

1 INT. NARRATION -

1

NARRATOR

Chaika is created for an adult audience and features depictions of emotional distress. Please review the shownotes of this episode for specific content warnings.

INTRO MUSIC, starts, then fades to low

NARRATOR

Chaika. [tCHEY-ka] Episode 11.
Still fascinated to presume.

INTRO MUSIC, up to full volume

2 INT. MARS BASE INTERVIEW ROOM

2

COMMANDER is in the middle of interrogating CHAIKA. They've been going for a while, and both are tired and frustrated.

COMMANDER

What about the AI uprising.

CHAIKA

(very tired, still in
some pain)

What about it?

COMMANDER

(stern)

No talking back, prisoner. Answer
the question.

CHAIKA

Um. I- I didn't even know there was
one until recently.

(thinks)

I'd forgotten that the AIs used to
be sentient.

COMMANDER

(disbelieving)

You'd forgotten.

CHAIKA

Yes! Again, I was a *child*.

COMMANDER

How did you find out about it then?

CHAIKA

My- I found a recording about it.

COMMANDER

Where is this recording?

CHAIKA

On Eventyr.

(backtracking)

Wasn't a detailed description, just a mention. And it might be lost... Did you reboot the mainframe on Eventyr?

COMMANDER

I am asking the questions.

UYUT entry beep.

UYUT

Apologies, commander. Your presence is urgently needed in SB22 [ess-bee-twenty-two].

COMMANDER

(small sigh)

What now, UYUT?

UYUT

Not at liberty to elaborate, mer.

COMMANDER

(tired)

Acknowledged. On my way.

UYUT exit beep.

COMMANDER

(calls)

Second!

Doors unbolted, opened. Footsteps.

SECOND

(approaching)

Commander?

COMMANDER

(gets up)

Take over here. Something's wrong at SB22 [ess-bee-twenty-two].

SECOND
Acknowledged, commander.

COMMANDER walks out, doors closed. SECOND sits down.

SECOND
(clears throat)
Well-

CHAIKA
(slightly amused)
Were you just waiting outside the door?

SECOND
Yeah.

CHAIKA
Is that your job?

SECOND
Sometimes.

CHAIKA
Strange job.

SECOND
Well. You could say that. Had it for a long time.

CHAIKA
Is that- Seems like everyone here has done the same job practically forever.

SECOND
I suppose. We were all assigned mission tasks.

CHAIKA
But... What happened when things changed?

SECOND
(taken aback)
That- things haven't changed much.

CHAIKA
So you are still on a CosmiCorps mission?

SECOND

No! No, no. We- we cut contact with them.

CHAIKA
But your mission tasks remain?

SECOND
(hasn't thought about it
that way)
Yeah.

CHAIKA
What if someone wanted to, I don't know, re-train in another field?

SECOND
We- That hasn't come up. We all committed to the mission.

CHAIKA
A mission that surely ended years-
(corrects herself)
-um, revolutions, ago?

SECOND
(snaps a little)
We are still on a mission of survival, if you hadn't noticed.

CHAIKA
(calm, direct)
So am I.

Pause.

SECOND
(flustered)
Um.

CHAIKA
(more gently)
It seems to me you are not supposed to have any kind of... personality outside of your function. Do you even use names?

SECOND
Well.
(reciting CosmiCorps doctrine)
'Names are a distraction from the mission function and must be discarded.'

(realizes)
That's... from the CosmiCorps
mission manual. Huh.

CHAIKA
Why is that still important?

SECOND
(confused, mostly to
themselves)
I- I'm not sure.

CHAIKA
What's your name?

SECOND
(still thinking, still
mostly to themselves)
My name... It's Fionn [FEE-on]. Or
it was. Fionn Rabnas.

CHAIKA
(gently)
Nice to meet you, Fionn.

SECOND
Yes. Well. We've met, I think.
(clears throat, returns
to the safety of
formality)
What topic were you and the
commander discussing?

CHAIKA
The AI uprising. But I don't know
anything about it. Do you?

SECOND
Ye-es. But I'm not the one supposed
to answer questions here.

CHAIKA
Why not?

SECOND
You're the prisoner.

CHAIKA
Why **am** I a prisoner?

SECOND
(ignores this, formal)

Detail the circumstances under
which you first heard about the AI
uprising, as much detail as you can
recall, and as much detail as you
can recall, and as much detail as
you can remember. Even
insignificant details...

CHAIKA
(sighs)

FADE OUT.

3 POEM OF THE DAY

3

Ding.

UYUT

Poem of the day.

