

THE UNBELONGER

by

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INT. CAR - EARLY MORNING

It's hot as Lance Corporal LEON FORSYTHE, early 20s, a soldier wearing military fatigues, drives through the desert with his phone on Bluetooth.

CHELSEA (O.S.)

Did you really have to take off like that? Dad's asking why you had to leave so early.

LEON

You know I have to report for duty.

Kids play in the b.g. on CHELSEA FORSYTHE's, late 20s, side.

CHELSEA (O.S.)

Well, don't get lost in the desert again.

LEON

Ha. Ha. Ha.

CHELSEA (O.S.)

I forgot to ask you, how are you liking it?

LEON

(over the kids yelling)

I don't know, I... I guess I thought enlisting was going to be like me finally figuring myself out after not fitting in for all those years. I mean, we're exactly the same, the uniform, the hair, we even talk the same, so why do I still feel like such an outsider?

CHELSEA (O.S.)

(to kids)

Just grab it from the plate!

(to Leon)

Sorry, I'm trying to cook breakfast... Never in a million years would I think you would end up in the military.

(to kids)

No, no, leave the toast for grandpa!

(to Leon)

Sorry. I really wish you could've stayed.

LEON

Why? Dad obviously hates me, I can feel it every time I'm around him--

CHELSEA (O.S.)

He doesn't hate you.

LEON

He's always thought I was a weirdo, you know that--

CHELSEA (O.S.)

(to kids)

Get off the floor!

(to Leon)

You're two different people-

LEON

Exactly! That's what I'm talking about, I--

CHELSEA (O.S.)

And you gave him a hell of a hard time growing up.

LEON

You always take his side--

CHELSEA (O.S.)

I don't always take his side. I'm just saying, most kids don't get all drugged out and disappear in the desert for five days and scare the shit out of their parents.

LEON

I was fifteen--

CHELSEA (O.S.)

I thought he was going to kill you and when he saw that tattoo... man.

(laughs)

What did it mean again?

Leon looks down at the tattooed four dots on his hand.

LEON

How should I know, I don't even remember getting it...

CHELSEA (O.S.)

That's so you.

LEON  
Sorry, we can't all be perfect.

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
Don't do that, don't be like that.  
I only bring it up because you did.

LEON  
I didn't.

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
So what, you wanna be angry at me,  
too?

LEON  
(relents)  
No... How did they... find me?

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
What do you mean?

LEON  
I mean, I never asked you. Five  
days, all by myself? Who survives  
the desert that long?

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
I don't know, uh Dad got the call  
and they came to get you. You had  
that stupid, holey Smashing  
Pumpkins shirt on that you never  
washed. I mean, you were acting...  
different, and then that weird  
thing with your eyes. Does that  
still happen?

LEON  
Sometimes. They said it was a  
result of the drugs.

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
Whatever you took it must've been  
hardcore.

LEON  
I guess.

Static on the line.

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
You there? Hlllllllo??  
(cutting out)  
You're cutting out.

LEON

Chel?

CHELSEA (O.S.)

(cutting out)

Can you... me?

The car's engine hesitates as she cuts out. The call drops.

The warning lights flash on the dashboard. He pumps the brakes as the power steering becomes unresponsive.

The car loses speed. Stops as the dashboard goes blank.

LEON

Oh no, no, no, don't do that.

(sighs)

Please, no.

(into phone)

Chel, you there?

He stares at his phone. Dropped call.

He tries to start the car again but it won't turn over. He looks at it in disbelief.

He gets out of the car. Takes in a set of radio towers ominously a few feet away. He does a soft bang on the hood.

LEON (CONT'D)

Thanks, TrustyDrive Rentals.

He tries to dial on his phone. It doesn't go through. No reception. He's stranded.

Leon pops the hood of the car. Stares down at the battery that seems to be burnt at the wires.

He takes the cables off. Pulls the battery out to examine it.

INT. CAR - TRUNK - MOMENTS LATER

Leon goes through the stuff in the trunk. What does he have in here? Half a bottle of water and some gum. No jumper cables.

EXT. DESERT - BY THE CAR - DAY

Leon raises his phone into the air.

He climbs up on top of the car. Puts his phone out in all directions for reception. Nothing.

He looks in the direction of the blazing sun. Starts sweating. This is the worst-case scenario. He hops down.

He looks up at the radio towers. Heads towards them.

EXT. DESERT - RADIO TOWER - LATER

Leon is at the top of the radio tower, hanging off the side. The bars in his phone are still not there. He calls, but it doesn't connect.

He sighs. Rests his head on the radio tower.

His phone rings. It says: STAFF SARGENT JOHNSON. He laughs in relief. Answers it.

LEON

Ma'am, ma'am, Can you hear me?  
Thank god you called, I'm stuck out  
in this desert.

JOHNSON (O.S.)

