

DOLL

(screenplay)

by

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(based on sci-fi novel)

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FADE IN:

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Silence.

Suddenly a telephone rings out.

An arm sticks out of the coverings. It gets hold of the receiver. Another arm stretches out and snaps on the night lamp next to the telephone.

A soft light falls on the bed. The clock next to the lamp points to 5 o'clock in the morning.

MAX, 45 year old writer and journalist, sits up in bed with half-closed eyes.

Max answers the phone.

MAX
(sleepily, but clearly)
Yes.

BOBBY (O.S.)
(excitedly and cheerfully,
but entreatingly)
Hello? Are you sleeping? I am sorry
but... Come on, put something on
and pop over to the editorial
office.

Max stays sitting in bed for a little while. He stretches out his arm and throws on reluctantly the white robe, spread out of the bed. He gets out of bed and goes into the bathroom.

He shakes his head.

MAX
This poor boy Bobby... Great panic!

Max comes out of the bathroom and turns the light on. Then he goes into the kitchen for a little while.

He shows up with a cup in his hand. He sits down at the middle of the bed. An ultra thin laptop is opened in front of him.

Max sits lost in thought, takes a sip of his coffee, and from time to time takes an abstracted look at the laptop.

MAX (V.O.)
What does my boss need me for? Most
likely... hmm, to fire me. And he
will be right.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

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MAX (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Which employer pays an employee who lies idle all day and stays at home instead of going to work? Even if the employee is his best friend? All the same...

(he sighs)

I am going downhill without having found THE MEANING OF LIFE. There is not a single thing that could impress me.

He stands up and gets dressed with an elegant, but casual suit: a thin black polo neck, a grey jacket and black trousers. He throws on his shoulders a long bluish-gray coat with the collar up around his neck.

He checks his pockets, sighs tiredly and goes out without enthusiasm.

The door of the room closes from the outside.

INT. BOBBY'S OFFICE - DAWN

The door opens from the outside and a man walks in - BOBBY, 55 year old plump black man in a black suit, who leads Max into his spacious office. His wry face betrays an ill hidden anxiety.

BOBBY

(in a businesslike manner,
but friendly,
predisposing)

Sit down.

Max sits down on the sofa. He rests his hands on his chin and begins to look at Bobby with interest.

Bobby sits down in the armchair facing him and looks askance at him. For a couple of moments both of them look fixedly at each other.

MAX (V.O.)

My boss is a decent man. One of those guys who are not very gifted but who manage to bring what they have started to an acceptable end with a little more work, nerves, failures, and a sense of duty. We are something like friends with Bobby, although each one of us interprets friendship in his own way. In short: we get along.

Bobby doesn't withstand against the "confrontation", he stands up and begins to pace nervously up and down room. He seethes inside himself, deep in thought about something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOBBY

Here is the problem. Serious accusations are being made against our editorial board. We are said to be negligent of our work...

Max sighs.

MAX (V.O.)

He is going to fire me...
Actually, it's all one to me,
although who doesn't need money?

BOBBY

(a bit calmed, as if
carelessly)

Important events are slipping out
of our attention. You must have
heard about the new Frankenstein?

He turns round abruptly and takes an inquisitive look at Max.

The question takes Max by surprise. At first he winces but then he calms down and continues to watch Bobby with curiosity, leaning his chin on his hands joined together.

Bobby cannot hide his anxiety, being affected by Max's challenging look.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

You would not feel so easy if you were in my place. It has been a whole week since they have been pestering me. Especially those - what was the name... - from the peace movement. They have been accusing me of hiding the truth. Take a look at this.

Bobby throws a folder with materials on the table in front of Max.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

They are threatening us that if we do not take up a position, they will boycott the work of the corporation. I sent two talented boys to investigate the problem. They came back with beautiful black-eyed faces...

He mops up the sweat on his brow.

MAX

(genuinely surprised)
So they did not manage to find out anything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He goes through the materials. The folder contains newspaper clippings with various headlines: "Military robots - killers!", "War between machines and people?", "We are going to die but not from a man's hand!"

MAX (CONT'D)
(reading aloud)
"...Revolutionary discoveries in science! Technologies will change our lives beyond recognition..."

Max turns over the page and begins to read another material.

MAX (CONT'D)
"A robot capable of replacing soldier has been created!" "THE MOST PERFECT WEAPON!" "Machines already have a way of thinking similar to that of human beings..."

Max blinks in surprise, he goes through more pages, and shuts the folder. He turns away his head and looks over his shoulder with a faint smile.

Through the huge windows of the skyscraper - from the upper floor where they are - there looks in a blue morning sky. Further below - a vast park with trees spreads around on all sides. In the close proximity - a part of the city can be seen further down.

Bobby watches him nervously and somehow imploringly. After a while he sits behind the desk a little relieved.

Max turns his head back. He quietly puts the folder on the little table in front of him.

MAX (CONT'D)
(with the manner of a professional)
Fairy tales. I don't understand why you are worried.

BOBBY
(looking for appropriate words a long time)
It is a REALLY serious matter, Max!

