

JESSE: Hey, uh, yeah, Jesse here. Vraga just found out you haven't left a review for *I Should Roll* yet... Not even *my* shields can protect you if you don't get on *that* pronto. Might want to pick up the pace.

VI: A podcast by the Intergalactic Improv Initiative.

KAYA: *Dangerous Dangers*, Minisode Four: *The Mystery of the Unclaimed Urchin*. Featuring the voices of Amanda Cotter and creator, Kaya Renwick.

She is very easy to spot. She's got gray skin, a pink fedora, she's *brimming* with confidence and *completely* lost... *I Should Roll*.

VI: Vaimalu 5, 2927, Galactic Standard Calendar; April 21st, 2185, Terran Universal Coordinated Calendar. The Citadel, Widow System, Serpent Nebula. Bachjret Ward, Wereha K'Eyi District. Marlowe's Shipping.

KAYA: It is the year 2185, we are on the Citadel, and we come to a nondescript office building in Bachjret Ward... and we come to the offices of Charlie Three-Toed Marlowe, a former Blood Pack mercenary who now runs a shipping business. We come to the main office, which is very clearly set up for a, primarily...*bipedal* customer base.

And behind the standard Council species-sized desk, eschewing the standard Council species-sized chair, is Leorlyn, the elcor...security guard/secretary/go-fer/ occasional warehouse worker when Charlie needs an extra hand back there...the jill-of-all-trades who Charlie took on as a bit of a favor to his old Blood Pack boss—but we don't talk about that in the break room.

Leorlyn has been at this job for some time now. She's pretty sure she's got the ropes—so it's not that Leorlyn is *bad* at her job, she's just...a little clumsy—maybe seeing as literally *everything* in the office is the wrong size.

AMANDA: Frankly, she's just—at this point, I think—lucky to have graduated from intern. The pay has not increased, really at all, really much, but she is at least being...I wouldn't say being treated with as much *respect* as any other employee would be, surely, but she... she has... She's more than an intern, and that's about all I—that's about all she gets.

KAYA: Some days Charlie doesn't show up till noon. Some days he comes in with a black eye. Some days Leorlyn is pretty sure he never left the night before. But Leorlyn is always there at 8:30 Terran Universal Coordinated Time to make coffee...and feed the fish.

The one bright spot in this job—apart from the fact that it *is* a job, which is always a nice thing to have—is the huge aquarium that is essentially the wall between

Charlie's office and the main lobby with Leorlyn's desk and the, you know, the couple of chairs where customers will wait, and so on and so forth. Charlie keeps it full of exotic fish—fish from Earth, fish from Thessia, fish from Sur'Kesh, fish from planets that Leorlyn is not sure exist—and it is her job to take care of the fish.

How's today going?

AMANDA: Well, you know what, I'm glad you asked. Today has been...more of the same, and by more of the same, I mean kind of a downer? You know, Leorlyn has—as much hope as any one creature can—trying to find the bright spots in her day. There is a certain amount of default and required *optimism* that she has to maintain to make it through her day, but this has been just another boring day in the boring existence that she had hoped by leaving home she would have gotten out of, and it's just a...same shit, different planet.

KAYA: Does Leorlyn have a favorite fish?

AMANDA: [excited] Leorlyn would absolutely have a favorite fish. I don't know exactly what fish are in the tank.

KAYA: Make one up.

AMANDA: Oh my God. What kind of fish are in the Mass Effect universe? I know, I know that there are—

KAYA: [enthusiastic cajoling] There's a zillion fish. Make one up.

AMANDA: Okay. Leorlyn's favorite fish is...

KAYA: Yes.

AMANDA: A goldfish that she has nicknamed Lea—not because she has ever seen the movie Star Wars, but because it's short for Leorlyn, and she has a deep kinship with the fish, so she named it after herself.

KAYA: That's really sweet. That's *really* sweet.

AMANDA: She's kind of a sweetheart.

KAYA: Yeah. Well, it's funny you should mention old Earth movies, because after Leorlyn clocks out for the evening at 5:30 Terran Universal Coordinated Time, she goes home to the tiny little apartment that she shares with her best friend, another former Blood Pack merc. And his—he's a batarian, and his name is Khato Fon'ton.

Khato is a bartender at one of the seedy bars that is close to the Silver Coast Casino. You guys left the Blood Pack at slightly different times, and so he was already on the Citadel when you decided to retire from your mercenary life. And you said, "Hey, do you know anywhere that I can crash?" And he offered you the floor because he didn't have a bed big enough for you and honestly wasn't sure where elcor slept.

