

## STATION ARCADIA OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

### SEASON 2, EPISODE 3: THE MONTGOMERYS

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**ELI:** Hey listeners, this is Eli Allan, producer of Station Arcadia. Unfortunately, production on Station Arcadia ceased midway through season 2. The following episode was mostly finished before we halted production, but the show's cancellation is reflected in lack of background music during the story, and other minor aspects of production quality. That said, enjoy episode 3: The Montgomerys.

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**KASS.** Welcome, anyone. Be careful trusting memories; they're never quite true. You're listening to Station Arcadia.

[THEME SONG PLAYS]

**KASS.** *(an aside:)* Are you ready?

*(Clears throat)*. Well, listeners! Stay powered and sit tight for this broadcast, cause we've got a very special treat for you folks today. I've got someone on the line, ready to deliver all your latest Imperial war news, and I bet you can't guess who it is...

Well, maybe you can, you've heard him before. That's right everyone, please welcome back... Marvin Roberts, stormchaser extraordinaire and good friend of the show.

**MARVIN.** Wow, hello! That was quite the introduction, Kass. I'll try to live up to it.

**KASS.** Now that we know a few people are actually listening to these broadcasts, Jo and I figured it wouldn't hurt to level things up a bit. Give the show a bit of extra flash. Not that you aren't worth it anyway, Marvin!

**MARVIN.** Now by 'flash', do you just mean an extra touch of drama, or is there something else to this tune-up?

**KASS.** Well, I wasn't sure if I should mention it or not, but Lyssel did rig me up a bit of a soundboard...

**MARVIN.** Oho! What's that?

**KASS.** It's this... well, it's a board, covered in mismatched buttons, and each one runs a different pre-recorded cassette with a little soundbyte. So in theory, depending on what I'm saying during the broadcast, I could supplement it with one of those noises. It's a bit of a work in progress, though, I'm still getting acquainted with it.

**MARVIN.** Well now you've gotta do a quick demo, Kass, or you're leaving everyone hanging.

**KASS.** I don't know...

**MARVIN.** Oh come on. Let's say a flock of seagulls have just shoved me off my boat right into a shark's mouth and it's a super tragic moment. You got a sound for that?

**KASS.** Uhh...

[KASS PRESSES A BUTTON]

[SPARSE APPLAUSE PLAYS FOR A FEW SECONDS]

**KASS.** No wait, sorry, wrong button.

[KASS PRESSES ANOTHER BUTTON]

[HARMONICA RIFF PLAYS]

**KASS.** Ok, so I'm still getting used to which buttons are where on this thing.

**MARVIN.** Third time's a charm?

[KASS PRESSES ANOTHER BUTTON]

[A LONG FART SOUNDS]

[MARVIN LAUGHS]

**KASS.** Wha- ok, that one was *not* on the board when I tested it yesterday.

**MARVIN.** *[he thinks he's so funny:]* How un-fart-tunate! But who could have stunk up your soundboard like that?

**KASS.** Oh, I have a pretty good idea who. Or rather, which two people. I'll give you a hint, neither is Jo, and their names rhyme with Ted and Myssol.

**MARVIN.** You're saying Jo isn't a fart fan? A flatulence fanatic? A terrible-two-timing-tooter?

**KASS.** You're the one that's terrible, and I'm kicking you off the show. Listeners, this has been Marvin Roberts, who unfortunately is no longer welcome on Station Arcadia-

**MARVIN.** No, no, mercy! I'll behave!

**KASS.** *(skeptical:)* Uh-huh. Is that so?

**MARVIN.** ...Absa-toot-ly.

**KASS.** You are full of worms.

**MARVIN.** Aw, love you too Kass.

**KASS.** Marvin, stop stinking up my show and gas to it. There, happy?

**MARVIN.** Never been better.

*[Kass sighs.]*

**MARVIN.** Right, on to the weather.

**[BUTTON PRESS]**

**[THUNDER AND RAIN SOUNDS]**

**KASS.** *(softly:)* Yes!

**MARVIN.** Nice.

In late July, year 407, Surrigen's small stretch of coastline was rocked by a tsunami that swept in from the Camnesse coast. Perrimon, the only port city in the country, sustained heavy casualties and damage to its infrastructure.

