

THE OTHER WHITE MEAT

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. DEEP SPACE - NIGHT

Remote ice covered planet gripped in eternal sub-zero winter. Official designation Z-27. Winds blow snow and ice. Lights shine from small windows in a research station.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

No frills, cluttered interior. Two unmade bunk beds, laboratory equipment, table, desk, piles of papers. The view from small windows looks like static on a TV screen.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

Two gaunt people in faded jump suits, JACK and SARAH, both 20s, sit at a table across from each other. They stare at a jar containing a spoonful of diced pickles and a cereal box.

JACK

Well, this is it -- Some diced pickles and a handful of something that may have once been corn flakes.

Sarah makes a circle in the air with her index finger.

SARAH

(mock gaiety)

Whoopee, just like Mardi Gras, nothing but the good stuff for us. Piss on ice and let the good times roll.

Jack tries to smile, fails. He shakes his head.

JACK

Sarah, I gotta hand it to you. When we started this mission eighteen months ago, I was sure you'd be the first to crack. You sure fooled me.

Jack shakes the cereal box, pretends to read the label.

JACK

Heck, you're as tough as an old catcher's mitt and I'm the one who's coming apart...

Sarah reaches across the table, touches Jack's hand.

SARAH

So you're a big pussy. That's not a bad thing -- You're still the best man on this rock...

JACK

I am the ONLY man on this rock.

Jack puts the cereal box down, picks up the pickle jar, studies the label.

JACK

Tell me again why we came here to the middle of nowhere.

SARAH

We volunteered. We were given the privilege to be here. Our mission was to look for new and wonderful extraterrestrial life forms.

JACK

(chuckles)

And how's that working out for us?

SARAH

Not so good. No new life forms, we ran outta food weeks ago and re-supply is long overdue.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

The microphone on the desk CRACKLES.

VOICE ON MICROPHONE (V.O.)

Calling Z-2-7 -- This is Base. Do you read me?

Jack and Sarah rush to the microphone.

SARAH

This is Z-2-7. We read you. Forget about the lipstick I ordered, JUST TELL US WHEN THE GROCERIES WILL GET HERE. OVER.

VOICE ON MICROPHONE (V.O.)

No way to sugar coat this -- We have a problem. We lost contact with your re-supply ship, the Pop Eye, three weeks ago -- Right after they reported being struck by meteors.

Sarah keys the microphone.

SARAH  
Come back -- Say again Base.

VOICE ON MIRCROPHONE (V.O.)  
We have lost all contact with your  
re-supply ship and have not,  
repeat, have not heard from them in  
three weeks. Over.

SARAH  
WHAT?

VOICE ON MIRCROPHONE (V.O.)  
We can only assume the worst and  
have launched a second re-supply  
ship -- They will not, repeat, will  
not be able to reach you for 45  
days. Over.

Jack grabs the microphone from Sarah.

JACK  
Unacceptable, we're outta food --  
We haven't eaten in weeks -- Do you  
copy?

VOICE ON MICROPHONE (V.O.)  
45 days is the best we can do --  
Maybe a little longer if they run  
into any problems getting there.

JACK  
You know you just signed our death  
warrants, right?

VOICE ON MICROPHONE (V.O.)  
Sorry Z-2-7 this is the best we can  
do. Base signing off. Hope you make  
it. Base, over and out.

Jack hands the microphone to Sarah, she puts it on the desk.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

An awkward silence fills the room.

JACK  
Sarah, What are our options?

SARAN

Well, this isn't going to be pretty...

JACK

We're not going to make it -- are we...

SARAH

Not both of us, but one of us maybe?

JACK

What are you suggesting? We eat snow and ice for 45 days?

SARAH

No. We're going to eat the only food source we have available.

Jack has a eureka moment.

JACK

OH, HELL NO...

SARAH

It's the only way. Both of us can't make it.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

A dazed Jack and Sarah shuffle to the table, sit down.

JACK

How would we decide?

SARAH

We'd cut for high card.

Sarah picks up a deck of cards, offers it to Jack.

SARAH

You wanna shuffle?

JACK

(snaps)  
Give me the cards.

Jack shuffles, puts the deck on the table.

SARAH

(softly)  
You go first.

Jack hesitates, cuts the cards. He turns his hand over -- The Nine of Hearts. Sarah cuts, reveals a Queen of Spades.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

Sarah wakes, gets down from the upper bunk, moves quietly to the table where she finds a handwritten note:

SARAH, AT LEAST THIS WAY, ONE OF US MIGHT MAKE IT. IT WAS A PLEASURE KNOWING YOU, JACK.

