

INTRO BUMPER

Efx: recorder button/tone.

KATIE
(whispering)
Roth-Lodbow Center for Advanced
Research. Project Cyclops, Day 8,
about to begin. Entering the
laboratory now.

Efx: keycard beep. A loud buzz, a metal lock unlatched. Door
opens, footsteps.

JOHN
How's your uncle?

KATIE
No update. Funny how a severed head
can tell you more information than
a real live doctor.

Efx: A purse is plopped down on the table. The audio fuzzes
for a moment.

JOHN
In these situations, sometimes no
news is good news.

KATIE
Actually, I do have some good news.

JOHN
Oh?

KATIE
That shady email address you gave
me yesterday had a person at the
other end of it. Sygma Corp called
me later that night.

JOHN
Did you talk to Henry?

KATIE
No, Amanda. His assistant, or
something.

JOHN
And?

KATIE

She just had a few questions. She also knew an awful lot about me, considering we've never met. Stuff that went way beyond social media.

JOHN

Did you setup a meeting?

KATIE

No. She said Henry would reach out if he's interested.

JOHN

He's interested. You wouldn't have heard from Sygma Corp in the first place if he wasn't.

KATIE

I don't want to get ahead of myself, but what if he does call?

JOHN

What do you mean?

KATIE

I've never played corporate spy before. I'm not sure what to say.

JOHN

Tell him what you have. You can trust him.

KATIE

He can't be any worse than the people I've seen here. But, John?

JOHN

Yeah?

KATIE

Sygma has to know, right? They have to know that I'm working with you. This implicates you. You know it does.

JOHN

Just keep me off the recordings. That's the deal.

KATIE

John...

JOHN
Ready to do this?

Efx: sheet being thrown off a box.

KATIE
So, we document everything that
happens truthfully, right?

Efx: wet popping noise.

KATIE
Even if it's our boss spearheading
a project that could kill millions
of people?

JOHN
It could all be a glitch, Katie.
Officially, it could be a glitch.

KATIE
If you say so. The cube is loaded.

JOHN
Project Cyclops. Trial 5-charlie-4.
Timestamp is registering correctly.
Initiating playback in 3...

2...

1...

Initiate.

Efx: distinctive noise.

Tic Tac Toe

CHARLIE
What am I gonna do with you?

NARRATOR
Charlie stared down at the
unconscious man for a moment before
walking to the back of the house.

(Footsteps)

(Sounds of tools being rummaged for in toolbox + set onto
wooden workbench)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

In the garage, there seemed to be a tool for everything. All sorts of hammers, cutters, and pliers hung from pegs and were piled into a massive tool box. In a corner stood a cowering dog.

CHARLIE

Hey there, pup. What's your name?

(Jangling of Charlie reading dog's tag)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Clifford, huh.

(Charlie scratches CLIFFORD'S ears.)

CLIFFORD

(Bark, whine, pleasant growl?)

CHARLIE

I couldn't have planned this better if I'd tried.

NARRATOR

As Charlie gazed across the garage, his eyes came to rest upon an empty squirt bottle and a bucket. Charlie found himself transported to an earlier time, a better time.

-BEGIN FLASHBACK-

(Flashback fade-in music)

KELLY

Will it be loud?

CHARLIE

(Laughing)

No, baby. It won't be loud.

KELLY

Are you sure? Mrs. Johnson said that volcanoes kill people.

CHARLIE

That's true, but this isn't a real volcano. It's just a model.

KELLY

Oh. I thought there was going to be lava.

CHARLIE

There sort of is. Pour the vinegar down the spout.

KELLY

It's called a vent, daddy.

CHARLIE

(Laughing)

Of course, it is.

Voices continue talking and fade out.

(Flashback fade-out music)

-END FLASHBACK-

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(Wiping eyes after tearing up)

Fuck. Okay. Okayokayokay. So, what else does Patrick deserve?

(Sounds of placing more items on cart)

NARRATOR

Once his selected tools were arranged on the cart, Charlie headed back to begin on Patrick.

CHARLIE

Order uuuuup.

(Cart rolling across tiles)

NARRATOR

As Charlie turned the corner and came into the living room, he frowned. The living room floor was no longer occupied by an unconscious man with a broken nose.

CHARLIE

This simply will not do. Let's take some goodies, and go on a rabbit hunt.

