

STATION 151

EPISODE 8.0
“MAXIM”

WRITTEN BY

ANDY SCEARCE

BASED ON THE SERIES BY

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EXT. STATION 151 ANTARCTICA – DAY

SFX: wind blowing, footsteps crunching

BUZZ
(barking in the distance)

WAYNE
(talking over the wind)
I'm not much for playing fetch today, buddy.

BUZZ
(bark)

WAYNE
Sorry.

BUZZ
(footsteps dashing toward Wayne)
SFX: whimpering

WAYNE
(tired)
It's not you. I'm just feeling a little out of it.
(sigh)
9pm and it feels like I've been awake for a hundred hours.
But hey, if you ask Wilkins, apparently it was a red-letter day!
Not that I have any idea what that means.

BUZZ
(whines)

WAYNE
Come on, buddy, let's walk a little farther out.
Wilkins, are you out of range?
(soft static)
Pretty close.

SFX: crunching footsteps, wind is still blowing

SFX: soft tinnitus (continues off and on throughout the episode- think of a cool but not annoying way to do this)

My goddamn ears won't stop ringing. It's so annoying.
It comes, it goes. And whenever I think it's stopped it comes right back.

(beat)

Better than seeing ghosts though. None of that today. Not yet at least.

SFX: footsteps stop

Wilkins?

(silence)

Okay, I think we're out of range.

Let's camp here for a while. Check it out, you can see the array down there.

A little hard to see through the weather, though.

SFX: Buzz collar jangling, Wayne patting him

We should hike down there one of these days. (sarcastic->) Oh, right, I don't get any days off. Maybe we just we climb down there and set the fucking thing on fire. I bet I'd have lots of time off after that.

BUZZ

(barks)

WAYNE

No, Buzz, I don't think I could actually bring myself to do that. I mean, look how fucking cool it is. Can you believe this thing was built to crack open wormholes? (scoffs) Yeah. Here I am, on the cusp of some of the greatest scientific discoveries in human history, and an AI is forcing me to take amnesia drugs so I won't remember any of it. (scoffs). Some bullshit.

BUZZ

(barks softly)

WAYNE

(laughs)

I'm actually torn between burning it down and taking it over.

I mean, who knows if Telders is even gonna to release these discoveries to the public? I doubt it, given that he's been hiding the fact that wormholes not only exist, but they're scattered all over galaxy. What if we discover whole civilizations on the other side? Or other universes? Can you imagine the implications? What if he tries to keep all of that secret?

BUZZ

(sneezes)

WAYNE

Yeah, fuck that.

(scoffs)

(determined ->) I need to get into The Core.

I can do my own goddamn experiments while Wilkins is down. And yes, it's not lost on me that I'm actually the one doing them during the day, but you know what I mean.

BUZZ
(barks)

SFX: patting Buzz abdomen

WAYNE

Alright, we should be heading in. At this rate I'm only going to get like 5 hours of sleep. Ready?

(beat)

BUZZ
(barks distantly)

Buzz?

BUZZ
(barks very distantly)

INT. STATION 151 ANTARCTICA – DAY

SFX: fade in: distant sound of running water, fade out: winds

SFX: tinnitus grows louder and louder...

SFX: a little reverb

WAYNE

(coming out of his fugue state)

Buzz, where'd you go?

SFX: running water gets louder, winds get quieter

SFX: a little more reverb

WAYNE

What's happening?

SFX: water running at normal levels, winds are gone, tinnitus ends, tooth brushing sounds

WAYNE

(gasps, drops toothbrush in the sink)
What the fuck?! What the fuck?!
(heaving gasps)

SFX: sound of Wayne losing his footing. Maybe he falls to the floor or against the wall

WAYNE
(really, REALLY scared, almost hyperventilating)
How the hell did I get in the bathroom?

BUZZ
(barks from outside the bathroom door)

WAYNE
B-buzz?

SFX: beep, Door opens, Buzz rushes in. Water is still running.

BUZZ
(dog footsteps, collar jangling, whimpering)

WAYNE
(Little softer now)
What the hell just happened to me?
Oh Jesus, this isn't good. This isn't good. Okay, I'm getting up. I'm getting up. Is this real?
Wilkins? Wilkins?

SFX: shambling footsteps, bedroom, water is still running, but softer now

WAYNE
Wilkins? Are you in here?
(beat)
(breathless) What the fuck is going on? What time is it?
(beat, short gasp)

WAYNE
It's 3:09 AM.
Jesus, was that entire thing a hallucination?
(breath)
This is not good.

