Darkest Night 2x02

"Yes, I Cannibal"

Written by
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DARKEST NIGHT

SEASON 2

EPISODE 1: Yes, I Cannibal

Characters:

Katie Reed: Mid 20s. Impulsive and spontaneous. Quick learner who isn’t afraid to speak her mind.

Dr. Lionel Ricketts: 30s. Younger member of Project Cyclops, working independently from Dr. Kinsler. Extremely cold. Soft spoken, but menacing.

Senator Jackson Carlisle: Late 40s/Early 50s, a well-known politician. Has a statesman's gift for natural charisma and charm. Harbors a dark secret: A taste for human flesh.

Beth Newman: 20s, an eager young staffer of the Carlisle campaign. She’s optimistic to a fault.

Miriam: 30s, Senator Carlisle's personal assistant. Plucky and unflappable. She's seen it all and reacts to very little. Prone to dry humor.

Eli Dale: 20s, another staffer for Carlisle. Mostly groans.

Locations:

1. Lab at Roth-Lobdow Center for Advanced Research
2. Campaign Rally
3. Car
4. Senator Carlisle's Home

Time of Day:

Night

(Continued)
INTRO BUMPER

ROTH-LOBDOW CENTER FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH

EFX: Recorder button/tone.

KATIE
(whispering)
Roth-Lodbow Center for Advanced Research. Project Cyclops, Day 12, about to begin. Entering the laboratory now.

EFX: Key card beep. A loud buzz, a metal lock unlatched. Door opens, footsteps.

KATIE (cont’d)
Good morning, Dr. Ricketts.

EFX: Papers rustling.

DR. RICKETTS
What? Hm. Oh yes. Good morning.

KATIE
What are you reading?

DR. RICKETTS
Previous lab reports. At least, the ones made available by the Center. A good scientist familiarizes themselves with the research that came before. Which, isn't particularly easy in this case. Your Dr. Kinsler wasn't the most organized, was he?

KATIE
(annoyed)
He didn't exactly have time to itemize things for his successor.

DR. RICKETTS
(dismissive)
Ah well, I'll make do.

EFX: Papers rustling again.

KATIE
Can we talk about something else?

(CONTINUED)
I was under the impression that Kinsler’s work and Project Cyclops was exactly what we were here every day to talk about, but yes. Fine.

A beat.

You look tired.

Wow, what a way to change topics for the better.

Just an observation.

Katie sighs.

Well, I am. I was up late last night, reading article after article online about the plane crash we saw via yesterday’s subject.

...and?

...and all of the articles suggest the plane went down due to equipment malfunction. But, we know that’s not true.

Right. So?

What about the black box? Communications with air traffic control? Someone has to have actual evidence of the truth.

We work for a company that has developed the technology to see through the eyes of the deceased. Does it seem so unlikely that someone could alter the findings of a black box?
KATIE
No, but... doesn't it bother you to know that all those lives were lost and the real cause is being suppressed?

DR. RICKETTS
It's not my job to be bothered. It's my job to collect scientific data. And I should think that you, of all people... with your experience here... should want to take the same course.

KATIE
Yes, but... I...

A beat.

KATIE (cont’d)
(Frustrated)
Fine. Let's get to work.

DR. RICKETTS
Yes, let's.

KATIE
What have we got?

DR. RICKETTS
Female, mid-20s. Extreme trauma to face.

KATIE
That's putting it mildly. She's been mutilated.

DR. RICKETTS
...as I was saying, "extreme trauma to face..."

EFX: Katie sighs.

KATIE
Okay, then. Removing optic nerve...

DR. RICKETTS
Project Cyclops. Trial 7-zeta-2. Time stamp is registering correctly. Initiating playback in 3... 2... 1...
Initiate.
CAMPAIGN RALLY - NIGHT

EFX: Crowd noises. Applause, cheers, etc.

We open on a campaign rally in progress. From the sound of it, the crowd is an extremely enthusiastic one.

Mid-speech, Senator Carlisle's voice, amplified by a microphone, echoes across the audience.

    SENATOR CARLISLE
    (via microphone, mid-sentence)
    ...and though the recent tragedy of G Valor Flight 7891 weighs heavily upon us all, I find a glimmer of solace in the sense of community support that has risen in its wake...

