

The Farthest Frontier:

"DREAM WORLD"

Written by

MAS

and dedicated to

Robert Anson Heinlein and Philip K. Dick

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"DREAM WORLD"

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. ANOTHER WORLD - DAY

The eyes of the PATIENT are closed, his features bathed in an overpowering light. A chorus of beautiful voices is heard all around.

Then one voice of the chorus becomes distinct from the others.

VOICE (V.O.)

At last - at long last! After all this time...

(pause)

You are returning!

The Patient smiles.

VOICE (V.O.)

It is time ... to wake up...

And in the Patient's hand a glowing point of light appears.

VOICE (V.O.)

To roll back the door...

(pause)

The door ... the door ... the door...

Slowly the words fade into a dull pounding noise, which becomes louder and louder.

INT. BEDROOM OF PATIENT'S HOME - DAY

With a start the Patient suddenly awakens, opening his eyes. No longer bathed in light, it is seen that he is lying in bed, fully dressed in rumpled clothes.

Then he raises his head to look up.

The door to the room is seen - barricaded with great pile of furniture. The dull pounding noise is coming from the door, as someone seems to be trying to batter their way through.

He jumps up from the bed and runs to the barricade, trying to hold it against the onslaught.

PATIENT

No, you can't! You can't!!

But the barricade slowly continues to give way, and the Patient slumps down to his knees in despair.

PATIENT

Almost there. So close.

(pause)

Almost there...

He collapses, bowed down, hands clasped over his head.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

A searcher. A dreamer. A man who looks for something over the hill ... around the corner ... on the road that never ends. But might, at last, find that his own search ends ... at THE FARTHEST FRONTIER.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. ROOM AT TREATMENT CENTER - DAY

The PATIENT is once more asleep on a bed, again with tranquil features. Then a pounding noise begins to be heard again, becoming louder and louder. It suddenly stops - at which the sleeper immediately opens his eyes.

He raises his head to look to the side ... where a door is seen just closing, after someone's exit. Soft muzak is playing in the background. Then he turns back, to see something at the foot of his bed. It is a vase of flowers on an endtable.

PATIENT (V.O.)

What...

On the flowers is seen a large note that reads: "Get Well Soon".

Still befuddled, the Patient seems to be trying to concentrate.

PATIENT (V.O.)

What's happened? Where am I?

Then something else replaces the muzak...

JACK PUMPKIN (V.O.)
 And now friends, buckle on your asbestos
 suits - 'cause it's time for: The Jack
 Pumpkin Show!

The Patient looks over to the wall, to see a speaker on a console.

JACK PUMPKIN (V.O.)
 Today we have in our studio the commander of our regional defense wing - who'll give us the real facts on these so-called "wonder weapons" we've been hearing about.

The Patient raises a hand to his forehead.

JACK PUMPKIN (V.O.)
 And also, what effect they could have on our military effort ... the chance they could turn this conflict around. So we could finally win this thing, and bring our people home...

As the show's theme is heard from the speaker, the Patient lies back down on the bed, and closes his eyes again.

PATIENT (V.O.)
 If only I could remember.
 (pause)
 Remember...

A low, rising chorus of voices is heard again, as the scene slowly begins to FADE TO WHITE...

DOCTOR (O.S.)
 It is time ...

And hand is seen at the console on the wall, pressing a switch beside the speaker. The chorus of voices is suddenly cut off.

DOCTOR (O.S.)
 To wake up.

PATIENT'S POV - DOCTOR CARLIN
 who is standing above the bed.

DOCTOR
 Aren't you going to get up?

BACK TO SCENE

The Patient blinks a few times, looking up at the doctor.

DOCTOR
 You've been asleep for quite a while,
 you know.
 (pause)
 Sleep is therapeutic - but not too much
 of it...

The Patient interrupts him, getting up on his elbows.

PATIENT
 Who are you?
 (pause)
 What am I doing here?

DOCTOR
 You don't remember what happened?

