

Ninety Degrees South

EPISODE FOURTEEN: 53 Seconds

INTRO MUSIC

ROBOTIC VOICE – RECORDING STARTED

ARCHES HUM, WALKING ON ICE, VMF DOOR OPENING, AND CLOSING.
WALKING DOWN HALLWAY AND INTO ROOM. ZEKE BRIEFING

ZEKE

(Insistent)

We've checked the panels, we've reviewed the breakers, the generators, and the UPS'. C'mon people! We're supposed to be the best damn team on this here Ice, what we missing? (pause) Gimmie a second, lawman. Be right with you.

RANDO 1(M)

Could it be fuel contamination?

RANDO 2 (F)

All diesel tanks were tested. Fume hood said nothing unusual.

ZEKE

The flicker this morning is the second since the holiday party last week. They're happening almost precisely five days apart.

RANDO 3 (F)

Could the flicker not be a flicker; but a dampening because of a power drawl someplace?

ZEKE SLAMS FIST ON TABLE

ZEKE

(Proud)

Damn it, people. See that? That right there is the kind of thinking we need! Power draw! Damn fine theory. How we track it down, find the source?

RANDO 2 (F)

E-mon sensors?

ZEKE

Perfect, how many we have?

RANDO 1 (M)

Case of two, so twenty-four total.

ZEKE

It'll have to work. Start breaking them out and install at all primary electrical panels. Next event, if it is a power draw, these babies will show us where the power is going.

3SP

ZEKE

(All business)

What the hell you waiting for? MOVE! MOVE!

SOUND OF PEOPLE HUSTLING OFF

ZEKE

What's up, Lawman?

BASS

No luck on your own investigation?

ZEKE

Running just like yours, I think. Lots of questions but damn few answers. As soon as we ID a potential solution, we manage to find something else that rules it out. I didn't want to say anything in front of my crew, but I'm not sure a power drawl is the answer. I just don't want them getting too discouraged.

DOOR OPENS

RANDO 4(M)

Did you want to see me, Chief?

ZEKE

Yeah, with the power flickering every week or so, this is the worst time for the emergency systems or the systems in B1 Lifeboat to start acting up. I'm putting you in charge of a complete systems check. Take Hanson and Penhall to help you out, eyeball everything top to bottom.

RANDO 4(M)

On it chief.

BASS

It sounded to me like you've already ruled out several things and are zeroing in on...whatever the root cause may be.

CARGO TRUCK BACKING UP SOUND IN DISTANCE

ZEKE

We've ruled out faulty wiring, electrical shorts, fuel contamination, mechanical systems failures, breaker failures, contact with power lines, wind, ice. We're almost through the traditional list of causes.

BASS

How about non-traditional?

2SP

ZEKE

You talking sabotage?

BASS

(Earnest)

Somebody around here is a killer. Most likely the same somebody who tried to kill me too. Causing a significant outage on the station and having everybody evacuated to McMurdo would be a great way to get one step closer to civilization.

ZEKE

(Considers)

Naw, naw...so far, nobody reported seeing anything that looked like sabotage. Something like that...it stick out. Be pretty obvious. Not to mention the amperage we're talking about; they'd stand a damn good chance of killing themselves.

2SP

BASS

(Curious)

Not sure... It may not be related at all, but have you ever heard of a swirling purple or blue mist around lights?

ZEKE

(Chuckles) Yeah, you get strong enough kush, and you might see that.

BASS

No, no...seriously.

SPUTTERING LIP SOUND

ZEKE

Well, there is something called 'striation' in fluorescent tube bulbs. I think it's due to mercury vapor mixing with cold temperatures. All our ballasts are rated for super below zero temps and beyond that, we running all LED bulbs down here. Why?

BASS

Several people mentioned seeing...never mind, it's probably nothing.

VEHICLE STARTING UP IN DISTANCE

BASS

Are you going to the party tonight?

ZEKE

(hesitant)

We'll be there. My crew's been working double-time trying to run these power flickers to ground. I don't give 'em some release, and things get testy. They start making minor mistakes and then going at one another.

