

A SIMILAR SPECIES

By

Robert Sacchi

LOGLINE: Set in 2467 the Interstellar space ship *Tereshkova* picks up the signature of a space ship traveling faster than the speed of light. They learn it was from a planet that just developed this technology. They are obligated to make contact with this planet.

Robert Sacchi
42854 Lindsey Heights Place
Ashburn, VA 20148
703-724-7564

FADE IN:

EXT. INTERSTELLAR SPACE

A large space ship travels through space. *Tereshkova* in Roman and Cyrillic letter is emblazoned on the side of the ship.

Super: "2467"

INT. THE TERESHKOVA'S CONTROL CENTER

There is a panoramic screen which shows a field of stars.

The 6 people in the control center have unisex utility clothing that has a drab color.

SHIP DIRECTOR DICK NISHIZAWA (40) tall, handsome face, athletic build, sits in the director's chair and looks at the screen with a bored look on his face.

COLONEL HELMUT WANG (42) tall with a slim build, sits in another chair. He has a blank expression on his face.

KAVITA PATTLE (30), a short woman, attractive face and figure, studies streams of information that appear on the video screens on her console. She isn't wearing any makeup and her hair is short.

The screen highlights a star. The screen flashes "Light Plus signature detected." The star is moved to the screen's center and enlarged. It is a binary star system.

DICK

Other known ships?

The screen flashes, "No other known ships in this sector. Other known Light Plus capable civilizations unlikely to have ships in sector.

DICK

Helmut, Kavita, the conference room in 15 minutes.

Dick taps a couple of buttons on his console.

DICK

STAN, DOCTOR, the conference room in 15 minutes. It's about the Light Plus signature.

DR. OTTO SMIK

What?

(Pause)

Oh, Ok.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

It is a stark room with a table and 12 chairs.

Ship Director Dick Nishizawa, Colonel Helmut Wang, and Kavita Pattle, DR. OTTO SMIK and STANISLAW (STAN) LIERDE sit at the table.

DR. OTTO SMIK, (40) average height, slim build.

STANISLAW (STAN) LIERDE, (35) average height, slightly overweight, is the ship's maintenance chief.

Helmut gives an overview of the situation.

HELMUT

Apparently a space ship reached a velocity above the speed of light. The craft maintained the Light Plus speed for 19 minutes and 34 seconds.

The walls opposite where people are seated each show an image of the binary star system. The image highlights and illustrates areas as Helmut speaks.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

The craft exceeded light speed from a point approximately 1 million kilometers from the only planet in this system that has complex organisms. The space ship traveled to a point near a dwarf planet at the opposite end of the system.

The wall screens change to show a futuristic space ship and images of 1950s and 60s technology.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Reconnaissance was last performed on this system 46 years ago. The sentient beings are humans and their technology roughly matched that of the mid-20th century.

DICK

It took us 150 years to go from initial space flights to light plus capability. They did it in less than 50 years?

HELMUT

They have a more serious interest in space flight than we had at that stage of development.

KAVITA

Analysis of their audio and video traffic shows there have been no major conflicts since they entered the Industrial Age.

DICK

(Surprised)

No wars?

HELMUT

Conflicts of short duration, like the Middle Eastern conflicts of the Mid-20th century.

DICK

Seems they are good candidates to join with us.

HELMUT

They are also an important candidate. There are 16 nearby star systems that have sentient life forms. The most advanced of these civilizations has Iron Age technology.

Dick nods understanding.

DICK

Good point Helmut. If they make contact with these civilizations and give them their technology they could dangerously disrupt the natural development of these other civilizations.

OTTO

That's an understatement.

HELMUT

Exactly Doctor.

DICK

Stan, they probably had communications with their Light Plus ship. We'll raise them on that frequency. Work out the language they used. Kavita, get the standard announcement message so Stan can translate and send it.

Stan and Kavita nod acknowledgement.

KAVITA

Analysis of the communication traffic shows this was their first use of Light Plus.

Dick is visibly elated with what Kavita said.

DICK

We are witnesses to a civilization's first time it exceeded the speed of light. That puts an extra historic emphasis on this contact.

(Beat)

Our routine mission is now among the most historic space missions.

EXT. SPACE

The *Tereshkova* passes a planet that's a gas giant.

INT. CONTROL CENTER

Kavita communicates with the planet, Palchi. Dick, Helmut, and some crew members are also in the control center.

Kavita's expression changes to surprise. She turns to Dick.

DICK

Dick, the Palchi are asking for a catalogue of our laws.

HELMUT

That's a curious request.

Dick turns to Helmut.

DICK

Can you speculate on why they would want them Helmut?

HELMUT

It would be best not to speculate.

Dick seems unhappy with Helmut's non answer. He turns to Kavita.

DICK

Tell them we will give them a catalogue of our laws if they will send us a catalogue of theirs.

Helmut walks to Dick.

HELMUT

May I ask why you agreed on the condition the Palchi reciprocated?

DICK

So far we have acceded to all their previous requests without conditions. Asking for reciprocity is a reasonable condition. I want to see if the Palchi can be reasonable.

Kavita works at her console.

A few moments passed.

Kavita turns to Dick.

KAVITA

The Palchi agreed and are transmitting their catalogue.

HELMUT

It seems the Palchi can be reasonable.

DICK

Yes, they can also be quick. I wish our leadership could be so fast.

Everyone in the Control Center GIGGLES.

EXT. SPACE

A small space ship approaches the *Tereshkova*.

