

RED PLANET BLUES

A *SPACE NOIR*

By

William Gunn

For Barbara...*Always and Forever!!!*

wgunn1953@outlook.com
1613 Barroso Lane
Charlotte, North Carolina 28213
(980) 333-1764

FADE IN:

1 **EXT. MARS - AERIAL VIEW - DAY - 2185**

1

Two DUNE BUGGIES Race Across The Surface of The HELLAS BASIN, an Area of the RED PLANET the Size of the CARIBBEAN SEA. Both Dodge Rocks and Boulders that Litter The Bleak Landscape. ONE Buggy is Slightly Ahead of The Other. The Distant SUN Hangs LOW in The SKY as Evening Approaches.

2 **EXT. MARS - HELLAS BASIN - TRACKING SHOT - CONTINUOUS**

2

The REAR Buggy Closes in on its PREY. Each Vehicle Carries One MAN. The Driver of The First Buggy wears a DAYGLO YELLOW ENVIROSUIT with an Attached TRANSPARENT 'Fish-Bowl' Style HELMET. A Meter-Long Radio ANTENNA Protrudes From The Back of His E-SUIT. He is DR. SAM GRANT (Early 40s). CHIEF-OF-STAFF for MARS GENERAL HOSPITAL.

The MAN in The Rear Buggy wears a Similar E-SUIT that's ELECTRIC BLUE in Color. He is ARLO TRASKE - THORIUM PROSPECTOR (Mid-50s). His 'Fish-Bowl' Style HELMET is Tinted GOLD. He Holds a Long Object That Could Be a WEAPON. Possibly a RIFLE!

A Low-Slung Four-Wheeled TRAILER is Attached to the Rear Buggy. It's Filled with Various types of Mining Equipment and Covered by an Old Silver Tarp. Some of the Equipment is identifiable. There are Shovels, A One-Person Laser-Drill, Rope.

The Forward Buggy Makes a SHARP EVASIVE TURN To the Right, Enters a SMALL BOX CANYON that leads to a High CLIFF-Wall and comes To a STOP. The Driver Dismounts His Vehicle. He trudges in the direction of The Other Buggy, Which Has Also Stopped. Traske Gets Out of His Buggy. They Stand a Few Meters apart. Their Conversation Takes Place Via HELMET RADIO.

GRANT
Traske, is that you?

TRASKE
You might as well give up, Doc --
There's nowhere left to go. You're
screwed!

GRANT
Like Hell!

TRASKE
You think the Cavalry's comin' over
the hill?

Traske Slowly Shakes His Head.

TRASKE (cont'd)
'Cause they're not.

Traske Moves Closer. He's Definitely Carrying a RIFLE. His
E-SUIT is Older than Grant's. It's Seen Better Days.

TRASKE (cont'd)
In fact nobody gives a damn.

GRANT
I don't believe you.

TRASKE
You're a fool. You've been one since
you first got here.

GRANT
What are you saying? That I should
have looked the other way. Been a
Team Player?

TRASKE
Maybe, for starters.

GRANT
I don't put up with theft. Not from
anybody.

Grant Looks around For a WAY OUT. There Isn't ONE.

Traske Points His RIFLE at Grant.

TRASKE
Big Fraggin' Deal, Doc! Big Fraggin'
Deal!

GRANT
This nonsense has gone on long
enough. Tell your boss it's too late
to stop the truth -- It's gonna get
out sooner or later.

TRASKE
That ain't my concern.

GRANT
If you're who I think you are, why
are you doing this?

TRASKE
A man's gotta make a livin'. I gotta
bunch o' mouths t' feed.

GRANT
Whatever they're paying you I'll
double it. I promise!

TRASKE
(snorting)
That ain't worth two farts in a
sandstorm.

GRANT
What are you saying?

TRASKE
I think you know.

GRANT
You're insane! You really believe you
can kill me and get away with it?

TRASKE
Why not, I have before.

GRANT
(desperate)
Now what?

TRASKE
In five hours they're broadcastin'
the heavyweight fight between
Kowalski and Morgan from Singapore --

Traske Moves Closer. The RIFLE Still Pointed at Grant.

TRASKE (cont'd)
-- I gotta thousand solars ridin' on
Kowalski --

He Moves Even Closer. Traske is only a few STEPS Away While
Aiming For Grant's Midsection.

TRASKE (cont'd)
-- I ain't missing it for nobody.

BANG!!

2A EXT. HELLAS BASIN - TRACKING SHOT - CONTINUOUS

2A

Traske stands over the BODY for a Moment. There's no doubt that the other Man is Dead. At such a close range a Slingshot would have been sufficient. Just to be on the safe side, He nudges the other E-Suit with one of his Feet.

TRASKE
You are dead, ain'tcha?

He doesn't expect an answer.

TRASKE (cont'd)
Yea, I thought so. Th' Bossman's gonna be happy...That's f'Dam'sure.

Traske walks briskly over to the Trailer. He removes the Tarp and takes out a medium-sized Shovel.

He walks around the Murder Scene for a few minutes as he tries to determine the best spot to get rid of the evidence. All the while he's mumbling something under his breath.

TRASKE (cont'd)
What a pain-in-m-arse you turned out t'be, y'lousy Homer.

He Finds the Perfect Spot!

TRASKE (cont'd)
This'll have t'do. Ain't nobody ever gonna find you anyway. Not after I'm done.

He begins digging into the Regolith of Mars. The Soil is fairly soft. After a couple of hours, Traske stands over a Hole over three meters deep by five meters wide.

TRASKE (cont'd)
I'll b'damned...I'did it...

He glances at his watch.

TRASKE (cont'd)
...I still might make it back in time t'see most of that fight.

He walks back over to Grant's Body. He begins to drag the sagging E-Suit toward the Hole. Once there, He casually rolls it into the makeshift Grave. Like so much Unwanted Garbage.

He then trudges towards Grant's Buggy. He checks it over to see if it's still operational. It is. Then he drives it slowly in the Direction of the Hole.

Traske begins removing small items from the vehicle and tossing them into the hole. He locates the Transponder. It's a Homing Device that's standard equipment on all Rental Dune-Buggies. After he takes it off the Buggy, he promptly smashes it with his Shovel.

TRASKE (cont'd)
Ain't nobody back in MarsPort gonna
be looking for you. Not now!

He walks back over to the Trailer. Once there Traske removes the Laser Drill from its Case. He then hefts the Bulky device over to the Grant's Buggy. Then he examines the drill making sure it has a Fully Charged Capacitor. All Green Lights. He Nods his head within his Helmet. He begins to whistle a silly tune and flips the first of several switches.

A DAZZLING Blue Beam of Intense LIGHT Springs from the Business End of the Laser Drill. Traske begins pointing the Light at the Dune-Buggy which begins to start coming apart under the High Powered Beam of Light. It almost seems like a living thing acting like it wants to escape the Laser. But there's NO Escape.

The Beam Cuts the Vehicle into Smaller and Smaller unrecognizable chunks of Metal and Plastic. Once Traske turns off the Laser Drill he stands there for a moment or two marveling at his Handy-work. Then He uses his Buggy to push the scraps of Grant's Vehicle into the Large Hole. Once this is done He walks around the Hole to make sure no incriminating parts were left remaining above the Ground.

He then removes one other Item from the Trailer. It's a Small Cylindrical Object roughly half-a-meter in length by one-quarter of a meter in diameter. He carries it over to the Large Hole very slowly. He places the Device on top of all of the Contents within, Dune-Buggy Scraps, Grant's Corpse, etc. He then takes his Shovel and begins to push all of the Loose Dirt back into the Hole. Once that is accomplished, he returns to his own Buggy he Drives slowly toward the exit of the Canyon.

Approximately one kilometer away, Traske removes a small device from his Tool-Belt. He Holds it at Arms length. Then he Pushes a RED Button in the Center of the thing.

One Kilometer away a Small-yet-Powerful Thermal Bomb
Detonates and Obliterates the Box Canyon.

3 **EXT. MARS ORBITAL STATION - NIGHT - 18 MONTHS LATER** 3

A THREE-HUNDRED METER Diameter ROTATING Wheel-like STRUCTURE
Orbits FIVE HUNDRED KILOMETERS Above the Surface of the RED
PLANET. IT Looks Like a Ginormous Metallic TIRE with Four
SPOKES Radiating Outward From a Slightly Smaller CENTRAL
HUB. A Large SPACECRAFT 'FREEBIRD' Docks with the Station.

4 **INT. MARS ORBITAL STATION - CONTINUOUS** 4

TWO Dozen ARRIVALS Are Lined Up to Pass Through the CUSTOMS
BOOTH. ONE of the Them is Called by the Next INSPECTOR - A
Slender Young Woman (Early 20s). She Wears a White Uniform
with a Lot of POCKETS. A CUSTOMS BADGE is Pinned to Her Left
Shoulder.

She Uses a MEDSCANNER (Handheld Diagnostic Device) to Begin
Her Preliminary Assessment. All the While She's Making
Notations onto an Electronic NOTEPAD.

INSPECTOR
You seem to be in perfect health.

The PASSENGER is JOHN WESLEY (JACK) GREYSON MD -
NEUROSURGEON (42) TALL and Fairly Thin - SMART-ASS!!- He's
Not As Clever As He Thinks He Is! - Slight Southern Accent -
FROM The BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS of NORTH CAROLINA.

JACK
(grimacing)
Tell that to my aching head.

The Inspector Looks Very Cheerful. She Flashes a Lot of
Pearly-White Teeth.

INSPECTOR
Just drink as much water as you can,
being hydrated will help.

JACK
I'll do that.

INSPECTOR
That's what I'm here for.

JACK

That's it?

A Small light on her Medscanner Flashes YELLOW.

INSPECTOR

(frown)

According to this you've got a history of Total Virtual Reality abuse.

JACK

The operative word is 'History'. I kicked that back in Lunopolis.

INSPECTOR

I don't know. That might be a problem. We just can't let anyone in. You understand -- Don't you?

Jack Hands Her a Small BUSINESS CARD. It Looks Like a PRINTED CIRCUIT Board.

JACK

That's the contact info for my therapist, Dr. Julio Delgado. He can confirm my current mental health status.

She Stares at the CARD For a Moment.

INSPECTOR

(slight smile)

I don't think that'll be necessary, Dr. Greyson.

JACK

You don't sound too certain about that.

INSPECTOR

Just remember, you'll have to register with the proper authorities once you're in MarsPort. It's the law.

JACK

(scowl)

You're joking, right?

INSPECTOR

Not at all. They have some pretty strict anti-Teever laws down there.

JACK
Why?

INSPECTOR
(whispering)
Because the Governor's son died of a
TVR overdose two years ago -- That's
why -- Good enough reason?

JACK
(frown)
Yah. Can I go now?

INSPECTOR
(smile)
Of course, there's just one more
thing... *'Abandon all hope, ye who
enter here.'*

JACK
(confused)
Whaaaa?????

INSPECTOR
Sorry. That's something my Great-
Grandpa used to say to all New-
comers.

JACK
(snarl)
Whatever...I think I'm gonna puke.

The Inspector Reaches Into one of Her Numerous POKETS. She
Takes Out a Packet of Small Blue-Green CAPSULES.

INSPECTOR
Take a couple of these. They'll help
...I promise.

5 INT. MARS ORBITAL STATION - ELEVATOR - LATER

5

Jack Greyson Takes an ELEVATOR Down one of the SPOKES to the
WHEEL with a HALF-A-DOZEN or so of the Other Passengers.

6 INT. MARS ORBITAL STATION - OUTER WHEEL - LATER

6

There HE Finds a TAVERN - THE WET SPOT. It's a Smallish
Place that Seats about Twenty. Most of Them are in Four-
Person Booths. In Spite of the Crowd, It's Fairly Quiet.

There's One BARTENDER Behind a Long Shiny BAR. The Rest of the Staff are FOUR-ARMED ROBOTS that Trundle About on Six Wheels.

Jack Notices SEAN CALLAHAN (Mid-40s) CO-OWNER and ENGINEER of 'FREEBIRD' - Tall and wiry - In a Dimly Lit Booth. His WIFE - YOKO CALLAHAN (Late 30s) - CO-OWNER and PILOT of 'FREEBIRD' - She Sits with Him. She's Short and curvy.

Jack heads towards them.

Callahan Half-Smiles as Jack Slides into the Booth.

SEAN

Now that you've made it, how're you feeling?

Jack Gets Settled. He Takes in a Deep Breath. His Color Is a Little Better. No Longer Looks Like He's so Nauseous. Or Not as Much.

JACK

(scowl)

Like a turd that's had the shize beaten out of it.

SEAN

Most likely from the Cold-Sleep.

JACK

(arching an eyebrow)

Oh really -- Y'think?

YOKO

That should wear off in an hour or so. It usually does.

JACK

God I hope so. Otherwise I want to crawl back inside that friggin' icebox for another six weeks.

SEAN

(half grin)

Give it time...Cold-Sleep's a Bitch!

JACK

(frown)

They should warn people.

YOKO

(grin)

They do. It's in all the travel brochures.

JACK

(scowl)

I know. But I didn't know it'd be this bad.

Jack Waives Over a ROBOWAITER. He Orders a Shot of BOURBON. He Drinks It Down In One GULP. He Orders a SECOND...Then a THIRD.

JACK (cont'd)

Any last-minute nuggets of advice?

SEAN

(grin)

Don't Eat the Red Snow -- Don't Go Outside Without Your E-Suit -- And Stay the Hell Away From 'Free Mars'.

JACK

I've heard about Free Mars, I thought it was an urban legend.

SEAN

It's real enough. Trust me, Doc.

JACK

You seem to know a lot about them.

YOKO

(slight smile)

You hear things. In our line of work it pays to keep your ears open and your mouth shut.

JACK

How will I know who's a member or not?

YOKO

You'll figure it out once you've been in MarsPort a while.

Callahan Moves a Bit closer to Jack.

SEAN

One more thing --

JACK

-- What?

SEAN

Don't get mad when they call you
'Homer.'

JACK

(arching an eyebrow)
Homer???

SEAN

It's what the locals call us folks
born on Earth -- The Homeworld,
y'know?

JACK

Right.

YOKO

(with a tear in her
eye)

Jack -- What you're doing -- Your
search -- That's one of the Bravest
Things I've ever heard in my life.

SEAN

(slight grin)
Or the Craziest -- If you ask me.

JACK

(arching an eyebrow)
Thanks you guys -- I think.

An ANNOUNCEMENT Comes Over the PA SYSTEM.

V.O.

**ATTENTION...ATTENTION PLEASE...THE
NEXT SHUTTLE FOR MARSPOORT WILL BE
DEPARTING IN FIFTEEN MINUTES...ALL
PASSENGERS PLEASE REPORT TO THEIR
ASSIGNED SEATS IMMEDIATELY...THANK
YOU.**

7 INT. MARSPOORT BOUND SHUTTLE - LATER

7

Jack is Shown to His Seat by a FLIGHT ATTENDANT. He Notices
There are Over a Dozen Other People Aboard. He Waves to Sean
Who Waves Back. Yoko Gives Jack a 'THUMBS-UP'.

Once Jack Is Securely Strapped In, He Reads the Following From a HOLOSCREEN Attached to the Back of the Seat in Front of His.

MARSPORT is Located in Mare' Ionium on the Northwest Corner of the HELLAS BASIN.

MARSPORT was Founded July 20th 2071.

MARSPORT is Recognized as a Sub-Section of the HELLAS BASIN REGION of the UNITED EARTH PROTECTORATE.

The HELLAS BASIN is Equal in Size to the Caribbean Sea.

The HELLAS BASIN Lies 33 Kilometers (20 miles) Lower than the Summit of OLYMPUS MONS, the Tallest Mountain in the Solar System.

MARSPORT has a Population of 200,000 According to the Last Census (2180).

MARSPORT Consists of Over Two Dozen Increasingly Larger Geodesic Domes.

They Range from Three Hundred Meters to Several Kilometers Across. The Largest is Seven Kilometers in Diameter.

All of the Domes are Covered by Ten Meters of Martian Soil for Radiation Protection.

Each Dome Consists of Several TERRACED LEVELS Dug into the SURFACE of MARS.

Each Dome Has a Series of Interconnecting Airlocks.

MARS GENERAL HOSPITAL is Located Inside the Largest Dome.

THE ROCKET ENGINES Fire Shortly Thereafter. Jack passes out from the Acceleration and the BOURBON. Mainly from the BOURBON.

8 **INT. MARS GENERAL - OPERATIONS MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY**

8

Two MEN Sit in an OFFICE Across a LARGE DESK. They are Jack Greyson and an Older MAN - CARLOS CHIANG - OPERATIONS MANAGER for MARS GENERAL HOSPITAL (Mid 70s) Short and Paunchy. He has Mutton-chop Sideburns and Thinning Hair.

There isn't an Obvious COMPUTER WORK STATION on The Ornate Desk. There is a Large Holographic Communications Console, or HOLOCOM On the DESK. It Makes an Annoying Humming NOISE.

CARLOS
 Welcome to Mars General. I'm glad you
 decided to take me up on my offer.

Chiang makes a DRINK for Jack.

JACK
 Thanks, Mr. Chiang.

CARLOS
 Please call me Carlos. Everybody
 does. We don't put up with that
 official crap like they do on Earth.

Jack Half-Smiles When He First Tastes The DRINK. Then He
 PLACES The GLASS On The DESK.

JACK
 Truth to tell I've never had much use
 for official crap myself.

CARLOS
 Which is one of the main reasons I
 wanted you here --

Jack leans a little Forward.

JACK
 -- Really?

CARLOS
 And your impressive C.V. was a
 plus...

JACK
 (grinning)
 What can I say. Thanks?

CARLOS
 (slight smile)
 ...of course the fact you were at the
 top of your class in Med School was a
 major factor in my decision as well.

JACK
 Good to know. I'm curious, what
 happened to my predecessor?

CARLOS
 It seemed he decided to take a Sunday
 drive...he never came back.

JACK
(arching an eyebrow)
When was that?

CARLOS
About eighteen months ago. He rented
a Dune-Buggy one weekend to do a bit
of sight-seeing -- Nobody's seen nor
heard from him since.

JACK
Any ideas?

CARLOS
Not a one. Security theorized he must
have driven off a cliff. Something
like that.

Jack Moves a little bit closer to Chiang's Desk.

JACK
But wouldn't there be any signs?

CARLOS
You'd like to think so. But Mars is a
big planet. Its landmass is the same
as Earth's.

JACK
I always forget that.

CARLOS
(half-smiling)
A lot of off-worlders do -- They tend
to underestimate Mars.

JACK
I'll bet.

Jack Scratches His Nose.

JACK (cont'd)
Didn't you used to be the CFO of The
Solar System Mining Corporation?

CARLOS
That was twenty years ago. I barely
own any stock now.

Jack Looks around the Large Office For a Bit, then changes
the Subject.

JACK
What was his name?

CARLOS
Sam Grant, why?

JACK
Just curious.

CARLOS
Tell me Jack, what do you think of
our little town?

JACK
I'm impressed, so far.

CARLOS
It's no Lunopolis. But I'm sure
you'll get used to the place very
soon.

JACK
Speaking of Lunopolis. I wonder how
long it'll be before I get used to
the extra gravity?

CARLOS
Being from Luna I'd have thought the
difference wouldn't have been that
noticeable.

JACK
Most people make that mistake.

Jack STANDS Slowly...Then Sits Back DOWN...SLOWLY.

JACK (cont'd)
This gravity is over twice what I've
been living in for the past seven
years.

CARLOS
I'm sure you'll adjust soon enough.

JACK
I'll be spending a lot of my time in
the gym to acclimate. That's for damn
sure.

CARLOS
That'll help. As a matter of fact we
have a first class facility here in
MarsGen.

JACK

Terrific.

CARLOS

It's on the second floor in case you're wondering.

JACK

I'm sure I'll become a regular.

CARLOS

That's the spirit.

JACK

I wish somebody would go ahead and invent Artificial Gravity. It'd be a big help for everyone.

CARLOS

I wouldn't be a bit surprised if SSMC was working on it.

JACK

They can't invent it fast enough far as I'm concerned.

CARLOS

(thin smile)

Give them time.

JACK

What's all this crap I've heard about Free Mars?

CARLOS

Don't pay any attention to the rumors you may have heard.

Chiang Moves closer to Jack with an Open look on his Face.

CARLOS (cont'd)

They're just a few Malcontents. Nothing to worry about.

JACK

(grin)

That's about what I thought.

Jack STANDS Up. HE Changes the Subject...AGAIN.

JACK (cont'd)

When do I get a look at my office,
meet the staff -- Get the lay of the
land?

CARLOS

You're eager, I like that. How does
9:00 tomorrow sound?

JACK

Let's make it 7:00. I'm an early
riser.

CARLOS

That's fine. I'll see you at 7:00.

9 INT. MARS GENERAL - CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

9

A HANDFUL of PEOPLE Stand Around the CONFERENCE ROOM. Most
Look BORED. There Are ONE or TWO Who Appear to be Over the
Age of FIFTY. THE OTHERS Look a Lot YOUNGER.

Carlos stands at the HEAD of the TABLE. Jack stands adjacent
to HIM. He hands Jack a SMALL Electronic NOTEPAD. Jack
notices the NAMES and HOLOGRAPHS of All of the Attendees
thereon.

Carlos waits until EVERYONE in the Room stops TALKING. He
begins to SPEAK.

CARLOS

Good morning everyone. This is Dr.
John Wesley Greyson, our new Chief of
Staff --

He Raises His VOICE. The CROWD Moves in a Little CLOSER,
Though Not a Lot.

CARLOS (cont'd)

-- He last served as Chief Resident
at Armstrong Memorial Hospital in
Lunopolis. We're lucky to have him.

JACK

As Carlos said I served at Armstrong
Memorial. I was there for seven
years -- I prefer Jack.

ONE of the MEN Speaks up - HIROSHI TANAKA MD - CHIEF SURGEON (Mid-30s) Average height and weight - His Hair in the Style of a SAMURAI. He wears a Sleeveless TUNIC. Both ARMS are Covered in Complex TATTOOS.

TANAKA

Why was I once again passed over for this position, Carlos?

CARLOS

As I've explained several times before, the Board and I don't think your quite suited for the job.

TANAKA

Bullshize!!

JACK

I'll need a strong Deputy Chief, you're more than welcome to the job.

TANAKA

(pissed)

Why don't you get on the next ship to Lunopolis. You're not wanted here.

Jack stands Up Very Straight Facing Tanaka.

JACK

For one thing -- I didn't fly to Mars in Cold-Sleep for six weeks to turn tail and run --

Jack Looks Around the Room. Only a Few Make EYE-CONTACT.

JACK (cont'd)

-- And second -- Who would reimburse the ten million solars it cost to bring me out here?

SOMEONE Else Speaks - It's MARLENA ANTONOVA - CHIEF NURSE - (Late 20s) Tall and skinny - Long Dark Hair and Brown Eyes.

ANTONOVA

(friendly smile)

I don't know about anyone else, but I'm glad you're here.

JACK

Thanks.

ANTONOVA

Marlena.

JACK

Right.

ANTONOVA

I for one am glad we'll have some new blood in charge --

SHE straightens up to be BETTER Seen.

ANTONOVA (cont'd)

-- The last guy was so damned undependable.

JACK

(slight smile)

I've been accused of many things over the years, that's isn't one of them.

Another MAN Chimes in - ALAIN' ROCHARD MD - NANOSURGEON (Mid-30s) Average Height and weight.

ROCHARD

I'll be happy to have an extra pair of hands in the OR. It'll lighten the workload

JACK

Hopefully.

ROCHARD

I see you studied at Wake Forest. Did you pick up any new techniques in nanosurgery over the years?

JACK

In fact one of the best in the field works at Armstrong Memorial -- Barbara Kingsford. Do you know her?

ROCHARD

I never had the pleasure. But I definitely know of her. She's done some amazing work over the years.

JACK

She's developed a totally new series of treatments over the past five years.

Rochard moves closer to Jack.

ROCHARD

I'd love to hear more.

JACK

Anything I've learned I'll happily share. That's what I'm here for.

ROCHARD

Thanks.

JACK

(smile)

In fact, I plan to have an 'Open Door' policy. If anyone ever needs my help -- Anytime.

CARLOS

Does anyone else have any more questions for Jack at this time?

PEDRO MONTOYA MD - GENERAL SURGEON Holds up his hand (Early 30s) Short and a Bit OVERWEIGHT.

MONTOYA

(laughing)

Yes, I have a question for Jack.

JACK

(with a grin)

Shoot!

MONTOYA

Isn't it true you're a Teever?

JACK

I was addicted to Total Virtual Reality -- I kicked it cold turkey three years ago back in Lunopolis.

MONTOYA

(sneer)

You know what they say -- Once a Teever, Always a Teever!

CARLOS

Exactly what kind of fool do you take me to be?

Chiang Looks Directly at Montoya.

CARLOS (cont'd)

Jack was vetted by the best Medical Placement Service on Earth.

JACK

It's alright. It's only natural for others to check out new people

CARLOS

It's still no excuse for him being a Horse's Arse!

ANTONOVA

(frown)

Why don't you Arseholes give Jack a chance. He just got here.

MONTOYA

(nasty grin)

Whasamatter 'Lena, you gotta Schoolgirl Crush?

TANAKA

Yeah Marlina, do you?

MONTOYA

It'd explain a lot.

TANAKA

(twisted smile)

It sure would, Pedro -- She must be Head-Over-Heels in Love with our new Chief-of-Staff already.

MONTOYA

I've heard of Love-at-First Sight, but this is ridiculous.

ANTONOVA

(snarl)

You can both kiss my Skinny Martian Arse!

MONTOYA

Screw you, Marlina!

ANTONOVA

(WIDE grin)

You wouldn't like it -- I just lay there.

JACK

(shaking his head)

This really wasn't what I was expecting on my first day at the job.

CARLOS

(frowning)

I'm very sorry Jack. There's no excuse! Both Hiroshi and Pedro will be severely reprimanded.

JACK

(smiling)

No. In fact as my first official act as Chief of Staff. Let's just drop the whole thing -- It's not worth the hassle.

CARLOS

Are you sure?

JACK

(nodding)

Absolutely!

10 **FLASHBACK:**

10

11 **LUNOPOLIS - PHONE CONVERSATION**

11

TWO PEOPLE, a MAN and an Older WOMAN Are Talking on a Voice-Only TELEPHONE.

MAN

I got the job -- I'm leaving in four weeks.

OLDER WOMAN

Good, maybe you can finally figure out what happened to him.

MAN

Maybe.

OLDER WOMAN

You don't sound too confident.

MAN

It's not that. I'm not gonna be able to go in there with guns ablazin', that's all.

OLDER WOMAN

What are you saying?

MAN

*I'm really gonna have to be discrete.
I can't tip my hand too early.*

OLDER WOMAN

Oh my God!

MAN

*I've got to build up a level of
trust, otherwise I'll never get
anywhere.*

OLDER WOMAN

But you promised --

MAN

*-- Yes I did -- And I'm gonna keep
that promise, I swear -- But--*

OLDER WOMAN

-- But?

MAN

*It may take longer to get all the
answers -- Assuming --*

OLDER WOMAN

-- Assuming???

MAN

He wasn't involved -- Somehow.

OLDER WOMAN

*Now you just wait one Damn minute,
Ja --*

MAN

*I am, but neither of us have seen Sam
in over five years -- Anything could
have happened.*

OLDER WOMAN

*I know, but I also know he'd never do
anything wrong -- It's not in his
nature.*

MAN

*True, but people change --
Unfortunately.*

OLDER WOMAN

Not him! Just find out -- Please.

MAN
I will -- Whatever it takes.

12 **END FLASHBACK:** 12

13 **INT. MARS GENERAL - CORRIDOR - DAY** 13

Jack Runs Into Marlena Antonova. The Corridor is EMPTY Except for a Few MAINTENANCE ROBOTS. They Operate in NEAR-SILENCE. Except ONE. It Has a LOOSE BEARING that Causes it to Make a SLIGHT SQUEAK When It Moves in a FORWARD Direction. A RED LIGHT Flashes on TOP.

ANTONOVA
What're you up to?

JACK
(grin)
Exploring.

ANTONOVA
Cool.

JACK
This place is bigger than I thought.

ANTONOVA
That it is.

JACK
By the way, I really appreciated your coming to my defense the other week. It meant more than you know.

ANTONOVA
(slight smile)
Anytime. Those Bastards were way out of line.

JACK
Yah, which reminds me. There's a get-together at Governor Malenkov's condo Friday night --

Jack steps a bit closer to Antonova.

JACK (cont'd)
-- It's a Plus-One event.

ANTONOVA

Are you asking me to be your Plus-One?

JACK

(slight grin)

That okay?

ANTONOVA

I'm flattered -- I really am --

She Begins to Walk Away From Jack...Very Slowly. Then She Turns Around.

ANTONOVA (cont'd)

-- But I don't think my Wives would like that idea too much.

JACK

I'm sorry you won't be able to make it. I've heard his parties are supposed to be -- Very interesting.

ANTONOVA

Looks like you'll just have to find that out by yourself.

JACK

Looks like it.

ANTONOVA

I'm curious Jack. Won't that be too much stimulation for an --

JACK

-- Ex-Teever?

ANTONOVA

I really don't mean to pry, but from from what I've read isn't there an upper limit on stimulation for someone in your situation?

JACK

Yah.

ANTONOVA

What'll you do then?

JACK

(with a slight grin)

Be very damn careful.

14

14

INT. MARSPOUR - GOVERNOR MALENKOV'S CONDO - NIGHT

THERE Are Dozens of PEOPLE in the Large HOME. A STRING QUARTET Plays MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY CLASSICAL MUSIC.

A MAN Walks Up to Jack - YURI MALENKOV - GOVERNOR OF THE HELLAS BASIN (Early 60s) Built Like a Pro Tennis Player - Thick Blonde Hair.

He holds out his Right Hand in a Friendly Gesture.

YURI

Dr. Greyson, I see you made it to my home. I'm glad you could spare the time.

JACK

Me too, Governor Malenkov. I understand your events are always a lot of fun.

YURI

(with a broad smile)
Please, Call me Yuri.

JACK

Thanks --

YURI

How do you like the music?

JACK

-- The Rolling Stones?

YURI

(mock horror)
Philistine! The Beatles!!!

The TWO Men Walk Towards the BAR. The Crowd Parts for Their HOST.

YURI (cont'd)

What can I get you to drink?

JACK

I'll have whatever you're drinking.

YURI

Is a vodka martini alright?

JACK

Just make it a small one please --

Jack Looks at his Watch.

JACK (cont'd)
 -- I've gotta get up awfully early in
 the morning.

Malenkov Stands Back to Take a Better Look at Jack.

YURI
 Why on Mars do you have to get up
 early on a Saturday morning?

JACK
 I've got rounds in the ER, starting
 at 7:00 a.m.

YURI
 (shaking his head)
 You can't assign someone else?

JACK
 'Fraid not.

YURI
 That's a real pity.

JACK
 (nodding)
 Yah. Sure is.

A Slightly DRUNK Carlos Chiang Walks Up. He has a MARTINI in
 His Hand. He's With a Tall, Slender Youngish WOMAN Wearing a
 Very REVEALING DRESS. SHE Has a Look of TERMINAL BOREDOM on
 Her LOVELY Face.

She Remains SILENT During the Entire CONVERSATION.

CARLOS
 I see you've met our new Chief of
 Staff.

YURI
 The Board made an excellent choice.

CARLOS
 Thanks, Governor.

YURI
 (looking in another
 direction)
 Great. Whatever.

Chiang Wanders Off. He Walks Towards Another GROUP of PARTY-GOERS. His Silent Companion Follows Behind Him.

Jack Steps a Bit Closer to Malenkov.

JACK

This is really good vodka. I'm usually not a fan.

YURI

It's made right here in MarsPort.

JACK

Really?

YURI

We limit imports from Earth as much as possible. It really helps our local economy.

JACK

Makes sense.

YURI

I don't know if you're aware of it, but there are scores of private farms all over the rim of the Hellas Basin.

JACK

I've read about them. Besides supplying MarsPort and the other settlements. Don't they also supply food to the mining operations as well?

YURI

(beginning to grin)

You've done your homework. I really admire that.

JACK

I like to know as much about where I'm going to be living.

YURI

(smiling)

I can tell.

JACK

There are mining operations all over Hellas Basin aren't there?

YURI
A hundred or more I'd estimate.

JACK
All automated, right?

YURI
(with a slight smile)
For the most part, though human supervision is always needed. There's nothing like having boots on the ground.

JACK
What kinds of ore?

YURI
You'd be surprised -- Nickel-Iron, Titanium, Helium-3, Thorium -- Just to name a few.

JACK
(arching an eyebrow)
Thorium?

YURI
It's used in most Non-Fusion Reactors all over the System.

JACK
I read that somewhere.

YURI
We mine approximately seventy percent of all the Thorium used in the Solar System right here on Mars.

JACK
That's amazing. All by robots?

YURI
No, we utilize Human Miners to dig the ore. It's hard work, but it's well paid. Machines are too slow and cost too damned much.

JACK
Seems practical.

YURI
 (with a bigger smile)
 I'm certain the Mining Companies
 will be happy to know that you agree
 with their Management Style.

JACK Takes Another Sip of His DRINK.

Just then A TALL Lovely YOUNG WOMAN Approaches - MONIKA
 BEITERHOFF - REPORTER - MARSPOET TRIBUNE (31)- Athletic
 build - Dark Red Hair - Blue-Green Eyes - Slight German
 Accent - Dazzling Smile.

MONIKA
 Aren't you going to introduce me?

YURI
 Of course. Monika Beiterhoff, this is
 Dr. Jack Greyson. He's the new Chief
 of Staff at Mars General.

JACK
 It's a pleasure.

MONIKA
 (with a slight smile)
 You too, Dr. Greyson.

YURI
 I'll leave you in Monika's capable
 hands.

Malenkov Pats Jack on the Back. He Smiles as He Walks Away.

YURI (cont'd)
 She'll show you 'round to some of the
 other guests.

Monika Reaches Out To Jack and Takes Hold of his Left Hand.

MONIKA
 (with a sly smile)
 Of course. Shall we, Jack?

They Move Toward the Larger, Noisier, More Crowded Section
 of Malenkov's Condo.

Jack Hesitates For a Moment or Two.

JACK
 I don't know. I've never been a
 social butterfly.

MONIKA

It'll be fun. There are a lot of people who'd like to meet the new Chief of Staff of MarsGen.

JACK

I can't imagine why?

MONIKA

Think about it. There will come a day when you might perform surgery on them.

JACK

I know that's true. But their social status won't matter when they're in my O.R.

MONIKA

Don't be so naive'. Their social status makes a big difference when it comes to every aspect of their lives.

Jack Shakes his Head. Then He Staggers a Bit.

JACK

Back in Lunopolis when it came to medical care it was first-come-first-served. Social status didn't matter.

MONIKA

It's the same here on Mars -- Officially.

JACK

Now what in the Hell does that mean?

MONIKA

You'll find out in due time.

JACK

(arching an eyebrow)
God I hope so.

Monika Sees a MAN Approaching.

MONIKA

Speaking of important people. Here's one you should definitely avoid, whenever possible.

He is HAROLD BARRINGTON-SMYTHE IV - PRESIDENT of UNITED MARS WORKERS UNION - Also LEADER of OLYMPUS MONS CRIME SYNDICATE (37) Tall and lanky - Jet-Black Hair with a Matching Pencil-Thin Mustache - Bright Blue Eyes.

MAN

Who's your friend, Monika?

MONIKA

This is Jack Greyson, the new Chief of Staff at MarsGen.

HARRY

The new sawbones, I'm Harold Barrington-Smythe. My friends call me Harry.

JACK

Nice to meet you, Harry.

HARRY

You too, Jack. I hope Monika's not boring you too much.

JACK

(with a smile)

Not at all. What line of work are you in, if I may ask?

HARRY

You could say I'm an entrepreneur.

JACK

(somewhat puzzled)

That covers a lot of ground.

HARRY

Very perceptive. Let's just say I have my fingers in a lot of pies here on Mars.

MONIKA

You may be interested to know, he's the richest man on Mars!

HARRY

Actually there's that fellow over in Clarkesville who's wealthier -- The former asteroid prospector.

MONIKA

Oh yes. I forgot about him. He is quite wealthy isn't he?

HARRY

He could buy and sell me. Three times over -- Easily.

JACK

I've heard of Clarkesville, but I can't recall where it is?

MONIKA

It's located on the opposite side of Mars near the entrance of Valles Marineris.

Barrington-Smythe Glances at His WATCH.

HARRY

Well if you two will excuse me I must be going. Auf weidersehen, Mausi.

Jack Takes a sip of His DRINK.

JACK

Mausi??

MONIKA

(with a slight smile)

It means little mouse -- In German.

JACK

Interesting man, Mr. Barrington-Smythe.

MONIKA

He's also a very dangerous man.

He Looks Over His SHOULDER.

JACK

Him -- He looks harmless enough.

MONIKA

Looks can be deceiving.

She Looks Back Too.

MONIKA (cont'd)

In addition to being President of the largest union on Mars -- He's also a very powerful Crime-Lord.

Jack Greyson Looks Like He's Just Spotted a RATTLESNAKE.

JACK
What do you mean a Crime-Lord?

MONIKA
Have you ever heard of Olympus Mons?

JACK
The volcano?

MONIKA
No, the crime syndicate.

He's Sill SHAKEN...QUITE A BIT IN FACT.

JACK
A crime syndicate, here on Mars?

MONIKA
Yes Jack, here on Mars.

JACK
I really find that hard to believe.
Nothing like that exists in
Lunopolis.

MONIKA
I'm sure it exists there too, you
just never noticed it.

JACK
(shaking his head...
slowly)
But with the United Earth Security
Service how do they survive?

MONIKA
Do you honestly believe underpaid
bureaucrats are immune to bribes?

JACK
I guess I've been so involved in
medicine for so long I didn't notice
such things.

MONIKA
That's why I'm in Investigative
Journalism, to keep up with those
kind of activities.

A Look of Relief Comes Across Jack's Long FACE.

JACK
I'm glad somebody does.

MONIKA

Here's an example. If MarsGen needs a new piece of medical equipment or a rare vaccine, Olympus Mons will find a way to make sure it 'Falls off a Cargo Pod'.

JACK

You seem to know a lot about a lot of things. Did you know Sam Grant?

MONIKA

Just barely. He mainly kept to himself, why?

JACK

Just wondering.

He Changes the Subject. Then He Looks at His Watch Again.

JACK (cont'd)

Good grief. I didn't realize it was so late. I'm working this entire weekend. Are you free next Friday night?

Monika Takes out Her VISIPHONE. She Hums a Tune Under Her Breath While She Looks.

MONIKA

Let me look. No. But I am Saturday. What did you have in mind?

JACK

Dinner and a holovid. The latest STARQUEST Episode has finally been released.

MONIKA

Took them long enough.

JACK

Ain't that the damn truth!

MONIKA

I'll see you Saturday night. Does 8:30 work for you?

JACK

(with a big smile)
Absolutely.

15 INT. MARS GENERAL - CHIEF OF STAFF'S OFFICE - DAY

15

Jack Greyson is at His Desk as He Finishes up Some Paperwork When A Stranger Walks in - LIAM M'KEMBA - CHIEF OF SECURITY FOR MARSGEN (Early 60s) A Tall MAN of AFRICAN DESCENT Wearing a Dark Business Suit.

The Stranger Extends His Left Hand.

M'KEMBA

I'm Liam M'Kemba, the Chief of Security for this asylum.

JACK

Nice to finally meet you. I don't envy your job.

M'Kemba Takes a Seat in Front of Jack's Desk. He Adjusts his Jacket Once He Gets Settled.

M'KEMBA

(smiling)

Nor I yours. I'm sorry I haven't come by sooner. I had a major family crisis to deal with in Clarkesville. It couldn't be avoided.

JACK

I'm really sorry. Is everything alright now?

M'KEMBA

Yes, thanks for asking.

JACK

How can I help you out today?

M'KEMBA

I heard you attended one of Yuri Malenkov's famous parties last night. Did you meet anyone of interest?

Jack Leans forward in His Chair.

JACK

How'd you know that?

M'KEMBA

It's a small town. News travels fast.

JACK

I suppose it does, I just didn't think of it that way.

M'KEMBA
It's not Lunopolis.

JACK
That's for damn certain. Back home
everybody minds their own business.

M'KEMBA
Lunopolis has over four times the
population of MarsPort.

JACK
Speaking of my own business, why are
you so curious about who I may have
met at Yuri's party?

M'KEMBA
It only makes sense. It's part of my
job to know if any of MarsGen's staff
becomes...compromised.

JACK
Compromised? I met Malenkov, drank
some lousy vodka, talked to a few
people and left early.

M'KEMBA
Anyone I may know?

JACK
(with a slight frown)
How about Carlos Chiang? Do you know
him?

M'KEMBA
Anyone else?

JACK
(with a slight grin)
I spoke with Monika Beiterhoff for a
little while.

M'KEMBA
She's a strange one, isn't she?

JACK
(arching an eyebrow)
How so, I found her quite pleasant.

M'KEMBA

I've always noticed that she plays it close to the vest. I suppose it's because she's an Investigative Reporter.

JACK

I know that. She told me herself. In fact we're going out to dinner this coming weekend.

M'KEMBA

Why so long?

JACK

You may not have noticed but we're both very busy people. We had to coordinate our schedules.

M'KEMBA

I'd very much appreciate it if you'd let me know how the date goes.

M'Kemba Moves Closer to Jack.

M'KEMBA (cont'd)

Is that something you could do?

JACK

No.

M'KEMBA

Are you quite sure? It'd really help me out.

JACK

(Pissed!)

Hell No!!

16

16

17 **INT. HOLOTHEATER - NIGHT**

17

Jack and Monika are Among Seventy or So Couples in the Large Circular Showroom to Watch the Latest STARQUEST Episode.

Three Service ROBOTS are Roving To and Fro taking Food and Drink orders. One Stops Directly in front of Monika and Jack.

MONIKA
What would you like, Jack?

JACK
Any old Bourbon'll do.

MONIKA
Sorry, all they have are non-
alcoholic beverages.

JACK
(scowling)
Dammit, you're kidding.

MONIKA
I'm afraid not, how about a
Droobleberry Slush?

JACK
(feigning a frown)
You really want to see me throw up?

MONIKA
(with a slight grin)
Of course not, Silly.

JACK
A large cola then -- And popcorn.

MONIKA
Sounds good.

She Presses a Couple of BUTTONS on the Robot and a Moment
Later they Both Have a Drink and Popcorn. Jack Begins
Wolfing His Down. Then He Begins Gulping His Soda.

Monika Watches Jack in Bemused Awe.

MONIKA (cont'd)
Slow down Jack. Nobody's going to
steal it -- I promise.

JACK
I guess I was hungrier than I
thought.

MONIKA
Evidently.

THE HOUSE LIGHTS Dim. The MUSICAL SCORE Begins. The AUDIENCE
Gets Quiet.

SUDDENLY!!! A SERIES of BRIGHT FLASHING IMAGES Spring suddenly from ALL DIRECTIONS of the Theater. A Few Moments into the PRESENTATION, Jack Begins SHAKING...A Little.

MONIKA (cont'd)
Are you alright, Jack?

JACK
Yah.

MONIKA
Are you sure. You don't look so good.

JACK
(trying to smile)
I'm fine.

Jack Starts SHAKING a Bit More. MORE NOTICEABLE Than BEFORE. WITHIN Moments He's Nearly CONVULSING. Jack Has a BLANK LOOK on His Face. Before Monika Can React Jack Shoots STRAIGHT-UP OUT OF HIS SEAT!!!

POPCORN Flies Out of JACK'S Bag Like so Much UNWANTED SNOW. THE LID of His DRINK Comes LOOSE Dousing Monika and A Few Other ATTENDEES With Purple SODA. A COUPLE of Them Shout CURSES. Then Jack Screams Like He's Been STRUCK by LIGHTNING.

JACK (cont'd)
AAAAAAAAAYYYYYYYYYEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!!!

Jack RUNS Full-Tilt Towards the EXIT. HE Knocks Over Several PATRONS as He Makes his GETAWAY. SOME of Them Try to Tackle Jack to the Floor Without SUCCESS. Jack BARREL-ASSES Out the Door Waving his ARMS. Monika STANDS There With a Look of WORRY and CONFUSION.

She follows Jack as Best as she can. Monika Keeps Him in Sight the Entire Time.

18 INT. TREE COVERED PARK - A FEW MINUTES LATER

18

Monika Catches Up to Jack. He's on a BENCH with his HEAD Between his LEGS. HE Looks SICK...Very SICK.

MONIKA
What happened back there?

JACK
(looking embarrassed)
At the theater?

MONIKA

Yes Jack, at the theater.

JACK

When I sort of -- "Blanked-out"?

MONIKA

(concerned)

That's one way of putting it. You really scared me.

JACK

I'm really sorry about that. It's a side effect of TVR withdrawal caused by sensory overload -- It hasn't hit me this hard in nearly a year.

MONIKA

Mein Gott!

JACK

Fortunately it doesn't happen that often -- I'm usually better prepared.

MONIKA

How do you possibly prepare for that?

JACK

(trying to smile)

You may have noticed I drink a lot of Bourbon -- It takes the edge off.

MONIKA

(with a slight grin)

I'll have to remember that. The main thing is that you're feeling better now.

JACK

Yah -- Mostly -- Now that we're in a quiet place.

MONIKA

Shall we continue on to the restaurant then?

JACK

(still looking weak)

Can we put it off 'til Friday night -- Right now I just wanna go home, have a drink, take a stress-pill and go to bed.

MONIKA

Of course, I'll make sure you get home safely.

JACK

(trying to grin a bit more)

Thanks.

19 INT. DOME SEVEN - LEVEL 3 - DAY

19

JACK stands under a Large HOLOGRAPHIC Display that reads HANK'S MOTORSPORTS. There are a few vehicles of varying sizes and different colors there on the lot. They range from One-Person DUNE-BUGGIES to Six-Person MULTI-DAY EXPLORER-VANS.

A Tall, Skinny MAN with Dark Brown Hair and a Matching Handlebar Mustache walks up to Jack. He has a 'Professionally' Friendly Smile on his face. One of those a Used-Car Salesman dons in order to make a SALE - HANK HOLLIDAY - DEALERSHIP OWNER (LATE 60s)

HOLLIDAY

Howdy stranger, what can I do you for?

JACK

Not much -- Just takin' a look.

HOLLIDAY

(with a slight frown)

Swell -- A Homer Lookie-loo.

JACK

I suppose...

HOLLIDAY

You don't wanna buy anything today?

JACK

No -- Unless --

HOLLIDAY

(with a hint of a smile)

-- Unless what?

JACK

You do rentals too?

HOLLIDAY
 (with a Broad smile)
 Friend, I got the best rental rates
 in all of MarsPort.

Jack takes a step back. A Slow Step.

JACK
 You wouldn't try t' be jerking around
 a Homer -- Would you now?

HOLLIDAY
 You wound me, Sir -- By the way
 whad'ya say your name is?

JACK
 I didn't

HOLLIDAY
 (arching an eyebrow)
 Well??

JACK
 Jack.

HOLLIDAY
 Jack what?

JACK
 Jack -- Spratt.

Holliday holds out his Right Hand.

HOLLIDAY
 A pleasure -- Mr. Spratt.

JACK
 Yah -- You too --

Jack moves in a bit closer to take the other Man's Hand.

JACK (cont'd)
 -- What I'm really interested in is
 findin' out if an old friend of mine
 rented one of your Buggies a while
 back.

HOLLIDAY
 Why?

JACK
 (with a grin)
 'Cause he told me he got a helluva deal from one of you guys here on Level 3 -- I'd like the same deal if possible.

HOLLIDAY
 How long ago was he here?

JACK
 Oh, about a year-and-a-half ago.

HOLLIDAY
 (flabbergasted)
 A year-and-a-half ago -- Now just how in th' Hell am I supposed to recollect everyone I dealt with eighteen months ago?

JACK
 Beats me -- Computer records maybe?

The Salesman Taps the Left Side of his Head.

HOLLIDAY
 Son, this is the only computer I trust.

Jack begins to walk away...SLOWLY.

JACK
 Okay -- Okay -- If you don't remember you don't remember -- Maybe I'll have better luck with the Dutchman.

HOLLIDAY
 That Horse-Thief -- He can't even remember his own mother's birthday.

Jack turns back around.

JACK
 Well?

HOLLIDAY
 Whad'ya say your friend's name was again?

JACK
 I didn't.

HOLLIDAY

Well???

JACK

Grant -- Sam Grant.

Holliday scratches his chin. Then he holds out his Left Hand...Palm-up...Puts on a BIG Smile.

HOLLIDAY

Come to think of it that name does sound a bit familiar.

Jack reaches for his wallet. Then he pulls out a One-Hundred Solar Bill.

JACK

I thought it might.

Holliday remains quiet, like he's expecting more.

Jack gives him Two more 100s.

JACK (cont'd)

Well?

HOLLIDAY

(smiling)

I remember it like it was yesterday -- It was a Sunday afternoon -- I was getting ready t'close up for th' day.

Jack nods. His patience is wearing thin.

JACK

Go on. Then what?

HOLLIDAY

Your Friend comes in here like th' Devil Himself was on his heels -- He was nearly outta breath.

Jack moves closer to Holliday. They are less than half a meter apart.

JACK

Did he say anything that you recall?

HOLLIDAY

Just that he wanted t'rent m'best
Buggy -- Cost didn't matter -- He'd
also need an E-Suit -- He was in one
helluva hurry -- I didn't even have
time t' haggle with him --

Holliday Stretches his Back in order to become more
comfortable.

HOLLIDAY (cont'd)

-- That in itself made me a bit
suspicious -- It set off a few alarm
bells in my head.

JACK

Really, why?

HOLLIDAY

(with a sideways grin)

Mister -- You really are a Homer --
Nobody does any tradin' down here
without takin' th' time t' haggle for
at least a good hour -- It's just not
done.

JACK

(with an arched
eyebrow)

Well, imagine me not knowing that.

HOLLIDAY

Yeah, whatever -- Whad'ya say your
name was -- You look a little
familiar t'me -- Aren't you that new
Doc at MarsGen?

Jack turns away from Holliday.

JACK

Not me. You must be confusing me with
somebody else.

HOLLIDAY

I dunno -- I'm pretty good when it
comes t' faces.

Jack begins to make a hasty retreat.

JACK

Well, I suppose there's a first time
for everything.

Holliday looks at the Cash in his Hand and Smiles.

HOLLIDAY
I suppose so.

20 **INT. CAFE - NIGHT**

20

As Jack and Monika Finish their MEAL a Strolling MARIACHI BAND Plays a Soft and Lovely TUNE. Jack Lights Monika's CIGARETTE. She SMILES. They Both Look HAPPY and SATISFIED. Jack is GRINNING.

A WAITER Brings Another Bottle of WINE to their TABLE. HE Hands the BILL to Jack, Who Makes a TERRIBLE FACE. Monika LAUGHS Out LOUD. TEARS Begin to Roll Down her Beautiful CHEEKBONES.

JACK
(beginning to laugh)
Good God. Why didn't you let me know how expensive this place is?

MONIKA
What's wrong, Jack?

JACK
Oh nothing. How do you feel about washing dishes?

MONIKA
It can't be that bad.

JACK
(with a twisted grin)
I don't know. I may have to promise free brain surgery to the owner and her whole family as well.

MONIKA
The food was good.

JACK
Yah -- But I wouldn't have had that third glass of wine if I'd known it was imported from Earth.

She tries to distract Jack.

MONIKA
How was your steak?

JACK
 (with a half-smile
 and a half-grimace)
 Terrific, I couldn't even tell it'd
 started out in a hydroponics tank.

MONIKA
 (with a sudden
 shudder)
 Oh God Jack. Remember reading how
 people used to kill animals for food?

JACK
 They didn't know any better -- In
 fact back home in th' Blue Ridge
 Mountains there're farmers who still
 keep chickens -- Some 'em are my
 kinfolk.

MONIKA
 For the eggs -- Right?

JACK
 (with a wink)
 Mostly.

Jack changes the Subject.

JACK (cont'd)
 I was wondering -- Since you know so
 much about what goes on in
 Marsport -- What do you know about
 Free Mars?

MONIKA
 Not much. Just a few rumors. That's
 all.

JACK
 What kind of rumors?

MONIKA
 Silly stuff really -- Rumors about
 Independence from Earth.

JACK
 (arching an eyebrow)
 Really?

MONIKA
 Yes. Really --

She Takes a Sip of Wine.

MONIKA (cont'd)

-- From what I've heard they feel that Earth's treating them like third-class citizens on their own planet for decades. How they're angry and ready for change -- Self-Rule!

Jack Lights a CIGARETTE. He INHALES Three Deep PUFFS.

JACK

If that's so I can't say that I blame them. I've always sympathized with the Little Guy.

MONIKA

That's a good way to live.

JACK

Thanks. But I'd like to know more.

MONIKA

Why?

JACK

Maybe I can help in my own way. Do something, even if it's not much.

MONIKA

Alright, take the cost of medical care here on Mars. As I pointed out at Yuri's party it's a rigged system.

JACK

For the upper class, right?.

She Takes a Bite of Her SALAD.

MONIKA

Precisely.

JACK

That Sucks! I intend to make a lot of changes in the way that's handled. Major changes.

MONIKA

That won't win you many popularity contests.

JACK

Like I give a damn --

Jack Takes Another SIP of Wine. Then He Lights Another Cigarette.

JACK (cont'd)
-- It's never been my style anyway?

MONIKA
(with a subtle wink)
Give the man a prize.

She Hesitates a Moment. Then She Charges Ahead.

MONIKA (cont'd)
There's something else, though.

JACK
What?

MONIKA
There's the Missing Thorium
Situation.

JACK
(puzzled)
What Missing Thorium Situation?

MONIKA
According to the auditors there
should be quite a bit more of the
stuff mined every quarter.

JACK
What auditors?

MONIKA
The one's who work for all the major
mining operations.

JACK
Okay. How much is missing?

MONIKA
Millions of solars worth. Tens of
millions over the past four years.

JACK
How many companies are we talking
about?

MONIKA
All of them.

JACK

How many Thorium Mining Companies are there.

MONIKA

There are nine operating Thorium Mining outfits within twenty clicks of MarsPort. Including the Independents.

JACK

Any suspects?

MONIKA

The United Earth Security Service isn't saying. Sometimes I think they're in on it.

JACK

(arching an eyebrow)

You never know.

MONIKA

Yes. And there's been an increase in accidents among the Thorium miners.

JACK

Really? How much?

MONIKA

Thirteen percent in the past four years.

JACK

What sort of accidents?

MONIKA

(looking grim)

Explosives misfiring -- Laser Drills burning through E-Suits -- Pressure Seals failing -- Things like that.

JACK

(frowning)

And when these accidents occur, what happens then?

MONIKA

The site is shut down at least seventy-two hours for inspection.

JACK
(with a faraway look)
That's what I thought.

MONIKA
Do you think somebody's arranging
these accidents?

JACK
(nodding slowly)
Yah.

MONIKA
That would give someone ample time to
confiscate as much ore as they'd
like.

JACK
It's how I'd do it if I was in
charge. Pretty slick -- Nobody'd be
the wiser.

MONIKA
Except for the occasional dead miner.

JACK
(with a heavy frown)
Yah -- There is that isn't there.

MONIKA
And if that isn't enough.

Jack Snaps to Attention.

JACK
(arching an eyebrow)
What else is there?

MONIKA
There's the Drug Trafficking too.

JACK
Drug Trafficking -- What Drug
Trafficking?

MONIKA
Two types really, Jack -- The first
is for Pain Meds for the Injured
Miners -- The second is for
Stimulants to make them work longer
hours to make up for lost time.

JACK
So they get screwed from both
directions.

MONIKA
Indeed they do!

Jack pounds on the TABLE.

JACK
That really Sucks Out-Loud!

MONIKA
I totally agree.

JACK
Any idea who's behind all of this?

MONIKA
I've been working this story for over
a year and not getting anywhere.

Monika Takes a SIP of Wine. Then ANOTHER.

MONIKA (cont'd)
It's so frustrating.

JACK
I can imagine -- Do you think Free
Mars may be connected somehow?.

MONIKA
I did, until I met some people who
claim to be members.

JACK
Could they have lied to you?

MONIKA
No. All of them are beyond reproach.

JACK
I'd really like to meet some of them,
just to talk.

Monika Hesitates. She stares at Jack while he finishes his
WINE.

MONIKA
That's a lot easier said than done.
Though one of them was at Yuri's
party.

JACK
Let me guess, Harry, right?

MONIKA
(with a thin smile)
I really can't say.

JACK
What about Barrington-Smythe? From
what you've told me this sort of
hijacking would be right up his
alley.

MONIKA
It's not Harry. I know.

JACK
Oh really, how?

MONIKA
(smiling)
I asked.

