

Descendants  
BOOK ONE - INHERITANCE  
iii. Those Below

by

Jordan Cobb

No Such Thing Productions

SCENE ONE

INT. Bio-Chem Laboratories, Aphelion Industries - DAY

Axel and Rori stand in the doorway to the lab, stunned, staring at the wreckage of the room before them. Simon, shaking and splattered in blood, struggles to hold themselves upright against one of the lab tables.

SIMON  
Help... H-help...

RORI  
Oh my god.

SIMON  
Help me.

They collapse. Rori moves forward, eyes scanning the room.

RORI  
Where is it?

SIMON  
I-... I don't-

AXEL  
It's not in here.

RORI  
Maybe. Keep your eyes open.

SIMON  
Please, somebody help me.

AXEL  
(moving to steady them) I got you!  
I've got you... (to himself) Name-  
tag... where's-... Ah! Simon? I-... I  
can't make out the last name- shit  
that's a lot of blood... (reading)  
Simon, they/them-

RORI  
What's that on their face?

AXEL  
What?

RORI  
Get back.

She pulls Simon's face towards hers.

AXEL  
They're bleeding.

RORI  
Not that. (she wipes something from  
Simon's face) This.

Green goo drips thickly from her finger onto the floor.

AXEL  
Is that-

RORI  
It's here. They're off the ship.

AXEL  
Shit.

SIMON  
(starting to fully come around) It...  
it came out of the walls... The  
vents...

AXEL  
Do we leave them?

RORI AND SIMON  
No!

SIMON  
Please don't leave me.

RORI  
They need medical attention.

AXEL  
We're under quarantine, and they're  
laying in a pile of blood and alien  
goo! We don't know if they're infected  
or not! We don't know what that thing  
did to them!

SIMON  
It tried to get into my mouth... Tried  
to crawl inside... I couldn't  
breathe...

AXEL  
Captain-

RORI

If we leave them here now, they'll die. No question. That thing will kill them.

AXEL

Like you let it kill Andrea?

SIMON

I didn't let it! I didn't!

RORI

(quietly) Your friend was already dead. They aren't. (to Simon) Can you stand?

AXEL

Rori!

RORI

Hey! Look at me. Can you stand? Can you understand me?

SIMON

I-... Y-yes, I understand... I can't-P-please, don't-

RORI

Easy, I've got you. I've got you. Axel, get some water.

SIMON

Where... where- I don't... God my head... I taste blood.

RORI

It's okay. I've got you.

SIMON

Everything hurts...

AXEL

... Are they dying?

RORI

Not if we can help it. I need water. A towel. We have to stop the bleeding.

Simon lets out a groan. Axel moves to get supplies.

RORI  
Hey. Hey, look at me. You're alright.  
You're gonna be fine. Can you remember  
your name?

SIMON  
I... S-Simon...

RORI  
Okay. Simon... Nice eyeshadow, by the  
way.

SIMON  
Thanks. I'd've worn something a little  
more edgy, if I'd known I was going to  
die today.

AXEL  
What are you doing down here.

SIMON  
I work here.

AXEL  
Not in my brother's lab you fucking  
don't.

RORI  
Axel-

SIMON  
P-Peter's a friend... We used to-...  
He and Chel-... I work down the hall,  
they let me sit in here sometimes...  
work... We brainstorm. Talk. They help  
me with my research.

AXEL  
What research?

SIMON  
Project Orion.

AXEL  
... You're Dr. Medlin. Simon Medlin.  
You took over for Buller after he  
retired.

SIMON  
After Peter fired him.

AXEL  
Same difference.

SIMON  
I can't breathe...

Something in a room further down the hall crashes to the ground. Everyone freezes.

From down the corridor, we hear an echoing, rasping cry.

SIMON  
It's here.

RORI  
(quiet, urgent) Up. Up. Get up. Now.

Another cry. It's much louder now, and closer. We can hear the Gorgon's body slithering wetly along the linoleum.

SIMON  
It's coming!

RORI  
Axel-

AXEL  
The tunnel opens up in the storage closet! We just have to-

And then a second Gorgon rears up from below one of the lab benches, sending splinters and instruments flying as it rears up, crying out in response to its twin. The Gorgon in the hall hisses back.

AXEL  
Holy shit!

SIMON  
Get away from the desk!

RORI  
Simon! Put your arm around me! Axel!  
The door!

He doesn't need to be told twice. Axel is already moving towards the laboratory's supply closet. He throws open the door.

