

Level Six

by

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FADE IN:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Spread across the table is a complex astronomy chart. Soaking in every celestial detail: SONIA SUMMERS, 20s.

She's blessed with striking features and flawless skin.

A burst of tapping on Sonia's wall breaks her concentration. It originates from the adjacent room.

In retaliation, Sonia knocks her fist against the plaster.

SONIA

Knock it off in there.

A strange murmur from the other room.

The doorbell rings. Sonia folds her chart, glancing at the wall before she goes.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sonia leads her guest, LYNN JARVIS, 20s, a plucky grad school type, toward the refrigerator.

LYNN

I brought Gummi Worms.

A nervous laugh from Lynn.

LYNN

And Mountain Dew.

SONIA

Cool. Mouthwatering.

She opens the fridge.

SONIA

Can I tempt you with some salad?

Lynn scrunches her nose. Nope. Fuck no.

LATER

Two empty cans of Mountain Dew. Only two uneaten gummies.

SONIA

I think it's time that we discuss your advancement to Level Six.

LYNN

Really? Crap. I was hoping.

To celebrate, she snatches a worm and chomps it.

SONIA

Level Six is the inner sanctum.

LYNN

Is it?

Lynn stares at Sonia's flawless teeth.

SONIA

Level Six is close contact with something greater than yourself.

LYNN

That's what I want. I'm down for it. Contact.

SONIA

With Level Six clearance, you'll witness phenomena that will push the boundaries of human comprehension.

Lynn chews her Gummi Worm.

SONIA

Of course, you'll need to sign a nondisclosure agreement. Will you do that?

Sonia removes a form and a pen from her kitchen counter.

SONIA

This is standard procedure.

LYNN

Wow. This is really long.

Lynn takes the pen.

LYNN

Are aliens particularly litigious?

A half smile. No worries. Lynn signs the document.

SONIA

This will be a life-changing experience.

Sonia files the paper away and presents Lynn with a second piece of paper. It has complex mathematical formulas.

SONIA

Here's a small sample of what you'll encounter.

As Lynn studies the sheet, her eyes widen with astonishment.

LYNN

Is this a biopolymer?

SONIA

A hybrid. Some phosphodiester bonds.

LYNN

How is that even possible?

SONIA

It's not of this world.

Lynn stuffs the last Gummi Worm in her mouth.

SONIA

I'll give you a minute alone to digest those formulas. Be right back.

Sonia leaves. Lynn chews and chews and chews her last worm.

She nudges the empty bag of gummies. She pushes it away.

LYNN

Shouldn't have eaten the whole bag in front of her.

A frown

LYNN

That doesn't look good: chewing like a yak.

A few thuds sound from the other room.

Lynn gazes at the mathematical formulas.

LYNN

This almost looks plausible.

She traces the numbers with a finger.

LYNN

Pretty convincing, actually.

Sonia returns wearing a dress that has a neon green glow. There is also neon makeup streaked over her cheeks.

She looks like she just returned from a rave.

In her hand she holds a vial with a glowing liquid.

Lynn's eyes widen.

SONIA

I know this looks like Halloween,
but it's the introduction to Level
Six. It's what you've waited for.

She lifts the vial.

SONIA

You won't be able to go further
with the experience until you drink
this.

Lynn scrunches her nose.

SONIA

This is healthier than the Mountain
Dews you just drank. Let me show
you.

Sonia swallows some of the substance in the vial. It leaves an odd, glowing film on her lips and teeth.

SONIA

Please, Lynn. Drinking this is
crucial to keeping you safe.
There's no proceeding without it.

Lynn studies the liquid. Okay.

She slurps it down as quickly as she can. Her teeth and tongue glow like Sonia's.

SONIA

There's a pretty big rush to it.
I'm not going to lie.

Lynn's mouth drops open in head-spinning wonder.

LYNN

Wow.

SONIA

Do you feel the euphoria? There's
more where that came from.

Sonia rushes out of the kitchen, returning a moment later with a slimy tentacle attached to her midsection.

Lynn sways.

LYNN

Whoa. You've got an umbilical cord.

SONIA

Basically.

Lynn laughs a little too loudly.

SONIA

You're like a giant fucking beautiful baby.

Lynn wobbles, drunk on the glowing juice.

She doesn't even notice that Sonia leaves the kitchen. The conversation continues sans host.

LYNN

I guess this is where I tell you, Sonia, that I'm in love with you. You're...like...you should be a model. You belong in a pillow commercial.

A light belch.

LYNN

I don't believe in any of this Level Six crap, but I believe in you. It's why I'm here.

Sonia returns, clutching another slimy tentacle.

She lifts Lynn's shirt and affixes it to her stomach. Lynn winces as it bites into her skin.

LYNN

Hey!

SONIA

We're all attached now. The three of us.

LYNN

(drunken)

I wanna be connected to you. I love you so much. I love your teeth and your ears. I want to see your toes. I know that's stupid for me to say.

SONIA

No.

LYNN

I'd start eating salad for you. And
I hate it.

The tentacle affixed to Lynn tugs her a little. Lynn laughs at the sensation.

LYNN

Am I really gonna see an alien?

Sonia nods.

LYNN

Does Level Six mean I get to kiss
you. That's what I was hoping it
would mean.

Sonia draws near and kisses Lynn...on the forehead.

The goofy, loopy look on Lynn's face remains for a moment, but it shifts abruptly to pain.

Her brow furrows. Her mouth drops open. She cringes.

Blarg. She vomits onto Sonia's dress. Semi-digested Gummi Worm remains are all over Sonia, causing her to wince in revulsion.

Lynn's tentacle yanks her down. Pulls her along the floor.

Wild-eyed Lynn cries out a question with slurred words:

LYNN

What's going on?

SONIA

It's the inner sanctum.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lynn is pulled along the floor by the tentacle. It has wrapped around her legs.

It brings her closer and closer to the bedroom door, which is open just a crack--just wide enough for the tentacle.

Strange, inhuman sounds emit from behind the bedroom door.

The tentacle reels Lynn in like a fish, bringing her closer and closer.

Lynn fights, pulls, resists, but it's no use.

The door opens. Through the threshold Lynn goes. The door slams shut.

Screams. Growls. Sloshing.

Sonia rushes to the door and pokes her head in to see what's happening.

Blarg. A wet liquid splashes onto her.

Sonia comes out of the bedroom with her face covered in Lynn's blood--like Sissy Spacek on prom night.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tentacle still attached to her gut, Sonia trudges in. She has a large vial of glowing liquid in her hand.

She chugs the liquid. Some of it runs down her chin. It mixes with the blood on her face. She licks the rivulets.

She whisks the empty Gummi Worm bag off the table. It floats sadly to the floor.

Sonia unfolds her astronomy chart, studies it, and points to a specific spot. She calls out loudly to the creature/being on the other side of the wall.

SONIA

There. That's where I want you to take me.

A growl from the other side of the wall.

SONIA

I fulfilled my side of the bargain.
Now take me to where I want to go.
You promised.

She wipes more blood from her face.

SONIA

Take me to Level Seven.

A flash of light. Zap. And then Sonia is gone.

Out the window, up to the stars. She's up there somewhere.

Onto the next level.

FADE OUT: