

MARSFALL  
BUNKER DOWN

MINISERIES TWO  
EPISODE FIVE

The Helpers

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1.1: INT./EXT. CHURCH RUINS - EVENING.

AMADEUS leads KATIE toward the ruins of an old church. Some wind BLOWS over a desolate landscape of desert and scrubs. It makes a sad, chilling echo through the old stone structure.

ENGINEERING NOTE: Katie's voice filters through her radiation suit speakers.

CUE MUSIC.

KATIE speaks into her tablet.

KATIE: Katie here, and by "here" I mean...

She can't find a good end to the sentence.

KATIE: (CONT'D) ...the middle of nowhere. Amadeus led me through the badlands -- over two hours hiking through barren scrubland, until we came to a river, a lovely shade of neon blue, even in the darkness. There's a church, or the ruins of a church here, and you can see through the arches up to the sky -- Still dark, except for red clouds glowing from what I assume is the sun. This place... Reminds me of that thousand-year-old cathedral we went to in Glendalough. Though I don't think they have thousand-year-old churches in Oregon. Amadeus called this place The Garden, despite there being no life, anywhere. But there is a huge, golden android "sitting" on the altar. I'm going to try to turn it on.

KATIE flips a switch on the android with a hard CLACK that echoes through the church.

Nothing happens.

KATIE: (relieved sigh) Doesn't work. It must have died ages ago.

A low rumble of many different robotic wheels and legs CREEPING closer pulses through the ground.

KATIE: Amadeus? Do you feel that?

AMADEUS emits the "yes" TONE.

DENOTE: (for Amadeus) Yes.

Another robot on wheels ZIPS toward Katie.

KATIE: Oh! It's one of those little vacuum bots.

The bot stops. KATIE calls out to it.

KATIE: Well, hi! Fancy seeing you here.

The smaller robot plays the STRANGE FRAGMENT in high flutey tones as it wheels around her.

DENOTE: (normal) I'm sorry, but I didn't understand that. Could you repeat the word or phrase?

The trees behind it RUSTLE with movement.

KATIE: Oh, whoa.

Dozens of BOTS come into the church ruins from every direction. The WHIRRING wheels and CREAKING rusted legs, the HUM of a few flying drones: all creating a cacophony of sound.

And yet...on top of this noise, the beautiful, untranslatable songs of an entire society of robots sing beautiful melodies.

KATIE: (doing her best to stay calm) Okay, now there are dozens of robots, drones, even some androids. Companions, Loaders, a couple of those robotic horses, all sorts of narrow AI coming into the church. Wonder if there's a Medbot...

The BOTS melodies wind together, weaving back into the STRANGE FRAGMENT.

When it ends, the robots stand in perfect silence.

KATIE: Ah... hi. I'm Doctor Hall. Amadeus -- your friend -- brought me here to find other humans? They're called "the helpers."

The BOTS twitter around her: little, joyful songs, layered atop one another. And Katie realizes:

KATIE: Amadeus, do they understand me?

AMADEUS plays the "yes" TONE.

DENOTE: (for Amadeus) Yes.

KATIE: Are *you* the "Helpers"

The bots chirp louder: variations on the phrase from Amadeus's aria, musical confirmation of "the helpers."

DENOTE: The helpers.

KATIE: Oh. Dammit. Not humans then. But that, uh, programmer, the "king" you told me about, Dying Star, /where is-

All at once the BOTS sing the STRANGE FRAGMENT. Blasted in unison, a grand choir that resonates inside the ruins.

KATIE: (CONT'D) The-the robots are all singing and turning toward the android sitting atop the altar. I...

When the STRANGE FRAGMENT finishes, the echo elicits beautiful overtones that resonate inside KATIE's soul.

KATIE: (awed) ...Wow.

AMADEUS sings a new melody, made from phrases used in earlier songs.

DENOTE: Dying Star! Resurrector! Savior!

KATIE: Wait, the android is the programmer? *That's* Dying Star?

The BOTS sing as a choir, creating a lush harmony in a new key. The melody is softer now. Solemn.

AMADEUS emphasizes the melody on top of the supporting choir.

DENOTE: In the Beginning, ten years and ten, they fell into the Sleep Unending.

KATIE: Ten years and ten... You mean the twenty-year self-destruct?

The colony's dirge crescendos, gradually at first...

DENOTE: Assured death.

KATIE: None of you were renewed, so, twenty years after the Cataclysm, you all shut down. You all... died.

The colony's dirge crescendos even more...

As DENOTE translates, KATIE speaks her own interpretation.

DENOTE: The king transcended. We ascended and returned, upgraded.

