

Ninety Degrees South

EPISODE FOUR: All I Have Left Are Memories.

Brian M Bradley

INTRO MUSIC

PA BELL OPEN

CHERYL-LYNN:
(VO / OVERHEAD SPEAKER)

Good Morning, Ya'll and I hope all my poleies are doing wonderful this morning. Today is Monday, October 11th, and it's 09:00 on the tick. This is Ms. Cheryl-Lynn here with your South Pole daily announcements!

OVERHEAD SPEAKER -TAPE RECORDER BUTTON SOUND, CHEESY FANFAIR MUSIC PLAYS, TAPE RECORDER BUTTON SOUND.

CHERYL-LYNN:
(VO / OVERHEAD SPEAKER)

Today, we'll have TWO cargo flights coming into PAX terminal. First scheduled for 10:50 hours and will have food stores resupply and consumables knick-knacks. The second arrival is at 15:10 Hrs. Chemicals and electrical components will arrive. Ya'll in cargo teams 3, and 7 need to skedaddle to make sure offloading don't go kaddie-whompus.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER -TAPE RECORDER BUTTON SOUND, CHEESY FANFAIR MUSIC PLAYS, TAPE RECORDER BUTTON SOUND.

CHERYL-LYNN:
(VO / OVERHEAD SPEAKER) (excited)

Now listen up ya'll, the start time for the Ice-Picks volleyball team practice has been moved from 17:00 to 17:30. Coach Glenn reminds you to drink lots of that water to hydrate and stop flexing when you check your watches on the floor; you ain't Val Kilmer!

OVERHEAD SPEAKER -TAPE RECORDER BUTTON SOUND, CHEESY FANFAIR MUSIC PLAYS, TAPE RECORDER BUTTON SOUND.

CHERYL-LYNN:
(VO / OVERHEAD SPEAKER)

Our activities director will host part 2 in a 5 part (struggle with name) 'Cure-o-saw-ah'? 'Kur-os-ahh-wha'... 'Kuroo-sa-wa'... film festival tonight at 20:00 hours after supper's through. Ya'll come to the B-1 Lounge, and you can watch...oh lord...Kak-ooo-shee tor-iddee-no-sa-ack-you-nin. With subtitles even. Ya'll have fun tonight, I like to watch my shows, not read 'em ... so Imma pass.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER -TAPE RECORDER BUTTON SOUND, CHEESY OLD TIME DOO DOO DOO DOO DATELINE SOUND PLAYS, TAPE RECORDER BUTTON SOUND.

CHERYL-LYNN:
(VO / OVERHEAD SPEAKER)

This just in from Lunch-Lady Alice. Lunch specials Today are Philly Cheesesteak, Sloppy-Joe sandwiches, or Ms. Alice's own Potato-salad surprise. For supper, we got specials of Flank steak, Asian style. Chicken-fried steak...mmmmm yum yum, and for all ya'll California vegetarians...you have your choice of roasted Eggplant Lasagna or Creamy chickpea curry on your choice of brown or white rice.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER -TAPE RECORDER BUTTON SOUND, CHEESY FANFAIR MUSIC PLAYS, TAPE RECORDER BUTTON SOUND.

CHERYL-LYNN:
(VO / OVERHEAD SPEAKER)

Finally, A friendly reminder from our area manager, Dr. Lawrence Waynewright...ahem... We here in Amundsen-Scott South Pole Research Station welcome all our new scientist, our contract workers and bid a fond farewell to those departing. Our new, dear make-sure-you-accent-this-word deputy Marshal Marlow has assured me those found to not be of interest in the unfortunate incident last season and were scheduled to disembark will shortly be cleared to do so. On behalf of the National Science Foundation and Beauregard-Lowing Corporation, we bid you...farewell.

PAPER WAVING AS PLACED ON TABLE

CHERYL-LYNN:

(VO / OVERHEAD SPEAKER)

So there you go! I want each of my pollies to be careful and safe with your chores today! Have a wonderful and blessed day. Too-da-loo!

PA BELL CLOSE

PAUSE TWO SECONDS

ELECTRONIC BEEP, FEMALE ROBOTIC VOICE – RECORDING STARTED

WALKING DOWN HALLWAY, MODERATE HALLWAY CHATTER. DOOR OPEN ABRUPTLY

BASS:

(angrily)

Seriously Waynewright?

