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# The Puppet Masters

By Ted Elliott

I thought we were gonna play ball.

Come on.

Come on!

Stay, Bo-jay

Hey, Mr Higgins.

Did you see something come down

ten minutes ago?

Yeah. It's in the clearing.

It's really incredible.

Come on, you have to come see it.

It's just through here.

- Sam. Great to see you. How are you?

- Mr Jarvis.

This is Dr Sefton.

- Mary. Hi.

- Sam. Hi.

- What the hell's he doing here?

- This is important, Sam.

- Sorry about the short notice.

- No problem.

They have their IDs?

So I'm a Cavanaugh now.

We're tourists. If anyone asks,

I'm Charles Cavanaugh.

Dr Sefton is your sister.

My sister?

Of whom you are extremely fond in a  
clean-cut, healthy, all-American way.

- Where's my sister been all my life?

- Dr Sefton is on loan from NASA.

Jarvis, get the trunk for me,  
will you?

Since when did the office  
start drafting civilians?

All you need to know

is that in the scheme of things,  
she is much more valuable to us  
than you are.

I take it you're as valuable as ever?

Naturally.

So if you two are being shot at,  
which bullet do I take?

You must try for both, of course.

What's so important to draw you out

of your office and into the field?  
Something unusual was reported  
entering our atmosphere last night.  
One of our Keyhole satellites  
picked this up.

- You wanna give me a hint?  
- See the little blur, top left?  
Yeah.

The analysts speculate  
that's where the UFO may have landed.

- That's all we have?  
- We immediately sent in two agents.  
Deitman and Truly.

They have not reported back and we  
have not been able to contact them.  
Peripheral reports?

The usual ground sightings.  
Reports of a landing.

Then a local TV station sent  
in a mobile unit to do a spot-cast.  
And they reported  
that indeed a UFO had landed.  
An hour later they changed  
their tune.

Claimed it was a hoax.  
A fraud perpetrated by a couple of  
farm boys who built this spaceship.  
Nice sign.

- You go ahead. I'll catch up.  
- OK.

Tell me, Mary,  
what exactly do you do for NASA?

- My speciality's exobiology.  
- Exobiology?

It's the study of what alien life  
forms might be like.

You make a living at that?  
Seems it'd be mostly guesswork.  
We used to joke in school  
that ours was the only science  
without a subject matter.

So you people are with the office  
of scientific intelligence.  
Till two days ago

I hadn't heard of it.  
You wouldn't have.  
Our existence isn't public knowledge.  
Eisenhower started O-SCI back in '59.  
We're an offshoot of the CIA,  
but the old man runs it  
like his own private dictatorship.  
- Pay for this, will you, Sam?  
- Sure, Charles.  
Three for the... flying saucer.  
What do you hear, Sam?  
No birds.  
Right. No birds.  
Care to see inside, sir?  
Only a buck more.  
That's a bargain.  
Let's have a look, shall we?  
Sure.  
Hi.  
Let's see... Three dollars.  
There you go.  
How much have you made so far?  
About \$320.  
I'll go first.  
Thanks.  
Could you help me here?  
Thanks.  
Thank you.  
Let's go, lady.  
I'm trying to run a business here.  
It doesn't look safe.  
It is. We've been taking people  
through all day.  
She balked  
at the Pirates of the Caribbean.  
Come on.  
Keep the money, guys.  
We're running late.  
Come on.  
Come on.  
Thanks, guys.  
- Well, Charles?  
- Wait a minute.  
Couldn't see anything,

but there was definitely something strange going on. What about the burn marks? The burn marks were real. Something landed there, but not that thing. Why that thing? Why the cover-up? Go on, Mary. There was something odd about those boys. And the men. What, precisely? I know this doesn't necessarily qualify as scientific evidence, but a woman is used to a certain response from men, and from those boys I didn't even get the automatic... When I was introduced to Sam, he did this. I did not do that. Based on what I was doing with my blouse, they should have tried to look down my top... Wouldn't have had to try very hard. We'll go to the TV station that broadcast those conflicting reports. Try something and let me know if you get the same reaction.

