

Pre-roll

Jackie: Hi, this is Jackie Hedeman

Molly: And I'm Molly Olguín

Jackie: Together we are the creators of The Pasithea Powder, a queer, postwar, sci-fi thriller and love story.

Molly: Oooh, a love story.

Jackie: Oooh!

Molly: The episode you're about to listen to was created for the Apollo Creator Showcase 2022. It's a little taste of The Pasithea Powder, an alternate universe what-if.

Jackie: If you want to learn more, visit www.apollopods.com/powder

Molly: Let us begin.

A Passage

Garbled version of the Pasithea Powder introduction music, intercut with static. It turns into a beep like a TV test pattern. Then:

Beep.

Cullen taps mic.

AGENT CULLEN

Ongoing Report, Cullen, Raymond, QGC-90732. This record to be updated every hour until the hostile is recovered or upon contact with the hostile. I am currently in active pursuit of the hostile's last known vehicle trajectory. Looks like I'm headed back to Santa Pedra. I do not recommend an intercept at this time: Gonzalez has prioritized life in the past, but the hostile's reactions are unknown. Engagement in civilian areas is to be avoided until absolutely necessary.

Since I've got an hour-long flight ahead of me, a detailed summary follows. Talking things through never hurt anyone.

Gonzalez spent eight hours alone in a room with the hostile, administering a classified medical treatment to it. They were under observation the entire time, obviously, but the hostile species is known for tampering with the human mind. Maybe it messed with hers. It is unclear at this time if we can trust the cameras, or if the hostile was somehow able to influence them, too. At the end of the eight-hour period, Agent Michael Blanc entered the room. A few moments later, footage shows that he drew his weapon. A moment after that, Dr. Gonzalez appeared to take his weapon and shoot him point-blank in the head.

My team has independently verified that Blanc appears to have died of a gunshot wound, and not the mauling we would expect if the hostile had taken direct action.

Gonzalez and the hostile immediately fled the facility and stole a surface craft.

Blanc appears to be the only casualty at this time. Christ knows there might be more tomorrow.

My analysis: Whether Gonzalez is being psychically manipulated by the creature or simply emotionally manipulated by it, at this time she appears to be the more erratic party. Someone needs to go through Blanc's files ASAP and get us a proper psychological profile. Wherever they're going next, it's going to be somewhere relevant to Gonzalez.

Slight pause.

Yes, I have tried Captain Green. She hasn't been picking up.

Click.

Ring.

SOPHIE

Jane, I need you to know something. Are you screening my calls again? I thought we were over that. Like, I thought we'd figured out how to be friends again. Friends don't screen calls, Jane.

Anyway, I need you to know something. Well, two things. One: I'm a little drunk. The lights went out. I think it was a planned blackout. I lit some candles but it's still so dark in here. The emergency lights in the street have this purple glow and everything's just.

It reminds me of this club I used to go to, after Evelyn and I broke up the first time. He was still alive—he wouldn't be dead for a year—but I went to this club without him, flying free, and the whole time I was there I was just thinking of him. I must have kissed fifty people in that club but none of them were him. I didn't want to kiss anyone if I couldn't kiss him, but I did anyway because it's what I do when the light is like this and there's a beat.

I dug around for these candles and I found some good tequila, like really expensive tequila. I don't know who gave it to me. It's what I've been drinking.

I kissed fifty people in that club and none of them were Evelyn. I must have kissed fifty people since.

I want to kiss you. I think about it all the time. I think I thought about it all the time then, too, when the three of us were in high school and Evelyn and I were dating, and then when the three of us were in college and you and Evelyn were living together and Evelyn and I were on again off again and then afterwards, you were still living together and I was fighting the war and he hated me for it and sometimes I had these *dreams*. In these dreams, he didn't know that we weren't together any more. He would climb into my bed and I would smell his hair and...

I remember you walked in on us, in college. I was so embarrassed. Sometimes in those dreams you walked in on us again and you didn't leave and I wasn't embarrassed. Sometimes in those dreams you walked in and found me alone.

He loved us both so much, but you were his best friend. He would never let me have you, even if you wanted me the way I want you.

I miss him all the time. Sometimes I can't breathe with it. But he is. Gone.

I loved him and I wish he weren't dead, but part of me is glad that he is because I get to kiss you now.

That was the other thing I wanted you to know.

I know life is hard but would you look at this light? Life can be like this, too. Cool. Slow. Deep.

Will you kiss me, Jane?

Will you—

There is a knock on the door. Sophie groans.

SOPHIE

Go away!

There's another knock. More urgent.

SOPHIE

Okay, fine, fine. Fuck.

A bottle clinks.

The door opens.

SOPHIE

(completely surprised)

Jane? Oh my god, Jane! I was just. I'm talking to you.

JANE

I'm sorry. I'm...sorry. We didn't. This was the only place we could go.

SOPHIE

We?

EVELYN

Hi, Sophie.

SOPHIE

Evelyn?!!

What. How.

I think I'm gonna be sick.

Click.

Jane's voice fades in slowly. At first it sounds like she's saying, very muffled, Believe me. Believe me. But as it gets louder, we hear that she's actually saying "Sophie. Sophie."

JANE

Sophie!

SOPHIE

(uncertain, just waking up from a faint) Jane?

JANE

Are you back with us?

SOPHIE

I'm—Jane? What is *happening*?

JANE

I need you to tell me where you keep medical supplies. I didn't see anything in the bathroom.

EVELYN

I'm all right, just give her a second.

SOPHIE

(sounding nauseous again) Oh my god. This isn't real. This isn't happening.

JANE

This is real. This is happening. Now, I need you to help me, because Evelyn has a gunshot wound and I don't know what to do.

EVELYN

I'm barely grazed, Jane. It's basically just a cut.

JANE

(tense, high) I'm not a medical doctor, but I think you're supposed to do something better than shoving a throw pillow into a bullet graze!

SOPHIE

He's shot? Fuck. Let me up.

A rustle of clothing.

Medical supplies are under the bed. Go get them.

