

ARK II

"The Balloon

#84008

PROLOGUE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. NARROW TRAIL - ARK II - MOVING SHOT 1

The Ark, without anyone at the controls, is moving along at a nice clip, approaching a mountain pass. Dead ahead is a good-sized stone in the road.

JONAH'S VOICE

Log, Ark II, Entry fifty-one. We are moving along on automatic pilot and are now entering Sector Fourteen, Area Twelve. Somewhere nearby are people who refuse to have communication with the outside world.

1A INT. ARK II CAB 1A

SHOOTING THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD. The vehicle slows down. Lights begin to blink on the dash, and the steering wheel turns by itself, avoiding the stone. *

2 INT. ARK II - JONAH, RUTH, ADAM 2

JONAH is talking into a microphone, while ADAM is at the stove cooking and RUTH is fooling with the computer. Samuel is tasting Adam's soup. He gives Adam a sign that the taste is perfect.

JONAH

Strangers are forbidden to enter this village. Our mission is to find out why.

3 EXT. ABANDONED AIRPORT 3

Wrecked and crumpled airplanes lie about. The hangars are decaying. An old gas truck sits on flat tires and a wind sock atop a pole has almost rotted away. Grass is growing from the cracked cement runway.

4. EXT. HANGAR 4

Toy balloons are floating into view over the roof, being released by someone on the other side of the hangar. One after the other they rise in a colorful procession.

1ST GUARD'S VOICE

There, sire, you see? Just as I told you. He is doing it again.

5

ANOTHER ANGLE

5

to show three MEN. Two of them are in tattered clothes and hold throwing nets. The third man wears sheepskins and knee-length sandals. He is obviously their leader and he is obviously furious. He starts forward.

*

6

EXT. HANGAR

6

where an OLD MAN, white-bearded, is tying a piece of paper to a toy balloon. A boy, BEN, releases the last of a number of balloons. The boy turns to the old man.

BEN

All gone, Grandfather.

GRANDFATHER

I'll have this one ready in a moment, Benjamin.

LEADER'S VOICE

That is one message you will not send.

Ben and the old man turn. Startled, the old man lets the balloon go.

7

ANOTHER ANGLE

7

as the Leader and his two guards approach the old man and boy. One of the guards makes a jump for the balloon, misses. The other guard throws his net over the old man.

*

BEN

Leave my grandfather alone!

The guard pays no attention to him.

BEN

(continuing)

Father, don't let them do that. Please.

The Leader thinks a moment, then nods to the guards. They release the old man. The Leader addresses him.

(CONTINUED)

LEADER

I have warned you before about sending these messages out. You are my father, but the same law applies to you as to the rest of our village. If I catch you sending out one more message...

(to Ben)

You'll never see your grandfather again.

He turns on his heel and the guards follow him. When they are gone --

GRANDFATHER

Ben, maybe you'd best go with your father.

BEN

What about you?

GRANDFATHER

I have five hundred more balloons to send out. Our village needs help, Ben. If we don't get it, we are all doomed.

The old man enters the hangar and the door closes behind him. Ben stands uncertainly, a few moments, looks after his father and the two guards. Finally he makes his decision. He goes to the hangar door, opens it and enters.

FADE OUT.

END OF PROLOGUE

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

- 8 EXT. A NARROW TRAIL LEADING INTO A MOUNTAIN PASS 8
- The CAMERA PANS UPWARD to reveal two men in tattered clothes looking down the mountain toward the trail. One man holds a twisted leather leash restraining a massive dog. The dog GROWLS. The man points to the valley below. Near them is a crude wooded crib full of boulders.
- 9 EXT. VALLEY - LONG SHOT 9 *
- Ark II rolls across a dirt road toward the mountain pass and the guards.
- 10 INT. ARK CAB 10
- Jonah is driving.
- 11 OMIT 11 *
- 12 INT. CAB 12
- SHOOTING ACROSS Jonah through the windshield as the Ark approaches the pass. Something above catches his eye and he stops the Ark, leaving the motor running.
- 13 OMIT 13 *

14 JONAH'S POV - SKY AND HILLS

14 *

A whole slew of balloons is floating along.

