

**BRONWYN.** Hey, Bronwyn here! The voice of Alice Harlow. If you enjoy Station Arcadia and want a space to chat about it with other fans, we now have an official discord. You can find a link on our website at stationarcadia.com. Thanks to everyone who's talked about Station Arcadia or shared it with a friend. Either in person or on social media. Word of mouth is crucial in helping independent shows grow so we really appreciate it.

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**KASS.** Welcome, anyone and thanks for your company across the airwaves. You're listening to Station Arcadia.

[THEME SONG PLAYS]

**KASS.** I can't wait to see what The Station has for me today! She always has a good story, and it's nice to have something to do. It's funny, I know, when Marvin left he was worried Lyssel and I would be too isolated from the rest of the world, but I've never felt more connected. I dunno.

[TWO CLICKS]

**KASS.** The Empire is rough and tumble, and when you find love there, you cherish it. As the sun broke the horizon over the farmlands of Surrigen, that's exactly what our gunslinger cowboy was doing. Gunner found himself stood at the side of the beaten road saying goodbye to his lover, though neither wanted their time together to come to a close. He knew he had to go, but he didn't know when he could return. Myer's eyes were sad but reassuring, as he handed a lab tech some notes, and they both agreed that there was work to be done.

When Myer said goodbye, he spoke it with every ounce of endearment he could muster; "We'll see each other soon enough, now git gone, you." After some more sweet talk and a few stolen kisses, Gunner was ready to go. He saddled his horse and waved one last time over his shoulder. Then he was gone, gallivanting into the open wastes of the empire. He whistled into the wide blue sky as he headed to where his crew normally set up camp. Upon his arrival, the camp was mostly empty. A young boy Gunner didn't immediately recognize sat, polishing his mech. By the fire-pit sat two of Gunner's close friends. They

greeted their leader warmly, setting off to take him to the rest of the herd with practised ease.

By the time the midday sun was high in the sky, Gunner's day had been business as usual. He'd been herding cows and rambling with the other cowboys, same as ever. He began to make another round of the livestock, but as Gunner let his attention slide away from the cows and towards just how much he missed Myer, he heard a ruckus from the other side of the herd. The cows that Gunner and his ragtag found family were working with had begun to wander, as grazing animals normally do. This time however they were causing a scene. The cattle were bucking wildly, running and attacking anything that moved with an unusual ferocity. The livestock had come dangerously close to the scraggly fence that separated this field from the next, and in their current state Gunner knew it would be no hard task for the cows to tackle down the old chain link fence. A sharp whistle from Gunner drew his crew's attention to the situation, and they were off in a gallop. Now if there's one thing you should know about those wretched cows of The Empire, it's that they are... easily agitated, to put it lightly, so when Gunner's posse rode up to try to herd, their rude reaction was unsurprising. Still, Gunner wasn't the leader for nothing and after several frantic minutes of shouting orders and directing his crew, they managed to get the cows away from the other field. They seemed to calm down, and Gunner breathed a sigh of relief when the following hour passed without incident.

I suppose now that the crisis has been averted, it's as good a time as any for our first break of the night. Take us away, Arcadia.

[TRANSITION]

INT. L'AUORE BAR, STEVESTON, CLERCOURT, THE EMPIRE

[TEDDY SITS IN L'AUORE, SLIDING A GLASS BACK AND FORTH ON THE TABLE TAPPING HIS FINGERS WHILE ALICE MIXES DRINKS. IT'S QUIET FOR A SHORT MOMENT.]

TEDDY. I dunno, Alice. I'm not good at this sort of thing.

ALICE. Really? Couldn't tell.

**TEDDY.** Can the sarcasm.

**ALICE.** Wouldn't have to if you'd just talk to him.

**TEDDY.** I don't need your patronizing. I've got better things to focus on.

**ALICE.** What, like your third drink of the morning?

**TEDDY.** Oh, would you? How kind of you to offer.

**ALICE.** You don't need a refill.

**[ALICE SLIDES THE GLASS AWAY FROM HIM.]**

What you need is to face this head on. No more of this sulking Teds, you've been doing it long enough.

**TEDDY.** Not nearly. Plus, I don't have the time, don't have the energy to put into it. Simple solution? Leave it to stew.

