

SPACEBALL

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Ver. 1.1

SCREENPLAY

ACT ONE

SCENE 1A. EXT. CITY STREET. BY A WELL. DAY.

A Stalin skyscraper in the centre of Moscow. The camera pans and we see: Moscow covered with lianas and overgrown with greenery, the climate in the capital is now tropical. Behind the skyscraper, its head brushing the clouds, rises a spaceship which looks like a dandelion.

ANTON, a youth (20), stands in a long queue for water. His mouth is open and his eyes are glued to a picture which some fans have created from coloured strips of material. It depicts Earth's Spaceball team (we will be introduced to them later). In the centre is the face of the team's captain - a beautiful girl (NATASHA, 20). People fill their bottles and leave the water station. Everyone takes a step forward except Anton, and in front of him appears a free space, but he doesn't notice and continues to gaze at Natasha's face on the picture.

VOICE FROM THE QUEUE

Look out!

Crack! Crunch! A lamppost crashes into the empty space in front of Anton, tearing his rucksack from his shoulder. The people in the queue jump out of the way and the shaken Anton steps back and falls into some roadside bushes.

BIG-NOSED GIRL

I told you not to stand next to that guy.
Bad luck follows him around.

ANTON

(lying in the bushes)
Oh, it's my fault, is it?

A large lizard on a branch behind Anton observes him intently with a cone-shaped eye.

ANTON

(jumping up)
AAAAAH!

RED-HAIRED GIRL
Y'see? I was standing behind him the day before yesterday and the pavement gave way underneath us. I nearly died!

ANTON
No, no, it's just a... lizard. I hate lizards.

Anton turns round to point to the place where he fell, and sees a girl holding the same bulbous-eyed lizard. Anton shudders again.

WATER DISTRIBUTER
Whose turn is it? Do you want some water or not? The game'll be starting soon!

MAN WITH DREADLOCKS
Let him through before something else comes crashing down on us.

ANTON
Happy to get out of here. I've got to find a job today.

Anton fills his bottle. Two predatory alien eyes watch him carefully from around the dark corner of a side street.

SCENE 1B. EXT. CAVE ABOVE WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

A siren wails. The rumble of unearthly mechanisms. A bright light at the end of a tunnel illuminates a quivering body. This is part of the wreckage of an alien spaceship, resembling an internal organ of an enormous animal. The ship is held down by a chrome structure looking like chains. We are deep under the ground, in either a gigantic mine or a bottomless pit, which has been turned into a high-tech prison by an extraterrestrial intelligence.

SCENE 2. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

Inside the ship, a 3D image of a girl is projected from a cornea-like alien apparatus. She is a threatening, yet attractive alien (VALAYA). The girl runs through a series of connected rooms and approaches a massive figure which looks like a clot of coagulated black tar. It is a

fearful-looking alien (CHERNO). His back is protected by a BLACK CLOAK, undulating by itself. The cloak slowly rises to the back of his head and holds it like a huge hand, either defending or threatening him. Chernov's whole figure oozes a concentration of ruthless cruelty and hidden danger. His gaze is fixed on a luminous cocoon which looks like an enormous, multilayered bean pod.

Inside the cocoon are two spheres, one on top of the other. The upper sphere is filling up with a bright plasma fire. It is a maturing WAVE-EATER.

VALAYA

Father, startling him with
the lamppost failed to
modify his genes. He remains
a normal human.

Cherno runs his hand along the outer membrane of the cocoon.

CHERNO

I have only two left.
Without sunlight, no more
WAVE-EATERS can be born.
When they take these, this
cave will become my tomb.

The wave-eater is now full of energy and slowly rises up from its cradle inside the cocoon. Cherno stretches out a hand. The wave-eater stops as though gripped by an unseen power. With an imperceptible movement Cherno pushes the wave-eater away from him, then moves it about to the right and left, manipulating it from a distance.

CHERNO

Today we are going to fight
back. Do not let me down,
child.

SCENE 3. INT. PRISON SECURITY COMMAND CENTRE

THREE-FINGERED SECURITY GUARD

Haul it in.

A red-faced humanoid alien presses a button on a control panel.

There is a photograph of the Threefinger's family - him with his wife and child - on the panel. Looking at the photograph and smiling, the Threefinger presses buttons on a tablet computer.

Scene 4. EXT. CAVE ABOVE WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

A huge power unit telescopes out of its dock, exposing its auxiliary modules. A LIGHT BLUE ray bursts out of them.

The ray pierces the internal walls of the ship.

SCENE 5. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

The ray penetrates the cocoon with the wave-eaters, wraps itself around the red one which has just broken free of the branch it was growing on, and pulls it out.

A grimace of pain appears on the faces of Chernov and Valaya.

SCENE 6. EXT. CAVE ABOVE WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

The ray pulls the trembling sphere in towards the module.

SCENE 7. INT. PRISON SECURITY COMMAND CENTRE

THREE-FINGERED SECURITY GUARD
I reckon we've got another
fighter. Let's boost the
restraints.

Threefinger's hand turns an intensity control wheel on a touch screen.

SCENE 8. EXT. CAVE ABOVE WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

The power unit module fixes the wave-eater and turns 180° together with it. Dozens of the light-blue rays attach themselves to the quivering sphere and carefully raise it toward the mouth of a tunnel which leads out to the Earth's surface. The most critical moment now begins - the transfer of the wave-eater.

SCENE 9. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

Suddenly Chernov throws a hand up and begins to manipulate the wave-eater, which has started vibrating and trying to extract itself from the power of the ray. Chernov waves his hands around, which causes...

SCENE 10. EXT. CAVE ABOVE WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

...the wave-eater's resistance to the rays to increase further. The power unit drones and inside its pipes and channels things begin to shake dangerously. And finally - strike! - one of the groups of power beams cuts out with a plaintive whine. The wave-eater pulls itself to freedom and begins to destroy everything in its path. EXPLOSION -

a power module is blown to pieces. EXPLOSION - one of the cave walls is blown apart. Like a comet, the wave-eater rushes toward the security command centre. A gigantic explosion blows the northern part of the bridge to pieces.

SCENE 11. INT. PRISON SECURITY COMMAND CENTRE

The security guards panic. The wave-eater cuts right through the security captain, Threefinger, whose body shrivels up like the bark of a dried-out tree, as though the wave-eater has sucked all the strength and juice out of him.

The photograph of Threefinger's family chars.

In the tight space, the wave-eater destroys everything it touches and sucks the energy out of everyone on the bridge.

Continuing on its way, the wave-eater pierces another two security guards, bursts out of the command centre and heads toward the mouth of the tunnel leading to the Earth's surface. Another second and it will probably be too late to stop it.

SCENE 12. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

A ray of hope sparks in Chernov's eyes.

SCENE 13. INT. PRISON SECURITY COMMAND CENTRE

A wounded security guard manages to press a button with his burnt hand.

SCENE 14. EXT. CAVE ABOVE WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

The power beams along the walls of the tunnel come to life, focus on the body of the flying wave-eater, and bristle up with YELLOW beams which immobilise the rampaging "escapee".

BURNT SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)
Activate transport! We can't
hold it long!

SCENE 15. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

Chernov cannot hide his displeasure - his rebellion has failed once more. He raises his eyes and looks at Valaya.

CHERNO
(not hiding his displeasure)
The gene combination I
created is capable of

creating order throughout
the whole universe in my
hands. And this great
invention of mine, this tiny
particle...

Cherno pokes a 3D model of dozens of miniscule molecular
compounds (like unravelled DNA), in the middle of which
one component is clearly missing.

CHERNO (cont.)

... is now in the body of a
feeble human who cannot even
muster up enough adrenaline
to activate it.
(to Valaya)
Go and kill him!

VALAYA

Papa, he's useless to us
dead.

CHERNO

Perhaps you have fallen in
love with him?

VALAYA

(stepping backwards in fright)
No, Father, what are you...

In a fit of anger Cherno throws at Valaya the first thing
that comes to hand. The object flies right through her.

CHERNO

So go and kill him! I will
not die in this prison!

Bowing subserviently, Valaya's hologram disappears.

SCENE 16. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING. MEETING ROOM

The lights on an instrument panel goes out. Valaya gets
up, annoyed, pulls a cable, like the tail of some unknown
animal, and turns off the connection. Energy continues to
spark inside the cable, now fallen the floor.

SCENE 17. EXT. CAVE ABOVE WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

The wave-eater, contained by the beams, forces its way up
along the endless shaft. It breaks away from the beams.

SCENE 18. INT. PRISON SECURITY COMMAND CENTRE

The burnt security guard presses keys on a panel.

BURNT SECURITY GUARD

Maximum pressure in Zone
Minus 51. I hope to God it
doesn't destroy the power
beams in the bend. Get me
Belo!

SCENE 19. EXT. CAVE ABOVE WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

In a bend in the tunnel the yellow beams suddenly become thicker. Humming and bending, they catch the flying WAVE-EATER and slow it down. The WAVE-EATER continues its journey towards the Earth's surface, barely controlled by the beams.

SCENE 20 EXT. CITY STREETS IN FRONT OF A STADIUM

A dystopian Moscow sprawls on the Earth's surface, unrelentingly scorched by the tropical sun. Over the city towers an alien spaceship like a gigantic DANDELION.

SCENE 21. INT. STADIUM

Inside a dome, which sits atop the stem of the alien ship, is a gigantic SPACEBALL stadium.

Millions of spectators shout boisterously. In the stands are Earth people and representatives of alien races. The fans are separated from the pitch by a force field.

They are kicking off to restart the game. The scoreboard reads 3:3. The Earth team's goal is open and all five bars on their three hundred metre goalposts are full. The Sirians' goal is still closed and only three bars on it are full. The players move about at great speeds, leaving TRAILS of energy behind them, each kick accompanied by an emission of COLOURED WAVES.

SCENE 22. INT. STADIUM. COMMENTARY BOX

In the box several commentators, Earthling and alien, are emotionally reporting the action of the game.

EARTH COMMENTATOR

It's a simple game that has united the galaxy: with five kicks of the ball, a team can open the opponent's goal for a chance to score.

SCENE 23. INT. STADIUM. PITCH

A red energy sphere, similar in colour and shape to the wave-eater we saw earlier, rises quickly towards the dome of the stadium, and the players, called ATHLETES, rush after it. The Earth girl FAN materialises right in front of the ball and kicks it hard in the air.

FAN
(into her headset)
Wave!

The ball throws out a wave of energy. Fan disappears to let the wave past and returns to the spot where she teleported from. On the huge display the fourth bar out of five lights up. A surge of energy scatters the players like skittles. The ball speeds down towards the pitch.

EARTH COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
Fan strikes the ball cleanly
and gets Earth the ball
again. One more kick and the
Sirians' goal will open.

The ball dives towards the pitch where it is met by another Earth player - PELE.

EARTH COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
Earth's Pele, all the way
from the cold and snow of
Brazil, has the ball.

Pele is surrounded by Sirians, who are several times bigger than Earth's players. Their ferocious captain is in Pele's way. One more moment and he will have the ball, but Pele strikes the ball and teleports. A SURGE OF ENERGY. The Sirian is forced to teleport to avoid the wave. The sphere rebounds off a wall and the Sirian throws himself after it, but Pele is quicker. He passes to Fan. Another wave, and again the players teleport to avoid it. The fifth and final bar lights up. THE SIRIANS' GOAL OPENS.

SCENE 24. INT. STADIUM. STANDS. EARTH SECTOR/SIRIAN SECTOR

An emboldened Earth fan jumps out of his seat and shouts excitedly. An unhappy Sirian fan sit next to him. The Earthling, knowing that he is protected by a wall, begins to taunt the Sirian.

SCENE 25. INT. STADIUM. PITCH

EARTH COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

The opposition's goal is opening! For the first time in years, our team has the chance to take a lead.

Natasha-sho-o-ot.

The Goal is open!

Natasha materialises on the pitch, ready to take the ball, but a fat Sirian, STAN, knocks her over. Natasha rolls head over heels along the ground, and a small box with tentacles - her SPUTNIK - is thrown from her. In her tumble she suddenly finds herself wearing only a thin, flesh coloured leotard, which makes her seem almost naked. She jumps up, ignoring the fact, and throws herself into the fray. The sputnik jumps back onto Natasha's back as she runs, and embraces her with three tentacles which lock together on her solar plexus. The arms then expand and out of them grow threads which weave into materials of various textures, clothing Natasha in her Athlete's kit once more.

SCENE 26. INT. STADIUM. STANDS

An alien girl smacks an alien boy round the back of the head for staring at the half-naked Natasha.

SCENE 27. INT. STADIUM. PITCH

Stan rushes towards the goal with the ball. Pele and Fan materialise in front of him, but the huge Stan bowls them over too. The Earthlings, slightly shaken, get up and throw themselves into the attack, thinking nothing of it. Pele grabs Natasha's arm and swings her, accelerating her towards Stan. Natasha quickly gains on her opponent. Stan looks round worriedly and accelerates. Natasha is just about to knock him down.

SCENE 28. INT. STADIUM. STANDS

The fans freeze for a moment, but immediately their excitement flairs up again with renewed force.

LITTLE BOY

Spaceball is the best!!!

SCENE 29. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

Stan kicks the ball as hard as he can. The sphere disappears into the Earth team's goal.

SCENE 30. INT. BEHIND THE GOAL. STADIUM

The ball, once in the goal, suddenly stops. It hangs in the air for a second, then "switches off" and collapses into a bright blue spot, like the picture on old cathode-

ray televisions.

SCENE 31. INT. EARTH SECTOR/SIRIAN SECTOR. STANDS. STADIUM

The crowd goes wild. The Sirian fan now jumps out of his seat, shouting and taunting the Earth fan.

SCENE 32. INT. COMMENTARY BOX. STADIUM

The alien commentator dances about with joy.

SCENE 33. EXT. TIMES SQUARE IN THE SNOW

The skyscrapers on Times Square are one third deep in snow. The screens atop the buildings are not working. Spaceball is being broadcast onto the sky above the distinctive features of the square. On an even, snowy surface stand four wooden sledges containing families wrapped up in furs. Fires burn in the gaps between the sledges. The people scream joyfully after another goal. The camera zooms into the centre of the square where the family of a bearded man - his wife and child (10) - are sitting.

The smiling wife reproachfully pokes her bearded husband in the ribs.

WIFE

Who are you rooting for,
man? The Sirians scored!

SCENE 34. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The score changes on the scoreboard - 4:3. One of the Sirian Athletes throws his arms up and shouts angrily at the spectators.

SCENE 36. INT. COMMENTARY BOX. STADIUM

The alien commentator shouts angrily.

SCENE 37. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The panting Earth Athletes come together. Natasha pats Fan encouragingly on the shoulder.

SCENE 38. INT. BELO'S BOX. STADIUM.

The force field opens up, revealing an exit from the trainers' sector. Belo steps unassumingly onto the pitch.

SCENE 38A. INT. STANDS

ALIEN IN RED
Belo! Belo's on the pitch!

SCENE 38B. INT. STANDS

HUMANOID-MANTIS.
KarA buerga (points) Belo!
(clapping its hands, turning
towards a sector of girls)
BELOOO! Belo!

SCENE 38C. INT. STANDS

The girls' jump to their feet and begin chanting like cheerleaders: "Belo, Belo". Then the whole stadium jumps to its feet in unison.

BLONDE IN THE STANDS
I love you, Belo!

BRUNETTE IN THE STANDS
He's an alien!

BLONDE IN THE STANDS
I don't care.

COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
The creator of Spaceball is
on the pitch, the great
scientist and beloved leader
of all the Athletes.

SCENE 38D. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

Belo, embarrassed by the general fuss at his appearance, keeps his head down and walks forward.

The surprised players of both teams come towards him. He comes in tight to them and speaks uneasily.

BELO
I'm just stalling for time.
There's a fight going on
down below.

The players exchange glances.

BELO
Stan - you're overheating,
take a break .

The corpulent, wheezing Stan crosses his arms on his chest, closes his eyes and falls flat on his back on the

pitch. Fan jumps in surprise.
Belo sees a FLASHING RED LIGHT on his TABLET.

BRIDGE SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)
T minus 15 seconds.

BELO
(to the Athletes)
Stand to!

The Athletes nod their understanding and go back to where they were.

The DIGITAL CLOCK under the flashing light on Belo's tablet begins the countdown: 15, 14, 13...

Belo leaves the pitch.

BELO
(to the bridge security guard)
Well done! You tamed it quickly!

BRIDGE SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)
We'll have everything back to normal by evening.

BELO
(to the Athletes)
Wave-eater in 10 seconds.

The dome over the pitch FLASHES a soft sky blue - the signal for arrival of a new ball. The crowd goes wild. A "stand to" indicator lights up on the Sputniks fixed on the backs of the Athletes.

SCENE 39 INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The Earth and Sirian teams huddle around their captains. Natasha looks over Pele's shoulder at their opponents and looks at the captain through a gap between the Sirians' backs. Trying not to be noticed by the fans in the stands, he shows Natasha with hand signals the move they are about to play. The two captains' eyes meet and she indicates to him "Ok".

T-u-u-u! The signal echoes around the stadium. A circular wave spreads out from the centre over the surface of the pitch. In response, the whole stadium, of two million spectators, claps in unison.

Tu-u-u-u! Another signal. A second wave runs out over the

surface of the pitch. Two deafening claps from four million hands. The Athletes from both teams adopt a fighting stance.

Tu-u-u-u! A third wave-eater rolls along the playing surface. Three sharp, rhythmic claps rock the stadium's force field.

The Athletes run to the centre of the pitch. A fierce WAVE-EATER bursts out from the centre. It is the same one that several minutes ago destroyed the cave.

SCENE 40. INT. STADIUM. COMMENTARY BOX

EARTH COMMENTATOR

And they're off!

SCENE 41. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The opponents charge towards each other at a crazy speed. THWACK! Pele and Fan throw Natasha upwards and fat Stan does the same with his captain. Bang! Bang! Natasha and the Sirian are above the wave-eater.

EARTH COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

We've got a crazy battle unravelling in mid-air.

NATASHA

Wave!

PAF! Natasha strikes the ball and disappears. A SURGE OF ENERGY. Natasha reappears at the point where she teleported. The missile powers downwards, but Fan meets it in the air. SMACK! The wave from the strike envelopes the stadium as if it were a small nuclear explosion. The spectators are ecstatic. The Sirians already have two bars on their goal.

SCENE 42. INT. COMMENTARY BOX. STADIUM

EARTH COMMENTATOR

Aaaaaaaaaa! Yesssssss!

SCENE 43. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

Pele volleys the ball. He disappears. SHOCKWAVE. Pele reappears at the point where he teleported. The missile flies to Fan, who summersaults, strikes the ball and disappears. SHOCKWAVE.

In slow-motion we see Natasha and Stan flying towards the

wave-eater. Their paths cross.

EARTH COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
Looks like we have quite the
rivalry brewing here!

It appears that Stan and Natasha clash with each other hard and fast, but Stan suddenly and barely noticeably gives Natasha a friendly wink, and she responds with a smile. A second before they collide, Stan and Natasha's arms link tightly. Stan spins Natasha with his massive body, accelerating her towards the wave-eater in such a way that from the side, for the spectators, it looks like Stan loses the clash with Natasha. CRASH! Stan rolls head-over-heels along the pitch.

SCENE 44. INT. STADIUM. STANDS

The crowd goes wild!

SCENE 45. INT. PITCH - STADIUM

EARTH COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
This is kind of women! I
wouldn't want to get in her
way! Although, what am I
saying, I do want to get in
her way! Natasha, I love
you!

Now nobody stands in Natasha's way. She gives the ball a mighty kick. EXPLOSION.

EARTH COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
That's five strikes! The
goal is open. We can win
this game! SHOOT!

Pele takes a run up and strikes the ball hard. The wave-eater flies into the goal.

SCENE 46. INT. STADIUM. BEHIND THE GOAL/WAVE-EATER STORAGE AREA

The WAVE-EATER, now shrivelled like a grape with its flesh sucked out, does not stop as the previous ball did, but flies into a smooth tube. It shoots off downwards, like a potted pool ball inside a pool table, until it thuds into a pile of similarly shrivelled skins. Before the shutters at the entrance to the tube have time to close after it, we see a huge chamber packed to the rafters with uncharged wave-eaters.

