

"THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL II"

Revised Treatment

by

Ray Bradbury

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The children of Paris,
The children, suddenly, of London, look up.
The star burns away across the Atlantic, following the
sun, keeping up with the rim of night, as Christmas Eve
shadows across the seas and lands:

CUT TO:

Cape Canaveral! Twilight here, also. The Star has not
as yet arrived.

Far off we can hear carols being sung...Christmas lights
at a distance, faint laughter.

The CAMERA prowls over the landscape. We see the largest
building in the world, silhouetted against the setting sun...
the Vehicle Assembly Building where the Apollo rockets were
fitted together and sent out to the launch-pads to go to
the Moon.

The CAMERA peers briefly into the cathedral interior of the
VAB where, perhaps, in a far alcove we see that someone has
set up a small Christmas tree, lit. Somewhere a radio is
playing, a mere whisper of some carol or other. The giant
hangar is empty. It is obvious that almost everyone has
gone home early for the holiday.

The CAMERA prowls inside for a moment, and we may well see,
standing tall, in the shadows, the titanic ghost shapes of
Apollo rockets, motionless and waiting.

The CAMERA moves out into sunset dune territory, scans the various gantries which are deserted. The wind blows dust over the lone machineries. The CAMERA finds and reads, quickly, a sign which says: ABANDON IN PLACE, No Further Activity Authorized. Perhaps we can hear an echo of the old sounds, voices counting down, the merest murmur of machineries, radios, computers.

THE VOICES
Oxygen check.....hydrogen
check.....ten minutes to
launch.....etc., etc.....

The sounds rise and fall in the sound of surf from the nearby sea. The CAMERA moves up, up, up along an Apollo gantry.

A VOICE
...seven...six...five...four...
three...two...one...we have
ignition!

There might be a mighty blast, but instead an explosion of -- wings!

Birds fly up from the dunes in a great bang of flying! Click, click, click, click, a MAN with a camera rises up to photograph this ascension.

The birds wheel and fly off.

The MAN continues to photograph them in the sunset light. Then he stops, checks his camera, looks around, moves off. The CAMERA follows him along the dunes, past the abandoned gantry where only the wind sounds now. He blinks up at the vast metal machineries as he passes, his face full of remembrance.

A car goes along the road a hundred yards off, a
Christmas tree tied to its top. Voices sing, raggedly:
"We wish you a Merry Christmas, we wish you a Merry
Christmas...."

The MAN snaps a picture of the sign: ABANDON IN PLACE.
He reads the sign, quietly, shakes his head. Surf pounds
the shore!

He backs into view, near a road, closer to the Vehicle
Assembly Building, snapping his camera, when:
Whoom! a car almost gets him.

The car stops. A MAN calls to him.

THE MAN
Hey, Atkins, what you tryin'
to do, get killed for Christmas?

ATKINS peers in, shakes hands. The MAN has a car full of
laughing singing kids.

ATKINS
Carl! Hey--great!

THE MAN
I thought you were with NASA
in Washington?

ATKINS
(nods)
They sent me down to photograph:
Christmas at Canaveral!

THE MAN
What Canaveral? Where?
(snorts, laughs)
Ah, well -- there's plenty of
Christmas! Right, kids!?
Make it Merry!

The car drives off, the children laughing, singing.
Leaving ATKINS to murmur to himself, waving at them:

ATKINS
Merry....

Then, something jerks his gaze. He glances at the sky.
A star is there, very bright, on the horizon.

ATKINS
Venus? No. Wrong place--
it---

The star moves. It rushes down, becomes a saucer shape.
And as ATKINS watches:

The saucer hurtles toward the Vehicle Assembly Building.
ATKINS gasps, because:

The VAB doors are thundering wide, as if signaled to
receive this visitor!

The craft flies down! And--

Flies right through the vast gates of the Vehicle Assembly
Building to vanish inside!!!

Stunned, ATKINS watches as:

In the cathedral interior, the spacecraft hovers, sinks,
sets down.

Even as the great gates thunder to shut in the craft!

ATKINS leaps through as: the gates slam.

The craft glows in the dark.

ATKINS circles, staring at it. He whispers to himself:

ATKINS
Wait! I know this!

He moves around the vast craft, memory shadowing his face.

ATKINS

Thirty years ago. Yes!

A sound startles him. A nearby elevator hums and drifts up in the strutworks, a shadow inside it.

He runs, stops, stares up: as the elevator slides into the shadowly heights.

ATKINS stares from the elevator to the spacecraft, then jumps, runs, punches a second elevator button. The second elevator slams its door wide, he leaps in, goes up.

On the way into the dark mountainslopes of machinery, he stares up at --

That other elevator, carrying its alien cargo up and on up into yet darker cathedral heights.

It reaches the top of the Vehicle Assembly Building a good ten seconds ahead of him. Distantly, we see and hear its door clang wide, and a shadow move.

Reaching the top, ATKINS runs by the other elevator, checking it. He glances up and around at further staircases. He emerges on the roof of the VAB as the last light of day fades.

He looks around at emptiness. The wind mourns up here, as lonely as the wind out in the dunes among the abandoned rocket pads.

A sound jerks him about.

It is the other elevator -- going back down into the shadows

400 feet below. Both elevators, in fact! He has been tricked. Obviously, someone has pushed the button on the second one and leaped out to let it go down by itself. Cursing, ATKINS races to a third bank of elevators, and has to wait, while, far below, the other two elevators reach their destination.

Sliding down out of the darkness, he emerges and looks around at silence and shadows. Whoever led him up to trap him on the roof, was gaining time. They have had a full minute or more to vanish. They are indeed gone.

A VOICE

Hey!

A building ATTENDANT stares down from a catwalk above. The spacecraft glows and hums, with the small Christmas tree nearby.

The ATTENDANT, stunned, says:

THE ATTENDANT

Who put that gift under my tree?

CUT TO DARKNESS.

A slam of brakes. A car arrives outside.

ATKINS is waiting for this arrival outside in the blowing night.

The arrival is the VAB DIRECTOR, who glares at ATKINS.

DIRECTOR

You've been drinking, of course?!

He looks into ATKINS' face, sniffs, shakes his head.

DIRECTOR

No. Damn. Now, who shut
those doors?

He is glaring at the vast doors now.

ATKINS

I wish I knew.

The DIRECTOR opens the small door in the great gate,
steps through. And stops, shocked as:

We see what he sees: the spacecraft, a light unto itself,
filling the great church-like interior.

DIRECTOR

(to ATKINS)

You just got your job back.

ATKINS

I didn't know I was fired.

More officials arrive to confer. For now, only a few
people know of the alien spaceship's landing...ATKINS, plus
the ATTENDANT, plus the handful of Canaveral people gathered
here.

The question is asked: why did the craft land here, this
place, at this hour?

CHRIS ATKINS almost responds. A shadow crosses his face.
He has half-remembered something about the visiting ship.
But he remains silent.

