

INTO THE NUMINOUS MOON

A Screenplay by

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Based on the novel THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON by H. G. Wells

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FADE IN:

EXT. MEDITERRANEAN SEA — BEFORE SUNSET — OCTOBER 1899

A British tramp steamer, the *AL-QAMAR*, glides gently in the golden aftermath of a storm that has pushed far to the east. Several idle DECK HANDS stand at the rain-soaked bow railing CHATTERING INDISTINCLY when a sudden LOUD SONIC BOOM causes them to flinch and draws their attention skyward.

DECK HAND #1
What the 'ell?

High above, a spherical object — lit brilliantly by the sun and set vividly against the deep purple of the eastern sky — descends in an arc until it hits the water a mile or so off the steamer's right side.

DECK HAND #2
(pointing frenetically)
Cap'n! Cap'n!

INT. THE AL-QAMAR BRIDGE — CONTINUOUS

CAPTAIN MALCOLM RAWLINGS (mid 50s), a handsome and educated — if somewhat scruffy — sea dog, mans the bridge with his SECOND MATE. Both of them have seen the object.

RAWLINGS
Yes, yes. I saw it!
(then to his second mate)
Let's investigate, shall we?
Thirty degrees starboard, and
let's pick up the pace a bit.
It'll be dark soon.

SECOND MATE
Aye, Aye, Captain.

EXT. ON THE STEAMER — CONTINUOUS

The steamer veers to the right and toward the object, which has resurfaced and now bobs lazily in the water. It remains ablaze with sunlight. As the ship draws nearer to it the Captain calls down to his crew.

RAWLINGS
What do you make of it men?

DECK HAND #2
Hard to say, Cap'n. But she's
a-floatin' she is! Diving bell,
maybe?

INT. THE BRIDGE — CONTINUOUS

RAWLINGS
(muttering to himself)
Diving bell. Dropped from the
stratosphere? Good God, man!

EXT. ON THE BOW — A BIT LATER

The ship is now within fifty yards of the object. It appears to be a hollow ball of thick glass roughly 9 feet in diameter and nestled within a larger polyhedral framework of open brass girders. A series of shock absorbing springs separate the glass from the framework.

At the top of the sphere is a hatch, and then...apparent movement within!

DECK HAND #1
Cap'n! There's sump'n inside!

INT. THE BRIDGE — CONTINUOUS

Rawlings reaches for a spyglass and aims it at the object.

POV. THROUGH THE SPYGLASS

Through the harsh glare of reflected sunlight a WOMAN can be made out desperately trying to draw the attention of the steamer and its crew.

RAWLINGS (O.S.)
God Almighty!

EXT. ON THE BOW — CONTINUOUS

RAWLINGS
(through a window on the bridge)
Alright, men, to your stations!
Let's get a boat out there!
Quickly!

EXT. ALONGSIDE THE STEAMER - A BIT LATER

A lifeboat has been lowered with four CREWMEN aboard. They row to the side of the object and begin to secure ropes to the outer framework. But suddenly the sphere lists sharply and the hatch flings open. As water gushes in, the woman struggles out of the hatch and into open water.

One of the deck hands tosses her a life ring and begins towing her to the lifeboat.

She thrashes in the water YELLING incoherently, and in apparent outrage, but the men continue to draw her toward the boat. Meanwhile the sphere continues to take on water and slide into the sea.

The woman - disheveled, waterlogged and wide-eyed - is lifted aboard.

THE WOMAN
(in near hysterics)
Please! Please save it! Save
the sphere!

As one of the men wraps the woman in a blanket, the others struggle with the ropes until the sphere becomes dangerously swamped.

CREWMEMBER
She's taken on too much,
lads! Can't let her take us
down with her! Cut the lines!
Cut the lines!

The lines to the sphere are cut and, as it sinks beneath the waves, the woman breaks into wrenching SOBS.

EXT. THE AL-QAMAR - THE NEXT MORNING

Another beautiful day at sea and as the steamer glides onward Captain Rawlings exits the bridge, descends to the lower deck and enters amidships.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

LOTTIE BARLOW, an imposing, no-nonsense Cockney woman who serves as the ship's steward has just exited the Captain's

quarters carrying an armload of laundry. She quietly closes the door behind her just as Rawlings enters.

RAWLINGS

Well, Barlow? Any word from our unexpected guest?

LOTTIE

Still sleeping' Cap'n...fitfully though, poor dear. Looks like she's been through 'ell she does. Ain't 'ad a minute of sleep in a week by the look of it. Been without food 'bout as long I'd say.

RAWLINGS

Well, keep an eye on her then. And after she's up and had something to eat, make sure I know about it. I have a few thousand questions for her.

LOTTIE

Aye, Cap'n.

INT. SHIP'S GALLEY — TWO HOURS LATER

Lottie pours a mug of tea and brings it to the counter where sits the woman from the sphere. She appears composed and rested. Her name is KATHRYN BEDFORD (early 30s). She is gaunt but lovely, with short-cut auburn hair and dazzling green eyes. She wears an over-sized male work shirt and tan knickerbockers with dark blue leggings.

KATHRYN

Thank you. And thank you for that wonderful breakfast. I really needed that.

LOTTIE

'at's quite a'right, dearie. Looks like you've 'ad a real go of it.

KATHRYN

You have no idea.

Kathryn blows on her tea and takes a sip just as Captain Rawlings enters the galley. She glances up from her mug.

KATHRYN

And who might you be?

LOTTIE

Why he's the Cap'n of this
'ere vessel, dearie, and he
saved your 'ide last night he
did! Give ya the use of his
cabin as well!

KATHRYN

The Captain, you say?
(then to Rawlings)
So, can you tell me where in
the hell I am?

LOTTIE

Ha! Listen to that, will ya?
Just a day after bein'
'oisted from the briny deep!
And now she's all piss and
vinegar she is!

RAWLINGS

That'll suffice, Lottie.
(then to Kathryn)
Captain Malcolm Rawlings, Miss.
Of the Al-Qamar. And if you
don't mind, I'll be asking the
questions.

Kathryn nods as a chuckling Lottie leaves the galley and Captain Rawlings takes a seat.

RAWLINGS

Very well then. May I ask who
you are and where you come from?

KATHRYN

My name is Kathryn Bedford and
I'm a Brit as are you. Unless
you fly that Union Jack for
mere decoration.

RAWLINGS

Hmmmm. You are rather full of it,
aren't you? Vinegar and all that,
I mean.

KATHRYN

Forgive me. I've been through
something of an ordeal recently
and I'm not feeling quite
myself just yet.

RAWLINGS

I gathered as much. And of course
I forgive you.

KATHRYN

Yes, well then. My home is in
Manchester...well, Stockport If
I am to be accurate. Do you know
of it?

RAWLINGS

I've heard of it. Never been
there, but I suppose I could
find it. It's ah...up there
somewhere, right?

He points to the sky.

KATHRYN

You're curious about that, I
imagine.

RAWLINGS

That shouldn't surprise you.
After all, it isn't every day
one bears witness to such a
thing.

KATHRYN

No, I suspect not.

RAWLINGS

That, that...orb, or whatever
it was...

KATHRYN

Yes, the sphere. Well, sadly,
the explanation you seek lies
with it at the bottom of the
sea.

RAWLINGS

To be honest, Miss Bedford, I'm
more baffled by the *altitude* it
achieved before it reached its
resting place at the bottom of
the Mediterranean.

Kathryn glances out the galley's porthole at the sea.

KATHRYN

(softly to herself)

The Mediterranean?

RAWLINGS

Was it the gondola of a balloon
that had ruptured perhaps? Or...?

KATHRYN

No, Captain, I can assure you,
it was nothing of the kind.

RAWLINGS

Well then?

Kathryn glances off into the distance, searching for the right way to proceed.

KATHRYN

It was a *conveyance*, let us say.
A....a....vehicle of sorts.

RAWLINGS

A vehicle, you say?

KATHRYN

Yes, a vehicle designed to travel
great distances, very great
distances indeed.

RAWLINGS

And just how great might those
distances be?

KATHRYN

It scarcely matters at this
point, wouldn't you say?

RAWLINGS

Perhaps, but I'd still like to
hear about it.

KATHRYN

(wearily)

Oh Captain, it's a very long,
and rather bizarre, story.

RAWLINGS

That's fine. I'm not going
anywhere. The sky is clear, the
sea is calm, my Second Mate is
more than capable, and the crew
— although a filthy lot to be
sure — aren't entirely worthless.
So, unless something else
unforeseen should fall from the
sky, I've got all day to hear
your story.

Kathryn SIGHS deeply and, once again glances out the
porthole at the sea.

KATHRYN

Before I begin, I should explain
that my participation in this
rather exotic adventure was the
outcome of the purest accident. It
might have been anyone. In other
words, I did not go looking for
the thing I found.

RAWLINGS

And isn't that just the way of
things in this life?

KATHRYN

Yes, I suppose it is.

Rawlings rises to refill the kettle and prepare another pot
of tea. He places the kettle on the stove, lights the

burner, returns to his seat and gestures for Kathryn to proceed. And she does.

FLASHBACK

INT. KATHRYN'S BEDROOM IN STOCKPORT — THE PREVIOUS MARCH

Kathryn stands before her dressing table tearfully reading a hand-written note. Her MOTHER (late 50s) stands close by, wringing her hands empathetically.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

I had recently had my heart
broken by a man I dearly loved,
who turned out to be little
more than a rake and a
scoundrel.

CLOSE ON THE DRESSING TABLE

...Where sits a jewelry box, a pewter bud vase holding a single daisy, a tiny white porcelain dish and a photo of a very handsome young man with a very self-satisfied smile. The photo is set in an elegant black frame with golden accents.

Kathryn places the note on the table next to the picture frame. Then, quietly SOBBING, she drops her engagement ring into the porcelain dish.

INT. KATHRYN'S BEDROOM — A WEEK LATER

Into the last of several leather suitcases, Kathryn packs pens, bottles of ink, journals and other implements of the writer's trade.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

I had, by that time, managed
to sell a number of stories to
a local magazine, and took this
crushing turn of events as a
sign that I should write my first
novel. And to that end I took a
remote cottage near the village
of Lympne...

EXT. LYMPNE, ENGLAND — AFTERNOON — A MONTH LATER

A quaint fieldstone cottage with a thatched roof and a weatherworn yet sturdy wooden picket fence sits alongside a small but tidy English garden.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
...largely because I had imagined
it the most uneventful place in
the world.

INT. COTTAGE — CONTINUOUS

Kathryn, in a pretty cotton blouse and tan jodhpurs, and with her hair gathered in a pale blue scarf, sits at a small desk overlooking her garden. She is writing.

She halts briefly, as if searching for just the right word, when a COMMOTION outdoors captures her attention. She glances out the window to see an unexpectedly large group of VILLAGERS gathering in the narrow lane that runs past her cottage. She goes to and opens her front door.

EXT. COTTAGE — CONTINUOUS

A large wagon drawn by a team of six draft horses pulls up to Kathryn's cottage. In the wagon, shrouded with a canvas tarpaulin, and anchored with heavy rope, is an enormous round object.

Three DELIVERY MEN bring the wagon to a halt, dismount and make their way to Kathryn's doorway.

DELIVERY MAN #1
(doffing his cap)
G'day mum. Delivery for a Mr.
J. S. Cavor. Where would he
like it?

KATHRYN
(politely)
I'm very sorry, sir. There must
be some mistake. There is no Mr.
Cavor at this address.

DELIVERY MAN #1
Oh, but there *is*, mum. Right
'ere on the Bill of Ladin'. J. S.
Cavor. There he is, plain as day!

He hands Kathryn the bill.

DELIVERY MAN #1
(this time to his associates)
Alright mates. Let's get on with
it then.

The other men return to the wagon and begin undoing the ropes.

KATHRYN
(suddenly agitated)
N-Now, wait just a moment! Yes,
this is the correct address but,
as I said, no one by that name
resides here!

DELIVERY MAN #1
No need to take that tone with
me, Missy! We've been on the
road four days with this 'ere
monstrosity, and we won't be
takin' it back! Now, if Mr. Cavor
decides he doesn't want the bloody
thing, that's 'is business an' he
can take it up with Messrs.
Endicott & Co. of London! But
we've got a delivery to make, and
make it we will!

The other men pull the tarpaulin from the object revealing
it to be a massive hollow sphere of thick glass with a
small circular opening at the top. The curious villagers
let out a collective GASP and Kathryn becomes slack-jawed
at the glistening sight of it.

KATHRYN
But...I...don't...know any J. S.
Cavor.

And just then...

Cavor (O.S.)
I am J. S. Cavor!

Kathryn looks up to see JONATHAN SAMUEL CAVOR (late-40s) on
the other side of the delivery wagon, his face wildly
distorted and enlarged by the convexity of the sphere.

Kathryn begins laughing in spite of herself, and soon, everyone else joins in.

EXT. CAVOR'S ESTATE — LATER

Having finally delivered the sphere to its proper place, the deliverymen — sweaty and exhausted — shake Cavor's hand and return to their wagon, which stands in the lane directly between Kathryn's cottage and Cavor's estate.

This first non-distorted view of Cavor reveals a somewhat portly middle-aged man with a ruddy complexion, thinning hair and wire-rimmed bi-focals.

He wears a dusty greenish overcoat, cycling knickerbockers, stockings and an absurd multi-colored cricket cap. All in all, something less than a dashing figure.

The delivery wagon slowly departs to reveal Kathryn patiently standing at the gate to her cottage. She crosses the lane, walks up to Cavor and extends her hand.

