

REVOLUTION UNDERGROUND

A screenplay by

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INT. JOSEPH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It is a dingy, 60's era modernist affair. Exposed pipes, soiled bare walls, dirty old furniture (where there is furniture, and there isn't much). It is the home of one JOSEPH HUXLEY, and thus it is at least neat, save for the dinner refuse on the eating table.

Joseph is an intellect of sorts, an avid reader, and a dark, depressing sort of conversationalist, who would just as soon not talk anyway. He sits on the worn couch, sipping coffee from a small can that once contained the coffee powder. His laptop is open on the coffee table in front of him. He leans back and watches a spot where a TV would most likely be placed if there were one.

Instead there is only bare wall, and through this bare wall, sounds are coming from the neighboring apartment. A MAN is screaming psychotic nonsense, and a WOMAN is shrieking and weeping with great emotional distress. It would seem she is being handled quite roughly, though no actual hitting seems to be occurring.

MAN

(muffled)

The cloak of shadows, he said
to them! The cloak of night's
mist and weave of the fog. The
wolf's fibers and the dancing
shawl of the seven wonders!

There is a loud crash like furniture being upended. The shrieking raises to account for it.

There is a brief semi-silence, and the woman momentarily becomes intelligible.

WOMAN

Put it down Jimmy. You don't
gotta do nothing here, just put
the gun down, we can all-

There is another crash, and she trails off into another shriek and more sobbing.

MAN

All are inferior! And they are
ribbons! They are ribbons!
Ribbons!

There is a series of crashes, each accented with a scream from the male voice. The shrieking rises in accompaniment.

MAN

Ribbons! Ribbons! Ribbons!

WOMAN

No! No no no no!

Suddenly the crashing stops, the woman's sobbing relaxes.

MAN

It is not fabric of man.

WOMAN

NO!

A gunshot. At the sound, Joseph sits up rigidly and sets down his coffee, a look of moderate-to-heavy concern on his face. There is a long silence, then the woman's voice is heard, not shrieking, but in long wailing sobs.

The shock drains from Joseph, and he picks up his coffee. He goes to drink it, then stops, and looks at it as if suddenly realizing he is drinking coffee from a coffee can, and sets it down.

He focuses on the laptop, hovering over the keys, and then he types.

JOSEPH (V.O.)

Something happened, just now.
Something awful and horrific.
The sort of thing that makes
you question humanity. It just
happened, right over the wall
in apartment 4H.

EXT. A RESTAURANT - DAY

A small sandwich shop in Basra. People and small cars crowd the streets.

JOSEPH (V.O.)

Something happened last week
too, in Basra. An even bigger
thing in fact.

The shop explodes, sending bodies and debris into the air. The crowd rushes away, screaming violently, many of them badly wounded. Sirens wail in the distance.

EXT. A HALLWAY - DAY

A trench-coated man with dark features runs down the hall, as two officially dressed men chase after him. He is unshaven with dark curly hair and bears a wild-eyed expression. It is a dingy cinder block hall, with

forbidding concrete everywhere, and industrial lamps hanging from a ceiling thick with steel framework.

JOSEPH (V.O.)

And again in Vienna not two days ago. Not so big as the last, but an important thing nonetheless.

The man turns the corner ahead of him is a doorway, through which he can see a

STAGE

In a large auditorium. Several national flags hang behind an official, diplomatic-looking figure giving a speech. Assorted national leaders watch in the darkness. The trench-coated man approaches the door, draws a gun, and shoots the speaking ambassador several times before the guards tackle him. The audience descends into chaos.

INT. A HOSPITAL - DAY

It is an African hospital. Dirty, run down, and full of people dieing of things you forgot about in biology class. A young African boy, barely awake, covered in sores and parasites, lies in a bed beneath a window. He is struggling up onto his side.

JOSEPH (V.O.)

And in Africa, they seem to have a propensity for things. They happen all the time.

The boy manages to lean over the side of the bed in time to regurgitate most of his bodyweight in bile into a bin on the floor.

INT. JOSEPH'S APPARTMENT - NIGHT

Joseph continues to type.

JOSEPH (V.O.)

Big, terrible things that haunt you in the produce section and at the salon and keep you up at night. Things that make you question humanity. And the only question I can ask is when did I stop giving a damn?

EXT. OUR FAITHFUL SQUARE - DAY

A cozy park area in a city block of a small urban area. Shops of all sorts, cafes, even the occasional antique church line the streets surrounding it, large commercial buildings towering off in the background.

