

Encapsulated Season 3 Episode 2

FADE IN:

INT. WHITE HOUSE PRESS ROOM - DAY

The room is packed full of reporters. There's a buzz of activity as the media awaits the president.

Rather comically, the room is filled with doppelgängers: there are the normal humans who typically occupy the room, and for many of them, their grinning alien doubles.

The aliens seem tethered to their humans: following them; mimicking them; having 'conversations'; and 'setting up equipment'. Although their conversations consist solely of 'mrr mrr mrr', and they have no clue how to work the cameras or microphones.

It's a bit of a mess. And not everyone has an alien double with them. Amidst the noise, there's a loud crash when one of the aliens knocks over his human's camera.

CAMERA-MAN 1

Come on! A little help here!

A few other camera operators go to help... As do their alien duplicates, who follow them dutifully, like puppies, with adorable grins plastered on their faces.

CAMERA-MAN 2

You alright?

ALIEN CAMERA-MAN 2

Mrr mrr mrr?

CAMERA-MAN 1

I'm fine, just get this... THING... out of here!

Camera-man 2 easily maneuvers camera-man 1's alien towards the main entrance/exit.

The alien smiles and doesn't put up a fight, although he does try to walk back to camera-man 1.

In the outer hall, there are a few dozen aliens crowded at the entrance, smiling, murmuring (literally), and eager to join their humans.

Camera-man 2 gently pushes the camera-man 1 duplicate into the group. Meanwhile, camera-man 2's own alien is standing at his side, observing but doing nothing.

CAMERA-MAN 2

There you are... Go talk to your friends.

ALIEN CAMERA-MAN 2

Mrr mrr mrr mrr.

ALIEN CAMERA-MAN 1

Mrr mrr.

Although the camera-man 1 alien tries to get back inside, like the others in the corridor, he's not very forceful, and camera-man 2 has no difficulty keeping them all out.

Back in the main room, there's a flurry of activity, and everybody starts snapping photos and talking. Camera-man 2 rushes back to his post, along with his alien.

Just in time. In walks PRESIDENT DAVE MURPHY (62) with a sincere, but exasperated grin, and his equally 'happy', smartly-dressed alien double. Everybody starts asking questions amidst a sea of flashing cameras.

Dave gestures for them to settle down, and his alien makes the exact same gesture. There's a chuckle from the humans, and a corresponding 'mrr mrr' from the aliens.

Dave approaches the podium, his alien grinning politely at his side. He waits for the noise to die down, and then he begins his speech.

DAVE

Good morning, my fellow Americans, and good morning to our visitors from outer space.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

There's more laughter, and more murmuring. The alien's impression of the president is comically uncanny.

DAVE

(chuckling)

Obviously, the last forty-eight hours have been... Unique. I'd like to-

ALIEN DAVE

(talking over him)

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

Dave stops and chuckles again. He looks at his double, who looks back happily.

DAVE

You can't imagine how fun it's been trying to prep for this meeting.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

For the rest of his speech, the alien continues to talk over him, but Dave powers through. Although there are regular laughs and chuckles, both from him and the media.

DAVE

Let me walk you through what we know, and then we'll open the floor for questions.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

I'll keep this brief. One. The aliens appear to have landed everywhere, not just in America.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

It also appears that EVERYBODY has their own matching alien, or will have one soon, depending on how far their nearest ship is from you.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

If you do NOT meet your corresponding alien within the next week or two, please contact the newly established Center for Alien Research.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

The Center is currently working to create a public database, so that we can better monitor and understand our new visitors. Any anomalies or 'missing' duplicates may be the key to unlocking why they're here, so please reach out.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

Also, no need to go looking for your double. Seems like they'll come to you.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

The real Dave pauses, looks at the alien, and grins.

DAVE

You don't quit, do you? You've got a great future in politics!

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr!

The audience laughs. Dave turns back to them.

DAVE

He's handsome, too.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr.

More laughter. He waits for them to settle down.

