

# The Horror in Antarctica

## Heath Bethe

Everything seemed tolerable in Antarctica during the late 23rd century. That's what we all assumed when we sat down for dinner. The lights weren't flickering, and the room was nice and warm despite the freezing weather outside. Mike, the base's quiet medic, was spooning mouthfuls of his fried rice. Tom, a joker of an archaeologist, was cracking jokes that made Sam, our very own cytologist, laugh so much that his beer came right out of his nose. Dan, my best mate and security officer, was chatting about cybernetics to me while Bradley, a botanist, was trying to get a response from Tim, the bases pathologist. As for myself, my name's Roy. I'm a scientist of practically most areas. We've been here for 4 years studying how to make ways for humans to permanently live in Antarctica.

Wait, what. I put my hand out to stop Dan wasting his time. But he too had noticed. So did all the others. Tim was always the loudest of us all when it came to dinner. But today he seemed distracted. I pondered over this in confusion, he can't be sick all of a sudden since he was fine ten minutes ago...could he.

"Tim," I asked calmly, "Are you all right?"

"Come on mate," said Bradley with a worried expression, "You're scaring the hell out of us."

As soon as Bradley touched Tim's shoulder, Tim went berserk and jumped three feet in the air before crashing on the floor. But he continued to writhe on his back as though something inside him was trying to eat its way out. Blood started to spurt out of his mouth as his stomach continued to swell to an enormous size.

While this was happening, the rest of the crew were swearing, jumping on chairs or standing still with utter terror written upon their faces. But I kept calm as possible and went straight to the First Aid kit which was beside Bradley who was huddled in fright. Tim was his brother. Poor old Tim, a great bloke with a terrible fate. He was the first of us. But by the time the anesthetic needle was in my hand, Tim's chest ripped open from the inside as blood splattered over Bradley. But it wasn't over.

The blood all over Bradley began to hiss and boil on his skin as though he was the hot plate of a primitive electrical cooking device. He screamed as the traitorous blood scorched his face and limbs. Tim's carcass began sprout tentacles before grabbing Bradley who was dragged towards the gaping belly of Tim. We all did our best to hold onto Bradley struggling wrist, but the monster was the strength of 10 horses pulling. Bradley's whole body except his head went inside the stomach before it closed and open as though it were a gigantic mouth. His head fell to the floor but it too sprouted tentacles from his brain and using his tongue as an elastic arm to grab me.

Thankfully, Tom had run to the emergency supplies and had grabbed the nearest flame thrower we had. Yes, always have a flamethrower in Antarctica. Both of these monstrous mutations went up in flames as Dan grabbed me from under my armpits before dragging me back into safety.

"What the hell was that?" Sam asked in disgust as the flames died down leaving the burning corpses to smoulder.

"I don't know," answered Mike.

"We'll have to either get U.N.I.T or Torchwood in," Dan suggested

"But in the meantime, "I told them, "There's only one way we're going to settle this."

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"And that puts an end to that," I told Dan and Sam as Tom and Mike were back in the dining room clearing up all the mess that was left behind from us dragging the corpses.

I locked the door in front of me with the card belonging to the door.

"And all we do is wait for torchwood to come and clear the mess for us."

Dan asked, "do you really think that this is the end of these mutations?"

"To be honest with you," I answered, "no, I reckon there's a thicker plot."

"Maybe the Russians want to get rid of our us because they want to discover our project first," Sam suggested.

"Don't be an idiot Sam," Dan told him sternly, "remember what the U.N.I.T. officials told us when they gave us all those weapons, keep an open mind when strange things occur."

That's when we heard fast and heavy footsteps coming down the corridor. It turned out to be Mike and Tom with terrified expressions that were easy to read. "I've been thinking of the burning blood," Mike told us.

"And?" I asked.

"I didn't think of it at first which is why I didn't say..."

"Just say it!" Dan yelled at Mike, already getting frustrated by Mike giving long explanations.

"From what I saw, I conclude that any mutations are still alive. No matter what you do to it, this infection is still alive."

We all turned slowly to face the locked door. "Get the flamethrowers," I ordered.

Dan and Sam hurried away down the corridor. "What are we going to do?" Tom asked me.

"We're opening the door," I answered.

"Are you insane?" Mike asked.

"We don't know what could be in there!"

"Anyone got a better idea?" I asked them. There was no other argument against me. Taking this as proof that my idea was best, I slid my card through the slot once again and open the door. It was pitch black and nothing could be heard stirring. "We should wait for the others," Tom advised.

But Mike and I didn't heed his warning and continued to creep in. I guessed Tom didn't want to be on his own because he followed us in too. Mike felt around the wall until we heard a click. The light wasn't working well because it kept flickering. The tarp covering the mutants on the metal table was open and the creatures were gone. Mike, Tom and I looked around each other, all frightened by the fact of walking corpses. I looked at Mike to study his reaction when a drop of blood fell on Mike's face. We all looked up gradually and saw a grotesque, blobby creature made from the fat, blood,

muscle and internal organs of Bradley and Tim. There was a gaping hole with teeth in it where two tentacles came out with both the remains of Tim and Bradley's heads.

"Run!" I yelled to the others as we all tried for the door.

But the creature had grabbed Tom while Mike and I got out safely. We turned back to save him, but we heard a scream of death as showers of blood streamed out of the doorway as though they were sparks. The others came back with two flamethrowers as all the mutant corpses were one. It was a five-legged creature with tentacles and all sorts of weird fleshy things. But the flames went everywhere as Dan and Sam fired. They continued until there was nothing left. The Cronanian surface (found on the planet Androzani) ensured that the flames died down on its own.

"What happens now?" Mike asked us.

"We know for a fact that there is nothing left of the creature," said Dan.

"We also know that any contact with the creature makes you part of it," Sam added.

"Are we saying any DNA from it?" I asked.

Dan nodded, "Why?"

"I got one drop of blood on me," answered Mike as he began to shake madly.

Both Sam and Dan went to burn Mike as he began to spurt out blood, but the flamethrowers were out of fuel. "Run!" I yelled as I took off at top speed.

The others weren't far behind, but the newly formed creature was catching up. I knew at this point we weren't going to make it. So I made up my mind to take this whole base and ourselves with it. We all stopped at the computer room. But the creature lashed out and grabbed Sam. Dan and I ran into the room before locking the door behind us. Trouble was that there was a window where we could see Sam, with only one arm, banging at the door before the creature grabbed him again and the whole window was covered in Sam's blood. I saw the self-destruct lever and put my hand on it. The computer acknowledged my DNA.

"It was good knowing you," I told Dan.

"Likewise," he answered.

The creature busted the door open and ripped opened Dan chest with claws, making his guts go everywhere.

"Stuff you, you bloody monster," I yelled at him, pulling the lever.

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Next moment I found myself dressed in fresh clothing, in a white room with a young man in metal armour staring at me. He carried guns and had crazy, brown hair. On the file he had, there was a "T" inside a hexagon. He showed me horrific pictures, like all my friends' corpses.

"We need to know about your business with the Rolanoc."

I don't know why but I just talked.

"It came from nowhere and killed us all. We took the whole base with it. I..."

I looked up at him.

“Do I have any traces from it,” I asked them.

“We’ve dealt with the Rolanoc before,” the man answered.

“It mustn’t get out to the world,” I warned them, “It mustn’t...”

Suddenly, my stomach lurched as though there was a creature inside as I felt blood vomiting from me. I saw from my blurry vision that the man was yelling for assistance, but I felt a tremendous pain as my stomach exploded. This was how the world ended.