90 Degrees South

SEASON FOUR

EPISODE THREE: TRUST IS THE FIRST LIE WE TELL OURSELVES

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by

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**BMB Productions LLC**

**SONG AND INTRO**

**ACT I**

**FADE IN.**

**INSIDE THE ATLAS CONFERENCE ROOM. THE TEAM IS ASSEMBLED AND WE JOIN THEM MID SESSION.**

 LARRY

…but unlike in past years where there was concern about the station manager leaving the station for the expedition; this year such is not a concern. After I resigned from the N.S.F. to accept the Director position with Beauregard Lowing; being on station is allowing for an opportunity we’ve never enjoyed. Having a company executive physically on-station to conduct operations; in real time.

 JOYCLYN

Resigned?!? I thought they sacked you.

 LARRY

And you would be mistaken with your assumption, Agent Flower.

 CARL

Not the way I remember it, but nonetheless; here we are. [PAUSE] What are we doing again?

 SHEPARD

 [EXCITED]

Discussing preparations for event four! We’re only twenty days away and I couldn’t be more excited with just a hint of anxious!

 LARRY

 [SMARMY]

Yes, yes doctor! We all share your enthusiasm; but let’s contain our glee and jocularity for the moment, shall we?

**RUFFLE OF PAPERWORK**

LARRY

{TALKING AS HE SKIMS OVER NUMBERS ON A PRINTED PAGE]

According to the data output from ongoing monitoring by the Laser Interferometer Space Antennas; there seems to be conflicting projections on the appearance point determined by the same monitoring efforts the week prior. Why?

 JEMMA

The LISA units, along with monitoring from Gravity Probe-B we had reactivated; indicate minute fissures in the local gravitational constant, which we suspect are causing localized fluctuations in gravitational acceleration or a subtle warping of spacetime, especially in regions of high curvature! Like near black holes, neutron stars, or the approach of a null space anomaly.

 CARL

Those fluctuations are not only moving but increasing and decreasing the potential appearance randomly each observation cycle. The margin of error presently is. . .[CALCULATING IN HIS MIND] plus or minus 3/4th of a mile. On a two dimensional plane of course! Sorry Mister Y-Axis, no fun time for you this go-round!

 SHEPARD

I’m working on a predictive algorithm which would simulate that the behavior of spacetime around a fissure in *gravity* using computational models and would help adjust and account for any random directional shift on the intersection of quantum field theory and general relativity, where such a fissure might exist, naturally.

 LARRY

 [FOLLOWING ALONG]

Which would not only filter out the distortion, but in theory help refine the exit aperture point to an even more precise set of coordinates; but also strengthen the ability for sensors to pinpoint the gravitational anomaly as it transverses null space. [ALMOST IMPRESSED] Intriguing theory doctor. Perhaps it wasn’t an error having you added to Atlas!

 SHEPARD

 [SHOCKED]

 What?

JOYCLYN

 You said that last bit out loud, Waynewright.

 LARRY

 Oh, I am aware.

 JOYCLYN

Right, before the Science Squad gets themselves wound up like a broken clock, can we tick a few things off the list?

I’ve picked who’s going to the Canadian station. Doctors Lorenz and Dellham, you’re up. You’ll be keeping an eye on…whatever gravitational doodah needs minding. Some scientific nonsense I don’t pretend to understand nor care to.

 JEMMA

Oh Shep, you’re going to be blown AWAY by the station. All the advanced equipment and the technology! It’s like walking into…well literally the future! Plus. . .I can’t WAIT to get my hands all over those translucent arachnid carcasses. Get up close and perform an exploratory dissection! Fell their cold exoskeleton against my bare skin [EXCITED SHUDDER NOISE]

**THREE BEAT**

 JOYCLYN

You have the weirdest idea of foreplay doctor! Moving on…Doctor Jovac.

 CARL

Present!

 JOYCLYN

That’s still up for debate. You’ll stay here, track our progress from Atlas, and try not to touch anything that hums.

 CARL

Happily! I’m too old to be crossing Ice tundras and exploring wandering dimensional pocket ways. Have enough problems traveling to the little scientist’s room late at night. Tinkle-torium.

 JOYCLYN

Next up—we need an engineer who knows their arse from a multimeter. Somebody who won’t panic the second a light blinks red.

 SHEPARD

Mister Bustamante?

 JOYCLYN

 [STERN]

Absolutely not. OPSEC’s priority one. I’m not about to hand Marshal Old Spice and his backup dancers another excuse to poke about. I told the D.O.D. to keep ’em grounded, especially after Marlow’s heroic cock-up that got Waters killed. They agreed. I pick who goes. Tweedle Dumb and Tweedle Bloody Dumber stay put. We’re takin’ Drexler.

 SHEPARD

Keenan?!?

**COLLECTED MOANS FROM THE GROUP**

LARRY

Mr. Drexler? I though you said ‘seasoned’. He’s just a boy and only a few seasons on station; no where near the experience level to be an acceptable selection. He also possess an insatiable need to vocalize every fleeting thought that crosses his mind, regardless of its relevance.

 JOVAC

 [BUSTS OUT A SPICE GIRL REFERENCE]

Well then. . .tell us who you want Lawrence; who you really really want?

 LARRY

 [FRUSTRATED]

I.Don’t.Care who is selected; only so long as that…person, possess the necessary experience and capacity for maturity to understand the magnitude of what they will be asked to care for.

 JOYCLYN

Yes, well that BOY who runs on at the mouth is the heir apparent to Zeke Bustamante after his move to your old job. His performance reviews over the last three seasons have been extremely favorable, if not colorful and he has experience in every mechanical & technical area within the arches. A jack of all trades as they say.

 SHEPARD

A jack of all trades who doesn’t know when to shut up! Silence can indeed be golden!

 JOYCLYN

 [LOSING PATIENCE]

Plus, the most important aspect is that THE DECISION IS MINE TO MAKE, I MADE IT SO THE REST OF YOU SOD OFF!

 **PAUSE FOR EFFECT**

 LARRY

 Sophistically stated, as always Agent Flower.

 JOYCLYN

 Shut your gob. That leaves me and Waynewright.

 LARRY

 [SMUG]

 I will be leading the expedition of course.

 JOYCLYN

Yes Waynewright, you are actually…WRONG. I’m in charge.

 LARRY

 [DEFIANT]

Oh that will absolutely NOT be the case.

 JOYCLYN

Alight grandad, you want to do this; let’s do this! You are a government contractor now, not the bloody boss. You are contracted to work on a government project called project Atlas. And in that situation, who do you think the government is?

 CARL

[EXCITED HE KNOWS THE ANSWER]YOU ARE!....[WAITS] Oh sorry. . .who is Agent Joyclyn Folwer? Jeopardy rules… I suppose.

 JOYCLYN

Spot on Jovac. Master of the bloody obvi as usual. You will be in charge of all science operations and matters while we’re on the station. I’m steering the bloody ship.

 LARRY

 [CONFIDENT]

I’m sure a simple phone call to…

 JOYCLYN

 [CUTS HIM OFF]

No call from your lot is simple anymore, Larry. Not after that genius from Beau-Low sold secrets to the bloody Chinese. Took me sticking my own neck out just to keep you off desk duty in a bunker somewhere next to Jovac.

 LARRY

 [INSULTED]

***You***…vouched…for ***me***!

JOYCLYN

The Department of Defense begrudgingly gave their authorization for you to attend, so long as I was in command.

**CHAIR SHOVED BACK FROM TABLE, FOOTSTEPS TO THE DOOR AND IT OPENS**

 LARRY

 Absolutely insufferable!

 **DOOR CLOSES**

**BEGIN FADE OUT**

 JOYCLYN

Right. Now that’s sorted, let’s move on to the travel prep and see if we can manage ten whole minutes without another tantrum.

**ACT II**

**DIGITAL RECORDER STARTED SOUND**

**BASS IS IN HIS OFFICE, WE HEAR THE RINGING ON THE SPEAKER PHONE. THE CALL IS ANSWERED.**

 SALLY

Good morning Deputy Marshal, or I guess for you it’s good evening.

 BASS

Hello Ms. Kirkland. Not A very good evening based on the email I just read.

 SALLY

Bass, I wouldn’t worry about that! I heard all about Senator Hawke’s staff asking questions about the takedown of Kaleo Makana and wanting more detail.

 BASS

Ms. Kirkland, They’re asking people I used to work directly with and that I’ve known for years. They’re telling me the questions they’re asking are very. . .biased and seem motive driven.

 SALLY

From what I remember reading; that incident was almost ten years ago and was extensively investigated by The Marshals, Honolulu PD and the state Sheriff’s office. Not to mention the A.G. and each agency came to the same conclusion. It was a good shoot.

 BASS

Then for an old case that is supposedly settled, they’re kicking up a lot of dust.

 SALLY

Look, I still don’t think there’s much to worry about; but for the sake of argument, what are you hearing about the questions being asked?

 BASS

Questions around who the initial tip-off came from and if that criminal informant was given favors in exchange for his information. Questions around the surveillance means used to ascertain the fugitive was inside that specific home and A LOT of questions around the exigent circumstances of the warrantless search.

 SALLY

Again, these were all settled matters in the official investigations conducted.

 BASS

Right! Sorry I forgot that one…and questions around the internal agency investigations where the matters were deems lawful and therefore settled. That too! None of the Marshals I know or have talked to have indicated they ever went through this level of vetting before their confirmation hearing.

 SALLY

Given the recent shifts in the President’s foreign policy; some amount of additional scrutiny isn’t unexpected. Making sure there aren’t any troublesome international connections or ties, but Bass let’s not get too worried here! You were born and raised in the prairies of Kansas; It doesn’t get more apple pie & Yankee-doodle than that!

