

Montag: That's it! Every God-damned fireman's address in this stinking city.

**Visual cue – Beatty enters – snap to G2 100%**

Beatty: Montag!! A very strange beast which in all tongues is called a fool! Don't you have something for me?

(Beatty holds out his hand.)

**Track 18: Q (ML) Faber Dialogue**

Faber: Quickly. No pause. Give it to him and look him in the eye.

(Montag hands Beatty a book, holding his gaze.)

Beatty: "Who are a little wise, the best fools be." (Beatty disposes of the book down a chute in the frame.) Welcome back, Montag. I hope you'll be sticking with us, now that your fever is done.

Montag: I am reporting for duty, Captain.

Faber: Not too enthusiastic.

Beatty: Well, the lost sheep returns to the fold! We are all sheep! We all stray at

times! They are never alone that are accompanied with noble thoughts, we've shouted to ourselves. "Sweet food of sweetly uttered knowledge"...

Faber: That's Sir Philip Sidney – don't agree yet, he'll counter it with something...

Beatty: But on the other hand: "Words are like leaves and where they most abound, Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found."

Faber: Alexander Pope.

Beatty: What do you think of that?

Faber: He's dangerous this one. A most dangerous enemy of truth and freedom. He's trying to draw you out.

Beatty: Where does that put you, Montag?

Montag: I can't work it out...

Beatty: A well-read man like you? You boys read a few lines and then over the cliff you go! You're ready to blow up the world, chop off heads, knock down women, destroy authority. I know, I've been through it all.

Montag: I'm all right now.

Beatty: Stop blushing like a ripe tomato!! I'm not getting at you, Montag! It's the human condition! I had a dream an hour ago and in this dream you and me, Montag, we got into a furious debate on books. You yelled quotes at me. I calmly parried every thrust. "*Power*", I said. And you, quoting Dr Johnson, said "Knowledge is more powerful than force!" And I said, "Well, Dr Johnson also wrote, that 'He is no wise man that will leave a certainty for an uncertainty.'" Stick with the firemen, Montag. All else is bloody chaos!

Faber: Don't listen to him. It's not an argument he's making. He's just trying to confuse you.

Beatty: And you said, quoting, "Truth will come to light, murder will not be hid long!" And I cried "The Devil can quote the bible for his purpose." And you screamed, "Knowledge is power!" What do you make of that, eh?

(Beatty seizes Montag's wrist.)

Faber: Don't be tempted to reply. Give him as little as possible.

Beatty: God, what a pulse! Frightened? Nervous? I've got you wrong, have I, Montag? Shall I talk some more? I like your look of panic. Swahili, Bengali, English Literature, I speak them all.

Faber: What's he doing? Give him nothing. Nothing.

Beatty: At the very end of my dream, along I came with the old Salamander here and said, Going my way? And you got in and we drove back to the firehouse in perfect

silence. How about that.

Montag: It sounds like a happy ending to me.

Faber: No!

Beatty: O, Montag knows all about happy endings now!

Faber: Calmly now. Correct your mistake.

Montag: No, sir – I made one mistake.

Beatty: Report's just come in. A fine pile of books, apparently!

Montag: Good with me! Let's go!! What's the address?

Beatty: Just getting clarification now. I'll drive!!

**Track 19: Q27a (CL) Short fire engine.**  
**Visual cue – fire engine made, snap to black + S3**

Beatty and Montag make the fire engine.

Beatty: Are you sure you're all right? You look green. I'd hate you to be coming down with another fever . . .

Montag: I'm fine!

Beatty: Almost there!!

Montag: Where are we? I recognize the area...

Beatty: O, you'll be fine once we're there. Home territory for you. Come on, here we are, jump to it! Let's keep the world happy!

They jump out of the fire engine as they have arrived at their destination.

**Visual cue – jump out of fire engine, snap to G1**

Montag: OK. Let's go!! Let's burn this house down!

(. He freezes. In the distance the sounds from the White Clowns show.)

Beatty: Something the matter, Montag?

Montag: Yes. This is my house.

Mildred enters from the house carrying the bucket of books. She is crying loudly. She sees Montag.

Mildred: Scumbag

Mildred throws the books down and starts crying again. She goes over to Beatty who comforts her with a hug. Just as she is about to exit, he stops her and hands her reward money. She exits.

Beatty: Well, burn it.

**Track 20: Q28 (ML) House burning**

**Visual cue – Montag lifts fire hose light, fast x fade G1 out, S6 on, 3 secs later S8 +S2**

**End of music cue or when Montag puts down fire hose snap back to G1**

Beatty: When you have quite finished, you are under arrest.

Faber: Montag, this is Faber. What's happening?

Montag: This is *happening* to me.

Beatty: O, what a dreadful surprise, Montag!! Everyone nowadays know is absolutely *certain* that nothing will ever happen to *me*. Otherwise, I go on. No consequences, no responsibilities. Except that there are. Aren't there?

Faber: Montag, can you get away, can you run?'

Montag: My feet won't move! (to Beatty) I feel so damn silly. My feet.

Beatty: You've been walking too much, Montag. And talking to girls in the street. Tell me it was just her body? Daisy chains, butterflies, leaves, sunsets, moonbeams... oh, Montag! What good was she ever going to *do*?

Montag: She didn't harm anyone...

Beatty: Didn't, hell! She rose like the goddam midnight sun to sweat you in your bed!

Montag: (to Faber) ... help me...

**Track 21, Q X (ML) Faber dialogue**

Faber: For heaven's sake, Montag... you mustn't speak to me.

Beatty: What is it about fire that's so lovely? It never stops changing does it?

(Beatty blows out the flame. Goes to the cavity and rips out the panel, sweeping the books out onto the floor. )

Beatty: I want you to do this. No kerosene this time. I want you to pull the trigger on every book. I want you to tip that transforming fire across every page, turning each one to pure black.

Faber: Just run, my boy.

Montag: No, no – I can't - the mechanical hound!!

Beatty: O, he's close. He's very close. You wouldn't get very far. Oh you idiot Montag, you damned fool. Why did you do it?

(Beatty slaps Montag round the head)

**Track 22: Q29 (ML) Screeching**

(Montag turns towards the pile of books and Beatty hits him across the head. Faber leaps to his feet, clutching his head and rolling about by the park bench in agony. M screeching electronic sound.)

Montag: What was that for!!

Beatty: This. (Beatty picks out the transmitter from Montag's ear. Turns it off.) So there's more to you than we thought. I'd guessed your conversation had been a little more... erudite... than usual. We'll trace the signal and visit your clever friend. Burn him.

Beatty: Well? What are you waiting for? It's your books, you clean up. You haven't forgotten? - "we burn the ashes".

(Montag looks down at his hands. He lifts the nozzle towards Beatty.)

Beatty: O. Well, that doesn't make the dog go away, but you certainly have my attention. Go on then. Fire away. Let's have your speech. What'll it be this time? Shakespeare? Moliere?

**Track 23: Q 30 and 31 (ML) Beatty burning and Montag escape sequence.**  
**Visual or sound cue Beatty burning – snap G1 out, S6 + S2 on**

(Montag fires the flame thrower and Beatty burning falls back in to the upright box. We hear and see him burning through the screen.

**Visual cue – Montag puts down fire hose, S6 out, leave S2 on + S3**

Montag takes off his coat and torch and places them in the bucket. He also tidies up the books from across the stage in to the bucket.

The Clarissa theme starts and Clarissa enters as a phantom (perhaps with a mask) and dances round Montag in his delirium.

Montag remembers the idea about planting books on fireman's houses and collects a few books up before heading to SR to run.

**X fade S2 +S3 with S9 spot when Montag arrives in S9 position**

We see Montag running in a spotlight SL during which ML clears props and set from SR. We should now be left with an empty stage in which Montag can run back and forth planting books.

**Visual cue – when Montag leaves spotlight fade up G2 50% and/or S4**

(M The sounds of running feet. The howls of Mechanical Hounds. The wail of sirens.)

Scene 15

Sung:: Denham's Dentifrice. Denham's Dentrifice! Denham's. Spelled: D-E-N – H – A – M! *Denham's ... (Or Taylor's terrific toothpaste – a smile as white as Christmas!)*

*Then thru loudhailer:* We interrupt this public information message for a Police Alert. Wanted: Fugitive in the city. Has committed murder and crimes against the State in time of war. Name: Guy Montag. Occupation: Fireman. Watch out for unusual behaviour, report those running or walking in a suspicious manner. Do not approach this fugitive, he may be dangerous. Last seen . . .'

(The announcement is lost in the growing wailing of sirens and the sounds of helicopters – mechanical dogs (M).

**Visual cue = when Faber enters fade up G2 to 100% + S4 out**

Under a street lamp. Montag is waiting, his collar pulled up around his face.

Faber enters.)

Faber: I guessed you would have nowhere else to go. We can't meet for long. Every helicopter, speed car, cop, nosy neighbour and robot bloodhound is out looking for you.

Montag: I didn't just run. I've put a book in the houses of half the local Fire Brigade. I breathed on them, Prof. Those firemen'll be getting visits from packs of robot hounds.

Faber: What plans do you have?

Montag: To keep running. (Shrugs.) That's it.

Faber: You'd better head for the river if you can, follow it along, and if you can hit the old railroad lines going out into the country, follow them. I've heard there are hobo camps all across the country, here and there; walking camps they call them, - mainly alongside the railtracks - if you keep going and keep an eye peeled, they say there's lots of professors, teachers, tutors on the tracks between here and Detroit – Most of them wanted and hunted in the cities like you. If they can survive, so can you.