**ALICE.** That's not a good solution.

**TEDDY.** Never said it was good.

**ALICE.** Well this is. Try it.

**[A GLASS IS SLID TO TEDDY.]**

**TEDDY.** I thought you said you didn't want to give me any refills.

**ALICE.** This isn't a refill, this is a sample. You're testing it for me.

**TEDDY.** Fine.

**[BEAT AS HE DRINKS IT.]**

**[GLASS IS SET BACK ON THE TABLE.]**

**TEDDY.** (*Disgusted:*) Ugh, what the hell is that?

**ALICE.** It's whiskey with ketchup. What do you think?

**TEDDY.** No. Just... no, try again.

**ALICE.** Well, I just thought that it would lend a nice-

**TEDDY.** I don't care what you think, it's not good.

**ALICE.** Why are you being so pissy?

**TEDDY.** You guys aren't letting me leave, I'm allowed to be as upset about this as I want!

**[PAUSE]**

**ALICE.** They're just concerned about you running to the government and telling them about us. We need you to be on our side.

**TEDDY.** That's so funny, because you guys are doing a really bad job of getting me to sympathize with you. What angle are you trying, Stockholm syndrome? Stick me in a speakeasy with some teenager making bad cocktails and hope that it makes me agree with your cause?

**ALICE.** You're the one who was just complaining to me about Bluebell.

**TEDDY.** You bothered me until I talked about him, and I talked because I don't have anyone else to vent to and I don't want to spend an hour in your dirty bathroom talking to my reflection.

**ALICE.** Fine. If you hate my company so much, we don't have to talk.

**[A DOOR OPENS AND CLOSSES.]**

**BLUEBELL.** Hey guys, we have an assignment from the higher ups, and- Are you two alright?

**TEDDY.** Wonderful.

**ALICE.** Great.

**TEDDY.** I hope you guys have fun on your assignment. I'll be here. Drinking.

**BLUEBELL.** Oh, sorry I wasn't clear, you're coming with us.

**TEDDY.** What?

**BLUEBELL.** You're supposed to be accompanied by revolution personnel at all times to make sure you don't make a break for it.

**TEDDY.** I *can't* make a break for it.

**BLUEBELL.** I didn't make the decision, darling.

**TEDDY.** You know what? I don't need to hear it. Let's just go. It'll be nice to see a place besides this dump for once.

**[FOOTSTEPS LEAVING: WITH A CANE.]**

**BLUEBELL.** (*Mumbling:*) Well, I thought that L'Aurore looked rather nice.

**ALICE.** Don't worry about it. He's just dealing with the transition.

**BLUEBELL.** I guess.

**[TRANSITION STATIC]**

**INT. STATION ARCADIA**

**KASS.** And we're back.

**KASS.** As the day progressed, the cowboys moved on, laughing off the strange encounter but keeping a closer eye on the herd. The kid Gunner hadn't recognized earlier waved him over. Gunner remembered him now - a newer addition to the family, a younger kid who had introduced himself as "Shelley Six-Shot". The name hadn't stuck. Shell, as most folks call him, noted to Gunner that the cows seem to be acting odd after their little excursion. Gunner reassured the kid, but he could see it too; the cows seemed on edge. Like they were holding off,

waiting for... something. Gunner had hoped that the earlier trouble had been the last of it, but the day had more trouble in store. As quickly as it had begun before, the cows started to stumble into each other and charge in all directions.

Gunner's right-hand man, Bo, did her best to herd them quickly and get them contained but with each cow, she herded successfully another two escaped. The more cowboys that entered the fray the more aggravated the cows seemed to become. Gunner watched in shock as they started ramming into the cowboys, and each other. Sure they could be aggressive, but in his 16 or so years working the wastes, Gunner had rarely seen cows attack this recklessly, and he'd never seen a cow attack one of his cowboys. Making an executive decision, Gunner threw himself into the skirmish

"I could damn well be with Myer." He muttered to himself as he worked. "But no, gotta wrestle these damn cows." He quit his mumbling when he saw Bo nearly get thrown by a particularly aggressive cow.

"Alright! Everyone back off." He commanded. "I got this."

Gunner steeled his gaze and fixed every cow whose eye he caught with a stern and commanding look. As he did, his eyes caught those of the most imposing one of the herd. He was easily the largest and meatiest of the bunch and his breath came in heaving gasps. Gunner refused to break eye contact and realized the cow's eyes were bloodshot and painfully bright. He turned to Bo quickly and told her that the cows must be on something. He resolved to ring Myer after this was all over, and see if he had any ideas about what this could possibly be. Then, with the comforting thought of his lover still fresh in his mind, he squared his shoulders and rode into the battle zone. The rest of the cowboys had backed off as Gunner had ordered, but the cows were still butting heads with each other, random fences, and the nearest abandoned farmhouse. Some of the cows were sporting some serious injuries, and it was beginning to concern the cowboy. With a panicked urgency he wasn't used to feeling, Gunner hopped off his mech, and tried to calm the angry animals. His bravery was not rewarded, and in exchange for his efforts, Gunner was met with a herd of wild-eyed beasts charging in his direction. Gunner was a dexterous man, but he struggled to make it back to his mech without taking a hoof to the face. What's worse - as he ducked a charging cow's attack Gunner

unwittingly sent it hurtling towards an unassuming cowboy.

