

ELINOR LOPEZ

Welcome back, dear listeners, to *The Pasithea Powder*. The following recordings continue the strange little tale of Lieutenant Sophie Green and Dr. Jane Gonzalez, and all the inconvenient things they discovered after the war.

Last time, Sophie talked with the award-winning Elinor Lopez.

Oh, and her queen, Reina Valencia, who urged her to return home to Cassandra. Jane and Moreau also took her to see Director Diaz, hoping for a Medean-led resolution to the threat of war with the Others.

A very special thanks to premium patrons CinCin Fang, Lacey Buchda, Alma Jones, and the Lunas, who helped make this episode possible!

This is Episode Thirty-One: “The Words.”

After this episode, there are only two more installments of this story to follow, listeners. Take a deep breath. Let us begin.

A shower is running, then turns off. A shower curtain is pushed back.

SOPHIE

Oh my fucking God.

MOREAU

Hi.

SOPHIE

How long have you been sitting there?

MOREAU

You said I could come in and brush my teeth while you showered. You said, and I quote, “Knock yourself out. What’s privacy? I was in the military.”

SOPHIE

I didn’t expect you to still be here when. I could have been doing anything! Whatever, hand me that towel.

MOREAU

Plus I want to talk to you.

SOPHIE

Now?

MOREAU

It's this or ask you out for coffee and I wouldn't want you to get the wrong idea.

SOPHIE

(grudgingly amused)

Okay, shoot.

MOREAU

My sister's been asking me how long you plan on staying, which means you've got about a week before she starts asking you.

SOPHIE

Right. She expected you, then got you and Jane, then got you and Jane and me.

MOREAU

Yeah. And she's fine with Jane—she likes Jane, Jane can stay as long as she wants—but you...

SOPHIE

Did I not put the salad bowl away in the right place?

MOREAU

Her best friend died in the raid on the Fifth Orbital.

SOPHIE

Oh.

MOREAU

Their other friends have been trying to get her to poison your terrible smoothies. So she's been extremely polite, under the circumstances.

SOPHIE

Sure fucking thing.

Moreau, if we're going to do a whole wartime reckoning thing, I should at least put on clothes, or maybe—

MOREAU

How long are you staying?

SOPHIE

I haven't heard shit from Leo Diaz, so I don't know.

MOREAU

Say you hear back tomorrow. Then you go?

SOPHIE

I guess.

MOREAU

Back to Cassandra?

SOPHIE

...did Jane send you in here?

MOREAU

Pfft. No. Why do you think I ambushed you here instead of out in the living room? She has explicitly told me not to ask you this, by the way.

SOPHIE

And you are anyway? I thought you were friends.

MOREAU

"Friends" doesn't even begin to cover what we are.

Beat.

SOPHIE

What kind of conversation is this, Moreau? If you have something to say, just say it. I need to put on lotion.

MOREAU

I am only going to say this once. She has been different since you came back.

SOPHIE

Different how?

MOREAU

Have you checked your old stream? She must have left you at least a dozen messages, even when everyone, myself included, was telling her she was talking to a dead woman.

SOPHIE

I opened it up when I first got the new comms but there are so many— What did she say?

MOREAU

Ohhhh no. You wanna know, you have to listen for yourself. Plus I'm sure there were nights she was up whispering to you that I don't know about.

SOPHIE

I'm not kidding, Moreau. It's totally full. It's just people asking me where I am, begging me to call them back...

MOREAU

And have you called any of those people back?

Beat.

God. *Cassandrans*. I don't know why I even try.

Transition into:

Ring.

BLANC

Hey, Janie. You didn't pick up the call. How disappointing—I know you're in range, now. And it's mid-morning over there—what else could possibly have your attention?

Maybe I'll try again.

Click.

Ring.

BLANC

Oh, Janie.

Well, that's all right. I'm just calling to chat. How's your week? Experienced any earth-shattering revelations lately?

(laughs)

You know, you really shouldn't decline messages from your queen. Not when she's so very good to you. After everything you've done, she's still willing to let you come crawling back home—maybe. If you ask her very nicely.

