

RED VALLEY

SEASON 1 EPISODE 5

'Morior Invictus'

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
Waitress	Sophie Wilson
Mr Aloha Eternity	Richard Campbell
Interviewer	Robin Hellier
Pus Crank	Belly of the Steel Beast

EPISODE 5

SCENE 1

GORDON IS INSIDE THE GOLDEN BULLET. THE ENGINE IS RUNNING. AFTER A FEW MOMENTS HE HONKS THE SAD LITTLE HORN. A MOMENT AFTER HE TAPS THE WINDOW.

GORDON: Ah... Hey. Over here.

EVENTUALLY THE PASSENGER DOOR OPENS.

WARREN: Can I stick this somewhere?

GORDON: Yeah, yeah just throw it in the back seat.

WARREN OPENS THE BACK DOOR, THROWS HIS BAG DOWN. SHUTS THE BACK DOOR, DROPS LIKE A SACK OF POTATOES INTO THE PASSENGER SEAT.

GORDON: Morning.

WARREN: Hey.

GORDON: Feeling alright?

WARREN: Yeah.

GORDON: Really?

WARREN: No. I feel like a nutsack. Er... Look, can we put on some air conditioning or something?...

GORDON: Oh, she doesn't have air con, man.

WARREN WINDS DOWN THE WINDOW,
LETTING THE BREEZE IN.

WARREN: This isn't a hangover by the way. It's a migraine.

GORDON: ...Is that true?

WARREN: My pills bring them on sometimes. It's always worst in the mornings.

GORDON: Probably didn't help being pissed up last night though?

WARREN GIVES UP.

WARREN: I think that's reasonable, yeah.

GORDON: You just going to leave your car here?

WARREN: Um, yeah. I'll come back for it. Um... Unless you'd rather go in my car?

GORDON: Do you want to drive?

WARREN: Please don't make me do that.

GORDON: Don't worry about it. Look, I've got biscuits.

WARREN: Oh God, I love you.

WARREN GREEDILY STARTS RUFFLING
THROUGH A PAPER BAG.

GORDON: Road trip then?

WARREN: Yup. Road trip.

GORDON: Okay. Let's do this. We're going to go to Red Valley, and solve mysteries -

WARREN: Mm-hmm.

GORDON: - uncover secrets, blow this shit wide open, stand in the shadow of the mighty Ball Bag -

A CAR HORN HONKS BEHIND THEM.

WARREN: I don't think you can stop here actually.

GORDON: Oh yeah, okay, hang on.

GORDON GOES TO PULL AWAY.

STALLS.

GORDON: Lol. Whoops.

OTHER CAR HONKS MULTIPLE TIMES.

GORDON: Oh, fuck off -

CUT.

SCENE 2

GORDON AND WARREN ON THE ROAD.

GORDON: Oh wait, did that say -

WARREN: Yeah yeah, left. Up there.

GORDON: I don't really know how to get...like... I'm probably fine once we're on the motorway but I don't actually know how to get to the motorway.

WARREN: Do you have a sat nav?

GORDON: No.

WARREN: My phone does. I don't have the data to get us all the way to Scotland, but we can use it for now.

GORDON: Cool, cool. There's a map behind your seat for the rest of it.

WARREN: Oh.

WARREN RUMMAGES BEHIND HIM AND PRODUCES WHAT IS CLEARLY A VERY OLD MAP. THE PAGES ARE STUCK TOGETHER. THERE IS A STICKY, CRISPY SOUND AS HE HANDLES EACH PAGE.

WARREN: Oh my god, how old is this?

GORDON: As old as the car I expect.

WARREN TURNS THE PAGES WITH
DISDAIN.

WARREN: Why is it so crispy?

GORDON: Because it's old. Don't look like that, I don't wank off over diagrams of the M25. Sniff it if you must.

SATNAV: After 200 yards, keep left.

GORDON: Wait, what did it say?

WARREN: Keep left. There, no, go there -

CUT.

SCENE 3

DRIVING IN SILENCE.

GORDON: Were you serious about this prison idea?

WARREN: It's only an idea. I was trying to think of practical uses for this kind of technology if it was real. I just don't believe a bunch of old rich people, no matter how much money they have, are enough to justify all this. No one's going to go to all the abject... horror and mess, frankly, on the whim of some old bastard, or some young bastard, who can change his mind, have second thoughts, die earlier than planned. There are too many variables. There has to be some larger function, something more permanent, some institutional application. Overhead make millions in private prisons. Being able to store a prisoner, rather than actively detaining them. All you'd need is a warehouse, a storage unit, a...

GORDON: A vault.

WARREN: Yeah.

GORDON: So, who are we talking to?

WARREN: Like I said, he's just a rep. He might not know anything, I thought what's the harm. We're only dropping in.

GORDON: What time?

WARREN: Oh there isn't a time, I'm just going to catch him at his office. I didn't want him to be able to say no.

GORDON: Sure, sure, yeah. Let's just make it up as we go.

SILENCE.

WARREN: So... what else did Clive Schill have to say about me?

GORDON: We don't have to talk about that.

WARREN: No, it's fine, really. I'd rather know.

GORDON: Erm... Well, he said...he said he wasn't supposed to be telling me this, that it was confidential HR stuff, but you had, uh...some difficulties with your mental health. Before joining the company. That you might be impressionable, or prone to paranoia or manic behaviour. And that I wasn't being a positive influence on you. With all my...interests.

WARREN: Well, I don't know where he would get that idea. I'm only thacking it up the M1 with a raging hangover, after drunkenly yelling at my boss that I'm off to search for a mythical research facility where maniacs are freezing people's bodies until they shatter like china plates or are liquified into toxic sludge. Without telling my wife.

GORDON: You didn't tell your wife?

WARREN: She...wouldn't take it very well.

GORDON: I expect you may have to tell her at some point.
Like...probably today...

WARREN: That is a distinct possibility. Have you got any
sweets?

CUT.

SCENE 4

ON THE ROAD.

WARREN: I think you've heard way too much about me
Gordon. Tell me about you.

GORDON: There's really not much to tell.

SILENCE.

WARREN: Oh, you're serious, you're not going to tell me
anything.

GORDON: I...

WARREN: Oh, sorry man, don't worry about it. I'm sorry to
ask.

SILENCE.

WARREN: Can we have the radio on?

GORDON: Oh, someone snapped the aerial off. I replaced it,
then went through the car wash a day later, which
snapped it off again, and now I just think I'm not
supposed to have an aerial.

WARREN: Okay. Got any tapes?

GORDON: Oh yeah! Yeah, glove box.

WARREN OPENS THE GLOVE BOX. A
PILE OF CASSETTES SPILLS ON TO THE
FLOOR.

WARREN: Jeez Louise.

GORDON: Sorry, there's quite a few. Take your pick though, they're all good.

WARREN: 'Neurovitrification and the Simian Brain.'

GORDON: If you can tolerate the horrendous animal cruelty, that's a fascinating lecture.

WARREN: 'The Sky's the Hayflick Limit.'

GORDON: Ah, yeah, The Hayflick Limit is the amount of times the cells in your body divide. Big part of the quest for biological immortality. Simon Callow reads the audiobook.

WARREN: This one's got Aubrey Wood on it but it's crossed out.

GORDON: Oh, that was just a copy I taped over. Think it had some early psych evaluations, boring stuff.

WARREN: I thought you gave me everything.

GORDON: Oh, I did. Everything from the base. This was just background fluff, where did she go to school, does she play well with others, etc etc.

WARREN: And you copied over it with...'Aloha Eternity'?

GORDON: Yeah, a guy proposed a cryonic cruise ship. You live out the end of your days on a luxury cruise liner going round the world, Hawaii, the Caribbean, wherever, always moving, avoiding all kinds of international euthanasia and funeral law then when you're ready, you down your last Dignitas marguerita and the bar staff immediately jump in and freeze your brains before you slip off your bar stool. It's not the worst idea in the world.

WARREN: 'You Can't Freeze a Soul - My Journey Into the Cryonic Void.'

GORDON: Oh, that's, uh. That's a memoir. A draft. Of a memoir.

WARREN: Your memoir?

GORDON: It's a work in progress.

WARREN: I thought there wasn't much to say about you. You've recorded a memoir! You've filled a whole tape.