But yeah, you guys have been staying together since, and Khato has a soft spot for old Earth movies. It's one of the reasons that he ended up leaving the Blood Pack, actually, because a batarian who's interested in human culture doesn't tend to be seen particularly kindly by others of his kin. And so you guys have—you guys watch a wide and varied selection of old Earth cinema; and tonight is movie night!

I'm not sure how often, exactly, movie night happens. I feel like it's not—it's maybe more than a weekly thing?

AMANDA: Yeah, probably...probably twice weekly. I'm sure we've got to arrange it so it's like—we've got to make sure that, you know, we have like a couple of nights off for Khato because being a bartender, he works nights a lot. So it's just his, like, two nights a week that he doesn't have work.

KAYA: Yeah. What are you picking up for dinner? And what is your favorite piece of trivia about your best friend Khato? Why do you like him so much?

AMANDA: [temporarily a squeeze toy] Oh my God.

Okay, so, uh...on the way home, I'm picking up Khato's favorite: I'm stopping by the ramen stand and bringing some ramen back because, you know, he so rarely gets a break. I feel, you know, given that he's spending his nights off with me and not doing stuff to, you know, go out and have fun, that I want to offer him—want to offer Khato a little something extra as, like, a thank-you for spending time with me.

KAYA: That's awesome.

AMANDA: Gonna get some ramen.

My favorite thing about Khato is how...*accepting* that he is. Being that he would not be looked upon, as you mentioned, quite so kindly as a batarian who's fond of human things, he has a soft spot for creatures who don't feel like they belong. And he and I formed that bond and got a lot closer after I moved to the Citadel. We were kind of, like, not particularly associated during my time in the Blood Pack, but once I got to the Citadel and, you know, looking up who on earth—[mild

self-mockery] *who on earth*—who on the *Citadel* might be able to help me out, we just clicked right away.

KAYA: Awesome. Awesome. One of Khato's idiosyncrasies—growing up in the Hegemony, not really a surprise, everybody's got a, you know, a little bit of post traumatic stress coming out of the Hegemony, and you and he have turned it into a bit of a game where you keep each other on your toes. And he occasionally will, just like, come swingin' with a right hook out of nowhere. And you, you block him or you take it and you pop him one right back, and yeah, you guys make it a game of trying to to trick each other, and one up each other, and keep each other on each other's toes. And I think it's helped Khato a lot, kind of adjust to life outside of a mercenary pack and life outside of the Hegemony.

What does...what does Leorlyn think about that little...that friendship habit?

AMANDA: [awkward admission] It's not Leorlyn's *favorite*. Leorlyn is a pacifist at heart, she doesn't really *like* fighting. She, as a matter of fact, that's one of the reasons she didn't last quite so long with the Blood Pack, she—

KAYA: [feigning surprise] Gee!

AMANDA: *Yeah!* You don't say that—

KAYA: [playfully sarcastic] Shocking!

AMANDA: —you wouldn't want to be a part of a mercenary group when you don't really like the fight part of it. She's also just not very *good* at it? It's hard for her to handle a gun and she often-times found that, you know, her aim was a little bit off, she could—she could get in trouble.

She accidentally *did* hit, like, a pet varren in the leg once. They weren't too happy. They had to retire that varren. And when I say retire, I mean roast.

KAYA: Yeah.

AMANDA: So, yeah, she's not a fighter, she's a lover, but she loves her friend, so she is more than happy to do what makes him happy and just has to kind of be mindful not to...use *any* ounce of strength that she has.

VI: Zakera Ward, Lower Wards. Residential Area 12.

KAYA: You get home with your takeout of ramen, and you find Khato on the couch, settin' up the vidscreen. And he cranes his neck and turns around to look at you over the couch. He says,

KHATO: Leorlyn, welcome home.

LEORLYN: Jubilantly: Good evening, Khato. I am so happy that it is movie night.

KHATO: Is that ramen I smell?

LEORLYN: Coyly: you will have to open it to find out.

KAYA: He chuckles, and then pats the sofa, and—you guys have been cohabitating long enough that you've actually—he has invested... So, bartending work pays a little more than random go-fer work for *mildly shady businessmen*, and he has invested in an elcor couch, which is kind of like a really big bean bag.

AMANDA: [near tears] Oh my God.

KAYA: It's sort of like a cross between, like, one of—

AMANDA: [overlapping; squeaking with joy] Yes...

KAYA: —those airline pillows, but it's like a bean bag.

AMANDA: [overlapping] I—that sounds *so comfortable*.

KAYA: And so you are able to like, yeah...to comfortably sit in it, yeah.

...I think I slightly broke Amanda.