MAX
(for him the conversation is over)
I don't believe so.

He stands up and is about to leave.

Bobby jumps forward with a surprising for his figure agility and blocks Max's way to the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BOBBY
(nervously, almost shouting)
Hey, wait, wait! Don't be so quick about getting out of it just like that! I thought you were my friend?...

Max sighs. He sits down unwillingly.

MAX
(with reproach)
Well then, what do you want from me?

BOBBY
(breathing heavily)
To investigate the problem.
(he bangs his fist on the desk)
To see what the hell is going on there! (He grunts out, sits, gets a little calmed) We couldn't find out where the information had leaked from. Most probably it is not from the government. And you can't come close to the military. However, the rumor is afloat. It is our obligation to inform the public. Otherwise they are going to lynch us...

Bobby coughs out and continues slowly and pathetically.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
People are right. They give money and they want the truth. We are the eyes and the ears of public morals and conscience. We cannot remain impassive...
(in a businesslike manner)
You have to go...

MAX
(in surprise)
To go? Where?

Bobby is silent for a while in triumph.

BOBBY
(with emphasis)
To the lair of the beast... In the military base of THE GRAND PLATEAU.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MAX

The Grand Plateau? The most inaccessible place for journalists in the whole world? But who will let me in?

BOBBY

(confidently)

Everything is arranged. You just have to go there and find out what they are engaged in...

MAX

When am I leaving?

BOBBY

When you think you are ready. Do not worry about the payment. You will be satisfied.

Max sighs with resignation, stands up and starts for the door.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Max!

Max turns around.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

(imploringly)

Make sure you find out what is going on there... Max!

Max turns and leaves the room.

EXT. TOWNSCAPE - DAWN

A wide pedestrian street between several-storied buildings with mixed architecture. End of winter - snow slush.

Against their background there towers above the contrasting thin outlines of an ultramodern bluish glazed skyscraper with a sign: IC. Its form resembles the letter "I". The morning sun looks from behind.

A workday, bustle. The passers-by hurry for work.

Max's figure appears among them. He walks at an easy pace on the opposite sidewalk, with his hands in his pockets and with the collar up.

He crosses the street on this side and stops at a news-stand. He buys some headlines and continues his way.

A picturesque little book shop. Max is walk in. A short time afterwards he walks out carrying a packet of books under his arm.

(CONTINUED)

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A sliding glass door of a big supermarket. It opens and Max walks out - his luggage is supplemented by two many-colored paper bags.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Max comes in, leaves the newspapers and the books on the bed and takes the bags with food into the kitchen. He takes off his clothes and slips on a robe.

He lays breakfast on a metal tray and settles comfortably on the bed. He pours some drink in a large glass and unwraps a sandwich.

He stands still for a moment - a professional habit. Already concentrated, he reaches for the first issue.

MAX (V.O.)

So... The Department of the Army places an order with a genius man of science - a certain Frank - to create a robot capable of replacing "the cannon fodder".

Max reaches for the remote control on the bedside table and turns on the television placed over the bookcase in the bedroom...

EXT. TOWN PARK - DAY

A demonstration against robots and military equipment begins in the town park.

There is a REPORTER in front of the camera who speaks at the microphone.

Behind him - a wood of tents. People potter about in all directions. An improvised stage form where the frantic howl of a rock band comes.

The crowd waves slogans in the air: "Give support to the defense of peace movement!", "Make love, not war!!!", "Down with robots, long live people!" Something incomprehensible is shouted.

Some fat fellow dressed in suit and with sleek hair gets onto the stage.

ORATOR

(with aplomb)

...These villains are violating the principle of the civil society! They are trying to do things, which they are not allowed to do! Have you heard? They are making robots - homicides! But we will give them a lesson!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

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ORATOR (CONT'D)
(he waves his fist about)
Aren't we a force?

He makes a wide gesture with his hand, which reminds of the one made by Caesar standing up in front of his legions.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Max watches for a while. One can read boredom in his face, but his eyes betray anxiety. He rummages in the books he has bought.

Max pulls out a FLASH that says "Modern weapons", and puts it into the player.

Staggering demonstrations of weapons appear on the screen - from pistols and submachine guns to super modern tanks, airplanes, submarines, rockets, robots... Commanding centers, drills of large dimensions, explosions, detonations, and so on.

Max turns the television off and goes through the heavy books - informatics, robotics, cybernetics. He takes a book, then he leaves it and takes a scientific magazine, then another one.

Towards evening. Max is still in bed. He closes his eyes and presses them - he is tired. He shuts the books with anger.

MAX
I am far remote from this subject
matter!

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Max gets ready slowly and unwillingly for a trip - he irons clothes and puts them in a suitcase, and he takes notes. At one time or another he pauses, stands up, and starts thinking.

MAX (V.O.)
I am disturbing my own untroubled
life for the sake of a doubtful
piece of news?
(he sighs))
Well, it is about The Grand
Plateau...

EXT/INT. PLANE - NIGHT

A silhouette of a huge transoceanic airplane hanging over the clouds.

