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Faith:

Hello everyone, it's Faith. And if you are listening to this on Wednesday, January 12th, it's my birthday. (laughs) And for my birthday this year, I have a short wish list. One, share Apollyon with everyone you know, in person, over text message, via social media, just spread the word. Two, if you have the means, join Patreon to help me and the entire Observer Pictures team keep creating. And three, if a monthly donation isn't your cup of tea, feel free to buy me a coffee at ko-fi.com/observerpix. That's K O dash F I dot.com/observerpix. The links to all of these things are in the show notes but you can also find them at observerpictures.com under Support Us. Thank you so much for listening, and I truly hope you enjoy this episode.

DiPA:

Observer Pictures presents Apollyon. Written and directed by Faith McQuinn. This is episode Six: Left Unsaid.

PSA Announcer:

Move beyond the holo with the new Gateway Personal Sensory Suit. Don't simply talk to your family, be with your family. Contact your nearest ICRS communications office to see if you qualify.

Armand:

Good morning, Savreen.

Savreen:

If the sun has not risen, it is not yet morning.

Armand:

(laughs)

Savreen:

(laughs) The boxes are in the trunk.

Armand:

I'll grab them. I made tea. I even bagged some for you to take home.

Savreen:

Armand, you are so good to me.

Armand:

Ah, it's the least I could do.

DiPA:

The time is 0600. The time is 0600.

Theo:

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Alarm off.

Theo:

DiPA, what does my day look like?

DiPA:

RCR training at 0900. Microbiology department meeting at 1330. Team meeting at 1500.

Theo:

Oh, okay. After work I'll eat dinner, watch a movie, and then stare at that damn box some more. (laughs)
Maybe I'll make it interesting and do it from the balcony.

Victoria:

Alarm off. DiPA, I said alarm off.

Gabriel:

Oh shit. That's not your alarm, that's my phone.

Victoria:

Your pants are over there.

Lincoln:

Hey, Dad.

Gabriel:

Link, hey, is everything okay?

Lincoln:

Yeah, yeah. You weren't here when I got up. Are you okay?

Gabriel:

I'm fine. And I'm sorry. I- I completely forgot to call.

Lincoln:

No, it's fine. I just wanted to make sure you're okay. I'm meeting Miller and Jane before school so I'm leaving in a few minutes.

Gabriel:

Did you eat?

Lincoln:

No, we're gonna grab something.

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Gabriel:

Please make sure it's more than just a doughnut.

Lincoln:

I will. I promise.

Gabriel:

Okay. Well, I'll see you when I get home tonight.

Lincoln:

You promise?

Gabriel:

Yes. I promise. Have a good day.

Lincoln:

You too. Love you.

Gabriel:

Love you too.

Victoria:

Uh, is everything all right?

Gabriel:

Yeah.

Victoria:

Then why are you getting dressed?

Gabriel:

I need to get home and shower.

Victoria:

You can shower here.

Gabriel:

I could but ... I also don't wanna be late for work.

Victoria:

Are you implying that we would do more than shower?

Gabriel:

Oh, I am not implying anything.

Victoria:

(laughs) Duly noted. You know, I was thinking about this weekend. Maybe you, Lincoln, Calista and I could all have dinner together?

Gabriel:

I'm not sure this is the right time.

Victoria:

No, you're right. We've only been seeing each other for three months now. It can't possibly be the right time for my family to meet yours. Does Lincoln even know about me?

Gabriel:

He knows that I date.

Victoria:

That's a no then.

Gabriel:

I thought we agreed to keep this casual?

Victoria:

I mean, at the beginning yes, but I didn't expect we'd still be ... We've moved past that, don't you think?

Gabriel:

I really need to go. We're starting RCR training today which means I'll be on your side of campus if you wanna have lunch.

Victoria:

I have a busy day. I'm not even sure if I'll make it to the commissary.

Gabriel:

Right. Well, then I'll see myself out.

Victoria:

You do that.

