

EP 13: TENSION

J.K. Robbins:

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[Theme music]

DIPA: Observer Pictures presents Apollyon, written and directed by Faith McQuinn. This is episode 13, Tension.

[Soothing music plays as Theo takes deep breaths inside a water filled isolation tank.]

DIPA:

Bring full attention to this very moment. Allow your mind and body to still. Bring your awareness to your breath. Don't try to force your breath. Just allow it to flow naturally on its— Incoming call from Savreen Khanna.

Theo:

(sighs) Connect.

Savreen:

Good evening to you.

Theo:

Hello, Savreen.

Savreen:

Where are you?

Theo:

Isolation tank.

Savreen:

I'm sorry. I can call you back.

Theo:

No, it's fine. I won't be able to get back into the rhythm now.

Savreen:
How are you?

Theo:
I've been worse.

Savreen:
Oh. Did you go into work today?

Theo:
I did.

Savreen:
That's wonderful to hear.

Theo:
I'm sure.

Savreen:
I know you were struggling, but you've made the right decision. You would've always regretted leaving. I'm very proud of you.

Theo:
I won't be working on the clinical trials though.

Savreen:
What? Xavier cannot do that.

Theo:
No, I asked to be moved. He agreed.

Savreen:
You're leaving experimental virology?

Theo:
No, no, I'm going to be working on advancements with the vaccine.

Savreen:
Meaning you will have no contact with the DHH.

Theo:
Minimal contact, if any.

Savreen:
I see.

Theo:

My connection with the DHH was part of this grand plan of yours, wasn't it?

Savreen:

Yes. Do you think if you reconsidered Weiss would...?

Theo:

I don't want to reconsider, Savreen. If I'm going to stay with the ICRS, it's going to be on my terms. Savreen, you know how much I love you and respect you, but I need more time from you if you want more from me. You have to tell me your plan.

Savreen:

Theo, I'm very sorry, but I don't feel comfortable telling you right now. I need more pieces to be in place.

Theo:

Are you afraid of something? Is this dangerous?

Savreen:

Yes, and absolutely.

Theo:

You're asking me to put myself at risk without telling me what's happening.

Savreen:

I am, and believe me, I would not do this if I didn't think it was necessary. Changes need to be made, and we are finally in a place to make them happen. If I have to, I'll do it without you, but I feel you might already have a target on your back.

Theo:

Because I've asked questions?

Savreen:

Yes.

Theo:

But the DHH doesn't know what I know.

Savreen:

That might be true, but they definitely know we have a relationship and who your mother is, was.

Theo:

Do you actually think I'm under surveillance?

Savreen:

Not officially, no. Although I'm sure there are people keeping a close eye on you. You have to trust me, Theo.

Theo:

I can't make this decision right now. I need more time.

Savreen:

I had years to make this choice. You don't have that luxury. Although unfair, it is the way it is.

Theo:

At least give me some insight.

Savreen:

I have some things I can put in motion that I can share more with you. I love you, Theo. I'll call you soon.

Theo:

I know we haven't had a sit down this week, and with Dr. Larson and I splitting duties, we'll probably only be doing them once a week until further notice.

Gabriel:

If at all.

Theo:

We'll be checking in with each other regularly. It just might not be in this capacity.

Gabriel:

Speaking of, as I'm sure you've all read the email by now, Elliot is back with us. He'll be bouncing back and forth between clinical trial work and the advanced vaccine studies.

[They all politely clap.]

Annabelle:

It's good to have you back, Elliot.

Elliot:

Thanks, and I'm excited to be working with everybody again.

Theo:

I was hoping... Oh, sorry.

Gabriel:
Go ahead.

Theo:
Are you sure?

Gabriel:
Yes, Theo.

Theo:
Elliot, I was hoping that you would be with Annabelle and me today, so we could catch you up to speed on what we're working on.

Gabriel:
Can't that wait until tomorrow?

Theo:
I guess it could, but I've figured he has more to catch up on with us, since he's already familiar with the mRNA sequences.

Gabriel:
I guess that makes sense.

Theo:
You wanted Elliot with you today?

Gabriel:
It's just that we have a meeting with Milgrim and I figured it would be great for him to sit in on that. Even though he does know the science, he needs to be up to date on the process.

Theo:
Milgrim isn't going to give him clearance this close to a meeting.

Gabriel:
I already sent the email. She approved it. You received your badge, right, Elliot?

Elliot:
Yeah.

Theo:
You didn't think to check with me first?

