

# THE SEEKERS

script sample, pages 6 - 15

by Jeff Winstead

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## PAGE SIX

1 — *Death Valley, California. Night. Establishing shot of the Death's Door Bar, which stands alone on a desolate strip of State Route 190. The bar is a genuine dive, a stark contrast to the glitz and bustle of the previous scene in Las Vegas. Several of the lights on the sign that spells out the bar's name are busted. The parking lot is near empty.*

CAPTION : Death Valley, California.

2 — *Establishing shot inside the bar. One wouldn't exactly say the joint was jumping. The bartender (PETE) dries a glass while watching the television behind the bar. On screen is the stunning blonde newscaster JENNIFER HART, reporting from a World News Network studio. There are a handful of customers, a motley bunch of regulars and bikers. Only one guy at a barstool looks slightly out of place, his head slumped over his drink so we can't see his face. The regular sitting beside him (FRANK) yells at Pete.*

FRANK: Aww, come on, **Pete!** We're missin' the **pre-game!**

3 — *Frank, still giving Pete what for. On the next stool, the out-of-place guy (ARTHUR NORDEN, but we still don't get a clear shot of him) signals Pete for a refill.*

FRANK: Why you got that on for, anyway? You don't even have the sound up!

PETE: Got **eyes**, don'tcha? That there's **Jennifer Hart**, the best lookin' dish on TV.

PETE: Got no interest in a word she's sayin', but I sure enjoy the **priddy view**.

4 — *Pete refills Arthur's glass, but looks at him with concern while doing so.*

PETE (whisper): Might wanna pack it in after this one, huh, Arthur?

## **PAGE SIX continued**

5 — *Close-up on Arthur as he throws back his drink. He looks rough—unshaven, sweaty and exhausted. Beneath it all we can see that he's a good-looking fellow; far from the absentminded professor stereotype, more Matthew McConaughey than Matthew Broderick (remember; he's an Indiana Jones type).*

6 — *Arthur sets his glass down on a worn newspaper. The thing looks to have been read a hundred times, and has multiple ring stains from the repeated placement of Arthur's glass. The photo beneath the headline is of an excavation site in Death Valley. Dust still rises up in the background from an apparent cave-in. The area is cordoned off with police tape, as officers question a couple of dusty and emotionally shaken college students. Arthur is in the foreground, likewise covered in dust, angrily ranting toward the camera. The paper's headline reads:*

***PROFESSIONAL NEGLIGENCE CAUSES CAVE-IN, KILLS TWO***

and the subheading:

***PROFESSOR BLAMES MYSTERY MAN WHO "CRAWLED FROM THE EARTH"***

## PAGE SEVEN

1 — *Same angle of the excavation site as the previous panel, but from before the cave-in; no police tape, no reporters, just a modest archeological dig, reasonably outfitted. The two students we saw being interviewed in the newspaper photo are studying some paperwork, one scratching his head.*

SHERI (off-panel from inside the cavern): **Dr. Norden!**

2 — *Inside the cavern as Sheri, a twenty-something student, carefully but hurriedly brushes at a section of cavern wall. A male student working in another section of the cavern looks up at her. Arthur approaches from the background, backlit by the sunlight shining through the cavern's entrance.*

SHERI: **Dr. Norden!!** You've got to **see** this!

ARTHUR: Just a sec, **Sheri**, just a sec . . .

ARTHUR: I appreciate your enthusiasm . . .

3 — *Arthur crouches down beside Sheri, smiling at her. The other student hurries over.*

ARTHUR: . . . but you might want to **take it down** a notch if you're going to react this way every time you find a--

4 — *Close-up of a strange set of geometric markings on the cavern wall. They are obviously not of this Earth.*

ARTHUR (OP): What in the world?!?

5 — *Arthur stands to leave, as Sheri and here classmate stare at the markings, mesmerized.*

SHERI: I know, right? What could it be, Professor?

ARTHUR: Let me grab my gear and we'll see if we can find out.

ARTHUR: Great work, Sheri--now, don't touch anything. Don't **move**, don't **breathe**.

ARTHUR: Be right back.