DiPA:

Larson, Gabriel. Access granted.

Gabriel:

I fucked up.

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Theo:

Good morning.

Gabriel:

Good morning. I fucked up.

Theo:

Hopefully this is a personal fuck up because we don't have much time to deal with a professional one before training today.

Gabriel:

It's definitely personal. I was at Vicki's this morning and she asked if we- she and I and Lincoln and Calista, could have dinner this weekend.

Theo:

Calista's her daughter, right?

Gabriel:

Yeah.

Theo:

And what did you say?

Gabriel:

That it wasn't the right time.

Theo:

I'm assuming you didn't mean for her to come up with a different day?

Gabriel:

I did not.

Theo:

How long have you been together?

Gabriel:

We're not together.

Theo:

Uh, all right. Backing up. How did she react when you said it wasn't the right time for you, and she, and your children to go somewhere together?

Gabriel:

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Something about three months is a long time for our families to not meet.

Theo:

It is a long time for two people to be together and not-

Gabriel:

We are not together. We have sex often.

Theo:

How often?

Gabriel:

Two, sometimes three times a week?

Theo:

Consistently? Don't answer that. Do you do anything else together?

Gabriel:

We've had lunch in the commissary a few times. You've been there for at least two of them.

Theo:

Have you or she stayed the night before?

Gabriel:

Y- sometimes. It's usually at her place since she splits custody with Calista's father. She stayed over I think twice when Lincoln has been at a friend's house.

Theo:

So neither of you have met the other's child?

Gabriel:

No.

Theo:

Mm. But she's definitely ready to change that.

Gabriel:

It would seem so.

Theo:

Exactly what do you think you fucked up since you're not together?

Gabriel:

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I left before we could discuss anything.

Theo:

Oh.

Gabriel:

I don't think your children should meet every person you sleep with.

Theo:

Has Linc met anyone you've slept with? I don't count.

Gabriel:

No.

Theo:

You've been with Victoria for the past three months, staying at her home and she stayed at yours, but it's casual?

Gabriel:

Absolutely. What?

Theo:

Mm.

DiPA:

Horatio Luna paging Gabriel Larson.

Gabriel:

Connect. What's up, Horatio?

Horatio:

Hey, Dr. Larson. We're about to head over to the DHH. Do you and Dr. Ramsey wanna join us?

Theo:

We actually have a few more things to get done.

Gabriel:

They can wait. We'll meet you at the elevator.

Horatio:

Great.

Theo:

I thought you wanted to talk about this.

Gabriel:

I thought it was gonna go a different way.

Theo:

Mm- we're not done.

Gabriel:

Well, we are for now.

Savreen:

You looked troubled. What's wrong?

Armand:

I just received this email from a friend of mine. They run a clinic in outer Atlanta.

Savreen:

This could be a regular recruitment. DHH sends them out nearly every quarter.

Armand:

We didn't get any notices. This isn't regular recruitment.

Savreen:

They could be doing a health study just in Atlanta. Nothing here suggests-

Armand:

The stipend is too high. Why are you making excuses?

Savreen:

They're not excuses. I'm exploring possibilities.

Armand:

Have you spoke to Jamila's daughter? She's in Atlanta, right?

Savreen:

She is. I haven't spoken to her yet.

Armand:

What are you waiting for?

Savreen:

It's very complicated.

Armand:

Well, uncomplicate it.

Savreen:

She works for the ICRS.

Armand:

But so do you.

Savreen:

Not in the same capacity. I will speak to her though. I promise.

Dr. Milgrim:

Okay. Let's discuss specifics of Phase One. There will only be between 50 to 70 subjects, all genders, between the ages of 25 and 45. Patient safety is our top priority in every trial we run. Because of that, the DHH will be in charge of subject selection.

Annabelle:

Sorry to interrupt, Dr. Milgrim, but are you saying that we have no say in who you choose?