The first thing to go were the boats in the harbor. Surrigen's only naval fleet was completely decimated when the violent waters smashed the ships against whatever surfaces they were unfortunate enough to be near. The seafaring vessels became wrecking balls that destroyed their own docks. Without the port, Surrigen has lost a major point to receive aid and supplies from the allied country of Westerfield.

From there, water spilled into the city. Buildings crumbled and collapsed on the people inside, and many of those who managed to make it to the streets were swept away in the flood. Wave after wave crashed ashore and echoed across the water like the sound of bombs. From where I'm sitting, there isn't much left of the place but rubble.

The tsunami also breached Perrimon's perimeter walls. Any Surri residents south-west of the city should be wary of flood runoff in the coming weeks.

With likely supply chain issues on the horizon, Surrigen will need to shore up quickly in order to weather future storms, but it's still too early to say what impact, if any, this will have on the war as whole.

In other news, we can expect heavy rainfall on sections of the Westerfield-Clercourt border to continue well into next month, as seasonal winds push the summer storm West from Fort Merc. Clercourt troupes stationed in these areas may find themselves soaked to the bone, but it's unlikely the storm will come in contact with any large settlements. Finally, I'd like to offer my commiseration to troops stationed at Policy Hill, a stretch along the Bremrig-Surrigen border, who have now officially spent one entire year experiencing periods of rain but making literally zero progress from either side. War, as always, is thrilling.

**KASS.** Thank you Marvin, that was certainly informative!

**MARVIN.** Thanks for having me Kass, and good luck with your soundboard.

**KASS.** Yeah... I'm not sure that's gonna last.

**MARVIN.** What, really? ...I thought it was fart-tastic.

**KASS.** And on that note, listeners, why don't we see where the Station is taking us today.

[BUTTON PRESS]

[TRANSITION]

[INSIDE L'AURE. THERE ARE A FEW PEOPLE AROUND, MOSTLY MURMURING AND CHATTING AMONGST THEMSELVES. ALICE POURS A DRINK.]

**ALICE.** Here you go, enjoy.

[FOOTSTEPS WALK AWAY.]

Sorry about that, what were you saying, Vesper?

**VESPER.** It's been bugging me. I just have a weird feeling.

**ALICE.** Well, you have a weird feeling about everything. I think your job makes you a bit too jumpy.

**VESPER.** This is different.

**ALICE.** You guys have barely even talked to each other.

**VESPER.** Exactly. He's been here for, what, almost a year? I don't think he's said more than a total of ten words to me.

**ALICE.** To be fair, I think that before he met any of us he mostly spoke in sarcastic jabs. We've been working on his conversational skills.

**VESPER.** That's also suspicious.

**ALICE.** At some point you have to realize that any kind of behavior can seem suspicious when you look at it from the wrong angle.

**VESPER.** I don't know Alice. Something's off. He's hiding something.

**ALICE.** You can't expect everyone around here to be completely open with each other. *Everyone is hiding something.*

**VESPER.** No, I know that. But...

**ALICE.** It feels different.

**VESPER.** Yeah.

**ALICE.** *(sigh)* Just give it some time, Ves. Teddy's still new, and he's probably just as skeptical of you as you are of him. I'm sure you two would get along fine if you gave him a chance.

**VESPER.** Hm.

**ALICE.** I'm telling you, I know the guy. We've done the whole "vulnerability" thing. I'd tell you more, but that's not my decision to make. Teddy is... complicated, I'll give you that, but that doesn't mean he's bad.

**VESPER.** Maybe.

**[TRANSITION]**

**KASS.** Oooh, and we're back with the Clercourt revolution! I think that means our story today will, likewise, be from the Empire. Fitting, I suppose, with Marvin's broadcast. I wonder if Arcadia does it on purpose.

