

# **RED VALLEY**

## **WHILE YOU WERE HYPERSLEEPING 3**

### **EPISODE 1**

by  
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**Character List**

Warren Godby	Jonathan Williams
GORD	Alan Mandel
Gordon Porlock	Alan Mandel
Aubrey Wood	Tash Reith-Banks

**WHILE YOU WERE HYPERSLLEEPING 3 - EPISODE 1**

**SCENE 1**

RED VALLEY, 2064. THE QUARANTINE SUITE. NIGHT. ALL IS QUIET, UNTIL THE SUITE'S SOLE OCCUPANT WAKES SUDDENLY, BREATHING HARD. WARREN GODBY WAITS FOR A MOMENT, CONTROLLING HIS BREATHING. REMEMBERING HIS SURROUNDINGS.

WARREN: Is there...er... a light switch? Do I...Do I just say 'lights' or something? How... How does the future work?

FROM THE DARKNESS, A VOICE. COOL, COLLECTED, FAMILIAR AND UNFAMILIAR.

GORD: You can say whatever you like. I'll probably get the gist of it.

A LIGHT FLICKERS ON. WARREN WINCES.

WARREN: Um... Thanks. What time is it?

GORD: It's just after 3am. Are you alright?

WARREN: Er... Yeah... Um... Yeah... not so much. Is Aubrey coming back, she left things a little um...

GORD: Cryptic and melodramatic?

WARREN ACTUALLY FINDS THAT QUITE FUNNY.

WARREN: Yeah er... Exactly that.

GORD: Aubrey's not on shift at this hour. She'll be back at some point, I'm sure. But right now, it's you and me.

WARREN: And how do you work, are you just... listening out for me all the time?

GORD: And watching.

WARREN: Watching too. Oh good.

GORD: You make it sound sinister.

WARREN: Not at all, it's er... cool and normal. Everything seems very cool and normal.

GORD: Would you prefer a stranger was brought down to watch you through the glass?

WARREN: Um... Point taken.

GORD: That's been required ever since your emergence. However, your recovery has reached a stage where I am able to provide ample supervision.

WARREN: Supervision sounds a little...

GORD: It sounds a bit prisony, doesn't it? My apologies. I assure you, we're only working in your best interest.

WARREN: Right.

WARREN BREATHES SLOWLY FOR A MOMENT.

WARREN: So, what do I call you?

GORD: I'm simply a Blue Sky unit. You can call me whatever you like. But since Aubrey asked me to adopt Gordon Porlock's voice we settled on Gord.

WARREN: Yes, Gord. Of course. You know it was a very strange idea to do that.

GORD: I assure you we are only working in your best interest -

WARREN: My best interests, right.

GORD: I imagine you're very concerned about him. About Gordon.

WARREN: Yes.

GORD: Would you like to talk through your concerns?

WARREN: Yeah... I'm not sure that's in my best interest right now.

GORD: Can you say more?

WARREN HASN'T GOT THE STOMACH FOR A  
VIRTUAL COUNSELLING SESSION.

WARREN: You know thinking about it, Gord, I am actually going to need Aubrey or whoever is on shift right now, to start telling me what is going on here, starting with what's happened to Gordon.

GORD: As I said Aubrey is currently off shift. But I can answer some of your questions -

WARREN: Just tell me where she is, I know my way around.

WARREN GETS UP TO LEAVE.

GORD: Warren you will in quarantine for several more days.

WARREN: And why exactly am I in quarantine?

GORD: You've been in hypersleep for an unprecedented period. It is vital for both your safety and that of our residents that we make sure you are not at risk of spreading or contracting any contagion that could pose a risk.

WARREN: Yeah... That sounds er... very dramatic. I'd like to get out please. Gord.

GORD: Please try to understand, Warren. We've put procedures in place to keep everyone at Red Valley safe -

WARREN: Who is... who is everyone? what do you mean 'residents'?...

GORD: Warren, you are tired. This is the first day where your short-term memory appears to be back to normal. That's excellent progress, but you are still immunocompromised and in need of rest.

WARREN LETS OUT A LONG BREATH.

WARREN: Okay. Okay.

GORD: You wanted to know more about Gordon. Aubrey has more detail and would like the opportunity to explain in full but let me tell you what I can.

