

SIRENS OF TITAN

Based on the novel by Kurt Vonnegut

Adapted to the screen by:

Tom Davis and Jerry Garcia

Please return to:
Grateful Dead Productions
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SECOND DRAFT

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SIRENS OF TITAN

OPEN ON:

EXT. DAY

Big stone wall with a small steel door. A carved marble sign says "Rumford Manson."

CUT TO:

LARGE MULTI-BOWLED FLOWING FOUNTAIN WITH THE MANSION IN B.G..

Many large equipment trucks parked about the grounds attended by scores of bustling technicians.

CUT TO:

THE MANSION AND THE LARGE ROCKET AND GANTRY TOWER.

Steam and vapor puff from the cables and hoses. Several news teams can be seen amid the scientists and workers.

CUT TO:

EXT. MANSION - DAY

WINSTON NILES RUMFOORD and his dog emerging from a back door of the mansion. They are both wearing spacesuits. Rumfoord has his helmet under an arm and a cigarette in a cigarette holder sticking jauntily from between his teeth. He is a tall, slightly overweight man in his forties. Kazak is a large Mastiff. They are attended by the butler, MONCRIEF. As they move away from the mansion along the stone walkway, Rumfoord turns and shouts up at a third story window.

RUMFOORD

Bea! Beatrice... !

CUT TO:

INT. THIRD STORY WINDOW

BEATRICE in her writing room. She is in her thirties, plain faced, with her hair in a bun. She wears a rich lady's dress and she is writing poetry at her desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD (O.S.)

Bea! Can't you say goodbye, dear?

CUT TO:

EXT. MANSION

Rumfoord looking up at her window. Bea opens her window and leans out.

RUMFOORD

Ah. We're still mad aren't we?

BEA

I'm angry. You're mad. Goodbye.

She closes the window and pulls the curtains.

CUT TO:

INT. SCREEN

Curtains opening in front of the screen. At first it looks like a movie theater, but PULL to reveal that it is a huge television screen in a most lavish Hollywood Hills mansion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE (O.S.)

What d'ya say, people... watch a
little TV for a while?

CONTINUE PULLING to reveal more of this room with a picture window looking out over a tile swimming pool around which several topless girls sunbathe and oil themselves. A Rodin sculpture "pours" water into the pool where more girls frolic with a beach ball that looks like a globe.

Inside, MALACHI CONSTANT is sitting in a sumptuous lounge chair, operating his TV control panel while smoking freebase in a large water pipe. A beautiful girl in white fishnet stockings, garters and a white g-string, spiked heels and a nurse's hat, lights his pipe with a small torch-lighter. Another beautiful young "bartender" (black bow tie, g-string, etc.) walks over from the oak bar. She has a martini on a silver platter.

MALACHI

(to no one in
particular)

I like watching with the sound off
and music on.

He pushes another button and some heavy metal MUSIC STARTS PLAYING. He bops to the music and watches a live remote report on the TV from the Rumfoord mansion. We can see Rumfoord walking through the grounds toward the rocket ship. The "butler" (a gorgeous girl in tails, g-string, etc.) enters and says something to Malachi but the music is too loud. Malachi turns it down.

BUTLER

Ransom K. Fern is here to see you,
Mr. Constant.

MALACHI

Oh, okay. Time to work. Thank
you, Jeeves. Show him in
please. Well, gotta bring home
the bacon, eh girls?

As Malachi gets up, RANSOM K. FERN enters the room. He is a tall, thin Harvard business weasel in his sixties. He is impeccably dressed, wearing a Homburg hat and carrying a cane.

MALACHI

(continuing)

Hello, Ransom, you fireball.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RANSOM

Hello, Mr. Constant.

MALACHI

Make yourself comfortable, Ransom,
if that's possible. I'm going
to... talk to a man... about a
fish. I'll be right back.

Malachi walks over to a bathroom door and enters.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM

Incredible bathroom: walk-in jacuzzi, big mirror, sauna, massage table, shell-shaped mirror and sink, and an ultra-modern toilet. As Malachi sits down, he picks up a Wall Street Journal from a nearby pedestal, opens it to the stock listings, and lays it on his knees. Then he picks up a book.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - BOOK

If is a Gideon's Bible opened to the first page with each letter of every word carefully crossed out up to verse twenty seven of Genesis, ("... image of God created he him; male and female." The letters are crossed out up to the "m" in "him.")

MALACHI

Hmmmm... "m"... "m"... (...
"em"... "em"...))

Malachi crosses out the "m" in "him" and the "m" in "male," then puts down the Bible and picks up the Wall Street Journal. He scrutinizes the Journal's stock listings with his index finger until he finds a company with the initials "MM."

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - WALL STREET JOURNAL

"MM" in the listings. Then Malachi searches the listings in a smaller booklet, "Wallstreet Index" until he finds "MM"... "Moon List."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALACHI
"M"... "M"... Ah. Here it is.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - WALL STREET INDEX

"MM"... "Moon Mist" in the Wall Street Index with Malachi's pointing finger. Malachi puts away the Bible and Index, flushes the toilet, waits a moment, then exits.

CUT TO:

MALACHI

walking up to Ransom who is perched on a chair.

MALACHI
Moon Mist.

Ransom gets up to leave. In the background, on the TV, Rumfoord is waving from the gantry and entering the door of the rocket.

RANSOM
I'll call you tomorrow and let you know how it goes.
(pause)
I don't suppose you know what they do?

MALACHI
Who do?

RANSOM
Moon Mist.

MALACHI
Oh... Ah... I don't know...
nocturnal pesticides or something.

RANSOM
Nope. Sorry... tobacco.

Shaking his head as the "butler" lets him out the door.

RANSOM
(continuing)
Just like your father...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALACHI

(indignantly)

My father never knew how to enjoy himself.

RANSOM

(smiling)

... the family trait is unmistakable. Take my word for it.

CUT TO:

INT. ROCKET SHIP

Rumfoord and Kazak are strapped into their respective seats. Rumfoord pushes a button to speak to those outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAUNCHING PAD

with a cluster of P.A. horns in foreground.

RUMFOORD (V.O.)

(over P.A.)

Please stand clear, everybody, we're about to blast off.

CUT TO:

INT. ROCKET SHIP

RUMFOORD

Kazak! Ready?

KAZAK

Ruff!

He pushes a button.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - ROCKET ENGINE - ROCKET LIFT OFF

SPECTATORS WATCHING

CUT TO:

SMALL ORANGE ALIEN ROBOT (SALO)

watching the liftoff on a screen on the control panel of a spaceship.

CUT TO:

BEA'S WRITING ROOM

Everything is rumbling and shaking. Fear crosses her face. Tea sloshes out of her teacup, ink spills out of the well onto her poem entitled, "Ode to Springtime Sun."

CUT TO:

INT. ROCKET

Violent shaking and rumbling. Both man and dog are going through G-force facial distortions (lips pulled back, eyes bulging) as the rocket lifts off.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROCKET

Climbing rapidly through clouds above the eastern seaboard and then through the upper atmosphere. Begin TITLE SEQUENCE AND CREDITS throughout these rocket scenes.

CUT TO:

INT. ROCKET

Rumfoord unbuckles Kazak. They are both weightless. Rumfoord "throws" him a bone.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROCKET

leaving earth behind.

CUT TO:

INT. ROCKET

Rumfoord is adjusting some equipment when the ship ALARM GOES ON (noise and lights).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His face shows concern as he reads the numerous dials and video monitors.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

The rocket approaching a huge pulsating, colorful wave and spiral energy belt that looms before it.

CUT TO:

INT. ROCKET

Rumfoord and Kazak looking out their port window at the cosmic spectacle. Rumfoord opens a bottle of champagne with a special zero gravity cork screw.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROCKET

entering spiral energy belt. The rocket begins to shimmer and glow.

CUT TO:

INT. ROCKET

Rumfoord and Kazak look at each other in wonder as they pulsate and dematerialize with bizarre color and SOUND.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER: NINE YEARS LATER

FADE IN:

ILL-KEMPT MANSION

And overgrown grounds, vines covering the dilapidated and empty rocket gantry.

CUT TO:

THE LARGE MULTI-BOWLED FOUNTAIN

Now cracked and dry, birds nest in the top bowl.

CUT TO:

THE BIG STONE WALL

with the small steel door with a large Yale lock on it. There is a "Beware of Dog" sign next to "Rumfoord Mansion." PULL BACK to reveal there is a motley geeky crowd milling before the small police barricade in front of the door.

CUT TO:

BACK SEAT OF A LIMOUSINE

ON Malachi Constant. He is reading a formal letter with a Yale key taped to the bottom. The letter reads:

Mr. Malachi Constant,

During his last Materialization, my husband insisted that you be present for the next. He says he knows you well, having already met you on Titan. Which, I am told, is the largest moon of the planet Saturn. Let yourself in with the key and lock the door behind you.

Mrs. Winston Niles Rumfoord

CUT TO:

THE LIMOUSINE

pulling up to the small steel door. Malachi steps out with a phony beard and dark glasses. He makes his way to the door, but he's jostled by the CROWD.

MAN IN CROWD

Who's that guy? How come he gets to see the Materialization?

WOMAN IN CROWD

Yeah. The public's got a right as much as anyone.

Malachi lets himself in through the door.

CUT TO:

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL

Malachi locks the door and when he turns he is startled by a large skeleton of a Mastiff with a spiked collar chained to the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Malachi chuckles to himself, takes off his beard and glasses and puts them on the dog skeleton's face. He pulls out a silver cigarette case on which he presses a button and the cigarette pops out already lit. He begins following a path, which is the width of a lawn mower, through the now dilapidated grounds of the estate.

He approaches the multi-bowled fountain which is now dry and unused except by birds who build their nests there. He takes a final drag off his cigarette and puts it out in the blossom of a large flower. Impulsively, he climbs up the fountain and surveys the estate. He holds his wrist up to let his gold solar watch drink in some rays.

CLOSEUP - FACE OF SOLAR WATCH

with inscription: Cartier Solar Watch.

BACK TO SCENE

Suddenly, he hears the BAYING of a large DOG and he scurries down the fountain and runs to the mansion. As he reaches the front door, it opens and the ancient butler, Moncrief, appears. Moncrief is beside himself with excitement.

MONCRIEF

The mastah... he, he... he's...
m... materializing Mr. Constant...
quickly...

Malachi follows the butler into the mansion foyer. On the floor is a mosaic showing the signs of the zodiac encircling a golden sun. There, standing on the sun, is Winston Niles Rumfoord with his dog, Kazak, who growls at Malachi.

RUMFOORD

Delighted, delighted, delighted,
Mr. Constant. How nice of you to
commmmmmmmmmme.

MALACHI

My pleasure.

Rumfoord steps closer to Malachi. Both the man and his dog have a spectral, almost translucent quality.

RUMFOORD

They tell me, Mr. Constant, you
are positively the luckiest man
who ever lived.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALACHI

Well, I guess I am lucky. I am the richest man in the world.

RUMFOORD

And to what do you attribute this good luck of yours?

MALACHI

Who knows? I guess somebody up there likes me.

RUMFOORD

(looking at the ceiling)

What a charming concept -- someone's liking you up there... perfectly charming.

(pause)

I can read your mind, you know.

MALACHI

(more than skeptical)

Can you?

Rumfoord takes a moment to read Malachi's mind.

RUMFOORD

Yes, and... if it's really so important to you to feel superior to me in some way, how about this: you can reproduce, and I cannot... C'mon, let's go somewhere we can talk.

Rumfoord puts his arm around Malachi and begins leading him through the mansion. Malachi takes interest in a large oil painting in one of the grand chambers. It is a painting of a little girl dressed in white, holding the reins of a white pony.

MALACHI

Nice picture.

RUMFOORD

Wouldn't it be too bad if she fell in a mud puddle? My wife as a child.

(pause)

This way please...

Rumfoord leads Malachi into a small, odd shaped room under a stairway. The room features shelves that run six feet up the window wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The shelves proudly display fossils, unusual rocks, odd bones of animals, a stuffed dodo; all objects collected by a bright child. over the shelves is a driftwood plank that has the wood burned message: Skip's Museum.

MALACHI

Who is Skip?

RUMFOORD

I am -- was. I'm sorry my wife is too indisposed to come downstairs to meet you, but really, it's me that she's avoiding. She hasn't seen me since my first Materialization. She found it very upsetting what I told her about the future.

MALACHI

You can really see into the future?

RUMFOORD

When I ran my spaceship into the Chrono Synclastic Infundibulum, it came to me in a flash that everything that has been, always will be, and everything that ever will be, always has been. Kinda takes the glamour out of fortune telling.

MALACHI

So you told your wife everything that's going to happen to her?

RUMFOORD

Well, not everything. She wouldn't let me tell her everything. What little I did tell her quite spoiled her appetite for more. But I did tell her that you and she were to be married on Mars. Well, not married exactly, but bred like farm animals.

Malachi smiles instead of laughing. This is too much.

MALACHI

Loo dee doo, Mr. Rumfoord... Mars?

RUMFOORD

Of course that's not your ultimate destination -- or Mercury either.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALACHI

Mercury?

RUMFOORD

Your destination is Titan.

MALACHI

Tell me, Mr. Rumfoord. Supposing this could be done, why in hell would I ever want to go there?

RUMFOORD

Well... Titan has a wonderful climate.

MALACHI

Climate! Listen. I have houses in Majorca, Barbados, Paris, Bali and Aspen. Why would I look to another planet for better climes?

RUMFOORD

Satellite, Mr. Constant. Titan is the largest moon of the planet Saturn.

MALACHI

I understand that. Still...

RUMFOORD

Well... there's women.

MALACHI

Hah! You think I'm having trouble getting women? Boy are you wrong about that. Can I show you a few pictures of a couple of recent girl friends?

Malachi pulls out his wallet and produces two snapshots and hands them to Rumfoord.

RUMFOORD

Uhm... mm...

MALACHI

That first one is Gloria. She was runner up in the Miss Universe contest. The blonde is Sweden's top model. You got anything like that on Titan?

Rumfoord hands him back the photos.

RUMFOORD

Nope. Nothing like that on Titan.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALACHI

Okay... climate, beautiful women
... What else?

RUMFOORD

Art.

MALACHI

Art? Well, I do own the biggest
art collection in the world...
so... ah... Hey -- what?

Malachi was starting to put the snapshots back in his
wallet when he finds not two photos but three.
Rumfoord grins roguishly.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - PHOTO

that Rumfoord slipped him: three of the most gorgeous
women imaginable, scantily clad, suspended in shimmer-
ing blueness. The quality of the photo is better than
holographic. The figures almost move and breathe,
beckoning.

MUSIC: Miraculous female chorus.

MALACHI

is stunned and frightened. Sweat breaks out on his
face.

RUMFOORD

You can keep the picture if you
like. It's wallet size. My wife
will still be with you when you
get to Titan but she won't mind if
you want to frolic with these
three young ladies. Your son will
be with you too.

MALACHI

Son?

RUMFOORD

Yes. A fine boy named Chrono.
Born on Mars by you -- out of
Beatrice.

MALACHI

Beatrice?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD

My wife. Things fly this way and that, my boy. It's chaos, but it's the great becoming that makes the light and the heat and the motion, and bangs you hither to yon. Let's see. Is there anything else I should tell you? I can feel myself, starting to go -- Oh yes! This child of yours -- Chrono. He will pick up a little strip of metal on Mars and call it his "good luck piece." Keep your eye on that good luck piece, Mr. Constant. It's unbelievably important.

Rumfoord and Kazak dematerialize slowly, beginning with the tips of Rumfoord's fingers and ending with his grin, which speaks before vanishing entirely.

RUMFOORD

(continuing; grin)

See you on Titan.

CUT TO:

BEATRICE

leaning over the railing at the top of the spiral staircase in the foyer.

BEA

Is it all over, Moncrief?

MONCRIEF

Yes, mum. He's gone. And the dog too.

BEA

And that Mr. Constant?

Malachi enters from the direction of Skip's Museum.

MALACHI

"That Mr. Constant" is still here.

BEA

Oh. How do you do?

MALACHI

How do you do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEA

(icily)

Mr. Constant... I can only appeal to your gentlemanly instincts in asking you not to spread the story of your meeting with my husband far and wide. I'm sure it must be a great temptation.

MALACHI

(sarcastically)

Hey, yeah. I could sell my story, make a lot of money. Gosh.

BEA

You'll pardon me if I fail to appreciate your sarcasm and all the other brilliant nuances of your no doubt famous wit, Mr. Constant, but... these visits of my husband make me ill.

MALACHI

I like him very much.

BEA

The insane, on occasion, are not without their charms.

MALACHI

Insane?

BEA

Wouldn't you say a person who makes highly elaborate and fantastic prophecies is insane?

MALACHI

I don't know. I do own the only rocket in existence that's capable of going to Mars. It's not that insane.

Bea is startled by this news.

BEA

Is this true?

MALACHI

A company I control has custody of one. Ever heard of "The Whale?" I sold it to the government and I'm sure they'd be delighted if someone would buy it back at five cents on the dollar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEA
(abruptly)
Much luck to you on your
expedition.

MALACHI
Much luck to you on yours.

The two turn away from each other, Malachi exits.