PATIENT
 I...

But his voice trails off, for he can't seem to find anything more to say.

DOCTOR
 Interesting.

The Patient watches as The doctor sits down in a chair beside the bed.

DOCTOR
 Well, to answer your questions, I'm Doc-
 tor Carlin. The attending physician on
 your case. And as to what you're doing
 here...

The Patient listens expectantly - as the Doctor looks closely at the him.

DOCTOR
 You're sure you don't recall anything
 about what happened?

The Patient only shakes his head despairingly.

DOCTOR
 Well, no matter. We'll just try some-
 thing else. What's the last thing you
 remember? We can start with that.

The Patient gets up and sits on the edge of the bed, stopping to think for a moment before he replies.

PATIENT
 It was ... an argument...

FLASHBACK

INT. STUDY OF PATIENT'S HOME - DAY

The Patient is seated in front of a desktop computer, working away on something.

PATIENT (V.O.)
Well, not an argument, really. You know
how it is. My wife...

DOCTOR (V.O.)
Your wife?

A woman's form - that of the Patient's wife, SUSAN - appears next to him. Her face cannot be seen.

PATIENT (V.O.)
Yes, my wife. Susan.

The Patient glances up for a moment, then returns to his work.

PATIENT (V.O.)
She wanted to know what I was working on
- even seemed a little bit insistent,
for some reason. But I didn't have time
to explain, just then.

The Patient waves her off, at which the female form suddenly turns and exits.

PATIENT (V.O.)
Which she took the wrong way ... of
course.

After a moment the Patient turns around in his chair to look in the direction the woman exited, but she's already gone. He shakes his head.

END FLASHBACK

The doctor nods.

DOCTOR
So that's what you remember - that you'd
been working on something?

PATIENT
My latest project. I'm a designer ... a
toy designer. That's what I've been
doing the last few years.

DOCTOR
A toy designer! That's interesting.

PATIENT

Yes. I know sometimes it sounds a little silly. But it's creative, and that's what I like best. Dreaming up things.

DOCTOR

So what was this latest project of yours?

PATIENT

Actually, it's...

The Patient stares for a moment, then closes his eyes.

PATIENT

It's something I can't remember, either.

DOCTOR

Well.

(pause)

First of all, let's see if you can describe something about it. You seemed to be working very hard - was it important?

The Patient opens his eyes again.

PATIENT

Yes. Yes, extremely important. To the company.

DOCTOR

And you were under pressure - on a deadline?

PATIENT

Exactly! They needed the final specs, so they could put the candy machine...

His eyes open even wider.

PATIENT

That's it! That's what I was working on! A new candy making machine! One for kids, you know. We were falling behind schedule...

Then he pauses and stops to think for a moment ... as the doctor watches him.

PATIENT

But at first I couldn't remember that.

(pause)

Why couldn't I, doctor? What's wrong with me?

DOCTOR

Please, don't-

PATIENT

And how did I end up here? You never explained that. Please, tell me - what happened?

The doctor sighs.

DOCTOR

Very well. I thought it would be better if you remembered yourself, but...

(pause)

It seemed to be some kind of ... episode. You were behaving strangely. At first everyone seemed to think it was just the pressure of the job - but then you started saying that people were watching you. Spying on you.

He looks at the Patient carefully.

DOCTOR

Your wife in particular.

The Patient looks downward.

DOCTOR

Can you tell me why you would think that?

The Patient's expression seems strained, but he merely shakes his head "no".

DOCTOR

You'd actually barricaded yourself in your room. Did quite a good job of it, I understand. So your wife finally had to call for help.

(pause)

And then had you brought here.

The Patient is silent a moment, before finally responding.

PATIENT

So this isn't a regular hospital - is it.

DOCTOR

Well...

PATIENT

And you're not a regular doctor.

DOCTOR

Please, that's not the way to look at it. There's nothing to be ashamed of.

PATIENT

That's right. I just lost it, that's all. Totally lost it.

