

SEND IN THE DRONES

By

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FADE IN:

INT. SUBWAY STATION - JANUARY 1968 - DAY

ROBERT CRAWFORD stands with a crowd of pedestrians on the subway platform. The bespectacled old man holds his fedora on his balding head as a train approaches.

Commuters step forward along the edge of the platform. Robert takes a step back.

A BUSINESSMAN notices Robert before entering the train. Robert looks back at him.

ROBERT

I'm just here for the show.

The businessman and other commuters walks into the train. The businessman keeps his eyes locked on Robert. As the train pulls out of the station, Robert waves at the businessman. The businessman looks through the glass of the subway doors unamused. He has no time for weirdos.

EXT. SUBWAY STATION - DAY

Robert emerges from the subway station and buys a paper from a NEWSBOY selling papers by the entrance. He opens the paper dated June 3, 1965. The headline reads: AMERICAN FLOATS IN SPACE FOR 20 MINUTES.

He nods with pride and then closes the paper and tucks it under his arm.

EXT. THEATER - DAY

Robert approaches a ticket booth where a YOUNG HIPPIE is sitting.

YOUNG HIPPIE

Afternoon. Are you here for the one acts?

ROBERT

I am my boy.

The young hippie squints at Robert.

YOUNG HIPPIE

I'm sorry but are you Robert Crawford?

ROBERT  
That's what people tell me.

YOUNG HIPPIE  
Uh, hey man. It's an honor to meet  
you.

The young hippie puts his hand through the window slot to shake Robert's hand. They shake hands. The hippie then hands a ticket to Robert.

YOUNG HIPPIE (CONT'D)  
It's on the house.

ROBERT  
Thank you.

YOUNG HIPPIE  
No problem Mr. Crawford. Hope you  
enjoy the show.

Robert walks into the theater. The young hippie jumps out of the booth and into the theater as soon as Robert is out of sight.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

RACHEL WILLIS applies make up with a pad in front of a mirror. She is wearing layers of random worn out clothing. The make up is used to produce a weathered and old complexion.

The young hippie from the ticket booth bursts into the dressing room.

YOUNG HIPPIE  
Hey! You won't believe who I just  
saw.

RACHEL  
You can't just burst in here like  
that.

YOUNG HIPPIE  
Robert Crawford just walked into  
the theater.

RACHEL  
What?

YOUNG HIPPIE  
He's in the theater.

Rachel freezes in place, pad still held on her face.

RACHEL

Why?

YOUNG HIPPIE

I thought the guy was dead.

RACHEL

This can't be happening.

The young hippie begins to leave the room.

YOUNG HIPPIE

Remember everything that can go wrong will go wrong.

RACHEL

Get the hell out of here!

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE - DAY

The set is made to look like a park outside. There are two chairs next to a table with a chess board on top of it. Fake trees surround them. Rachel plays a homeless woman. Across from her is JIMMY, a man in a sharp white suit with a small moustache.

JIMMY

I got the coffee. And this guy in front of me on line, he turns around without looking and slams right into me. Made a mess of my favorite shirt.

Jimmy opens up his jacket revealing a stained shirt underneath. He drops the flap of his jacket and moves a pawn forward on the chess board. Rachel makes a move right after him.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

What's the rush? There's no clock in this game.

RACHEL

So what happened. After you bump into the guy?

JIMMY

I told you he bumped into me. And I says to him, "What's the big idea?"

RACHEL

So you got his money?

JIMMY

Naturally.

Jimmy makes a move on the board. Rachel moves right after. Jimmy looks up at her to say something but then looks back at the board.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

He also invited us to dinner.

RACHEL

No, not interested.

JIMMY

I told him you were coming.

RACHEL

I'm staying here! This is my home. I don't need no one else's home.

JIMMY

This is a park.

Jimmy moves a rook to check.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Check.

They both hear the creaking of a fake tree on stage. Its platform buckles under the weight of the tree. Rachel and Jimmy dart their eyes towards the tree without turning their bodies. Jimmy's eyes widen.

WALKER, long blonde haired hippie stagehand looks at the tree in horror from the wings of the stage.

WALKER

(whispers)

Ah fuck.

Jimmy sheepishly leans back as if in anticipation.

Rachel stares at the chessboard.

RACHEL

You smell that?

Jimmy stares straight into Rachel's eyes. He reluctantly answers.

JIMMY  
Smell what?

RACHEL  
Exactly. It's supposed to smell like shit. But there's nothing.

JIMMY  
And you're complaining?

RACHEL  
The trees, they ain't liable to last without being nurtured. City's been skimping. Things been falling apart since the new mayor got into office.

The fake tree breaks from its base and comes crashing down onto the floor.

Jimmy gasps.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
You see what I mean?

Jimmy settles down.

JIMMY  
That's why you're gonna come to dinner with me. You might get killed out here.

Rachel makes a move on the chessboard.

RACHEL  
Mate.

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE - DAY

Rachel stands up with the two other members of the cast of the play and takes a bow as the audience claps. She looks ecstatic.

EXT. THEATER

Rachel walks out of the side entrance of a theater wearing her everyday street clothes.