14A INT. ARK

14A *

Samuel and Ruth are busy, Samuel at a computer, Ruth poring over a chart. Adam, in the dome, becomes excited.

ADAM

Look -- round birds!

Jason comes in from the cab.

JASON

They're round birds, all right -- a whole bunch of balloons.

(to Adam)

There's one caught in a tree out there and it looks as though there's a message attached to it. Can you get it?

14B ADAM

14B *

climbing down from the dome and moving to the switch that activates the door. He presses it and the door opens.

14C EXT. ARK - ROLLED UP MESSAGE PAPER

14C *

SHOOT PAST it to Adam as he comes out of the Ark and heads for it, then PULL BACK to show that it's hanging from a balloon caught in a tree. Adam grabs the message, pulls it and the balloon down.

14D INT. ARK - CLOSE ON MESSAGE

14D *

It's written with Greek letters in place of English ones. PULL BACK to show Jonah holding it, Ruth and Samuel on each side of him. Adam has the balloon.

RUTH

It's printed!

JONAH

(to Samuel)

Recognize the language?

SAMUEL

Greek.

(CONTINUED)

14D CONTINUED:

14D *

RUTH

Imagine that. Somewhere in those mountains someone still has a working printing press.

JONAH

Let's go find it.

15 OMIT

15 *

16 ANGLE - REAR OF THE ARK II

16

CLOSE on a remote control device held by Jonah.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

His fingers turn a switch. We HEAR an electronic BLEEP, then a WHIR as we PULL BACK to see the rear door of the Ark slide down to form an incline. Jonah turns another switch and the Roamer rolls down to the ground.

17 EXT. HILLSIDE ABOVE THE PASS

17

*

The two men, unobserved by the Ark crew, are watching them. They turn to see the guard we saw in the prologue come running up to them.

*

18 EXT. ROAD

18

*

Ruth and Jonah are getting into the Roamer. Samuel, Adam beside him, leans on the fender.

SAMUEL

I don't like letting you two guys go it alone.

*

JONAH

You'll be more use to us here. I want a translation of that message as soon as possible.

*

SAMUEL

Be careful.

19 EXT. HILLSIDE ABOVE THE PASS

19

*

The guard has reached the three men.

1ST GUARD

The Leader has sent me to tell you to close the pass forever.

They move to the crib full of boulders.

20 EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS

20

*

as the Roamer approaches it.

21 OMIT

OMIT

21

*

21A REVERSE ANGLE

21A *

as the Roamer moves through the pass and rocks begin to
tumble down on it. The car spurts forward.

*

21B ANOTHER ANGLE

21B *

as the Roamer races TOWARD CAMERA and away from an
avalanche of rocks that closes the pass behind them.
Dust rises from heap behind them. Jonah stops the
Roamer, and he and Ruth exchange a relieved look.

*

22 INT. ARK LAB

22

where Samuel is standing before the viewing screen,
trying to make contact with Jonah and Ruth.

SAMUEL

Ark Two to Ark Roamer, Come on.
Ark Two to Ark Roamer, come on!

*

Ruth's image materializes on the screen.

SAMUEL

(continuing;
fake anger)

Hey, I thought I told you to
be careful.

RUTH

We're trying.

23 INT. ARK ROAMER

23

Where Ruth and Jonah are on the other side of the
blocked pass. Sam's image is on the screen.

JONAH

Anything from the computer?

SAMUEL

I got part of the message so far.
It says "Come to the place of
iron birds, we need..." That's
all I got.

JONAH

Iron birds, huh? Check with
you later.

24 EXT. TOP OF MOUNTAIN PASS - CLOSE SHOT - ONE OF
THE BALLOONS

24

clinging to a bush, a message attached to it. PULL
BACK to show the three guards approaching the bush.
One of them sees the balloon, takes it.