(pause)

And now I can't remember anything.

DOCTOR

But look - you already are remembering. You just remembered what you were working on, and before long there'll be more. A loss of memory rarely lasts very long.

The Patient seems to consider this.

DOCTOR

Don't worry. It'll work out. I'm just here to talk to you, to answer your questions and help you understand. Does that sound okay?

PATIENT

I...

(pause)

Okay.

DOCTOR

Good!

PATIENT

But what caused this? Why did it happen?

DOCTOR

That's what we're going to look for. And we'll start at the beginning - it might help if I knew more about you, anyway.

(pause)

So tell me, where do you come from?

The Patient merely looks at him blankly.

DOCTOR

Where were you born, I mean? Maybe you could tell me something about your family.

The Patient holds up his hands helplessly.

PATIENT

Again ... I ...

DOCTOR

You mean - you don't remember anything about that, either?

The Patient shakes his head "no".

DOCTOR

Interesting.

The doctor himself seems at something of a loss now; then glances up at the ceiling for a moment.

DOCTOR

Well, we've already discovered the last thing you remember. So why don't we try the other direction - see what our boundaries are.

He looks carefully at the Patient.

DOCTOR

What's the first thing you can recall? As far as you can tell, anyway.

The Patient considers this for a few moments; then looks up at the doctor.

PATIENT

I ... well, maybe you wouldn't ...
(pause)
It's pretty strange.

DOCTOR

No, go on, go on.

PATIENT

It's just that the first thing I remember isn't real. It's more like ... a dream. Some kind of a dream.

DOCTOR

That's okay. Tell me about it.

PATIENT

It's as if I was high up...

FLASHBACK

EXT. PUBLIC PLACE - DAY

Clouds float in a blue sky, the sun shining like a mighty torch.

PATIENT (V.O.)

...high up in the sky. Just floating there - for how long, I don't know. As if I'd been there forever.

The scene now falls to the ground below - a public square or mall, on which many people are walking, to and fro.

PATIENT (V.O.)

And then I noticed them. Things, moving on the ground below me. Little things, so many of them. Why hadn't I noticed them before?

The scene has now zoomed in closer on the people.

PATIENT (V.O.)

They fascinated me. Their appearance, their actions - everything about them.

Various shots of people engaged in all kinds of activities follow one another in rapid sequence.

PATIENT (V.O.)

What were they doing? And why? The more I thought about it, the more I had to know.

The scene is now in the middle of a large crowd of people, moving this way and that.

PATIENT (V.O.)

I decided that if I went down there ... right down there, where they were...

A chorus of voices, as was heard earlier, begins to fade up into audibility.

PATIENT (V.O.)

... and took on their form, their shape. So that I might dwell among them...

The chorus becomes louder and louder as the scene begins to fade to white.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Then. Then I could...
(pause)
Could...

END FLASHBACK

The Patient is gazing into the distance as his voice trails off.

DOCTOR (O.S.)

Could what?

The Patient is suddenly startled at this, and looks at the doctor, who seems rather insistent.

DOCTOR
What could you do?

PATIENT
I don't know. That's where the dream ends.

DOCTOR
And you have no idea - no idea at all - of what might have happened before the dream? Where you might have come from?

PATIENT
No.

DOCTOR
Hmmm...

As the doctor contemplates this with glittering eyes, there comes the sound of a door opening, and then an Attendant appears. He hands the doctor a folder.

DOCTOR
Ah, thank you.

He opens the folder and begins reading as the Attendant leaves.

DOCTOR
Well, that was certainly a very interesting dream. But your records, here, may help us nail down your origin a little more precisely.

He looks up at the Patient.

DOCTOR
Zanesville, Ohio.
(pause)
Does that ring a bell?

PATIENT
Well...

DOCTOR
It says you were born in Zanesville, Ohio.

The Patient shrugs.

PATIENT
Could be. For all I know.

DOCTOR
So I don't suppose you could tell me anything about your parents, either. Or your childhood.