21 INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

21

Jack and Monika are Woken up by the Holocom that Sits next
to his Bed. He Looks at His Watch and Sees that It's 1:30AM.

When He Answers, a THREE-DIMENSION 1/10 Scale Image of a
Woman Appears In the HOLOFIELD - DR. KATHERINE (KATE)
O'MALLEY MD - FREE CLINIC OPERATOR (Late 50s) SHE'S Short
and Wiry with a FIERY PERSONALITY.

KATE
Is this Dr. Greyson?

JACK
(still half asleep)
Yah -- Whooziss?

MONIKA
Who's calling, Jack?

JACK
Beats me, Darlin' -- Now if you can
tell me why the name of Hell you're
calling at this ungodly hour I'd
appreciate it.

KATE

I'm Dr. Kate O'Malley -- I run what passes for a free clinic here in MarsPort.

JACK

This couldn't wait 'til the morning -- During regular office hours?

KATE

I'm afraid not. We've got an emergency. I need a neurosurgeon. Stat!

Jack Sits Up. He's Fully Awake NOW!

JACK

I suppose I can be there in an hour.

KATE

(irritated)

The sooner you can get here the better.

JACK

How will I find your clinic?

KATE

(with a slight grin)

Just follow your nose to the smelliest part of Dome One.

The Call Disconnects. Jack Turns to Monika.

JACK

I've gotta go out for a while.

She's half AWAKE.

MONIKA

Why?

JACK

Medical emergency.

MONIKA

When will you be back?

Jack Kisses Her Forehead.

JACK

I wish I knew. Go back to sleep

Monika pulls the Blanket over Her Head.

MONIKA
You don't have to worry about that.

22 INT. O'MALLEY'S CLINIC - LATER

22

THE CLINIC is Clean But VERY Disorganized. A Few Medical Technicians Wander Around GOING From PATIENT to PATIENT. Every STAFF MEMBER Looks Tired.

A FRAZZLED Kate O'Malley Walks Towards Jack. She Holds Out Her Right Hand and SMILES.

KATE
Welcome to my humble place of
business, Dr. Greyson.

They Shake HANDS.

JACK
(grinning)
I'm glad I could make it.

KATE
(thin smile)
Not half as glad as me.

JACK
Why aren't these people at MarsGen?

KATE
(sounding very tired)
The poor bastards can't afford it.
Good medical care here in Marsport is
for the lucky few. The ones with
money and power.

Jack takes Another Slow Look All Around.

JACK
That's not right. Aren't there any
other Doctors on staff?

KATE
(frowning)
No, just me and the few Medtecs you
see. And it's worse in most of the
other clinics in MarsPort -- A lot
worse.

JACK
That's incredible. How do you manage?

Kate CROSSES Herself.

KATE
Hand to mouth usually. And with a few
donations -- And lots of prayer.

JACK
Where's my patient?

KATE
A bit over four hundred kilometers
from here.

JACK
You're joking?

She Pats His Back.

KATE
You wish.

23 **EXT. AIRSHIP BARSOOM - NIGHT**

23

THE BARSOOM Is IMPRESSIVE. Cylindrical and Nearly as LONG as
a FOOTBALL FIELD. She's Painted DAYGLO GREEN. The GONDOLA
Hangs Underneath the Main Body like an AFTERTHOUGHT.

STANDING Outside the BARSOOM is The OWNER/OPERATOR - VIJAY
RAMESH (Mid-30s) Tall and Rangy - HE speaks with a WEST
TEXAS DRAWL.

Jack Approaches.

VIJAY
(smiling)
Welcome aboard. This ol' Gal is m'
pride 'n joy!

JACK
I can tell --

Jack Cranes His Neck to Take in The View.

JACK (cont'd)
-- Kate O'Malley told me my patient
is four hundred kilometers away.

VIJAY

Right.

Jack Follows VIJAY Through a Man-Sized HATCH Adjacent to The GONDOLA.

24 **INT. AIRSHIP BARSOOM - CONTINUOUS**

24

FROM The HATCH, Jack Climbs into The PASSENGER CABIN. There HE BUCKLES Up into the Traditional SHOTGUN Seat. It's Really CRAMPED Considering Jack's Lanky Build.

He Notices MOST of the Lighting in the CABIN Comes from the INSTRUMENTS on the CONTROL PANEL.

Jack Takes a Look at His Watch. It's 2:27AM

JACK

How long will it take to get there?

VIJAY

A tad over four-and-a-half hours -- assumin' --

JACK

-- Assuming what?

VIJAY

No Sandstorms.

JACK

I was under the impression that the Metsats keeps a close eye on those.

VIJAY

Oh they do. But sometimes th' damn things whip up with little or no warnin' at all.

JACK

Why do I find no comfort with that knowledge?

VIJAY

Don't get yer panties in a wad -- We'll make it there an' back without any SNAFUS.

Jack Looks Around The Interior of The GONDOLA. He'S Shaking His Head...SLOWLY.

JACK
I was under the impression it took
two people to fly one of these birds.
A Pilot and an Engineer?

VIJAY
(with a grin)
Aboard my ship I'm both. It's a real
money saver.

JACK
(looking a bit
concerned)
Is that safe?

VIJAY
(with a BIGGER Grin)
Now don't blow a gasket in yer E-
Suit -- This ol' Lady's got th' best
Autopilot on Mars.

A few MOMENTS of Silence.

VIJAY (cont'd)
I'll bet she didn't tell you I'm part
of her underground?

JACK
Underground?

VIJAY
It's nothin' sinister -- We're just
some average people who donate our
time an' services t' Kate's clinic --

He Takes a Reading From One of the INSTRUMENTS. Then He
Turns Toward Jack.

VIJAY (cont'd)
-- We make sure those who need
medical care get it.

JACK
Sounds like a worthwhile cause.

VIJAY
We like t' think so.

JACK
Do you know the Muldoons?

VIJAY
Just barely.

JACK
 Why didn't they just bring the boy to
 MarsGen?

VIJAY
 'Cause it woulda taken 'em at least
 fifteen hours by tractor.

JACK
 Do they trust you?

Vijay Looks Out the Forward VIEWSCREEN. The MARTIAN
 LANDSCAPE is CHANGELESS. All he Sees are Rust-Colored DESERT
 and LOW SAND DUNES in the DISTANCE. He has a Beatific SMILE
 on His LONG FACE.

VIJAY
 No -- But they trust Kate.

JACK
 She seems very trustworthy.

VIJAY
 She's prob'ly th' most trustworthy
 person on this whole God-fersaken
 planet!

JACK
 I can believe that.

VIJAY
 Wouldya b'leive me if I told ya that
 she came out here over twenty years
 ago?

JACK
 Sure, why?

VIJAY
 T' run Mars General.

JACK
 Why isn't she working there now?

VIJAY
 She couldn't take all th' bullshize.

JACK
 (nodding)
 I can understand that.

Jack Yawns. TWICE.

VIJAY

We gotta ways to go yet. Why don't ya sack out a while?

JACK

(rubbing his eyes)
Sound's like a good idea.

HE Hunkers DEEPER into His SEAT and Closes His EYES.

JACK (cont'd)

Wake me when we get there.

VIJAY

(grinning)
Well -- Duh!

25 **BEGIN BARSOOM MARS SURFACE FLYOVER MONTAGE:**

25

-- *BARSOOM Flies Perpendicular across the Rim of the HELLAS BASIN.*

-- *THROUGH the Forward VIEWPORT the Morning SUN can be Seen RISING in The EAST Bringing a New DAY.*

-- *BELOW BARSOOM the Colors of the Features of MARS Begin to CHANGE Once SUNLIGHT Begins to Strike THEM. The TOPS of the Countless DUNES Catch the FIRST LIGHT.*

-- *BARSOOM Flies Over Half-a-Dozen MINING OPERATIONS. A Few MEN Can be Seen on the GROUND as they Begin their SHIFTS. They Look Like So Many ANTS.*

-- *BARSOOM also Flies Over Two Other FARMS on HER Way to the MULDOON FARM. There's Little Activity Going On at Either PLACE.*

26 **END MARS BARSOOM SURFACE FLYOVER MONTAGE:**

26

27 **INT. AIRSHIP - BARSOOM - DAY**

27

A FAIRLY Loud BELL Begins to RING. Vijay Shuts It OFF Almost IMMEDIATELY. Then He turns to Jack. He SHAKES Him a Little Bit. Jack Rubs His Eyes as He Tries to Wake UP.

VIJAY

Y' better wake up. We'll be landin' soon.

JACK

How long?

Vijay Checks the CHRONOMETER. He NODS to himself. He Makes a Few NOTES in His LOGBOOK.

VIJAY

Twenty minutes, give or take.

JACK

Cool. What can you tell me about where we're goin'?

VIJAY

Th' Muldoon Farm. It's one of the oldest on th' Hellas Basin. In fact it's fifth generation, I think.

JACK

(amazed)

Fifth generation. You mean they've been out here nearly a hundred and twenty years?

VIJAY

Sounds 'bout right. Most of th' ones on this side of th' Basin are only third and fourth gen -- On th' other side they're mostly second and third.

Jack Looks Out a VIEWPORT. All He Sees is UNENDING DESOLATION.

JACK

They've been out here since MarsPort was first settled back in 2071?

VIJAY

Yeah. They were members o' th' Pan-European Pioneer Corps.

JACK

No wonder they don't like outsiders.

VIJAY

Not that. They just like their own kind. Typical farmers.

JACK

(with a slight smile)

I know the type. My sister's married to one.

VIJAY
 (smiling too)
 So's mine.

28 **INT. MULDOON FARM - DAY**

28

The FARM Consists of HALF-A-DOZEN Transparent Domes Nestled Up TIGHTLY Against the RIM-WALL of the HELLAS BASIN. The BARSOOM Sits DOWN on a Paved LANDING PAD.

ONCE Through the AIRLOCK Jack and Vijay are met by JED MULDOON (Mid 40s) FARMER Dark Blond hair and Blue eyes - Tall and Lanky - Next to him is SAMAYA MULDOON (Late 30s) FARMER also - Tall and Lanky like her HUSBAND - Dark hair and eyes - Middle-Eastern Decent. A Group of NOISY Children surround them.

The FARMER Doesn't hesitate.

JED
 Welcome Vijay, where's Kate?

VIJAY
 She thought it would be better if an expert came instead.

JACK
 I'm Jack Greyson -- Kate told me you have a medical emergency.

JED
 You're the new Doctor from Earth?

JACK
 Yah. But I've been working for the past seven years in Lunopolis.

JED
 Aye, but to us simple farm-folk you're still a Double-Damned Homer!

SAMAYA
 Why didn't Kate come herself?

JACK
 I'm a neurosurgeon. She's not.

VIJAY
 Hey guys, if Kate says Jack is okay you can bet th' farm on that.

JED
 (with a slight scowl)
 I guess you'll do, Doctor.

JACK
 (frowning)
 Thanks. May I see my patient now?

SAMAYA Starts to Walk Away. SHE Heads Towards a Well-Lit CORRIDOR. QUITE a Few of the Other KIDS Try to TAG ALONG But Samaya Shoos Them Away. NOT SO GENTLY IN A FEW CASES.

SAMAYA
 Of course, Doctor. Come with me.

29 INT. MULDOON FARM - MEDBAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

29

A BOY Lies on a White Sheet on a Low-Slung BED. There are a Few Wires and Tubes Attached to HIM. He's Unconscious. His Breathing is SHALLOW.

JACK
 What happened?

SAMAYA
 Hiram here was attending his chores two days ago when he fell off a ladder. He hasn't stirred since.

JACK
 How tall a ladder?

JED
 Five meters.

Jack Uses a PENLIGHT to Look into the Boy's EYES. HE Nods His Head a Few Times.

JACK
 And how old is Hiram?

JED
 Eleven his next birthday.

Jack Checks the Boy's PULSE. HE Makes a Few ENTRIES in His NOTEPAD. Then He Rubs His Chin.

JACK
 Was he being supervised?

JED
 No. Of course not.

JACK
Then please tell me, what in the Hell
was an eleven year old child doing
climbing a five-meter tall ladder?

JED
Like Samaya said, his chores.

Jack Looks Totally AMAZED!

JACK
At eleven?

JED
Dr. Greyson -- Don't judge us by your
Homer standards. We're a working
farm. We have kids as young as three
doing chores.

JACK
(with a frown)
That's awful. It violates all sorts
of Child Labor Laws.

Jed's Patience Is Wearing THIN. It shows on his LONG Face.

JED
In a farm like ours it's all-hands-
on-deck all the time -- Or we all
starve together.

SAMAYA
(nodding)
That's very true, Doctor
-- In a good year we have enough
produce to sell to MarsPort and the
other cities -- In a bad year it can
be pretty rough.

Jack Scratches His HEAD. He Looks Off into the DISTANCE. He
HUMS a Quiet Tune Under His BREATH.

JACK
As a matter of fact I've gotta few
relatives who're farmers. Sometimes
it's a struggle for them too.

JED
Here on Mars?

JACK
Back on Earth.

JED
 (with a slight smile)
 Maybe you're not such a bad fellow,
 after all -- For a Homer.

JACK
 (grinning)
 I hope not, now let me take a closer
 look.

Jack Takes Out a Medscanner From a JUMPSUIT Pocket.

JED
 What the devil is that thing?

JACK
 It's a Medscanner. It'll help me
 figure out what's wrong with Hiram.

It makes a BEEP now and then.

SAMAYA
 I've heard of such devices. I never
 thought I'd actually see one

JACK
 You must be the Household Medtec.
 Tell you what. When I've finished,
 it's yours.

SAMAYA
 I really shouldn't.

JACK
 I insist. I've got plenty to spare
 back at MarsGen.

SAMAYA
 Thank you.

JED
 Any word on Hiram yet?

Jack LOOKS at the DEVICE. It BEEPS Louder than Before.

JACK
 (with a frown)
 Any moment now -- Yah. As I suspected
 he has a Subdural Hematoma -- A bad
 one.

JED
 Can you fix it here?

JACK
Afraid not. He needs surgery at
MarsGen -- ASAP!

SAMAYA
How soon?

Jack TRIES To SOUND As CALM As POSSIBLE IN ORDER To Reassure
The MULDOONS.

JACK
Eight-ten hours max. I can give him
something that'll help him sleep 'til
we get there.

SAMAYA
What?

JACK
Narcosamine. Twenty cc's.

JED
Is that safe, Samaya?