Where's the wound? Yeah, pull the fucking pillow away. Who shot you?

EVELYN

Ow!

SOPHIE

It's supposed to hurt when someone touches it, it's a bullet wound. Jane. Give me the—yeah, thanks.

EVELYN

OW.

JANE

Is he okay?

SOPHIE

He was right. It's not that bad. Whoever did this either had shit aim, or they weren't trying very hard.

EVELYN

(softly) It's good to see you, Soph.

SOPHIE

Don't move your arm.

(to Jane, level) I am gonna need an explanation here in a second, or I am going to start screaming. Hand me the medical glue. It looks like—yeah, a bottle of glue.

EVELYN

Honestly, I'm not very clear on what's going on either.

SOPHIE

I told you to hold still.

JANE

I brought him back. Does it matter how?

EVELYN

What do you mean, 'brought me back,' exactly?

SOPHIE

Yes.

JANE

I...I can't answer that right now.

SOPHIE

Sorry, but that isn't good enough!

EVELYN

Jane, are you all right?

JANE

Look, it's a—it's a really complicated question, with a really complicated answer, and I can't answer it because we don't have time! Fine, okay, is Evelyn all patched up? We need to get moving.

SOPHIE

Moving? Moving where?

JANE

Well, they're chasing us, obviously!

SOPHIE

Who is fucking chasing you!

EVELYN

The government. The Queensguard, I think.

JANE

Sophie, please. I promise I'll explain everything, but—but what you need to know is that I found him, I've got him, and there was no way we were going anywhere without you, and—we need to leave. Now. We've spent too long here already.

SOPHIE

Jesus fucking Christ, Jane. Even for you, this is—

EVELYN

Look, she's not lying about the government agents, the—the place we were in, it was—we do need to leave.

SOPHIE

So you just expect me to drop everything and, what? Go on the run with you?

JANE

Please.

I—I shouldn't have—you don't have to come with us. But we couldn't—we had to ask.

There's a ringing sound. Sophie's comms is going off.

JANE

Please don't answer that.

EVELYN

Sophie?

SOPHIE

Fuck. FUCK.

Do you have a ship, at least? Or are you expecting me to provide the ride?

JANE

I, I mean, if you—if you're sure.

EVELYN

Actually, I'm pretty sure they're already tracking our current shuttle. I think it's literally government issue.

SOPHIE

Are you fucking serious? Yes, fine, I'm sure! I have to go, because apparently if I don't, the two of you are toast.

JANE

Thank you.

SOPHIE

Shut up. Just—get ready to move when I say move.

Transition to:

Static, abruptly clearing up.

AGENT CULLEN

Ongoing Report, Cullen, Raymond, QGC-90732.

Per my request, agents on the ground in Santa Pedra did not engage with the hostile or Gonzalez in the heart of the city. I made decent enough time, and met B-team at the rendezvous point. Eight possible vessels were surveyed; the one Green chose is registered to George Perez, a romantic connection of her mother's. It's in the air, and should clear the atmosphere shortly. The tag is coming through loud and clear. I'm still in the ground transport, but A-team is prepping two stealth vessels now. I'm en route to the landing strip.

We'll get her. Preferably in empty space, with little to no collateral damage.

In the meantime, B-team just cleared Green's apartment. They found a bloodied pillow, a bloodied cloth, and an empty syringe. It's unclear at this time which of the three of them

sustained injuries, or how. Speculation: Green doesn't take surprises well. B-team took all potential biological evidence back to Santa Viola for analysis.

I'm coming up on the landing strip now. More later.

Click.

Fade up into gentle spaceship sounds.

SOPHIE

Computer, take us to flight sequence twenty-five.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Flight sequence initiated.

Sophie lets out a tired groan.

SOPHIE

I could really go for a drink right about now.

JANE

I think I saw a liquor cabinet back by the little kitchen thing.

SOPHIE

It's called a galley on a ship.

JANE

Your stepdad has really good taste. Some of those labels had the blue seal on them.

SOPHIE

He's not my stepdad, he's just some guy my mom is seeing. And I shouldn't. Not until we get to Eiko.

EVELYN

You said it would be days. You're not going to have a drink for days?

SOPHIE

What's so weird about that?

EVELYN

It just doesn't sound like you.

SOPHIE

It doesn't? (*Beat.*) Okay, I've been patient—*more* than patient—and they're probably gonna have my captaincy for this so could one or both of you please tell me what the fuck is going on?

JANE

I think *I* need a drink for this.

SOPHIE

Well, fine, you know where everything is.

Footsteps start to fade off.

But you're not getting out of this conversation! I know all the good hiding places on an M-class vessel! Don't test me!

Silence.

EVELYN

I'm glad you're getting along.

SOPHIE

What?

EVELYN

I often wished you would.

SOPHIE

You wished we would what?

EVELYN

Be closer. There was always this tension between you and sometimes I thought you put up with each other for my sake. I thought that was sad, because you really have a lot in common.

SOPHIE

We have nothing in common. Just you.

EVELYN

Shows what you know.

Sophie laughs despite herself.

SOPHIE

Anyway, that's not what the tension was.

EVELYN

No?

SOPHIE

No.

EVELYN

Ah.

SOPHIE

Look...

Pause.

I don't know what's happening here, and frankly I'm expecting to wake up at any second, and also I'm just, my brain is just, *distressed*, because I look at you and it's, like, *normal*. More normal than anything has ever been in my life.

EVELYN

Yes. Sophie—

SOPHIE

Let me finish. But at the same time it's like watching a shark swim backwards. Or, no, not that, that's *too* off and you're...you're just... Maybe it's because time has passed and I tried to, like, seal off that part of my heart, the part that misses you all the time. Maybe I shouldn't have done that because maybe I don't remember you right. Because you're just. A little. Off.

I think I'm dreaming.

EVELYN

You're not dreaming.

SOPHIE

Evelyn, I feel like. I mean. Something is *wrong*. (*rhetorically*;) What are we doing here?

EVELYN

You're flying us to Eiko. Some kind of independent stronghold, you said.

SOPHIE

It was two years ago at least. I don't know what we'll find.

EVELYN

Forget about that for now. Just. Lean on me.

SOPHIE

What?

EVELYN

You're tired. You've been working so hard. You can lean—

SOPHIE

What the fuck are you saying?

EVELYN

Sophie, what's wrong?

SOPHIE

This is not how you. This is not how we were, together. And you know that.

EVELYN

It's going to be okay.

SOPHIE

Oh my God, you're an Other.

EVELYN

What's an Other? Sophie—

SOPHIE

You're a fucking Other, I knew it.

Footsteps approaching.

SOPHIE

Jane?! Jane! What the fuck did you do? Why is he—*what* is he and what is it doing on my ship?

EVELYN

Excuse me, I am not—

SOPHIE

Shut up, Jane's talking now.

JANE

I didn't have a choice. Agent Blanc was going to kill him. I just.

Look at him!

SOPHIE

I am looking at him! Is this what you thought he was?

JANE

Sophie—

SOPHIE

No, that's it, you're going to turn yourself in. He threatened you. He made you come to me. I was a perfect mark and went along with it but what else is new? We turn ourselves in, we hand him over, none of this ever happened.

JANE

He didn't threaten me.

SOPHIE

Yes. Jane. He—

JANE

No. There were witnesses. I killed Agent Blanc. I took Evelyn.

SOPHIE

That thing is not Evelyn!

JANE

He is as close to Evelyn as we're ever going to get again and I brought him to you!

Silence.

JANE

We can't go back.

Transition into:

Spaceship noises. When Sophie speaks, she sounds flat, tired.

SOPHIE

We're gonna need to refuel in about two hours. Jane, can you check the chart and tell us what our options are?

JANE

Okay. Where is it?

SOPHIE

What do you mean, where?

EVELYN

It's this thing here.

He presses a button.

EVELYN

This little dot is us, and the nearest stations are the pink dots here, here and—

SOPHIE

What are you fucking talking about. That's not how you—those are the major arteries, and we're on the run. We're not going to any of those stops. Do neither of you know how to read a star chart?

EVELYN

I was never the navigator on my crew. I could fly for a while, though, if you wanted to take a break—

SOPHIE

Absolutely not.

JANE

I've only been in a spaceship twice before. Once when Blanc transported me to Santa Viola—and I spent most of that trip being sick in the bathroom—and once in third grade when we took that tour of the HMS Asimov.

EVELYN

Oh, I remember that! Angie Patel put gum in your hair.

JANE

Oh god, I forgot about that. We had to spend the whole lunch break with you—

EVELYN

Holding ice to the gum trying to get it to be less sticky so we could peel it out! I felt like I was practicing for torture later in life. How long can you hold an ice cube in your fist before you spill state secrets?

JANE

It didn't even work! My mom had to cut it out when I got home, and then I had a random bald patch on the back of my head for weeks.

EVELYN

Little miss baldy! It looked like a coin slot where you could put spare change.

SOPHIE

Okay, we are not doing this.

EVELYN

Not doing what?

SOPHIE

I spent six years watching the Jane and Evelyn show, and I'm not going to spend this entire fucking roadtrip listening to the two of you reminisce about the sweet days of your youth.

JANE

Sorry.

EVELYN

Should we reminisce about the sweet days of *our* youth? Do you remember that time in tenth grade when Jane made us break into the chemistry building on the weekend so she could finish her group project without—

JANE

The alarm wasn't even hooked up to anything! No one got in trouble!

SOPHIE

(Grudgingly) Yeah, but you weren't the one stuck half-in, half-out of a window when the alarm went off.

JANE

Oh no I forgot about that part.

EVELYN

I remember it vividly. Your hips couldn't *quite* clear the frame...

JANE

Mr. Friedman would have given us permission if he'd known I wanted to get into the building, and I stand by that.

SOPHIE

Mr. Friedman was desperate for you to get a life.

JANE

He wrote my recommendation for Rowley's lab!

EVELYN

Didn't he also try to argue you into taking a gap year?

JANE

He told everyone to take a gap year!

SOPHIE

Yeah, everyone he thought was on their way to burning out at eighteen.

JANE

Little did we know.

Beat.

SOPHIE

Look. Do you want to learn how to read a star chart?

EVELYN

Yes, please.

SOPHIE

Jane, do you want to learn how to read a star chart?

EVELYN

Why can't I learn?

SOPHIE

You're an unknown quantity.

EVELYN

No, I'm not, I'm—

SOPHIE

I don't know you.

JANE

Yes, you do.

EVELYN

Is now a good time for that explanation, *Jane*?

SOPHIE

I—I mean, yes, I guess I fucking do know you, but—

EVELYN

Sophie? You're—bleeding.

SOPHIE

Oh. Huh.

JANE

Tilt, tilt your head back. Pinch your nose, um—Evelyn can you get me a tissue, or—

SOPHIE

(with a pinched nose) I've had a nosebleed before, *Jane*.

JANE

Just—here, I've got it.

SOPHIE

(nose still pinched) Are you seriously planning on pinching my nostrils shut yourself until the bleeding stops?

JANE

No! Just—do you get nosebleeds? Are they common in space?

EVELYN

(reading) Altitude and change in air pressure affects nasal mucosa and cephalid fluid shifts. It's part of the Space Adaption Syndrome.

SOPHIE

Are you checking your stream right now? Put that away, we're on the fucking run! Jane, you can let go.

JANE

Okay...okay.

SOPHIE

I'm gonna rock the world's sexiest look, like God intended, and shove this tissue up my nostril.
(A deep inhale.)

EVELYN

Be still my heart.

SOPHIE

Okay. Everyone who wants to learn how to navigate a spaceship, get over here.

Spaceship sounds swell.

Ring.

Ring again. The hum of the spaceship returns. The ringing continues under the following:

SOPHIE

Oh fuck.

JANE

Who is it?

SOPHIE

Agent Cullen.