It is half-empty and calm inside the plane. The engines roar, barely audible. Max's thoughtful face is lit up by dim lights. His head rests on his hand and his eyes are half-closed.

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FX

A rotating geographical globe. A red thread creeps like a snake and maps out Max's route. It crosses a great part of the globe - a long journey.

The perspective changes with ease. The red line disappears in a plain territory of enormous size where there is not a single trace of civilization.

FX - END

EXT. FLAT COUNTRY - DAY

A car moves eastwards. On the windshield - a sign: RENTAL CAR. The driver is Max.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Max takes a tired look out of the way to refresh himself.

Pine groves and grass fields fly past the windows. Some raindrops threaten rain. The horizon is just in front of the windshield. As if the end of the world drew on.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

The car has stopped at an improvised turning aside from the road. Max leans back and tries to get some sleep.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAWN

Max wakes up. He starts the car engine. He blinks and rubs his eyes to become fully awake. He sets off.

A plain. A small signboard passes by the road: THE GRAND PLATEAU.

MAX
(he sighs)
At last...

A concrete sentry-box looms in the distance. A greenish fence - perpendicular to the road, reaches the horizon. Fog.

EXT. A MILITARY POST - DAWN

Max pulls up carefully in front of the greenish gate. He gets out, takes a few steps, and hands his documents to the DUTY OFFICER with a camouflage uniform, a pistol on his waist, who has showed up in front of the sentry-box.

Without paying any particular attention to him, the officer takes up the pieces of paper and examines carefully their contents.

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He gives Max a piercing look with his gray expressionless eyes.

He goes inside.

Max watches him talk on the phone, sign, put some seals. He feels uncomfortable. He tries to not showing signs of nervousness. He is fidgety, runs his fingers through his hair, slightly bending down his head.

Finally the officer walks out firmly and hands him the documents.

THE OFFICER

(with a tone permitting no
reply)

Go straight until you reach the
first road fork, then you take it.
It will take you the place. On the
right. On the right!

Silent, Max turns back to the car.

The steel gates draw aside. The car heads for the gateway. It whizzes in the strictly guarded zone, and the tires leave a trail of dust behind.

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAWN

Max is not in the mood. He takes out a refreshing drink, opens the can and has a sip.

The car moves along an empty, deserted road, half-overgrown with weeds.

Max looks intently in vain now on the left, now on the right, to see some military objects... However, there are no such. His face betrays despair - he feels like giving up this whole adventure.

The road, heading eastwards, takes a light turn to left. Max notices a plain road fork on the right - a dirt road.

Max slows down so that he will not miss the turn. He makes his way through the desolate fields.

A wild grove-brushwood gradually springs up before his eyes. Half-hidden by it - one-story villa. Nothing else could be seen there besides the gray morning horizon.

The car pulls up 50 meters away from the villa. Max gets out and direct his steps that way with hesitation.

Suddenly he catches sight of a solitary human figure. A half-bent elderly MAN sweeps the yard with a long broom, with a brown house jumper, gray broadcloth trousers, on his feet - slippers.

(CONTINUED)

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The man notices him, too. He stops working, rises to his full weight, rests on the broom, and looks the newcomer inquisitively from top to toe.

Max comes closer.

MAX
 (tries to speak in a loud
 voice)
 Good morning, sir. I am looking
 for... the military base of The
 Grand plateau. I was wondering if I
 had lost my way?

The man listens with distrust to all he says, but finally he waves to him in a friendly manner.

Max snaps his fingers!

MAX (V.O.)
 This can not be other than...
 FRANK!

INT. FRANK'S VILLA - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Max sits on the sofa in a light and spacious living room. He is puzzled.

FRANK
 (distinctly, softly)
 You are the journalist from IC. You
 have been sent to learn more about
 our base? Let me make some coffee
 and we will talk...

He taps the elbow-rest of the armchair, stands up, and disappears through the flying door.

Max makes a panoramic view of the room:

A) The whole front wall facing east is a huge window made of thick glass. It slides all the way down to the floor, thus serving as a front door as well - an avant-garde architectural decision.

B) On the right - another, smaller window. The floor is covered with polished marble.

C) A sofa is set against the wall, which divides the living room from the other rooms in the house. It is opposite the window-door through which Max has entered.

D) In front of the sofa - a small short-legged rectangular polished table. On its left and right sides - two armchairs, forming the suite of furniture, which is upholstered in greenish-brown leather.

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CONTINUED:

E) Between the armchair on the right and the sofa there is a plant with huge leaves, put in a ceramic plant pot in natural color.

F) Behind on the left - a flying door of real wood. It opens on to the premises in the house.

G) Between the window-door and the door to the premises there is a wall, formed somehow diagonally, all of it taken up by an enormous thin television screen with the size of a photo wallpaper...

Max takes out a notebook and a pen and puts them on the table, placing them parallel to each other - a habit.

Frank comes forward, bringing the coffee. He sits. They take a sip.