- Yes.
- Let's go.
- I did that when we first met?
- You're still doing it.
- Stay by the car.
- I'll keep it up there and wait.

That's fine. The FCC does not take misrepresentation lightly, Mr Barnes. We made an explanation over the air. What else do you want? We fell victim to a practical joke. It was a mistake. We're only human, after all. Damn. Could I borrow your pen?

Well, I've seen the site.  
I find it difficult to imagine  
that a couple of farm boys  
could have pulled off  
a hoax like that on their own.  
Are you implying  
that my station was in on it?  
Be realistic.  
Hold it!  
He's still moving.  
- My God!  
- Well, well, well.  
- What the hell is that?  
- Our visitor, I presume.  
Careful.  
No! Sam!  
I want to take it back.  
Give me that case.  
Thank you for your cooperation,  
Mr Barnes.  
We will be in touch with you as soon  
as I complete the investigation.  
They're on their way right now.  
Let's go, Sam.  
Sorry.  
This way.  
Billy, they're coming through.  
Stop them, Billy.  
... you can stay calm,  
those around you will react...  
Especially if you have children.  
Once...  
Could I see some ID, please, sir?  
Sam, you drive. Jarvis,  
get in the car.  
Get away from the car, officer.  
Get in the car.  
He's on the car, Sam!  
Get out!  
- Get out.  
- Get him off!  
Get him off.  
It's the kid from the spaceship.  
- Get him off the car.

- Jarvis, help him.

My God.

- Sam. You all right?

- Yeah, I'm all right.

Make sure Langley understands we must stop this before it spreads.

I want that town sealed up completely.

Put up perimeter roadblocks...

Not local police.

They have been compromised.

Right?

The troops you send in must put up a challenge at 100 yards and shoot anyone who comes closer than 50 yards.

Get Holland

to take a hazard response team and investigate the landing site.

There is no time to waste...

- Thanks.

- Sure.

We should exercise extreme caution.

It wasn't supposed to happen like this.

What wasn't?

First contact.

What did you expect? ET?

No, but it would have been nice.

I never liked that little troll.

He's in his element. He's only really happy during a crisis.

Yeah. Alive.

A little tense between you two?

Yeah, well, he's my father.

This is incredible.

- Graves.

- Quite incredible.

Plenty of time for amazement later.

Right now I need facts.

OK, here's one. It's dead.

Are you sure?

No body heat, no electrical activity

and no movement.

If we vented the chamber,  
it'd be pretty ripe in there.

We gave it quite a jolt of  
electrical current.

Probably vascular collapse, although  
most parasites, when separated...

Dr Sefton will define  
what we're dealing with.

Right. How do you  
want to handle this?

We need to know how the creature  
interfaces with our nervous system.

We should split into teams,  
each focusing on a different aspect  
of the alien.

Biochemistry, physiology,  
reproduction.

- Endocrinology...

- Wait a minute.

What we need to know  
is who we're fighting  
and how to fight them.

Is that clear to both of you?

It's one o'clock. In two hours

I'm calling a meeting at the office.

Make sure you have  
something for me by then.

Brad, cover.

OK, Jim, tape this.

And get a water sample.

I'll be damned.

- Do you want me to wait?

- No. I'll check you out later.

- Any trouble in Iowa?

- Not like you people had.

I heard you had to take a couple  
of people out.

These weren't people any more.

You shoot, they just keep on coming.

Any word on Deitman and Truly?

- Has anyone told their wives yet?

- Not yet.

So what are we looking at here?

It seemed something organic  
had eaten its way into the earth  
below the water table.

Now, whatever was hiding  
in that fake saucer was moved.

A hole filled with water was left.

What's your guess? How many of those  
things could have been in that hole?

Based on the size of the cavity,  
could have been thousands.

I don't know if this counts for  
anything, but...

that kid said 320 people had gone  
through that ship about 11 hours ago.

What's the population of Ambrose?

10,001.

- All right, Mary, let's go.

- OK.

Please keep in mind

we were a little rushed.

Here's the creature, with an incision  
along its ventral surface.

The first thing that stands out  
is the complexity of its neo-cortex.

In a human, brain tissue accounts  
for about 5% of total body mass.

But in this creature,

and here's the brain tissue,  
it accounts for about 60%.

This black tentacle, which we saw  
jet across Barnes's office,  
contains a probe. An interface  
between the creature and its host.

The probe penetrates the brain  
while these hooks here and here  
lock into the spinal column.

Together they override  
the human nervous system.

Wait. Are you saying that these slugs  
are using us like puppets?

Exactly.

You didn't mention whether  
the creature has eyes. Does it?

We haven't been able

to locate any sensory organs.  
Anything else?  
We found human DNA and protein  
inside the creature.  
They're able to adapt to whichever  
life form they're riding on.  
We breathe oxygen  
so they breathe oxygen.  
The two systems merge.  
Can't we exploit this  
potential weakness?  
What affects the host  
might also affect the parasite.  
We must find something  
they're vulnerable to and we're not.  
The people being ridden  
seemed stronger than normal.  
We think they boost adrenaline  
production into their host.  
Like injecting nitro into  
a car's fuel line.  
The car will run faster  
but the engine will burn out sooner.  
It's really quite a remarkable  
organism.  
Much more efficient  
than anything on earth.  
Look how elegant  
the cartilaginous structure is.  
Incredible. It doesn't use  
haemoglobin in oxygen transport.  
It uses a chlorophyll derivative.  
Jeez, Graves. He sounds like  
he wants to fuck the thing.  
Shut up, Holland.  
Dr Sefton, do you have any idea  
how we should proceed?  
This was a preliminary postmortem...  
When did you quit smoking?  
- Must have left them in the car.  
- Stop him!  
Jesus. He's got one on him!  
Security!  
Alex, go upstairs!

Secure the exit.

Bonnie, call 334, main gate.

- Come on, upstairs.

- Main gate.

Alex!

- Where is it?

- I don't know.

- Harris, get a medic.

- Right.

- Sam?

- We got him.

I guess that thing

jumped onto whoever it ran into.

Put your gun down, Sam. Slowly.

Take off your shirt.

Thank you.

Well, let's find it.

Search everybody.

Right, everyone's accounted for.

- One of the aliens...

- This was on Jarvis.

It contains every emergency contingency we've drawn up since '59.

One of the alien life forms is loose in the building.

We have to presume that it's riding on the back of one of us.

Sam, show them your back.

Sam is clean.

Holland. Gorman.

Miss Haines. Everybody.

Miss Haines. Everybody.

What about you, sir?

Yeah, she's right. You're not exempt.

Stop her!

Gannet, Beasley, come on!

Miss Haines!

Miss Haines! Come back here!

Let go of me!

- They're down in the kitchen.

- Hurry up! Let's go down!

Damn! I lost it!

Forget it. Forget it.

I lost it.

It was too quick.

It went up through there.

I want that thing found tonight.

Turn the building upside down,  
but find it.

- Miss Haines?

- Sam, get cleaned up.

I want every second of Jarvis's time  
accounted for.

I want to know everything he was  
up to since we left Iowa.

Go and get a medic, will you?

God...

He's been like this  
since you brought him in.

In many ways he's exhibiting  
classic withdrawal symptoms,  
much like you'd find  
in a drug addict.

Are you saying he was actually  
addicted to having that thing on him?

No, he's saying  
that the presence of the thing  
satisfies some need or other.

Thanks, doc.

Jarvis is cold turkey  
and Miss Haines is in a coma.

- All victims will react this way?

- How would you react?

One minute you have this huge brain,  
the next moment you don't.

Think of it.

It'd be a lot easier if they had  
a live specimen to work with.

- What do you think these things are?

- Let's have a look.

They almost look like antennae.

What are they receiving?

Or transmitting, for that matter.

Radar, maybe. Or sonar signals,  
like bats.

Do you think that's how the aliens  
are able to recognise each other?

Yeah?

- You're the manager of the building?

