

ARCTURUS RISING

Screenplay by

Robert Cox

Robert Cox
4980 Vista Pl.
San Diego CA 92116
619-867-1610
robcoxtwo@aol.com

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - ESTABLISHING SHOT

The Star Arcturus, a huge red giant hangs in the darkness After a moment or two, A Large Spacecraft comes INTO VIEW from O. S. It moves silently.

EXT. PERAN - ESTABLISHING SHOT - MOMENTS LATER

A moon of the fourth planet in the Arcturus system. Rocky Devoid of atmosphere, totally dark on the surface, the planet between it and the sun.

OVER: ARCTURUS FOUR, MOON PERAN. 10,000 B.C.E. EARTH TIME

The Spacecraft comes INTO VIEW and glides to a stop above the surface. A beam of intense blue light comes straight down from the underside of the spacecraft and strikes the surface of the moon, sending up dust and debris and burrowing into the planet.

After a moment, the beam stops and a box lowers from the bottom of the ship and into the hole left by the blast. The ship glides silently away.

SCENE FADES TO:

EXT. PERAN

Again, the same barren, dark scene as before, except that this time, there is a large building complex on the surface, small specks of light come from it, a mining complex. A large '6' is emblazoned on one of the buildings.

OVER: 2496 C.E. EARTH TIME

ARTHUR (V.O.)

Personal Journal, day three hundred and fifty-seven by Earth reckoning, day two twenty seven in Arcturus time. The assayers aboard the Hydra will be here in ten Earth days to view our production...

INT. MINE - CONTINUOUS

Large tunnels, well lit by small lights imbedded in the tunnel ceilings. Several loading cars are nearby, on treads. A large drilling machine is at one end of the tunnel, drilling into a wall.

In the control seat of the machine is ALEX 'PAPA' FRANKS (55) - oldest and most experienced of the miners.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

Some of the miners are more than ready to get off this moon, but it's been a good year, and the assayers will be pleasantly surprised. When the shares from the sale are split, each of crew will have more than enough credits to live comfortably for a long time. Our numbers on the amount of Lap we've refined this cycle are the highest level they've ever been. One or two of the men have talked about extending their stay...

Several miners stand nearby holding shovels; JIM 'BANJO' EVANS(22), a fresh faced kid, youngest, TONY 'ROMEO' CORELLI(30), an out for all he can get huckster, who always wears a blue bandanna for luck, PAUL 'MOUSE' DELANO(43) hard worker, but quiet and shy, with lots he's hiding, JOHN 'BUSTER' SHEA(30) eager to please.

The men stand around, watching, while Papa digs more into the rock. They wear a round gold disc the size of a quarter on their shirts. (Communication device)

INT. LAMBERT QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Spare, functional and modern. Queen sized bed takes up a portion of the room, but there is a sitting area and some desk space. Doors lead to other rooms and out to other areas.

ARTHUR LAMBERT(44) sits at the desk space and talks into a recording device. He wears a gold disc like the miners.

ARTHUR

...but to be honest, I can't wait to leave this place. From a Geologist's standpoint, it has been fascinating adventure, but as a linguist and Anthropologist, it's been a disappointment. Both the planet and the moon Peran have never harbored any intelligent life or life at all, or at least nothing I can study...

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

Again, sparse, clinical, sterile and functional. There is a large table off to one side and some cages holding various small animals. Computers, examination equipment, a couple hospital beds are on the other side.

CAROL LAMBERT (43) sits at the desk, looks at a computer screen.

A crookneck lamp sits nearby, casting light on some papers she looks at from time to time. Also wears the gold disc.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

On a personal note, when I accepted this position, I had hoped this would be a new start for Carol and I, a way we could regain what we've lost in our marriage...

Carol looks at her watch, then reaches over and turns off the light and gets up. She doesn't look happy. She gets up and goes to the door. The door slides open and Carol goes out. The door shuts behind her.

INT. LAMBERT QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

As before.

ARTHUR

But being here hasn't helped, in fact, it's made things worse. Another reason why I will not miss this place.
(sighs)
End communication.

He looks up at a speaker on the wall. Calls out.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Stacy, Location of Carol Lambert!

STACY (O.S.)

(Over speaker, female voice)

Dr. Lambert is in corridor three on route to the control center.

ARTHUR

When is next sunrise?

STACY

(Over speaker)

Nine minutes, ten seconds.

Arthur gets out of his chair and moves to the door.

INT. MINE - CONTINUOUS

The drill is still breaking up rock. Papa drives while the others watch. There is the SOUND of SCRAPING, then a BREAKING NOISE, like glass or porcelain. Papa quickly stops the drill, the noise catching the miner's attention.

ROMEO

(to Papa)

Hey old man, you hit a rock or something?

PAPA

Didn't sound like no rock.

Papa gets down out of the control seat and moves to the front of the drilling machine.

There is a large hole in the wall, with shards of what looks like pottery around it. The men look surprised.

BUSTER

What the hell is that?

PAPA

Beats the shit outa me. I've been workin' in lap mines for thirty years and I ain't seen nothin' like that before. Banjo?

Banjo looks up.

BANJO

Yes Papa?

PAPA

Go get the professor and bring him down here.

BANJO

Can't you just call him?

PAPA

We're too far down. Signal can't get through.

BANJO

Oh, right, I forgot. Be right back.

Banjo takes off running and is soon OUT OF SCENE.

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

A very large, multi-purpose area. It's divided into two sections, a lounge and a control center. The lounge has a mixture of couches, chairs and small tables, with a small kitchen to one side. There is a large table at the center of the room.

The control center has banks of computers, several seats and a large observation window looking out onto the moon's surface, still dark, but beginning to lighten up.

Further down the wall is an airlock, about eight feet in diameter, leading out, it's door shut.

Carol sits in one of the control area seats and stares out the window at the landscape, sipping from a cup of coffee. There is a shimmer of light at the edge of the planet.

From the corridor, Arthur comes storming into the room. He looks around and spots Carol staring out the window.

ARTHUR
(Calls out)
Stacy, lock down all observation
windows.

Carol turns to the sound of Arthur's voice as a metal cover slides down over the window.

STACY (V.O.)
Lock down complete.

CAROL
(angry)
What did you do that for?

Arthur ignores her and comes over to the control center, scans some of the gages.

ARTHUR
(calls out)
Stacy, raise dampening field.

A LOW HUM fills the room and then fades out after a few moments.

EXT. PERAN - CONTINUOUS

Outside the building complex, the red sun is rising over Arcturus Four and the moon's surface is bathed in the red glow. A strong wind comes up and the dust on the surface blows around in billowing clouds.

Out of the dust, BOLTS of LIGHTNING crackle over the surface of the moon, some bolts hitting the building complex. When the bolt hits the building, sparks fly as it come in contact with a force field.

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

There is a SOFT BOOMING coming from outside. Arthur looks up and breathes a sigh of relief. Turns angrily to Carol.

ARTHUR
Carol, what were you thinking? Didn't
you see the sun coming up?

CAROL

Of course I did. There was still plenty of time to shut the observation windows and put up the field. This is the eighty-seventh sunrise since we've been on this god-forsaken rock. I know what I'm supposed to do and when. I'm not a child Arthur.

ARTHUR

Okay sorry, I just thought--

CAROL

What? Did you think I was daydreaming of someplace that had things like, oh, an atmosphere, and water and plants and trees and animals, and real people, not just six scruffy miners? You think I'd forget sunrise protocols? I give up, you're a hopelessly Neanderthal.

Carol storms over to the lounge part of the command area and goes for another coffee. Arthur follows her over.

ARTHUR

Not likely. The Neanderthal died out in the--

CAROL

Don't even go there Mr. 'I have three degrees in Anthropology, two in geology and four in linguistics.'

She gets to the Coffee container and pours herself another cup, talking all the while, her back to Arthur.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Let's do something together, you said, a year's not so long, just think about the possibilities for study, new plants, new animals. It'll be fun. I'm still waiting. We've been here three hundred and forty two days, and so far all I've seen is barren rock and electrical storms. I'm bored out of my mind.

Arthur leans against one of the couches. An Orange tabby cat, Einstein, jumps up next to Arthur. He pets it.

Banjo comes in, but stands at the doorway listening.

ARTHUR

Well, I'll admit Peran wasn't what I expected...

CAROL

Ya think?

Banjo, nervously COUGHS. Carol spins around as does Arthur. She's still angry. Even the cat takes off.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Well, what do you want?!

BANJO

(nervous, to Carol)

I'm sorry Dr. Lambert. I didn't mean to disturb your...

(to Arthur)

Professor, we found something strange in the new tunnel. Papa sent me to fetch you.

ARTHUR

I'll get my kit and meet you there.

Banjo nods and makes a quick exit and OUT OF SCENE. Arthur looks over at Carol.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

We'll talk about this later.

CAROL

Don't bet on it.

Exasperated, Arthur turns, goes out the door and OUT OF SCENE. Carol sips from her coffee.

INT. MINE - LATER

The men are looking at the damaged area. Mouse is on his knees looking into the space in the hole.

MOUSE

I think I see something.

PAPA

Well, don't do anything 'til the Professor gets here.

Banjo COMES INTO SCENE, a little out of breath. Papa looks over at him.

PAPA (CONT'D)

(to Banjo)

You find him?

BANJO
Should be right behind me.
(looks over at Mouse)
Find anything Mouse?

MOUSE
Not sure. Something's in there,
just don't know what.

BANJO
Let me see.

Mouse gets out of the way as Banjo comes over, kneels down and looks in the hole.

BANJO (CONT'D)
Looks like a box.

ARTHUR (O.S.)
Don't touch anything.

Banjo straightens up as Arthur comes INTO VIEW. He carries what looks like a small briefcase. Banjo stands up as Arthur comes over. He's wearing gloves.

He opens the briefcase and it has a number of mechanisms in it. He pulls out one and aims it towards the area. He kneels down and surveys the area. He sees.

POV

Two different soil types in the same area, and shards of what look like broken pottery.

BACK TO SCENE

Everyone is brimming with curiosity. Arthur puts the mechanism back in the case,

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
It's safe. Normal levels of radiation.

He pulls out a set of forceps and picks up a piece of the pottery. Examines it for a moment. The men cluster around

ROMEO
What do you think?

ARTHUR
Like it's been fused by extreme heat.

PAPA
Volcanic maybe? I seen something
like that on Battard.

ARTHUR

Doubt it. There hasn't been tectonic movement on this moon in twenty million years. This is far younger.

He pulls out some bags from his case and drops the shard he was looking at into one of them.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I'll take some soil samples. There seems to be more than one type here.

He places two types of soil samples into two different bags, and places them back in the case.

BUSTER

Mouse and Banjo say there's something inside.

Curious, Arthur gets his light out and shines it in the hole for a moment. Arthur sees something and is surprised.

ARTHUR

What the hell...

He puts down the light and reaches into the hole for a moment. When he pulls his hand out, he holds a cube of black metal roughly 7x7x7 inches, carved and embossed with alien-looking script.

There are three indentations on one side of the box. One corner of the box is broken and what looks like black sand leaks from it. The men are surprised. Arthur stands and angles the box so it doesn't leak. The men crowd around.

BUSTER

What the hell is that?

ARTHUR

I don't know. I've never seen anything like it before.

PAPA

Looks like writin' on it.

BANJO

Can you read it?

ARTHUR

Doesn't look familiar.

MOUSE

What do you think it is?

ROMEO

Could it be valuable?

ARTHUR

Well, it's hollow, so it's some kind of box, but I can't see a lid or anything like a hinge. You must have broken the corner off when you dug into the wall. As for value, I'll have to run some tests on it before I can answer that question.

Arthur pulls out another small bag and maneuvers the broken part of the box so that some the black dirt sifts out of it and into the bag. He looks up at the crew.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

If you need me, I'll be in the lab. Try to avoid that part of the wall in case I need to do some more tests.

PAPA

Okay guys, you heard him. Back to work.

The men reluctantly go back to their specific jobs. Papa climbs back into the digger. Arthur closes up his briefcase, picks it up, and carrying the briefcase and the box, moves down the tunnel.

CAROL (O.S.)

Can you read it?

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

Arthur sits at one of the tables in the lab. The box sits in front of him, the samples to the side. Arthur scans the box with a hand-held device, picking out the details.

Carol stands on the other side of the table watching Arthur work, curious herself.

ARTHUR

(Without looking up)
Doesn't look like anything I've ever seen before, but it does remind me of something.

He finishes scanning.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

That should do it.

He looks at the device's screen and inputs the findings into his computer. Puts the scanner down.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Let's see what the linguistics bank
can make of it.

The door slides open and Papa enters the lab. Arthur turns.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Hey Papa, what brings you here?

Papa comes over.

PAPA

Wanted to see if you made any progress
on those samples.

(to Carol)

Dr. Lambert.

CAROL

Papa...

ARTHUR

(to Papa)

They're all analyzed. The results
are interesting to say the least.

PAPA

And the box?

ARTHUR

That's going to take a bit more study,
but I have some ideas. Would you
get the crew together in the lounge
in an hour? I'll be done by then.

PAPA

Sure thing.

Papa exits out the doors. Carol looks over at Arthur.

CAROL

Do you have something?

ARTHUR

I think so. We'll soon find out.

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - LATER

All the miners except for Papa sit around the large table.
They're cleaned up, and Banjo plays with the cat. They all
have beverages in front of them. Papa comes through the
door and it slides closed behind him.

DAVID 'FIST' THERON (35) sits at the table drinking a cup of
coffee along with the rest of the crew

Papa sits down at an empty chair.

BANJO

(to Fist)

Hey Fist, how much do you think we got so far?

FIST

Counting what I processed today, we've taken out more than seventeen tons, which is about one hundred and ninety three million credits worth of pure Lapinium.

BUSTER

Damn, I've been here eight seasons and we've never taken out more than twelve tons before. The Professor sure has a nose for lap.

The door slides open and Arthur, carrying the box, comes in, followed by Carol. All eyes turn to them. The door closes behind them.

BANJO

We were just talking about you.

ARTHUR

Good, I hope.

Arthur comes over to the table and places the box on it. From his pocket he produces the four samples. Fist gives the box a once over. Everyone else gathers around.

Carol leans on the couch, watching. Einstein comes over and nuzzles her and she pets him.

FIST

So, this is the famous box I've been hearing so much about. I guess I missed a lot being stuck in the refinery.