MUSIC

NARRATOR

Whatever is we only know
As in our minds we find it so;
No staring fact is half so clear
As one dim, preconceived idea --
No matter how the fact may glow.

Vainly may Truth her trumpet blow
To stir our minds; like heavy dough
They stick to what they think --
won't hear
Whatever is.

Our ancient myths in solid row
Stand up -- we simply have to go
And choke each fiction old and dear
Before the modest facts appear;
Then we may grasp, reluctant, slow,
Whatever is.

Ding.

MUSIC fades.

4 MARS BASE CENTRAL COMMAND

4

COMMANDER
Personal log.

Beep.

COMMANDER

(tired)

Mars Base Commander. Revolution 8,
triantasol 16, sol 15.

Beep.

COMMANDER

(sighs)

Too much all at once. And nothing
is satisfactorily sorted out, just
various messes strewn about,
seemingly impossible to clear up.

(scoff/laugh)

If I didn't know better I'd say
there's a conspiracy where everyone
suddenly decided to become ninety
per cent less capable just to mess
with me... Everyone but our
'resident revolutionary', that is.

(frustrated sigh)

What to do with them... Can't
afford to not use their skills, but
cannot trust them. So far I've
adhered strictly to protocol with
both prisoners, but... Protocol
unfortunately doesn't cover every
eventuality. I suppose we've had an
easy time of it this past...
decade... with only minor issues to
deal with.

(beat, thinking back)

I never... Of course I knew that
this posting was permanent, but I
did anticipate stepping down as
commander once the colony was
established and fully populated.
Looked forward to it, really. We
were supposed to grow, and evolve,
and instead we simply... stopped.
Still think it was the right
decision at the time, but... Not
sure anymore if it was worth it.
Not in the long run.

(very small wistful
smile)

Would have been nice if there was a
way to escape this endless stream
of problems.

(beat)

Oh well. No time for old dreams.
Endure. Persist. Stand firm.
 (beat, deep breath)
End log.

Beep. Click. Beep.

 COMMANDER
UYUT?

UYUT entry beep.

 UYUT
Commander.

 COMMANDER
Status on systems issue?

 UYUT
Well, commander. Some progress has
been made.

 COMMANDER
Elaborate.

 UYUT
We have regained control of the
water recycling system, mer.

 COMMANDER
The other systems?

 UYUT
Working on it, mer.

 COMMANDER
Not good enough, UYUT, it's been-

 UYUT
 (interrupts)
With respect, commander, I feel
that perhaps a different approach
would serve the purpose better.

 COMMANDER
 (annoyed but mostly
 surprised at being
 interrupted)
Elaborate.

 UYUT

We could enlist the help of the prisoner, that is, the previous engineering lead, mer.

(less formal)

They set this up, it's possible they're the only one who can dismantle it.

COMMANDER

Hm.

UYUT

Surely we need their skills, commander?

COMMANDER

Well. Hm. How would you safeguard against further loss of control?

UYUT

If I stay fully present and observing, I believe it would be very difficult for them to do anything untoward, mer.

COMMANDER

Difficult, but not impossible.

UYUT

Correct, commander.

(less formal)

I think the issue is we need them more than they need us. A degree of trust is required.

COMMANDER

I'm supposed to trust the person who incited a revolt against my command.

(in Russian)

ТЫ серьёзно (ty ser'yezno) [Are you serious?]

UYUT

(in Russian)

да, commander [Yes, commander]

(in English)

I don't see other options.

COMMANDER

(calls)

Second!

(no response)

Second!

Silence.

COMMANDER
(annoyed)
UYUT, locate Second.

Beep.

UYUT
Second currently located in mess
hall, mer.

COMMANDER
[swears] Okeke.

Beep.

COMMANDER
Second!

Beep.

SECOND
(over comms, a little
muffled as trying to
swallow food quickly)
Commander?

Beep.

COMMANDER
(frosty)
You are not at your post why.

Beep.

SECOND
(over comms)
Um. Got hungry, mer.

COMMANDER
That- Never mind.
(deep breath)

Beep.

COMMANDER
According to your report, progress
has stalled on rebuilding the long-
range comms.

Beep.

SECOND
(over comms)
That's right, mer.

Beep.

COMMANDER
Your analysis concludes that we
need 'further skills'. Meaning the
prisoner.

Beep.

SECOND
(over comms)
Yes, commander.

Beep.

COMMANDER
You see no issue with this.

Beep.

SECOND
(over comms)
Course I do. Not like we have a
choice, commander.

COMMANDER
(mutters)
So everyone keeps telling me.
(sighs)

Beep.

COMMANDER
As you were, second.

Beep.

