

SELENE

Written by

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Selene is a speculative science fiction drama set on the Moon--but it is not about rockets or AI. It is about limits. Limits of the human body, of political systems, of hope.

This is a film about what happens when we reach for the stars but find ourselves stuck in orbit, repeating the same mistakes. A political argument in disguise.

This script unfolds deliberately: it is quiet, patient, and oppressive; atmosphere, not spectacle; dread, not gore.

The horror seeps in slowly but catastrophically, like the vacuum of space through a compromised spacesuit seam.

FADE IN:

EXT. APOLLO MOON LANDING SITE

Neil Armstrong's footprints. The abandoned lunar lander pad. A sun-bleached American flag. These relics of human achievement have laid undisturbed since 1969, ~100 years ago.

SELENE (V.O.)
Every step we take leaves
footprints. Imprints that last an
eternity.

INTERCUTTING SHOTS of the desolate lunar surface.

SELENE (V.O.)
There is no weather. No clouds, or
wind, or rain. No tide to refresh
the landscape. I've never
experienced the rebirth of Spring
or the decay of Fall--we have no
seasons here.

EXT. PLYMOUTH LUNARY COLONY (PLYMOUTH)

A lunar rover "screeches by," kicking up dust that doesn't so much hang in the air as... linger. There's no word for it. Not here. After all, there's no air here. Day and night doesn't even make practical sense here.

The base comes into view.

The colony didn't rise from the regolith--the surface layer of gray dust and shattered rock, sharp as glass and dry as bone. The colony was swallowed by it. A scattered series of half-buried domes barely visible beneath the dust.

SELENE (V.O.)
Instead, we live on the edge of
survival in a cold and desolate
land.

The colony looks like Bag End, if Bag End had been built by engineers in exile, not hobbits in comfort.

SELENE (V.O.)
Only two things have kept me alive
the last thirty-two years.
(MORE)

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

The dedicated ingenuity of my fellow one hundred and twenty-seven colonists has ensured that no matter the challenge, we've remained safe.

INT. PLYMOUTH

Sterile lighting casts long shadows across jury-rigged equipment. Nothing matches. Everything has been repaired at least once. Duct tape, zip ties, and 3D-printed brackets hold survival together.

This isn't a shiny NASA base--it's lived-in, failing, weary. A place that was never quite meant to survive this long. A slow-motion collapse that can only be slowed, never stopped.

Constant low-level hissing, humming, or intermittent clicking. Machines always working--but always a little wrong.

INTERCUT of colonists engaging in lunar life under VO:

- A botanist brushes lunar-grown tomatoes--their skins puckered and pale, grown under UV bulbs that flicker with age. A note is taped to the bulb: "Replace if/when spares arrive."

- Two engineers kneel beneath a pressure conduit, replacing a cracked seal with a 3D-printed ring. The last one they've got. --*Don't strip it.*

- Lights flicker. A red warning glows--"SCRUBBER LOAD: 84%". It blinks. No one notices.

- Outside, a suited engineer chips at the regolith. Their boot buckles are different colors--one snapped and was replaced from salvage. They pause, catch their breath, and press on.

SELENE (V.O.)

The colony's early years were spent patching cracked hulls with recycled polymer. Now we face the challenge of maintaining oxygen supplies. During these last fifty years the colony could not have survived without the daily sacrifice of the men, women, and even the children that live, work... and die here.

INT. CONGRESSIONAL HEARING, EARTH - DAY - SAME

FLASH TO a congressional chamber that looks almost unchanged since the 2020s. The walls are still wood-paneled, the microphones still wired. Even the suits worn by the Congresspersons haven't changed much.

The biggest difference is the huge screen showing SELENE DARE's (32) pale face, which bears the unmistakable marks of lunar birth: a long, delicate jawline, hollow cheeks-- features shaped not by Earth's gravity, but by decades of weightlessness and sterile air.

As Selene's voice trails off thinking about those who've died, the Senator at the center of the dais prompts her. This is Senator GRADY TOLLIVER (R-TN): mid-60s and the kind of Southern senator who quotes scripture and budget stats in the same breath.

TOLLIVER

And what would that second thing
be, now?

HOLD ON Selene's face on the congressional screen. Her name in a chyron beneath: "Dr. Selene Dare."

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SELENE'S ROOM, PLYMOUTH - SAME

CLOSE UP of Selene, the first human born on the Moon. One of only a handful.

SELENE

I'm sorry?

TOLLIVER (O.S.)

Now, I reckon there's a second part
to that story, isn't there?

Selene is snapped out of her reverie. We pan around her room-- walls lined with half-empty supply crates, a welded-together oxygen monitor beside her bunk, faded pictures of Earth she's never seen. A place lived in, not loved.

SELENE

The ongoing support of the U.S.
Government--which is why I'm
speaking to this Appropriations
Committee today. To ask that you
continue to subsidize the Plymouth
Lunar Colony on a cost plus basis.

