

DARKEST NIGHT

SEASON 2

EPISODE 1: Crash Course

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. Softspoken but menacing. Guarded.

Pilot Gerard Hinton - "Happy-go-lucky" private pilot. The quotes are there for a reason.

Co-Pilot Alexandra "Alex" Mayhew - New to flying for private airline. Used to be a pilot in the Navy... looking to settle her twitchy nerves.

Stewardess Emilia - One of Hinton's crew.

Lieutenant Ellen Steele - Mayhew's former Lieutenant.

Radio Voice #1 & Radio Voice #2 - Navy radio man/woman

Voice Over Radio - Terrifying unknown voice

Assistant Gloria -- Vivian's assistant.

Vivian Lobdow - Adopted by Clinton Lobdow, inherited The Roth-Lobdow Center for Advanced Research. In complete control after events of Season 1. Has kept Katie alive for a reason.

Locations:

1. Dr. Ricketts' Lab at The Roth-Lobdow Center
2. Airplane
3. Vivian's Office at The Roth-Lobdow Center

Time of day:

Variable

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INTRO BUMPER

KATIE

Phew, Katie. C'mon. You can do this.
You can do this.

Efx: Recorder button/tone.

KATIE (cont'd)

(whispering)

Roth-Lobdow Center for Advanced
Research. Project Cyclops, Day 11,
about to begin. Entering the
laboratory now.

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

KATIE (cont'd)

Hello?

(a beat)

Hello?

DR. RICKETTS

Ms. Reed, I presume?

Efx: Door slams shut.

KATIE

(startled)

Dr. Ricketts! It's, uh, it's nice to
meet you.

DR. RICKETTS

Call me Lionel.

KATIE

Really?

DR. RICKETTS

No. That would be highly
unprofessional.

KATIE

Oh... Ok.

DR. RICKETTS

Rumor has it you were Dr. Kinsler's
lab assistant up until yesterday.

KATIE

Uh... yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. RICKETTS

Early retirement! What a lucky man that Dr. Kinsler is.

KATIE

Yes... lucky indeed...

DR. RICKETTS

I've never had a lab assistant myself, to be honest. Were it not for Ms. Lobdow forcing your apprenticeship down my throat, you wouldn't even be here today.

KATIE

Oh?

DR. RICKETTS

In fact, I suspect Ms. Lobdow must've taken quite the shining toward you.

KATIE

It would appear that way, wouldn't it...

DR. RICKETTS

Well then -- should we get started?

Efx: A tray table rolling closer. Sheet being thrown off a box.

KATIE

Oh my god. That head... it's so...

DR. RICKETTS

Quite disfigured, yes. Luckily the right eye's just intact enough so as to be usable, wouldn't you agree?

KATIE

Right.

DR. RICKETTS

Well -- will you do the honors?

KATIE

S--sure.

Efx: Handling of forceps.

DR. RICKETTS

First we pull out the eyeball, making sure to --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE
-- keep the optic nerve in tact.

Efx: Wet popping noise.

DR. RICKETTS
Well -- Dr. Kinsler taught you quite well, didn't he? And now?

KATIE
Use a syringe to withdraw blood from the optic nerve, slip the sample in our little black cube over here --

DR. RICKETTS
Excellent work, Ms. Reed. Excellent work.

KATIE
Dr. Kinsler did mention I was a natural.

DR. RICKETTS
Alright. Project Cyclops. Trial 7-zeta-1. Timestamp is registering correctly. Initiating playback in
3...
2...
1...
Initiate.

Efx: Distinctive flash noise

INSIDE THE COCKPIT OF A PRIVATE PLANE. PILOT GERARD HINTON HAS JUST HIT CRUISING ALTITUDE.

Efx: Fasten seatbelt sign off. PA turning on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HINTON

Captain Hinton here again. I wanted to let our cabin know that we've hit our cruising altitude of just over 38,000 feet. We've turned off the fasten seatbelt sign and you're now free to roam about the cabin. But don't roam too far -- our crew will be coming by shortly to take your drink orders and offer you a complimentary Tablier Bleu meal of your choice. Might I suggest the Seared Cod with Date Vinnagrette or Fontina stuffed porkchops? They are delicious. And please enjoy the rest of your flight with G Valor Private Airlines.

Efx: The PA turning off. The cockpit door opening.

STEWARDESS

Your coffee, Captain Hinton.

HINTON

Two creams and one Splenda?

STEWARDESS

Just the way you like it.

HINTON

Thanks, Emilia.

STEWARDESS

And for you, Captain...