DAVE

Alright. Second. I cannot stress this enough. They seem to be BENIGN. By all accounts, they come in peace, they do NOT appear to be hostile.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

I urge you, please do NOT agitate them or cause them harm. We still don't know why they're here, and we don't want to accidentally start an interstellar war. But again, they seem HARMLESS, so there's no need to panic.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

Third. Their arrival was almost instantaneous, and we did not observe any objects approaching Earth prior to their arrival. They just dropped out of the sky everywhere they landed, without warning, didn't even show up on radar.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

I've met with the director of NASA, and her conclusion is that the aliens may have used faster-than-light travel or a wormhole, but at this point, we just don't know.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

Now, just as we don't know HOW they got here, we don't know WHERE they came from. As you've all certainly experienced, they aren't exactly... Well, they're rather monosyllabic.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

Obviously, this makes communication with them next to impossible. But my advisors tell me, and I happen to agree, that even if we were able to translate their speech, it may very well be our own words parroted back.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

In other words, their origins and purpose are still unknown, but we are working tirelessly to get you answers as we learn more.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

Fourth and final point, before we open the floor for questions. UNTIL we learn more, I strongly urge you to let them observe you, and show them your day-to-day routine.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

They do seem to be mute until they meet you, but once they've found their counterpart, they learn quickly how to behave and act like you, sort of like a parrot.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

And while their vocabulary may be limited, they seem eager to conform. So please be kind and... Show them the human experience. Imagine they're the new kid at school, shadowing you

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

Who knows, maybe they'll be fully independent some day. Our thinking is, the sooner they can learn how to BE like you, the sooner they stop FOLLOWING you.

(pauses)

At any rate, we know about as much as you do. We're all in the same boat. With that, I'll now address any questions you may have.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

Immediately, all the reporters raise their hands and vie for his attention. Their alien doubles also raise their hands and murmur loudly.

Dave points to one of the reporters, as does his double. The reporter and her double both stand up.

REPORTER 1

What should we do about their spaceships? Should we stay away from them? Try to move them?

ALIEN REPORTER 1

Mrr mrr mrr mrr? Mrr mrr mrr mrr? Mrr mrr mrr?

DAVE

Excellent question. I recommend staying away if you can, although they seem to be as harmless as the aliens themselves, and our initial tests conclude there are no signs of radioactivity.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

However, if the ship is blocking the road or is inconveniently located, please contact your local fire department, and they'll do their best to either move them, or find a way around.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

DAVE

Great question. Yes?

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr. Mrr?

He and the alien call on another reporter.

REPORTER 2

Where are they from?

ALIEN REPORTER 2

Mrr mrr mrr mrr?

DAVE

Like I said earlier, we don't know.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

REPORTER 2

Follow-up question - why are they here?

ALIEN REPORTER 2

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr?

DAVE

... Again, we don't know. Yes?

ALIEN DAVE

... Mrr mrr mrr. Mrr?

They call on another reporter.

REPORTER 3

Are they dangerous? Should we panic?

ALIEN REPORTER 3

Mrr mrr mrr? Mrr mrr mrr?

Dave seems mildly annoyed.

DAVE

Well, as I said earlier, they seem benign, but we just don't know.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

They point to another reporter.

REPORTER 4

Star Trek, or Star Wars?

ALIEN REPORTER 4

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr?

DAVE

Umm.. Offhand, some of my cabinet members keep alluding to 'Tribbles', which I believe is a reference from Star Trek...?

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

The reporters all seem particularly interested with this line of questioning, and satisfied with Dave's answer. There's a lull as they all write notes, while their alien doubles pantomime writing alongside them.

Finally, hands go back up. Next question. This is from a reporter who doesn't have his alien with him.

REPORTER 5

Their arrival, particularly that they follow us everywhere, is quite the disruptive paradigm... What if we don't want to be followed?

DAVE

Good question. As you may have observed from the hallway outside, it's not difficult to sequester the aliens. If you feel so inclined, we ask that you do so carefully and non-violently.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

They call on the next reporter.

REPORTER 6

Do our pets get one too?

ALIEN REPORTER 6

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr?

DAVE

What? Umm, no, I don't think so, they only seem to imitate humans.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr? Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

REPORTER 6

Follow-up question. Will our in-laws get them?

ALIEN REPORTER 6

Mrr mrr. Mrr mrr mrr mrr?

DAVE

... Yes, everyone seems to have one, so your in-laws would be included.

ALIEN DAVE

... Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

Again, for reasons unknown to Dave, these questions seem to be of the utmost importance, and there's another pause as they all write notes, which lasts for almost a minute.

