

EPISODE 2.7

MOUNTAINS, EXT, DAY

We hear the sound of howling winds. Feet walking on rock.

And then FAULKNER's narration.

FAULKNER:

(Narrating)

I've had a revelation.

Katabasian Mason has to die.

I stamp my feet and I shiver in the falling rain and swirling fog of the high hills, and I think to myself - yes, that's the way forward, that's the only practical solution.

He's sent me out here not for the benefit of the faith nor the glory of our god, but to keep me from my rightful path.

He has no intention of awarding me the Katabasian's rank, of giving me anything more than nominal power.

And he will keep sending me out into the ruined land, on flimsy pretexts and dangerous missions, with the young and untested as my only companions, just as he did to Carpenter when he decided he could no longer trust her.

We're out here now, in the foothills, looking for allies amongst the rain-gods and the water-tank gods.

But when we return...something will have to happen.

Yes, there can be no doubt about it the more I consider the matter, the more it becomes obvious. It's the only way forward.

You and I, my river...we're going to have to find a way to kill him.

A moment's pause; and then we hear a distant voice.

THURROCKS:
Katabasian Faulkner! Katabasian Faulkner!

FAULKNER:
(Calling back)
Thurrocks? Sister Thurrocks?

We hear FAULKNER's footsteps crashing over the rock.

He comes to a halt in front of THURROCKS, one of his young disciples. And something - a kind of mast - that's rattling ominously in the wind.

THURROCKS:
(Gesturing up to the mast)
She's dead.

FAULKNER:
(Quietly)
No. No, she isn't.

And we hear FAULKNER's thoughts as he stoops to the sacrifice.

FAULKNER:
(Narrating)
The woman has been impaled. Her jaw has been broken and prolonged, her mouth unnaturally extended in every direction until it resembles a rounded spout.

Her torso is swollen, veined, close to bursting, as the rain roils down through her opened maw.

A living water butt.

All around her feet and twisting about her legs, a bright and vivid violet in the gloom, wild heather is blooming up out of bare rock and snow.

She looks like she's been out here for months.

THURROCKS breaks the silence.

THURROCKS:

It almost looks like - like a parody of our own sacrifices-

FAULKNER:

This was done by the people we're out here to meet with, Sister Thurrocks. I don't think they had us in mind when they did it.

Their crops were failing. The Legislatures told them to invest in the licensed harvest gods, the pesticidal deities.

They refused; retreated up into the hills.

And up here they began their worship of the Endless Drear and the Ever-Living Sun, a little empire of light and rain that bears fruit from barren rock.

Suppose this means we're on the right track.

THURROCKS:

Should we take her down?

FAULKNER:

(With a little reluctance)

We can't. We need to win these people over. Convince them to join their strength to that of the Parish.

THURROCKS:

(With compassion)

It's just that-

FAULKNER:

(With compassion...but firmness)

I know. But leave her untouched.

Come on. Let's get back to the van.

We hear FAULKNER's shoes trudging through the dirt.

And a moment later, THURROCKS follows after.

THURROCKS:

(Calling)

Ahm...Katabasian Faulkner? Katabasian Faulkner!

She catches up breathlessly.

FAULKNER:

(Roughly)

I'm not **actually** a Katabasian, Sister Thurrocks.

THURROCKS:

(Earnestly)

You're going to be, though. We all know you're going to be.

FAULKNER keeps walking in silence for a moment - but he's pleased.

FAULKNER:

(A little softer)

What was your question?

THURROCKS:

When we find these people; the, um, false-faith-

FAULKNER:

(Correcting her)

-The Endless Drear-

THURROCKS:

-the Endless Drear...how do we intend on winning them over to the Trawler-man's cause?

With a show of strength, some fearful new miracle?

Could we use the Wither Mark, perhaps?

A moment's hesitation. FAULKNER has no idea what he's going to do, but he has no intention of using the Wither Mark.

FAULKNER:

(Trying to sound confident)

We'll take the diplomatic approach.