ARTHUR

That's it.

ROMEO

You get it open yet?

Arthur shakes his head. Mouse points to the samples.

MOUSE

What about those?

ARTHUR

Glad you asked.

Arthur picks up the light colored sample.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

This is soil from around the pipe.
Pretty standard, one point six percent
Lap.

Puts the sample down, picks up the next sample, this one a
little darker.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

This one has no Lap, and the other
material has been fused into
microscopic beads. Surface dust.

FIST

And that broken piece?

He picks up the shard in his other hand.

ARTHUR

This was fused at a temperature of
at least one thousand degrees.
Someone or something drilled into
the moon from the surface, down to a
depth of four hundred feet.

ROMEO

No shit?

ARTHUR

That accounts for the surface dust
in the tube, meaning that the box
was placed there deliberately.

BANJO

By who?

ARTHUR

No idea. Now, this is where it gets
interesting.

Arthur puts down the other two samples and picks up the black
sand sample.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

This material is eighteen percent
Lap, quartz and other elements I
haven't seen before. Same with the
box, eighteen percent lap, the rest
unknown. Haven't been able to
decipher the language.

MOUSE

You know how to open it?

ARTHUR

I think so.

Points to the indentations.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

You see the symbols in the middle of the indentations?

PAPA

Yeah.

ARTHUR

They correspond with a group of symbols over here.

He points to another area of the box.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Maybe if we press them in order, the box will open.

FIST

But--

ARTHUR

I had Stacy do a complete scan of the box. There's an object inside, but its chemically inert.

He places the box so that the indentations are on top.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Here goes nothing.

He presses them, then waits. Nothing happens.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Damn, I was so sure.

CAROL

If I may, Mr. Expert? You're assuming that the language is read left to right. Try reading the other way around.

ARTHUR

Good point. Should have thought of that.

Arthur presses the indentations backwards. A HUM begins and the box begins to vibrate. The crew steps back, in concern.

The box begins to glow at the edges and down the sides, around the broken edges. Suddenly, it opens flat.

There is a pile of the black sand at the bottom of the box, and sitting on the top of it is what looks like a clear faceted orb about the size of a small baseball. Everyone presses in to look at it.

BANJO

It's beautiful.

BUSTER

Sure is.

PAPA

(to Arthur)

Any idea what it is?

Arthur shakes his head.

ROMEO

Well, whatever it is, it must be worth a fortune.

Impulsively, Romeo grabs it. There is a HISSING sound and Romeo looks like he's in pain. The other miners react.

ROMEO (CONT'D)

(in pain)

Ow, Dammit!

He drops the orb back on the table and pulls his hand back and there are red marks on his palm and fingers as though burned. Carol comes over quickly.

CAROL

(to Romeo)

Let me see that.

She grabs his hand and looks at it.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Let's get you down to medical and get that treated.

Cradling his hand, Romeo follows Carol out of the lounge and
OUT OF SCENE.

ARTHUR

Don't touch anything, not until Stacy analyzes it.

(calls out)

Stacy, run scan on object.

STACY (V.O.)

Scanning...

(beat)

Object composed of fifty-two point six percent silicon, twenty point four percent oxygen, five percent nitrogen, two percent Lanthanum, twenty percent unknown minerals.

ARTHUR

Temperature?

STACY (V.O.)

Seventy-one degrees Fahrenheit.

ARTHUR

(to crew)

Room temperature, so Romeo isn't suffering from burns caused by heat. More likely a chemical reaction with his skin.

MOUSE

Is he going to be all right?

ARTHUR

I'm sure Dr. Lambert will have him good as new in no time.

(to Buster)

Buster grab me a pair of tongs.

Buster moves over to the kitchen part of the lounge, grabs a pair of tongs out of the drawer, brings them over to Arthur.

BUSTER

Here.

He hands the tongs to Arthur who takes them. Arthur gingerly picks up the orb and puts it back on the bottom of the box.

ARTHUR

Now, if I'm right, if you press the indentations backwards...

Arthur presses the indentations opposite the way he opened it. He pulls his hand away as the box HUMS, the edges glow and the box encloses the orb and goes back to being a box. The broken area in the corner has been restored.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

It locks the box.

Looks at the formerly broken corner.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

And it seems to have repaired itself as well. Interesting.

PAPA

What are you gonna do with it?

ARTHUR

Run some more tests, see what the computer comes up with. Good night Gentlemen.

FIST

'Nite Professor.

Arthur picks up the box and his samples, goes out the door and OUT OF SCENE. The crew moves to the lounging area. Banjo lounges on the couch. Einstein comes and sits on his lap.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

Arthur has the orb out on the table on it's bed of black sand. A magnifying table lamp shines down on the orb and Arthur examines it with the magnifier, inputting data into his computer.

Arthur stretches and yawns after a few moments. He gets up, goes out the door and OUT OF SCENE, carrying his computer.

The light is still on over the orb. A small arc of electricity moves from the light to the orb. The light goes out. The orb begins to glow softly with an eerie blue light. The caged animals start to CHATTER, obviously disturbed.

The orb begins to crack.

INT. REFINERY OFFICE- LATER

A fairly good-sized space with what look like smelters, large metal cylinders in the b.g. In front of those is a computer console and some other equipment. The ceiling is vaulted higher than the surrounding tunnels There is the constant HUM of machinery working.

Fist works at the console. He types into the computer.

Papa comes INTO VIEW, comes over to Fist.

PAPA

Hey Fist.

FIST

Hey Papa. You're up early. Looking for something?

PAPA
Yep. Lap tallies from yesterday.

FIST
Sure thing.

Fist taps on the computer. Scans it for a moment.

FIST (CONT'D)
I processed three point five tons of ore yesterday. With about thirty pounds of Lap per ton of rock, that's about one hundred and five pounds of the pure stuff.

PAPA
I figured it'd be around one hundred and eleven. Professor said the soil samples tested yesterday were at one point six, not one point five.

FIST
You know ore sampling's are never exact. The Professor'll tell you the same thing.

PAPA
I plan on askin' him just that.

FIST
Still don't trust me, do ya Papa?

PAPA
I don't trust nobody. That's how come I'm still alive after thirty five years in the mines.

FIST
Well, I got nothin' to hide, so go ahead and talk to him if you want.

Papa scowls and leaves. Fist shakes his head. He looks around, sniffs the air. Fist smiles.

FIST (CONT'D)
Listening in Romeo? Your cologne is a dead giveaway.

Romeo strolls out of the darkness and INTO VIEW. Moves up to Fist. His hand is bandaged.

ROMEO
Papa didn't seem too happy.

FIST

He's an old man on his last dig.
Wants everything he can get out of
this partnership before he sells.
Besides, I've only been here two
seasons. Don't think he trusts me.

ROMEO

You're playing a dangerous game Fist,
fiddling with the percentages.

FIST

Maybe, but I'm playing to win and
the prize is hefty.

ROMEO

Just how much did you skim off
yesterday?

FIST

About five point five pounds. The
old man called it pretty close.

ROMEO

He's smart and he's had practice.
We can't afford to have him getting
suspicious.

FIST

As long as I only take what's within
that margin of error, nobody's gonna
be the wiser. When the the Lap ships
get here, I figure I'll have an extra
three million credits worth of
product.

ROMEO

Don't you mean 'we'll have?'

FIST

Of course I mean we.
(beat)
How's the hand?

ROMEO

Okay. Don't hurt. Couple of my
fingers are numb though. Dr Lambert
says give it a couple days, and if
it don't get better, she'll do some
more tests. I can still work.

FIST

So you better get down there. Shift's
about to start.

ROMEO

Yep. See you around.

Romeo leaves the way he came, back into the darkness and OUT OF SCENE. Fist goes to his computer and starts imputing data. There is a SCRAPING SOUND which catches Fist's attention. He looks around, doesn't notice anything, shrugs and goes back to work.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - MOMENTS LATER

The lab is dark. The door slides open and Carol comes in. She hits the panel for the lights, but nothing happens.

CAROL

(calls out)

Stacy... turn on lights.

STACY (V.O.)

Lab light system off-line. Re-booting.

The lights flicker and come up slowly. The lab looks much the same as usual except that there is no sound and there are only shards where the orb once lay. Carol senses something wrong. She goes to her animal cages and looks inside.

POV

The animals in the cages are all dead, with blood spotting their fur.

BACK TO SCENE

Carol is horrified.

CAROL

No, no, no!

She looks around and sees the table where the crystal shards lay. She moves over and looks down on it. There is also no black sand.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Damnit!

(Calls out)

Stacy, Locate Arthur Lambert.

STACY (V.O.)

Arthur Lambert is in control.

Carol taps the disc.

CAROL
(into disc)
Contact Arthur.

She waits a few moments.

ARTHUR (V.O.)
(over disc)
Arthur Lambert.

CAROL
(into disc)
Arthur, you better get down to the
Medical Lab. We have a problem.

She taps her disc.

ARTHUR (V.O.)
And this is how you found it?

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

Arthur stands by the table where the shards are, looking
down on them.

CAROL
I haven't touched anything if that's
what you're asking.

ARTHUR
Sorry.

Arthur hits the on switch for the lamp, but it doesn't work.
He examines it.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
That's odd. It was working last
night.

CAROL
Lab lights weren't working when I
came in either.

ARTHUR
(calls out)
Stacy, run last eight hours of Lab
camera, from twelve twelve AM.
(to Carol)
That's when I left the lab

In front of them, a square of light (screen) appears and the
action begins with Arthur getting up from examining the orb,
and exiting, the lamp and the lights still on. The image
runs for a few moments and then a spark goes from the light
to the orb and the lamp goes out.

Carol and Arthur are startled.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
 (calls out)
 Rewind two seconds.

The image stop and rewinds to the point where the spark goes from the lamp to the orb and stops. Arthur examines the picture.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
 The spark went from the lamp to the orb. The orb absorbed it.
 (calls out)
 Stacy, continue.

The film progresses. The orb begins to glow blue. A piece of the orb falls off, and there is a bright flash of light and the image goes dark, startling Carol and Arthur again.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
 (Calls out)
 Stacy, report.

STACY (V.O.)
 Lab electrical system failure at twelve thirteen and twenty-six seconds AM Earth time. System back on line at eight ten AM.

CAROL
 That's when I came in and noticed the lights out and had Stacy Boot up the system.

ARTHUR
 Scan for life forms, one hundred meter radius.

STACY (V.O.)
 Three life forms, two human, one feline.

CAROL
 What do you mean 'life form?'

ARTHUR
 Look at what's left of the orb. What does it remind you of?

CAROL
 An eggshell...

ARTHUR

That's what I think. Something may have hatched and then killed your animals. I notice something else.

CAROL

What's that?

ARTHUR

When I left the lab, the orb was sitting on the black sand we found in the box. The sand's not there anymore.

CAROL

Arthur--

ARTHUR

I better let the miners know what's happened. You find out what killed the animals. And be careful, we don't know what we're dealing with. Until we do, we need to be alert.

CAROL

I can take care of myself, thank you...

ARTHUR

I know you can.

Arthur goes out the door and OUT OF SCENE. Carol walks over to one of the cages and opens it, removing a dead white rat. She starts examining it.

INT. MINE - LATER

The miners are working hard. Papa runs the digger, the rest move debris to the cars. From the tunnel behind them, Arthur comes INTO VIEW, moving quickly towards them. Mouse notices him first, bangs on the side of the digger.

MOUSE

(To Papa)

Hey Papa, shut it down. The Professor's here.

Papa shuts down the digger and comes down out of it. Arthur comes into the midst of them as they crowd around. Arthur's a bit out of breath.

BANJO

Hey Professor, you run all the way?

Arthur nods.

ARTHUR

Have you guys seen anything strange
in the tunnels today?

ROMEO

Not me.

MOUSE

Me neither.

The other men shake their heads.

PAPA

What's goin' on?

ARTHUR

That orb I showed you yesterday.
(to Romeo)
And you picked up.

ROMEO

Yeah?

ARTHUR

Well, it hatched.

BUSTER

Hatched, like in egg hatched?

Arthur nods.

BANJO

What was in it?

ARTHUR

We don't know. Somehow, it got out
of the lab, after it killed all the
animals in the cages.

BANJO

All of them? How?

ARTHUR

Carolyn's working on that. Just
stay alert. We have no idea what
this thing is or capable of.

PAPA

We'll keep our eyes open.
(to all)
Right guys?

A lot of heads nod.

ARTHUR

Thanks. I better let Fist know what's going on. I'll let you know when we find something.

Arthur turns and walks down the tunnel.

The men go back to work.

INT. REFINERY OFFICE- LATER

Fist works at the computer. Behind him, the refinery machinery CLANKS and HUMS. Arthur comes INTO SCENE from the shadows. Fist looks up, stops what he's doing. The Machinery stops.

FIST

Hey Professor, what brings you to the ass end of the mine?

ARTHUR

We have a situation. That orb we found yesterday, well it seems it was an egg, and it hatched.

FIST

No shit? What was in it?

ARTHUR

We don't know. It escaped. It could be anywhere in the tunnels.

FIST

I grew up on a farm, and when babies hatch, they're gonna be hungry.

ARTHUR

It's already had it's first meal. All the animals in the lab are dead, and the black sand we found in the box is gone.

FIST

Damn, that's not good.

ARTHUR

You seen or heard anything?

FIST

Just Einstein scratching out a place to take a dump.

(calls out)

Stacy, scan area, fifty meter circumference.

STACY (V.O.)
Two humans detected...

FIST
Einstein's probably found a place to
sleep, probably Banjo's bunk.

ARTHUR
Well, just be careful until we know
what we're dealing with.

FIST
Will do.
(subject)
Oh, by the way, Papa talk to you?

ARTHUR
About the percentages? Yeah, I told
him the average can swing plus or
minus two tenths of a percent, just
like you told him. Overly suspicious,
isn't he?

FIST
Can't blame him for wanting as much
as he can get. As long as he
understands I'm not trying to cheat
him, I can deal with his moods.
Thanks professor.

ARTHUR
I'll let you know when we find
something.

Arthur leaves. Fist goes back to the computer and the
Machinery starts up.

In a corner of the refinery area, unseen by Fist, there is a
pale blue glow, behind some of the machinery and the SOUND
of FAINT SCRAPING.

