

Generic Radio Workshop Script Library (BACK)**Series: X Minus One****Show: Tunnel Under the World****Date: Mar 14 1956**CAST:

NBC ANNOUNCER

ANNOUNCER

NARRATOR

GUY BURCKHARDT, who wakes up screaming

MARY BURCKHARDT, Guy's wife

HENRY SWANSON, Guy's friend

1ST SPEAKER (1 line)

MISS HORN, Guy's secretary

2ND SPEAKER (1 line)

DORCHIN, head of the research institute

NBC ANNCR: In just a moment, "X Minus One." But first-- Your home will be filled with the voices of top entertainers and fascinating experts in the homemaking field tomorrow, when Virginia Graham and Mike Wallace bring you another broadcast of NBC's "Weekday." Among the special guests is Rita Gam, Hollywood star and one of Grace Kelly's prospective bridesmaids. And Rita will be joined by a singer whose unique style is well-known to his many fans, Johnnie Ray. Then, from Britain, it's actor Trevor Howard. Meet them all tomorrow when NBC's "Weekday" brings you another day of fact and fun on this station. Now stay tuned for "X Minus One" on NBC.

SFX: HIGH-PITCHED ELECTRONIC HUM ... JOINED BY ELECTRONIC BEEPING IN AGREEMENT WITH COUNTDOWN

ANNOUNCER: Countdown for blast-off. X minus five, four, three, two. X minus one. Fire.

SFX: A MOMENT'S SILENCE ... THEN ROCKET SHIP BLASTS OFF

MFX: BUILDS VERTIGINOUSLY TO A CLIMAX ... THEN IN BG

ANNOUNCER: From the far horizons of the unknown come transcribed tales of new dimensions in time and space. These are stories of the future, adventures in which you'll live in a million could-be years on a thousand maybe worlds. The National Broadcasting Company, in cooperation with Galaxy Science Fiction Magazine, presents --

VOICE: (HEAVY ECHO) X Minus One!

MFX: TO A CLIMAX ... THEN OUT

ANNOUNCER: Tonight, a story by Frederik Pohl -- "Tunnel Under the World."

MFX: BRIEF OMINOUS INTRO ... THEN IN BG

NARRATOR: On the morning of June fifteenth, Guy Burckhardt woke up screaming.

SFX: EXPLOSION

GUY: (SCREAMS)

NARRATOR: It was more real than any dream he had ever had in his life. He could still hear and feel that sharp, metal-ripping explosion, that searing wave of heat. He sat up. [X]

GUY: Mary? Mary? (NO ANSWER, PANICS) Mary! Mary! Where are you?!

SFX: MARY'S HURRIED FOOTSTEPS APPROACH

MARY: Guy? What's wrong? You're trembling.

GUY: Where were you?

MARY: In the kitchen, cooking breakfast. What is it?

GUY: I don't know. A dream, I guess. An explosion--

MARY: Did you say an explosion?

GUY: Yes.

MARY: But that's the dream I had.

GUY: What?

MARY: I dreamed there was a big explosion and - and then something sort of hit me on the head.

GUY: Holy smokes. Maybe there really was some sort of explosion and it started us dreaming.

MARY: (CHUCKLES, LIGHTLY) Well, there'll be an explosion down at your office if you don't hurry and get to work.

MFx: BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, THEN GENTLY OUT BY [X]

NARRATOR: Coming in on the bus, Burckhardt watched to see if there was any evidence of an explosion. There wasn't. If anything, the town looked better than ever. The only thing that seemed strange to him was the fact that none of the usual crowd was on the bus. [X]

SFX: SNEAK IN BUS ENGINE ... CONTINUES IN BG

NARRATOR: He was a little relieved when his old pal Henry Swanson finally got on.

SFX: BUS ENGINE FILLS A PAUSE ... CONTINUES IN BG

HENRY: Excuse me.

GUY: Oh, Henry--

HENRY: (CURT) Pardon me, sir.

GUY: (CHUCKLES) Henry, what's the matter with you? It's me, Guy Burckhardt.

HENRY: Burckhardt? Sorry, I don't believe we've met.

GUY: What? Henry, for Pete's sake, it's me.