The great VAB doors are locked, the various officials
warned. For now, no one beyond the Base must know of
this strangely timed arrival.

Someone aboard the craft came out, vanished -- where?

ATKINS at last speaks up:

ATKINS

Maybe we won't search. Maybe
we wait for it to find us?

DIRECTOR

And why should it do that?

ATKINS

It knows one of us.

DIRECTOR

Who?

ATKINS

Me. I think. My family. Years
ago. Maybe they didn't know I
was here. Missed me. Gone
looking for me now. I've got
to follow.

DIRECTOR

Sorry. I've heard stuff like
that from photographers for years.
You'll do anything for a story.

ATKINS

You must let me go!

He looks about, frustrated, then moves toward the ship.

DIRECTOR

Now, hold on --

ATKINS, confronting the ship, whispers.

DIRECTOR

--what?

ATKINS whispers again. We cannot hear what he says. We
hear only a murmur, but--

The ship hums, whines, pulses, glows!

The officials, startled, turn.

As the elevators, all of them, hum, racing up their
separate shafts, empty!

The spacecraft pulses louder.

And the great doors of the Vehicle Assembly Building
thunder wide.

The officials stare from the doors, to the spacecraft,
to ATKINS.

ATKINS

It wants me to go.

The DIRECTOR, stunned, can only agree.

DIRECTOR

It most certainly does.

ATKINS hurries outside.

ATKINS

You'll hear in one hour!

The doors slam shut on the shocked Canaveral staff.

As the doors BANG, a Jeep drives up, ATKINS' friend and
co-photographer assistant, BARNEY, at the wheel.

BARNEY

Hey, did I miss something?

ATKINS

Not much. Tell you on the way.

(gets in Jeep)

Barney? If you were a visitor
from a strange world--

BARNEY

I am! Los Angeles!

ATKINS

--just arrived here. What would
you do first?

BARNEY
(joking)
Check in the nearest hotel?

ATKINS
Barney! I love you. Of course,
the nearest! Our hotel!

The Jeep roars away.

CUT TO:

At the hotel; busy. People coming, going, Christmas.

CUT TO:

The REGISTRAR.

REGISTRAR
Yes, Mr. Atkins?

ATKINS
You know me. I'm here four
times a year from Washington.
Could I see your registrations?

A long pause. The REGISTRAR scowls. ATKINS prompts him:

ATKINS
Official business...?

The REGISTRAR hands it over.

BARNEY arrives.

BARNEY
Hey, have the marines landed?

ATKINS
No, but...Williams, Harkins,
Field, Webster, Shane,
Robinson, Weiner, Magidson...
no...wait...

BARNEY
What?

ATKINS
There.

BARNEY leans over ATKINS' shoulder, peering at the names.

BARNEY

How do you pronounce that?

ATKINS

(softly)

Klaatu boroda nictu.

BARNEY can only blink at him, waiting.

ATKINS

(almost to himself,
murmuring)

Oh, my God....yes...a long
time ago.

BARNEY

Man? Woman?

ATKINS

I don't know.

BARNEY

(snorts)

Don't know!?

ATKINS

Boroda nictu!

(slams registration
shut)

O Lord! Room 212!

Upstairs, he taps at 212. No answer. Under the door
he sees a strange light, hears stranger electronic sounds.
He goes back to BARNEY, who has gathered their equipment
for the return to the Cape.

A party is in full flood, trimming a Christmas tree to
one side of the lobby.

Friends call to ATKINS as he scans all the faces coming
and going, looking for the Stranger from another world;
man, woman, what?

A FRIEND

Hey, Atkins, old bean. Join!

ANOTHER

Have a drink!

ANOTHER

Have a bauble.

ATKINS takes the champagne, the bauble. Climbs one step up a small step-ladder, hangs it.

BARNEY

Here's another, chum!

ATKINS

No, thanks--

ATKINS turns, ready to leave, when he looks down at:

The most incredibly beautiful crystal Christmas bauble ever seen. It glows and shines with an inner light, an inner sound, an inner music.

The light shines over his eyes, his cheeks, his face, warming and enchanting him to wonder. He looks from it:

To the delicate hand holding it, and the CAMERA moves down the long delicate arm to the person, the woman, who has handed him this incredible gift.

Faint music breathes from the crystal orb he holds in his hand.

Faint light from it illuminates the young woman's face who stares up at him across light years of time.

VOICES (in b.g.)

Boy! That has to be the Star
of Bethlehem! On top! Put
it on top!

ATKINS, transfixed by the beauty of the woman, cannot move.

At last he does, turns, reaches up.

Places the star, the crystal, the light, the music, high.

Turns, looks down. The crowd had closed around her like
a tide.

She is gone!

Riven, he leaps down.

ATKINS
Barney, did you see?!

BARNEY points to the lobby door.

Which has just swung shut!

CUT TO:

Their car on the road, pulling into the Cape.

In the car, BARNEY protests.

BARNEY
How you know she's coming back
here?

ATKINS
We're in touch now. It has to
be near the ship!

Outside the Vehicle Assembly Building, the first reporters
have arrived. Word has leaked out. The newsmen are incensed
at not being filled in; for that matter, being locked out.

ATKINS is permitted in, but BARNEY is kept out with the
other reporters.

Inside, ATKINS stares at the enigmatic ship.

ATKINS
(to himself)
I wonder, is she there?

AN OFFICER
What?

ATKINS
(corrects himself)
Has--anyone tried to open--that?

ANOTHER
You're kidding. There's no
way in!

ATKINS
Let me try.

FIRST OFFICER
See here--

SECOND OFFICER
Let him.

ATKINS moves up to the ship, watches it carefully, and
then says the words, quietly:

ATKINS
Klaatu..boroda...nictu.

Nothing happens.

The men behind snort and shake their heads.

VOICES
All right, Atkins...you...

Impulsively, he repeats the words.

ATKINS
Klaatu...boroda...nictu!

The ship hums, vibrates. A seam appears where the door
might manifest itself in the skin of the ship.

The men gasp. ATKINS waits.

But there is no further manifestation. The ship will not
breach itself just yet.

ATKINS' face lights with a thought which has just struck him.

ATKINS
Of course. Fool. It's not
Christmas Morning!

AN OFFICIAL
What?

ATKINS nods at the ship.

ATKINS
We open our Gift, then.

He turns to exit.

ATKINS
I'll check it out now.
Let you know. .

He exits. The night is blowing with a wind that dies as he moves across from the VAB toward the dunes, where he thinks he has seen something.

Out on the dunes, waiting for him, looking at the gantries, and the huge building where her spacecraft lies quietly waiting, is the YOUNG WOMAN from the hotel, the YOUNG WOMAN who handed him the incredibly bright crystal that he placed upon the tree.

He stands looking at her in profile. She is dressed in slacks and a trim jacket with a scarf. Her hair blows in the wind. It is a good clean profile that he sees, with a touch of luminous inner knowledge in the cheeks, in the brow, in the eyes.

She is not startled when he arrives, nor, for a long while does she look at him. Then, very quietly, listening to far radio voices and musics that drift by in the night, Christmas carols coming and going, she says:

YOUNG WOMAN
In a few minutes, it's your
Christmas.

He catches the way she has phrased it. And instead of saying hello, introducing himself, he continues as if they were picking up a conversation dropped only a moment ago:

ATKINS
Not yours?

The YOUNG WOMAN looks around at the sea and the land.

YOUNG WOMAN
Not mine.

This quickens him. She is admitting things, half sensed. She is looking around at the dunes now, and the ruins of the old space pads.

ATKINS
Do you like our world?

The YOUNG WOMAN looks, thinks, responds.

YOUNG WOMAN
Some of it.

Her eyes are fixed to the rusting machines now. He looks with her.

ATKINS
All of this was -- great --
once.

She nods and muses on this truth.

YOUNG WOMAN

I know. What a shame. What
a waste.

ATKINS defends the land, the ruins.

ATKINS

It'll be great again some day.
We'll rebuild.

YOUNG WOMAN

Will you...?

She looks at him for the first time. It is an incredible
face. The eyes take him down to the bone.

He almost backs off, she is examining him so clearly,
so easily, so completely.

YOUNG WOMAN

Will I even be here? For
that matter -- will you?

Again the clear gaze.

Again, he almost pulls back. There is no threat in her
voice, but he is vaguely uneasy.

ATKINS

Unless something -- happens.

YOUNG WOMAN

Ah! Things do happen, don't
they?

ATKINS

I'm not leaving, till I change
all this.

They look at Canaveral, the night, the sea.

YOUNG WOMAN

Then, you're in charge here?

He gazes into her face.

ATKINS
You know I'm not.

YOUNG WOMAN
(after a beat)
That could change.

He senses that she might very well be the one to change it.

ATKINS
I lie in bed nights, wishing
I ran the world!

YOUNG WOMAN
What would you do if someone
gave it to you?

ATKINS
I'd clean it all up!

YOUNG WOMAN
Or destroy it...

ATKINS
Yes. If I wasn't careful.

Far away there are sounds of celebration. A clock strikes
midnight.

She turns to look and listen.

The wind blows over the dunes.

YOUNG WOMAN
There. It's midnight.

ATKINS
Time for a Second Annunciation?

She knows what he is speaking about. The knowledge of the
Biblical Annunciation is in her glowing face as she turns
back to him.

YOUNG WOMAN
What would you like to have announced?

ATKINS looks from her to the world far across the land,
past the silent gantries.

ATKINS

That this Christmas morn, we get
the grandest gift that man ever
got. That something incredible
and wonderful is about to happen,
that will change us forever and
be only for the good!

She is taken and pleased with her possible friend and
pupil.

YOUNG WOMAN

Miracles do happen, you know.
Repentance is possible.
The response can be mercy.
The result can be salvation.

ATKINS

For me? For all of us?

YOUNG WOMAN

You first. You will be visited
by three Ghosts.

ATKINS

My God. You know Dickens! "The
Christmas Carol."

She nods.

ATKINS

Am I Scrooge, then?

YOUNG WOMAN

No, but perhaps there are millions
like him, nearby.

ATKINS

(looks around)

When do I meet the First Ghost?

She looks off at the VAB, and the ship hidden within,
as if asking it the answer.

YOUNG WOMAN

(a beat, then)

I will tell you, during the
night.

The wind rises, bringing with it far voices, bells,
exclamations, laughter, the tolling of clocks.
Both turn to look around at the Cape, the sky, the far
town, the Christmas lights.

ATKINS

It's--

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes. It's midnight. Time for--

She touches her wrist which is encircled with a silver
band with miniaturized computer tabs engraved on it.
And the lights on the far gantries spring on. They are
like immense Christmas trees in the night.

ATKINS stares, stunned and incredulous.

The gantries blaze. The music of the world rises fitfully
on the wind.

She steps and takes his face in her hands and kisses him
very quietly on the brow. He is immensely moved by all
of this.

ATKINS

Merry Christmas...

YOUNG WOMAN

(nods)

I wish you well.

She touches his eyelids with two fingers.

YOUNG WOMAN

Stay there.

His eyes are shut. He cannot open them.

He hears her moving away.

ATKINS

Wait!

From the darkness we see her shape pause, we hear her voice.

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes?

ATKINS

Your name!?

She responds, further off, turning to send her voice back in the night wind.

YOUNG WOMAN

Klaata.

He quickens, startled, feverish, eyes shut.

ATKINS

Klaatu!?

YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE

No!

We see her silhouette, further off.

YOUNG WOMAN

Klaata. Klaatu's daughter.

She is gone. The dunes are empty.

He opens his eyes.

ATKINS

(whispers)

Klaata---

He looks down at:

Her footprints in the sand, which, in a sudden gust of
wind, blow away, are erased, gone!

The Christmas-lit gantries, all along the Cape, go out,
one by one!

He stands in the darkness, riven, as we

FADE TO BLACK.

Inside the VAB, the officials are sitting or standing
in a half circle around the spacecraft.

ATKINS looms up behind them suddenly, stares at the ship
for a long moment, then says, quietly:

ATKINS

Get some sleep. Christmas
morning - I go in the ship.

He turns and moves off into the shadows. A door shuts.

At the hotel, there is quietness, shadows.

On the top of the tree which is still lit, is the incredible
crystal bauble placed there hours before by ATKINS.

An ATTENDANT is shutting the tree lights off as ATKINS
arrives.

The lights blink into darkness.

The ATTENDANT and ATKINS stand looking up at:

That amazing crystalline illumination brought as beauty
from a far place.

ATTENDANT

Hey...what's that connected to?

ATKINS softly responds.

ATKINS
You may well ask, son...you
may well ask.

He reaches up, removes the bauble, to which the ATTENDANT
objects.

ATKINS
It goes back on the tree...
at dawn.

ATKINS goes up to bed.

In the middle of the night, the bauble, which he has
placed on the second pillow on the empty side of the bed,
pulses with dim light, half-musical sounds.

ATKINS opens his eyes, and looks at:

The crystal, which burns and lowers its serene light.

ATKINS speaks to the light.

ATKINS
Are you here?

KLAATA's voice whispers back:

KLAATA'S VOICE
...yes....

ATKINS reponds.

ATKINS
And somewhere else, at the
same time.

KLAATA'S VOICE
(softly)
Near, yes.

ATKINS watches the growing, fading light.

ATKINS

When do I see you again?

The crystal responds.

KLAATA'S VOICE

...after you have seen the
First Ghost.

ATKINS remembers the old Dickens tale.

ATKINS

Christmas Past?

The crystal murmurs and illuminates itself with response:

KLAATA'S VOICE

When the sun rises.

He nods, knowing what to do.

ATKINS

Are...are you the Ghost of
Christmas Present?

And the crystal replies, quietly:

KLAATA'S VOICE

Perhaps. If you deserve me.

ATKINS

And the Ghost of Christmas Future?

