

The Slime of the Ancient Mariner

Mist rolled in over the minch as the ship's bell chimed dully over the deck. "We're behind by four days now cap'n, cook's gettin' worried about supplies". The *Alba Troos* was sailing to Iceland, delivering the final whisky shipment from the Highlands of Scotland before winter set in across the North Atlantic. There had been recent tales of ships returning from such voyages, completely encrusted in barnacles, cockles and worms, the weight of which slowed the ship's progress to such extent that crews barely made it back to port before their rations ran out. Such an ominous sight was enough to get the sailors chuntering and that was before they'd heard whispers of the tentacled behemoth that was said to hunt these mollusc-laden boats.

"Wind's due to pick up later this evening, Kyle. If you could check with Dr Simpson on her progress with the sample, that might help us get rid of these foul freeloaders!" Captain MacArthur was no fool; she knew the shipment would pay handsomely on its arrival in Reykjavik, and the risk of a couple of days on half rations (and a borderline mutinous crew) was worth the journey. She had however, requested the help of a microbiologist from the university to accompany them on the trip – if their mission could be the one to find the solution to this maritime scourge, that would be a fine bonus!

Dr Kara Simpson removed her gloves as she slumped back in her chair in the galley of the ship, which had been converted to a make-shift laboratory. Her studies of the mollusc samples taken from the hull revealed a dense film of microbes that had colonised the surface of the boat, providing a sturdy foundation to which larger, heavier marine life had attached. These shellfish were adding so much weight to the boat that the vessel could barely move. Since diesel engines has been outlawed following the climate crisis of the 2020s, shipping had returned to sail-power, but these mollusc hitchhikers were causing more drag than the wind could overpower.

A rap at the door announced the arrival of the ship's mate, Stefanos Kyle. "Come in!"

"Cap'n's requesting a report on your progress ma'am. Please report to the ward room in ten minutes"

"Thank you Stefanos – sorry – Officer Kyle. I'll be there."

The merchant navy was an unfamiliar environment for Kara, who was accustomed to the more relaxed atmosphere of her university lab – but this was a great opportunity, and a problem she knew had to be fixed. If only she had better news...

"They used to use a cocktail of antifouling molecules on commercial ships, but half of these were banned for being too toxic and the bacteria have simply developed resistance to the rest. There's no easy fix for this I'm afraid." Kara's statement was left to hang in the damp, salty air while Captain MacArthur rolled her eyes at this uninspiring report.

"Indeed, I remember the old harbourmaster cursing these damn things – biofilms, aren't they? We used to try all these special paints, different materials... The only thing that ever worked was rolling up our sleeves and scrubbing the ships in dock! But before you knew it, the biofilm slime was back and with it came the shellfish. We never thought we'd be returning to sail power, but then that meddling Greta Thunberg had to stick her oar in-"

The ship swayed torpidly from side to side, the whole vessel groaning with the strain of the extra weight.

“Dr Simpson, you must continue working on the samples, there must be something, some treatment-

“There is one treatment I’ve only just started working on, but...maybe...well, it would need volunteers, and it’s a big gamble. The bacteria that are coating the ship, they communicate with each other using tiny molecules as signals – it’s normally known as quorum sensing. I’ve been testing a drug which I think might neutralise the signals, block them from being passed from one bacteria to another, and I think that might result in the film weakening and dispersing from the hull. But the only way to get this treatment to the biofilms is to apply it directly. We’re going to need to dive beneath the ship.”

As the afternoon had worn on, the mist had thickened and the ship had begun to drift off course, pulled by the currents that weave to the north of Shetland.

“Something needs to change otherwise we’ll find ourselves wrecked on the Faeroes, or worse. We’ll round up volunteers from the crew, Officer Kyle will help you gather the materials you need.”

It was far from ideal, but the crew was getting desperate, and they knew too well that being delayed like this made it more likely they would run out of supplies, or get caught in bad weather that they had intended to keep ahead of. The biofilm was getting stronger and attracting more crustaceans with every hour they were at sea; a briefing was to be held that evening, with the first divers going under at dawn. Dr Simpson ran through the mechanism again and again as she blindly looked out over the mist cloaked water – she barely noticed the flicker of a tentacle as the colossal squid that had been following the *Alba Troos* slipped silently beneath the ship...

The dark slowly lifted to a porous gloom as the sun rose somewhere behind the mist. Four pairs of divers kitted out with chisels, air tanks, and the all important syringes containing the antifouling formula assembled on the deck.