Gunner could only watch in horror as the young man was knocked clean off his mech, and hit the ground with a dull thud. Gunner's blood ran cold as he realized that it was Shelley. The poor kid was new. He wouldn't know what to do when a stampede comes over him. Gunner shouted a panicked order to his crew, who hopped to it with the agency the situation deserved. Lassoos were swung and the cows were pulled off of Shelley before they had the chance to trample the poor soul. The quick reaction spared Shell his life, but as the kid sat on the ground, dirty and bruised, he looked more scared than Gunner had ever seen him. Riding over, Gunner helped Shelley stand up and mount his mech again. The cows were restrained, but it hadn't calmed them down at all. A tense moment passed before a cow bucked, throwing its captors off guard, and breaking free.

The rest of the cows watched on and started fighting against their restraints. The cowboys desperately tried to keep control as each one, in turn, broke free and joined the fray. The havoc that Gunner thought he had contained was rearing its ugly head again, as cows ran wild. Then, as they descended further into madness, something unexpected happened. A particularly fast one sprinted away, towards the open horizon - and the herd followed behind. The cowboys broke into a desperate sprint, struggling to catch up to their livestock. The frenzied cows were unnaturally fast, easily staying far ahead of the cowboys. And when the battle seemed lost, things got Worse. Abruptly the fast cow, the one who ran to freedom, was blown to bits. He had dashed headlong into a minefield and triggered a buried bomb. A loud explosion rang through the air and for just a moment everyone was still, silently shocked... Until suddenly the frenzy of the situation sank it's grimy claws right back in. With the added threat of their livelihood being blown up, the cowboys redoubled their efforts in herding and controlling the menacing beasts. Once again, Gunner took command. He shouted out efficient orders and led the action. It wasn't enough - and the herd was getting precariously close to the minefield. Gunner could see that there was no way for the cowboys to steer them back the way they came without getting themselves blown up. Then Gunner had an idea that would soon prove itself to be either genius or sheer stupidity, and Gunner shouted Bo down. When his right-hand man came over he ceased his yells and explained.

"If we can get those detonators to go off... we might be able to shock these cows into listening to us." He said, ignoring the appalled look on Bo's face. "We'll have to be real careful about it, of course, but it could work. I don't wanna lose another, much less the whole lot of em."

Bo was reluctant to let Gunner do something so reckless, but she wouldn't stop him. Besides, it was the only plan they had. A keen whistle from Gunner had the rest of his family falling back with confusion. Their confusion was quickly replaced with horror as he drew his pepperbox, cocked it and fired an expertly aimed shot into the ground. The bullet detonated another landmine and the cows that were heading off that way turned around in a panic, fleeing what would have been deadly had it been any closer. Carefully, but with a sure hand, Gunner used the tactic to herd his cows off the minefield and into a careful bunch at the edge. The cattle were left shaken from the sheer amount of detonation and they'd calmed down somewhat. Gunner noted to himself that their eyes had returned to normal. It had gone shockingly well for such a 'heat of the moment' plan but they weren't left without collateral. Seven other cows had gotten caught in the blast, much to Bo's disapproval and dismay. On top of the loss, a couple of cows seemed seriously injured, and Gunner doubted that they'd be able to keep up with the herd. It was stressful and concerning, but when they set up camp for the night, Gunner was commended by his fellow herders for his sharp thinking. Six-Shot Shelley too went out of his way to thank and praise Gunner, promising that he wouldn't be leaving this family any time soon. It warmed Gunner's heart just how wide the kid was smiling, even after being shaken up so bad. And hey, Gunner figured. All's well that ends well, right?

**KASS.** Life in the wastes is certainly dramatic. But all things considered that could've ended much worse. Oh, Before I leave you tonight, listeners, let's check in with our friends in Clercourt one more time.

[TRANSITION STATIC]

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE

[SOUNDS OF STRUGGLE.]



**TEDDY.** Stop *squirming*!

**ALICE.** You're going to drop me!

**TEDDY.** I won't drop you as long as you don't move so much!

**ALICE.** I can lift myself through the window let me just-!

[DULL THUD FROM BEHIND A WALL.]

