

STRANGE NEW THINGS

by
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Based on the novel by Michel Faber

10 December, 2015
EPISODE 1 / DRAFT 3

1

EXT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

1

We slowly pull in on a hotel door. Room 561.

2

INT/EXT. HOTEL ROOM / FORECOURT / HOTEL, KAZAKHSTAN - DAY 2

A man and woman make love in the half light of an anonymous hotel room. It's desperate, tender, frightened. They have their eyes locked on one other the whole time.

AFTER -- The man steps up to the window, still naked. As he pulls back the curtains we can make out a tattoo that spreads across his shoulders like a pair of black wings. He opens the curtains --

Morning light streams in, revealing this man as PETER LEIGH (30s), with a buzzcut and an intense gaze. He stares at a mountain range on the horizon, the steppes of Kazakhstan.

Just then Peter spots a car draw up outside the hotel. A CHAUFFEUR gets out and heads into the lobby. Time to go.

With a heavy heart Peter pulls a shirt from a pile of clothes strewn across a chair and gets dressed quickly. He looks back at BEA (30s), watching her sleep.

Peter sits beside Bea. He lifts a strand of hair from her face, she looks so peaceful. He wants to remember her just like this. Bea's eyes flicker open now and she suddenly remembers where she is, or rather why they're here.

PETER

The car's here. I have to go.

Bea sits up and embraces him suddenly. Peter buries his nose in her neck, breathing her in.

PETER (CONT'D)

I wish I could bottle your smell
and take it with me.

Bea climbs out of bed and extricates a red cashmere sweater from the clothes on the chair. She holds it out --

PETER (CONT'D)

You'll freeze.

BEA

I want you to have it.

He takes the sweater and tucks it away in a flight bag.

BEA (CONT'D)

Will I see you again before you go?

He nods emphatically and touches her face. She kisses his hand, nestling as close to him as she possibly can.

3 INT. LOBBY / HOTEL, KAZAKHSTAN - DAY

3

Elevator doors roll back to reveal Peter, the flight bag over his shoulder. He hesitates and stares at the button for the fifth floor, longing to return to Bea. He reaches for it --

CHAUFFEUR (O.S.)

Mr. Leigh?

Peter looks out to see a smartly dressed CHAUFFEUR waiting in the lobby. He's a local man holding a whiteboard branded with the USIC logo and with the name "Peter Leigh" written on it.

Peter smiles tightly, steels himself and steps out of the elevator. He feels the doors pinch shut behind him.

4 INT. HOTEL - DAY

4

Bea steps up to the window and looks out. She watches, hopeful that Peter might change his mind and turn back, but he climbs into the back of the limo. Then the driver gets in and the car pulls away.

Bea steps back and sits on the bed in the silence of the room. She looks lost, lonely, unsure what to do now.

She flicks a look up at the television and spots the remote control on a side table. She switches on CNN --

ON SCREEN: news footage of a mass migration, fields turned to dustbowls, oil tankers backed up outside Europe's ports.

EXPERT (ON TV)

Europe can only support around one fifth of its current population now, which means that 100 million climate migrants will continue heading north. The global rise in temperature is so acute that the heatwaves are buckling the infrastructure of most cities in Western Europe. No one built anything to operate in this kind of heat. Ironically, we've still got plenty of fuel -- oil, gas -- we just can't pipe it out anymore.

Bea stares at the apocalyptic images on screen.

5 INT/EXT. LIMO / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE, KAZAKHSTAN - DAY

5

Peter sits in the back of the limo. The seats are leather, there's a minibar with napkins carrying the USIC logo and miniatures of whisky, rum and gin. The bottles clink together as the car snakes down a steep hillside.

USIC EXECUTIVE
 We've had to bring everything
 forward. This way.

She keeps moving. Peter looks troubled as he follows her.

10 **INT. CORRIDOR - DAY**

10

Peter heads down a corridor, slowing as he spots a group of FIFTEEN MEN receiving instruction in a classroom. He peers in. These guys are all of a similar type, 'roughnecks' dressed in overalls. A CHIEF ENGINEER is demonstrating a piece of heavy duty welding equipment.

USIC EXECUTIVE
 You can join them soon. We just
 need to catch you up first. Make
 sure you're in good enough shape.

Peter notices SY (30s), a wiry looking guy chewing on a fingernail. The Chief Engineer makes a joke and the men laugh. Peter feels distant as he watches them.

11 **INT. MRI SCANNER / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE - DAY**

11

Peter is lying on an MRI scanner in a medical gown. He looks uneasy as he's drawn slowly back into the machine, which is humming noisily.

12 **INT. MEDICAL SUITE / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE - DAY**

12

Peter sits on a metal bench, still wearing his gown. Just then the door opens. A USIC DOCTOR enters and switches on a screen on which he inspects an image of Peter's lungs --

USIC DOCTOR
 We already got your blood work
 back, that's all good. No
 infection.

Peter watches the doctor as he examines another image of Peter's vital organs, checking every inch of his body.

PETER
 So what are you looking for now?

USIC DOCTOR
 We'll need to put you into a
 medically induced coma for the
 flight. There's limited room for
 food and building supplies. We
 can't afford to carry supplies for
 the journey as well.

(MORE)

USIC DOCTOR (CONT'D)
 So I need to know your body can
 take the medication. Don't worry,
 we've never lost anyone in flight.

PETER
 (dry)
 Good to know.

The Doctor continues to look at the MRI scans. Peter watches.

13 **INT. CAFETERIA / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE - NIGHT** 13

Peter eats alone, pushing the food around his plate, while a USIC corporate video plays on a loop in the corner.

ON SCREEN: VIKRAM DANESH (40s) is speaking at a news conference. It's archive footage that plays over shots of the Flight Centre being renovated --

DANESH (ON SCREEN)
*Oasis is our best hope of surviving
 as a species. It's at the edge of
 our solar system, way outside what
 we thought was the zone for
 sustaining any kind of life, but
 it's warmed from the inside by its
 own geothermal processes. That
 means there's a breathable
 atmosphere, gravity similar to that
 on Earth, and a plentiful supply of
 water. So it can sustain life.*

Peter looks up at the screen now. Danesh looks passionate, on fire with the vision he's describing.

DANESH (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)
*We expect to begin sending crews up
 in the next three to five years, to
 establish a base up there...*

Behind Peter, the shuttle is now in position on the launchpad, floodlit by kleig lights.

14 **INT. EXAMINATION ROOM / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE - DAY** 14

A door yawns open in a darkened room. Peter steps inside and the door closes behind him in this sound-proofed room. There's a headset on an empty desk.

USIC TECHNICIAN (OVER SPEAKER)
 Put the headset on please.

Peter steps over to the desk and sits down. He puts the headset on and waits.

USIC TECHNICIAN (OVER CANS) (CONT'D)
 We're going to ask you some questions and we'd like you to try to answer as instinctively as you can. How long can you go without your favourite ice-cream?

Peter looks surprised. He thinks seriously for a moment.

PETER
 I don't have a favourite ice-cream.

USIC TECHNICIAN (OVER CANS)
 What smell reminds you most of your childhood?

PETER
 I don't know. Maybe custard.

USIC TECHNICIAN (OVER CANS)
 Do you like custard?

PETER
 It's OK. These days I tend only to have it on Christmas pudding.

USIC TECHNICIAN (OVER CANS)
 What comes into your mind when you think of Christmas?

PETER
 Christ's Mass, a celebration of Jesus's birth, held at the time of the Roman winter solstice. John Chrysostom. Syncretism. Santa Claus. Snow. Bea...
 (beat)
 I'd really like to see her please.

USIC EXECUTIVE (OVER CANS)
 We'll bring her to you when you've cleared the psychometric stage of the pre-flight --

PETER
 You already tested me back home.

USIC EXECUTIVE
 That was a preliminary exam --

PETER
 I'm not answering any more questions until I see Bea. Do you understand me?

Peter sits back and waits. We hear a muffled conversation in the control room before the USIC Executive answers.

USIC EXECUTIVE

Alright.

15

INT. QUARANTINE BAY / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE - DAY

15

A room separated by a glass panel. Peter steps in and discovers Bea sitting waiting for him behind the glass. She coughs and wipes her nose with a tissue.

PETER

Are you sick?