INT. BANJO'S QUARTERS - LATER

A small room, pretty utilitarian, not much more than a bed,
a dresser, and a couple chairs. An open door leads to a
hallway. A closed door leads to the bathroom.

Banjo sits on his bed, playing his banjo, hair wet, looking
like he's just showered. Einstein sleeps at the foot of the
bed. Banjo plays chords and melody and is doing a good job
of it.

Mouse appears at the doorway. He also looks showered as
well. He listens for a moment.

MOUSE
Sounding pretty good.

Banjo looks up.

BANJO
Hey Mouse. Thanks, it's coming along.
I just need to practice more.

MOUSE
I'm going up to the galley. Want
anything?

BANJO
No, I'm fine. I'll be up in a few.
Gonna practice some more.

MOUSE
I'll see you there then.

Mouse starts to go on his way.

BANJO
(calls out)
Mouse?

Mouse comes back into the doorway.

MOUSE
Yeah?

BANJO
You've been here awhile, right?

MOUSE
This is my twelfth season, so I guess
I have.

BANJO
What do you know about the guy who
gave me the share in the mine?

MOUSE
Perk, not much. He was here for
fifteen seasons before he sold his
share. Don't know who he sold it
to. Never saw Perk again, after that.
Why you asking?

BANJO
Curious, I guess. It's not every
day somebody you don't know gives
you a share in a mining operation.

MOUSE

Yeah, you got that right. Think you'll be coming back next season?

Banjo nods.

BANJO

I don't mind the work, and it keeps me out of trouble. I was always pretty wild, a real rebel.

MOUSE

I hear you. Same way with me. I was constantly getting in trouble, when I was younger. I even... well, let's just say I'm glad I'm here, away from temptation. I'll see you in the lounge.

Mouse withdraws. Banjo starts playing again. He looks over at the cat and smiles. He strikes a very discordant chord on his banjo and Einstein bolts upright, giving Banjo a grumpy cat look.

The cat jumps off the bed and walks out the door, deeply offended. Banjo CHUCKLES then goes back to playing.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

Carol has all of the animals out in a row. She's measuring the distance between the puncture marks, and not liking what she's seeing.

Arthur comes into the lab. He looks at what she's been doing. She glances back.

ARTHUR

Find anything?

CAROL

Nothing that makes sense.

ARTHUR

What do you mean?

CAROL

Well, the puncture wounds are not what killed the animals. They're basically superficial.

Arthur comes around and looks down at the specimens.

ARTHUR

Then what killed them?

CAROL

Each one of these animals have no salt, or acetylcholine in their bodies. It's just gone.

ARTHUR

That's impossible.

CAROL

Impossible or not, the evidence is right in front of you. I took swabs for DNA from around the puncture wounds. It came up negative. This is puzzling too.

Carol moves over to another part of the table is and looks down on the shell of the orb, laid out in pieces. She picks up a piece.

ARTHUR

(alarmed)

Carol, be careful.

CAROL

It's all right. It's totally inert now. It's just silicon dioxide, common quartz. Stacy and I calculated the weight of whatever was inside, based on the weight of the shells, minus Stacy's preliminary scan, we think it weighed about eight point five ounces when it hatched.

ARTHUR

So it's small?

CAROL

It was when it hatched. Now, I'm not so sure.

She nods over to the specimens are laid out.

CAROL (CONT'D)

See the spacing between the punctures?

Arthur nods. She points to a mouse.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Here, the spacing is approximately two point five centimeters.

She moves up the line.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Here it's three point five, four point five, five and six. Which means it's doubled it's size, just in the time it took to feed on these animals. One more thing. Based on Stacy's scan, we're looking at a life form that's silicon-based.

ARTHUR

Silicon based? You mean like the Ganites on Plegal?

CAROL

Exactly, but much more advanced. As far as we know, Ganites only feed on silicon. Also, there were no carbon compounds in the orb itself, so it's the only possible answer.

ARTHUR

(calls out)

Stacy, recalibrate for silicon based life forms.

CAROL

(calls out)

Stacy, cancel request.

(to Arthur)

Do you really think I wouldn't have tried that already? There's too much silicon in the soil for an accurate reading. For now, we're flying blind.

ARTHUR

Then we better let the crew know.

INT. MINE - LATER

The tunnel is empty. Einstein strolls down the tunnel, exploring. It's dark, since several of the ceiling lights are dark. Up ahead, around an outcropping of rock, is the same blue glow, only brighter.

Einstein's hackles go up, and he GROWLS but his curiosity gets the better of him. He goes around the corner and...

There is the sound of a terrible SCREECHING coming from Einstein, and the Blue light flashes wildly. After a moment, the SCREECHING stops, and the glow brightens.

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - LATER

The men are gathered around the table. Carol is seated as well, just finishing up her explanation.

CAROL

And that's what we've got.

PAPA

Okay, so what you're saying is that there's a creature made out of glass running around the mine, and you don't know what it looks like or even how big it is.

CAROL

That's about right.

ROMEO

How dangerous is it?

ARTHUR

We're not sure.

FIST

And Stacy can't scan for it?

Carol shakes her head.

FIST (CONT'D)

That's not a lot to go on.

ARTHUR

It's the best we got at the moment.

PAPA

Well, it should be easy to spot.

BUSTER

Why do you say that?

PAPA

Because, except us and the cat, There's nothing else alive on this here moon.

Banjo straightens up, eyes wide in fear. Looks around.

BANJO

Einstein! Einstein?

(beat)

He's not here!

MOUSE

Maybe he's still down in your quarters.

BANJO

No, he left before I came up. I have to find him.

(yells out)

Stacy, Locate Einstein.

STACY (V.O.)

Feline is on level one, sector four.

FIST

Figures. Using my area for a litter box again, no doubt.

BANJO

I need to go get him.

ARTHUR

Wait a minute. Until we know what we're dealing with, no one goes anywhere alone. That includes you Banjo.

MOUSE

I'll go with him.

Banjo gets up, as does Mouse. The two of them go out the door and OUT OF SCENE. Carol turns to Romeo.

CAROL

Romeo?

ROMEO

Yeah Doc?

CAROL

I want to take some tissue samples from your hand, just to see if there's any correlation. Lab, five minutes?

ROMEO

Sure...

With that, Carol turns, goes out the doors and OUT OF SCENE. Arthur follows her. Romeo, grinning from ear to ear, turns to the other men.

ROMEO (CONT'D)

She wants me!

FIST

In your dreams Romeo.

BUSTER

Hell will freeze over first.

ROMEO

You'll see. No woman can resist me.

Romeo turns and goes out the door and OUT OF SCENE. The Miners LAUGH.

FIST

(to the others)

Who's up for a game of Poker?

INT. MINE - LATER

Banjo and Mouse walk down the tunnel. There is something on Mouse's mind.

BANJO

If I forget to say it, thanks for comin' with me.

MOUSE

It's okay. I know how much that cat means to you.

(beat)

About what I said, about not knowing about who bought Perk out.

BANJO

Yeah...

MOUSE

Perk never found out who bought the shares. A third party bought them, wouldn't tell him who the buyer was.

BANJO

I thought about looking him up during our down time.

MOUSE

Figured that. I...

Mouse looks up, and notices that a number of the lights are out, more than the last time and they're walking into darkness. Mouse stops, looks around. Banjo is confused.

BANJO

Mouse, what's wrong?

MOUSE

These shouldn't be out. I changed them last season.

(MORE)

MOUSE (CONT'D)

They're supposed to be good for at least four.

(calls out)

Stacy, why are some of the lights out in this section?

STACY (V.O.)

Unknown. Will adjust the illumination levels of the remaining lights to compensate.

The working lights glow brighter. The light levels come up, revealing The body of Einstein, a little further down the tunnel. Both men are momentarily stunned. There is the faint SOUND of SCRAPING

BANJO

Einstein, no!

Banjo goes to rush over but Mouse stops him.

MOUSE

Whatever it is may still be out there. Listen.

The same SOUND of SCRAPING is heard, but it's getting fainter. Way down the tunnel, comes a flash of blue light.

BANJO

Did you see that?

Mouse nods, then takes off his outer shirt.

MOUSE

Wrap him up up in this, just in case, and we'll take him to Doc.

Sad, Banjo nods.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

Romeo sits on one of the stool at one of the examination tables, his hand on the table. Carol uses a scalpel to remove a small piece of tissue from Romeo's finger. Romeo winces slightly. She picks it up with tweezers and puts it on a petri dish.

Out of her pocket she produces a small pen-like device. She puts it over the wound and presses the button, and a small laser cauterizes the would.

CAROL

That should do it. Are you getting any feeling back in the hand?

ROMEO

A little... Say Doc, why don't you
and I continue this examination
somewhere private?

CAROL

Private? In a mine, on a barren
moon, with some kind of creature
wandering around? Not hardly. Also,
one, I'm married--

ROMEO

But you're not getting along. It
must be tough being stuck with someone
who doesn't light your fire.

CAROL

...And two, even if I weren't, you're
not my type.

ROMEO

I'll bet I can be...

CAROL

You're a real piece of work aren't
you? Forget it Romeo. In eight
days, we'll be off this rock, with
our share of the profits, and we'll
never have to see each other again.
My advice is to just to keep it in
your pants for a little longer. If
you can't do that, I'm sure if I
turn the power up on this laser, I
can remove the problem... Permanently.
(smiles wickedly)
Do we understand each other?

ROMEO

(un-nerved)

Yes Ma'am. Can I go now?

Carol nods. Romeo turn and moves quickly to the exit and
OUT OF SCENE. Carol CHUCKLES and puts the laser device back
in her pocket.

She picks up the petri dish and sets it into a machine nearby.
Presses a button.

CAROL

(calls out)

Stacy, display findings.

On a video screen in front of Carol, a list of names appears,
with corresponding numbers. Carol looks at them.

Arthur comes INTO SCENE from the hallway. Carol turns, sees him.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Just in time...

Comes over to stand next to Carol.

ARTHUR

What do you have?

CAROL

Report on tissue sample from Romeo. According to this, his salt and acetylcholine levels are at twenty-four percent of normal.

ARTHUR

Which means?

CAROL

That he was lucky he dropped that thing as fast as he did. If he had held onto it longer, he would have had even more nerve damage. There's one more thing I want you to see.

(to Stacy)

Stacy, bring up enzyme models.

The picture on the screen changes to the chemical layout of Lysine.

ARTHUR

Lysine...?

CAROL

(to Arthur)

Very good, and here I thought you slept through Organic Chemistry.

ARTHUR

Only when you were lecturing.

CAROL

(irked)

Typical. C six H fourteen N two O two, a positively charged Amino acid found in almost every living thing.

ARTHUR

Okay, that much I still remember. Where is this going?

CAROL
 (to Stacy)
 Next slide.

The slide changes to show a different molecule. Same as the Lysine, but with Si instead C in the formula.

CAROL (CONT'D)
 Here's what we found in the animal's bodies in minute amounts. Same exact structure as Lysine, but with Silicon where the Carbon should be. Nearest we can figure, this chemical removes both salt and Acetylcholine out of the nerve receptors. I--

Carol is interrupted by the sound of the door to the lab opening. They both turn to see Mouse standing at the door with Einstein wrapped in his shirt. Carol sighs.

CAROL (CONT'D)
 Einstein?

Mouse nods.

MOUSE
 Banjo and I found him in the tunnel near the refinery.

CAROL
 (upset)
 Damn. Bring him to the table.

Mouse brings him in and places him on the exam table.

MOUSE
 I didn't want Banjo to touch him in case there was something on him.

CAROL
 Good thinking. Where is Banjo?

MOUSE
 In his quarters. He's real upset.

Carol gingerly removes the shirt and examines Einstein. He has the same wounds as the smaller animals. Carol picks up a pair of calipers and measures the spacing between the wounds. Looks grim.

CAROL
 Spacing is eight centimeters. It's still growing.
 (MORE)

CAROL (CONT'D)

(to Mouse)

I'm going to need to run some tests on Einstein, but I'm pretty sure of what I'll find. I'll need your shirt for awhile in case anything got on it.

MOUSE

Sure Doc.

ARTHUR

Mouse, did you see or hear anything when you were looking?

MOUSE

Yeah, a couple of things. We noticed lot of the work lights were out.

ARTHUR

Is that unusual?

MOUSE

Under normal circumstances, no, but I just replaced them, they shouldn't have failed. When we found Einstein, we heard a scraping noise and saw a blue light further down the tunnel.

CAROL

(to Arthur)

The egg glowed blue before it hatched.

ARTHUR

(To Carol)

It's possible the creature could be phosphorescent.

(to Mouse)

Anything else you remember?

MOUSE

No, that's all.

ARTHUR

Well, it's a start.

MOUSE

I want to check and see how Banjo is doing. Are you done with me?

CAROL

Yeah, go ahead. Call me if he needs anything to help him sleep. If you see any of the other crew, let them know what happened.

MOUSE
I will. Thanks Doc.

Mouse goes out the door and OUT OF SCENE. Arthur turns to Carol.

ARTHUR
How big will this thing get?

CAROL
I have no idea.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE LAMBERT'S QUARTERS - LATER

Empty for a moment, but Mouse comes down the hallway and stops at the door. He KNOCKS.

ARTHUR (O.S.)
(Behind Door)
Who is it?

MOUSE
It's Mouse...

ARTHUR (O.S.)
(behind door)
What do you want?

MOUSE
I need to you come right away.

CAROL (O.S.)
(Behind door)
Is it Banjo?

MOUSE
No, the miners are calling a meeting.
They want you there ASAP.

CAROL (O.S.)
(Behind door)
At this hour?

ARTHUR (O.S.)
Tell them we're on our way.

MOUSE
Okay...

Mouse turns and goes down the hallway.

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - LATER

All the miners are there seated around the table, except for Banjo, who sits at one of the couches, wrapped in a blanket.

The rest are in a heated argument.

FIST

And I don't care what we have to do... as long as this thing is loose, none of us is safe.

BUSTER

Do we have any idea how big this thing is?

ROMEO

We don't even know what it looks like. I say we break out the lasers and go looking for it.

MOUSE

We don't know if lasers will even work.

PAPA

Well we God damn have to do something!

The door slides open, Arthur and Carol come into the room.

ARTHUR

And we will, but I agree with Mouse, I'm not sure if lasers are the way to go.

MOUSE

What do you suggest?