The crystal almost darkens, then burns with a firefly light.

KLAATA'S VOICE

(far away)

Perhaps there will be none.
Maybe...there is no future.

ATKINS

(quietly, impulsively)
Klaata!

KLAATA'S VOICE

Sleep!

ATKINS

I--

KLAATA'S VOICE

Sleep...!

His eyes stare and close. Her voice fades as he goes
into slumber.

KLAATA'S VOICE

.....sss.....ssleeeep.....

The light dulls and he is asleep and we

FADE OUT TO:

Morning. Just before sunrise. The Cape. The Vehicle
Assembly Building washed with the first cold colors of
approaching dawn.

ATKINS ~~is out~~ on the dunes, his camera busy.

He finds something, looks down.

At the remnants of KLAATA's footprints, going off on
their own path in the sand, from the last night.

He takes a picture of them, then turns to scan:

The empty gantries.

As the sun rises.

He turns to walk toward the VAB.

Inside, all is silence. The people have taken ATKINS at
his word. Several guards lie asleep on their strewn mats,
around the ship. The NASA OFFICIAL drowns, half-asleep,
over a game of solitaire laid out on a cardtable nearby.

ATKINS stands by the ship. His lips move. We cannot hear what he says. But we know the words from the way his mouth forms them, in pantomime.

The seam of the ship's portal splits, opens, with a soft humming and a grand illumination.

The NASA OFFICIAL opens his eyes, quickly, blinks, starts.

ATKINS

Shh!

His finger to his lips, warning silence, ATKINS walks up, into the ship, which seals itself shut!

Circling in through the geometrically illuminated corridors, ATKINS arrives at the heart of the ship, where:

A crystalline oblong shape, a seven foot long object, glows in the center of a room. Inside the receptacle, or bright 'coffin' if you wish to use the word, suspended in light and shadow, lies a body on display.

At ATKINS' approach, the long oblong crystal pulses with somewhat brighter color.

ATKINS, above it, looks down, and is incredulous.

ATKINS

My God...! You are the Ghost of
Christmas Past!

A voice from within the oblong responds, quietly.

THE VOICE

...yes...a summer, anyway....
long gone...

ATKINS

They didn't---

KLAATU'S VOICE

--understand? Yes. So now, by this means, I am sustained, I do return. How much longer will I live? Now knowing, let us speak quickly. What have you all been up to, the past 30 years?

ATKINS

The usual--

The light flickers. We watch the serene face under the crystal barrier.

KLAATU'S VOICE

Ah, that's bad.

ATKINS

Some of it's good.

KLAATU'S VOICE

I know. Yes. But I want a complete recitation. The Universe is the Great School. You are the new students.

ATKINS

Will you grade us?

KLAATU'S VOICE

We are teachers, yes, but only to a point. After that--

ATKINS remembers something from the Past.

ATKINS

Our executioners...?

The light plays over KLAATU's face. We move in close on his silent mouth. His voice speaks from within his mind.

KLAATU'S VOICE

...we promised destruction, yes.
But--

ATKINS whispers.

ATKINS
I know you.

THE VOICE
.....yes.....

ATKINS
We met when I was a boy!

THE VOICE
We did.....

ATKINS speaks the name at last.

ATKINS
Klaatu!

Now, close up, we see the serene and sleeping face of
the man within the crystal.

THE VOICE
The same....

ATKINS cannot resist questioning.

ATKINS
Are you.....?

KLAATU anticipates the full question and replies, quietly,
from his half-sleep.

KLAATU'S VOICE
Alive and dead?
A bit of both.

ATKINS is bewildered. The light and shadows motion over
his face.

KLAATU'S VOICE
When I left your somewhat damaged
world, 30 years ago, I was some-
what damaged, myself.

ATKINS

Now you've changed your mind?

KLAATU'S VOICE

Perhaps we come only to punish.
And leave you to lick your wounds.
We have watched you, and wondered
at you. So much that is good. So
much that is right. Yet, so much
that falters and fails.

ATKINS

You've come to test us, then?

KLAATU'S VOICE

The Great Graduation Examination, yes!

ATKINS

And if we succeed?

KLAATU'S VOICE

You move up in the Universe.

ATKINS

And...failing...

KLAATU'S VOICE

...stay where you are, or move down
to darkness. But, all your own doing.
You have already lit your fuse. No
need for us to light it. We can put
it out, of course, and take some of
your Toys away. The ones that threaten
us and the Universe. After all, a
Nursery is no place for such things.

ATKINS

Are we that young, then?

KLAATU'S VOICE

Just out of the cave, the crib, just
fallen from the Tree, and forgiveable,
but dangerous. Enough. Gather the
people for the Great Exam, or the
Great Trial, the Test, mmm? Gather
all your optimists, bring all your
cynics. We must hear the pros and
cons. The Human Race For and Against
the Human Race.

ATKINS
They won't come!

KLAATU'S VOICE
They will. When we have frightened
them somewhat.

ATKINS
Nothing can frighten them!

KLAATU'S VOICE
You think not?

The crystal oblong glows.

KLAATU's face, asleep, almost seems to smile. He murmurs.

KLAATU'S VOICE
We have ways....

A soft chime rings. The humming stops. The crystal
oblong swarms with shadows and goes dark.

As does the face of KLAATU.

ATKINS would say more, but, seeing this, stops, turns,
pulls back, goes...

Out through the circling light and shadow of the corridors.

Outside the OFFICIAL is waiting. ATKINS says:

ATKINS
Call a press conference for
five this afternoon.

OFFICIAL
We don't want any press!

ATKINS
(looks at the ship)
They do.

OFFICIAL
It's Christmas Day!

ATKINS

Can't think of a better day
for it.

OFFICIAL

We--

ATKINS

That ship can destroy this
building, any time it wants.

OFFICIAL

My God! The building cost
700 million dollars!

ATKINS

That ship is worth...
(makes up a number)
...seventeen billion dollars.

That goes it. The OFFICIAL is overwhelmed with such facts.

OFFICIAL

Five? Hard to organize it by--

He stops, because:

The spacecraft has groaned like Marley's ghost, trembling
with power!

OFFICIAL

(swallows)

Five.

He grabs a phone.

CUT TO:

Outside, the wilderness around the gantries. ATKINS
looks up.

At the far top of one of the Apollo structures, he sees a
small figure. It must be the one person he wants to see now.
He climbs up toward....KLAATA....who is waiting for him.

On top of the gantry, KLAATA does indeed wait for him. They stand looking at the spread of the world, and beyond to the Vehicle Assembly Building where, on one vast 300-foot side, the NASA officials have caused to be strung, in outline, a Christmas tree made entirely of wire and lit bulbs; a tree some 200 feet high, softly glowing in the overcast day.

ATKINS

Will they come, do you think?

KLAATA

(lightly)

The reporters? To the news conference? They had better.

ATKINS

Or you'll teach them reverse sums in 'take-away'?

She nods, the wind blowing her hair.

ATKINS

What will you take away, first?

