

UEA Creative Writing Anthology 2011

Joe Wright

Something That's Green

A Radio Comedy Drama

1. INT. PRESS CONFERENCE (FLASHBACK)

(THE EXCITED MURMURING OF A CROWD OF PEOPLE. SUDDENLY A HUSH DESCENDS OVER THEM)

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, would you please welcome our keynote speaker, the leading light of science in the twenty-first century – Dr Peter Van Lee!

(TUMULTUOUS APPLAUSE AND CHEERS. MUSIC PLAYS: TCHAIKOVSKY'S WALTZ OF THE FLOWERS)

VAN LEE

Thank you, thank you very much.

MALE VOICE

You're an inspiration to us all!

VAN LEE

Thank you all for coming.

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(THE CROWD FALLS QUIET)

VAN LEE (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen. What I've
 come to show you today marks a
 monumental turning point not only
 in molecular biology, but in the
 history of humanity. For many years
 I worked tirelessly at the forefront
 of science, whilst other men took
 the plaudits for my efforts –

(THE CROWD BOO AND JEER)

FEMALE VOICE

Leeches!

VAN LEE (CONT'D)

But I have not come here to chastise
 them. I have come to appeal to
 them, to open their eyes to the
 truth that I shall now uncover. A
 truth that will change the world
 forever!

(MORE CHEERING)

VAN LEE (CONT'D)

Since the dawn of our existence, man
 has searched the skies and beyond
 for beings of similar intelligence to
 our own. Alien lifeforms from a
 distant galaxy, messages sent from
 across the cosmos ... we wanted to
 believe that there were others just
 like us: sentient,

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(MORE CHEERING)

wise and powerful, with whom we can share in the wonders of the universe. In all that time, our search has been fruitless. But today, ladies and gentlemen, today I can declare – it is fruitless no more!

(RAPTUROUS CHEERING AND APPLAUSE)

VAN LEE (CONT'D)

We were so busy exploring the heavens that we did not think to look where we stood. The mightiest discovery in biological history lay in wait at our feet, and all we had to do was bend down and see it!

(LAUGHTER FROM THE CROWD)

ELLEN

Get to the point, Peter. You're teasing them all.

VAN LEE

You're quite right, my dear. Well ladies and gentlemen, we come now to the main point of my announcement: what we are to do with this discovery. For you see, these beings need help if they are to reach out to the rest of the earth. And they must be. They must be allowed to meet with humanity, and it is I who must give them that chance.

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MALE VOICE

God bless you, sir!

VAN LEE

I am proud to be of service to them.
And even more proud to do so with
my Ellen by my side, for the sake of
humanity, and for the sake of us all!

(MORE CHEERING. THE CROWD IS GROWING RESTLESS AND EXCITED)

ELLEN

You are a true hero, Peter. We shall
be forever in your debt. I'm so proud
of you.

VAN LEE

It's all for you, Ellen. It always has
been.

(HE ADDRESSES THE PUMPED-UP CROWD)

VAN LEE (CONT'D)

And now, ladies and gentlemen: it is
time. Enjoy the feast!

(A LOUD GUNSHOT. A BODY THUMPS TO THE FLOOR. THE CROWD
EXPLODE WITH FEVERISH CRIES AND CHEERS)

2. INT. LABORATORY (PRESENT)

(A TAPE RECORDER IS BEING REWOUND. FOOTSTEPS APPROACH)

JOHN

Still here, Mike?

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MIKE

Jesus!

JOHN

Relax, it's all right.

MIKE

Sorry. You made me jump.

JOHN

I'm not surprised. It's eerie in here.

MIKE

Everyone else gone?

JOHN

It's 9.30. Most of them enjoy going home to their families.

MIKE

I didn't know it was so late.

(THE TAPE RECORDER CLICKS TO A STOP)

JOHN

Found something?

MIKE

What? Oh, no, nothing.

JOHN

What's that?

MIKE

Just a recording I made today. Whilst I was looking around the place.

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Y'know, to make sure I didn't miss anything.

JOHN

Right.

(A PAUSE)

MIKE

Still no trace of this guy?

JOHN

Nothing. No CCTV from outside, no signs of a struggle in here. He's vanished.

MIKE

Who made the call?

JOHN

An old woman, lives across the road apparently. Said she used to see him come out every evening, then suddenly – nothing.

MIKE

You'd think his family might've known something. Or friends.

JOHN

Doesn't have any. There was one other biologist – Hart, I think his name was. He's the only one who'd spoken to him recently.

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MIKE

(HASTILY)

Did you talk to him?

JOHN

A think Alison went to see him.
Nothing out of the ordinary,
apparently.

MIKE

Right.

(A BEAT)

MIKE (CONT'D)

Odd, isn't it?

JOHN

At least we know there's nothing
dangerous in here now. Forensics
said the lab was safe, no
contaminants or 'harmful
specimens' as they put it.

MIKE

Well that's good.

JOHN

Mmm.

(PAUSE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Are you all right, Mike?

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MIKE

Yes, why?

JOHN

You seem a bit on edge.

MIKE

Oh. Well, it's just being here, y'know. I never like Missing Persons scenes. I've always got this idea that they're gonna jump out at you at any moment.

(JOHN LAUGHS)

JOHN

Don't worry, we've checked all the cupboards. You're quite safe.

(MIKE LAUGHS – A LITTLE TOO FORCEDLY)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Anyway, we're done for the day. We're sealing the place up tonight, in case the press get wind of this.

MIKE

Oh, right.

JOHN

The rest of CID are off to the Crown if you fancy it?

MIKE

Yeah, yeah, why not. Nice drink, steady the nerves and that.

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JOHN

(SCEPTICALLY)

Yes. Shall we?

MIKE

You go on ahead, I'll meet you there.

JOHN

Why?

MIKE

Oh, I want to take a couple of extra shots, that's all. I don't want to have missed anything.

JOHN

We've scoured the place, Mike. We won't miss anything.

MIKE

I know, but I get pedantic like that.

(BEAT)

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'll be down in a bit.

JOHN

OK.

MIKE

Get me a lager, would you?

JOHN

Sure. But get a move on.

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MIKE

Right.

(FOOTSTEPS AS JOHN MOVES AWAY. A HEAVY DOOR SLIDES TO A CLOSE. THE LOCK CLICKS. MIKE FUMBLES IN HIS POCKET, AND DIALS A NUMBER ON A MOBILE PHONE. IT RINGS FOR A MOMENT)

MIKE (CONT'D)

Come on!

(A CLICK AS THE CALL IS RECEIVED)

MIKE (CONT'D)

The coast is clear. It's just me. And I've found something you're going to love.

Joe Wright has been passionate about creative writing since a very young age; studying English Literature and Drama at BA level and then the MA in Scriptwriting at UEA has allowed his interest to flourish. He has written scripts for all performance media, but stage writing is where he feels most at home.