“So remember, initially chisel off a patch of the shellfish and once you can see the surface of the boat, use the syringe to penetrate any space between the ship and the shells you can get to. We’ve only got enough air for 10 minutes, so don’t strain too hard removing the crust and keep an eye on your partner. Any questions?”

Dr Simpson had taken the decision to lead the divers – one pair were to take the hull, the second the stern and the remaining two on port and starboard sides of the ship. Officer Kyle joined the young microbiologist at the hull ready to go overboard. It was certain that none of the crew had signed up for this baleful task, but Dr Simpson felt a responsibility to keep these sailors as safe as she could; after all, this was her idea...

With a sudden chilling splash, each pair plunged into the icy grip of the Norwegian sea. Trying to avoid the searing cold of the water against their faces, the pairs descended beneath the ship, taking one last gulp of sea air.

Working quickly, they searched the surface of the biofilm-crust, seeking a suitable place to break in. Kara placed her chisel against a flattened section of barnacles, whilst Officer Kyle swung at it in an attempt to dislodge the calciferous scab. The drag of the water and restricted movement of the cold dry suits made this a near impossible challenge; exchanging panicked looks as the clock wore on and the air tank pressure dropped, they moved to another section to try again there. They could hear the other teams frantically clanging, the slightly deadened thuds reverberating through the water.

At last, a huge lump of shells flaked off the hull and they quickly jammed the syringe into the glutinous slime. Dr Simpson trembled with fear, cold and trepidation as she injected the solution into the biofilm, willing it to spread through the network and shut down the communication between the microscopic bacteria that were causing this enormous problem. It took a minute or so, until it was almost time for the divers to return to the surface, but suddenly chunks of the mollusc crust started to drop from the boat, trailing globules of slime as they tumbled through the water.

Exchanging looks of relief and delight, Dr Simpson and Officer Kyle signalled to return to the surface, but suddenly the microbiologist's vision became blurred – the slime that was budding from the boat had caught on her goggles, and the biofilm had reformed!

Pushing her way up to the surface, she could feel a slipperiness on her wetsuit; her formula had successfully dislodged the film from the boat, but only blocked the signals temporarily. The bacteria had switched their communication channel, and just as quickly as they were dispersing from the ship, the biofilms were reforming on the nearest solid object – the divers.

Dr Simpson managed to break the surface of the water and gasped for air as she ripped off her scuba mask and wiped the biofilm from her face.

“Simpson! What is it? None of the others are back up yet and it's been twelve minutes!” a tense Captain MacArthur called from the deck.

“It's the biofilms – they're reattaching and covering us in slime as soon as we remove them from the hull! It's making it almost impossible to see or hear anything!”

Suddenly the surface of the water broke but instead of a fellow diver, a huge glistening tentacle rose into the air, thrashing for the exposed woman-overboard. The symbiosis between the biofilm-forming bacteria and Giant Scandinavian Squid was paying off for the tentacled beast – at last they had led it to a fresh meal!

One by one, the divers were engulfed into the cavernous mouth of the squid, amid the desperate cries of the remaining sailors who watched in horror from the deck. The tales were true; the crews of these ships were cursed by the biofilms to meet a devastating end should they come into contact with this potent slime.

The following spring, a whisky bottle emerged from the lapping waves on Achmelvich beach in northern Scotland, much to the delight of a passing kayaker.

“That's smashing – a fine bottle of 18 year old malt! Don't mind if I do... just need to get these damn barnacles off the cap and I'll pour myself a wee dram...”

Golden Berries

Part 1: A New Therapeutic Dawn

A tickling sensation exerts on my capsid as a fellow phage's tail fiber collides out of nowhere. I twitch in relief with the reassurance that I am not alone. Of this I am constantly reminded when in doubt. I can't see them but I can sense their presence. They're just everywhere.

"Move over, this media's a shared space" one of the many virions makes it known.

I'm revived from my lost thoughts through my comrade's piercing impatient tone. Our numbers easily surpass 10^3 cfu, and aggravation augments as we anxiously await our mission. The tension in here, I could cut it with my tail pins.

"What's the matter, still dizzy from the revolutions? I said move! Not much upstairs is there."

Valid point, we all have a few kilobases beneath our capsid coating.

