

Entry Ten - Chel

by

Jordan Cobb

No Such Thing Productions

INT. Warrens Below the Pyramid, NC1701-Delta - NIGHT

We hear Chel scream and struggle as The Gorgon drags her down into the dark network of tunnels below the pyramid. The descent is rapid and chaotic, and we hear as she is roughly bounced and pulled, scraping and banging against the rocky earth. We might even hear the sound of cracking glass as her helmet slams into the ground and her visor breaks.

CHEL

No! Nonononono! Stop! STOP!

The Gorgon lets out a snarling scream. Chel screams, and we hear them struggle. Teeth snap. Chel shrieking. The Gorgon hissing and snarling. There are several hollow, ringing thumps as Chel repeatedly kicks at the creature.

CHEL (CONT'D)

No! Get off! GET OFF! Get off of me!
Get away from me!

Chel kicks out violently. We hear the sound of bone snapping and glass breaking, and Chel lets out a terrible scream.

Static.

FADE TO:

INT. Warrens Below the Pyramid, NC1701-Delta - LATER

We hear the sound of something thick dripping slowly onto the ground. Beyond that, the warren is eerily, suffocatingly silent.

Chel wakes, gasping and choking. Panicked, and disoriented in the dark, she struggles to calm her breathing.

CHEL

P-Peter?

No answer. We hear her click on her communications unit. There is a low buzz of static.

CHEL (CONT'D)

Peter? Peter, can you hear me? ...
Chel to Peter... Chel to Adamantine...
Peter please...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHEL (CONT'D)

HELP! Hey! SOMEBODY! HELP ME!

Her voice echoes. There is no response, only static.

Don't... Peter... Don't... Don't leave
me down here... Shit.

We hear her suit rustling as she tries to sit up. She groans slightly at the movement, and then, abruptly, she screams.

Static.

FADE TO:

3 SCENE TWO

3

INT. Warrens Below the Pyramid, NC1701-Delta - NIGHT

Static. We hear a series of warning beeps.

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Atmospheric seal breached.
Two hours of oxygen remaining.
Warning. Atmospheric seal breached.
Two hours of oxygen remaining.

Static. Chel's voice fades in.

CHEL

...-trapped. I don't know, how long
I've been here, (she lets out a noise
somewhere between a sob and a scream)
Oh god... Oh... go-...

I don't even know if this is
recording. The little light isn't on.
I don't know if I'm still in contact
with the Adamantine, if I'm able to
record, or transmit, or if anyone can
hear me... if you can see me. Locate
me. My suit's displays have all
stopped responding.

Static. We cut out, and then back in.

... I'm leaking atmo. My visor is
smashed. My head aches. I don't
remember when I hit it, but I do taste
the blood. I don't know if it's in my
mouth or on my face... where it's
coming from, I mean... But the visor

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHEL (CONT'D)

is... smashed. Barely staying together. I can't really see through it. Then again, I can't tell that there's very much to see.

And... I think my ankle's broken. The right one. I can't... put any weight on it. Or move it. My foot's... twisted off at an angle, and sort of... Almost limp...

Ahh... Oh... Um... I-... I'm gonna be sick.

(trying to force down bile) God. Um. What was it my dad used to say? "You should see the other guy." Apparently... I put my foot through his head. The Gorgon, not... not my dad. Power of adrenaline, right? It's... oozing. Not moving, just... standing over me, this dark green, viscous gore falling out of the shattered dark hole in its face. It's all over my suit. And the ground. It's... not so much a liquid as a... gel. It IS a liquid in places, a bit like a slushy, but it's congealing fairly quickly. Or I've been unconscious for... I... I don't know... The whole lower third from the snout to the jaw is gone, and cracks are spreading across its face, leaving just one eye wide and intact... staring at me...

From somewhere far away down the tunnels, we hear the echoing cry of another Gorgon.

No... No, no...

Static.