 BASS

Any more on the start of the confirmation hearings?

 SALLY

I was going to wait till tonight when I expect to get official word from the Senate Judicial Committee clerks; but everything is pointing to the hearings taking place on Monday April 24th. Typically, the Director of the Marshals will get a courtesy advance copy of the Agenda, saying who will be approved and who the committee may wish to further question in session.

 BASS

And if we find out they want to question me?

 SALLY

Will you stop that! Senator Victor Hawkes is chairman of the committee and it’s a very publicly known fact he is a MAJOR booster and supporter of the president. You’re so popular that I can’t foresee anyway that would happen.

 BASS

Devil’s advocate Ms. Kirkland. Humor me.

 SALLY

[DEEP SIGH] In theory, if they needed you to testify and given the circumstances of where you are and physical impossibility of current travel. . .there is a prescribed method which allows for teleconference attendance and would be permissible. Just PLEASE. . .please Bass, promise me you’ll be more ‘glass half full’ as we get closer to the date!

 BASS

Don’t worry about something until I have something to worry about. You aren’t the first person to tell me…

**IRIDIUM SATELLITE PHONE RINGS**

 BASS

Sorry Ms. Kirkland. I have another call coming in.

 SALLY

No problem, I’m late to my next meeting anyway. Hang in there Deputy, and remember. Glass half full! Good night!

 BASS

Night, Ma’am.

**BEEP OF SPEAKER PHONE HANGING UP**

**BEEP OF THE IRIDIUM PHONE BEING ANSWERED**

 BASS

 [CONFUSED]

Hello? Supervisory Marshal…

 FIONNA

 [SHE CUTS HIM OFF]

Don’t say my name. I’m on a burner and I don’t want anybody to know I’m calling you.

 BASS

 [NOW CONCERNDED]

Are you alright? Are you safe?

 FIONNA

 [WORRIED, URGENT]

What? [SIGH] Yes you dumbass I’m fine! It’s not me I’m worried about. The Sat-phone Chuck sent you has NSA type 1 encryption. I know because it was me who picked it out for Chuck to send you. Bass, I can’t be confident they won’t try to intercept your incoming calls. I \*am\* positive my own cell and office are being tapped. Hence why I’m calling you this way. I’m also monitoring DOD and NSA satellite traffic on my laptop as we’re talking just to make sure. Just. . .Shut up for once in our lives and let me talk.

 BASS

 [CONCERNDED]

Okay…

 FIONNA

They’re digging into you Bass. HARD!

 BASS

 [RELEIVED]

Oh my God. . .[PAUSES; SAID MONOTONE] person who I have never met before…[ASSURING VOICE] I already know all that. I’ve had no shortage of people getting in contact with me about my past case files. Especially that Makana debacle back in 2014! I’m sure they’ll try to ding me on. . .

 FIONNA

 [URGENT]

DIANE BASS! {LOWERS VOICE] They’re asking me questions about Diane.

**LONG PAUSE**

 BASS

 [ANGRY, BUT SLOW SIMMER]

What?

 FIONNA

 [URGENT]

Very personal questions. About your marriage questions. The accident, the aftermath, how you. . .you dealt with everything. If they’re going to try to get you on anything. ..it’s going to be about her!

 BASS

 [SIMMER RISING]

What did you tell them?

 FIONNA

 [INDIGNATE]

I’M NOT A . . .[LOWER VOICE] I’m not a moron Bass! Just the basics and left out anything that could paint you in a less than favorable light.

 BASS

 [FUMING]

I knew they were going to try and railroad me, but I never suspected they sink that low!

 FIONNA

It’s. . .It’s the upper tier of who …who we work for Bass. They’ll do whatever they need to.

**ALARM SOUND FROM LAPTOP IN FIONNA’S BACKGROUND**

 FIONNA

They know your phone was just activated, but they won’t be able to listen in for at least another ten minutes. Fucking lightweights! I could crack it in four, NSA type 1 or not!

 BASS

They’re setting me up not just to fail, but to discredit me. Humiliate me in the court of public opinion, on national TV when they air the confirmation hearings. Bastards!

 FIONNA

Bass, you need a lawyer that ISN’T being provided to you by the White House. You need somebody on your side.

 BASS

 [THINKING OUT LOUD]

Devil’s advocate.

 FIONNA

What?

 BASS

Nothing. I have somebody in mind. [CHUCKLE] one hell of a lawyer!

 FIONNA

I’m hoping off so the trace fails; although at this rate we could probably talk about whatever you want.

 BASS

Remember that trip you and your friends were talking about taking?

 FIONNA

Yeah.

 BASS

Not the one domestically, the original destination I won’t say on the line regardless.

 FIONNA

I know where you mean.

 BASS

TAKE IT! I’ll bankroll you. I’ll bankroll you and all your girlfriends. Hell, I’ll even bankroll what’s his name you’re dating steady now!

**TWO BEAT**

 FIONNA

 [CONFUSED]

How the hell did you know he and I had gotten. . .DAMN IT BASS, EVERY TIME? I fall for that every time!

 BASS

Just. . .be safe, and get ghosted. I lo. . .I look forward to seeing to seeing you soon.

 FIONNA

Same.

**PHONE DISCONNECT**

**DIGITAL RECORDER OFF**

**ACT III**

**BASS’ RECORDER**

**RECORDING STARTED**

**FOOTSTEPS DOWN A HALLWAY. THE NOISES OF THE VMF SING THEIR SONGS.**

**A HEAVY DOOR IS UNLATCHED AND CREEKS OPEN. FROM INSIDE WE HEAR THE SOUNDS OF A TELEVISION PROGRAM BEING WATCHED ON AN IPAD.**

BASS

Franklin, it’s Supervisory Deputy Marshal [REMEMBERS]. . . .eh, you probably already smell who it is. Can we chat for a minute.

 FRANKLIN

Let me guess. Just like the courtroom procedural drama I’m watching here, you need legal advice.

 BASS

How’d you know?

 FRANKLIN

All everybody comes down here for is legal advice! Once! Just one time I’d love to hear: Well Hi Franklin, just coming to check up on you and have a social call! Or…Hey Franklin, what can you tell me about crypto-currency investing? Or even… Franklin, my man; I hear you’re a demon in the sheets; how about some pointers? Deputy Marshal I can show you how to perform Satan’s depth charge! Doctor Jennings will be walking funny for days!

 BASS

Alright alright I get it! Look, this is serious business, and I honestly could use your expertise.

 FRANKLIN

 [PLAY IT COY]

And I could use a favor. A real…liberating favor!

 BASS

You know I can’t let you out of the tube Franklin.

 FRANKLIN

Which is why I’m not asking for that.

 BASS

Uh huh. Look, even though I don’t honestly believe I have a soul or that they even exist; I’m going to hedge my bets and not agree to barter with it.

 FRANKLIN

All you walking apes have one, I assure you, but no. That’s not what I’m asking for either.

 BASS

 [CONFUSED]

Then what? Just tell me already, I’m not here to play games and if you can’t help then...

 FRANKLIN

I want a watch-buddy!

 BASS

That’s it? A watch?

 FRANKLIN

No, no. Watch.Hyphen.Buddy. Somebody to binge watch television shows with. Somebody to talk to about the plot, share ideas, theories that don’t involve going on-line to the cest pool of humanity that is message forums. Why would I care what some creeper in his mom’s basement thinks?

 BASS

That’s it? You don’t want your freedom, souls to eat or. . .whatever other demon perversions you’re into. You want somebody to watch television with?

 FRANKLIN

[SHIFT TO DEMON] Of course I want to get out of here! And yes, I’ll take whatever souls I can get. Starting to go through withdrawals in here. Perversions? I have whos-its and whats-its galore, I’d love to tryout. But yeah. A TV watching buddy. That’s my ask.

 BASS

[SIGH] One show. We’ll watch the series together; one episode a week. What specific day and time. . .we’ll have to play by ear.

 FRANKLIN

[DEMON][CONSIDERS FOR A FEW SECONDS] Reasonable terms. I get to pick the series!

 BASS

 [CAUTIOUS]

No greater than five seasons.

 FRANKLIN

 [COUNTERS / DEMON]

TWENTY!

 BASS

 [COUNTER]

TEN! Not a trailer or teaser more.

 FRANKLIN

 [DEMON]

DONE! The bargain is struck! [PONDERS] Won’t get me on the cover of Demon Deals Digest, but a W is a W! It’s Franklin’s time to shine! Alight [REVERT TO HUMAN] What’s the legal advice you need, Javert?

 BASS

In the process of gathering information on my background and history with the Marshal’s service, the senate judiciary committee is interested in a particular old case of mine.

 FRANKLIN

Yeah, Cheryl-Lynn popped in a few weeks back and mentioned something about that. Nothing like being the last one to hear what happens around the station, let me tell you! How do you know they’re interested?

 BASS

People I works with. Colleagues, friends, all have got in contact with me to let me know questions are being asked and old details scrutinized.

 FRANKLIN

Okay, tell me about this case of yours. What happened?

 BASS

It was about ten years ago. We were on loan to the District of Oregon to assist with a task force operation going after the worst fugitives they had. It was The Pacific Southwest Regional Fugitive Task Force.

 FRANKLIN

 [JUDGING]

That’s not a very catchy name. I thought all you cops had catchy operation names like: Operation-Clean-sweep or Operation-payback?

 BASS

Yeah, not every time. Anyway… so one of the jackets we were given was for a shitbird named

Kaleo Makana. Ironically, he had fled three times from prosecution and needless to say, I was very familiar with him, given two of his three returns to custody were by me. I was anxious to go for the threepeat. This go-round, he fled from Honolulu and was hiding out in Eugene.

So we’re working the handful of cases we have when one of the other people on my unit gets some info from his criminal informant. Says he has some news about one of the guys we’re looking for. Surprise, surprise; it’s my boy Makana.

According to the C.I.; Kaleo was staying with an old friend in the West University Eugene neighborhoods. The informant was looking for a deal on an upcoming possession of stolen goods case he was staring down, so the local Marshal’s office agreed to drop those charges if his tip panned out.

 FRANKLIN

Following so far.

 BASS

Three of us stake out the address, a known drug pad and watch from a surveillance unit made to look like a work van. Thankfully it didn’t take long at all before we saw him exit a car and head into the duplex address we were given.

We call it in and ask to have a warrant issued from the local magistrate to enter this address and secure Makana. We had arranged to have a rotating judge available 24 hours for exactly this reason; so we expected within one or two hours to have that warrant and have local police assist in the execution.

 FRANKLIN

Let me guess, that’s where things went south. With the warrant?

 BASS

Huh? No. We got the warrant alright, but not until 90 minutes too late. We were waiting for a copy of the signed warrant to be driven down to us and the uniees to get prepped when it all went sideways.

This car, a real hooptie piece of crap clanks to a stop in front of the house and this guy gets up, dragging a woman who is kicking and screaming up the drive and into the house, smacking her across the head and telling her to stop yelling for help.

 FRANKLIN

 [STARTS TO GET IT]

Okay, alright. I see where this is starting to go. What happened next?

 BASS
We had a call to make and we had to make it right then. We all heard the woman screaming for help. We saw she was resisting efforts to enter that domicile and were well aware of at least one dangerous & wanted felon who was also inside.

We radioed quickly the sit-rep and requested immediate backup. All three of us agreed we couldn’t wait given circumstances and to make entry now.

So, we stack up, announce ourselves and ram the door.

Immediately, there was a junkie on the couch smoking meth. He raised a gun towards us and was handled immediately. We call in shots fired, and all hell starting breaking loose inside the house. The geniuses had put bars on all the windows because of break-ins so none of them could bolt out except by coming down the stair past us. Essentially we cornered frightened animals all around us and didn’t know how outnumbered we might be.

I sent the other two Marshals upstairs to clear the floor, and I proceeded ahead by myself. The first room was empty and nobody in the corners. As I approached the next door I could hear muffled screams. I went by to the last room down the hall which was the kitchen. Was able to clear it and then headed back to the door with muffled screams.

As soon as I announce myself bullets come flying through the door. I could discern two, maybe even three shooters from inside. With backup still way out there and somebody screaming inside, I did what I needed to do.

 FRANKLIN

Bust through the door, guns blazing? Shooting the bad-guys?

 BASS

No, I took a fire extinguisher from the kitchen, punched it through the drywall; between the studs into their room and followed it with a flashbang.

It went off, I used the damage from the extinguisher and the concussion from the grenade to the drywall and barged through. Ordered them to drop their weapons. They elected to start firing wildly so I shot them both to stop and control the situation.

Unfortunately, with all the panic fire, the young lady they brought into the house was hit and passed away.

Backup arrived, various agencies investigated the incident and matter leading up to. State, Local, Us in the Marshals, US attorney general who loves to make our lives hell; everybody and their sister looked into this one.

 FRANKLIN

So, who was the girl?

 BASS

Local girl who lived nearby. Her brother owed one of the men inside the house money so he kidnapped her to make him pay.

 FRANKLIN

Oh. Bummer!

 BASS

Since it was me who did the shooting, the Marshals had jurisdiction and led the internal investigation with coordination from the Eugene Police. Findings were that the decisions made while perhaps not optimal, were proper.

The Marshals acted in good faith responding to the cries for help. We made a decision that any other reasonable person would have made. Although we didn’t have warrant in hand; there were exigent circumstances that allowed us to enter. We were acting on credible information from a known and proven C.I.; so forth and so on.

 FRANKLIN

If it was already investigated, if you and the other two Marshals were cleared; why do you think the Senator’s staff is looking so hard at this?

 BASS

They want to find something to use as ammunition to get my confirmation rejected with reason. Something that will discredit me and not make me the…poster-boy for the US Marshals and tarnish my reputation. I’d like you to review everything on this case and tell me where the most likely areas are they may try to use; and help me prepare against it.

 FRANKLIN

[PONDERS A FEW SECONDS, SWITCH TO DEMON]

I need copies of everything you have, or you can get me on this case. Your notes and reports, local agencies, the review and investigation, emails; everything!

 BASS
I have all that already. Had to gather it for the pre-hearing background review. I can email it all to you. What’s your address?

FRANKLLIN

Yeet underscore master underscore sixty-nine at tik-tokfanatic dot com.