BASS

I think a lot of us need a night like this.

ZEKE

Other than Midwinter, tonight is *the* night. (Pause, sarcastic)
So...you uh...you taking anybody...

BASS

(Annoyed)

Yes, I asked Kendra to come with me to the party. That what you were looking for?

ZEKE

(Teasing)

Last I saw you two at the Holiday party, things looked like they were heading somewhere. But hey, lawman...you all just buddies...I remember!

BASS

Cute Zeke, Cute.

DOOR OPENS, SOUNDS OF PEOPLE MILLING AROUND AND EXCITED MURMURING

RANDO 2(F)

(Excited)

Chief, chief! you have GOT to see this.

ZEKE
(To Bass)
Catch up with you tonight at the party?

BASS
We'll be there.

ZEKE WALKING OUT, CLOSING DOOR BEHIND HIM, RADIO BEEP

IT CHRIS
(VO, EXCITED)
Deputy Marshal, please respond.

RADIO BEEP ACKNOWLEDGE

BASS
Go Ahead, Mr. Todd.

IT CHRIS
(VO, EXCITED)
The spreadsheet is ready. I say again...the spreadsheet is ready.....

IT EMERY
(VO, A distance back)
...You have to take your thumb off when you...

RADIO BEEPS.

BASS
Thank you, gentlemen; I'm on my way.

BASS JOGGING ON THE SNOW, FADE OUT

FADE IN, COMPUTER LAB; IT ROOM. SERVER CABINET NOISES. TALKING TO BASS. THE ENTIRE TIME, RANDOMIZE KEYBOARD TYPING. MOUSE CLICKING

IT CHRIS

(Excited)

It's currently trying to upload. We noticed it 10 minutes ago. They only could upload 7% of the file before we flooded the system with simultaneous uploads, slowing them down.

BASS

Can you track where they are logged into on base?

IT CHRIS

(lower tone)

That's what Em is doing. He's in the zone, trying to ping their location. It's tricky, and he needs focus.

IT EMERY

(Monotone, no dorky tone noticeable)

...Traceroute from a point inside...default router reachable 10.0.39.9. Now telnet to that addy and performing an ARP table search...

IT CHRIS

(Normal tone)

It make take some time. Lifeline two remains accessible for another ...four minutes before connectivity starts slowing and we lose her after she crosses the horizon.

BASS:

(urgent)

Four minutes...is that enough, will he get the trace?

IT CHRIS

(Low voice)

If he focuses. ...if he *beeeeeelievvvvvves*

IT EMERY

Have MAC address. Tying layer two address to layer one...

BASS

(inspired)

I have an idea. Where is your station directory?

IT CHRIS

Next to the phone.

CHAIR SCOOT OUT, HANDSET PICKS UP, DIALING. RING ON SPEAKER

CHERYL-LYNN

(VO, Normal level cheerful)

Well, hi boys, what can I do ya for?

BASS

Ms. June, it's Bass. Is Doctor Waynewright in his office right now?

CHERYL-LYNN

(VO)

Oh, hi Shug...no he's in the big conference room with Doctor Van Zandt and the MAPO lab teams reviewing quarterly figures. He's free at two PM, you stop on by and I'll get you on his calendar.

BASS

(Hurried)

Not necessary, I'll see him tonight. Need to go.

BASS

(Over shoulder to Chris)

Time?

IT CHRIS

(From distance, lower voice)

Three minutes, fifteen seconds.

DIALING. SPEAKER RING. RINGS AGAIN. RINGS AGAIN

BASS

(Anxious)

C'mon, C'mon....pick up.

KENDRA

DSL lab.

BASS

(Calm, but firm)

Kendra. It's me. Don't say my name, don't say anything but yes or no if you can help it. I'll explain everything later tonight. Understand?

KENDRA

(Confused)

Yes?

BASS

(Trying to stay calm)

Is Doctor Jovac at the lab right now.