When Sophie comes back to Cassandra, don't you want to be on her arm? There's still a *place* for you here, if you were worried about that. Did you hear that all the former Rowley conspirators are out of confinement and back in a laboratory? I don't know what they're reporting on that shithole of a planet, but it's true. Everyone you worked with, Janie. They've all come back to the fold. Still under supervision, of course—they did commit treason—but hey. They're doing good work. They go home to their families every night. Pasithea research is going to be with us for a long, long time.

We could put you back in a lab, too.

Or would you rather we put you back in Santa Pedra? A little pied-a-terre by the university, with a view of the cathedral.

Maybe you want to go home to your parents. Your mom says hi, by the way.

Or maybe—yes.

Maybe there's another mommy you desperately want to come home to.

Recorded this yesterday, Janie, just for you. I hope you enjoy it.

Cut to: a recording of Blanc talking to someone on the street. He's pretending to be a reporter—he sounds amused, but less slimy than usual. There are street sounds in the background.

BLANC

—say your name for the camera.

ROWLEY

Oh, sure. I'm Bell.

BLANC

Wonderful to meet you, Bell. And what did you want to tell the kids today?

ROWLEY

I know a lot of things are about to change, in a pretty big way. The aliens, the PSA, the *[beep—what she's saying, we assume, makes her location identifiable.]* And that can be frightening. But we're all going to get through it together. Change isn't always a bad thing. So listen to your parents, and read the old, good books, and don't be afraid.

(Her voice changing as she turns to Blanc instead of to the Kids of Cassandra)

Is that all right?

BLANC

That was perfect.

Cut back to Blanc on the phone, in the present.

BLANC

Well, Janie?

What do you say?

Are you going to come home?

Click.

Transition to: Jane and Sophie talking together, outside.

JANE

It was Rowley's voice, Sophie. She is alive. She's alive and he has her.

SOPHIE

That fucking fuckweasel.

JANE

I don't—I don't know what he wants from me.

SOPHIE

Who cares what he wants. How do we get him to leave you the fuck alone?

JANE

I don't care about that right now—I can't leave *him* alone. He has Isabel, and I—I *have* to find her. I have to. She's—I mean, we have the cure now. I could give it to her, and bring her back, and—she could just, just. She'll know what to do.

SOPHIE

Okay.

JANE

That sounds stupid, doesn't it? That after everything that's happened, I still want a grownup to come and tell me what to do?

SOPHIE

It's not stupid.

JANE

That's, um. The important thing, though, is that Blanc has her, and he's—horrible, and I—if I'm the only one who knows, then she could be in danger.

SOPHIE

You should call Anders.

JANE

Anders?

SOPHIE

Yeah. He's been promoted, he might be able to help. Give you leverage on Blanc, or something. And no, don't give me that face, it's technically a conflict of interest but Blanc is a dick, so he might...help anyway. If it's not a...global security issue, or whatever. He always liked you, sooo.

JANE

I, um. I wasn't very nice to him the last time we talked.

SOPHIE

...Seriously? You were rude to Anders? Anders Li?

JANE

I was. Not in a very good place.

SOPHIE

(touched, feeling weird about it) Well, uh. He'd forgive you for stabbing him in the eye, if it makes you feel better, so I'd try him anyway. And I'm gonna call Cullen.

JANE

Oh, right, Cullen. You haven't talked to him yet?

SOPHIE

Yeah. I've been putting it off, but...well, I owe him a call. And hey, after I update him on the alien situation and see what the hell is happening over there, maybe I'll see if he knows anything about Rowley.

JANE

Okay. Okay. Thank you. I—I think I've spent a long time thinking of Blanc as this—problem that was never going to go away.

SOPHIE

We are gonna make that fucker go away. After we find your grownup for you.

Jane hugs her, sudden, tight. A rustle of clothing and a whoosh of air from Sophie.

SOPHIE

Oh, hey.

Jane lets her go.

JANE

Sorry. I should—I'm gonna go call Anders.

SOPHIE

...Have fun.

Transition to:

Ring

SOPHIE

Cullen. It's Sophie. Green. Call me back.

Click.

Ring.

SOPHIE

Hi Mom, it's me. I'm sorry I didn't call you earlier. I've been. You probably heard that I'm alive. Sorry. [*she realizes that could be taken to mean "Sorry I'm alive."*] I mean, that probably should have come from me.

