

Sex-Rays
by
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FADE IN:

INT. TRAILER - DAY

An ignored cigarette burns away like a grey worm in a large ashtray that states a tacky WELCOME TO BARSTOW.

Nearby an older couple make loud love on a torn leather couch.

Their climax nearly drowns out the TV NEWSCASTER who forcibly displays her years of dental work to her television audience. Then an image of a large Bauhaus-like pyramidal structure beneath the clearest bluest sky.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

...is called a Zimmerman Orgone Generator or ZOG, like this one located outside of Barstow California. ZOGs emit orgone energy which is claimed to affect a wide variety of phenomena such as the color of the sky, gravity, orgasms, and even wars. Recently, I had the opportunity to talk one on one to Doctor Zimmerman.

INT. STUDIO

Dr. ZIMMERMAN's impish smile beams outward. His eyes confess his awareness and intelligence, while his cottony beard and electric-shock white hair shout his unconventionality.

ZIMMERMAN

...at Berkeley, in the sixties, when I was a graduate student. I ran across an article by Wilhelm Reich and I thought this could really help the cause...

NEWSCASTER

The cause?

ZIMMERMAN

World Peace, of course. And it wasn't until many years later that I realized what went wrong with earlier attempts to capture this energy...

NEWSCASTER

You want to bring about world peace?

ZIMMERMAN

That's all I've ever wanted.

NEWSCASTER

And you think these sex-rays --

Zimmerman laughs.

NEWSCASTER

Sorry -- that orgone energy can actually stop wars?

ZIMMERMAN

I'd stake my life on it -- and my fortune. Within the next year I plan to build two thousand strategically placed ZOGs around the world. In three hundred and sixty-five days there will be a world without war. Imagine that, if you can.

The newscaster freezes, at a loss.

EXT. ZOG FACILITY - DAY

An eerily quiet crowd of protestors gather outside a high chain link fence; some fan away the midday heat. They sport signs such as: REPENT YOUR SINS, GOD SAYS STOP, and PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

While some praise Dr. Zimmerman's attempts at world peace, others remain vehemently opposed.

The protestors are far out numbered by the partying crowd of neo-hippies and wannabes, a perpetual love-in.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

Yet, sex pilgrims seem drawn to the ZOG. Orgone worshipers who want nothing more than...

One of the protestors drops her sign, tears off her shirt and runs into the sexual fray. She is quickly absorbed in the mix. Her fellow protestors watch either in horror or in interest or both.

MIKE MATTERS turns his eyes away from the sight. His dark casual coolness seems out of place in this desert. His just-woke-up hair is smoothed by the dry breeze. He turns to the unarmed guard at the chain-link gate and holds up his wallet.

The guard stares at the wallet, then he scrutinizes Mike. He opens the gate and waves Mike through.

Inside the gate Mike is met by a different guard, WILLY. Willy escorts Mike toward a large Bauhaus-like pyramidal structure. Mike smirks.

INT. VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

VICE PRESIDENT CAGEY sits behind his desk in front of a large mural of the vice-presidential seal. His aides, SCHOLARLY, PIOUS AND COVERT, sit tensely on the comfortable furniture spread about his office.

Cagey slams down a copy of the Washington Post; the headline: SEX-RAYS, MIRACLE OR MADNESS?

CAGEY

Goddammit! Orgies? World Peace?
Is this shit for real?

SCHOLARLY

We don't know, sir. By all indications Zimmerman is a crackpot, like Reich was. There is no scientific evidence that orgone energy exists - much less any proof that it can...

PIOUS

Have you seen what's happening out side those unholy ZOGs?

SCHOLARLY

People caught up in the idea...

PIOUS

Idea or not! Sir, Zimmerman poses a grave threat to everything you have worked for, Oilyburden Enterprises will be worthless if peace suddenly breaks out.

Cagey's eyes open wide.

CAGEY

Zimmerman must be stopped.

PIOUS

Exactly.

SCHOLARLY

But sir...

CAGEY

No arguments! How do we get rid of him? -- Think!

INT. ZOG FACILITY

Mike and Willy's footsteps echo down the empty door-lined corridor. Mike fans the heat away. Then at a door like any other, Willy stops and opens the door.

WILLY

In here.

ZIMMERMAN'S OFFICE

Mike enters the office followed by Willy. Dr. Zimmerman sits behind his desk, he looks up, smiles impishly. Mike matches the smile, holds out his hand and bounds across the room.

MIKE

Doctor Zimmerman. It's an honor to meet you, sir? I'm Mike Matters...

Zimmerman stands and holds out his hand in return.

ZIMMERMAN

...from the Washington Post. I've read all of your articles on orgone.

They grasp hands and shake. Zimmerman gives Mike the once over and smiles. Mike's cheeks redden with bashfulness.

INT. VICE PRESIDENTS OFFICE

Cagey has a revelation.

CAGEY

A hunting accident?

SCHOLARLY

That won't work again, sir.

A snicker from Covert gets everyone's attention.

CAGEY

You. What's so funny?

COVERT

All this fuss about how, when I've already made the necessary arrangements. Our little problem should be taken care of just about

(looks at watch)

now.

Cagey's mouth drops open.

INT. ZIMMERMAN'S OFFICE

Mike and Dr. Zimmerman sit and stare at each other across the desk. Both sport an odd smirk. Zimmerman glances at Willy who stands by the door.

ZIMMERMAN
You can go now, Willy.

WILLY
You're sure, sir?

Zimmerman nods. Willy raises an eyebrow then exits. Once the door closes, Zimmerman gets serious.

ZIMMERMAN
Alright, you can drop the act.

MIKE
Excuse me?

ZIMMERMAN
You aren't Mike Matters. You're here to kill me, aren't you?

Mike nods looking shamed, but then he points an automatic at Zimmerman so fast that Zimmerman scoots his chair back with surprise. Mike smiles the kind of smile that only comes along with the upper hand, yet sweat beads form on his brow.

MIKE
There's too much money ridding on war. We can't let the idea of peace spoil it.

Zimmerman relaxes and once again smiles his impish smile.

ZIMMERMAN
And you can't stop it.

Zimmerman stands and makes his way slowly around the desk. Mike twitches as he follows Zimmerman's movements.

MIKE
Sit down! Now!

ZIMMERMAN
Pull the trigger. Go on, do it!

Mike tries to pull the trigger but he can't; his frustration shows in his eyes. Zimmerman puts a hand on Mike's shoulder.

ZIMMERMAN
It's real, Mike or whoever you are.

Mike tries to pull the trigger one more time, then he willingly relinquishes the gun when Zimmerman takes it from his hand.

ZIMMERMAN

Orgone energy works.

Zimmerman brushes a stray hair off of Mike's brow then he tilts Mike's head up, holding it under his chin. Zimmerman wears a tender smile as he stares into Mike's moist eyes.

ZIMMERMAN

Now let's go make some peace.

He moves in for a kiss. Mike's lips part.

FADE OUT.