Dave waits patiently. He's trying to mask his exasperation at their line of questions, and he sighs heavily - which the alien, surprisingly, doesn't mimic.

The press doesn't seem to notice, and after a bit, they're ready for the next question.

REPORTER 7

Can they die?

ALIEN REPORTER 7

Mrr mrr mrr?

DAVE

They certainly seem durable. And there have not been any reports of them dying. So I'd say that, tentatively, no, they can't die. But it is still a possibility. We just don't know.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

Next question.

REPORTER 8

Can they eat?

ALIEN REPORTER 8

Mrr mrr mrr?

DAVE

Yes, we have observed them eating when their human counterparts eat. And they also drink whenever their doubles drink. Here, let me...

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

Dave turns back and whispers to his advisor (so does his alien double). The advisor steps away, then returns after a few seconds with a water bottle.

Dave takes a sip, then hands the bottle to his double, who gladly drinks from it in the exact same manner as Dave.

Dave smiles and waits as the cameras capture the moment. After he's done, the grinning double hands the bottle back to the advisor.

DAVE

He learns fast, doesn't he? So yes, they can eat and drink. Now, we don't know if they REQUIRE food and water to survive, but I'd recommend sharing with them if you're able to.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr? Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

REPORTER 8

One more question. Where are they from?

ALIEN REPORTER 8

Mrr mrr mrr. Mrr mrr mrr mrr?

Dave sighs again, but his alien doesn't. As the reporters await his response, he glances at the alien curiously, but then refocuses on the reporters.

DAVE

I hate to sound like a broken record, sir, but, we just don't know.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

They call on the next reporter, when suddenly, there's a shouting and a commotion outside. The doors swing open and a crazed PROTESTOR stumbles inside.

PROTESTOR

Don't let 'em follow you! They're evil, they're all from CHINA, and they're here to DESTROY US, to MONITOR US! Don't believe the lies they're feeding you! WAKE UP! It's all a ruse! They do NOT come in peace!

As the protestor rants, there's a chorus of murmurs as the aliens who were trapped in the hall try to reunite with their humans (now that the door's open).

It's a comical scene. The protestor is swarmed by clueless aliens who eagerly relocate their humans. While the humans who had kept them outside are less than thrilled.

Up front, Dave and his double are simultaneously motioning for everybody to stay calm. And in the ensuing panic, the secret service agents are able to quickly and effortlessly apprehend the protestor.

PROTESTOR

Get your hands off me! LIES! LIES!! Lock 'em up! They're here to kill us! Don't trust 'em!

The agents forcibly remove him. However, their duplicates don't take any action, they just stay in place and smile as the agents drag the man away. He keeps ranting.

PROTESTORS

It's an invasion! Don't let them in your homes!
Don't talk to them! Lock 'em up! Blow up their
ships and try to kill 'em any way you can!

Finally, he's out of earshot. But inside the press room, things aren't any more civil.

Amongst the media, there's chaos and shouting. Several of the humans are livid that their duplicates are back, and they're angrily forcing them back to the hallway.

REPORTER 5

I thought I told you to LEAVE ME ALONE!

REPORTER 9

Get the hell out, what are you, deaf?!

CAMERA-MAN 1

No no no, not the camera, stop! Out!

The aliens don't mind being herded out or berated, they just grin and take the abuse. Meanwhile, Dave is trying to change people's minds.

DAVE

Everyone, please, try and stay calm, and let our guests stay here with us. They aren't hurting us, and they are NOT secretly from China.

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr.

DAVE

They don't mean to hurt us. Now if we could all just calm down...

ALIEN DAVE

Mrr mrr mrr mrr mrr...

Dave stops and looks around the room. Something seems to click internally.

He sees the secret service doubles, not doing anything to subdue the protestor.

He sees the angry reporters and camera operators, yelling at their doubles to stop following them, but the doubles just smile and say nothing.

He thinks back to his own double, not being frustrated even when he himself was.

DAVE
(to his double)
May I?

ALIEN DAVE
Mrr mrr?

Dave smiles and extends his hand to his double. His double takes it, and Dave silently raises their clasped hands as a sign of solidarity.

Slowly the press takes notice. Now the real Dave is doing the imitation. He has a sincere, harmless, goofy grin that perfectly matches his alien's.

FADE OUT.