

EPISODE 4

INT. SECRET LAB - DAY

ATMO: Faint BUZZ of fluorescent lights. Occasional BEEPS and the STUTTER of a computer.

HOME SECURITY SYSTEM VOICE
(heard through the
ceiling)
"Welcome home, Dr. Harbor."

ABIGAIL
Milo, was that your dumb security
greeting?

MILO
No way. How could it be?

ETHAN
Because we're under our house.

ABIGAIL
Your house in Massachusetts? We
flew to Scotland to get sent back
to where we started?

ETHAN
Apparently. Look at this stuff.

SFX: He SHUFFLES blueprints and schematics. A CLANK as he
shifts a device.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Schematics, part of a push pack,
like a dozen empty coffee cups...

ABIGAIL
Set of golf clubs.

SFX: Light CLATTER as Ethan examines the bag of clubs.

ETHAN
Yep. Old-school, actual-wood clubs.
Those are his. This is all dad.

MILO
Dad did not have a secret lab under
the house. How would he even access
it?

ETHAN

Same way we did, through the--

SFX: Spluttering as the LEYLINE SNAPS SHUT.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

--leyline.

ABIGAIL

Oh, crap. This stupid...

SFX: A CLUNK as Abigail puts the push pack on a table. KA-SCHINCK as she opens the battery chamber.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Yeah, battery's dead again. I need to refit this with something bigger.

ETHAN

Check this out.

ABIGAIL

Whoa. Yeah, if people were constantly calling me a conspiracy nut, I probably would hide my giant map covered in pushpins and string.

MILO

Are these...

ETHAN

Leyline connections. Look: here's Steinert Hall to Göbekli Tepe.

MILO

He was charting the whole network?

ETHAN

Yeah. Here's his "commute." He would drive ten minutes to this node in Tewksbury, which takes him to--

(he squints)

--the Duddingston Golf Course in Edinburgh. Maybe plays a round, then walks over to the Sheep Heid Inn and hops back to this lab.

MILO

Hey, maybe we can use the map to figure out where he went? Is there a leyline marked at MIT?

(He looks)

(MORE)

MILO (CONT'D)

Yeah, but it's not connected to any others. And it's orange. Why is it the only orange one?

ABIGAIL

Because I don't think it was a normal leyline.

MILO

What?

SFX: SHUFFLING papers.

ABIGAIL

These schematics are for the Think Tank at MIT. And this one is a quantum resonance generator, like the biggest one I've ever seen. We have them at McCall, but ours create a resonance field that's, I dunno, a few millimeters in diameter. This one is three meters.

ETHAN

So what does a giant quantum resonance field do?

ABIGAIL

Nothing practical, usually. We use them to study subatomic dynamics. But it looks like your father thought that, with a big enough field, he could tear an entrance into the leyline network.

MILO

Like making an artificial leyline?

ABIGAIL

Exactly. You wouldn't be limited to naturally occurring nodes. You could enter the network anywhere, like a needle puncturing a vein. If he had pulled it off, it would have revolutionized global transport.

MILO

Maybe he did pull it off.

ETHAN

What do you mean?

MILO

Dakota said she saw the leyline open at dad's demonstration. Maybe the artificial leyline worked for just long enough to pull him through before it exploded.

ETHAN

That's... I mean, is that possible?

ABIGAIL

In theory, but--

MILO

So if we reopen the same leyline, we can find him!

ABIGAIL

Milo, the only thing we know for certain is that, whatever your dad was doing, it killed eleven people. If we follow his plan, what's to say we won't blow ourselves up?

A beat.

ETHAN

Culture.

MILO

What?

ETHAN

Look at the map: where are the nodes? We've got the major cities, sure, but look at this one, way out in Western China. That's gotta be the ruins of Jiaohe.

MILO

Which is...

ETHAN

An ancient city, nowhere near China's biggest population centers. Same with this one, southern Peru, middle of nowhere. That's Choquequirao.

MILO

Is the point that you know a lot of hard-to-pronounce cities?

ETHAN

The point is that leylines aren't just tied to population. They're tied to cultural significance.

ABIGAIL

Okay, but how does that help us?

ETHAN

Dad didn't care about culture. He was arrogant; he thought he could brute force a leyline into existence. And he was half right, he could open a leyline, but, without any cultural connection, it wouldn't be stable. That's why his attempt was a catastrophe.

ABIGAIL

But if you can only open an artificial leyline where there's already cultural connection, then it's not really an improvement.

ETHAN

Unless you have a way to make culture portable.

ABIGAIL

As in...

ETHAN

Artifacts.

MILO

Oh, my god. This whole speech was you trying to make your dissertation seem relevant?

