DARKEST NIGHT

SEASON 2

EPISODE 4: Forgive and Forget

Characters:

<u>Katie</u> - Mid 20s. Impulsive and spontaneous. Quick learner who isn't afraid to speak her mind.

<u>Dr. Lionel Ricketts</u> - 30s. Younger member of Project Cyclops, working independently from Dr. Kinsler. Extremely cold. Softspoken but menacing. Guarded. Blew up at Katie last ep.

Morgan Davies - Late 30s/Early 40s. Grim and matter of fact, but also desperate to make a connection. Isolated from the world at large because of the unique nature of his job as a headhunter for the Roth-Lobdow Center.

Nora Lang - Early 50s. Alzheimer's patient. In and out of lucidity, but gradually losing her grip. (name can be changed to fit 'message')

<u>Vivian Lobdow</u> - Head of the center. She's trying to get through to this patient. For once, is actually trying to help. Or is she?

<u>Nurse Steve</u> - 30s. Nora's caretaker at the Lobdow Health Facility. Mild, pleasant, doesn't seem to fit in with what we've seen at Lobdow so far but everyone's got their demons.

Locations:

- 1. Lab at the Lobdow Center for Advanced Research
- 2. Private hospital room/hallways in the Lobdow Health Facility wing.
- 3. Lobdow rooftop

Time of Day:

Day

INTRO BUMPER

Efx: recorder button/tone

KATIE

(whispering)

Roth-Lodbow Center for Advanced Research. Project Cyclops, Day 14, about to begin. Entering the laboratory now.

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

KATIE (CONT'D)

Oh. Hi...

MORGAN

Thank god it's you who's here early today -- this would've been much more difficult otherwise.

KATIE

Hi...? I am a little early... What... are you... The guy who brings us our heads--

MORGAN

Yes. And I'm supposed to help you.

KATIE

Help me? Help me how?

MORGAN

First things first.

Efx: quick scuffling over, rolling out two heads

MORGAN (CONT'D)

You'll have two heads today -- do not record any of these heads. This first head is for you and Dr. Ricketts only. I will return an hour after he retires for the evening with another head that you will do on your own.

Efx: rewinding, deleting, fumbling with recorder.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Listen, Dr. Kinsler wanted me to look after you. I'm on your side.

KATTE

Dr. Kinsler said he didn't know the guy who delivered... the heads.

MORGAN

Dr. Kinsler said a lot of things when he knew you were recording. But for right now, I was never here. And don't tell anyone you saw me. I gotta go.

Efx: beeping, door open/closing, leaving.

KATTE

Okay. Better get to work then.

Efx: sound of clicking forceps, eye squishing, clattering of forceps as they're tossed on a nearby tray.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Not bad Katie.

Efx: keycard beeping, door open/closing, entry

DR. RICKETTS

Good morning, Katie. What a surprise to see you here so early.

KATIE

You know me, on a quest for knowledge.

DR. RICKETTS

Right.

KATIE

Everything's all set up, whenever you're ready.

DR. RICKETTS

You're all ready to just... begin the day? Don't want to talk about what happened yesterday?

KATIE

I see where you're coming from, Dr. Ricketts. My conspiracies can get a bit over the top. I will try to contain myself in the future...

DR. RICKETTS

Now then, that seems more than copacetic to me.

KATIE

Would you like to do the honors?

DR. RICKETTS

Project Cyclops. Trial... 6-kappa1. Timestamp is registering correctly. Initiating playback in 3...

2...

1...

Initiate.

IN A HOSPITAL ROOM LATE AT NIGHT

Efx: the sound of heels clicking across a tiled floor. Sound of a door handle being pulled, creaking open, then closing behind. A heart monitor machine beeps steadily in the background.

VIVIAN

How is she?

NURSE STEVE

As well as she could be, I suppose. We've had some... good days since we started the injections.

VIVIAN

Not too many though, it seems.

NURSE STEVE

Better than we could have hoped for with most early onset Alzheimer's patients.

VIVIAN

But still not good enough...

NURSE STEVE

(clears throat)

Those orchids are beautiful. Are they from the garden?

VIVIAN

Yes. I was going to bring some Forget-Me-Nots, but thought that would be a little too on the nose.

