

7.83.

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By

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Cast of characters.

PLUTO - *Jake Bartlett.*

EILEITH - *Bethan Harris.*

PROMETHEO - *Max Kyte.*

PASITHIA - *Seb Watkins.*

COEUS - *Daniel Opie.*

CHARIS - *Oliwia Burczyk.*

Crew.

Director / Editor - ROBERT LEFEBOUR.

Assistant director - BETHAN HARRIS.

Head writer - MAX KYTE.

Organiser - SEB WATKINS.

Costume - DANIEL OPIE.

Props - JAKE BARTLETT.

Make-up - OLIWIA BURCZYK.

Scene One.

A bright wash of light floods the entire space. PROMETHEO, cautious and curious, encroaches the space. He explores the space thoroughly, in awe of the light that embraces him. It is glorious.

Scene Two.

The light shrinks to a small spotlight. Inside, is an obscure silver obelisk. EILEITH steps into the space, staring at the light.

EILEITH: Last night I had a nightmare. The same nightmare when I'm pregnant with my son, Eli. Nine months past, ready to burst, but this time we were both starving. I was trapped inside a shoe-box flat the size of a dumbwaiter, and all I had to eat were stale corn flakes and crackers. I was lying motionless on the concrete floor. My lips were chapped, my mouth was dry, and my water had broken. My insides felt heavy, bloating like a balloon filled with hot liquid. Everything burnt but Eli was still hungry. So hungry that I could feel him gnawing away at my stomach, down here, just beside my bellybutton. A patch of my skin started bruising from a milky white to a deep purple as the sharp burrowing of his teeth went on and on until he burst through my flesh. Like a wasp in the belly of a Spider, like cancer, he slowly started digesting me. That's normally when I wake up. I think it's a warning, my subconscious talking to itself, or something. You see, I care for my son so much... but I don't love him.

PASITHIA *enters*.

PASITHIA: What are you doing?

EILEITH: Nothing.

PASITHIA: Nothing?

EILEITH: Sleepwalking.

PASITHIA: Sleepwalking?

EILEITH: Do you have a problem with that?

PASITHIA: No.

EILEITH: Really?

PASITHIA: Yes.

EILEITH: Good.

Pause.

EILEITH: What is it?

PASITHIA: Nobody knows... nobody I know knows. (*Beat.*) Do you want to touch it?

EILEITH: What does it matter to you?

PASITHIA: We'll see.

EILEITH *steps closer towards it.* PLUTO *enters.*

PLUTO: You feel it don't you? Its pull. Its gravity drawing you closer and closer... *(Beat.)* Are you going to do it?

EILEITH: Do what?

PLUTO: Touch the light.

PASITHIA: What is it?

PLUTO: There's only one way to find out.

EILEITH: It could be dangerous.

PLUTO: Look at it... it's just a light. Go on, touch it-

PASITHIA: Why don't you?-

PLUTO: Why don't you?!

EILEITH *moves to the rim of the light.*

CHARIS: *(Off.)* Stop!

EILEITH *backs away.* CHARIS *enters.*

CHARIS: Stay back, it's delicate.

PASITHIA: Why, what happens?

CHARIS: It ruins you.

PLUTO: How do you know?

CHARIS: It's obvious.

PLUTO: Obvious?

EILEITH: What makes you such an expert?

CHARIS: I can hear it!

EILEITH: Is that it?

COEUS *enters.*

COEUS: She's right. *(Beat.)* Well, she's neither right nor wrong, but the reality is that nobody knows therefore we shouldn't rush forward and make mistakes. *For God so loved the*

world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

EILEITH: Is that Shakespeare?

COEUS: John 3:16.

PASITHIA: What does it mean?

COEUS: It means that we need to be careful.

CHARIS: We need to protect it.

PLUTO: So you want us to do nothing?

CHARIS: I never said that-

PLUTO: Then what did you say?

COEUS: I'm saying that we shouldn't rush into anything. We don't touch it until we know it's safe, and we don't touch it without everyone else's agreement. We don't know what it could do.

PASITHIA: Agreed.

CHARIS: And me.

PASITHIA: *(To the EILEITH.)* What about you?

EILEITH: Yeah, why not?

They look at PLUTO.

PLUTO: Fine by me. What do I care? Just remember... the true value of any given object is only determined by how much somebody is willing to pay for it.

Scene Three.

Everybody leaves, revealing PROMETHEO. He stands forward and observes the obelisk. As he does, CHARIS enters. For some time she watches PROMETHEO before speaking up...

CHARIS: I can see you.

PROMETHEO *backs away.*

CHARIS: I can still see you.

PROMETHEO *begins to sign 'I see you'.*

CHARIS: What are you doing?

