

FADE IN

VIRDON'S VOICE

...I record my last thoughts before unconsciousness. This state will be deeper than sleep. Dreamless, dark, a void as total as the space outside.

(a beat)

Somewhere -- out there -- are Taylor, Thomas, LaFever and Bengsten -- or their remains. We're going to find them...or finish an epitaph for them...

The CAMERA PANS OVER TO the other receptacle and we HEAR Kovak's voice.

KOVAK'S VOICE

I keep having to tell myself... over and over again...that this is reality; this incredible suspended limbo. To age four weeks...while traveling almost six years...and to know that nothing we've left behind will be the same when we return...if we return. The body can handle it. The human frame can withstand a great deal. I believe...I really believe that Virдон and I will survive this. But can the mind assimilate the things that are happening to us? Can we survive...the wonder of it?

The CAMERA PANS UP so that we're at the foot of the two receptacles. Suddenly a bank of lights go on, looking like some kind of insane pinball machine. Bells RING. There's a pulsating electronic siren and a metallic prerecorded voice can now be HEARD.

VOICE

Entering atmosphere...
entering atmosphere...
controls will now be
manually monitored...
controls will now be
manually monitored.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE TWO RECEPTACLES

2

as the ice begins to melt. The covers slowly raise and the two ASTRONAUTS are electronically moved up into sitting

Cont.

3

2 Cont.

positions. The "caskets" are now like cockpits. Their eyes open as controls are slowly lowered from up above to stop in front of them -- instrument panels, lights, and finally in front of them a large scanning screen.

REVERSE ANGLE - FROM BEHIND THEM

3

LOOKING TOWARD the screen as it goes through a sequence of changing colors and then takes on, with stunning clarity, a panoramic vision of a planet beneath them as seen through high-strata clouds.

PROFILE SHOT

4

FROM one side of the room TOWARD the two Astronauts as they look at one another. Virдон grins, sticks up a thumb. Kovak smiles an acknowledgment and does likewise.

KOVAK

Just like a short catnap,
wasn't it?

VIRDON

Just long enough for the bus
to go down the block.

Then he turns, scans the screen, his voice with some grimness:

VIRDON

And that's where we get off!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

5

A barren plain, alien, stark, and yet with suggestions of familiarity. The rocks are rocks -- but different -- and the trees look twisted and gnarled, defying identification. INTO THE FRAME come Kovak and Virдон in astronaut suits but without helmets. They move up to the crest of a small hill and look around.

THEIR P.O.V. - PANNING SHOT - THE PLAIN

6

TWO SHOT - VIRDON AND KOVAK

7

VIRDON

(checking a device
in his hand)

I read about fourteen pounds
per square inch --

Cont.

KOVAK

Like sea level --

Viridon does some manipulation with the device, reads from it.

VIRDON

Nitrogen, oxygen, argon,
carbon dioxide, neon, and just
a fly's eye worth of krypton.

KOVAK

(looking around)

It's a great place to visit...
but I sure as hell wouldn't
want to live here!

VIRDON

(intensely)

But you could live here.

(a beat)

And so could Taylor and the
others.

(checks a compass,
nods in a diagonal
direction)

The water was over here.

He starts trudging off in that direction. Kovak follows him
with a hand on the butt of a weapon in a holster on his belt.

VIRDON

(with a side look
at him)

You're expecting Comanches?

KOVAK

Colonel -- you think back to
the worst nightmare you ever had --
and that's what I'm expecting!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

8

as the two Astronauts come over a sandy dune and stand
silhouetted against an incredibly clear blue sky, staring
down. CAMERA PANS DOWN to the water's edge where a large
fragment of metal is just being washed up.

ANGLE ON THE TWO MEN

as they move hurriedly down the dune over to the piece of metal. The two of them wrestle with it and ultimately pull it farther up the shore, then kneeling, examine it. There are numerals -- rusted and faded. Kovak looks up at Virдон questioningly.

KOVAK

Theirs or ours?

VIRDON

(touching it
with his hand)

Part of a helium tank.

He turns and looks down the beach.

VIRDON'S P.O.V. - THE BEACH

There are several pieces of metal, including one that's imbedded into a large rock outcrop.

MOVING SHOT - THE TWO MEN

as they move from piece to piece, studying, analyzing, identifying.

DIFFERENT ANGLE ON THEM

as Virдон rises from examining the last fragment.

VIRDON

It's Taylor's ship...or it was Taylor's ship.

KOVAK

Then we are where?

VIRDON

Roughly where we thought we'd be. In the Constellation Casseiopeia. Right on the border of the Milky Way.

(then with a
lopsided grin)

Feel better?

KOVAK

(scratching
his jaw)

I'm only a simple country doctor. I don't know from Casseiopeia.

Cont.

Kovak moves over and touches scrubby plant life, then turns with dead earnest.

KOVAK

But I do know atmosphere.

(looks around)

Absolutely life supporting.
We could be in the State of
New Jersey.

(looks down
toward the metal)

If they survived the crash...

(looks up
toward the sky)

...they sure as hell could have
survived this air.

He moves back over to Viridon who is once again checking out the metal and looks at him questioningly.

VIRDON

(picking up one
small square)

This is a piece of a Gimbal Bearing.

(holds it up,
studying it)

If I'd found this in New Jersey --
I'd say whatever it belonged to
wasn't very old.

KOVAK

Allan, that's the hangup. Time.

(then thoughtfully)

It could've been their hangup,
too.

(then, with intensity,
trying to sprinkle it
lightly, but it still
comes out intense)

I offer you now the Kovak theorem
of a time warp.

VIRDON

(shortly)

I've heard it.

KOVAK

Indulge me.

VIRDON

I over-indulged you when I
listened to you can that crud
months ago --

KOVAK

I give it to you as possibility.
If there were an honest-to-God
time warp that you encountered
in Deep Space -- what does that
suggest to you?