SCENE 47. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

Cherno grasps his heart and falls to the floor.

SCENE 48. INT. STADIUM. STANDS

The crowd is in ecstasy.

SCENE 49. EXT. EGYPT. PYRAMIDS

The public's delight at the goal is reflected in the smooth black surface of the ocean. A Bedouin lies on the bottom of a battered old boat moored to a metal ring attached to the very top of a pyramid sticking out of the water.

BEDOUIIN

(WHISPERING EXCITEDLY WITH
JUST HIS LIPS)

Natashaaaa...

SCENE 50. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The Athletes rise to their feet. Stan throws Natasha a severe look. Natasha smiles sweetly and gratefully at him in response. Her smile melts Stan's brutal face and he suddenly looks like a cute, blue-eyed teddy bear.

SCENE 51. INT. LABOUR EXCHANGE. DAY

Dozens of people of different ages and nationalities stand alongside the windows and boisterously applaud the match being projected straight onto the sky above the city. Anton - the same youth whose image Valaya showed to her father - stands at an empty window of the labour exchange and tries to shout at an employee:

ANTON

Please! I need work!

A lady sits on a chair by the window and does not take her eyes off the game.

ANTON

I've been coming here for
ten months!

LABOUR EXCHANGE LADY

(not taking her eyes off the
window)

Why don't you come watch the
game like everyone else!

ANTON
Because I'm not like
everyone else!

The lady slams the service window shut right in Anton's face.

Anton jumps up onto the window sill and pulls the blinds.

A half-light reigns in the room. The game is invisible through the tightly shut blinds.

ANTON
(shouting)
Maybe if you spent your days
working rather than staring
at the sky, we could've
rebuilt the world by now!

Several dozen numbed faces turn round. A deathly silence hangs in the air.

SCENE 52. EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF LABOUR EXCHANGE. DAY

Anton is thrown out onto the street. He falls with a thud. His rucksack is thrown out after him and some of his belongings fall out of its pockets onto the ground.

ANTON
(muttering to himself)
Twenty years since the moon
was destroyed. No food,
electricity for an hour a
day, and all they can think
about is Spaceball!

SCENE 53. EXT. CITY SQUARE. DUSK

Anton trudges dejectedly around the city. The SCENE is accompanied by a commentator's voice from the stadium.

EARTH COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
Looking at these guys, you
just know it'll be our turn
soon.

Anton pushes his way through a crowd of people craning their necks to watch the broadcast of the game.

SCENE 54. EXT. BACKSTREET. DUSK

Anton angrily kicks a can at the picture of the Athletes made from strips of material. Natasha looks severely at

him from the wall.

SCENE 55. EXT. CITY STREET. DUSK

The match finishes and people finally tear their eyes away from the sky and, stretching their stiff necks, go about their business. The city comes to life.

CITIZEN

(excitedly, to his friend)
I've been watching for
twenty years and it never
gets old!

Anton raise his head and sees capsules of spectators flying off in all directions away from the stadium like dandelion seeds. This is how the stadium ferries spectators around after the game.

Several boys begin imitating a game of Spaceball, kicking around a home-made ball. Anton walks past a cart being pulled with difficulty by a camel. In the cart something is jingling and the roots of some kind of plant are hanging. The cart goes past a bread kiosk where more and more people are forming a queue.

SCENE 56. EXT. KNOLL. DUSK

A transparent capsule from the stadium lands just in front of Anton and people exit it, buzzing from the game.

SPECTATOR

(to a friend meeting him)
I was sitting this close!
His face was right here!
Like yours are now! Next
time it'll come for you!

EARTH COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

Perhaps evolution has done
its part and tomorrow we
will all wake up to become
Athletes, overcoming the
terror that has befallen us!
If only we keep believing,
one day it will be true!

Anton walks up a knoll and behind him opens up a view of the dystopian city: a scorching sun, untypical for Moscow, palms, the dried-up river bed, and houses overgrown with lianas. The stadium towers over the city and the capsules with the last spectators are still leaving. The upper part of the stadium begins to move down. The force field

retracts, pulled inside until the upper part of the stadium meets the lower part, covering it like the perfectly formed halves of a shell.

SCENE 57. INT. ANTON'S FLAT. DUSK

Anton enters the flat and sees his MOTHER lying unconscious on the floor by the window. He runs to her and tries to bring her round. She opens her eyes.

MOTHER

Did we win?

ANTON

Am I the only person on
Earth that stupid game
hasn't turned into a zombie?

Anton runs to a table covered in medicines. All the jars are empty.

ANTON

Mum, you said you had plenty
of tablets left!

MOTHER

I'm much better now!

The door slams.

SCENE 58. EXT. CHEMIST'S SHOP. NIGHT

Anton runs towards a huge glass shop window. A sign in large letters says - CHEMIST'S. Anton tries the door, but it is shut. Looking around in desperation he sees a brick lying in the road. Not wasting time, he throws the brick at the shop window, but it bounces off leaving not even a scratch.

An alarm goes off.

Anton is perplexed. Suddenly a girl (ANYA, 20, the same girl who grabbed her heart upon seeing Anton in the queue for water) swoops down straight at him from above, her right hand holding onto a liana. CRASH. The other end of the vine is attached to a heavy man-hole cover. Anton looks round and sees the man-hole cover bounce on the asphalt, gain speed and fly towards him.

Anton ducks at the last moment and the man-hole cover shatters the window with a crash. Anya nimbly leaps through the hole it has made.

SCENE 59. INT. CHEMIST'S SHOP

Anya takes medicines from the shelves. Anton watches her in surprise. Checking himself, he jumps inside, runs to the shelves he needs and also starts gathering medicines. He notices a bar of chocolate, or some futuristic analogue of chocolate, in a coloured wrapper: Anton's mouth waters. He quickly shoves packets of medicine into his rucksack and pockets, then freezes. Unable to control himself, he greedily grabs the bar, takes a bite, closes his eyes and exhales lasciviously. The inside of the remains of the chocolate (or whatever) light up a suspicious green colour. An ear-splitting POLICE WHISTLE is suddenly heard. Anton shoves the remnants of the bar into his pocket and runs after Anya, who has already managed to open the back door.

SCENE 60. EXT. CHEMIST'S SHOP. NIGHT

The youths run out onto the street and are chased by two policemen - Vasily and his partner. The chase is on.

SCENE 61. EXT. CITY ALLEYWAYS. NIGHT

Despite their age difference, the policemen doggedly chase the pair of thieves. The youths dodge through city backstreets, tripping over plant roots. A turn. A small yard. The open door of a TRANSFORMER BOX.

SCENE 62A. EXT. BY THE TRANSFORMER BOX

The policemen run past the transformer box and through an archway.

SCENE 62B. INT. TRANSFORMER BOX

Anya looks carefully at Anton. She slowly looks to the right. A lizard crawls along the wall close to Anton's ear.

ANTON
(whispering in fright)
What is it?

ANYA
I think we've lost them.

ANTON
What's next to my ear?

ANYA
Just a lizard.

ANTON

AAAAAAH!

Anton shudders, and Anya presses him to the wall and puts a hand over his mouth.

VASILY (O.S.)

Put your hands behind your heads and come out now!

Tense pause.

ANYA

That's it. They've got us.

Anton slowly takes Anya's hands from his face.

ANTON

(loudly, to the policemen)
I'm coming out. Just don't shoot!

Anya looks at Anton in surprise. He carefully pushes her deeper into the box and opens the door.

SCENE 63. EXT. YARD IN FRONT OF THE TRANSFORMER BOX. NIGHT

Anton comes out onto the street with his arms raised.

VASILY

(aiming a stun gun at Anton)
Hands behind your head!
Where's the girl?

ANTON

(pointing left)
She jumped over the fence!

The policemen look left.

ANTON

(shouting to the right)
Run, girl!

The policemen look to the right. Anton sets off at a run, knocking Vasily off his feet. Vasily gets up and chases Anton.

VASILY

(shaking himself down as he runs)
You are done!
You son of a bitch.

SCENE 64. EXT. ROAD. NIGHT

Anton runs ahead along a narrow side street and out into the road. Glancing round, he wants to raise his hand in a mock triumphal gesture, but at this moment a fast-moving lorry hits him.

A squeal of brakes.

VASILY

(panting)

Holy Stems!

The frightened lorry driver quickly climbs down from his cab and runs away. The disgusted and frightened face of Anton peers out from behind the dimly-lit headlights of the lorry. The radiator grill is whole and unharmed, with no sign of a collision. Only the box of medicine which Anton has been holding in his hand throughout the chase from the chemist's is now welded to the front of the lorry. A thin stream of tablets runs out of the box.

The lorry driver, pressed to a wall, watches Vasily. His face twitches and covers in black spots, and he turns into Valaya.

SCENE 65. INT. STADIUM. BELO'S CABIN

Belo's tablet gives a vibrating signal and a green spot appears on it. Belo jumps up from his bed like he's been burned, trips and falls.

SCENE 66. INT. STADIUM. RECREATION ZONE

At the sound of Belo falling, the Athletes - Earthlings and Sirians - look round in the direction of his cabin. A grimace of sympathy on Fan's face.

PELE

Light!

The light goes out instantly.

SCENE 67. INT. STADIUM. BELO'S CABIN

Belo grabs his clothes from a hanger, hesitates for a second and throws it on the floor. He hastily reaches for a flower and opens the head. Inside are bioluminescent elements radiating light, which makes the flower look like a table lamp. Belo grabs the tablet and freezes on the spot.

SCENE 68. INT. STADIUM. RECREATION ZONE

Belo runs out into the dark recreation zone.

BELO

Everybody up!

The light comes on and the surprised and frightened faces of the teams stare at Belo. They are all holding their hands behind their backs.

BELO

(surprised)

What are you all up to?

FAN

(cheerfully, hiding playing cards behind her back)

Well... We're not sleeping!

BELO

Good! A new Athlete has been born! We must find him!

(runs out and returns, severely)

I'm mean, that's very bad.

You need to sleep. Just not now. Let's go!

(runs out and returns again)

Only Earthlings. We don't want to frighten him. You Sirians get some sleep!

Stan looks resigned.

SCENE 69. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

The same green light flashes on Chernov's tablet. The bright green flashes reflect on his severe, tarry face. Chernov closes his eyes salaciously.

SCENE 70. EXT. CITY STREETS. NIGHT

The gobsmacked Anton wanders falteringly down a street. He looks around, confused as to how he got there. His body suddenly disappears with a bang and reappears again a second later. Anton rubs his eyes.

ANTON

What the hell's going on?

ANYA

(panting)

There you are!

ANTON

(confused)

I've just been hit by a car...

ANYA

We need to hide.

ANTON

...and killed!

Anya unceremoniously takes his hand and pulls him after her. Anton doesn't have the strength to resist.

SCENE 71. EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF THE ENTRANCE TO ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING

Anya moves a man-hole cover aside, helps Anton down, jumps nimbly inside and disappears, easily closing the cover behind her. Silence. A ball of tumbleweed rolls over the man-hole cover along the empty street.

SCENE 72. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING

An iron staircase leads down to a well-equipped underground dwelling. It is clear that it has long been lived in, but it is not very cosy. It is damp and dark. Occasional puddles look like black holes in the floor. Anya leads the weak Anton to a makeshift couch and, while he eagerly lies down, she looks him over studiously.

ANYA

Why did you come out of the box alone back there?

ANTON

(rummaging in his rucksack, takes out a wet flask)
It's always some shit happening with me...
I spilt my water because of you.

Anya fetches some water.

ANYA

So, why?

ANTON

You nearly killed me with that man-hole cover.

Anya gives Anton the water and sits down opposite him.

ANYA

Can you answer my question?

ANTON

Leave me alone.

ANYA

Someone has a communication problem.

ANTON

They wouldn't have caught me! Those zombified fat-asses can't run. All they can do is watch Spaceball.

ANYA

Who won today?

ANTON

It was a draw.

ANYA

You're wrong.

ANTON

I'm telling you, I saw...

ANYA

(interrupting)

You're wrong that you're not zombified.

Anya gets up and, taking a jar of medicine from her rucksack, goes into the next room, closing the door tightly behind her.

ANTON

(to Anya)

Oh, like you don't watch it!

ANYA

Of course I don't! I need to help my dad, not gawp at the sky.

Anya appears in the doorway and sees a surprised and excited smile on Anton's face.

ANYA

Why are you looking at me like that?

ANTON

This is the first time I've met a person who doesn't like Spaceball.

Anya approaches him and holds out a hand.

ANYA

Anya.

Anton shakes her hand and looks at the medicines in her hand, stolen from the chemist's.

ANTON

Is your father ill?

ANYA

(nodding)

I've been trying to save him for years.

ANTON

(still shaking her hand)
We have a lot in common.

ANYA

We have one thing in common.
That's not a lot.

ANTON

(embarrassed)
I mean my mother's ill.

ANYA

I'm going to ask you a question. Just don't say "leave me alone".

Anton, still holding her hand, is all ears.

ANYA

What's your name?

ANTON

(a smile spreading across his face)
Can I come and see you again?

ANYA

You haven't left yet.

ANTON

I have to go and see my mum.

Anya and Anton stand in silence for a while, hand in hand.

ANYA

You're going to break my
hand.

Anya frees her hand from Anton's firm grasp and ruffles
his hair.

ANYA

You know your way home?

ANTON

I'll find it.

Anton gets ready to run, turns round and holds his hand
out once more.

ANTON

Anton.

ANTON RUNS OFF. Left alone, Anya unfurls her fist, which
contains a lock of Anton's hair.

Anya's face twitches, covers in tarry spots, and in a few
seconds Anya turns into Valaya. She walks thoughtfully
through to the next room.

SCENE 73. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING. MEETING ROOM

VALAYA picks up from the floor a cable like the tail of an
unknown animal and brings it towards a power socket. A
connection is made and a Chernov's holographic head appears
in front of her.

CHERNO

Speak.

VALAYA

I did it!

VALAYA puts Anton's hairs on an eyeball-like panel. The
hairs sink into the panel as if into a swamp.

Instruments switch on and the difficult process of
analysis begins. A 3D model of a fragment of the DNA chain
of the hairs appears before Valaya.

SCENE 74 INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

The same thing appears simultaneously in front of Chernov's eyes in his cave. He observes cold-bloodedly as the 3D model of the fragment of the DNA chain of the hairs appears. Chernov sits up, concerned. He puts the resulting fragment of DNA in the centre of a matrix and the chaotically positioned models of molecules and amino acids instantly align themselves into a long and intricately spiralled DNA model.

CHERNO

Yes... Soon there will be only
you, me and my creations
left in the whole universe.

With a hand movement Chernov activates a synthesis module, and an apparatus consisting of hundreds of biomechanical tubes and flasks comes to life, some liquids inside bubbling. The DNA projection gradually turns black and the apparatus stops working. A bullet-like test tube detaches from the synthesis module and a black liquid instantly sprays into it. Chernov puts the test tube into something resembling a thin syringe.

His black cloak falls elegantly to his feet and suddenly raises Chernov high into the air. The belly of the ship lights up. We see a huge cocoon, inside which a formless embryo is wriggling weakly. The cloak takes Chernov right to the centre of the cocoon and he quickly injects the contents of the syringe into the embryo.

SCENE 75. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING. MEETING ROOM

VALAYA leans forward so as not to miss anything. Because of Chernov's head she can only see a small bit of the cocoon.

SCENE 76. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S SHIP

Inside the cocoon a wild transformation begins. The formless embryo begins to take form and develop joints and muscles. Like a foetus in a womb, the embryo wriggles and pokes its limbs into the internal walls of the cocoon. It gradually acquires the features of a huge animal.

The process suddenly slows down, becomes barely discernible, then stops completely.

Chernov looks at the syringe in surprise, then looks around as if trying to find a reason for the failure.

SCENE 77. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING. MEETING ROOM

Chernov's hologram turns to Valaya.

CHERNO

It's not enough.

VALAYA takes a step back.

VALAYA

Father, that's all I could do. We were being chased.

From the blue beam projecting Chernob's head, his whole body now begins to show. It seems he crawls out of this blue, data-relay beam and takes a step towards Valaya. Despite this being merely a projection, Valaya shakes with fear.

CHERNO

You didn't kill him?

VALAYA

I activated him! Now he's the carrier of the working particle you created!

SCENE 78. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S SHIP

Chernob puts his fingers to his temples and squints.

SCENE 79. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING. MEETING ROOM

Chernob's hologram silently comes right up to Valaya. The surface of the panel unexpectedly bubbles as if it's boiling. VALAYA looks round in terror at a spray of sparks flying out of the power socket. The few appendages and tubes surrounding the alien communications device stir and rise up into the air.

The power cable bends and makes a noose. The noose slowly winds round Valaya's neck. Valaya shuts her eyes in terror and sparks fly out of the cable.

CHERNO

You took pity on him.

VALAYA

No, father!

CHERNO

If he falls into Belo's hands, my days are numbered.

VALAYA gasps for breath.

VALAYA

Yes, I remember.

Suddenly the cable tightens around her neck, cutting off her airways. VALAYA cannot breathe in and her eyes bulge. Chernov's hologram leans in close to her face.

CHERNO

OUR days are numbered.

The noose around Valaya's neck tightens even more. For another moment Chernov looks into her eyes, then suddenly disappears. The connection is switched off. The cable around Valaya's neck drops to the floor.

SCENE 80. INT. STAIRWELL IN FRONT OF ANTON'S FLAT

Anton runs up the stairs, shakes himself down, makes himself look respectable. He takes out a packet of medicines. He opens the door and freezes.

SCENE 81. INT. ANTON'S FLAT. NIGHT.

Natasha stands in the middle of the room with a cup in her hands. Anton enters and Natasha turns round and looks curiously at him. Behind her the all-star Earth Spaceball team are chatting casually with Anton's mother, who lies in bed.

NATASHA

Would you like some tea? I was just making some for your mother.

Anton stands open-mouthed. He suddenly disappears with a bang and reappears. A jar of medicine falls from his hands.

NATASHA

(jumping up)
No, no! Relax! Calm down!
That could be dangerous.

FAN

Uncontrolled teleport!

Belo suddenly appears alongside Anton and takes him under the arm.

BELO

You probably still don't understand what you did.

Anton picks up the medicine, not taking his eyes off Natasha.

ANTON

It wasn't me.

FAN

You teleported. No one understands the first time.

BELO

You have become an Athlete.

ANTON

That's fun. Now get out. I have to look after my mother.

Anton approaches his mother and begins to unpack the box of medicines. Belo does not understand the sense of what Anton has said and looks at Natasha questioningly.

NATASHA

He's refusing.

BELO

What do you mean he's refusing?
(to Anton)
You don't want to play Spaceball?

ANTON

No.

PELE

Is it just me, or is he being rude?

ANTON

(trying to open the box of medicines)
I didn't invite you here.

MOTHER

(surprised)
Anton?

PELE

He's definitely being rude.

Natasha hushes Pele and takes the box of medicines, which Anton hasn't managed to open, from his hands.

NATASHA

"No, I don't want to, go away" - is that your life philosophy?

ANTON

Everyone lives like that. And its fine with me.

NATASHA

I do not live like that.

ANTON

What do you want? Why aren't you getting the message?

NATASHA

Honestly?

ANTON

Well?

NATASHA

I fancy you.

Pele whistles. Anton disappears and reappears with a bang a second later in the same place. He raises a hand to his eyes. The jar of medicine falls from his hands again. His mother gasps.

NATASHA

(softly and simply)
We live life in the fast lane. There's no time for pretence.

Natasha takes a pill from a jar and gives it to Anton's mother with a glass of water.

ANTON

Girls like you... and boys like me... We just don't work. So go on and take the fast lane out of here.

PELE

How about smash in the face?

ANTON

I can do it! Do you want?

PELE

(laughing)
Ok. That might be
interesting.

Anton, clenching his fist, moves decisively towards the calm Pele. Natasha and Fan rush to separate them. No one notices that Vasily has entered through the open door and is standing dumbfounded by what he sees. As soon as the scuffle begins he reaches for his pistol.

VASILY

Hands up! I'm arresting the
boy for the robbery...

Belo quickly throws a small semi-transparent ball at Vasily. Vasily freezes in mid-step with his pistol drawn.

VASILY

(gradually stiffening)
... for the robbery of a
chemist's and a-thaalting a
holis ofisaaar.

He indicates Anton with his eyes.

