

RED VALLEY TAPES: SEASON 1 EPISODE 6

'Do You Want To Continue'

by

Jonathan Williams

Jonathan Williams
jon.nobbs@gmail.com

Character List

Warren Godby
Gordon Porlock
Clive Schill
Bryony Halbech

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'Do You Want To Continue'

SCENE 1

**THE LOUD JOLTING RACKET OF A HEAVY
CAR BEING DRIVEN QUICKLY AND
INEXPERTLY DOWN VERY BAD ROADS.**

GORDON: Personal log! It's something like 2am and I'm driving George the farmer's massive Land Rover in the middle of nowhere - argh I've never driven one of these before...

AWFUL CRUNCHING OF GEARS.

GORDON: So I'm in this terrifying end of the world farmhouse with this terrifying end of the world farmer George and his delightful wife Betty and she gives me the keys after making lots of strange comments about me and Warren getting back to nature and that the bothy is a lovely place where men can be men and we can true to ourselves, and no one will disturb us, and when I get back the car is gone, Warren is gone, no note, no signal on our phones. I can only assume he's going to Red Valley, somehow, cos he has no idea where it is. I have no idea what is going on.

BRINGS CAR TO A STOP.

GORDON: Where am I. God I hate this.

CHECKS MAP. TAKES A TURN INTO A
COUNTRY LANE.

GORDON: Oh God is this it? This is barely a path, what is this? I had to wake up George and Betty, I had no idea what to tell these people, so I told them we'd had a lover's tiff and begged them to let me borrow their car. Betty winked at me and gave me the key to this dinosaur car and as I'm leaving I can hear George from inside shout 'I wish I knew how to quit you!' Oh man where the hell is this place.

ABRUPT TAPE CUT. GORDON IS NOW
WALKING OUTSIDE. THERE IS A HIGH
WIND AND HIS VOICE IS RAISED.

GORDON: Okay. I'm here. I found the Golden Bullet. She's fine. No one there. I left the Land Rover and now I'm walking down a path which had a couple of modern-ish signposts, this has to be it. It is so dark...it could be 10 feet in front of me...what am I doing. I've got my dictaphone in one hand and my phone torch in my other. This is so fucking stupid.

SILENCE AS HE WALKS FURTHER.

GORDON: Oh fuck, there he is. And...theres the base. Or is it the farmhouse. Shit shit shit. How could I not see it? Where's the mountain? Oh its so fucking dark. He's just staring at it. He's just staring at it with his back to me. Oh man oh man oh man. Aaaaah.

PAUSE.

GORDON (SHOUTS): Warren! Warren, you okay?

WARREN (DISTANT): I'm here, Gordon.

GORDON (SHOUTING): Yep, yep. Look, this is really freaking me out so could you please turn around, unless you haven't got a face or you've turned into a little Japanese girl or something -

WARREN: I have a face, Gordon. Can you lower your torch?

GORDON: Oh yeah. Sorry.

WARREN: Thanks.

GORDON APPROACHES WARREN.

GORDON: You took my car.

WARREN: I'm sorry. I don't know...I don't know what's happening. I just had to come here.

GORDON: How did you know how to get here?

WARREN: I don't know. Please don't be mad.

GORDON: Fine.

WARREN: Thanks.

GORDON: I had to pretend we were a couple to get George and Betty to lend me their car.

WARREN: Right.

GORDON: You can explain it when we get back.

WARREN: Fine.

THEY BOTH LOOK AT THE BASE IN
SILENCE.

GORDON: So this is it.

WARREN: Yeah.

GORDON: Is the mountain there? I can't see anything, it's like the bottom of the ocean.

WARREN: It's right there. Turn your torch off and wait a minute, you'll see it.

GORDON: I'll take your word for it.

WARREN: Thought you'd be thrilled. Standing in the shadow of the mighty Ball Bag.

GORDON: Well there aren't any shadows because it's 3 in the morning, and I'm freezing my balls off.

WARREN: You said the air was amazing out here.

GORDON: Amazingly fucking cold yeah. So have you seen enough? Can we come back in the morning?

WARREN: No.

WARREN WALKS AWAY, TOWARDS THE
BASE.

GORDON: Oh come on!

CUT.

SCENE 2

GORDON IS CATCHING UP TO WARREN,
WHO IS STARING AT A DOOR INTO THE
BASE.

GORDON: I lost you there, you have to slow down.

WARREN: Sorry. There's a door here.

GORDON: Right. Well shall we -

A CLUMSY BUT LOUD BANG AS WARREN
KICKS THE DOOR.

WARREN: Ow!

GORDON: Why would you kick the door?!

WARREN: Well its locked isn't it.

GORDON: Have you tried it?

WARREN: No.

GORDON PULLS THE HANDLE. THE DOOR
OPENS EASILY, IF OMINOUSLY.

GORDON: You see. It's open. Which is totally normal. A secret unmarked base in the middle of nowhere in the dead of night, and the door's just totally open.

WARREN: Excellent. Thanks.

