

MARS GENERAL

By

William Gunn

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

TECHNICAL ADVISOR - ROBERT ZUBRIN - Founder and President of the MARS SOCIETY. A Portion of the Profits from the Production of MARS GENERAL will be Donated to the MARS SOCIETY.

wgunn1953@hotmail.com

1 FADE IN:

2 EXT. MARS - DAY - 2185

Two DUNE BUGGIES race across the surface of the RED PLANET, dodging rocks and boulders that litter the bleak landscape. One Buggy is slightly ahead of the other. The distant sun hangs low in the sky as evening approaches.

The Rear Buggy closes in on its prey. Each vehicle carries ONE MAN. The driver of the first Buggy wears a Bright Yellow ENVIROSUIT with an attached transparent fishbowl-style helmet. A meter-long radio antenna protrudes from the back of his E-Suit.

The man in the rear Buggy wears a similar suit that's Sky Blue in color with a fishbowl-style helmet that's tinted gold. He holds a long object that could be a weapon. Possibly a RIFLE.

The forward Buggy makes a sharp evasive turn to the right, enters a small Box Canyon and comes to a stop. The driver, dismounts his vehicle. He trudges in the direction of the other Buggy, which has also stopped. The second driver gets out of his Buggy. They stand a few meters apart. Their conversation takes place via HELMET RADIO.

YELLOW SUIT
Traske, is that you?

BLUE SUIT
You might as well give up. There's
nowhere left to go. You're screwed!

YELLOW SUIT
Like Hell!

BLUE SUIT
You think the Cavalry's comin' over
the hill?

Blue Suit slowly shakes his helmeted head.

BLUE SUIT (cont'd)
'Cause they're not.

Blue Suit moves closer. He's definitely carrying a rifle. His E-Suit is older than the other man's. It's seen better days.

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

YELLOW SUIT

I don't believe you.

BLUE SUIT

You're a fool. You've been one since you first got to Mars.

YELLOW SUIT

What are you saying? That I should have looked the other way. Taken the money?

BLUE SUIT

Maybe, for starters.

YELLOW SUIT

I don't put up with criminality...not from anybody.

Yellow Suit looks around for a way out. There isn't one.

Blue Suit points his rifle at Yellow Suit.

BLUE SUIT

Big Friggin' Deal...Doc! Big Friggin' Deal!

YELLOW SUIT

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

YELLOW SUIT (cont'd)

(he studies the other man)

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

BLUE SUIT

A man's gotta make a livin'.

YELLOW SUIT

I'll see to it that you still get your money. I give you my word.

BLUE SUIT

That ain't worth two farts in a sandstorm.

YELLOW SUIT

What are you saying?

BLUE SUIT
I think you know.

YELLOW SUIT
You're insane. You really believe you
can kill me and get away with it?

BLUE SUIT
Why not...I have before.

YELLOW SUIT
Your partner, Butch. Right?

Blue Suit laughs over the radio, an irritating sound.

BLUE SUIT
Him, and a few more.

YELLOW SUIT
Why, dammit?

BLUE SUIT
I got mouths t' feed...plus I like
breathin' too.

YELLOW SUIT
Now what?

BLUE SUIT
In three hours they're broadcastin'
the heavyweight fight between
Kowalski and Morgan from Singapore...

Blue Suit moves closer, the rifle still pointed at Yellow
Suit.

BLUE SUIT (cont'd)
...I gotta thousand solars ridin' on
Kowalski...

He moves even closer still, less than two meters away while
aiming for Yellow Suit's Midsection.

BLUE SUIT (cont'd)
...I ain't missing it for nobody.

BANG!!

4 EXT. MARS ORBITAL STATION - NIGHT - 2187

MARS ORBITAL STATION is a two-hundred meter diameter rotating Wheel-like Structure orbiting five hundred kilometers above the surface of the RED PLANET. It looks like a ginormous metallic tire with four spokes radiating outward from a slightly smaller Central Hub.

5 FADE TO:

6 INT. MARS ORBITAL STATION - CONTINUOUS

Two Dozen PASSENGERS are lined up to pass through the CUSTOMS BOOTH. One of the PASSENGERS is called by the next INSPECTOR who's a slender young woman - Early 20's - who wears a white uniform with a lot of pockets. A Customs Badge is pinned to her left shoulder. She uses a MEDSCANNER (Handheld Diagnostic Device) to begin her preliminary assessment. All the while she's making notations in an electronic notepad.

INSPECTOR
You seem to be in perfect health.

The PASSENGER is JOHN WESLEY (JACK) GREYSON MD - Early 40's - NEUROSURGEON - Tall and fairly thin.

JACK
(grimacing)
Tell that to my aching head.

She looks very cheerful. She flashes a lot of pearly-white teeth.

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

JACK
I'll do that.

INSPECTOR
That's what I'm here for.

JACK
That's it?

A small light on her Medscanner flashes Yellow.

INSPECTOR

(with a frown)

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

JACK

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

INSPECTOR

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

Jack hands her a small plastic business card. It looks like a printed circuit board.

JACK

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

She stares at the card for a moment.

INSPECTOR

(with a slight smile)

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

JACK

You don't sound too certain about that.

INSPECTOR

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

JACK

(frowning)

You're joking...right?

INSPECTOR

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

JACK

Terrific...can I go now?

INSPECTOR
Of course...there's just one more
thing..."**Welcome to Mars!**"

JACK
Thanks...I guess.

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

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

The Inspector reaches into one of her numerous pockets. She takes out a packet of small blue-green capsules.

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

7

FADE TO:

8 INT. MARS ORBITAL STATION - TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

Jack takes an Elevator down one of the Spokes to the Wheel with a half-a-dozen or so of the other Passengers. There he finds a Tavern - **THE WET SPOT.**

The Wet Spot is a smallish place that seats about twenty people. Most of them are in four-person booths. In spite of the crowd it's fairly quiet. There's one Bartender behind a long shiny bar. The rest of the staff are four-armed Robots that trundle about on six wheels.

Jack notices SAM WINSLOW - Mid 40's - SALESMAN - Nondescript - Another Passenger in a dimly lit booth and heads in his direction. Winslow half-smiles as Jack slides into the booth.

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

Jack gets settled. Then he takes in a deep breath. His color is a little better. He no longer looks like he's so nauseous. *Or not as much.*

JACK
 (with a heavy scowl)
 Like a turd that's had the shize
 beaten out of it.

WINSLOW
 Most likely from the Cold-Sleep.

JACK
 (arching an eyebrow)
 Oh really...Y'think?

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

JACK
 God I hope so...otherwise I want to
 crawl back inside that friggin'
 icebox for another three months.

WINSLOW
 (half grinning)
 Give it time...Cold-Sleep's a Bitch!

JACK
 (frowning)
 They should warn people.

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

JACK
 (with a heavy scowl)
 I know...But I didn't know it'd be
 this bad.

Jack waives over a Robowaiter. He orders a shot of Bourbon.
 Then he drinks it down in one gulp. *He orders a second...
 Then a third.*

JACK (cont'd)
 Any last-minute nuggets of advice?

WINSLOW
 Don't eat the Red Snow...Don't go
 outside during a Class 3 Sandstorm...
 And stay the hell away from *We Are
 Mars!*

JACK
I've heard about *We Are Mars!*
I thought it was an urban legend.

WINSLOW
It's real enough. Trust me, Doc.

JACK
You seem to know a lot about them.

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

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

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

He moves a bit closer to Jack.

WINSLOW (cont'd)
One more thing...

JACK
What?

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

JACK
Homer???

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

JACK
Right...

An announcement comes over the PA system.

V.O.

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

9

FADE TO:

10 INT. MARSPOORT BOUND SHUTTLE - NIGHT

Jack Greyson is shown to his seat by a Flight Attendant. He notices there are over a dozen other people aboard the shuttle. He waves to Winslow. He waves back. Then Winslow smiles and gives Jack a 'Thumbs-up!'

Once Jack's securely strapped-in, He reads the following from a HoloSCREEN attached to the the seat in front of him.

MARSPOORT is located in Mare' Ionium on the northwest corner of the Hellas Basin.

The HELLAS BASIN is equal in size to the Caribbean Sea.

The HELLAS BASIN lies 33 Kilometers (20 miles) lower than the summit of OLYMPUS MONS, the tallest mountain in the Solar System

MARSPOORT has a population of 125,000 according to the last census.

MARSPOORT Consists of over two dozen increasingly larger Geodesic Domes.

They range from a couple hundred meters to several kilometers across. The largest is seven kilometers in diameter.

All of the Domes are covered by ten meters of Martian soil for Radiation Protection.

Each Dome has a series of interconnecting Airlocks.

MARS GENERAL HOSPITAL is located inside the largest Dome.

The rocket engines fire shortly thereafter. Jack passes out from the acceleration and the Bourbon. Mainly from the Bourbon.

11

CUT TO:

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

Two men sit in an office across a large desk. They are Jack Greyson and an older man - CARLOS CHIANG - Mid 70's - OPERATIONS MANAGER - Short and paunchy. He has Mutton-chop sideburns and thinning hair.

There isn't an obvious computer work station on the ornate desk. There is a large Holographic Communications Console, or HOLOCOM there however. It makes an annoying humming noise the whole time Jack is there.

CHIANG

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

Chiang fixes a drink for Jack.

JACK

Thanks, Mr. Chiang.

CHIANG

Call me Carlos. Everybody does...We don't put up that official crap like they do on Earth.

Jack half-smiles when he first tastes the drink. Then he places the glass on the desk.

JACK

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

CHIANG

Which is one of the main reasons I wanted you here, especially...

JACK

...Especially???