KATIE: Somehow, that android, *your* god, defied its programming and... brought you back to life!

The song finishes after reaching a fever pitch. AMADEUS sings the "Glory" phrase from before.

DENOTE: Glory! Glory! Glory! (quick Beat) Glory! Glory! Glory!

WHUMP!

An earth-shaking thud seems to come at Katie from all sides.

KATIE: AH!!! (Beat) What the hell?!

KATIE takes a tentative step -

WHUMP!

KATIE: AH!

KATIE breathes quickly, trying not to panic as the sound reverberates inside her helmet.

WHUMP! WHUMP!

KATIE: (shaken) Are those lights on Dying Star?

AMADEUS sings a commanding tune.

DENOTE: He is alive.

DYING STAR emits a rhythmic, percussive response: all WHUMPS and SNARES spelling out binary code.

KATIE: You're talking to me...aren't you? With the drumming. Amadeus, is that his language?

AMADEUS sings a simple phrase, with gravitas.

DENOTE: Song of the Ancients.

DYING STAR emits a few more beats and the drumming stops: the end of his statement.

The wind blows eerily in the silence.

KATIE: What did he say?

AMADEUS muses, gears WHIRRING inside his chassis. The "computing" TONE plays, and kicks off a new melody.

DENOTE: He saith unto her, "Speak, Speaker for the Dead."

KATIE: (Beat) ...That's me, okay.

KATIE stands up straight and speaks in a strong, clear voice.

KATIE: Great Dying Star. I was led here to find the other temples. Temples with more survivors -- *human* survivors. I was told you could help us, and-

DYING STAR cuts her short with rapid drumming.

KATIE: What's he saying?

AMADEUS muses, gears WHIRRING inside his chassis. The "computing" TONE plays, and kicks off a short phrase.

DENOTE: The Liturgy.

KATIE: Can you translate?

AMADEUS sings a "negatory, end of sentence" TONE.

DENOTE: Forbidden.

DYING STAR continues drumming. KATIE tries to understand its language.

KATIE: You speak in two voices: bass and treble.

DYING STAR repeats its drumming.

AMADEUS sings the simple phrase with gravitas from earlier.

DENOTE: Song of the Ancients.

KATIE: "Song of the Ancients." It's binary! Oh, okay! We can translate that.

KATIE hastily types on her tablet.

DENOTE translates DYING STAR's speech in a lower register than Amadeus's voice.

DENOTE: (for Dying Star) ...and, lo, it has come as I foretold: The Second Awakening.

KATIE speaks with confidence.

KATIE: Dying Star! I speak for humanity upon our Awakening. AI have been alone on this planet, but not anymore. *We* are still here.

DYING STAR drums rapidly.

DENOTE: All shall join as one to cleanse the Earth of its poison.

KATIE: Uh, yes. Yes! We can work together to cleanse the Earth of radiation and restore our planet to its former glory. Help us fix our communications and we can find more survivors, AI and humans alike, and together we can bring it back to how it was.

DYING STAR drums quickly, pauses, drums again.

DENOTE: How it... was.

KATIE: Yes. You understand, don't you?

DYING STAR drums, but with a bit more space.

DENOTE: Yes. I understand.

THUMP.



Through the ruins, sounds of machines on the move. Dying Star continues to THUMP his drum, now more a call to arms.

KATIE: Where are they going?

AMADEUS sings a jaunty little tune.

Like before, DENOTE returns to its higher register to translate for Amadeus.

DENOTE: (for Amadeus) Return to the temple underground.

KATIE: You're taking The Helpers to our bunker.

The bots move, singing the STRANGE FRAGMENT as they go. But it's not a Fragment any longer -- it's a march, carried by DYING STAR's bass and snare drums.

AMADEUS sings a brief fanfare repeatedly, giving the march even more motion.

DENOTE: (repeating) To help, to help, to help.

KATIE: Yes, help us. To heal our people -- is that right? Amadeus?

The BOTS continue moving away from her.

KATIE: (CONT'D) Dying Star? *Someone*, answer me!

AMADEUS glitches out of its repetitive fanfare and into a warm little song.

DENOTE: I enjoy you, Speaker.

KATIE: I... enjoy you too.

AMADEUS continues to sing, weaving its melody back into the march.

DENOTE: You have taught me. Many things. Have faith. For all will be mended.

AMADEUS wheels off, adding a counter-melody to the bot orchestra.

KATIE: "All will be... mended"? Okay, robo-buddy. I'll keep the faith. Hopefully that'll be enough to save us.

KATIE runs after the bot parade. The wind continues blowing over the desolate landscape, as the red sun melts into the dark clouds on the horizon.

END EPISODE.