THURROCKS:

(Impressed)

The diplomatic approach. Yes, of course.

They keep walking.

FAULKNER tries to make conversation.

FAULKNER:

I don't think I've seen you before, Sister Thurrocks. You one of our recent arrivals?

THURROCKS:

That's right. Came up from downriver.

FAULKNER:

A convert?

THURROCKS:

No, my folks were lapsed.

We had a lot of the old books, and we still read them on feast-days, but there wasn't much genuine faith amongst us any more, just well-worn habit. I worked in a bar in the evenings.

I wasn't...happy. I didn't have a future.

But then a couple of months back...word came down to us about what was happening upriver. The signs of the river's rise. Fresh miracles upon the water.

The pilgrimage undertaken by you and Sister Carpenter, may she rest below the currents-

FAULKNER:

(Quietly)

-May she rest indeed.

THURROCKS:

(Thrilled)

Well, I knew I just had to see that for myself, I had to be a part of this great purpose.

I left my people behind. Just as you had.

I came and found my way to the Parish, as fast as I could - following in your footsteps.

FAULKNER doesn't answer. They walk in silence.

FAULKNER:

So your folks weren't won over by the signs and the miracles?

THURROCKS:

(A little reluctantly)

They told me they'd seen this all before, and it'll come to no good end, just as it did back then.

(Quickly)

They've lost their courage during the long hiding, and I apologise for them.

FAULKNER:
That's okay.

They keep walking for a moment.

THURROCKS:
(Trying to change the topic)
The other acolytes say your staff was plucked from the bottom of the Trawler-man's garden.

Handed up to you by the first of Twin Mouths, in the sodden ruins of Bellwethers.

FAULKNER gently tries to dissuade her.

FAULKNER:
I'm sure your parents would say that you can't trust stories like that-

A long silence. And then FAULKNER changes his mind.

FAULKNER:
(Conspiratorially)
But you and I, we know better.

Don't we, Sister Thurrocks?

THURROCKS:
(A little awed)
Yes, Katabasian. Yes, we do.

They walk on in silence for a moment.

Then FAULKNER comes to a halt.

FAULKNER:
Here's the van.

Don't call me Katabasian in front of the others, please, Sister.

Wouldn't want anyone thinking I've got ideas above my station.

A moment of silence.

We hear the mast of the water-butt sacrifice, rattling briefly in the wind-

TEMPORARY CAMPSITE, EXT, DAY

-and then the sound becomes a howling kettle, rattling on the stove as it boils.

WALLACE, another disciple, lifts it and pours himself a cup of tea - and then hears a distant whistled greeting from THURROCKS.

WALLACE:
(*Excitedly*)
Brother Faulkner's back!
(*Banging the kettle like a gong*)
Brethren, Brother Faulkner's back!

We hear the nearby doors of the van slide open as TAPPER and JASP also jump out.

JASP:
(*Relieved*)
The river rises.

The disciples hurry out to meet THURROCKS and FAULKNER.

THURROCKS:
(Yelling out, clapping her hands)
Disciples! Gather around.

Listen up to Brother Faulkner, now.

FAULKNER, put on the spot, is uncertain for a moment.

FAULKNER:
(A little weakly)
That's right...listen up.
(Warming up to his role)
We're close.

We go from here on foot. Stay close to another.

Wallace, you're in the vanguard. Tapper, you watch our backs. Keep an eye out for prayer-marks hidden amongst the rocks.

Keep your rifles slung, but do not fire unless fired upon. This is a peaceful mission.

All being well, we'll leave this place with new siblings of the faith gladly lending their numbers to ours.

Do not be afraid.

You're in the Trawler-man's care now, caught in his currents.

He saved Sister Carpenter and I at Bellwethers; he plucked me from danger a dozen times before that. He protected me.

Not because there's any special quality to me - but because the work is sacred, and we are his instruments.

The river rises.

The disciples murmur, appreciatively.

CHORUS (JASP, THURROCKS, TAPPER)

The river rises.

