

Prologue - Peter

by

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No Such Thing Productions

DATA PAD TWO - BLACK BOX RECORDING

We hear the sharp hiss of static.

We cut in, mid-transmission as PETER desperately tries to communicate with the outside world. But the message fades in and out of the static.

PETER

... -It came out of nowhere. We had no warning, no-...

... -It's here. It's on board the ship. We didn't-... -I don't even know if anyone can hear me-...

... -This was a mistake. It was a mistake. We never should have come-...

The static overwhelms the recording, and Peter's voice is lost.

The data pad lets out a soft beep.

DATA PAD COMPUTER

Warning. File Corrupted. Warning.
File Corrupted. Warning. File-

Again, we hear the hiss of static, and the data pad jumps to the next available file.

CUT TO:

INT. Bio-Chem Labs, Aphelion Industries - NIGHT

Peter fumbles with his keys, unlocks the door and pushes it open.

Axel is sitting on one of the lab benches, reading a little black book.

AXEL

Working late, Petey?

PETER

Axel! How- How did you get in here?!

(CONTINUED)

AXEL

I own the building, genius.

PETER

Please don't sit on my lab bench.

AXEL

Why? You're not using it.

PETER

I was going to.

AXEL

You should be going home, Petey.

PETER

Peter.

AXEL

Petey... You working hard? Making me lots of money? Taking good notes, and all that jazz.

PETER

Yes. Please put that down.

AXEL

What, this? (flipping open the notebook) Oh I've already read it. You take long bathroom breaks. I didn't know you still kept a diary, Petey.

PETER

Axel!

AXEL

You're not much of a poet, but I'm sure your little friend would be flattered nonetheless.

PETER

Give me that! (snatches it back, huffing) I-...I don't know who you're referring to.

AXEL

Who, Chel? Sure you know Chel! Your lab partner, your friend, your cherie amour.

PETER
Chel is... a colleague.

AXEL
With interesting eyes.

PETER
I don't know what you're talking
about.

AXEL
God, you're hopeless. What would
you do without me?

PETER
Thrive.

AXEL
I'm sure.

PETER
Did you want something?

AXEL
Can't a CEO come visit his
favorite, most productive employee?

PETER
If he has to.

AXEL
What about a man who just wants to
see his baby brother?

PETER
Bullshit.

AXEL
Someone has to check in on you,
Petey.

PETER
Must they?

AXEL
Well you could always come visit
me.

PETER
Why? I know you're fine. Besides...
I've... been busy.

AXEL

I'd noticed. Actually, there was something else. ...You remember that little planetoid you found. Two years back. Out in... where was it?

PETER

Quadrant 2, Sector D, Ceres System... Dwarf planet in orbit around a binary star. Classification NCC1701-Delta.

AXEL

That's the one! It's freaky, the way your mind works. You could have named it anything, you know.

PETER

... I did.

AXEL

I'll assume I'm missing a reference. I'm going to need you to pull out those notes.

PETER

What? Why?

AXEL

Because I think it's about time I made a little money off it, don't you? You said the soil was rich. Plenty of mining veins to tap into, and chemicals to extract.

PETER

I said there was evidence of rich soil. But it would take more preliminary research to be sure.

AXEL

And what about the evidence of the class 6 civilization? You never mentioned that. (beat) That's a pretty penny you've been sitting on, brother mine. (beat) I saw the satellite photos. You need a better passcode for your data pad.

PETER

Who went through my-

(CONTINUED)

AXEL

You sat on this for two years. You knew we were looking for something exactly like this. Why did you keep the C6 out of your report?

PETER

I-... It didn't seem relevant.

AXEL

An undiscovered class 6 alien civilization didn't seem relevant. To a man who studies dead aliens for a living. I'm not even going to dignify that by calling you a liar. ... You're not selling this information, are you?

PETER

What?! No!

AXEL

Good. Because your little shining city in the stars could be hiding the next technological leap forward for mankind. And if someone else gets to it first-

PETER

It just didn't seem like this was a good time for an expedition.

AXEL

For you, or for her? Because I think this is the perfect time for a little treasure hunt. Your colleague with the interesting eyes seems to agree with me.

PETER

Chel?

AXEL

She came to see me.

PETER

What? When?

AXEL

Couple of days ago. I was thinking about giving her a transfer.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

What, to... to the Ceres system?!
You can't do that.

AXEL

No? You don't think she's talented?

PETER

Of course she's talented! She's
brilliant! But she doesn't know how
to take care of herself! She
wouldn't last 10 minutes out there
on her own!

AXEL

I completely agree.

PETER

You do?

AXEL

Which is why you're going too.

PETER

WHAT?!

AXEL

Well, like you said, it's not as if
she can do this on her own. One
person does not an expedition make!
And you are her supervisor.

PETER

You're punishing me.

Axel hops down off the lab bench.

AXEL

As your employer I'm legally
required to say no. As your
brother, I am ABSOLUTELY punishing
you. You're lucky I don't tell mom.

PETER

Axel-

AXEL

And you and I both know, you're the
only one worth trusting for this
job. (beat) You'll be leaving in
about six weeks, we should have
everything arranged by then. A two
person shuttle will take you out to

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AXEL (cont'd)
the Ceres system, you'll make a thorough preliminary report of the planet, and our long dead friends, and whatever innovations you come across, and then come back.

PETER
But... but- No!

AXEL
Mom always said you needed to get out more.

PETER
Axel, I am not a field expert! I don't WANT to be a field expert! I LIKE my lab! I LOVE my lab!

AXEL
And if you'd done your damn job like you were supposed to, you could have stayed in it! (claps him on the shoulder) Think of it this way. It's just you, and Chel, floating together all alone together in the dark, cold recesses of lonely space, for months, and months... Plenty of time to get cozy.

PETER
Axel PLEASE!

AXEL
Don't ever said I never did anything for you, Petey.

Axel leaves, grinning, and shuts the door behind him.

PETER
Axel! AXEL!

The words fade in the hiss of static, and the recording abruptly cuts out.

FADE OUT.

END.