

EPIDEMIC

Written by

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Fade in:

INT. COLMAN RESIDENCE KITCHEN - DAY

EMILY is sitting at the kitchen table with her father, MATTHEW, as they eat breakfast. All of the furniture is aging and in various states of decay: no back on Matthew's chair, a thin book under the table leg, and no covering over the room's light source. The TV is on.

NEWS REPORTER

A recent outbreak of an unknown illness has struck many in the area and across the nation. Most people with this infection describe sensations of fatigue, headaches, and respiratory issues such as shortness of breath and wheezing. It is also common for those infected to start coughing up blood. Local governments have started to implement a program in order to catch these kinds of cases before they are able to spread this disease.

CAMILLA walks out from the bedroom and into the main entrance that is adjacent to the kitchen, the voice of the broadcaster fades out; she glances in to see her family at the table.

CAMILLA

Glad to see that you put breakfast on the table.

MATTHEW

It's going to be my last day here for a while. Wanted to make this last.

Camilla is primping herself in the mirror that is near the front door, half listening to the conversation.

CAMILLA

You don't say?

MATTHEW

Leaving for that company trip this afternoon, I won't be here when you get back.

Camilla turns to her husband, putting in an earring as she does so.

CAMILLA

Is that the one for the health outbreak?

MATTHEW

Yup. The higher ups at the office want the most experienced to... deal with this situation.

Matthew gets up to put his now empty plate next to the sink before leaning with his back against the counter.

CAMILLA

They shouldn't be sending you out there, you know that.

MATTHEW

If I don't do it then who would, Cami? I should only be gone for a week, two at most.

STATIC NOISE becomes audible as Emily gets up, coughing into her hand while putting her plate on top of her father's.

CAMILLA

(to Matthew)

You have to be gone before I get back tonight or else.

Emily starts to the main entrance for her duffel bag on the floor. The static abruptly stops with the start of the line.

CAMILLA (CONT'D)

(to Emily)

Do you have tennis tonight?

Emily stops in the door frame between the kitchen and the entrance, looking back to Camilla.

EMILY

Until about five or so, it's just going to be practice.

CAMILLA

Okay, well I probably won't be here when you get back then. The deadline for this project I'm on was pushed forward, so I might have to work late tonight.

EMILY

That's fine. I know where the spare is.

Emily makes her exit with her duffel bag in tow.

INSERT - BLOODY DOOR HANDLE.

CAMILLA

That disease will get you if you're not careful, okay?

MATTHEW

I will be careful; you know that you don't need to worry about me.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - DAY

STATIC NOISE as Emily is leaning against a pole, coughing into her hand. Emily pulls back her bloody hand and tries to wipe the blood away as the subway car pulls into the station. Static fades.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Emily walks into the subway car with other riders, ASTRID is asleep a few rows back. Emily elbows Astrid awake while sitting down next to her, placing the duffel bag onto the floor.

ASTRID

What do you want, asshole?

EMILY

Your unending love and affection.

ASTRID

How about this: no.

Emily smiles.

ASTRID (CONT'D)

Feel good to be eighteen? Won't have to deal with those parents of yours anymore --

EMILY

They're not bad people, Astrid, they're off doing whatever for the night so there's that--

ASTRID

Wait, wait, wait. Your parents are going away -- on your birthday?

Emily nods, causing Astrid to grin from ear to ear. Emily coughs into her hand.

ASTRID (CONT'D)

Well, then tonight is going to be the best night of your life.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

Emily is still in her practice outfit, coughing into her hand, duffel bag on the seat next to her. Static is present only when she is coughing. There are few other riders on the same car, the outside lighting is starting to turn to dusk.

INT. COLMAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Emily opens the door to a surprise birthday party.

EVERYONE

Surprise!

Several of the guests are laughing at the expression on Emily's face, side conversations pop up. Astrid rushes over to Emily, pulling her into a comically tight hug.

ASTRID

Hope that you didn't mind me doing this for you! After all, your folks wouldn't have done anything like this for you on the one day that it matters.

EMILY

You look down on them too much, Astrid. They're not bad people and you know that.

Static starts, Emily rubs her temple.

ASTRID

If they're not "bad people" like you claim, then where are they? After all, their daughter's eighteenth birthday should be one of their top priorities at the moment.

Emily coughs into hand. SARAH is in background, occasionally looking over from her current conversation.

EMILY

You've got a point.

Emily coughs up blood onto her open palm. Emily is calm while Astrid is freaking out.

ASTRID
Oh, God! Are you okay?

EMILY
Yeah, yeah - I'm fine. I just need
to wash this off.

Emily walks into the kitchen and washes her hands. Emily's hands have been washed but the sink remains on. Sarah comes up from behind to grab Emily by the wrist while drying her hands, dragging her out of sight.

EMILY (CONT'D)
What's- What are you doing?!

