

Countdown

Rush

(coming up on 45 minute point in our countdown
everything going smoothly
T-minus 45 minutes and counting coming up on t-minus 40 minutes
t-minus 40 minutes and counting
this is Shuttle launch control)
Lit up with anticipation
We arrive at the launching site
The sky is still dark, nearing dawn
On the Florida coastline Circling choppers slash the night
With roving searchlight beams
This magic day when super-science
Mingles with the bright stuff of dreams
(we have an AEO abort
go for test
tester says they are go for launch
at the present time we know of no major problems as we enter this final hold)
Floodlit in the hazy distance
The star of this unearthly show
Venting vapours, like the breath
Of a sleeping white dragon Crackling speakers, voices tense
Resume the final count
All systems check, T minus nine
As the sun and the drama start to mount
The air is charged - a humid, motionless mass
The crowds and the cameras,
The cars full of spectators pass
Excitement so thick - you could cut it with a knife
Technology - high, on the leading edge of life (T minus 27 seconds
we have gone to redundant sequencers start
T minus 20 seconds and counting
T minus 15, 14, 13
T minus ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four
we have rocket main engine start
we have main engine start
we have liftoff) The earth beneath us starts to tremble
With the spreading of a low black cloud (the shuttle has cleared the tower) A thunderous roar
shakes the air
Like the whole world exploding (rocket is en route) Scorching blast of golden fire
As it slowly leaves the ground
Tears away with a mighty force
The air is shattered by the awesome sound (T plus 30 seconds, plus 35
columbia-houston you are go at 40) Excitement so thick - you could cut it with a knife

Technology - high, on the leading edge of life
Like a pillar of cloud, the smoke lingers
High in the air
In fascination - with the eyes of the world
We stare...(Columbia is now turning towards its precise window in space for main engine cutoff
... 40 seconds
Columbia now 39 nautical miles altitude
42 nautical miles downrange
- Columbia you are looking a little hot and all your calls will be a little early
Young and Crippen really moving out now
velocity now reading 6200 feet per second
- what a view, what a view
glad you are enjoying it
G800 to LOS
Columbia Houston, we have 40 seconds to LOS
you're looking good burning over the hill, we will see you in Madrid
-and we enjoyed the music Bob thank you
we enjoyed it, just wanted to share some with you)

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