LARRY:

(Smugly)

COME IN! . . . oh, **DEPUTY** Marshal. . .I guess they never explained the necessity of knocking in Marshal school, huh?

BASS:

(confrontational)

I'm also guessing not obstructing a federal agent in the performance of his duties wasn't on the official distributed university syllabus? Huh?

LARRY:

(feigned shock)

Obstructing? I would never do any such thing!

BASS:

(fuming)

Then why the announcement? Why are you telling people we're letting them go?

LARRY:

(Smugly, Smug)

Did you not. . .receive the message from the Marshal Service? Did it not. . .say that the NSF required those scheduled to depart to be free to leave if found to be immaterial to the ongoing investigation?

BASS:

(Angry)

This is **my** investigation Waynewright. **I** make the determination on when somebody is immaterial or otherwise. Me! Not you, not Honolulu, and absolutely NOT some stuffed shirt bureaucrat in the NSF.

LARRY:

(Confrontational, Smug)

I respect your candor **DEPUTY** Marshal, so I will be just as direct.

CHAIR SCOOTING BACK

LARRY:

(Firm & Smug)

This is **my** research facility. This is **my** base complex. **I** am charged with overseeing the efficient operation of day-to-day activities and all scientific endeavors or experiments. **You** and your investigation will not impact that efficient operation or disrupt the higher pursuit of advancing scientific knowledge.

SILENCE, JUST OVERHEAD BASE HUM

LARRY:

(Smug)

Wonderful, then I think we have a clear understanding of one another.

CHAIR SCOOTs BACK IN

LARRY:

(Dismissive, smug)

That is all; you may leave now.

FURIOUS FOOTSTEPS OUT AND DOWN THE HALL

ELECTRONIC BOOP, FEMALE ROBOTIC VOICE – RECORDING STOPPED

ELECTRIC BEEP

BASS:

(VO), formal, Obviously still frustrated.)

Day 6. October 8th. 2021. 9:20AM. Agenda Today: Interview 5 suspects. Bustamante comma Ezekiel. J, Facilities and Chief Engineer of the station. Biggs, David & Daniel general engineers and finally, Decker, Lou. Logistics support. Interview starts at 10:00 Hrs.

DRINK WATER

BASS:

(VO, sarcastic)

Assuming, of course, that Napoleon Bonaparte doesn't try to hamstring me there as well! (sigh) (informal) Diane, scratch that last sentence.

BASS:
(VO, Formal)

15:30 Hrs I'm to receive an update from Station IT on their analysis of the laptop retrieved from Dr. Rodney's office inside of the MAPO lab. A summary of the last 72 hours has been compiled. A copy of all information and data is being sent off to Honolulu for additional computer forensics review. Make sure Fiona knows it's coming.

BASS:
(VO, Formal)

16:45 Hrs. complete weekly review paperwork, expense reports, hopefully in time for dinner, get some exercise and then bed. (sigh) Pause, . . .Diane, I've been thinking about this the last few days. Not sure reaching out to Dr. Jennings is the right thing here. It's. . . .ok, Yeah! She's attractive, like, beautiful! She's obviously intelligent as, according to this report, she's researching things I can't even pronounce! (Frustrated sigh)

BASS:
(VO, Informal)

If we run into one another, we run into one another. Need to stay focused! Eye on the prize! Head in the game!

DRINK WATER

BASS:
(VO, Formal)

With the lifeline satellites proving reliable and allowing for more communication stability, I've been asked to updated Chuc (catches himself). . .Marshal Goodwill on the investigation process each Tuesday & Thursday. I'm sure his interest is completely professional. Any concern for his DM's in the field has *nothing at all* to do with DC or any 3rd party defense contractor intervention.

PHONE RINGS TWICE & THEN CLICK TO ANSWER

BASS:
(VO, Formal)
Deputy Marshal Marlow.

MALE VOICE:
(VO)
Sir, Station Ops center. You have an incoming call from Honolulu.

BASS:
(VO)
Please transfer it here.

MALE VOICE:
(VO)
One Moment, Sir.

AUTOMATED CLICKING TWICE

CHUCK:
(VO/connection scratchy)
Bass? You there?

BASS:
(VO)
I'm here Charlie, go ahead.

CHUCK:
(VO/connection scratchy)
Have the result back from the fingerprints and facial recognition searches you requested.

BASS:
(VO, anticipation)
....Well? Don't leave me hanging here, Charlie!