GORDON: Warren do you think this is entirely the right thing to do? This just feels like a stupid dream where you make choices you would never make in real life. Nobody chooses to go in this door apart from those idiots from the Blair Witch Project.

WARREN: Is there a particular reason you're trying to stop me doing this?

GORDON: Yeah, I'm shitting myself and I want to go home.

WARREN: Do you have anything you want to tell me Gordon?

GORDON: What do you mean?

WARREN STRIDES INTO THE DARK
DOORWAY.

GORDON: Warren! Stop being so bloody dramatic!

PAUSE.

GORDON: Stupid Blair Witch wanker.

CUT.

SCENE 3

A CORRIDOR. GORDON CLOSSES THE DOOR. WARREN AND GORDON'S ECHOING FOOTSTEPS. A LIGHT SWITCH, THE FLICKER AND HUM OF STRIP LIGHTING COMING TO LIFE.

GORDON: Colder in here than it is outside.

WARREN: Smells like my old school. Musty, wooden desks.

GORDON: I don't think anyone's here. It looks like no one's been here in a long time.

WARREN FINDS A CUP. PICKS IT UP AND SNIFFS IT.

WARREN: Cold coffee. Still smells fresh.

GORDON: Or maybe they have.

WARREN IS STRIDING AWAY FROM GORDON, CREAKING DOORS OPEN, PEERING INTO OFFICES AND CUPBOARDS.

GORDON: Warren, what is it you expect to find here? What is going on?

WARREN: You tell me.

GORDON: What?

WARREN: You helped design this place right? You know it.

GORDON: The project was killed, we never finished it. And I wasn't on architecture, I was on the seed archiving system, which never happened.

WARREN: Really.

GORDON: Warren, what are you trying to say?

WARREN: How did I know how to get here tonight?

GORDON: What are you talking about?

WARREN: You were the only person who could've cancelled that prison visit, you were the only one who knew about it.

GORDON: You think I stopped us visiting your mate, or whoever, who I don't know anything about? Warren, you took my car and came here in the middle of the night -

WARREN: And yet you still found your way here.

GORDON: Fuck this. Give me my keys.

WARREN: No.

GORDON: Give me the –

A SCREECH OF FEEDBACK, THEN A HEAVILY
MODULATED, DEEP, FORCED LAUGH THROUGH
A TANNOY.

TANNOY: Ho ho ho ho. Ha ha ha ha.

SILENCE.

TANNOY: Come on. You're meant to say, 'I know that laugh.'
And then the curtain rolls back and its Jabba the Hutt!
Yahn chass Solo, chung Wookiee! I love this thing.

GORDON (CLOSE): Seriously can I have my keys back now?

TANNOY: Right, enough dicking about. Follow the corridor to the
end to the fire exit, push the door then come
downstairs. Please.

WARREN: Last chance mate. Anything you want to tell me?

GORDON: I'm telling you we need to turn around and drive as far
away from this place as possible.

WARREN AGAIN TURNS AND WALKS AWAY.

GORDON: Warren. Please stop walking away like that.

WARREN KEEPS GOING.

GORDON: Please. This is too weird now, I don't like it!

WARREN REACHES THE FIRE EXIT.
PUSHES THE DOOR WHICH OPENS WITH A
HEAVY CLUNK, THAT ECHOES DOWN A
STAIRWELL.

WARREN: I'm sick of this London Dungeons shit.

CUT.

SCENE 4

WARREN AND GORDN DESCEND A METAL STAIRCASE, THEIR STEPS ECHOING DOWN THE STAIRWELL AND DOWN AN UPCOMING CORRIDOR. THE FLOOR SIMILARLY IS METALLIC. DOWN HERE, THEIR IS A SOFT HUM OF ELECTRICITY, THE EFFICIENT FLOW OF SOPHISTICATED AIR VENTILATION, THE REPEATED BEEPING PATTERN OF DISTANT COMPUTERS. IF THE UPSTAIRS FELT LIKE A MUSTY SCHOOL CORRIDOR, THIS IS THE STARSHIP ENTERPRISE.

GORDON: This feels more like a seed vault.

WARREN: Shh.

THEY PACE ON IN SILENCE FOR A FEW MOMENTS. EVENTUALLY A DOOR OPENS NEAR WARREN.

CLIVE: Warren! You made it.

WARREN: Clive.

CLIVE: You don't seem surprised to see me.

WARREN: I guess...no. I suppose I'm not.

CLIVE: Hooray! Bit of a lousy welcome I know, we just weren't expecting you in the middle of the bloody night, that's all.

WARREN: Oh, sorry.

CLIVE: I mean, it was hard enough getting here ahead of you in the first place, but if you will indulge these flights of spontaneous fancy. But you're here, and you made it all by yourself.

GORDON: He's not by himself.

CLIVE: Whoa there! Hey! How long have you been standing there?

GORDON: I...we came together. Well, he came here. And I followed.

CLIVE: Well. I'm sure that was meant to be sweet and not creepy at all. Anyway, there's cake! Actually it's cheesecake. Peanut butter and chocolate, my wife made it. It's got those little American things on top, the peanut butter cups. Got a bit squished in the helicopter but it's still good, do you want some?

