

VI: A podcast by the Intergalactic Improv Initiative.

KAYA: *Dangerous Dangers*, Minisode Three: *Athena Consults Her Rolodex*. Featuring the voices of Lea Lawson and creator Kaya Renwick.

Well-behaved women seldom make history. *I Should Roll*.

VI: January 19th, 2189. Terran Universal Coordinated Calendar. The Citadel, Widow System, Serpent Nebula. Zakera Ward, Mid-Wards District.

KAYA: You've split off from Vraga, and you are going to get your own supplies. What is—Where is Athena going? What is Athena doing?

LEA: Athena is gonna head back to her ship. Um, I know the guys were actually trying to get a ship and there was a whole thing. [chuckles] She has her own little craft—

KAYA: Okay.

LEA: So that is currently docked. And yeah, she's going to go there to get just a couple of things and maybe talk to someone about *these guys*.

KAYA: Alright, so you are going to head to Tayseri Ward. From about any Ward to another, it's about a half hour skycar ride, thereabouts, just in general. So she grabs a rapid transit car and swooshes off into the purple sky. And are you—are you going to do anything on your way there? Call anybody? Or are you just sittin'... sittin' pretty and waiting?

LEA: I know a guy I could call. [soft laugh] Yeah.

KAYA: Alright. Who are you calling?

LEA: Ghostbusters!

KAYA: Ha! Well...

LEA: [overlapping - disappointed in self] I'm sorry.

[KAYA and LEA chuckle]

LEA: Geez.

KAYA: That's staying in. I hope you know that's staying in.

LEA: [oh man] Uh huh. Right.

[KAYA AND LEA laugh]

LEA: Damn it, morning brain! Alright. [giggles] She is going to call her old mate Bailey!

KAYA: Callin' C-Sec. Okay. Yeah.

LEA: Mm-hmm!

KAYA: Well, that call connects and the long-suffering voice of Captain Armando-Owen Bailey comes over the line.

BAILEY: Bailey here. What do you need? Make it quick.

ATHENA: [overly sunny] Armando-Owen Bailey. How are you?

KAYA: He heaves the biggest sigh [LEA giggling] as he recognises your voice and he says:

BAILEY: [oh God why] Athena Hellier. To what do I owe this distinct... pleasure?

ATHENA: What, you don't think this is just a social call?

BAILEY: From you? In the middle of the work day? Pfft.

ATHENA: Okay, perhaps you do know me. [chuckles] I was hoping to see if you knew something. Um, I've hunted around and you're obviously the best person that I can ask.

BAILEY: 'Cause *that's* not concerning at all.

ATHENA: [chuckles]

BAILEY: Do I need to fish another goldfish out of the lake?

ATHENA: [coyly] What fish?

BAILEY: I'm gonna take that as a *no*...

ATHENA: Just because people keep *finding* them doesn't mean that I've *put* them there.

BAILEY: Don't tell me anything that I'll need to swear against in a court of law. How many times...? [exhales with experience]

ATHENA: You love it! Your job is much more fun when I come calling, surely.

BAILEY: It certainly makes the days go by a little faster, I'll give you that.

[ATHENA giggles in satisfaction]

KAYA: You can hear the little bit of a smile in his voice.

LEA: Yeah. And she definitely picks up on that.

ATHENA: Now, the call is encrypted. I need to ask you if you know where any Minos operatives might be floating around the Citadel.

BAILEY: [sus] Will it do me any good if I ask you why?

ATHENA: I mean, they're the bad guys.

BAILEY: [that does NOT negate my point] And you have on occasion found yourself on the not-so-white side of the line, so...pardon me for being paranoid, but it is kind of my job.

ATHENA: True, true, very true on all counts there. But these guys? [sigh] Armando, you know they're on another level. I... I have a lead that I'm squirreling after. And I just, for once, I don't know where I could find them. They have to be here. I know they *shouldn't* be here, but they're here—they are. Have your boys—and girls—have they found anything?

KAYA: He heaves another sigh, and this one you recognise as the serious Bailey. He takes his job seriously, otherwise he wouldn't still be here.

