

[Graham clicks and scrolls on his computer.]

MORGAN (Hanna Cheek) (through the door and downstairs): Graham?

MORGAN: Are we doing this, or...?

GRAHAM (Sean Williams): Yeah, be right down...

MORGAN (through door): Look if you need another hour or...

GRAHAM: I'm coming down!

[Morgan walks up one more step.]

MORGAN (through door): Well... are you, or...?

GRAHAM: Yeah, I'm coming down!

[Morgan walks briskly up the stairs.]

GRAHAM (low, to himself): No, no, no, no...

[Morgan reaches the door and knocks on it.]

MORGAN: Can I come in?

GRAHAM: I'll be right down!

[Graham's computer makes a pinging notification sound. Then another.]

MORGAN (through the door): Okay, um...

GRAHAM: One sec, I'm getting some...

MORGAN (through the door): I just think if we're going to do this, I should book it this week, the slots fill up fast, and—

GRAHAM: Yeah yeah, I'm coming down.

[More notification sounds.]

MORGAN: Okay this is stupid, [opens door] why don't we just talk in here?

GRAHAM: No, I'll come down, I'm, I'm sorry—

[Graham's phone makes two more notification sounds as Morgan says:]

MORGAN: I think if you don't want to do this you should just say so.

GRAHAM: No, I do, it's just, I got a bunch of notifications, I wasn't sure if there was some kind of—

MORGAN: Graham. Close your computer. Turn over your phone.

[Morgan's phone makes a three-tone notification sound.]

MORGAN: Shit.

[Morgan's phone makes another notification sound.]

GRAHAM: Yeah, that's what was happening to—

MORGAN: Okay, I'm silencing mine too—

[Morgan pulls out her phone and taps her phone screen.]

MORGAN: Huh...

GRAHAM: What, is it something we need to -

MORGAN: I don't know, something weird, we will deal with it later.

GRAHAM: So why don't we go downstairs—

MORGAN: Look, I'm here, I've got the brochure, let's just—do, do you want me to read it to you?

GRAHAM: You don't have to read it, I can read it.

MORGAN: Well, okay, well, I gave you one just like this weeks ago. Did you read that one?

GRAHAM: I mean I understood the gist, it's some sort of retreat, for um...

MORGAN: Rebuilding Intimacy.

[Under their conversation, a dog begins barking outside.]

GRAHAM: Right.

MORGAN: That is the name of the course.

GRAHAM: There isn't a thing like, nobody actually watches you have sex, do they?

MORGAN: No—Graham—[makes a sound of stifled frustration, her voice begins to waver] it literally said in the—[takes a breath and regains her calm] Emotional intimacy. Intimacy doesn't automatically mean—

GRAHAM: Okay, okay, okay, fine.

MORGAN: They, they, they keep the groups small, so no more than eight couples, uh, and there's a series of structured activities that—

GRAHAM: Christ.

MORGAN: Excuse me?

GRAHAM: And in the mountains or something?

MORGAN: Well, in a lodge, we're not hanging from a sheer—look, are we talking about this seriously or not?

GRAHAM: Yeah, yeah, I'm—

MORGAN: I'm really trying here.

GRAHAM: I'm taking it seriously. You said it's us, uh, seven other couples...

[Outside, people are talking excitedly.]

MORGAN: It's all about, I guess, [quick exhale] multiple perspectives, uh, a, a strong guiding voice to keep everyone on track... something about breaking the cycle of competitive resentment—Graham!

GRAHAM: Sorry! No, I just noticed peripherally—

MORGAN: Is something...?

GRAHAM: Just a lot of our neighbors are [quick exhale]—you were saying resentment?

MORGAN: *Stopping* resentment, breaking a cycle of—look, is there some reason you can't focus on this?

GRAHAM: It's just... [sighs]

MORGAN: What?

GRAHAM: I don't know, sitting around in some room with seven other couples and, what, some guru—

MORGAN: Are you f—I spent a lot of time researching this, this isn't some scam—

GRAHAM: Right, and we say private things *to strangers*, and then we have meals with them—

MORGAN: I put so much time into this!

GRAHAM: Can't we figure this out just the two of us here at home—

MORGAN: It's been just the two of us! Don't you think it would've happened by now? You think this granola shit is my first choice? Yeah, it sounds fucking awful, but my fucking-awful beats your nothing!

[The voices outside grow louder and more excited.]

GRAHAM: What the hell is...

MORGAN: Is someone hurt, what's happening?

GRAHAM: I think they're, they're reacting to something on their—

MORGAN: They're all on their phones...

GRAHAM: Babe, I think we should, just to make sure it's not...

MORGAN: Fine.

[They pull out their phones and tap on the screens. A low drone begins under their conversation.]

GRAHAM: Wait... is yours saying...

MORGAN: This can't—Jesus—this can't—

GRAHAM: There's a link to a video.