Although the Senator's speech continues, it fades into the background. We can still hear him faintly speaking.

From the wings, Beth watches the speech. Miriam stands beside her.

    BETH
    He really is something, isn't he?

    MIRIAM
    Mmmhmmm.

    BETH
    I'm sorry. I don't mean to gush. I'm sure that since you're his assistant this is all very routine for you. But, I've campaigned and worked for the senator for years...and this is the closest I've ever been during one of his speeches. It's the one drawback of working at a branch office. The up close and personal sometimes gets lost. When you're in the crowd, you never really realize how big it is.

She pauses a beat.

    BETH (cont’d)
    ...are they always this big?

    MIRIAM
    (glib)
    Sometimes bigger.

(CONTINUED)
BETH

Wow.

MIRIAM

...and that's thanks in part to you.

BETH

(bashful)

Well, I don't know if that's...

MIRIAM

(cutting her off)

Look, Beth... you wouldn't be here if you weren't supposed to be. The Senator knows the amount of work his staffers put in, and he's been making an extra special effort to invite those of you who have gone above and beyond to spend time with him so that he can offer his thanks. It's why he invited you and your associate to dinner tonight. To express his gratitude.

BETH

I know, I know. It was just a nice surprise, that's all. Eli and I were thrilled to receive the invite.

A beat.

BETH (cont’d)

Which, now that we mention it, I'm surprised Eli is running late. It's not like him at all. And he'd love this.

MIRIAM

Well, you of all people should know that a staffer's job is never done. Mr. Dale had a few other matters to attend to at the request of the Senator. He'll be joining us shortly.

BETH

Oh, I see.

MIRIAM

Look at it this way, Beth: At least you're not the one who had to work late.

At this, Beth laughs.

(CONTINUED)
BETH

Fair point.

Focusing back on the Senator, we catch the tail end of his speech.

SENATOR CARLISLE

( into microphone)

...and it's this sense of unity that
truly fills me with pride for our
nation. Kindness, strong morals, and
being there to lend a helping hand...
that is a taste of the true America!

EFX: Thunderous applause.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)

( into microphone)

Thank you and good night!

A patriotic fanfare plays as the Senator exits the stage, the
sound of applause still lingering behind him.

THE NARRATOR

Although Beth had worked for him for
years, as Senator Jackson Carlisle
made his way from the stage toward
the spot in the wings where she
stood... the young staffer couldn't
help but feel a twinge of nervous
energy in her gut. The Senator,
beloved by colleagues and
constituents alike, often had
hundreds vying for attention at any
given moment. That he would choose to
so freely give his attention to Beth
seemed almost preposterous to the
young woman. Yet, there he was,
walking directly toward her.

EFX: The Senator's footsteps.

SENATOR CARLISLE

Beth! I'm so glad you could make it.

THE NARRATOR

Beth took note of the shift in the
Senator's persona -- from the stoic
statesman behind the podium to a more
jovial, relaxed individual. It was a
subtle charisma that had served him
well over the years in D.C.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
THE NARRATOR (cont'd)
and one that immediately helped put
the butterflies in Beth's stomach at ease.

BETH
Thank you, Senator Carlisle. I
wouldn't have missed it!

SENATOR CARLISLE
How'd I do?

BETH
Huh?

SENATOR CARLISLE
The speech! The speech!

BETH
Oh, it was truly something. You speak
with such conviction. It's admirable.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Well, thank you kindly, Beth. And
what about you, Miriam? Thoughts?

EFX: Texting noises.

MIRIAM
Hm? Oh, yes. Thrilling.

Senator Carlisle chuckles.

SENATOR CARLISLE
She's never impressed.

Beth laughs.

MIRIAM
(unfazed)
I like the Press Correspondent's Dinner.

SENATOR CARLISLE
I've never spoken at that.

MIRIAM
No. But the Fregola Sarda Salad is
out of this world.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Oh, Miriam. You're incorrigible.

(CONTINUED)
MIRIAM
No, I'm in politics.

The Senator laughs.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Any pressing matters I need to be made aware of before we continue our evening with Beth here?