VASILY

Hat's himm...

MOTHER

He did it for me.

Anton looks at his mother. Pause.

ANTON

(thinking)
If I come with you, will you
cure her?

BELO

You know that according to a
decision of the
Intergalactic Council,
highly developed
civilisations do not have
the right to give technology
or medication to less
developed civilisations.

ANTON

Then I would rather go to
prison.

The frozen Vasily blinks gleefully.

NATASHA

Belo!

Belo looks round at Anton's mother.

BELO

Very well. You have my word
that I will cure your
mother.

Anton silently shakes Belo's hand.

ACT TWO

SCENE 82. EXT. FIELD IN FRONT OF STADIUM. NIGHT

A transport capsule lands in a field in front of the stadium and the Athletes exit. To a radius of 40-50 metres around the stalk of the stadium there are no tall plants or buildings. At the entrance to the stadium the team look like small insects in the shadow of an enormous flower. The organic walls of the stadium part to make an entrance.

BELO

This stadium-ship is a
living organism - a flower
in fact. I grew it to look
like your planet's
dandelion. Beautiful, isn't
it?

Anton apprehensively follows the Athletes.

SCENE 83. INT. STADIUM. IMMUNITY CONTROL SLUICE

They enter and find themselves in a small sluice. The entrance behind them grows over leaving no trace in the stalk. A stream of multi-coloured pollen is blown powerfully into the sluice and fills the space. After this a powerful jet of air blows the pollen from the clothes and faces of the Athletes. Anton coughs and spits. The Athletes giggle quietly.

ANTON

What the...?

BELO

You cannot bring anything in
which might harm the
Dandelion's immune system.

A scanning beam inspects the Athletes. It stops on Anton's pocket. BEEP! Anton worriedly takes from his pocket the wrapper from the stolen chocolate (or whatever). The wrapper is open and dust spills out of it into Anton's hand.

BELO

It probably found some
bacteria it didn't like.

Anton wants to say something, but just then the internal shutters of the sluice open revealing the interior of the alien ship, into which no living person has ever stepped, except the Athletes. Forgetting everything, Anton follows the others into his new life.

SCENE 84. INT. STADIUM. LIFT

A transparent lift takes the team up at a tremendous speed. Anton looks around dumbfounded at the wondrous internal space of the giant plant-stadium. The lift stops sharply. A huge cleaner-robot enters and squeezes everyone against the walls. The lift continues upward. The robot's proboscis sucks the dust and wrapper from Anton's fist. Fan looks at Anton's dumfounded face and smiles.

SCENE 85. INT. ANTON'S FLAT

A glass of boiling water contains root instead of tea. Anton's mother tears several petals from her indoor garden and throws them into the glass. Vasily sits at the table, wrapped up in a blanket. His teeth chatter and he looks reverently at Anton's mother.

VASILY

That was Belo himself? Wow!
Your son is an Athlete? How
can I arrest him now?

MOTHER

I suppose you can't. Now
drink. I haven't had a guest
since the moon was destroyed
and I fell ill.

SCENE 86. INT. STADIUM. SICKBAY

Anton lies on a couch. An alien device, attached "contactlessly" to his arm, draws from under his skin little balls of blood which travel through the air to an elaborate box containing the metallic shell of his future Sputnik. Fan watches excitedly. Natasha scrutinises Anton. Pele notices her interest and turns away. Pele's own

Sputnik attaches itself to his finger with a tentacle. Pele plays with it like a yoyo and the Sputnik squeaks joyfully.

BELO

(throughout the whole previous sequence)
We are fusing your genetic material with microcircuits to create a biomechanical equivalent of your neural connections. The resulting droid - we call them Sputniks - is a...

NATASHA

(interrupting)
We are making your Sputnik. We all have one.

FAN

Shhh, quiet! He's waking up.

One of the box's panels slides aside and inside it a shell opens and out comes the SPUTNIK. Balancing uneasily, it tries to stand on its four tentacles. The whole team emotionally observes its first steps. And as if wanting to join in this precious moment, the other Sputniks peer out from behind the players' backs. Anton looks at the "newborn" in mild disbelief.

BELO

(whispering)
Say something so he can identify you as his own.

ANTON

Say what?

The Sputnik stands up on its four shaky paws and points its sensors at Anton, turning its head questioningly.

FAN

(whispering)
Just say "hi".

ANTON

Hi.

The Sputnik starts to slowly move towards Anton as if attracted by a magnet, trips over its own tentacles and falls over.

FAN

(whispering)
Keep talking!

ANTON

What do I say?

FAN

(whispering)
Just something baby-talk-ish.

ANTON

I don't do baby-talk.

PELE

Careful...

The droid jumps from the box right onto Anton's chest.

ANTON

Ahhh!

The Sputnik hangs there, clinging to Anton's skin with its tentacles.

PELE

I wanted to say it would be painful. He's still small.

FAN

Be quiet! Quiet! Or we won't hear what he calls himself.

Pause. Everyone watches in expectation. The Sputnik slowly straightens up and, carefully moving its paws, crawls up Anton's chest.

FAN

When he senses your care,
it'll say its name.

Anton is confused. The Sputnik stops. Anton and the Sputnik look at each other for a few seconds. At last the Sputnik raises a tentacle and gently touches the tip of Anton's nose.

ANTON

(squeamishly)
Get it off me.

Upon hearing Anton's voice the Sputnik is delighted and raises its tentacle again and gently strokes Anton's

cheek. Fan squeaks joyously.

NATASHA
(whispering)
Stroke him back.

Anton shakes his head.

NATASHA
(mildly irritated)
Your blood flows through
him. At least tell him that.

ANTON
Tell it what?

NATASHA
"We be of one blood, ye and
I".

ANTON
???

NATASHA
It's a quote from Mowgli.

ANTON
What's Mowgli?

In a fit of emotion the Sputnik presses its body to Anton's cheek and puts its arms round his neck.

ANTON
(loudly)
Get it off me!

Anton's loud voice scares the Sputnik. It withdraws, covering itself with its paws in fright.

Fan worriedly grabs Anton's Sputnik and cuddles it like a baby.

FAN
You scared him!

NATASHA
Apparently we need to take
it one step at a time with
this one.

BELO
The next step: Training!

Belo heads for the exit. Anton, dressing quickly, follows

him.

BELO

(walking)
The droid communicates with
you via signals. You must
learn to recognise them
during the fight...
(checks himself)

All the players turn around and stare at Belo.

BELO

(continues)
... during the game. This is a
very important part of your
training.

Belo leaves the room, followed quickly by Anton.

PELE

(to Natasha)
It's not going to be easy.

NATASHA

It wasn't easy with you.

PELE

Why are you defending him?

FAN

We don't even know what his
Sputnik's called yet.

SCENE 87. INT. STADIUM. TRAINING HALL

Anton looks around in surprise at the huge unfolding
flowers on the inside of the dome. The centres of the
flowers are filled with a bioluminescent mass radiating a
bright light which illuminates the training hall.

BELO

(proudly)
Don't worry - this place
renders everyone speechless
when they see it for the
first time.

Belo stops in the middle of the hall and on his signal a
clump of plasma forms in the air, hissing and sparking.
Vibrating, it hangs an arm's length from Anton, who is
bewildered and dumbstruck: he has never seen a real
Spaceball so close up before.

Belo turns a wheel on the control unit to minimum and the ball calms down.

BELO

We will train with the ball
at its lowest charge.

ANTON

And I'm supposed to do what
exactly? Kick it?

BELO

Try.

Belo presses a button. Anton barely has time to swing back, when the ball flies past him.

ANTON

(stopping)
Whoa! Give me another try!

Anton jumps and kicks the air clumsily with his feet, missing the ball. The team exchange glances. Pele laughs.

BELO

To strike the ball you need
to match its speed, and in
order to do that you must
master control of your
teleportation abilities.

Belo approaches Anton.

BELO

(calmly and evenly)
You were knocked down by a
lorry.

ANTON

Yeah, I've had balconies
falling on me all my life.

With an utterly innocent, almost childlike expression on his face, Belo strikes a lightning-fast blow to Anton's chest. Anton doubles up.

BELO

It is fear that has made you
an Athlete.

Anton straightens himself and immediately collapses onto his back, his feet up in the air, floored by Belo's

unexpectedly deft undercut.

BELO

I must return you to that
state.

At this moment Anton jumps up quickly and starts throwing punches at Belo, in the best tradition of street fighting. Belo easily, like a regular aikido expert, catches Anton's fist and dances round him, bending his arm behind his back. With his other hand, swinging slightly to the side, Belo turns Anton around to face him and swings back to strike him with his open palm. Anton's body flickers and Belo is engulfed in a current of air like a shockwave.

BELO

That's it! Now teleport!

Belo delivers a shattering blow to Anton's chest. Anton falls flat on his back, like the Tower of Pisa toppling over.

PELE

(to Natasha)
I have gotten away from that
blow, teleported

ANTON

(doubled up in pain)
What was that?

BELO

That was teleportation,
still uncontrolled
unfortunately. You need to
learn to do it deliberately.
But that'll do for your
first time.

ANTON

No! Let's go again!

Anton gets to his feet and sticks out his chest for the next strike. Belo looks confusedly at Natasha.

NATASHA

(to Belo)
May I try?

Belo thinks for a second, then nods. Natasha approaches Anton.

NATASHA

Give me a hug.

ANTON

(backing away)
Why?

NATASHA

I'm going to teleport you.
You might figure something
out for yourself. Just put
your arms around me.

ANTON

(looking back and forth
between Belo and Natasha)
There has to be some kind of
middle ground between the
carrot and the stick?

BELO

(to Pele)
Between what?

PELE

(to Anton)
Listen, carrot!

Anton turns towards Pele. At this moment Natasha wraps her arms around Anton from behind and disappears with him. They both reappear under the dome of the training hall, Natasha holding Anton tightly. It is as though they are levitating. They flicker constantly.

NATASHA

It may seem like we're
floating but we won't fall.
I'm teleporting us to and
from the same place at a
rapid frequency.

Anton can't draw breath because of the frequent movement. He looks down goggle-eyed. It is a good hundred metres down.

NATASHA

You see, a little hug is
nothing to be afraid of.

Suddenly they stop flickering and both fall down fast. Anton gives a blood-curdling scream. Fan opens her mouth in awe and Pele tucks his head down into his shoulders in anticipation of disaster.

NATASHA

(very calmly)
Teleport, or get smashed up!
Remember how it happened to
you first time.

ANTON

AAAAA!!! YOU!!! JERK!!!
YOU!!! AAAAAA!!!

Natasha holds Anton to her during the fall and a second before they hit the ground they both disappear. Smack. Natasha and Anton appear a few metres from where they would have hit the ground. Anton falls out of Natasha's embrace and starts cursing desperately out of fear.

ANTON

You're a maniac!

NATASHA

Calm down.

ANTON

You idiot! Get away from me!

NATASHA

(walking away)
That's probably all for
today.

Anton stops, punching the air with his hands in anger.

ANTON

No, let's go again!

Anton adopts a fight pose with his fists held forward. Everyone freezes, Belo raises his eyebrows in surprise. Pele rubs his hands and runs over to the control panel.

PELE

My turn!

BELO

What are you doing?

PELE

If he's not afraid of
heights, let's try something
else.

Pele presses all the buttons in turn and lots of charged

spheres appear on the pitch. Anton looks at them all boggle-eyed.

ANTON

(retreating)
What are you doing? I said I wanted to continue the training, not do it all at once!

SCENE 88. EXT. POLICE STATION. NIGHT

A massive fist hits a table.

POLICE CHIEF

In today's world, with pollution making everyone sick...

Vasily and his partner - the policemen who chased Anton and Anya - stand with their heads bowed.

To save themselves from the night heat, the policemen have based themselves out on the street. Some petty criminal has been punished and is pedalling the wheels of a bicycle-driven dynamo inside a large cage. The cable from the dynamo leads to a lamp and a small fan which hang next to the police chief. Barely does the prisoner stop for a breather, when the lamp goes out and the fan stops. Pausing in mid-sentence, the police chief turns his head emphatically and the duty officer pokes the prisoner in the cage with a mop.

POLICEMAN

Come on, keep going! You haven't pedaled 350 kilowatts yet!

POLICE CHIEF

(continuing his lecture)
... chemists are strategically important assets, and you...

A loud click is heard. Here and there lights come on in the windows of the city's houses. The city responds with an excited whoop. The police chief's face changes, his eyes pop out and he shouts:

POLICE CHIEF

CHARGE UP!

All the policemen, who have been melancholically wandering about, rush into the station, on their way whipping

electro-shockers and various other devices from their belts.

POLICE CHIEF

If I end up with uncharged
curling tongs again, I'll
shake you out like a
Spaceball, Sidorov!

The police chief throws the curling tongs at a policeman running past. With his free hand he curls the right side of his almost Daliesque whiskers.

POLICE CHIEF

(returning to Vasily and his
partner)
... and you can't catch two
petty thieves!

VASILY

Belo has taken the boy in.
(pointing towards the
stadium)
There.

POLICE CHIEF

You trying to be funny? Do
you want to eat this crap
food like everyone around?
Either you get those thieves
in this cage, or you get in
the queue at the labour
exchange!

SCENE 89. INT. STADIUM. TRAINING HALL

Anton, already panting considerably, continues to run from the missiles.

NATASHA

I think we've tortured him
enough for one day!

At this moment all the spheres, as if by command, group around Anton in a tight ring. Vibrating, they threaten him like an animal baring its teeth.

PELE

Ah!

NATASHA

Cut it out!

Belo stops Natasha with a gesture, Fan holds her Sputnik closer to her chest. In this second all the spheres fly headlong into the centre and Anton has no chance of escape. The spheres meet in the centre, Belo angrily hits the off button, a powerful explosion resounds around the training dome and shrinks to a point. The training area is empty. Anton is not there. FAN squeals.

A loud bang and Anton appears behind Fan, continuing to shout with fear. Belo jumps up and screams like an excited sports trainer.

BELO

Yes, just like that! Now
don't stop! Choose a point
in the air and teleport to
it!

Anton takes a deep breath, as if he's going to dive into water and, leaving a coloured trail behind him, teleports back under the dome through the force field. Belo runs to him.

BELO

More!

In the slowest possible motion Anton looks at his hand in the air. Like a sand sculpture being eroded by the wind, Anton's hand, followed by the rest of him, gradually disappears. Tiny crystals fly off to the other end of the hall, leaving a coloured trail behind them. At the other end, beginning with his hand, Anton is recreated.

BELO

Don't stop! Go on!

The sparks of Anton's teleport trail, like fireworks, reflect in Belo's excited face.

BELO

Use the power of your
displacement to strike a
blow! Teleportation energy
is equal in everyone,
regardless of size and mass.
This is how Athletes are
able to compete with bigger
and stronger beings.

Belo skips over to the control unit.

BELO

Controlled teleportation on

the first day of training!
That's impossible!

Pele is surprised.

BELO
(still carried away)
Now hit it!

Anton doesn't think twice about teleporting to the strike position and striking the sphere. Belo stops the process. The explosion seems to freeze. Anton drops down to the floor and looks at the sphere. It hangs in the air and a wave of energy spreads out from it as though in slow motion.

BELO
(extremely seriously)
And now the most important part: immediately after you strike the ball, you must teleport again, or this will happen.

Belo uses the control unit to release the shockwave. The flow of energy throws Anton up, spins him all the way round twice in the air, drags him along the floor like a rag doll, and flings him against the protective screen. Anton jumps up in an adrenaline rush, despite his wounds, and surveys all the players with a crazed look. Belo tries to calm him down.

BELO
The ball is now practically uncharged. You're safe.

ANTON
(interrupting)
Again!

Anton clenches his fists and adopts a fighting stance again. A new missile appears with a roar at the other end of the hall. Anton stands opposite it. This resembles a Wild West duel. The missile takes off and Anton runs to meet it, his hands held out like a goalkeeper. The sphere smacks into Anton, creating a cascade of five powerful explosions. Everything is obscured by a haze of plasma wisps. A second later Anton's silhouette appears.

BELO
Am I the only one who saw that?

NATASHA

I saw it too.

PELE

(unnerved)
Maybe we're all just
hallucinating.

FAN

I WANT TO DO THAT TOO!

Belo suddenly becomes incredibly serious. He approaches the control unit purposefully.

BELO

Let's have a look at it
again.

Belo turns on the replay. The image is projected onto the protective screen. In slow motion they see Anton teleport after each wave and strike again, slipping away from the wave, and all this five times in a row. The image turns off. The protective screen disappears.

Anton looks at the team, and the team at him.

NATASHA

(excitedly)
None of us can do that.

BELO

And don't you dare try to!
This manoeuvre of Anton's
needs to be studied first.

A smile breaks out on Anton's face. A light suddenly flashes, a buzzer sounds and a voice speaks from above.

VOICE

At your request, the
Galactic Council is on the
line.

BELO

(hastily, to Anton)
You're playing tomorrow. The
first two plays. Then we
continue training.

PELE

Tomorrow?

Belo hastens to the door, calling Natasha with him.

BELO

Pele, Fan, take Anton away.
Natasha, you come with me!
This is important.

NATASHA

Why?

BELO

(almost out of the room,
sure that nobody can hear
him)
His mother can't be saved.

The door grows over behind Belo and Natasha and Anton does not hear the end of the phrase. Anton is stupefied and the smile falls from his face.

SCENE 90. INT. STADIUM. COMMUNICATIONS ROOM

Belo speaks to a transparent screen bearing the images of several aliens: a Sirian, a Threefinger and an elderly purple lady - an Amazonian.

SIRIAN

So she dies! We cannot pass
on knowledge to undeveloped
societies. That's the law!

BELO

If following the law means
losing the most gifted
Athlete I've ever met,
perhaps it needs to be
broken this one time. Anton
has incredible power,
something more than just a
new twist of evolution like
the other Athletes. And in
order to keep him on board,
we have to cure his mother.

SIRIAN

With all due respect...

BELO

(interrupting the Sirian)
With all due respect, I am
going to do it, whatever
your decision may be.

NATASHA

Well, actually, we've
already done it anyway.

Belo looks in surprise at Natasha, who winks at him in return.

SCENE 91. INT. STADIUM. RECREATION ROOM

Anton sits in a table, his hands sadly hanging down. He is fidgeting tensely. He drinks nervily from a fancy-shaped glass.

FAN

Can I show you how to pet
your Sputnik?

ANTON

No.

Belo and a cheerful Natasha enter. Anton jumps up.

ANTON

I'm going home.

BELO

Well, you can't leave the
ship alone!

ANTON

What?

BELO

It's a rule we have.

ANTON

(takes a step towards Belo)
So, I'll teleport.

BELO

You can't! If you try to
move beyond your field of
vision, you may get stuck in
the first wall. It would be
your last teleport.

ANTON

I think you just like to
scare people who don't
listen to you.

BELO

I do when I can't trust them

yet.

ANTON

Ahaaa.

BELO

You may go with Natasha.

Belo leaves.

SCENE 92. INT. TRANSPORT CAPSULE. NIGHT

In the transport capsule, the same as the ones in which the stadium ferries the spectators around at the end of games, Anton and Natasha fly above the night-time city.

The shattered moon can clearly be seen against the background of the black sky, tiny shards floating next to the main mass of the Earth's sputnik. It looks terrible, but at the same time spellbindingly unusual. The youths sit alongside each other. Anton has frozen from the awkward situation, Natasha's thigh and knee pressed tightly to him.

SCENE 93. EXT. ROOF OF A HOUSE. NIGHT

Somewhere in the distance the light from the capsule licks the ventilation tubes and crooked antennae on the rooftops. The usual landscape of grimy roofs is cut through by two light blue eyes tenaciously following the approaching capsule. VALAYA appears from the darkness.

SCENE 94. INT. TRANSPORT CAPSULE. NIGHT

Anton sits looking at the shattered moon. He is turned away from Natasha and has tears in his eyes. Natasha turns to him wanting to say something.

ANTON

(taking the initiative)
Am I able to teleport all
the way to the moon?

Natasha takes Anton lightly by the hand.

NATASHA

I told you I fancy you. I've
never told someone that
before. I shared my truth
with you, my sincerity..

ANTON

(with meaning)

Sincerity?

NATASHA

Yes! Such sincerity frightens normal people. It can be harder than teleportation to master, and yet it's as easy as getting out of your own way, letting your feelings flow freely so that you don't have to do anything at all.