[KAYA chuckles at AMANDA's hellishly low bar for emotional reactions]

AMANDA: YOU HAVE! I'm like sitting here about to cry. I feel...I feel *so loved right now*.

KAYA: Well, as you should! Khato loves his good friend Leorlyn. It's a good time.

So, as you come around and you give him the ramen and he opens it and inhales deeply and...

Here's a question for you: so, batarians are well known for their very, *very* specific and precise body language. There's a huge amount of nonverbal communication that goes on with batarians, and that comes down—that goes all the way down to the direction that you tilt your head, what *hand* you do something with, what *angle* you gesture with, which eyes you blink and so on and so forth. Like it's very, *very* detailed and very granular. There's very, very strict social mores and etiquette guides around it, and you can *really* offend someone quite easily if you, you know, tilt your head to the left instead of the right, that sort of thing. And very strict social castes.

Now, Khato, of course, knows all of this and does most of it unconsciously, but he does—he has, in his time away from the Hegemony and out the Blood Pack, he's

relaxed some of it... and isn't quite as exacting with it.

What does Leorlyn do with that? Does Leorlyn—has Leorlyn learned any of it, or what's her take on that aspect of her friend's culture?

AMANDA: Well, Leorlyn absolutely fucking *hates* that Khato, or anyone for that matter, has been made to feel *lesser* than anyone else. But she, in the interest of learning more about her friend and wanting to support him, has done her best to learn as much as she can about these nonverbal body language signals, so that she can tell how he's doing—

KAYA: [overlapping] Okay.

AMANDA: —because at most of—when he's at his lowest or his highest, it's more likely that he will fall into those habits that he's so used to, and so that helps Leorlyn tremendously to get a read on how her friend is.

KAYA: Yeah, for sure. Okay. In that case, roll me a Perception check.

AMANDA: Would love to, thank you. [high pitched] Oh! Not bad! Excellent. That would be a twenty-three!

KAYA: Hell yeah! Okay. And I was—I had set the DC relatively low because you had specified narratively that Leorlyn, you know, would be paying attention to this. You can tell that tonight Khato is extra excited. Yeah. He's got, like, this little twitchy thing going on in his right hand that you can tell that he's, like, trying to keep it *chill*. But you've seen him do it and it's this telegraphing of—this quiet telegraphing of anticipation.

KHATO: Leorlyn, I know you are going to love the movie that I've picked for us tonight. I just—I have a feeling that you're going to love this movie, but—

KAYA: And he stops himself.

KHATO: We gotta go by the book: how was your day?

KAYA: You guys always ask each other this. You always check in. This is 'cause—this is one of the things that he has done for *you* and that—he knows that you know he knows that you're a *lover*, not a *fighter*. And he knows that you're working, you're for 'Three Toes' Charlie.

This is not a Blood Pack company, *but it's a Blood Pack company*. [wink] It's a shell company, you know how this goes. And so he—and he knows this isn't your deal. This isn't your preferred place to be. And so he's made a point of checking in with you and learning what's good and what's not so good, and yeah, so you

guys always ask each other whenever you get home from work or he gets home from work: there's always a, "How was your day?"

LEORLYN: With middling dismissiveness: It was just another day. Charlie showed up late. Did absolutely nothing. Worse than nothing. Angered a customer. I had to mediate. It did not go well.

KAYA: He blinks his upper eyes a couple of times, and does this little flicking gesture with his left hand which is code for, you know, like, the slight revulsion, but not surprise. And he asks,

KHATO: Did you have to get the mop bucket out? [that water is red]

LEORLYN: Begrudgingly: I had to get the mop bucket out.

KAYA: He nods, he sighs, and he pulls up his omnitool and says,

KHATO: I got just the thing. We're going to fix this.

KAYA: And he starts the 1963 Pink Panther movie, and you two proceed to spend the evening experiencing the first entry in the cinematic franchise in all its *wonderful glory*.

The ramen is long gone and so are a couple of buckets of popcorn by the time you guys finish. What does Leorlyn think?

AMANDA: Well, throughout the movie Leorlyn has been *absolutely mesmerised*. She, as mentioned, is not very dexterous. She gets in the way a lot. You know, even at work, there's really not much space for her, and when Charlie is there, there's, you know, shuffling, just to make sure that he has enough room to be able to be there. She always feels like she's in the way and she can't do anything right.

And watching this movie, she is [fondly] *baffled* in a way that, from the looks of things, Inspector Clouseau *always* does stuff wrong. He's always falling over! He broke a *violin*? That has to cost a lot of money to fix—she assumes [KAYA chuckles] because, you know, she has dabbled a little bit in the cost of some musical instruments as sometimes they, you know, contraband have to be—contraband depending on, you know, where they've come from.