CHIANG

Considering that you saved my life four years ago.

Jack leans a little forward. Then he rubs his nose.

JACK

In Lunagrad...right?

CHIANG

Right...I'd never have survived that massive stroke if it hadn't been for you.

JACK

I was doing my job, that's all.

CHIANG

That job kept me from dying. I knew right then if I ever had the chance of hiring you I would.

JACK

Well...

He leans in closer to Jack.

CHIANG

(with a slight smile)

...Well nothing. I'm grateful. My wife is grateful...And in the long run that's all that matters.

JACK

What happened to my predecessor?

CHIANG

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

JACK

(arching an eyebrow)

When was that?

CHIANG

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

JACK

Any ideas?

CHIANG

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

Jack moves a little bit closer to Chiang's desk.

JACK

But wouldn't there be any signs?

CHIANG

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

JACK

I always forget that.

CHIANG

(half-smiling)

A lot of off-worlders do...They tend to underestimate Mars.

JACK

I'll bet.

He scratches his nose.

JACK (cont'd)

Didn't you used to be the CFO of New Frontiers Development Corporation?

CHIANG

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

He looks around for a bit then changes the subject.

JACK

What was his name?

CHIANG

Ron Bradford...Why?

JACK

Curious. That's all.

CHIANG

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

JACK

I'm impressed...so far.

CHIANG

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

JACK

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

CHIANG

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

JACK

Most people make that mistake.

He stands slowly...then sits back down...*slowly*.

JACK (cont'd)

This gravity is over twice what I've been living in for the past seven years.

CHIANG

I'm sure you'll adjust soon enough.

JACK

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

CHIANG

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

JACK

Terrific...Good to know.

CHIANG

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

JACK

I'll definitely check it out. I'm sure I'll become a regular.

CHIANG

That's the spirit.

JACK

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

CHIANG

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

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

CHIANG
Give them time.

JACK
What's all this crap I've heard about
We Are Mars!?

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

He moves closer to Jack.

CHIANG (cont'd)
...They're just a few malcontents...
nothing more.

JACK
Good. I don't need any extra
headaches. Matter of fact I've never
given a damn about politics...too
boring.

JACK (cont'd)
(with a slight grin)
I haven't voted in twenty years, at
least.

CHIANG
(smiling)
Let wiser heads decide...Right?

JACK
Absolutely...It's above my pay-grade.

He stands up again. He changes the subject.

JACK (cont'd)
When do I get a look at my office,
meet the staff. Get the lay of the
land?

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

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

CHIANG

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

13

FADE TO:

14 INT. MARS GENERAL - CONFERENCE ROOM - 7:13 AM

A handful of people stand around the conference room. Most looks bored. There are one or two who appear to be over the age of fifty. The others look a lot younger.

Chiang hands Jack a small electronic notepad with the names and holographs of all of the attendees. Chiang stands at the head of the table. He waits until everyone in the room stops talking. He begins to speak.

CHIANG

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

He raises his voice. The crowd moves in a little closer, though not a lot.

CHIANG (cont'd)

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

JACK

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

One of the men speaks up - HIROSHI TANAKA MD - Mid-30's - CHIEF SURGEON - Average height and weight.

TANAKA

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

CHIANG

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

TANAKA

Bullshize!!

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

TANAKA
(really pissed)
Why don't you get on the next to ship
to Lunagrad...you're not wanted here.

Jack stands up very straight facing Tanaka.

JACK
For one thing...I didn't fly to Mars
in Cold-Sleep for three months to
turn tail and run.

Jack looks around the room. Only a few make eye-contact.

JACK (cont'd)
And second...Who would reimburse the
ten million solars it cost to bring
me out here?

Someone else speaks - MARLENA ANTONOVA - Late 20's - CHIEF
NURSE - Tall and skinny.

ANTONOVA
(with a friendly
smile)
I don't know about anyone else, but
I'm glad you're here.

JACK
Thanks.

ANTONOVA
Marlena.

JACK
Right.

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

She stands a bit taller in order to be seen better.

ANTONOVA (cont'd)
...the last three were so damned
incompetent.

JACK

(with a slight smile)

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

Another person chimes in - ALAIN' ROCHARD MD - Mid-30's - NANOSURGEON - Average Height and weight.

ROCHARD

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

JACK

Hopefully.

ROCHARD

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

JACK

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

ROCHARD

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

JACK

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

He stands a little closer to Jack.

ROCHARD

I'd love to hear more.

JACK

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

ROCHARD

Thanks.

JACK

In fact, I plan to have an '**Open Door**' policy...if anyone ever needs my help anytime.

CHIANG

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

Someone else speaks up - PEDRO MONTOYA MD - Early 30's - GENERAL SURGEON - short and a bit overweight.

He holds up his hand.

MONTOYA

(laughing)

Yes, I have a question for Jack.

JACK

(with a grin)

Shoot!

MONTOYA

Isn't true you're a Teever?

JACK

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

MONTOYA

You know what they say...once a Teever always a Teever.

CHIANG

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

He looks directly at Montoya.

CHIANG (cont'd)

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

JACK

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

CHIANG

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

JACK

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

CHIANG

I'm very sorry Jack...there's no excuse...both Hiroshi and Pedro will be severely reprimanded.

JACK

(smiling)

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

CHIANG

Are you sure?

JACK

(nodding)

Absolutely!

15 LUNAGRAD - FOURTEEN WEEKS AGO - (FLASHBACK)

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

Two people, a MAN and a WOMAN are talking on a voice-only telephone.

MAN

I got the job...I'm leaving in two weeks.

WOMAN

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

MAN

Maybe.

WOMAN

You don't sound too confident.

MAN

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

WOMAN

What are you saying?

MAN

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

WOMAN

Oh my God!

MAN

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

WOMAN

You promised...

MAN

Yes I did...and I'm gonna keep that promise...I swear...but...

WOMAN

...But?

MAN

It may take longer to get all the answers...assuming...

WOMAN

...Assuming???

MAN

He wasn't involved...somehow.

WOMAN

Now you just wait one Damn minute, Ja...

MAN

I am...but neither of us have seen him in over five years...anything could have happened.

WOMAN

I know...but I also know he'd never do anything wrong...it's not in his nature.

MAN

True...but people change...unfortunately.

WOMAN

Not him...Just find out...please.

MAN

I will...Whatever it takes.

END INTERCUT:

16 END FLASHBACK:

17

FADE TO:

18 INT. MARS GENERAL - DOCTOR'S LOUNGE - DAY

There is a large computerized schedule posted on the wall. Jack stands there a moment. He stares at it very intently. He has a slight frown on his face. Then he shakes his head.

Hiroshi Tanaka walks in alone. He looks at Jack with a slight smirk.

TANAKA
(with a faint nod)
Doctor...

He heads over to a row of coffee makers and pours himself a cup.

JACK
Why don't I have any surgeries this week?

TANAKA
No neuro cases.

JACK
Not a one?

TANAKA
That's what I said.

JACK
Any operations that I can assist?

TANAKA
No.

JACK
You sure?

TANAKA
Yep.

JACK
You are aware it's my job to assign surgeries?

TANAKA
I suppose.

JACK
 (arching an eyebrow)
 What does that mean, 'You suppose'?

TANAKA
 It means I've been doing it so long
 now that it's second nature...

He moves a bit closer.

TANAKA (cont'd)
 ...everybody likes the way I've been
 doing it...I've had no complaints...
 until today.

JACK
 That changes as of now. You got me,
 Hiroshi?

Tanaka is looking at something in the room. Not at Jack.

TANAKA
 Whatever...Doctor.

JACK
 (with a big smile)
 You seem awfully warm and friendly
 today.

TANAKA
 Screw you, Homer!

JACK
 (grinning like a
 JACKASS!)
 You wouldn't like it...I just lay
 there.

19

FADE TO:

20 INT. MARS GENERAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Jack runs into Marlena Antonova. The Corridor is empty except for a few maintenance Robots. They operate in near-silence. Except one. It has a loose bearing that causes it to make a slight squeak when it moves in a forward direction. A red light flashes on top.

ANTONOVA
 What're you up to?

JACK
(grinning)
Exploring.

ANTONOVA
Cool.

JACK
This place is bigger than I thought.

ANTONOVA
That it is.

JACK
By the way, I appreciated your
comments the other week. It meant
more than you know.

ANTONOVA
(with a slight smile)
Anytime.

JACK
I know, which reminds me. There's a
get-together at Yuri Malenkov's condo
Friday night...

He steps a bit closer.

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

ANTONOVA
Are you asking me to be your Plus-
One?

JACK
(with a slight grin)
That okay?

ANTONOVA
I'm flattered, I really am...

She begins to walk away from Jack...very slowly. Then she
turns around.

ANTONOVA (cont'd)
...But I don't think my wives would
like that idea too much.

JACK

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

ANTONOVA

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

JACK

Looks like it.

ANTONOVA

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

JACK

...ex-Teever?

ANTONOVA

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

JACK

Yah.

ANTONOVA

What'll you do then?

JACK

Be very damn careful.

21

CUT TO:

22 EXT. MARS - MINING HUT - DAY - 2185 (FLASHBACK)

A Solitary Dune Buggy travels slowly in the Martian midday. The distant sun is high in the sky. The Rider sees an enormous RADIO TELESCOPE ARRAY over the horizon lying several kilometers ahead near the center of the HELLAS BASIN.

The Rider looks at his watch. Then he spots a flashing beacon up ahead and aims his vehicle in that direction - RON BRADFORD MD - Early 40's - CARDIAC SURGEON - MEMBER of WE ARE MARS!