This is Staff Sergeant Johnson,  
who's calling?

LEON

*Lance Corporal Forsythe.*

JOHNSON (O.S.)

And you say you're stuck? Where?

LEON

The car broke down, I was on the  
way back to base. It's not starting  
at all.

JOHNSON (O.S.)

What's your twenty?

LEON

I uh...

(looks around)

Jeez, off the ten, I think, exit  
one forty-four, about three miles  
past? There are some abandoned  
radio towers, red. I'm at the top  
of one of them right now. I've got  
a rental, a white Toyota.

JOHNSON (O.S.)

I'll send a couple of guys out  
right now. Probably about an hour  
and a half, maybe two.

LEON

Thanks! I was really starting to think I was going to be stuck out here forever.

JOHNSON (O.S.)

Stay by the car, don't walk anywhere. You'll fry out there.

LEON

You got that right, it's--

JOHNSON (O.S.)

(cutting out)  
We'll send a tow, too.

LEON

You're cutting out. Staff Sargent?

The call drops.

INT. CAR - LATER

It's been hours. The heat has gotten worse.

Leon is in the car, down to his skivvies, his fatigues beside him. Sweat drips down.

He looks down at the bottle of water that is almost empty. He tries his phone again. No signal. Battery almost dead.

He hangs his head, defeated.

LEON

Where are they?

He gets out of the car. Holds the phone up. Looks down the road. Empty.

He spots something in the sky in the distance. It descends at a slow pace and then rapidly falls. Crashes to the ground.

At the same time, the car door slams shut, locking him out.

LEON (CONT'D)

What... ?  
(turns to car)  
Shit!

Leon stands frozen, trying to process it all when the phone jars him back to reality. He answers it.

LEON (CONT'D)  
Hello? Hello, yes!

JOHNSON (O.S.)  
Forsythe, where are you?

LEON  
Ma'am? I'm here. The reception is  
shit and I... I think I just saw a  
plane crash or something and the...  
the car's locked. I--

JOHNSON (O.S.)  
Is this some kind of joke?

LEON  
No... really there was--

JOHNSON (O.S.)  
I told you to stay by the car. They  
said you're nowhere to be found.

LEON  
Who?

JOHNSON (O.S.)  
*Reed and Martinez.* The guys I sent  
out!

LEON  
That's impossible, I've been here  
the whole time. Are you sure they--

JOHNSON (O.S.)  
(cutting out)  
Off the ten, exit forty-four, three  
miles past?

LEON  
I'm telling you, I've been in the  
car, my eyes on the road. Maybe  
they took a wrong turn,  
(looks around)  
There aren't any signs really...

He watches as smoke comes from the distance where the  
aircraft landed.

LEON (CONT'D)  
Oh my god, we need emergency  
services out here now, the plane is  
on fire!



JOHNSON (O.S.)  
What plane?

LEON  
The plane that went down!

JOHNSON (O.S.)  
There are no planes down in that area. If you're playing some kind of prank or got some weird internet shit going, where you hide and--

LEON  
I'm right where I said I would be. Look, I don't know what's going on but there's been an accident and I'm not equipped for a rescue mission, Staff Sergeant. I'm in my damn skivvies--

JOHNSON (O.S.)  
They're there now.

Leon looks around. The desert is empty.

LEON  
What do you mean, "they're there now?" Wherever they are, they aren't *here*.

JOHNSON (O.S.)  
(cutting out)  
Go back to the car--

LEON  
I'm at the car right now, I never left! Ma'am? Ma'am?

The phone goes dead. He grunts in frustration.

JOHNSON (O.S.)  
Argh!

His phone dings. A look of dread comes over his face as he stares at a photo sent through text message.

It's a wide shot of the empty rental car in the same spot. He is nowhere in sight.

Leon looks down the road. No one is there. The desert seems to swallow him up.

He stares over at the billowing smoke in the distance. He begins walking towards it.

EXT. DESERT - BY THE SPACECRAFT - LATER

Leon is dripping sweat when he gets to the site. A low, constant hum consumes the air as he approaches.

His eyes grow as he takes in the aircraft that is partially embedded in the scorched sand. It is not an airplane.

It's round. Sleek. Futuristic. Its surrounding, slowly fading lights blink different colors, sputtering out.

Cryptic symbols line the ripped-off panels that expose iridescent wires and tubing underneath.

Groans as the lights reflect off the bodies of three TRANSLUCENT FIGURES, jagged tears in their aquatic skin and shells.

They are motionless in the sand, white gunk oozing out of them.

LEON  
Jesus Christ.

Leon notices the four dots on their hands like his own.

One begins to move. Slithers on the ground towards him, begging, his pupils changing into vertical slits.

Something hits the figure. Leon watches as parasites take over the body, eating it alive.

Leon recoils in shock as he eyes the source of the shot.

