



The first thing you see when you open your eyes is the TV. It's off. The still, black screen makes you think of the voidspace.

"Hey." You can feel the couch sink a little under Oriana's weight as she sits beside you. The weight of only one other person on a couch made for five.

"...hey." You say, feebly. You're trying to remember exactly what happened - it plays back in your head in pieces. Movie night, a dead body, a red giant, a restaurant, a forest, and a dive, deep into darkness. And a hand - "Did Jill follow us here?"

Ori nods. "I think she did. She ran off." The lounge room feels almost deceptively normal after everything you've just witnessed. "I think she believes that she can adapt to our world. I don't know if she really can. Maybe she will, maybe she'll make a life for herself, or maybe she'll just end up raving on the streets."

Everything feels absurd. "And Josh? And Leisl?"

"...I don't know. I think they're still inside a movie somewhere."

Your eyes travel down to the pile of DVDs by the tv. However ridiculous they seemed before, they seem even stranger now. People frozen in poses on the covers. Vague, abstract titles. 4 star ratings emblazoned above the names of the toughest critics.

"Do you think they'll be able to get out?" She doesn't answer.

Instead, her eyes follow yours onto the pile, and a question, unspoken, seems to rise from the images - are they somewhere friendly? Somewhere dangerous? Somewhere untarnished by obsessions with voidspace and the outside? Wherever they are, you hope they're okay.

Looking back into the kitchen, you can see photos of them on all the adventures they could afford and you couldn't. Shiba Inu, grinning and plump like furry steam buns. You check the time. Barely any time has passed since the ordeal started - maybe time moves differently inside.

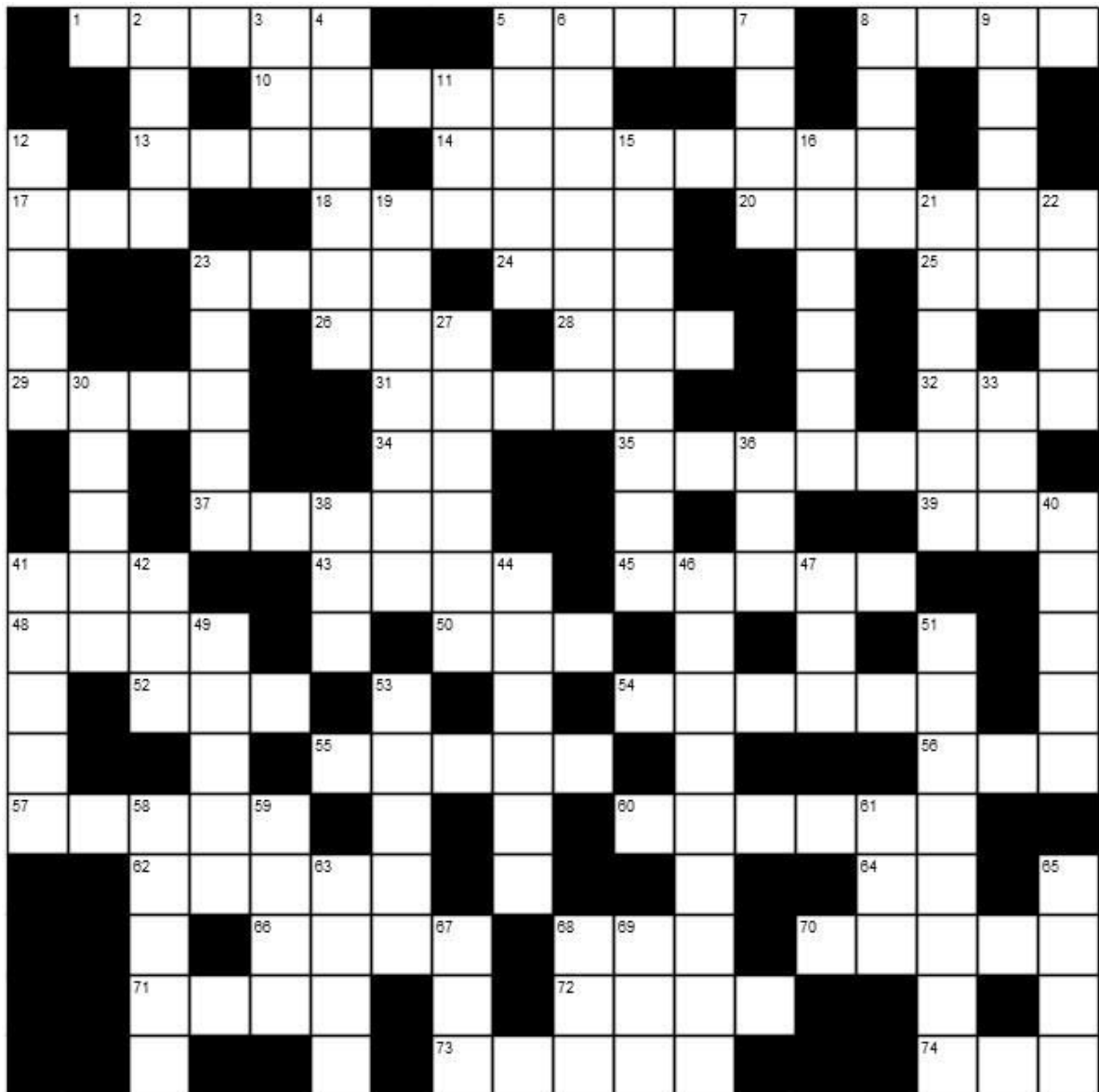
"I guess we wait." You say.

