

A PSYCHIC OCTOPUS ON EUROPA

by

PETER GARTNER

Copyright PETER GARTNER 2021

## INT – BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Scientists seated around a table. A white board in front of the table, on which there is a drawing of a circle, with “Europa” written in the middle.

Professor ALAN ROPER, standing near the whiteboard, speaks to a number of scientists.

ROPER

If we send a probe to Europa...if there's life on Europa, it will be in the ocean beneath the ice. It will not be humanoid. It's likely to be an octopus.

SCIENTIST

An octopus ?

ROPER

Octopus has alien DNA. Lives in the sea. Where did it come from ? Europa has an ocean beneath the ice, with liquid water. So, put the two together, and you reach the conclusion, if there is life on Europa, in the ocean, it's likely to be an octopus.

2<sup>nd</sup> SCIENTIST

So, what are you proposing ?

ROPER

I'm proposing we try to communicate with an octopus...

SCIENTIST

We train an octopus to speak English ?

ROPER

Just to communicate...we probably need an intermediate language..something both we and the octopus can understand...then take the octopus into space, on a mission to Europa.

2<sup>nd</sup> SCIENTIST

A shared language - ?

ROPER

It would be..octopus to the octopus, and English to us...

SCIENTIST

Telepathy ?

Roper is reluctant to use the word, in case of ridicule.

ROPER

Telepathy...

3<sup>rd</sup> SCIENTIST

There's no such thing.

2<sup>nd</sup> SCIENTIST

It's science fiction.

ROPER

It's science..fact...

3<sup>rd</sup> SCIENTIST

There's no telepathy I know of, actually works.

SCIENTIST

We should keep an open mind on that.

ROPER

We need it to work.

3<sup>rd</sup> SCIENTIST

You know of any telepathic octopuses ?

2<sup>nd</sup> SCIENTIST

You know of any telepathic humans ?

ROPER

There must be some, of each.

3<sup>rd</sup> SCIENTIST

So, all we have to do is, find an octopus with ESP, and put it together with a human with ESP, and you got a telepathic link ? Simple as that ?

ROPER

You can mock.

2<sup>nd</sup> SCIENTIST

All we need for the mission is something that's totally impossible...

ROPER

- Only with our present state of knowledge.

Roper goes to the whiteboard and writes "Octopus" beneath the circle with "Europa".

SCIENTIST

What do you propose ?

ROPER

We research telepathic communication with an octopus, or several octopuses, whilst you get the hardware ready for a mission to, Europa.

SCIENTIST

The finance, the rocket, the probe, the astronauts, and the octopuses.

ROPER

Could be ready to go in..five years.

2<sup>nd</sup> SCIENTIST

Ain't gonna happen.

ROPER

Get to it, folks...

3<sup>rd</sup> SCIENTIST

You're serious - ?

ROPER

I am...

The scientists look at each other in disbelief, then get up from their seats and go out.

Roper looks at the whiteboard and underlines "Europa", then "Octopus".

CUT TO:

INT – HOUSE – DAY

Living room.

Roper has just come into the hallway, heard by his wife, MARY, who sits up in her chair, then stands, as he comes into the living room.

Roper and Mary kiss, as a routine courtesy.

Roper sits down on an armchair.

Mary sits on her chair.

MARY

So, how'd it go ?

ROPER

I gotta convince them -

MARY

This octopus thing...

ROPER

- Is a hunch, based on, logic.

MARY

Crazy, uncertain logic.

ROPER

Not that crazy. Not that, uncertain.

MARY

The theory is...

She half shakes her head.

MARY

It won't work.

ROPER

How do you know, for sure ?

MARY

It's implausible...

ROPER

- But not impossible...

Mary shrugs.

ROPER

You don't know what's possible.

MARY

Possibility is not enough. It has to be, believable, to get the money, to do the research. As a marine biologist, I don't think, it will work.

ROPER

Mary, use your imagination.

MARY

Alan, use your common sense.

ROPER

If it works -

Mary looks doubtful.

MARY

How do we control this octopus, train it, to do this mission ? Will it take our instructions ?

ROPER

They are intelligent. They should do.

MARY

Why ?

ROPER

Because it's the smart thing to do. They are intelligent.

MARY

Not as intelligent as us humans.

ROPER

The ones on Europa might be. They might be more intelligent.

MARY

Like what ?

ROPER

Like they don't do dumb things some people do.

MARY

By "people", you mean, the human race ?

ROPER

Some people are, stupid.

MARY

But generally, the human race is, intelligent. More intelligent than any other creature on the planet.

ROPER

On this planet. Not Europa.

MARY

We don't know if there is life on Europa.

ROPER

If there's water, there should be life. It's a good bet.

Mary stands and moves towards the kitchen door, then stops and turns round to speak to Roper again.

MARY

I'm not sure, this octopus thing will work.

ROPER

It's worth a try.

MARY

How will you know, if it works ?

ROPER

It will communicate..with me.

MARY

How high is your ESP rating ?

ROPER

The idea is, the octopus will do the work...  
establish the psychic link, and make it happen.

MARY

What do you want me to do ?

ROPER

Find me a psychic octopus.

Mary half laughs, then stops.

MARY

How will I know, it's psychic ?

ROPER

Show it a picture of Europa. See if it reacts.

MARY

How will you find someone with psychic  
powers ?

ROPER

I'll go visit my brother...

MARY

That lunatic !

ROPER

He claims to have psychic powers.

MARY

If he was psychic, he wouldn't be in that  
mental institution. He would've used his  
psychic powers to free himself...

ROPER

Maybe, he's got telepathy, but not any telekinesis.

MARY

I am sceptical about this ESP thing.

ROPER

Extra Sensory Perception. Telekinesis.. telepathy. He's got some.

MARY

I doubt it.

Mary goes into the kitchen, leaving Roper to ponder.

CUT TO:

EXT – PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY

The signs says, "State mental hospital."

CUT TO:

INT – ROOM – DAY

MARK, Roper's brother seated on his bed, in his room in the hospital.

The door opens and Roper is shown in by the hand of a psychiatric nurse.

The door closes with a noise.

Roper approaches Mark.

He pulls up a chair and sits down.

Mark reacts to his presence slowly, as he is on medication.

ROPER

Mark...Mark...

MARK

What do you want ?

ROPER

I wanna talk to you.

A beat.

MARK

Why ?



ROPER

I need your help.

MARK

You need..my help ?

ROPER

Yes. I need you, to help me.

MARK

How ?

ROPER

You know, you always claimed to have some extra-sensory perception...

Mark laughs.

MARK

That was meant to be a joke.

ROPER

Not a total joke. You did have some, psychic ability...

MARK

That was a delusion, caused by my illness.

ROPER

That all it was ?

MARK

What else, could it be ?

ROPER

I need your help !

MARK

I am not psychic...

ROPER

What are you, then ?

MARK

I'm a lunatic in a state mental hospital. I have been on so many drugs, I don't know what is what, any more. There was a time I believed I had telepathic powers, but now, I am satisfied, that was a delusion cause by my mental

MARK (cont'd)  
illness. I was, mistaken.

ROPER  
Go back to that time; remember, you  
told me you did have the ability to read  
minds...

MARK  
That was before they put me on drugs...  
to cure me, of that, delusion...

A beat, while Roper ponders this.

ROPER  
What do you think, now ?

MARK  
The drugs dampened down my psychic  
abilities. They were much stronger before  
I was put on drugs. I only got a little  
precognition and telepathy left. I can't  
do telekinesis at all, any more.

ROPER  
I might get you outta here, if...

MARK  
What ?

ROPER  
- You become part of a research program...  
into, telepathy...

MARK  
You could do that ?

ROPER  
I could pull some strings.

MARK  
Why didn't do that earlier ? Get me outta  
here ?

Roper hesitates before answering.

ROPER  
I guess, I didn't need ta use you, before.  
I do now.

MARK

So, you let me rot in here.

ROPER

I'm sorry.

MARK

Now, you need my help...

ROPER

I'll get you outta here, if you can demonstrate some psychic ability...

MARK

Read your mind...?

ROPER

If you like.

MARK

Telekinesis... Well, okay, at the moment, you got octopus on your mind...

ROPER

Octopus - ?

MARK

You're thinking about an octopus...

ROPER

Anything else ?

MARK

Europa...

ROPER

How did you know - ?

MARK

Maybe I am a little psychic, after all.

ROPER

I will, get you outta here.

Mark looks at Roper, then turns a little to look at the window in his room.

CUT TO:

INT – HOUSE – DAY

Living room.

Roper and Mary.

MARY

You never mentioned it to him before ?

ROPER

Never.

MARY

It could be cold reading...