WARREN: No thanks.

CLIVE: Actually, what am I thinking? You should probably be nil by mouth from now anyway. It's the only thing keeping me awake really. So! If you found us on your own, it must all be clicking into place, hmm?

SILENCE.

CLIVE: Your vacant expression isn't filling me with much hope Warren.

WARREN: I've been here before.

CLIVE: Please tell you've got a bit more in place than that.

GORDON: Warren, why don't we just, let's go back to the car and
-

CLIVE: Shut the fuck up and stay where you are you little dungeons and dragons little fucker, I told you, I told you to stay out of this and leave him alone and here you are. Now I have to find the considerable energy to murder you and make it look like an elaborate suicide and I haven't had nearly enough sleep or cheesecake to do that. It's the middle of the fucking night and I don't appreciate it Graham.

GORDON: Gordon.

CLIVE: Fuck off. Look I'm not 100% up to date here, I haven't been keeping up with the bugs for the last couple of days -

WARREN: Bugs?

CLIVE: The bugs. Your bugs. Your phone, your car, your house, your clothes, your bugs. Look at you, you're going full Rain Main.

CLIVE STRIDES TO A WALL AND PRESSES THE INTERCOM BUTTON. HIS VOICE IS MAGNIFIED THROUGH THE TANNOY.

CLIVE: Bryony! Bryony could you come up here please. I need your help and I've started on the cheesecake, it's delicious.

GORDON: Bryony? Bryony Halbech? She's here now?

CLIVE: She's the one with the keys, so yeah, she had to come too.

ANOTHER DOOR DOWN THE CORRIDOR OPENS. FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING ROUND A CORNER.

BRYONY: Clive, you can see how much there is to do, I asked you not to -

WARREN: Karen?

GORDON: What?

BRYONY: What's this?

CLIVE: I know you said it looked unappetising after I sat on it but I swear, it's so good, you have to try some. Oh, Warren's here.

WARREN: Karen, what are you doing here?

GORDON: Karen?

BRYONY: Clive what the hell were you th -

WARREN: Look at me.

BRYONY: We had a strategy. A sensitive approach. It was essential, why on earth would you abandon that pla -

WARREN: Karen!

BRYONY: Hi. Warren.

GORDON: This is Bryony Halbech?

CLIVE: Bryony, I got the impression he was going to be a bit more clued in to what was happening here. Look at him, he's going into standby mode right in front of you, I'm surprised a little red light hasn't started flashing on on his face. Amnesia really is the most tedious business.

BRYONY: Warren, listen to me. You're in the right place. You're supposed to be here.

CLIVE: Too much brainal fisting on your part I think.

GORDON: Warren, we need to get the fuck out of here right now.

CLIVE: I wasn't kidding man, I'll stab you in the fucking eye with this fork. Now that's a really elaborate suicide but I reckon I can do it.

BRYONY: Warren, look at me. Look at me now.

CLIVE SIGHS AND GOES BACK TO THE TANNOY.

CLIVE: Guys, help on Level 1 please.

GORDON: How many people are here?

CLIVE: Warren, you're the first man ever to have survived cryonic preservation. Congratulations. And tonight, you'll be the first man to go in twice.

BRYONY: Clive, we had a plan.

DOORS OPEN AND MULTIPLE HEAVY FOOTSTEPS HURRY DOWN THE CORRIDOR.

CLIVE: Thanks guys, if you could just take him downstairs for a bit, call us if his brain starts running out of his ears or whatever.

THE MEN TAKE WARREN AWAY DOWN THE CORRIDOR. WARREN IS SILENT AND DOES NOT STRUGGLE.

GORDON: Warren. Hey Warren, you don't have to go with them, Warren! Where are they taking him?

CLIVE: Now it looks like we won't be sleeping for a bit so I'm going to take some uppers and get in the mood, either of you guys want anything?

BRYONY: You're a clown, Schill.

CLIVE: Hey, we only do what we can live with, right? Ain't that right Warren? Ehhhhhhh –

CUT.

SCENE 5

**BRYONY AND GORDON ENTER A SMALL
CONTROL ROOM.**

BRYONY: You can sit there.

GORDON: Right.

BRYONY: You can stop looking at me like that, no one's going to hurt you.

GORDON: Clive did literally just say he was going to kill me. Twice.

BRYONY: Clive's a difficult one. Rather thinks he's top bollock. The sharp end of the sword. He's actually the...what's the word. The shovel bit of the shovel. If it makes you feel better he threatens to kill people all the time. Very rarely follows through.

GORDON: Great.

**THE SOUND OF STRIP LIGHTING COMING
TO LIFE IN THE NEXT ROOM. GORDON
REACTS - HE CAN SEE THE ROOM
THROUGH A LARGE WINDOW.**

GORDON: What's going on?

BRYONY: Clive is going to begin the debrief process for Warren. I speak to Clive through a bug in his ear, and you get to watch through the glass.

GORDON: Is that the right thing to do? Putting Warren with him?