Gabriel:
Oh, is that something we're doing now?

Horatio:

Well, I'm sure it would be fine if...

Gabriel:

I've already cleared it with Dr. Milgrim. She's expecting all three of us. You've stepped away from the clinical trials, remember? It's my team. I make the decisions.

Theo:

You're right. I just thought scheduling would be something we'd discuss.

Gabriel:

Maybe we need a list to avoid instances like this.

Elliot:

Dr. Ramsey, you can send me any notes. I can read them before tomorrow.

Gabriel:

That's a great idea, Elliot. What do you think, Theo?

Theo:

Annabelle, would you mind?

Annabelle:

Of course. I'll loop you in, Elliot. If you have any questions, we can link up tomorrow morning.

Elliot:

Sounds good.

Gabriel:

There, problem solved.

Theo:

Is there any other news anyone wants to share before we get the day started?

Horatio:

All good here.

Annabelle:

Nope. Nothing.

Gabriel:

Perfect. Have a great day everyone. Horatio, Elliot, hang back a minute. I need to speak with Dr. Ramsey.

Elliot:
Yeah.

Horatio:
Yeah, of course.

Gabriel:
Theo, a word.

Theo:
Sure.

[Automatic doors open and close as Theo and Gabriel move to private space.]

Theo:
If this is about that list, I don't actually think that's necessary.

Gabriel:
I think we might need to reconsider Christmas.

Theo:
Do you think this is the right time to talk about this?

Gabriel:
Well, you moved out of our office and are ignoring my calls. I figured this was the only time you wouldn't run away from me.

Theo:
I'm not running away from you,

Gabriel:
Could have fooled me.

Theo:
I need space, Gabriel. I still do.

Gabriel:
Which is why I think we need to reconsider Christmas.

Theo:
You really don't think we can be adults and...

Gabriel:
We just snapped at each other in the meeting with our team.

Theo:

Oh, now it's our team?

Gabriel:

Point proven.

Theo:

Everything's just a little too fresh right now. Christmas is a couple weeks away. Plus Reese would be heartbroken if you and Link weren't there.

Gabriel:

Oh, just Reese? I also think you should skip dinner tonight.

Theo:

I was going to cancel anyway.

Gabriel:

When were you going to tell me?

Theo:

Gabriel.

Gabriel:

Okay. If I need to talk about the holidays, I'll send you a personal message.

Theo:

Good idea.

Gabriel:

Well, we have a full day.

Theo:

Right.

[They walk back to the lab. The doors open and close behind them.]

Annabelle:

It's still a little odd.

Horatio:

A little?

Elliot:

Ready for us, Dr. Larson?

Gabriel:

Yes. I'd like to go over some things before our meeting.

Annabelle:

Best of luck with Dr. Milgrim.

Horatio:

Same to you.

[Doors open and close]

Theo:

Is there anything you need to discuss before we head to the lab?

Annabelle:

No, everything's fine. Is there anything you need to talk about?

Theo:

I'm good, Annabelle.

Annabelle:

Because if you...

Theo:

We should get to the lab.

Annabelle:

Absolutely.

Riley:

(over intercom) Dr. Weiss, you have a call from Dr. Khanna.

Weiss:

Put it through. Savreen, how nice of you to contact me at work?

Savreen:

Calm down. This is a friendly call, Xavier. I wanted to thank you for allowing Theo the time to make her own decision.

Weiss:

She's an integral part of my department. I need to be respectful of the people who work for me.

Savreen:
Of course.

Weiss:
I should also thank you for convincing her to make the right decision.

Savreen:
I had nothing to do with that

Weiss:
Really? That's interesting. I assumed if anyone could persuade her, it would be you

Savreen:
Not Gabriel?

Weiss:
Usually yes, but there seems to be a bit of tension there.

Savreen:
I didn't know.

Weiss:
You said this was a friendly call?

Savreen:
Yes. I was wondering if you might be able to grant a position change if it came across your desk.

Weiss:
Interdepartmental?

Savreen:
No, within your department.

Weiss:
As I'm sure you're aware, I've already recently granted a change. In fact, I backed up this decision quite adamantly with the partnering department.

Savreen:
This is quite important to me.

Weiss:
To you?

Savreen:
Xavier, I'm asking for a simple favor.

Weiss:
Savreen, I've known you for 20 years. You're not asking for a simple favor.

Savreen:
I understand that it may hurt your reputation, but...

Weiss:
Not just my reputation, but this entire department's.

