

"ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES"

Original Screenplay

by

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Based on characters created by

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SCREENPLAY

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"ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES"

FROM BLACK SCREEN
SHOCK-CUT TO EXTREME CLOSEUP:

1 THE EXPLOSION OF ROCKETS

as we watch a it speeds away from CAMERA.

CUT TO:

A-1 EXT. SPACESHIP (STOCK)

It soars into space.

2 INT. ORBITING SPACESHIP

through whose windows the same light lividly
illuminates three space-suited and helmeted ASTRONAUTS

-- afraid and curiously hesitant at the controls. We establish a Dual Date Meter showing the year in terms both of "EARTH TIME" and "SELF-TIME." Both panels read: 3955.

ASTRONAUT 1 (MALE)

We made it.

ASTRONAUT 2 (MALE)

So far. But one thing is for certain. Whoever wins the war, there'll be no place on Earth for us.

ASTRONAUT 3 (FEMALE)

Where are we going?

ASTRONAUT 2 (MALE)

(briskly)

Probably to our death. But just possibly --

3 P.O.V. SHOT - EARTH'S RIM WHITENS TO INCANDESCENCE

and a soundless explosion sends a column of fire and mushrooming up towards us.

4 SPACESHIP

Appalled silence. Through the ship's windows the ASTRONAUTS are watching (and we with them) the nuclear disintegration of Earth. The incandescence almost burns through their space helmets. In awed voices:

ASTRONAUT 2

The fools...they've finally destroyed themselves.

ASTRONAUT 1

My God, the earth is no more.

ASTRONAUT 3

And we've escaped.

The spaceship begins to shudder.

ASTRONAUT 2

We have, if we survive the shock wave.

The shock wave of the huge, megatonic explosion hits the spaceship from below.

Chaos and pandemonium inside. We multiply normal air turbulence a thousandfold and are bashed, buffeted, whirled, twirled, lifted a hundred miles and dropped fifty, before slowly flattening out to some semblance of equilibrium on (presumably) a new orbit. The Date

Meter digits under "EARTH TIME" have begun to click and race erratically. ASTRONAUT 2 watches intently.

ASTRONAUT 2

The shock must have ... unbalanced the mechanism. I don't understand.

Now he turns to look at another dial.

5 ILLUMINATED PANEL LABELED "AUTOMATIC RE-ENTRY SEQUENCE"

Across it curves the descending graphline which traces optimum re-entry path. Now the lights begin to trace the spacecraft's actual re-entry path, which sometimes slightly deviates to left or right of the graphline but always approximately follows its course.

ASTRONAUT 2

We've been forced out of orbit.

ASTRONAUT 1

(looking at panel)

We're descending.

ASTRONAUT 3

But where?

The spacecraft is seared with flames and smoke as it plummets through space. The windows fog and blacken. ASTRONAUT feverishly works at controls to no response.

A-5 LONG SHOT - SPACECRAFT (STOCK)

The fiery missile descends on our screen.

B-5 FLAMES AND SMOKE

leap at the windows. Descent is rapid, and suddenly through the blackened windows the entry is completed for light can be seen flickering through the charred cracks.

C-5 SUBJECTIVE P.O.V.

We descend rapidly to be swallowed in a cloud bank.

D-5 INT. SPACECRAFT

SHOOTING across the frozen ASTRONAUTS, we see the Date Meter spin to a halt.

EARTH TIME

1973

SHIP TIME

3955

E-5 SUBJECTIVE P.O.V. (STOCK)

We are crashing rapidly into the ocean.

F-5 SPLASHDOWN (STOCK)

The spacecraft split the water into churning waves.
Then all is still.

6 EARTH - AERIAL SHOT - THE PACIFIC OCEAN - DUSK

We are watching it from the P.O.V. of a U.S. Marine helicopter PILOT flying on normal coastal reconnaissance duty; and the coast itself as plane banks to include it) is California. All is peaceful, empty and deserted. Until...PILOT mildly reacts to an object beached on the tideline far below. His prop-blades louden as he goes into a steep, investigatory dive.

7 FROM PILOT'S P.O.V.

We ZOOM towards the floating and still-unopened spaceship.

8 INT. PILOT'S CABIN

As he flattens off and reascends:

PILOT

(radio-reporting)

Tower, this is Red Baron Five. I have an object beached on the tideline -- uh -- seemingly one of our spacecraft. Coordinates are southeast corner of sector Alpha Charlie. Relay this to appropriate recovery forces. I have enough fuel to orbit for forty-five minutes. Please alert Red Baron Ops and I'll squawk Channel Two for radar fix.

