

THE LAKES OF THE MOON

-VOLUME 1.5-

VHS

CHAPTER ONE

VINETA

SFX: VHS TAPE INSERTED INTO VCR. VHS BUZZING, HUMMING, ETC.

The NAMELESS MAN's audio is ALWAYS crisp and clear. He's credited as "Nameless Man" but may be played by an actor of any gender. It is not imperative that he be "male." He is outside the VHS tape. All male cast members will provide the voice + strange noises of the Nameless Man, to be used at random throughout.

NAMELESS MAN
(frightened sigh)

SFX: REMOTE CONTROL CLICK. TAPE PLAYS.

SFX: STATIC.

SFX: "MOVIE CHANNEL TIME" MELODY.

SFX: JFK's "WE CHOOSE TO GO TO THE MOON" SPEECH.WAV.

KENNEDY

But why some say the moon? Why choose this as our goal?
And they may well ask, why climb the highest mountain?
Why 35 years ago fly the Atlantic? We choose to go to the
moon. We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the
moon in this decade and do the other things not because
they are easy, but because they are hard. Because that
goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our
energies and skills, because that challenge is one that
we're willing to accept. One we are unwilling to
postpone. And one we intend to win.

**SFX: VHS BUZZING AND RECALIBRATION. AUDIO IS ANALOG FOR THE FIRST
FEW LINES, THEN BECOMES CRISP/CLEAR.**

SFX: DISHES BEING LOADED INTO A DISHRACK. RUNNING TAP WATER.

MAMA (55), Polish, and CATHERINE (32), her daughter, "enter" our scene. Mama moves and talks rather slowly, struggles to catch her breath during sentences. She speaks with a thick Polish accent. CATHERINE is Polish American, heavy emphasis on American. No accent. She is fully integrated into 20th century American culture and ideals. Behind every sentence is a demand to be recognized for her intelligence and accomplishments.

MAMA

Leave the dishes, dear.

CATHERINE

I've got it, Mama. Go sit down, I'll make us some coffee once I'm finished.

MAMA

Ah, you're a good girl. My old bones don't keep up like they used to. Leave the dishes, dear.

CATHERINE

I've got it, Ma.

MAMA

Are you sure? I can do them.

CATHERINE

That white borscht, mmmmm delicious, the cherrywood kielbasa. You outdid yourself.

MAMA

Your babcia had me making that since I was seven years old. The little deli in Włocławek (Vlatzlavek), ah! best kielbasa-- makes all the difference you know -- *kielbasa weselna*,¹ that's the one you want. Garlic, black pepper, a little kosher salt, ah! The deli here, it's okay. Cherrywood, it's okay, it's okay.

SFX: TAP WATER SHUTS OFF.

CATHERINE

Coffee?

MAMA

Yes.

SFX: PUTTING COFFEE ON THE STOVE.

CATHERINE

On the porch?

MAMA

If you like.

¹ 17_VHS_kieebasa

CATHERINE

I'm asking you, Mama.

MAMA

Well it doesn't matter to me one way or other.

CATHERINE

Alright. Let's sit on the porch, then.

SFX: MAMA'S SHUFFLING FEET.

MAMA

If you insist. It'll take me a while to get there. You know my bones don't work like they used to.

CATHERINE

(Sigh) We can sit at the table.

MAMA

No, no, it's all right. I'll make it there, I'll make it.

CATHERINE

Walter Cronkite is covering the moon launch today.

MAMA

The which?

CATHERINE

The moon launch. They're sending men to the moon, Mama.

MAMA

(Unease) I see.

CATHERINE

Don't you think it's a marvel?

MAMA

No.

SFX: PORCH DOOR SWINGS OPEN - FOOTSTEPS ON DECK.

SFX: ROCKING CHAIR.

CATHERINE

Well they're going, with or without your approval.

SFX: CATHERINE WALKS ACROSS THE ROOM, TURNS ON THE TV SET.

SFX: TV STATIC - GENERIC NEWS COVERAGE SOUNDS.

MAMA

Turn that off, dear.

CATHERINE

I want to see the launch.

MAMA

You kids. *(Mumbling)* All your college learning and you still don't know nothing.

CATHERINE

Walter looks like he's in a sauna.

MAMA

What's that, dear?

CATHERINE

Walter Cronkite. The man on TV. He looks nervous.

MAMA

Sure he's nervous. He knows it's not right.

CATHERINE

What've you got against going to the moon, Ma?

MAMA

(Mumbles something unintelligible)

SFX: COFFEE POT BOILING.

CATHERINE

What? Coffee's ready.

MAMA

Who are the cosmonauts anyway?

CATHERINE

They're called astronauts, Ma.

MAMA

Well who are the astronauts?

CATHERINE

Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins.

MAMA

"Buzz." Whoever heard of a man named Buzz?

CATHERINE

It's a nickname, Mama.

SFX: MAMA'S LINE DISTORTS AND FLAWS ON "a nickname, Mama", AS IF THERE IS AN ISSUE WITH THE VHS TAPE.

NAMELESS MAN

(frustrated sighs, angry noises)

SFX: THE NAMELESS MAN EJECTS THE VHS TAPE, SHOVES IT BACK INTO THE VCR, CLICKS PLAY.

MAMA

"Buzz." Whoever heard of a man named Buzz?

CATHERINE

It's a nickname, Mama.

SFX: STATIC.

SFX: GENERIC 80s/90s PSA MUSIC.

PSA MAN

Missing...Travis Moore, fifteen, Chris Baym, fourteen, and Ryan Wickers, seventeen, last seen March 5th, 1998, in Innervale, Colorado. If you have any information relating to the disappearances of these three boys, call the Idyl County sheriff's department: 719-7576. And remember, your call is confidential.²

SFX: STATIC - "I'm preparing my monograph" IS UNINTELLIGIBLE.

SFX: PORCH DOOR.

CATHERINE

I'm preparing my monograph at UCLA.

MAMA

What's a monograph? Why the hell do you professors have to use such big words? Why can't you talk like regular people?

²Idyl: pronounced like *idle*.

SFX: POURING COFFEE.

CATHERINE

It's an academic study on a specialized subject, Mother.

MAMA

That don't mean nothing to me. Talk to me when you find a husband and give me grandchildren.

CATHERINE

Who's husband should I find?

MAMA

Nie pyskuj. [Don't be a smartass.]³

CATHERINE

Now, my monograph—

MAMA

Ohhh, stop with that nonsense.

CATHERINE

--I was wondering if you could help me out.

MAMA

No.

CATHERINE

My subject is genetic memory—

MAMA

Is what?

CATHERINE

Inherited memories at birth.

MAMA

What does that mean?

CATHERINE

Memories from our ancestors getting passed down in our genetic makeup, you see?

³2_VHS_nie

MAMA

Uh-huh.

CATHERINE

There is often a muddying or distortion of those memories, but they are there regardless. You understand what I mean?

MAMA

Why, certainly! We didn't use all that high and mighty college talk, but memories of the ancestors in your bones, yes that's been known by babcias for generations.

CATHERINE

Well I'm glad you agree. I've compiled an exhaustive list of Polish myths from their primary sources, but there is this one myth in particular that eludes me.

MAMA

Uh-huh...

CATHERINE

I was wondering if you knew anything about it.

MAMA

Uh-huh...

CATHERINE

(Pause) Well aren't you going to ask me what it is?

MAMA

No.

CATHERINE

That's all right, I'll tell you.

MAMA

I'd rather you didn't.

CATHERINE

It's the myth of a city called Vineta.

MUSIC: VINETA'S THEME.

MAMA

(Gasp) No, *Kasiu*!⁴ Why do you want to know about that place?

⁴ 3_VHS_no, kasiu

CATHERINE

I just told you—

MAMA

You shouldn't have asked me.

CATHERINE

Why not?

MAMA

You shouldn't have asked!

CATHERINE

Ma are you all right? If this is too bothersome—

MAMA

It is bothersome! But you asked me and now I must...

CATHERINE

For heaven's sake 'must what' Ma?

MAMA

Oh God, *Kasiu*, why?

CATHERINE

I'm sorry if my work brings you that much distress, Mother.

MAMA

There are things that should never be recalled. I wish you didn't ask me.

CATHERINE

Forget it, Mother. I'll find out without you.

MAMA

(Cynical laughing) You won't find Vineta in your scholar's books or in history books, or any other books. It's been forgotten, except by some...some of us.

CATHERINE

I said I'll find it without you.

MAMA

(Long pause) It was an ancient city, long time ago...

CATHERINE

So you will tell me?

MAMA

I'm compelled to...

CATHERINE

Oh stop being so melodramatic. Hang on let me get my tape recorder.

MAMA

What are you getting?

CATHERINE

My tape recorder.

SFX: PORCH DOOR SWINGING OPEN - RUNNING UP THE STAIRS.

Mama speaks while Catherine runs for the recorder.

MAMA

Oh, I really wish you wouldn't, dear...

SFX: CATHERINE'S VOICE SOUNDS LIKE SHE'S UPSTAIRS.

CATHERINE

Tell me everything you remember.

MAMA

(To self) It was so very long ago...

SFX: BOTTLE FROM APRON - BOTTLE UNCAPPED - MAMA DRINKS.

CATHERINE

Aha!

SFX: RUNNING DOWN THE STAIRS - PORCH DOOR AGAIN.

SFX: BOTTLE PUT BACK IN APRON.

CATHERINE

More coffee?

MAMA

(Hiccups) No, dear.

SFX: TAPE RECORDER CLICKS ON.

SFX: TAPE RECORDER RUNNING.

CATHERINE

This is the legend of Vineta, told to me by my mother. Okay, Mama, go ahead.

MAMA

(Pause) Is it on?

