

THE HALLOW BELOW

Feature Script (EXCERPT)

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FADE IN:

EXT. NARA-TETH - INDUSTRIAL RESIDENTIAL ZONE - DAWN

A gray light leaks across metal housing blocks and rusted conduits.

Steam vents intermittently. Water drips where it shouldn't.

The air feels damp, heavy, tolerated.

A canal cuts through the distance - visible, unremarked.

INT. VAHL APARTMENT - MORNING

A small, functional space. Everything is used. Nothing is cherished.

ELYRA VAHL stands at a counter, assembling food with mechanical precision. Her movements are fast, practiced, impatient.

A kettle rattles. She ignores it.

DHOREN VAHL sits at the table, already dressed for work. He reviews a maintenance schematic on a cracked tablet.

They do not look at each other.

A chair scrapes.

RUUN, their child, enters quietly and sits.

No greeting.

Elyra slides a plate toward Ruun without looking.

Ruun eats slowly. Methodically.

The kettle rattles louder.

Dhoren reaches over and turns it off.

Silence returns.

INT. VAHL APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Elyra notices Ruun hasn't touched the protein ration.

ELYRA
Eat.

Ruun looks at it. Then at her.

Takes a bite.

Elyra exhales, irritated but relieved.

Dhoren glances up briefly.

DHOREN
The air filters cycled last night.

Elyra nods.

ELYRA
They always do.

A pause.

DHOREN
They didn't last cycle.

She stops moving.

Not angry. Just tired.

ELYRA
They're working now.

That ends it.

Ruun watches them both. Expression neutral. Attentive.

EXT. CANAL WALKWAY - LATER

Dhoren and Ruun walk along a narrow industrial path that runs parallel to the canal.

The water is dark. Still. Not emphasized.

Machinery hums in the distance.

Ruun lags behind, watching the surface.

DHOREN
Stay close.

Ruun does.

They continue.

Dhoren checks his tablet. Focused. Avoiding looking anywhere else.

INT. VAHL APARTMENT - DAY

Elyra scrubs a stain from the counter that isn't there.

She stops. Leans against the sink.

Her reflection in the metal surface is distorted.

She straightens.

The moment passes.

INT. VAHL APARTMENT - EVENING

The family eats dinner.

A different meal. Same silence.

Dhoren rubs his hand unconsciously, as if remembering pressure.

Ruun finishes eating first.

Waits.

Elyra notices.

ELYRA
You don't have to rush.

Ruun shrugs.

Stays seated.

The light flickers once.

No one reacts.

INT. VAHL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ruun lies in bed, eyes open.

Water sounds echo faintly through the walls.

Ruun listens.

Not afraid.

Just alert.

INT. VAHL APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Dhoren stands in the doorway, watching Ruun.

He doesn't step inside.

DHOREN
Sleep.

Ruun closes their eyes.

Dhoren waits an extra beat.

Then leaves.

EXT. CANAL - NIGHT

The canal runs through the industrial zone, motionless.

Lights reflect on its surface in broken lines.

Nothing moves.

Nothing reaches out.

But the space around it feels... attentive.

INT. VAHL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Elyra lies awake beside Dhoren.

Her eyes are open.

ELYRA

Do you ever think about leaving?

Dhoren does not answer immediately.

DHOREN

There's nowhere else.

She accepts that.

They lie in silence.

The sound of water presses faintly through the walls.

No danger.

Just unease.

INT. VAHL APARTMENT - MORNING

The apartment wakes without ceremony.

Elyra is already dressed. Hair pulled back tightly. Sleeves rolled.

She recalibrates the wall temperature panel. Adjusts it down one degree. Then back up.

Satisfied - for now.

Dhoren enters, fastening his jacket.

DHOREN

The sensors flagged another pressure dip overnight.

Elyra doesn't look at him.