CUT TO:

9 INT. OPS ROOM

DUTY OFFICER

(on phone)

Rescue, we have Red Baron Five report of possible spacecraft washed ashore in southeast sector Alpha Charlie. Immediately launch two choppers to effect pickup and recovery. Base Radar will vector them to the location.

He picks up second phone and dials.

DUTY OFFICER

The Colonel, please.

10 EXT. COLONEL'S GARDEN

The COLONEL, among friends, is barbecuing a steak on the lawn of his private quarters as the garden phone rings beside him. The roar of the o.s. helicopters passing overhead and the nature of the phone message itself distract him from the steak which, during the brief conversation's course, is burnt to a cinder. As the helicopters recede:

COLONEL

I didn't even know we had anything up. Okay, I'll call Washington.

(seeing burnt steak)

Damn!

11 HELICOPTERS IN FLIGHT

12 OFFICE IN WASHINGTON

3-star GENERAL BRODY stands against wall map of splashdown area and barks into phone.

BRODY

No serial number? ... Well, it may have been burnt out on re-entry. ... No, neither did I. I'll check with Deputy Director, NASA, and call you back.

He cuts the call to initiate a new one.

13 EXT. HELICOPTER

disgorging FROGMEN at spacecraft. First helicopter departs.

14 OFFICE AT CAPE KENNEDY

INTERCUTTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR with BRODY in Washington.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR (CIVILIAN)

(patiently)

General Brody, I'm telling you... We have no spacecraft up.

BRODY

(irritably)

You're telling me that what never went up can't come down. And I'm telling you it just has. And now I'm going to tell the President.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. BEACH AREA

Military vehicles, combat Marines, trucks, jeeps, etc. swarm.

16 WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

The PRESIDENT is an articulate, unruffled professional politician with a flair for irony. Into phone:

PRESIDENT

Let us hope and pray that you are right, General. But I think we should be alert to a remoter possibility: that the Russians retrieved one of our missing spaceships and remanned it with astronauts who have now accidentally splashed down in our own territorial waters. If they're alive, you may tell Colonel Winthrop at El Palomar to welcome them with caution. Whether they're alive or not, have NASA go over that ship with whatever's the scientific equivalent of a fine tooth comb. And until we know more, I want a full security clampdown on the entire operation.

(dryly)

You understand me, General. This is not for the networks.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. SPACECRAFT

being towed ashore by cable attached to truck winch. FROGMEN, swimming alongside, shout orders to truck on beach.

CUT TO:

18 INSIDE SPACESHIP

Its windows still fogged and blackened; the OCCUPANTS still helmeted. We hear O.S. FROGMEN faintly shouting orders from outside.

ASTRONAUT 2

We are being pulled.

FROGMAN'S VOICE

(O.S.)

How the hell do you hold onto this thing.

FROGMAN'S VOICE

(O.S.)

Some Frogman you are.

He laughs.

ASTRONAUT 1

They speak our language. At least they have intelligence.

ASTRONAUT 2

(urgently)

Then at least let us conceal our intelligence from our captors. Our safety may lie in silence.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. FIRST HELICOPTER RETURNS

and lands on beach. COLONEL emerges, with two AIDES, to view:

20 EXT. SPACECRAFT AT WATER'S EDGE

21 MARINES SURROUND SPACECRAFT AT THE READY

22 THE OPENING OF THE SPACESHIP'S HATCH

Our helmeted ASTRONAUTS emerge, descend; and draw the selves up, line abreast, facing:

23 COLONEL AND AIDES

COLONEL

Welcome, gentlemen.

Then their faces stiffen in aghast astonishment, as we:

CUT TO:

24 FROM THEIR P.O.V. - THE ASTRONAUTS UNHELMETED

They are all chimpanzees. One of them (MILO) is a character new to our series. The other two are CORNELIUS and his wife ZIRA. Over their heads we SUPER:

TITLE AND CREDITS

which continue over a:

- A. CREDIT: ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES
Frozen shot of the three apes.
- B. CREDIT: (STARRING)
A shot of the Colonel and two aides. Camera ZOOMS into head shot of Colonel.
- C. CREDIT: RODDY McDOWALL
Close shot of Cornelius. Pull back to Med. shot. He looks off.
- D. CREDIT: KIM HUNTER
Camera pans to Zira.
- E. CREDIT: BRAD DILLMAN
Full shot - beach action. Colonel and two aides run towards jeep.
- F. CREDIT NATALIE TRUNDY
Colonel in f.g. reaches for phone in jeep. Two aides in b.g.
- G. CREDIT: ERIC BRAEDEN
General Brody reacting to news on telephone (freeze frame).
- H. CREDIT: (CO-STARRING)
Deputy Director, NASA, reacting to news (freeze frame).
- I. CREDIT: SUPPORTING CAST
President of the U.S. reacting to the news (freeze frame).
- J. CREDIT: RICARDO MONTALBAN AS ARMANDO
Full shot - Ops Room receiving news on teletype.
- K. CREDIT: MUSIC - JERRY GOLDSMITH
Tighter shot - Ops Room - activity on phone.
- L. CREDIT: PHOTOGRAPHY - JOE BIROC
Full shot - security gate. Trucks and ambulance entering air base.
- M. CREDIT: ART DIRECTION, ETC.
Security gates being closed Zooming into off-limits sign.
- N. CREDIT: MAKEUP DESIGN AND FILM EDITOR
Full shot - trucks and ambulance arriving at air base depot.
- O. CREDIT: UNIT MANAGER, ETC.
Ambulance being opened to admit Ape-onauts.

- P. CREDIT: PANAVISION, ETC.
by soldiers to guardhouse (director's
note: possible two shot).
- Q. CREDIT: ASSOCIATE PRODUCER
Low-bed truck carrying spacecraft.
- R. CREDIT: WRITTEN BY
Tighter shot on moving truck carrying spacecraft.
- S. CREDIT: PRODUCED BY
Jeep arriving at air base depot. Aide to Colonel
enters building.
- T. CREDIT: DIRECTED BY
Colonel and Aide emerge from building heading
towards guardhouse.

MONTAGE ENDS.

26 EXT. MARINE BASE - COLONEL AND AIDE

who is carrying a large paperbag, as they walk past
Headquarters Buildings.

COLONEL

Did you call the Zoo?

AIDE

Yes, sir. We're in luck. The
sick bay's almost empty except
for a mauled fox cub, a deer with
pneumonia, and a depressed gorilla.
The Apes will be hidden from the
public. They'll be quarantined.
If they want medical attention, it's
available on the spot. And the
experts can start giving them the
once-over first thing in the morning.
General Brody's very pleased.

COLONEL

Me, too. Can't have a lot of monkeys
making messes in the Guardhouse. Have
we fed them? Like raw steak or
something?

AIDE

The Zoo tells me that chimpanzees,
like all apes, are vegetarian, sir.

COLONEL

Good God.

AIDE

(indicating paper bag)
They suggested oranges.

They have reached:

27 EXT. GUARDHOUSE

whose door is unlocked by an obviously shaken MARINE M.P.

COLONEL

What's the matter?

MARINE M.P. helplessly ushers them into:

28 INT. GUARDHOUSE

Its rear section (behind bars) is furnished with austere but serviceable beds, chairs, tables and a washing sink with plates and cutlery in rack above. On the floor: a capacious rawhide valise, from which ZIRA (gloved and shod) has extracted a robe into which she is changing. Her discarded space suit lies at her feet. MILO and CORNELIUS have already changed. Their space suits are hanging neatly from wall hooks. At COLONEL'S entry, MILO and CORNELIUS rise courteously to their feet, while ZIRA struggles hastily into her robe. From the threshold:

COLONEL

(automatically)

Excuse me. I didn't mean to disturb....

(aghast to Aide)

What am I saying?

AIDE

They're...pretending to dress.

COLONEL

What d'you mean, pretending?
They are dressing. Where'd they get those clothes?

MARINE M.P.

(indicating valise)

They brought them with them, sir.

(gulping)

In a suitcase.

COLONEL

Suit....?

(with an effort;

to Aide)

Greg, give them their oranges.

AIDE advances cautiously with paper bag.

29 MASTER SHOT

We HOLD COLONEL and MARINE M.P. talking in f.g., while AIDE proffers oranges (which the TRIO gracefully accepts) in b.g.

ZIRA, holding her orange, has gone straight to the sink rack, from which she takes three plates, three knives and three forks.

COLONEL
(not noticing;
to Marine M.P.)
Arrange prisoner escort for 16:30
hours...

