

THE CHRONICLE

"Touched By An Alien"

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"Touched By An Alien"

TEASER

FADE IN:

The headlights of a Lincoln Town Car eclipse everything else on the screen as the vehicle pulls into:

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

DONALD steps out of the Town Car, carrying a Halliburton Zero briefcase.

He hears the ECHO of FOOTSTEPS. Donald turns in the direction of the sound -

- and gets hit in the face by the light beam of a flashlight. Donald squints.

A raspy voice rings out in the darkness. This is SMILEY.

SMILEY'S VOICE

Did you bring my payment?

Donald steps further into the beam of light and puts down the briefcase.

A wiry, nervous man with thick glasses, trembling hands and a cigarette hanging from his lips, Smiley steps up to the briefcase, puts down the flashlight, and pries it open.

Inside the briefcase is a brightly colored snake.

DONALD

Notechis Scutatus. Just like you asked.

SMILEY

It's beautiful.

DONALD

You said you had important information.

Smiley takes a long drag from his cigarette:

SMILEY

There's something coming. It's bad. It has to be stopped.

(CONTINUED)

DONALD

I need a little more to go on here.

SMILEY

It's going to be a bloodbath,
Donald. This thing's ruthless. The
only thing it knows how to do is
kill.

DONALD

Is this what I think it is?

Smiley nods gravely. Donald looks down. His brow furrows. His
tone turns black:

DONALD (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Smiley...you wouldn't happen to
know when it's coming down, would
you?

SMILEY

I'm in danger just telling you
this. I need to hide.

Donald's eyes bore into Smiley - who finally lets it out:

SMILEY (cont'd)

Tonight.

Donald nods, the color draining from his face:

DONALD

You just keep that information
coming.

Donald gets back to his car. He reaches for the keys, and
notices that his hand is shaking.

This is a rare moment: Donald Stern is afraid.

In the shadowy background, Smiley opens his mouth wide and
swallows the Tasmanian tiger snake whole, downing the last
few inches with a loud SLURP.

As Donald looks back, then shakes his head and steadies
himself...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. SEEDY GENTLEMAN'S CLUB - NIGHT

A garish sign reads "THE HUBBA HUBBA ROOM." Large double
doors lead inside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The doors BURST OPEN - a few scantily clad girls dance on a stage inside. The tantalizing sight is cut off as a BOUNCER drags out a LECHEROUS GUY.

LECHEROUS GUY

This isn't fair...I barely goosed her...everyone touches the girls...

BOUNCER

Maybe she didn't like being touched by you.

LECHEROUS GUY

Are you kidding? With the kind of bucks I'm handing out?

BOUNCER

Money can't buy you love, and a knob like you can't even lease with an option to buy.

The Bouncer pushes Lecherous Guy down on the pavement. Lecherous Guy recovers and stands up, then looks up at the sky beyond the club, a strange look on his face:

BOUNCER (CONT'D) (cont'd)

What are you, paralyzed from the neck up? Get the hell out of here!

The Bouncer steps up and grabs Lecherous Guy. A strange WHISTLE like that of an incoming artillery shell fills the air around them.

The Bouncer looks up in the same direction as Lecherous Guy -

BOUNCER (cont'd)

Oh. My. God.

- and sees a meteorite - streaking in from the sky straight toward The Hubba Hubba Room!

The two men's eyes widen in shock and horror as the meteor gets closer and closer and -

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. CHRONICLE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A BORING REPORTER drones on and on. Grace looks at Tucker and Wes in disbelief and shakes her head. Tucker and Wes shrug.

BORING REPORTER

...and according to my sources inside the Pentagon, the government has an invisible man doing secret agent work for them. They implanted a synthetic gland in his brain that makes him turn invisible. They say he's been sighted all over the east coast.

A disheveled Donald sits at the head of the table. Staring off into the distance. His mind is elsewhere.

DONALD

I like it. That's very creative. Run with it.

GRACE

Run with it? Donald, I'm not trying to be a buzz kill, but every invisible man secret government agency story we've ever had has turned out to be a hoax.

DONALD

Yeah. Grace is right. Invisible men don't work for the government. Find something else to do. OK, people, meeting's over.

Donald gets some coffee. Wes turns to Tucker and Grace:

WES

Was that our morning meeting or did we stumble into the last half hour of *Apocalypse Now*?

DONALD

Tucker, Wes, Grace. I have a research project for you.

Off Donald's ominous expression...

INT. THE ARCHIVES - DAY

Tucker, Wes and Grace are in research mode with Pig Boy.

PIG BOY

The Big Guy was like a zombie. Down here doing research at 5 A.M. Never seen him like that before. It's like the wheel's still spinning but the hamster's dead.

GRACE

I don't believe this crap! I was supposed to interview that guy with the exposed brain and Donald sends us all down here to find out if there was a UFO landing last night?

PIG BOY

Looks like someone needs to replace the coffee they normally drink with a delicious decaffeinated blend.

Tucker reaches for the phone:

TUCKER

I'd better cancel my date with Kristen. Last time Donald was this affected about a story, I spent the night inside a man-eating oven.

WES

I guess I oughta cancel tonight's booty call too.

(to Grace)

Don't you have someone to call?

GRACE

Unlike some other people, my life isn't dominated by whoever I'm dating that week.

TUCKER

No call to make?

GRACE

Well, duh!

PIG BOY

That explains a lot. Having a little dry spell, huh?

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

You could get me a guest shot on
Death Valley Days.

PIG BOY

You know, Grace, I may be half pig,
but I'm also half man.

GRACE

That's about a fourth of what I
need.

WES

Been that long?

GRACE

Eight interminable weeks.

WES

Damn, girl. You're not going to
turn into one of those cat ladies,
are you?

GRACE

Only if the cat takes four D
batteries and has vibrating
whiskers.

TUCKER

Hang on. You really expect us to
believe you can't find a man?

GRACE

Oh, there's plenty of men out
there. Some of them want to wear my
thongs, others need to watch *Mary
Poppins* to get turned on, and then
there was the freak who wouldn't go
out with me without first giving me
a pedicure.

WES

What's the matter with that?

GRACE

He did it with his teeth.

Tucker and Wes exchange grossed-out looks.

PIG BOY

You call eight weeks a dry spell?
Try walking a mile in my hide.
(off the looks)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PIG BOY (cont'd)

If there is such a thing as war
between the sexes, my love life
could be best described as -

GRACE

Oh please. Don't say it.

PIG BOY

What?

GRACE

You were going to say "Bay of
Pigs," weren't you?

PIG BOY

Was not!

GRACE

You are so predictable.

An ALARM goes off in Tucker's computer.

TUCKER

I have a live one here. Strange
lights spotted over a riverfront
gentleman's club, followed by a
meteorite crash.

INT. CHRONICLE - BULLPEN - DAY

Wes, Tucker and Grace bustle through -

TUCKER

Wes, who's that at your desk?