MAYHEW

Mayhew. Alexandra Mayhew.

HINTON

(a tad pointedly)
And she's not a captain. *Not yet.*

STEWARDESS

Right. What would you like to drink Ms. Mayhew?

MAYHEW

Water's fine. Thanks.

Efx: The cockpit door opening and closing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NARRATOR

Captain Gerard Hinton was a man defined by status. His quest for dominance consumed him. Even in a field with cocky and chauvinistic personalities, Hinton was in a stratosphere all on his own.

MAYHEW

I apologize, Captain Hinton. I didn't mean to--

HINTON

It's nothing to fret... Alex, right?

MAYHEW

Yes sir. Alex. Alex Mayhew.

HINTON

Emilia, that stewardess? She's one of the... dare I say, more simple-minded of the bunch. She'll learn to address you correctly in due time.

NARRATOR

Hinton never stopped to think about how his behavior could be perceived as condescending or rude. His style was defined by one-upmanship. He constantly had the sexiest of companions, the blackest of credit cards, and the shiniest of winged lapel pins.

Efx: The flight hits a tiny patch of turbulence.

MAYHEW

Shit!

HINTON

Keep calm, Alex, keep calm.

Efx: The flight slowly creeps until it's regularly cruising.

HINTON (cont'd)

Pass me the in-flight.

MAYHEW

The what?

HINTON

The in-flight.

(beat, nothing)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HINTON (cont'd)
 Y'know, the in-flight?
 (unhappy, frustrated)
 The radio you idiot!

NARRATOR
 Mayhew grabbed the in-flight radio
 and passed it to Hinton, who ripped
 it from her grasp.

HINTON
 I knew you were green, Alex, but I
 didn't know you were that green,
 Jesus.

Efx: The PA turning on.

HINTON (cont'd)
 Hi folks! This is your captain
 speaking. Sorry for that bit of
 turbulence there. It appears we may
 have hit an unexpected cold front
 moving faster than usual across the
 Pacific. Just to be safe I'm going to
 put the fasten seatbelt sign back on.
 (Efx: fasten seatbelt
 sign turning on)
 Thanks for choosing G Valor Private
 Airlines.

Efx: The PA turning off.

NARRATOR
 Hinton's tone changed when he
 addressed the cabin. It was cheery,
 relatable. In stark contrast to the
 man that Mayhew had seen thus far.

MAYHEW
 Sorry about the in-flight--

HINTON
No apologies in my cockpit, Alex.
 (Efx: handing back
 the in-flight)
 Only results. You learn from
 mistakes, you make the grade. *Or*
else. Understood?

MAYHEW
 Of course. Sure. Understood.

Efx: The cockpit door opening and closing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

STEWARDESS

Captain Mayhew--

HINTON

(enraged, unexpected)

IT'S CO-PILOT MAYHEW, MISS MAYHEW OR
ALEX, EMILIA. What part of that do
you not understand?

Efx: The Stewardess taking a deep breath.

STEWARDESS

Your water, Miss Mayhew.

MAYHEW

Thanks, Emilia.

HINTON

(a beat, realizing)

That may have been a tad uncalled
for, Emilia, but what's my one rule?

STEWARDESS

(as if by rote
memory)

You learn from mistakes, you make the
grade.

HINTON

Or...?

NARRATOR

Emilia knew what the correct response
was though she dreaded saying it
every time.

STEWARDESS

(low, in a whisper)

Or else.

HINTON

What was that?

STEWARDESS

(full volume)

Or else.

HINTON

Good job, Emilia. Now please vacate
the cockpit.

Efx: The cockpit door opening and closing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

NARRATOR

A long moment passed. No one on Hinton's crew had ever experienced an "or else" before. But they all lived in constant fear of what "or else" could truly mean...

MAYHEW

What happened to your last co-pilot, captain?

HINTON

Paternity leave. Just had twins -- a boy and a girl.

MAYHEW

That's wonderful.

HINTON

I suppose.

(beat)

Where'd they bring you up from anyhow? Some low-level commercial airline?

MAYHEW

The Navy, actually.

HINTON

A Naval officer in our midst, eh? You don't say.

MAYHEW

Former Naval officer, captain.

HINTON

Former? Not on reserve? At your young age?

NARRATOR

Mayhew paused before answering the question. She knew better than to dig into this... but...

HINTON

Alex?

MAYHEW

A dishonorable discharge, Captain Hinton.

HINTON

Oh? Why's that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

MAYHEW
Temporary insanity.

Efx: Thunder strikes!

