

In Transit

Episode 2.13: “Canary”

Theme. Fade in – a knock on the door. Someone gets up, opens it.

SAWYER: Halley?

HALLEY: Hi.

There’s a pause.

HALLEY: Can I - can I come in?

SAWYER: Yeah. Yeah, of course!

She enters.

SAWYER: How have you been holding up? *(A pause. Halley doesn’t answer)* Right. Yeah.

HALLEY: What day is it?

SAWYER: Twenty-third.

HALLEY: Right. So it’s been -

SAWYER: It’s been two weeks, Halley. *(Another pause)* There’s not much point to me asking if you’re okay, is there?

HALLEY: Physically, I’m as fit as a fiddle. *(Beat)* Um. Alnitak’s words, not mine.

SAWYER: Yeah. You - uh. Spent a couple days in the med-bay, didn’t you?

HALLEY: I don’t know why. I was fine.

SAWYER: Halley.

HALLEY: Sorry. *(Beat)* I'm sure Notos must be in a dire state without Take Notes.

SAWYER: I - uh. Think that Notos has more pressing things to think about. No offence.

HALLEY: No. Of course. I - uh. I'd kind of forgotten if I'm honest. I haven't really left my room since leaving the med bay.

SAWYER: I know. *(Beat)* I - um. I've been looking out for you.

HALLEY: Right. Thank you. Um. What's it been like? Since -

SAWYER: Weird. It's been weird. Half chaos, half completely normal. People are really split. Some people are furious at Faraday. Some are excited. Some deny that there's anything wrong with Notos at all. And some - uh. Some want to stay on the ship.

HALLEY: Right. But they can't. Can they?

SAWYER: I don't know. *(Beat)* The Quinn thing didn't get out. We decided to keep that under wraps until we need it. *(A long pause)* Halley?

HALLEY: Um. Right. Was it Alecto who made that decision?

SAWYER: Yeah. She's - um. Shaken up too. I haven't seen her much if I'm honest.

HALLEY: Gosh. Yeah. I mean, you guys saw -

SAWYER: But we weren't there, Halley. We weren't at risk.

HALLEY: I don't know why he let me go. Why did he let me go?

SAWYER: I don't know.

HALLEY: I feel so *guilty*. It's not *fair*.

SAWYER: Halley -

HALLEY: Sorry.

SAWYER: No. It's okay.

HALLEY: Do you believe what he said? In his speech?

SAWYER: No.

HALLEY: No?

SAWYER: Alecto told me the details about what happened with Korzeniowski and those implants. But I think he realised he enjoyed causing pain and that's it. And all of that was just him messing with us.

HALLEY: Maybe.

SAWYER: Let's. Uh. Let's talk about something nicer than this. Yeah? I'm guessing you came here to get your mind off things.

HALLEY: Yeah. I just - I feel guilty about leaving you all high and dry.

SAWYER: There's nothing to apologise for. Besides. We haven't really been up to anything new. Just Alecto avoiding us again.

HALLEY: Right.

SAWYER: For real, though. I heard Notos has a stash of movies from Earth that we don't have on Eurus. Why don't we watch one of those?

HALLEY: Um. Okay. *(Beat)* Thanks, Sawyer.

SAWYER: That's okay.

Elsewhere.

HARRIS: Tonight. We're going to arrive tonight.

ALECTO: You're sure?

HARRIS: If our inside eye is correct, then yes. It'll be tonight.

ALECTO: God. And you said they were a navigator?

HARRIS: Head of Navigations.

ALECTO: Impressive.

HARRIS: I have my connections.

ALECTO: Thank you for this, Harris. Really.

HARRIS: I'm not doing this for you.

ALECTO: I know. *(Beat)* What's the plan, then? What do you need me to do?

HARRIS: For now? Nothing.

ALECTO: Harris -

HARRIS: *Nothing*, Alecto. We have it under control. We wait until we're approaching the coordinates - we barricade the Helm of Eurys while our friends down in Notos do the same. And then we intercept with a broadcast upon arrival carrying a prerecorded message detailing everything that we know. About Faraday. About Langley and about Korzeniowski and Zephyrus.

ALECTO: But I don't see why I can't help with this.

HARRIS: You're too high profile, Alecto.

ALECTO: So, what? They'll know it's happening, surely.