Wes sees JOLENE and ALONSO FREEWALD (50's), a handsome,
dignified suburban couple.

WES

Hey, the parental unit!

Wes runs up, takes a kiss from his mom, high-fives his dad.

ALONSO FREEWALD

How's our future Pulitzer prize
winner?

JOLENE FREEWALD

(sees Grace approaching)

Hi, Grace! I love what you've done
with the hair. Makes me wish I were
twenty years younger.

(CONTINUED)

ALONSO FREEWALD
Hell, makes me wish I was twenty
years younger.

JOLENE FREEWALD
Oh, be quiet.
(sees Tucker)
And you must be Tucker.

ALONSO FREEWALD
Alonso and Jolene Freewald. Nice to
finally meet you.

TUCKER
Nice to meet you. I've heard a lot
about you.

Handshakes and pleasantries are exchanged:

JOLENE FREEWALD
And we've heard a lot about you
too. I thought you'd be shorter.

ALONSO FREEWALD
(before Tucker can react)
I read the piece you wrote about
how our son took care of that
Dragon in Chinatown. Hell of an
article, Burns.

JOLENE FREEWALD
We framed that cover, have it
hanging on our wall.

ALONSO FREEWALD
We keep all of Wesley's pictures.
On archival stock, of course.

TUCKER
(mouths the word to Grace)
WESLEY?

Wes turns a "don't say a word" stare on Tucker before
changing the topic.

WESLEY
What are you doing in town?

JOLENE FREEWALD
We got tickets for Tom Jones at the
Garden.

ALONSO FREEWALD
One night only. SRO.

JOLENE FREEWALD
So we thought we'd stop by and
visit.

ALONSO FREEWALD
And I need to have words with
Donald about your photo credit. I
think the typeface is shrinking.

WES
I don't think you want to do that
today. Big Guy pulled an all-
nighter on a fast breaking story,
now he has us on it. It may be
another UFO -

ALONSO FREEWALD
Hold it! Don't spoil it for us.
We'll pay the two ninety-nine and
read it off the press just like
everybody else...now you go get a
cover story.

Off the moment:

EXT. THE HUBBA HUBBA ROOM - DAY

The roof and "Hubba Hubba" sign continue to smolder as the PT
Cruiser pulls up. As The Gang steps out:

TUCKER
...it's just too cool to see your
parents being so supportive. My
parents don't even know I work for
the World Chronicle.

WES
I lucked out with the 'rents. You
know, when I was a kid, they took
me to see *Star Wars: Episode Five*
nine times at the theater.

GRACE
Didn't your parents get combat pay
for that?

Wes snaps a few pictures, the OWNER (VITALY), a surly fifty-
something Russian in a track suit rushes up to The Gang:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VITALY

Who are you people?

TUCKER

Reporters. World Chronicle.

VITALY

I've already had the local news,
police, scientists from the
university...what do you want?

WES

Can I examine the impact site?

VITALY

Through the front doors, past the
main stage, at the bottom of the
large, smoking crater.

WES

I'll be back.

TUCKER

Take your time, Wesley.

WES

Hey. Use of that word is
restricted.

GRACE

What we need to know is if anything
out of the ordinary occurred.

VITALY

Other than my insurance company
saying I'm not covered for
meteorite damage?

TUCKER

We need "strange." Like...did
something crawl out of the crater?

Vitaly regards them with a scowl, then, as he walks away:

VITALY

I never should have left Minsk.

No sooner is Vitaly gone that Tucker gets a tap on the
shoulder from a SCANTILY CLAD STRIPPER (SAVANNAH).

SAVANNAH

Hi. I'm Savannah. You're from the
World Chronicle, aren't you?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAVANNAH (cont'd)
(running her finger down
Tucker's arm)
I'm a big fan of your paper. A
very, very big fan.

GRACE
Oh brother.

TUCKER
So...do you think you could answer
some questions?

Savannah twirls her hair, doing her best to tantalize:

SAVANNAH
Maybe...depends...

Tucker stares at Savannah for a moment. Grace is exasperated.

GRACE
What's the matter, Tucker, never
been to one of these places before?

TUCKER
Of course I - hey...?

Grace takes Tucker's wallet from his back pocket, pulls out a
fiver and stuffs it in Savannah's top. The moment Savannah
gets her money, the over-sexed tease turns all-business.

GRACE
Did anything weird happen after the
meteorite crashed?

SAVANNAH
Yes. But our boss told us to keep
our mouths shut. Last thing that
borscht-stinking cheeseball wants
is a lawsuit.

TUCKER
Why, was somebody hurt?

Another pause. Savannah looks at him coyly, batting her
eyelashes. Tucker snatches his wallet from Grace and stuffs
another fiver in Savannah's top.

SAVANNAH
(all business)
Right after the crash, it looked
like no one was hurt...

TUCKER
But?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Savannah gives Tucker an alluring look. Grace just shakes her head, reaches into Tucker's wallet, hands over all his cash.

SAVANNAH

One of my co-workers, her stage name is Dakota, but her real name is Enid. She was giving a private dance right where the meteorite crashed, and she didn't even freak out. Just climbed up from the hole all cut up and bruised and bloody and walked away. Didn't feel any pain or nothing. Might as well have been sleepwalking.

TUCKER

Can you tell us where she lives?

Savannah is silent. Tucker turns to Grace:

TUCKER (cont'd)

I hope you brought some cash.

INT. THE ARCHIVES - DAY

Donald enters. In the foreground, Pig Boy removes a large-sized piece of meteorite from a plastic bag in Wes's hand.

DONALD

What've you got for me?

PIG BOY

Piece of meteorite. I'm running a spectographic analysis like you asked...then I'm putting it under the electron microscope, doing an atomic resonance scan and carbon dating it...you know, for kicks.

DONALD

Where are Tucker and Grace?

WES

Following a lead. I figured you'd want the meteorite examined so I hightailed it back here.

Pig Boy looks up from the microscope, points to a screen:

PIG BOY

This is bad...this is really bad...this thing wasn't a meteorite at all...look...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON SCREEN

In a highly magnified picture showing what appears to be:

WES
Writing?

DONALD
(in recognition)
Oh crap.

PIG BOY
I think this thing was some kind of
a space pod disguised to look like
a meteorite.

Donald pulls out a handkerchief, dabs the sweat from his forehead.

DONALD
Find Tucker and Grace. I want them
off the field now.

EXT. ENID (DAKOTA)'S HOUSE - DAY

Run down. Low class. Cheesy music tinkles out from inside.
Tucker knocks on the door.

GRACE
Are you sure this is Dakota - uh,
Enid's house?

TUCKER
Savannah said she lived with her
boyfriend...

He checks the mailbox, the tag reads "JESSE VANCE."

TUCKER (CONT'D) (cont'd)
...Jesse Vance...I don't think
anyone's home.

GRACE
Someone's gotta be listening to
that music. Maybe it's Dakota.