Her two friends Walker (30's) and SALLY (20's) a woman with long curly hair tied together, stand outside waiting for her. They are carrying bags and dressed in loose fitting clothes.

They are walking down a street towards a pizza place.

RACHEL

Did I miss any make up?

SALLY

No, and you were fantastic.

RACHEL

Have you seen the costumes yet?

SALLY

They are very colorful. Bright. But that's how it goes.

RACHEL

It's a hippie musical.

WALKER

I don't know about the new song. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me.

SALLY

Is this your first musical?

EXT. TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK - DAY

Rachel, Sally, and Walker are sitting in the park with their slices over paper plates.

In the background a Vietnam War sit-in is in progress. Large masses of hippies with signs that read, END THE WAR, and SILENT MAJORITY FOR PEACE are interspersed between them.

WALKER

Wanna hear some gossip?

SALLY

Of course.

WALKER

I heard from the stage manager that they might move the venue for the performance.

SALLY

The production is turning into a disaster.

RACHEL  
It's always like that.

WALKER  
They're thinking we might open the  
Public theater.

SALLY  
What?!

WALKER  
Papp thinks it's avant garde or  
something. Perfect for the opening.

RACHEL  
Get out of here.

WALKER  
That's what I heard. Obviously it's  
not official. So don't go blabbing  
all over town.

SALLY  
Critics are gonna wanna hate us.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - ONE MONTH LATER - DAY

Rachel stands behind a perfume counter smiling blankly into  
space.

VICTOR a handsome young tailor approaches her with an armload  
of fabrics.

VICTOR  
Morning Rachel.

RACHEL  
Good morning Victor. Here to sample  
the wares?

VICTOR  
How did the performance go?

RACHEL  
It wasn't a total disaster.

VICTOR  
Sorry to hear.

RACHEL  
You would like that wouldn't you?



VICTOR  
If you're famous actor I won't see  
you at work anymore.

RACHEL  
That would be the least of our  
problems.

VICTOR  
We still on for tomorrow?

A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN approaches the counter.

RACHEL  
I might be late from auditions if  
all goes well.  
(To woman)  
Morning, would you like to try some  
samples?

WOMAN  
No, no thank you.

VICTOR  
I'll see you later.

Rachel watches Victor leave.

INT. SUBWAY CAR

Rachel naps on the seat of the train. She is exhausted.

INT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The phone rings in her apartment but no one is there to  
receive the call.

It rings three times and stops.

Rachel opens the door to her apartment and enters without  
ever hearing the phone. She goes to her bedroom and throws  
her things on the floor and falls head first onto her bed.

INT. RACHEL'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Rachel's roommate SARA (30's) knocks on Rachel's bedroom  
door. Rachel is dead asleep on her bed.

SARA (O.S.)  
Hey, your agent is on the phone.

RACHEL  
 Okay. Can you tell him to give me a  
 minute?

Rachel goes over to the living room and picks up the phone.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
 (to Sara)  
 Thanks.  
 (into the phone)  
 Hello?  
 (beat)  
 No, wait, hold on. I just woke up.  
 (beat)  
 I have to go to an audition in two  
 hours.  
 (beat)  
 Is it that important?

INT. BROOKE CHASE'S OFFICE

A RECEPTIONIST named MS. DELPY is writing down information into a notebook sitting behind a desk. Rachel is seated in the waiting area.

BROOKE (O.S.)  
 Ms. Delpy, you can call her in now.

MS. DELPY  
 You can go in now Rachel.

RACHEL  
 Thanks Ms. Delpy.

Rachel walks into Brook's office.

BROOKE CHASE (40's) is a young hotshot manager for actors in the city. He sits at his desk smoking a cigarette. He stands up as Rachel enters his office. There are no windows in his office. And it is very smoky inside.

BROOKE  
 Rachel, how are you doing?

RACHEL  
 Fine Brooke. So what is the deal?

BROOKE  
 You might want to take a seat for  
 this.

Rachel sits. Brooke stands and smokes for a moment before he begins.

RACHEL

Do you smoke in here all day?

BROOKE

Yeah, it's my office. That's what I do in my office.

RACHEL

Sorry, I'm just... My throat is real sore.

BROOKE

You want us to go outside?

RACHEL

No, I'm fine. So what's going on?

Brooke stubs out his cigarette and then begins to light a new one and smokes again.

BROOKE

All right. So let me get right to the point. You are a recipient of the prestigious Fala Murray Grant.

RACHEL

The Fala what grant?

BROOKE

The Fala Murray grant. And it's a means to an end.

RACHEL

But I didn't apply for any grants.

BROOKE

No you didn't. You don't find them. They find you.

RACHEL

How did they find me?

BROOKE

A secret committee chooses creatives deserving money to keep pursuing what they're pursuing. I heard of this grant. But up until last night I thought it was a myth.

RACHEL

So what's catch?

BROOKE

Well it's also a residency program in Arizona and you gotta be there in three days.

RACHEL

There's the rub.

BROOKE

It's headed by Robert Crawford.

RACHEL

Robert Crawford?

BROOKE

The Robert Crawford.

