

FADE- IN:

NOT- TOO- DISTANT FUTURE

EXT. CITY OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT

A massive shantytown sits on the banks of a black river. Thousands of makeshift wooden shacks, campfires, and tents line the river's edge as far as the eye can see. On the opposite side of the river, the lights of a modern city skyline loom in the distance. The tallest building displays a large, single-worded sign: ORION.

EXT. SHANTYTOWN - NIGHT

The shantytown — known as The Domain — teems with people, looking disoriented and agitated. Some people huddle around campfires in a catatonic state, cooking rats and mice. A BEARDED MAN injects a dirty needle into his arm, while a screaming woman runs past. The bearded man rises, staggering past a group of people with deformed limbs and faces, looking frighteningly grotesque. The man approaches the only bridge on the river, staring across to a checkpoint that is manned by TWO ARMED GUARDS. The bearded man stares straight ahead, walking slowly, raising his hands. He calls out.

BEARDED MAN

I am not a carrier. The guards bristle and defiantly step forward. The bearded man continues walking, nearing the midway point of the bridge. Both guards raise their weapons, metallic and shiny. A red laser casts a pinpoint red dot on the man's forehead. He stops momentarily at the midpoint of the bridge.

BEARDED MAN

I've been healed. He takes a step, as the SOUND of laser-fire punctuates the night air. In an instant, the bearded man's body convulses, and then drops lifelessly to the deck of the bridge. The laser-fire causes a momentary lull to the activities in The Domain, but the moment is fleeting. The guards return to their post as the dead man's still open eyes stare in the direction of the large neon sign: ORION.

INT. ORION CITY – ORION SANATORIUM – OPERATING ROOM – NIGHT

A pale-lit room. A solitary light hangs from the ceiling above an operating table. A SURGEON stands over a YOUNG WOMAN, who is seated in stirrups, sweating and pushing.

SURGEON

That's it. Just a bit more. The woman GRUNTS and SCREAMS, gasping for air.

SURGEON

Here it comes.

The woman lets out a wail, and then a long sigh of relief, as the surgeon collects the newborn baby into her arms. The surgeon turns, giving a quick glance to a dark-windowed observation room, situated above her. Inside the observation room can be seen the silhouettes of TWO MEN.

INT. OPERATING ROOM OBSERVATION ROOM – NIGHT

A pale-looking man named CORTEZ (51) gives a cold-blooded stare into the operating room. Cortez exudes power and fear. Cortez turns impassively to RUFUS (42), a broad-shouldered goon who resembles a clean-looking skinhead.

CORTEZ

Kill them both.

Rufus nods, as both men turn to leave the room.

INT. ORION SANATORIUM - OPERATING ROOM – NIGHT

The new mother collects the swaddled baby into her arms.

MOTHER

He looks normal. I'm sure he is. She gives an apprehensive and exhausted smile, as the door CREAKS open. The mother looks up and sees

RUFUS

Standing in the doorway, giving a blank stare in her direction.

THE NEW MOTHER

Gives Rufus a look of familiarity and horror, reacting with abject fear. She lets out a blood-curdling scream.

EXT. ORION CITY - ORION MEDICAL COMPLEX - DAY

A series of interconnected white buildings with dark windows. The surrounding grounds are pristine, consisting of concrete footpaths and manicured landscaping. All of the white buildings encircle and connect to the ominous-looking Orion Sanatorium — cylindrical, gray, and without windows.

EXT. ORION MEDICAL RESEARCH BUILDING - DAY

One of the benign-looking white buildings.

INT. RESEARCH BUILDING - LUNCH ROOM - DAY

A small rectangular-shaped room with two long, white tables and a mammoth-size refrigerator. Hanging on the wall in the far corner is an old-fashioned dartboard. A half-dozen boisterous INTERNS are gathered around the dartboard, exchanging money and heckling each other. All the darts have been thrown, except for one last dart. ANDREW TRUMAN (29) steps to the line, as everyone waits with a feeling of anticipation. Andrew is a tall and medium-built man, good-looking with dark hair and a tidy appearance. A small scar on his forehead is the one noticeable blemish. An intern named DAVID with a scowling countenance and illmannered disposition, watches intently.

DAVID

Bulls-eye to win. He's toast.
Andrew manages a smile, as he
lowers the dart to his side.

INTERN (O.S.)

Uh-oh, the patented knife toss.

DAVID

I'll take action at ten to one.
More money is hurriedly passed
around and collected, as all eyes
turn to Andrew.