HENRY: (MOVING OFF) If you'll excuse me, this is my stop.

GUY: (TO HIMSELF) Well, I'll be-- How do you like that?

MFX: BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, THEN GENTLY OUT BY [X]

NARRATOR: Guy Burckhardt got off in front of the gigantic Contro Chemical building, took the elevator to the ninety-eighth floor, where he had worked in the accounting department for twelve years. It wasn't until he was almost at his floor that he realized the speaker was not playing the usual commercials. [X]

SFX: HUM OF ELEVATOR ... CONTINUES IN BG

1ST SPEAKER: Friends, are you happy with your present home freezer? Of course not! Well, the answer to your problems is a Feckle Freezer. Feckle Freezers are better freezers! Most wives would do anything for a Feckle Freezer. Friends, are you happy with your present home freezer?

SFX: ELEVATOR OUT ABRUPTLY ... ELEVATOR DOOR SLIDES OPEN ... GUY'S FOOTSTEPS DOWN THE HALL

GUY: Morning, Miss Horn.

MISS HORN: Good morning, Mr. Burckhardt.

GUY: Well! New hairdo I see, huh?

MISS HORN: Uh, why, yes. Do you like it?

GUY: Makes a lot of difference in your appearance. Uh, Mr. Barth in?

MISS HORN: Uh, no, sir. He had an appointment with Mr. Dorchin of the Human Research Institute.

GUY: Today? But today's the fifteenth of June. He has to sign the quarterly statement.

MISS HORN: He said he wouldn't be in.

GUY: Huh. That's mighty peculiar.

MISS HORN: Yes, sir.

GUY: Oh, by the way, Miss Horn, what the devil is a Feckle Freezer?

MISS HORN: A Feckle Freezer?

GUY: There's some new copy on the elevator commercial. Dorchin must've landed another account. Feckle Freezers.

MISS HORN: I really don't know, Mr. Burckhardt.

GUY: Huh. (BEAT) It's a funny day. Can't quite put my finger on it but there's something strange going on.

MFX: BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, THEN GENTLY OUT BY [X]

NARRATOR: He couldn't shake the thought out of his mind. It persisted all through the day and through dinner. He was still brooding as he and Mary got ready for bed. [X]

MARY: Tired, dear?

GUY: Hm? Oh, uh, no.

MARY: Anything wrong?

GUY: I don't know.

MARY: Well, I guess I'll get a good night's sleep. Coming?

GUY: I think I'll sit up and read for a while.

MARY: (YAWNS) Good night, darling.

GUY: Good night, dear.

MFx: BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, OUT AT [X]

NARRATOR: At exactly midnight, Guy Burckhardt lapsed into a sudden deep sleep. And the following morning, he woke up. Screaming. [X]

SFX: EXPLOSION

GUY: (SCREAMS)

MARY: Darling, what is it? What's wrong?

GUY: I-- Oh. Nothing. Bad dream, I guess.

MARY: Oh, you gave me such a shock.

GUY: (EXHALES) I seem to be having a lot of nightmares lately.

MARY: Really?

GUY: Yes. The one I had yesterday. This was the same. A big explosion and then -- nothing.

MARY: (PUZZLED) You had a dream yesterday?

GUY: Well, of course I did. You had the same sort of dream.

MARY: I? (CHUCKLES) Guy, you're mistaken. I - I don't remember dreaming.

GUY: Oh, now, Mary, you told me--

MARY: Guy, you're mistaken.

GUY: But, Mary--

MARY: (LIGHTLY) Maybe you dreamed I had a dream. Maybe--

GUY: Well, yes, I might have done that, I suppose. Everything did seem sort of strange yesterday.

MARY: That's probably it. You better get dressed, dear. Today's the fifteenth. That's when the--

GUY: Fifteenth?!

MARY: Yes.

GUY: Well, then it must have been a dream. Because yesterday was the fifteenth.

MFx: BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, OUT AT [X]

NARRATOR:

Guy Burckhardt got up, dressed, ate breakfast and took the usual bus to work. Once again, everything seemed even brighter and newer than usual. And, once again, he was puzzled when he noticed none of the old crowd on the bus. [X]

SFX: BUS ENGINE ... CONTINUES IN BG

HENRY: Pardon me, please.

