

PERUSAL SCRIPT

Space:

*The Fatal Frontier*

*A CHAMELEON'S MURDER MYSTERY*

By

**Jim Christian**



Newport, Maine

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## **SPACE: THE FATAL FRONTIER**

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SPACE: THE FATAL FRONTIER

## CAST OF CHARACTERS (M F)

**COMMANDER CLINT McFADDEN** -- PILOT OF THE "INTERPLANETARY RESCUE SHIP 'MOTHER HEN" -- EVERYTHING HAS TO BE DONE HIS WAY - THE CONSUMMATE BUDDY-BUDDY LEADER - EVERY CUB SCOUT'S WORST NIGHTMARE - GUNG-HO TO A FAULT - BIG-TIME STORYTELLER

**MAGGIE O'TOOLE** -- CHIEF ENGINEER OF THE "I.R.S. MOTHER HEN" - KNOWS THE INS AND OUTS OF EVERY GIZMO MANKIND EVER CREATED - CONSTANTLY AT ODDS WITH Commander McFADDEN BECAUSE SHE KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT SHE'S TALKING ABOUT - DABBLES IN CARICATURE ART - RELATES BEST TO MACHINES

**ULTRAKEVIN 2000** -- STATE-OF-THE-ART ANDROID FLIGHT ATTENDANT - COMPLETELY NON-PLUSSED AND CONGENIAL BECAUSE HE'S PROGRAMMED TO BE THAT WAY - A "STEPFORD" STEWARD - EFFICIENT AND DETACHED - COMES EQUIPPED WITH BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS MODULES AND SENSE OF HUMOR

**GLADYS BONDURANT** -- EARTH WOMAN WHO HAS BEEN BROUGHT ABOARD THE "MOTHER HEN" AS A PART OF "PROJECT X" - WAITRESS AT THE "HAMMER DOWN" TRUCKSTOP ON I-80 NEAR LARAMIE, WY. - TABLOID ADDICT - WORKS GRAVEYARDS SO THAT SHE CAN WATCH OPRAH, CURRENT AFFAIR, ET AL

**SONNY BONDURANT** -- GLADYS'S HUSBAND - WORKS MORNINGS AT THE LOCAL "KWICKEE MART" - LEAGUE BOWLER BY NIGHT - SCIENCE FICTION BUFF - HAS STARTED AND DROPPED EVERY FAD HOBBY IN THE LAST THIRTY YEARS -- HOME LITTERED WITH HAM RADIO PARTS, ROCK TUMBLERS, METAL DETECTOR, ETC.

**ZOLTAR GALACTIC WARLORD** -- DARK AND THEATRICAL - EXPECTS PEOPLE TO COWER AT HIS PRESENCE - CLAIMS ALTRUISTIC MOTIVES DESPITE HIS SINISTER EXTERIOR - TRIES TO BE LIKEABLE - CAN'T - CONSTANTLY TRYING TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR MARTIAL LAW & HIS VISION OF A UTOPIAN UNIVERSE

**PTARANTULA, MISTRESS OF PAIN** -- ZOLTAR'S ADJUTANT - TOTALLY DEVOTED TO HIS VISION - SMOOTH AND MYSTICAL - HAS AN ARSENAL OF WEAPONS RANGING FROM SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES TO HER OWN PERSONAL "GRIP OF GRIEF" LIKE ZOLTAR, SHE CLAIMS BENEVOLENCE

**HYDRO** - ALIEN CREATURE FROM ANOTHER SOLAR SYSTEM - PTARANTULA'S PET - KEPT UNDER HER CONTROL BY AN ELECTRONIC LEASH - SPEAKS HIS OWN LANGUAGE (TRANSLATED BY PTARANTULA) - SOMETIMES USED AS AN ATTACK BEAST -DANGEROUS-LOOKING & UNPREDICTABLE -- CONSTANTLY SQUINTING

**TIME** -- THE PRESENT

**PLACE** -- ABOARD THE "I.R.S. MOTHER HEN"

**THE SECRET CLUE** --

is on the "Rules of the Road" page -- the first capital letters on items 1.1-6.9 - "The first victim was a woman."

**The song** -- "Stand By Your Man" is played on a CD or mp3 (permission may be needed for this)

## 1 -- COCKTAILS

*(As GUESTS arrive, they are welcome to board the “Interplanetary Rescue Ship Mother Hen” by Commander McFADDEN and ULTRAKEVIN2000. They are given boarding instructions and a brief medical clearance. MAGGIE is constantly tinkering with equipment and making last-minute preparations. At some point, the BONDURANTS board and begin acquainting themselves with the ship, crew and guests. Eventually, MAGGIE seals the entryway, ULTRAKEVIN2000 sounds an “all clear” and commander McFADDEN addresses the guests.)*

## 2 -- AFTER COCKTAILS (Act 1)

**McFADDEN:** People of Earth—or what remains of you—how’s it going? I am commander Clint McFadden, and it is my privilege as Chief Officer of the Mother Hen to congratulate you upon being selected for this rescue mission. Now, you can call me “Commander McFadden” or “Commander Clint” or just plain “Clint”. Or if you can’t remember any of that, a good old-fashioned, “Sir” is always appropriate. Whatever.