KATHRYN

Good afternoon sir, Kathryn
Bedford, your new neighbor.

Cavor is clearly taken with this pretty young woman...and a bit intimidated.

CAVOR

Pleased. And I am — as you may have gathered — Cavor. Jonathan Cavor.

KATHRYN

Yes, now about that unusual delivery.

CAVOR

My deepest apologies Madam, an inexcusable error on my part. I once owned that cottage, you see, but had to sell it. My scientific research had become a rather costly endeavor and I needed the capital. Anyway I apparently gave them your address when I tendered my
(more)

CAVOR (cont.)
order. Just out of habit, you
see? Simply out of habit. Very
absent-minded of me. Yes, very
absent-minded indeed.

KATHRYN
You're a scientist, then.

CAVOR
Well, yes. And, as a matter of
fact, I'm on the threshold of
completing a most important
demonstration. That's right! One
of the most important demonstrations
the world has ever seen!

KATHRYN
(teasingly)
You've bred the world's biggest
goldfish!

Cavor initially furrows his brow in confusion then...

CAVOR
Oh...Quite! That's marvelous!
"World's biggest goldfish!" How
delightful! So very clever of you!
"World's biggest goldfish!" I get
that! Splendid!

A brief cheery moment soon drifts into an awkward silence.

CAVOR
(cautiously)
Miss, ah...

KATHRYN
Bedford. Kathryn Bedford.

CAVOR
Yes, of course. Miss Bedford.
I was just about to take my
evening constitutional, and
was wondering if...perhaps...
um...you would consent to walk
with me. I could show you the
sights, such as they are.

KATHRYN
(with exaggerated solemnity)
Why yes, Mr. Cavor. I would be
delighted.

Cavor blushes and the two begin their walk.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF LYMPNE — A BIT LATER

They stroll through the rustic countryside as Cavor explains his project in a very animated way.

CAVOR
The goal, you see, is a substance
that should be...well, *opaque*
isn't quite the word...but, yes,
in a sense opaque to the radiant
energy of gravity...in the way
that, say, a window shade is
opaque to sunlight. You see?

KATHRYN
And you say you've about got it?

CAVOR
Yes, I believe so. I believe
I shall have it in a matter
of days.

EXT. CHURCHYARD CEMETERY — LATER

Cavor takes time off from his lecture every now and then to point out certain features of the area — in this instance the headstones of certain Lympne notables. But as they continue he returns to the topic of his project. Kathryn listens intently.

EXT. FURTHER ALONG THE WAY — LATER

KATHRYN
So where does the big goldfish
bowl fit into all of this?

CAVOR
The goldfish bowl? Oh, yes, of
course. Well a sphere such as
that — coated with my substance —
(more)

CAVOR (cont.)
would not be bound by
gravitational force at all. One
could leave the earth entirely.
Visit...the moon perhaps!

KATHRYN
The moon? You cannot be serious!
This is mere hypothesis, right?

CAVOR
I wouldn't have purchased the
sphere if it were mere hypothesis,
my dear.

EXT. OVERLOOKING THE ENGLISH CHANNEL - LATER

The walk has now taken them to the very edge of the shire.
The English Channel sparkles in the early evening sunlight.
BIRDS TWITTER gently. And the discussion continues.

KATHRYN
(taking in the view)
Oh my, how lovely! This was so
very nice of you to ask me along.

CAVOR
It has been my pleasure, Miss
Bedford.

Kathryn stoops to pick a wildflower and examines it
halfheartedly, her mind on other things.

KATHRYN
But the moon, Mr. Cavor? It
seems like there might be
countless other applications
for such a substance. Extremely
lucrative, to be sure, but not
as dangerous.

They stop now at the promontory and stand face to face.

CAVOR
Such as?

KATHRYN

I'm no entrepreneur, mind you,
but common logic suggests it
might be a boon to transportation,
shipping, construction and so on.
It could make you a fortune!

CAVOR

You're quite right. Great scientific discoveries often lead to practical applications. But man is an explorer Miss Bedford. It's in his nature. And the moon may actually have a good deal to teach us.

KATHRYN

I can't imagine what. It's a dead world isn't it?

CAVOR

Perhaps, but it may also bring us to a greater understanding of our place in the universe. Those dead rocks may hold many secrets, not to mention precious minerals and even gemstones!

KATHRYN

But Mr. Cavor, it would be so risky. You could be killed and all your work would have been for nothing.

CAVOR

The greater the risks the greater the rewards Miss Bedford. And the greatest reward of all is that moment of epiphany, of pure awe...of...of the *Numinous* if you will. That is the true reward of the scientific life.

KATHRYN

The *Numinous*?

CAVOR

That thing that arouses the soul to ecstasy, to wonder, to the presence of the Divine.

Unfamiliar with the term, Kathryn smiles sweetly, and shrugs her shoulders.

KATHRYN
It's a lovely word, though...
"Numinous"...whatever it may mean.

She casually tosses her wildflower to the ground.

CAVOR
(a bit discouraged)
We should really start heading
back. It seems I've talked us
to the brink of nightfall.

With the conversation stalled they turn for home...

KATHRYN (V.O.)
It was all so utterly ridiculous,
I thought. This business of going to
the moon! But I must admit that I
found him fascinating and even
charming in a non-threatening way,
and he was a pleasant distraction
from the memories that still burdened
me so. I looked forward to seeing
him *again*. But it would be another
week before I did.

...and Kathryn's wildflower lies forgotten in the grass.

EXT. KATHRYN'S COTTAGE — A WEEK LATER

Kathryn returns to her cottage carrying a number of parcels from an apparent shopping excursion. Waiting for her at the gate is a POSTMAN who hands her a small stack of mail before continuing on his way.

She studies the envelopes on her way to the door and is about to open one of them when she suddenly sees a small goldfish bowl and its darting little occupant sitting on the welcome mat with a small note attached.

She throws her head back in glee, only barely stifling a hearty LAUGH. Then she glances across the lane at Cavor's estate.

EXT. CAVOR'S ESTATE — A BIT LATER

Kathryn arrives at Cavor's door, carrying the goldfish bowl. When Cavor opens the door she holds the bowl up to her face, distorting it. Cavor chuckles at the sight.

CAVOR

I see you've met your new roommate.

Kathryn lowers the bowl and glances fondly at the little fish.

KATHRYN

Yes, I have. And I just love him...or is it a her? In any case you needn't have...really.

CAVOR

But I did need to, you see?
I felt I owed you an apology.

Cavor steps aside and gestures for Kathryn to enter. And she does.

INT. CAVOR'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

KATHRYN

An apology? Whatever for?

CAVOR

For so rudely dominating the conversation during our stroll the other day. I gave you no opportunity to tell me about yourself.

KATHRYN

Don't give it a second thought.
I enjoyed our time together.

CAVOR

I would still like to hear your story. Perhaps over afternoon tea?

KATHRYN

(With some hesitation)
Yes, of course, that would be lovely.

EXT. CAVOR'S GARDEN — A BIT LATER

Cavor and Kathryn take their tea in the shade of a large oak tree standing over Cavor's ill tended but still colorful English garden. Cavor has gone all out: linen tablecloth, fine china, scones and biscuits, jams and marmalades, etc.

KATHRYN

Well, I grew up in Stockport,
near Manchester. And I was to
be married there not so long
ago until I learned that my
intended was something less
than...devoted, if you know
what I mean.

CAVOR

Disgraceful! I'm so sorry, Miss
Bedford.

KATHRYN

And so I came to Lympne to
write.

Cavor refills both of their cups.

CAVOR

You're a writer then. Lemon?

KATHRYN

Yes, please.

Cavor passes a small dish of lemon slices to Kathryn.

KATHRYN

Thank you. So, what was I
saying?

CAVOR

That you write.

KATHRYN

Well, nothing you're likely to
have read. But yes I'm a writer.
And my intention now is to write
a novel.

Just then, two of Cavor's assistants, BENJAMIN SPARGUS, a burly metalworker and LIONEL GIBBS, a handsome young carpenter, enter the yard. They carry a long section of brass railing. As they pass the table...

SPARGUS

Beg pardon, Mr. Cavor, sir. But this 'ere is the last of 'em.

CAVOR

Very well, men. Now, of course, there is that furnace that needs looking after.

SPARGUS

Right, the furnace. Get right on it, sir.

As the two men continue past the table, Gibbs looks back at Kathryn and leers suggestively. She notices.

CAVOR

(to Kathryn)

Well then, your novel. You were saying?

KATHRYN

(glancing past Cavor at Gibbs)

Yes, my novel. It's about the treachery and vanity of beautiful men, and the preposterous fantasy of romantic love.

Cavor is stung by the remark. Would Kathryn have made the withering remark about '*beautiful men*' in the presence of a man she found to be beautiful?

CAVOR

I see.

KATHRYN

There simply must be an audience for such a novel. I mean there must be scores of women who could place themselves in such a scenario.

CAVOR
(tersely)
I'm afraid I wouldn't know about
that.

KATHRYN
(sensing Cavor's discomfort)
Well, once again, Mr. Cavor, this
was so very nice of you. But I
really must be getting back to
my writing.

CAVOR
Certainly, I understand.

KATHRYN
And thank you so much for the
goldfish bowl and the darling
little fellow who now calls it
home.

She rises, picks up the fishbowl and begins to depart.

CAVOR
(with forced bonhomie)
Well, you can't really live in
Lympne without one. We all have
one, you know.

Kathryn smiles and walks away.

CAVOR
(sadly to himself)
Some are quite spectacular,
I hear.

INT. KATHRYN'S COTTAGE — DAWN — SEVERAL DAYS LATER

Kathryn lies asleep in her bed. At her bedroom window, lacey white curtains billow gently in the morning breeze and sunlight streams through in oblique shafts. Except for the slight TWITTERING of birds, Lympne is utterly quiet.

And then...

A nearby thunderous EXPLOSION, followed by the sound of SHATTERING GLASS, and a low ominous RUMBLE. Kathryn reacts

immediately with wide-eyed horror. She leaps from her bed, gathers a robe about herself, and races to her door.

EXT. CAVOR'S ESTATE — CONTINUOUS

Every window in the place has been shattered and the roof has been all but obliterated. From this massive structural defect rises a column of debris including bricks, splinters of wood, pieces of furniture and shards of glass.

Finally, with the wind now HOWLING, a plank of some shiny bluish substance breaks free and rises into the air. And then all is quiet.

Kathryn joins villagers who have swarmed upon the scene.

KATHRYN
(screaming hoarsely)
Mr. Cavor! Mr. Cavor!

A fire brigade arrives with a horse drawn, steam-powered fire wagon, but despite the devastation, there is no trace of fire or smoke. The village volunteers begin sifting through the wreckage and CALLING out for survivors.

Kathryn, verging on panic, suddenly sees something begin to stir amid a heap of branches and fencing that had been pushed up against the garden wall. And then she spots the familiar cricket cap caught on a nearby branch. She races to the spot.

KATHRYN
Mr. Cavor! Oh, Mr. Cavor!

Cavor has cuts on his face and hands, and is covered with dirt and dust. He reaches from the rubble for Kathryn's hand.

KATHRYN
Mr. Cavor! Thank God, you're alive!

She helps him to his feet and allows him to brace himself against her as together they walk slowly toward Kathryn's cottage.

INT. KATHRYN'S COTTAGE — A SHORT TIME LATER

Kathryn guides the limping Mr. Cavor to a chair and eases him into it.

KATHRYN

You just sit right here. I'll get you a washbasin and some soap.

As Kathryn rushes for her supplies, Cavor begins brushing the dust from his jacket. She returns to find him absolutely beaming! She begins to wash the blood and dirt from his face.

KATHRYN

What could you possibly have to smile about?

CAVOR

Miss Bedford, I've done it!
It works!

KATHRYN

What in heaven's name are you going on about?

CAVOR

My substance, Miss Bedford! My gravity defying substance!

KATHRYN

You mean it was you that caused the explosion? I imagined it to be a cyclone!

CAVOR

Well, my idiot assistants no doubt triggered the event, but the thing is...it works!

Kathryn wrings out her washcloth. And stares at Cavor in utter astonishment.

EXT. CAVOR'S ESTATE - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

Spargus and Gibbs are sorting through the mess, assessing the damage and attempting to restore a measure of order.

Cavor and Kathryn walk slowly toward a work-shed set far back from the house, and evidently unaffected by the morning's bedlam.

CAVOR

When the substance cooled to 60 degrees, the process of its manufacture was complete. So you see, it really wasn't an explosion at all.

KATHRYN

I'm speechless. I never really thought it would work.

CAVOR

(chuckling)

Neither did I! Not entirely, at least. All along I wondered if it would turn out to be theoretically possible but, in practical terms, absurd.

They arrive at the shed and Cavor swings open the double doors to reveal the vehicle in a partial state of assembly.

The glass "goldfish bowl" is now nested within its not-quite-finished framework of brass girders. Another Cavor ASSISTANT is welding in the interior.

CAVOR

Voila!

KATHRYN

(aghast)

My God! You're really serious!

CAVOR

I am indeed. Of course certain precautions must be taken. I wouldn't want a repeat of this morning's commotion. Had the Cavorite sheet been fastened to the ground it might have ejected the atmosphere itself out into space, instantly depopulating the globe!

Cavor swoons a bit at the realization. Kathryn steadies him.

KATHRYN

Yes, that would have been
something of an inconvenience.
But what did you call it?

CAVOR

Cavorite. Now that I know it
works, I thought I'd give it
a proper name.

Kathryn smiles and shakes her head.