PATIENT

No. I'm sorry.

DOCTOR

Still, you do remember that you have your own family now - you said you have a wife.

PATIENT

Yes.

DOCTOR

But no children, I gather.

PATIENT

No.

DOCTOR

Hmmm...

The doctor reads through the Patient's records for a moment. Then suddenly looks up at him.

DOCTOR

How do you feel about your wife?

The Patient seems startled.

PATIENT

What?

DOCTOR

Your wife - what is your relationship like?

PATIENT

Well.

(pause)

I love her. Of course.

DOCTOR

Of course.

(pause)

But during the episode you had earlier, you were insisting she was against you. That she and others were plotting against you.

PATIENT

I ... just don't...

DOCTOR

Remember. Yes.

(pause)

But surely you had differences before this.

PATIENT

Well...

DOCTOR

Come now - everyone has disagreements with their spouse. It's normal. If you remember you have a wife - you must remember something like that!

PATIENT

Well, there was one time ... in particular. A few months ago...

DOCTOR

Go on.

PATIENT

It was nothing, really. Nothing much. But still, a little strange...

FLASHBACK

INT. STUDY OF PATIENT'S HOME - DAY

The Patient is once again in front of his computer, working away. As he turns to get something, he happens to knock some papers off the desk, and bends down to pick them up.

PATIENT (V.O.)

It all started by accident.

As they Patient is picking up the papers, he notices something - the corner of a little slip of paper, stuck in the crevice between the desk and the wall. He takes it out and looks at it.

PATIENT (V.O.)

It was just a little piece of scrap paper. With a few notes on it.

He begins reading.

PATIENT (V.O.)

About JJ-180. The project number for the latest design I was working on.

(pause)

Notes in my wife's handwriting.

He looks up.

INT. KITCHEN OF PATIENT'S HOME - DAY

The Patient and his wife are sitting at the breakfast table. The wife's face is hidden by a newspaper she is reading.

PATIENT (V.O.)

It was odd. So later, I asked - just in passing - if she'd heard we were going ahead with JJ-180. Going into production.

She seems to shake her head.

PATIENT (V.O.)

But she said no. And what was JJ-180, dear? She'd never heard of it.

The Patient seems to be staring at her.

PATIENT

Until now.

END FLASHBACK

The Patient shrugs.

PATIENT

It wasn't a big deal. Nothing I do is secret! But why wouldn't she admit looking at my work? Like I said, it was strange.

DOCTOR

Yes, maybe you're right. A little strange. But perhaps we can clear it up now.

PATIENT

What do you mean?

DOCTOR

We'll simply ask her about it - that would seem the most direct course.

The Patient suddenly seems a bit alarmed.

PATIENT

What? You're saying that-

DOCTOR

Your wife. She's here to see you. They handed me a note with your records.

The Patient is increasingly agitated.

PATIENT

No!

(pause)

I can't see her ... not now!

DOCTOR

But why? She hasn't talked to you since you arrived here. Your own wife! Don't you think it's time?

The Patient is staring at the door to the room.

PATIENT

You don't understand! She's the one ... the one...

SUSAN (O.S.)

The one who loves you.

And with that Susan, the Patient's wife, suddenly appears from off to the side, stepping up beside him.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. ROOM AT TREATMENT CENTER - DAY

The Patient still sits on the edge of his bed, his head hanging down now - and turned away from his wife.

SUSAN

You can tell me to go away - but you can't make me stop loving you.

The Patient raises his head, but still doesn't look at her.

PATIENT

Oh. And I guess that's why ... you were eavesdropping on me.

SUSAN

I wasn't. I came in by the side door just a minute ago.

(pause)

Don't you see how foolish it is - to keep putting these suspicious interpretations on everything? Can't you see-

The doctor cuts her short.

DOCTOR

That's why we're all here. To try to get a clearer look at things.

The Patient shakes his head.

DOCTOR

You don't agree?