*

1ST GUARD

The old man has broken the law
again. For the last time.

*

They stride off.

25 EXT. ROAD - ROAMER 25
 as the Roamer moves along. Ahead of it a horse-drawn cart appears.

26 INT. ROAMER - MOVING SHOT 26
 Jonah and Ruth react to what they see ahead.

27 THIER P.O.V. - MAN IN FACE MASK 27 *
 He is driving the cart, and as we APPROACH it we see that it is filled with people sitting in a semi-stupor.

28 EXT. ROAD 28
 as the Roamer pulls alongside the cart. The cart keeps moving.

MASKED MAN
 (alarmed)
 I do not know who you are or what you want, but do not stop. These people are sick, and their disease is contagious.

RUTH
 What is the matter with them?

MASKED MAN
 No one knows.

JONAH
 Where can we find the place of iron birds?

The man points in the same direction in which Ruth and Jonah are going.

29 EXT. AIRFIELD 29
 The Roamer approaches it slowly. It stops and Ruth and Jonah climb out to survey the old aircraft. MOVE WITH them as they walk up to a decayed aircraft and study it. She snaps her fingers as it dawns on her:

RUTH
 Of course, "the place of iron birds..."

Jonah reacts to something.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

JONAH

Listen.

The SOUND of a clacking machine comes from within the building.

30 EXT. THE BUILDING - DAY 30

as they run up to it. Cautiously, Ruth and Jonah enter what appears to have been a hangar.

31 INT. HANGAR - DAY 31

Old crates, another broken plane, cobwebs, ancient posters and calendars from the past give a spooky feeling. Ruth and Jonah move slowly, apprehensively, deeper into the hangar. The CLACKING sound grows louder.

JONAH

There it is.

32 P.O.V. SHOT - BEN AND HIS GRANDFATHER 32

At an antique hand-cranked printing press, the man feeds sheets of paper into the type bed. He's probably seventy years old and his kindly eyes are fixed on his job. Ben sweats from turning the heavy flywheel. His stack of crude paper has grown very thin. As the last of the paper goes into the press, the old man signals for Ben to stop cranking. The young man lets go of the flywheel to rub his tired arms.

GRANDFATHER

Any more paper, Ben?

BEN

That's the last of it,
Grandfather.

They move away from the press in the direction of Jonah and Ruth.

33 ANGLE ACROSS JONAH AND RUTH TO GRANDFATHER AND BEN 33

The two react with fear. The boy steps in front of the old man to defend him.

JONAH

Hey! Hold on. We're friends.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

GRANDFATHER

Who are you?

JONAH

My name is Jonah, and this is Ruth.

GRANDFATHER

I mean who are you? Where are you from?

RUTH

We're from Ark II. Our job is to help people rebuild what's been destroyed. We're here to help you.

GRANDFATHER

Oh yes, I have heard of you, and you found one of my messages.

JONAH

Yes, but we couldn't understand it. Why did you print it in Greek?

GRANDFATHER

I don't have English letters, so I used Greek letters in their place. It was the best I could do. Can you give us medical help?

JONAH

What's wrong?

34 EXT. ARK

34 *

START ON the two guards, then PAN SLOWLY TO the Ark and PUSH IN.

35 INT. ARK LAB

35 *

where Samuel is operating the computer, pushing buttons. The message in Greek is in front of him. Adam tries to push the buttons, but Sam restrains him.

SAMUEL

Hey, I thought you were gonna fix us some lunch.

While Adam moves o.s., Samuel keeps operating the machine, talking to himself.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

SAMUEL

(continuing)

Okay, here it comes, ready or not. Give, baby.

He coaxes the machine as Adam comes in with a tray. One plate is on it, and in the middle of it is a small wafer. Samuel pops it into his mouth, makes a face while he studies the computer.

