

THE CALL OF THE VOID - 304

"My Monster"

Written by

Michael Alan Herman
& Josie Eli Herman

EPISODE FOUR - MY MONSTER

SCENE ONE

INT. JM LABS - DAY

SFX: Lab sounds and the buzz of florescent lights. A tape recorder clicks on.

SFX: Pounding from behind an enclosed metal door.

JOANNE

Dr. Joanne Delmen research log 479. October 14th, 2003.

YOUNG ETSY

(Distant) Let me out! Mom!

JOANNE

There is a clear causation between the number of hours the test subject spends in isolation and her ability to reach into the dimensional stratosphere.

SFX: A lab door opens.

JOANNE

Fulton. Good morning.

PROFESSOR FULTON

Evening.

JOANNE

What?

PROFESSOR FULTON

It's past 6:00.

SFX: Chair shifts.

JOANNE

I'm sorry. It's been a day.

PROFESSOR FULTON

I have the report from Thursday here.

JOANNE

Has the rest of the board seen it?

PROFESSOR FULTON

No. Not yet.

JOANNE

Good.

SFX: Pounding continues in the background.

PROFESSOR FULTON

Joanne. There's something else I wanted to speak with you about.

JOANNE

Oh?

PROFESSOR FULTON

I feel as though this program has....taken a turn.

JOANNE

What do you mean?

PROFESSOR FULTON

I think we should re-evaluate your daughter's involvement in the program.

JOANNE

(Beat) Victor and now you.

PROFESSOR FULTON

I've been going over the reports from the last two weeks and...this is getting out of hand.

JOANNE

Our work is revolutionary, Andrew. Our goal isn't to contain and scrutinize the information available to us, it's to reach outwards towards new summits in our capabilities. *Out of our hand* is exactly what we're striving for.

SFX: Pounding continues

YOUNG ETSY

(Distant) Let me out!

PROFESSOR FULTON

Joanne. Here's what I'm getting at...How long was she in the chamber this last time?

JOANNE

It was only 43 hours.

PROFESSOR FULTON

In complete isolation. You need to see something.

SFX: Fulton hands Joanne a file.

JOANNE

What is this?

PROFESSOR FULTON

You might want to take a look at these pages in addition to the latest reports.

JOANNE

I don't know what I'm looking at.

PROFESSOR FULTON

Etsy drew those. In the holding room.

JOANNE

And are my daughter's pencil sketches being considered an applicable component to our technological analyses? This is...art. This is irrelevant.

PROFESSOR FULTON

Look at it, Joanne. Faceless monsters with wings and talons. Etsy has been telling the technicians these monsters haunt her inside the isolation chamber. First the symbols, and now this...

JOANNE

These things are from her mind, Andrew. A little girl imagined monsters in the dark and drew pictures of them. Once again, I don't see how this is relevant to our experiments.

PROFESSOR FULTON

Her body came back clawed and bleeding, Joanne.

JOANNE

Andrew...

PROFESSOR FULTON

You think she did that to herself?

JOANNE

I know you can't be earnestly making this suggestion, so I'm wondering what it is exactly that you're trying to convince me of in this conversation.

PROFESSOR FULTON

(Beat) What we're doing is torture. And so far...what you see in these sketches is our only real outcome.

JOANNE

These are only as real as Etsy makes them. She needs to learn control.

SFX: Final pounding, increasingly angry.

JOANNE

We're on the brink of something amazing here, Andrew. You can choose to be a part of this program, or to give up. So which is it?

TITLE SEQUENCE

SCENE TWO

EXT. ABANDONED SIX FLAGS - DAY

SFX: The screech of the Night Gaunt.

TOPHER

Etsy.

ETSY

Stay back...

TOPHER

It doesn't have a face, but it can tell when you're looking at it.

MASON

And it has talons.

TOPHER

It's tendrils can grab you...

MASON

I shot it and it didn't do anything.

TOPHER

And it loves to bury people.

(Beat) Topher.

MASON

What?

TOPHER

It's not attacking her.

MASON

Etsy...

TOPHER

SFX: Night Gaunt hisses and screeches at Etsy.

Hey. Look at me. (Beat) I said look at me.

ETSY

What is she doing?

MASON

She's...talking to it?

TOPHER

SFX: Night Gaunt hisses at Etsy again.

What is it saying?

TOPHER

How would I know that?

MASON

Why are you here?

ETSY

SFX: Night Gaunt hisses at Etsy again.

You don't control me either. And I asked you a question. Why are you here?

ETSY

SFX: Night Gaunt hiss at Etsy again.

You're not going anywhere.

ETSY

SFX: Etsy blasts back the night gaunt as it screeches and attacks her.

TOPHER

Etsy! Look out!

SFX: Etsy attacks, but she is thrown down.

MASON

You alright, Delmen?

ETSY

I'm alright.

SFX: The Night Gaunt ATTACKS Etsy. She FIGHTS back.

TOPHER

Watch the claws on the right! The other right!

ETSY

I made you what you are. And I can unmake you.

SFX: Etsy blasts at the creature. It recoils and attacks. Etsy blasts at it once more.

SFX: The final screech of the Night Gaunt as it dissolves into oblivion.

SILENCE

SFX: Etsy falls to the ground, breathing heavily.

TOPHER

Is it gone?

ETSY

It's gone.

TOPHER

Are you okay?

ETSY

(Beat) Yeah.

(Beat) Hi. TOPHER

Hey. ETSY

You came back. TOPHER

I did. ETSY

I called you. I called you for a year. TOPHER

I'm sorry. ETSY

Where were you? TOPHER

Sort of all over the place. ETSY

Tomorrow's report is going to be something else. MASON

Mason. Hey. ETSY

It's good to see you, Delmen. MASON

Yeah. It's good to see you too. (Beat) How long have these things been around? ETSY

Simone and I first saw one in the Dark City last year. TOPHER

The what? MASON

In the Bayou. But we don't know why they've returned. TOPHER

ETSY

I don't know why they're here, but I know where they came from.

MASON

Where?

ETSY

(Beat) Me.

SCENE THREE

INT. MASON'S CAR - LATER

SFX: Car driving on a highway.

ETSY

They came from the isolation chamber at the lab. But there was a question of whether they were from some other dimension, or my nightmares just became a reality.

MASON

You're saying you made that thing up?

ETSY

I might have. Sorry.

MASON

Hell of an imagination.

TOPHER

Either way we don't know why the Night Gaunts would be crossing into our world now.

ETSY

What are you calling them?

TOPHER

Night Gau...oh. It's just a Lovecraft thing.

ETSY

Ah.

TOPHER

It's an appropriate name because Lovecraft describes the original of Night Gaunts as an alternate dimension only accessible to humans through their dreams.

MASON

You know what, Topher? I need more coffee for this shit.

ETSY

I know know, I think he's got a pretty good point, Mason. This could be true shit.

MASON

I know. I was just chased half to death by a creature with no face. And I will be doing everything in my power to keep this city safe from it.

TOPHER

We will too.

SFX: Mason pulls the car into a parking lot. Car doors open and close. Night noises.

MASON

Now, just because you're helping me with this case doesn't mean I'm giving out get-out-of-jail-free cards.

ETSY

I have missed stealing your car on the weekends.

MASON

I can't say I missed the paperwork.

ETSY

Good night, Mason.

MASON

Y'all get back safe then.

SFX: Mason drives away.

SFX: Car keys jingle as Topher unlocks his car with the fob.

ETSY

New car?

Yeah. Used, but... good.

TOPHER

I sold my car for a camper.

ETSY

Oh, cool.

TOPHER

But it exploded, so...

ETSY

(Beat) Oh.

TOPHER

Yeah.

ETSY

SFX: Topher fiddles with his car keys, awkwardly.

That was cool...back with the cryptid.

TOPHER

Oh, yeah. Thanks.

ETSY

SFX: Awkward silence.

Do you have a place to...

TOPHER

(Overlapping) It's really nice to...

ETSY

Sorry. Go ahead.

TOPHER

Uh. It's really nice to see you.

ETSY

Yeah. You too. (Beat) Did you have a place to stay?

TOPHER

ETSY

Uh, no. Guess I didn't think about...that.

TOPHER

Okay. I mean, you could stay at our place.

ETSY

Oh, no, that's...

TOPHER

No, it's okay. We have a guestroom at my house and um...you're basically family. We'll give you your own space. (Beat) You won't hurt anybody.

