

Breathing Space, contains mature content such as substance abuse, sexual situations and violence.

This episode contains mentions of death and trauma, family separation, divorce and alcohol use.

INT. STATION PERSONNEL BLOCK - DAY

AUTOMATED SYSTEM

The person you are trying to reach is not accepting calls at this time. Please record a message, starting with a two second pause. Say "send" when finished.

Answering machine starts recording.

ANTON

Hey, kiddo! Looks like I missed you again. You're probably sleeping, but I wanted to wish you a happy birthday! You're growing up so fast! I feel bad I won't be around for this one... again, but I sent you a present! I think your mom got it already, but I- I bet you'll really like it. Give me a call and let me know, okay?

Even though it feels like I'm all alone out here, it helps to look at the pictures and letters you've sent me. They really get me through the day. I'm happy to see they are teaching you all these cool things in school. I bet you know so much now. Maybe more than me.

I want you to know I miss you Aurora. I miss you so much. Daddy hopes to be home soon. I want to be there with open arms waiting for you when you wake up, to give you the biggest hug, but we'll have to wait a little longer.

What do we say? "Gone, but not so far away." Right? I'll let you get

back to your big day. You're
always in my heart kiddo. Love
you.

(voice breaking)
Send.

Answering machine stops recording. Anton sniffles and
cries.

ANTON
(crying)
Do you even notice I'm gone?

Instrumental intro plays and fades out.

INT. ARCTURUS STATION - THE RED EYE BAR - NIGHT

Plates, glasses and cutlery clatter continuously in the
background.

CONNOR HOLMES
(on red line, fading in)
...Our continuing coverage of the
trial of Elliemay Settlesdottir,
the former captain of the
Peregrination ship 'Settle for No
Bitter Compromise', a report
outlining revelations of the
number of possible victims fed to
what is being called "The
Mechanical Maw of Hell" was
entered into evidence.

Law enforcement officials provided
a cross-referenced list of
reported persons missing during
the time of the vessel's operation
against data pulled from its
navigational systems. The list is
the product of a three month
investigation into the number of
lives lost beyond those taken
amongst the crew.

Officials have not released the
list of victims to the public, but
anonymous sources put the number
at close to 30 persons in the last
year. Marshals contributed to the
speed at which the connections
were made after obtaining a

CONNOR HOLMES

(cont.)

personal log kept by one of the ship's engineers. Attempts to contact the former crew member have remained unanswered.

Bar stool slides out.

HOSS

(welcoming)

What can I get you?

ANTON

If you have Shoulda IPA, I'll take one of those.

HOSS

All out. Kinda hard to get that out here right now. We got a Ceres pale on tap if that's close.

ANTON

Sounds good. Could I get an order of humdingers, too?

HOSS

You bet. How many?

ANTON

Half dozen. Some of that sweet and sour sauce if you got it.

HOSS

Coming up.

Hoss walks to terminal, enters Anton's order.

ANTON

You know any place where I can find some short-term work? Passing through, but I could use some funds before catching another transport.

Hoss picks up glass, pours and serves

HOSS

Depends.

ANTON

On?

HOSS

If you have any ship
building-related skills.

ANTON

Not really looking for any skilled
labor. We're talking a week or two
max.

HOSS

Nothing off the top of my head
then. I wouldn't bother looking at
the moors then unless you had some
specialty. Heard they've been
looking for some additional
electricians for awhile now.

ANTON

Maybe something less specialized?

HOSS

Hmm. For that short a time, might
be able to find some runner work,
n' part deliveries. Slim chance,
but possibly the docks for
incoming and outgoing shipments.

ANTON

(worth a shot)

Tried that. I'll check around some
more then. Appreciate the
suggestions.

HOSS

Let me know if you need another.
Food'll be out in a bit.

Ivanhoe is talking to himself in a separate part of the bar
as Anton and Hoss are speaking.

CONNOR HOLMES

(on red line)

When questioned if she felt
remorse for the number of lives
taken-

IVANHOE

Remorse? Why do they think she
even cares?

CONNOR HOLMES

(on red line)

-during her time as leader of the crew, Settlesdottir said only that she was accountable for all things under her leadership. She declined to comment further.

IVANHOE

Or they could take it for what it clearly is! An admission!

Hoss wipes up and puts away cutlery as he speaks with Anton.

ANTON

(to Hoss)

Hey, what's that guy's deal?