GORDON: Well, not the whole tape.

WARREN: It says Part 5!

GORDON: It's not ready for public consumption.

WARREN: Gordon, I choose to believe you. You know, I don't think I can listen to anyone talking about brains or monkeys or margueritas of any kind. Do you have any music? Anything at all?

GORDON: Oh yeah, yeah. That green one.

WARREN: What is it?

GORDON: That's my old band.

WARREN: Hmm.

GORDON: It's good! I like to keep it around, it reminds me of a simpler time. Put it on, it'll be fun.

WARREN: Sure.

WARREN PUTS IN THE TAPE.
IMMEDIATELY AN EAR-BLEEDING
METAL TRACK PLAYS.

WARREN: Fuck me!

GORDON: Still sounds great!

AFTER A FEW MORE SECONDS

WARREN TURNS IT OFF.

WARREN: Jesus!

GORDON: That track was called Morior Invictus. It's about galloping towards a glorious death.

WARREN: Of course, it was.

GORDON: We were called Pus Crank.

WARREN: Pu... Pus Crank.

GORDON: Yeah!

WARREN BURSTS INTO LAUGHTER,

AND GORDON JOINS IN. CUT.

SCENE 5

WARREN AND GORDON ARE EATING
FAST FOOD AT A BUSTLING SERVICE
STATION.

GORDON: She sells out every belief that she has. Remember that scientist guy she's in love with the whole time?

WARREN: David. He went to Minsk.

GORDON: She's in love with him for like 10 years and then blows him off for a pretty boy -

WARREN: That was Paul Rudd. I would choose Paul Rudd.

GORDON: She's an animal rights activist who then wants to wear a real fur coat, she hates corporations but then fills her house with Pottery Barn furniture and goes to work for the big corporate massage company in secret. Phoebe is a fraud.

WARREN: Rachel turns up at Monica's house in the very first episode having left a guy at the altar, right. Monica is her best friend from school. She wasn't even invited to the wedding. She's not even an evening guest. She gets off with Ross the night Monica and Chandler get engaged because God forbid an event happens that isn't about her, on Monica's wedding day it's all about Rachel getting pregnant, when she has the baby she steals Monica's baby name. And then Monica ends up not being able to have kids.

GORDON: Yeah, well, that's not Rachel's fault.

WARREN: Everyone says that.

CUT.

SCENE 6

PETROL STATION. GORDON IS
REFUELLING THE CAR. WARREN IS SAT
QUIETLY WHEN HIS PHONE RINGS.

WARREN: Hello? Oh, Craig. Umm... Hi. I'm good, yeah. What can I do for you? Well, yeah, actually I am. I'm on my way through this afternoon and I was wondering...Oh right... Okay... What if I got there sooner? Yeah, yeah I'm with a friend. Just a, just a guy from Archives. Ah I see... Well, another time then? Umm... yeah, I'll send you an email if that's ok? Yeah, alright mate. Well, it was good to speak to you anyway. Okay... bye.

GORDON IS BACK IN THE CAR.

GORDON: That doesn't sound good.

WARREN: That was my friend, the rep. He just cancelled on me.

GORDON: Wait, I thought he didn't know you were coming.

WARREN: He didn't.

GORDON: Did Doug Holder tell him?

WARREN: Didn't tell him either. Well, I don't think I did?

GORDON: Are you sure?

WARREN: Well yeah, I was trying to be stealthy.

GORDON: What do you want to do?

WARREN: Sod it. Let's plough on. It's saved some time at least, we can stop for some food if you want.

CUT.

SCENE 7

**PUS CRANK IS BLASTING FULL
VOLUME.**

GORDON (LOUD): You see the thing is, the music, despite the technical complexity and outwardly aggressive tone is... as I'm sure you can tell, incredibly melodic and uplifting, sentimental in many ways.

WARREN (LOUD): Yeah, it's very sweet.

GORDON (LOUD): Thank you. So... you need a suitable power metal name. I wanted to call us Glory Wings, but apparently it sounded like a sanitary product. But Geoffrey and Simon, who were the guitarists, and brothers as well, they were obsessed with names like, uh, Bile Piston, Poxhammer. Which are all clearly crust names -

WARREN (LOUD): What is Crust?