KATHRYN

Well then, congratulations sir,
on your discovery of Cavorite.

CAVOR

(triumphantly)

Why thank you my dear. And now,
of course, it's onward to the
moon!

EXT. THE NIGHT SKY OVER LYMPNE — LATE JULY

A half moon gleams against an inky backdrop. Crickets CHIRP
and leaves RUSTLE in the breeze.

INT. KATHRYN'S COTTAGE — CONTINUOUS

Kathryn lies in her darkened bedroom, SOBBING quietly.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

The letter from my sister arrived
in July. It was not good news. The
scoundrel who had broken off our
engagement only days before the
wedding, had recently taken a
bride. And, if that weren't
enough, it seems that their
dalliance had been going on for
quite some time. Suddenly, writing
a novel — however cathartic I had
imagined it would be — seemed a
very forlorn enterprise indeed.

INT. CAVOR'S LABORATORY — THE FOLLOWING AFTERNOON

Cavor's lab is a wild hodgepodge of beakers, test tubes, blackboards with indecipherable mathematical scribbles, and spark-throwing dynamos of dubious merit. He wears a smudged and fraying lab coat and goggles.

Despite the LOUD COMMOTION of TRADESMEN making repairs on his damaged home, he appears lost in thought. His housekeeper, MRS. ARMISTEAD (late 60s), interrupts his reverie.

MRS. ARMISTEAD

Sorry for the intrusion, sir.
But Miss Bedford is here to
see you. Shall I send her away?

CAVOR

No, no. Tell her I shall meet
her in the garden. She knows
the way.

MRS. ARMISTEAD

Yes sir.

EXT. CAVOR'S GARDEN — A BIT LATER

Cavor paces furiously through the garden with Kathryn following right behind.

CAVOR

No! It's absolutely out of the question! I don't wish to hear another word of it.

KATHRYN

Mr. Cavor, I beseech you! My life has become altogether desolate. My heart has been shattered, my writing has become an exercise in sheer futility and I can see no path forward.

CAVOR

(turning to face Kathryn)
Miss Bedford. My dear Miss Bedford. The terrible risks aside, there are also matters of convention and even *decency*
(more)

CAVOR (cont.)
to consider. We are not man and
wife. It would be scandalous!

KATHRYN
(suddenly agitated)
Scandalous? Scandalous? The whole
thing is scandalous, you brilliant
lunatic! You're about to fling
yourself among the stars, probably
never to return, and you're worried
about social convention?

CAVOR
Well then, what about privacy?
There are certain hygienic
considerations, you realize.

KATHRYN
The man who gave the world
Cavorite is incapable of solving
something as mundane as a
traveling water closet?

Thus challenged, the inventor in Cavor pauses to consider.

KATHRYN (cont.)
I can help, Mr. Cavor. I am
educated and bright. And I long
SO for something to arouse my soul.
To arouse it to ecstasy, to the
presence of the Divine, to the...
what did you call it?

CAVOR
The Numinous.

KATHRYN
Yes, that's right. The Numinous.
I long for the Numinous.
(beat)
Please take me with you, Mr.
Cavor!

Cavor sighs deeply. Then, after a pause...

CAVOR
(sheepishly)
I'm not a lunatic.

Kathryn smiles radiantly.

MONTAGE

Cavor and Kathryn prepare for their journey to the moon: Mechanical blinds are installed between the girders that surround the sphere; Cavor shows Kathryn the inside of the sphere and demonstrates the use of the controls; They go over blueprints together in Cavor's lab; They shop for provisions, etc. And OVER this...

KATHRYN (V.O.)
And so this project, which had once seemed so utterly ridiculous to me, had now become the most important thing in my life. And, whether out of despair or madness, I began to believe it possible. So finally, by mid-September, there was nothing left but for us to give it a go.

END MONTAGE

EXT. CAVOR'S ESTATE — EARLY MORNING — SEPTEMBER

The double doors to Cavor's work shed are wide open and the two halves of the pitched roof have been swung apart leaving the shed completely open to the elements.

The completed sphere sits in the center of the shed, braced upright with struts of lumber. The blinds have been drawn in the spaces between the girders, concealing the glass interior.

The blinds are coated with the Cavorite, a dark blue enamel-like substance that drips a bit as it dries.

Embers still smolder in a wood burning furnace, and a wall-mounted thermometer reads 71° Fahrenheit.

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

With the blinds drawn, the interior is very dark. If not for a single weak incandescent bulb and an instrument panel with multiple rows of small red lights, it would be pitch black.

Cavor and Kathryn sit facing one another at the bottom of the sphere among their provisions. Barely discernable in the background are regularly spaced metallic discs marking the points of contact between the glass and the outer framework.

CAVOR

It was very chilly this morning
so we should not have to wait
much longer for the temperature
to drop to the necessary 60°.

EXT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

As the Cavorite dries its original deep midnight blue gradually takes on a mottled patina of turquoise. The last few live embers in the furnace are dying. The thermometer now reads 67°.

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

KATHRYN

And then? I mean should we be
bracing for a shock?

CAVOR

It's hard to say. After all,
we will be shut off from all
exterior gravitation. But it
would probably be wise to prepare
for some effect.

EXT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

The embers in the furnace finally flicker out. The turquoise mottling spreads more insistently across the blinds. The thermometer reads 63°

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

KATHRYN

It's all very exciting, isn't it?

CAVOR

And about to get more so I imagine.

EXT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

The thermometer reads 62°, the Cavorite continues to dry, and the wooden struts bracing the sphere begin to tremble slightly and RATTLE a bit.

The thermometer reads 61°. A flock of birds perched in the trees above makes a sudden, FLUTTERING departure.

The last of the drying blinds turns completely turquoise. The thermometer reaches 60° and — after a brief moment of complete silence — the sphere lifts off! The thermometer is blown off the wall, the wind ROARS and the trees sway violently.

POV. GOD'S EYE VIEW OF LYMPNE — CONTINUOUS

The English countryside is lush, green and parceled into tidy lots. The coast of the English Channel is defined by a slender beige outline of beach.

The Channel itself segues from a bright aqua at the shore to an intense dark ultramarine as the water deepens. The sphere rises like a shot from the bucolic scene below.

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

KATHRYN
(and oblivious to the liftoff)
How long will it take to get
there once we depart?

CAVOR
(also unaware)
The moon is roughly a quarter
million miles away. It is difficult
to gauge exactly what that will
mean to us in terms of time.

EXT. SPACE — CONTINUOUS

The sphere rushes ever upward through a now pitch black sky. The curvature of the earth is now apparent.

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

CAVOR

My best estimate suggests a
journey of four days, give or take.
It's impossible to really judge
how fast we'll be travelling
through the void. It may seem as
though we're not moving at all.

KATHRYN

It sounds so strangely wonderful.
If only we could begin.

CAVOR

Patience, Miss Bedford. Patience.
'Tis a virtue...they say.

EXT. SPACE — CONTINUOUS

The sphere races on.

INT. THE SPHERE — A SHORT TIME LATER

Cavor and Kathryn still face one another in the dim lighting. Cavor glances beneath him. Faint shadows cast from the light blub above reveal that they and their supplies are now suspended in mid air!

CAVOR

By Jove!

Kathryn follows Cavor's downward gaze.

KATHRYN

Mr. Cavor! What...what on earth
is happening?

CAVOR

That's just it, Miss Bedford, we
are no longer on the earth! We
have departed!

KATHRYN

Already?

CAVOR

Some time ago it seems!

KATHRYN

But I hadn't felt a thing!

CAVOR

Nor I! Nevertheless, the thing
has happened! We are on our way!
And so...having travelled beyond
the earth's influence...we float!

KATHRYN

It's like something out of Lewis
Carroll, or a dream! But how can
you be sure we're travelling in
the proper direction?

CAVOR

Well, our initial trajectory has
been on a tangent, you see? In
other words, in a straight line.
But now, to adjust our bearing we
need only to open one of our
blinds. Then, at once, any heavy
body that chances to be in that
direction will attract us.

Cavor floats over to the instrument panel and flips a switch. One of the blinds springs open with an abrupt CLICK, to reveal an ocean of stars! Kathryn drifts to what is now the sphere's only "window."

KATHRYN

My God!

Cavor joins her at the window.

CAVOR

We're beyond the atmosphere, you
see? The stars we see on earth are
merely those few blazing survivors
who are able to penetrate our misty
veil...It *is* stunning, isn't it?

Cavor drifts back to the panel. Suddenly, the blind snaps shut with a CLICK and beside it another opens and closes in rapid succession. Then a third window opens to reveal the moon!

Although only a slender crescent at this point Kathryn must still shield her eyes from the dazzling brightness. Cavor opens several more blinds to form a larger window, and the moon appears to settle itself in the very center of it.

CAVOR

We have now only to relax, enjoy
the splendid view and let Bella
Luna do all the work.

INT. THE SPHERE — TWO DAYS LATER

Nearly a third of the exterior blinds are now open, and the light of the moon reveals the rest of the interior. An arrangement of oxygen tanks, a vapor condenser, an electric space heater and a cabinet of sorts are affixed to the surface of the glass. The coils of the heater glow in a bright red orange.

Bedrolls and other bundles float near the center with Cavor and Kathryn. Both are similarly attired: light sweaters, knickerbockers, stockings, slippers and matching dark-lensed goggles.

Kathryn is gazing at the brilliant moon through her upraised legs. But then...

KATHRYN

How very odd to find oneself
looking down at the moon.

And from her perspective, it is down.

CAVOR

Of course here, in the void, terms like "up" and "down" are somewhat nebulous, as are "day" and "night." But you may be correct. We may have travelled far enough at this point to say with some conviction we are at last coming down.

LATER

Kathryn is still unable to look away from the moon.

KATHRYN

It's actually a world, isn't it?
One feels that infinitely more
than one ever could on earth.
Might there be life?

CAVOR

It's highly unlikely. The
environment would necessitate
an almost impossible degree of
adaptation.

KATHRYN

Is that the scientific consensus?

CAVOR

Yes, of course, although some
have raised the possibility.
Still, any life form on the moon
would have to fit itself to a day
as long as fourteen of our own –
a cloudless, blazing, sun-scorched
fortnight followed by a numbingly
frigid night of equal duration!
And the atmosphere – if there is
any at all – would be entirely too
insubstantial to support life as
we know it.

Cavor glides to a small pile of bedrolls and duffel bags
floating near the center of the sphere and, from one of the
bags, withdraws a sextant. With Kathryn still engrossed in
the moon, he points it to the open side of the sphere.

CAVOR

Hmmm.

KATHRYN

Is anything wrong?

CAVOR

We have evidently drifted a bit off
course. The Moon is in constant
motion you see. But a simple
adjustment is all that's required.

KATHRYN

Can you show me?

CAVOR

Certainly. If I were to open
that blind right there...

He points to the darkened side of the sphere.

CAVOR (cont.)

...for, say, thirty seconds,
that should do the trick. But
I must alert you that the
procedure might leave you
lightheaded. You may wish to
brace yourself against
something just to be on the
safe side.

Cavor floats to the control panel and Kathryn grabs hold of one of the mounted oxygen tanks. Cavor opens the blind and through the new temporary window hangs the crescent earth!

Along the terminator, the westernmost coastlines of Europe can still be distinguished and beyond it the vast Atlantic shines like molten silver. Kathryn is overcome.

KATHRYN

Dear God! How far away she
looks. And how fragile. But,
Oh Mr. Cavor, how unimaginably
beautiful!

After the blind CLICKS shut, Cavor turns from the panel to Kathryn and they gaze at one another in silent awe.

HOURS LATER

The moon now fills almost the entire open half of the sphere, and its gravitational influence has begun to take effect. Loose items (including the occupants themselves) now float closer to the surface facing the moon.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

The gentle tug of gravity had a most curious effect on both of us, and after a while we found ourselves drifting into a sort of tranquility that was neither waking nor slumber. We fell
(more)

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
through a space of time that had
neither night nor day in it,
silently, softly, and swiftly
down towards the moon.

EXT. THE SPHERE — THE NEXT DAY

The sphere seemingly hovers over the lunar landscape, almost half of which remains in shadow. The distance can be no more than 100 miles and the crests, craters and pinnacles are more clearly defined than ever.

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

As Kathryn gazes at the lunar surface, Cavor performs calculations in a small notepad. The glare of the moon is reflected in their goggles.

CAVOR

We now enter the most perilous
leg of our journey, Miss Bedford.
It will require our utmost
vigilance.

He drifts to the control panel to prepare for the landing.

KATHRYN

I can feel the motion now. We
seem to be going quite fast.

The moon is clearly getting closer.

CAVOR

Yes, perhaps a bit too fast.

He opens two blinds on the dark side of the sphere. In one floats the earth and in the other the distant sun.

CAVOR

The idea, you see, is to harness
the pull of both the earth and
the sun so as to mitigate our
rate of descent.

KATHRYN

To mitigate our...?

CAVOR
(brusquely)
To keep us from crashing.

EXT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

50 miles and closing.

KATHRYN (O.S.)
We don't seem to be slowing.

25 miles. The moon looks as if one could reach out and touch it. And it is approaching at an ever-faster rate. The blinds on the sphere are opening and closing wildly.

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

Cavor is working feverishly at the control panel. The sphere is slowing, but just barely. Kathryn is becoming unglued.

KATHRYN
Mr. Cavor!

The plummeting continues...

KATHRYN
Mr. Cavor!

and continues...

KATHRYN
Too fast!

and continues...

KATHRYN
Much too fast!