*(Gravely)*

But! Ladies and gentlemen, we have come here today from Stratos III on a very important mission. I cannot communicate to you enough the gravity of your situation—

*(With rising crescendo)*

—the danger—the desperate circumstances which currently face your home planet—the ultimate fate of the human race—

*(Cheerily)*

But first, I would like to turn your attention to our flight steward, UltraKevin2000, for some important preflight instructions.

**KEVIN:** Thank you, Commander McFadden.

*(To the GUESTS)*

Hello. And welcome aboard the “I. R. S. Mother Hen.” My name is UltraKevin2000 and I’ll be your in-flight steward for the duration of our journey... approximately the next 2 years. I would like to draw your attention to the sealed information card located at each of your places. At this time, please break the seal and follow along as I review some important safety precautions for our flight.

**GLADYS:** *(waving her card)* Yoo-hoo, over here!

**KEVIN:** Yes, Ma’am?

**GLADYS:** Do we get to keep these?

**KEVIN:** Certainly.

**SONNY:** Great!

**KEVIN:** As we follow the information card, Chief Engineer please observe the demonstrations provided by Maggie O’Toole.

**MAGGIE:** You know, I really hate doing this...

**KEVIN:** Now, Maggie—we have been through this approximately 2607 times—Central Control requires a tandem presentation of all preventive safety measures as outlined in section 503/J of the ...

**MAGGIE:** *(joining him)* ... all preventive safety measures as outlined in section 503/J of the policies and

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procedures manual. Yeah, I know. Just shut up and do it.

**KEVIN:** (*warmly*) Thank you.

(*Throughout the next sequence, MAGGIE demonstrates the various devices to which KEVIN refers.*)

Emergency exits may be reached through the doors located at the rear of this cabin. However, opening these portals in anything other than the Earth's atmosphere would result in the following response by every cell of your body.

(*MAGGIE inflates a balloon or brown paper bag and pops it.*)

**SONNY:** Wow!

**McFADDEN:** I always love that part.

**MAGGIE:** (*to SONNY*) Makes you think, don't it?

**KEVIN:** Therefore, in the unlikely event of evacuation seizures, the large panels located in each of these walls will automatically open providing access to our stylish 8-passenger escape pods. During this process, please try to keep your groups together as future colonization and propagation of the species will be highly dependent upon compatibility.

**SONNY:** (*dourly*) You can say that again.

**GLADYS:** What's that supposed to mean.

**SONNY:** Oh, nothin', puddin'.

**KEVIN:** (*as he does a quick piece of origami*) Should motion sickness occur, your information card can easily be converted into a vessel for containing bodily discharges.

**MAGGIE:** (*fumbling horribly with the paper*) I never can get this stupid part!

**McFADDEN:** C'mon, Maggie. It's a piece of cake.

**MAGGIE:** (*throwing the mangled paper*) Look, by the time anybody gets this thing folded, they're already going to be wearin' their lunch.

**McFADDEN:** (*with a completed cup*) Ta-Da!

**SONNY:** (*displaying it*) Mine's done!

**GLADYS:** (*holding hers up*) Aren't these cute?

**MAGGIE:** I hate you all.

**KEVIN:** Should we experience a sudden deionization in cabin conditions, and individual life support system will extend from the floor below your seat and automatically attach itself to an exposed area of flesh. Maggie?

(*MAGGIE continues to sulk*)

Maggie?

(*No response*)

Mag—

**MAGGIE:** All right!

(*She produces a hose and suction cup and attaches it to her forehead.*)

Frigigin' ratzazfratchit.

**KEVIN:** And Once the support system securely in place, a steady flow of stabilizing base nutrients and trace elements is provided to the body.

(*MAGGIE begins struggling to remove the suction cup.*)

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Additionally, a flexible polymer coating is quickly distributed over the skin surface to protect the individual from most atmospheric changes...

**SONNY:** Jeez -- I'd feel like I'd just been to Maaco!

**KEVIN:** ... in essence, providing each passenger with their own form-fitting spacesuit. Any questions?

**GLADYS:** Do we have any color choices with that plastic coating?

**KEVIN:** Unfortunately not. This flight is only equipped with the standard issue: Toasty Mocha.

**GLADYS:** Oh, I love that.

**KEVIN:** Finally, our meal and beverage service will begin shortly followed by a cinematic double feature: "Nightmare On Elm Street, #378" and "Ernest Goes To Alpha Centauri." And remember—if at any point during our voyage, I can be of any assistance, do not hesitate to summon me. I'm UltraKevin2000 and I live to serve.

