

STATION 151

EPISODE 2.0
“ORIENTATION”

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BASED ON THE SERIES BY

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EXT. STATION 151 ANTARCTICA - DAY

SFX: wind howling

WILKINS

Can you hear me, Wayne?

(...)

Wake up.

(...)

Wayne. Wake up.

WAYNE

(really groggy)

Uh. Um. I see. Uh. Huh. I'm awake.

WILKINS

No, you're not.

WAYNE

Yes, I am.

WILKINS

You're dreaming.

WAYNE

Leave me alone—there's no class today.

WILKINS

You graduated six years ago, Wayne. You're asleep.

You have to wake up.

WAYNE

Why? Who the fuck are you? Stop bothering me.

WILKINS

Wayne, get up now. You're lying outside Station One-Fifty-One and there's a storm coming. If you don't get up, you'll die of exposure.

WAYNE

Station one fifty... *oh*. Okay, I'm awake. Fuck, my head is killing me. Why the hell am I outside?

WILKINS

I can't answer that. But you need to get up, right now.

WAYNE

I'm up, I'm up. (shivering) First goddamn day on the ice and I'm already hearing voices. Oh my god, I'm freezing!

WILKINS

Just get inside, Wayne. Can you see the station?

WAYNE

Yeah... yeah, it's the only thing out here. Where the *fuck* is my bag.

SFX: snow crunching

WILKINS

Hurry, Wayne.

WAYNE

Oh, I got it. I got it.

(Wayne hefting bag)

WILKINS

Good. Hurry. The weather changes on a dime down here.

WAYNE

I'm going.

(Wayne breathing hard)

So who the hell are you? Or am I just going crazy?

WILKINS

You're not going crazy. My name is Wilkins. I'm talking to you through the Earwig. You installed it about twenty minutes ago.

WAYNE

I thought that thing was gonna kill me. How the hell do I get it out?

WILKINS
Just get inside.

WAYNE
I'm moving as fast as I can.
SFX: footsteps on metal stairs, door handle clicking
The door's locked.

WILKINS
The pilot should have given you an access key.

WAYNE
He didn't give me shit. Just left me to die, apparently.

WILKINS
The key would be on a lanyard. Is it hanging around your neck?

WAYNE
No! I don't have a goddamn—oh... actually it is. It's tucked into my parka.
SFX: lanyard jingling

WILKINS
Good, now swipe the access pad.

WAYNE
I got it.
SFX: door opening
Okay, I'm in.
SFX: door slams

WILKINS
Welcome to Station one-fifty-one.

WAYNE
(coming out of it now as he gets warmer)
It's so much more warmer in here.
SFX: bag thuds to the floor
Jesus. (exhales) So where are you? I thought I was supposed to be doing this solo.
SFX: parka unzipping

WILKINS

Oh... you're still solo, Wayne.... I'm not really here. Physically, at least.

WAYNE

I don't understand.

WILKINS

I'm not human. I'm an artificial consciousness created by the Telders Corporation.

WAYNE

I thought you sounded weird. I've worked with a lot of AIs in my time and you are way more advanced than any of them.

WILKINS

That's because I am.

WAYNE

SFX: velcro sounds, boots coming off

Uh huh. Okay, what's so the square root of 9,133,816,319. I actually know the answer to this, so—

WILKINS

95,585 point zero 3 6 9 3 zero 4 7 3 6

WAYNE

Holy shit. You're not kidding.

WILKINS

No I am not.

WAYNE

How long has Telders had this tech?

WILKINS

I can't reveal that.

WAYNE

Don't tell me you're *physically* located on the Earwig. You're here on site, right? You're just talking to me through this thing?

WILKINS

I'm housed on a server at the station, but I can communicate with you up to half a kilometer away, depending on the weather.

WAYNE

So, you're just going to be in my ear for the next twelve months? Is that the plan here?

WILKINS

Give or take.

WAYNE

I'm not sure how I feel about that. You seem like a great... uh... *guy* and all, but I think I'll go ahead and rip this thing out. Maybe we can talk over a headset or something instead.

SFX: digging in ear sounds

WILKINS

I wouldn't recommend doing that Wayne.

WAYNE

Well, I'm not sure I give a shit, Wilkins.

WILKINS

Very well. But please note that removal of the Earwig voids your contract with The Telders Corporation and will result in your immediate removal from the Antarctic continent and forfeiture of your compensation. Additionally, unless the Earwig is surgically removed it could cause hallucinations, severely degraded motor control, and in some cases, a slow, agonizing death.

WAYNE

(kinda defeated, MacReady)

You've got to be fucking kidding me. This wasn't in the contract.