BAILEY: For once, I actually wish I *could* help you, Athena, but... you're not wrong. Minos is on another level. We get hints here and there that, you know, somebody, somebody's connected to something, but by the time we get there, by the time we dig in, they're gone. We've had whole swaths of key cards and ID chips being reported missing, and they never turn up in the regular places. So I, I wish I could help you, but honestly, if you find—you, you might know more than me at this point! And that chaps my ass to have to admit.

ATHENA: Yeah, wow. [pauses] I mean, I'm not surprised... Some of your C-Sec officers can't find anything. They couldn't find their way out of a paper bag but—

BAILEY: Some of them can't find their ass with both hands, let's be real!

ATHENA: [long chuckle at his admission] *But* they have people like *you* and if you don't know anything, then, well, you don't know anything. Shit! Okay. Well, I mean, you're not the only person I know. But you are one of my favourites.

BAILEY: [hear how touched I am] Aw, how sweet. Listen, is this a number I can call you at? If I do find anything?

ATHENA: Yes, I will leave this ability open.

BAILEY: Excellent. Because like I said, you're not wrong. If we can do anything to fuck these guys up, you know I'm on board.

ATHENA: Mm. And you know I might do that. So—

BAILEY: Oh, I do.

ATHENA: Listen, yes, if I find—*if?* *When* I find something, I'd like first dibs. But I *promise* that I'll give them back.

BAILEY: As long as you don't break more of my station than the Keepers can fix. [ATHENA exhales in amusement] The ends justify the means, if you ask me. You know how I work.

ATHENA: I know how you work. And, yes, I'll try to keep damage to a *minimum*.

BAILEY: Always appreciated. Saves me paperwork.

ATHENA: Mm. That old chestnut.

KAYA: You vaguely hear [buzzer sound] a buzzer in the background and he says:

BAILEY: Ah, shit. Athena, gotta let you go.

ATHENA: Alright. Until next time. Bye.

BAILEY: Talk later.

KAYA: And the line goes dead.

VI: Tayseri Ward, Private Docks, MSV *Sonder*.

KAYA: Okay, the rest of the drive passes in quiet as Athena thinks about her—thinks about her day, thinks about what Bailey said, and then you swoop into the Tayseri Ward docks. And could you describe your, describe your ship? What's her name? What does she look like?

LEA: Her name is the *Sonder*, which feels very appropriate. She is a smaller craft, so not something that would actually fit her new crew [chuckles] Otherwise, it may have been on offer. [KAYA and LEA laugh] She's had this thing for about eleven years, but it was in the family *slightly* longer than that. Yeah, it's not big by any means but there is enough space in it that, you know, she can have a bed space, a few seats, a cockpit, a shower, and some little hidey holes. But other than that, not too large.

KAYA: We're talking—is it, is it like a sleek asari sort of ship or, you know, like an angular turian sort of ship, very human style...?

LEA: Yeah, I'll probably go like asari-ish.

KAYA: Nice.

LEA: One that has—yeah, because she would roll around in something sleek. But the outside, it does look like things have definitely been replaced. Mods have been made—

KAYA: [overlapping] Mm.

LEA: Scratches are kind of dusting the side, so it's definitely seen some action. I'll just quickly say that, like, there's nothing in this ship that would really indicate that *she*, herself, lives there. [KAYA hums in acknowledgement] It's very—it's very clean. The *only* thing that would sort of prove that *she* owns this is that instead of a little bunk bed, there's a... there's a king bed that's been installed because, you know, so practical. So practical!

KAYA: Oh, yes.

LEA: [laughs at her character] And, at the end of the bed, there is a holographic poster of a *really* old film: Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

KAYA: Oh, I love it.

LEA: Yeah! [KAYA gleeful giggle] The only thing!

KAYA: [overlapping] Oh, that's great.

LEA: The only piece of memorabilia!

KAYA: Amazing. Oh—

LEA: [overlapping] Yeah!

KAYA: —I love that. Oh, I love that. That's great. Okay. The skycar drops you off at the docking corridor that leads to the *Sonder*, and you enter your home away from home? Your home away from home away from home? [LEA laughs without confirming] And as you do, the familiar modulated voice of your ship companion, Marco, greets you.