KENDRA

Yes

BASS

Can you see him?

KENDRA

No

BEEP OF MUTE BUTTON

BASS
(Over shoulder, Urgent)

Time?

IT CHRIS
Two fifteen

IT EMERY
Hello, you're reachable via FastEthernet 0/13, but you're a
plant...a distraction. Port is connecting to a different switch:

BEEP OF MUTE BUTTON

BASS
Do you think you know where he is?

KENDRA
Yes.

BASS
Go find him, see where he is and, if possible, what he is
doing. Don't say anything, don't speak, just see what he's
doing and hurry back. Say "here" when you're back.

KENDRA
(Confused)
Okay....

2SP

IT CHRIS
Two Minutes

2SP

IT EMERY

(Still calm, still Zen)

...switch's management address is listed via C.D.P. 51# show
neighbor B1/02 19...

c.d.p.

2SP

IT CHRIS

One forty-five

2SP

BASS

(hurried)

Come on Kendra....

2SP

KENDRA

Back.

BASS

(Calm, but talking faster)

Did you see him?

KENDRA

Yes

BASS

Was he using a computer or laptop?

KENDRA

No

BASS

Did you see a computer or laptop within six feet of him?

KENDRA

Um....no.

IT CHRIS

One Thirty

BASS

(Hurrying more)

In the room with him at all?

KENDRA

....no

BASS

Are you positive?

KENDRA

(thinking)

Yes.

BASS

(Hurried)

Thank you so much; you're the best. I'll explain everything I promise, I have one more call to make.

DIAL TONE

IT CHRIS

One fifteen

NUMBERS DIALING. RINGING, RINGING.

RANDO 2 (F)

VMF?

BASS

(Hurried)

Is Zeke there? Can you put him on?

RANDO 2 (F)

Yeah, we're all in the garage; this is weird! Hold on, and I'll get him.

3SP

IT CHRIS

(Nervous)

Sixty Seconds

IT EMERY

Eight percent uploaded. Bog-down working, another false address. You're good, my friend...but your Python is no match for my Java style.

IT CHRIS

Fifty Seconds. Get 'em, grasshopper!

3SP

BASS

(Mad)

C'MON ZEKE, PICK UP THE DAMN PHONE!

3SP

Forty-Five IT CHRIS

3SP

Forty IT CHRIS

IT EMERY
(Calm, almost happy)
Telnetting to tertiary switch's IP address, rinse, wash, repeat
MAC table lookup

BASS
(Anxious)
Pick up Pick up pick up!

2SP

Thirty-Five IT CHRIS

ZEKE
(Surprised)
What up lawman, hey you ain't gonna believe this!

BASS
(Anxious)
No time Zeke. Is Reno Dave there.

ZEKE
(happy)
Slow down lawman, what you say again?

Thirty IT CHRIS

BASS

(Slower, but anxious)

Reno.Dave. Is he there in the garage?

ZEKE

Naw, he out sorting Cargo in the DNF hut.

IT CHRIS

Twenty-Five

BASS

(Anxious/Calm)

You assign anybody to offload with him?

ZEKE

(Frustrated)

Yeah, Keenan's supposed to help him. What this about Lawman? Why the hurry?

BASS

There a computer in the DNF hut?

ZEKE

Yeah. C'mon lawman...the hell?

IT CHRIS

Twenty Seconds

IT EMERY

IP unmasked, last search. Trying 10.0.99.10...closed.

BASS

(Anxious)

Zeke, Can you get Keenan on the radio quickly, get him to confirm what Reno is doing?

ZEKE

Don't need to—Keenan's right next to me. I held him back to check out this time...thingy.

IT CHRIS

Ten

BASS

(rushing)

Reno's Alone?

ZEKE

He's okay; DNF is heated.

IT CHRIS

Five

IT EMERY

Port B1 02/05. Mac Addresses for this criterion: one.

ZEKE

He's alone, as far as I know!

IT EMERY

There can be only one!

IT CHRIS

Time.

BASS

(Calm, strangely calm)

Zeke. I'm coming to see you. Don't say anything to anyone about what we talked about just now.

ZEKE

(Confused)

Lawman, I have no fuckin idea what the hell we just talked about, so no problem.

BASS

Zeke, be there in ten minutes.

CLICK OF PHONE HANGING UP.

BASS

Talk to me, Mr. Waters. What do you have?

IT EMERY

Port B1 02-05. Berth B1, Level 2, room 205. Tran Nguyen.

IT CHRIS

(Confused)

Dr. Nguyen departed the station yesterday after you cleared him. We got his laptop back right....where'd it go?

IT EMERY

IP for that laptop is in Berth B1-205.

BASS

(Concerned)

Is...Mister Waters okay? Do we need to call somebody?

IT CHRIS

Pshhhhh, he's on a zone adrenalin high. He'll be fine in five minutes and will sleep like a baby tonight!

BASS

Need to see Zeke. Gentlemen...not a word about this to anybody. Don't discuss it. Don't brag about it. Only three people know...so if it gets out, I know it wasn't me.

IT CHRIS

We'll keep quiet about this, promise Deputy Marshal.

IT EMERY

I feel....everything. I know...everything

IT CHRIS

C'mon, Highlander...you had a busy day!

FADE OUT. FADE IN ARCHES. BACKGROUND ARCHES HUM

ZEKE

(Doubtful)

I got a hard time believing this lawman. Reno is the last person you'd think of as a killer. Cat is a standup guy.

BASS

(serious)

Look, I've come to trust you...

ZEKE

Still weird's me out.

BASS

Take the compliment...so I feel okay telling you this. When we saw the data attempting to be uploaded, I called to check out the current whereabouts of my top three suspects. One. Doctor Waynewright was on a conference call with Van Zandt and a room full of people. No way he could be trying to upload data. Everybody would see it.

SOUND OF PNEUMATIC WRENCHES

BASS

Two. Doctor Jovac was in the DSL lab. Kendra said he was in a room by himself with no computer around. Three. Reno Dave. All by himself in DNF cargo. Computer in the room.

ZEKE

(Countering)

Hold up hold up! You said yourself; the nerds in IT said the upload...thing was happening in one of the B-1 Berths. Dave was in DNF Cargo!

BASS

Was he? Who was there with him? Who saw him? There was a whole room of people who saw Waynewright and Van Zandt, plus the NSF team they were with. Kendra saw Jovac in DSL.

ZEKE

Just cause nobody saw him at that time, don't make him a stone-cold killer!

BASS

It's not public knowledge, but before Rodney was stabbed, he was hit over the head with a heavy object. Hit on the left side of the back of his head by a left-handed individual. Reno Dave is a south-paw.

ZEKE

(challenging)

Aw come on, lawman, how many left-handers got to be on this station?

BASS

That we're here during 2021 Winterover? Three.

Jennifer Florez had an iron-clad alibi, Waynewright who claims an alibi that nobody can support, and Reno Dave, who didn't even have an alibi when the murder took place.

ZEKE

So what you going to do? Arrest him?

2SP

BASS

I don't have enough yet. No alibi for the murder & the upload isn't enough. Being left-handed makes it more interesting, but still not enough to arrest him.

ZEKE

(aggressive)

My opinion means anything to you, lawman?

BASS

Yeah, it does. It means a lot.

ZEKE

(Serious)

I've been in places where there have been thugs all my life. I've been around killers, around people who just assume knock you out than talk it out. Hustlers, dealers, con men and some pretty all around bad people. I know when they have evil in their heart. Reno Dave may not get a medal for having the best life...but he's no killer. I'll put my reputation on the line for the man.

2SP

BASS

(Considers)
Okay.

ZEKE
(Confused)
Say what?

BASS
(Honest)
I said, okay. You know Dave better, longer than I have. I trust you...

ZEKE
(shudder)
Aw man, you did it again!!