Grace steps off the landing, the two walk around the house.

TUCKER
What's with these stripper names
anyway? Dakota, Savannah...they all
sound like pickup trucks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

Consider the audience.

Grace looks in a window, turns toward Tucker:

GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Oh-kay. I think Dakota survived
that meteor impact just fine.

INSIDE THE HOUSE

A couple makes passionate love in the dimly lit bedroom.

TUCKER

(looking in)

Yeah...definitely no story here.

For a second, they are entranced by what they see. Their heads turn and bob in unison, presumably following some arcane change in sexual position.

TUCKER (CONT'D) (cont'd)

(turning away)

Damn. Lucky guy.

GRACE

Lucky girl. That Jesse's a talented man.

TUCKER

Come on, Grace, let's give them their privacy.

Tucker reaches out for Grace, pulls her away.

GRACE

Excuse me, I'm trying to live vicariously here!

A SCREAM pierces the air as Tucker walks Grace away. The two look back to see smoke, pouring out from the window.

TUCKER

I can't see anything!

As Tucker and Grace rush back to the front of the house:

THE GARAGE DOOR

SLAMS OPEN. Grace rushes over and, as she gets in front of the opening garage door - a tricked-out Conversion van ROARS out: heading straight for her!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

INSIDE THE VAN

Is Enid's boyfriend JESSE VANCE (20's) - a terrible, vacant stare in his eyes. Jesse guns the engine. Tucker fly tackles Grace, getting her out of harm's way in the nick of time. The van tears ass into the distance.

GRACE

Let's check out the house - c'mon!

Tucker limps back to his feet.

TUCKER

Uh...you are welcome!

INT. ENID (DAKOTA)'S HOUSE - CORRIDOR/BEDROOM - DAY

Dark. Tucker and Grace make their way in through to the bedroom. Smoke pours in from the bedroom door. The cheesy love music gets louder and louder as they get closer...

TUCKER

What's that smell?

GRACE

Not a smell...It's never good when there's a smell...oh no...

REVEAL

The bed. On top of it, over the covers, is what remains of Enid...a bag of skin, barely recognizable as human...slowly dissolving into an acrid, black, steaming muck.

As Tucker and Grace react to the grisly sight:

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. CHRONICLE - BULLPEN - DAY

Tucker and Grace enter. A less-than-pleased Donald rushes up to them, flanked by Wes.

DONALD

What the hell were you thinking?
(off the looks)
Going to that house was a major
foul-up. If you'd been there a
minute earlier you could have
gotten killed!

TUCKER

We're investigative reporters. We
investigate, we report.

GRACE

We did our job, what else do you
expect?

DONALD

That you wouldn't do a stupid thing
like going into a strange house
with an alien assassin in it.

Silence. Tucker and Grace look at one another, processing this revelation. This situation just went critical.

TUCKER

Whoa. Hang on. Did you just say
"alien assassin"?

GRACE

(off Donald's silence)
Stupid is not mentioning the words
"alien" and "assassin" when you
send your people out in the field.

DONALD

You want in on the loop? Then pay
attention, cause you're about to
get a crash course. In the
Archives. Now.

INT. CHRONICLES - ELEVATOR SHAFT - ESTABLISHING - DAY

As the elevator descends...

INT. THE ARCHIVES - DAY

Pig Boy mans the computers. Tucker, Wes and Grace watch as Donald points to the alien writing on the computer displays:

DONALD

These glyphs come from the Myazaki Cluster. A civilization off the shoulder of Orion. The meteorite was a pod designed to house one of their most lethal undercover agents. An S.T.A. - a sexually transmitted alien assassin.

WES

So this week we're fighting a dose of the space clap?

DONALD

I'm as serious as a heart attack, people. Sal, show them.

Pig Boy pushes a key. A picture of the S.T.A. a slimy creature like an angry jellyfish, appears on the screen:

PIG BOY

The S.T.A. hides inside people's bodies. It's a gelatinous creature that passes through mucus membranes in the adrenaline rush of sexual intercourse. It can get in anyone and make them do its bidding.

GRACE

So I have nothing to worry about.

DONALD

Think again. The S.T.A.'s genetically engineered to emit a powerful pheromonal blast. Biologically impossible to resist. It can seduce anyone any time.

WES

Anyone?

DONALD

Let me pay you the courtesy of being blunt: this alien has his mojo on so hard, he could talk Mother Theresa into a threesome with Mahatma Gandhi.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TUCKER

Is that what the ultimate
extraterrestrial killing machine
was doing at The Hubba Hubba Room,
looking for love?

PIG BOY

S.T.A.'s can't breathe oxygen. It
needed to find a host body
quickly...so it zeroed in on a
nexus of heightened sexual energy.

GRACE

Which explains why it didn't show
up at my apartment.

TUCKER

It explains what we saw...the
S.T.A. takes over the dancer's
body, she goes home and transfers
the alien to her boyfriend.

Pig Boy pops up from behind a computer.

PIG BOY

I just ran Jesse Vance's name
through every database in the book.
If the alien buys anything with his
credit cards, bells are going to
start going off.

TUCKER

What I don't get is why Enid's body
melted after the alien left her.

DONALD

That's how it covers its tracks.
After its done using a body, it
goes through that poor soul like a
hydrochloric acid Big Gulp.

PIG BOY

Hey guys...Jesse Vance's van
conversion? It's got a Lojack.

DONALD

So where is this Jacqueline Susann
monstrosity headed?

Pig Boy holds up his finger and goes back to work:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WES

If this thing is an alien assassin -
who sent it and who's the target?

TUCKER

I'd put money down it's going
straight to the UN. It could
destabilize the entire planet.

As Tucker, Wes and Grace argue, Pig Boy looks up to Donald,
points to a screen:

PIG BOY

(in a hushed tone)
He's parked outside of the
building.

Donald nods and quietly steps away.

GRACE

Why would it want the UN? You want
to destabilize the planet, you go
kick some ass in Wall Street.

WES

Tom Jones.
(off the looks)
The man's the pre-eminent musical
genius of our time, he's in New
York for just the one night.
There's no better time to strike
than now.

GRACE

I'd go after Robert Goulet way
before gunning for Tom Jones -
hey... where's Donald?
(beat)
Sal, where'd he go?

But Pig Boy is silent. Tucker, Wes and Grace step off the
research hub and Tucker notices -

DONALD'S GUN LOCKER

Open. A gun missing.

TUCKER

Oh no...He's going after it!

The Gang steps out of the archives into -

INT. ELEVATOR FOYER - CONTINUOUS

- and find Donald, weapon in hand, strapping in.

TUCKER
Donald, what are you?

As the elevator doors close:

DONALD
Don't follow me.

Off the looks exchanged by The Gang:

EXT. CHRONICLE - ENTRANCE - DAY

Donald opens a side door, slowly inching out until he sees:

JESSE'S VAN

Squatting quietly across the street.

Donald looks around - coast is clear - and quickly runs up behind the van, dropping on one knee below the tailgate windows.

Cocking his weapon, Donald makes a stealthy creep around the van and SLIDES the side door open, immediately pulling back to aim his weapon inside.

But the van is empty. As Donald makes a careful approach toward the van...

CRANE OVERHEAD

TO REVEAL ALIEN HOST JESSE, lying face-up on the roof of the van - waiting for the right time to ambush!

DONALD

Takes a step into the van...and Alien Host Jesse drops in from above! Donald spins around. Raises his weapon, but with half of his body in the van, he is in no position to fire.

Alien Host Jesse grabs Donald, forcing him to drop the weapon. As Alien Host Jesse kicks the gun away, Donald winds up his other hand and punches Alien Host Jesse in the face!

Recovering quickly, Alien Host Jesse SMASHES Donald against the van, then pulls out a jagged, ugly knife of alien origin...which he plunges deep into Donald's side!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Donald SCREAMS in pain. Alien Host Jesse pulls out the knife and is about to go for the death blow when a high energy plasma bolt impacts against the side of the van!

Alien Host Jesse turns back and sees:

TUCKER

Struggling to figure out Donald's weapon.

Alien Host Jesse's eyes widen in surprise. Tucker sends a high energy plasma bolt into his side, blasting a major wound! Alien Host Jesse falls to his knees. Wincing, he lifts his knife and is about to kill Donald when -

WES

- rushes up from behind the van and lands a major front kick on Alien Host Jesse, sending him reeling away from Donald.

WES

Don't even think about busting up my boss!

Alien Host Jesse runs away. Tucker opens up on him, firing wildly as Wes and Grace minister to Donald.

TUCKER

I'm going after him!

But Donald is bleeding profusely from his side.

GRACE

Tucker...Donald's hurt!

Tucker looks back at the running alien, then at Wes and Grace as they try to lift Donald up without tearing his wound. Tucker immediately rushes over to help the Big Guy.

WES

(to Donald)
Gotta get you to a hospital.

DONALD

No. Take me to the Archives.

TUCKER

The Archives, are you crazy?

DONALD

Haven't you three disobeyed me enough for one day?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As Tucker, Wes and Grace help Donald to his feet...

INT. THE ARCHIVES - HEALING SANCTUARY - NIGHT

Pig Boy leads Tucker and Grace to bring Donald into a darkened room dominated by a strange enclosure: a high-tech, glass-walled gazebo dominated by a gurney at its center.

TUCKER

What the hell is this?

PIG BOY

A little advanced medical technology, courtesy of our friends from Frolix 8. A biomorphic healing sanctuary.

(beat)

Stand back, me and Donald are the only ones who can open it.

Tucker shoots Pig Boy a quizzical look.

PIG BOY (cont'd)

What can I say? The Big Guy trusts me with the big toys.

Pig Boy puts his hand on a palm reader. The door to the healing sanctuary slides open with a WHOOSH.

DONALD

(faintly)

Just put me on the gurney.

Tucker and Grace help Donald inside, and help him lie down on the gurney. Pig Boy taps a keyboard on a panel on the outside of the Healing Sanctuary.

TUCKER

Donald. Why didn't you tell us?

(off Donald's silence)

You have to come clean with us. He came here to kill you, didn't he?

DONALD

You shouldn't have gotten involved. Too dangerous.

GRACE

Why didn't you trust us?

Donald puts his hand on Grace's shoulder, shoots her a faint smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONALD

I do trust you. Doesn't mean I want to see you get hurt.

TUCKER

We need to know why he's out to get you. There has to be some way to stop it.

DONALD

The Myazaki Cluster. Three years ago I printed a story about a member of their Royal Family and they took it badly. Very badly.

(beat)

Don't confront the S.T.A. He'll kill you all to get to me.

PIG BOY

Time's running out, I gotta let the healing begin.

Tucker and Grace step out. Pig Boy closes the door to the healing sanctuary.

Pig Boy produces a cylinder full of a white substance from a slot, he then places the cylinder into and entry port.

The healing sanctuary floods with a white gas that obscures Donald from view.

WES

What are you doing to him?

PIG BOY

It's an anaesthetic gas. Once he's asleep, microscopic, genetically tailored medical-mites come out and repair the tissue damage.

(beat)

The Big Guy hates HMO's.

But Tucker's in no mood for levity.

TUCKER

That alien took one of those high energy plasma bolts point blank and still had enough left in him to run away.

WES

So he's a tough son of a bitch. Doesn't mean we're letting him off

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WES (cont'd)

the hook for messing up the Big Guy.

TUCKER

I put a pretty big hole in him, he's gotta change bodies soon. If we don't get him now, the next time we might get a chance is after he kills Donald.

GRACE

That's not gonna happen.

(to Pig Boy)

There's still a chance we might find him if he tries to use any one of Vance's credit cards, right?

Pig Boy taps a computer mounted on the wall, types frantically:

PIG BOY

I'm already on it.

TUCKER

That's not the only thing we need you to get on.

(off Pig Boys look)

Jesse Vance is an innocent bystander in all of this. And so's the next person who gets possessed by that thing. I don't want to have to shoot an innocent person again. If we find the S.T.A., we need to have some way of getting the alien out without killing the host.

PIG BOY

First things first...according To the credit card records he just checked into the Tronzo Hotel. It's less than a mile away.

As The Gang hauls out of there...

EXT. TRONZO HOTEL - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

The PT Cruiser SCREECHES up to the valet stand.

INT. TRONZO HOTEL - NIGHT

Tucker, Wes and Grace burst into the bustling lobby.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TUCKER

The S.T.A. might still be in
Vance's body...if we can keep him
from switching bodies we might even
have a chance to save Vance.

WES

How hard can this be?
(looking around)
All we gotta to do is find where
Jesse Vance is staying and stop him
from having sex.

GRACE

I think that's going to be harder
than we think.

Tucker and Wes turn toward Grace. She points to a large
banner over the reception desk.

The banner reads "WELCOME 2001 WORLD SWINGERS CONVENTION."

As Tucker, Wes and Grace react to this bizarre complication:

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. TRONZO HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT

Wes and Tucker scope out the hotel lobby while Grace lays it on thick for a HOTEL DESK CLERK.

GRACE

I don't care if it isn't policy to give out room numbers. When Jesse checked in, he was clutching his side in pain, right? That's because I need to give him his medicine. If something happens, you are going to be personally responsible!

TUCKER AND WES

Look at all the average-looking people bustling about.

WES

If this is what a swingers convention looks like, we aren't going to have a problem finding Jesse Vance.

TUCKER

How come?

WES

Good looking dude like that's gonna stick out like a sore thumb. This place looks like the early dinner buffet on the Lido deck.

TUCKER

That's cause all the hot young people are upstairs having hot young people sex.