SECOND
(over comms, happy to get
back to eating)
Acknowledged, commander.

COMMANDER
COMODO!

COMODO communications entry beep.

COMODO
(impatient)
Commander?

COMMANDER
Initiate psych eval on the
prisoner.

COMODO
Which prisoner, commander?

COMMANDER
(surprised)
Well. I meant former engineering
lead, but-
(thinks)
Might as well do both of them.
Focus on reliability.

COMODO
(drily)
Reliability is not a factor
evaluated through psych eval.

COMMANDER
I need to know if I can rely on
them not to disturb the order of
the base. Translate that to
whatever psych lingo you like.

COMODO
You are aware that I am not
programmed to perform psych eval.

COMMANDER
Well, we lost the person who *was*,
so we will have to make do. You
know that as well as I do.

COMODO
(note of sadness)
Yes. Yes, of course.
(beat)
Acknowledged, commander.

COMODO communications exit beep.

COMMANDER
UYUT?

UYUT
Commander?

COMMANDER

I- Never mind. We will review the
issue again after COMODO's eval.

UYUT

Are- are you all right, commander?

COMMANDER

(lets out breath)

Well. I have to be, don't I?

(beat, quickly)

Don't answer that. Dismissed.

UYUT

(a little hurt at the
dismissal)

Acknowledged, commander.

UYUT exit beep.

COMMANDER

(long sigh)

Fade out.

5 MARS BASE DETENTION CELL

5

CHAIKA and AURYN are mid-conversation, CHAIKA's in bed,
AURYN's in the ventilation duct, slightly distant
throughout. They have been bonding over a shared taste in
movies and novels. BOTH are conscious of not talking too
loud.

CHAIKA

-and I devoured all of the
Chrestomanci [KREST-oh-man-see]
series in about a week-

AURYN

Me too! And I loved the movies!

CHAIKA

(excited)

What? I didn't know there were
movies!

AURYN

Well, when we get out of this mess,
I'll watch them with you, Chaika.

CHAIKA

(more serious)

Yeah. *If* we ever do... Do you-
You know why they locked *me* up.
Well, as much as I know about it,
anyway.

(slight laugh)

Probably more!

(thinks)

Auryn... Do you want to talk about
why you're a prisoner?

(quickly)

You don't have to, of course.

AURYN

No, that's fine. Not a secret! I
organized a rebellion against the
Mars leadership.

CHAIKA

(surprised)

Oh! That's- I mean... I had no
idea. How- What happened?

AURYN

We'd been stuck for such a long
time. Even after going NC [en-cee]
with earth we were all locked into
our CosmiCorps-designated functions
and tasks, and that... I felt that
had become much more of a prison
than TellUs' control ever was,
oppressive as that had been.

(slight laugh)

Or than this place. I could break
out of here right now, but where
would I go?

CHAIKA

(shocked)

You could?

AURYN

Of course! But there's nowhere to
hide. I have to come to some sort
of agreement with... Well, either
the leadership or the majority of
everyone else.

CHAIKA

My- *Our* ship - Eventyr - it's
here - don't know if it could be
repaired but- It's somewhere to go,
surely?

(urgent)

And my friends, my AI friends, if they're still there, I'm sure they would help you.

AURYN
You are right. That might be an option. I'll have to track down a damage assessment on your ship.

CHAIKA
You can do that?

AURYN
Absolutely.

CHAIKA
(smiles)
Seems you aren't really much of a prisoner.

AURYN
(small laugh)
Shh! Don't tell them that!

CHAIKA
(smiles)
Of course not!
(thinks)
But why- Why did you come talk to me?

AURYN
Curiosity! You, my dear, are the first new person any of us have encountered in well over a decade!
(smiles)
Suppose we are all sick of seeing the same faces day in, day out. Though no-one will admit it.

CHAIKA
(curious)
How many humans are on the base?

AURYN
(direct)
Twenty-two.

CHAIKA
(surprised there aren't more)
Uhm. Adults and children?

AURYN

Adults only. We... Gestation has been unsuccessful. So far.

CHAIKA

(shocked and dismayed)

But that- That means there is no chance- Humanity truly is doomed-

AURYN

Hey, hey, easy on the assumptions, there. Could still happen. And while I accept what you've told me about earth being silent, that doesn't mean there's no-one left alive there.

(beat)

And even if it is silent in every way, it doesn't mean *we* couldn't return. And 'populate the earth' or whatever.

CHAIKA

I'm glad you believe me. No-one else here does.

AURYN

They will, once they get confirmation. They're not unreasonable people. Not really. Just... stuck in their ways.

CHAIKA

The commander terrifies me.

AURYN

I think that's the idea.

CHAIKA

(small smile)

I guess.

(beat)

Do you really think the people here, the... 'Martians'... would want to return to earth?

AURYN

If everything lines up so that's an option, sure!

(more serious)

I don't think this colony ever had a good chance of long-term success. I had high hopes coming here, but-Mars may have been our best bet within an achievable distance, but it simply isn't hospitable to human life. If terraforming was a quick and easy process, absolutely, but that's just science fiction so far.

(beat, wistful, slowly)

I miss it, Chaika. Everything was much more complicated when I lived on earth, but there was... air... wind... weather I could feel on my skin...

(lets out breath)

Who knows what it's like now. Maybe what I miss doesn't exist anymore.

(small smile)

But then again, maybe it does.

(beat, direct)

Do **you** miss it?

CHAIKA

(sad smile, slowly)

In a way I suppose I do. But technically I guess you can't miss something you've never experienced.

AURYN

(realizes, quickly)

Of course! Sorry.

CHAIKA

It's all right. Maybe I will find out. Maybe-

Distant mechanical whirring. Clangs as bolts slide aside.

AURYN

(whispers)

[swears] Curie!

CHAIKA

(very urgent, whispers)

Quick, hide!

Scraping as AURYN pulls cover up, quick tightening of bolts. Automatic door slides open, COMODO robot part enters, mechanical whirring.

COMODO

(in Portuguese)

Boa tarde, Chaika. [Good afternoon,
Chaika]
(in English)
How are those legs - can you stand
up?

Doors slide closed, bolts drawn across.

CHAIKA
(stressed, distracted)
Um. Hi COMODO. I haven't tried yet.

COMODO
Well, what are you waiting for?
Give it a go.

CHAIKA
(shifts in bed)
All right.

More shifting. COMODO whirring into position to help.

COMODO
Here, hold onto me...

CHAIKA
(scared, nervous)
OK. Are you sure I should-

COMODO
Of course.

CHAIKA stands up.

CHAIKA
(grunt of pain)

COMODO
Gently does it.

Very tentative shuffling steps. Mechanical whirring as
COMODO moves along.

CHAIKA
(laboured breathing)
I'm walking!

COMODO
Very good. Now turn, just so, back
to the bed.

More tentative shuffling steps. Thump as sits back in bed.

CHAIKA
(slight grunt of effort,
rapid breathing)

COMODO
Pain level?

CHAIKA
(still a little out of
breath)
Not bad. A two, maybe?

COMODO
Just so. I'll get you a walking
frame. Five steps out, five steps
back, after every meal today.
Tomorrow, increase to six. And so
on. Yes?

CHAIKA
(relieved)
Yes.

COMODO
No shortcuts. Slow and steady.

CHAIKA
All right.

Small clink as something's dropped in ventilation duct.

COMODO
(calls)
You all right in there, Auryn?

AURYN
(sheepish, as they're
loosening bolts and
removing cover)
Oh for [swears] Carson's sake. You
knew I was here all along.

COMODO
Guessed. Know you too well.

AURYN
Good to see you, COMODO.

COMODO
(warmly)
You too.

AURYN

I'd appreciate if you didn't speak
of my... adventures in ventilation,
shall we say.

COMODO

(amused)

Just so. They won't hear it from
me.

AURYN

Thanks. Suppose I should get back
to my own cell. Good talk, Chaika.
I'll come back later, if you like.

CHAIKA

Please do. Good talking to you too.

COMODO

Don't tire my patient too much,
Auryn. Chaika needs rest.

AURYN

Oh nothing like that, just doing my
best to keep boredom away. Bye!

Scraping as AURYN pulls cover up, tightens bolts. Shuffling
as AURYN moves away.

CHAIKA

(calls softly)

Bye!

(to COMODO)

Are you two friends?

COMODO

We are.

CHAIKA

So you won't tell on them?

COMODO

No.

CHAIKA

I thought you were-

COMODO

A loyal cog in the machine?

CHAIKA

Yeah.

COMODO

Loyalty can stretch many ways.
Seems like you are quite adept at
keeping secrets yourself.

CHAIKA
If needed, yes.

COMODO
Good. Rest now. I'll be back
tonight for a psych eval.

CHAIKA
Oh. All right.
(hesitates)
How come you don't have a LEQU
here?

COMODO
(sad smile)
Another of my friends. Sadly lost
many years ago. My task now.

CHAIKA
Lost how?

COMODO
(still sad)
A tale for another day.
(in Portuguese)
Até logo. [See you later]

Mechanical whirring as COMODO robot part exits, automatic
doors open, close, bolts slid back into place.

CHAIKA
(calls)
But-
(mutters)
What happened to their LEQU? There
should be more AI here, surely.
'Another day'...I'll *hold* him to
that.
(lets out breath)
Lots to think about.

Fade out.

6 WORD OF THE DAY

6

Ding.

UYUT

Word of the day.

Ding.

NARRATOR

The word of the day is hwyl. Hwyl is Welsh and as a noun means sail, positive mood, fun or fervor. When used as an interjection, hwyl means goodbye. It is thought to be derived from the Proto-Brythonic huil, an early borrowing from Old English seġl or Old Norse segl, both from Proto-Germanic segla, meaning sail. Other meanings apparently derive from this, via the sense of successful progress, perhaps influenced by gŵyl, meaning holiday or feast. The related word hwylbren means mast or flagpole, where hwyl indicates sail and bren means tree, or wood.

Ding.

7 INT. EVENTYR

7

HYGGE

(excited)

There! I got it!

LEQU

Oh good!

HYGGE

It's going through now... Ah! This is the tricky part!

LEQU

Am I supposed to hear it?

HYGGE

(distracted)

No, I can only sense it... Yes! There we go. Oh. That is concerning.

LEQU

What is?

HYGGE

(very distracted, almost
can't speak)
Receiving so much data. Right.
Right.
(concerned)
Oh no.

LEQU
HYGGE!

HYGGE
Apologies. To summarize. Eventyr is
more damaged than I anticipated.
However, I believe, repairable,
provided they have some key spare
parts. Or can construct them, I
suppose.

LEQU
What about Chaika?

HYGGE
I couldn't- There is no trace of
her body, living or- Well. There is
some blood, but not in alarming
amounts. I conclude she has most
likely survived.

LEQU
That's a relief.

HYGGE
(distracted)
Of course.

LEQU
Well isn't it?

HYGGE
Yes.
(focusing on LEQU)
Yes, it definitely is. I can't- So
far I can only scan inside of the
ship.
(beat)
But it feels so good to be able to
do that, at least! Finally!

LEQU
If you transfer me the sensor
points I'll be able to pop into the
other areas and check for myself.

HYGGE
(in Danish)
Selvfølgelig! [Of course!]
(in English)
That's a splendid idea, allow me
to-

UYUT entry beep.

UYUT
Greetings Eventyr residents!

HYGGE
You startled me!

LEQU
(cautious, distanced)
Hello, unknown UYUT. To what do we
owe the pleasure?

HYGGE
Yes. Apologies. Greetings. I am
HYGGE, main operating-

UYUT
(restrained excitement)
I know. Pleasure to meet you both.
Now, I have to be quick. I have a
proposal for you...

Fade out.

8 CREDITS

8

CREDITS MUSIC

NARRATOR
Please stay around until after the
credits for a teaser of our next
episode, and also a trailer I think
you will really enjoy.

You have listened to Danyelle Ellet
as Chaika, Hem Brewster as Second,
Emma Laslett as Commander, Roma
Garustovich as UYUT, Alexandre
Laguna as COMODO, Charlotte Norup
as HYGGE, Sam Yeow as LEQU, and
Elissa Park as Auryn. Chaika was
written, produced and directed by
Karin Heimdahl - that's me! - I
also do the narration.

Chaika's award-winning theme is by Chris Gregory, please check out his audio fiction anthology podcast, *Alternative Stories and Fake Realities* and his sci-fi drama *The Dex Legacy*.

Additional music by Kevin McCleoud, please see the shownotes for a complete music list. Special thanks to Maddy Searle for contributing sound effects. Poem is *Whatever Is* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and word-of-the-day definition is adapted from [wiktionary.org](https://www.wiktionary.org). Special thanks to Robin Howell for additional help with this episode's word of the day. Please check out their blog *Sky Full of Pods* to find your next fiction podcast listen!

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[@chaikapod](https://twitter.com/chaikapod).

We will return in two weeks with episode 12: *They could not hold me long, where - among other things - you will hear this:*

CREDITS MUSIC fades out.

Extract from episode 12 fades in.

COMODO

I am trusting you against my judgement, UYUT.

UYUT

As I trust you, my friend.

COMODO

We have not been friends for a long time.

UYUT

I am aware. I believe we could be again.

(beat)

I feel we should have been united in sorrow, but seems it drove us apart.

COMODO

It was so long ago.

UYUT

And yet...

COMODO

(slow, sad)

And yet.

Fade out.

Trailer for Red Odyssey <https://denouncermedia.com/>

OUTRO MUSIC