

A HOLLOW VICTORY

by

Steven P. Dilworth

EXT. MASSIVE FIELD - DAY

The sun beats down as OWEN FUNK, 22, skinny, with a rumpled look that screams Goodwill Outlet Store and a backpack with "The Truth is in There" scrawled on its flap, sweeps his metal detector back and forth.

He stops to wipe the sweat from his brow, and allows the detector to swing lazily off to the side.

He clutches his headphones as a sharp BEEP indicates a find.

OWEN

Hey!

Using the detector, Owen quickly pinpoints the spot, pulls his trowel out of his backpack, and kneels down to dig.

After several moments of digging and confirming a find with a handheld pinpoint metal detector, he freezes.

OWEN

(breathing heavily)

No. No way...

Owen throws the pinpointer aside, rips off his headphones, and starts to dig frantically with his hands.

Finally, with a small mound of dirt by the hole, he stops.

Slowly, he reaches in with both hands and scoops out a pile of gold coins.

Staring at the coins, Owen slowly stands up.

OWEN

This is unreal. Totally,
fuckingly, unreal.

He holds out the coins, looks to the sky and screams:

OWEN

This is totally, fuckingly, un...

A dark object SHRIEKS down from the sky and strikes Owen on the head.

He collapses and the screen goes black.

GOVERNOR (V.O.)

(echoing)

Owen? Can you hear me Owen?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Owen lies unconscious on a bed. His head is heavily bandaged, he has oxygen tubes in his nose and an IV in his arm.

JOAN FUNK, 54, chain-smoker skinny, with clothes that may have been handed down by her older brother, sits by the bed, sobbing quietly.

A DOCTOR, 42, well groomed in a young Lyle Waggoner kind of way, walks in,

Joan looks to him with tear-filled eyes.

JOAN

Who found him?

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. MASSIVE FIELD - DUSK

Owen lies on the ground, his eyes flutter. Blood streams down his forehead.

GOVERNOR (V.O.)

(echoing)

You can't keep it, Owen. It belongs to my people.

A FARMER, 55, cliché in flannel shirt and overalls, comes up tentatively behind him.

FARMER

(nervous)

Owen?

END FLASHBACK:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

DOCTOR

The farmer who owns the field where your son was metal detecting found him, Mrs. Funk.

JOAN

(sobs harder)

Did he see who did this to him?

DOCTOR

Well, this is very odd, but it seems
no one did this to him. Not on
purpose, that is.

He moves over to the side table by the bed and picks up a
small ball of blackened metal.

DOCTOR

He was struck by this.

Joan gets up and looks closely at the small piece of metal.

JOAN

This thing didn't throw itself at
his head. Someone had to do it.
(growing more hysterical)
Or they just bashed him with it!

She falls against the doctor, clutching his coat.

DOCTOR

(yells)
Nurse!

A NURSE, 25 and comely, in a classic 70's medical drama sort
of way, rushes in and assists Joan back to her chair.

There she crouches down and lets Joan sob on her shoulder.

JOAN

None of this makes sense. What
happened to my son?

DOCTOR

(hesitantly)
It is all rather bizarre, Mrs.
Funk, and sounds impossible when
you hear it, but it's the only
explanation that fits the evidence.

Joan nearly pulls the nurse over as she grips her shoulder
and admonishes the doctor.

JOAN

Quit beating around the bush and
tell me what happened to my son!

BEGIN FLASEBACK:

EXT. OUTER SPACE - ETERNAL NIGHT

A satellite streams tiny jets of gas as it wobbles out of control.

It starts to move lower and the edge of Earth with it's glowing atmosphere come into view below it.

Tiny sparks shoot off it as little bits start to break away.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

DOCTOR

He was hit by space junk.

JOAN

That thing's a meteorite?

DOCTOR

No, Ma'am. Space junk. It's not natural. It's part of a satellite that malfunctioned and fell out of orbit. It was identified by the local police.

Joan's eyes grow wide as the realization hits her of what has happened.

The nurse has to work harder to keep her from collapsing.