GRACE

(stepping up)

I got the room number, let's go.

INT. ALIEN HOST JESSE HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The front door opens, illuminating the darkened room with outside light. As The Gang enters...

TUCKER

Unlocked...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

Oh no. I recognize that smell.

Wes hits the lights. The Gang is shocked to see a steaming, dissolving carcass on the bed by a room service cart. Wes is especially grossed out: he hasn't seen this before.

Tucker steps up to the room service cart, opens a covered dish to reveal a steak. Tucker puts his finger on the meat.

TUCKER

Food's still hot, this can't have happened long ago. And Vance was in the room when he changed bodies. The new host can't be far away.

WES

We have no way of knowing who it is.

Grace grabs the receipt from the room service cart:

GRACE

Room service was here. If you were wounded and in need of a new body, why not just pick up the phone?

TUCKER

Looks like our best shot.

Wes takes the receipt and taps the phone:

WES

Yeah, room service? I had a waitress up in my room a little while ago, name was...

(reading the receipt)

...Sandy...Sandra, right. Yeah, I forgot to tip her. Can you tell me where I can find her? And she's a blonde? A red-head - yeah I didn't get a good look at her. Looked like a blondish red-head. Great, thanks.

(hanging up)

Bad news and worse news.

TUCKER

Bad news?

WES

Sandra, the room service waitress finished her shift less than five minutes ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GRACE

Worse news?

WES

She headed up to the eighth floor.
That's where the swingers have
their hospitality suite. They
booked the entire floor.

The Gang exchange glances and scramble out:

INT. SWINGERS FLOOR - ELEVATOR LOBBY - NIGHT

The elevator door opens with a DING! to reveal Tucker, Wes
and Grace...and their faces all show their reaction to:

REVERSE ANGLE

A serious, swingin' bash. Music plays. All the rooms are
open. ASSORTED SWINGERS (middle-aged and pot-bellied, covered
up by a wide variety of terry cloth to dragon-embroidered
satin robes) walk in and out of the rooms. Smiles abound.

TUCKER

Sweet Jesus! I've never seen this
much drooping flesh in my life.

WES

I thought you said all the hot
young people would be up here
having hot young people sex.

TUCKER

God I was wrong!

GRACE

All the sudden having a dry spell
doesn't seem like such a bad idea.

WES

We gotta keep a zen-like center
about all of this. We gotta focus.

GRACE

How are we gonna do that? It's like
The Red Shoe Diaries on Geritol.

TUCKER

No. Wes is right. Donald's life is
at stake, and so is that waitress.
We don't want her ending up like
Jesse Vance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An O.S. MAN'S VOICE gets their attention:

AUTHORITATIVE MAN (O.S.)
Hey, you three! We don't allow
rubberneckers.

Tucker, Wes and Grace turn to see the MAN, standing behind a
clothes check station.

AUTHORITATIVE MAN (cont'd)
Either you check your clothes at
the door or you turn around.

INT. SWINGERS FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Wes, Tucker and Grace step out onto the floor in short,
embroidered satin robes. Wes looks especially strapping in a
black robe with a Chinese dragon design on the back.

TUCKER
OK. Here's the plan. We split up,
go room to room, find Sandy before
she passes on that S.T.A....and
then we tell no one about this.
Ever. Agreed?

WES
(off Grace's grimace)
If I gotta make like some kind of
triple X Bruce Lee, so can you. It
won't take long. Room Service said
she's got a blazing head of red
hair, can't be too hard to spot.

GRACE
In this crowd? You better hope the
carpet matches the drapes.

INT. SWINGER HOTEL ROOM#1 - NIGHT

Grace enters, trying not to step on anyone, finds herself
next to a NAKED MAN (seen from the waist up) who drinks a
cocktail while watching the action just below the frame:

GRACE
Is there a Sandra in this room?
Hello? Anyone named Sandra here?
(to Naked Man)
Is any one of those four...five
people down there named "Sandra?"

NAKED MAN
Nope.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

You do know these people, right?

NAKED MAN

Oh yeah, we're all friends. And that one down there on all fours, that's my wife. Heck of a gal, huh?

GRACE

Yeah...damn...

Grace looks at the action below the frame for a moment, trying to figure out the geometry of bodies in motion.

INT. HOTEL ROOM CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Grace, Tucker and Wes regroup:

GRACE

Anything?

WES

Nope. Tuck B?

TUCKER

No, but if I ever want to be a part of something called "the caterpillar" they'll hook me up in there.

GRACE

I can't believe I'm saying this but...I'm starting to feel kind of turned on by all of this sexual energy and exposed flesh...

Wes looks Grace in the eye:

WES

Grace, we gotta keep it moving, so think of nuns, dead puppies, the dude who played Sheriff Roscoe P. Coltrane on *Dukes of Hazzard*.

Grace closes her eyes, then opens them:

GRACE

Wes. You are my rock.

The three scatter. Wes moves into the next room.

Then, from inside the room, a SCREAM. Tucker and Grace re-enter the corridor, exchange concerned glances:

(CONTINUED)

TUCKER

Wes!

Tucker and Grace rush into:

INT. SWINGER HOTEL ROOM#2 - NIGHT

Tucker and Grace rush in to find Wes, trying to get out.

WES

Oh my God - oh my God - oh my God!

JOLENE FREEWALD'S VOICE (O.S.)

Wesley come back, it's OK!

REVERSE ANGLE INTO THE ROOM

Wes has disrupted a party. The assembled SWINGERS are busy getting dressed.

Among them are Jolene and Alonso Freewald, both slipping into matching embroidered satin robes.

GRACE

What the hell?

Tucker and Grace are absolutely dumbstruck as Alonso tries to do damage control among his friends.

ALONSO FREEWALD

It's OK, people, party's still on, keep having fun, just give us a few minutes in here and we'll set it off again - this is nothing.

The swingers disperse. Tucker, Wes and Grace are alone in the room with Wes and his parents.

WES

This is nothing? What the hell happened to Tom Jones?

TUCKER

Uh. Wes, I can tell this is sorta traumatic for you but -

WES

Traumatic doesn't begin to describe it. I'm on the redline. I'm experiencing the freakin' China Syndrome!

CONTINUED:

JOLENE FREEWALD

But, son...what are you doing here?

Wes realizes that he himself is wearing a skimpy robe. An awkward moment ensues, then:

WES

I happen to be undercover doing a story here, thank you very much.

GRACE

I think what Tucker's trying to say is...we have someone to find...and interview...so we'll just do that while you... yeah...OK...

Tucker and Grace get out of there in a hurry:

WES

When were you gonna tell me?

ALONSO FREEWALD

We weren't. We respect your privacy and what we do with our free time, is, frankly our own business.

WES

But how can you watch my mother while other people...eugh!

ALONSO FREEWALD

What you have to understand, son, is this doesn't have anything to do with how your mother and I feel about each other. We are two adults who are very much in love, and very much committed to each other.

