

CORRIDOR TO PRINCESS ARDALA'S QUARTERS

Buck approaches in a side hallway, peeks around the corner.
Sees:

BUCK'S POINT OF VIEW - A GUARD

posted in front of Ardala's door.

ON BUCK

as he summons up his wiley femininity and saunters up to the
Guard. (All of Buck's lines are in his best female voice.)

BUCK

Hi, big boy.

GUARD

(startled, but
not displeased)

Hi, yourself. Where you going?

BUCK

For a stroll. Wanna come?

GUARD

I can't. On duty. Say, are you
a real woman?

Buck tries not to show the flash of fear he feels.

BUCK

Uh...are you a real man?

GUARD

You know what I mean. Are you a
regular woman...or one of those
five-year jobs?

BUCK

Five-year jobs?

GUARD

You know, with the speeded-up
growth hormones...for the Gregorian
War. Don't act like it's such a
secret. Everybody on Villus Beta
knows.

BUCK

They do? Oh...of course. They do.
Well, if you must know...I'm one
of them.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

GUARD

Huh. You sure look terrific for a five-year old. I seen some early ones that went wrong. It was a sad sight to see.

Buck again must hide his feelings, his revulsion at the way these people trifle with human life.

GUARD

I get off at six. What time is it?

BUCK

Can't wait. I'll meet you in two minutes in the garden.

GUARD

But I'm on duty.

BUCK

Tough luck, big boy.

And with that, Buck scurries down the hall.

INT. HALL TO GARDEN - NIGHT

The Guard passes on his way to the garden. After he's out of sight, Buck comes out of a small door and heads in the opposite direction, to Ardala's suite.

DOOR TO ARDALA'S QUARTERS

Buck finds the door unguarded this time and stealthily passes through.

INT. ARDALA'S QUARTERS

Buck makes his way through the semi-darkness. Since this room is on the surface, it isn't completely dark. The several moons shine through the garden windows. Buck approaches Ardala's bed. And as he does, she bolts up, instantly alert and ready to defend against her enemies.

ARDALA

Stop. I have my laser pointing right at....

Buck has grabbed Ardala, deflected her laser hand. She fires. A beam of light shoots off and burns a wall.

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CONTINUED

BUCK

Ardala, it's me. Look.

Holding her, he flips on a light. She looks at him in the dim light and doesn't recognize him.

ARDALA

Who?

Buck smiles. She studies his face, then breaks out laughing. He takes the gun and lets go of her.

ARDALA

Buck. You're very pretty.

BUCK

Thanks, but we don't have time for compliments. You ready to go to Earth?

ARDALA

Yes. Oh, yes. Look what I went and got for you. I was going to give it to you in the morning.

She holds up Theo. Buck smiles, takes Theo and puts him around his neck.

BUCK

Theo! You old devil!

(to Ardala)

Great. That really simplifies our escape. We would have had to retrieve him first.

ARDALA

We'll go to the spaceport and get my ship.

She heads for the windows.

BUCK

Not yet. First we have to go to the computer room and tap it for the information on my family.

ARDALA

There's no time for that. We have to get out of here fast.

BUCK

I came here for something and I'm not leaving without it. The information or we're not going anywhere.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED - 2

Ardala considers his position and accedes.

ARDALA
All right. This way.

They exit to:

INT. CORRIDOR TO ARDALA'S QUARTERS

The guard is not at his post as Ardala and Buck (still dressed as a woman) enter.

ARDALA
What did you do to the guard? Kill him?

BUCK
No. Seduce him.

They exit down the hall.

INT. MAIN HALL - NIGHT

as Buck and Ardala make their way through the deserted room, trying to avoid the expansive furniture in the semi-darkness.

BUCK
This way.

ARDALA
I can't see you.

BUCK
Over here...ow. Not over here.

ARDALA
Here. It's clear here.

They continued on a few feet.