**BASS WRITING THAT DOWN**

 BASS

Have no idea what that is supposed to mean…and probably don’t want to. I’ll start emailing files in an hour. Appreciate you looking Franklin.

 FRANKLIN

 [BACK TO HUMAN]

No need to thank me, I’m getting somebody to watch Verdict: Impossible! With.

 BASS

 [CONNECTS 2 and 2]

Wait. That’s what you’re watching? Kendra has me watching it too. She is a complete fanatic about that show. You’re into it as well?

 FRANKLIN

Nobody was more surprised than me how accurate they got court room procedure as well as how dysfunctional a law practice can really be. I’m also convinced I’ve met the woman who is playing a possessed court stenographer. If I’m right she really is one of us. Talk about method acting!

 BASS

Let me talk to Kendra to figure out how this can work. I’ll honor my promise and our deal. . .but I need to square things with her as well.

 FRANKLIN

By all means, bring the good doctor along!

 **HEADING OUT THE DOOR**

 BASS

Not what I meant and I don’t want her. . .[SIGH] this one’s gonna be a dozy!

**BASS RECORDER: RECORDING OFF**

**ACT IV**

**FADE IN. WE HEAR FEMININE BOOTS TRAVERSING THE HALLWAY AND ENTERING THE GALLEY WERE NEW JASS MUSIC IS PLAYING. IT’S A SMALL CROWD.**

LLA

Well good afternoon to ya Agent Fowler. Hope you brought your appetite today cause I’ve whipped up…

 JOYCLYN

 [CUTS HER UP ABRUPTLY]

Beef stew on mash. Bread. Hold the chinwag.

 LLA

Coming right up. Oh, it’s such a treat to get ta make dishes for our international visitors! I’ve been reading up on some of the more traditional U.K. faire and I can’t wait to. .

 JOYCLYN

 [CUTS HER OFF AGAIN]

Beef Stew. Mash. Bread!

 LLA

Okay, I appreciate someone who is all business there. Here ya go. Hope you enjoy yeah you betcha!

**FOOTSTEPS WALKING OFF AND SITTING AT A TABLE. SOUND OF SILVERWARE BEING PUT DOWN AND A FEW BEATS.**

SYDNEY

 Hello there. Mind if I join you?

 JOYCLYN

 [CURT]

 Yes.

 SYDNEY

 Thank you.

**SOUND OF CHAIR BEING PULLED OUT AND A COFFEE CUP PLACED ON THE TABLE**

 JOYCLYN

I meant yes, I do mind if you join me. I want to enjoy my lunch in peace. I don’t do. . .conversation.

 SYDNEY

I won’t take up much of your time. We’ve been here on station for a month now and I wanted to introduce myself.

 JOYCLYN

I know who you are mate. You’re the head doctor. Head of the crackers brigade. The psychologist that can read minds. Bremmer.

 SYDNEY

 [SURPRISED]

Lawrence filled you in on that did he? Most times he opts to keep that little kernel under wraps. Make sure nobody gets intimidated or scared.

 JOYCLYN

I cannot relay how much I truly don’t care. Now why don’t you be an outstanding lad and go stand out there!

 SYDNEY

Well, you see Joyclyn; this is where it may get a bit awkward. Per Beauregard-Lowing and the National Science Foundation; all winterovers need to see me once a month. It’s mandatory.

 **PLATE SCRAPING/EATING STOPS**

 JOYCLYN

I was supposed to have been given an exemption from Beauregard-Lowing from you shrinking my head. Madaline Dantes should have cleared that. Re-check your email queue.

 SYDNEY

I spoke to Lawrence about that a few weeks ago. He said now that he was in the directorship of R&D- Defense & Military applications the decision fell to him. He mentioned something about careful deliberation and felt there would still be merit in you seeing me.

 JOYCLYN

He.What?

 SYDNEY

I’m sure you are going to want to check with him and confirm that. You just met me now, so I don’t blame you wanting to verify.

 JOYCLYN

 [CONFUSION MIXED WITH ANGER]

Does he think I’m going to lose my bottle? That I can’t hack it?

 SYDNEY

I don’t think it’s that. Lawrence is a very unique individual. He may not have all the standard social niceties, but in his own way, I honestly believe he cares for people.

 JOYCLYN

 [NOW ANGER MORE THAN CONFUSION]

Bollocks! He doesn’t care for anybody other than his own self. He’s. . .[FIGURES IT OUT] trying to intentionally get me sacked! Thinks I’ll spill all about….

 SYDNEY

 [REASSURING]

Again, anything that I…pick up shall we say. . .I can’t share. Unless you are planning to murder somebody or cause massive harm; only then would I be able to divulge what I know; but only information pertaining to that murder. Nothing else could be…

 JOYCLYN

Oh if you see me you’re going to get a master uni class all on intentional homicide, Bremmer.

 SYDNEY

[OLIVE BRANCH]

Look, Joyclyn, I know your file and background, but I don’t know you. Until I can assess whether the threat is real, I’ll just attribute it to a hot temper, how about that?

 JOYCLYN

 [SCOFF]

SYDNEY

 [REASSURING]

Oh c’mon. Seeing me isn’t a bad thing. In this harsh, isolated environment, mental well-being is crucial—especially during your first winterover, which can be the hardest.

 JOYCLYN

 [UNDER HER BREATH]

Waynewright is going to pay dearly for this one!

 SYDNEY

[LAYS IT OUT]

Look, I know my office isn’t where you want to be. You’ve built your life on strength, discipline, and pushing through. But real strength isn’t just enduring—it’s knowing when to maintain what keeps you operational. You wouldn’t ignore a jammed weapon, so why ignore your own mind?

You wouldn’t be seeing me because you’re weak. You’d be there because you refuse to be a weak link. Ignoring the weight doesn’t make it disappear; it just makes it heavier. If you respect the mission, then you respect staying sharp, reliable, and in control. That takes work, just like everything else you’ve mastered.

Nobody expects you to like this process, but if you respect the mission, then you respect the need to keep yourself operational. If that means checking in, tuning up, and facing whatever’s rattling around in your head, then so be it.

That’s not surrender Joyclyn! That’s making sure you stay in control. And control? That’s something I know you understand!

Your file says you had five combat deployments in the middle east with M.I.-39 and were attached to SAS operations. If you can handle that, you can handle this. I believe in you.

So, what’s say we cut through all the posturing and get you into a session. . .next week?

**IMMEDIATE LEAP FROM JOYC TO BASS’ POV; NO FADE OUT**

**BASS” DIGITAL RECORDING STARTED**

**BASS IS IN THE GALLEY AS WELL BUT ACROSS THE ROOM. WE CAN JUST BARLEY MAKE OUT SYDNEY’S AND JOYCLYN’S CHATTING IN THE BACKGROUND.**

**ACT V**

 BASS

Looks like Sydney is trying to convince Joyclyn of something. They’re over on the other end of the galley and I don’t want to get in the way. I’ll just sit over on this side so I can keep my eye on them. Jump in if I need to help.

 **HEELS APPROACHING**

 LLA

Here ya go Mister Marshal Marlow. Hot creamy potato soup and a side of ham.

 BASS

Still just Deputy for now Ms. Alice, but thank you none the less.

 LLA

Or you’re very welcome there. Now you go eating that while it’s all still hot! Need to get some more meat on them bones don’t cha know!

**HEELS LEAVING**

 BASS

Okay, let’s do this quickly while my soup is cooling off. Thursday March 23rd, this is Supervisory Deputy Marshal Bass Marlow and this is. . .me in a holding pattern while I await something more to happen. It’s 13:00 Hours and I’m in the Amundsen Scott Galley. No investigation. . .just, holding still. I despise holding still. [SHUDDER LIKE SOMEBODY WALKED ON YOUR GRAVE]

Anyway, I’m looking more into the files I received a few months back from Charlie after his passing and everything that he was given on this station and the elusive Tesla journal by this. . .Mister Gable.

Mister Gable was the cover name for the individual giving all the files and documentation for most everything we know about that journal to date. The fact that Gable was Chaz Wilford’s handler back in 2002 when he witnessed the murder and Wilford being on this station 20 years later is too much of a coincidence to accept.

It reinforces for me that the journal was either left and hidden on this station by the previous owner when he attended the station christening or hidden somewhere close by. Both DARPA & Beauregard-Lowing seem intent on getting it; which obviously means we need to find it first to ensure we keep it out of the wrong hands.

Gable provided Charlie a way to get in contact when he needed to relay information on what was going on down in Amundsen Scott. Charlie would take out an add in the legal notice section of the Poughkeepsie Journal. Using specific words he was given by Gable in what looked like a generic legal notice, a number or email would be provided for Gable to call Charlie back on.

I’m contemplating putting in an add myself in attempts to get more information from Gable and see if we can’t get more information on this Journal and where it might be on station?

I’ll talk to Kendra this evening and run it past her for her thoughts as well.

Hrrrm, also…an interesting, yet curious item of note. I received radio calls from both my special Marshals based in Palmer and McMurdo. Both said there have been reports of US Navy vessels out on their horizon. Both of their stations are situated on the shore, so ships out in the ocean aren’t that unusual.

However, U.S. Naval ships, multiple time in as many week and being spotted not just by the US stations; but many other international station on our shores \*is\* unusual. Best we can figure at this point is it’s Campbell just showing the flag to the other stations. Rattling sabers if you will. Making sure they’re aware the United States is always out there. It’s Campbell’s style to a tee.

In other news I have sent down all the files and documents I have on the Oregon shooting I was involved into Franklin for review. He said based on an initial review he should be able to come up with the top four or five most likely items a legal team would try and build upon to make me look bad.