INT. CONTROL CENTER

Dick, Kavita, Helmut, and some other crew members are in the Control Center.

Dick watches with amazement as the screen shows the Palachi ship as it approaches the *Tereshkova*.

Dick talks to himself.

DICK

Look at that ship. It could fit 3 people maybe 4 if they were crammed in. This is the first time anyone from their world has

seen an alien space ship. I wonder what that crew is thinking.

Helmut interrupts Dick's musing.

HELMUT

We must be an imposing sight to them. As best we can tell our ship is about 10 times the size of anything they have put into space.

The Palchi ship has many images on it.

DICK

All those images, I wonder what they mean.

HELMUT

They images don't seem to have any relationship to each other.

DICK

I will have to remember to ask the Palchi about it.

EXT. SPACE

A small fleet of space ships surround the *Tereshkova*. The space craft are all smaller than the first craft and some are too small to have anyone on board. All these craft have numerous images on them.

INT. CONTROL CENTER

Kavita looks are the screen. It shows the space craft surrounding the *Tereshkova*.

KAVITA

They seem to like art.

HELMUT

That would be a good thing. I would hate to make first contact with a planet of crashing bores.

Everyone in the Control Center LAUGHS.

EXT. SPACE

The *Tereshkova* orbits the planet Palchi. A fleet of small craft surrounds the *Tereshkova*. A small space craft approaches the *Tereshkova*.

INT. DOCKING WAY

Dick, Helmut, Dr. Smirk, and Stan stand by the docking way hatch.

The civilians are wearing suits and seem uncomfortable in them. Helmut has on his dress uniform and stands proud.

They have devices around their necks and on the sides of their heads.

DICK

Let's give these translators one last check.

DR. SMIRK

We've checked them 3 times and the diagnostics all show green.

DICK

Stan.

STAN

Gallia est omnis divisa in partes
tres

HELMUT

France is divided into 3 parts.

DR. SMIRK

I hear the same.

DICK

I came, I saw, I conquered.

STAN

Veni, Vidi, Vici, checks confirmed.

DICK

Maybe these formal suits were a
mistake. The Palchi would have no
idea what a formal suit is.

Stan monitors a small control panel by the hatch.

STAN

Well it's too late to go back and
change. The emissary ship is in
the docking pattern.

There is a slight THUD.

STAN (CONT'D)

Docking completed.

Dick exchanges smiles with the others.

The hatch opens.

KAM, (50) a tall and portly man, steps through the hatch.
His is wearing a medium brown suit. The jacket extends to
his knees. He has a cylindrical device about 6 centimeters
long extending from this left ear. He also has a device

around his right ear. He looks surprised and gives a nervous smile.

KAM

I am Chair Kam, Chair of the
Global Counsel.

GRAZBY, (35) a short thin woman, steps through the hatch. She has short black hair and her facial features match classical East Asian looks. She is wearing a medium brown suit almost identical to Kam's. Besides the cylindrical device on her left ear, which is identical to Kam's, her only other accessory is a 3 pointed star broach below her left shoulder. The broach is a slightly darker shade of brown than her suit. She has a blank expression on her face.

KAM (CONT'D)

This is Representative Grazby of
Velikiy a legal expert.

LAITA, (30) a tall voluptuous woman with a gorgeous face and light blue eyes, steps through the hatch. She is wearing silver high heel sandals that strap up to mid-calf. She has a calf length green dress that is slit on both sides. The sleeveless dress plunges to just below her naval. On her left wrist she is wearing a copper bracelet that has a large green jewel on it. She is wearing silver and gold necklaces of various lengths. Her long platinum blonde hair has a horizontal red streak even with her cheeks. He has a broad toothed smile.

KAM (CONT'D)

This is Representative Laita of
Minhwa a linguistics expert.

LAITA

Hello!

DICK

Hello, I am Dick Nishizawa, the ship director. This is Colonel Helmut Wang he is the ship's senior military officer. This is Dr. Otto Smik, the ship's medical doctor. This is Stanislaw Lierde, the ship's maintenance chief.

KAM

We are all pleased to meet you. We are here as physical representations. The long devices in our ears are so the other members of the Global Counsel can hear what we hear and give us their input.

There is a small amber light shining in the ear devices.

DICK

On our planet we have a custom we call 'shaking hands' that we perform when meeting people. Dr. Smik, would you help me demonstrate?

Dick and Otto shake hands.

Dick extends his hand to Kam. Kam nods and shakes hands with Dick.

LAITA

What a charming custom.

Laita extends her hands to Dick and they shake hands.

Kam and Laita exchange handshakes with Dr. Smirk, Helmut, and Stan.

Dick extends his hand to Grazby. She shakes his hand but shows no emotion.

DICK

If you would come with us please
we have a formal dinner prepared
in your honor.

LAITA

What gracious hosts.

KAM

Thank you.

Grazby shows no reaction.

Dick and Stan lead the way. The emissaries follow Dick and
Stan. Helmut whispers to Dr. Smirk.

HELMUT

It's impressive Laita greeted us
in the Earth Common Language.

DR. SMIRK

Kam didn't explain the other ear
device.

HELMUT

Perhaps it's a personal device?

DR. SMIRK

That's what I'm thinking.

INT. A GALLEY

The galley has some images and paintings.

The emissaries sit on one side of a long table. Dick,
Helmut, Dr. Smirk, and Stan sit opposite the emissaries.

There is no one else eating at the galley.