RACHEL

I can't go to Arizona. I'm in the middle of rehearsals. It's out of the question.

BROOKE

But you haven't asked the right question. You haven't asked how much.

RACHEL

I don't care how much? I'm in two productions that can potentially transform my career. Do you know how rare that is? Do you know how many actors would kill to be in my position?

BROOKE

Ask me how much?

RACHEL

It's not about the money Brooke. I worked so hard to get where I am today and I'm finally cashing in. I'm not gonna throw it all away for some grant I never heard of. Even if it is Robert Crawford or Marlon Brando or Meisner.

BROOKE

I hear you. But aren't you curious?

RACHEL

Okay Brooke. I give up. Tell me, how much?

BROOKE  
Six thousand dollars.

RACHEL  
(beat)  
What?

BROOKE  
A year. For two years. That's  
twelve thousand dollars Rachel. And  
I get ten percent of that. I think  
it's a good deal. I would recommend  
it.

RACHEL  
Well, of course you'd recommend it.

BROOKE  
No no. Look. Think about it. You  
can start that company you've been  
ranting about for the last three  
years. It's not so crazy anymore.

RACHEL  
With the money.

BROOKE  
Of course with the money. It's all  
about the money. What world do you  
live in where it's not about the  
money?

Rachel takes one of Brooke's cigarettes from his case and  
smokes one.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - DAY

Rachel and Victor are eating lunch together in a Chinese  
restaurant.

RACHEL  
Three days.

Victor waves a WAITER over. He pushes a teapot to the waiter.

VICTOR  
Can we get some more?

The waiter takes the teapot.

RACHEL  
I'm not even sure how long they  
want me for.

VICTOR  
I'm gonna miss you.

RACHEL  
I can't just leave you.

VICTOR  
I don't think you have a choice.  
Things like this only happen once.  
Or they never happen.

RACHEL  
But I'll miss you.

VICTOR  
I'll visit.

The waiter returns with tea and Victor pours some for both of them.

RACHEL  
I thought you would protest.

VICTOR  
I could if that made you more comfortable.

RACHEL  
Are you sick of me?

VICTOR  
This was always a possibility. I  
said yes to this as soon as I  
decided to date an actor.

RACHEL  
I'm coming back right away.

VICTOR  
I know.

RACHEL  
Will you visit?

VICTOR  
I'm a man aren't I?

RACHEL  
Oh god.

VICTOR  
I got vacation days I'll use. And  
we can write letters in between.

RACHEL

Why are you so understanding?

VICTOR

My mother wanted to be in show business. And then she met my dad and then she had me. With the whole Lib movement it got me thinking, what if? I know she wonders. I don't you to wonder.

RACHEL

It's enough money to start my own company.

VICTOR

It'll be good not to see you at work anymore.

RACHEL

Shut up.

VICTOR

I'm happy for you.

RACHEL

I love you Victor.

Victor raises his tiny tea cup in the air for a toast.

VICTOR

To the grant.

RACHEL

To the grant.

They clink teacups.

EXT. CITY BUS HEADED FOR ARIZONA - DAY

Rachel sits by a window seat of a bus staring out into the countryside.

EXT. ARIZONA BUS STATION - DAY

The bus is pulling into the station.

Rachel lugs two large suitcases towards a parking lot. The bus pulls away from the station. She is left alone.

She unfolds a piece of paper to read an address.

She hails a cab to pick her up.

EXT. LUKE AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

Rachel stares out at the air force base as they drive passed.

EXT. DINER - DAY

The cab stops in front of the diner.

RACHEL

You need to use the bathroom?

CABBIE

Nope. This is the end of the road.

RACHEL

This can't be right. I'm supposed to go to theater or building or something. Not a diner.

CABBIE

This is the address.

RACHEL

Okay. Thanks.

Rachel unloads her luggage from the taxi and stands mystified in front of the diner.

Rachel enters the diner.

INT. DINER - DAY

The diner is mostly empty. Two tables have civilians. But there are also three soldiers sitting at the counter. Everyone turns to look at Rachel.

A handsome young waiter named JACK standing behind the counter calls out to her.

JACK

Have a seat wherever you'd like.

Rachel sits in a booth.

JACK (CONT'D)

(To the soldiers)

I'll be right back.



Jack steps off of a step stool revealing that he is only five feet tall. He walks around the counter, grabs a menu and approached Rachel. She takes the menu

RACHEL

Thanks.

JACK

Want anything to drink?

Rachel pulls out the folded paper again and shows it to Jack.

RACHEL

I was just wondering if you knew where this address was.

Jack takes a moment to read it.

JACK

Here you are.

RACHEL

Gee, that's strange. I'm supposed to meet someone here by the name of Robert Crawford.

JACK

Want any coffee? Water?

RACHEL

Water is fine.

JACK

All right. I'll be right back.

Rachel looks out the window of the diner and stares into the desolate deserts of Arizona.

Jack comes back with water.

JACK (CONT'D)

Here's your water.

(whispers)

Now listen. You just order something, get your full, and I'll introduce you to Mr. Crawford.

RACHEL

Why are you whispering?

JACK

Mr. Crawford is a private fellow.