CHUCK:
(VO/connection scratchy)

Bupkiss!

BASS:
(VO, questioning)

Nothing at all?

CHUCK:
(VO/connection scratchy)

Nothing! CIA database, nothing. NSA database, nothing, FBI's AFIS, Interpol, CODIS, MI-5. Don't know who you have down there, Bass. Still, she's never been printed and apparently has evaded every camera on the planet for the last twenty-five years.

BASS:
(VO, dubious)

What about the Capitol Hill hospital?

CHUCK:
(VO/connection scratchy)

See definition – Bupkiss.

BASS:
(VO, confused)

So no net presence, isn't on paper, no photographs other than the winterover one?

CHUCK:
(VO/connection scratchy)

Rare, I grant you, but not unheard of. You always have survivalist, off-the-grid people. Seems to me you don't get more off the grid than the pole!

BASS:
(VO, Mulling)

I suppose.

CHUCK:
(VO/connection scratchy)

Listen, Bass, I hear chatter that the NSF wants an expedited resolution to this homicide investigation.

BASS:
(VO)

Oh, I'm **WELL** aware Charlie!

CHUCK:
(VO/connection scratchy)

I can hold off the hand shakers and baby kissers for a while, but you need to do ME a favor and cool your jets a bit. Turn off the afterburners and coast. . .not on the investigation, just on the. . .other stuff.

BASS:
(VO)

...I hear what you're saying, Charlie.

CHUCK:
(VO/connection scratchy)

That's my boy! Hang in there, Bass.

CLICK OF THE LINE DROPPING.

BASS:
(Deep sigh, VO)

... Aw Shit!

RECORDER PICKED UP, ELECTRONIC BOOP

FADE IN, RECORDING IN PROGRESS

ZEKE:

... and for the first part of the first season I was here, the chief just never understood how I knew what needed fixin'. He'd start having me fill out the work assignments. Give him more time to focus on the bigger stuff.

BASS:

OK, Zeke. What is it that you do at the station?

ZEKE:

(correcting him)

My station!

BASS:

(confused)

...sorry?

ZEKE:

See, now I know Waynewright is the man on the throne, making all the rules and accepting all the awards and whatnot, but the station. . .She's a special lady.

BASS:

(Still confused)

So you run the station?

ZEKE:

(laughs)

Naw Naw Naw...ok so, you ever have a car you loved? A truck? Jeep? Whatever?

BASS:
Well yeah, sure.

ZEKE:
(curious)
What was she?

BASS:
(chuckles)
68 Chevy Camaro.

ZEKE:
(Impressed)
Whoooooooooooo! RS?

BASS:
(Proud)
SS.

ZEKE:
(HAPPY)
68 Chevrolet Camaro SS 4-speed! 350?

BASS:
(Smiling)
396

ZEKE:
(Claps his hands once)
Then you know EXACTLY what I'm talking about! 375 Horsepower!
V-8 engine and zero to 60 in six seconds.

BASS:
(Regains composure)
Actually ...no, what are you talking about?

ZEKE:

(Frustrated)

Awwwww! (sigh) OK, you going down the highway, doing sixty. .sixty-five. You know every vibration through the steering wheel. You know the way the air should sound around the windshield. Every bump in the road either feels like the shocks are either fine, or something feels really wrong.

BASS:

(gets it)

Yeah, that's actually true.

ZEKE:

My man! (snaps fingers) that's how it is with me and my girl here. I know every rivet, every seam. I know when a fan unit has a frayed belt that will snap in a week. I know when a generator is at 85% capacity and hasn't had its weekly load test. (Leans in, slight quieter voice) Sometimes at night, when it's late and quiet, I can tell just by the way the floor vibrates where the air balance is off.

BASS:

I understand. You don't run the station; you keep her running.

ZEKE:

I keep her... happy!

BASS:

(snaps himself back)

OK, so how well did you know Doctor Rodney?

ZEKE:

Knew who he was. Can't say we were friends or nothing.

BASS:

Get along OK?

ZEKE:

Along as well as any two Beakers and contractors get. You had to have seen by now; DeWalts & Beakers don't typically mix. (Thinks a sec, reconsiders) Naw! That ain't 100% true. Some of the beakers are alright. They don't look down on us or anything. Then there are the other Beakers. The ones who think we're 'the help'. Not scientist, so not worth caring about. Those the Beakers I can't stand.