ANTON

(pointing at the moon)
So, can I or not?

NATASHA

No, you wouldn't have enough energy. Either you'd stay swimming in space, or you wouldn't be able to materialise and your atoms would be scattered throughout the universe.

Pause. Natasha and Anton sit in silence for a while.

SCENE 95. EXT. STREET BY ANTON'S HOUSE. NIGHT

The capsule lands and Anton and Natasha exit. Anton winks at a boy of seven who observes the stars in admiration. Anton and Natasha have barely entered the house when the boy's admiring eyes sparkle a cold, light blue colour and tarry spots appear through his skin. He shudders and turns into the terrible VALAYA.

SCENE 96. INT. ANTON'S FLAT

MOTHER

Natasha! You know, if this were 20 years ago, before the BREAK-UP, we'd be taking selfies together. But now, alas, we don't even have cameras.

Natasha pulls an ALIEN MEDICAL DEVICE along Anton's mother's arm.

NATASHA

Try not to move so much.

From his corner Anton unfalteringly observes Natasha's movements.

ANTON

Mum, is it helping?

MOTHER

You know, I think it is! It feels like energy flowing right into me.

NATASHA

The main effect will come later.

ANTON

I wasn't asking you!

MOTHER

Anton, I did not raise you to be such a brat! This woman is helping me!

Anton blinks dumbly a couple of times, not knowing what to say, goes helplessly to his corner, sits down on his bed and watches the rest of the scene through the doorway.

MOTHER

(whispering to Natasha)
You'll have to excuse him. I know all mums think this, but he really is special. I was pregnant with Anton when the moon broke up.

Anton's mother points to her belly.

I swear something shot into in my belly, Boom, like a grain of sand, and he began to stir. It was as if everything started to bubble. I was scared at first, but then I understood it was a sign from the heavens.

Anton, holding his tears back, takes his coat from a nail behind a curtain, puts it on and does it up so that his Spaceball kit cannot be seen under it. Anton takes his Sputnik, shoves it in a cupboard and closes the door, propping a chair against the door for good measure.

MOTHER

Of course, you are completely different. I don't mean young people, but YOU, the Athletes. I was amazed how you told Anton straight away that you like him. I imagine you never got much of a reply.

Anton approaches the window, quietly opens it a crack, and listens in.

MOTHER

(continuing)
To be honest, all my life I've wanted to feel free enough to say what I feel. And even more, to meet someone who could respond the same way.

Anton's corner is empty. A dog can be heard baying in the street.

SCENE 97. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING

Anton climbs down into the dwelling and enters the dwelling nervously. He looks around the room. It is empty. Cellophane pods contain a gently bubbling liquid, which in turn contains smaller, scary-looking, bean-pod-like plants. Either his eyes get used to the light, or the lighting in the room changes imperceptibly, but Anton sees in the shadows the slim female figure of Anya in a short shirt, looking at him meekly from the far corner. Anton loses the power of speech. Anya slowly walks towards him and shyly raises her head as if presenting her face to invisible rain. Anton freezes. Anya stands up on tiptoe, closes her eyes, offering her face for a kiss, and gently puts a hand to his chest so as to feel support. But at this moment her fingers clench, feeling something out of place under his coat. She gives him a concerned look.

Anya quickly unfastens his coat and sees under it his Spaceball kit.

Pause.

ANYA

You're an Athlete now?

ANTON

(justifying himself)

Not in spirit. And I'm not going back there.

ANYA

Good.

ANTON

They promised to cure my mum, but they lied.

ANYA

I'm not surprised. That's what Spaceballers do - lure people into submission with false hope.

She impulsively runs to the table with the plants.

She shoves her hand into a cellophane pod and pulls out a "bean-pod". The disturbed plant begins to glow.

ANYA

Is it true that the stadium is a plant?

ANTON

Yes, it's true.

Anya places the pod in his hand.

ANYA

You can get them back for their injustice. My father grew these. The juice of this pod can paralyse any plant. Squeeze the juice out at the stadium. Then everything will be over, people will stop gawping at the sky, and you can leave them with a clear conscience.

Pause. Anton procrastinates. Anya's face changes.

ANYA

Or..

She opens Anton's hand.

ANYA

Or have you... changed your mind?

She takes the pod.

ANTON

No, not at all. I want
retribution. It's just...
(looks at the pod)
The stadium has its own
immune system. It blocks you
from taking anything in that
might harm it.

Anya takes the pod from Anton's hand.

ANYA

So you've changed your mind
after all.

ANTON

No, no, give it here!

Anton tries to grab the pod from Anya's hand. She does not give in and a commotion ensues. Their movements recall a Greco-Roman wrestling contest. Anya slips and they fall to the floor, and the pod falls from Anya's hand and rolls under the bed. They race each other to reach it. Anya gets there first, but when she turns round she finds herself face to face with Anton.

ANTON

I'll take it in, but if they
find it on me, there'll be
hell to pay.

Their eyes meet, and a second later their lips come together in a kiss.

ANYA

(whispering)
I've been waiting for you.

The tentacles of Anton's Sputnik suddenly cling to his face and it howls desperately at Anya. Natasha flies into the room after it.

NATASHA

What are you saying? We
can't just... (stops short.
Sees Anya and Anton lying on
the floor together)

ANTON

(standing up)
How did you find me?

NATASHA

I didn't. Your Sputnik did.

ANYA

(scowling)

My my, what stars I have in
my cellar!

NATASHA

(to Anton)

Let's go! We're late!
They're waiting for us at
the stadium!

Anya approaches Anton and places the pod unnoticed in his hand. Anton puts it in his RIGHT POCKET.

ANYA

(whispering)

Come back soon... with good
news.

Natasha and Anton leave.

SCENE 98. EXT. FIELD IN FRONT OF STADIUM. NIGHT

A transport capsule lands in the field a few metres from the entrance to the stadium's immunity sluice. Vasily crawls out of the bushes at the edge of the field, takes his pistol from its holster and silently runs towards Natasha and Anton. The Sputnik on Anton's back jerks convulsively. Natasha's Sputnik raises its head and looks back.

ANTON

I've got a strange feeling.

Natasha and Anton stand in front of the opening door of the immunity sluice.

NATASHA

It's your Sputnik trying to
warn you of a potential
threat.

Anton looks round and sees Vasily running with his gun in his hand.

VASILY

(running)

Stop! I'm arresting you for

robbing a chemist and
assaulting a police officer.

NATASHA

The probability of danger's
less than 4 percent, which
is why the Sputniks didn't
switch into battle mode.

ANTON

It told you all that?

NATASHA

It told you too. You just
don't know how to listen.

They enter the sluice and the door of the immunity cell slowly grows over. Vasily makes a dash for it and at the last moment manages to shove his face into the closing door. Vasily cannot squeeze a word out because the walls have trapped his head. At this moment we hear a hissing sound and a cloud of yellow dust spurts from the sluice. The air jet then pushes Vasily outside - POP! The stoma shuts.

SCENE 100. INT. STADIUM. IMMUNITY CONTROL SLUICE. NIGHT

All the pollen has been blown off Anton and Natasha. Anton watches in terror as the scanner hovers for a second over the pocket containing the capsule given to him by Anya-VALAYA.

ANTON

What happens if my Sputnik
doesn't say its name?

NATASHA

It could cost you your life.

The scanner beeps and its beam hovers over Anton's right pocket.

NATASHA (CONT.)

One day it will try to warn
you of some danger and you
won't understand because you
haven't forged a connection
with it.

Anton begins to sweat. Natasha notices this. The beam moves up and down over the pocket, fixing precisely the size of the pod, then winks and smoothly disappears. The sluice stomata open and Anton and Natasha find themselves

in front of the lift.

NATASHA

Go and get some sleep.
Playing the game is more
dangerous than it seems.

Unnoticed, Anton takes the pod out of his pocket, checks that it's not harmed, then puts it back.

SCENE 101. EXT. FIELD IN FRONT OF STADIUM. DAWN

Vasily lies on the ground, covered in yellow dust and spitting. He jumps up and waves his arms about in anger.

VASILY

I'm allergic to pollen!

Suddenly his pistol goes off and the bullet ricochets off a rock and hits the stadium wall to the side of the entrance to the sluice. Vasily shudders and comes closer. The bullet has entered the organic wall and is now slowly being sucked into it, as if into jelly. Not a trace remains of the bullet. Thinking for a moment, Vasily shoots several times into the organic alien matter. The bullets stick into the wall of the ship, like darts into an oak board, and are then sucked inside. The surprised Vasily leans into the place he shot and runs a hand over the smooth, unscathed surface of the wall.

Suddenly the wall spits a bullet out with a popping sound, and the bullet flies in an arc and lands right on Vasily's head.

POP - the next bullet, spat out like a cherry pit, hits Vasily in the stomach.

VASILY

Bloody hell!

POP! POP! POP! - Vasily runs away, waving the bullets away like bees.

SCENE 101A. EXT. CITY. DAY.

The excited face of a beautiful young girl.

ДЕВУШКА

(shouting)
A capsule has come for us!
We get to go to the
Spaceball game!

The girl jumps into the capsule and her father follows her.

FATHER

Masha! Mashaaa!

GIRL

MUM! MUM! They're saying
we've got a new player!

The transport capsule hovers by a second floor balcony. A happy family run out and jump into the capsule: a girl, her father, and her mother, who hasn't even had time to change and is still wearing her dressing gown and is sprucing herself up on the hoof.

GIRL

I already love him!

MOTHER

We haven't even seen him
yet!

The capsule rises into the air, and we see thousands of other capsules of different sizes also rising and heading off to the dandelion-stadium.

SCENE 102. INT. STADIUM. CEREMONIAL HALL

The bright sun shines through the stalk of the stadium, creating a celebratory atmosphere. The huge shadows of four sportsmen lie across the floor as if painted there. The young, toned bodies, wrapped in thin, flesh-coloured sportswear, look almost naked. Opposite Anton stand Fan, Pele and Natasha. We hear the muffled sound of footsteps and Belo enters in an official manner. Anton tightly clenches the fist containing the pod. Shaking, he shifts it into his other hand.

BELO

You probably don't
understand the significance
of what is happening. Today
you join the ranks of the
Athletes and become a small,
but very important part of...
(pause)... the army...

The Athletes glance briefly at him then look away. Anton quickly tries to push the pod into his underwear. He feels it with his hand and realises it will be visible because of the tightly clinging material. He quickly removes it and clenches it in his fist again.

BELO

... which fights to inspire
the people of Earth and the
whole universe to do good..

Anton sniggers.

BELO

... I really didn't prepare
this speech, thought it
would just come to me..

Anton restlessly wipes the sweat from his brow. Natasha
and Pele notice Anton's worry and exchange glances.

BELO

Anyway, from this day on,
Team Earth will play at full
strength thanks to you. I
congratulate you, and
welcome you officially to
our team!

Belo takes a deep breath and with a sweeping gesture
indicates a perch on which the Athletes' Sputniks sit.
Natasha and Anton's Sputniks are holding hands and playing
together.

BELO

(shouting)
SADDLE UP!

Natasha and Pele exchange surprised glances.

PELE

I didn't teach him that!

The Sputniks take off and, using practiced moves, settle
on the players' backs.

FAN

So, we're horses, are we?

The Sputniks wrap their tentacles around the players,
interlocking three paws on their solar plexuses. The
tentacles extend: out of them grow thin threads, which
weave into variously textured materials, enrobing the
Athletes in their battle dress. In a second Pele is
already dressed. Then Natasha. Then Fan.

Anton stands, his fist pressed to his chest. His battle
dress has not appeared.

FAN

Spread out your arms and act
like you need help.

Anton warily spreads out his arms. His fist is still clenched. His Sputnik flinches, and Anton's body is covered in his Athletes' kit. Ceremonial music sounds and everyone turns towards the exit.

NATASHA

Congratulations!

FAN

I was worried he wouldn't
open up.

Anton furtively glances at his hand, opens his fist and sees that the pod has remained in his palm under his battle glove.

BELO

Your task in the game is to
cover Pele's back.

ANTON

When can I take the suit
off?

BELO

Whenever you like. Just ask
your nameless Sputnik.

SCENE 103. INT. STADIUM. CORRIDOR IN FRONT OF THE
CEREMONIAL HALL

The Athletes and Belo walk confidently to the lift. Anton lets the team go ahead and slows his step.

ANTON

(holding his arm out, to his
Sputnik, as if to
himself) Come on. I'll play
without the glove.

Nothing happens.

ANTON

(curses under his breath)
Come on. TAKE THE GLOVE OFF!

Nothing happens.

ANTON

Free my hand. Please.

The glove stays on his hand.

ANTON

What do I have to do? Show you that I care? Why should I? I grew up alone on the streets. Nobody's ever cared for me and I turned out fine. Well, ok, my mum cared for me.

(pauses, walks a couple of steps, stops)

Although I guess you don't have a mum. Sorry.

Anton reaches behind his head and strokes the shell of the Sputnik clinging to his back.

The Sputnik makes a clicking sound and the glove disappears from Anton's hand. Anton grasps the pod and with a trembling hand SQUEEZES a few lilac-coloured drops onto the floor.

He runs after the team.

SCENE 104. INT. STADIUM. AREA UNDER THE STANDS

The lift doors open, Anton and the team enter the area under the stands, in front of the exit out onto the pitch. Anton stops, raises his head and sees the huge figures of giants: three girls (the captain, YU, the forward, BU, and the halfback, BO). Three metres tall, they are the embodiment of feminine power and beauty. With them is a muscly, bearded male with a long mane of hair (the unfortunate HO), twice Anton's height. Their bodies are protected by iron armour and the exposed parts of their skin are covered with tattoos. The teams greet each other with a clash of fists - the Amazonians' enormous fists and the tiny Earthlings' fists. It gets to Anton's turn.

AMAZONIAN YU

Ah, a new babe.

AMAZONIAN BU

They say he's good!

AMAZONIAN BO

(grabs Anton by the fist, pulls him closer with ease)
Take care not to

accidentally knock my belly
button, little babe.

Amazonian HO beats Anton a greeting. The teams stand together in two rows. Ho stares long and hard at Anton, then slowly and emphatically leans towards him.

AMAZONIAN HO
(in a scary voice)
I like you.

Anton is stupefied.

THREE AMAZONIANS
(GRIMACING IN UNISON)
We live life in the fast
lane!

The Amazonians laugh out loud. Natasha quickly kicks Pele's butt.

NATASHA
Loudmouth! You told them my
line?

PELE
It wasn't me!
(curses)
Bloody hell!

FAN
(ashamedly)
It was me, sorry, but they
promised not to tease...

The Amazonian girls laugh and Anton lowers his eyes in embarrassment.

NATASHA
(kindly)
Idiots!

SCENE 105. PITCH. STADIUM

Fans of all races yell excitedly in the stands. Accompanied by the MC's ceremonial words, eight Athletes emerge from the half-light of the corridor into the bright light of the playing area. Anton lowers his head and sees the giant feet of the unfortunate Ho alongside his own tiny feet.

COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
No, I don't believe it! A
FOURTH PLAYER! THAT'S THREE

PLUS ONE! OR TWO PLUS TWO IF
YOU LIKE! A FOURTH PLAYER
FROM PLANET EARTH! TODAY!
AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!

Anton senses the edge of the pitch like a physical barrier, and breaks it with his chest. His breath is simply taken away by the roar of the crowd intensifying, the clapping, stamping and shouting of millions of people. The teams of Athletes go to their own halves of the pitch. Anton alone stands a bit excluded and can't tear himself away from the incredible spectacle created around him. If it could, Anton's jaw would drop to the floor. One of the Amazonians claps him on the shoulder, nearly knocking him over.

COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

Yes! Yes! We love you! And
the Sirians, and the
Amazonians, and all the
representatives of all the
planets and galaxies, in one
voice, welcome the new Athlete,
AAAANNNTTOOOOONNNNNN!

With these last words of the commentator's an enormously magnified portrait of the flummoxed Anton appears on the energy walls of the stadium, and he is puzzled that he is unexpectedly beginning to like all this.

SCENE 106. INT. STADIUM. STANDS/EARTHLING SECTOR

In the Earthlings' sector of the stands, shouts of "Anton! Anton!". The Sirians' sector - "Anton! Anton!". A sector of humanoid aliens with tentacles instead of mouths also chant, but in their own language, which sounds to cultured people like a volley of indecent noises.

SCENE 107. INT. ANTON'S FLAT

Anton's happy mother watches the smiling Anton from the window of her flat.

MOTHER

They're showing Anton!

By her, his hands demurely crossed on his knees, sits Vasily, his face yellow. In the same fit of glee, Anton's mother unceremoniously claps Vasily on the shoulder.

MOTHER

Don't you worry! I cook a
mean seedcake!

VASILY

(sadly)
Are you having a laugh?

MOTHER

(joyously)
Uh hu.

On the table between them lies the device Natasha used to treat Anton's mother. An LED on it flickers.

Vasily sighs deeply and gazes very gently at this surprising woman. A prolonged honk sounds in the sky, signalling the start of the game.

SCENE 109. INT. STADIUM. STANDS

A young spectator freezes, holding a piece of sweet seedcake to his open mouth. The whole stadium waits in expectation, staring at the pitch.

SCENE 110. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

Tu-u-u! - the horn breaks the silence. At the same moment, like the ripples from a stone thrown into water, a wave spreads out from the centre of the pitch. The huge stadium bristles with raised hands, fins and tentacles. CLAP! - the crowd claps in unison.

The Athletes adopt their fight stances before the ball is served, like rugby players before kick-off.

Tu-u-u! Another horn. Another wave. CLAP! CLAP! The spectators clap twice.

NATASHA

Stand by!

Anton stands unsurely next to Pele.

Tu-u-u! WAVE. CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! THREE CLAPS in reply!

The teams charge towards the centre of the pitch. A ball flies out from under the surface of the pitch.

Running, Pele and Natasha grab Fan under the elbows and throw her upwards. At the same time, Amazonian Bu also charges up towards the dome-bound ball.

Anton pulls up sharply, stops, and unexpectedly for everyone sits down right in the centre of the pitch.

SCENE 111. INT. STADIUM. BELO'S BOX

Belo looks worriedly at Anton.

SCENE 112. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

Fan materialises under the dome ahead of Bu and swipes, but misses the ball. The missile strikes the dome and bounces off to the side.

COMMENTATOR

Ah, Fan missed!

BELO

(into a
communication
device)

Anton, what's happened?

Anton is silent. His eyes dart nervously from side to side, but his pose speaks of apparently utter indifference. Amazonian U flies towards the ball.

AMAZONIAN YU

What's your baby doing
sitting down?

Suddenly the tiny Fan slips under her legs.

FAN

Wave!

Fan strikes the ball. Explosion. Wave. Anton disappears for a second, lets the wave pass, then materialises in the point of teleportation, still sitting on the floor.

SCENE 112A. INT. STADIUM. STANDS

A boy in the stands jumps frantically on the spot, looking at Anton and chanting, like he's incanting:

BOY #1

Get up! Get up!

SCENE 112B. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The crowd roars. The ball flies over Anton's head with a buzz, and HO speeds past him, shaking the pitch with the terrifying stamp of his huge feet.

NATASHA

(to Anton)

Are you ok?

ANTON
Who, me? Yeah, I'm fine.

SCENE 113. INT. STADIUM. BELO'S BOX

BELO
(drily)
Anton's vital signs are
normal.

SCENE 114. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

NATASHA
(running)
Get up and play!

Anton continues to sit.

SCENE 115. INT. STADIUM. STANDS

Another boy jumps out of his seat.

BOY #2
That's enough sitting!
Sitter!

Several spectators from the Earthlings' stand take up:

SPECTATORS
SI-TTER! SI-TTER!

SCENE 116. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

Belo presses a button on the control unit and the ball stops in mid-air, shrinks to a small point, and disappears. An exclamation of surprise echoes around the stadium.

SCENE 117. EXT. TIMES SQUARE IN THE SNOW

Unharnessed sledges

BEARDED MAN
What the hell?

SCENE 118. EXT. EGYPT. THE PYRAMIDS

The Bedouin in his moored boat by the top of the pyramid jumps up and shouts in surprise.

БЕДУИН
أرضية الهرم كنت في القارب

(Bloody hell!)

