

BECOMING DISAPPEARED

a short SCI-FI SCRIPT

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CHARACTERS**GABRIEL CANADA**

Mayor of the capital city of the Republic of Caelum /*KYE-luhm*/, who has been on a quest to figure out why people are being “Disappeared”

JANUS /*JAY-nuss*/ DENMARK

A simple-minded man who wants to help Gabriel on his quest

SETTING

The office of the Mayor, which is located in the capital of the only remaining country on Earth, the Republic of Caelum

SCENE I

There is a large desk to the left of the room, at an angle, with papers stacked all around it, a simple lamp and a photo. There is a flag behind the desk, and paintings lined up across the back of the room. There is a seat directly across from the desk, with the only other accessory being a small side table located in the center of the room on a rug.

SCENE II

The large desk is placed facing audience, on the left. There is a flag behind the desk. Surrounding the desk are elements required for a televised press conference: cameras, lights, etc. In the middle of the stage is a door.

TIMESCENE I

Monday morning on September 3, 2134

SCENE II

Some time later on the same day

SCENE 1

[**GABRIEL** is sitting behind his desk, scribbling in his notebook. Suddenly, two loud dings are heard, off stage, and **GABRIEL** stops what he's doing and looks up, listening intently.]

VOICEOVER

Greetings, people of the Republic of Caelum. It is Monday, September 3, 2134 and these are your morning announcements. The radiation-free zone has officially been extended by a thousand meters along the entire parameter of Caelum, effective today. New residential areas will be constructed in the coming months, and with spaces filling up fast, be sure to reserve your spot if you are considering relocation. In other news, today marks the 82nd anniversary of J-Day. As every year, we mourn the loss of the billions of souls who perished in the nuclear annihilation of 2052. Finally, doctors are saying that lapses of memory as simple as misplacing your keys could be a symptom of becoming Disappeared. If you or someone you know has been suffering from any of the symptoms, please seek the nearest Observation Facility to assess your likelihood of being Disappeared. We always like to end by reminding you: being unable to open a perfectly functioning door has been observed by most to correspond with the final stages of this condition. When this happens, know that it's already too late...

[**GABRIEL** sighs dramatically, pushes back from his desk, stands up and begins muttering to himself.]

GABRIEL

Every day, it's the same thing. There's always a tragic anniversary of destruction or else the celebration of the Numina /*noo-MEEN-ah*/ doing something wonderful for us. Every day, they ignore the real issue: more are Disappeared, but no talk of how many more. And my quest for the truth continues...

[**GABRIEL** stares at a painting on the wall. The phone rings three times. He answers.]

GABRIEL (continued)

Yes, I heard the morning announcements, everyone hears the morning announcements, it's been mandatory for years, which you know... It's only a scare tactic, making people believe that misplacing keys can...

(Begins pacing)

Well, I understand that it's scary, and all I want is to figure out why this is happening... No, it's not the Numina; I know it isn't them, just because everyone thinks it's them... I worked with them. I considered some of them closer to me than my own family. They came to Earth to help us, and they did and when they left, they took nothing from us because they expected nothing from us. Just because we're self-serving, doesn't mean every species... But I've seen lights coming from the radiation zones; someone or something is out there and they could be to blame... You know what the major symptoms are, and you're still playing the violin. We decided when that stops being possible, then we take it

GABRIEL (continued)

seriously. It's only when major aspects of who you are begin to disappear that... No, it's only if you know the door can open and when you go to open it, it doesn't... No, I don't know what it means...

[Knocking is heard, off stage.]

GABRIEL (continued)

I have to go; my 9 am is here... I love you, too.

[**GABRIEL** puts the phone down on desk and sits behind his desk.]

GABRIEL (continued)

Yes, come in.

[**JANUS** enters office and goes to shake hands with **GABRIEL**, continues to shake his hand while speaking.]

JANUS

Hello, Sir. This is quite the honor, quite the honor indeed to meet you. Why, my family, they won't believe this, Sir, no they won't, that I'm here with the Mayor himself, shaking hands with the Mayor himself.

[**GABRIEL** loosens hand from **JANUS**'s grasp and motions for him to take a seat.]

GABRIEL

Please, it is always a pleasure to meet with any citizens of our fine city. This job primarily consists of office work, so I'm happy for the change of pace. You know my policy: available to serve, always. How can I help you, Mr...?

JANUS

Oh, it's Mr. Janus Denmark, Mr. Mayor. But you can call me Jay. All my friends call me Jay, so why shouldn't the Mayor call me Jay? I think you should, if that's okay. Denmark was a beautiful place, absolutely beautiful place, at least that's what my grandpa was always sayin'. The idea to replace our last names with our former country names, genius, Mr. Mayor, absolute genius. For years, we'll always remember, for many years.

(Takes a deep breath)

Well, Mr. Mayor. I'm here because I think there's some stuff you ought to know about, yes, a lot of stuff. Everyone thinks it's them aliens that have been disappearing everyone, but Mr. Mayor, it ain't the truth, it just ain't the truth.

GABRIEL

What do you know about it, Jay? Tell me everything you know.

[**JANUS** stands up and begins pacing the room, stopping at the paintings hanging behind him. **JANUS** pauses in front of a picture of the leader of the Numina and Gabriel posing together.]

JANUS

You know, I remember the day they left us, yes, I remember it, I do. The Numina, I mean. We didn't know whether we ought to be happy that we're ready to run this place ourselves or sad that they're leavin'. I remember being sad, yes, yes, I was very sad. They saved us, all of us, and without them, who knows where we... I feel like I've done bad by them. What I've done, it's not easy to talk about, Mr. Mayor, not easy at all. What I've done... not just one thing, it's many, many things, for a very, very long time. But I just can't anymore. I just can't.

GABRIEL

Please, I can only help you if you tell me what you know. We have all done things; we have all done things that we're not proud of in the name of Caelum, for the sake of humanity. I may not be able to offer you redemption, but maybe I can help.

JANUS

You started feelin' the symptoms, yes?

GABRIEL

How did you...? Yes, just last week. I used to be able to paint...

(Gestures to wall behind him)

But I can no longer remember how to hold a brush. I'm assuming this means I may not have much time left. This is why I must try to figure this out as quickly as I can, before I can't anymore, before I...