

Nora Monologue:

This is Nora. I'm not sure if you're getting my transmissions. I'm in trouble. I can't tell you why. Not now. I've been traveling with a small group of the Collective. We've been on the road now for 2 months trying to get to the Region. I'm not sure if you know about it. Apparently, it's a Collective location not on the radar, somewhere in New Mexico. Our scout's van broke down, and there's about 20 or so of us on foot. We're in an old city of Albuquerque. I'm not sure if we're going to make it. If we don't, it's all my fault. I can't believe I could be so stupid. I'll send another transmit as soon as I can.

Nora Monologue:

I don't know if you're getting my transmissions. I'm still on audio. Riding a bike, in the desert, at night, six months pregnant, isn't my first option to get to an Empathy Builder site. I'm on the outskirts of Albuquerque, the border road that traces the edges of the desert. Lots of travellers. It's getting real windy out here. And cigarette smoke in the air. Cigarettes were banned from the planet over 10 years ago and they cost a fortune, like who can afford a fricken cigarette. I could be a small fortune for someone out here real desperate if I'm not careful. My grandmother always told me I wasn't that bright, a sentiment she shared about my mother as well. My grandmother the saint. She smoked. Every time I smell cigarette smoke, I remember our last morning together. It was just before Day Zero..

Nora Scene: (For audition—see Sara Harlem scene below pg. 11)

Guard Scene:

NORA
Hey.

GUARD
Is everything ok? You got to meet the Director?

NORA
Yes, I did. Who are the other women that were here earlier? Why are they here? Are they Carriers?

GUARD

Oh, no no. They come here when they're sick. We used to give out food, but there was a small riot, lots of robberies, so they only treat the sick now.

NORA

Where do people get water?

GUARD

There are tanks that come through here, water pirates.

NORA

Yeah, I heard about them.

GUARD

They get water up north, near Taos. The Plutarchs have pretty much bob-wired all of the water sources up in the mountains, and the pirates don't always make it out alive.

NORA

How do they make money? Doesn't seem like the people around here have money?

GUARD

There's always some way to get coin. Lot of trading of things. People paying people to steal from others, clothing, food, transport. Books.

NORA

Books?

GUARD

Yeah. Now that we don't have the net, rich folks pay a lot of coin for a book. I thought about being a book scout myself, but you know, here I get a place to lay my head and food. If you find one though, a book, let me know. I can hook you up if you need a connect. You know if you share a little coin.

NORA

I actually don't plan on staying here.

GUARD

Oh, you can't leave.

NORA

Why not?

GUARD

The Director told me to make sure to look out for you. You don't want to go out there on your own. Anyone see you like this, a Carrier, you'd get kidnapped in a minute.

NORA

I can take care of myself.

GUARD

I'm sorry, ma'am, but I can't let you go. I'm under orders.

The Director Scene:

THE DIRECTOR

I am so delighted you've chosen the Empathy Builders as a refuge. How may we be of service?

NORA

What is this place? What do you do exactly?

THE DIRECTOR

The Empathy Builder sites are spread sparingly throughout the planet at undisclosed locations. If you are on the run, as you are, you learn only of the location you need to get to, which means I can't tell you exactly how many locations there are.

NORA

Who do you work for, exactly?

THE DIRECTOR

The Empathy Builders are like embassies that have maintained neutrality in the midst of the Collective resistance. We've been around since before you were born.

NORA

Do the Plutarchs know you're here?

THE DIRECTOR

Dear child, you look worried. There's no need to feel apprehensive. We are here to protect you.

NORA

You didn't answer my question.

THE DIRECTOR

Hmmm. The Empathy Builders don't openly oppose the Plutarchs nor openly support the Collective. We do, however, shelter any Carriers, with discretion, of course. The question is, at the moment, have you been tracked?

NORA

What does that mean?

THE DIRECTOR

That means if certain authorities know of your...condition...you may be sought after or tracked. How did you get here, from New York, right?

NORA

I traveled on my own. I was trying to make it to see a friend.

THE DIRECTOR
Of course.

NORA
This territory of New Mexico had become a safe zone for people with brown skin. The Plutarchs have given up on hunting down the endangered races simply because we're expendable. They think we're dying out because they live in areas that lacked water and fertile ground.

NORA
Where are you going? What happens now?

