DIMENSION X

Written by

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Re-Imagined Radio
Season 11, Episode 11, November 20, 2023

Final draft

Dimension X

Stories in time and space

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Season 11, Episode 11
Final Draft

Premier broadcast: November 20, 2023

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Sound design, Music composition, Post-Production by Marc Rose

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Synopsis
This episode of Re-Imagined Radio celebrates *Dimension X*, a radio science fiction series broadcast from April 8, 1950 to September 29, 1951. Less than a year. Only fifty episodes. Despite this short span, *Dimension X* pioneered science fiction radio storytelling, according to James Widner and Meade Frierson, "using imagination to experience whatever is being talked about, read or acted out" (8). In doing this work, *Dimension X* provided the essential radio storytelling DNA for *X Minus One*, perhaps the most acclaimed science fiction anthology radio series ever broadcast.

Dimension X was neither the earliest nor the most famous radio science fiction series. But, its far-reaching legacy continues to inform our thinking about science fiction radio storytelling. With this episode we explore that legacy. First by reviewing radio science fiction programs leading up to *Dimension X*, and second by listening to "The Outer Limit," the first episode of *Dimension X* and perhaps the most often broadcast radio science fiction story.

Color Code
<mark>Yellow highlighted text</mark> = sound effect(s), either pre-recorded or created for episode. Pre-recorded audio is used as content in this episode.

~~<mark>Magenta highlighted text with strike through</mark>~~ = text deleted for episode timing

<mark>MUSIC</mark> = pre-recorded

<mark>MUSIC</mark> = bespoke, created for this episode

COLD OPEN

SFX: OPENING OF DIMENSION X.

MUSIC: LOW RUMBLE UNDER

ANNCR   Adventures in time and space ... told in future tense!

               MUSIC: RUMBLE BECOMES ROAR AND CRASH

ANNCR   Dimension X (ECHO "X" OUT)

               MUSIC: FOUR SLOW DRUMBEATS, THEN UNDER

ANNCR   Can you predict what will come in one hundred years? Or in ten? Or in the next minute?

               MUSIC: DRUMBEATS OUT

ANNCR   Some people think they can. Nuclear scientists. Mathematicians. Astronomers. Biologists. They'll predict the shape of the future. Why? Because they MAKE the future. Because they see beyond the known dimensions of time and space - into the unknown: Dimension X.

               THEME AND ANNOUNCER

               MUSIC: RIR THEME

ANNOUNCER   Welcome to Re-Imagined Radio, a program about radio storytelling. I'm Jack Armstrong. With each episode we combine dialogue, sound effects, and music to

<mark>engage your listening imagination. This episode is no different, and here to tell you about it is John Barber, producer and host.</mark>

<u>HOST OPEN</u>

HOST   Thank you Jack. Hello everyone. Welcome.

This episode of Re-Imagined Radio celebrates *Dimension X*, a science fiction anthology series broadcast on the NBC radio network, April 1950 to September 1951.

Although its lifespan was short, only 17 months, just 50 episodes, the legacy of *Dimension X* is long lasting. Stories adapted for *Dimension X* became the DNA for science fiction storytelling as we know it today.

We explore that legacy in two ways. First by reviewing radio science fiction programs leading up to *Dimension X*, and second by listening to "The Outer Limit," the first episode of *Dimension X* and perhaps the most often broadcast radio science fiction story.

Our radio storytelling originates from KXRW-FM. Vancouver, Washington's community radio station. We thank them for their support.

And we thank YOU for joining us as Re-Imagined Radio celebrates Dimension X:

Stories in Space and Time . . . Told in a future tense.

MUSIC: SF THEME. FOR TRANSITION

HOST INTRODUCTION

HOST   Science fiction literature was well established with adult and younger readers before radio became a popular entertainment and information medium. Novels by Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, and Edgar Rice Burroughs introduced ideas of space travel, alien life forms, and adventures on other planets. Beginning in the 1920s, science fiction stories also appeared in magazines, and comics.

Radio producers, eager to attract listeners, adapted science fiction stories as radio programs throughout the so-called "Golden Age of Radio," the 1930s to the 1950s.

BUCK ROGERS IN THE 25TH CENTURY

HOST   *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* is perhaps the earliest example.

SFX: OPENING FROM "BUCK ROGERS IN THE 25TH CENTURY"

"BUCK ROGERS IN THE 25TH CENTURY!"

SFX: ROCKET LAUNCH

> <mark>"BUCK ROGERS IS BACK ON THE AIR. BUCK AND WILMA AND ALL THEIR FASCINATING FRIENDS AND MYSTERIOUS ENEMIES IN THE SUPER-SCIENTIFIC 25TH CENTURY. SHALL WE JOIN HIM THERE? OKAY THEN. HERE WE GO, FIVE HUNDRED YEARS INTO THE FUTURE."</mark>

> <mark>SFX: ROCKET LAUNCH</mark>

HOST   The character Anthony Rogers first appeared in the novella *Armageddon 2419 A.D.* by Philip Francis Nowlan, published in the August 28, 1928 issue of *Amazing Stories* (Nowlan 1928).

Nowlan, with illustrator Dick Calkins, adapted the story to a comic strip, and changed the lead character's name to "Buck," beginning in January 1929.

Adapted to radio in 1932, and heard until 1947, Buck Rogers, along with Wilma Deering, and Dr. Elias Huer, inventor of the Mechanical Mole, the Gyrocosmic Relativator, Thermal Radiation Projectors, Flexo-Impervium metal, Electro-Hypno Mentalo Phones, Sub-Cosmic Radio Units, Non-Recoil Energy Projectors, and Moleculear Expansion Beam Projectors (DeForest 182), battle criminals and warlords like Killer Kane, and his crime paramour, Ardala Valmar (Science Fiction in Radio).

As its legacy, *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* brought the idea of space adventure into popular media. And,

introduced compelling radio storytelling to its target audience of younger listeners.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

INTERPLANETARY ADVENTURES OF FLASH GORDON

HOST   *The Amazing Interplanetary Adventures of Flash Gordon* was created specifically to compete with *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*.

SFX: OPENING FROM "AMAZING INTERPLANETARY ADVENTURES OF FLASH GORDON"

"PRESENTING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN RADIO THE AMAZING INTERPLANETARY ADVENTURES OF FLASH GORDON AND DALE ARDEN."

MUSIC: CRESCENDO

"THESE THRILLING ADVENTURES COME TO YOU AS THEY ARE PICTURED EACH SUNDAY IN THE COMIC WEEKLY, THE WORLD'S GREATEST PICTORIAL SUPPLEMENT OF HUMOR AND ADVENTURE. THE COMIC WEEKLY NOW PRINTED IN THIRTY-TWO TABLOID-SIZED PAGES EACH PAGE IN FULL FOUR COLORS IS DISTRIBUTED EVERYWHERE AS A PART OF YOUR HEARST SUNDAY NEWSPAPER."

MUSIC: FADES OUT

HOST   Each of the 26 radio episodes, targeted
              to younger listeners, broadcast April to
              October, 1935, followed almost verbatim,
              *The Amazing Interplanetary Adventures of
              Flash Gordon* comic strip, created in
              1934 by Alexander (Alex) Gillespie
              Raymond.

              The main characters include Flash
              Gordon, a handsome polo player and Yale
              University graduate, Dale Arden, and Dr.
              Hans Zarkov. Together, they travel in
              Dr. Zarkhov's rocket ship to a strange
              planet, called Mongo. They meet, fight,
              and make friends with the rulers and
              creatures of several kingdoms. Returning
              to Earth, Flash and Dale marry and the
              series ends, but returns, almost
              immediately, as we'll hear shortly.

              Many artifacts introduced in *The Amazing
              Interplanetary Adventures of Flash
              Gordon* can be followed into later radio
              series. For example, the "spacephone,"
              first introduced in the July 1, 1934
              Flash Gordon comic strip, was
              incorporated by William "Mike" Moser
              into his radio series, *Space Patrol*.

              MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

              FURTHER INTERPLANETARY ADVENTURES
              OF FLASH GORDON

HOST   *The Amazing Interplanetary Adventures of
              Flash Gordon* ended on Saturday, October
              26, 1935. The following Monday, October
              28, *The FURTHER Interplanetary
              Adventures of Flash Gordon* debuted as a

four-day-a-week, fifteen-minute radio show. The series continued until February 6, 1936. The primary audience was younger listeners.

> SFX: OPENING FROM "FURTHER INTERPLANETARY ADVENTURES OF FLASH GORDON"

> "GROVES EMULSIFIED NOSE DROPS BRING TO YOUR RADIOS THE FURTHER INTERPLANETARY ADVENTURES OF FLASH GORDON. IT IS THE SAME DARING AND RESOURCEFUL FLASH GORDON WHOSE EXPLOITS HAVE HELD YOU SPELLBOUND IN THE NEWSPAPERS. NOW THROUGH YOUR LOUDSPEAKER EVERY MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, AND THURSDAY AT THIS SAME TIME, TRAVEL WITH FLASH GORDON, DALE ARDEN, AND DR. ZARKOV TO THE LOST CONTINENT OF ATLANTIS ON THE OCEAN'S FLOOR."

HOST　　　　*The Further Interplanetary Adventures of Flash Gordon* frequently strayed from Raymond's comic strip. As you heard, Flash, Dale, and Dr. Zarkov shared an adventure in Atlantis, the mythical sunken city.

> MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

> LATITUDE ZERO

HOST　　　　The next science fiction program on our timeline is *Latitude Zero*, broadcast on the NBC Radio Network in 1941.

SFX: OPENING FROM "THE FIRST SHOW," EPISODE #01 OF LATITUDE ZERO.

"THE NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY PRESENTS . . . LAAAAATITUUUUDE ZEROOOOOOO.

SFX: ECHOING ROCKET LAUNCH

"LATITUDE ZERO. ADVENTURE FANS ATTENTION! TONIGHT BEGINS THE FIRST EPISODE OF THE MOST EXCITING AND FABULOUS ADVENTURE STORY YOU'VE EVERY HEARD. LATITUDE ZERO, ESPECIALLY WRITTEN FOR RADIO BY TED SHERDEMAN. A STORY OF FIVE MEN AGAINST THE WORLD. HEROIC MEN WITH IDEALS AND THE COURAGE AND STRENGTH TO FIGHT FOR THEM. LATITUDE ZERO."

SFX: ROCKET LAUNCH

HOST   According to a review in *Time* magazine, *Latitude Zero* was quote "broadcast [on NBC] accompanied by the world's most bizarre barrage of sound effects. The script is written to match. The program dwells on the doings of one Captain Craig McKenzie. Anxious to save civilization from its doom, the Captain operates an insular Shangri-La in the South Pacific. The Captain populates his island with all kinds of high-toned people, whom he transports to his hideaway at 'Latitude Zero' (i.e., somewhere on the Equator) in a submarine. To rescue them he has brushes with huge man-eating crabs and trees,

griffons and an evil fellow called Malic, who runs a rocket ship" unquote.

Seventeen episodes were produced by NBC, in 1941. Only one is known to survive.

Given the *Time* magazine review, and the radio storytelling of the surviving episode, it's easy to lament the absence of the rest of the series.

MUSIC: RIR THEME FOR BREAK

THE FUSEBOX BREAK

HOST   This is Re-Imagined Radio. I'm John Barber, producer and host. We'll return to *Dimension X* in just a moment. But first I want to tell you about The Fusebox Show. Produced by Marc Rose, it's a different kind of radio storytelling, full of quirky conversation and comedy, and its own form of science fiction. Here's a sample.

SFX: THE FUSEBOX SHOW TEASER

HOST   Learn more, and subscribe to the podcast at *The Fusebox Show* website, thefuseboxshow dot com.

MUSIC: RIR THEME, FADE UNDER AND OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING

BEYOND TOMORROW

HOST   We've arrived at the year 1950 in our
                        review of early science fiction radio
                        shows. This is when *Beyond Tomorrow*
                        would have introduced itself to radio
                        listeners like this . . .

                                    SFX: OPENING FROM "INCIDENT AT
                                    SWITCHPATH," EPISODE 03 OF BEYOND
                                    TOMORROW.

                                    "NOW, FOR TONIGHT'S STORY, LET'S GO
                                    . . . BEYOND TOMORROW."

                                    MUSIC: DRUM ROLL, ETC.

                                    "ARE YOU AFRAID TO FACE TOMORROW?
                                    OR WHATEVER MAY LIE BEYOND
                                    TOMORROW? DO YOU THINK YOU'RE UP TO
                                    SPENDING A WEEKEND ON THE MOON? OR
                                    ENTERTAINING HOUSE GUESTS FROM
                                    MARS? CAN YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN
                                    ADJUST TO THE STRANGE, NEW,
                                    WONDERFUL WORLD THAT IS BEING
                                    WROUGHT IN THE TEST TUBES AND
                                    CYCLOTRONS OF SCIENCE BEYOND
                                    TOMORROW? BEYOND TOMORROW, A NEW
                                    PROGRAM OF PROBABILITIES DRAWN FROM
                                    THE VAST LIBRARY OF SCIENCE FICTION
                                    WHERE ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE AND
                                    POSSIBLY MAY HAPPEN TO YOU."

                                    MUSIC: UP, AND FADE OUT

HOST   I say *Beyond Tomorrow* WOULD have
                        introduced itself to radio listeners for
                        a reason. Allegedly, the series was
                        intended as the first science fiction
                        program for the Columbia Broadcasting
                        System. The anthology series, featuring

adaptations of published works, was intended for adult listeners. An audition and three episodes were recorded.

They were announced in newspapers. But it's unknown whether they were actually broadcast.

Interestingly, both the first and last episodes are the same story, "The Outer Limit," which we'll learn more about when we tune our attention to *Dimension X*.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

SPACE PATROL

HOST　　Next on our timeline is *Space Patrol*, broadcast on ABC radio, 1951–1955.

SFX: OPENING FROM "BUZZ CORRY BECOMES COMMANDER IN CHIEF," PILOT EPISODE FOR SPACE PATROL.

"SPACE PATROL! HIGH ADVENTURE IN THE WILD, VAST REGIONS OF SPACE. MISSIONS OF DARING IN THE NAME OF INTERPLANETARY JUSTICE. TRAVEL INTO THE FUTURE WITH BUZZ CORRY, COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE SPACE PATROL."

SFX: ROCKET FLYBY

HOST　　As a radio science fiction / adventure / space opera series, *Space Patrol* was set

in the 30th-century. Episodes followed Commander-in-Chief Edward "Buzz" Corry of the United Planets Space Patrol and his sidekick, Cadet Happy, and other crew aboard the spaceship *Terra V*, as they tried to keep the peace in space using ray guns, Space-O-Phones, and atomolights.

Space Patrol is significant because it began as a television program for young listeners and was then adapted for radio. Its cross-marketed promotional items connected the series narrative into the daily lives of many listeners. It remains an enjoyable radio series for radio fans and collectors. By the way, the announcer you heard, Dick Tufeld, later voiced the robot in the television series, *Lost in Space*.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

TWO THOUSAND PLUS

HOST   *Two Thousand Plus* is called the first adult science fiction radio series, and was heard on the Mutual Radio Network, 1950 to 1952.

SFX: OPENING FROM "FLYING SAUCERS," EPISODE OF TWO THOUSAND PLUS.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC

"2000 PLUS!"

MUSIC: BOOMING

"ADVENTURES INTO THE WORLD OF
TOMORROW. SCIENCE FICTION STORIES
FROM YEARS BEYOND 2000 AD."

MUSIC: MELODRAMATIC CRESCENDO

HOST   The melodramatic episodes of *Two
              Thousand Plus* were written and produced
              by Sherman H. Dryer, with Robert
              Weenolsen.

              Eighty-nine episodes of *Two Thousand
              Plus* were produced. Sixteen are said to
              survive.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

TOM CORBETT

HOST   The radio series, *Tom Corbett, Space
              Cadet*, was heard on ABC, in 1952. Many
              episodes were adapted from the Tom
              Corbett television series, 1950 to 1955.
              The same cast was used for both
              television and radio episodes.

SFX: OPENING FROM "LIVING CRYSTALS
OF TITAN," EPISODE OF TOM CORBETT,
SPACE CADET.

MUSIC: ORGAN STINGER

"THE WORLD BEYOND TOMORROW IN THE
AGE OF THE CONQUEST OF SPACE.

MUSIC: ORGAN STINGER

> WHEN ROARING ROCKETS BLAST TO DISTANT STARS AND FAR-FLUNG PLANETS WITH
>
> MUSIC: ORGAN STINGER
>
> TOM CORBETT, SPACE CADET."

HOST   Episodes were broadcast on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Each was complete in itself but the story line would span both shows for the week with Part 1 broadcast on Tuesday and Part 2 on Thursday (Pippin).

Stories followed Corbett and friends Roger Manning and Astro, a Venutian, as they trained at the Space Academy to become members of the Solar Guard, an interplanetary police force that helps maintain the Solar Alliance of Earth, Mars, and Venus. Much of their training is aboard their spaceship, *Polaris*.

> MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION
>
> PLANET MAN

HOST   Circa 1952 to 1953, Palladium Radio Productions provided episodes of *The Planet Man* to radio stations around the country.

> SFX: OPENING FROM "ORBIT THE MOON," EPISODE 02 OF THE PLANET MAN.
>
> "THE PLANET MAN."
>
> MUSIC: STYLIZED ROCKET LAUNCH

> "THE . . . PLANET . . . MAN"
> (ECHOING)
>
> "THIS IS THE FASCINATING STORY OF
> DANTRO, THE PLANET MAN, TROUBLE
> SHOOTER FOR THE LEAGUE OF PLANETS
> ORGANIZATION, THE LAW ENFORCEMENT
> BODY FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE IN THE
> CELESTIAL WORLD WHOSE HEADQUARTERS
> AND CENTRAL OPERATIONS ARE SITUATED
> ON THE CAPITAL OF ALL THE PLANETS,
> PLANERIA REX. FROM MERCURY TO
> PLUTO, WHEREVER DANGER THREATENS
> THE UNIVERSE YOU WILL FIND DANTRO,
> THE PLANET MAN FIGHTING FOR FAIR
> PLAY. IN A MOMENT, THE PLANET MAN."

HOST   Dantro, The Planet Man, patrols the
                galaxy for The League of Planets,
                keeping the peace.

                Forbidden to use violence, except in
                self defense, The Planet Man fights
                aggressive evil warlords like Marston,
                the ruler of Mars.

                Dantro is helped by Dr. John Darrow, a
                scientist, Darrow's daughter Pat, nephew
                and niece Billy and Jane, and engineer
                Slats. Dantro rescued them all when
                their rocket was about to crash into the
                Moon.

                The Planet Man extends some familiar
                tropes heard in earlier science fiction
                radio series. Like the main character
                standing for fair play, justice, and
                diversity. And there's the helpful
                scientist. And space travel.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

CAPTAIN STARR

HOST   Next up is *Captain Starr of Space*, heard on ABC radio, June 1953 to May 1954.

              SFX: OPENING FROM "THE MYSTERY OF MARS," EPISODE 02 OF STARR OF SPACE.

              SFX: ROCKET LAUNCH

              FROM OUT OF THE FUTURE COMES

              SFX: ROCKET FLYBY

              CAPTAIN STARR OF SPACE, SPACE, SPACE (ECHOING)

              ROAM THE STAR WORLD WITH CAPTAIN STARR, ACE ADVENTURER OF SPACE. THRILLING TRANSCRIBED ADVENTURES IN OUTER SPACE AND STRANGE AND FAR OFF WORLDS WHERE MYSTERY, INTRIGUE, AND DANGER RIDE ON EVERY SPACE FLEET MISSION WITH

              CAPTAIN STARR OF SPACE, SPACE, SPACE (ECHOING)"

HOST   Captain Starr and his Space Rangers travel throughout the galaxy aboard their spaceship, *Shooting Star*, dealing with interplanetary criminals, and other exciting galactic adventures.

              Captain Starr of Space continues the tropes of spaceships, space travel, ray

guns, futuristic technology, and systems of justice.

Potentially, 75 episodes were produced. 8 are thought to survive, but only 4 circulate.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

X MINUS ONE

HOST   Next, a science fiction radio program that you may have heard of, and perhaps remember: *X Minus One*.

As a science fiction series with broad adult appeal, *X Minus One* was broadcast by NBC radio from 1955 to 1958.

The opening of each episode significantly upgraded the familiar trope of a rocket launch, and the echo plate effect that originated with *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*, 23 years earlier.

SFX: OPENING FROM "X MINUS ONE."

COUNTDOWN FOR BLASTOFF . . . X MINUS FIVE, FOUR, THREE, TWO, X MINUS ONE . . . FIRE!

SFX: ROCKET LAUNCH

FROM THE FAR HORIZONS OF THE UNKNOWN COME TALES OF NEW DIMENSIONS IN TIME AND SPACE. THESE ARE STORIES OF THE FUTURE;

> ADVENTURES IN WHICH YOU'LL LIVE IN A MILLION COULD-BE YEARS ON A THOUSAND MAY-BE WORLDS. THE NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, IN COOPERATION WITH GALAXY SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE, PRESENTS X-X-X-X MINUS-MINUS-MINUS-MINUS ONE-ONE-ONE-ONE . . .

HOST   *X Minus One* is known for high quality radio adaptations by writers Ernest Kinoy and George Lefferts of stories by leading science fiction writers that appeared in *Galaxy Magazine*.

Re-Imagined Radio celebrated this legacy in June 2021 with samples from "The Veldt" by Ray Bradbury and "The Cave of Night" by James E. Gunn.

X Minus One is significant because it continued the "X factor"---stories told in future "time and space"---from *Dimension X*. Which we'll talk about next.

MUSIC: TRANSITION

DIMENSION X

HOST   More than 20 years after the first science fiction radio programs, both radio creators and consumers understood that science fiction literature and radio storytelling thrive on engagement and imagination. Words on pages and dialogue, sound effects, and music heard in radio programs interact with the

imagination to create images in readers' and listeners' minds (McHugh 21). These images can "evoke places (where things happen) and actions (that happen there) (Nuzum 114)

Dimension X demonstrates how effective that connection can be.

SFX: OPENING FROM "DIMENSION X."

MUSIC: LOW RUMBLE UNDER

ANNCR   Adventures in time and space ... told in future tense!

MUSIC: RUMBLE BECOMES ROAR AND CRASH

ANNCR   Dimension X (ECHO "X" OUT)

MUSIC: FOUR SLOW DRUMBEATS, THEN UNDER

ANNCR   Can you predict what will come in one hundred years? Or in ten? Or in the next minute?

MUSIC: DRUMBEATS

ANNCR   Some people think they can. Nuclear scientists. Mathematicians. Astronomers. Biologists. They'll predict the shape of the future. Why? Because they MAKE the future. Because they see beyond the known dimensions of time and space – into the unknown: Dimension X.

HOST   The stories, tropes and techniques of
                        early science fiction radio programs
                        provide context and perspective for the
                        unique radio storytelling of *Dimension
                        X*.