Cavor abruptly closes all the blinds at once and — but for the red lights on the control panel and the coils of the space heater — the interior is thrown into darkness, forcing both Cavor and Kathryn to remove their goggles.

CAVOR
That should stall the momentum
(more)

CAVOR (cont.)
a bit but we can't keep it like
this for long or we'll be flung
back toward the earth.

Cavor begins opening blinds on the moon, one every few seconds. Altitude - 5 miles, then 4, 3, 2 and 1.

CAVOR
Any moment now!

KATHRYN
Dear God!

Cavor still works to brake the sphere's descent. Altitude - 1,000 feet.

CAVOR
Brace yourself!

Kathryn, now WHIMPERING, wraps herself in a bedroll. Cavor begins opening all the blinds. 100 feet!

CAVOR
This is it!

All the blinds are open.

EXT. THE SURFACE OF THE MOON - CONTINUOUS

The sphere touches down on the inside rim of a large crater, perhaps 100 miles across. It tumbles down through what looks like finely powdered snow, and finally comes to rest at the floor of the crater in near total darkness.

INT. THE SPHERE - MOMENTS LATER

All that separates the blackness of the lunar horizon from that of the sky is the blanket of stars. Cavor turns on the incandescent and looks for Kathryn among the bedrolls and blankets. Despite the space heater, it is cold.

CAVOR
(in a whisper)
Miss Bedford, we've made it.

Kathryn raises her head and exhales as if she had been holding her breath for a very long time. For a moment she

and Cavor stare at one another in wide-eyed silence.
Kathryn again scans the surrounding glass.

KATHRYN
Why is it so dark?

CAVOR
We must wait for the sun, but
it shan't be long. We landed
just ahead of the approaching
dawn.

Cavor and Kathryn cover themselves in their bedrolls, their breath rising in steamy clouds of vapor. The glass becomes clouded with condensation, which soon crystallizes into frost.

EXT. THE FLOOR OF THE CRATER — A BIT LATER

Sunlight peeks over the rim of the crater, setting the distant ridge of the crater ablaze in dazzling light.

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

As light starts to spread over the surface, the frost on the windows begins to evaporate, giving Cavor and Kathryn their first real close-up look at the moon. Cavor points through the glass at small tendrils of vapor rising from what had appeared to be snow.

CAVOR
Good Lord, Could it possibly
be? I think it is! An atmosphere!

KATHRYN
Are you sure?

CAVOR
It must be or it wouldn't rise
like that — at the touch of a
sunbeam!

Cavor glances upward.

CAVOR
And look...in the sky!

EXT. THE FLOOR OF THE CRATER — CONTINUOUS

The horizon, which had earlier been set against the blackness of space, now abuts a narrow band of bright blue that gradates to black overhead where a few bright stars remain visible.

CAVOR (O.S.)

The air is settling, filling
the crater like rainwater fills
a gully!

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

When the sun itself emerges from behind the near ridge it casts its blinding radiance upon the sphere. Cavor and Kathryn scramble for their goggles.

KATHRYN

My God, such intensity!

The harsh light immediately liquefies the 'snow' and sends it rushing down the ridge and over the sphere where it appears to boil before quickly vaporizing altogether.

CAVOR

I would never have imagined such
A process. This is phenomenal!

KATHRYN

What do you think it means?

CAVOR

It is the full atmosphere of the moon being released by the sun. The little whiffs we saw earlier were only harbingers of this far greater event.

KATHRYN

And look, what is happening over there?

Through the glass, minute slender green blades can be seen breaking through the fibrous lunar surface, which is now finally rid of its nighttime blanket of white. The process is slow at first, but soon begins to accelerate.

CAVOR
Good God, I believe it's life,
Miss Bedford. The moon does
harbor life!

EXT. OUTWARD FROM THE SPHERE — A BIT LATER

The floor of the crater is exploding with all manner of flora: exotic succulents, flowers, seed pods, lichens, fungi, fruits, mosses, spores, tubers, ferns, fronds, vines, gourds and melons in wild unearthly colors and bizarre patterns. The growth rate is spectacular. Cavor and Kathryn are giddy with amazement.

KATHRYN (O.S.)
It's the Garden of Eden!

CAVOR (O.S.)
Or Ezekiel's valley of bones
come to life!

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

Cavor and Kathryn suddenly look at one another as if hitting on the same idea at the same moment.

CAVOR
You're wondering if the atmosphere could sustain us as well, aren't you?

KATHRYN
Exactly, but how could we be certain?

CAVOR
We must test it first. This atmosphere may be perfectly safe for these plants and at the same time lethal to us.

Cavor tears a sheet of paper from his notepad, crumples it, lights a corner of it with a match, and thrusts it hastily through an exhaust valve in the hatch cover.

At first it looks as if the flame has been extinguished, but then a bluish flame rises along one edge of the paper.

It spreads, burns brightly, and quickly reduces the paper to ash.

CAVOR

Well, that indicates the clear presence of oxygen. But it may still be too rarified for humans. We must proceed with caution.

Cavor begins to open the hatch, turning the hand wheel with great deliberation. When the denser air within the sphere begins to escape around the gasket of the hatch it makes a SHRILL WHISTLING sound like a kettle just beginning to boil.

PAUSE FLASHBACK

INT. THE AL-QAMAR GALLEY

The kettle on the galley stove WHISTLES wildly, but Captain Rawlings is too engrossed in Kathryn's story to notice.

KATHRYN

Captain? Do you plan on getting that?

RAWLINGS

I'm sorry?

KATHRYN

The water, Captain. I believe it's ready.

RAWLINGS

(snapping out of it)

Oh...the water. Yes, of course.

He rises and moves to the stove where he turns off the burner and pours the hot water into the teapot. He returns to his seat, still appearing somewhat dazed.

KATHRYN

Are you alright, Captain?

RAWLINGS

I'm not entirely sure. I can't decide which of us is the likelier candidate for the
(more)

RAWLINGS (cont.)
insane asylum. You for telling
such an outlandish story, or
me for listening to it.

KATHRYN
I could stop.

RAWLINGS
No, no, please. Carry on.

KATHRYN
(smiling slightly)
Yes, alright. So...where was I?

RAWLINGS
I believe your Mr. Cavor was
about to open the hatch.

KATHRYN
That's right. He was about to
open the hatch and actually
set foot upon the surface of
the moon.

Kathryn continues.

RESUME FLASHBACK

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

The hatch swings open. Cavor raises his head through the opening, inhales deeply, exhales and calls down to Kathryn in a THIN, GHOST OF A VOICE.

CAVOR
The air is thinner, to be sure.
but breathable.

EXT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

He hoists himself out of the hatch and slowly works his way down the outer framework to the surface. He signals for Kathryn to join him, and soon she emerges from the open hatch.

KATHRYN

It doesn't distress your lungs
too much, then?

CAVOR

No, no. We should be able to
manage this.

Kathryn climbs down the exterior. Her final step off the sphere is over three feet, but she virtually floats to the surface, appearing utterly dumbfounded.

KATHRYN

(giggling)

I'm light as a feather!

CAVOR

It's the weaker gravitation,
you see?

Cavor begins to hop up and down, each time a little higher as if bouncing on a trampoline. He and Kathryn break into LAUGHTER, which sounds light and distant in the thinner air.

Kathryn attempts a leap of her own and ends up more than 10 yards away from the sphere. Cavor follows but lands awkwardly in a large flowering shrub. He rises LAUGHING and brushing himself off.

CAVOR

Well, that wasn't terribly dignified.

KATHRYN

(also laughing)

No, it was wonderful! Quite graceful, in fact!

They continue to explore a lunar jungle that grows and spreads so rapidly it slows their progress.

A SHORT TIME LATER

CAVOR

We must not stray too far
from the sphere. With so much
(more)

CAVOR (cont.)
vegetation growing so quickly
it would be easy to lose sight
of it.

They scan the vicinity and locate the sphere about 300 yards away, resting among some still growing shrubs.

Then, what appears to be a swarm of large white butterflies rises from behind the sphere. The swarm whirls and dips and rises as if the creatures were psychically linked, as in a murmuration of starlings.

KATHRYN
How beautiful! What do you suppose they are?

CAVOR
A type of insect I would think.
Some species that can go completely dormant during the long night.

The swarm grows nearer to Cavor and Kathryn who watch with awe and reverence until it hovers right above them. Then, all at once, the swarm attacks, BUZZING frenetically! Kathryn CRIES OUT.

The two begin swatting at the 'butterflies' that, up close, appear more like wasps with large, white triangular wings.

KATHRYN
Go away! Shoo!

CAVOR
Be gone, I say! We mean you no harm!

Suddenly, a creeping magenta vine wraps itself around Cavor's ankle and pulls him to the ground.

Kathryn continues to fight off the insects, which only seems to provoke them further. Both she and Cavor are stung repeatedly. When Kathryn falls to the ground she too becomes entwined in some deeply veined green and purple vine.

KATHRYN
Dear God! Mr. Cavor! Help!

Cavor frees himself from the vine and continues to swat at the bugs while at the same time trying to free Kathryn.

CAVOR
Fight, Miss Bedford! We must get back to the sphere!

KATHRYN
I can't move! I'm ensnared!

As Cavor struggles to free Kathryn a branch from a willowy nearby shrub swings toward him. One of its heart-shaped leaves opens to reveal three rows of small blue and yellow spikes.

As the branch sweeps over Cavor's head, the leaf detaches and fixes itself to the back of his neck. Cavor goes down in agony. More of the lunar wasps arrive and small, tentacled creatures crawl from the underbrush to join the melee.

Cavor continues to aid Kathryn, whose goggles have been pushed down around her neck. Her face has been stung many times and she seems on the verge of unconsciousness.

Cavor's face is also covered with insect bites, and a sick bluish rash spreads from beneath the leaf on his neck. Then another creeping vine begins to encircle his head sweeping away his goggles as well.

CAVOR
Miss Bedford, I'm afraid we may be doomed!

Kathryn gives no response and both appear to be done for when they are surrounded by a group of six antlike beings with bulging eyes, glossy dark heads, spindly limbs and leathery bodies.

They walk upright and stand about 5 feet tall. Some carry torches, and they make RASPY CHIRPING NOISES in apparent communication with each other. They reach down for Kathryn and Cavor.

CAVOR
Oh My God! No! Please No!

INT. LUNAR CAVE — TWO DAYS LATER

Kathryn — her face red and swollen — lies on a pallet of colorful, primitively patterned material, wearing a tunic of similar fabric.

She is in a small cave lit by torch sconces and buzzing with a melodic HUMMING sound. Against one wall is what appears to be a candlelit altar, above which is a stylized pictograph of Planet Earth painted on the cave wall.

KATHRYN (V.O.)
I drifted in and out of consciousness for the better part of two days and most likely would have perished had it not been for creatures who at first seemed so grotesque and menacing, but who instead turned out to be our very deliverance.

Three BEINGS, more humanoid than ant-like in appearance, enter from behind a curtain. They are a deep earthy purple in color and, although hairless, have strong yet delicate features suggesting an empowered femininity. Each wears a tunic similar to Kathryn's.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
Cavor, with typical quixotic flair, referred to them as *Selenites*, after Selene, the Greek goddess of the moon. And somehow the name seemed fitting.

Two of the SELENITES follow the third with studied deference, suggesting that she is an individual of some standing in the community.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
Although, we would eventually learn that Selenite society was entirely egalitarian, one individual seemed to hold a somewhat honored position.

The Selenite of which Kathryn speaks walks silently to the altar and raises her arms in a gesture of reverence to the painting of Earth.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
Cavor referred to her as *The Priestess*, a title that also seemed appropriate.

After a brief moment of silence, the PRIESTESS picks up and lights what looks like a shaman's smudge stick. She then walks it over to Kathryn's pallet and begins to wave it over the earthling with sweeping motions of her web-fingered hands.

She then gestures for her assistants to help Kathryn to her feet. And, with almost reverential tenderness, they do.

The small group then walks slowly past the curtain and out of the small cave.

INT. A MUCH LARGER CAVERN — CONTINUOUS

Kathryn and the others enter a much larger space BUZZING with activity. Other SELENITES tend to bonfires, prepare food, and paint brilliant phosphorescent pictographs on the walls.

LITTLE ONES — lighter and somewhat less purple than the adults — are tended to in groups, and some participate in melodic cricket-like CHIRPING. Then, OFF SCREEN...

CAVOR (O.S.)
Miss Bedford!

Kathryn turns to see Cavor running joyously towards her. His face is still blotchy, and around his neck is a gauze-like wrapping. He is wearing his regular clothing, but it looks as if it has been laundered for him. Soon he catches up with Kathryn and her Selenite nurses as they stroll through the cavern.

CAVOR
Miss Bedford! How wonderful to see you up and about! You're feeling better, I take it.

KATHRYN

Yes, thank you. Still a little
woozy, but better. And you?

CAVOR

Splendid! Couldn't be better! Our
hosts have simply been wonderful!

KATHRYN

So, where have you been? And what
have you been doing with yourself?
It's been quite some time since I
last saw you.

CAVOR

I tried to visit you several
times each day, but you were
barely aware of your own existence,
let alone mine. However I could see
that you were in good hands and
felt it better that I give your
caretakers the space to do their
work. So instead, I decided to
investigate the lunar community
and, I must say, the locals have
been treating me like something
of a potentate! It has been quite
extraordinary.

KATHRYN

Yes, indeed it has.

CAVOR

So, do you think you might be
up for a short tour?

KATHRYN

Yes, I think that would be nice.