EVELYN

Are you going to answer?

JANE

Is she going to *answer*?

SOPHIE

I might be able to get some sense of— Maybe he doesn't know I'm gone.

JANE

Sophie.

SOPHIE

Pipe down.

She picks up.

SOPHIE

Cullen. To what do I owe the pl—

AGENT CULLEN

Captain Green, this is no time for charm. You will turn your stolen ship around right now. You will dock at Base 3 and you will surrender Dr. Gonzalez and the hostile to the Queensguard.

SOPHIE

(not even trying to be convincing)

Did Mom's boyfriend call you? I just took his ship to see how it handled. I was sure I told him. Oops.

AGENT CULLEN

Don't feign ignorance, Captain Green. I am offering you amnesty, but only if you turn the ship around in the next five minutes.

SOPHIE

Will she be safe?

AGENT CULLEN

I... Yes.

SOPHIE

I don't believe you. Well, it's been nice chatting, Cullen.

AGENT CULLEN

Sophie—

SOPHIE

This is all really interesting, but I don't know where they are.

AGENT CULLEN

They're with you right now, or at least the hostile is. We're tracking it.

SOPHIE

...oh?

AGENT CULLEN

Can they hear me right now?

SOPHIE

No.

AGENT CULLEN

The hostile isn't safe, Captain Green, and Jane Gonzalez has made a serious error. Turn your ship around now and—

Click.

SOPHIE

Jane, take the wheel.

JANE

What??

SOPHIE

All you have to do is sit here and yell if any lights start blinking. *You.* Get on the ground.

EVELYN

What?

SOPHIE

He's got a tracker in him. Jane, where would that be?

JANE

Oh my God.

SOPHIE

Jane! Where??

JANE

The, um, just under the collar bone, on the right, probably. If you shine a, um—

SOPHIE

Got it. Okay, buddy, I'm gonna sit on you right here, like this. And you're gonna hold my thighs like—yeah, exactly like that.

EVELYN

Why?

SOPHIE

Hold on tight. I'm going to cut this thing out of you.

EVELYN

WHAT?

SOPHIE

Deep breath.

EVELYN

Where did you get that knife?

SOPHIE

I said take a deep breath. It sits in a decontamination sheath, and afterwards we'll patch you up. You're gonna be fine. *(beat)* Ready?

EVELYN

No.

SOPHIE

Evelyn. Look at me.

Are you ready?

EVELYN

No. But go. I trust you.

SOPHIE

Deep breath.

Evelyn shouts.

SOPHIE

There it is.

EVELYN

Shitting! Fuck! Fuck, shit, balls!

SOPHIE

(softly, like talking to a spooked horse)

There it is. There it is. You're okay.

Evelyn is breathing hard.

SOPHIE

I've got you.

JANE

(overwhelmed)

Oh my god.

Spaceship sound swells.

Nighttime sounds, whatever that is on a spaceship. The rustle of cots. After dark convo vibes:

SOPHIE

I switched on Anchor Mode, right?

JANE

You're sure it's safe to let the autopilot drive while the Queensguard is pursuing us?

SOPHIE

There's a setting on this thing that alerts you to any ships within a generous radius. I think George and his pals use it so they can drink and fly.

EVELYN

The best thing is for all of us to rest up and live to fight another day.

SOPHIE

Everyone comfortable?

JANE

Yes.

EVELYN

Yeah.

SOPHIE

Night.

Brief silence.

EVELYN

Actually, no. Jane. What the fuck is going on?

JANE

Excuse me?

EVELYN

I've been letting adrenaline fuel me ever since I woke up, and I don't actually think I want to go to sleep without knowing what is happening. To me, and you, and—well, Sophie's along for the ride! Why did you kill that man! Why did you—

JANE

Evelyn.

EVELYN

What is going on?

SOPHIE

He's got a point. I'll turn the lights back on.

JANE

No.

EVELYN

"No" don't turn the lights back on, or "no," you're not going to explain?

JANE

Leave the lights off.

I don't know how to say any of this. I don't know if I can.

Sophie takes Jane's hand.

SOPHIE

I don't believe there's anything you can't explain.

EVELYN

Are you holding hands?

SOPHIE

And?

EVELYN

Okay, I guess...maybe things have changed? Since I saw you last? Which was when? It's obvious I'm missing things. What, exactly, am I missing?

JANE

(dodging) Well, the war is over. You can be happy about that.

EVELYN

What??

SOPHIE

(tersely)

We lost.

EVELYN

Oh.

JANE

It was my fault. Sort of.

EVELYN

...What?

JANE

I mean, I was one person partially responsible for triggering a cascade of events that ultimately led to a cessation of hostilities, but. Yeah.

SOPHIE

The other thing you should know is that a horde of shapeshifting cannibal aliens walk among us. Casual, right? As though it weren't enough trying to return to some kind of normal life.

JANE

We don't know that the whole species are cannibals. We have a limited sample size.

EVELYN

What?

SOPHIE

Oh and you're dead.

EVELYN

What the fuck does that mean?

JANE

Evelyn—

EVELYN

I mean, was I in a coma? Or was I—Was I *brought back*, oh my god, am I a government experiment? Jane, did you resurrect me? Am I a Frankenstein now? Oh sweet Christ, I knew Rowley was dragging you into some controversial therapy stuff but I didn't think it would end in the actual zombie apocalypse—wait, am I a zombie?

SOPHIE

You're not a fucking zombie, you're one of the shapeshifting aliens, and obviously for some reason Jane thought it would be fun to try and pass you off as...*you*, only, sorry, but you're not. Sorry.

JANE

That's not true.

EVELYN

What's not true?

JANE

You're you. You're you as I remember you.

EVELYN

You gave me Pasithea.

SOPHIE

How do you even fucking know about Pasithea?

JANE

(sharply) He lived with me while I was developing it. Obviously I talked to my best friend about my work.

EVELYN

You...convinced me? Original me? Some other me? The owner of this body? That he was Evelyn Glass.