**[KASS PLUGS IN]**

**KASS.** Every family in the Empire is a military family, in a manner of speaking. Mandatory service policies vary little between countries, it's the one thing that they all happen to have in common. Every mother, father, parent, and guardian watches their child head out at the assigned age. Everyone has a friend or cousin marching somewhere in the lines. But the *true* military

families are in a league of their own. The ones with long lines of lieutenants, colonels, *generals*. The ones who carry battlefield glory in their very names. If you manage to preserve that legacy, your name can be worth more than any other possession you have.

Clercourt is a country of order. On the surface, at least. When you make everything illegal, that everything has to go *somewhere*. There's a strong underbelly, rife with liquor and crime, and almost everyone dips their toes into it at the very least.

The most important thing, no matter what happens, is that you keep your name out of it. There are appearances to be kept. In Clercourt, the image that others see is what counts; not the lies behind the picture.

So there's a high level of respect placed on those who "make it." The ones who seem to follow all the rules and pull themselves up by their bootstraps. And the Montgomerys... well, the Montgomerys have been pulling themselves up for years now.

The family home is tucked away in the east of the country, in a walled city of the same name. Montgomery. Proof positive of the worth a name can have if you invest in it. The Montgomerys haven't just survived in the Imperial civil war; they have *thrived*. There are stories of their exploits reaching back generations, to the point that they've just about joined the Empire's pantheon of folk heroes.

The manor is enormous, both a military complex and a family home. The only official way in or out is the main entrance, though it's an open secret that there are dozens more methods of egress known only to the family themselves. The foyer is massive, a room of cold marble floors and walls supported by pillars polished to a gleaming white. The heels of military shoes echo like a bullet's ricochet with every step further into the house. The rooms closest to the entrance are war rooms, armories, and collections of intel. It's a brazen taunt. Even if you somehow got in there when you weren't supposed to, and you're welcome to try, you wouldn't make it out with what you came for.

As you delve into the deeper recesses of the house, marble gives way to mahogany, braced with the same white pillars like the

ribcage of a massive beast. The walls between the doors in the hall are lined with artwork. Triptychs and commemorations of the Montgomery line's heroic exploits in battle. Sibyl's assassination of a Westerfieldian general takes center stage, her eyes burning with a righteous fury that bores straight through the canvas it is painted on. A statue of Alaina lashed to a post is settled between pillars. She snarls at anyone who passes by, the same way she did when her troops suggested that she abandon it to retreat in the battle of Eastlick. Just across the way is a wood etching of Caius' siege on Kildon, engraved onto a singed piece of wood taken from the same forest that used to guard the city. And at the very end of the hall is the most recent Montgomery family portrait.

The current matriarch, Minerva Montgomery, stands at the center. Her dreadlocks are twisted into a bun on the top of her head, and her dark skin stands out elegantly against her crisp white uniform. Her children are gathered around her, backs stock-straight and shoulders pushed back, and yet somehow their posture still seems lacking next to their mother's. Just behind her, tucked next to Minerva's eldest daughter is a redacted figure. There's the general shape of a person, painted over with a shade of black that *almost* blends into the dark burgundy, but not quite. It stands out enough to tell that someone used to be there. And enough to tell that they want you to know that, too.

There are no spouses in the portrait, but not for a lack of them. Minerva alone has taken several consorts over her life, and none of them were able to last long next to her. If you aren't able to keep up, aren't able to keep yourself alive, then it's your fault that you get left behind. They say that war never changes, but the truth is that it changes every day and you have to be prepared for the form that it may take. Even if that's a loss. So the portrait just contains Minerva and her children; her legacy. It would go through too many alterations otherwise.

[TRANSITION]

[SOUP KITCHEN, DAY. PEOPLE ARE CHATTERING AMIABLY.]

**BLUEBELL.** Alright, I think that's the end of the lunch rush. How about we grab a bowl and I treat you to a meal?

**TEDDY.** Does it count as treating me if the food is free?



**BLUEBELL.** It's the thought that counts.

**TEDDY.** I suppose you're right.

[BOWL NOISES. LIKE SCRAPING]

[SOME CHAIRS ARE PULLED OUT AND THEY SIT DOWN]

It's a good idea.