MIRIAM
Just a few.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Go ahead.

MIRIAM
We received an e-mail from the charity founded by the families of the crash victims and--

SENATOR CARLISLE
Make a sizable donation. Whatever you think is appropriate. Next.

MIRIAM
Sigma Corporation requested a phone call at your earliest convenience.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Pass. I'm busy tonight. I'll call them tomorrow.

MIRIAM
Noted. Similarly your other... uh... campaign donor... has requested you touch base whenever possible. She seemed to suggest it was a matter of some urgency.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Everyone thinks their problems are the most urgent. As with Sigma, she will have to wait until tomorrow. As of now, the most pressing matter on the plate is getting this young lady some dinner. If you could bring the car around Miriam, let's not make her wait any longer.

MIRIAM
As you wish, sir.
EFX: Footsteps as Vivian walks away.

A beat.

SENATOR CARLISLE
(To Beth)
My apologies. As you know, a Senator's work is never done.

BETH
Oh, I don't mind, really.

SENATOR CARLISLE
A hard worker and polite! I love that.

BETH
I'm just doing my job, Senator Carlisle.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Jackson, please. You've been working at our branch office for how long now?

BETH
Going on six years, give or take.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Six years! Why, that's a whole senatorial term. I couldn't do it without people like you, Beth. Lots of folks "just do their jobs," but it's the ones who come and give it something extra that make the difference.

BETH
Well, thank you, sir...

SENATOR CARLISLE
Jackson.

BETH
Jackson. That really means a lot, coming from you.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Nonsense. A politician is only as good as the people around him.

(CONTINUED)
And that's why I'm trying to take time out to express my gratitude to those of you who have gone above and beyond.

EFX: Text alert.

Speaking of which...

EFX: Phone button noises.

...it seems Miriam has brought the car around, so we can get this evening underway.

BETH
Shouldn't we wait for Eli?

SENATOR CARLISLE
Eli...? Ah yes. As Miriam might have mentioned, I tasked Eli with a special assignment... and he'll be meeting us at dinner.

BETH
Oh. What assignment was that?

SENATOR CARLISLE
Now, now... that's part of the surprise! Shall we?

BETH
Sure. I mean, yes, please...

SENATOR CARLISLE
...Jackson.

BETH
Jackson.

EFX: Footsteps as they walk away.

EFX: Door open, faint crowd noises in the distance.

THE NARRATOR
After leading Beth through several dark corridors of the venue's backstage area, the Senator and the young woman emerged through a nondescript door into an alley.

(MORE)
Although the faint chatter of the crowd could still be heard in the distance, the alley itself was devoid of any signs of life, save for one black town car, parked ominously under the splash of the door's one, dull yellow service light. The windows of the vehicle were covered in a dark tint, revealing no clues to car's interior... or those who may occupy it.

SENATOR CARLISLE
This is us.

BETH
It's nice.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Perks of the job.

EFX: Car door.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
After you.

EFX: Sounds of the two getting in the car, door shutting after them.

THE SENATOR'S CAR – NIGHT

EFX: Sounds of a car in motion.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Now, make sure you buckle up. We should be fine, but Miriam can be a little aggressive on the brakes.

EFX: Seatbelt noises.

MIRIAM
I heard that.

SENATOR CARLISLE
You were supposed to.

BETH
I didn't realize Miriam was also your driver.

(CONTINUED)
SENATOR CARLISLE
Well, she's not usually. But my regular driver left recently to go work for a private limo service and we haven't found a replacement yet.

BETH
That's unfortunate.

A beat.

BETH (cont’d)
So, where are we headed? I guess I'm not really sure where senators eat.

SENATOR CARLISLE
(feigns disgust)
Yuck. Who would want to go where senators eat? Those guys are boring.

Beth laughs.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
No, no restaurants. I'm really picky and most of the places in town are just so lackluster.

BETH
Then, what...?

SENATOR CARLISLE
I'm having a meal specially prepared for us at my home. Not just to suit my refined palette of course, but also because I felt a personal touch was important. I hope that's okay.

BETH
(slightly uncertain)
Oh, yes. Yes, that's fine. It's awfully nice of you to invite us into your home.