BRYONY: It's less than ideal but we're rather thin on the ground here and I've just been pretending to be his wife for half a year, which might compromise the process somewhat.

GORDON: This is so fucked up.

BRYONY: Quiet now. Okay Clive, you can start.

IN THE NEXT ROOM, A DOOR OPENS.
CLIVE AND WARREN ENTER. THEIR
CONVERSATION IS SLIGHTLY TINNY BUT
VERY CLEAR, AMPLIFIED INTO THE
CONTROL ROOM.

CLIVE: You can sit there.

WARRENS TAKES A SEAT AT ONE END OF
THE SMALL ROOM. CLIVE SITS AT THE
OTHER END, AN UNCOMFORTABLE
DISTANCE APART.

CLIVE: I told you you were the next big thing.

WARREN SITS IN SILENCE.

CLIVE: Come on. Don't be modest. Do you know how many people have sat where you're sitting? Not a one. You're the only person that has ever survived the thawing process. The only person that has ever Continued. That's what I want to call it. 'Continue'. I want it on billboards. 'Do you want to continue?' Make it a bit more sci-fi, maybe spell it with a K or something. And you're the start of it all.

WARREN: I don't know what you're talking about, I don't remember anything like that...

CLIVE: Think of it as...you're just like Captain America! You have the magic DNA that worked with our product, which kept you alive while you were frozen. You just don't have the added benefits of being super strong, or in any way good looking or charming, or having anything else remotely special about you whatsoever. So Captain America, but shit. Captain Shit.

WARREN: I'd like to speak to my wife please.

CLIVE: She's not your wife. She's the lead of this operation. We couldn't let you back out in the world without a handler and it was her or me. And I think we're all glad it wasn't me. She's watching all this right now actually. Just through that mirror behind me.

WARREN: I'd like to speak to her please.

CLIVE: Nope.

WARREN: Could I speak to her.

CLIVE: No way.

WARREN: Karen. Karen!

CLIVE: Her name is Bryony. Why did you go home? To Gravesend? Of all the places in the world.

WARREN: You've been watching me.

CLIVE: All the time. *All* the time. Constant, boring, relentless watching, listening. Why did you go home?

WARREN: I felt like...

CLIVE: Like what?

WARREN: I really want to speak to my wife please.

CLIVE: Not your wife. Why didn't you tell Karen, who isn't your wife and isn't called Karen, that you were going all that way? Did you not want her to know?

WARREN: Just wanted to go home.

CLIVE BLOWS AIR OUT OF HIS CHEEKS.
HE STANDS, SLOWLY DRAGS HIS CHAIR
ACROSS THE ROOM UNTIL HE'S UP CLOSE
WITH WARREN.

GORDON: What's he doing.

BRYONY: He has a prepared approach, it's fine.

GORDON: Do you have to do this now? Look at him. You're blowing *my* mind, so God knows what you're doing to him.

BRYONY: I'm not asking for feedback, Mr. Porlock.

CLIVE: What gave you the idea of Overhead developing this product for use in mass incarceration? It was a bit of a leap from Sonic the Hedgehog, wasn't it?

WARREN: I don't know.

CLIVE: Are you being deliberately obtuse with me, Warren?

WARREN: I think it's reasonable that all this might be considered a lot to take in.

CLIVE: Yes, yes, it's been a day, hasn't it Warren? Would you like tea?

WARREN: I would actually love that, thank you.

CLIVE: What gave you the idea of Overhead developing this product for use in mass incarceration?

WARREN: I don't know...I'd been drinking...

CLIVE: Calm down George Best, you had 2 beers. Why did you ditch Porlock and come here on your own? How did you find us?

CLIVE CLAPS HIS HANDS.

CLIVE: Hey! Cuck Rogers!

GORDON: Is he actually going to give him some tea?

BRYONY: No.

GORDON: Shall I make some?

BRYONY: Sit down and be quiet.

CLIVE: Okay. You're going to start telling me what I'd like to know. Or I'll do nasty things. I'll tie Porlock to the back of his shitheap car, put a brick on the accelerator and let it off into the mountains until there's nothing left but a stump.

BRYONY: Nothing personal.

CLIVE: I'll slide one of those old mercury thermometers down his dick hole and snap the glass?

BRYONY: Jesus. Clive, less of the bad cop, maybe?

CLIVE (CLOSE): You know the reason you haven't been able to get it up is down to us, right?

BRYONY: Clive.

CLIVE: It's the medication. It's not a side effect, one of the pills is literally just to kill your boner. Couldn't have you actually trying to shag your handler, could we. So we neutered you. Like a dog. We've got whole tapes of you crying about it. Crying, apologising, begging.

GORDON: What the fuck kind of interview is this?

BRYONY: Clive, that's enough.

CLIVE: You know, Bryony and I have known each other a long time. We were never together, I'm a married man, but I do know other guys in the company, who have, you know...with her. She is apparently amazing. Velvet twat.

GORDON: Whoa!

A PIERCING FEEDBACK SCREECHES INTO
THE INTERROGATION ROOM. BRYONY IS
NOW ON A TANNOY.