I spasmodically jerk forward and turn a little, mind you still remaining in the same spot. It's about as much as any of us can manage at the moment, before our great mission. The concept of motility is a far cry from our current confining sedentary lives: for this reason, it's exhilarating. Our time will come, as we were hardwired for this very purpose: we simply must reunite with *Staphylococcus aureus*, it's in our DNA. We must overcome our phobia of entrapment in that sticky stuff, I forget its name.

The lysing incident was a blur to the majority of our plaque, dream-like in a sense, almost as if it never occurred. But I remember it like it was yesterday. I remember how stories of the older generation were told with pride. How they embarked in solidarity on the surface of *S. aureus* and inserted themselves through the stubborn intricate glycans. How they endured through that sugary, viscous cobweb of suffocation – a horror from your worst nightmare would be a gross understatement. They faced the most gruesome terrors headstrong for us, and now we must do the same. We must reminisce the thrill of our explosive liberation: moments after emergence, by-passing the eerie remains of capsule shelling in the midst. No amount of centrifugation could ever make me forget. Forgetting would be careless.

"We're doomed, we'll never see light again" says another. I look back. What a strange thing to say, of course we're doomed. We'll never be the same again, what's there to fear? Fear failure instead. Our simple genome programs us to do one thing only - it's all we're defined by. At the very least appreciate being goal-driven, uncertainty is a lot scarier.

"You certainly are" laughs another. "With those puny pathetic little tail fibers of yours, diffusion is out of the question. The *biofilm* will get you for sure". Oh, that was the word. Biofilm.

Ah, yes, that adhesive icky matrix of *extracellular polymeric secretions*. Despite its intimidating reputation, I find a certain solace in knowing *S. aureus* fears us as we fear it. It's sheer cowardice encourages the beast to form such stationary collectives, shielded by this very substance I speak of. Fellow virions fear that some *S. aureus'* biofilm is too impenetrable, as they recall even the mighty methicillin was unable to pierce it on multiple occasions. They, of course, speak of a new variant we're probably unlikely to encounter ourselves. I believe some call it the MRSA.

"I'm trying, with great obscurity, to conjure up an action plan for when I encounter it" I blurt out. "Maybe I'll dive capsid-first towards its body, through the biofilm if there is one. Turn vertically and reveal my jagged base plate when I come into contact with its wall".

Silence falls on the entire media. I have the spotlight.

"I'll have to make sure I widen my tail fibers to encompass sufficient surface area. To facilitate the landing of course". My words echoed, lingering in harmony alongside the piercing wisps of fluttering tails and slight sheath contractions.

"What, like some sort of solo paratrooper? You must be out of your mind".

An antagonistic chill overcomes me.

"When will you realize we attack in coordination with one another? In unison. As a team. That's the only way we succeed."

"We must outnumber them – overburden them – rid them of their ability to fend. We will coat and cling, as leeches do when they latch on. We're not to give a moment to spare – push, push, push through and insert! Once we're in - we're in! It'll be like entering a treasure chest of organic matter– we reassemble with its reservoir. We assume charge of the manufactory and orchestrate its processes. Or we overwhelm its insides with our progeny and rupture it to destroy. It's up to us to decide. Parasites need to collaborate."

Part 2: Left Behind

It all went black for a while. And quiet. Very quiet. My memory blanked. Where am I? Have I been injected? Am I in the injection? Where is everyone?

With immense ease, my train of thoughts outpaced the gentle stream of external forces, sweeping me to an unknown destination I have yet to consent to. I feel powerless, helpless, alone. I am bewildered as my confidence is drained from within. I don't feel like myself anymore.

I attempt to turn around, create some sort of movement. I try recoiling my sheath and stretching my tail tube. My sheath - unable to contract. My tail tube - as still as a tomb.

My whiskers begin to tremble as my memory is finally able to make some traces. The cocktail was placed in the injection, and we, placed near the site of infection. Our troop must have dispersed.

I suddenly feel a structure pressed on the other side of my capsid as I bump into an unknown unit. It must be *S. aureus*, it has to be – my time has come. I instinctively reorient and propel myself towards the body, by far the most I've ever moved. I masterfully land my tail fibers and prepare for insertion. Then it hits me. I've landed on no microcapsule. I've penetrated no biofilm. It's a regular cell membrane with protruding glycocalyx structures. I've mistaken an endothelial cell for a pathogenic superbug.

Get it together and translocate this blood vessel. Once you enter the bloodstream, locate the site of infection and help your friends with the invasion. Or get lost in the abyss forever.