First, taking in a Smashing Pumpkins shirt full of holes. Then, up to the face where he sees HIMSELF, red-faced and sweating, holding a parasite gun trained on him. WTF?

This is LEON #2.

LEON #2  
Don't move!

Leon puts his hands up. Leon #2 charges over to him. Aggressively pats him down.

LEON #2 (CONT'D)  
Where are your keys?

LEON  
My... ?

LEON #2  
Your keys!

LEON

They're locked in the car... It's broken down. Who--

LEON #2

Does anyone know you're out here?

LEON

They're... they're sending someone.  
(to himself)  
It's a delusion, a mirage. I've been out here too long--

LEON #2

It isn't a goddamn mirage. I'm you. The original you.

LEON

What does that mean... what--

LEON #2

The first time you got lost in the desert... well, *I did*, they took me... That's what these psychopaths - what YOUR KIND do. Kidnap people. Clone them to send back to the world to gather information while they keep the original to study.

LEON

I don't... have any idea what you're talking about.

LEON #2

Of course you don't, they erase your mind, stupid. They can't just send a conscious alien out into society... *Who's* sending someone?

LEON

The... the base. My superior... They're *supposed to be sending someone*...

LEON #2

The military. No one questioned me joining the fucking military?  
(gun still on him)  
Where are your fatigues?

LEON

I locked myself out... I... I...

LEON #2  
 (puts gun in Leon's face)  
 WHERE ARE THEY?

LEON  
 In the car! Look, whatever these...  
 (looks at dead aliens)  
*Things* are, I'm not... I can't be.

LEON #2  
 Of course, you are. Ever look at  
 your eyes?

Leon's eyes narrow, his pupils becoming vertical slits.

LEON  
 (quietly)  
 It's because of the drugs.

LEON #2  
 Are you listening?  
 (begins to strip)  
 There weren't any drugs! You aren't  
 me. I want you to get me to the car  
 and--

Leon suddenly bolts. Hardcore industrial music as he takes off.

Shocked Leon #2 doesn't react at first. Then, he's running, charging after him, both of them in their underwear.

They seem to run forever, trapped in the sand hurricane they're creating by running.

Leon looks back, terrified as Leon #2 gains on him.

EXT. DESERT - BY THE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Leon #2 tackles Leon, losing the grip of the parasite gun which flies into the sky and disappears off to the side, near the car.

They struggle as Leon #2 shoves Leon's face into the sand. Tries to suffocate him.

Leon manages to push him off but they roll around, wrestling in the sand storm they've created. Back and forth.

It's hard to tell which one is which as they intertwine.

Finally, Leon overtakes Leon #2, straddling him as he struggles.

Leon spots the car battery on the ground. Goes to reach for it as Leon #2 tries to push him off.

LEON #2  
Help! Somebody help me!

Leon raises the battery above Leon #2's head. Slams it down into Leon #2's face.

LEON  
You're not going to stop me from getting home!

Leon slams the battery down again.

LEON (CONT'D)  
I wanna see my family. My dad, Chelsea!

Leon drops it onto Leon #2's face over and over again. It's vicious, merciless.

Close on the smashed face that is nothing but indistinguishable meat and white gunk.

Down to the hand on the dead body. It has the four-dot tattoo. THE SMASHED FACE BODY IS LEON NOT LEON #2.

Leon #2 tries to catch his breath. Process things. He hears something. He turns to see a Jeep coming in the distance.

He gets up. Tries to open the car door. It's locked.

He sees the fatigues in there. He takes the white ooze-covered battery and throws it into the window, breaking it.

He pulls the fatigues out as the Jeep comes over the horizon. He dresses, throwing everything on at a rapid pace as they get closer.

In a panic, Leon #2 drags the body of Leon behind the car.

He looks at himself in the mirror. Wipes the splattered white gunk off his face.

He turns. Wildly waves at the Jeep that is now there.

LEON #2  
Hey! Over here!

He runs over to meet them as they slow to a stop, trying to hold back tears of relief.

SOLDIER #1 rolls down the window.

SOLDER #1  
Lance Corporal Leon Forsythe?

LEON #2  
Yes sir! That's me.

He crawls into the Jeep's backseat behind Soldier #1 and SOLDIER #2. He smiles, unable to contain his excitement in finally being free.

SOLDIER #2  
Back to base?

LEON #2  
Home please. I would like to go home.

The Jeep turns around. Takes off down the road.

Leon #2 watches through the back window as another spacecraft stops above the broken-down car.

A cylinder of light comes down. Leon's body is slowly beamed up into the spacecraft.

Leon #2 sighs. He's safe. All is right and he's going home.

Off his face of peace and contentment, we go to the front of the car to the hands of the two soldiers as Leon #2 remains oblivious in the back.

They have the four dot marks on their hands.

Up to their faces. Their eyes pupils flicker into vertical slits.

CUT TO BLACK

THE END