

WHILE YOU WERE HYPERSLEEPING 2
A Red Valley Mini-Series
by
Jonathan Williams

Jonathan Williams
jon.nobbs@gmail.com

Character List

Gordon Porlock

WHILE YOU WERE HYPERSLLEEPING TWO

GORDON PORLOCK, AT HIS DESK IN THE RECORDS ROOM. IT IS LATE, HE IS ANXIOUS. BUT QUIET, BUTTONED DOWN. HE IS TRYING TO REMAIN CALM.

1. GORDON: Gordon Porlock, personal log. So it turns out I'm not alone. Aubrey Wood's outside. Hiding in a camper van. We spoke a couple of hours ago over the comm Warren left her.

2. GORDON: I have no idea if I can trust this person. I've listened to the recording Warren gave me over and over but...I don't know. I can't think of any reason you'd go through what she's now going through unless you were sincere about trying to put something right. But then, my only friend is an amnesiac criminal whose fake wife threatened to cut my skull open with a bone saw the other week. There's a chance I'm not a great judge of character.

3. GORDON: We didn't talk very long. We weren't sure what to say to each other. Weird thing is that we *have* actually spoken before. A lot. Online, a few years ago when I first heard the rumours about Red Valley. It was Aubrey. She was the source who first started getting me information. I think she thought telling me that would break the ice...If anything it made it more awkward to talk over the comm. I sound much cooler when you can't hear my voice.

1. GORDON: Aubrey told me a lot of wild stuff about Overhead back then. It's what got me hooked on Red Valley, on cryonics, in the first place. The utter madness of it all. The man who started it all was one of the founders of the company in the 70s, Malcolm Landry. He was the first head of R&D. To begin with it was all above board, boring cryogenics work on plants and amphibians. Aubrey's convinced he's behind everything that happens after that but his name is nowhere near any of it. He's still at the company now though, on the board of directors.

PAUSE.

2. GORDON: Didn't take many years for Overhead's work to get grisly. Testing extreme temperature endurance on the homeless in the 80s. Igniting a vat of hydrogen sulphide that blew up an entire cohort of test subjects in North Wales in the 90s. And then this place. So I thought, I've finally got the whole archive here. Going through all this is what Bryony asked me to do anyway. If I can corroborate what Aubrey told me with what's in here, maybe that's a step closer to trusting her. I mean...I assume half of it isn't true.

CUT. TIME HAS PASSED. GORDON DUMPS A
BUNCH OF DOCUMENTS DOWN ON THE TABLE
HARD.

1. GORDON: Nope. It's all true. All of it. Here's a cutting of Malcolm Landry in 1972 barking on about suspended animation and how we're doomed to repeat our mistakes unless we 'harness the wisdom from past generations'. Here's a note from the lead scientist of those experiments on the homeless. Good God. 'The vagabonds are a surprisingly cheerful bunch, which has made the liquid nitrogen immersion far less tedious than one might have anticipated.'

A QUICK GULP OF TEA AS HE RIFLES THROUGH
MORE DOCUMENTS.

2. GORDON: Photos of the burned down research station in Wales. The guy in charge of that one was so desperate to protect his work, he shot five members of the local volunteer fire service with a hunting rifle as they tried to put out the blaze then injected himself with his own infusion.

HE TOSSES THE PHOTOS BACK DOWN.

3. GORDON: Here's my take on why cryonic preservation has been such a total bust (until Warren, obviously). It's not because the concept is ridiculous. Fringe science begets fringe scientists. Narcissists, control freaks, God complexes. Those are your entry level traits. It's not a long walk to get to sociopathy, psychopathy, and straight up Dark Lord of the Sith. In the end, it doesn't matter how gifted they are or what results they get. Maniacs gonna maniac.

PAUSE AS GORDON SEES SOMETHING IN THE PHOTOS. HE SCATTERS OTHER PAPERS OUT OF THE WAY AS HE SCRUTINIZES SOMETHING.

1. GORDON: Wait. Is that - no fucking way -

CUT TO: GORDON PACING THE SPACE, SERIOUS, TRYING TO REMAIN CALM.

2. GORDON: Here's a fun wrinkle. So the brazen shithead running the homeless experiments disappears from the story once the project yields no decent data. Until you look at the photos of the victims in the Wales station fire 10 years later. He's one of the bloody test subjects. They turned the lead scientist on one project into a Guinea pig in the next.

HE STOPS. GOES BACK TO THE DESK, LEAFS THROUGH MORE PAPERS ANXIOUSLY.

3. GORDON: Which begs the question, what happened to the guy with the hunting rifle. What's his name, what's his name...Hansmann. Alexander Hansmann. Where did I see that -

CUT AS GORDON MARCHES BACK TO THE ARCHIVE. CUT TO GORDON BACK AT HIS DESK, NOW STILL AND REFLECTIVE AFTER HIS EVENING OF NERVOUS ENERGY.

1. GORDON: So here is where the past arrives unpleasantly at the present. At my present. To Red Valley being active as the new home of cryonic research. Before any Teddy Bears, before Warren Godby. Some dissection and analysis carried out on a selection of frozen internal organs. All clearly labelled. I thought Hansmann was the name of the physician who harvested them. No, he's the bloody subject. Their analysis was the first duty of the newly appointed cryonics lead. Doctor Bryony Halbech.

HE TAKES A BEAT.

2. GORDON: It's hard not to look back at Malcolm Landry's words about being doomed to repeat yourself and think, no shit. You hire lunatics, expect lunacy. I guess recycling your lead scientists is economical. Creates a tidy little closed loop. Once you've started cannibalising your own staff though, where does that leave you. Where next can you turn.

PAUSE. GORDON THINKS.

3. GORDON: Bryony knows everything I learned here tonight. She knows how Overhead treat their own people. Does she even need it archived, or did she just want to show me? To show me who she is. Show me what she can do.

ANOTHER PAUSE. GORDON SNAPS OUT OF HIS
REVERIE AND STARTS SCOOPING UP
DOCUMENTS AND PUTTING THEM BACK IN A
BOX.

1. GORDON: Aubrey's stories match up at least. If all of this is anything to go by, she might be the only person involved in this research that's ever managed to escape it. And she's come back. She's come back to stop it. I guess...I guess that's not nothing.

HE SEALS A LID ON THE BOX.

2. GORDON: Warren I hope they wake you up soon. We need to talk.

CUT.