ETSY

(Beat) Okay. I'd appreciate it.

TOPHER

(Suddenly) Oh!

ETSY

What?!

TOPHER

There's someone...I forgot there's someone that needs to see you immediately.

ETSY

(Beat) Um...who?

SFX: Distant night jazz of New Orleans.

SCENE FOUR

EXT. SOMMER'S HOUSE - DAY

SFX: Martin Brody meows as the door opens.

ETSY

Oh my gosh.

TOPHER

It's been a while, huh?

ETSY

Yeah.

SFX: Epic meows from Martin Brody.

TOPHER

I think he missed you. He's been sort of irritable since...pretty much since you left.

ETSY

Honestly, same.

SFX: They both laugh.

ETSY

Oh my gosh. (Getting emotional) Thank you again for taking him in.

TOPHER

Sure.

ETSY

I wish I could have kept him, but it's been a lot of moving around.

TOPHER

Sure. Moving around as in...

ETSY

Arizona most recently. I got to see the Grand Canyon.

TOPHER

Nice. We took a family trip out there one time.

SFX: Brody jumps on Etsy's shoulders.

Hey, Brody. (Beat) Hey...

TOPHER

He just jumped up on your shoulders.

ETSY

He has no sense of personal space.

TOPHER

I could never get him to do that.

ETSY

Hey...I missed you too, buddy...I missed you.

SFX: Etsy wipes away tears as Martin Brody continues to meow.

TOPHER

You okay?

ETSY

Oh. Yeah. It's just been a while since I've touched something that was alive. And I freaking love this cat.

TOPHER

Wait. Have you not...?

SFX: Footsteps down the hallway.

SIMONE

Hey Topher, are you busy... (Beat) Oh.

ETSY

Hey.

TOPHER

Simone. Hi. Etsy's back.

SIMONE

Right.

TOPHER

Mason and I were attacked.

SIMONE

Again?

TOPHER

Yeah. But Etsy showed up.

SIMONE

She did. (Beat) Are you busy?

TOPHER

No. What's up?

SIMONE

I was going over dad's research papers over the last few hours.

TOPHER

Okay.

SIMONE

One of them talks about the Absolute Zero Condition where, theoretically all of the frequencies drop to oblivion. The paper was co-authored with Fulton.

ETSY

Fulton.

TOPHER

Do you remember him?

ETSY

Well, yeah...

SIMONE

He said he was only there in the early days.

ETSY

He was there the whole time.

SIMONE

He told me he left shortly after dad.

ETSY

He was there until the last day.

TOPHER

Why would he lie about that?

ETSY

I don't know.

SIMONE

Whether he was there until the end or not, he is still a pioneer in this field. Frankly, one of the only minds in this branch of applied quantum physics. That qualifies as a resource if not an ally.

TOPHER

Sure. So what is the absolute zero condition?

SIMONE

It's a theoretical state in which all frequencies converge to zero and there is no life in a system.

TOPHER

And they reached this condition?

SIMONE

They were just proposing it back in the day. Him and dad. The De Soto site hasn't reached zero yet, but if it keeps decreasing...

TOPHER

How much has it decreased so far?

SIMONE

Around 2.7 hertz. I was tracking it with another student named Eli. (Beat) I'm still looking for some of the papers on the subject. You don't know where the key is to Dad's bottom drawer, do you?

TOPHER

No.

SIMONE

Well, I'll probably keep reading for a while tonight.

SFX: Footsteps as Simone walks back down the hall.

SIMONE

It was good to see you, Etsy.

ETSY

You too.

SFX: The door to the study slams shut.

TOPHER

She's going to be okay. (Beat) Let's get you set up in the guest room, yeah?

SCENE FIVE

INT. SOMMER'S HOUSE - GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

SFX: Pillow being fluffed.

TOPHER

There's extra pillows in the closet if you happen to need them. The bathroom is through there and the bedside lamp does work, but the bulb is weird so you might have to fidget with it a little...

SFX: Topher fidgets with the lightbulb.

ETSY

This is great, thanks.

TOPHER

Oh, did you need any more food? We have some beignets from Café Du Monde. Or I could make you something with less powdered sugar.

ETSY

I'm all set, but thank you.

TOPHER

Okay. (Beat) Yeah. Sounds good. If you need anything, I'm the second door on the right. In the hall we just came through. Past the Rothko knock-off.