MAX

(cautiously, but in a businesslike manner)

Mr. Frank. The IC editors are disturbed by the news that experiments with humanoid robots for warlike purposes are being conducted here. The experiments are said to be in an advanced stage. We understand that the government stands for you and supports you, but the lack of information that would calm the public opinion, makes us think that things are not... likeable. There should be, of course, military secret. However, the taxpayers have the right to know where their money goes and whether the result of the experiments will not turn against them.

Frank listens attentively. He smiles as if to himself. Then he frowns. He stands up and goes to the window. He turns to face Max.

FRANK

I should like to inform you. The military base at the Grand Plateau... is actually not a military base.

(he is silent for a while)

We are a private company and we get help by the government for the protection of our activities.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FRANK (CONT'D)

In return we offer access to our works and if the other side takes an interest, we assume the obligation to adjust them to the needs of the defense.

MAX

(bows his head onward)

Can I see it for myself? To the present moment I was sure that machines designed for military operations have been produced here. How far in their improvement could it go if the subject of your work coincides with my preliminary notions at all?

FRANK

(calmly but emphatically)

We don't have the intention to make particular announcements... We are not against the press, but we do have the right to keep secret.

MAX

(persistently)

Well, but... What does this have to do with the weapons meant to kill? However secret they may be, they should not be left out of control.

Frank becomes thoughtful. His face betrays boredom. He starts looking at Max - he likes him. He resumes his seat. It is obvious that he is making an important decision.

FRANK

(emphatically, but calmly)

Weapons are a plague. Personally I would never take up their manufacture...

He turns his head to the flying door that opens on to the rooms of the house. He calls out.

FRANK (CONT'D)

MA-UNI! It's time for breakfast. We got somewhat hungry.

Max looks around, but he sees no one except Frank.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You suppose that I am trying to evade responsibility by demonstrating only my negative attitude toward the military works.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FRANK (CONT'D)

Of course, I could assert that surely someone must produce weapons and there is no reason that this someone should not be me. So I don't have to search for moral justification...

A light shadow walks past Frank and stops in front of the table. A GIRL's silhouette in a delicate everyday dress (MA-UNI, 20 year old woman-robot) holds a tray for serving in her hands.

FRANK (CONT'D)

...But do not think that some special weapons are being made here. If you ask me, the future of weapons lies in the creating of such weapons, which do not affect man's life and health, but which makes it harmless only temporarily. I am totally "for" THE HUMANE WEAPONS, if there should be weapons at all.

The girl leans over and starts serving.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(encouragingly)
Max, meet my daughter!

MA-UNI

(articulately and clearly)
Hi! My name is MA-UNI.

MAX

(in confusion)
Eh... Max.

The morning sun, which has suddenly appeared from behind a cloud, starts shining right into his eyes. He blinks instinctively and turns his head.

When he opens his eyes again, MA-UNI has already walked out.

MAX (V.O.)

A daughter?
(ironically)
We have seen that sort of "daughters"... Frank's appearance doesn't speak of perversity but... who knows?

Max directs his eyes to Frank again. Talking about weapons is more important.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MAX

(slightly irritated)

Do you really think that a weapon could be humane? "Weapon" and "humaneness" are incompatible. Personally I cannot imagine such a combination of words - "a humane weapon".

Frank watches him furtively. He looks away and begins to speak in a moralizing way.

FRANK

Peace has no alternative. However, there have been and there will be weapons. Systems that neutralize the opponent with no harmful consequences are being developed now. The opponent's viability, physical and mental condition should not be affected.

MAX

(in a tired voice)

You are trying to persuade me that the systems you are developing satisfy these conditions - humaneness and harmlessness. At the same time you are claiming that you are not able to show me samples of your new technology because of the requirement for secrecy. That is as may be, but how am I supposed to explain this to the ordinary people?

FRANK

(takes a frowning look at his watch)

I have been looking for a solution to this problem all my life... In fact, I was in two minds about whether to take you around the base in order to show you particular samples of our new technology. But... I won't do it! Because I did more for you.

(with confidence)

Much more. I showed you what should actually be seen, and what nobody has seen so far. I did my best to be of use to you!

Frank stands up abruptly.

Totally surprised, Max finds himself obliged to get up, too.

EXT. FRANK'S VILLA - DAY

Max gets into the car and takes the road back, angry at Frank's quick-tempered reaction.

EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN TERRACE - DAY

Max sits down on the floor in a yoga pose - unbuttoned shirt with short sleeves negligently put on, in shorts.

With his body relaxed he basks in the warm sun shining from the cloudless sky, and looks with half-closed eyes in the daylight.

Around him there are titles scattered: "History of Egyptian Civilization", "Modern Concepts of Spirit", "Philosophy and Science" and the like.

MAX (V.O.)

Well, I sent the "hot" material to Bobby. But I can't get Frank's words out of my head. He has shown me "much more"? "Much more" WHAT?...

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

The sun looks in at the terrace. Max cleans the house - he dusts, collects the garbage, dumps the piled up, useless things, rearranges the rooms.

Accidentally he looks in the mirror and imagines himself as a chambermaid - with an apron and a bonnet. He smiles - this is not a job for him. He gets dressed and goes out for a stroll.