**BLUEBELL.** One of the older folks came up with it originally. Amrit, I think his name was? He was originally from one of the outland towns and he said they did something like this. It's worked so far, plus we get to help people. Practicing what we preach, you know?

**TEDDY.** Yeah.

**BLUEBELL.** It's kind of nice. All this espionage and intrigue sometimes gets to you. It's good to see the faces of the people you're helping. When I was a kid back in Bremrig I would have loved to be able to go to a soup kitchen like this.

**TEDDY.** I remember you mentioned you grew up there. I don't think you said what city you were from.

**BLUEBELL.** Didn't I? Huh. Well, I'm Grened born and bred as they say back home. You said you were from here, right?

**TEDDY.** Well, I'm insulted that you don't remember

**BLUEBELL.** In my defense, I've developed a filter that makes me forget about personal information after a month. I'd have way too much of that inside my head otherwise.

**TEDDY.** Because...?

**BLUEBELL.** Missions.

**TEDDY.** Oh.

I wish I could do the kind of stuff you can.

**BLUEBELL.** Really?

**TEDDY.** Mhm. The... talking and networking, that sort of thing. People tend to be... off put by me.

**BLUEBELL.** Ohhh, yea. I think Alice told me you offered her mom jerky as consolation for her missing child.

**TEDDY.** That's neither here nor there.

[BLUEBELL LAUGHS]

**BLUEBELL.** You managed to win me over. Plus, you're not exactly a talentless hack yourself.

**TEDDY.** Talentless hack...?

**BLUEBELL.** I've seen you do some good detective work. Hopefully I'll get to see some more pretty soon.

Besides, you made it this far and that has to count for something.

**TEDDY.** Huh. I guess it does.

**BLUEBELL.** For what it's worth, I'm glad you're here.

**TEDDY.** Me too. I mean, I'm glad that you're glad. I mean—

Can we just eat so I can stop talking?

**BLUEBELL.** *(Smiling:)* Of course.

[TRANSITION]

**KASS.** I'm just so happy to hear from these guys. It's especially heartening to know that Teddy is still out there in the world being as awkward as ever. Not that I claim to be any better.

Y'know, I was thinking, during the break... the name Montgomery sounds so familiar. I know it's a city, so maybe that's all it is. But I swear I've heard about someone with that name before...

[KASS THINKS FOR A SEC, FINGER DRUMMING ON TABLE SOUND]

Nope, it's not coming to me. Maybe it'll click at some point if I keep going.

**KASS.** The next sections of the winding hallways are mostly bedrooms. Each door is simple in its design, merely a solid slab of steel. The rooms inside are all the same, containing a wardrobe, a desk, and a bed with sheets folded sharp enough to cut you. Towards the end of the hall, the second-last door on the left is locked. Were you to look through the keyhole you'd see the same carbon-cut design as the others, albeit settled with a thick layer of dust. One or two of the other rooms have been cleaned out and filled with tributes to a dead warrior, and are visited occasionally by grieving members of the family, but this one remains in stasis.

Past that, in sitting rooms that attempt at an intimate air, are more personal mementos. The kind of family trinkets and heirlooms you show to people with a smirk, as though you've just given them a heavy secret to bear. Many of them are decommissioned weapons, too old to work and far too valuable to throw away. The artifacts are displayed in their original condition, or given a polish at most. The chips and scratches on the surface are battle scars to be proudly displayed, proof of their authenticity. One of the more unique items is a pair of dog tags with the name *Ezra T. Rubin* imprinted on them, and a bullet stuck in the steel. A keepsake from the first Montgomery courtship ritual someone managed to pass against Minerva.

What a time that had been! Whereas most military families settle for a more ordinary courtship, the Montgomerys have two trials for anyone who wants to marry into the family. It's only fair that potential suitors prove themselves if they want to join one of the most prestigious families of Clercourt. Not to mention it suggests they'll last at least three months. The first round is a game of the suitor's choice, to prove their strategic skills. Anything is on the table. It's very rare that anyone makes it past this point, and even rarer that they make it past the second.

The second trial is a mock assassination. Strike your potential fiancée by the end of the day, and you've passed. The entire city of Montgomery is the playing field, making the game a challenging blend of reconnaissance, tracking, and tactical skill.

