

ASTRID: MY ECO-WARRIOR

PILOT EPISODE

"ONE OF OUR OWN"

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST BOUNDARY (PLANET: BETA CENTAURI-6) - DAY

SUPER: BETA CENTAURI-6. NEAR FUTURE.

A CLOAKED FIGURE strides out of the woodland forest onto the meadow...avoiding young PLANTS, breaking through the soil.

Following him and levitating just above the vegetation, is a "platoon" of beachball-sized, METALLIC SPHERES. They emit a low-frequency HUM. From small holes perforating its entire surface, radiates a soft, PINK LIGHT.

As the spheres pass above the young plants, they begin to grow at an accelerated rate.

The cloaked figure heads for a sleek SPACE CRUISER that hovers just above the ground. It's ramp lowers -- he steps lightly onboard.

One by one, the spheres dock into the open hatches along the sides and rear of the vessel.

EXT. FOREST VALLEY & BEYOND - CONTINUOUS

Back in the woodland forest -- an alien war zone.

Amongst broken TREES and mangled vegetation, CORPSES of "orc-like" creatures piled high, are consumed by colorful FUNGI.

Levitating above the vegetation is a much larger sphere than those that returned to the cruiser. It HUMS. A soft PINK LIGHT shines from the many holes in its metallic surface.

The forest regenerates at amazing speed.

This regenerative process is occurring planet-wide.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SUMMIT (EARTH) - NIGHT

SUPER: SENTINEL DOME -- YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, U.S.

An angelic-looking, blue-eyed human girl -- ASTRID (18), searches the starry sky. She shivers, her breath -- frosty.

ASTRID
He should be home by now.

ALBIN (60), a tall, wiry CUSTODIAN -- a long-lived, humanoid species from the Planet Vardaran, who monitor our sector of the galaxy, drapes his cloak around her.

Albin is an explorer. He's also Astrid's doting Uncle.

ALBIN
Ahh, the impatience of youth. Let's
go inside, he could be hours.

Astrid continues to look up at the night sky...Albin shape-shifts into a huge BEAR and wraps his shaggy arms around her, hugging her to his chest. She snuggles in.

ASTRID
I love you, Al.

Albin, as a bear, gently kisses her head.

INT. CUSTODIAN COUNCIL CHAMBER - SAME TIME

SUPER: PLANET VARDARAN, FIVE LIGHT-YEARS FROM EARTH.

Dressed in his formal uniform bearing a "Science" insignia on his coat lapel, THE CUSTODIAN known as ELEN (42) -- Senior Biologist and Leader of the "Earth Mission" turns to face the blank wall...his forehead slightly bowed.

Watching that blank space -- members of THE CUSTODIAN COUNCIL -- tall, silver-haired men, similarly dressed, bearing the "Councilor" Insignia on their coat lapels.

IMAGES from EARTH materialize on the wall...

- A MOUNTAIN -- strip-mined.
- Wild ELEPHANTS -- shot.
- An angelic, blue-eyed HUMAN CHILD -- looks up and smiles.
- Pristine RAINFOREST -- bulldozed -- ANIMALS fleeing.
- CITY SLUMS -- mountains of trash.
- WHALES -- butchered on a factory ship. Blood on the decks.

SURAN (50), Council leader and career politician, raises his hand.

SURAN
Elen, stop!

The images fade. The Councilors -- visibly upset.

ELEN
You did insist, Suran.

Standing before them -- the tall, handsome GALEN (32).

He's the cloaked figure we've already encountered and a highly celebrated CUSTODIAN ECO-WARRIOR.

GALEN
And you would defend those who've
committed these crimes?!

ELEN
No, brother, but Earth is not Beta
Centauri-6.

Galen whips around to the Councilors.

GALEN
The restoration of genetic
diversity on Earth will take
thousands of years, even with
Custodian technology.

Councilor Suran studies Elen with an intense look.

SURAN
The blue-eyed creature? A human?

ELEN
Yes. Nobody of consequence, Suran.

GALEN
Humans must be eliminated. Each day
we delay, more species go extinct,
more land destroyed. Nothing is
sacred to them.

SURAN
Elen, how long before total
ecological collapse?

ELEN
(reluctant)
Within seventy-five Earth years.

Suran "telepathically connects" with the Councilors -- their foreheads slightly bowed in unison. He breaks the link and taps a METAL GONG on the table.

SURAN
We see no alternative. Galen, you
may begin the eradication process.

ELEN
But I'm still to complete DNA
profiling of non-Primate life.
Please allow me to finish the
mission, Suran. I must return.

INT. GALEN'S SPACE CRUISER - NIGHT

Elen sits alone, deep in thought as the space cruiser travels at warp speed across the vastness of SPACE.

He takes a DEVICE from his pocket and activates it. A 3-D IMAGE of Astrid on a pedestal -- she smiles and waves.

His eyes tinged with sadness, look out at the tiny specks of light amid the blackness of space.

