

sex war one

by

Hillel F. Damron

(Based on his Sci-Fi Novel)

Phone: 916-952-9096
email: hfdamron@yahoo.com

TITLE ON BLACK

EXT. A CAVE IN A MOUNTAIN - DAY

Gray walls frame the dark cave. The TITLE fades out as we pull back to reveal the mountain, awash in bright sunlight.

Two figures emerge. A woman, ZEZE, climbs briskly wearing only a plain nylon dress. A man, JAYDE, trails behind her, wearing a space-like suit, a helmet on his head, one gloved hand carrying a large nylon sack.

Zeze reaches a cliff below the cave and sits down on its rocky edge, hugging her knees. Jayde stops behind her. Both are awestruck by the view of the valley below:

A desert-like plain with a hill on the other side, a modern-looking tower on top. A high mountain range is far behind with the faint blue color of water beneath it.

Zeze smiles, inhaling the view. She's twenty or so, with brown skin and free-falling black hair, swaying in the wind.

Jayde puts down the sack and takes off his helmet. He breathes with difficulty and has to kneel down. He has sharp features, fair skin and hair, cut short. He's tall and blue-eyed, forty-five or so, it's difficult to determine exactly.

He takes his heavy gloves off and collects some dust from the ground, letting it sift through his fingers. He's fascinated by it but not for long. He turns his head and looks around, sees the cave, gets up and walks there.

EXT/INT. THE CAVE - DAY

Enough sunlight penetrates, partly illuminating the cave and the small rock at its center.

Jayde enters, his head almost touches the cave's ceiling. He looks around with interest, then drops the sack by the rock. He brings out of his suit's large pocket a radiation gun, sleek-looking. He weighs it in his hands, then looks outside.

Through the cave's opening Zeze can be seen, still sitting motionless on the edge of the cliff.

JAYDE (O.S.)
(loudly)
Zeze, come over.

Zeze turns her head and looks back towards the cave. She

hesitates, before getting up and running over.

She enters the cave and moves around it, fascinated, touches the walls. Jayde stands still, looking at her. In one hand he holds his helmet and gloves, the other holds the radiation gun behind his back. He brings it out, aiming at her.

She doesn't seem to understand what it is, therefore not frightened. She sits down on the small rock and hurriedly fishes inside the nylon sack. She brings out a colorful drawing on a white sheet, showing it to him.

He looks at it briefly, unmoved, then back at her. A proud smile spreads on her face. His index finger, dust-covered, inches closer to a red button on the gun.

JAYDE

I have to kill you, Zeze, eliminate you with this radiation gun. The colony citizens decided so.

She lets the drawing fall, looks up at him baffled. He keeps looking at her, hesitating, before slowly lowering the gun.

JAYDE

But I cannot do it. As you can see.

He puts the gun back in his large suit's pocket. Zeze stands up, senses that something bad is about to happen.

JAYDE

You will remain here by yourself. You have plenty of food and drink tablets in the sack, fireballs too. It should last you for a while. I...

She steps closer, stretching out her hands to get hold of him. But he steps back to the cave's opening.

JAYDE

I'll come back one day, I promise you. You will survive until then, I'm sure. Especially that the air is so good and surprisingly clear of any radioactive clouds.

Her big black eyes are so innocent, forcing him to look down.

JAYDE

I'm sorry, Zeze, but I have to go now. Or they'll come after me.

He turns and walks away. Through the cave's opening, he can be seen walking downhill.

ZEZE (O.S.)
(a shout)
No... Jayde!

He halts and turns around. Looks back in shock.

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN, BY THE CAVE - DAY

Zeze comes running out of the cave towards Jayde. She falls into his arms and he hugs her, dropping the helmet and gloves. She's crying. He lifts her face and kisses her tears.

JAYDE
You called me, didn't you?

She nods and mutters a faint "Yes" as slowly, they go down to the ground together. He smooths her hair. She hugs him strongly, puts her head on his chest.

JAYDE
You spoke at last, how wonderful.
Maybe it's for the better.

ZEZE
What?

JAYDE
That I brought you here. That you are out of there. Now... you are free.

She raises her head to him now and kisses his lips tenderly, innocently. He tries to resist her lips, which kiss his face all over now, but finally succumbs and kisses her back. This strong affection intensifies, gradually, into an uncontrolled passion. We zero in on Jayde's face. His eyes are shut.

INT. UNDERGROUND COLONY - ARTIFICIAL LIGHT

At the center of a playground there's a swimming pool. Naked children are in the pool and scattered around it, swimming and playing. They seem to be of the same age, five or so, all of them with fair skin and hair, strikingly identical.

Not far from the pool a man and a woman stand, keeping their eyes on the children. Like Jayde, they are tall and slim, with fair skin and hair, cut short. Both are wearing tightly fit, one-piece blue suits.

In one corner there's a gathering of a few children. Out of that group runs a little girl, naked too, different from the other kids: her hair's black and long, her skin's brown, and she's shorter. The other children chase, catch, and beat her.

The woman and man do not interfere. They observe indifferently while talking to each other.

But Jayde - younger, dressed as the woman and man - enters the playground and rushes towards the gang of kids. He pushes them away and they all jump merrily into the pool.

Jayde picks up the little girl and holds her in his arms. She is crying. He kisses her tears and caresses her head gently. She stops crying and looks up at him with her big black eyes.

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN, BY THE CAVE - DAY

Jayde opens his eyes. He's lying on the ground, and Zeze lies beside him, asleep. The one-piece blue suit he's wearing is zipped open.

He looks around, alarmed, sees that the sun is on its way down over the high mountain range. He shudders, hurries to zip up his one-piece blue suit. He gets up, careful not to wake up the sleeping Zeze

He picks up his space-like suit, on the ground beside him, and puts it on. He gathers his helmet and gloves, then kneels and very carefully pulls down Zeze's dress to cover her legs.

She stirs, opens her eyes. For a second, they look quietly at each other, before he turns and hurries down the mountain. She watches him drift away into the sunset.

FADE TO BLACK - OPENING CREDITS - FADE TO LIGHT

INT*. UNDERGROUND COLONY, ENTRANCE HALL - ARTIFICIAL LIGHT*

(* From now on, while inside the colony, there will be no indication of the interior, exterior, day or night.*)

A lit-up sign reads: UNDERGROUND COLONY B.365 - ENTRANCE HALL

We pull back from the sign to reveal the hall. There are no windows, as the Entrance Hall - sleek, shiny plastic all around, finely built - is not visible to the outside world. We close in on another sign: CONTROL ROOM.

Two colony citizens are in the Control Room, busy watching one monitor, part of a long panel of colorful screens.

On that monitor a figure can be seen walking slowly through a tunnel, dressed in a space-like suit, a helmet on his head. He stops in front of a heavy, double-glass door.

The two citizens who watch the screen, dressed uniformly in tightly fit, one-piece blue suits, turn towards each other.

They are both tall, with fair skin and hair, and remind us somewhat of the two citizens we saw earlier guarding the kids in the playground.

One of them, ENAR, is a woman with a slightly up pointed nose, thin lips and clear blue eyes. The other is a man, EFBE, sturdier than her with a darker shade of blue eyes.

ENAR

Finally, he is back. Our decision was carried out.

EFBE

So it seems.

ENAR

The Monster is gone, what else do you want?

He just looks at her. She doesn't wait for him to respond but turns to go. He follows her.

They walk towards the doors to the Entrance Hall, where - inside now - Jayde is being helped out of his heavy suit by two other colony citizens.

Jayde is left holding the radiation gun. He smiles in recognition at the two citizens helping him, but the smile vanishes quickly when he sees Enar and Efbe approaching.

ENAR

What happened, citizen Jayde? We were very concerned.

JAYDE

Concerned... that a strange word coming from you.

He doesn't wait for her to respond but quickly hands her the gun, almost throwing it at her. She hands it over to Efbe, who stands beside her.

ENAR

What kept you outside for so long?

JAYDE
I enjoyed my time there, citizen Enar.
No one was there to disturb me.

He looks at her coldly. She ignores his snide remark.

ENAR
What about the Monster?

JAYDE
What about her?

ENAR
Did she enjoy her time there too?

JAYDE
(hesitates)
You'd have to ask her that yourself.

EFBE
How come... isn't she dead?

JAYDE
(deadpan)
Of course she is.

A quick exchange of looks between Enar and Efbe.

ENAR
Good. The colony is clean now.

JAYDE
I doubt it.

ENAR
What do you mean?

Again, a moment of hesitation.

JAYDE
I mean... we are all infected now,
aren't we? Especially you and me.

ENAR
I've no idea what you're talking
about. You better get some rest.

She turns to Efbe, who looks with interest at the radiation gun in his hands.

ENAR

You should go down, Efbe, put it away
in the weapon safe.

EFBE

Sure. But not before I check it.

ENAR

Of course.

They turn and walk towards the elevator.

Jayde stands still, watching them go. Soon, they're swallowed by the elevator. The other two citizens, ESO and KAYCE, get closer, hand him his heavy outside suit, helmet and gloves.

ESO

She's right, Jayde, we were worried.
What happened?

Jayde takes his time, studying her closely.

While it's difficult to determine the exact age of the colony citizens, she does look younger than Jayde and the other two we've met. Her blond hair is a bit longer, her blue-gray eyes, which look at him straight, reflect sincere concern.

JAYDE

It was very hard on us, Eso, the
separation. I... I didn't kill her.
Just couldn't use the gun.

ESO

(surprised, after a beat)
So you left her outside, alone?...

JAYDE

What choice did I have?... We found a
cave in the mountain. She has plenty
of food and drinks, fireballs too,
which give her a fair chance. Maybe...

He hesitates. Both Eso and Kayce - the other citizen there, a man, somewhat older than her - look at him in disbelief.

KAYCE

Maybe what... .

JAYDE

Maybe she'll survive. The air is
clean, free of radioactivity. I...

KAYCE
You are serious?... No more
radioactive clouds in the air?

JAYDE
Didn't see or smell any, Kayce. I was
able to breathe without my helmet on.

Eso and Kayce find it hard to comprehend.

JAYDE
It won't be long, I think, before
plants and other forms of life will
begin to grow again. I even saw the
sun setting, the moon rising.

KAYCE
Like we saw in those old films and
videos... of the times before the
virus pandemic and the nuclear war?

JAYDE
That's right. The view is magnificent.

He turns and walks towards the elevator. Kayce follows him
first, then Eso too, deep in thought.

ELEVATOR

The doors shut and they go down. There's a window on one
side, through which it's possible to see briefly the
different levels of this brilliantly lit, and fantastically
built underground colony. The three citizens inside are
quiet, thoughtful.

A CORRIDOR

The elevator doors open soundlessly. The three citizens exit
and walk ahead in the long narrow corridor.

JAYDE
How are things in the Birth-Lab,
Kayce?

KAYCE
Something went wrong with the Ovum-
Suction pump earlier, but we fixed it.
Everything is under control now.

JAYDE
Good. I can rest easy then.

KAYCE
I don't know about that.

No more is being said but the penetrating looks they exchange speak volumes.

LED light is emitted through the corridor's plastic walls but it creates no shadows. A constant low hum is heard as if somewhere far a massive engine is hard at work. There are closed doors in the catacomb-like corridors, with small cameras fixed above them. At a fork in the corridor, Jayde and Eso turn one way, while Kayce turns the other way.

ESO'S ROOM

Eso steps in with Jayde following her, putting down his heavy suit, gloves and helmet. He sits down beside Eso on the one sofa by the wall. It's the only piece of furniture visible.

On the wall beside Eso there's a keyboard. She taps a couple of keys and a tray extends out of the wall, containing an assortment of tablets and pills in different shapes and colors, and a variety of liquids in larger capsules. They eat and drink quietly.

The room is small, made of the same shiny plastic we've seen everywhere. The walls emit light. No screens of computers and television. No phones, plants, pets, or any decoration.

ESO
Poor young woman... I can't get her out of my mind.

JAYDE
So am I.
(pause)
I feel terrible, Eso. Just couldn't kill her with the gun. Never used one in my life before, as you know.

ESO
No one ever did.

He nods, swallows the last of the big liquid capsules. Eso returns the tray to the wall. She then taps some other keys on the keyboard and a piece of upbeat electronic music is heard, streaming from the walls.

ESO
What did you do all that time there... outside?

He hesitates, avoids her inquiring eyes.

JAYDE

I enjoyed nature coming alive. Who knows if I'll ever get another chance.

ESO

And she...

JAYDE

She enjoyed it too, more than I even. But... when she fell asleep, I left.

Her eyes keep scrutinizing his. He looks away, shuts them.

FLASHBACK: Zeze sits on the edge of the cliff below the cave, hugging her knees, enjoying the view of the valley below.

ESO (V.O.)

What do you think has happened to her?

Back in the room, Jayde opens his eyes.

JAYDE

Who... Zeze?

ESO

No, fool... Enar.

JAYDE

I don't really know, or understand.

ESO

She used the Joint-Screen a lot, I was told, watching you teaching Zeze how to read, write, and draw.

JAYDE

So... what does it mean?

ESO

It means Zeze grew and developed, even if at a slower pace than the other kids. Thanks to you mainly.

JAYDE

And what's wrong with that?

ESO

Nothing, for you and me. But for Enar and her followers, a lot.

She moves even closer to him, lays her hand on his arm.

ESO

Enar was afraid the Monster, as she kept referring to her, will be able to join the rank of the citizens soon.

JAYDE

I never put such a motion forward.

ESO

It was inevitable, though. And...

(pause)

Maybe there was another problem.

JAYDE

What problem?

He's looking at her straight. She avoids his eyes, taps again on the keyboard. The light changes into a kaleidoscopic, slow dance of colorful lights, the music changes too, mellower.

ESO

This is bizarre, but Enar thought you two are developing a special... well, relationship. An "emotional attachment," the way she put it.

JAYDE

An "emotional attachment"... what do you mean?

ESO

(impatiently)

Ask her, if you really don't know.
It's not for me to tell.

She stands up, presses another key on the keyboard. The sofa, just as Jayde stands up too, opens slowly and becomes a comfortable bed. In a simple, nonchalant manner, Eso unzips her one-piece suit and lets it drop down.

ESO

Let's have some pleasure, Jayde. It will help us forget both of them.

But he can't. He looks motionless and remote at her naked, slender body (she wears no bra). She's about to remove her plain white undies (men-like, almost) when he steps back.

JAYDE
 Can't forget them, Eso, Especially
 Zeze. Not after what happened.
 (pause)
 Sorry, we'll have pleasure soon.

She's surprised and hurt, closing the gap between them.

ESO
 (forcefully)
 Maybe the problem is really YOU,
 Jayde. Not Enar or Zeze!

It hits him hard. He remains quiet and still, though, seeing how she zips her suit back up and drops on the bed. She lies down there, looking up at the low ceiling.

Jayde walks to the door and picks up his heavy outside suit, helmet and gloves. He stands there looking at her, about to say something else. But it's too late: she taps another key and the door slides open. He walks out.

Eso attaches two electrodes - which come out of the wall beside her bed - to both sides of her head. She then taps on the keyboard and soon the music changes, increases in volume, and so is the rapid dance of colorful lights.

Next, she swallows another handy capsule, then shuts her eyes. The bed begins to shake and with its rhythm, her body shakes too. Her face relaxes into the motion.

JAYDE'S ROOM

Jayde sits on the sofa in his room, identical to Eso's room. His face is tense and thoughtful.

He gets hold of the heavy outside suit, beside him on the floor. From one of the smaller pockets he brings out a white, thin plastic sheet, which he unfolds.

It's a child's colorful drawing of a swimming pool with a yard beside it and some naked kids, depicting the earlier scene we saw. In childish handwriting, the name Zeze is written at the top.

Jayde looks at it long and hard, then lies down on the sofa. He puts the drawing on his chest and covers it with his hands. He stares at the ceiling, then shuts his eyes.

Unidentified sounds can be heard in the background. Then a loud female voice is calling, "Jayde!"

BIRTH-LAB

At the center of the shiny-clean, ultra-modern lab, we see a very technically advanced, yet strange-looking machine. It has many flickering lights, test tubes of various sizes, containers, Petri dishes, and screens.

There are two lab-workers near the Birth-Machine, wearing identical, transparent nylon lab-gowns over their one-piece blue suits: Enar and Kayce, who look somewhat younger.

A third lab-worker, Jayde - likewise dressed, younger - comes over and through a microscope inspects one of the transparent containers, with its mostly whitish, plasma-like solution.

ENAR

Very strange pro-embryo. Never saw anything like it before.

KAYCE

Looks like a flawed compound to me, between an unwanted sperm cell and a rejected egg.

ENAR

Why the Birth-Machine didn't kill it, I wonder.

Jayde raises his head from the microscope.

JAYDE

It's not the machine's job to kill it.
(pause)

In the past, long before we were born, mutants like this one were quite common.

KAYCE

How do you know that?

JAYDE

One of our oldest manuals, "The Dominant Race," mentions it.

ENAR

We must destroy this mutant at once!

JAYDE

No, Enar, give it a chance to live. Let's see how it will develop.

ENAR

Are you sure, Jayde? It might be dangerous.

JAYDE

What's dangerous about it? We can always destroy it later.

KAYCE

I agree. As scientists, we have the opportunity to learn from it. See its development in our own eyes.

Jayde is pleased to hear that, but not Enar, who walks away. Kayce presses a button, which brings on a flashing blue light and a continuous buzz. The Birth-Machine comes alive.

JAYDE'S ROOM

A buzz, slightly different, is heard in the room too. Jayde opens his eyes and rises to a sitting position on the sofa, looking disoriented at the wall opposite him, where a small red light keeps blinking. He taps on a key in the keyboard placed on the wall beside him.