Once he arrives Bradford notices another similar vehicle parked outside of what appears to be the entrance of MARS-Soil covered Dome approximately ten meters in diameter. He walks around to the other side and sees the Airlock.

23

FADE TO:

24 INT. MARS - MINING HUT - CONTINUOUS

Once inside he sees a man wearing an Envirosuit similar to his own - VERNON TRASKE - Mid 50's - PROSPECTOR. His Helmet is on the floor. Traske himself is Nondescript.

Traske's Sky Blue colored E-Suit appears to be older and dirtier than the one Bradford wears. It's been repaired several times, not always in the most professional manner.

He leads Bradford to an old-model computer on a desk in a corner of the dusty office. They sit down in chairs in front of the desk. Traske flips a switch and the computer slowly comes to life. He starts typing.

BRADFORD

What did you want to show me that you couldn't show me back in MarsPort?

TRASKE

It's way too important to discuss back in town...The walls have ears, y'know.

BRADFORD

What is it?

TRASKE

It's more a matter o' what are they, not what is it.

BRADFORD

Alright, I give up. What are they?

TRASKE

Hold your horses. I'm gettin' t' that.

BRADFORD

Then get to it!

TRASKE

I am!

BRADFORD

Well?

TRASKE

You've heard 'bout th' strange operations...some old folks goin' in MarsGen and never comin' back out again...not to mention kids disappearin'?

BRADFORD

I've heard a few stories since I've been on Mars. Tall tales mostly.

TRASKE

What me and m' partner found ain't no Tall Tale. It's real.

BRADFORD

(frowning)

Then show me or shut up.

He points towards the computer. There are several charts, graphs and readouts.

TRASKE

Okay. Okay. Who pissed in your cornflakes...

The Traske points toward the computer.

TRASKE (cont'd)

Whadaya think?

BRADFORD

About???

He moves closer. Then taps the screen.

TRASKE

Oh yeah, sorry. It's pretty hard to see unless yer lookin' for it.

A moment passes. Bradford looks at the display in very great detail. He scrolls down the screen. Twice.

BRADFORD

You and your partner stumbled across this accidentally?

TRASKE

Sure thing.

BRADFORD

When?

TRASKE

'Bout six weeks ago or thereabouts.

BRADFORD

How?

TRASKE

Butch and me were in this hut lookin' fer some surplus tools we could salvage...He sorta turned on the system and there it was.

BRADFORD

Who figured out how to open these data files?

TRASKE

That was me Doc...I always was th' brains o' th' outfit.

The two men pour over screen after screen of raw data. It's a treasure-trove of information about special medical "procedures" that had taken place over the past several years. Very exotic procedures. Procedures sanctioned on the highest level.

BRADFORD

This is absolutely astounding. I'm shocked that nobody else has ever found this.

TRASKE

I s'pose Butch and me got lucky, that's all.

BRADFORD

If this is true there's gonna be all kinds of Hell to pay.

TRASKE

No shize, Doc. I believe you. And this is just the tiny tip of one Humongous Iceberg. There's even more. A lot more!

BRADFORD

More. What else is there?

TRASKE

Enough stuff to put some powerful men
away for the rest of their lives,
good enough?

BRADFORD

I believe you, but what solid
evidence do you have that'll convince
the Authorities?

TRASKE

Oh, I got proof.

He hands a small shiny circular object about the size of a
quarter to Bradford - A DATADISK.

TRASKE (cont'd)

How's that. Will that do?

BRADFORD

Police from here to Earth will want
to see this.

TRASKE

Butch said th' same thing.

BRADFORD

Smart man.

TRASKE

Was.

BRADFORD

Was?

TRASKE

He had a blow-out in his suit 'bout a
week ago...He's dead as two o'clock.

BRADFORD

(shaking his head)

I'm sorry.

TRASKE

Shize happens! He knew the risks.
Tell me, how much do y'think such a
discovery like this is worth?

BRADFORD

I have no idea. It could be in the
millions at least, maybe more.

TRASKE

Maybe as much as five million?

BRADFORD

I honestly don't know. But I might know some people who can give you a good estimate.

TRASKE

Who?

BRADFORD

They're back in MarsPort...In fact, I'm meeting with one of them later today.

TRASKE

Just tell em' they don't get to see anything else 'til I got those solars in my hands, right?

25 END FLASHBACK:

26

END ACT ONE:

27 INT. YURI MALENKOV'S CONDO - NIGHT

There are dozens of people in the large place. A man built like a Pro Tennis Player walks up to Jack - YURI MALENKOV - Early 70's - OPERATIONS MANAGER of NEW FRONTIERS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION - MARS DIVISION.

He holds out his right hand.

MALENKOV

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

JACK

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

MALENKOV

(with a broad smile)

Please, Call me Yuri.

JACK

Thanks...Yuri.

The two men walk towards the bar. The crowd parts for their Host.

MALENKOV
What can I get you to drink?

JACK
I'll have whatever you're drinking.

MALENKOV
Is a vodka martini alright?

JACK
Just make it a small one please...

He looks at his watch.

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

He stands back to take a better look at Jack.

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

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

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

JACK
'Fraid not.

MALENKOV
That's a real pity.

JACK
Damn right!

A slightly drunk CARLOS CHIANG walks up. He has a Martini in his hand.

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

MALENKOV
The Board made an excellent choice.

CHIANG
Thanks, that means a lot.

MALENKOV
(looking in another
direction)
Sure...whatever.

Chiang wanders off. He walks towards another group of Party-Goers.

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

MALENKOV
It's made right here in MarsPort.

JACK
Really?

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

JACK
Makes sense.

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

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

MALENKOV
(beginning to grin)
You've done your homework...I really
admire that.

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

MALENKOV
(smiling)
I can tell.

JACK

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

MALENKOV

A hundred or more I'd estimate.

JACK

All automated, right?

MALENKOV

(with a slight smile)

For the most part, though human
supervision is always needed...
There's nothing like having boots on
the ground though.

JACK

Seems practical.

MALENKOV

(with a bigger smile)

I'm certain the Board of Directors
will be happy to know that you agree
with their Management Style.

Jack takes another sip of his drink.

A Tall lovely woman approaches - MONIKA BEITERHOFF - Early
30's - SECURITY DIRECTOR of NEW FRONTIERS DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION - MARS DIVISION - Athletic build. Dark Red hair
and Blue-green eyes - Slight German Accent.

MONIKA

Aren't you going to introduce me?

MALENKOV

Of course. Monika Beiterhoff. This is
Dr. Jack Greyson, the new Chief of
Staff at Mars General.

JACK

It's a pleasure.

MONIKA

(with a slight smile)

You too, Doctor.

MALENKOV

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

He pats Jack on the back. He smiles as he walks away.

MALENKOV (cont'd)

She'll show you 'round to some of the other guests.

She reaches out to him and takes hold of his left hand.

MONIKA

(with a sly smile)

Of course. Shall we, Jack?

They move toward the larger, noisier, more crowded section of Malenkov's Condo.

JACK

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

MONIKA

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

JACK

I can't imagine why?

MONIKA

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

JACK

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

MONIKA

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

Jack shakes his head. Then he staggers a bit.

JACK

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

MONIKA

It's the same here on Mars, officially.

JACK

Now what in the hell does that mean?

MONIKA
You'll find out in due time.

JACK
(arching an eyebrow)
God I hope so.

Monika sees a man approaching.

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

HAROLD BARRINGTON-SMYTHE IV - Late 30's - PRESIDENT of
UNITED MARS WORKERS UNION - Also LEADER of OLYMPUS MONS
CRIME SYNDICATE - Nondescript.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
Who's your friend, Monika?

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

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

JACK
Nice to meet you, Harry.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
You too, Jack. I hope Monika's not
boring you.

JACK
(with a smile)
Not at all...what line of work are
you in, if I may ask?

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
You could say I'm an entrepreneur.

JACK
(somewhat puzzled)
That covers a lot of ground.

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

MONIKA

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

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

Actually there's that fellow over in Bradburyville who's wealthier...the former asteroid prospector.

MONIKA

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

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

He could buy and sell me. Three times over...easily.

JACK

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

MONIKA

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

He glances at his watch.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

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

Jack takes a sip of his drink.

JACK

Mausi??

MONIKA

It means little mouse, in German.

JACK

Interesting man, Mr. Barrington-Smythe.

MONIKA

He's also a very dangerous man.

He looks over his shoulder.

JACK

Him, he looks harmless enough.

MONIKA
Looks can be deceiving.

She looks back too.

MONIKA (cont'd)
In addition to being president of the
largest union on Mars, he's also a
very powerful Crime-Lord, allegedly.

He looks like he's just spotted a Rattlesnake.

JACK
What do you mean a Crime-Lord?

MONIKA
Have you ever heard of Olympus Mons?

JACK
The volcano?

MONIKA
No, the crime syndicate.

He's still shaken...quite a bit in fact.

JACK
A crime syndicate, here on Mars?

MONIKA
Yes...here on Mars.

She moves a bit closer.

MONIKA (cont'd)
They control almost anything illegal
from prostitution...gambling...
narcotics...loansharking...access to
pirated Teever Programs...even
murder-for-hire.

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

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

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

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

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

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

A look of relief comes across Jack's face.

JACK
 I'm glad somebody does.

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

JACK
 You seem to know a lot about a lot of
 things. Did you know Ron Bradford?

MONIKA
 Just barely. He mainly kept to
 himself. Why?

JACK
 Just wondering.

He changes the subject. Then he looks at his watch again.

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

She takes out her Visiphone. She hums a tune under her
 breath while she looks.

MONIKA

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

JACK

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

MONIKA

Took them long enough.

JACK

Ain't that the damn truth!

MONIKA

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

JACK

(with a big smile)
Absolutely.