Dr. Milgrim:

Not exactly. We will follow the parameters set by Drs. Ramsey and Larson. But we make the individual selections. Each potential subject goes through a physical health assessment to make sure they're fit for the program. Then, each subject from that pool goes through a mental health assessment. As I said, we ensure the safety our patients from all aspects.

Horatio:

Are all the subjects local to Atlanta?

Dr. Milgrim:

Great question! For Phase One, they are chosen from the Atlanta limits as well as within a 45 mile radius outside the limits. When the study moves to Phase Two, we'll conduct it from our headquarters here as well as DHH facilities in London, New Delhi, and Vancouver. They will also be open to those within and outside the limits.

Annabelle:

What are the percentages from outside the limits?

Dr. Milgrim:

Very high. Usually around 98%.

Elliot:

And why is that?

Horatio:

The money.

Dr. Milgrim:

The money plays a part, I'm sure. The ICRS subjects are paid to be part of any clinical trial. And individuals outside the limits, of course, are more willing to participate for the pay we offer.

Horatio:

(laughs)

Dr. Milgrim:

But, I believe it's more about the chance to be within the limits.

Annabelle:

If people are getting paid, that isn't exactly volunteering.

Dr. Milgrim:

Untrue. We do not force anyone to be part of the program or coerce them to stay within the program. It is fully up to them, hence, they are volunteering.

Elliot:

For research purposes, wouldn't you want a better balance of people?

Theo:

People outside the limits are no different than those within.

Elliot:

I'm sorry, Dr. Ramsey, I, I didn't mean to offend. Uh, what I meant is that people within the limits live in a different environment than those outside the limits. Uh, rural versus urban can have an effect-

Theo:

That's a misnomer. A majority of the people who live within a 45 mile radius of Atlanta live in suburban communities, not rural.

Elliot:

I didn't know that.

Gabriel:

It's all right, Elliot. Most people your age don't.

Dr. Milgrim:

And it's irrelevant to this study. We're looking for healthy people within the age range we set no matter where they've been raised. Okay.

Theo:

I'm sure Elliot would love to shadow your team during the selection process. He did a few days with the primate research team during those trials.

Dr. Milgrim:

I'm sorry. We don't allow anyone outside the facility to participate in assessment. It is not that we don't trust you as scientists-

Gabriel:

Research scientists just have terrible bedside manner.

Dr. Milgrim:

(laughs) While that is very true, it's more nuanced than that.

Theo:

Do you have any interns with the DHH?

Dr. Milgrim:

No we do not. Everyone who works within this department is heavily vetted. The work we do cannot be left to those who aren't properly educated.

Theo:

That's interesting.

Dr. Milgrim:

Dr. Ramsey, DHH is the most front facing research department within the ICRS. We don't function as the other research departments do. Back to the details of Phase One. Once we have our subjects selected, they will move to ICRS housing for the duration of the study. They will have no physical contact with anyone outside of DHH approved healthcare workers.

Gabriel:

Will we be allowed to monitor vaccine administration?

Dr. Milgrim:

We record all interactions with participants. You may request those files if you require them. Otherwise, we will deliver all patient data on a daily basis.

Dr. Milgrim:

That's our time for today. We have just two more sessions and then you will all be set for Phase One of human trials. This has been a very productive day.

Theo:

I, I have a few more questions.

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Dr. Milgrim:

Dr. Ramsey, I have a very tight schedule. You can send those questions to my inbox and I'll make sure to answer them in tomorrow's session. Okay? Great.

Elliot:

It's nice to know I'm not properly educated.

Horatio:

Come on, I doubt that's what she meant.

Elliot:

What's the point of going through responsible conduct training if we're never gonna interact with human subjects?

Annabelle:

ICRS still has to make sure we understand the ethics of research.

Elliot:

That's true.

Annabelle:

Ah, I'm hungry. I hear the north campus commissary has a lobster bisque today!

Horatio:

Now that sounds like a plan.

Annabelle:

(laughs)

Horatio:

Wanna join us?