JANE

I didn't do it for fun! I was experimenting on an Other for the Queen. Under direct royal command. The treatment worked. It worked, Evelyn. I know it's awful, but once we began, someone was going to die. Either the alien was going to leave that room, or you were. I chose you. I'd do it again.

EVELYN

Oh. Oh wow. Oh WOW. Jesus Christ. You're saying I'm wearing the body of the person you killed so I could live.

JANE

Yes.

EVELYN

Why? Why would you do that?

JANE

I didn't—I barely had a choice.

EVELYN

When we talked about the trolley problem back in middle school I didn't think you'd take it this far.

SOPHIE

It's because she's in love with you.

JANE

Sophie, seriously?

EVELYN

Uh—

JANE

Obviously I love you! You're my best friend, and you're more important to me than anyone else, so, obviously I love you, I don't know why we're talking about it.

EVELYN

Hey, hey. You know I love you. I don't know if I'd kill someone for you, or how I feel about you doing that for me, but that's never going to change.

SOPHIE

And how do you feel about me?

EVELYN

You know how I feel about you.

SOPHIE

Jog my memory. When I left that last time, and I told you that if I wanted someone to explain everything I'm doing wrong with my life, I'd date our chemistry teacher, how did you feel about me then?

EVELYN

I have a ring. Had. A ring. I don't know who ended up with my stuff. It's antimony. I got it from that shop downtown with the cat in the window. That's how I felt about you.

Long pause.

SOPHIE

No you didn't.

EVELYN

Is it so hard to believe?

SOPHIE

(gathering herself)

I don't know what's going on in that brain of yours right now. I don't know if there's even a brain in there. But trust and believe, the Evelyn I knew would never buy a ring for me. He didn't do stuff like that. He liked to watch me work out and go out to eat and argue all the time and he wasn't that complicated. He liked my dick up his ass and he liked breakfast in bed. It wasn't going to last forever. Not with me.

JANE

What are you *talking* about? I spent literal years watching the two of you break up and get back together and break up and come back to each other in spite of taking different sides on a literal war, and you're saying—what are you even *saying*?

SOPHIE

I mean, good job, Jane. He looks like him, and he sounds like him, but the way he looks at me is a lie. We both know who he was going to spend the rest of his life with, and it wasn't me. I don't know how the two of you would have spent the decades—probably together in your library making out and getting actual fucking doctorates in actual fucking disciplines and changing the world and just being, like, friends who loved each other so much you can't even look at it. You had to concoct this version of him instead.

JANE

How can you think that? You can't honestly believe Evelyn ever—when you were right there, the whole time?

EVELYN

Sophie, none of that is true. That's not how Jane and I are—if I'd known you felt this way, I would have—we could have talked about it. We should have talked about it.

SOPHIE

(in pain)

We *did* talk about it.

EVELYN

What? No, that never—I would remember that.

SOPHIE

You think I would talk about this in front of Jane? That's the only way you'd know about it. If she fed it into your brain. And she never knew. Why would she? I didn't want her to.

JANE

So maybe you talked about it. That doesn't mean that's how he felt. He loved you, Sophie. I was there, I saw—I helped him pick out the fucking ring. Do you know how many times we talked during the war? How many times I had to pick up the pieces of Evelyn Glass after the two of you broke up and he thought maybe you'd never talk again? It's a fundamental fact of the universe. Fire is hot. Chlorophyll is green. Oxygen is required for life. And Evelyn loves you.

EVELYN

Stop talking about me like I'm not here.

Sophie gets a nosebleed.

SOPHIE

Oh Jesus, I'm, I've got another—nosebleed. Hand me the. Thanks.

EVELYN

Is this normal? Here, Soph—tilt your head back.

SOPHIE

(tearing up)

Nothing about this is normal.

EVELYN

Jane?

SOPHIE

I've got it. You can let go.

JANE

I don't know. I. I don't know. It could be—but I don't know.

EVELYN

(very calm) Okay. Look. There have been a lot of bombs dropped tonight, and I don't know how to feel about any of them. This isn't the kind of thing you figure out with a confession and a hug, okay? This is a—put it in a box and deal with it when we have access to tea or therapy or puppies kind of thing.

SOPHIE

I actually saw a box of tea in the kitchenette.

EVELYN

Soph—

SOPHIE

Yeah. You're right. Sorry.

EVELYN

Anyway, the past is subjective. We can't ever really know what it was like, because we're not there anymore. It's gone.

JANE

The only thing we have is what's right here, right now.

EVELYN

Right. So. I'm alive. You're alive, Sophie's alive. We're in a spaceship, and we're being chased by the Queensguard. What comes next? Where are we going?

SOPHIE

To Eiko still; given the entire universe there's no way they knew we were going there.

EVELYN

Do you need to change the autopilot?

SOPHIE

It's already programmed in. I don't start flying if I don't have a destination in mind.

EVELYN

Sure. Okay. That makes things simpler. Then I think we should all lie back down and get some shuteye. Can we do that?

Yeah. Fine.

SOPHIE

Jane?

EVELYN

I'm. I need to do some reading.

JANE

Really?

EVELYN

Really.

JANE

Okay. Will you come lie down when you're done?

EVELYN

Yes.

JANE

Swear?

EVELYN

Yes.

JANE

All right. Good night.

EVELYN

Spaceship sounds transition into:

A loud docking bay. Clanging. Hissing. Far-off unintelligible shouting.

I thought the plan was *not* to be noticed.

JANE

No one's paying attention to us here. It's just a place to refuel.

SOPHIE

JANE

Everyone here is wearing coveralls and flight jackets. Evelyn and I stick out like sore thumbs.

SOPHIE

I wouldn't have chosen this spot unless I thought it was safe. People here know how to not notice; it's better for them in the long run. Plausible deniability. Plus you look amazing.

JANE

My hair is a disaster.

SOPHIE

It's just bedhead. I think it looks...

JANE

Yes?

SOPHIE

Hot.

JANE

Sophie!

SOPHIE

Look, really quick while Evelyn's inside, when you came and got me I was in the middle of leaving you a message.