SENATOR CARLISLE
It's my pleasure, really.

BETH
...and Eli knows to meet us there?

SENATOR CARLISLE
Oh yes, Eli has the details and has been prepared.

(CONTINUED)
BETH
Great.

A beat.

BETH (cont’d)
I didn't realize you were such a gourmand.

SENATOR CARLISLE
I would hardly call myself a gourmand. I dabble. I still make too much of a mess in the kitchen to be pro, though.

BETH
I sympathize. I can barely boil water.

The Senator laughs.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Well, that's one thing I won't ask you to do.

BETH
Thank heavens.

The duo sit in contented silence for a few beats.

EFX: The sound of the car in motion.

SENATOR CARLISLE
This is our stop.

BETH
It's...lovely.

EFX: The car pulling to a stop.

THE NARRATOR
Miriam pulled the car to a halt in front of a large, stone mansion. Despite being in the heart of the city, the home's palatial nature made it feel like an island apart. Though small flourishes had been made to the building's exterior to make it seem more inviting, there was nonetheless a subtle coldness to the home that almost whispered "Stay away."

EFX: Car doors opening, foot steps on gravel.

(CONTINUED)
EFX: Front door opening/closing. Lock clicking.

THE SENATOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

EFX: Footsteps.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Welcome to my home.

BETH
Wow, it's really nice.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Thank you. It's been in my family for generations. It certainly requires some upkeep, but there is something to be said about preserving a legacy.

BETH
Well, you seem to have done a wonderful job. And it smells so good in here!

SENATOR CARLISLE
Ah yes! It seems our chef for the evening is already at work! Miriam, would you mind checking on that?

MIRIAM
Of course.

EFX: Miriam's heels on the tile as she begins to walk away.

BETH
Are you going to be joining us for dinner, Miriam?

EFX: Miriam's footsteps stop.

MIRIAM
Me? No. I'm...a strict pescatarian. I'll be skipping the meal. But, I will be working with the chef to coordinate the courses. So, I'll be in and out. You're not rid of me, yet.

BETH
Oh. I didn't mean...
SENATOR CARLISLE
Oh, don't mind Miriam. All that fish in her diet, I'm convinced that the mercury has effected her sense of humor.

MIRIAM
No sir, just the hours on the clock.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Off you go, Miriam.

MIRIAM
Sir.

EFX: Miriam's footsteps, the echo of the kitchen door in the distance.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Everyone's got special diets these days. Vegetarians, pescatarians. It's so limiting. Though, I suppose I forgot to ask: Any restrictions?

BETH
Oh, no. I grew up in the Midwest on a Midwest diet. I'm a meat and potatoes girl.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Bless you. One thing I've always said about the fine folks of the Midwest: They know how to eat and they know how to vote.

He laughs. She does too.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
Come in, come in. Make yourself at home.

EFX: The pop of a cork, the sound of wine pouring into a glass.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
Here, a glass of wine. From a colleague in Martha's Vineyard.

BETH
Oh, I...
SENATOR CARLISLE
I insist. It pairs well with the meal.

BETH
Well, okay.

SENATOR CARLISLE
To hard work. And, of course, to America.

Beth laughs.

BETH
Cheers.

EFX: The clink of the glasses, the sound of Beth sipping her wine.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Good, right?

BETH
Very.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Told you.

EFX: Door opening, footsteps.

MIRIAM
If you'd like to convene in the dining room, the appetizers have been set out.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Wonderful.

BETH
Where is Eli? It's not like him to be late.

SENATOR CARLISLE
I'm sure he's almost ready. In the meantime, more food for us. Let's go.

EFX: Footsteps, door noises.

THE NARRATOR
As the Senator and Beth entered the dining room, the young woman could see that the table... (MORE)
THE NARRATOR (cont'd)
an exquisite piece boasting the finest wood and ornate carving... was set with an array of elegantly plated appetizers. Each piece of meat, crudité, and garnish was arranged to appeal to the senses...

A beat.

THE NARRATOR (cont’d)
...an appeal that was certainly successful, as Beth could feel her stomach growling.

BETH
Wow. There's so much.