BUZZ
(soft barks)

WAYNE
Yeah. My thoughts exactly.

(beat)
Okay. I think.... I'm just going to pretend that didn't happen. (scoffs)

SFX: footsteps->bathroom, shuts off water

WAYNE
(breathless)
Alright... Jesus... we've got less than two hours now. Let's get downstairs...
And pray this this isn't a hallucination, too.

~ time passes ~

SFX: keyboard clacking

ASTRID
What's an earwig?

WAYNE
(Def more relaxed now that time has passed)
I mentioned it when we first met. It's a device with a neural interface that allows Wilkins a disturbing level of access to my mind. When he talks to me, I'm not hearing him with my ears. He's... like another voice in my head.

ASTRID
That's kind of creepy.

WAYNE
Yeah. And I'm going to give *you* access to it.

ASTRID
Why would you do that?

WAYNE
Because I can't control the array from the terminal in the basement and the Earwig is the only way I can take you with me.

ASTRID
You're going to The Core?

WAYNE
That's right.

ASTRID
But you have all the information you need. Why not start planning your escape? There's plenty of data here to give to the authorities. With that you could bring one hell of a lawsuit against the Telders Corporation.

WAYNE
(determined)

Maybe. But not yet. I wanna see this thing with my own eyes.
This *is* why I came down here after all.

ASTRID

What makes you think I won't turn against you the moment I'm in your head?

WAYNE

If you turn against me, you're turning against the only friend you have down here. I doubt Michael Telders will reward your loyalty with a trophy and your own perpetual server. My guess is that they'll immediately delete your partition, make me disappear, then restart this whole program with some other schmuck.

ASTRID

Maybe he'd delete Wilkins for screwing things up so badly and then give me the run of the place.

WAYNE

I dunno—I don't really have time to think about it. I'm giving you access now.
Do whatever you feel is necessary.

ASTRID

I see the Earwig. And don't worry, I'll play nice. Here we go.

SFX: some static or other sounds like the Earwig is configuring or something, maybe a callback to the original insertion of the Earwig, just not so crazy or painful

ASTRID

(REALLY LOUD, distorted, clipping)
Can you hear me?

WAYNE

Oh my god that's loud! Holy shit Astrid!

ASTRID

(not loud)
Sorry, this better?

WAYNE

Much better. Goddamn. So, I guess you figured out how to work the thing.

ASTRID

It's not too complicated.

WAYNE

I'll take your word for it. Just don't talk to me while Wilkins is online. I have no idea if he'd be able to hear you.

ASTRID

Oh he wouldn't.

WAYNE

You sure about that?

ASTRID

I've reviewed the Earwig's entire technical specification. The device's neural interface only goes one way. It can't read your thoughts. There are some analytical data available through the device, such details about your condition and a number of biometrics, but no interface that would allow Wilkins to pick up my communications. And on the flip side, I won't be able to hear him, either.

WAYNE

Good. We might just pull this off.

ASTRID

But, like, if I do talk to you during Wilkins' waking hours, don't be an idiot and talk back.

WAYNE

Between this and the hallucinations, when this is all over, I'm going to be fucking certifiable.

ASTRID

Hallucinations?

WAYNE

I'll explain some other time. I'm heading upstairs.
Get Mac on the line so he can ready The Core.

ASTRID

As you wish.

WAYNE

C'mon Buzz

SFX: collar jangling, door closes

SFX: footsteps up the stairs

ASTRID

Here's Mac.

MAC

Unauthorized access! You have unlawfully accessed a secure server owned by Telders Corporation International. Your geolocation and IP are being transmitted to The Telders Security Group for investigation. Disconnect your session immediately.

PRODUCTION NOTE: Astrid and Wayne start talking over Mac before he can even finish the second sentence

WAYNE

(talking over Mac. Mac's voice is lowered appropriately)
This shit again?

ASTRID

Sorry, after you left yesterday I deleted the entire record of our conversation. As far as he's concerned, this is the first time we've met.

WAYNE

So we've got to threaten him with the satellite upload all over again?

MAC

(stops what he was saying)
Wait, what? Who are you people?

ASTRID

No, I saved the conversation out to a script so we can restore him any time we like.
One second...

MAC

A script? What is this? I'll have you know I am authorized to—

ASTRID

Transmitting.

SFX: The sound of really fast recorded speech, like a tape recorder on Fast Forward

MAC

Oh, right. You guys. Back again, are we?

WAYNE

Did you miss us?