CUT TO:

MALACHI

emerging from the little steel door, with beard and
glasses. Again, he is jostled by the curious unat-
tractive CROWD.

WOMAN
What happened! We've got a right
to know.

MAN
Did he bring anything with him?

BOY
What about the dog!

The frustrated crowd pounds on the windows of the lim-
ousine. One man stabs the windshield with a hot dog
with extra mustard. When the car reaches the open
road, Malachi takes off the beard and glasses and
stares quizzically at a billboard they are passing:
"Take A Friend To The Church Of Your Choice On Sunday!"

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. HOUSE

Malachi back at his Hollywood rakehell home in the
middle of a raging self-destructive-type party. Thus
we find him snorting lines of coke off the stomach of
Miss Sweden, MUSIC is BLARING, the "bartender" is mak-
ing Pina Coladas and two Chinese-looking guys are set-
ting up an opium pipe in the background. Ransom K.
Fern is standing in the front doorway with his hat on,
cane in hand.

RANSOM
Is that all, Mr. Constant? Don't
you want me to buy anything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALACHI

No. Just sell every share of Galactic Spacecraft. I want nothing to do with "The Whale"... sell it for scrap if you have to. I'm out of the space business, okay?

CUT TO:

INT. ESTATE - BEA'S WRITING ROOM

Bea is meeting with two LAWYERS, her ACCOUNTANT, and Moncrief.

LAWYER #1

We've determined that you would have to liquidate all your securities to buy enough shares in Galactic to get on the Board of Directors.

ACCOUNTANT

As your accountant, Mrs. Rumfoord, I have to tell you again that this is a very unwise move.

BEA

(bitchily)

Just do it. Do it please.

CUT TO:

VILLA - ON THE SEA - MEXICO

Malachi with three weeks of beard growth. The raging party is still going with several hundred jet-setters. There are Lear jets and helicopters parked in the back-ground. Servants are filling a swimming pool with thousands of bottles of champagne. Malachi is with a tough looking, but beautiful BIMBO in and evening dress. He is in a summer tux and wears mirrored sunglasses and a sombrero. He is offering her something from one hand and a bottle of tequila from the other hand.

MALACHI

It's peyote. I got some for everybody. Wash it down with this.

BIMBO

Okay. But I still want us to fly home tomorrow. You promised.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALACHI

Hey, no problema.

The girl takes the peyote and takes a long swig off the nearly empty Tequila bottle.

MALACHI

(continuing)

Atta girl... eat the worm. It's the worm that gets you high. Go for it!

A BUSINESSMAN with a portfolio approaches Malachi.

BUSINESSMAN

Mr. Constant, sir.

MALACHI

Who are you? You are not Mescalito.

BUSINESSMAN

No sir. I have those package designs you wanted for Moon Mist cigarettes.

MALACHI

Ah! Excelente... let's see 'em!

Malachi grabs the portfolio and pulls out a posterboard with a drawing of a cigarette package for "Moon Mist Cigarettes." On the package is the picture of the three ultra-gorgeous girls on Titan (The Sirens) that Rumfoord gave Malachi, only now, the fingers of one of the girls holds a lit Moon Mist cigarette and the smoke passes beneath the nostrils of the other two, who now appear to be excited by the mentholated smoke.

CUT TO:

INT. ESTATE - BEA'S BATHROOM

On the sink is an opened jar labeled "Cyanide Powder-Poison," and an opened gift package ring box. Using a tiny spoon, she is filling the hidden compartment of a Lucretia Borgia-type ring with the deadly poison. She snaps the ring shut and puts it on her finger. Clasp- ing her hands to her bosom, she stares determinedly at herself in the mirror.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - MALACHI'S ARM

with the gold solar watch, hanging unconsciously in the water.

SFX: Telephone ringing in the background.

PULL to reveal Malachi passed out in the gutter of his Hollywood pool. He's lying in a half inch of water which is soaking his blue-green evening shorts and dinner jacket of gold brocade. The RINGING TELEPHONE is in a rhinestone phone booth next to the pool. At the bottom of the pool is a piano, a television set, broken glasses, cherries, olives, cigarette and marijuana butts, and syringes float on the surface. The entire area is strewn with party wreckage. Malachi shows some movement but clearly he's not going to answer the phone.

Then we hear the SOUND of HIGH HEELS and the Bimbo we saw in Mexico enters. and answers the phone. Gingerly, she picks up the receiver. She is holding a small bottle of nail polish in one hand, and gently waving her other hand to dry her wet nails.

BIMBO

(in phone)

Yeah! Oh, it's you again. Yeah, he's awake... Hey, Space Cadet.

MALACHI

Hm?

BIMBO

The guy who's president of the company you own wants to talk with you.

MALACHI

Which company?

BIMBO

Which company you the president of?... Magnum Opus... Ransom K. Fern.

MALACHI

Tell him I'll call him back.

BIMBO

He'll call you back...

(pause)

He says he's quitting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIMBO

He says you're broke and can't afford to pay him his salary anymore and to come and see him before he goes home...

(she speaks back
into the phone)

... 'bye!

She hangs up and walks over to Malachi, rights an inverted lawn chair and sits in it. She returns to the task of polishing her nails.

Malachi struggles to a sitting position and tries to open his eyes. He fumbles with his dark glasses.

MALACHI

Where is everybody?

BIMBO

You threw 'em out. Don't you remember?

MALACHI

Ah... I don't know...

BIMBO

Oh it was quite a show. You'd been up for a week and last night you were having a great time getting everybody to help shove the piano in the pool, and then you got on this crying jag.

MALACHI

Crying jag? Me?

BIMBO

(she blows on her
nails)

Oh yeah. You told everybody what a rotten childhood you had and that your mother was a whore and that you were proud to be the son of a whore and you would give an oil well to any woman who'd come up to you, shake your hand, and say real loud so everybody could hear, "I'm a whore just like your mother was."

MALACHI

(groans)

What happened then?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIDGE

You gave an oil well to every woman at the party... then you started crying again, and told how, if you fell asleep, someone would come and put you on a rocket ship to Mars. Then you threw everybody out, and then... you married me!

She smiles triumphantly.

CUT TO:

INT. SKIP'S MUSEUM AT THE ESTATE

Bea is out of breath and has apparently just had a tantrum while talking to her materialized husband. She is standing in the pieces of the contents of the shelves, her fists clenched at her sides; face wrenched with anger. Rumfoord's eyebrows are raised as Moncrief appears at the doorway.

MONCRIEF

Everything alright, sir?

RUMFOORD

Yes, thank you, Moncrief. We're just having a spirited discussion.

Moncrief exits.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

You can't hold me responsible for these things. After all, I am only human.

BEA

If you're human I'd rather have a chimpanzee for a husband. No chimpanzee husband would stand by while his wife lost all her coconuts! You can predict the future where I'm going to be inseminated by Mr. Malachi Constant. Couldn't you have told me the stock market was going to crash? Can't you tell me how I'm going to be tricked into going to Mars so I can do something?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD

Bea, I just wish we could go out into the Chrono Synclastic Infundibulum together so you could understand...

He picks up a Time magazine, on the back of which is an ad for Moon Mist cigarettes with the Sirens.

BEA

What is this hiding behind a magazine? Talk to me! I'm your wife!

RUMFOORD

Look. All kinds of things are going to happen to you. Life is like a roller coaster. Sure, I can see the whole ride you're on, and I could tell you about every dip and turn, but it wouldn't help you any.

BEA

I don't see why not.

RUMFOORD

Because you'll still have to take the roller coaster ride.

BEA

And Malachi Constant is part of the roller coaster?

RUMFOORD

Yes.

BEA

And there's no avoiding him?

RUMFOORD

No.

BEA

Then tell me what steps bring me and Mr. Constant together and let me do what little I can.

RUMFOORD

Oh... alright.

Rumford crosses his fingers behind his back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

... At this very moment, the President is announcing a New Age of Space. To usher in this New Age they will fire "The Whale" next Tuesday. Now... "The Whale" will be renamed "The Rumfoord" in my honor, it will be loaded with organ grinding monkeys, and targeted for Mars. You and Constant will both take part in the ceremonies, and go on board for an inspection. Suddenly a faulty switch will send you both on your way with the monkeys.

Kazak has been looking curiously at Rumfoord's crossed fingers, and cocks his head. Rumfoord looks back at Kazak and rolls his eyes, as if to say, "I had to." He sits down and looks at the magazine again.

BEA

How can you sit there with a magazine and be so indifferent to my suffering?

RUMFOORD

(suddenly very sober)

I'm sorry, but stop and think about me and my suffering for a minute. I'm snapped about this galaxy like a buggywhip in the hands of a lunatic... Someday it will be revealed to you just how ruthlessly I've been used, and by whom, and to what disgustingly paltry ends.

Suddenly Kazak begins to BARK and run around the room. He is starting to dematerialize. As he gets near Bea, he runs in place on the linoleum, going faster and faster until he disappears with a final "pfftt."

BEA

(shaken)

Kazak... nice doggie...

PULL BACK to reveal that behind her, Rumfoord has disappeared too.

BEA

(continuing)

... Nice doggie...

CUT TO:

EXT. TOP OF LARGE OFFICE BUILDING

in downtown Los Angeles, on which the words "Magnum Opus" are painted stylistically. A helicopter lands heavily and a little off-center on the roof. Out steps Malachi, hungover, and still in his evening shorts and coat.

CUT TO:

INT. EXTRAORDINARY OFFICE

featuring real grass putting green carpet and electromagnetic furniture so that tables and chairs float in the air without any legs. Ransom K. Fern is looking out of the floor-to-ceiling window at downtown Los Angeles. The elevator doors open at one end and Malachi enters. He is startled by the furniture.

MALACHI

Some... somebody's changed all the furniture.

RANSOM

American Levitation Company. You said buy it, so we bought it.

MALACHI

Really? Gee. This stuff is great. They should really sell.

Ransom's mouth frowns imperceptibly. Malachi sits in one of the floating chairs but it is so unsteady that he is almost thrown to the floor.

RANSOM

For three months you have made nothing but wrong decisions and you have done what I would have said was impossible. You have succeeded in wiping out almost forty years of inspired guessing. Neither you nor your father has ever really known anything about business. It is something I have always been in awe of.

Ransom pulls out a handkerchief and wipes his brow. Malachi's chair is half in the sunlight. He holds his gold solar watch out so it can absorb some rays, and he stares at it glinting in the sunlight.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK -THE SAME WATCH

in the sunlight on a man's wrist, which rests on a desk top. There is a photo of Malachi as a child. It's pushpinned to the wall above the desk on which there is a Wall Street Journal turned to the listings and an opened Gideon's Bible with many small pencil marks.

PULL BACK to reveal a man, NOEL CONSTANT, resembling Malachi, but in his fifties. He is holding a pencil and concentrating on the Bible page while sitting at a table in a cheap motel room (Rm 223). There is a KNOCK at the door.

NOEL

Come in.

The door opens and there stands a younger Ransom K. Fern with a twenty-one-year-old Malachi.

RANSOM

Hello, Noel. I've brought you the boy.

Malachi enters and Ransom closes the door, staying out in the hall.

NOEL

Hello, son.

MALACHI

Hi, Dad.

NOEL

Happy birthday.

Malachi sees the picture of himself. Noel observes this.

NOEL

(continuing)

Um... I know I'm not the greatest father and since this may be the only time we meet, I want you to know my secret system so you can carry on when I die... Not even Ransom K. Fern knows this... step over here to my desk... you ever read the Bible, son?

MALACHI

No.

NOEL

Doesn't matter.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOEL (CONT'D)

One night about a year before you were born, I was sitting in this motel room with nothing but a bank book, a Wall Street Journal, and a Gideon's Bible. I had failed at just about everything. I had eight thousand dollars left and I decided to become a speculator. Then it hit me. The Bible would be my investment counselor...

Noel turns to the first page of the Gideon's Bible.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP ON FIRST PAGE OF GENESIS

with the letters of each word crossed out up to Genesis: verse thirteenth ("And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.") His hand, holding a pencil, underlines the verse.

NOEL (V.O.)

I've been taking the letters of the words in the Bible two at a time and in sequence, then finding a company or corporation in the Journal with those particular initials. Then I invest in it.

CLOSEUP ON WALL STREET JOURNAL

Noel's pencil points to the International Nitrate listing.

NOEL (V.O.)

My first investment was International Nitrate, the second was Trowbridge Helicopter. That's from "IN THE BEGINNING..."

INT. ROOM

Noel and Malachi.

NOEL

Are you following this, son?

MALACHI

I think so.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOEL

It's pretty simple.

Noel looks down at the page of the Bible and points with his finger to the next two letters to be crossed out, the "A" and "Y" of "day."

NOEL

(continuing)

... now... I'm only as far as "And the evening and the morning were the first day..." Allied Yeast.

There is a long awkward pause. Noel sighs.

NOEL

(continuing)

I can't think of anything else to tell you, son, except for some advice my father told me on my twenty-first birthday -- don't touch your principal, and keep the liquor out of the bedroom...

(long pause)

... Well, I guess that's it.

MALACHI

Thanks, Dad. Goodbye.

NOEL

Oh. Here...

Noel takes off his watch and gives it to Malachi.

NOEL

(continuing; stiffly)

... Happy birthday.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE (PRESENT TIME)

Malachi looking at his watch.

RANSOM

I hope I'm not boring you. Are you late for something?

MALACHI

Ah... oh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RANSOM

At ten o'clock this morning, I was congratulating myself on having buttressed Magnum Opus against any conceivable blow. And then, at ten-fifteen I was visited by a lawyer who was at your party last night. You were giving away oil wells, and that lawyer was thoughtful enough to draw up the documents which you signed. That wiped out Fandango Petroleum. At eleven-thirty I was informed by the legal department that the A.M.A. has discovered that Moon Mist cigarettes are causing sterility in approximately ninety percent of its users. That means ten million smokers can sue you for many more times whatever monies remain. So... I will now perform my last official duty. Your father wrote you a letter which was to be given to you only if your luck turned for the worse.

Ransom puts on his hat and picks up his cane.

RANSOM

(continuing)

My instructions were to place the letter under the pillow in Room 223 in the Wilburhampton Hotel. I placed it there an hour ago. Here is the key.

He puts the hotel key on the huge conference table.

RANSOM

(continuing)

And I will now, as a humble and loyal corporate servant, ask you for a small favor. If the letter seems to cast the vaguest light on what life might be about, I would appreciate your telephoning me at home. Goodbye, Mr. Constant... and good luck.

He turns and walks to the elevator. Malachi looks out the window at the shutdown Wilberhampton Hotel across the street.

CUT TO:

INT. WILBURHAMPTON BAR

There are only two customers and they are seated at the bar so they can see out the window to the street and the Magnum Opus Building. One is a stocky man, HELMHOLTZ, and the other is a thin middle-aged woman, WILEY, both seemingly old and touristy.

WILEY

Well we always loved to travel and for some reason we just never made the drive across country... So here we are.

They see Malachi approaching from across the street. They look at their watches.

HELMHOLTZ

I believe we have time for one more. What d'ya say, Edna?

WILEY

Sounds fine to me, Enoch. How about another couple of Navy Grogs?

HELMHOLTZ

Sure. I like those crazy mugs they come in, don't you?

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM 223 - DARK

The door opens and Malachi turns on the light. The room is dusty, cobwebby, etc. The photo on the wall of Malachi is yellowed and rolled up. Malachi moves to the bed and takes the letter from under the pillow. He opens it and as he reads it, we hear the voice of his father.

NOEL (V.O.)

Dear Son. When your mother sent me that picture of you, I thought maybe you were what all that Bible business and the big money build-up was for. I decided I would die without ever seeing any sense to it. The reason I told Ransom K. Fern to give you this letter only if your luck turned bad, is that nobody thinks or notices anything as long as his luck is good. Why should he?

CUT BACK TO:

MED. WIDE SHOT OF MALACHI

who sits on the bed to finish reading the letter.

NOEL (V.O.)

So have a look around for me,
boy. And if you go broke and
somebody comes along with a crazy
proposition my advice is to take
it. You just might learn
something. The only thing I ever
learned was that some people are
lucky and others aren't and not
even Ransom K. Fern can say why.
Yours truly, Your Pa.

There's a KNOCK on the opened door behind him. Malachi
turns to see Helmholtz and Wiley.

WILEY

Mr. Constant...

Wiley removes his wig to reveal he is a man.

WILEY

(continuing)

... We are here to inform you that
the planet Mars is populated by a
military industrial society
recruited from Earth. We are
prepared to offer you a direct
lieutenant-colonelcy in the Army
of Mars.

HELMHOLTZ

In addition to a pay scale and
privileges well above those
accorded lieutenant colonels in
earthling armies, we can offer you
immunity from all earthling legal
harassment and an opportunity to
see a new and interesting planet.

WILEY

If you accept the commission,
raise your left hand and repeat
after me...

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT

Malachi's abandoned helicopter in the middle of the
desert. His footprints lead about forty feet away from
it, and then stop.

CUT TO:

INT. ESTATE - BEA'S WRITING ROOM

Bea is watching TV and talking with two other people who are O.S. On the TV, a large rocket is about to be launched. Bea is in a good mood.

