

Strange Specimens
By
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FADE IN ON:

INT. SPACESHIP - CONTAINMENT ROOM

One wall's transparent - dominated by a breathtaking view of Earth. Inside, there's not much to see. Except for four large GLASS TUBES.

The cylinders run ceiling to floor, with tiny VENTS in front. Four unconscious HUMANS lie at the bottom. Fortunately for them, they're all clothed:

- JENNY (40s) Science seems to be her occupation. She wears glasses and a white lab coat.
- AKONI (50s) - A distinguished Jamaican with dreads.
- HIGGINS (30) - A soldier in Camo Uniform.
- DIRK (20s) - A stereotypical Millennial. A "resting snark" expression on his face.

Jenny is the first to awake. She stretches a leg, bumps against glass. She adjusts the spectacles on her face.

JENNY

Oh my stars. Where are we?

Higgins is second to revive. One look - that's all he needs. He dives ferociously at the glass.

HIGGINS

Mother-fuck. Why won't this break?

AKONI

(stirs)

Where are we?

Jenny turns, takes in the view of Earth. And is instantly transfixed.

JENNY

I have... an idea.

She points at the wall. Higgins and Akoni GASP in awe.

AKONI

This is heaven?

JENNY

Well, we've risen up. In a way.

HIGGINS

Screw that noise. How'd we get here?

JENNY

I don't recall. But I saw a light.

Dirk YAWNS on the floor.

DIRK

Crap and a half. Hangovers suck. Sarah - you slip a roofie in my drink?

JENNY

Who's "Sarah"?

The three stare down at Dirk in his tube. Dirk looks around, freaks out at where he is.

DIRK

Um, make that LSD -

HIGGINS

We've been kidnapped by aliens! Wherever you're hiding - show yourselves!

A dazzling display of colors flicker before his face.

TWO AMORPHOUS BEINGS appear (we'll call them GLERK and ZIX.) But whatever their names are, they're composed *entirely of light*.

AKONI

Angels!

JENNY

No. First Contact!

Higgins pounds his Plexiglas prison with his fist.

HIGGINS

Shapeless cowards! Let me go.

JENNY

Don't insult them. It's not safe!

DIRK

Either I'm dreaming, or I just woke up on a *Star Trek* set! Where's Nemoy, I want his autograph. Oh - I forgot. He's dead.

HIGGINS

So are those night lights over there, if they don't let me out... right now!

Glerk and Zix PULSE with colors; it's their conversation, with SUBTITLES. But the prisoners don't understand.

GLERK

(to Zix)

Is four enough for you? Or will you insist on collecting more pets? It's getting crowded in here. And if we had noses, this would smell rank.

ZIX

These aren't pets, they're specimens. We must observe them to decide.

GLERK

Well, they don't behave too well. Check out that brindle over there.

Glerk's colors form an arrow, pointing at Higgins. The soldier wails at the glass like Rocky on a punching bag.

ZIX

Worry not. He can't break through. And he could not hurt us, anyway.

GLERK

He *could* damage the containment field. You're the one who insisted we build this room. You know what that did to the Xenodivision's budget?

ZIX

Give me a break. They had to breathe.

GLERK

Not much longer. Hurry the fuck up. I am tired, and must recharge.

ZIX

"Fuck"? You're turning native, Glerk. You've been monitoring their communications far too long.

Jenny watches their colors flicker.

JENNY

(whispers)

Beings made entirely of light! I wish I could touch you, make you understand. Let's work on rudimentary language. I'll start first. I'm "Jenny."

HIGGINS

This isn't a blind date. Don't introduce yourself!

(to Glerk)

You strobing bastards, solidify for just one moment. Let me out, I'll break your Dayglo face!

AKONI

Don't talk to them like that! We are a gentle species. Believe me: we come in peace.

Glerk rolls multi-colored "eyes" at Zix.

GLERK

Come in Peace? We're the ones that brought you here. Delusional, are they not?

ZIX

But they're still a little smart.

His colors arrow-point towards Jenny.

ZIX

That one over there: it works in the physics field. Only the rudimentary Quantum stage, but still. That's why I culled it from the herd.

GLERK

Well, get your studies over with. Before one of them springs a digestive leak!

Higgins spits on his floor.

ZIX

(sighs)

Too late. The nano-bots'll clean that up.

Dirk watches the alien colors, mesmerized.

DIRK

Man, it's like someone built Frankenstein 2.0. While on Molly. On a rave!

Zix floats towards Jenny. A portion of him extends through the cylinder's vents, towards her ears and mouth.

Involuntarily, Jenny breathes "him" in. Zix's deep voice echoes in her brain.

ZIX

Behold, Human Creature. I am Zix.

Jenny's eyes grow wide.

JENNY

We CAN communicate!

ZIX

Well, kind of. In a way.

HIGGINS

(glares at Jenny)

That thing just possessed your brain! You *still* think aliens are cute, like *Mack and Me*?

JENNY

Mind to mind communication - it's so beautiful!

Dirk's lips curl with sarcasm.

DIRK

As long as there's no anal probe, that looks fine to me!

Zix's voice echoes in Jenny's head.

ZIX

Soft Human, we are here to evaluate you.

JENNY

I'm not soft. I work out!

ZIX

We must know if you are safe, and of use.

JENNY

We are: our species can be friends!

ZIX

Enough chit-chat. Consider yourself representative of the human race. Speak up: you are "on trial." State your case!

JENNY

(stammers)

Representing humanity? I'm honored. As a scientist, you've made a wise choice. We may be primitive, but humans have accomplished great things. We're young, but we'll keep trying. We still have so much to learn.

GLERK

So, you're a virus. If we let you live,
you'll spread to other worlds.

Zix "retracts" from Jenny. She collapses to the ground.

HIGGINS

What did you do to her? You monster!

Higgins bangs the tube. Glerk ZAPS him with a charge.

GLERK

Quit making so much noise.

Zix heads to Higgins next. The alien pours through the vent, penetrates the soldier's ears and throat.

HIGGINS

Arrrrrggggh!

He drops to his knees and SCREAMS. Dirk points his way.

DIRK

Dude, that Shatner impression's rad!

Zix's voice rumbles in the soldier's mind.

ZIX

Warrior, justify your species. Speak!

HIGGINS

Get out of my head, your Christmas
colored freak! Mess with the human race,
Neon Nerd, we'll pull the plug. When my
CO finds out what you did, it'll be
"lights out" for you and your pal, ET!

GLERK

(turns blue)

The hostile tendencies are strong in this
one. Dismissed.

Zix retracts from Higgins, moves onto Akoni. He fills Akoni's tube, and ears. The Jamaican GASPS in delight.

AKONI

Free of physical bonds, and earthly pain.
You bring heaven to us, do you not?

ZIX

Cut the poetry, there's no time. My
partner... he's cranky today. He wants to
demolish your whole world.

AKONI

There's good cop, bad cop in your world?

ZIX

Time is precious. State your case.

Akoni's face fills with a soft, sweet glow.

AKONI

Military Man over there may bark, but please don't think all humans bite. Most of us simply desire to be one with nature. A world of perfect peace!

GLERK

(sighs)

We should vaporize this water bags. They're mostly harmless. And lame.

Zix retracts from Akoni.

AKONI

You are an Angel. Don't leave me!

Leaving just one more Specimen left. Hesitant, Zix makes a bright bee-line for Dirk.

GLERK

That one's young.

ZIX

But full of energy. A curious Specimen.

Zix fills Dirk's tube. Dirk shakes his head, backs away.

DIRK

Nuh-uh. No alien blow-jobs for me. Not that there's anything wrong with that, but I'm not gay.

He squints at Glerk's rainbow colors.

DIRK

Though maybe you guys are. Out and proud - LBGT all the way!

Zix fills his ears, eyes and lungs. Dirk fights to stand.

ZIX

Listen carefully, Human Child.

DIRK

(chokes)

I'm not a child, no matter what Dad says.
I'm just taking a break from college!

ZIX

Your species' survival is at stake. You
are the last Human I can inhabit today.

DIRK

There are other Humans. You can do more!

ZIX

You think this process isn't hard? And
Glerk is a bureaucratic dickwad. He wants
his answer today!

DIRK

"Dickwad?" You know that word?

ZIX

I minored in Xeno language. You should
consider that for college. It's fun.

Glerk "taps" an impatient multi-colored pod.

GLERK

Stop playing with those creatures, and be
done!

ZIX

(to Dirk)

You heard the man. If you wish to live,
explain!

DIRK

Explain *what*? And doesn't "no mean no" in
your world? Then again, it doesn't feel
like you're really in...

ZIX

You are comparing me to a reproductive
process in your species?

DIRK

(gasps)

Gimme a break. That's a joke!

ZIX

What do you mean... joke?

DIRK

You know: a sense of humor. Sarcasm. It's
a form of self-defense, okay?

ZIX
Self-defense? How so?

DIRK
Okay: here's an example of humor: Why did
the horse cross the road?

ZIX
Why are you asking me this?

DIRK
Because the chicken needed the day off!

Dirk makes a RIM SHOT sound. Stares at Zix, defiant.

ZIX
Please clarify.

DIRK
Forget it. It's a culture thing. Lemme
give you something easier. Knock knock.

Zix is silent. He doesn't "get" this game.

DIRK
You're supposed to answer, "Who's there?"

ZIX
If I must. Who is present?

DIRK
Anita?

ZIX
What do you mean by that, human?

DIRK
Anita you to get outta me. I'm getting a
migraine. This blows chunks!

Zix retracts and floats back to Glerk. Dirk falls to his
knees. He glances over at Higgins, still down as well.

DIRK
You know we look like Choir Boys?

HIGGINS
(hisses)
Screw you, Generation Why. Nothing's a
joke in times like these!

Akoni reaches out to the aliens.

AKONI

Please - we wish to live in harmony!

JENNY

(nods)

We have so much to learn from each other.
Please - just let us live.

Zix confers with Glerk. Lights flash.

GLERK

Let's zap this rock, and go home.

ZIX

This *Sense of Humor* must be studied! It's
unlike anything we've encountered before!

GLERK

It's insane.

ZIX

But intriguing. That child says it can be
used for "self-defense."

DIRK

I told you - I'm an adult. I can even
drink legally! Next year...

GLERK

(sighs to Zix)

I guess we should study these animals in
more depth.

ZIX

Just a few centuries. Then we'll revisit
the issue with the board.

GLERK

Fine with me. Go clean up this mess.

Both aliens begin to fade. Higgins bangs on the glass.

HIGGINS

You're gonna leave us here? Seriously?!?
We'll all die when we run out of air!

Jenny stares at the stunning view of Earth.

JENNY

If that's the last thing I see, so be it.

All four humans sparkle. It's like a *Star Trek*
transporter, in real life. Higgins CHEERS.

AKONI

We're converting into light?

HIGGINS

Nah. They're sending us back home. I guess I finally scared 'em off!

Dirk lifts a quasi-transparent hand to his face.

DIRK

I wonder what my dick looks like now.

JENNY

Please. Keep that image to yourself.

DIRK

(leers)

I dig smart chicks. What's your name?

JENNY

Fuck off, Creep.

DIRK

I know other girls called that, too. Are you related to them?

The humans twinkle more. Dirk looks down at his pants.

DIRK

Look - Space Balls!

Then they all fade away. To Home. And Earth.

SUPER: And so First Contact began. Thanks to Generation Y, the fate of the world was saved!

FINAL FADE OUT: