

THE WORLD FAIR

Written by

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Based on a Short Story

EXT. WORLD FAIR|FLUSHING MEADOWS - QUEENS, NY - DAY

1964. A Technicolor dream.

The UNISPHERE, a twelve-story stainless steel globe, towers over a sea of men in fedoras and women in vibrant A-line dresses. The atmosphere is a cocktail of popcorn, diesel exhaust, and the electric hum of the future.

CORPORAL JACK MILLER (22), square-jawed with a fresh Army buzzcut, stands at the edge of the FOUNTAIN OF THE PLANETS. He wears his Class A uniform with a quiet, uneasy dignity. He looks like a man who just stepped off a boat and isn't sure if he's found land or a movie set.

He checks a map. It's colorful, frantic. He looks lost.

He sits on a concrete bench. Something crinkles under him.

He pulls out a thick, RED ENVELOPE. No name. No address. Just a hand-drawn symbol: a circle with a horizontal line through it. Silence.

Jack opens it. Inside are vellum blueprints.

Schematics of the NEW YORK STATE PAVILION, the "*Tent of Tomorrow*." Red ink bleeds across the drawings, marking structural joints. Notes are scribbled in the margins: "*RESISTANCE FREQUENCY: 42Hz. AMPLIFICATION PEAK AT 2100 HOURS.*"

JACK
(to himself)
What the hell is a harmonic
disruptor?

A shadow falls over him. Jack looks up, hand instinctively tightening on the envelope.

EMILY (21) stands there. She's a spark plug in a yellow dress, holding a sketchbook and a slide rule like they're holy relics. Her eyes are sharp, darting between Jack and the papers.

EMILY
That's not the souvenir map.

JACK
(Closing the envelope)
Just some trash I found.

EMILY

I'm a schoolteacher, Corporal. I know the difference between trash and a structural vibration analysis. Those are architectural schematics for the Philip Johnson towers.

She sits beside him, uninvited. Her proximity smells like jasmine and drafting ink.

EMILY (CONT'D)

I'm Emily. I've spent every weekend here since the gates opened. I know every bolt in this park. And those plans... they show how to shake those bolts loose.

JACK

(Low voice)

You think this is real?

EMILY

Look at the math in the corner. That's not a hobbyist. That's someone who knows the resonance of steel. If someone puts a vibration motor at those coordinates... the Tent of Tomorrow doesn't just fall. It disintegrates.

Jack scans the crowd. He spots a MAN IN A CHARCOAL SUIT fifty yards away. The man isn't looking at the Unisphere. He's looking at Jack.

The Man's face is a mask of cold, mid-century cynicism. He starts walking. Fast.

JACK

We need to go. Now.

EXT. WORLD FAIR | THE IBM PAVILION - DAY

Jack and Emily weave through the crowd toward the "Ovoid" - a massive white egg suspended in the air.

EMILY

Why are they doing this? The Fair is about what's coming. The future!

JACK

Some people are afraid of the future, Emily.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)
They'd rather burn it down while
it's still in the box.

They duck behind a pillar. The CHARCOAL SUIT man scans the area. He's joined by two others—identical suits, identical expressions. THE ARCHITECTS OF SILENCE.

JACK (CONT'D)
(Tactical)
Where is the most vulnerable point
in the Pavilion?

EMILY
The foundation of the Observation
Towers. There's a maintenance level
below the mezzanine. But it's
restricted.

JACK
That shouldn't be a problem. I've
spent the last two years jumping
out of planes into restricted
areas. Lead the way.

EXT. WORLD FAIR|SINCLAIR DINOLAND - SUNSET

They sprint past a life-sized fiberglass Brontosaurus. The sun is beginning to dip, turning the sky a bruised purple.

The Architects are closing the gap. Charcoal Suit pulls a small, silver device from his pocket—it looks like a transistor radio but HUMS with a sickening, low-frequency pitch.

The ground beneath Jack's boots trembles slightly. A nearby trash can rattles.

JACK
He's testing it.

EMILY
There! The service hatch behind the
"Dino-Land" sign!

Jack grabs a heavy metal trash lid. As the first Architect rounds the corner of a T. Rex, Jack hurls the lid like a Frisbee. It catches the man in the chest, knocking him into the fiberglass prehistoric swamp.

Jack grabs Emily's hand. They dive into an underground service hatch.

INT. WORLD FAIR | SERVICE TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS

The "World of Tomorrow" is messy underneath. Steaming pipes, buzzing transformers, and the smell of grease.

EMILY

Left at the junction! It follows
the cooling lines to the Pavilion.