GUY: Well, look, don't shove so-- I-- Oh, morning, Henry.

HENRY: (CURT) Morning. (LOW VOICE, URGENT) For God's sake, don't talk to me.

GUY: (LOW VOICE, CONFUSED) Well, what is it? You being followed or something?

HENRY: (LOW) Don't you know? I was sure you remembered.

GUY: (LOW) Remembered what?

HENRY: (LOW) I can't talk. (LOUD) Er, this is my stop. Will you excuse me, please?

GUY: Well, Henry-- Henry, for Pete's sake--!

MFx: BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, OUT AT [X]

NARRATOR: As in yesterday's dream, Guy Burckhardt got off at his stop and took the elevator to the ninety-eighth floor. The speaker in the elevator purred a new commercial this time. [X]

SFX: HUM OF ELEVATOR ... CONTINUES IN BG

2ND SPEAKER: (SEDUCTIVE) Marlin Cigarettes -- They're sanitized. Does your present cigarette make your throat feel raspy and unpleasant? Marlin Cigarettes contain a miraculous new drug which actually gives you the sensation of smooth, creamy smoke. Marlin Cigarettes. Marlin Cigarettes.

SFX: ELEVATOR OUT ABRUPTLY ... ELEVATOR DOOR SLIDES OPEN AND SHUT ... GUY'S FOOTSTEPS DOWN THE HALL, CONTINUES IN BG

NARRATOR: He walked down the marble corridor to his office.

SFX: GUY'S FOOTSTEPS OUT

MISS HORN: Good morning, Mr. Burckhardt.

GUY: Good morning, Miss Horn.

MISS HORN: You like my new hairdo?

GUY: (BEAT, UNEASY) Uhhh, yes. Uh, is Mr. Barth in?

MISS HORN: Uh, no, sir. He had an ...

GUY & MS. H: ... appointment with Mr. Dorchin at the Research Institute.

GUY: I know.

MISS HORN: (SURPRISED) You know?

GUY: Well, I guessed it, anyway. And today is the fifteenth of June and he won't be here to sign the quarterly statement. And I'm going nuts! Let

me have a cigarette, will you?

MISS HORN: Uh, yes, sir. (BEAT) Try one of these. They're Marlins.

GUY: (IRRITATED) I never heard of Marlins before today. What are we, a bunch of guinea pigs [for Dorchin's new advertising accounts]?

MISS HORN: (INNOCENT) Something wrong, Mr. Burckhardt?

GUY: (SARCASTIC) Wro-ong? Ho ho. Perish the thought, Miss Horn, perish the thought.

AFX: OMINOUS BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, OUT AT [X]

NARRATOR: He went to his desk and stared at the mail. Before he opened it, he knew that the Factory Distributors envelope contained an order for twelve new electronic computers. He knew that the Development Journal contained an article about a new method of trans-printing selected brain circuits of human engineers onto the electric brain circuits of robot engineers to facilitate the operation of automatic factories. He knew that there was a complaint from Finebeck & Sons about the Contro Chemicals' newest household robot circuit. After a long while, he forced himself to open them. They were exactly as he suspected. [X]

SFX: PHONE RINGS ... RECEIVER UP

GUY: Hello?

HENRY: (FILTER, NERVOUS) This is Swanson. Henry Swanson.

GUY: What is it?

HENRY: (FILTER) Do you remember?

GUY: Remember what?

HENRY: (FILTER) Just remember.

GUY: All right, now, listen, Henry, let's stop playing games. Yesterday, either I was dreaming or you snubbed me on the bus. Today, the same thing happens.

HENRY: (FILTER, RELIEVED SIGH) Oh, you do remember. Thank heavens. I thought so when I saw you but I couldn't be sure.

GUY: Now, what is it you want?

HENRY: (FILTER) Listen. Tomorrow morning, when I get off the bus, you get off with me. Be casual. They may be watching.

GUY: Who may be watching?

SFX: LINE IS DISCONNECTED

GUY: Swanson?!