                        For example, instead of adapting comic
                        strips, or television shows, writers
                        Ernest Kinoy and George Lefferts
                        faithfully adapted science fiction
                        stories by actual science fiction
                        writers like Ray Bradbury, Robert Bloch,
                        Robert Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, Kurt
                        Vonnegut, and others.

                             MUSIC: RIR THEME, ESTABLISH AND
                             FADE UNDER AND OUT

                             THE RIR BREAK

                             MUSIC: RIR THEME. ESTABLISH, THEN
                             FADE OUT UNDER THE FOLLOWING.

HOST   This is Re-Imagined Radio. I'm John
                        Barber, producer and host. With each
                        episode we explore radio storytelling
                        using voice, sound effects, and music.
                        Here are some examples . . .

                             SFX: RE-IMAGINED RADIO AUDIO
                             TRAILER

                        More information and listening
                        opportunities are available at our
                        website--reimaginedradio DOT net

                        Re-Imagined Radio is also available as
                        podcasts. Subscribe, listen, like, and

review wherever you get your podcasts, or, from our website.

<u>MUSIC: RIR THEME, RETURN.</u>

HOST   Although its lifespan was short, only 17 months, 50 episodes, the legacy of *Dimension X* is long lasting. Stories adapted for *Dimension X* became the DNA for *X Minus One*, and science fiction storytelling as we know it today.

We can demonstrate this impact by highlighting the opening episode of *Dimension X*, "The Outer Limit."

The original story, by Graham Doar, was first published in *The Saturday Evening Post*, December 24, 1949 (pp. 22, 23, 72).

The story concerns a pilot testing a new, experimental aircraft who disappears with only ten minutes of fuel left. Given up for dead, he returns ten hours later with a message given him, he says, by aliens: stop developing and using atomic weapons.

Doar's story effectively combines post war angst, Cold War fears, and interest bordering on hysteria for flying saucers to create a template for several alien "close encounter" stories that followed.

Adapted for radio, "The Outer Limit" was first heard as Episode 97 of *Escape*.

It was scheduled for both *Beyond This World* and *Beyond Tomorrow*, heard twice on *Dimension X,* twice on *Suspense*, and finally on *X Minus One*.

As result, "The Outer Limit" may be the most frequently broadcast science fiction radio story.

Let's listen to "The Outer Limit," as heard on *Dimension X*.

THE OUTER LIMIT

SFX: THE OUTER LIMIT, AS HEARD ON DIMENSION X.

MUSIC: THEREMIN & ORGAN . ESTABLISH, THEN UNDER ANNOUNCER

ANNOUNCER   We go ahead in time now to 1965. We're on a vast concrete runway, set in the desert of the southwest. A giant metal ship stands before us - prow pointed for the stars - and in five minutes the signal will flash and it will tear up through the atmosphere...to the Outer Limit!

MUSIC: THEREMIN BACK UP. OUT UNDER VOICE

SFX: AIR RAID SIREN CONTINUES UNDER VOICE

VOICE ON   Attention! Attention! Clear field for
SPEAKER   takeoff (VOICE GOES UNDER DIALOGUE) Clear field for takeoff!

HANK   Five minutes, Steve.

STEVE   Right.

HANK   (SHOUTING) Warm 'er up, Charlie!

CHARLIE   (SHOUTS BACK) Turn 'er over!

                        SFX: JET ENGINES START TO WHINE

HANK   I want to go over procedure again,
                        Steve.

STEVE   Don't worry, I've got it straight.

HANK   Just make sure.

STEVE   Okay. I take 'er up on jets to fifty-
                        thousand, and then I cut in the rockets.

HANK   No lower, or your tail blast will blow
                        out three counties.

STEVE   I climb four minutes on rockets, and
                        then start maneuver tests.

HANK   Remember that. No more than four
                        minutes.

STEVE   Right.

HANK   This ship isn't like those strato-
                        rockets you've been testing. She's the
                        first one built for outer space. If she
                        works, we can go clear to the moon.

STEVE   If I'd have known that, I'd have brought
                        my toothbrush.

HANK   Well, not this trip. Now get this,
                Steve, you've got power there to clear
                the Earth's gravitational field. But
                remember - after you cut in the rockets,
                you've only got ten minutes' fuel. If
                you go beyond the Outer Limit, and don't
                save fuel for the return --

STEVE   I know. I won't get down again.

HANK   That's right, Steve. You'll drift off
                into space. Get that, now. Ten minutes'
                fuel!

STEVE   Gotcha.

HANK   Now as far as I'm concerned, this
                project is a lot more important than
                that cosmic ray bomb they're testing out
                in the Pacific tonight.

STEVE   Well, Security Commission brass doesn't
                think so -- I don't see any Under
                Secretaries under anything.

HANK   Don't worry. In the long run, our ship
                will make the CR bomb back-page stuff.
                But in the meantime, it's just as
                dangerous. Remember, half the principles
                on this ship are pure theory, Steve;
                slide rule stuff. If anything goes
                wrong, we may have to scrape you off the
                landscape with a soup spoon.

STEVE   You have a charming sense of humor.

HANK   Now here's what I'm getting at-- We're
                risking your neck on this test. If

anything blows, we don't want the next
man pull the same boner.

STEVE   I know, Hank.

HANK   So keep your mike open and keep talking.
                  If anything goes wrong, we want to know
                  exactly why. And we won't be able to ask
                  YOU. Let us know before you pull every
                  switch - before you do anything. You got
                  that?

STEVE   Yeah.

HANK   Even if you only have to blow your nose.

CHARLIE   (SHOUTS OFF) All right! Get those fuel
                  lines away!

TECH   Okay, Mr. Pearl!

HANK   Well, I guess that's about all, Steve.

STEVE   That reminds me-- Look, if Mary calls,
                  I'm just up on a milk run. I didn't tell
                  her today was it.

HANK   How is she?

STEVE   She's okay, but she's due about now, and
                  I don't want her to be nervous.

HANK   Hey, I didn't know the baby was that
                  close.

STEVE   Yeah.

HANK   Steve, I really ought to be sending a
                single man on this job ...

STEVE   What, and cut me out of a soft paycheck?
                Forget it, Hank. You know you can't get
                anybody else who can take fifteen gees
                acceleration when those rockets cut in.

HANK   Yeah, I know. (BEAT) It's time, Steve.

STEVE   Yeah. (BEAT) Well, see ya later. Don't
                worry Hank, I'll sweat for both of us.
                (SHOUTS) Button 'er up, Charlie!

CHARLIE   Yeah.

STEVE   So long, Hank.

HANK   So long. We'll give you the light from
                control!

                        SFX: DOOR ON SHIP SLAMS SHUT

                        MUSIC: TRANSITION

                        SFX: STEADY BEEP OF RADAR ESTABLISH
                        THEN UNDER THROUGH SCENE

STEVE   (FILTER) X2R to Control...X2R to
                Control, are you there yet, Hank?

HANK   Okay, Steve. Got you on the speaker. I'm
                ready to go.

ELSIE   Mr. Hansen.

HANK   Ready on radar, sergeant?

SARGE   (OFF) Check

ELSIE   Mr. Hansen, you'd better see this.

HANK   What is it, Elsie?

ELSIE   Message sent in for Steve. Mrs. Weston
                 just left for the hospital.

HANK   What? Hello, Steve.

STEVE   (FILTER) What?

HANK   Stand by a minute.

ELSIE   Shall we hold the takeoff, Mr. Hansen?

HANK   What? Oh, yes -- no, wait just a minute,
                 it's, uh, it's too late, now.

ELSIE   Aren't you going to tell him?

HANK   Maybe he's got enough to worry about.

STEVE   (FILTER) Hey, what's holding us up,
                 Hank? Something on your mind?

HANK   No, no. it's nothing, Steve. I just
                 wanted to say... good luck. (LOUDER)
                 Clear for takeoff, Charlie?

CHARLIE   (OFF) Right.

HANK   Okay -- give him the light.