I've been thinking a lot about that apartment we had by the roasterie. There's a lot of buildings like that in Medea: like they're built to look impressive but you just know that you can hear every neighbor sneeze and when it rains you have to set out a bucket. Of all the things I thought I knew about Medea, I never thought about how they probably get mold in their shiny new apartments, same as us.

Don't worry! I still hate it here. I've just got some things to do.

Were you... Did you get married yet, or did I dream that?

You can call me back if you want.

Oh wait! I. I, heh, talked to the queen? On the phone? And she.

(carefully diplomatic:) She asked after you. And I wanted to make sure you're okay. Also. And no matter what happens, I want you to still be okay. So if you have to...I'm just saying...

I know sometimes it's been hard to be my mom and I just want you to know that if it would be easier for you to...not be...ever, then you should. Do that. Like. Relax. Like Jane's parents do.

Anyway.

I'll try you later.

Click.

Ring

SOPHIE

Hey Cullen, I think my last message might have been kind of rude. But you've gotta be used to that. Anyway. I don't want to say everything I have to say in a message, so call me back. Please. When you can. Thanks.

Click.

Ring.

SOPHIE

Anders Li! I am intentionally leaving this message at a time when you will not pick up the phone because I think what I have to say might be embarrassing for me and you would have way too much fun at my expense. I know you left me messages while I was gone but there are a shit ton of them and I don't want to wade through all of them so: hi. Thank you for caring whether I live or die. I also care whether you live or die. I heard you got married and I'm just, like, ridiculously happy for you. What I need to know is: was there karaoke at the reception, did you kill it, and what is Susan's karaoke song?

Call me back and please just pretend everything is normal and I was never gone and we've been talking this whole time. I feel like. I stepped out of a party and then came back in and everyone's heads just swiveled around to stare at me. And you know I don't mind people staring. But the circumstances have to be right. I'm not an *alien*. I'm a war fucking hero.

She lets out a big sigh.

Okay. Thanks. (*genuinely:*) Congrats.

Click.

Ring.

SOPHIE

Cullen, if you're going to ghost me, it's my right to make you feel bad about it.

You know, during the Friendship Delegation I was actively contemplating throwing you out the window. Now I'm, like, actively seeking out your fusty opinions on things. How the hell did that happen? Anyway. I'm just going to keep calling back, so you might as well hit me with the "Lieutenant Green," just for old time's sake. What could you possibly be doing that's better than this?

Click.

Transition to:

JANE

Computer, call Anders Li. Region C.

MEDEAN AUTOMATED VOICE

Connecting you.

Ring.

ANDERS

Hello?

JANE

Hi, Anders. This is Jane Gonzalez.

ANDERS

Hi Jane! Of course I knew it was you. How are you doing?

JANE

I, um. Fine. How are you?

ANDERS

I'm doing good! How are you?

JANE

Anders.

ANDERS

I'm sorry, I just, this is really awkward! I mean, how is she? She's back. She's really—she's okay? You're okay? Are the two of you okay? You're calling me and you never call me, so—is it bad? Is she dying? Should I get on a ship to Medea right now? Because I'll probably need to travel under a pseudonym and I'm really bad at remembering stuff like that so I'll definitely mess it up!

JANE

Calm down. She's fine, she's not dying, you don't need to...adopt any aliases.

ANDERS

Oh thank god.

JANE

Yeah.

ANDERS

Oh wow you have no idea how relieved I am. I mean, I've been waiting for a call, but—my heart just sank when I saw your name.

JANE

Thanks.

ANDERS

Oh no, I didn't mean—!

JANE

It's fine, Anders. I get it. I think she just—doesn't know how to talk about it. Yet.

ANDERS

Oh. Oh, that makes sense. But she's okay?

JANE

She's okay.

ANDERS

Okay. Okay, great. Can we start over again? Jane! I'm so happy to hear from you! How are you?

Jane laughs in spite of herself.

JANE

I'm fine, Anders. I, um. There's something I wanted to ask you about.

ANDERS

Ask away!

JANE

I...do you know...Agent Blanc? Or, that might not be his title anymore. Blanc? Michael Blanc?

ANDERS

I...do. Yes.

JANE

He's, um. He's been contacting me.

ANDERS

Oh no.