- Yeah. Can I help you?

I need to get inside the apartment  
of Neil Jarvis.

Yeah, sure.

Just a second.

I'll be right with you.

Do you have a crowbar?

No, I got the keys.

Up this way.

Anybody here?

Hello?

These arrived this morning for  
Mr Jarvis.

- I let the delivery people in.

- Give me a hand.

Yeah, sure.

Iowa. I wonder what that's all about.

What the hell are those things?

The president's scheduled appearance  
at the digital age conference

has drawn harsh criticism

from Senator Allen,

who categorised the visit

as blatant grandstanding.

Make sure the magnetometer's cranked  
up early. We don't want delays.

Has headquarters given us

the name of our post standers?

Yes.

I need more agents on that balcony.

- And all along this perimeter.

- OK.

Long time no see.

Good to see you, Bruce. This is

Evan Greenberg, one of my agents.

- How are you, Evan?

- Hi.

What brings you down here?

I understand the president

is scheduled to appear here.

If everything goes as planned.

There's a situation developing

that I think you need to know about.

Can we talk in private?

Yeah. Come on.

OK. Now, Sam, what's this all about?

What the hell are you doing?

Please take your seats. The opening session is about to begin.

- Good to see you.

- Welcome, Mr President. This way.

Get him.

Alpha One, he's headed your way.

Watch where you're going.

Bruce, will you tell me what's happening here, please?

Clear?

Dead.

Are you all right, sir?

Andrew.

What in God's name is going on?

Damn! There! There he is!

Stop! Hold it!

Stop!

Again.

Watch out!

Hold up.

Jesus, that was close.

- You think he would have shot me?

- Of course he would.

Get him to the lab.

What does all this mean?

Top line is Sam's heart rate.

Bottom is the alien's.

They're identical. Brain waves too.

Their nervous systems are linked.

Pulse is 120. Blood pressure

140/90. Temperature 103.

Creature's running him hot.

Move the fluoroscope

to the right profile, please.

What's this?

An electromagnetic signal. At first we thought it was just interference.

It seems to be coming

from the parasite.

- You were right, then. Radar.

- Yeah.  
- Let me hear it.  
- It's too high a frequency.  
Wake him up. I'm going in there.  
Sir, it's not a good idea.  
I don't think it's safe in there.  
It's Sam, Lawrence.  
- Sir?  
- It's all right.  
Wake him up, Jim.  
Bring me that stool.  
Can you hear me?  
Sam isn't here any more, Andrew.  
You know me?  
And your dead wife.  
And Mary.  
You wouldn't believe the fantasies  
my host has about you, Mary.  
- Would you like me to tell you?  
- No, we would not.  
I will ask the questions,  
and if you do not cooperate,  
I'll administer electric shocks  
and you will die.  
I will stop the heart of this host  
and it will die.  
Get him back!  
- He's gone flatline!  
- 2cc of ephinephrine!  
2cc of ephinephrine, stat.  
It's back.  
Hold that ephinephrine.  
My God, it has total control.  
Sam, why have they come here?  
What do they want?  
I warned you.  
Shock it.  
I acknowledge you can hurt me, but  
each shock shortens your son's life.  
Do you understand?  
Of course I understand.  
Now you answer me.  
Why are you here?  
Our previous hosts ceased to be

useful.

You are stronger than they were.

You will last longer.

Right. How many are you?

One.

There may be semantic differences.

Its concept of identity

may be different.

No.

No.

How many are you?

One.

Sam, do you have any idea

how many of them there are?

It was thinking "one".

It doesn't know why you keep...

Always giving orders, aren't you,  
Andrew?

Always telling people how to run  
their lives.

Maybe that's why you're so lonely.

Did you ever think of that?

Maybe that's why

your son resents you so much.

You won't be lonely when you're

one of us. No-one will be.

For God's sake,

tell us what you want.

Peace.

Say goodbye to your son, Andrew.

Jesus. It's killing him.

Get it off him!

It's gone.

Welcome back.

I'm sorry you had to

go through that, son.

Those things I said, Dad.