Samaya Holds Up Her LEFT HAND In An Unfamiliar GESTURE.

SAMAYA
(frowning)
As safe as any drug,
I suppose.

JED
Dr. Greyson. If you're taking Hiram
to MarsPort, I want Samaya to go with
him.

JACK
Of course.

JED
Samaya --

SAMAYA
-- I've already packed my bags.

30 INT. MARS GENERAL - OPERATIONS MANAGERS OFFICE - DAY

30

Jack WALKS Into Chiang's OFFICE. M'Kemba Is There As Well.

Both MEN Seem AGITATED. Chiang is Holding a CIGAR. The SOUND SYSTEM is Playing Too Loud. Chiang Turns DOWN The VOLUME Once The DOOR to His OFFICE is CLOSED.

JACK
(with a slight smile)
What's up?

Carlos gives Him a STERN look.

CARLOS
It's come to my attention that you recently performed surgery on a boy. A boy from one of the farms.

JACK
As a matter of fact several members of the staff assisted me -- Voluntarily --

HE STANDS a Bit STRAIGHTER. Jack Clears His THROAT.

JACK (cont'd)
-- If the boy didn't have the surgery he'd have died.

M'KEMBA
Was this surgery authorized?

JACK
Authorized by who? Being Chief of Staff I assumed it was my call.

M'KEMBA
You assumed wrong.

CARLOS
You may not realize it but Mars General has a chain of command --

M'KEMBA
-- A chain of command you didn't follow.

CARLOS
What you did was totally irresponsible --

M'KEMBA

-- We don't engage in socialized
medicine here at Mars General.

JACK

May I remind you both, every citizen
of the United Earth Protectorate has
the right to free healthcare.

Carlos PUFFS Himself Up.

CARLOS

(with amused disdain)

And may I remind you, we're not on
Earth, are we?

M'KEMBA

I'm afraid I'll have to file an
official report with the U.E.P.
Security Service.

Jack doesn't hide his ANGER.

JACK

File and be damned. I don't give a
Rat's Arse!!

M'KEMBA

(very solemn)

You really should, Jack.

CARLOS

(smarmy)

That's a big mistake. You'll regret
it -- I promise.

JACK

(pissed)

Is that a threat?

Chiang Lights His CIGAR. HE Blows SMOKE in Jack's Direction.
Then TAKES Another PUFF.

CARLOS

Of course not. Just a bit of friendly
advice.

31 INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

31

Jack Paces the FLOOR while Monika WATCHES. She's CONCERNED
And It SHOWS. Monika Has A DRINK In Her HAND That Hasn't
BEEN TOUCHED.

MONIKA
It's only a week.

JACK
I know. But it still pisses me off.

MONIKA
What did you expect?

JACK
I don't know, a handshake maybe.
Something dammit!

MONIKA
Things work differently on Mars.

JACK
I'm beginning to understand that. I
wonder how much Kate could pay me to
come aboard?

MONIKA
Don't be silly. The Board won't let
Chiang fire you.

JACK
I hope you're right. But if they do I
was thinking about something that
could tide me over.

MONIKA
Such as?

JACK
I could make housecalls.

MONIKA
(confused)
What's a housecall?

JACK
Back in the nineteenth and early
twentieth centuries doctors would go
to patient's homes instead of the
patient coming to the doctor.

MONIKA
(arching an eyebrow)
Wasn't that terribly inefficient?

JACK
It was ridiculously inefficient. It would probably be twenty times harder here on Mars -- At least.

MONIKA
(nodding)
At least.

JACK
If I could persuade Kate she might go for it, though.

MONIKA
(arching HER eyebrow)
Let me see if I understand this. You and Ramesh would fly his airship from farm to farm dispensing medical treatment?

JACK
(thin smile)
It does sound a bit quixotic -- When you put it that way.

MONIKA
Just a bit.

JACK
I've got to do something.

MONIKA
I know. But have you really thought this through?

JACK
How I'd get my supplies for example?

MONIKA
Right.

JACK
Maybe through Barrington-Smythe.

Monika doesn't LIKE this Idea.

MONIKA
You can't be serious. Like I told you he's dangerous.

JACK

No doubt. But I'll bet he knows where to obtain anything we'd need to be successful.

MONIKA

But at a very steep price.

JACK

You're right -- I know.

MONIKA

Of course I am.

JACK

I believe I'll go visit Kate tomorrow and see if she'll have me.

MONIKA

I'm sure she'll appreciate anything you can offer.

JACK

I hope so -- I just don't want it to be a waste of time.

32 INT. O'MALLEY'S CLINIC - DAY

32

Kate is Alone When Jack ENTERS. There Are a Few PATIENTS in COLD-SLEEP PODS.

Kate's Drinking From a Large COFFEE MUG.

KATE

Jack, what in the Bloody Hell are you doing here this early?

JACK

You've probably heard by now that I got in trouble for operating on the Muldoon boy?

KATE

(nodding slowly)

News travels fast in this damned beehive.

JACK

I've come to ask a favor.

KATE
(with a cautious grin)
Ask away.

JACK
If I get fired I'd like to come to
work for you --

Jack STEPS towards Her.

JACK (cont'd)
-- In fact I'd like to start making
housecalls starting with all of the
Hellas Basin Farms.

Kate Takes A STEP Back Away From Jack.

KATE
I see.

JACK
What do you think?

SHE Rubs Her CHIN Then REPLIES.

KATE
It's a noble idea. But I couldn't pay
you one-tenth of what you're making
at MarsGen.

JACK
I didn't go into medicine for the
money.

KATE
That's why I like you so much, Jack.
You're an idealist.

JACK
(with a slight grin)
I suppose I am, after all.

Kate Wrinkles Her NOSE.

KATE
And a Drunk too. I can smell the
booze from here.

Jack Puts on a Bad IRISH Accent.

JACK
Gee thanks, Katie-Darlin' -- You
really do care.

She's NOT Amused.

KATE
How's that been workin' out for you,
Jack?

JACK
What?

KATE
The Smart-Arse Routine.

JACK
(with a BIG smile)
Pretty well, so far.

KATE
God, I really hope so.

JACK
Why?

KATE
I know some Important People who'd
like to meet you.

JACK
Who?

KA
Just some folks with Free Mars!

Jack Becomes SERIOUS.

JACK
When?

KATE
As soon as possible. You might want
to sober up first.

JACK
Right. You don't know this. But I
tend to act stupid when I'm
nervous --

Jack Steps CLOSER to Kate.

JACK (cont'd)
-- Bourbon helps.

KATE
Stupid, how?

JACK
I start making jokes -- Everything is
hilarious -- In spite of the
circumstances...

KATE
That must be a real pain in the ass.

JACK
(scowling)
You have no idea -- The worse off
things get, the funnier I become --
I'm the Life-of-the-Fraggin'-Party!

33 INT. MARSPORT - LOCATION UNKNOWN - TIME UNKNOWN

33

Jack sits in an UNCOMFORTABLE Chair Facing a Long TABLE.
He's BLINDFOLDED.

SOMEONE from behind Him Removes the Blindfold. He Squints
the Bright LIGHT out of His EYES.

Three Serious Looking PEOPLE face Him on the other SIDE of
the TABLE. Two Men and One Woman. They All Appear to Be LATE
MIDDLE-AGED.

MAN 1
I understand you've being wanting to
meet us.

JACK
Yah!

MAN 2
You know we wouldn't be holding this
meeting if Kate O'Malley hadn't
recommended it --

WOMAN 2
-- We think very highly of her
opinions --

MAN 1
-- Indeed.

JACK
Is she a member of Free Mars?

MAN 2
No, more's the pity -- We've been
trying to recruit her for years --

WOMAN 2

-- And her answer is always the same, 'As the Great Groucho Marx said, "I refuse to join any club that would have me as a member".'

JACK

Yah. That sounds like her.

MAN 1

She's the "Real Deal".

JACK

(with a smile)

Yah, she sure is! Now what?

WOMAN 2

In a perfect world, you'd join our cause.

JACK

I appreciate the offer -- I really do. But I think I'm gonna take the same stand as Kate.

MAN 2

Are you quite sure, Dr. Greyson?

JACK

Yah. And it's not that I disagree with your ideals. It's the Revolutionary overtones that bother me.

MAN 1

That's a real pity.

WOMAN 2

You recently performed surgery on that child from the Muldoon Farm.

JACK

Yah.

MAN 1

And you were chastised by your Superiors.

JACK

Chastised Hell! I had my Arse handed to me.

WOMAN 2

Would you do it again?

JACK

Hell Yeah. I'm not gonna let anyone go without medical care. Not on my watch.

MAN 1

Even though you may lose your position?

JACK

I could care less.

WOMAN 2

That's what caught our attention, Dr. Greyson.

JACK

Oh?

MAN 1

Yes. That's why we contacted Kate. We wanted to meet you.

WOMAN 2

We thought you might be a good candidate for recruitment.

JACK

What can I say. I'm a sucker for lost causes.

WOMAN 2

Tell me Doctor, are you aware how the Government functions here on Mars?

JACK

I know what I've read. There are Twelve Regions across the planet. Each with its own Governor.

MAN 2

Precisely. We have Yuri Malenkov here in the Hellas Basin. He's been in office the past four years.

JACK

I know. I've met him. He seems harmless enough -- For a Bureaucrat.

WOMAN 2

Yes we know. There's one each for all the regions, Mariner Valley, Olympus Mons, Syrtis Major, Arcadia just to name a few.

JACK

Okay.

WOMAN 2

Do you know how they're selected?

JACK

I haven't a clue. Elections?

MAN 1

No. Each Governor is appointed by one of the Major Corporations that funded the Permanent Settlement of Mars over a Century ago.

JACK

(arching an eyebrow)

I didn't know that. That's very interesting. I thought the United Earth Protectorate was in charge.

MAN 2

Most people are under that impression, but as long as the right people on Earth receives their share of the profits that will always be the case.

JACK

The right people being the Stockholders. Of course.

WOMAN 2

And certain high ranking United Earth Protectorate Board Members as well.

JACK

So, between the Corporations and the Bureaucrats on Earth getting the Lion's Share, Mars is left with the Crumbs.

MAN 1

Very dry crumbs, Dr. Greyson.

JACK

No wonder Medical care isn't free here on Mars.

MAN 2

Exactly -- It's also why the Farmers are so poorly paid for their labor.

WOMAN 2

Some of those unfortunate folks come close to starvation every year.

JACK

That really Sucks -- Out Loud! Nobody should have to live that.

MAN 1

You're absolutely right.

JACK

At least when it comes to the cost of Medical care I'm planning on making some drastic changes.

MAN 1

We know. But will that be enough to make a difference that'll change things?

JACK

Hey, it's a step in the right direction. It's why I went to the Muldoon Farm.

WOMAN 2

That was admirable. But as you said it's most likely going to cost you your job.

JACK

Sometimes you gotta choose what's right -- In spite of the consequences.

THE Other MAN Stands and WALKS Closer to Jack.

MAN 2

And there's the plight of the Thorium Miners. They're caught up in this Cycle of Greed as well.

JACK
I've heard a little about that.

MAN 2
From Ms. Beiterhoff, correct?

JACK
Yah. According to what Monika told me something rotten is going on with all that.

MAN 1
To put it mildly. Evidently there's been an increase in Industrial Accidents. People are dying!

MAN 2
Yes -- There have been a lot more unexplained explosions over the past few years.

WOMAN 2
Entire shipments of Thorium are going missing, more and more often. It's as if they're just vanishing into thin air.

MAN 1
The Miners are losing valuable work time.

MAN 2
Not to mention their share of the profits -- Millions of solars.

JACK
She told me about that too. What else can you tell me?

WOMAN 2
Someone high up in one of the Mining Companies is behind the entire operation.

JACK
Which one?

MAN 1
The Solar System Mining Corporation.

JACK
But why?

MAN 2
To make more profits -- Possibly as
individuals for illegal purposes.

JACK
You're saying they're Greedy
Bastards?

MAN 1
Exactly.

JACK
What kind of proof do you have.
Extraordinary claims like this
requires extraordinary proof --

Jack Rubs His EYES.

JACK (cont'd)
-- Especially when you're implicating
someone in something involving
deaths?

MAN 2
Oh, we have proof. Or we did.

JACK
Whaddya mean "You did?"

WOMAN 2
We had an inside man. An informant
who had overwhelming evidence.

MAN 1
We were planning to go public. Hold a
Press Conference.

MAN 2
He called to let us know where to
meet him to receive the information.
We waited three hours at the
rendezvous point -- He never showed
up.

WOMAN 2
We finally received a message. He
said he had been exposed and was
being followed.

MAN 2
He told us to meet him at a secondary
rendezvous point -- One that we
believed was totally secure.

MAN 1

That was the last we ever heard from him. He was a good man. He was killed before he could get the information to us.

JACK

Who was he?

MAN 1

Dr. Sam Grant.

JUST Then a Wall EXPLODES.

BOOM!!!

A Dozen SECURITY TROOPS Storm Through the RAGGED HOLE. They're LED by M'Kemba.

To Jack, His EYES are filled with sheer HATE and BETRAYAL!

MAN 1 (cont'd)

You Homer Bastard!

34

INT. MARS GENERAL - CHIEF OF SECURITY'S OFFICE - DAY

34

Jack is STRAPPED into What Appears to Be a DENTAL CHAIR. M'KEMBA Stands Next to HIM. The LIGHTING is Very BRIGHT.

There is a Small Metal TABLE Next to the CHAIR. It's COVERED With Shiny Metallic Medical Instruments and One SYRINGE.

M'KEMBA

I imagine you're wondering why you're here?

JACK

I have no idea.

M'KEMBA

You were meeting with some people you shouldn't have.

JACK

Really?

M'KEMBA

Really.

JACK

How so?

M'KEMBA
They're dangerous.

JACK
Them -- They seemed harmless enough.

M'KEMBA
You know who they are?

JACK
Yah. Just some old friends.

M'KEMBA
What were you doing?

Jack puts on a Big Smile.

JACK
Playing Canasta. You ever play? It's
lotsa fun and a great stress
reliever -- You should try it
sometime.

M'KEMBA
(with a thin smile)
There's that damned humor again. Not
everything's a joke.

JACK
Except you. Why am I here, really?

M'KEMBA
(ignoring the
question)
Did you know I'm a doctor?

JACK
Hippocrates must be rollin' over in
his grave.

M'KEMBA
No. I'm a psychologist, not an MD.