Cavor and Kathryn look over to the Priestess, as if asking
for permission. And, appearing as though she understands,
she responds with a human-like smile and small wave.

CAVOR

(bowing slightly)

Thank you my dear, for everything.

And the two proceed onward by themselves.

A BIT LATER

Cavor and Kathryn continue to stroll through the cavern. And for the most part, the Selenites remain at a curious, yet respectful, distance.

However, several Selenite CHILDREN eventually give in to their curiosity and begin quietly tagging alongside. One hands Kathryn a brightly colored flower.

KATHRYN
(in response)
Well, aren't you adorable!
Thank you!

CAVOR
The eternal curiosity and acceptance of childhood.
(then, to the little ones)
Well, come along then.

Just as they are about to continue their walk, a HUNTING PARTY returns, to a joyous CLAMOR. The hunters carry carcasses of eviscerated beasts resembling boars and as they pass the other Selenites bow their heads in tribute.

With the hunters are those who had been harvesting fruits and vegetables for the community.

Upon their arrival, the hunters and gatherers remove what had only been protective headgear and body armor, revealing that their initial ant-like appearance was simply due to their equipment. And now, with the headdresses removed, they resemble the other Selenites.

Kathryn, Cavor and the Selenite children watch them for a while before moving on.

KATHRYN
So what exactly happened after we landed?

CAVOR
Well, you see, the biology at the surface functions as a single living organism, and until we arrived that entity had never encountered such a threat.

KATHRYN

We were hardly a *threat*.

CAVOR

Well, the moon's 'Garden of Eden,'
as you put it, apparently
disagrees with you on that point.

KATHRYN

Whatever do you mean?

CAVOR

The moon's biology reacted as if
we were a bacterial invasion or
deadly poison of some kind. And
I would imagine, from the moon's
perspective, we are *precisely*
that.

KATHRYN

Then why weren't we killed?

CAVOR

Had it not been for these lovely
beings, we *would* have been. So,
as I said, while you were
recovering from the incident at
the surface, I was, well, getting
acquainted...in a manner of
speaking.

KATHRYN

(stunned)

You can talk to them?

CAVOR

No, not exactly. You see I
found their language to be
indecipherable – drastically
different vocal chords and so on
– but here's the interesting
thing: They seemed to understand
me nevertheless. It was as if
they understood the concepts that
undergird the specific words.

KATHRYN

I'm afraid you've lost me.

CAVOR

I believe that the Selenites may
be...what's the word? Intuitive?
No, it's more than that.
Clairvoyant, maybe? No, telepathic!
Yes, that's the word, *telepathic!*

KATHRYN

They can read our minds?

CAVOR

Yes, I think it's possible. The
Priestess seems especially skilled
at it. Perhaps you noticed
something of this when she was
caring for you.

KATHRYN

Yes, now that you mention it,
language didn't seem to be much
of a barrier at all.

CAVOR

Yes, exactly. Well put. No
language barrier whatsoever.
And this allowed me to learn a
good deal about these gentle souls
and their home.

KATHRYN

Really! Tell me everything.

CAVOR

Well, I can't claim to be an
authority, mind you. But I can
tell you what I've discovered so
far. Their astonishing artwork
should help you understand as
well. I have found it to be a
wonderful resource. Let me
explain.

As they continue through the cavern, Cavor serves as a guide to the many bright phosphorescent hieroglyphs that cover nearly every wall in the place.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

Cavor then explained to me all that he had learned in his time with the Selenites. And I will always be impressed by how effortlessly this peculiar little man adapted to such an extraordinary situation.

They arrive at an image similar to the one painted above the Priestess' altar. And next to this is a stylized depiction of the sun. Beneath the two orbs are figures representing the Selenites in poses of supplication.

CAVOR

They believe that the earth – in tender congress with the sun – had given birth to the moon and is therefore deserving of their deepest veneration.

KATHRYN

Yes, I see.

The next several paintings illustrate Selenite life during the time of sunlight: The trips to the surface; The hunts; The festivals; The feasts; and so on.

CAVOR

Their lives are structured around the cycles of day and night, and as you might imagine, the Selenites welcome and celebrate the two weeks of sunlight for the warmth, light and sheer abundance they bring with them.

KATHRYN

...as did the Druids upon the arrival of the Spring Equinox.

CAVOR

Yes, You're quite right! Well done, Miss Bedford!

KATHRYN

And the long night?

The next several paintings depict the dark time: Selenites hibernating communally in the large central cavern; Torch-lit religious gatherings; and so on.

CAVOR

Yes, well the night, as you can see, is a time of rest and reflection. Two weeks of hibernation, solemnity, fasting and prayer.

KATHRYN

Sounds a bit like Christendom's season of Lent.

CAVOR

Yes, it may very well be. Very perceptive of you, my dear.

The next painting portrays the moon in cross-section, looking much like a labyrinth in a medieval cathedral, with a stylized blue sea at its very center.

CAVOR

But there is a good deal more to the moon itself than we could have guessed. And these humble beings are not alone in their world. Living beneath our new friends, and separated from them forever, is another — more advanced — society, whom I call *The Others* and, from what I could gather, they are creatures of intense antisocial demeanor.

Another painting depicts the so-called *OTHERS*. They resemble the Selenites except that they are totally drained of color, and seem to radiate an air of malevolence.

The little ones in the group recoil at the sight of the Others and gather behind Cavor and Kathryn trembling and frightened.

CAVOR (cont.)

They are of the same species, I suspect, but differ dramatically in many ways.

KATHRYN

How so?

CAVOR

Well, for one thing, they are almost entirely subterranean, and rarely set foot upon the surface. And, unlike the communal world of the Selenites, their society is structured around a strict inverted hierarchy, with the ruling class at the very center of the moon, and the other classes radiating outward, separated according to function.

Kathryn reaches back to comfort the Selenite children.

KATHRYN

My God, they're terrified!

CAVOR

Yes, the fear. Well evidently it's well founded. The Others, it seems, have always looked upon the Selenites as inferior and unclean by virtue of their color, their primitive lifestyle and their daytime excursions on the surface. So the Selenites are strictly forbidden to enter the lower regions and are punished severely should they ever try.

Cavor comes upon and points to another painting, this one showing a massacre of the Selenites by the Others. At the sight of it, the terrified little ones break away from Kathryn and race back down to the central cavern.

KATHRYN

They sound monstrous!

CAVOR

Yes, although apparently the Selenites have arrived at an
(more)

CAVOR (cont.)
understanding with them. As long
as they keep to themselves no
harm should come to them.

KATHRYN
It seems so utterly pointless.

CAVOR
Well, in this sense the moon is
very much like our own world
I'm afraid. Mindless prejudice
and rigid territorialism, along
with an apparent genetic
predisposition toward cruelty.

KATHRYN
Over something as trivial as
color?

CAVOR
As I said, Miss Bedford, not so
different from things on Earth.
But, in this case there seems
to be something else.

KATHRYN
I'm listening.

CAVOR
Well, it seems that more than
anything; they hate the
Selenites for their religious
beliefs. The Selenite devotion
to Mother Earth is seen as an
insult to the primacy — and
even the presumed *divinity* —
of the Others. One can only
imagine what they would make
of visitors — and *esteemed*
visitors at that — from Planet
Earth.

And here they arrive at one last painting — of Cavor,
Kathryn and the sphere.

The two look at one another apprehensively.

INT. CENTRAL CAVERN OF THE SELENITES - SEVERAL DAYS LATER

Cavor and Kathryn (now back in her regular clothes) enjoy a feast with the Selenites before a large glowing fire. Kathryn LAUGHS and plays with the little ones who are captivated by her, while Cavor attempts further communication with the adults.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

And we were esteemed visitors too. Apparently our arrival from the earth was seen as a great blessing...a *miracle* in fact. And so we were treated as though we were gods, or at very least as *emissaries* of the gods. It was like a wonderful dream. But all dreams must end and with the lunar night fast approaching we knew it would soon be time that this one ended as well. But as it turned out it was way *past* time, because others had been watching us as well.

INT. THE FAR SIDE OF THE CAVERN - CONTINUOUS

The wall on the far side of the cavern is only dimly lit by the flickering glow of the bonfire. But it is enough to see the many cracks, crevices and stress lines in the stone.

Behind one of these cracks, and up-close, two pairs of sinister, bloodshot eyes can be seen staring malevolently.

INT. CENTRAL CAVERN OF THE SELENITES - A WEEK LATER

Cavor and Kathryn stand in the midst of a large attentive group of Selenites. Cavor has the floor.

CAVOR

We are most appreciative of your...um...heroics at the surface, and we cannot thank you enough for your...your...hospitality, but, you see, we really must return to...to the earth.

And he points to one of the paintings of earth on a nearby wall. The Selenites BUZZ and nod their heads.

CAVOR (cont.)

We must return to the sphere, you see, before the...ah...the return of the night. Do you understand? The night? The...the dark time? By my calculations it is two days from now. Earth days...you see? Perhaps less. Oh dear, how to explain Earth days?

(then to Kathryn)

I'm not sure I'm getting through to them.

KATHRYN

But you already *have*, Mr. Cavor. With your *mind*, remember?

CAVOR

Yes, yes. Perhaps you're right.

Just then, the Priestess rises, smiles, and pats Cavor on the shoulder. She stoops to draw in the dust at their feet. She draws a circle and then points to the painting of Earth as Cavor had just done.

CAVOR

Yes, yes! The earth! We come from Earth.

Then she draws a smaller circle and places two stick figures inside of it.

KATHRYN

It's the sphere!

The Priestess points at Cavor and Kathryn, then to her drawing of the sphere.

CAVOR

That's right! That's right! We must get to the sphere.

Finally, the Priestess draws a line from her sphere to the earth.

CAVOR

Yes! Yes! Can you help us?

The Selenites all rise, BUZZING and CHIRPING delightedly. They surround Cavor and Kathryn and reach out with genuine affection. But then, (OFF SCREEN) a loud volley of ZWOOSHING SOUNDS followed by agonized and panicked SCREECHING.

It's the OTHERS, bearing firearms that discharge bursts of concentrated energy rather than projectiles. Many of the Selenites scatter. Some huddle together to protect one another and their young. And some try to engage the marauders in self-defense. It is a scene of utter bedlam, and many Selenites are killed or wounded.

Somehow through the pandemonium Kathryn spots the Selenite child who had earlier given her the flower. The child stands alone, wide-eyed and terror-stricken. Kathryn races toward the child, but is seized by the Others before she can reach her.

Cavor attempts to rescue Kathryn but he too is apprehended, which brings the raid to an immediate halt. The Others regroup around their captives and quickly march them out of the cavern.

INT. THE REALM OF THE OTHERS - HOURS LATER

Cavor and Kathryn sit on the floor of a dimly lit room. They are bound - hands, feet, waists and necks - in cold metallic chains. A dull confusion of muffled NOISES - as of a factory or a busy urban thoroughfare - fills the air.

KATHRYN

They are going to kill us, aren't they?

CAVOR

I don't think so. If they had wanted to, there is no reason why they should not have already done so.

KATHRYN

Perhaps these things might also view us as deadly germs that must be destroyed like those things at the surface.

CAVOR

But the Others are intelligent beings. The plants and animals on the surface were reacting unconsciously or, rather, instinctively. I'm more concerned that the Others might consider us Selenite *gods*. That would make us a threat to their supremacy.

Abruptly, and with a soft CLICK, a thin vertical line of intense blue light appears on a smooth wall facing the two captives.

KATHRYN

Mr. Cavor.

Cavor looks up to see the blue line broaden. It is light from a door opening behind them. They turn to see a solitary FIGURE silhouetted against the iridescent blue background – it is one of the Others.

He enters, marches up to the captives and stares at them intently, his face a lifeless blanched facsimile of the Selenites'.

CAVOR

We've come in peace. We mean you no...

The Creature turns, leaves the room and closes the door.

CAVOR

That was odd.

KATHRYN

And not terribly encouraging.

They sit in silence for several moments, then...

CAVOR

We are some way down. Perhaps a couple thousand feet or more.

KATHRYN

I'm sorry, Mr. Cavor. But I fail to see how that could possibly matter right now.

CAVOR

Simply an observation, Miss Bedford. If we are to effect our escape, it might behoove us to know exactly where they've taken us.

KATHRYN

Yes, you're quite right. I wasn't thinking. So, anyway, what makes you think we are that far down?

CAVOR

Well it is cooler, for one thing. And the air is denser. Perhaps you've noticed how much louder our voices are.

The door opens. This time six more OTHERS enter, each carrying a long tubular staff. One of them hands his staff to a comrade, stoops down and undoes the captives' leg shackles.

KATHRYN

Mr. Cavor, what's happening?

The leading Other gestures for the earthlings to rise.

CAVOR

I haven't the faintest idea,
My dear.

They rise awkwardly and the Others, using their staffs as goads, prod Cavor and Kathryn through the door and into a much larger space that is cold, angular and sterile – a stark contrast to the warm, roughhewn and colorful world of the Selenites.

They march along a walkway overlooking an enormous machine of some type that extends vertically for hundreds of feet.

Huge shafts of metal are flung up and out from the machine's center in parabolic arcs like the pistons of a large steam engine. The machine is the clear source of the NOISES that have been filling the air.

CAVOR

Such technology. I never dreamed!

Thick transparent tubes filled with a brilliant blue incandescent liquid, run the length of the machine and drain into a network of canals that serpentine throughout the netherworld of the Others supplying light, but apparently no heat.

When Cavor stops to study the thing more closely he is prodded by one of the Others – his goad throwing a spark into Cavor's ribs with a loud ZAP. The Other then gestures for the group to keep moving.