HARRIS: Faraday will be keeping tabs on you.

ALECTO: I can -

HARRIS: It's a no, Alecto.

There's a pause.

ALECTO: Why?

HARRIS: You're too young. You're just a kid.

ALECTO: I'm twenty-four.

HARRIS: *(Almost sombre)* Exactly. *(Beat)* Get some rest. Please. And pick up your comms. Your friend has been trying to get in touch with you for the past few days. Called someone here this morning just to see if you were around.

ALECTO: Oh. God. Um -

HARRIS: Can't remember his name. The - uh - the one that's got that prosthetic. Ponytail - tall -

ALECTO: Cairo. *Cairo.*

HARRIS: Go home. Alecto.

ALECTO: I can't. I have to do this. I *need* to do this.

HARRIS: Why?

ALECTO: Because it's all I know.

HARRIS: But it won't be forever.

A pause.

ALECTO: Okay.

HARRIS: Find somewhere quiet. Enjoy it while you still can.

ALECTO: Harris?

HARRIS: Yes?

ALECTO: You'd have made a good Commander.

HARRIS: I know. *(Beat)* I'll see you, Alecto.

ALECTO: Good luck.

Footsteps, door. Alecto sighs, pauses, and opens up her comms. They ring for a few moments.

CAIRO: Hey?

ALECTO: Hey.

CAIRO: Are you okay? I haven't heard -

ALECTO: I know. I'm sorry. I've been -

CAIRO: You've been busy. I know. *(Beat)* Sawyer saw Halley.

ALECTO: He did? That's good.

CAIRO: Yeah. She - um. Seems to be doing as well as you can expect she would be.

ALECTO: Yeah.

CAIRO: Are you -

ALECTO: I don't know, Cairo. I don't want to know. I don't want to think about it. Y'know?

CAIRO: Hm.

ALECTO: Are *you* okay?

CAIRO: I kind of feel nothing. Is that strange?

ALECTO: I don't know.

CAIRO: I'm kind of just annoyed, more than anything. That it happened. That things can't go back to normal.

ALECTO: Well things really won't go back to normal ever after -
.

CAIRO: Don't remind me.

ALECTO: How's Al?

CAIRO: Yeah. He's good.

ALECTO: No more than just good?

CAIRO: *(A laugh)* Focus on saving the ship, Alecto. I'll tell you about any interesting tea when I have it.

ALECTO: *(Almost contemplatively)* Yeah.

CAIRO: Sorry that I've been bothering you. I just wanted to check that you're okay.

ALECTO: It's okay. I'm okay.

CAIRO: Ah. Uh - shit sorry, didn't notice the time. I've gotta go. Talk to you later?

ALECTO: Yeah. Um. Cairo?

CAIRO: Sorry, 'Lec. See you soon!

He hangs up.

ALECTO: Oh.

Elsewhere, Faraday and Langley are together. She paces back and forth.

LANGLEY: Faraday.

No response.

LANGLEY: *Faraday?*

FARADAY: What?

LANGLEY: 'What?' What do you mean 'what'? Have you been paying attention to anything I've been saying for the past twenty *fucking* minutes?

FARADAY: *(After a pause)* What have you been saying for the past twenty fucking minutes, Solea?

LANGLEY: I have been *trying* to talk to you about contingencies.

FARADAY: Contingencies?

LANGLEY: Have you so much as had a conversation with Navigations about what to do tonight? A single thought about how the wormhole might affect our own ships?

FARADAY: Not really relevant, is it? The wormhole won't destroy them entirely. And we'll be done with them come tomorrow. For all it matters, the ships can evaporate to dust once we step off them.

LANGLEY: So you know nothing.

FARADAY: I have not talked to Navigations. No.

LANGLEY: Which is precisely why I had the Head of Navigations as my old deputy.

FARADAY: Didn't he try to kill you?

LANGLEY: Hm.

FARADAY: Didn't you kill *him*?

LANGLEY: (*Again*) Hm.

FARADAY: Look at that. We both have a penchant for killing our deputies.

LANGLEY: At least I didn't enjoy it.

FARADAY: Who's to say I enjoyed it?

LANGLEY: That speech. It wasn't real. Was it? What you said?

FARADAY: Who knows. That's the beauty of it all. Isn't it, Elara.