MARCO: [very posh] Welcome *home*, Athena. It's *so* good to see you back.

ATHENA: It's so good to *be* back. I missed you.

MARCO: Oh, and I missed you *too*. [LEA giggling] Tell me, what trouble did you get up to while you were away?

ATHENA: Well, seems I've made some new—gosh, I don't even know what to call them... compatriots? I don't know. I got roped into something through an elcor I know and, uh, let's just say it's escalated a little.

MARCO: [chuckles] Things tend to when you're involved, my dear.

ATHENA: [laughs in agreement] True.

MARCO: And I love you for it. So, tell me about these new friends. Do I get to meet them soon?

ATHENA: Oh, well, not in *person*.

MARCO [tsk] Ugh, shame.

ATHENA: Well, maybe one day...maybe one day we can do something about that? If you'd like, but—

MARCO: Oh, you know I always like to meet your friends. [LEA chuckling] Have to make sure that everyone's taking care of my girl, after all.

ATHENA: [chuckling affectionately] I'm never going to get quite used to you calling me that. But, um, yes, I have some new companions and... I'd actually like you to hack into the feeds of where I was about thirty minutes ago?

MARCO: [intrigued] *Ooh*. Well, *that*, that sounds like *fun*, and I think we can handle that. *Do* step into my cockpit, and we'll get things underway.

KAYA: As you step into the cockpit, Marco's avatar appears on its little pedestal [LEA yays]. Today, he has selected a very sleek Italian three-piece suit. He's got short spiked hair going on and a ring of hoop piercings all down one ear. [LEA gleeful 'oh' noise] *And* the biggest winged eyeliner you think you've ever seen.

LEA: [incredulously thrilled] Oh my god, I *love it*. [KAYA & LEA giggling] This is not what I expected him to look like at all—and, and he said *today* so he's switching it up. Oh, how good!

KAYA: So he appears and he's tapping his long fingers together with excitement.

LEA: Ooh.

MARCO: Alright, my girl, I have hacked into everything from here to Illium. What do you want to know?

ATHENA: Just got to say: today's get-up? Approve.

MARCO: Ooh, I thought you might like it. It's my favorite so far, I think. I'm not—I'm not entirely sold on the hair yet.

KAYA: And he sort of gestures.

[ATHENA makes a noncommittal noise]

MARCO: But what I *do* like? I like *this*.

KAYA: And he points to his eyes.

ATHENA: I *adore* it. It's *delicious*.

MARCO: Thank you. Now:

ATHENA Mm.

MARCO: Who am I looking up? What am I doing? What trouble are we getting into?

ATHENA: Yes. So you'll find me at the ramen stand. It's actually a *rachni*. Now, I have never met one but, no, I'm, I'm, I'm completely serious: it's a *rachni*. They're behind the counter—

KAYA: As you're talking, he's flicking his fingers in the air and bringing up the holographic feed of the security of, like, a couple of different angles of security cameras outside the ramen stand in Zakera Ward. And he's flicking through the footage, and he finds you guys—you know, in seconds—and, and then, you know, does the like the 'enhance' motion, or the zoom motion, with his hands—

LEA: [overlapping] Mm-hmm.

KAYA: —and pulls up the frame of Solace behind the counter.

MARCO: Oh, she's a beauty!

ATHENA: Isn't she?

MARCO: Mm *hmm*.

ATHENA: Ah—or them? Or he? I—I haven't quite worked it out, but um...

MARCO: Rachni are confusing that way. Much like myself! [posh, flamboyant laughter]  
[LEA briefly loses it with amusement]

ATHENA: Yes. And, and, and she was wearing a uniform. I—I didn't expect them to come in uniform. But, so, what did her badge say? Her badge... her badge...  
S-S-Solace? With—withers, withers-day?

KAYA: He pulls up the image of the name tag.

MARCO: Solace-Within-Clay, madam.

ATHENA: Within-Clay... [dramatic shock] Do you think she does... *pottery*?

MARCO: It's possible. Do you know—so I've, I've learned—in the last ten seconds, mind you—that rachni are given their names based on the sound and songs they make before they hatch. Isn't that incredible? And they can change their names over the course of their lives. They could be even given a name by the queen. It's very exciting stuff. I wonder what the queen would name *me*...