FAULKNER:

Sister Thurrocks, will you help me lead the chant?

THURROCKS:

(Pleased)

Of course, Brother - Brother Faulkner.

FAULKNER:

(As if delivering a sermon)

These are The Silt Verses!

THURROCKS:

And - and I name our disciples thus.

B. Narr.

Cait Gallagher.

William A. Wellman.

Mintaka Angell.

Cole Weavers.

Harlan Guthrie.

A moment of silence - and then FAULKNER claps his hands.

FAULKNER:

All right! Let's march.

MOUNTAINS, EXT, DAY

We hear footsteps through the heather as FAULKNER's disciples march.

FAULKNER:

(Narrating)

I like them, these children.

Jostling and whispering as they walk ahead of me, a long and uneven trailing column up through the rocks.

And as they climb through the gully, they sing one of the Trawler-man's hymns, softly and inharmoniously, underneath their breaths. Trying to keep quiet, unable to stop their excitement and their joy from leaking out all the same.

Sister Thurrocks may be a little too eager-eyed (was I like that?) and Sibling Jasp clearly has a bad chest cold that's making them sniffle, but...

I **do** like them.

I don't think Carpenter can have ever felt like this, can she?

I wish she'd had the chance.

A few more steps in silence.

And then-

THURROCKS:

(Calling back)

Brother Faulkner!

FAULKNER:

(Calling)

Sister Thurrocks?

(Muttering to himself, a little annoyed)

-bait and flesh, what's she keep yelling for...?

THURROCKS:

(Calling back)

Brother Faulkner, there's someone here!

We hear him running to catch up.

THURROCKS has found someone - THE REVEREND TOES - who she shoves down the slope and onto his knees.

He giggles gently, apparently unbothered.

THE REVEREND TOES:
(Brightly, absent-mindedly)
Hello there.

THURROCKS:
We found him walking down through the rocks. He's not armed. Seems to be alone.

Got an empty sled with him.

FAULKNER:
What's your name?

What are you doing out here?

THE REVEREND TOES:
(As if uncertain)
My name?
(As if remembering)
Oh, my name. I'm the Reverend Toes.

FAULKNER:
(Almost insulted)
Nobody's called the Reverend Toes.

THE REVEREND TOES:
(Cheerily)
You can't have met my family. We're a very big family, oh, yes.
(Beginning to brim over with excitement)
We have a Mrs Thigh, and a Mr Throat, and Little Baby Tooth-

THURROCK:
(Interrupting sternly)
He asked you what you're doing here.

THE REVEREND TOES:
I've been visiting friends in the hills.

FAULKNER:
Which friends?

THE REVEREND TOES hesitates.

THE REVEREND TOES:
Are you with the police?

THURROCKS:
Do we look like we're with the police, fool?

THE REVEREND TOES:
(Shrugging)
It takes all sorts to make a world.

To elaborate, as you seem impatient with me - I've been visiting friends who are keen to avoid any visits from the police, if you take my meaning, and they'd certainly be unhappy if I accidentally pointed any lawbringers in their direction.

I hope I can rely on your discretion.

FAULKNER:
The Chapel of the Endless Drear?

THE REVEREND TOES:
(Brightly)
You know them.

FAULKNER:
I hope to. Is their village nearby?

THE REVEREND TOES:
The old town is west through the valley. But it's been abandoned, I'm sorry to say.

There's been a lot of pressure in these parts recently, you understand, a lot of attention from the law.

So the Drear packed up their things, and they headed to the Cistern. An old hiding place up in the hills, a network of caves.

I've been bringing them food and medicine every once in a while, as a favour.

That's where you'll find them.

FAULKNER:
Sister Thurrocks. A moment.

They draw aside.

THURROCKS:
Something's off.

FAULKNER:
You think?

THURROCKS:
Do we take him with us?

FAULKNER:
If this **is** a trick, I don't want him anywhere near us.

But we can't risk him going back down the mountain and talking to the police, either.

THURROCKS:

(Simply)

We could shoot him, hide the body.