ROPER

It was too precise...

MARY

Maybe he's a mentalist...

ROPER

A fake ?

MARY

If he's fake, he won't be communicating with your octopus, not genuinely...it would be a trick. You can't go to Europa relying on, he might be psychic, telepathic. You gotta be certain.

ROPER

No certainty with telepathy, you know that.

MARY

You'll never get the funding.

ROPER

I can get the money.

MARY

How ?

ROPER

You leave that to me. I will promise them, Europa. Mining rights...

MARY

It's an ocean.

ROPER

The core...

Mary is bemused and half laughs, then stops.

MARY  
That's so deep down...

ROPER  
Greed has no limits.

Mary sits down.

ROPER  
I care for him.

Mary shakes her head.

MARY  
No. I remember you saying, he was a pain,  
and, you couldn't care less, when they put  
him in that mental hospital.

ROPER  
He was a pain. Nothing I could do, they put  
him in that institution.

MARY  
You're getting him out now -

ROPER  
- I need to use him.

MARY  
So, now you care about him.

A beat.

MARY  
You're a hypocrite...

ROPER  
So what if I am - ? I get things done.

Roper sits down.

MARY  
You're exploiting him.

ROPER  
I'd be getting him out of that hospital.

MARY  
Is it safe ?

ROPER

Huh ?

MARY

You'd hafta take responsibility for him.

ROPER

I would hafta take him off drugs, to get the full psychic package, outta him.

MARY

He is disturbed...

ROPER

He was disturbed...

MARY

He still is.

ROPER

How do you know ?

MARY

I presume, he is.

ROPER

He's changed. He's no longer a danger to himself, or others...

MARY

- Now that you need ta use him. He got certified...

ROPER

I'll de-certify him...

MARY

You can do that ?

ROPER

Offer them enough money, I can do that.

MARY

So, you gonna keep him here ?

ROPER

If that's okay...?

MARY

He'd better safe.

ROPER

I'll guarantee that.

MARY

You can't, you can't guarantee that.

ROPER

We'll have sedatives ready, if he goes too far.

MARY

So, I hafta accept that ?

ROPER

Mary, please...

Mary sighs.

MARY

The things I do for you...

ROPER

Thanks...

Roper looks relieved.

CUT TO:

INT – PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL – DAY

Consulting room.

A PSYCHIATRIST is handing Mark over to Roper.

PSYCHIATRIST

You take care of him.

ROPER

I will.

PSYCHIATRIST (to Mark)

You take care of yourself.

MARK

Thanks.

Roper leads Mark out of the room, down the corridor to the exit.

Mark pauses as he looks at the outside through a window near the exit door.

He turns to Roper.

ROPER

You can do it.

Mark nods.

They go out.

CUT TO:

EXT – CAR PARK – DAY

Roper shows Mark to a car.

They get in, Roper in the driver's seat, Mark in the back.

CUT TO:

INT – CAR – DAY

Roper driving. Mark in the back.

Roper looks at Mark in the mirror.

ROPER

You'll be staying at mine.

Little reaction from Mark.

ROPER

You heard me ?

MARK

Sure, I heard you.

ROPER

You remember my wife...?

Mark ponders as he tries to remember.

CUT TO:

INT – HOUSE – DAY

Living room of Roper's house.

Roper introducing Mary to Mark.

ROPER

...Mary...

Mark looks blank.

Mary offers her hand to Mark to shake.



Mark slowly moves his hand towards Mary's hand, and she initiates a handshake.

After a few seconds, Mary releases Mark's limp hand.

MARY

You remember me...at all ?

MARK

No...

ROPER

He was on drugs.

Mark looks at Roper, then back to Mary.

MARK

He got me off all the drugs they had me on at the hospital.

MARY

Is it safe to do that ?

ROPER

They didn't care. They effectively washed their hands of him.

MARY (to Mark)

You're on no medication at all ?

MARK

This is, correct. Don't worry. The drugs I was on did so much damage, there's practically nothing left of me; certainly, no anger...only regret.

MARY

You want your revenge on them ?

MARK

Not yet; not at the moment.

MARY

You do want revenge on them ?

MARK

I can wait for that. For now, I gotta help my brother.

Mark looks towards an armchair.

ROPER

Sure, you can sit down.

MARK

Thanks.

Mark goes over to the armchair and sits down.

MARY

You know something...

MARK

Mark...

MARY

Mark...I gotta be honest with you. Alan here, my husband, your brother, only wants to use you...

MARK

I know that.

MARY

That's acceptable to you ?

MARK

Of course, it is...he got me outta the mental institution, where people rot...

MARY

He once said...

MARK

- I was a pain and he couldn't care less about me.

MARY

I was just about to say that.

MARK

I can read minds...

ROPER

He's very talented. All I need now, is an equally talented telepathic octopus.

MARY

Like, that's gonna be so easy to find.

ROPER

I'm relying on you, Mary, to find me one.

MARY

I'll do what I can.

Mary goes to Mark.

MARY (to Mark)

You can't trust anyone; remember that.

MARK

I've always known that.

ROPER

Don't forget it.

Mark looks up at Roper.

MARK

I won't.

Roper and Mary sit down.

Roper looks at Mark, then at Mary, whose expression remains doubtful. She then looks at Mark, who looks distant but thoughtful.

CUT TO:

INT – AQUARIUM – DAY

Mary has been showing Mark the tank with some octopuses.

MARY

Gotta keep that lid on, or they'll escape.

MARK

They are, very intelligent creatures.

MARY

Can you establish a psychic link with one of them ?

MARK

I'll try.

Mark goes up the the glass of the octopus tank and looks at the octopuses with intense concentration.

One of the octopuses is drawn to him and goes up to the other side of the glass from him.

It touches a tentacle to where Mark's forehead is.

Mark looks at the tentacle and smiles.

MARK

He's got it. This is the most psychic one.

MARY

Okay. We'll put him in his own tank.

Later:

The psychic octopus is alone in another, smaller tank.

Mark puts his head against the glass.

MARK

I sense a yearning, to return to its origins.  
First to the sea, then, to go further back,  
a kind of race memory, back to..Europa.

MARY

They originated from Europa ?

Mark nods.

CUT TO:

INT – BRIEFING ROOM – DAY/NIGHT

Evening twilight. The briefing room with the whiteboard, table and chairs.

Roper, Mark and Mary.

ROPER

From Europa...

He turns to look at the whiteboard and goes over to write "Europa" on it, then turns back to look at Mark and Mary.

ROPER

I thought so. It was a hunch I always had.  
Now, I got some proof.

MARY

An ex-lunatic with a supposed psychic  
ability, communicating with an octopus !  
That does not meet the standard of scientific  
proof.

ROPER

It's good enough for me.

MARY

You slacked on your rigour.

ROPER

I'll get the money for a mission to Europa, with a psychic octopus and my telepathic brother.

MARY

You know how crazy that sounds ?

ROPER

You'd like a trip up to Moon-base, wouldn't you ?

MARY

I'm not going to Europa.

ROPER

Moon-base first, then, Europa.

MARY

I'll go to Moon-base; not Europa.

ROPER

Fine.

Roper goes to the window and looks up at the sky, to see the moon.

ROPER

Moon-base, it is.

Roper turns to look at Mary and Mark, who look at each other, but say nothing. Mark then looks upwards.

CUT TO:

EXT – MOON

A shuttle lands on a pad at Moon-base. The Earth can be seen in the background.

CUT TO:

INT – MOON-BASE – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Roper supervises as technicians unload the transparent tank containing the octopus, watched by Mary and Mark.

MARY (to Mark)

He can get money for any crazy scheme.

MARK

The crazier it is, the more likely to get funded.

ROPER

Careful, now. That is valuable cargo.

The technicians handle with tank with appropriate care, and wheel it through to Roper's laboratory, followed by Roper, Mark and Mary.

The tank is then placed on a table.

The technicians go out, and Roper closes the door. He goes over to the tank on the table.

ROPER

A mighty fine specimen.

MARY

A psychic octopus.

MARK

Now, all we gotta do, is get it up to Europa.

The octopus reacts to the "Europa" and swims up to the glass, then stops. Mark goes up to the tank and places his forefinger and middle finger up against the glass. The octopus puts its tentacle where Mark's fingers are, on the other side of the glass.

ROPER

We'll get it there, with your help.

MARY

He likes "Europa."

The octopus reacts again and swims around the tank in a motion like a dance.

Mark releases his fingers from the tank, and moves away from it, to address Roper.

MARK

We'll need a submarine, if we're to explore the ocean on Europa.

ROPER

We got one.

MARK

It will hafta withstand substantial pressure.