KAYA: [overlapping] Of course, of course.

AMANDA: Have to be shipped around, so—you know *she knows* what insurance costs on those sorts of things.

[KAYA hums agreement]

AMANDA: And *yet*, he somehow seems to garner some *respect* from everyone around him. He is *listened to*. He *sees* everything that nobody else sees. And he knows *exactly* how to solve this mystery. And it's—you know, at the end, it doesn't necessarily work out for the best for him, he does end up going to prison, but she *knows—she knows* that eventually he's going to be exonerated, 'cause it sure wasn't his fault.

But yeah, it's just so refreshing and so—it fills her with such hope to see that somebody else who falls over and who gets in the way... can be respected and can do things right and doesn't struggle with belief in himself.

KAYA: [noise of agreement] Does this feeling of resonance last until the office the next morning?

AMANDA: [ponders before answering] Yes, yes, it absolutely does. She had the best night's sleep that she can remember in a very, very, *very* long time, that night. Dreaming of how much she wishes that she could solve her own mystery. She wants to solve the mysteries of the universe because if she could *just* solve those mysteries then maybe she, too, would have the respect and admiration of those around her.

VI: Bachjret Ward. Wereha K'Eyi District. Marlowe's Shipping.

KAYA: Leorlyn arrives at the office. Roll me a Perception check.

AMANDA: Alright, that is sixteen.

KAYA: Okay. A sea urchin is missing.

AMANDA: *Oh no!*

LEORLYN: Chilled to the bone: Oh, no. Where has Ulna gone?

[embraces her new identity] With equal trepidation and enthusiasm: I believe I have a mystery to solve. With nervous excitement: Let's get to it then.

AMANDA: And Leorlyn wants to investigate.

The first thing Leorlyn wants to do is search for any openings that might be in the fish tank. Leorlyn would like to see if there is any evidence of the top being opened, any sign of, shall we say... *aquatic foul play*?

KAYA: [pleased anticipation] I believe that will be an Investigation check.

AMANDA: [whispers with excitement] Let's see how this goes. [dice clatters, followed by gleeful surprised chuckling] That is a natural twenty! [loses words to laughter]

KAYA: [joyous laughter] Okay—

AMANDA: [overlapping jovially] Leorlyn's gonna solve this mystery in no time!

KAYA: How is Leorlyn investigating? Is she just looking? Is she scanning with her omnitool? Does she have—what sort of tools is she using here?

AMANDA: Excellent question. Leorlyn, right now, is so excited and yet so scared. So, like, what's going through Leorlyn's brain is: she is going to be in a massive amount of trouble, she believes, that Ulna has disappeared. The fish are *her* responsibility and—as is everything else—and she's nervous what the response is gonna be when the boss comes in and notices that Ulna has disappeared.

That said, she is *out of her mind* with excitement that the universe has placed this dream that she—that just came to life right in front of her. So with the continued emotional *ping pong* that is happening within her brain right now there is absolutely no way she has the cognisance to use anything but her eyes and ears.

KAYA: Okay! Then—and your nose; you are an elcor.

AMANDA: [overlapping] And her nose!

KAYA: Yes, and her nose.

So, this aquarium is essentially a wall, right? Leorlyn can do it because she's an elcor without getting a ladder, but if you were a biped doing this, you would need a ladder to get up to, like, the little intake valves or vents at the top, and that's also where you do things like cleaning the filter and things like that.

Leorlyn spies that the intake vent, intake cover—filter cover is hanging ajar. That is the first thing—that is the thing that she sees. She also *smells* the salt water of the tank. This is a saltwater tank, not a freshwater tank. And the briny salt water she can smell...and more *strongly* than if it were just open. Elcor olfaction is such that she can smell that some water came out of the tank.

LEORLYN: With smug suspicion: This carpet smells fishy.

KAYA: [acknowledging the pun in quiet astonishment] Oh my God.

[AMANDA laughing so high pitched, pleased with her pun ability]

KAYA: *Beautiful.* Beautiful.

The door opens and Charlie's assistant, Frank Knight, comes in.

Frank Knight is another human, another former Blood Pack. He's a little rough

around the edges in *looks*, but not in temperament. In *temperament*, Frank Knight is placid and calm and unflappable. He is probably the person who actually does the most work around here, apart from Leorlyn. But he's really the one that does most of Charlie's work. And he is a—he's got a crew cut. He's got sort of darker skin, cold blue eyes. He's an enforcer. He was an enforcer in the Blood Pack and a very good one, at that.

And now he works as an assistant for Charlie 'Three Toes' Marlowe. And he comes in—he typically does not give Leorlyn the time of day. Not cruelly, but she's just so far below his pay grade that he has better things to do. As long as, you know, his coffee shows up and Charlie's coffee shows up and, you know, the office isn't on fire, he doesn't...really...give a damn.

And so, when he walks in, he more or less ignores you and goes past you towards Charlie's office.

AMANDA: Would Frank likely, possibly, sort of like bump into me along the way as I take up a fair amount of room... and, though, not apologize for something like that?

KAYA: Let's do a Dex check for Frank. Um, he rolled well... Because Clous—because Leorlyn is kind of legendarily in the way, yeah...give me I guess a contesting Dex check.

AMANDA: Sure, yeah. That is an... Yeah, if it's just a flat Dex check, it's an eleven.

KAYA: Okay. The difference is five, and I had arbitrarily decided that if the difference was less than seven, that they *would* bump into each other. I think what happens is Leorlyn *thinks* that she's gonna be in the way, and so she moves, but she wouldn't have been in the way if she hadn't moved.

AMANDA: [chuckling] God, you have no idea how relatable that is. That, like— [stammering] I'm so sorry.

KAYA: Yeah it's the traffic jam thing, right? It's the this. Yeah. And so, yes, you have effectively stopped Frank in his tracks. You have a few seconds. He is definitely—you know all of their tells. Humans are so easy to read. They're so loud. They're so smelly.

AMANDA: Really smelly.

KAYA: It is all you can do on a regular basis not to like live in this office with like a bouquet under your nose at all times because God, they just *stink*.

AMANDA: Now I'm just imagining her with one of those little, like, Victorian church clutches.

KAYA: Exactly. Exactly. Prior to the hat, there was the sachet. Yeah. So you can tell he's about to roll his eyes and like, sidestep you and go on, but you have a couple of seconds where you have his attention *if* you want to do something with it.

LEORLYN: Timorously: I am so sorry, Frank, for being in the way. But if I could bother you with a quick question...could I bother you with a quick question?

KAYA: Frank finishes rolling his eyes, but then composes himself and:

FRANK: What can I do for you, Leorlyn?

LEORLYN: With a proverbial sigh of relief: Frank, something terrible has happened. Ulna is missing.

KAYA: Does Leorlyn share her names for the fish with anyone?

AMANDA: Yes, but no one ever listens, Frank. I mean, we can roll for it, but I almost guarantee that Frank would have no idea who I'm talking about.

KAYA: [overlapping] Okay, yeah, that's kinda what I figured. That's kinda what I figured. Yeah, yeah. Okay, yeah. Okay, and yes, he did not roll enough. I had set that at a DC15 to see if he had, like, clocked that at some point. He did not hit the fifteen.

He looks at you, and his face doesn't change much because he's gone into professional mode, but there's just this little twitch around the eyes... Insight check, actually. Let's see just how much attention *she's* paying.

AMANDA: I'll tell you what, she's rolling hot today. I'm gonna— I'm gonna jinx it. Insight check. That is a seventeen!

KAYA: Okay. Yeah, you can absolutely tell that he has no fucking clue what you're talking about. And so—but he gets, yeah, he has this little twitch and he says,

FRANK: Is that a customer?

KAYA: And I'll also give you on that Insight check that that particular tone of voice... Frank is wondering if he needs to go kneecap someone.

AMANDA: [chuckling] That is amazing. Okay.

LEORLYN: Nervously trying to recover the situation: Ulna is the urchin who lives in this tank. Have you seen Ulna? Ulna was here yesterday but she is gone today. Do you not remember Ulna?

KAYA: Frank looks between Leorlyn and the fish tank and back at Leorlyn and he shrugs.

FRANK: These things happen. Maybe one of the other fish ate it. What's the big deal?

AMANDA: This shakes Leorlyn to her very core in a number of ways. Number one, there is the feeling that, like, maybe she doesn't need to be nervous because maybe the boss won't care. If Frank isn't noticing, maybe Charlie won't notice either.

That said, she is horrified at the idea that another fish might have eaten Ulna because she absolutely did not think any of them—she thought they all got along very peacefully. This was kind of a utopia situation. [indignant] They didn't need anything. I feed them plenty! They get lots of love. Like I talk to them every day. There's no one else for me to talk to at the office so, like, I just chat with the fish. So you know, I thought they were happy. Why? Why would one of them turn on Ulna like that?