A fractal image of a BUDDHIST DHARMA CHAKRA - a spoked wheel, appears on a wall screen. SANKHARA is an ancient, fully-autonomous A.I. -- a sentient being of pure energy.

SANKHARA

How are you going to explain her?

Elen pockets his device.

ELEN

Galen's simply docking with the cloaked transport in orbit.

SANKHARA

It's clear he has the Council on side, especially Suran. I sense...

Galen strides onto the command deck, sits in the cockpit and keys in the docking sequence.

SANKHARA (CONT'D)

Greetings Galen, we've had no time. Vardaran seems busier than ever. On Beta Centauri-6 -- well done.

GALEN

Thank you. Their natural ecosystems are almost restored. So Elen, why convey a human's image to the Council? Why the delay?

ELEN

She's a reminder of the species you're about to annihilate. The mission's incomplete.

GALEN

They deserve it.

(To Sankhara)

When I return we'll have time.

ELEN

When?

GALEN

I can block your mind too, Brother.

INT. CUSTODIAN COUNCIL - ARCHIVES (VARDARAN) - NIGHT

SUPER: CUSTODIAN RECORDS OFFICE

A CUSTODIAN ASSISTANT (21) enters the vault, locks the door.

He heads down an aisle at the back of the room...

Removing a dusty cover off a COMMUNICATION CONSOLE, he activates the "voice only" mode.

CUSTODIAN ASSISTANT
(into the console)
It's time. Custodian Elen is
returning and I expect updates of
his movements. You would be wise
not to try and remove the implants.
We know your location.

INT. GALEN'S SPACE CRUISER - ELEN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Elen packs his things. Sankhara appears on a wall screen.

SANKHARA
Now what are you going to do? You
look exhausted and you can't lock
him out forever. What if our
alternative--

ELEN
Watch me.

SANKHARA
Fails?

Elen, grim-faced, continues to pack...

The "pale, blue dot" of EARTH looms closer in the window.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE**EXT. MOUNTAIN SUMMIT - NIGHT**

SUPER: SENTINEL DOME -- YOSEMITE N.P., CA

Elen's cloaked transport touches down in the light snow...

Astrid runs to Elen's outstretched arms. She looks up at him.

ASTRID
Father? What's wrong?

ELEN
Nothing of consequence, dear one,
but you should be inside.

ASTRID
Albin kept me warm. I want to
accompany you next time. See the
Vardaran forests.

Albin shape shifts into his humanoid form and embraces Elen.

They telepathically connect -- foreheads bowed. Elen breaks
the connection. Albin studies his face, looking worried.

ELEN
Let's get in out of the cold.

EXT. CUSTODIAN RELAY STATION (TITAN) - NIGHT

SUPER: SATURN'S MOON -- TITAN

Partly buried in the ice on the far side of the moon is a
camouflaged, prismatic DOME.

Galen braces against the ICY WIND and heads for the AIRLOCK.

INT. CUSTODIAN RELAY STATION - CONTINUOUS

THE CUSTODIAN -- ARNE (22), a lanky, silver-haired "wannabe"
Eco-Warrior YAWNS loudly, his feet on the console, perusing
the surveillance screens -- look bored.

Galen SLAMS the inner door. Arne leaps to attention.

ARNE
Greetings, Galen. Honored to see
you, sir. Congratulations on
Centauri-6. I wish I could have
been there to assist.

GALEN
Greetings. Can you monitor him?

ARNE
Who?

GALEN
Who do you think?! My brother.

ARNE
I'm only permitted to monitor
medallion activity, sir.

GALEN
Keep me informed of anything
unusual. The Council's eager to
implement the eradication protocol.

ARNE
I've no love for humans either for
what they're doing, but according
to the Council isn't it you that's--

GALEN
Keep me informed if you wish to
rise above this station.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SUMMIT - DAY

Amongst the trees, CRYSTALLINE DOMES disguised as GRANITE
BOULDERS glint in the sunlight.

Entering one, we'd see CONDENSED SUNLIGHT internally reflect
down the metallic LIGHT TUBE through tons of rock, deep into
the mountain.

INT. SECRET CUSTODIAN BASE - HYDROPONICS - DAY

FRUIT TREES and vertical hydroponic bays of VEGETABLES fill
the room. They grow towards the LIGHT TUBES in the ceiling.

Astrid, gathering food, SINGS a traditional SWEDISH SONG.

INT. SECRET CUSTODIAN BASE - ALPHA LAB - SAME TIME

Elen, at a lab bench, listens to her VOICE and HUMS along.

Downing tools, he looks "distant" -- lost in a memory...

FLASHBACK - EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

SUPER: SAREK N.P., SWEDEN. 18 years ago...

Standing in the forest of snow-laden EVERGREENS, Elen gazes up the AURORA BOREALIS and the STARS with a look of pure joy.

He hears a BABY'S CRY. He heads for it...