28

CUT TO:

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

Jack is at his desk as he finishes up some paperwork when a
Tall man of African descent wearing a dark business suit
walks in - LIAM M'LENGA - Early 60's - CHIEF OF SECURITY FOR
MARSGEN.

He extends his left hand.

M'LENGA

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

JACK

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

M'Lenga takes a seat in front of Jack's desk. He adjusts his
jacket once he gets settled.

M'LENGA

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

JACK
I'm really sorry. Is everything
alright now?

M'LENGA
Yes, thanks for asking.

JACK
How can I help you out today?

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

Jack leans forward in his chair.

JACK
How'd you know that?

M'LENGA
It's a small town. News travels fast.

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

M'LENGA
It's not Lunagrad.

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

M'LENGA
Lunagrad has nearly four times the
population of MarsPort.

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

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

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

M'LENGA
Anyone I may know?

JACK
(with a slight frown)
I don't know, how about Carlos
Chiang? Do you know him?

M'LENGA
Anyone else?

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

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

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

M'LENGA
I've always noticed that she plays it
close to the vest. I suppose it's
because she's New Frontiers' Security
Director.

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

M'LENGA
Why so long?

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

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

M'Lenga moves a little closer to Jack.

M'LENGA (cont'd)
Is that something you could do?

JACK
No.

M'LENGA

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

JACK

(Pissed!)

Not a chance in Hell!

30

CUT TO:

31 INT. MARSPOINT - HOLOTHEATER - NIGHT

Jack Greyson and Monika Beiterhoff are among seventy or so couples in the large circular Showroom to watch the latest *STARQUEST* Episode. Three Service Robots are roving to and fro taking drink and food orders. One stops directly before Monika and Jack.

MONIKA

What would you like, Jack?

JACK

Any old Bourbon'll do.

MONIKA

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

JACK

(scowling)

Dammit...you're kidding.

MONIKA

I'm afraid not...how about a
Droobleberry Slush?

JACK

You really want to see me throw up?

MONIKA

(with a slight grin)

Of course not, Silly.

JACK

A large cola then...and popcorn.

MONIKA

Sounds good.

She presses a couple of buttons on the Robot and a moment later they both have a drink and popcorn. Jack begins wolfing his down. Then he begins gulping his soda.

Monika watches in bemused awe.

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

JACK
I guess I was hungrier than I thought.

MONIKA
Evidently.

The House Lights go down. The Musical Score begins. The Audience gets quieter.

Suddenly there is a Series of Bright Flashing Images coming from all directions of the large room. A few moments into the Presentation, Jack Greyson begins shaking a little.

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

JACK
Yah.

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

JACK
I'm fine.

Then Jack starts shaking a bit more. It's even more noticeable than before. Within moments he's nearly convulsing. Jack has a blank look on his face. Before Monika can react Jack stands straight up out of his seat. Popcorn flies out of Jack's bag like so much unwanted snow. The lid of his drink comes loose dousing Monika and a few other attendees with cold sticky fluid. A couple of them shout curses. Then he screams like he's been struck by lightning.

JACK (cont'd)
AAAAAAAAAYYYYYYYYYEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!!!

Jack then runs full-tilt toward the exit. He knocks over several patrons as he makes his getaway. Jack barrel-asses out the door waving his arms. Monika stands there with a look of confusion and worry.

32

FADE TO:

33 INT. MARSPOORT - PARK OUTSIDE HOLOTHEATER - CONTINUOUS

A few minutes later Monika catches up to Jack. He's on a BENCH with his head between his legs looking sick.

MONIKA

What happened back there?

JACK

(looking embarrassed)

At the theater?

MONIKA

Yes Jack...at the theater.

JACK

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

MONIKA

(concerned)

That's one way of putting it...you nearly scared the shize out of me.

JACK

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

MONIKA

Mein Gott!

JACK

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

MONIKA

How do you possibly prepare for that?

JACK

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

MONIKA

(with a slight grin)

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

JACK

Yah...mostly...now that we're in a quiet place.

MONIKA

Shall we continue on to the restaurant then?

JACK

Can we put that off 'til tomorrow night, please...right now I just wanna go home, have a drink, take a stress-pill and go to bed.

MONIKA

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

JACK

Thanks...I really appreciate it.

34

FADE TO:

35 INT. MARSPOUR - CAFE - NIGHT

As Jack Greyson and Monika Beiterhoff finish their meal a strolling Mariachi Band plays a soft and lovely tune. Jack lights Monika's cigarette. She smiles. They both look happy and satisfied. Jack is grinning.

A Waiter brings another bottle of wine to their table. He hands the bill to Jack who makes a terrible face. Monika laughs out loud. Tears begin to roll down her beautiful cheekbones.

JACK

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

MONIKA

What's wrong?

JACK

Oh nothing, how do you feel about washing dishes?

MONIKA

I can't be that bad.

JACK

I don't know, though I may have to promise free brain surgery to the owner and her whole family as well.

MONIKA

The food was good.

JACK

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

She tries to distract her date.

MONIKA

How was your steak?

JACK

(with a half-smile
and a half-grimace)

Terrific. I couldn't even tell it'd started out in a hydroponics tank.

MONIKA

(with a sudden
shudder)

Oh God Jack...remember reading how people used to kill animals for food?

JACK

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

MONIKA

For the eggs...right?

JACK

Mostly.

He changes the subject.

JACK (cont'd)

...I was wondering, since you know so much about what goes on in Marsport, what do you know about *We Are Mars*?

MONIKA

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

JACK
What kind of rumors?

MONIKA
Silly stuff really...rumors about
Independence from Earth.

JACK
(arching an eyebrow)
Really?

MONIKA
Yes...really...

She takes a sip of wine.

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

He lights a cigarette. He inhales three deep puffs.

JACK
If that's so I can't say that I blame
them...I've always sympathized with
the little guy.

MONIKA
Really? That's good to know, Jack.

JACK
I'd really like to know more.

MONIKA
Why?

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

MONIKA
(she arches an
eyebrow)
Alright...take the cost of medical
care here on Mars. As I pointed out
at Yuri's party it's a rigged system.

JACK
(with a slight grin)
For the upper class, right?.

She takes a bite of her salad.

MONIKA
Precisely.

JACK
(frowning)
That Sucks! I intend to make a lot of
changes in the way that's handled...
major changes.

MONIKA
That won't win you many popularity
contests.

JACK
Like I give a damn...

He takes another sip of wine. Then another.

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

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

She hesitates a moment.

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

JACK
What?

MONIKA
Over the past several years a
noticeable number of pre-teen
children have gone missing...only to
be returned safe and sound to their
families six weeks or so later.

JACK
Here in MarsPort...not the other
cities?

MONIKA
Apparently.

JACK
How long has this been going on?

MONIKA
Several years...as far as I can
determine.

JACK
(shaking his head
slowly)
I'm really having a hard time getting
a handle on this.

MONIKA
So did I until I really started to
investigate the situation.

JACK
That's really weird, Monika.

MONIKA
And there's more.

JACK
(arching an eyebrow)
Really?

MONIKA
You recall how I told you how the
kids were returned home after six
weeks safe and sound?

JACK
Yah.

MONIKA
All of their parents reported that
their children had undergone a major
personality change...almost to the
point of acting like a totally
different person.

JACK
(frowning)
Did they suspect drugs, hypnosis...or
something worse?

Jack takes another sip of wine.

JACK (cont'd)

Monika...as a neurosurgeon you can't just change someone's personality... it takes a major trauma... something...extreme.

MONIKA

That's what I thought...especially...

JACK

...Especially?

MONIKA

After I did a follow-up on a handful of the kids...seven of them in fact.

JACK

What'd you find out?

MONIKA

All seven of them...they're eighteen years old now...have been accepted as interns into some of the largest corporations in the Solar System.

JACK

That's amazing.

MONIKA

In fact one's on track to become the youngest CEO in the history of her company...another is being groomed to be the next Archbishop of Lunagrad.

JACK

Who else knows about this?

MONIKA

Officially.

JACK

Officially?

MONIKA

Nobody...Just me.

JACK

How's that possible?

MONIKA

It's part of my job as Chief of Security for New Frontiers.

JACK

Do you think *We Are Mars!* may be connected somehow?.

MONIKA

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

JACK

Could they have lied to you?

MONIKA

No...all of them are beyond reproach.

JACK

I'd really like to meet some of them just to talk, tell me how I can help...something.

She hesitates for a full two minutes. All the while Jack sits there as he finishes his wine.

MONIKA

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

JACK

Really, which one?

MONIKA

Can you keep a secret?

JACK

Of course.

MONIKA

(with a MONA LISA smile)

So can I.

36

CUT TO:

37 INT. MARSPOORT - DOME FOUR - DAY

DOME FOUR is a mixture of all sorts of Human activity. There are at least a hundred people wandering about its wide open-air lanes.

Dozens of Holographic Signs, both large and small point out the numerous Businesses in Dome Four.

Jack consults a free-standing Holographic Map to locate a specific business. Shortly thereafter

Jack arrives at his destination. He walks up to a large Holographic Sign that reads: ABNER'S MOTORSPORTS. He sees one man working there.

The man walks up to Jack. He has a friendly, but jaded look about him - ABNER STONEBENDER - Early 70's - USED CAR SALESMAN - Tall and lanky. He has thick dark red hair with matching bushy eyebrows. *He also has a large bulbous nose.*

STONEBENDER

Howdy stranger. What can I do you for?

JACK

Not much, just takin' a look.

STONEBENDER

Swell, a Homer lookie-loo.

JACK

I suppose.

STONEBENDER

You sure?