And then on the other hand—because now she has at least three hands—is this mystery slipping from her grasp already? Is it so simple, that one of the other fish ate Ulna and there's actually nothing at play? And the, like, hope is starting to crumble, a little bit like grains of sand through her elcor fingertips.

KAYA: Does she say anything to Frank in this moment of despair?

LEORLYN: With mild horror: Do you really think one of the fish ate Ulna?

FRANK: I don't know. But Charlie buys all those fish just for shits and giggles. You know what? Ask Bols. Bols would know. He's a salarian. They know all about fish and shit. I'm going to go do some real work.

KAYA: And he dismisses himself and heads into the office.

AMANDA: If I may: I would say that *that*... that cuts Clous a little to the quick, like, as well. Like, it's not as though that's not the kind of dismissiveness that she isn't used to, but no matter how used to something you get like it kind of still hurts a little bit. So Clous would, as much as an elcor can, mumble to herself,

LEORLYN: With a hint of regret: This is what I get for asking.

KAYA: So you know exactly who he's talking about. Bols is the guy in the back. He runs supply. He is the guy that contacts the guy to get the stuff from the guy to the other guy. You need a guy, you talk to Bols.

AMANDA: He's a real guy's guy.

KAYA: He is, yeah! Yeah, he's a funky little guy and he's always there at like, stupid hours. You're pretty sure he sleeps in the break room most nights, but I think Leorlyn is probably too polite to say anything about that.

AMANDA: Oh yeah, absolutely. If she—I mean, they haven't built up again the kind of relationship where she would feel comfortable asking, you know, if he needs help... and, like, maybe he *wants* to be sleeping there. All I know is I sure as shit *smells* like somebody's been sleeping there.

KAYA: Oh yeah. Oh yeah, the break room reeks of cloaca on most days. It's a bad time.

AMANDA: Clous would absolutely try to, you know, pull herself back together, psych herself up to go talk to Bols, and see if Bols has seen anything.

KAYA: Okay, so you head through the break room into the back, into the loading docks. Sure enough, you find Bols Ogost in the back in the loading area. He is buried in datapads as usual and mumbling to himself in gibberish of, you know, this, that, and the other shipment, trying to get everything organized. He's a pretty short tempered and absent minded fellow who...he's got a system and nobody else understands it, but it works.

LEORLYN: With hope that I do not regret asking: Hello Bols. Do you have a moment to assist me with a missing person?

KAYA: Bols is shuffling datapads as you come up, and startles when you speak, and drops one, and they clatter to the floor, and he swears and he kind of—he gets down on his knees and gathers up the datapads and comes back and narrows his eyes at you.

BOLS: [exasperated] Do I have a minute? I *never* have a minute. What do you want? What do you *want*, Leorlyn? A minute for an elcor is an hour for a salarian, so get on with it!

LEORLYN: Attempting not to panic: Bols, Ulna the urchin has gone missing. I cannot find her. Frank does not care. Please...care. Please help me care.

KAYA: [tickled pink] This throws him for a loop. And you can see—because salarians are also very expressive, because they run *so* fast—and so you see his face go from 'Who the fuck is Ulna?' to 'I thought you said missing *person*' to 'Is an urchin a nickname?' to 'Oh you're talking about the fucking *fish tank*' and then 'Well, of *course* Frank doesn't care.' He finishes on—and, I suspect this is the worst one, but I suspect that Leorlyn has seen it before—it is this, just this 'Bless your heart.'

AMANDA: Which she takes very seriously as actually he cares and, like, this is a rare moment of like "He feels for me!"

KAYA: Oh, I love Leorlyn, I love her so much. So after you watch this, this epic emotional journey—of, you know, ten seconds—he finally says,

BOLS: The sea urchin is missing? Is *that* what you're worried about?

LEORLYN: Mildly hysteric: Yes. I have reason to believe that Ulna the urchin would have a very difficult time surviving outside of the saltwater in her tank, and it is of the utmost importance to me that I find her, and ensure that she is okay.

KAYA: He scoffs.

BOLS: Ugh. Charlie always buys such *fragile* things. Back on Sur'Kesh, sea urchins do whatever the fuck they want! Probably would have gotten up and walked away. //I don't have time for this. I gotta get this shit done before he gets in. Good luck finding your urchin. Maybe *it* ate everything else. Anything else missing? Anyway, whatever, don't care.

KAYA: And he very clearly turns back to his datapads and leaves Leorlyn in the lurch.

LEORLYN: Frightened and baffled: Could Ulna really have walked away? Wistfully: Is Ulna seeking a better life for herself? Was she unhappy in her tank? With a hint of sadness: Could I have made her happier?

