

SHIFTED

by

SOMEONE

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(Inspired by "And When the Sky was Opened")

INT. CAPSULE - DAY

White interior, egg-shaped with iridescent walls, and a slight ridge that resembles a padded shelf.

A panel opens in the shell and COLONEL TAYLOR, 30s, dressed in a blue jumpsuit and high-tech headset, clambers in through the opening. Behind him, visible in glimpses, a larger room full of state of the art mainframe computers and exotic display monitors.

Taylor settles down on the padded shelf as the panel closes automatically behind him.

TAYLOR

Set.

CONTROL (V.O.)

Confirmed.

Taylor adjusts his headset's visor with his right hand. The visor gradually darkens until it is ink black.

TAYLOR

Are we still green?

CONTROL (V.O.)

Electromagnetics at background level, field stable and contained, we're --

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)

Taylor, it's green here, all green across the board.

TAYLOR

Sir, understood.

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)

Good. And your mission scope?

TAYLOR

Observe and record.

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)

No, repeat, no interaction... this isn't Stranger Things.

TAYLOR

Understood.

BEAT.

CONTROL (V.O.)
Countdown, in five, four, three, two,
one. Shifting.

A flash of white light obscures everything.

FADE OUT

CONTROL (V.O.)
(now a distant echo)
Shifted.

INT. CAPSULE - DAY

Taylor glances around the confines of the pod.

Everything is as it was.

Except it isn't.

TAYLOR
Shift confirmed.

He adjusts his visor as before, but with his left hand.

TAYLOR
I'm exiting the pod.

He taps on the side of the wall.

The panel opens, this time on the other side of the craft.

EXT. WOODLAND GLADE - CONTINUOUS

Taylor exits the pod, egg-shaped and white externally too.

He stretches and takes in his surroundings.

TAYLOR
I expected... something else.

He turns round in a complete circle, staring into the trees
that surround him.

TAYLOR
Trees. So many trees.

A sun beams down from behind Taylor sending shafts of
sunlight between the tree trunks.

Taylor plays his fingertips through one of the beams of light.

TAYLOR
The sun here is cool, colder than the surrounding air.

He looks down at his feet.

TAYLOR
It doesn't seem to cast a shadow either.

He moves around to check his observation, stepping left then right to ensure no tree is obscuring his shadow.

TAYLOR
Definitely no shadow.

He walks forward, stops.

TAYLOR
It's quiet too, no sound of animals, birds or insects... can't see any either.

He walks on, examining the flora as he progresses, being careful to touch nothing.

TAYLOR
It's beautiful, but... I'm not sure how to describe it. Cold, like nature isn't organic here, no warmth... or life to it.

He glances back, the pod a few hundred meters behind him.

TAYLOR
I wonder...

He SHOUTS.

A call rather than a word, loud and clear.

BEAT

Silence returns.

TAYLOR
Native sounds do not seem to exist --

A low rumble reverberates through the trees.

TAYLOR

Then again.

The low rumble comes again, like a far off stampede.

TAYLOR

Or maybe sound attracts more sound.

The low rumble is distinctly louder.

TAYLOR

Is that closer?

Taylor cocks his head on one side.

The rumble is nearer.

The plants nearer the sound begin to tremble slightly.

TAYLOR

This may not be a purely auditory phenomenon.

One of the plants nearby shatters like glass.

TAYLOR

(uneasy)

I'm gonna head back now.

Taylor turns and strides back towards the pod.

Behind him, the rumble gets nearer and louder, as more plants shatter.

He steps up his pace to a run, and throws a quick look over his shoulder.

Trees shake from side to side, some uprooted by an unseen force as a sound like crystalline thunder fills the forest.

Taylor clambers into the pod at speed, knocking his visor off in the process.

The panel shuts behind him cutting off the alien sound.

TAYLOR

Mission abort!

He presses upwards onto the roof of the panel and screws his eyes tightly shut.

TAYLOR

Shifting now.

Again, a flash of white light.

FADE OUT

INT. CAPSULE - DAY

Taylor attempts to open his eyes, but the effort is painful and he screws them shut again.

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)
Taylor, what the hell happened.

TAYLOR
Something, there was something there.

The panel above his head opens.

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)
You saw something over there?

Taylor reaches for the opening and pulls himself up.

TAYLOR
No, I heard something, in the trees.

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)
Heard what?

Taylor clambers out of the pod and into the...

INT. HIGH-TECH LAB - CONTINUOUS

Taylor stumbles to the floor, eyes still shut.

CONTROL (V.O.)
Sir, the readings.

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)
What, what about them?

CONTROL (V.O.)
The containment is wider.

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)
Wider, how can that be?

Taylor risks his eyes again, allowing them to gradually open and become accustomed to the light of the lab.

TAYLOR
Sir.

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)
Hang on Taylor, we have a technical
issue.

TAYLOR
Sir!

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)
What man?

Taylor stares at his feet.

Despite the light overhead, there is no shadow cast.

CONTROL (V.O.)
Sir, the containment field is getting
wider, exponentially.

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)
Impossible.

The lights begin to sway as a low rumble is heard in the
room, seemingly coming from everywhere simultaneously.

The rumble escalates, louder by the second.

CONTROL (V.O.)
Sir, we cannot stabilize it.

MAJOR SHARP (V.O.)
Taylor --

The rest of the words are drowned out by the rumbling sound
of the impending cataclysm.