

HUMAN NATURE

by

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HUMAN NATURE E01

FADE IN

NEAR FUTURE

EXT. COLORADO SPRINGS - DOWNTOWN - DAY

Several vehicles circle the parking lot of a black church as they search for any available spot.

Down the street a rebel flag adorns the back of a pickup truck, parked just out of view.

CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN looms in the distance.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK

A WOMAN sits between TWO MEN; all are in their twenties.

The DRIVER raises up a beer can.

The woman reaches down and opens a bag from *Gwen the Florist* that sits in the floorboard.

A burner phone and several cans of spray paint are inside.

She pulls out several cans and impatiently elbows the driver.

WOMAN

C'mon.

DRIVER

Okay, okay.

He guzzles the rest of his beer, tosses the can, and pulls up closer to the church.

They all scan the parking lot.

The man by the passenger door points at some movement near one of the cars.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Yeah, I see 'em.

They watch as a smartly dressed black couple enters the church along with their three small children.

WOMAN

Look at those uppity *African-Americans*. Don't they all look so pretty in their Easter best.

The driver positions the truck on the shoulder of the road.

There are no people left in the parking lot.

GOSPEL MUSIC rings out from inside.

MALE PASSENGER

Coast is clear. No cameras.

DRIVER

All right - Go!

EXT. BLACK CHURCH

The two passengers jump out of the truck with the spray paint, and sprint to the parking lot.

The woman paints "burn in hell" on one of the cars.

WOMAN

Woo hoo!

MALE PASSENGER

Shut up, woman.

She gives him the finger.

They paint the swastika symbol on several other cars, then race back to the --

INT. TRUCK

They toss their empty spray paint cans on the floorboard as they clamor inside.

The driver slowly pulls away from the parking lot. The male passenger wrestles with the bag...

DRIVER

Hurry up.

...and pulls out a burner phone.

He taps a few numbers.

Silence.

All three turn to look at the church... when suddenly:
the building EXPLODES.

The woman in the middle uses her phone to record the
destruction.

Two more explosions decimate the church.

The driver smiles.

DRIVER (CONT'D)
You gettin' all this?

WOMAN
Hell yeah.

She aims her phone through the back window and continues to
film as the fire destroys the church.

The male passenger nervously glances around the empty street.

MALE PASSENGER
Come on, man - let's go!

The driver shoves the trunk into gear and peels out.

INT/EXT. FORD EXPLORER, DOWNTOWN - DAWN

DAVID RYDER, 45, is in the driver's seat. In decent shape
from occasional visits to the gym, his face tries to hide
the wear and tear of too many years of worry.

David has one hand on the wheel of his Ford Explorer as it
creeps along with the traffic.

The windows are rolled up and the radio plays music softly
in the background.

MARIA PEREZ, 30s, sits in the passenger seat and strains to
see up ahead as DOT workers put up a new traffic signal.

MARIA
Didn't they just change those?

DAVID
Yes they did - last year. Ten to
one they have the new recognition
cameras built in.

MARIA
I hate those things.

DAVID

Why? It helps them catch all the criminals. Even if they disguise their face.

MARIA

And keep tabs on the rest of us.

David lets his foot off the brake.

He inches closer to the vehicle in front of him.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Thanks for the lift, by the way - my car should be ready tomorrow. Of course, they said the same thing yesterday.

DAVID

No problem. You really should get a new mechanic, you know.

Maria looks over at him and grins mischievously.

MARIA

It's got to be driving you crazy. I mean, it's been what, a week now?

DAVID

Five days to be exact.

MARIA

You must be slipping. You broke that Russian code in 24 hours.

David brings the car to a stop as several BOYS ON BIKES appear on the sidewalk up ahead.

David eyes them suspiciously.

A news report comes on about the church bombing.

Maria turns up the radio.

RADIO REPORTER

- and police are asking if anyone has any info about the bombing to call - you will remain anonymous.

She shakes her head.

MARIA

That was terrible - so many people killed. And for what?

DAVID
Yeah, I saw that on the news. It
makes you wonder about people.

Maria changes the channel.

RADIO REPORTER
Another gay couple has been found
stabbed to death in Europe, this
time in Hamburg -

She turns off the radio.

MARIA
That's the fourth one this month.

David looks out the window at the boys on bikes.

They leave the sidewalk, and dart out into the traffic on
their bikes, in front of David.

He immediately grips the wheel with both hands.

David gestures towards them.

DAVID
(angrily)
Look at those stupid kids.

MARIA
I see 'em. So?

The kids fan out, and head in David's direction.

DAVID
Can you believe this?

He honks the horn - several times.

She looks at him, perplexed.

MARIA
Relax, will you. They're just
playing. And the traffic's not
moving, in case you hadn't noticed.

DAVID
They need to be up on the sidewalk;
they could cause an accident.

One of them cuts in front of the Explorer.

He pops a wheelie on his way past.

David rolls down the window, and yells.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You goddamn kids - stay off the
road!

The boy on the bike ignores David, but the outburst startles Maria.

MARIA
(raises her voice)
What the hell - what is your
problem?!

DAVID
They can get someone killed, doing
that kind of crap.

David looks over at the kids as they hop back on the sidewalk and scamper off, totally unaware of his anger.

His face is flushed.

MARIA
Jesus, David. Calm down.

David takes a deep breath.

DAVID
Sorry.

MARIA
You've got to let that go. I mean,
after all these years... you can't
carry it around forever.

INT. CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN COMPLEX - DAVID'S OFFICE - MORNING

David and Maria share a large office at NORAD.

He sits at his desk and works on a laptop.

A notepad nearby is filled with scores of different symbols.

Several books on Mandarin and Cantonese dialect are open on the desk.

David's Air Force jacket hangs on the wall. His shelves are filled with books on other languages.

Maria's desk on the opposite side is surrounded by multiple monitors, as well as a large printer.

The monitors show various RADIO TELESCOPES around the world.

There is a table between them that holds several stacks of printouts.

The adjacent wall contains numerous photos taken in space.

Maria sets down two more printouts on the corner of the table; each shows unusually large spikes.

She looks at David.

MARIA

These are the new ones from Spain.
I'd say quite a bit of chatter for
such a small satellite.

David does not break his concentration.

He annotates the letter E next to a symbol on his notepad.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Wonder who our inscrutable friends
are communicating with?

David gets up and approaches the table.

DAVID

Probably just one of their probes.

MARIA

Normally that's what I would say
too, but look at this.

She shows him the large spikes.

MARIA (CONT'D)

The data transmission speed is
higher than anything we've ever
recorded. Much higher.

COMMANDER JENNINGS, 50s, imposing, enters.

He stands near the table.

COMMANDER JENNINGS

What have you got for me?

DAVID

I've looked at the most recent
transmissions. It's the toughest
code I've ever encountered.

MARIA

We think it's using AI to keep
sending signals from Mars out into
deep space, until it learns how to
make contact -

COMMANDER JENNINGS

How the hell did they get it up
there without our knowing... and
who are they communicating with?

MARIA

Why the sudden urgency?

Jennings turns towards her.

COMMANDER JENNINGS

We're seeing unusual military
maneuvers over in China. The boys
in Washington don't believe in
coincidence, and neither do I.

MARIA

It's only one satellite. Not like
we don't have any up there.

COMMANDER JENNINGS

Maybe, but what ELSE do they have
up there that we don't know about?

He goes to the door.

COMMANDER JENNINGS (CONT'D)

We can't get a damn thing out of
our sources in China. I need
answers, the sooner the better.

Jennings leaves.

Maria turns to David.

MARIA

(hopeful)

Think they've actually made
contact?

He shakes his head.

DAVID

I think you're jumping the gun -
like always.

