

Screenplay

Set up

Scene 1: Powerful description of metropolis while Freder rejoices playing the organ at a beautifully vaulted room.

Voice over:

Now the rumbling of the great organ swelled to a roar, pressing, like a rising giant, against the vaulted ceiling, to burst through it.

Freder bent his head backwards, his wide-open, burning eyes stared unseeingly upward. He was never so near tears in his life and, helpless, he yielded himself up to the glowing moisture which dazzled him.

Grandiloquent tone.

Above him, the vault of heaven in lapis lazuli; hovering therein, the twelve-fold mystery, the Signs of the Zodiac in gold.

Even more eloquent.

Set higher above them, the seven crowned ones: the planets. High above all a silver-shining bevy of stars:

Deeper, solemn.

the Universe.

Scene 2: Burning Earth metaphor.

Dramatic, violent turn.

The breakers of the notes dissolved the room into nothing. The organ, which Freder played, stood in the middle of the sea.

It was a reef upon which the waves foamed. Carrying crests of froth, they dashed violently onward, and the seventh was always the mightiest.

Confrontation 1

Voice over:

Solemn yet inflammatory.

Shaken to her core, the old earth started from her sleep. Her torrents dried up; her mountains fell to ruin. From the ripped open depths the fire welled up; The earth burnt with all she bore. The waves of the sea became waves of fire. The organ flared up, a roaring torch of music.

The earth, the sea and the hymn-blazing organ crashed in and became ashes.

Heroic.

But then, from the gray, scattered ashes, on trembling wings unspeakably beautiful and solitary, rose a bird with jeweled feathers.

Tragic, trembling voice.

It uttered a mournful cry. It hovered hither and thither, not knowing where to settle. It hovered above the grave of the sea and above the corpse of the earth.

Relieved

But then, from the solemn mighty dance of the stars, one freed itself and neared the dead earth. It enveloped the mourning bird in its dear light; it was as strong as a deity, crying:

Sparkling star:

To me... to me!

Voice over:

Decreasing tone.

Then the jeweled bird left the grave of the sea and earth and gave its sinking wings up to the powerful voice which bore it. It swept upwards and sang, becoming a note of the spheres, vanishing into Eternity.

Confrontation 2

Scene 3: Back to the beautifully vaulted room with the organ.

Voice over:

Ceremonial tone.

Freder let his fingers slip from the keys. He bent forward and buried his face in his hands. Everywhere, everywhere, in an agonizing, blissful omnipresence, stood, in his vision, the one countenance.

The austere countenance of the virgin, the sweet countenance of the mother, the agony and the desire with which he called and called for the one single vision for which his racked heart had not even a name, except the one, eternal,

Freder:

Surprised.

You... you ... you ...!

Voice over:

He let his hands sink and raised his eyes to the heights of the beautifully vaulted room, in which his organ stood. From the sea-deep blue of the heavens, from the flawless gold of the heavenly bodies, from the mysterious twilight around him, the girl looked at him with the deadly severity of purity, quite maid and mistress, graciousness itself.

Her voice, pity, every word a song.

Freder:

Surprised and awakening tone.

You!.

Voice over:

The captive note struck against the walls, finding no way out.

Freder stood up and opened the windows.

He pressed his eyes closed, standing still, hardly breathing.

Voice almost whispering on "his keepers".

He felt the proximity of the servants, standing silently, waiting for the command which would permit them to come to life. Those silent creatures, ordained by his father, were his all-powerful protectors, and at the same time, his keepers.

He felt himself exposed, unclothed. A cruel brightness, which left nothing concealed, bathed him and everything in his workshop which was almost the most highly situated room in Metropolis.

Freder:

Softly.

I wish to be quite alone.

Voice over:

Silently the servants vanished. But all these doors, which closed without the least sound, could also, without the least sound, be opened again to the narrowest chink.

Small pause.

His eyes aching, a smile, a rather bitter smile, drew down the corners of his mouth. He was a treasure which must be guarded as crown jewels. The son of a great father, and the only son.

Freder:

Doubtful.

Really the only one?.

Voice over:

His thoughts stopped again at the exit of the circuit and the vision was there again and the scene and the event.

Pause.

Scene 4: Freder having fun at the Club of the Sons, in the Eternal Gardens.

Reinvigorated.

Voice over:

The "Club of the Sons" was, perhaps, one of the most beautiful buildings of Metropolis. It was more a district than a house. It embraced theaters, picture-palaces, lecture-rooms and a library in which, every book, printed in all the five continents, was to be found. Race tracks and stadium and the famous "Eternal Gardens."

Slightly humorous.

It contained very extensive dwellings for the young sons of indulgent fathers and it contained the dwellings of faultless male servants and handsome, well-trained female servants.

Almost comic.

Their chief task consisted in nothing but, at all times, to appear delightful and to be incapriciously cheerful; and, with their bewildering costume, their painted faces, and their eye-masks, they resembled delicate dolls of porcelain and brocade, devised by a master-hand.

More serious now, accentuate "victory".

Freder was but a rare visitant to the "Club of the Sons." He preferred his work-shop and the starry chapel in which this organ stood. But when once the desire took him to fling himself into the radiant joyousness of the stadium competitions, he was the most radiant and joyous of all, playing on from victory to victory with the laugh of a young god.

Revealing

On that day too... on that day too.

Pause.

The milk-colored glass ceiling above the Eternal Gardens was an opal in the light which bathed it. Loving little women attended him, waiting roguishly and jealously, from whose fine finger-tips he would eat the fruits he desired.

