

The Elysium Project

Episode 5: Crisis

Podcast Transcript

Prologue

Introduction:

The Elysium Project

Written and produced by Natalie Van Sistine

Episode 5: Crisis

Prologue Scene

Gabriel walks quickly and is soon through a side door at the UN building. A soft, more professional ambiance with a low buzz of scattered conversation quickly fades in as the door closes, replacing the crowd noise. Another set of high heeled footsteps approach.

Catherine: Secretary Highmoore?

Gabriel: Catherine! Good, I'm glad you're already here.

Catherine: I got here before the sun was up trying to beat the worst of the crowds. Some of the protesters have been walking since last evening. Even my son's school is shut down for the week.

Gabriel: It's understandable given the circumstances. And your son... Nicholas, isn't it?

Catherine: Yes, thank you for remembering.

Gabriel: We've certainly worked together long enough. Have you received any notice of change from the New Eastern Coalition since last night?

Catherine: They won't budge. And I've never seen such absurd demands before, we still don't know just how serious they are.

Gabriel: Blocking all exports was a risky move on their part - it's going to eventually backfire on them as well. We'd be in a better place now if we could just wait them out a little longer.

Catherine: Except the peace talks have turned into a PR nightmare. We should never have agreed to making a public joint statement that a resolution would be reached by the end of the week. Backing out now would be catastrophic to our image. We can't afford any more slip ups.

Gabriel: And reestablishing negotiation terms with their leadership is still a dead end?

Catherine: We're trying, but they're comfortable staying behind the extremists while we panic. Most of the extremists bought their way into power and they're positioned to take the fall if anything backfires. As long as the leadership feels safe behind them, they have nothing to lose and everything to gain by forcing our hand. They're dodging all our efforts to reason with them no matter what we try.

Gabriel: I was hoping we'd make some headway this weekend. That's unfortunate. Catherine, I know we've discussed this as a committee at length, but I have to ask

your advice, just the two of us. If we don't give in, do you think the extremists are bold enough attempt anything drastic?

Catherine: I don't like saying it, but I think they'd be stupid not to. The second recession left a huge opening for them to take financial and military advantage of us when they formed and we played into their hands.

Gabriel: So now it's just a matter of coming out of this alive.

The doors to the audience chamber open and they step inside, only to stop as an eerie silence descends over them. The door slam shut behind them, but no other sound can be heard other than a surreal ambiance that builds slowly. In the front of the chamber, many of the American ambassadors, translators, and security guards have been left in bloody piles strewn across the floor, while some of the more prominent figures have been stretched out and affixed to the front of the platforms with chains and rope.

Catherine: Ohh...

Gabriel: God. They're all dead... even the guards.

Catherine: Greg... Gabriel, none of the Coalition ambassadors are here with them - this has to be a trap.

Gabriel: I don't... some of them are just...

Catherine: I know! But what if-

An initial low pulse followed by a deep rumbling and explosion type sound builds within seconds into a reverse stinger explosion, cutting out before the full sound of the explosion drowns out everything.

Transitional Cut to Intro

Intro: The Elysium Project.

Intro: Written and Produced by Natalie Van Sistine.

Intro: Episode 5... Shift.

Scene 1

Out on the street, Nick is standing at the security gate, trying to argue his case with an officer. The crowd of protesters are loud and busy behind him.

Officer: Son, I've already told you. You need to stand back from the barricade until you can provide me with a call of clearance.

Nick: I told you I'm trying! My mom is Ambassador Choy, so she probably has her phone off for the meetings! I'm trying to call in a warning-

Officer: Yeah, you and half the city!

Nick: Please! My dad-

The same bomb Gabriel and Catherine were present for goes off with an earsplitting bang, silencing everything. The explosion rumbles out for a long, tense moment and finally the dust seems to begin to settle while a ringing noise signifies the intensity of the sound. The rest of the scene slowly fades back into clarity as it progresses.

Nick stands up slowing, stumbling forward, trying to see through the dust.

Nick: Mom...

*Sound slowly begins to fade back in, along with distant yelling and screaming.
Nick stumbles further into the wreckage.*

Scene 2

The door to Emma's apartment opens and Ian pokes his head out.