CATHERINE

Yes it's on.

MAMA

Are you sure? I didn't hear the click.

CATHERINE

It's on, Ma.

MAMA

Are you sure?

CATHERINE

Mom!

MAMA

All right, all right.

CATHERINE

Hold it.

SFX: RECORDER STOPS - REWINDS.

Legend of Vineta by Mom. Okay go ahead.

MAMA

What did you do?

CATHERINE

I'm re-recording over our conversation.

MAMA

Why did you do that?

CATHERINE

Oh God, Mom.

MAMA

All right, all right. Go ahead get mad at your poor old mother.

CATHERINE

I'm not mad.

MAMA

Well you're certainly not happy.

CATHERINE

Why don't you want to talk to me?

(Long pause)

SFX: TAPE RECORDER CLICKS OFF.

Fine.

SFX: LIGHTING A CIGARETTE.

MAMA

Oh, don't do that, sweetheart. My asthma.

SFX: PUTTING OUT CIGARETTE.

CATHERINE

(Frustrated sigh)

MAMA

I miss your father.

CATHERINE

(Pause) Me too, Mama.

MAMA

He was a good man.

CATHERINE

Yes he was.

MAMA

It's lonely here, *Kasiu*. I'm very, very lonely.

CATHERINE

I know...

MAMA

Mrs. Ogrodnik⁵ doesn't come to visit me anymore, not since her cancer. Tom and Stella live so far away. Mr. Budney is getting on in years. He can hardly go to the bathroom by himself let alone drive across town --

CATHERINE

I try to come up when I can, Ma.

MAMA

Once you have everything you need you'll be gone. I won't see you until Christmas. So far away...

CATHERINE

I told you to come live with me in LA --

MAMA

And leave this house? *Kasiu*, this is the only home I've known since Włocławek (Vlatzlavek).⁶ *(Pause)* Your father is buried here.

CATHERINE

(Sigh) Oh, Ma...

MAMA

The city is too loud.

CATHERINE

I know...

MAMA

There's too many trains. I don't...I don't like trains, *Kasiu*.

CATHERINE

California is safe, Mama.

MAMA

I'm not leaving your father! Who would bring him flowers? Who would go talk to him? Who? *(Panicking, then collecting herself. Another long pause, quiet panic in her voice)* I...I don't want to see...or hear...another train as long as I live...

⁵ 4_VHS_ogrodnik

⁶ 5_VHS_kasiu

CATHERINE

(Pause) Those days are over.

MAMA

You don't know what it was like.

CATHERINE

You're safe, Ma.

MAMA

Kasiu...

CATHERINE

Yes?

MAMA

You...you need to keep who you are in your heart, all the time.

CATHERINE

I know.

MAMA

No one can never take that away, whatever they do. Don't ever let anyone take that away.

CATHERINE

Yes, Ma. I know.

MAMA

You don't call yourself by your name. *Catherine* and not *Katarzyna*.⁷ You give yourself an American name.

CATHERINE

Ma, come on.

MAMA

Your father wanted that.

CATHERINE

I'm American, Ma.

MAMA

You're Polish!

⁷ 6_VHS_katarzyna

CATHERINE

I was born here.

MAMA

Promise me, promise me you won't forget where you came from.
It is so important...

CATHERINE

Must you be so --

MAMA

Say it!

CATHERINE

(Sigh) I won't for --

MAMA

In Polish!

CATHERINE

Oh my God! Ma! *(Pause, then reluctantly)* Nie zapomnę. [I will not forget.]⁸

MAMA

Obiecuj mi! [Promise me!]⁹

CATHERINE

(Pause) Obiecuję. [I promise.]

MAMA

Próbowali nas zniszczyć, ale nie zostaniemy zniszczeni.
Mówili, że jesteśmy brudni, gorsi. Byli w błędzie. To
kłamstwa. Pamiętaj na zawsze! [They tried to erase us, but we
will not be erased. They said we were filthy, inferior. They
are wrong. They are lies. Never forget!]¹⁰

CATHERINE

Yes, Ma. I know.

MAMA

Niech cię Pan błogosławi, moja najdroższa córeczko, od dzisiaj
aż do końca twoich dni. [God bless you, my dearest daughter,
from today until the end of your days.]¹¹

⁸ 7_VHS_nie zapomne

⁹ 8_VHS_obiecuj mi

¹⁰ 9_VHS_probowali

¹¹ 10_VHS_niech

CATHERINE

Okay, Mama.

MAMA

I have my memories. I have the memories of many babcie.¹² And so do you. You haven't opened your eyes, yet. Babcie...they know the secret.

CATHERINE

What secret?

MAMA

Even now, my chest is thumping like a jackrabbit. You had to ask me today...With those men going to the moon...*(Long pause)* All right, Kasiu. I'm ready now.

CATHERINE

Are you sure?

MAMA

Hurry hurry!

Vineta Story

SFX: TAPE RECORDER CLICKS ON.

MAMA

(Short Pause; deep breath) Vineta...

MUSIC: VINETA'S THEME.

SFX: OCEAN SOUNDS - BIRDS - CROWDS.

...it was a great city built on the edge of the sea, and surrounding it on all sides were these incredible walls made of moonstone and blue beryl - a thousand feet high! smooth as glass - ah, they were like mirrors in the sun. Artists and craftsmen from the highest orders studied there, under the city's master architects. The wealth and majesty of Vineta surpassed all the wonders of the world. Merchants, traders, priests and kings came to marvel after its beauty, and it was known to all as the City of the Sun.

SFX: HUMMING.

¹² 12_VHS_babcie

In those days, there were Twin Moons in the sky: the Elder and the Younger,

SFX: SOFT CHOIR.

and when their moonlight shone on Vineta, her walls sang like choirs of angels. The people were a good people, then.

SFX: CHEERFUL CROWDS / HAPPY.

They honoured the Twin Moons. They housed the poor. They fed the starving. They didn't wage war.

SFX: WIND IN THE LEAVES.

They let the trees grow into lush forests.

SFX: WATER / WAVES SPLASHING.

They had peace with the merfolk who lived in the sea, exchanging gifts for songs and laughter.

SFX: PLANETS / STARS.

MUSIC: WONDER.

In their contentment, as their generations came and went, they yearned to know the mysteries of the stars, the signs of the planets, the secrets of the gods -- the Heights -- things they should not have chased after, hidden things, things...things we are not meant to understand. But they were persistent, this headstrong people with wills like granite. Wherever they stretched out their hand there was neither man nor god to tell them 'Stop! Enough!'

MUSIC: ADVENTURE / BROKEN PROMISE.

SFX: ANCIENT SHIPS ON THE WATER - SPLASHING SOUNDS.

They sent their wild ships out to sea to hunt mermaids and mermen and their young.

SFX: FISHERMEN SCOOPING UP FISH IN NETS.

Their flesh became a sweet delicacy in Vineta. In fact, it was the custom to eat their flesh on the Feast of Roses, the holiest of days.

SFX: REVELRY / FEASTING.

They had scooped up so many merfolk that there were no more left in the sea. As if this was not enough for this gluttonous people! As if they did not empty the sea! They emptied the sky too!

SFX: DRAGON SOUNDS - GRIFFIN (MAYBE EAGLE LIKE?) SOUNDS.

When the first cornerstone was set in Vineta, you could not look up without seeing chalkydri flying from east to west. And flocks of griffins with their golden feathers, you could not throw a stone in the air without hitting one.

SFX: CROSSBOWS / LAUGHTER / REVELRY.

But the people, this stupid, stupid people!

MUSIC: OMINOUS.

They shot down every chalkydri for their feathers, their horns, and every griffin for their furs, their silver teeth. The sky was void of them. They became a memory.

SFX: OBNOXIOUS CROWD LAUGHTER.

The people felled the trees --

SFX: CHOPPING TREES DOWN.

...and uprooted the grass --

SFX: GRASS RIPPING.

...they drove the creatures of the wildwood away --

SFX: GALLOPPING STAGS.

...and hunted them until they were no more.

SFX: FORGING WEAPONS.

They turned their plowshares into swords. They made spears from their fishing hooks. They exchanged their poets for captains of war, legions of armies marching from shore to shore.

SFX: MARCHING ARMY.

They forged armour and they forged battle axes, and they beat the drums of war.

MUSIC: WAR DRUMS.

They destroyed cities and kingdoms, slaughtered peoples from every tribe. They took whatever they wanted. There wasn't a kingdom from mountain to sea that did not fall under the tyranny of Vineta, that great city.

SFX: REVELRY / OBNOXIOUS LAUGHTER.

Ah, the people of Vineta, so greedy, so mired in their own filth. They got bloated, you see. Bloated in their heads, bloated in their hearts. They had no needs. Only wants.

MUSIC: WAR DRUMS FADE.

CATHERINE

Their warmongering becomes their undoing, does it not?

MAMA

No. They warmonger all over the place and win all the time.

CATHERINE

Hmm.

SFX: LIGHTS CIGARETTE.

MAMA

Dear --

CATHERINE

Oh for Christ's sake.

SFX: PUTS OUT CIGARETTE.

MAMA

More coffee?

CATHERINE

(Sigh) Thank you.

MAMA

Ah! there we are.

SFX: COFFEE POURING.

SFX: CUP SET DOWN ON PLATE.

CATHERINE

So, what happens next then? They get their comeuppance one way or other, don't they? I've heard enough of these to know --

MAMA

(Laughing) Boże drogi. [Good heavens.]¹³ Ah, myszko. [Little mouse.] Be quiet. Listen. *(Takes a deep breath - gets back into the story)*

SFX: NIGHT WIND.

SFX: MOON AMBIENCE.

MUSIC: KROL'S THEME.

One terrible day, there was born into the Royal House of Vineta a wicked seed, a rotten sapling of a boy who became a rotting oak of a man. A quick-tempered, insolent man, a disgraceful prince.

SFX: CHEERING CROWDS AT CORONATION.

MUSIC: KROL'S CORONATION.

When he was crowned with many crowns, he gave himself the title Król Królów...King of Kings.¹⁴ He demanded that to him every knee would bow and every tongue confess, from all Vineta to all the nations near and far, that he was a King whom emperors shall serve, and to him alone their allegiance would be pledged.

SFX: THUNDER.

SFX: DRAGON ROARING.

¹³ 13_VHS_boze

¹⁴ 14_VHS_krol

He kept a great bronze chalkydri by his throne, one of the very last in Vineta, having five heads and five horns on each head. He inflicted so much torture on the beast that it had become a fearsome thing, roaring, twisted, full of hate. It bent to the Król's will and did whatever he wished it to do.

SFX: PEOPLE GASPING / AFRAID.

Anyone who dared approach his throne risked becoming devoured.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS ON STONE.

SFX: NIGHT SOUNDS.

SFX: HUMMING.

One night, the Król could not sleep, so he walked in the royal gardens under the Twin Moons, but he did not bow to them,

SFX: SOUND TO INDICATE GOD'S SUDDEN APPEARANCE.

when suddenly he was visited by a new god whose ways were not known to their ancestors. He was a god from beyond the heavens,

MUSIC: THE SUL.

SFX: ALIEN WHISPERING VOICE.

far yet near, he said. A god white as bone, white as the face of the moon. He called himself the Sul, the Hidden Name, and he chose the Król of Vineta as his divine representative on earth. Isn't that convenient?

So he rejected the gods of his ancestors --

SFX: BRICKS CRUMBLING / STATUES BREAKING.

...destroyed their altars, tore down their images. He commanded all Vineta to renounce the Heights -- the old gods -- to cease honouring the Twin Moons, and worship only the Sul. Anyone who resisted were brought to the bronze chalkydri and eaten alive.

SFX: DRAGON ROARING / BREATHING FIRE.

SFX: PEOPLE SCREAMING / DYING.

MUSIC: THE HORNED ALTAR.

This arrogant, vile Król! He raised up a new altar to his god, a high altar made of stone. Around its sides were many horns taken from the slain chalkydri. And above the altar, made entirely of limpid crystal, was the Face of the Sul looked down.

SFX: MYSTICAL SOUND.

On another night, a wintry night, long after instituting his new religion, the Król stood on his terrace to search the stars, using this crystal sphere held to his eye. Far into the distance, beyond Aldebaran, he saw a very strange thing: a bright star made of sapphire glass.

MUSIC: SAPPHIRE GLASS THEME (CHORAL MAYBE?).

How he lusted after that star! He swore by the Sul that he would take it and set it within his crown-of-many-crowns, becoming equal with the Sul himself!

MUSIC: COUNSEL ME.

He called forth his princes in counsel, his captains in secret, his courtiers by night,

SFX: MURMURING CROWD IN COUNSEL.

to determine how they would reach up and pull down the glassy sapphire from heaven's orbit. But the princes, captains and courtiers could not answer him, and he became very angry.

SFX: TABLES OVERTURNED.

In his frantic need for the star, like a drowning man desperate for air, the Król threw himself before the altar and grabbed hold of its horns, demanding his god speak with him face to face.

MUSIC: THE SUL REPRISE.

SFX: ALIEN WHISPERING.

The Sul did speak. In gentle whispers he told the Król what he must do.

MUSIC: THE NEW DECREE.

And so, obeying his god's word, the Król commanded that three giant ovens be constructed near the palace of Vineta.

SFX: ROARING FURNACES.

SFX: PEOPLE GASPING / MURMURING.

These ovens were made in the image of the Sul, in his likeness and form, having a thousand eyes and a thousand limbs. He enacted a new law decreed by the Sul himself, and this was his law: Every year, on the first day of spring, all the firstborn sons and daughters of Vineta had to be thrown alive into the fiery ovens.

CATHERINE
No!

MAMA
By doing this, the Król would earn the Sul's favor and granted the power to take the star of sapphire glass.

CATHERINE
They didn't listen to him, did they? Oh, why am I asking, it's only a story...*(Pause)* Did they? *(Longer pause)* Mama?

SFX: ALIEN WHISPERING.

MAMA
He told the people that once he obtained this precious star, he would graciously bestow on every loyal subject a portion of its magical power. They would share in the great power of the Król and his god, the Sul!

CATHERINE
He's lying!

MAMA
Every one from the wealthiest to poorest would wear a crown, he said, and be clothed in gold and scarlet, have the audience of kings and the thrones of kingdoms, oh!...but to their Król, their beloved Król, to him only would they bow, and no other. Yes, this was his promise, as good and as sure as the word of the Sul.

SFX: WILD CHEERING.

So, seduced by their Król, blinded by their incessant greed,
the people happily obeyed.

CATHERINE

No...no they can't...

SFX: CHILDREN SCREAMING / CRYING.

SFX: ALIEN WHISPHERING VOICE.

SFX: WILD CHEERING CONTINUED.

MAMA

They dragged their sons and daughters in chains up to the
roaring ovens, not having the slightest bit of remorse for
what they were about to do. And lifting their eyes to heaven
they cried, "In the Name of the Sul!" and cast their children
into the fire.

CATHERINE

(Screaming) No!

SFX: CHILDREN SCREAMING / CRYING / ROARING FURNACES 5 SECONDS.

MAMA

The black smoke of their holocausts blotted out the sun. With
each child's scream, the people of Vineta, their eyes wide
with glee, foam dripping from their mouths,

SFX: LAUGHTER / CHEERING.

SFX: ROARING FIRES.

they blessed the Sul for his goodness and prayed for more
riches, more prestige, more, more, more!

This people, this abominable people, the people of Vineta! So
much hurt... *(Voice trembling on that line)*

SFX: TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF.

CATHERINE

That's enough. I don't want to hear anymore.

MAMA

You must hear it, *Kasiu*.

CATHERINE

I said I don't want to hear anymore.

MAMA

You asked me and now you must hear it! (*Pause*) You will hear it, *Kasiu*.

CATHERINE

More of your burning children? I'm sorry I...don't know why I'm behaving this way.

MAMA

Here.

SFX: TAKING BOTTLE OUT OF APRON.

CATHERINE

What, you keep alcohol in your apron? Is that what you do now?

MAMA

Drink it.

CATHERINE

My mother the bootlegger.

SFX: UNCAPPING BOTTLE.

MAMA

If God didn't want us drunk he wouldn't have invented brandy.

CATHERINE

God it's strong.

MAMA

What, this? In Poland we give this to babies when the milk is run dry. Na Zdrowie! [Cheers!]¹⁵

SFX: MAMA DRINKING THE BOTTLE A LONG TIME.

CATHERINE

I don't know why this is bothering me so much...

¹⁵ 15_VHS

MAMA

(Quickly swallowing the drink) The brandy or the story?

CATHERINE

Vineta.

MAMA

Ha. Yes. *(Pause, sadder now)* Yes...*(Pause)* Now then --

SFX: TAPE RECORDER TURNED ON.

CATHERINE

I said I don't want t--

MAMA

It's not finished, *Kasiu*.

CATHERINE

(Pause) Hurry.

MUSIC: THE WINGED MAIDEN.

SFX: SERENE SOUNDS - RURAL COUNTRY SOUNDS.

MAMA

(Mama composes herself) As all this took place, far outside the beryl walls of wicked Vineta, there were these small villages of poor farmers. Their land yielded no crops. The mountains yielded no rivers. The village folk were desperate for grain and milk. In one of these poor villages, a farmwife fell pregnant. Neither she nor her husband knew how they would feed an extra mouth. They already had five children, and they could barely keep them fed.

"Go out into the woods, have the child, and bury it there," her husband said. "Do not speak to me of this thing in your womb." Frightened, alone, guilty, the poor farmwife went into the woods. She did not want to kill the child but she feared her husband's violent temper, for he was as violent as the Król. As she went deeper into the woods, she looked up and saw a great light streak across the sky.

SFX: SHOOTING STAR SOUND - METEOR SOUND.

It landed in the dusty field near their home. A large stone from the face of the Elder Moon, a stone as big as the old altars of Vineta, bright as the sun...and the sound it made--

SFX: EXPLOSION!

...shook the whole countryside.

MUSIC: MOONSTONE.

The moonstone called to the farmwife, beckoning her to come near.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS IN DUST.

Its glow was cold as ice. The child in the farmwife's womb leapt like a frog when her mother touched it. Right then and there the farmwife gave birth to a beautiful little girl. But there was something very different about this girl. She had wings, six marvelous wings bright as silver in the sun, starshine in her feathers.

SFX: MYSTICAL SOUNDS - SHIMMERING SOUNDS.

SFX: RIVERS - BIRDS SOUNDS.

The very next day, rivers flowed into the valleys. Water fell over the cliffs. Crops grew again.

SFX: EXCITED / HAPPY CROWDS.

Word spread throughout the villages that the Winged Child had made the land prosperous. The wretched poor came to touch her shimmering feathers and prayed to their gods for blessings.

MUSIC: THE SHEPHERD.

The villagers made a laurel wreath of holly and hazel and placed it on the Winged Child's head. Day and night she sat down on the great moonstone that fell from the sky while visitors from lands near and far made pilgrimage.

SFX: LAMBS GRAZING.

But there was one such person who did not seek her blessings. He was a poor shepherd boy who tended his lambs on the other side of the mountain. A boy of only eight years, about her age. When he came to see the Winged Child for himself, he asked for nothing. He didn't even want to touch her wings. All he wanted was to sit with her. He brought her cakes and he

brought her butter. Year after year he came with his gifts,
only to sit and speak with her, and want nothing in return.
And they sang this little song together.

MUSIC: ELSHASAR DREAMFLIGHT THEME.

In a land where dreams take flight,
Underneath the moon's soft light,
There's a tale that's ever told,
Of a journey, brave and bold
In the quiet of the night,
Hope shines like a candle bright,
With friends by your side, you'll see,
There's no telling what can be

Oh happy dream, it will never fade away,
In the heart it finds glory,
In my heart it will stay,
Through visions we soar,
In dreams evermore
Through visions we soar,
In dreams evermore.

For many hours they would sing and tell each other stories
long forgotten. When the sun turned red, he would gather his
flock to go back home over the mountain. She gave him a token
--

SFX: GLIMMERING SOUND.

a feather plucked from her wings, glimmering. And he kept it
near his breast always.

MUSIC: PASSAGE OF TIME.

The years passed. They grew older. The Winged Child became the
Winged Maiden, and he was the Young Shepherd. She counted the
days until he returned to her from over the mountain. Her
dreams were filled with a hundred maybes and what-ifs, dreams
of life with him in some faraway place.

MUSIC: OMINOUS.

One day, word of the Winged Maiden reached the Król of Vineta.

SFX: HORSES GALLOPPING / CHARIOTS / BARKING DOGS.

At once! he sent his chariots and he sent his horsemen. He sent his foot soldiers and he sent his wild dogs. Perhaps, he thought, perhaps she was the key to conquering this star made of sapphire glass.

SFX: RAIDING THE VILLAGE.

SFX: CHAINS.

SFX: PEOPLE SCREAMING.

On the first break of dawn, before the Young Shepherd could see her again, the Król's soldiers took her away, binding her wings in chains.

SFX: FIRE RAGING.

SFX: CATTLE LOWING.

The villagers were terrified but they could do nothing against the Król's soldiers who were so cruel that they beat many of the good villagers to death. They burnt their houses and they burnt their grain fields.

SFX: YOUNG WOMAN SCREAMING IN THE DISTANCE.

The Winged Maiden was taken away.

CATHERINE

(Pause - shivering, near tears) Why must it be so sad?

MAMA

Oh, *Kasiu*.

CATHERINE

God what the fuck is wrong with me?

MAMA

Language, dear.

CATHERINE

It's not real, and yet...

MAMA

More real than you or I.

CATHERINE

How?

MAMA

(Chuckling) Well, I'll let you find that out through your studies. All I can tell you is, it's in our blood.

CATHERINE

When I was a little girl you would drag me out to church...

MAMA

Ha! Yes, by your hair.

CATHERINE

I took the eucharist on my tongue.

MAMA

Yes, yes, the body of Christ.

CATHERINE

I felt nothing. Nothing, Mama, never. I never felt anything at all. Christ was supposed to be on my tongue - - first of all my God what an absurd sentence - - second...*(Long pause)* I smell the dung of the shepherd's lambs, the burning of Vineta's children. I hear the sound of the Maiden's voice...

MAMA

Some stories...are more real than other stories, *Kasiu*. Listen to me: it is in our blood. You see?

CATHERINE

I...

MAMA

Ah, one day you will understand. You will have no choice...

CATHERINE

What do you mean?

MAMA

Kasiu...we are nearing the end of Vineta.

CATHERINE

Okay...

MAMA

Let me speak it to you.

CATHERINE

Okay, Mama...hold me, please.

MAMA

Of course.

MUSIC: THE SHEPHERD'S FATE.

SFX: DYING FIRE.

The villages were destroyed. The Young Shepherd's heart broke in two and he wet the ground with bitter tears. He went back beyond the mountain and built a shrine to the god of shepherds, though he knew nothing of his god's origins. But he was desperate. He gave his god lambs and goats on the altar, but still the god of shepherds gave no sign and spoke no word.

SFX: ANGRY VILLAGERS.

Enraged, needing someone to blame, the villagers went after the Young Shepherd, beat him, killed his lambs, and burned his own village to the ground. But still they were angry. As the Król did to them, they would do to the Young Shepherd.

It was not enough that they beat him, no, it was not enough that they set his village afire or slaughtered his lambs. They brought him to an enchanter to be cursed with life as sure and as steady as the rising and shining of the sun. The enchanter obliged the angry villagers, and set the curse upon the Young Shepherd.

Then they imprisoned him in an armor made with spikes that pierced his body.

SFX: METAL SNAPPING TOGETHER.

SFX: YOUNG MAN SCREAMING.

SFX: SPIKES PIERCING FLESH.

They gouged out his eyes and seared an iron mask onto his face,

SFX: SEARING FLESH.

and seared shoes to his feet and made him wear the yellow cloak of the unclean so that wherever he went he would be a walking curse in all the land.

SFX: GLIMMERING SOUND.

MUSIC: MAIDEN'S THEME REPRISE.

But still, still, in spite of all they had done, they never found the token the Winged Maiden had given him. It was still safe in his tatters, near his breast...

MUSIC: THE TEARING OF THE WINGS.

Back in Vineta, the Wicked Król with his very own hands ripped the Maiden's wings from her flesh and wrapped them around his naked self,

SFX: FLESH TEARING.

dripping in her blood, her blood which he used to mingle with incense burnt on the high altar. With her blood he burnt a strange fire to his god the Sul.

SFX: ALIEN WHISPERING VOICE.

SFX: STRANGE INTERDIMENSIONAL SOUND.

It was a fire not seen on this earth before or since. And when the smoke of it covered him, he saw with different eyes the glassy sapphire,

MUSIC: SAPPHIRE GLASS THEME (CHORAL MAYBE?).

and reached forth his hand to touch...but he could not grab hold.

MUSIC: RAGE!

Furious, he took his knife...

SFX: HEARTBEAT.

and cut out the Maiden's heart...but her heart continued to beat, even in the grip of his hand.

She did not die...no...she did not die...She looked into the eyes of the Wicked Król, and said, "How long will you offend the Heights?"

And, for the first time in his self-indulgent, malicious life, the Król was afraid.

MUSIC: AFRAID (OR) WHAT HAVE I DONE?

He trampled the beating heart, which beat even after it left his hand, and he commanded his soldiers to put the Maiden in a tomb deep in his dungeon,

SFX: DUNGEON DOOR SLAMMING SHUT.

where she cried the most dreadful cries from sunrise to sunset. Not a single moment passed when the Maiden did not cry.

The Król again threw himself before the altar, and took hold of its horns with those terrible, bloodied hands, hands stained with the Maiden's blood, hands stained with the blood of thousands, and he begged the Sul to meet him face to face.

MUSIC: ABANDONED BY THE SUL.

But his god did not answer him. He cried and begged and moaned. He offered his slaves on the altar. He offered his concubines and he offered his wives. He offered his own children. But still his god did not answer him.

SFX: HEAVY PANICKED BREATHING.

And he was sore afraid.

MUSIC: FEAST OF ROSES / THE BREAKING OF THE ALTAR.

On the Feast of Roses, when it is the duty of the Król to burn a rosebush on the altar in the presence of all the people, a most marvelous thing happened.

SFX: MAN SCREAMING.

SFX: CROWD WATCHING IN HORROR / SHOCK.

SFX: BLASTING SOUND, A SUDDEN AND BRIGHT APPEARANCE.

In the thick of the smoke above the altar, was the star made of sapphire glass burning brighter than the Król's roaring ovens! with a fire as white as the face of the moon!

SFX: CROWD SCREAMING / CRYING (CONTINUOUS).

The altar broke!

SFX: STONE / BOULDER BREAKING.

The Face of the Sul broke!

SFX: GLASS SHATTERING.

Then the star spoke like thunder:

SFX: THUNDER THROUGHOUT.

"Break his throne and break his crown! Let his palace fall!
Let the city drown! Away with the unclean, away with the
wicked! O, Elder Moon, awake! Awake!"

And all the people fell down afraid!

SFX: STAR VANISHING SUDDENLY.

When the star disappeared, the Król was white as the face of the moon. In his terror, he gouged out his own eyes and in the presence of all the people cried, "Not upon us, O star! Not upon us!"

MUSIC: ELDER MOON'S JUDGMENT.

Then the Elder Moon stood up in the heavens like a warrior in a drunken rage, and said to her sister the Younger --

"Now is the time to visit on Vineta, that wicked city, the full reward for her wrongs. The Maiden's cry has come up to me, and the cry of the innocent dead has come up. Now I will avenge their blood forever."

MUSIC: APOCALYPSE (THE END OF VINETA).

The Elder Moon cast herself to the Earth, upon Vineta, that wicked city!

SFX: HUGE EXPLOSION!

Down came the walls of moonstone and blue beryl!

SFX: WALLS FALLING DOWN.

Down came the Król's palace, on him and on his bronze
chalkydri, crushing their bones to powder!

SFX: DRAGON SCREAMING.

SFX: BUILDINGS FALLING.

SFX: EARTHQUAKES! / LOTS OF VERY LOUD THUNDER.

SFX: PEOPLE SCREAMING.

SFX: FIRE AND WIND.

The Sul could not save the city nor its stupid people. They
mourned and cried out for the waters to hide them from the
wrath of the Elder Moon.

SFX: CRASHING WAVES.

Thus, Vineta and its shimmering walls fell into the sea
burning with fire.

MUSIC: (END OF VINETA) CONTINUES HERE ANOTHER 30 SECONDS.

SFX: ROARING WAVES BECOMING CALM / OCEAN BIRDS / CALM SEAS.

By daybreak, the city was no more.

MUSIC: YOUNGER MOON'S DECLARATION.

The Younger Moon wept for her sister, and made this
declaration: when Vineta rises again, she will cast herself
down to us, and this time all the Earth will perish, and all
its people will be tortured in the heart of the sapphire
glass.

CATHERINE

(Pause; overwhelmed; disturbed) What happened to the Maiden
and the Shepherd?

MAMA

They're alive. Suffering. She entombed in the sea. He entombed

in his armor, a wander in the earth. Separated forever. In fact, Vineta cannot rise again until their suffering is complete.

CATHERINE

And when will that be? *(Pause)* Mama?

MAMA

(Pause) When men walk in the heavens.

MUSIC: OMINOUS.

This is the secret of Vineta.

CATHERINE

What does it all mean?

MAMA

Darling, some things aren't meant to be told as they are. They need to be dressed in costume, spoken with symbols, or else we could never bear it...

SFX: TV - ROYALTY FREE NEWS COVERAGE OF APOLLO 11 BLASTING OFF.

CATHERINE

There they go...

MAMA

Dear.

CATHERINE

Yeah?

MAMA

Will you stay with me one more night?

CATHERINE

Of course, Ma.

SFX: VHS TAPE PAUSED.

NAMELESS MAN

(Eerie noises; frustrated; scared)

SFX: DIALING PHONE.

OPERATOR

9-1-1. What's your emergency?

SFX: SLAMS PHONE DOWN.

NAMELESS MAN

(Crying) I didn't mean it...I didn't mean it...

End Chapter One.

CHAPTER TWO

HOUSTON

SFX: UNPAUSES TAPE.

SFX: "MOVIE CHANNEL TIME" MELODY (MOVIE CHANNEL IDs 0:45 - 0:55)

NAMELESS MAN

(Creepy noises; sighs)

SFX: ROYALTY FREE FOOTAGE OF APOLLO 11 HOVERING OVER THE MOON.

SFX: ANALOG/RADIO VOICE ON BUZZ, ARMSTRONG, COLLINS, HOUSTON.

SFX: ROCKET SHIP AMBIENCE.

SFX: STATIC.

HOUSTON

Apollo 11, this is Houston.

ARMSTRONG

Roger. Everything looks okay up here.

HOUSTON

Copy. Looks good down here, too.

BUZZ

How much time until touch-down, Mike?

COLLINS

Nine minutes.

BUZZ

Well, let's let them look at the main bus ties coming on, alright?

COLLINS

Sure.

BUZZ

What time is it?

ARMSTRONG

8-1/2 minutes.

BUZZ

How soon are we going to--?

COLLINS

Take 2.

BUZZ

One second early. Okay. Main bus ties.

ARMSTRONG

Okay.

COLLINS

I'm going to turn my S-BAND VOLUME down, so you can...

ARMSTRONG

Down Voice Backup.

BUZZ

Main bus tie A coming on. Have you got TVC Gimbal Drive - Pitch and YAW, to AUTO, huh?

COLLINS

TVC GIMBAL DRIVE, PITCH and YAW, to AUTO.

BUZZ

Okay TVC-

COLLINS

He's not going to have the sun in your eyes - I mean, on this thing, why don't we ...?

BUZZ

Is that right?

ARMSTRONG

Now, you may have the sun in your eyes coming around the corner; now, you've got your patch ready in case you want it?

COLLINS

Got it right here.

ARMSTRONG

Captain Billy Bones.

COLLINS

Yo ho ho.

SFX: CREEPY NOISE.

BUZZ

Where did the noise come from?

ARMSTRONG

VHF or the S-BAND?

BUZZ

I don't know.

COLLINS

VHF, I think. It's a woo-woo noise.

BUZZ

Woo-oo. What time is it?

COLLINS

I turned my S-BAND VOLUME down to get rid of that background noise; now don't forget for us to turn it back up on the other side.

BUZZ

What time you got?

COLLINS

It's coming up on 5 minutes to T. I'll give you a mark.

BUZZ

Look at that! Look at that! 169.6 by 69.

COLLINS

You wanna write it down or something.

BUZZ

--60.2

COLLINS

Write it down just for the hell of it. 170 by 60, like gangbusters.

BUZZ

Hello, Moon! How's the ol' backside?

ARMSTRONG

Tape recorder still running?

BUZZ

Like greased lightening.

ARMSTRONG

Oh boy.

COLLINS

That's a pretty sight, ain't it?

ARMSTRONG

Boy, look at that crater.

COLLINS

Hope none of those meteors come by right now. God! Look at that moon.

BUZZ

That's a horrible window. It's too bad we have to shoot through this one, but -- oh boy, you could spend a lifetime just geologizing that one crater alone, you know that?

ARMSTRONG

You could.

COLLINS

That's not how I'd like to spend my lifetime, but--picture that. Beautiful.

BUZZ

Yes, there's a big mother over there, too.

COLLINS

Come on now, Buzz. Don't refer to them as big mothers. Give

them some scientific name.

BUZZ

It sure looks like a lot of them have slumped down.

COLLINS

A slumping big mother. You see those every once in a while.

BUZZ

Most of them are slumping. The bigger they are, the more they slump - that's a truism, isn't it?

COLLINS

You know what you're going to say, commander?

BUZZ

Sure he does. "Ladies and gentlemen of the world, boy do I have to piss."

ARMSTRONG

I'm going to declare myself King of the Moon.

BUZZ

How do you like that? Give the man the keys to a rocket and all of a sudden he's Superking Bignuts Armstrong, the lunar ruler.

ARMSTRONG

And don't you forget it.

COLLINS

More like the loonie ruler ask me.

BUZZ

You're taking a walk with us, right?

COLLINS

Someone has to stay back in case one of you mucks it up.

BUZZ

Glad to see you have faith in us.

COLLINS

You know it, buddy.

SFX: STATIC 10 SECONDS.

ARMSTRONG

Well, we're at 180 degrees, and now we're going to want to stop that and start a slow pitchdown. We want to go --

BUZZ

We're not going to see the earth come up over the horizon.

HOUSTON

Apollo 11, this is Houston. You're go for landing. Over.

BUZZ

Roger. Go for landing. 3000 feet.

HOUSTON

Copy.

BUZZ

12 alarm. 1201.

HOUSTON

Roger. 1201 alarm.

BUZZ

We're go. Hang tight. We're go.

ARMSTRONG

(Chuckling) Like a dream.

BUZZ

2,000 feet. 2,000 feet into the AGS. 47 degrees.

HOUSTON

Roger.

BUZZ

47 degrees.

HOUSTON

Eagle looking great. You're go.

BUZZ

Altitude 1600. 1400 feet. Still looking very good.

HOUSTON

Roger. 1202. We copy it.

BUZZ

35 degrees. 750 feet. Coming down at 23. Seven hundred feet, 21 down, 33 degrees. 600 feet, down at 19. 540 feet, down at...30. Down at 15. Four hundred feet, down at 9. Fifty-eight forward. Three hundred fifty feet, down at 4. Three hundred thirty, 3.5 down. You're pegged on horizontal velocity. Three hundred feet, down 3.5. Forty seven forward. Slow it up. 1.5 down. 270. I got the shadow out there. 250, down at 2.5. Nineteen forward. Altitude, velocity lights. 3.5 down. 220 feet. 13 forward. 11 forward. Coming down nicely. 200 feet. 4.5 down. 5.5 down. 160 feet. 6.5 down. 5.5 down. 9 forward. You're looking good. 120 feet. 100 feet. 3.5 down. 9 forward. 5 per cent. Quantity light. OK, 75 feet and it's looking good. Down a half. 6 forward.

HOUSTON

60 seconds.

BUZZ

Lights on. 60 feet. Down 2.5. Forward. Forward. 40 feet, down 2.5. Picking up some dust. 30 feet, 2.5 down... shadow. 4 forward. 4 forward. Drifting to the right a little. 20 feet. Down a half.

HOUSTON

30 seconds.

BUZZ

Drifting forward just a little bit. That's good. Contact light. OK engine stop. ACA out of detent. Mode control: both Auto. Descent Engine Command override: off. Engine arm: off. 413 is in.

HOUSTON

We copy you down, Eagle.

ARMSTRONG

Houston. Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed.

We switch POV from the astronauts to Catherine and Mama.

CATHERINE
Isn't it incredible?

MAMA
(Uneasy) Turn it off, Kasiu.

SFX: TV ANALOG/RADIO VOICE FOR ARMSTRONG.

ARMSTRONG
That's one small step for man. One giant leap for mankind.

MAMA
Turn it off, dear.

CATHERINE
Why?

MAMA
I don't want to see anymore.

CATHERINE
Are you sure?

MAMA
I don't want to see anymore...

POV back to the astronauts.

SFX: ANALOG/RADIO VOICE FOR ASTRONAUTS/HOUSTON.

ARMSTRONG
That's the damndest thing. You see that?

SFX: ANALOG DISTORTED UFO NOISE FAR AWAY.

BUZZ
Now what the Sam Hill do you think...

SFX: ANALOG HUMMING.

ARMSTRONG
(LONG PAUSE) Jesus.

BUZZ
There it is again, going up and down into that, that, crater.

COLLINS is still in the command module. He never walked the moon. His voice should sound slightly different from Armstrong's and Buzz's.

SFX: COLLINS RADIO VOICE.

COLLINS

You fellas seeing this?

ARMSTRONG

Can you make it out from up there?

BUZZ

Houston. Come in Houston.

SFX: HOUSTON RADIO VOICE.

HOUSTON

Copy. Go ahead Tranquility Base.

SFX: CREEPY ALIEN SOUND.

ARMSTRONG

There it is again.

BUZZ

Are you getting this?

SFX: COLLINS RADIO VOICE.

COLLINS

Ah, shit. I don't like this. I don't like this one bit.

SFX: HOUSTON RADIO VOICE.

HOUSTON

We're not seeing it down here, Tranquility.

BUZZ

But you see what we're looking at don't you? The camera's picking it up isn't it?

SFX: COLLINS RADIO VOICE.

COLLINS

You're telling me the Russkies made it here first?

ARMSTRONG

I've seen Russian. That's not Russian.

SFX: COLLINS RADIO VOICE.

COLLINS

Sweet mother...

SFX: HOUSTON RADIO VOICE.

HOUSTON

Houston. Tranquility this is Houston. Over.

BUZZ

Go ahead, go ahead.

SFX: HOUSTON RADIO VOICE.

HOUSTON

Be advised that we've switched broadcasting to Hangar 3.

SFX: COLLINS RADIO VOICE.

COLLINS

What're they talking about?

ARMSTRONG

It's their backup, in case things go belly-up.

SFX: COLLINS RADIO VOICE.

COLLINS

What backup?

BUZZ

Ah, shit. Houston this thing's moving at an impossible speed. By the looks of it I'd say it's clear on the other side of the moon but... *(Long pause)*

SFX: ANALOG HUMMING/DISTORTED UFO COMING CLOSER.

Jesus God it's coming in fast...

ARMSTRONG

Sure is.

BUZZ

You see that?

ARMSTRONG

I don't believe it.

SFX: HOUSTON RADIO VOICE.

HOUSTON

All broadcasts are coming from Hangar 3.

SFX: COLLINS RADIO VOICE.

COLLINS

What the hell is in Hangar 3?

BUZZ

Our doubles and a replica of the lunar surface.

SFX: COLLINS RADIO VOICE.

COLLINS

They're not just gonna leave us here are they?

ARMSTRONG

(Heavy breathing) Ah god, this...hell, this...I'm not liking this at all.

BUZZ

Houston advise. Come in, Houston.

SFX: HOUSTON RADIO VOICE.

HOUSTON

...side the module.

BUZZ

Look at the size of it.

ARMSTRONG

Doesn't look like a machine...like it's alive --

SFX: HOUSTON RADIO VOICE.

HOUSTON

Tranquility this is Houston. Over.

BUZZ

Yeah, Houston what in hell are we supposed to do up here?

SFX: HOUSTON RADIO VOICE.

HOUSTON

Tranquility cut your cameras immediately. We're still receiving transmission.

BUZZ

Ah Christ. Look over there. Jesus Christ! Are those wings?

ARMSTRONG

A whole mess of them...

BUZZ

What in hell are they?

ARMSTRONG

Oh Jesus...father help, help...

BUZZ

It's gonna be on us in the next three minutes. Houston.

SFX: STATIC.

ARMSTRONG

Houston. Come in Houston.

SFX: CREEPY DISTORTED STATIC.

BUZZ

Collins!

SFX: MORE CREEPY STATIC.

ARMSTRONG

We're on our own out here. Got to get back --

Armstrong and Buzz devolve into an unintelligible, panicked state. We hear them through the TV as POV switches to Catherine and Mama.

MAMA

(Hyperventilating, panicked) No, no --

CATHERINE

Mama! Ma what's wrong?

MAMA

Turn...turn...

CATHERINE

Ma sit down!

MAMA

...don't look at it -- *(Disturbing animalistic noises)*

CATHERINE

Ma? Mom! Mom!

POV back to the astronauts.

SFX: VERY LOUD ALIEN NOISE.

BUZZ

Houston! It's right on top of us. Oh my God! oh my God!

SFX: ALIEN VOICE, VERY DISTORTED, DEMONIC, ETC.

ALIEN VOICE

YISROT SUL'ONA. YISROT IS'SOMAYA. YISROT EE'LAH SYA.

(All astronauts screaming, crying, etc.)

SFX: STATIC.

SFX: COMMERCIAL MUSIC (ROYALTY FREE) .

PSA MAN

Do you have mushrooms growing on your body? Are you experiencing debilitating nightmares? If the answer to these questions is yes, the Idyl County sheriff's department wants to speak with YOU. Call them today at 719-7576. And remember, your call is confiden-

NAMELESS MAN

(Screams and cries; angry)

SFX: STATIC.

SFX: ROYALTY FREE MUSIC SLOWED DOWN, DISTORTED, VERY CREEPY.

SFX: COMMERCIAL MUSIC (ROYALTY FREE) .

SECOND PSA MAN

Missing, Travis Moore, fifteen, Chris Baym, nineteen, and Ryan Wickers, seventeen, last seen March 5th, 1998, in Innervale, Colorado. If you have any information relating to the disappearances of these three boys, call the Idyl County sheriff's department immediately: 719-7576. And remember, your call is confidential.

NAMELESS MAN

(Sobbing uncontrollably)

SFX: STATIC.

SFX: ANALOG - DEMON/ALIEN NOISES - MOON AMBIENCE.

Astronauts screaming.

BUZZ

(Insane; singing)

Jesus loves me this I know
For the bible tells me so
Little ones to him belong
They are weak but he is strong
Yes, Jesus loves me
Yes, Jesus loves me
Yes, Jesus loves me
The bible tells me so *(Inconsolable)*

SFX: GROSS NOISES / SKIN PEELING OFF BONES.

SFX: STATIC.

SFX: ANALOG - SCREAMS - EERIE/CREEPY SOUNDS.

SFX: ANALOG ALIEN VOICE.

ALIEN VOICE

QUEEN OF ALAR. IN HASTUR, TRUE QUEEN.

POV back to Mama and Catherine.

MAMA

(Crying) Kasiu...

CATHERINE

Mama...you're bleeding. Mama...*(gasps)*

MAMA

(Erratic) I told you not to look. Don't watch it, I said.

CATHERINE

Mama, your arms...what's happening to you?

SFX: GROSS DE-FLESHING SOUNDS.

MAMA

It's so hot out, *Kasiu*. Look at the moon! It's too hot.
It's too hot, *Kasiu*, it's too hot!

CATHERINE screams in horror as she watches Mama remove her own skin.

Take off your skin, *Kasiu*.

CATHERINE

No! Stay back Mama! Get away!

SFX: STATIC.

SFX: VHS TAPE PAUSED.

SFX: ERRATIC FOOTSTEPS PACING - SLAMMING CUPBOARDS.

NAMELESS MAN

(Whiny crying; erratic crying. Sings in a whiny tone)

Jesus loves me this I know...

For the...

(Unintelligible)...are weak but...

Yes, I've done bad things

Yes, I've done bad things

Yes, I've done bad things

The angels told me so

(Clinically insane laughter)

I got a nice little present...

I got a nice little present...

I got a nice little present for...

For...

For...

Ha! Ha! Ha! FOR! FOR! FOR!

SFX: STATIC.

SFX: ANALOG - BRADBURY POEM, FULL CLIP.

BRADBURY

I don't know what in hell I'm doing here. I'm the least scientific of all the people up on the platform here today. Nine-year-old boys are always finding me out. A 10-year old boy a few years ago ran up to me and said, "Mr. Bradbury?" I said yes and he said that book of yours, the Martian Chronicles, I said yes, he says on page 92 I said yeah he says where you have the moons of Mars rising in the East, I say yes. He said no. So I hit him.

ARTHUR C. CLARK

Good for you!

BRADBURY

I'll be damned if I'll be bullied by a boy.

Every time I get a group of people together and have them trapped in a hall like this, I bring a poem see and you can't escape me. But luckily it's a short poem but it sums up some of my feelings on why I love space travel, why I write science fiction, why I'm intrigued with what's going on this weekend on Mars. And part of this has my philosophy about space travel, and if you'll permit I'll read it to you. It's very short.

The fence we walked between the years
Did balance us serene
It was a place half in the sky where
In the green of leaf and promising of peach
We'd reach our hands to touch and almost touch the sky
If we could reach and touch, we said,
'Twould teach us, not to, never to, be dead

We ached and almost touched that stuff;
Our reach was never quite enough.
If only we had taller been
And touched God's cuff, His hem,
We would not have to go with them
Who've gone before,
Who, short as us, stood as they could stand
And hoped by stretching tall that they might keep their land
Their home, their hearth, their flesh and soul.
But they, like us, were standing in a hole

O, Thomas, will a Race one day stand really tall

Across the Void, across the Universe and all?
And, measured out with rocket fire,
At last put Adam's finger forth
As on the Sistine Ceiling,
And God's hand come down the other way
To measure man and find him Good
And Gift him with Forever's Day?
I work for that

Short man, Large dream
I send my rockets forth between my ears
Hoping an inch of Good is worth a pound of years
Aching to hear a voice cry back along the universal mall:
We've reached Alpha Centauri!
We're tall, O God, we're tall!

End Chapter Two.

CHAPTER THREE

SKIN

SFX: "VHS MAN".WAV.

VHS MAN

The books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it. And death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them. And they were judged, every man according to their works. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

SFX: HEAVY DISTORTION.

NAMELESS MAN

(Making wild sounds during the distortion; unintelligible; smacking his own forehead)

SFX: BANGING SOUNDS - DOORS SLAMMING - THINGS SMASHING.

SFX: "MOVIE CHANNEL TIME" MELODY (MOVIE CHANNEL IDs 0:45 - 0:55)

(NAMELESS MAN speaks in babbling language, half crying, half laughing)

SFX: STATIC.

SFX: ANALOG ON NIXON.

NIXON

Fate has ordained that the men who went to the moon to explore in peace will stay on the moon to rest in peace.

These brave men, Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin, know that there is no hope for their recovery. But they also know that there is hope for mankind in their sacrifice.

These two men are laying down their lives in mankind's most noble goal: the search for truth and understanding.

They will be mourned by their families and friends; they will be mourned by their nation; they will be mourned by the people of the world; they will be mourned by a Mother Earth that dared send two of her sons into the unknown.

In their exploration, they stirred the people of the world to feel as one; in their sacrifice, they bind more tightly the brotherhood of man.

In ancient days, men looked at stars and saw their heroes in the constellations. In modern times, we do much the same, but our heroes are epic men of flesh and blood.

Others will follow, and surely find their way home. Man's search will not be denied. But these men were the first, and they will remain the foremost in our hearts.

For every human being who looks up at the moon in the nights to come will know that there is some corner of another world that is forever mankind.

SFX: STATIC / HEAVY ANALOG.

SFX: OLD FASHIONED FILM REEL ROLLING.

INTERVIEWER

Okay, Catherine, whenever you're ready.

CATHERINE

Are we rolling?

INTERVIEWER

We're rolling.

CATHERINE

Do you want me to just --

INTERVIEWER

I'll prompt you and you can answer as you wish.

CATHERINE

Great.

INTERVIEWER

Start with your name and your position at the school.

CATHERINE

(Clearing throat) Yes, my name is Dr. Catherine Kocznur, I'm a professor of psychology, specifically cognitive psychology, here at UCLA.

INTERVIEWER

And how long have you been at UCLA?

CATHERINE

I taught my first class in September of 1965.

INTERVIEWER

Three years ago.

CATHERINE

(Smiling) Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Now you're working on a very interesting and, I suppose in your opinion a rather important monograph --

CATHERINE

Yes, certainly.

INTERVIEWER

--on Slavic myths, and--

CATHERINE

Myths and genetic memory, that's correct.

INTERVIEWER

Fabulous. Can you break that down for us? What is 'genetic memory' and what does this have to do with your Slavic mythology?

CATHERINE

Well it's a psychological phenomenon in which certain kinds of memories may be present at birth in the absence of any associated sensory experiences, and in fact may be present over many centuries.

INTERVIEWER

In other words, a person born today in 1968 may have the memories of his ancestor from 1868.

CATHERINE

That's overly simplified but yes, that's essentially right.

INTERVIEWER

Why is the study of genetic memory important?

CATHERINE

It's important for many reasons: understanding certain behaviors, understanding how organisms adapt to environmental change; it can help us better understand the field of neurology, we can determine how certain genetic factors contribute to diseases. Most importantly, in my opinion, it helps us understand who we are, where we came from.

INTERVIEWER

Ah, the age-old question. Don't you think that's best left for theologians and philosophers?

CATHERINE

No not at all. I think it's the responsibility of every thinking woman - (*jokingly*) and on occasion, every thinking man if you can find him -

(*INTERVIEWER chuckles.*)

to search for humanity's collective cradle, or to at the very least to wonder. I happen to think the answer is in us quite literally. At it's most fundamental level, the study of genetic memory helps us unlock our generational core memories, thoughts and ideas our conscious selves don't fully understand, yet.

INTERVIEWER

How so?

CATHERINE

The human mind, at the conscious level, perceives things best when they are concrete. That's why metaphor is so powerful, that's why art is so powerful, religion, myth - -

they buttress themselves with metaphor. In the Ugaritic texts or even in the Bible you have gods described as "kings" or more accurately as "chieftains" of their respective nations. God is a king in his heaven made of gold floating somewhere high above the clouds - - below us is an eternal fire of sulfur and brimstone - - Well, no one, if they really, really stopped to consider this for just five minutes actually believes there exists a deity who just happens to have the exact same ideas of monarchy that we do, or more specifically, the ideas of monarchy that a Late Bronze Age people had. Goodness, Psalm 82 of your Old Testament - - Yahweh and the council of the gods - - is just a redacted facsimile of the Council of El texts from Ugarit and the ancient Canaanite religions, and those are mirrors of early Mesopotamian bureaucracy. These are not divine revelations. They are human metaphors designed to help us understand how the world works.

INTERVIEWER

Well I must say I never heard any of that in church before.

CATHERINE

Now I'm not disparaging religion, you see, but I am challenging how we understand religion, how we understand and respond to revelation - - the same can be said of mythology - - revelation, stories, not from a god sitting on his throne, but from a reality that is constantly revealing itself to us, discovering itself through us. What are our genetic memories telling us that our conscious minds don't understand? That's why the study of genetic memory is important.

INTERVIEWER

I don't know whether I'm interviewing a professor of psychology or Albert Schweitzer. (*Laughing*)

CATHERINE

I met Schweitzer --

INTERVIEWER

Did you?

CATHERINE

He gave quite the speech here at the university during my third year.

INTERVIEWER

I'd love to get into that but I'm afraid we've veered off track.

CATHERINE

You'll have to edit this down.

INTERVIEWER

Yes we certainly will, though it is quite fascinating. Now, you've restricted this research to the Slavic memory and Slavic mythology.

CATHERINE

That's right.

INTERVIEWER

Why is that?

CATHERINE

My parents were born in Poland and regaled me with countless stories passed on from generation to generation. That's due to my mother, mostly my mother. She brought Poland with her.

INTERVIEWER

I understand they were death camp survivors, Dachau I believe it was.

CATHERINE

(She doesn't want to talk about this) Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Did they ever talk to you --

CATHERINE

Can we carry on with the subject at hand, please.

INTERVIEWER

Of course. Pardon me. *(Stumbling over notes)* Well, your mother's bedtime stories paid off.

CATHERINE

Absolutely.

INTERVIEWER

Is there a story in particular that fascinated you?

CATHERINE

Yes indeed, the story of Nataniel, a 15th century Polish monk who served in the Poznań Cathedral during the reign of John XXIII (23rd), Pope of Rome.

INTERVIEWER

Wait a minute, wait a minute. Roncalli is John XXIII.

CATHERINE

(Chuckling) Yes, the old men in Rome love to confuse us. Roncalli took the moniker John XXIII because the Vatican does not currently recognize the papacy of that 15th century Pope John XXIII.

INTERVIEWER

Why not?

CATHERINE

Because there were three popes reigning at the same time, each excommunicating one another. Two of those popes are considered antipopes, pretenders. There can be only one, you see. It was quite the mess and the Church to date has never resolved that debacle.

INTERVIEWER

Are you putting me on?

CATHERINE

(Laughing) Scout's honour. Ask any Jesuit. They cannot tell you for certain who the real pope was.

INTERVIEWER

Well this is turning into quite the history lesson --

CATHERINE

I only mention John, the 15th century John, because he is the pope whom Nataniel recognized.

INTERVIEWER

He didn't recognize the other popes.

CATHERINE

Correct. Nataniel, the legend goes, found this ancient text buried deep within the cathedral's walls, written partly in Greek and partly in Armenian. He immediately recognized it as a forbidden text, one of many books the Church had burned. So he secretly translated it into Latin, titling it the *Lacus Lunae*, Lakes of the Moon. Now, that copy has long gone and there are no others as far as we know. We don't even know what its contents were.

Well, as these stories go, as Nataniel translated the text, his right hand rotted away. He became a leper, covered with terrible lesions, and went insane. Well, certainly, it didn't take too long for the bishop to find out what he had been doing right there in the cathedral. This matter is considered so serious that the bishop reaches out to Pope John, John XXIII in Rome.

Nataniel is brought - in chains no less - directly to Rome to plead before the pope. He has this back and forth with John, makes some astounding claims which John, shockingly, doesn't wholly refute. Now, John wasn't a great theologian, in fact he was disdained by the clergy because he was theologically illiterate. So he has his bishops debate with Nataniel. We're not sure what was said, but the bishops end up clawing their faces, even gouging out their eyes, and throw themselves off the heights of the Lateran Palace.

Well, this worries John. He refuses to have Nataniel speak with anyone else, so he orders him to be burned at the stake, and his translation with him. Because this is what you do when you're the pope.

But, again as legends go, Nataniel doesn't die. He's there, burning, cursing the terrified crowd, and he looks up to the sky and cries, "Weep not for me! The hosts of Hastur are descending upon you."

INTERVIEWER

What is Hastur, exactly?

CATHERINE

Nobody knows. A pagan god from the old world, a Slavic god, most likely, my opinion. But that very night a terrible rain, a sickly greenish yellow fell on the entire country, killing thousands, decimating crops, causing mutations to their cattle -- matter of fact to this day in the Polish Church it's commemorated during the Feast of St. Casimir as the *Noc Trędowatego Deszczu*, Night of Leprous Rain. In fact, Casimir is said to have cleansed the land by some miracle, however he wasn't born until sometime after the event -- anyway! I'm getting off track again. Apologies.

INTERVIEWER

(Amused) Quite alright.

CATHERINE

Nataniel, who is still alive this entire time, is taken from the stake and buried in an unmarked grave --

INTERVIEWER

Buried alive?

CATHERINE

Buried alive. His record and trial are erased from the cathedral and from Rome. His memory passes into myth. And there you have it.

INTERVIEWER

And there you have it. Nataniel the Monk. Dr. Kocznur this has been a most interesting discussion. I don't suppose your research could be of aid to the gentlemen going to the moon next year, could it?

CATHERINE

I'm very much looking forward to mankind's journey to the moon, and I think in the coming decades this research into genetic memory will help us in our quest with the stars.

INTERVIEWER

Do you have a title for your monograph?

CATHERINE

I do. *Whispers in the Bloodline: Unveiling Genetic Memory in Slavic Folklore and Legend*.

SFX: STATIC.

MUSIC: OMINOUS.

CATHERINE

Mama please!

MAMA

Take out your bones, darling.

CATHERINE

Get away from me!

MAMA

She doesn't like our bones. See? Watch me take out my bones. Watch me prepare for Her!

SFX: FLESH RIPPING – BONES BEING PULLED OUT.

CATHERINE

Oh God Momma no no NO! Stop! (*Horrificed screaming / crying*)

SFX: DOOR KNOCK.

MAMA

Now who could that be?

CATHERINE

Stop it! Stop!

SFX: LOUDER KNOCKING.

MAMA

Do you know who that is, darling?

CATHERINE

Mama stop PLEASE!

SFX/MUSIC: STATIC / ERRATIC WEIRD MUSIC.

PSA MAN

(*Erratic; excited; maniacal*) Hey boys and girls wanna kill your parents? Three teenagers have already vanished into

thin air here in Idyl County and you don't want to be next! To protect yourselves, Uncle Poopsie recommends you take a knife and stab mommy and daddy right in the brain! Stab 'em right in the brain, just like that! You don't wanna end up like those three teens do yuh? No you don't! Oh no you don't! Bet you wanna see what they look like, huh? Do yuh? Do yuh, huh? Bet you wanna know why I've got mushrooms growing out of my head. I'll show you. I'll go ahead and-

SFX: GUNSHOTS.

SFX: OFF THE AIR SIGNAL / STATIC.

SECOND PSA MAN

Our humblest apologies for that outburst. If you have any information regarding the missing teenagers, please contact the Idyl County sheriff's department at 719-7576. And remember, your call is confidential.

PSA MAN

Holy shit you fucking shot me what the fuck--!

SFX: GUNSHOTS AGAIN.

SECOND PSA MAN

Our humblest apologies, once again.

PSA MAN

Jesus Christ I'm still not dead yet! How the fuck does this happen you fucking bastards!

SECOND PSA MAN

(Extremely annoyed) Oh for heaven's sake...

SFX: EXCESSIVE GUNSHOTS.

Well, that should do it. *(As if talking to someone offscreen)* Hmm? Oh, we're still rolling? Oh dear. *(Clears throat)* Ladies and gentlemen, if you would be so kind as to stare at your television sets just a little while longer...that's it...*(Again to someone offscreen)* Now? Okay. *(Back to us)* ...a little longer...

SFX: WEIRD HIGH-PITCHED TONE / STATIC.

Ladies and gentlemen, over the past week this station has sent out a public service announcement regarding three missing teenage boys. We would like to retract that announcement at this time. The Idyl County sheriff's department appreciates your understanding.

SFX: STATIC.

CATHERINE

No Mama NO! NO!

SFX: DOOR OPENING.

SFX: MOON AMBIENCE.

MAMA

Whoooooooooooo's there?

SFX: INHUMAN WAILING / VIOLENT WIND.

MAMA

Look at the moon, *Kasiu*! Have you ever seen so many colours before? Oh God it's hot as an oven!

CATHERINE

Come back! Come back! Close the door!

SFX: DOOR SLAMS SHUT.

(CATHERINE is shivering in the silence)

SFX: TV STATIC IN BACKGROUND.

SFX: SLOW CREEPING WET FOOTSTEPS.

I don't want to turn around...I don't want to turn around...
Oh God, no...no...who's there? I don't want to turn around...

ALIEN VOICE

I SEE YOU.

CATHERINE screams, is frightened to the point of insanity.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS RUNNING DOWN A HALLWAY - DOOR SLAMMING.

SFX: ALIEN VOICE AS HEARD THROUGH THE DOOR.

LIFT THE VEIL.

CATHERINE screams and cries hopelessly.

SFX: MAMA'S VOICE HEARD OUTSIDE THE HOUSE.

MAMA

No my Queen! No my Queen! Please no! *(Screaming)*

CATHERINE

Mama! Don't leave me!

ALIEN VOICE

TAKE OFF YOUR SKIN!

SFX: PEOPLE SCREAMING, CRYING.

SFX: VIOLENT WIND - MOON AMBIENCE.

CATHERINE

(Screaming)

SFX: VHS TAPE PAUSED.

SFX: REWINDS.

CATHERINE

Mama?

MAMA

Darling?

(They listen to Nixon's conversation with the astronauts.)

SFX: "NIXON'S PHONE CALL TO THE ASTRONAUTS".WAV.

NIXON

Hello Neil and Buzz, I am talking to you by telephone from the Oval Room at the White House, and this certainly has to be the most historic telephone call ever made from the

White House. I just can't tell you how proud we all are of what you have done. For every American this has to be the proudest day of our lives, and for people all over the world I am sure that they, too, join with Americans in recognizing what an immense feat this is. Because of what you have done the heavens have become a part of man's world, and as you talk to us from the Sea of Tranquility, it inspires us to redouble our efforts to bring peace and tranquility to earth. For one priceless moment in the whole history of man all the people on this earth are truly one--one in their pride in what you have done and one in our prayers that you will return safely to earth.

ARMSTRONG

Thank you, Mr. President. It is a great honor and privilege for us to be here representing not only the United States, but men of peaceable nations, men with an interest and a curiosity, and men with a vision for the future. It is an honor for us to be able to participate here today.

NIXON

Thank you very much, and I look forward, all of us look forward, to seeing you on the Hornet on Thursday.

ARMSTRONG

Thank you. We look forward to that very much, sir.

CATHERINE

Did...did you...

MAMA

Yes. The Veil was lifted...

CATHERINE

Mama I'm so scared!

MAMA

Now, you will understand.

CATHERINE

(Shivering; gasping) I have thoughts that are not mine. Knowledge...that isn't mine. *(Terrified gasp, as if seeing something shocking for the very first time)*

MAMA

Yes...you see now.

CATHERINE

(Crying into hands) Oh God!...is there no hope? Are we all destined for...*(She can't bear to say it)*

MAMA

Come here, myszko [little mouse], come here. Look at Mama.

CATHERINE

Why aren't you afraid?

MAMA

I am afraid. They tell us their stories, these great gods older than the oldest stars. They make you feel small, unclean, unworthy, wicked. They tell us their stories, write it in our blood --

CATHERINE

I feel...oh God! I feel the hatred of the universe falling down on me...

MAMA

Oh, *Kasiu*...When you were a baby, the very first time you opened your eyes, and you looked up at me...I knew in my heart no spirit or god had any right to call you wicked. Look at me, *Kasiu*. You are good, you are so very, very good.

CATHERINE

(Crying) Tell me it's not true, it's not true please, tell me it's not true, please...

MAMA

Shhhhhh. Mama's got you. *(Hums the tune to Bayushki Bayu from RED ODYSSEY)*

CATHERINE

It's not true...it's not true, it can't be...

MAMA

Shhh, that's alright, myszko [little mouse]. *(Continues humming)*

CATHERINE

(Quietly) I'm not afraid...I won't be afraid, I won't be afraid...I'm not afraid...I'm not afraid...I'm not afraid...

MAMA's humming fades as we leave them be.

SFX: EXTREME GLITCHING.

SFX: VHS TAPE STOPPED - EJECTED - TAPE PLACED ON HARD SURFACE.

NAMELESS MAN

(Shivering and mumbling incoherently)

SFX: SCRIBBLING SOMETHING ON PAPER - FOOTSTEPS TO DOOR - DOOR OPENS - NIGHTTIME - CRICKETS.

(NAMELESS MAN breathes heavily. He screams and cries as the Alien Voice speaks the decree)

ALIEN VOICE

THE DECREE OF THE GREAT QUEEN:

YSRA! I SEND MY SCOURGE!

YISROT! I SEND MY SIGN!

(NAMELESS MAN continues crying, screaming "No! No!" etc. and thrashing about.)

NAMELESS MAN

Not on me! Not on me! No not on me!

SFX: LOST SIGNAL 5 SECONDS.

SFX: TV UNPLUGGED.

SFX: STATIC 3 SECONDS.

EXIT MUSIC BEGINS FIRST 3 SECONDS.

SECOND PSA MAN

Wait wait wait!

SFX: RECORD SCRATCH - MUSIC HALTS.

A moment, maestro. Dear listeners, we do hope you enjoyed our production of *VHS*. Our director was the marvelous _____. Our players were the illustrious ____ as Catherine, the formidable ____ as Catherine's Mama, the incomparable _____ as our Public Servant Announcer, and myself _____ as your Second Public Service Announcer.

PSA MAN

You didn't have to shoot me so many times, you know.

SECOND PSA MAN

Well you wouldn't get off the stage.

PSA MAN

Because you shot me.

SECOND PSA MAN

A moment dear fellow. In addition, we would like to welcome you back for Season Two of 'Lakes of the Moon.' This second season is titled *Innervale*, a name that may sound familiar to you by now. Join us, won't you?

PSA MAN

Are you going to shoot me again?

SECOND PSA MAN

Not if you behave yourself.

PSA MAN

Season Two: *Innervale* premieres February 2025.

SECOND PSA MAN

January.

PSA MAN

Is it January?

SECOND PSA MAN

That's what I heard.

PSA MAN

Well, January or February --

SECOND PSA MAN

You don't want to miss it. Now, maestro, if you please!

EXIT MUSIC RESUMES.

SFX: HOBBLING AWAY / REGULAR FOOTSTEPS.

And now, good sir, shall we call you an ambulance?

PSA MAN

I have lost...so much fucking blood...

SECOND PSA MAN

It's remarkable you're still standing.

SFX: THEIR VOICES GROW DISTANT AS THEY "EXIT".

PSA MAN

I'll tell you this is the last time I come to London for a recording.

SECOND PSA MAN

Manchester, actually.

PSA MAN

Is that better?

SECOND PSA MAN

If you're from Salford it is.

PSA MAN

What's in Salford?

SECOND PSA MAN

Precisely.

EXIT MUSIC.

End Chapter Three.