(MORE)

SELENE (CONT'D)

So we have the resources we need to survive here.

INTERCUT CONVERSATION: Selene and the Senator

TOLLIVER

You've been asking the same thing for forty-seven years. You want a blank check from the American people.

SELENE

We are the American people. We've been an American colony longer than Puerto Rico has been an American state, which is why we should have our own Senators to advocate for us.

TOLLIVER

And that's the fly in the buttermilk. You see, the people of Puerto Rico pay taxes to the US Treasury. You colonists don't. To keep granting your budgetary requests would contravene the fundamental value that animated this country when it was just colonies: no representation without taxation.

SELENE

We want justice.

TOLLIVER

You don't have the circumstances for justice. You live on a desolate rock. All you can do is depend on American good will to keep your experiment going.

SELENE

This "experiment" is the only home some of us know--*can ever know*.

TOLLIVER

Still, that don't mean you can't earn your keep.

SELENE

If "no taxation without representation" was a founding principle, your inversion turns it into a threat.

TOLLIVER

Seems you're facing enough threats already, Doctor, without ascribing to me ill motives.

(beat)

Tell me about the oxygen problem you're having. Help us understand why the American people should pay to fix it.

Selene looks down at her arm and brushes off some dust.

INT. PLYMOUTH COUNCIL CHAMBER - EARLIER

The colony's central meeting room is part command center, part school gym, part church basement. Mismatched chairs, handheld tablets, and oxygen scrubbers hum in the background.

The colony's vacuum-hardened commander, ALEX REYES (50), brings them to attention.

REYES

Let's stay focused. This oxygen issue isn't hypothetical--it's escalating.

The room is crowded, maybe fifty colonists. Notably they're all ages--some no older than 20 and one person who looks like they're in their seventies. HOLD ON the elderly person for a few moments.

All eyes drift toward the growing dispute between DR. HART (60), a seasoned pragmatist who believes in reconciling with Earth, and MARCUS LI (35), a sharp-tongued firebrand for lunar independence.

DR. HART

The reality is straightforward. We require parts from Earth--seals, foam filters, trace gas compensators. 3D-printed solutions are temporary measures at best.

MARCUS LI

So we're beggars now? That's your plan?

DR. HART

I prefer to think of myself as a realist, Marcus. Earth provides our respiratory capacity.

MARCUS LI
Earth is our leash.

DR. HART
I've spent thirty years maintaining pressure valves in this facility. Thirty years of patches, temporary fixes, emergency repairs. Perhaps we should have recognized earlier that permanence was... optimistic. If we intend to maintain respiratory function beyond this month, Earth remains our only viable option.

MARCUS LI
If we want to live free, we need to cut the cord now.

Murmurs. Some nod. Some scoff.

OLDER COLONIST
I didn't come here to live in a spreadsheet. I came to escape gravity-- ...not crawl under a different kind.

The room divides literally:

- Marcus's supporters cluster near the exit
- Hart's group sits formally in center
- Selene stands alone between them

Pale and nauseated, Selene steadies herself a moment then stands to address the room.

SELENE
Third option. Congressional representation. Get a seat at the table.

A handsome but haggard man watches Selene with approving awe. This is JOHN FIELDING (40s). He takes a puff of an inhaler.

SELENE (CONT'D)
Population of 127. Permanent residents. That's not a mine-- that's a constituency.

REYES
And what would that buy us?

SELENE

A seat at the table. Budgets.
Voting rights. The chance to fix
things without begging or breaking.

MAYA (20) raises her hand--nervous, barely out of training.

MAYA

With respect... the oxygen levels
are dropping now. I've isolated it
to west dome perimeter. Section
14G.

REYES

We'll need to verify before--

SELENE

(to Maya)

How confident are you?

MARCUS

Confident enough to put on a
helmet?

Maya nods sheepishly.

SELENE

(deep breath)

Alright. Let's suit up.

EXT. LUNAR SURFACE

A WIDE FRAME of nothingness that holds a moment or two longer
than is comfortable.

DOWN-ANGLE SHOT - HIGH POV: Selene and Marcus are tiny as
they cross the barren surface, dwarfed by the infrastructure
buried in the dust.

They move like ants over the ribs of a dead beast buried in
ash. Dust halos around their boots. They reach Section 14G.

MARCUS LI

What's this?

He gently taps the exterior insulation. A puff of silver dust
escapes. Suddenly, a micro-seam bursts!

Sound cuts out.

The vacuum does what vacuums do: it devours. For a moment,
nothing stirs.

CRACK—SHHHFFFFFFT!

An EXPLOSIVE DECOMPRESSION chain reaction rips through the exterior paneling like hollow bones splintering under pressure.

The aluminum skin of the outpost buckles outward, warping under the differential.

Inside the adjacent dome, lights flicker. A siren wails. Dust and loose objects spiral into the airlock seam, pulled toward the breach.