GORDON (LOUD): Crust? Oh er... Like anarchy-punk shit. All guttural screaming and dirty bass. It's an entirely different sound. So, no wonder we never got anywhere with a name like Pus Crank!

WARRENS PHONE STARTS RINGING.

WARREN: Ah shit.

GORDON (LOUD): What?

HE TURNS THE MUSIC OFF. THE PHONE
CONTINUES TO RING.

GORDON: Oh... Just tear the plaster off.

WARREN: Yeah thanks.

ANSWERS.

WARREN: Hi.

KAREN: Hi. I didn't expect you to pick up.

WARREN: I'm sorry.

KAREN: I don't even know what you're apologising for.

WARREN: Thank you.

KAREN: No, I mean which part? Is it the running away and not telling me where you're going, is it going AWOL at your job which we need to pay for the house we live in, or is it the way you spoke to Doug, your boss, my friend, to whom you owe your whole career?

WARREN: I know. You're completely right.

KAREN: I'm right. Of course I'm right! You told him to suck your dick!

GORDON: What!

WARREN: Whoa whoa, I never said that.

KAREN: Really?

WARREN: I would never say that.

KAREN: Oh so, what did you say?

GORDON PUFFS OUT HIS CHEEKS.

KAREN: Warren?

WARREN: I said he could suck *a* dick.

KAREN: I'm sorry?

WARREN: I said he could go suck a dick.

KAREN: Oh, much better. I wonder how he got those two confused.

GORDON: Yeah that's totally different.

KAREN: Who's that?

WARREN (CLOSE): Shut up.

KAREN: That's Gary Hemlock or whoever is it?

GORDON: Gordon Porlock.

KAREN: And I suppose he's taping all of this on his little Dictaphone, is he?

WARREN (CLOSE): Sorry man. She's my wife.

GORDON: I'm an archivist Mrs Godby. It's just a habit.

WARREN (CLOSE): Stop talking... Karen, I know, I'm having some trouble, I... I should never have spoken to Doug that way, I don't want to lose my job -

KAREN: Then why did you tell him he could stick it up his shitpipe?

GORDON CAN'T HELP BURSTING INTO LAUGHTER.

WARREN & KAREN: Shut up, Gordon!

WARREN: Karen, I'm gonna be home in the next day or two -

KAREN: Oh, will you?

WARREN: - and I'll explain everything.

KAREN: I'll just make you up a dinner then, shall I? Keep it warm for you, when you deign to come home?

WARREN: Look let's... let's talk later, please?

KAREN: Hmph.

AN AWKWARD SILENCE.

GORDON: Who's the worst Friend, Mrs Godby?

WARREN (CLOSE): Gordon, be quiet!

KAREN: What?

GORDON: The worst friend from Friends. I think it's Phoebe, Warren thinks it's Rachel.

KAREN: Two white guys taping themselves arguing about TV shows. Just what the world needs more of.

WARREN: I'm sorry... I'm sorry.

KAREN: Enjoy your little pop culture happy hour, my love.

WARREN: Bye. Love you.

ANOTHER SILENCE.

KAREN: Ross is obviously the worst Friend.

KAREN HANGS UP.

SCENE 8

**WARREN AND GORDON ARE IN A
ROADSIDE CAFE.**

GORDON: How's the hangover?

WARREN: I feel like I'm in the middle of a really long stroke.

GORDON: But you've done all the things. You had biscuits. You found those furry paracetamol in the cup holder and you had a Burger King.

WARREN: I listened to 75 minutes of power metal.

GORDON: Which you were into by side B. And you said you were only pretending to be napping so I'd stop talking about my pitch for a live action adaptation of The Silmarillion but... I saw a fly land on your face, and you didn't move so I know you got some sleep.

WARREN: I just...I don't know who I think I am carrying on like this. I have no idea what I'm doing.

GORDON: You've just got the dreads. Existential crises are an essential part of the recovery experience.

PAUSE.

WARREN: You remember when you were at school, and you would get bullied -

GORDON: What makes you think I was bullied?

WARREN: Who did you say you wanted to play Eru the Supreme Being in The Silmarillion?