(Sounds of grabbing duct tape and hammer from cart)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(Mumbling)
What're we hunting?

NARRATOR
Memories of Kelly rose to the
forefront of Charlie's mind once
again.

-BEGIN FLASHBACK-

(Flashback fade-in music)

(Muffled driving noises throughout.)

KELLY
Who's your favorite cartoon
character, daddy?

CHARLIE
Not really sure.

KELLY
How can you not be sure?

CHARLIE
Eh, it's just something I've never
given much thought to.

KELLY
Oh. Well, maybe you should.

CHARLIE
(Laughing)
I suppose I should.

(Natural conversation pause)

KELLY
Well?

CHARLIE
Hm?

KELLY
Have you figured it out?

CHARLIE
My favorite cartoon character?

KELLY
Sometimes I think you don't listen
to me, daddy.

CHARLIE
(Laughing)
Uhhh, I'm not sure. Elmer Fudd?

KELLY
Elmer Fudd? Who's that?

CHARLIE
The greatest hunter in all the
land, sweetie.

KELLY
What does he hunt?

CHARLIE
The most dangerous creature in all
the land.

KELLY
(Scared)
What's that?

CHARLIE
It's a fearsome, but intelligent
beast known as...

KELLY
(Whispering)
Known as what?

CHARLIE
(Whispering)
Known as... WABBIT!
(Starts laughing)

KELLY
(Squeals then giggles)

Fade out as both laugh.

(Flashback fade-out music)

-END FLASHBACK-

CHARLIE
We're hunting a shitty, little
wabbit that deserves everything
coming to him.

NARRATOR
Following the blood trail didn't
take long.

CHARLIE

(Mumbling)

Why the fuck would you go upstairs?
Do people not watch horror movies?

(Creaking stair steps)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(Singing softly under breath, going from
light-hearted to dark/growling)

Gonna catch me a wabbit, gonna skin
me a wabbit, gonna kill me a
wabbit, gonna burn me a wabbit.

NARRATOR

At the top of the staircase,
Charlie crouched and pressed his
ear to the door.

(Beeping noises of cell phone buttons being pressed.)

PATRICK

(Muffled cursing and more beeps)

CHARLIE

(Under breath)

Seems like the cellphone jammer is
making the silly wabbit a little
upset. Now all we have to do is be
patient and wait.

PATRICK

Ah, fuck it.

(Steps grow louder from inside as Patrick approaches door)

NARRATOR

As the footsteps grew closer,
Charlie smiled in the darkness. He
readied himself as the door was
unlocked and creaked inward an
inch. Nothing happened for about
twenty seconds as Charlie held his
breath.

The door opened another inch, then
all the way.

Charlie stayed crouched next to the
doorway as light spilled into the
hall.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

A leg appeared from the doorway,
shortly followed by Patrick's head
as he leaned out to scan for
danger. He noticed the huddled mass
against the wall too late...

(Swinging + crunching sound effect that leads to screaming
from Patrick and a heavy thump as he falls to the ground)

CHARLIE

(In a good-natured voice)
Looks like I caught myself a
wabbit.

PATRICK

(Screaming)
What the fuck?!

(Sounds of Patrick writhing)

CHARLIE

(Mimicking a serious baseball announcer)
Let's see if he can go two for two.

(Swinging + crunching sound effect that leads to more
screaming from Patrick)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

YAHT-zee!

NARRATOR

As Patrick tried to crawl back into
the room he had originally sought
sanctuary in, Charlie picked up the
duct tape and hopped over him.

(Sounds of tearing duct tape)

PATRICK

What do you want? You can have
anything. Money? Drugs? What?

CHARLIE

Quit moving.

PATRICK

I'm serious. I can get you anything
you need. Anything money can buy.

CHARLIE

Your money can't get me what I
want.

PATRICK
(Indignant snort)
Enough money can get anything.

CHARLIE
Shut your mouth so I can tape it.

PATRICK
No. We can talk about this like two
rational human be-

(Noise of Patrick being punched + silence as Patrick is
knocked unconscious)

CHARLIE
Thank you.

(Lots of duct tape noises and shuffling as Charlie covers
Patrick's mouth and binds his hands behind him)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Down the stairs we go.

NARRATOR
Charlie considered tossing Patrick
over the banister or just letting
him roll down the stairs, but
thought better of it.

What if Patrick broke his neck?

