

[Static fades in and out]

[Machine crackles]

KLEIN

Alves. It's Klein. I've got Maintenance working on it, too. There's at least one person from every department on it right now. Let me know if you guys know anything. Or find anything. We're all hands on deck here.

And thanks for being cooperative with me on this, Gloria.

[Click]

HARLEY

The Foundation does a lot to ensure the security of its sites. The contents, of course. Not necessarily the people, which should be evident by our little predicament down here. But the anomalies themselves? It's pretty rare that any of them make it out the front doors.

This Site was never enough of a danger to get our own nuclear warhead. SixtyThreeTwenty was not a threat to the populace. If it was, we would have cleared the area. Spread disinformation about a chemical hazard in the soil making the land unliveable. Chased out the town's entire civilian population until the only people left was us.

Like an invasive species. It's not like we haven't done it before.

But not 107. We weren't enough of a major hazard. Apparently we used to be considered one of the safest sites in America. One of the most predictable extradimensional anomalies in Foundation hands. Which really must have people up top recontextualizing a lot of what they consider "safe."

Hopefully.

Hopefully we were enough of a tragedy for them to try harder to prevent this from happening again.

[Click]

KLEIN

I think we should push sooner.

I understand that, yeah. But our prospects are looking really good right now and I think we should seize the opportunity while everything is still calm.

Right, but-

Alright, alright. What I need is acknowledgement that the status quo here changes RAPIDLY. If we wait until the next cycle to go through with the detonation, we're risking a lot of factors we can't possibly anticipate. We're counting on the next cycle having no rogue events, and I don't think that's the best option. What if something happens next cycle that prevents us from being able to do the detonation at all?

What if this is our window, and we miss it?

All I'm doing is voicing my disagreement as Acting Site Director. It's my professional opinion that our best course of action is to move the timeline up and blow the rift at the end of this cycle.

[Click]

[Harley's office ambience]

[Klein sighs]

KLEIN

I swear to God, Harley. I feel like I am losing my mind.

[Harley pours a glass of something]

HARLEY

I know how you feel.

KLEIN

Hold up, why are YOU day drinking?
You're doing great! Your code is
going gangbusters, everybody
thinks you're our ace in the hole
now!

HARLEY

Yup. Everything's coming up
Harley...

KLEIN

Gimme that.

HARLEY

(half-heartedly)
Noooooooooo...

KLEIN

Is being Site Director always like
this? Just a constant battle with
the people higher up than you? I
SWEAR Gloria is being this way on
purpose. Like, everything was
going SO WELL, and then she has to
go and publicly say I'm wrong in
front of all the other Department
heads.

HARLEY

Gloria?

KLEIN

Alves.

HARLEY

I didn't know you two were on a
first name basis.

KLEIN

Oh, that's not even the half of
it, but...

HARLEY

Ah.

KLEIN

She's still mad that Shao voted me
as Acting Director and not her.
But it was only because I've been

here longer than she has. And I
have more Level 4 clearance
experience.

HARLEY

I didn't know you were Level 4
before this.

KLEIN

I was. For a while.

HARLEY

What happened?

[Pause]

[Klein sighs and takes a long, obnoxiously
slurped drink]

KLEIN

(chuckling)

I fucked up, Harley. I fucked up
real bad.

[Pause]

HARLEY

...Do you want to talk about it-

KLEIN

(interrupting)

No, I do not.

[Click]

KLEIN

(a little drunk)

Dear diary. I am going to talk
about my feelings, okay? I almost
left Gloria a voicemail, my GOD,
would that have been fucked up?
I'm not THAT drunk though.

Anyway, um...

I'm trying really hard. I don't
actually know if what I'm doing
here is the right call,
considering how much Upper
Management doesn't agree.

But I have a really bad feeling
about pushing it to next month. We
know that the big Dash Ones create
the large scale environmental

effects, the blackouts and the temperature changes; so we can probably avoid having another one this cycle, if we're careful. And everything is cool right now, who knows what kinda crazy shit we're gonna have to deal with in two, three weeks from now.

I think they're wrong. I think Shao is wrong, I think Alves is wrong, and I think I'm right. And I think they don't trust me.

I think Shao knows. Shao knows about what happened at my old site. That's why they don't trust me.

But screw it! I'm doing well this time! I'm doing well. They're wrong, and I'm trustworthy.