The buzz stops and a large screen appears on the opposite wall. On the screen is Enar, looking severely at him.

JAYDE

Something happened, Enar?

ENAR

Something didn't happen, Jayde.

JAYDE

What do you mean?

ENAR

I mean, you didn't kill the Monster. Efbe checked the radiation gun. You didn't use it!

Her look is punishing. He knows better than to argue with her.

JAYDE

It doesn't prove I didn't kill her, does it?

ENAR

To me, it does.

JAYDE

So be it. But she is out there alone, destroyed already by late passing radio-active clouds, and other elements of nature.

ENAR

You don't know that for a fact, do you?

He doesn't respond.

ENAR

I tell you what I do know: You didn't carry out the decision of our colony citizens!

JAYDE

Not exactly. I didn't carry out YOUR decision. Nobody really cared much until you decided to be so irrational about it.

Enar, seated too, leans back and smiles a bitter smile. But then she leans forward, head closer and bigger on the screen.

ENAR

Kill her, Jayde, destroy her once and for all. As you promised you'd do in the Birth-Lab before she was born. Only then we'll be friends again.

JAYDE

And if I won't?

ENAR

Then we'll be enemies.

He takes a moment to consider, keeps staring at her.

JAYDE

These are strong words, Enar. I haven't heard them before in our colony, being used this way.

ENAR

Get used to it, then. Strong actions will follow, I can promise you that!

JAYDE

I appreciate your honesty.

ENAR

So appreciate this, too: The radiation gun isn't in the weapon safe yet. Efbe is waiting for you, go down and get it.

JAYDE

I will consider it.

ENAR

Don't take too long, though, or it will be too late.

Click. She and the screen disappear. Jayde stares thoughtfully at the wall. He turns to the keyboard beside him and taps some keys. First, the lights dim, then a small screen appears there above the keyboard, crowded with words. He scrolls down the various lines, searching.

He highlights the word "Moonlight," and taps on it. The screen fills with a scenery of a moon rising over a mountain (a digitally enhanced version of an old painting). The same goes for the music that comes next: It sounds modern, electronic, yet based on old music (possibly Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata").

Jayde lies down on the sofa, his head resting on the armrest. Zeze's drawing rests beside him. His eyes stare up and away.

EXT/INT THE CAVE IN THE MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

A different pair of open eyes, also staring far and away. An orange glow is reflected in these big black eyes. We pull back to see that Zeze is lying on the cave's ground, covered with the empty nylon sack. Two fireballs, on each side of her head, are burning.

She's made the cave a bit of a home for herself: Her supply of food and drink tablets are arranged nicely on one side, her drawings and fireballs supply on the other side.

She's motionless, but we continue to travel out of the cave. A beautiful full moon is high above the mountain, washing the valley below with its magnificent moonlight glow.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND COLONY, THE BIRTH-LAB

At the center of the lab stands the Birth-Machine. Three lab workers keep their eyes on the machine: Jayde, Kayce, and

AREN, a woman we haven't seen before. They all wear transparent nylon lab-gowns over their blue suits.

So do other lab workers around, busy with various tasks. As Kayce inspects the machine's main control-screen, beating with numbers, colorful graphs and lines, Jayde gets closer.

JAYDE
No deviation so far?

KAYCE
Not that I can see. Here, as you know, they are all identical.

JAYDE
Somewhere else they are not, you mean?

Kayce turns to look at him, nods. From the look in their eyes it's apparent how much they understand and like each other.

KAYCE
I found a very old film in the library. Quite the exception.

JAYDE
In what way?

KAYCE
Well... only black and white, if you can believe it. A tragic comedy, I think, they called it back then.

JAYDE
Back when?

KAYCE
Oh... long ago. Mid-twentieth century, probably.

JAYDE
That long...

KAYCE
Yes. But don't let it stop you from watching it with me.

JAYDE
It won't.

He pats Kayce on the back, turns and steps closer to where Aren is standing, inspecting a Petri dish via a microscope.

JAYDE
All's well, Aren?

AREN
Yes, we're ready. Take a look.

She raises her head and he lowers his eyes to the microscope.

INSERT: A living organism is seen under the microscope, while in the background three consecutive loud beeps are heard, overcoming the laboratory noise: generally low, monotonous.

Jayde raises his eyes from the microscope, nods approval first to Aren, then looks at the main doors.

As they slide open, in come two women citizens who walk lockstep towards Jayde and Aren. Even more than the other citizens, these two look truly like twins. They are QUTEE and ESPEE, who stop by Jayde and Aren. They seem somewhat younger (no facial lines at all, white as milk.)

QUTEE
You failed to execute a major colony resolution, Jayde. You didn't kill the Monster!

JAYDE
Who said I didn't kill her?

QUTEE
Enar and Efbe. They say you didn't use the radiation gun!

Jayde and Aren exchange looks. She's surprised to hear that.

JAYDE
There was no reason to use it. I took her outside and eliminated her.

ESPEE
This is an assumption on your part.
You cannot prove it.

JAYDE
Of course I can.

ESPEE
Then you'll have to do it in front of a special session of the Citizens Assembly. At time 250.

JAYDE
And who called this special session?

QUTEE
Enar did.

ESPEE
With the support of many citizens. You
don't have a choice.

He realizes that. Looks at them both unfazed.

JAYDE
I'll be there.

He turns his attention back to the Petri dish. As does Aren.
The two young women walk away.

AREN
You should have used the gun before
you came back. Just in the air.

JAYDE
It never even crossed my mind. Nature
was so impressive outside, I simply...

He hesitates. She's back checking the Petri dish under the
microscope. But when he remains quiet, she raises her eyes.

AREN
You simply...

JAYDE
I don't know... forgot about it. And
anyhow, it is one of our colony's
basic rules, right, to never cheat and
deceive?

AREN
Right. And we almost never do. But...

JAYDE
But what?

AREN
Sometimes, I suppose, there's no other
choice.

JAYDE
But I do. My conscience is clear about
it all. Enar knows that.

AREN
So what does she still want from you?

JAYDE
To replace me as Colony Secretary,
that's my guess.

AREN
I see. Do you care at all about it?

He hesitates, looks around. He sees that Qutee and Espee talk to other lab workers, before exiting the lab.

JAYDE
No, I don't. But I worry what would happen once she's elected.

AREN
Don't worry. It will be the same, only you'll have more time here. Which is much more important.

JAYDE
I agree, Aren, but I'm not as sure as you are about things staying the same.

They look deep into each other's eyes.

ENAR'S ROOM

Enar stands in front of a mirror in her shower cubical, part of her room. She combs her short hair and applies lotion to her face. There are no cosmetics, not even lipstick.

There's a small keypad on the wall by her mirror, on which she taps. On the mirror, an electronic sign appears in red, all caps. It reads: IN CASE OF A TIE VOTE, COLONY RULE #23b ALLOWS FOR A SECOND VOTE. DON'T GIVE IN TO JAYDE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES!

She smiles at the sign, her face visible behind it in the mirror. Using the keypad, she clicks it off and turns away.

She's inside her room, identical to the other rooms we've seen. She zips her one-piece suit up to her neck as she looks at the digital clock above the door. It reads 249.

ASSEMBLY HALL

A large digital clock reads 250. Thirty citizens are present in the circular hall, seated in plastic chairs. There's no

podium, desk, or special seat for a chairperson. Technically advanced, yet simplicity - as everywhere - rules here too.

The citizens sit quietly, uniformly dressed. All are white. It's difficult to distinguish between the sexes, at first, or young and old. The similarity is striking.

Jayde, after surveying the assembled citizens, begins to speak through an extended microphone attached to his chair.

JAYDE

Citizens of our underground colony:
You are all aware by now of the reason
for this unscheduled, unnecessary
assembly meeting.

(pause)

Let's be clear about it: The resolution you adopted here previously, under significant pressure from citizen Enar, stated that I have to go outside and eliminate Zeze. It did not specify how.

He allows his words a moment to sink in. Kayce, who sits beside him, looks at him encouragingly.

JAYDE

It will defy reason, and science too, to assume that she's still alive outside, wearing only her thin nylon dress, fighting alone against nature's wild elements.

In his chair, like in all the other chairs, there's a tablet arm containing an electronic keypad screen, and a clear tall cup with a yellowish drink inside. He sips from it.

JAYDE

Am I to be blamed for acting like a human being, part of our enlightened, advanced race, which doesn't kill, because it doesn't know HOW to kill?

(pause)

I acted exactly as our law demands: I accomplished your decision without using the weapon. Which, let me remind you, is allowed to be used only in order to defend our colony against an attack by outside invaders!

There are no cheers or hands clapping, but a murmur of

approval spreads among the assembled citizens.

Enar, who sits opposite Jayde at the other side, between Qutee and Espee, is quick to seize on it, using her chair mic.

ENAR

You did NOT kill the Monster! This is a fact. We are NOT dealing here with assumptions, you of all people should know that. We are dealing with facts and certainties.

(pause)

Citizen Jayde didn't use the gun, which was given to him for this specific purpose. Instead, he stayed outside with her, who knows for what reason. Only when it got darker outside, the Secretary of our Colony decided it was time for him to return.

She pauses, searching for support among the citizens. Some of those seated beside her nod in agreement.

ENAR

Jayde's decisions and actions were twisted due to irregular emotions. These strange feelings that once, in the long-forgotten past, existed among our ancestors.

(pause)

This primitive, emotional attachment between Jayde and that creature, maybe even PHYSICAL attachment, who knows... presents a great danger to our future. We can only hope that this was an isolated incident, and that Jayde will face the consequences accordingly!

The citizens are quiet. But judging by their grave faces, the occasional murmur and nod, it seems her words had impressed them strongly. Not so Kayce, who speaks next.

KAYCE

It seems to me that what we are now experiencing is like a chain reaction of old times. It began with the birth of that baby girl Zeze, and continued until her deportation from the colony. We must break this chain now.

(pause - more)

KAYCE (CONT'D)

The deterioration of relations among us is unacceptable. She is no longer with us, Enar, that's also a fact. So forget her and let's move on.

EFBE

This "chain reaction" Kayce is talking about doesn't exist. What exists is the fact that Jayde didn't follow through with the decision of our colony citizens!

QUTEE

Exactly. And that's why Enar MUST replace Jayde as our next Colony Secretary!

Silence prevails. Enar is very pleased, nodding at Qutee. The other citizens look towards Jayde, expecting his reaction. He doesn't look surprised or displeased.

JAYDE

Even before this session has begun, I've made up my mind to resign as your secretary. I came to this conclusion despite its basic injustice.

(pause)

But this issue, this debate before us, is undermining my ability to continue in this position, and there are other things to do, more important ones.

His words leave quite an impression on the surprised citizens. Including Enar.

JAYDE

Let me remind you, though: The post of secretary is an administrative one, without the power to rule or to enact new laws. Let's keep it this way.

(pause)

Therefore, allow me to suggest a neutral candidate. A candidate who will put an end to the animosity currently existing between Enar and me. A citizen who will conduct the affairs of the colony rationally and logically. I put forward Eso as my candidate for the post of new Colony Secretary.

His words create quite a stir among the citizens, who talk to each other and look at Eso.

She - the young woman Jayde visited earlier in her room - is not only surprised but embarrassed with all the attention directed at her. But she overcomes it and turns her mic on.

ESO

I'm very surprised... don't see myself qualified to hold this position. I'm too young still, and don't have enough experience. More importantly, I'm busy with the education of our children, which consumes most of my time.

(pause)

But I agree with Kayce: We must break this chain reaction of hostility and forget what happened recently. We must let Jayde finish his term as our secretary.

She looks at Jayde directly. Displeased. The others look at Enar, since to their great surprise she stands up and speaks loudly without the help of the mic.

ENAR

It's clear to me that the choice is still between me and Jayde, who admitted here to his wrongdoings, and even agreed to resign.

(pause - looks at him sharply)

I think the position of Colony Secretary isn't only an administrative one, as he just said, but a visionary one too. It should have a greater influence on our life here!

(pause again - looks around)

I want our colony's "Foundation Rules" to exist not only on our screens, but to be part of our way of life from now on, never to be broken again. Our great experiment in transhumanism will continue, citizens, I promise you that. But I see before me a major change coming, a bright future ahead, and I intend on showing you the way!

She remains standing, as all the citizens look at her, expecting more. Her face is flushed with excitement. In the hall, nobody claps, but in the background we can hear strong clapping and cheering.

VIDEO LIBRARY

The sound of clapping and cheering continues to vibrate in the library hall, filled on all walls with shelves full of neatly arranged cases of DVDs and CDs. There are small video players, too, with screens attached.

The sound comes from a nearby smaller room. There's a large widescreen there, where the figure of Charlie Chaplin is projected, delivering the final speech of his B&W film, "The Great Dictator." The sound of clapping fades away.

CHARLIE

... We think too much and feel too little. More than machinery we need humanity. More than cleverness we need kindness and gentleness. Without these qualities, life will be violent and all will be lost...

The picture pauses. Jayde and Kayce sit in front of the screen, set on a desk. An old DVD case is opened on the desk.

There's also an embedded small keypad, where Kayce holds his hand. Jayde's hand is placed on Kayce's shoulder, as the image of Charlie Chaplin remains frozen between them.

JAYDE

You don't really think it's possible here, do you, violence and all that?

KAYCE

Yes, I do. That's why I'm showing it to you.

JAYDE

I see...

(pause)

Our way of life is so different, though. We don't have enemies or wars. We don't use money or suffer hunger. We have full equality between the sexes. And...

KAYCE

And some things never change, I believe. Never will.

JAYDE

Even considering that we are born in the Birth-Machine, (more)

JAYDE (CONT'D)
and don't have parents. That we are
one big family here?

KAYCE
Even so. We are still human beings.

JAYDE
Well... yes, you can say that. Still,
violence here... I don't think so.

KAYCE
We shall see.
(pause)
And I tell you something else.

JAYDE
What?

KAYCE
You made a big mistake, my friend,
resigning so easily without a fight.

These words hit Jayde hard. He swallows, takes his hand off Kayce's shoulder and looks back at the screen.

JAYDE
What a good friend you are.

KAYCE
Indeed.

JAYDE
Let's see how it ends.

Kayce taps on the keypad and the film resumes.

CHARLIE
... Let us fight for a world of
reason, a world where science and
progress will lead to all men's
happiness. Soldiers! In the name of
democracy, let us all unite!

A thunderous sound of applause again, coming from a multitude of people gathered outside in a big square.

The picture dissolves to a lonely young woman wearing a simple dress, lying on the ground. Gentle music is heard. She raises her head as if hearing it.

CHARLIE

Hannah, can you hear me? Wherever you are, look up, Hannah. The clouds are lifting. The sun is breaking through. We are coming out of the darkness into the light...

Just then Jayde taps on Kayce's shoulder and Kayce pauses the film again.

Jayde, mesmerized, looks at the face of the young woman, framed by her long dark hair, looking with moistened eyes as if at him.

FLASHBACK: Zeze, sitting on the small rock at the center of the cave, shows her drawing to Jayde. She looks up at him as a proud, childish smile spreads on her face.

CONTROL ROOM

The face of another woman, Enar, looking with concern at one of the screens on the panel. She's watching Jayde and Kayce in the library's Screening Room, as the film comes to an end.

ENAR

What do you think?

She turns her head, looks at Efbe, who stands beside her.

EFBE

That we should find a better use for this library. And for the screening room.

ENAR

You just read my mind.

EFBE

That's my role now. We should destroy all these videos, if you ask me.

ENAR

Exactly. What do we need them for, anyway? We have the holograms for entertainment now.

EFBE

Plus, this is a deviant, solitary activity for Kayce. He never joins the rest of us in the Pleasure Hall.

ENAR
We must stop it then. And soon.

She turns her attention back to the screen. Only Kayce can be seen, seated as before in the screening room. Very carefully, wearing white gloves, he places the DVD in its case.

ESO'S ROOM

Eso sits on the sofa, a small keyboard with a screen attached to it on her lap. She reads and writes.

The title on her screen, in all caps, is RECENT HISTORY.

A buzz is heard. She raises her head to the door but remains motionless. When it's heard again she taps the keyboard.

The upper part of her door becomes transparent and the image of Jayde, from the waist up, appears there waiting.

Eso taps another key and the door slides open. Jayde comes in but stays by the closing door, looking at her.

JAYDE
You are busy, I can see.

ESO
Sharp as ever, aren't you?

JAYDE
Well... I was born this way. I'll come another time.

He turns back to the door.

ESO (O.S.)
No. Stay!

He turns, looks back at her. She puts her keyboard with the small screen back in its place on the wall. She points to the free space beside her on the sofa and he sits down there. A moment of awkward silence follows.

ESO
Why didn't you ask my permission first?

JAYDE
Things happened too fast. Even the idea to nominate you came to me just there, at the Assembly Hall.

ESO
And your decision to resign?

JAYDE
Same thing. I realized I couldn't go
on like that.

ESO
Like what?

He hesitates. Her direct look persists.

JAYDE
Things have changed lately, Eso, as
you know. Something we're not familiar
with is taking place here, and I came
to the conclusion that...

ESO
That it's too much for you?

JAYDE
No. That it's better for me to resign
now, on my own terms. Maybe it would
calm things down, before it would be
too late and too ugly.

ESO
Never thought of you this way, you
know. Being such a... well, defeatist.
Maybe you've changed lately too.

JAYDE
Probably so...
(pause - thoughtful)
What happened with Zeze, here and
outside, had taught me a lesson.

ESO
What lesson?

He hesitates, about to speak when another buzz, slightly
different, is heard and a small red light blinks opposite
them on the wall. They stare at it, motionless, but when the
buzz continues Eso taps a key on the keyboard beside her.

The embedded large screen on the opposite wall comes alive.
Enar - head and shoulders - appears there, looking at them.

ENAR
The two of you... what a surprise.

ESO
Get to the point.

ENAR
The point is, Eso, that I hope we can work together, you and me.

ESO
I don't see why not.

ENAR
Good. You too, Jayde.

He remains quiet, looking at her steadily.

ENAR
You are not responding, just as you didn't congratulate me on being elected the new secretary.

JAYDE
There was no need for it. Hearing your ceremonial speech was enough for me.

ENAR
But not for me.

He just stares at her. Eso looks at him, expecting his reply.

ENAR (O.S.)
You will hear more speeches like this, Jayde, be sure. We are moving forward now, away from the vulgar nature of you and your Monster. Trust me.

JAYDE
I do, unfortunately.

ENAR
So you better cooperate from now on. Don't stand in my way!

JAYDE
That will depend on your actions moving forward, as you say.

It's her turn to just stare at him, annoyed. He holds her stare while placing his hand on Eso's hand, who smiles at him. A change of light on their faces and a beeping sound signal the disappearance of Enar and the screen. They remain still and quiet, looking deeply into each other's eyes.

ESO (V.O.)

A war of words can escalate quickly to a war of weapons. Recent history teaches us that, as it happened on earth after the Global Virus Pandemic, and before the Great Nuclear War.

CLASSROOM

Eso goes on speaking, standing in front of the class.

ESO

Our underground colony was not the only one to be built back then, but at present we don't know if any other colonies still exist, since we lost contact with them. That's the case also with the Mother Colony, up above.

A short ping is heard and a purple light blinks on the chair of one of the kids, AMDE, seated in front of her.

ESO

Yes, Amde, you have a question?

AMDE

Yes. Up where?

ESO

On Planet Mars, supposedly. But as I said, we have lost all communications.

AMDE

Did we ever have any?

Eso takes her time answering, surveying the class. Every pair of blue eyes is set on her, belonging to ten look-alike kids, all of them six years old (or so), dressed in one-piece green outfits. It's difficult to distinguish between the girls and the boys, so similar they look with their short blond hair.

The shape of the room, with colorful, windowless walls, is half-circled. The children are seated in chairs that include tablet arm-desks, small screens, keypads and electronic pens.

ESO

We have no substantive evidence of such communications, only old stories being passed on from generation to generation about the times before the pandemic and war.

AMDE
So how do we know she still exists,
the Mother Colony?

ESO
We don't know that, Amde, and your
time is up. Direct your attention back
to your screen.

Amde lowers his head to his small screen. The other kids
remain attentive.

Eso takes a sip from a plastic cap beside her on her desk.

ESO
Our colony was built between an
underground water lake and an ore-body
containing a vast uranium field, and
some other important minerals and
elements as well.

(pause)
We have uranium in abundance, which we
constantly extract from the mine in
order to feed our nuclear reactor. It
produces the energy we need to sustain
our lives here.

She pauses, allows time for the kids to write on their pads.

ESO
We are still using the heat and energy
of the sun for some tasks, with the
help of special solar panels situated
at the top of our Periscopic-Tower. We
plan on using more sun power now,
since the heavy radioactive clouds,
the result of that tragic war, have
dissipated significantly.

She pauses again, making sure the kids are writing.

ESO
But you need to know this: The price
of that war was enormous. Everything
living under the sun was destroyed.
Everything but our colony, and
maybe...

The door slides open suddenly and Enar comes in, followed by
Qutee and Espee, who remain by the door. Enar walks ahead and
stops near Eso. Who, like the kids, is very surprised.

ENAR

Children, I'm Enar, your new Colony Secretary. I'm responsible for the well-being of this colony and all its citizens, including you and your teacher, who will wait patiently until I'll finish speaking to you.

If looks could kill - Enar would be dead. But all Eso does is move away from her a few steps. Her look changes to worrisome, though, looking at the bewildered children.

ENAR

You, children, are the most advanced product the human race has ever known. Your brain is superior, and the sole controller of your perfect bodies. You don't have these strange emotions that existed once, before the pandemic and nuclear war, like love, hate and fear.

Some short pings are heard and a few purple lights blink on the kids' chairs. Enar ignores them.

ENAR

From now on you are under my direct supervision, and that of my two assistants by the door. Together, we will move forward, towards an even better future. You, children, will be part of this great change!

She waits a moment, evaluating the effect of her words on the surprised faces of the children. She then walks to the door, where she stops and looks back at Eso, who looks back at her. It's not a friendly exchange, which ends when Enar turns and leaves the room with her assistants.

Immediately, commotion starts. The kids speak among themselves first, then directly at Eso.

CHILD A

What does she mean by this great change?

CHILD B

What are emotions, teacher?

CHILD C

What's wrong now that we need this great change?

Eso raises her hand.

ESO
Quiet now. Don't talk all at once!

Finally, there's quiet again.

ESO
Listen to me now, and listen very carefully: This interruption was very unusual. I can't lie to you: I don't agree with what the new secretary did and said, and I promise you I'm going to speak with her about it soon.

A short ping is heard again and a purple light blinks on the chair of one of the kids, TEVY.

ESO
Yes, Tevy, what is it?

TEVY
What should we do then?

Eso, not pleased with the interruption and pointed question, still looks fondly at Tevy. Who, in a closer look, seems like a girl, with a tiny beauty mark above her upper lip.

ESO
I'm coming to it now. I want all of you, individually though, to think about what has just happened, and write your thoughts about it.

TEVY
But what is individually?

ESO
Individually is... personally, and separately. Don't talk about it among yourselves, and don't think of what I might want you to think.

(pause)
Just look inside your own head, deep inside it, and bring out your own personal thoughts and feelings. Then write them down on your pads. Later, We will discuss it all. Please begin.

It takes a moment before the kids begin to write, using their electronic pens and pads. But some, like Tevy, remain still.

Esō drops on her chair. She has a larger screen in front of her on the desk. She first looks at it, then scrolls down, reading. But then she stops, stares hazily up at the ceiling.

OLD PEOPLE HALL

The door opens and Enar enters, her assistants in tow. As the door closes behind them, they stop and look around.

There are about ten elderly people there, women and men, wearing yellow, toga-like outfits. They look similar to the other citizens, only older.

Two of them are playing with what seems to be chess, only the chess pieces are different. Another couple is in a corner, seated on a bench, embraced, eyes closed. Others are playing video games on the small screens embedded in the walls.

Near a closed door sits a man on the floor, his back leaning against the wall. He seems older than the others, completely bald but with a long white beard. He's busy writing on a tablet screen but halts and looks up at the newcomers.

QUTEE

If you want to speak to them, we better...

ENAR

No, I better not.

Just then a side door opens and a male citizen, BECE (who was present at the Assembly Hall meeting), steps in from a room with a large window. He addresses Enar immediately.

BECE

What are you doing here at this time, Enar? You know...

ENAR

I know all there is to know, Bece. Go back to your workstation.

BECE

Not before you leave. Or tell me what you are doing here.

They stare at each other strongly, motionlessly, before Enar turns to go, addressing her assistants.

ENAR

Let's go. Efbe will handle it here.

Qutee, staring unfriendly at Bece, presses a button and the door slides open. They exit. Bece stays put, staring at the closing door.

The old man turns his eyes - blue like the rest of them, but wise and all-knowing - away from the door and back to his tablet screen. He resumes writing. The sign above the door beside him reads DEATH CELL.

BIRTH-LAB

Enar and her assistants enter. Here too, nobody pays much attention to them. The three women walk around and talk to the Lab workers, who continue with their work. They stop by the Birth-Machine, beside Kayce.

Enar watches him for a moment. He doesn't even look at her, continues to inspect the tubes, the flow of the plasma, and the screen in front of him.

Enar turns to go but not her assistants.

QUTEE
Citizen Kayce, the Colony Secretary
was here.

KAYCE
You don't say...

QUTEE
I do.

KAYCE
Then I tell you what: She can come and
go anywhere in her free time, like
anyone else.

ESPEE
She is not like anyone else, and this
is not her free time.

KAYCE
If it's not, then she should be at
work now.

QUTEE
This is her work!

He doesn't answer this time. Blue light flickers on the screen in front of him and a buzz is heard. He taps on an icon and waits.

BIRTH-LAB - CONTROL ROOM

The same buzz is heard here too, and so is the flickering blue light on a larger screen, full of unreadable data.

Jayde watches that screen. Beside him stands Aren, his co-worker, who looks out through a transparent wide wall. It enables a view of the entire lab. She sees Enar approaching.

Just as Enar steps inside the buzzing sound stops. The flickering blue light too.

ENAR

Everything in order, Jayde?

JAYDE

Sure looks like it. In fact, you just brought order with you.

ENAR

(smirks - after a beat)

Good... You will be ready for the birth of the next generation, then?

JAYDE

Of course we will, we always are. Though unexpected disruptions might...

ENAR

There won't be unexpected disruptions anymore, be sure. Unless...

JAYDE

Unless what?

ENAR

I decide so.

She takes a step forward, stops between Jayde and Aren.

ENAR

Suppose we want twenty babies, Aren, instead of the regular ten. Is that still possible?

AREN

It is possible, in theory. But it's not practical.

ENAR

Leave the practical to me. (more)

ENAR (CONT'D)
 (after a beat)
 What if we want them all to be female
 babies, in the future, what then?

Aren hesitates, looks at Jayde.

JAYDE
 This will be in conflict with our
 Foundation Rules, Enar. These are
 rhetorical questions. All theory, as
 Aren just said.

Enar turns and walks back to the doorway, where she halts.
 She turns back, directs her eyes at him.

ENAR
 You should be ready for everything,
 Jayde. Even for the possibility that
 theory would become reality!

She turns and walks away, her assistants behind her. Jayde and Aren look at each other, puzzled. When they turn their heads back to the doorway Kayce is already there.

KAYCE
 So the "Great Change" is coming!

AREN
 You're not joking.

KAYCE
 I'm not. I wonder who can stop it.

JAYDE
 Only us, together. We should do...

A short but loud sound, like an alarm going off, is heard. It cuts Jayde short, then a voice comes on through the speakers.

QUTEE (V.O.)
 Citizens of underground colony B.365:
 At time 260 there will be a special
 showing of a new live-vision program
 at the Pleasure Hall. The Colony
 Secretary will speak first, and all
 the citizens not on essential duty
 must be present!

The three citizens look at each other. Kayce smiles awkwardly, steps in closer to them.

KAYCE

We should do something about it. Is that what you were about to say?

JAYDE

Exactly. Let's talk about it later, as we have work to do now.

He turns and walks out. Kayce follows him. Aren stays put, watching them thoughtfully through the wide transparent wall.

PLEASURE HALL

The pentagonal hall is crowded with citizens, seated in armchairs. Small screens are attached to their arm sets, trays too, with assortments of colorful tablets and drinks.

Their attention is directed to the center, where Enar stands in a circle of light. Behind her stand Qutee and Espee.

ENAR

Citizens: there are two reasons for our gathering at this time. First, to inform you of some changes in our way of living and working. Second, to incorporate these changes with some pleasurable activities. It is for this particular reason that we are gathered here, in the Pleasure Hall, and not in the Assembly Hall.

She pauses and surveys the citizens. They are attentive, but occasionally they drink and swallow some tablets.

ENAR

As some of you already know, my work supervising the uranium Production-Level has come to an end already. My entire time will now be devoted to my role as your Colony Secretary.

(pause)

This will be the case also with my two assistants, Qutee and Espee, who from now on will be working only with me. Other workers will cover their duties at the mining tunnels. Their place...

Several of the citizens raise their voices in disagreement, cutting her off. This interruption brings Qutee and Espee forward, raising their hands for quiet.

QUTEE

Let the Secretary speak. You will have an opportunity to respond later.

Quiet prevails. Enar nods at her assistants. They step back.

ENAR

In addition, Efbe will join us too, and will be ready to assist us at all times for any purpose.

She looks back towards the double doors, where Efbe stands, his feet slightly apart, his hands behind his back.

ENAR

As a result of these changes, there will be changes in work assignments too. Some of you will be moving to the mining and production levels, while others will switch positions to the Birth-Lab. These new assignments and duties will be determined by me.

(pause)

Additionally, to every working shift, one time-unit will be added in order to close the gap that the four of us will leave behind.

The growing discontent among the citizens continues. One of them, ELDE, stands up.

ELDE

These changes are contrary to our colony rules. They are unacceptable!

AREN

Right. We need to schedule an urgent General Assembly meeting in order...

ENAR

The order is that you let me finish, Elde and Aren, before you will have your say. Now sit down.

Reluctantly, Elde sits down, while getting verbal approval from other citizens. Enar notices that. Her eyes linger on some of the faces as if searching for someone.

ESO'S ROOM

Eso and Jayde are seated closely on the sofa, holding what

looks like a wireless video game console. They play together, wearing no headsets.

On the wall opposite them, the embedded large screen is on, where they are building an old-times' city: building by building, street by street, bridge by bridge. Sound effects and electronic music can be heard.

Suddenly, their play is interrupted by a sharp buzz. Eso taps a key on her wall's keyboard and the upper part of her door becomes transparent, with the image of Kayce standing there.

Eso looks at Jayde, who nods. She smiles, taps another key. The door slides open and Kayce comes in. He stays by the door looking at the screen, then at them with distraught eyes.

ESO
Join us, Kayce

KAYCE
Not if I'm disturbing you. I...

ESO
I opened the door, didn't I?

He nods, then opens a narrow cupboard in the wall and brings out a folding plastic chair. He unfolds it and sits down.

JAYDE
We agreed to talk after work, I know.
Are you coming from the Pleasure Hall?

Kayce shakes his head.

KAYCE
I went to the video library, instead.

JAYDE
What a surprise.

KAYCE
Surprise indeed. She has blocked the entrance.

Eso, aghast, puts down the video game console.

ESO
What do you mean?

KAYCE
I mean... take a look yourself.

Esō grabs the keyboard from the wall and taps on it rapidly. The frozen screen with the city they were building vanishes, and instead multiply screens of the colony's various halls and rooms appear. She opens the Video Library screen, but there's no feed - it's pitch black.

KAYCE
Check outside.

She does, bringing on the screen a view of the corridor outside the Video Library. There's a sign on the door. She zooms in on it. The sign reads: COLONY SECRETARY'S WORKING-ROOM. UNAUTHORIZED ENTRANCE IS FORBIDDEN!

Nothing but silence. Shocked eyes are fixed on the screen.

PLEASURE HALL

As before. Enar, at the well-lit center, speaks.

ENAR
... but future absence from these compulsory communal meetings will not be tolerated. Unless receiving direct permission from me or my assistants not to attend, those absent citizens will be punished severely.

(pause)
Time wasted in inactivity, and the free liberal lifestyle that has existed in our colony for far too long, must come to an end.

She allows quiet to reign momentarily, giving the citizens an opportunity to reflect, while looking around at them.

ENAR
In the next birth generation, there will also be some changes, not all of them finalized yet. However, I have decided positively already to change one discriminatory rule.

(pause)
As you well know, female citizens' names combined of two letters taken from the second half of the alphabet, but the males are given names with two letters from the first half. This practice will change: From now on it will be mixed alphabet letters for all new babies, regardless of gender!

She gladly accepts a cup of pink liquid from Qutee. While she sips from it, the growl of discontent grows louder. She quickly hands the cup back to Qutee

ENAR

Before we move on to the cultural, pleasurable part of our gathering, if anyone here has anything to say, and thinks it's important enough for us to hear, this is your opportunity.

(pause)

But I'm going to be very clear about it: There will be no prolonged discussion, debate, or vote in regard to the changes I have just announced.

Immediately, Elde stands up, while Espee rolls one of the armchairs forward for Enar. She sits down.

ELDE

I strongly object to all these changes, citizen Enar. You...

QUTEE

(interrupts him)

Colony Secretary Enar, citizen Elde. That's how you, and everybody else, should address her from now on!

ELDE

(after a beat)

What is taking place here, and being said, changes our colony rules as we know them. All these changes are utterly wrong and will threaten our normal way of life.

(pause)

The right of the citizens to speak, to debate, and to take decisions accordingly is taken away from them. This is unacceptable!

Most citizens voice agreement with him. Qutee and Espee are agitated, looking at the seated Enar, who remains calm.

ELDE

There is no reason to remain here now, and the only correct reaction to this unscheduled gathering is to cancel and dissolve it.

(pause - more)

ELDE (CONT'D)

I'm going to leave right now, and I call on everybody who thinks this way to join me.

He walks straight towards the doors. Other citizens - Aren and Bece among them - follow his lead. Enar's assistants too. But Enar remains calm, turns her head to watch the doors.

There, as before, stands Efbe, his legs slightly apart, hands behind his back. His look, though, reflects some uncertainty. But not Elde's look, when he stops in front of him.

ELDE

Get out of the way, Efbe.

But Efbe stays put while looking at the approaching Enar, who nods at him. He moves his hands forward from behind his back.

He's holding a RADIATION GUN.

Everyone is dumbfounded. Even Qutee and Espee. But not Enar.

ENAR

The doors are closed, Elde. Nobody is going to leave this hall without my permission. The General Assembly will convene to approve these changes in due time. Until then, what I have announced here is in effect already.

ELDE

You are not only wrong, but insane too. Open the door!

He's in Efbe's face now. Chest to chest, except the gun in between them.