HOSS

Not sure. Been here a spell. Figured he was waiting on some repairs to his ship because he ain't a local. Was mostly keeping to himself until he got a few in him.

ANTON

Not out of the ordinary for a bar. Did something set him off?

HOSS

He's just been stuck to the red line. If we were busy I'd have a talk with him, but he seems mostly harmless.

IVANHOE

(grumbles)

Like she didn't put us through enough already.

ANTON

(to Hoss)

What's been on?

HOSS

Trial coverage for the captain that did those terrible things a bit back.

ANTON

Big topic around here?

HOSS

(slightly laughing)

Heh, where ain't it? Everyone 'round here thought it'd be done by now, but been draggin' for months.

ANTON

Didn't realize anyone would still care. Person did something horrendous. Doesn't seem to be denying what they did. Open and shut to me.

HOSS

Not so easy given it's a (pause) Perrie matter, 'specially with it being so out of the ordinary with a Lawkeeper bringing in Rangers.

ANTON

Why not throw every book at her?

HOSS

Ain't a simple thing.

ANTON

(cynical)

Pfft. Never simple when it comes to the law.

HOSS

Shame it's been going on so long though. You can tell it's really affecting the people from the Enclave.

ANTON

Enclave?

HOSS

Section of the station the Perries at.

ANTON

Didn't realize there was a proper name.

HOSS

Locals don't think much of it, but a lot of station visitors act like all the horror stories they tell their kids about the Perries are true. A handful of 'em are committing atrocities, and they must all be.

(scoff)

Ignorance, plain an' simple.

IVANHOE

(indignant)

I do not understand why they persist in labeling her a part of the Family, when she chose to leave...

ANTON

It's a twisted way to look at things. Sadly, isn't the first place I've seen it going on lately.

HOSS

Oh?

ANTON

Vocal anti-Peregrination faction of the universe seems louder now, as if all their views were validated. People are saying the quiet thing out loud. Too many barstool reactionaries.

HOSS

(confirming)

We see Perries in here wondering if the trial is doing more harm than good with it in the public eye.

ANTON

Get a lot of Peregrination folks in here?

HOSS

Some. Ain't like they're restricted to the Enclave.

ANTON

Any trouble?

HOSS

'Round here? No, thankfully.

ANTON

(relief)

That's good.

Cooking noises in kitchen.

HOSS

(matter of fact)

Arcturus watches out for its own.
Always outliers, but either they
learn to leave or shut it, in
short order.

ANTON

Honestly surprised the Perries
haven't completely turned their
backs on the system. Me? I'd shut
myself away until all this shit
blew over. Hopefully there's at
least a little more caution on
their part.

HOSS

Couldn't blame 'em for it.

ANTON

Nope, heh. You hear anything about
how they're handling the ship?

HOSS

Few things, between the line and
customers.

ANTON

Anything solid?

HOSS

(not convinced)

Some constructive ones like giving
it to remaining crew or making it
a sort of waystation. Lotta lip
flappin' saying melt it down.

ANTON

People are still living on it?!

HOSS

Yeah, it's just sittin' out there
since they haven't made a call on
it. Can't say the whole crew is
there, but doubt it's small.

IVANHOE

(honestly confused)

Why would anyone drink beer this
bitter?

ANTON

(to Hoss)

Guess displacing a bunch of people
from their homes isn't a popular
thing to do. I say find them a
home, then send the cursed thing
into the Sun.

HOSS

So you're a flapper then.

ANTON

With a bit more panache than that.
I only mean there's a negative
stigma around it, whether you give
it a new coat of paint or not. The
last thing they need to do is turn
it into some sort of spectacle.

HOSS

Bigger minds than ours will decide
its fate.

ANTON

Can't argue with that.

Service bell rings.

HOSS

Food's up. Back in a sec.

Glass set on bar.

ANTON

Grab another too?

HOSS

Sure thing.

CONNOR HOLMES

(on red line, fading in)

Tune in to NNN for our continuing coverage of the trial of the Mother of Mulch as it happens. Live courtroom coverage begins at 8:00 AM standard time, followed by our special presentation, Compromised Horror-

Beer poured and served.

CONNOR HOLMES

(on red line)

-where myself and a panel of experts analyze the events of the trial. Until then, this is Connor Holmes signing off.

HOSS

(over red line)

Enjoy.

CONNOR HOLMES

(on red line)

Veronique MacNeal is up next with system-wide news.