ETHAN

There is a theory that physical objects can become imprinted with memory. They're called engrams. These places are ruins now, so why do they have leylines? Because they're anchored to the cultural memory of the very walls. That's what I felt at Gobekli Tepe, something powerful in the air. We can mimic that by using an imprinted object as a kind of... anchor artifact to stabilize the leyline.

MILO

So, what, we go dig up some old bricks?

ETHAN

We could use anything. It just needs to have cultural significance and, ideally, be really old.

MILO

And that will make dad's leyline work.

ETHAN

Yes.

ABIGAIL

You sound pretty confident given that you clearly just pulled this idea out of your ass.

ETHAN

It makes sense! Milo, tell me that this isn't the exact kind of mistake dad would make. Thinking he could outsmart nature.

Beat.

MILO

I mean, yeah, that's dad.

ABIGAIL

(to Milo)

So now you believe all that?

MILO

If it means we can find dad, it's worth a shot. We'll need the quantum resonance generator. Do you think Cameron could get us access to the Think Tank?

ABIGAIL

Uh, probably. Her name is on the building.

MILO

And Ethan, we need, what, an artifact that represents Boston?

ETHAN

My department at BU has some Colonial pottery that could work.

(MORE)

ETHAN (CONT'D)
They've got these pre-Revolutionary
teapots with surprisingly intricate
sunflower patterns--

MILO
We don't need the details. Can you
get one?

ETHAN
I'm not exactly on the best terms
with my advisor right now, but... I
think so.

MILO
Alright! We've got a plan!

ABIGAIL
We're also trapped in a basement
with no exits and a dead push pack.

MILO
Well, when you're in a trap, you
grab your wedge.

SFX: Golf clubs RATTLE as Milo pulls one out.

ETHAN
That's a nine iron.

MILO
Well, dad never actually took me
golfing, so I would't know that,
would I?

SFX: WHACK--Milo hits the drywall ceiling with the golf club.

ABIGAIL
Jesus, Milo!

SFX: WHACK! WHACK! WHACK--kerCHUNK as a bunch of drywall
tumbles down.

MILO
(spitting out drywall
dust)
Sbbppft. Blecch.

ETHAN
Oh, wow. Okay: I'm a little mad you
figured that out before I did.

ABIGAIL
Is that a... wait, how did you know
there'd be a hatch there?

ETHAN

Because we're below our old
bedroom. There was a hatch under
the rug that our dad sealed up and
told us to never touch.

SFX: Milo KNOCKS twice on the wooden hatch with the golf
club.

MILO

All those hours dad said he was at
work, and he was ten feet below us.

A beat.

ETHAN

Let's go.

SFX: CREAK of the hatch opening.

MUSIC: Transition into...

INT. CAMERON'S PLANE - DAY

ATMO: The DRONE of jet engines and airplane AC.

SFX: A friendly DING.

A PILOT (50s) speaks over the PA system.

PILOT

Folks, ah, we're at cruising
altitude. Should be landing at
Boston Logan in about six hours.

CAMERON

Six hours. For a journey your
friends made in about thirty
seconds. Marvelous, don't you
think?

NOAH

Not the word I'd use.

CAMERON

Oh? How would you describe
leylines?

Beat.

NOAH

Unknown.

CAMERON

Hm. A prudent perspective. I like that.

(beat)

I must attend to other business. Sawyer will keep you company. Please help yourself to some rosewater kombucha.

SFX: SLIDE of a door as Cameron enters a separate compartment.

A few moments of silence, then:

SAWYER

Military?

NOAH

Huh?

SAWYER

You're military. Army Ranger.

NOAH

Oh, yeah. How'd you know?

SAWYER

You got a Ranger patch on your jacket.

NOAH

Oh. Right.

(beat)

Well, I'm not a Ranger anymore.

SAWYER

No?

A beat as Sawyer comprehends.

SAWYER (CONT'D)

I see. Marine Force Recon, myself.

More silence.

SAWYER (CONT'D)

Not the only way to use what you've got, your skills. To protect people.

NOAH

I'm not even sure people want protecting.

SAWYER

It's not about what they want. It's about what they need.

(beat)

You understand me?

NOAH

Yeah.

SAWYER

Anyway. You think on it.

A longer beat.

NOAH

I will.

MUSIC: Pensive transition.

INT. BU - ARCHAEOLOGY DEPARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

SFX: STEPS ECHO down a long hallway.

MILO

Why do universities always have to look so old? Like, you can spend some of that endowment to upgrade the paneling. Or is that just because it's the Archaeology Department?

Beat.