Once we have that defined, he thinks it should be too hard to come up with a strategy to beat them at their own game and be prepared for whatever they come at us with. Not sure of my feelings in partnering up with Franklin on this. I know what Zeke’s thoughts would be so no need in checking with him.

[DEEP SIGH] Speaking of Franklin, I have a debt I need to start paying off. I spoke to Kendra and filled her in. I’m not happy with how things went. I’m trying my best to balance everything in my life down here and keep what Sydney said in mind. That I can’t be a shepherd for everybody. That people need to make up their own minds. Well, Kendra made up hers. No doubt about that. I don’t like how things were left, but I’m going to deal with it….

**BEGIN FADE OUT**

**ACT VI**

FADE IN. WE’RE BACK IN FRANKLIN’S ROOM. WE CAN HERE THE BUSS OF THE VMP NOICE OUTSIDE, BUT NOW A NEW SOUND IS PRESENT. THE AMPLE SORROUND SOUND OF A 53” TELEVISION. WE HERE A JAUNTY REJOINER AND THEN A ANNOUNCER’S VOICE’S COMES ON:

ANNOUCNER

And now back to: VERDICT: IMPOSSIBLE!

 HONNORABLE AMANDA COVINGTON

 [ON TV]

Mister St. Couix, you best have a reasonable explanation of this outburst. This court has never, and will never take homicide victims testifying through Ouija boards as credible testimony counselor!!!

 DAMION ST. COUIX

 [ON TV]

Your Honor, I know this may be within the realm of unusual and unprecedented, but despite …..

 KENDRA

 [DISBELEIF]

I can’t believe Damion made the deal with the medium to get in contact with Jim Kastle’s recent victim!

 FRANKLIN

 [DEMON]

What choice did he have really? The Irish mob was going to go public with the sorted details of his

Illegitimate twin daughters Jade and Emerald!

 BASS

This is hard for me to follow. So. . .Kastle killed the mobster Montana?

 FRANKLIN

Shhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!

 KENDRA

 [LOW TONE]

No sweetie. Kastle was set up by Baron von KoiterMach to make it look like he murdered Montana. Nobody knows yet who the real murderer is. I think it’s Chet!

 FRANKLIN

 [DEMON]

No way! Chet was at the Jazz festival upstate for the Herbie Hancock weekend. Said he missed the last one remember?

 KENDRA
That’s what he told Delilah… [LEADING FRANKLIN] who he was….

 FRANKLIN

 [DEMON]

Cheating on, that’s right! He was knocking boots with the school principal for opposing counsel’s niece! [SWITCH BACK TO HUMAN] Take it from me Doctor, end a secret and illicit love affair the right way, Killing isn’t that far a stretch. Actually, pretty easy to bridge the two if I need to!

 BASS

‘*Killing isn’t that far a stretch’*? Taken out of context Franklin, that’s the kinda statement …***might*** suggest criminal intent!

 FRANKLIN & KENDRA

SHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

HONNORABLE AMANDA COVINGTON

 [ON TV]

Objection overruled. Counselor, you may proceed in questioning the Ouija board!

 KENDRA

 [HAPPY]

Yes!

**WE HEAR HEAVY BREATHING FROM INSIDE THE TUBE**

 BASS

Franklin, do you have to breath down our necks?

 FRANKLIN

You’re the ones who wheeled in the love seat and pushed it up against the tube!

 BASS

There is only one electrical outlet in this room. If we want to watch together, this is the only place we could set it up and be comfortable!

 FRANKLIN

By all means, you both should get as comfortable as you can! Kick off your shoes! Cuddle under blankets. And should you guys want to get to 2nd or 3rd base while we watch; Franklin will understand.

 BASS

Not going to happen!

 KENDRA

 [TRYING TO WATCH]

Would you boys shush already!

**THREE BEAT**

 FRANKLIN

 [DEMON]

Make it international! Russian hands; Roman fingers! Eh? Eh? Show her Satan’s Depth charge I told you about!

 BASS

Stop.

 FRANKLIN

Wait, how did EmmaJean Daughtry get out of holding already?

 KENDRA

 [ANNOYED]

Well if you two chatty-Kathy’s would pay ATTENTION to the show instead of playing patty-cake with each other, you may not miss so much.

 FRANKLIN

Wow! Sorry Doctor.

 BASS

Sorry sweetie.

 KENDRA

That’s better. [THREE BEAT] Besides, we can’t do Satan’s depth charge without a hot tub and two shots of Jägermeister.

 BASS

 [SHOCKED]

Wait. . .how are you familiar with…

 FRANKLIN

 [DEMON]

I’m a lawyer, don’t answer that doctor! Objection!

HONNORABLE AMANDA COVINGTON

 [ON TV]

Sustained! Case Dismissed!

WE HEAR CHEESY TV VICTORY MUSIC AND CHEERING, ALONG WITH GAVEL BANGING FROM THE EPISODE AS IT BLENDS WITH THE SHOWS OUTRO!

**OUTRO AND CREDITS.**