

Westcrest

Episode #10: Brain Bug

Marcus Tel-Ur doesn't park outside the gas station because he needs fuel; the motorbike runs on high-octane blend, a secret formulae closely guarded by Conor. But he's been on patrol all night, sweeping the streets, stopping to glance occasionally at the silver pocket watch he keeps in his jacket and he's bored and hungry and figures that a soggy hot dog is exactly what he needs.

It's not by chance that he chooses to stop here and now, at this particular gas station on this particular corner; not some random coincidence. No, the very universe itself has conspired to bring Marcus here, because it's exactly where he needs to be.

And besides, something's about to explode.

Marcus hears the screeching of brakes but barely has time to turn his head as the blue car careens into the station. It clips a pump and inside the store somebody screams and drops a packet of crisps.

Swearing, Marcus steps outside and starts towards the car. It has come to rest on the concrete verge, but there's already a pool of dark liquid forming beneath it and somewhere beneath the hood of the car, Marcus can smell burning.

The figure behind the wheel remains slumped over and unmoving. Marcus wrestles with the car door, even as voices begin calling out behind him.

"Hey Mister, get away from there, that whole thing's gonna' blow!"

Marcus hears the voices, but ignores them. He ignores everything, in fact, except for the door that he's trying to open. Finally he gets it to move. The smell of petrol is stronger now and he knows that there will only be a few minutes until the wreck goes up in flames. There's sirens in the distance and Marcus intends on being gone before they get here.

The door opens and Marcus reaches inside with his big hands, grabbing for the figure behind the wheel. As his hands grip the driver's shirt a face turns to leer at him, eyes bulging from their sockets, tongue lolling from a mouth barely able to form words:

"It's... eating... my... brain..."

Then the car explodes and Marcus flies backwards. He strikes the concrete hard and winces. One side of him feels like it's on fire—in fact, it probably *is* on fire—but for now all he can do is lay here and think about those words.

It's eating my brain.

The sirens are growing louder now and Marcus struggles to retain consciousness. He remembers that he left the conveyance in a nearby alleyway and hopes that nobody decides to investigate its peculiar modifications.

Everything fades to black.