[Two taps at the phone screen.]

MORGAN: This can't be right.

[The final word “right” echoes and the drone grows louder, leading into the Give Me Away theme. The theme is mysterious and wistful, with an undercurrent of chatter/busyness and a driving percussive energy. It combines organic cello and piano parts with electronic synths and percussion.]

VOICEOVER (Jordana Williams): Give Me Away, Episode 1: Is That Thing Screaming?

[A “breaking news” musical stinger plays. As the Newscaster speaks, his voice becomes more distant and crossfades into being a television broadcast playing in the background across a room.]

NEWSCASTER (Kevin R. Free): ...members of the Army Corps of Engineers now assembling the equipment they'll be using in an attempt make an opening in the already-recessed portion of the structure...

[Footsteps and the clink of glasses.]

NEWSCASTER (on TV): ...Once again, sixteen days after the arrival of the unidentified object, and after an extensive safety assessment of the exterior, the Army Corps of Engineers is attempting entry tonight.

[Two glasses are set down on a table, and two drinks are poured.]

TRAVIS (Nat Cassidy): I mean, I hope you never come home.

[The newscast continues under their conversation.]

GRAHAM: “Come home.”

TRAVIS: Did you like that?

GRAHAM: ‘Cause if you weren’t staying there, you’d say “I hope you never *go* home.”

TRAVIS: But I am staying there, Graham. I’m staying in *your home*... with *your wife*.

GRAHAM: Yep.

TRAVIS: Whose body I’ve coveted *for years*.

GRAHAM: Yeah.

[Graham sips his drink as Travis speaks.]

TRAVIS: And not in a worshipful way either, no candles, no slow caresses. I’m talking foul, dank rutting that would shock the conscience of a nation.

GRAHAM: Look, if she sent you because she—

TRAVIS: She didn’t send me.

GRAHAM: I’m just saying that if she sent you—

TRAVIS: She didn’t send me... in the sense that when I said, “I’m, I’m seeing Graham at his hotel,” she failed to say, “Don’t do that.” And when I return to *your home* later tonight, she and I will probably have a conversation about our respective evenings.

GRAHAM: (sullenly) And that's you hitting "your home" extra hard to see how I react.

TRAVIS: [takes a sip of his drink] Damn, my sly ruse.

GRAHAM: Like I'm supposed to say "not anymore" or whatever.

TRAVIS: Is that what you say?

[They pause to listen to the TV:]

NEWSCASTER (on TV): ...it's impossible to tell exactly, but the team leader does seem to have suspended use of the drill while he reexamines the recessed area on the structure's surface...

GRAHAM: Travis, have you ever... genuinely felt... okay, take you, for example.

TRAVIS: Oh , I love where this is going.

GRAHAM: You stay over at the house so often that Jamie's old room is basically your room now.

TRAVIS: Yeah, you're welcome.

GRAHAM: I'm saying between the nights you spend at our place and the handful you spend at your place—hey, does that kinda look like it's opening by itself?

NEWSCASTER (on TV): ...so, it's unclear if what we're seeing now is due to the efforts of the team or some other cause.

TRAVIS: Yeah, ultimately this whole conversation is moot, once the space-hornets come flying out...

GRAHAM: I guess I'm saying: between our place and your place, do either of those make you feel... [sighs] I don't know, grounded, like you've landed, like "this is my reset"?

TRAVIS: Are you trying to say "at home"?

GRAHAM: I'm trying to zero in on what that means.

TRAVIS: What "at home" means?

GRAHAM: Well if you're so confident, which of the two places you currently sleep makes you feel like that?

TRAVIS: It does sorta look like it's opening by itself.

[Screams begin emanating from the TV. Under Graham's line, a woman in the background says, "Hey, can you turn that up?" and the screams grow louder.]

GRAHAM: 'Cause when you say "I hope you never come home" of course it makes me picture coming home. But when I picture that, it doesn't seem like going home, it seems like... going to a place, and I don't—

[An unearthly cacophony blares from the television. The conversation falls silent.]

NEWSCASTER (on TV): [talking over the screams] Okay obviously we're not... obviously we aren't prepared to comment on what that sound...

TRAVIS: (disbelief) Is it screaming?

NEWSCASTER (on TV): ...soldiers drawing back from the opening right now... presumably hearing the same...

TRAVIS: (perturbed) Is that thing screaming?

[Transition. Cars whiz by, overpowering the conversation.]

JAMIE (Diana Oh): Okay... okay... so...

[When Morgan speaks, her words are quickly obscured by a passing vehicle.]

MORGAN: Do you have any questions for us, or anything we can—

JAMIE: I can't hear you!

[A vehicle passes.]

MORGAN: Sorry, I was saying, if you have any questions for us—

JAMIE: I'm processing, Mom, okay? Is that okay? I'm processing!

[The cars fade to footsteps in a quiet apartment.]

TALIA (Dani Martineck): Is Jamie okay?

MORGAN: That's your first question?

TALIA: No, it's just—you're the ones sitting here, I can see how you're doing. But Jamie...

MORGAN: Jamie is...

GRAHAM: You can always call her if—

MORGAN: Wait—how are we doing?

[The atmosphere transitions back to the noisy roadside. Jamie paces in a gravel parking lot.]

JAMIE: So... okay... okay...

MORGAN: Jamie, sit down.

GRAHAM: It's fine for her to pace if she wants to—

MORGAN: (snaps) Jamie, sit down!

JAMIE: Does Talia know?

GRAHAM: We're talking to them next week after their midterms.

JAMIE: (aggressively sarcastic) Whoa, way to ace the pronouns, Dad!

GRAHAM: I... feel like I've been doing okay for a while...

JAMIE: So, you thought... you *both* thought the best way to break this to me...

MORGAN: Jamie, please sit down, it's hard to hear you from there.

JAMIE: ...the best way to completely fuck with my equilibrium by telling me you're getting a divorce...

GRAHAM: Yeah, your mom's right, it's hard to hear you—

JAMIE: (shouting louder)...IS TO AMBUSH ME AT MY PLACE OF BUSINESS...

GRAHAM: Isn't your shift over?

MORGAN: I wanted to see where you work!

JAMIE: (continuing to shout) A roadside ice cream stand? You couldn't just use your imagination??

[The car sounds fade into a quiet apartment. A drink is poured under Talia's line.]

TALIA: Dad make sure this tastes okay, I'm still sorta honing my mixology.

MORGAN: You know you can still count on us for anything you need, right?

[Graham takes a sip.]

TALIA: And I appreciate that. What's the verdict, Dad?

[Morgan laughs slightly. Graham 'hmm's.]

TALIA: What?

MORGAN: It's just how you said it, "I appreciate that," like, "That's sweet, but I probably won't."

GRAHAM: That's good, though, right?

TALIA: You're the ones going through a thing, it should be me saying that to you: you can count on me for anything you need.

GRAHAM: Well, well that's...

MORGAN: Thank you, sweetheart.

TALIA: So... should we talk logistics? Where's everybody living now?

[The ambience transitions back to the noisy roadside. The cars are picking up into a steadier stream.]

JAMIE: So, what, am I doing Christmas at Mom's in the morning and then Dad's at night, like how is the rest of fucking life supposed to work now?

MORGAN: Jamie! Okay... you're an adult—

JAMIE: Like I'm not dealing with enough already? There's a goddam screaming spaceship in the Nevada desert, everything we know about the universe is fucked—

GRAHAM: Well technically everybody's dealing with that—

JAMIE: Did you see the footage? When they let the news crews in?

MORGAN: All right, look, you're obviously deflecting—

[A particularly loud truck passes.]

GRAHAM: We should go somewhere else, these cars are ju—

JAMIE: There was no one inside! No green men, no Vulcans, nothing, and it's screaming anyway!

[The spaceship screams, previously heard over the TV at the bar, are now on all sides. Individual screams overlap, modulate, and echo to make a chorus of anguish. In the reverberating tail of a scream, the ambience fades to a quiet room. A chair is folded up. Graham and Lex shift shuffle and shift furniture around under their conversation.]

GRAHAM: Do the chairs stay out, or—

LEX (Rebecca Comtois): Ha, no, barely enough room for customers as it is. We stack 'em in the back—but Graham, you don't have to clean up.

GRAHAM: Oh it's not a problem.

LEX: You're the only one who read the book, you shouldn't have to—

GRAHAM: [laughs] I enjoyed it. It was different.

LEX: From what, from your usual...

GRAHAM: Yeah. I tend to read more...

LEX: Stuff with “seal team” in the title?

GRAHAM: [chuckles] I don’t know that one, but yeah, thrillers, basically. Anything that just sort of make me... go away.

LEX: [light chuckle] *The Road to Autumn* is definitely not that.

GRAHAM: No but I liked that, I liked sort of having to go deep into a... like, like if you told me it’s just a whole story about someone finally admitting something, like—

LEX: Not even to someone else, to themselves!

GRAHAM: Right, I would never read something based on that description, but now that I have...

LEX: Sorry you were the only one.

GRAHAM: Yeah, I mean, I get it.

[They both slow down in their cleaning-up activities.]

LEX: (more serious) Shit, I barely read it. Like my eyes moved over the words, but...

GRAHAM: Yeah, it’s a weird time.

LEX: Look, total transparency, Graham, that’s what Book Club’s mostly been since it landed.

GRAHAM: Talking about the Ghosthouse?

LEX: Isn’t it weird how that name just stuck?

[Graham laughs.]

LEX: [laughing] Like somebody said it twice on cable and now *that’s* the name—forever.