SFX: GUY RATTLES THE CRADLE

GUY: Hello?!

SFX: RECEIVER DOWN ... BUZZER BUZZES, BEAT, THEN OFFICE DOOR OPENS

MISS HORN: You buzzed, Mr. Burckhardt?

GUY: Yes, I'm still out of cigarettes. Would you buy me a pack of Kelvins?

MISS HORN: (INCREASINGLY PERSUASIVE AND SEDUCTIVE AS SCENE UNFOLDS) Wouldn't you rather have Marlins?

GUY: I smoke Kelvins.

MISS HORN: But, Mr. Burckhardt, Marlins have that soft, creamy smoke that's so soothing to your throat.

GUY: (DISMISSIVE) Ohhh, you really believe that stuff?

MISS HORN: Well, it's true. I wouldn't say this, Mr. Burckhardt, except that-- Well, I've gotten to know you pretty well and I've grown to admire you so much.

GUY: (DISTURBED BUT TRIES TO HIDE IT) I see.

MISS HORN: Uh, would you mind, Mr. Burckhardt, if I told you that, for months now, I've wanted to-- Well, just comfort you. I know how troubled you've been.

GUY: Well, you've, uh, never mentioned your feelings before, Miss Horn.

MISS HORN: April. (CHUCKLES WARMLY) My first name's April.

GUY: Uh huh. Well, that's a pretty name.

MISS HORN: You see, I do have your welfare at heart. That's why, when I see you smoking Kelvins, and I know Marlins are so much better-- Won't you let me buy some of them for you, huh?

GUY: Well, I - suppose so. (CASUALLY) Why not? Here, bring me a carton.

MISS HORN: (PLEASED) Oh. Thank you, Mr. Burckhardt. (LOVINGLY) Guy.

GUY: I, uh, I think you ought to go.

MISS HORN: (PLAYFUL) I'll be back.

AFX: OMINOUS BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, OUT AT [X]

NARRATOR: There was something wrong. Something definitely peculiar about what was happening. The call from Henry Swanson; the strange behavior of his secretary Miss Horn; these new products; the dream. Guy Burckhardt went home that night - feeling like a man in a nightmare. [X]

SFX: DOOR OPENS ... FOOTSTEPS IN

MARY: That you, dear?

SFX: DOOR SHUTS

GUY: (WITH A WEARY SIGH) It's me.

MARY: Did you have a good day?

GUY: Fair.

MARY:

Oh, before you sit down, will you go down in the cellar and put in a new fuse? The switch in the hall closet blew out. I shut it off.

GUY: Okay.

MARY: Supper'll be ready in a minute so don't start fooling around with that old boat hull you've been building.

GUY: I won't.

SFX: GUY'S FOOTSTEPS TO CELLAR DOOR WHICH OPENS AND SHUTS ... GUY'S FOOTSTEPS DOWN STAIRS TO CELLAR

MFx: BRIDGE ... THEN OUT

SFX: (SLIGHT CELLAR ECHO ON VOICES IN THIS SCENE)

GUY: (HUMS TO HIMSELF, THEN CALLS URGENTLY) Mary?! Mary?!

SFX: CELLAR DOOR OPENS OFF

MARY: (CALLS, FROM OFF) What is it?

GUY: Come down here! Hurry up!

SFX: MARY'S HURRIED FOOTSTEPS DOWN CELLAR STAIRS

MARY: (CLOSER) What is it?

GUY: I don't know. I'm not sure. I was looking for a fuse and I thought maybe I'd dropped one under the boat hull so I scratched around. Look. Let me put the flashlight on it.

MARY: (BEAT) Well?

GUY: Look at the floor.

MARY: Well, what about the floor?

GUY: It's supposed to be cement.

MARY: Well?

GUY: Well, it's copper. There's a thin layer of cement but underneath it's metal. Look here.

SFX: SCRAPES CEMENT WITH TOOL

GUY: Underneath the concrete, more metal. And, here, on the wall.

SFX: CHIPS AWAY AT WALL WITH TOOL

GUY: You see? Metal. Metal under the floor, behind the walls, everywhere!

MARY: Well, I - I don't really understand.