                 SFX: EFFECT AS ROCKET BLASTS OFF

                 MUSIC: THERAMIN SWOOP UP

                 SFX: STEADY BEEP OF RADAR CONTINUES
                 UNDER

HANK   All right, Steve, I'm reading you clear.

STEVE   (FILTER) I'm at forty thousand. Air
                     speed six hundred -- she's running fine.
                     The soundproofing works. There's a third
                     degree waver in the AGY pressure.

HANK   Got that, Charlie?

CHARLIE   (OFF) Check.

SARGE   (OFF) Dead center on radar, Mr. Hansen.

STEVE   (FILTER) Fifty thousand now ... cutting
                     out the port jet. Now the starboard. I'm
                     off jets ... airspeed dropping ...
                     Opening the rocket selects. The switch
                     sticks a little, Charlie. Throughout the
                     hull, pressure is three-fifty ... All
                     right now, I'm advancing the ignition
                     key ... Here goes rocket one ...

                         SFX: (FILTER) ROCKET FIRES)

                         SFX: BEEPS FASTER THEN UNDER

HANK   Steve, you all right?

STEVE   (FILTER) Yeah. Feels like somebody
                     slugged me with a sledgehammer. Airspeed
                     now at twelve hundred. Here goes number
                     two.

                         SFX: (FILTER) ROCKET FIRES.
                         THERAMIN. PAUSE WE SWITCH POV TO
                         ROCKET. ENGINES CLEARLY IN BG.

HANK   (FILTER) Hello, Steve. Elapsed rocket
                time is now four minutes. What's your
                altitude? Over to you.

STEVE   Speed forty-four hundred. Still climbing
                ... Altitude ... two hundred and ninety-
                seven miles.

HANK   (FILTER) All right, you're at the Outer
                Limit. Level off for maneuver test.
                You've got exactly six minutes' fuel
                left.

STEVE   Okay. Starting a three-degree left bank.
                It's a little sluggish ... there, it's
                all right, now ... There's a low
                vibration someplace ... maybe the
                cockpit hatch ... Now I'm straightening
                out.

HANK   (FILTER) Five minutes' fuel left.

STEVE   Now I'm starting a three degree
                right --- Hey!

HANK   (FILTER) What's the matter? What's
                wrong?

STEVE   There's something up here - something
                shiny.

HANK   (FILTER) What are you talking about?

STEVE   There's something above me, Hank. I'm
                gonna chase it.

HANK   (FILTER) Steve - Steve, you're at the
                Outer Limit, now.

STEVE   I can see it plain, now.

HANK   (FILTER) Steve, don't go any higher! You've only got four minutes left.

                     SFX: HIGH PITCHED WHINE OF RADIO CUTTING OUT BEGINS

HANK   (FILTER) You've only got --

                     SFX: WHINE DROWNS HIM OUT AND CONTINUES IN BG

STEVE   There's too much static, I can't hear ya, Hank. It's dead ahead, now. I'm gonna make a pass at it, and get a good look. (BEAT) Hey, it's swerving to meet me! It's dead ahead, now! It's dead ahead!

                     SFX: ROAR OF ENGINES. THERAMIN SWOOP. BACK TO GROUND POV. BEEPS CONTINUE.

HANK   Hello? Hello, Steve? Steve, come in!

ELSIE   Nine minutes' fuel gone.

CHARLIE   Still no sign on radar.

HANK   Hello! Hello, Steve? Steve, what's happened? Charlie, get out the crash squad. Tell the Army squadron to alert their search planes.

CHARLIE   Right.

ELSIE   Nine and a-half minutes gone.

CHARLIE   (THIS GOES ON IN BG UNDER DIALOGUE)
                 Crash squad. Crash squadron! Hello?
                 Charlie Clapper for Mr. Hansen. We need
                 a search squadron. No, Mr. Hansen's
                 busy.

HANK   Hello? Hello, Steve! What's happened,
                 where the Devil is he? Hello! Come in,
                 Steve! Come in! Hello! Hello, Steve!
                 Hello, Steve!

                     SFX: AIR RAID SIRENS BEGIN TO BUILD
                     IN BG

ELSIE   Ten minutes, Mr. Hansen. That's the end
                 of his fuel.

                     MUSIC: TRANSITION

                     SFX: STEADY BEEP

HANK   How long has it been, now?

CHARLIE   Ten hours, Mr. Hansen.

HANK   Nothing more on radar, Sergeant?

SARGE   Screen's blank.

ELSIE   Colonel Corelli called in. Search planes
                 are back. They didn't find anything.

HANK   There should be some trace...

ELSIE   He couldn't have bailed out, could he?

HANK   You don't hit the silk at forty four
                 hundred miles an hour. He either went
                 past the Outer Limit and ran out of

fuel, or something blew and we'll find the pieces scattered from here to the coast. (BANGS FIST ON DESK) Why does it have to be the best man? Always the best man?

SFX: BUZZ OF PHONE

ELSIE   I'll get it. (HER CONVERSATION CONTINUES UNDER STEVE AND CHARLIE) Control? Yes, I'll take it. Is that so? All right, I'll tell him. Alright

HANK   Charlie, Charlie, you know, we've got to figure out what was wrong.

CHARLIE   Mmmm...yes.

HANK   Something - something must have blown.

ELSIE   Mr. Hansen?

HANK   Yes?

ELSIE   There's a message from Northside hospital for... for Steve. Mrs. Weston's fine. It's a boy.

HANK   Thank you, Elsie. It's a boy, Charlie.

CHARLIE   Oh.

HANK   Fine, fine, it's a boy. He didn't even know she went to the hospital. How am I gonna tell Mary that?

CHARLIE   It wasn't your fault, Mr. Hansen. The ship had to be tested.

HANK   Yeah, yeah, and we'll build another one and some flying fool will shoot past the Outer Limit into space. (SIGHS) Oh, I'm getting old, Charlie. You can remember when I used to take 'em up myself. Now I've got to send other men.

                SFX: BEEPS BEGIN TO GET CLOSER TOGETHER. ALMOST IMPERCEPTABLY AT FIRST

CHARLIE   It's a job, Mr. Hansen.

HANK   Now I'm afraid. Every time I hear a jet go off, I jump. Every time I have to send someone up in a new model, I start to sweat.

SARGE   (OFF) Mr. Hansen!

HANK   Yeah?

SARGE   (OFF) I think there's something on the radar!

HANK   No flights scheduled in, are there, Elsie?

ELSIE   We have the whole day cleared.

SARGE   (OFF) It's coming in behind us--

                SFX: BEEPS GET CLOSER TOGETHER, JET ROAR BEGINS

SARGE   (OFF) - Here it comes over the building!

                SFX: WHOOSH OF ROCKET ENGINE

HANK   What crazy jockey is buzzing the field like that? Is that an Army plane, Charlie?

CHARLIE   Uh, I can't say...

SARGE   (OFF) It's turning!

HANK   Charlie, alert the field! (BEAT) I know that engine ... Steve!

CHARLIE   That's impossible!

                SFX: ENGINE GETS LOUDER

CHARLIE   That's his ship!

HANK   It can't be!

CHARLIE   Well there's no other model like that! It's Steve, all right!

                SFX: BEEPS STILL GOING. SOUND OF SHIP LANDING

CHARLIE   He's coming in.

HANK   Thank God. (BEAT) Thank God...

                MUSIC: TRANSITION

                SFX: DOORS OPEN, SHUFFLE OF CHAIRS

HANK   All right. Sit down, Steve. The quicker we get this done, the quicker you get over to see Mary and the baby.

STEVE   Hank--

HANK   ~~Elsie, give the order to check and~~
        ~~refuel the rockets. I don't want anybody~~
        ~~in here until I get Steve's reports.~~
        ~~Bury any calls. (TO STEVE) All right,~~
        ~~let's have it. What the devil happened~~
        ~~to you?~~

STEVE   Hank, does that cosmic ray bomb still go
        off tonight?