That would be no fun.

(Shuffling followed by muffled bangs of Patrick's ankles
hitting steps and Patrick attempting to scream from behind
the duct tape)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Instead, Charlie grabbed the back
of his shirt and began the process
of sliding Patrick down the stairs.

CHARLIE
This isn't so different from moving
a mattress down a flight of stairs.

PATRICK
(Muffled screams/pleading)

(Sound of going down stairs for a little bit here)

CHARLIE

Hmmm. You're starting to turn blue on me, Patrick. Oh well, we're close enough to the bottom.

(Sound of sliding + faster banging as Charlie lets Patrick slide down the rest of the steps)

(Patrick pleading fades away as Charlie walks to garage)

(Tools being rummaged)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Where was it... wheeeere was it. I know I saw it h- There you are.

(Patrick pleading fades back in as Charlie approaches him)

PATRICK

(Pleading)

(Click of box cutter)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

(Louder pleading)

CHARLIE

Relax. I'm just going to cut a slit in the tape so you can breathe better.

PATRICK

(Wheezing noises coming through duct tape slit)

CHARLIE

I'm gonna cut the hole wider so you won't have to struggle to breathe. If you yell, I'll cut your eyelids off and rip out your eyeballs. Then I'll leave them dangling from their sockets so you can see what I'm doing to you. Do you understand?

PATRICK

(Muffled)

Okay.

(Cutting duct tape noise followed by deep breaths)

PATRICK (CONT'D)
What do you want?

CHARLIE
Several things, Patrick, but first
let's get you into a chair. I
understand that this will hurt, but
do try and keep quiet as I move
you. Okay?

(Shuffling)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Ready or not, here we go.

(Grunting, shuffling, moaning through gritted teeth: all the
noises you would hear if someone was dragging someone injured
onto a chair.)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
There. That wasn't so bad, was it?

PATRICK
What do you want?
(Pause)
What? Am I supposed to know?

NARRATOR
Charlie didn't answer as a heavy
wave of rage rushed over him almost
buckling his own knees. He walked
over to the cart and brought back
the rope, the bungee cords, and the
duct tape.

(Sounds of bungee cords and rope being wrapped)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
He put the bungee cords around
Patrick's chest and the chair and
wrapped the rope solely around his
ankles, tight enough that Patrick
couldn't shift his ankles, but
loose enough that he wouldn't lose
feeling in his feet.
That would be no good.

PATRICK
Who are you?
(Pause)
Why are you doing this?

CHARLIE
Just a second.

(Sound of duct tape)

NARRATOR

(Duct tape sounds continue throughout)

Charlie wrapped the first roll of duct tape around Patrick's legs and the chair, avoiding his kneecaps and skipping to his thighs. When the duct tape ran out, he headed back upstairs to grab the roll he had left there. When he returned, he wrapped half of the roll around Patrick's head and the chair, to hold the head still. Then he finished off that roll by wrapping it around Patrick's chest and the chair.

(Several footsteps)

PATRICK

Are you just going to stand there and admire your handiwork?

(Footsteps)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

What are you doing? Wait-

(Loud crash as TV is lifted from wall mount and dropped to ground.)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

That was a \$25,000 TV, dick.

(Scraping noises as Charlie pushes the TV away followed by metal dragging noises of Charlie dragging Patrick closer to the wall.)

(Sounds of furniture being moved.)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Why are you moving my couch?

(Sounds of furniture being moved.)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

And the loveseat?

(Sounds of furniture being moved.)

PATRICK (CONT'D)
And my easy chair? Oh... I get it.
You're fucking soundproofing,
aren't you?

CHARLIE
Comfy?

PATRICK
I'm not scared of you.

CHARLIE
I don't believe you.

(Sound of footsteps + cart being wheeled over.)

PATRICK
What are you going to do with
those?

CHARLIE
You're sounding scared now,
Patrick.

PATRICK
Fuck you.

CHARLIE
We're gonna play a little game now.
If you beat me, I'll let you live.
If you don't, well, that won't end
so well for you.

PATRICK
Who are you?

CHARLIE
Ready for the first question?

PATRICK
What question?

CHARLIE
Why Kelly?