AMANDA: And then she sort of, like, shakes her giant elcor head, trying to, you know, rid herself of the feeling of, like, she probably did something that set off—she's—no, absolutely this— [spiraling] Of course Ulna didn't walk away! Ulna would love it here! I hang out with Ulna every day. Where would she find more creatures to hang out with? And, like, surely she loved her life here!

Genuinely kind of wondering if it is possible that, like, Ulna could have survived in the air and walked away, I presume returns back to the scene of the possible crime no closer to finding the answer than when she started.

Now that all of the interviews have shown to be fruitless, the next thing that Clous would need to do is to review security camera footage...because there's absolutely got to be security camera footage. I can't—she can't believe she didn't remember that there were security cams and, oh, man, theoretically they could have saved her so much time!

KAYA: I don't even think I need to make you roll for that. Of *course*, there's security footage! This is part of your *actual* job, and so you scroll back through the footage, and at approximately three o'clock in the morning, Terran Universal Standard, Leorlyn watches as Ulna uproots herself from the aquarium floor and suction cups her way up the glass. The vent filter flips open, and she suction cups her way back down the outside glass and toddles off in the direction of the break room.

AMANDA: Clous is...absolutely flabbergasted by this realization.

LEORLYN: Hardly believing my eyes: It is true. She got up and walked away; she went to the break room. Curiously: Perhaps I did not feed her enough and she was in need of a snack.

AMANDA: So I think that the next step here...I should go check out the break room. So she is—she's going to maneuver her way over to the break room and look for Ulna.

KAYA: Okay, do me another Investigation roll.

[AMANDA voices a drumroll like a cartoon duck while shaking her dice]

AMANDA: [elongated; in a somber whisper] Aw, the luck had to run out sometime. That...is officially a five.

KAYA: You attune to that briny smell, which you now realize was Ulna leaving this trail of salt water. Unfortunately, the break room smells *so bad* to your elcor nose that you lose the scent.

So the break room is—it's a little small for you. I'm going to say it's probably like an eight by ten room.

AMANDA: That is quite wee.

KAYA: Yeah, it's got a counter on the side with, like, a little kitchenette with the little dinky sink and the shitty kettle and even shittier microwave, sort of deal.

AMANDA: [overlapping] I was gonna say somebody's been microwaving fish in it and oh, man, I really hope it wasn't anything from the aquarium.

KAYA: Right? And you know, one of those *big* garbage cans right at the door, which never seems to close quite right. And there's chairs and a table in there, like for the humans and the salarian just to sit at. And so it's *really* cramped, but yeah, that's what you're looking at...and it's always a disaster because Leorlyn can't really get in there and clean it properly, really. Much to her dismay, I assume.

AMANDA: Oh yeah, absolutely dismayed, yes.

KAYA: And so, like the microwave is *caked* in grime, and the counters are gross, and you really need—you should run some Drano through the sink...and there's like wrappers and shit on the table and the floor, because I mean, elcor brooms are really long: good luck handling one in there. So yeah, it's a mess in there. How are you going to find your runaway urchin?

AMANDA: Well, Leorlyn stands, aghast at the state of things—because she really does try to avoid going into the break room as much as possible, it's not a pleasant experience.

LEORLYN: Deeply perplexed: How on the Citadel will I continue searchin' for this urchin?

[KAYA laughs at what is objectively the worst wordplay AMANDA has made thus far]

AMANDA: I... [gasps with inspiration; elongated] Ooh, I would like to use my Sly: Look Into The Abyss Aspect so that I can...consider this situation from more angles than I even have three hands, as we established earlier on.

So yes, I... Actually, now that I'm saying out loud, that would give me a plus two on any Charisma-based skill roll. So...*let's try to call out to Ulna.*

[AMANDA wheezes; KAYA is stunned and laughing at the very odd choice of tactic]

KAYA: Oh my gosh... *Okay!*

AMANDA: [overlapping] Clous—Clous is—Leorlyn spends an inordinate amount of time talking to these sea creatures because, you know, they're her only *real* friends other than Khato. And so, hoping beyond hope that Ulna has somehow managed to find the snack that she was looking for—maybe she found some sort of, like, hopefully not-decaying salt water that was left inside the refrigerator, that, like, maybe is safe for an urchin but not for bipedal consumption.

Leorlyn takes a deep breath.

LEORLYN: Desperately clinging to a shred of hope: Ulna...are you in here? Did you find your snack? Please come out.

I miss you.

KAYA: Okay...roll me your choice of Charisma skill-based roll with that plus two.