ROPER

Come with me; I'll show you.

Roper goes out, followed by Mark. Mary looks at the octopus in the tank.

CUT TO:

## INT – SUBMARINE BAY – ARTIFICIAL DAY

A submarine bay on the moon, with a transparent dome on top.

Roper leads Mark down to the Europa Submarine, which is half submerged in the water of the bay.

They go down steps, and Roper jumps onto the submarine, followed by Mark.

MARK

It's a decent size.

ROPER

There's plenty o' room for that octopus and his tank.

MARK

Got large windows...

ROPER

So we can see where we're going. Lots o' lights. Let's take a look inside.

Roper opens the hatch and goes inside, followed by Mark.

CUT TO:

## INT – EUROPA SUBMARINE – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Inside the submarine, Roper goes to the controls and sits down in the pilot's seat. He puts his hands on the wheel.

Mark has a look at the facilities, including an airlock for release into the ocean. He sees some two spacesuits, with helmets. He turns around to address Roper.

MARK

We gonna put our octopus in that airlock ?

ROPER

They can survive a little while in the air.

MARK

What if it swims off, to freedom ?

ROPER

We still have the psychic link to you.

MARK

What about your wife ?

Roper sighs.

ROPER

She's not coming. She said so.

MARK

Why not ?

ROPER

You ask her.

MARK

I'll do just that.

Mark sighs.

CUT TO:

INT – LABORATORY – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Mark watches Mary as she observes the behaviour of the octopus in the tank.

MARK

You're not going with us, to Europa...?

MARY

No.

MARK

Why not ?

Mary turns round to look at Mark.

MARY

I do not intend to die inside a submarine, on a trip to the ocean of Europa, with an octopus for company, with my unhinged husband in command. If I'm gonna die, I'll do it here, on the Moon.

MARK

Why don't you divorce him, if you think he's unhinged ?

MARY

I don't know. Maybe, I will, one day, if he ever makes it back from this mission to Europa.

MARK

If he dies on Europa, which is a distinct possibility -



MARY

It saves me the effort.

MARK

You're lazy. You're depending on fate to decide things for you.

MARY

I suppose I am.

MARK

Always take your destiny in your own hands...if you can...

MARY

You didn't...

MARK

I was not in the position to do that. I was incarcerated in that mental hospital.

MARY

I know, and I felt bad about that, but your brother, my husband, could've got you out years ago. He decided not to. He only done it now, because he needed to use you.

MARK

I gotta be grateful I got out now. I was rotting away in that place.

MARY

You know, that's one of the reasons I don't like my husband. I wouldn't die for him.

MARK

What if we survive ? What if he don't die on that mission to Europa ? What if I don't die ?

MARY

What about the octopus ?

MARK

What if we all come back okay ?

MARY

I'll marry the octopus...

Mark does not find that funny. He sighs.

MARK

Seriously, Mary, I always liked you.

MARY

I liked you; but you were..insane.

MARK

I went funny in the head. I got cured.  
I'm sane, now.

MARY

Are you ? It's one crazy mission you're  
going on.

MARK

Your husband's idea.

MARY

He's crazy.

Mark looks at the octopus in the tank.

MARK

You're gonna marry that ?

MARY

It's a joke, about how unsuitable some  
men are...

MARK

I hope I come back, alive.

MARY

I hope you come back alive...

MARK

You do...?

MARY

I hope the octopus comes back alive.  
I even hope my husband comes back  
alive.

MARK

Then there's nothing between us...?

MARY

Of course not.

Mark looks at the octopus and talks to it.

MARK  
We gotta make it back.

The octopus shimmers in response.

MARK  
You understand me...

The octopus raises a tentacle, and taps the glass.

Mark turns to Mary.

MARK  
How about that ? He knows what's going on.

MARY  
Of course he does.

MARK  
We will go to Europa, and come back safe.

The octopus shimmers in agreement.

CUT TO:

INT – SUBMARINE BAY – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Technicians load the tank containing the octopus onto the submarine, supervised by Roper.

Mark watches as the tank is lowered through the hatch.

CUT TO:

INT – SUBMARINE – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Roper closes the hatch, and takes the tank with the octopus to an area where it is locked in place.

Mark smiles at the octopus, which shimmers in response.

Roper notices this connection between them.

ROPER  
He looks happy.

MARK  
He's going back to his ancestral origins.  
That makes him happy.

ROPER  
Communing with an octopus.

MARK

No ordinary octopus. The most psychic octopus we could find.

A beat.

ROPER

Okay. Let's get this thing to Europa.

Roper goes to the command seat and straps himself in.

Mark goes to a passenger seat and straps himself in.

Roper presses a button.

On the screen, he can see a computer simulation of the submarine set-up with a crane approaching the submarine.

CUT TO:

INT – SUBMARINE BAY – ARTIFICIAL DAY

The crane picks up the submarine and places it on the carriage of a train.

The train then exits the submarine bay into a tube. The inner side of the tube closes after the train fully enters.

CUT TO:

EXT – MOON-BASE

The train emerges from the other end of the tube, which closes behind it.

A crane then lifts the submarine off the train and into the Europa Spaceship, through the bay doors, which close behind, once the submarine is inside, and disconnected from the crane.

CUT TO:

INT – EUROPA SPACESHIP – ARTIFICIAL DAY

The submarine is on the floor of the bay, inside the spaceship.

Roper and Mark emerge from the submarine hatch and climb down onto the floor.

They proceed out of the bay area, closing a door behind them, and then go up a corridor to the control room.

In the control room, Roper straps himself into the command chair.

Mark straps himself into another chair.

Roper turns to Mark.

ROPER

You ready ?

MARK

I sure am.

ROPER

Okay. Let's get to Jupiter, and then, Europa.

Roper presses a button for ignition.

CUT TO:

EXT – MOON

The Europa spaceship takes off vertically upwards, then, as it clears the moon, goes into horizontal flight towards Jupiter.

CUT TO:

EXT – SPACE

The Europa spaceship passes by Mars, then passes through the Asteroid Belt, towards Jupiter.

The spaceship goes into an orbit around Jupiter and slows down due to Jupiter's gravity.

The spaceship then slowly moves towards Europa.

CUT TO:

EXT – EUROPA

The spaceship slowly descends towards the surface of Europa and hovers above it.

A huge drill emerges from the underside of the spaceship with a large circular cutting bit.

The cutting bit lowers down to the surface and starts cutting through the ice.

CUT TO:

INT – EUROPA SPACESHIP – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Roper is monitoring the progress of the drill on a computer screen, watched by Mark.

ROPER

We gotta drill down twelve miles to get to the ocean.

MARK

How long will that take ?

ROPER

I don't know exactly. No-one's ever drilled

ROPER (cont'd)  
down that far, before.

MARK  
Is it safe ?

ROPER  
We're well clear of the water's gonna  
spray up when we get to the ocean. It  
will be like a geyser, only wider. Until  
then, we just gotta sit back and wait...  
let the drill do its job.

They continue to watch the computer screen simulation of the progress and depth of the drill.

Later:

The screen shows the drill getting close to the end of the ice and the start of the ocean, about to penetrate into the water.

Roper slows the process down and halts it. He looks at Mark.

ROPER  
Now or never...

MARK  
Okay.

The drill cuts through the last remaining ice and reaches the ocean.

ROPER  
We got through.

Roper presses a button to retract the drill, all the way up through the ice.

On the screen, the level of the water goes up with the drill being retracted.

As the drill is about to be drawn out of the hole, Roper slows it down, so that the release of water is more controlled.

ROPER  
Here we go.

Roper presses a button for the drill to be lifted out of the hole.

CUT TO:

EXT – EUROPA – DAY

The drill is drawn up into the underside of the spacesuit.

Water gushes out of the hole, for some time, like a geyser, until it calms down and falls flat, with the water pressure lessened, seeping out rather than flooding.

CUT TO:

INT – EUROPA SPACESHIP – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Roper looks to Mark.

ROPER

Let's see what's down there.

They undo their belts and make their way to the submarine.

They climb inside the submarine and close the hatch.

CUT TO:

INT – EUROPA SUBMARINE – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Roper and Mark put on their spacesuits and carry their helmets with them, to the control panel.

On the way, Mark notices the octopus is shimmering and dancing in its tank.

MARK

He's happy.

ROPER

He's going home.

Roper and Mark put on their helmets.

Roper operates the controls to release the submarine into the water.

CUT TO:

EXT – EUROPA – DAY

The submarine touches the surface of water in the circular hole created by the drill.

It starts to submerge.

CUT TO:

INT – EUROPA SUBMARINE – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Seen through the front windows of the submarine, the water level rises as the submarine submerges, and goes vertically down.