BASS:

(Questioning)

Doctor Rodney in the second group?

ZEKE:

(factual)

Doctor Rodney was the King almighty of the second group! He had no respect for anybody unless you had letters after your name. You think Waynewright is up-tight? (pssshhhhhh.) Rodney had a stick so far up his ass you could take out geese with his head.

BASS:

Any run-ins?

PENCIL WRITING IN NOTEPAD

ZEKE:

Not if you want to keep your job! (leans back) Like I said, it's not *all* Beakers; I think most of them are good people! *But*, there have been problems going back a long time, longer than me being here. I took over as chief after two seasons because the old chief pushed an astronomer who got too drunk and tried to start something. NSF got called, and the chief was on the next LC-130 out of here. I got the job. Some people will tell you Beakers have a license to kill around here. It's not that bad, but I've seen things that if it were one of my crew that did it, there wouldn't be no

'disciplinary review'. Wouldn't be no 'investigation into the matter. Just pack your bag, wheels up first flight out tomorrow.

BASS:

But no run-ins between you and Doctor Rodney?

ZEKE:

I wouldn't call in a run-in!

PENCIL WRITING STOPS

BASS:

(curious)

What would you call it?

ZEKE:

(clarifies)

We had ...words!

BASS:

Walk me through it.

ZEKE:

(Sighs as remembers)

...This would have been middle March, I think. Yeah, that's actually right. The last of the summer crew was rolling out, and we had just secured Summer-camp down the week before. I was in the Galley having lunch when I heard somebody drop a glass. Looked over, and one of my guys had bumped into Rodney; it was his glass that dropped. Well, he decided he wants to make it into a thing. Gets up in my man's facing saying F'ing DeWalts this and F'ing DeWalts that. We all stupid knuckle draggers who don't have any business being ...whatever. The man had hate in his heart and no respect for people.

ZEKE:

Now, my folks raised me right. Taught me the golden rule and right from wrong. Show respect; you get respect. I honestly believe that Lawman, seriously do! But sometimes...

BASS:

(curious)

What you do?

ZEKE:

(Not boasting, slightly regretful)

I got up, walked up behind Rodney, and just let him go on for a bit. (quick chortle) He must have been so mad and focused on my guy he didn't see all the faces around him looking in my direction and stepping back as I walked up. (cough) That's when he had just started in on how DeWalts were knuckle draggers and stupid. So I spoke up. Told him...that I apologized for not being able to understand him. Told him that I must be stupid, could he face me so I could see him and say that again slowly to me, so ... you know, I could stop being stupid and listen.

BASS:

Hrmm. Doctor Rodney was ...

PAPER FLIP

BASS

5'9 and one hundred sixty-two pounds. You're....what? 6'6 and 240?

ZEKE

6'5 and 260, but I appreciate ya for the compliment!

BASS

Go on.

ZEKE

(trying not to laugh)

Cat turned bright red and just stormed out of the galley. Soon as he got out of sight, the whole place started to laugh & applaud. No way he didn't hear it walking away.

BASS:

That was the end of it?

ZEKE:

Oh, he tried to get me fired! Said I humiliated him in front of his peers. But since I never raised a hand, never touched him, shoooot, I didn't even raise my voice; *and* there were 10 or 11 witnesses so it was hard for Waynewright to take any action. (ponders) I remember him and Fireman Fred getting into it last year. I think it was about... cake or something? (snaps back to present) anyways, after that, things just went back to normal, like they always do.

BASS:

Do you remember where you were the night he was killed?

ZEKE:

(firm)

No doubt. My baby had a fan motor stop in the main A-Pod Fan-Room, A-117. It was later in the afternoon when she stopped running. Since the main mechanical room is right there, I figured we might as well go ahead and get in front of our preventive maintenance schedule. So, I assigned Lou Decker to help me. After our Wednesday Poker game, we took down systems in that area to repair the run capacitor and give everything else a good once over.

RESUMES WRITING IN NOTEBOOK

BASS:

How long did that take?

ZEKE:

Started after poker wrapped up at 9:00PM, mmmm, maybe quarter after. Wasn't cleaning up after ourselves until 12:30 or 1AM.

BASS:

You and Decker together the whole time?

ZEKE:

Yeah, Lawman, yeah.

BASS:

(Satisfied)

OK Zeke...I think I'm good here. If I think of anything else...