Ian: It looks like the coast is clear. No one in the hallway.

Emma: Thank God. I wouldn't put it past my dad to leave a security detail.

They start walking into the hall.

Ian: Do you want to risk taking the elevator? I made it up here okay.

Emma: I'd feel safer taking the stairs. There's a service exit that way I took once before. There might be a camera though.

Ian: I can take care of that.

The elevator dings near by, signifying the arrival of the car.

Emma: Oh no-

Ian: Come on!

Emma: AH! How did...? We just went straight *through* the door?!

Ian: Yeah, we can do that.

Emma: What are you doing now?

Ian: Trying to see back through the door - I want to know who's out there.

Emma: Your abilities can do that too?

Ian: Mhmm. Just manipulate the molecular structure... It looks like a woman. I think she's headed for your apartment.

Emma: It could be my dad's lawyer again.

Ian: Nevermind, she's coming this way. Hold on!

Ian leaps up to the railing with Emma in his arms and then leaps out into the stairwell. He and Emma plummet downward with a sharp rush of air and then stop just above the ground.

Ian: You okay?

Emma: I think... I swallowed... my stomach.

Ian: Good enough. Come on!

They run forward and phase through the door again, utilizing the same effect as before. From above, the sound of heels click on the concrete of the stairwell.

Susan: It looks like they just left the building.

Bastios: Good. We'll keep them moving until they lead us back to the others.

Susan: I doubt it'll be long now.

Scene Transitions Out

Scene 3

Out on the streets, Emma and Ian are walking down the sidewalk.

Ian: So... can you see straight yet?

Emma: Just about... a warning would have helped though.

Ian: You'd think. Dammit, I forgot to call Kate...

Ian pulls out his phone and starts dialing.

Emma: Who?

Ian: Someone who isn't going to be happy when she picks up...

Kate: Ian? Ian, are you okay? What the hell were you thinking?! We bailed as soon as Rachel told us where you went and I've been going crazy trying to figure out why you thought-

Ian: Kate! Kate, I'm fine. I didn't even see James! I just... ran into someone else.

Kate: What?! Who else *is* there?!

Ian: I'll explain later, but I found out something you need to know, okay? James isn't working the project any more. He left a few weeks ago right around the time we escaped.

Kate: What?

Ian: Look, I'll tell you the rest later, I just needed you to know that. Where are you now?

Kate: I could strangle you, you know that?

Ian: Kate, where are you?

Kate: That place we scouted out over by Tribeca. You remember which one?

Ian: I remember.

Kate: Room 206.

Ian: Thanks.

Kate: Ass.

The phone hangs up abruptly.

Emma: From what I could hear... she sounded nice.

Ian: She means well, she just worries about us.

Emma: My friend Melissa is kind of like that. But it's nice to have someone care about what happens to you.

Ian: Yeah. The group of us... we kind of became a family at the test facility. A really dysfunctional one, but it's what we have.

Emma: How many of you were there?

Ian: Kate and Mirage were some of the first, but from what I understand, the formula didn't work the way it was supposed to for them and they brought us in next. There was twelve in my group, but only seven developed abilities and the rest disappeared a little while later.

Emma: So there's seven of you, plus Kate all hiding out now?

Ian: Just five. I think the rest got out, but we were separated and we don't have a way of finding out what happened. I hope they made it.

Emma: Would they be in trouble if they were caught?

Ian: Probably. I wouldn't want to know what would happen if your dad was still there. But if it's someone new now-

The UN explosion suddenly sends a shockwave across the city, the dull roar of the initial blast echoing not far away in the distance. Ash and dust begin to rush through the city streets and corridors.

Emma: W-what was that?

Ian: I don't know. It could be- Holy-

Emma: That's an explosion... that's by the UN.

Ian: The peace talks started today. There could have been a bomb...

Emma: All of those people ... Ian, what do we do?

Ian: I think... I need to help.

Ian starts walking towards the UN and Emma trails behind.

Emma: But it's dangerous!