They run. The sound of their footsteps echoes. Above them, they can hear the muffled, cheery music of the Fair—a haunting contrast to the dark dampness of the tunnels.

JACK

Why do you care so much? About a
bunch of buildings?

EMILY

(Breathless)

It's not the buildings, Jack! It's
the idea! My students in Brooklyn
think the world is just concrete
and sirens. Here, they can see the
stars of tomorrow. So, you see, I'm
not going to let some bitter men
take the stars away from them.

They reach a heavy steel door labeled: *"PAVILION FOUNDATION -
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY."*

Jack kicks it open.

INT. WORLD FAIR | TENT OF TOMORROW - FOUNDATION LEVEL - NIGHT

The room is dominated by massive concrete pillars holding up the towers above.

Attached to the central pillar is THE DEVICE. It's the size of a suitcase, covered in glass tubes that glow with a rhythmic, pulsing amber light. A heavy, mechanical HUM fills the room. Dust falls from the ceiling.

The Charcoal Suit man steps from behind a pillar. He's holding a snub-nosed revolver.

CHARCOAL SUIT

It's a beautiful lie, isn't it?
Progress. Peace.

JACK

(Stepping in front of
Emily)
(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

It's only a lie if you stop trying
to make it true.

CHARCOAL SUIT

The world is a cold, dark place,
Corporal. We're just accelerating
the inevitable silence. In three
minutes, the "Great Light Show"
begins. The electrical surge from
the fountains will trigger the
final frequency. The towers will
come down on ten thousand people.

He raises the gun.

Jack doesn't wait. He lunges.

Jack is a soldier; he moves with a brutal, practiced
efficiency. He grabs the man's wrist, twisting it until the
gun clatters away. He delivers a sharp elbow to the ribs,
then a grounded sweep.

Charcoal Suit hits the floor, but he's laughing.

CHARCOAL SUIT (CONT'D)

You're too late. The feedback loop
has started.

Jack turns to the device. The amber tubes are turning a
violent red. The vibration is so intense now that Jack can
feel it in his teeth.

JACK

Emily! What do I do?

Emily rushes to the machine. She pulls out her slide rule,
measuring the pulse of the light.

EMILY

The blueprints! Jack, the red
envelope!

Jack fumbles it out. She tears it open, scanning the
"harmonic disruptor" schematic.

EMILY (CONT'D)

It's a bridge circuit. If you just
cut the power, the stored kinetic
energy will release all at once.
It'll blow the pillar.

JACK

So how do we stop it?

EMILY

We have to create a counter-resonance. We have to trick it into thinking the building is already falling.

She points to three wires: Blue, Green, White.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Cross the blue and the white. Then, when the light show starts and the surge hits... You have to ground the green wire into the pillar casing.

JACK

(Looking at the sparking wires)
I'm gonna get fried, aren't I?

EMILY

(Eyes damp, voice steady)
Not if I'm holding the other end.
We'll distribute the charge.

Jack looks at her. Truly looks at her. The soldier and the teacher.

JACK

Ready?

EMILY

For the future.

Above them, a BOOM echoes. The Light Show has begun.

The device screams. A surge of electricity arcs from the machine. Jack grabs the wires. Emily grabs Jack's shoulders, grounding him, her face pressed against his back.

A blinding FLASH of white light fills the room. The HUM rises to a deafening SHRIEK—

—and then, SNAP.

Silence.

The amber tubes dim. The vibration dies.

Jack and Emily collapse to the floor, panting. Above them, they hear the faint, muffled sound of a crowd APPLAUDING. They have no idea how close they came to the end.

Jack looks at his shaking hands. Then he looks at Emily.
She's covered in soot, her hair a mess, but she's smiling.

JACK
I think I found my purpose.

EMILY
Yeah? What's that?

JACK
Making sure you're around to see
the next Fair.

EXT. WORLD FAIR|UNISPHERE - NIGHT

Security guards lead the Architects of Silence away in
handcuffs. The Charcoal Suit man looks at Jack with genuine
confusion—as if he can't understand why the world didn't end.

Jack and Emily stand by the fountain. The water is
illuminated in a rainbow of colors.

JACK
You know, I have a whole week
before I have to report to my new
post in DC.

EMILY
The Pentagon?

JACK
Civil Engineering. I want to build
things that stay up.

Jack takes her hand. They look up at the Unisphere,
reflecting the lights of a thousand dreams.

EMILY
So, what happens now?

JACK
The future, my darling... The
future happens.

FADE OUT.

THE END