CAVOR

Good God!

KATHRYN

Are you all right?

CAVOR

The thing was electrified! It was quite a jolt!

A BIT LATER

The group now treks through dank, claustrophobic corridors.

KATHRYN

(in a whisper)

Where do you suppose they are taking us?

CAVOR

(also whispering)

We are going deeper. That much I can feel.

KATHRYN

But to what end?

CAVOR

Perhaps we are to be put on trial, by those who lord over – or rather under – this infernal place.

KATHRYN

I fear you may be right.

INT. SUBTERRANEAN CORRIDOR — LATER

The group emerges from a narrow corridor into a larger, brighter space along the edge of a sheer precipice. An upward draft of air tousles Kathryn's hair making a soft WHOOSHING sound.

CAVOR

The air here is quite warm. Do you feel it?

KATHRYN

Yes, I do. Why is that, do you think?

Just then, a large rectangular hot air balloon hauling a square metallic gondola rises up from the chasm until the gondola is flush with the rim of the drop-off. A group of Others silently marches off and Cavor and Kathryn are goaded to board.

CAVOR

They're going to take us further down. We must find a way out of this.

With a guard to either side of them, Kathryn and Cavor are marched toward the gondola. But Cavor halts and turns around.

CAVOR

(forcefully)

No, I say! This farce has gone on long enough!

Another guard lowers his goad menacingly and advances on Cavor who boldly holds his ground. But just as the guard steps forward, he is gored from behind with a spear that juts through his chest. He looks down at it in utter bewilderment before falling dead to the ground.

Behind him, six armored Selenite hunters emerge like specters from the darkness. And they advance!

The Others level their goads at the Selenites but they are no match for the Selenite lancers. Three of them are instantly dispatched and fall into the abyss. Then the Selenites move in and — after a brief struggle — slay the rest. Kathryn and Cavor shuffle away from the gondola,

where the Selenites remove their manacles and chains. And, for the moment at least, they are free

CAVOR

You wonderful, wonderful people!
How can we begin to thank you?

One of the Selenites — presumably the leader of the group — removes his headgear, smiles, and finally gestures for them to follow him down a corridor.

The small group continues onward until they arrive at the border of the Others' dark realm. Here, the harsh industrial corridors give way to natural caverns and a number of tunnels. The Selenites confer before selecting one.

KATHRYN

What are we to do now? Where
are we to go?

But one of the Selenites quickly gestures for quiet and Kathryn complies. Then, just as a tunnel is chosen, a piercing SIREN begins to WAIL throughout the underworld.

Startled by the sound of the siren, Cavor loses his footing and back-steps into one of the canals of liquid light. He quickly jumps out only to discover that he glows brightly from mid-calf to the soles of his feet.

CAVOR

Confound it! Now what shall we
do? My footprints will bring
them directly to us!

The lead Selenite helps Cavor remove his shoes and stockings and tosses them back into the canal. And, with the SIREN still blaring, they proceed to one of the tunnels.

INT. TUNNEL — AN HOUR LATER

The tunnel is nearly vertical and what began as a run to freedom has now become a slow and arduous climb. It is quite dark, but the Selenites use phosphorescent fungi as a light source to guide them.

Now and again, Cavor WINCES in pain as he continues to climb in his bare feet.

KATHRYN

Oh my poor Mr. Cavor, you are
clearly in distress! Perhaps we
should hold up a bit and give
you a chance to rest.

CAVOR

I'm fine, Miss Bedford, I
promise you. We've climbed a
good bit already, and we must
keep going! We have no choice.

Higher in the tunnel, glistening ores, crystals and fungi
dot the walls like stars and nebulae. One especially bright
and colorful mushroom catches Kathryn's eye, but as she
reaches for it, a small creeping thing SKITTERS past making
her flinch.

Then, from behind Kathryn, a small web-fingered hand
reaches over, plucks the mushroom and lifts it to
illuminate a familiar Selenite face. It is the Priestess
who cared for Kathryn upon her arrival.

KATHRYN

(pleasantly surprised)

My Lord, it's you! I hadn't
recognized you in your helmet.

The Priestess smiles and hands Kathryn the mushroom.

KATHRYN

Thank you. You are such a dear.
Thank you so much.

They continue their climb.

LATER

Finally they arrive at the end of the tunnel to find that
the sirens have been silenced, but also that the mouth of
the tunnel is covered by metallic grating. The lead
Selenite shakes his head despondently and CHIRPS something
to the others.

KATHRYN

(to Cavor)

What's the matter?

CAVOR

It seems we've come to an
impasse of sorts.

KATHRYN

You mean we'll have to turn
around and start all over again?

CAVOR

Perhaps not.

Cavor takes the lead Selenite gently by the shoulders and gazes into his eyes. The Selenite then smiles and makes way for Cavor to pass so that he might examine the grate.

CAVOR

I may be able to bend it.

KATHRYN

Really?

CAVOR

Well, we shall see Miss Bedford.
It's a matter of gravity again,
you see? Our muscles have evolved
to function in a much more
strenuous gravitational environment.
It is nothing any of us would be
able to accomplish on earth, but
here things may be different. And,
to be honest, the bars do look a
bit flimsy by earthly standards.

Cavor grips the bars of the grate and girds himself for a moment of extreme exertion, but he bends the bars so easily he almost slips.

The Selenites GASP and CHIRP among themselves excitedly, as though they had just witnessed a miracle. The group proceeds through the opening.

INT. A LARGE OPEN CAVERN — LATER

One by one the group members leave the tunnel and inch their way to a ledge overlooking a vast cavern. Below they see huge slug-like carcasses in various stages of dismemberment.

The SOUNDS are those created by the knives, saws, hooks and toggles used to butcher the animals and load the flesh upon transport devices.

CAVOR

Unbelievable! Look at the size
of those beasts! They must be
bred entirely in captivity for
slaughter in this hellish pit.

Kathryn gazes in disgust at the carnage below, but then catches a glimpse of Cavor's feet, which look as ghastly as the butchery on the cavern floor.

KATHRYN

Mr. Cavor, your feet! You must
be in the throes of agony.

CAVOR

I can't even feel my feet at
this point, Miss Bedford. You
shant concern yourself.

Kathryn looks at Cavor with great tenderness, and notices that his face has taken on a sudden expression of focused alarm.

KATHRYN

What's the matter?

CAVOR

The silence.

And it is true, the sounds that had been rising from the butchering floor have ceased.

Cavor barely gets the words out before the rescue party is set upon by five of the OTHERS who materialize out of the darkness. Like all Others, they are a pale, almost bluish, white. But they are of heavier build and a more brutish aspect. They attack!

The Priestess falls back to protect the earthlings, and the remaining Selenites square off man-to-man. But when one of the Selenites is slain, the Priestess leaves Cavor and Kathryn to join the fight.

When another Selenite is killed, one of the Others charges for Kathryn. But just as he reaches her, Cavor, kills him with a vicious punch that crushes his head as if it were an over-ripe tomato.

The battle rages on until the remaining brutes panic and scamper madly back down to the cavern floor. And Kathryn turns to Cavor, finding him ashen and trembling a bit.

KATHRYN

Mr. Cavor, are you alright?

CAVOR

I...I don't know.

He quickly scans himself for possible injury but, except for his bloody and swollen feet, he has emerged unscathed.

CAVOR

I've never been in a situation like that before. I wasn't sure I had it in me.

Kathryn looks at Cavor as if seeing the man for the very first time.

KATHRYN

But you did. You were absolutely heroic. I mean it.

The remaining Selenites tend to their fallen comrades with great solemnity. The Priestess removes small bracelets from each of the dead and covers their bodies with diaphanous cloths they'd been carrying with them.

Then they bow their heads and quietly CHIRP what seems to be a prayer. Kathryn and Cavor join them in a silence that is broken when, once again, the SIREN is sounded.

CAVOR

They've sounded the alarm again!
We must get out of this place!

The Priestess scans the slaughterhouse floor and the cavern beyond, then points excitedly to a wide tunnel above a steep and rugged wall, and just beyond the carcasses. Shafts of light stream at sharp angles, not the cold blue

artificial light of the Others, but pale yellow, as from the sun!

KATHRYN

Light!

CAVOR

I didn't think we had ascended quite so far but yes, that is sunlight! We must get to that tunnel, but it will mean crossing the cavern and climbing that ridge.

Hurry!

The Selenites redistribute the spears of the fallen and carefully but quickly descend to the cavern floor.

INT. THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE FLOOR — A BIT LATER

With the SIREN still WAILING the group makes its way between the huge carcasses slipping occasionally on the blood that has pooled on the cavern floor.

Then, suddenly, charging FOOTSTEPS of Other WARRIORS ECHO throughout the cavern. And then the SHOOTING begins. The carcasses serve as cover for a time, but soon Cavor, Kathryn and the Selenites decide to make a run for it.

The lead Selenite indicates that the rest of the party should continue up the ridge then sneaks off in another direction.

CAVOR

Come, we must keep going!

MOMENTS LATER

Just as TWO patrolling OTHERS come upon one of the carcasses the lead Selenite charges out from behind. He quickly gores them and gathers up their guns, but as he begins to run for cover, he is shot down from behind and the guns slide away from him on the cold floor of the cavern.

Seeing this, the Priestess breaks from the group, and as she picks up one of the guns and begins to return fire, the two remaining Selenites run to join her.

Although terribly outnumbered the Selenites fight valiantly. But it is not enough and soon only the Priestess remains to fight off the Others.

Suddenly a shaft of intense sunlight streams directly into the cavern causing the Other warriors to recoil and retreat in panic. Cavor turns to the source of the light.

CAVOR

Good God, that's the light of a sun that is about to set. We have very little time!

Suddenly a new ALARM is sounded to replace the wailing siren. It is louder and shriller, and the Others respond by double-timing it out of the slaughterhouse.

KATHRYN

What's happening?

CAVOR

I have no idea. Perhaps it's the sunlight or maybe the arrival of night. Whatever the reason, they are obviously terrified.

The Priestess begins the solemn rites for her fallen comrades as before, and Kathryn makes a move to join her.

CAVOR

Miss Bedford, we must not tarry.
Our time is extremely limited!

KATHRYN

(regretfully)

Of course, I understand.

They continue onward.

LATER

The climb up the rugged face of the cavern wall is grueling with Cavor seeming to fall back two steps for every one he takes upward. His feet are at last giving out on him. But at the top of the rise they come to the tunnel, which leads to the source of the sunlight. They begin to pick up the pace.

KATHRYN
We're almost there!

Then, behind them, the light sound of FOOTSTEPS. It is the Priestess. But just as she is about to join them another loud ZWOOSH rings out and she falls, dropping her weapon.

Behind her are THREE fanatically driven OTHERS advancing quickly. Kathryn and Cavor race to the Priestess' side. More SHOTS ECHO through the tunnel and Cavor is struck in the shoulder. But Kathryn manages to pick up the weapon and return fire, killing the rogue invaders.

Cavor tries to comfort the Priestess, who is gravely wounded. He gently lifts her head onto his lap but with his now injured shoulder he is unable to do much more.

CAVOR
I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry.

Kathryn kneels next to Cavor and begins to tenderly stroke the Priestess' purple head. The Priestess reaches up to touch Kathryn's face.

THE PRIESTESS
(weakly)
Tuk-oo. Tuk-oo.

KATHRYN
Tuck ooh? Tank...Thank...? Dear God! Did you say Thank you? No, thank you sweetheart! Thank you!

The Priestess smiles, nods weakly and drifts away.

CAVOR
(weeping)
We never even knew her name.

Kathryn wipes a tear from her cheek. And as she turns to the opening of the tunnel her face immediately takes on the golden glow of the setting sun.

KATHRYN
Come, Mr. Cavor. There is nothing more we can do here.

They rise and together exit the tunnel only seconds before a large metallic door slides to close it off.

EXT. THE FLOOR OF THE CRATER — CONTINUOUS

The sun is very low in a noticeably darker sky. The jungle remains, but the colors have faded and the plants have become dry and brittle. Cavor, wincing from the pain in his shoulder and feet, reaches for what looks a bit like an earthly apple only to have it crumble to dust in his hand.

CAVOR

The jungle has fallen into dormancy. It should no longer be a threat to us. But that means that the lunar night is close at hand. Very close indeed!

KATHRYN

Mr. Cavor, the sphere!

The sphere sits in the distance, looking none the worse for wear. But it is several hundred yards away.

KATHRYN

Hold on to me, Mr. Cavor. We can make it.

She braces Cavor upright and they continue onward, but their progress is slowing by the moment. And then Cavor lets out an agonized SCREAM and falls to the ground, a dried bayonet-like palm frond having been driven through one of his bloody feet. Kathryn kneels next to him.

CAVOR

Miss Bedford, it's no use. I've come as far as I can. Assisting me can only imperil you further. You must go on without me. You simply must!

Suddenly, shadows fall over them and they glance up to see a small reconnaissance group of SELENITES, wearing their protective headdresses and leather body armor.

KATHRYN

Thank God! They can help us!

The apparent leader of the group lowers herself to examine Cavor's pierced foot, then CHIRPS something to the others who immediately begin to fashion a stretcher of sorts.

KATHRYN

See? *They can carry you to the sphere. We're saved!*

The leader looks up at the sun and gestures with some urgency to her comrades.

CAVOR

No Miss Bedford. You see the Selenites are endangering themselves too. They brave the surface during the lunar day, which is perilous enough. The lunar *night* would be every bit as deadly to them as to us. I simply will not endanger any of you any more.