MILO (CONT'D)

Get it? Because you study old stuff?

ETHAN

Yes, I get it. I told you I could do this alone.

MILO

But what if you need moral support? Or a sense of humor?

ETHAN

Whatever. We're here. Just go sit on that bench and wait, okay?

SFX: Ethan KNOCKS on the wooden office door.

From through the door, we hear DR. MAYUMI KIHARA (51, formidable and precise).

DR. KIHARA
 (muffled)
 A moment, please.

ETHAN
 (quietly, to Milo)
 Sit!

MILO
 (quietly)
 What if she says no?

ETHAN
 (quietly)
 She won't.

Milo SIGHS.

SFX: A couple FOOTSTEPS in the hallway, then a wooden bench
 CREAKS as Milo sits.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS inside the office, then the door OPENS.

DR. KIHARA
 (surprised)
 Ethan.

ETHAN
 Hi, Dr. Kihara. Do you have a
 minute?

A long pause.

DR. KIHARA
 Very well. Come in.

ETHAN
 Thanks.

INT. BU - DR. KIHARA'S OFFICE - DAY

SFX: The office door closes.

ATMO: Several desk fans WHIR LOUDLY.

ETHAN
 Wow, it's like an oven in here.

DR. KIHARA
 Yes, the AC in these old buildings
 reliably fails at exactly 90
 degrees.

ETHAN

May I sit?

DR. KIHARA

I'd prefer if we made this quick.

ETHAN

Sure. Okay.

(beat)

I know I... I'm sorry for my behavior last time we spoke.

DR. KIHARA

You ranted at me at a bar. In front of my colleagues. I believe "academic cesspit" and "clown college" were phrases you selected.

ETHAN

Yes. That was absolutely unacceptable. And this is not to excuse my actions whatsoever, but it's just that, after my father's death, I wasn't in my right mind--

DR. KIHARA

I accept your apology. However, my decision stands. I cannot continue as your advisor.

ETHAN

I'm not here about that.

A beat as Dr. Kihara considers what might be coming.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

I'm working on something new. And if I could access some artifacts from the archives--

DR. KIHARA

Who are you working with? It can't be anyone in the department.

ETHAN

Um... it's just me, right now. But I'm really close to a significant breakthrough, something that could potentially change the world.

DR. KIHARA

Like your father.

ETHAN

No, not like...

(beat)

It's not about my dad. I just need your help. I've already seen things that would completely change our understanding of how human culture intertwines with nature. Yesterday, in Göbekli Tepe--

DR. KIHARA

You were in Turkey?

ETHAN

Yes. But these... this thing I'm studying, it's a worldwide phenomenon. This pub in Edinburgh--

DR. KIHARA

And when were you in Scotland?

ETHAN

Er... this morning. I know how that sounds, but I can provide evidence that will make everything clear. If you could just give me authorization to--

DR. KIHARA

Ethan, let me stop you. I wanted this to come through official channels, but, given the course of this conversation, I think it's best if I let you know: your PhD has been denied.

ETHAN

What? There was nothing wrong with my dissertation!

Dr. Kihara doesn't have a response.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

It's my father, isn't it? The university doesn't want to associate with him. Jesus. The whole point of this degree was that I'm not him!

Beat.

DR. KIHARA

Ethan, I can't speak to the committee's decision.

(MORE)

DR. KIHARA (CONT'D)
But let me act as your advisor one final time. Until you can put the work itself ahead of the reputation it garners, you won't find what you're looking for.

ETHAN
Well, if I'm no longer associated with this department, then I don't have to listen to lectures.

Beat.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Enjoy your sauna office.

SFX: Ethan leaves and SLAMS the door.

INT. BU - ARCHAEOLOGY DEPARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

ATMO: Ethan's FOOTSTEPS ECHO in the hall.

ETHAN
"Enjoy your sauna office." Nice one, Ethan.

SFX: Milo TROTS up. He's BREATHING HEAVILY.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Where'd you go? I told you to stay here!

MILO
Yeah, well, I didn't. What'd she say?

ETHAN
That I've apparently wasted the last five years of my life. They denied my PhD. Which, obviously, also means I can't get into the archives.

MILO
Aw, crap, man. Listen: screw those guys. Remember what dad used to say: "Academia is for smart people who never want to accomplish anything."

ETHAN

I don't really want to talk about dad right--wait, what's with the Starbucks bag?

MILO

Oh! I got the teapot.

ETHAN

You got the--you broke into the archives?!

MILO

I picked the lock on one of the side doors. Well, more accurately, I smashed the lock. Kind of a picking-smashing combo.

ETHAN

You didn't think I could convince her.