Efx: The flight hits a *larger* patch of turbulence!

Efx: Warning buttons going off

HINTON
Help me out here, Alex.

Efx: Buttons being pressed. Levers pushed. The turbulence intensifies.

MAYHEW
This looks bad Captain Hinton.

HINTON
We'll pull through in... mere...
moments...

Efx: The flight slowly creeps until it's regularly cruising.

NARRATOR
As the plane leveled off, Captain
Hinton felt a strange stirring in his
stomach...

HINTON
Thanks for the help there, Alex.

NARRATOR
Perhaps it was due to the fact that
his co-pilot just confessed to being
diagnosed as temporarily insane...
Or... perhaps not...

MAYHEW
Of course, captain.

HINTON
You were saying? About the Navy.

MAYHEW
It may not be the best time to delve
into this story, Captain Hinton. I
presume you need me at my best while
we're faced with this turbulent front
and --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

HINTON

Lady, I've been flying planes all my life. Ever since I was a 13-year-old and my pop bought me one of the first remote controlled airplanes they put on the market. I'm not scared of flying and I sure as hell ain't gonna let a lil' jet stream like this take us down. What I would like, however, is a story to keep me company.

NARRATOR

That feeling was still present in Captain Hinton's gut. It was startling him but he wasn't sure why.

MAYHEW

Okay. Well -- It was a Friday night on the carrier. Some drinking, hanging out. A couple of the sober susans -- most of the girls in the Navy, Captain... they, uh... well, they don't tend to get as sloppy as some of the guys on board.

HINTON

Yea, figures.

MAYHEW

So, some of the sober sallys -- myself included -- were dared to run a scrimmage... a sort of game that us pilots would play to practice for an unsuspecting attack.

Efx: Flashback tone/memory voice.

Efx: Navy fighters, flying, midair.

MAYHEW (cont'd)

I was co-piloting with a female lieutenant I had come to know well. Ellen. Used to bunk on the same floor. A quiet pilot. Very by the book. Sensible. Aware. You'd never think of her as anything other than completely stable, even-keeled... but then --

Efx: BANG! BANG! Gun fire.

Efx: Glass shattering. A body being hit. A woman screaming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

MAYHEW (cont'd)
We took friendly fire.

RADIO VOICE #1 (IN BG)
Mayday, Mayday. Carrier 7489 shows
catastrophic engine failure --

RADIO VOICE #2 (IN BG)
Lieutenant Ellen Steele. Lieutenant
Ellen Steele do you copy --

RADIO VOICE #1 (IN BG)
Officer Mayhew, do you read?

Efx: Consuming the entire soundscape until -- *a complete
silence.*

MAYHEW
(from the silence)
I don't know how to explain what
happened, Captain Hinton. But in that
moment, all the noise? You know --
fear? Worry? Whatever you wanna call
it -- it just disappeared. And I knew
I had to act... immediately.

Efx: HAYWIRE AGAIN. Buttons pressed, levers pushed, grabbing
of a radio.

MAYHEW (IN THE PAST) (cont'd)
Copy, copy. Officer Mayhew here.
We've taken friendly fire. Heading
home to the nest. Lieutenant Steele's
been shot, she's in critical
condition and suffering substantial
blood loss.

Efx: Buttons continue to be pressed. Mayhew grunts as she
heaves the broken vessel, attempting to take control of the
spinning beast. Continue to level off over next piece of
dialogue.

MAYHEW (cont'd)
Taking back control from the clutches
of that dark fate? That wasn't the
horror that drove me insane.

Efx: General plane sounds, no longer haywire.

STEELE (IN THE PAST)
Alex... Alex...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

NARRATOR

It was in that moment, on that fateful day years ago that Mayhew -- for the first time -- was confronted by death... and a most gruesome death at that.

STEELE (IN THE PAST)

Save me Alex... save me...

NARRATOR

The body of Lieutenant Ellen Steele was unrecognizable and bore little resemblance to a human being. Her body was covered in debris, glass and blood. But worst of all...

STEELE (IN THE PAST)

Help... help...

NARRATOR

She was still alive...

MAYHEW

(Choking up)

And I... I couldn't think, Captain Hinton, I could barely breathe... I was making second-by-second calculations concerning lift, weight, and velocity -- Yet her begging, her brutal whines for help... they were... they were *unbearable*...

Efx: Steele keeps screaming for help, begging...

NARRATOR

As Mayhew continued to attempt and safely land her jet, Lieutenant Steele finally made her bloody hands to the cuffs of Mayhew's dress blues. Lieutenant Steele continued to yank on Mayhew's oxygen mask. Pleading. Begging.