AXEL  
In here!

Axel crouches, and we hear him pull up a piece of the tiled floor and push it off to the side, as Rori helps Simon limp into the closet. Rori pushes the door shut, and Axel keys in a code.

AXEL

Come on... Come on!

The keypad lets out an angry beep.

AXEL

... Oh son of a-... SHIT!

RORI

Axel-

He keys in the code again. Another angry beep.

AXEL

You paranoid motherf-

RORI

What's wrong?!

AXEL

He changed the goddamn passcode! And I can't access the bio-scanner without it! FUCK! Peter, I'm gonna kill you!

We hear the high pitched ring of the Gorgon's song, and things in the lab being pushed around as the creature makes its way inside.

RORI

AXEL-

AXEL

I'm working on it! I just need a second to-

Something bangs into the outside of the closet door with splintering force. The Gorgons growl.

AXEL

The door!

RORI

What am I supposed to do? Build a barricade?!

SIMON  
Hang on, I've got it!

RORI  
Simon, WAIT-

The two Gorgons slam into the other side of the door again. Rori instinctively throws herself against the door, struggling to hold it shut. We hear Simon move deeper into the storage closet, pushing jars and boxes aside. Jars clink as they look through them.

RORI  
SIMON! I can't hold this by myself!

SIMON  
(muttering to themselves) Tippi  
Hedren... Rod Taylor... Orson Wells...  
Just a second!

Again, the Gorgons crash violently against the closet door. It buckles, and begins to splinter.

RORI  
Axel!

AXEL  
Working on it!

RORI  
Doc! What are you doing?!

SIMON  
I'm looking for-... ALFRED HITCHCOCK!

RORI  
What?!

Simon triumphantly snatches up a jar.

SIMON  
Move!

RORI  
Doc-

SIMON  
NOW!

The door buckles again. We hear the Gorgon scream in frustration. Rori moves away from the door.



SIMON

Stand back!

Simon lifts the jar over their head. Something inside buzzes and crackles with a strange energy. And then they hurl the jar down onto the floor. It shatters spectacularly, some of the material flying up and catching Simon in the face. The room is filled with a strange, low, electric buzzing.

AXEL

What the hell are you doing?

SIMON

(stepping back, coughing) Black Orion! One of the original xenobacterias my research team tested for our work... Engineering colonies... Should give us time... The Hitchcock generation was particularly aggressive. They'll develop a mass in front of the door, slow that thing down, should give us a chance to escape. See? Look! They're already starting to spread, reproduce... (coughs) Oh, god, that tastes like shit.

AXEL

I could kiss you right now.

SIMON

(still choking) No, please don't. Everything in my mouth is so awful right now... Ugh, I can't breathe... it hurts...

RORI

That door's not going to hold much longer!

Axel stabs at the keypad. Finally, it lets out a beep of confirmation.

AXEL

MY birthday?! Are you kidding me? Of all the stupid dates-

A Gorgon bellows. We hear them scrabbling wetly at the growing cracks and holes in the wood.

RORI

Axel!

There is an electronic scanning whirr, and then the lock disengages. There is a pneumatic hiss as the trap door to the tunnels swings open.

AXEL

Tunnel! Now! Go, go, go!

Behind them, we hear the closet door crack, splinters falling to the floor. A Gorgon lets out a deafening roar.

Rori helps Simon down into the hole in the floor, and Axel follows them. The trap door hisses and then slams shut behind them.

Silence.

They wait.

And wait...

Wait.

Nothing.

RORI

... Jesus. That was-

AXEL

Too close.

SIMON

Is it gone?

AXEL

I don't know...

SIMON

Can it get in?

AXEL

I don't know...

RORI

... Come on. Let's keep moving.

She starts to move off down the tunnel. After a moment, Axel and Simon follow her into the dark.

FADE TO:

But back in the lab...

BANG! Something hits the closet door.

BANG! It hits the door again, and the wood lets out a creaking protest-

CRACK! The door shatters.

Silence, except for the strange sounds of the ever growing mass of bacteria.

The Gorgons ooze into the storage room through the shattered remnants of the door, hissing at one another as they slide thickly along the floor. We hear the Black Orion buzzing wildly around the opening. One Gorgon pauses to inspect the dark, spreading mass, gurgling faintly... The other squelches slowly over to the scanner, spreading a tendril over it. We hear a thin bubbling of goo as the electronic scanner whirs... and let out a beep. The lock disengages and the Gorgon lets out a venomous hiss...