BUCK
You people haven't been exactly honest with me about these antibodies of mine, have you?

ARDALA
What do you mean?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BUCK

You need them to capture Gregoria,
not to save your race.

ARDALA

Yes, that's true. But it wasn't
my idea. It was Kane's. I'm
blameless.

BUCK

And the Pope's Baptist.

ARDALA

What?

BUCK

Nothing.

VARIOUS CORRIDORS

Buck and Ardala make their way to the computer room. Now when
they pass guards, the guards are most solicitous, bow to or
greet the princess.

SMALL HALL LEADING TO COMPUTER ROOM

Buck stops, holds Ardala against the wall.

BUCK

One more thing. In case we get
blown up around the corner.

ARDALA

Anything.

BUCK

Tell me about this raising people
in five years business.

ARDALA

A new set of hormones the Professor
devised. Speeds up the growth
process.

BUCK

In five years my children with my
antibodies fight the Gregorians, is
that it?

ARDALA

Yes.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BUCK

And those girls, Blorim, Grenda, Orell. They're five year olds?

ARDALA

Yes and no. Only the way you're 500.

BUCK

You got a point. Let's go.

Turn the corner to the:

INT. ENTRANCE TO COMPUTER ROOM

Two guards stand at the door. Ardala, followed by Buck (as a girl), approaches them. The guards snap to attention.

GUARD

Good morning, Princess Ardala. May we help you?

ARDALA

Yes. You may let us pass.

GUARD

I'm sorry. We are allowed to admit no one without authorization.

ARDALA

A good plan. Now let us pass.

The guard looks at his mate, who shrugs. The first guard stands firm.

GUARD

Your Highness, I'm sure you wouldn't want us to disobey our orders. Mr. Kane and the Professor have ordered us to let no one pass who isn't on the list.

ARDALA

Mr. Kane and the Professor work for me.

GUARD

Yes, of course.

ARDALA

So. I am adding my name to the list. Now!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

GUARD

Well, if you put it that way.

He lets them pass. They exit to the room. The doors close behind them.

INT. COMPUTER ROOM

As the doors close behind them, Ardala and Buck catch their breath. Except for them the room is empty. The on-enight lighting is shadowy and dramatic. Buck makes his way to the central control and sits at the console. He keys in some symbols and the roomful of machinery awakens. Lights light up, tapes whir, gears shift, flywheels hum. The room is alive with electronics.

ARDALA

Hurry.

BUCK

Okay. I'm doing the best I can.

BUCK

(to machine)

Do you know me?

COMPUTER

Captain Buck Rogers, pilot, Inner City, Earth. Go ahead.

BUCK

I want to tap your genealogy banks. Tell me about my family line.

ARDALA

We don't have time for this.

BUCK

Wait. Are you compatible with a compuvisor? Can you feed the information to Theo here?

(holding Theo
on imprint panel)

COMPUTER

Yes. Compuvisor Model 1480. Compatible. Feeding.

The imprint panel glows. Theo lights up, blinks, whirs. The panel goes dark.

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rb #49912

94A

CONTINUED

THEO
Feeding received.

BUCK
So you can talk.

ARDALA
Let's get out of here.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED - 2

BUCK

Right.

He turns the computer off and heads back toward the doors, right behind Ardala.

INT. TELESCREEN ROOM

Kane and Professor both continue to sleep. But the Professor's body is leaning precariously off the edge of his chair. He looks like he might fall and wake up.

INT. GREAT HALL

Buck and Ardala make their way through, now heading for the spaceport.

EXT. GARDENS

Buck and Ardala enter from the building and run through the gardens.

INT. TELESCREEN ROOM

The Professor and Kane continue to sleep. The sleeping Professor's position is still precarious.

INT. BUCK'S ROOM

Orell sits on his bed waiting for Buck to return.

INT. WILMA'S SHIP

She talks to the fleet on the radio.

WILMA

Change heading two degrees. Ready.
Mark.