HANK   What are you talking about? Straighten
        out, Steve! Where have you been for the
        last ten hours?

STEVE   Listen, Hank, there's something more
        I've got --

HANK   Come on, now! I've got to get a report
        on the screen to Washington, so let's
        have it. I've got to know how you
        stretched ten minutes' fuel to keep you
        in the air for ten hours.

STEVE   Now one thing before I talk --

HANK   Look, Steve --

STEVE   Have the Geiger men run over the ship
        before they refuel.

HANK   What'd you run into?

STEVE   So help me, Hank, I don't know. We
        better check and make sure it isn't
        radioactive.

        SFX: CLICK OF INTERCOM

HANK   Elsie, add a Geiger report on the
                standard check.

                SFX: CLICK OF INTERCOM

HANK   Steve, maybe we'd better have the doc
                look YOU over, too.

STEVE   No, no. I'll be all right. They said I'd
                be all right.

HANK   They? Look son, I know you've had a
                tough time, but we've had this field on
                the alert for ten hours. One of the Army
                boys cracked up looking for you, and
                he's hurt bad. So let's have the story.
                Let's have it straight.

STEVE   I don't know how to tell you. Hank, I
                saw something up there -

HANK   At three hundred miles -

STEVE   I CHASED something up there, Hank. And I
                CAUGHT it.

HANK   Now don't hand me that -

STEVE   Listen to me! I was cruising along, just
                starting the right bank when I spotted
                something. Must have been going about
                half my speed. It was - egg-shaped and
                smooth. I made a pass at it, and I was
                coming back for another and then there
                was a humming sound.

HANK   Humming?

STEVE   Sort of vibration. And I blacked out. I was headed straight for it at forty-four hundred miles an hour. I thought it was gonna be the biggest smash since Hiroshima, and - Hank, is there a drink in that bottle?

HANK   Never mind that, Steve, what happened?

STEVE   I came to - inside their ship.

HANK   Uh-huh. (BEAT) Steve, this whole thing's been a devil of a strain on you. I'm gonna to call Major Donaldson from the Army base, ask him to sit in.

STEVE   Psychiatrist? (BEAT) Yeah, yeah. That's a good idea. Let him run his tests, they'll tell you I'm not kidding. 'Cause Hank, unless I miss my guess, I've just been tipped off to the way the world ends.

                      MUSIC: TRANSITION

DONALDSON   All right, Mr. Winston, suppose you continue your story.

HANK   Yes, let's have it, Steve. You woke up inside this ship?

STEVE   Yes. And uh, the place was jammed with machinery - dials, blinkers - I couldn't recognize anything.

DONALDSON   And you were surrounded by these - men from Mars?

STEVE   I didn't say anything about men from Mars. I didn't even say they were men. I - couldn't see them clearly - they were just - there.

DONALDSON   Where did they come from, then?

STEVE   Another galaxy! Millions of miles outside of our solar system. That's all I know! YOU figure out where they came from.

DONALDSON   And they came all that distance to find the Earth?

STEVE   Yes.

DONALDSON   They tell you that?

STEVE   Yes.

DONALDSON   (BEAT) You mean they spoke English to you?

STEVE   No, no, they didn't. (BEAT) That's funny, I hadn't thought - they didn't really speak to me at all, they just - planted the thoughts in my mind.

DONALDSON   You mean thought transference? Telepathy?

STEVE   Yes! That's right.

HANK   Well Steve, what brought them here?

STEVE   We did, Hank! We rang their bell, we brought them in.

DONALDSON   Well, how?

STEVE   With our atomic explosions! Hank, that's
                  why you've gotta stop that bomb test
                  tonight!

HANK   (SIGH) Oh, I give up.

STEVE   Look, you've gotta believe me, Hank! Oh,
                  how can I make you understand?

DONALDSON   Maybe I can help Mr. Hanson. Would you
                  submit to... narco-psychometry?

STEVE   What's that?

DONALDSON   Under proper drugs I can put you back in
                  this, uh, ship - by suggestion. Then we
                  can get a playback record of your memory
                  pattern on the audio circuit.

STEVE   How long will that take?

DONALDSON   Half an hour. We'll have to go up to the
                  lab.

STEVE   Would you believe me if it checks?

DONALDSON: It will give us an accurate memory
                  picture of what your mind reports.

STEVE   All right, let's go. Hank, you've gotta
                  believe me, we haven't got much time!

                        MUSIC: TRANSITION

DONALDSON   You should be getting drowsy, now...
                  Count backwards from ten.

STEVE   Ten... nine.... eight..... seven......
                  siix...... siiix... (PREGNANT PAUSE,
                  THEN HEAVY, RHYTHMIC BREATHING)

DONALDSON   He's under. Now we attach the head plate
                  electrodes...

                          SFX: CLICKS AS ELECTRODES ARE
                          ATTACHED TO HEAD

DONALDSON   ...the cortical pickup...look out for
                  that wire, Mr. Hansen. Three-Oh setting,
                  thirty-one point three. Now throw that
                  switch, Mr. Hansen.

                          SFX: CLICK OF SWITCH. STATIC.

DONALDSON   I have to start him off by suggestion.
                  All right, Steve. You're in your ship,
                  now. You're in the rocket...

STEVE   (DREAMILY) Rocket...

DONALDSON   You're in the rocket. You're in the
                  rocket, and you've just sighted
                  something strange.

STEVE   (FILTER: AS IF HE'S TALKING INTO RADIO)
                  Now I'm starting a three degree right...

HANK   What's that?

STEVE   Hey! There's something up here!
                  Something shiny!

DONALDSON   (TO HANK) His memory pattern. We're
                  picking it up electronically.

STEVE   Something above me, Hank! I'm gonna
               chase it!

DONALDSON   It's piped through the audio circuits.

STEVE   I'm getting static, I can't hear you,
               Hank!

HANK   This is where we lost contact with him.

STEVE   I'm gonna make a pass at it, and - hey!
               It's swerving to meet me! It's dead
               ahead now - it's dead ahead! (PAUSE)

HANK   Now what?

DONALDSON   This is where he blacked out. There's no
               telling how long - minutes or hours.

               SFX: THERAMIN BEGINS UNDER

HANK   What's that noise?

DONALDSON   I don't know -- quiet.

STEVE   Where? - How did I get in here? - Wha -
               Who are you?

DONALDSON   Is he seeing them?

STEVE   Intergalactic Patrol? What's that?

DONALDSON   What are they saying, Steve? What are
               they saying?

STEVE   It's about nuclear fission - they KNOW
               about it. They know the danger of it.
               Long ago they had wars that almost

destroyed them. And finally they learned. Now they've outlawed war.

DONALDSON   Go on, Steve.

STEVE   They patrol space. When their detector picks up an atomic explosion, they send a patrol.

HANK   What are they going to do?

STEVE   They've quarantined us!

DONALDSON   Quarantined!?

STEVE   They've isolated the Earth, 'cause we don't know how to control ourselves yet. Until we learn, we'll be a menace to the whole universe!

HANK   What is this nonsense?

DONALDSON   Quiet. (TO STEVE) How are they going to do it, Steve?

STEVE   They've spread a layer out here of - I don't know how to call it. All around the Earth - it's miles deep. When there's an atomic explosion on Earth, the radioactive particles will drift up to this layer and set off a chain reaction. It'll go around the world in microseconds. And that's the end.

DONALDSON   The end? What's he-- Wait, wait!

STEVE   (TALKING TO SOMEONE ELSE) Yes? Yes. I understand. I've got to bring back the

warning. You're going to put me back in my ship - to bring the warning.

                    SFX: THERAMIN UP AND OUT, REPLACED
                    BY BUZZING STATIC

HANK   Now what?

DONALDSON   He's blacked out again. I guess that's all.