MILO

I... okay, yes, fine. I thought maybe it wouldn't go well, so... I'm sorry. I should've waited. But hey: we've got the artifact, right?

Beat.

ETHAN

(begrudgingly)

I guess.

SFX: A DOOR OPENS in the distance.

MILO

We probably shouldn't hang around. Let's hope Abigail was able to get us into the Think Tank.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS as they hurry down the hall.

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INT. MCCALL ENERGY CAMPUS - OPEN WORKSPACE - DAY

ATMO: An open-plan office. TYPING, some quiet CHATTER, occasional FOOTSTEPS.

CAMERON

Abigail! Come on in!

ABIGAIL

Hi, I--

CAMERON

Quite the adventure we've had! And, of course, I've brought back Noah, safe and sound.

NOAH

Hey. You okay?

ABIGAIL

(brusque)

Yeah.

(to Cameron)

Is this your... office?

CAMERON

In a sense. My father's office is on the top floor, but I like to be out here, shoulder-to-shoulder with my coworkers. And I mean that, Abigail. I consider you--everyone here--my coworkers, not my employees.

NOAH

But you do employ them.

Beat.

CAMERON

Yes. But we have a common goal. A shared mission. And I don't think we can succeed on that mission if I'm looking down on my teammates from some penthouse office. Can I offer you some carbon-offset tea?

ABIGAIL

No, thanks. I actually had a somewhat urgent request. We discovered a lead. We wanted to see if you could get us access to the Think Tank at MIT since, well, you more or less own it.

CAMERON

I don't own the Think Tank. It's part of the university, intended to serve the greater good through cutting-edge research.

ABIGAIL

I meant--

CAMERON

I know; I'm being jocular. I can speak with the administration for you. Can I ask what exactly you are investigating?

ABIGAIL

Uh, I think Ethan and Milo didn't want to share that just yet.

CAMERON

I see.

(beat)

Noah, would you mind if I talked to Abigail one-on-one? Help yourself to some snacks in the relaxation vestibule; I think it's shiitake "wagyu" sliders today.

NOAH

I'll pass on the fungus burgers.
(to Abigail)
I'll see you outside.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS as Noah exits.

CAMERON

I want you to be our Development Lead on the Leylines Initiative.

ABIGAIL

I... I'm sorry, what?

CAMERON

You would have your own research team, a budget that would be, for all conceivable purposes, unlimited, and you would report directly to me. We'd be working together, making the real decisions that will shape the future of our society.

ABIGAIL

I mean, that would be incredible. But... why me? I haven't even been with McCall for a full year.

CAMERON

Because, for one, I know a brilliant mind when I see one.

(MORE)

CAMERON (CONT'D)

More importantly, you know more about leylines than any other living person. Except, perhaps, the Harbor brothers.

ABIGAIL

There's still a lot we don't know.

CAMERON

Which, I'm sure, you will discover in the course of your research. Now, there is a caveat. Our researchers have made significant progress based on Dr. Harbor's work at the Think Tank, but, without the push pack, we can't move forward. Or, rather, you, as Development Lead, can't move forward.

ABIGAIL

Ah.

(beat)

So it's not really about my "brilliant mind." You just need someone to convince the brothers to give you the push pack.

CAMERON

If I wanted to bribe you, I wouldn't use the second most important job in the company. I want you heading up leylines because you're the right woman for the job. But, should you accept, you will need the push pack.

(beat)

Abigail, I believe we have a similar vision for the future. We understand that leylines could be the key to reversing climate change. To creating a panglobal exchange of goods and ideas. To generating a chance for a true utopia. Do we share that vision?

Beat.

ABIGAIL

Yes.

CAMERON

Then get the push pack, and we'll get to work.

ABIGAIL

I can try. But they never agree on anything.

CAMERON

I don't need both brothers. One signature will be sufficient with enough lawyers. And I have no shortage of lawyers.

(beat)

So. I can make a call right now to get you access to the Think Tank. Are you ready to change the world?

MUSIC: Transition to...

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EXT. MCCALL ENERGY CAMPUS - GROUNDS - DAY

ATMO: A lush corporate campus. Birds CHIRP and Segways ZOOM.

SFX: A high-tech door SLIDES open. FOOTSTEPS as Abigail exits the building. She's on the phone.

ABIGAIL

Perfect. Meet at MIT in 30 minutes?

(beat)

Great.

SFX: BEEP as Abigail ends the call.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

(to Noah)

Hey.

NOAH

Who was that?

ABIGAIL

Milo. I got us access to the Think Tank lab. What's the nearest T station, Broadway?

NOAH

Yeah.