The match is being projected onto the sky above the pyramids. On a screen the size of the entire sky, Belo walks gravely across the pitch towards the sitting Anton.

SCENE 119. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

Belo approaches Anton.

BELO

You've made your spectacle.
Good for you. Now come with
me.

Anton stands up.

SCENE 120. INT. STADIUM. COMMENTARY BOX

COMMENTATOR

Let's not be too hasty in
calling the lad an idiot.
There's not a person on
Earth who wouldn't want to
play Spaceball. It's
probably just a technical
problem.

SCENE 121. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

ANTON

I'm done with the team!

BELO

(stopping)

Why?

ANTON

You deceived me! You said my
mother would die, and you're
still pretending everything
is ok!

Natasha grabs the confused Belo's tablet and quickly does something on it.

NATASHA

You impossible idiot! Belo
got official permission from
the Council to use alien
technology to save your mom.

Natasha shows Anton an image on the tablet. We see his mum

in an online image from the medical device Natasha left at the flat. His mother, untypically enthusiastic and active, is waving her arms about, pointing at the projection on the sky of the halted match, and demonstrating something to Vasily, whom we cannot see at the moment.

ANTON

(confused)

Who's that she's talking to?

BELO

Come with me. I have something to explain to you...

Accompanied by the whistles and jeers of the unhappy crowd, Anton trudges after Belo.

SCENE 122. INT. STADIUM. CORRIDOR IN FRONT OF THE WAVE-EATER STORAGE SPACE

Belo walks quickly and surely along the corridor and Anton can barely keep up with him. Belo shows Anton an image on the tablet, showing the Athletes during a game kicking the ball, which flies into the goal and shrinks to a small point.

BELO

What do you see?

ANTON

Spaceball.

BELO

Correct. And what is this?

The image changes: we see a shot from the previous game, showing Natasha kicking the ball into the goal. The ball does not dissolve like the previous one, but the emptied husk flies down a tunnel.

ANTON

I don't know.

BELO

I could never have imagined that on the day of a new player's first game I would be leading them down here.

A huge gap opens up in front of the stupefied Anton.

SCENE 123. INT. STADIUM. WAVE-EATER STORAGE SPACE

Anton sees thousands of shrivelled Spaceballs. Dazed, Anton surveys the seemingly unending space. Belo again shows Anton an image of a ball shrinking to a small point.

BELO

This is a holographic ball I created for training and warming-up in expectation of this.

The tablet now shows the merciless destruction of the security command centre in Chernov's cave from the start of the film.

BELO

This thing is called a wave-eater. It was created to seek out and devour energy. It cannot be destroyed, only de-charged by five strikes from an Athlete. Millions of beings died before we understood how to stop these infernal wave-eaters.

ANTON

Died?

BELO

Anton, this is a war. The stadium is actually a de-charging cell as well as a training base for the Athletes. We have been saving the Earth from total destruction for many years now.

ANTON

But why are they attacking us?

BELO

The wave-eaters are weapons. We are being attacked by their creator - Chernov.

A picture of Chernov appears in front of Anton.

BELO

He is trapped here, under the earth, deep below this very stadium. He was my

friend. Together we discovered a way of replicating living matter. But Chernobyl decided that everything not created by his hand was not perfect and therefore not worthy to exist. Using the energy of the stars, his first gruesome experiment was his own daughter, VALAYA, who most likely died the day of what you Earthlings call the "break-up of the moon." In fact, the cataclysm that befell Earth 20 years ago was a result of our war with Chernobyl. We attacked him when we found out he had isolated the gene for teleportation. Imagine what would happen if he had succeeded in creating a wave-eater that could teleport! It would have made him invincible. The deciding battle just happened to take place near your planet. A broken-off piece of Chernobyl's laboratory crashed into Earth and we managed to imprison him below the surface, where he still remains. Fortunately, his teleportation gene was lost at the time of the crash.

ANTON

So at any moment some alien... thing could escape and wipe the floor with you in front of millions of people, and you're making a spectacle of it?

BELO

Spaceball is training for battles against Chernobyl's wave-eaters. But isolated training proved ineffective. Risking your life is much easier when you are supported by hundreds of millions of people, even if

they have no idea that you might die and their entire galaxy will crumble if you fail. And for the Earthlings, three young beings found to have incredible abilities in these difficult times have served to give hope that mankind might survive no matter how harsh the conditions they now find themselves in.

ANTON

Why not just kill this Chernobyl? You've got him right there in prison.

BELO

If we kill him, his laboratory will explode, delivering your planet up to the same fate suffered by your moon. That's how he's safeguarded himself.

ANTON

And the spectators?

BELO

The ship's force field protects the people.

ANTON

So, if there is no stadium..

On the tablet are more scenes from the destruction of Chernobyl's cave from the start of the film.

BELO

And so on until the planet turns into a scorched wasteland.

Pause.

A VOICE IN BELO'S EARPIECE

The wave-eater will be there in one minute.

ANTON

(hurriedly)

Let's go through this again.
You are now going to play
with a ball which could kill
Natasha, Pele, little Fan
and... destroy the whole
planet and everything,
because some evil guy, who
we can't kill, wants to take
over the universe, and
everyone thinks you're
playing a game here. Do I
understand you correctly?

BELO

That's about the sum of it,
yes.

ANTON

(hurriedly)

Can I leave for a moment? I
need to, um... very badly..

Without waiting for an answer, Anton runs out.

SCENE 124. INT. STADIUM. CORRIDOR

Anton runs along the corridor at full tilt, skidding round
the bends.

SCENE 125. INT. STADIUM. LIFT

The lift shoots at immense speed. Anton impatiently knocks
on the wall.

ANTON

QUICKER, QUICKER, QUICKER!

SCENE 126. INT. STADIUM. CORRIDOR IN FRONT OF CEREMONIAL
HALL

Anton jumps out of the lift and runs to the place where he
squeezed out the poison from the pod. To his horror,
instead of a few lilac drops, a shuddering lilac mass has
grown. A lilac stream is spreading up one of the stadium's
arteries, like a blood infection. The vessel pulses as if
it's choking. The shuddering mass, like an inflammation,
rises relentlessly towards the stadium's dome. The walls,
overcome by the inflammation, begin to look like the
surface of a rotten potato.

A horn signalling the service of the next ball.

Anton speeds off.

SCENE 127. INT. PITCH. STADIUM.

BELO
(by internal
communication)
Fifteen second warning.

TU-U-U! The horn echoes round the stadium. A circular wave spreads out from the centre over the surface of the pitch. In response, the whole stadium, of two million spectators, clap in unison.

SCENE 128. INT. SPACE UNDER THE STANDS/EXIT TO THE FIELD

Anton runs at full tilt. The players on the field cannot hear his cries.

ANTON
The stadium's infected! Over
there!

Points at...

SCENE 129. INT. STADIUM. INFECTED PART OF SECTOR "A"

... the part where the lilac mass has seeped from under the stand into the visible part of the stand and begun to grow into the walls of the force field.

TU-U-U-U! Another horn! A second wave spreads out over the surface of the pitch. Two deafening claps from four million hands. The play is just about to start. The Athletes of both teams stand in fighting stance.

SCENE 130. INT. STADIUM. BELO'S BOX

Belo notices Anton's terror-distorted face. He looks around and sees the monstrous lilac patch eating away at the force field.

SCENE 131. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

TU-U-U-! The third circle. Three sharp, rhythmic claps rock the stadium.

The Athletes dash to the centre of the field, where the wave-eater BURSTS OUT from.

SCENE 132. INT. STADIUM. BELO'S BOX

With uncharacteristic sharpness, Belo flings a capsule of freezing agent at the site of the infection. It flies like

a bullet to the other side of the stadium.

SCENE 133. INT. STADIUM. INFECTED PART OF SECTOR «A»

The capsule explodes, freezing the foundations of the force field. But shoots have already climbed higher and continue to spread inside the force field.

SCENE 134. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The wave-eater flies up to the top of the dome, and Natasha and an Amazonian follow it, but arrive too late. The wave-eater hits the dome. The inner force field shakes and from the vibration, in the place..

SCENE 135. INT. STADIUM. INFECTED PART OF SECTOR «A»

... where the mould has grown, a crack appears in the force field.

SCENE 136. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The EMERGENCY EVACUATION alarm sounds. The stadium dome begins to flash red.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Attention. Emergency
evacuation!

Anton continues to run up the pitch towards the infection. Natasha and Fan chase the ball.

SCENE 137. EXT. STADIUM

Capsules of spectators fly off in different directions, like dandelion seeds.

SCENE 138. EXT. CITY STREETS

The broadcast on the sky has finished. The people who have been watching the match on the city streets turn their heads in unison towards the ship and see the capsules flying away, evacuating people from the red-flashing stadium. The upper part of the stadium quickly lowers itself. The dome begins to collapse.

SCENE 139. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

Power beams located along the edges of both the upper and lower shutters open and switch on (they are exactly the same as the ones which fixed the wave-eater in the opening scene near Chernov's laboratory). Their yellow beams focus on the wave-eater, pull it to the centre and, using

massive pressure, fix it in the air under the dome.

SCENE 140. INT. STADIUM. COMMENTATOR'S BOX

A commentator, gawping like a regular bystander, freezes. He is enveloped in the energy walls of a transport capsule and carried away.

SCENE 141. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The stadium is practically empty and just one capsule of spectators in the infected sector A is unable to detach itself.

SCENE 142. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

Some of the shoots of the lilac mould have grown through the force field into the body of the capsule and are not letting it detach itself from the stadium. The upper part continues to lower itself threateningly.

Natasha sees the stuck capsule and speeds towards it.

SCENE 143. INT. STADIUM. INFECTED PART OF SECTOR A

The people inside the capsule shout with fear. Natasha appears in front of them and tries to tear the roots with her hands.

SCENE 144. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The lilac mould grows through into the power beams under Natasha's feet and destroys them. The section of yellow beams under Natasha's feet is extinguished. A gap appears in the ring of beams holding the WAVE-EATER. The wave-eater slips into the empty gap and flies hard towards Natasha's back. Seeing this, Ho rushes to intercept it.

SCENE 145. INT. STADIUM. INFECTED PART OF SECTOR A

Natasha tries hard to free the capsule by rocking it from side to side. The WAVE-EATER gains speed towards her back.

Ho materialises in its path and strikes it a powerful blow. Explosion.

In slow motion the wave threatens to wipe out Natasha, who still has her back to the explosion, but at this moment Anton appears, grabs Natasha and teleports with her to another part of the stadium.

SCENE 146. INT. STADIUM. INFECTED PART OF SECTOR A

Ruptures and cracks appear in the inner force field from the explosion. Through these, part of the shockwave, wildly shakes the capsule and rips off the right hand part of the lilac mould roots. The right hand part of the capsule frees itself.

SCENE 147. INT. STADIUM. PLAYING FIELD

The dome begins unrelentingly to crush the capsule of spectators.

BELO
(shouting)
Break the roots!

Anton rushes back to the capsule and hits the lilac patch with all his might. Then the left hand side of the capsule frees itself and carries the frightened spectators away from the infected stadium.

The stadium slams shut.

SCENE 148. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

Cherno presses jerkily on the surface of a glossy panel, as though he's using a pump to pump energy. Sparks fly inside the laboratory and the light in there reaches maximum brightness.

SCENE 149. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

The yellow beams try to fix the rabid wave-eater. Like a shot the wave-eater speeds towards the sector with the destroyed power beams, where Anton is.

In slow motion Anton turns round and finds himself almost face to face with the wave-eater. There is nothing left for him to do but throw himself headlong at it, fists outstretched, just like in training. Natasha's face shows terror.

His fists hit the WAVE-EATER. Explosion.

In the very slowest motion: a wave spreads out, Anton disappears, avoiding the shockwave, reappears and strikes the ball. Explosion. Anton materialises, but this time sooner than he should have, and finds himself right in the "tail" of the second shockwave. The energy of the explosion drags Anton with it. He loses control and falls from a great height.

Natasha teleports and catches Anton.

Pele delivers the final blow to the wave-eater. The sphere flies quickly into the goal.

SCENE 150. INT. STADIUM. BEHIND THE GOAL/WAVE-EATER STORAGE AREA

The uncharged wave-eater flies along the tunnel and falls into the huge storage unit.

SCENE 151. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO' LABORATORY

The light flickers and goes out. In the half-light only Chernov's silhouette and unblinking blue eyes remain.

SCENE 152. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING

Through a storm drain, as if looking out through prison bars, VALAYA sees the dandelion-stadium standing over the city as always, whole and unharmed.

SCENE 153. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

BELO

Cut away the infected parts.

He grabs Anton by the shoulders and looks him in the eye.

BELO

(continuing)

I saw the wave-eater catch you. It's a miracle you survived. Get to the sickbay!

Belo leaves, continuing to give orders. Anton raises his head and sees Amazonian YU looking attentively at him.

AMAZONIAN YU

I was wrong - you're no baby. You're one hell of a dude!

Pele stands behind her back.

PELE

I agree.

They both run off after Belo. Anton, looking around sheepishly, sets off in the direction of the tunnel under the stands. Natasha stops him. She shakes his hand in a business-like manner.

NATASHA

Thanks.

Something suddenly bulges in Anton's temple, as if lightning runs along it in a quick flash, then goes out.

NATASHA

Hey.

ANTON

What?

NATASHA

Um... Never mind.

Behind her back Fan and HO give Anton the thumbs up.

Anton is embarrassed and takes off. He runs a few metres and stops. For a moment he thinks lightning has run through his veins. He wipes his wrists and runs off.

SCENE 154. INT. STADIUM. CHANGING ROOM

Anton holds his Sputnik in his hands and stands in front of his open locker.

ANTON

Sorry, mate, but I have to sort this out on my own.

Anton tries to shove his Sputnik into his locker. The Sputnik clings on with its tentacles like a cat. Gently unattaching each paw from the locker, Anton hides the Sputnik in his locker and closes the door.

SCENE 155. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING

Anton runs into the dwelling. Anya is nowhere. He hears a rustle behind him, turns around and just has time to draw breath to speak when PAF! - Anya squeezes a pod like the one Anton poisoned the stadium with. A violet-green cloud of coloured dust flies at Anton and engulfs him. Wisps of vapour crawls into his mouth, nose and ears, like snakes. He convulsively tries to breathe, but can't. He tries to move, but can't.

SCENE 156. INT. STADIUM. CHANGING ROOM. INSIDE ANTON'S LOCKER

In the darkness of the locker Anton's Sputnik's screen is covered with a wave of red-green lights - the alarm signal. It braces itself against the walls of the locker with its tentacles.

SCENE 156A. INT. STADIUM. CHANGING ROOM

A thin laser beam cuts through the locker door from the inside.

SCENE 157. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING

Anton stands motionless like a mannequin. Anya looks attentively, sadly and lovingly into his eyes. Suddenly tarry spots begin to grow around the edges of her girlish features. The human element disappears from her face, and she is now different. To his horror Anton finally sees in front of him a terrifying alien monster. Only the eyes remain sad.

SCENE 158. INT. STADIUM. CHANGING ROOM

CRASH! The cut-through locker door bursts open and Anton's Sputnik is now free.

SCENE 159. INT. PITCH. STADIUM

Natasha uses a laser to cut away the mouldy fragment from the stadium wall. The screen of Natasha's Sputnik takes up the alarm signal and also shows the red-green lights.

Belo, looking at his tablet, indicates to the robots the infected areas. Anton's Sputnik tears past Belo at great speed. At this moment Belo's tablet reports the emergency. Belo turns around and sees Natasha running towards him.

NATASHA

It's Anton!

SCENE 160. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING

VALAYA touches her wrist and activates a bracelet which immediately turns into a drill-weapon. Three drills begin to advance predatorily towards Anton's face. Three blades perform a backwards motion like a snow-clearing machine collecting snow from the curb side. Valaya's hand freezes a millimetre from Anton's face. She lowers her hand and the weapon disappears back inside the bracelet.

VALAYA

There isn't a single being
in the entire universe I
know better than you. I have
been next to you your whole
life. But it wasn't you I
was looking for, it was
something deep inside you --
a genetic particle which

flew out of my father's
laboratory when he crashed
into the moon and everything
was smashed to pieces. Bang.

Valaya makes a motion with her hands as if she's breaking
an invisible round object in two.

VALAYA (cont.)

Father was trapped
underground. I found myself
on the Earth's surface. But
the particle flew away...

Valaya touches Anton's belly gracefully with her entwined
index fingers.

VALAYA (cont.)

... and, BOOM!, landed in you.
Now, in order to get my
father out of his prison, I
must take from you that
which was not rightfully
yours to begin with. It's me
who brings you all your bad
luck -- trees falling on
you, the ground giving way
beneath your feet. It was me
who brought you a box of
lizards while you were
asleep and now you're scared
of them. And each time I'm
torn between my debt to my
father and... your clear and
frightened eyes. They come
to me in my dreams every
night. The truth is, all
this time trying to use you,
I ended up becoming attached
to you.

VALAYA fixes her gaze on Anton and shamefully takes a step
backwards, showing herself to him.

VALAYA (cont.)

My real name is Valaya. I
was always worried that you
wouldn't like the real me.
So... do you like me? It was
for you that I first went
against my father. Oh, if
only you had destroyed the
stadium, in the perfect

universe which my father is going to create, I could have had my own world with you at my side. But it's too late for all that now.

The weapon shoots out once more from the bracelet and the three drills dig greedily into Anton's forehead.

SCENE 161. EXT. CITY STREETS

Anton's Sputnik races along the city streets. Suddenly it shudders and slips, as if it's hit an air-pocket, and, like a dog losing the scent, begins to tear frantically along the street.

SCENE 162. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING

Anton's lifeless body drops to the floor.

SCENE 163. INT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING. MEETING ROOM

Valaya begins to move quickly. Like an experienced hitman, she clicks a capsule out of her alien weapon and puts it on the panel for communication with Chernobyl.

The capsule is immediately sucked into the panel, as if sinking into a bog.

Instruments switch on and the analysis process begins. A 3D model of a fragment of the DNA chain appears in front of Valaya.

SCENE 164. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

The same happens simultaneously in front of Chernobyl in his cave. Chernobyl puts the DNA fragment in the centre of a matrix and the randomly placed models of molecules and amino acids instantly organise themselves into a very long and complex, spiral model of DNA.

CHERNO

At last!

SCENE 166. EXT. BY VALAYA'S DWELLING

CRASH! The man-hole cover down to the dwelling opens. VALAYA springs out, not noticing Anton's Sputnik creeping along a wall and diving down into the dwelling.

SCENE 167. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY. BY THE SHIP'S EMBRYO

A bullet-like test-tube detaches from the synthesis module, and instantly a black liquid sprays into it. Chernov loads the test-tube into a device which looks like a thin syringe.

Chernov floats above the embryo on his cloak. With a wide backswing, he plunges the syringe into the cloudy membrane of the cocoon.

Inside the cocoon a wild transformation begins. Blood begins to circulate around the vessels of the embryo.

SCENE 168. INT. VALAYA'S DWELLING

The Sputnik flies towards Anton's lifeless body, sees the three tiny holes and produces a sound like a howl of desperation.

SCENE 169. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY. BY THE SHIP'S EMBRYO

With a burst, the embryo inside the cocoon begins to sprout flesh and fur. Chernov rushes towards the head of the being, which has not yet hatched from its cocoon, but already has the clear features of a giant, white-furred dog. The walls of the cocoon burst and the dog falls onto the floor with a crash.

Like a blind, newborn puppy the beast gingerly holds its nose up in the air, trying to study the world it has found itself in. Suddenly the newborn is grasped by previously prepared fetters. The beast gives a deafening howl of pain. Chernov grins.

SCENE 170. INT. VALAYA'S DWELLING

The Sputnik hangs over Anton. One of its tentacles carefully extends towards the wound. Narrow, energy vortices form around its paw and attach to the edges of the wound, forming something like an almost invisible tunnel between the tentacle and Anton's head. Small balls of blood begin to freely float, as if weightless, out of the tentacle and into the wound, as though the Sputnik is returning to its master the drops of blood it received from him at its birth. Holes appear along the whole length of the Sputnik's paw, gradually widening until the tentacles looks like Swiss cheese.

With the last of its strength, the Sputnik crawls and presses its body against the wound.

SCENE 171. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY

Cherno hangs, fixed by his cloak to the very highest point of his laboratory, and looks at the animal strapped to the floor by the chains. A semi-transparent, flexible, plastic MATERIAL, similar to Cherno's cloak in structure and properties, but LIGHT BLUE, is lowered down from above. The material is laid on the animal's back and flows in a stream along the dog's spine, from head to tail. Cherno holds his arm out in front of himself. The light-blue material suddenly takes the form of an outspread hand and, repeating precisely Cherno's movements, brutally presses on the scruff of the dog's neck. Without opening its eyes the dog howls with pain.

Cherno flies down from a great height, his cloak spread out behind him like the membrane of a flying squirrel, and lands in the centre of the light-blue material on the dog's back.

CHERNO
(self-satisfied)
Let's ride.

Suddenly the light-blue material begins to envelope Cherno from all sides. Cherno infiltrates through it into the internal space.

SCENE 172. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Only now do we see that the light-blue material on the dog's back is in fact the ceiling of hermetic living quarters stretching from the animal's head to its tail. Cherno cannot conceal his satisfaction on beholding the internal space of his future ship. Cherno's right hand clenches the air rapaciously.

SCENE 173. EXT. CHERNO'S SHIP

The light-blue material repeats Cherno's movements precisely and now holds the unfortunate dog even tighter by the scruff of the neck. The chains holding the dog weaken and the dog slowly tries to stand up, seemingly trying to protect its head, which the cloak is evidently pressing hard on. Cherno's hand rises up and the dog's head also rises, unnaturally. Cherno has barely weakened his grip, when the dog howls and tries to break away, but Cherno again grabs it by the scruff of the neck and presses its head to the floor. The dog howls plaintively and opens its pained eyes.

SCENE 174. INT. VALAYA'S DWELLING

In the absolute silence Anton suddenly takes a deep, nervy breath as if he's just burst out from under water. The

Sputnik falls lifelessly to the floor.

Security droids rush into the dwelling at high speed, followed by Belo and Natasha. Seeing Anton, Belo stops dead in the middle of the room. He looks around and sees the cellophane pods containing the "bean pods".

BELO

This is part of the wreckage
of Chernov's laboratory.

Natasha rushes to Anton.

NATASHA

Anton, are you ok?

Natasha's Sputnik rushes to Anton's Sputnik and lifts it up. Natasha notices the injured tentacle and looks at the scar on Anton's brow.

Belo walks slowly to the tank and fishes out a branch with pods attached to it. He slowly turns around to Anton.

BELO

My boy, tell me it wasn't
you who poisoned the
stadium.

Anton continues to look at Natasha, who looks at him hopefully. He swallows and lowers his head.

ANTON

It was me.

At this moment in the next room a bright light flashes and a hissing sound is heard. Through the slightly open door Belo sees a hologram of Chernov appear from the communications apparatus.

CHERNO

Belo, my old friend.

Belo carefully opens the door a little more.

CHERNO

I will give you the chance
to save yourself. Fly to me.

The hologram disappears. A POWERFUL EARTHQUAKE! Plaster dust falls on Anton's face. The walls of the dwelling vibrate.

BELO

To the surface!

Belo, Natasha and the droids run out of the dwelling. Anton tries to stand, but he has not regained his strength fully yet and is weak.

SCENE 175. EXT. CITY STREETS

Natasha runs out onto the trembling surface, where Belo and the other Athletes are already standing, mouths agape. A rumbling sound. A high-rise shakes from a powerful jolt, the source of which is hidden from Belo's view. A blue teleport trail flies by and disappears behind some houses. ANOTHER JOLT! A huge house collapses, like a house of cards.

BELO

My God, he's managed to engineer a more powerful wave-eater!

FAN

Mama...

Suddenly in slow motion in front of the Athletes materialises a huge white dog the size of a nine-storey house. The vicious beast comes together gradually, atom by atom, from nose to tail.

The security droids cause a squall of fire to rain down on the dog. VALAYA runs out and the dog-ship picks her up in a paw and put her on its back, where she is sucked in through the light-blue material onto the ship. The dog-ship snaps angrily with its jaws at the missiles flying at it, like a hungry dog catching food.

SCENE 176. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

VALAYA approaches her father and stops, resolved not to go further.

VALAYA

Father.

Cherno, focused on steering the ship, cuts her off with a gesture.

CHERNO

Do not disturb me.

A glow spreads through the animal's tissues from the missiles hitting it. Its veins, filling with energy, lead to a bladder, where from each shot a new wave-eater

expands in small bursts, as if from small shots of water injected by a pump.

Cherno smiles with satisfaction watching the process.

CHERNO
Good, that'll do.

SCENE 177. EXT. CITY STREETS

BELO
Cease fire!

The security droids stop firing. The dog, whose jumping it was that made the ground tremor, stops and looks fiercely at Belo. Dust from the earthquake and shots settles slowly on the ground.

BELO
It seems like we are only feeding it with energy.

SCENE 178. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Cherno holds a hand out, as if grabbing something in the air, and drags it downwards.

SCENE 179. EXT. CITY STREETS

The dog whines with pain, stands up on its hind legs, raises its head, and disappears. A teleport trail shoots into the sky.

BELO
Action stations! Fall in!

All the Athletes gather around Belo in quick military fashion. Anton looks out meekly from behind their backs.

BELO
You cannot hide from this,
Anton.

Anton pushes into the ring of Athletes.

BELO
(to Anton)
There is no possible justification for what you've done. In times of peace I would lock you up and get all the information to make an informed

judgment.

(to the Athletes)

But this is war, and we need every soldier we can get, even if that means taking a risk. I ask you: are you ready to trust Anton with your lives?

The Athletes exchange looks. They all look at Natasha, who realises they are waiting for her word.

NATASHA

It's hard for me to be objective. But the facts, Anton, are that what you did was treacherous. I don't know what to expect from you. And I can't trust you.

Natasha takes a step forward.

After a pause, all the Athletes take a step forward until it's Fan and Pele's turn. Pause. Anton looks at Pele expectantly. Pele, steeling himself, takes a decisive step forward. Fan remains in her place. She raises her eyes questioningly to Belo, then to Natasha, then to Anton, looking for support from someone. Unable to restrain himself, Pele takes her hand and drags her forward, completing the small circle. In the centre stands Belo, and Anton remains outside it.

BELO

I will assemble the Galactic Council. You spread out around the city. The first wave-eater will be here soon.

Turning sharply around, Belo heads to the transport capsule. The Athletes disperse, trying not to look at Anton. Only the kind eyes of the Amazonian YU meet Anton's for a second. She wants to say something, but changes her mind and heads off after the others. Trails go off in different directions. Only Natasha remains, then she disappears, her trail speeding towards the stadium. Anton is alone in the middle of the street. He stands, clinging to his Sputnik like a last hope.

ACT THREE

SCENE 180. EXT. OPEN SPACE

The dog-ship materialises in orbit around the Earth. An amazing view of the blue planet opens up under it. Above it - the bright sun. Growling salaciously, the dog straightens the fibres of its white fur, turning them into something like small antennae, along which the sun's rays penetrate into the animal's body.

SCENE 181. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

The sun's energy squirts through the animal's tissues into the bladder containing the gradually expanding wave-eaters.

SCENE 182. INT. STADIUM. COMMUNICATIONS ROOM

In the dark space in front of Belo, holographic images of three members of the Galactic Council float in the air.

A Threefinger gives orders to someone off screen.

BELO

He's escaped but we can
still recapture him. Raise
the whole fleet. The clock
is ticking.

SCENE 183. EXT. CITY STREETS

A sand storm gathers on the horizon.

Anton walks sluggishly along the street. He carries the Sputnik in his arms, protecting it from the wind, like a baby. Anton sees the stadium-flower folding its engine-petals inwards in preparation for take-off.

From a window a woman hysterically calls her boys home then closes the shutters. The boys run past Anton and throw pieces of liana at him.

BOYS

Loser! Sitter!

SCENE 184. EXT. CITY

A bird's eye view of the city, in the centre of which the dandelion-ship is taking off from the ground. The contrail from the ship's take-off blows twenty-year-old dust from the buildings.

SCENE 185. EXT. CITY. SIDE STREET

A small girl excitedly watches the dandelion-ship take off from the ground. Her mother quickly puts a homemade respirator on her.

SCENE 186. EXT. OPEN SPACE

The dog-ship, floating in open space, looks at the helpless Earth and bares its teeth wickedly.

SCENE 187. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Cherno carefully reaches a hand out to the first ripe wave-eater.

The energy-full wave-eater slowly rises from its cradle inside the bladder. Cherno reaches out a hand. The wave-eater stops, as if ensnared by an invisible force. Cherno pushes the wave-eater away from himself, manipulating it from a distance.

CHERNO

Child of mine, only the
Athletes can stop us. Keep
them on that cursed planet
for as long as possible.

VALAYA sadly watches Cherno, with a big backswing, throws the wave-eater through the light-blue material of the ship and...

SCENE 188. EXT. OPEN SPACE

... towards Earth.

The dog-ship, like a small puppy, watches the flying ball in surprise, as if it's an escaped toy. Suddenly the dog winces with pain and whines, as if grabbed hard by the withers, and dematerialises.

The wave-eater speeds towards Earth like a terrible comet.

SCENE 189. EXT. CITY STREETS

Barely has the dandelion-ship disappeared behind the clouds, when a massive image of Belo appears in the sky, the same size as the image of the Spaceball game. Belo clears his throat, looks into the camera, and speaks in a calm, sure voice.

BELO

Citizens of Earth, today you
will learn the truth about
Spaceball. Today, just as

they were twenty years ago,
the skies will be torn
apart, and fire will rain
down on the Earth. All these
years I have been trying to
protect Earth from
destruction. I have failed.
Forgive me. You see,
Spaceball is not a game. It
is a war that has raged
unceasingly since long
before these games came to
your planet.

SCENE 190. INT. ANTON'S FLAT

Anton sits on the floor of his own room washing the wounded tentacle of his Sputnik with water. He dabs at the wound with rags lying on the floor.

ANTON

If it hurts, say so.

Anton looks attentively at his Sputnik, but it doesn't react.

ANTON

Or don't. I thought it was
you who didn't deserve my
care, but it was I who
didn't deserve yours.

He takes the longest rag from a pile, makes a splint and carefully binds the tentacle.

ANTON

(angrily)

What else can I do?

Anton picks the Sputnik up in two hands, holds it to his chest, lies down on the floor and curls up.

SCENE 191. EXT. EGYPT. PYRAMIDS

The Bedouin in his boat raises his head and listens to Belo, fascinatedly.

BELO

But I want to say to you:
whatever happens, do not
give in. Our trust in one
another is our only
strength.

SCENE 192. TIMES SQUARE IN THE SNOW

The family of the bearded man has gathered to eat round a fire. His wife and child hold plates in their hands, the bearded man - a frozen fish and a knife. Unmoving, they all listen to Belo, fascinatedly.

BELO

I am departing with my ship
in the hope of correcting my
mistake. There is no point
in attempting heroics
against the wave-eaters. Man
is defenseless against them.
THE ATHLETES, MY ATHELETES,
WILL DEFEND YOU.

SCENE 193. EXT. MOCKBA. THE FLAT OF AN ELDERLY COUPLE

An elderly couple watches Belo in the sky from their window.

BELO

But they will not succeed if
they do not feel your
support every second of
their struggle.

The couple looks into the distance, where the sand storm is moving towards the city.

SCENE 194. EXT. SIDE STREET

Two young kids, a boy and a girl, sitting on a branch of a large tree, watch in fascination as the ship takes off.

BELO

And if you are to be heroes,
be heroes to your loved
ones. Promise them you will
navigate these troubled
times TOGETHER.

SCENE 195. EXT. CITY STREETS

A group of teenage girls and boys stops in the middle of a street and looks up.

BELO

Life is a struggle... a
struggle for those you love.

SCENE 196. INT. ANTON'S FLAT

Mother enters the room and sees Anton on the floor.

MOTHER

What's all this about?

ANTON

Some evil space rogue wants to kill everyone and invented a terrible bomb. And we all thought it was just a ball. And now this rogue has run away and we're all doomed.

MOTHER

Because of you?

Anton curls himself up even tighter around his Sputnik.

ANTON

I screwed up, Mom. I screwed everything up.

Mother sits down on the floor next to Anton and puts a hand on him.

MOTHER

I can't speak for the other planets, but we people of Earth, through the ages and without exception, have made mistakes time and again. Half of human history is a catalogue of our tragic mistakes. But the other half is the story of those strong souls who sought to correct these mistakes.

Mother stands up and walks out, still speaking.

MOTHER

I'm going to make something to eat. Don't fly away without eating first!

Mother goes to the kitchen.

SCENE 197. EXT. ABOVE THE CITY ROOFTOPS

On a roof stand Amazonian BO, Stan and little Fan. They

stand staring at the sky, as Spaceball fans once did. Biting into a biscuit, BO sees the first wave-eater burst into the Earth's atmosphere. She gives the biscuit to Stan, who takes a bite without looking at it, and passes it to Fan.

STAN

(to Fan)

Leave a bit for me, will ya?

The bit of biscuit given to Fan is 10 times bigger than she can bite off in one go, so she takes a bite and gives the rest back to Stan. He takes the biscuit, throws it into his mouth and, setting off running, shouts:

STAN

Girls, we can't let them
reach the city!

The three of them disappear into the sky. High above the rooftops the explosion of the first strike against the wave-eater rings out.

SCENE 198. INT. ANTON'S FLAT

Anton jumps up and walks to the window. His Mother, hearing the explosion, begins to mash the beans in her bowl twice as fast.

MOTHER

Remember, no fighting crazy
space bombs until you eat
something!

Anton sees the flash from the explosion and runs to his bed and puts his Sputnik on the pillow. He waits for a second, then moves in close to the Sputnik's screen and speaks in a near whisper.

ANTON

I'll be back soon. Please
don't die on me. There's so
much I need to fix.

Pause. The Sputnik is silent.

ANTON

We be of one blood, ye and
I.

The Sputnik's empty screen glows cold and indifferently.

ANTON

It's a quote from Mowgli.

Pause. Suddenly two huge eyes appear on the Sputnik's screen staring at Anton.

Space distorts.

SCENE 199. INT. EMPTY SPACE. MIND PALACE

Anton finds himself standing alone in the middle of a huge, light room. Right in front of him stands his battle dress, just the suit, nobody inside, no face, no body. Anton sees his reflection in the protective visor of the empty helmet.

In a second the suit configures to the form of Anton's Sputnik.

Slowly, like in a dance, the Sputnik waves a tentacle and touches Anton's forehead. Both figures twist into a vortex: lines and colours mix and from the centre of this vortex fly out images of Anton as the Sputnik saw him when it was born:

SCENE 200. INT. STADIUM. SICKBAY. MIND PALACE

Anton's grimace of indignation at the moment when the Sputnik jumps out of its box at him;

His odious demand, enunciated in such a painful timbre, that the Sputnik be removed from his arms or he will start shouting;

SCENE 201. INT. STADIUM. CHANGING ROOM. MIND PALACE.

The locker door, slammed in the Sputnik's face;

SCENE 202. INT. VALAYA'S DWELLING. MIND PALACE.

And finally, the bloodied head of Anton, lying lifeless on Valaya's floor, and the tentacles tenderly recreating Anton's flesh. The wounds on Anton's head closing over.

SCENE 202A. EXT. CITY STREETS. MIND PALACE.

Now we are in Anton's consciousness and seeing all the scenes through his eyes.

Natasha's stare a second before she says: "I cannot trust you".

SCENE 202B. INT. PITCH. STADIUM. MIND PALACE.

Natasha stops Anton and squeezes his hand in a business-like fashion.

SCENE 202C. INT. STADIUM. PLAYING FIELD. MIND PALACE.

Natasha's reproachful look on the field during the game with the Amazonians. Natasha flies in and takes Belo's tablet.

SCENE 202D. INT. PITCH. STADIUM. MIND PALACE.

Natasha's worried look at the moment when she notices Anton sitting down on the pitch.

SCENE 202E. INT. STADIUM. TRAINING HALL

Natasha's disappointed look in training.

SCENE 202F. INT. FLAT. ANYA/VALAYA'S DWELLING. MIND PALACE.

The pain in Natasha's eyes when she runs into Valaya's dwelling.

SCENE 202G. INT. STADIUM. TRAINING HALL. MIND PALACE.

Natasha and Anton float below the training hall dome.

NATASHA

You see, a little hug is
nothing to be afraid of.

SCENE 202H. INT. TRANSPORT CAPSULE. NIGHT. MIND PALACE.

Natasha's look of remorse in the capsule over the city.

NATASHA

I've never told someone that
before. I shared my truth
with you...

SCENE 202I. INT. ANTON'S FLAT. MIND PALACE.

NATASHA

I fancy you. We live life in
the fast lane. There's no
time for pretence.

SCENE 202J EXT. CITY STREETS. BY A WELL. MIND PALACE.

Finally, Anton's loving look at the poster of Natasha from the very start of the film.

The vortex freezes together with the last memory, and all

the elements of the picture go back to their original places.

SCENE 203. INT. ANTON'S FLAT

The camera zooms out of Anton's eye.

Anton sits in his own flat, leaning over his Sputnik.

We have returned to reality.

The Sputnik raises its splinted tentacle like a scarecrow, and greets Anton.

СПУТНИК

Magli

Anton extends a hand.

ANTON

Anton.

The Sputnik puts its splinted tentacle in Anton's hand and presses another tentacle to the back of Anton's hand - a two-handed handshake. Seeing this, Anton also takes the tentacle in two hands. The joyous Magli slaps this composition of hands with its third tentacle. They both smile.

SCENE 204. EXT. OPEN SPACE

The dog-ship opens its fierce eyes. Its ocular nerve is attached to a panel inside the ship. Chernob has turned this panel into a surveillance monitor.

SCENE 205. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Chernob sees what the dog sees: on the horizon 150 ships, of different shapes and sizes, fly towards Chernob. It seems they obscure everything around.

CHERNO

Mmm... Galactic Council battle ships. Twenty years and no progress.

(to Valaya)

What have they been doing with their lives?

VALAYA raises her head questioningly, surprised that her father has addressed her, but it is a rhetorical question. He approaches the gland, picks six ripe wave-eaters from their branch, and sends them out through the light-blue

material towards Earth.

CLQEHA. 206. EXT. OPEN SPACE

Belo's ship flies in open space, but now it looks completely different: solar-battery sails have opened out and face the sun, like enormous yellow petals.

SCENE 207. INT. STADIUM. BRIDGE

Belo watches the wave-eaters fly one by one past his ship in the distance towards the Earth, and he tries to assess the situation, his eyes fixed on CHERNO'S SHIP.

BELO

The ship looks like an exotic animal and can absorb the energy of shots fired at it. Organise a force field snare.

Natasha's voice is suddenly heard behind him.

NATASHA

Why is he not firing at us?

BELO

He's more concerned with detaining the Athletes for now. But when he's stronger and full of energy, then...

NATASHA

(into her headset)
Attention. Another 6 wave-eaters are on their way to you.

BELO

What are you doing here?
I told you to stay!

NATASHA

I'm with you!

BELO

With me, or further away from him?

NATASHA

Can't it be both?

SCENE 208. EXT. OPEN SPACE

The ships begin to create something like a net, forming taught yellow power beams between them, like those that catch the wave-eaters.

SCENE 209. EXT. IN THE SKY ABOVE THE CITY

The teleport trails of the Athletes scatter in the sky, like the contrails of ten jet planes. The Athletes spread themselves out and stop, forming a giant ellipse in the air with one end sloping down towards the Earth. At the bottom end of this ellipse, in fight stance, are the "catchers": Ho, Pele and Stan. Six wave-eaters cut through the Earth's atmosphere and hurtle at colossal speed towards the catchers.

Ho drives a wave-eater off to the left, Pele - straight ahead, Stan - to the right. In an instant the space in the middle of the ellipse is filled with explosions and the fiery swirls of uncharging wave-eaters.

This is totally different to what happened under the dome of the stadium during the game. From beneath it looks like someone wants to touch a giant red-hot branding iron to the Earth.

"CATCH", STRIKE, EXPLOSION! A cacophony of cries, commands and signals, warning each other of shockwaves.

After striking a wave-eater, little Fan folds her arms across her chest and tumbles backwards in freefall. She takes several deep breaths, trying to stabilise her breathing, then returns to her position. Striking a ball, Amazonian YU notices Fan falling.

AMAZONIAN YU

(into her headset)

Don't overload Fan!

PELE

(into his headset)

Roger that!

Anton appears behind Pele's back and, stopping there, shouts:

ANTON

A penitent teammate,
reporting for duty!

Pele gives Anton an annoyed look then immediately turns around and strikes a wave-eater heading for him.

PELE
(at the moment of
impact)

WAVE!

SCENE 210. INT. ANTON'S FLAT

Vasily runs headlong up the stairs and into the flat, where it is already very windy. The storm blows paper and dust all over the flat. The windows are wide open and the curtains are blowing upwards like the wings of a giant bird. Anton's mother rushes to cover her indoor vegetable and herb garden with a piece of cloth.

VASILY
Forget it. It's war out
there!

MOTHER
(takes a deep
breath and stops)
I fancy you!

A gust of wind and the curtains fill up with wind, like a sail.

MOTHER
(continuing)
I could see myself falling
in love with you.

Red dust swirls like a whirlwind round the two people standing in the middle of the room. Vasily blinks in confusion.

MOTHER
(continuing)
There's no time for
pretence. You don't have to
say anything.

Anton's mother heads out of the room.

VASILY
Wait! I want to say
something!

Anton's mother turns around. The storm intensifies and a gust of wind sends chairs skidding and crashing around. In the indoor garden the plants are bent almost in half and about to be torn out of the soil from their roots.

VASILY

I like you very much too.
Now follow me!

SCENE 211. EXT. IN THE SKY. ABOVE THE CITY ROOFS

BANG. Pele suddenly teleports away from a shockwave. BANG.
Anton is behind Pele's back once more.

ANTON

STILL HERE!

PELE

(throwing himself
at a ball with a
shout)

What do you want, halfwit?
Get lost!

(at the moment of
impact)

Wave!

Bang. Bang. Pele and Anton slip away from the wave-eater,
and are side by side again.

PELE

(angrily)

You're not an Athlete
anymore!

Pele swings his leg back for a strike, but two wave-eaters
collide in front of him. One of them shoots
perpendicularly out of the ellipse. Pele heads for the
second one and manages to strike it. Throwing his head
back away from the escaping wave-eater, Pele sees the
empty husk of another wave-eater flying away from Anton,
who is hanging in the air. Pele quickly moves towards
Anton, grabs his shoulder and they both freefall towards
Earth, just like Natasha and Anton did in training.

PELE

(very angrily)

What do you think you're
doing?

They fall towards Earth with a whistle, accelerating fast.

ANTON

(shouting over the
wind)

Covering your back.

Anton wears no helmet, the wind blows his hair around, and
sand and smoke fly into his eyes. Suddenly after an

awkward silence, Pele gives Anton a juicy clout. At first Anton flares up angrily, but then checks himself and smiles, realising that Pele has accepted him.

PELE

Cover Fan!

Pele returns to his position and Anton goes to help Fan

ANTON

YOU'LL HAVE TO SHOUT, I'M
NOT WEARING A HELMET AND
MAGLI'S AT HOME.

FAN

Magli?

ANTON

Magli.

FAN

You rat! I wanted to be
there to hear your Sputnik's
name!

Fan gives Anton another smack.

ANTON

(rubbing the back
of his head)

Two down, nine to go.

SCENE 212. EXT. OPEN SPACE

Having organised themselves into a huge net-like cordon, the Galactic Council ships shoot energy beams one after another at the dog-ship. The dog howls at each hit and squirms with the pain. Ten, fifteen beams to the back and the face. A yellow energy ball forms around the dog.

SCENE 213. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

It is turbulent inside the ship.

Cherno sighs deeply and holds his hand out in front of himself.

SCENE 214. INT. STADIUM. BRIDGE

Belo sees a giant teleport trail fly out of the yellow energy ball and speed towards the first ship of the cordon.

SCENE 215. INT. BRIDGE OF THE FIRST GALACTIC COUNCIL SHIP

THREEFINGER CAPTAIN

What the...

SLOW MOTION. The trail penetrates the ship. A dog materialises atom by atom in the air. Two huge, fierce eyes. Nose. The dog's face alone takes up the whole bridge of the ship. The faces of the Threefingers freeze in terror.

SCENE 216. EXT. OPEN SPACE. FIRST GALACTIC COUNCIL SHIP

The last ship in the cordon suddenly lurches, falls out of line and explodes. The teleport trail disappears inside the next ship.

EXPLOSION!

In the tight ring of military spaceships, the trail flies from one ship to the next and one by one the ships blow apart. The core of each explosion shoots, as if pulled by a magnet, to the dog and is sucked into it via its antennae-hairs.

There remain fewer and fewer yellow energy beams as they are extinguished one by one like a fan of fairy lights.

SCENE 217. INT. STADIUM. BRIDGE

The flashes of the explosions reflect in Belo and Natasha's faces. On a monitor we see the Galactic Council ships exploding

SCENE 218. EXT. OPEN SPACE. REMAINS OF THE GALACTIC COUNCIL CORDON

CHERNO'S SHIP destroys the whole cordon ship by ship. The dog-ship shakes off scorching fragments of ships, like a dog on Earth shakes after swimming.

SCENE 219. INT. STADIUM. BRIDGE

Natasha and Belo stand dumbfounded in front of the screen. The rest of the inhabitants of the ship are gathered behind them: cleaner bots, security droids. They all stare at the screen.

NATASHA

Do you have a backup plan?

BELO

(whispering)

I suppose we're one on one
now.

(in a commanding
voice)

Accelerate! Continue the
chase!

From their viewpoint, we see a clutch of wave-eaters, like the head of a giant firework, shoot out through the light-blue material. One by one they break away from this clutch at uneven intervals and fly towards the Earth.

NATASHA

(into her headset)

Ten... ten wave-eaters, guys.
A big spread.

SCENE 220. EXT. TIMES SQUARE IN THE SNOW

The bearded man and his wife and child gather their belongings into trunks. The man looks up and sees a wave-eater shooting at enormous speed past ice-covered skyscrapers, followed by the teleport trail of an Athlete. Stan materialises from the trail and gives the wave-eater a juicy kick. The resulting wave knocks icicles from the walls of the skyscrapers and they crash to the ground. After the kick the wave-eater continues with renewed energy over the horizon and is followed by Stan's trail.

SCENE 221. EXT. SKY OVER MOSCOW

A battle over Moscow. The ellipse, in which the Athletes are uncharging the wave-eaters, is collapsing.

A wave-eater heads sharply downwards. Amazonian YU gives chase. Kick! The wave-eater flies back. The shockwave clips the top of a skyscraper, pieces of glass and concrete break off.

SCENE 222. EXT. CITY STREETS

Pieces of glass and metal fall to the ground. People scatter.

SCENE 223. EXT. TOP OF A SKYSCRAPER

YU materialises on the top of a mangled skyscraper. She looks quickly down to see if any citizens have been injured by falling debris.

Sure that nobody has, YU looks up to the sky to see another wave-eater break out of the zone surrounded by the Athletes. YU dives down from the skyscraper.

AMAZONIAN YU

(jumping)

This one's mine!

BANG. YU's teleport trail sets off after the runaway wave-eater.

SCENE 224. B EXT. SKY OVER MOSCOW

Anton, not hearing what YU says, gets ready to head off after the wave-eater. Dive. Anton's trail becomes entangles with Fan's, the teleportation flow halts and they materialise in the air. Fan holds Anton with two hands and digs into his chest.

FAN

(breathing
heavily)

YU's got it! You're deaf
without a helmet! Stick
close!

Anton growls in vexation at himself.

The formation of the Athletes, which was previously an ellipse, has now fallen apart. The sky over Moscow now looks like a formless mess of explosions, fiery flashes, clumps of plasma and Athletes racing about.

SCENE 225. EXT. EGYPT. THE SUNKEN PYRAMIDS

The Bedouin tries to untie his boat from the ring attached to the top of the pyramid. He sees with horror a wave-eater heading straight for him. Realizing the knot won't give, the Bedouin fatefully closes his eyes. A loud bang and a shockwave reaches him as a strong gust of wind. Silence. The Bedouin opens his eyes to see Amazonian YU sitting in front of him on the top of the pyramid. She gives the bewildered Bedouin a friendly wink, takes a deep breath and dives off into the blue sky. The Bedouin closes his eyes and whispers "YUYUYUYUYUYUYU".

SCENE 226. EXT. SKY OVER MOSCOW

Amazonian YU fields a flying wave-eater and passes it on to Fan.

AMAZONIAN YU

I'm back!

Fan prepares to make a strike, but is suddenly blinded by the bright sun and she misses. The wave-eater heads

towards the Earth.

FAN

Missed!

Fan dives after the wave-eater. The wave-eater, sensing a group of people panicking and not hiding in their indecision, changes its course like a fighter plane and heads for them.

FAN

Protect the people!

Anton, standing behind Fan, flies downwards.

SCENE 227. EXT. CITY STREETS

A boy lies among the debris. One of his trouser legs is caught up in his bicycle chain. An older boy tries to help him, but in vain - the chain won't budge. A wave-eater bears down on them pitilessly from above. SLOW MOTION. The wave-eater is almost on them, but Fan appears in its way and swings back to kick it. Anton sweeps the startled boys up in his arms.

FAN

(at the moment of
impact)

Wave!

Anton and the boys disappear, avoiding the shockwave. END OF SLOW MOTION. Anton puts the boys down carefully on the ground.

ANTON

See, a little hug is nothing
to be afraid of!
That's just... for future
reference...

Anton disappears. The brothers watch the trail shoot off into the sky.

SCENE 228. B EXT. ROOF.

The captain of the Sirians drags the limp body of Stan to a tank of water on the roof of a house. With a mighty blow the captain makes a hole in the tank. A thick stream of water flows out onto Stan's head and he comes round, his vision clearing. His face steams like a red-hot horseshoe plunged into water.

STAN

(breathing
heavily)
I'm overheating!

SIRIAN CAPTAIN
If any more come, we won't
be able to save the city.

SCENE 229. EXT. OPEN SPACE

In open space Belo's ship spreads out all its petals and antennae and, due to its proximity to the sun, looks evermore like a yellow dandelion.

SCENE 220. INT. STADIUM. BRIDGE

Belo watches Chernov's ship with concern. Against the background of the sun, the dog's fur ripples and undulates, creating the illusion that the dog is swimming in water. Wave-eaters fly out of the light-blue material covering the ship from head to tail, and head towards Earth. Belo turns sharply to Natasha.

BELO
Give me your hand!

He places Natasha's palm on the control unit. Circles spread out around her hand, the unit makes noises, and Natasha's silhouette appears on the screen. The scanning process begins.

Natasha tries to say something, but Belo doesn't let her get a word in.

BELO
The ship will now listen to
you. If I don't come back,
save everyone you can from
Earth.

He takes a couple of steps away from her.

BELO
(turning around,
deadly serious)
You have the power to stop
him.

Natasha stares intently at his hard expression. With his surly, wrinkled brow, he is far from the Belo she is used to - the Belo with the laughing eyes. Suddenly, his expression unchanged, he winks at Natasha.

In no condition to smile, Natasha turns uneasily to the unit. Belo walks quickly to the transport capsule. He has hardly put a foot through the door of the capsule, when Natasha throws herself at him

NATASHA

No one can leave the ship
unaccompanied!

She puts her arms around him and their teleport trail heads off for Chernov's ship.

SCENE 231. EXT. CITY STREETS

A wave-eater cuts right through a house, hits the remains of a car and, burning a palm trunk to ashes, bounces off the ground and speeds back into the sky. Explosion. Pele alters the wave-eater's trajectory, sending it straight upwards. The corner of a house slowly collapses and slowly falls to the ground.

The huge corner of the house falls to the ground. The frightened faces of dozens of people peer out from the settling column of dust. The bad-tempered woman from the labour exchange raises her eyes and sees Vasily clambering up the fallen corner of the house through the settling dust and screaming:

VASILY

Listen to me! There's no
chance of survival here on
the surface! At the end of
the street there's an
entrance to the metro! We
can hide underground!
Everyone follow me!

VASILY

(to Anton's
mother)

Don't leave my side.

Taking Anton's mother by the hand, Vasily leads the crowd away. Anton's mother holds Magli to her like a babe-in-arms.

SCENE 232. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Natasha and Belo appear right in front of Chernov.

NATASHA

(looking
distastefully at

Cherno)
So that's what a monster
looks like.

BELO
(whispering)
A monster about to meet his
end.

NATASHA
(indicating with
her eyes the gland
of wave-eaters)
It's going to explode.

BELO
Please, give yourself time
to teleport. The dandelion
needs a captain.

He gives her a badge bearing the Spaceball emblem.

Cherno paces about, his hands folded behind his back.

CHERNO
(to Belo)
Well well, haven't you aged
terribly?

Belo runs his hands along his body as if unfastening an
invisible zip. Belo's usual guise is apparently a
bodysuit, under which has been hidden a creature of the
same race as Cherno, only Belo's body is more like a
fresh, taut, white marshmallow.

CHERNO
That's better. Now I
recognize you.

Behind Belo and Natasha, camouflaged chameleon-like
against the wall, stands VALAYA, unnoticed by anyone. Only
her two glowing eyes give her away.

BELO
You called.

CHERNO
You are the only one who
could truly appreciate the
creations I will use to
replace this universe's
pathetic lifeforms. But I
wonder what YOU have created

in all this time. Don't tell me these twenty years have been wasted stewing on hatred for me.

BELO

(steadfast)

If you consider saving the sacred universe from a madman who wants to destroy it to be a waste of time, then I'm sorry to disappoint you.

Cherno is taken aback.

CHERNO

I have waited twenty years for this conversation. I honestly thought we would chat for longer. But I forgot how boring your old-time sentimentalities are.

Cherno holds out a hand and part of his cloak tears off and flies at Belo. Belo, like a Wild West shooter, throws a freezing capsule with lightning speed. The cloak folds up awkwardly and is covered in ice. Natasha unexpectedly materialises in the air next to Cherno, and swipes with her foot, but misses, because Valaya appears out of nowhere and hinders her. Valaya holds in her hand the same deadly weapon she almost killed Anton with. The ice-covered black cloak still manages to throw itself at Belo's legs and tries to curl around him, like an anaconda around its prey.

Cherno, avoiding a clash with Natasha, hides in the labyrinth of the ship's interwoven corridors of light-blue material.

Natasha gives chase.

SCENE 233. EXT. BY THE METRO ENTRANCE

Vasily kicks down the boards blocking the entrance to the metro station. He quickly pulls the rubble aside and leads the people down under the ground. Starting from the explosions, Anton's mother follows him closely, carefully keeping Magli covered.

SCENE 234. EXT. CITY STREETS

Fan materialises on an empty street. Her legs fail her and she looks up to the sky, greedily gasping for air. Anton

appears alongside Fan.

FAN
We... need... there...

Anton takes Fan by the hand and tries to hold her to him to calm her.

FAN
(tearing herself
away)
I'm ok. Let me go.

Fan weakens, already unable to resist, and Anton takes her in his arms.

ANTON
Don't worry, I'll stand in
for you.

FAN
(mumbling)
I just need to... lie down...
for a bit...

Anton, looking around, runs towards a group of people. He has the exhausted Fan in his arms. Among the people he sees a man in uniform - the police chief. Anton carefully hands Fan over to him. The police chief can't believe he has a real Athlete in his arms.

ANTON
Please, look after her. She
needs a bit of rest. And
water.

The people crowd around the police chief and watch Anton disappear into the sky.

SCENE 235. EXT. SKY ABOVE THE CITY

Another cacophony of cries, shrieks, and strikes against wave-eaters. Bo passes to Yu. She has barely disappeared, when Stan appears alongside her with another wave-eater. A dazed Ho appears out of the smoke. He has only just managed to reach another sphere to knock the last charge out of it.

Bang! Bang!

Pele attacks. Reflected in the visor of his helmet we see a wave-eater approaching fast and gaining on another. Their trajectories come together, but instead of bouncing

off one another, the missiles, like magnets of opposite polarity, are drawn together and fly on in tandem. Pele prepares to cut them off, but at this moment another sphere flies at him out of the smoke following an explosion, and he is forced to abandon them.

PELE

A duo! Fan, Anton, they're yours!

Pele disappears in clouds of smoke.

SCENE 236. EXT. CITY STREETS

Fan raises her head weakly. Her crazed eyes try to seek out Anton in the sky.

FAN

Anton can't hear without his helmet!

SCENE 237. EXT. SKY OVER THE CITY

A Sirian, kicking through a wave-eater, notices out of the corner of his eye the double missile heading straight for the city.

SIRIAN

A DOUBLE! LOOK OUT!

The Sirian disappears in the flames of the explosion.

SCENE 238. EXT. CITY STREETS

Fan sits up quickly.

FAN

ANTON!

She points into the sky. The whole crowd look to where she is pointing and see a bright plasma dot careering towards Earth. Anton materialises in front of it.

SCENE 239. EXT. SKY OVER THE CITY

Anton moves into position. From his angle the two wave-eaters appear as one. Not suspecting anything, Anton makes a crushing blow on the first wave-eater. An outburst of energy. Anton returns to his place of teleportation. And at this moment the SECOND WAVE-EATER RIPS RIGHT INTO HIS CHEST.

SCENE 240. EXT. CITY STREETS

The crowd around Fan gasps.

SCENE 241. INT. METRO STATION

Anton's Sputnik, Magli, shudders and jumps out of Anton's mother's arms and heads for the exit. Anton's mother and Vasily watch it go in alarm.

SCENE 242. EXT. SKY OVER THE CITY

Anton instantly morphs into a fiery cloud. Slowly, like a burning firebrand, he falls.

SCENE 243. EXT. CITY STREETS

Catching sight of the helplessly fading smoke trail in the sky, the women in the crowd start crying.

SCENE 244. EXT. CITY STREETS. YARD

Anton materialises in the middle of a yard. His clothes are almost completely burnt away. The husk of an uncharged wave-eater falls at his feet. To his horror he finds the veins in his arm are flowing with energy just like those of Chernov's dog-ship. Anton gets to his feet. The burnt remains of his clothes fall from him. An exclamation of astonishment behind him. He turns around and only now realises he's standing absolutely naked in the middle of the yard, across which people are running for cover. Covering his genitals, Anton heads for the shadow of a backstreet. Out of a mixed sense of shame and shock he raises his knees unusually high as he runs. In the half-light of the backstreet the light reflexes of his energy-full veins become visible. He looks at himself in horror. Lightning runs through his temporal veins and disappears, just like after the shockwave which clipped him in the last game.

Suddenly two ropes wrap themselves round him from behind and interlock over his solar plexus. Anton shouts with surprise. A hard object, like an antenna, hits his ear. Anton grabs it with his hand, brings it up to his eyes and recognises the bandaged tentacle of his own Sputnik.

ANTON

MAGLI!

The happy face of his Sputnik appears from behind his back, but at this moment the energy begins to flow from Anton's body into his Sputnik along its tentacles and the tentacles begin to glow the same colour as Anton's veins. Suddenly the bandages on Magli's paw flare up and turn to

ash. The energy-charged tentacle begins to regenerate incredibly fast. The wounds heal from the inside and the protective layer also heals instantly. In less than a second the tentacle returns to its former look.

MAGLI
(babbling
joyously)
Magli. Magli. Magli.

The Sputnik embraces Anton with its recuperated limb, which interlocks with the other two over Anton's solar plexus. Thin threads stretch out from inside the tentacles and interweave into variously textured materials, enrobing Anton in his battle dress.

Along with his helmet, the voices of the Athletes are returned to Anton. Cries, commands, exclamations.

ANTON
(excited)
Guys, I... I...

Anton tries with gestures to express the sense of the phrases he cannot formulate, pointing now at himself, now at the husk of the wave-eater, now at the explosions in the sky.

ANTON
I...

Anton takes a deep breath in, then out.

ANTON
(calm now)
I've got my helmet back.

Raising his head, Anton sees the battle has almost descended on the city. Explosions destroy buildings. Several streets are engulfed in flames. And above this all Anton sees a chain of new wave-eaters heading towards Earth.

ANTON
(Magli)
What do you say we try that again?

A red light appears on the Sputnik's screen: Magli switches to battle mode. Anton's trail shoots off into the sky.

SCENE 245. EXT. SKY OVER THE CITY

Anton smacks a wave-eater.