GUY: Mary, I know this sounds crazy but somebody, for reasons I can't even begin to guess, has taken this house and replaced it with a clever imitation.

MARY: Guy!

GUY: Honey, I'm gonna look around a little more.

MARY: Well, your dinner'll be ready--

GUY: All right, save it for me. There are a couple of things I've got to figure out.

MFX: BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, OUT AT [X]

NARRATOR: The following morning, Guy Burckhardt woke up, screaming. He dragged himself into the kitchen where his wife Mary was preparing breakfast and discovered it was still - June fifteenth. [X]

SFX: KITCHEN DOOR OPENS

GUY: (URGENT) Mary? Where's the morning paper? Where is it?

MARY: Outside the door, I guess.

SFX: GUY'S HURRIED FOOTSTEPS TO DOOR WHICH OPENS ... NEWSPAPER PICKED UP AND UNFOLDED

GUY: (AS HE EXPECTED) Uh huh. June fifteenth.

MARY: You'd better hurry, dear. Today's the day Mr. Barth fills out the quarterly tax return.

GUY: Oh, no, it isn't.

MARY: What?

GUY: He won't be there. He'll be at a meeting with that crackpot Dorchin at the Human Research Institute.

MARY: Mr. Dorchin?

GUY: He'll be there. And Miss Horn will have a new hairdo, and the elevator will be selling some new product, and Swanson--

MARY: (BEAT) What about Swanson?

GUY: (REMEMBERS, TO HIMSELF) Swanson, he said-- I wonder if it's going to be the same today, or whether--

MARY: Guy, what in the world are you talking about?

GUY: Huh? (QUICKLY) Uh, nothing, never mind. Where's my coat?

MARY: You haven't had any breakfast yet.

GUY: I don't want to miss my bus. I'll see ya tonight.

MFX: BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, OUT AT [X]

NARRATOR: Guy Burckhardt got on his bus. There were the same unfamiliar faces, the same unusually new-looking buildings, the same unusually bright sunshine. And on the customary corner, Henry Swanson, pale and furtive, climbed aboard. [X]

SFX: BUS ENGINE ... CONTINUES IN BG

HENRY: Uh, excuse me, sir.

GUY: It's quite all right.

HENRY: (LOW VOICE) Do you remember the phone call?

GUY: (LOW) Yes.

HENRY: (LOW) Oh, thank heaven. Get off at the next corner and follow me.

GUY: (LOW) Where are you going?

HENRY: (LOW) There's an excavation for a building about a block down. Make sure you aren't followed. I'll go first.

MFX: BRIDGE

SFX: GUY'S FOOTSTEPS DOWN SIDEWALK

HENRY: (OFF) Burckhardt? Here, behind the fence.

SFX: GUY'S FOOTSTEPS TO HENRY, THEN OUT

GUY: All right now, Henry. What's this all about?

HENRY: [Just a minute. I want to make sure you weren't followed.

GUY: Followed by whom?

HENRY: By them, of course.

GUY: And just who are "they"?

HENRY: I'm not sure. At first, I thought perhaps they were Russians. Now, I'm beginning to think they're Martians. No humans could have accomplished what they've accomplished.

GUY: Now, wait a minute. Start from the beginning, Henry. What's going on?

HENRY: Look, Burckhardt, peculiar things have been happening to you, right?

GUY: Yes.

HENRY: A lot of your friends are missing, your house seems changed?

GUY: Yeah. There's something stranger than that. The date. Today is June fifteenth. Yet I could swear yesterday was June fifteenth and the day before that.

HENRY: You got it, friend. It's always June fifteenth. And you and I are the only ones who know it.

GUY: But why, Henry? How?

HENRY: I'm not sure. I think it's some sort of mass hypnosis or something.

GUY: Well, why doesn't it work for us? My wife Mary doesn't remember a thing.

HENRY: Somehow when it happened, they missed us. We were protected from the full force of the - rays or whatever they used. Burckhardt, where were you on the night of the fourteenth about midnight?

GUY: Let me see; that was Sunday night.

HENRY: Yes.

GUY: Yeah, I was down in the cellar, under the boat I'm building.

HENRY: And I was in my darkroom developing some pictures.

