

THE MONOLITH

Written by

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Based on the recent discovery of a monolith in Red Rock, Utah.

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EXT. - UTAH DESERT - DAY

An orange sun peeks over the desert mountains. A slow breeze echos and whips through an ocean of red clay.

In the far distance, a tiny speck shimmers beneath the blazing desert sun.

INT. - BEDROOM - MORNING

An alarm BLARES from a cellphone in a dark room. Its bright screen reads: 6:15 am.

A lamp turns on, revealing a cluttered room full of alien conspiracy articles, video equipment, and scientific papers.

GREGORY (25), young, handsome, and hasn't bathed in days, YAWNS and stretches across his bed. He unlocks his phone. He swipes through the usual apps until he lands on the news.

An article from USA TODAY appears.

The title: *Alien art? Mysterious metal monolith found in Utah Desert.*

Gregory quickly LEAPS out of bed, scrolling and reading as quickly as possible. He makes a call and puts it on speaker as he starts to get dressed.

CALEB (24), Gregory's best friend since college, answers him, still half asleep.

CALEB

Hello?

GREGORY

Caleb, hey man, wake up you gotta see this.

CALEB

What time is it?

GREGORY

Seriously, dude this is huge. Look at the article I just texted you.

CALEB

Wow.

GREGORY

We gotta get out there. This is it.

CALEB
Come on, Greg.

GREGORY
Dude, if we miss this today, there are literally going to be hundreds of YouTubers and tourists out there by tomorrow. It's 6 hours away.

CALEB
What about your interview?

GREGORY
It can wait.

CALEB
Dude.

GREGORY
Just come over here and we'll talk.

CALEB
I'm going back to bed.

GREGORY
Caleb, please. I need this.

EXT. GREGORY'S APARTMENT - DAY

A car pulls into an apartment complex as Caleb, a very thin stoner with a scruffy beard, steps out of his car with coffee in hand. He grabs his gear from the back of the car and heads to the front door.

He knocks.

The door swings open as Gregory appears, fully decked out in flannel, jeans, and equipped with camera gear.

CALEB
Dude I really gotta pee.

INT/EXT. GREGORY'S CAR - HIGHWAY - DAY

Caleb opens a bag of sour gummy worms as they drive along the rocky desert highway.

CALEB
This is the good shit. You want some?

GREGORY

I'm ok.

CALEB

Breakfast of champions man. You need some energy.

GREGORY

We'll make a pit stop later.

Caleb sizes up his best friend with concern.

CALEB

Dude, are you ok?

GREGORY

Yeah, why?

CALEB

I don't know. I haven't heard from you in like two weeks. I'm just...I don't know. I don't like seeing you like this.

GREGORY

What if this is it?

CALEB

Come on, it's probably just some tripped out guy putting up some wannabe Space Odyssey shit. I'm happy to go with you, but this isn't healthy and you know it.

GREGORY

I just want to see for myself.

CALEB

And if it isn't what you're hoping for, what then? When are you going to drop it?

GREGORY

This is it, I'm done after this I promise.

CALEB

Haven't heard that before.

Greg pauses, his eyes get misty as he focuses on the road.

CALEB

I know you miss him. We all do. This isn't what he'd want.

GREGORY

I know.

A sign on the highway reads: UTAH: 160 miles. Caleb yawns and raises his hood over his head.

CALEB

Guess I needed more caffeine. Wake me up when we stop?

Gregory nods as Caleb curls up in the passenger seat and leans against the window.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Greg's car pulls into an empty, worn down gas station on the side of the desert road.

A red faded sign stretches over the pumps. It reads: Red Rock Gasoline. An OPEN sign is lit above the front entrance.

Gregory turns off the ignition and nudges Caleb awake.

GREGORY

Hey. We're close.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Greg and Caleb enter the gas station. It's fully stocked with snacks, beer, and candy. An aged lottery advertisement sits by an unoccupied chair behind the front counter.

Greg peers around as Caleb squats down and peruses the candy aisle.

GREGORY

Hello?

No response. Caleb stands up and looks around the room.

CALEB

Maybe they're out back or in the bathroom or something.

Gregory walks to the back corner and knocks on the restroom door. No response.

He opens it. It's empty.

GREGORY

No one in the bathroom.

Caleb drops his attention from the sweets and joins Gregory as they head to a back door down a narrow hallway. They crank open the creaky door and look outside.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

A lone car sits in the back parking lot. Greg and Caleb approach, slowly.

Caleb dusts off the passenger window and looks inside. The car is empty.

CALEB
I don't like this, man.

GREGORY
It's early, maybe nobody's here for their shift yet.

CALEB
It says they're open.

GREGORY
I know.

CALEB
Dude I think we should call the police or something.

GREGORY
We're fine. Let's just get what we need and leave them some cash.

CALEB
Are you serious?

GREGORY
We're wasting time. I want to get there first.

CALEB
Bro this is like, the creepiest fucking gas station I've ever been in and you're not even a little freaked out that it's empty?

GREGORY
I think you're overthinking this.

CALEB
I think we should go home.

GREGORY

We're 2 miles away. If you want to stay in the car you can. We're too close, I'm not stopping. Let's just get our shit and go.

EXT. RED ROCK DESERT - AFTERNOON

Gregory's car slowly drives off-road, picking up dust as it lurches through the rocky red clay and rolls to a stop.

Gregory steps out of the car and grabs his equipment. Caleb meets him at the back trunk.

CALEB

You sure this is it?

Gregory and Caleb lock up the car and start heading toward the nearby mountains. He peers down at his phone and checks the coordinates.

GREGORY

Yeah, we should be close.

EXT. RED ROCK DESERT - AFTERNOON

Caleb and Gregory walk over a steep red hillside, a shiny glimmer appears far away in the distance.

Caleb nervously eats a bag of potato chips.

Gregory pulls out his binoculars for a closer look. The top of monolith shimmers through the lens.

GREGORY

That's it! Look!

Gregory hands Caleb the binoculars. He peers through them.

CALEB

Shit, no way. Let's set up a quick shot for the channel.

Greg smiles in agreement. Caleb pulls out his equipment and turns on his camera. He points it towards Gregory.

CALEB

Alright man, you ready?

GREGORY

Yeah, let's do it.

CALEB
In three, two...

GREGORY
Alright everyone welcome back to
truth seekers, we are just a few
miles away from-

CALEB
Wait hold on.

GREGORY
What?

Caleb lowers the camera. He looks down to see a blank screen.
The camera is dead.

CALEB
Looks like I'm out of battery.
Could've sworn I charged it last
night.

GREGORY
I've got a backup in my pack.

Caleb pulls out Gregory's camera and tries to turn it on. The
screen is blank.

CALEB
Dude, it's dead.

GREGORY
Wait what? How? I just charged it
last night!

Suddenly, a faint alien like sound PIERCES through the air as
if a robotic, shrieking coyote howled in the distance.

CALEB
What. Was that? Dude...What was
that?

GREGORY
I don't know.

CALEB
I'm out.

GREGORY
Seriously?

CALEB
I don't like it.

GREGORY

We're so fucking close. We're going to be fine. We can use our phones for cameras. Look.

Gregory pulls his phone out of his pocket.

GREGORY

Camera's still working!

CALEB

I am not feeling it, dude.
Really...

The sound pierces through the air again. A strange, alien-like howl.

CALEB

Yep. Nope. I'm out. I'll see you back at the car.

GREGORY

Fine.

Gregory hands him the keys.

GREGORY

I'll only be a few minutes.

CALEB

Call me if anything happens.

Caleb turns back quickly from the path and starts heading back towards the car.

Gregory presses onward.

He bounds over the red clay like an excited school kid, inching closer and closer to the monolith.

EXT. RED ROCK DESERT - AFTERNOON

Caleb walks slowly on the path towards the car, checking his watch and compass as he approaches the location.

He climbs a steep hill and looks over the other side. He searches for the car and looks out upon the ocean of red clay before his eyes rest on the area they parked.

The car is MISSING. Only tracks remain.

Caleb quickly pulls out his phone in a panic to call Gregory.

The line rings, several times.

GREGORY (V.O.)

Hello?

CALEB

Greg. Come back. The car is missing. Come back right now.

GREGORY

I ca- hea - y..

CALEB

I said the car is gone. Greg, PLEASE come back.

GREGORY

I'm s-- dude, I ---

Suddenly, a loud, ear piercing noise blasts through the phone. Caleb SCREAMS in pain, holding his ears shut.

Caleb falls to the ground, writhing and squirming in pain until he suddenly stiffens like a tree. His eyes stare blankly to the sky as if he's paralyzed.

A shadow approaches and looms over him.

EXT. RED ROCK DESERT - SAME TIME

Gregory stands on a rocky hill, with his phone in hand.

GREGORY

Caleb? Caleb?

He hangs up, and presses onward.

EXT. RED ROCK DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

Gregory hikes down a spiraling trail as the sun begins to set in the distance.

The wind begins to howl eerily, but Greg ignores it and continues onward with determination.

The wind whips up louder and louder until it sounds like a faint whisper in Gregory's ear.

WIND (V.O.)

Greeeeeeeg.

GREGORY
What the fuck? Who's there?

WIND (V.O.)
Greeeeeeegoryyyyyyyyyy.

Greg begins to jog deeper into a cavernous trail, hoping to escape the wind. He enters a clearing where a lone cactus sits.

Greg sits for a minute to compose himself. He opens a flask and drinks.

CACTUS (V.O.)
Hey.

Gregory looks up, petrified. He looks around.

CACTUS (V.O.)
Over here.

GREGORY
What, what the fuck?

CACTUS (V.O.)
It's ok, Greg. I'm not here to hurt you.

GREGORY
How are you...talking to me?

CACTUS
It's me, Greg.

Gregory takes a minute to process...

GREGORY
Dad?

CACTUS
Come find me, son.

GREGORY
You're alive?

The cactus's words begin to blur and hiss like the wind, they spin around in Gregory's head and multiply into a barrage of little whispers.

CACTUS
GREG. Find me Greg. COME FIND US
GREG. I'm here. LOOK FOR ME! I'm here. I love you. I'm in the mirror
GREG. GREGORY. Listen.
(MORE)

CACTUS (CONT'D)

You're GROUNDED. I miss you.
Gregory, I'm so proud of you. GREG.
It's time for school. Gregory
Alexander Robertson. I'm here.
GREG. I'm lost. In the
mirror...find me...Gregory HELP.
You've grown so much! I love you.

Gregory gets up and SPRINTS away from the clearing, trying to escape the barrage of voices as he turns down another pathway.

As he turns one last corner, The monolith appears in the distance.

The voices disappear. All is silent.

EXT. MONOLITH - LATE AFTERNOON

Greg approaches the monolith slowly, taking his time as he observes it in awe.

He places his hand on the cool, silver steel, examining the object.

Greg searches the monolith for clues as the sun slowly dips closer to the hills in the distance. He paces around. The wind howls again as he squats down and searches for some kind of sign.

He tries to climb to the top, but sees nothing. He knocks on the metal three times. The knocking sound is strange, unlike anything he's ever heard.

Gregory pulls out his phone. It's completely dead. He tries to turn it back on. No luck. He finally gives in and starts to turn away.

And then, finally, the sun dips beneath the mountains.

A faint glow emanates behind Greg. He turns back to look.

Strange hieroglyphic writing begins to appear vertically along the monolith, glowing in a bright white color.

He approaches again, cautiously. His face is illuminated by the strange, glowing markings. He stretches out his hand, slowly, and touches the monolith.

A loud RUMBLE. The ground shakes beneath Gregory's feet.

He steps back. The ground GIVES WAY and caves in.

Greg grabs a flashlight from his pack and points it to reveal a STRANGE STAIRCASE leading underground.

He descends the staircase, slowly, as the sunlight fades.

INT. SMALL CAVE - NIGHT

Caleb JOLTS awake, breathing heavily with sweat covering his face. His backpack sits nearby, wide open with his equipment strewn out on the cave floor. He grabs a flashlight and turns it on.

CALEB

Greg?

He searches the small cavern, nothing there. His flashlight begins to flicker. He returns to the backpack and finds an emergency lantern. He turns it on just in time before the flashlight fades.

He exits the cave and jogs out into the night sky.

INT. ANCIENT CAVERN - NIGHT

Gregory lights a flashlight as he walks down a long, ancient stairway.

In the distance, a light bounces and reflects back towards him. He approaches the light slowly. As he inches closer, he sees his reflection.

He raises his flashlight, revealing a massive, pristine mirror stretching from the roof of the cavern to the floor. It appears to be a natural part of the cavern wall.

Greg stares at himself in the mirror. He observes it closely. Until eventually, he shouts:

GREGORY

DAD?!?!

No response. Greg kneels and sits back on the cavern floor defeated. He curls into a ball and whimpers.

DAD

I'm here, Greg.

Gregory looks up, bewildered. He stands and wipes the tears from his eyes.

DAD
(smiling)
I knew you'd find me.

GREGORY
I've been looking for so long.

Gregory reaches out to the mirror and touches it. It ripples like water. He sticks his hand through. His father grabs his hand softly and embraces him with both of his hands.

Gregory steps through the liquidated mirror completely.

He looks into his fathers eyes, and they embrace with a long hug.

EXT. MONOLITH SITE - NIGHT

Caleb sprints and bounds through the desert. His lantern ILLUMINATES the rocks as he approaches the clearing.

Out of breath, he looks around as the moon and stars shine brightly above him.

CALEB
GREG!

No response.

CALEB
GREG!

Caleb approaches the opening. He looks down to see Greg's footsteps. He follows them slowly, his lantern illuminating each step.

Caleb carefully retraces Gregory's steps until...

They stop.

He looks out into the night. There's nothing to be found. The ground beneath him is unaltered.

The monolith is no more.