The depth gauge shows the submarine reaching the depth of one mile.

ROPER

We're going down.

Mark looks back at octopus becoming more excited in its tank. It seems to be dancing.

The depth gauge shows the submarine going past two miles.

Roper turns to Mark.

ROPER

Down, down and down...Hey, I never asked you this...did you resent me ?

MARK

You weren't much of a brother to me.

ROPER

I'm sorry. I regret that.

MARK

Do you ? Do you really ?

ROPER

Sure, I do. I wish I had been a better brother, to you. I was too absorbed in my career, my obsession, to find alien life in the Solar System. I did care for you, only I didn't have a pretext to get you outta there, that mental hospital... then, I found a reason...

MARK

You'd let me rot, until you found...

ROPER

...a way to get you outta there...

MARK

You only got me out, because you needed to use me...

ROPER

I assure you, I needed a good reason, to convince them, to let you go.

MARK

Is that it ?

ROPER

You needed a purpose in life, not just you were cured of your illness...that was not enough to get you out. You needed an occupation.



MARK

I could help you communicate with a psychic octopus - ? They accepted that ?

ROPER

With sufficient money attached, they found that, acceptable...they let you go.

MARK

Well, I guess I gotta be grateful for my freedom, after so many years of, rotting away, incarcerated in that mental hospital.

They look at the depth gauge, which shows they are five miles down.

ROPER

I guess this is when we get to say what we feel...on the way down.

MARK

You hafta be so God-damned patient in this life, if you wanna say what you feel. This is my first opportunity, to say that.

ROPER

Well, what do you feel ?

MARK

I feel let down by everyone, betrayed, even. I am so disappointed in people. None of them acted in my real best interests.

ROPER

That include me ?

MARK

It does.

ROPER

Well, all I can say is, I'm sorry.

MARK

Your apology is, noted.

A beat.

MARK

Maybe, I might meet some decent

MARK (cont'd)  
understanding soul, down there...

ROPER  
In the ocean of Europa ?

MARK  
Maybe, the things down there, got some  
empathy.

ROPER  
For themselves, not for you, another species.

MARK  
I felt some affinity with our octopus, a psychic  
bond.

ROPER  
I just think, he was using you to get to Europa.

MARK  
That's possible.

ROPER  
It's what life is all about; people use other  
people.

MARK  
I got used...by other people.

ROPER  
You ain't never used no-one...

MARK  
Not yet.

ROPER  
You will, one day. Then, you become fully  
human.

MARK  
Might be human, but it ain't nice.

ROPER  
"Nice" don't get you nowhere.

MARK  
Nice has gotten me here.

Roper sighs.

ROPER

You're naive...

MARK

So what if I am ?

ROPER

Ain't good for you.

MARK

I am what I am.

ROPER

People take advantage of you.

MARK

That is what you're doing...

ROPER

I just want you to, wise up a little.

MARK

"Wise up ?" I'm too dumb, to do that.

ROPER

You're here to perform a function.

MARK

To talk to the imaginary alien psychic octopuses, of Europa.

ROPER

They ain't imaginary.

MARK

How can you be sure of that ?

ROPER

I ain't sure. I got a hunch.

MARK

So did Quasimodo...didn't do him no good.

ROPER

It stands to reason...there's any intelligent alien life in the Solar System, it's gonna be in the ocean of Europa...most likely gonna be an octopus...it's a decent bet, they're gonna be, telepathic...not, humanoid... psychic octopus in the ocean of Europa.

MARK

I cannot fault your logic.

Roper looks at the gauge, and now it is approaching twelve miles.

Roper stops the descent, just above the level of the opening into the ocean.

Roper puts his helmet visor down and locks it in place. Mark then does the same.

Roper tests the helmet microphone.

ROPER

You receiving me ?

MARK

Roger, loud and clear.

ROPER

Good. They're working. Let's go.

Seen through the front windows, the submarine descends into the wider ocean.

CUT TO:

INT – EUROPA OCEAN

The submarine emerges from the bottom of the drilled shaft into the main ocean underneath the ice.

The lights are switched on, as the ocean is quite dark.

The submarine descends further into the ocean.

CUT TO:

INT – EUROPA SUBMARINE – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Roper and Mark in the control panel area.

Mark turns around to see the octopus is shimmering and dancing in its tank.

Mark turns forwards.

MARK

He's gotten all excited.

ROPER

It's understandable.

MARK

I hope we can deliver for him. I know what it's like to be disappointed. I don't

MARK (cont'd)  
want that to happen to him.

ROPER  
It's just an octopus.

MARK  
He is more sensitive than you can imagine.  
We humans, underestimate the intelligence  
of anything that's not us.

ROPER  
That's true.

MARK  
I can trust that octopus. The question is, can  
he trust me ? I am human, after all.

ROPER  
What is it, to be human ?

MARK  
Treachorous, deceitful, dishonest, unreliable.  
As a rule, humans cannot be trusted. I am the  
exception to that rule. I would never betray  
that octopus.

ROPER  
Would you betray me ?

MARK  
If I had to, I would. You betrayed me, in  
the past.

ROPER  
I wouldn't betray you now.

MARK  
Because you need to use me.

ROPER  
That's true.

A beat.

Roper looks ahead, through the windows.

Mark reacts to something, at the same time as the octopus shimmers, then sits down at the bottom of the tank. The octopus reaches a tentacle upwards, then curls it up.

MARK

I can feel something. The octopus felt it.

ROPER

What ?

MARK

There's something out there.

Roper peers into the distance.

ROPER

Can't see nothing.

MARK

There is something down there.

ROPER

Okay. Let's see if we can find it.

Roper pushes the control wheel forwards to make the submarine tip downwards in a dive.

He looks at the depth gauge, which is approaching fifteen miles down.

MARK

I'm sensing something. You can level off now.

Roper pulls back on the control wheel to level off.

MARK

They will come to us.

Mark sees a glimmer of something ahead in the water. The undefined shape turns into a huge gleaming silver-white ALIEN OCTOPUS creature, which stops in the water, seen through the front windows of the submarine.

CUT TO:

EXT – EUROPA – OCEAN

The huge alien octopus surrounds the submarine and extends its tentacles to envelope the whole of the submarine.

CUT TO:

INT – EUROPA SUBMARINE – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Roper sees the huge underside of the alien octopus pressed against the glass.

ROPER

It's got us.

The psychic octopus stretches its tentacles upwards towards the lid of its tank and thumps against it.

Mark gets up out of his seat to speak to the octopus telepathically.

MARK (telepathically)

You want physical contact ?

PSYCHIC OCTOPUS (telepathically)

It is my destiny.

Mark goes back to the control panel area.

MARK

He wants to go meet his progenitors.

ROPER

That great big thing has us surrounded.  
It must be fifty, sixty feet, tentacle to tentacle.

MARK

It's pretty big.

ROPER

Is it hostile ?

MARK

I hope not.

ROPER

Is it friendly ?

MARK

I don't know. I don't feel any hostility.

ROPER

But you don't know...?

MARK

Not for sure.

ROPER

Let's hope it is friendly.

The psychic octopus bangs against the lid of its tank.

MARK

He's getting pretty insistent. We gotta let him go.

Mark unclips the tank and carries to the airlock.

He puts the tank in the airlock and closes the door.

He presses a button on a remote control device which releases the lid of the tank, so that the octopus can get out into the airlock.

Mark then presses a button on the panel outside the airlock to fill it with water. The water level soon submerges the psychic octopus, which swims up and down.

Mark sees the water gauge for the airlock reach the top.

He presses a button to open the airlock outer door, to let the psychic octopus out.

CUT TO:

EXT – EUROPA OCEAN

The psychic octopus exits the airlock into the ocean, then swims up to one of the tentacles of the huge alien octopus, which extends to touch it.

The psychic octopus changes colour to that of the alien octopus.

CUT TO:

INT – EUROPA SUBMARINE – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Roper and Mark observe the psychic octopus changing colour.

ROPER

It's changed.

Mark goes into a trance and speaks with the voice of the alien octopus.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

You have returned one to us. We thank you.

ROPER

What do you want ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

We want...we want...nothing...

ROPER (puzzled)

Nothing ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

Nothing.

A beat.

Roper sighs.



ROPER

You do want diplomatic relations with the human race ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

No.

ROPER

You're not hostile, are you ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

No.

ROPER

What type of relationship do you want with us ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

None.

ROPER

None ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

None.

Roper shakes his head.

ROPER

You don't intend to fight us, do you ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

No.

ROPER

What are your intentions, with regard to the people of Earth ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

We have no intentions towards the people of Earth ?

ROPER

You don't want to conquer us ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

No.