SARAH
(hushed)
Be quiet!

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sarah drags Emily inside before closing the door behind them.

EMILY
What was that for?! I don't even
know you!

SARAH
Of course you don't know me! I
barely know who you are and you're
supposed to be the star of the show
tonight.

EMILY
So what do you want? I have to get
back to the party.

Emily starts for the door, Sarah blocks her path.

SARAH
You're not going back to the party.

EMILY
What are you - my mother?

Emily starts for the door again, Sarah stands her ground by refusing to let Emily past.

SARAH

I am the only person who understands what is going on with you. The headaches, the fatigue, the breathing issues, the blood. All of it.

EMILY

What is going on then?

SARAH

Have you listened to the news lately? About some mystery illness going around.

EMILY

You're not saying -

SARAH

I am -

EMILY

No, I don't have it. That's final.

Emily opens the door but Sarah is able to close it again.

SARAH

You have it, Emily, whether or not you believe it - it's true.

EMILY

I am not allowing myself to give into that label - I am not giving into quarantine.

SARAH

You have options.

EMILY

I don't have options. My options are that I am fine or being quarantined in some hospital with doctors in hazmat suits poking and prodding me with needles and whatnot.

SARAH

You have my option.

EMILY

What is it then?!

SARAH

Asylum. There's a house just outside of town, I've been living there for the past few months ever since my old man kicked me out.

EMILY

How am I supposed to trust you? You could be some snitch for all I know!

SARAH

I know what you're going through, Emily, you need to trust me on this and -

EMILY

I can't unless you prove it to me!

SARAH

(calm)
Fine.

Sarah takes off her shirt to show how her body is disintegrating; torso is covered in rashes, left shoulder bones are visible; muscles in the upper left arm are visible.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I've had this for months, maybe even a year. You've had it for weeks at most.

EMILY

Then I want the third option.

INT. LUCAS RESIDENCE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Sarah stumbles into the foyer, static noise audible, holding a bloody rag as she coughs up blood, making her way into the kitchen towards the bathroom. DANTE, sitting on the couch in the next room reading a book with the door halfway open, hears Sarah repeatedly coughing so he goes over to help her after putting his book down onto the couch next to him. Static volume becomes lower but does not disappear.

DANTE

Sarah, you okay? You sound like you're coughing up a lung. Is that -
- blood?

Sarah is sitting on the ground coughing up more blood, STATIC with coughing, back to the wall, as Dante is approaching.

SARAH
Does it matter?

Sarah coughs more, STATIC. Dante stops halfway.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Does it matter?

Dante goes to sit at the table, facing Sarah.

DANTE
You've contracted it -- didn't you?

SARAH
Contracted what?

Sarah coughs, STATIC.

DANTE
You know what -- people contracting
it left and right as of late,
dropping like flies if you ask me.

Dante slowly stands.

SARAH
I have a chance, if it's that then -

DANTE
You don't have a chance!

Sarah coughs, STATIC.

SARAH
I can live!

Dante turns to walk away.

DANTE
Then leave. I can only give you so
much of a head start -- given your...
situation.

Dante is leaving the room.

SARAH
I can live, dad! I can live!

Dante leaves for the next room with his book still on the couch, closing the door quietly behind him. Sarah coughs before standing and leaving the apartment as fast as she can. Static spikes when she coughs and ends with flashback.

INT. COLMAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT - MONTAGE (PRESENT DAY)

NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

Inside sources at local hospitals are alarmed to see such a drastic increase in the amount of people who have become quarantined with this unnamed disease.

- Emily and Sarah evict people from the party, several attempting to sneak in to grab stuff before being angrily thrown out again by either Emily or Sarah.

- Emily and Sarah yank open drawers to throw Emily's clothes into a large suitcase.

- They leave the apartment with Sarah slamming the door shut behind them.

END OF MONTAGE.

INT. THE SAFE HOUSE - DAY

HARVEY, NORA, and LEON are sitting around the TV which is playing The Wizard of Oz. VIVIAN is in the kitchen. Sarah opens the front door with Emily following behind her, bags in hand.

SARAH

Looks like I found another one. She didn't even know.

LEON

I take it as a good thing then?

SARAH

Well, I doubt that you would want to be stranded out there. After all, we were all in the same boat as her at some point.

LEON

You got me there.

Sarah starts coughing blood into her hand, STATIC.

HARVEY

So I take it that she knows the drill?

EMILY

No outsiders. Contribute to the house.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

If you snitch on the safe house
then you are kicked out of the safe
house.

Vivian walks in from the kitchen eating an apple.

VIVIAN

What's her name anyway?

EMILY

Emily.

VIVIAN

Well, it's nice to meet you Emily.
I hope that your transition here
will be seamless. Let's start
getting you unpacked, shall we?

INT. COLMAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Camilla walks into the house going about her normal routine;
keys in bowl, jacket in closet.