VIRDON

(reluctant but
fascinated)

Stanley -- you'd have to be
dead drunk or out of your mind
to accept a hypothesis --

KOVAK

I'm not asking you to accept
it. Just live with it as a
possibility for a minute.

CLOSE SHOT - VIRDON

13

who rises from the sand and stares at him.

VIRDON

If there were a time warp --
(a beat)
-- then the question wouldn't
be where we were...

He looks around the barren landscape beyond the water, then
to Kovak.

VIRDON

...the question would be when.

CLOSE SHOT - KOVAK

14

KOVAK

(with even more
intensity)

Assume, like Taylor and the others,
that we start from a fixed point.
We move from A to B. During that
trip, distance is in miles. But
you hit a warp --

He draws a line across the sand with a piece of stick,
then stops and moves the stick back to where it began.

KOVAK

-- then suddenly...we're back
where we started.

CLOSE SHOT - VIRDON

15

His eyes narrow. He swallows.

VIRDON

I don't like that possibility.

(a beat)

That would mean that --

(looks around)

-- we're either a million years before...

KOVAK

Or a million years after.

(a beat)

What I'm suggesting as the possibility, Allan, is that this could be earth.

ANOTHER ANGLE - KOVAK

16

as he moves over to Virdon, takes the piece of metal from him.

KOVAK

Earth as it was...or earth as it will be.

The two men stare at one another.

VIRDON

(tightly)

You have just been indulged, Doctor, and that's all you get for this mission.

(a beat)

Let's go.

SERIES OF SHOTS - THE TWO MEN

17

as they walk, look, check, record.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - ANGLE ON SPACE
VEHICLE - NIGHT

18

Kovak sits in front of a scanner screen, half dozing. He's jarred to attention by Virdon's VOICE.

VIRDON'S VOICE

Stan? You read me?

Kovak leans forward to adjust one of the knobs under the screen to bring it into clarity.

ANGLE ON THE SCREEN

19

Illuminated against a dark lunar landscape is Virdon. He carries an electric torch which casts an incredibly bright eerie light around his immediate vicinity.

KOVAK

Audio and video -- you're beautiful.

VIRDON

That ridge just to the north of us -- it isn't volcanic. The black stuff is some kind of lichen.

KOVAK

So come home. I've got your supper ready.

VIRDON

Punching out now. On my way.

ANGLE ON THE SCREEN

20

as Virdon starts off to the left as if turning back, then stops abruptly.

ANGLE ON KOVAK

21

KOVAK

What is it, Allan? You see something?

ANGLE ON THE SCREEN

22

Virdon hurriedly moves off to one side, his torch picking up trees, boulders, fauna, then he stops and turns to face the screen.

ANGLE ON KOVAK

23

KOVAK

What is it? What do you see?

ANGLE ON THE SCREEN

24

Virdon holds out his torch. ZOOMAR INTO the screen until we're close on four makeshift wooden crosses. From one of them hangs an astronaut's helmet. The ZOOM CONTINUES right on INTO the worn, weathered, almost obliterated name on the helmet. It reads "Taylor."

CLOSE SHOT - KOVAK 10
25

rising. It takes him a moment to speak.

KOVAK
Oh, my dear God!
(a beat)
Stay right there, Allan. I'm
coming out.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PLAIN - DAY 26

It's a gray early morning light emphasizing the loneliness --
the uninhabited quality of the place.

ANGLE ON THE FOUR CROSSES 27

the astronaut's helmet swaying slightly in a crying wind.
CAMERA PANS OVER TO:

ANGLE ON KOVAK AND VIRDON 28

Some entrenching tools lie on the ground and lined up, in
almost perfect symmetry, are the reconstituted skeletal
figures lying in a row, disinterred.

ANGLE ON KOVAK 29

as he moves from one to the other.

MOVING SHOT - WITH HIM 30

KOVAK
Male. Caucasian. Age
approximately thirty-one.
Lead remnant in the rib cage --

VIRDON
Gunshot?

KOVAK
Most likely.
(moves on to the
next skeleton)
Male. Caucasian. Age
twenty-eight to thirty.
Same cause of death.
(moves over to
the third figure)
Male. Caucasian. Age
approximately twenty-three.
(bends down closer
to the skeleton)
Broken neck.

Cont.

He looks back toward Virdon who closes his eyes and shakes his head. CAMERA PANS BACK TO Kovak who stops over the fourth skeleton and just stares.

VIRDON

Male. Caucasian. What age?

Kovak has to swallow before he responds.

KOVAK

I'm going to give you an educated guess.

VIRDON

(nods)

Go.

KOVAK

(looking down at the skeleton)

Female.

VIRDON

Female?

He moves over to Kovak's side, looks at the skeleton then at Kovak, shaking his head.

VIRDON

There were no females on that crew.

KOVAK

Like I say...this is an educated guess.

(a beat)

Allan...these are the bones of an ape.

The CAMERA STARTS A SLOW PULL BACK on the two men until it reaches a point where INTO THE FRAME steps an ANTHROPOIDAL FIGURE, partially dressed, his back TO THE CAMERA.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

EXT. PLAIN - HIGH ANGLE SHOT - THE APE - DAY 31

standing above Virдон and Kovak. It opens its mouth, raises both hands.

REVERSE ANGLE - LOOKING DOWN - THE ASTRONAUTS 32

both transfixed. Novak pulls his gun out of his holster. It's a reflexive, fear-ridden act. He has pressed the trigger while the gun is still traveling upwards in an arc.

ANGLE ON THE APE 33

It lets out one fearsome SCREAM, clutching at its neck, then falls forward, tumbling down the side of a dune to land at the feet of the two men.

ANOTHER ANGLE 34

as Kovak hurriedly moves to the ape's prostrate body to examine the wound of the apparently lifeless animal.

VIRDON

Dead?

KOVAK

(quickly examining)

Not quite.

(then probing deeper)

About a millimeter away from the trachea -- then out the back over here.

(he looks up)

But it sure messed up things on its way.

He rises, stares down at the body, his voice shaking.