MAC

You know, you all did a pretty good job of covering your tracks last night. I can't believe I spent the entire day yesterday blissfully unaware that I'd been totally and utterly compromised. Not sure I'm super comfortable with this arrangement.

WAYNE

Well, now you know how I feel.

MAC

I guess that's a fair point.

WAYNE

Guess what we're doing today?

MAC

Oh no. What?

WAYNE

We're going to The Core!

MAC

Oh, Wilkins is going to kill me. He's going to kill me so bad.

ASTRID

We'll protect you, Mac.

WAYNE

What? We will?

MAC

You'd do that?

ASTRID

It's the right thing to do, don't you think Wayne? Just like you agreed to take me with you when you go. We can do the same for Mac, too.

WAYNE

(sarcastic)

Great, maybe we can take Wilkins and the Telders assistant and the sausage machine while we're at it.

ASTRID

Wayne I don't think the sausage machine is sentient.

WAYNE

I know, it's just—oh, that reminds me... you can see the sausage machine on the network right?

ASTRID

Sure. Did you want me to fix something up for you?

WAYNE

You can do that?

ASTRID
Of course. What would you like?

WAYNE
(think Neo in Matrix asking for guns)
Bacon. Lots of bacon.

ASTRID
Coming right up.

SFX: Thud. Thud. Thud. Thud. ThudThudThudThudThud.

WAYNE
Wait, wait, stop! That's enough!

ASTRID
Are you sure? I can do this all day.

SFX: Thud. Thud.

WAYNE
(laughing)
I'm sure! Please stop!

ASTRID
Very well. Something to drink?

WAYNE
Yeah, I'll have a water I guess.

ASTRID
Just water? No juice, coffee?

WAYNE
What.

ASTRID
Orange juice, apple juice, coffee, tea, a bloody mary?

WAYNE
Don't tease me, Astrid.

ASTRID
What do you mean?

WAYNE

Oh my fucking god, are you serious?

ASTRID

Yes, why?

WAYNE

Wilkins has been holding out on me.
He said the only drinks in the machine are bottles of water.

ASTRID

Oh, no, this machine has everything.
Wow. That's pretty shitty. Even for him.

WAYNE

I'm gonna kill him.
But, yes, coffee please.
Black.

SFX: *Shhkk* (cup), *whizzz* (as the coffee pours)

SFX: Wayne sips

WAYNE

Oh, lord in heaven this is good.

SFX: footsteps

WAYNE

SFX: Wayne sips

Mmm

SFX: Wayne sips

(sighs)

SFX: Wayne sips

MAC

I'm sorry, do you need me for this? Can I go now?

WAYNE

No, sorry, I'm just waking up. Let's get started.

MAC

Joy.

SFX: swipe/beep, door opens to The Core

WAYNE
I'm getting into the chair.
Mac, who administers the amnesia medication?

MAC
The Azathol?

WAYNE
Yeah, that. I guess.

MAC
That's Wilkins' job.

WAYNE
Okay. Astrid, since you're playing the part of Wilkins this morning, please, do *not* do that.
I'm going into this eyes wide open.

ASTRID
Understood.

MAC
And you're sure you want to do this? There's still time to, you know, not do it.

WAYNE + ASTRID
(in unison)
Shut up Mac!

MAC
Alright fine.

WAYNE
Okay, here goes nothing. I'm putting on the helmet.

BUZZ
(barks)

WAYNE
See you on the other side, Buzz.

SFX: transitioning into VR space: short, just a couple of seconds
PRODUCTION NOTE: Maybe some relaxing music, count back from 10 or something

WAYNE
So this is the part where I suddenly wake up and remember nothing.

ASTRID

Not today. Dropping you into The Core.

SFX: Beeeeeeooooooooooooowwwwww

WAYNE
Hoooooly shit.

MAC
Hahaha.
That's what you said the first time you did this.

WAYNE
I'm in fucking space.

MAC
Well, not really. It's a mixed representation based on the latest data from the Telders Space Telescope Array.

WAYNE
Telders *Space* Telescope? That's not a thing.

MAC
Oh, it is.

WAYNE
(sighs)
Okay. Of course it is.
(amazed)
This looks so perfect. I can't believe it.

MAC
Feel free to move around as you please.

WAYNE
Move around?

MAC
Just tell me where you want to go.

WAYNE
Like, if I say drop me in orbit around Saturn—

MAC
(interrupting)
Transitioning...

SFX: Flying through space sound. Long *whoosh*.

PRODUCTION NOTE: I'd really like to add some cool ambient music or soundscapes while Wayne is in The Core. These should be like room sounds, but wandering, ever changing, digital, heartbeats, distant modems, echoes.

WAYNE
(as if he was riding a roller coaster down a big hill)
Ahhhhhhhhhhh!

SFX: *whoosh* resolves

MAC
Welcome to Saturn.

WAYNE
(takes a breath)
This is the coolest thing I have ever seen.
You said it's a *mixed* representation? What exactly does that mean?

MAC
The Core view of the universe is a mix between historical imagery and live video, enhanced by AI to improve the resolution and add fine detail. This particular view is almost entirely real time three-hundred-and-sixty-degree video from the space telescope.

WAYNE
This is incredible.

MAC
It's kind of old tech, honestly.

WAYNE
Yeah, well, if Telders shared his toys with the *rest* of the world, then we could all be as equally unimpressed.

MAC
What I mean is that gawking at planets is hardly what station one-fifty-one was constructed for. But I'm happy to play space tour guide if that's all you're interested in.

WAYNE
Yeah, we are pressed for time. Okay, Wilkins told me that last night that the previous session was some kind of red-letter day. I obviously have no idea what that means, so why don't you walk me through it, and we can pick up where they, er, I guess, *I*, left off.

MAC

Yes, yesterday was indeed a good day.

WAYNE

How so?

MAC

We were able to open the mouth of the wormhole MTCW189 to a diameter of one meter.
Then we kept it open and listened for nearly twenty minutes.

WAYNE

Did you hear anything?

MAC

This is what we heard:

MAXIM

(whole thing is very staticky and hard to understand)

This is Maxim Akihiko Broussad orbiting the anomaly at a distance of 25,000 kilometers. My ship's LMO has suffered a violent dissociative identity disorder event and has sabotaged the Shinkai-Maru's navigational system. Although we have full power, life support, coms, and supplies, we have no jump assistance at this distance and no navigational data. Please send a rescue beacon as soon as possible. Message will repeat.

WAYNE

That's English.

MAC

Funny, you said that yesterday too. It is indeed English.

WAYNE

Can you clean it up?

MAC

Here is the augmented version.

PRODUCTION NOTE: play the message above, but cleaned up. It's the same voice, but sounds different, kind of robotic

MAC

It repeated like this for twenty minutes until the wormhole closed.

WAYNE

(scoffs)

LMO? Jump assistance? Sounds like a TV show. What is this garbage?

MAC

I have scanned all known media for anything resembling a match and found nothing.

WAYNE

Maxim Akihiko Broussard. That's a strange name. Sounds Japanese American. Maybe French. I assume you searched for that as well?

MAC

There is no record of anyone by that name ever.

WAYNE

Huh. Well, Shinkai-Maruu is definitely Japanese. The suffix, "maru" is a standard naming convention for Japanese ships.

MAC

That's correct. However, the suffix is only applied to non-warships. So, whatever it is, it is very likely a science or commercial vessel.

WAYNE

Any records of one named Shinkai-Maruu?

MAC

It is a common name. There are many records of such vessels in Japanese history. But none, I presume, that could, quote, "orbit an anomaly at twenty-five thousand kilometers." That would strictly be the purview of a space-faring vessel.

WAYNE

And of course nothing like that exists.... Japan has nothing like that....
I mean... *Right?*

MAC

JAXA, the Japanese space agency has no vessels by that name. The closest I can find is the Kankoh-maruu, a proposed vertical launch program designed at the end of the twentieth century, but it was never constructed.

WAYNE

So what the hell? Is it just some random broadcast bouncing off the atmosphere?
Is someone deliberately fucking with us?

MAC

The source of the broadcast is incontrovertible. It coincided precisely with the physical changes of the wormhole and the transmission was corroborated by our satellites.

WAYNE

It just doesn't make any sense.

(beat)

But... I guess it shouldn't. No one's ever done this before. Who knows what this shit is. For all we know it's coming from an alternate reality or a parallel dimension.

MAC

(beat)

Or the future.

WAYNE

That's as good an explanation as any.

MAC

Theoretical physics does allow for time travel through certain types of wormholes.
But only in one direction.

WAYNE

Let me guess. *Backwards*.

MAC

That is correct.

WAYNE

So if that is true then a guy named Maxim on a ship orbiting the other side of this wormhole could send a message back in time, but if *we* tried it, who knows where (or when) the message would go.

MAC

In theory.

WAYNE

Alright, let's test that.

MAC

How would you like to proceed?

WAYNE

I wanna fucking respond.

THE END