ROPER

You don't want to help us ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
We have no intentions towards the people  
of Earth.

ROPER  
Are you for us, or against us ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
We are indifferent.

ROPER  
Indifferent ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
Indifferent.

ROPER  
You don't care for us ? You don't hate us,  
or love us ? You have no feelings for us ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
The people of Earth have their own affairs.  
We would not interfere with anyone.

ROPER  
The human race have great curiosity, and  
a capacity for love...

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
The human race is, irrelevant.

ROPER  
I am a representative of the human race,  
and I say, we are not irrelevant.

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
You are irrelevant to the inhabitants of Europa.

ROPER  
You're just a great big alien octopus.

A beat.

ROPER  
You gonna destroy us, the human race ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
We would not destroy the human race.  
We would not harm or help the people  
of Earth. We are indifferent to your fate.

ROPER

We humans have achieved so much. We invented mathematics and space flight. We invented money and morality.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

We, the inhabitants of Europa, have no concept of money.

ROPER

Then, you're poor indeed.

A beat.

ROPER

You're so uninterested in us, you won't even try to destroy us ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

That is correct.

ROPER

Then, why am I even talking to you ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

We can terminate this communication.

ROPER

Terminate it, then. I'm indifferent to you being totally indifferent, to us.

Mark seems to come out of his trance.

ROPER

You heard that ?

MARK

I heard it. How about that ? They're so indifferent to us, they don't even wanna destroy us.

ROPER

I mentioned money – they weren't interested. Is there any point in speaking to them again ?

MARK

They will initiate contact if necessary, but it ain't necessary, not at the moment.

Roper sighs.

ROPER

I am disappointed with these alien octopuses.

MARK

It was always possible, if there was actual alien life elsewhere from the Earth, - we just assumed if it was intelligent, it would be interested in us. That was arrogant.

ROPER

I, we, the human race, are interested in the possibility of intelligent alien life elsewhere; but, if they are indifferent to us, why should we care about them ?

MARK

We care about them, because of our innate curiosity.

ROPER

They got no curiosity about us. You been with them; they were inside you; so, how much they know about us ?

MARK

Enough.

ROPER

Enough ?

MARK

I did sense some disdain for us, our history; in particular, the way we're polluting our planet, the damage we done to the oceans. They would never treat their environment, the sea of Europa, like that. Our technology is damaging the Earth.

ROPER

We are a sophisticated species. We need technology. Do they use technology ?

MARK

I'd hafta ask them.

ROPER

Can you get in touch...?

MARK

I can link up with our telepathic octopus,

MARK (cont'd)  
to get them to answer...

ROPER  
Let's do that.

MARK  
Okay.

Mark goes into a trance and starts to speak with the voice of the alien octopus.

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
What do you want ?

ROPER  
We want to talk.

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
For what purpose ?

ROPER  
To share our experience, our knowledge...

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
That is acceptable.

ROPER  
We have technology...we invent machines,  
we invented, money...a means of exchange.

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
We have examined your technology...

ROPER  
Do you understand our philosophy of life ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
We understand.

ROPER  
What do you make of us ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
Waste, waste and waste. You have wasted  
your planet's resources to create artificial  
technologies, which merely damage your  
environment.

ROPER  
I didn't come all the way here, to get a lecture

ROPER (cont'd)

on the environment...

MARK (Alien Octopus)

You are arrogant. You believe you are more important than your abode. You believe you are superior...

ROPER

We are...technology makes us superior.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

There are so many things you cannot do. Your technology limits your imagination. You do not understand energy and matter.

ROPER

Einstein worked that out... $E$  equals  $MC$  squared...Energy equals mass times the speed of light squared...

MARK (Alien Octopus)

But what does that mean ?

ROPER

It means what it says. Energy equals mass times the speed of light, squared.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

What does that mean ?

ROPER

The energy mass equivalence.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

You don't understand energy. We have psychic energy. You don't. Not enough to make it work. You don't understand Time.

ROPER (puzzled)

Time...?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

The real equation should be,  $E$  equals  $T, M C$  squared. Energy equals Time multiplied by Mass, multiplied by the Speed of Light, squared. Energy can increase when time is compressed.

ROPER

I don't get that.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

When Time, when Space-Time is compressed, you increase the energy, enormously. That makes psychic energy enough to, transmute matter.

ROPER

Transmutation of matter, created by...

MARK (Alien Octopus)

- Energy from Time compression...

ROPER

How do you compress Time ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

You use the power of your mind, psychic energy, to contain and compress Time.

ROPER

You can do, time travel ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

We could, and we have, in the past.

ROPER

How about now ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

"Now" is, relative.

ROPER

Time travel, and, transmutation of matter.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

It is possible. We can do it; but, there has to be a good reason.

ROPER

I could do with a demonstration.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

Not here. Not now.

ROPER

When ? Where ?

Mark convulses, then calms down.

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
The time and the place will come.

ROPER  
Just hope it's not a conjuring trick, if you need special conditions...

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
You will have your demonstration, when and where we will make it happen.

ROPER  
What do you propose ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
There is important information you should have...

ROPER  
What ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
The Greys...

ROPER  
Huh ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
The humanoid aliens...

Roper looks puzzled.

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
You ever thought for a moment, you ever wondered why the Greys are humanoids ?

ROPER  
The Roswell aliens...

MARK (Alien Octopus)  
...Are not, aliens...they are humans from the future, your future, on your planet... the Earth...a quarter of a million years in the future. They travel in space-time, but, radiation, from your atomic bomb tests, then, your H-bomb tests, interferes with their journey, damages space-time; so, they fall out of the fabric of space-time, and materialise...they crash, like they did at Roswell...



ROPER

What really happened there ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

Their time-and-space travelling vessel crashed out of space-time, into the sands at Roswell. They did not come from outer space; they did not come from another planet. They came from Earth, your own descendants, many many years into the future. Why should aliens be humanoids ? They simply are not. Why should life develop the same on two different worlds ? The conditions are different on Europa. We aliens on this world are octopuses.

ROPER

Okay; but when are you gonna do your magic trick, transmutation of matter, lead into gold ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

You're not asking the right questions.

ROPER

What should I be asking ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

Why the Greys are visiting Earth ?

ROPER

They're falling outta the fabric of space-time...

MARK (Alien Octopus)

- Due to excess radiation. They have a warning for mankind: you are ruining your planet.

ROPER

Our people are only interested in money. They would really like to see, lead into gold.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

The human race is, a disgrace. Your foolish obsession with money, will endanger your future.

ROPER

You're making moral judgements now. You are superior...

Roper shakes his head.

ROPER

You should not, judge us.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

Octopuses don't have machinations.  
We do not scheme; we do not plot.  
We do not engage in conspiracies.  
We are reliable and trustworthy.

ROPER

So, you can consider yourselves better...

MARK (Alien Octopus)

- We are better, than you.

ROPER

Look, Mister Octopus, I am a prime example of the human race. We have faults, for sure...we're human. We are not gods, If anything, we are fallible and fragile; but we know our limitations. You speak like you're a god.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

We have no concept of religion. We have no gods. We have no hierarchy. Each one of us is equal.

A beat.

ROPER

Can you help us ?

MARK (Alien Octopus)

Should we help you ? That is the question.

ROPER (ironically)

Please, help us.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

We can. We will.

ROPER (ironically)

Thank you, so much.

Mark slumps back and then comes out of his trance.

MARK

I'm back.

ROPER

You heard all that ?

MARK

I sure did.

ROPER

So, what's the plan ?

MARK

We get our psychic octopus onboard, then travel back to Earth, and deliver a message from the future, a stern warning, to change our ways.

ROPER

Humans might be defective, but we choose our own destiny. We will not have things imposed on us.

MARK

What if that's the only way to save us, from the consequences of our own stupidity.

ROPER

If the human race decides to destroy itself, it will be our choice, to do so.

MARK

That's a great epitaph: too stupid to change.

ROPER

The human race is intelligent.

MARK

Not intelligent enough.

ROPER

So we hafta be guided by a superior alien intelligence ?

MARK

It might do us some good. It might stop us from destroying ourselves.

ROPER

At least, that would be a decision we made. I don't like being dictated to by an alien octopus.

MARK

You're stubborn and arrogant, like the rest of the human race.

ROPER

You got your mind taken over by that thing.

MARK

I am a bridge to a higher intelligence; and remember, it's the Greys would be warning you, not the octopus. Would you heed a warning if it came from your descendants, the humanoid Greys from your future ?

ROPER

I might do.

MARK

Then, there's some hope for you.

They hear a tapping sound on the glass.

Roper and Mark go to look through the windows, to see the psychic octopus is tapping to be allowed back onboard.