Ezra, only the third man to make it to this stage, offered for Minerva to protect herself using live ammunition instead of the usual non-lethal ones. A risky play, which he survived just by the shine of his dog tags, but one that had thoroughly won Minerva's respect. "No one can surprise me quite like Ezra can," she would say. Unfortunately, he would die soon after their first son's tenth birthday, in another rather surprising move.

The rest of the Montgomery home is reserved for personal entertainment and utilitarian facilities. Kitchens, laundries, a swimming pool, a rifle range, and the family's personal armory. You could never have too many armories, Lonnie Montgomery once said. The dinner table holds one plate for each member of the family, with an extra place set at the very end, opposite to Minerva's position at the head of the table. The plate was replaced each meal, but it was never laid with silverware. There was no way to eat should anyone actually sit there.

After traversing the passageways all the way back to the foyer, opening the main doors sends a blast of hot air in, tinged with the acrid taste of chemicals and the humid stench of still-smoldering land. The manor is like a block of ice compared to this. No. Not ice. A morgue. Temperature controlled and sterile, the Montgomery manor reeks of death in its own way, in a form more subtle and quiet. There are lots of things a name can hide if you invest well enough in it.

**KASS.** Huh. Well, I'm not quite sure what to make of this. I still can't figure out what's bugging me about the name Montgomery, but I bet it's related to these secrets the family is hiding... there must be some reason why Arcadia had me share this story.

Ugh. This is going to bug me, I know it. If I come up with anything, I'll let you know in a future broadcast.

Speaking of things that'll keep me up at night, that weather report was a bit concerning. I know Marvin has to keep his messages coded for security reasons as he spreads news of the war between opposing factions, but there's no reason I have to be so coy here. If I'm reading his code correctly, the news from Surrigen could mean that-

**[DOOR OPENS TO BOOTH, Z WALKS IN]**

**Z.** Kass! Are you done yet?

**KASS.** Oh, Z, this is perfect! I was just talking about the Imperial war, wanna take a seat? I'm sure you have more insightful thoughts on the whole situation than I do.

**Z.** For sure! It's true, I have actually been thinking a lot about war lately, and... I've decided... I'm not a fan. There's something about pointless state-funded mass-murder that just... I don't know, it's just not my thing.

**KASS.** Z, if you don't want to talk about it, that's ok. But the situation in Surrigen seems to be worsening, and I just wanted to check in. Your family still lives there, right? How are you holding up?

**Z.** I'm actually pretty upset right now.

**KASS.** *(encouraging)* Yeah?

**Z.** Yeah. Cause you seem to have forgotten *all* about our first ever station disco dance night.

**KASS.** Ah.

**Z.** It's like you don't even care about grooving, Kass! Come on, Lyssel's almost done setting up the sound system.

**KASS.** Is Jo still insisting on costumes?

**Z.** Uh, obviously. She's wearing a *cape*, it's surprisingly awesome.

**KASS.** I guess I'd better go get ready then. I'm sure we'll find another time for depressing war talk.

**[Z OPENS THE DOOR]**

Listeners, I hope you have a good night, wherever you are. Stay safe, stay moving, and stick close. You've been listening to Station Arcadia.

**[CLOSING THEME]**

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**ELI:** Station Arcadia is a podcast by Metal Steve Productions, run by Eli Allan and J.R. Steele. It is produced by Eli Allan, with creative direction by Tovah Brantner, dialogue editing by Leo Zahn, and soundscaping by J.R. Steele.

The radio story for this episode was written by Tovah Brantner, with bug segments and weather by Tovah Brantner, Arcadia segments by Eli Allan, and copy editing by Eli Allan. It featured theme music by Arps.

This episode featured Lady Renaissance as Kass, Dylan Ramdin as Marvin, Bronwyn as Alice, Taylor Maimone as Vesper, Andrew Simons as Teddy, Cole B as Bluebell, and Marius Trusler as Z.

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Today's ceiling texture of the week is stucco. Today is the day to appreciate all the stucco ceilings in your life.