SAMUEL

(continuing)

Bacon and eggs again?

ADAM

Complain. Always complain.

The computer sends a sheet of paper sliding out of a slot. Samuel stares at it, then AD LIBS an "Ai-Yai-yai!"

SAMUEL

(to Adam)

Ruth and Jonah have walked right into an outbreak of a deadly virus. Even the computer never heard of it.

He moves to the viewing screen, punches a couple of buttons. That starts a BEEPING sound.

36 INT. HANGAR

36

Where Jonah and Ruth are confronting Ben and his grandfather.

RUTH

Are you sure, sir?

GRANDFATHER

Positive. The disease strikes swiftly, without warning.

The BEEP BEEP BEEP begins to sound, fainter than the signal Samuel is sending. Jonah presses a button on his wrist teleradio.

37 INSERT - SAMUEL'S IMAGE ON WRIST TELERADIO

37

SAMUEL

Jonah. You're in trouble. You and Ruth are right in the middle of an epidemic.

*

38 ANOTHER ANGLE

38

JONAH

We know, Samuel. We'll get
back to you as soon as we can.
(clicking image off;
to Grandfather)
Why didn't you just go out
and get help? Why the balloons?

GRANDFATHER

My son is the Leader here. We have had
many wars with strangers, so he
permits no one to enter or leave
our village. If he knew you were here...

JONAH

You're the medical expert, Ruth.
What do we do?

RUTH

Sounds to me as though we may
be dealing with a mutated virus, a
completely new strain. We have to
get back to the Ark so I can prepare
a fast-working vaccine -- one that
will work on any virus.

They move to the door, Jonah opens it and stops, react-
ing to what he sees.

39 EXT. HANGER - JONAH'S P.O.V. - THE TWO GUARDS
AND THE LEADER 39

examining the Roamer. The first guard gets into it,
examines the controls.

40 INT. HANGAR 40

as the Grandfather and Ben join Jonah at the door, the
old man closes the door quickly.

GRANDFATHER

It is my son. If he catches
you...

JONAH

But all we have to do is tell
him we're here to help.

GRANDFATHER

He will not listen.

Jonah looks around the place.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

Ruth and Jonah move around, looking at things. Ruth passes close to a big crate that snags her clothing. She stops to unhook herself, notices something that catches her attention. She bends over and blows dust away from the top of the crate.

41 INSERT - THE CRATE

41

a picture of a big balloon on it.

RUTH'S VOICE

Jonah, look at this.

42 ANOTHER ANGLE - JONAH AND RUTH

42

JONAH

(reading)

Raven -- Model Fifty -- Hot
air balloon. Hey!

In a flurry of excitement Jonah gets a tool, forces the box open, and pulls out a handful of balloon cloth.

JONAH

(continuing)

Wow, after hundreds of years, it's still
in good condition.

(to Grandfather)

Which way do the prevailing winds
blow?

GRANDFATHER

East to West.

JONAH

Ruth, we'll need time to inflate
this thing.

(handing her
remote control)

You think you can keep them
busy out there?

RUTH

(smiling)

Can I?

Together with the Grandfather and Ben, Jonah starts pushing the crate toward the rear door of the hangar. PAN WITH Ruth as she goes to the front door, opens it.

- 14.
- 43 EXT. AIRPORT - IN FRONT OF HANGAR - HER P.O.V. 43 *
- The three men are still around the Roamer, the first guard still inside of it.
- 44 EXT. HANGAR - RUTH 44 *
- hiding in the doorway as she turns a dial on the remote control device.
- 45 EXT. AIRPORT 45 *
- The Roamer begins to move forward slowly.
- LEADER
What are you doing? Stop it!
- 1ST GUARD
I'm not doing anything. Help!
- The Roamer keeps moving and the second guard and the Leader start chasing after it. No sooner are they on the point of reaching it that it veers away from them.
- 46 EXT. HANGAR - RUTH 46 *
- laughing.
- 47 EXT. OTHER SIDE OF THE HANGAR 47
- Jonah, with the old man's help, is taking the balloon out of the crate.
- 48 EXT. AIRPORT 48 *
- where the guard in the Roamer jumps out and is joined by the Leader and the second guard. They head for the hangar.
- 49 EXT. HANGAR DOOR - RUTH 49 *
- reacting. She shuts the door, switches off the Roamer remote control and starts for the rear.
- 50 EXT. REAR OF HANGAR 50 *
- The balloon is completely inflated, the crate and the tank of propane gas in evidence. Ruth comes out the door. *