PATRICK
(Pause)
Who the fuck is Kelly? I don't even
kno-

(Sound of bolt cutters being lifted from cart)

NARRATOR

The weight of the bolt cutters felt good in Charlie's hands as he crouched in front of Patrick, angling the blades so that they sat on either side of the big toe on Patrick's right foot. Patrick breathed in and out rapidly.

PATRICK

(Almost hyperventilating)
 Omigod. Look, I'm sorry I don't remember anyone named Kelly, but you've gotta believe that I would nev-

(Sound of bolt cutters cutting through big toe + screaming + light thump of toe hitting the tile)

CHARLIE

Memory is a funny thing.

NARRATOR

As Patrick's screams washed over him in steady waves, Charlie's heart filled with a joy he had never known since Kelly had left him. Using the wet end of the toe, Charlie began drawing out lines:

(Sound of a toe being dragged across a wall... you know... that sound effect...)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Two vertical lines, side by side, criss-crossed by two horizontal lines.

A bloody grid stood out against the stark white wall as Charlie tossed the toe across the room to Clifford.

(Sound of dog snatching toe out of air)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Charlie fired up a butane micro torch

(Fire noise + begging no's)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
and bent down to apply flame to the
dark, empty place

(Sound of sizzling + more screams)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
where Patrick's big toe had resided
for so much of his life.

CHARLIE
We can't rightly have you bleeding
out, now can we?

(Sizzling)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
There. Now where was I?

PATRICK
(Words forced through pain)
Who... are... you?

CHARLIE
I think the more important question
is why Kelly?

(Sound of bolt cutters being lifted)

PATRICK
I don't know who she is.

CHARLIE
Oh. Well, I suppose that you can go
first then.

NARRATOR
Charlie brought the bolt cutter up,
nestled it around the second toe of
Patrick's right foot, and...

(Sound of bolt cutters cutting toe off followed by screams)

(Fire noise, sizzling, fresh screams)

CHARLIE
(Clearing throat)
You can go first, Patrick

PATRICK
Go first at what?

CHARLIE
Tic-tac-toe.

PATRICK
... Seriously?

CHARLIE
Do your missing toes look like I'm
joking?

PATRICK
You'll let me go I win?

CHARLIE
Absolutely. I believe in rewarding
people with what they deserve.

PATRICK
Okay. Okayokayokay. I loved tic-tac-
toe as a little kid. I can beat
you.

CHARLIE
That's the spirit.

PATRICK
Put an X in the middle square.

CHARLIE
(Toe on wall sound effect)
Done and --

(Toe on wall sound effect)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
-- done. Here you go, Clifford.

(Dog catching toe in midair noise)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Now, back to my first question: why
Kelly?

NARRATOR
Charlie nestled the blades of the
bolt cutter around the third toe on
Patrick's right foot.

PATRICK
Wait, wait. I know who she is, ok?
I did it. It was me.

CHARLIE
I know that you did. What I asked
was why?

PATRICK

I don't know. I guess because the
stupid bitch ran ou-

(Sound of bolt cutters cutting toe off followed by screams)

(Fire noise, sizzling, fresh screams)

CHARLIE

(Through clenched teeth)
I wouldn't refer to Kelly in that
way again.

(Footsteps)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

So it's my turn now... where will I
move. How about... here.

(Toe dragging a circle against wall)

NARRATOR

Charlie used the bloody end of
Patrick's toe to draw a circle in
the lower left corner of the grid.

PATRICK

Why are you doing this?

CHARLIE

Because Kelly never should've died.
You could've saved her. Also, if
I'm really being honest, I'm just
really enjoying myself right now.

PATRICK

Look. I'm sorry about what I did.
Really, I am. I'm sorry I didn't
stop after I hit her. I really
didn't mean to. I thought I'd hit a
dog. It wasn't until the next day
that I figured out what had
happened from the news.

NARRATOR

Charlie bent down and positioned
the bolt cutter around the fourth
toe of Patrick's burned foot.

PATRICK

Wait, no, nononono-

(Sound of bolt cutters cutting toe off followed by screams)

(Fire noise, sizzling, fresh screams)

(Footsteps)

CHARLIE

Where would you like to move next?

PATRICK

(Wheezing and crying)

X in the bottom right.

(Toe on wall sound effect)

NARRATOR

Charlie bled the X into being in the bottom right square of the grid before tossing the toe through the living room and into the kitchen. Clifford went racing for it.