The head Selenite points to the mouth of another smaller tunnel then to herself, her comrades and Cavor.

CAVOR

They are asking me to stay! And I must decide quickly. Please Miss Bedford. This is the way it must be. The Selenites are my friends. Indeed, I have felt more welcomed among them than I ever did among my own kind. I should stay.

KATHRYN

Well then *I'm* staying as well.

CAVOR

You will do no such thing! You must return to Earth. You simply must!

KATHRYN

Not without you.

CAVOR

Miss Bedford, please! If left unattended through another day/night cycle the sphere itself could be in jeopardy. The Others would only be too happy to destroy it, and neither of us would be able to return!

Kathryn looks up at the Selenites who nod to her as if they understood the exchange.

CAVOR

Please forgive me, Miss Bedford. I never should have taken you with me. Any portion of this expedition might have killed you. And you're still not out of danger. I'm so sorry, dear. So very, very sorry.

The stretcher is now ready. Cavor looks up at the Selenites and nods. Kathryn accepts that they must part. But first she takes Cavor's face in her hands and looks deeply into his eyes.

KATHRYN

You have nothing for which to be sorry. I would not have missed this for the Crown Jewels or even the Crown itself! And I was wrong about beautiful men. They are not all vain and treacherous. And you, My dear Mr. Cavor...my dear *Jonathan*, are the most brilliant, courageous, and beautiful man I have ever known.

And she kisses him tenderly on the lips. Cavor blushes and tears well in his eyes.

CAVOR

Thank you, Miss Bedford... I mean...Kathryn. It has been an honor...no...a *miracle* having you for a friend. I shall never forget you.

He wipes his eyes.

CAVOR

Now, hurry. Get yourself to the sphere. You know how to work it. Godspeed, my dear.

Kathryn rises, embraces each of the Selenites, smiles lovingly at Cavor, then turns decisively in the direction of the sphere. The Selenites carry Cavor to the mouth of the tunnel.

MOMENTS LATER

Kathryn's labored breath rises in small clouds of vapor. She runs as fast as she can and occasionally even makes awkward low-gravity leaps forward.

The sphere is now only yards away. But the lunar atmosphere has begun to crystallize and fall like snow.

When Kathryn reaches the sphere and begins to climb up toward the hatch a large grayish vine wraps itself around her ankle. But she glances back at the thing with utter contempt, and with one determined jerk of her leg it crumbles pathetically. She then enters the sphere.

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

She closes and secures the hatch, opens the oxygen valve and activates the control panel. One by one, the blinds snap shut.

POV. GOD'S EYE VIEW OF THE LUNAR SURFACE — MOMENTS LATER

The terminator splits the moon into two distinct zones, a massive dark disk and a brilliant, though waning, crescent of light, across which spread dramatic shadows of the mountains, valleys and craters that define the lunar terrain.

The sphere rises like a shot from the twilight region below.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

Finding myself in the utter darkness of the sphere left me feeling as though I had suddenly passed from the passions and terrors
(more)

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
of life to the nothingness of death,
and I soon drifted into a weary
complacency.

INT. THE SPHERE — DAYS LATER

Half of the blinds are open illuminating the interior with the reflected light of Earth. Kathryn floats near the middle of the sphere. In the ethereal light her skin gleams like white marble, and her eyes are open. She appears to be in a state of almost mystical rapture.

KATHRYN (V.O.)
Perhaps it was the solitude this time, or the realization that I had left Jonathan back on the moon. But as I coasted back to Earth I began to dissociate from myself, and to see Kathryn Bedford as a trivial and incidental thing. It was as if I had lost my identity and merged with the Cosmos, as does a raindrop when it falls into the sea. It was only when I began to feel the pull of the earth upon my being that I remembered the reality of my existence.

INT. THE SPHERE — SEVERAL DAYS LATER — APPROACHING EARTH

Kathryn opens and closes the blinds as the sphere falls to Earth. Below her is a large body of water glistening in Golden Hour sunlight. A vessel sails nearby.

The descent is as hectic as when she and Cavor had descended to the moon, but Kathryn seems to be handling it. The sea draws nearer and the light is blinding.

EXT. THE DECK OF THE AL-QAMAR — CONTINUOUS

The AL-QAMAR, glides eastward bathed in golden sunlight. Deckhands stand at the bow. Suddenly a loud SONIC BOOM draws their attention skyward.

High above, the sphere — lit brilliantly by the sun and set vividly against the deep purple of the eastern sky — descends in an arc.

DECK HAND #1
What the 'ell?!?

The sphere hits the water with a large SPLASH.

EXT. UNDERWATER — CONTINUOUS

The sphere pierces the deep blue sea.

INT. THE SPHERE — CONTINUOUS

Kathryn tries to stand, but finds it difficult to regain her equilibrium as the sphere continues its plunge through the now churning water of the Mediterranean.

But although the sphere rapidly springs back to the surface, Kathryn still seems to panic. Then she spots the nearby steamer.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

I was fortunate to have landed safely, but the thought of having completed such a perilous journey only to drown at sea, propelled me to the brink of hysteria.

EXT. THE LIFE BOAT — MOMENTS LATER

As Kathryn thrashes wildly in the water, Crewmen of the Al-Qamar throw a line to her from a lifeboat.

KATHRYN
(choking and gasping)
Please! Please save it! Save the sphere!

She clings to the life preserver exhaustedly, until she is pulled to the lifeboat and hoisted aboard. There, a crewmember drapes a blanket over her shoulders. The remaining crewmembers try to save the rapidly flooding sphere.

CREWMEMBER
She's taken on too much, lads!
Can't let her take us down with her!
Cut the lines! Cut the lines!

The lines to the sphere are cut and, as the sphere sinks beneath the waves, Kathryn breaks into wrenching SOBS.

EXT. THE AL-QAMAR — THE NEXT AFTERNOON

Another beautiful day at sea, and the steamer glides onward.

Kathryn's narration from this point REVERBERATES a bit as if read in a large room with a high ceiling.

She is no longer relating the story to Captain Rawlings.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

Having saved me from a watery grave, the captain of the Al-Qamar felt he was entitled to some answers and I obliged with the full story of our journey to the moon. I'm fairly certain he didn't believe a word of it. But he was a gentleman.

EXT. THE PORT OF ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT — TWO DAYS LATER

As Egyptian DOCK WORKERS unload the Al-Qamar, Captain Rawlings escorts Kathryn from the steamer to a waiting carriage. There he helps her board and bids her farewell.

INT. BRITISH CONSULATE IN ALEXANDRIA — A BIT LATER

Kathryn sits in one of the consulate's suites talking to an OFFICIAL sitting behind a large desk.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

After we had disembarked at Alexandria in Egypt, Captain Rawlings had arranged for me to meet with the British Consul who mercifully asked very few questions but who graciously provided for my passage back to England.

EXT. PASSENGER STEAMER — SEVERAL DAYS LATER

Kathryn, now refreshed and wearing a long dress, stands at the railing of the ship gazing out over the water.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

I had come to Lympne, the previous
spring hoping to find quiet and
solitude, and to mend my broken
heart...

END FLASHBACK

INT: LONDON AUDITORIUM — EVENING 1901

Kathryn stands before a lectern on the auditorium's stage,
reading from a book. Her voice REVERBERATES a bit through the
hall.

KATHRYN (cont.)

...What I found instead was
nothing less than the Numinous
Moon. So utterly at variance is
destiny with all the little plans
of men.

(beat)

The End.

As Kathryn closes the book to warm applause another WOMAN joins her on stage. This is GWENDOLYN PRESCOTT (mid 40s), the hostess for the night's reading. She carries a large floral bouquet, and as she hands it to Kathryn the applause builds to an OVATION. Kathryn acknowledges this outpouring with a brief curtsy and a beautiful smile, and together with Mrs. Prescott, she exits stage right.

Waiting for them in the wings is a gregarious gentleman named WINSTON AINSLEY (mid 50s), Kathryn's book editor.

AINSLEY

Congratulations, my dear! That
went splendidly! A triumph by
any standard!

KATHRYN

Do you really think so?

AINSLEY

I should say so! A second printing
is almost a given at this point!

KATHRYN

Oh my! Wouldn't that be something?

AINSLEY

(to Mrs. Prescott)

Have you a way to get to the
reception, Gwen?

GWENDOLYN

I thought I'd just walk over
it's so close.

AINSLEY

Nonsense, last I looked it was
dreadful out there. I've arranged
for a carriage and I must insist
that you join us.

GWENDOLYN

Why thank you, that is so very
gallant of you.

AINSLEY

(grandly)

Well then, ladies, your carriage
awaits!

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE THE AUDITORIUM — MOMENTS LATER

Kathryn, Gwendolyn and Ainsley depart the auditorium into the foggy, gas-lit night. On the way out they pass a poster on the side of the building reading: TONIGHT! KATHRYN BEDFORD READS FROM HER NEW NOVEL, "*INTO THE NUMINOUS MOON.*"

Ainsley glances up at a fog-shrouded gas lamp.

AINSLEY

Blast it all!

GWENDOLYN

(playfully)

Oh, Winnie, what is it now?

AINSLEY

This accursed fog! After hearing
Katie's rousing story I was rather
hoping to catch a glimpse of the
moon tonight.

The two women CHUCKLE a bit as they enter the carriage.

INT. POSH HOTEL SALON — LATER STILL

The elite of London society — in their formal best — have gathered for a gala reception in Kathryn's honor.

Stiff and proper WAITERS serve fluted glasses of Champaign, while prim WAITRESSES circulate with hors d'oeuvres. A STRING QUARTET plays discreetly in the background.

Kathryn sits on a divan in a separate room. STUDENTS and LITERARY PATRONS of various types — each hoping to hear more — surround her. A COUPLE approaches Kathryn from behind.

PARTY WOMAN

Oh Miss Bedford! We just wanted
to tell you how much we enjoyed
your story. It was simply
marvelous!

PARTY MAN

Indeed! Such imagination.
Brilliant.

Kathryn smiles and nods.

KATHRYN

Thank you. I'm delighted that you
enjoyed it so.

PARTY WOMAN

But wherever did you come up with
such an idea?

KATHRYN

Oh my. Where do any of our ideas
come from? One day it was simply
there, the whole story. From then
on it was as though I were merely
taking dictation. The creative
process is truly mysterious.

PARTY WOMAN

Well, once again dear, it was
grand!

The couple leaves the room and continues to mingle. And Kathryn resumes her conversation with the others.

YOUNG WOMAN

Miss Bedford, I noticed you
dedicated your book — with love
— to the memory of "J. S. C."

KATHRYN

That's correct.

YOUNG WOMAN

(timidly)
J. S....Cavor?

Kathryn smiles enigmatically. This was bound to come up sooner or later.

YOUNG WOMAN

Did you actually know a Jonathan
Cavor?

KATHRYN

(with some hesitation)
Yes, I knew a Jonathan Cavor. And
yes, my book is dedicated to his
memory.

Her answer sparks an animated response from those gathered around her.

YOUNG WOMAN

And was he really...

She leafs quickly through her copy of Kathryn's novel until she finds what she's looking for.

YOUNG WOMAN (cont.)

...“the most brilliant, courageous
and beautiful man” you ever knew?

KATHRYN

He was all that and then some.

YOUNG WOMAN

But you don't mean to say...?

YOUNG MAN
(interrupting breathlessly)
...that the story is true?

KATHRYN
Of course my story is true. But
then truth is a more flexible
thing than we usually assume it
to be.

YOUNG MAN
(excitedly)
So you *did* actually go to the moon?

KATHRYN
The moon is a quarter million
miles away, sir!

YOUNG MAN
But you haven't answered my
question.

KATHRYN
(slyly)
Haven't I?

YOUNG MAN
I'm afraid I don't understand.

Kathryn SIGHS slightly and peers intently at her questioners
for several long seconds.

KATHRYN
Jonathan and I lived across the
lane from one another in Lympne,
I in my humble cottage and he in
his estate. But I was so
heartbroken when I moved there,
and so focused on writing the
Great Romantic novel, that I had
become something of a recluse. So
I had been there for quite some
time before I even so much as laid
eyes on him.

FLASHBACK

INT. COTTAGE — LYMPNE, ENGLAND — LATE AFTERNOON — MAY 1899

Kathryn, in a pretty cotton blouse and tan jodhpurs, and with her hair gathered in a pale blue scarf, sits at a small desk overlooking her garden. She is writing.

She halts, as if searching for just the right word, when something outdoors captures her attention.

She glances out the window to see Cavor walking down the lane MUTTERING to himself and gesturing dramatically.

EXT. THE LANE — CONTINUOUS

Following Cavor at some distance is a small group of begrimed YOUNG BOYS. They are LAUGHING riotously and mocking Cavor's every move and gesture.

When Cavor turns to discover the boys and their mockery of him, he feigns a sudden move in their direction and they all scatter. But then he simply smiles and continues down the lane.

INT. KATHRYN'S COTTAGE — CONTINUOUS

Kathryn chuckles at what she had just seen and returns to her writing.

MONTAGE — A SERIES OF BRIEF FLASHBACK SCENES

EXT. IN FRONT OF KATHRYN'S COTTAGE — SEVERAL DAYS LATER

A mutual NEIGHBOR introduces Kathryn to Cavor. They shake hands politely.

KATHRYN (V.O.)
But when I met him, I instantly
took a liking to him.

INT. KATHRYN'S COTTAGE — ANOTHER DAY

Kathryn enters her cottage carrying the goldfish bowl. She is delighted (if somewhat bewildered) by this odd little housewarming gift.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
Oh he was eccentric, to be sure,
but I also found him to be rather
sweet.