GORDON: Danny DeVito -

WARREN: So... when you were bullied. You would always do everything you could to avoid being hit, right?

GORDON: Yeah.

WARREN: Of course you did. Me too. And whenever I would tell my mum or a teacher or whoever they would always commend me for not trying to hit them back, for not starting a fight.

GORDON: Okay.

WARREN: And that idea was meant to get reinforced in your mind, that you were the better person for not being violent, for not rising to it.

GORDON: Well yeah. That's true.

WARREN: I never felt that. Not once. I didn't back down from a bully at school or walk away from an idiot in a pub because I thought it made me the better man, I did it because I was scared, because I was always smaller than they were, because I had no idea how to hit someone. If I'd been built like He-Man I wouldn't have backed down, I would've broken their faces. I wasn't better, I was weaker.

GORDON: There's no shame in not wanting to get yourself hurt. Especially if you've done nothing to earn it.

WARREN: I'm sorry. I'm getting all weird and intense.

GORDON: Yeah, enough of this self-pitying beta male shit, please.

GORDON GETS A WAITRESS'
ATTENTION.

GORDON: Er... Hi. Yeah, can we get the bill please?

WAITRESS: Sure.

CUT.

SCENE 9

WARREN AND GORDON DRIVE IN
SILENCE, A TAPE PLAYING. THE VOICE
IS SLOW AND ENTIRELY
MONOTONOUS.

MR ALOHA ETERNITY: There's no denying the allure of the cruise lifestyle. I myself have taken 16 cruises with my wife and family over the years. I've been to the Mediterranean, seen the Northern Lights, Budapest, the Caribbean, Thailand. I believe there is a great opportunity here to celebrate the spirit of adventure at that time of life when it might seem most far away. To not know where in the world you might pass on, but to be secure in the knowledge that when you do, highly skilled cryonic technicians will be on hand to vitrify your corporeal form -

THE TAPE CUTS AND ANOTHER VOICE
IS HEARD.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think your mother's death, and the manner of her death, impacts on the work you do? Do you believe it has an impact on your current position, and how do you think it could affect your day to day responsibilities?

AUBREY WOOD: I think It would be naive to think it hasn't played a part in my choices, in my career and my personal life. And that it wouldn't inform decisions I go on to make. It's one of the reasons I got into the field, but it's not an obstacle.

- INTERVIEWER: Have you had any counselling or therapy of any kind in regards to this or any other life event or trauma? /
- WARREN: / What's this?
- GORDON: Oh, there's still some Aubrey left over. You want to turn it off?
- WARREN: Nah. /
- AUBREY WOOD: I expressed a desire to talk to someone following my mother's passing. / My father wasn't keen as he was worried it would somehow damage my future if I had a 'mental issue on your record', as he put it, but I insisted I speak to someone shortly after her death.
- INTERVIEWER: A professional?
- AUBREY WOOD: Yes, my school counsellor and then a private practitioner later. I've had therapy at various times in my life, I think it's very healthy.
- INTERVIEWER: I agree entirely. We've made great efforts to offer committed mental health services across the board at Overhead, / it's hugely important that the staff feel they are able to come to us, for any reason.
- AUBREY WOOD: Yes, I've seen the posters. It's a very good thing.

GORDON: / Her mum died when she was little, I think. They're just trying to work out if she's in all this for the right reasons.

WARREN: Whatever they are.

GORDON: Uh-hmm. /

INTERVIEWER: / You're aware of the full nature of your duties once you're embedded at the facility.

AUBREY WOOD: Yes. Fully.

INTERVIEWER: The risk of loss of life during the process is...

AUBREY WOOD: I'm under no illusion. There will be loss of life. As with every stage of the project so far.

INTERVIEWER: How does that sit with you, Aubrey?

AUBREY WOOD: The process by which we select our cohorts is exhaustive and I've played a direct role in meeting, vetting and selecting our candidates. I believe in informed consent. I believe everyone that sets foot in our facility knows the risks.

INTERVIEWER: But given the circumstances you'll face. Isolation, limited rest or relaxation, rationed food, very little company. How do you predict those risks, the apparent certainty of a mortality rate, will affect you? Given your own responsibility in... managing those risks?

