

The Mould We Live In

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. HDB CORRIDOR - MORNING

Hung on the ledge handle, a torn pink paper lantern rustles in the wind.

The focus shifts the car park below, where the SCOUT jogs past. She is wearing a small headset, a camera clipped to her running top, a belt bag, and a backpack.

EXT. BRIDGE - MORNING

The Scout runs up the highway bridge, with skyscrapers on the horizon. We hear an electronically distorted male voice, from the OPERATOR:

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Okay Scout, it's a simple mission today.

EXT. CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT ROADS - DAY

The paths and roads are littered with zombies standing still. Some zombies have BLACK MOULD growing on their bodies. The outlines and tones of the mould are tinged with sepia colours.

As the Scout runs through various roads, a light on her headset blinks in sync with the Operator's voice.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
It's nothing too difficult. All the zombies here are still hibernating.

The Scout runs through a road with more zombies, and she weaves through them without fear.

OPERATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
You just need to inject a syringe into the mould growth. Got it?

SCOUT
(slightly
breathless)
Got it.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
(cheerfully)
And you don't even need to use any weapons.

SCOUT

Mm.

We follow the Scout as she runs through a road packed with cars, some with motionless zombies slouched inside them.

As she runs, we see that some roads are cracked with potholes, while others are dotted with puddles and growths of fungus.

EXT. CENTRAL SQUARE - DAY

While the Scout moves through grass patches, we see even more zombies, some completely covered in the black mould to form human silhouettes. It is a grim crowd of black figures.

Tired, the Scout stops running to catch her breath. She squats down to her knees, then looks up at a pair of black silhouettes holding hands.

The edges of the frame blur.

We cut between the SCOUT and one of the figures during the argument:

SCOUT (V.O.)
(echoing)
I'm not going to tell them.

PARTNER (V.O.)
(echoing, accusatory)
Still?

Beat.

SCOUT (V.O.)
(echoing)
And I'm not going out. I... don't
want anyone to see us.

Beat.

SCOUT (V.O.) (cont'd)
Wait!

We see both figures, and we hear a door slam that echoes and fades out.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Scout?

Eyes widening, the Scout is jolted back to reality.

SCOUT
(hurriedly)
It's nothing.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Oh. Anyway, your target is just a few
blocks away.

The Scout turns to jog ahead through the path. She jogs
between the tight crowds of zombies.

OPERATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
I'm sorry Scout, there isn't much of
a break after this. Once you're done
with this mission, you need to get to
the park.

The Scout's face darkens. We see a wide shot of the horde of
blackened zombies.

OPERATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
They really underestimated the work
there.

SCOUT
Mm.

The Scout continues running to leave the square behind.

EXT. FUNGUS-INFESTED ROAD

The Scout is reaching an intersection, tired and sweating
hard.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Okay Scout, you're really close now.
It should be...

The Scout jogs past the intersection and turns right.

OPERATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
...on your right.

The Scout stops and looks up. We see a huge mass of BLACK
FUNGUS in the middle of the road, many stories high. Its
strands are attached to two tall buildings, and it is
pulsing gently, as if it is breathing.

OPERATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
Oh. Okay...

We see the Scout more closely—she is taken aback too. She
walks towards the fungus gingerly.

OPERATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
Don't worry. You just need to use the
syringe, right?

SCOUT
(swings out backpack)
Mm.

The Scout throws her backpack on the ground, then rummages through it. We see the inside of the bag, filled with survival supplies and devices, but there is no syringe.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Ugh. Those idiots should have packed
it somewhere.

Panicking, the Scout tears more pockets open, but the syringe is still nowhere to be found.

We see the surface of the fungus more closely. A few APPENDAGES begin to grow from it, then they stretch towards the Scout.

OPERATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
You tried the top pocket yet?

From both sides, the giant appendages are surrounding the Scout, like a white blood cell swallowing a germ. A shadow grows above the Scout, but she is totally unaware of this.

OPERATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
Wait... watch out—

The appendages pounce out to envelop the Scout inside them.

SMASH TO BLACK.

EXT. HDB CORRIDOR - DAY

The edges of the frame are slightly blurred. The colours are of sepia tones, contrasting with the other scenes and reminiscent of the mould.

The Scout is sitting on the HDB unit's steps, tying her shoelaces. She is wearing a white shirt, and different clothing from the earlier scenes.

The PARTNER, wearing a pink T-shirt, is standing further ahead in the corridor, waiting for her.