ANTON

Thanks.

IVANHOE

(to Hoss and Anton)

You two! Yes, over there. I know you can hear me.

HOSS

(to Anton)

Leave 'em be.

ANTON

Planned on it. He can do whatever he wants. Over there.

HOSS

I'll be in the back. Call for Hoss if you need somethin'.

Kitchen doors open and close - Hoss enters the kitchen. Ivanhoe grabs his drink and sits next to Anton at the bar.

IVANHOE
(judgemental)
I said, I heard you talking about
me. That's rude, you know.

ANTON
(placating)
Didn't mean anything by it. Merely
asking the bartender why you were
ranting.

IVANHOE
(scoffs)
Ranting? I do not rant.

ANTON
(sarcastic)
Sure. What's riling you up to not
rant?

IVANHOE
(straight)
An acquaintance is in a spot of
well deserved trouble.

ANTON
Enough to be drinking alone in...
(realizes)
You don't mean to say you know...

IVANHOE
(insistent)
Shh. Shh. Shhhhh. Not so loud.

ANTON
(put out)
If you don't want anyone to hear,
why are you telling me?

IVANHOE
It's a slip of the tongue. Keep it
to yourself.

ANTON
(calling out)
Hey Hoss, can we get this guy some
water? He's speaking nonsense.
Could use some sobering up.

IVANHOE
Captain Ivanhoe Iveskin.

ANTON

What?

IVANHOE

That's my name. Ivanhoe.

ANTON

Okay, Ivanhoe. I'm Anton.

IVANHOE

Anton?

ANTON.

A name like any other.

IVANHOE

Tony is easier.

ANTON

(irritated)

No, it's not. God! Why does everyone- Did you need something? I'm getting ready to eat.

IVANHOE

Good. You shouldn't let anyone besmirch your name by calling you something less than what you'd require. To accept such is to take shortcuts and lessen what you've earned and deserve.

ANTON

Uh-huh...

IVANHOE

(straight)

I simply wanted to correct your impolite assumption that I'm of a dubious nature.

ANTON

(sarcastic)

Then excuse my behavior. Take a drink as an apology, Captain?

IVANHOE

(ignoring Anton's tone)

Adequate. Bring me a Martian whiskey.

Kitchen doors swing - Hoss walks into bar from kitchen.

ANTON
Give him what he wants, Hoss.

HOSS
(to Anton)
You sure?

ANTON
(sighs)
If it gets him to leave me alone,
by all means.

IVANHOE
You heard him.

Hoss pours a glass of whiskey for Ivanhoe and pushes it to him.

HOSS
(hesitant)
Here you go. Try to keep it down
will you?

ANTON
We good?

IVANHOE
(proud)
Your presumptuous opinion is
forgiven.

ANTON
(tired)
Then if you don't mind, I'll get
back to my plate.

Awkward silence. Anton starts to eat, sighing as Ivanhoe begins to speak.

IVANHOE
Have you ever been in a bad
relationship Anton? Not simply
bad, but bad... bad.

Anton places his fork on the plate.

ANTON
(heavy sighs, then to self)
Can't believe I'm going to engage.

ANTON

(annoyed)

While it wasn't one that started out bad, yes. Though I guess you'd say I'm the one accountable for it going sideways.

IVANHOE

(judging)

Disappointment is yours then.

(self righteous)

Nothing I did contributed to her... Ah. I have- I had no part in this current situation. The writing was on the wall, given how it all played out. A messy ending, but a correct one.

ANTON

Did you remain in contact after you split?

IVANHOE

She made her choice. One that was at the extremes for the Family, I should note. Isolating herself from everyone. If anything, she was reprehensible for abandoning her child.

ANTON

What did you mean she abandoned them?

IVANHOE

He made the decision to stay with me when she left. Elliemay chose to look at it another way.

ANTON

But was it a choice or a consequence?

Plates and cutlery are washed up, and stacked in the drainer.

IVANHOE

(flat)

That I do not know. I suspect a choice after she treated it as a betrayal.

IVANHOE

(cont., dismissive)

A child betraying their parents.
As if something so small and
uneducated would even be capable
of that.

ANTON

And was your kid young?

IVANHOE

(straight, but tripping up)

Young enough to know kids aren't
at fault for the actions of their
parents. If anything, parents owe
children to be... judicious? No,
prudent.

(to self)

Prudent.