BASS
I TRUST YOU! You have better instincts than some Deputy Marshals I know. You trust the man, I trust you, so okay...not saying I won't be watching him close...cause I will! But you convinced me.

ZEKE
Thank you Bass.

SOUND OF BRO HANDSHAKE, PALMS SLAPPING, BACK SLAPPING

BASS
(Curious)
So what's this thing everybody is excited about?

ZEKE
Hrmmm? OH! The time door, I almost forgot, let me show you!

BASS
(Sarcastic)
Of course, this year can't end...without a time door.

WALKING ON METAL GRATES, OPENING DOOR WITH PEOPLE MILLING AROUND.

ZEKE

Okay, check it out. Up there on the 2nd level is our storage room for machine and garage parts, spare pieces...all that stuff. Two ways in and out. One from the hallway outside the machine shop. Another is direct from the maintenance garage. We don't know when it started, but we first noticed this morning.

BASS

(Confused)

Notice what?

2SP

ZEKE

Probably easier to show you. Does your watch have a stopwatch on it?

BASS

Yeah.

ZEKE

KEENAN! Get over here. (Pause) Okay, go to your stopwatch and when I say go, start it. I've going to give youngblood here my watch and start it at the same time. We'll start at the stairs in the hallway and end at the top of the stairs leading to the maintenance garage. When you see him at the top step at the garage, hit stop. He'll do the same. It's a straight path in the storage room from stairs to stairs. One doorway notwithstanding down here, more or less the same direct way.

2SP

ZEKE

Go on Keenan, get up there, and get ready.

FOOTSTEPS UP METAL STAIRS.

ZEKE

Ready Keenan, Ready lawman? Annnndddd...go!

ELECTRONIC WATCH BEEPS. THEN WALKING DOWN THE HALL, DOOR
OPENING, AND THEN STANDARD GARAGE SOUNDS.

BASS

(Confused)

Where is he?

ZEKE

Just keep your watch running until we see him.

2SP, GARAGE SOUNDS. BACKGROUND CHATTER

BASS

(Confused)

You said a straight shot.

ZEKE

It is. We'll have you run it from up there next round if you want
so you can see.

2SP

ZEKE

(Small talk)

So what you wearing tonight to the party?

BASS

(Amused)

Now? You want to talk about this now?

ZEKE

Eh, we have twenty more seconds to kill.

BASS

(Sighs)

I brought a tan sports coat and matching trousers. Have a light blue button-down that goes with it.

ZEKE

Nice! Why'd you bring that to Antarctica?

BASS

I didn't know if I was going to be doing anything formal. Didn't figure so but I thought something semi-formal would be good.

ZEKE

Versatile. Work for any number of events. Smart!

BASS

I thought so too.

SLIGHT SOUND EFFECT OF A BUZZING, BRIEFLY

ZEKE

(Gets ready)

Here he comes and.....STOP WATCHES

ELECTRONIC WATCH BEEP. FOOTSTEPS COMING DOWN METAL STEPS.

ZEKE

What time you have, lawman?

BASS

Uh, One minute, thirteen seconds.

ZEKE

Check out my watch. Twenty seconds. Started same time, ended same time. We've done this probably eighty tries by now. Every time we do, whoever is down here has exactly 53 seconds more on their watch than whoever is up there.

BASS

(Incredulous)

Okay. A. Time travel is all science fiction, star trekie stuff. B. 53 seconds? Going upstairs and crossing the storage room sends you 53 seconds in the future? That has to be the lamest time machine ever! What good would 53 seconds do you?

ZEKE

(explaining)

We ain't Beakers down here. We didn't build it or invent it. It just showed up here in my VMF arch. I figured you would be all like... 'naw it ain't real'. So you go up there, lawman. You walk it. You see. I'll clock you down here.

WALKING BACK, DOOR OPENS, AND WALKING DOWN HALL.
FOOTSTEPS UPSTAIRS.

ZEKE

(All business)

Same as before. Hit start, walk the straight line. When I see you hit the top step of the garage side, I'll stop my watch, you do the same.