PLUTO *enters, which scares away PROMETHEO.*

PLUTO: My dad once told me a story about a blind man who went to Heaven. It doesn't matter how he died, all that matters is he did. He was waiting outside the big pearly gates next to St. Peter when he was personally greeted by God himself. The lord, as courteous as ever, guided him through the gates into a spectacular land that seemed to run on for an eternity. Mountains peaked at great heights unthinkable to the imagination; waterfalls churned the purest water, and wild forests curled around one another as if they existed within the realm of a fairy-tale. And across this glorious, open land millions of brilliant people warmed the orange grass that they stood on. However, although Heaven was more perfect than the blind man could have fathomed, he found himself conflicted. He turned to God and asked, 'how can a single person's idea of paradise be equally as perfect for everyone around them? If every man's wish is granted in Heaven, then where is the shadow of greed and corruption that bleeds as a natural by-product?' God, shocked by this sudden wave of cynicism responded, "man makes what they want of life - only I have the delight of seeing the land in its entirety". And with that, the atmosphere turned black around the Lord as he witnessed first-hand the blind man's vision for his kingdom. Blue skies became wild storms, calm seas bestowed great tsunamis, and the people inhabiting the land started to burn and peel. The children grew cancer, the women became barren, and the men became hungry for nothing but money. But it wasn't the cynicism of the blind man that created hell. It was his wish for honesty.

CHARIS: I didn't realise you were religious.

PLUTO: I didn't realise you were so obsessed with it.

CHARIS: I was just admiring - looking at it. There's no harm in looking, is there?

PLUTO: I suppose not.

CHARIS: Sometimes, if it's quiet, I can hear it.

PLUTO: What does it say?

CHARIS: Nothing, it's like a humming. You have to concentrate.

Silence.

PLUTO: Nope. Nothing.

CHARIS: Me neither.

PLUTO: Touch it.

CHARIS: What?

PLUTO: It might help.

CHARIS: I can't.

PLUTO: One second.

CHARIS: No.

PLUTO: It won't hurt.

CHARIS: It doesn't matter-

PLUTO: I can see it in your eyes.

COEUS *enters.*

COEUS: What's going on?

CHARIS: Nothing.

She leaves sharply.

PLUTO: That was your fault-

PLUTO follows her. Alone, COEUS quickly walks to the rim of the light... and carefully enters. He feels the power it possesses. The more time he spends in the light, the more his confidence grows. He extracts a small orb and admires it in his hand. PASITHIA enters, watching COEUS. Eventually, he notices her.

COEUS: Don't say anything!

PASITHIA: I knew it'd be you-

COEUS: Look - look, it's fine.

PASITHIA: So?

COEUS: Don't you see what this means? We can touch it; we can investigate thoroughly-

PASITHIA: We made a deal, a deal you suggested!

COEUS: This is my job-

PASITHIA: So that's okay, is it? That's enough for you-

COEUS: Shut up!

Beat.

COEUS: Don't you see? All people ever do is worry about dying. On your death bed - "what will my last words be?" Will it be cancer, dementia, a car crash? It's always on your mind, yet you never do anything about it. You'll think to yourself, "I'll live my best life", but you never do. You can't even make the time worth it. Even now, you could be staring the answers directly in the face, but you still don't see. In the heart of the Amazon, scientists discovered treatments for diseases such as Malaria, Glaucoma, and Leukaemia. Fucking Leukaemia! What are we looking at, but not results like that? Well, I'm sorry, I'm too worn, I'm too tired, I'm too fucking desperate not to. Regardless, I don't care what you think, or what rules I've broken... I'm right.

PASITHIA: Why make up rules just to break them?

COEUS: *(He gestures in the direction of the PLUTO.)* Because of people like him. Businessmen only care about one thing...

PASITHIA: Give it to me.

COEUS: No-

PASITHIA: If these things are as important as you say I want one-

COEUS: Typical.

PASITHIA: Typical?

COEUS: I need them all.

PASITHIA: You either hand one to me or share them out with everyone else.

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COEUS *picks up two orbs and hands one to PASITHIA before pocketing the other.*

COEUS: What do you even want with it anyway?

PASITHIA *leaves. COEUS exits in the opposite direction.*

Scene Four.

PROMETHEO *re-enters to protect the light. Suddenly, he coughs blood onto the monolith, before wiping his mouth with a handkerchief.* EILEITH *enters.*

EILEITH: What are you doing?

No response.

EILEITH: What's the matter? What do you want?

PROMETHEO *signs, 'I see you; I hear you speak.'*

EILEITH: Eli?

CHARIS *enters - alarmed.*

CHARIS: Something's wrong!

EILEITH: What do you mean?

CHARIS *begins to examine the monolith. Eventually, she steps into the light and presses her hand against the monolith listening.*

EILEITH: What are you doing?!

She steps back...