FADE TO:

4 SCENE THREE

4

INT. Warrens Below the Pyramid, NC1701-Delta - NIGHT

CHEL

There are more of them. I don't know
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHEL (CONT'D)

how many. I can hear them moving. Slithering around in the dark. There's no way out, there's no way back up. I don't know if I'm just imagining it, but I can feel them on my skin. Thick tendrils burrowing under my flesh, and cold biting crystal at the back of my neck.

I couldn't wait for you to come find me. You weren't coming. And they were. I'm on my hands and knees. I have to crawl, because of my stupid ankle. But I couldn't run, even if I want to. The passages are choked, and narrow, no way to stand... It's a maze down here. It's just tight, dark spaces. I'm dizzy. It's getting so hard to breathe.

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Fifty-four minutes of oxygen remaining. Warning. Fifty-four minutes of oxygen remaining.

CHEL

Shh! Please! Please... For the love of fuck, please!

Static.

CHEL (CONT'D)

...-No one is coming... I am... completely alone. And I don't think I can make it much-

There is a noise like something sliding across the ground.

CHEL (CONT'D)

No... No... No... Please...

Static.

CHEL (CONT'D)

(whispering) ...-It knows where I am. I can feel it. It's here. Hunting me. It's so close. I can feel it-...

Very close, we hear the echo of a Gorgon's hissing growl.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHEL (CONT'D)

Don't leave me down here, please...
Peter, please... Where are you?!
They're everywhere down here. I can't-

Static.

FADE TO:

5 SCENE FOUR

5

INT. Warrens Below the Pyramid, NC1701-Delta - NIGHT

CHEL

Off! Get this! Stupid! Fucking thing-

We hear a hiss as a pressure seal is released -- Chel has removed her helmet. We can now hear the small, atmospheric sounds of the warrens around her. She takes a deep breath.

Static.

CHEL (CONT'D)

I had to stop. Take off my helmet. My suit's out... out of atmo. Sorry. I guess we'll be testing my theory about how long it'll be safe to breathe...

The air down here is sweet. Like... burning sugar. I expected... I don't know. Rotting eggs? Decay. Something to go with the dark and the cold. But it's... comforting. Even if it's killing me.

You're not coming to save me. I knew that. Have known it. Should have guessed it. I was never meant to make it out of here.

They're communicating with one another. It's some sort of... hive mind. That's how they keep finding me. Blocking my path. They don't... seem to have eyes. But they can find me. Slithering from hole to hole, like the lines between the constellations. Seeking me out, like the last bright star. It's... fitting. Dying. Out here. Burning out in the dark. It's my fault. I asked for this. I just didn't

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHEL (CONT'D)

think it would be so lonely. Burning out. Shouldn't I have known? All my life... I've been drawn to this. Asked for this. Begged for it- to be like them. Always looking out, always reaching up, always seeing the brilliance and the infinite, and the constellations and never, not once noticing there is nothing so bright... and cold.. and beautiful and... desperately alone, as a star. I wanted this. But not... not like-...

But my god. What a ride.

beat.

But I'm no star. I will not burn out. (dully) I have to keep going. I have to get up. I-

She tries to get up and lets out a stifled shriek of pain, that echoes faintly in the tunnels.

SHIT! FUCK! A-ah! No... No... God...

One step. Just... one step. And the oth- AH!

Fuck, please... Don't make me do this. Don't make me do this. Peter, please... It hurts. I can't do this. I can't. I don't-... I don't... FUCK! One st-step. And the other. One step. I can't-... I don't want to... It's not fair. It's NOT FAIR.

I just want you. I want to go home.

Static.

Exhausted, Chel drags herself up towards the mouth of the caves.

CHEL (CONT'D)

It's getting lighter. I can feel the ground... sloping up... Close... Peter, we're so... Light... I can see light...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

We hear the distant crash of thunder. Chel lets out a sob of relief.

I'm so... so dizzy. Please... Oh god... Please. Don't... Don't let me... die here. Don't let me die here. Peter... I want to go home... I want to go home. Please. Please. I'll be good. I'll be quiet. I'll never ever leave again, just PLEASE. I want to go home. I want to go home. Please, please, please... Peter...