KLAATA

(thinking)

Everyone must be surprised.

He stares at her as any man would stare at any woman who is a special windvane to a special weather that blows across the Cape this Christmas Day.

ATKINS

My good sense is gone already.

She gazes at him quietly, reading his temperature.

KLAATA

For awhile, I'll hold onto mine.

(she gestures to the
spread of Canaveral)

We're out to save the World, aren't we?

He looks at the World, at her, and back to the World,
laughing quietly at some small thought.

ATKINS
On your world, do women have
headaches?

KLAATA
(laughs)
Never!

ATKINS
(stunned)
What a world that must be.

KLAATA
And here?

ATKINS
(goes serious)
Men have headaches, all the time.

KLAATA
War does that...

She touches his elbow, pulls gently.

KLAATA
Shall we go find a cure?

ATKINS
You're the teacher.

She turns at the top of the stair in the blowing wind,
and gazes at him, nodding quietly.

KLAATA
Yes. I am.

They go down into the world of Christmas.

The reporters begin to gather for the News Conference. Not
many, of course. It's short notice. It's Christmas.

Reporters are coming up from Miami, of course, and a few who
can fly in from some of the Southern States in a few hours.
Local TV will link into national TV, naturally. We see the
accumulation of people at the Cape.

They are gathering outside the great doors of the Vehicle Assembly Building.

Announcements are being made over TV, cross-country, around the world.

Coming downstairs in his hotel, ATKINS glances over at the Christmas tree, which a moment before was filled with ornaments.

The tree is empty of baubles, of light.

Only the crystal fire hangs at the top, a promising Star.

ATKINS turns to a BELLHOP nearby.

ATKINS

Hey, Chuck, is Christmas over already?

He nods to the tree. The BELLHOP stares, is astounded.

BELLHOP

Hey, who took off all the ornaments!?

ATKINS turns to find KLAATA there. He glances back at the tree, and at her again. He suspects her of this.

ATKINS

Well?

KLAATA

What are a few baubles? It's the spirit that counts, right?

Disquieted, ATKINS leaves.

The Press Conference convenes. ATKINS finds himself as interlocutor for a highly unlikely visitation, and an amusing, to almost everyone, concept:

THE INHABITANTS OF THE WORLD, BROUGHT TOGETHER IN SOME SORT OF RAMSHACKLE TRIAL, WILL BE ASKED TO PUT THEMSELVES IN THE DOCKET.

The arguments to be presented in this great J'Accuse case, where all mankind is involved, are as follows:

DOES THE HUMAN RACE DESERVE TO GO ON EXISTING?

or, conversely:

DO WE DESERVE, BECAUSE WE ARE EVIL AND HALF-MAD APES, TO BE ELIMINATED?

or, somewhere between:

CAN THESE BEASTS, FAIRLY FRESH FROM THE TREE AND THE CAVE, EVOLVE TOWARD SOMETHING MUCH MORE WORTHWHILE?

and

ARE WE HALF THERE ALREADY, AND WITH A LITTLE PUSH CAN WE MAKE IT UP THE SCALE INTO THE UNIVERSE?

or

IS IT A LOST CAUSE, LET'S GIVE UP ON OURSELVES?

The sun is beginning to set over Canaveral as the last of the Conference is being held.

The reporters, in jovial mood, make mild jokes. After all, this is a ridiculous media event. Nothing has been shown so far, nothing proven. Why should it all be taken seriously? Why should the bright speakers of the world come or go anywhere to prove or disprove Mankind's right to go on existing? Where's the threat, the proof?

At the height of the reporters' derision:

The great doors of the Vehicle Assembly Building thunder wide.

The spacecraft of KLAATU pulses with energy, heat, power!
And the vast Christmas Tree, which we have seen earlier, strung and lit on the 300-foot side of the building, darkens, goes out, vanishes. It is a tree, we must explain, shaped only of lights, a sketch of a tree delineated by wires and bulbs.

But now, it is gone!

Its illumination vanishes from the faces of the reporters.

At the same moment, across the land, the lights on hundreds of trees blink out, blink out, blink out. They darken as startled people look up in a swift montage.

At the end of which, as the reporters look up at the blank wall of the VAB, the great doors rumble SHUT.

Ending the scene.

Across the land in the next few hours, small things begin to vanish. In a series of montage CUTS, we move from home to home across country, across the world, as tiny objects, close at hand, begin to disappear.

In one home, a woman, sewing, misses her thimble.

In another, needles vanish.

Some children's metal toys simply 'blink' out of existence!

Consternation. Wails of frustration!

Meanwhile, on the TV screens of the world, on every station, we see CUT after CUT, a MONTAGE of war, guns, explosions, invasions, tanks, jets, people fleeing on roads, devastated cities. Then, a quick series of CUTS of people in various cities, in various parlors:

A MAN

Wait a minute--where's that?

ANOTHER MAN

Which army--

A WOMAN

Another war--?

A THIRD MAN

Wait. That's Korea!

FOURTH

No, Vietnam!

FIFTH

No, the Maginot Line, 1940!

SIXTH

El Salvador!

CUT TO:

The interior of the ship, in a vast circle above Klaatu's crystal 'bed,' we see the same TV scenes repeated, a dozen times, a hundred times, on 200 screens above his resting place.

ATKINS and KLAATA, standing in shadow, look up at the devastation, hear the shrieks and explosions.

ATKINS

Which country, which war, which year--?

KLAATA

Every country, every war, every year.

More montages of explosions, troops, tanks, planes.

KLAATA
Can you tell them apart?

ATKINS stares, shakes his head.

KLAATA
Manchuria, 1929.
Turkey, 1922.
France, 1918...
Russia, 1942...
Japan, 1944...Brazil...
Argentina...Morocco...
South Africa...Pakistan.

She points to all the images, which whirl and confuse
themselves.

KLAATA
Different names, but always
the same terror, the same
despair. We will stop that.

The images rush and shriek to a vast concussion.

WHICH she cuts across by touching a lever.

Darkness. Silence. The wars are erased.

KLAATU's crystal tomb glows quietly.

In the silence, ATKINS turns to look at KLAATA, questioningly.

ATKINS
You waited thirty years. Why
did you come back, now?

KLAATA
We said we would.

ATKINS
You also said you'd destroy
Earth if we didn't behave.
What are you waiting for?

KLAATA touches buttons on her wrist-computer. Quieter scenes blossom on the vast screens above KLAATU's 'bed.'

KLAATA

You've behaved better than you think. That's why we delayed. You're strange people. You've actually done some things right!

ATKINS

Such as...?

KLAATA

Must I, from another world, tell you? Thirty years ago people still died from polio, malaria, scarlet fever. You've stopped all that. Your country invented new kinds of wheat and corn. You ship food to 90 countries. Immigrants pour in to your land, 500 thousand a year. Why are they coming here if you're as bad as you say?

ATKINS

I didn't say...