EXT. CITY STREET - BISTRO - DAY

Max walks about aimlessly. Women follow him with their eyes, but he doesn't pay attention to them.

He passes by some bistro. From the outside he is seen to take a seat by the window.

INT. BISTRO - DAY

Max sits alone at the table by the window. A waitress comes, takes his order with a formal smile, and serves the ordered drink in the same nice, but reserved way.

The customers talk to each other.

EXT. BISTRO - CITY STREET - DAY

We see Max behind the window. From inside the bistro Max watches the passers-by. His face resting on his hand is lost in thought.

(CONTINUED)

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He stays for a little while, looks around, sighs, rises to his feet, and walks out.

EXT. CITY STREET - DUSK

Max goes back the same street walking at an easy pace. He passes by the window display of the next shop.

His eyes happen to fall on the plastic window-dolls, displaying women's underwear.

Max stops dead! Hypnotized, he watches the half-naked bodies.

FX

Suddenly the background behind the standing window-dolls flashes in a bright light.

FX - END

Time goes by, passers-by starts looking at him. Some of them smile faintly.

Max shakes his head. He pulls himself together and walks away.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Max stands by the window. His hand is on his waist, the other one holds a glass with an amber-colored drink.

He has fixed unseeing eyes on the skyscrapers across the way. One can read on his face a great tension.

Max leaves the glass on the table and starts pacing up and down the room with growing excitement.

MAX

(he scolds himself)

My assignment was to be on the look out for a humanoid robot. HU-MA-NO-ID! This was what Bobby was hammering into my head. And I was picturing a big metal armored heavy crude stupid and ugly... MACHINE.

Max pauses. He looks around unseeingly, half-closes his eyes - an extremely important insight.

MAX (CONT'D)

SHE IS TOO PRETTY TO BE A PERSON!

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAWN

Max takes a shower, wipes himself. He diligently packs a suitcase. He gets dressed. He takes a last look around and walks out of the room.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - STAIRCASE - DAY

Max locks the door and goes down the stairs with a suitcase in his hand.

EXT. VILLA - DUSK

Max gets out of the rental car and sets off furtively for the building. His face betrays fear and impatience at the same time.

The windows of the villa throw sheaves of light upon the grass. Max gets nearer and stops in front of the entrance. The glass door "feels" him and slides down automatically.

INT. VILLA - LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Frank and MA-UNI have settled themselves on the upholstered furniture and talk to each other. Frank sits in his usual armchair - with his back half-turned to the flying door that opens on to the rooms in the house.

MA-UNI sits in the middle of the sofa, her legs crossed one on top of the other. Her little figure is right opposite the door.

Upon his entering the two of them turn heads and breaks off the conversation.

Max stops at the doorstep and freezes.

We see at MA-UNI from Max's position:

A) incredible, peculiar expression on the face. It manifests astonishment- a person surprised by something, which does not threaten him;

B) bright blue, enormous, slightly prolonged eyes. Half-closed, stalking, catlike. Long, black, doll-like eyelashes;

C) hair - blond, golden, straight, to shoulder length, with sharply outlined fringe;

D) fingers - long, slender, fine; long, straight, dark-red manicure; Max compares it to a weapon;

E) exquisite flexible little body. Waist - awfully slim; it gives the impression that it could break off upon an abrupt movement;

F) thighs - uncovered, incredibly tender, frail, smooth, skinny. Legs - one on the top of the other, thrust into fluffy slippers;

E) skin - light brown, almost milk-white, tender, delicate.

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G) clothes - a bright red leather sleeveless jacket of ultra fashionable design put on next to the skin and unbuttoned in front; plaits, fashion sport shorts of the same silky fabric.

MA-UNI has leaned back relaxed on the sofa, but she creates the impression that any moment she can jump up with incredible energy.

FRANK
(excited with joy)
Max! What a nice surprise!

He jumps up and suggests to Max to sit down - he turns the unoccupied armchair toward the table.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Sit down, please!

Max nods his head in embarrassment and sits down heavily. He follows MA-UNI with the white of his eyes.

MA-UNI watches the guest inquisitively and with interest as well.

An awkward situation.

MA-UNI gets up.

MA-UNI
Well... I'll prepare something
special for the occasion!

She passes in front of Max. Her skinny light brown hips happen to fall in his range of vision for a moment. His eyes follow her until she disappears behind the door.

By a gesture Frank invites Max to take the seat which was occupied by MA-UNI a short while ago. Max changes his position.

FRANK
(with enthusiasm)
I've read your article with
pleasure. Even I could not write
better about myself...

Max listens to him politely, but absent-mindedly. His eyes are attracted by MA-UNI who walks in at the present moment.

She carries a metal tray, on which there are crystal glasses, an amber-colored drink, a thin polished little can...

She stops in front of the table and starts arranging the things on its unruffled surface.

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CONTINUED: (2)

MAX (V.O.)

I have never seen a woman of such a monstrous beauty!...
A woman? A woman?! That's not a female body. This is not a human! A robot? It is hardly probable...