ENAR

One little push on the trigger button will be enough to activate the gun, and citizen Elde will collapse instantly on the floor and die.

(pause)

If Elde will try to force his way out, I will order Efbe to use the gun. This has never happened before in our colony, Elde, I'm well aware of it. Don't be the first to go this way!

Aren puts her hand on Elde's shoulder. He looks back at her,

sees behind her how the other citizens who followed them to the doors begin to retreat.

ENAR

Don't try me, Elde, as I won't hesitate to act. Return to your seat now, like the others. We prepared a new, sexually stimulating program for you all to enjoy.

Aren's hand is pulling Elde's shoulder back. He finally relents and retreats with her, but not before giving both Efbe and Enar strong, meaningful looks.

Enar smiles at Efbe. He tries to smile back, awkwardly though, then hides the gun behind his back again and remains on guard in front of the doors.

ESO'S ROOM

As before: Eso is seated on the sofa with Jayde beside her, Kayce is on the chair. All with grim faces. On the screen, the sign outside the Video Library is still visible: COLONY SECRETARY'S WORKING-ROOM. UNAUTHORIZED ENTRANCE IS FORBIDDEN!

KAYCE

... but we talked about it already, Jayde, remember?

JAYDE

I do. Just couldn't imagine how quickly it would escalate. I still don't understand why.

ESO

I told you why: Your relationship with Zeze. I can see it now more clearly.

She looks deeply into Jayde's eyes. He looks back at her.

KAYCE (O.S.)

I think our ancestors referred to it as jealousy.

ESO

Jealousy... what does it mean, exactly?

KAYCE

Something strange you suddenly feel
(more)

KAYCE (CONT'D)
 growing inside you. A strong emotion
 directed at someone else.

ESO
 How do you know about that?

KAYCE
 An old film I watched once, adapted
 from an even older play. There was
 this morbid desire to possess one
 woman, if I remember correctly.

(pause)
 It included notions of race
 superiority, too, and brought about
 great misery.

A moment of quiet deliberation follows.

JAYDE
 Still, it doesn't make sense to me.
 And it doesn't explain why Enar does
 all these things now, this "jealousy."
 (pause)
 Her behavior and actions are a
 betrayal of everything our colony, our
 society stood for, for so long.

ESO
 What's the reason then?

JAYDE
 Well... what if Enar is a mistake,
 too, of the Birth-Machine?

They look at him surprised, trying to digest it.

KAYCE
 You mean... one that went undetected?

JAYDE
 Exactly. Only eventually, a mistake
 would reveal itself. With Enar, it
 begins to reveal itself now, lately,
 while with Zeze it already has begun
 to disappear.

KAYCE
 If she is a mistake too, as you say,
 and an evil one at that, then we must
 stop her immediately!

ESO
But what about Qutee and Espee?

JAYDE
Right... and Efbe

KAYCE
We must stop them all at once. Call an emergency meeting of all the citizens, while we still can.

JAYDE
No. Something is wrong here.

They stare at him, surprised again. He takes his time.

JAYDE
If Enar is a mistake, so are Qutee and Espee, to an extent. Too many mistakes simply...

ESO
Don't make sense. And most of them are female "mistakes."

KAYCE
Right, I agree. But what if...
(pause - hesitates)
I saw it in an old film once, too, don't laugh. I mean, pregnancy. Women must be missing it very much. Giving birth, nursing babies, things we...

ESO
All but forgot about.

KAYCE
That's right. But...

JAYDE
But that changes everything, my friends. Everything we've tried to create and build here in the colony.

Silence and stillness follow. They remain deep in thought.

PLEASURE HALL

Two figures float majestically in the air, at the well-lit center, surrounded by the seated citizens, dimly lit.

It's a Hologram, with images projected in the air in a variety of colors, with the help of a 3D Hologram LED projector fan, hanging from the ceiling. It's a love dance of sorts, in rhythm with electronic music, between two women.

Some of the citizens watching are stretched comfortably in their deep armchairs, drinking and chewing, while others are already hooked to electronic gadgets, attached to their bodies, including in the groin area.

Not everyone is enjoying the show. Elde, Aren and Bece sit upright and motionless, keep looking at each other, or alternately towards the doors, where Efbe still stands.

Enar sits some distance away from the rest of the citizens. Behind her stand Qutee and Espee, who look at each other, smiling. On closer look, it seems they very much resemble the two women engaged in the love-making dance - who now begin to undress each other - in the air.

Unlike her assistants, Enar does not enjoy the show. The look in her eyes reflects annoyance.

ESO'S ROOM

Eso and Jayde are seated on the sofa as before, thoughtful. Kayce is absent, but the screen is on still, with the new sign outside the Video Library's door.

JAYDE

I'm sure of only one thing, though:
This kind of behavior has never
happened before.

ESO

So what are we going to do about it?

JAYDE

I'm not sure, but we must act soon, as
Kayce suggested. Or it would be too
late.

ESO

If it's not already is.

She turns off the screen and dims the lights, then stands up and extends her hand to him.

ESO

Let's try and forget everything for
now, enjoy the moment.

He just looks at her, motionless, unsure.

ESO
It will help us clear our heads,
you'll see, reach the right decision.

He accepts her hand and gets up, stands opposite her.

JAYDE
You think so?

ESO
I know so.

Wasting no time she unzips her one-piece suit, lets it drop down. He responds by undressing too in a similar fashion. Both are wearing the same type of loose-fitted white shorts, which fall down next. They embrace and kiss, then progress, slow at first, into love-making on the sofa.

ENAR'S ROOM

Enar sits on the sofa, looking disturbed on the screen embedded in the wall opposite her, where Eso and Jayde can be seen making love.

On a folding chair beside the sofa sits Efbe, on his lap rests the radiation gun. He looks at the screen too.

ENAR
What do you think?

EFBE
Having pleasure in one's free time is no crime, as you know.

ENAR
But not attending a mandatory meeting is!
(pause)
Time for plan B then, right, as we discussed earlier?

He nods, somewhat reluctantly, just as they hear the lovers' moaning. They turn their eyes back to the screen.

On it, Eso and Jayde reach a climaxing, unifying sexual moment. It leaves them spent, content in each other's arms.

DISSOLVE TO:

COLONY SECRETARY'S WORKING-ROOM

Enar sits behind the screening-room's desk, minus the large screen. In front of her stand Jayde and Kayce. Around them, the walls are shiny gray: clean of all the shelves with the old DVD and CD cases, and the small video players.

By the open door to the screening-room stands a robot: not as tall as humans but sturdy, made of plastic, with one red eye at the center of its round head, not on now. 'R-1' is imprinted on its upper front.

JAYDE

What robot one is doing here?

ENAR

Nothing to do with you.

JAYDE

It should stay in the robots' room.
Only in an emergency situation...

ENAR

This IS an emergency situation, Jayde,
and it's in training.

JAYDE

Training...

ENAR

That's right. Efbe has some ideas on
how it can be of help to us.

Jayde looks at Kayce, but Kayce's eyes are elsewhere, looking at the empty walls.

ENAR

Now listen to me, Jayde: You are not allowed to interact with Eso anymore.

JAYDE

Says who?

ENAR

Say I. No meetings for any reason for some time, until...

JAYDE

Until you are gone. Your decisions are not only ludicrous, but unlawful too. That gun there is their only power.

He points behind towards the main (old library) door, where Efbe stands, holding the radiation gun in the open. Nonchalantly, he smooths it with a white cloth.

ENAR

You were absent from the last communal activity. That's unlawful, too, and that's your punishment!

JAYDE

Not so. It's up to us whether we want to participate in such a "pleasurable" activity or not. Read our colony rules again, why don't you.

ENAR

No reason for me to do that. The old rules are dead, Jayde, new ones will replace them soon.

JAYDE

Which is unlawful, too.

ENAR

I will determine what is lawful and what's not, from now on.

JAYDE

You are delusional. Only the General Assembly can decide that.

Enar stands up, leans forward, tries hard to stare him down.

ENAR

The special General Assembly meeting you two are trying to organize will not take place!

JAYDE

Sure it will. More than the required twenty members have agreed to it. They know the subject of discussion: You and your repressive actions. They will come to discuss it.

ENAR

They will not. Qutee and Espee are making sure of it as we speak. Most citizens understand already what the two of you are unable to understand: Who makes decisions here and why!

JAYDE

They don't understand. They are afraid of the gun, so they surrender.

ENAR

That's right. Until order is achieved, Efbe and the gun will help me rule.

(pause - sits down)

Which reminds me: You and Kayce are working from now on in the uranium Production-Level. Your work in the Birth-Lab is over!

Jayde and Kayce exchange baffled looks. Kayce is enraged but stays quiet.

JAYDE

You must be insane. We are about to start new scientific research. The most important one yet.

ENAR

I will decide about that, not you.

JAYDE

We want to investigate the origin of evil, Enar. We want to eliminate all evil genes before new babies are even born. No more "Monsters" like you!

It hits Enar hard, and it takes her a moment to recuperate. She gets up again and leans forward, right at his face.

ENAR

Too late for it, Jayde, as we're not going back. You allowed the real "Monster" to live among us for too long. You "loved" her. You did not eliminate her. You betrayed the citizens' trust in you. Now go away!

For a moment, he just stares back at her, before turning and walking to the door. But not Kayce.

KAYCE

Where are all the films, Enar? The video discs? The entire library archive?

She's taken aback by the angry tone of his voice, but keeps mum.

KAYCE

Those films and videos are irreplaceable. They contain a tremendous amount of cultural, historical, and artistic values.

(pause)

Our heritage is preserved in them.
Where are they?

ENAR

Gone, Kayce. All gone. We destroyed your video discs, erased all your films and digital archive.

KAYCE

You destroyed yourself, too!

He doesn't wait for her to react but walks to the door. She just watches him go, furious.

At the door, Efbe prevents their exit, his radiation gun pointing at Jayde, then at the approaching Kayce.

EFBE

We don't need art anymore, Kayce, or culture. History doesn't interest us at all. We just live, you see. That's our "Art!"

They just stare at him. He smiles gleefully, lowers the gun and presses a button by the door. It slides open. They exit.

CHILDREN'S HALL

A different door opens. Elde (who resisted Enar at the Pleasure Hall) enters. Eso is there, checking on the sleeping kids. These are the same kids we saw earlier in the classroom, now asleep in small beds spread around. A few tables are at the center full of colorful tablets and drinks.

Eso and Elde meet at the center of the hall.

ESO

(quietly)

As you can see, they're all asleep finally.

ELDE

(quietly too)

Good. You can go now.

ESO

No, I'd rather stay here with you and the kids for a while.

She leans back on one of the tables, looks around with fondness at the sleeping kids.

ELDE

I met Jayde and Kayce just now, on their way back to the Birth-Lab, after meeting with Enar

ESO

Anything new?

ELDE

(nods)

Instead of the Assembly Hall we're meeting at the Old People's Hall.

ESO

I see. Do you know why?

He nods again but keeps mum, as his eyes catch one of the sleeping kids who is awake. She is Tevy, the girl we've seen before, with the tiny beauty mark above her upper lip. She looks back at him with her big blue eyes.

BIRTH-LAB

Jayde and Kayce enter, walk straight to the Birth-Machine. Aren is there, inspecting. Another woman, Exen - we've seen her before in passing, as one of the lab workers - stands by the central control screen, studying it carefully. Nearby, Qutee and Espee stand on guard, holding radiation guns.

JAYDE

What are you doing here, Exen? Go back to your workstation.

EXEN

This is my workstation now.

JAYDE

No, it's not. You have no idea what to do here.

EXEN

I will learn from Aren. You two should go down to the Production-Level.

Jayde turns to Aren.

JAYDE

What is she talking about? She has no
clue what to do here. She will
destroy...

AREN

I know. But...

EXEN

I know what to do, Jayde. And I know
whom to destroy!

She taps an icon on the control screen. A buzz is heard, red lights blink, a thin purple line zigzags across the screen.

Jayde moves in quickly, pushes Exen aside and taps on another icon. The buzz dies down, the blinking red lights too, the purple line disappears.

Exen turns to Qutee and Espee, who move in with their guns, pointing at Jayde and Kayce.

QUTEE

A new order is in place, Jayde. Next
generation will be different.

ESPEE

Right. Only two male babies. Now go
down to the Production-Level!

Other lab-workers move in, curious, creating a tight circle around the Birth-Machine. Three loud beeps are heard and the main doors open. Enar and Efbe enter, marching in purposely. The circle of workers opens up for them.

ESPEE

Just two male babies in the next
generation, Colony Secretary, correct?

ENAR

Correct. Start the process Exen.

Exen is about to repeat the process, but Jayde is in her way.

JAYDE

You are both mad!

Efbe launches forward with his gun in hand, shoving Jayde aside with the other hand. Jayde pushes him strongly back.

Efbe falters, falls on the floor, almost losing control of his radiation gun.

Jayde turns back to the control screen and continues to work. But, with his back to Efbe, he's unprepared for the blow of the gun's butt on his head.

He falls to the floor. The circle of citizens widens. Cries of shock and disapproval are heard. Kayce and Aren get down on the floor to check on Jayde.

He tries to get up, unsteadily, receiving support from Kayce and Aren. He touches his head with his hand, then looks at his fingers, covered with blood.

The shocked faces of the citizens tell the story: It's clear from their reaction that they haven't seen such a sight, and experienced such an event, before.

For a moment no one moves. Then Kayce lets go of Jayde and launches at Efbe. He hits the hand holding the gun forcefully, and it falls to the floor. Both of them are fighting for it now. The circle of workers widens.

There's a fierce fight between the two men over the gun. We see it in flashes, moving from hand to hand.

JAYDE
No... stop it!

He tries, weak still from the blow to his head, to intervene. But Qutee and Espee, guns in hands, prevent him.

Suddenly a strange noise is heard - not so loud, a sharp whistle-like sound - and a cloud, smoke-like, rises, covering momentarily the two fighting men. Some citizens are frozen, shocked, some step back and cry in alarm.

As the smoke-like dust clears away slowly, only Efbe can be seen getting up from the floor, gun in hand.

Kayce is no longer there. Only a MOUND-OF-ASHES remains. Around it some dust still hovers, smoldering bones too.

The citizens are stunned. No one moves or says a word.

Jayde kneels down on the floor. He collects some of the ashes from the ground, lets them sift through his fingers. But his fingers are stained with blood, and some ash sticks to them.

FLASHBACK: Outside on the mountain, Jayde collects some dust

from the ground, lets it sift through his fingers. He is fascinated by it but then turns his head and looks around, seeing the mountain's cave. He gets up.

BIRTH-LAB

Jayde gets up, holding his blood-stained hand forward. The tight circle of citizens opens up for him and lets him walk through. A few of the lab workers follow him out of the lab.

The remaining citizens watch Enar closely, awaiting her command. There's no joy of victory - or expression of sadness - in her eyes and words.

ENAR

Resume all operations, Exen. Back to work, everybody.

Exen taps the icon on the control screen. A buzz is heard and red lights start blinking. The other lab-workers, troubled greatly by what they've just witnessed, move slowly away and back to their workstations.

But not Aren. Like Jayde, she kneels down by the mound-of-ashes and dips her fingers into it.

ENAR (O.S.)

Go back to work, Aren.

Aren raises her head and looks at her, full of hatred.

AREN

Not before I say farewell to a dear old friend. A colleague of mine, whom you just murdered!

These words hit Enar hard, but she's able to shake them off.

ENAR

It was an accident, Aren. Not a murder.

AREN

An accident by design, it was. You will regret it!

She gets up and they stand face-to-face, eyeball-to-eyeball.

ENAR

Don't lecture me, Aren. You should join us, it would be better for you.

AREN
Why... so you won't murder me too?

ENAR
(swallows - a beat)
No. Because you have an opportunity to
help us. Use your brain and your
knowledge to advance our sex.

Aren looks at her for a moment, wondering how to respond. She looks at her palm and fingers, covered with Kayce's ashes. She raises her hand - as if to hit her - but holds it steady.

AREN
You are living in the past, Enar, and
this is the result of it.
(pause)
The sexes are all equal here.

ENAR
You think so?

AREN
I know so. Before you showed up and
began changing everything.

She turns to go, walks towards the doors.

ENAR
(calling after her)
You can be in charge of the lab, Aren,
instead of Jayde. Think about it!

Aren halts and looks back. Everybody there looks at her.

A hint of a smile registers on her lips before she turns to the doors, where she meets the armed assistants. But Enar nods and they let her through. Aren exits.

OLD PEOPLE HALL

Jayde enters. He looks around, his head's partly covered with a bloodstained bandage. Others follow him in, all of them male citizens, among them Elde and Bece. They walk in the empty hall: no elderly people are around, the doors are shut.

Jayde sits down on the floor in the center of the hall. The others join him, among them AMEL, ADI, and DIEL. They sit closely in a tight circle, illuminated by sparse light.

JAYDE
Kayce is gone.

A moment of silence. All heads are down.

BECE
And by the look of it... so are our
elderly citizens.

AMEL
Yes, where are they?

BECE
I don't know. Efbe took over here soon
after Enar was elected. I fear...

JAYDE
The worst. So am I.

They all look at him, wondering, expecting more.

JAYDE
We are not allowed to enter their
private rooms, Bece. Right?

Bece nods.

ELDE
Nor do we have time for it now, as we
are next to disappear. We must act!

BECE
But they took all the radiation guns.
Including the heavy ones.

AMEL
Yes, we checked the weapon safe. It's
empty!

Quiet again, as the latest blow sinks in.

JAYDE
They took Eso too, I think.

ELDE
What do you mean, took her?

JAYDE
I met her earlier in her room, and she
took care of my wound. I told her I'll
call on her and Aren later, (more)

JAYDE (CONT'D)
when the time comes, so they could
join us.
(pause)
But they were not in their rooms
later. I couldn't find them anywhere.

ADI
Not good... I was hoping some women
would join us.

BECE
And I was hoping for some good news,
we need it.

JAYDE
None to report, I'm afraid.
(pause)
In fact, Enar has decided already that
in the next generation only two male
babies will be brought to life. The
rest will be females.

They look at each other, stupefied.

AMEL
What can we do then?

ELDE
Fight we must!

JAYDE
No other way. Either that or death.

All eyes are on him, demanding an elaboration.

JAYDE
Death to us all, I mean, to our entire
sex. Like our friend Kayce.

He tilts his head down. A moment of silence again.

BECE
But say... they still need us, don't
you think?

JAYDE
Not for long, though, the way things
are moving. This is a war now!

AMEL
A war...

ADI
A sex war. Never happened before in
human history, I believe.

JAYDE
Sex war one, then.

ELDE
Never mind what you call it. Fight we
must!

JAYDE
I agree. If not, she will destroy our
way of life and annihilate us all.

ADI
But what can we do?

AMEL
Maybe if we won't fight her, she will
let us live.

ELDE
And what kind of living would that be?

They contemplate this difficult question silently. Diel, who
was quiet until now, speaks first.

DIEL
If we decide to fight, then how?... We
don't have any weapons. We don't even
know what war is.

ELDE
Until now. We know the situation we
are in, and we must respond.

JAYDE
No other way. As Elde said, fight we
must. Even if right now we don't have
any weapons, or know how to fight.

DIEL
That's not good enough for me, Jayde.

ELDE
Then leave. Anybody who's not ready to
join the fight should leave right now!

His commanding words hit some of them hard, but not Diel. He gets up and walks to the door, where he stops and looks back.

DIEL
War is not the solution, I'm afraid.

ELDE
What is the solution, surrender?

Diel doesn't answer, about to open the door. But then Adi gets up and joins him, turns back and looks at the others.

ADI
I admire your courage, and won't stand in your way. But it's a losing battle.

They exit. Four men remain, huddled together on the floor. Elde lifts his arms, lays them on the shoulders of those sitting beside him. They all do so, united in silence.

But then a terrible, unusual cry of a woman is heard, coming from somewhere close by. They raise their heads and look in horror at the door.

COLONY SECRETARY WORKING-ROOM

Enar sits high behind the desk. Eso stands opposite her, looking horrified at the screening-room's shut door. The last echo of that terrible cry dies down.

The door opens and Efbe comes out, nodding his head at Enar. Next, Qutee and Espee appear, dragging a semi-conscious, half-naked woman behind. They stabilize her, not without difficulty, by holding her weak arms over their shoulders.

There are no open wounds on the woman's skin, no blood, but quite a few blue and red marks are visible on her pale body. On closer look, we recognize her as Aren.

ENAR
Aren dared to oppose me, Eso, but no longer.

ESO
(shocked)
What did they do to her?!

ENAR
You can ask my assistants that, and robot one too. Though I doubt the details would help you much.

Only now Eso notices that robot R-1 is stationed at the door, its single red eye blinking. On one of its arms hangs Aren's blue suit, in the other it holds an electrical club.

ENAR

My instructions were simple: Convert citizen Aren to our cause and prepare her to join the new female order. The rest was left for their imagination and devices.

ESO

You are mad!

ENAR

(absorbs the blow)

We shall see about that very soon, who is mad among us.

Eso rushes to Aren and raises her head. Her blood-shot eyes are only half-opened, her purple lips quiver, but all she can do is shake her head before it drops down again.

ENAR

Dress her up and take her to the infirmary station. Revive her.

Qutee grabs Aren's suit from the robot's arm and dresses her up while Espee holds her steady. They carry her away to the door, her head resting helplessly on Espee's shoulder.

Efbe is by the door, gun in hand. He pushes a button and the door opens. The women exit.

ENAR

Citizen Aren will soon be in charge of the Birth-Lab, Eso, and will obey all my orders. Her sexual reeducation was a complete success!

ESO

I doubt it very much. And what do you want from me, anyway?

ENAR

Help me, don't stand in my way. As Aren tried to do.

ESO

I don't stand in your way, so spare me your ridiculous sexual reeducation.

ENAR

You ARE standing in my way, and it's not "ridiculous." It can be very, very painful.

ESO

I believe you. Just tell me what you want me to do.

ENAR

Join the female revolution and be one of us. I have high hopes for you.

The main door opens and Qutee and Espee return. They march forward, stopping near R-1 by the door to the old screening-room.

QUTEE

Go back inside the room, robot one, and wait for us there.

R-1

(robotic voice)

Aye aye, girls. I'll be ready.

With light blinking and voice whistling it turns around and coasts back into the room.

The "girls" remain outside - not amused at all by the robot's remark - looking attentively at Enar.

ENAR

Support me, Eso, and you will be rewarded. Be one...

ESO

(cuts in)

One of the "girls, aye?"

ENAR

(shakes off the mockery)

Exactly. Do you want some?

She offers her a cup, full of yellowish liquid. Eso shakes her head, as Enar sips from another cup.

ENAR

We will rule now, be sure. For too many millenniums men ruled alone.

ESO
Not anymore. We are all equal here.

ENAR
Oh no, we are not. Men's power still rules, even here. Time for women's vision of power to rule.

ESO
We have enough power, Enar. What we lack is friendship, and love.

Enar leans forward over the desk and gives Eso a piercing look. Eso doesn't flinch.

ENAR
Love you say... no such thing anymore. Love is primitive, Eso. Love is dead!

ESO
And so are you. All of us, in fact, if that's the truth.

ENAR
Why... we have clean, problem-free pleasure now. That's all...

ESO
(cuts in)
Pleasure yes, but not love.

Enar stands up and moves to the front of the desk, right near Eso, who remains put.

ENAR
And you know what love is?

ESO
I think so.

ENAR
You love Jayde, don't you?

ESO
I do.

ENAR
Do you want to have a child with him?

Her face, her eyes are very close to Eso's now.

ESO

No, I don't want to have a child with him.

ENAR

But why... you "love" him?

ESO

This idea has never even crossed my mind. All our colony's children are MY children!

ENAR

But in the future, if your love for him will grow even stronger, will you then want to have his children?

ESO

I don't know about the future, it's all speculation.

(pause - thoughtful)

But I do know that if children are not being born and raised freely, educated freely and equally, then the reason for living will die with them.

Enar gets even closer to her, raises a hand - Eso remains calm - and smooths fondly Eso's short blond hair. She smiles at her, temptingly, but the smile is not returned.

Enar retreats to her seat and takes a long sip from her drink, before leaning forward over the desk.

ENAR

Here's my offer to you: Help me rule the colony, and in return you will have Jayde to rule.

ESO

I don't want to rule him, I want him free. What do you mean, anyway?

ENAR

You will rule over him, and he will rule over all the other men. I need them all to cooperate with me until the next generation is born, grow up and educated properly.

Eso smiles for the first time, but it's a smile of contempt. Enar realizes that more convincing is needed.

ENAR
You will be my chief assistant from now on. Like Efbe, you will be a Supervisor Citizen!

ESO
Is that all?

ENAR
That's not all. Most importantly, I promise you immortality!

ESO
You cannot promise me that.

ENAR
Yes, I can. Only us few will never retire to the Old People Hall. We will have access again to the forever-young pills!

Eso scrutinizes her for a moment, in disbelief.

ESO
I thought those pills were all but destroyed. There were too many errors and abnormalities.

ENAR
Some, of better quality, survived.
Safely kept away.
(pause)
Think about it: We will live as long as we wish. We will never die!

ESO
And what kind of living that would be?

ENAR
Much better, believe me. And who knows... if you and Jayde do as I tell you, I may allow you to love again. We'll untie your tubes so you can have your own children, why not, as an experiment.

She leans back, thinking she has won her over. But...

ESO
I don't believe you, Enar. (more)

ESO (CONT'D)
 Your female revolution will fail, I'm
 sure, since it goes against human
 nature, against the essence of life!

Enar is shocked by the power and conviction of these words.
 Furious, she turns to Qutee and Espee, shouting.

ENAR
 Take her away!

They do. There's no resistance from Eso, just scorn as she looks back at Enar, before the door to the old screening-room shuts. Soon enough, a terrible female scream is heard again.

DISSOLVE TO DARK:

MINING TUNNEL

The tunnel is dark, with some yellow lamps illuminating the workers wearing heavy protective gear. They operate pumping tubes and drilling machines. The walls of the tunnel, as we travel ahead, are lined with pipes. Cameras too, in places.

We come to a stop near two workers, wearing helmets. They operate a drilling machine, but while one of them is doing the heavy lifting, the other is just assisting him. Once the drilling is done, a pump is connected to the ore, sucking.

The two workers walk away until reaching a secluded area. They sit down on the ground, leaning their backs against the tunnel's wall. One of them takes off his helmet. Even with the dull light, Jayde can be recognized. The other worker, BEJAY, takes off his helmet too, but hesitatingly. He's much younger, seventeen or so, blond, handsome, just as - we might assume - Jayde was at his age.

BEJAY
 Not dangerous, taking off...

JAYDE
 Life is dangerous, Bejay.

BEJAY
 I see... you are a big expert, I hear.

Jayde smiles, looks at him fondly.

JAYDE
 Unfortunately so. Been doing it long
 enough, both living and working.

BEJAY

Some boys told me you worked in the Birth-Lab before.

(pause - admiringly)

They said you were also the Colony Secretary once.

JAYDE

(after a beat)

All true, Bejay, but belongs to the past. Now I'm here working in the mining tunnels, and it won't be long before you will master this work too.

He takes off his gloves, brings out of his suit's pocket a small plastic box and opens it. He offers the colorful capsules inside to Bejay, who takes two of them, and so does Jayde. They chew on them.

BEJAY

You think I will ever work in the lab, as you did once?

JAYDE

I don't really know.

(pause - thoughtful)

If things were as before the female revolution, sure. Now, I'm very much in doubt.

BEJAY

But why did it happen... I mean, why did Enar change our life here so much?

Jayde hesitates. He looks at the boy again and lays his arm around his shoulder.

JAYDE

It's very, very complicated. But tell me, Bejay, how did the women teachers explain it to you?

BEJAY

They didn't say much. Suddenly they came one time and separated us from the girls. We don't see them anymore.

JAYDE

I see... but the Colony Secretary, what about her? Did she ever give you an account of her actions?

BEJAY

Only once. She said the time has come for women to rule the colony. We boys have reached the end of our education. But the girls...

(pause - emotional)

The girls will continue to study until they will be ready to work in the Birth-Lab, the Operation-Hall, places like that. We boys...

JAYDE

You boys questioned her?

BEJAY

Few of us did, even raised objections. But...

JAYDE

But what?

BEJAY

They had those guns on them. They even took one of us, who refused to leave the classroom, away with them. We never saw him again.

Jayde squeezes the boy's shoulder, then taps on it lightly.

JAYDE

It will be all right, Bejay, I promise you. We'll bring the colony back to the way it was.

BEJAY

(in disbelief)

How can you say that? Look at us here, we...

A loud woman's voice, coming from the speakers, cuts him off.

VOICE

Colony worker Jayde to the operation hall. Immediately!

Jayde straightens up, Bejay too. Both are surprised, Bejay more than Jayde, who hesitates. But the voice is heard again.

VOICE

Colony worker Jayde to the operation hall. Immediately!

JAYDE
Don't worry, Bejay. I'll be back soon.

BEJAY
(worried indeed)
But what do they want from you?

JAYDE
Who knows.
(pause)
Go back to where we worked, by the
drilling machine, and stay there. If
you have any problems, call on Elde.
He works at the end of this tunnel.

Jayde hurries to put on his helmet and gloves. Bejay does so too. Jayde stands up, begins to walk ahead in the tunnel. Bejay stands up too, watching him walking away, getting smaller.

OPERATION HALL

Jayde moves through a decontaminating-shower, and into a transparent bubble where he takes off his heavy protective suit, helmet and gloves. He enters, blinded momentarily by the brightly lit hall.

In contrast with the Birth-Lab, everything's bigger here. The nuclear reactor core at the center is way down but surrounded by a busy supporting cast: machines, computers and workers, wearing white protective suits and masks.

Two of them lead Jayde to the Control Room, where Qutee and Espee - wearing shiny silver suits, shaved heads, holding radiation guns - receive him. They lead him in, stop near Enar, who stands with her back to them, watching through a wide window the activity in the hall.

Enar turns, trains her sharp eyes on Jayde. She's wearing a shiny, silver-colored suit too, her hair cut real short. She's a bit older, like Jayde, whose blond hair's luster has faded somewhat, his face acquired lines not seen before.

ENAR
All's well, colony worker Jayde?

JAYDE
All's well, colony secretary Enar.

ENAR
The workingmen are happy, down there?

JAYDE
(guarded hesitancy)
Couldn't be happier, in fact.

ENAR
Good, I like hearing that. Not hungry, are they?

JAYDE
They work very hard, as you know. They can always do with some more food.

ENAR
We will consider increasing their ration, if you like.

He nods. The assistants are puzzled, studying her closely.

ENAR
What about their sexual hunger, still driving them mad, as it used to be?

Jayde hesitates, looks at the women on guard by the doorway.

QUTEE
I believe our Colony Secretary has asked you a question, colony worker Jayde.

JAYDE
And I believe she will have to find that out herself, as I have no idea.

ENAR
We'll do that, certainly.
(pause - eyeing the women)
Bring him a chair Espee. He must be very tired.

Espee does as ordered, brings him a folding plastic chair. He's too tired to refuse this "kind" gesture.

ENAR
Now what about YOUR sexual hunger, Jayde, still as strong as ever?

JAYDE
(again, guarded hesitancy)
Nonexistent, actually. Too tired to even think about it.

ENAR
Um... interesting.
(pause)
But if I would offer you a sexual
partner, what then?

He takes his time answering that, looking up at her suspiciously. Her assistants, likewise, are bewildered.

ENAR
What do you say, colony worker Jayde?

JAYDE
If all the other men were to be so
privileged, I might consider it too.
(pause)
Depends of course, who will be my
sexual partner.

ENAR
(loudly, sarcastically)
Depends of course, WHO will be my
sexual partner!
(turning to her assistants)
You heard that? Our colony worker
Jayde still reserves the right to be
choosy. Not any female colony citizen
will do. How about that, sisters?

Though they smile, they do so awkwardly.

ENAR
And he will only consider satisfying
his sexual hunger if his fellow
workers will have the same
opportunity.
(pause)
Still selective, our man worker here,
and loyal too.

She turns back to the wide window, surveying the activity on the Operation-Hall's floor. She speaks from there.

ENAR
And with me, worker Jayde, do you want
to have some pleasure?

Jayde hesitates, looks over at her shocked assistants and their guns, as Enar turns back and gets even closer to him.

ENAR
Answer me. Right now!

JAYDE
As I said: no sexual hunger, or any desire, left in me.

ENAR
Not even with me, your Colony Secretary?

JAYDE
No... not even with you.

ENAR
I thought so.

Her assistants' posture becomes even more erect, and so are the guns in their hands. But Enar maintains her composure, giving them no indication as to her next move.

ENAR
Not your type, Jayde, as they used to say in the world above, before it was destroyed. Or just not pretty enough?

He keeps quiet, expecting more. And sure it comes, as she gets in his face.

ENAR
Or maybe not young and ugly enough, like your brown-colored Monster?

He lowers his eyes, looks at his hands, fingers laced firmly.

FLASHBACK: Jayde and Zeze make love, partially undressed, down on the ground by the cave. He stops, looks at her, says something which we don't hear. She nods, her lips are moving, but we don't hear her speak. Instead, as they continue making love even more vigorously, we hear Enar speak:

ENAR (V.O.)
What happened, you cannot speak suddenly? Like her?!

Back in the room, he seems disoriented, eyes down. But when he looks up at her, there's a new, bright light in his eyes.

JAYDE
She was able to speak, in fact, the last time I saw her. Make love too.

She slaps him hard. About to do so again when he catches her hand and stands up, in her face. But her assistants are there in a flash, training their guns on him, forcing him back to the chair. Enar, flushed red, turns away to the wide window.

ENAR

I'm not surprised, hearing that. And glad I was able to get the truth out of you, finally.

He keeps quiet. The assistants by his sides are holding him down. Enar turns back to him, in composure now.

ENAR

What about Eso?

JAYDE

What about her?

ENAR

Does she know?

JAYDE

She does. And she understands.

ENAR

I see... You know what else she understands?

JAYDE

What?

ENAR

That women are in charge now. That there's no going back to the brute nature of man like you.

JAYDE

So... she is alive still?

ENAR

Alive and doing very well. Reeducated, though, sexually and socially.

He stares at her, doubtful. She realizes that.

ENAR

You don't believe me, do you?

JAYDE

I don't.

ENAR

You better do. She accepts now that "love" was a retarded, old-time feeling. It drove men like you crazy, so you went to war against each other constantly, killing and raping women at will.

He lowers his eyes, remains quiet.

ENAR

Women were victims then, Jayde, slaves and whores and birth-machines. But no longer. Now they are the ruling class!

She turns her attention back to the window. Talks from there.

ENAR

Go back to work, where you belong. But if you and your men will continue to perform well, maybe a time will come when I will allow you to meet Eso again. You will find out for yourself how she has changed.

JAYDE

I thank you, colony secretary.

He gets up quickly from the chair, makes his way to the door, led by Enar's assistants.