LANGLEY: I'm not Elara.

FARADAY: So you aren't. Hm.

LANGLEY: What are you going to do with me? When we arrive?

FARADAY: Up to New Earth to decide.

LANGLEY: I don't believe that.

FARADAY: Ok. You don't believe that.

There's a very long pause.

LANGLEY: You don't know what's going to happen either. Do you? Not in the slightest. You're pretending like you do - you're pretending this will go off without a hitch and you'll be fine, and when we get to New Earth, you'll be able to weasel your way back up to the top. You've probably convinced yourself, too. But there's a touch of doubt left in you. Isn't there?

FARADAY: Is there?

LANGLEY: You haven't left your office in days. You speak to everyone through comms. You haven't slept. You're worried you don't have the ship's support anymore.

FARADAY: Plenty of people on both ships support me.

LANGLEY: Plenty of people on Eurys supported me too.

FARADAY: Yes, but the difference between you and me, Solea, is that you actually care what people think of you.

LANGLEY: You care.

FARADAY: Oh. I mean - yes, in an ideal world they'd all love me. And I do my best to give them what they want so that they do. But I don't care much for their opinions. They can all hate me - wish me dead. But as long as they're scared enough to do what I want when I want it, I don't particularly mind.

LANGLEY: I never know when you're speaking the truth and when it's all lies.

FARADAY: Just the way I like it. Can I get back to this speech?

LANGLEY: Fine. And I'll get back to running your ship for you.

FARADAY: Again. Just the way I like it.

Elsewhere. The sound of somewhere greener. Footsteps.

ALNITAK: Who was that on the phone earlier, by the way?

CAIRO: Alecto.

ALNITAK: Oh. Is she okay?

CAIRO: I don't know. I think so.

ALNITAK: Hard to read?

CAIRO: Yeah.

ALNITAK: You can go and - uh - hang out with her if you like. I don't mind.

CAIRO: Al, this is literally the first hour of free time you've had in - what? A whole week?

ALNITAK: Who'd have thought - the announcement of New Earth, clones and a wormhole all combined at once would create an epidemic of cardiovascular problems.

CAIRO: You're busy. I know.

ALNITAK: Wish I wasn't.

CAIRO: Hah.

ALNITAK: Are you nervous?

CAIRO: About?

ALNITAK: All of the above.

CAIRO: Um. I don't know. I'm a bit sad - to be honest.

ALNITAK: Sad?

CAIRO: Eurus is my home. This nebula is kind of my home as well. And having to leave it feels a bit - I dunno. Like I'm going to be leaving behind a part of me. Y'know?

ALNITAK: Yeah.

CAIRO: Don't lie. You're so ready to get off this ship you'd jump out of an airlock if the opportunity was presented to you.

ALNITAK: That's not true.

CAIRO: But you hate it here.

ALNITAK: I don't hate Notos. I just hate the - I don't know. The limit of it, I guess. No matter how far I go, how far I run - the ship ends. I can walk from one metal wall to another metal wall and someone will still be able to find me. I want the freedom to go somewhere so far away that nobody will ever be able to find me. I like - I want to go somewhere where I'm the only person. *Really* the only person. Not just the only person in a room, or the only person in a hallway. Like - big open space, where it's only me and the sky, and there isn't another person around for miles.

CAIRO: Huh

ALNITAK: I don't know. I just don't feel like I'll ever feel like *myself* until I do.

CAIRO: Well. You will.

ALNITAK: Yeah. I will.

CAIRO: Honestly though, I'm the opposite. I couldn't care less for the sky or open space.
This is open space.

ALNITAK: Well, yes, we are literally in space.

CAIRO: Maybe I'll see if they have any like - outreach programmes. Rescuing other stranded ships.

ALNITAK: I'm sure there are plenty.

CAIRO: Booming industry.

ALNITAK: We're really different people, aren't we?

CAIRO: Hah. Yeah.

They walk for a moment.

ALNITAK: Do you think it'll look like this? New Earth?

CAIRO: No clue.

ALNITAK: These plant species all existed back on Old Earth, you know? Some of these were even extinct by the time we left - but they kept the seeds perfectly stored. Like - uh - like this one.

CAIRO: Yeah. Uh. It's pretty.

ALNITAK: It's fine, Cairo - I know you don't care.