Kam appears hesitant.

KAM

We are surprised you appear human. Our scientists have told us life forms from other planets wouldn't look anything like us.

DICK

(Chuckles)

We are human. We are aware of about 500 planets with sentient beings. The sentient beings on these planets fall into one of 5 life forms. There are almost 100 planets with humans on them.

Kam nods.

KAM

This is amazing. Yesterday we wondered if we were alone in the universe now we learn we are neither alone nor unique.

Laita beams with enthusiasm.

LAITA

This is fantastic! This is truly fantastic! It is absolutely wonderful.

Grazby shows no reaction.

DICK

It is because there are so many planets inhabited by sentient beings in various stages of development that Earth and some

other planets have agreed upon
some protocols.

(Pause)

We make contact with societies
when they develop light plus
technology. We feel it is better
to make contact this way rather
than risk an unexpected meeting in
space.

(Pause)

In the case of new light plus
capable planets it is also best we
inform them of the dangers of
contact with planets that haven't
reached light plus development.

Kam nods.

KAM

I see.

LAITA

(Cheerfully)

Light plus, is that what you call
travel faster than the speed of
light in a vacuum?

DICK

Yes.

GRAZBY

(Curtly)

Your purpose is to have us agree
to abide by your protocols.

DICK

Yes, there are many advantages to agreeing to these protocols. We can help each other develop politically and socially.

GRAZBY

What if we choose not to agree to your protocols?

DICK

No one is forced to accept the protocols.

(Beat)

It is strongly recommended you do.

(Pause)

Our protocols are designed to avoid causing pandemonium on non Light Plus planets. If Palchi doesn't agree to the protocols then we cannot aid with Palchi's development in any way, including political, social, economic, or technological.

Laita cocks her head to one side.

LAITA

These protocols about other planets, is there anything on our planet we would have to accept for this development assistance?

Dick turns to Helmut.

DICK

Helmut.

HELMUT

Your planet does not have a single government.

GRAZBY

We have a history of banding together when the need arises.

HELMUT

A single world government is not mandatory. Some of your governments permit executions, even non-judicial executions, and have laws that limit the rights of the accused.

Laita gives Grazby a smirk.

LAITA

Yes, other governments are pressuring these governments to turn their back on archaic practices.

Grazby takes a quick glance at Laita then turns to Helmut.

GRAZBY

Non-judicial executions are only used when apprehension is impractical.

HELMUT

By impractical do you mean inconvenient?

GRAZBY

If I meant inconvenient I would have said inconvenient.

Dick grabs a flask from the table and gives a big smile.

DICK

This is called Sculpin. It is famous throughout our known universe.

GRASBY

It is against your regulations.

DICK

Yes, one of the advantages of exploring space is you get to make connections.

GRASBY

By drinking this Sculpin we would be participating in a crime.

Laita lets out a short giggle.

LAITA

Grasby, she's always the prosecutor.

Laita takes the flask and pours the Sculpin into her glass then takes a sip.

LAITA (CONT'D)

I can see why it's famous throughout the galaxy.

Laita flashes her eyes and a smile at Dick.

DICK

We should give you a tour of the ship.

(Pause)

Since it's a big ship we should split up.

(Beat)

Otto, you could give Chair Kam a tour.

(Beat)

Helmut, you show Representative Grasby around.

(Pause)

I'll give representative Laita a walk around the ship.

He turns to the emissaries.

DICK (CONT'D)

You can compare notes later.

Laita gives a big smile.

LAITA

That is a marvelous idea.

Kam nods approval.

KAM

It is a large ship.

INT. A CORRIDOR

Dick walks down a corridor with Laita. They both appear in a jovial mood. Laita turns serious.

LAITA

Velikiy is full of people, like Grasby, who live by rigid rules

and ideas. Most people on our world realize their ideas are outmoded.

DICK

You believe Velikiy would oppose our protocols?

LAITA

Yes, I'm sorry to say. They are very resistant to change. They no doubt chose Grasby because she is a staunch defender of these old-fashioned beliefs.

DICK

We had similar problems on our planet.

Dick stops at a hatch and smiles.

DICK (CONT'D)

This is the Director's quarters.

Laita smiles and takes the device from her ear. She twists the device and its amber light goes out.

INT: ENGINEERING SECTION

There is a line of work stations. Crew members monitor the consoles at these stations.

Helmut leads Grasby into the section. Stan walks to them.

HELMUT

Representative Grasby, you've met Stan Lierde, our ship's lead engineer.

Grasby shows no emotion and speaks in a dry tone.

GRASBY

Pleased to see you in your work place Stan Lierde.

Grasby scans the area.

GRASBY (CONT'D)

An impressive work place it is.

Stan gives a broad smile.

STAN

Yes it is Representative Grasby.

ENGINEER 1 turns to the engineer at an adjacent work station.

ENGINEER 1

Francium levels within tolerances.

Grasby gives a curious look.

GRASBY

You use Francium?

STAN

This ship couldn't exceed light speed without it.

Stan's expression changes from happy to serious.

Stan and Helmut exchange worried looks.

Grasby scans Stan and Helmut's faces.

GRASBY

Francium is rare on our planet.
To my knowledge we never found a
use for it.

HELMUT

Our protocols for dealing with
other planets prohibit us from
revealing technical details about
our technology.

GRASBY

I will refrain from asking
questions in this section.