Or keep him in the van, to be tossed to the currents later on.

Silence.

FAULKNER:

(Privately thinking his own thoughts)

Your eagerness is a boon to the Trawler-man, Sister Thurrocks.

He thinks for a moment, and then walks back to THE REVEREND TOES.

FAULKNER:

Reverend...

(Uncertainly)

...Toes.

What does a disciple of the Endless Drear say, upon encountering another?

THE REVEREND TOES:

(Calmly)

'One tear falls now. Another upon parting. Both feed the earth in equal measure.'

FAULKNER:

Who leads this village?

THE REVEREND TOES:

(Just as calmly)

Hyades Plimpton is the one you want to be speaking to.

Was there anything else - Brother Faulkner, was it? I should really be getting back to my family.

FAULKNER:

I'm afraid that'll have to wait.

We don't mean you any harm, but we do want to be careful. I'm sure you can understand that, in times like these.

So Tapper here is going to wait with you, by the van, while we head up into the hills and check your story. There'll be food and water down there, and you can shelter in the dry.

If the Chapel is up in the caves where you say they are - then we'll send word back down and you can be on your way.

If you give him any trouble, or if it proves you've been lying to us, things may go somewhat harder.

Does that seem fair?

THE REVEREND TOES:

(Politely)

By the terms of your loaded guns, it seems fair enough.

Make for the highest peak. There's a path up through the gully. Follow it to the ridge, then take a right turn. You'll see there's a pair of stone basins to catch the water. The entrance is hidden just beyond them.

And do be careful on the rocks. The rain makes you slip.

FAULKNER:

(With a little gallantry)

Thank you.

I'm sure we'll see you soon enough.

MOUTH OF THE CISTERN, EXT, DAY

We hear feet climbing past us upon rocks.

FAULKNER:

(Narrating)

The climb is long. The chanting of my children fades to an occasional listless whimper.

At one point Sibling Jasp slips on the scree and gives themselves a nosebleed, which they tend to constantly, like a battle-wound, as they walk.

But finally the steepness flattens out, the fog subsides - and we come to the place.

Just like the strange man said. A pair of great stones, eroded concavities at the scalp, their natural basins pooling with rainwater that drips and flows downwards from rivulet to rivulet.

Etched with human-made marks that swirl and dance. They look a little like our own.

And beyond the twin basins, hidden beneath the curve of the slope, is the entrance. Gaping and silent.

A raw mouth of darkness lipped with flinty stone.

We hear the crunch of FAULKNER's feet on the rocks as he approaches.

FAULKNER:

Good work, siblings.

WALLACE:

It's dark down there. No sign of life.

And it's not an easy descent, either.

Looks like we'll need a rope if we want to climb down.

(Shrugging)

Maybe they're not even down there.

THURROCKS:

(A little sharply)

Or maybe they're watching us. The false faiths are cruel - perhaps they're looking for more water-butts.

What do you want to do, Brother?

FAULKNER stands at the cave entrance and calls down.

FAULKNER:

(Calling)

One tear falls now.

A long silence. And then the echoing voice of HYADES PLIMPTON drifts up from far below.

HYADES PLIMPTON:

(Faintly, echoing)

Another upon parting.

FAULKNER:

Both feed the earth in equal-

HYADES PLIMPTON:

(Faintly, echoing)

Both feed the earth in equal measure.

FAULKNER:

(Calling out)

My name is Brother Faulkner, of the Parish of Tide and Flesh. We come in peace, as cousins of the water, to speak with you.

He waits. No answer.

FAULKNER:
I said-

HYADES PLIMPTON:
(Faintly, echoing)
Come on down, but be careful - it's slippery.

FAULKNER:
All right.
(To his disciples)
Get the rope.

Move slow, and be careful.

We hear the disciples unwind the rope and tie it taut, before tossing one end into the darkness-

THE CISTERN, INT

FAULKNER descends, slowly and painfully. We can hear the constant drip and trickle of water on rock. Gradually, the sound of the wind fades.