JACK

Pretty sure. Unless...

He begins to walk away.

STONEBENDER

...Unless what?

JACK

You do rentals as well as sales?

STONEBENDER

Son, I've got th' best rental prices on this whole damned planet!

JACK

You wouldn't be trying to con me, would you?

STONEBENDER

Sir, you wound me. By the way, whad'ya say your name is?

JACK

I didn't.

STONEBENDER
Well?

JACK
Jack.

STONEBENDER
(with a slight frown)
Jack what??

JACK
Jack Greyson.

STONEBENDER
A pleasure, I'm sure.

JACK
Yah, you too.

STONEBENDER
Now how can I help you today?

JACK
An old buddy of mine said he got one
helluva rate from one of you guys
here in Dome Four...

He looks at the merchandise a bit closer.

JACK (cont'd)
...I just can't remember the
dealership.

STONEBENDER
How long ago was your buddy in D4?

JACK
A year-and-a-half ago.

STONEBENDER
A year-and-a-half?

JACK
Yah.

STONEBENDER
How in th' hell am I supposed to
remember somebody I may have dealt
with that long ago?

JACK
Beats me, computer records maybe?

He taps the side of his head.

STONEBENDER
Mister, this is the only computer I
trust.

JACK
Okay...okay...if you can't remember
you can't remember...

He walks toward the exit.

JACK (cont'd)
...maybe I'll have better luck with
the Dutchman.

STONEBENDER
That swindler...

He spits on the ground.

STONEBENDER (cont'd)
...He can't even remember his own
mother's birthday.

JACK
Well?

STONEBENDER
Whad'ya say your friend's name is?

He shrugs his shoulders.

JACK
I didn't.

STONEBENDER
Well??

JACK
Ron Bradford.

STONEBENDER
Another Homer?

JACK
Yah.

He scratches his chin. Then he holds out his right hand...
palm up.

STONEBENDER

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

He reaches for his wallet. Then he pulls out a one-hundred
solar bill.

JACK

(frowning)

I thought it might...well?

The other man grabs the money...very fast.

STONEBENDER

(with a slight grin)

If I recall, it was the weekend of
the big heavyweight championship
broadcast from Singapore.

JACK

And?

STONEBENDER

Your friend came in the place in a
big damned hurry wanting to rent my
best Buggy and E-Suit...He was actin'
like the Devil himself was right
behind him.

JACK

Did you see anyone else?

STONEBENDER

Not a soul...anyway he took off
twenty minutes later headed for the
Main Airlock...that's the last time I
saw him.

JACK

(arching an eyebrow)

Interesting...damned interesting.

STONEBENDER

Yeah...so I waited two days, then I
called the Cops. They did a search
and didn't find a single clue...and
the Buggy had a Beacon Chip.

JACK

Beacon Chip?

STONEBENDER

You know...like an old-style GPS...it had a range of two-hundred klicks.

JACK

Still nothing?

STONEBENDER

Nada...zilch...I was gettin' ready to file with the insurance company a week later when that labor big-wig Smith and a couple of his flunkies came by and paid me "for my troubles."

JACK

Harold Barrington-Smythe?

STONEBENDER

That's th' one...he paid cash for the Buggy and E-Suit...full price like they were brand new.

JACK

(slowly shaking his head)

That's truly incredible...I don't know what to say...

STONEBENDER

(scowling then smiling)

Well I do...this brings back a lot of memories...I made a bet on that fight with old Hendrik Van Tassel...*the Dutchman*...five hundred solars...and that piece o' shize still owes me...with interest...and by God I'm gonna collect...or else!!!

38

CUT TO:

39 INT. MARSPOORT - JACK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack and Monika are woken up by the Holocom that sits next to his bed. He looks at his watch and sees that it's 12:30AM. When he answers the device, a three-dimensional one-tenth scale image of a woman appears on the screen - DR. KATHERINE (KATE) O'MALLEY MD - Late 50's - FREE CLINIC OPERATOR - Short and wiry. Fiery personality.

KATE
Is this Dr. Greyson?

JACK
(still half asleep)
Yah...whooziss?

MONIKA
Who's calling, Jack?

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

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

JACK
This couldn't wait 'til the
morning...during regular office
hours?

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

Jack sits up. He's fully awake now.

JACK
I suppose I can be there in an hour.

KATE
(irritated)
The sooner you can get here the
better.

JACK
How will I find your clinic?

KATE
(with a slight grin)
Just follow your nose to the
smelliest part of Dome One.

The call disconnects. Jack turns to Monika.

JACK
I've gotta go out for a while.

She's still not fully awake.

MONIKA

Why?

JACK

Medical emergency.

MONIKA

When will you be back?

He kisses her on the forehead.

JACK

I wish I knew. Go back to sleep.

She pulls the blanket over her head.

MONIKA

You don't have to worry about that.

40

CUT TO:

41 INT. MARSPOUR - O'MALLEY'S CLINIC - NIGHT

Jack arrives at the clinic forty minutes later. The clinic is clean but very disorganized. A few MEDTECS (Medical Technicians) are wandering around going from patient to patient. Every member of the staff looks tired. O'Malley walks towards Jack. She holds out her right hand and smiles.

KATE

Welcome to my humble place of business, Doctor.

He smiles as he takes her outstretched hand.

JACK

I'm glad I could make it.

KATE

Not half as glad as me.

JACK

Why aren't these people at MarsGen?

KATE

(sounding very tired)

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

He takes another slow look around the place.

JACK

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

KATE

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

JACK

That's incredible. How do you manage?

She quickly Crosses herself.

KATE

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

JACK

Where's my patient?

KATE

A bit over four hundred kilometers
from here.

JACK

You're joking?

With a pat on his back.

KATE

You wish.

42

CUT TO:

43 EXT. AIRSHIP *BARSOOM* - NIGHT

The *BARSOOM* is impressive. She's cylindrical in shape and nearly as long as a football field. She's painted Dayglo green. The *GONDOLA* hangs underneath the main body like an afterthought.

Standing outside the Airship is VIJAY RAMESH - Mid 30's - OWNER/OPERATOR - Tall and rangy. He has a West Texas drawl.

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

JACK
I can tell...

Jack cranes his neck to take in the view.

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

VIJAY
Right.

Jack follows Ramesh through a Man-Sized Hatch that leads to the interior of the large Airship.

44

FADE TO:

45 INT. AIRSHIP *BARSOOM* - CONTINUOUS

From the Main Hatch Jack climbs into the Passenger Cabin. There he buckles up into the traditional *Shotgun* seat. It's really cramped considering Jack's height. Jack notices most of the lighting aboard the Gondola comes from the Instruments.

He takes a look at his watch.

JACK
How long will it take to get there?

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

JACK
...Assuming what?

VIJAY
No Sandstorms.

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

VIJAY

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

JACK

Why do I find no comfort with that knowledge?

VIJAY

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

JACK

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

VIJAY

(with a grin)

Aboard my ship I'm both. It's a real money saver.

JACK

Is that safe?

VIJAY

Now don't blow a gasket in yer E-Suit. This ol' Lady's got th' best Autopilot on Mars.

JACK

That's good to know.

He changes the subject.

VIJAY

I'll bet she didn't tell you I'm part of her underground?

JACK

Underground?

VIJAY

It's nothin' sinister. We're just some average people who donate our time and services t' Kate's clinic...

He takes a reading from his Instruments. Then he turns toward Jack.

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

JACK
Sounds like a worthwhile cause.

VIJAY
We like t' think so.

JACK
Do you know the Muldoons?

VIJAY
Just barely.

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

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

JACK
Do they trust you?

He looks out the forward Viewscreen. The landscape is
changeless. All he sees are Rust-colored desert and low sand
dunes in the distance. He has a beatific smile on his long
face.

VIJAY
No, but they trust Kate!

JACK
She seems very trustworthy.

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

JACK
I can believe that.

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

JACK
Sure, why?

VIJAY
T' run Mars General.

JACK
Why isn't she working there now?

VIJAY
She couldn't take all th' bullshize.

JACK
I can understand that.

Jack yawns. Twice.

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

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

He hunkers deeper into his seat and closes his eyes.

JACK (cont'd)
Wake me when we get there.

VIJAY
(grinning)
Well duh!

46 INT. AIRSHIP *BARSOOM* - CONTINUOUS

47 BEGIN MARS SURFACE MONTAGE:

-- *BARSOOM* flies perpendicular in a northeasterly direction
across the Rim of the *HELLAS BASIN*.

-- She flies at an average altitude of five hundred meters
above the Surface.

-- Through the forward viewport the morning Sun can be seen
rising in the east bringing a new day.

-- Below *BARSOOM* the colors of the features of *MARS* begin to
change once sunlight begins to strike them. The tops of the
countless Dunes catch the First Light.

-- *BARSOOM* flies over half-a-dozen Mining Camps. A few Men
can be seen on the ground as they begin their shifts. They
look like so many ants.

-- BARSOOM also flies over two other Farms on her way to the MULDOON FARM. There's little activity going on at either place.

48 END MARS SURFACE MONTAGE:

49 INT. AIRSHIP - BARSOOM - DAY

A fairly loud Bell starts to ring. Ramesh shuts it off almost immediately. Then he turns to Jack. He shakes him a little bit. Jack rubs his eyes as he tries to become fully awake.

VIJAY

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

JACK

How long?

He checks the Chronometer. He nods to himself. He makes a few notes in his logbook.

VIJAY

Twenty minutes, give or take.

JACK

Cool. What can you tell me about the farm?

VIJAY

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

JACK

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

VIJAY

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

He looks out a Viewport. The landscape is unfamiliar to him. All he sees is unending desolation.