FADE TO:

SCENE TWO

INT. Secret Passageway, Below Aphelion Industries - NOW

The shadows of the tunnel seem to press in and breathe. Somewhere in the darkness, water drips. Something unseen scurries, scratching. A rat, hopefully.

The trio walks in silence, their footsteps echoing eerily in the space. We hear the soft, steady beep of Rori's locator.

RORI

That was quick thinking back there,  
Doc.

SIMON

I- (coughs) It... It was nothing...

RORI

No, it really wasn't.

SIMON

(quietly) ... Thank you. For... for  
not... not leaving me, or... you  
know...

RORI

Don't mention it.

SIMON  
(glancing at Axel) Really, though.  
Thank you.

AXEL  
What the hell were you doing back  
there, anyway? Didn't you hear the  
sirens?

SIMON  
I was-... working. Listening to a  
voicemail.

AXEL  
(slightly skeptical) A voicemail?

SIMON  
Chel-... Dr. Stadler.

AXEL  
... Oh.

SIMON  
I heard something moving in the walls,  
and then all of a sudden that THING  
just came flooding out of the air  
vent. Quarantine warning came a little  
late for me.

RORI  
You got lucky.

SIMON  
Did I?

AXEL  
Given that thing was hiding under a  
lab bench about ten feet away and  
decided not to kill you? Yeah. Looks  
like.

SIMON  
(to themselves) It's like I was  
bait...

RORI  
So they've figured out the ventilation  
system. They'll be crawling all over  
the building in a matter of hours at  
this rate.

AXEL

There must be something we can-

RORI

We can get out. Stay alive. For now,  
that's all.

SIMON

What are those things?

RORI

(hesitates, then) We're... We're not  
sure.

SIMON

Where'd they come from?

RORI

They came down on the Adamantine.

Simon stops short, excited.

SIMON

You FOUND the Adamantine? Where? When?

Rori stops, and looks at Axel, eyes wide.

RORI

I-... Uh...

AXEL

(under his breath) Jesus.

RORI

I-... It... crashed. Three days ago.  
My team-... We found it out on the  
barrens by the Rosseter moon colony.

SIMON

What do you mean it crashed? Peter's  
an excellent pilot. He wouldn't-... Is  
he alright? What about Chel? Where are  
they? What happened to them? Is that  
where we're going? To see them?

RORI

I... No-... I-...

AXEL

(softly) They're dead, doc.

SIMON  
... dead? Both... both of them?

AXEL  
Those things... from what we've gathered, they must have picked them up out on NCC... or at least, somewhere along the way. It looks like they were trying to make it back home. But... They didn't.

SIMON  
Both of them?

AXEL  
(a sudden flare of temper) YES! Both of them! Both! Chel and Peter! Peter and Chel! What part of dead can't you get through those thick glasses?!

RORI  
Axel!

Axel stops abruptly, startled and chastened.

AXEL  
I... I'm-... I didn't-

SIMON  
It's okay...

AXEL  
(means it) I'm sorry.

SIMON  
It's okay.

Axel turns away. Rori glances at Simon. They're pale.

RORI  
How's your head?

SIMON  
I... I'll be alright. Just... I ache a bit, that's all.

RORI  
You sure? You're still bleeding. You want me to-

SIMON

No. Thank you. Please don't.

RORI

... Okay. I'm Rori, by the way. We didn't have a chance to-... Well. Captain Rori Cassini. ARC Juno.

SIMON

Right... Thank you, Captain.

RORI

Rori's fine... I-... I'm sorry for your loss.

SIMON

I-... Oh... Thank you.

RORI

You were close?

SIMON

There were only three of us. So. Yes. Very.

RORI

I'm so sorry. (and then, frowning) You weren't on the ship.

SIMON

Sorry?

RORI

You three worked as a unit? But they left you behind. You didn't go.

SIMON

Well, Peter and Chel were the unit, I just sometimes... tagged along. I have my own lab and facilities, but I enjoyed their company, and our work sometimes overlapped... But... Really, I mean even if I'd wanted to-... I couldn't. Bad lungs. I don't do well in small shuttles. Too much pressure.

RORI

Oh...

SIMON

It's alright. Better to hold down the

fort here, than to suffocate.

RORI

I... Yeah... What... ah... What were you working on?

SIMON

Synthesis. Well. Bio-engineering. Uh, more specifically the development of artificial lifeforms, designed to advance human technologies and colonial structures.

RORI

Wow... (she mimics the sound of something whooshing over her head)  
Yeah, sorry... You've lost me...