ETSY

I'll probably be good.

TOPHER

Great. Have a good night.

ETSY

You too.

TOPHER

You too.

SFX: Topher closes the door. After a moment, he opens it again.

TOPHER

Sorry, also, if you need food, the fridge is where it is in the kitchen.

ETSY

Right.

SFX: Door closes. It opens again.

TOPHER

That's not where the beignets are. Those are in the food pantry.

SFX: Door closes. It opens again.

TOPHER

Oh, there's also a record player. If you wanted something to fill the silence. I have lots of lame bands I listen to on vinyl.

ETSY

Yeah, I saw those on the shelf.

TOPHER

Oh, no, that's my good music.

ETSY

(Beat) Oh.

TOPHER

It works just like you think it would with the tone-arm.

ETSY

Amazing. Thank you.

SFX: Door closes. After a pause, it opens again.

TOPHER

I don't really know how to get into this conversation without it being weird.

ETSY

Trust me you're already making this weird.

TOPHER

What happens when you touch people now?

SFX: Etsy shifts on the bed.

ETSY

Last year I pulled a part of the Void inside. Instead of pushing it back. It would consume anyone I touch.

TOPHER

They would get taken by the Void?

ETSY

Yes.

SFX: Topher sits down at the edge of the bed.

TOPHER

Okay.

ETSY

He's been with me since last year.

TOPHER

He? Like...a voice? Inside your head?

ETSY

Sometimes it's more than that. Sometimes I can see him. I can...

TOPHER

What can we do to stop it?

ETSY

This is my monster, Topher. It's just something I have to figure out.

TOPHER

Okay.

ETSY

Thanks for everything. I think I will put on some of your music.

TOPHER

Sure. There's tons of options there.

ETSY

Yeah.

TOPHER

Okay. I'm actually leaving this time. Good night, Etsy.

ETSY

Goodnight.

SFX: Opens and closes.

SCENE EIGHT
INT. SOMMERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

TOPHER

She's all set up in the guest room.

SIMONE

Great.

SFX: Topher puts dishes back into the cupboards.

TOPHER

It's nice to have her back.

SIMONE

Great.

TOPHER

Yeah.

SIMONE

Is she still dangerous?

TOPHER

She saved Mason and me from the Night Gaunts today, Simone.

SIMONE

What happens when she touches people?

TOPHER

She can't anymore. She, um...There's a part of the Void that's inside of her.

SIMONE

And she's in our guest room right now.

SFX: Martin Brody meows.

TOPHER

Oh. I have to feed him.

SFX: Topher sneezes.

SIMONE

Do you need Sudafed or something?

TOPHER

I'm okay.

SFX: Topher pours cat food into a dish.

SIMONE

(Beat) How long are you going to keep taking care of things that hurt you?

TOPHER

He can't get food by himself.

SIMONE

No.

TOPHER

So, someone needs to help him. And I am able to help him. So I'm going to.

SIMONE

I have more research to do.

TOPHER

Fine.

SCENE SIX

EXT. DE SOTO SITE - NIGHT

SFX: Sounds of a forest at night. Footsteps and a door opening.

RILEY

Eli. Hey.

ELI

What's up, Riley.

RILEY

What are you doing out?

ELI

]I was going to walk the perimeter of the site.

RILEY

It's 9 pm.

ELI

Yeah.

RILEY

Aren't we investigating the site again on Monday? With the rest of the class? It's not Monday.

ELI

Yeah.

RILEY

They don't give out extra credit at summer intensives, you know that right?

ELI

This is kind of for my own thing.

RILEY

Alright. Can I walk it with you?

ELI

Sure.

SFX: Footsteps through the forest. A distant Night Gaunt screech.

RILEY

What was that?

ELI

I don't know.

RILEY

You've heard about the De Soto site being haunted, right?

ELI

No. And I am also not an unscientific heathen.

RILEY

It could be scientific. If there were certain places where the veil is thin between this world and something else.

ELI

Hold on. We're here.

RILEY

I thought the site was like another half mile.

ELI

It's...it's expanded.

RILEY

Since yesterday? (Beat) What the hell.

ELI

It's...It looks...

RILEY

What happened here? The plant-life, the....everything is just gone.

ELI

You see that barn?