JACK

They've been out here since MarsPort was first settled back in 2053?

VIJAY

Yeah. They were members o' th' Pioneer Corp.

JACK

No wonder they don't like outsiders.

VIJAY

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

JACK

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

50

CUT TO:

51 INT. MARS - MULDOON FARM - DAY

The Farm consists of half-a-dozen transparent Domes nestled up tightly against the Rim-Wall of the HELLAS BASIN. The *BARSOOM* sits down on a paved Landing Pad.

One of the Locals is a tall, lanky Man - JED MULDOON - Mid 40's - FARMER - Dark Blond Hair and Blue Eyes.

MULDOON

Welcome Vijay, where's Kate?

VIJAY

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

JACK

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

MULDOON

You're the new doctor from Earth?

JACK

Yah, but I've been working for the past seven years in Lunagrad.

MULDOON

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

A Woman stands next to Muldoon - SAMAYA MULDOON - Late 30's - FARMER - Also tall and lanky - of Middle-Eastern Descent.

SAMAYA
Why didn't Kate come herself?

JACK
I'm a neurosurgeon, she's not.

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

MULDOON
I guess you'll do, Doctor.

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

She starts to walk away from the Airlock. She heads towards a well-lit corridor. Quite a few of the other kids try to tag along but Samaya shoos them away. Not so gently in some cases.

SAMAYA
Of course, Doctor. Come with me.

52

FADE TO:

53 INT. MULDOON FARM - SICKBAY - CONTINUOUS

Jack sees a boy lying on a white sheet on a low-slung bed. There are a few wires and tubes attached to him. He's unconscious. His breathing is shallow.

JACK
What happened?

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

JACK
How tall a ladder?

MULDOON
Ten meters.

Jack uses a Penlight to look into the boy's eyes. He nods his head a few times.

JACK
And how old is Hiram?

MULDOON
Eleven his next birthday.

He checks the boy's Pulse. He makes a few entries in his electronic notepad. Then he rubs his chin.

JACK
Was he being supervised?

MULDOON
No. Of course not.

JACK
Then please tell me...what in the hell was an eleven year old child doing climbing a ten-meter ladder?

MULDOON
Like Samaya said, his chores.

JACK
At eleven?

MULDOON
Doctor, don't judge us by your Homer standards. We're a working farm. We have kids as young as three doing chores.

JACK
Oh my God!

MULDOON
In a farm like ours, Doctor it's all-hands-on-deck all the time or we all starve together.

SAMAYA
That's very true, Doctor...

SAMAYA (cont'd)
(nodding)
...In a good year we have enough produce to sell to MarsPort and the other cities. In a bad year it can be pretty rough.

He scratches his head. He looks off into the distance. He hums a quiet tune under his breath.

JACK

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

MULDOON

(smiling)

Here on Mars?

JACK

Back on Earth.

MULDOON

Maybe you're not such a bad fellow, after all...for a Homer.

JACK

I hope not, now let me take a closer look.

Jack takes out a Medscanner from a jumpsuit pocket.

MULDOON

What the devil is that device?

JACK

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

SAMAYA

I've heard of such things. I never thought I'd see one though.

JACK

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

SAMAYA

I really shouldn't.

JACK

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

SAMAYA

Thank you.

MULDOON

Any word on Hiram yet?

He looks at the Medscanner. It beeps somewhat louder than before.

JACK

Any moment now...Yah. As I suspected he has a Subdural Hematoma. A bad one.

MULDOON

Can you fix it here?

JACK

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

SAMAYA

How soon?

JACK

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

SAMAYA

What?

JACK

Narcosamine. Twenty cc's.

MULDOON

Is that safe, Samaya?

She holds up her left hand in an unfamiliar gesture.

SAMAYA

(frowning)

As safe as any drug,
I suppose.

MULDOON

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

JACK

Of course.

MULDOON

Samaya...

SAMAYA

...I've already packed my bags.

54

CUT TO:

55 INT. MARS GENERAL - RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

Many long hours later several members of the extended MULDOON Family arrive at MARS GENERAL.

JACK

Hiram's gonna be totally fine. Once we got him here it took less than half-an-hour to repair the damage.

He Crosses Himself.

MULDOON

Thank the Good Lord for that.

SAMAYA

While I was waiting, he told me there's no reason Hiram won't be back at work in a few days.

MULDOON

Is that so?

JACK

Yah. Just go easy on him at first. Nothing strenuous. Okay?

MULDOON

If you say so, Doctor.

JACK

I say so, Mr. Muldoon!

MULDOON

Amazing. I don't know how I'll ever be able to repay you.

JACK

There's no payment. It's free.

MULDOON

(scowling)

I've never liked charity.

JACK

It's not charity. It's a fundamental right...all United Earth Citizens receive free medical care...no exceptions.

SAMAYA
I've never heard of such a thing.
Have you Jedidiah?

MULDOON
Nary a peep. It's news to me.

JACK
You're joking.

56

FADE TO:

57 INT. MARS GENERAL - OPERATIONS MANAGERS OFFICE - DAY

Jack walks into Chiang's office. M'Lenga is there as well.

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

CHIANG
(looking very stern)
It's come to my attention that you
recently performed surgery on a boy.
A boy from one of the farms.

JACK
As a matter of fact several members
of the staff assisted me
voluntarily...

He stands a bit straighter. He clears his throat.

...if the boy didn't have the surgery
he'd have died.

M'LENGA
Was this surgery authorized?

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

M'LENGA
You assumed wrong.

CHIANG
You may not realize it but Mars
General has a chain of command...

M'LENGA
 ...A chain of command you didn't
 follow.

CHIANG
 What you did was totally
 irresponsible...

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

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

CHIANG
 (with amused disdain)
 And may I remind you, we're not on
 Earth are we?

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

JACK
 (very angry)
 File and be damned. I don't give a
 Rat's Ass!!

M'LENGA
 (very solemn)
 You really should, Jack.

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

JACK
 Is that a threat?

He lights his cigar. He blows smoke in Jack's direction.
 Then he takes another puff.

CHIANG
 Of course not. Just a bit of friendly
 advice.

59 INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack paces the floor while Monika Beiterhoff watches him.

MONIKA
It's only a week.

JACK
I know, but it still pisses me off.

MONIKA
What did you expect?

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

MONIKA
Things work differently on Mars.

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

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

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

MONIKA
Such as?

JACK
I could make housecalls.

MONIKA
(with a strange look)
What's a housecall?

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

MONIKA
Wasn't that terribly inefficient?

JACK

It was ridiculously inefficient. It would probably be twenty times harder on Mars at least.

MONIKA

(nodding)

At least.

JACK

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

MONIKA

Let me see if I understand this. You and Ramesh would fly his airship from farm to farm dispensing medical treatment?

JACK

It does sound a bit quixotic, when you put it that way.

MONIKA

Just a bit.

JACK

I've got to do something.

MONIKA

I know. But have you really thought this through?

JACK

How I'd get my supplies for example?

MONIKA

Right.

JACK

Maybe through Barrington-Smythe...

MONIKA

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

JACK

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

MONIKA

But at a very steep price.

JACK
You're right, I know.

MONIKA
Of course I am.

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

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

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

60

CUT TO:

61 INT. O'MALLEY'S CLINIC - DAY

KATE
Jack, what in the bloody hell are you
doing here this early?

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

KATE
(nodding slowly)
News travels fast in this damned
beehive.

JACK
I've come to ask a favor.

KATE
(with a cautious grin)
Ask away.

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

He moves closer.

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

KATE
I see.

JACK
What do you think?

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

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

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

JACK
(grinning broadly)
Guilty as charged, Your Honor.

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

JACK
What?

KATE
Being a Smart-ass!

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

KATE
Speaking of idealism...I know some
idealistic people who'd like to meet
you.

JACK
Who?

KATE
 (with a sly smile)
 Just some folks with *We Are Mars!*

62

CUT TO:

63 INT. MARSPOORT - LOCATION UNKNOWN - TIME UNKNOWN

Someone removes the blindfold that covers Jack's eyes. The light is very bright at first. He sits in a hard chair that faces a long table. Three people face Jack. Two men and one woman. They all appear to be late middle-aged.

WE ARE MARS 1
 I understand you've been wanting to meet us.

JACK
 Yah!

WE ARE MARS 3
 You know we wouldn't be holding this meeting if Kate O'Malley hadn't recommended it...

WE ARE MARS 2
 ...We think very highly of her opinions...

WE ARE MARS 1
 ...Indeed.

JACK
 Is she a member of We Are Mars!?

WE ARE MARS 3
 No, more's the pity. We've been trying to recruit her for years...

WE ARE MARS 2
 ...And her answer is always the same, 'As the Great Groucho Marx said, "**I refuse to join a club that would have me as a member**".'

JACK
 Yah, that sounds like her.

WE ARE MARS 1
 She's a pistol...that's a fact.

JACK

Now what?

WE ARE MARS 2

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

WE ARE MARS 1

You may be interested to know Harold Barrington-Smythe is a Member.

WE ARE MARS 2

...We don't approve of all of his methods...

WE ARE MARS 3

...But we certainly approve of the results.

JACK

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

WE ARE MARS 3

Are you quite sure?

JACK

Yah...and it's not that I disagree with your ideals. It's the Political overtones that bother me...and now the fact Barrington-Smythe is involved...

Jack stands to stretch.

JACK (cont'd)

...How do you know you can trust him?

WE ARE MARS 1

He's my Grandson.

JACK

Oh.

WE ARE MARS 2

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

JACK

Yah.

WE ARE MARS 1
And you were chastised by your
Superiors.

JACK
(grinning)
Chastised Hell...I had my Ass handed
to me.