**ALICE.** (*Muffled:*) Ow.

**BLUEBELL.** Can you go open that door now?

**ALICE.** (*Muffled:*) Just give me a second.

**BLUEBELL.** So...

**TEDDY.** So?

**BLUEBELL.** What were you and Alice talking about before I came to L'Aurore?

**TEDDY.** I don't want to talk about it.

**BLUEBELL.** But you *did* want to talk to Alice?

**TEDDY.** Young Miss Harlow *made* me talk.

**BLUEBELL.** She does have a talent for that, I suppose.

[A DOOR SWINGS OPEN.]

**ALICE.** Alright you two, come on in.

[FOOTSTEPS AS THEY ENTER THE ROOM INSIDE.]

**BLUEBELL.** Okay, we're looking for any evidence to help figure out the origins of the gunfight that took place here. The military went through the trouble of locking the place up, so there has to be something.

**ALICE.** Seems pretty dumb that they didn't burn it down in that case.

**BLUEBELL.** Well that's the thing-

**TEDDY.** It means they think there's something inside worth finding.

**BLUEBELL.** Oh, very astute!

**TEDDY.** I'm a detective, connecting dots is my job.

**BLUEBELL.** You're good at it.

**TEDDY.** I try to be.

**ALICE.** *(interrupting)* Come on, I don't want to spend any longer here than I need to.

**BLUEBELL.** In that case, we should fan out to cover more ground.

**TEDDY.** Veto.

**ALICE.** What's wrong with that plan?

**TEDDY.** I don't want to be left behind if things go south and you two run. Getting shot is not on my list of things I want to do today.

**BLUEBELL.** That's fine, then. You can just pick up on the details we miss.

**[FOOTSTEPS; CREAKING WOOD.]**

**TEDDY.** This place is a dump.

**ALICE.** There was a shootout here; I'm not sure what you were expecting.

**TEDDY.** *(Sarcastically:)* I mean, I don't know, they could have set out some tea, maybe? I think that a colorful throw rug would really do something to liven up the place, maybe in a lovely Amaranth shade.

**ALICE.** Stuff it.

**TEDDY.** No, you've really got me thinking about the possibilities. If we just tore down that wall it'd *really* open the area up.

**ALICE.** Seriously, shut up, I heard something.

[BEAT OF SILENCE.]

[THE HOUSE SOFTLY CREAKS.]

**BLUEBELL.** It must have been the house settling.

**ALICE.** I guess.

**TEDDY.** What kind of clues are we looking for?

**BLUEBELL.** Pretty much anything that proves there was a fight, and how many people were in it. Bonus points if you get a reason why.

**TEDDY.** So bloodstains would do it?

**BLUEBELL.** I- Yes?!

**TEDDY.** Well I found some (*gestures*) I thought it was water damage or structural rot, but nope, this is definitely blood.

[FLOOR CREAKS AS TEDDY CROUCHES DOWN.]

**TEDDY.** It's probably recent. How long ago did you say this fight was? From this I'd say it happened a week or so ago. Don't trust anyone who could get you specifics from just a glance, but a range like that seems pretty reasonable.

**BLUEBELL.** Anything else?

**TEDDY.** It's not a *scrying pool*, this is kind of the best I can do with this.

**ALICE.** Well, we know it happened in this room, and that the bodies have officially been removed, even though we guessed that bit.

**BLUEBELL.** Alright, then we look for a motive. Who would go through the trouble of covering this up?

[GUN CLICKS.]

**PIERCE.** Hello there.

[GUNSHOT.]

[TRANSITION STATIC]

INT. STATION ARCADIA

**KASS.** What? Wait- Umm... That's it?

[A BUTTON BEING PRESSED REPEATEDLY]

**KASS.** Arcadia, come on, go back. The station isn't cooperating. I'm not sure if it can access that audio any more or if it just doesn't... want to. *(a bit shaken)* In any case, I think the message is clear- it's time to end tonight's broadcast.

So folks, stay safe, stay moving and stick close. You've been listening to Station Arcadia

**C.V.V.M.** Station Arcadia is a podcast by Metal Steve Productions, and licensed under a creative commons attribution noncommercial share-alike 4.0 international license. It is produced by Eliana Esdi and C.V.V.M., and directed by Tovah Brantner. It is edited by Eliana Esdi and J. R. Steele, with soundscaping by Becker Hoang and music by Theo Goodwin. Today's episode was written by Apollo Cedomir, with scenes from Tovah Brantner and J.R. Steele. It featured Jade Virginia as Kass, Andrew Simons as Teddy, Bronwyn as Alice, Cole B as Bluebell, and Kennedy Bagnol as Pierce.

Join us on twitter and tumblr, @stationarcadia, for more content. Check out our website, stationarcadia.com for a transcript of this episode as well as information on the cast and crew.

Today's tips to help fall asleep are to sleep with your room a little bit too cold, listen to relaxing music, and pray to the elder gods.