BRYONY: Clive! Shut the fuck up!

CLIVE: Oh come on Bryony! Is this guy anything like the one that went in?

BRYONY: That's enough. Let's break. And get him some fucking tea.

CLIVE: What is the point of being able to put someone into hypersleep if they have a personality transplant when we wake them up? What if they all come out like Forrest fucking Gu -

IN A SUDDEN COMMOTION, WARREN
LEAVES HIS SEAT. THERE IS A LOUD,
VIOLENT THUD AS TWO HEADS COLLIDE,
AND THE SOUND OF CHAIRS FALLING
OVER. WARREN AND CLIVE STRUGGLE
TOGETHER, CLIVE YELPING AND CURSING
IN PAIN.

BRYONY: For God's sake.

SHE HITS A BUTTON AND AN ALARM
STARTS WAILING.

GORDON: Whoa. Ow! Jesus.

THE DOOR TO THE INTERROGATION
ROOM OPENS AND THE ASSISTANTS
ENTER. BRYONY USES THE TANNOY.

BRYONY: Just separate them. Take Warren for a lie down
please.

CLIVE: Taze him for fuck's sake!

BRYONY: There's no need for that, just...there that's it. Grace,
have you got him? Pamela if you could - good. Well
done. Clive clean yourself up and we'll have a chat,
shall we?

GORDON: This place is demented.

WARREN: Karen. Karen!

CLIVE: 'Karen, Karen!'

BRYONY: Oh shut up you craven little prick!

WITH A BUTTON PRESS THE
INTERROGATION ROOM GOES SILENT -
NO ALARMS, NO SCUFFLING, NO VOICES.
BRYONY DROPS BACK DOWN INTO HER
CHAIR. SHE TURNS TO GORDON,
BRIGHTLY.

BRYONY: Well, what do you think of the place?

CUT.

SCENE 6

**BRYONY RETURNS TO THE CONTROL
BRINGING TEA FOR HERSELF AND
GORDON.**

BRYONY: No sugar I'm afraid.

GORDON: Thanks.

BRYONY: So. What are we going to do with you?

GORDON: If there's a choice I don't really need the thermometer going up my -

BRYONY: We got you straight out of university, didn't we?

GORDON: Um. Yes.

BRYONY: So. Thirteen years then. Shuffled from one windowless basement office to another, carrying out, it must be said, outstandingly unremarkable work.

GORDON: ...Right.

BRYONY: Consistent, dependable averageness across the board. Resoundingly three out of five.

GORDON: Thanks?

BRYONY: We call your type stillwaters. You don't rock the boat through underperformance, you never draw attention through any particular deeds of great merit. You never build lasting relationships with colleagues or superiors, and you seem best avoided thanks to your rangy eyes, sweaty pallor and thoroughly asymmetrical face. Such reliable mediocrity is undoubtedly why you were chosen to help design a fictitious seed vault here at Red Valley. Overhead do this a lot, smokescreen projects to secure investment and resources, camouflaging a different objective. And now you know all about ours.

GORDON: Are you going to kill me?

BRYONY: I don't want to kill anyone Gordon. We were wrong about you, weren't we? You're not a stillwater at all. All this time, you've been digging away like a sweaty little gumshoe detective, learning more about this facility than almost anyone alive. Your dedication to finding out what truly happens here borders on the obsessive. Frankly I think this reveals less of a desperate search for truth or justice, and more of a genuine passion for what we do here.

GORDON: I am trying to expose what you are doing here, playing with people's lives, meddling with things that...that you shouldn't be!

BRYONY: You can wheedle out as many mad scientist clichés as you like but I think we should both stop pretending. The deeper you dig the more fascinated you become. You're not outraged or disgusted. You're enthralled by our work. Of what it could mean.

GORDON: You've no idea...

BRYONY: I've heard every conversation you've had with Warren. You're not put off by the macabre, the gory, the violent, like he is. When you talk about it you sound...feverish.

GORDON IS SILENT.

BRYONY: I'm not saying you're a bad person Gordon. I'm not saying you want people to suffer. No one here wants anyone to suffer. Except Clive.

GORDON: So what are you saying?

BRYONY: As you can imagine it's incredibly hard to find and maintain staff for a project like this -

GORDON: Are you offering me a job?!

BRYONY: I can't be here as much as I would like, Clive isn't here any more than I would want, and our handful of assistants are inconsistent and too regularly rotated. Red Valley is old, in constant need of upkeep. If it falls into genuine disrepair then it compromises the work, that's the truth of it.

GORDON: You want me to be the caretaker? Of your underground experimental cryonic laboratory?

BRYONY: In return, I give you access to everything. Every record, every file, every video, every tape. Not just my work. Red Valley has been used for many things, for many years, and I want it documented. Someone like Clive would happily burn everything as we go to keep his nose clean. I disagree. I have no shame in the work I do, and I think if you want to get full marks, you need to show your working. You're an archivist, Gordon. It is your singular vocation. Archive Red Valley for me.

GORDON LETS OUT A LONG BREATH.

BRYONY: There is another more altruistic aspect to the role. Warren is your friend, is he not? Your only friend, perhaps. He's going back into hypersleep tonight. It would be beneficial, particularly in light of the behaviour you just saw, if there was someone here who...had his back.

GORDON: Sounds like something his wife should do.

BRYONY IS A LITTLE EXASPERATED.

BRYONY: The choice, such as it is, is entirely yours Mr Porlock, but I'd advise you that the alternative would place you into the care of Clive Schill, which will almost certainly involve a blunt object and the sudden and permanent misplacing of your cognitive functions. A thermometer up the willy would be the least of your problems. Drink your tea, mull it over, take your time.

GORDON: Right.

A SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS.

BRYONY: Actually, forget that, decide now or you might be dead before your drink's cold.

CLIVE ENTERS THE ROOM, HOLDING HIS
HEAD UP AND A TISSUE TO HIS NOSE.

CLIVE: Have you calmed down now?

BRYONY: You found a way to make putting my vagina on an official audio document even more horrible than that already sounds.

CLIVE: Firstly, nothing in this building is official, not even me, and secondly, you lost your righteous indignation privileges when you pretended to be his spouse for 9 months, so wind your neck in. Have you got another tissue, I think there's a pint of blood on that one.

BRYONY: We had a carefully considered question and answer process crafted specifically to avoid exactly the kind of behaviours that might put Warren or anybody else at risk.

CLIVE: I was trying to establish who we are dealing with. The Warren Godby we brought into this programme and the one you've been house training all year. And it worked, didn't it? He's still a dangerous cretin.

BRYONY: Oh it worked perfectly Clive. Hey, did you bring another face with you, because most of yours has been sprayed down your shirt.

CLIVE: Bryony, this is good. He's the same guy underneath and we didn't need 40 years of clinical cross-examination to work it out.

BRYONY: Did you ever consider that it might not be the end of the world for a subject's mental health to actually improve after the treatment? Rather than openly encouraging him to headbutt you?

CLIVE: He didn't headbutt me. He fell into my face.

BRYONY: So he's a violent thug when it suits your argument and just unsteady on his feet when it damages your pride?

CLIVE FINALLY REALISES GORDON IS
STILL IN THE ROOM.

CLIVE: Why are you still here?

GORDON: I - uh -

CLIVE: Fuck off Hufflepuff. Why is he still here?

BRYONY: Gordon was just deciding whether or not he wants to accept a posting here at Red Valley.

CLIVE: Jesus, you want all this taken seriously and this is the best hire you can make? Fantastic Twats and Where To Find Them?

BRYONY: Oh listen to another audiobook.

PAUSE.

BRYONY: Well?

GORDON: What did you mean by Cuck Rogers?

BRYONY: What?

CLIVE: Buck Rogers. He got sent into the future. With his little robot. Biddy biddy bid.

GORDON: But what is a cuck though?

CLIVE: I thought you were an internet nerd. You can't even do that right.

CLIVE PULLS OUT HIS PHONE AND GOOGLES.

GORDON: I – well –

CLIVE: No no, I'll look it up.

BRYONY: Is it terribly important?

CLIVE: Cuck. From cuckold. Weak or servile man, unmanly and inadequate, dominated by his wife.

GORDON: Oh right.

CLIVE: So you see how good an insult that actually was. Like the more I think about it the better it gets. And it just came to me like that.

GORDON: Wasn't that good.

CLIVE: Only because you didn't understand it.

GORDON: You're the one who had to google it.

CLIVE: You know I've got that thermometer in my pocket, right?

BRYONY: Gordon. I know it's probably easy to see a good cop bad cop situation in front of you right now -

GORDON: Not really.

BRYONY: - but I'm afraid Clive and I are on the same page about this sort of thing. The choice is essentially come on board or he'll push you out of a helicopter. And I'll be holding the door open for him.

GORDON: Right. Well I need my stuff -

BRYONY: We boxed up your flat this afternoon. I can call them now and bring anything that's absolutely necessary.

GORDON: And I should tell...someone...

CLIVE: I'm sure your Game of Thrones sub-Reddit will get over the loss in time.

GORDON: You keep talking about Warren, before all this...like he was a different person.

CLIVE LAUGHS AND SPITS OUT BLOOD.

BRYONY: Like I said. You'll have access to everything, Gordon.

CUT.

SCENE 7

WARREN LIES IN A BED IN A MAKESHIFT HOSPITAL WARD ROOM, LARGE AND FULL OF BEDS, BARELY USED. AROUND HIM ARE THE BLEEPS OF MONITORS READING HIS VITAL SIGNS, AND PUMPS GIVING HIM MEDICATION. GORDON ENTERS TENTATIVELY.

GORDON: Warren?

WARREN: Oh hey! Clive didn't kill you and eat you.

GORDON: No not yet. Are you...what is all this, are you okay?

WARREN: So they set me up in this very comfy bed that looks older than me, and hooked me up to all this monitoring and stuff, they were very nice about it.

GORDON: You seem pretty upbeat.