GUY: This just doesn't make any sense to me. Russians, Martians -- what makes you think that?

HENRY: I've seen them.

GUY: Where?

HENRY: At the end of the tunnel.

GUY: What tunnel?

HENRY: The one they built under Tyler Town.

GUY: A tunnel under Tyler Town?

HENRY: Yes, that's right. It's made out of copper or some alloy.

GUY: Copper? Wait a minute. I found a copper layer under my cellar floor last night.

HENRY: So did I. That's how I discovered it. I found a way to get in, too. It's at the bottom of this excavation.

GUY: Holy mackerel. Henry, why don't we tell the police?

HENRY: Because we can't trust them. Even the police may be Martians in disguise.

GUY: Oh, come on, now. You're being melodramatic.

HENRY: Oh, am I? Well, you just come with me.

GUY: Where?

HENRY: Into the tunnel. I'll show you.

MFx: BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG, OUT AT [X]

NARRATOR: Henry Swanson led Guy Burckhardt to a small hole in the side of the excavation. There, he removed a cut-out piece of metallic substance and they crawled into a dimly-lighted tunnel. They walked for what seemed like two miles until Swanson held his finger to his lips. [X]

SFX: (SLIGHT ECHO ON VOICES IN TUNNEL SCENES)

HENRY: We've gotta be quiet now.

GUY: Henry, this is fantastic! They've got a tunnel right under the whole town.

HENRY: Oh, you haven't seen anything yet. There's a room a little farther down. We'll be able to look through a glass in the door.

GUY: Is it safe?

HENRY: It's perfectly safe. Unless one of them comes along. Well, come on.

GUY: Okay.

SFX: THEIR FOOTSTEPS TO DOOR

HENRY: Here. Now, Burckhardt, look through this glass. Now, just so I know I'm not completely insane, tell me what you see.

GUY: (BEAT) Good lord.

HENRY: Well?

GUY: A tremendous panel with dozens of telescreens. In front of each, a servo-robot. They seem to be computing something.

HENRY: Yes, I've watched them. They're evaluating data from the screens.

GUY: [Evaluating?

HENRY: Why not? Each of them has a part of a human mind. Remember that.

GUY: It's against the law to transfer an evaluating circuit from a human brain to a robot.

HENRY: Burckhardt, whoever is conducting this monstrous experiment is operating far outside the law.]

GUY: Have you gotten a chance to look at the data on those screens?

HENRY: No. I've been afraid to go in. There might be a warning circuit somewhere.

GUY: Well, if we knew what those robots were working on, we could go to the authorities.

HENRY: (INHALES) I'll risk it, if you will.

GUY: All right. It's worth a chance. We're lost anyway.

HENRY: (RESIGNED) Okay. Open the door.

SFX: METAL DOOR OPENS ... ELECTRONIC BEEPING, COMPUTERS CLICKING, AND OTHER HIGH TECH AMBIANCE ... CONTINUES IN BG, FADES OUT GENTLY BY [Y]

HENRY: So far, so good.

GUY: Come on. Let's take a look at that data.

HENRY: But don't interfere with the robots.

GUY: Don't worry. Here, let's look at this screen. (PAUSE) Listen to this. (READS) "Tests in the 47-K12 group with Marlin Cigarettes pulled eighty percent using the Soft, Feminine Approach. Indications are that an extension of this approach would influence at least seventy percent nationwide. The Direct Elevator Pitch pulled only ten percent. This should be abandoned and a new series of High-Persuasion Personal Elements introduced." (TO HENRY) Henry, do you know what this means?

HENRY: No, I haven't the faintest idea.

GUY: Well, I don't blame you. This is crazy, but it fits the facts when I think about it. [Y] Do you know who's behind this?

HENRY: Martians?

GUY: No, not Martians, Henry. Humans!

HENRY: What?

GUY: Humans who are interested in developing the perfect propaganda machine.

HENRY: What?

GUY: I don't know who they are or how they've done it but somehow they've taken Tyler Town over.

HENRY: Hypnosis?