GRAHAM: I guess with the screaming...

LEX: It doesn't even look like a house! It just looks like a big block of nothing. Inside too, it turns out.

GRAHAM: Well right, the livestream, I thought maybe that's why people were talking about it so much today. But, I thought maybe after, whatever, the novelty wears off—

LEX: Divorced, right?

GRAHAM: Excuse me?

LEX: Or separated?

GRAHAM: ...y-yeah, separated... how...

LEX: Two ways we get men in book club: with their wives, or *really not* with their wives.

GRAHAM: [laughs] Right.

LEX: I-I-I jus-I just, I don't wanna misrepresent—okay: if you wanna hang out with people offline, maybe even meet somebody? Then... yeah. But if you seriously wanna talk about books? It's gonna be a while before that's not just a pretext. It's aliens.

[A jaunty Spanish guitar riff plays, then fades into playing in the background of a crowded restaurant. A series of boot footsteps approaches.]

BEATRIZ (Alba Ponce de León): Graham! You're already settling up?

GRAHAM: Hey Beatriz—I'm not leaving, I'm just gonna pay and then I—

BEATRIZ: I totally caught you leaving—without saying goodbye!

GRAHAM: No no no, I swear, I-I was just—

[She playfully hits him on “very” and “dare.”]

BEATRIZ: (now clearly teasing) Before I leave FOR-EVER! Ugh, how very DARE you!

GRAHAM: Oh, okay, you're giving me shit.

BEATRIZ: You can't leave, Graham, you're the only one here who's not shaking me down for details!

GRAHAM: Oh, your fancy new job?

BEATRIZ: I'm like, "Guys, this isn't some NDA, this is *prison forever*."

GRAHAM: Of course, totally, and I'm not—

[Alan 'woohoos' in the background and laughing, draws nearer.]

BEATRIZ: Oh shit, it's Alan.

[Alan slow claps as he approaches.]

GRAHAM: What?

BEATRIZ: (under her breath) Human shield, Graham. Get my back.

ALAN (Jorge Cordova): (with patronizing sarcasm) The lady of the hour!

BEATRIZ: (through politely gritted teeth) Thanks, Alan, thank you.

ALAN: The departing superstar!

GRAHAM: What are you drinking, Alan?

ALAN: Actually, the lady *and* the man of the hour!

GRAHAM: W-what did I do?

[Alan pats Graham congratulatorily.]

ALAN: Look at this guy being modest—you got single again!

GRAHAM: Oh, well, that's—

ALAN: Level with me, man: what's it like to rejoin the actual world?

BEATRIZ: I'll see you guys back at the table.

ALAN: See here's what's wild to me, Beatriz [he pronounces her name like 'Beatrice' with a 'z']: we're both Ivy League, we're at the same firm, same specialty, same paygrade—

GRAHAM: Hey, Alan why don't we grab a drink—

ALAN: ... but *you're* the one going to the Ghosthouse, and *I'm* the one staying here. What's the difference between you and me?

BEATRIZ: Hmm, you must know you're pulled right up to something you don't wanna say.

ALAN: Why do they need a storage analyst on a spaceship anyway? E.T. doesn't use the same processors we do, right?

BEATRIZ: Once again—

ALAN: Top secret! Right, right. *You* can know, but *I* can't.

BEATRIZ: Okay! I'm out.

[Beatriz walks away. A woman laughs in the background.]

GRAHAM: Seriously, Alan, let's do a round on me, anything you want.

ALAN: You should fuck that bartender.

GRAHAM: The um—yeah, she's pretty—

ALAN: God, that age on a woman, when everything's just... [sighs] If like some genie told me I could fuck that bartender once, but it meant I couldn't see my kids for a month? I would do it.

GRAHAM: No. You think that now, but if you went a whole day without seeing—

ALAN: But you could! You could literally fuck that bartender tonight.

GRAHAM: Yeah, no, I don't think that's—

ALAN: [quietly] I dream about my kids growing up and moving out, you know that? Other parents are like “they grow up so fast, I'm missing it all,” and I'm like, “Really? 'Cause in my house it feels like it's been a hundred years.”

GRAHAM: Alan, seriously, bottom of my heart: you're wrong.

ALAN: Please fuck her, Graham. Take her home and fuck her, so I know some other life is possible.

[The restaurant ambience and music fades out.]

NEWSCASTER: ...once again for those just joining us, Nevada Task Force Director Brooke Harris, speaking to reporters this morning regarding the team's working theory on the nature of the Ghosthouse.

[Shutters snap in quick succession. A quiet audience occasionally whispers and coughs.]

BROOKE (Lori Elizabeth Parquet; into a microphone): So at this time, having interfaced with the onboard computer for some weeks now, it is our hypothesis that it functions as a sort of... penitentiary mainframe, a prison inside a computer. Which means those screams are being generated in some way by the inmates, whose minds we believe have been converted and uploaded into this mainframe as some form of non-transferable data, effectively imprisoning them indefinitely.