ATHENA: *Ooh*.

MARCO: Or *you*.

ATHENA: Oh!

MARCO: [overlapping] *Ooh*.

ATHENA: Oh gosh. I—?

MARCO: What songs do you think we would make? Oh, it's all very exciting. [that's all very good now back to business] Anyway what do you want to know about this... *bug*?

ATHENA: Yes, I mean they, they are a *bug*. And what you said about songs: did you know—[chuckle] I know you just did your research but—did you know they can beam. Thoughts. Into your *motherfucking mind*?

MARCO: I did.

KAYA: And he looks very, very serious for a moment and he reaches out and he puts a holographic hand on your forearm. He says:

MARCO: It's a terrible invasion of privacy, but unfortunately it's their only way of communicating, short of manipulating corpses.

ATHENA: W—Uh—

MARCO: So let's maybe skip *that*?

ATHENA: Uh, I-I-I don't *want* to skip that—*WHAT*? Sig—*COR*—

MARCO: [hastily] Yes, it's, it's, well—now—You see, now you see, I, I do believe that's only a, a, a capacity of the queen.

ATHENA: [calming down a little] Oh.

MARCO: And, and this particular rachni here, that's *not* a queen. That's a, that's a... a worker caste, um, and a very young one at that. I—I'd guess—based on what I've just learned in the last ten seconds—that she's, they, they are—it's impossible to tell—

ATHENA: [overlapping] Mmm?

MARCO: —that their, their, their gender system has more to do with castes than it does with... '*bits*'.

ATHENA: Mm hmm.

MARCO: So, they—we'll just go with *they*—they are probably about a year old? So I'm not really sure what, what you'd like—

ATHENA: [overlapping] I—

MARCO: —me to tell you about them—

ATHENA: [overlapping] Uh...

MARCO: —because you see that—the rachni don't really have—

ATHENA: [overlapping] Mar—

MARCO: —databases that are hackable.

ATHENA: *M-Marco...*

MARCO: Yes?

ATHENA: [sputters] Did you say *one*?

MARCO: Yes. Based on the pattern in the chitin and the length of the—

ATHENA: [overlapping; not comprehending] One?

MARCO: —antennae. About, about one. Yes.

ATHENA: Wh—I... I'm s—*One*?!

MARCO: [sweetly] *A little baby.*

ATHENA: A baby! [spiralling] I-I didn't sign up to babysit. What, do I have to sign a permission slip to take them out to excursion? What?! One! [panicked noise]

MARCO: Well, I, I do believe that rachni worker castes become—they, they're, they're considered to be *of age* at about *two weeks* so... no, I don't think you have to babysit.

ATHENA: Oh, *bloody hell*. I mean, she is *working*. Man, human babies are so disappointing in comparison. They're like... they're like—

MARCO: Mushy little flaily meat bags.



ATHENA: Gosh and it takes us *years* to even—

MARCO: [overlapping, revolted] Just disgusting!

ATHENA: —do *anything*.

MARCO: I *know!* [ATHENA disappointed sigh] You poor, poor dear.

KAYA: And he pats the back of your hand. Which of course doesn't feel like anything [LEA laughs]

ATHENA: I mean, I appreciate the gesture. I'm sure I wasn't *that* boring, but, ugh, *babies*.

KAYA: He zooms out of the image of Solace.

MARCO: Now I do—I do recognise your friend here? That, that's Clouseau, isn't it? The elcor?

ATHENA: Yes, *Clouseau*, she—[exhaled 'oh' lightbulb noise]—I know what to ask you. I know a bit about her, but I know what to ask: the *hat*. The hat, Marco. Marco, the hat—it! [Athena.exe has encountered a fatal error] It-it-it-it-I... It's-it's *there*. It's *small*. It *stays!* What can you tell me about it?

KAYA: He zooms in on the hat...

MARCO: [long pause] It appears to be a hat.

ATHENA: [exasperated] Ugh! Don't tell me—don't tell me *that*. It's, it's, it's more. It has—*look at it!*

MARCO: [overlapping] Well *unfortunately, darling*, unless you were to splurge on getting me *out of here*, you would need to bring her *here* for me to be able to do any sort of *scanning*.