GUY: Hypnosis, drugs, maybe some kind of a ray or something. However they do it, what happens is that they let us live through a single day. During that day, they pour all kinds of suggestions and propaganda into us. At the end of the day, they evaluate the results -- see how we've reacted. Then, at midnight, they wash the day out of our minds and the next morning we start the same day over again with different stimuli.

HENRY: [No. I - I can't believe that.

GUY: I know it sounds ridiculous. But think of it. They can run the perfect test -- and on a whole community.] Do you know what that means, Henry? Suppose one man learned how to influence people one hundred percent. Why, in a year, he could sell us anything from freezers to political candidates!

HENRY: (SKEPTICAL) Oh, wait a minute--

GUY: We're guinea pigs, Henry! This whole community is one big test tube for Dorchin's propaganda research.

HENRY: Burckhardt, what do we do?

GUY: I don't know. But somehow we've got to get out of this town and get to the FBI.

HENRY: Do you think we can?

GUY: It's worth a try. Come on.

HENRY: Wait!

GUY: Huh? What is it?

HENRY: Look through the door. There's somebody coming down the tunnel.

GUY: We've got to hide.

HENRY: Behind this circuit box.

GUY: Shhh!

SFX: METAL DOOR OPENS

GUY: (LOW) Good lord, it's Dorchin, the head of the Research Institute.

HENRY: (LOW) Sh, quiet.

SFX: DORCHIN'S FOOTSTEPS WALK IN SLOWLY ... THEN STOP

DORCHIN: (CALLS) All right, Burckhardt. Come out. (NO ANSWER) We know you're in this room. Miss Horn has informed us that you remember. I must warn you

that it's useless to buck us. Come out peacefully. Let our maintenance crew adjust you properly -- so you don't remember from one experiment to the next. It will be quite painless. If you don't come out peacefully, we'll have to get you.

GUY: (LOW) Henry, take this wrench. When I give the word, jump him.

HENRY: (LOW) But he may be armed.

GUY: (LOW) Well, we've got nothing to lose.

DORCHIN: (CALLS) Very well. I'm coming after you.

SFX: DORCHIN'S FOOTSTEPS

GUY: Now!

SFX: SCUFFLE ... CRACK! AS DORCHIN IS HIT ON HEAD BY WRENCH ... BODY CRASHES HEAVILY TO FLOOR

HENRY: Burckhardt, I've killed him!

GUY: No, wait. Get his coat unbuttoned. Maybe his heart is still beating.

SFX: COAT OPENED ... BUZZ OF ELECTRIC SPARKS

GUY: Henry!

HENRY: What is it? What's wrong?

GUY: Look, underneath his coat.

HENRY: (BEAT) Heaven help us.

GUY: It's a robot. A humanoid robot. Designed to look like Dorchin.

HENRY: Come on. Let's get out of here.

DORCHIN: (FILTER) Wait!

HENRY: What's that?

GUY: The loudspeaker.

DORCHIN: (FILTER) I told you it was useless, gentlemen.

GUY: Who are you?

DORCHIN: (FILTER) Mr. Dorchin, naturally. The real Mr. Dorchin.

GUY: What are you trying to do to us?

DORCHIN: (FILTER) Merely, trying to prevent you from damaging my experiment, gentlemen.

GUY: You can't get away with this, Dorchin. Sooner or later, somebody -- the FBI or somebody -- is going to get wind of this madness.

DORCHIN: (FILTER) Really, Burckhardt, you're quite naive. Now, why not be reasonable and let the maintenance crews adjust you?

GUY: And if I refuse? I suppose you'll kill me.

DORCHIN: (FILTER) That would be quite impossible.

GUY: Oh?

DORCHIN: (FILTER) You see, Burckhardt, you're already dead.

GUY: Dead?

DORCHIN: (FILTER) You're shocked. It's quite true. You, and everyone else in this town, were killed by a premature atomic blast at the Contro Chemical plant. The blast occurred at seven A. M. on June fifteenth. That is the last thing imprinted on your minds. That's why you wake up screaming each morning.

GUY: No. It isn't true.

DORCHIN: (FILTER) But it is! What I and my associates did was take the brain circuits from your dead bodies. We stored them in electro-chemical batteries till we had a chance to rebuild the cities and begin our tests.