The others, WALLACE, THURROCKS and JASP, are already down here.

THURROCKS:
(Fussing over him as he descends)
-careful, Brother.

FAULKNER lands with a grunt. He shakes her off and takes a step forward into the cave.

FAULKNER:
No sign of them down here?

WALLACE:

Few pallets and old crates stacked in the corners. Some prayer-marks up on the rock up there, where the water sluices down. Suppose their camp must be-

From somewhere in the distance, a voice calls out:

HYADES PLIMPTON:

(Faintly, echoing)

We've gone further in. Follow us when you're ready.

WALLACE:

(Faintly rattled)

-must be further in.

You'd think they could light a torch or two.

FAULKNER:

(Calling out)

Will you come out and meet us?

Silence for a moment. Then-

HYADES PLIMPTON (?):

(Faintly, echoing - in a voice that seems to mimic FAULKNER's own)

Will you come out and meet us?

THURROCKS:

They're mocking us.

FAULKNER:

(Turning to one of the other disciples)

Sibling Jasp, you stay up here. Guard the rope. If you hear someone coming back up from below, call out the first line of the Alluvial Lament.

If we don't respond, feel free to go ahead and shoot us.

If you hear trouble, stand your ground and be ready to run back to the van.

We won't be long.

JASP:
Got it.

FAULKNER:
(To the others)
Come on. We're heading further in.

We'll leave the flares to mark the path.

We hear the sound of footfall upon rock-

-which become the sound of feet splashing through water as the disciples descend.

And THURROCKS wades up behind FAULKNER.

THURROCKS:
(Hissing)
Brother Faulkner.

Brother Faulkner, this doesn't feel right.

FAULKNER:
(Trying to reassure her - or at least, calm her down)
Perhaps they're testing us. They want to see how easily we'll be scared off.

THURROCKS:
Katabasian Mason wouldn't want us to stray into danger.

A moment's silence as FAULKNER considers his response to this statement.

FAULKNER:

(Gently contradicting her)

Katabasian Mason expects us to find what we're looking for. If we don't find it, he'll send us back out again - or he'll find someone else.

Do you want him to find someone else?

THURROCKS:

No.

FAULKNER:

Me neither. This is our only way forward.

(Calling back)

Drop a flare here!

We hear the faint noise of a flare being lit by WALLACE.

FAULKNER:

The descent into darkness is one of our faith's core aspects, Sister. We plunge into drowning depths - and in the Trawler-man's wisdom, we arise again, remade anew, and stronger, and whole.

(Gently)

Just think of the stories they'll tell about us, when we emerge from this place with the Drear's folk taking our part.

Maybe it'll be enough to relight your parents' faith.

Trust that our god knows where he's leading for us, Sister. We have nothing to fear.

They wade, in silence, through the dripping cave.

THURROCKS:

Brother Faulkner, I couldn't help but notice - Brother Tapper and Sibling Jasp are the youngest of us.

And you told them to stay behind, in safety.

FAULKNER:
(Absent-mindedly)
Did I?

FAULKNER:
(Narrating)
Yes, I did. I didn't even realise I was doing it.

FAULKNER speaks aloud, more firmly.

FAULKNER:
I wasn't playing favourites, Sister. I can promise you that much.
(Making conversation)
You and Brother Tapper are together, aren't you? I remember you
whispering to one another back in the van.

THURROCKS:
Uh...yes. Yes, we are.

But Katabasian Pinker said that it was acceptable, under-

FAULKNER:
(Reassuring)
It is, of course it is.

Just so long as you remember that our god comes first. In all things,
Sister.

Our lives are lived in readiness for the river's rise, not for their own sake.
(After a moment)
He seems like a sharp young man.

THURROCKS:
It means a great deal to me that you approve, Brother. A great deal.

FAULKNER:

(Narrating)

She nods at me, her eyes bright.

And I know I will emerge from this place with my first true disciple.

The noise of the water fades.