THE DIRECTOR
I'll call for a midwife to come and examine you. My concern now is for your health. You look unwell, as I imagine the journey 'on your own' has compromised your immune system. We want to make sure you and your little one are healthy.

NORA
What's a midwife?

THE DIRECTOR
Ah, so sweet and young. Midwives have been bringing life into the world, well, since the world began, Ms. Harlem.

NORA
Are there other Carriers that have come here?

THE DIRECTOR
The Collective is merely a choice, Ms. Harlem. You're not the only ones who survived the C.E.

Jefferey's Scene (After discovering there is a pregnant woman accompanying them on their journey to the secret location of the Region):

JEFFEREY
Is she going to have it right now?

YOUNG
I don't know.

JEFFEREY
I'm not sure if we can hold out in this place too much longer. What's our situation?

YOUNG
I saw a few travelers passing by on foot, but I don't think we're in any danger.

JEFFEREY

Except that it's going to be daylight soon and if there are any live feeds around this neighborhood, we're screwed.

YOUNG

What are we going to do? The sun is going down?

JEFFEREY

Shit, here comes someone. Cover her stomach.

(A Collective member enters from the other side of the ransacked store. Young immediately covers the pregnant woman's shoulders with her jacket to hide her pregnant stomach)

COLLECTIVE MEMBER

Hey, what's going on? Shouldn't we be going?

JEFFEREY

We have a sick woman here, as you can see.

COLLECTIVE MEMBER

Can't she just see a doctor once we arrive? The sun will be up soon. Everyone's getting nervous. We need to leave.

JEFFEREY

We leave when I say it's time. Why don't you just go back to the others while we take care of this lady.

COLLECTIVE MEMBER

I'm just saying. We don't have much food or water left and there's 12 of us. With the van broken down, how are we gonna make it for 30 more miles?

JEFFEREY

Instead of complaining about the obvious, let's see if there's any food or anything we might need for the very long walk we have ahead of us.

Dr. Hartwell & Marianne's Scene: (Dr. Curtis Hartwell & his wife Marianne are taking a nightly stroll)

MARIANNE

Staring at the stars again, my love. Remember, you get seasick, let alone a ride to the other side of the galaxy.

DR. HARTWELL

Imagine, you and I, dancing in our first class spacepod suite, the Milky Way as our glorious backdrop.

MARIANNE

We could still try for the Moon. Transports leave once a month.

DR. HARTWELL

The moon? Please. Mars is the dream darling, isn't it? What, we were in our 20s when the first mission launched.

MARIANNE

Yes. And if we could have afforded it, our honeymoon would have been spent eating space crackers and pooping in spacesuits for six months.

DR. HARTWELL

If only the world was ready for aquaponics before the C.E. People had no vision, let alone the good sense enough to realize that most of the earth's soil would be completely void of nutrients for growing anything. I tried to win the Plutarchs who owned the university. But no, they wanted to keep me as their young Black prodigy, the budding genius scientist they could use for window dressing for their funders. Though, obviously, I was a genius. Their loss.

MARIANNE

No regrets, love. Look at the beauty of what we've built for Earth.

DR. HARTWELL

What's left of it.

MARIANNE

Look. I know we didn't have the chance to leave the planet, but our legacy, what we've built together, aquaculture on the Moon. Those colonies wouldn't have lasted five minutes without your work.

DR. HARTWELL

I suppose so. And don't forget Mars.

MARIANNE

Yes, dear. We'll have our first transmission with the first colony only a month from now. Isn't it exciting?

DR. HARTWELL

I suppose. Oh, if the fragility of age wasn't still the thorn in scientific advancement. Maybe I should have worked on preventing aging instead of growing food from fish poop.

MARIANNE

Well, according to our new guest, mortality isn't an obstacle to human existence.

DR. HARTWELL

That poor, poor child, brainwashed to believe such nonsense. To actually believe she can talk to her dead mother.

MARIANNE

We are not here to judge a person's spiritual beliefs.

DR. HARTWELL

I know how they accomplished it--this communication with the dead via VRF. The downloading of one's Chi or spirit into a heavenly neural digital network. Nonsense.

MARIANNE
Don't knock until you try it, dear.

DR. HARTWELL
Please don't tell me you believe such a farce. If you say you do, you'll give me heart failure right here and now.