Theo:

You three go ahead.

Theo:

[crosstalk 00:15:31]

Theo:

That was a little strange, right?

Gabriel:

I assume you're not referring to Dr. Milgrim's swift exit?

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Theo:

No.

Gabriel:

Not having any interaction is unusual, I think. This is our first human study.

Theo:

Hm. I- remember the mock trial we did in grad school? We were able to interact. Why would they do a mock up that wasn't standard procedure?

Gabriel:

We've been out of school for a while. Things change. Hence the training?

Theo:

I guess.

Gabriel:

We should grab lunch. We have a department meeting in, uh, 90 minutes.

Theo:

Mm. Uh, there's Victoria. Victoria!

Gabriel:

What are you doing?

Theo:

Being an adult.

Victoria:

Theo, hello.

Theo:

We were grabbing lunch. Wondering if you'd join us.

Victoria:

Thank you, but no. I'm not staying. Just grabbing a quick bite before I head back. Good to see you though.

Theo:

You as well.

Gabriel:

She didn't even acknowledge my presence.

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Theo:

She was in a hurry.

Gabriel:

Obviously not too much of a hurry. She stopped to talk to our lab techs.

Theo:

Ah. Do you wanna go sit outside?

Gabriel:

Yes, please.

Theo:

(laughs)

Theo:

Felicity Milgrim really is interesting.

Gabriel:

You don't like her?

Theo:

I didn't say that.

Gabriel:

You called her by her full name.

Theo:

That is not a thing I do.

Gabriel:

It is.

Theo:

Ah- she rubs me the wrong way.

Gabriel:

She's very happy. No one should be that bright and sunny all the time.

Theo:

Mm, I actually like that about her.

Gabriel:

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Oh ...

Theo:

(laughs) Did it seem as if she was avoiding our questions about patient interaction?

Gabriel:

She answered everything.

Theo:

Okay. Not avoiding. Um, redirecting?

Gabriel:

Everyone in DHH is like that though. They all keep information very close to the chest. They're like the CIA.

Theo:

The what?

Gabriel:

Central Intelligence Agency? It was a US government agency that dealt in security. Secrets were their way of protecting the country. Didn't you learn this in high school history?

Theo:

Ah, I failed history. I'm not very good with dates.

Gabriel:

Yet you probably remember the results of the first PCR you ever performed.

Theo:

Okay, not the same.

Gabriel:

(laughs)

Theo:

Anyway, do you think Felicity Milgrim-

Gabriel:

Ah! You did it.

Theo:

Okay. Do you think Dr. Milgrim is secretive because she's trying to protect us?

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Gabriel:

I have no opinion on the matter.

Theo:

I simply don't understand why we can't observe patient interaction-

Gabriel:

Ugh.

Theo:

... and the no intern policy? That's very interesting.

Gabriel:

You need to eat.

Theo:

Back to Victoria.

Gabriel:

Ugh ... Right.

Theo:

You've been seeing her for more than a couple weeks. That's more serious than you've been in years.

Gabriel:

But it's not serious.

Theo:

I didn't say it was serious. I said it was more so than usual for you.

Gabriel:

But is it?

Theo:

How is it not?

Gabriel:

I don't know anything about her. I've never met her daughter. We haven't even been on a proper date. It's just sex.

Theo:

Mm, but you've had sex with other people and then moved on.

Gabriel:

Yeah.

Theo:

I think you're into her. And the feeling is apparently mutual.

Gabriel:

Ugh. I really thought we were on the same page, you know? Just having fun with each other.

Theo:

But you enjoy her company.

Gabriel:

I do.

Theo:

Then what's the issue here?

Gabriel:

I'm not ready for anything meaningful.

Theo:

Lincoln can handle more than you think he can.

Gabriel:

I said I wasn't ready.

Theo:

Linc is always at the front of your mind. I mean, every decision you make, you think about how he'd feel first. He'll be all right.

Gabriel:

Those are wise words coming from someone who's never been in serious relationship.