ANTON

(at the moment)

Waaave!

A very powerful explosion. The shrivelled skin of a wave-eater is thrown somersaulting away from the explosion. Anton disappears and returns to where he teleported from. He notices with horror that part of the shockwave is pulled back towards him in lightning-like strands, as if by a magnet, and penetrates his chest. An excited exclamation from Magli. Anton panics and pats his body as if trying to put out an invisible flame.

Anton looks around and sees plasma spots like glowing coals here and there over the whole surface of his costume.

ANTON

A-A-A-A-A-A... WHAT'S THAT?

PELE

Anton, are you ok?

ANTON

I don't know! Look!

Anton holds out his fists to meet an incoming wave-eater.

Unlike all the previous times, the body of the wave-eater instantly collapses, throwing all five explosions vertically upwards simultaneously, like Saturn's rings, with Anton in the centre. The ring of the fifth explosion is a moment later pulled into Anton's chest.

Observing this spectacle, the freaked-out Pele races in freefall through the clouds and the smoke from explosions.

PELE

Bloody hell! How do you do that?

ANTON

No idea.

Anton turns in the direction the wave-eaters are coming from.

ANTON

I'll keep the battle up in the sky... or die trying!

Anton races off to meet the next wave-eater.

SCENE 246. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Natasha follows Chernov through the maze of light-blue material corridors of the dog-ship. She finds herself in a dead-end, goes back to the main corridor and here she runs across a cloud of violet dust - exactly the same as that which Valaya used to neutralise Anton. The cloud envelopes Natasha and the vapours, like snakes, creep into her mouth.

In a second Natasha loses control and freezes, paralysed. Valaya ditches her chameleon-like camouflage against the light-blue material and becomes herself. She approaches the motionless Natasha.

VALAYA

(whispering)

It wouldn't have worked out
between you and him.

VALAYA plunges Natasha into the light-blue material, as if into jelly, and leaves, looking very pleased with herself.

Natasha's Sputnik's screen is covered in a wave of red-green lights.

SCENE 247. EXT. UPPER LAYERS OF THE ATMOSPHERE

A teleport trail suddenly goes wonky and a dumbfounded Anton falls out of it. On Magli's screen appears a pattern of signals the same as Natasha's Sputnik sent. Anton's eyes open wide.

ANTON

Natasha!

Anton hangs between the Earth and the sky. The battle between the Athletes and the wave-eaters unfolds under his feet. Above his head is a thin, shining dotted line of new wave-eaters on their way to Earth. Anton dives to meet them. Explosion! The first clash is almost in the stratosphere.

SCENE 248. EXT. CITY STREETS

Yu supports Bo's listless head on her shoulder. Blood runs down Bo's face.

AMAZONIAN YU

(looking at Anton)

Let's turn and burn! Looks
like we have a bit more
time.

Yu lingers a bit, then disappears, followed by the injured Bo.

SCENE 249. EXT. OPEN SPACE

Anton materialises in open space. He flounders in open space.

ANTON
(looking at the
fractured moon)
And she said I couldn't fly
there.

Seeing his own reflection on the inside of his helmet, he notices his veins have stopped glowing: the energy has left them. An image of a thermometer appears on the internal display and flashes a warning. The indicator falls sharply into the minus zone and remains blue.

Anton is worried, looks up, sees a wave-eater flying at him and punches it with his fists. Five explosions simultaneously fly vertically upwards, like Saturn's rings, and part of the shockwave returns and penetrates Anton's chest. His tendons glow once more. The empty wave-eater skin floats in open space.

ANTON
(looking into the
distance at the
next wave-eater)
Two days ago I was worrying
I had nothing to eat, and
now I'm worrying I don't
have enough energy to travel
through open space! Funny
how priorities change.

He heads off towards the next fiery point. FLASH - the shockwave spreads out in vertical rings.

SCENE 250. EXT. OPEN SPACE

The dog-ship flies towards the sun. Its pure white fur, which before merely shone from the sun's energy, now glows red.

SCENE 251. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

A vicious fight on Chernov's ship. Belo fights alone

against Chernob, his cloak and Valaya. Maintaining an all-around defence, Belo's white marshmallowy body manages to react to Valaya's attacks, kicking masterfully and ducking under the cloak's close-range blows, controlled by Chernob.

All this time Belo moves closer to Natasha, who limply tries to break out of her confinement: she is still under the influence of the purple dust.

Belo jumps up high, turns a somersault in the air and, accelerating, fires a long burst of freeze-bombs. The missiles fly past Chernob and hit the gland, which is overfilled with wave-eaters. Chernob and Valaya look around in horror. The missiles burst against the base of the gland. The freezing agent evaporates with a hiss, but where the agent hits it, the gland turns darker and darker as it cools.

Chernob panics and cuts off the burst of freeze-bombs with his cloak. Belo doubles the frequency and power of the attack.

Chernob's cloak, spread out as a protective shield, becomes covered on the inside by a crust of ice.

Regaining her senses, Valaya lunges sharply, aiming her weapon at Belo's temple. Belo leans away, not ceasing his bursts of freeze-bombs. Uppercut. Valaya flies through the air way off to the side.

This is it, the critical point in the fight. Another second and the icy crust completely covers the cloak - Chernob's only weapon. Chernob slowly begins to retreat, all the time under fire from the ice-bombs. Suddenly Belo, like a boy on a sports court in a yard, stands up on tiptoe and lobs a freeze-bomb over the top of the ice-covered cloak. Chernob barely glances up and the capsule smashes against his forehead. His face, neck and shoulders are covered with a crust of ice and, without producing a single sound, Chernob freezes in that position, his head raised. The cloak, losing its master, falls and smashes to pieces, like fallen icicles. Belo boldly takes another couple of shots at the frozen figure of Chernob, turning him into a block of ice. Not hesitating for a second, Belo turns around and...

... sees Natasha in front of him.

PAF!

A cloud of purple dust explodes around Belo and his body goes limp. Natasha's face covers in tarry spots and quickly changes into Valaya's self-satisfied, smiling mug.

Behind her Natasha looks miserable and stupefied, still under the influence of the dust.

SCENE 252. INT. METRO TUNNEL

People settle themselves as best they can. Mothers calm their children. Vasily and Anton's mother help the injured. Plaster dust falls down on them from above. The sound of explosions comes from the surface.

The police chief makes his way through people to a group of wounded, carrying Fan in his arms. Fan comes around and the first thing she sees is the police chief's fantastic moustache.

FAN
(in a weak voice)
Your moustache is...

POLICE CHIEF
(worried)
What's wrong with it?

FAN
(smiling)
... beautiful.

The police chief smiles at the girl.

Vasily sees the police chief carry Fan past him. This alarms him: her Athlete's suit is the only thing distinguishing her from the exhausted thirteen-year-old girl falling asleep in the police chief's arms like a babe.

VASILY
(confused)
We are protected by
children.

Vasily stands up abruptly.

VASILY
(either to
himself, or to
Anton's mother)
We must fight!

Vasily heads for the exit, but after a few steps turns back to Anton's mother and looks at her decisively. He returns to her confidently, manfully and at the same time gently, and hugs her.

VASILY

Fight for those we love.

Vasily kisses Anton's mother, as if for the last time, reverently leaning in to her fragile figure, like in old films about love.

Vasily adopts a serious look and leaves without a further word to fight the wave-eaters.

SCENE 253. EXT. OPEN SPACE

Each time Anton strikes a wave-eater, with his fists, feet or even his back, the wave-eater uncharges and gives part of its energy to Anton.

Anton's teleport trail flies from one boiling sphere to another. Ahead of him the tiny dot of the red-hot dog-ship can be seen against the background of the sun's disc. Behind it stretches the hellish dotted trail of deadly missiles.

SCENE 254. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Predatory drills cleave ice. Chernov's powerful leg is freed and its icy shackles fly in all directions. Valaya hides the weapon with which she has just freed her father. Chernov gently extends a hand towards the shards of his frozen cloak.

Obedying their master's gesture, the shards individually, freed of their icy shell, crawl like black worms towards their creator's hand, wriggling and twisting, like a tangle of snakes, into a unified being. Suddenly Chernov straightens up sharply, clenching his fist, transforming his Black Cloak into a long whip, the other end of which wraps quickly around Belo's neck, making him gasp for air.

CHERNO

This is how I have lived
these past twenty years,
unable to breathe freely.

BANG! The appearance of Anton in the confined space is accompanied by a gust of wind. Valaya gasps and Chernov shifts his gaze in amazement. Quickly gathering his wits, Anton teleports behind Valaya's back. Not giving her time to react, he grasps her by the neck and sharply throttles her. Valaya reveals her weapon. With his free hand Anton grabs her wrist and brings the rapaciously spinning drills up to her face. Valaya croaks.

ANTON

Let him go.

The black whip instantly frees Belo's neck. The cloak obediently returns and wraps itself around its master's arm. Carefully, almost creeping, Chernob approaches Anton.

CHERNO

You want to kill her?

Anton nods affirmatively.

Chernob shifts his look to Valaya.

CHERNO

(looking Valaya
over)

She is hardly a perfect
specimen. I suppose we might
as well.

Chernob's cloak takes on the form of an eastern yataghan and in a single motion spears Valaya right through. Not expecting such a backstabbing gesture, Anton sees the tip, pierced right through Valaya's body, break off against the outer layer of his own battle armour, but the force of the blow is so great that he is thrown back to the opposite wall of the ship.

Barely has Anton's back sunk into the jelly-like light-blue material and touched the ship's inner surface, when the ship's venous system sucks itself to Anton with a million very thin bolts of lightning. Anton begins the first phase of teleportation and his body, protruding from the light-blue material, begins to dissolve into minuscule particles, but the lightning from the ship's venous system grabs them in flight and momentarily fetches them back. Anton is motionless and loses the capacity to teleport. The energy begins to flow out of his body.

CHERNO

(to Anton)

All of your powers were
crafted by my hand! And I
will take them back!

Suddenly, like metal scratching on glass, an exclamation:

VALAYA

Behind you!

Chernob turns around. A ball of freezing agent is released with great force from Belo's unclenched fist. The cloak speeds immediately towards Belo, defending its master.

SLOW MOTION. Belo, smiling, looks into Anton's eyes.

BELO

This is your chance.

The cloak breaks up into a dozen thin strips with sharpened ends which dig into Belo's soft flesh.

VALAYA

(to the
dumbfounded Anton,
shouting)

The ship is your flesh and
blood! Talk to it!

The impaled Belo slumps to the floor. The strips of the cloak, like a flock of birds of prey, turn around in the air and head in Anton's direction. Anton closes his eyes.

SCENE 255. INT. EMPTY SPACE. BLACK ROOM

Anton opens his eyes and sees in the distance the gigantic dog charging towards him with its hackles up. Anton turns around and runs. Ahead he sees a door, light streaming through it. Anton stops several dozen metres from the door. He thinks. The dog gains on him quickly. The floor trembles. Anton turns around and takes several unhurried steps towards the dog.

The dog pulls up sharply, its four paws digging into the ground. The huge dog's inertia makes it skid several dozen metres.

ANTON

(shouting)

Growling, biting, killing -
is that your entire life
credo?

The dog looks carefully at Anton. Then takes a step forward.

ANTON

I used to think that was the
only way too.

A few steps remain between Anton and the dog.

Pause.

The dog lowers its face and begins to growl at Anton, blowing knockdown-powerful streams of air at him.

Despite his fear, and standing up to the blasts of wind, Anton takes a step towards its monstrous gaping jaws and holds out a hand. In surprise the dog ceases to bare its teeth. It gently lowers its face.

Anton's hand lowers towards the rough hair on the monster's snout and the dog's pupils suddenly widen. Space twists into a vortex once more, as it did with Magli, and sucks in Anton and the ship. From the neck of the vortex the dog's memories gush out, every one of them associated with pain, oppression and fear.

SCENE 256. INT. WRECKAGE OF CHERNO'S LABORATORY. MIND PALACE

POV dog's embryo - Chernov makes an injection.

Chernov's angry cry when he chains the dog to the floor with heavy restraints.

SCENE 257. EXT. CITY STREETS. MIND PALACE

Security droids shoot at the dog when it breaks out onto the city streets.

SCENE 258. EXT. OPEN SPACE. MIND PALACE

Power beams from the Galactic Council ships when they try to fix the dog.

SCENE 259. INT. EMPTY SPACE. MIND PALACE

The vortex freezes together with the last memories, then quickly unwinds.

SCENE 260. INT. WHITE EMPTY SPACE

Anton stands in the middle of a similarly endless, but now white space. The tiny dog-ship fits in his hand. Anton looks at it trembling, scared of frightening it, and says quietly:

ANTON

You're still so SMALL!

Anton strokes it carefully with his other hand, the puppy raises its head towards Anton's hand, then curls up and quietly snuffles contentedly.

The space fills with a blinding white light until everything merges together.

SCENE 261. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Inside the ship Anton still stands with his eyes closed, as if time has stopped. Suddenly the ship shudders so wildly a wave ripples along the light-blue material.

Anton opens his eyes and sees rapacious strips of Chernov's cloak flying towards him. The bolts of lightning pinning Anton to the ship's veins are suddenly extinguished, and a second before the collision with the cloak Anton teleports outside the ship. Chernov's cloak penetrates the wall of the light-blue material. The enraged Chernov doesn't notice the light-blue material carefully enshrouding the heavily wounded Valaya in a light-blue cocoon.

SCENE 262. EXT. OPEN SPACE

Two figures - Anton and the dog - fly side by side against the background of the sun's disc. For a few seconds Anton does not understand what to do. But the enormous animal, arching its back agilely, suddenly turns to him and puts its snout frighteningly close. The dog's inquisitive eye stares at Anton and sees its own reflection as if mirrored in the facets of the lens.

ANTON

(smiling)

Hey there, kid.

Anton's reflection suddenly begins to sway, a wave runs over it, and the giant eyelid brushes an unexpected tear away into open space.

ANTON

(winking either to
his own
reflection, or to
the dog)

Mistakes can be fixed. And
wounds can be healed.

SCENE 263. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Chernov, catching sight of Anton in the ocular monitors, gives a hand-signal order to the light-blue material on the back of the dog's head.

СЦЕНА. 264. EXT. OPEN SPACE

The light-blue material squeezes the back of Kid's neck with full force. Instead of howling with pain and desperation, Kid knits its brow.

SCENE 265. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Cherno clenches his fingers even harder.

SCENE 266. EXT. OPEN SPACE

The material digs deeper into Kid's neck. The dog scowls harder.

ANTON

(looking his new
friend in the eye)

Natasha...

SCENE 267. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

The walls of the light-blue material hold Natasha like a safety belt.

SCENE 268. EXT. OPEN SPACE

The puppy, "takes a deep breath" and begins to spin faster and faster along its roll axis.

SCENE 269. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Cherno's cloak, sensing something is wrong, transforms into thin straps and fixes Cherno to the floor and ceiling. Cherno, spinning inside the ship, which is gaining momentum, now looks like a black widow spider in its web.

SCENE 270. EXT. OPEN SPACE

Zip, Zip, Zip - Kid gains momentum.

SCENE 271. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Unable to stand the strain, the strands of Cherno's web begin to snap one by one.

Cherno, like a stone falling into a centrifuge, hits the walls, trying helplessly to grab hold of something before the centrifugal force slams him against the light-blue material ceiling.

Kid gains momentum and, subordinate to the force, Cherno's body begins to slowly be sucked through the wall of the ship into open space.

SCENE 272. EXT. OPEN SPACE. NEAR THE SUN.

Cherno shoots like a bullet towards the sun. A second later he is followed with a squelch by the gland, full to

the brim with wave-eaters. Not waiting for Kid to stop, Anton teleports back inside.

CUEHA. 273. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

He runs to Natasha and embraces her.

ANTON

That's the end of Chernobyl.

Natasha raises her eyes and through the blue ceiling sees the figure of the disappearing Chernobyl flare up against the background of the sun's disc.

At the same time the gland full of wave-eaters begins to swell up dangerously.

NATASHA

We have to get out of here.
This whole place is going to
blow.

ANTON

(smiling slyly)
Don't worry, I remember what
you taught me: teleport just
before the explosion.
(to the dog-ship)
Kid?

SCENE 274. EXT. OPEN SPACE

Kid jumps up like a dog called for a walk. It looks round at the implacably swelling gland.

SCENE 275. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

A monstrous explosion in open space lights up the faces of Anton and Natasha for a second. Then Kid collects them all in its teleport trail and the shockwave drives unimpeded through the place where Kid and its new friends were but a moment ago. For this reason nobody notices the wounded Valaya being hurled away in a LIGHT-BLUE COCOON at the speed of the explosion into the vast emptiness of space.

SCENE 276. EXT. CITY STREETS NEAR THE METRO

By the exit from the metro Vasily waves a piece of rusty pipe around like a sword. He has a few seconds left before he dies - a wave-eater is heading straight for him!

VASILY

You want a piece of me,

scumbags? Get in line!

Vasily slowly swings his arm back in readiness for the strike, but he sees, as if by command, the wave-eater freeze. One, two, and then a few seconds later, through the clouds of dissipating smoke, hundreds of wave-eaters have lost their master and freeze in the sky before Vasily.

Vasily hears a surprised wail from behind him, turns around and sees a frightened family preparing to go down and hide in the shelter.

SCENE 277. EXT. SKY OVER THE CITY

In the peaceful sky above the city Natasha delivers a fiery speech.

NATASHA

My fellow human beings, we are safe. Belo has given his life for us, and for our planet. The wave-eaters have been neutralized and their energy reserves will be enough to restore life on Earth and rehabilitate the environment. It is time to stop merely surviving, and begin living again.

SCENE 278. EXT. NEAR THE MOON

All the Athletes are on a Galactic Council ship restoring the moon.

They hold up large and small fragments of the planet using yellow beams and, at the necessary moment, Kid flies in and spits out a dose of plasma.

SCENE 278A. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Anton is on the control bridge.

SCENE 278B. EXT. NEAR THE MOON

The pup, like a fire-breathing dragon, shoots out a giant blob of plasma into the very centre of the planet. Fragments of the moon join together as if welded.

SCENE 278C. INT. CHERNO'S SHIP

Anton holds in his hand the dog-eared cover of a thirty-

year-old children's magazine.

Anton compares it with what he sees on the monitors.

ANTON

It looks quite similar.

CUEHA. 279. EXT. CITY STREETS

During Natasha's monologue the people, even the lady from the labour exchange, rake through the rubble and listen to her at the same time. The labour exchange lady addresses a bystander who gawks at the sky like people did before when they watched Spaceball:

LABOUR EXCHANGE LADY

We should be working to
build our planet back up,
not staring at the sky!

SCENE 280. INT. STADIUM. RECREATION ROOM.

At the end of Natasha's address to the people of Earth, Anton materialises alongside Pele. Fan runs out.

FAN

(to Anton)

There are some people here
to see you.

NATASHA

(looking around at
Fan)

Stop that racket. I'm trying
to talk to people.

Vasily appears from behind Fan's back and approaches Anton very formally. Anton rolls his eyes and holds his hands out.

ANTON

Are you here to arrest me?

VASILY

(a little
embarrassed)

No, no. The Police Authority
is dropping all charges
against you. We figured your
whole saving-the-planet
thing kind of makes up for
stealing some medicine for
your beautiful mother.

ANTON
Beautiful? My mum?

VASILY
Yeah, I just... well, you
don't have to call me Dad,
but... you know...

Vasily clears his throat. Anton's happy mother takes him
under the arm.

NATASHA
Hey, congratulations!

FAN
Cool!

ANTON
Ah, so you... now...

Confused, he draws indistinct circles and rings in the air
and his mother nods affirmatively.

ANTON
Ok, great! While we're all
getting acquainted, these
are my friends! Pele, Fan,
Magli, and where's Kid?

The dog-ship flies in and licks Anton.

ANTON
(shaking off the
slobber)
And this is Kid.

His gaze rests on Natasha and Anton blushes.

ANTON
And this girl... is... a girl.

FAN
A girl who loves you.

Natasha looks attentively at Anton, his eyes glint.
Anton opens his mouth and suddenly disappears, then
reappears again in the same place and a magazine with a
picture of the moon on its cover falls from his hands.

FAN
Uncontrolled teleport!

TITLES

As the titles roll, 78 attempts by an embarrassed Anton to declare his love.

THE END.