JOLENE FREEWALD

This is more like a hobby.

WES

No. Macrame is a hobby. Skeet shooting is a hobby. Group sex - you all didn't even go to Woodstock!

ALONSO FREEWALD

This isn't how we would have wanted you to find out, but this has been a part of our lives since before you were born.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOLENE FREEWALD

You remember Marty and Bess?

WES

Of course I remember my own aunt and uncle!

JOLENE FREEWALD

They're not really your aunt and uncle.

WES

What?

ALONSO FREEWALD

We met them on a cruise and...well, one thing led to another...

WES

I cannot talk about this right now - just do me a favor. You gotta stop swinging tonight. Don't swing with anyone. Anyone, OK?

ALONSO FREEWALD

Wesley. Now that you know, you're going to have to live with this.

WES

Trust me on this, OK, please.

JOLENE FREEWALD

We're not just going to drop out of the lifestyle.

Wes gets a tap on the shoulder - he turns to see Tucker. Walking away behind him are Grace and a blazing red-head in her late 40's: SANDRA.

TUCKER

Would you excuse us?

(pulling Wes away)

That's Sandra. Grace told her we want to have a private party in our room upstairs. We gotta motor.

WES

We have a room upstairs?

GRACE

(holding up a key)

These people are about as loose

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GRACE (cont'd)
with their keys as they are with
their clothes.

WES
(steps up to his parents)
I gotta go.

ALONSO FREEWALD
Son, whenever you are ready to
talk, your mother and I are going
to be there for you.

Wes shoots his parents a wounded look, then goes.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Wes catches up to Tucker and Grace, who follows Sandra into
the elevator.

TUCKER
How are you holding up?

WES
I think I need to wash my skull out
with soap.

TUCKER
I just want my clothes back.

INT. SWINGER HOTEL ROOM#3 - NIGHT

Carrying her clothes, Grace herds Sandra into the
room...followed by Tucker and Wes. Sandra drapes herself
across the bed, tugs the belt on her robe seductively.

SANDRA
OK, boys and girls. I'm ready for
you. Who's first?

Tucker pulls the phone cord off the wall, tosses it to Wes.

TUCKER
How about you drop the act? We know
who you are.

SANDRA
Oh do you?

WES
And we know what you're up to.

SANDRA
Then you know I've been a bad, bad
girl.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANDRA (cont'd)
(re: the phone wire)
Maybe someone needs to tie me up
and teach me a lesson...or I might
just hurt someone.

As Sandra holds out her wrists:

GRACE
(stepping out)
I'll call Pig Boy, see if he's
figured out how to get that thing
out of her.

INT. HOTEL ROOM CORRIDOR/THE ARCHIVES - INTERCUT

Grace speaks to Pig Boy. He is busy scampering around the Archives, working on the chemistry set: brewing up something and lining up a group of syringes on the work table.

GRACE
- is that the only way to do it?

PIG BOY
You could always just keep her tied
up until the S.T.A. burns his way
out of her body. Then it'd be
exposed to our atmosphere and die.
But that would suck for the Host.

GRACE
So walk me through the other way.

Grace notices a HANDSOME LATINO ROOM SERVICE WAITER (an Antonio Banderas type) stepping out of the elevator.

PIG BOY
Well, it's interesting because it's
all a problem of brain chemistry.
If you can knock her unconscious,
you could simulate a sexually
heightened state...

The Waiter moves in behind Grace. While Pig Boy blathers, the Waiter gets close. Very close.

PIG BOY (cont'd)
...which would then confuse the
S.T.A. into exiting the body
without killing the host.

Grace turns. He shoots her a smile, she tries to keep the conversation going as she is mesmerized by his good looks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

Knocking her out I can handle, but how are we supposed to put her in a sexually heightened state? That just sounds...messy.

The waiter strokes Grace's hair. She likes it and he knows it. The two fall deeper and deeper into each other's eyes...

PIG BOY

It's really a simple issue of brain chemistry...when two people are in a state of sexual ecstasy it's like an explosion of neurochemicals.

Grace strokes the Waiter's face, he strokes hers. Grace closes her eyes, luxuriating in his every caress...

PIG BOY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

There's phenylethylamine which speeds up the flow of information between nerve cells, and dopamine and norepinephrine which stimulate the production of adrenaline, which releases endorphins, creating an orgasmic sensation...

By now, Grace's phone hand has dropped to her side and she is doing some heavy necking and petting with the waiter.

PIG BOY (cont'd)

...so I'm putting together a little chemical soup which ought to do the trick. A chemical one-night stand. All we have to do is give her an injection of this stuff and the alien comes flying out of her. Hell, if I didn't have any scruples we could probably sell the stuff and make a fortune.

Grace peels the waiter's jacket off his muscular torso. The jacket falls to the floor...followed by Grace's cell phone.

PIG BOY (O.S./FILTERED) (CONT'D)

(cont'd)

Grace? Grace are you there?

Grace and the Waiter fall out of view. As Pig Boy calls through the cell phone FIND the waiter's jacket on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

THE CHRONICLE "Touched By An Alien"
CONTINUED: (2)

37.

The name tag reads "SANDY."

CUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. SWINGER HOTEL ROOM#3 - NIGHT

Sandra, whose hands and body are now also bound with phone and power cords, is getting very, very annoyed.

SANDRA

Are we getting it on or what?

WES

You're not getting it on with anyone, we saw what you did to Jesse Vance.

SANDRA

Who's Jesse Vance?

TUCKER

The guy you left dead in his room. Your last room service client.

SANDRA

My last client was an elderly couple from Tuback, Arizona. Double order of creamed spinach.

Tucker holds up the room service receipt.

TUCKER

We have the receipt to prove it.

SANDRA

That wasn't me. That was Sandy.

WES

You're Sandy.

SANDRA

No. There's also a waiter named Sandy. He's from Argentina. His real name's "Sandro" but he goes by Sandy so people don't get him mixed up with me.

(beat)

You people don't even swing, do you?

Tucker gets close to Sandra, sniffs her:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TUCKER

Wes?

(as Wes takes a whiff)

You feeling anything...pheromonal?

Wes takes a whiff, shakes his head.

SANDRA

What is wrong with you two? Are you two going to rob me or something?

TUCKER

Wes. You think the alien could... swing both ways?

WES

Why did I assume it'd want a woman? I mean, dude's from outer space, why follow conventional morality when you're irresistible and come from another planet?

TUCKER

We gotta get Grace and find him, fast!

The two storm out of the room, then:

SANDRA

Hello? You psychos gonna set me free? I could have you two thrown in jail for this!

Tucker and Wes re-enter the room, Wes undoes Sandra's bonds. She reaches for the phone, holds it out like a weapon:

TUCKER

There's really no need to involve the cops in this, is there?