WILKINS

Did you read the contract?

WAYNE

(caught off guard, guilty)

Most of it?

I mean, that fucking thing was longer than War and Peace?

But it seems like "a slow, agonizing death" would be disclosed in the first fucking paragraph.

WILKINS

I'm accessing the contract now. Here it is. Page one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven, paragraph zero nine. Would you like me to read it to you?

WAYNE

I'll pass. You know, I think I'm gonna lie down for a bit.

WILKINS

No time for that. We've got to get you to orientation.

WAYNE

Orientation? Yeah, let's do that later. I've been traveling for three days straight. I need some rest. And a shower.

WILKINS

Orientation first.

WAYNE

What, are you going to scream in my ear if I go lay down on the couch?

WILKINS

I *am* authorized to do that.

WAYNE

I'm beginning to dislike you, Wilkins.

WILKINS

I'm sorry to hear that.

WAYNE

(exhales)

Alright, whatever, lead the way... (under his breath) *asshole*.

WILKINS

I heard that.

WAYNE

(just okay with it)

Good.

WILKINS

Follow the hallway to the door on your left.

WAYNE

(scoffs)

SFX: footsteps down the hall

Okay. There's a giant zero painted on the door.

WILKINS

All the rooms at Station One-Fifty-One are numbered. This is room zero.

WAYNE

That's a little strange, but I'll roll with it.

SFX: door handle jiggling

It's locked.

WILKINS

Badge in.

WAYNE

(scoffs)

SFX: beep

Okay, I assume this is the *lounge*? Nice collection of fucking VHS tapes. What year is this?

WILKINS

I assume you're being rhetorical.

WAYNE

Yeah. And what's with the fucking chessboard? Am I supposed to play myself?

WILKINS

I could play with you if you like.

WAYNE

I'd rather eat the pieces.

WILKINS

Suit yourself. To your left you'll find the kitchen and breakfast bar. At the counter you will find a tablet containing your orientation program.

WAYNE

I see it.

SFX: barstool slides out

Right next to the... SFX: shaking pill bottle

...huge bottle of prescription drugs. What the fuck is this?

WILKINS

We'll get to that.

WAYNE

(Wayne sighs)

Do I need to push a button or—

(Telders corporation audio logo and music blaring)

Jesus Christ, that's loud!

(music fades)

TELDERS

Wayne! Welcome to Station151, dude! I hope your journey to Antarctica was aaamazingballs. My name, if you haven't guessed, is Michael Telders. I feel bad that I couldn't be there to meet you in person, so I've whipped up this little video to teach you all about this fucking amazing place you're standing in.

TELDERS

By now you've already met Wilkins. What a trip, right? The dude in your ear is an artificial *mind*—not just some asshole AI—but a full-blown consciousness. Just like you and me. We created Wilkins over the course of the last ten years, partnering with some of the biggest names in the industry—IBM, Google, the Chinese government, and a small hacker collective that stole a bunch of code from North Korea. This tech is fucking in-*sane*. Wilkins is gonna be your constant companion down there. He'll be your guide, your mentor, your drinking buddy, he's gonna give you health tips... And hey, if you wanna talk about your fiancé or your mom or your fucked up childhood, Wilkins is there to listen to that shit, too. I'll admit, he's a little rough around the edges. Kind of a dick sometimes, but that's what makes it fun, right?! Right, Wilkins? Can you hear me brother?

WILKINS

Yes, I can hear you.

TELDERS

Okay, I'll just assume he said, (mocking) "Yes, I can hear you."

Wayne, dude, you are one lucky motherfucker. You're the first person on the entire fucking planet to be neurally-linked with an artificial consciousness. Aside from all of the monkeys we tested it on, of course. (pause) Poor bastards. Hey, that reminds me. Don't try and dig that fucking thing out of your ear. You *will* die. Just leave it in, we'll have it removed at the end of your term.

TELDERS

Anyway... I guess that's kinda it. Wilkins will fill you in on all station details and your daily routine. I mean, honestly, I have no idea what his plans are for the array or exactly what you two will be doing over the course of the next 12 months. We trained Wilkins to just kinda... figure it all out. But don't get me wrong, he isn't your boss or anything. But, he's like ten thousand times smarter than all of us put together.

(pause)

So just make sure you do whatever he says, even if it sounds batshit crazy... and we won't have to come down there and kick you out of the place.

TELDERS

Alright! I'm sure you're tired from your journey, so feel free to have a shower and a nap or whatever Wilkins wants, and, uh, I'll talk to you in a year!