Neither of you seem to know what to do, apart from sit there, still, like a frame from a film.



Doubleter

Author: Wen Zhang





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Across

- 1 Blown feuds dissolved (5)
- 5 Lecturer/academic hides around custodian (5)
- 8 Gamble the final rest (4)
- 10 Vehicle reverses to end on animal (6)
- 13 Inspects half the paper (4)
- 14 Romantic engagement is in it (8)
- 17 Notices a gaming console (3)
- 18 Grim, distraught lemons (6)
- 20 Calm down; start organising piles (6)
- 23 Repented to a cross, I heard (4)
- 24 Alcoholic soft drink - without alcohol or reactive gas (3)
- 25 Regular, fierce anger (3)
- 26 Cut or remove powers (3)
- 28 Make a trap (3)
- 29 Ride on french foal first (4)
- 31 Thief without number is sharper (5)
- 32 It has pieces unless... (3)
- 34 Yell in noise (2)
- 35 Picture in inside (7)
- 37 Are bus pieces a puzzle (5)
- 39 Treasure and gold start with them (3)
- 41 Obedience hides support (3)
- 43 Escort hollow addict (4)
- 45 Renegade outsiders embrace endless amazing grace, for example (5)
- 48 Apple feature around a plant (4)
- 50 Child in prison (3)
- 52 Discipline not about wordplay (3)
- 54 Carry-on box (6)
- 55 Dames head in with calibre (5)
- 56 1,500 plus (3)
- 57 Rioter about fall left (5)
- 60 Charging hard (6)
- 62 Song lyrics' first font (5)
- 64 Alternatively bless earth? (2)
- 66 Steers oxygen shells (4)
- 68 Confused expression or invitation of agreement? (3)
- 70 Mark it after artwork (5)
- 71 Sea eagle decapitated sea bird near sea centre (4)
- 72 Emit weird element (4)
- 73 Assumes without greeting presents (5)
- 74 Swallow left from fall (3)

Down

- 2 Luke Skywalker hides short instruments (4)
- 3 Times are changing (3)
- 4 Reservoirs help central people in distress (6)
- 5 Fake ethics ends morals (5)
- 6 Spiky sea creature enema – no, awful! (6)
- 7 Attack their final support (4)
- 8 Half a country makes machines (4)
- 9 Eater, inside, eats type of meat backwards (5)
- 11 Fuel endless twists (3)
- 12 Headquarter's premises (5)
- 15 An absurd rioter is in front (8)
- 16 Locating it in pipe (6)
- 19 Rank of Germany or of America? (7)
- 21 Stylish home in PG mooning (6)
- 22 First layer eyes never see (4)
- 23 Direct witness with hesitation (5)
- 27 Conceals, without disrespect, clothes (6)
- 30 Guide our group and the woman (5)
- 33 Small peg for certain shirt (3)
- 36 Some of many (3)
- 38 Still bath is overturned (3)
- 40 Entertained without a thought (5)
- 41 Confuse tribe dog, for example (5)
- 42 Note: address decline (3)
- 44 Schedule resort at sea (6)
- 46 First ailments start endless chest pains (9)
- 47 Floor covering tangle (3)
- 49 Particularly brilliant (5)
- 51 Ivanovic posts pics of wordplays (8)
- 53 Steal a gun (5)
- 58 Stripped, drab, even at first messy (5)
- 59 List item about animal (4)
- 61 Neither what a cow has or a crow hasn't? (3)
- 63 Woodcutters' lines (4)
- 65 Walk animals back (4)
- 67 Sweep around pile (3)
- 68 Their greetings (3)
- 69 Vehicle finishes commute (3)