BEA

It's just a cold. Some asshole stole my sweater...

She smiles, relieved to see him, and steps quickly over to the partition. Peter smiles too and edges right up to the glass. They're as close as they can get to one another.

BEA (CONT'D)

(smiling bravely)

Well this is... strange.

PETER

Quarantine. They can't afford for me to get sick now. It would contaminate the planet.

BEA

It isn't too late to change your mind, you know. Break the glass.

PETER

(a confused smile)

What?

BEA

Pick up a chair, break the glass and kiss me. They can't send you then.

PETER

I don't know if you're joking.

BEA

I'm not. You don't have to do this.

PETER

(stoic)

I do. It's the only way we can be together. I'll be home in a year.

BEA

Don't sacrifice yourself for me.

PETER

For us. And it's not a sacrifice.
I'm coming back. Besides, I really
think I can do some good up there.

BEA

So could someone else.

They stare at each other through the glass, Bea's composure
cracks a little as she gazes into Peter's eyes.

BEA (CONT'D)

I'm scared.

PETER

It's safe, the risks are covered,
they've invested too much money not
to do this right. I'm coming back.
One year. Then we've got the rest
of our lives together.

Bea stares at Peter, wanting desperately to believe this.

BEA

I love you.

PETER

I love you too.

BEA

Pray with me.

Peter watches as Bea closes her eyes and touches the glass
with the palm of her hand. He reaches up and mirrors her hand
with his. Just as he closes his eyes, he hears a choking
sound. Bea is crying.

BEA (CONT'D)

I feel like God's punishing us.

Tears are rolling down her cheeks now. Peter desperately
wants to get to her, to hold her, but he can't.

16

EXT. USIC FLIGHT CENTRE - DAY

16

Peter checks his flight bag, making sure he has the sweater
Bea gave him. It's there.

VOICE OVER SPEAKER

Two minutes, everybody.

Peter, dressed in a flight suit, is waiting with the fifteen
other members of the crew, including Sy, who clocks Peter
now, as a bus heads across the tarmac towards them. The space
shuttle is being fuelled in the distance now.

17 **EXT. VIEWING PLATFORM / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE / LAUNCHPAD - DAY**

Bea is shown onto a roof deck overlooking the launch site. There's no one else there. She watches anxiously as the support vehicles are pulled away from the shuttle.

18 **EXT. USIC FLIGHT CENTRE - DAY** 18

Sy sidles up to Peter as the men watch the bus draw closer.

SY

So you're the man, huh?

PETER

(confused)

I'm sorry?

SY

Don't apologise. You must be the shit to just roll in here and go straight up. They even talked about delaying the whole mission if they couldn't get you. We've all been here freezing our balls off for three months. Doing collaboration tests, blueprint training. What is it you do?

PETER

I'm a minister of God.

SY

A priest? Seriously?

Peter smiles tightly, he looks awkward.

SY (CONT'D)

(fascinated)

Why not? I guess everything down here's getting pretty biblical.

PETER

And what do you do?

SY

Let's just say I can grow stuff in the most unlikely places.

PETER

A botanist.

SY

Sure, let's go with that.

Sy winks at Peter, who's not entirely sure what he means. Just then the bus pulls up and the others climb on.

Peter looks back at the USIC building, searching for a glimpse of Bea, but he can't see her. Finally he gets on the bus.

19 **EXT. VIEWING PLATFORM / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE / LAUNCHPAD - DAY**

Bea watches as the bus heads towards the shuttle. A screen relays a live feed from the launch site.

20 **EXT. LAUNCH PAD / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE - DAY** 20

The bus pulls up and the doors open. The men get off and head towards an elevator platform running up the side of the shuttle. Crew members pair up as they approach the platform.

SY
(smiling)
And the animals went in two by two.

Peter spots a USIC FILM CREW now. He looks back and sees the flight centre in the distance.

21 **EXT. VIEWING PLATFORM / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE / LAUNCHPAD - DAY**

Bea watches the TV screen as Peter enters the craft. ON SCREEN: Peter stares at the camera, trying somehow to make a connection with Bea through the screen before he finally disappears inside the shuttle.

After a few moments the shuttle door seals shut. An alarm sounds as the last support vehicle pulls away below.

22 **INT/EXT. CAFETERIA / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE / LAUNCHPAD - DAY** 22

A CAFETERIA WORKER clears tables as the rocket powers up on the launchpad in the distance. Smoke rushes out as the thrusters suddenly kick in.

23 **EXT. VIEWING PLATFORM / USIC FLIGHT CENTRE / LAUNCHPAD - DAY**

Bea watches as the shuttle surges into the air, her gaze flicking to the screen in front of her as it grows more distant. After a few moments the shuttle leaves her field of vision --

USIC EXECUTIVE
There's a car waiting to take you
to the airport when you're ready.

BEA
Where are the others? The families
of the crew.

The USIC Executive stops and looks back, confused.

USIC EXECUTIVE
There aren't any.

BEA
No partners, girlfriends?

USIC EXECUTIVE
No ties. That's part of the
selection process. An exception was
made in Peter's case.

BEA
Why?

USIC EXECUTIVE
Honestly, I don't know. Someone
must have thought he was worth it.

The USIC Executive steps away now and Bea is left alone. Her eyes return to the sky but the shuttle has passed out of sight. She looks back at the screen and it clicks off.

24 **INT/EXT. SHUTTLE / OASIS - DUSK**

24

Darkness. Silence, then a hatch is rolled back and there's a sudden blinding light --

Peter stirs and immediately spews up a thick white liquid that splashes onto the floor of the shuttle.

He finds himself strapped into a crib seat and connected up to oxygen pipes and tubes that have been feeding him intravenously. He's grown a scrappy beard.

A gust of wind blasts through the cabin as the other Crew Members around him stir too.

A ground team -- SEVERIN (40s), B.G. (30s) and TUSKA (20s) -- start to unbuckle the crew and help them out their seats, supporting them as they struggle to stand.

Severin unstraps Peter, who squints as the wind whips a fine dust into the cabin. Severin shouts something at Peter but he can't hear so he just nods. In the next moment he's led out towards the light.

25 **EXT/INT. SHUTTLE / TRANSIT VEHICLE / OASIS - DUSK**

25

The wind makes it hard for Peter to see anything as Severin walks him towards the blazing headlights of a transit vehicle. Then, through the swirling dust, he glimpses a stunning purple horizon and undulating fields of red flowers as far as the eye can see, before the dust obscures his view again and he's helped up into the transit vehicle.

26 **INT/EXT. TRANSIT VEHICLE / OASIS - DUSK**

26

Peter and the rest of the crew are wrapped in foil space blankets and hold their flight bags as the vehicle bumps across the surface of this new planet.

They stare out the window in hushed awe: the storm is still obscuring their view but there are flashes of white-capped mountains in the distance.

SY

(with wonder)

Are you seeing this, Padre?

Peter nods, just then he spots the blurred lights of a large facility. Sy and Danesh and the other crew members push close to the glass.

As the vehicle gets nearer, the base comes into focus: a large geodesic dome linked to other modules and buildings by narrow corridors, all fitted with solar paneling.

The complex resembles an enormous metal spider clinging to the surface of this planet. Sparks dance in the arid air as a group of USIC Construction Workers weld a new section to the existing structure of the base.

27 **INT/EXT. USIC BASE / OASIS - DUSK**

27

VIKRAM DANESH, whose face we remember from the corporate film in the USIC cafeteria, steps up to a small window. He stares out as the transporter ferries the new intake across the surface of the planet towards the base.

28 **INT. CORRIDOR / USIC BASE / OASIS - DUSK**

28

The corridor leading from the dock is lined with people standing in doorways, chatting quietly. There's a palpable excitement as the workers wait for the new arrivals.

Just then a low level alarm sounds and the hiss of a pressurised door rolling back.

Everyone turns and stares as the first of the new intake arrive, exhausted and struggling to walk.

After a moment a round of applause breaks out and slowly swells. Peter clutches his flight bag and looks into the faces of the men and women he passes as he heads down the corridor. He feels suddenly emotional, happy to be alive --

29 **INT. BATHROOM / USIC BASE / OASIS - NIGHT**

29

MANGO (40s) tries to help Peter strip his flight suit off, but Peter puts his hand up and, despite being disoriented,

climbs out of it by himself.

PETER

(woozy)

I can do it... thank you.

Mango takes Peter's suit from him, handing it to DONNIE (20s) who shoves it into a large laundry bag. Then Mango takes Peter's flight bag from him.

Mango goes through Peter's possessions, sorting them back into his flight bag or into a plastic crate labelled with his name: LEIGH, P.

PETER (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

MANGO

There isn't much space in your cabin so anything you won't need straightaway goes into storage.

Peter looks dazed. He doesn't spot Bea's sweater being folded and shoved into the plastic crate. Peter's naked now. Donnie and Mango spray him with blue foam from neck to toe, wiping him down with paper towels and filling a waste bag.

PETER

Isn't there a shower?

DONNIE

Water is gold. Every drop we got, we drink. What's your name?

PETER

Peter.

DONNIE

I'm Donnie. This is Mango. Don't worry, you're gonna feel better real soon.

Peter nods, clearly exhausted. Mango nudges Donnie as they take in the tattoos on Peter's body -- a strange mixture of demons, a skull, a pentagram and a dagger.

They're faded, years old, but they cover Peter's chest, shoulders and back like a scar from an old injury.

Music plays over speakers in the ceiling, a song by Patsy Cline, as Peter, Sy and the other newly washed recruits shuffle down the serving line carrying trays.

SY
 Look at them, all sitting in their
 little cliques...

Behind them the mess hall is packed with all the personnel on the base, 80 people from all over planet Earth. Sy is right: every grouping is subtly different from the other. The engineers look like roughnecks, while the technicians and scientists give off a nerdy vibe.

SY (CONT'D)
 Bunch of hardcore science freaks
 who couldn't grow a tomato plant
 between them. Not up here anyway...

PETER
 But you could?

SY
 If anyone can grow shit on this
 dustbowl it's gonna be a guy like
 me. I haven't come across a place
 yet where I can't grow product.

Peter realises now and looks at Sy, surprised.

PETER
 Product. You mean weed? That's your
 background -- growing marijuana?

SY
 (smiling, looking around)
 Keep your voice down, Padre. If you
 must know I got busted for this
 little factory I had going on. USIC
 bailed me out. Sent a lawyer in.

PETER
 Why?

SY
 I guess they know talent when they
 see it. I walked straight out of
 that cell into a USIC training
 programme. So I owe them one. Same
 as everyone else up here...

Peter considers this for a moment before inspecting the food behind the counter; it's all processed and preserved but it looks edible. HALLORAN (50s) serves up Peter's plate. Peter smiles gratefully.

PETER
 Thank you.

HALLORAN
 Pleasure, Father. You're a
 Christian, right?

PETER
That's right.

HALLORAN
Just checking. Good to have you.

Peter shuffles on and picks up dessert, a small slice of dense chocolate cake, before stepping away. Peter is about to join Sy, Severin and BG at a table when Danesh appears.

DANESH
Reverend?

Peter turns to find Danesh smiling at him. Danesh slides his arm around him and draws him in the opposite direction --

DANESH (CONT'D)
Vikram Danesh, head of mission. Do you mind? There's a few people you ought to meet.

Danesh leads Peter to a corner table, clearly reserved for executive members of staff.

DANESH (CONT'D)
Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to introduce Reverend Peter Leigh.

Peter looks around the table. Danesh points.

DANESH (CONT'D)
Dr. Phelps is our mining expert. We stole him from God knows where.

PHELPS
MIT. I thought I was retired.

PHELPS (60s) shakes hands with Peter, who smiles politely but eyes the food in front of him, ravenous.

DANESH
Coomer is an engineer specialising in hydro-metallurgic processes.

Peter shakes hands with COOMER (40s).

COOMER
Pleasure to meet you, Peter.

DANESH
(coolly)
And this is Dr. Ruiz, our chief botanist...

ALICIA RUIZ (40s) smiles at Peter as she pumps his hand. The mess hall is full now. Everyone seems to be happy. Peter looks around while he eats.

PETER
Morale seems good.

DANESH
Let's hope so. We've got a lot of
work to do. Excuse me.

Danesh stands now and gradually the room falls quiet.

DANESH (CONT'D)
Thank you. I want to welcome our
new intake. I know many of you have
heard this speech before, but it's
important that everyone is reminded
of what we're engaged in...

Peter watches as the head of security, SARA GRAINGER (30s),
steps in at the back of the room. Her hair is pulled back
tight. She's attractive, with a studied seriousness,
unwilling to drop her guard.

DANESH (CONT'D)
We're working together to build the
first permanent off-planet human
colony. It's a major step towards
making homo sapiens a multi-planet
species. And I don't need to tell
anyone here how much we need to
achieve that right now. Human
civilization has never been in a
more precarious state...

Some people have given up listening and started eating again.
Danesh is aware he's gone on too long.

DANESH (CONT'D)
Before you get back to your food
I'd like to introduce an important
new member of our team. Peter,
would you stand up please?

Peter stands, noticing all eyes are on him, including
Grainger's from the back of the room.

DANESH (CONT'D)
Peter is a Christian minister, here
to serve our community. Do you want
to say a few words, Peter?

Danesh sits. Peter has the floor. He smiles; we'd expect him
to be nervous but he's in his element.

PETER
I've been eating through a tube for
three months and I'm starving, so
this won't be a sermon.

A few people laugh, including Sy.

PETER (CONT'D)

I've no idea what day it is, but it feels right to assume that tomorrow is Sunday, the first day of the week, the first full day of my life among you on Oasis.

SEVERIN

It's Thursday!

People laugh. Peter smiles.

PETER

Even so I'll be celebrating with a service tomorrow morning. Now I know some of you will have a different faith to mine and some of you will have none, but as your chaplain up here I hope you'll feel you can talk to me and even bring your problems to me. I'm a good listener, and the advantage of being a priest is that whatever anyone says to me remains confidential.

Grainger is clearly trying to get a bead on Peter. Peter looks around the room and takes a moment to shape his next thought, sensing all eyes are on him.

PETER (CONT'D)

There's a bravery in being the first to do anything. Striking out is hard, but it's what defines us as the human race. We all know the crisis we've created for ourselves back home and how much we need hope. And everyone here is making that future possible, every day. So I want to thank you for your courage and your skill. Every one of you.

Halloran seems touched by this. Sy likewise.

PETER (CONT'D)

Your gifts will allow us to explore further into God's wondrous universe.

Peter sits. There's silence as people absorb these words for a moment, before slowly getting back to their meals.

Peter looks around. As he takes a mouthful of food all eyes are fixed on him, including Ruiz, who watches him closely.

31 **INT. CORRIDOR / USIC BASE / OASIS - NIGHT**

31

After dinner an exhausted-looking Peter is led down a corridor by Danesh, flanked by Coomer and Phelps.

"Find Your Way Back" by Jefferson Starship blasts from somebody's dorm room.

DANESH

The first two ships were designed to be dismantled. They form the basis of this entire facility.

PETER

But the ship we arrived in --

PHELPS

Is the first one built to return. Don't worry. It won't be long before you start to see how everything joins up.

COOMER

And who does what. Which can be a little confusing at first, since everyone does more than one job.

PETER

I need to call someone before I sleep.

DANESH

There's a temporary communications problem. Don't worry, Bea will have been informed of your safe arrival.

Peter looks surprised to hear her name come out of Danesh's mouth. Just then they arrive outside a door marked with a number. Danesh hands Peter a swipe card.

DANESH (CONT'D)

Well, this is you. Get some rest. And welcome to Oasis, Peter.

As Danesh, Coomer and Phelps head away, Peter hears a ringing in his ears. He looks exhausted as he swipes his card on the panel, opening the door of his room.

32 **INT. PETER'S ROOM / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY**

32

Peter wakes up in a small room that resembles a cabin on a ship. He sits up, his head throbbing.

Peter looks in the mirror over the washbasin and assesses his beard. He turns on the tap and a green liquid comes out. Peter is taken aback and turns off the tap. He spots the notice above the basin:

"Colour of water is due to purification process. It is certified safe to drink."

Grimacing a little, Peter brushes his teeth with the green water. Then he takes a cassock and a stole out of his flight bag and lays them on the bed.