Arthur comes over to the table, while Carol goes over to sit next to Banjo. She puts her arm around his shoulder, comforting him.

ARTHUR

Thanks to Mouse and Banjo, we know three things we weren't sure of before. One, it glows with a blue light. The vids in the science Lab show that it glowed while it was hatching. Two, we know that it pulled power out of the Lab's grid, first the lamp and then the lighting. Mouse said that there were a lot of work lights out where they found Einstein.

ROMEO

So what? We're always replacing lights.

MOUSE

Yeah but I had just changed them.
They should have been working.

ARTHUR

Agreed. The lights may have been
drained by whatever it is we're
looking for. Third, Mouse said he
heard a scraping noise going down
the tunnel away from them.

(to Carol)

Carol, what makes a scraping noise
when it runs?

Carol looks over at him.

CAROL

By Earth standards, lots of animals.
Insects, for one, Arthropods,
Crustaceans. It's not so much a
scraping as it is the outer shells
rubbing against each other when they
move, making noise.

ARTHUR

And four pairs of wounds. What does
that add up to?

Banjo looks up.

BANJO

A spider?

ARTHUR

Or something like one.

(calls out)

Stacy, take in all pertinent
information, and extrapolate. Given
data, using an earth spider as a
model. How large an animal are we
looking for?

STACY (V.O.)

Based on data, unknown creature would
be point nine zero meters in length

PAPA

Three feet? You mean to tell me we
are looking for a three foot long
glass spider?

CAROL

We can't be sure until we actually
see it.

BUSTER

I sure don't want to. I hate spiders.

ARTHUR

(to Papa)

Papa, you've been here the longest.
What's your advice?

PAPA

Can't say that I've run into anything
like this on a dig before, but I
agree with Romeo. We break out the
hand lasers, look for it and kill it
if we can. We sure can't risk doin'
any more diggin' until we find it.

ROMEO

I agree.

BUSTER

Me too.

ARTHUR

I suggest that we turn all door locks
to palm scan entry.

PAPA

Agreed. We'll need to get all the
mining machines and the refinery
powered down.

ROMEO

Mouse and I can take care of the
mining machines.

FIST

I'll shut down the refinery. I want
to upload all my mining data into
Stacy just in case we lose power.
Better to do that sooner than later.
It'll be safer in the bunker anyway.

PAPA

Get the lasers out of storage. Fist,
take Buster with you.

Banjo looks up.

BANJO

I'll go with Mouse and Romeo.

PAPA

You can go with me.

(MORE)

PAPA (CONT'D)

The faster we secure everything, the faster we can get out of there.

(to Arthur)

Professor?

ARTHUR

I'll keep working on a way to track it and see if I can translate the writing on the box. It might give us a clue on how to destroy it.

PAPA

Okay, everybody to their tasks.

The men peel off into pairs and head out, through the doors and OUT OF SCENE. Carol stands, looking irked.

CAROL

And what am I supposed to do, stay home and knit?

Arthur comes over to her.

ARTHUR

I need to you to run more tests on Einstein and find out whatever else you can.

CAROL

(serious)

Arthur, what if we can't stop it?

ARTHUR

It has to have a weakness. We just need to find it what that is.

INT. REFINERY OFFICE- LATER

Armed with laser pistols, Fist and Buster move into the refinery area. They look around for any danger, but don't see anything. The refinery area is very quiet, some of the lighting is working while some isn't. Fist looks up.

FIST

Some of the lighting is out. I hope the computer is still operating.

Fist and Buster move over to the computer area. Fist taps a button on the computer and it lights up. Fist breathes a sigh of relief.

FIST (CONT'D)

Computer seems to be okay. I'll start the upload to Stacy.

Fist taps several buttons on the machine.

FIST (CONT'D)

That should do it.

(to Buster)

I'm gonna go make sure all the machines are locked down. You check the tunnels, see how many more lights are out.

BUSTER

But Papa said--

FIST

You got a laser gun, use it if you have to. Don't be such a coward. If anything happens, I can track you through the com and be there in a few minutes.

BUSTER

Okay Fist.

Fist goes over to the controls for the refinery, while Buster moves down the tunnel and OUT OF SCENE. As soon as Buster is gone, Fist moves to an area to the side of his control area, and over to a large crate, amongst other machinery that has a cover over the top of it.

Fist looks around to make sure he's alone and pulls the cover off the box. He looks around as sees:

POV

A gaping hole in the box. A bar of metal, looking like silver is halfway out the hole, it's one end chewed up and partially missing.

BACK TO SCENE

Fist is surprised and angry. He picks up the bar, examines it.

FIST

What the fuck?!

INT. MINE - MOMENTS LATER

Laser gun in his hand, Buster cautiously moves down the tunnel. The lights are on. It's quiet for a few moments, and then the SOUND of SCRAPING is heard, softly

Un-nerved, Buster hits his com.

BUSTER
 (Into com)
 Buster to Fist.

FIST (V.O.)
 (over com)
 Fist here...

BUSTER
 (into com)
 I hear something...

FIST (V.O.)
 (over com)
 Where are you?

BUSTER
 (into com)
 Level one, section six. Everything
 looks fine.

FIST (V.O.)
 (over com)
 Don't take any chances. Get back to
 the refinery, now.

Down the tunnel, there is a spark of electricity on the ceiling and a section of lights goes out. Buster sees it.

BUSTER
 Shit!

Buster runs down the tunnel. As he goes, there are more flashes of electricity and other sections of lighting go out, and the SOUND OF SCRAPING, gets louder.

BUSTER (CONT'D)
 (into com)
 It's right behind me!!

FIST (V.O.)
 (over com)
 Well then blast it!

Buster raises his weapon and looks behind him, just as another arc of electricity hits nearby and above him, and the area is plunged into darkness. Buster runs in the dark.

FIST (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 (over com)
 Buster, what's going on?

BUSTER
 (into com)
 The lights are out. I can't see
 anything.

Buster trips in the darkness and falls.

POV

From the ceiling of the tunnel. A bright blue light flares
 up and Buster is beneath it, face down, from where he tripped.
 He turns over, faces the light and SCREAMS.

INT. REFINERY OFFICE- CONTINUOUS

Fist is by his computer when Buster's SCREAMS are heard over
 his com.

FIST
 (into com)
 Buster! Buster!

The SCREAMS are cut off. Fist looks up.

FIST (CONT'D)
 (yells out)
 Stacy, Buster's location!

STACY (V.O.)
 Com is non functional.

FIST
 Scan level one, areas six and seven.

STACY (V.O.)
 Stationary human, area six.

FIST
 Stacy, Sound mine alarm.

The SOUND of a BLARING ALARM fills the air. Fist puts his
 hands to his ears to block the noise. He doesn't hear the
 faint ANGRY ROAR of an animal somewhere down the tunnel.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

Carol examines Einstein, Arthur studies the box. The ALARM
 goes off, catching their attention.

ARTHUR
 What the Hell?!
 (to Stacy)
 Stacy, Alarm origin.

STACY (V.O.)
Refinery.

CAROL
I'll get my med bag.

INT. MINE - CONTINUOUS

Papa and Banjo are at several machines, shutting them down. The SOUND of the ALARM causes them to look up.

BANJO
(to Papa)
What's that?

PAPA
Trouble.

Papa runs down the tunnel with Banjo right behind him.

ARTHUR (V.O.)
And this is how you found him?

INT. MINE - LATER

The miners are huddled around the body of Buster. There are spotlights set up around the body, illuminating it. Carol examines the body. Arthur talks to Fist. Fist nods.

PAPA
Why'd ya let him go off on his own?

FIST
It wasn't my idea. I was uploading to Stacy, and he wandered off. You know how he is...was.

ARTHUR
Did you see anything, hear anything?

FIST
No, nothing.

ARTHUR
(to Carol)
Carol, you got anything?

With a sigh, Carol stands.

CAROL
Nothing we haven't seen before, except for this.

She holds up a bag with what looks like a shard of glass in it.

CAROL (CONT'D)

I found it in Buster's hand. He must have broken it off of the creature when they were struggling. I'll take it to the lab and see what I can find. I'll want to examine the body too.

MOUSE

I'll get one of the transports and bring him to you. Banjo, come with me.

Banjo nods. The two of them move down the tunnel and OUT OF SCENE. Fist turns to the others.

FIST

I still got some shutting down to do. Romeo, you want to help me?

ROMEO

Sure.

ARTHUR

We'll wait for the transport. Be careful.

The two men walk off. Papa doesn't look pleased.

INT. REFINERY OFFICE- LATER

Romeo and Fist come out of the tunnel and into refinery office. Romeo looks around.

ROMEO

Looks like everything's shut down.

FIST

That's because it is. There's something I need to show you.

He goes to the computer, and pulls out a drawer, pulls out a box. He opens it and pulls out the partially eaten bar of lap about the size of a person's palm. Romeo is surprised.

ROMEO

What the hell happened to that? Looks like half of it's been eaten.

FIST

I guess whatever killed Buster has a taste for Lap.

ROMEO

Seriously? How much are we missing?

FIST

Two bars and half of this one. I put the rest of the lap in the vault. Nothing's gonna get through those walls. We can sift it out later, once we take care of our little problem.

ROMEO

Yeah, and speaking of problem, I'm not keen on being a sitting duck in case that monster comes back for more Lap, so I say we get back to Control.

FIST

Good idea.

Holds up bar of Lap.

FIST (CONT'D)

I should show this to the Professor.

ROMEO

He may ask questions.

FIST

Don't worry. I got lots of answers.

The two men move out of the refinery, down the tunnel and
OUT OF SCENE.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

It's looking grim in the science center. Einstein lays on one of the tables and the cloth shrouded body of Buster is on a gurney nearby.

Carol examines the shard at the table. She places it on a dish.

CAROL

(calls out)

Stacy, run scan on object.

STACY (V.O.)

Scanning...

(beat)

Object composed of fifty-one percent silicon, twenty percent oxygen, five percent nitrogen, seven percent Lapinium, seventeen percent unknown minerals.

Carol looks surprised. The door to the hallway opens and Arthur enters.

CAROL
That can't be right.

ARTHUR
What can't be right?

She turns to him.

CAROL
The readings. I ran a scan on the shard and compared the readings from before it hatched. The percentages are different. Most everything is close to what it was, but the amount of Lapinium is more than three times more.

ARTHUR
How is that possible?

CAROL
I have no idea.

Arthur gets an idea and smiles.

ARTHUR
But we can use that that to our advantage.
(calls out)
Stacy, scan for Lapinium in percentages greater than five percent. Widest possible spread.

STACY (V.O.)
Scanning...
(beat)
Target location, corridor A, Section three.

CAROL
What?

At that moment, the door opens. Arthur and Carol turn and pull their lasers out, just as Fist comes through the door. He sees the guns drawn, and suddenly nervous.

FIST
Hey, wait a minute!

They lower their weapons, relieved.

ARTHUR
Fist, what the hell?

FIST
I could say the same thing. The last thing I expected to see walking in was two pistols pointed at me.

ARTHUR
What are you doing here?

Fist pulls the piece of Lap out of his pocket and shows it to them.

FIST
I wanted to bring you this.

Carol and Arthur come over to him.

CAROL
Is that a bar of Lap?

ARTHUR
I would say what's left of one. What happened to it?

FIST
I pulled this bar out of the last lot I refined, to test for purity. I thought it would be okay on the QC table. The next time I saw it, it looked like this.

Carol takes it from him and examines it.

CAROL
It looks like it's been chewed on.

She makes a realization. Calls out.

CAROL (CONT'D)
Stacy, extrapolation mode.

STACY (V.O.)
Ready...

CAROL
Given, Creature is silicon-based. Given, Absorbs salt and Acetylcholine from it's victims. Given, utilizes Lapinium in it's structure.

ARTHUR
Carol, what are you doing?

She motions him to stop talking.

CAROL

Given, creature absorbs electrical energy from surroundings. Probability percentile, the creature uses salt, acetylcholine and Lapinium for growth and structural stability.

STACY (V.O.)

Processing... eighty six point three percent probability.

Carol leans back on the table, satisfied.

ARTHUR

You mind telling me what that was all about?

CAROL

We've been going about this the wrong way...

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - LATER

The men, minus Buster, sit around the table, listening to Carol. The bar of lap sits on the table.

CAROL

... We've been assuming that the creature is purposely absorbing electricity.

PAPA

You mean it's not?

CAROL

I don't think so. It has seven percent lap in it's structure. Mouse, what is lap used for?

MOUSE

In small amounts, mixed with other ferrous metals, it dampens electrical fields.

CAROL

Right. Why would a creature that purposely absorbs electricity have something in it's system that dampens it? It may be that electricity is attracted to it, not the other way around.

PAPA

So it needs to eat Lap to keep from being overloaded?

ARTHUR

Precisely, which is why I asked Stacy to scan for any concentrations of more than five percent Lap. Since that doesn't occur on Peran naturally, it'll stand out like a beacon.

ROMEO

That means we can track it, right?

ARTHUR

Unfortunately, Stacy can only scan the first two levels, and this mine is five levels. So far, it hasn't shown up on sensors. It could be anywhere.

FIST

So we need something that will draw it out.

ARTHUR

You have a suggestion?

Fist picks up the piece of Lap and holds it up.

FIST

Just one.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

Carol works on the body of Buster, who lies on the gurney, stripped to the waist, the spaced wounds visible. Arthur stands nearby. They're arguing.

CAROL

If you want my opinion--

ARTHUR

I don't.

CAROL

Well, you're going to get it anyway. This has got to be one of the stupidest ideas I've ever heard.

She points to the wounds.

CAROL (CONT'D)

Look at these wounds.

(MORE)

CAROL (CONT'D)

Twelve point five centimeters apart...
If you go by Stacy's calculations,
the creature was about five feet
long when it attacked Buster. Who
knows how big it is now?

ARTHUR

We don't have many options at this
point. We can't wait for it to get
hungry again. I'd rather draw it
out using the Lap, than one of the
men. If you've got a better idea,
now's the time.

CAROL

Frankly, I don't. I still don't
like it.

ARTHUR

Duly noted.

Arthur turns to leave.

CAROL

Arthur wait.

He turns back.

CAROL (CONT'D)

I'm not sure what this means, if
anything, but when I was examining
Buster, Stacy did a scan of Salt
levels in his body.

ARTHUR

They were depleted, right?