ANTON

(agreement)

Judicious works. It would take
someone with rotten maturity to
walk away from a child. Especially
if they try to blame them for
making an impossible choice.

IVANHOE

(absolute belief)

A derelict sense of responsibility
to say the least.

ANTON

(reflective)

Heh.

IVANHOE

Did that strike a nerve?

ANTON

(trying to twist)

Sometimes it isn't as simple as
ducking responsibility. Sometimes
it's just poor decision making.

IVANHOE

(confused)

What makes a decision "poor"?

ANTON

Choosing your job over your family?

IVANHOE

I don't interpret that as a misjudgement. If you can't provide for your family, you are failing them.

ANTON

That's a pretty damned black and white way of looking at it. People's feelings aren't so absolute.

IVANHOE

You can't ignore what's in front of you. People aren't sustained on feelings. I would dedicate... did-did dedicate myself appropriately.

ANTON

Did you mean to project something there? Guilt?

IVANHOE

I can't be guilty if I did nothing wrong.

ANTON

There's nothing to fix in the relationship with your kid then? Took a parenting education course, passed it with flying colors, made no mistakes and left with no regrets?

IVANHOE

I did my parental duty. You teach children respect, and you show it to them when they earn it.

(sighs)

And you instruct them as to the rationality of what it means to be an adult. You prepare them for the world, not treat them with leniency. To do anything else is to do them a disservice.

Washing up stops.

ANTON

What, dole out discipline and then neglect their emotional growth?

IVANHOE

To the first, yes. To the second, not on purpose.

ANTON

That's a suffocating way to grow up. What about trying to build a relationship beyond a strict, structured life?

IVANHOE

Children need parents. Children do not need their parents to be their friends.

ANTON

(blunt)

Let me get this straight. You're saying it's okay to be there because of them, but not for them. That's cruel and irresponsible. Not to mention you're setting them up to fail when dealing with their own emotions without having the tools to do so. That's an important part of being an adult.

IVANHOE

You're mistaking your feelings for mine. Who's projecting now?

ANTON

Fine then. Let me tell you about my parenting experience, then you can interpret my feelings.

IVANHOE

Very well, in that case, barkeep? Another here?

Ivanhoe sets his glass down. Hoss pours another shot.

ANTON

Years ago, I ended up moving away from my family because of a job. My wife and my daughter stayed at home, as we decided that was for the best. It wasn't the ideal thing to do, but we knew we'd find a way to make it work.

IVANHOE

I don't see anything wrong with that.

ANTON

(under breath)

Of course not.

(back to normal volume)

When I left, our daughter was a toddler. She required tons of attention and was at that phase where she was a headache.

IVANHOE

Yes, I don't miss those days. So many interruptions.

ANTON

(agitated)

To say the relationship between me and my now ex-wife ended up strained is a fucking understatement. Nothing simple about the entire situation, but it boiled down to her accusing me of picking work over my family. At the time, it was a load of bullshit! Cassie blamed me for a lot of things, too many if you ask me. Not like I was rash about the whole damn thing. I wasn't the only person making the decisions.

(sighs)

To her credit, she made sure I was able to talk to Aurora, often. I was still part of her life, but I wanted to be there more.

IVANHOE

It sounds like you made an effort. Not as though you ran away.

Someone washes dishes by hand.

ANTON

(genuine)

No, but...raising a baby is hard. A part of me felt free of the burden. Liberated even. Not having to deal with all the shit that came with parenting.

(reflecting)

All the responsibility I shouldn't want to toss on someone else to deal with. Still hate that part of myself.

IVANHOE

(blunt)

Hmm, a reasonable reaction to the feeling of deserting one's duties.

ANTON

I'd comm as often as I could. Tried to talk as much as you can to a small child, but it wasn't enough. Took an embarrassingly long time for it to sink in just how big of a mistake I'd made. I was missing a lot of important things. I knew I could never make up for it! Felt like absolute fucking garbage about it.

IVANHOE

And what did you do to fix it?

ANTON

(mocking)

Fix it?! Hah!

IVANHOE

(serious)

Did you do anything?

ANTON

(cynical)

Wouldn't be a story about how shit of a parent I am if I did, would it? I failed my daughter by not being there. Even when I was physically there, I wasn't doing all that much for her.

IVANHOE

Allow me to revise my previous statement on you running.

ANTON

(serious)

About the time of my daughter's fifth birthday, everything went south. Only took two years of being away, but enough was enough finally.