Peter prays silently, closing his eyes as he seems to disappear into himself for a moment. Then his eyes snap open and he stands and begins to dress --

33

INT. CHAPEL / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY

33

Dressed in the cassock and stole now, Peter steps into a banal meeting room made into a chapel only by the addition of a plain white cross on the wall and a table placed like an altar in front of a few rows of chairs.

HALLORAN (O.S.)

You ready for us, Father?

Peter turns to see a few people waiting at the door, including Halloran, Sy and, to his surprise, Tuska, Severin and B.G., who look uncomfortable.

PETER

Of course. Come in. Take a seat.

The men sit, scattered around the room. Sy seems embarrassed by the low turnout. Peter smiles warmly.

PETER (CONT'D)

Well... I've led services in some unusual places, but I can safely say I've never done one on another planet before.

Halloran smiles, relaxing into his seat.

PETER (CONT'D)

This is obviously an unusual situation. For all of us. But God has brought us together, so I'd love to know a little bit more about all of you.

Blank looks, an awkward cough.

PETER (CONT'D)

May I ask how many of you are baptised?

Sy raises his hand, no one else.

SY

I think so anyway.

PETER

How many of you have been to a
Christian service before?

Three hands go up this time: Sy, Halloran and Severin.

PETER (CONT'D)

Well, you're welcome to this one.
You're all welcome. And for those
of you who are experiencing this
for the first time, it's important
for you to know that Jesus died for
all of us. No exceptions. He ate
with prostitutes and tax
collectors. He doesn't judge us the
way we judge ourselves. It's our
soul that he sees.

SY

I always liked that. Everything's
connected. Everything has soul.
Trees and animals and shit.

PETER

That's not really what I'm talking
about.

SY

(disappointed)
It's not?

PETER

This isn't simply about being
alive. Our souls are unique to us
as human beings. That and the fact
that we're made in God's image.
That's what gives us dominion over
animals, over the Earth. That's
what makes us special in God's
eyes. Every person here.

Peter looks around the room. Severin nods. B.G. sits back.
Peter looks at Halloran, who's smiling.

HALLORAN

You know I actually brought a bible
up here. It was my wife's, from
when she was a kid.

PETER

Why don't you bring it the next
time and we'll read from it?

HALLORAN

I lent it to Morgan.

PETER

Well perhaps you could bring him
along next time too.

B.G.

No chance.

PETER

And why's that?

SEVERIN

Morgan left.

PETER

Left? What do you mean?

HALLORAN

(in a world of his own)
Matter of fact the last time I was
in a church was Maggie's funeral...

TUSKA

Does this even count as a church?

HALLORAN

(ignoring him)
She was a devout Catholic. I used
to give her hell for believing in
things you can't see, but when she
died I wished I'd taken her faith
more seriously.

SEVERIN

(under his breath)
This is worse than AA.

HALLORAN

I mean who am I to say what can and
can't exist, right? It's just like
you said in the mess hall, Father.
It's a wondrous universe, right?

PETER

Exactly.

HALLORAN

That's why it makes sense to me
when people say they've seen things
up here.

Silence. Peter isn't sure if he's misheard.

PETER

I'm sorry, what do you mean, "seen
things"?

HALLORAN

You didn't think we'd come all this way and find ourselves alone up here do you, Father?

Severin stifles a laugh. Peter looks at B.G., who twirls his finger by his temple in a 'he's crazy' gesture.

TIME CUT -- Peter shakes Halloran's hand as B.G., Severin and Tuska head away laughing their heads off. Halloran looks a little embarrassed.

HALLORAN (CONT'D)

I hope I didn't talk too much, Father.

PETER

Not at all, Mr. Halloran.

HALLORAN

(sadly)

It's only that it can be a lonely place. You'd think billions of miles from home you'd grow closer to the people around you. But it doesn't work like that.

Halloran heads away. Peter watches him go as Sy steps up. Severin and Tuska disappear down the corridor, crooning 'Amazing Grace' at the top of their voices.

PETER

I'm glad they came, though I'm not sure it was quite what they were expecting.

SY

I wonder who put them up to it?

PETER

What do you mean?

SY

Well no offence, but they don't exactly strike me as the Born Again type. I bet you tonight's dessert someone got them to come along. Boost your numbers.

Peter doesn't want to believe this, but as he watches them go he can't help but feel doubtful.

Peter unpacks his flight bag, his head full of questions. He's looking for Bea's sweater. He opens the bag but it's not there. Now he remembers what Mango said about storage.

35 **INT. CORRIDOR / REC ROOM / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY** 35

Peter looks at a map of the base on a wall. He sees where the REC ROOM is marked and then CREW STORAGE next to the VEHICLE GARAGE. He sets off.

Further down the corridor Peter spots Tuska heading towards a door. He pulls out a key card, beeps it and enters. Peter quickens his pace and glances inside as the door slides shut.

B.G. and Severin are in an airport-like lounge, drinking beer and laughing it up. The door closes behind Tuska now and Peter spots a sign etched into the metal:

'REC ROOM. ACCESS BY PERMISSION ONLY'

Peter takes the sign in, thinks for a moment and heads on.

36 **INT. CORRIDOR / VEHICLE GARAGE / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY** 36

Peter reaches the end of a corridor, arriving at a door leading to the garage and beyond that to the wide open expanse of Oasis.

Peter tries the handle but the door is locked. There's a keypad beside it. Through a small portal window he sees the wind whipping up the dust outside. He stares out. Suddenly he sees something moving in the distance.

Peter looks closer, intrigued and a little troubled. Then the figure comes into view: it's a USIC CONSTRUCTION WORKER in a protective suit, carrying welding equipment.

Peter drops back, feeling stupid. He turns and steps over to a door with CREW STORAGE written on it. Peter uses his swipe card and the door clicks open.

37 **INT. CREW STORAGE ROOM / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY** 37

Peter peers in at the alphabetised rows of metal shelves on which are stacked plastic crates of the crew's surplus possessions. He searches for the row marked 'L' and wanders down a long line of crates until he finds his own.

He opens it and finds Bea's sweater. He holds it to his face and breathes in Bea's familiar scent. He smiles.

Peter is about to step away when he sees the next section marked 'M'. He edges down it before spotting a crate with MORGAN, J. printed on it.

Peter thinks for a moment and then pulls the crate down. He opens it and finds a wash kit and neatly folded clothes inside. Just then Peter hears a stern voice --

GRAINGER

What are you doing in here?

PETER

Getting something I needed.

GRAINGER

That isn't your stuff. Put it back.

Peter turns to see Grainger. She wears a gun holster on her hip. Peter begins to pack Morgan's stuff back in the crate but Grainger looks irritated and takes over --

GRAINGER (CONT'D)

I mean put it back the way you found it.

Peter watches Grainger as she folds Morgan's clothes away. He's surprised by how much care she's taking.

PETER

Who are you?

GRAINGER

I'm a USIC Security Marshall. Sara Grainger.

PETER

I didn't expect there to be any weapons on the base.

GRAINGER

Please come with me, I need to log this as a security breach.

PETER

You are joking?

GRAINGER

Does it look like it?

Grainger gives him a hard stare.

38

INT. SECURITY ROOM / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY

38

Grainger leads Peter into an open plan area with two holding cells and a desk and a workstation. She grabs a tablet from the desk and starts tapping away on it.

PETER

I want to speak to Danesh.

GRAINGER

You were in an restricted area without permission. I need to log that.

Grainger pulls up Peter's personnel file and is surprised to find a police charge sheet from ten years ago, complete with a mug shot of a much younger-looking Peter. His eyes are bloodshot and he looks wild.

Grainger looks surprised; this was not what she was expecting at all. She steals a glance at Peter. She can tell how uncomfortable he is about being in here: the bars and the locks seem to stir a distant memory for him.

PETER

What is this place anyway?

GRAINGER

The 'cooler' for the base. Fortunately we rarely need it. The incentives system is the best way to maintain order.

PETER

Incentives?

GRAINGER

We reward people with various privileges. For showing initiative or going above and beyond their core duties. Use of the Rec Room, for example. Though as a Grade Two employee you have automatic access.
(beat)
Are you alright?