EXTERIOR - SPACE

Wilma's fighter squadron executes a small turn and whizzes off.

INT. ELEVATOR TUBE ENTRANCE

Buck and Ardala approach the guard.

ARDALA

Let us pass.

GUARD

But, Princess, I'm not....

ARDALA

Let -- us -- pass!!

GUARD

Yes, Princess.

He steps aside. They get in the elevator tube.

ELEVATOR TUBE

Buck (as woman) and Ardala shoot up to spaceport level.

INT. TELESCREEN ROOM

The two men are still asleep. The screen is dark. The Professor's sleeping position remains precarious. Then his body slips into an even more precarious position. He is about to crash to the floor when, without waking, he readjusts himself firmly onto the couch. But, unexpectedly, Kane comes awake with a start. His eyes open and dart around. He looks at the screen. He jumps up.

KANE

Professor. The screen. It's blank.

The Professor wakes, looks at the screen.

PROFESSOR

(half asleep)

Rogers must have found the camera. Go to sleep.

KANE

Rogers. I'm going to see if he's in his room.

The Professor is asleep again. Kane marches out of the room.

EXT. VILLUS BETA SPACEPORT - ARDALA AND BUCK

step off the elevator tube and approach two Guards.

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CONTINUED

GUARD #5

Princess, we didn't expect you here.

ARDALA

I've no time to chat. Let us pass.

HEAD GUARD

But I have orders. No one may pass without the express orders of Mr. Kane.

ARDALA

Kane is my chancellor. I order you to let us pass.

HEAD GUARD

I'm sorry, ma'am. I can't unless I hear it from him.

INT. HALL TO BUCK'S QUARTERS - KANE

walks briskly down the hall toward camera.

EXT. SPACEPORT

ARDALA

This is your last chance.

HEAD GUARD

I'm sorry, Your Highness.

Ardala hauls off and slugs the Head Guard in the face. He is stunned but not hurt. Buck uses the opportunity to jump the second Guard, take his gun and wrestle him to the ground, throwing his gun to Ardala. The first Guard regains his composure in time to point his laser gun at Ardala before she can point the one Buck threw to her at the Guard. But Buck has his gun out and zaps the Head Guard.

There is a flash of laser light and the Guard falls to the ground. Buck wallops the other Guard on the chin, knocking him out. And Buck and Ardala jump over their victims and run to the field.

INT. DOOR TO ROGERS' ROOM

The Guard stands at his post. Kane approaches.

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CONTINUED

KANE
Everything all right?

GUARD
Fine, sir.

Kane opens the door and looks in.

INT. BUCK'S ROOM

Kane sees Orell in Buck's bed. He looks around, but does not see Buck.

KANE
Where is Rogers?

ORELL
I guess he's still with the Princess.

KANE
The Princess?

Kane whirls around to the Guard.

INT. DOORWAY

KANE
I thought you told me everything
was all right.

GUARD
Yes, sir. It is.

KANE
Rogers isn't here.

GUARD
He must be. He didn't leave.

KANE
You idiot! Come with me.

Kane runs toward the Princess' quarters, the Guard right behind him.

EXT. SPACEPORT

Ardala and Buck are running across the field toward her ship.

INT. HALLWAYS - KANE AND THE GUARD
continue on their way to Ardala's room.

EXT. SPACEPORT - ARDALA AND BUCK
continue to the ship as fast as they can.

INT. DOOR TO ARDALA'S ROOMS

The Guard stands at his post. Kane and other Guard approach him.

KANE
Did anyone go into the Princess'
room tonight?

PRINCESS' GUARD #6
No, sir. Not a soul.

KANE
Come in with us.

Kane motions, the door opens, the three men enter.

EXT. SPACEPORT - ARDALA'S SHIP

Buck and Ardala are climbing through the open hatch. They secure it after them.

INT. ARDALA'S QUARTERS

KANE
Princess...Princess Ardala, I must
talk with....