NARRATOR

Nurse Steve let himself be amused by the remark. It wasn't so often his boss was in a joking mood. Vivian made her way over to the bedridden patient and sat down beside her. As she stroked her hand, the woman began to come to. Nurse Steve took the orchids from Vivian.

NURSE STEVE

I'll go find a vase for these.

Efx: the sound of foot steps leaving, door opening/closing.

NORA

(sleepily)

Oh, it's you again.

Hello, Ms. Lang.

NORA

Please, don't be so formal. It's Nora.

VIVIAN

I'm surprised you remembered me.

NORA

Of course I remember you, Veronica.

NARRATOR

Vivian deflated as she realized that Nora's progress really wasn't further along. She let go of Nora's hand, and crossed the room to where a dizzying array of medicine bottles, needles, and hospital accoutrements sat locked behind a protective case. Vivian took out her keys, immediately finding the right one, and unlocked the cabinet.

Efx: sound of keys jingling, key into lock, cabinet opening.

NORA

Are my sons coming to visit me soon?

NARRATOR

Vivian stopped cold in her rummaging.

VIVIAN

No. It's just me tonight.

Efx: continues rummaging.

NORA

What are you looking for?

Efx: sound of cap being popped off a bottle.

VIVIAN

We're just going to give you a little boost, and see how you feel after that.

NORA

I'm quite tired at the moment. Can't it wait until tomorrow?

Why wait when you could get better right now? Here, give me your hand.

NARRATOR

Vivian gently took Nora's arm. After quickly cleaning the area with rubbing alcohol, she injected her with a serum. She put the tools down, and once again clasped Nora's hand.

VIVIAN

We're on the verge of a breakthrough, I just know it. I want to help you, Nora. I really do.

NORA

You're so very kind to me.

VIVIAN

Well, you are the inspiration for my life's work. I mean, my father started the company and all, and I was never really into all this 'science stuff', even after he passed and left it all to me. But then I found you. And I realized—

NORA

You had a purpose in life larger than yourself. I remember.

NARRATOR

Nora squeezed Vivian's hand. Vivian smiled sweetly as she saw the medication starting to take effect.

VIVIAN

What else do you remember now? Let's see... Tell me your birthday.

NORA

August 27th, 1970.

VIVIAN

Your favorite season?

NORA

Spring.

VIVIAN

Mine too. Favorite color?

NORA

Green.

VIVIAN

Uh huh. Favorite food?

NORA

Hotdogs.

VIVIAN

Hotdogs? Really?

NORA

I used to eat them at the park with my mother when I was a child. She would take me every Friday afternoon so I could see the ducks. I'd always break off a little piece of my bun and feed it to them. Now that I think about it, I don't even know if I loved the hotdogs so much as I did spending time with her...

VIVIAN

That must have been nice.

NORA

What?

VIVIAN

The time you spent with her.

NORA

With who? What are you talking about?

NARRATOR

Nora ripped her hand away from Vivian's.

NORA

I'm sorry, who are you? What is this place?!

VIVIAN

Nora, relax.

NARRATOR

But Nora wouldn't. She grew increasingly erratic as she started to slip from lucidity. She frantically tugged at the tubes in her arms, screaming as Vivian tried to calm her down.

NORA

No! No! I don't know you! Get away from me!

Efx: clanging, crashing, items being knocked over. The heartbeat monitor speeding up.

VIVIAN

Please. I'm here to help you.

Efx: Quick footsteps approaching outside, door being swung open.

NURSE STEVE

Not again.

NARRATOR

Nurse Steve rushed in. He quickly set the vase of orchids down and immediately tried to restrain Nora. She thrashed and kicked, knocking the vase right off the counter.

Efx: noises of struggle, glass shattering.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Vivian grabbed a syringe and once again injected her. Nora seemed to calm down immediately, allowing herself to be put back into bed. Nurse Steve cleaned up the shattered glass, setting the naked orchids on the counter.

Efx: The heartbeat monitor slowing back to normal.

VIVIAN

There now. How does that feel?

NORA

Much better. I'm sorry. I don't know what just happened.

VIVIAN

Just a symptom of your illness. That's why you're here. We're trying to cure you.

NARRATOR

Nora stared forlornly out the big hospital window.

NORA

How long have I been here?