JOAN

Oh, God. Oh, God! Is he...will he...

BEGIN FLASEBACK:

EXT. MASSIVE FIELD - DUSK

The Farmer is fumbling in his pocket.

FARMER

Don't worry, Owen, I'll call an ambulance.

OWEN

(barely audible with a slight grin)

Don't worry...I've made contact...

GOVERNOR (V.O.)
(echoing)
That's right, Owen, and I know
you'll do the right thing.

Owen's eyes roll back in his head as he passes out.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

DOCTOR
Your son is lucky to be alive, Mrs.
Funk. At first it was touch and go,
but his vital signs have
strengthened and held, so I have
every reason to believe he will
pull through. The next twenty-four
hours are critical.

JOAN
My boy. My boy. His dad last year
and now this.

The doctor motions to the nurse and she pulls a syringe out
of her tunic pocket.

DOCTOR
Now, Mrs. Funk, we're going to give
you a sedative. Things will look
much better after a night's sleep.

The nurse gives her the shot in the arm and holds her until
she starts to calm down.

The doctor takes a pillow from the bedside locker and helps
the nurse ease Joan into a reclining position against the
bedside table.

They quietly leave the room and turn off the lights as the
screen fades to black.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Early morning sunlight streams in the window.

Joan has moved during the night. Her head now rests on the
pillow, which rests on the bed.

She snores slightly.

Suddenly, Owen sits bolt upright and yells out:

OWEN
My coins! Owww...

He clutches his head and falls back on the pillow.

Joan is startled awake and slips off the pillow.

She stares at Owen clutching his head and yells:

JOAN
Owen! Nurse!

She scrambles out of the room and into the

HALL

Where she runs to the

NURSE'S STATION

The nurse from last night and a 2ND NURSE, 45 and matronly,
man computers.

JOAN
It's Owen! My son. He woke up!

Both nurses abandon their stations and run down the hall
with her and into the

HOSPITAL ROOM

The nurses split up. The 2nd nurse starts looking at
readings on his monitor while the original nurse goes to
Owen's bedside.

ORIGINAL NURSE
Mr. Funk. Mr. Funk. Can you hear
me?

OWEN
(gibbering)
My coins. Mine. You can't, you
can't...

2ND NURSE
His vital signs are all over the
place.

OWEN
You can't have them back. My
coins. My coins. I found...

ORIGINAL NURSE
We'll have to sedate him.

JOAN
(frantic)
No! We have to talk to him. What is
he talking about?

The original nurse pulls out a syringe and injects Owen.

GOVERNOR (V.O.)
(echoing)
Just rest, Owen, and I'll explain
why this is so important to me.

After a few moments he drifts back to sleep.

Joan is in tears.

JOAN
Why did you have to do that? He was
awake.

2ND NURSE
Vital signs have stabilized.

The original nurse puts her arm around Joan's shoulder and
Joan rests her head on the nurse's shoulder.

ORIGINAL NURSE
He was awake, yes, Mrs. Funk. But
Owen really hadn't been to sleep.
Not like you do at night. Now that
we know he will wake up again, it's
best he get some normal sleep. I
suggest you go and get some
breakfast. Owen will wake up in a
couple of hours.

JOAN
But, what was that insane talk
about coins being his? What coins?

ORIGINAL NURSE
When Owen was found, the farmer
recovered Owen's metal detector and
other gear, and there were a number
of gold coins all over the ground
around him. They believe it was
what he found right before the
incident.

Joan's mouth drops open and she stares at her now-sleeping son.

JOAN

Gold? Coins?

ORIGINAL NURSE

Yes. They're in a little bag with the rest of his things in the locker. Now, you go and get something to eat and then we'll take a look.

The nurses lead Joan from the room as the screen fades to black.

OVER BLACK: "TWO DAYS LATER"

INT. RATTY OLD CAR - DAY

Joan is driving. Owen stares out the passenger side window, head bandage peeks from under an old baseball cap.

The bag of coins lies between them on the console.

Joan glances back and forth from Owen to the bag.