He looks directly at the doctor.

PATIENT

She won't tell you the truth.

For a moment there is only silence.

DOCTOR

Why do say that? Didn't you tell me you loved your wife?

PATIENT

Yes. I do.

(pause)

But she won't tell the truth.

SUSAN

Why do you say that? Why do you keep saying that?

PATIENT

And why did you keep saying you knew nothing about JJ-180?

(pause)

I told the doctor all about it.

Susan sighs, and turns to the physician.

SUSAN

I didn't deny I knew about it - I never denied it. I guess I just forgot about it.

(to the Patient)

That's what I kept trying to tell you. I happened to see your project and made some notes for an article, for our club bulletin. You know, "My Husband the Toy Designer". The "JJ-180" part I forgot about - I don't keep a lot of numbers in my head.

DOCTOR

Well, I must admit, that seems pretty reasonable.

(to the Patient)

Wouldn't you say so?

The Patient says nothing.

DOCTOR

You know, quite honestly ... I don't understand your reaction. You seem like a reasonable, intelligent man - one who loves his wife. And that didn't seem like an important incident.

(pause)

What are you so afraid of?

PATIENT

I...

DOCTOR

Why are you so upset with your wife?

PATIENT

I don't know!

DOCTOR

But there has to be a reason. Something you don't want to face. That's why you can't remember it.

PATIENT

She's watching me! That's all I know!
Spying on me, everything I do...

DOCTOR

But stop, think a moment. You yourself
said you had no big secrets. Why would
she spy on you?

PATIENT

I don't remember!

DOCTOR

And that's the whole point. To find the
truth you've got to look for it - there,
inside yourself. That's where you'll
find it.

(pause)

And you will remember, you know. Sooner
or later.

PATIENT

No! You don't understand! It's just
that this ... this ...

Suddenly Susan intrudes on the conversation.

SUSAN

This has gone far enough.

(pause)

In fact - too far.

She opens her handbag, and as she reaches in a faint little
beep seems to come from it. At this the Patient seems trans-
fixed with horror.

PATIENT

Please...

Susan takes from her handbag a futuristic looking gun, which
seems to be aimed directly at the Patient.

PATIENT

Please, Susan! I love you...

SUSAN

That's why I'm doing this.

She nods at the gun.

SUSAN

Here doctor...

She suddenly swings the gun toward the surprised doctor.

SUSAN

Is JJ-180.

The Patient starts to turn his head aside as Susan pulls the trigger.

There is a flash of light at the muzzle of the gun, and a few little beeps and a whine. That and nothing more.

Without further ado she hands the gun to the doctor.

SUSAN

There's your secret project. For a toy design.

She looks sadly at her husband - who almost seems to collapse back down on the bed, burying his face in his hands.

DOCTOR

Well.

(pause)

That was perhaps a little ... overdramatic. But maybe some progress has been made...

PATIENT (O.S.)

Yes, doctor. You're right.

Now the Patient is seen again, raising his head to face the doctor. And strangely, has suddenly become calmer.

PATIENT

Progress has definitely been made.

He looks at his wife ... who merely stares at him.

PATIENT

I remember, now.

He even smiles a little.

PATIENT

That was quite a show. Seeing the gun again - I think that did it.

Then he turns back to the doctor.

PATIENT

But she's still not telling the truth.

DOCTOR

Really, I-

PATIENT

No, doctor. Please don't interrupt. I'll tell my little story - and then you can make your judgment of it.

The doctor merely sighs a little as the Patient nods toward his wife.

PATIENT

And I think she might be interested in hearing this too. She might know part of it - but not the whole story.

Susan shakes her head in resigned disgust.

PATIENT

It happened a couple of months after I found her notes on JJ-180...

FLASHBACK

INT. KITCHEN OF PATIENT'S HOME - DAY

The Patient is sitting at the kitchen table, reading a newspaper, when the phone rings. After the second ring he moves as if to rise, but then Susan's voice is heard.