BEA

I hope you don't mind my making you watch this, but they did rename this rocket after my husband.

PULL BACK to reveal Helmholtz and Wiley.

WILEY

That's quite alright. I don't think we have much business left. Do we, Helmholtz? Why no. I don't think so.

The ROCKET BLASTS OFF.

TV ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

And it appears to be a flawless liftoff...

HELMHOLTZ

God I'm proud to be an American living in the time I do.

Bea gets up and turns off the TV. She is very happy.

BEA

Perhaps I can get you something to drink or more tea perhaps?

HELMHOLTZ

We're fine, thanks. There is one thing remaining. The bank did want us to take inventory of the larger buildings on the grounds.

WILEY

Oh. I'm afraid it's gotten quite dark. Do you have floodlights?

BEA

I'm sorry, no. I have a flashlight but I don't think it will be necessary to go out there. I can tell you what all the buildings are: there's the Tennis House, the Greenhouse, the Gardener's Cottage, the Kennel, what used to be the Gate House...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELMHOLTZ

Which one is the new one?

BEA

The new one?

WILEY

Yes. The metal one.

BEA

Metal? There aren't any metal buildings. Maybe some of the weathered shingles have kind of a silvery look.

WILEY

We saw it when we came in.

HELMHOLTZ

Could we go out and have a look?

BEA

Yes, of course.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. FRONT DOOR

The three of them heading out the front door from the foyer, Bea with a flashlight. Bea leaves the door wide open and we see the flashlight move out onto the grounds as their voices recede.

SFX: CRICKETS.

BEA (V.O.)

Really, I can't imagine.

WILEY (V.O.)

It looks like kind of a prefabricated thing made out of aluminum.

HELMHOLTZ

It's kind of a mushroom shape. I thought it was a water tank or something.

CUT TO:

EXT. ESTATE - NIGHT

Colorful UFO lights move up and away.

SFX: Flying saucer

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER: MARS
EIGHT YEARS LATER

FADE IN:

EXT. MARTIAN TWILIGHT

CLOSEUP of Malachi Constant (Unk). Though it has been only eight years, he looks like he's aged sixteen years. His head has been shaved and his eyes are spaced out. His face is shaking with some kind of strain.

PULL to reveal he is strangling a red headed man who is chained to a huge post on an immense rust-red iron plain with red mountains in the distance and two small moon overhead. At least a thousand soldiers in cheap military uniforms are standing at attention. The man being executed spends his last effort trying to communicate with his executioner.

RED HEADED MAN

Unk! Unk! Under the blue stone,
Unk! Barracks Twelve.

Unk pauses for a second, trying to understand what the man is saying, then suddenly his eyes widen as terrible pain shoots through his head and he quickly strangles the man to death.

CUT TO:

BEHIND UNK

There is a strip of adhesive plaster running from the crown of his shaved head to the nape of his neck. At the center of the strip is a little bulge and a tiny red light.

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT - THE SOLDIERS

Then, without any audible command, all the men present arms, about face and march away.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - MARCHING MEN

They all have the little red lights. The CAMERA FINDS a black sergeant, (BOAZ), walking lackadaisically instead of marching. He is off to the side of his platoon. We see he does not have spaced out eyes, he has a higher quality material for his sharply tailored uniform, leather boots and finally, he has no little red light on the back of his head.

CUT TO:

THE MEN

marching down a long line of barracks with flags of different countries of the world before each structure. Unk is marching in the foreground. They go past Barracks 12.

CLOSEUP OF UNK'S EYES

looking at Barracks 12.

CUT TO:

UNK

cleaning his M-1 rifle with all the other men in his platoon in the barracks. The soldiers rifles are an odd assortment of World War I and World War II rifles. He almost takes pleasure in the task because it's one of the few things he can remember. As Unk withdraws the rod and patch from the bore of the rifle, he sees his pink thumb at the other end of the barrel. Boaz watches Unk as he relaxes on a nearby cot, hands behind his head.

CUT TO:

UNK'S POV

looking at his thumb.

CUT TO:

UNK'S FACE

He begins to space out; dreaming.

MUSIC: celestial female chorus.

CUT TO:

UNK'S POV

He sees the three Sirens of Titan moving at the end of the barrel. One of them is smoking a cigarette.

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT - EVERYBODY

cleaning rifles with Unk in the foreground.

UNK
(like in his
sleep)
Sell Moon Mist.

BOAZ
You say something, Unk?

UNK
Dump Moon Mist. Get rid of it.

Unk doesn't know what the words mean that he's saying. Neither does Boaz whose tone is condescending as if speaking to a small child.

BOAZ
Okay, Unk. We sell it...

Boaz begins talking mostly to himself as he must often do, because all the men around him have had their minds blanked.

BOAZ
(continuing)
... funny what a man'll forget in the hospital and what he'll still remember no matter what they do. Can you remember more, Unk? You know how many times you been to the hospital, Unk? Seven times! Once is enough for everyone else, but not for you! Go ahead... try and remember.

Boaz slips his hand into his pocket and surreptitiously pulls out a small metal box with a couple of control knobs and a tiny red light. He places it next to his body so no one can see.

BOAZ
(continuing)
... see what happens when you try to remember things. Do you remember what your name was before it was Unk, Unk?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Unk's brow furrows in the effort of remembering. He stands up, about to utter something floating to the surface of his consciousness. Suddenly, he grabs his head and screams in horrible pain and collapses. Boaz returns a knob on his control box back to "zero." A man in a Captain's uniform strides into the barracks.

CAPTAIN BRACKMAN

What the hell is going on here?

Boaz shouts "ten-hutt," and all the men stand up and at attention, eyes unseeing, but wide open.

CAPTAIN BRACKMAN

(continuing)

What happened, Sergeant?

BOAZ

I was kidding him, Captain. He was trying to remember stuff an' I told him to go ahead. I didn't think he'd do it.

CAPTAIN BRACKMAN

Oughta have more sense than that, Sergeant. That's the worst thing you can do to a man just out of the hospital. Perhaps a weeks latrine duty will teach you something about horseplay in the Martian Army.

Boaz gently adjusts a knob on his box and the Captain suddenly has a splitting headache.

BOAZ

What's that you say, Captain? A week?

The captain's headache surges slightly.

CAPTAIN BRACKMAN

Ah... perhaps... ah... perhaps... you... you...

Suddenly, the captain stands bolt upright at attention, eyes wide open. He does a stiff about face; we see his little red light blinking furiously. Then he marches quickly out the door. Boaz chuckles.

BOAZ

Aw, men... aw, men, men, men.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOAZ (CONT'D)

Goddam now, men... ol' Boaz sure got it pretty good, don't he? I mean I got it made. Now you men don't have it so bad yourselves. You should see how we treat the Generals.

He laughs.

Boaz walks over and picks up the unconscious Unk and lays him on his bunk. All the men are still at attention, unseeing or hearing.

BOAZ

(continuing; changing
tone as he speaks
privately to Unk)

Unk, you are one of the richest dudes who ever lived. Back on Earth, man, you were king. You had everything a man needs to really lead hisself a life on Earth, and you knowed how to do it, too. That's why you and me are gonna be good buddies. An' after we conquer Earth, you and me are going to go into some fine places and order us some fine things and party down! We gonna be famous. People gonna see us comin' an' they gonna say "Here comes ol' lucky Unk and his buddy Boaz!" Yessir!

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRACKS - NIGHT

Everyone is sleeping. Unk steals out through a window.

CUT TO:

BARRACKS 12

Unk furtively finds a big flat turquoise flagstone, pushes it back and finds a metal cylinder. Then he goes into the back door.

CUT TO:

INT. FURNACE ROOM

Unk opens a small door in the furnace for a light source, then he looks at the cylinder and figures out how to open it. Inside is a large tattered letter covered with scrawl. His lips move slightly as he struggles to read in the flickering light.

UNK (V.O.)

Dear Unk. They aren't much, but here are the things I know for sure: (1) I am in a place called Mars. (2) Everybody on Mars came from Earth because they thought it would be better and now no one can remember what was so bad about Earth. (3) Watch out for Boaz with his little black box. (4) Unk, your best friend is Stony Stevenson.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. UNK'S BARRACK - NIGHT

Stony with a bottle of whiskey, climbs in through the window. Unk's V.O. continues at letter-reading pace as this action occurs:

CUT TO:

INT. BARRACK - NIGHT

Stony creeps over to Unk and wakes him up. They speak softly in the moonlight and drink the whiskey.

UNK (V.O.)

He heard what an eightball you were and he got you to trust him and tell him your theories about what is going on, and he was damned if it didn't start to make sense.

They both take a generous swig of whiskey.

UNK (V.O.)

(continuing)

He was sure somebody was using him and he didn't know who it was. He didn't even know why Mars was attacking Earth, but he was sure Mars didn't stand a snowball's chance in hell.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UNK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Stony knew there was no one else
to talk to but you, Unk. He said
that from now on you two were best
friends and would tell each other
everything and share it like the
bottle of whiskey.

Stony and Unk clasp hands in a brotherhood handshake.

DISSOLVE TO:

UNK

reading the letter, tears welling in his eyes. He
swallows.

UNK (V.O.)
(5) According to Stony, this big
guy and his dog show up...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE TYPE ROOM

with folding chairs and tables. ON Rumfoord and Kazak.
There are perhaps one hundred and fifty "true leaders"
milling and talking to each other. They wear different
kinds of uniforms and there are several zombie generals
standing around stiffly. There is much whiskey and
cigarettes. In the foreground, Rumfoord is talking to
Boaz and several other men including Stony.

UNK (V.O.)
... at the meetings of the true
leaders on Mars. He is dressed
like one of the parachute ski
marines but none of those guys
really know him.

CUT TO:

UNK

reading the letter.

UNK (V.O.)
(6) Unk, every time you and Stony
find out something new, add it on
to this letter.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UNK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Every time you change the hiding
 place, be sure to tell Stony.
 Then if you go to the hospital to
 have your memory cleaned out,
 Stony can tell you where to fill
 it up again. (7) Unk -- you have
 a mate and a child.

FADE TO.

BEA

(MOS) Using a pointing stick and lecturing to an O.S.
 class. The chart she is pointing to features the human
 anatomy with three large words: Goofballs, Oxygen,
 Intestines. The chart also has a "clock" with moveable
 cardboard hands.

UNK (V.O.)
 Your mate's name is Bea. She
 instructs at the Breathing School.
 She probably doesn't remember
 you. Your son is Chrono...

FADE TO.

EXT. MARTIAN PLAYGROUND

Chrono playing "Batball." He hits a flabby ball with
 his fist to other kids in a baseball kind of configu-
 ration. Chrono runs to "first base."

UNK
 ... he lives in the grade school
 and doesn't know you.

CUT TO:

UNK

reading the letter.

UNK
 Unk, you crazy son of a bitch, the
 only reason you keep going is so
 you can take this little family of
 yours and Stony, swipe a spaceship
 and get the hell out of here.
 Then find someplace nice, and try
 to figure out why all this
 bullshit is happening. I remain
 faithfully yours...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Unk unfolds the bottom of the letter revealing his own signature, "UNK." He is stunned to learn that he himself wrote the letter. CLOSEUP of Unk's face. Tears stream out of his eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. PHOEBE - LATE AFTERNOON

A company of SOLDIERS (an odd collection of earthlings) march through the Martian city Phoebe. A formation of flying saucers skim low overhead.

COMPANY CHANT

Terror, grief and desolation
Hut, tup, thrup, of!
Come to every Earthling nation
Hut, tup, thrup, of!
Earth eat fire! Earth wear chains!

CUT TO:

UNK

marching and "chanting" but he is only moving his lips.

COMPANY CHANT

Hut, tup, thrup, of!
Break Earth's spirit, spill
Earth's brains!

PULL to reveal: Unk and Boaz marching and chanting; they are carrying a mortar between the two of them on their shoulders.

BOAZ

Unk, ol' buddy?

UNK

Yes, old buddy?

BOAZ

I really set everything up
superfine for you an' me. Ol'
Boaz, he looks out for his buddy,
don't he?

CUT TO:

UNK

pulling the pin on a hand grenade.

UNK

That's right, buddy.

While no one's watching, Unk tosses the grenade into a sewer.

BOAZ

Yessir. You and me get the Mother Ship.

Suddenly the SEWER EXPLODES and the soldiers throw themselves to the ground. Smoke fills the air.

CUT TO:

BOAZ

looking up as the last of the debris rains down around him.

BOAZ

Goddam, buddy. I guess -- Hey!
Unk? Unk?

PULL to reveal: Unk is gone.

CUT TO:

UNK

running around a corner with his rifle. He sees a bicycle parked near a doorway. He quickly mounts it and peddles away.

CUT TO:

EXT. IRON MARTIAN PLAYGROUND

Several kids behind a cyclone fence backstop. SIRENS and some COMMOTION can be HEARD in the distance.

KID #1

Hey, Chrono! You're up to bat!

Unk's son is eight years old with jet black hair and a fierce expression on his face. The other children regard him as a kind of a bully-hero.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As he steps to the plate, he puts the water-filled rubber ball by his feet, and takes from his pocket a short strip of metal that is his Good Luck Piece. He kisses it and returns it to his pocket.

CUT TO:

EXT. LARGE BOULDER

Unk is crouched behind it. His rifle and the stolen bicycle lie next to him. He is watching the kids.

Chrono suddenly picks up the ball, hits it with a mighty bloop and scrambles toward the two bases. The other children ineptly try to tag him out and Chrono slides home for the score. He kisses the Good Luck Piece again. Unk stands up and walks out boldly onto the field and approaches the OLD LADY SCHOOLTEACHER.

UNK

"Security"... the boy, Chrono...
routine interrogation...

SCHOOLTEACHER

Oh. Has Chrono done something
wrong?

UNK

We'll have him right back... thank
you very much...

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY CLASSROOM

The teacher's desk is cluttered with stacks of ungraded papers. The desks are lined up irregularly and "Death to Earth" is scrawled fifty times on the blackboard. Unk and Chrono enter. Unk sits down in the teacher's chair and looks at his son who remains standing.

CHRONO

Baloney.

UNK

(surprised)

What?

CHRONO

Whatever you say -- it's baloney.

UNK

What makes you think so?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRONO

Everything anybody says is baloney. What do you care what I think, anyway. When I'm fourteen, you'll put a thing in my head and I'll do whatever you want anyway.

UNK

Is your mother full of baloney?

CHRONO

She is since she came back from the hospital this time.

UNK

Who isn't full of baloney?

CHRONO

Me. I'm the only one.

UNK

Come closer.

CHRONO

Why should I?

UNK

Because I'm going to whisper something very important.

CHRONO

I doubt it.

Unk, his eyes wide with emotion, gets up and whispers in the boy's ear.

UNK

I'm your father, boy!

CHRONO

So what?

UNK

I've come for you. To take you away from here.

CHRONO

And do what?

Unk is thrown for a moment.

UNK

Live! I don't know!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chrono takes out his Good Luck Piece and rubs it compulsively between the palms of his hands.

CHRONO
I am living. Go to hell!

UNK
(injured)
Go to hell?

CHRONO
(almost apologetic)
I tell everybody to go to hell.
Can I go play batball now?

Unk begins weeping.

CHRONO
(continuing)
I'm going out to play!

He runs out of the room. He is disgusted.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF MARTIAN HOSPITAL

Several SOLDIERS with guns run by.

SOLDIER #1
We'll take "Victory Boulevard,"
you take "Rumfoord Lane."

SOLDIER #2
Okay!

As they move OUT OF FRAME, Unk emerges cautiously from an alley across the street. He is carrying a rifle and a hand grenade. He scurries into the hospital entrance.

CUT TO:

INT. BEA'S CLASSROOM

The breathing chart is pulled over the blackboard, and fifteen new male recruits and two female recruits are seated on the benches facing the chart. They are all naked from the waist up. Their heads are shaved with strips of adhesive plaster running from the crowns of their heads to the nape of the neck; all with the tiny red lights. Bea is taping over the mouths and inserting plugs into the nostrils of the last of the blank-eyed recruits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEA

This will prove to you that during normal activity you don't need to use your lungs at all, as long as you have Combat Respiratory Rations -- or as you'll soon be calling them in the Army, "goofballs."

There is a KNOCK at the door of the classroom. Bea goes to the door and opens it. Unk is standing there out of breath.

UNK

(furtive)

Messenger. Message for Bea.

BEA

(uneasy)

I am Bea.

UNK

(whispering)

Do you recognize me?

BEA

No.

UNK

I don't remember you either.

BEA

I've been in the hospital. I had to have my memory cleaned.

UNK

Whisper!

BEA

Sorry. I've forgotten so much.

UNK

We all have.

BEA

What's the message?

UNK

I am the father of Chrono. I have just deserted from the army. My name is Unk. I am going to find some way for you, me, the boy, and my best friend to escape from here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly SHOUTS are heard from out in the corridor.

SHOUT #1 (V.O.)

You search that room, we'll check these!

SHOUT #2 (V.O.)

Yes, Sir!

Unk hands Bea the hand grenade and the rifle which she holds awkwardly. Unk then strips to the waist, tapes his mouth, inserts nostril plugs, and sits beside a new recruit. Unk's system is clearly taxed from his recent exertion. He strains against the tape and nostril plug.