AMANDA: I think I would have to go Charm, you know? I'm not trying to Intimidate Ulna out. I genuinely miss Ulna, I want her to reveal herself. [dice clack] Alright, uh, that is...

[AMANDA's math-ing, thinking song] Boh-bah-bah oh-boh-boh-boh-bah...

That's an eleven!

KAYA: You catch the faintest whiff of briny salt water from inside the trash can, which is just slightly ajar.

AMANDA: What kind of top does this trash can have? Is this one of those like, rotating sort of things where you know it's got like the little half circles that are kind of cut out on either side—

KAYA: [overlapping] Yeah, I'd say so, yeah, yeah. And it's not been taken well taken care of, and so it kind of *sticks* a little bit open most of the time.

AMANDA: [laughs in disgust] *Oh fun*. As delicately as Clous—as Clous can, with her rather sizeable elcor digits, uh, *really*, like, grossed out and, like, hoping that she's not going to, like, bring home some sort of incurable bacteria that might infect Khato, pries open further this trash can and...

LEORLYN: Gently: Ulna? Is that you?

KAYA: As Leorlyn pries open the top of the trash can she sees inside an open jar of pickled fish eggs.

AMANDA: [high-pitched excited squeal] I was hoping it would be pickles.

KAYA: It's, you know, the—Bols has eaten most of the fish eggs and it's mostly, it's just, like, it's the end of the juice, but he didn't bother pouring it down the sink. Probably because the sink's clogged again, let's be real.

AMANDA: Would just add to the stench.

KAYA: Yeah. And so, it's just, it's sitting in the trash can amongst all of the other trash, and Ulna is half-in, half-out of the jar.

[skittish urchin noises]

AMANDA: I would like to reach into the trash can and—and pick that lil' queen up out of it.

KAYA: Okay, as you do—so she's sort of, she's frilly, this Sur'Keshian sea urchin is sort of like...I'm imagining, like, a Carmen Miranda dress.

AMANDA: [elongated] Yes! She's fabulous!

KAYA: Yes, and very bright, bright, *bright* colors, but those colors are dimming and fading. And as you pick Ulna up out...

AMANDA: [quietly shaking] Oh no.

KAYA: I rolled a Nat one on her Luck check.

AMANDA: [crescendoing in devastation; all words elongated] Oh, G-d no.

KAYA: Leorlyn feels and smells the final briny excretion of a sea urchin that has been out of water too long and and she—she's gone.

[heart going out] She's gone.

AMANDA: Leorlyn just...stares...horrified and devastated. And...

G-d, she was hoping so deeply that she would—she had just this spark of—of “Yes, I've done it!”

And the feeling of gently holding Ulna as these last vestiges of life just *dissipated* from her is one of the most profoundly gutting experiences that she has ever had.

The mystery doesn't matter to her anymore; she's lost a friend.

LEORLYN: Lost and with an Ulna-shaped hole in my heart: My dear sweet Ulna; you got yourself into a pickle, and thus...pickled yourself.

[a brief pause while KAYA and AMANDA attempt to respect the moment...then melt down into manic, wheezing laughter]

KAYA: [squeaking] I think we have to leave it there, that's the perfect line. [elongated] Oh my God. Oh my *God*.

VI: You have been listening to *I Should Roll: Dangerous Dangers*, Minisode Four: *The Mystery of the Unclaimed Urchin*. Featuring the voices of Amanda Cotter as Leorlyn and Kaya Renwick as everyone and everything else.

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Thank you for listening. Have a pleasant day.

VRAGA: [distantly] Are you serious?! I swear to—

[into the mic] Jesse's brought to my attention the fact that you haven't left us a review yet. Let's make a deal: if you leave a review, I won't show you why they call me... *Thresher Mawm*.

LEORLYN: With reverence and affection: Ode to Ulna.

Mournfully contemplating life's impermanence:
It's funny how the smallest things can make the biggest splash.

I thought we'd have more time together; you were gone in such a flash.

Wistfully reminiscing on the time we spent together:
While you were never one engaged in sparkling conversation,
You were the pinnacle of listeners across this whole space station.

Bemoaning the fickle nature of dreams:
From dreaming of a mystery and looking for a sign,
To woe that I have found it in a jar of pickle brine.

Buried alongside you in the depths of sorrow:
I ponder now what might have been, were I speedier in searchin',
However, all that I can do is say "Goodnight, my dear, sweet urchin."

With earnest resolve to keep your spirit alive:
So, a vow I swear to you: Ulna, you will not go in vain.
I make it my life's mission that I'll never fail again;
To help someone in need, there's no bin I won't peruse,
And forevermore the world will know me as Detective Clous.