CAIRO: What's it called?

ALNITAK: Ah. Fuck - uh. No clue. No clue what it's called. Where it's from.

CAIRO: Don't you think that's a bit sad? That we don't know.

ALNITAK: Yeah.

CAIRO: But it is really beautiful.

ALNITAK: Yeah. It is.

In a sudden moment, there is the sound of water dripping - slower, and then faster. Rain.

ALNITAK: Oh.

CAIRO: Is it - raining?

ALNITAK: Yeah. They do this sometimes. Always random. I've never been here when it's happened before.

CAIRO: Huh.

ALNITAK: It's cold. Isn't that strange. I never thought rain would be cold. I always thought it'd be like a shower.

CAIRO: Yeah. Me too, I guess. *(Beat)* I guess there's a lot we don't know.

ALNITAK: I guess there is.

They stand for a moment, in the rain. Alnitak laughs, slightly breathlessly. He notices Cairo.

ALNITAK: *(Still laughing)* What? What is it?

CAIRO: What?

ALNITAK: You're looking at me funny.

CAIRO: I am?

ALNITAK: Yeah.

CAIRO: No. It's nothing. It's just. You look - you look happy.

ALNITAK: *(Again)* Yeah.

The rain keeps going.

ALNITAK: Do you want to go? We're uh - kind of getting soaked.

CAIRO: Nah. Let's stay.

ALNITAK: Really?

CAIRO: Yeah. You can - uh. You can show me your favourite tree.

ALNITAK: I don't have a favourite tree.

CAIRO: Oh.

ALNITAK: I like plantlife but I'm not like - weird about it. *(Beat)* What, like you have a favourite star?

CAIRO: *(Unconvincing)* No.

ALNITAK: What is it?

CAIRO: I'm going to go find *my* favourite tree.

He leaves.

ALNITAK: Cairo? Cairo! *(He laughs)* Cairo!

Somewhere new. There's the sound of buzzing - lights, perhaps. Footsteps.

SPUTNIK: Alecto?

ALECTO: Oh. How'd you find me?

SPUTNIK: I didn't. I just wanted to have a look.

ALECTO: I see.

SPUTNIK: Can I join you?

ALECTO: Yeah. Of course.

They sit.

SPUTNIK: I haven't seen you in a while.

ALECTO: I don't feel like I've been - like - present in a while, in all honesty. Emotionally.

SPUTNIK: Yeah. I'm sorry I haven't checked in. Is that okay? Was I supposed to check in?
Is that what - like - friends do?

ALECTO: I don't know. But I don't mind.

Beat.

SPUTNIK: Alecto, are you okay?

Beat.

SPUTNIK: Alecto?

ALECTO: I'm - no, I'm not not okay. But I will be. I'll be fine.

SPUTNIK: Is it Quinn?

ALECTO: No. Actually, no, it's not.

SPUTNIK: Oh.

ALECTO: Is that bad? That it's not Quinn?

SPUTNIK: I don't know.

ALECTO: I knew her. Probably as well as I knew Lyra. Oh. Uh. Lyra is a friend I had that - she died. Um. And when Lyra died it was. Like - it was really hard. But with Quinn I guess I just. I just feel nothing.

SPUTNIK: That's okay, though. Sometimes that happens.

ALECTO: Sometimes I feel like I can't feel anything at all and I have to force myself to pretend to have these emotions to - I don't know. Be normal.

SPUTNIK: You're not normal, though.

ALECTO: Hah.

SPUTNIK: No, but I mean - neither am I! That's not a bad thing! I used to think it was a bad thing because other people acted like it was a bad thing. But it's not a good thing or a bad thing, it's just a - a *thing*, I guess. It's who you are. And I like who you are.

ALECTO: Sputnik. *(Beat)* Thank you.

SPUTNIK: What are you worried about, if it's not Quinn?

ALECTO: I don't know. Kind of everything. Faraday. New Earth. The - uh - impending sense that everything is going to go horribly wrong very soon.

SPUTNIK: You're very pessimistic, Alecto.

ALECTO: I know. I was trained to be.

SPUTNIK: But there are nice things to look forward to as well, aren't there? Like - we'll get to see what the sea looks like. I mean - that is if there is a sea on New Earth.