SHOUT #3 (V.O.)

Nothing in that one!

Bea walks to the corner of the room and respectfully leans the rifle between the wall and a bookcase. Bea notices that the new recruits are turning bluish and Unk is turning greenish. She goes and sits down at her desk and places the hand grenade next to the stapler. Unk's eyes are starting to roll back in his head. Bea picks up a pencil and looks at a half finished poem in front of her entitled, "The Little White Pony." Unk falls to the floor, unconscious.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. SPACESHIP WITH AN OPEN DOOR

Unk waking up on a bunk. He is nauseous. He lurches out the door, falls to his hands and knees and pukes.

CUT TO:

UNK'S POV

We see the boots of a paratrooper and the feet of a great dog. PAN UP to see its' Rumfoord and Kazak.

KAZAK

Ruff!

RUMFOORD

Long time no see.

UNK

Stony?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD

No, Unk. I'm not Stony.

A squadron of flying saucers soars overhead, COOING
SOFTLY

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

There goes your regiment, Unk.
You're not with them. Aren't you
ashamed?

UNK

Who are you?

RUMFOORD

What do names matter in wartime?
Oh, Unk, Unk, Unk... What a time
you've had.

UNK

Who brought me here?

RUMFOORD

The military police, bless them.
Unk, the very saddest love story I
ever hope to hear took place on
Mars. Would you like to hear it?

Unk is bewildered and Rumfoord does not wait for his
answer but helps him to a sitting position.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

... Once upon a time there was a
man being carried from Earth to
Mars in a flying saucer...

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. SPACESHIP

Malachi playing poker and drinking with some Martian
REGULARS. They are all drunk.

RUMFOORD (V.O.)

... he had volunteered for the
Army of Mars and already wore the
uniform of a lieutenant colonel...

REGULAR #1

Aw, there'll be plenty of women
after we win the war.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REGULAR #2

Did you hear what's in the aft-cabin?

REGULAR #3

I heard some incredible broad or something.

REGULAR #2

Yeah. They don't want anyone to see her 'cause they're afraid you'll fall in love -- worst thing that can happen to a soldier.

MALACHI

Are you serious?

REGULAR #1

I don't know. I fall in love everytime.

MALACHI

Gentlemen, I have had somewhere near seven hundred of the world's most beautiful women -- and you want to know what's more important to them even than falling in love? It's when her back arches, you feel that monkey grip, her mouth opens in a silent scream, and her eyes roll back in her head -- that's what it's all about.

REGULAR #2

Hey! Hosemaster of Mars... !

Malachi drains his glass and notices there's a key at the bottom. He pulls it out and looks. CLOSEUP of key in Malachi's hand, inscribed "Aft-cabin."

REGULAR #3

(dealing cards)

Hey there, killer -- are you in or out on this one?

Malachi gets up from the table.

MALACHI

Excuse me, boys. Be back in a little while...

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - SPACESHIP

door labeled "Aft-cabin," Malachi drunkenly approaches, looks both ways to see if anyone's in sight, then lets himself in with the key.

CUT TO:

INT. "AFT-CABIN"

Malachi closes the door behind him and gropes in the very dimly lit room for the light switch. He finds it but it doesn't work.

MALACHI

Damn!... hello? Is anybody here?

In the darkness across the room comes a SOFT, DRUGGED GROAN of a woman.

MALACHI

(continuing)

Well, hello...

As Malachi cautiously crosses the room we can make out a naked female form with longish blonde hair, lying on a cot. She MOANS and tosses and turns in her drugged stupor.

MALACHI

(continuing)

... say, you and I make a fine pair -- we're both smashed, we're young and we're Martian... Gimme a kiss.

He takes off his pants and drops them on the floor; the CAMERA FOLLOWS and STAYS on a TIGHT SHOT of the pants as Malachi's boxer shorts join them.

DISSOLVE WIPE FOR TIME PASSAGE.

MALACHI'S HAND

picking up his boxer shorts and then his pants. The CAMERA FOLLOWS the pants and PANS UP so we can see Malachi in the darkness. He stumbles and bumps his head on a lamp suspended from the ceiling.

RUMFOORD (V.O.)

... of course his vanity compelled him to get a better look at his latest conquest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns on the light and sees a nude Bea partially covered with a sheet. Her doped eyes are puffy and barely open, her hair is unkempt.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - MALACHI'S FACE

as the horror of what he's done sinks in.

FADE TO:

RUMFOORD (PRESENT)

telling Unk the saddest love story.

RUMFOORD

... as the crew predicted, the man was spoiled forever as a soldier. When the spaceship landed on Mars the man learned from loose talk that he was about to have his memory taken away, so he cleverly wrote the first in a series of letters. He looked for her after his amnesia treatment and found she didn't remember him and that she was pregnant. Thereupon, his problem became to win her love, and through her, the love of the child. This he attempted to do not once, but many times...

Boaz approaches out of breath.

BOAZ

Goddman, buddy. Boy, did you ever put your buddy through hell. Everybody went and left without us! C'mon! We got to catch up!

RUMFOORD

(jovially)

You boys just get on board, close the airlock, push the "on" button and you'll catch up before you know it. Everything's fully automatic.

BOAZ

I know, I know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He goes into the spaceship followed by Unk.

CUT TO:

BOAZ

moving to an extremely simple control panel featuring one large red button which he pushes. The SHIP HUMS to life and the door begins to close. Rumfoord addresses Unk who watches him through the slowly diminishing space.

RUMFOORD

It is perhaps food for thought,
Unk, that this supremely
frustrated man was the only
Martian to write a philosophy, and
the supremely self-frustrating
woman was the only Martian to
write a poem! 'Bye!

As soon as the door closes, the saucer takes off.
Rumfoord and Kazak watch it and follow its progress
through the sky.

CUT TO:

THE MARTIAN FLEET

Hundreds of spaceships speeding away from Mars followed by Unk and Boaz's Mother Ship which is distinctive in size and design (but not the biggest; the biggest is the "Command Ship" near the front of the fleet).

CUT TO:

EXT. COMMAND SHIP

lighted windows indicate what must be the Bridgehead.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGEHEAD

populated by Martian soldiers in formidable-looking uniforms, with a nondescript General in the command chair.

CUT TO:

GENERAL IN COMMAND CHAIR

He is preoccupied with some device.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP OF THE DEVICE

It is a little game like "get the B-B's in the holes."

CUT TO:

WIDER SHOT OF THE GENERAL

Suddenly a red light above a small screen in front of him goes on. Then a message appears on the screen:
Play Earth Broadcast Tape.

The General opens up the arm of the command chair and pulls out a plastic case and produces a three-quarter inch video cassette similarly labeled and puts it in an appropriate slot in the control board and pushes a square green button next to it.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOP OF COMMAND SHIP

A small hatchway opens and a broadcast dish emerges and emits beams in the direction of Earth. The visual of Earth Broadcast is a shrouded, faceless, seated figure who speaks in a deep, threatening voice.

CUT TO:

TELEVISION SCREEN

showing the Bill Cosby Show. PULL TO reveal a typical American FAMILY watching TV in their living room. Suddenly the Martian "Earth Broadcast" appears on the screen.

GENERAL (V.O.)

People of Earth, surrender or
die...

DAD

What th... ?

WIFE

Hey, what's happening to the TV?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GENERAL (V.O.)
I am Zargan, Supreme Commander of
the Imperial Martian Forces.

Astonished kids watching this broadcast on a video game
in an arcade.

GENERAL (V.O.)
(continuing)
We travel in great numbers in
ships of technology centuries
beyond your present level of
development.

CUT TO:

THE OVAL OFFICE

with the back of the "President's" head in foreground;
he is talking to some African potentate. Suddenly an
aide bursts into the room and turns on the large TV to
this EARTH BROADCAST.

PRESIDENT
... floating your dollar is --
hey!... this better be damned
important, Larry.

LARRY
We thought you ought to see this,
Mr. President.

GENERAL (V.O.)
... A new era is upon you. Accept
it. If you resist... you face
annihilation.

CUT TO:

BRIDGE OF A SOVIET NUCLEAR SUBMARINE

Earth Broadcast is on every video screen before the
startled Captain and crew.

GENERAL (V.O.)
Within the next half an hour, you
will receive a little taste of
hell, compliments of Mars.

SOVIET CAPTAIN
New za shto? Toe govoreet
pangleeski?

CUT TO:

A POOR LEBANESE PALESTINIAN FAMILY

watching this Broadcast on their TV in their funky home.

GENERAL (V.O.)

This should be warning enough. In six days we shall enter your upper atmosphere and you shall decide, Earth: surrender... or die!

CUT TO:

A POPULAR AMERICAN BAR

with a "Monday Night Football Game on TV, a "Go 49ers" banner over the bar as well as an elaborate betting pyramid. The CUSTOMERS are drunk and furious over their game being interrupted.

DRUNK PATRON

What happened to the game? I don't believe it! This is a playoff game!

WOMAN PATRON

(to the matronly
bartendress)

Hey, Selma -- somethin' wrong with the set...

The patron doesn't realize other patrons are trying to get her to shush!

CUT TO:

A HUNDRED MARTIAN MISSILES

entering the Earth's atmosphere.

CUT TO:

TWO FAMILIES

at a back yard barbecue in a suburb of Dallas.

KID

(pointing to the
sky)

Daddy, look!

They look up and see a missile trail approaching.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DADDY

Oh my God!

The MISSILE crashes and EXPLODES feebly in another back yard about three houses away.

CUT TO:

SEVERAL JAPANESE

pointing skyward in the Ginza district of Tokyo. Tow Martian rockets hit and explode a quarter of a mile away.

CUT TO:

THE SKY

above the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., another missile trail coming down fast.

CUT TO:

A BLACK GHETTO STREET

with the capitol building in the background. A ROCKET crashes and EXPLODES, blowing up the street and a couple of cars.

CUT TO:

THE BERLIN WALL

Another rocket tears into an apartment building on the east side.

CUT TO:

A MARTIAN ROCKET

sticking halfway into the ground near an old farmhouse in rural England. The farmer stares in disbelief as sheep graze around it.

CUT TO:

THE MARTIAN FLEET IN SPACE

Unk and Boaz's Mother Ship still trails behind.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

The only light source aside from control panel lights is Boaz's reading light in his bunk. He is doing a crossword puzzle. We can faintly see Unk lying awake in his bunk with his rifle lying beside him.

BOAZ

Say, ol' buddy, what's a seven letter word for "Egyptian Wonder?" I think the first letter is "P."

UNK

Damn if I know. Damn if I care.

BOAZ

You don't give a damn for nothin', do you?

UNK

That's right. I don't even give a damn or that thing you've got in your pocket.

Silent pause.

BOAZ

What I got in my pocket?

UNK

A thing to hurt people with. A thing to make 'em do whatever you want 'em to...

We see Boaz surreptitiously reach for the box in his pocket and turn the knobs. He tries to be nonchalant as he looks over to Unk expecting to hear him scream but nothing happens. Confusion, then fear spread across Boaz's face.

BOAZ

Unk... ?

UNK

Yeah?

BOAZ

You there, buddy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UNK

Where would I go? You think you vaporized me?

BOAZ

You okay, buddy?

UNK

Why wouldn't I be, buddy?

Unk rises onto his elbows and turns to Boaz.

UNK

(continuing)

... last night while you were asleep, ol' buddy, I took that thing out of your pocket, old buddy, and I tore the insides out of it and stuffed it with toilet paper. And now I'm sitting on my bunk, ol' buddy, and I got my rifle and just what the hell do you think you're going to do about anything?

Boaz is stunned. He doesn't know what to do. Suddenly he bursts into laughter so hard that tears come out of his eyes.

UNK

(continuing)

What's so funny, Boaz, buddy?

BOAZ

Holy smokes, Unk. What am I doing way the hell out here in space? Who's steering this fool thing? How come we got to where we're going? Can you tell me? Fuck if I know! Fuck if I know any fucking thing.

He laughs uncontrollably. He pulls the box out of his pocket and throws it on the floor.

BOAZ

(continuing)

I don't want it, Unk. I don't want none of this crap.

He stops laughing for a three count and then starts again.

CUT TO:

THE MARTIAN FLEET IN SPACE

CUT TO:

A SATELLITE WITH A DISH ABOVE EARTH

It is pointed away from Earth.

CUT TO:

ROWS OF HUGE TRACKING DISHES OUT IN THE DESERT.

CUT TO:

INT. "MOUNT WEATHER"

The nerve center of the USA defense network. Soviet Generals and top scientists are shaking hands with Americans and examining computer readouts, etc.

CUT TO:

THE SOVIET COUNTERPART OF "MOUNT WEATHER"

American Generals and top scientists confer with the Soviets, etc.

CUT TO:

A SOVIET NUCLEAR SUB AND AN AMERICAN TRIDENT SUB

docked to each other in mid-ocean, helicopters hover overhead.

CUT TO:

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The Secretary General is concluding a speech.

SECRETARY GENERAL

We unite as people of this planet
-- Earth will not be conquered!

The assembly erupts with CHEERING and APPLAUSE. Everyone is standing.

CUT TO:

THE MARTIAN FLEET

approaching Earth and its Moon. Suddenly Unk and Boaz's Mother Ship veer off on a completely different course, away from the fleet.

CUT TO:

THE FLEET

passing by the Moon.

CUT TO:

AMERICAN MISSILES

launching out of ground silos.

CUT TO:

A ROCKET

launched from an F-15.

CUT TO:

SOVIET MISSILES BEING LAUNCHED

CUT TO:

A POLARIS MISSILE

EXPLODING out of the sea.

CUT TO:

A FRENCH MISSILE

being launched from an obviously French site.

CUT TO:

THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE OF THE EARTH

Hundreds of missiles can be seen approaching. As they get larger and more numerous, their trajectories are practically random. The hundreds of missiles appear to be half with USA and American flags on them, and half with a red star and CCCP on them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But then we see one with a Union Jack, then many more American and Soviet missiles, and then two small rockets with the Japanese "Rising Sun" on them.

CUT TO:

THE MARTIAN FLEET

approaching this barrage of missiles in outer space with Earth in the background. There are hundreds of EXPLOSIONS. We see many Martian spaceships destroyed.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMAND SHIP

EXPLOSIONS, SCREAMING, the ceiling falls on the "General."

CUT TO:

SCORES OF SPACESHIPS

reeling and rocking, but succeeding in making it past the RAIN OF FIRE and into the Earth's atmosphere.

CUT TO:

SEVERAL SPACESHIPS

approaching the North American Continent.

CUT TO:

A MARTIAN SPACESHIP

landing on the front lawn of a middle class American home in Nashville, Tennessee. A matronly woman steps out from the front door of the house. She is carrying a .22 calibre rifle and skillfully picks off the first two Martian soldiers that emerge from the spacecraft, but the third Martian manages to wing the old lady with his vintage weapon. Suddenly a next door neighbor with a deer rifle mows him down and the next guy too.

CUT TO:

A SPACESHIP LANDING IN HARLEM

The Martians are summarily SHOT, knifed, mugged, etc.

CUT TO:

A MARTIAN SPACESHIP'S DOOR OPENING

from its landing spot in Belfast, Ireland. The first soldier out gets hit in the face with a brick and then two Molotov Cocktails fly in through the door so that the SPACESHIP EXPLODES in a small fireball. Two Martians run out on fire.

CUT TO:

A MARTIAN SPACESHIP LANDING ON THE EDGE OF A CLIFF

The door opens on the side facing away from the cliff, and the first Martian out is big and fat. As soon as he hits the ground, the craft topples over the cliff.

CUT TO:

AN F-15

SHOOTING Sidewinder missiles and knocking out a Martian craft in mid-air.

CUT TO:

MAIN STREET OF A SMALL TOWN

somewhere in America's deep south. There are two landed spacecraft and Martian soldiers hanging from every lamppost. REDNECKS drink and celebrate in the street.

REDNECK #1

Shee -- it! Send us more
Martians.

CUT TO:

EXT. TEHERAN AIRPORT

with a big picture of Khomeini. A Martian spacecraft has just landed on the runway. Suddenly a beat-up Dodge Van speeds out from behind the building.

CUT TO:

INT. DODGE VAN

A young SHIITE drives the van full tilt at the saucer.

YOUNG SHIITE
Yaheeee... Allah Shanlalei!

The van crashes into the saucer and there is a huge
EXPLOSION.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE EARTH'S UPPER ATMOSPHERE

There are only about six more Martian spaceships heading down to Earth past a dozen Soviet and American missiles still floating around.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE

A disabled Martian ship trying to pull out of its dive, the Earth comes rushing up at it. Finally it crashes near a small primitive Amazon village.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT OF THE SMOKING WRECKAGE

Amazon natives begin to surround it. Bea and Chrono emerge from the wreckage. Bea's front teeth have been knocked out and Chrono is bleeding but he kisses his Good Luck Piece.

CUT TO:

SOMEWHERE IN MOSCOW

A Martian spacecraft landing in a vacant lot in Moscow. A Soviet jeep with a mounted machine gun and two Soviet soliders pulls up and CUTS DOWN several figures who run out of the saucer. The figures are all women and children. The machine gunner stops firing and one or two more Martian women and children emerge safely.