BASS

All right. Say when.

ZEKE

Go!

ELECTRIC BEEP

BASS
(doubtful)

There is a reasonable explanation for this...

LOW BUZZING OR HUMMING SOUND THAT GETS LOUDER ON APPROACH.

BASS
Looks normal enough. No weird light or sound or smell..

BUZZING GROWS AND THEN A ELECTRICAL ANNGGGGGRRRRHHH (find a sound)

ZEKE
TIME!

ELECTRIC WATCH BEEP

BASS
(looks down)
Eighteen seconds.

ZEKE
(told ya so!)
One minute eleven.

LITE APPLAUSE, SOUND OF WALKING DOWN METAL STEPS

BASS
Was I supposed to see some flash of light or something as I went through the room?

ZEKE

Naw, nobody has said seeing...well anything, they walk through the room like any other day...just went they exit that side and that side only, it's almost a minute later than it should be.

BASS

So you guys tried the other direction?

ZEKE

(confirming)

Yep, nothing different. We tried going in the front way and turning right around, nothing unusual. We tried staying in the room for 5 minutes, 20 minutes... It doesn't matter how long or short, you walk out that side...it's however long you were in there...plus 53 seconds.

2SP

BASS

(Considers)

Look...I'm not saying I doubt you, but I don't think I'm ready to say it's...time travel. Why not get one of the scientists down here...

ZEKE

(resistant)

Uh uh! No way do I want a bunch of beakers walking around here, messing up my arch, breaking stuff, and doing whatever their muppet brains do with things like this. It ain't hurting nobody, and as you said...what 53 seconds going to do for someone?

BASS

Alright...you're boss down here. Just if anything goes sideways with this....

ZEKE

We call it 'time door.'

BASS

Yeah..the time door. (ponders) Hey Zeke...

ZEKE

What's up?

BASS

Think that...time door has anything to do with the power flickers?

ZEKE

(Thinks)

Maybe. Power's been flicker for 5 or 6 weeks now, but we ain't sure when 'time door' opened... HEY KEENAN? WANT YOU TO GO UP THERE AND ROPE OFF TIME DOOR! GO OUT THE WAY YOU CAME IN!

2SP

ZEKE

Good call, lawman, till we can find the cause, best to stop poking this thing!

FADE OUT ARCHES.

ELECTRIC BEEP OF DIGITAL RECORDER

LITE BLUE MUSIC IN BACKGROUND

BASS

(VO, FORMAL)

Diane; 21:20 hrs 31 December 2021. New Year's eve. I'm due to pick up Doctor Jennings at her berth in ten minutes. Before that, however, I wanted to make sure you were up to speed on the events over the last few days. Oh, and I wanted to say that Chuck filled me in on him and Janet's visit on Christmas day. I'm happy that the tradition carries on. Hopefully, next Christmas we can all spend it together.

2SP

BASS
(VO FORMAL)

Item 1: There was another attempt to send data off-station to New Zealand. While we did prevent it, we...I believe I know who the culprit is. I don't have enough yet to charge them; however, we plan to catch them when they attempt it again. I don't have the details together yet...but needless to say, this may be the break we've needed for some time! More to come later.

2SP

SOUND OF BOOTS BEING SHINED

BASS
(VO INFORMAL)

By the way, Diane, we may have found a way to cook a three-minute egg in two minutes, seven seconds. (chuckle) I'll go into this too on a later update. Suffice to say, the locals I've noticed are quick to jump to most absurd assumptions. Even when dealing with a station that is composed of brilliant scientific minds. I'm chalking it up to the long bouts of isolation over multiple years. I now understand why the NSF limits the number of "lifers," as they're called.

BASS
(VO FORMAL)

Item 2: I've become keenly aware of how much time is remaining in the summer austral season. Meteorology has yet to provide their final predictions, however, I'm hearing it may be earlier than usual, and around mid-February the last flight would take off from the pole, leaving the rest to winterover. That gives me roughly 45 days to wrap this up.