[Click]

[Klein's voice echoes in the hallway]

KLEIN
(muttering to herself)
'Kay, have to finish up the mechanism with Engineering, we still need a remote or something, though... Containment wants BH-9 at 11 tomorrow, so I'll have to...

[Door opens farther off]

KLEIN
...hey, Lancaster. Lancaster! Hey!

LANCASTER
What? Oh! Hey! Hi!

KLEIN
Where've you been, man? I feel like I've haven't seen you the last couple days.

LANCASTER
You're not the only one who's close to a breakthrough, that's all I'm gonna say.

KLEIN
Yeah? What kind?

LANCASTER

I think I've made a connection about how non 14B people's brains interact with the anomaly. And how to maybe fix it.

KLEIN

(interested)

Elaborate.

LANCASTER

I don't really want to yet, I don't want to get ahead of myself and then find out that I'm- off, or that I did something wrong, or-

KLEIN

You want to wait until your idea is more fleshed out.

LANCASTER

Yeah. "Fleshed out."

KLEIN

Do you need any help? I could come in and-

LANCASTER

No, I'm good.

[Pause]

KLEIN

You've been working yourself kind of hard, recently.

LANCASTER

No, no, I'm just excited! It's nice to have- to have a concrete idea to work on. Besides, you and Harley have been working a lot too.

KLEIN

Can't argue with ya there.

LANCASTER

Speaking of work, I've gotta get back. Don't want to lose my train of thought.

KLEIN

Alright. Come by the cafeteria tonight! We're watching Ferris Bueller-

LANCASTER

(farther away)

Okay, I'll try to finish up before then!

KLEIN

You need to take rests!

LANCASTER

I'll rest when I die!

KLEIN

Ugh. Scientists.

[Click]

HARLEY

And I tried to hang onto the inside of the stall door so he wouldn't see me, but it FELL OFF the hinges and I almost landed on-

[Door lock beeps]

[Door swings open suddenly]

LOVE

Harley I have a favor to ask-

HARLEY

Do you NOT KNOW how to knock?

LOVE

I've never knocked on a door ever once in my FUCKING life, Harley. Can you babysit tonight?

HARLEY

(genuinely asking)

Babysit you?

LOVE

NO, babysit Dumptruck. Klein wants me to help her get booze from the Departments that are being difficult about it.

HARLEY

Raddagher can't do it?

LOVE

No, she's gonna be on shift and she says he's distracting. Can you do it or not?

HARLEY

(excited)

I ABSOLUTELY can.

LOVE

You're not allowed to do anything weird to him.

HARLEY

I'm gonna do all manner of weird things to him.

LOVE

Don't! Or I'll make Lancaster do it instead.

HARLEY

You've SEEN Lancaster recently?

LOVE

I fixed his office camera a few days ago. He said it made a little popping noise and it stopped working on our end.

His office looks like a printer blew up in it. He's got sticky notes like, everywhere.

HARLEY

I'm a little worried about him.

LOVE

Why? He's always been a little weirdo.

HARLEY

Yeah, he gets like that sometimes. But he hasn't spent any time with me for- basically the whole cycle. He's just holed up in his office all the time.

LOVE

When I was in there, he said he was doing stuff with the memetic. Said something about - like, perception alteration or direct exposure or whatever. He SOUNDED like he was onto something, at least.

HARLEY

You're not concerned?

LOVE

No, I'm not concerned. He seems fine. He just looks invested in what he was working on right now. Besides, how much time did you actually spend with him before we got stuck in here?

HARLEY

That's a good point. I guess I've gotten used to seeing everybody more than usual.

LOVE

We can do something about it if he starts to smell.

[Click]

KLEIN

Are you kidding me? Are you kidding me, Gloria? How could you know about this and NOT tell me! This is relevant and IMPORTANT information, especially now!

What do you mean, you "thought I knew?!" I was Research, why would I-

[Beat]

You KNEW. You KNEW that if I knew we had an Emergency Bomb, I'd want to use it for the detonation this cycle!

No, you listen to ME. I don't care if you agree with it or not, but I am 107's Site Director as long as we're in here. Not you. And I'm going to convince Shao to do it this cycle.

[Pause. She sighs in exasperated exhaustion]

KLEIN

No. We DON'T have to measure the blast first! We don't, it doesn't make a difference! If you knew

about it, then Carson did too! I'm
just-

[Klein huffs]

KLEIN

I'm going over right now. I'm
going to his office right now. I'm
going to his office and I'm
combing his computer for any other
info that nobody bothered to tell
me!