ENAR (O.S.)

Colony worker Jayde!

He halts and turns back, arms being held by her assistants.

ENAR

I almost forgot why I ordered you in here, how strange.

Not only Jayde, but Qutee and Espee look at her bewildered.

ENAR

We often enjoy those live-vision programs you and Kayce used to make. The hologramic digvids, remember them?

JAYDE

Of course. Glad to hear you still enjoy them.

ENAR

Problem is, our female citizens are bored with the old programs, or the ones we tried to make. We need new, more interesting and stimulating ones. Can you still make them, without...

JAYDE

(quick to react)

Without Kayce... Of course I can.

ENAR

Excellent. You will get all the help you need. But think of some new, interesting ideas.

JAYDE

I will. Be sure.

ENAR

Good. You will hear more about it soon. Now go.

Her assistants lead him out and hand him over to two female workers in protective gear, who take him back to the transparent cell, where he puts on his heavy suit and helmet.

Enar is watching him from behind the Control Room's window.

MINING TUNNEL

Three colony workers are huddled together in a relatively dark, dead-end spot. No drilling machines, pumps or pipes, only the radiance of the tunnel's yellow light. They wear heavy protective gear but their helmets are on the ground. Two of them, Amel and Bece, shield Elde as he lifts a midsize rock from the tunnel's wall and puts it on the ground.

From a hole in the wall, he brings out a small toolbox. He opens it and hands Amel and Bece two roughly made blades. They weigh them in their hands a moment, before beginning to sharpen them by chafing them one against the other.

Next, Elde brings out of the hole a crudely built radiation-gun, made of plastic. He disassembles it and cleans its parts with a piece of cloth. He then tries to smooth the integration of the parts, using simple tools.

BECE

Quick, someone is coming.

They look at where he points and see a silhouette approaching them from far in the tunnel, getting bigger.

Swiftly, Elde assembles the gun, covers it with the cloth and puts it back in the hole. Amel hands him the toolbox, blades inside already, and Elde places it in the hole too. Just in time he lifts the rock, receiving cover from his two friends, and places it back in the wall, over the hole.

But the intruder who stops in front of them shortly is dressed like them, a working man, and is quick to take off his helmet too. They breathe in relief, seeing Jayde.

ELDE

You gave us a jolt, Jayde. We didn't expect you at this time.

JAYDE

I know. I couldn't join you earlier. I was called to...

BECE

... to the Operation Hall, we heard it. What for?

JAYDE

Some emotional torture, the usual.

AMEL

By who?

JAYDE

Enar, who else.

BECE

The QUEEN herself... what did she want this time?

JAYDE

To talk about Eso. She wanted to know if I still love her. If I want to have pleasure with her again.

ELDE

Is she still alive, do you know?

Jayde takes his time: his pained face tells the story.

JAYDE

She says she is, but...

BECE
But you don't believe her.

Jayde nods. Elde puts an arm around his shoulder. Bece and Amel join them. The four of them are united and still.

JAYDE
There was also something else this time, quite unusual.

ELDE
What?

JAYDE
She wants me to create a new live-vision program. The women are bored with the old ones.

BECE
The way you used to do, with Kayce?

Jayde nods.

BECE
Can you still make it, though?

JAYDE
Do I have a choice... But I also think, maybe it's the opportunity we've been waiting for.

ELDE
In what way?

JAYDE
I don't know exactly yet. But I have a strong feeling that...

AMEL
That what? Out with it!

JAYDE
That... well, as our friend Kayce once told me: Where there is a will, there is a way.

They all look at him, taking it all in.

BECE
Sounds like a line from an old film. The ones he used to watch.

ELDE

No matter. I'm a strong believer in this saying. And in Kayce, too, as our guiding light.

Jayde nods, smiles, looks at him deeply.

JAYDE

It reminds me of something else he once told me.

BECE & AMEL

What?

JAYDE

Something about the light... if I remember correctly. He said it can be found at the end of every dark tunnel.

At once, as one, they turn their heads towards the tunnel. Where, far away, there's a source of defused yellow light.

ELDE (O.S.)

We should go towards that light, then.

JAYDE

Right, before it will be too late.

BECE

Or too dark

ELDE

No matter what, my friends, fight we must!

JAYDE, BECE & AMEL

Fight we must!

They put on their helmets and turn to go. First Elde and Jayde, arms on shoulders, then Bece and Amel, likewise. Dark figures walking ahead towards that defused source of light.

OLD SCREENING-ROOM

Eso opens her eyes - still beautiful, but more red than blue now - looks up in terror, as if awakening from a bad dream.

ENAR (O.S.)

Answer me, Eso: Do you still want to see him?

Eso nods, slightly though. She's lying on the bare floor, her head leaning against the wall. She's wearing her blue suit, but it's torn in places and hangs loose on her.

ENAR

I met him a short time ago, and I can tell you this: He accepts my rule, and the wisdom of the new order.

She smiles, sitting on a chair in the empty room. Only robot R-1 is there, on guard by the open door, quiet and still.

ENAR

I'm not sure, though, that he's interested in seeing you again.

ESO

(whispering)

I don't believe you.

ENAR

You still think I'm the real Monster, don't you?

Again, only a slight nod from Eso.

ENAR

You don't care what he did with her, that creature outside, before leaving her to die there alone. Do you?

ESO

I do.

ENAR

Then prove it to me by joining us. You are the last remaining objector.

ESO

What do you need me for?

ENAR

I need you personally, that's the truth. I feel our female revolution is not complete without you.

ESO

It is complete, don't lie. Just get rid of me, the way you did with Kayce. It would be better.

It hits Enar hard. She lowers her eyes for the first time.

ENAR

I cannot get rid of you, Eso. You are responsible, just by being alive still, for Jayde's good behavior. For the good work that the men are doing down there, in our uranium tunnels.

A muffled cry comes first. But then - surprising Enar - Eso gets up from the floor, though with great difficulty. She moves slowly, unsteadily towards Enar, looking like a skeleton. She stops near her, face to face.

ESO

You want him all to yourself, don't you? You LOVE him too!

Enar chuckles, remains calm though. Behind them, by the open door, Efbe appears with his radiation gun at the ready.

ENAR

I don't "love" him, or anybody else. Love was always an overrated word, in my opinion. It's the company of women that I seek, don't you realize?... Men are useless to me.

Eso just stares at her, can hardly stand.

ENAR

Even pleasure, I can tell you, is much better with women. Or by myself. What do I need men for, anyway?

Eso's response is to look in desperation at the door, where robot and man stand. Efbe smiles at her, sinisterly though.

ENAR

If not for their sperm, the one thing we're yet to produce artificially, I would've gotten rid of some of them already.

Eso looks back at her, horrified.

ENAR

The age of men is over, Eso, accept that. Once we bring back cloning, we'll do away with them altogether.

ESO
You are crazy!

She turns, staggers back to her corner and falls down there. Enar gets off her chair and steps closer to her, then sits on the floor beside her, leaning her back against the wall. She smooths Eso's long hair gently, speaks softly.

ENAR
You bring it on yourself, sister, all the trouble and torture. And Efbe too, with his sexual reeducation.

Eso shivers, but she remains quiet.

ENAR
I tell you what else?

ESO
What?

ENAR
I've been thinking lately: Maybe the all-powerful Mother-Colony had planted that retarded creature, the Monster, here among us.

ESO
But why?

ENAR
To test us, that's why. To find out if we are strong enough to resist the primitive nature she represented. But Jayde failed that test.

She waves her free hand for Efbe to leave. He hesitates, but then obeys, closing the door. The robot stays put though. Enar slides on the floor, lies down beside Eso, hugging her.

ENAR
Can I tell you a secret... Nobody else knows that.

Eso opens her eyes, her head rests on Enar's chest.

ENAR
I heard this voice inside me, urging me to intervene. I was afraid other colony citizens would follow Jayde's lead, the way you did, (more)

ENAR (CONT'D)
and that would endanger the future of
our colony.

ESO
In what way?

ENAR
The amazing victory of the brain over
the heart was in grave danger, I
thought. The old disease was about to
spread wings again, like one of
nature's old plagues.

ESO
But why so brutal, so sadistic?

ENAR
Why... there was no other way.

She kisses Eso's head, tenderly so, and whispers in her ear:

ENAR
You see how nice it could be?

ESO
Yes... if it's not forced.

ENAR
It won't be, believe me, once I get
everything under control.

ESO
I thought you already have.

ENAR
Almost there, sister, almost there.
(pause - kisses her again)
I need you to join me first. Accept
that your love for Jayde was a
mistake, and that it's dead now.

ESO
(whispers, eyes shut)
But it's not.

No response from Enar this time, except a bitter smile. They
remain quiet and still, embraced.

DISSOLVE TO:

OLD ASSEMBLY HALL - NEW PLEASURE HALL

Two other women are embraced, lying on an air mattress. They kiss and make out. When they stop briefly and look at each other's eyes, we realize that these are Qutee and Espee.

Enar sits close behind them. She seems bored, looks at the center of the hall where a hologram is in progress. Numerous human-like figures float in the air in various shapes and colors, slightly above a large gathering of female citizens.

These images dance to the rhythm of electronic music. It seems the images interact with the living women, who lie on air mattresses. Some eat and drink, some inhale from hookah-like pipes, spraying steamy vapors around the hall.

The old Assembly Hall's chairs are gone, but for the one Enar sits on. There's a large electronic sign: New Pleasure Hall. Beneath it stands Efbe, holding an electronic gadget, which controls the hologram through the 3D LED projector fan.

He looks towards Enar, who seems more upset than bored now, as she looks down on her assistants. Their making out is heating up, with one on top of the other.

ENAR
(commanding)
Qutee, we should start!

Qutee, just as her lips move down from Espee's lips to her neck and chest, stops abruptly and looks up, bewildered.

ENAR
Bring them in. We are bored.

QUTEE
Right away, Colony Secretary.

She gets off Espee, stands up zipping up her suit. Espee does so too. Both are upset, yet obedient. They walk towards Efbe.

They exchange some words with him and remain on guard by the doors. He puts an end to the hologram, then picks up his radiation gun, resting on a low stool beside him, and walks towards a smaller door in the hall.

He opens it, gets inside, but soon comes out. He leads behind him a robot first, then two men, following him to the center.

The women cheer and sit up. They wave colorful plastic balls, hitting them as if clapping, sending sparkles up the air.

In front of them a small circular stage rises from the floor, not too high, with robot R-1 standing on it. His head rolls, his single red eye blinks.

The two men are naked, but for their briefs, standing on the age of the raised stage. They are frightened, looking at Efbe pleadingly. Up close, we recognize them as Diel and Adi, the two men who left the Old People Hall when the other men were discussing their resistance.

ENAR
Efbe, start the program!

The women cheer, shaking their shiny balls, while Efbe says something to the men, aiming his gun at them.

They react, slow at first, trying to climb on the low stage, reach the robot's back head and hit a button there. But when they get closer, R-1 hits them with the electrical club in his hand, producing flashbulb-like hits and cries of pain.

The men fall back and down. The crowd cheers. The men try again, but each time they meet R-1's club. They fall harder on the floor, and it takes them longer to get up. Soon, their white bodies are decorated with blue and red marks.

WOMAN A
(shouting)
The workers down below are much stronger!

WOMAN B
Yes, these two are useless!

WOMAN C
We want the colony workers up here!

All the women, in a frenzy, repeat these last words in unison while throwing their plastic balls at the scared men.

Enar stands up and raises her hand. Efbe steps forward and raises his gun. The assistants get closer too.

Still, it takes a few minutes before calm is restored. The angry women are back sitting still, looking at their leader.

ENAR
I agree, these two are useless.

The women cheer.

ENAR

I will bring over here, to our New Pleasure Hall, the colony workers.

A loud, enthusiastic response from the crowd.

ENAR

You will have the opportunity to pleasure yourselves with them, and they will have the opportunity to celebrate with us our total victory!

To the wild cheer of the crowd, she turns and walks towards the doors, where Qutee and Espee are waiting for her. But as the doors open, she turns around again and calls:

ENAR

They are yours, Efbe, if you still need them. If not, you might as well get rid of them.

WOMAN A

(shouting)

No. They are ours!

WOMAN B

Yes. Give them to us!

ENAR

Your decision, Efbe.

She turns, exits. The doors close on her and her assistants.

WOMAN C

Move aside, Efbe. These men belong to us!

The crowd of women cheers, and rises, getting closer to them. Efbe looks at the terrified men, cowered on the floor by the stage. But before he can say or do anything, a wave of women sweeps him aside and drowns the men.

Up on stage the robot looks on, its red eye blinks madly, its small mouth opened, whistling.

THE BIRTH-LAB

Another robot, a similar one, is motionless in a corner. On its upper front, 'R-2' is imprinted. Three loud beeps are heard. R-2's red eye turns on.

The doors open and Jayde and Bejay enter, escorted by an armed female guard. Bejay (the boy who worked with Jayde earlier) looks around in wonder. As the doors close, Exen comes over (the woman placed in charge of the lab earlier).

EXEN

Come with me. Enar insisted I show you all the changes we've made here lately before you start your recording.

They follow her obediently, as she leads them towards the Birth-Machine. The lab workers, all of them women, look at them curiously. Their guard stays behind by the doors.

By the machine, Bejay looks around impressed. Jayde notices Aren at the control-screen. She's very pale, her hair cut extra short. When she sees him, she turns her eyes away.

EXEN

The embryo-preserving cells are divided now into two sections. The larger one is reserved for female embryos. The smaller one for males.

JAYDE

In what ratio?

EXEN

Eight to two.

Bejay looks curiously at the embryo-preserving glass cells.

JAYDE (O.S.)

How will you explain it to them, once they grow up, this sexual inequality?

EXEN (O.S.)

This will be the first lesson we will teach them, colony worker Jayde.

Bejay raises his eyes to look at her.

EXEN

The superiority of the female sex will be a crucial element in the reality of their existence, and will follow them until graduation. And thereafter.

JAYDE

But in actual terms, how they...

EXEN

They will grow up separately, of course, and be educated differently.

(pause)

The girls will be educated in all relevant fields of science and social studies, while the boys will learn only the most basic elements needed for their existence as working men.

BEJAY

But that's wrong. We also...

EXEN

You are alive, boy, for the sole purpose of self-preservation of the female sex. Once we have enough frozen sperm, which you will soon be required to produce weekly also, we might stop giving birth to your kind altogether.

Bejay is shaken, about to protest, but Jayde puts his arm around his shoulder and whispers something in his ear. Exen leads them to a different section of the Birth-Machine.

EXEN

The most interesting changes take place in the process of improvement and elimination. The female sex...

Three loud beeps are heard again. The doors open and Enar and her assistants come in, marching ahead, stopping behind Exen.

EXEN

Colony Secretary, I was just explaining to them...

ENAR

Go on, Exen, we are listening.

EXEN

As for the female sex, we will continue as before: destroying the less advanced, and refining the more advanced.

(pause - looks at Enar)

The big change is in how we treat the male sex: we reverse course, in fact, destroying the more advanced, while allowing the less advanced to live.

BEJAY
But for what reason?

ENAR
(loudly - steps closer)
Listen to me, boy: What we need now
are primitive men to execute simple
tasks, using their hands and strength.
Brawn but not brain, is what currently
needed of them.

JAYDE
But if only retarded, no-brain men are
allowed to live, how will you be able
to refine your female sex?

ENAR
We are working on it, Jayde, and I'm
confident our female scientists will
find the right solution to it soon.
(pause)
Meanwhile, we have enough frozen sperm
to last us for a very long time.

She looks at Jayde closely. He knows better than to argue.

ENAR
Now start working. Create your new
live-vision digvid.

JAYDE
I'm ready.

ENAR
Good. It must be perfect, and very
stimulating.

JAYDE
It would be.

ENAR
Good. You have the lab and machine for
your use, as you asked for. But your
time is limited.

She turns around and walks to the doors. Exen joins her,
talking to her. Qutee and Espee march behind them, while
Jayde gets closer to the control-screen, where Aren works.

JAYDE
(quietly)
You agree with all of that?

AREN
I have no other choice, Jayde. She tortured me, it was horrible.

JAYDE
I understand.
(pause - looks around)
But if you'll have another choice, take some action to reverse course, if only for the sake of Kayce's memory.
What then?

AREN
I can't wait for that moment to arrive.

JAYDE
It's arriving soon, Aren, be sure. You will be able to help us.

AREN
I will. You can...

Just then Exen stops by them with the one female guard in tow. Aren quickly turns her head back to the control-screen.

EXEN
What are you waiting for, Jayde?

JAYDE
You... I wasn't sure you are done with your education class.

EXEN
I am. Start working.

JAYDE
On my way.

He walks away to a far corner of the lab where the robot, R-2, is stationed by a closed door. Bejay follows him.

JAYDE
Wake up, robot 2. You are on duty now.

The Robot comes alive, head spinning, red eye blinking.

R-2
Who says so, may I ask?

JAYDE
Me, Jayde. Your old friend.

R-2
I was told you are not my friend
anymore, Jayde, your voice was erased.
Where have you been lately?

JAYDE
Oh... don't even ask. What about you,
doing well?

R-2
Better not say, old friend. Times have
changed.

JAYDE
I hear you, Robby. Time to go to work.

R-2
Just work, or some fun too?

JAYDE
If you follow my instructions for
once, it will be fun too.

R-2
I will make an exception this time,
Jayde, For old times' sake.

JAYDE
Good. Go bring me the digvid case.

R-2
Why, are we going to record another
Video Vérité, as our old friend Kayce
used to say?

JAYDE
(a beat - swallows)
You got it, Robby. You are going to
play the leading role in it.