ZIRA distributes plates and cutlery to MILO and CORNELIUS. To AIDE's astonishment, the APES draw up chairs and sit round the table.

COLONEL
(not noticing;
to Aide)
We're sending them to the Zoo Infirmary.

The APES start meticulously quartering their oranges on their plates with their knives.

COLONEL
(still to Aide)
They'll have company. There's
a gorilla in the next cage.

ZIRA, overhearing this, reacts violently; rises, picks up her plate and hurls it to the ground.

COLONEL
(looking round at
last)
Now why the hell did it do that?

The full implications of the plates and the knives only strike him as we:

CUT TO:

30 INT. ZOO INFIRMARY - NIGHT

We START on CLOSE SHOT of the deer with pneumonia, cradled under ultraviolet lamps which (as we PULL BACK) prove to be the huge, clinically furnished room's only light source -- for the sick animals must get their rest. We PAN past a recumbent camel and the mauled fox cub, into whose small sleeping body the rubber tube of a suspended flask is intravenously dripping plasma; and END on a white-coated KEEPER (with flashlamp) inspecting our APE TRIO, now installed in one of two

large, contiguous cages at the dim room's center: straw for them to lie on; a bowl of water for drinking; and a generous supply of oranges and bananas, one of which he cautiously proffers to ZIRA through the bars, while playfully patting her head. ZIRA reacts the banana and slaps his face. Taken aback but still amicably:

KEEPER

Have it your own way, mate.

Clang! He locks them in and exits. When the light from his flashlamp has faded to near-darkness, we hear an outer door more distantly locked.

ZIRA

(outraged whisper
to Cornelius)

I'm not his mate. I'm yours.

CORNELIUS

Zira, please control yourself.
I think they're trying to be kind.

ZIRA

This cage stinks of gorilla.

She sits down disconsolately on the straw. Instantly CORNELIUS sits by her and takes her hand. In undertones:

ZIRA

Cornelius -- where are we? What's happened?

CORNELIUS helplessly shrugs. From the shadows, very softly:

MILO

I know where we are. I know what has happened.

ZIRA and CORNELIUS stare at him.

MILO

In some fashion -- and I lack the intellect to know precisely how -- we have traveled from Earth's future into Earth's past.

CORNELIUS

But we saw Earth destroyed.

MILO

And Earth will be destroyed -- just as we saw it. Only, since fleeing it, we have passed through

a....backward disturbance in time --
did you notice the Date Meter
clicking down after the shock
wave hit our ship? -- and we
have returned to Earth almost
two thousand years before its
destruction.

(solemnly)

That is another reason for keeping
silence. Our human captors would
not be edified to know that, one
day, their world will crack like
an egg and fry to a cinder, because
of an Ape war of aggression.

His low tones have become just emphatic enough to
disturb:

31 GORILLA IN NEXT CAGE

It shifts, grunts and whimpers uneasily.

32 BACK TO SCENE

The TRIO reacts. We CLOSE to:

MILO

Apes, at this instant in time,
cannot yet talk. For the moment,
we should follow their example.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

33 EXT. ZOO - MISTY MORNING SHOTS (6:00 A.M.)

We hear occasional call of a tropical early bird, and
CLOSE to two human early birds: LEWIS DIXON, a young
animal psychiatrist, and his pretty (female) research
assistant, STEVIE. As they walk:

LEWIS

(feeling in
pocket)

The driver brought e report from
the Air Base.

(scanning it)

The usual imitatory behavior ...
mimicking salutes ... hand-shaking
... sitting on chairs ... eating
off plates with knives ... but--

He hesitates.

STEVIE

What, Lewis?

LEWIS

There was a sort of carpetbag in the ship.

STEVIE

With food?

LEWIS

No -- clothes. Stevie, they changed into them.

STEVIE

I don't believe it.

But his reaction says it is true. We have reached the Infirmary's main (open) door which is guarded by two SOLDIERS.

STEVIE

What are they doing here?

LEWIS

Security.

(undertone)

Join the Marines and see the Zoo ...

Passing between the SOLDIERS, they enter:

A-33 INT. INFIRMARY CORRIDOR

They don white smocks (marked with their own names) hanging from wall hooks; walk past the sick deer and the fox under treatment in small box-cages against the wall; and enter:

B-33 MAIN ROOM - DOUBLE CAGE

In one half of the cage sleeps the depressed GORILLA; in the other half, very much awake, sit CORNELIUS and ZIRA staring at the Intelligence Test apparatus. Outside the cage stands KEEPER.