SUSAN (O.S.)

I'll get it!

In the next moment she appears, some car keys in hand. She answers the phone.

SUSAN

Hello?

(pause for response)

Is something wrong?

(pause for response)

You're kidding! Don't worry, I'll be right over!

(pause for response)

Just a few minutes!

She slams down the phone, and starts to leave; then doubles back a moment and addresses the Patient.

SUSAN

Sorry, I've got to leave again right away. An emergency at the office.

The Patient nods. She starts to leave and then doubles back a second time, obviously agitated.

SUSAN

I should be back before long...

At which she finally takes off for real. The Patient smiles a little at this, shaking his head; then seems to notice something. It is his wife's handbag, sitting on a stool by a counter. After he realizes what it is he jumps up and grabs it, hurrying out.

INT. ENTRYWAY OF PATIENT'S HOME - DAY

The Patient dashes up to the front door of the house and flings it open, holding up the handbag to hail Susan. But evidently she is already driving away, the noise of her vehicle heard in the background. After a moment he shrugs and closes the door again, leaving the way he came.

INT. KITCHEN OF PATIENT'S HOME - DAY

The Patient walks into the kitchen. At first he heads for the stool by the counter, as if to put the handbag back where he found it; but then stops - and slowly holds it up, looking at it.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Well.

(pause)

What would you do?

He goes over to sit at the kitchen table, setting the handbag in front of him.

PATIENT (V.O.)

It must have been a big emergency. Because she was never without this thing. Never.

He picks up the handbag.

PATIENT (V.O.)

I knew it wasn't right. But those notes on JJ-180 ... not really a big deal, but it still sort of puzzled me.

(pause)

And I'd never have another chance like this.

He moves as if to open the handbag, but then notices something, and stops.

PATIENT (V.O.)

A lock?

(pause)

Do they usually put locks on these things?

But shrugging, he tries anyway, and cracks it open.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Left it open! My lucky day.

As he starts opening the handbag wider there comes a faint beep, just as when Susan opened it at the treatment center.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Wait a minute. I knew that beep!

He reaches into the handbag and pulls out the same futuristic looking gun as before.

PATIENT (V.O.)

JJ-180!

He looks at the toy gun, and then smiles.

PATIENT (V.O.)

I'd heard they'd just put my new toy into production. Did she go out and get one - to surprise me, or something?

Still smiling, he examines the gun; then holds it up, aiming as he squints one eye shut and pulls the trigger. There come some little beeps and a whine - followed by an energy beam that comes arcing out of the muzzle. The beam strikes a toaster, which glows for an instant and then disappears.

The Patient remains frozen in place for a moment, staring blankly. Then he goes over to the counter where the toaster stood, and finds that only a scorch mark and a little fine debris remain.

He looks up, utterly dazed. Then he looks at the gun again - and suddenly drops it, as if it's been heated to a thousand degrees.

PATIENT (V.O.)

My God.

He seems to sag against the counter.

PATIENT (V.O.)

What was going on? It looked exactly what I'd designed - but it was real!

He suddenly seems to realize something.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Have you ever been doing something - something by long habit - but didn't think much about it? Until one day it suddenly hits you?

He immediately hurries off.

INT. STUDY OF PATIENT'S HOME - DAY

The Patient sits down in front of his computer and turns it on, staring at the screen.

PATIENT (V.O.)

I went back and took a look at my design for the JJ-180. Looked at it from square one - as if I was seeing it for the very first time.

He taps rapidly away at the keyboard, looking up at the screen again and again.

PATIENT (V.O.)

And then I saw why it looked like the gun in my wife's handbag.

The Patient stops, his eyes widening a little.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Because it was the gun in my wife's handbag.

He sits back in his chair, stunned.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Now that I looked at the design again - the circuitry, the components - I saw how it worked. Worked all too well.

He puts a hand to his head.

PATIENT (V.O.)

But how could this happen? How could I think I was designing one thing - but unconsciously be working on something else altogether?