KLAATA

No? You don't like yourself, your world, your people. How peculiar that I find much to defend. All this, that, there, didn't exist, thirty years ago. You've reached the Moon. You've touched Mars and Jupiter and Saturn!

ATKINS

And stopped touching...

KLAATA

But you can do it again!

ATKINS

If I had my way...yes. But I'm only one person.

KLAATA

Ah, and so am I. But watch me!

There is no threat in her voice, only will and energy;
much fervor, a great fire.

He turns to look at her face, and up at the screens.

ATKINS
You going to teach them?
(nods out at the world)
The world doesn't like teachers,
do-gooders.

KLAATA laughs.

KLAATA
But, I'm here to do bad!

He is stunned. She continues, amused, gesturing at the
landscapes.

KLAATA
I come not with Christmas gifts,
but to take away!

KLAATA searches the horizons on the screen.

KLAATA
There, see? That oil tanker.
What if I took it and all the oil
in the world away to celebrate
New Year's?

ATKINS
You'd be dead by noon tomorrow!

KLAATA
Yes!?

She speaks this, first to ATKINS, then down at the semi-
illuminated place where KLAATU half-sleeps.

KLAATA
Yes?

She has been watching the quick images in her wrist-computer, news clips from around the world. She switches it off.

KLAATA

Yes. I see. Well?
Has anyone missed the thimbles
yet? Or the needles?

ATKINS

What?

KLAATA

Turn out your pockets. Your
coins, your money.

He turns out his pockets, shows her what change he has.

KLAATA

Put one here.

He places a penny on the wrist-computer surface, which
immediately hums and pulses with sums and computations.

KLAATA touches a tab.

The pennies in ATKINS' open palm vanish.

ATKINS

Hey! How'd you do that?

She touches her wrist-computer. An image of round fire is
projected high on the side of the Vehicle Assembly Building.

KLAATA

What's that?

ATKINS

The Sun.

KLAATA

And Earth was once in the Sun,
yes, all your elements, everything?
Everything in this building, every
bit of ground we stand on?
Hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen.

The crystal oblong beats three heartbeats of light. His voice whispers:

KLAATU'S VOICE

No....

Then she is off, through the shadowed ship corridors.

ATKINS can only follow.

The great seal of the spaceship shuts.

KLAATA is on her way out of the building. BARNEY is there, and grabs ATKINS' arm.

BARNEY

My God, all hell's broken loose!

ATKINS

Wha--?

BARNEY

The whole world thinks this is a plot by the United States to blackmail them!

ATKINS

But don't they see--?

BARNEY

Not a damn thing. She'd better do something spectacular, or--

ATKINS

Spectacular?! God!

ATKINS leaves. Outside, KLAATA is waiting for him by his car.

ATKINS

My friend says, you'd better work a miracle.

As she touches her wrist, the colors of the Sun boil and change hue, according to the element named.

KLAATA

If we can analyze the Sun's elements, we can analyze anything. The copper in your pennies, the silver in your pocket--

ATKINS

Sum it up and wipe it out?

KLAATA

We could. We might.

She flicks off the great Sun image.

He gets in the car. It won't start.

He looks at her, suspiciously.

KLAATA

Only if I say go, does it go.

ATKINS

(it gets to him)

There are 300 million cars in the world!

KLAATA

And sometimes, don't you think, how nice it would be, if they all stopped?

ATKINS

Nice.

(a beat)

...Terrible.

KLAATA

Go.

KLAATA has said go, the car goes, as she touches her wrist-computer and the engine juices itself.

ATKINS

Go...yes...Go.

They drive back toward the hotel. On the way, he says:

ATKINS

Can you make all the needles
in the world disappear?

KLAATA

If we wished.

ATKINS

And the nails that hold
paintings on the walls?

KLAATA

We could make a million pictures
fall.

ATKINS

What about nail files and scissors?

KLAATA

The fingernails of the world will
be longer next year.

ATKINS

Why are you starting small?

KLAATA

Isn't it more interesting to drop
hints? Let the world know, bit
by bit, doorknob by doorhinge by
clothespin that it is the time of
Indian Giving, the time of taking
back, the time of Uninventing all
the inventions, large and small,
in the history of Man?

ATKINS

God!

KLAATA

Oh, God, indeed.

KLAATA then explains in some detail what their plan, her
plan, KLAATU's plan, is. To let the panic grow in little
starts and stops, little vanishings, little disappearances,
at first unnoticed. Who cares, for instance, if all the

tiddlewinks in the world vanish on the same day? Or
all the collar-stays? Or all the pennies which now
burden us and are almost worthless?

Somewhere down the line - OIL!

But they are at the hotel.

Outside KLAATA's room, he prepares to leave, when she
holds the door open and waits. She is obviously inviting
him in.

ATKINS

Klaata---?

KLAATA

We have worked more than enough
miracles for one day. Now, let's
work our own.

ATKINS

Still--

KLAATA

Time is running out. We may
never have a quiet moment again.
And--

ATKINS

And?

She laughs, gently.

KLAATA

My world waits for me to bring
your child back with me.

ATKINS

(blinks)

From just this one night?

KLAATA

It is written.

KLAATA goes in, pulling off her jumper-top as she goes.
The door is wide open. ATKINS glances around, embarrassed,
hurries in, shuts the door.

In the midst of their love-making, she says:

KLAATA

Have you ever wondered what a
woman feels and thinks as she
lies like this?

He nods.

KLAATA

Have you ever, for a moment,
wanted to be in her eyes,
looking back at you?

He thinks, at last nods.

KLAATA

Well.

She touches his eyes, closes hers.

KLAATA

So...

He is stunned, astonished, transfigured. They are separate
but one. In their kissing, souls go back and forth, or so
it seems. He breaks away at last.

ATKINS

Can everyone on your world
do that?

She nods.

ATKINS

Does anyone ever get out of bed!?

KLAATA

Only to come nag at you Earthmen.

Much later, lying side by side, she looks at the ceiling and says:

KLAATA
It is written.

He looks at her, gently, questioning.

KLAATA
When I am home, if I wish, I
will have seven sons and seven
daughters.

ATKINS
All mine?

She nods.

ATKINS
All in one year!?

She shakes her head.

KLAATA
In seven different years. We
women up there, are not quite
the same as yours. We have an
even greater talent for survival.

ATKINS
Are you sure that my sons and
daughters are with you now?

KLAATA
Perhaps...you had better make
certain.

Whereupon he moves toward her again and they kiss and

FADE TO BLACK.

The next few days, a series of further 'take-aways' occur, ending with most of the cars of the world grinding to a halt. The world shakes its fists at the sky, but, the world gives in:

It agrees to be put on trial. The defendants gather at Canaveral. The list of things that each country has done is impressive. The protestants sound much like KLAATA as she defended Earth against itself, to ATKINS. Harvests are up. Floods have been controlled. Disease has been conquered in most of the world. The computer is beginning to lift the burden of boring work from millions of people. The black middle class HAS grown, etc., etc.