RACHEL  
So this is the right address.

JACK  
Never said it wasn't.

EXT. BACK OF DINER - DAY

Jack leads Rachel outside to the back. He walks towards a locked basement gate and unlocks it.

RACHEL  
Are we going down there?

JACK  
It's a lot bigger than it looks.

He pulls open the large doors and steps down into the basement. Rachel leaves her luggage behind and follows him into the darkness.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

It is pitch dark. We can hear their slow footsteps.

JACK  
Okay, now hold on.

We can hear the jingle of his keys as he unlocks another door. Once opened, we see another set of steps but they are lit up by paneled lights.

They descend several flights of stairs until they reach what looks to be a well lit office, furnished with a desk, some file cabinets, and even a plant. A man named FRED sits behind the desk with a small stack of papers laid out towards her.

RACHEL  
What on earth.

JACK  
Fred, this is the new recruit.

Fred stands up from his desk and offers his hand.

FRED  
Rachel Willis. You're here about the Fila Murray grant.

RACHEL  
I'm sorry but what is this place.

FRED

Before we go any further, you need to sign this confidentiality agreement.

RACHEL

Confidentiality agreement?

JACK

It's standard procedure.

RACHEL

You're a waiter.

JACK

But I'm also an actor. The day jobs never end for us. I'm just kidding. I am an actor though.

FRED

I assure you, Robert is waiting behind me.

Rachel picks up a pen and starts reading through the agreement.

INT. QUINT'S OFFICE - DAY

Rachel enters another office. MAJOR QUINT (40's) is in the middle of eating a pastrami sandwich. He is a air force Lieutenant Colonel decorated with silver oak leaves on the lapels of his uniform. His room is far more inviting with lavish mahogany furniture, bookshelves and a colorful rug, but still no windows. He wears thick black rimmed glasses. They are both surprised to see each other.

Quint stands up while still holding half of his sandwich.

QUINT

Oh. Hello. Come in. Come in. Have a seat.

(To Jack)

I'll see you in a bit.

Jack heads towards another room of the office and exits.

Rachel keeps standing.

RACHEL

I'm sorry. This is not at all what I was expecting. Are you in the military?

QUINT

Air force to be more precise. Do you like pastrami? I got another half.

RACHEL

No thank you. I just ate.

Quint puts away his sandwich into a drawer in his desk. He walks around his desk over to Rachel and they shake hands.

QUINT

I'm Lieutenant Colonel Quint. The head of this department. And you will be reporting to me.

He walks back around his desk and takes a seat.

RACHEL

Did you say reporting?

QUINT

Oh, right. So the Fala Murray grant and residency is part of the Air Force. It was started by FDR and continues to this day. I'm sure you noticed Luke air force base on your way here.

RACHEL

Where are we exactly?

QUINT

This is sort of the headquarters for your acting adventures. Please, have a seat.

She still stands.

QUINT (CONT'D)

Just hear us out. That's all that we're asking. And then decide for yourself.

RACHEL

I quit two jobs for this.

QUINT

Did I already tell you how much you'd be paid? It's a government grant with government benefits. And you will have the opportunity to develop your own work while you're here.

RACHEL

Major Quint, I think we both know that kind of money comes at a cost. And I haven't taken the money yet.

QUINT

Yes, you're right. That is true. But you don't have to decide yet. How bout you follow me and I'll introduce you to your company. They will outline what your job entails and then you can decide from there. I promise, there's nothing to be afraid of.

Quint stands up and walks towards other door in the office.

RACHEL

There are a lot of doors in this basement.

QUINT

Yeah right, it's like the labyrinth from hell. I've been telling people we need a map for this place.

When Quint opens the door Rachel peeks in to see a massive warehouse room, with short walls dividing up separate rooms. Rachel and Quint walk down a few steps towards a conference room where Robert Crawford stands in front of a chalkboard by a large table.

QUINT (CONT'D)

Robert.

Robert turns around and sees Rachel.

ROBERT

Oh. Rachel, I'm so glad you made out here to join us.

Rachel rushes towards Robert and shakes his hand.

RACHEL

Mr. Crawford, it's such an honor to meet you.

ROBERT

Please, the pleasure is all mine. I was quite impressed with your performance a while back. You know how to stay on your toes.

RACHEL

Thank you.

ROBERT

So are you excited to be here.

QUINT

I'm just gonna head to the base.

ROBERT

Carry on Major.

Quint walks up the few steps back into his office.

RACHEL

What is this place?

ROBERT

This is a state of the art facility where we work towards the theater of the world. We work with many tools here and have a world class crew that can meet any demands asked of them.

RACHEL

Where are they?

ROBERT

They're scattered about. Come, I'll introduce you.

INT. MAKE UP ROOM

MADDIE HOLBROOK is working on several wigs. She is a woman in her thirties with thick curly hair and glasses.

There is a knock at the door.

MADDIE

Come in.

Robert enters with Rachel.

ROBERT

Maddie, I'd like to introduce you to a new player in our company.

(to Rachel)

Rachel, this is Maddie Holbrook. She is our make up expert straight out of Hollywood.

Maddie uses both hands to thread hair into a wig. She looks up for a moment just to see Rachel's face and then looks back at her work.

MADDIE

Hey.

ROBERT

Maddie used to work for Roger Corman. But these days she's hard at work masking our players for the countless audiences we perform for.

RACHEL

I've never heard of this.

ROBERT

That's what makes us special.

INT. MAP ROOM

Robert and Rachel enter a room where TED KIMURA and DANNY HILL are working. Ted, a tall Japanese man is working on a small round metal device with switches on it, and Danny, a short bald middle aged man is looking over maps and doing calculations at a drafting table.

ROBERT

Ted, Danny, this is our new recruit Rachel Willis.

(To Rachel)

Ted is a tech and Danny is sort of our producer

TED

Hello.

DANNY

Hey sweetheart. Good to see some fresh blood in this dank hole of ours.

RACHEL

It's good to meet you too.

INT. HALLWAY

Robert leads Rachel to another room.

ROBERT

And now to meet some of your fellow actors.

INT. REC ROOM

Robert enters a rec room with a pool table, some sofa chairs and a television set. Sitting on the chairs are GIL CHAVES (20's), a Latino man from Brooklyn in a t-shirt and jeans; FRANK MARTIN (40's), a blond man that is tall, handsome, and in a suit; RICH RALEIGH (20's), a five foot tall bucktoothed kid from Kentucky and Jack Minnow.

When Quint says the name of each person, then each person raises a hand to indicate who he or she is.

ROBERT

Gentlemen. Our new player has arrived. Rachel Willis meet our men.

They all stand up and approach her with smiles.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Roger, Gil, Rich, and you've met Jack of course.

RACHEL

How do you all do?

RICH

It sure is nice to meet you.

GIL

Why you're prettier than Faye Dunaway.

FRANK

Hello there. Here to bring a bit class to the group?

RACHEL

You look pretty classy to me.

FRANK

I try.

ROBERT

We're about ready to head into a new performance early tomorrow morning. I want you to see what we do to get a feel for what we are all about. And then decide from there whether you'd like to join.

RACHEL

Okay. Sure. I'm up for it.



ROBERT  
I'm gonna go talk with Danny.

Robert leaves, followed by Rich.

JACK  
I'll go get your luggage from upstairs.

Jack heads out after them.

GIL  
I don't gotta go anywhere.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Rachel talks on a pay phone to Victor.

RACHEL  
Yeah, I made it here just fine. But the whole thing is so strange... Well it's a government program.

Fred walks across Rachel's path. He turns to her and puts his index finger up to his mouth as if to say "silence."

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
Victor I gotta go. But I'll talk to you soon. Just know that I'm okay for now.  
(beat)  
No, it's fine. I write to you tonight.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Jack is carrying Rachel's belongings to a motel room. Rachel follows behind him.

RACHEL  
I can carry those.

JACK  
It's all right. I'm stronger than I look.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

Jack opens the door to the motel room and let's Rachel walk in. He hands her the keys to the room.

JACK

This is where you will stay for the week.

RACHEL

Thanks Jack.

JACK

All right. Well, I'll let you get settled in. There's a grocery store half a mile from here. And if you need anything you can just the company?

RACHEL

Where do you stay?

JACK

Back at Headquarters.

RACHEL

Okay.

JACK

I'm glad you're with us Rachel.

RACHEL

Well I haven't decided yet.

JACK

Have a good night.

Jack leaves and closes the door behind him. Rachel stands for a moment and then sits up in her bed.

EXT. HIGHWAY TO OHIO - DAY

Jack Minnow speeds along the highway with Rachel in a Dodge Charger.

He is followed by a van with Danny Hill, Ted Kimura, Frank Martin, and Maddie Holbrook inside. Ted Kimura is driving. Maddie is in the passenger seat.

In the back of the caravan is a semi truck with Rich and Gil in the front seats. Gil Souza is driving. The truck is dragging a huge cargo container behind it.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW MEXICO HIGHWAY - DAY

Jack Minnow steps harder onto the gas.

JACK  
 (To Rachel)  
 Can you make the call to Ted? Use  
 the handie talkie.

Rachel reaches down towards her feet and pulls up a large clunky green box device with a phone attached to it. It is an old school walkie talkie. She punches in numbers and makes the call.

RACHEL  
 Hello, Ted?  
 (beat)  
 So you're ready in the location?  
 (beat)  
 (to Jack)  
 He says twenty clicks from the  
 billboard.

JACK  
 All right.

CUT TO:

They whiz by a cop car hiding behind some bushes. The cop in the car, LONNIE CHAMBERS (30's) turns on his siren and takes chase after the Charger.

There is a small chase that occurs with these two cars. Rachel looks worried. Jack is focused. After they pass a billboard Jack begins to slow down the Charger and pulls over to the side of the road.

Officer Chambers parks his car behind them by thirty or so feet. Jack keeps the engine on.

JACK (CONT'D)  
 (to Rachel)  
 Get ready.

Officer Chambers gets out of his vehicle and approaches the Charger.

Jack Minnow begins to roll down his window but can't seem to get it all the way down.