MA-UNI moves in a peculiar way - as if performing some mysterious ritual. Her movements are supple, catlike, expressive, flowing...

However, one's eye can easily segment them in a multitude of simpler movements. This adds a particular charm to them, and they are not always possible to be noticed either.

MA-UNI finishes with the serving. With an elegant gesture of her hand she invites them.

MA-UNI

Please, help yourselves!

She leaves the tray on the little table and sits down as among friends, tucking her legs under one in the armchair.

FRANK

(he raises his glass)
To our guest!

MA-UNI has poured herself a strange blue liquid from a thin polished little can. She sucks from a glass through a straw.

Max cannot keep his eyes on her. Her beauty is stunning.

She stands up and walks out.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(he sighs with delight)
A beauty! It's a pity that I won't be able to be of use to her for a long time...

Frank takes a sip from the glass and puts it down.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Now that you are here, it means that you have formed a pretty good idea about some things...

MAX

(he clears his throat,
then swallows)
That's right...

Frank stands up, walks about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FRANK
(simply, but with
confidence)
MA-UNI is not a human!

MAX
(he exclaims)
Is this a machine... ?!

FRANK
(he shakes his head with
disapproval)
No! MA-UNI is not a machine. That's
what I am trying to convince people
of... However, primitivism in
thinking is difficult to eradicate.

MA-UNI walks in and sits down. She takes a curious look at
them.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(he throws in light-
heartedly)
You will be staying with us for a
while, won't you? Once you've
beaten the hoof up to here, you
will hardly feel like going back
right away.

MA-UNI takes a look at Max. Then at Frank. She seems excited.

MA-UNI
(cordially)
Our guest room is vacant. Come!

The door to the inner corridor opens. MA-UNI makes a gesture
to him to follow her.

Max sees a lighted up corridor with many rooms and several
doors. They pass by the first one on the left.

MA-UNI (CONT'D)
This is where my father lives.

They give a look in.

An office room - brilliantly lit up. An antique style, with a
heavy mahogany desk and an enormous bookcase, covering the
whole opposite wall - from top to bottom, with books leather-
bound of the same color.

On the left hand side of the desk - under the window, there
is a couch with simple forms. Behind the desk there hang
original paintings, a short sporting gun, and a hunting
trophy as well - antlers.

They continue and stop at the next door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MA-UNI (CONT'D)
 (simply)
 This is where I live.

The whole in white: a big feather bed, an antique mirror, a white wardrobe - it seems that's all. But the most unusual thing about it is that there is not a single sharp edge.

All the pieces of furniture, including the walls, are upholstered in white leather over a thick soft material. All the corners are rounded and soft, although the forms of the objects remain rectangular.

The more miniature things, which are not rounded and soft, have strictly fixed places in the well-padded lockers, the doors of which are barred tight.

They go on. MA-UNI opens the last door on the left of the corridor.

MA-UNI (CONT'D)
 (with enthusiasm)
 Here is our guest-room. It's small
 but I hope you will like it.

They enter for a short time. Max looks round the little room with lack of interest.

A bedroom suite, a cabinet, a little table, a wardrobe, mirrors, and the necessary trifles. A small bathroom. Everything is new and unused.

They go back the same way.

From the other side of the corridor there can be seen a winding staircase, which leads to the basement as well as to the roof. A big bathroom with an open door. A kitchen-bar - without a door, open to the corridor. A door opening on to a garage.

MA-UNI walks ahead of Max - firmly, vigorously, sexy. He watches her secretly.

They go into the living room - Frank sits and takes a sip. They sit down.

MAX
 You have a cozy house. I would feel
 excellently here.

INT. VILLA - MAX'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tired to death, Max lies on his back, directly in his clothes, puts his hand behind his head and stares at the ceiling with unseeing eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAX
(in an undertone)
Dangerous weapons? Self-propelled
armored robots? Poor Bobby!

EXT. VILLA - DAWN

Max takes out white plastic little table and chairs and places them on the grass - a few meters away from the villa. He sits down and patiently waits for his hosts to show up.

Expression on the face and body's posture - a person, prepared for an important business meeting, but sure that it is certain to take place.

A "Monolingual dictionary" is spread open in front of him on the word "machine".

Max casts a glance on the following text: "Machine is a mechanism, which performs some kind of work by transforming energy."

Being inspired, Max turns over the pages on the word "mechanism". There it says: "The internal structure of a machine."

Max bursts over with the so found nonsense and throws the book on the table.

EXT. VILLA - MORNING

Max and Frank sit on the chairs and have conversation, the topic of which is "machine".

FRANK
...We have made thousands of
remodellings in her kinematic
programs just because we weren't
satisfied with the way MA-UNI
stood, walked, talked. Now MA-UNI
cannot make an ill-looking
movement, cannot take an ill-
looking pose... She just... DOESN'T
KNOW how to do it.