JANE

I never got it.

SOPHIE

I never sent it. Because you and Evelyn barged in and things, well, I thought things were, I mean, there was the status quo and then there was a completely different status quo and I wanted to give myself time to see if.

JANE

What are you saying?

SOPHIE

(she steadies herself)

In the message I was leaving, I said that I was glad that. That.

JANE
(gently)

What is it?

Evelyn strolls into the conversation.

EVELYN

Did you know they sell mini flan here?

He plants a mwah kiss on Sophie's cheek.

Mwah!

SOPHIE

Oh my fucking god.

EVELYN

It's flan to go! We could buy some, right?

SOPHIE

You got my cheek all wet! Why—

Evelyn kisses her on the mouth.

SOPHIE

Oh. Evelyn.

EVELYN

Sorry. You looked. I had to kiss you.

JANE

(like a bucket of water on the proceedings)

There's food on the ship.

EVELYN

...am I interrupting something?

JANE

No, no.

We can't buy flan. We should save our money.

I'm going back to the ship. I'll let you know when it's full.

She leaves.

EVELYN

She's jealous.

SOPHIE

(duh)

Yeah.

EVELYN

Of me.

Beat.

SOPHIE

Oh, fuck it. Yeah. You know what? She probably is. Hell, I'm jealous of you. I'm jealous of her. I'm jealous of myself. It's like for years we were splitting this pizza with poorly distributed toppings three ways and no one was getting what they want.

Sometimes I want her so much I can hardly see. Every time I think of you I remember what it was like to be in bed with you. And I would give anything to feel like the person you loved again.

EVELYN

You think it isn't mutual?

SOPHIE

I don't know, sometimes I'm sure it is. Like, she'll look at me, and... But I never know what to believe from Jane.

EVELYN

That's not what I meant.

I think you're right. I think as long as we're trying to split the pizza, we'll never be happy with what we have. But what if we were to...share the pizza?

SOPHIE

I know I started the pizza thing but that needs to stop. If you're saying we should all fuck each other, just say that.

EVELYN

Yes, but it would have to be more than that, I think. Do you remember the day we sat in Verde Park?

SOPHIE

No.

EVELYN

I think the three of us stand a chance. I remember it.

Sophie gets a massive nosebleed.

SOPHIE

Not this again. Oh fuck.

EVELYN

That looks really bad.

SOPHIE

It was worse that time Irma punched me in the nose.

EVELYN

It's—maybe you shouldn't be talking. Here, sit there. Tilt your head back. I'll get Jane.

SOPHIE

What is Jane going to—

EVELYN

Don't talk!

He scampers off. Sophie's comms start ringing.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Incoming call from Agent Cullen.

SOPHIE

(she groans)

Decline it.

AUTOMATED VOICE

The function “deck light in” is not available. Incoming call from Agent Cullen.

SOPHIE

(trying to enunciate)

Decline. Oh, god, why is it so...slippery...

AUTOMATED VOICE

Accepting call.

Sophie hisses like yikes.

AGENT CULLEN

Captain Green?

Captain Green?

My comms indicate that we are connected. Can you hear me?

SOPHIE

I can't talk, I'm. What is it, Cullen?

AGENT CULLEN

You removed our ability to track you, and I'm sure you're aware, which means that I should have washed my hands of you, only I thought you should know: we analyzed the syringe found at your apartment.

SOPHIE

Syringe?

AGENT CULLEN

There was a syringe found at your apartment with human blood on the needle. The syringe itself contained traces of Pasithea. Jane Gonzalez dosed you.

Silence.

I'm guessing this is news to you.

Jane Gonzalez illicitly dosed you, Captain Green, and you had no idea. Are you still willing to risk everything for her, or will you turn around now?

Silence.

Captain Green?

Silence.

Captain Green.

Click.

Spaceship door opening; the sound of the inside of the spaceship fades back up. Evelyn and Jane are talking when Sophie returns.

EVELYN

—started bleeding again, and I don't think it's normal.

SOPHIE

What's going on, Jane?

JANE

What do you mean?

SOPHIE

You dosed me?

JANE

(obviously lying) I don't know what you mean—

EVELYN

Jane, she has a right to know.

JANE

That is categorically false.

SOPHIE

What are you fucking talking about?

JANE

Sophie, there are things I can't tell you. I have been—I have been clear about that, haven't I? You trusted me before. You asked me to give you Pasithea.

SOPHIE

Yeah, but—I mean, a, I don't remember that, and b, you're telling me you gave me Pasithea again? Like, yesterday?

EVELYN

She did.

JANE

Evelyn, *stop*. You have no idea what you're doing, and you have no idea what the consequences might be.

EVELYN

What are you talking about, there are already consequences! Her brain's been bleeding out her nose since last night, and you're telling me there's no—

SOPHIE

My permission is fucking revoked, tell me what the fuck you did to me. Both of you.

EVELYN

Yesterday, we knocked on your door.

JANE

Evelyn—

EVELYN

You opened it, you saw my face.

JANE

You are ruining everything, you—

EVELYN

And you shot me.

SOPHIE

What?

EVELYN

I didn't get shot leaving the compound, Sophie, I was shot outside your apartment. You almost shot Jane.

SOPHIE

This was me?

JANE

It was supposed to be temporary! Just to—you weren't listening, Sophie, and I was worried he'd—I just needed you to believe me. I needed you to listen to me for long enough to get us out of there, and I had the syringe, and you had a *gun*.

SOPHIE

So you fucking drugged me? You took another memory away from me?

JANE

No, I didn't—I knew I could make you listen if I had an hour, but we didn't have an hour. I needed you to let us in, and I needed you to put down the gun. I just—I made you believe me.

SOPHIE

I'm gonna be sick.

JANE

It was a tiny dose, it shouldn't have—it should have bought me three minutes, that's it. I don't know what went wrong, exactly, but—I—you were dosed with Pasithea before. We haven't done the kind of testing that—I didn't mean to, Sophie.

SOPHIE

I know you didn't mean to.