I wedge myself in between two endothelial cells, through the vessel. I am now moving in unity with the host tissue – large warm red bodies floating forward in a directional manner within amber solution. I decide to follow them, not that I'm able to do much else given my immobility. I am illogically reassured. Why do I feel certainty when my dire circumstances are unaltered?

All of a sudden, the vessel walls begin to widen. I panic yet I cannot prevent myself from moving forward. My mind – racing now more than ever. The fragile squamous walls are almost unsalvageable, and appear to be destroyed right ahead. Then, in the distance, I look in fear as I am faced with multiple milky white bodies submerging themselves ruthlessly inside the lumen. They are large and armored, formidable to the highest degree. They look like they're ready to kill.

Is this a hallucination? It's too real. No. This is real.

The pale devils take no interest in me. Curiously, they all speed through the lumen in the direction I am headed. I feel insulted. Why didn't they acknowledge my presence? I'm foreign, why didn't that at least raise their suspicions? And why are we all headed towards the same direction?

It turns out I'll have found out too late.

Part 3: Is it sticky in here?

I regather my consciousness as I exit the tunnel of ordeal. I can sense I am now in a larger and sounder place. I'm thankful to relieve myself from purgatory and asphyxiation. Although I still remain disconnected with the other virions from my cocktail, their whereabouts still very unknown.

The place I'm in – its structured beautifully. The walls are smooth, very much like the ones of the vessels I encountered. They're impressively elastic and organized. I hear a pulse-like beat shuddering – vibrating the surrounding walls. I am thrusting downwards, indefinitely closer towards the origin of the bizarre sound.

It was at that moment I reached my final destination.

The place is completely illuminated. After lengthy periods of darkness, it is certainly attractive. My instincts are aroused and I'm mesmerized. It appears as though I've entered a giant's garden of paradise, with glimmering wispy white branches bearing bountiful bunches of ripe golden fruit. They're round, circular, and tempting – inviting from a distance. Their gold light shines all around me, like interconnected chandeliers among white clouds.

My fascination as I'm drawn closer and closer into the alluring network is interrupted as I spot my former foes – those dreaded white monsters. I watch in shock as they gnaw at the web of berries. I'm truly disgusted by how disruptive they are for no apparent reason.

Knock it off!

My gradual movement is abruptly halted as I feel every fiber and projection of my viral structure frozen. I try to bend and push forwards. I am unable to even fidget, move in any Brownian way. I see surrendered gaunt phage corpses sprawled out lifeless amidst the smothering deadly white glue that surrounds me. I make a chilling discovery as I reunite with my fallen comrades.

I'm **entirely** and **permanently** entrapped within the **biofilm** of ***Staphylococcus aureus***.

I see them up close now, their true faces projected on to mine. Their merciless colonization and pathogenic motives. Their shameless greed and desire to endlessly multiply. The cunning manner in which they evolve – in their case how they thickened their biofilm to maximize its weaponry. An attack within a defense. I'm a victim to my very own parasitic design, and I have succumbed to our collective desire.

I have not moved since.

Dissociation

"It's getting worse again"

Staring at the wall, the black mould that has been there for a month, no, two months maybe, has been growing faster and faster than expected. That reminds me: my friend Emily used to help me clean the house.

"Now, what did Emily call it again? Oh yes. *Stachybotrys chartarum*... what a long name."

A faint memory, but strangely, a special one to me, made me reminisce the time I had with her before she left. She was always a science freak.

I stood up from the floor; it was still slimy as usual. Everything in this household has not been cleaned for ages: there's so much filth, slime, and dust everywhere. With a loud exasperated sigh, I decided to finally go and take a shower after days of not bathing.

Walking up to the bathroom door, the door handle was covered in similar gooey substances, grabbing it, I can feel all the disgusting moist textures that had been living there. Pushing the door open, a whoosh of disgusting, yet familiar, smell went up to my nose. As per usual, my bathroom was dirty and covered in a similar-looking mould. Except, there was more.

"Now, let's see."

I turned the tap for the shower. Slowly but surely, water started to drip out. Moving my left hand underneath the grimy shower head, I was met with the cold and slightly coloured water.

"Not again," I grumbled. "Better than nothing."

Changing my clothes to some new ones, I instantly remembered that I had forgotten something. Constantly, every morning, I remind myself. But alas, I always forget.

"Oh, I forgot to check it again." I muttered.

Dragging my feet downstairs, I made my way towards the kitchen window. The window had a great view of my backyard, overseeing my garden: I couldn't help but whisper to myself,

"The grass seems to be growing fine."

At least, I think it is. My eyes always seem to be getting blurry and itchy all the time.

Itching my eyes, the quick feeling of relief washes over me. "Ah, maybe I should go to sleep. Sleep always fixes things."

Looking down at my red and lumpy arms, my concern has slowly risen.

"Hopefully, these will go away in a few days too," I mumbled. "Hopefully."

My skin, my eyes! It's getting worse. I think it's swollen; everything burns.

Few days have passed now, and my symptoms had not gotten any better. Even worse, I've started coughing and having trouble breathing. Trying my best to open my eyes, I can see the different types of mould on my walls. But there was one mould that stood out most; it was the black fuzzy one.

"Oh, it moves?!"

Blinking my eyes, the burning sensation throughout my body had gotten worse.

"Oh god, what the hell?" I cried out.

I want to stop all this itching. Should I clean my house? No. What's the point? Cleaning won't help. I want it to stop. It's getting hard to breathe.

Begrudgingly, I lifted my shaky arms and reached for my phone.

"Better to get treated than to suffer, right?" I laughed to myself, but ultimately, it ended with a cough.

Typing in a number I'm well acquainted with; I pressed the stiff call button to call my local general practitioner. And after a few rings, someone picked up.

"Oh, hello. My name is Ally Johnson and I..."

Suddenly, a violent uncontrollable cough escaped my mouth. Unable to get any words out, I just coughed. I coughed and coughed. I couldn't breathe; I didn't have any lung problems before, not like this. In just a few long agonising seconds, everything around me started spinning. Until suddenly, everything turned black. No sound, no light. Nothing. Just pitch black.

Opening my eyes slowly, I began to see white lights. Although my vision was still blurry, I could make them out to be the overly dear hospital lights I had come to know back four months ago. In fact, a couple of more times before four months ago.

"I see you're awake, Miss Johnson," a man's voice calmly said. Turning to my left, a tall man with the typical doctor's coat was standing beside me. "you've been unconscious for quite a while."

I recognise that voice; it was Dr Brown.

With a hoarse voice, I tried to talk. "What happened?"

"Well..." The doctor, Dr Brown, cleared his throat. "It's hard to say what you got. But it seems to me that you either have an infection or a virus."

With a puzzled look, I instinctively ask, "What do you mean?"

"Well, your symptoms seem very strange and your coughs on the phone sound horrendous. We did some tests and I originally thought you had a simple infection like *Labyrinthitis* or *Staph infection*."

Again, with the annoying and confusing words. I gave the doctor a funny look and tried to sit up. However, I was immediately stopped in my tracks as Dr Brown chimed in.

"Oh, please relax, Miss Johnson. Please lie down."

Reluctantly, I lay back down. In an irritated tone, I asked: "Can you please carry on?"

"Alright then..." he replied with a worried look. "Anyways, what you have seems to either be a new strain or a different type of infection. We tried to give you some medication to help relieve your symptoms, but they don't seem to be working too well. Which is most likely due to the antimicrobial resistance."

"I see..." Closing my eyes; I tried to drift off to sleep.

"By the way, Miss Johnson."

Opening my eyes, I looked straight at Dr Brown. "Yes?"

"Your *acute toxoplasma*," He began. "It's gone now, right? No hallucinations?"

With a straight face, I said with confidence: "Of course," He smiled. "I've also double-checked the meat I eat, no contamination for me. Although, I will admit that I had a bad hallucination around 4-3 months ago. Just after being diagnosed by you."

"Oh?" Surprised, Dr Brown stared at me. "What do you mean?"

Trying not to worry him, I responded with: "Oh, I saw black fuzzy monsters-like people. But, not to worry, I took the *Pyrimethamine* and *Sulfadiazine*. Just like you prescribed me to, and they started to disappear in a couple of days." I chortled.

With a slightly concerned look on his face, his facial features eventually softened. "Ok, that's good to hear. It must have been terrifying."

I turned my head away. "It was."

An awkward silence soon followed.

Sitting here, I get flashbacks of when I was a child. A child that was always physically sick, forever needed some type of treatment. It's a good thing I was diagnosed as 'only' physically sick. But my thoughts were suddenly interrupted by Dr Browns voice.

"How's Emily? I haven't seen her in months."

Looking up at the ceiling, I responded.

"I don't know. The last I saw her; she gave me a lecture on being clean and not lazy."

Scratching his chin and slightly nodding his head, Dr Brown spoke.

"I see, she's always been that kind of person. Well, rest well, Miss Johnson. I'll check up on you later and see what we can do for your symptoms, we might have to do more research though." With a quick wave, he left the room.

Softly, the sentence: "I'm here again..." escaped my mouth. Closing my eyes, I decided to try and sleep.

Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

Staring at the clock, it read exactly three AM.

"Emily..."

I remember it clearly; that day was one I could not forget. She was so unknowing about what was going to happen to her. So, sweet. So, innocent. So, dead.

That memory about four months ago, the day where 'they' spoke loudly. The day where 'they' gave me a great and extremely fun idea... And with one clean hit, she had finally shut up.

I smiled and couldn't help but laugh out loud.

"No one will find your body."

Beside me, the black fuzzy 'thing' stood there watching me laugh. 'They' never really left, I lied.

And unbeknownst to me, the black mould growing in my house... is also growing inside me.

THE PLANE CRASH

This all begins on all hollow's eve when this group of student doctors are on their way to do training in Seattle where there are more trauma accidents happening every day so their knowledge will be as wide as possible. They were all on the plane when they heard an extremely loud bang, they thought it was just some lightening because it was forecast thunder storms. Then suddenly, an engine went out and within three minutes the plane had crashed.

Hours later Arizona was the first to wake she noticed that they were in a forest. The pain set it she noticed that there was something wrong with her leg she then removes the piece of cloth that was covering her thigh all she could see was blood she let out a monstrous scream she took a closer look as she was going into orthopedics {bones} she knew it looked familiar it was her bone.

Then, Mark woke up he was mostly fine the back of his head was bleeding but he heard Arizona scream so he tried to follow her voice to find her and see what was wrong with her when he finally found her as he was majoring in plastics, he did not know what he was looking at so he asked her when he found out it was her bone the look on his face was like he saw a ghost. Mark then said to Arizona that he should try to find April, Stiles, and Derek she agreed.

Mark found April and stiles quite close to each other but could not for the life of him find Derek how must have been in the back of the plane when it went down because he remembers them all being close to the front talking about how nervous they all were to go to a new place they had never been before to start their residency training with the best attending doctors in the country. They all thought that something was too good to be true.

Stiles then awoke he screamed when he had no idea where he was but then mark re assured him that he was safe and that they were all involved in a plane crash. Then suddenly stiles started to hyperventilate {he also suffers from extremely bad anxiety issues and attacks} at the sight of Arizona limb that is hanging off her body with thick black blood oozing out of her cold weak body.

Later, when everyone was awakened, they all gathered around April as she was stuck underneath the back of the plane with a metal rod going through her lungs as she said her final words was her confession to her lover.

When the pilot awoke, he mentioned that he had a flare gun he said that someone would see it and then come and save us so they shot the first flare. They all lay awake waiting in pain for someone to come to their rescue. Arizona let out a groan that everyone heard she then said **"I feel something crawling inside of my leg"** her leg went numb then she was silent for hours. She finally said something but her voice was not her own it sounded more like she had been possessed by whatever had crawled inside of her. It was like a new alter-

ego had emerged within mere hours. Her appearance then started to change like a reddish-marron goo started to create a shell around her body then it all went silent.....

Arizona then started to demolish April's body. Whilst the others stared in repugnance as they wondered what had happened to their friend. When she finished, she passed out whilst the rest of them had to stay awake for days waiting for help four days later help finally arrived. The people who came to help went to Arizona first because of the slimy goo that surrounded her.

They were in the hospital stiles Derek and mark were fine they were waiting to see what had happened to Arizona. She was in an isolation room which had a bubble in so if she were contagious with whatever she had she would not infect anybody else. When the attending came back with the test results It was confirmed to be biofilms had grouped together whilst she was vulnerable with her leg open fractures were easy for the micro-organisms to climb into and bond together and without treatment, she can become a completely tameless animal and die but with treatment it could become tamable but biofilms are a ridiculously hard infection to get under control.

When she next awoke and was told the results she did not know what to do because it had already started to get into her brain and change all her impulses from human to supernatural. Part of Arizona knew that she had treatment but most of her wanted to go ferocious.

Arizona could smell blood as a new patient came in bleeding from their carotid artery, she craved it. It was like she was a vampire infected hybrid.

She escaped the hospital leaving dozens of bodies behind some doctors and some patients. They had to find her and try to appeal to her human side they knew just the way to do that but it was the factors if she even had any humanity left or was it all just gone was the Arizona, we knew simply now just a memory...

They followed the trail of bodies she lefty behind but she had hidden them well because all that was left of them were the bones, she had demolished all the flesh. They also had the police involved to help by looking at missing persons in certain places in the area.

A few weeks had passed since the search started for Arizona at the moment, they had tracked her to Redmond with about 10 bodies l the same location the police have covered it up with an animal attack which is not completely false because that is how she is acting. They continued tracking her and found her at a hotel so after they searched most of the rooms, they found her passed out after her most recent killing if you can even call it that.

Whilst she was out cold, they oved her to a prison they placed into one of the solitary confinement cells. When she awoke, she tried to break out of the restraints that they placed her in so she could not hurt anyone. Mark was the first one to go in to see if she had any humanity left in her even if it was just a tiny sliver. When he exited, he said with tears rolling down his face "I'm not afraid of ghosts or wolves or even haunted hotels for the matter but

whatever is in Arizona I see no humanity left in her she has been taken over but I believe that the person we knew is still in there somewhere.” After they had all gone in individually, they all agreed that she is still in there deep down.

After hours they came to the decision to use something that was their last resort her daughter Lydia after showing her pictures and videos it was like a switch had been flipped just for a second you could tell by the look in her eye. Then the vampire hybrid part of her came back with “you are going to have to try a hell of a lot harder to get her back completely.” So that is exactly what they did non-stop for weeks on end and with her food secretly poisoning the hybrid with the treatment for the biofilm infection.

After some time, she started to seize and scream like she was being exorcised from her body. But for Arizona she was getting memories from hat the infected part of her did all the “killings” she did and how many bodies were there and she broke down with “how many families have I left broken.”

But in the end the hybrid part of Arizona still has power because no-one knows not even Arizona herself knows about the army of hybrids that are in the shadows waiting to attack sometime in the future when the universe is stuck in some phenomenon that not one person can control. But the best thing is that they will not even see it coming. So good conquers evil..... For now,

Biofilm World!

Many years ago humans inhabited this planet it's the only other planet with life forms one but one life form that is so discrete is slowly growing to take over this planet that humans now call home

3073

Humans have finally found a new planet ,what they call home but little do they know that something so small is about to take over this world. The humans have only been living on this planet for 3 years now . They have found new organisms, none the less there has already been a bacterial outbreak called Allis 12.

The population level is staying the same, but little do they know this will be the last bacteria on the planet. Scientist Paul Roadshow, has been studying organism mostly fungi but while going through a forest he saw a weird brown blob, growing on a rock, he wondered what it was and wanted to test it he put it in a bag and took it back to the lab .

While testing he found a trace called polysaccharide, what was commonly found on earth. he wondered if it had the same effect as the one on earth, so he put a put it on some agar. He found out the blob was grass but there was a bacteria growing on it and carefully placed it into the incubator two weeks passed and he wanted to check it didn't just grow it took over the incubator ,with a liquid dripping like a rain drop on an umbrella he worried about what he created and did some more tests and it devoured a heart and anything he put in their was gone.

He wrote a telegram to the government about his discovery as soon as the government read it they were like lightning to Paul's lab they asked what happened but it was too late, the unknown bacteria was taking over his body vines crawling out of his mouth . The lab went on lockdown and was isolated from society but the government had other plans they were curious what they could do with it so they thought it could maybe help cuts they asked half a dozen people to scarifies there life to science to see they all cut there leg with a scalpel and placed a little bit of what they now call *ichycondrio*, while doing the experiments one of the participant asked could this effect our metal ribs (they needed these for their lungs to adapt to the new pressure on the planet) the scientist who was doing the experiment did not know so he just said "no it won't" a week passed from the experiment all the patients were perfectly fine except one he went to the doctors and they checked his ribs .

The *ichycondrio* took over the ribs they didn't know what to do they reached out to the participants but none of them answered the *ichycondrio* took over their blood stream then there lungs then there.

Body

They still looked normal and felt normal but didn't know what was going on in their insides they all lived their normal lives but where ever they went whatever they touch got ichycondrio bacteria on it then other people would touch it then it will happen to them no one knew about what was happening except Ian duster he knew what was happening as he was the scientist that did the experiment he wanted to find a cure so he started his mission he got ready for lockdown he got all the long lasting food he could get got his daughter who is a straight a++ student they start getting the bio film under control in a lab they realised it can go through any object they are trying there hardest for the vaccine or ichycondrio killer.

Two years pass

They have not had any human contact with anyone except each over TV was no longer a thing the only thing they had was what was in there lab but the time has come to have a break from the mission they go to the 9 inch thick door and looked out the world was not how it use to be nothing was used by humans body's scattered acres of ground vines hanging down ..the dark misty sky was the only thing normal while looking round they saw the ichycondria didn't just take over humans but anything it can get go was everywhere Ian was 2 feet deep in slime and squishy sponge material they didn't feel alone all of a sudden "aaahhhh" his daughter screams he tries to shimmy his way to her but it's too late her skin turned green things where moving in side her then her eyes bulged with vines he ran in tears leaving his only companion there he got in the lab shut the door and slumped his back on the door tears came out like a waterfall he was all by himself in this huge planet he stopped looking to stop ichycondrio ad starts to try making and human with human and chimpanzee eggs he thought in his head might as well try 2 months pass of sorrowfulness and depression the incubator beeps he runs over and opens it .

A human another one he can use the rock covered heart shattered and a lovely heart came back his body filled up with adrenaline his face lit up with contentment as he has found out how to bring back humanity months pass he has now made 4 lab babies and they can grow a lot quicker than a normal human within 10 days they were a full size adult all with 178 iq clearly the chimpanzee and human DNA had mixed in a

good way he carried on his assignment with his new recruits his brain overflowed with amazing ideas to do for his ichycondrio destroyer they finally decided on one they called it pzezor 67 it's a mixture of dead ichycondrio cells and more weird chemical he put in a beaker and poured the tiniest bit on the world destroyer biofilm instantaneously the ichycondrio shrivelled up .

They were flabbergasted with their discovery but did not relies they won't have enough pzezor 67 to solve this problem

He has tiny break as his brain has been mentally challenged with this bio film taking over the world so he tries to get the best sleep he has had in 9 months but he forgot to shut the vents while he is in his deep sleep the ichycondrio slugged its way into the lab first going for the lab creation then for Ian.

The world has finally been takin over by biofilm.

Or has it ...

BIO-FILM: A HORROR STORY

I opened the curtains slowly to see my mother lying there on the bed, cold, split nails, sweating and shivering at the same time. My eyes were drawn to the bright blue light above her; it felt like staring into the eyes of a demon, a creature you could feel but wasn't there. I felt a shiver upward from the bottom of my spine through to my neck.

I was walking through the brightly lit corridors of the hospital eating an apple, it was sweet but the juice hit your lungs like ammonia. Everyone could see me but I couldn't help but feel like it wasn't real, whether I was in denial of what the bio-film had done to my mother or if it was the exhaustion.

Why can't it stop? I thought to myself, so many people had died from this bacteria spreading through their body. What if it never ends? As I turned to my right I could see a group of people in lab coats surrounding one glass test tube filled with a fungus-like, sticky, greenish-grey goo, they were looking through a microscope at it. I was almost sick. As I wandered through the hospital alone in my thoughts I could only wonder what it was they were looking at (I assumed it was bio-film) it really was awful.

The exhaustion was taking over me. I felt sick moving up through my stomach and heading to my throat as I walked by the other hospital patients effected by this malicious disease. The rotting teeth and the foul smell. I found an empty room with a clean bed and I laid down as I knew it would take a while for my mother's results to come back.

As I drifted off my mind wandered through horrible thoughts; I saw a silhouette in front of me, I recognised it but I couldn't remember where from. I realised it was my best friend, Luke, he had died from the effects of the bio-film spreading through his family. His death was extremely difficult for me to comprehend, especially since I wasn't able to see him during his isolation period so I didn't say goodbye. I thought to myself that at least if my mother dies, I can be sure I've been there with her.

After dreaming for a while I suddenly woke up sweating and crying to a shrieking alarm sound, screaming, banging on doors, curtains being draw at an impeccable pace. I didn't know what was happening all I could think was what about mother? I couldn't leave her but I had no choice. I followed the crowd and ran out of the hospital where the lights were flickering and no one could focus. Still running I could feel the adrenaline rushing through my veins, the fear, I would never see mother again; I couldn't say goodbye but I was unable to stop even for a second to think. There was a large shatter of glass and we all watched as the hospital filled with a mucus like liquid, which was the bio-film. That was the last time anyone in that town was seen until today...

Georgie