## **PAGE SEVEN continued**

6 — *Outside of the cavern, Arthur excitedly grabs his bag and some other equipment.*

7 — *The ground begins to shake as Arthur and the two students from Panel 1 turn toward the cavern's entrance.*

**SFX: RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE**

## PAGE EIGHT

1 — *Large panel as the cavern collapses in on itself, throwing dust and rock into the air. Arthur and the students are thrown to the ground.*

**SFX: BA-KOOOOM!!**

**ARTHUR: NOOO!!!**

2 — *Arthur on the ground, coughing from the thick dust. The students are out of view. A figure (THE GATHERER) stumbles from the haze in the background, although he can't be seen clearly at this point.*

ARTHUR: \*cough\* \*cough\*

3 — *The Gatherer is tattooed head to toe with alien religious markings down one side of his body. The markings on his face matching those of the cavern wall. Embedded in his skin within the design of the tattoos are jewels similar to those that the female Seeker had on her bracelet in the Vegas scene. He's nude, but dust strategically covers sensitive areas. He seems dazed as he stands not ten feet from Arthur, who looks up at him.*

4 — *Close-up of The Gatherer, head cocked as he looks down at Norden.*

5 — *The Gatherer changes direction and shambles off, leaving Arthur coughing on the ground. The two students who were above ground before the collapse can be seen now as the dust around them begins to clear. They don't notice the Gatherer.*

ARTHUR: No . . . \*cough\* . . .

ARTHUR: . . . no . . .

## PAGE NINE

1 — *Back to the present. Arthur hangs his head. We can see his reflection in the dirty mirror behind the bar.*

2 — *Same shot; the reflection looks up and begins to speak to Arthur (it's all happening in his head, of course).*

REFLECTION: Been five days now.

REFLECTION: You planning to sit here forever and wallow in **self pity**, or are you going to figure this thing out?

3 — *Arthur sits silently, his head still low.*

4 — *Arthur looks up. He matches his reflection again. Both have a sudden look of indignant confidence.*

ARTHUR: You're right, Dammit.

ARTHUR: You're right.

5 — *Arthur stands and walks toward the back of the bar, talking to Pete without looking at him. Pete picks up Arthur's glass and newspaper.*

ARTHUR: Time I got going, Pete. Shouldn't be driving just now, though.

ARTHUR: Mind if I--?

PETE: Sure thing. Cot in back's all yours.

6 — *Tight shot of the newspaper now in a trashcan behind the bar.*

## PAGE TEN

1 — *Establishing shot of a frozen Siberian forest near the town of Oymyakon. Due to the time difference, It's very early in the morning. A clump of trees in one section begins to shake as if from an isolated earthquake.*

CAPTION: Oymyakon, Siberia.

SFX: **KKRIKK SNAP KKRIKK**

2 — *The trees topple over in a radial pattern as the ground beneath them erupts.*

SFX: **KA-KOOOMM!**

3 — *A Seeker (THE HUNTER) floats to the surface. His skin is solid black. Like the previous Seekers he's completely nude, but doesn't have the bracelet or jewels we've seen on the others.*

4 — *Close-up of the Hunter as he calmly looks over his shoulder.*

DOGS (OP): GRRRRR GRRRRR

SFX: KLIK

5 — *The Hunter turns to see a team of Seppala Siberian Sleddogs lashed to a sled, now barking wildly. Their nervous-looking Russian owner has stepped in front of the dogs and is aiming a rifle at The Hunter.*

DOGS: AARRF AARRF AARRF

6 — *The Russian panics and pulls the trigger . . .*

SFX: **KAPOW**

## **PAGE ELEVEN**

1 — *The bullet strikes the Hunter, but simply ricochets off his skin and hits the Russian in the arm.*

**RUSSIAN: AAGGHH!**

2 — *The hunter walks past the Russian toward the dogs. The Russian's on his knees holding his arm in pain, as blood from the wound soaks his shirt and runs through is fingers onto the snow.*

**DOGS: AARRF AARRF AARRF**

3 — *The Hunter crouches down to look the lead dog in the eyes. The Dogs stop barking.*

4 — *Same shot.*

*HUNTER: Aarrf.*

5 — *He unfastens the lead dog's harness as the dog licks him on the face.*

6 — *The Hunter and the dog walk toward the town in the distance, as the Russian watches in shock.*

## PAGE TWELVE

1 — *Death Valley, the excavation site. It's the middle of the night, but headlights from a parked jeep cut the darkness. Sections of the police tape are torn, suggesting that someone was in a hurry to get through. In the background, silhouetted by the headlights and swinging a pickaxe, is a shirtless Arthur Norden.*

CAPTION: Death Valley.

ARTHUR: HRMPH!

ARTHUR: HRMPH!