SENATOR CARLISLE
I told you: I like to be open to dining options. Go ahead, dig in.

BETH
I don't even know where to start!

SENATOR CARLISLE
Allow me.

EFX: The sound of a plate scraping across the table, utensils shifting.

THE NARRATOR
With no small amount of showmanship, Senator Carlisle approached the table, carefully selecting one of the many plates. Lifting it, he carried the dish over to Beth, who surveyed its contents. She saw small crackers, topped with tiny chunks of red, lightly grilled pieces of meat. Each was covered with a dollop of thin, red sauce. The smell was strong. At once foreign, but also oddly familiar.

BETH
What are these?

SENATOR CARLISLE
House specialty. Go on, try one.

THE NARRATOR
Lifting a cracker from the plate to her mouth, Beth took a bite. (MORE)
The meat was salty, but flavorful. The sauce, spicy... but with the vaguest hint of something... almost like copper. It was unlike anything Beth had ever had before.

**EFX:** Munching noises.

**BETH**
That's good.

**SENATOR CARLISLE**
...isn't it just?

**BETH**
Mmm.

**SENATOR CARLISLE**
Have another.

**BETH**
Just one more. Don't want to spoil my appetite before Eili gets here.

**SENATOR CARLISLE**
Of course.

**THE NARRATOR**
Allowing Beth to remove one more of the treats from the tray, the Senator returned the dish to the table.

**SENATOR CARLISLE**
More wine?

**EFX:** Swallowing.

**BETH**
Oh, I couldn't possibly. You've barely touched yours and I'm almost done with my glass. I don't want to look like a lush in front of the boss.

**SENATOR CARLISLE**
Nonsense. I insist.

**EFX:** The sound of wine pouring, sipping.

**BETH**
It is good.

(CONTINUED)
SENATOR CARLISLE
As I said, it's a very specific vintage.

A beat.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
Now, Beth... before the evening continues any farther, I want to discuss with you the real reason I asked you here tonight.

THE NARRATOR
Beth had just finished a gulp of wine when the Senator placed a gentle hand on her shoulder. The phrasing of his words combined with familiarity of his touch caused the butterflies, long since dissipated, to return to her stomach.

BETH
(anxious)
Oh. Senator Carlisle. I...

THE NARRATOR
Before Beth could finish her thought, the door to the dining room swung open. Miriam, usually unflappable, entered with a look of uncharacteristic dismay.

MIRIAM
(Urgent)
Sir.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Miriam, I am in the middle of something.

MIRIAM
It's... it's the "other donor," sir. She's on the line and is quite insistent that you speak. Now.

The Senator sighs.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Fine. Transfer the call to the study. I'll be right there.

MIRIAM
Yes, sir.

(CONTINUED)
EFX: The sounds of Miriam exiting.

SENATOR CARLISLE
(To Beth)
If you'll excuse me just one moment. We'll resume this when I get back. Have some more wine. And eat.

BETH
(Plummoxed)
Sure.


BETH (cont’d)
What the hell is going on? Is my boss hitting on me?

A beat.

THE NARRATOR
Digging into her purse, Beth frantically grabbed her phone, dialing Eli's number.

EFX: Phone buttons.

BETH
Eli, where are you? I need you here, pronto.

THE NARRATOR
As the phone began to ring on Eli's end, Beth was surprised to discover another noise joining the digital chime: The sound of a phone simultaneously ringing somewhere in the house.

EFX: Phone ringing noises, both on the phone and in the distance.

THE NARRATOR (cont’d)
Curious, Beth began to follow the sound. Each step drawing her closer to the ringing. Eventually, she found herself outside a thick service door, the chime of the phone clearly coming from the other side.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
The pungent aroma of the cooking meal was extremely strong here, the faint sound of sizzling suggested that the ringing had to be coming from the kitchen. Cautiously, Beth pushed open the door and entered.

THE SENATOR'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

EFX: The phone ringing, the sizzling of something in a skillet.

BETH
Oh my god.