INT. OUTSIDE THE EXAMINATION ROOM

Dr. Smirk and Chair Kam are outside the Examination Room.
Dr. Smirk points out the hatchway.

DR. SMIRK

There are sensors in this hatchway
that will give us a diagnostic as
we walk through it.

Chair Kam smiles.

KAM

You can examine a patient just by
having them walk through a
hatchway?

Dr. Smirk walks through the hatchway.

DR. SMIRK

Yes, step through and I will
demonstrate.

Chair Kam gives a tentative nod and steps
through the hatchway.

Dr. Smirk steps to a console and flips a switch.

DR. SMIRK (CONT'D)

You have hearing loss in your right ear.

Kam points to his right ear.

KAM

You didn't know this was a hearing aide?

DR. SMIRK

Since you didn't tell us I thought it would be rude of me to ask.

(Pause)

The others in our welcoming committee probably felt the same way.

(Pause)

I can fix your hearing loss, as well as your cholesterol buildup, and a number of other minor medical abnormalities.

Kam gives an enthusiastic smile.

KAM

Amazing, you would be willing to do this for me?

DR. SMIRK

Of course, I'm a doctor. Just lie down on the table and I'll fix you right up.

INT: OUTSIDE THE EXERCISE BAY

Helmut and Grasby exit the exercise bay.

HELMUT

I am curious why you and the
others were chosen as emissaries?

(Pause)

Scientists would seem more
suitable choices.

GRASBY

Scientists were considered.

(Beat)

It was decided scientists may be
too enamored with your technology.

Helmut raises an eyebrow.

GRASBY (CONT'D)

Colonel Wang, you traipse around
the galaxy in an unarmed space
ship?

HELMUT

This ship is armed.

GRASBY

When on this tour will you show me
your weapons?

HELMUT

I was not planning to show you our
weapons.

GRASBY

You are orbiting my world in an armed space ship that has technology far beyond that of my world.

Helmut ponders her words for a moment. He takes a deep breath.

HELMUT

I will now show you our ship's weapons.

INT. OFFENSICE WEAPONS SECTION

Helmut and Grasby are in the section.

Two weapons systems officers in the section tend to their consoles.

HELMUT

The primary laser battery is capable of releasing energy bursts of 4 megawatts.

Grasby shows no emotion.

GRASBY

That is enough energy to destroy our largest cities.

HEMLUT

That is why scientists would be better suited as emissaries. They would be less likely to have irrational apprehensions of our technology.

GRASBY

You consider my apprehension
irrational?

HELMUT

We failed to mention our ship was
armed because we didn't want
knowledge of our ship's weapons to
be construed as a threat.

GRASBY

I see.

INT. OUTSIDE DICK'S QUARTERS

Laita and Dick are alone in the corridor. Laita is giddy
but turns serious.

LAITA

If you give us freedom to move
about the ship, unescorted, that
would negate any Velikiy arguments.

DICK

I see. I'll take that under
advisement.

Laita smiles and takes out her ear device. She twists the
device and its amber light goes on. She puts it in her ear.

Dick and Laita walk down the corridor.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Dick, Helmut, Dr. Smirk, Stan, and Kavita are in the room.

DICK

Kavita, give your presentation of
what you have learned from
monitoring Palchi communications.

KAVITA

The people of Palchi are generally excited about our presence. There are some voices of opposition. The leaders range from enthusiastic to guardedly optimistic. Palchi's geopolitical power is divided into almost 200 nation-states. These states are in a series of alliances with each other, called spheres. There are 5 spheres roughly divided by the planet's 5 major continents. The leaders of Velikiy and those in their sphere are the most reserved in their statements. The Velikiy are the most technologically advanced, they achieved Light Plus capability. They are also the wealthiest. The Minhwa is the most populace sphere. Over half the people on the planet are within the Minhwa sphere. Their economic and technological capability is such they can make contributions to Palchi technical advances but overall at least a generation behind the Velikiy in significant scientific fields. At the other end of the scale is Madang. It is the most sparsely populated sphere. Its nations are impoverished and I've uncovered no evidence they have made a significant social or scientific accomplishment since the planet's industrial age. Chair Kam is from Madang.

DICK

I see.

(Beat)

There is a great disparity between spheres.

STAN

It is similar to Earth at this stage of development.

HELMUT

Palchi has suffered some large asteroid strikes relatively recently. The last such strike occurred 104 years ago.

(Pause)

It struck Madang.

(Beat)

There was some advanced warning so many of the wealthier people of Madang moved to other continents, primarily Velikiy.

(Pause)

Another large asteroid was on a collision course with Palchi. It would have struck the ocean near Velikiy.

(Beat)

The Velikiy developed and used their technology to divert the asteroid.

KAVITA

This happened 23 years ago.

DR. SMIRK

It sounds like the old haves and have not situation.

(Pause)

The planets change but not the circumstances.

STAN

If Madang is in this 'have not' block then why did they put Kam in charge of their Global Counsel?

HELMUT

The Global Counsel has no actual authority.

(Pause)

It is similar to such global organizations in the 20th century.

(Pause)

It is simply a place for diplomats from different nation-states to meet.

(Beat)

The real authority comes from the dominant nation-state in each sphere. The two areas of conflict have been economic and security.

(Pause)

The other spheres have been pressuring the Velikiy sphere to share more of their wealth and technological knowledge with other spheres.

(Beat)

The Velikiy sphere has been demanding the other spheres give more urgency to dealing with violent crime. Nation-states in the Velikiy sphere have been the most frequent victims of mass casualty attacks.