JACK
Then Freud and Jung must be rollin'
over in theirs.

M'KEMBA
Anything else to say, Jack?

JACK
Yah -- Your Mother was a Whore and
your Father had the Clap.

M'KEMBA
Do you know what my previous position
was?

JACK
Professional Arse-Kisser?

M'Kemba PUFFS Himself up.

M'KEMBA
I was a Brigadier with the United
Earth Protectorate Security
Service -- I headed up the Enhanced
Interrogation Division.

JACK
Why am I not surprised. When we first
met I thought you reminded me of
somebody -- Somebody famous in fact.

M'KEMBA
Who?

JACK
Hitler.

M'KEMBA
How droll.

JACK
I gotta million of 'em.

M'KEMBA
I'm sure you do. But I'm only
interested in one subject.

JACK
Lemme guess. Your weight and your IQ?

M'KEMBA
No -- Free Mars!

JACK
What about Free Mars?

M'KEMBA
How long have you been a member?

JACK
You're crazy, I'm not a member.

M'KEMBA
Then why were you meeting with the
leadership earlier today

JACK
(frowning)
Like I said, we were playing cards.

M'Kemba REACHES for the SYRINGE. HE BARES Jack's Right ARM.

M'KEMBA
I really didn't want to do this.

JACK
(frowning)
All right! All right! If you must
know I was asking them if they knew
anything about my predecessor --
Happy?

M'KEMBA
Dr. Grant?

JACK
Yah.

M'KEMBA
Why?

JACK
He was my Best Friend. I promised his
Mom I'd find out what happened to
him.

M'KEMBA
How noble of you Jack. Of course I
don't believe you.

JACK
Whaaaa????

M'KEMBA
Don't act so surprised, I haven't
really trusted you from the get-go.

JACK
(with a grin)
Not that I give a wet fart, but why?

M'KEMBA
There was just something about you. A
gut feeling I guess you could call
it.

JACK

Okay...

M'KEMBA

(shaking his head)

That damn smugness. What finally convinced me was when you performed that unauthorized surgery on that Farm Boy.

JACK

Never mind he'd have died without it?

M'KEMBA

(shrugging)

So what. He's just another useless mouth to feed. A waste of space.

JACK

You Son-of-a-Bitch!

M'KEMBA

(sneering)

That's just great, Jack! You are a Man of the People after all.

JACK

(wild-eyed)

If I get outta this chair, I'll show you.

For a Moment, M'Kemba Looks SAD.

M'KEMBA

You leave me no choice.

JACK

There are always choices.

M'KEMBA

That'll be up to Carlos to decide.

M'Kemba Places the SYRINGE in Jack's Right ARM and PRESSES the TRIGGER. There is a Slight Huffing NOISE.

A Few MOMENTS Later Jack is OBLIVIOUS to HIS SURROUNDINGS.

35 INT. MARSPOORT - HARRY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

35

EVEN Though it's Late, Harry is Hard at Work. HE Sits at His DESK Dictating into a HOLOCOM.

Monika appears in the Entrance to the Office. She's been Crying.

HARRY
This is an unexpected yet pleasant surprise. Why are you here at such an ungodly hour?

MONIKA
They've got Jack.

He puts on a Curious SMILE as if He's Pretending to CARE.

HARRY
Who's "they"?

MONIKA
Chiang and M'Kemba.

HARRY
Yeah. So?

MONIKA
They're going to hurt him -- Maybe worse.

HARRY
It's no skin off my arse.

Monika Wipes Away some TEARS.

MONIKA
Please!!!

HARRY
Why's he so important?

MONIKA
I love him.

HARRY
The truth comes out.

MONIKA
Yes damn you. Happy now?

Harry Writes SOMETHING Down in His NOTEBOOK.

HARRY
More than you could ever know --

He Looks into Her EYES.

HARRY (cont'd)
-- Exactly what do you think I can do?

MONIKA
Pull some strings. Use some of that influence you're always bragging about -- Something -- Anything!

HARRY
Why are those Bastards holding him?

MONIKA
They're saying he's a traitor, and a member of Free Mars.

HARRY
Is he?

MONIKA
You know he's not.

HARRY
Yes.

Monika Begins to CRY AGAIN.

MONIKA
Please Harry!!

Harry Lights a CIGAR. Then He Inhales SLOWLY.

HARRY
If it weren't for the fact my folks took you in as an orphan after your parent's death --

MONIKA
(still weeping)
-- I -- I Remember --

HARRY
(quick burst of anger)
-- Do you Really -- Really???

Harry Takes a DEEP Breath.

HARRY (cont'd)
To me it seems you only get in touch when you need something that I can provide -- Or am I mistaken?

MONIKA
 (very quiet voice)
 No, and I'm really sorry for that.

HARRY
 You're sorry -- I'm sorry --
 Everybody's sorry -- But nothing ever
 change -- Does it?

Monika Holds His HAND. Very TIGHT.

MONIKA
 No, but it will -- I promise.

HARRY
 I hope so for both our sake,
 otherwise --

MONIKA
 (unsure)
 -- Otherwise?? --

HARRY
 (shakes his head)
 -- We wouldn't even be having this
 conversation. But because it's you,
 Mausi --

Harry Hands Her a Silk HANDKERCHIEF.

HARRY (cont'd)
 -- I may have some interesting
 information -- Information that
 Carlos Chiang wouldn't want exposed
 to public scrutiny -- Maybe.

The REVELATION Puts a Hesitant Smile on Her Face.

MONIKA
 Really?

HARRY
 I said maybe, don't get your hopes
 up -- Yet.

MONIKA
 I'm sure whatever information you
 have will be useful.

Harry Looks Into Monika's Eyes Even CLOSER.

HARRY
Possibly. You haven't even asked
about the family -- I'm hurt.

MONIKA
(quietly)
How's the family?

HARRY
(smiling broadly)
We're all doing great -- Alex and I
are happier than ever -- Joanna wants
her own Airship for her next birthday
and Harry the Fifth is growing like a
weed.

MONIKA
(hint of a smile)
That sounds very nice.

HARRY
It is -- You and Jack should try it.

MONIKA
(wistfully)
Maybe -- Someday.

HARRY
I hope so -- Now if you'll give me an
hour or two I'll see what I can dig
up.

MONIKA
Thanks so much -- I'll owe you big-
time.

HARRY
(half-smile)
Indeed you will -- Maudi.

36 INT. MARS GENERAL - OPERATIONS MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

36

Carlos Sits at His DESK With a CIGAR in His MOUTH. M'Kemba
Paces the FLOOR. Jack is UNCONSCIOUS Propped UP in a High-
Back CHAIR. There's a Pair of HANDCUFFS on His WRISTS.

CARLOS
Wake him up.

M'Kemba Gives Jack a SHOT of SOMETHING in His Right ARM.

M'KEMBA
This'll take a minute or two.

CARLOS
Whatever, just do it.

M'KEMBA
Who pissed in your cornflakes??

Jack Begins to WAKE. HIS Eyes FLUTTER a Couple of Times.

M'KEMBA (cont'd)
See, he's awake.

CARLOS
About damned time.

Chiang WALKS Over to Jack. His CIGAR Has GONE OUT.

Jack struggles to consciousness. Looks around assessing his surroundings as Carlos and M'kemba go on.

CARLOS (cont'd)
You really screwed up royally.

M'KEMBA
And we had such high hopes.

CARLOS
We sure did. We thought we had a winner this time, but you're another loser -- Just like Grant.

Jack's still groggy.

JACK
Sorry to disappoint you, Carlos. But as they say you can't win 'em all.

CARLOS
Always the Smart-Ass.

M'KEMBA
God, how I hate such impertinence. Why did you ever consider this fool?

CARLOS
He had a very impressive Curriculum Vitae. The glowing recommendations from Dr. Floyd at Armstrong Memorial.

Carlos takes in a breath. Then continues.

CARLOS (cont'd)
He was also at the top of his class
at Wake Forest Medical.

JACK
-- You forgot about my tremendous
singing voice -- And my twelve-
inch...

-- SLAP! --

JACK (cont'd)
Ow. That hurt dammit!!!

M'KEMBA
(very stern)
Continue being a boor and I'll treat
you as such, behave and I won't.

CARLOS
Will you behave?

JACK
What choice do I have?

CARLOS
Let's make Jack more comfortable,
shall we?

M'KEMBA
Of course, where are my manners?

M'Kemba Removes the HANDCUFFS.

CARLOS
What would you prefer, Jack -- Scotch
or Bourbon? --

Chiang Takes a BOTTLE Down From a SHELF Behind His DESK.

CARLOS (cont'd)
-- The Scotch is a Single-malt from
the Highlands of Scotland -- I
recommend it.

JACK
Then I'll have Bourbon.

Carlos pours himself a Drink, then gets one ready for Jack.

M'KEMBA

You've presented us with a unique situation. You've found out the truth.

CARLOS

What my colleague said is correct.

JACK

As if I really give a Rat's Arse. What truth, Carlos?

CARLOS

You have an opportunity that most men rarely see in their entire lifetimes.

He hands Jack a tall glass of Bourbon.

JACK

Cool -- What?

M'KEMBA

As you probably have figured out already, there's a lot more to MarsPort than meets the eye.

CARLOS

Indeed, quite a bit more in fact.

He SIPS His SCOTCH.

CARLOS (cont'd)

And the right men in key positions can make a great deal of money, if they're smart.

M'KEMBA

Are you smart, Jack?

CARLOS

Yes, are you?

JACK

I'd like to think I am.

M'KEMBA

You need to be. It took a lot of planning to get us where we are today.

CARLOS
(looking sad)
Before all the previous nonsense, our
plans were working so well.

JACK
(nodding slowly)
Then here comes Grant,
screwing up everything.

CARLOS
(with a smile)
No. Initially we thought he wanted to
join us.

JACK
You're joking.

CARLOS
Not at all. He came to us one day
when we were having lunch --

M'KEMBA
-- On a Tuesday.

CARLOS
It was a Wednesday.

M'KEMBA
Does it really matter?

CARLOS
No, of course not. Anyway, he came to
us telling us he'd been investigating
the missing Thorium and had arrived
at a certain conclusion.

JACK
What conclusion?

CARLOS
That the two of us were behind the
entire operation. He wanted in.

M'KEMBA
As a full partner, otherwise he'd
take his evidence to the United Earth
Security Service.

CARLOS
At first we denied any knowledge of
what he was talking about.

JACK

I'll bet.

CARLOS

But after we looked over his 'so-called' evidence we decided it would be best to bring him into the fold.

JACK

(puzzled)

Just like that. No strings attached?

M'KEMBA

Of course not! We're businessmen, not thugs.

CARLOS

We can be reasonable, Jack. You must understand that.

JACK

Yah. I suppose.

M'KEMBA

Still I had a feeling about Dr. Grant.

JACK

What kind of feeling?

M'KEMBA

That his motives weren't what he said they were.

JACK

How so?

M'KEMBA

(sneering)

That he was playing us for a couple of fools.

CARLOS

More's the pity. It was his downfall.

JACK

How so?

M'KEMBA

I became to believe the evidence was too good to be true. That it had been fabricated.

CARLOS

It turned out he was a member of Free Mars.

M'KEMBA

And he was gathering information for them -- He was a Spy!

JACK

I find all this hard to believe.

CARLOS

That's a shame. It's still true whether you accept it or not.

M'KEMBA

I had one of my agents follow him. A Prospector named Arlo Traske.

CARLOS

Traske caught him red-handed making a call to his Free Mars friends.

M'KEMBA

He overheard the Doctor making plans to meet his associates.

CARLOS

Before Traske could stop him he escaped via Dune-Buggy into the Hellas Basin Outback.

M'KEMBA

Naturally we had Traske follow him.

CARLOS

His orders were to bring Dr. Grant back to us for questioning.

M'KEMBA

But that fool Traske had other ideas. He killed the Good Doctor, instead.

CARLOS

Needless to say we were quite upset with that information.

JACK

I'm sure you were.

M'KEMBA

No, we really were. We didn't want any harm to come to Dr. Grant.

CARLOS

We just wanted to keep him 'quiet'
for a while. Nothing underhanded.

M'KEMBA

We were going to place him into Cold-Sleep then ship him off to Titan Base.

CARLOS

That way he'd be out of our hair for at least thirteen months.

JACK

Thirteen months?

CARLOS

That's how long it takes to go from Mars to Titan Base. Even with Fusion Drive.

M'KEMBA

(thin smile)

There's a fortune to be made, Jack. It's amazing how much we've made so far.

JACK

On Thorium?

CARLOS

It powers most of the non-Fusion reactors throughout the entire Solar System.

M'KEMBA

(grinning)

We found a way to siphon off several million solars worth every year without being caught.

JACK

By arranging the occasional accident in one of the mines so it's closed down for a safety inspection --

Jack Slowly Takes Another SIP of BOURBON.

JACK (cont'd)

-- Giving your crew time to go in and walk off with as much Thorium as they can carry, right. Never mind the miners who get killed.

CARLOS

Who's to say, Jack. How do you know how many workers should be dying every year in those mines?

M'KEMBA

It's very hard work. Even though the mines are pressurized. Sometimes there are accidents.

Carlos TRIES To LOOK LIKE HE Actually CARES.

CARLOS

Pressure seals fail. Explosives are mishandled.

JACK

You really don't give a Damn, do you?

CARLOS

Not particularly. Nobody forces those men and women into those mines at gunpoint. It's their choice.

M'KEMBA

They know the risks.

CARLOS

(nodding)

They really do.

JACK

And you being the former CFO of the Solar System Mining Corporation has put you in a position to take advantage of all of the chaos when such accidents cause --

Jack Looks at Both MEN Very CAREFULLY.

JACK (cont'd)

-- You can make whole shipments disappear. Right, Carlos?

CARLOS

Damn! You are as bright as I thought. The 'Smart-Alec' act is just a diversion.

Jack Takes In A DEEP Breath.

JACK

So. Let's see if I've got this right. You're offering me a chance to join you two in an illegal operation that's been ripping-off millions of solars worth of Thorium for several years. Maybe even arranging the occasional 'Accident' --

Jack Stands to STRETCH. His BACK Makes a Loud POP!

JACK (cont'd)

-- In spite of the fact that this operation is at least indirectly responsible for the death of my friend. Right?

CARLOS

That sums it up very well.

JACK

(with a thin smile)

Sure. Why the Hell not?

CARLOS

See, M'Kemba. I told you he'd join us.