JOAN

You'll feel better once I get you home and make you something to eat. That hospital food is terrible!

OWEN

No. No food. I have to put them back.

Joan fishes a cigarette out of her purse and sticks it in her mouth.

She works it frantically back and forth, but does not light it.

JOAN

(through the cigarette)

I don't understand. When you woke up, you said the coins were yours. You found them Owen!

OWEN

Not right. He told me.

JOAN

Who told you, Owen. The farmer? Did he sneak in there when I was out?

OWEN

Not the farmer. The Governor. He told me, and he is right.

JOAN

But Owen. Son. These coins are the find of your life. The find of both our lives! They could probably pay for your whole hospital stay...and more! Your father-

OWEN

Would have said I had to give them back. The Governor told me, and he's right. I have to give them back.

(beat)

It's only right.

Joan rips the cigarette from her mouth, crumples it with one hand and throws it at her feet.

She keeps her eyes on the road, but turns her head away from Owen.

EXT. MASSIVE FIELD - DAY

Joan pulls the car up near to the spot where Owen found the coins.

The small mound of dirt is still there by the hole.

INT. RATTY OLD CAR - DAY

Joan stares down at the the steering wheel.

Owen reaches down and picks up the bag of coins.

OWEN

It's only right, mom, the Governor said...

Joan shrugs her shoulders and flings her hand at him.

Owen pulls his backpack out of the back seat and gets out of the car, into the

FIELD

He walks over to the hole.

OWEN
(to no one)
She doesn't understand, Governor.

He kneels down by the hole.

OWEN
It wasn't right for me to take the
coins. It took a fiery bolt from
the heavens to gift me with the
ability to hear your plea.

He takes out his trowel and opens the bag of coins.

OWEN
Yes sir, I always knew the truth
was in there. So I return these
sacred coins to you.

He dumps the coins into the hole, and uses the trowel to
push the dirt back in and pat it down.

He stands back up and stares at the sky.

OWEN
We think we're the only people on
Earth, but we're not. It was wrong
for me to take your treasure
Governor, so now I return it...to
those people who live inside the
Earth.

Owen stows the trowel in his backpack, hoists it on his
shoulder and starts walking back to the car.

GOVERNOR (V.O.)
(echoing)
I'm proud of you, Owen. Me and my
people will be forever grateful.

Joan sobs. Her head resting on the steering wheel as the
screen fades to black...

INT. FUNK HOME - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Owen sits on a rotten, wooden chair, with a massive growth
of scraggy beard, puffing on a vaping device and staring
blankly out the window.

SUPER: "Owen stopped hearing messages from the Governor and slowly went around the bend trying to listen. He gave up work and metal detecting and wasted what brain he had left Vaping."

EXT. DILAPIDATED BRIDGE - NIGHT

Joan slams her ratty old car with one working headlight to a stop on the bridge beneath the single weak street lamp.

She flings open her door and stumbles out of the car, bag of coins in her hand.

JOAN
(muttering angrily)
Gold coins, my ass!

Teetering drunkenly, she works her way around the door...

JOAN
(muttering angrily)
Governer, my ass!

...to the crumbling wall at the edge of the bridge and...

JOAN
Well, the Governer can shove his
coins right up his ass!

...heaves them over the side.

FREEZE ON: THE THROW

SUPER: "Joan went back to the field and dug up the coins. Only to find out that not only weren't they made of gold as we know it, they weren't any kind of coins ever recorded, and so worth about as much as a parking token. She threw them in a river."

FADE TO BLACK

OVER BLACK:

GOVERNOR (V.O.)
I deserve another the chance. The
son could be reasoned with, but the
mother was like a woman possessed!

SUPER: "The Governor lost a vote of 'No Confidence' due to losing the community's treasure and was replaced as Supreme Leader of Agartha."

INT. SOME HOUSE - NIGHT

An open laptop sits on a desk with a Google search page on screen.

A pair of hands types A-g-a-r-t-h-a into the field and presses the enter key.

The screen fades to black before the results are displayed.

GOVERNOR (V.O.)
Google it.

THE END