KAYA: And he does this little, like, twiddly thing with his fingers.

MARCO: So *unfortunately* we're a little bit *stuck*.

ATHENA: [resigned] Indeed. Indeed. But I'm putting that on the to-do list, even if I might not see you for a little while—I will explain why shortly. [pauses] Okay, table the hat. Let's move on to the next one.

MARCO: Hat tabled. Who's next?

ATHENA: That would be the big krogan.

MARCO: [enticed] Ooh.

ATHENA: And honestly, between the two of *them*, I'm liable to injury.

LEA: And she grabs absentmindedly her hand that she had high-fived with before. She doesn't realise it still hurts just a *little bit!*

KAYA: He zooms in on Vraga.

MARCO: [attracted 'ooh' noise] She's a feisty one! She's...she's lovely, she is—

ATHENA: [overlapping] Right?

MARCO: —mm. My kind of woman, I'd say—

ATHENA: [amusedly surprised] Oh, is *that so*?

MARCO: I think so. At least today. I'm feeling—

ATHENA: [overlapping] At least today!

MARCO: —adventurous!

ATHENA: [chuckling, pleased] Perfect. I *like* this side of you. We might keep this parameter on a little bit *longer*.

MARCO: Ooh, exciting.

ATHENA: But yes, her name is Ravanor Vraga. And whilst she's not overly saturated in the vocabulary department, there's definitely more to her. I *know* it.

KAYA: He cracks—figuratively cracks his knuckles, and then does some more flittery bits in mid-air.

MARCO: Well, as you know the krogan don't exactly keep excellent records. But what I *can tell you* is that there is an entry in the genealogical database being maintained by one Laelar Solus that indicates that, um, she may have a child...

ATHENA: Oh?

MARCO: But I can't confirm that because, again, with the not great records? It, it, it *could* be, could *not* be, *might* be worth checking out? Um? Other than *that...* [pauses] She, ah—ah—*ooh!* Her extranet communication history includes *several calls* to one Councillor Urdrnot Bakara! Isn't *that* interesting?

ATHENA: Isn't it *indeed*. Councillor. [MARCO confirmation noise] She's got connections.

MARCO: She *does*.

ATHENA: *That* will come in very handy. Between that and the rachni communication that I one hundred percent will be taking advantage of—

MARCO: [overlapping] As you should.

ATHENA: [laughs schemingly] That—ooh, that could be fun, but—Vraga has connections and she's got...baby—a baby? Do you know...?

MARCO: [alas and alack] Can't tell—

ATHENA: Or no?

MARCO: No.

ATHENA: No?

MARCO: No. [ATHENA disappointed noise] Just the name. I've just got a name—and, and the thing is, the thing is about krogan databases: they're not always accurate.

ATHENA: [overlapping awareness] No...

MARCO: —Although this one's being maintained by a salarian? So I don't know. I don't know, my dear. I don't know.

ATHENA: [contemplative noise]

MARCO: Worth looking into.

ATHENA: So worth looking into.

MARCO: Now I see one more fellow in this screen. Who's he?

ATHENA: This one, I don't know... He feels a little underwhelming, but at the same time, the most *interesting* person that I've come across today. He's the reason why I'm going on this little...adventure...because it turns out, not only is he *brainless*—well—he—[laughs at the memory]—you won't understand that—not only is he amnesiac, but he, he's, he's lost a lot of time, because the *Alliance*...

LEA: And like her whole body gets a little tense when she says that word. Like she... I don't know... they rub her the wrong way for many reasons.

ATHENA: They basically abandoned him. He has questions, they *surely* have answers, and they're *not* providing it. And on top of that, he's looking for Minos.

KAYA: Marco... Marco's eyebrows lift—his perfectly plucked eyebrows lift—[LEA chuckles] and he straightens up and he goes:

MARCO: Looking for *Minos*? And the *Alliance* *abandoned* him? Well, we can't have *that*.

KAYA: And he gives himself a shake and the fingers fly. And then he stops midair and *scowls*.

ATHENA: [curious] Oh...