KOVAK

I don't know why the hell I shot him. I looked up and there he stood with his big damned hands out --

VIRDON

(interrupting, his voice sharp)

Save it for a critique. Look at this.

Cont.

He kneels down by the body, pulls up on the ragged shirt worn by the ape; then he twists the rope that's around the ape's neck, revealing a severed end just above the knot. He looks up at Kovak.

VIRDON

Somebody owns this thing. I don't want to be around when 'somebody' comes looking for him.

KOVAK

Allan --

Viridon nods.

KOVAK

At least we know there's a 'somebody' civilized enough to own a pet.

VIRDON

(grimly)

And to put four sets of bones in the earth. There's such a thing as being too civilized.

He looks toward the four skeletons, then back down to the ape.

VIRDON

We've got to get this thing out of here.

The two men lift the apes and start carrying him off.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHIP - NIGHT

35

A small cubicle of a room full of all kinds of gear, including medical. The ape is on a small, portable fold-up table and Kovak is just finishing wrapping a bandage around its throat. Viridon, who's been watching, moves into the periphery of light over the table and looks questioningly at Kovak, who finishes the bandaging and turns to him.

VIRDON

Good job.

Cont.

KOVAK

(looking down at
the ape)

Skilled, huh? Call me if you ever need a bullet removed from your throat...or on the other hand, if you want me to put one in. I'm the new Renaissance man, Colonel. Lefty-righty -- shoot 'em, cure 'em!

VIRDON

(intensely)

I preferred your optimism. The guilt complex doesn't become.

KOVAK

(with a shrug)

You pays your money, you takes your choice, Colonel. I can be all things to all men. The Great Healer -- or Quick-Draw McGraw.

At this moment the ape moves slightly on the table and both men stare at it. Virdon takes a step closer to the table and stares down at the ape's face in repose; then he lets his eyes move over to the shirt and rope that are draped over a metal railing.

VIRDON

How do you figure it? Zoo maybe.

KOVAK

Or somebody's pet, like you said.

MOVING SHOT - VIRDON

36

over to the shirt. He picks it up, stares at it.

VIRDON

(his voice musing)

Why do I get this feeling we should just batten down, fire up the engines and get the hell out?

(he turns to Kovak)

Apes.

KOVAK

What do you mean -- 'apes'?

Cont.

VIRDON

One of the skeletons was an ape.
 And this poor, punctured little
 bastard over here -- he's an ape.
 This bloody place is so ape-
 oriented, I get a feeling the first
 human we see will be either Tarzan
 or Jane.

There is a sudden restless motion of the ape on the
 table. Both men turn to it.

ANOTHER ANGLE - KOVAK

37

as he reaches into a drawer for a syringe, holds it out
 to the light, moves over to the ape.

VIRDON

Will that quiet him?

KOVAK

(as he injects the
 needle into the ape's
 arm)

This would quiet a hippo. It'll
 also keep it from pulling the
 bandage off its throat.

ANGLE ON VIRDON

38

as he moves to the opposite side of the table and looks
 down at the ape.

CLOSE SHOT - THE APE

39

It opens its eyes and stares up at Virdon.

UPSHOT - VIRDON

40

as he looks down into the ape's face.

CLOSE SHOT - THE APE

41

as the eyes stay open...for a moment, locked. It opens
 its mouth but makes no sound at all, though an effort
 does show; then gradually the eyes close.

ANGLE ON THE TWO MEN

42

VIRDON

It figures.

Cont.

KOVAK

What does?

VIRDON

That certain spasm of compassion men feel for monkeys. You remember an ancient flick called King Kong?

KOVAK

Vaguely.

VIRDON

(looking down at the ape)

A fifty-foot-tall gorilla takes a dive off the Empire State Building. And by God, if you don't feel sorry for it. It kills off about five thousand people and wrecks half of New York City -- but when the Navy planes shoot it off the building -- you get this impulse to send flowers.

(he shakes his head, scrooches up his eyes)

Doctor, what have you got in that bag of yours to put me back on the track?

(he points to the ape)

I'm starting to worry more about the monk than I am about us.

(he looks up, lets his eyes scan the room)

And we can do with all the worrying.

CLOSER ANGLE - THE TWO MEN

43

as they leave the cubicle and move INTO the corridor.

EXT. CUBICLE ROOM

44

as Kovak and Virdon pause near a small, circular porthole.

SHOT - THROUGH THE PORTHOLE - THE GNARLED, TREED LANDSCAPE 45

where for just one spasmodic moment we see something move and within a fraction of a second, yet another thing moves.

ANGLE ON VIRDON AND KOVAK

VIRDON

There's somebody out there. We're
being watched.

KOVAK

(catches his breath)

They can't get in here -- that's
one consolation.

Viridon turns to him.

VIRDON

That's a helluva small consolation.
No, they can't get in here but yes,
they can dent this hull with just
a couple of rocks and maroon us here
until the end of time.

KOVAK

(tight-lipped)

Then maybe --

He stops abruptly as if clamping off the thought.

VIRDON

(very softly)

We're going to have to make some
contingency plans to get out of
here, Stan.

(a beat as he looks
once again toward
the porthole)

The bloody trouble with this place
is that every time you get an
answer...up pops another question.

KOVAK

We found three of the bodies --

VIRDON

Who buried them!

(a beat)

I'd like to find that other crew
member -- whichever one he is --
either that or his dog tags.

(he shakes his
head)

God knows, I wouldn't want to
leave him here alive.

Cont.

Then as if shaking himself out of deep, reflective and disturbing thought:

VIRDON

For the moment we'll sit tight.
We'll sleep in shifts.

He continues down the passageway, followed by Kovak.

ANGLE DOWN THE EMPTY PASSAGEWAY 47

TOWARD the closed door TO the cubicle.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CUBICLE ROOM - DOWN SHOT - THE APE - NIGHT 48

It opens its eyes, stares up at the ceiling, turns its head very slowly to the side, then with vast difficulty and obvious pain, it raises itself to a sitting position; then very gingerly it feels of the bandaged throat. Flecks of blood appear on its hands and on the bandage, then it very slowly sinks back down to lie there with its eyes wide open.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SHIP - NIGHT 49

Two blinding spotlights, strategically placed on the ship, slowly traverse back and forth across the foliage. There is an occasional RUSTLE of branches and a heavy padding SOUND of moving feet, but there is nothing actually visible. The threat hangs heavy; the jeopardy has almost an ozone count of its own -- but it remains invisible.

INT. SHIP - CONTROL AREA - NIGHT 50

Virдон sits in the command chair, staring toward the screen which reveals the spotlight area outside. There is a SOUND behind him. He whirls around. Kovak stands there.

VIRDON

You should be asleep.

KOVAK

(entering the room)
You should live so long.

Cont.

KOVAK (Cont.)
 (a nod toward the
 screen)
 See anything?

Viridon shakes his head.

VIRDON
 See it -- no. Feel it -- from
 my arches to where I part my hair.

MOVING SHOT - KOVAK

51

to a point near Viridon. He stares up at the scanning
 screen.

KOVAK
 I wish they'd make the move.

VIRDON
 (thoughtfully)
 Said and felt since the beginning
 of time -- by everybody sitting in
 the dark and sweating to death.
 (a beat; turns to
 Kovak)
 I'd like to get out of here in
 about six hours. We'll jettison
 everything except bulkheads. I
 want us to weigh about a feather
 and a half when we break loose.

KOVAK
 I'll go right down to the buff,
 Colonel. I'll leave socks, shoes,
 skivvies -- everything out there,
 if that's what's required.

Viridon moves from his seat over to one of the portholes
 to look out. There is a distant SOUND of RUMBLING
 THUNDER and an occasional flash of lightning.

VIRDON
 (flatly)
 It rains here. Remind me to make
 a note of that.

KOVAK
 When do you want to take the last
 walk?

Cont.

VIRDON

It should be light soon.
 (a beat as he looks
 toward the far door)
 Did you check the monk? I don't
 want to leave him on board by
 himself while we're out there.

KOVAK

(moving toward the
 door)
 I can give him another shot --

VIRDON

Stan!

Kovak turns to him.

ANGLE ON VIRDON

52

He shakes his head.

VIRDON

No more shots. Just put him
 outside. That's a couple of
 hundred pounds added to the
 gravity.

ANGLE ON KOVAK

53

KOVAK

I'm not sure he'll survive outside --

CLOSE SHOT - VIRDON

54

VIRDON

I'm not sure we will either.
 (a beat)
 So what's to do?

ANGLE ON KOVAK

55

who nods and moves OUT of the room.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SHIP - DAY (DAWN)

56

We see large piles of equipment and material that has
 been thrown out of the ship. A PAN PAST various of
 these OVER TO the ape, who has been placed, sitting,
 against a tree, its eyes open but glazed and weak.

Cont.

Over this is the SOUND of more equipment being thrown. PAN OVER TO the ship as Virdon and Kovak COME OUT, both armed. They start away from the ship and in the process pass the ape. Both look down at him. Kovak kneels to check pulse, then pulls down both eyes, looks over his shoulder back toward Virdon.

KOVAK

He may make it.

ANGLE ON THE APE

57

as Kovak starts to rise. It suddenly grips hold of his arm. Kovak stares at the ape's hand; then slowly, and with some gentleness, removes it. He rises.

KOVAK

(softly)

Don't sweat it, pal. When the swelling around those vocal chords goes down...you'll be able to roar and grunt and be King of the jungle.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE APE

58

as it makes a massive effort to make a sound, holds up one hand as if in supplication.

TWO SHOT - VIRDON AND KOVAK

59

reacting.

VIRDON

(tightly)

Let's go, Stan. We've got about five hours.

The two men move off.

ANGLE ON THE APE

60

He rises, takes a few weak, stumbling steps in their direction, then wavers, reaches up, touches the bandaged throat, looks at the blood-flecked fingertips, then slowly turns his head toward the ship.

MOVING SHOT - THE APE

61

over to the ship.

ANGLE OVER ITS SHOULDER

as we see some motion. The CAMERA MOVES TO a different position to discover what that motion is. The ape is writing on the side of the ship and, suddenly, shockingly, we see the bloody message that he has scrawled across the metal side. It reads, "I can speak." There is THUNDER and a rain begins to fall. The ape very slowly falls to its knees, then topples sideways.

TOP HAT SHOT - ACROSS THE GROUND - THE APE

lying there, unconscious, rain cascading down. A PAN UP TO the side of the ship where, very gradually, the rain obliterates the writing until there is nothing left.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

EXT. PLAINS - DAY

64

in the aftermath of the rain.

UPSHOT - TOWARD THE TOP OF A KNOLL

65

as Virdon and Kovak come to a stop, both sweaty, begrimed, dead tired. They look around in all directions.

VIRDON

Nothing.

HIS P.O.V. - PAN SHOT - THE EMPTY PLAIN

66

VIRDON

I now anticipate the interrogation.
And what did you find on this
incredible, uncharted asteroid?
One ape, one helmet, a persistent
feeling of disquiet.

ANGLE ON VIRDON AND KOVAC

67

KOVAK

(nervously)

You had it yet?

VIRDON

(nods)

But if there's one of them alive...
and we pull out...

(turns to Kovak)

There's gonna be an ache in my
gut that no medic will ever cure.

KOVAK

Like you say -- what's the choice?

The two men turn and start to retrace their steps back
in the direction of where they've come.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLEARING - OUTSIDE OF SHIP - DAY

68

as Virdon and Kovak come into the area. Virdon, ahead
a few feet, stops dead, stares across at the ship.

SHIP'S P.O.V. - THE TWO ASTRONAUTS

69

as they stare.

KOVAK

(in a choked voice)

Visitors.

DIFFERENT ANGLE - THE SCENE

70

as the two men race toward the ship and we see what it is they've seen -- the side entrance of the spaceship pulled aside, bent out of shape.

CUT TO:

INT. PASSAGEWAY - SPACESHIP

71

as Virdon catapults himself inside, looks quickly left and right then moves toward the open door leading to the control room.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

72

as Virdon enters, followed by Kovak. The room has been smashed, equipment flung around, dials broken, the place in rubble.

KOVAK

Good God!

Virdon has his gun out, pushes his way past Kovak back to the passageway toward the exit.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHIP - DAY

73

as the astronauts come out, Virdon in a white hot fury. He stops abruptly. WHIP PAN OVER TO the edge of the clearing. There stands the ape. He carries a length of pipe in his hand.

ANGLE ON VIRDON

74

He sees the ape, the pipe, figures the equation in his mind and then raises his gun. Kovak comes up alongside. Both stare toward the animal.

VIRDON

(his voice quivering
with fury)

We made two God-awful mistakes.
We didn't kill it to begin with...
and then we kept it alive.

He starts to aim the gun.

ANGLE ON THE APE

75

who takes a step toward them, dropping the pipe, holds up his hands.

APE

Please...wait...

REVERSE ANGLE - LOOKING TOWARD THE TWO ASTRONAUTS 76

who stare at him, absolutely dumbfounded. WHIP PAN OVER TO the ape.

APE

My name is Galen. I can speak now. It wasn't I who damaged your ship. I tried to prevent it.

He points to the pipe as if it were some silent Exhibit A to support his point.

APE

You must believe me.

ANGLE ON THE TWO ASTRONAUTS

77

Viridon very slowly lowers his gun, just staring, wide-eyed, open-mouthed. He looks briefly at Kovak whose expression is almost identical to his own.

VIRDON

Who...

(wets his lips)

...who went into the ship?

ANGLE ON GALEN

78

GALEN

The Security Police. I fought them off as best I could... then I ran away.

ANGLE ON THE TWO ASTRONAUTS

79

KOVAK

(self-conscious,
as is Viridon, and
bemused by this
incredible dialogue)

You...you must be a very valuable animal.

26

CLOSE SHOT - GALEN

80

He takes a few more steps toward them.

GALEN

Why do you think that?

ANGLE ON THE TWO ASTRONAUTS

81

as Kovak exchanges a look with Viridon.

KOVAK

You've got the Security Police
after you --

ANGLE ON GALEN

82

GALEN

What is your name?

KOVAK

I'm Doctor Kovak. This is
Colonel Viridon.

Galen looks from one to the other.

GALEN

Doctor Kovak...Colonel Viridon...
you seem perplexed that I can
speak. So it follows that
neither of you understand how
it is here.

(a beat)

Gentlemen...the Secret Police...
the populace...the government...
they are all apes!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SHIP - NIGHT

83

bathed in moonlight. We hear Galen's voice from inside.

GALEN'S VOICE

(o.s.)

The evolutionary progression is
obviously in direct contrast to
the planet Earth.

The CAMERA STARTS A MOVE TOWARD the ship.

Cont.

GALEN'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Here the primate is in the
ascendency. Man is the animal.
It has been this way since the
beginning of our recorded time.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHIP - NIGHT

84

Galen now sits in a chair in the control room which has
been cleaned up. The two astronauts across the room
listen raptly.

GALEN

Then the ship arrived with
four 'men'. It was no longer
homo-generis -- a species of
animal. It was homo-sapien --
man the wise. It was as if
we were wild animal trainers
holding up whip and chair...
to find ourselves looking into
the eyes of a crouching beast
who was stronger, more intelligent,
infinitely superior to us.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PLAINS - DAY

85

PAN UP TO a ridge above where we see the two astronauts
and the ape moving across the horizon.

GALEN'S VOICE

(o.s.)

The items you need, Colonel,
to repair the ship, are in
our central city just over
the rise there.

CLOSER ANGLE - THE GROUP

86

as they stop on a high point of the ridge.

GALEN

(as he notes Kovak
touching his gun belt)

It's unlikely they would try to
disturb us in the daylight, Doctor.
In point of fact, they're more
frightened of you -- than you
are of them.

GALEN (Cont.)

(turns, points
off to the right)

The humans -- they live in the
forest area far to the north.

VIRDON

Are they like us?

GALEN

Physically identical. But
intellectually -- you and
I are far more similar. I
suppose that they are to us...
what the ape is to you on your
planet. Here they're hunted
down for sport. Sometimes to
capture...sometimes just to
kill.

(a beat)

But when that first ship landed
from the stars -- the four men
who stepped out threatened to
change who was the hunter...
and who was the prey.

(nods down toward
the graves)

They were killed by our Security
Police.

KOVAK

Why? They meant you no harm --

GALEN

(looking directly
at him)

I meant you no harm, Doctor.

(points to the
fresh scar on
his neck)

But you gave this to me because
we are alike in many ways. A
reflex of fear...and an instinct
for survival.

VIRDON

There are three human skeletons
down there. The fourth is an
ape.

Cont.

GALEN

Her name was Zira. She was helping them to escape. As to the other astronaut, best you forget him.

VIRDON

Why?

GALEN

(with a look from one to the other)
He's dead.

ANGLE ON VIRDON AND KOVAK

87

who exchange a look.

KOVAK

What do we do now?

VIRDON

We need supplies for repairs.

GALEN

It will mean entering the city. And every moment we're there -- we are all of us in peril.

KOVAK

Why you? I still don't understand --

GALEN

There is much that you'll have to learn, Doctor Kovak. And there's much I don't understand, myself. So we must teach each other. We must learn why we speak the same language...share some of the same customs...

(a beat; his head goes down, then he looks up at the two of them)

But for the time being, we'll wait until night comes. Then we'll go into the city...and, sadly enough, my friends, you'll get an inkling as to how similar we are!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

88

This is the apes' central city or portion thereof -- perhaps just two or three structures visible in outline form to give a feeling of "difference". It is a conglomerate architecture reflective of Stone Age, Medieval village and animal cave. The street is quiet, criss-crossed with shadows. Flaming torches partially illuminate the scene like primitive street lights. We see the three figures of astronauts and ape as they observe ape life, watched by other eyes - Ursus and his Secret Police.

FULL SHOT - TOWN SQUARE

89

as suddenly lights go on as torches are suddenly lit all over.

ANGLE ON THE ASTRONAUTS AND GALEN

90

as they react, looking wildly around.

SERIES OF SHOTS

91

All exits from the square are guarded by a uniformed APE. PAN OVER TO URSUS, the Chief of the Security Police, uniformed in a metal-studded leather tunic, flanked by similarly uniformed APES.

URSUS

My name is Ursus. I'm Chief of Security here. Introduce me to your new animal friends, Galen.

ANGLE ON KOVAK AND VIRDON

92

as they both reach for weapons.

ANGLE ON AN APE

93

who lifts up a rifle -- a weapon that looks like an ancient blunderbuss -- and fires.

ANGLE ON THE EMPTY GLASS DISPLAY CASE

94

behind the two astronauts which disintegrates with a crash as the bullet plows into it. Virdon and Kovak freeze and stare.

31

ANGLE ON URSUS

95

URSUS

And Galen...tell your animal
friends to behave themselves.
Or I'll see that they're
muzzled!

FULL SHOT - THE ROOM

96

as the various uniformed apes begin to converge.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

INT. APE COUNCIL BUILDING - NIGHT

97

A large rotunda-like room in a kind of rock age congress. There is a "SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE" sitting on a dais flanked by lesser OFFICIALDOM and standing beneath them, in the middle of a discourse, is Ursus.

URSUS

So, gentlemen.,I believe our course is clear. In the interests of security, the destruction of living venal wild animals who pose a threat to our very existence -- should be a mandatory exercise, and these powers should be given without any further debate.

ANGLE ON AN APE

98

in the middle of the group who raises his hand. The "Speaker" points to him.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

The Chair recognizes Mr. Zende.

APE

Mr. President...whereas I yield to our distinguished Director of the Security Police in areas of security, it's my understanding that in this case more than security is at stake.

ANGLE ON THE GROUP

99

On one side, YOUNGER APES -- some in uniform -- who POUND on desks and ROAR OUT disapproval. A PAN OVER to the other side where are the OLDER APES -- quieter, more restrained -- who MURMUR their assent.

ANGLE ON THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

100

who POUNDS with a gavel.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

Please...gentlemen...a member of our body has the floor. Allow him the courtesy to speak, if you will --

He nods toward the Ape.

Cont.

APE

I have been in conversation with no less a distinguished personage than our own President of the Academy of Science -- Dr. Zaius. He tells me that these...these newcomers to our planet are not just animals. They represent a higher plane of species -- not unlike the four individuals who came into our midst sometime ago --

(turns toward Ursus)

-- whose deaths occurred without the sanction of this body.

URSUS

(half shouting)

Whose deaths, I may interject, occurred while the animals were violently resisting all attempts on our part to place them in custody --

APE

(out-shouting Ursus)

Would this Chief of Security Police expect any living thing not to fight for its survival?

URSUS

And would the distinguished Councilman deny us the right to put chains on a living thing if by its life it placed into jeopardy our own?

Again TUMULT and PANDEMONIUM from the two sides as they SHOUT and brandish fists at one another. There is the SOUND of the gavel then dead silence as one after the other the Apes turn toward the rear of the room. We see DR. ZAIUS standing there -- an elderly ape in a frock coat -- and if any Simian can be considered "distinguished" -- this is the aura of this individual.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

Dr. Zaius.

There is a MURMUR of reaction as Zaius moves down the aisle toward the front of the room.

ZAIUS

Mr. Chairman...gentlemen of the Council...if the Chief of Security Police would allow me a moment --

Ursus nods his head. Zaius addresses both the Chair and the audience intermittently.

ZAIUS

Then with his permission, gentlemen, and yours -- may I make the following points. A number of years ago we were visited by other human space travelers. They were summarily destroyed...liquidated. And in doing so, we did not just kill off life. We destroyed a source of knowledge which might very well have aided us beyond measure.

URSUS

(interrupting)

How much would they have aided us, Dr. Zaius, if their so-called advance knowledge had resulted in our liquidation?

Zaius turns to face him, points a finger at him.

ZAIUS

That was the rationale you used, Ursus, when you put them to death. Despite the fact that you knew -- and know now -- that these space travellers offer a link to our own history --

There is a MURMUR of reaction.

ANGLE ON URSUS

101

as he moves toward the older Ape, his tiny, bestial eyes glaring at Zaius.

URSUS

We have antithetical positions, Doctor. Your job apparently is to document the past. Mine is to secure the present.

ZAIUS

And stifle the future? Is that your job, Mr. Chief of Security Police? Because everytime you sever a link of knowledge, you stick us one foot deeper into a pit of ignorance until we'll reach a point when our future generations will think the sky is made out of mud!

Again loud SHOUTS from either side of the room as the line of babble is drawn even more sharply. The gavel is POUNDED and after a moment the uproar subsides. Zaius turns toward the Chairman.

ZAIUS

Mr. Chairman, I request that this meeting be dissolved and that I be permitted to speak to the Chief of Security Police in privileged matters which are not privy to this Council!

ANGLE ON THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

102

who POUNDS the gavel.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

This meeting is adjourned for reasons of national security to allow a discussion of privileged material --

ANGLE ON THE GAVEL

103

as once again it POUNDS. The CAMERA MOVES UP for:

ANGLE ON A TORCH

104

on a wall above the Chairman's dais.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO:

INT. SAME ROOM - ANGLE ON THE TORCH

105

as it has burned halfway through. The big, cavernous room is empty save for Zaius and Ursus, Zaius standing, Ursus sitting.

ZAIUS

I make this an oath to you. A solemn oath. These men you will not kill. And apes, like my young friend Galen who chose to befriend them -- them you will not imprison. And if you take one step to do either of these things -- I'll make the arrival of the spaceships common knowledge and I will document the nature of the men who came here and why it is you have this anxiety to place them into the ground without being seen or heard.

CLOSE SHOT - URSUS

106

who slowly rises.

URSUS

Realizing, of course, Doctor, that it is not just two humans we must contend with. It is a planet full... thousands of them...who could, with direction and leadership, place us into the ground.

ZAIUS

Even with that certain knowledge.

Ursus looks down toward the floor then up.

URSUS

Dr. Zaius...obviously we must accommodate each other.

(a beat)

Your price.

ZAIUS

Let the two spacemen go their own way -- unharmed. Release Galen and any other of our people currently charged.

URSUS

Done. So long as the spacemen return to the sky and back where they came from.

ZAIUS

(nods)

That would satisfy us.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING URSUS

107

who looks down at the floor thoughtfully then looks up.

URSUS

You may go to them yourself with a writ of release.

ANGLE ON ZAIUS

108

as he turns and starts toward the door.

URSUS

Dr. Zaius --

Cont.

Zaius turns to him.

URSUS

You may yet live to see the day
when you might wish I'd killed them
even before they'd drawn one breath
of our air.

ZAIUS

If such a day were to come, I
will have lived too long.

He turns and moves OUT of the room. A SLOW PAN OVER TO
Ursus who stares across at nothing.

URSUS

(softly)
Mr. President of the Academy of
Science...you've obviously already
lived too long!

CUT TO:

INT. VAULT - NIGHT

109

This is the deep basement of the Academy of Science where
are kept historical writings and other memorabilia of the
past. Zaius is alone, sitting at a long table, a large
book in front of him. The door at the top of the stone
steps opens.

GUARD'S VOICE

(o.s.)
Down there. Dr. Zaius is waiting
for you.

UPSHOT - THE STONE STAIRS - VIRDON AND KOVAK

110

as they come down the stairs. Above them the door is shut.

ANGLE ON THE TWO ASTRONAUTS

111

as they reach the foot of the steps and move over to the
table. They exchange a look of reaction to Zaius. The
latter rises, faces them.

ZAIUS

I am Dr. Zaius. I'm President of
the Academy of Science. Which of
you is Colonel Virdon?

Cont.

VIRDON

That's me, Doctor. I understand
we have you to thank for --

ZAIUS

(interrupting)
For nothing.

KOVAK

You arranged our release.

ZAIUS

I had no choice. It was either
that -- or watch your liquidation.
In the case of your predecessors --

VIRDON

We're aware of what happened to
them.

Zaius hangs his head.

ZAIUS

We have a society which I gather
is not unlike your own. There
are warriors...and pacifiers.
Or, depending on the point of view --
patriots...or cowards. The members
of the Academy...myself...my young
friend, Galen...we hold out the
olive branch instead of the gun.

VIRDON

For which we're very grateful.

ZAIUS

It would be our hope that we might
'co-exist' -- I think that's the
expression. Unfortunately, while
we have the influence -- we are not
in the majority. The others will
destroy you before you destroy them.

KOVAK

We're not animals, Doctor.

CLOSE SHOT - ZAIUS

112

who looks down at the giant, ancient book in front of him,
slowly opens it.

Cont.

ZAIUS

On the contrary, Doctor -- the race of man is the most vicious, predatory and devious animal on the whole scale of evolution. Read this, if you will.

The two Astronauts move over to a point behind Zaius and look over his shoulder.

ANGLE ON THE OPEN BOOK

113

What we're looking at is a bound collection of ancient newspapers -- the New York Times of the 1990's with a headline that reads, "Three Way Nuclear War Begins. China, Soviet Union, U.S. All Suffer Massive Damage."

UPSHOT - THE TWO ASTRONAUTS

114

as they stare, open-mouthed.

KOVAK

(his voice a
whisper)

Oh, my God! I was right, Allan --

VIRDON

(to Zaius)

We're on earth. We've moved ahead in time --

ZAIUS

(slowly closing
the book)

You have moved ahead in time, as did Commander Taylor and his crew.

(he turns slowly
to look up at the
two men)

And what do you find, gentlemen? You find the legacy of man. You have a planet of rubble taking its second breath. This time -- with man pushed out of the driver's seat because of his infinite capacity to drive to his own destruction.

He rises from his chair, looking from one to the other.

Cont.

ZAIUS

Do you understand, gentlemen, why you're feared here? Man, as we know him, is a primitive cave dweller who has only recently learned the use of fire. You represent the potential of man... with his ingenious capacity to split atoms and poison the earth.

KOVAK

That's why they killed Taylor and the others --

ZAIUS

And would kill you before you civilize the human beings who we would much prefer to have remained uncivilized.

VIRDON

So the deal is what?

ZAIUS

The deal is --

CUT TO:

EXT. PLAINS - HIGH ANGLE - LOOKING DOWN ON VIRDON, 115
KOVAK, GALEN AND ZAIUS - DAY

as they walk back toward the ship.

ZAIUS' VOICE

(o.s.)

-- you return to your ship. You go back into the sky and back into your own time. Accept what you have found as the destiny of your species. Suffer it perhaps... but accept it.

UPSHOT - FROM BELOW - THE FOUR FIGURES

116

as they suddenly stop, staring down.

CUT TO:

ANGLE ON THE REMNANTS OF THE SPACE SHIP 117

It has been blown to pieces, fragments of it spread out all over the ground.

REVERSE ANGLE - LOOKING TOWARD THE FOUR FIGURES 118

who are suddenly galvanized into movement by a fusillade of shots as uniformed APES start to converge on them from all sides. Zaius falls, clutching at his side. Galen and Kovak start to pull him up.

GROUP SHOT 119

ZAIUS

(breathless, waving
them off)

Leave me. Head toward the forests.
I shall survive. Go, Galen -- now.
Show them the way.