Ian: Yeah, but there's probably a lot of people hurt or trapped right now and I can help. No one's going to ask questions about who I am or what I can do. And if your friends are still alive, they might still be able to help you.

Scene transitions out

Scene 4

Dust from the explosion is still settling as Nick picks his way through the rubble, stumbling and pulling debris aside.

Nick: Mom? Dad? *Anybody?! Is anybody there?*

Gabriel: Here! Over here!

Nick: Keep talking! I'm coming!

Gabriel: I-I'm...here. There's a beam... I'm pinned. There's someone else here too.

Nick: I'm here... I think... this is the beam.

Gabriel: I can't... it's knocked me over and I can't move to try and lift it.

Nick: If I lift it, can you crawl out?

Gabriel: Yeah. I just need a few more inches. There's a gap open just to the side here.

Nick: I see it! Hang on - it's really big, but I'm going to try and lift it now. (he grunts and groans as he pulls at the beam)

There is a slight groan of metal and stone as Nick lifts the beam, along with a slight humming sound indicating Nick's abilities. Debris shifts and falls as Gabriel scrambles out.

Gabriel: There! I'm out!

Nick: Are... are you... can you make it up here?

Gabriel: Yes, but there's someone else with me. (slightly lower, to Catherine)
Catherine? Catherine are you awake?

Nick: Mom?! Is that Catherine Choy?!

Gabriel: Yes! Her legs are crushed - I can't pull her-

Nick leaps down into the wreckage and slides down next to Gabriel.

Nick: Mom?

Catherine: An angel... I saw... angel...

Gabriel: I can't reach her myself-

Nick: If I can lift this, would you be able to pull her out?

Gabriel: I think so.

Nick: Okay. Ready?

Gabriel: Yes.

A light Elysium effect fades in, indicating that Nick's abilities are being used in order to lift the beam. Rubble shifts and threatens to fall around them.

Gabriel: Got her...

Gabriel: How... did you do that?

Nick: I don't know... I just... I had to get her out.

Distant sirens begin to fade in from the distance as the emergency crews arrive.

Gabriel: We need to get her to an ambulance - she's lost a lot of blood. Can you help me carry her?

Nick: Yeah. Let's go.

Scene transitions out

Scene 5

Sirens fade in louder, along with panicked crowd noise. Ian and Emma approach the line of devastation, running towards the ruins of the UN building.

Emma: What are you... are you...?

Ian: The building hasn't totally collapsed, so there are definitely survivors. I'm going to go in and try to help pull them out before the debris shifts.

Emma: What am I supposed to do?

Ian: I got you to the UN. You can figure it out-

Emma: But what if I need to find you! You're the only person who understand what's happening to me!

Ian: Fine. Take my phone. There's only one number in there and it's Kate's. Emergencies only. Please. Don't let anyone know what this is.

Emma: I understand.

Ian: And if you can, just stay out of this. Okay? Find your friends and get out of here.

Emma: Thanks... Ian.

Ian runs towards the debris as an emergency vehicle drives by. More sirens sound distantly and helicopter passes overhead, there are even a few distant screams - all of it overwhelming Emma with the noise.

Nick and Gabriel's voices fade in distantly as they carry Catherine free of the ruins. Emma slowly begins to make out what they are saying as they get closer. The nearest siren stops as the drivers sees them.

Nick: Over here! We're over here! Help! She needs help!

Emma: (softly, to herself) Nick... oh god, Nick...

Emma runs towards Nick, as he and Gabriel are lifting Catherine onto a gurney with the help of the rescue crew.

Gabriel: I think her legs were crushed beneath the beam - her spine may have experienced some trauma, she'll need extra support.

Catherine: Nick... Oh Nick, is that you?

Nick: Mom? Mom? It's me. I'm here-

Catherine: Oh Nick... I saw such beautiful angels...

EMT: Son, we need to get her in the truck. Are you coming?

Nick: Yeah, I'm coming.

Emma: Nick? Nick!

Nick: Emma? Emma, what - what are you doing here?!

Emma: I was trying to find your mom and we - we saw the bomb!

EMT: Son, are you coming?

Nick: Yeah! Emma, come on. Mr. Highmoore, I can't-

Gabriel: It's all right. Make sure she's safe.