EVELYN

Bullshit. Are you hearing this?

SOPHIE

What?

EVELYN

Every single thing she says, you agree with her.

SOPHIE

Come on, that's obviously untrue. I disagree with Jane about everything, all the time.

EVELYN

Jane, tell Sophie something untrue. Tell her the sky is green, or that humans breathe carbon monoxide or something.

JANE

I. I love dogs?

SOPHIE

So? What's that supposed to prove? Jane changed her mind about dogs, so what?

EVELYN

Yesterday, Jane shot you up with Pasithea and gave you exactly one instruction.

JANE

It was supposed to last three minutes. This *shouldn't have happened*.

SOPHIE

What did you tell me?

JANE

I told you to believe me.

Long pause.

SOPHIE

Wow. Well. I have to hand it to you, Jane. You single handedly found a way to stop all those religious free will arguments in their tracks. Great job. Kudos! Maybe there's another doctorate in it for you!

JANE

Sophie, I'm sorry. I—

EVELYN

Shut up. You do not get to speak another word. Not if you're going to make declarative statements that Sophie has no choice but to believe, possibly at the expense of a genuine brain bleed. If you have something you really need to say, you type it into that console and I'll read it.

SOPHIE

Okay, okay. It's gonna make for an awkward life, but okay. Unless you have a better long term fix for this?

EVELYN

Jane? Is there a way to fix this?

The sound of typing.

SOPHIE

Oh my God, here, let me make things easier. Jane's gonna say something about how the science is still out on blah blah blah who cares, Evelyn is going to fire back with a toasty zinger about how she should have thought about this before she woke up that morning. *Don't* look at me like that, Jane, I spent long enough listening to the two of you flirt.

EVELYN

(reading) This has never happened before, not that Jane knows about. Rowley might have known a way. The rest of the conspiracy might know a way. But they're back on Cassandra, and we can't go back without losing Evelyn.

SOPHIE

I mean, yeah, obviously we're not going back. What if she just gave me Pasithea again and told me to disregard her previous order? Generals do it all the time.

Furious typing.

EVELYN

Sophie, I think if it's a matter of saving your life, you should let the people who know what they're doing treat you. Jane is—a genius, but clearly this is above our paygrade.

SOPHIE

What are you saying?

Jane makes an urgent sound. Evelyn reads:

EVELYN

Jane says "There is no Pasithea cure. I made a mistake. This is irreversible without a lab and a hospital. You have to go back, or it could get worse."

Sophie...

SOPHIE

Okay, well, that's not happening, so you're gonna have to come up with something else.

Typing sounds.

EVELYN

What does "get worse" even mean in this context? Is she going to die? Is her brain going on the fritz? Is she going to—yes, fine, type faster.

Jane makes another frustrated noise.

EVELYN

(Reading): She says "We don't have a choice. I didn't want to think this was a side effect. But I think Evelyn is right. You need to go back. And he can't. I don't know what getting worse means, but I have seen things I wouldn't wish on my worst enemy, let alone you. I'm scared."

SOPHIE

You're *scared*? I have to go back? I didn't ask for any of this! It's not fair. I just got you back.

She kicks something.

Fuck!

EVELYN

I didn't ask for any of this either. I mean—literally, I'm an idea Jane had. "I" don't exist, except that now I do. I mean—from a bird's eye view, I guess, this is an improvement? Yesterday I was gone. I mean, maybe there's an afterlife, but I don't think so, so—I'm here, when I wasn't. If we can't see each other—you remember that encryption key I gave you, right? Maybe we could still...call each other? Leave messages? Is that too old school?

SOPHIE

I'm not surprised you're suggesting it; it's exactly what Jane would do. You weren't gone, Evelyn, you were dead. And I know you know that, because at first you asked about it a lot, and then you kind of stopped, almost like Jane didn't want to talk about it, and so neither did you. I'm shocked you're not having nosebleeds.

EVELYN

I mean, who knows if I even have a nose. This is all astral projection, right?

JANE

That is absolutely not what's—

EVELYN

Jane!

JANE

No, I can't—you need to understand that—

Evelyn muffles Jane with his hand.

EVELYN

No absolutes. You can talk, if you don't say anything absolute. I don't think you can do it, but hey, I was born yesterday. Prove me wrong if you want, but you don't get to keep messing with her head.

JANE

(extremely carefully) I believe that we are getting distracted from the issue at hand, which is Sophie's health. In my view, we should focus not on abstracts, but on...*(she discards several possible statements)* what to do next. I would say that we need—I would say that a person in Sophie's situation should seek medical attention very soon.

EVELYN

Okay. If we turn the ship around now, we can be back in Cassandran space in 18 hours.

SOPHIE

“We”? I'd like to see you try to turn this ship around.

EVELYN

I honestly feel kind of ambivalent about being alive in this state, and while I'd prefer it to being un-alive, I am not going to trade whatever this stolen hypothetical existence is for you. You are definitely alive, Sophie Green. Life 1.0. We're not trading you for me, even gradually.

Beat.

SOPHIE

We're not gonna trade you for me, either. We go back, they definitely kill you. We go on, I *might* die. But, like, that's been a big maybe hanging over me for most of my adult life, so I'm not that stressed about it. And I'm still the captain.

JANE

It is my opinion that no one needs to die. I believe there is an obvious solution to our problem. If Sophie could simply leave the two of us somewhere we could get a ride—at a waystation, maybe, or a small city—she could hypothetically return on her own. In this hypothetical, everyone lives, no one dies. We'd just never be able to see each other again. But, let's be realistic. Yesterday you were dead and—

EVELYN

Jane.

JANE

—and Sophie, it is my perspective that you and I were probably already never going to see each other again. So really, the only thing that would be different in this hypothetical is that we'd know for sure.

SOPHIE

That's your perspective?

JANE

Yes, that is my perspective.

SOPHIE

Fuck your perspective. You know that message I was leaving for you? I said I wanted to kiss you. All the time. I said that I wanted you to crawl into bed with me. So, I don't know about your perspective, but my perspective is that we were headed somewhere really freaking promising.