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

RUTH

They're coming!

JONAH

Get in quick! You'll have
to figure out how to land it!

He helps her in.

RUTH

How about you?

JONAH

Never mind me!

*

Jonah grips the bottom of the basket and shoves it up. Just as the guards arrive, the balloon ascends out of their grasp.

51 EXT. SKY - CLOSE SHOT - RUTH AND THE BASKET

51

as she looks down.

52 EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - HIGH ANGLE

52

as the guards move in on Jonah and the Grandfather.

*

*

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

53 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD

53 *

DOLLY BACK with the group. The two guards and the Leader are moving along a trail.

GRANDFATHER

I ask you a simple question --
why have you taken this man
prisoner?

LEADER

He is our enemy.

GRANDFATHER

He is a stranger.

LEADER

The same thing.

GRANDFATHER

It is not the same thing. You
drove our human enemies away a long
time ago. Now we have a new enemy -
disease - and we need the help of
strangers in order to conquer it.

JONAH

He's right, sir.

LEADER

"He's right, he's right." I am
the Leader here. I am right.

(to Grandfather)

You are wrong. You should be
teaching my son to respect my
wishes. Instead, you teach
him to disobey me.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

Ben has fallen behind everyone. Now he stops. The Leader looks back at him.

LEADER

(continuing)

Ben, come along.

Ben takes a step forward and starts to faint. Jonah is closest to him, catches him before he can fall. The others crowd near, but the Leader pushes them back.

LEADER

(continuing)

It is the sickness. Stay back.

GRANDFATHER

He is your son. Will you too stay back?

The Leader is hurt by the question, but he won't relent.

LEADER

Yes, I shall. We will send the cart for him.

(miserably)

Come away.

JONAH

No. We're not going to leave him here.

LEADER

We must.

JONAH

My friend will be returning soon with medical aid. She'll be able to cure Ben.

He picks up the boy, carries him in his arms. Everyone gives him room as he starts forward.

54 EXT. SKY (STOCK)

54

*

The balloon sails on.

55 INT. BASKET - CLOSE SHOT. - RUTH

55

*

*

She looks down.

(CONTINUED)

59 TWO SHOT

59

LEADER

That will be in a few minutes
from now.

(a BEAT)

Ben -- Ben... I wish there was
some way I could help you.

The boy picks his head up, stares unseeingly.

LEADER

(continuing)

Benjamin, I'm sorry, son, I...

Ben's head falls on Jonah's shoulder. The Leader is
near tears. He slumps down in his chair and puts
his head in his hands.

JONAH

Can't you understand there may
be a cure for this, if you'll
just wait...

Jonah puts a hand to his own head as CAMERA MOVES IN
on him. He has begun to sweat.

JONAH

(continuing;
groggily)

...that -- if -- you'll -- just
-- wait...

CAMERA PULLS BACK as the others register their reaction.

LEADER

You fool, you would not listen.
Now you too have the sickness.
And you too must be taken away.

60 THE SUNDIAL

60

The shadow closer to five.

61 INT. ARK LAB - CLOSE SHOT - SAMUEL AT THE TELERADIO

61

Ruth's image is on the screen.

SAMUEL

Where are you now?

RUTH

(smiling)

Coming right at you.

62 INT. ARK LAB 62
Sam and Adam move to the observation dome. They scan
the sky.

63 P.O.V. - LONG SHOT - THE BALLOON (STOCK) 63
Ruth waves.

64 OMIT 64 *

65 ANOTHER ANGLE 65
as Samuel and Adam react, stumble down from the dome. *

66 EXT. ARK II 66
as Samuel and Adam exit the Ark, run to: *

67 EXT. FIELD - THE BALLOON BASKET 67
as it settles down, Samuel helps Ruth out.

SAMUEL *
Am I glad to see you!

RUTH *
Samuel, we have to get to Jonah
as fast as possible.

SAMUEL *
Ruth, there's fifty tons of
rock between us and Jonah.

RUTH *
We'll have to blast through
with the laser beam.

SAMUEL *
I don't have that much power.

RUTH *
You've got to find it, Samuel.

SAMUEL *
(thinking, then:)
Maybe I could re-wire, but
even then...

RUTH *
You can do it. I know you can.

68 OMIT 68 *

69 OMIT

69 *

70 EXT. VILLAGE - CLOSE SHOT - THE SUNDIAL

70 *

The shadow is on five. Jonah is still holding Ben while the Leader, the old man and the others look on.

MASKED MAN

It is true.

He moves to Jonah, who holds on to Ben more tightly.

GRANDFATHER

You cannot take him away. Maybe he does not have the sickness.

LEADER

When he falls, we will know.

71 INT. ARK LAB - DAY

71

where Ruth is at work among test tubes and the like. She takes a vessel full of liquid and places it before a scanner. She presses a button, a light shines down on the liquid and an electronic WARBLE is heard. On a small screen, the word "positive" appears.

RUTH

The vaccine's ready, Samuel!

She moves to where Samuel is working amidst a mass of wires and cables.

SAMUEL

Wish I could say the same for myself. Let's try it.

72 EXT. ARK II - DAY

72

with a soft WHINE, a laser beam is emitted from the nose of the Ark.

73 INT. ARK LAB - DAY

73

Samuel is at the computer bank, the machinery WHINING. He makes adjustments and the whine gets louder. Ruth and Adam watch. A print-out comes up on the screen.

SAMUEL

Say a prayer.

Adam clasps his hands and looks up, as he punches more buttons -- a print-out comes up again.

RUTH

Will the equipment take the load?

SAMUEL

Ruth, any more questions like that and you'll discourage me.

RUTH

Just one more, please?

SAMUEL

Okay, but only one.

RUTH

Can you hurry up?

74 EXT. THE ARK AND ROCK RUBBLE - DAY

74

The laser beam BLASTS into the rocks. Steam and smoke rise.

75 INT. ARK LAB - DAY

The vehicle is vibrating, the WHINE at a peak. Samuel looks worried. He looks around, sniffs the air.

RUTH

Samuel -- there!

She points.

76

HER P.O.V. - SMOKE

curling up from some wires, then an ERUPTION of sparks.

76

77

SAMUEL

throwing a switch hurriedly. The whine dies.

77

SAMUEL

I can do it, Ruth, I can.
But I need more time.

78

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

on Jonah, as he tries to walk, keep moving. Finally he falls to his knees.

78

LEADER

(to Masked Man,
sadly)

You must take them away.

The man in the surgical mask approaches Jonah, takes Ben from him and brings him to the cart. Jonah watches helplessly, then crumples.

79

INT. ARK LAB - DAY

Ruth is working controls on one panel, Samuel on another.

79

SAMUEL

This is it. When I tell you,
punch red sixty-two and white
thirty-nine.

He presses a few buttons and the WHINE begins.

SAMUEL

(continuing)
Hit it at fifty thousand RPM's.
What's your reading?

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

RUTH
Forty-eight thousand RPM's,
forty-nine, fif...

SAMUEL
Go for it!

Ruth punches both buttons at the same time Samuel does. The whine doubles in intensity and the ark begins to vibrate.