MA-UNI appears at the sliding glass door. She comes nearer with a sexy walk: in the 60s style - a mini skirt, and over the big leather belt - a short cotton shirt, uncovering her slender waist. Light leather sandals. Her hair is black as tar, silky, to shoulder length, with a fringe so long that it almost covers her eyes.

MA-UNI cuts cross the grass and sinks into the unoccupied chair crossing her legs. She leans her elbow on the table, resting her head on her hand, and gets ready to listen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Her eyes are half-closed by the big black eyelashes - this gives the impression that she sleeps and is not interested in the conversation.

However, Max takes a more careful look at her and to his horror finds out that her pupils are directed to him - she secretly watches him.

MA-UNI takes the floor. Her eyes brighten up - they open wide, roll about in all directions, blink impatiently, laugh, become serious for a moment, then laugh again.

Her arms make gestures, helping her to express those words, which, according to her, should be the most important ones in her speech.

They stretch out, withdraw, twist, reach out and draw back. Her whole body moves - it twists, bends, jumps up and down...

MAX (V.O.)

What words shall I use to describe
MA-UNI's conduct? Perhaps:
"dances", or to be more precise:
"performs a piece of drama"...

After a short time MA-UNI stands up for something and goes back into the house.

MAX

Frank, I am sorry for speaking my
mind but to me MA-UNI is a radio-
operated doll...

Frank becomes thoughtful.

FRANK

I have some work to do in the base
these days. MA-UNI is going to stay
here. I hope in her company you
will come round to the opposite
opinion.

FX

We show Frank's "residence" from a bird's eye view, the landscape acquiring the nature of a locality map.

The desert flat country is cut through by the thin thread of the deserted road.

Passing by near Frank's solitary building, it leads to north-east, gradually turning straight east and descending the plateau - the miniature buildings of some town loom in the distance - the base-company.

In the south there is wasteland. In the north - again a plain; groves in dark color can be seen here and there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

In the west - the meandering line of the road to the military post, and from there on - to "civilization".

FX - END

EXT. VILLA - DAY

Grey sky. Max and MA-UNI are out walking. They walk along some path in the field. The diminishing villa remains behind them.

MAX (V.O.)

Hmm... MA-UNI and I left together alone? This man has unbelievable confidence in me.

MA-UNI walks impatiently ahead. She is dressed like Pippi Longstocking - her favorite. She has drawn a sock on one foot, on the other - a stocking reaching the upper part of the thigh, pulled up by a garter, which is hooked to her linen shorts. Her hair is in two plaits sticking up on one side.

MA-UNI walks in a particular way - slightly leaping as if there are springs drew on her feet. The artificial muscles of her legs strain themselves, their outlines emerge clearly and every now and then Max gives them the eye.

They turn aside from the dirt road and cross a meadow flecked with flowers.

MA-UNI rejoices nature - she jumps and fidgets as a fool, and her body surprises Max with poses not typical of the human physics.

She breaks into a run, imitates ballet pas, tries gymnastic figures - somersaults, leaps; she starts climbing a solitary tree, walks on her hands with her head downwards, dances.

MA-UNI stops suddenly, takes an inquisitive look at Max in order to assess the effect she thinks she produces on him. Then she continues walking speaking all the time.

MAX (V.O.)

What kind of machine is that? It thinks like a professor in logics, and it indulges in children's mischief. A crazy thing...

EXT. VILLA - AFTERNOON

The sky is louring and overcast - dark low clouds, almost a night. There is a cold heavy rain.

Max is in a black waterproof raincoat. Black gumboots. A big black umbrella in hand. MA-UNI - in a short blouse and a mini skirt made of red waterproof fabric. Hair - blond.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MA-UNI slops barefoot through the muddy puddles. A big puddle.

Suddenly MA-UNI jumps in it, squats, sits down in the muddy water, slaps hands, and shouts with laughter. Her body is covered with splashes of mud.

With his umbrella Max stands by the puddle, shivers with cold, and wonders what he is to do now.

MA-UNI stands up and shakes off the drops from her hair and body. They slips out of her skin.

She steps across the puddle and continues her way gesticulating and talking to him about something.

MAX (V.O.)

Frank is amazing me with his vision of the machine. No, this "doll" of his is not a machine! It is...

(he stops to express his thought more precisely)

...WHAT COMES AFTER THE MACHINE!

Max watches after MA-UNI's silhouette who walks ahead and sways her hips in a sexy way going round the puddles.

INT. VILLA - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Frank and MA-UNI are dressed in the base outfit. Frank leaves a video player on the little table. The two of them say "Good bye" to Max and leave.

Max watches the receding little figures through the window. In the distance - perhaps about ten kilometers away, the roofs of tiny buildings gleam - THE BASE.

Max lies back on the sofa, rests his elbows on his knees and his chin on the flat of his hands. There is a cup of steaming coffee in front of him.

MAX (V.O.)

Frank and MA-UNI are going to the base... For her last tests.

Max turns the video player on. The big screen lights up. On the screen there come one by one episodes revealing MA-UNI's making.