MARIANNE
Would you try it if something happened to me?

DR. HARTWELL
Please, I don't wish to have a conversation based upon a concocted scenario that breaks my heart as we speak. Our guest seems to have made quite an impression on you. And what are we to do with her? She can't have a child here?

MARIANNE
No, she can't.

DR. HARTWELL
I am also concerned about who else knows. As much as I want to protect her, we cannot jeopardize our facility.

MARIANNE
Yes, the Collective could not survive without our pods.

DJ Bristol Monologue:

DJ BRISTOL

We're coming to you live, broadcasting from JAW, connecting to our Collective sisters and brothers planetwide. Music is alive in the New World and we're bringing it to you from the U.K., fam, and it's a live 86 degrees here in the West End and it's only 10 a.m. Hope you filled your water tanks this week because it's "dry out" Thursday and we don't want to hit a Day Zero like our fam in New York, rest their 1 million souls. So, let's take our minds off of water and take you to eco-punk rocker Patrick Chicago. In case you've been underground and not plugged into JAW, Patrick Chicago was one of the lucky ones who survived the C.E. And still making music, fam. Let's see how Patrick do we have him on the JAW line. Are you there, Patrick? It's Bristol from JAW.

Patrick's Scene:

DJ BRISTOL

We're coming to you live, broadcasting from JAW, connecting to our Collective sisters and brothers planetwide. Music is alive in the New World and we're bringing it to you from the U.K., fam, and

it's a live 86 degrees here in the West End and it's only 10 a.m. Hope you filled your water tanks this week because it's "dry out" Thursday and we don't want to hit a Day Zero like our fam in New York, rest their 1 million souls. So, let's take our minds off of water and take you to eco-punk rocker Patrick Chicago. In case you've been underground and not plugged into JAW, Patrick Chicago was one of the lucky ones who survived the C.E. And still making music, fam. Let's see how Patrick do we have him on the JAW line.

DJ BRISTOL

Are you there, Patrick? It's Bristol from JAW.

PATRICK

Yes, hey Bristol.

DJ BRISTOL

Patrick. Thanks for joining us. Glad you made it out of Chicago alive, bruh. And you're making music. Tell us how you're doing, bruh.

PATRICK

Thanks for having me on, Bristol. Yeah, we got hit hard, and I'm thankful to have made it out alive.

DJ BRISTOL

Lucky, man.

PATRICK

No, Bristol. Denial is not one of my character traits, like the sleeping masses that kept their million-dollar homes on the coastlines. Nope. I built a studio away from the antics of the cities and the coastlines, programming music on analog.

DJ BRISTOL

Analog? Mad fam! Old school. So, tell me about the music. Your band before the C.E. topped the international charts, hot in what used to be the entire U.K. You must miss those days.

PATRICK

No, we actually sucked, Bristol.

DJ BRISTOL

Come on! What are you sayin, bruh?

PATRICK

I'm saying that I smoked a lot of weed, made shit music, got a ton of STD's, and then the world ended. Rock n roll dream, Bristol.

DJ BRISTOL

Raw truth, fam. That's what we love about you Patrick. All out, open book. So, the new world brought you to some enlightenment I'm hearing?

PATRICK

I'm 60 years old and now I'm kinda glad that the world was fucked because all of that crap music I made hopefully died with that soul drain of the internet. Now, it's about making some true meaning.

DJ BRISTOL

And we can't wait to hear some of that New World music of yours Patrick that will carry us in this new age.

PATRICK

My music isn't about the new age. Its an ode to the end of the world, my friend.

DJ BRISTOL

Are we talking about the Collective now, Patrick?

PATRICK

As a Native person, I can say that I don't remember any of my elders telling me to adhere to abstinence as a way to peace, but as a good citizen, I don't judge the Collective. I just make music. Either way, the world is ending.

DJ BRISTOL

Aw, come on, Patrick. There's always hope that human beings will make their way back. We gotta have hope fam, with a lot of prayer and love, that we'll one day be rid of the Plutarchs.

PATRICK

Good luck with that hope, Bristol. Remember kid, there's only the Collective now that have helped human beings tap into the true soul of nonviolent protest.