Today the streets are not as peaceful as usual. Crowds of high-school-age protesters march around the square. Their movement is essentially orderly, and there doesn't seem to be any damage caused, but it is clear they are agitated. They scream unintelligible slogans, their bodies tense with wrath. All of them wear white t-shirts emblazoned with "REVOLUTION UNDERGROUND" and a logo that seems vaguely to be a cross between a peace sign and a swastika.

Most carry pickets emblazoned with odd slogans. They follow no theme, many don't fit the bill of a public protest, and some seem to be well known corporate slogans or movie taglines: "Masturbation is not a crime," "Soylent Green is People," "Think Different," "OMGWTF," "Video murdered the radio star," "I am not a virgin," "This is not a sign," "Ignorance is a bitch," "How many people have to die?," "There is no spoon," "Stand up for your 16th amendment rights."

On top of the crowd, one boy sits, crowd surfing upright, with a megaphone, barking similar things to the rest of the crowd. His name is Emanuel Geman, but everyone calls him EEMIN GEEMIN.

JOSEPH (V.O.)

I remember when. It was back during The Revolution Underground, when they were all killing themselves over \$5 t-shirts. Yet even will admit that at its peak it had a sort of boyish glory to it. Marching in file and getting on like the whole world cared. Even their founding philosopher would never have guessed.

INT. THE SOPHISTICATE - DAY

The Sophisticate is a local café for sophisticates, as the name states. Its decorated in early faux jazz-club. Copies of the Times, and even the Morning Star circulate freely, the vegetables in the hors d'oeuvres are free range and fed on imported mineral water.

The patrons of the café are all sitting on the floor to one side of the room. On the other side standing on a long

table, is an old homeless man, or PHILOSOPHER, in worn clothes. He carries a sawed-off shotgun at his side, and is reading from a white paper in a British courtier accent. His eyes seem almost shut as he glances down at the paper.

PHILOSOPHER

The cloak of shadows, he said
to them. The cloak of night's
mist and weave of the fog. The
wolf's fibers and the dancing
shawl of the seven wonders. All
are inferior, said Jerome to
the Tum Tum Trees, All are
ribbons; but shadows that melt
and die with the sun.

He pauses in reflection, and with his eyes so closed to begin with, he now appears to be sleeping.

Moments pass, and the audience begins to get restless. A balding middle-aged man near the back rises to his knees, and begins clapping. Soon the audience tentatively joins in.

The philosopher first opens one eye, then the other, both wide with indignation. He points the shotgun at the ceiling and fires. The crowd screams and covers their heads. He waits for their silence, then his eyes return to their nearly shut state.

PHILOSOPHER

(self-righteously)

I'm not finished.

(beat)

He laid at their feet the weave
of Lazarus, a sheath of the
skin of the arm of Beowulf, and
the shawl of the Russian
Tigress.

JOSEPH (V.O)

The public didn't receive his
message well at first, but the
police had more foresight. They
gave him a 21-gun salute.

A SWAT team breaks through the door, and fires exactly 21 shots into the back of the philosopher.

EXT. THE SOPHISTICATE - DAY

Police vehicles crowd the street as officers coat the area in yellow tape. The SWAT team stands around in groups, dangling their helmets by the chin strap in their hands.

Just behind the tape, the café patrons are making tearful reunions with their family. In the background, the sun sets behind the buildings lining Our Faithful Square.

JOSEPH (V.O.)

A few tears were shed, the
captive audience embraced their
children, and then they
wandered home to sleep off the
drunken happenings of the day.
The sun set over Our Faithful
Square, the calendar turned a
page, and it began.

INT. A CLASSROOM - DAY

A bell rings.

Students are seated about the classroom in an assortment of comfortable, unorthodox positions. Many sit on desks, some have their feet up. A TEACHER moves to the front of the room.

A 17 year old Joseph sits in the front row, next to a girl named Gerilyn, GERRI for short. She is a sweet-looking sort of girl, with big, pretty eyes, and well figured. Her clothing is neo-hippie. Her greatest appeal, however, is her capacity for abject silliness in the name of good fun.

TEACHER

Hello everyone, welcome back.
I'm sure your all just itching
to get to your first classes of
the year, so lets get the
attendance done.

He cranes his neck to see the people in the back.