INT. THE BASE - A DESIGNER STUDIO - DAY

A hall with walls covered by big photos; sketches and sculptures - of women only. Artists work quietly and with concentration in front of huge monitors. They are modeling the appearance of a female body centimeter by centimeter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There can be seen the first rough touches of a part of some organ.

They become more and more defined until the moment when they turn into three-dimensional images, which, in their turn, are transformed into living artificial flesh looking like something between rubber, mould, metal, and plastic.

This "flesh" is shaped by a previously set algorithm, thus becoming gradually a part of some organ.

There it is - the body is ready. It has taken on the form of a semi-transparent virtual statue - on a rotating pedestal.

Each organ is of a distinguishing color: the stomach - a basin located in the thorax - white, the nervous system - yellow, the brain - light gray. "The lungs" - light blue.

However, they serve only for cooling of the organism, not for breathing. The muscles - Max is concentrated and wonders why they are semi-transparent.

The skeleton is aluminum-colored. It is not an exact copy of a human skeleton - it is more refined and stylized, it does not look frightful.

A new organ - white-colored, in the form of a kidney, is located in the pelvis - "the black box". It contains a copy of MA-UNI's mind, which is updated by a cable, connected to the cerebrum. It can be seen how information circulates between the two organs.

Secretory system is missing. There is not a genital system either, except for the copulating organs.

There are inscriptions signs on each of the organs: the logo of the company that has produced them, date of manufacture, instructions for use - with tiny colored letters.

INT. THE BASE - TESTING STANDS - DAY

On special stands bones and muscles are twisted and winded. Hands and arms are broken, tissues are torn or put into wash tubs with liquid nitrogen or boiling water.

A hand bends and unfolds its fingers at such a great speed that only the movement itself could be perceived.

INT. THE BASE - A VIRTUAL SIMULATOR - DAY

MA-UNI is put on a special simulator where she is taught in the basic models of human behavior. A distinct voice gives short commands.

On a big screen there can be seen a virtual counterpart of hers playing out various common situations on the street, in shops, establishments, cafes, at symposia, concerts...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Facial expressions, gestures, poses, conversations with acquaintances and strangers, ways of protection in tricky and dangerous situations, and so on, and so on...

INT. THE BASE - A RESEARCH CENTRE - DAY

A team of scientists in sterile astronaut suits. They move quickly. The camera follow them. They stop at a lock-chamber. The door opens. They go in.

On a small stand there lies something like a not big gray rubber ball, creased in half, with an opening in the middle: MA-UNI's brain. Soft and yielding to pressure.

A hand in a sterile glove reaches out and touches it. The hand raises it.

INT. VILLA - LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Max is delighted, but frightened, too. He runs his fingers through his hair, puts his arms akimbo. He stops, fidgets. He shakes his head, continues walking.

MAX

These scientists - are they aware of the nature of their own plastic doll? Computers control banks, production, space machinery, the army... So she could control all this, if only she feels like it?

INT. VILLA - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Max and Frank sit on the sofa, respectively - in the armchair. MA-UNI takes the afternoon snack away from the table in front of the villa.

FRANK

(in a mood for sharing)
Just like every child, I also dreamt of doing something great in my lifetime. I was born poor. However, I discovered that I have a talent. And by saying talent, I mean TALENT...

Max listens carefully Frank's monologue. A gold mine for the journalist!

FRANK (CONT'D)

...Not everyone who is taking part in the project MA-UNI knows about her! Everyone in the base is clear about the fact that humanoid systems are designed here. But that's all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAX

Impossible!

FRANK

For some of the staff "a humanoid system" means simply a robot. That is what the cleaning women, the craftsmen, the draftsmen, and the regular "soldiers" think. Further up in the hierarchy are the designers of the separate parts and details. According to them a robot for advertising purposes is being developed here.

MAX

Aren't the competitors working on that problem as well?

Frank's face brightens up.

FRANK

We hold the lead as regards technology. They are also developing but with another purpose. Trade mechanisms pull them back...

(he continues on the subject)

Of all the levels of the hierarchy only two are familiar with the real nature of MA-UNI. The first level knows that revolutionary discoveries are being made here and that the aim is the creation of an equivalent of the natural man. But it is only the last level - the few colleagues who are immediately responsible for the complete development of the body - that is familiar with MA-UNI in details...

MAX

Is it possible that no one has seen her? I suppose MA-UNI walks freely around the base and gets in the way of everyone?

FRANK

Oh, it is full with experiment samples there! In the laboratories, in the workshops, on the streets. There are analogies of hers everywhere... BUT ONLY SHE IS THE REAL ONE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAX

(cautiously, with alarm in
his voice)

Frank, won't this machine slip out
of our control?

Frank stands up and starts walking restlessly.

FRANK

(thoughtfully, but firmly)

It depends on us. We are her
creators. If we turn out to be bad
parents and if we let our vices
pass over to her, nothing good is
in for us. One must work on that
problem, Max...

Max listens in silence, then he stares in the distance.

MAX (V.O.)

I wonder what does Frank need me
for? Obviously he is trying to
shift some responsibility upon my
shoulders...

(The full scenario - in a separate publication.)