Kane turns on a light. He looks around the room.

KANE
She's gone. You must have seen
her leave.

PRINCESS' GUARD #6
No, sir. She didn't leave.

KANE
(yelling)
Then where in the galaxy is she?

PRINCESS' GUARD #6
I don't know, sir.

INT. ARDALA'S SHIP - BUCK AND ARDALA
enter the bridge.

BUCK
Can you run this thing?

ARDALA
No. I hire people for that.

BUCK
Well, I guess you just hired me.
He looks at the alien controls.

BUCK
I wonder if I can figure this
thing out.

INT. ARDALA'S QUARTERS

KANE
Sound a full alert.

PRINCESS' GUARD #6
Yes, sir.

EXT. SPACEPORT - LONG SHOT

Suddenly lights come on all over the place. Sirens begin to wail. And immediately, Ardala's giant ship lifts off the ground. Soldiers run and ride toward it, but they are too late. The ship disappears into the night sky.

INT. VILLUS BETA WAR ROOM - KANE

runs in, the Professor behind him. Several technicians man their posts. The beam controller attempts to follow each conflicting command.

KANE
Use the beams. Shoot it down.

PROFESSOR
(running in)
Is it true he has the Princess?

KANE
Yes.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

PROFESSOR
Then you can't shoot it down.

KANE
Why not?
(into phone)
Blow them out of the sky.

PROFESSOR
We must have Rogers back alive.

KANE
The hell with Rogers.

EXT. - SPACE - ARDALA'S SHIP

hurdles away from Villus Beta. Suddenly a laser volley shoots by, barely missing the ship.

FADE OUT

END ACT SEVEN

ACT EIGHT

FADE IN

EXT. VILLUS BETA - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

INT. WAR ROOM

PROFESSOR

You shoot them down, Kane, and we lose the war to Gregoria. We must get Rogers back alive.

INT. ARDALA'S SHIP - ARDALA AND BUCK

see another volley go by them. Buck has taken off the women's clothes and wig and is wiping the make-up off his face.

PRINCESS

Are they crazy? Or don't they know I'm aboard?

Another volley reaches them. This one nicks the ship. It shudders from the shot. Ardala stabilizes it.

BUCK

Maybe they're firing because they do know.

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CONTINUED

ARDALA
Go into warp, you idiot!

BUCK
(pulling a control)
I would, Princess, but that volley
must have disabled the warp generator.

ARDALA
I'll have them killed forty times
for this.

BUCK
From your sanctuary on Earth?
With me?

ARDALA
(this is a curse)
Drift off!

Another volley hits the ship a little harder. Buck and Ardala
are knocked to the floor. The power and lights waver.

INT. WAR ROOM

PROFESSOR
Kane, you'll answer to Draco for
this. You're as crazy as his
crazy daughter. Both so caught
up in vengeance you can't see the
facts. Now call off that attack
unless you want to be responsible
to Draco for killing his daughter
and the solution to the Gregorian
War!

Kane thinks a moment. Then glumly to the head technician:

KANE
Call off the laser attack. Launch
the fighter fleet. We have to bring
them back alive.
(exiting)
I'll lead the attack myself.

INT. ARDALA'S SPACESHIP

Buck and Ardala struggle to their chairs, get back in.

ARDALA
We're going to die. This is it.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

There is a long pause.

BUCK

Maybe not.

ARDALA

Why haven't they fired?

The lights flicker and come on. The ship straightens itself out.

BUCK

They called it off. We're safe.

ARDALA

But they're not. I will not let them live.

BUCK

What about Earth?

ARDALA

The black hole with Earth. I want Kane dead.

EXT. VILLUS BETA SPACEPORT

The fighter crews run to their ships.

EXT. SPACE WITH VILLUS BETA IN BACKGROUND

The Beta squadron streaks toward the camera.

EXT. WILMA'S SQUADRON

pass by the camera right to left in space.