CAROL

Not completely. The tissue nearest
the wounds had low or no salt levels,
but the outer extremities had almost
normal readings.

ARTHUR

Which means?

CAROL

I'm not sure, but it looks like
something interrupted it before it
was finished.

INT. MINE - LATER

An area where several tunnels converge. An open elevator platform, about 15 feet in diameter is at the center of the tunnels, On a box at the center of the platform, are two bars of Lap and the partial.

There are tools on the platform, including shovels, and a control panel in the middle. Three lights on stands are also on the platform, near the panel.

Except for Arthur, all the miners are on the platform. Fist comes off the platform and over to Arthur, who is bent down, looking at the floor of the tunnels.

FIST

Finding anything?

Arthur straightens up.

ARTHUR

Nothing obvious like discernible footprints, but frankly, I don't know what I'm looking for. I could be looking right at them and not even know.

FIST

How do you know this plan is even going to work?

ARTHUR

I don't, but if the creature needs Lap to survive, it'll have to come out and get it.

PAPA

(calls out)

Hey professor, everything's ready.

Both men turn towards Papa. Arthur gives him a wave and the two of them get onto the elevator platform.

PAPA (CONT'D)

(to Arthur)

What level?

ARTHUR

I'll check.

Hits his com.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Stacy, scan for levels of Lapinium greater than five percent, widest possible spread. Mask elevator platform.

STACY (V.O.)

(Over Com)

No contact present.

MOUSE

So I guess that means it's in the lower levels.

ARTHUR

Would seem so.

(to Mouse)

Mouse, take us down to level five, slow speed. We'll start there and work our way back up. Everyone, have their lasers ready.

Mouse nods and presses a button on the control panel and the platform lowers slowly. Arthur comes over to stand by Fist.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(to Fist)

I have a question.

FIST

Shoot...

ARTHUR

Buster's com was on when he was attacked, right?

Fist nods.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

How long after his com went dead did you sound the alarm?

FIST

The alarm? Couldn't have been more than ten maybe fifteen seconds. Why do you ask?

ARTHUR

Just something that Carol told me.

The elevator continues it's descent. A number of the ceiling lights are out. Papa comes over and stands next to Arthur.

PAPA
(to Arthur)
Looks like it passed this way.

ARTHUR
Yeah, it does.
(calls out)
Romeo, turn on the bio-lights.

ROMEO
Okay.

Romeo goes to each light and turns them on. A yellow glow spills out of each of them illuminating the area.

FIST
Why the bio-lights?

ARTHUR
It may get darker, the further down we go. So far, the creature attracts electricity from current. These lights are chemical. If something's going to attack me, I want to see it coming.

FIST
Can't argue that logic.

The elevator stops on the floor of a tunnel, the fifth level. Arthur looks around. About 3/4 of the lights are out. There are three tunnels that branch off from their location.

ARTHUR
We'll start here.

BANJO
What do we do?

ARTHUR
The place where we found the box is a hundred feet down that way. I want to take a look at the area. Banjo, Mouse, you want to come with me?

BANJO
Sure Professor.

MOUSE
I'm in.

ARTHUR

(to the other men)

You three stay here. If you see or hear anything, get us on the com.

Mouse, Banjo and Arthur step off the elevator and head down the tunnel. Romeo turns to Fist.

ROMEO

If I see anything, I'm gonna start shooting.

Fist nods.

INT. MINE - MOMENTS LATER

Near where the box was found. The lights in the area are still on and the digger is still in basically the same place as before. Another tunnel branches off from the site, but no lights.

Mouse, Arthur and Banjo, each carrying a flashlight in one hand and a laser in the other, come upon where the box was found. The area looks like it has been disturbed and none of the dark sand is seen.

ARTHUR

Just as I thought. It's been here.

BANJO

How can you tell?

ARTHUR

All the black sand that leaked out of the box is gone, probably eaten by the creature. Not surprising. It would have to be able to absorb Lap from the surrounding soil.

During Arthur's speech There is the faint SOUND of SCRAPING coming from further down the tunnel. Banjo hears it first.

BANJO

Professor, I hear something.

They all turn. The SCRAPING is a bit louder. All are concerned.

BANJO (CONT'D)

That's the same sound we heard when we found Einstein.

ARTHUR

We better get back to the elevator.

MOUSE

Yeah, and fast...

The Three men move quickly down the tunnel. The SCRAPING is getting louder. From down the tunnel, comes a flash of blue light.

INT. MINE - MOMENTS LATER

By the elevator. Papa, Fist and Romeo stand on the elevator platform. Romeo looks bored.

ROMEO

How long you think we'll be here?

PAPA

Some place you gotta be?

ROMEO

I just don't like the idea of standing around waiting for something to attack us.

PAPA

Just stop your whining and...

From out of the tunnel, Mouse, Banjo and Arthur come running.

ARTHUR

(Yelling)

Get ready to move! It's behind us!

The men run towards the elevator, as something bursts out of the tunnel.

The creature looks similar to a centipede, about ten feet long, narrow body and twelve pairs of legs. It has a large head with large eyes and antenna, and a small mouth with no jaws, just small protuberances.

It's most striking feature is that it looks like it's made entirely of clear glass. As it moves, electricity arcs to it from the ceiling lights and they go out, and the creature glows blue for a few moments. The bio-lights keep the area lit.

Papa moves to the center and starts the elevator. The three men jump onto the platform as it starts to move up.

Romeo and Fist fire their lasers at the creature as it approaches. The beams pass right through it. The creature is getting closer, but the elevator moves up shaft before the creature gets up there, leaving the creature to clamor around.

Arthur comes over to Papa.

PAPA
Sure don't look like no spider.

ARTHUR
Just get us out of here.

Fist comes over to Arthur.

FIST
The lasers didn't even slow it down.
What do we do now?

PAPA
We get the hell outa here, that's
what.

They come up to the widening on level four. Banjo looks over the edge of the platform.

BANJO
I can't see it.

Mouse is concerned.

MOUSE
(Yells)
Banjo, get away from the edge!

Banjo turns to come back to the middle, just as one of the creature's legs spears his calf. Banjo SCREAMS and falls, as the creature hauls it's head and front legs up onto the platform. Mouse grabs a shovel and comes at the creature.

Mouse slams the shovel into the creature's face, and causes it to let go of Banjo. Romeo runs up and pulls Banjo away. Mouse keeps slamming away until the creature disappears over the side and the shovel breaks. The elevator goes up the central shaft.

Mouse goes over to Banjo who is barely conscious. Banjo has his hand on the wound. Romeo looks at Mouse.

ROMEO
He's bleeding pretty bad, Mouse.

Mouse looks up and sees the bandanna around Romeo's neck.

MOUSE
(to Romeo)
Give me your Bandanna. I can use it
for a tourniquet.

Romeo takes off the Bandanna and gives it to Mouse.

There is a THUMPING sound and the elevator shakes. Papa turns to Arthur.

PAPA

I think it's underneath us. When we get to level three, it'll be able to get to us.

Arthur calls out to the rest of the crew.

ARTHUR

Keep an eye out.

Mouse has fashioned a tourniquet out of the bandanna and used part of the broken shovel to keep it tight.

By this point, everyone is clustered near the center of the elevator. The elevator comes up to the third level and the space opens out. From underneath the elevator, the creature comes out, climbing up the wall. Romeo sees it.

ROMEO

(Yells out)

There it is!

Romeo fires at it. It goes through the creature's body but hits the wall behind it and kicks up debris, which unsteadies the creature. Arthur notices.

ARTHUR

Aim for it's feet. See if we can knock it off the wall.

They fire at the dirt below it's feet, and after a few moments it loses it's footing and falls onto the mine floor. The elevator goes up into the shaft.

After a few moments, the THUMPING returns and the elevator rocks.

PAPA

We may have pissed it off.

FIST

What was your first clue?

ARTHUR

As long as it's below us, we're safe.
(to Mouse)
Mouse, how's Banjo?

MOUSE

Not good. I can't stop the bleeding.

Arthur, looks over at the other men. The THUMPING hits again and shakes everybody.

FIST

If this keeps up, it's gonna get through.

ROMEO

What do we do when we get to the next level?

ARTHUR

Keep it busy for just a few seconds until I call Stacy.

ROMEO

What's the computer going to be able to do?

ARTHUR

Not sure, but I have a theory.

The elevator clears the second level, and the creature grabs hold of the edge of the platform. They train their lasers on the metal flooring and fire.

The metal becomes hot and the creature backs away with a ROAR OF PAIN. It then climbs up the wall and menaces them as they fire at the creature's feet, keeping it off-balance.

Arthur taps his com device.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(into com)

Stacy, sound mine alarm!

The SOUND of a BLARING ALARM fills the air. At once, the creature starts writhing as in pain and falls onto the mine floor, still writhing and SHRIEKING. The blue glow flashes.

The men on the platform cover their ears as the elevator goes up. Papa moves over to get a better look and comes face-to face with the creature as it has climbed the wall, still glowing and thrashing it's head back and forth in pain.

Papa turns to get out of the way, but the creature grabs him, it's front feet stabbing into him. Papa SCREAMS and continues to do so when the creature retreats and disappears down the elevator shaft, carrying Papa with it.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(Overlap)

NO!!!

MOUSE
 (Overlap)
 PAPA!!

Arthur falls to his knees, upset and spent. He pounds the floor in frustration.

ARTHUR
 Dammit!

Romeo crosses himself. The elevator goes into the Shaft.

FIST
 Aren't we going after him?

Arthur shakes his head.

ARTHUR
 He's gone. There's nothing we can do for him.

He stands.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
 We need to get Banjo to Carol, or we're going to lose him too.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

The four men carry Banjo to the Medical/Science Lab. They get to the door and it opens and they go in. The ALARM still BLARES.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

All of the tables have been pushed against the wall and an examination table is at the center, along with a number of medical-looking gadgets. Carol is waiting as they come through the door.

CAROL
 (Concerned)
 Put him on the table.

The men place Banjo on the table. Carol takes a pair of scissors and cuts away the pant leg.

CAROL (CONT'D)
 Arthur, put the scanner on his forehead... and can somebody do something about that damn alarm?

Arthur goes over and gets the scanner.

ARTHUR
 (Calls out)
 Stacy, engage all outside crash doors!

Arthur places the scanner on Banjo's forehead. It lights up.

STACY (V.O.)
 Crash doors engaged.

ARTHUR
 Silence Alarm.

The ALARM goes off. Carol pulls away the pants leg, and looks at the wound. It's deep, ugly and still bleeding.

CAROL
 Damn, what a mess.
 (Calls out)
 Stacy, vitals.

Carol picks up various tools and begins working on the leg. Fist takes two full and one partial bars of Lap out of his pants pockets and puts them on the table.

STACY (V.O.)
 Heart rate forty-five, blood pressure fifty over twenty-six. Temperature ninety two point three. Blood volume down twenty-five percent.

Carol gets the bleeding under control. Except for Arthur and Mouse, the others have pulled back.

CAROL
 That should stop the bleeding.
 (To Fist and Romeo)
 You two can go up to the lounge.
 I'll let you know when he's stabilized.

She looks around and then over to Arthur.

CAROL (CONT'D)
 (questioningly)
 Where's Papa...?

Arthur shakes his head. Carol sighs, sadly.

CAROL (CONT'D)
 (under her breath)
 I knew it was a stupid plan.

Fist and Romeo go out the door, into the hallway and OUT OF SCENE.

CAROL (CONT'D)

(to Mouse)

You can let go Mouse, I've closed
off the artery.

The Mouse lets go of the tourniquet.

ARTHUR

Mouse, if you want to wait with the
others...

MOUSE

I'm staying.

CAROL

Suit yourself.

(calls out)

Stacy, scan for pseudo-Lysine.

STACY (V.O.)

None detected.

CAROL

Thank goodness for small favors.

(calls out)

Stacy, blood type, Evans, Jim.

STACY (V.O.)

B Negative.

CAROL

How many units in stasis?

STACY (V.O.)

Two units.

CAROL

That's not going to be enough.

MOUSE

How much do you need?

CAROL

One maybe two more units.

Mouse starts taking off his shirt. Arthur and Carol look at
him curiously.

ARTHUR

(to Mouse)

What are you doing?

MOUSE

Doc says he needs more blood. She
can have some of mine.

ARTHUR

We don't know if you're compatible.

MOUSE

(calls out)

Stacy, blood type, Delano, Paul...
Genetic relationship to Evans, Jim.

Carol is intrigued.

STACY (V.O.)

B negative... Genetic relationship,
parent.

ARTHUR

(stunned)

You're his father?

Mouse nods.

MOUSE (V.O.)

I guess I should'a told you guys
when I bought up Perk's share...

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - LATER

Fist, Romeo, Mouse, and Arthur sit around the table, talking.

MOUSE

... but I was afraid that one of
you'd slip up and Banjo would find
out I bought it for him. Then he'd
start asking questions I wasn't ready
to answer, like me being his father.

The door to the lounge opens up and Carol comes in. Mouse
gets up quickly, gets dizzy and sits back down.

CAROL

Take it easy Mouse. You're going to
to be weak for awhile.

MOUSE

How's Banjo?

Carol comes down and sits at the table.

CAROL

Resting comfortably. He'll be out
for an hour or so, but he should
make a full recovery.

(change of subject)

Now, what happened out there?

ARTHUR

I screwed up, that's what happened, and now we've lost another crewman. We went out with lasers looking for a five foot spider, and ended up finding a ten foot long centipede.

CAROL

Centipede? And the lasers?

ARTHUR

No effect. We were right about one thing. It does look like it's made of glass. The lasers passed right through it. The only thing that seemed to effect it was the alarm.

FIST

(to Arthur)

How did you know?

ARTHUR

Something Carol said, the creature being interrupted after it attacked Buster. The only thing it could have been was the alarm.

ROMEO

Smart thinking Professor.

ARTHUR

Not good enough to save Papa.

(calls out)

Stacy, how long before the Hydra comes out of slip space?

STACY (V.O.)

Forty-five hours, forty-six minutes.

ARTHUR

Okay, this is how it's going to go. The Hydra comes out of slip in about two days. Then, it will take another two days for it to get here. I've brought down the crash doors, so it can't get in.

FIST

Good move.

ARTHUR

But that means we all stay put until they get here. No one goes out into the mine or the refinery.

(MORE)

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

We can contact Hydra and explain our situation when they hit normal space. They're better equipped to handle trouble than we are. Everybody agree?