CUT TO:

REVERSE ANGLE

The shocked faces of the Soviet soldiers.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. RUMFOORD ESTATE

The wall with the little door outside the Rumfoord Estate. There is an usher next to the door tearing tickets for a small line of tourists, among them a young, overweight priest, C. HORNER REDWINE (he has a super-8 video camera with a microphone).

CUT TO:

THE DOORWAY OF "SKIP'S MUSEUM"

The wall has been knocked down and plexiglass has been put up. The small crowd is kept back by velvet rope dividers and the "proprietor," MARLIN T. LAPP, is talking into a cheap microphone and "conducting the tour."

Rumfoord is seated in his chair and Kazak sits on the floor next to him. Neither enjoys being the animal in the zoo. Moncrief, dressed in a three piece suit and carrying a briefcase, visits with Rumfoord for a moment and then exits. The sign says: "The Chrono Synclastic Infundibulated Man and His Best Friend."

MARLIN T. LAPP

I guess he don't feel much like talking today, folks. You got to realize he's got a lot to think about. He isn't just here, folks. He tells me he appears on Mercury every fourteen days, Mars every one hundred twenty-seven days, he's here every fifty-nine days, and he tells me he's on Titan all the time. But I think it's wonderful that you all took the time to come down here and see this great cultural, educational and scientific exhibit on such an historic day as our great Victory over the Martians. Maybe our ghost here will someday have something to say when the time is ripe.

RUMFOORD

The time is rotten-ripe!

The CROWD GASPS; this was unexpected. The Rev. C. Horner Redwine steps closer with his super-8 video camera with microphone, and begins recording.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We COME IN OVER HIS SHOULDER and PULL INTO the eyepiece monitor screen.

RUMFOORD (V.O.)

The war that ended so gloriously today was glorious only for the saints who lost it. Those saints were earthlings like yourselves.

PULL BACK from screen to reveal the patrons of The 49er Bar intently watching Rumfoord on the TV over the bar.

RUMFOORD (V.O.)

(continuing)

Martyrs to the cause of the brotherhood of man, they provided a common enemy against which all the nations of Earth could unite. Their wish when they died...

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIA - TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

A town square in India with hundreds of people viewing a large screen mounted on the back of a pickup truck. There are Hindu subtitles.

RUMFOORD (V.O.)

... was not for paradise for themselves, but that the brotherhood of mankind might be enduring. To that end, devoutly to be wished, I bring you word of a new religion.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIJI BEACH - SUNSET

Seventy or so natives watch a black and white TV on a table set up on the porch of a thatched roof bamboo community house.

RUMFOORD (V.O.)

National borders will disappear. The lust for war will die. All envy, all fear, all hate, will die! The name of the new religion is The Church Of God the Utterly Indifferent.

CUT TO:

EXT. A JAPANESE BASEBALL STADIUM

whose capacity crowd watches an immense animated scoreboard showing this speech.

RUMFOORD (V.O.)

The two chief teachings of this religion are these: puny man can do nothing at all to help or please God Almighty, and luck is not the hand of God.

EXT. "SKIP'S MUSEUM"

Redwine gets in close with the camera and Rumfoord plays to it.

CUT TO:

REDWINE'S CAMERA POV

RUMFOORD (V.O.)

Why should you believe in this religion rather than any other?

CUT TO:

RUMFOORD IN "SKIP'S MUSEUM" (REAL TIME)

RUMFOORD

You should believe in it because I, as head of this religion can work miracles, and the head of no other religion can. I can work the miracle of predicting, with absolute accuracy, the things that the future will bring. Hear now these following twenty predictions as recorded by this priest who shall become my chief disciple and shall disseminate my teachings...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE

Unk and Boaz's Mother Ship approaching tiny Mercury in its narrow shadow. The sun is perfectly enormous.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Unk and Boaz are looking out the porthole.

BOAZ

Alright! It won't be long now! I hope we land in Hollywood. I want ol' Unk and Boaz to hit some nightclubs tonight!

As their craft comes in low over Mercury's nightside surface, we see it is covered with giant crystal formations. The sunlight plays through the crystals and off each other almost like spotlights on skyscrapers. Tears fill Unk's eyes. Both Unk and Boaz believe they're landing on Earth because they can't believe anything else.

UNK

Damn, I don't see anybody... they must all be asleep.

BOAZ

But not for long! When we start cuttin' up, nobody's gonna sleep for a week.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP OF UNK'S FACE

His eyes well with tears as he goes into a fantasy looking out the porthole.

DISSOLVE TO:

LIMBO SHOT

Bea, Chrono and Stony Stevenson in limbo. They are smiling and waving. They look great.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSEUP OF UNK'S FACE

enthralled.

CUT TO:

UNK AND BOAZ

looking out the porthole.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UNK
Here we go! We're landing!

CUT TO:

EXT. THEIR SHIP

weaving gracefully through skyscraper-sized crystals,
then lowering itself vertically into a large crevasse.
It disappears below the surface.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Light streams into the dimly-lit cabin through the
porthole as the walls of the caves of Mercury are
luminescent.

BOAZ
We're still dropping. We're going
to the basement of someplace.

CUT TO:

MERCURY - CUTAWAY VISION

so we can see the spacecraft's progress seeking its way
down a great labyrinth of crevasses to the deepest
level possible. At one point it snags on a ledge.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Unk and Boaz are lying in their bunks. As they feel
the ship lurch to a halt. They cheer and jump to their
feet.

BOAZ
Alright!

UNK
Finally... let's go!

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACESHIP

The ship is actually trapped on a ledge between a crystal outcrop and the wall of the crevasse. Little metal feelers and sensors pop out from the bottom of the craft as it automatically assesses the situation.

CUT TO:

THE SAUCER - CUTAWAY SHOT

working its way below the surface of Mercury. The spaceship springs to life and, through a series of jerky movements it maneuvers itself free to continue its descent into the bowels of the tiny planet.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Unk and Boaz being tossed about.

UNK

Damn! What the...?

BOAZ

Oh no...

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACESHIP

Finally the spaceship finds the bottom of an immense luminescent cave; the spaceship lands gently (again utilizing the mechanical feelers and sensors) and shuts itself off with a great sigh.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Boaz leaps up from his bunk, puts on his helmet and grabs his rifle. Unk is hesitant.

BOAZ

What do you think? Home at last!
C'mon, ol buddy, let's hit the
streets.

Boaz hits the button which opens the door. There is a "WHOOSH" as Mercury's atmosphere rushes in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Unk and Boaz walk cautiously to the door and look out at their alien environment: the walls of the subterranean cavern are yellow phosphorescent. There are thousands of aquamarine diamond-shaped living translucent creatures about a foot across. They move slowly on the cave walls and floor using the little suction cups on their corners. These creatures are HARMONIUMS; and they eat vibrations. Their main diet involves the "tones of Mercury," which are heard throughout this entire Mercury segment. When they collect in great numbers they form huge geometric patterns.

BOAZ

(in helium voice)

Mama! Goddamn mama! This sure as hell ain't Earth -- Hey, what's with my voice? Say something, Unk.

UNK

(in helium voice)

Well, we're still alive. There's enough oxygen. Must be a shitload of helium though.

UNK

(in helium voice)

Let's go back inside, seal the door and repressurize.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Unk presses a button. After the door closes and there is a "WOOSH," they talk in normal voices again.

BOAZ

This ain't Earth. That sun was pretty big, too. Maybe there are some people up in those skyscrapers we saw.

UNK

Let's get out of here.

He goes over to the control panel and pushes the large green button.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTHER SHIP IN MERCURY CAVERN

It lifts up off the floor, touches a wall, drags its rim up the wall with a GRINDING, TEARING SCREAM, BASHES ITS DOME again.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Unk and Boaz are bounced out of their respective bunks and bump heads in mid-air.

BOAZ

Ow!

UNK

Aahhh!

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTHER SHIP IN MERCURY CAVERN

The ship backs off the ledge, grazes a projection, and wedges itself in an indentation with a final GRINDING SCREAM.

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Yellow smoke is pouring out of the control panel. Coughing and gasping, Unk and Boaz open the door and jump out on the sandy floor of the phosphorescent cavern. They writhe and weep in helium voices as they realize their hopeless predicament. Hundreds of Harmoniums gently move toward them.

BOAZ

(in helium voice)

Goddamn, man! What the sense in this?

UNK

(in helium voice)

I was finally going to get some living done.

Unk arches back, expressing his anguish, when suddenly he sees something that makes him gasp and then freeze.

CUT TO:

UNK'S POV

looking up at a great sloping wall of their cavern, a hundred or so Harmoniums (moving very slowly) are arranged in letters spelling out this message: IT'S AN INTELLIGENCE TEST!

CUT TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C.

Huge crowd dedicating the New Martian War monument which is identical in design to the Viet Nam War Monument (directly behind the crowd) except that it is about half the size and made out of red marble. Rumfoord is speaking to the crowd through an echoing PA system (ala "Pride of the Yankees") from a stage area in front of the monument. The Rev. C. Horner Redwine, with a slab of metal hanging from his neck, stands behind Rumfoord on the platform along with Moncrief and a couple of others.

RUMFOORD

We gather today to honor all those who died in the War with Mars. Those who unknowingly sacrificed their lives so that the endless cycle of war could be broken. In the history of war, millions have died for nothing or less...

Rumfoord motions with his hand and we see a bag of shot (dead weight) is hanging from his wrist.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

At least these few thousand paved the way for our great new religion. To these valiant dead we dedicate this monument.

Twenty-one Martian veterans point to the sky with their odd collection of rifles, and FIRE in unison on comand, but one RIFLE EXPLODES in a veteran's hands, causing him to drop his gun and dance around in the receding cloud of gunpowder. Then the BLUE ANGELS ROAR overhead in the "Missing Man" formation, immediately followed by an equal formation of Martian spaceships that "COO" overhead.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP OF BOAZ'S WELL-MUSCLED, NAKED BACK

PULL BACK to reveal he is weight lifting in a living area he has arranged not far from the spaceship. This includes a couple of lamps, a table, two chairs, a mirror, a punching bag, dumbbells, and a ghetto blaster with cases containing hundreds of tapes.

Thousands of Harmoniums are inching toward the speakers, but are held back from the stereo and the living area by a makeshift net barricade. A MOZART CONCERTO IS PLAYING, but it is distorted by the odd atmosphere. He has three or four "favorite" Harmoniums stuck to different places on his body. He talks to them as if they were kittens. As he finishes his exercises and neatly puts the barbell on its rack, he detaches a small Harmonium creeping across his heart.

BOAZ

Hey there, little feller... you've already eaten more vibrations than is good for you. Ol' Papa Boaz better put you back with your friends over here enjoying the concert. Yes...

He gently places the creature in the area below the speakers with the hundreds of other Harmoniums.

BOAZ

(continuing)

Yes, ol' Boaz loves you all an' you love him, don't ya... an' ain't that what it's all about... yes...

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP OF UNK'S HAGGARD, TORMENTED FACE

He has long greying hair and a scraggly beard. PULL BACK to reveal he is wandering through one of the many branches of the caverns, he is following the footsteps of a man and a dog in the phosphorescent dust on the floor. Unk's clothes are tattered and his boots are wearing out. Unk is not excited about following the footsteps, it's just what he does on Mercury.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP OF UNK'S FACE

As he is walking, he begins to fantasize.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE PLANET MERCURY - CUTAWAY SHOT

with the tiny figure of Unk far below the surface. PAN UP to the surface and the huge crystals we saw are now crystal-shaped buildings with streets in between and lots of people walking around. The large fountain from the Estate is there; dry and with bird nests. The CAMERA PULLS CLOSER to a building until we are looking in a window with bars on it. Bea is looking out from behind the bars. She looks troubled but defiant; she's wearing a sexy dress and her hair is down.

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM WITH BARS

Bea is looking out the window. Stony Stevenson and Chrono are tied to back-to-back chairs. Now two secret police pull Bea to a third chair and tie her up. The furniture is the same magnetic, floating furniture that was in Malachi's office in the Magnum Opus building. The carpet is grass here, too. There is a SECRET POLICE CHIEF sitting on the edge of a table in front of them. There are three televisions on the table, each with a different angle of a clean-shaven Unk wandering in the caves. The secret police all have large foreheads and odd white hair.

SECRET POLICE CHIEF

It seems your husband still hasn't given up.

BEA

I told you, fool.

CHRONO

I can see you don't know much about my dad. Why don't you just capture him, too?

SECRET POLICE CHIEF

No. It would be too dangerous to have both him and our friend, Mr. Stevenson, here in the same room at the same time.

STONY

Oh c'mon. It's true we have a reputation for doin' a little hell raising... but really...

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP OF CHRONO AND STONY'S TIED-UP HANDS

Chrono is quietly cutting Stony's bonds with his Good Luck Piece.

DISSOLVE TO:

WIDE SHOT OF A GOOD SIZED CHURCH AND OLD CEMETERY

in Barnstable, Massachusetts. The church sign on the large front lawn proclaims: Barnstable First Church of God the Utterly Indifferent, The Church of the Weary Space Wanderer. There is no cross on the steeple. The CONGREGATION AND THE PASTOR CAN BE HEARD CHANTING FAINTLY from inside. Service is in progress.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH

In the pulpit, Rev. C. Horner Redwine has canvas bags of shot hanging from his wrists and ankles, and slabs of iron hanging from shoulder straps on his chest and back. These are his "handicaps." Also hanging around his neck and many of those in the CONGREGATION is a "Malachi" doll, which is like a "Ken" doll but resembles the young Malachi Constant. It dangles from a small hangman's noose. Behind the pulpit, standing on the altar, is a game show type board with the title "Rumfoord's Prophecies." There are two rows of predictions numbered one through twenty (the predictions include things such as "Parisian Volcano," "Jean Dixon dies," "Currency dyed red," "Falwell's feet," "Watt's oil field," "Space Wanderer's Words," etc.) The first seventeen have "come true" revealed behind them by pulled cards. The last three apparently have not happened yet as the blank cards are still in place.

REDWINE

We, the faithful of the Church of
God the Utterly Indifferent,
gladly bear self-imposed handicaps
so that fairness can truly exist
in the race of life...

He motions to the weights hanging from his body.

REDWINE

(continuing)

... the strong carry weights.

We see a beautiful woman in the congregation who is wearing dumpy clothes and chewing gum.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REDWINE

(continuing)

... the beautiful hide themselves
in ugly clothes...

We see a woman with broken glasses next to a young
bald-headed man with a dazed look on his face.

REDWINE

(continuing)

... the brilliant and quick witted
confuse themselves with mind
boggling drugs... We do this so
that even the smallest and weakest
will not feel disadvantaged, and
the biggest and strongest will not
feel extraordinarily blessed...
let us now join in Rumfoord's
Litany.

Redwine pauses and assumes a pious posture.

CONGREGATION

(mumbled monotone)

-- Call me son --

REDWINE

But I am not your son, rather call
me a dog. But I am not your dog.
Rather call me a flea.

CONGREGATION

-- Call me a flea --

REDWINE

But I am not a flea. Rather call
me a germ on the flea of your
dog. As a germ on the flea of
your dog, I am eager to serve you
in any way I can, just as you are
willing to serve God Almighty,
Creator of the Universe.

CONGREGATION

-- Creator of the Universe --

Then Redwine and the entire Congregation slap their
left arms with their right hand, killing the imaginary
flea, then flicking it off.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVES OF MERCURY

A view of the stricken spacecraft from a distance. Unk enters from the foreground and walks toward it. Boaz's STEREO can be heard PLAYING HELIUM-DISTORTED MUSIC for his Harmonium audience. Unk's hair and beard are longer and scragglier. His clothes are more tattered.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Boaz is shaving with a couple of his favorite Harmoniums stuck to him. The door opens, there is a "WOOSH;" Unk enters and closes the door; there is another "WOOSH." Unk walks past Boaz to a table with some food products. Unk selects a piece of beef jerky and begins chewing.

BOAZ

Hey, lil' fellers, look who's here. It's Uncle Unk.

Unk is sulking. He says nothing and opens a chocolate milk which he drinks greedily. A Harmonium on Boaz's arm stirs.

BOAZ

(continuing)

What's that you're trying to say there, cutie? Huh? Are you trying to say, "Ol, Boaz." I don't want to sound ungrateful, on account of I know it's a great honor to get to be here close to your heart. Only I keep thinking about all my friends outside, an' I keep wishing they could have something good, too, "that what you trying to say?" Please, Papa Boaz, put on a concert for everyone outside.

UNK

(snapping)

Hearing you talk like that to those things drives me fucking nuts.

BOAZ

Hey! You're goin' crazy, alright. Look't you! You're falling apart. You could learn something from these guys. I have.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UNK

Those "guys" are the most boring things ever called "alive." They like a clock ticking as much as they do your stupid baby-talk. I mean, I got a real mate and a real son and a real best friend.

He picks up a Harmonium.

UNK

(continuing)

As for these overgrown ameobas --

Unk rips the Harmonium in two and drops it. The thing shrivels and looses its color. Boaz moves swiftly to Unk and grabs him by his tattered shirt.

BOAZ

Don't truth me, Unk, and I won't truth you, okay? Maybe you do have those people or maybe you don't. What's important is that you think so, that's the way I leave it.