                    SFX: SWITCH FLICKS OFF

HANK   What does all that mean?

DONALDSON   It's what he remembers.

HANK   You don't think that really happened?

DONALDSON   No, no. The narcopsychometry circuits produce what he remembers. It just means that Steve BELIEVES this happened.

STEVE   (MOANS AS HE COMES OUT)

HANK   I don't like to see this. I've seen too many good test pilots snap. Steve is the best I've known. How bad do you think he is?

DONALDSON   Frankly, outside of the presence of this well-organized hallucination, there's no sign of unbalance. It may not be too serious. If he had a more plausible story, I'd be inclined to believe him.

STEVE   (GROGGY) What - why- Hank??

HANK   It's all right, boy.

STEVE   Did you hear it, Hank? Ya understand?

HANK   Sure, sure, we've been quarantined.

DONALDSON   Let me give you something that to make
                        you sleep, Steve.

STEVE   But, don't ya understand? They fixed it
                        so that if we set off one more nuclear
                        explosion - that'll be IT!

DONALDSON   Of course. Don't roll you're sleeve
                        down--

STEVE   You don't believe me!

DONALDSON   Now take it easy, Steve.

STEVE   That test tonight - they're setting off
                        the CR bomb. Hank, what time is it?

HANK   Eleven-twenty.

STEVE   Well, it's scheduled for midnight! Hank,
                        we've gotta stop that bomb!

HANK   Steve, let Donaldson give you the hypo.

STEVE   Hank, you've gotta believe me, I saw
                        them! I got the warning! If we touch off
                        that bomb tonight - It'll be the biggest
                        galactic Fourth of July of all time! The
                        whole Earth'll go up like a Roman
                        candle! April tenth, nineteen sixty-
                        five - The End!

HANK   Now look, Steve, you'd better calm down.
                Don't you want to see Mary and the baby?
                You've got a new son, remember?

STEVE   Well, that's just it - I want to see my
                son - I want him to live! If that bomb
                goes off - Hank, we've got to stop them!

DONALDSON   Mr. Hansen, I think we'd better get over
                to the base hospital.

STEVE   Hank, you've gotta believe me.

HANK   Maybe there is something to it -- look,
                it's out of your hands. I'll put it in a
                report and shuttle it into Washington in
                the morning.

STEVE   In the morning? There isn't going to be
                any morning, Hank! Don't you understand?
                You've gotta call Washington now! Get
                the head of the Security Commission and
                postpone that test!

HANK   Now, you know I can't do that, Steve. My
                neck'd be out a mile! Besides, this is
                nineteen sixty-five, not forty-five.
                Twenty countries have atomic bombs now.
                What's the use of stopping just this
                one? The rest will keep right on popping
                them off.

STEVE   (AGITATED) Well, we'll have to call an
                international conference! Can'tcha
                understand, Hank? The first one that
                goes off finishes us - it's the end!
                They've given us the Quarantine Warning!

HANK   Steve, I think you'd better go with us
                to the base hospital.

STEVE   But--

DONALDSON   ~~Look, Steve, we can call up for a detail
                if we have to.~~

STEVE   (CRYING NOW) All right. All right. I'll
                go with ya. I don't need a strait
                jacket.

DONALDSON   That's the way, Steve. You'll probably
                feel better by morning. Let's go...

                        SFX: FOOTSTEPS. DOOR OPENS.
                        FOOTSTEPS. DOOR CLOSES. FOOTSTEPS
                        CONTINUE. THEY ARE OUTDOORS. THE
                        WIND PICKS UP BG.

HANK   Well, Steve, tomorrow I'll drive you
                over to the hospital to see Mary and the
                kid.

STEVE   (VERY CALM) Sure.

HANK   Look at the ship under the floodlights.
                Pretty, huh? You'll be flying her again
                soon, don't you worry.

STEVE   Yeah. Yeah, I guess so. Uh, what's she
                doin' out on the line? They refuel her?

HANK   Yeah. We got Clausowitz coming in
                tomorrow from Denver for another test.
                Figure we give you a day off.

STEVE   That's good. That's (PUSHES HANK AWAY)
                FINE!

SFX: RUNNING FOOTSTEPS. CONTINUE UNDER.

HANK   Steve! Steve! Come back! Come on, Donaldson! Steve! Steve, wait!

HANK   He's heading for the rocket! Look, there he goes up!

DONALDSON   That crazy fool!

SFX: STEVE CLIMBS INTO ROCKET AND SLIDES THE COVER

HANK   We can't get at him now. That cover's armored glass!

DONALDSON   He's waving!

HANK   Yeah, towards Control! It's the radio -- He means the radio! Come on!

SFX: RUNNING FOOTSTEPS

DONALDSON   I should have gotten help!

SFX: THE STEPS SKID TO A STOP. DOOR OPENS

HANK   Good thing the radio's still hooked up here. Hello. Hello, Steve?

STEVE   (FILTER) Listen to me, Hank. Ya gotta call Washington, now!

HANK   Come on out of that rocket, Steve!

DONALDSON   I'll call my medics.

STEVE   (FILTER) Don't try anything, Hank! They've refueled the rocket for tomorrow.

HANK   Take it easy, Steve.

STEVE   (FILTER) You know what'll happen when I fire the rocket tubes down here?

HANK   Steve, don't!

STEVE   (FILTER) It'll burn out every building for five miles! All of us in one big flash!

HANK   Steve, what do you want?

STEVE   (FILTER) You've gotta stop that bomb! Ya gotta call Washington, right now!

HANK   They won't believe me!

STEVE   (FILTER) You make that call or I cut in the rocket. Now I mean it, Hank! Now hook my screen to yours in parallel - I want to see exactly what you're doing.

HANK   All right, all right. Now just don't fire those rockets!

STEVE   (FILTER) Get going, Hank! You've got twelve minutes to make that call and stop that bomb.

HANK   All right, I'm making the parallel hookup right now.

                 SFX: CLICK

HANK   Donaldson, do you think he'll really
                blast?

DONALDSON   I don't know. Up to now I'd almost say
                he was normal, but now, he's liable to
                do anything, Hansen.

HANK   Steve. Steve, there! Are you getting it
                on your screen?

STEVE   (FILTER) Yeah. Now put that call
                through.

HANK   All right.

                    SFX: CLICK

OPERATOR   (FILTER) Operator.

HANK   Visiscreen to Washington.

OPERATOR   (FILTER) The visiscreen circuits are
                busy, sir. If you'll try again in half
                an hour --

HANK   This is Security Commission priority.
                Break in and get me a line.

OPERATOR 1   (FILTER) Yes, sir! Just a moment,
                please!

STEVE   (FILTER) Ten minutes, Hank.

HANK   Listen, Steve, I'm trying.

OPERATOR   (FILTER) They're ready to take your
                call, sir!

HANK   Washington - Security Commission three,
                        this is urgent! I want undersecretary
                        Herbert Ames!

OPERATOR   (FILTER) Washington thuh-ree, one
                        moment, please.

HANK   Hurry, will you?

OPERATOR   (FILTER) One moment, please.

                        SFX: BEEPS AS CALL CONNECTS

HANK   What time is it, Donaldson?

DONALDSON   Eleven fifty-one.

HANK   Do you think he'll fire those rockets?

DONALDSON   He might.

FEMALE OPR   (FILTER) Washington.

HANK   Visiscreen three. Mr. Herbert Ames,
                        please!

FEMALE OPR   (FILTER) That is a coded exchange, I
                        cannot accept your call without
                        clearance.

STEVE   (FILTER) Get it through, Hank!

HANK   Listen, Washington, put it through! This
                        is Mr. Hansen at San Marco Air Base.
                        This is a priority call. I'm coded!

FEMALE OPR   (FILTER) One moment, please, I'll check
                        your code number.

STEVE   (FILTER) Get that through, Hank! That
                   bomb goes off at twelve!