Everyone nods.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

Banjo, his leg bandaged, lays in a standard hospital-type bed. Arthur looks at the box at another table, still trying to figure it out, while Carol works on the computer at another table. Banjo is bored. He looks over at Carol.

BANJO

(Calls out)

Hey Doc.

Carol looks up.

BANJO (CONT'D)

How soon can I get outa here? I mean, I can heal up just as well in my own quarters. No offense, but it's boring here.

Carol smiles.

CAROL

(to Arthur)

Kids, you give them time to relax, and they just don't appreciate it.

(to Banjo)

We'll take your vitals in about an hour. If they look good, You can go to your quarters and re-coop there. That okay?

BANJO

Sounds great.

The door to the room opens and Mouse comes in. Banjo is happy to see him.

BANJO (CONT'D)

Hey Mouse, come to make sure I'm not wasting the blood you gave me?

Mouse walks over to the bed. He looks serious.

MOUSE

You seem to be doing better.

CAROL

He's just bored, plus the pain meds
are putting him a happy mood.

BANJO

Got that right.

Mouse looks over at Arthur and Carol, serious.

MOUSE

Could I have a minute with him?

ARTHUR

You know Carol, I could use a cup of
coffee. How about you?

Carol understands where this is going.

CAROL

That sounds wonderful. A break is
just what the Doctor ordered.

Carol and Arthur get up, move to the doorway, out the door
and OUT OF SCENE. Mouse pulls up a chair and sits next to
Banjo's bed. It's awkward.

BANJO

I ah... guess I should thank you for
saving my life, twice, actually. I
heard about you fighting off the
creature, and the transfusion. Isn't
it lucky that we have the same blood
type...

MOUSE

Banjo, James, I need to say something.
Something I should have told you a
long time ago.

Banjo is almost amused.

BANJO

You mean that I'm your son?

MOUSE

(Taken aback)

Wait, what, you know? Who told you?
If one of the guys blabbed, I'm gonna--

BANJO

It wasn't one of the guys. Mom told
me, the day I got the mining share.

MOUSE

I specifically told her not to say anything to you about it.

BANJO

This is Mom we're talking about. She couldn't keep a secret to save her life, trust me.

MOUSE

Why didn't you say something?

BANJO

I was waiting for you to. I certainly gave you enough openings, which you neatly sidestepped. Besides, it gave me a chance to see what you were really like, without all the family drama mucking things up.

MOUSE

How much did your mother tell you about me?

BANJO

Everything, She talked about you a lot, good stuff and bad. She told me about the man you accidentally killed, you jumping bail, and that you sent money every month so we could live comfortable.

MOUSE

I shouldn't have run away, I shouldn't have left you and your mom alone. I'm sorry Banjo.

BANJO

If you hadn't, things would have been a lot worse for mom and me, I know that for a fact. We all make mistakes, God knows, I sure did.

Banjo gives Mouse a playful punch in the arm.

BANJO (CONT'D)

Don't sweat it, Dad....

MOUSE

Say that again.

BANJO

(Laughs)
Dad...

MOUSE

I could get used to hearing that.

Banjo LAUGHS again until he gets a stab of pain from his calf.

BANJO

Ow, me too.

INT. FIST'S QUARTERS - LATER

Fist's quarters look pretty much the same as Banjos. Sparse, utilitarian, pretty much like Fist himself. There is a KNOCK on the DOOR, three long raps and a short one. Fist gets up and goes to the door, puts his hand on the panel to the right and it opens, revealing Romeo.

FIST

Get in here!

Fist pulls Romeo in and the door shuts behind him.

FIST (CONT'D)

Anybody see you?

ROMEO

Nah. The professor and the Doc are in the lounge having coffee and Mouse and Banjo are doing father and son time in Medical. What's the problem?

FIST

The problem is that there is still about four hundred and sixteen pounds of Lap in the vault that shouldn't be there. We need to move it.

ROMEO

(voice raises)

Are you crazy? With that thing roaming around out there! You saw what it did to Papa, and Buster.

FIST

Quiet down. Which would you rather take your chances with, the creature or the mining board? Besides, it's probably down at the bottom level.

ROMEO

And what if it's looking for a meal, or more Lap? If we open the vault, how do we know it won't smell it and come running?

FIST

If it does, we turn on the mine alarm.
Scare it off again.

ROMEO

Yeah, and that sure helped Papa,
didn't it? All it did was piss it
off.

FIST

Listen, you gonna help me or not?

ROMEO

No way...

FIST

Suit yourself, but if I get caught,
you're going down with me.

ROMEO

You'd squeal on me?

FIST

Like a pig in mud.

Romeo thinks about it. Then.

ROMEO

Okay what do you want me to do?

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

Banjo and Mouse talk among themselves, when Arthur and Carol
come into the room. They stop talking and look over as they
enter. Carol looks concerned.

CAROL

Everything okay?

Mouse and Banjo smile.

MOUSE

It's all good. Seems the little
twerp knew everything before he got
here.

BANJO

My mom's a blabbermouth.

(to Mouse)

And who are you calling little?

ARTHUR

Mind if we go back to our work?

BANJO
Knock yourselves out.

Arthur goes over to the box and Carol to her computer.

MOUSE
(to Banjo)
I'm going to the lounge. Need anything?

BANJO
I could go for one of those Denibian colas.

MOUSE
You do realize they're twenty percent sugar.

BANJO
I'm over twenty one, it's a little late to pull the overly concerned dad routine. Just get me the cola and nobody gets hurt.

MOUSE
Okay, okay. I'll be back in a few.

Mouse goes towards the door. He looks at Carol, smiles.

MOUSE (CONT'D)
Kids. No respect.

Carol smiles. Mouse continues on his way, out the door and OUT OF SCENE. Banjo turns his attention to Arthur.

BANJO
(serious)
Professor, do you think Papa's dead?

ARTHUR
Yes. As much energy as that creature used fighting us, it would have needed to replenish itself. I think that's why it attacked us even after we turned on the alarm.

Carol looks up from her screen.

CAROL
It attacked you after the alarm started?

ARTHUR
That's right.

BANJO

(to Carol)

Don't look at me, I was pretty out of it by that point.

CAROL

Arthur, I think you may be right. Maybe attracting the electricity burns through the salt and acetylcholine, and it needs to replenish it.

BANJO

All I know is that it's a lot scarier-looking than the one in my mythology book.

Arthur looks over at Banjo, curious.

ARTHUR

What Mythology book?

BANJO

The mythology of the planet Dealos. My mom used to read it to me when I was a kid. It mentioned something about what looked like a centipede in it. The people of Dealos called it the 'God of Storms' or something like that.

CAROL

(to Arthur)

Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

ARTHUR

(Calls out)

Stacy, check the data library for a book 'The Mythology of the Planet Dealos.'

He looks over at Banjo, who nods.

STACY (V.O.)

Book located.

ARTHUR

Show me any pictorial references to a creature called 'The God of Storms.' Display!

A vid screen appears in front of them.

It is an illustration of the same creature in quite a difference scene.

Here, it is coming up on land from the sea. The waves are wild and the creature looks fearsome. Flashes of lightning dance around it.

Arthur and Carol study the picture.

BANJO

Sure looks like the one we saw.

ARTHUR

I'll have to agree.

(calls out)

Stacy, bring up language file on planet Dealos. Display.

The screen changes, showing an image of many symbols, looking very much like the symbols on the box.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Now, we're getting somewhere.

CAROL

Why didn't Stacy find this in the language banks?

ARTHUR

Because the last Dealosian died out nine thousand years ago.

INT. REFINERY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Romeo and Fist come over to the office. It's quiet, too quiet. In their gloved hands, they have their lasers out and ready.

ROMEO

I don't like this Fist. Let's do what we have to do and get out of here.

FIST

We will. Quit whining.

ROMEO

What if the Professor catches us.

FIST

So what? He can't tell us what to do. He's not the boss. We hired him, remember?

ROMEO

Yeah but--

FIST

If he asks, we just say we were checking to make sure that the Lap vault hasn't been broken into. Stacy's vid system only covers two sides. The refinery and the storage is my responsibility. I have a right to be here.

ROMEO

Then I'll let you explain it to him.

FIST

Fine by me. Cm'on, let's get this done and get back to our quarters.

ROMEO

Shouldn't we have Stacy do a scan and see if it's nearby?

FIST

Good idea. Couldn't hurt to check again.

(calls out)

Stacy, scan for Lapinium levels greater than five percent. Widest scan.

STACY (V.O.)

No contact present.

FIST

(to Romeo)

Told ya. It's probably down on the lower levels, where it took Papa.

ROMEO

I guess. Poor Papa.

FIST

His own fault for getting too close to the edge. Papa said this was his last season, and he was right. The kid was just lucky. Let's get back to business.

ROMEO

Okay Fist.

They move forward towards the VAULT, a large metal storage facility, twenty feet wide, twelve feet high. And one hundred feet long. The two men approach the entrance.

FIST

(to Romeo)

See it's perfectly safe.

There is a SCRAPING SOUND and the SKITTERING TAP of something hard on metal. The noise causes both of them to look around, lasers ready.

From the roof of the Vault, a pair of clear legs appears, then the head looks over the side. Fist looks up and is startled.

FIST (CONT'D)

Shit!

Romeo looks up as well. They both fire their weapons, hitting the creature in the face with no effect other than it makes the creature mad. It flashes it's blue light on and off in irritation.

FIST (CONT'D)

Run!!

The two men take off, heading for the safety of the Compound. The creature slithers down the Vault and gives chase.

The men are running neck and neck, but the creature is gaining.

ROMEO

It's catching up. We're not gonna make it.

FIST

You are so right. Sorry Romeo.

ROMEO

What are--

With that, Fist changes his direction to give a body slam to Romeo, knocking him down, as Fist keeps on running. Romeo gets up quickly and starts running after Fist who has a lead now, and the creature is very close to Romeo.

ROMEO (CONT'D)

Fist!! You son of a bitch!! You God Dammed F--!!

Romeo doesn't finish his word as the creature has caught up to him and plunges all eight of it's front feet into Romeo's body. Romeo SCREAMS in agony and keeps SCREAMING. His body falls forward and Romeo struggles, face down in the dirt, the creature on top of him.

Fist keeps running. Romeo's SCREAMING stops.

Romeo's struggles cease and the creature begins to feed, glowing a brilliant blue.

INT. MINE - MOMENTS LATER

Outside the entrance to the Compound. Huge metal doors lead into it. A print pad is to the right of the door.

Fist comes running up to the door, pulls off his right hand glove and throws it aside. He presses his hand onto the print pad, the door opens and Fist goes inside. The metal doors close back up.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - MOMENTS LATER

With the alphabet on his Computer, Arthur is working on the translation of the box. Carol is studying figures on her computer.

The door to the Lab slides open and Fist comes running in, The commotion causes both Arthur and Carol to stand.

FIST

I tried to stop him!

CAROL

Stop who?

FIST

Romeo.

ARTHUR

He went out? To where?

FIST

He wanted to make sure the creature wasn't getting into the vault. I told him the vault was safe but he wouldn't listen.

ARTHUR

(calls out)

Stacy, Refinery cameras, display.

The vid screen appears in front of them. It is a scene of the creature feasting on Romeo, the creature glows blue.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Damn it!

CAROL

I think I'm going to be sick.

(calls out)

Stacy, close display.

The Video screen shuts off. Carol grabs onto the table for support.

ARTHUR

(to Fist)

Why didn't he check with Stacy to see if it was clear?

FIST

He said he did. So did I.

ARTHUR

(Calls out)

Stacy, Scan for Lapinium concentrations higher than five percent. Widest range, screen out lab.

STACY (V.O.)

None detected.

ARTHUR

I don't understand, it should have worked.

CAROL

(calls out)

Stacy, scan for Lapinium in concentrations higher than three point five percent, same parameters.

STACY

Four point two concentration located in sector six, first level.

FIST

The Refinery.

CAROL

It seems that the creature burns off Lap as well as salt and acetylcholine.

ARTHUR

Makes sense. There's no trace of Lap on the surface. Considering the severity of electrical storms, It wouldn't surprise me if it's all been vaporized over millenia.

FIST

Could you two stop talking like scientists. What are we going to do about Romeo? We can't just leave him out there.

ARTHUR

And we're not going to. Get a transport ready. I'll get Mouse and we'll go out and bring him back.

Fist nods and goes out the door and OUT OF SCENE. He passes by the table where two bar of Lap sit. Arthur turns to Carol.

CAROL

Mouse is probably in Banjo's quarters.

ARTHUR

I'll check there first. I need you to monitor the vid feed to the Refinery. I'm going to turn on the alarm on levels one, two and three. When the creature is gone, send me word on the com.

CAROL

All right. Be careful.

Arthur nods and goes out the door and OUT OF SCENE.

Carol takes a deep breath to steady her nerves.

CAROL (CONT'D)

(calls out)

Stacy, Refinery cameras. Display.

A video screen appears in front of her. The creature is no longer on top of Romeo but is eating the soil nearby. Carol looks at the tableau with interest.

INT. BANJO'S QUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

Banjo lays on his bunk, while Mouse sits on a chair nearby. Mouse has Banjo's banjo and is playing it very well. Banjo is almost transfixed. After another moment, Mouse stops.

BANJO

(awed)

That was fantastic.

MOUSE

I just can't believe your mom kept this.

BANJO

It hung on the wall. When I came here, I asked if I could take it with me. Was it yours?

MOUSE

Actually, it was my father's. He taught me how to play, and gave it to me when I was about your age. I'm a little rusty, but there are some things you just don't forget.

There is a KNOCK on the DOOR.

BANJO

Probably the Doc, checking up on me.
(calls out)
It's open.

The door slides open and Arthur comes in, looking grim.

BANJO (CONT'D)

Hey professor...

ARTHUR

(to Mouse)
Mouse, I need your to come with me.

MOUSE

Sure. What's wrong?

ARTHUR

Romeo went out to check on the Vault. The creature attacked him.

BANJO

Is he dead?

ARTHUR

I'm afraid so. We're going out to get him. Fist's bringing up a transport.

Mouse stands and puts the Banjo on the chair.

MOUSE

Let's go.
(to Banjo)
And you young man, stay put.

BANJO

Yes sir. Be careful dad.