Tears well in Sarah's eyes. She puts the note down, walks to Jack's bunk. She shakes his shoulder. He does not respond.

SARAH

Jack?

She sees a syringe in his arm, his eyes stare at nothing. Sarah sobs violently, cries.

SARAH

You stupid monkey, you never were  
lucky at cards...

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

Dirty overalls with the name Jack over the chest pocket lay on the floor. Sarah stands next to the table in a blood spattered apron. She wipes tears from her eyes.

Sarah wraps small bundles in butcher paper. Bundles neatly marked: JACK.

Sarah puts on a heavy parka, picks up several bundles, opens the exterior door, goes outside.

EXT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

Sarah leans into the wind. She stacks the bundles of Jack against the exterior wall of the building. She affectionately pats them with her gloved hand.

SARAH (V.O.)

This is a perfect deep freezer and  
there's nothing out here to bother  
you.

Wind howls, snow cuts through the air. She goes back inside.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

Sarah enters. The strong icy wind makes it difficult for her to close the door. She struggles, closes the door. She takes off her heavy coat.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

Sarah sits at the table, her face in her hands. In front of her, an empty bowl, a spoon, the pickle jar, corn flakes box.

She pours the contents of the box in the bowl, shakes the box, peers inside to confirm the box is empty.

She pours the diced pickles over the corn flakes, runs two fingers inside of the jar, puts those fingers in her mouth, closes her eyes.

She wipes her fingers on her jump suit, eats her meal with no apparent pleasure. She stares straight ahead, chews.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAYS LATER

Sarah paces the floor. Her stomach GRUMBLES. Unable to resist any longer, she puts on her heavy weather coat, goes outside.

EXT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

Sarah makes her way to where she stored Jack. She picks up a small bundle, goes back inside the research station.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

She puts the deep frozen bundle on the table, taps it with a fork. It rings like a solid piece of glass. She waits for Jack to thaw.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

Sarah opens the bundle, draws back when she sees a fist-sized portion missing. A dark-colored dust covers the thawed flesh.

SARAH (V.O.)  
What the hey-hey?

Sarah smears a sample of the dark-colored dust on a glass slide. She puts the slide under a microscope.

INSERT: MICROSCOPIC VIEW OF TINY INSECT LIKE CREATURES.

Sarah recoils in horror.

SARAH (V.O.)  
Geez, there is life on this rock  
after all -- Thousands of tiny  
critters with a taste for Jack.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

Dark-colored spots form on the walls of the research station.  
They move down the walls, reach the floor.

SARAH (V.O.)  
Jack, you should be proud. You  
really did it. You discovered what  
we were looking for...

The spots coalesce to form larger spots which move across the  
floor towards Sarah. She shrieks, watches the dark mass get  
ever closer.

SARAH (V.O.)  
Some discovery.

She goes to a computer, types.

SARAH (V.O.)  
Better leave some notes -- I'm  
giving Jack full credit for this  
discovery.

The dark mass on the floor gets ever closer.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - DAY

Sarah stops typing, jumps on a chair. The dark mass reaches  
the chair, climbs up the chair's legs.

EXT. RESEARCH STATION - NIGHT

Countless stars twinkle in the sky. From inside the station  
screams, then silence.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - NIGHT

Sarah's empty jump suit, underwear, laced up boots with socks  
inside lay on a floor covered with dark-colored dust. A hang-  
in-there-kitty screen saver on the computer glows softly.



EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

Deep Space Truckers, BERT and ERNIE, both 20s, drop into orbit around the planet Z-27. Bert keys his microphone.

INT. RESEARCH STATION - NIGHT

Radio on the desk hisses, crackles, comes to life.

BERT (V.O.)  
Z-2-7 -- Come on, how 'bout it?  
This is Captain Bert and his trusty  
side kick Ernie on the rust bucket,  
Pop Eye -- We got groceries. Over.

No response. Bert keys his microphone.

BERT (V.O.)  
Sorry for the delay. We were beat  
all to hell by meteors -- Lost our  
engines, atmosphere and radio. We  
floated dead in the water for weeks  
before we could make repairs and  
get underway. We only just today  
got the radio working. Over.

No response from Research Station Z-27.

BERT (V.O.)  
Repeat, Z-2-7 do you copy? We got  
groceries...

FADE OUT.