- It wasn't me talking.

- Come on.

Do you remember what happened?

I was aware. I was conscious of what

I was doing and what was happening.

It was like having one of those

dreams when you're paralysed.

No matter how much I tried  
to move or scream, I just couldn't.  
It had total control over me.  
I was like an open book to them.  
They could read everything in my  
mind. My thoughts, fears, memories.  
Did they have thoughts?  
I remember something about...  
...their ship...  
It wasn't a ship, though.  
It was like a nerve centre.  
A hive.  
Had to get back to it...  
...to share information  
with the others.  
You know where it is? Do you?  
I'm not sure where, really.  
Get some rest.  
Get some rest.  
Let me know as soon as  
I can try again.  
Say goodbye to your son, Andrew.  
That's enough of that. Take it off.  
Sir.  
The parasites run their hosts  
at a high body temperature,  
which gives them  
an identifiable heat signature.  
We have been able to track  
that heat signature  
through thermal imaging from  
satellite sweeps and reconnaissance.  
Run the RPV recording.  
This is Ambrose, and those red areas  
are creature-controlled.  
Give me maximum magnification here,  
please.  
I want to show you something.  
These are human beings  
with creatures on their back.  
- What's the green dot?  
- A human being without a creature.  
He's surrounded  
by parasite-controlled hosts.

And now he too has a parasite  
on his back.

I'm not... I'm not coming.

I'm sorry, Dad.

Get this off me.

Everybody, just get off of me.

It's OK.

- Get it off me!

- It's not on you any more.

It's not on you any more.

OK? You're OK.

- You're OK.

- I can still feel it.

It's gone. It's gone.

You're all right.

Have we been in contact  
with the governor?

What about the Iowa National Guard?

They will have been infiltrated.

You have to go in on a federal level.

Our nearest troops are the first  
infantry division at Fort Riley.

- How quickly can we move on this?

- You'll have a force in 12 hours.

I recommend we go in at night to take  
advantage of the thermal imaging.

Do it.

Wait. I see something.

We're going in.

Go.

Shit.

- Gentlemen.

- What's this?

- This is a thermal image feed.

- It's from Lieutenant Abbey's unit.

They're using children?

You cannot think of them as children.

They are the enemy.

General?

- They're here to see you, sir.

- In the office. I'll be in soon.

This way, men.

We've lost satellite link-up, but  
we have Lieutenant Abbey on audio.

The situation's under control now.

We'll bring the children  
into the holding area  
then move on to sector seven.

Thank you.

So far so good.

What's going on in here?

Captain Earley, sir.

Iowa National Guard, Camp Dodge.

We're here to provide backup.

I didn't hear anything  
about you being called in.

- Get me Washington on the line.

- I'd rather you didn't.

Did you find a way  
to kill them?

No, not yet. We're trying everything.

Different bacteria, viruses,  
radiation.

But so far we've found nothing  
that doesn't kill the host.

See the one looking at us? He's  
wearing the slug we took off you.

They've been sitting like that  
for hours.

Yeah, they're merging. It's how  
they communicate with each other.

- Yeah?

- They exchange chemical signatures.

We're ready, Dr Graves.

We should have thought of that.

Ants communicate in the same way.

Where did you get  
the second parasite?

Just watch.

We set up a keyboard  
in case they want to talk to us.

Vargas, note the time.

- Does the old man know about this?

- He wanted to make sure.

Here we go again.

This is how they reproduce.

A second adult parasite in minutes.

Vargas, get the old man on the line.