INT. CAVOR'S LAB — ANOTHER DAY

Cavor entertains Kathryn with simple but dazzling scientific experiments in his lab.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
He actually *did* dabble a bit in
the sciences and spent a good
deal of time playing in his
little laboratory...

EXT. THE LYMPNE COUNTRYSIDE — ANOTHER DAY

Kathryn and Cavor feed the swans at the edge of a small millpond.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
...but he was always happiest
when communing with nature.

EXT. MEADOW — ANOTHER DAY

Kathryn and Cavor watch with joy and wonder as a large flock of butterflies flit and dance above a colorful meadow.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
He told me that all living things
were interconnected...

INT. CAVOR'S DINING ROOM — ANOTHER EVENING

Cavor sadly shows Kathryn an engraved illustration of the Second Boer War from the Illustrated London News.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
...but that humanity had become
too tribal and mechanized to
appreciate it.

EXT. NEAR CAVOR'S GARDEN — NIGHT

Cavor invites Kathryn to view the moon through his telescope.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
And he shared his dreams with me,
his strange and wonderful dreams.

This first close-up view of the lunar surface affects Kathryn deeply.

END MONTAGE

PAUSE FLASHBACK

INT. KATHRYN'S RECEPTION — CONTINUOUS

YOUNG MAN
Dreams about going to the moon?

KATHRYN
Well, when he talked about going to the moon — and he *did*, often — I was always under the impression that for him it was more of a philosophical or even spiritual exercise.

Kathryn continues.

RESUME FLASHBACK

EXT. OVERLOOKING THE ENGLISH CHANNEL — EARLY EVENING

Cavor and Kathryn take another evening walk together, this one bringing them to the very edge of the shire. The English Channel sparkles in the early evening sunlight. BIRDSONG twitters gently. Kathryn stoops to pick a wildflower and examines it halfheartedly.

KATHRYN
I imagine someday mankind will find its way to the moon, although I *can't* imagine what they could possibly expect to find there. It's a dead world isn't it?

CAVOR
Perhaps. But there would be other reasons for making the trip. For me, it would be the feeling of pure awe. of...of the *Numinous*, if you will.

KATHRYN

The Numinous? I'm not sure I understand.

CAVOR

That thing that arouses the soul to ecstasy, to wonder, to the presence of the Divine. May I?

He points at Kathryn's wild flower. She hands it to him.

CAVOR

"To see the world in a grain of sand. And heaven in a wild flower, Hold infinity in the palm of your hand. And eternity in an hour." That sort of thing.

KATHRYN

Blake, right?

CAVOR

Yes, William Blake. He understood things, you see? Had Blake ever thought about it he would have realized how spiritually beneficial such a voyage could be. To view the earth as it is, without artificial markings of any kind. To view our world from the surface of another.

They turn to head for home and OVER this...

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O.)

He sounds lovely.

PAUSE FLASHBACK

INT. KATHRYN'S RECEPTION — CONTINUOUS

KATHRYN

Well he was lovely, although not in the way our culture usually measures such things. He was a bit pudgy, and was losing his hair. And he dressed himself in the oddest manner, as if he simply didn't care what others thought of him.

Kathryn smiles wistfully at the memory.

KATHRYN (cont.)

But he *was* a wonderful man. And in retrospect I can see that he was rather infatuated with me from the very beginning.

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh really?

KATHRYN

Yes, but, by that time I had essentially given up on men so, although we spent a good deal of time together, I'm afraid I was missing most of his signals. And I didn't really see him in quite that way in any case.

RESUME FLASHBACK

EXT. CAVOR'S GARDEN — AFTERNOON

Cavor and Kathryn are enjoying afternoon tea in the shade of an old oak tree in Cavor's garden. His two assistants — Gibbs and Spargus — stand next to the table holding a length of metal railing. Cavor briefly discusses something with the first of them, Spargus.

SPARGUS

...this 'ere is the last of 'em.

CAVOR

Very well, men. Now, of course, there is that furnace that needs looking after.

SPARGUS

Right! Get right on it, sir.

As the two men continue past the table Gibbs looks back at Kathryn and leers suggestively. She notices.

CAVOR

(to Kathryn)

Well then, your novel. You were saying?

KATHRYN

(glancing past Cavor at Gibbs)

Yes, my novel. It's about the treachery and vanity of beautiful men, and the preposterous fantasy of romantic love.

Cavor is stung by the remark. But the conversation proceeds.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

It was a terrible thing to say and I almost instantly realized I had hurt him. After all, who was I at that moment to be weighing in on beauty, male or otherwise?

PAUSE FLASHBACK

INT. KATHRYN'S RECEPTION — CONTINUOUS

YOUNG WOMAN

(speculating)

So, because he believed that you found him unattractive, he recklessly went ahead with his experiment and died as a result. And *that's* why you dedicated the book to him.

KATHRYN

No dear. It wasn't like that at all.

Kathryn continues.

RESUME FLASHBACK

INT. KATHRYN'S COTTAGE — NIGHT

Kathryn in her nightshirt and cap, sits on her bed reading a letter, when a loud sharp KNOCK at the door startles her. She goes to the door and opens it to find a very inebriated Mr. Gibbs and his equally sodden friend Spargus.

KATHRYN

Yes? Is there something I can do for you?

The two drunkards push their way into the cottage.

GIBBS

As a matter of fact there is,
luv. You can allow me to grant
you a proper Lympne welcome.

Spargus starts SNICKERING until Gibbs throws him a harsh look.

KATHRYN

Mr. Gibbs, is it? As you can see,
I am about to retire for the night.
And you are in no condition to be
welcoming anyone anywhere.

GIBBS

Well now, aren't we "Little Miss
High and Mighty" tonight!

Spargus bursts into laughter.

GIBBS

(to Spargus)

Shut up, you snozzled ape!
(then to Kathryn)
And I expected more of you,
Bedford! I saw the way you looked
at me t'day in Cavor's garden.

KATHRYN

I have no idea what you are
talking about. And I must again
ask that you take your leave.

GIBBS

I'm not goin' anywhere 'till I
get a little kiss. Spargus, watch
the door.

Gibbs staggers toward Kathryn but loses his balance and stumbles.

KATHRYN

No! You must go! Now!

GIBBS

Not until I've 'ad my kiss.

And he lunges for her, holds her close, and yanks violently on her hair. As he tries to kiss her she slaps his face.

KATHRYN

I said NO!

Enraged, Gibbs strikes Kathryn hard with the back of his hand and she falls back on the bed.

He sprawls atop her, places his hand over her mouth, and starts trying to raise her nightshirt. She continues to struggle, and is finally able to SCREAM.

Spargus still stands at the door, glassy eyed and drooling, when suddenly the door opens slightly behind him and the twin barrels of a shotgun are pressed against the back of his head. Then the door opens completely to reveal that it is Cavor.

CAVOR

(loudly)

That's enough Gibbs! Unhand her!

Gibbs looks back, sees the gun and grins.

GIBBS

Well, look what we have here.
If it isn't the village lunatic.
Now get the hell out of here,
before you hurt someone with
that thing!

CAVOR

I said: That. Is. Enough! Now
this 'thing' I'm holding has
two barrels. They're both
loaded and I'm prepared to use
them!

SPARGUS

(to Gibbs)

Jigg's up, mate! Cavor means
business!

Cavor backs himself toward the open door, the gun now trained on Gibbs, who slowly rises from the bed.

CAVOR

Alright then, *both* of you, out of here at once! And don't even think of returning to collect your pay. You're both fired!

The two sots walk slowly to the door.

CAVOR

Put your hands above your heads!

They comply.

CAVOR

Now, march!

And they do: out the door and slowly down the lane until Cavor fires a deafening shotgun BLAST into the air, and they break into a sprint.

Cavor reenters the cottage ashen and trembling a bit, and finds Kathryn sitting at the edge of her bed, dazed and speechless.

CAVOR

Miss Bedford! Are you...did he hurt you?

KATHRYN

Huh? Oh...no....I don't think so.
Just startled me.

She looks up at her relieved yet distressed neighbor.

KATHRYN

Mr. Cavor, are you alright?

CAVOR

I...I don't know. I've never been in a situation like that before.
I wasn't sure I had it in me.

KATHRYN

(quietly traumatized)
I don't know what I would've done...

As Kathryn loses her train of thought, Cavor gives her a sad and fragile smile, nods, and slowly shuffles from the cottage closing the door behind him. Kathryn remains on the bed, stunned.

KATHRYN (V.O.)

Maybe he saw them at my door. Or perhaps he heard the struggle. In any case he was *there*. And at that moment I felt more respected, appreciated, and even loved than I ever had before by any man. But I was too shaken to tell him. In fact, I barely recall saying anything to him that night.

PAUSE FLASHBACK

INT. KATHRYN'S RECEPTION — CONTINUOUS

YOUNG MAN

So he did, didn't he? Go to the moon, I mean. And you never saw him again.

KATHRYN

Actually I *did* see him again.
One last time.

RESUME FLASHBACK

INT. KATHRYN'S COTTAGE — THE NEXT MORNING

Kathryn lies asleep in her bed. At her bedroom window, lacey white curtains billow gently in the morning breeze and sunlight streams through in oblique shafts. Except for the slight TWITTERING of birds, Lympne is utterly quiet.

And then...

A nearby thunderous EXPLOSION, followed by the sound of SHATTERING GLASS, and a low ominous RUMBLE. Kathryn reacts immediately with wide-eyed horror. She leaps from her bed, gathers a robe about herself, and races to her door.

EXT. CAVOR'S ESTATE — CONTINUOUS

It is utterly demolished, with portions of it in flames.

Kathryn joins villagers who swarm through the billowing smoke looking for survivors. Sunlight streams through the smoke in eerily beautiful shafts.

A fire brigade soon arrives to begin battling the blaze. It is a scene of utter chaos. And OVER it...

KATHRYN (V.O.)

Gibbs and Spargus continued their drinking that night, and got it Into their vile and simple heads that Cavor should be taught a lesson. So they broke into a mining and excavation company and stole some explosives in order to destroy the laboratory that Jonathan loved so much. As it turned out, they stole a good deal more than they needed.

Kathryn, verging on panic, suddenly sees something begin to stir amid a heap of branches and fencing that had been blasted up against the garden wall; and there she finds Cavor. He is partially covered in dust and rubble, but while there is no blood, it is clear that he has been gravely wounded.

She takes him in her arms and begins to tenderly brush the dust from his head.

KATHRYN

Oh, Mr. Cavor, you poor dear. I'm so sorry. I'm so very sorry.

Using what's left of his rapidly fading strength he reaches up to touch Kathryn's face.

CAVOR

(almost inaudible)

Thank you. Thank you.

KATHRYN

Thank you? Did you say Thank you?
No, it is I who should be thanking
You, Mr. Cavor!

Cavor smiles, nods weakly and drifts away.

Kathryn gently lays Cavor's body back down. But although she reacts to his passing with horror and grief, she cannot stop looking at him. His eyes are open, and there is even the hint of a smile. He is — in a word — *beautiful*. So she bends down and takes his face into her hands.

KATHRYN
My dear Mr. Cavor...my dear
Jonathan.

Kathryn continues to study Jonathan's face.

KATHRYN (V.O.)
That was the moment I saw Jonathan
...really saw him...for the very
first time, and realized how
brilliant, courageous and
beautiful he truly was.

EXT. CHURCHYARD CEMETERY — A FEW DAYS LATER

It is dismal and foggy as Jonathan Cavor is laid to rest. Kathryn — weeping softly — joins the other black-clad MOURNERS around the grave. The local VICAR presides.

VICAR
Then shall the dust return to the
earth as it was; and the spirit
shall return unto God who gave it.

EXT. KATHRYN'S COTTAGE — THE NIGHT OF THE BURIAL

Flickering light dances in the cottage's windows as if from a live fire.

KATHRYN (V.O.)
It was shortly afterward that I
realized I owed him something.

INT. THE COTTAGE — CONTINUOUS

Kathryn stands before her lit fireplace leafing through the pages of her unfinished romance novel.

KATHRYN (V.O. cont.)
It wouldn't be enough and it would
be far too late, but I knew I *had*
to do something.

With a plaintive chuckle she begins feeding the pages into the fire, one by one at first then the rest all at once.

Finally she walks to her writing desk, sits, withdraws another sheet of paper from her stationery drawer, and begins to write: *IN LOVING MEMORY OF J.S.C.*

END FLASHBACK

INT. KATHRYN'S RECEPTION — CONTINUOUS

KATHRYN

So, of course, Jonathan never went to the moon at all...with me or anyone else. But he had defended my honor, and probably saved my life. And even more than that, he gave me a new way of looking at life, a new way of thinking about life...a new way of thinking about myself. He gave me the *Numinous*...

The people surrounding Kathryn gaze at her with almost trance-like attentiveness. Some are in tears.

KATHRYN (cont.)

...so I gave him the moon.

EXT. NIGHT SKY OVER LONDON — LATER THAT NIGHT

The fog has lifted and the clouds part to reveal a luminous full moon.

INT. KATHRYN'S HOTEL ROOM — CONTINUOUS

Kathryn lies sleeping soundly in her hotel bed in the bluish ambient light from her window. Beside her on the nightstand lie one of her books, a photograph of Jonathan Cavor set in an elegant black frame with golden accents, and a small goldfish bowl with it's little occupant swimming lazily in the beautiful light of the moon.

FADE OUT:

THE END