IVANHOE

And you finally split up at that point?

ANTON

(forlorn)

Yeah. I was under some sort of delusion everything was going to be okay and I'd get a chance to make up for lost time. Was kidding myself. Only positive was I was still able to talk to Aurora.

I even fucked that up. Took it for granted. As time went on, we were able to talk less and less. First it was because of schedules. Then she was busy or asleep. I tried to be optimistic, thinking there was no way Cassie would keep me from her.

Washing up stops.

SCENE BREAK

INT. STATION PERSONNEL BLOCK - FLASHBACK

Anton speaks with Cassandra over the line.

ANTON
(pleading)
Cassie, would you please put
Aurora on?

CASSANDRA
(frustrated)
Why? So she can have yet another
reminder her father isn't here for
her?

ANTON
(hurt)
That's a low blow.

CASSANDRA
(blunt)
It's deserved.

ANTON
(defensive)
I'm not the one that made the
decision to break apart the
family. I tried everything-

CASSANDRA
(cutting Anton off)
Aren't you?

ANTON
You think I wanted to leave?

CASSANDRA
You decided to go to the other
side of the damned system. For
work. Like you couldn't refuse and
find something closer.

ANTON
Why do you keep trying to rehash
this? We both decided it was okay.
There were going to be issues.

CASSANDRA
There was also an expectation you
were going to come home. How many
times did you cancel?

ANTON
(raised voice, upset)
Because they kept-
(clears throat, sighs)

No. I'm not doing this again.

CASSANDRA

It's not even about our relationship anymore, Anton. You aren't here for Aurora. Do you think line conversations are good enough? She needs you here. She's gone years without seeing her father.

ANTON

I know.

(softer)

I know.

CASSANDRA

At this point I'm starting to think talking to you does more harm than good.

ANTON

(agitated)

There's no way you mean that! Especially after talking about how much I've missed. Go from saying that to suggesting not talking to me at all is somehow better?

CASSANDRA

She misses her father. You're not the one that sees it on her face when you miss a call. Or when she's showing something off she created. There's a stack of things on the table she's made for you.

(voice breaking)

It's heartbreaking.

ANTON

(ernest)

I want to be there Cassie. Truly. I requested a transfer for an open position last week that would get me closer. Couldn't you tell her I'm trying?

CASSANDRA

(straight)

I won't get her hopes up. If it actually happens, I will.

ANTON

Can I talk to her tonight then?
Please? It's been days. I've
already broken promises to her
doing that. Please don't make me
break another.

(pleading)

Please, Cassie.

CASSANDRA

(relenting)

I'm only letting you speak to her
this late because she's been
talking about you all day. Don't
make me regret it.

(to Aurora)

Honey, Daddy's on the line! Come
here!

(muffled)

Here she is.

ANTON

(Dad mode)

Hey kiddo! Sorry it's late. Mommy
and I had to talk. How was your
day? Really? I can't wait to hear
all about it...

SCENE BREAK

INT. ARCTURUS STATION - THE RED EYE BAR - NIGHT

IVANHOE

Did she end up deeming you a bad
influence on the growth of your
child?

ANTON

Probably.

IVANHOE

(absolute)

In that case, she made the correct
decision.

ANTON

(baffled)

You are something else, man.

IVANHOE
(ignores Anton)
My good sir! Pour me another!

HOSS
(concerned)
That's three in short order. You
sure?

IVANHOE
(sighing)
Do I look like a person who
miscalculates?

HOSS
Whatever you say. What's your
poison?

IVANHOE
I'm feeling adventurous. I'll have
a rum and a... Nebula cola.

HOSS
Don't have Nebula. New Galaxy
okay?

IVANHOE
(honestly confused)
Is there a difference?

HOSS
Coming up.

Ice scooped into glass.

IVANHOE
(to Anton)
Where was I?

ANTON
Ordering a drink.

IVANHOE
Yes, before that.

ANTON
Listening?

Drink poured and passed to Ivanhoe.

IVANHOE

(blunt)

Right, yes. I was judging you
silently. Please continue.

ANTON

(concerned)

You sure you're good? I haven't
even been here 20 minutes. Seems
like you're an eight on a scale of
10.

IVANHOE

I know my limits.