[Pause]

KLEIN

(venomous)

ABSOLUTELY. Yeah, it's a GREAT
idea for me to come down there
right now. YES, I'm being
sarcastic. I can't see you right
now. Or I might- I dunno. I'm- no.
I'm done. I'm done talking about
this. Goodbye.

[Button clicks, Klein groans into her hands]

[She takes a breath, composes herself]

KLEIN

Alright. Pull yourself together.
Let's go see what Carson's got.

[Bag rattles]

No, know what? I'm gonna blow
something up.

[Click]

[Klein's voice reverberates through the
chamber]

KLEIN

Are we almost ready?

Uh, no, they're not coming.
Especially not Alves.

Because, strictly speaking, we're
not... we're not 100% cleared on
this one, actually.

No no no, we're cleared on the
materials! We just didn't exactly

get Containment to sign off on doing it TODAY. In the main containment chamber. But where else are we supposed to test it, we don't have anywhere else big enough, right? They want us to measure the explosions, so we're gonna measure the explosions. We have more than enough supplies to rig this one up a second time. Maybe even a third.

It'll be fine. We're far enough away and there's nothing around the explosive that could even hit the anomaly.

I got most of Upper Management to give it the go-ahead, so we'll be fine. If we do any significant damage to the walls they'll just fix themselves anyway. And we're all up here, so there's almost no risk involved.

Trust me, I know what I'm doing. And if we do this test real quick, it'll bump us ahead of schedule by like, three days. That's a net win for everybody.

Okay.

Are we ready?

Arm the device.

[switches click, fuse lights]

KLEIN

Ear and eye protection on:

Detonation in three, two, one-

[Muffled, distant door opens]

KLEIN

WAIT-!

[Explosion detonates]

[Lancaster shouts]

KLEIN

JESUS, LANCASTER!

LANCASTER
(Distant, muffled)
Sorry! God, I'm so sorry!

KLEIN
Are you okay?!

LANCASTER
Y-yeah, I'm fine! I'm fine, sorry!

KLEIN
Oh, thank God. What the FUCK,
Lancaster!

LANCASTER
I'm sorry! I didn't know anybody
was going to be in here.

KLEIN
What the fuck are you DOING in
here?

LANCASTER
I wanted to see the-

KLEIN
No, like- how did you get in?

LANCASTER
Oh, one of the Containment people-
uh, gave me a card for a second.

KLEIN
Without an escort?

LANCASTER
Yeah, I guess. I'm just- I was
gonna look at the- Nevermind, I'm
just gonna go-

Klein
No. Stay where you are, I'm coming
down there.

[Click]

HARLEY
Today I have learned that, while
we are not important enough to
warrant a nuke, we do have what
many of us are referring to as an
Emergency Bomb. And it's what it
sounds like; a large explosive
device intended to use on an

anomaly to neutralize it, or failing that, to delay any effects until additional support arrives. General consensus is that it must have been one of the numerous installations in this site, put here in anticipation of its expansion.

There is a chance, depending on what we learn about it, that we may use it for the controlled detonation next cycle.

[Click]

KLEIN

Raddagherrrrrrr... why did you TELL THEM?

RADDAGHER

I told them because you did not tell me not to tell them.

KLEIN

Yeah, but-

RADDAGHER

They asked about it so I did my job.

KLEIN

Yeah, you're good at your job, but why couldn't you just read MY MINNNNND

RADDAGHER

I can't read anyone's mind.

KLEIN

I didn't mean literally.

RADDAGHER

Oh.

KLEIN

(sighing)
And I'm not actually mad at you, I'm- I'm mad at myself. And I hate it when Alves yells at me.

RADDAGHER

She yells at you a lot.

KLEIN

Yeah, she does.

RADDAGHER

Why did you do that?

KLEIN

Why did I- Alright, it's not like I was trying to sneak around or anything. I just didn't feel like we needed to get Containment's signature on detonating a little explosive! It didn't even have anything to do with the anomaly.

RADDAGHER

I think they were mad about you doing it in the containment chamber.

KLEIN

Maybe! We weren't even close to the rift! It was fine! Listen, if you see Research doing stuff like that again, just don't-

RADDAGHER

No.

KLEIN

What?

RADDAGHER

If you want me to keep secrets you have to justify it to me first.

KLEIN

I...

[Beat]

KLEIN

Alright. You're right, actually. I should have gotten it cleared with them. I don't know why I keep-

Nevermind. Talk later.