DAVID

That's it. Let's go, Andrew. Andrew holds the dart by his hip, studying the dartboard. In one lightning-fast motion, Andrew flicks his wrist, as the dart explodes out of his hand. In an instantaneous blur, the dart nails the dartboard dead-center. Bulls-eye.

Everyone does a double-take, taking in the image of the dart sticking out of the bulls-eye, as a collective series of cheers and groans fill the room. David's jaw hits the floor, shaking his head with disbelief. Andrew turns with a look of self-satisfaction. He hears a beeping sound, and then glances down at his space age looking wristwatch.

ANDREW

Shit.

Andrew turns and runs out of the room.

INT. ORION MEDICAL RESEARCH BUILDING – RESEARCH WING - DAY

Opaque marble floors, long corridors, and clean, white walls. A narrow corridor with low ceilings terminates at a security-locked glass door that reads: RESEARCH LABORATORY. The SOUND of someone running can be heard, as Andrew appears, running up to the glass doors. He turns to face a flat-panel screen imbedded into the wall.

ANDREW

Andrew. Truman.

Andrew waits impatiently, bouncing on his feet.

ANDREW

C' mon, already.

A chime RINGS, as the doors slide open and Andrew dashes inside.

INT. RESEARCH LABORATORY – DAY

A large room aligned with long tables and futuristic medical equipment. The laboratory is augmented by adjoining offices, examination rooms, and a consultation room.

INT. RESEARCH LABORATORY – CONSULTATION ROOM - DAY

A small room with a couple of sofas and comfortable chairs. Seated on a sofa is a nervous young couple named MR. AND MRS. CAMPBELL. Holding the hand of Mrs. Campbell is DR. ROMAN PARKER (62), a graying man with short limbs, a round face, and slightly unkempt appearance. Despite his appearance, Dr. Parker has a calm benevolence to his mannerisms.

DR. PARKER

The genetic map that we created is consistent with your wishes, but more importantly, it'll ensure your baby boy is not infected with The Plague. Mrs. Campbell gives a nervous smile.

MRS. CAMPBELL

How can we be sure?

MR. CAMPBELL

Honey, this is Doctor Roman Parker you're talking to. Dr. Parker smiles warmly.

DR. PARKER

It's okay. We all wish we could conceive a child naturally. But everyone is a carrier. And all natural births result in deformity and insanity – to varying degrees.

ANDREW (O. S.)

There are no exceptions. Dr. Parker looks up and sees Andrew, standing in the doorway, looking slightly winded.

DR. PARKER

Dr. Truman knows the mantra of Orion Sanatorium by heart. He's also quite a dart player. If he can just arrive on time. Andrew takes a seat, as Dr. Parker rises.

DR. PARKER

Andrew will modify your barcode.

MR. CAMPBELL

Will it hurt?

ANDREW

Just like getting a shot. But instead of a clear barcode, yours will be green.

Andrew points to a clear and transparent barcode, barely visible on Mrs. Campbell's forehead. It becomes apparent that everyone's forehead contains a see-through barcode that looks a lot like a watermark—barely visible to the naked eye.

DR. PARKER

It helps Orion Security identify you in public so they know your pregnancy is government-approved.

ANDREW

We'll do it after you've been inseminated with your husband's modified sperm. Then you'll be in the system.

Mr. and Mrs. Campbell give nervous smiles to one another. Andrew takes Mrs. Campbell's hand, giving her a reassuring pat on the shoulder, smiling warmly.

INT. CITY SKYSCRAPER – OFFICE – EVENING

A large room with high ceilings and skylights. The fading light casts a dim glow on the assortment of space-age drafting tables and computer consoles.

INT. OFFICE – DRAFTING TABLE - EVENING

FIONA HOLLAND (30) sits at a drafting table, staring at a partially completed map. Fiona looks away for a moment, staring out through the large windows at the city skyline and the neon beacon: ORION. Fiona has short-cropped hair and a somewhat androgynous appearance, but exudes a dynamite combination of toughness and sexuality. She sighs wearily, and then gives a troubled stare to the half-finished map, as she saunters across the room.

INT. RESEARCH LABORATORY – ANDREW'S WORKSTATION – DAY

Andrew's workstation is adjacent to a table of microscopes and specimens. Tacked to a small bulletin board are photos of Andrew and a young woman who resembles Fiona the cartographer, and Andrew making pottery. As Andrew works in his wheeled-chair, video cameras monitor his every move. Andrew gathers a computer printout, inserting it into a tube that is sucked through a pipe. An overhead computer console reads in red letters: CAMPBELL.

Andrew turns to see an arriving tube drop into an in-basket that looks like a six-pack carton. Andrew turns, as his overhead computer console displays the image of Dr. Parker.

DR. PARKER (ON SCREEN)

Just a reminder, you're already late for the symposium.

ANDREW

Damn it.

Andrew leaps from his chair, hurrying out of the lab.

INT. AUDITORIUM – DAY

A sloping, bowl-shaped auditorium. All the seats are filled by doctors, physicians, and interns. On the stage sits a rectangular table with seating for four people. At the foot of the stage stands Fiona the cartographer, the menacing Doctor Cortez, and Doctor Parker. Cortez greets Fiona with genuine affection.

CORTEZ

Fiona, so pleased to see you as a member of the team. Fiona forces a smile, holding up a white badge.

FIONA

Just a contractor. Wait till you get the bill.

CORTEZ

I asked your office to specifically send you.

FIONA

Funny. And I tried like hell to get them to send someone else. Dr. Parker approaches, as Fiona's demeanor brightens noticeably. They embrace.

PARKER

Thanks for your help with the maps. All the doctors here flunked geography.

FIONA

Including your prized pupil. Parker nods, and then looks up and sees

ANDREW

Hurriedly enter the room, taking the steps two at a time until he reaches Dr. Parker and Fiona.

FIONA

Speak of the devil. Cortez steps forward.

CORTEZ

Andrew, I was just explaining to Fiona how fortunate she is to participate in this forum today – albeit as a bystander. Andrew gives Fiona a sideways glance.

ANDREW

I'm sure she's excited for the opportunity.

CORTEZ

And it's not every day that the President of Orion City and the Orion Territories joins us.

FIONA

Every puppet show needs a puppet. Awkward silence. Andrew stammers, and then the crowd rises to its feet as THE PRESIDENT enters the room. Andrew, Cortez, and Dr. Parker take their seats at the table, as The President strides purposely to the podium, motioning for everyone to take their seats. Fiona sits in the front row with the other physicians.

PRESIDENT

Before introducing Doctor Cortez for a security update, I must inform all of you that in the coming days, I will be making a series of televised addresses regarding the growing problem of unrest in The Domain.

(beat)

So you'll forgive me, but I have strategy briefings that require my undivided attention. The President glances over his shoulder, exchanging a knowing stare with Cortez.

PRESIDENT

At this time, I yield the floor to Director of Security – Doctor Cortez.

The President steps away from the podium, and leaves the room almost as quickly as he had arrived.

CORTEZ

Steps to the podium, as a large color-coded, global-looking map displays behind him

CORTEZ

Our timeline shows little progress. Fifty years ago, the first signs of The Plague. Cortez motions to the map, which shows the spread of the plague across the globe as shades of purple and red.

CORTEZ

Thirty years ago, we recognized the disease was passed on at birth, and the government began its compulsory artificial insemination program — making genetic mapping available to prospective parents. The color shadings on the map gradually encompass the entire globe with small pockets of unblemished areas remaining in what looks like a portion of the map of the United States.

CORTEZ

As you can see, the Orion Territories represent the largest and healthiest of all the major population centers worldwide. In fact, the majority of the planet looks a lot like what you see across the river — in The Domain.

(pause)

We hope to revive our dormant aviation industry, but a cure for the plague is our highest priority. From the map, you can see that outlying areas are vast wasteland despite the folklore and legend of lush greenery and large bodies of fresh water.

Cortez looks over to Dr. Parker and Andrew, who both rise, and then move toward the podium

CORTEZ

Dr. Parker and Dr. Truman can provide more details on their current progress for finding a cure, and perhaps answer any questions you may have. Cortez retreats from the podium, standing next to a scowling and impassive Rufus.

DR. PARKER

Clears his throat, measuring his words.

DR. PARKER

I'll start by saying that our recent trials which had seemed so promising and held tremendous hope — haven't quite panned out. Results were inconclusive. In short, we've had a setback.

Hushed silence, as Andrew glances down to Fiona seated in the front row, and exchanges a long stare. Dr. Parker attempts to enliven the gloomy reception of his opening remarks.

DR. PARKER

No cure as yet, but prevention is essential, provided people adhere to the insemination program. The newborn won't contract the disease, but will always be a carrier. There are no exceptions.

Andrew stands solemnly next to Dr. Parker, and then searches the crowd of raised hands. Andrew points to a bespectacled physician named DOCTOR REILLY, who remains seated.

DOCTOR REILLY

Do you still hope to find a patient who isn't a carrier?

DR. PARKER

Realistically, no. As you know, no fetus conceived naturally has ever had Creator Code. A perfect genetic map that both precludes them from getting the disease and transmitting it.

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For the complete script please contact Jennifer Brooks at
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