Chel has reached the mouth of the caves. With a soft laugh, she drops her helmet into the dirt. There is a sound of something moving rapidly -- someone scrambling to their feet. We hear the sound of a weapon being charged.

PETER

... Chel?

Chel looks up, dazed.

CHEL

Peter... Hi..

PETER

Chel? I-... No. You- You're-

CHEL

Peter.

She staggers into his arms.

PETER

Chel...

CHEL

Just... Hold me.

PETER

Okay. I-... I've got you.

CHEL

Don't let go.

Static.

6 SCENE FIVE

6

INT. Sick Bay, Starship Adamantine - NIGHT

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CONTINUED: (2)

We hear the soft, steady beeping of a heart monitor, and the low hum of several machines.

CHEL

Everything's... blanketed. Like a layer of soft, warm moss is spreading all over my body. I can't... breathe... Everything is-... spinning... And. You're... not here. But the equipment is running. You're recording this... what? For posterity? You said you would be here... you promised you'd be back in a couple of minutes. I remember... you... gave me something, and then-... everything went... sideways. And now I'm strapped to a table. And you are gone. You left me.

I had a bad dream. I was down in the tunnels, and there were monsters in the dark, and I couldn't find you. It was a bad dream. Only... it wasn't.

I was in their nursery, Peter. Just before I found the tunnel out. It was a wide, circular space, with tunnels branching out from all directions, like dozens of spider legs. I found them, Peter. There are... hundreds, maybe thousands of statues down here. All the missing bodies. Our lost civilization, all... gestating. Dormant. Thousands of crystal eggs, perfectly untouched... waiting for... Us. The ones in the caves must have been the last of them. Or the vanguard for the rest of the swarm. Imagine it. All those people...

I... found one... Alive. Another of the dog-like hosts, like the one that dragged me down here, only... the transformation wasn't... complete.

It was lying there, half cocooned in crystal. I could see that same, dark green gelatinous liquid around its mouth, and its big, purple eyes were milky, and starting to frost over. Four of its six legs were already

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHEL (CONT'D)

frozen into stone. It had fur, but most of it was matted with blue-white crystals, and I could see a pearly sheen under its skin, and thin shards of crystals were starting to poke up out of its veins... It looks like that's how it starts. Under the skin, and then... over it. Sealing the host up, working its way from the inside, out. It was still breathing. It... cried. Little sounds.

There was an adult too. I watched it hatch. The torso of one of the statues just disintegrated, and that dark green liquid came sloshing out. And then, after a while... I don't know how long, I've lost track of... everything... it... twisted. Started to slither. It was the same as those long, dark green things we saw coiled up in the trees... It must have been... I don't know... twelve feet long? It poured out of the shell of the host, and disappeared down one of the tunnels.

I couldn't stop looking at that creature, that dog... I can still hear it, Peter. And I can't stop thinking... That would have been me.

I found the path. I could see fragments of my suit and helmet... the indentation of my body against the earth. And I thought, 'I know the way back, now. All there's left to do is climb. Hope I don't suffocate.' I just...

beat.

You let go of my hand.

beat.

I felt it. That slight loosening of your grip. I thought I'd imagined it. You never would. But I saw it in your face. Your calculations. My life,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CHEL (CONT'D)

versus yours. Could you hold me. Was it worth it.

You decided I was already dead. And I watched you let go.

beat.

It's... one of those things. We won't talk about it. Will try never to think about it. But you were never coming to get me.

You let go.

From somewhere down the corridor, we hear something crash.

Peter? (she struggles against her restraints) Damnit! Gotta get this thing-... Peter? What happened are you-

There is another crash, and then sudden silence. Chel inhales sharply and freezes, the realization hitting her all at once. She closes her eyes.

(more a breath than a sigh) Oh.

Peter, I-... I'm... My statue. The statue from the cave. The one I brought-... It's on the ship. I brought it on the ship.

It's here... It's hatched.

FADE OUT.

END.