Boaz lets go of Unk, bends over and picks up the two pieces of the torn Harmonium. A tear rolls down his cheek.

BOAZ

(continuing)

Maybe these animals ain't exactly your dish, but you just let me think whatever I'm going to think.

Unk is silent but repentant.

CUT TO:

EXT. HELICOPTER

landing next to the wreckage of a Martian spaceship, now overgrown with vegetation in the Amazon jungle.

The native Indian people in the tiny nearby village peer shyly from the edge of the clearing. Moncrief steps out of the helicopter along with an armed Amazon Indian guide. Three warriors from the village approach the helicopter. The warriors are naked except for their jungle G-strings and paint on their faces.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

One carries a blowgun, one a long spear, and the third (Chrono) carries a blowgun and a thin strip of metal hanging on a string around his neck. He kisses the strip of metal. Moncrief holds some binoculars up to his eyes and examines the village women.

CUT TO:

MONCRIEF'S BINOCULAR POV

looking from face to face at the naked jungle women. We HOLD ON Bea who is talking to her native friend, standing beside her. Her front teeth are missing and she has apparently lost an eye, and she is brown and weathered, almost indistinguishable from her neighbors.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Boaz is carefully walking out of the spaceship while holding a cup of coffee. He sits in a lawn chair next to the "ghetto" box and hundreds of Harmoniums. He chances to look up and on the cave wall above him is this message spelled out in Harmoniums: BOAZ DON'T GO WE LOVE YOU BOAZ.

CUT TO:

SHOT OF UNK

following footsteps in the caves of Mercury. His greying hair and beard are really long. He looks a little like Howard Hughes in his final days. He is naked except for a loincloth and the remains of his boots which are held together with duct tape and strips of cloth. He pauses to catch his breath and leans against the rock wall. A Harmonium sticks to his hand as he pulls it away. Irrked, he rips it in two. It shrivels immediately; in disdain, Unk tosses the pieces up in the air. He chances to look above him and his mouth drops open; his eyes fill with amazement.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER ANGLE - UNK

LOOKING UP FROM BEHIND Unk, we see another message spelled out with Harmoniums: UNK TURN THE SHIP UPSIDE DOWN.

CUT TO:

BOAZ'S LIVING AREA

Boaz in his living area near the spaceship. He is naked except for a couple Harmoniums, and boxer shorts. He is spit-shining his beautiful boots. Unk comes running up to him. Breathless and excited, he shouts in his helium voice.

UNK

Boaz! Boaz! Message! We're gonna go home! Going home!

BOAZ

(in helium voice)
Hang on, Unk! Slow down, man.
Let's go inside so we can talk.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

Unk and Boaz are sitting at the table. Unk is animated and Boaz is numb.

BOAZ

I said, I ain't goin'.

UNK

Okay, Boaz. I know you mean it.
I think you're crazy, but... okay.

BOAZ

You know... I found me a place where I can do good without doing any harm, and I can see I'm doing good, and then I'm doing good for know I'm doing it, and they love me, Unk, as best they can. I finally found me a home.

UNK

Okay.

CUT TO:

UNK AND BOAZ

turning over the ship using a winch and a steel cable, etc.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHIP

The ship upside down and lots more provisions stacked in Boaz's living area. Boaz and Unk stand before the inverted door. Unk puts his hand on Boaz's shoulder and looks him in the eye.

UNK

(in helium voice)

Goodbye, ol' buddy.

BOAZ

(in helium voice)

So long, Unk.

Unk enters the ship, the door closes. The SHIP STARTS HUMMING, then it lifts up and deftly rises out of the cavern. Boaz watches it go, a tear rolls down his cheek and he thinks as if he were still explaining to Unk why this is his home. As we MOVE UP AND AWAY we hear his V.O. thoughts.

BOAZ (V.O.)

And when I die down here someday,
I'm going to be able to say to
myself, "Boaz, you made millions
of lives worth living. Ain't
nobody spread more joy. You ain't
got an enemy in the universe"...
you go to sleep now. You're a
good boy, Boaz. Good night.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Raindrops trickling down an old headstone in the cemetery next to the Church of God the Utterly Indifferent in Barnstable, Massachusetts. It is a beautiful spring rain. A gnarled hand gently feels the headstone. PULL BACK to reveal: a wet tall skinny man with long and scraggily greying hair and beard. He is naked except for a loincloth. The battered, steaming spaceship rests peacefully behind him, door wide open.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH

C. Horner Redwine is alone and behind his pulpit. Behind him hanging from a rhinestone encrusted hanger on a spike in the wall, is a strange rubberized yellow jumpsuit with a large red question mark on it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Redwine is entranced by his own church and listens to the SOUND OF THE RAIN. He walks down the aisle between the pews to the back of the church where a bell-rope hangs with a little "Malachi" doll hanging from the end of it. Rainwater is slowly trickling down the rope and the doll. Redwine allows a droplet to fall on his face, then he looks out the window and sees Unk and the spaceship in the graveyard. He runs to the side door and opens it for a better look. His face agape with joy, he dashes back to the bell-rope and begins pulling it wildly.

CUT TO:

UNK

startled by the PEALING BELL. Then he hears some SHOUTING and a fire department SIREN in the distance. He panics and runs to the spaceship, bumping his shin on a headstone. Suddenly, jubilant people emerge from all sides of the cemetery. As the door closes slowly, Unk feverishly pushes, then pounds the large green "on" button. The SPACESHIP BEGINS TO HUM, then CLICKS OFF. Unk pounds the button with his head. The CRAFT HUMS with a BAD KNOCKING SOUND and rocks back and forth. Yellow smoke begins pouring out of the control panel, it shudders violently, then stops entirely. Terrified, Unk looks out the porthole and sees a procession approaching.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACESHIP

The Rev. C. Horner Redwine carrying the yellow jumpsuit followed slowly by the Barnstable fire engine on which there are children waving lilac blossoms. Everyone is wearing grey sackcloth and handicaps of one sort or another hang from their bodies. Their ecstasy makes them oblivious to the rain. The fire cannon sprays in the air. Redwine walks up to the porthole of the craft.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER SHIP

From behind Unk we see Redwine's face in the porthole, looking in like an intelligent ape at the zoo. He motions in the direction of the door. Unk takes a breath, and opens the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Redwine steps in, reverently holding the suit on the hanger. He is shaking with rapture.

UNK

This... this is Earth?

REDWINE

Yes. Cape Code, Massachusetts,
United States of America,
Brotherhood of Man.

UNK

Thank God!

Redwine is taken aback.

REDWINE

Why?

UNK

Pardon me?

REDWINE

Why thank God? He doesn't care
what happens to you.

He sees that Unk is staring at the different weights hanging from his person.

REDWINE

(continuing; proudly)

Heavy.

UNK

Um.

REDWINE

You should carry about... oh...
fifty pounds I should guess --
after we build you up.

UNK

Fifty pounds?

REDWINE

You'll be glad, not sorry to carry
such a handicap, won't you?

Unk stares back blankly and says nothing. Redwine is thrown by Space Wanderer's ignorance of the church's ritual.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REDWINE

(continuing)

That way no one could reproach you
for taking advantage of the random
ways of luck, right?

UNK

... Okay...

REDWINE

Well... put on the suit...

UNK

Why?

REDWINE

So you can make your "Space
Wanderer" speech, Space
Wanderer.

Unk steps into the suit.

UNK

What should I say?

REDWINE

It has been prophesied what you
will say, word for word.

UNK

But I can't think of anything
except "hello" and "thank you."
What do you want me to say?

Redwine zips up the zipper on the front of the
skintight suit which fits him perfectly. Redwine
starts pushing him out the door.

REDWINE

C'mon... Those good people out
there have been rehearsing this
moment for a long time. They will
ask you two questions and you will
answer.

The CROWD, which has formed a semicircle around the
spacecraft entrance, falls silent like a choir about
to sing as Unk and Redwine emerge and pause for a
moment. Then Redwine gives a saintly signal and the
Congregation speaks as one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONGREGATION

Who are you?

UNK

I... I don't know my real name.
They call me Unk.

CONGREGATION

What happened to you?

Unk shakes his head vaguely. He searches for something propitious and finds nothing. He sighs and shrugs with resignation.

UNK

I... I was a victim of a series of accidents... as we all are.

The crowd erupts with wild cheering and dancing. Unk is hustled aboard the fire engine and driven on it past the back door of the church. Redwine beams and points for Unk so he sees that over the door is an unfurled, wooden scroll on which are inscribed the words: I WAS A VICTIM OF A SERIES OF ACCIDENTS AS WE ALL ARE.

CUT TO:

A SMILING UNK

waving from his fire engine procession. Girls are throwing flowers, Redwine is clanging the bell (with a "Malachi" on the clapper), and Unk is giddy with people, fresh air, the now brilliant sunshiny day with a rainbow. He understands none of it.

CUT TO:

THE FIRE ENGINE PROCESSION

passes a sign: "Newport 4 Miles," and an endless smiling and cheering crowd with "handicaps" all along the way who shout the same question over and over.

CROWD

What happened to you?

UNK

(laughing)

Accidents!

CUT TO:

THE WALL OUTSIDE THE RUMBOORD ESTATE

The wall has been denuded of its vine covering and is decorated with banners. There are thousands of pilgrims with handicaps. Many are buying souvenirs from perhaps twenty little wooden booths under one continuous roof. It's a real carnival.

CUT TO:

SLOW PAN DOWN THE LINE OF BOOTHS

attended exclusively by veterans (survivors) of the Martian Army. (We should see faces from previous Mars scenes.) They wear VFW-type hats ("VMW" it says on their hats). Two VETERANS in the first booth are selling buttons and pennants with a picture of the estate on them.

FIRST BOOTH #1

Souvenir buttons with Rumfoord and Kazak.

FIRST BOOTH #2

Pennants. Rumfoord Estate
Pennants!

SECOND BOOTH

Souvenir models of the big fountain. Works just like the real one. Perfect gift for that little pilgrim at home!

The THIRD BOOTH is a T-shirt concession including "My Parents Went To A Materialization And All I Got Was This Lousy T-Shirt," and "Mars University."

THIRD BOOTH

T-shirts. Materialization T-shirts. One hundred percent cotton in gold, white or tan... or Martian red... T-shirts...

In the fourth booth are Chrono, Bea and Captain Brackman. They are selling "Malachi" dolls and they are each wearing VMW hats. Bea's skin is a leathery tan and she has gold front teeth and an eye patch. Captain Brackman has a hook instead of a right hand. Chrono is opening a fresh case of the dolls while Bea and Brackman do the serious hawking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPTAIN BRACKMAN

Hey! Getcher official "Malachi" while there's still time. Can't sell 'em once the Materialization starts, so get 'em now. Prove to the folks back home that you were really here -- show 'em your official "Malachi."

A pilgrim wearing a felt Robin Hood hat with a picture of Rumfoord on one side and a spaceship on the other, and his name, "DELBERT", prominently embroidered on the front, is examining one of the dolls. He is wearing shorts and sandals, and he is dragging a refrigerator door and a car bumper by a rope tied around his waist (his handicap).

DELBERT

How much?

BEA

Seven dollars.

DELBERT

Wow!

BEA

It's a genuine, authorized official "Malachi" made from high-impact plastic with moveable joints.

DELBERT

Uh huh. I'm going to shop around a little bit... I'll probably be back.

BEA

Sure you will, Delbert.

DELBERT

(startled)

Hey. How did you know my name was Delbert?

BEA

You think Winston Niles Rumfoord is the only one around here with supernatural powers?

There is a LONG, LOUD STEAM WHISTLE heard, signaling the booths to stop selling. All the veterans close the shutters on their booths.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There are large TV screens for the thousands who can't fit inside the walls of the estate. It says "Standby for Materialization" on the screens.

CUT TO:

INT. BEA-CHRONO-BRACKMAN BOOTH

Bea is counting money from the cigar box.

CAPTAIN BRACKMAN
Here we go again, kiddies.

Brackman sits down on a case of "Malachis" next to Chrono who is cleaning his fingernails with his Good Luck Piece.

CAPTAIN BRACKMAN
(continuing)
Go to hell, eh, kid?

CHRONO
Go to hell!

CAPTAIN BRACKMAN
Yes, sir. There's a Martian vet for you. Won't even get off his case of "Malachis" for the Space Wanderer.

The fire engine procession with Unk and Reverend Redwine pulls up to the little door in the wall. The pilgrims CHEER. The large TV screens now show a stage next to the big fountain, and then Rumfoord and Kazak materialize. A CANNON GOES OFF, and the crowd is going crazy. Rumfoord looks into the CAMERA and his VOICE BOOMS OVER A POWERFUL PA.

RUMFOORD
Bring the Space Wanderer here!

CUT TO:

INT. BEA-CHRONO-BRACKMAN BOOTH

CHRONO
(emotionally)
To hell with him!

BEA
(sarcastic)
The mighty Rumfoord.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPTAIN BRACKMAN

(stupidly)

What's that, Bea?

BEA

What do you think?... He kidnapped us, cleaned out our minds like taking seeds out of a pumpkin, wired us like robots and burnt us out. That's what.

CAPTAIN BRACKMAN

But it was a good cause.

BEA

I don't care. I hate him. But I'm glad he used me. Maybe it was better than whatever I was before. At least I'm all used up. He can't possibly use me again.

CUT TO:

CROWD'S POV

looking up at one of the big TV screens on the wall. Rumfoord is interviewing the Space Wanderer with a cordless hand-held microphone. Their VOICES ECHO throughout the estate.

RUMFOORD

Welcome, Space Wanderer. Tell me, do you see anything here that makes you think you might have been here before?

SPACE WANDERER

Um... the fountain. I remember the fountain only... ah... it was dry... not wet like now...

RUMFOORD

Anything else, oh Space Wanderer?

SPACE WANDERER

Yes. You.

RUMFOORD

I am familiar? You mean there's a possibility that I played some small part in your life before?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPACE WANDERER

I remember you on Mars. You and the dog -- just before we took off.

RUMFOORD

What happened after you took off?

SPACE WANDERER

Something went wrong... a lot of things went wrong...

RUMFOORD

Something went wrong -- did you hear that, folks?

The AUDIENCE LAUGHS AND APPLAUDS appreciatively. Unk is suddenly apprehensive.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

Space Wanderer, have you ever considered the possibility that everything went absolutely right?

SPACE WANDERER

No.

RUMFOORD

I'm told you have a mate and a child?

SPACE WANDERER

(perking up)

Yes! And a best friend.

RUMFOORD

Would you recognize your mate and child, do you think?

SPACE WANDERER

I... I don't know...

RUMFOORD

Bring me the woman and the boy who sell "Malachis" outside the little iron door.

He puts his arm around Unk, whose eyes widen in anticipation like a guest on "This Is Your Life".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD
(continuing)
Bring me Bea and Chrono.

A furtive and unwilling Bea and Chrono are led by two city cops through the crowd.

MUSIC: Music from "This Is Your Life" plays OVER THE PA.

The stage near the fountain is at eye level for the crowd, and includes a system of catwalks, ladders, pulpits, steps, and small platforms. The super-structures are painted gold and the underpinnings are painted flat black. TV cameras can follow the system anywhere. On top of the great fountain is a familiarly designed spaceship with its door open and a long ladder leading from it to a precarious position on the center-stage. Rumfoord lowers his microphone and speaks amiably to Unk as the crowd watches Bea and Chrono mount the steps to the stage.

RUMFOORD
(continuing)
This is certainly your day, isn't it?

SPACE WANDERER
Um... hmm...

RUMFOORD
The crowd adores you. How do you like them?

SPACE WANDERER
They've certainly been wonderful.
Yes...

RUMFOORD
Well, here they come -- you're not looking for anyone else, are you?

SPACE WANDERER
Ah... well, I... uh... as a matter of fact... my best... ah...

Bea and Chrono sullenly walk up to them and stand there. Chron nervously rubs the Good Luck Piece between his palms. Rumfoord walks over to the edge of the stage near a big tree with climbing rungs, and talks into his microphone as he climbs. Technicians swing a boom microphone over Bea, Chrono and the Space Wanderer. Rumfoord has disappeared in the darkness up in the tree.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD
Hello, Bea. How do you do?

BEA
How do you do?

RUMFOORD
(addressing the crowd
in the style of an
evangelist)
Oh, my happy handicapped brethren,
let us thank God -- God who
appreciates our thanks as much as
the mighty Mississippi appreciates
a raindrop -- that we are not like
Malachi Constant.

The crowd is watching the speakers in front of them.
Rea, Chrono and Unk are all staring in the direction of
Rumfoord in the tree, so they don't have to look at
each other or the crowd or the cameras.

RUMFOORD
(continuing)
We are angered by Malachi Constant
because he did nothing to deserve
his billions and because he did
nothing unselfish or imaginative
with them. We hate Malachi
Constant because he accepted the
fantastic fruits of his fantastic
luck without a qualm, as though
luck were the hand of God. Space
Wanderer...

Unk has been drifting off during this speech; he is
scanning the faces in the crowd for his friend, Stony
Stevenson.

RUMFOORD
(continuing)
Hey, you in the yellow suit...

Unk is snapped back to attention. He looks up at
Rumford in his tree.

UNK
Pardon me?