JANE

Yeah. Yeah, they have not been...nice...messages.

ANDERS

Jane, I am so, so sorry.

JANE

Thank you. I—so, lately, he has been—I mean, he sent me a recording of—can, can you promise not to tell anyone about this?

ANDERS

Yes, of course. Unless, um, I can't, because it's a matter of safety or security or global interest or something. No offense, just, your problems can get pretty...big. But if it's a personal thing, my lips are sealed!

JANE

Okay. Well, I guess I'll let you be the judge. He told me Rowley is still alive.

ANDERS

Oh. Oh, shit.

JANE

Yeah. And, um. I was just worried that—I mean, if it's true—could you, could you look into it? I don't want to be the...the only person who knows about this.

ANDERS

Yes. Yes, I can look into it. I'm really sorry, Jane.

JANE

Thanks. Thanks, Anders.

Awkward pause.

JANE

Um, so, that's all I wanted to ask.

ANDERS

Oh, okay!

JANE

I'll make sure she calls you.

ANDERS

It was really nice talking to you, Jane.

JANE

You too, Anders.

Click.

Street sounds. Sophie is walking and leaving a message for Linda.

SOPHIE

...anyway, *like I was saying, Linda*, I know I'm running out of time, but I don't know what else to do. I went to the Director of Medea. I went to the press. I talked to Reina Valencia on the phone! I'm just one person and I. (*she clears her throat*) I was never supposed to— This isn't my role. And I know we said no more time, but I could really use more time.

This isn't, like. This isn't a gambit. I know it sounds like something someone who was double crossing you would say to buy time but I really— I think while I was living on Earth I forgot how *slow* everything is down here.

Plus. The bigger the ship the harder to stop, you know? Sometimes I think the war happened because it was harder not to.

Anyway. I made my case, take it or leave it, but I really hope you take it because for the first time since I saw David fucking Alegros on Telos—no, longer ago than that—for the first time since, like, *high school*, I've had this feeling. This.

It's hard to explain. It's like when there's a nip in the air. The first of the year. Like anything could happen. (*she lights up when she says this*) And anything will. And I won't see it coming.

Don't get me wrong, I'm sweating bullets waiting for Leo Diaz to fucking *do something* but I'm starting to feel—not like myself but, like—some self. It's stupid.

I listened to a bunch of messages. People were leaving them for me and I listened. I'm on a walk right now because I couldn't—if I sat still in a room and listened it would be too much, so gross. So here I am. Some of the messages, they were from people I didn't even know were still alive. People I lost track of during the war and they're still on Cassandra, thinking about me.

Some of the messages are just basically people saying fuck you, which, yeah, fuck me I guess.

Some of the messages my mom left are just. Everyone else is pouring their heart out, talking to me like they'd talk to my headstone and Mom is just talking about her day. Groceries. Who was on the stream last night. When I was alive she never called me. I mean when I was.

She's good at lying to herself; she knew I was dead. (*frustrated with herself:*) I mean she *thought*.

I think maybe that's the feeling. I believed it a little, what everyone else believed, that I was gone forever.

How many other people have felt this way?

How many of the people who called me have felt this way?

I still haven't listened to Jane's messages.

She left a lot of them. I'd get to one and just skip, skip. But I am going to listen. I wanted to call you first, to let you know that I'm trying, I just need more time. But I think you can give me more time. We—

MEDEAN AUTOMATED VOICE

Call incoming from Frank Braugher.

SOPHIE

Who?

MEDEAN AUTOMATED VOICE

Frank Braugher.

SOPHIE

Uhhh. I'm gonna take this. It could be, like, an undersecretary or—

MEDEAN AUTOMATED VOICE

Call incoming–

SOPHIE

Yes, I get it, God, accept.

A silence.

FRANK

Hello? Is that Sophie Green?

SOPHIE

Lieutenant Green. Yes?

FRANK

Lieutenant Green, sorry.

SOPHIE

Yeah.

Who is this?

FRANK

Oh. This is. I'm Frank. Braugher.

SOPHIE

Yeah, I got that much.

FRANK

Sorry, I'm. I'm calling with some bad news. I don't think you've heard–

SOPHIE

Who *are* you?

FRANK

Oh. Yeah, you wouldn't know my name. Of course. Sorry. Raymond was my husband.