ZEKE:

(Cuts him off)

I'm in the Arches unless I'm sleeping or getting my grub on.

SOUND OF CHAIR SCOOTING BACK AND DOOR OPENING, CROWD NOISE OUTSIDE IS HEARD (15%)

ZEKE:

(Curious)

Hey, Lawman?

BASS:

(looking down at his note, not paying attention)

Huh?

ZEKE:

(Curious)

What happened to your lady?

BASS:

(Looks up quickly)

What!

ZEKE:
Your Cammy? Ms. Camaro 1968?

BASS
(Confusion resolved)
Ohhhhhhhh. (Thinks) Had to sell her. My Dad, back in '96, got really sick. Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. Cancer. (Beat) Medical bills were piling up; I couldn't have them mortgaging...I couldn't just; I had to step in to help. And on it goes.

ZEKE:
(respect)
Family first! I feel ya. You good people, for a Lawman.

DOOR CLOSSES

ELECTRONIC BOOP, FEMALE ROBOTIC VOICE – RECORDING STOPPED

TWO SECOND PAUSE

ELECTRONIC BEEP, FEMALE ROBOTIC VOICE – RECORDING STARTED

BASS:
(Apologetic)
I'm sorry, I'm sorry, gentlemen! I should have activated this before you started and for the official record. Would you mind please restarting again?

IT CHRIS:
(Dorkey voice)
No problem Deputy Marshal. As I was saying...there is no way to tell you everything on the external drive. All we can do is give you a partial list of files. Going into the history and recent folders, we can see files associated with a drive that weren't housed internal to the laptop. Nor were they to any of the other hard drives found in Dr. Rodney's office.

PIECE OF PAPER BEING HANDED OVER

IT EMERY:
(Dorkier Voice)
Tell him...tell him the good part! (proudly) That was my idea!

IT CHRIS:
(Dork Voice)
Take your Adderall Emery, you're spazzing out in front of the feds,
I'm getting to it, geese!

INHALER SOUND

IT CHRIS:
(Dork Voice)
So, we checked into his access files and history for the last 72
hours. Nothing unusual and no different than the 72 hours before
that. (Acts proud) With one. . .exception!

IT EMERY:
(Dorkier Voice, excited)
Tell him!

IT CHRIS:
(Dork Voice)
Can you **NOT** right now, Em, you're going to wet the carpet again!
(Ahem) so... it occurred to us.

IT EMERY:
(Dorkier voice, from behind Chris)
Me!

IT CHRIS:
(Dork Voice, getting angry)
That we should cross-reference outgoing emails attachment file
names with the names on that list in your hand.

BASS:

(confused)

But from what I hear, scientists are sending off attachments to universities, colleagues, and other research stations?

IT CHRIS:

(Dorkey voice)

oh absolutely, and Doctor Rodney was no different! All the files he sent out, we found on the internal hard drive, except for this file!

IT EMERY:

(Dorkier voice, from behind Chris, Proud)

My idea!

IT CHRIS:

(Dorkey voice in a whisper to over his shoulder)

Shut upppppppppp!

BASS:

(reading from paper)

Up triangle thingy, C-D-M Model M-S-P Solved dot Doc. ..Any ideas?

IT CHRIS:

(Dorkey voice)

None Deputy Marshal, doesn't make sense to me either.

IT EMERY:

(Dorkier voice, from behind Chris)

US!

BASS:

(curious)

When was the last time that file was accessed?

IT EMERY:

(Dorkier voice)

Oh he asked! He asked! I knew it. I win the bet. Pay up noob!

BASS:

(Confused)

What bet?

IT EMERY

(Dorkier voice)

Ha-ha! You said, exact words... no square jawed cowboy looking like he walked off a GQ cover would have half the brain to ask about file access protocols. You lose! Emery wins! Flawless victory!

IT CHRIS:

(Dorkey Voice, Mad)

For the love of the Shire and all things Tolkien, will you SHUT YOUR PIE HOLE!

BASS:

(Stern)

Gentlemen!!

IT CHRIS:

(Dork Voice)

You'll have to excuse my colleague here. (whispers) He smoked a chronic once in Jr. High.

BASS:

(calmly, but tired)

The file... accessed?

IT CHRIS:

(Dorkey Voice)

It was attached to an email and attempted to be sent at 11:49PM. It was attached to an email going to 'Binderclip2071945@MillworkSolutions.co.nz.'