GUY: Do you think I'd believe a fantastic tale like that?

DORCHIN: (FILTER) I imagine you find it incredible. Of course, we didn't rebuild everything exactly. After all, it only has to last for a single day -- June fifteenth. At midnight, we turn off the power and wash out the memory of the day. You and your friend Swanson, unfortunately, have defective circuits. You remember.

HENRY: Burckhardt, it's no use. We're trapped. Give up.

GUY: No, not me.

HENRY: What can we do?

GUY: We can make a run for it down the tunnel. Come on.

SFX: THEIR HURRIED FOOTSTEPS AWAY ... CONTINUES IN BG

DORCHIN: (FILTER) It's useless, Burckhardt!

GUY: (TO HENRY) Keep going.

DORCHIN: (FILTER) It's useless - useless - useless - (FADES)

MFX: BRIDGE

SFX: [THEIR HURRIED FOOTSTEPS ... THEN IN AGREEMENT WITH FOLLOWING--

HENRY: (WEARY, OUT OF BREATH) Burckhardt! Burckhardt, it's no use! You go ahead. I'm finished.

GUY: (BREATHING HARD) Look, we're almost to the end of the tunnel. I can see a door. Here, I'll help you.

HENRY: I can't.

GUY: Just a little further.

HENRY: No.]

SFX: THEIR FOOTSTEPS SLOW TO A STOP

GUY: Now, now, if this door is open--

SFX: HEAVY METAL DOOR UNLATCHED

GUY: Yes! It opens! (SIGH OF RELIEF)

SFX: HEAVY METAL DOOR SWINGS OPEN CREAKILY

GUY: (BEAT) Oh, no! No! I don't believe it! Swanson, look!

MFX: SNEAKS IN ... CONTINUES IN BG, OUT AT [X]

NARRATOR: They were standing on a ledge of smooth, finished metal. At their feet, the ledge dropped away into a chasm so deep they could not see the bottom. Beyond was only a glare so bright that their eyes could not stand to look into it. And yet, just at the limit of their vision, something towered; something so huge it was almost inconceivable. Something-- [X]

DORCHIN: (GODLIKE) Burckhardt?

GUY: Y-yes?

DORCHIN: This is Dorchin. Now do you understand why it's useless?

NARRATOR: The great looming figure moved closer. It seemed to take shape now. And yet it was so gigantic as to be unbelievable. It came closer. The glare was partially blocked. And then -- Guy Burckhardt knew that the towering shape was none other than Dorchin himself.

DORCHIN: You see how I did it, Burckhardt? I took your brain circuits and had them reduced so they could be transferred to tiny humanoid mannequins. That's what you are, Burckhardt -- a tiny miniature of yourself. And this city -- this whole experiment I'm conducting -- is built on a table top!

SFX: LONG, LOUD EXPLOSION ... FOR PUNCTUATION

MFX: BRIDGE ... THEN IN BG

NARRATOR: It was the morning of June fifteenth, and Guy Burckhardt woke up out of a dream -- screaming.

MFX: TO A SOMBER FINISH ... THEN OUT

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard "X Minus One," presented by the National Broadcasting Company, in cooperation with Galaxy Science Fiction Magazine which this month features another story by tonight's author Frederik Pohl. It's the second installment of his novel "Slave Ship," the story of a world engaged in the wildest of all possible non-wars; where the order of the day was even wilder still: "Spare every animal, and throw the men to the wolves." Galaxy Magazine, on your newsstand today.

MFX: SNEAKS IN UNDER FOLLOWING--

ANNOUNCER: Tonight, by transcription, "X Minus One" has brought you "The Tunnel Under the World," a story from the pages of Galaxy written by Frederik Pohl, a former advertising executive who is now one of our leading science fiction writers. It was adapted for radio by George Lefferts.

Featured in the cast were Les Damon, Ginger Jones, Bob Hastings, Connie Lembcke, Stan Early and Kermit Murdock. Your narrator was John Larkin. Your announcer, Fred Collins. "X Minus One" was directed by Daniel Sutter and is an NBC radio network production.

MFX: TO A FINISH ... THEN OUT