Savreen:
You have proven yourself to be incredibly diplomatic and resilient. You'll be fine.

Weiss:
You've grossly miscalculated this one, Savreen. I've never needed outside help to run my department, and even if I did, I wouldn't start with you.

Savreen:
Have a good day, Xavier. Thank you for your time.

[Various kitchen noises]

Victoria:
Do you think the children are all right?

Gabriel:
I'm sure they're fine.

Victoria:
This is the first time we've left them alone together.

Gabriel:
I know.

Victoria:
Calista can be a bit much.

Gabriel:
I'm sure Lincoln can hold his own.

Victoria:
I should go check on them.

Gabriel:
Hey, they're fine. I promise Lincoln is probably showing her one of his models or something.

Victoria:
You're probably right.

Gabriel:
Why are you so nervous?

Victoria:
Why aren't you?

Gabriel:
I'm sorry. You're going to have to catch me up.

Victoria:
This is our first dinner together, the four of us.

Gabriel:
Okay, and?

Victoria:
Gabriel, why isn't this a big deal to you?

Gabriel:
It's a meal.

Victoria:
Jesus.

Gabriel:
Please tell me what I fucked up on this time.

Victoria:
You didn't fuck up, Gabriel.

Gabriel:
Would it have been better to go out?

Victoria:
No. No. This is perfect. Calista and I don't sit down to dinner very often. We definitely didn't do

it when I was with her father. She asked me what she was supposed to wear to a dinner party. I didn't know how to answer.

Gabriel:

Well, this isn't a party. It's just dinner.

Victoria:

So you and Lincoln do this every night?

Gabriel:

Well, not every night, but we try to sit down and eat together as often as we can.

Victoria:

And you cook full meals like this?

Gabriel:

Most of the time.

Victoria:

That's really sweet.

Gabriel:

We've been doing it basically his whole life.

Victoria:

You're definitely winning the single parent thing.

Gabriel:

I've just had more practice.

Lincoln:

Oh, did I interrupt something?

Gabriel:

No, we're just talking.

Lincoln:

Okay.

Gabriel:

What's up?

Lincoln:

Just checking to see if you talked to Theo.

Gabriel:
About what?

Lincoln:
About why she's not here yet.

Gabriel:
I'm sorry, bud. She's not coming.

Lincoln:
Why not?

Gabriel:
She had a rough week. She's skipping tonight.

Lincoln:
Oh.

Victoria:
Are you and Calista getting along?

Lincoln:
Yeah. Yeah. I was going to ask if she wanted to play a round of dragon stone once Theo got here, but I guess it's a little crowded tonight for her to come over.

Gabriel:
Hey, Lincoln, that was uncalled for. Apologize right now.

Victoria:
It's okay.

Gabriel:
No, it's not. Apologize, young man.

Lincoln:
I'm sorry.

Victoria:
Calista likes that game. I'm sure she'd love to play.

Lincoln:
Yeah, she mentioned it.

Victoria:
Watch out. She's pretty good.

Lincoln:
We'll see.

Gabriel:
Dinner will be ready in about 30 minutes.

Lincoln:
Cool.

Gabriel:
I'm really sorry about that.

Victoria:
Why did you lie to him?

Gabriel:
I didn't. Theo has had a rough week.

Victoria:
But that's not why she's not here.

Gabriel:
It might as well be.

Victoria:
You should tell him what's going on.

Gabriel:
I'm not exactly sure what's going on, so I think I'll protect him from this bullshit as long as I can.

Victoria:
He obviously blames me.

Gabriel:
He's not usually like that. I don't know what's gotten into him.

Victoria:
You obviously haven't experienced the replacement parent syndrome yet.

Gabriel:
And what is that exactly?

Victoria:

Your child fears that any serious relationship will either end any chance of your parents getting back together or will result in you paying less attention to them.

Gabriel:

You've had experience with that?

Victoria:

I've been single for five years. Yes, I've had experience with this.

Gabriel:

I'm not your first serious relationship since your divorce?

Victoria:

No.

Gabriel:

Well, you're mine.

Victoria:

No, I'm not.

Gabriel:

Yes, you are. I haven't been serious with anyone since Kate left.

Victoria:

Maybe not romantically, but Theo is a huge part of your life. And Lincoln obviously thinks I'm imposing on that. That's funny to you?

Gabriel:

No, it's not that. It's nice that we're both experiencing something new together. You get a family dinner that's just a meal, and I get a jealous pissed off teenager.