MARIA

Well, if China *did* make contact
with intelligent life -

She smacks him in the chest with a printout.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Think about how *that* would affect
the balance of power.

EXT. SUPERMAX PRISON - DAY

The SUPERMAX PRISON near Colorado Springs sits on roughly
forty acres, and is designed to keep the inmates isolated
from each other.

Several massive guard towers, along with miles of barbed wire
define the perimeter of the facility.

INT. SUPERMAX PRISON

The main exercise area inside the prison is surrounded by
high concrete walls.

A steel cage the size of a racquetball court sits empty on
one side. The gate is locked.

ROBERT HARDY, 30s, white, is muscular from years of working
out. He and a HISPANIC GUARD escort a prisoner through the
exercise area.

Neither guard carries a weapon.

The prisoner is KANE, 40s, the leader of the BROTHERHOOD, a
white supremacy group.

He is in shorts and a T-shirt. His body is chiseled, and
covered with neo-Nazi and gang related tattoos.

His hands are handcuffed behind his back.

Kane smiles at the Hispanic guard as he's led to the cage.

The guard nervously glances down at the handcuffs as they
continue to cross the open area.

They all stop at the gate.

Kane looks at Robert.

KANE

Now that you're going to be the
assistant Warden, does that mean I
won't be seeing you as much?

Robert nods.

ROBERT

I'll be around.

The Hispanic guard steps closer to Kane.

He watches him closely as Robert unlocks the gate.

He escorts Kane inside the cage, and quickly steps back out.

Robert locks the gate.

The Hispanic guard attempts to taunt Kane.

HISPANIC GUARD

Enjoy your free time.

As the guard turns away from him, Kane suddenly leaps towards
the wall, and screams.

KANE

You stupid spic - I'll kill you
when I get the chance!

The Hispanic guard takes several frightened steps backward.

Kane laughs, and looks at Robert.

KANE (CONT'D)

I love doing that.

Robert motions at Kane to back away.

Kane begins to walk around the perimeter of the cage.

The guard composes himself as he approaches Robert.

HISPANIC GUARD

Sorry, man.

ROBERT

Forget it. Just don't let 'em get
inside your head.

The Hispanic guard heads back across the exercise area and
stations himself at the entrance.

Robert pulls out his phone and checks his messages.

He quickly shoots out a text.

Kane stops pacing near the gate.

KANE

It's ironic that you don't
appreciate what we stand for.

Robert puts his phone away.

ROBERT

What's ironic about it? You just
hate everyone that's different.

KANE

You've got it wrong, my friend.

Kane approaches the gate.

KANE (CONT'D)

THEY hate US because of the things
we've accomplished. And now they
want to take it all away.

ROBERT

Guess I don't see it that way.

KANE

Something else for you to think
about. Whites will soon be a
minority, and in our very own
country.

ROBERT

How do you figure?

KANE

Easy - look at all the wetbacks
sneaking across the border every
day, and the darkies having scores
of kids with different fathers.

Kane returns to the middle of the cage.

He starts to do jumping jacks.

Robert shakes his head.

ROBERT

You guys are all the same. Anything
to justify what you do.

KANE

A race war is coming. And make no mistake, the whites will lose out, unless we do something.

ROBERT

I wouldn't let it bother you too much - you're gonna be in here for a long time.

Kane grins.

KANE

We'll see about that.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Robert is with his girlfriend DEBBIE, 30s, hispanic, at a small park near the prison.

Robert lays a blanket out on the grass.

ROBERT

I'm glad you called. This worked out good.

Debbie smiles at him as she retrieves a picnic basket from her car.

DEBBIE

Hey, with our schedules we have to be creative.

ROBERT

Speaking of which, have you talked to them?

DEBBIE

They gave me the usual routine: *we will do everything in our power to accommodate your request.* Whatever that means.

She sets the basket down on the blanket.

ROBERT

So what did you make?