Grainger notices that Peter is sweating. She changes tack.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)

Look, I guess I don't have to make this official. We're on the same side after all, right? Keeping people from straying. What you said last night, is that true? Is everything people say to you really confidential?

PETER

Meaning what?

GRAINGER

Meaning if someone tells you about activity that breaks regulations --

PETER

People have to be able to trust me with anything.

GRAINGER

I'm only asking you to keep your ear to the ground.

(MORE)

GRAINGER (CONT'D)
 Anything that has implications for
 our survival I need to know about.
 I'm here to ensure everyone's
 safety, Reverend.

PETER
 Then where's Morgan?

Peter watches Grainger, noticing a flicker of unease.

PETER (CONT'D)
 Ruiz said he left, but no one who
 came up here has made the journey
 back to Earth yet, have they?

GRAINGER
 No.

PETER
 So what happened to him? Is he
 dead? Did he take his own life? Is
 that why no one's talking about it?

GRAINGER
 That's not it.
 (beat, uneasy)
 He disappeared.

Grainger stares at Peter and then picks up the phone. She
 lowers her voice to a murmur.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)
 This is Grainger. He's right here.
 He's asking about Morgan. Fine.

Peter watches her, intrigued. She hangs up.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)
 Would you come with me please?

39 INT. DANESH'S OFFICE / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY

39

Grainger leads Peter into Danesh's office where Coomer, Ruiz
 and Phelps are waiting. Silence.

DANESH
 You've been here nearly twenty-four
 hours, you must have questions.

PETER
 Why did you rush me up here? I was
 told there was an urgent need for a
 minister.

DANESH
 There is.

PETER

Then why were there only five people at my service today? Three of whom were clearly under orders to be there.

Danesh remains silent.

PETER (CONT'D)

Did you bribe them with access to the Rec Room? Where's my congregation? What am I doing here?

Peter looks around but no one speaks. He meets Ruiz's eye but she remains silent, watching him curiously.

DANESH

Grainger, would you prepare a vehicle?

PETER

We're going off base?

DANESH

You asked where your congregation was. Maybe it's time you met them.

40 **INT. VEHICLE GARAGE / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAWN**

40

Peter steps down into the garage to find Grainger loading up a jeep with weatherproof clothes - snow boots, hats, gloves and down coats.

GRAINGER

The temperature drops pretty dramatically when we get a few miles out from base.

She looks at Peter, who is trying not to seem anxious.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)

You ready?

TIME CUT -- The garage door rises slowly. A shaft of light breaks through. We hear the wind raging beyond.

41 **INT/EXT. JEEP / PLANET SURFACE / OASIS - DAWN**

41

Grainger drives. The sun is rising over Oasis now as wind buffets the car. Peter takes in the beauty and strangeness of this planet.

Out one side of the car, sparks seems to dance in the air, tiny gold flecks that catch the light and scatter as they sweep past. The car speeds across the firm, chocolate brown surface, pierced occasionally by craggy black rocks.

The horizon pulses gently with soft bands of hazy green light -- shimmering like the Northern Lights.

GRAINGER

It's temperate desert. This part of it at least. Desert here, mountains to the east.

Peter looks out Grainger's side of the car now, just as a geyser explodes in the distance. Several geysers are spouting steaming water, surrounded by almost luminous orange pools of thick liquid.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)

There are pockets of plant life, miniature ecosystems. Animals too --

PETER

Animals?

GRAINGER

Sure. Reptiles mostly.

Peter watches Grainger, her excitement is infectious. She catches him looking and smiles, intrigued.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)

What?

PETER

Nothing. It's the first time you've smiled, that's all. You take your job very seriously.

GRAINGER

I can't show any weakness. Not up here.

She flicks a look at Peter, almost surprised at having admitted this to him. They drive on in silence. Peter continues to stare out.

PETER

How far is it to the other base?

GRAINGER

We'll be there soon.

PETER

You said Morgan disappeared. When?

GRAINGER

A month ago.

PETER

And you haven't found a body yet?

GRAINGER

If we'd found a body he'd be dead,
not missing, don't you think?

PETER

Where did you lose him? Off base?

Grainger keeps quiet.

PETER (CONT'D)

Did Danesh tell you to keep things
from me or is that your own idea?

GRAINGER

You're the one hiding things,
Peter.

PETER

What's that supposed to mean?

GRAINGER

The tattoo across your back -- I
guess you've been quite a handful
in your time, Reverend...

Peter stares at Grainger, unnerved that she knows about this.
He takes a moment.

PETER

I wasn't always a priest. I was a
different person back then. Angry.
I drank. Then I found God. And Bea.

GRAINGER

Then what are you doing up here?

Peter wants to answer but he can't. He looks at the snow-
capped mountain range in the distance. The hard-packed earth
around them gradually gives way to scorched dark stone that
bleeds into grey and then vast frozen shelves of ice.

42 **EXT. PLANET SURFACE / OASIS - DAY**

42

The Jeep pulls to a stop at the bottom of a steep slope.

43 **INT/EXT. JEEP / PLANET SURFACE / OASIS - DAY**

43

Peter looks surprised as Grainger parks the jeep.

GRAINGER

The engine will freeze if we go any
further. We do the rest on foot.

Peter watches Grainger's breath cloud in the frigid air. Ice
is already creeping across the window beside him.

44 **EXT. PLANET SURFACE / OASIS - DAY**

44

Peter and Grainger quickly put on their coats and boots. Peter is shivering now in the icy wind. Grainger switches on a tracking device. It beeps.

GRAINGER

They pick up the signal back at base. In case anything happens.

PETER

(dry)
Well that's reassuring.

45 **EXT. MOUNTAIN / OASIS - DAY**

45

Peter and Grainger slowly pick their way up the side of a low mountain. He's unprepared for how arduous it is. Grainger forges ahead, using guide ropes already fixed in place. This journey has been made before.

Peter tries to keep up with Grainger as she follows a steep path. Peter slows to take in the view, spotting a huge grey bird swooping in the distance.

PETER

(amazed)
Grainger!

Grainger turns. She stares, astonished. It's more like a manta-ray in flight than a bird as we might recognise one. It glides and eddies on the air.

GRAINGER

It's beautiful.

Just then the bird swoops closer to them. It's exhilarating and terrifying as it hovers above them, kite-like. It lets out an ear-splitting shriek.

PETER

What's it doing?

Just then the bird contracts its wings and drops towards them like a stone. Peter jumps clear as it opens its wings at the last minute and careens away, but Grainger loses her footing and slips.

She slides down the steep path, her hands clawing for a hold, but then she hits a boulder and pitches sideways.

Grainger slides towards a ravine, just managing to catch hold of a ledge and stopping herself from falling in. She clings on, her legs dangling as she kicks wildly --

GRAINGER

HELP ME!

Peter scrambles down to her as fast as he can. Getting a strong foothold, he stretches out his hand. Their fingers are almost within touching distance.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)

I can't reach.

PETER

Yes you can. Just a little more.

They both make an extra effort and finally he is able to get a good grip on her hand and pull her up. Peter checks her over, Grainger looks embarrassed.

GRAINGER

I'm fine.

PETER

You could have died.

GRAINGER

We're nearly there. It's just over this peak. We're so close --

PETER

What are we doing out here? Where is this base anyway?

GRAINGER

There isn't one.

PETER

What?

GRAINGER

That's not what we're here to see.

Peter hears something now. It sounds like people singing. He looks at Grainger but she doesn't seem a bit surprised. Peter strains to hear the voices carried faintly on the wind.

PETER

What is that? Sounds like...

GRAINGER

Amazing Grace.

It is. 'Amazing Grace' is floating over the mountains. Peter pushes forward now past Grainger, intrigued and desperate to know where this singing is coming from. Now it's Grainger who struggles to keep up with Peter.

Peter crests the tip of the mountain and looks down to see a settlement below.

He's amazed to see a network of dwellings, like sturdy teepees, at the bottom of a valley dotted with patches of lush green vegetation.

A series of reservoirs full of melting ice feed irrigation channels that coil into small agricultural plots. Peter can still hear singing. He scans the settlement and sees no one, only a church-like structure larger than the dwellings. The sound of singing is coming from inside.

GRAINGER

I'd better lead.

Peter isn't listening to her. He scrambles down the mountainside as quickly as he can.

Grainger follows, sensing how intrigued Peter is.