THE NARRATOR
Emerging into the kitchen, Beth was able to confirm what she had already suspected: The ringing on her handset and the ringing in the house were one in the same. Standing before her at the stove was Eli, her co-worker and the evening's assumed tardy party. Eli's phone, which continued to ring, was buried somewhere in his pocket. Physically surveying the young man, it was clear why he had yet to answer it: His left arm, severed at the elbow, now lay on the stove top, sizzling with a marinade of onions and olive oil. In his right hand, Eli clutched a spatula, casually pushing pieces of his severed appendage around in the skillet. In the spot where his arm once existed, a neat bandage dressed the amputation... and though the occasional droplet of blood would fall from the fresh wound to the floor, the garish chef didn't seem to notice.

BETH
(nauseated and panicked)
Oh my god, oh my god. What the fuck...

THE NARRATOR
At the sound of Beth's voice, Eli turned to her. His eyes glassy. (MORE)

(CONTINUED)
THE NARRATOR (cont'd)
Although Eli was standing in front of Beth, one look confirmed that whoever was looking back at her was not present. Blood, fresh and thick, was caked around his mouth. Almost lazily, he opened his lips as if to speak, but only a soft moan escaped.

EFX: Groan.

THE NARRATOR (cont’d)
Although she was able to see inside his gaping maw for just a moment, Beth knew instantly that Eli no longer had his tongue.

Beth screams.

EFX: Footsteps, door opens.

SENATOR CARLISLE
What?

BETH
What the fuck is going on?

SENATOR CARLISLE
This is why we don't leave guests unattended to wander the house.

MIRIAM
Then you need to learn to transfer your own calls.

BETH
What did you do to him?

SENATOR CARLISLE
I didn't do anything to him. As you can see, he's cooking himself.

BETH
...what happened to his tongue?!

SENATOR CARLISLE
Remember that appetizer you enjoyed? I think that was it. Though it might have been someone else's... we had a few leftovers we reheated. Gauche, I know.

BETH
You mean, I...
EFX: Vomiting.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Oh, now. That's no way to show
grateful to your chef.

EFX: Beth continues retching.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont'd)
Ick. Miriam, get her a glass of
water.

BETH
(hysterical)
No! Stay away from me! Both of you!

SENATOR CARLISLE
I don't think you're in any position
to tell us what to do.

BETH
(crying)
Please, please stay away...

The Senator sighs.

SENATOR CARLISLE
You... need to shut up. Right now.

THE NARRATOR
Despite the overwhelming terror
clutching at her chest, Beth found
that as the words left the Senator's
lips... she could no longer speak.
Even her sobs of fear were
immediately silenced. Inside, her
mind was screaming... but her
physical self refused to respond.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Miriam, if you could tend to our
chef, Beth and I need a moment.

MIRIAM
Sir.

SENATOR CARLISLE
...oh! And make a note to contact the
"donor" and apologize. We didn't get
to properly finish our call thanks to
someone causing a racket.

(CONTINUED)
EFX: Footsteps, Miriam crossing the room.

SENATOR CARLISLE
...now you, sit down.

THE NARRATOR
Once again, Beth found herself compelled to follow the Senator's orders against her own will. She crossed to a small table in the corner of the kitchen, and had a seat.

MIRIAM
(to Eli, in the distance)
...and you, turn that meat over. It's starting to burn on that side.

Eli groans his consent.

EFX: Footsteps. The Senator is crossing to where Beth sits.

SENATOR CARLISLE
You can talk now.

Beth gasps for air as if she had just emerged from deep water in the pool.

BETH
How are you doing that?

SENATOR CARLISLE
(glibly)
I don't know. Mind control? Or maybe you just had too much wine.

At this, the Senator laughs to himself.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
I know how you girls can get.

A beat.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
Well, this isn't exactly how I had planned the evening to go, but you gotta roll with the punches, you know?
BETH
(Sniffling)
I don't understand.

SENATOR CARLISLE
We were interrupted earlier, but you and I have some business to attend to...

Beth sobs.

BETH
Oh god...oh god...are you going to force me to have sex with you?

The Senator snorts.

SENATOR CARLISLE
What?! No! You think I want to fuck you? Absolutely not. Do you fuck your food? Come on, Beth.

BETH
Then, what...

SENATOR CARLISLE
Speaking of which... Miriam? Could you have Eli service us at his convenience? This is supposed to be a dinner party, after all.

