

**A BITE OUT OF TIME**

by

A Writer out of Time

**FADE IN**

**EXT. BIOSPHERE 2 - DAY**

The three acre facility is surrounded by desert. It consists of five biomes under sealed glass. Corridors connect the biomes to each other.

**SUPER: BIOSPHERE 2: AN ARENA OF SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY FOR LEARNING ABOUT EARTH, ITS LIVING SYSTEMS, AND ITS FUTURE.**

The center and largest biome is a simulated Marine Mesocosm consisting of an ocean and coral reef.

**INT. MARINE MESOCOSM BIOME - DAY**

The ocean of 7.6M liters of salt water ebbs and flows over a coral reef with a sandy lagoon. An elevated boardwalk winds its way through an overhanging tropical forest.

A HISS of air interrupts the serenity as a panel opens to a corridor. Two SCIENTISTS enter and the panel seals under positive pressure.

The elder is DOCTOR FRANK STILLWELL (64). His white beard and ponytail contrasts against his dark tan and weathered face. He carries four cages and has a machete on his hip.

Next to him is Grad student JESSICA MILLER (22). She carries a long aluminum case. Both wear cargo shorts, safari vests, and wide-brim hats.

FRANK

Let's get one thing straight, Miss Miller. If you only remember one thing from your internship, it's this: I am neither Doctor nor Mister Stillwell. Just call me Frank, okay?

JESSICA

Okay, Frank. And, please, just call me Jessica.

FRANK

Very good, then. Let's get started.  
(spreads arms wide)  
This marine mesocosm has been active since the biosphere's inception in 1986.

JESSICA

Wow, almost eighty years.

FRANK

Good, you can count. Like I was saying, about thirty years ago, we  
(MORE)

FRANK (cont'd)  
decided to simulate full glacial  
atmospheric and oceanic conditions  
to see if we could stimulate coral  
growth.

JESSICA  
So a CO2 reduction of about fifty  
percent of current conditions.

Frank raises his eyebrows in astonishment.

FRANK  
Well, well. You've a bit of  
knowledge in there, eh?

JESSICA  
I minored in meteorology, too.

Frank smiles knowingly.

FRANK  
Yes, I know. Top of your class in  
both marine biology and  
meteorology.

Frank leads Jessica through the forest to the beach. Frank  
holds an arm out to stop Jessica from getting too close to  
the water's edge.

FRANK  
Whatever you do, do NOT go in the  
water. The paleozoic conditions  
have, um, influenced the  
development of assorted marine  
life.

A SPLASH as a creature, the size of a tea saucer, scurries  
across the reef.

JESSICA  
Oh...My...GOD! Was that a-

FRANK  
Trilobite.

JESSICA  
But, where-

FRANK  
Your guess is as good as mine. Now  
you know why you had to sign the  
non-disclosure agreement.

JESSICA  
No one outside knows about this?

FRANK

Nope. And they're not going to, either.

Frank sits on the sandy beach and pats the sand for Jessica to have a seat, which she does.

An 'Ah-ha' moment gives her a start.

JESSICA

The Great Barrier Reef Restoration Project!

FRANK

And this is why I chose you to help me. You're one sharp cookie.

JESSICA

They've been removing CO2 from thousands of locations around that reef for almost ten years, now. What if...

She trails off and turns to Frank.

FRANK

It's already happening. And it's bigger than a trilobite.

JESSICA

What do we do?

FRANK

We need to see what makes these little buggers tick. Open your case.

Jessica opens the case and retrieves what looks like a telescoping fishing rod except with retractable claws.

JESSICA

Looks pretty basic.

FRANK

Looks can be deceiving. Watch this.

He extends the rod over the lagoon and lowers the claws above water level. A sensor in the claw's center BEEPS and turns RED. It rotates and dives quickly in the water.

The line goes taut. After a brief battle, Frank reels in a trilobite and places it in the case.

He offers the rod to Jessica.

FRANK

You want to give it a go?

JESSICA  
(shrugs her shoulders)

Sure.

Jessica follows suit and hovers the claw above the water. It BEEPS and dives.

This time the struggle is great and she fights hard.

FRANK  
You got it! Don't let go!

Frank is so intent on the line, he doesn't notice that Jessica has stepped into the lagoon.

A tentacle glides under the water's surface, wraps around her ankle, and jerks her off her feet.

JESSICA  
Frank!

Frank draws his machete and dives into the lagoon. An underwater battle foams the water.

Jessica clambers out onto the beach and watches as the water turns a crimson red and goes still.

A moment later, Frank surfaces triumphant with machete in one hand and a ten-foot spiny tendril in the other. His clothes are shredded and he bleeds from several cuts.

JESSICA  
What the hell was that?!

Frank shuffles over and sits next to her. He looks at the tendril and tosses it to the side.

FRANK  
Goddamn Kraken. That ain't nothing compared to the one off Australia's coast.

FADE TO BLACK