Quite some time. But we're getting closer, I can feel it.

NORA

Do my sons know I'm here?

VIVIAN

Yes.

NORA

Have they visited me?

VIVIAN

...No.

NORA

Why not? Why haven't they come?

NARRATOR

Vivian gave Nurse Steve a nod, and he once again left them alone.

Efx: footsteps leaving, door shutting.

VIVIAN

Your sons they... They haven't been back since they left you in our care. They said it was too hard to see you like this...

NORA

They said that?

VIVIAN

I'm sorry, Nora. But you have me now. And $\underline{I'm}$ going to take care of you, just like I have been.

NORA

I can't believe they abandoned me. Their own mother.

VIVIAN

Yes, well, familial relations can be... complicated. But we are humans after all, and many times we do terrible things as a matter of self-preservation.

NARRATOR

Nora marinated on that last sentence. Vivian noticed.

What is it?

NORA

Nothing I thought I... No, never mind. It's gone.

VIVIAN

Do you remember when you first started experiencing symptoms? When your memory really started slipping? I realize that might be a silly question to ask someone with your affliction, but I'd like to take advantage of your state right now, while you're still with us.

NORA

I must have been in my thirties. Shortly after the birth of my second son. I kept losing things around the house... my keys, his milk bottle... when the boys were a bit older I'd forget to take them to their play dates. Or pick them up. Sometimes I'd forget their names completely. The other parents stopped trusting me with their kids, and eventually my children had no one left to play with. I felt so guilty...

VIVIAN

I can imagine.

NORA

Did you spend a lot of time with your father?

VIVIAN

Not really. My father always had someone do all the 'dirty dad work' for him. He'd take me on the occasional trip, but it was never a fun vacation. Usually they just ended up being some twisted lesson about life he wanted to teach me. I wasn't allowed to talk about my feelings because he said that, for a scientist, there was 'only room for facts, not emotions'.

(MORE)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

So I mostly talked to our driver, who always took me to school, my friend's houses, my croquet matches...

NORA

Croquet?

VIVIAN

Father thought it was classy, and he wouldn't settle for me playing what he referred to as "peasant sports", stuff that got you dirty, like softball or soccer. I did end up loving it though. In fact I still have my first mallet...

NARRATOR

Vivian trailed off as she reveled in her own fond memories, but quickly snapped out of it.

VIVIAN

Anyway. What about your husband? Where is he?

NORA

Never married. Both of the boys' fathers asked, but I was never interested in a long term commitment. Not with them, at least. The only people I wanted to spend the rest of my life with were my kids. After they were born, they were the only things in this world I truly cared for.

Efx: heels clicking across tile.

NARRATOR

Vivian approached the window overlooking the rest of the Center. Various office lights were still lit, but most had gone dark for the night.

VIVIAN

That's so nice to hear, Nora. I'm glad you were able to have them in your life as long as you did. They were very lucky.

NORA

Who was?

NARRATOR

Vivian sighed as she realized she lost her again.

VIVIAN

Dammit.

(calling out)

Nurse Steve!

NORA

Who's that? What are you talking about? What is all this?!

VIVIAN

Okay just calm down. We're gonna get you--

NORA

No! Get your hands off me!

NARRATOR

Nora sprung up from the bed, eyeing a shard of glass on the floor Nurse Steve had missed during his cleanup. She quickly grabbed it and swung it around wildly. Vivian tried to subdue her, but Nora slashed her in the face.

Efx: clattering, clanging, flesh being sliced?

VIVIAN

Shit!

NARRATOR

Vivian pressed her hand to her cheek. Her fingertips were sprinkled with blood. Nora took the diversion as a moment to escape. She quickly swung open the door and ran out. Vivian immediately gave chase.

VIVIAN

Nora!

NARRATOR

Nurse Steve quickly caught up with a panicked Vivian.

NURSE STEVE

What happened?

She attacked me.

NURSE STEVE

Why doesn't the serum work as well on her as it does with the others?

VIVIAN

Not sure. Maybe there's an issue with the transmitter.

NURSE STEVE

Don't overdo it.

NARRATOR

But Vivian never liked being told what to do.

VIVIAN

Where were you?