Victoria:

I think I got the better end of the deal.

Victoria:

Thank you for tonight. It was lovely.

Gabriel:

Anytime.

[They kiss.]

Victoria:

Maybe we can make it a weekly thing.

[A door slams in the distance. Loud music blasts through the closed door.]

Gabriel:

Maybe we wait on that.

Victoria:

Yeah.

Calista:

Mom, can we go already? We're going to miss the train.

Victoria:

Patience, please. Have a good night.

Gabriel:

You too.

[Victoria and Calista leave. Gabriel blows out a loud breath and walks to Lincoln's room. The music grows much louder when he opens the door.]

Lincoln:

Don't you knock anymore?

Gabriel:

Turn it down.

[Music continues]

Gabriel:

Turn. It. Down.

[Music shuts off]

Gabriel:

Okay, let's talk.

Lincoln:

I don't feel like it.

Gabriel:
Well, tough shit.

Lincoln:
Are Fridays going to be with her instead now?

Gabriel:
Not every Friday.

Lincoln:
(groans) Is Theo going to be over anytime soon?

Gabriel:
I don't know.

Lincoln:
What about Christmas?

Gabriel:
I don't know.

Lincoln:
I knew this was going to happen. I knew it.

Gabriel:
What?

Lincoln:
Theo said she wasn't going anywhere, but she lied. Victoria's ruining everything.

Gabriel:
If anyone ruined anything tonight, it was you.

Lincoln:
Whatever.

Gabriel:
We're not done talking.

Lincoln:
I said I don't feel like it.

Gabriel:
Where are you going?

Lincoln:
Out.

Gabriel:
No, you're not.

Lincoln:
You always say that if something's overwhelming, I should give myself some space.

Gabriel:
Where are you going?

Lincoln:
Just a walk around the block.

Gabriel:
Fine, but we're talking when you get back.

Lincoln:
Whatever.

[Lincoln leaves]

Gabriel:
At least he can't slam that door.

[Doorbell rings]

Theo:
Identify the person at the door.

DIPA:
Lincoln Larson.

[Theo walks to the door and opens it]

Lincoln:
Hi.

Theo:
What are you doing here?

Lincoln:
I'm alone.

Theo:
What's wrong? Did something happen?

Lincoln:
Yeah.

Theo:
What? What happened?

Lincoln:
No, nothing. It's not an emergency or anything.

Theo:
Ugh. Does your dad know you're here?

Lincoln:
No.

Theo:
Where does he think you are? Lincoln.

Lincoln:
Walking around our neighborhood.

Theo:
Ugh.

Lincoln:
Can I come in?

Theo:
You're already here.

[Lincoln comes in. The door closes.]

Theo:
Call your father.

Lincoln:
Why?

Theo:
Call him.

Lincoln:
Why don't you?

Theo:
Because you are old enough to own up to your mistakes and...?

Lincoln:
And what? Why didn't you come to dinner tonight?

Theo:
I don't have to be at dinner every week.

Lincoln:
He said you have a rough week or something, but that's a bunch of bullshit. You always come over.

Theo:
I did have a rough week, and I needed some alone time.

Lincoln:
But you live alone.

Theo:
Wow.

Lincoln:
I'm sorry. I meant Friday is us time.

Theo:
I know. I just couldn't do it this week.

Lincoln:
What about next week?

Theo:
We'll have to see.

Lincoln:
Is it dad's fault?

Theo:
Not exactly.

Lincoln:
It's Victoria, isn't it?

Theo:
No. No. Victoria's lovely.

Lincoln:
You're just saying that because you're too nice.

Theo:
Link, come on.

Lincoln:
You told me you wouldn't go anywhere.

Theo:
And I haven't.

Lincoln:
But things are already changing. I don't want this. Whatever's going on. Whatever he did, he's sorry, I'm sure.

Theo:
It's not that easy.

Lincoln:
You can just call him and talk. Everything will be fine.

[Communicator rings]

Theo:
It's your dad.

Lincoln:
Of course it is.

Gabriel:
Is he there?

Lincoln:
Yes.

Gabriel:
Lincoln, you need to get a transport home right now.

Lincoln:
I wanted to...

Theo:
Actually, it's kind of late. He can stay here tonight.

Lincoln and Gabriel:
Really?

Theo:
Yeah.

Gabriel:
Where?

Theo:
There's a very comfortable sofa in my office. I'll bring him home first thing in the morning. He's probably tired, and you two could use some space.

Gabriel:
You really love space, don't you?

Theo:
Not right now, Gabriel.

Gabriel:
Fine, but don't think you won't be punished.

Lincoln:
Are you talking to me or Theo?

Theo:
Lincoln.

Lincoln:
I'm sorry. Just trying to lighten the mood.

Gabriel:
See you in the morning.

Lincoln:
Thanks, dad.

Gabriel:
You're thanking the wrong person, bud. Bye.

Lincoln:
Thanks.

Theo:
I figured you needed a break.

Lincoln:
Like you?

Theo:
Yeah, like me.

Lincoln:
You're really mad at him, aren't you?

Theo:
Have you ever had a friend who likes the same games and same movies you like?

Lincoln:
They wouldn't be my friends otherwise.

Theo:
Okay, but have you ever told those friends about something you really liked and then they didn't like it at all?

Lincoln:
Yeah.

Theo:
Were you mad about that?

Lincoln:
No. More wretch, I guess.

Theo:
That's how I feel about your dad right now.

Lincoln:
So you're not fighting?

Theo:
We're strongly in disagreement about a work thing. I'm afraid it will go very wrong, but your dad isn't so worried about that. Neither of us can really do much about it though.

Lincoln:
Wait, a work thing?

Theo:
Yes, a work thing.

Lincoln:
Really? That's it?

Theo:
You do know our work things are kind of a big deal.

Lincoln:
Yeah. Okay. Yeah, but it's work.

Theo:
You know as well as I do that work is most of our lives, Linc. I'm used to seeing your dad every day. We usually work pretty closely, and this thing has changed that. I think we both need to figure out how to deal with things being so different.

Lincoln:
Is there anything I can do to change his mind or your mind?

Theo:
Link, that's sweet, but it's not your responsibility. Your dad and I will talk it out.

Lincoln:
When?

Theo:
Soon.

Lincoln:
Dad needs you.

Theo:
Did he tell you that?

Lincoln:
No, but I know it's true. You're the only other person he really cares about, besides me.

Theo:
What about Victoria?

Lincoln:

Yeah. Her too, but it's not the same.

Theo:

Be nice to her, okay? Your dad deserves love.

Lincoln:

You love him, don't you?

Theo:

Not like that.

Lincoln:

Why not?

Theo:

Okay. We are not having that conversation.

Lincoln:

Fine. (long pause) I don't hate Victoria.

Theo:

That's good.

Lincoln:

I'm scared she's going to break up with dad. And if you're not around, what's going to happen?

Theo:

Why wouldn't I be around?

Lincoln:

You weren't around tonight. Do you miss your mom?

Theo:

All the time.

Lincoln:

Was it nice having a mom?

Theo:

It had its ups and downs, but yes, it was nice. Is it nice having a dad?

Lincoln:

It has its ups and downs. Did you know my mom?

Theo:

No. I didn't know your dad until you were a little older.

Lincoln:

Does dad ever talk about her?

Theo:

Maybe once or twice. Have you asked him about her?

Lincoln:

I used to, but then, I noticed he always got really uncomfortable. So I stopped.

Theo:

Do you want to know more about her?

Lincoln:

Maybe. I don't know. Even if I did, what would it matter? I can't go to Canada or wherever she is, and it's not like she'd want to see me anyway.

Theo:

Oh, Linc.

Lincoln:

I'm getting tired. Can I...?

Theo:

Oh yeah, of course. I'll get you a pillow and blanket.

Lincoln:

Please don't tell dad I asked about my mom.

Theo:

That can be between you and me.

Lincoln:

Thanks, and thanks for letting me stay.

Theo:

Link, try not to focus on the bad things that haven't happened yet, because they might not ever happen. You've got to focus on the good things that you already have.

Lincoln:

Ah, that's good advice. Maybe you should take it too.

[Theo throws blankets at Lincoln. They laugh.]

Theo:
Go to bed.

Lincoln:
Night, Theo.

Theo:
Good night.

[Theme music]

DIPA:

This episode featured the voices of Marquita Richardson as Theo Ramsey, James David West as Gabriel Larson, Pamela Paul as Savreen Khanna, J.K. Robbins as Xavier Weiss, Kyle Nishimura as Lincoln Larson, Marina Verlaine as Victoria Kimathy, Meg Biddle Smith as Annabelle, Will Candelaria as Horatio, Mauricio Ortiz-Segura as Elliot, Bjorn Munson as Riley, and me, Drea Silvertooth as DIPA.

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