DJ BRISTOL

And with that, we'll take our thirsty listeners on a ride with Patrick's new tune mixed with some analog rhythms. Thank you, Patrick for giving our artists out here living beyond the C.E. The reason to live and a reason to create here in the New World. Bless the departed souls and as we breathe each moment towards joining an everlasting Collective, we at JAW leave you with these words...the world ends with us, fam.

PATRICK

The world ends with us, my friend.

Young & Sun Auckland Scene (Young contacts his father via a secret transmission feed, known as VRF)

YOUNG

Sun. Auckland.

SUN

Hello, my son.

YOUNG

Hello, father.

SUN

Good, good. I'm so glad you checked in. How are you?

YOUNG

I'm not sure.

SUN

Why are you not sure? What's wrong son?

YOUNG

Remember when you told me that I'd see things that wasn't right or wrong.

SUN

Yes.

YOUNG

Well, I saw something, something that goes against everything the Collective stands for, and I don't know what to do. I don't think it's right, but I don't feel it's wrong either.

SUN

You don't know what to do. Can you change the situation?

YOUNG

No. I mean, I can't change it, but maybe I can help it.

SUN

Son, sometimes situations are just information. You are a witness, and you learn, and you move on.

YOUNG

And...

SUN

And what?

YOUNG

I know there's more. I know you, dad. Don't hold out.

SUN (HE LAUGHS)

Yes. You know me too well. I'm still protecting you even though I can't be there. I wish your mom and I could have gotten out.

YOUNG

I know, dad. It's ok. We're here now. Tell me, what else, dad?

SUN

The situation. Well, sometimes a situation is information, and sometimes a situation points you in a direction. Whatever you decide, take care of yourself. I wish I could be there.

Sara Harlem's Scene (Sara's daughter, Nora, connects to her via a secret transmission feed known as a VRF):

NORA
Sara. Harlem.

SARA
There you are dear. Are you okay, sweetie?

NORA
I'm ok, mom.

SARA
No, you're not. Tell me, what's wrong.

NORA
I'm really ok.

SARA
No. I know you're not ok. You hesitated.

NORA
I'm on my way to join the others.

SARA
Good. I'm glad you're on your way. You still didn't answer my question.

NORA
They're kidnapping women. They're taking the poorest women. Women who have either openly joined the Collective. Pregnant women.

SARA
Yes, honey, I know. It's getting worse.

NORA
Are we going against our nature to do this? I mean, we are here, for whatever reason, right, as human beings? It's not like we designed our bodies. Reproduction is natural.

SARA
Reproduction is a choice. Our species was also not meant for perpetual barbarism. Look, I know you're worried. We will be together again. This is the only way. You're a Harlem. You can do this.

NORA
Promise me you'll tell me about Harlem the next time we talk. I wish I remembered it.

SARA

I wish you remembered it too. Harlem was home. Whether you know it or not, you carry the memories in you, from me. Time to go, baby. Next time.

NORA

Okay. I don't know when I can connect again.

SARA

Don't worry. I'll always be here. And remember. The world ends with us.

NORA

The world ends with us...

Frank's Scene (Frank, aka the Beekeeper, receives a video call from Dr. Hartwell):

DR. HARTWELL

Frank. How's monsoon season treating your flock?

FRANK

The flock is out right now. Waiting for the winds to settle. What's going on my brother? Good to see you.

DR. HARTWELL

You as well, Frank. Life in the lower altitude is the same as always, which means, business is good.

FRANK

I'm not doing too bad myself. I'd be doing better though if you are calling to report how my little ones are doing now that they've literally flown the nest.

DR. HARTWELL

I won't hear any reports on the new Mars colony until our first transmission.

FRANK

They arrive next month, right?

DR. HARTWELL

Yes, and if you'd like, I could bring you in on that transmission.

FRANK

Noooo. No, thanks, my man. One thing you're good at that I'm not is being the ever-so-smooth scientist/politician. I'm quite ok with collecting a check incognito.

DR. HARTWELL

I like being rich and remembered.

FRANK

And how is the woman that manages to keeps you ever so humble?

DR. HARTWELL

Having a soulmate does have its advantages. You should find one, my friend.

FRANK

I have thousands to keep me company, though it broke my heart to part with my queens who are now space-bound.

DR. HARTWELL

What if I told you that you could see your queens once more, without an extra pair of eyes?

FRANK

I'm listening. What's the catch?

DR. HARTWELL

I have a special guest I'd like for you to meet.