HANK   Be reasonable, Steve, I--

FEMALE OPR   (FILTER) Your call has cleared, San
                   Marco. Washington visiscreen thu-ree.
                   Herbert Ames, please.

                        SFX: A BUZZ AND CLICK ON THE LINE

AMES   (FILTER) Security Commission, Ames.

HANK   Listen, Ames.

AMES   (FILTER) Oh, hello Hansen.

HANK   Ames, you've gotta get me to the chief.

AMES   (FILTER) Are you kidding? He's at the
                   test control room!

HANK   Yes, I know, but get him for me!

DONALDSON   (FILTER) What's up? You look lousy. Or
                   is it a bad circuit?

HANK   There's no time, I've got to get him
                   before the test! It's about the CR bomb!

AMES   (FILTER) I can't take that
                   responsibility.

STEVE   (FILTER) Get that through, Hank, or I
                   blast!

AMES   (FILTER) What's going on there?

HANK   Ames, my project has a high enough
                        rating. This is a priority A call!

AMES   (FILTER) What? Okay, it's you're neck,
                        I'll try and get him for ya. He's in the
                        control room, so you'll have to switch
                        off your screen and speaker and go on
                        earphones. Too much going on in there.
                        Security ruling.

HANK   You hear that, Steve? I've gotta cut the
                        incoming screen.

STEVE   (FILTER) All right, but don't try
                        anything. Eight minutes, Hank.

                        SFX: SWITCHES CUT OFF

HANK   Hello. Hello! ... What?

STEVE   (FILTER) You got it, Hank?

HANK   (BEAT) Yes... this is Hansen at San
                        Marco ... No sir, Priority A request to
                        cancel the bomb test ... No, no, I'm
                        serious! This is deadly serious! ... We
                        sent the X-2 JTR up today to the Outer
                        Limit. We uncovered evidence ... Yes, on
                        the automatic instruments ... What's
                        that? ... No, possible chain reaction.
                        No, I can't tell you the whole story,
                        there isn't time here ... Yes, yes. I'll
                        bring the readings into Washington in
                        the morning ... You've got to postpone
                        the test 'till you see them ... Look! I
                        worked on contracts with the Commission
                        for ten years! ... Yes, I have complete
                        confidence in my information. You can

record that ... Yes, I'll call you back immediately ... Good bye.

SFX: CLICK

SFX: (FILTER) HANK? HANK?

HANK   He's agreed to cancel, Steve. The bomb won't go off. (LETS OUT A BREATH OF RELIEF) All right boy. You can come down out of that ship.

MUSIC: TRANSITION

SFX: CLICK AND HATCH ON SHIP OPENS WIND IN BG

SARGE   He's opening up. Here he comes.

HANK   All right, Steve! Come down.

STEVE   Sure, Hank. Just a second.

SFX: STEVE GRUNTS AS HE CLIMBS DOWN THE LADDER

STEVE   Hank, I was scared. I was plain scared.

HANK   Easy now, it's all over. The bomb won't go off.

STEVE   Thank God. Look, I want to see Mary and the baby. Can you get me transportation now?

HANK   Wait a minute, it's almost twelve, they won't let you in the hospital, now.

STEVE   I want to see the baby.

DONALDSON   Sure you do, but you've been under a
                 strain. I've got a shot for you here,
                 Steve. It'll give you a good night's
                 sleep. All right - roll up your sleeve.

STEVE   Yeah, here.

DONALDSON   (BEAT) There, that'll make you sleep.
                 The sergeant will find you a bed.

SARGE   Yes, sir. Come on, Mr. Weston.

STEVE   Okay. Good night, Hank. I'm kinda beat.
                 It's been a tough night.

                         SFX: FOOTSTEPS START UNDER LAST
                         LINE

DONALDSON   It sure has. I thought for a minute that
                 he was gonna blast those rockets and
                 send us all to Kingdom Come.

HANK   Yeah.

DONALDSON   Quite a stunt, getting the ray bomb test
                 called off.

HANK   It isn't called off.

DONALDSON   But - the chief said --

HANK   Ames couldn't get the chief. I was
                 talking to a dead circuit. Bomb goes off
                 in a couple of minutes.

DONALDSON   Oh. Poor Steve. He was one of the best.

HANK   He WAS the best.

DONALDSON   One in ten million. Some story of his,
                    poor guy. For a while, he almost had me
                    believing in that quarantine. That's a
                    very common delusion. End of the world.

HANK   Yeah. I suppose so. (BRIGHTENS) It's a
                    nice night. Never saw the stars so
                    bright.

DONALDSON   We'd better be getting in, that wind is
                    cold.

                    SFX: FOOTSTEPS

HANK   That bomb goes off in thirty seconds.
                    Poor Steve.

DONALDSON   You know, Hansen, there's just one
                    thing.

HANK   Yeah?

DONALDSON   It's outside my field, but I'm curious.
                    How did he keep that ship in the air for
                    ten hours - with only ten minutes' fuel?

                    MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT

ANNCR: You have just heard THE OUTER LIMIT, by Graham
Dorr. An adventure in time, space, and the unknown!
(ECHO) Dimension X!

MUSIC: MUFFLED DRUM, FOUR BEATS AND UNDER

ANNCR: Now - about next week. Have you ever heard of the
Mark Three? The amazing electronic brain at Harvard that
instantly solves the most complicated scientific
problems? Suppose you had a mechanical brain like that in
your house? A robot that was always at your service, so
that you could just sit with folded hands and relax the
rest of your life. That would be nice, wouldn't it?
Perfect. That's what they thought when it happened in the

year 2006. But they were wrong. Terribly wrong. How? I'll tell you -- next week.

SFX: THERAMIN

ANNCR   Tonight's story transcribed on Dimension
                    X - The Outer Limit by Graham Doar was
                    adapted for radio by Ernest Kinoy.
                    Featured in the cast were Joseph Julian
                    as Steve, Wendell Holmes as Hank, and
                    Joe DeSantos as Major Donaldson. Your
                    host is Norman Rose. Music was by Albert
                    Berman. Sound designed by Simon Roe.
                    Edward King directed.

                    SFX: GONG/DRUMBEAT FADE TO THE
                    FOLLOWING?

                    HOST CREDITS AND CLOSE

HOST   This episode of Re-Imagined Radio
                    celebrates *Dimension X*, a short-lived
                    radio science fiction anthology series
                    that provided essential DNA for science
                    fiction storytelling as we know it
                    today.

                    Our tribute is two-pronged. First a
                    review of other science fiction programs
                    leading up to *Dimension X*. And second,
                    listening to the first episode of
                    Dimension X, "The Outer Limit," which is
                    perhaps the most repeated science
                    fiction radio story ever.

                    MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, THEN DUCK
                    UNDER THE FOLLOWING

HOST   We'll archive our production of
                Dimension X, along with other examples
                of our radio storytelling, at our
                website, reimaginedradio DOT net.
                Podcasts are available at the major
                platforms, or our website.

                The script for this episode was written
                by John Barber.

                Sound Design, music composition, and
                post-production by Marc Rose.

                Graphic design by Holly Slocum.

                Re-Imagined Radio announcer is Jack
                Armstrong.

                Re-Imagined Radio is supported by KXRW-
                FM. Vancouver, Washington's community
                radio station.

                This is John Barber, producer and host.
                Thank you for listening.

                        MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, THEN DUCK
                        UNDER THE FOLLOWING

                        ANNOUNCER CLOSE

ANNOUNCER   This is a production of Re-Imagined
                Radio. Our radio broadcasts are heard on
                local, regional, and international
                community radio stations.

                For on demand streaming, point your
                browsers to our website, reimaginedradio
                (all one word, no punctuation) DOT net.

Thank you so much for listening, and please join us again for another episode of Re-Imagined Radio where we'll continue our exploration of radio storytelling.

MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, AND TO END.