47

EXT. SETTLEMENT / OASIS - DAY

47

Peter heads through the settlement. Rows of what appear to be vegetables are growing in the plots outside each hut, but there still isn't a person in sight.

All of a sudden the singing stops.

Just then the door of the church-like building opens. A figure about a foot taller than Peter appears. It is completely wrapped in a shawl, its face hidden...

Peter can barely breathe as the figure heads down the steps of the church and slowly approaches him.

Other similar figures fill the doorway of the church now, all wrapped in shawls and cloaks, their faces also covered.

Peter takes a step back and the figure stops. Silence.

Grainger approaches Peter. She can see his hand is shaking as the figure reaches out towards him.

As its hand emerges from the shawl we suddenly see that it's a large muscular hand with talons, definitely not human --

Peter's vision blurs as he looks up at the face of the creature before him. Huge piercing blue eyes stare out from under the shawl. As the figure fixes on Peter he struggles to piece together the jigsaw of what the hell he's looking at -- tight grey skin, a single nostril, long ape like feet.

Peter is struggling to comprehend it. A moment later the sound distorts and he blacks out.

48

EXT. MOUNTAIN / OASIS - DAY

48

Peter's eyes flash open. He's propped up against a rocky outcrop. Grainger is staring at him, clearly concerned.

GRAINGER

Drink some of this...

She offers Peter a canteen of water. He takes it and has a drink, then forces himself to his feet.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)

We can take a moment, it's OK.

PETER

That hand... it had claws.

GRAINGER

Helps them climb the mountains. I guess they evolved that way.

PETER

Take me back to base.

GRAINGER

Just get your head straight first. You need to calm down, OK?

PETER

(incandescent)

Did you see what I just saw?

GRAINGER

Look, I understand what you're going through.

PETER

I don't think you do.

GRAINGER

It's like your mind doesn't know how to process them, isn't it?

PETER

What are they?

GRAINGER

There's no category for them. They're not human, clearly. But they've got the basis of a civilisation. They farm.

Peter suddenly thrusts the canteen back to her and heads off the way they came. Grainger watches him go, surprised.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

DANESH

You're right. You should have been told. But we couldn't risk it. If anyone back home knew we'd made first contact the entire nature of this mission would change, Peter.

(beat)

It wasn't supposed to be like this. USIC selected Oasis to help us find a way to survive. We picked this planet because we thought it could support life. We didn't know it was already here. But we're established now, the investment has been made, and we need you to work with them.

PETER

What?

DANESH

We need you to minister to them.

Peter absorbs this, horrified.

DANESH (CONT'D)

It's their planet. But it seems they're willing to share it with us. So long as we share the gospel with them.

PETER

How do you know that?

Danesh shoots a look at Grainger now.

DANESH

Would you give us a moment please?

Grainger looks surprised. She nods and heads out, sealing the door behind her. Danesh stares at Peter.

DANESH (CONT'D)

Morgan communicated with them. When he disappeared they refused to have anything to do with the rest of us. They wanted a man of God. We need you to regain their trust.

PETER

Have you even seen them?

DANESH

They wouldn't show themselves to me. But they came to you. I knew they would. We picked you carefully Peter. This mission cannot fail. Every life up here depends on it.

PETER

Why?

Danesh considers telling Peter but changes his mind.

DANESH

I can't discuss it.

PETER

I thought you were in charge.

DANESH

I am. Up here. But the board --

PETER

Then you can forget about me going back. It would be sacrilege for me to minister to them.

DANESH

(incredulous)

Why? You must have ministered to every kind of specimen in London.

PETER

Those 'specimens' were all human beings. Made in God's image. The things I saw out there aren't. I'd rather die than desecrate the name of Jesus by uttering it in the presence of those things.

DANESH

Morgan said he thought they had a soul.

PETER

(outraged)

They don't have a soul. They can't.

Peter heads for the door. Danesh is scrambling now.

DANESH

Your background suggested you were the perfect man for this job.

PETER

Well I guess someone screwed up their research, didn't they? I'll carry out my duties on the base, minister to people's needs, but I'm not going back out there.

DANESH

Aren't you forgetting why you came here in the first place?

Peter stops and looks back now.

DANESH (CONT'D)

To give you and Bea the chance of some kind of life together when you return. You'll never get home to her if you don't do this, Peter.

PETER

Is that a threat?

DANESH

Just the reality of the situation.

Peter heads out, leaving Danesh alone and desperate. He thinks for a moment and then pulls out a walkie-talkie.

51

INT. PETER'S ROOM / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY

51

Peter arrives back in his room. He paces for a moment before he hears a trill as a new message appears on the screen embedded in his desk. A single word flashes: MESSAGE.

Peter taps his name into a keyboard and sits on a chair facing the screen on which Bea's face suddenly appears, staring right at him.

BEA (ON SCREEN)

Peter...

Peter looks up. He's astonished, close to tears. Bea is speaking from her modest London flat, she smiles tightly.

BEA (CONT'D)

They didn't tell me when you'd get this message. You've been gone ten weeks and they say it'll take a couple more before you even arrive. But I wanted to send this so you got it as soon as you arrived. Peter, I'm pregnant...

Peter freezes, a mixture of emotions. Bea smiles through her tears as she stares at the screen.

BEA (CONT'D)

I wish you could have seen her on the scan. She's so tiny and her heart was racing. She's working so hard in there.

Peter is crying now, he puts his hand to his mouth. He can't speak, he can barely even breathe.

BEA (CONT'D)

...I'm trying to think of the other things you might want to know. I'm OK. I'm healthy. Things have got worse here --

Just then Peter notices a jump in the recording, as if a section is missing. He looks confused, suddenly anxious.

BEA (CONT'D)

Send me a message back. Please. As soon as you can. I need to see you. I love you, Peter.

The message clicks off. Peter sits in silence for a moment.

52

INT. SECURITY ROOM / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY

52

Peter steps in to the security wing to find Grainger.

PETER

I got a message from home.

GRAINGER

That's good.

PETER

There's a section edited out.

GRAINGER

(surprised)

What do you mean?

PETER

There's a section missing. Did you cut it out? What did it say?

GRAINGER

Wait a second.

PETER

Tell me!

Peter looks fired up now. Grainger can see his anger.

GRAINGER

I don't monitor the messages that come here. That's not my job. Why? Who was it from?

PETER

Bea. My... partner.

Grainger can see how affected Peter looks.

GRAINGER

It must be good to see her face.

PETER

Danesh must have been holding it back from me. I won't do what he asks and now all of a sudden I get a message from home saying...

Peter dries up. He can hardly say it out loud.

GRAINGER
Saying what? Is everything OK?

PETER
It's blackmail -- to try and force me go back out there. He says our lives are in danger up here. Do you know what he means?

GRAINGER
No. I'm not part of the top table. I wasn't supposed to know about them but Morgan told me.

Grainger makes a decision and unlocks a drawer. She carefully removes a worn but beautifully illustrated children's bible.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)
Morgan borrowed it from someone.

PETER
Halloran.

GRAINGER
Maybe. I don't know. Anyway, he started reading it to them. He told me that they called it the Book of Strange New Things.

PETER
(suspiciously)
How did you get this?

GRAINGER
I found it, searching for Morgan.

PETER
You went out looking for him?
That's dangerous. You two must have been close...

GRAINGER
(raw)
I admired what he was willing to do. Yes, we were close. For a time.

Grainger falters slightly as Peter watches her and he senses a deep well of emotion just below the surface.

All of a sudden an ALARM SOUNDS. Grainger steps over to her tablet and pulls up a feed from a CCTV camera. A couple of MEDICS are racing into the garage area as a body is pulled from the back of a Jeep --

GRAINGER (CONT'D)
Shit.

Grainger races out of the security wing. Concerned, Peter heads after her, taking the bible with him.

53 **INT. CORRIDOR / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY**

53

Grainger streaks down a corridor. Peter heads after her, joining a wave of USIC staff heading out of their dorm rooms and racing towards the garage. The alarm continues to sound. Just then Sy runs past.

PETER

What's happening?

SY

There was an accident off base.

Grainger heads into the garage. Peter and the other staff crowd in after her.

