

RED VALLEY

SEASON 1 EPISODE 2

'The Golden Bullet'

by
Jonathan Williams

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Character List

Warren Godby	Jonathan Williams
Gordon Porlock	Alan Mandel
Karen Godby	May Cunningham
Dr. Aubrey Wood	Tash Reith-Banks
Doug Holder	John Cook Lynch
Clive Schill	Alexander Broad
Cashier	Hadley Smith
Jemma	Sophie Wilson
HR Operator	Richard Campbell

EPISODE 2

SCENE 1

THE ABRUPT SWITCH OF A TAPE
PLAYER RUNNING. A CRACKLING,
ANCIENT RECORDING BEGINS TO
PLAY.

FEMALE VOICE:

Aubrey Wood, log number 58. The infusions have begun in earnest now. Yogi and Pooh aren't feeling too chipper. Yogi's only been out of the medibay for 48 hours as it is, I'm confident he'll be back in again by tonight. Pooh's problems are as much down to his attitude as anything else. He ripped out his IV this morning and wouldn't eat. You'd be forgiven for thinking he doesn't want to be here. All the others seem fine, responding well. Not enough time's passed to observe any particular cause for these two reactions compared to the others. And honestly not a big enough pool to draw any worthwhile conclusions anyway. Maybe it's because we didn't give the other guys such stupid names.

TAPE PLAYER CLICKS OFF.

THE KITCHEN, WARREN'S HOME.
CLOSE SOUNDS OF WASHING UP.

KAREN: (OFF) What names did the other guys get?

WARREN: (CLOSE) Brown, Black, Grizzly and Polar.

KAREN: She's right, they are less stupid.

WARREN: Indeed.

KAREN: How much more is there?

WARREN: I haven't listened to it all but not a great deal. Tape's mostly blank. Maybe they were for dictation, someone transcribes the log and then wipes the tape. Maybe they used a different tape for each log, no matter how short it was. Maybe she just lost it.

KAREN: Maybe it was taken.

WARREN: Or maybe it was taken.

KAREN: This is exciting! So, what is it, some animal testing thing? That might explain why it's a big secret. Can't pour shampoo in a rabbit's eyes these days.

WARREN: You sound sad about that.

KAREN: You know how brittle my hair is. I need good shampoo.

WARREN LAUGHS.

KAREN: Have you spoken to Doug about this? Do you think he'd be okay with you following some eco-warrior who's sending what I assume is confidential material to your home address?

WARREN: I haven't mentioned it yet.

KAREN: Because this guy Gordon told you not to?

WARREN: No, because it's...twenty past 7 in the morning and I'm scrubbing fish skin off a frying pan. I'll speak to him about it later. Gordon's just an old fruit. The whole company is crawling with this kind of guy, little mole men who never see daylight and want to be in the X-Files.

KAREN: Do you want to be in the X-Files?

WARREN: Are you kidding, I'm fucking married to an X-File.

KAREN: Ahhhhh!

WARREN: Ahhhhhhhhhh -

ABRUPT CUT.

SCENE 2

TAPE PLAYER BEGINS.

AUBREY WOOD: Dr Thomas wants to keep going with the dietary supplements. I'm... well, I'm less inclined to continue just because they taste so bad, none of them are enjoying it and like I said, Pooh is just refusing now, even when I gave him something he liked instead he wouldn't touch it. Dr Thomas thinks it'll help the infusion process along and I don't know, maybe it would. It shouldn't be necessary though, and if we don't stick to the regimen we laid out then how are we going to prove the infusion's efficacy. I suppose we're both coming from a place of compassion. I want to keep their spirits up and send them in with as positive a state of mind as we can. Ben wants to give them the best physiological shot possible. Bryony will decide.

TAPE PLAYER CUTS.

**CANTEEN, DAYTIME. THE BUSY
SOUNDS OF LUNCH HOUR.**

CASHIER: That's £4.20 please.

WARREN: £4.20? How is that, it's normally 3 something.

CASHIER: Vegetables are 50p per serving so that's a pound...and chips are £1 a serving so that's £3...

WARREN: How is that £3?

CASHIER: That's 2 servings of chips.

WARREN: That's 1 serving of chips.

CASHIER: And the pie is £1.20.

WARREN: But that's only 1 serving of chips.

CASHIER: It's 2, sir.

WARREN: How many chips quantifies a serving? Is there a specific number?

CASHIER: I'll take £4.

WARREN: What? So, the price is negotiable now? Is the chip count negotiable too?