BASS:

New Zealand?

IT CHRIS:

(Dorkey Voice)

Home of every filming location for Mr. Peter Jackson's tour de force masterpiece, Lord of the Rings.... New Zealand!

BASS:

(sudden revelation)

Wait...you said 'attempted'?

IT CHRIS:

(Dorkey Voice, click-click finger gun sound)

Exact-a-mundo! The transfer was terminated on the senders end at 11:57PM, which... (chuckle to himself) hmm hrmm hrmm was the exact same time that...?

IT EMERY:

(Dorkier voice)

The external drive was unplugged!! (suddenly sad) but they didn't properly eject first! That can cause serious damage to your drive's integrity.

IT CHRIS:

(Dork Voice, Mad)

I wanted **HIM** to answer Em!

BASS:

(inquiring)

So if the file never got sent, did anybody ever re-try later?

IT CHRIS:

(Dork Voice)

No. We checked all outgoing email logs, and no file by that name has been sent. Nothing even close to the size of that file has been attempted, not even after lifeline deployed.

BASS:

(thinking out loud)

Which I'm assuming means whoever has it will try to re-transmit now that lifeline is operational or carry it off the station on their way back. (ponders a second) Gentlemen, can you set up some way to detect when a file with that name or that size is attempted to be sent out?

IT CHRIS:

(Dork voice, Proud)

Already implemented, Deputy Marshal!

BASS:

Excellent work, Gentlemen.

IT EMERY:

(Dorkier voice, shouting from a distance)

My Idea!!

ELECTRONIC BOOP, FEMALE ROBOTIC VOICE – RECORDING STOPPED
TWO SECONDS

ELECTRONIC BEEP, FEMALE ROBOTIC VOICE – RECORDING STARTED

SOUND OF WALKING DOWN HALLWAY, MINOR CROWD NOISES WALKING
DOWN THE DA STAIRCASE AND SOFT MUSIC PLAYS. A QUIET FEMALE VOICE CAN
BE HEARD AND GROWS IN VOLUME AS WE APPROACH.

TWO LOOPS OF START OF SONG: GIRL-CRUSH BEFORE SHE STARTS. FOUR OR
FIVE WORDS IN, SHE STOPS. JUST THE MUSIC CONTINUES

BASS:
(Apologetic)
I'm Sorry Dr. Jennings, I didn't mean...

KENDRA
(Mortified)
I'm SOOOO Embarrassed! I...I need to...

BASS:
(Hurried)
Wait, wait, please! Just give me two minutes. I have two things to say, and I hope you let me say them. You don't even have to respond, just...listen. Would that be OK with you?

KENDRA
(Nervously)
MmmHmm.

BASS:
(Sincere)
Thank you, Doctor. One. I wanted to apologize for the other day, our first meeting. It never occurred to me to introduce myself as a US Deputy Marshal. I don't think I've ever met anybody like...I mean to say. . .that I don't think I ever had a first meeting go quite like that.

2 SECONDS OF SILENCE

BASS:
It took me off guard, off-balance. Not me excusing myself! Just. . .offering an explanation of how I was wrong.

KENDRA:

(Low, Almost a whisper)

...two?

BASS:

(deep breath)

Two. We're scheduled for our formal interview on Dr. Rodney's Homicide. That said, and given your. . .given how I want to make sure you're comfortable and not distressed, I had an idea on how we could make this less stressful.

KENDRA:

(low)

Mmmhmm?

BASS:

Our chat isn't set until 18:00Hrs. I still have a few things to work out. Still, if you'll come to the small conference room, I promise you, you'll have the entire room to yourself, nobody else with you to get anxious about.

KENDRA:

(Low).

Fine... I need to...

BASS:

Of course, I understand. .

HURRIED SHUFFLING APPROACHING THE MIC AND DOOR OPENING

BASS:

(hurried)

Your singing is beautiful, Doctor!

KENDRA:
(confused, low)

What?

BASS:
I only heard a few seconds, but what I did hear...(genuine) WOW!

KENDRA:
(Shyly, Flattered)

Thank you.

DOOR CLOSSES
FEW SECONDS SILENCE
ELECTRONIC BEEP

BASS

(VO)

I remember; I think it was Homer's Odyssey, where the sirens of the sea would lure in unexpected sailors. Singing hypnotically until they steered their boats onto the rocks, allowing the Sirens to (spookily) Devour their souls!! (sigh) I don't think she's an evil siren Diane, nor do I believe in souls, but she did entice with her voice. It's truly a shame she doesn't share her singing with others.!