AUBREY WOOD: When I was vetting potential candidates, I spoke to a man who had seen terrible things, maybe he'd done terrible things. Part of the process is very similar to this conversation, only I'm in your chair and the potential candidate is in mine. I tried to gauge his state of mind considering the exceptional circumstances under which we were meeting. I asked him about the things he had done, the things done to him. He said, 'You should only do what you know you can live with.' It's a far easier thing to say than it is a code to live by, but it's stuck with me since... I know what we're facing... And I'm still here.

THE INTERVIEW ENDS, THE TAPE
STATIC ROLLING ON.

GORDON: What's wrong?

WARREN: What?

GORDON: You're looking at my tape deck like it turned into a grapefruit.

WARREN: ... It's nothing.

GORDON: You sure?

WARREN: Yeah.

CUT.

SCENE 10

STILL DRIVING. TIME HAS PASSED.

GORDON: It's so dark, how are you supposed to see anything...

WARREN IS SILENT.

GORDON: At least it's not raining, I guess.

SILENCE.

GORDON: I'm sure we're in the middle of some dramatic scenery, if there was just some moonlight or something.

THEY DRIVE ON A LITTLE LONGER.

GORDON: Oh wait, was that it?

THE CAR SLOWS.

WARREN: What?

GORDON: Was that a sign?

WARREN: I... I wasn't looking.

GORDON PUTS THE CAR IN REVERSE.

GORDON: Ah yeah, this is it.

THE CAR TURNS AND SLOWLY
TRUNDLES UP A ROCKY PATH.

WARREN: Do they even have B&Bs round here?

GORDON: It's not a B&B.

WARREN: You said it was a B&B?

GORDON: Nah... I said a bothy.

WARREN: A what?

GORDON: A bothy.

WARREN: What is a bothy?

GORDON: Like a hut for mountaineers. I think farmers used to use them.

WARREN: A hut?

GORDON: Well Airbnb doesn't really go this far up.

THE CAR COMES TO A STOP.

WARREN: Does it have electricity?

GORDON: Well, yeah, it's not a literal hut. It's just a bit bare bones. Camping stove, sleeping mats, that sort of thing.

WARREN: We've been on the road for 11 hours and there's no bed?

GORDON: Come on, it's all part of the adventure.

GORDON GETS OUT OF THE CAR.

WARREN RELUCTANTLY FOLLOWS.

WARREN: How do we even get in?

GORDON: The farmer that has the keys lives just nearby it said...Oh there, there you can see his lights on.

WARREN: Huh... Great.

GORDON: Look, you're shattered, just... wait in the car and I'll walk over, it'll only be 10 minutes.

WARREN: Why don't we just drive over, it's the middle of the night?

GORDON: Nah, nah, I fancy a quick stroll. The air is amazing here.

WARREN: Okay.

GORDON: Are you alright?

WARREN: What do you mean?

GORDON: You've been quiet for ages, I just wondered if you were alright.

WARREN: I'm fine, I'm fine. It's just cold and late.

GORDON: Yeah. Alright, sit tight, I'll be right back.

GORDON WALKS AWAY. WARREN GETS
BACK IN THE CAR. HE SIGHS AND
TURNS ON THE STEREO, LISTENS TO
THE STATIC OF THE UNTUNABLE
RADIO. EVENTUALLY HE PICKS UP A
TAPE, PUTS IT IN THE DECK. REWINDS
IT FOR A FEW SECONDS, PLAYS.

INTERVIEWER: -iven the circumstances you'll face. Isolation,
limited rest or relaxation, rationed fo -

HE WINDS FORWARD A COUPLE OF
SECONDS.

AUBREY WOOD:

- candidate is in mine. I tried to gauge his state of mind considering the exceptional circumstances under which we were meeting. I asked him... about the things he had done, the things done to him. And he said, 'You should only do what you know you can live with.' It's a far easier thing to say than-

WARREN STOPS THE TAPE, AND DOES NOTHING FOR A MOMENT. THEN HE SHIFTS FROM HIS SEAT INTO THE DRIVER'S SIDE, STARTS THE CAR, AND PULLS AWAY QUICKLY.

CUT.

END.