R-2 makes a complete circle, lights and sounds ablaze. But
then it stops suddenly.

R-2
Where is he, by the way, old Kayce?

Jayde contemplates, then touches R-2 in a certain spot on its chest. It turns blue there.

JAYDE
He is gone, Robby, for good.
(pause)
Now get going. We are behind schedule.

R-2
I need to ask permission from Exen first, though.

JAYDE
Go ahead, if you don't trust me.

R-2
I do. But there's a new order in the lab now.

And saying so, it rolls away.

BEJAY
Very clever, this one.

JAYDE
Indeed, quite the character.

He wraps his arm around Bejay's shoulder, leads him aside.

JAYDE
Listen to me carefully, Bejay. Do you know who is Aren now?

BEJAY
Yes, the woman over there. You talked to her a moment ago.

He points in Aren's direction. Jayde lowers his hand quickly.

JAYDE
She is one of us, and she will help us. Do you follow me?

Bejay nods, attentively, but not sure where Jayde leads him.

JAYDE
We will record this live-vision digvid a number of times. One time, you will sneak a radiation gun inside here. Think you can do that?

BEJAY
(alarmed)
What radiation-gun?

JAYDE
I will explain everything later. For now, you have to trust me. Can you do that for me?

Bejay hesitates, stays thoughtful. Then nods again.

JAYDE
Excellent. Now pay attention: They don't search on you the way they do on me before we enter. So you will give the gun secretly to Aren, and she will charge it up for us with one load of radiation, then hand it back to you.

BEJAY
Will she be ready for it?

JAYDE
Yes, I will make sure of that. Also, you'll see soon, I'm going to dim all the lights here. That will help you too.

(pause)
Still, it's a dangerous task, Bejay.
Sure you are up to it?

BEJAY
I am. You can count on me.
(pause - emotional)
Nothing is worse than our situation right now, and what they just told us they are going to do here soon.

Jayde nods and squeezes his shoulder.

R-2 (O.S.)
Here you are, Jayde. One digvid case.

Jayde receives from R-2 a shiny, aluminum case.

JAYDE
Good. You got permission, then?

R-2
Yes, I am allowed to work with you.

JAYDE
 You see, you should've trusted me. I
 thought you are one of us.

R-2
 I'm not, you should know better.

JAYDE
 Sorry, I forgot.

R-2
 Not male nor female, remember?... I
 belong to the Third Sex!

Jayde smiles. Bejay too. Jayde smooths R-2's round head.

JAYDE
 I know, but I thought you are a bit
 human, too. Forgive my mistake.

R-2
 You are forgiven, Jayde. After all,
 you are just human.

JAYDE
 Sure hope so, Robby.
 (pause)
 I always had a soft spot for you.

R-2
 Um... same here.

JAYDE
 Wonderful. We should record the first
 scene then.

He puts the case on the floor and opens it. He takes out an electronic gauge, an electronic marker, and a sleek looking computer-screen, tablet-like. Using the electronic gauge and marker, he creates a perfect square around the Birth-Machine.

He turns his attention to the ceiling and, using the tablet, lowers four small hooks, suspended on thin cables. He places them above the four square's corners, in the exact same distance and height from the Birth-Machine's center.

He kneels back by the open case, lifts its dividing center, revealing four small digital cameras neatly arranged there. He brings them up, clips them with Bejay's help to the hooks.

Using the tablet he turns on four laser spotlights, up on the

ceiling, and directs the beams at the Birth-Machine. Next, he dims the lights in the lab, enough to highlight the purple-lit Birth Machine at the center.

Aren remains standing by the machine's control-screen, paying no attention to what Jayde is doing. Unlike Exen, the guard, and some other women lab-workers who surround the highlighted marked square, looking on with great interest.

Jayde gets closer to Aren and touches her shoulder lightly.

JAYDE
You need to take a break, Aren.

She turns her head to him: eyes more dead than alive.

JAYDE
It won't take long, this recording session, I promise you. I'll be back soon to record the rest.

She studies the busy screen in front of her, taps some icons.

AREN
You better be quick, though.

JAYDE
I will be.
(pause - quietly)
Is she still alive...

Aren hesitates, studies him gravely.

AREN
I haven't seen her in a long time, Jayde. I'm sorry.

She turns and walks away. Jayde's eyes follow her.

OLD SCREENING-ROOM

Eso opens her eyes, looks disoriented at the door. It opens, Efbe enters, holding his gun. He smiles, zips down his suit.

EFBE
Ready for our ritual to begin?

She shakes her pale head, horror in her eyes. Her whole thin, bruised body - only partly covered with a thin nylon blanket - is shaking. Her long, untidy hair, is whiter than blond.

Efbe puts his gun down, walks to a corner where robot R-1 is waiting, the electrical club in one hand. He presses a button at the back of R-1's head and it comes alive: head spinning, red eye blinking. Efbe turns to Eso.

EFBE

Before we start, Eso, have you changed your mind lately? Ready to join finally the "Great Female Revolution?"
(pause - smiles)
Especially now that Jayde is dead.

She trembles and looks at him in disbelief. Her head falls down on the floor, as she covers it with her hands. She begins to sob, shaking all over. We can hear Efbe laughing, then a whistle-like sound from the robot is heard, and as it moves closer its shadow covers her.

MINING TUNNEL

Despite the darkness, we can see three figures at the same spot we visited before, working suits on but no helmets. They hold three roughly made blades, engaged in fight training and mock-stubbing.

They are so into it that only when two other figures are but a few steps away from them, they see them and stop. Not surprised, though, glad to see Jayde and Bejay.

ELDE

You are back from the lab already?

JAYDE

Yes, we started the live-vision recording. Most importantly, Aren has agreed to help us.

AMEL

In what way?

JAYDE

Well... I hope she'll be able to load the gun for us with radiation.

AMEL

You hope... but not sure.

JAYDE

Not yet. I will speak to her about it more specifically next time I'm there.
Is the gun ready?

ELDE
Ready it is, waiting for you.

JAYDE
Excellent. We have two more recording sessions. On the third, we'll take it.
(pause)
Bejay here, young and brave, has agreed to carry it inside. They don't search on him, you see, the way they do on me.

He wraps his arm around Bejay's shoulder and brings him closer to the circle. The other men tap on his shoulders.

BECE
Assuming all goes well, what are we going to do next?

JAYDE
Here's my plan: Exen informed me just before we left that when I'm done recording, all of us working men will be invited to a special gathering of the women, so we can help them celebrate their... "Total Victory."

The men look at each other, both in surprise and disgust.

JAYDE
I suggested on the spot, and received her permission, to bring the digvid case myself with the new live-vision recording inside, as a present to Enar from us.

ELDE
So we can hide our weapons there!

JAYDE
That's the idea. I will hand you the blades in secret when the right time comes. I will also have the gun hidden inside the case.

AMEL
But will it fit?

JAYDE
It will. I measured it already.

BECE
When the right time comes, as you say,
how would we know?

JAYDE
The live-vision will end with a big
explosion, the way I envision it. That
will give us the element of surprise.

ELDE
And the right time to attack.

JAYDE
Exactly. I will rush towards Enar and
destroy her with the gun. With the one
radiation load we will have there.

A moment of silence. Just a hum of distant drilling is heard.

ELDE
We will attack with the blades too. I
will take Efbe. You take Qutee and
Espee.

BECE
What... kill them?

ELDE
Of course. Forget what we learned in
the past. Times have changed!

A pause. Heavy silence.

AMEL
If we succeed, what about the other
women?

ELDE
We won't hurt them. We want to live
together with them, as before.

JAYDE
Right, as before the revolution.
Before death.
(pause, as if to himself)
We are fighting for a world with
purpose... a world where science and
progress will bring happiness to all!

BECE
What did you just say?

JAYDE

Oh, nothing... a line from an old film
I once watched. The last one Kayce
showed me, in fact.

They get even closer now, arms on shoulders, united.

OLD SCREENING-ROOM

On the floor, as the robot "watches," Efbe rapes Eso. Her eyes are shut, her mouth too. She seems unconscious.

FLASHBACK: Eso and Jayde make love. First, Eso is more dominant, on top of him. Then he is more dominant, as seen by her, naked above her. Then complete darkness.

MINING TUNNEL

In the darkness, towards the yellow light, Elde, Bece and Amel walk ahead, putting their helmets on. Jayde and Bejay walk a few steps behind, helmets in hands.

JAYDE

Remember what I told you once, Bejay,
about the cave in the mountain?

BEJAY

Of course. I think about that young woman sometimes. The one you were forced to take outside.

JAYDE

I'm glad to hear that. So maybe you remember also how I told you I got out of the colony, through the entrance hall in the tower, and the last heavy door there.

Bejay nods, unsure. Jayde wraps his arm around his shoulder.

JAYDE

So listen to me now, and listen very carefully. What we are about to do, the four of us, is very dangerous. Our enthusiasm and determination aside, how it's all going to end... nobody knows.

BEJAY

How can you say that?... Sure you are going to win!

JAYDE

I sure hope so. But they have many guns, you know, very powerful ones. Every step of the way ahead they may catch us, and...

BEJAY

And what?... What are you trying to say?

Jayde stops walking, looks at Bejay real close and deep.

JAYDE

I was trying to say... never mind. Forget I ever said that.

BEJAY

That's better. Never thought of you to be so... I don't know, so hesitant.

JAYDE

That's my stupid old character coming alive suddenly. Kayce used to say...

BEJAY

Who was he, you mentioned him before?

JAYDE

He was my best friend here. Very wise and brave man. The first to die in this needless battle.

BEJAY

Oh yes, I think I've heard of him. So just be like him, wise and brave, and everything will be good.

JAYDE

You are right again, my boy.

And saying so, he kisses Bejay's forehead, then hurries to put his helmet on. Bejay, surprised, just stares at him a moment, before also putting his helmet on. They walk ahead and join their friends. Soon all five of them disappear behind a curve in the dark tunnel.

DISSOLVE TO BRIGHT LIGHT:

OLD ASSEMBLY HALL - NEW PLEASURE HALL

The hall is lit with a magnificent, kaleidoscopic display of

bright colors. Loud electronic music is heard. As before, the colony women are lying on air mattresses. Some eat and drink, helping themselves from the nearby trays, some inhale from hookah-like pipes, spraying steamy vapors around.

But their attention is directed mostly to the back of the hall, where some 15 men are huddled together in a tight group. The men's attention is directed back at the women. At the center of the group sits Jayde, surrounded closely by Elde, Amel, and Bece. Two women, holding heavy radiation guns, stand on guard on both sides of the group.

Efbe sits on a chair near the small, raised circular stage. On his lap rests his radiation gun, at his feet lies Eso, a thin nylon blanket over her body. Only her bony, pale bare feet are visible on one end, and her long white hair on the other. Her head, resting motionless on a stretched arm, is covered by her hair like a fan.

She's invisible to the men at the back, especially that soon the lights dim, the music stops, and instead a loud, high whistle-like tone is heard. Efbe hurries to stand up, the women follow through. As do the men, urged on by the women guards. We can see, as he gets up, that Jayde holds in one hand the shiny, aluminum digvid case.

A single spotlight is directed at the doors as they open. Enar enters first, then her two assistants, who remain on guard by the doors. Enar marches on to the stage, as the women welcome her with loud cheers.

Up on stage, lit by the spotlight, Enar surveys her adoring crowd, dressed in a one-piece red suit. Behind her, there's an old Pleasure Hall's armchair. She raises her hand. Only now does the intense sound stops. As the women and men sit down again, Efbe steps on stage and hands Enar a small mic. She takes it, he steps down.

ENAR

Our revolution is complete, female citizens. The victory belongs to us!

(pause - looks around)

My rule, sisters, is YOUR rule. My celebration, the summit of our achievements, is YOUR celebration. It is our time now, and this colony is in our hands for good!

A tremendous burst of applause from the women, who also shake their small shiny balls in the air, producing sparkles. But behind them, the stunned men remain frozen and mute.

ENAR

I foresee a time soon when not only the world down here, but the one up above will belong to us. The superior female warrior will then rule over the entire universe!

(pause)

We will never again be the object of man's desire, or his oppression, but a liberated woman free from the heavy load of pregnancy, as we are now, and the burden of taking care of babies.

(pause)

The restrictions that nature has imposed on us, has chained us with for so long, have been removed forever. No biological limitations will ever be imposed on us again!

A round of applause, even louder than before. Some female citizens turn around and taunt the male citizens, who remain quiet and still, stone-faced.

But while the women are at it, and while Enar continues to speak, we can see how Jayde - under the cover Elde, Amel and Bece give him - opens the digvid case and hands his friends the three blades, which they quickly hide in their pockets.

ENAR

The age of MAN is over, sisters, so I ask you this: What do we need men for anyway? We now have enough frozen sperm to last us for many generations.

(pause)

It is the age of pleasure now, the age of FEMALE pleasure. The dedication of our new Pleasure Hall is complete and the devoted colony workers are here as proof of our success.

(pause - loud cheer)

They are sitting there at the back, quiet and obedient, ready to serve us upon our command and demand. They are, my liberated sisters, the best evidence of our triumph!

Wild celebration. Even the women guards get into the act. But not Jayde: shielded by his friends under relative dimness, he opens the case again and brings out the sleek-looking tablet he used before for the hologram recording in the Birth-Lab.

He looks around first, making sure he's safe, then lifts the case divider and from the bottom compartment sneaks out the crude radiation gun, placing it on the floor by his feet. He puts the case on it, holding the tablet.

ENAR

Following my speech, we will move on to the second part of our celebration: the special live-vision program that colony worker Jayde has prepared for us. A present to me and you from him and his fellow men.

(pause - the crowd cheers)

If his gift will entertain us, we will move on to the third part of our program: pleasurable games and free sexual interaction between you and the male workers.

(pause)

You will be able, as indeed you asked me last time, to have your way with them sexually. You will reverse human history by using them as your sex slaves. Your pleasure toys. No longer women are the spoils of war. Men are!

It is so wild now - some of the women are already partly undressed - forcing the women guards to step forward and shield the frightened men from the coming women. At the group's center, though, Jayde and his friends remain calm.

ENAR

But if we won't be amused by Jayde's gift, he will be yours to use and abuse. The rest of our male workers, after quick sexual pleasure with you, will be led back to the mining tunnels. Where they belong.

WOMAN A

Let the show begin!

Cheers and voices of approval, repeating that call.

ENAR

I agree, let the show begin. Let's celebrate, sisters, our victory!

Wild cheers. Efbe puts his gun down on the floor by the motionless Eso, gets up from his chair and walks to the men's group. Jayde stands up and hands him the tablet. Not a word

is exchanged, but strong looks are.

Efbe walks back and steps up on the small stage, where Enar is now seated in the armchair. He hands her the tablet, also a tall cup. She drinks, as Efbe returns to his chair.

Enar puts the cup down, taps on the tablet in her hand. The spotlight turns off. The stage is covered with semi-darkness, and so is the entire hall, but for the electronic red sign by the doors, reading: NEW PLEASURE HALL. Then a voice is heard:

JAYDE (V.O.)

The robot and the machine: An old-time love story. A live-vision tribute to our leader from all the colony workers.

Four laser beams, coming from the hall's concave ceiling, lit a perfect square in front of the stage. Next, a 3D Hologram LED fan is lowered from the ceiling. Soon - as melodic music (reminisce of a classical Waltz) is heard - an image, holographic, appears: A replica of the Birth-Machine.

Next, robot R-2 (holographic too) appears on the square's edge, looking at the machine inquisitively. It approaches the machine slowly, circling it as if dancing. First slow, then fast, red light flashing in its head, strange noises coming from its mouth.

Quiet and full attention from all the women and men, except Jayde and his friends, who - in the relative darkness at the back - get ready with their weapons in their hands.

In short order: The robot touches the machine here and there; the robot finds the control-screen and presses icons there; the machine comes alive with lights and sounds; the robot, encouraged, climbs on top of the machine; the machine, plasma flowing, groans and moans.

Back to the four men: in charging position. Nobody pays them any attention.

JAYDE
(whispering)
Get ready.

ELDE
(whispering too)
Fight we must!

They all repeat it, as if to themselves, looking ahead.

By the stage, in the hologramic square, the robot suddenly jumps down into the machine's central plasma pool, landing there with a splash, causing liquid and steam to boil over.

The Birth-Machine gives a terrifying cry, then comes a loud explosion: The machine and robot, finally united, blow up in the air. Fire and smoke are engulfing them.

As the explosion - sound and vision - continues to vibrate in the hall; and as the women in the front react with cries of shock, the four men at the back spring into action.

Jayde leads the pack, running ahead with his gun forward. He reaches the stage, where Enar stands up, looking at him in horror. But just then he catches sight of Efbe, who is about to pick up his gun from the floor. It is then that Jayde - for the first time in a long time - sees Eso, lying on the floor at Efbe's feet, more dead than alive.

He moves his gun from pointing at Enar to Efbe. Just then, for a quick instant, the image of Kayce - his old friend - appears at the side of Efbe, looking seriously at Jayde

A brilliant, blinding flash as Jayde shoots Efbe. The gun falls off Efbe's hands as he staggers back, then implodes from the point of impact in his chest, as the radiation load takes hold of his body and eats it alive.

Elde is right behind Jayde, stunned by this surprising, unplanned development. But just for a quick second, before he jumps on the stage and tries to stab Enar with his blade.

He's able to thrust it into her, but not with full force, as he's cut short: A shot of radiation hits him, coming from Qutee's heavy radiation gun, reducing him to a pile of ashes.