DRINK WATER

BASS:

(VO)

I can already hear your voice in my head, Diane! (high pitch female imitation) Don't get attached, Bass. You're only there a few months, Bass. We don't get involved during an investigation, Bass. What about...(pause, suddenly somber. No more imitation) What about your wife...Bass? (Pause) It's not as if I stopped loving her. Not like. . .she'll always have a place in my heart! We...we were only ever together for 5 years, married for 3 of those. (curious) I told you

that, right Diane? (sigh) Anyway, is interest in another woman, betraying her memory when...all I have left *are* memories?

PA IN DISTANCE

CHERYL-LYNN:

(VO/PA/Muffled behind the door but Audible)

Doctor Shumway, darlin, would you please call 4128? Doctor Shumway 4128. Thank youuuuuuuuuuu

BASS:

(VO) (sniff)

Sorry to get all maudlin on you, Diane. (FORMAL) Marshal Godwin provided results of the background check of Sandra Derecha; all results returned with negative hits. The suspect is not listed on any present databases, fingerprint archives, nor video archive footage. This is perplexing me. (Informal) And by the way, Diane, I assume I have you to thank for getting Charlie to expedite that. So... thank you! (Formal) Per request from NSF and the Beauregard-Lowing I've been...asked... to clear an initial number of 42 winterovers who have solid alibis or other reasons to remove them from consideration in the investigation. To that end, I have to provide five names. Four of them were scheduled to return to the states and are doing so now.

DRINK WATER

BASS:

(VO) (Formal)

Last interview of the day in 30 minutes. After that I can start necessary paperwork and hopefully get some chow in before 60 minutes of cardio. End. (Informal) Hey Diane, I got an email this morning that my sat-phone was being expedited. Again, if this was you ...you're the best and you are way too good to me!

ELECTRONIC BOOP.

TWO SECONDS SILENCE

SKYPE SOUND DIALING, THEN ANSWER

KENDRA:

(surprised)

Hello?

BASS:

(Usual quality Skype sound.)

Good evening, Doctor. I hope you don't mind me taking the liberty. I had the IT guys set up laptops in that conference room and in my office on the other side of the wall!

KENDRA:

(asking, low voice but not as shy)

You had them tape over the camera?

BASS:

I figured it might help to relax you if nobody could see you. In reality or on screen.

KENDRA:

(flabbergasted)

I... I can...

BASS:

(Suddenly remembers)

Oh, hey...before you start, I'm supposed to make sure you know all your rights so...bear with me...(Ahem). If you can just read that piece of paper in the folder to the right while I get my notebook out

PAPER FLIP

BASS:

(Formal)

Ok... Interview. October 11th, 2021; 18:04 Hrs, local time. US Deputy Marshal Bass Marlow conducting the questioning. In a conference room, B-224 Is Doctor Kendra Jennings to be interviewed over Skype. Scientist and researcher at the Dark Sector Lab, South Pole Telescope of Amundsen-Scott Research Station. Doctor, for the record, can you please state your name?

KENDRA:

(Almost teary-eyed)

Kendra!

BASS:

(Gently)

I need your full name and title, Doctor, for the record.

KENDRA:

(Teary)

No... (sudden realization) I mean, yes...of course I'll give that you in a second, but ...what I mean to say is...I'd like for you to please just call me Kendra! Please.

BASS:

(happy)

Absolutely, I'll have to use your title in the official interview, but otherwise...Kendra. Please then, just Bass.

KENDRA:

(sniffing, wiping away tears)

Thank you.

BASS:

(confused)

For what?

KENDRA:

(more wiping away tears, nose)

Nobody has been this considerate to me...for a long time. Nobody has made this much effort...for me. Thank You.

BASS:

(Sincere)

You are most welcome, Kendra. Now (Ahem), full...

KENDRA:

(collects herself, clears throat, sniffs)

Dr. Kendra Rene Jennings. Ph.D. with doctorates in Quantum Physics and Cosmology. I work in the Dark Sector Lab at A.S. research center.

BEGIN FADE OUT

BASS:

Doctor, Can you describe to me in detail your relationship with the deceased, Doctor Mark Rodney and where you recall yourself being the evening...

(Outtro and credits.)