CHARIS: Someone's taken the light.

EILEITH: Who?

CHARIS: *(Ignoring EILEITH.)* Two of them.

PLUTO *enters.*

PLUTO: See, I knew you'd be back here; it always draws you back-

CHARIS: Where is it?

PLUTO: Where's what?

PASITHIA *enters.*

PASITHIA: What's going on?

EILEITH: He's taken the light.

PLUTO: No I haven't!

CHARIS: Give it back.

PLUTO: I haven't got it; I don't even want it.

CHARIS: Yes, you do. You're obsessed.

PLUTO: And you're not?

COEUS *enters*.

PLUTO: What about him?

COEUS: What about me?

PASITHIA: Someone's taken the light...

COEUS: Well, don't look at me.

EILEITH: Why not?

COEUS: You were all here before me. Who was first?

They look towards EILEITH.

EILEITH: It wasn't me. (*She gestures towards PROMETHEO*) It was him... I saw him.

CHARIS: He couldn't have.

EILEITH: Why not?

COEUS: He just showed up; we don't even know his name.

CHARIS: Just look at him.

PLUTO: Why are you protecting him?

PASITHIA: Maybe they're working together.

COEUS: You don't know that.

EILEITH: Don't gang up on him.

PASITHIA: Why not?-

PLUTO: You blamed him!

EILEITH: Not to start a witch hunt-

CHARIS: Where would he put them?

PLUTO: You tell us.

CHARIS: I don't know.

COEUS: (*Quietly.*) I took it.

They all ignore COEUS.

PASITHIA: You sure?

EILEITH: Look at him, he's sick.

COEUS: I took it!

Silence. He reveals the orb.

COEUS: I was careful with it, and if we're careful with it, we can use this source for good rather than leaving it for somebody else. Look at it, honestly, just look... it's fine.

CHARIS: But you can't be sure-

EILEITH: He's right.

CHARIS: What?

EILEITH: He is the expert after all.

CHARIS: So?

PASITHIA: An expert on what exactly?

PLUTO: *(To COEUS.)* What it's worth?

CHARIS: So now nobody cares-

EILEITH: We never said that.

COEUS: It's the opposite of that.

PASITHIA: Maybe it could be safe?

CHARIS: But you don't know that-

COEUS: But we do.

EILEITH: He's the expert.

Beat.

CHARIS: Fine...

CHARIS goes up to the light and enters. Carefully, she puts her hand into the monolith.

PLUTO: Careful...

She takes out an orb - the final orb.

PASITHIA: Told you so.

PROMETHEO *coughs up even more blood before collapsing. The spotlight instantly begins flashing/strobe/distortion.*

EILEITH: Someone help him.

COEUS: Don't touch him!

EILEITH: What's wrong with him?

COEUS: I don't know.

PLUTO: What did you do?

CHARIS: Nothing.

PLUTO: What did you do?!

CHARIS: I don't know.

She puts the orb back.

COEUS: He's breathing.

EILEITH: Thank God.

CHARIS: Put them back. Put them all back now!

COEUS returns the orb.

CHARIS: It's not working.

COEUS: (*looking at PASITHEA*) Who else has one?

CHARIS: (*To PLUTO.*) You!

PLUTO: I said I don't have one!

PASITHIA *reveals the light.*

CHARIS: (*To PASITHIA.*) You...

EILEITH: You're surprised?

She puts it back into the centre.

CHARIS: Why isn't it back yet?

COEUS: If nobody has one... it's gone. The light's dead.

Blackout.

Scene Five.

PROMETHEO *is unconscious and clinging to life. EILEITH tries to comfort him, CHARIS helps, and PASITHIA watches from a distance.*

EILEITH: Don't beat yourself up. You're not to blame you know.

PASITHIA: How did you work that one out?

EILEITH: What?

PASITHIA: Isn't it obvious? She takes the last light, and he passes out.

EILEITH: Shut up.

CHARIS: She's right-

EILEITH: No, she isn't. *(She takes PLUTO's temperature.)* He's getting colder.

CHARIS *holds out the orb.*

CHARIS: I think it helps when you're close to it.

EILEITH *puts her hands on the orb.*

PASITHIA: Let me feel...

They all simultaneously hold the orb.

EILEITH: What's his name?

CHARIS: I don't know. I never asked. Do you think he has a family?

EILEITH: He has to...

Pause.

CHARIS: I have a mum. I was meant to see her last Christmas, but we... *(Beat.)* she's all on her own now.

EILEITH: I have a son. He's only six... no... I don't remember. What kind of mother am I?

PASITHIA: It's funny. I always hated my family. They never beat me or anything, but they'd always drink and go out late and leave me and my sister in the house for hours. They'd get the drink money from our child welfare as well, then send us to school with leftovers for lunch. For the longest time it was just me and my sister, then she started ignoring me.