FAULKNER:

(Narrating)

Wallace, Thurrocks and I keep walking onwards and downwards through the darkness, gingerly feeling our path from stone to stone.

The water drips, and gurgles, and pools, through the hollows and the winding passages of the rock walls that surround us on every side.

Here and there the light falls in faint rays through the mist, merging with the searching beams of our torches.

Occasionally we come across abandoned rucksacks or mouldering crates half-buried amongst the rocks.

But, strangely, no further sign of the Drear's people. And their voices, too, have fallen silent in the darkness.

And then, at last, we stop - because we've come to a junction.

Two distinct passageways. One leading up and left. One leading down, and to the right.

An unhappy silence as the three of them stare up and down the corridor.

THURROCKS:

Which way do we go now?

FAULKNER:

(Narrating)

I shine my torch upwards - and I see something beautiful, caught between my faint beam and the dappled light that falls downwards from the clefts in the mountainside.

(With a little wonder)

Carved into the wall of the rock, high above us, is a mural.

A crowd of tiny, crudely-etched people, adults and children, gathered around in happy expectation, their heads tilted to the sky.

Their jaws expanding out further than any jaw should go, tongues lolling and outstretched.

And etched stone beads of rain fall from the sky in spitting torrents towards the tiny people, delivered from a vast and inhuman mouth that towers above them, teeth like no human's teeth, a grand and terrible reflection above of those who wait below.

It makes me smile. A little, in spite of everything.

That's what it means, I suppose, to be a god or a prophet.

To provide, to offer yourself up.

To light the way.

He drops his backpack and examines the rock.

FAULKNER:

(Narrating)

I kneel before a crevice in the rock, through which the white water falls.

With my wetted finger, I trace a mark across the stone's surface, whispering the words of the Dowser's Beseechment beneath my breath.

And I'm certain - perfectly certain, even in the darkness - that as my hand completes the shape of the prayer-mark, the course of the water jerks visibly to the left.

FAULKNER straightens up.

FAULKNER:

Wallace. You're to head down the left passageway. Slowly. Carefully.

We'll tie the rope around your waist so you don't get lost.

Every few steps, you yell back at us. 'Clear.'

If you see anything that looks untoward, you come right back to us, you understand? Look for the flare.

WALLACE:

Understood.

(As a mantra)

Swift currents bear me on.

FAULKNER:

(Patting him on the back)

Swift currents bear you on. All right.

WALLACE's footsteps recede.

Silence.

Then, distantly, we hear his voice, at intervals, growing fainter each time.

WALLACE:

Clear!

Silence.

WALLACE:

Clear!

Silence.

WALLACE:
Clear!

Silence.

WALLACE:
Clea-

An abrupt, hideous, blaring DRONE sound - it's WALLACE's own 'CLEAR', distorted and echoing, a blast of noise that makes the rocks crack and shake and creates a sonic whine in the air.

And then silence.

FAULKNER:
(Calling)
Wallace?

THURROCKS:
(Calling)
Brother Wallace?

Silence.

ECHOING VOICE (WALLACE):
Clear!

Something is very wrong here.

FAULKNER:
(Calling out)
Brother Wallace? Are you all right?

A moment's silence. Then we hear WALLACE again - repeating with exactly the same intonation.

ECHOING VOICE (WALLACE):
Clear!

THURROCKS:
His rope's gone taut. I think he's fallen down.

FAULKNER:
(*To THURROCKS*)
Pull him back in. Pull him back in.

We hear the rope dragging on rocks.

THURROCKS:
He's heavy.

FAULKNER:
(*Calling*)
Brother Wallace?

We hear the sound of something heavy being dragged and dragged towards us.

And then the noise stops, as something falls down in front of THURROCKS and FAULKNER.

THURROCKS:
(*Horried*)
Oh, blessed garden!

ECHOING VOICE (WALLACE):
Clear!

FAULKNER:

(Narrating)

We haul Brother Wallace back towards us through the darkness - and pull him into the torchlight.

The front of his face has been sliced away. From the bottom upwards, in a single, clean movement.