(Beat)

The Velikiy blames the Minhwa for not taking effective measures to prevent such attacks.

DICK

Mass casualty attacks, do you mean terrorism?

HELMUT

Since the Palchi view motivations for crimes as irrelevant we do not know how many of these crimes would fit our definition of terrorism.

DICK

What about the emissaries?

DR. SMIRK

Kam is friendly. I repaired some ear damage and some other medical issues for him.

(Beat)

I think I made a friend for life.

Dr. Smirk holds up Kam's hearing aid.

DR. SMIRK (CONT'D)

He gave me this for a souvenir.

(Pause)

It's what he had to use to make him hear clearly.

HELMUT

Grasby's thinking is very analytical. She is intelligent, calculating, and devious.

DICK

She lied to you?

HELMUT

No, but she gave the opportunity for me to lie.

(Pause)

She states the *Tereshkova* was an unarmed ship.

(Beat)

She apparently concluded we had weapons.

(Beat)

Based on her previous speech patterns and subsequent statements I believe her statements and questions were tailored to put me on the defensive.

Dr. Smirk is amused.

DR. SMIRK

Did she succeed?

HELMUT

She did not reveal her conclusions.
Dick is also amused but tries not to show it.

DICK

Laita is enthusiastic about her planet having relations with us.

(Pause)

She acknowledges there are some on Palchi that don't want to make overdue social changes. She gave some helpful advice on how we can allay the fears of those who oppose further contact with us.

DR. SMIRK

I think it was obvious from our dinner reception Grasby and Laita don't get along.

DICK

Two opposites and Kam in the middle, do you see the logic in a welcoming committee like that Helmut?

HELMUT

Grasby mentioned a concern that interest in our technology may interfere with their judgment.

(Beat)

Grasby may have been chosen as a voice of opposition.

STAN

So she's a 'devil's advocate'.
From what I've learned from

history people who are in
opposition are usually ignored
when decisions are made.

DICK

Point noted Stan.

(Pause)

She seems to be in a stronger
position than some outsider going
against the tide.

KAVITA

She is highly regarded in her
sphere, and has successfully
prosecuted over 1,000 capital
cases.

DICK

Her comments about the Sculpin,
she believes in strict adherence
to the law.

HELMUT

She, and others on her planet, may
conclude if someone in your
position is so cavalier about
having contraband we may have a
similar attitude about more
serious regulations.

DR. SMIRK

There is a big difference between
having some Sculpin and
regulations that have a serious
impact on planetary relations.

HELMUT

The Palchi might not think so.

DICK

Laita was quick to point out how Grasby overreacted.

STAN

Dick, when Earth was in this stage of development there was often a personality clash between two types of women.

(Pause)

There were those who believed to be treated as men's equals they had to act like men. Other women believed they didn't have to give up their femininity to be treated as men's equals.

DICK

This could just be a personality clash between two women?

KAVITA

Personality clashes aren't restricted to just women.

DICK

I stand corrected.

(Pause)

It could be a personality clash between two people. I'll give them freedom of the ship.

(Beat)

Kavita, I'll have everyone report to you when any of them leaves a section. I do want to keep track of where they go and what they say.

KAVITA

Yes Dick.

Dick glances at Helmut.

DICK

I'll also instruct everyone to strictly adhere to regulations.

INT. DOCKING WAY

Dick, Helmut, Dr. Smirk, and Stan are present. Stan monitors as the Palchi ship docks with the *Tereshkova*.

The docking way hatch opens and the docking hatch of the Palchi ship opens.

Kam steps through the docking way hatch. He has an impressionist style painting. He hands the painting to Dick.

KAM

This time we come with gifts.

(Pause)

Here is a painting by one of our most popular living artists. He painted it to mark your coming.

(Pause)

It's titled, "The Arrival".

Dick forces a grateful smile.

DICK

Thank you.

Dick hands the painting to Helmut who fakes an appreciative nod.

DICK (CONT'D)

Have this hung in a prominent place on the ship.

HELMUT

Yes director.

Grazby steps through the docking way hatch. She holds a cylinder in her arms. She speaks in her usual matter-of-fact tone.

GRAZBY

This is francium.

Stan takes the cylinder from her. Dick has a confused look.

DICK

Thank you.

Laita steps through the docking way hatch. She is wearing red high heel, sling back sandals. She has a blue ribbon tied around her right ankle. She has a red mini-dress that has a bare back and left midriff. Around her waist is a black belt that holds up what looks like two black saddle bags on her sides. These "saddle bags" extend to her mid-thigh. She has on a mirror pendant with a silver coin chain. She is wearing silver and gold necklaces of various lengths. She has on a blue bandanna. She has a big smile and is holding a case of bottles in her arms. Dick quickly moves to take the case from her.

LAITA

Here is a case of the finest beverage on our planet.

(Pause)

We call it 'The Old One'. I'm sure your crew will enjoy it. It is something to compare with Sculpin.

Dick returned Laita's smile.

DICK

Most generous, welcome aboard, you are free to move about the ship and my crew will be happy to assist you in any way they can.

Grazby walks past Dick and exits the docking way.

Kam and Laita exchange handshakes before they exit the docking way.

After the visitors leave the crew members exchange looks.

DR. SMIRK

"The Arrival"?

DICK

They could have said it was titled "Naked on the Beach", I wouldn't have known the difference.

They laugh.

STAN

This style of painting was popular on Earth at this stage of development.

INT. DICK'S QUARTERS

Dick sits in a chair and looks at a screen.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Laita requests entry.

DICK

Enter!

The door slides open.

Laita stands at the entrance with a small, white plastic, bottle in her hand.

LAITA

Care to toast good relations
between our worlds?

DICK

I am all for better interplanetary
relations.

Dick takes 2 glasses from a draw in his table and puts them on the table.

Laita sits at the table and pours a drink for herself.

She squeezes the bottle slightly as she pours a drink for Dick.

It's unnoticeable but the squeezing causes a clamshell like opening in a small bottle within the bottle.

Laita takes her glass and waits for Dick to take his glass.

Dick holds up the glass.

DICK

To good interplanetary relations!

LAITA

To us!

INT. DICK'S QUARTERS - LATER

A lethargic Dick sits on his bed. His head is turned away from the table. The table has two empty glasses and an empty bottle.

Laita quickly takes an empty bottle out of her "saddle bags" and puts it on the table. She scoops up the original bottle and puts it in one of her "saddle bags".

She steps in front of Dick and looks at his eyes.

She waves her hand by the side of his head. Dick just stares into her eyes.

Laita gives a sly smile and speaks in a sensual voice.

LAITA

Your primary laser battery is a marvelous piece of equipment. How would one fire that weapon?

Dick speaks in a monotone drawl.

DICK

Flipping the switch marked 'primary' readies the primary laser. The target is selected. When the target is acquired the target monitor goes to green. Pressing and holding the 'confirm' button on the console then touching the monitor would cause the battery to fire.

LAITA

That is very interesting. How would someone select a stationary target on a planet being orbited?

INT. THE EXAMINATION ROOM

Dick steps into the examination room with the bottle in his hand.

Dr. Smirk is in the examination room.

DR. SMIRK

What is it Dick?

DICK

Otto, can you analyze what was in this bottle?

Dr. Smirk takes the bottle and sits it on a stand. He presses 3 buttons on the side of the stand.

DR. SMIRK

This is the drink the Palchi gave us.

DICK

Is there anything unusual in the drink?

DR. SMIRK

Nothing unusual, it's very similar to strong whiskeys we bottle on Earth. Why do you ask?

DICK

Laita brought this bottle to my quarters.

DR. SMIRK

(Chuckles)

This sounds interesting.

DICK

I think she drank me under the table. There seems to be a gap in my memory.

Dr. Smirk restrains himself from laughing out loud.

DR. SMIRK

Do you need something for a hangover?

DICK

No, I don't have a hangover.

DR. SMIRK

Well drinking something that is 50% pure grain alcohol and not having a hangover. You should consider yourself lucky.

DICK

It's just I didn't drink that much.

DR. SMIRK

This stuff is potent enough that even a little is that much.

(Pause)

You don't suspect the Palchi of being up to something?

DICK

No, I guess too many encounters with civilizations that have ulterior motives.

INT. CONTROL CENTER

Dick sits in his chair in the Control Center.

Kavita turns to him.

KAVITA

Dick, Representative Grazby is asking for permission to come to the Control Center.

DICK

That's odd. She didn't strike me as one who would ask permission if she didn't have to.

HELMUT

It may be one of her tests. Response time could be a factor.

DICK

Tell her permission granted and her courtesy is appreciated.

Kavita swipes a section of the console.

KAVITA

Permission granted and Ship Director Nishizawa appreciates your courtesy.

Moments later a hatch opens and Grazby steps into the Control Center.

Dick stands and walks towards Grazby.

Grazby raises one hand.

GRAZBY

Please try to ignore my presence.

Dick nods and returns to his chair.

Grazby stands close to the entrance hatch and quietly observes what is happening.

INT. DOCKING WAY

Laita walks to the docking way hatch. A MALE CREW MEMBER is at the control console. Laita gives him a broad smile as she nears him.

Laita makes a deliberate stomp which breaks off the heel of one of her sandals. She fakes a stumble. The Male Crew Member rushes to aide her. Laita pretends to regain her balance.

MALE CREW MEMBER

Are you alright?

LAITA

Oh yes, thank you.

Laita limps to her broken heel and picks it up.

LAITA (CONT'D)

I broke my heel.

Laita points her heel at the crew member. A jet of purple gas shorts out of the heel.

Laita covers her mouth as Male Crew Member collapses.

Laita stomps off the other heel and rushes to the console.

She opens the docking way hatch. Six men, wearing clothes similar to *Tereshkova* crew cloths, rush through the hatch.

Laita rushes to the incapacitated Male Crew Member. She takes off two of her necklaces and uses them to bind Male Crew Member's hands and feet. She uses her bandana to gag the crew member.

The men rush down the corridor. Laita scoops up her heels and follows them.

INT. CONTROL CENTER

Grazby watches as the crew monitors the Palchi ship docking and other routine activities.

Kavita gives a surprised look.

KAVITA

Dick, the docking is completed and the docking way hatch has opened but the assigned crewmember hasn't reported the progress.

DICK

Kavita, ask the crewmember to report.

KAVITA

I've been trying but no response.

DICK

Helmut, send some of your people to the docking way.

Dick turns to Grazby. She looks confused.

DICK

Representative Grazby, what do you know about this?

GRAZBY

I know nothing about any of this.

INT. DOCKING WAY

Two military men rush to the docking way. One man rushes to the bound and gagged Male Crew Member. The other military man calls in a report.

INT. OUTSIDE THE OFFENSIVE WEAPONS SECTION

Laita and two of her men run to the hatch.

Laita takes off her mirror pendant and sticks it to a bulkhead.

INT. THE OFFENSIVE WEAPONS SECTION

Two crewmembers are in the Section. The hatch opens and Laita's men rush in and fire their weapons at the crewmembers.

The weapons fire darts which are connected to wires. These darts tase the crewmembers then the tasers release the wires and load another dart.

Laita rushes in. She has her remaining necklaces in her hands. She uses the necklaces and her ankle ribbon to bind and gag the crew members.

LAITA

Power up the laser!

She takes the empty bottle from one of her "saddle bags" and holds it out to one of her men.

LAITA (CONT'D)

Take this they might mistake it
for an explosive.

The man has a cylinder in his hand. He keeps hold of the cylinder and grabs the bottle's neck with his thumb and index finger.

INT. CONTROL CENTER

HELMUT

My people found the crew member at
the docking way unconscious.

There are a series of red flashes.

COMPUTER GENERATED VOICE

Ship's primary weapons are
charging.

The hatch door opens and 4 of Laita's men with their
weapons drawn and small cylinders in their other hands rush
in.

LAITA MAN 1

Nobody move! We don't intend to
harm anyone on this ship.

Laita Man 1 spots Grasby.

LAITA MAN 1 (CONT'D)

Except you!

Laita Man 1 punches her in the mouth and she falls
unconscious on the deck.

A CONTROL CENTER CREWMEMBER flinches towards Grasby. LAITA
MAN 2 points his gun at Control Center Crewmember and the
Control Center Crewmember stands fast.

INT. THE OFFENSIVE WEAPONS SECTION

Laita closes her eyes, raises her head, and smiles as she
presses the part of the monitor screen marked "fire".

She opens her eyes and retargets the laser.

INT. CONTROL CENTER

There is a loud mechanical POP. Laita's Men smile.

LAITA MAN 1

That is your ship's weapon firing,
correct?

Laita Man 1 glances at Control Center
Crewmember.

LAITA MAN 1 (CONT'D)

You may revive her, but move
slowly.

He turns his head towards Kavita.

LAITA MAN 1 (CONT'D)

Stations should be reporting the
devastation. Put them on the
screen. I want her to see this.

Kavita stands and has a defiant look.

KAVITA

I will not.

INT. ENGINEERING SECTION

Stan works frantically at his console.

STAN

Control Center, what is going on?
Come in Control Center.

(Pause)

Offensive Weapons Section, come in
Offensive Weapons Section.

(Pause)

Examination Room!

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM

Dr. Smirk and Kam are in the room along with the unconscious Male Crew Member.

Kam puts his hand to his earpiece and the blood rushes from his face.

STAN (V.O.)

Examination Room!

DR. SMIRK

This is Otto.

KAM

Kkot obliterated. A city of 8 million people destroyed.

STAN (V.O.)

Otto, I can't contact the Control Center or the Offensive Weapons Section. Do you have any idea what's going on?

KAM

A ray from your ship destroyed a major city.

DR. SMIRK

Someone destroyed a city with our lasers!

INT. ENGINEERING SECTION

Stan turns to the others in the section.

STAN

(Yelling)

Cut off all power except life support, utilities, and communications.

He turns to the console.

STAN

Open communication.

(Pause)

All military personnel arm up and proceed with caution to the Offensive weapons Section or the Control Center.

(Pause)

All other personnel, armed intruders on board, take appropriate protective measures.

INT. THE OFFENSIVE WEAPONS SECTION

Laita PANTS with anticipation.

The monitor shows there is a lock on another city.

Laita's smile broadens as she presses the part of the monitor screen marked "fire".

INT. CONTROL CENTER

There is the sound of the ship's main laser firing.

The *Tereshkova* powers down. The intruders reflexively look up. Dick bursts out of his chair. He runs and vaults over a railing, kicks down one of the intruders. Kavita grabs the weapon hand of the intruder nearest to her. The Control Center Crewmember rushes another intruder. The intruder wrestling with Kavita pushes her into a console. Helmut gives a karate chop to an intruder's neck and that intruder collapses. Dick punches Laita Man 1, knocking him unconscious. The intruder wrestling with the Control Center Crewmember fires his weapon. The Control Center Crewmember and the intruder shake then collapse. Laita Man 1 picks his weapon off the deck but Dick punches him. Dick blow knocks out Laita Man 1.

DICK

Helmut, send your people to the
Offensive Weapon Section.

Grazby regains consciousness. She puts her hand to her earpiece. She puts on a brave face but her quivering body betrays she is distraught.

The Control Center hatch opens and some military personnel rush in.

MILITARY MEMBER 1

Mr. Nishizawa, is everything under
control?

DICK

Take these intruders into custody.

Helmut checks an intruder's pulse. Control Center Crewmember regains consciousness. He pulls a piece of metal that's attached to a thin wire from his chest.

HELMUT

This intruder is dead.

GRAZBY

Be careful!

(Pause)

Those are 'silence sticks' on the floor. They are designed to poke the holder with a lethal poison should the holder lose consciousness.

INT. OUTSIDE THE OFFENSIVE WEAPONS SECTION

Laita's mirror pendant is stuck to the wall.

The heel of Laita's sandal is stuck to another wall at face level.

Stan is with some military members. They have non-lethal electric shock weapons.

The military team splits into 2 squads. They approach the Offensive Weapons Section from 2 directions.

Stan waves his hand and the military members move towards the Offensive Weapons Section.

One of Laita's men sees the reflection of the squad with Stan. Laita's man hurls the liquor bottle at the squad. Stan and the squad jump back.

The other squad's advance sets off a motion detector in Laita's heel. Gas shoots out and incapacitates a squad member. The intruders fire their tasers and incapacitate 2 squad members. Return fire incapacitates Laita's men. The squad rushes to the Offensive Weapons Section hatch and Laita's men.

MILITARY MEMBER 2

This man is dead.

MILITARY MEMBER 3

This man is dead too.

STAN

Is there any chance of a lethal charge?

MILITARY MEMBER 2

None, if a weapon doesn't pass a sanity check it would give a warning light and not discharge.

INT. CONTROL CENTER

Grazby is distraught. Dick looks sternly at Grazby.

DICK

What do you know about this?

GRAZBY

Two of our cities have been reduced to ashes.

DICK

I mean the assault on my ship.

GRAZBY

I am not involved in their actions if that is your question.

Dick gives Grazby a long look. His stern look changes to sympathetic. He turns to Helmut.

DICK

You and your people come with me.

Dick and the military people rush out of the Control Center.

Grazby's look changes from distraught to determination. She takes deliberate steps walking out of the Control Center.

INT: OUTSIDE THE OFFENSIVE WEAPONS SECTION

Stan feverishly works at the console by the hatch. Military members stand at the ready. Dick, Helmut, and more military members rush to join them.

DICK

Stan, what's happening?

STAN

Two of them were outside the door. Our people are alright but two of them killed themselves. It was apparently some kind of 'dead man's stick'.

(Beat)

They locked the hatch.

DICK

How long will it take?

STAN

Just a few more seconds Dick.

(Pause)

There she goes.

(Beat)

Ready?

DICK

Now!

The hatch opens. Dick leads everyone into the Offensive Weapons Section.

INT. OFFENSIVE WEAPONS SECTION

Laita has her arms outstretched by her sides and parallel to the ground. Two military members hold their weapons on Laita as the other military members check the room and untie the two Offensive Weapons Section crew members.

DICK

Laita, why?

LAITA

This was to strike a blow for the oppressed.

DICK

Strike a blow for the oppressed?
You killed millions of innocent people.

LAITA

The innocents are shields for the oppressors. The Velikiy have jealously guarded their technology and wealth instead of sharing it equally among all the people.

DICK

This is not the way. You can't seek justice by committing mass murder.

LAITA

I did the nasty work, now all you have to do is demand the Velikiy submit. They will have no choice but to comply.

(Beat)

We are not monsters.

(Beat)

We did not seriously harm any of
your crew.

(Beat)

Equality, and the liberty it
brings, is within your grasp.

Grazby, Dr. Smirk, and Kam enter the section.

GRAZBY

Educated, privileged, an excellent
and significant job, still she
joins the murder groups.

(Beat)

She is still alive. It is a
standard murder group tactic. The
one best able to garner sympathy
and articulate the groups'
supposed purpose stays alive to
turn and recruit others.

LAITA

My relative privilege is no cause
for me to ignore the plight of
others.

(To Dick)

Remember what we spoke about, a
free and equal planet. You can do
this.

GRAZBY

Ship Director Nishizawa, you will
immediately send her down to
Velikiy.

LAITA

I wish to appeal to your planet.

DICK

I see.

GRAZBY

Ship Director Dick Nishizawa, send her down to Velikiy, Now!

DICK

I have no choice. She has asked for an appeal to Earth. I have to bring her before one of our tribunals for a hearing. Our regulations are clear on this.

In one motion Grazby grabs the broach from her chest. She presses the broach which extends three points from the points in the broach. She throws the broach and it strikes Laita in her left midriff. The extended points slowly retract and the broach falls to the deck.

Laita takes a half step forward and staggers. Dick rushes to Laita and catches her before she falls. She looks deep into Dick's eyes.

LAITA

You see they are barbarians. You can end their scourge. End their terror rule.

Laita grabs Dick and gives him a passionate kiss. She dies in his arms.

Dick rushes towards Grazby and stops one step in front of her.

DICK

Get her off my ship.

Two military men take her out of the section.

Kam steps in front of Dick.

KAM

Nishizawa, you will send these bodies and everything these criminals brought with them down to my planet without delay.

(Beat)

Then you will take this ship and its crew out of this solar system.

(Beat)

Your planet is not to attempt any contact with us unless we first contact your planet or one of its ships.

(Beat)

This is a grand accommodation.

(Beat)

By our laws this ship is a crime scene and all on board are criminal suspects in a mass murder investigation.

(Beat)

Crew ranks or positions afford them no privileges or authority. Do you understand this Nishizawa?

DICK

I understand and will comply.

INT. THE TERESHKOVA'S CONTROL CENTER

Dick sits in his chair. Helmut is at his station. Kavita approaches Dick.

KAVITA

Kam gave a speech explaining why they sent us away. He said our, 'Technology had developed beyond our ability to control it.'

DICK

That sounds familiar

HELMUT

Dick, we did everything right. It wasn't our fault the situation ended badly.

DICK

Helmut, over 15 million people are dead. They did everything right and 15 million of their people are dead.

KAVITA

It was only 7 people. They made a decision not to have relations with us based on the actions of 7 people.

DICK

They based their decision on 15 million people killed.

FADE OUT: