

FIND US ALIVE EPISODE 04: Blackout

[Click. Whirring.]

[Harley takes a breath.]

HARLEY

...a lot can happen in nine hours.

I come to you on record from my portable kit. Nine hours ago, we lost power to the entire facility. It's a Dash 1. A big one. Has to be. I can't think of any internal explanation there could possibly be. The Foundation is too thorough for any wiring or technical error to be able to kill the power to the whole site.

I'm in my office. It is... extremely dark. I'm keeping my flashlight off. I keep seeing people pass by in the hall outside. Sometimes I can hear them yelling. I don't think things are... entirely safe out there.

Yeah, also? Site-107 has descended into a state of complete feudal chaos.

As soon as the lights went off, and everyone figured out that it was the entire site, not just an isolated incident... that's when the panic set in. People running in every direction. I've never seen anything like it before, it was like the end of the world. Utter, absolute darkness, strobed by the beams of a dozens of flashlights and cell phones.

It's intriguing to see how little it takes to reduce a hundred of the world's strongest and smartest people to a mindless stampede. Or rather, how little it takes when you add it to being trapped in a pocket dimension.

I ran to my dorm. I wanted to see if I could get access to the radio pack before things got too hairy. But I couldn't find the key to unlock it. So I grabbed my own personal TASCAM equipment and whatever leftover rations I had and I went to see if I could catch Lancaster, but... I couldn't find him. And things were getting crazy, I saw somebody from Research and someone I think was from Records fighting- and I mean REALLY fighting, I think one of them stabbed the other with a ballpoint pen.

...I admit, I wasn't immune to the mass hysteria. I panicked just as much as anybody else did.

I don't know if anyone has fired a gun yet.

But it was LOUD. Screaming, yelling, footsteps, impacts. No alarms. That was the weirdest part. Something goes wrong in a Foundation facility and the first thing you expect to hear is the breach alarm. But there wasn't one. There wasn't anything. Just people. People and weapons and white LED beams cutting through the thick, black darkness.

And then it was silent.

About two hours after we lost power, I finally made it to the booth, and it was quiet. Much, much too quiet. Every once in a while I can hear people outside, but other than that... dead silence. You don't think about how much noise electronics make. It fades into the background after a while. But the humming and soft beeps of our equipment generate quite a bit of noise, as I have learned from the sheer, oppressive absence of it.

It's a killing sort of quiet.

I hid in my office, curled up under my desk for hours. It does something to you, that kind of silent dark. It activates a dormant animal instinct and you start listening to your own heartbeat just to escape the emptiness. The void. Your brain conjures sounds from the nothing just to make you feel better, because the other option is that there isn't anything at all, and that's much, much worse.

Almost one hundred people in this building and it was still as the grave. For a while, I actually worried I might be the only one left somehow. Like everyone else had cannibalized each other in the violence and everyone was dead and now it was just... me. Alone, in this pitch black, labyrinthian research facility.

I haven't left the office yet. I'm going to have to, though. I didn't bring any water in with me.

And I guess I'll eventually be finding out if the toilets work in a blackout after all.

I don't know what's going on out there. And I'm not overly enthused to find out.

Sometimes I still hear people fighting.

Somebody even tried my door handle, but for once I've actually locked it. They probably didn't think the radio office is valuable enough. They'd be right, if it weren't for my crank generator. It's barely enough to keep a few walkie batteries charged and my tiny little space heater working, but...

Nobody can find out I have a generator.

Security is always loud as hell, but I haven't heard any of them. I take that to mean they're separated, because if any of them were together you'd be able to hear them talking from two halls away. Botany and Records are likely holed up like I am, doing god knows what. I don't know where Psychology would be. Scattered, most likely. None of them ever seemed that close to one another. Which means I also have no idea where Lancaster is.

My biggest worry though... is the field agents.

Any of the people from outside who got trapped. There are a handful of outside agents in here, and all of them are extremely unpredictable. I wouldn't put it past them to abandon the sense of camaraderie we've been trying to build since the shift.

And where the hell is Klein in all this?

I doubt my tiny little generator could give us enough power to reach any comms beyond a few rooms away. We need to get everybody in the same place, we need to call a truce so we can figure this out. But I doubt that's going to happen. Not in the state things are-

[Metallic clanking noise]

[Harley pauses]

(whispering)
Did you hear that?

I think-

I think I heard-

[Mic clicks off]

[Mic clicks back on]

HARLEY
(hushed)
Okay. I'm- I'm almost to my room.
I think I'm in... wing AD-5? God,

whose idea was it to build this place like this?

It's very hard to tell where I am in the dark. I'm trying to use my flashlight as little as possible, in case somebody sees me. I've managed to make it this far without running into any of the others. I'm going to sneak in, fill as many receptacles with water as I can and I'm going back to the Comm office. Access to my equipment gives me the most strategic advantage I can hope for.

It also gives me the best shot at calling somebody else to help me.

Speaking of help, I have to find Lancaster.

The fact that I haven't seen him yet is... disconcerting. People in Psychology aren't exactly known for their toughness or combat ability. For all I know, another Department could've gotten him already. And... waterboarded him, or whatever it is they're doing.

You know, I don't think anyone has gotten *killed*, so it makes me wonder what the others are *doing* to people? Are they just... plundering each other for resources? That can't be it, right? God, I think I'm spiraling. What if-

[Harley suddenly fumbles with the mic, running down the hall]

[Mic cuts out]

[Mic clicks back on. Harley speaks quietly and way too close to it, peaking the mic hard]

HARLEY

(trying very hard not to be heard)

This is Dr. Harley, coming to you live from the inside of a broom closet.

I managed to get out of the open hallway before Containment saw me. They're sweeping the site, they're looking for batteries. From what I heard when I was listening under the door a second ago, Alves isn't even *with* them. Apparently she went off on her own "mission." Doing what? It's a mystery. But one of the Containment officers is carrying a *literal* torch, and I don't even know what to do with that.

[Shuffling as Harley kneels down onto the floor]

Ow, okay. Okay. I'm listening-

Pause.

(whispering)

...they're looking for Alves. What? They don't know where she is? She's their boss, I feel like-

She's after Klein. That makes sense.

Pause.

Dammit. They don't know where Klein is either. I'll find

Lancaster and maybe he can help me
find-

[Metallic cacophonous noise as something
falls off a shelf inside the broom closet]

[After a moment, the noise subsides. Harley
holds his breath]

[Pause]

[Footfalls approach the door]

(frantic whispering)
OH SHIT- OH FUCK DAMMIT- SHIT SHIT
SHIT SHIT-

[Mic clicks off]

[Mic clicks on]

[Harley pants as he catches his breath]

(totally winded)
Fuck- god, I'm so- out of shape-
ugh-

[He takes a second to collect himself]

I made it. I made it back to my
room. I have a backpack full of
water and batteries and a few
other things I might need, and I'm
about to head to the Psych office.
See if I can sniff out Lancaster.

Also, toilets do work in
blackouts, it turns out. Water is
still running for now, but the
recycling isn't on, so eventually,
it'll run out.

And temperature control isn't on.

It's getting very cold in here.

I'm going back out, Overwatch
Command. Wish me luck.

[Mic clicks off]

[Mic clicks back on cacophonously. It's
muffled from the other side of a door]

HARLEY
(hushed but frantic)
GO GO GO GO

LANCASTER
I'M TRYING, YOU KNOW I CAN'T RUN
THAT FAST-

[Harley fumbles with the door handle.
There's a small BEEP as he scans his card.
The door opens]

HARLEY
Inside, inside-

[He shuts the door behind them. The lock
beeps again]

HARLEY
Thank FUCK the door locks are on
batteries...

LANCASTER
(wiped)
Fuck... fuck you...

HARLEY
What? Why?

LANCASTER
That was... a very long way... to run.

HARLEY
What? Like we had a choice NOT to?
Did you see how close they were?
You probably could have gone

faster if you weren't carrying all that shit with you.

LANCASTER
These are important!

HARLEY
Yeah, also? What *ARE* THOSE.

LANCASTER
Dossiers.

HARLEY
(sizing him up)
...why...?

LANCASTER
...I... um...

HARLEY
You're squinting again, are you scheming?

LANCASTER
Stop pointing out my squint thing!
And I'm not *scheming*, I'm- I'm onto something, maybe.

HARLEY
Then set it all down and show me.

LANCASTER
I- I *can't tell you*, Harley.
There's- You're going to have to trust me.

HARLEY
(joking)
You know I've never trusted a theatre kid.

LANCASTER
I need- shut up- I need you to answer some questions for me.

HARLEY

About this?

LANCASTER

Pertaining to this, yes.

HARLEY

Go for it.

LANCASTER

Have you felt weird since we got trapped in here?

HARLEY

(broad-ass question bro)
...dude.

LANCASTER

No- wait, I meant *really*
noticeably weird. Like, weirder
than you would expect.

HARLEY

I- I don't know? I was really
spacey for the first week or so,
but other than that, not really?

LANCASTER

Hmm. Okay.

HARLEY

Scheming.

LANCASTER

I'm not scheming. Hold on, give me
your flashlight.

[Flashlight clicks on.]

HARLEY

...Oh. Are they all only one page?

LANCASTER

These are just the cover sheets.

HARLEY
Department Heads?

LANCASTER
The ones on the top of the stack,
yeah.

HARLEY
Me?

LANCASTER
(sympathy)
...buddy...

HARLEY
I- whatever. Why do you have
these?

LANCASTER
Hold these. Write something.

HARLEY
Write what?

LANCASTER
Anything- doesn't matter. Write
something or draw something, I
don't care, just trust me.

HARLEY
O-okay.

LANCASTER
What about other people?

HARLEY
What ABOUT other people?

LANCASTER
Have you noticed anything... "off?"
Anything strange?

HARLEY

No? Maybe? I don't know! EVERYBODY seems weird, I've never spent this much time around any of them!

LANCASTER

Just compare them to me. Or to people on the outside, is there *anything* off?

HARLEY

People here are really into monsters.

LANCASTER

No, not stuff like that.

HARLEY

They're uh, they're lone wolves a lot of the time. Lot of people don't really interact with each other.

LANCASTER

Uh-huh.

HARLEY

Sometimes people don't hear me until like, the third time I try to get their attention.

LANCASTER

(connecting the dots)

Uh huh.

HARLEY

I keep seeing people completely zone out and stare at the wall for like, thirty seconds.

LANCASTER

YES! Okay, people seem unfocused, right?

HARLEY

...I guess?

LANCASTER

Let me see your paper.

[Paper shuffles.]

[Lancaster chuckles.]

HARLEY

What?

LANCASTER

...is this supposed to be a spider?

HARLEY

You told me to draw something!
Lanc, *please tell me what's going on.*

Lancaster

I- I don't know if I *can*. If I try to be explicit it-

[Quiet rapping on the door.]

[Silence. They're holding their breaths.]

HARLEY

(barely whispering)
...did you hear that?

LANCASTER

Ssh-

[Rapping starts again]

LOVE

(hushed)
Let me in!

[Pause]

LOVE

I KNOW you're in there! I saw you
a couple minutes ago!

HARLEY
(barely audible)
Don't- just wait until she leaves-

LOVE
(frantic whispering)
OPEN THE DAMN DOOR, THE SCAVENGERS
ARE COMING!

[Another silent pause]

HARLEY
Don't.

LANCASTER
I'm gonna.

HARLEY
She'll kill us.

LANCASTER
I'm not leaving her out there.

HARLEY
It could be a trap!

LANCASTER
(cross talk)
It's not going to be a trap! She's
probably alone, she's probably
hiding like us! It isn't a trap
stop saying it's a trap! Have you
ever even talked to a field agent?
The field agents DON'T EAT BONE
MALLOW.

HARLEY
(cross talk)
It's AGENT LOVE. Of COURSE it's a
trap! She's probably planning a
ritual-style execution with the
other field agents! What the hell

does she even mean, SCAVENGERS?!
She's going to suck out our bone
marrow, Lancaster!

[BEEP. Lock clicks.]

LOVE
Huh. I wasn't expecting that to
work.

HARLEY
BLOCK THE DOOR-

[The door swings open and Love rushes
inside. It clicks shut behind her]

HARLEY
Hey, you're not supposed to-

[Revolver clicks]

LOVE
Don't kick me out, I swear to GOD-

LANCASTER
WHOA, hey, there is no need for
THAT-

LOVE
(whisper-shouting)
SHUT UP. GET DOWN.

[Commotion as Love pulls the two of them to
the floor]

HARLEY
(whispering)
WHAT-

LOVE
SSSSH!

[Pause. Quiet. Muffled voices from the other
side of the door]

[The voices grow quieter as the group
outside leaves]

LOVE
DON'T. Kick me out.

LANCASTER
(therapist voice)
We're not going to kick you out.
We just need everybody to be calm,
alright? So please *put that away-*

HARLEY
(whisper-shouting)
WHO THE *FUCK* WAS THAT JUST NOW?

LANCASTER
Sounded like Containment.

LOVE
No.

LANCASTER
...no?

HARLEY
Engineering?

LOVE
(shuddering)
Worse.

HARLEY
(dread.wav)
...worse?

LOVE
...Medical.

[END EPISODE]