2SP

BASS
(VO FORMAL)

I am not looking forward to the prospect of being stuck here for six more months than necessary. (Pause)...that said...eh, one day at a time, right Diane? Alright. I shaved, I've showered, have my tan suit on...let's celebrate the end of the year. Happy New Year, Diane.

ELECTRONIC BOOP

FADE IN, PARTY IN PROGRESS. MUSIC, REVELERS, CHATTING AND LAUGHING.

ZEKE
(Chuckling)

...He must have been out there for a good two hours. Looking, asking where we keep the fluid for the left turn signal!

SMALL GROUP LAUGHING

ZEKE
Aw you want to talk about greenhorns there, Kansas lawman, that kid was about as green as they come!

THOMAS
That's right, I forgot you were from Kansas, Deputy Marshal!

BASS

(Proud)

I grew up there, moved to Lawrence, and went to the University of Kansas after high school. Then down to Georgia for training in the Marshal's academy.

THOMAS

That's fascinating. I don't think I ever knew anybody from Kansas!

BASS

Oh I assure you...we're out there.

GLASSES KLINK IN THE DISTANCE

HELENA

Well, isn't this quite the motley crew?

BASS

Doctor McKendrick

ZEKE & THOMAS

Doctor McKendrick.

HELENA

My my doesn't our Deputy Marshal clean up quite nicely!
You hold onto him dear; he's quite the catch.

KENDRA

(Tipsy)

Oh, I willll, Helena! I'm...I'm...did I hear you're going back to Maryland?

HELENA

(amused)

I am, that's right. I've spoken with Lawrence, and while he is sad to lose his top Geologist, he understands. I'm

wrapping everything up here for my replacement who is coming in late January. Once he arrives, I'll be heading back to the US. I've already sent a notice to Michael. We're ...optimistic. (Whispers but loud enough) Deputy...how much has she had?

KENDRA

She's had one!

HELENA

(Surprised)

One? Well. If you were with anybody other than the giant boy scout I'd be nervous about you getting home alright. But, (sigh) he's too much the gentlemen. Never met anybody that...honorable.

KENDRA

(tipsy)

Or anybody sooooo, striking!

SOUND OF DRINKING

BASS

Okay there, cowgirl. Let's slow it down a bit!

KENDRA

In any event, you kids have a great evening.

BASS

Happy New Year, Doctor McKendrick.

SPEAKER WINCE NOISE

NIC

(OVER SPEAK MIC)

Okay, okay, people! We have a bit of time before the
countdown! Who wants to have the last Karaoke run of 2021?

BASS

Oh hey...Kendra. You should absolutely...

KENDRA

(Panicked)

NO BASS, NO!

2SP; AWKWARD

ZEKE

(Covering)

Hey, Tommy...lets go up. Do some old-school Wagon Wheel
duet.

THOMAS

(Get's the hint)

Oh...yeah, I love Hootie!

ZEKE

Naw man...he stopped going by Hootie...you know what, yeah
let's do Hootie. NIC! We're your Huckleberries. Wagon
Wheel. Darius version.

NIC

Alright, let's hear it for Zeke and Thomas!

APPLAUSE AND WHOOPING

BASS

Hey? Kendra? I'm sorry. What I do wrong?

KENDRA

No, no it's...I haven't...(deep breath) ...my singing. It's...special to me. I love it.

BASS

I picked up on that before. But...why?

ZEKE & THOMAS SINGING, MASK IT SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO LICENSE

KENDRA

(low voice, but worked up)

When I sing. I don't...stammer. Stutter. My voice is clear...it's easy toget to understand. I can sing in front of one person if ...if I trust them it's not diff..not hard. Two people. That's pushing it. A room of 100 people, no way. NO WAY, I...it's public speaking all over...

BASS

Kendra, I am SO sorry. I had no idea how, how strongly you felt. I in no way...

KENDRA

I know. You've been...you...ARE, so spec...

CLEARING THROAT

JOSH

Sorry if I'm interrupting...