Ditching me. She always needed me as well, you know, but she never understood. This one time, we were walking around the town after a night out - pissed of course. I was sobering up, but she was finished. I went to one of those junky food trucks to sober her up whilst she rested on a park bench. It was only when I turned back and saw her there, sprawled out. Desperate. Like a child, or a lost puppy yapping for help. And you want to help, you do, but you can't. You reach the limit where if they don't help themselves then what's the point. So I left her there. On the bench, in the cold, yapping. *(Beat.)* For the rest of the week, she slept in the hospital. Multiple fractures, a few bruised ribs, but she never told me what happened. She never told anyone. She learnt her lesson though. Now she understands. Now she values me. *(Pause.)* What?

COEUS *enters with* PLUTO.

COEUS: Careful... they'll dissipate quicker.

Pause.

COEUS: We're running out of time.

Scene Six.

A choreographed sequence occurs in which orbs are taken and retrieved. Everybody wants an orb as a remaining source of light - they will do almost anything. This could include intimacy with others, or contrastingly a more violent struggle to obtain one. Whilst this occurs PROMETHEO, in an unconscious state, mouths random phrases. The sequence finishes with all of the orbs having been passed into the audience aside for just one - the last hope for humanity, or so they think. CHARIS holds it high above her head.

CHARIS: We can't all share it. I'm sorry, it'll burn out too fast.

PASITHIA: So what do we do?

PLUTO: Give it to me.

He takes a step forward. CHARIS holds it above her head.

CHARIS: Take one more step and I'll smash it.

PLUTO: You'd kill yourself?

CHARIS: If I have to.

PLUTO: Seriously?

CHARIS: I don't deserve it.

He steps backwards.

CHARIS: *(To EILEITH.)* What about you?

EILEITH: What?

CHARIS: Why should you have it?

EILEITH: I have a son, Eli. I don't know what it does, but we owe it to ourselves to put them first. It wouldn't be for me. It'd be for him.

PASITHIA: She lying! If you love your son so much, tell us how old he is?

EILEITH: Fine. I don't love him. I'm sorry, I don't, but that doesn't mean I don't want what's best for him.

PLUTO: I've got a sister.

CHARIS: Quiet-

PLUTO: Annabelle, the last time I saw her she was seven years old and-

COEUS: Why do you never mention her then?

CHARIS: I said be quiet! (To PASITHIA.) What about you?

PASITHIA: I don't-

CHARIS: Just say something. Please.

PASITHIA: We think the same. I want to protect it. I want to use it for the right reasons, but only with people I can trust. You and me... we're like sisters.

CHARIS: You hid it from me.

PASITHIA: I needed it...

COEUS: We all need it! But some of us need it more. My mum's dying, a tumour, inside her head, just here. Four more months and then... I need to have it, to help her and anyone suffering like she is.

CHARIS: This only happened because of you.

COEUS: For others! Face it, out of all of us here, I have the best intentions.

PASITHIA: The best intentions? Has it ever occurred to you that sometimes, if it wasn't for the best intentions, terrible things would have been avoided-

COEUS: As opposed to what?

PASITHIA: Whole atrocities-

CHARIS: Be quiet, all of you!

CHARIS *looks at all of them... deciding... she chooses EILEITH. She holds out the orb to her.*

CHARIS: Take it.

EILEITH: Seriously?

She nods. EILEITH walks forward, fixated to the light. CHARIS notices.

EILEITH: Give it to me.

She goes to take it, but CHARIS draws it back. Beat. EILEITH slaps her - the orb falls... and smashes.

With the final light gone, over a transition, PLUTO, EILEITH, COEUS, and PASITHIA slowly cease to exist. Leaving CHARIS alone, but very weak.

Suddenly, PROMETHEO wakes.

PROMETHEO: *(Overloading.)* Last nightmare... blue skies, wild storms and people peeling... Ignoring. Ditching... God loved the world, his son. I have a baby. I don't love him but... Shakespeare? He's sick. But I have the best intentions.

He explores the space frantically... he stops, and begins humming.

PROMETHEO: I woke with the light, the sunshine on my face. I washed, showered, bathed, soaked. I drank... coffee! And tea. I ate. I work - I worked. But whilst nobody hears, whilst silent... *(He takes a deep breath.)* I breathe...

CHARIS *she stands, PROMETHEO turns towards her.*

Silence.

CHARIS: I'm sorry. It's all my fault.

PROMETHEO: I'm sorry. It's all my fault.

PROMETHEO *reaches into his pocket and takes out an orb beaming with light - the last orb. They hold it together. Blackout. All that can be seen is the light emitted from the small orb, and for the only time, we hear the noise of the light. Snap! The light goes out - extinct.*

The End.