LEWIS

Good morning, Arthur.

ARTHUR

Hi, Dr. Dixon.....Dr. Branton.

Our APES survey them stonily.

ARTHUR

(fingering bruise
on cheek)

The female's a bit uppity, sir.

LEWIS

Okay, I'll be careful. We'll start with the Wisconsin Multiphasic.

STEVIE opens the cage.

LEWIS

Go easy, Stevie.

STEVIE

They look pretty docile.

LEWIS

Yes, but don't take any chances.

The Wisconsin Multiphasic is a screen which can be lowered and raised (like a window shade) between the Investigator on one side and the Subject on the other. ZIRA winks knowledgeably at CORNELIUS. MILO gestures her into more discreet behavior. KEEPER sets up apparatus during:

LEWIS

(to Stevie)

Unless the spacecraft was remotely controlled, they must have been conditioned to press at least some of the right buttons. They can't be morons.

(to Keeper)

The female first, Arthur. And set up Tic-Tac-Toe.

To everyone's surprise and KEEPER's relief, ZIRA promptly squats down on her side of the raised screen. The hyper-cautious MILO disapprovingly shakes his head. LEWIS raises screen and displays a single red cube for three seconds before lowering screen to mask ZIRA's view. When he raises it again, he is simultaneously displaying a blue pyramid, a green cone, a yellow sphere, a blue cube, a red octahedron and the red cube. ZIRA instantly selects the red cube, which she offers courteously back to LEWIS. LEWIS gives an astonished whistle. STEVIE, too, reacts in amazement.

LEWIS

She seems to be pretty smart. All right -- let's make it difficult.

He lowers the screen, and readies an assortment of five colored blocks, then raises the screen only for a second, then lowers it. He now adds additional blocks to make it an even dozen, and breaks up the pattern of

five previously seen by ZIRA. Now, almost smugly, he raises the screen, but any superiority he may have felt is quickly erased as ZIRA swiftly selects the original five blocks. LEWIS is dumbfounded, STEVIE drops her notebook and the KEEPER stares in utter disbelief.

Now, LEWIS pulls the drawer out from the table, and we see that slots for all twelve blocks have been carved in the bottom. No slouch ZIRA. She deftly and swiftly fits all twelve blocks into their proper niches. Whereat she rises to her feet, clasps hands over her head like a boxer acknowledging victory. CORNELIUS responds with mirth, but MILO shakes his head.

LEWIS has risen at this interplay between the apes and now questions the KEEPER quietly.

LEWIS

They haven't eaten this morning?

ARTHUR

Not a bite....just as you ordered.

LEWIS

Good. We'll go for the banana...

Scattered about the cage are a number of oddly constructed wooden boxes, all gaily painted. STEVIE now adds several more, as ARTHUR tugs on a rope pulley to lower a banana from the top of the cage.

This is a test unfamiliar to ZIRA, who responds to its challenge. She speculatively eyes the banana; then stoops to prowl among the boxes, which she carefully examines without touching them. Then she straightens... and thinks. The tension is insupportable. Suddenly ZIRA, moving into action, interlocks all the boxes so that they form a somewhat eccentric staircase leading to the banana. Having done so, she ascends the "stairs," sits on the top, and stares smugly at the banana, now only inches from her nose.

STEVIE

Why doesn't she take it?

ZIRA

Because I loathe and detest bananas.

CORNELIUS

Zira!

As though in a slow nightmare, STEVIE sags and faints. Somehow, LEWIS catches her and lowers her to the cage floor. Somehow, KEEPER sluices water from the drinking bowl over her upturned face. As she recovers:

LEWIS

(sweating)

Help me get her away. I'll come
back.

Jointly supporting STEVIE, they leave the cage, which
KEEPER locks. We STAY with:

34 OUT

35 APE TRIO

MILO

Zira, are you mad?

CORNELIUS

Dr. Milo, please don't call my
wife mad.

MILO

(evenly)

I did not call her mad. I merely
asked her if she was. And I repeat
the question.

(to Zira)

Are you mad?

ZIRA

I hate deceit.

MILO

There is a time for truth and
a time, not for lies, but for
silence. Until we know who is
our friend and who our enemy--

ZIRA

And how in the name of God are we
to know that, unless we communicate?
We can speak. So I spoke.

MILO

We can also listen

CORNELIUS

To a lot of psychiatric small talk --

MILO

And we can watch ...

CORNELIUS

A display of primitive apparatus --

ZIRA

(kicking the apparatus)

Primitive? Its prehistoric. It

couldn't test the intelligence of
a newt.

She kicks the apparatus again, and it collapses. The
GORILLA in the next cage gives a disturbed grunt.

CORNELIUS

Zira, calm yourself --

ZIRA

I am calm.

She knocks another piece of apparatus endways. Now even
MILO's self-control snaps. He stalks to the side bars
and (with eyes screwed shut in frustration) briefly but
fiercely shakes them before spinning round, with back
pressed against the bars, to glare at his two
tormentors. We SHOOT AT AND PAST HIM into the next cage
where the GORILLA now shambles to its feet and slowly
advances from b.g., during:

MILO

Stop arguing. It's too late for
that.

His body masking the GORILLA's crouched and stealthy
approach from them -- but not from us.

MILO

Use your heads and start thinking.
Now that they know we can speak,
how much shall we tell them? ow--

ZIRA

(screaming)

Milo-o-o!

Through the bars two hairy hands converge on MILO's
throat and strangle him to death. The roaring of the
GORILLA, the throttled cries of MILO and ZIRA's screams
combine to launch:

36 VARIOUS ZOO SHOTS

of alarmed birds and beasts as panic briefly infects
the Zoo. E.g., a sleeping owl opens huge eyes; cranes
cry; mallards take off from pool; seals cough; apes
gibber; tigers snarl; lions roar, and elephants
trumpet. We might (instead of separating each cry)
overlay sound cumulatively so that each new noise is
added to its predecessors, as we build visually and
aurally to a massive and bestial crescendo before:

CUT BACK

TO:

The "panic" is over. Outside, STEVIE (shaken but recovered) confers with LEWIS. As KEEPERS 1 and 2 lift a blanketed stretcher and carry MILO's body out of shot:

LEWIS
We shall want a full autopsy ...

STEVIE
With particular emphasis on the cranial and oral areas.

LEWIS
Keep him in cold storage till the reports in. Then send him to Taxidermy.
(wryly)
He's a museum piece.

A low moan turns their heads toward the cage's interior. ZIRA sits crouched in a corner, her head in her hands and rocking from side to side. CORNELIUS is comforting her.

LEWIS
(to Stevie)
I'd better do this alone.

She nods and stays outside the cage, which LEWIS enters. He looks compassionately at the two huddled APES, the straw, the orange peel, the bananas, the abandoned Intelligence Test apparatus.

LEWIS
(gently)
We mean you no harm.

Silence and stillness.

LEWIS
Do you understand? We mean you no harm.

Slowly and bitterly, ZIRA points an ironic and accusing finger at the next cage, where an anesthetized and chained GORILLA slumps in the shadows.

LEWIS
But he isn't us. He's your own kind.

ZIRA
(angrily on her feet in a flash)
He's a gorilla.

As CORNELIUS soothes her:

LEWIS

I mean he's of your race.
He's an Ape. Look. You don't
have to be afraid. We've put him
in chains and under sedation.
Do you understand that?

ZIRA

I should. I've been doing it
half my life to Humans.

LEWIS

(dumbfounded)
Humans?

ZIRA

(as though this
explained everything)
I'm a psychiatrist.

A second shock. LEWIS covers dazed eyes with his hand
and, after a struggle, regains his self-control.

LEWIS

So am I. And I mean you no harm.

CORNELIUS

(at last)
We know that.

LEWIS, over one hurdle, exhales.

LEWIS

Do you have a name?

CORNELIUS

My name is Cornelius. And this
is Zira -- my wife.

LEWIS

My name is Lewis -- Lewis Dixon .

He diffidently extends a hand, CORNELIUS takes it.
ZIRA doesn't.

LEWIS

Nobody's going to believe it.

CORNELIUS

Believe what?

LEWIS

That primitive apes can talk.

ZIRA
(furious)
Primitive?

LEWIS
(quick smile)
I mean that in our 'primitive'
civilization, apes just don't talk.
I mean I think it's important that,
when our 'primitive' security
precautions are lifted, the first
time you say something in public you
should talk to what we 'primitively'
call the Right People.

ZIRA gives him a long, searching look ... and smiles.

ZIRA
May I say something personal?

LEWIS
(smiling back)
Please

ZIRA
I like you.

LEWIS look gratefully from her to:

CORNELIUS
I did from the beginning.

TO BE CONTINUED...