SIMON

Essentially, I'm... part of a team working to ah... evolve a new lifeform, that will... well... build a better future for humanity. Bacteria that will build our houses, power and upgrade our technology. An eco-friendlier future, with these smaller organisms building thriving organic cities for the larger ones.

RORI

Like a coral reef...

SIMON

Exactly.

AXEL

I thought your division had stopped working with the Black Orion bacteria strain, years ago?

SIMON

Well, we did. It's... why Dr. Buller was uh-... When I took over the program, it was deemed that the Black Orion bacteria was too... aggressive. Spread too rapidly, and couldn't reasonably be contained. Too difficult to control, and (coughing) m-might end up being more of a danger to the colonists than a help. So we discontinued developing the new



strains... But we already had a number of cultures ready for experimentation at that point... I just held onto them, and Peter never seemed to mind... I mean... I'd named them, and... they're alive. Just because we can't USE them, doesn't mean they're not useful...

RORI

But I don't understand. What on earth would you want to do with-

AXEL

Did you hear that?

Everyone stops. A faint sound echoes through the tunnel.

RORI

What is it?

AXEL

I thought I heard something.

SIMON

I didn't hear anything.

AXEL

Well maybe if you would stop talking-

RORI

No, wait! Stop...

The sound is louder now. A steady, high pitched ringing song. Something slithers in the darkness.

RORI

It's in the tunnel.

AXEL

Shit!

SIMON

How?!

RORI

Nobody panic. This is absolutely not the time to panic.

SIMON

This is a perfect time to panic.

AXEL

Doc, shut up.

RORI

Both of you, in front of me. We move quickly, and quietly. Don't stop. Don't scream. We don't know how it's tracking us, we might have a shot at getting out of here. Axel, you know the way?

AXEL

I-... Yes. But-

RORI

Then you're in front. Here, help Simon.

She powers up her gun.

We hear the Gorgon let out a long, echoing screech, that reverberates through the tunnels.

RORI

Go. NOW.

They turn, and start to move quickly. The Gorgon's screech turns into a roar.

RORI

RUN!

There is a mad scramble as the trio races blindly through the dark. The Gorgon song is growing steadily louder. A dripping, slithering sound echoes ever nearer.

SIMON

STOP! STOP, STOP, STOP!

Simon breaks abruptly, causing Axel to stumble and Rori to slam into them both.

AXEL

For the love of-

RORI

Doc, what the fuck?!

SIMON

NO! Wrong way! Wrong way!

AXEL

What?

SIMON

The sound is coming from the wrong way! The echoes-... That sound's not coming up from behind us-

The Gorgon song is much louder now. Sharp, and clear, and terribly close. We hear a rasping cry.

RORI

Oh my god...

And then, unmistakably, from behind, another rasping cry.

RORI

No... No... That's not possible...

AXEL

Jesus, we're trapped.

Somewhere in the darkness, a Gorgon screams.

FADE OUT.

CLOSING THEME.

FADE TO:

EPILOGUE

INT. Bio-Chem Laboratories, Aphelion Industries - MEANWHILE

We hear the door to the lab being pushed open, and then rapidly slammed shut. CERISE and GINGER hurry inside, breathing hard.

GINGER

Come on, Cerise! Move it!

CERISE

Ging, WAIT! Please! Let me catch my breath-

GINGER

We don't have time. The alarms have stopped. They'll be going to Stage Two any minute now, and we don't wanna be stuck in the building when it gets doused.

Ginger starts looking through the cabinets.

CERISE

Ginger, WHAT are you doing?

GINGER

Looking for acid! ONE of these doctor-types must have SOMETHING strong enough to get through all that metal they have blocking up the windows.

CERISE

But what if there's like... a disease or something going around? Ging, it's a quarantine-

GINGER

So stay here then! But I'm not sitting around, waiting to die. I wanna go home! Are you gonna stand there looking cute, or are you going to help me?

A sound from the supply closet. Something falls to the ground. Both women freeze.

CERISE

What was that?!

GINGER

Something's in the closet... Hello?

CERISE

GINGER! Oh god, Ging, DON'T.

GINGER

Cerise, shut up. HEY! We can hear you moving around back there... Cut it out! Come out where we can see you! ... Hello? Is somebody in there?

Another sound. Something heavy and wet slithers...

And then through the doorway, a mass appears, rising out of the shadows, and we hear a strangely electric, buzzing, high pitched peal of song...

FADE OUT.

END.