MARK

I guess we'd better get the airlock ready. That psychic octopus of ours, another species, is prepared to leave his home, to help us out.

ROPER

I guess the folks at home, the ones in power, might listen to the Greys, not to an octopus.

MARK

A special octopus, a psychic octopus.

ROPER

Even so...

The octopus taps again.

MARK (to the octopus)

Okay, little fella, I'm letting you in.

Mark goes to the airlock and presses a button to lock it tight, then another to begin to flood it.

The water level in the airlock fills up.

When the level reaches the top, Mark presses another button to open the airlock outer door. The door opens and the psychic octopus swims into the airlock. Mark presses another button to close the airlock outer door.

MARK

You are an intelligent little fella.

Mark presses a button to suck the water out of the airlock. The water level drops until it reaches zero.

Mark presses a button to open the airlock.

The psychic octopus is calmly resting on the floor.

Mark picks up the tank and places it down near the octopus.

The octopus uses its tentacles to climb back into the tank.

MARK

You're co-operating, because you got a purpose.

Mark puts the lid back on the tank and carries it out of the airlock; then he closes the airlock door, and carries the tank through to its previous position, where he locks it in place.

Mark turns to speak to Roper.

MARK

Gotta fill it up.

Mark takes a hose from the submarine's internal water supply and lifts the lid on the tank to fill it with water.

When the tank is almost full, Mark turns the water off and retracts the hose.

The octopus swims and shimmers.

MARK

He like a bit o' water.

Mark fastens the lid in place by its clips.

MARK

Okay. We gotta get you back to Earth.

ROPER

Gonna stop off at Moon-base. I wanna see my wife.

MARK

Of course.

ROPER

She'll take a good look at him, make sure he's okay.

Roper goes back to the command seat and straps himself in.

Mark goes to the other seat, and straps himself in.

MARK

Let's go.

Roper pulls the control wheel back, so the submarine turns upwards.

CUT TO:

EXT – EUROPA

The submarine emerges at the top of the hole in the ice sheet of Europa.

A crane then comes down from the Europa spaceship, and pulls the submarine into the opened underside of the spaceship.

The spaceship then fires its engines to leave Europa.

CUT TO:

EXT – SPACE

The spaceship looks tiny against the huge shadow and sphere of Jupiter, as it passes by.

CUT TO:

EXT – MOON

The spaceship lands on a pad at Moon-base.

CUT TO:

INT – MOON-BASE – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Laboratory.

The tank containing the psychic octopus is on one of the tables.

Mary opens the lid.

The octopus is calm, and lifts one of its tentacles.

Mary holds the tentacle in her hand.

Roper comes in and quietly approaches Mary.

ROPER  
You holding hands now...

Mary jumps, surprised, then sighs.

MARY  
Don't creep up on me like that.

ROPER  
Sorry. - You're getting familiar with that octopus.

MARY  
Are you jealous ?

ROPER  
Of course not.

MARY  
I do believe you are.

ROPER  
I could not be jealous of an octopus.

Mary releases the tentacle.

MARY  
There you go. No need to be jealous now.

ROPER  
So, how is it ?

MARY  
In good shape.

ROPER  
We're gonna use it in our presentation.

Roper puts his arms around Mary and draws her to him.

ROPER  
I missed you...

MARY  
It's been a while since you've been so romantic...

Roper pulls her closer.

She looks at him as they are about to kiss.

They kiss, and hold the kiss for a few seconds.

MARY  
Mmm, that was nice.

ROPER  
Want some more ?

MARY  
Okay.

They kiss again, and hold the kiss for longer, then, release.

MARY  
I like you like this.

ROPER  
I aim to please, ma'am.

A beat.

MARY  
So, what's the plan ?

ROPER  
We're gonna go to Congress, and deliver  
our lecture, with our friend here, as a psychic  
link between us and the aliens.

Mark, who has been listening at the door, comes into the laboratory.

MARK  
That's where I come in.

ROPER  
He goes into a trance, when the aliens speak  
through him.

Mark notices Mary's doubtful expression.

MARK  
Ain't a trick. I am a genuine psychic, with  
telepathic abilities.

MARY  
Read my mind...

MARK  
You're curious, but doubtful.



MARY

That is more than obvious. You could do that, cold-reading.

ROPER

A sceptic.

MARK

There's nothing wrong with that.

Mark looks at the octopus in the tank.

MARK

He's mighty docile.

ROPER

He is co-operating fully with our plan.

MARK (to Mary)

He would only do that, if he understood our purpose.

The octopus shimmers.

MARK

See; that was a signal, he understands.

MARY

Clever boy.

ROPER

He sure is. We will perform our little magic trick in front of the senators, and the aliens of Europa, who happen to be huge octopuses, have promised they will materialise the Greys from our future, to give the world an ecological warning from the future.

MARK

Hindsight as foresight, if they come from the future. I wish I'd had some foresight before I made the mistake sealed my fate.

ROPER

What was that ?

MARK

What I did caused me to be put in that mental hospital ?

MARY

What did you do ?

MARK

I'd rather not say. What I will say is, I have regretted that mistake each day of my life. I just hope the human race is not made to regret the mistake it's made, the way I did.

MARY

I'd like to know.

MARK

It hurts me just to think about it. To talk about it, would be too painful.

A beat.

MARY

Okay.

She turns to look at the octopus.

MARY

You're gonna be a star witness in Congress.

The octopus shimmers.

MARK

See. He knows.

ROPER

That is one intelligent octopus.

MARK

Maybe, given a chance, he might save us all, the human race.

The octopus taps the glass of the tank with a tentacle.

CUT TO:

INT – SENATE HOUSE – DAY

The Senate in session, hearing evidence from Roper.

A white sheet covers the tank containing the octopus, with Mark standing near it.

ROPER

...To make this happen...we hafta show

ROPER (cont'd)

you this...

He pulls the sheet off the tank, to gasps of surprise from the SENATORS.

SENATOR

An octopus ?!

ROPER

Not just any old octopus, this is a psychic octopus.

More gasps from the senators.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

A psychic octopus ?

Mark comes forwards.

MARK

Yes, senator, a psychic octopus. I have established a telepathic link with this little fella here, and he responds to my prompting.

Mark turns to the octopus and raises his hand. The octopus responds by lifting a tentacle.

3<sup>rd</sup> SENATOR

A conjuring trick.

MARK

Ain't no trick.

ROPER

We took our psychic octopus here, all the way to Europa, Jupiter's moon, and we went down through the ice, all the way to the ocean, where we met a huge alien octopus, which spoke to us through Mark, my brother here, to tell us about the Greys, who are in fact, not aliens, but humans from our future, here to warn us, not to pollute the planet, our Earth...

SENATOR

You expect us, to believe that ?

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

This is, preposterous.

MARK

The Greys know our future, and it's not good. They are a quarter of a million years ahead of us, and they have perfected time travel. They visit the Earth to take notes, to try to influence us, not to contaminate the planet. If we take heed of their warnings, they...

ROPER

...Might disappear...it is a paradox they are prepared to accept...

3<sup>rd</sup> SENATOR

Or they might not disappear, if they exist at all.

SENATOR

You can't prove that...

ROPER

That's what we intend to demonstrate.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

The Greys...

ROPER

They crash-landed at Roswell, because all the extra radiation caused by atom-bomb tests interfered with the fabric of space-time, and caused them to fall out of the continuum, at Roswell.

3<sup>rd</sup> SENATOR

They abducted people, and experimented on them – so the story goes...

SENATOR

The story - ?

3<sup>rd</sup> SENATOR

Folklore, science fiction...

ROPER

Science fact.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

So, why did they do that ?

Roper sighs.

ROPER

You ask them...

MARK

When they appear...

SENATOR

If they appear...

MARK

To make that happen, I will now establish a psychic link between myself, the octopus and the alien octopuses of Europa.

Mark sits down and goes into a trance. The psychic octopus shimmers, then turns a silver-white colour. A large transparent sphere appears to materialise, containing the tank with the psychic octopus and Mark.

Out of this sphere, an ethereal version of the huge alien octopus emerges, to occupy the space in the Senate House around the main table and beyond, being about fifty feet across.

Mark speaks for the alien octopus.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

We, the inhabitants of Europa, you call the Alien Octopus, would not interfere in the affairs of Earth. We would never intervene in the course of your history; but, we have established telepathic contact with your future descendants, the Greys, who travel through space-time using the time machine they have developed, one quarter of a million years into your future. They have a warning for mankind. Heed their warning, if you are wise...

The alien octopus then shrinks back into the sphere and disappears.

Then, two GREYS, materialise from the sphere.