DEBBIE

I slaved all day long just for you, *mi amor.*

She pulls out two sub sandwiches from a local chain, and hands him one.

ROBERT
I can see that.

He feels the wrapping.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
You didn't get 'em toasted?

DEBBIE
No...this way, we can eat them
now...or later.

They both look around the park to verify they are alone.

Nobody else is around.

They lay down on the blanket, kick off their shoes, and embrace passionately.

The sandwiches never make it out of their wrappers.

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE - DAWN

David lays on a military cot next to his desk.

He looks at the time.

David rises and begins to fold up the cot.

He looks frazzled.

He struggles with it at first, but manages to get it back in the sleeve.

David lays the cot down on the floor behind his desk.

He sits at his desk, which still has books on the Han Chinese dialect, and several Math languages open.

There are now TWO NOTEPADS.

The top one is filled with various symbols, and the letter E.

The BOTTOM NOTEPAD has even more symbols, and the letters "E,T, and R" circled next to three of them.

Maria enters.

MARIA
Good morning -

She looks over at David.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Jesus, you look terrible. Did you
even go home last night?

DAVID
Of course. I thought about staying
here, but Jacquie gets on me when I
do that.

MARIA
I know you didn't make it home for
dinner - I bet she loved that.

DAVID
She's used to it by now.

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE - MORNING

ANDREW, 40s, bookish, enters and stands near the table.

He glances at the two printouts with large spikes.

MARIA
Those are the latest from my
'scopes. Were you able to find
anything on the satellite?

ANDREW
I was able to maneuver one of ours
closer - much closer.

MARIA
And?

ANDREW
It's not armed, from what I can
tell. I'm headed over to tell
Jennings.

He looks over at David, who is focused on some symbols.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
We still on for lunch?

David waves him off.

DAVID
Not me. You guys can go.

Maria overrules him.

MARIA

You're not staying here all day again - you're taking a break.

ANDREW

Great. Swing by my office later.

MARIA

I'm late for a meeting. Gotta run.

She leaves.

David does not look up, and Andrew secretly grabs the two printouts from the table.

EXT. DOWNTOWN SIDE STREET - DAY

JESSICA BRYANT, 25, pretty in a quirky way, walks on a side street with CURTIS, 20s, black and athletic.

She looks at her phone.

JESSICA

I might actually be early for work today. Hope they can handle the shock.

CURTIS

Been awhile. How are things going for you?

JESSICA

Well, let's see. I have no money, no prospects and I wouldn't have a job if it weren't for Elaine.

She smiles at him.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Other than that - good.

CURTIS

That doesn't sound like the girl I knew in school. You were going to set the world on fire.

JESSICA

(sarcastic)

Meet the new and improved me.

CURTIS

In that case, you'll have to come to the Governor's mansion some time. Maybe I can get you in there.

JESSICA

I might take you up on that.

She receives a text.

TEXT FROM JESSICA'S MOTHER: I won't be able to take you to the reading of the will as planned.

Jessica shakes her head as another text is received.

TEXT FROM JESSICA'S MOTHER: You'll just have to meet us there.

Jessica starts to reply, but changes her mind.

She puts her phone away.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Figures.

CURTIS

What was that?

JESSICA

My dear, sweet Mother. She says she can't even give me a lift to the attorney's for the will.

CURTIS

No problem - I can take you. I was sorry to hear all that about your Dad. You two were pretty close, weren't you?

JESSICA

Oh, yeah. I loved him. He was so much fun when I was growing up - he always did things with me.

CURTIS

Did they ever figure out what happened to him?

JESSICA

No. He was fine, and went in to donate platelets, like he always did. Next thing we know, they're rushing him into intensive care.

She struggles to maintain her composure.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
I swear that hospital is what
killed him. They kept running test
after test, instead of actually
doing something. They just watched
him die.

They approach a small crowd on a street corner.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

The crowd is gathered around a white man in his 60's known as
PASTOR JACK.