MIRIAM
Sir.

A beat.

MIRIAM (cont’d)
(To Eli)
You heard him. Get on with it.

THE NARRATOR
With his free hand, Eli, as if impervious to pain, reached into the skillet and grabbed his cooked arm. Crossing to the small table where the Senator and Beth sat, Eli placed the still steaming meat between them.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Fantastic! You've done good work here here tonight, Eli... and I wouldn't dream of imposing on you further. You are now relieved of your duties.

(MORE)
SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
Miriam, make sure our young chef is taken care of, won't you?

MIRIAM
Of course, sir.

EFX: Footsteps as Miriam walks over.

MIRIAM (cont’d)
Now, Eli...you can retire for the evening. Let's get you situated in the walk-in freezer.

Eli groans.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Oh, and Miriam?

MIRIAM
Sir?

SENATOR CARLISLE
Don't forget the marinade.

MIRIAM
Ah yes. Now, Eli... once we get to the freezer and you slit your throat, we must remember to sprinkle some Bay seasoning on the blood before you expire. The Senator insists it helps with the flavor.

Eli groans again.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Thank you, Miriam.

MIRIAM
Just doing my job, sir.

EFX: Shuffling feet. The sound of Miriam and Eli exiting, the freezer door in the distance. Beth's sobs.

BETH
(crying)
Why are you doing this?

SENATOR CARLISLE
You really should have a taste of this arm while it's hot. It should be tender enough that you can tear a little piece off with your fingers. It's all in the sauteing.

(CONTINUED)
BETH
Please. Don't.

SENATOR CARLISLE
(stern)
Eat it.

THE NARRATOR
Despite willing herself to resist with every fiber of her own being, Beth could feel her hand ripping a piece of meat from Eli's cooked arm. Slowly, she popped the morsel into her mouth, rolling the flesh over on her tongue several times before chewing. Her stomach wretched as she ate part of her friend, even as she attempted to suppress the thought that it was actually, in its own way, quite delicious.

EFX: Chewing, swallowing.

BETH
Oh god...

SENATOR CARLISLE
There's really nothing like it, is there? Once that taste graces your tongue, it's one that you'll crave for the rest of your life.

A beat.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
Which, for you, unfortunately isn't long. A shame, really. It's even better the next day in a frittata.

Beth sobs.

BETH
Why?

SENATOR CARLISLE
Why? Why?! For the exact reason I told you that you were invited. That's why. You're a good employee.

BETH
I don't understand.
SENATOR CARLISLE  
...perhaps too good, aren't you? But apparently not good enough to clean out your e-mail cache. Or else maybe we wouldn't have noticed that little expenditure report you and Eli shared with one another a few weeks ago.

BETH  
I... I don't know what you're talking about.

SENATOR CARLISLE  
Oh, come now. Feigning ignorance is a politician's job. Don't scam a scammer, Beth.

BETH  
I'm serious.

The Senator sighs.

SENATOR CARLISLE  
So am I. Now, let's get back to the matter of hand. Bite off your finger.

THE NARRATOR  
Before she could even register the command, Beth could feel her index finger pressing into the back of her throat, the joint connecting the digit to her palm resting on her bottom row of teeth. Compelled by forces beyond her, she bit down. Blood frothed across her tongue, leaking out of her mouth and down her shirt. Eventually the bone snaps under her jaw's pressure. With a few more gnashes, she severs the last bits of meat. Her finger now independent of her body.

EFX: Biting, bone cracking.

SENATOR CARLISLE  
Now, spit that out. You don't want to eat that raw.

EFX: The sound of spitting. The finger plopping on the table.

Beth cries uncontrollably.

(CONTINUED)
SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
Get a hold of yourself.

She does.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
Now, those e-mails.

BETH
(very shaky)
The Sigma Corp donor e-mails?

SENATOR CARLISLE
Bingo.

BETH
We found a discrepancy. Money donated to the campaign by Sigma Corp was being sourced to fund a project by a competing donor.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Yeah. I wasn’t thrilled that you were able to connect those dots so easily.