Theo:

By choice. Thank you very much.

Gabriel:

I'm not trying to attack you. I promise. Okay? I just worry about you as much as you worry about me. You deserve someone, Theo. Or a few someones.

Theo:

I don't have time for that.

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Gabriel:

I work just as hard as you do. Trust me, you have time for it.

Theo:

That may be true now, but getting to this point I had to work three times as hard as you. I didn't have the luxury of sleeping around.

Gabriel:

But we're at this point. So what's your excuse now?

Theo:

I'm very comfortable being alone.

Gabriel:

Oh, that's bullshit.

Theo:

Why do you think it's better to have meaningless sex instead of a real relationship with someone?

Gabriel:

Because I'm scared.

Theo:

Oh.

Gabriel:

You thought I was going to divert.

Theo:

You usually do.

Gabriel:

See, this is a little heavy for a lunchtime conversation.

Theo:

You started it.

Gabriel:

That I did.

Theo:

We can go back to conspiracy theories of DHH being CIA.

Gabriel:

When Kate left for about a week I thought she was gonna change her mind. I didn't go to class or work because I wanted to be there when she came back. Link would cry, and I'd sit there and I'd let him for a few minutes, thinking she'd walk through the door and pick him up. Seven whole days of putting my life on hold, of letting my son cry longer than he should have because I was hoping for something that wasn't going to happen. So yeah, I buried myself in work and never really cared about the people I slept with because I didn't want to go through that ever again.

Theo:

Is Victoria different?

Gabriel:

Maybe.

Theo:

Then you need to talk to her.

Gabriel:

I know.

Savreen:

There you are.

Armand:

Just needed some fresh air.

Savreen:

I'm about to head home.

Armand:

It's three already?

Savreen:

Actually, it's 3:30. There was a family worried about taking the full box.

Armand:

Did they take it?

Savreen:

After many reassurances, yes. I don't know how Jamila did it.

Armand:

We can't all be psychiatrists.

Savreen:

True, true.

Armand:

I miss her.

Savreen:

I do as well. Every day.

Armand:

Casey hasn't been back.

Savreen:

Remind them it wasn't their fault.

Armand:

I don't think it matters what I say. It didn't matter when I told you and Jamila to stop coming.

Savreen:

I need to get going before the checkpoint shift change. Don't stay too late tonight.

Armand:

I can't make any promises.

Savreen:

I'm well aware. I'll see you next week.

Armand:

And you'll talk to Jamila's daughter?

Savreen:

I will. I promise.

DiPA:

Good evening, Theo.

Theo:

Messages?

DiPA:

You have one message.

Theo:

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Play please.

DiPA:

Message received at 12:15 from Reese Williams.

Reese (recording):

This is a reminder that you and I are going out for drinks tomorrow night. I'll pretend you didn't need this reminder but I know better.

Theo:

(laughs)

Reese (recording):

Tomorrow night, seven PM, I'll be at your door and you better be ready. (laughs)

Theo:

(laughs) Archive.

DiPA:

Incoming audio call from Savreen Kana.

Theo:

Connect. Hello Savreen.

Savreen:

Hello my dear. Are you busy?

Theo:

No.

Savreen:

Wonderful. Have you had a chance to go through the items in the package I sent?

Theo:

I actually haven't opened it yet.

Savreen:

Why not?

Theo:

It feels too final. It feels like the last connection to mom and I'm not ... It's silly. I know.

Savreen:

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It's not. But I do urge you to open it soon. The heaviness you feel will only grow if you wait. And please, after you go through everything, call me.

Theo:

I will.

Theo:

It's just a box. It's just a box full of things your mother wanted you to have.

Theo:

What's in here, Mom? Open it and find out, Theodora. Good lord. Just do it.

Savreen:

Hm. It's the clinic ...

DiPA:

Incoming video message from Theodora Ramsey.

Savreen:

Connect. Theo, is something wrong? Theo?

