PETREFLECTORS

Synopsis

by

John M. Bodkin

In a Pennsylvania town at war over fracking, high school seniors Adrian and Emma know they should avoid each other. His mom and her grandpa are arch enemies. But when the teens stumble upon creatures that emerge from river reflections, pulse with low-frequency sound and speak in an ancient language, Adrian and Emma forget the feud and slowly give in to an attraction they both feel. They have no choice.

They have been chosen to save the world.

After 10,000 years, petreflectors are back on earth. "Human fate rests in human hands," Trunk says. The tall Akeeli petreflector has materialized along with six other bizarre creatures on a desperate mission: to free his Akeeli army for battle against a Morga petreflector invasion that will soon destroy planetary life. The problem is, Trunk cannot free his army without human help.

It all starts when Adrian and Emma, Rick Blake, their drama teacher, and their fellow actors Ramon, Susie Chou, Franklin and Sophie camp on a river island. They hear a giant pulse and find a steaming crater in the riverbed. Local cops and a pretty Standish Oil and Gas geologist, Charlayne Billings, are baffled after surveying the site the next day. When Adrian returns to the island alone, the spider-like Morga King attacks him. Trunk saves Adrian's life in a battle that leaves fresh craters. Terrified, Adrian flees. Although he doubts his own mind, he is the first human to see petreflectors.

To prove to himself that he's not hallucinating, he convinces Emma to wade across to the island with him. Now Emma sees them, too. There's no turning back.

The Akeeli ask Adrian and Emma to bring the others who also camped on the island when they first emerged. Fate has chosen them, as well. Half-convinced that something is going on, Rick Blake and the other actors follow Adrian and Emma to the island after school. As daylight fades, a pack of dog-sized Morga attack them, tearing off sparkling spirit flesh. The seven Akeeli save their lives and heal Susie Chou, but neglect to heal Rick Blake of a Morga bite on his left hand.

Rick Blake and the teens believe what they see. They know the petreflectors are real, and so is the impending danger. Moving like unhatched wasps behind their reflection doorways, the Morga army awaits the arrival of a mysterious "light front." It will

strike on Saturday, in four days. Time is short.

Trunk tells them that he, Fuzz, Eyebrows, Hornet, Weeper, Gnome and Elbows — the seven Akeeli — are only an advance guard, hopelessly outnumbered by Morga unless the humans accept and use the Akeeli's gift. If they accept, then each teen and Rick Blake will wield one minute of supernatural power. They cannot tell each other what it is or they will lose it. If they use it twice, the power will kill them.

Their mission is to deliver a small stone "Origin" to a place of greed that Trunk will not reveal. If they succeed in finding the location, then human hands will have done their part and the Akeeli army will be freed from their reflection doorways along the river. The water level must be preserved, Trunk says. For Morga, it does not matter. They worship death and can take any form.

Adrian's mom, Ellie, is organizing a no-fracking rally on Saturday. Thousands of people will be in town. Along with the teens' families, all will be devoured and die under the supernatural shadow storm brought by the Morga. Unless the Akeeli army can stop the invasion, the entire earth will follow. The teens accept their powers, as does Rick Blake, but he is already changing.

The Morga poison is taking hold of Rick Blake. Soon he will deny the teens' story when they try to warn the Chief of Police, Adrian's uncle Bill, of the impending disaster on Saturday. Chalking up their wild tale to fracking fumes or drugs, neither the Chief, their parents nor anybody else in town believes them. Emma's warning on Facebook brings only ridicule.

From inside a secret facility in the woods, Harlow Standish and Charlayne Billings oversee an illegal drilling project under the river. For over a year, they have been tunneling toward a superrich shale dome just 1,000 feet below protected park land. The dome is worth ten thousand wells. Although no one knows it, when they blow the frack bomb on Saturday, earthquakes will drain the river at the worst possible moment.

Rick Blake has already met Charlayne at the river and again in a bar. Intensely attracted to each other, by Wednesday they begin an affair. On Thursday morning, when she leaves, he hides the changes taking place on the left side of his body. His fingernails are yellowed and his teeth are gray. Slowly turning into a split personality, half-human, half-Morga, Rick Blake struggles not to break into Adrian's farm in search of the Origin, but does so anyway. Over the next three days, he transforms into something hideous. He possesses an unknown Akeeli power, as well.

Meanwhile, Adrian, Emma and the others must find where to take the Origin. They begin to use their powers and soon encounter deadly situations. On Saturday, two of them will die.

As time runs out and emotions build, the story races toward scenes of geologic and human destruction mixed with CGI beauty and horrific monsters. Acts of vengeance, gun violence and love swirl in a climax that brings all the characters together.

At the explosive and revelation-filled conclusion, we learn the true nature of the petreflectors.

John M. Bodkin Writer P.O. Box 410 Bradford, NH 03221 (603) 938-5120 jmbodkin@gmail.com REG. WGAe VWNA3E670182

Contact:
Kathy Lowe
26 Otterville Road
New London, NH 03257
(603) 526-6152
kathylowebloch@comcast.net
kathylowemusic.com

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