BASS

(slightly impatient)
Actually... Mr. Nickels...

KENDRA
You're not Josh. How are...is... everything...how's your night?

JOSH
(Friendly)
Good, Good. Listen, Deputy Marshal. I have this tradition. I've had it for many years. I can't end the year by being mad or holding grudges. Deputy Marshal, I understand that you were just doing your job, and I won't hold a grudge for being accused of murder...which is a statement I'd never imagined saying! I'll shake your hand if you allow me.

BASS
That's very kind of you, Mr. Nickles. I have to admit I don't get that...well ever. Yes, of course, I'll shake your hand. Happy New Year.

JOSH
(Earnest)
Happy New Year to you. To you both. Dr. Jennings, it's great to see you out and celebrating with us this year.

KENDRA
Thank you, Josh. Happy New Year.

JOSH
Fabulous. If you'd both excuse me...I'd like a shot at that karaoke machine myself!

2SP AS HE WANDERS OFF
MUFFLED ZEKE AND THOMAS SONG CONTINUES

IT EMERY
(Off in the distance, mad)

We're singing Mister Roboto or nothing Chris!

KENDRA

(Chuckles)

The love birds are at it again!

BASS

(Ponders)

I was curious about that; what the actual relationship was...is? I mean, they fight like an old married couple.

KENDRA

Well, other than them, I'm not ...not sure anybody knows, but that...it's the prevailing theory.

CLAPPING AS ZEKE & THOMAS' SONG ENDS

NIC

(OVER SPEAKER, EXCITED)

Okay people, one minute. One minute until we start 2022, refill your glasses and get ready!

2SP

BASS

Do you want me to add more to your glass?

KENDRA

Ohh, no bad idea. This last little... this tiny bit will be for midnight and then that's it—one glass; my limit.

BASS

Don't drink often?

KENDRA

(Friendly)

Stop teasing me!

START COUNTDOWN AT TWENTY

KENDRA
(Excited)

This is it

LET COUNT DOWN GET TO TWELVE

KENDRA
You know Bass, with our luck...something will happen at "one"
to interfere.

BASS
With this station, I've found...

KENDRA
(Cuts him off. Goes for it)
Aw fuck it...

SOUND OF CHAMPAIGN FLUTE TOSS OVER SHOULDER

BASS
(Shocked)
Kendra, are you Mpahhhhhh (sound of being kissed)

THREE, TWO, ONE...HAPPY NEW YEAR

3SP

KISS ENDS

KENDRA
Happy New Year, Bass. I thought you'd be a good kisser.

Outro and credits.

EASTER EGG

PARTY HAS ENDED, ONLY MIKHAIL IN THE GALLEY LATE NIGHT, CLEANING.
HUMMING AS THE BRUSH SOUNDS SWEEPING UP GLASS AND DEBRIS

MIKHAIL

(Focused, VO on digital recorder)

Smarty-Pants doctors make one huge mess. Food plates, drink glasses. What is...is this nacho dip or meatloaf?

CLEANING NOISES. SOUND OF RECORDER BEING PICKED UP OFF SURFACE

MIKHAIL

(VO)

Huh...Tovarishch leaves voice recorder box on table. Is red light meaning box is on or is meaning batteries low? Meh, I bring to his office and leave for morning. But first..cleaning up Smarty-pants party mess.

CLEANING NOISES

BEGINS HUMMING 'HARK KNOCK LIFE'

MIKHAIL

("Singing" in Russian Accent)

Is a hard-knock life; for me. Is a hard-knock life; for me. 'Stead of treated, I get tricks. 'Stead of kisses, I get borscht. Is the hard-knock life.

2SP

MORE HUMMING TO BEAT

MIKHAIL

("Singing" in Russian Accent)

Every day a new va-cation, when you work in re-search station. Clean up after (**STOMP STOMP**) smart-t-pants. Afterward

Mikhail (**STOMP STOMP**) SINGS AND DANCE...is a hard-knock life!

END EASTER EGG