NURSE STEVE

I'm sorry, the courier came for his pickup, and I--

VIVIAN

Never mind. We have to get her before she hurts herself. Or someone else. You take the east wing, I'll take the west.

NURSE STEVE

Got it.

Efx: running footsteps.

NARRATOR

The two split up as they searched for where Nora could be. Vivian headed to the empty cafeteria. She hit the light switch, the harsh fluorescent lights flickering as they warmed up.

Efx: fluorescent lights buzzing, heels clicking

VIVIAN

Nora? Are you in here?

NARRATOR

Vivian scanned the room, but there was no sign of her. Suddenly, the sound of distant scurrying footsteps emitted from the hallway.

Efx: scurrying bare feet against a hard floor.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Vivian immediately turned and ran towards the sound. But when she reentered the hallway, it was completely silent. Except for some faint whispering she could hear.

Efx: barely audible creepy ass whispering.

VIVIAN

Nora, please. Let me help you.

NARRATOR

Vivian followed the whispers, which led her to the women's bathroom. The pristine whiteness of the bright walls nearly blinded her as she entered from the darkened hallway. A row of stalls with closed doors lay before her. The whispering was still faint, but clearly coming from this room. Vivian peeked underneath, but saw no feet.

Efx: creaking open of stall door, footsteps moving down the line throughout

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

She checked the first stall. Empty. She checked the second. Nothing. She checked the third, and found it locked.

VIVIAN

Nora. If you're in there, please, come out already.

Efx: whispering stops, faint click of stall unlocking.

NARRATOR

Relieved, Vivian slowly pushed open the stall door. She could see part of Nora's frame crouched on the toilet as she opened it.

Efx: door creaking open.

VIVIAN

Okay, time to--

NORA

GYAHHHHHH!

NARRATOR

Suddenly, Nora lunged at Vivian, knocking her backwards, and escaping once again. Vivian caught herself on a nearby sink, grabbing it desperately.

VIVIAN

Jesus Christ.

NARRATOR

Vivian collected herself, and once again made her way after Nora. As she ran down another hallway, she spotted something on the floor. Drops of blood.

VIVIAN

Nora?

NARRATOR

Vivian followed the drops until she came across a bloody tube. It seemed as though Nora had succeeded in ripping out her IV. The remnants led her all the way to a staircase that had access to the roof. Vivian quickly ran up the stairs and burst through the doors.

Efx: frenzied footsteps going upstairs, door being burst through, a soft breeze blowing.

VIVIAN

Nora? Are you up here?

Efx: a woman sobbing.

NARRATOR

Vivian could hear the sound of crying as she made her way across the roof. She followed it until she found a profoundly confused and upset Nora, crouched behind an exhaust pipe.

VIVIAN

Hi, Nora.

NORA

Oh, hello.

NARRATOR

Nora dried her tears, and stood up before Vivian.

NORA

Could you help me? I'm so lost.

VIVIAN

Of course. But first...

NARRATOR

Vivian grabbed Nora's arm, this time a little less gently, and injected her once more.

NORA

Ow! That hurts!

VIVIAN

Shhh, it's okay. Just give it a second.

NARRATOR

Nora blinked hard as she observed her surroundings again, seemingly lucid.

NORA

Well this is quite embarrassing. How did I get all the way up here? Oh my...

NARRATOR

Nora gently cupped Vivian's face, wiping some of the blood away with her thumb.

NORA

What happened to you, dear? Are you hurt?

VIVIAN

It's fine, don't worry about it.

NORA

Did I do that to you?

NARRATOR

Vivian moved away from Nora, suddenly uncomfortable with her physical touch.

NORA

Please, let me help clean you up.

No. It's really okay.

NORA

Come now don't be silly. Look at all that blood--

NARRATOR

Nora reached for Vivian again, but this time, Vivian grabbed her hands and shoved her away.

Efx: feet scuffling backwards.

VIVIAN

I said no!

NORA

I'm sorry. I'm sorry!

VIVIAN

Stop saying you're sorry! You don't even know what you're apologizing for!

NORA

I do! I do know. I hurt you. I'm sorry.

VIVIAN

I can barely feel it.

NARRATOR

Nora shook her head as a flood of thoughts entered her brain. She grabbed her skull, like it was physically causing her pain.