What's left of him is a smooth mask of red flesh.

(Correcting himself)

No, not entirely smooth. A few stray teeth dangling from their sockets.

Bisected, jellied eyes stare up at us.

FAULKNER is horrified too, but tries to keep his calm.

And we continue to hear the distant, echoing voice of WALLACE.

ECHOING VOICE (WALLACE):

Clear!

ECHOING VOICE (WALLACE):

(Distorted)

Clear!

THURROCKS:

(Swallowing)

Brother Faulkner - what's, what's making that noise?

ECHOING VOICE (WALLACE):

Clear!

ECHOING VOICE (FAULKNER):

Brother Wallace, are you all right?

FAULKNER is thinking fast.

And he realises something.

FAULKNER:

There's an angel down here with us.

Something forgotten, something stray. It lives in the echoes.

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (WALLACE):

Clear!

FAULKNER:

It took Wallace when he yelled - so we have to stay quiet. No matter what.

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (FAULKNER):

My name is Brother Faulkner, of the Parish of Tide and Flesh-

FAULKNER:

All right. We're getting out of here.

We're going back the way we came. Move quick and quiet.

We're not going to lose our nerve, we're not going to lose our focus.

Wallace is going to stay behind in the caves.

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (FAULKNER):

We come in peace, as cousins of the water, to speak with you-

FAULKNER:

Is that understood, Sister Thurrocks?

THURROCKS takes a breath.

THURROCKS:

Yes, Brother. Yes, of course.

FAULKNER:

Come on, now. Look for the last flare. You see it in the distance? Start walking towards it.

They start to walk.

Gradually, they reach the same running water as before, and they begin to wade through it.

From all around them, we hear the echoing voice of THE ANGEL IN THE ECHOES.

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (HYADES PLIMPTON):

We've gone further in-

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (FAULKNER):

Wallace?

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (HYADES PLIMPTON):

(Terrified)

Don't come in any further! There's something down here-

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (THURROCKS):

Brother Wallace?

THURROCKS gasps as she recognises her own voice.

FAULKNER:

Ignore it. Keep moving.

The sounds continue to rise. It begins to feel like a bombardment of noise-

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (HYADES PLIMPTON):

There's something down here with us, get back to the surface-

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (FAULKNER):
Drop a flare here!

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (FAULKNER):
Will you come out and meet us?

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (THURROCKS):
Brother Wallace?

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (HYADES PLIMPTON):
(Terrified)
Angel! There's an angel in the caves!

A sudden, echoing scream from the ANGEL - we're hearing someone die.

THURROCKS trips in the water, and gasps. Her rifle goes off. BANG.

The sound echoes through the cave.

And we hear a rising tide of ECHOING NOISE in response, as FAULKNER says, quietly and quickly-

FAULKNER:
Down.

They dive into the water, submerging themselves, just as we hear the noise of the echo washing over them.

As the sound dies down, FAULKNER and THURROCKS surface with a gasp and begin to wade to shore.

As they walk, the ANGEL continues to mimic THURROCKS. It almost feels mocking.

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (THURROCKS):
Brother Wallace!

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (THURROCKS):
(Distorted)
Brother Wallace!

THURROCKS stops dead. She's trembling.

THURROCKS:
That's my voice.

FAULKNER:
Sister Thurrocks, we need to keep moving-

THURROCKS:
(Her voice getting louder)
We should never have come down here.

FAULKNER:
(Softly)
Sister Thurrocks-

THURROCKS:
It's stolen my voice, it's taken my voice away from me-

FAULKNER:
(Very softly hissing)
Sister Thurrocks. Sister Thurrocks, please listen to me.

Keep your mind on what lies ahead.

They'll tell stories about this. Sister Thurrocks and Brother Faulkner, how they overcame the angel in the caves.

This is all just part of the greater pattern that's yet to reveal itself.

Now. Please keep walking.

THURROCKS:
Yes, Brother Faulkner.

Yes, of course.

Silence.

Gentle footsteps.

Dripping.