RADDAGHER

Bye.

[Click]

[Love's voice echoes through the hall]

LOVE

ALRIGHT NERDS. HAND OVER YOUR
ALCOHOL! WE NEED IT FOR THE
SCIENCE!

[Click]

[Door opens to Harley's office ambience]

KLEIN
You look like shit.

HARLEY
Thanks.

KLEIN
Get more sleep.

HARLEY
I would love to, but I cannot on
account of the tattoo and the
existential crisis.

KLEIN
Ah, I see.

HARLEY
You look like shit as well, I
might add.

KLEIN
I need all your liquor.

HARLEY
You're too late. Love cleaned me
out an hour ago.

KLEIN
You hear I almost blew up
Lancaster today?

[Pause]

HARLEY
What?

KLEIN
In my defense, he should not have
been able to get into the
containment chamber, so.

HARLEY
Do you mean you LITERALLY almost
blew up Lancaster?

KLEIN

We were testing one of
Engineering's improvised
explosives and he just WALKED IN.

HARLEY

Is-

KLEIN

He's fine. Nobody got hurt.

HARLEY

Sounds like somebody COULD have
been-

KLEIN

NOBODY GOT HURT, alright?!

[Beat]

KLEIN

Nobody got hurt.

[Pause]

HARLEY

(changing the subject)
So, are you going to use the
Emergency Bomb for the detonation?

KLEIN

No.

HARLEY

No?

KLEIN

It requires manual activation to
set it off. We would need to kill
a D-class.

[Klein sounds exhausted]

KLEIN

Or. You know. Any person. Any
human individual who is cool with
getting blown up.

[Another pause]

HARLEY

...I've got one more jar of shine
in the filing cabinet.

KLEIN

Oh my god, give it to me.

[Click]

[Harley speaks from behind a door, voice muffled]

HARLEY

Yeah, I checked his room, and this seems like the only other place he'd- Oh, he is? Do you think I could-

[Door opens, Harley's voice becomes clear]

HARLEY

Speak of the devil!

LANCASTER

(tired but still bright)
Hey, Harley.

HARLEY

Just came by to check on you. Seems like you haven't been around in a while. Also Klein said she almost blew you up.

LANCASTER

Yeah, she did almost blow me up. But it's okay. My ears are still ringing a little bit though.

HARLEY

Where have you BEEN?

LANCASTER

Oh, I'm just - I'm working really hard on this project, I'm sorry.

HARLEY

Can you work less hard for a little while?

LANCASTER

Probably, but-

[Lancaster sighs]

LANCASTER

I'm sorry, Harley. I know I haven't- haven't spent any time with you or any of the others lately, but I have so much motivation right now, and- and I can't stop or I'm gonna lose it.

HARLEY

Are you doing okay? Love said your office is a disaster.

[Lancaster chuckles]

LANCASTER

Yeah. Yeah. It IS. It really is- a mess. Don't- don't look at it, though. Don't look at it or you're gonna ruin it.

HARLEY

Can I look for two seconds?

LANCASTER

You can look after I finish the actual thesis, when I start putting things away.

HARLEY

Do you need any help organizing?

LANCASTER

(sharply)

NO.

[Pause]

[Lancaster sighs again]

LANCASTER

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to- I haven't been sleeping very well.

HARLEY

It's fine, I get it. I don't think any of us have.

[Beat]

LANCASTER

I should really get back to it. The sooner I get done, the- the sooner I can- you know, kinda get back to normal.

HARLEY

Promise you're alright?

LANCASTER

Of course.. I'm alright.

[Click]

KLEIN

My primary goal as your Acting Site Director is to minimize further casualties as much as possible. We lost nearly half our staff in the Shift. It is my firm belief that in spite of ordinary Foundation protocol, I have an ethical and moral obligation to the people in this building. All of them. I want to thank all of you for bending the rules with me. The Foundation we knew on the outside would have actively encouraged the expenditure of a human life over a test involving the Emergency Bomb, and I appreciate each one of you who is trusting me on this. Human life is one of our irreplaceable resources in this circumstance. It is my promise to all of you that I will do everything in my power to ensure the safety of everyone here, regardless of their station.

And for those of you who voted against me, I am tired of fighting you. If r you agree not to use the Emergency Bomb in any scenario short of apocalyptic, I will stop pushing for the detonation date to be moved up. I just want us to agree on one thing. I don't feel that this is too much to ask.

Thank you for trusting me.

END EPISODE