54 **INT. VEHICLE GARAGE / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY**

54

Grainger arrives as the Medics perform CPR on a body lying on the floor. The prostrate figure is soaking wet, dressed in a heavy jacket and winter boots --

Tuska, B.G. and Severin stand by the hastily parked Jeep. They're all wearing cold weather clothes. B.G. appears to be in a state of shock.

People crowd into the garage now.

Peter catches sight of the look on B.G.'s face.

Just then one of the Medics looks up and shakes his head. The Medics step clear and now Peter is able to get a clear view of the body on the ground --

SY

Who is it?

PETER

(stunned)

Halloran.

SY

Jesus.

Peter pushes through and drops down next to Halloran's body. Sy can see the emotion in Peter's eyes. Just then he realises that he's still clutching the bible. He presses it into Halloran's lifeless hand.

Everyone is gazing at Peter as he utters a silent prayer and shuts Halloran's eyes gently.

Tuska is standing by himself, uneasy. He catches Peter's eye and smiles tightly. Peter approaches.

TUSKA

Thank you for the service. I'm sure Halloran would have appreciated it.

PETER

And what about you?

TUSKA

I don't know... I guess.

Just then Peter hears raised voices. B.G. has pushed past someone at the bar to reach for a fresh bottle of Scotch. He fills up his glass and drinks it down in one go before refilling it again and taking another gulp.

PETER

You and Severin were with Halloran when he died, isn't that right?

Tuska spots Danesh watching him. He mutters his reply.

TUSKA

B.G. was the closest.

PETER

Even so, that's a hard thing to witness. If you need to talk --

TUSKA

I'm fine. I can handle it.

PETER

What happened to him?

TUSKA

It was all pretty fast. I think he must have had a heart attack.

PETER

(suspicious)
I thought he drowned.

TUSKA

(floundering)
Before he drowned, I mean.

PETER

I don't believe you.

Tuska looks up angrily at Peter, but he's surprised to find no judgment on his face.

PETER (CONT'D)

It's OK, you can tell me. What were you doing out there?

TUSKA

(torn)

They said we had to keep it to ourselves.

PETER

Who did? Danesh?

Before Tuska has the chance to answer a fight breaks out.

B.G. (O.S.)

GET THE FUCK AWAY FROM ME!

Peter turns now to see someone trying to prise a half empty Scotch bottle from B.G., but B.G. wrenches it off the guy and thrusts him backwards, bringing the table crashing down.

Bottles smash. Everyone falls silent --

B.G. wheels around now, aware that all eyes are on him. His speech is slurred and he looks ready to explode.

B.G. (CONT'D)

I know what you're all thinking.
But it's not my fault he died.

Peter sees the wild fear in B.G.'s eyes. Severin steps in to try and reason with him, but B.G. lashes out, punching his friend. People try to restrain B.G. who struggles, fighting back. Just then he catches Sy with an elbow in the face. Peter races over --

PETER

STOP IT!

B.G. spins around, cocking his fist back before he realises it's Peter. Just then Grainger steps in. She reaches for the Taser in her holster but Peter shakes his head and she stays back. She watches Peter as he reasons with B.G.

B.G.

It wasn't my fault.

PETER

I believe you. It's alright. Just tell me what happened.

B.G. crumbles now, beginning to cry freely as Peter takes hold of him. The rest of the men watch.

B.G.

(shaking)

He was calling out his wife's name.
Maggie, over and over. Like he saw her out there...

Peter registers this, not sure what it could mean.

B.G. (CONT'D)

I tried to go after him but he slipped through the ice. He had a backpack on, equipment. It was too heavy, I couldn't pull him out so I turned back to call for help and that's when I saw it...

Silence. Everyone is staring now. Danesh quietly enters the room, quickly taking in the scene.

B.G. (CONT'D)

I had to get out of there... I was scared. So I just... I let him go.

SY

What was it? What did you see?

Just then we hear a sharp electric charge. B.G. goes down, convulsing. Everyone turns --

DANESH

Give him room.

Danesh has grabbed Grainger's Taser from her belt. He hands it back to her as he steps over B.G.'s inert body.

GRAINGER

What are you doing?

DANESH

This man attacked two members of our community. Your job is to keep order up here. Cuff him and take him down to the cooler.

Danesh looks at Grainger, who is clearly disturbed by his actions. Danesh senses everyone staring at him.

DANESH (CONT'D)

Now, Grainger!

Grainger looks uneasy but does as she's told. She steps forward and cuffs B.G.

Danesh catches the look of defiance on Peter's face as he steps forward to help Grainger get B.G. to his feet. Danesh surveys the room and then heads out.

Peter enters the mess hall. The incident in the Rec Room is still fresh. The atmosphere is strained; people are whispering as they line up for food or sit eating in huddles.

Peter picks up his tray and catches the eye of a few workers. Each of them gives him a respectful nod. Someone even gives up their place in the line for him, which surprises Peter.

Peter steps forward and receives his food, half expecting to see Halloran serving him.

Peter heads away with his tray but he deliberately chooses not to sit at the executive table where Phelps, Coomer and Danesh are conferring. Ruiz takes a seat at the far end of the table. Her gaze follows Peter.

Peter sits at a table of workers including Severin.

SEVERIN
(respectfully)
Father.

Peter nods, and is about to start eating when he senses a murmur going around the room.

There's a low insistent back and forth coming from a table in the far corner, a discussion about who should speak. After a moment Donnie stands. Everyone falls silent.

DONNIE
(nervous)
B.G. said he saw something out there. What did he mean by that?

Silence. Donnie stares at the top table. Everyone turns and looks at Danesh now. They wait for an answer, but Danesh doesn't speak, he takes in the room, all eyes on him.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Did something kill Halloran?

DANESH
Halloran fell through the ice.

PETER
What were those men even doing out there in the first place?

Everyone takes in Peter now, his gaze is locked on Danesh.

PETER (CONT'D)
You knew how dangerous it was but you sent them anyway. Why?

DANESH
(seething)
Everyone here is a very long way from home, Peter, and there's no way off this planet. If you want to terrify them, go right ahead.
(MORE)

DANESH (CONT'D)

Or you could try and act in a way that befits your calling. These men need leadership.

PETER

They need the truth. What was that team doing out there on the ice?

Danesh glares back at Peter, suddenly making his mind up.

DANESH

We've run out of water.

Silence. The men look astonished, terrified.

DANESH (CONT'D)

Are you satisfied now?

PETER

They control the water?

Mango and Donnie look confused who Peter means by 'they'.

DANESH

Every drop on the planet. We've been recycling our supply, but since Morgan...

(picking his words)

Since communication broke down with the Oaseans they've cut off our supply.

MANGO

'Oaseans'. Who the fuck are they?

RUIZ

It's what Morgan called them.

There are murmurs now as people realise what this means.

DONNIE

Then we're not alone up here?

DANESH

(a deep breath)

No. We're not.

The men react in a sudden torrent of fear and speculation. Peter looks uneasy about what's been unleashed. Danesh is clearly angry, trying to regain control.

VOICES

What the hell are they? / Are they dangerous? / How many of them?

DANESH

Ask Reverend Leigh, he undertook a sortie out there to speak with them. Isn't that right, Reverend?

SY

You've seen them?

Peter looks up now. All the men are staring at him, a few betrayed looks, especially from Sy.

PETER

There's a settlement fifty miles to the east. I was taken there and I saw them. And they're unlike anything in creation.

SY

Why you didn't you say something?

PETER

I wanted to but --

DANESH

It's your fault that I had to send out a team. You wouldn't countenance a return journey to secure our water -

PETER

You never told me the reason. You'd do anything to avoid admitting how doomed this mission is. Isn't that the truth? Halloran's blood is on your hands, not mine!

A deathly silence. Danesh looks rattled now.

DANESH

We have a week's water rations left for everyone in the base. Either you go and minister to them or I send more men to secure a supply.

SY

They'll kill you if you go back. Like they killed Halloran.

SEVERIN

And maybe Morgan too.

DONNIE

We need to take the water by force. That's how we secure it.

An angry roar of approval goes up from the men, a storm of insurrection brewing amongst them. Danesh stares at Peter, who senses things breaking down.

SY
I couldn't come, I was working.

Sy looks deeply uneasy, restless. Peter seems confused.

PETER
Sy? What is it?

SY
You need to see something...