2 — *Tighter on a clear shot of Arthur. He's swinging with everything he's got, drenched in sweat. He's been here for some time.*

ARTHUR: **HRMPH!**

3 — *The camera pans from Arthur far across the desert. This can be a continuous landscape shot, broken into a series of small panels. The shot eventually lands on a road some distance from Arthur. A shadowed figure (THE GATHERER, although we can't see that for certain at this point) shambles down the center of the road, heading away from the excavation site.*

ARTHUR (in the distance): HRMPH!

4 — *The Gatherer continues down the road as the headlights of a car come into view in the distance.*

5 — *He hurries into a thatch of bushes by the side of the road.*

## PAGE THIRTEEN

1 — *We can finally make out the Gatherer's features as the car passes; the tattooed side of his face is illuminated, but the other side is still in deep shadow.*

2 — *He touches a jewel embedded on his temple, which begins to glow with an eerie green light.*

GATHERER (translated): < Where . . . are you? >

3 — *Close-up of the Gatherer, eyes closed as if he's trying to concentrate through a fog.*

GATHERER: < And the others? >

GATHERER: < I see. >

4 — *He looks down at his tattooed forearm. Several of the gems embedded there are glowing (one for each awakened Seeker), each in a different color.*

GATHERER: < Then I shall gather them, as is my purpose. >

5 — *The Gatherer looks up at the night sky. He seems to have found his bearings now.*

GATHERER: <The time . . . >

GATHERER: < . . . has **come**. >

## PAGE FOURTEEN

1 — *The Death Valley Excavation site; high noon. Days have passed, and the site looks a lot different now; the police tape has been removed, floodlights have been brought in for night work, there's a backhoe and some other equipment, and a tent has been set up. It's a smaller operation than before, but an effective one. The location of the cavern as been almost completely excavated and is now a large crater. All of it Norden's work, and Norden's alone. The wheels of a TV news van pull into the foreground, kicking up dust.*

CAPTION: One week later.

SFX (from tires): CCCRUNNCH

2 — *The driver's door of the van swings open, and JENNIFER HART steps out. She's dressed in appropriate desert attire; khaki colored shirt, sunglasses, cargo shorts and work boots. Her hair is up and her makeup is minimal, but she's nonetheless strikingly beautiful.*

JENNIFER: Alright, Madeline . . .

3 — *MADELINE steps out of the passenger's side, staring out at the site. She's a short, cute brunette, her hair tucked under a Los Angeles baseball cap. Jennifer hurries toward the back of the van.*

JENNIFER: Let's get to work!

MADELINE: Oh, boy.

4 — *Jennifer swings open the van's back doors as Madeline walks up beside her.*

JENNIFER: I **need** this story. **You** need this story.

JENNIFER: Okay, maybe not **you** so much--you're already tops in the camera slinging game . . .

MADELINE: Thanks for that.

JENNIFER: . . . and you're already taking a **huge** risk by doing this for me on the sly . . .

MADELINE: Very true . . .

## PAGE FIFTEEN

1 — *Jennifer, focused on pulling equipment from the van, reaches back and hands Madeline her video camera.*

JENNIFER: . . . but this is my **chance**, Mad.

JENNIFER: My chance to stop **reading** the news from a prompter and actually start **reporting** the news. **Finding** the news.

MADELINE: I've got your back, Jen. You know that.

2 — *Madeline fiddles with some settings on her camera.*

MADELINE: I just hope you're right and there's actually a **story** here.

MADELINE: I mean, a nutty professor who's blaming his screw-up on a **mole man** . . .

3 — *Jennifer with her hand on one of doors, talking to Madeline who's checking the lens of her camera.*

JENNIFER: Well, take a look and tell me . . .

4 — *Jennifer swings the door shut to reveal Arthur walking toward them from the tent in the background. He's sweaty and dirty but looks much more rested and focused than when last we saw him, like a man who's drawing all his strength from the task at hand. Madeline looks up from her camera and is instantly smitten.*

JENNIFER: . . . that **he's** not a story.

ARTHUR: Ladies . . . no offense, but . . .

ARTHUR: . . . I'm not really in the mindset for **interviews**.

# THE SEEKERS

graphic novel treatment  
by Jeff Winstead  
8/29/11

*We're on a mission from God.*

Although the Seekers are hardly the Blues Brothers, there are some parallels; they believe their mission to be divine, and they must complete a series of spectacular adventures to achieve their goal. The biggest difference is that the stakes are much, much higher.