80 EXT. ARK II - DAY

80

as the laser beam hits the rock pile. The rocks begin to glow, smoke rising from them. The ark is bathed in the reflected light.

81 INT. ARK LAB - DAY

81

The WHINE is sinking down to a steady hum.

SAMUEL
We're doing it, Ruth. We're
gonna hold together!

82 EXT. THE ARK - DAY

82

The rocks are disappearing one after the other. Soon, they are all gone.

83 INT. ARK CAB - DAY

83

as Samuel sits in the driver's seat, starts the MOTOR and the Ark jerks forward.

SAMUEL
Steady as she goes!

RUTH
Full speed ahead -- and I mean
speed.

84 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

84

as the cart moves off, everyone looking on.

85 EXT. VALLEY - DAY

85

The Ark racing across the flats, a trail of dust boiling up behind it.

86 INT. ARK CAB - DAY

86

Adam has his hand on Samuel's shoulder. Both he and Ruth are having trouble staying in their seats, the Ark is swaying and bucking so.

RUTH

Can't we go any faster?

SAMUEL

If we had wings, yeah.

87 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

87

The old man and the leader are alone, the other people walking away. The Leader slumps into his chair, buries his head in his hands, then:

LEADER

You see what good your messages have done.

GRANDFATHER

If you had not kept strangers out, perhaps we would have had help in time.

LEADER

(angrily)

You say this sickness is my fault?

The old man sees that argument will accomplish nothing. He puts a hand on the Leader's shoulder, pats it.

GRANDFATHER

No, my son. It is no one's fault. You did your best.

They both turn as from o.s., we hear the SOUND of the Ark.

88 EXT. DIRT ROAD - P.O.V. SHOT - THE ARK

88

approaching fast.

89 ANOTHER ANGLE

89

as the Ark pulls up near them, stops. Ruth, Samuel and Adam come out. Ruth is carrying a medicine kit.

RUTH

(to Grandfather)

My friend, Jonah, where is he?

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

GRANDFATHER

Gone. He and my grandson were taken away to be isolated.

SAMUEL

Where?

GRANDFATHER

To the place of sickness.

He points to a narrow road.

SAMUEL

Can't take that in the Ark.

RUTH

Where is the Roamer -- our machine?

GRANDFATHER

At the place of iron birds.

SAMUEL

The what?

RUTH

(grabbing Samuel)

Come on!

She runs off.

GRANDFATHER

You must hurry! Once they have been taken inside, they cannot return.

(sadly)

They didn't hear me.

90 EXT. ROAD - MOVING SHOT - CART

90

*

Jonah and Ben are sitting side by side. Jonah regains consciousness, raises his head and stares around him with glazed eyes.

91 HIS. P.O.V. - EFFECT SHOT

91

The surrounding road and trees in a haze.

92 JONAH

92

as his head drops forward. He's unconscious.

93 EXT. ABANDONED AIRPORT

93 *

as Ruth and Samuel, Adam trailing, come in sight of the Roamer. While Samuel continues to dash for the Roamer, Ruth takes out the remote control device from her belt, activates it. The Roamer starts to move towards Samuel, stops when he reaches it. He gets inside, speeds up to Ruth and Adam. They hop in and the Roamer takes off.

94 EXT. OLD STRUCTURE

94 *

A structure fronted by a door. The cart drives up to it and the driver jumps down. On the door is a heavy knocker. The masked man raps with it, the SOUND hollow. The door is opened, the interior dark. Two people in white masks come out.

MASKED MAN

More victims of the sickness.

They nod, move with him to the cart and gently help out Ben, Jonah and a third person. Jonah and Ben are brought in and disappear into the darkness. The Masked Man enters with the third person and is about to shut the door when the SOUND of the Roamer makes him stop.

PAN OVER as the Roamer skids to a stop and Samuel and Ruth jump out.

RUTH

Samuel! Jonah must be inside!

Samuel rushes for the door, gets to it when it is almost closed, shoves against it, re-opening it. The man in the surgical mask appears.

MASKED MAN

You cannot enter here.

RUTH

We don't want to. You've just taken our friend in there. You have to bring him out again.

MASKED MAN

I cannot. He has the sickness.

RUTH

But you must. We can cure him, and anyone else who's sick. Please, you have to believe me.

MASKED MAN

I would like to believe you.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED:

94

RUTH

Then give me the chance to show
you I'm telling the truth.

The man stares at her and Samuel.

95 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

95

The Leader still sits on his throne, his head in his hands. The old man sits beside him. The Leader raises his head.

LEADER

I am a fool -- a close-minded,
blind fool. I'll never forgive
myself.

The old man looks o.s., reacting.

GRANDFATHER

What is that?

96 EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

96

A trail of dust in the distance as the Roamer speeds toward us.

97 TWO SHOT - GRANDFATHER AND LEADER

97

The old man squinting.

GRANDFATHER

It is the machine with the
strangers...

(a beat)

... and -- no, it couldn't be.

LEADER

(amazed)

It must be. Old man, it is!

It is Ben. My Ben!

(a roar)

Ben!

He begins to dash towards the Roamer, calling his son's name. Other villagers have seen the Roamer approach and they too dash toward it. Inside, are crowded Jonah, Ben, Samuel, Ruth and Adam. The Roamer stops and Ben is picked up by his father and given a big bear hug. Ruth comes forward with her medicine kit, opens it.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

LEADER

(to Jonah)

You did it. You brought my
son back to me.

JONAH

(of Ruth and Samuel)

They did, not I. Not only
that, but there's a whole
bunch of other people on their
way back here. We didn't have
room for them in the Roamer.

LEADER

And by what miracle did you
accomplish this?

RUTH

By the miracle of medicine. It
cures the sick and protects the
healthy.

BEN

It's called a shot, Poppa.
They give it to you there.

He imitates giving a shot to his father's arm.

LEADER

(putting Ben down)

Do they! Then let me be the
first to receive this wonderful
shot.

Ruth approaches him.

RUTH

It's really called an inoculation.
You'll have to bare your arm.

Without hesitating, the Leader rips his sleeve from
the shoulder. Ruth inoculates him. He takes it
without a grimace, makes a sign to the villagers.

LEADER

All of you, come here.

ADAM'S VOICE

Not yet. I go first.

Adam lopes up to Ruth and holds out his arm.

RUTH

Adam chimps don't get this
disease.

ADAM

Nobody's perfect.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED - (2):

97

Everyone laughs.

LEADER

(to Jonah)

You have done something for
which I can never repay you.
But let me try. Ask what you
wish.

*

JONAH

I wish only that you'll open
your heart and your mind to
the world.

*

SAMUEL

Otherwise, you're gonna be in
trouble all over again. I
opened up that pass for you.
Maybe you could keep it open,
huh?

LEADER

It will be done.

The CAMERA PUSHES IN on the Grandfather and Ben.

98 INT. ARK CAB - MOVING SHOT

98 *

Jonah drives, Ruth is studying a newspaper. Adam looks
over her shoulder.

JONAH

What are you reading?

RUTH

A newspaper. Ben's grandfather
gave it to me.

JONAH

Anything in it about us?

RUTH

I don't know. It's printed
in Greek.

They all exchange looks. Adam covers his eyes.

99 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - THE ARK

99 *

We PAN IT BY Samuel as seen in the Dome.

*

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

JONAH'S VOICE

*

Ark Two -- Log entry
fifty-two. Time -- seventeen
hundred hours -- We have just
opened the eyes of a tribe of
isolated people to the value of
communicating with others. We
think they have learned, as we
have, that to block progress
only stops growth -- and by
talking instead of fighting,
we can move forward.

100 EXT. DIRT ROAD .

100

as the Ark II moves across the flats toward the sun and
horizon, we...

FADE OUT.

THE END