MARCO: Athena, my girl, I'm very good at hacking, you know this.

ATHENA: [cautious concern] Yes?

MARCO: I *can't get in*.

ATHENA: [mildly annoyed] What do you mean you 'can't get in'?

MARCO: Well, *usually* I can *sneak along* the back doors into ONI's intelligence archives, and I can pluck a few things here and there—and of course it's gotten a little bit more difficult ever since their new *secretary* came on the scene, but that is what it is—and we have a... a working agreement.

ATHENA: [I'd hope] I bet.

MARCO: But when I look up this, this, this fellow... I use the facial recognition. I have his name. I have his service number. I have his service record which... *begins*... two months ago.

ATHENA: [disbelieving] *No!* No, he's—he's Alliance. He's, he's, he's a big shot.

MARCO: Well, I don't know that he's a big shot. He's a *sergeant*.

ATHENA: Oh.

LEA: [trying to speak through laughter] She, she, she looks really disappointed.

KAYA: [laughing] He reaches out and pats you on the shoulder and says:

MARCO: I know, I know, it's very disappointing. *But:* my dear, if I can't find anything on him, if *I* can't, and he's just a sergeant... there's more to find.

ATHENA: [growling] Oh, there's *so* much more to find.

LEA: And her brain is just going off in *every* direction.

KAYA: Marco lets you, Marco lets you do this for several seconds—

LEA: Mmm.

KAYA: —and then he lifts a finger and he says:

MARCO: Darling, I know who you should call. You should call Ciara.

ATHENA: Yes. That's a good idea. That's a *very* good idea. Yes, this is *crazy*. *Two* months ago, there's no *fucking* way. Alright, we're going to call her in a sec, but... before we do... can you tell me anything about his personality or his abilities, like what can he do in combat—or is that all scrubbed too?

KAYA: He pauses, his eyes flick back and forth a couple of times.

MARCO: Well he's... he's listed as a *vanguard*, but his latest training results—

ATHENA: [overlapping] Mm hmm?

MARCO: —are for a *sentinel*. He's changed tactics.

ATHENA: [contemplative] Oh.

MARCO: Beyond that, everything's scrubbed. I'll keep trying.

ATHENA: [as you should] Yes.

MARCO: But...

ATHENA: But I don't like your chances.

MARCO: Frankly, neither do I. Which is *so* disappointing.

ATHENA: *So* disappointing.

MARCO: Might have to go paint my nails black and we'll go into *mourning*. We can't have *that*.

ATHENA: [unfazed by his campy drama] Yes, but your response is appropriate. [sighs to reset] Alright, uh... I don't think she's going to like me calling. Yes, we are *friends*... Well, yes—no—maybe. But... Alright. [pull the bandaid, make the call] Encrypt it—

MARCO: [overlapping; softly] Alright.

ATHENA: —encrypt—

MARCO: Oh, of course. Oh, I'm *way* ahead of you, my dear.

KAYA: He does his little flittery thing and then his avatar fades into the background and is replaced with the image of, the—an *iconic* cyberpunk looking-hacker. She's got half her head shaved and, like, a mohawk on the other side. And it's, like, bright purple. Her—all of her piercings are on her eyebrows. And she's got these tattoos all down her face and neck—and you know that they go further [LEA makes a knowing noise]—but you can tell even in the hologram that they shimmer—

LEA: [overlapping] Nice.

KAYA: —so they're enhanced tattoos. And she's got... it looks like an omnitool on her arm, but *you* know that's a *hard* implant.

LEA: Yeah.

KAYA: So she's got, she's got tech implanted into her, and she's just like this cyborg cyberpunk hacker.

LEA: Mm. Sweet.

KAYA: And she does *not* look happy to see you.

LEA: [whispers] Ah, shit. [laughs quietly]

CIARA: [exasperated] Ach! *Athena*. Why d'ya always call me at the worst times? What do you *want*? What do you want *now*? And tell me quick so I can get back to my dinner.

ATHENA: What do *I* want? Okay, first of all: *hello*!

CIARA: [overlapping] You never call if you don't want anything. Don't even with me. [ATHENA exhales loudly with exasperation] I don't have time. What do you want?