NORA

I've hurt so many people. I keep hurting people. It's all I seem to do. My boys, my parents, now you... And I can't even remember. Everyone else is stuck with the pain I caused and I can't even remember!

VIVIAN

But you're remembering now.

NORA

There's so much. It's happening so fast.

Nora, I need you to try really hard. Think. Before you became sick, before your sons were born. What else do you remember? High school? Your teenage years? It's the only time in your life we've never spoken about. I need to know what you remember from then. Anything that stands out. Before the medication wears off.

NARRATOR

Nora thought long and hard about what Vivian had asked her. Then, she caught a glimmer of a specific memory. Something was coming.

"FLASHBACK"

Efx: car pulling up to a drive-in, sounds of a busy diner, kissing noises?

NORA

I remember... Going to the movies with my boyfriend, Paul. I don't remember what we saw but I know that he took me for a milkshake after. And then we... uh... in his car. My first time.

VIVIAN

And then?

NARRATOR

Nora placed her hand on her stomach, her eyes welling up with tears.

NORA

I got pregnant.

VIVIAN

Keep going.

NORA

Paul dumped me shortly after. Oh, I was so heartbroken.

VIVIAN

... And the baby?

NORA

I had it. Her.

Efx: baby crying

VIVIAN

And what do you remember about her?

NORA

She...

NARRATOR

Nora's face twisted into a scowl.

NORA

She was a hideous little thing. I couldn't even believe she was mine. So alien-like, so needy. I was seventeen and the only thing I knew was that I didn't want her. But my parents made me keep her.

NARRATOR

Vivian winced as the words made their way into her ears.

NORA

They helped me raise her, for a time, telling everyone she was my "accidental sister". And all she did was cry, and cry, and cry... I couldn't take it. They resented me for being so irresponsible, and in turn, I hated her.

Efx: Nora hitting the infant, baby shrieking.

VIVIAN

Then what?

NORA

When I was twenty my parents made me move out. With the baby. But I couldn't take care of her on my own. I just couldn't do it. And I didn't want to.

Efx: footsteps walking on crunchy leaves, baby cooing.

VIVIAN

What did you do with her?

NORA

There was a church a few miles out. I was going to leave her there but...

(MORE)

NORA (CONT'D)

I didn't want to risk them seeing me. So I left her in the nearby woods. On an old tree stump.

Efx: church bells tolling in the distance.

VIVIAN

Just like that.

NORA

I knew they'd find her eventually. Lord knows she cried loud enough. But I had to leave. I just had to. And I was finally able to close that chapter and move on with my life. When I was finally ready to have children again, I did. Two beautiful boys.

Efx: high heel cracking against the ground.

NARRATOR

Vivian stomped her foot, her rage no longer able to be contained.

VIVIAN

Who want NOTHING to do with you!

NORA

What?

VIVIAN

Your sons. They abandoned you, surely you remember that now. Again.

NORA

I...

VIVIAN

(welling up with tears)

Isn't it so ironic?

Efx: a SLAP.

NARRATOR

Vivian slapped herself hard across the face. Her eyes dried instantly.

You give up the one child who did love you, and did want you, only to be cast aside by your other children who couldn't give two shits.

NORA

No, that's not what...

VIVIAN

Oh, but it is. That baby's father was wealthy, yes, but money can't replace love. And there was no love to be had in that house.

Efx: A rough breeze blows across the roof, some distant car horns in the distance, maybe a siren, city noise.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Do you know what else happened to that child?

NORA

No. I don't want to kn--

VIVIAN

(escalating)

Her siblings abused her every chance they got. Her brother constantly telling her she 'didn't matter', 'didn't belong', and her cruel sister torturing her for her own pleasure. Every single day was some new, horrible surprise.

NARRATOR

Vivian was moving closer to Nora. Becoming more unhinged with every step.

VIVIAN

Eventually she moved into a "ratty old apartment" far away from the pain, only to realize that even though she was finally free, she was completely alone. Is that what you wanted for your "baby girl"? Or did you not even think about her once you started over with your 'brand new life'?

NORA

I don't... I don't know. I didn't
know...

VIVIAN

Of course you didn't know! And not only didn't you know, but you didn't even care. You never looked for her. You never asked how she was. You didn't even bother to find out if she was still alive!