(pause)

Something of a technology that far exceeded anything around me...

He looks around the room.

PATIENT (V.O.)

And then it hit me. This must all be a fake. A setup. Somehow, someone was playing with my head, getting me to do things I otherwise wouldn't. Getting me to design weapons of mass destruction...

He looks down at the JJ-180 again, lying on the floor.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Which I thought were toys.

Then he looks over at the handbag, still sitting on the table.

PATIENT (V.O.)

And Susan...

(pause)

They'd given me everything. A perfect life - a perfect job - a perfect wife. All a dream.

He drops his head in despair.

PATIENT

A dream.

But after a moment he suddenly looks up again.

PATIENT (V.O.)

But my latest project - the one I was working on now! What could it-

He jumps up.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Wait a minute!

He hurries over to his wife's handbag, and begins rummaging through it. After a moment he comes up with something that looks a couple pieces of wrapped CANDY.

PATIENT (V.O.)

So they were already turning out a prototype. My next design - that candy machine. That goddamn candy machine.

He stares at the piece of candy.

PATIENT (V.O.)

What was it, really?

(pause)

A deadly poison? A disease agent? A genetic bomb to wipe out a nation?

And as he stares, a sound is heard outside - of a vehicle driving up next to the house.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Back already!

Though at first wild-eyed, the Patient suddenly seems to decide something.

PATIENT (V.O.)

But I knew what I had to do.

He hurriedly exits.

INT. BEDROOM OF PATIENT'S HOME - DAY

The Patient is already piling furniture up against the door to the bedroom.

PATIENT (V.O.)

If I could just buy enough time...

But then a voice is heard faintly, from elsewhere in the house.

SUSAN (O.S.)

Dear? Dear, are you there?

The Patient quickly flings a couple more things onto his barricade, then goes over to sit down on the bed. He takes a piece of candy out of his pocket again and looks at it.

PATIENT (V.O.)

What would it do? I had no idea. Maybe kill me. But that would solve my problem too. Because there was no way I'd work for them again. No way I'd let them control my life.

He slips off the wrapper from the candy.

PATIENT (V.O.)

And somehow - I don't know why - it really didn't frighten me. As if this was the right thing. As if I knew this was what I had to do.

He puts the candy in his mouth, then lies down on the bed.

PATIENT (V.O.)

How long ... how long would it take?

(pause)

How long until I'd find out...

And as the scene begins to fade to white, the doorknob is heard being tried, followed by a knock, and Susan's voice.

SUSAN (O.S.)

Dear? Dear, are you in there? Please answer me...

FADE TO

END FLASHBACK

For a moment everyone is silent, there in the room at the treatment center. In fact, the Patient seems calmer than ever ... perhaps unnaturally so.

PATIENT

So, what do you think of my story?

There is no immediate reaction from Susan or the doctor.

PATIENT

Now we know how it ended - I guess they got there in time...

SUSAN

To save you from tooth decay.

DOCTOR

Please, don't!

(to the Patient)

Well, that was certainly ... fascinating.

PATIENT

Thank you, doctor. But also keep this in mind.

(pause)

That now I know you're in on this, too. You must be.

Susan suddenly jumps up from where she's been sitting.

SUSAN

Why are you saying that? Why are you doing this? None of it happened that way, none of it! I found the kitchen thrashed, that's all! You keep twisting facts into something they're not...

The Patient stands too.

PATIENT

And I...

(pause)

I loved you. That was part of it. Did you know that?

Susan sits down again, shaking her head.

SUSAN

Stop...

PATIENT

I actually loved you.

(pause)

But you won't get me to go on.

The Patient's voice begins to get louder.

PATIENT

You and the others were good. So good, that maybe I even wanted to be fooled.

As the Patient's tirade becomes ever more vehement, the doctor gets up to push a button on a console on the wall.

PATIENT

But now I see what's really happening.

He seems to be staring at something, in the distance.