REPORTER (Bart Fasbender; from the audience): Meaning they're trapped forever?

BROOKE: Unless we can make the non-transferable, well, transferable.]

[The screams and shrieks of the Ghosthouse swell in volume across the stereo field and then subside and fade, until they are being heard in the distance. Insects chirp, sets of boots crunch on gritty sand, and airplanes pass overhead.]

HALLIE (Stephanie Willing): Okay, folks: this is the main attraction, the best view of the Ghosthouse in its entirety—this is why we've been walking all day!

[There are scattered cheers from a small group of people.]

HALLIE: So we're gonna hang out here for about an hour! Plenty of time for pictures, video, selfies, grab a bite if you're hungry, and we've got porta-potties up there! Any questions, come find me. Once again my name is Hallie, and in 60 minutes sharp, we'll be moving on!

[Hikers walk around the area. A closer set of footsteps approaches.]

HALLIE: Do you mind holding my pack while I get out my gear?

GRAHAM: Oh—sure.

[Hallie's pack rustles and her gear clanks as she takes it out.]

HALLIE: All good—thanks!

GRAHAM: No problem.

[Hallie takes her pack back and puts it on.]

HALLIE: Are you not...

GRAHAM: Mmm?

HALLIE: Taking any photos, or...?

GRAHAM: Oh. No. I just wanted to see it—or hear it, I guess.

HALLIE: Me too.

GRAHAM: Oh right, is all that equipment, just...?

HALLIE: [slightly self-conscious] Eh, Podcast gear.

GRAHAM: Hmm.

HALLIE: That's why I took the guide gig—I'm doing a series on the Ghosthouse.

GRAHAM: And you don't need any visuals for that?

HALLIE: Honestly? The audio's the best part. I mean, look at that thing. These people are all going home with pics of a big gray slab. But the sounds are amazing.

GRAHAM: Huh...

HALLIE: You don't think so?

GRAHAM: I just don't know if that's the word.

HALLIE: What word would you use for "screams from outer space"?

GRAHAM: [chuckles] I don't know, it's... On the news, the screams are like, something out of, like one of those sound effects tapes they use in haunted houses, but standing here now...

HALLIE: More vivid, right?

GRAHAM: It's just so much clearer what they're screaming for.

[They pause and the screams continue in the distance.]

HALLIE: Well, I mean, hopefully the task force can...

GRAHAM: Yeah, yeah.

HALLIE: Get them onto other computers, or whatever they...

GRAHAM: It's just strange to be hiking... just pleasantly hiking... right next to something that's screaming.

[Hallie shifts her gear.]

HALLIE: You think you could say all that again?

GRAHAM: [surprised] What?

HALLIE: What you just said. Could you say it all again into the mic?

[A close, sharp scream cuts in, transitioning into the squeak of a faucet being shut off. The outdoor ambience has shifted to a quiet bathroom. Graham breathes heavily as under the running of the faucet.]

GRAHAM (to himself): You're okay... you're fine... you're fine... [deep breath]

[The faucet is shut off.]

GRAHAM (to himself): You're okay.

[Graham pulls a towel off the rack.]

GRAHAM (to himself): You're fine. You're fine.

HALLIE (from outside bathroom): Graham? Are you all right?

[Graham takes a deep breath. He quickly dries his hands with the towel and opens the bathroom door.]

GRAHAM: Yeah, sorry, I'm, uh—

HALLIE: No, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to—you just—for a second it sounded like you might be hurt or—

GRAHAM: [laughing] No, I'm fine, I'm fine, I'm sorry. I was in there too long, I had, uh, it's a—

HALLIE: No! Not at all!

GRAHAM: I'm sorry I went in first without, you know, checking to—

HALLIE: It's really fine, Graham.

GRAHAM: No, it's just—I was married for 26 years, and we—

HALLIE: [laughs uncomfortably] Wow, this took a turn.

GRAHAM: Sorry, God. I just... I don't know how you like to do... this part.

HALLIE: [awkwardly] Well, first I'll probably, uh, hit the bathroom.

GRAHAM: Great, great! It's all yours.

HALLIE: [moving away] Oh, and can you figure out the TV? I wanna see the news, sounds like something happened with the Ghosthouse.

GRAHAM: Oh, sure, will do.

[Graham picks up the remote from a table and turns on the TV.]

BROOKE (on TV): But it became almost immediately clear that it was a terrible mistake, that there was no—

NEWSCASTER (on TV): But a well-intentioned mistake, surely.

BROOKE (on TV): I'm not sure how much intentions matter when you've consigned a sentient being to a worse existence than the one you freed them from.

[The bathroom door opens.]

HALLIE: [drawing closer] Oh, is it on?