Pastor Jack grips a well-worn bible and addresses the crowd.

PASTOR JACK
You must believe in segregation,
for He commands it.

Jessica and Curtis join the crowd, and stand next to an
ASIAN MAN, 20s, who leans in to Curtis.

ASIAN MAN
Is this guy for real?

CURTIS
He thinks he is.

Jessica pushes her way towards the pastor.

JESSICA
Segregation is morally wrong.
Everybody knows that.

PASTOR JACK
If you stand against racial
separation, they you are going
against God Almighty.

The preacher maneuvers closer to a group of white girls.

PASTOR JACK (CONT'D)
Interracial dating is a sin, and it
will not be tolerated.

He stands directly in front of the girls.

PASTOR JACK (CONT'D)
God never meant to have one race.
It was not His purpose at all.

Curtis films the preacher with his phone.

PASTOR JACK (CONT'D)
God has a purpose for each race.

Jessica gets closer to the preacher and shouts.

JESSICA
You need to leave. Like now!

The preacher refuses to back down, and returns to the middle of the crowd.

He speaks louder now.

PASTOR JACK
Negroes are dangerous, and they are inherently inferior to whites.

Curtis looks around at some other black people.

CURTIS
I'm calling the police, before this gets any worse.

JESSICA
Screw that. He'll just come back again, like he always does. We need to get rid of him once and for all.

Pastor Jack continues his rhetoric.

PASTOR JACK
Look at all the violence because of the blacks. Detroit, the South Side of Chicago.

The Asian tries to counter his argument.

ASIAN MAN
Poverty's the real problem -

PASTOR JACK
But the violence is not just there. It's here, *in our neighborhoods.*

He scans the crowd.

A few people nod their heads.

PASTOR JACK (CONT'D)
And it's here to stay.

JESSICA
You're full of it asshole.

She tries to splash the preacher with a water bottle, but he manages to sidestep it.

A woman in the crowd hurls rocks at Jessica.

Jessica picks one up, and throws it back at the woman.

More people start throwing rocks.

Pastor Jack shields his eyes as he also gets pelted.

Curtis gets blindsided by two whites, who throw him to the ground. The Asian man helps drag them off.

More fights break out, and Pastor Jack is knocked down.

The Asian points down the street.

ASIAN MAN
Police are coming - my cue to
leave.

Jessica and Curtis follow him as the crowd begins to disperse.

As they leave, Jessica looks back to see several of the crowd approach Pastor Jack, and help him to his feet.

EXT. TJ'S RESTAURANT - NOON

This popular, trendy downtown restaurant bustles with patrons.

Jessica and Curtis arrive. She waves goodbye to him as she quickly enters through the kitchen door.

INT. TJ'S RESTAURANT

Jessica hurriedly throws on her waitress uniform. She stands next to the kitchen door and looks disheveled.

ELAINE, 20s, another waitress, approaches. Exuberant and vivacious, she makes Jessica seem sullen by comparison.

ELAINE
What the hell happened to you?

JESSICA
That stupid preacher... Sorry I'm
late.

ELAINE
No worries - I covered for you,
again. Hey, your half of the rent
is overdue, by the way.

They look up as David sits down at his usual table with
Maria, Robert and Andrew.

Elaine nods towards Robert.

ELAINE (CONT'D)
You need to introduce me to *that*
one sometime.

JESSICA
The prison guard? Gross.

Elaine shakes her head.

ELAINE
Sometimes I wonder about your taste
in men.

JESSICA
Well, time for me to earn some of
my fortune.

She conjures up her best smile, pulls out an order pad and
approaches their table.

There is a small box on the table by Robert.

Andrew lights up when he sees her, obviously smitten.

Jessica looks at David.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
The usual?

David nods.

MARIA
Same same.

She looks over at Andrew.

JESSICA
You're new.

ANDREW

Hi, I'm Andrew. This is my first time here. I work with these guys.