Watch what they do to the little one.  
The new one knows me.  
I've got General Morgan reporting in.  
Andrew Nivens here, general.  
How is it going down there?  
It was touch and go for a while,  
but we think the worst is over now.  
- It's your son.  
- Hang on, Sam.  
We've got 70% of the area contained  
- and kept casualties fairly low.  
- Thank you.  
Would you take off your shirt  
and turn your back to the camera?  
- Is this a joke?  
- No, it's not. Take off your shirt.  
I don't take my orders from you.  
Order him to take off his shirt. Sam,  
go on.  
I'm sorry, general. Would you  
humour us for a moment, please?  
God.  
- There's no signal coming in.  
- What's going on?  
The transmission isn't lost.  
The transmission has been cut because  
General Morgan has been taken,  
and we can assume  
that his troops are now our enemy.  
We're getting reports  
that the situation's been contained.  
The reports are faked.  
We're being manipulated.  
I have just been told  
that their numbers are increasing  
infinitely more than anticipated.  
We've lost a town, sir.  
Now we've lost an army.  
They're capable of transmitting  
not just intelligence but memory  
from one body to the next  
by coming into physical contact.  
The new one knew Sam as if  
it had been the one on his back?

Yes.

How long does it take it  
to prepare for division?

12 hours. Let's assume  
we started with 1,000 of them.

We'll be conservative.

That's one day, 4,000.

Two days, 16,000.

- In two weeks there would be...

- More than 250 billion.

You OK?

I don't know why your father  
picked me.

- I won't be able to find the answer.

- Wait.

He knows what he's doing.

You'll find something.

No, Mary, you will.

Thanks, Sam.

He's given everyone

a few hours off to recuperate.

I don't have time to go to the hotel.

I'll go back to the lab.

No, I...

I just live a few blocks from here.

OK.

That wasn't very friendly.

I wouldn't take it personally.

He's kind of a prima donna.

- How about if I make a fire?

- That'd be great.

Is that OK for him

to go out like that?

Yeah, yeah. He comes and goes.

- Is this your mom?

- Yeah.

She's pretty.

She died about a year

after that picture was taken.

What was it like growing up with him?

- Boot camp.

- I'll bet.

Whenever he was working at home,

he'd give me a quarter

for every hour I could keep quiet.  
One day, I remember it was...  
it was a Saturday morning.  
I decided I wouldn't say anything  
until he did,  
even if it took all weekend.  
But he never said anything.  
I don't think he even noticed.  
So how much did you make?  
About 12 bucks.  
Shit.  
It's the old man.  
Yeah.  
Yeah, she's here with me.  
Yeah. OK.  
- Are you all right?  
- Yeah, I just dropped the phone.  
Look who turned out  
to be a sweetie after all.  
So?  
So we have to go back.  
Maybe we could stay  
another... ten minutes.  
Don't move.  
Why did you do that, Sam?  
What's the matter, Sam?  
Isn't this what you wanted  
from the day we met?  
You and I together.  
You can't hurt her, can you?  
But I can.  
Mary got it off your cat? Jesus.  
They've taken her back to their hive,  
I'm positive.  
If they've taken her back there,  
there's nothing we can do about her.  
I'm going after her.  
No, you're not.  
It's a suicide mission.  
You don't understand the enemy.  
I won't have you  
on the casualty list.  
I have to find the hive,  
get inside and get information.

In 12 hours that area will be a war zone. You're not thinking rationally. Dad, I'm sick of thinking rationally. I'm going after her!

Do you intend to help me or not?

It's receiving OK.

Minneapolis has been invaded.

Civil authorities are fighting to keep the situation under control, but they are not having much luck.

It's good, but the frequency still isn't matching.

What safeguards can be taken to protect you and your family?

Keep your doors and windows locked. Don't let anyone into your home, even if they appear to be a friend.

If you absolutely have to venture outside...

OK, can we get started?

Stay tuned to this station for further updates.

There's some sort of a hive that they have to go back to regularly.

Central source.

Intelligence replenishing.

Exactly.

OK, let's run this.

I've had the analysts sort through the thermal image data we've gathered in order to plot the expansion of the alien colony.

This is a satellite picture of Iowa when the UFO was sighted.

Here. Day 1. Now watch.

The orange shape represents the spread of the colony over five days.

Now, what you'd expect, if it's necessary to stay close to the hive, with Iowa's topography, is that the shape would be roughly circular.

So we rationalised it into three overlapping circles.

Could you do that, please?

If we shrink these circles back,  
we find the location of the hive  
at different times.

Each time the hive is on the river.