CASHIER: Sir...

CUT. OFFICE, DAYTIME. WARREN
APPROACHES A DESK IN A BUSY
OFFICE.

WARREN: Hello.

JEMMA: Hi.

WARREN: I'm sorry...this is my desk.

JEMMA: Oh, Warren! Hi, I'm Jemma.

WARREN: Hi, hi. Um. So is something wrong with your desk, or...

JEMMA: No, the hotdesking starts today.

WARREN: What hotdesking?

JEMMA: It was in the email... from Doug.

WARREN: I haven't seen that email.

JEMMA: Oh. Awkward! I've taken your desk!

WARREN: Yeah. I... don't know where to sit now. They're all taken, aren't they?

AWKWARD PAUSE

JEMMA: Hmm... Well, I assumed you're meant to be on the road today, that's why there's nothing free.

WARREN'S PHONE STARTS TO RING.

WARREN: Okay, Okay, cool, humm. It's fine, it's fine, if it's just today.

JEMMA: Oh no, it's every Thursday.

WARREN: Oh what?

JEMMA: It's...every Thursday. Because of Neil and Doug...

WARREN HAS TAKEN HIS PHONE FROM
HIS POCKET, RINGING LOUDLY.

WARREN: Sorry.

JEMMA: You should check the email.

WARREN: I will, I will... Hello?

GORDON: (D) Did you listen to it?

WARREN: Hello?

GORDON: (D) Did you listen to the tape?

WARREN: Gordon.

GORDON: (D) No, I'm the other guy you met yesterday who put his balls on the line sending recordings of highly sensitive material to your house.

WARREN: Of course, of course.

GORDON: (D) Is this a bad time, you seem to have a big boy voice on.

WARREN IS MOVING QUICKLY
THROUGH THE OFFICE AND THROUGH
A DOOR TO A QUIET, ECHOEY
STAIRWELL.

WARREN: No, no, now is fine.

GORDON: (D) Did you listen to it?

WARREN: Yes, I've listened to it.

GORDON: (D) And?

WARREN: It's really interesting, yes.

GORDON: (D) Interesting?

WARREN: Yeah.

PAUSE. GORDON SIGHS.

GORDON: (D) Look, I'm going to be in the car park of the north build at 7pm tonight. I've got a gold colour Vauxhall Astra. Well...it's more coppery but I like to say its gold. I call it the Golden Bullet. It doesn't go very fast.

WARREN: Thank you for telling me that but I don't –

GORDON: (D) Meet me in the car, but I recommend you get to the end of the tape first as you obviously haven't. Then we can discuss how 'interesting' it is.

WARREN: I actually have a lot of other things that I need to -

GORDON HANGS UP.

WARREN:

Motherfu -

CUT.

SCENE 3

WARREN, IN HIS CAR.

WARREN: So yeah, it's good, this guy seems to have some background on the whole thing, so...yeah.

DOUG: (D) Seems to?

WARREN: Yeah. He says he used to work for the Seed Vault in some capacity. I think he may have been let go to be honest, he seems quite bitter about the whole thing.

DOUG: (D) Well it would be useful to find someone who was involved with the project at a managerial level. These guys, they rename, repurpose, restaff these things all the time. If it wins them their slice of the budget, they'll do whatever they have to to stay in business.

WARREN: Yeah, of course. I will, this guy is just interesting, and I thought it would be good to get to know as much about...well you know, whatever this is, before I went in all guns blazing.

DOUG: (D) All guns blazing.

WARREN: Yeah.

DOUG: (D) Did you speak to Clive Schill yet?

WARREN: Uh, no. I've tried him, I haven't had a response back.

DOUG: (D) I heard he's the man of the hour in R&D. I'm sure he'd be able to help.

WARREN: I'm sure he can, yep, I just want to work this guy Gordon, I like to be thorough. Don't worry.

DOUG: (D) I'm not worried, buddy. Just keep me posted, alright? And ask for help when you need it, okay? That's what I'm here for.

WARREN: You got it. Oh, Doug?

DOUG: (D) Yeah?

WARREN: Have I lost my desk on Thursdays?

DOUG: (D) Yeah, Jemma needs it while Neil is restructuring. You saw the email?

WARREN: Of course, of course. I think I must've got the date wrong, or something.

DOUG: (D) Right.

WARREN: Not to worry. I'll be on the road anyway.

DOUG: (D) Okay then.

WARREN: Okay, I'll let you go. And Doug, thank you. Again.

DOUG: (D) Don't be soft.