Theo:

There are papers in this box that honest to God came from hemp paper.

Savreen:

You opened it.

Theo:

Yes. And I don't think you really wanted me to open it to relieve the heaviness in my heart.

Savreen:

That was part of it.

Theo:

(laughs) Those papers had the name of a clinic, a clinic outside the limits.

Savreen:

It is.

Theo:

That's it? That's all you're gonna say? Mom, and I assume you as well, were working at a clinic outside the limits where she definitely contracted AVS and all you're gonna say is "it is."

Savreen:

What do you want me to say?

Theo:

An explanation would be nice.

Savreen:

Have you looked through the other things in the box?

Theo:

No. The realization that my mother and her best friend knowingly put themselves in danger put a halt to my desire to dig any deeper. Mom never liked talked about her work after Dad died. I mean, I- I just came to accept that. But you? You never kept things from me.

Savreen:

Jamila didn't want me to say anything so I didn't.

Theo:

She's dead. It doesn't matter what she wanted.

Savreen:

It matters a great deal.

Theo:

Did she move to Denver for this?

Savreen:

I was working at the clinic for about a year before I told your mother about it. She had already been considering leaving Atlanta and she thought moving to a new city where she could do some good would be wise.

Theo:

Wise is absolutely not the word I would use in this situation.

Savreen:

That's sense of wanting to help everyone, you get that from your mother.

Theo:

Is the clinic illegal?

Savreen:

No, everyone there is licensed to practice.

Theo:

Then why there?

Savreen:

They needed us. The closest ICRS approved clinic outside the limits is over an hour away. There are people here who can't afford to make that trip regularly.

Theo:

And what can you do?

Savreen:

Through some of our connections, your mother and I were able to get cases of Redivir to the clinic.

Theo:

Oh my God.

Savreen:

We've saved so many people, Theo.

Theo:

Oh my God.

Savreen:

Jamila was so wonderful with everyone here. She could soothe all the people who were afraid to take the medicine, afraid that they would get in trouble, or that it would poison them.

Theo:

A legitimate fear with black market drugs.

Savreen:

Don't be dramatic. Every Redivir packet we acquired came from an ICRS manufacturer.

Theo:

How do you get past the checkpoint?

Savreen:

I'd rather not say.

Theo:

You'd rather not say? Okay. You said our connections. What connections did Mom have to get Redivir?

Savreen:

Jamila was very good with people.

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Theo:

(laughs) You aren't really answering any of my questions. You realize that, right? Why would either of you do something so incredibly dangerous?

Savreen:

There is very little danger and it had to be this way.

Theo:

Why?

Savreen:

You should keep looking through that box. The answers are there.

Theo:

Savreen, just tell me!

Savreen:

I've had a long day. I need to rest. Good night, Theodora.

Theo:

Don't you dare hang up on me. Dammit. DiPA, call Savreen Kana.

DiPA:

Calling Savreen Kana.

Theo:

Ah.

DiPA:

Theo, I cannot complete the call. How would you like to proceed?

Theo:

End call.

DiPA:

This episode featured the voices of Marquita Richardson as Theo Ramsey, James David West as Gabriel Larson, Pamela Paul as Savreen Khanna, Marisha Tapera as Reese Williams, Kyle Nishimura as Lincoln, Marina Verlaine as Victoria Kimathy, Kirsty Woolven as Dr. Milgrim, Meg Biddle Smith as Annabelle, Will Candelaria as Horatio, Mauricio Ortiz-Segura as Elliot, Brian Huey as PSA Announcer, Marta da Silva as ICRS computer. And me, Drea Silvertooth as DiPA. Producer Amanda Lorraine. Sound design and mix, Joshua Suhy. Sound recordist, Karl Huber. Original theme, Catherine Seton. Additional music provided by Sound Stripe Music. Virology consultants, Lindsey B. Crawford, PhD, and Peter Krug, PhD. For more information, please visit Apollyon.observerpictures.com.

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