WARREN: Well if I press this button here, I get morphine. So thats okay. I think they want to keep me calm because theres a chance I might be a violent criminal.

GORDON: Yeah.

WARREN: What did I do to Clive, my face was wet afterward.

GORDON: Oh you bust his nose. But don't feel bad, he's...well he's awful isn't he.

WARREN: Never headbutted anyone before. Or maybe I have, maybe I'm the king of headbutts. It really hurt though, there must be a technique to it.

GORDON: Probably yeah.

WARREN: So they're not letting you chip off home then.

GORDON: Uh, no. It's either work for them in perpetuity or a grisly murder.

WARREN: So you work for them now.

GORDON: We always worked for them. Besides its a lovely place to work. Wonderful team spirit.

PAUSE.

GORDON: How are you doing Warren?

WARREN: Well. My recent life as I know it seems to have been entirely made up. My wife is actually Doctor Frankenstein and I'm the monster. And the guy in charge is a psychopath who places human life at a lower priority than cake.

GORDON: Mary Berry's Frankenstein.

WARREN BURSTS INTO LAUGHTER.

WARREN: That is good. That is a good pun. Mary Berry.

GORDON: She - uh, Dr Halbech, said you consented to be part of a cohort taken from a prison in Norfolk. Last year.

WARREN: Right.

GORDON: Do you think that was you? That Aubrey Wood was talking about. On that tape.

WARREN: I don't know. It made me want to come here, and I just knew the way. I don't know anything about Aubrey Wood that hasn't been on your tapes.

GORDON: You didn't make the final selection that ended up being Teddy Bear's Picnic. But eventually they came back for you, did more gene testing on you and some others. You were the only survivor of the treatment. Obviously. You were in successful hypersleep for a month.

WARREN: A month? This seems like a lot of hassle for a month.

GORDON: I think they were expecting you to be pretty much a vegetable when you came out, so when it seemed that you'd undergone nothing more than some personality tweaks and memory loss -

WARREN: You know, just minor stuff.

GORDON: Well, it is, considering you should've been dead, or at best a cabbage person. When you did better than they ever thought you would she, Halbech, wanted to study you as much as possible. It was her idea to put you back in the world and she stayed close enough to observe everything.

WARREN: And she didn't feel like she should be the one catching me up on all this crucial exposition.

GORDON: They're putting you back into hypersleep tonight. I don't know if they expect you to remember any of this when you come back out. Or if...

WARREN: Or if I'll even be the same person.

GORDON: Right.

WARREN: Or a parsnip.

GORDON: Well, ideally not.

WARREN: I think I need some more morphine.

GORDON: I wish I could help you, that I could take you out of here, I had to convince them to let me even talk to you, that I could -

WARREN: No, no, I'm sorry I brought you into this, you should never have been here tonight.

GORDON: Well I did follow you to be fair.

WARREN: Yeah that's true. So that is your fault really.

GORDON PULLS CLOSER.

GORDON: We could try. We could try and make a run for it.

WARREN: No, no. I want to do this.

GORDON: You do?

WARREN: I just found out that I'm not really who I thought I was, and that I was in prison for doing something presumably not great. I come from a long line of people who did some not great things. My father was a man who did...if it turns that I'm like...if I've done -

GORDON: It's probably just tax evasion. Or you didn't pay your TV licence or something, they're fierce on things like that these days.

WARREN: Yeah.

GORDON: And hey, you've spent the last few weeks or months or however long feeling like you were going a bit crazy, right, like you said to me that night in the car you were crap at your job, that you shouldn't be doing it? Like imposter syndrome, right? Well we all have that. But you're literally right! You're not going crazy. You *are* an imposter. You're actually the star of a huge and wildly unethical science experiment!

WARREN: Wow you're right. I mean its really a sunny side up situation.

GORDON: AND. You're a month younger than you thought you were.

WARREN: Oh yeah.

GORDON: I mean. Your life expectancy is probably a fair bit shorter.

WARREN: Oh really?

GORDON: Oh yeah, your insides are probably...

GORDON DOES A RASPBERRY.

WARREN: Ah. Brilliant, thanks.

GORDON: Hey, who wants to live forever, right?

WARREN: Your new job isn't reassuring people about to go into hypersleep is it?

GORDON: Sorry.

WARREN: That's okay.

PAUSE.

GORDON: Did you know a warren is the name for a rabbits burrow?

WARREN: I did know that, yeah.

GORDON: Ah! But did you know Warren is also the name of Bucky O'Hare's home planet?

WARREN: Ha! Bucky O'Hare!

GORDON: You know, the cartoon. Captain Bucky O'Hare -

WARREN & GORDON: He goes where no ordinary rabbit would dare.

WARREN: He had a friend that was an armoured gorilla, what was he called? Berserker?

GORDON: No, he used to shout berserker when he got angry. 'Berserker!' But his name was Bruiser which in fairness is easy to confuse.

WARREN: I remember my mother recorded that for me off the tv while I was at school. She went through the opening credits pausing it every few seconds so she could write down all the words to the song at the start so when I got home we could sing it together.

GORDON: That was nice of her.