PATIENT

So you can't make me go on - do you hear?

The Attendant and a new SECOND ATTENDANT rush into the room. At a sign from the doctor they take hold of the Patient, bodily lifting him up and putting him down on the bed, holding him as the doctor takes up a syringe and prepares it for an injection.

PATIENT

It's over! So you can't make me! Do you hear, you can't make me!

The doctor goes over to administer the injection, and after he does so the Patient's voice begins to slowly fade away.

PATIENT

Can't make me ... can't make me ...
can't ... make ... me ...

And then there is silence. The doctor gestures for the Attendants to leave; then goes over to Susan, gently putting his hand on her shoulder.

DOCTOR

I'm sorry.
(pause)
Very sorry.

She slowly raises her head.

SUSAN

I know, doctor. I know you did your best for him.

She looks sadly at her husband.

SUSAN

It's so crazy - it just doesn't make any sense...

Then she turns to face the doctor.

SUSAN

But that's what we all have to keep doing. Our best.

He nods.

DOCTOR

Yes ... Commander.

Susan stands.

SUSAN

I suppose mistakes had to happen, sooner or later.

(pause)

We'll simply have to correct them...

Which she says as she looks down again at the Patient. Suddenly her gaze is steely, determined.

SUSAN

Because we need those weapons he makes. We need them so badly!

DOCTOR

Yes, Commander. We all know.

She steps up to the bed, standing beside the Patient as he lies there quietly, his eyes still half open.

SUSAN

It's funny - he wanted to know who we were! But if only we knew who he really was!

She looks pointedly at the doctor.

SUSAN

You didn't find out anything more, did you? About where he came from?

DOCTOR

No. No, he couldn't remember.

SUSAN

Too bad.

(pause)

It was strange, how we found him. And even stranger, when we found out what he could do...

She touches the Patient on the shoulder.

SUSAN

He'll rest now, won't he?

DOCTOR

Yes, I gave him a new sedative. Very effective - it's derived from the formula for that "candy" he was working on.

The doctor reflects for a moment.

DOCTOR

It was odd - we found him with some of that candy in his mouth. What was he trying to do? Unless he imagined it had some other effect...

(pause)

Still, it seems to be working. He's completely sedated now.

Susan sighs.

SUSAN

But you know, it's even stranger - how sad it feels.

(pause)

As if I had almost, somehow, become ... close to him.

She touches the pillow next to his head.

SUSAN

And I keep wondering. About what it must be like, I mean.

(pause)

To see what he does.

They both gaze at him silently.

CLOSEUP ON PATIENT

who is lying there on the bed, eyes drooping almost shut as he mumbles very softly.

PATIENT

Where...

(pause)

Where are you ...

The other-worldly chorus of voices begins to be heard again, one voice rising above the others.

VOICE (V.O.)

You're back again! At last!

PATIENT

Yes.

(pause)

It was only ... a dream.

His eyes finally close completely.

ANGLE ON SUSAN AND THE DOCTOR

as they now begin to slowly fade away from sight. And then finally disappear completely, leaving only the room in view.

CLOSEUP ON PATIENT

as he smiles.

PATIENT (V.O.)

Now I remember.

EXT. ANOTHER WORLD - DAY

The Patient stands against a softly glowing background of light.

PATIENT (V.O.)

The light.

The chorus rises louder and louder.

PATIENT (V.O.)

The light of every living thing, as it
always had been, and always would be,
all in and of the One. The One that
dreams; and when it dreams of Being,
then becomes...

(pause)

The Dreamer of Worlds.

And as the chorus begins to fade into silence, there comes
Susan - who steps beside the Patient, as they both raise their
heads, to gaze into the light.

BEGIN SLOW FADE TO BACKGROUND OF STARS

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

A searcher. A fugitive. A dreamer.
Who discovered that reality can be built
from the stuff dreams are made of, when
the builder finds his blueprint in ...
THE FARTHEST FRONTIER.

FADE OUT.

THE END