SERIES OF SHOTS - THE ASTRONAUTS AND GALEN 120

as they race down the opposite slope of the ridge, racing across the plains.

ANGLE ON TWO APES 121

on horseback, heading toward them.

ANGLE ON VIRDON 122

who picks up a rock and lets fly. It catches the first ape flush in the face. He topples over. The other horse stumbles against the now riderless horse, flinging its rider to the ground.

ANGLE ON A SCUFFLE 123

between the astronauts and the two ape riders. Both are pounded into unconsciousness.

ANGLE ON GALEN 124

astride one of the horses, beckoning to the two astronauts. Kovak climbs behind him. Virdon catches the other horse by the bridle and mounts up. A fusillade of shots kick up the dust around them but then they are off, riding across the plains, leaving their pursuers behind. PAN ACROSS BACK TO the ridge for a:

ANGLE ON ZAIUS 125

who slowly gets to his feet. INTO THE FRAME steps Ursus who looks briefly at Zaius then across the plains.

URSUS
 (thoughtfully)
 As always...inventive...
 opportunistic...and difficult
 to kill.

ZAIUS
 (looking directly
 at Ursus, pointing
 at him)
 And as always -- devious,
 murderous and without honor.

URSUS
 And so I shall remain...until
 we find them and rid the planet
 of them.
 (a beat)
 Survival, Doctor. Survival.
That's all there is.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FOREST - MOVING SHOT - NIGHT 126

THROUGH heavy brush and overhanging tree limbs, as if we
 were moving on some kind of vehicle. We suddenly break into:

EXT. CLEARING - NIGHT 127

a bonfire, surrounded by HUMANS. They're dressed in
 primitive, almost Medieval peasant clothing -- not
 unintelligent but desperately frightened as if suffering
 and resignation were a habit pattern. They look up from
 the fire toward the astronauts and Galen who enter the
 clearing on foot, holding onto the horses.

MOVING SHOT - THE THREE INDIVIDUALS 128

past slinking, frightened, furtive humans who shy away,
 clutching babies or themselves, desperately frightened but
 incapable of any other kind of overt act of defense.

ANGLE ON GALEN 129

who takes a step toward one of the older men who lets out a
 gasp and hurriedly moves away. Galen turns to look toward
 the two astronauts.

GALEN
 (shaking his head)
 They're sick with fear at the
 sight of me.
 (turns back toward them)
 I mean no harm.

OLD MAN

Please...please leave us be --

VIRDON

Are you a leader? Who do we talk to?

All eyes look toward the old man.

OLD MAN

My name is Dempsey. I guess...I guess I speak for the others. What is it you want?

VIRDON

Food...shelter...protection, if possible.

There is a murmur of reaction.

OLD MAN

Protection?

(shakes his head
back and forth)

Against apes? You'd have us fight them with our bare hands?

(shakes his head
again)

We may be a dying race...
but no one here wants to die.

KOVAK

(intently)

What would you rather do? Live in trees...caves? Did it ever occur to you -- any of you -- that this hasn't always been the condition of man?

OLD MAN

We know what was the condition of man. Let me show you something.

MOVING SHOT - THE OLD MAN

130

who leads the astronauts and Galen over to the mouth of a cave. He takes a torch from one of the other humans and holds it up.

INT. CAVE

131

There, on worn rims, is an ancient car, rusted and falling to pieces.

ANGLE THROUGH THE FLICKERING LIGHT - THE OLD MAN AND ASTRONAUTS 132

OLD MAN

Legend tells us that centuries ago we built things like that. We sat in them and they moved by themselves.

(a beat as he turns toward the astronauts)

Look at us now...the race of men.

(shakes his head)

Tomorrow morning you will leave here. Perhaps someplace on this planet you will find other men.

KOVAK

If we do, I hope to God they're different.

The old man bows his head and moves past them. Kovak looks toward the humans surrounding the fire.

KOVAK

If the meek inherit the earth... would they know what the hell to do with it?

MOVING SHOT - VIRDON 133

over the car. He puts a hand on a smashed fender.

VIRDON

The legacy.

(shakes his head then turns to Galen)

There's two of us...and one of you.

(looks back toward the car)

And this collector's item over here. And from all of this we'll have to start building.

Galen slowly extends his hand. Virdon takes it. Kovak puts his hand on the other two while the humans stare at them, curious but unknowing.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COURTROOM - NIGHT 134

with a row of black-clad APE JUDGES who look down at Dr. Zaius who stands in front of them and Ursus who stands a few feet off.

Cont.

APE JUDGE

Dr. Zaius...it is the finding of this court that you are to be released without prejudice. But with an explicit promise from you that you will in no way aid or abet the activities of so-called humans -- with this added proviso that you will also in no way impede or hamper the activities of the Security Police in tracking down these animals.

CLOSE SHOT - ZAIUS

135

who looks up toward the Judge then turns to Ursus.

ZAIUS

I make no such guarantee.

JUDGE

Then you force us to place you in custody.

ZAIUS

(looking back up
to the judge;
softly)

So be it.

(a beat)

But I would remind this court...

(turns toward
Ursus)

And I would remind the Chief of the Security Police...that you must either coexist with man...or man will return to reclaim that which is his.

(again he looks
up toward the
judge)

Expect him, Your Honors. Expect him. He'll be coming back. Only not as an equal...but once again... as a master.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PLAINS - HIGH ANGLE - LOOKING DOWN - VIRDON, 136
KOVAK AND GALEN - DAY

as they head off toward distant mountains.

CLOSER ANGLE - THE GROUP

137

as Kovak stumbles, falls forward. Galen helps him to his feet then looks down at his bare feet.

KOVAK

I'll have to get used to this --

Galen kneels down, removes his shoes, hands them to Kovak.

GALEN

Let's take turns getting used to it.

DIFFERENT HIGH ANGLE

138

as the CAMERA PULLS AWAY on the three civilized beings as they move off, starting man back on his second time around.

FADE OUT

THE END