SOPHIE

Raymond who?

She hears herself saying it and realizes almost immediately. The following lines overlap.

FRANK SOPHIE
Raymond Cullen. Cullen?

FRANK SOPHIE
Yes. Was?

FRANK
Yes.

Beat.

One of his colleagues told me you'd left messages. She wasn't allowed to contact you, but I guess she was a fan during the war.

Beat.

Are you still there?

SOPHIE
What. Happened.

She's furious.

FRANK
They said it was a case of Mishandling of Specialized Weapons. He was off-planet, at that PSA conference. You heard about that?

SOPHIE
Yes. But no one said anything about. No one told me.

FRANK
When was the last time the death of a member of the Queensguard made the news? Cast your mind back, Lieutenant Green. I bet you can't even name one.

SOPHIE
Call me Sophie.

I'm sorry for the Lieutenant Green thing— Cullen called me Sophie. Toward the end.

FRANK

I know.

I never got to hear much about what he did, and this might be overstepping, but he believed in you.

SOPHIE

I fucked up all the time.

FRANK

He met a lot of fuck-ups in his time. (*chuckling to himself*.) He even married one.

He was a long-term thinker, Sophie. Believe me, if I got the sense that he believed in you, he believed in you.

SOPHIE

I'm sorry but I— They really didn't tell you anything else? Mishandling? That's it?

FRANK

That's it. An accident.

SOPHIE

I don't believe...

(*wartime Sophie emerges*)

I'm sorry for your loss.

FRANK

Thank you.

SOPHIE

How are you holding up?

FRANK

(*startled*)

Well, I've taken up knitting. If you knew me, you'd know that's...unexpected. Most of our friends think I've lost my mind.

SOPHIE

Your friends. That you have over for dinner and, like, drink wine with? Go watch a play?

FRANK

Yes. You can have a life, even as a member of the Queensguard. In fact, I highly recommend it. Friends. Family. Terrible taste in entertainment.

SOPHIE

I thought no one did that any more.

FRANK

You thought wrong.

SOPHIE

I have to go.

FRANK

Okay. Well. I'm glad I caught you.

SOPHIE

Yeah.

FRANK

Take care, Sophie.

SOPHIE

You too.

Click.

Transition to: the sound of typing. It's Jane and Moreau, in Moreau's office at the university. They're working on their paper again.

JANE

Should we cite Diaz and Price there? I know we did with the chart, but—

MOREAU

Yup. Already got it pulled up.

The sound of typing.

JANE

Great. And the—

MOREAU

Uh huh.

More typing.

JANE

And then maybe—

MOREAU

(interrupting her) —Break?

JANE

Break.

MOREAU

More coffee?

JANE

Please.

Coffee being poured.

MOREAU

Okay, come on. You've been sitting on something all afternoon. Let's hear it.

JANE

What is Director Diaz waiting for? It's been days.

MOREAU

I don't know.

JANE

You really don't know, or Leo Diaz's cousin doesn't know when Jane Gonzalez is asking?

MOREAU

Jesus, Jane, I really don't know. We haven't had a family fucking meeting about it. Leo's talking to his cabinet, not to me.

JANE

We've put you in a bad position. Sophie and I.

MOREAU

Look. I think Sophie's story is plausible. We saw her kidnapped by the Others with our own eyes—the whole galaxy saw it on their streams. She clearly believes what she's saying, and the fact that she's back in the flesh to say it is pretty good evidence to support her story. I think Leo probably believes her, too.

JANE

What he said back on Peri. That Cassandra and Medea could join forces against the Others, and—use that alliance, that, that story. The peninsula standing together against the alien monsters. To resist the PSA.

MOREAU

Never gonna happen now.

JANE

But—couldn't Cassandra and the PSA do the same thing in reverse? If Medea believes Sophie's story, and they don't—couldn't they, they use the threat of the Others to—if the story they're selling is that the Others are monsters and Medea is colluding with them, if we're the only ones, then, couldn't the PSA use that to—

MOREAU

Swallow Medea whole, if there's another war and the entire PSA is involved this time? Sure.

JANE

Fuck.

MOREAU

Yeah. So I'm guessing Leo's having a bad week.