That could be how they moved it.

All right. This is where  
it all started.

This is where the hive is now.

Des Moines.

Makes sense. High population density.

And it'd be easier to defend.

We've narrowed its location to a  
ten-block radius in the city centre.

That's where Mary is. I know it.

Show me the projected size of  
the colony in the next 24 hours.

We'll parachute in tonight.

- We have six hours.

- We'll need eight.

You've got eight hours.

You've got a very tight eight-hour  
window to pull this off.

- After that you're on your own.

- Yes.

- Opening drill.

- Look, reach, pull.

Good.

Wait up!

I just want to tell you  
we jerry-rigged these transmitters  
so they send out  
the same frequency as the aliens.  
It's how they recognise each other.  
If you don't get too close,  
they'll think you're one of them.

- Beautiful.

- Nice.

- Thanks, Graves.

- Thanks.

Hey, Graves, I think you're a genius,  
man.

I just want to apologise for that  
comment I made back in the room.

About you fucking the thing.

- Let's go!

- I didn't mean it.

- Thanks. Thanks.

- Good luck.

...choppers. We'll have to use  
army vehicles and supply them here.

We have to cover this terrain...

Danny?

Somebody help!

Forget it, Alex.

No!

Jesus, I don't wanna end up  
like that.

- Trapped inside my own body.

- Come on.

He wants to merge.

Remind me to thank Graves.

The president's announcement has sent  
shock waves throughout the country.

They should be at the city centre  
now, sir.

... have been filtering in  
from virtually every state.

In response, the president has  
declared a state of emergency,  
instituting martial law  
in all major urban centres.

In related news,

the financial world...

All units designated primary  
and secondary to proceed to level P2.

All other units  
should assemble on the first floor.

- This has to be it.

- Let's go around back.

It's down there.

- I should be going with you.

- Just give me 20 minutes.

How will I know it's really you?

If it's not, you know what to do.

Share information... with the others.

Sam, why are they here?

What do they want?

My thoughts, my fears.  
My memories.  
You won't be lonely  
when you're one of us.  
No-one will be.  
It's everything  
you try to hide from yourself.  
Isn't this what you always wanted?  
You wouldn't need the fantasies  
that life was just about you.  
You and I, together.  
You can't hurt her, can you?  
- It's not on him.  
- Get it off me!  
But I can.  
Get it off me!  
Don't move, don't move.  
Fuck.  
You all right?  
There's something you've gotta see.  
It's important, Sam.  
Wait.  
Stay close to me.  
This is why they wanted me.  
Jesus, Mary, what is this place?  
While we've been studying them,  
they've been studying us.  
More dead bodies. Great.  
Can we get out of here?  
He's alive!  
Get him out of there!  
This is what we want. Something  
killed the parasite but not the boy.  
Why did it die?  
He must have contracted  
something fatal to his parasite.  
He was sealed off in here  
so he wouldn't infect the others.  
This is it.  
Come on.  
That's Alex. Take the kid.  
Alex! I got him! Let's go!  
Help!  
Come on!

We can't help him. Come on.  
Come on.  
You gotta get up on the roof. Go.  
This'll keep them busy.  
Code eight. All units to South Plaza.  
Main power supply.  
- Can you stand up?  
- Yeah.  
Do you think you can walk?  
They'll pick us up on the roof.  
They're coming.  
Go!  
Come on!  
- Take the kid.  
- OK. I got him.  
You weren't planning on leaving  
without me, were you, buddy?  
Go. Get him to the roof.  
Let's talk about it, Alex.  
Here, kitty-kitty.  
I'll talk to you, Sam.  
I know you're in here.  
If I have to look for you too long,  
it's gonna really piss me off.  
Where are you,  
you lousy son of a bitch?  
You said you'd help me.  
You're no better than your father.  
Help me!  
God!  
Come on!  
- Alex, man, fight it!  
- Yaaagh!  
Fight it, man! Fight it!  
How could he, Sam? You couldn't.  
Don't leave me!  
- Please, Sam, get it off!  
- Alex?  
- Alex!  
- Get it off!  
Not very smart, are you, Sam?  
Pick him up. Bring him here.  
It's safe. Come on!  
Where are the others?