In the middle of which, the intellectual leaders, on trial before the Universe, begin to bicker, put each other on trial. For the first time, KLAATU, having been silent for days, summons the leaders to a final confrontation. Two dozen men and women from various countries circle his crystal enclosure which glows with light.

Shadows come and go over KLAATU's recumbent face as he accuses them, point by point:

KLAATU'S VOICE

Look at you! What shall I take
away next? What good will it
do? Will you learn your lessons?

The CAMERA circles the faces of the embarrassed and somewhat ashamed leaders.

KLAATU continues:

KLAATU'S VOICE

If we destroyed your airships you
would fight on land. Rob you of
your cannons, you'd use rifles.
Seize your rifles, you'd fire
pistols. Steal your pistols and
you'd make bows and arrows.
(more...)

KLAATU'S VOICE

(continued)

Take your bows and arrows and
you'd make spears, axes, knives.
Take it all away and you'd use
fists. Cut off your fists and
you'd kick with your feet. Cut
off your feet and you'd bite with
your dumb teeth. When, when,
when will it end?

The leaders stare, stunned and silent, no response ready.

KLAATU goes on:

KLAATU'S VOICE

You think that I, Gort, my ship,
are miraculous...
But you are miraculous...if you
wish! Have you no eyes? Don't
you see the grand Universe? Have
you no hands, to touch and build
all the great architectures that
will save you Forever?
What's wrong with you?
Why - why are you so - mean?

Silence. Half of the gathered leaders have their eyes shut,
sealing out the sight and the sound of the man and the voice
half-in, half-out of a technological tomb.

KLAATU'S VOICE

Must a half-dead man teach you
some final lessons?

His crystal oblong pulses with a single heartbeat.

KLAATU'S VOICE

...Klaata!...!

KLAATA moves forward from the shadows.

KLAATU'S VOICE

A gift is never appreciated. We
cannot give you your future. You
must build and give it to your-
selves. But let us, at least,
show it to you.

(quietly now)

Klaata.

KLAATA touches the controls. The spacecraft thrusts up to hang above Earth, halfway to the Moon....

Where, suspended over Earth, KLAATA touches yet other computer tabs.

And the bottom side of the great Disc unshutters its eye, which is to say reveals itself as a great viewing crystal around which the military and power elite circle and gasp. For the whole continent of America, leaning into the shadow of night, can be seen below.

KLAATA touches a series of buttons and:

Out beyond, in Space, great platforms construct themselves.

The power elite, stunned, watch as the--

Platforms fit jigsaw within jigsaw, as pieces are brought up through the night heavens by Shuttle and by other rocket vehicles and Astronauts scramble out to unfold the puzzle and slot it back together into a mile-long flat mirror surface which blinks and burns with sunlight:

While below, on Earth, in great screens placed within the Ship's interior, we can see vast receiving Cups being welded into place, here, there, and about the continent.

While still more platforms are built in Space, two thousand or three thousand miles apart, circling the Earth.

There is a great hum and stir or excitement amongst the captive audience as--

KLAATA touches the final buttons to finish the work
and ATKINS says:

ATKINS
That's not real...?

KLAATA
(smiles)
No.....Holograms, three-dimensional
projections of things that could
be. Images of possible dreams.
There.

She touches a last lever.

The great Solar Platforms (for that is what they are)
turn magnificently on their silent hinges.

And catch the Sun!

For they are high enough above the Earth to get the
slanted rays of the Sun beyond the night planet!

KLAATA
And here....and now...here.

She touches the controls.

The light beams flash down to Earth....

Are caught in the receiving Cups!

KLAATA looks upon her work and then says:

KLAATA
Now...let us light the cities
of the world.

She moves her hand over a territorial spread of
continental land under her fingers, in miniature.

The audience gasps.

For below in the night world, from New York, then on
to Boston and Philadelphia, and across country, city
by city, town by town, lights up!

In a great flare and spread and flash of light, the
entire American continent fires its town and city lights!
It is a magnificent moment, at which all can only stare,
frozen in delight!

KLAATA moves her hand on.

The Ship tilts and moves in Space.

The Platforms flash and turn to drink more Sun!

And the cities of Europe light themselves, one by one.

It is like a scene, reversed, in which all the candles
in a great hall or cathedral have been blown out but now,
in a miraculous instant, relight themselves!

KLAATA lights all the night world of Earth.

ATKINS speaks at last, staring down.

ATKINS
Can we do that?

KLAATA looks from him to the illuminated planet.

KLAATA
Yes! And when it's done, no
more navies protecting oil-lines,
no more shortages, no more
blackmail, no more need. Only
light, forever, all night every
night for ten thousand years!

She touches a button and:

The Space Platforms blink out, fly apart, fragmented dreams.

The lights of the world go out.

The faces staring down, turn dark.

KLAATA gestures.

The Ship lands back at Canaveral. There, with the solar display over, and the lights of the world gone dark...

the leaders of the various nations fall into their old patterns of animosity, hatred, petty irritability:

Who will build the first platform?

Who will benefit most?

Can the solar platforms be used for war?

No reason why not!

Good reason, therefore, to build and--

The crystal tomb of KLAATU pulses and goes dark.

KLAATA turns on the leaders, stares at them, then gives instructions to the Ship's computers.

There is a great stir in the heavens of Earth.

More spacecraft arrive from out of the Universe!

Is the moment of utter destruction at hand?

With KLAATU perhaps finally dead in his dark crystal,

KLAATA makes the final motions:

And a thousand spacecraft thunder down!

ATKINS, seeing this, comments ironically:

ATKINS
Is this...the Ghost of Christmas
Future?

KLAATA
(quietly, firmly)
...yes....

The ships are coming down out of the sky.

One spacecraft arrives over Mecca.

Another over Berlin.

A third over London.

A fourth over Washington, D.C.

A fifth over Chicago.

A sixth over Denver.

A seventh over Los Angeles.

An eighth over San Francisco.

A ninth over Tokyo.

A tenth over Delhi.

An eleventh over Peking.

A twelfth over New York City.

And in each city the people are looking up.

But, especially the children, those from six to eleven years old, are staring at the sky with its wonderful beauties and its great musics.

The ships suspend themselves in the air only one hundred feet up.

The people wait. The children wait.

CUT TO:

KLAATA within her Ship, surrounded, on the domewalls, by images of all the ships, all the cities, all the people, all the children.

At which moment, do we, or do we not, hear a voice from
KLAATU's crystal tomb whisper:

KLAATU'S VOICE

Now!

KLAATA touches a light-source disc. She speaks. Outside,
in the area near the VAB Building, the leaders of Earth
hear her voice.

KLAATA

I hear you speak, but what you
are really saying is you do not
believe in the future. You do
not believe in the future! Well,
then. We will take it away
from you....

She touches a control.

The spacecraft move down over the cities of the world.
And as they move in thunders, a music comes from them.
And the children of the world look up, here, there,
everywhere, beyond!

The older people stand, transfixed.

The ships hover and glide, and are now only a few feet
above the ground.

And the portals open, to an even grander music.