NEWSCASTER (on TV): "Worse," meaning less space?

BROOKE (on TV): Our goal was to alleviate the prisoner's suffering by transferring it to what we thought was, in terabyte terms, a larger space. But in practice we've done quite the opposite.

HALLIE: I can't believe how open they're letting her be about this!

GRAHAM: Yeah...

HALLIE: I guess that's Diaz's whole deal, but...

NEWSCASTER (on TV): Is the process reversible?

BROOKE (on TV): We don't believe so, no.

NEWSCASTER: So there's no way—

BROOKE: Sometimes you just have to live with mistakes. Even awful ones. The best we can do at this point, is hope to do better by the remaining imprisoned minds in the Ghosthouse mainframe.

HALLIE: (laughs, talking over the end of Brooke's answer) Look at his face! He can't deal with her! He's so used to spin—

GRAHAM: (colder tone) Excuse me. [picks up remote] I wanna hear this.

HALLIE: Oh—sorry...

NEWSCASTER (on TV): And is there a plan in place for that?

[The TV is turned up.]

BROOKE (on TV): In my view, it starts with being humble, by admitting we can't make a quantum leap in technology just because we want to.

NEWSCASTER (on TV): That sounds like giving up.

BROOKE (on TV): Not at all. It simply means taking an honest look at what we were trying to achieve and where we went wrong...

HALLIE: (talking over Brooke again) Okay now she's spinning—

GRAHAM: Please.

BROOKE (on TV): ...and then determining if that suggests a holistic solution that our arrogance wouldn't let us see before.

NEWSCASTER (on TV): Such as?

BROOKE (on TV): Well, think about it: is there any other piece of machinery out there—currently in use, widely available—that can store a consciousness?

NEWSCASTER (on TV, but now TV voiceover): Harris's interview has already elicited strong reactions in Washing—

[The remote is picked up and the TV is switched off.]

HALLIE: Are you okay?

GRAHAM: Yeah.

HALLIE: You just seemed...

GRAHAM: No, it was just interesting.

HALLIE: So...

GRAHAM: Hm?

HALLIE: (sighs) Is there any version of this where I rest my head on your chest and you don't read into it?

GRAHAM: Oh, uh... do you want to?

HALLIE: If you're gonna flip out or decide you're in love, I'd rather not. I just want it to be a nice thing.

GRAHAM: Yeah, that's, uh... yeah, here, lemme just...

[The mattress creaks and sheets rustle as they shift around and move pillows.]

HALLIE: All good?

GRAHAM: Yeah, definitely.

HALLIE: This is nice.

GRAHAM: (lying) It is.

[A series of wistful ambient drones transition into the next scene. A phone rings. Someone picks up.]

MORGAN (on the phone): Is there any way we can make this quick?

GRAHAM: Were you asleep?

MORGAN (on the phone): No, but I have fond hopes in that direction.

GRAHAM: I can call back in the morning.

MORGAN (on the phone): Doesn't sound like it.

GRAHAM: Is Travis there?

MORGAN (on the phone): (teasing) Sprawled out naked on the bed, should I put him on?

GRAHAM: (slight chuckle) Yeah, okay.

MORGAN (on the phone): I'm actually watching the feed.

GRAHAM: The f... oh, from the Ghosthouse.

MORGAN (on the phone): I'm watching them prep that poor woman for... what, "alien brain-injection"?

GRAHAM: Well, "poor woman," she's the director of the whole entire—

MORGAN (on the phone): Leading from the front, ya gotta hand it to her.

GRAHAM: She must be terrified.

MORGAN(on the phone): Huh! She doesn't look terrified. She looks as placidly neutral as everyone else on this stream. I know it's becoming the overused joke, but who knew how boring aliens would be?

GRAHAM: Morgan...

MORGAN (on the phone): President Diaz and his famous transparency. Now we know why things got classified in the first place...

GRAHAM: Babe...

MORGAN (on the phone): ...they were too tedious for public consumption.

GRAHAM: I could come over. [Beat. Silence from Morgan.] I'm not trying to—I don't mean sex... it could just be like, I could just... I could come over.

MORGAN (on the phone): (sighing) Graham, I think if we're doing this, we have to really do it. We're too old for "sort of."

GRAHAM: I'm not saying—

[The call hangs up. Graham sets down his phone.]

[Synths, melancholy piano chords, and a lone bass note transition into the next scene. There are bird calls and ambient young adults talking excitedly. There are footsteps on the sidewalk.]

GRAHAM: (calling out) Kiddo!

TALIA: Dad! C'mere!

GRAHAM: What?

[The footsteps speed up.]

TALIA: C'mere, c'mere!

GRAHAM: Yeah, hold on, I'm...

TALIA: It's almost over!

GRAHAM: What, what is it?

BROOKE/DEIRDRE (on a cell phone video): Obviously in the aftermath of something like this, there's a... (laughs)

GRAHAM: Oh my god, that's...

