



# HYBRID

A short Sci-Fi One-Act

John C. Cowder, Playwright

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Suggested Music Score: Good Vibrations by the Beach Boys (particularly the parts with the electrotheremin vibration sound).

**So... Did you ever wonder what humans will be like in a few million years? You need to watch this...**

*Scene is a beach, two folding lounge chairs about six feet apart, center stage. A young, slim, pale woman in a bikini with large, dark sunglasses is sunbathing on the lounge to the right. A radio alongside is playing soft music. A bottle of mineral water next to the chair. The lighting is very bright. A man in swim trunks, holding a beach towel, and a banana approaches from stage right...*

MAN: (to the woman) Is this chair taken? Do you mind?

WOMAN: Not at all.

*The man spreads out his towel and lies on the lounge, banana in hand. After a brief, uncomfortable moment of silence he turns to the woman who is lying motionless on her lounge, pointing the banana at her.*

MAN: Do you come here often?

WOMAN: As often as I can.

MAN: I'm here for the day... Just to take in the beach.

*Woman remains motionless, not saying anything.*

MAN: Man, I could really use some sun!

*Turning to the woman who is still motionless.*

MAN: Are you from around here?

*Woman remains motionless, hands at her sides.*

WOMAN: No.

MAN: If you don't mind me asking... Where are you from?

*Woman remains motionless, hands at her sides.*

WOMAN: You wouldn't know... It's very far from here.

MAN: Try me...

*Woman wets her lips as if bored, takes a drink of her water, and sighs.*

WOMAN: Proxima.

MAN: That sounds like it's in another country... Like Italy or Greece?

WOMAN: You could say something like that... It's distant.

*Another awkward silent moment.*

*Man still trying hard to stir-up a conversation with this pretty woman...*

MAN: Okay... I'm a student at Stanford, studying Environmental Sciences... What do you do?

WOMAN: I'm here for a short while, studying bio-genetics... You probably wouldn't understand.

MAN: Bio-genetics... Like DNA and genomes and stuff?

WOMAN: (sarcastically) Yeah... DNA and stuff like that.

*Pointing the banana again at the woman.*

MAN: Okay... Okay... Tell me something about... about this banana...

WOMAN: Humans share nearly 60% of their DNA with bananas. Humans are closer to bananas than you think.

MAN: Really??? 60%???

WOMAN: Actually, humans and all living things on earth evolved from the same single cell, called a Eukaryote, nearly 3 ½ billion years ago.

MAN: That's fascinating!!!

*The man is now up on his elbow, facing the woman... Thinking he has finally got her attention!*

MAN: So you are saying that all living things evolved from the same thing?

WOMAN: All living things on Earth.

WOMAN: Basically, all living things, on Earth and elsewhere, have something in common... DNA.

MAN: How could you possibly know that... “and elsewhere”?

WOMAN: It’s something I was taught on Proxima.

*The man looks at the audience... perplexed expression on his face. Shaking his head.*

MAN: Wait a minute! You’re saying that Proxima is “Out of this World”???

WOMAN: You could say something like that... It’s distant.

*The man just stares at the audience in disbelief.*

*The man, now sitting up, turns to the woman...*

MAN: Come on!!! Really??? What the fuck!!!

*The woman finally moves her head...Takes off her sunglasses and turns to the man.*

WOMAN: (nodding her head) Really.

*The man throws himself back on the lounge, staring at the sky, arms drooped to the sides...*

*He leans over toward the woman with banana in his hand...*

*The woman places her sunglasses back on her face and resumes her motionless sunbath.*

MAN: Okay... Tell me more... Maybe you would like to share this banana since we have so much in common...

*The man peels the banana half-way down and takes a huge bite, and offers the rest to the woman.*

*Woman, barely moving...*

WOMAN: I don’t eat bananas... Eating a banana would probably kill me.

MAN: What “on Earth” ... Excuse me... What “on Proxima”, do you eat?

WOMAN: Millions of eons ago, our people did eat both animal and plant, like you do; but we evolved when we discovered we had so much in common with the other living things, and besides, our population was growing exponentially to the point where we would someday not have enough food to sustain us.