Mouse nods. Both Mouse and Arthur go out the door, and it closes behind them as they go OUT OF SCENE. Banjo sighs and lays down on his bunk.

INT. CORRIDOR - LATER

In front of the doors leading out to the mine. Fist sits at the wheel of a transport vehicle which looks like a golf-cart with a six foot bed. Tires are built for sandy soil.

Arthur and Mouse come around the corner and INTO VIEW. Arthur gets into the passenger seat, while Mouse sits on the truck bed.

ARTHUR

All set?

Fist nods. Arthur clicks on his communication device and talks into it.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(into com)

Carol, what's the creature's location?

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

Carol is watching the screen. The creature is still in the area, feeding on the sand around the edges of the Vault.

CAROL

(into com)

Still in the area. Looks like it's grazing on the soil around the vault.

INTERCUT

ARTHUR

(into com)

I'm going to raise the mine alarm, see if we can scare it off. Have Stacy track it as far as she can.

CAROL

(into com)

I'm ready on my end.

ARTHUR

(calls out)

Stacy, Sound mine alarm, levels one, two and three.

The BLARING of the ALARM sounds.

Carol holds her ears and watches the screen. The creature begins to writhe in pain, twisting and contorting.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. REFINERY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The creature is ROARING, glowing blue in flashes, and writhing on the dirt. Finally it rights itself and quickly moves off.

INT. BANJO'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Banjo hold his ears to block out the sound. He looks anxious.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

Carol watches the creature move quickly off and out of vid range.

CAROL

(into com)

It's moving away from the area.

It's out of vid range.

(calls out)

Stacy, track object until out of sensor range.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

(over com)

It moves pretty fast, it won't be long.

After a few moments.

STACY (V.O.)

Object is no longer on upper level sensors.

CAROL

(into com)

It's out of range.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

All three men are ready.

ARTHUR

(Calls out)

Stacy, open crash door, north corridor.

There is a creaking sound and the doors open up.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Let's get going. I don't know how long the alarm will keep it away.

The vehicle drives out of the door and it shuts behind them.

INT. REFINERY OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

The vehicle is parked next to the body. Arthur and Mouse are finishing up wrapping Romeo's body in a sheet. The ALARM is still BLARING. Fist sits in the driver's seat.

ARTHUR

(to Mouse)

Let's get him on the transport.

Mouse and Arthur lift Romeo's body onto the transport.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Right, let's go.

(into com)

Carol, we got him. On our way back.

The two men get onto the transport, Arthur in the seat and Mouse on the bed. They drive off. Mouse sees something on the ground as they circle around.

POV

Two sets of footprints, then an area of disturbed dirt near to where the footprints converge then split off again.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

Carol watches the vid screen of the transport driving off.

CAROL

(into com)

Bring him straight to the lab.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

(Over com)

Will do.

Carol watches as the transport goes off the vid screen.

STACY (V.O.)

Four point one contact on level two,
section eleven.

Carol taps her com.

CAROL

(into com)

Stacy just detected the creature on
level two, section eleven.

INT. MINE - CONTINUOUS

The transport is moving down the tunnel.

ARTHUR

(into com)

Understood.

(to Fist)

This heap's going to have to go faster.

(into com)

Stacy, scan for Lapinium, three percent or higher.

Fist floors it.

STACY (V.O.)

(over com)

Three locations. One hundred percent, location lab, three point seven percent, location, level one, section nine, one hundred percent, location level one section four.

MOUSE

That where we are.

(to Fist)

Fist, you put all the Lap in the lab, right?

FIST

Most of it.

ARTHUR

What do you mean, most of it?

Fist reaches into his shirt pocket and pulls out the partial bar of Lap. Arthur grabs it.

Mouse looks down the tunnel and sees.

POV

The creature runs towards them down the tunnel, and getting a little close.

BACK TO SCENE

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(furious)

You had it in your pocket? You idiot, this is leading it right to us. Of all the--

MOUSE

(panicked)

Guys, can we have this conversation later?

Fist and Arthur looks back and see the creature gaining. Fist turns back and gives the transport the gas. In a few moments, the creature has caught up and it's front legs hit the transport, very close to Mouse who dodges the feet.

ARTHUR

(to the creature)

You want this so bad, Catch!

With that, Arthur throws the Lap at the creature. It sails over the creature's head. The creature turns towards the direction the Lap and scrambles after it. The transport roars on.

INT. CORRIDOR - LATER

In front of closed doors. After a moment, they open and the transport drives in. The ALARM continues to BLARE.

ARTHUR

(calls out)

Stacy, secure crash doors.

The doors close behind them.

STACY (V.O.)

Crash doors secure.

ARTHUR

(Calls out)

Silence alarm.

The Alarm stops. Still fuming, Arthur gets off the transport. He comes over to the driver's side, pulls Fist out of his seat and gives him a right hook, knocking Fist to the group.

Mouse sees the problem and gets up and over to Fist as he gets up and is about to lunge at Arthur. Mouse holds him back.

FIST

(to Arthur)

What the hell was that for?!

ARTHUR

(to Fist)

Of all the stupid... you knew that the creature needs Lap to survive. You could have gotten us all killed!

FIST
It was a mistake.

MOUSE
You two calm down. This isn't going to solve anything.

ARTHUR
You're right Mouse, it isn't.
(to Fist)
Mouse and I will take Romeo to medical. Then I'm going to want answers from you. We've got three days before the Hydra gets here, and I'll be damned if I'm going to lose anymore of the crew.

Mouse lets go of Fist. Arthur gets into the driver's seat of the transport. Mouse comes around the vehicle and gets onto the passenger seat. They drive off, leaving a fuming Fist.

ARTHUR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Now, let's start from the beginning...

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - LATER

Everyone is there, except Carol. Banjo sits on one of the couches. The other two, Mouse and Arthur, sit across from Fist.

ARTHUR
Why was Romeo out there?

FIST
I told you. He wanted to make sure that the creature hadn't broken into the vault. I told him that there was no way that it could get through the plating, but he wouldn't listen.

ARTHUR
So you went out with him.

FIST
Your orders, no one goes anywhere alone.

The door opens and Carol enters quietly. She walks over and leans on the couch, listening.

ARTHUR
What happened when you got to the refinery?

FIST

We had Stacy scan the area, nothing showed up, so we went over to the vault to look around.

ARTHUR

And...?

FIST

It was on the roof. It started chasing us. Romeo wasn't fast enough. It got him. There wasn't anything I could do.

ARTHUR

Is that it?

FIST

(defensive)

Other than I ran all the way back to the Compound to tell you, no. And what's the hell with the third degree? Okay, I'm sorry about having the Lap in my pocket. I forgot I put it there, okay? We were pretty much running for our lives after the creature took Papa and trying to make sure that junior over there didn't die. You're lucky I remembered to grab it on the way out at all.

Fist stands, angry.

FIST (CONT'D)

You know, I'm done answering questions! You asked me what happened, I told you, end of conversation. If you need me, I'll be in my quarters.

Fist angrily walks out the lounge, through the doors and OUT OF SCENE.

Carol turns to Arthur.

CAROL

(to Arthur)

Touchy, isn't he?

MOUSE

Well, Romeo was the closest thing he had to a friend.

ARTHUR

Yeah, but something's not quite right.
 (to Carol)
 Found out anything new?

CAROL

Nothing much. The spacing between
 the wounds are wider apart. Given
 what we know from the vid footage,
 the creature is about twelve feet
 long now.

BANJO

Good enough reason to stay in the
 compound until the Hydra gets here
 as far as I'm concerned.

MOUSE

Well, If you two don't need me, I'm
 gonna go back to my quarters.
 (to Banjo)
 Give you a lift?

BANJO

Works for me.

Mouse goes over to Banjo and helps him up. The two of them
 walk out the door and OUT OF SCENE, Mouse supporting Banjo.

Arthur looks like something's bothering him. Carol notices.

CAROL

Okay, what's the matter? You've got
 that look you get when something's
 bothering you.

ARTHUR

Just a feeling.
 (calls out)
 Stacy, location, Theron, David.

STACY (V.O.)

Quarters.

ARTHUR

(calls out)
 Stacy, Track his location. Inform
 me if he leaves the compound.

STACY (V.O.)

Understood.

CAROL

Why did you do that?

ARTHUR
I think he's hiding something. I'd
feel better keeping an eye on him.

CAROL
Your trouble is, you're paranoid.

ARTHUR
(teasing)
That's the nicest thing you've said
to me in months.

Carol's not amused.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

At the table, Arthur works on the translation of the box.
Carol is looking at the vids of the creature on her computer.
He does a few keystrokes to his computer and puts it down,
smiling.

ARTHUR
I got it...

Carol looks up.

CAROL
Got what?

ARTHUR
The translation.
(calls out)
Stacy, Display Translation file.

A screen comes up and the writing on the box appears, with a
translation beneath it. Carol comes over to look at it.
She reads the first line.

CAROL
Stand steadfast before your god and
do not run from his sight.
(to Arthur)
Well that's cryptic.

ARTHUR
Look at the second line.

CAROL
(Reads)
That which gives birth to the god,
causes it to perish... That sounds
like something.

The door opens and Mouse enters. He looks over at the table
where the two bars of Lap sit.

Arthur and Carol turn from the screen.

ARTHUR

Hey Mouse.

MOUSE

Professor, Doc.

(to Arthur)

Professor, could I talk to you...
Privately?

CAROL

That must be my cue to go check on
our young patient.

MOUSE

Thanks Doc.

Carol goes out the door and OUT OF SCENE. Mouse comes over and drags a stool over near Arthur, and sits. Arthur looks concerned.

ARTHUR

Something wrong?

MOUSE

I didn't want to involve the Doc on
this in case I'm wrong. It's Fist.
I don't think he's telling us
everything.

ARTHUR

Go on.

MOUSE

One of the jobs I had when I was
younger was as a tracker. When we
picked up Romeo, I saw footprints in
the dirt coming from the vault,
running parallel for awhile, then
one set moved in and there was a big
disturbance in the sand. I think
Fist knocked Romeo down so he could
get away.

Arthur doesn't say anything for a moment.

MOUSE (CONT'D)

I'm not making this up.

ARTHUR

I believe you. Something's been
nagging at me too. That's why I
have Stacy tracking Fist's movements.

MOUSE

At least I'm not the only one. I know Papa never trusted him. Told me that he thought Fist was skimming off the top.

ARTHUR

Told me the same thing. I just thought it was Papa being Papa. Well, there's one way to find out.
(calls out)
Stacy, weight of Lapinium in vault.

STACY (V.O.)

Thirty five thousand four hundred and thirty-seven pounds, eleven point six ounces.

ARTHUR

Lapinium tallies for this past season.

STACY (V.O.)

Thirty five thousand and twenty one pounds.

MOUSE

They don't match. Papa was right. He's skimming.

ARTHUR

And it answers a lot of questions, like why he was out there in the first place. I think we need to talk to him.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE FIST'S QUARTERS - LATER

Mouse and Arthur come down the hallway and stop at Fist's door. Arthur KNOCKS. There's no answer.

ARTHUR

Fist? Fist, open up. We need to talk.

No answer.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(Calls out)
Stacy, Location, Theron, David.

STACY (V.O.)

North Corridor, section one.
Correction, level one, section one.

ARTHUR

He just went out the North door.

MOUSE

Is he crazy?

ARTHUR

No, he's desperate. If the mining guild finds out that he's been cheating the other miners, it's prison.

(Calls out)

Stacy, Scan For Lap levels greater than three point five. Mask lab.

STACY (V.O.)

None detected.

ARTHUR

Well, that's something.

(calls out)

Stacy, contact me if situation changes.

STACY (V.O.)

Understood.

ARTHUR

(to Mouse)

Ready?

MOUSE

No, but that's never stopped me before.

The men start down the hallway.

INT. REFINERY OFFICE - LATER

Fist has backed the transport up to the door of the Vault. He gets off the transport and goes over to the door.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

(over com)

I wouldn't do that Fist? You open that door, and the creature will come running.

FIST

I'll take that chance.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

(Over com)

Do you really think you can unload fifty two bars of Lap before it gets here?

FIST

Spying on me Professor? I didn't think you had it in you.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

(over com)

You didn't give me any choice. There were just too many unanswered questions.

Fist pulls out his laser gun.

FIST

Where are you?

ARTHUR (V.O.)

(over com)

Close enough to see that you just drew your weapon. Do you really think you're going to get away with this?

FIST

I've worked too long and hard to give up now. I can cut you in if your interested.

In another area of the refinery, in the shadows unseen is Arthur and Mouse. Arthur is talking into his com.

ARTHUR

And end up like Romeo? No thanks. I figured he was working with you. You two weren't checking to see if the Vault was intact, you had Lap to move. And when the creature surprised you, you knocked Romeo down so the creature would get him and not you.

FIST (V.O.)

(Over com)

Survival of the fittest.

Fist looks around, sweeping his gun, trying to find Arthur.

FIST (CONT'D)

Why don't you come out and we can talk this over like civilized men.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

(Over Com)

I hardly think you qualify. Funny thing is, why didn't the creature go after you instead of Romeo.

ON ARTHUR

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

It was after Lap and you had some in your pocket, at least supposedly. You would have thought it would go after you.

FIST (V.O.)

(over com)

Yeah, funny about that.

Arthur signals Mouse to stay. Mouse pulls out his laser. Arthur moves out into the open.

BACK TO SCENE

Arthur calmly comes out into the open where Fist can see him. Arthur talks as he walks.

ARTHUR

Here's what I think. You didn't have the Lap on you when you came out here with Romeo. I think you took it when you came into the lab and told us what happened to him... and you used it to lure the creature, hoping it would grab one of us.

FIST

You're a lot smarter than I gave you credit for. Too bad the creature didn't get either you or Mouse, It would have saved me a lot of trouble.

ARTHUR

You planning on killing all of us?

FIST

The creature will do that for me. You, Mouse, the Doc, Banjo. Then I get all the profits from the Lap. Survivor's law. It's in the contract

ARTHUR

You think we're going to stand around and wait for it to get us? How will you explain it?

FIST

I got lots of stories, and I can be very convincing when I need to be. As for the extra Lap, after you're all dead, t won't take any time at all to alter the tallies to match.

STACY (V.O.)

(Over com)

Four point two contact made, level two section eleven.

ARTHUR

It knows we're here.

FIST

Too bad for you.