STEELE (IN THE PAST)

Help me, Alex. Help me!

NARRATOR

The yanking became more forceful as Lieutenant Steele began to see that her fate was sealed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (10)

MAYHEW

It became distracting, and I was desperate to live... so... so I took out my sidearm...

Efx: Gun Shot

MAYHEW (cont'd)

And ended her suffering.

Efx: more gun shots until it clicks.

NARRATOR

There was a long pause after Mayhew finished this piece of the story. But there was one coda left.

MAYHEW

I don't remember landing the plane. I don't remember the next few months after. I eventually woke up in a straight jacket... in a facility... and worked on my mental health until I was given the all clear.

(beat)

Now I'm cured.

HINTON

Cured. Cured... I'm sure.

Efx: The flight hits an even *larger* patch of turbulence!

MAYHEW

Captain Hinton --

HINTON

Alex -- I need your help.

MAYHEW

Yes?

HINTON

I'm going to need you to do something for me.

MAYHEW

What... what is it?

HINTON

I need you to take over control of the plane.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (11)

MAYHEW

What?

HINTON

I-- I need you to--

NARRATOR

This had never happened to Captain Hinton before. This gut feeling... he was beginning to realize that he was no longer in control of his own body.

HINTON

I-- I need you to take over control of the plane and I need you to use that fire extinguisher to knock me out.

MAYHEW

Captain Hinton, is this some type of test or --

HINTON

This not a test. Something is wrong with me -- I should not... I should not be having such difficulty in this turbulence... I'm not certain why I can't get out of it.

VOICE OVER RADIO

That would be me, Captain Hinton.

HINTON

What... who is this?

VOICE OVER RADIO

Captain Hinton -- crash the plane.

HINTON

What?! No!

NARRATOR

Against his own will, Hinton began to nosedive.

Efx: More turbulence, flight problem noises.

HINTON

Alex--

MAYHEW

No... no...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (12)

NARRATOR

Mayhew grabbed her controls and attempted to steady the aircraft.

HINTON

Alex-- I need you to knock me out.

VOICE OVER RADIO

Don't do it, Mayhew.

HINTON

Quickly, before I'm completely incapable of remaining in control.

VOICE OVER RADIO

Crash the plane, *NOW HINTON*.

NARRATOR

All Mayhew could see with this request was Ellen's final moments.

MAYHEW

I-- I can't. I can't, Captain Hinton.

VOICE OVER RADIO

Knock out Mayhew, Hinton.

EFX: Seatbelt snap.

NARRATOR

With a quick snap, Hinton undid Mayhew's seatbelt, and then made a sharp jab with the controls, flinging Mayhew forward into the pilot's windshield. As the flight began to descend more rapidly, Mayhew's innards curdled against the glass, gorgeous red blossoms cascading across the space.

Efx: Blood splattering against windshield.

HINTON

No... no...!

VOICE OVER RADIO

Crash. The. Plane.

Efx: A faster nosedive than before.

Efx: PA turning on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (13)

Efx: The plane sounds like it's about to crash any second now.

VOICE OVER RADIO (cont'd)
 Captain Hinton's no longer in control
 of this plane. I am. I wanted to let
 our cabin know that we're descending
 from our cruising altitude at a rate
 which will soon destroy you all.
 (Efx: Seatbelt sign
 off)

Efx: People screaming

Please enjoy the rest of your life
 with G Valor Private Airlines.

Efx: A gigantic plane crashing into the ocean noise.

OUTRO BUMPER

Efx: distinctive noise.

KATIE
 Weird.

DR. RICKETTS
 Did you notate everything accurately?

KATIE
 Hrm?

DR. RICKETTS
 (still matter of
 factly)
 Did you notate everything accurately?

KATIE
 Uh... yes?

DR. RICKETTS
 Excellent. I'll take them from you if
 you don't mind.

Efx: Katie passing along her notations.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (14)

KATIE

We're not... we're not going to talk about it...?

DR. RICKETTS

Talk about... what?

KATIE

What we just saw? The terrible crash that killed possibly hundreds of people?

DR. RICKETTS

Hundreds? Have you been on a private airliner before, Ms. Reed?

KATIE

I mean, no, I guess not--

DR. RICKETTS

Then how do you know there were hundreds of people on this flight?

KATIE

I mean, I guess I don't--

DR. RICKETTS

I certainly hope your notations are void of any odd, pointless conspiracy theories... that would be quite a break from the scientific method I know and love.

KATIE

But, what about the fact that this Project Cyclops actually ended when our patient died? I've only had that happen once before in my experience. And what about the fact that Captain Hinton was clearly not himself in those final moments? It seemed like he was being controlled by that voice over the radio.

DR. RICKETTS

These seem like subjective observations, Ms. Reed. Not objective ones.

KATIE

But, I--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (15)

DR. RICKETTS

Why don't you proceed home for the day and we'll start again tomorrow. It appears you've got some bad habits that Dr. Kinsler instilled... but don't you worry, Ms. Reed, I'll make sure to rid you of these horrid presuppositions.

KATIE

Ok...

Efx: footsteps walking away. A door opens and shuts. The recorder is removed from Katie's purse.

KATIE (cont'd)

(into recorder)

Roth-Lobdow Center for Advanced Research. Project Cyclops, Day 11, completed.

Efx: recorder button press/tone.

...

...

But our story continues --

Efx: Footsteps down a hallway.

NARRATOR

As Katie walked further down the hallway of the Roth-Lobdow Center for Advanced Research, she did a quick look behind to make sure Dr. Ricketts was no longer following her. When Katie was sure the coast was clear, she darted toward an elevator and selected the 47th floor of the Roth-Lobdow Center -- the top floor.

Efx: Elevator buttons. Elevator arriving. Katie stepping in.

NARRATOR (cont'd)

Katie had been nervous about her first day back to the center after Kinsler's "early retirement", but now that the day was done... she was feeling worse... more complicit in the Center's actions than ever before...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (16)

Efx: Elevator arrives. Doors open. Katie exits. Footsteps.

NARRATOR (cont'd)
 ...but she knew that what she was
 doing was for a good cause,
 ultimately, it was a just cause --
 or, at least, that's what Katie was
 telling herself.

ASSISTANT GLORIA
 Ms. Reed?

KATIE
 (trying to be cheery)
 That's me!

ASSISTANT GLORIA
 Ms. Lobdow said you could interrupt
 her at any time. Please, come in.

Efx: Doors open. Katie's footsteps into Vivian's office.

VIVIAN
 Katie. So good to see you.

Efx: Doors closing.

KATIE
 Yes... yes... hi.

NARRATOR
 Vivian's office was ornate. Stained
 glass windows adorned the walls. It
 was almost church-like in appearance.

VIVIAN
 Gorgeous, right?

KATIE
 Yes.

VIVIAN
 My father always thought that what he
 was accomplishing here at The Center
 was something of divine
 proportions... thus, "the look".
 But... I dunno... I've been thinking
 of giving it a more modern twist.
 What do you think?

KATIE
 Whatever's best for you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (17)

VIVIAN
Now you're learning! Here, hand over
the recorder.

NARRATOR
Katie gave Vivian the recorder.
Vivian rewinded a bit until --

Efx: Recorder rewinding, then settling on --

DR. RICKETTS (FROM MOMENTS BEFORE)
These seem like subjective
observations, Ms. Reed. Not objective
ones.

KATIE (FROM MOMENTS BEFORE)
But, I--

DR. RICKETTS (FROM MOMENTS BEFORE)
Why don't you proceed home for the
day and we'll start again tomorrow.
It appears you've got some bad habits
that Dr. Kinsler instilled... but
don't you worry, Ms. Reed, I'll make
sure to rid you of these horrid
presuppositions.

Efx: Stopping the tape.

VIVIAN
Oh, Dr. Ricketts. Such a different
specimen than Dr. Kinsler, wouldn't
you agree? Less willing to engage in
your "conspiracy theories", no?

KATIE
He's certainly no John.

VIVIAN
And what will you do now? With the
tape?

KATIE
(as if reciting from
memory)
I'll continue to send these
recordings to Henry over at Sigma
Corp.

VIVIAN
Excellent. And if you ever lie to me,
steal from me, or intend to usurp
me...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (18)

KATIE

Then you'll... you'll make sure my Uncle Tim never recovers from his cancer diagnosis.

NARRATOR

Katie stood there seething. Trapped in a game of corporate espionage, a game she had never intended to be a member of... but, now? Now she had no choice.

VIVIAN

Well, head along then, get those recordings over to Sigma Corp and we'll see you tomorrow AM.

Efx: Katie walking out of the office.

VIVIAN (cont'd)

Oh, and Katie?

KATIE

Yes?

VIVIAN

Welcome to the upper echelons of The Center. We're happy to have you as part of the team.

Efx: Door slams shut.

END OF EPISODE