WARREN: Alright.

GORD: In 2020, Gordon sustained injuries that could not be adequately treated with the facilities at hand. The decision was made to place him in a state of cryonic preservation. He is currently in a pod almost identical to the one you emerged from 3 days ago. The most recent diagnostics from that pod show stability, with no significant variances reported in his condition over the last 44 years.

WARREN: So, he's no worse than...when he went in?

GORD: There is no notable indication of deterioration.

WARREN THINKS ABOUT THIS.



WARREN: Wait... Is that because nothing has changed or because you can't tell what's actually happening inside his pod?

GORD: There are aspects of Gordon's preservation that remain unquantifiable.

WARREN: Unquantifiable.

GORD: Lacking measurable characteristics -

WARREN: You don't fucking know do you?

GORD: The circumstances around Gordon's preservation presented variables that could not be adequately measur-

WARREN: He was shot. He was dying.

GORD: Every effort was made with the facilities at hand to-

WARREN: You weren't there.

GORD: I have been given accounts made at multiple -

WARREN: Stop.

PAUSE.

GORD: Of course.

WARREN: I need to see him please.

GORD: What you need is natural REM sleep. It's totally understandable that you might be experiencing anxiety. I strongly recommend a sleep aid. You are clearly fatigued.

WARREN: You know I am trying to give you the benefit of the doubt, but you sound very plausibly like an evil robot keeping me in evil robot prison.

GORD: That's a pity. I'd taken time to study all available records on Gordon Porlock in an effort to more accurately convey his personality. It's disappointing to hear that I sound...

WARREN: Creepy?

GORD: Inauthentic.

WARREN: Well... if it makes you feel better Gordon can, on occasion, sound a little creepy.

GORD: Oh. So I'm on the right track.

WARREN: I mean don't get carried away. He's not Vincent Price.

GORD: Understood. Thanks all the same.

WARREN: You're welcome.

GORD: So, would you consider a sleep aid? -

WARREN: What did you mean available records?

GORD: I'm sorry, I didn't catch that.

WARREN: You said you studied available records. Of Gordon. What do you have that's his?

GORD: Aubrey had a limited amount of Gordon's recordings when she left Red Valley in 2020. More remained here along with your cryopods. When she returned, they were found to be largely undamaged, and were archived for prosperity. They include his daily logs while stationed at Red Valley -

WARREN: *Daily logs?* He recorded himself every day?

GORD: He did. Daily logs, historical logs from the duration of his employment with Overhead, personal recordings, poetry -

WARREN: What?

GORD: Haikus and sonnets, I believe he enjoyed the parameters within which he could express himself -

WARREN: Good God. Porlock poetry.

GORD: The great ballbag looms. Unconcerned by rain. Snow. sleet.  
A weathered scrotum.

GORD: And of course, the draft of his memoir.

WARREN: Oh my God the memoir.

GORD: You Can't Freeze a Soul -

WARREN: Colon, My Journey into the Cryonic Void. That was a dreadful fucking title.

GORD: I could play you some if you like.

WARREN: Yeah... I thought you were gonna give me a sleep aid.

GORD: How do you know this isn't it?

THIS ALMOST MAKES WARREN LAUGH. HE  
THINKS FOR A MOMENT.

WARREN: Yeah... Okay. Um... Okay. I... I would like that.

GORD: Excellent.

WARREN: Let's start at the start.

GORD: Of course.

CUT.

**SCENE 2**

AN OLD, WORN TAPE RECORDING, MADE LONG AGO, BUT SAVED FOR PROSPERITY. IT SOUNDS BATTERED, POPPING, HEAVY WITH STATIC.

GORDON: Every other Friday my family would get fish and chips. The shop was called This Must Be The Plaice. Wonderful smell. Terrible mushy peas. And on the counter, a jar filled with pickled eggs. 20 or so hard boiled eggs, bobbing about in vinegar, a sickly green tinge to them that I felt sure belonged to the eggs themselves and not just the thick, discoloured glass.