Fist raises his weapon. A laser blast from the shadows knocks the weapon out of Fist's hand. Fist grimaces in pain. Mouse comes out of the shadows and over to Arthur, his weapon trained on Fist. Fist cradles his hand, in pain.

FIST (CONT'D)

Mouse, I--

MOUSE

Save it, I heard everything. Professor, The creature will be here any minute.

FIST

Well, looks like one of us is going to die, and it's not gonna be me.

Fist makes a run for the Transport.

ARTHUR

(to Mouse)

Mouse, no matter what happens or what you see, don't move a muscle until I give the signal.

MOUSE

Sure Prof...

From out of the darkness comes the creature, making his way towards the three of them. It stops and looks at Mouse and Arthur, getting close, but both of them are perfectly still. Fist in the meantime, starts up the transport and moves away quickly.

This catches the attention of the creature and it gives chase. It catches up in a matter of moments and pulls Fist out of the driver's seat.

The transport coasts to a stop not far away from Arthur and Mouse.

There is a BLOODCURDLING SCREAM from Fist as the creature sinks it's front legs into him, and then the SCREAM dies. The creature flashes blue.

ARTHUR

Now!!

Both men run to the transport and get in, taking off quickly. The creature is busy and ignores them. Soon the transport is OUT OF SCENE while the creature feeds.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - LATER

An angry Carol, and an equally angry Banjo stand at one of the tables, Watching the door. It opens and Arthur and Mouse come in. An indignant and angry Carol goes over and slaps Arthur.

ARTHUR

Ow!

CAROL

If you ever do anything like that again, so help me I'll...

ARTHUR

Glad to see you too. I take it you watched the vid feed?

BANJO

How did you know it wouldn't attack you?

ARTHUR

Stand steadfast before your god and do not run from his sight. When it killed Buster, he was running from it. Papa tried to move away. Fist, well you saw what happened.

(Calls out)

Stacy, how long 'til the next sunrise?

STACY (V.O.)

Forty two minutes.

ARTHUR

(to Carol)

We don't have much time.

CAROL

Time for what?

ARTHUR

That which gives birth to the god,
causes it to perish. The electrical
system in the lab caused it to hatch.

MOUSE

So an overdose of electricity would
kill it?

CAROL

And how are you going to overdose
it?

ARTHUR

We lure it to the airlock, open it
up, suck the creature outside and
wait for the sun to come up. The
electrical storms should kill it.

BANJO

And how are you going to do that?

Arthur picks up the two bars of Lap and puts them in his
pockets.

ARTHUR

We use the Lap as bait.

Arthur goes over to the door and it slides open. Arthur
stands in the doorway.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

And me...
(calls out)
Stacy, close lab blast doors, seal
all exits. Reopen three hours from
my mark, unless canceled by me.
Now.

CAROL

(panicked)
No, no...

Arthur steps into the hallway as the metal doors come down.
Carol runs to the now closed door.

CAROL (CONT'D)

(Yells out)
Arthur don't do this.

ARTHUR (O.S.)

(behind door)
I have to...

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

Arthur faces the door.

ARTHUR

The creature needs a moving target
and it has to be me. I'm sorry,
there's no other way.

Arthur moves off down the hall toward the lounge.

CAROL (O.S.)

Arthur... Arthur!

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - LATER

Arthur attaches a tether onto a hook near the outer airlock door. He's dressed in a space suit and he's ready to put his plan into action. He holds his helmet, walks from the airlock out into the control room.

ARTHUR

(Calls out)

Stacy. Put refinery on the vid
screen.

The vid screen image comes up and it shows the creature over near the vault, nuzzling the dirt.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Stacy, close all doors not in a direct
line from the North entrance to
control.

There is the SOUND of distant DOORS SLAMMING.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

Mouse, Banjo, and Carol sit, waiting. The vid screen shows the same image as in the control center. They look up when they hear the SLAMMING.

BANJO

What's he doing?

MOUSE

Giving the creature direct access to
him.

Carol looks stricken.

MOUSE (CONT'D)

(to Carol)

He knows what he's doing.

CAROL

I hope so...

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Arthur stands near the control panel. He's still looking at the screen.

ARTHUR

(Calls out)

Stacy, open North entrance.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

At the northern door. The crash doors open and the entrance doors open. On the walls just inside are large silver scrape marks.

INT. REFINERY OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The creature is rummaging through the dirt. It stops and lifts it's head as though sniffing and moves off, past Fist's body, into the tunnel and OUT OF SCENE.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

The three watch as the creature goes off the screen.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

(over Com)

Carol, come in.

Carol taps her Com.

CAROL

Arthur, the creature just went off-screen.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

(over com)

I know. Carol, listen to me...

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Arthur stands at the communications array

ARTHUR

I need you to contact me the moment the creature goes by the lab.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

ARTHUR (V.O.)

Don't move until you're sure it's gone, okay?

CAROL

All right.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The door is open. The creature comes into the corridor and nuzzles the silver stripes on the wall. It then proceeds down the corridor, making the same SCRAPING noise.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB

Carol, Mouse, and Banjo wait. The SCRAPING noise is heard, becoming Louder. Carol is about to say something but Mouse motions her to be quiet.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

The creature stops and SCRATCHES at the door.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

Inside, they hear the SCRATCHING sound. It continues for a moment, then stops. The SCRAPING NOISE begins again, becoming fainter.

Carol, Mouse and Banjo, breathe a silent sigh of relief. Carol presses her com.

CAROL

(into com)

Arthur, it just went by...

ARTHUR (O.S.)

(over com)

Copy that.

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Arthur now has his helmet on. He moves to the airlock chamber.

ARTHUR

Wish me luck.

CAROL (V.O.)

(Over com)

Luck. Try to stay alive.

ARTHUR

(into com)

I'll do my best.

The SOUND OF SCRAPING is becoming noticeable. Arthur clips the other end of the tether to his belt.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
 (into com)
 Gotta go.
 (calls out)
 Stacy, time to full sunrise?

STACY (V.O.)
 Seven minutes, twenty seven seconds.

From the hallway, the creature appears, looking around at the new environment as it comes all the way into the control area. Arthur sees that it's all the way in.

ARTHUR
 (Calls out)
 Stacy, seal all pressure doors to the control room.

The HISS and CLUNK of doors dropping into place is heard, spooking the creature. It turns and moves wildly, crawling all over the far end of the room, including the ceiling.

Arthur peeks out of the airlock chamber.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
 (Calls out)
 Stacy, on my mark, open outer airlock.

STACY (V.O.)
 Understood.

Hearing the voices, the creature looks around. Arthur moves out of the airlock and into the full view of the creature. He pulls the bars of Lap from his pocket and holds them up.

ARTHUR
 (to the creature)
 Hey ugly, this what you're looking for?

The creature moves towards Arthur, who backs into the airlock chamber again, putting the bars back in his pocket. The creature menaces Arthur.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
 (Calls out)
 Stacy, open airlock.

The airlock opens and the air flows out of the room violently.

EXT. PERAN - CONTINUOUS

Arthur is pulled out of the airlock, stretching his Tether to the max. Some debris from the room is pulled out along with everything else.

The creature sails past Arthur, barely missing him, to land in a heap about fifty feet away.

Arthur pulls himself against the wind. He looks back and sees the creature getting up, shaking it's head, somewhat stunned. Arthur doubles his efforts as the creature moves towards him.

Arthur reaches the roof of the airlock and holds onto a handle. He pulls himself out of the wind, only to be menaced by the creature who has crawled up the wall. The creature tries to stab at Arthur, but misses.

Arthur plays out the tether enough that he is out of the creature's reach. He hits his com device.

ARTHUR

(into com)

Stacy, close inner airlock.

Almost instantly the outward airflow ceases. Arthur swings into the airlock, but the creature is close behind him. He runs to the inner airlock door, reaches into his pockets and drops the bars of Lap on the floor.

As the creature peers into the airlock and begins to move in, Arthur grabs the closest handhold and latches onto it.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(over com)

Stacy, open inner air lock.

The airlock slides open and the air begins rushing out again. It picks up the two bars of Lap and hurls them at the creature, causing physical damage, but the creature lets go of the airlock floor and disappears out of view.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(over com)

Stacy, close outer airlock.

It slides closed instantly, and the wind stops. Arthur slides down to the floor, exhausted.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

(over com)

Stacy, bring pressure and Air levels to normal. Time to sunrise?

STACY (V.O.)

Three minutes, fifty-four seconds.

Arthur wearily goes over and sits in a chair, looks out the window.

POV

The creature is eating the bars of Lap about thirty feet away, but the sun is coloring the sky.

BACK TO SCENE

ARTHUR

Stacy, begin Sunrise protocols.
Lock down all Observation windows
and raise dampening shields.

The window to the outside shuts, and a HUM begins.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Activate outside Video. Project.

A large screen appears, showing the outside. The creature is still eating. It doesn't seem to realize the danger it's in.

STACY (V.O.)

Air and pressure within normal
parameters.

Arthur takes off his helmet. Takes in a deep breath.

ARTHUR

Stacy, close North door. Open all
inner hallway doors and lab doors.

There is the SOUND of DOORS OPENING, including the one to the control room.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Carol, Mouse and Banjo are still there. Carol paces.

ARTHUR (V.O.)

(Over com)

Anyone want to join me in Control?

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

ARTHUR

Show starts in two minutes.

INT. MEDICAL/SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

The blast shield opens up as well as the regular door. Carol looks over at Mouse and Banjo.

MOUSE

Go on. We'll catch up.

Carol moves quickly out the door and OUT OF SCENE. Mouse turns to Banjo.

MOUSE (CONT'D)
C'mon son, let's go watch the fireworks.

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

Arthur has taken off his space suit and is watching the vid screen. Carol comes rushing through the door and runs straight into Arthur's arms, kissing him passionately.

CAROL
You're alive.

ARTHUR
So it seems.

CAROL
If you ever do anything like this again, I will never let you forget it.

ARTHUR
I promise, I will never push a twelve foot glass centipede out an airlock, unless it's absolutely necessary.

About this time, Mouse, helping Banjo, come through the door and INTO SCENE. They come over.

BANJO
We miss anything?

ARTHUR
Not yet. I hope this works. If it doesn't, at least it's out there and we're in here.

EXT. PERAN - MOMENTS LATER

The creature is still chewing on the Lap. The red sun sun of Arcturus peeks over the horizon. The creature looks up and stares in to the sun. The wind starts blowing and it sets off static charges. The creature becomes agitated, glowing blue.

It runs towards the building, but bounces off the force field surrounding it with a shower of sparks. It runs around the surface as the lightning strikes around it and on it.

The wind picks up, as the sun rises further, and more and more lightning strikes the creature. It can't outrun it, as bolt after bolt strikes it.

Finally, the creature falls, the blue light going out, and relentless bolts strike it.

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

The four watch the death throes of the creature on the vid screen, Carol with her arm around Arthur's waist.

CAROL
(to Arthur)
You did it.

ARTHUR
I guess I did...

There is a CRACKLE of STATIC and a VOICE comes on.

VOICE (V.O.)
This is the Hydra calling Mining
Camp Six.

Everyone looks over at the communications array, but Arthur gets there first and answers it.

ARTHUR
Mining Camp Six, Arthur Lambert
speaking.

VOICE (V.O.)
We've just come out of slip, and our
long range scanners have detected an
electrical anomaly at your location.
Please verify.

ARTHUR
That may take some time to explain.
We've had an incident here. I'll
have our computer send you the files,
so you're up to speed by the time
you arrive.

VOICE (V.O.)
I look forward to your report. Hydra
out.

ARTHUR
(Calls out)
Stacy, send all pertinent files
concerning the creature to the Hydra.

STACY (V.O.)
(after a few moments)
Task completed.

MOUSE

I would pay good money to see the look on the Captains' face when he opens those files.

ARTHUR

Me too...

Arthur gives Carol a hug.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

We've seen to it that all your possessions have been placed on board...

INT. CONTROL ROOM/LOUNGE - LATER

Carol and Arthur are talking with the CAPTAIN (50's) of the Hydra, the Captain in a uniform. Carol holds Arthur's hand.

CAPTAIN

We should be leaving in a couple hours. Mr. Evans and Mr. Delano left about an hour ago for the Reigel system.

CAROL

I know. We saw them off.

CAPTAIN

With everything that's happened, I'll bet you'll be glad to get off this rock.

Carol looks over at Arthur.

CAROL

And maybe to someplace green, with animals in it.

CAPTAIN

Well with the seventy-four million credits that was just put in your account, you can go just about anywhere.

ARTHUR

Carol was thinking about studying the Ganites on Plegal for a year.

CAROL

I have some theories I'd like to test out.

CAPTAIN

Plegal? You'll have a lot of company. From the chatter I heard, some explorers found an entire abandoned underground city. A lot of science types are planning expeditions there.

Arthur is interested.

ARTHUR

Really?

CAPTAIN

If you will excuse me, I have things to attend to before our departure.

ARTHUR

Thank you Captain.

The Captain gives a slight bow, walks out the door and OUT OF SCENE.

Arthur turns to Carol.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

An underground city. What do you think?

CAROL

Could be fun...

They kiss.

EXT. PERAN - CONTINUOUS

Another Mining series of structures, looking much the same as '6,' but having a large '3' on one of the buildings. There is the SOUND of MINING MACHINES at work. There is a CRUNCHING SOUND...

MAN 1 (V.O.)

What the fuck?

INT. MINE - CONTINUOUS

Looks the same, Mining equipment is the same. MAN 1 (30s), turns off the digger and swings down from his seat. MAN 2 (20's) and MAN 3 (30's) come over from their positions as Man 1 moves around to the front of the digger.

MAN 2

You hit something?

MAN 1

Don't know yet.

MAN 3

A rock maybe.

All three men go to the front of the digger. The digger has hit another tube, but this time shattered it. A box with unusual carvings lays amongst the shards, same box as at '6.'

MAN 3

What the hell is that?

MAN 1

Don't have no idea.

Man 1 goes over and picks up the box.

MAN 1 (CONT'D)

Got some kind of writing on it.

He shakes it, and it RATTLES.

MAN 2

Sounds like something's inside.
Well, we'll take a look at it later.
Right now, back to work. We got a
schedule to keep.

Man 2 and Man 3 walk back to their former positions. Walking back to the digger and getting in, Man 1 sets the box on the floor next to him, and goes back to work.

FADE OUT