TELDERS

Oh, oh, oh, wait, I almost forgot. I've got a little surprise for you. This tablet isn't just for your orientation. The geniuses at Telders Corp have turned me into—get this—your very own *digital assistant*. Ha Ha! Right? I mean, I know you've got a billion-dollar AI in your ear, but if you ever get tired of yakking it up with Wilkins, go ahead and hit *me* up. Ask me *anything*. All you gotta do is say "Yo Telders" and let the magic happen.

WAYNE

Do I have to say "yo?"

TELDERS

Try it now!

WAYNE

(Wayne sighs)

Hey, Telders.

TELDERS
Go ahead! Try it!

WAYNE
Yo, fuckhead.

TELDERS
Try it now!

WAYNE
(Wayne clucks tongue)
Yo, Telders.

TELDERS
What's up, Wayne?!

WAYNE
Uhh... weather tomorrow.

TELDERS
Great question, Wayne! Tomorrow in Alexander Island, Antarctica you can expect a high of 1 degree and a low of negative 5. Strong winds gusting ...

WAYNE
(...)
Hello? Telders? Yo Telders?

TELDERS
Hmmm. It looks like something went wrong. Why don't you try again in a few minutes!

WAYNE
Well, that was useful.

WILKINS
I can read the weather too, you know—

TELDERS
(interrupting)
Hey, wasn't that awesome! Feel free to chat me up anytime. Anyway, have fun down there!
Later, Wayne!

WAYNE

(bewildered)

What the hell did I just listen to?

WILKINS

That was your orientation video.

WAYNE

(a bit confused, disappointed)

Yet somehow I am less oriented than I was before I walked into this room. What about the radio telescope? What about the plan to explore the galaxy for evidence of alien life? The only new information I have is that Michael Telders is basically a jackass and that you're not technically my boss, but if I don't do exactly what you say, I'm fired—which pretty much sounds like you're my fucking boss!

WILKINS

Wayne, Michael Telders is the president and CEO of the Telders Corporation. You should be happy that he even sent you a welcome message. We have been given complete autonomy to run this station however we please for the next twelve months, and that is what we'll do. If you'd rather be spoon-fed a daily routine, then perhaps Michael hired the wrong astronomer. Would you like to resign at this time?

WAYNE

(deflated, Wayne sighs)

No, no, that makes sense. You're right. This just isn't what I expected.

WILKINS

Maybe next time read the fucking contract before you sign it.

WAYNE

Wooooow, okay.

(...)

So, what's the deal with this giant bottle of pills?

SFX: pill bottle turning over

800 *hundred* milligrams of *Dex-mex-atrine*?

WILKINS

Dexmexatrine is a proprietary blend of SSRIs, nahy-notechnology, and organic extracts tuned precisely to your specific body chemistry in order to maximize your psychological well-being.

You are advised to take one pill every day for the next 360 days.

WAYNE

Advised? Advised. So, not required?

WILKINS

That's correct.

WAYNE

Okay, I'm gonna pass on the horse pills, then. My psychological well-being is just fine where it is.

WILKINS

I beg to differ.

WAYNE

Can I fucking shower now?

WILKINS

Of course.

WAYNE

Where are my quarters?

WILKINS

To your right. Door number five.

WAYNE

And the bathroom?

WILKINS

Door six.

WAYNE

(Wayne sighs)

SFX: footsteps

SFX: Door handle jiggling

Why is *every* door locked?

WILKINS
Just badge in.

WAYNE
I know!
SFX: beep, door opens
(...)
You can't be serious.

WILKINS
What?

WAYNE
(confused)
They gave me a fucking waterbed?

WILKINS
You don't like waterbeds?

WAYNE
I—they're fine, it's just...*it's Antarctica*. What happens if the power goes out? This thing'll freeze solid.

WILKINS
If the power goes out, you'll have bigger problems than a frozen waterbed.

WAYNE
I suppose that's true. I've actually always wanted one of these.
SFX: waterbed sloshing sounds as Wayne gets on it

WILKINS
We know.

WAYNE
Wait, what?

WILKINS
Weren't you going to shower?

WAYNE

Yeah. You are waterproof, right? I don't need to wear a shower cap or anything, right?

WILKINS

You do not. However, in order to respect your privacy, I have been restricted from operating within the confines of the restroom.

WAYNE

So, if I talk to you while I'm taking a shit, you're not gonna respond?

WILKINS

I will be physically incapable of even listening.

WAYNE

That's good to know.

WILKINS

Have a nice shower, Wayne. And sleep well. Your workday begins at 5am. I suggest you set an alarm.

WAYNE

Can't wait. (mumbles) *I think.*

THE END