JACK (CONT'D)  
 (to the cop)  
 Sorry officer. It seems to be  
 stuck. What can I do for you?

OFFICER CHAMBERS

Turn off your engine and step out of the vehicle. And I wanna see your license and registration.

JACK

Sure thing.

In the background we see Ted Kimura step out of the woods, run up to the cop car, and throw the small metal device into the back seat of the car. The device begins to emit a gas into the car. He immediately runs back into the woods.

Jack leans back and then looks worriedly at Rachel. He slowly but surely takes his keys out of the ignition.

JACK (CONT'D)

Rach dear, would you pull out the registration.

Rachel makes the same sort of worried expression. But she is trying to seem very likable to Lonnie Chambers. She smiles at him and he smiles back.

RACHEL

Here. I found it.

She carefully hands it over to Jack.

JACK

Thanks dear.

Jack puts his keys into the ignition and takes off at lightning speed. Lonnie Chambers is stunned. He runs back to his vehicle, gets in, and drives in pursuit of the Charger.

The small device Ted Kimura was threw into the cop car continues leaking gas into the car.

As Officer Chambers gives chase everything he sees around him begins to glow. He rubs his eyes to get rid of the glow in front of his face..

Rachel stares ahead of her and notices a flying saucer in the sky.

RACHEL

Oh my god. What is that? Is that a flying saucer?

JACK

Don't worry. It's one of ours.

Lonnie sees the flying saucer as well and is mesmerized by it. He no longer chases after Jack and Rachel but drives only to keep track of the UFO which gently floats forwards in the sky. The Charger disappears into the distance.

JACK (CONT'D)

Can you grab the handie talkie and let Maddie know she's up.

CUT TO:

Officer Chambers is still staring at the flying saucer as it hovers over a tree line, and disappears underneath it. He notices smoke billowing out from the same area and drives onto a dirt path into the woods to follow the smoke trail.

EXT. CLEARING IN THE WOODS - DAY

Officer Chambers enters a clearing in the woods and sees a crashed flying saucer billowing smoke next to a farm house. He parks his vehicle some distance away and turns off his engine. He is silent in shock.

From around the woods there is an elaborate speaker system set up, through which Gil Souza's voice can be heard.

GIL (O.S.)

Step out of the vehicle.

Officer Chambers is in a trance and gets out of his vehicle.

GIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Approach the craft. And then stay very still.

Officer Chambers walks up to the UFO in a trance. He stands in front of the UFO entrance. He is in awe of the beautiful sight.

GIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Lift up your arms.

Lonnie Chambers looks around him and then slowly lifts up both of his arms.

Frank Martin and Gil Souza come out of the farm house and run up to Officer Chambers. Gil trips to the ground and quickly gets up again. Roger holds Lonnie's arms in the air while Gil undoes his holster and guns. They both run back into the farm house.

GIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(breathing heavily)  
You may... Enter the craft.

A sliding panel creates an entrance to the UFO.

Officer Chambers walks into the UFO.

INT. UFO

The circular interior is walled by large black glass panels. There is an observation table in front of him and control panels all around the craft. It's like something out of Star Trek but there are no chairs. Only tables and panels. Maddie's voice can be heard in the background.

MADDIE (O.S.)  
Please lay down on the table.

Officer Chambers lays down on the table.

A separate door slides open and three short aliens walk into the room. They are classic little gray aliens with large heads and huge beady eyes. They are about five feet tall and one of them is fat. They surround Officer Chambers as he lays still.

We see that one of the black glass panels is a two way mirror and behind it is Maddie Holbrook and Rachel Willis in a dark room. A film camera beside them is filming the scene in front of them.

RACHEL  
So you guys pretend to be aliens  
from mars?

MADDIE  
We are the aliens from mars.

All three aliens begin touching and examining Officer Chambers as he lays still on the table.

Maddie turns away from the scene and looks at some charts on a table. Rachel is stunned.

EXT. CLEARING IN THE WOODS - DAY

Lonnie Chambers stumbles out of the UFO.

GIL (O.S.)  
Stand still Officer Chambers and  
carefully lift up your arms.

Gil Souza and Frank Martin run towards Lonnie Chambers and reattach his gun and holster. They immediately run back into the farm house.

GIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
You can put your hands down now.  
Slowly walk towards your vehicle.

Lonnie walks halfway towards his police car.

GIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
You will enter your car and drive home. You will eat, drink water. And at seven you will leave your house and head to the police station to report what you saw today.

Lonnie walks into his car and drives away.

EXT. OHIO HIGHWAY - DAY

Jack Minnow is driving again with his team's caravan behind him. Rachel is next to him.

JACK  
So what's on your mind?

RACHEL  
I feel like I just saw my entire life flash before my eyes.

JACK  
It's not that bad you know.

RACHEL  
What's going to happen to that poor man?

JACK  
He'll report what he witnessed. People will believe he's telling the truth and we will keep America safe.

RACHEL  
But why are you people doing this?

JACK  
We're part of a program that started in 1945. The Fala Murray grant is a front that funds the organization.

RACHEL

What was that thing in the sky we saw earlier?