PARTNER
Let's go.

The Partner checks her smartphone.

PARTNER (cont'd)
If we have time, we can still make it
to the park.

The Scout finishes her shoelaces, and runs up to the Partner. They walk through the corridor.

The SCOUT looks anxious.

SCOUT
Maybe. I don't know.

She looks up at the Partner.

SCOUT (cont'd)
I just... didn't want to keep quiet
any—

Suddenly, our vision completely blurs, and the SCOUT stops walking to hunch over. Nauseous.

The Partner keeps walking forward obliviously.

The Scout's eyes shift down. She opens up her belt bag—which is now the same one as before. The Scout is surprised by something inside, but we do not see the item.

Our vision clears, and the Scout gets back up. The camera is now framed above her hands.

PARTNER
(concerned)
Are you okay?

The Scout flashes a look of determination, breathes out, then hugs her Partner.

We briefly see that one of her fists is closed, but the Scout's movement was too fast for us to make out what she was holding.

SCOUT
I... don't know.

The Partner opens her mouth to respond—but suddenly, her eyes widen. From behind the Partner, we see that the Scout is clutching the SYRINGE, now stabbed into the Partner's back.

SCOUT (cont'd)
I'm sorry.

Weak, the Partner collapses onto the Scout, and the Scout continues to embrace her.

SCOUT (cont'd)
(voice cracking)
I can't... let anyone know about us.

Around the site of injection, black ooze bubbles up, and the Partner's skin grows black. As the Scout still clutches the Partner's body, it collapses into black liquid.

SCOUT (cont'd)
I'm so sorry...

We see that black fungus is creeping through the walls and floor, cracking the concrete. The Scout is on the floor, hand on her face, on the verge of breaking down.

The scene turns black and the building crumbles into mould, causing the SCOUT to free-fall through darkness.

FADE TO BLACK.

SCOUT (V.O.)
I still can't... let anyone know.

EXT. FUNGUS-INFESTED ROAD - DAY

We see a sky with dark clouds. There are buildings on the edges of our vision. Then we look down at the Scout, who is unconscious, lying down and covered in black goo.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
(distorted with bubbling noises)
Scout? Scout? Do you copy? Scout?

The Scout opens her eyes and slowly sits up. Then she quickly rubs the headset's ear-cups and its microphone, wiping off the black-brown goo.

She puts the headset back on.

OPERATOR (V.O.) (cont'd)
Scout? Scout! Scout!

SCOUT
Yes, I'm here!

The Scout wipes her slimed hands on her running shirt, spreading the goo all over it.

SCOUT (cont'd)
Sorry. I'm fine.

EXT. GATES OUTSIDE SAFETY AREA - DAY

The Scout reaches a pair of metal gates. It slowly opens to reveal a busy scene of scientists, civilian volunteers, and vans.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
What happened—

The Scout walks into the zone, and the scientists run over to escort her.

SCOUT (V.O.)
The fungus swallowed me. But I
injected the syringe inside it, so
it's now a pool of slime.

The scientists lead her to a small white building. She walks through the chaos of the area, through the volunteers unloading zombie corpses.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Oh, gosh. You okay?

SCOUT (V.O.)
I think so?

The Operator exhales in relief.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Okay... first, you need to get back
here.

INT. SCANNING ROOM - DAY

The Scout stretches out her arms to her sides, closes her eyes, then a red laser scans her slowly from left to right.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
The science team will give you a
check-up.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Lying in a hospital bed, the Scout is listening to a doctor's questions. She is now clean, and in a hospital gown.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
And if it's all clear, we'll redeploy
you to the clean-up crew.

INT. VAN - DAY

The Scout looks out of the window, where there is a green field packed with hibernating zombies wearing pink T-shirts. This is the park.

OPERATOR (V.O.)

There's a lot we have to clean up.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Many other Scouts and volunteers are killing zombies, carrying zombie corpses, or throwing them into vans.

SCOUT (V.O.)

Yeah. I know.

Another Scout passes our Scout zombie corpses, then our Scout stuffs them into the back of the vehicle.

To kill the zombies, Scouts and volunteers are zapping the zombies from the back of their heads with a taser-like device, causing the zombies to collapse into lifeless corpses.

From inside the van, we see a mid-shot of the Scout, who is turning around to take another corpse. As she heaves the body onto the van, she glances at the corpse's face.

For a moment, she is shocked, then she attempts to hide her twinges of grief.

The Scout closes the van door.

FADE OUT.