EVELYN

Wow.

JANE

I—I—(frustrated sigh) If I could speak freely, I would say that I would have wanted that in another world. If I could speak freely, I would say that believing we could have that in this world was always a fantasy. I—I will remind the room—I can say this, Evelyn, it's just a fact—I was Reina Valencia's prisoner, and my life was not my own. It is my opinion that we should not be distracted by fantasies now.

SOPHIE

I would rather have another year—month? week?—with you. Both. Than any amount of time you think you'd be buying me back home.

JANE

It is my opinion that this is childish.

Sophie blows a raspberry.

JANE

If you accept that I love you, then you—it follows that I would rather not be your murderer.

EVELYN

I will second that one. Sophie, you can't ask us to agree to a scenario that ends with you sick or dead.

SOPHIE

Everyone gets sick and dies. It's a fact of life. I could go back and get hit by a surface craft crossing the street. I could go back and fall in the shower. And I'd be alone.

JANE

You—if one were to play Telosian Roulette, that would be one's own choice. In this instance, however, I unwittingly—I—Evelyn, it's a metaphor!

EVELYN

Metaphors are taken literally, figuratively all the time!

JANE

In the metaphor, I am the person who loaded the gun. I would like you to believe I regret that. I would like to not regret it further.

SOPHIE

You—both of you—can say whatever you want. You can use whatever convoluted metaphors you choose. I'm not going back. We are going to Eiko. That's it. Thank you.

EVELYN

I know that face. Jane, she's only going to go back if she thinks it's for our own good.

JANE

I—!

Typing.

SOPHIE

Jane. Listen to me.

EVELYN

(reads) She says: “I brought you back without your permission. I changed her mind without hers. Haven’t I played God enough in the last two days? I don’t want to take another choice away from her.”

Jane, you *have* been playing God. You broke a bunch of shit. This is how you fix it. I’m sorry if it compromises your morals. Play stupid games, win stupid prizes. Do you want to save her life, or don’t you?

JANE

I—

SOPHIE

Don’t say it!

JANE

I—

SOPHIE

No! Please! This is... The two of you making decisions for me, talking, like, at this level that... I hate it. Like I’m too stupid to make my own decisions.

JANE

I wish I could tell you I am so sorry. I wish I could take it all back. I hope you know you are mistaken. I wish I had trusted you from the beginning.

EVELYN

Jane. There’s no point. You have to do it.

SOPHIE

(crying)

I know you’re not really you but I thought you loved me and if you loved me you wouldn’t do this. Please, Evelyn.

EVELYN

I do love you. I am sorry for not wanting you to die. You don’t have to forgive me, you just have to live.

JANE

(crying too) Is this really—is this really what we should do?

SOPHIE

No! It isn't what you should—

EVELYN

Don't drag it out. You didn't let me choose, you didn't let her choose. Give us a merciful ending.

JANE

Sophie.

SOPHIE

No! Fuck you! No!

JANE

You can't stay with us. If you do, we'll be easier to spot. Two people can disappear more easily than three. And you are Captain Sophie Green. You're famous. Everyone on a hundred planets knows your face. You have to go back, or we're all going to die.

SOPHIE

(weakly) But you came to me.

JANE

It was my mistake. I made a mistake. Do you believe me?

SOPHIE

Yes.

JANE

I hope you know how much—I hope you know we love you.

SOPHIE

Oh. That's nice to hear.

Transition to:

Ring.

SOPHIE

Hi Jane. I'm about two hours out of Eiko, flying at a rate of...oh, what do you care? Once I'm well clear of the area I'll call Cullen and surrender. If they ask me where you are, I'll say I don't know. If they ask again, I'll still say it, because I really won't know, will I?

By then, you and Evelyn will have found some kind of sympathetic local to take you further up the isthmus. You'll have to bribe them, but I left you with plenty of money. Once you get wherever you're going, you'll have to figure out something to do, but the two of you always know what to do.

I watched the two of you as long as I could. You got so small so fast once I took off. With the whole universe to sort through, I don't think they'll find you. If you don't crack and call me, they definitely won't find you. I forgot to say that when I... No, I *couldn't* say it. But I think it's best. If you don't call me. I can't put your life in danger. Not any more. Even if the alternative is this huge fucking Not Knowing that lasts the rest of my life.

I'm going to imagine you with a house on the edge of whatever town you find. I'm going to imagine the years it will take for the community to trust you, when it's just the two of you. Waking up in the morning, going to bed at night, finding ways to pass the time. I'm going to imagine that for the rest of your life you'll be safe. And I'll never see you again.

Will you call me, Jane?

Will you—

AUTOMATED VOICE

You have reached the allotted time.

Click.

The Pasithea Powder theme begins to play.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Captain Sophie Green was portrayed by Jackie Hedeman. Dr. Jane Gonzalez was portrayed by Molly Olguín. Evelyn Glass was portrayed by Ian Andrews. Agent Cullen was portrayed by Antal Spector-Zabusky, and the voice of the computer was Cade LeBron. Original music by Annie Moriondo. This episode was written by Jackie Hedeman and Molly Olguín and edited by Jackie Hedeman.

This episode was a special transmission in partnership with Apollo Podcasts.

If you enjoyed this transmission, listen to *The Pasithea Powder*, available wherever you listen to podcasts. Be sure to start at the beginning. In a not so different world, there is another Jane Gonzalez making very different choices.

Post-roll

Molly: Hi there, Molly Olguín again.

Jackie: And Jackie Hedeman

Molly: As the creators of The Pasithea Powder, we wanted to thank the Apollo Creator Showcase 2022 for having us! Go listen to the other amazing episodes; you're really in for a treat.

Jackie: Yes, one thousand percent. And we loved being able to play around in our own sandbox.

Molly: If you want to learn more, visit www.apollopods.com/powder

Jackie: And if you liked this episode, you'll love The Pasithea Powder. Episode One is waiting for you.

Molly: Until next time.