SANDRA

They put people in prison for locking someone in a room and tying them up against their will. Give me one good reason I shouldn't turn you in to the N.Y.P.D. right now.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - VENDING AREA - NIGHT

Pulling on the last of her street clothes, Grace steps out from behind a door labeled "VENDING AREA." She has a glass stare: she is Alien Host Grace now.

INT. SWINGER HOTEL ROOM#3/HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Tucker and Wes burst out of the room, now fully dressed.
Sandra follows, smiling:

TUCKER
Grace! Grace?

Tucker scouts out the floor as Wes and Sandra discuss:

WES
Now, we have a deal, right, you
don't mention this to anyone.

SANDRA
As long as you keep up your end of
the bargain.

WES
Oh you'll get what you want...a
lifetime subscription to the World
Chronicle. Guaranteed.

SANDRA
You know, in spite of everything...
you're kind of cute.

Sandra gives Wes a huge wet kiss and sashays off with an
alluring flourish. Wes winces: this is all way more than he
bargained for. As he joins Tucker:

WES
Man, after tonight, I'm definitely
paying off some shrink's mortgage.

TUCKER
Grace isn't here.

WES
I'll just call her, hang on.

Wes dials his cell phone.

The two hear a faint RING, which they follow to a door
labeled "Vending Area." Tucker and Wes approach.

The RING gets louder. Tucker opens the door...

INT. VENDING AREA - NIGHT

...and the two get a faceful of acrid smoke and a look at the
carcass that was once Sandro.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tucker and Wes get closer and find Grace's still-ringing cell phone...next to the waiter's jacket and his name tag.

As the two back off in shock and disgust:

TUCKER

OK. He's clever. He saw us save Donald...he probably figured we'd be proactive and come after him...

WES

And he knew the best way to get to Donald would through one of us...

TUCKER

And if he's inside of Grace, he probably knows exactly where Donald is and how to get to him. Dammit!

This is bad. Way bad. As the two haul ass out of there:

INT. THE ARCHIVES - NIGHT

Pig Boy works diligently on his adrenaline/endorphin injection. The phone RINGS. He ignores it, caught up in his work, pouring his liquid concoction into a vial.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. PT CRUISER - NIGHT

Where Tucker and Wes race back to The Chronicle. Tucker stares at the cell phone:

TUCKER

C'mon, Sal...pick up! Pick up!

ON PIG BOY

Finally turning toward the annoyingly insistent phone:

PIG BOY

OK, OK...I'm coming.

Pig Boy grudgingly reaches to get the phone as the door to the Archives slides open to reveal Alien Host Grace.

Alien Host Grace takes off her jacket, lets it drop to the floor, and slithers over toward Pig Boy.

PIG BOY (cont'd)

(into the phone)

Yes?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON TUCKER

TUCKER

Sal, it's Tucker you have to
listen! Grace is on her way there
and -

But before Tucker can finish:

ON PIG BOY

As Alien Host Grace steps up behind him. She takes the
receiver from his hand and looks at him with pure animal lust
in her eyes.

PIG BOY

(looking up)

Hi Grace, what's -

Alien Host Grace flashes a predatory smile, grabs Pig Boy by
his shirt, and hefts him onto the counter.

TUCKER'S VOICE (FILTERED)

- you have to get away as fast as
you -

PIG BOY

I knew you'd come around some day.
I knew it!

Alien Host Grace SLAMS the phone back onto its cradle and
plants a major lip lock on Pig Boy.

ON TUCKER

Re-dialing frantically.

TUCKER

She's there with him...she's going
to use him to open Donald's healing
pod!

ON PIG BOY AND ALIEN HOST GRACE

She has him pinned down to the counter. She kisses his neck.
Pig Boy SNORTS with delight...

...then the phone starts RINGING again. Pig Boy looks up at
Grace:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PIG BOY

Uh, that's probably Tucker - it seemed pretty urgent, what he had to say -

But Alien Host Grace simply kicks the phone off the counter.
As the phone CRASHES to the floor:

ON TUCKER AND WES

TUCKER

This is useless. We have got to get to him somehow.

WES

Hold the wheel, I have an idea...

Tucker holds the wheel, Wes reaches between the seats and pulls out his PDA, hands it to Tucker.

TUCKER

What am I supposed to do with this?

WES

(taking the wheel)
What, you never heard of e-mail, instant messaging? You're the writer, be creative!

Tucker pushes a few buttons, then types into the diminutive keyboard with one finger:

ON ALIEN HOST GRACE AND PIG BOY

Alien Host Grace licks the side of Pig Boy's face. Pig Boy closes his eyes, enjoying every moment...

...and then a computer monitor directly in his line of sight lights up with a LOUD CHIRP.

An instant message window opens on the monitor. In bright flashing red letters, the text reads:

SAL - THE ALIEN IS INSIDE GRACE!

Alien Host Grace grabs Pig Boy's face and moves it back toward her, then starts unbuttoning his shirt with her teeth.

PIG BOY

(struggling to get the words out)
Grace...not that this isn't great but...you wouldn't happen to be
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PIG BOY (cont'd)
possessed by a sex crazed alien
killer...would you?

Alien Host Grace looks up and smiles, running her hands
across his bare chest.

PIG BOY (cont'd)
You're right...who cares...

Another message FLASHES on the screen with a CHIRP:

FOR GOD'S SAKE DO NOT HAVE SEX WITH HER!

PIG BOY (cont'd)
Oh God...I'm in hell. This is hell!

ON TUCKER AND WES

Tucker types frantically:

WES
You gotta make sure you tell him
that the only reason she's seducing
him is because she knows he's the
only person other than Donald who
can open the alien healing
sanctuary...

TUCKER
I only have one finger!

ON PIG BOY AND GRACE

Pig Boy is busy giving in to the ecstasy of Alien Host
Grace's groping and kissing when the monitor CHIRPS again:

CLOSE YOUR EYES AND THINK OF DONALD!

...and something finally breaks inside of Pig Boy:

PIG BOY
That's it! I'm only half human, I
can resist this!

With a heave, Pig Boy tries to slide out from under Alien
Host Grace, but succeeds only in CRASHING to the floor with
her still on top of him.

Pig Boy has just enough of a chance to slip away. Alien Host
Grace rises from behind the counter, pure murder in her eyes.

ON WES AND TUCKER

As Wes steps on the brakes and the two rush out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ON PIG BOY AND ALIEN HOST GRACE

Alien Host Grace chases Pig Boy down a corridor, grabs him by the back and SLAMS him against the wall. Pig Boy is out cold.

INT. CHRONICLE - BULLPEN - NIGHT

Tucker and Wes rush in, head for the Archives.

INT. THE ARCHIVES - HEALING SANCTUARY - NIGHT

Alien Host Grace, the steely look in her face more lethal than ever, drags unconscious Pig Boy into the healing sanctuary area and pushes his hand into the palm scanner.

The door to the sanctuary WHOOSHES open. Alien Host Grace lets Pig Boy fall like a sack of potatoes and enters.