We begin to hear the faint sound of drizzle, far above.

THURROCKS:
(*Whispering*)
Brother Faulkner! Do you hear that, that's-

FAULKNER:
(*Whispering*)
Rainfall. Come on, we're there - we're almost there-

There! The daylight!

Their feet squeak onwards for a moment. And then-

JASP:
(*Yelling distantly*)
Hey! Who's skulking about down there? Brother Faulkner, is that you?
Sister Thurrocks?

FAULKNER:
(*Whispering*)
Shit. It's Jasp.

JASP can't see them, but continues to yell from the mouth of the cave.

JASP:
(Yelling distantly)
Answer me!

FAULKNER:
(Hissing)
Please, keep your voice down, please keep your voice down-

We hear the distant sound of JASP cocking their rifle.

JASP:
(Yelling distantly)
Take another step forwards and I'll shoot you! I- I mean it!

FAULKNER:
(Hissing)
Jasp! Jasp!

JASP:
(Yelling distantly)
Hey! I said-

We hear the horrible sound of the ANGEL rise, howling JASP's own words back at her. 'HEY. HEY. HEY'. The cave begins to shake and crack as the noise surges towards her.

In amongst the chaos, we hear JASP scream.

A moment's silence.

And we hear something fleshy - quite possibly JASP's head - rolling down the rocks.

It comes to a halt at JASP's feet.

We hear THURROCKS gasp.

FAULKNER:

(Whispering)

Don't react. Don't react.

Just keep walking, keep quiet.

When we get to Jasp, we're going to have to leave them behind.

We're not going to look at the body, we're just going to pass them by and we're going to climb.

In silence, breathing hard and exhausted, they walk.

The voice of the ANGEL IN THE ECHOES moans after them.

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (FAULKNER):

One tear falls now.

FAULKNER:

(Whispering)

It's trying to draw us out. It can't hear us so long as we stay quiet.

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (HYADES PLIMPTON)

Another on parting.

We hear their feet slipping on the rocks. They reach the cliff, and begin to climb.

Their quiet breaths.

FAULKNER:

(Whispering)

We're going to have to climb. Come on, now. Mind your feet on the rocks.

Let's go.

A few gasps and grunts, the sound of their feet slipping on the rock, as they climb.

From below, we can hear the voice of the ANGEL IN THE ECHOES drifting upwards.

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (HYADES PLIMPTON):
There's something down in the caves! Run, all of you, run-

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (HYADES PLIMPTON):
Wait. Please wait. Where are you going?

Don't leave me down here-

And then, mournfully, fading away,

ANGEL IN THE ECHOES (HYADES PLIMPTON):
I don't want to die alone down here...

MOUNTAINSIDE, EXT, DAY

FAULKNER collapses out onto the mountainside with a gasp.

We can hear the rain drizzling all around him.

He turns immediately, to try and help THURROCKS, as she rises out of the cave with a gasp.

FAULKNER:
Well done, Sister. It's okay. You're out of there now. You're safe.

FAULKNER falls back, breathing hard, and then staggers up to his feet.

FAULKNER:
We made it. Oh, we made it.
(To the TRAWLER-MAN)
Thank you, my river.

Oh, thank you, thank you, thank-

We hear rapidly approaching footprints behind him-

-and he grunts as he's knocked unconscious by a blunt instrument, toppling down onto the hillside.

THURROCKS:
Wait!

Please don't-

She cries out in pain as she's knocked unconscious as well.

The REVEREND TOES slows to a walk and cheerfully swishes his weapon.

THE REVEREND TOES:
(Brightly)
Two alive. Plus our friend in the van makes a none-too-shabby three in total.

They didn't do too badly down there, not too badly at all!

Praise and thanks to the Five-In-Glimpses.
(Gesturing to his companions)
Mr Thigh. Mrs Throat.

Let's bundle them up and get home.

Tomorrow we'll do a final recce around the waterside traps.

Then I think we **probably**...yes, I think we probably have enough to make a start.

END OF EPISODE.