BETH
(incredulous)
That’s why you’re doing this? Because we found out you shifted money? That’s not even all that remarkable, by DC standards.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Yeah, it’s not just the money. But also what the money’s funding.

BETH
I... don’t understand.

SENATOR CARLISLE
...well, that’s probably because you’re losing a lot of blood. That gaping wound where your finger was sure is a doozie.

A beat.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
Did you share this information with anyone?

(CONTINUED)
BETH
(fading)
No, why would we? Like I said, it seemed par for the course. We were loyal. You killed us for nothing.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Oh, dear Beth. You're misunderstanding. I was always going to eat you. I noticed how delicious you looked when I visited the branch office ages ago. This little incident just helped bump you up on the menu. I was just curious how traceable that data was, but it really was just a red herring.

A beat.

SENATOR CARLISLE (cont’d)
Speaking of which, I'm pretty sure we had actual herrings on the appetizer table that we never got to sample because you decided to go all Jessica Fletcher. And because of that, I'm still peckish.

BETH
You'll never... get away with this.

SENATOR CARLISLE
Oh, but I have. You've worked in my branch office for years... and you never once noticed that staffers come... and staffers go. My tastes aren't a new development... just my ability to urge you to prepare the meal for me. Which, I much prefer. As I told you in the car... I'm a mess in the kitchen.

He chuckles.

THE NARRATOR
Pushing away from the table, the Senator stood. He crossed to the counter, where an array of utensils were laid out, Carefully selecting one.

EFX: Clanking steel against the counter.

(CONTINUED)
...but, I gotta hand it to you Beth. You got to be privy to one of the Senate's best kept secrets. One that kept me energized on the campaign trail and well-fed enough to filibuster for hours on end. So, that makes you one of the special ones. Couldn't you just eat your heart out?

Crossing back to Beth, Carlisle gently laid a meat cleaver in front of her. The young woman looked down at it in paralyzed terror.

...in fact, I think you should. I did promise you a meal, after all.

With tears streaming down her face, Beth picked up the cleaver.

EFX: Sound of the blade scraping across the table.

Please no.

...I hope I have enough garlic cloves for this...

EFX: A stabbing noise. Beth gurgling and choking on her own blood.

KATIE
I think I'm going to be nauseous.

DR. RICKETTS
Do you need a minute?

No, I'm fine. I just don't know how anyone could eat another person.

DR. RICKETTS
Cannibalism is found in a number of different species.

(CONTINUED)
KATIE
(dryly)
You know, this is one of those occasions where science isn't really much solace.

DR. RICKETTS
I *always* find solace in science.

KATIE
Still. The idea that there's a cannibal operating in modern society... let alone a member of our government? Do you know who that was? I voted for him!

DR. RICKETTS
...the lesser of two evils?

KATIE
Something like that.

DR. RICKETTS
(uncharacteristic)
Ha.

KATIE
But, I think we're burying the lede here. Carlisle was using mind control.

DR. RICKETTS
You're a very inquisitive lab assistant, you know that?

KATIE
I've seen drugs here that do something similar... not quite to that extent, but still...

DR. RICKETTS
The Senator did essentially admit that he dosed her wine.

KATIE
Right, and it can't be a coincidence that he had dealings with Sigma Corp. How much do you want to bet the "other donor" that he kept talking about was our very own Roth-Lobdow Center?

(CONTINUED)
DR. RICKETTS
It's not my job to speculate on such things.

She ignores him.

KATIE
Dr. Kinsler once told me that it would be useless to attempt to go to the authorities about the things we see here. Maybe he knew that The Center had government protection.

DR. RICKETTS
Kinsler also knew to mind his own business. Until he didn't. And we saw how that ended.

KATIE
Wait... you know...?

DR. RICKETTS
Know... what? That Dr. Kinsler's dead? No, but I presumed. And you've just confirmed.

KATIE
Shit.

DR. RICKETTS
It doesn't change much. I mean... what else could 'early retirement' really mean in the grand scheme of things? I don't want to talk about it anymore. We're done for the day.


KATIE
(into recorder)
Roth-Lodbow Center for Advanced Research. Project Cyclops, Day 12, completed.

EFX: Record button press/tone.

END OF EPISODE