WARREN: That really happened didn't it.

GORDON: Yes. Yes, of course.

WARREN: You're still going to be around when they wake me up?

GORDON: Yeah. I'll be here.

THEY SIT IN SILENCE FOR A TIME, THE MONITORS BLEEPING QUIETLY IN THE BACKGROUND. CUT.

EPILOGUE

A LONG ELECTRONIC NOISE UNLIKE ANYTHING WE'VE HEARD SO FAR. THEN, A ROOM. A SMOOTH VENTILATION IN THE BACKGROUND. SOME BEEPS AND BLOOPS, AGAIN NOTHING WE'VE HEARD BEFORE.

AUBREY: Bit of a soft ending.

GORDON'S VOICE - BUT UNLIKE WHAT WE'VE HEARD BEFORE. IT'S FROM A SPEAKER, HE'S NOT PRESENT IN THE ROOM. BUT HIS TONE IS ALSO DIFFERENT. IT'S CALM, MEASURED AND FLAT.

GORDON: They sit in silence for about 3 minutes. Warren eventually does a small fart and Gordon realises he's fallen asleep. Then the assistants come in to start the rapid cooling process. It's a better ending this way.

AUBREY: You did have a flair for the melodramatic Gordon.

GORDON: He did.

AUBREY: Sorry. I can't quite get used to this. To...hearing his voice like this.

GORDON: I can change it back to the default -

AUBREY: No no, it took long enough to get it this close. Just wish you were here.

GORDON: I am here.

AUBREY: Oh you know what I mean.

GORDON: Well this is the best we can do.

AUBREY: Yes it is.

AUBREY STANDS UP, MOVING HER CHAIR AWAY FROM HER DESK, AND BEGINS TO WALK. GORDON'S VOICE MOVES AS SHE DOES - IT WAS BY HER SIDE WHEN SHE WAS SAT DOWN, NOW AT VARIOUS DISTANCES, BY A WALL AS SHE APPROACHES IT, DOWN A STAIRCASE AS SHE DESCENDS IT.

AUBREY: Is everyone sorted upstairs?

GORDON: Yes. Hester just finished her round and is heading back to the house. Jacob is on 4 hourly observations but I can take them.

AUBREY: Could you try dialling it up a little, you haven't quite

got his energy right.

GORDON: Well, yeah, I could talk a little more like this if you want, it just involves inserting around 30-50% more words than necessary into any given sentence and simulating breathlessness which admittedly is still not an easy thing for the program to do, it just feels counter-intuitive to me, does it feel counter-intuitive to you, you might feel this is the set up for you, just having sentences that never seem to end, if this what you like then I'm delighted, no *delighted*, more enthusiasm, on unexpected *words*, what do you think, do I just keep going, on and on and on, without actually *saying* anything, is this soothing to you because it seems like it would be stressful to me -

AUBREY: No no, Jesus. I take it back. He really was annoying.

GORDON: I think thats better for everyone isn't it.

TINNY RAINFALL NOISE STARTS COMING
OUT OF THE SPEAKER.

GORDON: Would you like some Amazon rainfall sounds to calm you down?

AUBREY: No thanks Gordon.

GORDON: Okay.

THE SOUNDS STOP AS AN AMAZONIAN
BIRD STARTS ITS ELABORATE MATING
CALL. THEY HAVE REACHED THE BOTTOM
OF THE STAIRCASE AND AUBREY NOW
STRIDES ACROSS A METALLIC FLOOR.

AUBREY: This is the right thing to do, isn't it.

GORDON: It was your idea.

AUBREY: Well I've had a lot of ideas Gordon. They all seem good at the time.

SHE STOPS. GORDON NOW SPEAKS
FROM A CLOSEBY SPEAKER ON A WALL.

GORDON: You tell everyone that finds their way here that ultimately, all you can offer them is choice. Almost all of those people tell you that choice is all they ever wanted.

AUBREY: Almost everyone?

GORDON: Roughly 65% of guests at Red Valley have said something involving a selection of terms based around the root concept of choice. It's not almost everyone but I wanted to show support.

AUBREY: Thanks.

GORDON: If that is what you hope to offer, then there probably aren't many people who deserve to be given a choice more than him.

AUBREY: Okay, lets start.

SOME COMPUTERY NOISES.

GORDON: Everything is ready to execute, there's no need for you to be present after you give authorisation.

AUBREY IS PULLING UP A CHAIR,
POURING HERSELF A DRINK FROM A
THERMOS.

AUBREY: I know. It's just quieter down here.

NOW SOME HISSING, MECHANICAL
NOISES FROM A NEARBY POWERFUL
DEVICE.

GORDON: Thawing sequence initialising. 2200 hours. November 19, 2064. Mark. Godby, Warren. Mark. Authorisation?

AUBREY: Wood, Aubrey Jane.

THE SPEAKER SAYS HER WORDS BACK
AT HER TO CONFIRM HER VOICE.

GORDON: Mark.

THE MECHANICAL NOISES PAUSE, A
SUBTLE, THROBBING BEEPING.

GORDON: Do you want to continue?

END.