Nick: Thanks.

The doors to the ambulance shut and the vehicle begins to pull away. Gabriel takes a few steps away and pulls out his phone and dials. The phone clicks on.

Gabriel: Yes, I'm all right. But I have some questions for you...

Scene transitions out.

Scene 6

Later that night, Ian has found his way back to the motel where the fugitives are staying. He knocks, and a few seconds later the door opens.

Kate: Ian! Thank God...

Ian: (soft, nervous) Kate, I - ugh!

Kate pulls him into a crushing hug.

Kate: You scared me.

Ian: I know. I'm sorry.

Kate pulls back and shuts the door. The TV volume is turned down in the background.

Alex: Glad you came back. We were worried.

Ian: Thanks. Hey... Jess.

Jess: (level, tired) Hey.

Ian: I am... *so so* sorry. I never meant-

Jess: I know. It was stupid, for both of us. Just... don't make a habit of it, okay?

Ian: No. How... are you feeling?

Ian, Alex, and Kate all sit down.

Jess: Tired.

Rachel: She's been out pretty much since we got here...

Kate: She healed up fine as far as I can tell.

Alex: Uh, dude? Did you see what happened to the UN building? It looks like you got caught in the middle of the... *explosion*.

Ian: Kind of. I was a few blocks away - I went to help dig people out.

Kate: Ugh. Of course you did.

Jess: Our hero.

Alex: How bad was it?

Ian: Hard to tell. You probably know more than I do - I just kept looking for people until the authorities started calling the volunteers out for safety reasons. But it was good to use my abilities... for that. To help people.

Kate: And the irony is that we probably never will.

The TV plays in the background for a long moment.

Rachel: Can we... watch something else?

Jess: Yeah. No more news tonight.

Kate: Works for me.

The scene ends.

Scene 7

Emma stands near a hospital waiting room, talking to Melissa about the UN bombings.

Melissa: Wow... all of that since last night? That's really, really insane. How are you holding up?

Emma: Okay, I guess? I don't know if just hasn't hit me yet... you know what I mean?

Melissa: Yeah. Just be careful, I guess. If it does hit, it could be intense. Are you still at the hospital now?

Emma: Yeah. Nick's mom is still in surgery for another couple hours. The whole place is packed, obviously. He was sitting in the emergency stairwell when I got up to call you - it's the only quiet place we could find.

Melissa: How is he?

Emma: His dad is still officially missing, but Nick was on the phone with him when he... well...

Melissa: Yeah. I feel awful for him.

Emma: Yeah. Hey, Melissa? I think the battery on his phone is getting low and we don't have the charger-

Melissa: Sweetie, It's fine. Go ahead. Just keep me posted if there's anything I can do.

Emma: Thanks. I miss you.

Melissa: Miss you too, hun. Be safe.

The phone clicks off.

Scene 8

The door to the hospital stairwell shuts and Emma walks down the stairs. She sits down and places two styrofoam cups between them.

Emma: Here's some tea if you want it. The hot drink machine is out of order - this is all I could find. It smells pretty bad though.

Nick: Thanks... Did you get ahold of Melissa?

Emma: Yeah, she's just glad we're okay. Here's your phone. There's not a lot of battery left though. I'm sorry.

Nick: Thanks, it's fine. I talked to her yesterday after your dad came. She was freaking out.

Emma: I've never disappeared before. She's been worried my dad will snap and do something crazy... basically what happened last night.

Nick: Yeah. She called that one.

Emma: It doesn't feel real anymore. Like I'm watching all of it from somewhere else and I can reach down and pull myself out, but... I just keep watching instead... I don't know why.

Emma: How... are you... okay?

Nick: No.

Emma: Nick, I'm so sorry.

Nick: I just... Dad's *gone*... and mom is... I can't do anything but wait...

Emma: Hold my hand...

Nick: What?

Emma: I don't know what to do... but you can hold my hand. You can do that. Both of us can do that.

Nick takes her hand and they sit quietly.

Nick: Emma... I'm... scared... to let go.

Emma: Me too.

Scene transitions out

End of Episode 5