CAMILLA

(loudly)

Emily? You home yet?

Camilla pauses at the lack of response.

INT. COLMAN RESIDENCE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Camilla walks into the kitchen to see food that has been left
out on the table, decorations strewn around the room, open
beverages (both alcoholic and nonalcoholic) on the counter
top and table, and a boom box in the corner.

CAMILLA

(loudly)

Emily?! What is all of this?!

Camilla starts towards her daughter's room, going off screen.

CAMILLA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Emily!

Camilla walks back into the kitchen and picks up the land-
line phone that is next to the refrigerator before calling a
specific number. The phone rings, Camilla starts to fiddle
with the chord.

CAMILLA (CONT'D)

This is Camilla Colman, Matthew Colman's wife.

COWORKER (V.O.)

Do you want me to relay a message to him? He is out of the office at the moment.

CAMILLA

As soon as it is possible, yes. Let him know that Emily is missing along with all her stuff. I have a feeling that this is on her own accord - my husband will know what to do from here.

INT. THE SAFE HOUSE - DAY - MONTAGE

NEWS REPORTER (V.O.)

According to those in the medical community, it is believed that this disease is able to be transmitted through contaminating the surrounding air - which would be able to explain the dramatic increase in medical cases with these hospitals. The only treatment that is currently available for those with this disease is being quarantined off from society. This is now being enforced by the governments within each area. There are no specific details on how this will be enforced.

- Sarah is helping Emily move in to her room; Emily coughs up blood into her hand. Sarah looks at her with a saddened expression.

- Emily is reading on her bed when other people are having an inaudible conversation in the next room. She goes over to the door to hear the conversation better. Emily goes back to her bed to continue her reading.

- House dinner with Emily being stuck in the middle between Sarah and a middle age-man in his forties, Harvey, Emily is obviously uncomfortable yet everyone around her is chatting and having a good time despite some coughing. Food is being passed around the table.

- Shots of Emily getting to know Nora, Leon, and BRYANT on a one-on-one basis.

- House dinner where Emily appears to be a lot calmer with the people sitting around her. She talks with the people sitting next to her.

- Emily is at a window looking outside at a parked car near the house; the man in the driver's seat can be seen watching the general vicinity before making eye contact with Emily who draws the curtains while coughing up blood.

END OF MONTAGE.

INT. THE SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

MABEL, Vivian, Nora, Bryant, and Emily are cooking dinner in the kitchen.

BRYANT

How about this, I'm not in the mood to get beaten up with a two by four.

VIVAIAN

If you don't then Shay would be pissed about putting up his end of the deal when you backed out like the chicken you are.

MABEL

What? How did you guys manage to drag Shay into this? This competition is getting out of hand if you asked me.

BRYANT

As far as I know, Leon was calling Shay some pretty nasty names. At that point, I figured that Shay needed to prove his "masculinity".

VIVAIAN

Therefore Shay decided to dive headfirst into a face-plant. "Oh, if I can do something this extreme to myself then I can do something this extreme to somebody else."

BRYANT

Shay had to have been committed to doing it since he was running around in his birthday suit. Bruised his face up pretty badly, bloody nose and broken jaw.

MABEL

Wait, wait, wait! You want me to believe that Shay would be willing to do *that*?

VIVIAN

His words -- not mine.

Emily opens the preheated oven to put in unbaked banana nut bread. She coughs up blood into her hand while closing the oven.

EMILY

Shay would never willingly run through the street naked, he must have drugged off his ass for that to happen.

Emily goes over to the sink to wash off her hands.

NORA

Might have been for all we know, he did do that majestic swan dive into the pond.

MABEL

The one that's been drained for years?

NORA

The very same.

VIVIAN

Why else did he come home bloody and bruised? Just be lucky that we were able to --

FOUR POLICE OFFICERS ram through the front door. In full police gear (including full face helmets) with weapons drawn, the officers proceed to shoot everyone residing in the residence. An officer comes out of a bedroom to the rest of the officers in the main room.

OFFICER 1

Looks like that was the last one.

GUN SHOT in the kitchen. The other three officers rush over, guns drawn.

OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)

What now?!

MATTHEW (O.S.)

Had to make sure that this one was
dead.

OFFICER 1

Understandable considering the
situation.

Matthew takes off his helmet, revealing his identity to the
audience.

MATTHEW

Just wish that this wouldn't be how
things would end. Know what I mean?

OFFICER 2

My sister caught it last month. I
understand how you feel about this.
I'm only glad that I wasn't there
for when they dealt with that
situation.

MATTHEW

I wish that I had that same luck. I
had my suspicions about this --
didn't think that it would happen
though.

OFFICER 2

Same. We need to get back to write
up this report for them -- how are
we going to write this off?

OFFICER 1

Let's go with the usual: "They
started going at us therefore we
had to kill them before we got
infected."

Fade out.