JACK

It's what the air force refers to as a drone. It's an unmanned vehicle that uses an alternative energy source to silently survey areas. I think they procured it from the Nazis, but who knows.

RACHEL

And why are we pretending to be aliens? It's just so crazy.

JACK

Well originally the Air Force explained the drones as weather balloons. But the public believed they were flying saucers with aliens from outer space you know?

RACHEL

Okay.

JACK

Well yeah, so the air force decided aliens were better than weather balloons, and to keep the drone program a secret they hired us to make the public believe in aliens.

RACHEL

That's the craziest thing I've ever heard.

JACK

I was in New York before I got drafted. Jack Minnow is my stage name. It used to be Jacob Moscovitz.

RACHEL

Jacob Moscovitz?

JACK

They called me Mouse for a long time.

RACHEL

Why are you telling me this?



JACK

Because Rachel I'm just like you.  
And this is as good as it gets.  
We're performing in the greatest  
play ever created. It's a once in a  
lifetime opportunity. And we're  
getting paid beyond our wildest  
dreams to do it.

RACHEL

Jeez. You sound like me when I'm  
smoking dope.

JACK

We use the real world as our  
theater and the audience becomes an  
unknowing actor in our productions.

RACHEL

I feel like a criminal.

JACK

What we do is very important for  
the country. We can't let our  
enemies know that we have this  
technology. It helps us stop them  
before they even make a move. The  
'drones' are designed to save the  
lives of countless Americans.  
Keeping them secret is integral to  
that.

RACHEL

Don't you think the public can make  
up its own mind?

JACK

You're not seeing the big picture.  
We have a chance to save lives by  
using the talents that we know we  
have. We alone. Only a select few  
are chosen for this project and  
it's not easy. But nothing good is.

RACHEL

I don't know what to make of all  
this. Why me?

JACK

I've read your reviews and I can  
read between the lines. They ignore  
you. And that's why we want you to  
work with us. You're here to make  
us better.

RACHEL

But how?

JACK

You're our dramaturg. You're gonna bring a new realism to it all.

RACHEL

(To herself)

I was in two productions.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Jack is driving Rachel to the grocery store near her motel.

JACK

You don't want me to drive you to your place?

RACHEL

No, I want to look around the supermarket and get to know the neighborhood a little bit.

JACK

Okay. Sure.

Rachel steps out of the Charger and walks into the supermarket.

INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

We see Jack Minnow drive off in the background as Rachel walks into the supermarket and stares all around her. Rachel grabs a shopping basket and starts to survey the groceries.

She buys some fruits and vegetables and walks to the cashier. She pulls out a twenty from a small wad from her pocket and pays for the groceries with that.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

Rachel enters her motel room. She puts all the fruits and vegetables on a small table in the room.

Rachel goes to the bathroom and closes the door behind her.

INT. QUINT'S OFFICE - MORNING

Rachel enters Quint's office as Quint is packing up a suitcase to leave.

RACHEL

Hey, did you want to see me?

QUINT

So Rachel, what do you think? Want to join Drone Company?

RACHEL

I thought I had till the end of the week to decide.

QUINT

I need the paperwork signed before I leave. And I'm leaving sooner than expected.

RACHEL

Why? Where are you going?

QUINT

I've been called into DC for a meeting. But I'll be back in a week. I'm being frank here. You will want to get out of this job as soon as you can. The sooner the better. It gets a little weary here sometimes.

RACHEL

Do you not want me to work here?

QUINT

I'm just being honest. You seem like a good kid. These other fools are going nowhere. And they got dark sides to them. Real dark. You're not like them. You're better than them.

(beat)

I know I shouldn't be telling you any of this but I have a daughter about your age and I just know I would want someone to be honest with her in a situation like this.

RACHEL

I see.

QUINT

So I don't know. I think the team was pretty straight forward about everything. You got the gist of it. And you know, it's a pretty cushy job where you get to retire after five years. That is quite a package.

Quint closes his luggage and puts on a military cap.

QUINT (CONT'D)

Look, I'll be here for another hour. Till five. And then I gotta leave. But you have an hour.

RACHEL

What am I supposed to do here?

QUINT

They don't remember anything from the abductions.

RACHEL

Maybe you should have them take notes?

QUINT

No, I mean the targets not the team. The targets have only a vague recollections of the abductions because of the drugs we use.

RACHEL

Maybe you should use different drugs?

QUINT

The cocktail Ted cooked up is one of a kind. It's the best for mind control and hallucinations. But it blacks out memories.

RACHEL

Then why don't you lower the doses?

QUINT

The midgets won't work if the targets have a gun. Which I completely understand.

(beat)

No, I think what we need is a new leader. I want you to make them more effective.

(MORE)

QUINT (CONT'D)

I believe you have a special talent that might be stronger than any drug. I've seen you many times while visiting New York. Jack, he's an actor too.

RACHEL

Yeah, he told me.

QUINT

You have less than an hour.

Quint leaves his office and leaves the door open.

QUINT (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(To Rachel)

Can you close the door on your way out?

RACHEL

Sure.

Rachel stands still in the room as she listens to Quint leave.