ATHENA: *Wow*. Okay. Well, first [second] of all, have you forgotten that *you owe me* and that I have every right to give you—

CIARA: [overlapping] I certainly have not, and that's why I've answered your call.

ATHENA: [overlapping] Right. And yet you *still* insist on *sassing*.

CIARA: [incredulous] You wouldn't have it any other way.

ATHENA: [tone change; chuckling] Do you know what? Totally right. *Totally* right. Alright. Alright. Well, I...unfortunately, I need to... to cash in that favour. Because *that* is a big one. And *this* needs *you*.

KAYA: At this—at the mention of cashing in the favour—her belligerence diminishes.

CIARA: Alright. What do you need me to find?

ATHENA: Yes, *need* is definitely the word. I need *anything* you have on Minos, on Jesse—who is formerly a vanguard, now a sentinel—and I need information on a ship: the SSV *Marathon*.

KAYA: As you're saying this, she's typing on her arm. Typing this in.

CIARA: Jesse. D'ye have a surname?

MARCO: [whispering] Westcott.

LEA: Athena... [soft chuckle]

ATHENA: Westcott.

LEA: She mouths 'thank you' to, uh, to Marco.

[KAYA & LEA laugh]

CIARA: Alright, alright, give me... give me two seconds and I'll tell you what I can find in a quick, in a quick search and then I really do have to go to supper—but—but I promise you [ATHENA aggressively sounds a long exhale] I will, I *will* find... I will find what you need.

ATHENA: [curtly; you] Better.

CIARA: And, and I *won't*, I won't consider the favour finished until I do. You know I'm good for it. I *always* am.

ATHENA: [venom subsiding] Yes.

KAYA: So then she holds up, she holds up a finger and then continues typing. And you've done enough work with Ciara that she is like the best of the best [LEA hums agreement] and so when you see her *frown*, that's not a good sign.

LEA: No... Not at all.

KAYA: The frown that crosses her face is at first disappointment, then frustration, then determination. And she renews her efforts and she types furiously. And then she swears in a language that you don't recognise, but you've heard her say it before. [LEA agrees, amused] And she looks up and she says:

CIARA: I don't like this, 'Thena. I don't like this at all.

ATHENA: [fuck] I don't like where you're *going* with this.

CIARA: Who is this person and why are you involved with them?

ATHENA: Why are you asking me who this person is? Didn't you just find that?

CIARA: No; and that's the problem.

ATHENA: [displeased] What?

CIARA: They're a *ghost*. Whoever this man is, this Jesse Westcott, I can get two pieces of information about him: I can get his service number, I can get his rank. He's a *ghost*. This is a problem, Athena.

ATHENA: *That's it?*

CIARA: This is a problem.

ATHENA: What the... *fuck?*

LEA: She starts—she's pacing...

ATHENA: [exhales] Okay... so I have several leads—well, several contacts and they don't know *shit*. And *you're* telling me that *you don't know shit*. Wh—

CIARA: I'm telling ye, I don't know shit *right now*. On my *main channels*. I'll keep looking because I don't like this, 'Thena. If I can't find someone that means I don't like them. And I don't want them near my friends.

ATHENA: [curious at the phrasing] ...Noted.

CIARA: Why do *you* care about this person? Why don't you walk away?

ATHENA: Walk away... Look, I know—

LEA: She's realising the gravity of the situation like, yeah, Ciara can't find anything. This is... this is fucked. This is *high-level shit*. And she *should* turn. She should run. But... the curiosity that Athena has is *so* great. She wants to explore and find so many things in the universe. She knows that sometimes when you pull a thread you can find treasure too. She composes herself a little bit.

ATHENA: Look, I don't know this Jesse. But I know what it's like to be *fucked over* by the Alliance. But on top of that, to be fucked over by humanity's number one bad guy—in fact, it's probably not even humanity, it's like *everyone*—these guys are *bad fucking news*. [considering] Should I put my finger in the pot? Should I... should I—

CIARA: [overlapping] Athena.

ATHENA: —get involved?

CIARA: [pointedly] Athena.

ATHENA: What? What?

CIARA: How d'ye know he's telling you the truth?