WARREN: Sure thing.

DOUG: (D) Find the money!

THEY BOTH LAUGH. CUT.

THE TAPE PLAYER BEGINS AGAIN.

AUBREY WOOD: It's 3.43am. Yogi is dead. He was back in the medibay for a few hours and we'd ceased the infusion... six, no, seven hours ago. But he arrested just after midnight. Bryony and Ben were already there, I arrived as soon as I heard the alarm. We did everything right, everything we could, but we couldn't get him back. I'm going to sleep.

CLICK AS THE TAPE STOPS, THEN
IMMEDIATELY RESUMES.

AUBREY WOOD:

Dr Thomas, Dr Halbech and I all concur that Yogi died of a massive hypercoagulation event. If he had had a single embolism, maybe he would've survived the arrest and we could have...there was no way we could've stopped it happening. Yogi had no genetic disposition that would invite this kind of scenario, or he never would've made it on to the program. So, it must've been a reaction to the cryoprotectant. Yogi was on the alpha course with Pooh and Brown, so we've paused their infusions while Bryony recalibrates. This still isn't going to bump the schedule apparently. Teddy Bears Picnic goes live on Monday and I have never felt stupider using that codename than I do this morning.

CUT.

SCENE 4

WARREN IS ON THE PHONE.

VOICE: If I could just take the account number, I can help you with that sir.

WARREN: I gave you that just now.

VOICE: I... don't think you did.

WARREN: Not you, the robot person asked me to type it in before I got put through to you.

VOICE: That's your policy number, not your account number.

WARREN: How is that different?

VOICE: Your policy number is for your individual policy, the account refers to your department, Accounts.

WARREN: You want a number for the account for Accounts?

VOICE: Yes.

WARREN: Look, I don't have that number, I just have the letter you sent which tells me you're lowering my pension contribution when I requested that I increase it.

VOICE: Yes, and with the account number I can access all your policy information and see where we are with -

WARREN: If you need the account number to see my policy information then what is the point of a policy number?

VOICE: Sir...

CUT. THE CANTEEN.

WARREN: Just the curry and the yoghurt thanks.

CASHIER: Could you lift the poppadom please?

WARREN: Sorry?

CASHIER: Can I see under the poppadom?

WARREN: What do you think is under the poppadom?

CASHIER: I'd like to check, please.

WARREN: It's curry. There's curry under the poppadom.

CASHIER: Will you just lift it?

WARREN: No. I'm going to draw the line. I'm not going to lift the poppadom.

CASHIER: Sir, there's... umm... there's a line. I can't charge until I've seen your items and I need to confirm what is underneath the poppadom.

WARREN: There are 5 chips under the poppadom.

CASHIER: I'm sorry, I couldn't quite hear that?

WARREN: There are 5 chips under the poppadom.

THERE IS SOME QUIET GIGGLING AND
A GASP.

CASHIER: Well that's another pound isn't it.

WARREN: It sure is.

WARREN LUMPS CHANGE ON TO THE
COUNTER.

CASHIER: Thank you.

WARREN: No, thank *you*.

CASHIER: Have a great day.

WARREN: No, *you* have a great day.

CASHIER: I will try.

WARREN: Swell. Namaste.

CUT. DIFFERENT PHONE CALL.

CLIVE: No no no no no, if you want to talk about anything like crop storage, anything in the Agric sector, you need to go back to before Overhead acquired all those patents. You need to go back to Wheelhouse.

WARREN: Wheelhouse?

CLIVE: Wheelhouse. That was the company that owned all the farming contracts. They had satellite operations around the country, around the world. When we absorbed Wheelhouse we took all those over.

WARREN: Right.

CLIVE: Overhead doesn't just buy patents, man. We buy every other company that buys patents. We own ideas, that's the point.

WARREN: Yeah, yeah, I get it.

CLIVE: Yeah, you do! Doug told me you were the next big thing.

WARREN: I er... I don't know about that. Clive...Do you know anything about ... cryonic storage?

CLIVE: Hmm. You mean cryogenics?

WARREN: No, that's actually the study of...I can't remember, actually. Anything cryo-ey really.

CLIVE: We own a bunch of patents for, like, athletic treatments, like cryosaunas for rich footballers, Olympians and shit like that, I don't know. What's that got to do with your seed vault thing?

WARREN: Well if it was a vault for storing crops, they'd have to be frozen, wouldn't they.

CLIVE: Oh right. Yeah, that makes sense.

WARREN: So, you don't?

CLIVE: Don't what?

WARREN: Know anyone, any teams that work in cryo stuff?

MUFFLED SOUNDS ON THE LINE.

WARREN: Clive?

CLIVE: Yeah?

WARREN: Everything alright?

CLIVE: Yeah man. Look I've got to bounce, good talking with you. Doug was right, you're the next big thing! Let's get a drink or something soon.

WARREN: Oh, yeah, cool -

CLIVE: I'll email you. Peace.

WARREN Ok.

HANGS UP.

SCENE 5

GORDON'S CAR. RAINFALL OUTSIDE.
DOOR OPENS, THE RAIN LOUDER,
SPLASHING IN PUDDLES NEARBY.
WARREN GETS IN, SHUTS THE DOOR.

GORDON: Are you recording?

WARREN: Jesus, I just got in. Aren't you recording this anyway?

WARREN RUMMAGES IN A BAG.

GORDON: Of course I am. But you need a copy for your own records.

WARREN: Can't I just have a copy of yours?

GORDON: Now you're being ridiculous.

WARREN PLACES HIS TAPE PLAYER ON
THE DASH AND CLICKS IT ON.

WARREN: There. Done. Continue.

GORDON: How did you enjoy the tape?

WARREN: Some horrible things happening to some things with code names that are all bears for some reason.

GORDON: Some... things.

WARREN: So, you're saying they're people, Yogi and Pooh and Brown Bear and whoever.

GORDON: Well if they were bears, they wouldn't be very good code names.

WARREN: I guess not.

GORDON: Kind of weird though isn't it. Wood talking about compassion, about doing what's right. But she doesn't treat them like people. They might as well be animals. Pumping them up with their synthetic shit and sending them to their doom.

WARREN: What are these infusions, what's she giving them?

GORDON: I don't know exactly. But we're past the nutritional boosting phase, the training, the fitness, the aptitude tests, the gene studies. We're getting to the real ham of this sandwich, Warren. These are cryoprotectant infusions.

WARREN: But what is that?

GORDON: Getting your subjects in the best shape of their lives is only the first part. You want someone to survive the greatest endurance test humankind has ever known, you're going to want to make sure they're ripped like Jesus before they go through it. But none of that matters if you freeze them so fucking hard ice crystals form all over their body and they end up shredded in the more traditional sense of the word. Then you'll basically just be defrosting a big red slush puppy. So, you gradually swap out their regular blood for a synthetic, that doesn't just do all your regular blood jobs but is also crammed with lots of goodies derived from all kinds of crazy shit.

WARREN: Crazy shit infusions?

GORDON: Look, I wasn't there and I'm not a cryo...ologist. But the company's been trying to develop and refine life-extending drugs for years. If you want to follow the money, there is an R&D black fucking *hole* in this company when it comes to human longevity projects. They're taking DNA from amphibians, those little frogs who get frozen in lakes all winter and survive to see the spring, cold-climate insects, there's the, uh, rotten egg gas, uh -

WARREN: What?

GORDON: Hydrogen sulphide, they used that as a fucking chemical weapon in WW1, terrifically dangerous, but apparently, it's loaded with all this crap that protects your arteries and whatever. The stuff in red wine that's meant to be good for you, fucking olive oil, who knows. Anyway, they fill their boys, Yogi and BooBoo and whoever, with bags of this stuff, teddy bears fucking picnic indeed, so they're as ready as they'll ever be when they go in the freezer. That's why they're all named after bears, man. They're going into hibernation.

PAUSE. WARREN LISTENS TO THE
RAIN.

WARREN: So, I have a lot of questions.

GORDON: Are they all about accounting?

WARREN: Not exclusively -

GORDON: Come on, man! I am talking to you about illegal experimentation into human cryonic preservation! If I could show you the receipts I would but this is what I have.

WARREN: You have to concede that what *this* is, is two men sat in the rain in a 1998 Vauxhall Astra.

GORDON: I get it, ok, I get it. You need more. I'm doing this as gradually as I can because if I showed you the whole jigsaw your head would pop off your skinny fucking shoulders. Here is your next puzzle piece.

GLOVE BOX OPENS AND CLOSSES.

WARREN: Another tape.

GORDON: Another tape.

WARREN: This one's not going to fit in my Dictaphone.

GORDON: No, it won't Mr Godby, but luckily you're sitting in a 1998 Vauxhall Astra. What it lacks in air conditioning it makes up for in a top-notch cassette player.

GORDON PUTS THE TAPE IN THE
PLAYER. IT BURSTS TO LIFE.

END