M'KEMBA

I suppose. I thought he was your Best Friend.

JACK

(frowning)

He was back at Wake Forest. Truth to tell the Son-of-a-Bitch still owes me money. Fifty solars!

M'KEMBA

What about your promise to his Mother you mentioned in our previous conversation?

JACK

Yah. There is that, isn't there?

M'KEMBA

Yes.

Jack Makes a SUDDEN MOVE. He Attempts to KICK the LEGS out from Under M'Kemba.

Carlos rushes back to his DESK and removes a small PISTOL.
He POINTS It at Jack.

CARLOS
So you are a fool after all?

Jack FREEZES.

Carlos approaches Jack.

CARLOS (cont'd)
I believe Hiroshi's going to be Chief
of Staff. Just like he wanted.

JACK
Be sure to tell him the job's a real
pain in the ass.

Carlos tightens his GRIP on the Pistol.

CARLOS
My God Man, do you ever quit?

JACK
Hell no!!!

M'Kemba Comes Up Slowly Behind Jack and GRABS Him. Holds HIM
TIGHTLY.

M'KEMBA
Be sure to tell the Supreme Council
back at U.E.P. Headquarters when you
and your Free Mars co-conspirators
are on trial.

JACK
On trial. For what?

CARLOS
(smug)
Treason, Of Course.

M'Kemba Looks Like He's REPORTING a HIGH SCHOOL Sporting
EVENT. VERY Dispassionately.

M'KEMBA
They used to hang traitors. I wonder
if they still do?

JACK

Okay, okay, this Horseshit has gone on long enough. You can't keep me quiet forever. The truth will get out.

Carlos Looks Very SELF-ASSURED.

CARLOS

It hasn't yet, do you think you're the man who can do it?

M'KEMBA

(sneering)

Anyway, no Sane Person would believe such allegations. Especially from a Teever!

CARLOS

And even if you had proof it could easily disappear. Along with yourself.

Chiang Stands Closer to Jack.

CARLOS (cont'd)

(crooked smile)

I hear Titan's quite lovely this time of year.

M'Kemba releases Jack and pushes him back towards the High-Back Chair. Carlos keeps the Pistol trained on Jack. M'Kemba produces another syringe from a jacket pocket. He Has a VERY STRANGE Look on His Face as He GETS Within ONE METER Of Jack.

M'KEMBA

(smiling)

You'll go to sleep here and the next thing you know you'll be at Titan Base.

CARLOS

Goodnight, Jack. Or should I say Goodbye --

JACK

You Bastards! Somebody will find out.

CARLOS

(laughing)

Face it, even if they did. No one will believe your fabrications.

The Door to the Office SLIDES OPEN. Everyone Freezes and looks Over. Monika WALKS in.

MONIKA
I would, and so would my friends at
the U.E.P. Security Service.

CARLOS
(SHOUTING)
This is a private meeting, Ms.
Beiterhoff. Get out!!!

M'KEMBA
Shall I escort you out?

Her Eyes are Like LASER BEAMS!

MONIKA
Try it -- Just see what happens --
Old Man!! --

Monika Turns to Jack.

MONIKA (cont'd)
-- Liebchen, are you alright?

JACK
Better now.

Back to the Others.

MONIKA
Okay, the game is up.

M'KEMBA
And what game would that be?

CARLOS
Yes, what game indeed?

MONIKA
The one where Jack and I get the Hell
out of here...And you two --

CARLOS
We two do what...Precisely?

MONIKA
Surrender.

M'KEMBA
My God, you're as foolish as he is.
Astounding!

Chiang Is SHAKING His Head In AMUSEMENT.

CARLOS
She is. isn't she?

M'KEMBA
(nodding)
She's bluffing you know. She doesn't
know a thing.

CARLOS
When you're right, you're right --

Chiang Moves toward Monika.

CARLOS (cont'd)
-- Admit it. You have an empty hand.
You have absolutely no evidence of
any wrongdoing on either of our
parts.

MONIKA
(smiling)
Okay. You're right. I don't have any
evidence. But I believe I know
someone who does.

Monika steps back to the Office Door. She taps on it 3
times.

The Door slides open. In walks Harry. He has BIG Smile on
his Face.

HARRY
Hi everybody. It's good to see you.

CARLOS
What are you doing here?

HARRY
(to Jack)
Checking on a friend. You okay?

JACK
Better and better, you?

HARRY
(grinning)
My Lumbago is acting up. But aside
from that I'm fine.

M'KEMBA
You're nothing but a criminal.

Harry Takes a DEEP Theatrical BOW.

HARRY
 (with a twinkle in
 his eye)
 Takes one to know one.

Jack Applauds. He's SMILING the Whole Time. Monika STANDS
 Next to Jack. VERY CLOSELY.

Monika Looks at Harry with PRIDE and Sincere ADMIRATION.
 LIKE Only a SISTER Can Give To Her BROTHER.

MONIKA
 (Broad smile)
 You tell them, Harry!

CARLOS
 This doesn't concern you. You have no
 business interfering in our affairs.

HARRY
 I beg to differ. In fact, I believe I
 have some rather interesting
 information. Information that neither
 of you would like to be made public.

CARLOS
 (concerned)
 What could someone like you possibly
 know about our business?

Harry LOOKS at Chiang and M'Kemba. He has a BIG SMILE on his
 Face.

HARRY
 You'd be surprised, Carlos.

CARLOS
 I don't believe you.

HARRY
 You really should --

He WINKS at Jack.

HARRY (cont'd)
 -- You see -- I've had both of your
 offices wired for sight and sound
 since last Founder's Day.

M'KEMBA
 (incredulous)
 That's impossible -- I have both
 inspected twice daily for any
 electronic listening devices.

Harry Looks at M'Kemba With a MIXTURE of DISTRUST and
 DISGUST. He SHAKES his Head as he Walks Towards the Men.

HARRY
 You should have been paying your
 staff higher wages -- It's amazing
 how little it takes to sway the
 loyalties of key people --

He MOVES Closer to Chiang. Harry SLAPS Him, SNATCHES the
 Pistol Out of His HAND. Then He PLACES It in a JACKET
 POCKET.

HARRY (cont'd)
 -- A few hundred solars in a man's
 pocket every month really makes a
 difference.

M'KEMBA
 (angry)
 What man?

HARRY
 Like I'd ever tell you --

He Steps away.

HARRY (cont'd)
 (BIG smile)
 -- By the way -- I've always
 considered myself a sophisticate --
 I've never been in the position to
 judge another man's -- Sexual
 Proclivities --

Harry takes a BREATH. He Turns back to M'Kemba.

HARRY (cont'd)
 (slight shudder)
 -- But even I find some of your
 preferences somewhat -- Shall we say
 Rather -- Unusual.

CARLOS

(surly)

You're bluffing. I know your type.
You couldn't tell the truth if you're
life depended on it.

HARRY

Are you really willing to take that
chance?

M'KEMBA

I guarantee he's lying -- There's no
way anyone on my staff would betray
me.

CARLOS

(very smug)

I know.

HARRY

It's really funny that you both are
thinking this way -- I thought you
might --

Harry Looks at His Watch.

HARRY (cont'd)

-- So I made a few hundred copies of
the evidence. Then I had it all
converted into transmissible format.
If I don't make a certain phone call
in --

He Takes Out His Visiphone.

HARRY (cont'd)

-- The next thirteen minutes, every
bit of it will be broadcast to every
reliable news agency in the entire
Solar System -- From Lunopolis to
Titan Base.

CARLOS

I still think you're lying. A clown
like you couldn't arrange all of
that.

HARRY

(grinning ear to ear)

How much are you willing to bet? --

Harry Glances at His WATCH One More Time.

HARRY (cont'd)
 -- Tick -- Tick -- Tick.

Carlos has a Look of Complete and Utter FAILURE on his Face.

CARLOS
 What do you want?

HARRY
 (BROAD grin)
 As for me -- A handful of those Cuban
 cigars would be nice --

Harry Walks Towards the ORNATE DESK.

HARRY (cont'd)
 -- I understand they're hand-rolled
 on the inner thigh of a robot in
 Newark, New Jersey -- As for him --

He Nods Towards Jack.

HARRY (cont'd)
 -- Jack?

JACK
 (HUGE smile)
 I've got a few suggestions.

38 INT: MARS GENERAL - OPERATIONS MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

38

Jack and Kate Both Stand in the Large OFFICE. An open Bottle
 of Champagne sits on the Ornate Desk. They Both have a
 fluted glass in their Hand.

JACK
 How do you like your new office?

KATE
 (smiling)
 Oh my God, it's amazing!

JACK
 I thought you'd like it -- It suits
 you.

KATE
 (frowning)
 I tell you one thing -- As soon as
 possible I'm getting rid of this ugly
 damned desk.

JACK
(slight grin)
I don't blame you.

KATE
You'll also be happy to know
effective immediately there'll no
longer be any cost for treatment at
Mars General.

JACK
That's terrific. I wanted to do the
same thing.

Kate Looks Out a WINDOW.

KATE
I know. We'll also begin those
Housecalls like you wanted.

JACK
To the Farms around Hellas Basin?

KATE
Yep, Vijay is already on board. He's
ready and willing. 'Barsoom' is
standing by.

JACK
Fantastic. I'll be sure to sign up
when he's recruiting volunteers.

KATE
That's funny, he thought you would.

JACK
(slight frown)
I'm curious Kate, won't the
Bureaucrats here on Mars and back on
Earth possibly object.

KATE
(nasty grin)
Possibly -- But as far as I'm
concerned they can take their
objections and blow 'em out their
collective Arse!

Jack Becomes Serious.

JACK
Are your friends from Free Mars
alright?

KATE

They're all safe and sound. After we talked a while they realized you didn't screw 'em over.

JACK

That's good. You can tell them they can rely on me from now on.

KATE

I know they'll be happy to hear that.

JACK

I just hope they know they can trust me from now on.

KATE

Trust's a hard thing to build. It's not something that happens overnight.

JACK

I know. Hopefully they'll come around soon enough.

KATE

The only thing that'll convince them are actions not words, Jack --

Kate Refills her Champagne Glass and Takes a Sip.

KATE (cont'd)

-- I don't know what you had on Chiang. But it sure worked!

JACK

By now he and M'Kemba are well on their way to Earth. Where I'm certain they'll enjoy their early retirement.

KATE

In the Maximum Security Prison on Luna, I hope!

JACK

No doubt. Hopefully they'll get five hundred years each.

KATE

If there's any justice.

JACK

What about the other Board Members?

KATE
Time will tell. But I trust Lorelei
Gomez-Wu, the Treasurer.

JACK
Really, why?

KATE
(smiling)
We've been lovers off and on for
nearly twenty years.

JACK
I really hope you're right.

KATE
How are you holding up, Jack?

Jack Turns to Leave. Then He Hesitates.

JACK
I'm getting there. I still can't
believe how everything happened so
damned fast. I thought I was a goner
for sure.

KATE
That was all Monika's doing. You're
one lucky son-of-a bitch that she had
the cojones to ask Barrington-Smythe
for help. Otherwise you'd be in
really deep shize.

JACK
(frowning)
I know, but I don't have to like it.

KATE
Grow up! The two of you will be
running Marsport within ten years if
you play your cards right -- And you
don't wuss out.

JACK
How should I handle it?

KATE
Grow a pair! Jesus!!!

She Crosses Herself.

KATE (cont'd)
Mother of Mercy! -- Give me strength!

JACK
When did life become so...
Complicated?

KATE
(with a frown)
When the Good Lord decided to put Men
in the World.

Jack Walks Towards the Door with a Stupid GRIN on his LONG
Face.

39 **INT. MARSPORT - MONIKA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT**

39

Monika Sits on Her Sofa. It's Covered with STACKS of
PAPERWORK. She Tries to Focus on the Mess.

Her Eyes are RED from Crying.

Her Doorbell CHIMES. It's Jack Greyson On The HOLOIMAGER.

JACK
Hi there. Can I come in?

MONIKA
Suit yourself.

THE DOOR SLIDES Open. Jack Moves Slowly Towards Monika.

JACK
How are you?

MONIKA
Fine.

JACK
You sure?

She Looks at the Paperwork. She Tries Hard Not to Look At
Jack.

MONIKA
Yes.

JACK
Good, I just wanted to check --

Jack Moves a Bit Closer. He Hesitates Though.

JACK (cont'd)

-- I really wanted to thank you again for all you did to save me -- I really mean it -- I just wish you had taken a different route -- That's all.

MONIKA

No problem.

JACK

And I'm really sorry how I reacted when I found out that you went to Barrington-Smythe for help. I was way outta line.

MONIKA

You think?

JACK

I was caught off-guard.

MONIKA

Oh, really!

JACK

I can only apologize so many times.

Her Eyes ABLAZE!

MONIKA

Then apologize some more. You really hurt me -- Damn you, Jack --

She Shakes Her Head. Almost Starts To Cry Again. Takes In Three Deep Breaths With Her Eyes Closed Tight. Regains Her Composure. Then Begins to Smile...A LITTLE.

MONIKA (cont'd)

-- I've known Harry for years. We're just friends.

JACK

I still don't trust him -- You told me yourself he's no good.

MONIKA

He's always been upfront with me. And there's more -- Much more.

JACK

What?

Monika looks very Sad.

MONIKA
You wouldn't understand, Jack. You
couldn't.

She Steps over next to Jack.

MONIKA (cont'd)
We practically grew up together. He
was like an Older Brother to me.

JACK
(cautious frown)
That may be, Monika. But there's one
thing I do understand. He wants
something. Regardless of the past.

MONIKA
What?

JACK
You. He's in love with you! It's
obvious!

MONIKA
That's crazy. He can't be, Jack.

JACK
Oh really. He's a man, isn't he?

MONIKA
Mien Gott! Can't you tell. He's
married. He and his Husband have been
together over ten years.

JACK
Oh??? --

MONIKA
-- Yes!

The Two Stand Very Quiet. Then They Share a Passionate Kiss.
After a few Moments, in order to catch their Breath, they
move apart.

Then they Kiss again. After a Few more moments.

JACK
(grin)
You won't believe what Kate told me
earlier.

MONIKA

What?

JACK

That the two of us are gonna be
running this whole place some day.

MONIKA

She's right.

JACK

How do you know?

MONIKA

(with a slight smile)
I've seen the future.

JACK

I believe you.

MONIKA

Free Mars?

JACK

(with a WIDE grin)
Free Mars!

40 **FADE OUT:**

40