As detailed in the proposal, the Seekers are an alien race dedicated to maintaining harmony in the universe. This is a divine calling for the near-immortal Seekers, making them more of a religious order than the alien conquerors we see in most Science Fiction. Lead by the mysterious Overseers, Seekers for millennia have been sending the most capable of their race to planets with emerging life, along with a doomsday device that can destroy a planet should its continued existence be deemed a danger to the rest of the universe. Those who are chosen are placed into a "life sleep" for thousands of years, buried deep beneath a planet's surface to awaken at the moment that planet's dominant species is capable of interstellar travel. These Seekers know that they will never be able to return to their home—at best, they will judge a planet worthy of survival and be stuck there forever; at worst, they will be charged with destroying the planet and themselves with it.

For reasons unknown to them (which they do not question, for it is the way of things), The Seekers are separated when placed in their life sleep and must search out their brethren upon awakening. They also do not know the location of the doomsday device or how to deactivate it. To find it, they must locate clues left for them by the Overseers.

The Seekers are divided into seven distinct sects that have different functions and abilities. One member from each group is sent on every mission. The members do not have individual names; they are known only by their sect.

The sects are: **Gatherers**, skilled at tracking down and bringing together other Seekers in their search for the doomsday device; **Hunters**, who provide whatever the Seekers need to survive in their unfamiliar environment; **Protectors**, skilled fighters who guard other Seekers during their quest (and, unknown to the others, protect the secrets of the Overseers); **Destroyers**, who eliminate all evidence of the Seekers and their mission once they leave a given location; **Leaders**, trained to take command of a Seeker group once gathered; **Runners**, scouts who can very quickly travel to the location of the next clue in advance of the other Seekers; and **Readers**, who have mind-reading capabilities that allow them to quickly learn native languages, customs, etc.

Now the Seekers have awakened on Earth.

Following the events shown in the attached script sample, the Reader (the female Seeker who appeared in Las Vegas) makes her way to Death Valley to find the clue at the site of the Gatherer's awakening. There, she encounters Arthur, Jennifer and Madeline and, after some initial confusion, explains the basics of her mission. The trio are not only shocked, but skeptical; true, humanity has had the capacity for mass destruction since the invention of the atomic bomb, but we're nowhere near capable of interstellar travel. Why would the Seekers awaken now? Of course, our protagonists don't yet know about Section P.

Section P is on the verge of unlocking interstellar travel, having discovered the remains of the ship that we saw in the introduction (cavemen killed the aliens that arrived in the ship, which has remained buried for thousands of years). Unknown to Arthur, Section P was also the sponsor of his dig, suspecting he would find other alien artifacts. They've also managed to capture one of the Seekers (the Leader) using intel gained from the Las Vegas site. Section P isn't evil, they simply do not yet understand the full picture.

Some among the Seekers feel that humans will inevitably become a threat to the universe and must be destroyed now. Others, who have witnessed the goodness in humanity firsthand, argue that we have great potential that must be allowed to develop.

Our heroes— Arthur, Jen, Madeline and the "pro-human" Seekers (one of whom will be revealed to be traitor)—scour the globe for clues to the location of the doomsday device. This leads them to locales both fantastic (the lost city of Atlantis) and dangerous (a condemned coal mine in Kentucky) as they try to avoid confrontations with local authorities and attempt to stay one step ahead of Section P and the "anti-human" Seekers. As the drama unfolds, Arthur and Madeline develop a romance, one of the Seekers falls for Jennifer (something that is unheard of for the emotionally detached race), and the Leader sacrifices herself to save them all.

When they finally locate the doomsday device, it turns out not to be an instrument of destruction at all . . . but a teleportation device. Inserting the "key," comprised of the various clues they've collected, activates a message from the Overseers: *"What you were seeking wasn't some mythical doomsday device—It was your own humanity. You can now return to teach us what you've learned, helping your people regain what has been lost through the centuries of immortality, or you may stay on Earth and pursue your own destiny. Either decision is valid. The choice is yours."*

The Seekers who were intent on seeing Earth destroyed finally understand their mistake and repent, returning to their home world. Only the Gatherer refuses, adamant that the Overseers have lost their way and have abandoned their sacred mission. He leaves, vowing to one day erase humanity from the universe.

Surprisingly, Arthur and Madeline decide to journey to the world of the Seekers (for Arthur, it is the greatest of archeological adventures; for Madeline, a fantastic subject to document on film). Jennifer and her Seeker decided to stay on Earth and perhaps prepare humanity for the next step in our evolution—if we're willing to listen.