JANE

Do you think that means he'll—act as if Sophie's story isn't true? To protect Medea?

MOREAU

Maybe. Except that we both know Sophie's telling the truth, which means that ends with millions—maybe billions—of humans dying at the hands of the Others for no fucking reason.

JANE

Isn't there any way to stop it?

MOREAU

Any chance that Howe or Reina Valencia sees reason? Put the long-term good over short-term gain?

JANE

Oh god.

MOREAU

Yeah.

JANE

So you think Leo's going to—

MOREAU

I don't know what he's going to do.

A heavy silence.

JANE

(suddenly) Thank you. For—I don't know. Thank you.

MOREAU

(gently) You wanna get back to work?

Transition away to:

Beep.

ANDERS

Hey Jane. This is Anders Li, calling you back! I did some poking around, and I couldn't find anything about Dr. Rowley, except, um, the stuff that's already on the record. Like, her heart attack. Uh, I did find out something that might be a connection, but I don't know how useful it's going to be? So, during the war, the Queensguard officially served in the War Office, so, probably, um, I think on paper it was supposed to be protecting the royal family, but, um, I think we both know that means intelligence work. Right, but, so: there's a record of Blanc taking a

funeral leave a few months before the armistice. And I couldn't find out who the funeral was supposed to be for—his parents were already dead, his sister is still alive, he wasn't married. And I guess it could have been for a friend, hah, that would make sense, but they don't tend to grant leaves for less than immediate family, so—um, anyway, I was looking for Rowley connections, so I followed a hunch, and, um. Checked the records at Mercy House. And—and this is—I can't tell you anything more than this, and I don't even know if I'm right about it, and um please don't tell anyone because I could get in trouble for telling you about it, but I think maybe you—okay, so. There's no record of Michael Blanc checking into Mercy House. But a Michael White did check in. For three days, during Blanc's funeral leave. And Rowley was obviously doing rotations at Mercy House then. I mean, you should know, you were too. So—so if Blanc ever met her. Um. It was probably then.

Okay. That's all I know. I hope you've still got your Salida Del Sol encryption key going! Ha ha. Uh.

Take care of yourself!

Click.

SOPHIE

Okay. It's time.

Beep.

A swelling hum begins, initially over orchestral music, then just the hum, almost like we're running through Sophie's brain. Clips of Jane's past voicemails, not in chronological order, over the growing hum. "There are several extremely good reasons to believe you're not dead." (23) quickly into: "I would know. I would just. I would know." (23) "I bet that's not a secret at all." (23) "and my whole chest just felt—tight, and—" (23) "You, soot-stained, smiling, landing in front of the Queen's Palace in Santa Pedra, climbing out of the open hatch like—and I'm sure some bright person will pull out their comms and capture the exact moment, and then I'll get to be vindicated." (25) "Sorry, sorry. I don't know why this is so hard for me." (26) "Just hold on. I'll be there as soon as I can." (28) "I have a lot I still need to say to you, Sophie Green." (27) "When you come back, I think I want—" (23) "I'll call you tomorrow." (23)

Click.

Jane and Sophie's room. The door opens.

JANE

Sophie— What happened?! You look terrible.

Sophie closes the door firmly behind her.

SOPHIE

Gee, thanks. Scoot over.

She comes and sits down on the bed.

JANE

What happened?

SOPHIE

Did you know Cullen was dead? Did you not tell me because—

JANE

Agent Cullen's *dead*?

SOPHIE

Yeah. *(Beat.)* And my mom called back. She's on a cruise, she knew I'd be okay. And my finger really fucking hurts. Like it's in another room. Why do I keep doing these things to myself?

JANE

Sophie—

SOPHIE

I finally listened to your messages. That you left when I was gone.

JANE

(dragged hither and thither by this conversation)

Oh?

SOPHIE

Yeah.

JANE

Were they embarrassing? Oh God, I bet they were embarrassing. Did you listen to all of them?

SOPHIE

(irritated)

Of course I did. They weren't embarrassing. They were.

(forcefully:) Jane.

JANE

Sophie?

SOPHIE

You never *say* these things. You talk around them all the time in circles like.

I could have been okay with just kissing or fucking or whatever if we ever got back there because I have been walking around with this sneaking suspicion that you like me a little bit. But, Jane, I listened to those messages and you don't *like* me.