ANTON

Anyway, eventually Cassie cut off
all communications after something
happened at my job. But, it had
been sporadic at best before that.
Either the embarrassment of
knowing me or the potential
ramifications it could have on our
daughter's life made it really
easy to cut the final string.

IVANHOE

What happened at your job?

ANTON

Not something I want to get into.

IVANHOE

Is it relevant?

ANTON

It's not.

(pause)

The bigger issue is she up and
disappeared as far as I was
concerned. Learned she moved to
Luna some time after. I tried
reaching out several times, but
received nothing but silence in
return.

IVANHOE

Were you that... radioactive?

ANTON
(playing it down)
Eh, it gave me a reputation of
sorts.

IVANHOE
(straight)
Makes sense for her to do it then.

ANTON
(frustrated remembering it)
Well she was successful. No one in
our circle would tell me how I
could contact her. No family. No
friends. Hell, even Aurora's
school wouldn't tell me anything.

IVANHOE
How long since you've seen her
then?

ANTON
Six years now?

IVANHOE
Is that all?

ANTON
(exasperated)
Is that all?! That's a fucking
eternity for a child.

IVANHOE
There was little else you could
do. No use expending energy if you
can't hope to repair it. Given
you're here, asking about work, it
seems you made a decision. You
moved on.

ANTON
(agitated)
Are you insinuating I quit on my
kid? I didn't give up! I accepted
reality.

IVANHOE
(honest)
There is nothing wrong with
accepting the things you cannot
change.

ANTON

Hence when things go bad, you
bootstrap it and carry on?

IVANHOE

Yes. What good is dwelling on it?

ANTON

(upset)

You fucking hypocrite. What were
you doing when I came in then?

IVANHOE

(failed composure)

Working through a problem.

ANTON

(condescending)

Oh? And how's that going for you?

IVANHOE

(dismissing)

Fine. Fine. Simply venting a
little steam. It'll make you
irrational if you bottle it up.

ANTON

(smarmy)

Oh, so you do have feelings.

IVANHOE

(defensive)

Are you implying I don't-

ANTON

(snippy)

Don't have an emotional goddamned
bone in your body? Yeah! I am!

(pause)

Even an infallible person like you
can not live in a reality where
things are only right and wrong.
There is no wrong way to feel.
Much like there isn't one way to
be right.

IVANHOE

Then we agree.

ANTON
(confused)
Huh?

IVANHOE
We agree.

ANTON
(confused)
I'm lost. Did you suddenly sober
up?

IVANHOE
No. Feelings are... valid. The
problem is if you let them control
you. One cannot only move to life...
To- through life with only
feelings leading the way. We often
do, making snap decisions without
stopping to think. This leads to
regret and pain. But it can also
result in... blissful spontaneity.
It's about balancing this with
logic. Life's formula is not
solved with only one or the other.
We are a sum of our experiences.

ANTON
(pleasantly surprised)
Gotta say, that runs counter to
how you've presented yourself this
whole time.

IVANHOE
As previously established, your
evaluation of me is faulty.

ANTON
(serious)
Anyone ever tell you you're very
punchable?

IVANHOE
I've lost count. But don't change
the subject.

(pause)
Do I agree with your assessment of
parenthood? No. Did you do it
right? No.

ANTON
Please, don't hold back.

IVANHOE
(instructive)
You must remember. No one knows
with absolute... certainty? Clarity...
what's right in the moment.

ANTON
(obviously)
No shit. If we knew, we'd make the
right decision every time.

Ivanhoe swirls his glass, thinking. The alcohol begins to
affect his speech more than before.

IVANHOE
(hesitant)
Take what happened to my son. In
trying to keep him on the right
path, I was strict and acted with
purpose to raise him. In doing so,
some could argue I made mistakes.

ANTON
Even without knowing you, you did.

IVANHOE
(sighing)
I know the choices I made built-
built resentment towards me. It
eventually boiled over in spite of
my best intentions. So was my way
right? No, but it was the best I
could do at the time.

ANTON
Would you consider what you did,
or didn't do, a failure then?

IVANHOE
(somber)
Perhaps not in the long term, but
there were consequences.
Significant ones at that. I drove
them away.

(hurt, but stumbling on words)
I resist... res-

ANTON
(searching for words)
You...?

IVANHOE
(irritated)
Don't distract me. Respond? No.
What is it? Resile? What is the
word...

ANTON
Resemble?

IVANHOE
What?

ANTON
Resent?

Ivanhoe goes silent for a moment.