RUMFOORD
Are you there, Space Wanderer?

UNK
Right here, sir!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD

What is your real name?

UNK

I don't know my real name. They called me Unk.

RUMFOORD

What happened to you before you arrived back on Earth, Unk?

Unk beams. He has heard this question hundreds of times already.

UNK

(confidently)

I was a victim of a series of accidents as are we all.

The crowd is strangely silent, straining to hear every word. Unk's face drops when the crowd does not respond.

RUMFOORD

A victim of a series of accidents, were you? Of all the accidents, which would you consider the most significant?

UNK

I'd have to think...

RUMFOORD

I'll spare you the trouble. The most significant accident that happened to you was your being born. Would you like me to tell you what you were named when you were born?

UNK

Please do.

RUMFOORD

They called you Malachi Constant...

The crowd gasps.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

... you have had the singular accident, Mr. Constant, of becoming a central symbol of wrongheadedness for a perfectly enormous religious sect. You would not be attractive to us as a symbol, Mr. Constant, if our hearts did not go out to you to a certain extent. Our hearts have to go out to you since all your flamboyant errors are errors that human beings have made since the beginning of time. So in a few minutes, Mr. Constant, you are going to climb that ladder.

He points to the ladder.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

You are going to get into that spaceship, and you are going to fly away to Titan, a warm and fecund moon of the planet Saturn. You are going to voluntarily exile yourself so the Church of God the Utterly Indifferent will have the drama of dignified self-sacrifice to remember and ponder. We will imagine to our great spiritual satisfaction, that you are gathering all mistaken ideas about the meaning of luck, all misused wealth and power, and all disgusting pastimes, and taking them all with you.

Unk turns ghostly white. He turns and looks at Bea and Chrono. Then he straightens up and assumes a deliberate look on his face, turns on his heels and walks steadily to the ladder.

CUT TO:

BACK OF UNK'S HEAD

as he is walking. Beneath his long greying hair, there is a tiny red light on.

MUSIC: The soft Martian marching cadence.

CUT TO:

RUMFOORD

operating a little box with knobs. When Unk reaches the base of the ladder, Rumfoord turns a knob and the little red light goes off. Unk pauses and shakes his head.

RUMFOORD

Is there anything you would like to say, Mr. Constant, before you go up the ladder?

A TECHNICIAN with a boom microphone, near the base of the ladder, softly advises Malachi.

TECHNICIAN

If you're going to talk, speak in a normal tone and keep your lips about six inches from the microphone.

UNK

Yeah. I'd just like to...

The MICROPHONE FEEDS BACK so LOUDLY he must repeat.

UNK

(continuing)

... I'd just like to say that I haven't understood a thing that's happened to me since I reached Earth.

RUMFOORD

(sardonically)

Missing that feeling of participation, are you?

UNK

It doesn't matter. I'm still going up the ladder.

RUMFOORD

Well, if you feel we're doing you some sort of injustice here, Mr. Constant, suppose you tell us something really good you've done at some point in your life... just one good thing.

Unk searches his memory to choose one good thing, but suddenly he realizes that perhaps there is nothing there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

Yes. Can you remember one good thing that you ever did?

UNK

Ah...

Long pause until Unk finally latches onto something.

UNK

(continuing)

... I had a friend...

RUMFOORD

What was his name?

UNK

Stony Stevenson.

RUMFOORD

Just one friend?

UNK

Just one.

RUMFOORD

So your claim of goodness would stand or fall depending on how good a friend you were to Stony Stevenson. Do you recall an execution on Mars...

CUT TO:

QUICK FLASHBACK OF THE EXECUTION

RESUME SCENE

RUMFOORD

... Mr. Constant, where you, as the executioner, strangled a red-headed man at the stake?

UNK

(searching his memory)

I, I think I remember... oh...

RUMFOORD

Well, the man you strangled was your best friend, Stony Stevenson.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The audience gasps and murmurs. Unk weeps as he climbs the ladder.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

Feel more like a participant now,
Malachi? Don't close the door
when you get to the top, thank
you...

Rumfoord climbs down from the tree to the stage and approaches Bea and Chrono, but speaks to the TV cameras.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

I will now tell you about this
woman, Bea, who sells "Malachi"
dolls outside the walls here.
When she was enroute to Mars, so
many years ago, Malachi Constant
forced his attentions on her, and
she bore him this son.

Rumfoord holds his hand over Chrono.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

Before then, she was my wife and
mistress of this estate. She is
Beatrice Rumfoord. I now invite
you all to despise the example of
her life, as you have the example
of Mr. Constant. The excesses of
Beatrice were the excesses of
reluctance. As a younger, more
beautiful, woman, she felt so
exquisitely bred as to do nothing
and allow nothing to be done to
her. We of the Church of the
Utterly Indifferent damn her for
refusing to risk her imagined
purity as roundly as we damn
Malachi Constant for wallowing in
filth... Mrs. Rumfoord, I now
invite you and your son to follow
Mr. Constant in the spaceship
bound for Titan... would you like
to say something, Bea?

She grabs his hand-held microphone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEA

I don't remember the old days.
But, when you just said I was
mistress of this estate and how I
could not stand to do anything or
have anything done to me, I loved
myself the instant you said so.
When my son and I walk to that
ladder and climb it, we won't be
doing it for you or this crowd.
We'll be doing it for ourselves.
Our hearts won't be breaking as we
leave this scummy planet, and you,
especially!

CUT TO:

CROWD

bubbling with a multitude of responses.

CUT TO:

INT. SPACESHIP

Unk trying to help Bea and Chrono, who climb quickly
through the opened door looking down on the stage and
the estate. There are some empty beer cans, Kentucky
Fried Chicken garbage, cigarette butts, etc., as well
as some graffiti on the cabin wall. The trio sweep
this refuse toward the door with their feet, and kick
it out and down onto the stage. Chrono throws himself
on a bunk and nervously rubs his Good Luck Piece.

CHRONO

For crying out loud, let's go!

Bea picks up a discarded brassiere and throws it out
the door as Unk presses the start button.

BEA

(archly sarcastic)
Goodbye, all you clean and wise
and lovely people.

CUT TO:

BRASSIERE

fluttering in the breeze until it catches on a tree
branch near Rumfoord, who watches the spaceship take
off.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

STARS IN DEEP SPACE

PAN to show Saturn in all its glory. Suddenly Unk, Bea and Chrono's spaceship shoots PAST THE CAMERA and disappears toward Saturn.

SALO (V.O.)
Saturn has nine moons, the
greatest of which is Titan.

CUT TO:

STUNNING VIEW OF TITAN

below the rings of Saturn, whose expanse dominates the sky.

SALO (V.O.)
Titan has an atmosphere rich in
oxygen and a uniform temperature
of sixty-seven degrees Fahrenheit.
Titan is an ideal environment not
just for the many native life
forms, but to three aliens who
live there now as well.

We BEGIN PULLING CLOSER to Titan.

SALO (V.O.)
(continuing)
Two of these life forms are a man
and his dog.

CAMERA SHOOTS OVER the sea in which Saturn and its
rings are reflected, and APPROACHES a shoreline on
which is built a replica of the Taj Mahal.

SALO (V.O.)
(continuing)
They live on the shore of the
Winston Sea. Their home is a
flawless reproduction of the Taj
Mahal in Earth India.

At this point the CAMERA IS MOVING PAST the Taj with a
stone monument in the foreground which says "DUN
ROAMIN."

SALO (V.O.)
(continuing)
It was built by Martian slave
labor and my friend Skip has named
it "Dun Roamin."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The CAMERA PULLS UP TO a wrecked alien craft on the shore near the Taj Mahal to reveal: SALO, our narrator, who talks TO CAMERA. Salo is a robot, four and one-half feet tall. He is orange; he has three deer-like legs at the end of which are feet, which are either inflatable for walking on water, or turn into suction cups to walk up walls, or turn hard as billiard balls to speed over hard surfaces. He has three eyes and his head rests on gimbals. Salo is standing next to a forest of thirty-foot statues.

SALO

Hello. My name is Salo. I am a special communicator robot from my home, Tralfamadore, a planet in the small magellanic cloud.

PULL IN on: the small magellanic cloud.

FADE TO:

AN ALIEN CITY OF TRALFAMADORE

SALO (V.O.)

My people are all robots and almost all of our communicating is done telepathically.

CUT TO:

SALO

having the message cylinder hung round his neck by a Tralfamadorian leader. Salo's brand-new spaceship stands open-doored behind him.

SALO (V.O.)

This contains a secret message cylinder from the high council of Tralfamadore's University. And my sole purpose is to carry it from one rim of the Universe to the other and present it to whomever is there. That is still basically eighteen million light years further from my home than Titan.

CUT TO:

INT. SALO'S SHIP

with Salo at the controls. There is a small EXPLOSION and yellow smoke pours from a compartment grating. Salo gears down and crash lands on Titan.

SALO (V.O.)

But in your earthling year 203,177 BC, I was forced down here by the disintegration of a small part of my ship's power plant. Since I am not an engineer or mechanically inclined, I have been seeking Tralfamadorian help telepathically, thus enabling us to solve the problem many times faster than physically traversing this same distance with an emergency ship.

CUT TO:

EXT. TITAN - SALO WITH A TITANIC DAISY FARM

Some of the rows of daisies are small and colorful, some are large but ugly, some are huge and beautiful.

SALO (V.O.)

Tralfamadore is sending the part and the wherewithal to repair my ship, by manipulating the human race. In the meantime, I have developed several hobbies, including breeding Titanic daisies... and sculpture fashioned out of Titanic clay...

Salo working with amazing speed on the forest of statues.

CUT TO:

INT. SALO'S SHIP

Salo watching Earth on his viewer: Druids whipping Teutonic slaves as the large stones of Stonehenge are assembled. The TV CUTS TO: 3D computer breakdown of Stonehenge and the corresponding Tralfamadorian letters.

SALO (V.O.)

... but watching Earth on the viewer on the dash panel of my ship has become my fascination.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALO (V.O.)(CONT'D)
In fact, it is by this means that
I receive many messages from my
home planet. Stonehenge is
Tralfamadorian for "Replacement
part being rushed with all
possible speed."

CUT TO:

SALO WATCHING A CHINESE EMPEROR

directing his Han henchmen to whip their Mongol slaves
as the Great Wall of China is assembled. Then the TV
CUTS TO: a satellite shot of the Great Wall, then,
supered next to it, the corresponding Tralfamadorian
letters.

SALO (V.O.)
The Great Wall of China means, "Be
patient, we haven't forgotten
about you."

CUT TO:

SALO'S MONITOR

showing a satellite photo of the Alaskan Pipeline and
the corresponding Tralfamadorian letters.

SALO (V.O.)
And the Alaska Pipeline means,
"Pack up your things and be ready
to leave on short notice."

CUT TO:

SALO

talking TO CAMERA.

SALO
There have been many incomplete
messages... But I must say that I
have come to more than admire
earthling emotion, so that now I
too have feelings. In fact, I
have a friend -- a good friend --
Skip Rumfoord.

Salo begins walking toward the Taj Mahal Palace and we
MOVE WITH him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALO

(continuing)

I'm going to see him now, but I
feel very anxious -- Skip is upset
with me.

Salo inflates his feet and begins skimming across the
water to the Taj Mahal.

CUT TO:

SALO

entering the walled yard of the Palace and letting the
air out of his feet. There is a contour chair beside
the pool. There is also a drink, a pair of beach
thongs, and a smoking non-filtered cigarette in a
standing ashtray.

SALO

Skip? Hello... Skip?

KAZAK'S BARK can be heard and suddenly the great dog
appears, running toward Salo from one of the minaret
buildings. But he halts peculiarly beside the chair.
Suddenly he is beset with paroxysms and appears ablaze
with St. Elmo's Fire (a luminous electrical discharge).
Rumfoord appears under an archway. He looks ill and
also is beset with St. Elmo's Fire.

RUMFOORD

Peace.

SALO

Skip! What's the matter?

RUMFOORD

(pointing; sickly)

Sunspots.

Rumfoord slumps into his contour chair. We...

CUT TO:

ANGLE

that permits us to see that the Sirens of Titan, those
three most gorgeous girls, are actually three of Salo's
painted statues at the bottom of the pool. (On the
wall near the pool hangs a lifesaver (Dun Roamin), a
long-handled pool skimmer, and a pool rules sign with
"NO DIVING" at the top.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALO

I... I've never seen you like this before, Skip.

RUMFOORD

There's never been a storm on the sun like this before.

SALO

Is there anything I can do, Skip?

RUMFOORD

(irritated)

Will people never stop asking that dreadful question?

SALO

Sorry.

Salo nervously makes SUCTION CUP NOISES with his feet.

RUMFOORD

(more irritated)

Do you have to make those noises?

Salo is hurt and two of his three eyes look up.

SALO

Skip...

RUMFOORD

Don't call me "Skip." That's for people I've grown up with.

SALO

I thought... as a friend of yours, I could...

RUMFOORD

Shall we just drop this guise of friendship -- and stop making those noises with your feet!

SALO

Skip... Winston. It's like a nightmare, your talking to me this way. I thought we were friends.

RUMFOORD

Let's just say we've managed to be of some use to each other and leave it at that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALO

I was glad to help you. Didn't I design your Martian spaceships and share my fuel-drive? Didn't I fly the first recruiting missions? Didn't I help you control the Martians and didn't I help you plan the new religion?

RUMFOORD

Yes, but what have you done for me lately?

SALO

What?

RUMFOORD

Never mind. It's the punch line for an old earthling joke -- your feet! Your feet!

SALO

Oh, sorry. I'm sorry for everything. I feel like weeping. I've tried every way I know how to be a true friend, and I've never asked for anything in return.

RUMFOORD

You didn't have to ask. It's almost here, Sire. Constant's boy has it -- calls it his Good Luck Piece -- as though you didn't know. Excuse me. I'm going to get sick again.

Suddenly he and Kazak have seizures again, complete with St. Elmo's Fire. They shudder horribly, then the seizure stops and Rumfoord turns to Salo again.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

You were saying?

SALO

(ingenuously)

You think that somehow I used you?

RUMFOORD

Oh, not you. Your fellow machines back on your precious Tralfamadore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALO

Uhh... you think you've been used,
Skip?

RUMFOORD

Tralfamadore reached into the
Solar System, picked me up and
used me like a handy dandy potato
peeler.

SALO

If you could see this in the
future, why didn't you mention it
before?

RUMFOORD

Nobody likes to think he's being
used. He'll put off admitting it
to himself until the last possible
instant. It may surprise you to
learn that I take a certain pride
in making my own decisions for my
own reasons, no matter how
foolishly mistaken.

SALO

I'm not surprised.

RUMFOORD

(coldly)

Oh? I should have thought that
was too subtle an attitude for a
machine to grasp.

Two of Salo's three eyes close.

SALO

I give you my word of honor... I
didn't know you were being used,
and I haven't the slightest idea
what...

RUMFOORD

Machine!

SALO

If you think so badly of me, Skip
-- Winston -- Mr. Rumfoord --
after all I've tried and done in
the name of friendship alone,
there's certainly nothing I can
say or do now to change your mind.

RUMFOORD

That's precisely what a machine
would say.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALO

That's what a machine did say.

Rumfoord takes a breath and changes to a more serious tone.

RUMFOORD

In a very short time an explosion is going to blow the terminal of my spiral clear off the Sun, clear out of the Solar System.

SALO

No! Skip! No!

RUMFOORD

No! No pity, please...

Rumfoord stands up and looks away, trying to control his emotions.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

... it's a very good thing, really. I'll be seeing lots of new things, a lot of new creatures...

He smiles bravely.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

... one gets tired, you know, being caught up in the monotonous clockwork of the Solar System. After all, it isn't as though I'm dying or something. Everything that ever was always will be, and everything that ever will be always was... You know all that Chrono Synclastic Unfundibulated crap -- somehow that stuff doesn't quite cut it when you're starting to vanish to a separate part of the Universe... but I'd still like to know what the main point of this episode has been.

SALO

What do you mean, Skip?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD

... before my dog and I go crackling off through space for the last time, I would like to know what the message is you're carrying.

SALO

But, Skip. I am specifically instructed not open it until I reach my destination. That is my purpose.

RUMFOORD

Against all orders from Tralfamadore, against all your instincts as a machine, but in the name of our friendship, Salo, I want you to open the message and read it to me... now.

CUT TO:

UNK, BEA AND CHRONO

sitting in the shade of a Titanic daisy (tree-sized) near their open-doored spaceship next to the Rumfoord Sea and the forest of large statues. The Taj Mahal stands across the water. Two of the statues nearest them are: a scientist holding up a test tube, but he obviously has a major hard-on beneath his smock -- this statue is entitled: "The Inventor of Atomic Power," a nude woman playing a trombone -- this is entitled: "Evelyn and Her Magic Violin."

UNK

(burnt out)

No matter what happens. No matter what beautiful or sad or happy or frightening thing happens, I'm damned if I'll respond.

Bea and Chrono glance at Unk as he speaks, their expressions indicate they are incredibly bored by what he is saying. They've heard it before.

UNK

(continuing)

The minute it looks like something or somebody wants me to act in a special way, I'll freeze. I've had it. I quit, and I mean it!