Eso awakens suddenly and looks up at Jayde. Beautiful light of recognition comes into her eyes, just as Jayde reaches down for her with open arms.

ENAR (O.S.)
No! Don't shoot him!

Espee, her gun pointed at Jayde at close range, looks at Enar bewildered. Enar is wounded at the abdomen but not mortally, the bloody blade at her feet. She is being helped by Qutee.

ENAR
We still need him. Shoot her!

Another flash of brilliant light. Eso is hit. She implodes

into ashes in Jayde's empty arms.

ENAR (O.S.)
Get up, Jayde, and order your men to
stop fighting!

Slowly, Jayde gets up. He looks back, seeing Amel and Bece still fighting with the two women guards.

ENAR
Move Jayde. You lost the battle!

Without a word but with speed, Jayde runs into the middle of the crowd of shouting, panicking women, trying to cut his way towards his fighting friends.

When he gets closer, he sees that while Amel is still alive, on the floor by the bleeding body of a dying woman guard, Bece is already dead: a pile of ashes.

The other woman guard is still alive, and - though wounded - shoots her radiation gun at Amel. She turns her gun at Jayde but he's quick enough to jump at her first, hitting her and sending her to the floor. Her gun drops from her hands.

Jayde turns away from her and the gun. He runs madly towards the doors, and - somehow, hitting left and right - manages to force his way through the panicking crowd and exit the hall.

BIRTH-LAB

Jayde enters, hurries to the Birth-Machine. Only Aren is there, by the machine, a tablet in her hands. Jayde - not wounded, but the signs of the battle clearly marked on his torn suit, disheveled hair, and in his face and eyes too - stops beside her. She looks at him surprised.

AREN
What happened?...

JAYDE
We failed, Aren, and I'm to blame.
Death is running wild in the colony.

AREN
Where is Enar?

JAYDE
She'll be here soon, I'm sure. I killed Efbe instead of her.

She takes a moment to consider.

AREN
What now then?

JAYDE
There's one more thing you can do for
me, and for our future.

AREN
What?

JAYDE
Hurry up and open the doors for the
girls and boys. The children too.
Maybe they will survive.

AREN
Why... what are you going to do?

JAYDE
Blow up this Birth-Machine. Who knows
what will happen next.

She takes a step closer to him, looks at him deeply.

AREN
Many times since Enar took over power,
I thought of doing just that.

JAYDE
I'll do it on behalf of both of us
then. Revenge can be sweet, sometimes.

AREN
Even justified.
(pause)
I have nothing to lose, do I... She
will kill me anyway.

JAYDE
I'm afraid so. She will figure out who
helped us.

AREN
Which I won't hide from her, if the
opportunity comes.

JAYDE
I know, Aren, and I admire you for
that. And for all you have done.

He puts his hand on her arm, caressing it. They look deeply, and sadly, into each other's eyes.

JAYDE
Farewell, Aren. Be strong and brave!

AREN
You too.

She hands him the tablet and turns to go.

JAYDE
Aren...

She stops, turns. He steps closer, hugs her. She responds, but soon departs. Using a far-corner side-door, she exits.

Jayde turns to the Birth-Machine. He taps rapidly on the tablet, then throws it aside. He opens the frozen-semen cover and extracts the main artery pipe from the pro-embryos glass container. Plasma streams over and spills on the floor.

R-2 (O.S.)
Is that you, Jayde?

Jayde halts his actions, looks at the robot rolling over.

JAYDE
That's me, robot 2. I was hoping you
won't recognize me.

R-2
Don't be stupid. Your image is stored
again in my superior brain. What are
you doing here?

JAYDE
Destroying evil.

R-2
Looks to me like you are destroying
life.

It has a point, and Jayde knows that.

JAYDE
Time to destroy it, robot 2. Just as
you did in the live-vision we recorded
together.

R-2
What are you, crazy?... This is life,
man, not vision.

JAYDE
I know. But in this case, life
imitates art.

A beat. It looks as if the robot is thinking.

R-2
I wish I knew what you are talking
about.

JAYDE
People here are getting real crazy,
Robby, you are right. Me included. You
will help us greatly by destroying
this machine.

R-2
Sorry Jayde, but I'm a machine too.

JAYDE
No, you are not. You are a robot,
remember? Citizen of the Third Sex?

R-2
Um... you have a point saying it,
Jayde. I'll give you that.

JAYDE
Then give me your trust, too. Your
time to rule has come.

Jayde turns back to the machine, taps rapidly on the control-screen, then picks up the tablet and hits the control-screen repeatedly with it, breaking it. Plasma is already streaming all over, spilling on the machine and floor.

Three loud, consecutive beeps are heard, causing Jayde to abandon the Birth-Machine and run to the side-door Aren has just used. He opens the door and rushes out.

R-2 charges over to the machine, hitting it, breaking glass cells, test tubes, Petri dishes. Fiery sparks and some smoke can be seen coming out of the Birth-Machine.

Enar stands at the open doors, looking on with horror. Her wounded abdomen is dressed up nicely with a large white bandage, though stained a bit with blood. Her armed

assistants stand beside her, supporting her. They look, stupefied, at the exploding Birth-Machine.

OLD PEOPLE HALL

Jayde enters, finds the hall the same way he saw it last time: clean, quiet, eerily empty of elderly citizens. He hurries to open the door to the Death Cell.

A pair of magnificent, wise blue eyes stare calmly back at him. They belong to the very old man we've seen here before, completely bald but with a long white beard, sitting on a low stool under a shower-head fixture, a red button beside it.

OLD MAN
(slow, deep voice)
You can kill me if you wish. Just push
the red button for me.

JAYDE
I want to kill myself, not you.

OLD MAN
Why are you in such a hurry, young
man?

Jayde examines him closely. Strange, unusual noises can be heard, coming from somewhere in the colony.

JAYDE
Our colony is lost. Some women are
after me, and I don't want to give
them the pleasure of killing me.

OLD MAN
You seem like a nice fellow to me. Why
do they want you dead?

JAYDE
There was a revolution, by these
women. There was a war, by us men.
They brought violence and death, and
we retaliated. They changed the Birth-
Machine's purpose, and I destroyed it.

The Old Man isn't surprised hearing it. He smiles, toothless.

OLD MAN
Revolution and war, fire and smoke.
What an old-fashioned story.

While saying that, he bends down and brings from under his stool a tablet. He unplugs a small, sleek device (similar but bigger than a flash drive) and hands it to Jayde.

OLD MAN
Take it with you, young man.

JAYDE
What for... I'm a dead man alive. I'm going nowhere.

OLD MAN
Oh yes, you are. Shape up!

He places the device in Jayde's hand.

OLD MAN
The history of the colony and its citizens, from inception before the Global Virus Pandemic, and the Great Nuclear War, through the good and bad times, is stored here. My life's work.

Jayde looks at it with interest, placed in his opened palm.

OLD MAN
That's the reason I stayed alive all this time, using the forever-young pills I stole a long time ago.

(pause)
I wanted to pass it along to someone like you. I was a historian, you see, back in the old days.

JAYDE
But what can I do with it?

OLD MAN
Take it with you. Don't die before you pass it along to the next generation.

Jayde looks at it again, still hesitating.

OLD MAN
Go ahead. You are the last hope of the human race and its long history.

JAYDE
Sounds like a bad joke to me. I will die soon too.

OLD MAN
 Not before you pass the past into the
 future. Now go away!

He pushes Jayde's hand, holding the device. But his bony hand
 is powerless. Jayde looks deep and long into his eyes.

OLD MAN
 Look if you like, young man, but you
 will have to leap.

JAYDE
 Excuse me... what did you just say?

OLD MAN
 Oh, just a line from an old poem I
 learned in my youth. I suddenly...

JAYDE
 Does it mean anything?

OLD MAN
 You'll have to find that out for
 yourself.

Jayde's eyes, as they look at the Old Man with wonder.

FLASHBACK: The scenery of the cave in the mountain. The rocky cliff and Zeze, the young woman, the way Jayde saw her the last time: asleep on the ground, surrounded by nature and illuminated by splendid golden sunlight.

A CORRIDOR

Jayde runs ahead. Behind him, far in the long corridor, are Enar and her assistants, giving chase. Enar is hampered somewhat by her injury. Qutee and Espee help her along.

Jayde, while running, turns into another, narrower corridor.

NARROW CORRIDOR

Jayde continues to run, as distant sounds of explosions can be heard, coming from deep down.

Suddenly, he comes upon a little girl sitting on the floor by a closed door. He stops running, kneels down beside her. In her hands she holds an electronic game, and yet she's crying.

He lifts her face, looks at her big, crying eyes.

JAYDE
What's the matter, little girl?

She shrugs, doesn't answer, continues crying. He sees that she has a tiny beauty mark above her upper lip. He lifts her up from the floor, as her game-toy flies off her hands. He continues to run, the girl in his arms.

Behind, Enar and her assistants are closing in on him.

ELEVATOR

Jayde holds the girl, Tevy, in his arms. Through the window we can see that they are going up, passing by various colony levels and floors.

JAYDE
Who let you out, little one?

TEVY
A woman.

JAYDE
And the other children?

She shrugs, cries even harder now. He hands her the electronic device the Old Man has given him. She takes it, looks at it with interest. Stops crying.

JAYDE
Did they remain in their beds?

She nods.

JAYDE
What happened to the woman?

TEVY
Other women came. Took her away.

Jayde swallows, kisses her head, just as the elevator stops.

ENTRANCE HALL

The elevator's doors open and Jayde exits, carrying Tevy. He hurries towards the heavy, double-glass doors, leading to the tunnel, and hits a button on the electronic board by the doors. The doors open for him. He exits.

The woman citizen at the Control Room, unarmed, sees him now, but it's too late for her to stop him. The long panel full of

monitors she's watching shows the death and destruction in the New Pleasure Hall, the Birth-Machine exploding, colony citizens running wild in corridors.

The elevator's doors open, ejecting Enar and her assistants.

THE TOWER'S TUNNEL

Jayde stops in front of the last transparent partition door, at the bottom of the colony's tower, the girl in his arms. Bright sunlight streams from outside, down the narrow stairway ahead.

Without hesitation, he disconnects the electric bar, which enables him to unlock and open the partition door. He steps out, begins to climb up the stairs with the girl.

ENTRANCE HALL

The heavy, double-glass doors open again, as Enar and her assistants enter. They hurry ahead into the tunnel, though the wounded Enar is slowing their pace.

EXT. COLONY'S TOWER - DAY

Jayde appears at the top of the colony's tower and hill. The girl in his arms is crying again, but holding on to the small device he has given her. He strokes her golden hair, breathes deeply while looking in wonder ahead.

The valley, a desert-like plain, and the mountain on its other side are awash with late-afternoon sunlight, under magnificent, clear blue skies.

ENAR (O.S.)
(calling from a distance)
Jayde ... stop!

He hurries down the tower's outside steps, which leads to the hill below, the girl in his arms. He runs down towards the valley.

EXT/INT THE TOWER'S STAIRWAY - DAY

Enar, pushed from behind by Qutee, laboriously climbs up the stairs. It's a struggle, but she makes it up to the top.

There she stands, breathing heavily, Qutee and Espee at her side. They take in the view, as if for the first time.

EXT. THE VALLEY - DAY

Jayde continues to run in the valley towards the mountain, the girl in his arms. He doesn't look back.

In the back though, Enar and her assistants run in his footsteps, closing in on him. Once in a while Enar stops, rests a moment, and calls on Jayde to stop.

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN - DAY

Jayde reaches the slope, where he stops to catch his breath. He looks back, sees the approaching women, then looks at the high rocky cliff. He starts climbing.

Behind him, Enar and her assistants are getting closer to the mountain's foot. Once there, they also stop to catch their breath. Qutee and Espee are still holding the radiation guns.

ENAR

Stay here and wait for me. He is probably afraid of your guns.

QUTEE

But can you make it up alone?

ENAR

I'll do or I'll die.

A tense moment, as Qutee and Espee look at each other, wondering if to obey.

ENAR

If I'm back with him with me, we will continue as planned.

ESPEE

And if not?

ENAR

If not... then go back home. Continue without me.

Saying that, she begins to climb. They watch her, uneasy.

EXT. THE CLIFF - DAY

Jayde, in a roundabout way, reaches the top of the rocky cliff. Exhausted, he puts the girl down, holding her hand. Her other hand clutches the small device. They look ahead.

Below them, the valley stretches under the bright, late afternoon sun. At its end, the colony hill can be seen. From the colony tower, a thin gray funnel of smoke is now rising. Farther away is the high mountain range, with - no longer faint, as in the beginning - the deep blue color of water beneath it. The sun is going down over that mountain range.

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN - DAY

Enar climbs up. It's not easy for her, but she's determined to continue. She can see Jayde at the top of the cliff and begins her final push towards him, taking a detour.

EXT. THE CLIFF - DAY

Jayde turns his head, looks away from the valley below and up towards the cave. Though it's dark there, a flickering of orange light can be seen suddenly, some movement too in front of it, obscuring the light momentarily.

Jayde kneels down by the girl, holding her hand.

JAYDE

Can you do something for me, little one?

TEVY

What?

JAYDE

Go to that cave over there, you see it. Wait for me there.

He points towards the cave. She looks up there, unsure, hangs on to his hand. It seems she's about to cry again. He kisses the top of her head and nudges her forward, just as we hear small rocks falling.

They look, see that Enar is about to reach them. Hardly breathing, totally exhausted, her white abdomen dressing is stained with more blood. Tevy, afraid of her, clutches Jayde's hand even stronger.

JAYDE

Please little one, run there. I'll be right with you.

Finally, she obeys, just as Enar stops in front of Jayde. She's in great pain.

ENAR
You are the last male alive, Jayde.

He studies her closely, reflecting, remains quiet though, then looks towards the cave. Where, halfway there, Tevy stops and looks back at him. He waves his hand at her. She waves back at him.

ENAR (O.S.)
The Birth-Machine is destroyed, as you know. All the frozen sperm is lost.

He looks back at her, quietly, then gets closer to the edge of the cliff.

ENAR
Stop! Are you mad?

She moves closer to him, stretches her hand for him to hold it. He declines.

JAYDE
Yes, I'm mad. Thanks to you.

ENAR
True, Jayde, I've made some mistakes.
But so have you.

He just stares at her, considering.

ENAR
It's not too late for us to forgive each other, work together for a better future.

A bitter smile appears on his face. He is about to say something but... A different VOICE IS HEARD suddenly. Though it's rather faint, it sure sounds like the CRY OF A BABY.

Jayde looks up towards the cave. He can see again the glowing orange flame there, just for a second. Then the cry stops. A new light is reflected in his eyes now when he speaks.

JAYDE
A better future will start somewhere else, I believe.

Enar turns her head to him, after looking at the cave too.

JAYDE
Without us.

And saying so, he grabs her forearm by the wrist and pulls her strongly with him, as he leaps off the cliff. Her terrifying scream cuts the quiet air.

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN - DAY

Down by the mountain's foot, Qutee and Espee hear that terrible scream and look up in horror.

Jayde and Enar, still hand in hand, fly off the cliff.

FLASHBACK, A QUICK MONTAGE: Eso in her room, beautiful and peaceful, looking up; Kayce in the screening-room, looking at a picture on the screen; Aren, a tablet in her hand, standing in front of the Birth-Machine; the colony citizens, sitting in chairs around the Assembly Hall, listening; Elde, jumping on Enar, stabbing her with his blade; Zeze in the cave, showing Jayde proudly her colorful drawing; the dark mining tunnel, a source of glowing yellow light at its end gets closer.

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN - DAY

At the bottom of a steep ravine, the bodies of Jayde and Enar come to rest. They lie there motionless, not far apart.

Qutee and Espee run over, look at the dead bodies in shock. Madness is reflected in their eyes, as they scream in terror.

They throw their radiation guns down, one after the other, then begin to run back to the colony, from where a stream of black smoke now rises.

EXT. THE VALLEY - SUNSET

From afar, up in the mountain, we can see Qutee and Espee run amok towards the colony. As they get closer, someone else is seen escaping the colony tower, running fast downhill.

He passes by them, just as there's a big explosion, in sight and in sound. The Underground Colony bursts into the air like a volcanic eruption, with a big mushroom of fire and smoke.

When that mass comes crashing down to earth, it covers the colony hill and a large area around it with debris, smoke and dust. It buries also the last two women citizens.

But on the edge of that circle of destruction, the last survivor - a teenage boy, it seems - manages to rise out of the ashes and, unsteadily at first, begins to walk away from the ruined underground colony.

EXT. THE CAVE - SUNSET

The little girl, Tevy, turns her eyes away from the valley and looks at the cave. She cries, frightened by a dark cloud of smoke drifting over her.

But when the wind blows that cloud of smoke away from her and the cave's opening, a figure appears there, stepping forward.

She's Zeze, the young woman Jayde left there by the cave. Her shiny black hair is longer, falling freely over her bare, brown-colored shoulders. She holds a naked baby to her bare chest, smiling at the little girl.

Tevy walks over to her and Zeze extends a hand for her, which the girl clutches. They look quietly ahead.

EXT. THE VALLEY - SUNSET

A thin funnel of smoke still rises from the colony hill. It is the only movement to be seen, except far away - over the high mountain range on the other side of the valley - where the sun completes her downwards journey, about to disappear.

Across the valley, towards the blue waters underneath the high mountain range, a flock of birds flies by majestically.

EXT. THE CAVE - SUNSET

Zeze smiles, inhaling the view. Then, holding the baby with one arm and the girl with the other, she turns and walks into the cave.

We follow them but stop when the walls of the dark cave frame the picture. As in the beginning.

THE END