62 **INT. ANTECHAMBER / GEODESIC DOME / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY** 62

Sy checks no one is watching and holds his swipe card up to a panel. The door clicks open.

SY
Put this on.

Sy hands Peter a white Hazchem suit.

63 **INT. GEODESIC DOME / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY** 63

Sy and Peter both wear Hazchem suits now, the plastic hoods over their heads as they enter the huge dome. There is no one else in sight, just hundreds of rows of plants suspended in aquaponic tubes.

Peter follows Sy into a lab at the side of the dome --

64 **INT. LAB / GEODESIC DOME / USIC BASE / OASIS - DAY** 64

Peter enters the lab and pulls off his hood, surprised to find Ruiz waiting for him. Sy pulls off his hood too. They all stand in silence for a moment.

RUIZ
I don't think I've ever seen anyone stand up to Danesh like that.

PETER
Everyone on this base has put their life in USIC's hands. They deserve to know what we're up against.

RUIZ
The Oaseans aren't our enemy. They craved what Morgan was teaching them. Why would they turn on him? It doesn't make any sense. He saw their faces. They allowed him to gather data on them --

PETER
What sort of data?

Ruiz looks at Sy who takes his cue and steps over to a computer. He taps away at the keyboard. Just then the screen fills with code. Sy turns and looks meaningfully at Peter.

SY

It was encrypted on the server but tagged with Morgan's name. It's a DNA chain.

PETER

Well whose is it?

RUIZ

Their's.

Confused, Peter looks at Ruiz. Her eyes bore into his and he suddenly understands. Sy stares at the code, fascinated.

RUIZ (CONT'D)

It's pretty similar to human DNA, remarkably so in fact -- but with a few significant differences.

Sy shoots a look at Ruiz but she keeps her powder dry.

PETER

Morgan was sequencing the Oaseans' genome? Why would he do that?

RUIZ

To try and understand them. He was a scientist first and foremost. There were only eighteen of us on the first shuttle. Morgan and I were the senior crew so we scouted out the planet, looking for water. One morning we went over the mountain and we came upon them.

Peter looks at Ruiz; he can see how vivid this memory is for her. Sy is watching her closely now too.

RUIZ (CONT'D)

My brain couldn't process what I was seeing. But Morgan was calm. Almost like he was ready for them.

Peter clocks this but he lets Ruiz continue.

RUIZ (CONT'D)

He started heading out there every day for months.

PETER

You didn't go with him again?

RUIZ

He made it clear that he preferred to go alone when he met his family.

PETER

Family?

RUIZ

That's what he started calling them after a while. The Oaseans don't give themselves names, so to distinguish between them Morgan called them after members of his family back home. Like pet names I guess. That's how close he was to them. By the time he disappeared I'd say Morgan was closer to the Oaseans than to anyone else on the base. He trusted them.

PETER

Well if they're not responsible for Morgan's disappearance, then who is?

RUIZ

I don't know. But Halloran called out his wife's name right before he died. Whatever he saw out there, he wanted to go towards it. You don't do that if you're scared, do you? I don't think the Oaseans are the threat up here. I'd trust them before I'd trust Danesh.

Peter's mind is racing, he stares back the screen. Sy shares another look with Ruiz and Peter catches it this time.

PETER

What?

SY

You need to tell him, Ma'am.

Ruiz thinks for a moment, then makes a decision.

RUIZ

Alright, but I'm prefacing this by saying genetics aren't my field.

PETER

What are you talking about?

RUIZ

I dated a genome scientist back at college and enough of it stuck to make an educated guess --

SY
Just tell him.

Ruiz points at a section of code from the aliens' DNA.

RUIZ
Cells in the body constantly
replace themselves before they die.
But each time they do, the faults
are passed down to the replacement
cells. That's what causes the body
to age. You can tell by looking at
what's called the telomeres at the
ends of each chromosome. As they
age, they fray.

Ruiz taps at the keyboard and magnifies the DNA sample on the screen so it's clear. The DNA looks perfectly new. Peter stares at it, confused.

PETER
That doesn't look frayed at all.

RUIZ
Exactly.

Peter looks at Ruiz and then at Sy. He looks back at the screen, his mind racing.

PETER
Their cells don't deteriorate?

RUIZ
They don't appear to.

PETER
But that would make them...

Peter can't finish the thought, it's too dangerous to say it.

RUIZ
Immortal?

Peter doesn't speak. Sy waits for Peter's reaction as he steps away and takes a seat. He looks lightheaded.

RUIZ (CONT'D)
You OK, Padre?

PETER
(faltering)
If Morgan hid this research from
you, what was he doing with it?

RUIZ
I honestly don't know.

PETER

Morgan must have taught them
'Amazing Grace'. What else?

GRAINGER

I don't know.

PETER

Was he even religious?

GRAINGER

No, but he wore a cross around his
neck. It was his grandfather's, he
kept it for sentimental reasons,
but they asked him what it meant.

PETER

So they speak?

GRAINGER

He communicated with them using
sign language at first, but they
picked up English almost instantly.
They're highly intelligent. He told
them about Jesus.

PETER

What kind of things?

GRAINGER

Stuff he'd learnt as a kid. That he
was born in a stable. Turned water
into wine. Sunday school stories.

Peter bridles at this reduction of his faith.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)

They were fascinated. Morgan tried
to change the subject, but every
time he went to see them they
wanted to hear more.

Grainger can sense his anxiety levels rising as they draw
closer to the mountain. She picks her words --

GRAINGER (CONT'D)

You can do this you know.

PETER

I hope so. I'm not exactly
qualified...

GRAINGER

Neither was Morgan but he was a
good man too.

Peter is grateful for this.

GRAINGER (CONT'D)
 It's not in your file. The reason
 you're here -- why you came.

Grainger looks at Peter now, he chooses to confide in her.

PETER
 Bea's married. She's also part of
 my congregation. Neither of us
 meant for it to happen. People
 found out. I needed to get away,
 for Bea to get a divorce and the
 dust to settle. Then I can go back
 to my parish and we can be
 together.

GRAINGER
 And let me guess, USIC approached
 you right when you were at your
 lowest. Offered you a way out.

PETER
 (suddenly realising)
 That's right.

GRAINGER
 Everybody up here owes them
 something.

Peter remembers Sy's words and he seems suddenly troubled by
 hearing them come out of Grainger's mouth. She drives on.

68 **EXT. MOUNTAIN / OASIS - DAY** 68

Peter and Grainger head up the side of the steep mountain.
 This time they stay close together, helping one another to
 keep a grip as they move quickly up the path.

69 **EXT. MOUNTAIN / SETTLEMENT / OASIS - DAY** 69

Peter crests the mountain and looks down at the settlement
 below. There are at least three hundred Oaseans working the
 land and communing with one another now.

GRAINGER
 I'd better stay back.

PETER
 What?

GRAINGER
 I'll be right here, but it's you
 they want to see...

Peter looks scared but he's got no choice. He nods and begins
 to clamber down the mountain as Grainger holds back.

Peter heads through the settlement now. Slowly the Oaseans stop and turn towards him. Everything falls silent. Peter is barely breathing.

Just then the church door opens and a figure wrapped in a shawl heads down the steps.

Peter freezes as the figure walks towards him and, just as before, stops a few feet away.

Peter looks more closely now, trying to see what is hidden beneath the shawl.

Suddenly he can make out a pair of piercing blue eyes. Then he hears a sweet, female voice that seems familiar to him.

FEMALE OASEAN

Did you bring it?

Peter looks stunned as he recognises the voice. He falters.

PETER

I'm sorry, I don't know what you --

FEMALE OASEAN

The Book. Of Strange New Things.

Peter realises what she means and pulls out Halloran's bible. He holds it up and in that instant all the Oaseans in the settlement drop down as if on one knee in reverence. It's an astonishing sight and Peter is amazed.

Just then the Female Oasean reaches out, but far from being a claw like before, it appears to be a delicate woman's hand.

Peter's gaze flicks up to the shawl as the Oasean reaches up and pulls back the layers covering its face and head.

Peter can hardly believe it as the final layer is pulled back and the blue eyes are revealed as belonging to a human woman. Billions of miles from home, Peter finds himself standing in front of Bea...

END OF EPISODE ONE