BROOKE/DEIRDRE (on phone): ...a tremendous, adjustment process...

TALIA: Brooke Harris. Yeah.

BROOKE/DEIRDRE (on phone): Two very different people, needing to reconcile one space.

GRAHAM: It worked?

TALIA: I mean...

NEWSCASTER (on phone): One space meaning: your mind.

BROOK/DEIRDRE (on phone): *Our* mind, yes—and by extension, our body. This is now a vessel for two.

GRAHAM: I-I can't...

TALIA: Right??

NEWSCASTER (on phone): So at this moment, I am addressing Director Brooke Harris, and...?

BROOKE (on phone): ...and Deirdre. My Second.

NEWSCASTER (on phone): And Deirdre's listening right now?

BROOKE (on phone): She is, and she has a message.

TALIA: This is nuts.

NEWSCASTER (on phone): Oh, please.

[A calm but inspiring drone plays under the speech. The final words of the speech have a slight echo.]

BROOKE/DEIRDRE (on phone): (assuming a slightly quieter, more halting diction) Deirdre speaking: I have so many things to say, but for now I'll restrict myself to this: thank you. Thank you for setting me free. Thank you for Brooke. Thank you for my new home.

GRAHAM: My god...

TALIA: (hushed) Look around.

NEWSCASTER (on phone): You must feel pretty proud right now.

TALIA: Everyone on the quad is watching this.

BROOKE/DEIRDRE (on phone): We'll feel proud when the rest of the prisoners are free.

[A melodic, percussive transition plays. Two sets of footsteps walk along a sidewalk.]

GRAHAM: So... do you wanna get lunch off campus, or—

TALIA: Okay, Dad, I can feel you burning to ask—

GRAHAM: No, no, I'm not—

TALIA: I called her.

GRAHAM: And?

TALIA: And, it was unbearably stilted, like we were set up on a sibling-blind date by our dad, which we were.

GRAHAM: Look, I know it's not fun, but regular check-ins are key—

TALIA: Okay, but regular check-ins require the participation of both parties.

GRAHAM: Right but even voicemails, even if they're not returned, just so she knows there's a support structure—

TALIA: Okay, it is just slightly weirding me out that it sounds like you're leaving her to me in your will.

GRAHAM: I... am, kind of. You're gonna live a lot longer than me.

TALIA: (growing upset) Sure, and when Jamie's in trouble, as much as possible, I'm gonna be there, but I'm not actually qualified to be my older sibling's guidance counselor, and I'd kinda love it if we could ever talk about other stuff!

[Beat.]

GRAHAM: I'm sorry, you're right.

TALIA: I don't mean to...

GRAHAM: (laughing) What about the aliens, we could talk about them some more?

TALIA: Sure, or, you.

GRAHAM: What is there to say about me?

TALIA: I mean... you're the expert.

[A desert ambience fades in, with the Ghosthouse screaming in the distance. A coyote begins to howl along with the screams. A helicopter flies by overhead, cutting across the stereo field. When the helicopter fades, there is a suburban backyard ambience. Morgan and Travis are doing a bit. A cooler opens.]

TRAVIS: Are you lost? Sad? Stressed?

MORGAN: Worried about money? Abandoned by your friends? Crushed under the cruel heel of modern life?

TRAVIS: Stick an alien in your brain!

MORGAN: Inject an alien *directly into your brain!*

GRAHAM: Does anybody, uh—

MORGAN: Left behind by the global economy?

TRAVIS: Alien, all up in there!

GRAHAM: I'm going to the kitchen if anybody—

MORGAN: Your favorite show got canceled?

TRAVIS: Brain! Meet! Alien!

GRAHAM: (unamused) Okay well you guys are doing your thing, so—

TRAVIS: (resuming conversational tone, laughing) Who do they seriously think is gonna sign up for this?

MORGAN: (laughing) Are you kidding?

TRAVIS: What, like there's hordes of people who watched Alien and thought John Hurt was aspirational?

MORGAN: There's so many people out there who are either lonely or—like those women who marry men on death row.

TRAVIS: Yeah, but, but they don't have to live with the guy in their brains, they just have to write him some letters!

MORGAN: I've often thought of you as one of those women, Travis.

TRAVIS: Oh, which makes you what, the inmate I can never touch?

GRAHAM: (colder, louder) I mean people might do it for the given reason, right?

MORGAN: Sorry?

GRAHAM: To save someone from an... online prison camp?

MORGAN: (laughs) I'm sure most of the people who do it will say that's the reason, but something *this radical, this irreversible*? No one would do that for an abstraction.

TRAVIS: (commercial tone of voice) "What would you do for an abstraction?"

GRAHAM: [rising] Well I really do need to hit the bathroom, so—

MORGAN: (suddenly serious) Are you leaving?