She walks over to his books and stares at the titles on his shelf. "Sherlock Holmes" "Heart of Darkness" "Les Miserables" in French are on his shelf.

Rachel walks over to his desk and begins to open his drawers. There is a file with her name on it. She opens it up on the desk and looks through it. There are many photos of her. On stage in various productions and then a series of photos with her in public.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - TAILOR ROOM - DAY

Victor hems a pair of pants. His CO-WORKER pops his head into the room.

CO-WORKER

Rachel's on the phone.

VICTOR

Be right there.

Victor drops what he is doing and leaves the room.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Victor grabs a phone off of the receiver.

VICTOR

Hello? ...Hey. How is it? ...You just gotta get used to it. It's like any new job. You look back and realize it was nothing to worry about.

EXT. BACK OF DINER - DAY

Rachel holds the receiver to a payphone.

RACHEL

The program is a lot more than a week. They want me here indefinitely... It's more like job than a residency... I don't know... It's not that simple.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

VICTOR

I know acting is a lot of work... Well that's great. You'll get lots of experience... But you can just quit right... Then what do you have to lose.

EXT. BACK OF DINER - DAY

RACHEL

It's just, I'm scared... I'm alone here. And I feel like don't know what I'm getting into. I can't tell if it's a dream or a nightmare.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

VICTOR

Well look. I gotta get back to work but I spoke with George and he said I can take a week off whenever I wanted. I'll come in two weeks... It'll be nice to get out of the city for a little while... Yeah. I love you too. Just hang in there.

EXT. BACK OF DINER - DAY

RACHEL

Okay. Bye.

Rachel hangs up the phone.

INT. DRONE COMPANY HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY

Rachel walks down the hallway and passes a rec room where Rich Raleigh is watching TV. She enters and sits besides Rich. Rich stands up to be polite.

Rachel opens door after door, but cannot find Fred.

She opens a door and finds Gil reading a playboy and drinking a beer.

GIL

Hey, don't you knock!

RACHEL

Sorry, do you know where Fred is?

GIL

He's six doors down on the left!

RACHEL

Thanks!

Rachel runs off again.

GIL (O.C.)

Make sure to knock next time!

Rachel abruptly opens another door and sees Fred sitting a little too close to the door. She is startled but quickly composes herself.

RACHEL

Fred, do you have the contract?

FRED

Is everything all right Miss Willis?

RACHEL

I need to sign it and get Major Quint to sign off before he leaves.

Fred goes into a desk drawer and pulls out the contract. He lays it on the desk with a pen for Rachel to sign it.

Rachel leafs through it trying to read as much as she can from the forty page document.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
Did you write this?

FRED  
Yes.

RACHEL  
It's thorough.

Rachel signs it.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
Do I need to give this to Major Quint?

FRED  
No it's fine. I was witness to the signing.

Fred takes the contract and puts it back into his desk.

FRED (CONT'D)  
Just tell him you signed it with me and you'll be good to go.

RACHEL  
Okay. Thanks.

INT. DRONE COMPANY HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY

Rachel runs down the hallway and sees Ted Kimura on the phone.

RACHEL  
Did you see Major Quint?

Ted points down the hall.

RACHEL (CONT'D)  
Thanks.

Rachel finds the exit to the building and rushes into the parking lot.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Danny Hill is smokes a cigarette looking off into the distance.



DANNY  
You smoke?

RACHEL  
No, I quit for my voice. Have you  
seen Major Quint anywhere?

DANNY  
Quint? Yeah, he left like twenty  
minutes ago.

RACHEL  
Really? He said he would be around  
till five to sign off on my  
employment.

Danny points towards the highway.

DANNY  
Probably headed towards the base.

RACHEL  
No. That's impossible. He said he  
wasn't leaving till five.

Danny Hill looks at his watch and sees that it is just five.

DANNY  
You sure you don't want one?

RACHEL  
I already told you, I don't smoke.

DANNY  
You sure? You seem really on edge.

RACHEL  
Why would he leave so early without  
telling me.

DANNY  
That's kind of how it is around  
here. Welcome to drone company.

Danny Hill walks back into the diner as Rachel stands alone,  
wondering if she has just made a terrible mistake.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Victor walks down an alleyway. He pulls out a small tube  
canister from his pocket. Victor grabs a loose brick of a  
building and slides it out. He places the tube into the space  
and then replaces the brick.

Victor leaves the alleyway and looks around to see if anyone spotted him.

Victor walks off into the distance.

We see the false brick in the wall. Hours pass and the alleyway grows more dark.

A MYSTERIOUS FIGURE wearing a fedora, grips the brick and slides it out to retrieve the tube canister.

The mysterious figure leaves the alleyway and hails a cab.

INT. TENEMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

The mysterious figure enters the building and ascends a flight of stairs.

The man enters an apartment.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

The man walks into the living room and sits down to open the canister. He pulls from it a small piece of paper and reads the contents.

He stands and walks to a kitchen to use his phone. He dials a number.

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

Hello? It's me... I got a message from Max. He's going to meet her in two weeks... I'll give him the equipment. He'll be ready before he leaves... Very good.

The figure hangs up the phone.

FADE OUT