And the children begin to move.

As ATKINS watches on the screens inside the Ship, with
KLAATU beside him.

And he sees children of friends, children we have seen
earlier on, moving toward the strange craft.

As the older people cry out but cannot move.

And the children of Chicago and New York and Moscow
and Peking and Tokyo begin to go on board the ships.

By the tens of thousands they move, happily, called by
the music. The Pied Pipers of All Time are summoning
them. They can only, gladly, go.

ATKINS watches, astonished and moved, as:

Children from every walk of life move toward the spacecraft.

More of which land to summon:

Rich and poor alike. High and low. Children of the
powerless as well as children of the powerful, the con-
trollers of the world. Children of every color, shape,
and size. But they all move gladly, not looking back.

ATKINS cries out, at last:

ATKINS
My God, you're inhuman!

KLAATA responds quietly, with sympathy, standing near him,
directing the multi-illuminated computer under her fingers,
watching the exodus of the young on the screens circling
their heads:

KLAATA
No. We care. They are your
future. . . which we will deliver
back into your hands if you deserve
them. Do you know your history?
Thousands of years ago, your nomad
tribal chieftans traded their sons
and daughters to insure against
attack and war. We do them one better.

She glances at the screens. He stares:

As more ships fill, more children arrive.

KLAATA

(stunned)

700 thousand, a million. Rich,
poor, weak, powerful, every color,
every custom, every religion,
everywhere.

She reads his face which is not as yet accepting.

KLAATA

What if we left them here - for
you to do what with? Burn and
destroy with your ignorance, your
hate, your blind wars?

ATKINS

(bursts out)

What are you - some sort of -
dumb optimist!?

She glances at the screens.

Outside, in various cities, we see the last of the
children going aboard.

CUT BACK TO:

KLAATA nodding, speaking:

KLAATA

Do I think you will work and
build and succeed in trying to
earn back the future, deserve
to have your children among you
once more?

(a beat)

Yes. You will.

ATKINS watches the screen. It is sinking in now. Slowly
he says:

ATKINS

We must.

She presses a series of buttons and levers.

The spacecraft are beginning to seal themselves up.

KLAATA watches this, looks at ATKINS, says:

KLAATA

Love me.

ATKINS

What else can I do? You've
stolen my child, too.

KLAATA

(touches her front,
quietly)

No. It was given freely.

ATKINS

(nods, shuts his
eyes a moment)

It was.

He opens his eyes, looks at the screens, at her.

ATKINS

Can I go?

KLAATA

You're needed here. In case they
sometimes for a moment forget.
Then you yell, for all the
children. For your sons.

ATKINS

Sons??!

KLAATA

It is written.

She kisses him tenderly. They hold to each other. In
a last moment, she looks up:

Sees all the faces of all the parents in the world,
standing, waiting, watching, unable to move. Then
back to KLAATA as she says, quietly:

KLAATA
Oh, Pinocchio, Pinocchio...if
you act well, and learn to love
each other, one day you will
become real humans.

He holds her at arm's length, nods, turns, walks. Then
runs.

All the ships are sealing up!

ATKINS steps swiftly from KLAATA's ship.

KLAATA looks at:

The crystal oblong where KLAATU sleeps. It pulses with
one great impulse of light, sound, music.

She thrusts a lever.

And all the spacecraft move...up!

The spacecraft in Moscow hovers, then shoots straight up,
up over and away from the Kremlin. We see the bright
pear-shapes of the churches in Red Square diminish.

The spacecraft in Rome hovers and rises above St. Peter's.
We see Bernini's columns fall away below!

The spacecraft over London, moves up along the walls of
the Houses of Parliament, shoots by the face of Big Ben,
and vanishes in the sky.

The spacecraft in India, bangs straight up away from the
Taj Mahal.

In China, away from the Great Buddha.

In South America, Rio, past and up from the Christ of the Andes!

In Paris, from the base of the Eiffel Tower to the top!

In New York, along up, up, from the foot of the Statue of Liberty past the head, the torch, and gone!

The people of Earth, intercut, shot after quick shot, watch as:

The scores of spacecraft, in thunder, vanish into the clouds, into the stars. And as they fade, we hear KLAATU's voice (or his daughter's):

VOICE

Follow us. Follow!
If you succeed, you will find
your children, you will find
and keep your Future.

What is your answer, O people
of Earth? You who disbelieve
in futures, and so have had
it taken from you?

Speak!

No....act! Do! Build. Rise up!
Live!

Well?

The last ships are gone.

Out among the gantries, ATKINS finds the stunned officials staring at the sky.

ATKINS

Well?

They are all looking at the stars in the almost midnight sky. Someone says:

A MAN
Do we follow, blast 'em, grab
our kids back?

A GOVERNOR, or an OFFICIAL, or the PRESIDENT, looks at the MAN as if he were mad.

GOVERNOR
No!
(a beat)
We'll go earn our way.
Deserve our future.

The GOVERNOR (or PRESIDENT) looks over at the VAB.

GOVERNOR
There's only one flag on that
building.

ATKINS
Should be a thousand.

GOVERNOR
By this time next month, there
will be. A real United Nations,
at last. And more...did it ever
strike you...it's like a big
cathedral inside?

The doors are open. They look in at the emptiness where the spacecraft was and now all is vast and sepulchral.

GOVERNOR
I wonder...

ATKINS
If we asked all the rabbis in the
world, all the Moslem prayer-leaders,
all the Baptists, all the Buddhist
priests, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir
...and the Pope! to come here some
Friday night, some Saturday noon,
some Sunday morning...to celebrate
and remember our children...would
they come?

The depths of the Vehicle Assembly Building stir with
future shadows, songs, choirs, whispers, prayers, voices.

ATKINS, seeing, half-hearing this, asks:

ATKINS

When do we start packing to
leave and go - straight up?

PRESIDENT

(with quiet determination)

Now.

ATKINS

(somewhat doubtful)

Not tomorrow?

PRESIDENT

Now!

He looks around at the gantries.

ATKINS' wrist-watch sounds off the hour.

ATKINS

Midnight, sir.

PRESIDENT

(blinks)

Midnight?

ATKINS

(quietly)

Happy New Year.

One of the gantries, far away, takes fire with a ghost
blaze, a spirit illumination, as a phantom rocket, in
muted thunders, takes off.

The men stare around.

The PRESIDENT, ATKINS, in their minds' eye, see and hear:

Ghost rockets thundering up the gantries, away.

INTERCUT, the faces of all, the PRESIDENT, ATKINS.

As gantry after gantry lights and ghost rockets rise!

The PRESIDENT, imagining this, says quietly:

PRESIDENT
Happy New Year.

ATKINS looks up as:

A final gantry blazes. A final rocket thunders.

We go with it, looking back at the faces of those men.

We start CLOSE UP, in their eyes, their faces, then go straight up for a swift ten thousand yards in seven seconds! And Earth falls away below, a small orb lost in the stars.

MUSIC -----

And:

THE END.