ABIGAIL

Okay, let's hurry.

SFX: Abigail and Noah WALK on a GRAVEL PATH.

NOAH

What did Cameron want to talk about?

ABIGAIL
Work stuff.

NOAH
The CEO of your company wanted to
talk about "work stuff"?

ABIGAIL
Yes.

Beat.

NOAH
Okay.

SFX: A few moments of just WALKING.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Oh.

SFX: Noah PULLS A DEVICE FROM HIS POCKET.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Here.

ABIGAIL
What is this?

NOAH
It's a GPS tag.

ABIGAIL
For what?

NOAH
In case we get separated again,
like with the leyline in Scotland.

ABIGAIL
So, what, you can track me down?
Like I'm your lost AirPods?

NOAH
No, it's just--

ABIGAIL
I'm not taking that thing, Noah.
What is going on with you? Why have
you been treating me like a child?

SFX: Noah STOPS WALKING.

NOAH

I... I saw something in Somalia. I think it was a leyline.

SFX: Abigail also STOPS.

ABIGAIL

Why didn't you mention it before?

NOAH

I was ordered not to.

ABIGAIL

Wait, so does the government know about leylines? Are they--

NOAH

I don't know, Abigail. But... it was bad.

(beat)

People were killed. Guys in my unit.

ABIGAIL

By... by the leyline?

NOAH

Yeah. They were torn apart.

ABIGAIL

Oh.

(beat)

I'm sorry.

NOAH

Yeah. I just... I just don't want you to get hurt. Or Milo, or Ethan.

ABIGAIL

I get that, Noah. But we're close to something big here. I could have a real impact on the world. So I don't need a babysitter; I need a partner.

Noah doesn't respond.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Figure out which one you want to be.

SFX: Abigail starts WALKING. After a moment, Noah FOLLOWS.

MUSIC: Transition to...

INT. MIT - THINK TANK CENTER - NIGHT

ATMO: WHIRRING of various computer cooling fans. A very quiet WARBLING noise made by the quantum resonance generator.

ETHAN

It's weird actually seeing all this. Where it happened. In my head, I could only imagine it right after the accident. Body parts.

MILO

Way to set the mood, buddy. Cheer up! We're about to complete dad's work!

NOAH

So how does this generator work?

ABIGAIL

It consumes an obscene amount of energy to create a textured field at the quantum level. Basically, we get a little patch of spacetime to be really pissed off.

MILO

And then the push pack can force that field to tear open into the leyline network. And Ethan's little teapot will keep it stable.

NOAH

So it's not going to blow up.

ETHAN

If all goes well.

NOAH

That's not particularly reassuring.

ETHAN

I assure you: it will go well.
Milo, start it up.

SFX: KACHUNK as Milo turns on the generator. The warbling noise amplifies and becomes a SOFT, ATONAL HUM, like a very deep cello played without melody.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Abigail, you have the calculations
for the push pack?

ABIGAIL
Yep.

SFX: KEYSTROKES and BEEPS as Abigail punches in the numbers.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
This is so cool. We're making
history.

MILO
How do you think we should release
our results? Ooh, can I do a Steve-
Jobs-style keynote?

ABIGAIL
I think it's ready. Milo, place the
teapot.

SFX: Milo STEPS up to the generator. A TINK of china as he
places the teapot.

MILO
Tea is served.

ETHAN
Here we go.

SFX: The HUM GROWS. The sound starts to WARP and BUBBLE, and
then: BWLORMP. The leyline opens.

MUSIC: Quiet, ethereal, triumphant.

NOAH
Whoa.

ABIGAIL
Oh, my god.

MILO
Yes! I take back everything I said
about archaeologists.

ETHAN
This is it. They're gonna have to
give me my degree now.

MILO
Ethan, they're going to give us a
Nobel Prize.

MUSIC: A hint of danger.

NOAH
It looks different.

ETHAN
Yeah. It looks... orange?

NOAH
The edges are ragged.

SFX: The burbling and warping becomes LOUDER and WILDER.

MUSIC: Tension builds.

ETHAN
Milo, kill the generator.

MILO
Hold on. I can see something on the
other side.

ETHAN
It's not stable. Get out of the
way!

MILO
No!

SFX: A SCUFFLE as Milo blocks Ethan from getting to the power
switch.

ETHAN
Get off me! We have to shut it
down!

NOAH
I got it!

SFX: KACHUNK as Noah shuts off the power. But the burbling
and warping continue, throbbing like highway wind buffeting a
car window. It gets faster and faster, louder and louder...

ETHAN
Oh, no...

MUSIC: Builds towards catastrophe, and then...

END OF EPISODE.