Under a tree -- a HUMAN BABY, swaddled in blankets. He wraps the blankets tighter around it, then looks about.

ELEN
(In Swedish, subtitled)
Hello?! Hello there! Human mother
respond please! Your baby will die!

SILENCE

He BREATHES on its face... blue lips and cheeks turn pink.

The Baby gazes up at him -- the LIGHT of the Aurora Borealis reflects in its big, blue eyes.

ELEN (CONT'D)
Why would you be abandoned here?

He holds the Baby's forehead to his own, tucks the baby underneath his cloak and disappears into the forest.

SANKHARA (V.O.)
Elen, what are you doing with that?

ELEN (V.O.)
I found it -- abandoned.

SANKHARA (V.O.)
Our mission is to gather data only,
not adopt the local fauna, or is it
for research?

ELEN (V.O.)
It's a defenseless baby, I couldn't
leave it to die.

INT. ALPHA LAB - (BACK TO PRESENT)

Elen resumes the DNA sampling, and listens...

SILENCE

INT. BETA LAB - CONTINUOUS

ALIEN TECH fills the lab. On screens -- LIVE CAMS and data readouts of Earth's ecosystems and oceans.

Astrid with a star-struck, dreamy expression on her face, sits in front of a computer, studying a personnel file...

CUSTODIAN ID: GALEN / Beta: 298754
 AGE: 275
 DESIGNATION: ECO-WARRIOR / FIELD RANK: ALPHA
 RECENT MISSION: Beta Centauri-6 STATUS: Successful completion
 FUTURE MISSION: Earth -- eradication of Primate Order
 CURRENT LOCATION: VARDARAN (on leave)

KIN: ELEN / Alpha: 298542
 AGE: 302
 DESIGNATION: SENIOR BIOLOGIST. FIELD RANK: ALPHA
 CURRENT MISSION: Earth STATUS: ongoing
 CURRENT LOCATION: EARTH (37.72N/119.58W)

Elen enters the lab.

Astrid closes the computer file and runs to hug him. Through sad, misty eyes he manages a smile.

ELEN
 And what do you plan for dinner on
 this, your special day?

Her blue eyes sparkle with love and happiness.

ASTRID
 Quiche and your favorite dessert.

ELEN
 Ahh, Peach cobbler.

ASTRID
 (laughing)
 No! Apple pie!

He studies the readouts displayed on a nearby monitor.

ELEN
 I see you've been busy.

ASTRID
 The false readings have re-routed
 the fleet. By the time they've
 recalibrated, the tuna will have
 long since gone.

ELEN
 You make a fine Custodian...and
 your computer assignments?

ASTRID
 My lessons are complete, but I was
 told to suspend work on "The Game."
 (off Elen's look)
 Why, Father? What's wrong?

ELEN
 Nothing of consequence.

ASTRID
Good, then I want to train as an
Eco-Warrior.

Elen is momentarily stunned -- he quickly buries it.

ELEN
It's a hard life, Astrid. Forever
vigilant, held in suspicion and
feared by many for the violent
means they use to fulfil their
duties. You're free to choose, but
is that the life you really want?

ASTRID
Yes.

Elen studies her face.

ELEN
Are you happy here?

ASTRID
Why would you ask? You're my
family. I love you. All of you and
this is my home. Though it would be
nice to return to Sweden once in a
while -- see the forests.

ELEN
I miss them too. Go now, go make us
a fine Birthday feast.

INT. ELEN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Albin follows Elen into the room. Sankhara appears on the AV
screen. The door is SEALED.

ELEN
I can't bear this. I can't. She's
my beloved daughter.

ALBIN
Ours. There must be an alternative.

SANKHARA
None. If Galen finds her--

ELEN
He can't. The shielding around this
mountain protects us, but you know
that, even the Council doesn't know
our exact location. So how--

SANKHARA
You intend on imprisoning her?

ELEN
Of course not!

SANKHARA
He will find us eventually and
detecting her enhancements, he'll
kill her. He must. That's his job.

ELEN
She along with the entire Primate
Order. Eighty-three million years
of evolution, erased.

SANKHARA
If the Council learns you've
adopted and enhanced an alien it
will erase your career! Banished.

ALBIN
Enable SR-64 I'll go with her.
(To Elen)
You can't go, but in their eyes I'm
just an old man who's out on one of
his adventures.

SANKHARA
Albin, this is no time for jest and
you'd hardly pass as a human.

ALBIN
Enable SR-64 and--

SANKHARA
Enabling an enhancement she's not
even aware of will come as a shock
and she won't be in control of it.
Not until neurological chemical
balance is restored.

ALBIN
She can't leave here defenseless!
While she may be brilliant she's
naïve in the ways of her kind.

SANKHARA
Agreed. And revealing her life in
here, out there will see us all in
trouble. There's no way around it.
Her memory engrams must be erased.

ELEN
No! We cannot do that to her!