MAN: What are you saying??? You don’t eat?

WOMAN: That’s partially correct. I do drink enriched fluids.

MAN: Enriched fluids???

WOMAN: I guess you could say... Mineral Water of sorts.

MAN: Well, if you only drink, do you poop?

WOMAN: Well, not exactly... I have no gastric tract like you. I don't have an anus, but I do pee on occasion if the liquid is not expelled enough as sweat. And in the sun, I sweat a lot!!!

MAN: Jesus!!!

MAN: How did this happen?

WOMAN: It began with a small experiment using water, vinegar, salt, a fern seed, a human hair, and some electricity that simply joined the genomes of the plant with the genomes of a person. The resulting seed germinated and after a few weeks, developed muscular properties that were not there before... Derived from the DNA of the hair follicle. It was kind of like your Venus Flytrap. And, as you would say... "The rest is history".

MAN: Come on!!!

MAN: Well, describe yourself then...

WOMAN: I am what you would call a hybrid... Part plant and part animal.

MAN: Shut the back door! But you look like a human...

WOMAN: We were not always human-looking. It took millions of years to evolve.

MAN: But you breathe air just like I do... Right???

WOMAN: Well, not exactly... I breathe both carbon dioxide and oxygen. My body generates both. When I lie in the sun, the plant side of me, through a process similar to photosynthesis, takes carbon dioxide and water to create sugar and oxygen as by-products. The human side is similar to your own, using the oxygen and sugar to feed my cells and produce carbon dioxide. It's kind of cyclical... Essentially, if I wanted to, I could hold my breath for hours at a time. The sun, the minerals in the water, the oxygen and carbon dioxide in the air, sustain me. In scientific terms, you would consider me a photoautotroph. As an Environmental Scientist, you might understand this.

MAN: I don't believe this!!!

WOMAN: All life-producing energy can be traced back to photosynthesis and light energy from a star, like your Sun. We really don't need a planet to sustain us.

MAN: How do you reproduce?

WOMAN: Kind of the same as you do... We have sex, in fact, it's very pleasant; but it's more like pollination... The baby grows inside of me and eventually pops-out through my vagina.

MAN: How did you get here???

WOMAN: We've been coming here for millions of years. I happen to be in a bit of a time-warp and are a few million years in the future. The first visitors were not quite as developed as I am.

MAN: What... What do you mean?

WOMAN: Well, you've heard of "Little Green Men" right?

MAN: Well, yes, I've heard of them, but they aren't real, are they?

WOMAN: The green was the early stages of our hybrid evolution... chloroplasts, like plants. And they were very small, to conserve energy. But it allowed them to travel vast distances with very little nourishment, taking most of their energy from solar absorption. These early explorers abducted a few of you for samples of your DNA for further mutations.

MAN: What the Hell!!! So what are you doing here???

WOMAN: As I said before, I'm here to study biogenetics... And, take a few samples for further research.

MAN: You can't be serious!!!

WOMAN: Very serious. I'm genetically altered to appeal to and attract the human male, like yourself.

MAN: Mother of God!!!

WOMAN: Something like that.

MAN: Are you intending to take a sample from me???

WOMAN: I would love to.

MAN: You're either some kind of freak or a mental case!!!

*Man jumps up wildly from the lounge chair.*

MAN: Ugh! God! I gotta get outta here!!! You're not getting anything from me!!!

*The man grabs his towel and runs off the stage, leaving his half-eaten banana behind.*

*The woman places her sunglasses back on her face, lies back to absorb a few more rays of sun. "Good Vibrations" play softly in the background.*

*After a short while, the woman sits up, facing the audience, grabs her towel, water bottle and radio and places them under her arm. She picks up the half-eaten banana, removing and dropping its skin to the ground, and proceeds to place the remainder in a zip-lock bag. She then turns her back to the audience and leaves stage left. Her back is clearly visible to the audience and is a vivid green with leaf-like scales.*

THE FORESEEABLE END