ALECTO: I dreamt I was by the sea when I was in cryogenic sleep, you know? I'd like to know if that dream was accurate in any way.

SPUTNIK: Oh that's *so* cool. You dreamt in cryogenic sleep?

ALECTO: I think. Or maybe it was the dream I was having before I was properly put under.

SPUTNIK: Do you miss them? The people you knew before?

ALECTO: Yeah.

SPUTNIK: I do too. The - uh. People I knew from West Wing.

ALECTO: Oh. Sputnik.

SPUTNIK: It's okay! I have new friends now, anyway!

ALECTO: Hm.

SPUTNIK: You'll stay safe, right, Alecto? You won't -

ALECTO: I can't make that promise.

SPUTNIK: Please?

ALECTO: I can promise to try.

SPUTNIK: Okay.

There's the sound of something in the distance.

ALECTO: Do you hear that?

SPUTNIK: Yeah. Uh. Do you think we're -

ALECTO: We might be.

The sound continues.

SPUTNIK: I can't see - um. Oh!

ALECTO: What?

SPUTNIK: There. Straight ahead. Do you see it?

ALECTO: I don't.

SPUTNIK: There. Look closely. Do you see - like - that sphere? Like, a distant outline? It looks a bit like a bubble.

ALECTO: Oh.

SPUTNIK: Is that real? It looks so like - just like a part of the space.

ALECTO: They made that. Isn't that fascinating.

SPUTNIK: Do you feel that? In the pit of your stomach. Like there's something wrong about the universe all of a sudden?

ALECTO: I think that's called anxiety, Sputnik.

SPUTNIK: No. It just feels like. Sorta displaced. Like I'm being pulled towards it.

ALECTO: Yeah.

SPUTNIK: It's a dark place, though, isn't it? This place.

ALECTO: What do you mean?

SPUTNIK: I was talking to some people on a job. Apparently these are the same coordinates as where Korzeniowski was killed.

ALECTO: What.

SPUTNIK: Yeah. Exactly the same ones. Isn't that odd.

Alecto stands up.

SPUTNIK: Alecto? What is it?

ALECTO: I need to go. Fuck, I need to go.

She rushes off.

SPUTNIK: Alecto?

LANGLEY: Faraday, please. Do we need to bother with this? Can we please go to Navigations and get this over and done with?

FARADAY: Hold on.

LANGLEY: Amos, I'm going to -

FARADAY: Don't call me Amos.

LANGLEY: Why? Why do you hate being called Amos so much?

FARADAY: Careful.

LANGLEY: Have I hit a nerve?

FARADAY: Don't ruin this, Solea. This is a perfectly pleasant view that I am enjoying. Don't ruin it.

LANGLEY: Yes. A perfectly pleasant *space bubble*. *(Beat)* What are we waiting for?

FARADAY: You'll see.

LANGLEY: You know, after tomorrow, you're going to be nothing.

FARADAY: Am I?

LANGLEY: You are. You're going to be just like me. Commander one second, kicked to the curb the next. And I can't wait to see it happen. I'm going to be *thrilled*.

FARADAY: I have the means to make sure that won't happen.

LANGLEY: You do? How? You don't - *oh*.

There's a noise that comes from the wormhole.

FARADAY: There we go. Step one.

LANGLEY: Is that a ship?

FARADAY: It is.

LANGLEY: Does the wormhole make things look smaller than they appear?

FARADAY: I'm sorry?

LANGLEY: It's small. The ship.

FARADAY: It is.

LANGLEY: But that's only going to fit - that could fit maybe two or three people.

FARADAY: Precisely. We need to know that the wormhole works before we send our whole ships through it. So New Earth has sent out a tester shuttle.

LANGLEY: I see.

FARADAY: We're going to try a system like a - oh, god. What's the name? Of those birds that they used back on Old Earth to send into the mines? If the bird stopped singing they knew it was dangerous and had to get out of there? What were they called?

LANGLEY: A canary.

FARADAY: Yes. That's right. A canary.

LANGLEY: Well, who? You're not very well going to go in there yourself, are you?

FARADAY: Of course not.

LANGLEY: A prisoner, then?

FARADAY: Yes.

LANGLEY: Who, then?

FARADAY: You.

LANGLEY: I'm sorry?

FARADAY: You, Solea. Isn't that exciting? *You* are going to be my little canary.