TEACHER

I think I know most of the
people here . . .

He looks at Gerri and Joseph.

TEACHER

Are you two new?

JOSEPH

Yeah, we transferred in from
Innocence High.

TEACHER

That's near Northland, right?

GERRI
 (nodding)
 South of Northland.

TEACHER
 And what's your name?

GERRI
 Gerri.

The teacher turns to his attendance.

TEACHER
 Last name?

GERRI
 Chopin.

He checks his list and ticks her off.

TEACHER
 (To Joseph)
 And you?

JOSEPH
 Joseph. Huxley.

The teacher checks him off on the list.

TEACHER
 Well, welcome.

EXT. THE PATIO - DAY

A large cement patio adjoins the school cafeteria. It is populated with a few benches, some round picnic tables, and a large crowd of students. Joseph emerges from the cafeteria door, and looks around. He spots Gerri socializing with a group of similar girls. He begins to walk over, and trips over a long black boot.

The boot is on the leg of a girl named GRENDELLA, who sits on one of the benches. In many ways your average emotional teen, her look goes beyond goth; it is a romanticized raver/heroin-addict motif. She smirks at his incident.

Joseph picks himself up.

JOSEPH
 Sorry.

GRENDELLA
No, no, its fine. That's the
only excitement I've had all
day.

JOSEPH
Heh. Did I mess up your boots?

GRENDELLA
Eh, don't worry about it. You
new?

JOSEPH
Yeah.

She sticks out a hand.

GRENDELLA
They call me Grendella.

JOSEPH
Grendella?

He shakes her hand.

GRENDELLA
I don't know. It's some kind of
medieval shit. Who are you?

JOSEPH
Joseph, good to meet you.

GRENDELLA
You to Joe.

JOSEPH
I kinda prefer Joseph.

She stares at him.

GRENDELLA
Joe.

Joe stares back for a moment, then nods subjectively. He
takes a seat on the ground.

GRENDELLA
So what brings you here?

JOSEPH
Oh, higher education, the noble
pursuit of knowledge, the
usual. You?

GRENDELLA

I'm mostly in it for the sex
and booze, but I catch a class
or two.

A tall boy in a long coat (TANK, 17) approaches from behind. He is simple of mind and slack of jaw and dresses to make Grendella look like a bride. He enjoys waxing philosophical, but his real drive is easy pleasure.

TANK

Babe you gotta give me some
time to get here. We don't
scare the new kids together all
we got left is the sex.

Joe looks up at him.

JOSEPH

Wow, you look different.

TANK

(bewildered)

Wow, you look like everyone
else.

GRENDELLA

Average Joe here kicked me in
the boots.

He sits by her, and she slides into his lap. He strokes her, pet-like.

TANK

You been knocking boots with my
girl?

He snorts.

TANK

Don't answer that, it was crap.
They call me tank, because I'm
hard core.

He extends a hand.

JOSEPH

They call me Average Joe Huxley
because I look like everyone
else.

TANK

Naturally. Who else you met?

JOSEPH
Practically no one.

TANK
That kid right there . . .

He points. HOWIE BEALE, a respectable looking young boy with a crew cut, is in the throes of a marvelously entertaining story before a group of girls.

TANK
. . . Howie Beale, writes for
the school rag. Killer shit,
only reading that gets done
around here. That guy . . .

He points again. A skinny, pale, rodent-like boy in a green, onion-shaped hat of seemingly Arab origin is playing poker with others of similar aspect and far different headgear.

TANK
. . . is onion head. He wears
that hat, and that's about all
there is to it, so just respect
it, ok?

JOSEPH
Uh, yeah, sure thing.

TANK
You're a good man, I can tell.
Now, that guy . . .

He points to where Eeman Geeman is sitting alone, sipping coffee behind dark sunglasses, wearing a black beret.

Tank leans into Grendella's ear.

TANK
(Thick French Accent)
. . . Emanuel Geman.

He straightens back up.

TANK
We call him Eeman Geeman cuz
he's crazy, which would be fine
if he weren't such an asshole
about it.

JOSEPH
Yeah, I know the feeling.

TANK

Well, that's your cast of
characters right there, at
least the important ones. Then
again who knows who might
stumble into the story, right?
That's why you gotta keep an
open mind.

Joseph stares, then points in Eeman's Direction

JOSEPH

And he's crazy?

TANK

Go talk to him, If you've
gotta, I've done my part.