NARRATOR

Nora stared at Vivian, a look of horror creeping its way onto her face.

VIVIAN

Well guess WHAT, mommy?! I'm alive and well. No thanks to you.

NORA

Vivian...

NARRATOR

Nora slumped to the ground, sobbing uncontrollably.

NORA

You're right. You're right. I was so young and stupid. I should have never...

VIVIAN

Never what?!

NORA

Had you in the first place! All this pain... I could have saved both of us from it. And now look where I am: trapped in a hospital being forced to remember all the things I was lucky enough to forget.

VIVIAN

So that's your greatest regret then? Having me?

NORA

...Yes.

NARRATOR

Vivian took a deep breath and glared at her mother. The silence was stagnant between them.

NORA

I just want to forget you again. Please. No more medications. No more injections. Please just let me forget.

VIVIAN

There's a simple way to do that. A way you can erase all the memories, all the pain. It's all natural, and it'll only take a moment.

NORA

What is it? I'll do anything.

VIVIAN

Yes, you will.

NARRATOR

Vivian stared fiercely at the woman who was desperate to release herself from all of her painful memories. Her heartbreaks, her family falling apart, her only daughter's existence.

VIVIAN

Get on the ledge.

Efx: the wind blowing, soft city noises.

NARRATOR

Nora climbed up, the breeze blowing through her hospital gown. She looked down below at the courtyard concrete.

VIVIAN

You really want to forget it all?

NORA

More than anything.

VIVIAN

Fine. Then this is goodbye, mother.

NORA

(whispering)

Thank you.

Now jump.

NARRATOR

With that final command, Nora let herself fall from the ledge.

Efx: the sound of a body thudding, splattering, crashing, breaking whatever was below it.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Vivian walked to the ledge and peered over. Below she could see the bloody outline of her dying mother, convulsing on the ground below. Nurse Steve approached breathlessly from behind, viewing the same scene.

NURSE STEVE

Oh dear god!

VIVIAN

God had nothing to do with this.

NURSE STEVE

I guess I should go take care of that.

VIVIAN

Dispose of it properly.

NARRATOR

Nurse Steve nodded and turned to leave, but stopped.

NURSE STEVE

Are you okay?

NARRATOR

Vivian was not okay. But it was not in her character to ever admit that. Vivian's adoptive father had drilled that into her head from a very, very early age.

VIVIAN

'Only room for facts, not emotions'.

NURSE STEVE

What's that?

Nothing, Steve. Now dispose of it.

NURSE STEVE

Right. Of course. I'll go... get on that situation now.

Efx: footsteps leaving, roof door closing.

NARRATOR

Vivian looked around, making sure she was alone. Then, as she stared down at her mother's nearly lifeless body once more, a tear escaped from her eye. And multiple stories below, as Nora Lang, Vivian's biological mother, took her very last breath... Vivian finally let a tear fall for her.

OUTRO BUMPER

Efx: distinctive noises

KATIE

Wow. I can't believe it.

DR. RICKETTS

That this drug is being tested as an Alzheimer's treatment? Yes, quite fascinating.

KATIE

I meant about Vivian. I can't imagine how difficult that must have been to hear from her own mother. And then to tell her to jump...

DR. RICKETTS

You know Vivian doesn't put too much stock into her relationships. Besides, wouldn't you have done the same?

KATTE

What? No. Of course not. I could never tell someone to kill themselves. Especially not my own mother.

DR. RICKETTS

Even if that person was the root of all your pain and suffering?

KATIE

Their death wouldn't erase any of that.

DR. RICKETTS

How do you know? You can't possibly come to that conclusion without first testing a hypothesis. Every scientist knows that.

KATIE

I guess.

DR. RICKETTS And that's the problem.

KATIE

Another person potentially dosed with the same drug, another Project Cyclops that actually ended when that individual passed away...

DR. RICKETTS

Now that's an observation I can agree with. Presuming this is the same drug... which, again, we're not one hundred percent sure of.

KATIE

We... probably shouldn't discuss what we just saw... with anyone... right...?

DR. RICKETTS

I would definitely agree with that, Ms. Reed.

KATIE

OK. We'll I guess tomorrow is another day. See you then.

Efx: recorder button press/tone.

END OF EPISODE