You never did have a right hand.

Come here.

We gotta go. Where's Holland?

He didn't make it.

- You all right?

- Yeah.

Get Nivens on the radio.

The boy has encephalitis, which causes inflammation of the brain.

It's not fatal to humans if it's treated in a few days, but the aliens are 60% brain matter, so it should kill them first, allowing us to save the host.

- How long has it been?

- 33 minutes.

There's still the question of disease vectors. How it would spread.

Mosquitoes.

Yes.

Mosquitoes.

We could release infected batches over the areas controlled by aliens.

Wait.

Jesus.

It's disgusting.

33 minutes, 18 seconds.

That's it. We've done it.

Yes, but how do we get to them all?

They've spread so far.

We don't need to.

There's only one alien.

We've been thinking of millions. It's one creature with a million parts.

The same way

they transmit information, they'll transmit the disease.

A chain reaction. We can infect the colony as if it were one body.

Perfect.

We've got General Morgan coming in from Fort Riley.

Bring the camera over here, please.

Well, we're all clean, sir.

It seems to be working.  
The medics are administering  
the antitoxin throughout the area.  
Most of my men are sick as hell,  
but the aliens are dying.  
01 to P3. All clear.  
Anything?  
Yes.  
Yeah. They're on their way down?  
Good.  
All clear down here.  
What were they trying to do here?  
Rebuild their home.  
Careful, sir.  
My God!  
Everybody OK down there?  
Soldier, down here.  
You OK?  
I'm fine. Sorry. It was silly of me.  
I should have been more careful.  
Check him out, please.  
He's clean.  
- Sorry, sir...  
- No, please don't apologise.  
We'll need to take samples  
of the structure.  
It's a pity we couldn't save it.  
What we might have learned...  
Well, I've seen enough.  
Thank you.  
I don't think I would have believed  
it was really over.  
How you doing?  
I can't believe  
I slept for two days.  
Excuse me, sir.  
Dr Nivens forgot his cane.  
Give me a hand up.  
- There you go.  
- Thanks very much.  
Thank you.  
Come on, soldier. On the double.  
Move!  
Call in emergency services now.

Hello, Sam.

I can fly a helicopter.

Perfectly.

You never told me how good it felt.

I had no idea man could feel

such a sense of freedom.

- My God!

- When did you take him?

- Back in the ship.

- We checked.

I explained we had to lower  
my body temperature, so we did.

- We learn from our mistakes.

- I want you to land this helicopter.

Or what?

A gun.

Automatic pilot.

What are you going to do?

Do you think that you are capable  
of killing your father?

He'd want me to.

Possibly.

But the question is, can you?

Give me...

But you can't win.

Give it up.

Stand back.

You guys come with me.

Dad?

Come on, man. Don't do this to me.

Don't do this to me! Dad!

Stop shouting, Sam, for God's sake.

You know how much I hate it.

I got it. I got it.

I can't believe you actually shot me.

What would you have done?

I would have shot you, of course,  
but...

I never dreamed

you were that kind of man.

Get outta here, Sam. I'm fine.

- It's OK, I'm going with you.

- No. Take her for a cup of coffee.

Exercise a fantasy.

OK, Dad.

That was the last one.

You don't know that.

- Yes, I do.

- Excuse me.

Have a good time.

I guess you exobiologists

finally earned your keep.

Yeah, I guess.

When I was inside that thing,  
it was like hearing a thousand voices  
inside my head.

Yeah, I know.

You were there.

Your memories, your thoughts,  
feelings.

Everything you try to hide  
from yourself.

Yeah.

I guess you know how I feel  
about you, then.

Down to the last gory detail.

- Gives you an unfair advantage.

- Why's that?

It would take me forever  
to learn that much about you.

No, I think actually it helps us.

If you look at it  
from a sociological point of view,  
you could argue that men take a lot  
longer to open up than women do.

So you should be right on track  
in about 40 or 50 years.