**McFADDEN:** Thanks, Kev-o.

*(To the GUESTS)*

What the droid! And let me echo what he said, folks. If there is anything that any of the crew can do to make your journey more pleasurable, just let us know. In fact, as a little added bonus, I've asked Yeoman O'Toole to share one of her many hidden talents with us.

**MAGGIE:** Do I really have to do this?

**McFADDEN:** Hey, sad sack—fetch that pad.

*(MAGGIE obliges)*

Y'see, O'Toole over there is not only the best engineer in the fleet, she's a crackerjack caricaturist to boot! C'mon, Maggie—give us a sample of your handiwork.

**MAGGIE:** *(begins sketching one of the passengers)* Burgiss RiddyKriddy...

**McFADDEN:** We just thought it might be nice for somebody to have a little souvenir of this journey into the unknown.

*(MAGGIE finishes with a flourish)*

All done? Okay, let's see it.

*(MAGGIE turns the whole pad around, revealing a rough, goofy cartoon of the subject.)*

What did I tell you? So if anybody wants their picture done at any time...

**GLADYS:** Ooh, me next!

**MAGGIE:** Commander! I've got to check on those fuel capacitors...

**McFADDEN:** Hey, don't be a party-pooper, fly boy! We are trying to help these people have a good time.

*(MAGGIE Begrudgingly sketches GLADYS, gives her the picture, then storms off.)*

Now, back to the big picture—

*(Suddenly serious.)*

the reason that we have gathered all of you will board the "I.R.S. Mother Hen" is that the planet Earth has been targeted for takeover by The Placticons.

**SONNY:** The Placticons?! Oh my biggest heck!

*(SONNY pulls out a copy of "The Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy" and begins thumbing through it frantically.)*

**GLADYS:** What are you doing?

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**SONNY:** Trying to look up The Plasticons. This is “The Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy” and it just might help us save our sorry butts from total annihilation.

**GLADYS:** But that’s ridiculous. It’s just a piece of fiction! What good will that do? If we want some real answers, we should be looking in a reliable source.

*(GLADYS produces a copy of “The National Enquirer” from her purse and begins leafing through it.)*

**McFADDEN:** *(eyeing the BONDURANTS)* Uh...Kev-o?

**KEVIN:** Yes, Commander?

**McFADDEN:** Could I see you over here for a moment?

**KEVIN:** Certainly, Sir.

*(KEVIN moves to McFADDEN)*

**McFADDEN:** *(Confidentially)* Are you positive that those two are part of our designated cargo?

**KEVIN:** Would you like me to run a verification check, Commander?

**McFADDEN:** Uh, yes, I would.

*(To the BONDURANTS who are still feverishly searching their print materials.)*

Excuse me?

**SONNY & GLADYS:** Yes?

**McFADDEN:** I always like to get to know I should board personnel... um... who are you?

**SONNY:** Oh, we’re Sonny

*(Shaking McFADDEN’s hand)*

**GLADYS:** *(breaking in)* And Gladys Bondurant....

**SONNY:** *(competing for focus)* ...from laramie, Wyoming.

**KEVIN:** *(pressing a concealed button on his chest)* Bondurant...

**McFADDEN:** Well, it’s very nice to meet you...

**KEVIN:** *(to McFADDEN)* Sonny Bondurant — verified...

**McFADDEN:** Really?

**SONNY:** *(to McFADDEN)* What’s he talking about?

**KEVIN:** ... and Gladys Bondurant—also verified.

**GLADYS:** What do you mean “verified?”

**McFADDEN:** I ... I ...

**SONNY:** We were invited to be a part of this space project, weren’t we?

**McFADDEN:** Well, of course you were.

**GLADYS:** Then what’s the problem?

**McFADDEN:** It’s just that typically... passengers are gathered because of specific... traits, which make them valuable contributors to the impending propagation of the species and... I was just curious as to... as to...

**GLADYS:** As to what?

**McFADDEN:** As to why the two of you were selected!

*(Quickly to KEVIN, under his breath)*

Get me out of this!

**KEVIN:** Certainly, Commander!

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*(To the BONDURANTS)*

Perhaps a few illustrations will clarify this point: in assembling this group, we have tried to make purposeful choices which will guarantee a solid genetic basis for future generations.

*(During the following, KEVIN refers to specific members of the audience.)*

This couple, for example, has been chosen because of superior hygiene and strong visual aesthetics. Over here, we have an individual with outstanding mastery of logic, analysis, and other left brain functions. This entire group has been determined to be excellent breeding stock...

**SONNY:** and what about us?

**KEVIN:** *(after a moment searching his data-banks)* To serve as a nagging reminder of what can happen when cross-fertilization is not carefully monitored, resulting in hybrids, mutations...