GREY

We are from your future, a quarter of a million years in your future, and we implore you, to change your ways. We beg you, not to exploit your planet's resources, the way you do. We ask you, to reduce emissions of C O Two drastically, or you will end up like us, living, existing on a dead planet, with nothing to do, except travel back in time to a greener era, when you could breathe the air and live in

GREY (cont'd)

harmony.

SENATOR

You a Grey ?

GREY

I sure am.

SENATOR

Why did you abduct and experiment on people from our time ?

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

To establish the corruption of the human mind and body, caused by the polluted environment you live in.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

That does make sense.

3<sup>rd</sup> SENATOR

Mister Grey, there is the possibility, if we did what you said, you might cease to exist...

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

We can accept that. It's not much of an existence, when you want to escape from your present, into the past.

SENATOR

You got time-travel ?

GREY

It took many thousands of years to perfect.

SENATOR

That is such an achievement.

GREY

It enables us to visit our past, and discover all the mistakes our ancestors made.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

You ancestors - ?

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

That's you, senator.

GREY

Please, heed our warning.

The Greys de-materialise.

The sphere disappears.

Mark comes out of his trance.

SENATOR

You heard that ?

MARK

I sure did.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR (to Senator)

What should we do ?

SENATOR

We gotta debate this...

MARK

...and do, something...

3<sup>rd</sup> SENATOR

What ?

ROPER

Something.

The senators look at each other.

CUT TO:

INT – HOUSE – DAY

Living room.

Roper, Mark and Mary.

ROPER

They listened...

MARY

Are they gonna do, anything ?

MARK

They're gonna debate it.

MARY

We need action, not words.

MARK

Maybe they got doubts.

ROPER

They need convincing.

MARY

How do we do that ?

ROPER

The Greys, our future descendants, have a miserable existence. Their only solace is to slip back in time, to see a better age. We still have a planet we can save. It's not too late, yet.

MARK

They would rather not exist at all, than accept their fate was fixed.

ROPER

They would sacrifice their own existence, to make the future better for us.

MARY

That must mean, they don't think their lives are worth living at all. How bad must things be, if you think like that ?

ROPER

Pretty bad.

MARK

I feel for the Greys, even if they abduct people and experiment on them.

A beat.

MARY

What is the future ?

ROPER

It's still up for grabs.

MARK

I'd rather have a future than a past I cannot change.

MARY

You gotta live with your past...



MARK

That's easy for you to say. Your past ain't as bad as mine.

ROPER

The Greys know they have no future. They only have a past.

MARK

They might disappear if they change their past too much. I can't change my past at all. That's why I have no future.

ROPER

It's not about you. It's about the future of the human race.

MARK

I know that.

ROPER

You are not important in the great scheme of things.

MARK

I do have some purpose in life. That was why I became psychic.

ROPER

We should not think about ourselves at a time like this.

MARK

How much was I in the wrong for the mistake I made ?

MARY

What mistake ?

MARK

Was the mistake, unavoidable ?

MARY

Maybe, it was. Does it matter any more ?

MARK

It matters to me.

Roper sighs.

ROPER

Your only purpose was to serve as a link between the alien octopus of Europa, the Greys and us. Your personal problems are, unimportant.

MARY

You gotta put your past behind you.

MARK

I can't. I just can't.

MARY

Why ?

MARK

My past sealed my fate, my destiny.

ROPER

The Greys say we still got a chance, to change our future, by changing their past.

MARK

I can't change my past.

MARY

I'm sorry for you, but -

ROPER

- You just don't matter, enough.

Mark sighs.

ROPER

Anyway, I got matters to attend to. I gotta convince the members of the committee this wasn't just a trick.

Roper goes out. A little later, they hear the front door closing.

MARK

He's left us alone together.

MARY

So he has.

MARK

I need you to help me.

Mary looks disconcerted.

MARY

How ?

MARK

I need you to, sympathise with me.

MARY

Why me ?

MARK

You're here, now, with me.

MARY

I don't necessarily sympathise with anyone, not even my husband, not even myself.

MARK

You don't even sympathise with yourself ?

MARY

I am not sympathetic.

MARK

I thought you were.

MARY

You're mistaken.

Mary moves away from Mark and sits down.

MARK

What am I gonna do ? I can't change my past, but I won't have no future unless I do.

MARY

I simply can't help you.

MARK

The Greys have some hope of changing their past, to change their future. I got none.

MARY

Maybe, you should speak to the Greys...

MARK

If I changed my past, I would not disappear.

Mary sighs out of impatience and exasperation.

MARY

Look, Mark, you need special help.

MARK

Didn't get none o' that at the mental hospital. All they did was screw me up even more.

MARY

I'm sorry about that.

MARK

Why isn't our relationship working.

MARY

I don't have a relationship with you.

MARK

I thought we were friends.

MARY

That's all we are, and I'm only a friend because you are my husband's brother.

A beat.

MARK

No-one's helping me...

MARY

Then, you gotta yourself.

MARK

How do I do that ?

MARY

I don't know.

MARK

Maybe, the octopus can help me.

MARY

I hope he can, but I doubt it, somehow.

MARK

Maybe, the Greys might help me.

MARY

How ?

MARK

Take me back in time, in their time machine,  
to the moment I made my mistake.

MARY

You might disappear. You might cease to,  
exist.

MARK

That would be better than the life I got now.

MARY

Then, be prepared, to go, disappear, cease  
to exist.

MARK

Okay.

Mark looks at Mary.

CUT TO:

INT – AQUARIUM – DAY

Mary and Mark near the tank containing the octopus.

MARK

Octopus, I gotta speak to the Greys...

The octopus shimmers in response.

MARK (to Mary)

He says, only the alien octopus on Europa  
can summon the Greys...

Mark sits down and goes into a trance.

He speaks with the voice of the alien octopus.

MARK (Alien Octopus)

Through space and time, we call on the  
Greys.

A transparent silver-white sphere materialises, from which the two Greys emerge.

Mark's eyes open and he speaks with his own voice.

MARK

You know what I want...?

Mary observes the Greys.

GREY

The danger is, you might cease to exist.

MARK

I can accept that risk.

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

If we take you back...change the past,  
even if you survive, you won't be the  
same person...

MARK

I don't like the person I am. I would  
like to be, someone else.

Mary approaches Mark and the Greys.

MARY

It's not that simple, you just change  
your past, and everything will be okay.

MARK

Things went wrong...

MARY

They might still go wrong...

MARK

At least it would be something different;  
not the same old past I always remember.

A beat.

GREY

Come with me.

The Grey extends its arm, so that Mark can touch its hand.

The Grey guides Mark to the centre of the sphere, and then, Mark and the two Greys  
disappear.

Mary is left looking at where they were.

CUT TO:

INT – BEDROOM – DAY

Morning.

Mark asleep in bed.

The morning light travels slowly across the room until a shaft of light moves over Mark's face. This wakes him.

He sits up in bed, and looks around.

MARK

Who am I ? Where am I ?

He gets up and puts on a dressing gown.

He walks into the bathroom and looks at himself in the mirror, looking puzzled.

He goes back into the bedroom.

He takes off the dressing gown and starts to get dressed.

Later:

Mark is dressed but still puzzled-looking.

He sits on the bed.

CUT TO:

INT – CLINIC – DAY

Mark, in the waiting area, of a psychiatric clinic.

Other patients waiting.

A NURSE calls Mark to his appointment.

NURSE

Mark, please...

Mark gets up and goes into the consulting room, where the nurse is seated behind a desk.

Mark sits on a chair in front of the desk.

NURSE

We have reviewed your medication.  
We have come to the conclusion, the dosage was cut down from three to two too early. We must put the dosage back up to three.

MARK

Why was it cut down too early ?

The nurse looks at the notes.

NURSE

I...I don't know.

MARK

You don't know - ?

NURSE

We don't know.

Mark sighs.

MARK

Why don't you know ?

NURSE

We don't know why we don't know.  
It should be a simple matter of putting  
the dosage back up to three.

MARK

I can't do that.

NURSE

Why not ?

MARK

The dosage was cut down too early  
for me to go back up to three.

NURSE

What are you saying ?

MARK

The dosage was cut down so early,  
I simply cannot go back onto three.

NURSE

This is not an unreasonable request.  
In fact, it is an instruction, an order.  
We require you to increase the dose  
back to three.

MARK

This was a mistake you made, not me !  
Not my mistake. You don't even know  
why.

NURSE

Does it matter ?



MARK

You made the original mistake; you don't know why; you expect me to go back onto three, when the dosage was cut down to two so very early, so much earlier than usual, -

NURSE

You gotta comply with this request, order, instruction, command...

MARK

- Or else what ?