WE ARE MARS 2
Would you do it again?

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

WE ARE MARS 3
Even though you may lose your
position?

JACK
I could care less.

WE ARE MARS 1
Amazing...absolutely amazing. Tell me
Doctor...have you ever heard of
Operation Tabula Rasa?

JACK
I know what the term means...Blank
Slate...in Latin...but aside from
that no...why?

WE ARE MARS 1
Back in the mid-2070's a team of
scientists in what was the People's
Republic of Scotland developed a
technique...

JACK
...What sort of technique?

WE ARE MARS 3
What they created was a reliable
method of totally and absolutely
wiping the synaptic pattern of a
Human Being...permanently.

WE ARE MARS 2

This procedure would leave a human completely void of any personality... identity...their self-awareness... their soul if you will.

MARS FIRST 1

They would then indeed be a literal Blank Slate...one that could be reused.

JACK

What you're describing is scientifically impossible...total fantasy.

WE ARE MARS 1

I'm afraid that turns out not to be the case...it was done... repeatedly...successfully.

JACK

How can you be so certain?

WE ARE MARS 3

We have video records...the scientists kept all their data.

JACK

Why hasn't anyone ever heard about this...I'm a Neurosurgeon and this is news to me.

WE ARE MARS 2

It's happening, Dr. Greyson...believe us.

JACK

But why?

WE ARE MARS 1

Jack...do you recall learning about the concept of uploading human minds into artificially intelligent machines?

JACK

Yah...that I do remember...they first started discussing that way back in the 1990's I believe.

WE ARE MARS 1

What if I told you it finally succeeded...nearly twelve years ago...here on Mars...what would you say?

JACK

Bullshize!

WE ARE MARS 3

I'm afraid not...it's a sad reality.

JACK

But...why?

WE ARE MARS 2

One reason and one reason only... profit...someone has been abducting children these past several years... erasing their minds and uploading new personalities into those unfortunate individuals...it's worse than murder.

WE ARE MARS 3

Extremely wealthy men and women from all over the Solar System are the ones having his procedure done.

WE ARE MARS 2

They pay fabulous amounts of money for a sort of immortality.

WE ARE MARS 1

At the expense of these children...it sickens me.

JACK

It's monstrous...hideous...and someone's doing this here in MarsPort???

WE ARE MARS 1

Apparently...and it's something that we've been investigating.

JACK

God I hope so...do you have any suspects?

WE ARE MARS 1

At first we thought the United Earth Security Services were behind the operation.

WE ARE MARS 2

But that wasn't the case.

JACK

Who then?

WE ARE MARS 3

Someone associated with Mars General Hospital itself...someone high up.

JACK

That's an incredible accusation...I assume you have evidence to back it up?

WE ARE MARS 2

We had an informant inside the organization gathering detailed information about the operation.

WE ARE MARS 3

Information that we intended to turn over to the proper authorities.

JACK

What happened?

WE ARE MARS 2

In the last message we received from our informant he told us he'd been exposed...

WE ARE MARS 3

...Exposed and on the run to one of our rendezvous points for pick-up... he wasn't there. In his call he said he was being followed.

WE ARE MARS 2

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

JACK

Who was he?

WE ARE MARS 1
Dr. Ron Bradford.

Just then a wall explodes. A dozen Security Officers storm through the ragged hole. They're led by Liam M'Lenga.

To Jack. With eyes are filled with sheer Hate and Betrayal!

WE ARE MARS 1 (cont'd)
You Homer Bastard!

64

END ACT TWO:

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

Two men are in the office. They are Liam M'Lenga and Jack Greyson. Jack is strapped into what appears to be a Dental Chair. M'Lenga stands next to him. The lighting is very bright. There is a small metal table next to the chair. It's covered with a few medical devices and one syringe.

He looks relaxed. And very contented.

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

JACK
I've gotta few ideas.

M'LENGA
Really, do tell.

JACK
That you're a sadistic son-of-a bitch and when I get loose, I'm gonna take you apart barehanded.

M'LENGA
Did you know I'm a doctor?

JACK
Hippocrates must be rollin' over in his grave.

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

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

M'LENGA
Anything else to say, Jack?

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

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

JACK
Just you.

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

JACK
Lemme guess, professional ass-kisser?

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

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

M'LENGA
Who?

JACK
Hitler.

M'LENGA
How droll.

JACK
I gotta million of 'em.

M'LENGA
I'm sure you do, but I'm only
interested in one subject.

JACK
Your weight or your IQ?

M'LENGA
No...*We Are Mars!*

JACK
What about We Are Mars!?

M'LENGA
How long have you been a member?

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

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

JACK
We were playing Canasta. You ever
play? It's alota fun and a great
stress reliever...You should try it
sometime.

He reaches for the syringe. Then he bares Jack's right arm.

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

JACK
Then don't.

M'LENGA
I'm afraid I'm out of options.

JACK
There are always other options.

M'LENGA
It's funny.

JACK
What?

M'LENGA
That's almost exactly what Dr.
Bradford said.

JACK
Ron Bradford?

M'LENGA
Yes...why?

JACK

He was a friend of mine, you Son-of-a-Bitch...I promised his Mom I'd find out what happened to him. And now I have.

M'LENGA

That's most unfortunate. Now I have to burden Carlos. Though I imagine he'll want to make sure you meet the same fate as your predecessor...

He rubs his hands together.

M'LENGA (cont'd)

...only this time there'll be no loose ends.

M'Lenga places the hypo on Jack's right arm and presses the trigger. There is a slight huffing noise. A few moments later Jack is oblivious to his surroundings.

66

CUT TO:

67 INT. O'MALLEY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A loud buzzing sound wakes Kate O'Malley out of a sound sleep. She glances at her watch. It's 1:30. She heads for the main entrance of her clinic. She doesn't even bother to change out of her old nightgown or take the curlers out of her hair. She's has a pleasant surprise when she opens the door and there stands Monika Beiterhoff. Her eyes are red from crying.

KATE

Monika, what in the world are you doin' here at this hour?

MONIKA

Kate, have you seen Jack?

KATE

Sure. A few hours ago when I sent him to meet some friends of mine. Why?

MONIKA

That was over twelve hours ago. He hasn't come home since...I'm worried sick.

Kate puts her arm around the younger woman's shoulder.

KATE

I can tell. Did you check in with MarsGen?

MONIKA

Of course. You do know he was suspended, don't you?

KATE

Yeah. I heard it through my connections there in fact. Just double-checking.

MONIKA

So where is he, Kate?

KATE

I really wish I knew. But I'm sure he's fine.

MONIKA

How? I've spent most of today searching all over MarsPort. Do you have any idea just how big this place is?

KATE

I've gotta pretty good idea...

KATE (cont'd)

(yawning)

...You know what I saw a few days ago in one of the corridors here in Dome One?

MONIKA

I have no idea.

KATE

A mouse.

MONIKA

A mouse...Yuck!

KATE

Yuck indeed. The funny thing about those critters...here we are two hundred million miles from where they started and those damned things still flourish.

MONIKA

What's your point?

KATE

My point is they're resilient little buggers. They're hard to keep down... and as far as I can tell. So's Jack Greyson.

MONIKA

I hope you're right. You know about his...

KATE

...Teever Addiction, yeah. So what? That's in the past. He beat that, didn't he?

MONIKA

I know. I only wish I had some other ideas.

KATE

I'm sure you'll think of something.

68

CUT TO:

69 INT. MARSPOORT - BARRINGTON-SMYTHE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Even though it's late, Harold Barrington-Smythe is hard at work. He sits at his desk dictating into a Holocom. He has a visitor at the entrance of the large room - Monika Beiterhoff. She's been crying.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

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

MONIKA

They've got Jack.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

(with a curious smile)
Who's "they"?

MONIKA

Chiang and M'Lenga.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

Yeah, so?

MONIKA

They're gonna hurt him, maybe worse.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
(scowling)
It's no skin off my ass.

She wipes away the tears.

MONIKA
Please!!!

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
Why's he so important?

MONIKA
I love him.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
The truth comes out.

MONIKA
Yes damn you...Happy now?

He writes something down in his notebook.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
More than you could ever know...

He looks into her eyes.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE (cont'd)
...Exactly what do you think I can
do?

MONIKA
Pull some strings. Use some of that
influence you're always bragging
about...something...anything!

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
Why are those Bastards holding him?

MONIKA
They're saying he's a traitor, and a
member of We Are Mars!.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
Is he?

MONIKA
You know he's not.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
Yes.

She begins to cry again.

MONIKA
Please Harry!!

He lights a cigar. Then he inhales slowly.

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

MONIKA
(still weeping)
I...I remember...

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
Do you...really...really???

He takes a deep breath

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

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

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
You're sorry...I'm sorry...
everybody's sorry...but nothing ever
changes...does it?

She holds his hand. Very tight.

MONIKA
No...but it will...I promise.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
I hope so for both our sake...
otherwise...

MONIKA
Otherwise?

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
(he shakes his head)
...We wouldn't even be having this
conversation...but because it's
you...*Mausi*...

Harry hands her a silk handkerchief.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE (cont'd)
...I may have some interesting
information...information that Carlos
Chiang wouldn't want exposed to
public scrutiny...maybe.

MONIKA
(she begins to
smile...almost)
Really?

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
I said maybe...don't get your hopes
up...yet.

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

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

MONIKA
How's the family?

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

MONIKA
That sounds very nice.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
It is...you and Jack should try it.

MONIKA
Maybe...someday.

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

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

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
(with a half-smile)
Indeed you will, Mausi.

70

CUT TO:

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

There are three men in the room - Chiang himself - Liam M'Lenga and Jack Greyson. Chiang sits at his desk with a cigar in his mouth. M'Lenga paces the floor. Jack is unconscious. He's propped up in a High-backed Chair. There's a pair of handcuffs on his wrists.

CHIANG
Wake him up.

M'Lenga gives Jack a shot of something in his right arm.

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

CHIANG
Whatever, just do it.

M'LENGA
Don't be such a noodge.

Jack begins to wake. His eyes flutter a couple of times.

M'LENGA (cont'd)
He's awake.

CHIANG
About damned time.

Chiang walks over to the chair where Jack is sitting. His cigar has gone out.

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

M'LENGA
And we had such high hopes.

CHIANG
We sure did. We thought we had winner this time. But you're another loser like Bradford.

JACK
 Sorry to disappoint you two. But as
 they say you can't win them all.

CHIANG
 Always the smart-ass.

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

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

He takes a sip of something. Then another.

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

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

-- **SLAP!** --

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

M'LENGA
 Continue being a boor and I'll treat
 you as such, behave and I won't.

CHIANG
 Will you behave?

JACK
 What choice do I have?

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

M'LENGA
 Of course. Where are my manners?

M'Lenga removes the handcuffs from Jack's wrists.

CHIANG

What would you prefer, Scotch or
Bourbon?...

He takes a bottle down from a shelf behind his desk with an
extra flourish.

CHIANG (cont'd)

...The Scotch is a Single-malt from
the Highlands of Scotland. I
recommend it.

JACK

Then I'll have Bourbon.

M'LENGA

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

CHIANG

What my colleague said is correct.

JACK

As if I really give a rat's ass. What
truth Carlos?

CHIANG

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

JACK

Cool...What?

M'LENGA

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

CHIANG

Indeed, quite a bit more in fact...

He sips his Scotch.

CHIANG (cont'd)

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

JACK

(nodding very slowly)

And here comes Bradford, screwing up
your well-laid plans.

M'LENGA

(scowling)

The Bastard...he had to meddle...he
couldn't accept reality.

JACK

That must have been annoying.

CHIANG

Indeed. To put it mildly.

JACK

How'd he figure it out?

M'LENGA

That Prospector...Traske...he
contacted him initially.

CHIANG

And we thought Traske was our man.

M'LENGA

He was...'til he got greedy.

JACK

Ain't that always the way...you just
can't get good help anymore.

CHIANG

If you only knew.

JACK

That's the one main thing I'm not
sure about your operation.

M'LENGA

How so, Jack?

JACK

If you two really want me to become
involved I'll need a lot more
information.

CHIANG

Such as?

JACK

For example...how does the so-called
mind wiping technique work...how does
the new personality uploading work
and who makes the decisions and how
much money is exchanged?

M'LENGA

I assure you, Jack you'll learn all this in due time.

JACK

(nodding slowly)

Of course.

CHIANG

It's very complicated.

JACK

I'm sure...but I think I have the basics down...you two have been kidnapping young kids from all over MarsPort for the past several years...

Jack takes a sip of Bourbon. Then another.

JACK (cont'd)

...mindwiping them...then using outlawed tech to transfer the Synaptic Patterns of Trillionaires from all over the Solar System into those kids so you two can make a few extra solars for your retirement funds...is that about it?

CHIANG

Yes...that's pretty much it.

M'LENGA

Highly simplified, though.

JACK

I have a question?

CHIANG

Yes?

JACK

What about the kids?

M'LENGA

What about them?

JACK

I mean they're for all intents and purposes they're dead...right?

M'LENGA

I suppose you could say that.

JACK

Didn't they have a future...something to live for?

CHIANG

You're looking at it from the wrong direction, Jack...now they can begin new lives as productive members of society...in positions of authority...instead...

M'LENGA

...Instead of the waste of space that they would have been...taking up valuable resources...not contributing to the common good.

CHIANG

Now they are People of Influence... not the...Liam...what's that old term I'm looking for?

M'LENGA

Trailer Trash...yes...that's it... trailer trash.

JACK

And Bradford found out all of this?

M'LENGA

With the help of a traitor...a Prospector by the name of Vernon Traske...contacted him...and gave Bradford some valuable information.

CHIANG

Then Bradford confronted us with accusations and showed us a copy of a Data Disk.

M'LENGA

We offered him money...quite a bit in fact...but he was totally unreasonable.

CHIANG

That's when we decided to eliminate Dr. Bradford...and ultimately Traske as well.

JACK

Now you want me to join you in this rather unusual business venture that's responsible for the deaths of dozens of children and Ron Bradford too?

CHIANG

That sums it up very well, Jack.

JACK

(with a BIG smile)

Sure...why the hell not?

CHIANG

See. I told you he was smart. Much smarter than Bradford.

M'LENGA

I suppose...I thought he was your friend?

JACK

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

M'LENGA

What about your promise to his mother

JACK

Yah. There is that, isn't there?

M'LENGA

Yes.

Jack makes a sudden move. He attempts to kick the legs out from under M'Lenga. While he does that, Chiang removes a small pistol from his desk.

He points it at Jack.

CHIANG

So you are a fool after all...

He stands closer to Jack.

CHIANG (cont'd)

...I believe Hiroshi's going to be Chief of Staff after all.

JACK

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

He holds the firearm with a tighter grip.

CHIANG

My God man, do you ever quit?

JACK

Hell no!!!

M'LENGA

Be sure to tell the Supreme Council back at United Earth Headquarters when you and your We Are Mars! co-conspirators are on trial.

JACK

On trial, for what?

CHIANG

Treason!

M'LENGA

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

JACK

What if I told you that We Are Mars! has proof. Proof that the two of you are behind all of these criminal activities?

M'LENGA

No sane person would believe such allegations...especially from a Teever!

CHIANG

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

He stands a bit closer.

CHIANG (cont'd)

(with a crooked smile)

In fact I hear Teevers turn up dead quiet often. It's in the News all the time.

M'LENGA

That's true. Another sad victim of this new technological vice would barely be noticed.

JACK

You Bastards! Somebody will find out.

CHIANG

(beginning to laugh)
...Face it, even if they did. No one will believe your fabrications.

Just then the door slides open. Monika Beiterhoff walks in.

MONIKA

I would. And so would my friends at the United Earth Security Service.

CHIANG

This is a private meeting, Ms. Beiterhoff. Get out.

M'LENGA

Shall I escort you out?

MONIKA

Try it. Just see what happens, Old Man...

She briefly turns to Jack.

MONIKA (cont'd)

...Leibling, are you alright?

JACK

Better now.

MONIKA

Okay, the game is up.

M'LENGA

And what game would that be?

CHIANG

Yes, what game indeed?

MONIKA

The one where Jack and I get the hell out of here, and you two...

CHIANG

...We two do what, precisely?

MONIKA

Surrender.

M'LENGA

My God. You're as foolish as he is.
Astounding.

CHIANG

She is, isn't she?

M'LENGA

She's bluffing you know. She doesn't
know a thing.

CHIANG

When you're right. You're right...

Moving towards Monika.

CHIANG (cont'd)

...Admit it, you have an empty hand.
You have absolutely no evidence of
any wrongdoing on either of our
parts.

MONIKA

Okay, you're right. I don't have any
evidence. But I believe I know
someone who does...

She takes her Visiphone out of her pocket. She dials a
string of numbers. Then she speaks to someone not present.

MONIKA (cont'd)

...You can come in now.

Once again the door slides open. In walks a familiar man.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

Hi everybody. It's good to see you.

CHIANG

What are you doing here?

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

Checking on a friend. You okay?

JACK

Better and better, you?

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

My lumbago is acting up. But aside
from that I'm fine.

M'LENGA
You're nothing but a criminal.

He takes a deep theatrical bow.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
(with a twinkle in
his eye)
Takes one to know one.

Jack applauds. He's smiling the whole time. Monika stands next to Jack. She looks at Barrington-Smythe with pride.

JACK
You tell 'em, Harry!

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

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

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

He looks at the Chiang and M'Lenga. He has a big smile on his face.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
You'd be surprised, Carlos.

CHIANG
I don't believe you.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
You really should...

He winks at Jack.

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

M'LENGA

(incredulous)

That's impossible. I have both offices inspected twice daily for any electronic listening devices.

He looks at M'Lenga with a mixture of both distrust and disgust. He shakes his head as he walks towards the men.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

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

He moves close to Chiang. He slaps him, then snatches the pistol out of his hand. Then he places it in a jacket pocket. All within a few moments.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE (cont'd)

...A few hundred solars in a man's pocket every month really makes a difference.

M'LENGA

What man?

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

Like I'd ever tell you...

He moves closer to Jack.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE (cont'd)

(with a BIG smile)

...By the way, I've always considered myself a sophisticate. In fact, I've never been in the position to judge another man's sexual proclivities...

He takes a breath. He still looks at M'Lenga.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE (cont'd)

(with an arched eyebrow)

...But even I find some of your preferences somewhat..shall we say... rather...unusual.

CHIANG

(surly)

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

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

Are you really willing to take that chance?

M'LENGA

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

CHIANG

(very smug)

I know.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

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

He looks at his watch once again.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE (cont'd)

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

He takes out his Visiphone.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE (cont'd)

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

CHIANG

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

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE

How much are you willing to bet...?

He looks at his watch one more time.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE (cont'd)

...Tick-tick-tick.

Chiang sounds much older than his actual years. He has a look of complete and utter failure on his face.

CHIANG
What do you want?

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE
(with a grin)
As for me, a handful of those Cuban
cigars would be nice...

He walks towards the ornate desk.

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

He nods towards Greyson.

BARRINGTON-SMYTHE (cont'd)
...Jack?

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