**GLADYS:** Is that a crack?

**KEVIN:** ... Genetic breakdown, deviation from the species...

**GLADYS:** Well!!

**KEVIN:** ... talk show hosts...

**GLADYS:** *(wheeling on McFADDEN)* Captain, I want to turn this thing around and take us home this instant.

**McFADDEN:** I'm sorry, but that's quite impossible. By this time, there may be nothing left of your world as you remember it.

**GLADYS:** Oh, bear sweat!

**SONNY:** *(sensing McFADDEN's seriousness)* No, Gladys, maybe he's right.

**McFADDEN:** I think you should listen to your husband, Mrs. Bondurant. The Plasticons are a diabolical race which has the ability to assume the form of any object, living or otherwise. In their crusade to achieve absolute control of the universe, they have chosen the planet Earth as their next target.

**SONNY:** When will the Plasticons attack?

**McFADDEN:** Now, slow down just a minute—you're jumping to conclusions. The Plasticons never come right out and attack. Infiltration—that's their method. They enter a society by imitating familiar components of the culture. Then, once they have established their base of operations, they moved quickly and efficiently to eliminate all opposition to their master plan.

**GLADYS:** *(referring to the tabloid)* So what you're saying is that some of these so-called sightings of Elvis could actually be the Plasticons in action?

**McFADDEN:** *(at a loss as to what she really means)* ... Sure.

**SONNY:** *(still scouring his book)* But how do you know when you've met a Plasticon?

**McFADDEN:** You don't ... that's the problem. The plastic arms are such masters of mimicry that they are virtually impossible to detect.

**GLADYS:** But surely there must be some way...

**KEVIN:** Oh, there is. It's rather complicated, but—

**MAGGIE:** *(bursting into the room)* Commander, the relocation port has indicated that alien life forms are in a transference process onto the ship.

**McFADDEN:** Can transport be reversed?

**KEVIN:** *(pulls a control keyboard from his pocket and madly punches the buttons)* Negatory, Commander. The best we can do is prepare ourselves for encounter.



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**McFADDEN:** *(with delight)* And then there's only one option—BATTLE STATIONS!

*(McFADDEN, MAGGIE, KEVIN all draw weapons and move to positions focused on the transport area.)*

**GLADYS:** *(in a panic)* What do we do?

**SONNY:** Just stay calm.

**KEVIN:** And please open your “rules of the road manual” to “item 6.7: Mortal Combat” and follow along with me...

**GLADYS:** *(screaming)* Sonny!

**SONNY:** C'mon!

*(SONNY drags GLADYS to her table)*

**KEVIN:** ... Outer space is often referred to as the “New York City of the cosmos”...

**MAGGIE:** *(shouting)* Turn it off, Kev-o!

**KEVIN:** Thank you.

*(KEVIN resumes his battle stance. At this point, the transport area is illuminated [ hopefully with accompanying sound effects] as ZOLTAR, PTARANTULA and HYDRO materialize. Upon the completion of the transport sequence, they burst into the room.)*

**ZOLTAR:** *(with a melodramatic gesture)* Hold your fire!

**PTARANTULA:** Don't shoot!

**HYDRO:** EDFIOYPP87UY!

*(There is a massive 'take' by everyone onboard.)*

**PTARANTULA:** *(after a beat)* That means – “We come in peace.”

**McFADDEN:** Zoltar!

**ZOLTAR:** “Commander” McFadden – surprised to see me?

**McFADDEN:** Very. What do you want?

**ZOLTAR:** Sanctuary. Our ship was under alien attack and yours was the only passive signal in the vicinity. We have merely come here to save our own lives.

**MAGGIE:** I don't trust 'em.

**McFADDEN:** *(still wary, indicating PTARANTULA and HYDRO)* Who are these two?

**ZOLTAR:** This ... is Ptarantula, Mistress of Pain.

**McFADDEN:** I thought you said you came in peace.

**PTARANTULA:** We do.”Mistress of Pain” Isn't a title—it's my last name.

**KEVIN:** *(processing this new data)* T-A-R-A-N-

**PTARANTULA:** No ... that's: P-T-A-R-A-N-T-U-L-A.

*(ALL do a take.)*

The “P” is silent.

**MAGGIE:** *(suspiciously)* Ha!

**PTARANTULA:** And this is my ... pet ... Hydro.

**HYDRO:** *(darkly)* GL;AJSHG;DFGFALKSH

**PTARANTULA:** That means he likes you

**KEVIN:** I know.

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**ZOLTAR:** So you see, Commander, all we are asking is a place to stay until we are able to reboard one of our own fleet.

**McFADDEN:** I don't believe you.

**ZOLTAR:** Commander... under the charge of your 'position' are you not obligated to provide temporary asylum to any peaceable creatures who ask?