JANE

What? Of course I—

SOPHIE

You're in love with me.

JANE

I...

Long pause.

SOPHIE

Yes?

JANE

I don't know what to say.

SOPHIE

It's easier when I'm dead, right?

JANE

Nothing about that time was easy.

SOPHIE

It's easier to say this shit in the dark or into the comms, not when I'm sitting right the fuck in front of you. On another planet or dead, I'm not a real person, right?

JANE
(disagreeing)

No.

SOPHIE
Yes. I'm just some imaginary Captain Sophie Green. Believe me, I just spent months on end with Omikron and I know how out of sight out of mind works, what it can turn a person into. I know how that goes when you're not alive.

JANE
No. You are alive. I know you. You're not a memory, you're a person. And when you're out of the room I might not remember exactly how annoying you are, but I still know who you are, Sophie. I've known every version of you. You're not imaginary to me, ever.

Beat.

SOPHIE
So. All those messages. The sound your throat made. The way you said my name. Did you mean it?

JANE
Of course I meant it.

SOPHIE
Then say it to my face.

Long pause.

SOPHIE
Fuck this shit.

JANE
Sophie—

SOPHIE
What.

JANE
I can't. It's hard. I've never said it before. I'm not going to say it just because you're mad at me.

SOPHIE

I'm mad at you because *you're in love with me* and you let me think we were just...touching elbows in the dark!

JANE

You knew it was more than that.

SOPHIE

I wanted it to be more than that.

JANE

Well good then!

SOPHIE

And I still do, but...

JANE

I can be a selfish person, Sophie. The things I've done for you are not things I would do for just anyone.

SOPHIE

Are you talking about Pasithea or are you talking about licking—

JANE

JESUS CHRIST. Pasithea, Sophie, God.

I am saying that these are not new feelings.

SOPHIE

Then why—

JANE

Why do you need to hear me say it in so many words when, according to you, there's hours of it sitting in your stream?

SOPHIE

I need to believe it.

JANE

Believe it, Sophie. Believe it.

Silence.

You haven't said how you feel.

SOPHIE

I told you. My finger hurts and my mom's an asshole and Agent Cullen died and no one, um, did anything, like it's a secret they're ashamed of or, or like an afterthought. Like he didn't matter enough to miss.

JANE

I meant how do you feel about me.

SOPHIE

(like it's been forced out of her:) Oh.

JANE

It only seems fair.

Silence.

SOPHIE

When I listened to those messages I felt like I'd been hit by a freight craft. I thought I knew where we were and it turns out we've been on the moons of Ios this whole time.

JANE

And?

SOPHIE

And I love you.

WAY TOO LONG OF A BEAT.

JANE

I can't—

SOPHIE

Will you just say something?

JANE

There could be a war tomorrow! I'm terrified, and you want—

SOPHIE

And it's not. Fair. If we have to fight the Others I could die for real. If we don't, or, hell, even if we do, I don't live here, Jane. I could handle all this when I thought I was the only one but you had to fucking leave those messages.

And like, okay, say it out loud, don't say it out loud. Just tell me whether you think we can actually be together, not some time in the future that might not fucking exist, not on vacation at the beach. Right now. I don't think anything else is guaranteed. And knowing what I know now, I can't just sit there and eat cereal with you in silence.

(almost despairing, almost to herself:) There's never enough time.

JANE

Sophie, *please*—

SOPHIE

So what do you think?

End music plays.

ELINOR LOPEZ

Thank you for listening to The Pasithea Powder. This was Episode Thirty-One: "The Words." Tune in next time to see *what Jane thinks*.

Jackie Hedeman was the voice of Sophie Green. Molly Olguín was Jane Gonzalez. Tim Briggs was George Moreau. Colin Killick was Agent Blanc, and Maganda Marie was Dr. Isabel Rowley. Qia Seed was the voice of Anders Li. Frank was played by Martin Geiger, and Anne D. Hedeman was the Medean Automated Voice. Narration by that song on the jukebox in the diner down south, and original music by Annie Moriondo.

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The Pasithea Powder was created by Bad Wine Productions.

Our heroines will return in our penultimate episode, Episode Thirty-Two: "Armistice."