NURSE

You really don't want to know. I require your compliance...

MARK

I can't; I just can't.

NURSE

Why ?

MARK

I'm not certain this is the right drug for me. Maybe, I should be on another drug.

NURSE

What other drug ?

MARK

Surely, there's more than one drug available for my condition - ?

NURSE

This is the drug we use.

MARK

If it's the wrong drug for me; if it was cut down from three to two, far too early, due a mistake you made – I don't think you can expect me, to go back onto three.

NURSE

You are not co-operating...

MARK

I can't co-operate if I'm on the wrong drug and you cut the dose down too early.

NURSE

Please, I'm asking you, please, just to go back onto three...

MARK

I'm sorry, I can't.

The nurse looks at the file.

CUT TO:

INT – CELLAR – NIGHT

A cellar with a few crates and little light.

Mark talking to the two Greys.

MARK

I was seriously in the wrong, or was I ? Was I just stubborn and immature ? Or, was I on the wrong drug ? There seems to be some evidence, I was on the wrong drug. There seems to be some evidence the dosage was cut down from three to two, too early. My refusal to go back onto three could only be justified if I was on the wrong drug, or if the dosage was cut down too early. What was the more significant: it being the wrong drug, or it being cut down too early, and by too early, I mean, seriously too early ? Which factor determined my decision ?

A beat.

GREY

What do you want us to do ?

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

Take you back to when the dosage was cut down from three to two ? Prevent that from happening ?

MARK

That was a decision they made, not me. They made mistakes. They had me on the wrong drug, and they cut it down too early...

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

Take you back to the day you were unable

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY (cont'd)

to comply with their instruction you should increase the dosage back up to three, so that you would comply, knowing the consequences, if you did not comply ?

MARK

I might still do the same thing; but was it a mistake, or did I do that, because they had me on the wrong drug, which they cut down from three to two, too early- ? Both mistakes, they made. I might've been in the right, but the consequences of my non-compliance, are why I was put in the mental hospital, with all the disastrous treatment I received there, which ruined my life.

GREY

Do the right thing...

MARK

The right thing for me, for my integrity as a person, was to do exactly what I did.

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

Your integrity, your inability to compromise, is what caused you to have such a lousy life.

MARK

What does that mean ?

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

Even if we took you back to the day your fate was sealed, you most probably would still make the same decision.

GREY

You could change the past, we could give you that opportunity; but you would most likely do the same thing, because of your essential nature and integrity.

MARK

So, I am the author of my own misfortune ?

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

I'm afraid, you are.

MARK

So, you can't help me ?

GREY

Your distress cannot be resolved. You will hafta live with your anguish.

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

We're sorry, we could not help you.

The Greys de-materialise.

Mark is left on his own, in the cellar.

He ponders his fate, and looks dejected.

CUT TO:

INT – HOUSE – DAY

Living room.

Mark, Roper and Mary.

MARK

I couldn't change my past. The Greys, they couldn't help me, because of the type of person I was. I just hope that is not a lesson they take to heart. Some days are so frustrating, when you can't get what you want, what you need.

ROPER

I'm sorry to hear that.

MARY

Maybe, things can't change for the individual, but they can for the human race.

ROPER

Our future is a barren polluted dead planet.

MARK

With time travel.

ROPER

With time travel. The destiny of the whole human race, is important.

MARY

What happens, life, is a disappointment, to the individual.

MARK

I never, in the whole of my life, asserted myself; only that one time, and look at happened as a result of that: I got put in that mental institution – you got me outta there...

ROPER

You're too intelligent, to be in a mental hospital. You question things, too much.

MARK

That impossible question: why ?

MARY

“Why ?”

MARK

Why ? Why do we make mistakes ? Why did it all go wrong ?

ROPER

The question should be: will the Greys persuade our senators to save the world ?

MARK

If not, we're screwed.

MARY

If they do, the Greys might be erased from the future.

MARK

I stay as I am.

Mark sighs.

CUT TO:

INT – SENATE HOUSE – DAY

A room.

On a table, the psychic octopus in its tank. Chairs around the table.

Two senators. One is seated behind a desk. The other one is standing.

Roper and Mark standing.

The two Greys, standing, having emerged from a transparent sphere, which dematerialises.

SENATOR

So, you Greys can do time travel.

GREY

That is correct.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

You can travel backwards and forwards  
in time ?

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

Only backwards to our own past, and then  
forwards from our past, back to our present.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

You can't go into your own future ?

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

No.

A beat.

SENATOR

Tell us about your present...

GREY

...which is, your future...

SENATOR

„,our future...

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

The future of the human race...

The second Grey looks at the Grey, who then speaks.

GREY

It is a future of total desolation. The Earth  
is a dead world, poisoned by pollution and  
hot, so very hot. The only inhabitants have  
to live in special domes, like living on the  
Moon.

SENATOR

How hot ?

GREY

The surface temperature is seventy-five  
degrees, too hot for human life.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

But the human race survived...

GREY

Only a few...

SENATOR

Then you got no over-population problems...?

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

The Earth is, under-populated, by the few, living in our special domes, to create an artificially-sustainable environment.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

But the human race survived, and you have time-travel; the elite survived and you live in domes, with all comforts and conveniences... with minimal population...

GREY

We exist, but we have such sorrow for the world we destroyed.

SENATOR

Well, thanks for your evidence.

The Greys dematerialise into the sphere, which disappears.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

Sounds like heaven. Sounds like paradise. The elite survived; we got rid of the people we don't need, and we get to live in high tech domes...

ROPER

...On a dead planet...

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

...with technology, to help us live our lives.

SENATOR

I could find such a future, acceptable.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

Who needs the Earth, when the elite can live in domes.

MARK

Sounds like Hell.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

We got rid of the, undesirables.

MARK (to Roper)

They're not gonna change.

ROPER

We'd better go.

Roper and Mark go out. Mark picks up the tank with the octopus on his way out.

SENATOR

Well, if that's the future, in a strange way, it's desirable.

2<sup>nd</sup> SENATOR

I think we can slack on all this, save the world stuff.

SENATOR

The future is...acceptable.

The senator sits at his desk.

CUT TO:

INT – HOUSE – DAY

Living room.

Mark, Roper and Mary.

ROPER

We failed.

MARK

The senators are actually looking forward to the future...

MARY

What will happen to us, the ordinary people ?

MARK

We're all gonna die.

ROPER

That is the future.

Mary goes to the window and looks out of it.

CUT TO:



EXT – PLANET EARTH – DAY

The surface of the planet Earth one quarter of a million years in the future.

A hot, barren, dead world, with large domes in various locations.

A scene of desolation.

CUT TO:

INT – DOME – ARTIFICIAL DAY

Inside a dome.

The two Greys.

One of the Greys is looking out of a window at the world outside. The second Grey is standing in the middle of a living area, effectively a room separated from the rest of the dome.

GREY

Totally dead.

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

We failed.

GREY

We're still here.

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

I would happily exchange my existence  
for a better future for the human race.

GREY

It's depressing.

The Grey moves away from the window.

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

What do we do now ?

GREY

We could go to Europa, have a word  
with the octopuses; see if they have  
an idea...

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

Okay.

The Grey goes back to the window, but looks upwards at the sky.

CUT TO:

EXT – EUROPA

A super-advanced spaceship-time machine in the sky above Europa, with Jupiter behind.

The spaceship-time machine develops a super-hot front section which melts the ice down twelve miles, to reach the ocean.

EXT – EUROPA OCEAN

The spaceship-time machine descends to the depth, with bright lights illuminating the way down.

The spaceship-time machine levels off and travels forwards until a host of huge silver-white octopuses surrounds it.

The spaceship-time machine stops.

CUT TO:

INT – SPACESHIP-TIME MACHINE – ARTIFICIAL DAY

The two Greys look out of the front window at the octopuses.

GREY

We failed...

They hear the voice of an alien octopus.

ALIEN OCTOPUS (O.S.)

We know.

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

What do we do now ?

ALIEN OCTOPUS (O.S.)

You try again.

GREY

What about the paradox ?

ALIEN OCTOPUS (O.S.)

If you succeed, you might cease to exist.  
You hafta see the bigger picture.

GREY

Okay...

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

We will try, again, again and again.

The Greys look at each other.

2<sup>nd</sup> GREY

Who would've thought, the future depends  
on us.

GREY

It's a helluva responsibility, especially as  
success could well mean our demise.

They look at each other, and share a slight smile, as they contemplate the future.

CUT TO:

EXT – EARTH – DAY

The sun is shining, there are fields of grass and meadows, trees rising upwards and running  
water in the streams.

But, is this the future, or the past ?

THE END