**McFADDEN:** *(very aware of the passengers watching)* That's true.

**ZOLTAR:** Well, then... why don't we make a truce... say, the "Cosmic Bond of Peace?"

**SONNY:** *(moving forward with GLADYS)* What's that?

**KEVIN:** A solemn, unbreakable oath which bans all violent aggression between the parties.

**SONNY:** Wow!

**MAGGIE:** But it only lasts for thirty minutes

**GLADYS:** Then why do it?

**McFADDEN:** Why not?

*(Retracting his weapon)*

All right – you're on. But no tricks!

**ZOLTAR:** *(stepping smoothly forward)* No tricks.

*(They ALL lower their weapons)*

**McFADDEN:** Ready?

**ZOLTAR:** Ready.

*(McFADDEN, ZOLTAR, MAGGIE, PTARANTULA and KEVIN all execute a series of gestures which seal the pact. The BONDURANTS perform it to the best of their abilities)*

Good. Ptarantula?

**PTARANTULA:** Yes, Zoltar?

**ZOLTAR:** Now.

*(PTARANTULA snaps her fingers and HYDRO immediately goes into attack mode, straining at the full length of his leash and cornering McFADDEN, MAGGIE, KEVIN, SONNY and GLADYS)*

**HYDRO:** KDGHKNGL.DZHNY;/LKF!

*(The BONDURANTS scream.)*

**MAGGIE:** What the hey?

**McFADDEN:** Wait a minute!

**ZOLTAR:** *(cooly)* What?

**McFADDEN:** You can't do this. It's impossible to break "The Solemn Bond of Peace."

**HYDRO:** ;IARHGLIEYHT/HGO;EHBA

**PTARANTULA:** Hydro says, and I quote, "But I didn't take the oath, Dumbbell."

**HYDRO:** HEH-HEH-HEH-HEH-HEH-

*(HYDRO turns back on the others who are powerless to draw their weapons.)*

**ZOLTAR:** Now, it's my turn.

*(Addresses the CROWD)*

People of Earth, I am Zoltar, Intergalactic Warlord and Keeper of the Peace. I have come here to inform you today that this man...

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*(Indicating McFADDEN)*

... and his entire crew are imposters. I am the real commander of the Mother Hen.

**MAGGIE:** That's a lie!

**ZOLTAR:** ... And right now each of you are in grave danger. You haven't been rescued—you have been kidnapped!

**McFADDEN:** *(to the CROWD)* Don't listen to him!

**ZOLTAR:** I shall be calling upon each of you to assist me in regaining control of this vessel. Ptarantula?

**PTARANTULA:** Yes, Zoltar?

**ZOLTAR:** I have said my piece.

**PTARANTULA:** Yes, Zoltar.

*(PTARANTULA snaps her fingers and HYDRO becomes passive.)*

**McFADDEN:** *(threateningly)* You won't get away with this!

**ZOLTAR:** And neither will you.

**GLADYS:** *(getting weepy)* Sonny?

**SONNY:** Yes?

**GLADYS:** I'm just so confused!

**MAGGIE:** Now don't you start listening to them!

**PTARANTULA:** *(indicating MAGGIE)* And don't be fooled by her.

**SONNY & GLADYS:** What are we going to do?

**KEVIN:** *(responding to an audible signal)* Eat. We seem to have reached the appropriate time coordinate where a nourishing and delicious meal has been prepared for your enjoyment. If passengers 1 through 20 will now proceed in an orderly fashion to the galley area, service will begin shortly. Thank you.

**McFADDEN:** We can't worry about food right now!

**KEVIN:** Sorry, Commander. The nutritive process cannot be postponed.

**ZOLTAR:** *(smugly)* I see... starving your victims already?

**PTARANTULA:** *(chiming in)* ... And thus the torture begins.

**McFADDEN:** *(not to be outdone)* I'll show you!

*(To the CROWD)*

All right, what did Kev-o say? Passengers 1 through 20? Let's move it. It's chow time. Hut-2-3-4, Hut 2-3-4...

**ZOLTAR:** That's better.

**McFADDEN:** *(to ZOLTAR)* But just remember wiseguy—in 28 minutes, that truce is history!

*(They ALL proceed with dinner, with KEVIN organizing the buffet line.)*

### **#3 -- DINNER**

*(During the meal, there is great caution and defensiveness between the opposing crew. At some point, each character pulls KEVIN aside for a few moments. GLADYS Pulls a small tape recorder from her purse and begins to play country-western music. HYDRO Begins to a whole ferociously. PTARANTULA Asks KEVIN to take HYDRO for a walk and he obliges. After they return, KEVIN does*

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*an arms and equipment check with MAGGIE and McFADDEN. Throughout the proceedings, each member of the crew stubbornly sticks to their story, claiming to be on the passengers' side, and looking out for their best interests. At the conclusion of the meal, McFADDEN addresses the guests.)*

**4 -- AFTER DINNER (ACT 2)**

**McFADDEN:** Ladies and gentlemen of the earth y...ou know... this is really embarrassing. I mean, here we are, doing our level best to provide your successful escape from a hostile environment...

*(Wheeling on ZOLTAR and his crew)*

... when suddenly in these maniacs the beam aboard our ship and throws in a total state of chaos.

**ZOLTAR:** Mr. McFadden—

**McFADDEN:** *(correcting him)* Commander McFadden—

**ZOLTAR:** *(smiling)* That's entirely debatable. Mr. McFadden, as should be obvious by now, we have come here completely unarmed. We may be bearing the troops, but we are not bearing weapons.

**MAGGIE:** *(indicating HYDRO)* What about him?

**HYDRO:** GWO;QABBJSB.IWKETKE.

**ZOLTAR:** Oh, he's just a little attention-getting device. I felt it was my responsibility to let these people...

*(Indicates GUESTS)*

... know exactly what kind of danger they were in. Hydro here just helped me get my point across.

**HYDRO:** *(smiling)* ISEHFLUHSD;L/KGAS.

*(ZOLTAR scratches HYDRO and he purrs ecstatically.)*

**SONNY:** Mr. Zoltar—why should we believe you?

**PTARANTULA:** Because he's telling the truth.

**McFADDEN:** No, he's not!

**ZOLTAR:** These people are taking you on a one-way trip to disaster.

**GLADYS:** No, they're not.

**SONNY:** They are going to save us from the Plastics.

**GLADYS:** Yeah!

**ZOLTAR:** *(freezing in his tracks)* Did you say... Plastics?

**SONNY:** *(innocently)* Yes?

**GLADYS:** They are planning to take over our planet.

**ZOLTAR:** *(turning on SONNY with rising panic)* Plastics?

*(SONNY nods his head frantically)*

We're all gonna die!!!!

**McFADDEN:** *(incredulous)* Why, you big baby!

**MAGGIE:** What a weenie!

**ZOLTAR:** *(manically)* Oh, you think so? Have either you ever come face-to-face with the Platicon? Hmm?

**McFADDEN:** *(fumbling)* Well, I... err ...don't think so.

**MAGGIE:** It's kind of hard to tell.

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**ZOLTAR:** Exactly!

*(with contempt)*

You incompetent little boobs! Where do you get off, pretending to be experienced professionals?

**McFADDEN:** Hey, I'm the commander of this—

**ZOLTAR:** Don't start that again. Don't you realize what it means to deal with the Plasticons? They're almost invincible.

**PTARANTULA:** *(to GLADYS)* You said they're attacking your planet?

**GLADYS:** *(indicating McFADDEN, MAGGINE & KEVIN)* That's what they said...

**PTARANTULA:** *(turning on them)* well, aren't you the clever ones! How do you know that you didn't bring one of them aboard when you were gathering these idiots?

**GLADYS:** *(taking mild offense)* Hey!

**PTARANTULA:** For all you know, there might be a Plasticon right here listening to every word we say.

*(They ALL freeze and scan the room.)*

**McFADDEN:** *(after a beat)* Really?

**PTARANTULA:** That's right.

*(They ALL begin edging nervously about the room.)*

**MAGGIE:** *(carefully)* So... what do you think they might look like?

*(During the next section, EVERYONE refers to examples in the room.)*

**ZOLTAR:** It's hard to say...

**PTARANTULA:** They might be tall...

**ZOLTAR:** ...or short...

**SONNY:** ... or scary looking?

**GLADYS:** Could they have fangs?

**McFADDEN:** ... or claws?

**HYDRO:** *(sniffing someone and pointing)* ALKUDYKJGFYXF;LJA.

**PTARANTULA:** Exactly. And they don't necessarily have to take the form of a living creature...

**MAGGIE:** ... so they could be...

**PTARANTULA:** ... chair...

**MAGGIE:** ... or a...

**McFADDEN:** ... nap Ken...

**SONNY:** What about a speck of dust ... floating in the air?

**ZOLTAR:** I think that's stretching it.

**McFADDEN:** It could be...

*(snatching one up)*

... a fork!

**MAGGIE:** *(spying GLADYS)* ... Or... I hat!

**ALL:** *(except KEVIN & GLADYS)* A hat...

*(They begin advancing on GLADYS.)*

**GLADYS:** What?

*(Realizing what they mean.)*



PERUSAL SCRIPT -- **Space: The Fatal Frontier** by *Jim Christian*

**KEVIN:** O'Toole? Take him to the garbage chute.

**MAGGIE:** *(not sure exactly what to think, but jumping to fulfill the request)* Sure... whatever you say.  
*(MAGGIE rolls HYDRO out the door and shut it behind her.)*

**McFADDEN:** *(to KEVIN)* What—in—blazes—was that all about? You are not programmed for aggression.

**KEVIN:** I am now.

**McFADDEN:** What?!

**KEVIN:** I've been reprogrammed.

**McFADDEN:** When?

**KEVIN:** During dinner.

**McFADDEN:** Well, who did it?

**KEVIN:** It was...

*(Quick memory scan)*

... oops, sorry... evidently that portion of my memory circuit has been erased.