Montag: I'll find them. I'll survive. I'd better run. Thanks.

(Faber walks about the stage checking in every direction.)

Faber: OK One more thing. I heard something else. The people in those camps are books.

Montag: What?

Faber: There's no paper there, no ink – but the people there, they are the books. They've learned them, memorized them and they can recite them any time. It's just something I heard, but... maybe it's the future.

Montag: Books, people as books, that's crazy! That's amazing!

Faber: Go. Go quickly. God bless you! Thank you!! Thank you for finding me!!

(Montag, shocked a little at this latest revelation. Faber looks about him. Then walks away in the opposite direction leaving Montag SC)

## Scene 16

**Track 24: Q32 to end. (ML) Chase, escape, delirium, hobos, bombers, nuclear attack and end.**

**Music cue – snap to black**

(Sounds of howling sirens music of Clarissa theme – strident).

Montag runs about the stage. CL appears as the hound at the back of the stage searching for Montag.

ML and BF enter with a long strip of blue cloth representing the river. It should stretch most of the width of the stage. They puff it up over the dog so it lands covering Montag from sight. The dog searches the river in vain for Montag.

**Visual cue – cloth out and dog gone (need to be worked out) S10 on**

Montag is swimming in the river for escape. Lights come up of the back screen and we see a silhouette of Clarissa dancing.

**Sound cue – Clarissa theme, add S1.**

**Visual cue – river goes, x fade S10 and S1, add G3 after Clarissa has gone**

## Scene 17

At the end of the Clarissa theme the river should have been removed leaving Montag DSC and an empty stage again as Clarissa fades from the back screen.

A hobo (BF) gives him a hand up then disappears.

(Montag sets off to walk SC and discovers the train tracks USC. He proceeds to walk down stage as if following them. As the music stops and we just hear the wind the Hobos enter from far US (CL, ML, FB). They walk very slowly towards Montag though as he is facing the audience he does not see them at first. Eventually he feels their presence and turns around – all are scared of each other at first.

Montag: The books, the books, you are books! (they all relax)

Hobo 2 (BF): Each one of us.

(Hobos step forward to introduce themselves. Actors can improvise greetings as they do so as well. All three actors have 3 different books/hobos here)

Hobo 1 (CL): Brave New World, Huxley.

Hobo 2: Moon Palace, Auster

Hobo 3 (ML): Grapes Of Wrath, Steinbeck.

Hobo 1: Moby Dick, Melville

Hobo 2: Hamlet, Shakespeare

Hobo 3: Oliver Twist, Dickens

Hobo 1: Midnight's Children, Rushdie

Hobo 2: Snow, Pamuk

Hobo 3: The Poems Of Matthew Arnold. A library of hope, my friend.

Montag: I don't belong here. I've made so many mistakes.

Hobo 1: That's alright. We've all made the right kind of mistakes.

Hobo 2: Do you want to join us?

Montag: But I don't know anything – I am a fireman – all I know is the one poem and a few pages of the bible that I started to read...

Hobo 2: Which pages?

Montag: The Book of Ecclesiastes.

Hobo 1: Sounds fine to me – we need a book of Ecclesiastes!

Montag: I'm not sure I can remember it all...

Hobo 2: It'll come to you.

(A sudden screeching of jets – all run forward to some degree and watch the jets fly over the city.)

**Sound cue – as jets pass dim lights to 20%, then back up again**

Hobo 1: So it's starting.

Montag: The War.

Hobo 3: The counter attack, the retaliation they said would never happen.

(A massive explosion, the stage turns red and a crack of explosion breaks and then is followed by a deep rumble like thunder. They begin to walk forward. A great wind hits them, roaring in the trees. They walk on together, leaning into the wind.)

**Sound cue – explosion, snap black, S2 up and down again  
Bring up G2 and G4 as people move forward**

Hobo 1: (Passing binoculars) Just ash now, the city, white ash (passes the binoculars)

Hobo 2: flat, white ash.

Hobo 3: Lets go. We'll follow the old tracks south. Till we can come back.

(They all turn except for Montag).

Montag: I think... I think I can remember...

**Montag now in spot position so add S9 50% for speech, then fade S9 + G2 as he turns, leaving G4 on**

(As the red light of distant fires lights up the back of the set, Montag begins to recite Ecclesiastes the hobos have turned to listen):

Montag: And on either side of the river there was a tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the trees where for the healing of the nations.

They all turn and walk slowly off.

(As the wind rises and we hear the theme of Clarissa and a howling wind).

**Fade G4 to black on last phrase of music.**

END

**G1 applause (Keep lights up during applause)**