Chrono tries to scratch something at the base of another statue.

CUT TO:

A STATUE OF A HAPPY NEANDERTHAL FAMILY

huddled together. PULL BACK to reveal the family is roasting a human foot and this statue is entitled "This Little Piggy."

PULL BACK to reveal further: Chrono trying to scratch graffiti on the statue's base, using his Good Luck Piece. However, the Titanic material is diamond-hard.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - THE GOOD LUCK PIECE

getting a final, perfect nick put in it. WIDEN ANGLE... Chrono is angered that he damaged his Good Luck Piece, returns it to his pocket and kicks the base of the statue. Bea finishes a candy bar and throws the wrapper on the ground with several other pieces of litter, obviously from her.

UNK

Yes, sir... Gone are the days that this family takes part in experiments and fights and festivals we don't know about. I'll tell ya that, right now.

He looks around at his Titanic surroundings and spits.

UNK

(continuing)

What happens next? All the statues come to life?... What... I don't care...

CHRONO

Shut up!

Suddenly, Bea and Chrono spot something and view it like animals of prey. Unk is unaware.

CUT TO:

THE VIEW FROM BEHIND THEM

so we see they are watching Salo walking on the water with his feet inflated. He is towing an old rowboat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chrono uses a hunting knife to shine sunlight in Salo's eyes.

BEA

Worry him again.

Chrono flashes light with the blade again.

UNK

What should I do?

BEA

Shh!

Salo lands the boat and tethers it to the hand of some other statue. As he turns around, a rock flies at his face. He ducks, but then Chrono leaps at him and throws him to the ground. Chrono sits astride the robot's "chest" and brandishes the blade above him.

SALO

(mournfully)

Go on -- kill me. You'd be doing me a favor. I wish I were dead. Go ahead and put me out of my misery and then go see him! He's asking for you.

BEA

Who is?

SALO

Your poor husband -- my former friend, Winston Niles Rumfoord.

BEA

Where is he?

SALO

In that palace on the island. He's dying -- all alone except for his faithful dog. He's asking for you... asking for all of you... and he says he never wants to lay eyes on me again.

CUT TO:

UNK, BEA AND CHRONO

approaching Rumfoord in his chair beside the pool at his Taj Mahal. He looks worse than before; he is now holding Kazak's empty dog collar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUMFOORD

Hello, Beatrice... Hello, Space Wanderer... Hail Chrono, bearer of the Good Luck Piece. I am not dying, I am merely taking my leave of the Solar System. There is something you should know about life that I've known all along, and that is: everything that every earthling has ever done has been warped by creatures on a planet one hundred and fifty thousand light years away.

Rumfoord points at Chrono and bands of orange and blue electricity begin spiraling around him.

RUMFOORD

(continuing)

I think perhaps this is it... all I can say is that I tried my best to do good for my native Earth while serving the irresistible wishes of Tralfamadore. Perhaps now Tralfamadore will leave this Solar System alone. It's a wonder earthlings have been able to make as much sense as they have. Well... Remember me as a gentleman of Newport, Rhode Island, Earth, and the Solar System, and in a more punctual way of speaking...

Salo bursts into the courtyard -- he is holding the opened message cylinder and the two-square-inch lead wafer message.

SALO

Skip! Wait! I opened it.

RUMFOORD

... goodbye...

Rumfoord's cocoon lifts up and disappears with a "pfftt".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALO

Skip! I did it for you!... oh...
gone... gone...

His head does a somersault in its gimbals.

SALO

(continuing;
inconsolable)

Machine? A machine I am and so
are my people. I was designed to
be dependable, predictable and
durable. How good a machine have
I proved to be? Dependable? I
was depended upon to keep my
message sealed until I reach my
destination, but now I've torn it
open. Predictable? After
watching human beings for two
hundred thousand earthling years,
I have become as skittish and
sentimental as the silliest
earthling schoolgirl. Durable?
We'll see about that!

He picks up the message so Unk, Bea and Chrono can see.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP OF LEAD WAFER

with a single dot on it.

SALO

Would you like to know what the
message is? The one I've been
carrying almost half a million
earthling years, and that I'm
supposed to carry for at least a
million more?

UNK

A single dot?

SALO

In Tralfamadorian, that means
"Greetings."

Salo literally tears himself apart. Bea, Chrono and
Unk have to duck to avoid flying parts. Finally he
lies disassembled on the stone floor of the courtyard,
his head off its gimbals.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The three stand there in stunned silence until Chrono walks over and drops his Good Luck Piece in the middle of Salo's parts. Then he WHOOPS AND CAWS like some strange bird and hops around the debris. Suddenly he runs off towards the mountains on the horizon.

CUT TO:

BEA AND UNK

watching their son run away; Unk tenderly puts his arm around her shoulder.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER: THIRTY YEARS LATER

FADE IN:

SEVENTY-FOUR-YEAR-OLD UNK

collecting Titanic daisy milk in buckets like maple syrup. The Taj Mahal is visible over the water behind him. TITANIC BLUEBIRDS fly overhead.

TITANIC BLUEBIRDS

Graw! Graw!

CUT TO:

BROWN AND GNARLED HANDS

of an old woman writing poetry. PULL to reveal: an eighty-year-old Beatrice sitting in Rumfoord's contour chair beside the pool. She is writing her poem on a huge roll of paper, some of which is piled around the chair like giant linguine, but the greater length of the sheet of poetry-laden paper stretches all the way into the entry of the palace and disappears inside. Thirty years' worth of Bea's poems and notes are scrawled like graffiti on the many walls and surfaces of the palace. Litter and refuse is everywhere -- many empty or half-eaten cans of boneless chicken, peanut shells, scraps of paper, rags, etc. Over against the wall is a workbench with many tools (some of them homemade). Salo lies on the table nearly assembled -- someone has been trying to put his pieces together.

CUT TO:

VIEW OF BEA

beside the pool, from nearby bushes. A hand, with blue feather cuffs and sleeves, parts the bushes to spy out.

CUT TO:

SHADOWY FIGURE OF A MAN

dressed up in an elaborate, but obviously homemade, Titanic Bluebird suit; the man sneaks to the side of the palace and crawls in through a window.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE

The man in the bird suit is searching shelves and drawers. The room is messier than out by the pool with the same type of refuse, and we can see the other end of Bea's poem: a larger "pile of linguine" with the long strand running out the doorway towards the pool. The strand moves as Bea occasionally pulls it from OFF CAMERA. The large oil painting of the "Little Girl In White With Her Pony" is hanging on the wall.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP OF BIRD-MAN'S HANDS

in a drawer filled with odds and ends (ball of string, a hard salami, a pack of felt-tipped pens, etc.). The bird-man finds what he was searching for: a candle. He picks up a boneless chicken can and opens the lift top, exposing the contents, and jams the candle into the chicken.

CUT TO:

BEA

standing beside the contour chair, the endless poem sheet in her hand. The bird-man jumps out of the entryway with the boneless chicken candlestick. The candle is lit. The bird-man is a forty-year-old Chrono. Chrono sings loud and crazed. Bea is startled and then upset.

CHRONO

Happy Birthday to you!
Happy Birthday to you!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEA

Aaaaaaahhhhhhhh!

CHRONO

Happy Birthday, dear Mother!

BEA

It's not my birthday!

CHRONO

Happy Birthday to you!

BEA

It's not my birthday just because
you say it is! It's not my
birthday, Chrono!

Chrono turns from his mother and stares with animal
fascination at the moon, Phoebe, and the rings of
Saturn.

CHRONO

(screaming bird
language)

Graw!

BEA

No, Chrono. Stay. Don't go.

Three Titanic Bluebirds fly silhouetted against the
moon.

CHRONO

Graw! Graw! Graw!

Chrono is greatly excited. He cries like the giant
birds, and rushes at his mother, averting her at the
last instant. He runs out to the beach, flapping his
arms. Finally he dives into the sea. Bea is upset.
She picks up an oar that has half a white sheet tied to
it as a makeshift flag. She goes out to the beach,
waves it once or twice, and sticks it in the sand.

CUT TO:

UNK

observing this from his daisy-tapping activities. He
picks up a bucket of milk and another bucket with huge
strawberries in it, and walks quickly down to the beach
where the rowboat waits.

CUT TO:

UNK

unloading the boat at the Taj Mahal beach. He grabs the milk and strawberries, a homemade shovel and rake.

CUT TO:

EXT. POOLSIDE

Bea hobbling nervously back and forth; she wrings her hands. Unk enters, setting his stuff down next to the workbench (with Salo's remains).

UNK

What's the matter, Bea? You okay?

BEA

It's Chrono...

UNK

Birthday party?

BEA

Yes.

UNK

Well, I'm sure that he has reasons. Maybe it's something important to him.

BEA

Well... At least he isn't a "Mamma's Boy"... and at least he had the greatness of soul to join the most beautiful creatures in sight..

UNK

Brought you some fresh daisy milk... I know you don't like it fermented... You know, long as I'm here, maybe I'll do a little cleaning up.

BEA

(obviously feeling better)

Well, you do whatever needs to be done.

UNK

That's the story of my life...

Unk starts using the homemade rake to collect the refuse on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEA

Thank you for coming so quickly.

UNK

Oh, I wasn't so far away this time.

BEA

Would you like to hear my latest verses?

Unk notices a part from Salo on the floor. he picks it up and sees if he can find where it fits on Salo. Bea picks up the poetry roll.

BEA

(continuing)

Here's one...

(she recites)

A little girl with a pony stands
O'erlooking Rumfoord's Sea
The giant birds of blue they soar
While crying "Hello there, Bea
Air and food and money
Are no longer her concern...

Unk is done fitting the part on Salo by this time, and he has resumed raking.

BEA

(continuing)

...Simple pleasures milk and honey
With daily labor earns.

Unk looks up and at her with a "give-me-a-break" expression, but when Bea looks up, he quickly assumes an innocent face.

UNK

I like that.

BEA

Do you? That's the first time
I've read that one out loud...
here's another and this is about
you-know-who...

I know what it is to be a tool
In the hands of a shoddy craftsman
While artisans poor
Dissect the floor
To the plans of a shoddy draftsman.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEA (CONT'D)

Yes, he loves to dance upon your
brain
While your face he is a-slappin'
He smiles when he says you soon
will know
The worst thing that can happen.

Bea admires her own poem for a moment, then, with an air of finality, she puts a period after "can happen", signs her name and tears off the end of the long linguine-like piece of paper from the roll.

UNK

(talking as he works)
Say! You really are getting
better. Yes, sir! I really do
like that one. It's kind of
catchy...

BEA

You know, I was just thinking that
the worst thing that can happen,
never really happened to me.

UNK

Oh? What's that?

BEA

Well, I think... the worst thing
that could happen would be not to
be used for anything by anybody.

UNK

Hmmm.

BEA

Unk... thank you for using me even
though I didn't want to be used by
anybody.

CUT TO:

UNK

who has been raking debris into a pile. He reaches down, picking up the stuff and putting it in a nearby plastic garbage can.

UNK

You're welcome.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Unk continues working and does not look up; he's waiting for Bea to resume reading. Finally he looks over at her.

CUT TO:

UNK

stopping in mid-motion as he sees Bea's arms hanging limply down and her head slumped over.

UNK

Bea?

Unk drops what he's doing and slowly walks over to Bea. He kneels and puts his head on her breast to listen for her heart. He straightens up and stares at her face; then he picks her up and carries her inside.

CUT TO:

UNK

putting the last shovelful of Titanic peat on Bea's grave beside the Rumfoord Sea, but away from the statues and the palace. Hundreds of the Titanic Bluebirds fly overhead. He sighs, puts the shovel on his shoulder, turns and begins walking back.

CUT TO:

UNK

with the shovel on his shoulder, approaching the workbench near the pool. Salo is perched on the edge of the workbench making some final mechanical adjustments on himself. He hops on his feet and bounds up to Unk.

UNK

How do you do.

SALO

How do you do. Thank you for putting me back together again.

UNK

I didn't think I did it right. I couldn't get a peep out of you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALO

You did it right. I just couldn't make up my mind whether or not I wanted to peep. Well... I guess I'll be on my way.

UNK

You're going to deliver the message after all?

SALO

Anybody who has traveled this far on a fool's errand has no choice but to uphold the honor of fools by completing the errand.

UNK

Oh... Uh... My mate died today.

SALO

Sorry. I would say "Is there anything I can do?", but Skip once told me that was the most hateful and stupid expression in the English language.

UNK

I miss her.

SALO

So you finally fell in love.

UNK

Yes. Only an earthling year ago. It took us that long to realize that no matter who is controlling it, the most important thing is to love whoever is around to be loved... how 'bout that"

SALO

If you or your son would like a ride back to Earth, it wouldn't be much out of my way.

UNK

My boy joined the Bluebirds.

SALO

Good. Good for him. I'd join them if they'd have me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UNK
(thinking to himself)
... Earth...

SALO
We can be there in a matter of
hours once we figure out where
this spare part goes.

Salo picks up Chrono's Good Luck Piece from the work-
bench.

CUT TO:

INT. SALO'S SPACESHIP

Salo is at the control panel and Unk is on his hands
and knees, reaching into the opened grating with soot
above it (indicating that smoke had once poured out of
it).

SALO
Just do your best, Space Wanderer.

UNK
Okay... I don't know how I could
do this better than you, but...

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP - INSIDE OF GRATING

Unk's hand holding the Good Luck Piece. He fumbles
around, vainly tries to make it fit somewhere. It
drops out of his hand and falls perfectly into place.
The MACHINERY immediately STARTS HUMMING.

CUT TO:

TITAN AND SATURN

as viewed from space. Salo's spaceship comes shooting
PAST THE CAMERA.

CUT TO:

INT. SALO'S SPACESHIP

Salo is looking at Unk who is looking out a porthole. Unk is wearing some of Rumfoord's old clothes for cold weather: overcoat, overshoes, etc.

SALO

Why Indianapolis?

UNK

Because, I don't know anybody in Indianapolis and I don't know anything about Indianapolis except one thing I read in a book. It said Indianapolis is the first place in the United States where a white man was hanged for murdering an Indian. The kind of people who'll hang a white man for murdering an Indian -- that's the kind of people for me.

SALO

Okay, but it's cold there.

UNK

That's fine.

Salo quietly comes up behind Unk, raises one of his feet and gently touches the back of Unk's head and speaks soothingly.

SALO

You are tired, so very tired,
Space Wanderer, Malachi, Unk.
Stare at the faintest star,
earthling, and think of how heavy
your limbs are growing.

UNK

... heavy...

SALO

You are going to die someday, Unk.

UNK

... yes...

SALO

When you are dying, Space
Wanderer, a wonderful thing will
happen to you. Something you have
thought of many times.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. A SNOWY VACANT LOT - A STREET IN INDIANAPOLIS

It is snowing hard, but there is no wind. It is quiet. There's an old apartment building in the b.g. and a bus stop bench beside the sidewalk, a bus stop sign, and a fire hydrant. Salo's ship lands gently, in a vacant lot. The snow beneath it begins melting. The door opens and Unk steps out and turns around to say goodbye to Salo.

SALO

That's your bus stop over there, old soldier. You'll have to wait about ten minutes and it'll take you right to the center of town. Ask the driver to let you off near a good hotel.

UNK

I'll be alright.

SALO

How do you feel?

UNK

Warm as toast.

SALO

You really alright?

UNK

Yes, fine. Warm as toast.

SALO

Good luck...

UNK

We don't say that down here.

SALO

I'm not from down here...

(pauses)

... beautiful.

UNK

Isn't it, though.

(pause)

Hey, you better go.

SALO

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UNK
Goodbye. Thank you.

SALO
You're welcome. Goodbye.

Unk, stiff and bent over, makes his way to the snow-covered bench and sits down as the spaceship gently takes off, leaving a wet, melted spot in the vacant lot. Unk's breathing becomes hard and erratic. His face winces, then suddenly, his eyes open wide and he gasps and turns in his seat and looks up.

MUSIC: Siren's celestial female chorus.

CUT TO:

UNK'S POV

so he is all VOICE OVER through this scene:

STONY
Hello, Unk. Get in here.

UNK (V.O.)
Get in? Who are you?

STONY
Stony Stevenson, Unk. Don't you recognize me?

Unk's POV stands up and approaches Stony.

UNK (V.O.)
Stony? Is that you, Stony?

STONY
Who else could stand the bloody pace? Get in!

UNK (V.O.)
Where are we going, Stony?

STONY
Paradise, pal. I'm not kidding.

UNK (V.O.)
Alright! What's it like?

Unk's POV is now face-to-face with Stony.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STONY

Well, everybody's happy there
forever or as long as the bloody
Universe hangs together. Get in!
Beatrice is already there, waiting
for you. Get in, you crazy
bastard.

Stony and Unk's POV step inside the ship.

UNK (V.O.)

Beatrice? We're going to Paradise
now? I'm going to get into
Paradise?

STONY

Don't ask me why, sport, but
somebody up there likes you.

Stony presses the green "on" button.

CUT TO:

UNK

sitting, dead, on the bus stop bench. He is being covered up with snow. ROLL CREDITS. AFTER CREDITS, the bus pulls up and opens its door for the man on the bench.

FADE OUT.

THE END