GRAHAM: Not right away, I'm just going to—

MORGAN: But you're winding up to leave.

GRAHAM: Not any time soon.

[A gentle synth transition plays, and a bathroom faucet starts running. Under the sounds of handwashing, Morgan and Travis are yelling in the other room.]

MORGAN (through door): What are you doing?

TRAVIS (through door): I'm clearing up [inaudible]

MORGAN (through door): You are not staying! [inaudible]

TRAVIS (through door): Fine, just let me—

MORGAN (through door): No! This is how it starts!

[The faucet is turned off.]

TRAVIS (through door) I'm just saying let me help you clean up—

MORGAN (through door): No, no!

[The light is switched off. The door opens. We approach Morgan and Travis.]

MORGAN: Enough! You've been here six nights in a row!

GRAHAM: Guys?

TRAVIS: If I was overstaying my welcome you could've just—

MORGAN: You should just know! You're an adult! It's not normal, you should be able to figure that out by yourself and not force *me* to be the one—

TRAVIS: I'm just saying let me help you with the dishes and then—

MORGAN: Ugh, "just the dishes"! And then it's "oh, I'm tired, that fifth glass of wine"—

GRAHAM: Okay, okay, okay, why don't we—

MORGAN: *I want you to go home!*

[A brief silence, then a sliding door opens and a backyard suburban ambience comes in. Soft electric guitar music is playing from speakers, and dishes are scraping on the table. A set of footsteps approaches.]

GRAHAM: Travis's Lyft came, so, uh... why don't I... you're just sort of pushing those dishes around, so...

MORGAN: You want 'em? Come and get 'em.

GRAHAM: (slight laugh) What?

MORGAN: (seductively) You want these dishes, come and pry 'em out of my hands.

GRAHAM: I...

[They kiss. Dishes clatter on the table. A piece of silverware clatters onto the ground. Wistful yet energetic synths transition into the next scene. A bird calls from outside the window.]

GRAHAM: (into phone) Yeah, I can do it all from home, I can access everything from server... thanks Em.

[A door creaks open. Graham hangs up and sets down the phone.]

GRAHAM: How long have you been up?

MORGAN: I was gonna make some breakfast... then I thought I should ask first...

GRAHAM: Yeah, that's, uh... [Beat.] Yeah, probably not.

MORGAN: Will you be okay with work?

GRAHAM: Yeah, it's all fine.

MORGAN: Can you send Jamie some money? We're fighting, I don't know if she'll take it from me right now.

GRAHAM: Did she ask for money?

MORGAN: No, but will you send her some?

GRAHAM: Yeah, definitely. [Beat.] So can I help with the dishes, or—

MORGAN: (strained) Oh, for God's sake.

[Beat.]

GRAHAM: Okay.

[The ambience fades into the interior of a car. Rain patters against the windshield, as the windshield wipers quietly swipe back and forth.]

BROOKE: That's his hotel. Straight ahead.

DEIRDRE (inside Brooke's head): So he moved into that... almost two years ago... and he never tried to find another home?

BROOKE: Will you give me a chance to persuade you?

[The car stops, and Brooke removes the keys from the ignition.]

DEIRDRE (inside Brooke's head): Let's see him.

[A brief transition to the interior of a room with a TV quietly playing in the background. There are three knocks on a door in quick succession. Someone gets up, unlocks the door, and opens it. As the door opens, the sound of rain grows louder.]

BROOKE/DEIRDRE: Hello, Graham.

GRAHAM: Oh my god.

BROOKE/DEIRDRE: We received your application.

GRAHAM: You're Dr. Brooke—no! Brooke's your first name, sorry, I'm—and Deirdre! (gasps) Oh shit. Deirdre.

BROOKE/DEIRDRE: That's right.

GRAHAM: You respond in person?

BROOKE/DEIRDRE: We like to look at applicants directly. A lot of people aren't serious.

GRAHAM: I'm serious.

BROOKE/DEIRDRE: We'll see.

GRAHAM: Do you wanna come in, or—

BROOKE/DEIRDRE: No, we want you to get dressed and come with us right now.

GRAHAM: Where?

BROOKE/DEIRDRE: Where do you think? This is your screening, Graham. It's already started.

[The Give Me Away Theme plays under the final line and continues into the credits. The theme continues to play under the following voiceover.]

VOICEOVER: Gideon Media presents *Give Me Away* by Mac Rogers, directed by Jordana Williams.

Featuring Sean Williams, Hanna Cheek, Kevin R. Free, Nat Cassidy, Diana Oh, Dani Martineck, Rebecca Comtois, Alba Ponce de León, Jorge Cordova, Lori Elizabeth Parquet, and Stephanie Willing.

Sound design by Bart Fasbender. Assistant directed by Marty McGuire. Music by Adam Blau, and produced by Cara Ehlenfeldt.

END OF EPISODE 1