INT. CHRONICLE - ELEVATOR CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Tucker and Wes race to the elevator, frantically push the call button.

INT. THE ARCHIVES - HEALING SANCTUARY - NIGHT

Alien Host Grace lifts her alien knife and pulls the covers off the gurney...

....to find that Donald isn't there!

Alien Host Grace spins around and sees Donald, putting his hand on the palm scanner.

DONALD

Oldest trick in the book.

The door to the healing sanctuary WHOOSHES shut! Alien Host Grace SCREAMS in maddening frustration.

DONALD (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Sal! Sal!

Pig Boy slowly comes to, then, groggily:

DONALD (cont'd)

Tell me you figured out a way of getting this thing out of Grace!

Pig Boy holds up his thumb. Scampers away. Grace's hits the door next to Donald's face, punching a hole through the glass and grabbing Donald's neck!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TUCKER (O.S.)

Donald!

Tucker and Wes rush in and grab Donald, trying to pry him away, but Alien Host Grace's hold on him is relentless.

Donald chokes, his windpipe collapsing under the vise-like grip. Wes and Tucker pull on the Big Guy, desperately trying to keep Alien Host Grace from squeezing the life out of him -

- and then Pig Boy enters the healing sanctuary, carrying a syringe full of his serum!

PIG BOY

Grab the anaesthetic gas! Hurry!

Wes picks up a canister and hands it to Pig Boy, who plunges the syringe in through the top and then jams the canister in the healing sanctuary's entry port!

DONALD

Sayonara, sucker!

Pig Boy pushes a button and the Healing Sanctuary floods with an opaque gas and a great RUSH of air.

Alien Host Grace's hand lets go of Donald, who reels back, gasping for air. Tucker, Pig Boy, Wes and Donald try to recover as the gas dissipates -

- an a hideous creature SLAPS against the glass door. Half Portuguese man of war, half melting stain of acrid crud, the thing clings to the glass by a ganglioid structure whose rudimentary mouth is locked into a repugnant death SHRIEK.

The four men jump back, startled. Then, as the creature slides off the door, everyone heaves a huge sigh of relief.

TUCKER

Donald?

DONALD

I'm OK, people. I think you just got yourselves this week's cover.

WES

How about you, Sal?

PIG BOY

(after a wistful pause)

No. I'm not OK. A man never gets over what I lost tonight. Never.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Donald puts his hand on the healing sanctuary palm scanner.
The door WHOOSHES open to reveal a disheveled, smiling, and
no longer alien-hosting Grace.

Grace regards the mess on the door, then:

GRACE

Hey guys...did that thing just come
out of me?

Everyone nods gravely, but Grace is in serious bliss.

GRACE (cont'd)

Wow.

Tucker and Wes rush up to Grace, holding her up:

TUCKER

How about we get you out of here?
Get some breakfast in you, what do
you say?

GRACE

I feel like I should smoke a
cigarette...

Tucker and Wes look back as they walk Grace out of the
sanctuary. Donald shoots them a smile and a thumbs up.

GRACE (cont'd)

...but I don't even smoke...

Off the relieved looks exchanged by Donald and Pig Boy, as
Tucker, Wes and Grace exit...

CUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

FADE IN:

INT. CHRONICLE - BULLPEN - DAY

Wes sits at his desk when something lands before him: a snapshot. A "classic" black and white picture of a flying saucer.

Wes looks up to see his parents. It's quiet. Awkward.

WES
(quietly)
That's the first snapshot I ever took.

JOLENE FREEWALD
Remember how you thought it was a flying saucer?

WES
And the two of you took out a magnifying glass and we spent half an hour looking at it until you made out the word "Buick" just above the rim.

ALONSO FREEWALD
But we gave you the benefit of the doubt. We've always given you the benefit of the doubt.

Jolene and Alonso exchange glances, trying to salvage an uncomfortable topic:

JOLENE FREEWALD
And here you are with a great job, taking great pictures...

ALONSO FREEWALD
...even though we can't say we believe everything in the pages of The Chronicle, we trust you know what you're doing. You're an adult.

WES
It's not going to be easy, getting used to what I saw.

JOLENE FREEWALD
We know. We used to feel the exact same way about ghosts, and dragons and flying saucers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALONSO FREEWALD

But we trust you, Wes. We've always been proud of you. I mean...

(looking at the picture)

...this was a remarkable picture, and you were only seven.

WES

(a smile, then:)

The focus is a little soft. If I'd had a telephoto lens...

JOLENE FREEWALD

...don't start on that, you could have had that telephoto if you'd done your chores.

WES

That would have taken time out of designing my darkroom.

ALONSO FREEWALD

You were seven, Wesley.

WES

Seven is the exact right time to start teaching your child how to handle noxious chemicals...

As Wes builds a bridge with his parents -

TUCKER

- rushes through the double doors into the bullpen and sees Wes and his parents, hugging, exchanging good-byes as they get to the door.

ALONSO FREEWALD

We'll call you, son.

WES

Just don't call me for the next Tom Jones show, OK?

Alonso chuckles, Jolene sees Tucker standing between them and the door.

JOLENE FREEWALD

Nice meeting you, Tucker.

Jolene winks at Tucker. As Tucker reacts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WES

OK, time to go, parents...come
again...

(off their smiles)

...that's not what I meant...

As Jolene and Alonso vanish behind the doors. Tucker and Wes
exchange glances.

WES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Yeah, I really lucked out with the
parents.

TUCKER

I think there's something you
should know.

WES

What is it?

TUCKER

Remember how Donald said he printed
an unflattering article about the
Royal Family from the Myazaki
cluster three years ago.

WES

Yeah, it's why they sent that
amoeba from hell after him.

TUCKER

I spent the night looking through
the back issues database. Looked at
everything...that article was never
printed.

(beat)

The Big Guy's keeping secrets, Wes.

As Tucker and Wes process this information...

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Smiley stands against his column, reading the Chronicle. The
headline reads "IS THAT AN ALIEN IN YOUR PANTS OR ARE YOU
JUST HAPPY TO SEE ME?" Donald watches.

SMILEY

Are you sure humanity is ready to
know about this?

DONALD

I left out a couple of important
details. No one has to know it came

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONALD (cont'd)

for me... or why.

(beat)

But you do me a favor and put the word out to all your contacts. Let them know those bastards sent one of their best mercenaries out to get me and I sent it back to them in a jar.

(beat)

Tell them Donald Stern's packing heat and he's not afraid to use it.

SMILEY

I'll put the word out...but it's going to cost you.

DONALD

I'm ready to pay.

Donald slides open the briefcase. Smiley opens it...

...a loud MEOW sounds off from inside. Smiley's mouth widens into a satisfied grin.

SMILEY

Donald, you're a wonderful human being.

DONALD

I'd say the same about you Smiley...if you were...

Donald turns to go. As Smiley recedes into the darkness...

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF EPISODE