ATHENA: [long pause] I don't. I trust my gut! I *always* trust my gut. And if you think that I'm not going to— Look, Ciara, if Jesse does *anything* to compromise me, I will *drop* him. You know this.

CIARA: I do.

ATHENA: He's gone.

CIARA: I do.

ATHENA: He's *gone*. But the risk? The risk of—of looking into this? What I could *reap*? The information *alone*... I—I'd be a protected species for, well, perhaps forever! And *you*? If I come out of this *well*?

CIARA: With great risk comes great reward. I know this.

ATHENA: Yes!

CIARA: I understand.

ATHENA: I've got to!

CIARA: I—[hesitates; softly]—Be careful, Athena. You know I don't say that lightly.

ATHENA: No, I don't think you've *ever* said that.

CIARA: No, I don't think I have. Be wary.

ATHENA: [overlapping] I—

CIARA: —Be *wary*. I will keep looking. I will let you know if I find anything.

ATHENA: I know and I... [drops her guard] I appreciate that. I don't um... I don't like favours being *half done*. But this? This is, this is *above* your pay grade and that's—

CIARA: [interrupts] Oh, I'm in this now. *Oh*, I'm in this now, *love!* [thrilled laughing]

ATHENA: Well that's... good to hear. Good to hear. Because I know you have every right to just turn tail, never speak to me again—I'd find you, but you could *attempt*.

KAYA: She laughs.

[KAYA & LEA softly chuckling]

CIARA: Oh, I know you would. I know you would. No, Athena, I will—I'll do everything I can to, to help you out in this, but jus—just p—[pauses] promise me you'll be careful. Please.

ATHENA: [pauses; softly responds] To the best of my ability, Ciara, I will. [pauses] I'm always going to keep my eyes peeled. I'm going to try and use what I know about my... companions to my advantage—you know this—I'm going to leave no stone unturned.

CIARA: Good.



ATHENA: But I've, I've got surprises. [CIARA laughs knowingly] I, I will do everything to live. I will do *everything* to live!

CIARA: [overlapping] Oh, don't I know that! Don't I know that! Alright, Athena [ATHENA laughs] I'm going to get on this. And my dinner. Get on with you—

ATHENA: [overlapping] Right; you should eat.

CIARA: [overlapping] I can see—I can see that your, you're p—

ATHENA: [overlapping] You never eat!

CIARA: No, and—I know. I know! And the *one time*, the *one time* I'm going to eat and you *call me*! What am I gonna do with that? [ATHENA dramatically laughs] Alright! Alright. See you later. Be careful.

KAYA: And she ends the call.

ATHENA: Alright.

LEA: And she's gone! [chuckles]

MARCO: Oh I *do* like her,

KAYA: Marco says.

ATHENA: You *would*—

MARCO: [overlapping] I do.

ATHENA: [overlapping] You would! You would.

MARCO: She has great hair.

ATHENA: Right. Great, great many things.

KAYA: Is there anything else you wanna do?

LEA: Yeah, um... Well, I guess I have to finish packing.

KAYA: Yes! After she finishes packing and is at the door, Marco materialises his avatar near the airlock. And pulls out like a lace handkerchief and pretends to dab at his eyes.

LEA: [adoringly] Ah, so extra!

MARCO: Oh, I will miss you. Do come back soon, but you'd *better* tell me how it all goes, my dear.

ATHENA: Oh, I *promise*, Marco, I'll tell you *everything*. No details spared.

MARCO: Good. Don't forget to write.

ATHENA: I only wish I could take you with me.

MARCO: Oh, I wish you could too. [ATHENA giggles] Some day. Some day!

ATHENA: Yes. Yes. Can you please ask Sebastian at the dock that if I help his parents out, can he keep the *Sonder*, and you, and Newman, and Redford safe?

MARCO: [indulgent] Of course, always.

ATHENA: Excellent. Excellent.

MARCO: Now off with you! Go make trouble!

ATHENA: [laughs mischievously] Guaranteed.

VI: You have been listening to *I Should Roll, Dangerous Dangers: Minisode Three: Athena Consults Her Rolodex*. Featuring the voices of Lea Lawson as Athena Hellier and Kaya Renwick as everyone and everything else.

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