Selene slams her body into Marcus, shielding him as a second panel groans. She slaps the emergency patch foam against the rupture--hissing, expanding, hardening.

A beat.

Silence creeps back in--dense and absolute.

SELENE

(to Marcus)

That wasn't structural fatigue.

(on comms)

Seal breach at 14G! We've got loss--
request backup EVA team and full
sensor sweep!

She leans closer. The dust around the crack glitters oddly--too patterned to be debris.

MARCUS LI

Look.

Inside the crack, faint but iridescent--a thread of lunar bacteria webbing across the inner seal.

SELENE (SOFTLY)

That's not just dust.

MARCUS

It looks like rust.

SELENE

Rust?

MARCUS

It's what happens when you've got
air and time. We'll need a sample.

SELENE

And a microscope.

INT. PLYMOUTH, AIRLOCK - SHORTLY AFTER

The pressure stabilizes with a hiss. Dust clings to everything--helmets, boots, skin.

Selene peels off her suit, her undershirt becomes dusted in gray powder.

Marcus struggles with his helmet latch. She helps him with it--gloved hands fumbling--until it pops off. A small cloud of regolith floats up and settles across her chest like ash.

Pale-faced, Selene coughs and bats it away with her hand. She takes a moment or two, then dry heaves in the corner.

MARCUS LI

Selene! Are you OK? Is it the dust?

SELENE

No. I was feeling off before we left.

MARCUS LI

Go to the infirmary.

SELENE

No. I need to get this sample to analysis right away.

COMMS (V.O.)

That'll have to wait, doctor. It's 2 p.m. Eastern.

Selene freezes. Her shoulders drop.

SELENE

Damn.

(to Marcus)

Take it to John in the lab. I'll be back after the committee meeting.

INT. SELENE'S ROOM, PLYMOUTH

We're back on-screen in the hearing. Selene sits frozen in front of the camera, posture stiff.

She brushes lunar dust from her sleeve--a quiet, defiant fingerprint of where she's just been.

SELENE

We actually have a lead on the cause of the explosion.

TOLLIVER

Explosion!? Lord have mercy, sounds like Babel all over again. You build too high in the wrong place, and down it all comes.

SELENE

You don't need to look to God for a cause. The best engineers Earth has produced are working here to find the cause and to fix it. I'm dedicated to finding a solution--to prove we can solve our own challenges.

TOLLIVER

This is exactly the problem. All this talent wasted on economically unproductive work. Plymouth Lunar Colony needs to become a public-private partnership. Less tinkering. More work.

SELENE

This isn't just a colony, Senator. It's not a business. It's a home. While I understand the impetus--

TOLLIVER

--No, I don't believe you do understand. Two trillion dollars, Doctor. And for what?

SELENE

Senator--

TOLLIVER

--I'll be recommending to this committee that the United States recoup its investment by sellin' a majority stake in the Plymouth Lunar Colony to a private company.

(pause)

Maybe Orbis Industries can do what y'all haven't: turn this boondoggle around.

Selene is devastated--*I've let everyone down.*

INT. BIOLAB - LATER

INSERT - Microscope slide view.

Bacteria branch and glisten, forming crystalline threads--fractal and alien.

JOHN (V.O.)
Well... it's organic. Definitely
organic. Which is... interesting.

END INSERT

The lab is cramped, half-lit by green diagnostic LEDs. Cables coil across the floor. A 3D-printed centrifuge whines in the corner.

Selene steps beside John, leaning close. Her body presses against his. Not sexual--but intimate, lived-in.

SELENE
Organic!?

JOHN
Extremophile bacteria, I think.
That would be my... my best guess,
anyway.

SELENE
No movement.

JOHN
The metabolism seems... slow. Very
slow. Like it's adapted to this
environment over... well, who knows
how long.

SELENE
Novel strain?

JOHN
I should be able to confirm that
once the... once the DNA sequencing
runs. And the AI modeling. Should
have results in... few hours,
maybe.

A pause. The glow of Earth through a porthole creeps across Selene's face.

SELENE
It's been a long day.

JOHN
The hearing today? Don't... don't
let it get to you. These things
have a way of... eating at you.

He takes a puff of his inhaler.

SELENE
Everyone is relying on me. Looking
to me. Now... privatization--

JOHN
--You're not responsible for what
other people do.

SELENE
Easy for you. You want out.

John looks wistfully out the window at Earth hanging in the
velvet black.

JOHN
Back on Earth I used to dream in
color.

Selene tilts her head. Quiet.

SELENE
Here?

JOHN
Here? All grays. Like the... like
the surface out there. Everything's
gray.

He nods toward the dust-choked surface.

A chime. One of the machines flashes green. John lifts a
nearby slate and scans the readout.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Confirmed. *Anabact Lunae*.
(beat)
You're not the only life form that
was born on the Moon.