GORDON: Why, I had asked my parents. Why pickle an egg? As a boy I could not imagine a less appealing thing. I never saw anyone order one. I wasn't convinced the jar had ever been opened. My father drily recounted the practices of food preservation dating back hundreds of years from all over the world. He had seen a segment on the topic on TVAM one morning. My mother's reply was typical, in both its brevity and its digression to a preferred topic. 'You know who belongs in a jar like that?' she said to me. 'Little boys who talk too much.'

PAUSE.

GORDON: There'll be some cool theme music right here.

ANOTHER PAUSE.

GORDON: This is not a story about eggs. This is a story about preservation. Not of an object or specimen. Not a document or record. This story is about the preservation of all that we are. And what must be left behind in the process. This is The Cryonic Void.

PAUSE.

GORDON: Oh... Wait er... the theme music should probably go here actually.

GORDON CLEARS HIS THROAT.

GORDON: You Can't Freeze A Soul: My Journey into the Cryonic Void. A Memoir, by Gordon Sergio Porlock. Read by the author.

GORDON: You'll know what cryonics is, of course. The freezing of bodies or brains after death in the hope they may be returned to life one day in the future. The ultimate preservation of the self. It's a joke science, right? If you've come across this memoir you've probably read a bit about cryonics already. Maybe you've heard some of the horror stories. Doesn't take more than a quick Google. Bodies cracked down the middle. Frozen heads cut off with chainsaws. Clients left to thaw out and rot, some turning to nothing but sludge to scrape into a bucket and hand back to their relatives.

GORDON: Makes it hard to take seriously, doesn't it? What if I told you that it's taken very seriously by people you might not expect. Important people. Powerful people. Maybe you should take cryonics a little more seriously too. If you've found this memoir, you're already on your way.

GORDON: Surely cryonics is not so wild a concept at the end of the day, is it? A desire to stave off death is perfectly rational. Some of the most enduring tales in our history are those of resurrection, be it the Egyptian god Osiris, murdered by his brother and brought back by his wife Isis. That guy Jesus and his busy Easter weekend, or Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons.

GORDON: But how do we get from there to throwing grandma in a trough of liquid nitrogen? Let's return to that jar of pickled eggs in the fish and chip shop. Let's think about our ability to preserve and where it took us as a species. Could mankind's obsession with corporeal preservation have stemmed from the humble pickled egg? The first cured meat, the first fermented grains of barley? Preserving our food allowed us to create structure and community. To travel further, to broaden our knowledge. The foundations of human society are as much salt, honey, vinegar and ice as the spear, the trap, and the net.

GORDON: Alongside these great innovations in our development is another cornerstone of human society, that separates us from animals, for better or worse: the treatment of our dead. The overlapping of these two concepts brings us to the earliest attempts to conserve human remains after death. From the first mummifications, by the Chinchorro people of northern Chile, to Alexander the Great's supposed immersion in honey to make the journey back to his homeland. For thousands of years, we have sought the means to preserve our dead. In reverence, in respect, for sentimentality. Perhaps most commonly though, for faith - linked inextricably in so many cultures, of course, to what? More life. A journey perhaps. To another world, another existence. Not just to live again, but, perhaps, to live forever. Many of these practices were, and are, carried out with noble, loving intention. There are some practices, however, that are less than noble. Less than respectful. Less than scientific. And there are *some...* that just really take the piss.

GORDON: This story is also a journey. But where does this journey begin? Not with death, not with ritual, not with faith. It begins with a small patch of land, in the shadow of an unremarkable mountain, and a small bag of seeds.

THE RECORDING ENDS. GORD SPEAKS SOFTLY.

GORD: Are you still awake, Warren?

WARREN ROLLS OVER, ASLEEP.

GORD: The memoir was a good idea.



ANOTHER VOICE.

AUBREY: I didn't actually think it would put him to sleep. He hasn't even got to the boring parts.

GORD: His sleep patterns will remain erratic for some time. Perhaps permanently.

AUBREY: It's going to be a long few days for him until he gets the all clear. He needs something to focus on. Give him as much as you can, just... no more than discussed.

GORD: As you wish, Aubrey.

AUBREY: Keep me informed, alright?

GORD: When will you be down to see him?

AUBREY: There's a lot going on right now, Gord.

GORD: Of course.

AUBREY: Good night.

GORD: Good night.

END.