IVANHOE
(giving up)
...regret.

ANTON
(to Hoss)
Can we get some food maybe? Carbs.
Lots of carbs!

(to Ivanhoe)
Wait, did you say regret?

IVANHOE
(serious, but down)
You... you say you failed your
daughter.

ANTON
I did.

IVANHOE
(realization)
Your viewpoint is valid, but not
accurate.

ANTON
How do you figure that?

IVANHOE

(earnest)

Because you didn't drive your child away. As you have surmised by now, I am not an easy person to get along with.

ANTON

(sarcasm)

I hadn't noticed.

IVANHOE

(mournful)

My son and I disagreed. Often. You could say we never saw eye to eye. When he left... I said things. Our relationship became damaged. I thought, irreparably. I couldn't correct... I respected his point of view. Yes, feelings were hurt, but there were no falsehoods. No impulsive acts.

Rehashing the past is admitting wrongdoing. But there was nothing wrong in what I did.

(proud, yet regretful)

My son is a good person. Showed self-respect by standing up to me. Wasn't afraid to stick by his convictions and tell me I was wrong.

Ivanhoe picks up his glass, sighs and downs the last of his drink before setting it back on the bar.

IVANHOE

She might resent you, but she doesn't hate you. We fought. You and your daughter didn't.

ANTON

I doubt she even remembers me.

IVANHOE

(comforting)

Children will surprise you.

ANTON

(concerned)

You don't strike me as someone who surprises easily.

IVANHOE

My son reached out after a long, long absence. Through no suggestion or coercion on my part I might add. I thought it unlikely I would get another chance to be a family again. It makes me...

(lost in thought for a moment)

...happy.

(honest)

It's not easy for me. To put it that way. But what other way is there? A second chance was put in front of me after years of thinking rekindling this relationship was a lost cause.

(somber, losing composure)

I found myself thinking about our relationship, if I would repeat moments from our past. Do I carry on like nothing has changed? Do I apologize as an act of courtesy? Would I chastise him for being gone for so long? How odd would a warm welcome be from me? What even constitutes warmth from?

(upset)

Do you know one of the first things I said to my son when he contacted me?

ANTON

I'm sorry for being an asshole?

IVANHOE

(regret)

I told him I was afraid he was going to turn into his mother.

ANTON

That's a hell of a thing to say.

IVANHOE

(sad, but perking up a little)
Do you know what he did though?
Told me he was like his mother, in
a way. A moment hit me, as if that
fear was realized, until he said
something I wasn't expecting.

ANTON

...and that was?

IVANHOE

(wistful)
That he inherited her
stubbornness, a sense to do
whatever he set his mind to, in
spite of everyone else. And you
know what? My dread was replaced
with pride.

Proud to know if she screwed up
that badly and yet still was able
to teach our child something, then
all of my mistakes weren't for
naught. They could be learned
from. There was value in what I
did, even if it didn't look like
it in hindsight.

If I said something like that and
it still turned out alright, well
maybe not the best, but still good
enough, then you should do
whatever you need to do to be back
in your daughter's life. You can't
be any worse off.

ANTON

(straightforward)
...I'm sorry.

IVANHOE

(confused)
For what?

ANTON

For misjudging you. You're
challenging, you know that?

IVANHOE

So I've been told.

Anton picks up his fork of his plate.

ANTON
You never did tell me your son's
name.

IVANHOE
Crutchfield.

ANTON
(genuine)
Why don't you tell me a little
more about 'em?

(to Hoss)
Could we get another round over
here?

IVANHOE
Better make them water.

ANTON
(laughs)
You bet.

SCENE FADES OUT.

Thank you for joining us for
this episode of Breathing
Space.

This episode, Do You Notice
I'm Gone, was written and
directed by Jordan W.
Anderson, and edited by Amy
Young.

Anton Proctor is voiced by
Jordan W. Anderson
Hoss is voiced by Duke
Stuggs.
Captain Ivanhoe Ceesfather is
voiced by Quill Turner.
Cassandra Proctor is voiced
by Madi Opincaru.
Connor Holmes is voiced by
SockX.
With additional voice work by
Aubrey Akers.

Our theme, Blues for the
Black, was composed by
Michael Freitag with vocals
by Jeremiah and lyrics by
Scott Paladin.

You can find links to learn
more about our cast and crew
in the show notes and more
information about our show at
our website,
breathingspace.lawofnames.com

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