One was standing aside, mixing him a drink.

From hip to knee billowed sparkling brocade. Slender, bare legs like ivory, in purple, peaked shoes, and pomegranate red mouth.

She smiled so unknowingly down at the beverage that it caused the other girls to laugh aloud.

Infected, Freder also began to laugh.

The laughter induced the friends, for no reason, only because they were young and care-free, to join in the cheerful sound. Like a joyously ringing rainbow, peal upon peal of laughter arched itself gaily above the young people.

Then suddenly Freder turned his head.

His hands, which were resting on the hips of the drink-mixer, lost hold of her.

The laughter ceased, not one of the friends moved. They just stood and looked.

Fast, emotional voice.

The door of the Eternal Gardens had opened and through the door came a procession of children. They were all holding hands. They had dwarfs faces, gray and ancient.

They were little ghostlike skeletons, covered with faded rags and smocks. They had colorless hair and colorless eyes. They walked on emaciated bare feet. Noiselessly they followed their leader.

Small pause. Approving tone.

Their leader was a girl. The austere countenance of the Virgin. The sweet countenance of the mother.

She held a skinny child by each hand.

Her beautiful brow in the diadem of goodness; her voice, pity; every word a song.

She released the children and stretched forward her hand, motioning towards the

friends and saying to the children:

Sparkling star:

Look, these are your brothers!.

Voice over:

And, motioning towards the children, she said to the friends:

Sparkling star:

Look, these are your brothers!.

Voice over:

Explaining.

She waited, stood still and her gaze rested upon Freder.

Fast paced, angry

Then the servants came, the door-keepers came. Between these walls of marble and glass, under the opal dome of the Eternal Gardens, there reigned, for a short time, an unprecedented confusion of noise, indignation and embarrassment.

Calm.

The girl appeared still to be waiting, nobody dared to touch her.

Guilty.

Her eyes rested perpetually on Freder.

Pause.

Then she took her eyes from his and, stooping a little, took the children's hands again, turned and led the procession out.

The door swung to behind her; the servants disappeared with many apologies. All was emptiness and silence. Had not the large number of witnesses perceived the event, they would have been inclined to put it down to hallucination.

Pause.

Near Freder, the little drink-mixer was sobbing uncontrolledly.

Increasing tension.

With a leisurely movement, Freder bent towards her and suddenly twitched the mask, the narrow black mask, from her eyes.

Her hands flew up, clutching, and remained hanging stiffly in the air.

Crucial.

A little painted face stared, horror-stricken at the man. The eyes exposed were senseless, empty.

The Eternal Gardens scintillated. The beautiful beings in it, even if, temporarily, thrown out of balance, shone in their cleanly abundance. The odor of freshness, which pervaded everywhere, was like the breath of a dewy garden.

Critical, enumerating.

Freder looked down at himself. He wore, as all the youths in the "House of the Sons," the white silk, which they wore but once, the soft, supple shoes, with the noiseless soles.

He looked at his friends. He saw these beings who never wearied, unless from sport; who never sweat, unless from sport; who were never out of breath, unless from sport. Beings requiring their joyous games in order that their food and drink might agree with them, in order to be able to sleep well and digest easily.

Rather delicate.

The tables, at which they had all eaten, were laid, as before-hand, with untouched dishes. Wine, golden and purple, embedded in ice or warmth, was there, proffering itself, like the loving little women.

Now the music was playing again. It had been silenced when the girlish voice spoke the five soft words:

Sparkling star:

Look, these are your brothers!.

Voice over:

And once more, with her eyes resting on Freder:

Sparkling star:

Look, these are your brothers!.

Voice over:

Furious.

As one suffocating, Freder sprang up. He dashed the door. He ran along passages and down steps. He came to the entrance.

Pause.

Person 1:

Inquiring.

Who was that girl?.

Voice over:

Angrily.

Perplexed shrugs. Apologies. The occurrence was inexcusable, the servants knew it.

Dismissals, in plenty, would be distributed.

The Major Domo was pale with anger.

Relieved.

But Freder, gazing into space, said:

Freder:

A tad insecure.

I do not wish that anyone should suffer for what has happened. Nobody is to be dismissed ... I ... do not wish it ...

Voice over:

The Major Domo bowed in silence. He was accustomed to whims in the "Club of the Sons.". And so he asked:

Major Domo:

Inquiring.

Who is the girl... Can nobody tell me?.

Voice over:

Powerful.

Freder remained silent. He shook his head. First slowly, then violently.

Freder:

Furious.

No one does. Do not set a bloodhound on the track of a sacred, white hind.

Nobody is to inquire about her.

Resolution

Voice over:

Relieved.

He felt the soulless glance of the strange, hired person upon his face. He felt himself poor and besmirched. In an ill-temper which rendered him as wretched as though he had poison in his veins, he left the club.

He walked home as though going into exile. He shut himself up in his workroom and worked. At nights he clung to his instrument and forced the monstrous solitude of Jupiter and Saturn down to him.

Nothing could help him, nothing!

Pause, final, understandable

In an agonizing blissful omnipresence stood, before his vision the austere countenance of the virgin, the sweet countenance of the mother.

And a voice spoke:

Sparkling star:

Look, these are your brothers.

Voice over:

Lovingly.

And the glory of the heavens was nothing, and the intoxication of work was nothing.

And the conflagration which wiped out the sea could not wipe out the soft voice of the girl:

Sparkling star:

Look, these are your brothers!

Freder:

Begging.

My God..., my God...