EXT. VILLUS BETA SQUADRON

As the fighters enter deep space, the planet becomes a speck in the distance.

INT. ARDALA'S SHIP

Buck is playing with the telescreen controls.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BUCK

How do you tune this thing?

ARDALA

(shrugs)

You ask the communications mate.

BUCK

But we forgot to take him with us.

A picture comes onto the screen. It shows space in front of them.

BUCK

There. That's where we're going.
Now, I want to see where we've
been. There.

He hits a switch and the picture changes to behind them. Villus Beta is way off in the distance. Buck studies the screen and sees some tiny specks moving toward them.

BUCK

Either there's a bunch of little
teeny stars coming this way, or
we're being chased by a fighter
squadron.

ARDALA

This ship can outrun them.

BUCK

Not without warp capacity.

He hits a telescreen button. Puts on a picture of where they're going. An asteroid is growing bigger and bigger on the screen.

BUCK

But maybe it can outsmart them.

VILLUS SQUADRON

keeps heading toward Ardala's ship.

ARDALA'S SHIP

turns and heads toward an asteroid.

INT. LEAD VILLUS BETA SHIP

Kane is aboard along with a pilot and crew. They see Ardala's ship disappear into the asteroid on their telescreen.

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CONTINUED

KANE
What are they doing? Follow them.

DRACONIAN PILOT
I can't find them.

ARDALA'S SHIP

goes around behind the asteroid and stops, hovering on the dark side. After a beat, the Villus Beta ships streak by on the light side.

INT. LEAD VILLUS BETA SHIP

The telescreen shows no ships.

KANE
Where are they? They fall into a black hole?

DRACONIAN PILOT
I don't know, sir.

KANE
Well, do something!

DRACONIAN PILOT
Okay...what?

Kane glares at him.

INT. ARDALA'S SHIP

ARDALA
All right. They're gone. Now, return to Villus Beta. They'll have a little greeting party when they return.

BUCK
Princess, we're going to Earth. What happened to your eternal love?

The princess grabs the gun out of Buck's belt. He wrestles with her for it. She gets her hand over the trigger and fires. Zap! A puff of light. Buck falls to the floor, stunned. Theo flies off of Buck's neck chain and slides across the floor. Ardala takes over the controls. She tries a few shifts of levers and the ship lurches.

EXT. ARDALA'S SHIP

It shakily charges out of the dark side of the asteroid around to where the Villus Beta squadron can spot it.

SPACE

We see Ardala's ship coming into view of the squadron.

INT. KANE'S SHIP

We see Ardala's ship on the telescreen.

DRACONIAN PILOT

Look. There she is.

KANE

I wonder what sneaky plot they're hatching?

INT. ARDALA'S SHIP

She sees the fighters on her telescreen. She tries to make her ship turn around but can't. The power flickers. She gets panicky.

ARDALA

Buck...Buck, wake up. I didn't mean it.

She shakes Buck's inert body. He groans then passes out again.

INT. KANE'S SHIP

KANE

Can you lock onto her?

DRACONIAN PILOT

If they have as little power as the scanners show, we should be able to use the power of all our fighters cumulatively to lock her in.

KANE

Then do it. Do it!

DRACONIAN PILOT

(into radio)

Beta squadron. Prepare to transfer eighty percent power to locking beams.

INT. ARDALA'S SHIP - ARDALA

gets the ship to start moving away from the fighters slowly. She sees on the telescreen that she's picking up distance. She laughs.

EXTERIOR - SPACE

We see Ardala's ship gaining slightly on the fighter squadron.

INT. ARDALA'S SHIP

ARDALA

I did it. What do I need with men?

She kicks Buck's body.

INT. KANE'S SHIP

DRACONIAN PILOT

(into radio)

Ready...lock now.

EXTERIOR - SPACE

We see Ardala's ship straining, then changing directions, starting to move toward the fighter squadron.