(Dog nails scrabbling on tile)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Charlie bent down and picked up the bolt cutters again, positioning the blades on either side of the pinkie toe on Patrick's left foot. Patrick just stared at the toe he was about to lose, shock beginning to take over.

CHARLIE

Why did you do it?

PATRICK

Because I thought --

(Taking a deep breath)

-- I thought she was dead. I thought she was dead when I hit her so I left.

CHARLIE

Interesting. Both the autopsy and the crime scene showed that she was run down, dragged for twenty feet, and then backed over.

PATRICK

I don't... I don't... I...

CHARLIE

That's not an answer.

(Sound of bolt cutters cutting toe off followed by attempted screams. Closer to wheezing.)

(Fire noise, sizzling, more wheezing)

(Footsteps)

NARRATOR

Charlie smudged a circle in the top left corner of the grid.

(Toe on wall sound effect)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

He tossed this toe into the front room by the stairs, pausing for a moment to watch Clifford race for his treat before he crouched back down to bring the bolt cutters up, this time wedged around the second toe on Patrick's left foot.

CHARLIE

Why did you do it?

PATRICK

I didn't want to get arrested. If she was dead, I could go home and escape the whole thing. I was just putting her out of her misery... I was putting her out of her misery.

CHARLIE

Did she say anything when you got out to check what you'd run down?

PATRICK

Yeah. She was crying for her daddy. She just wanted him to make the pain stop.

NARRATOR

Charlie felt all the air escape him and closed the blades of the bolt cutter, severing the toe.

(Sound of bolt cutters cutting toe off followed by a grunt.)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Patrick flinched, ground his teeth, but didn't try to scream this time.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Charlie didn't bother cauterizing the wound; this was almost over with.

CHARLIE

Where do you move?

(Pause)

I asked where you move?

PATRICK

Middle right.

(Toe sound effect)

NARRATOR

Charlie inked Patrick's X in blood and then inked his own O onto the grid. The O filled the middle left square. Charlie drew a vertical line through the left squares that were filled with his dripping O's and shook his head as he looked at Patrick.

It only took ten minutes...

(During actor's natural pauses of monologue below, splice in clips of Charlie and Kelly flashback scene with volcano. Timing Kelly's vent comment with Narrator talking about Patrick's throat would be ideal.)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

When it was finished, Charlie sat against the blood-smearred wall, taking in what he'd done.

He remembered helping Kelly with her science project earlier that year and building a Papier-mâché volcano. They had filled the base with baking soda and he had let her pour in vinegar mixed with red food coloring. The resulting eruption had created a smile on her face that day that seemed to warm him even as he thought about how similar the foam flowing from Patrick's throat was to the foam that streamed down the sides of the painted volcano.

A red funnel flowered from the Patrick's mouth.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Inside the cup was a yellow bubbling mass that seemed to writhe up and down like sea foam at low tide.

Charlie could see the bright red funnel through the holes the combined pool chemicals had eaten through the Patrick's cheeks. The holes reminded Charlie of sheet metal that had finally rusted through. Most of Patrick's jaw was still intact, but yellow foam with streaks of red bubbled out of jagged holes in his throat.

CHARLIE

(Whispering)

I made a volcano for you, sweetheart... just for you.

KELLY

(Giggling)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(Crying)

OUTRO BUMPER

Efx: distinctive noise.

KATIE

I might be having a moment, but at what point should we be telling someone about this? And I don't mean Sygma Corp, I mean the proper authorities.

JOHN

Something tells me the police would think you're the crazy one.

KATIE

People are being murdered, John. There has to be a breaking point for us.

JOHN

After everything we've seen so far this is where you want to blow the whistle?

KATIE

I know, I know. I guess I'm just nervous, that's all. About everything.

JOHN
Just do your job. File the report.
Remember, it could be...

KATIE
Nightmares, glitches, misfires, bad
formula...I get it, John.

Efx: email ding. Click of the mouse.

JOHN
Well, this is interesting.

KATIE
What is it?

JOHN
Email from Robert. He wants to
talk.

KATIE
About?

JOHN
Doesn't say. Meeting is in the
afternoon.

KATIE
Just the two of you?

JOHN
It doesn't appear you're involved
in this one.

KATIE
Unless the meeting is about me.
What if Sygma called Robert, what
if...

JOHN
Stop being paranoid. And turn that
off.

Efx: rummaging through purse. Recorder button press/tone.