Jessica feigns interest.

JESSICA

Oh, up on the mountain.

ANDREW

I work with our communication satellites.

JESSICA

Great. Another one to protect us from the aliens.

Andrew ignores the remark.

ANDREW

What do you recommend?

JESSICA

Tilapia's good.

She impatiently taps her pen on the order pad.

ANDREW

But what do YOU like?

JESSICA

(sarcastic)

My personal favorite? Oh, it would have to be the oven roasted chicken and the roasted cauliflower.

ANDREW

That sounds good.

She leans in closer to Andrew all sexy, and whispers.

JESSICA

If I could *marry* a meal, that would be the one.

ANDREW

Then that's the one for me.

Jessica nods and heads for the kitchen.

Andrew glances at Maria.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

She's nice.

Maria rolls her eyes.

Robert scrolls on his phone, scanning the news.

ROBERT

Is it just me, or has there been
a lot more *racial stuff* goin' on
lately?

MARIA

I know, right? They're still trying
to figure out who bombed that black
church.

DAVID

Just another crazy. The world's
full of them - always has been.

Jessica comes back with water.

ROBERT

Crazy or not, they pulled it off in
broad daylight. Definitely some
type of organization behind it.

DAVID

I doubt it.

Jessica sets down the drinks.

DAVID (CONT'D)

It's nothing new. I mean, we've
seen it before...in the sixties,
the nineties -

MARIA

Not like this.

ANDREW

I think neo-Nazis are behind it.

Jessica interjects.

JESSICA

They should lock up *those people*
like the animals they are.

Andrew looks at her.

ANDREW

Yes, before their movement gains
any more momentum.

MARIA

I wouldn't worry about it too much.
The Nazis could never win anything
politically. Too many people hate
what they stand for.

DAVID

On that I would agree.

Jessica walks over to an adjacent table as more people
enter the restaurant.

Maria glances at the box near Robert.

MARIA

(to Robert)

Okay, you gonna tell us what's in
there or not?

Robert grins.

ROBERT

Oh yeah, I almost forgot.

He opens the box, pulls out an engagement ring, and shows it
to the group.

David and Andrew check it out.

MARIA

(impatient)

Let me see it...

He hands it to her.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Ooh, nice.

DAVID

When are you going to give it
to her?

ROBERT

Friday night. I've already made
dinner reservations at a nice
romantic place.

Maria hands back the ring.

Andrew surreptitiously takes a picture of Jessica as she
tends to some other patrons.

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE - DAY

The door to Andrew's office is shut.

A shredder sits in the corner.

Andrew is at his desk, and looks at the overhead monitors.

Andrew holds his cell phone up and scrolls to a picture of Jessica in her waitress uniform.

He admires her picture.

ANDREW
(to himself)
Soon...very soon.

Maria enters.

He puts his phone away.

MARIA
Have you seen my latest printouts?
They were on the table this
morning.

ANDREW
No. Maybe Jennings took them.

MARIA
I'll check with him. Anything new
on the satellite?

ANDREW
Nothing out of the ordinary.

Maria leaves.

He looks at one of the monitors, which shows the Chinese satellite in orbit around Mars.

Andrew opens a drawer and pulls out the two printouts with large spikes.

He writes a seemingly random series of symbols down on a piece of paper, and scans it to his computer.

He slides out his keyboard, and sends off the document.

He takes the piece of paper and the printouts over to the shredder, and carefully inserts them.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLANET MARS

The Chinese satellite changes its orbit slightly.

LED lights on the telemetry control system flash on and off, as it gradually increases it's velocity.

The solar panels alter their position, and the LED's flash in a different pattern.

EXT. NEPTUNE

A large asteroid orbits around Neptune. An unmanned communications relay station operates on it's surface.

Several enormous radio telescopes are stretched out over a mile of terrain.

They slowly turn in a synchronous fashion.

A robotic crane performs maintenance on a transmission station nearby.