INT. KANE'S SHIP

They see on screen it's working.

KANE

Good. Good. I did it.

The Pilot gives him a dirty look.

INT. ARDALA'S SHIP

She sees on the telescreen the fighters are getting closer. She jams the controls several times. Then she pounds the control panel. Then she gets worried and turns to the sleeping Buck.

ARDALA

Buck...Buck...I need you!

EXTERIOR - SPACE

We see Ardala's ship draw close to the fighters.

INT. KANE'S SHIP

DRACONIAN PILOT

(to radio)

Lock and hold there.

Ardala's ship looms full on the telescreen.

DRACONIAN PILOT

Now, set course for return to
Villus Beta.

EXTERIOR - SPACE

The squadron with Ardala's enormous ship in the lead makes a large turn. The impression to anyone who didn't know Ardala's ship was in tow would be that her ship is the leader of the pack.

Now we see an angle on Ardala's ship and the Villus Beta squadron very far off in the distance and moving straight toward the camera.

WIDEN TO REVEAL

We are watching on the telescreen in Wilma's lead ship of the Inner City fighter squadron. Wilma is watching with us. She speaks into her radio.

WILMA

What do you make that out to be, Al?

PILOT AL'S VOICE

(on radio)

Looks like a fleet of fighters...
except for that something in front.

WILMA

A Draconian Class D-3 Freighter,
would you say?

PILOT AL'S VOICE

(on radio)

Yes. Like the one we spotted over
the Inner City shield.

WILMA

Exactly.

EXTERIOR - SPACE - REVERSE ANGLE

Same scene from the Villus Beta point of view.

WIDEN TO REVEAL

We're watching on the telescreen of Kane's ship.

DRACONIAN PILOT
Inner City fighter squadron at 12
o'clock, sir. What do we do?

KANE
Blow them up.

DRACONIAN PILOT
They probably won't attack us.

KANE
Not if we blow them up.

DRACONIAN PILOT
We might lose control over the
Princess' ship if we convert enough
power to the laser torpedoes to
hit them.

KANE
We'll deal with her later.

DRACONIAN PILOT
Yes, sir.
(into radio)
Switch power to laser torps. Ready
...Mark. Commence fire.

INT. WILMA'S SHIP INCLUDING TELESCREEN

We see a torpedo heading toward us. So does Wilma.

WILMA
(into radio)
Prepare to dodge hostile fire.
Pattern A.

She moves the controls. The ship moves to the right. On the telescreen, the torpedo passes to the left. A second torpedo explodes prematurely toward the left, jogging the ship.

WILMA
Switch to Pattern W.

EXT. INNER CITY SQUADRON - VARIOUS SHOTS

The ships execute maneuvers to dodge the round of torpedoes, which light up the area when they explode, perhaps in multi-colors. One torpedo hits one of the ships, blowing it to smithereens.

PILOT AL'S VOICE

(on radio)

They got number 14.

WILMA'S VOICE

(on radio)

Acknowledged. That was Mark. Mark's gone. Prepare to counter attack.
Fire.

The Inner City ships launch torpedos in kind.

EXT. VILLUS BETA SQUADRON - VARIOUS SHOTS

The incoming torpedos approach, firing near the ships which try to outflank the torpedos. Two ships are hit and explode. The lead Princess Ardala ship is brushed, jarred, sent spinning away from the group.

INT. ARDALA'S SHIP

The power is mostly off, slight flickering. The ship is spinning out of control. Ardala holds on for dear life. Buck is coming around.

ARDALA

Buck...get up. Do something.

The ship calms down, stops spinning. Some lights stay on. The telescreen comes back. Buck looks up on the telescreen sees they are trapped in between the two combat squadrons.

BUCK

Kill the power.

ARDALA

What? Get us out of here.

EXT. INNER CITY SHIPS

WILMA'S VOICE

(on radio)

Target the D-III. Fire.

The ships fire torpedos.