RILEY

Yeah.

ELI

That was a quarter mile away from the site six hours ago.

RILEY

Even the barn looks...like it's aged a hundred years.

ELI

Do you want to read the frequencies on the detector or record?

RILEY

I'll read.

ELI

Okay.

SFX: Frequency detector turns on.

RILEY

It's showing 1.964.

It's already below 2?

ELI

That's what I have here.

RILEY

We're not going to want to get any closer. I think there's..

ELI

Eli...

WHISPER MEN

Eli?

RILEY

(Distracted) Yeah?

ELI

Are you okay?

RILEY

Yeah. I'm just... If the frequency drops too low, weird stuff starts to happen out here.

ELI

Weird like...what? You're freaking me out.

RILEY

It's just auditory and visual hallucinations. We need to stay above 1.5. Okay. Just make sure the meter reads above 1.5.

ELI

Eli, why are we out here right now?

RILEY

I need data if I'm going to calculate the rate of growth.

ELI

Eli.

RILEY

Yeah.

ELI

It dropped.

RILEY

ELI

Just now? What are we at? What are we at, Riley?

RILEY

Why would you say that?

ELI

What?

RILEY

Why did he say that to me?

ELI

Why did who say that? Who are you talking to?

RILEY

Do you see the guy over there?

ELI

No.

RILEY

Next to the barn.

ELI

There isn't anybody by the barn.

RILEY

I've seen him before.

ELI

No you haven't.

RILEY

That's my brother.

ELI

Don't... Don't walk toward him, okay? Look at me.

RILEY

He died when I was a kid.

ELI

He's not your brother.

Why is he here?
RILEY

You need to stay away.
ELI

Hey. Hey, you can follow me.
WHISPER MEN

Riley I can't step any further into it...
ELI

SFX: Riley walks towards the barn.

You died. Mom said you died.
RILEY

You need to come back. Riley!
ELI

It's our little secret.
WHISPER MEN

What's wrong with your face? John? No....
RILEY

*SFX: Riley screams. She begins to dissolve into ashes.
Her screams continue.*

Riley!
ELI

SFX: Eli breathes in terror.

SCENE SEVEN

INT. MISSISSIPPI RESEARCH STATION - LATER

SFX: A door bursts open.

What happened?
PROFESSOR FULTON

ELI

I just...I was walking the site with Riley.

PROFESSOR FULTON

Just tried to breathe, Eli.

She went too far into the site. I told her to not go so far into the site.

PROFESSOR FULTON

Where is she?

ELI

She's gone. She dissolved. Right in front of my eyes. She dissolved.

PROFESSOR FULTON

Did you go into the site after her?

ELI

No. I couldn't.

PROFESSOR FULTON

Was there anyone else with you?

ELI

It was just the two of us. (Beat) So, what do we...what do we do? We call the police.

PROFESSOR FULTON

No. We don't want to call the police yet.

ELI

Why? WHY?

PROFESSOR FULTON

I want to... I have to make sure we should bring them in.

ELI

Riley just...

PROFESSOR FULTON

We don't want more people to get hurt. I just... Trust me, I need to think about this.

ELI

What is there to think about? Riley is gone.

PROFESSOR FULTON

You're scared. You're tired. You should head back to the living quarters. You'll be safe there. I can protect you, but you need to listen to me. Yes?

ELI

Okay.

PROFESSOR FULTON

You'll be fine if you head back to the living quarters. I'll figure this out. (Beat) I'll alert the authorities tomorrow morning.

ELI

(Beat) Okay.

SCENE EIGHT

INT. SOMMERS HOUSE - VICTOR'S STUDY - NIGHT

SFX: Knocking on a door. Footsteps within. The door swings open.

ETSY

Hey.

SIMONE

Topher's room is down the hall.

ETSY

Right. Past the...painting thing.

SIMONE

Yeah.

ETSY

I actually wanted to talk to you for a second, if...

SIMONE

I'm kind of busy with my dad's research.

ETSY

On Absolute Zero?

SIMONE

Energy displacement at the quantum level, at the moment.

ETSY

Are you still looking for the key to his bottom desk drawer?

SIMONE

(Beat) Yes.

ETSY

This is going to be weird for me to know, but...if nobody's moved it, it might still be in...um, there was like a photo-album of you and Topher with a green canvas cover.

SFX: Footsteps as Simone walks over to a shelf. She opens up a book and a key slips out and drops to the floor.

SIMONE

(Beat) That was weird for you to know.

ETSY

When I went to see your dad at the psych ward...

SIMONE

You mean when you stole my identity.

ETSY

Yeah. Uh. When I touched his hand, I saw that uh...he must have dropped the key while he was flipping through the pages. I think the pictures of the of you were one of the last memories he was holding onto.

SIMONE

He was a good dad. I'm sorry you didn't have that.

ETSY

He fought until the end for the people he cared about. I'm going to do that too.

SIMONE

Topher says the Void is inside you now. Is that true?

ETSY

I don't know how to beat it yet.

SIMONE

And now It swallows whoever you touch.

ETSY

Yes.

SIMONE

That's why you left New Orleans.

ETSY

I couldn't chance...

SIMONE

I appreciate that. Thank you for saving Topher today.

ETSY

He deserves only good things.

SIMONE

I know that.

ETSY

I know that isn't me. But I can help in this fight. I need to. (Beat) That's why I'm here.

SFX: Etsy steps away and begins to close the door behind her.

SIMONE

Etsy. (Beat) How do you...see what you see when you touch people and...walk between worlds. Push things from one reality to another. I don't understand the science.

ETSY

Honestly, I don't know. I wish I did. But I'm sorry I hurt you.

SIMONE

(Beat) Thank you for the key.

ETSY

Goodnight.

SFX: Etsy exits and shuts the door.

SCENE NINE

INT. SOMMERS HOUSE - GUEST-ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

SFX: Etsy shuts the door to the guest room and lies on the bed. She leans over and fiddles with the bulb in the bedside lamp.

Etsy.

JONAH

SFX: Etsy ignores him, continuing to fiddle with the bulb.

JONAH

You've been shutting me out.

ETSY

I didn't want to talk to you.

JONAH

I never did anything to hurt you. I helped you...

SFX: The lightbulb suddenly breaks in Etsy's hand. She gasps in pain.

JONAH

Back in the desert. I helped you push them back. And then you shut me out.

ETSY

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to shut you out.

JONAH

(Caring) Are you alright?

ETSY

I haven't been alright in a long time.

JONAH

Hey. I know how much this hurts you. I see all of your tears.

SFX: Jonah moves closer to Etsy, gently touching her skin.

JONAH

You're so broken, Etsy. Stay here with me. Let me hold you. I'm the only one who can.

SFX: Etsy gets up from the bed.

JONAH

Where are you going?

ETSY

I'm leaving.

Leaving what?
JONAH

SFX: Etsy struggles with the handle on the door. It appears to be locked.

JONAH
Leaving *what?* (Beat) You know you can't run from me. I've told you that before.

ETSY
Let me out.

JONAH
Who are you to defy me? I am your weakness. I am your god.

SFX: Etsy pounds on the door.

ETSY
Let me out!

JONAH
I am inside of every part of you. I pulse through your veins. I crawl beneath your skin.

SFX: Sounds of Etsy in pain. She is thrown down to the floor.

JONAH
Your darkness is written on your bones. Carved into your flesh. Bleeding out from your heart. And I will mark you...

SFX: Topher pounds on the door from outside.

TOPHER
(Distant) Etsy! What's happening? Etsy!

SIMONE
(Distant) What's going on in there?

TOPHER
(Distant) I don't know.

JONAH
I will untwist your nature until the face you see in the mirror is nothing but a husk.

SFX: Etsy struggles in extreme pain.

TOPHER

(Distant) Etsy. Open the door. Open the door, Etsy.

SFX: Banging on the door.

JONAH

You are emptiness. Always. I will never let you forget that you are mine.

SFX: Etsy screams.

SFX: Topher and Simone break open the door. A cosmic whirlwind turns the room into chaos as objects swirl around them.

TOPHER

Etsy!

ETSY

Stay away! Get back! Don't touch me!

TOPHER

It's going to be okay.

ETSY

Don't touch me, Topher! Stay back....you can't...

SIMONE

Her arms.

TOPHER

Look at me. You can fight this. Etsy...

SIMONE

There's writing on her arms.

ETSY

(Beat) He's here.

CLOSING SEQUENCE