**SONNY:** Probably by the person who reprogrammed him.

**KEVIN:** That would make a lot of sense.

**ZOLTAR:** The Plasticon!

**McFADDEN:** *(ducking)* Where?

**ZOLTAR:** No! I mean that the Plasticon is obviously the one that reprogrammed your droid. You see, your system has been infiltrated and is being turned against you.

**McFADDEN:** But the ULTRAKEVIN 2000 is the most reliable service droid currently in production.

**ZOLTAR:** And that reliability may be our most dangerous hazard right now. If he has been reprogrammed into a violence mode, it may only be a matter of time before he turns on each of us.

*(MAGGIE reenters, wiping her hands and squinting.)*

**GLADYS:** So what do we do?

**SONNY:** Oh, what I would give her personal force field right now!

**McFADDEN:** O'Toole?

**MAGGIE:** Yes, Commander?

**McFADDEN:** Cover me.

*(MAGGIE draws a bead on KEVIN with her gun as McFADDEN draws a deep breath.)*

UltraKevin?

**KEVIN:** Yes. Commander?

**McFADDEN:** Whether you know it or not, you may have been turned into a state-of-the-art killing machine.

**KEVIN:** I don't believe that's true, Commander.

**McFADDEN:** Well, whether it is or not, we really can't afford to take any chances now, can we?

**KEVIN:** I would suppose not.

**GLADYS:** *(nervous)* Just hurry!

**McFADDEN:** Shhh ...

*(Methodically)*

I want you to very slowly hand me your weapon...

**ZOLTAR:** ...handle first!

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- **Space: The Fatal Frontier** by *Jim Christian*

**McFADDEN:** ...Handle first, and then step back and hold still.

**KEVIN:** Certainly. And thank you for asking.

*(He very slowly begins to obey the order.)*

**SONNY:** This could take up to a week.

**PTARANTULA:** Quiet! We don't want to take any chances.

**McFADDEN:** Well, maybe I could speed up just a little...

**ZOLTAR:** I think you're right.

**McFADDEN:** Ultra Kevin... increase function speed by factor 3.

*(KEVIN moves more naturally and hands McFADDEN the gun)*

Got it!

**GLADYS:** Now blast him!!

**MAGGIE:** Right!!!

*(MAGGIE shoots at KEVIN, but her gun backfires and she lies dead.)*

**McFADDEN:** O'Toole!!!

*(He rushes to her body)*

She's gone!

**GLADYS:** O, my nerves!

**PTARANTULA:** This is the work of the Plasticon.

**McFADDEN:** Ultra Kevin—get her out of here.

**KEVIN:** Yes, Commander.

**ZOLTAR:** No! We should let him out of our sight.

*(pointing at SONNY)*

You!

**SONNY:** Me?

**ZOLTAR:** Dispose of the body.

**SONNY:** But!

**ZOLTAR:** NOW!

**SONNY:** Right!

*(He drags MAGGIE out of the room and shuts the door.)*

**GLADYS:** To be careful.

**PTARANTULA:** *(Examining MAGGIE's gun which he has picked up)* The Plasticon must have tampered with this so that it would backfire.

**KEVIN:** That is an incorrect assumption.

**ZOLTAR:** Oh?

**PTARANTULA:** Why?

**KEVIN:** Because I tampered with the weapon.

**ZOLTAR:** And turned it into a suicide machine.

**McFADDEN:** Kev-o?

**KEVIN:** Yes. Commander?

**McFADDEN:** Were you also programmed to adjust Yeoman O'Toole's weapon?



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**KEVIN:** Excellent assumption, Commander.

**ZOLTAR:** *(with insight)* Yes. Based on the predictability of behavior patterns, the Plasticon was able to assume that your engineer would eventually turn to an act of aggression and thus provide the means for her self-eradication.

**McFADDEN:** (as the dawn breaks) Wait a minute...

*(To KEVIN)*

... so during dinner, when you did the maintenance check on our weapons...

**KEVIN:** in Right again, Commander. I reversed the polarity is on The Yeomen O'Toole's weapon.

**PTARANTULA:** Just as you were programmed to do.

**KEVIN:** That would be correct.

**McFADDEN:** So, my weapon...

*(KEVIN smiles)*

...Whoa!

*(McFADDEN quickly places his own weapon and KEVIN's on a table and jumps back.)*

**ZOLTAR:** *(pointing at MAGGIE's gun)* Ptarantula!

**PTARANTULA:** *(realizing she is holding MAGGIE's gun)* Arrgh!!

*(Throws it to ZOLTAR or who starts a game of hot potato with everyone until SONNY reenters, tries very hard to focus on what's going on, and finally intercepts the gun.)*

**GLADYS:** Sonny!!

**SONNY:** *(Pointing the gun at GLADYS in a panic)* What?!!

**GLADYS:** Sonny!!!

**SONNY:** *(Screaming right back at her)* Arrgh!

**ZOLTAR:** Give me the gun, Earthling.

**SONNY:** No--o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o!!!

*(SONNY fire's in a panic at ZOLTAR and, of course drops dead.)*

**GLADYS:** SONNY!!

*(She begins sobbing in a decrescendo.)*

**McFADDEN:** Now, what?

**PTARANTULA:** This one's on me.

*(She moves to SONNY's body and shows it out of the room, closing the door behind her.)*

**ZOLTAR:** *(retrieving MAGGIE's gun and placing it with the others)* I think we have reached the point of no return. Immediate action must be taken to identify and eliminate the Plasticon. The question is—how do we do it?

**KEVIN:** Follow standard procedures of identification and elimination.

**McFADDEN:** There are no standard procedures.

**KEVIN:** On the contrary, Commander, as a fully equipped model of the UltraKevin 2000, I have been provided with a full backup system for dealing with all known alien lifeforms.

**McFADDEN:** Well, why didn't you say anything earlier?

**KEVIN:** I wasn't asked.

**ZOLTAR:** Quickly! How does one identify Plasticon?

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**KEVIN:** Very simply, Sir—no matter what form a Plasticon may take, it's one inevitable behavior pattern is...

*(He mouthes the identifying trait)*

**McFADDEN:** What was that? I didn't quite hear you.

*(KEVIN mouthes the word again.)*

Louder!

*(KEVIN repeats.)*

**ZOLTAR:** Don't you see? The Plasticon has obviously intercepted his ability to tell us what the identifying characteristic is

**KEVIN:** It would appear that you have assumed successfully once again.

**GLADYS:** So what do we do now?

**ZOLTAR:** *(to McFADDEN)* Surely you must have brought an instruction manual for him with you—

**McFADDEN:** I don't remember packing 1.

**ZOLTAR:** Well, it must be here somewhere.

*(He begins to exit and encounters PTARANTULA re-entering.)*

Oops!

**PTARANTULA:** *(blinking to refocus)* Where're you going?

**ZOLTAR:** To find an instruction manual for the droid. Come on.

*(ZOLTAR leaves.)*

**McFADDEN:** *(following ZOLTAR out)* I will not have you wondering about my ship.

*(McFADDEN goes.)*

**ZOLTAR:** *(offstage)* My ship!

**McFADDEN:** *(offstage)* My ship!

**ZOLTAR:** *(offstage)* My ship! Ptarantula!!

**PTARANTULA:** Coming!

*(PTARANTULA exits.)*

**GLADYS:** *(realizing that she is left alone with KEVIN, she begins moving stealthily toward the weapons on the table)* So, Mr. Killing Machine...

*(overly casual)*

Do you remember which one of these guns was yours?

**KEVIN:** Of course —

*(reaching for it)*

— it's this one!

**GLADYS:** *(Snatching it up before KEVIN can take it)* Aha!

*(Points it at KEVIN)*

Say your prayers, you glorified can opener.

*(She fires -- nothing happens -- she fires again -- nothing happens again)*

Don't move!

*(She puts down his weapon and surveys the other two.)*

Which one belongs to what's-her-face?

**KEVIN:** *(pointing)* This one.

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**GLADYS:** (*snatching it up*) I told you not to move.

(*Remembering that MAGGIE's gun backfires, she holds it so as to aim at KEVIN.*)

Okay, Battery Breath—hasta la vista!

(*She fires along steady blast and again there is no response.*)

So are you indestructible, or what?

**KEVIN:** No.

**GLADYS:** Look ...why don't you just go help the others look for your directions, okay?

**KEVIN:** What ever you say, Ma'am.

(*KEVIN exits*)

**GLADYS:** I don't get it. Three people have died from these weapons, but they had no effect on old Ultra-Slim fast. Hmm. I wonder...

(*Takes KEVIN's gun and blasts a member of the audience—sees no effect—shoots another—then another—then shoots herself a long one—quickly tries the other guns—nothing.*)

There is something extremely fishy going on here. One of those four is up to something and I'm going to find out what.

(*She starts for the exit.*)

Oh, and it wouldn't hurt all of you to get off your lazy keesters and help. Now check your passenger ID numbers and cross-reference the final digits to this chart out here. It will tell you where to search. All ones and sixes go to the same place. All twos and sevens go together, all threes and eights ...

(*Fussing*)

...Oh, you get it. Just check this chart on your way out... and do something useful for a change.

(*She goes out, taking the weapons with her.*)

The RAMBLES portion

The RESOLUTION portion

and the supplemental materials

make up another **16 pages** (lots of supplemental materials on this one)