

Once Upon A WASTELAND

Season Two: "Broader Lands and Better Days"

Episode 8
"The Spark of Hope"

by

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Based on "Fallout 76" by Bethesda Softworks

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"THE SPARK OF HOPE"

INT. FLAGRANTE BELLO PORTAL ROOM - EVENING

The portals working in harmony, BETH and ODESSA prepare to switch places with their counterparts and return home.

Lines 1-7 will be re-used from E7 and should not be recorded.

1	ODESSA Beth? It's time.	1
2	BETH Odessa... I have <i>faith</i> , but I'm still concerned. What if it sends us somewhere else? Somewhere with no way home?	2
3	ODESSA Wherever we go, we'll be together.	3
4	BETH And that's all I need.	4
5	(beat) We're ready.	5
6	AMANDA Here we go!	6
7	DEVON Almost there. 38.1. 38.3... 38.5!	7

There is a flash and crackle, and a loud, staccato pulse as BETH and ODESSA are pulled into the portal.

Back in our universe...

NOTE: "ALT-" VOICES ARE DISTORTED BECAUSE WE'RE HEARING THEM THROUGH THE PORTAL. USE SAME EFFECT AS IN E7.

8	RAHMANI (urgently) Where did they go?	8
9	(beat) Devon?	9
10	ALT-ODESSA Amanda! I missed you so much!	10
11	ALT-AMANDA Is it really you?	11
12	ALT-ODESSA It's really me!	12

13 **ALT-AMANDA** 13
We have something very important to
talk about.

14 **ALT-ODESSA** 14
Uh-oh...

15 **ALT-AMANDA** 15
No, no! It's good news!

16 **DEVON** 16
Do you have them?

17 **ALT-DEVON** 17
Yes! They kind of... blipped out
for a second, but they're here. No
ill effects that I can see. Beth?

18 **ALT-BETH** 18
I feel fine. It's nice to be back
in my own body.

19 **ALT-DEVON** 19
We're good over here. How about
you?

20 **DEVON** 20
Still trying to figure that out.
Our Beth and Odessa haven't popped
back in yet. Got to be some kind of
anomaly...

21 **RAHMANI** 21
We need to figure it out, and now.
Scribe Hargrove, any ideas?

22 **HARGROVE** 22
We may need to modulate the
resonance frequency again. It was
tuned to that specific universe. If
we move slowly...

23 **RAHMANI** 23
Do it!

24 **HARGROVE** 24
Yes, ma'am.

*HARGROVE moves to the console and fiddles with the controls.
The sound of the portal changes slightly.*

25 **DEVON** 25
Look!

The sound of the portal flickers as Beth and Odessa pop in and out of existence.

26 **HARGROVE** 26
Almost got them... but it's like something's fighting me, trying to keep them from staying *here*. That's why they keep disappearing and reappearing.

27 **RAHMANI** 27
Devon, have you ever seen this before?

28 **DEVON** 28
No. Well, not exactly. Every time they reappear, it looks exactly the same as someone emerging from the Nexus.

29 **RAHMANI** 29
And?

30 **DEVON** 30
When I got shunted into the Nexus by the Untainted, it was because they damaged the console we were using to control the portal.

31 **RAHMANI** 31
So we're causing them to phase in and out?

32 **DEVON** 32
I think that may be what's happening, yes. They're trying to come back, but there isn't a stable doorway to come back *through*.

33 **RAHMANI** 33
David! Hands off the controls!

34 **HARGROVE** 34
Yes, ma'am!

They wait a few moments. The portal stays steady but Beth and Odessa do not emerge.

35 **RAHMANI** 35
Nothing. We need them back, Devon.

36 **DEVON** 36
Scribe Hargrove, shut the console down.

62 **ODESSA** 62
It's okay. I just don't want to
talk about it until I have some
clarity, that's all.

63 **BETH** 63
No matter what he says...

64 **ODESSA** 64
I know.

ODESSA gathers herself.

65 **ODESSA (CONT'D)** 65
Let's head to Atlas.

66 **HARGROVE** 66
Devon and I will keep working on
things here. It looks like your...
excursion generated a lot of
telemetry for us to work with. It
will take some time to analyze, but
it will be worth it.

67 **RAHMANI** 67
After you see Dr. Hardy, I want you
to go home and relax. We'll alert
you if we have any breakthroughs,
but you need to rest.

68 **ODESSA** 68
Leila, I can--

69 **RAHMANI** 69
(interrupting)
That's an order, Scribe Valdez. And
while I don't have direct authority
over you, Beth, I suggest you do
the same.

70 **BETH** 70
No argument here, Paladin. We're
going to need to remain sharp if
we're going to solve this, and
right now... well, it's been a long
few weeks. I'll tie Odessa to a
chair if I have to.

ODESSA chuckles.

71 **ODESSA** 71
I'll be good, I promise. But
please, if anything big happens, or
if I can help...

RAHMANI

72 (interrupting) You'll be my first call. 72

ODESSA

73 Thank you. 73

MUSICAL TRANSITION

INT. BETH AND ODESSA'S HOME, AFTERNOON

BETH and ODESSA are relaxing.

BETH

74 If there's one thing I'm going to miss about the mirror universe, it's the food. 74

ODESSA

75 I know... And I wish we could've eaten at Amanda's restaurant! 75

BETH giggles.

BETH

76 That would've been brilliant! I suppose it isn't much of a surprise that she's such a successful businesswoman. Especially with such a great partner by her side. 76

ODESSA

77 I kind of wish I'd had time to learn more about that Odessa. I got the highlights, but that's really just scratching the surface of who she is. The people I interacted with who knew her - Captain Houston, Doctor Clark, even Devon - they didn't catch on that I was a totally different person. 77

BETH

78 Well, not *totally* different. You were still brilliant. 78

ODESSA

79 (playfully) Oh, yeah? Anything else? 79

BETH

80 (playing along) Driven, clearly. 80

81 **ODESSA** 81
Mmm hmm. Brilliant and driven. That
all?

82 **BETH** 82
Well, there may have been some
other similarities...

83 **ODESSA** 83
Such as?

84 **BETH** 84
Well, there seem to have been some
physical attributes in common as
well.

85 **ODESSA** 85
Were you checking out my *mirror*
universe version?

BETH laughs.

86 **BETH** 86
In my defense, we weren't sure at
first if there had been a... body
swap.

87 **ODESSA** 87
I see.

88 **BETH** 88
But, you know...

89 **ODESSA** 89
What is it?

90 **BETH** 90
Perhaps we should... compare our
observations. For science, of
course.

91 **ODESSA** 91
Of course. I don't have a Navy
uniform handy, though...

92 **BETH** 92
I thought we could start with a
more... basic exam.

93 **ODESSA** 93
I think I see where you're going
with this... establish a baseline.
No uniforms to, um... get in the
way of our observations.

AMANDA

106 I think Valeria just wants her to 106
keep an eye on whatever's going on
with these portals, but I'll take
it.

BETH

107 Has the Enclave taken more of an 107
interest in what's been happening?
When we left, they seemed...
strangely disinterested.

AMANDA

108 I never bought that for one second. 108
There are two groups in Appalachia
that would be all over whatever the
hell this is - the Brotherhood and
the Enclave. I bet Valeria and
MODUS started Enclave-ing it up as
soon as you walked through that
first portal.

BETH

109 I'm sure they did. 109

There is an awkward pause.

AMANDA

110 Are you okay, Odessa? You're kind 110
of quiet over there.

ODESSA

(still awkward)
111 Yeah. I'm okay. Glad to be home. 111

AMANDA

112 You two need to give me all the 112
details from your little adventure.
Maybe you can come to the Web, we
can knock a few back and you can
tell me all about it... what it was
like, who you met, how much you
missed me...

ODESSA

113 I need to lie down. 113

ODESSA leaves.

AMANDA

114 What's wrong? What did I do? 114

BETH sighs.

115 **BETH** 115
It's nothing like that. There
were... well, some things about
that universe hit a bit close to
home for both of us.

116 **AMANDA** 116
Anything you want to talk about?

117 **BETH** 117
For starters, I had a sister.

118 **AMANDA** 118
A sister? Really?

119 **BETH** 119
Really. Three years younger than
me. I guess not being in the Vault
gave my parents the freedom to have
a bigger family.
 (almost, but not quite
 skeptical)

120 They always told me they never 120
seriously considered having another
child after me.

121 **AMANDA** 121
And you believe them, right?

BETH sighs.

122 **BETH** 122
They wouldn't lie to me about
something like that.
 (beat)

123 I don't know how I'm going to bring 123
it up when I talk to them. Or if I
even want to.

124 **AMANDA** 124
I think they'd want to know.

125 **BETH** 125
I do as well. But what if they
tried to have another child, and it
didn't happen? Or what if I *did*
have a sister, but we... lost her
and the pain was too much for them
to bear to talk about it, even with
me? I don't want to tear open any
old wounds.

- 137 **BETH** 137
Odessa was talking about how she wishes she'd been able to learn more about that version of herself. I feel the same way. To really get a good look at how I would've turned out with the same amazing parents but no Great War, no Vault-Tec, none of the people who... hurt me.
- 138 **AMANDA** 138
(comforting)
Hey, hey. I don't know anything about *that* Beth, but *this* version of you is one of the best human beings I've ever met. I wish you didn't go through any of the shit that you did in the Vault, and I still plan to kill anyone I find out was involved, but the fact is that you turned out great in spite of that. Just think about the woman who's lying down right now, in the bed you share every night. Do you think Odessa Valdez is going to put her heart on the line for just anybody? Hell no she's not! But she's doing that for you.
- 139 **BETH** 139
I think this experience brought us closer together. We really *can* face anything, as long as we're together.
- 140 **AMANDA** 140
Good thing both of you got, uh... swapped.
- 141 **BETH** 141
Yeah. I'm sure we would've gotten it sorted if it was, say, Rahmani and I, but still. It being *her* felt important. It was a good thing Bones noticed that portal underneath your restaurant...
- 142 **AMANDA** 142
Wait. I thought you were in DC?
- 143 **BETH** 143
We were. Your restaurant and bar - the originals - were downtown.
(MORE)

BETH (CONT'D)

Great location, I can see why it was such a success.

AMANDA

144 So I owned a bar in two different cities in two different universes, and that's where all these portal shenanigans started? 144

BETH

145 Hrm. Yes. I hadn't thought about it that way. I'd call it a coincidence, but Odessa's taught me that those are about as worthy of trust as a Vault-Tec employee. 145

AMANDA sighs.

AMANDA

146 This is bullshit. Rahmani told me about the accident and that they were working on getting everybody back to where they belonged. But it sounds like I'm smack dab in the middle of this, no matter what universe we're talking about and I *didn't know*. 146

BETH

147 You weren't brought in? 147

AMANDA

148 No! She told me they were working on getting you back and they'd bring me in if they needed access to the basement. I was ready to slap her. The other Beth and Odessa were locked up in Atlas and she wouldn't let me see them. She was super weird about it, too. 148

BETH

149 She wouldn't have known about the portal in the other Amanda's basement, so that part tracks, at least. But I don't understand why she wouldn't bring you in to try to figure out a solution. You're one of the Seven, and that means something. I still don't know what yet, but *something*. 149

150 **AMANDA** 150
She's one of the Seven, too. She
should've trusted me.

151 **BETH** 151
I don't know that it's a matter of
trust.

152 **AMANDA** 152
What are you talking about?

153 **BETH** 153
I've spent a lot of time with
Rahmani lately. She trusts you. It
even became a bit of a bone of
contention between her and Derek
before he got to know you. It's
just...

154 **AMANDA** 154
Come on. Spill.

BETH sighs.

155 **BETH** 155
Her thought may have been that you
meeting the other version of Odessa
would've introduced...
complications.

156 **AMANDA** 156
"Complications?" What the hell are
you talking about?

157 **BETH** 157
While we were there, it became
quite apparent that we're different
people from our counterparts, with
different relationships and
different personal histories.
Rahmani may have just been trying
to limit everyone's exposure to
that.

158 **AMANDA** 158
Meanwhile, you and Odessa were
rubbing elbows with me, your
parents, god knows who else...

159 **BETH** 159
There wasn't anything we could do
about that!

AMANDA

170

I'll head back to the Web. Have fun
with your assessment, but try to
get some rest, too, okay?

170

BETH

171

Thanks. And we'll talk soon.

171

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. KIRBY HOME, DAY.**

ANDREW and ELISE are in the living room. The doorbell rings.

ELISE opens the door.

172	ELISE	172
	Schatzi! How are you feeling? And how is Odessa?	
173	BETH	173
	I feel fine, mum. Odessa does as well. Thank you for asking. We've been resting as much as we can, but both of us want to be in the thick of it right now.	
174	ELISE	174
	I understand. Standing on the sidelines can be difficult, but in this case it's the right thing to do, at least for a little while.	
	(beat)	
175	ELISE	175
	I thought Odessa would be with you. Are you sure she's alright?	
176	BETH	176
	Yes. There were some things that I wanted to discuss with you and dad, privately.	
177	ELISE	177
	Oh. I see. What would you like to discuss?	
178	BETH	178
	It's about the other universe. Who we were, what we saw... what we learned. But first... how are you feeling, dad?	
179	ANDREW	179
	A little tired, but mostly fine.	
180	BETH	180
	Are you eating?	
181	ANDREW	181
	I am. Amanda and Elise have made sure of that.	

182 **BETH** 182
Good. The first thing I wanted to ask you about... did you ever think about having another child, after me?

183 **ANDREW** 183
Well, we did *consider* it, but in the end we decided that our family was perfect just as it was.

184 **ELISE** 184
We've talked about this, Schatzi.

185 **BETH** 185
I know, I know. It's just...

186 **ANDREW** 186
It's just... what?

187 **BETH** 187
In the other universe... I had a sister. Three years younger than me. We were apparently very close.

188 **ANDREW** 188
Oh. I think I understand now.

189 **BETH** 189
I know that things there are fundamentally different from the way they are here. But there were *so many* things that were the same, I started wondering if that was one of them.

190 **ELISE** 190
No, dear. If our situation had been different, perhaps our family would have ended up in a different configuration. But it didn't.

191 **ANDREW** 191
Fear not, you don't have a long-lost sister out there somewhere.

BETH chuckles.

192 **BETH** 192
I think Derek's reappearance satisfied my "soap opera moment" quota for a long while.

193 **ELISE** 193
How is that situation going?

194 **BETH** 194
Well, aside from me almost ruining
everything by worrying about
whether Odessa was going to leave
me for him, I think it's finally
sorted. In a way, us being yanked
out of this universe and shoved
into another was the best thing
that could've happened... it
allowed us to focus on what's
really important. Well...

195 **ANDREW** 195
What is it?

BETH sighs.

196 **BETH** 196
You have to promise not to say
anything. It's awkward enough
already.

197 **ANDREW** 197
You have our word.

198 **BETH** 198
Odessa was married in the other
universe.

199 **ELISE** 199
Oh, my. To Derek?

200 **BETH** 200
No, no. To Amanda.

201 **ANDREW** 201
Our Amanda?

202 **BETH** 202
Yes. They'd been married for about
three years. Odessa learned that
she was pregnant while we were
there... they'd been trying to
start a family of their own.

203 **ANDREW** 203
I can see how that could be
awkward. But why is it *still*
awkward?

BETH sighs.

204 **BETH** 204
I haven't pressed either of them on
it, but Odessa and Amanda seem to
have a... complicated friendship.
And it was only made more
complicated when this portal
business started.

205 **ELISE** 205
Complicated in what way?

206 **BETH** 206
I'm not blind. It's clear that
there's a level of mutual
attraction between them. And that's
fine, it's normal. Let's be honest,
they're both perfect girlfriend
material.

207 **ANDREW** 207
As you well know.

BETH chuckles.

208 **BETH** 208
Indeed. And it's like you said, if
our situations had been different,
perhaps we'd all have ended up in a
different "configuration," as it
were. But we didn't. Odessa and I
hare happy together, and so are
Amanda and Cindy.

209 **ANDREW** 209
None of that sounds complicated.

210 **BETH** 210
No. But since we got back, Odessa
has been *incredibly* awkward about
Amanda. She came to visit us this
morning and almost immediately left
the room to lie down. And she
didn't want to talk about it, which
isn't like her. She immediately
changed the subject, and she knows
exactly how to distract me.

211 **ANDREW** 211
I know you want to help. But in
this case, it may be best to simply
be there for her and allow her the
space to process this in her own
time.

212 **ELISE** 212
And it also sounds as though Odessa
and Amanda need to have a
conversation as well.

213 **BETH** 213
I hope Odessa comes to the same
conclusion. Amanda's good at hiding
her emotions, but she was clearly
upset by the way Odessa reacted to
her. She was hurt. And I don't like
to see her hurt.

214 **ELISE** 214
It must be difficult to see two
people you love going through this
much tumult.

215 **BETH** 215
Very. I just wish I could do
something to help.

216 **ELISE** 216
You are. Just by being there.

217 **ANDREW** 217
Was there anything else that you
wanted to talk to us about?
Regarding the other universe?

BETH sighs and gathers herself.

218 **BETH** 218
Has Dr. Hardy or Dr. Flagler made
any headway finding out what's been
going on with you? Health-wise?

219 **ANDREW** 219
No, nothing yet. Tony keeps
lamenting that the equipment he has
available is rudimentary in terms
of diagnostics. Even the medical
bays we have in our houses are more
of a trauma ward than a diagnostic
tool.

220 **BETH** 220
I talked a lot with that universe's
version of you, dad, and I was able
to steer the conversation to any
health issues he may have
experienced recently.

232 **BETH** 232
Brilliant. You go first. I want to
hear everything.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

INT. THE SPIDER'S WEB, DAY

AMANDA and BONES are getting ready for the evening's customers. There is a knock on the door.

233 **AMANDA** 233
Expecting anyone?

234 **BONES** 234
Nope. No deliveries scheduled for
today. Let me see who it is. I'll
get rid of 'em if I have to.

235 **AMANDA** 235
Thanks, Bones.

BONES opens the door.

236 **BONES** 236
Oh, hey, Odessa! Didn't expect to
see you today! I guess that means
you're feeling okay.

237 **ODESSA** 237
I am, Bones, thank you. Is Amanda
here?

238 **BONES** 238
She's right over there.

ODESSA enters.

239 **ODESSA**
 (sheepishly)
Um, hi. 239

240 **AMANDA** 240
Bones, can we have the room,
please?

241 **BONES** 241
Sure thing, boss. I have some stuff
to take care of in the basement.
Just yell if you need me.

242 **AMANDA** 242
Thanks.

BONES leaves.

243 **ODESSA** I... um... I'm sorry. About earlier. 243

244 **AMANDA** What's going on with you? I have never seen you like that. It's like you saw a ghost. A me-shaped ghost. 244

245 **ODESSA** I didn't know you were coming over, and I wasn't quite ready to see you yet. 245

246 **AMANDA** Not ready to see me yet? You're worrying me. What happened? Did I do something? Did I hurt you somehow? I'm sorry, just tell me what it was and I'll fix it. 246

ODESSA sighs.

247 **ODESSA** We need to talk. 247

248 **AMANDA** Are... are you breaking up with me? I mean, we're not "together" but the only times I've said that were when I was getting ready to dump somebody. 248

ODESSA chuckles.

249 **AMANDA (CONT'D)** Well, I can still make you laugh, at least. 249

250 (beat) So, let's talk. Want a drink? 250

251 **ODESSA** No, but thank you. I'm waiting on some lab tests and I don't want to drink any alcohol until I know the results. 251

252 **AMANDA** Is everything okay? Is that what this is about? Worried about those tests? 252

253 **ODESSA** 253
No. Well, I guess it is, in a way.

AMANDA
 (concerned)
254 Are you sick? 254

ODESSA
255 It's nothing like that. Physically, 255
I'm fine.

AMANDA
256 Damn right you are. 256
 (beat)
257 Sorry. Force of habit. 257

ODESSA
258 We need to talk about this "thing"
between us. 258

AMANDA
259 I thought we had an understanding 259
about the, um... "thing."

ODESSA
260 We did. We *do*. But some things 260
happened while Beth and I were...
away that you need to know about,
because I can't stop thinking about
them. That's why I reacted the way
you did when you visited us.

AMANDA
261 I'm not gonna lie, that hurt. Beth 261
talked me down a little, but still.
I didn't know what I did.

ODESSA
262 I'm sorry. I was just... 262
overwhelmed, and I had to get away.
And you didn't do anything.

AMANDA
263 That's what Beth said, too. She was 263
hinting around at *something*, but I
couldn't pin her down on any
details. She said that me meeting
the other version of you could
create "complications," and that
might be why Rahmani kept those two
at Atlas and wouldn't let anyone
near them except for Devon and your
old buddy the Scribe.

264 **ODESSA** 264
That was a good call.

265 **AMANDA** 265
Jesus, Odessa, just tell me what's
going on.

266 **ODESSA** 266
We were married.

AMANDA laughs.

267 **AMANDA** 267
For a second there I thought you
meant we were married *to each
other.*

268 (beat)
268 Wait. You *did* mean that? There was 268
an actual "us," with wedding rings
and everything?

269 **ODESSA** 269
Yeah. I think Beth almost passed
out when she heard the name "Amanda
Valdez."

270 **AMANDA** 270
I would have.

271 **ODESSA** 271
But then she kissed me.

272 **AMANDA** 272
Okay, nothing weird about that, she
didn't know you weren't her Odessa
and married people kiss all the
time.

273 **ODESSA** 273
And...

274 **AMANDA** 274
And... what?

275 **ODESSA** 275
And I kissed her back.

276 **AMANDA** 276
You what?! With Beth standing right
there?

277 **ODESSA** 277
You remember what we kept
experiencing every time we got
close to a portal?

278 **AMANDA** 278
I'll never forget it. It wasn't
just *physical* attraction anymore.
Don't get me wrong, that was still
there, but it was... more than
that.

279 **ODESSA** 279
Come on, Amanda, it's just us. Say
it.

280 **AMANDA** 280
I was in love with you, okay? Like,
shout-it-from-the-mountaintops in
love. It felt *real*, even though I
knew it wasn't.

281 **ODESSA** 281
That's what I felt, too. There
wasn't anything I wanted more than
you.

282 **AMANDA** 282
You know what the most messed up
part was? I wanted it to be real. I
liked feeling that way. It scared
me, and I don't scare easy.

283 **ODESSA** 283
I felt the same way, including the
"scared" part. I think that helped
me recognize what was going on. I
pulled myself back to reality - *my*
reality - pretty quickly after the
kiss. But in that moment, with her?
I was that Odessa. It terrified me.
I wondered if I was starting to
lose myself, and if she was going
through the same thing here.

284 **AMANDA** 284
Did you talk to Beth about any of
this?

285 **ODESSA** 285
Some of it. But there were things I
had to talk with you about first.
With you, not Mrs. Valdez.

296 **ODESSA** Yeah. She and Dr. Hardy are the only other people who know. 296

297 **AMANDA** The important thing is that she's back where she belongs and so are you. You're both with the people you're meant to be with again. 297

298 **ODESSA** Yeah. I just hope things aren't as messy for her as they are for us. 298

AMANDA sighs.

299 **AMANDA** I guess the "thing" was going to come to a head eventually. 299

300 **ODESSA** We should have talked about it sooner. 300

301 **AMANDA** "Semper veritas" it is. 301

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**INT. FORT ATLAS, DAY**

SCRIBE NAVIA is working in a lab, clacking away at a keyboard.

CINDY enters.

303 **CINDY** 303
Excuse me, Scribe Navia?

304 **NAVIA** 304
Lieutenant Connors! What can I do
for you?

305 **CINDY** 305
I'm off-duty. Please call me Cindy.
We're both part of the Seven, so we
should probably be on a first-name
basis anyway.

NAVIA chuckles.

306 **NAVIA** 306
You're probably right. No more
"Scriba Navia," then, call me Jess.

307 **CINDY** 307
Okay, Jess. I was looking for
Odessa. Is she around?

308 **NAVIA** 308
No. Paladin Rahmani sent her home
to rest. It sounds like they had
quite an experience.

309 **CINDY** 309
Yeah. Rahmani was pretty tight-
lipped about it, too. Wouldn't let
any of us near Beth and Odessa.
Amanda was ready to strangle her.
And not in the fun way.

310 **NAVIA** 310
How *is* Amanda?

311 **CINDY** 311
She's great! She was really worried
about Beth and Odessa, and now that
they're back it's a big weight off
her shoulders. I've been doing my
best to keep her distracted.

312 **NAVIA** I'm sure she didn't mind. 312

CINDY chuckles.

313 **CINDY** No. But it's been nice to spend 313
more time with her. I had a lot of
liberty saved up that I couldn't
use because we were so busy. But
it's been surprisingly quiet around
the Bunker lately, so I'm finally
able to tear myself away.

314 **NAVIA** That's good. It's important to have 314
a balance.

315 **CINDY** I've been so invested in proving 315
myself to Valeria and everybody
else there... proving that I
belong... that it's been hard to
find that balance. I want to be
more than my job, even though I
understand how important that job
is.

316 **NAVIA** That's a feeling I know well. I've 316
been trying to branch out a little.
Find some hobbies, something to
pass the time that isn't strictly
Scribe work.

317 **CINDY** Yes! I just started painting. I'm 317
not very good, but Amanda's really
been encouraging me.

318 **NAVIA** You'll have to show me some of your 318
paintings!

CINDY chuckles.

319 **CINDY** Maybe someday. The hardest part is 319
finding paint. Well, the right *kind*
of paint.

320 **NAVIA** I might be able to help you with 320
that.

(MORE)

NAVIA (CONT'D)

It would be fun to see if I can whip some up for you. It's still science-y, but not Scribe work, so it counts.

CINDY

321 That would be great! I promise, 321
you'll be the second person I show
anything I paint using what you
come up with.

NAVIA

322 That's a great incentive! I'll keep 322
you posted.

CINDY

323 Deal. 323

(beat)

324 So what else has been going on? Any 324
movement with the portal stuff?
Like, why we're... special?

NAVIA

325 Nothing concrete. But Beth 325
mentioned something interesting
when they got back to Atlas.

CINDY

326 What is it? 326

NAVIA

327 They found a portal arch like the 327
one in Morgantown under Amanda's
restaurant.

CINDY

328 Okay, and? 328

NAVIA

329 The restaurant was in Washington, 329
DC. Hundreds of miles away from
here. Now, it *could* just be a wild
coincidence that two
transdimensional hotspots happen to
sit in Amanda's basement in two
different universes...

CINDY

330 But it's far more likely that it's 330
something specific to Amanda.

331 **NAVIA** Yes. And whatever it is, it's so strong that it's present no matter what universe's Amanda we're talking about. 331

332 **CINDY** I hope she's not in any kind of danger... 332

333 **NAVIA** It's a very small sample size, and there could be any number of plausible explanations. 333

334 **CINDY** Including the possibility that she's the key to everything... somehow. 334

335 (beat) Wait. Isn't "the Key" one of the archetypes the Emerald Pike identified? 335

336 **NAVIA** Yes! I like where you're going with this. If she's the Key, that can narrow down who the rest of us are. 336

337 **CINDY** And what we have to do to stop this invasion before it happens. 337

RAHMANI enters.

338 **RAHMANI** Scribe Navia, I... oh, hello, Lieutenant. What brings you here? 338

339 **CINDY** I was looking for Odessa. I had a few things I needed her expertise on, but Jess and I were just discussing something you may want to hear. 339

340 **RAHMANI** I'm listening. 340

341 **NAVIA** Leaving the infrastructure at Flagrante Bello aside, we know about one specific portal location in our universe and another in the one Beth and Odessa visited. 341

342 **RAHMANI** Right. Under the Spider's Web and under... oh. I think I understand. Amanda is somehow... tied to these portals? Or drawn to them? 342

343 **NAVIA** We hadn't really gotten as far as specifics, but yes. It could be that she chose the locations for her businesses in both universes because there were weak points in the barrier between dimensions there. She wouldn't have had any idea she was doing it, either. 343

344 **CINDY** You don't think she's causing these "weak spots," do you? 344

345 **NAVIA** I hadn't considered that, but we can't ignore it as a possibility. 345

346 **CINDY** Something just occurred to me. Could it be that all the problems we've been seeing with the portals are because Vault-Tec didn't know that they had to find a weak spot? 346

347 **NAVIA** Or that they know but didn't know how. Either way, though, it fits. That could be why the portals were always unstable and why Beth and Odessa swapped places with their counterparts in the way they did. Even Devon seemed surprised by that, and he's the expert. 347

348 **RAHMANI** While we're on the subject, there's something else that's been nagging at me. 348

358 **NAVIA** 358
Odessa's description of the project
supports that hypothesis as well.
They don't seem to have gotten
quite as far as Vault-Tec did.

359 **RAHMANI** 359
Scribe Navia, please discuss this
with Knight Carlson. He's become
our expert in the more...
philosophical aspects of this
operation. Lieutenant, would you be
willing to join that conversation?

360 **CINDY** 360
Of course.

361 **RAHMANI** 361
And please keep Amanda updated.
We'll need her to be up to speed;
as we've learned, things happen
very quickly and on very short
notice. We need everyone to be
ready for that.

362 **CINDY** 362
I will.

363 **RAHMANI** 363
I'm going to talk to Derek. If you
need anything, that's where I'll
be.

364 **NAVIA** 364
Yes, ma'am.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

INT. FORT ATLAS, RAHMANI'S OFFICE, DAY

RAHMANI is at her desk. DEREK knocks at the door.

365 **DEREK** 365
You wanted to see me, Leila?

366 **RAHMANI** 366
Yes. Please come in. Have Devon and
Scribe Hargrove made any progress?

367 **DEREK** 367
I just talked to Dave. He's like a
dog with a bone.
(MORE)

DEREK (CONT'D)

The telemetry itself is kind of opaque, but between his experience with Vault-Tec systems and Devon's experience with portals they'll get it figured out.

RAHMANI

368 Good. 368

DEREK

369 Have you talked to Odessa? 369

RAHMANI

370 Briefly. I want to give her time to rest, but I also want to make sure she's okay. She seemed... I don't know. She seemed to be impacted by the experience on an *emotional* level. 370

DEREK

371 Did she tell you why? 371

RAHMANI

372 Derek... 372

DEREK

373 I'm asking as her friend and colleague. Nothing more. 373

RAHMANI

374 No, she didn't, and I didn't pry. It was clear that she needed to rest and recover from the moment they reappeared. She and Beth both looked exhausted. But when we got back to Atlas, it became clear that resting and recovering *with Beth* was every bit as important, if not *moreso*. 374

DEREK

375 I understand. 375

RAHMANI

376 Do you? 376

DEREK

377 What's that supposed to mean? 377

RAHMANI

378 Derek, I've known you for a very long time. 378

(MORE)

RAHMANI (CONT'D)

I know you still love her, and I *suspect* that you're still holding out hope that she's going to "come to her senses" and go back to Lost Hills with you. You've never given up when something means as much to you as she does.

DEREK

379 I can't argue any of that. 379

RAHMANI

380 There comes a point, though, when you need to *let go*. For her sake and for yours. You may think that you're operating completely above board here, but you have to recognize that what you're doing is causing friction between her and Beth. 380

DEREK

381 Maybe that should tell her something. If Beth is that insecure about how Odessa supposedly feels about her... 381

RAHMANI

382 Maybe it should tell *you* something. You're being selfish and manipulative, and that does *not* suit you. 382

DEREK

383 That's not fair. 383

RAHMANI

384 Isn't it? Fair or not, it's true. You're a Paladin now, and Paladins have to be better than that. She has been *incredibly* patient with you. So has Beth, for that matter. Yet you're so obsessed with the idea of winning her back that you don't give a damn about the impact that's having on her. 384

DEREK

385 I can't believe you're talking to me like this. 385

RAHMANI

386 Believe it. 386

387 **DEREK** 387
What do you expect me to do? Give
up?

388 **RAHMANI** 388
"Give up?" Do you even hear
yourself?
 (gathering herself)

389 389
You claim to be her friend. I
expect you to start acting like it.
If you can't do that, then maybe
you should ask yourself what's
really driving this.

390 **DEREK** 390
I'm trying to correct a mistake.

391 **RAHMANI** 391
By making a bigger one? Look, I
haven't been privy to your
conversations, but I know Odessa
well enough to know that if there
were any hope to be held out for,
she would've told you. If she was
conflicted, or suddenly unsure,
you'd know that.
 (beat)

392 392
But my suspicion is that she didn't
do that.

DEREK sighs.

393 **DEREK** 393
No. She didn't. She told me that
she loves Beth and wants to spend
the rest of her life with her.

394 **RAHMANI** 394
So you have your answer.

395 **DEREK** 395
We were supposed to spend *our* lives
together.

396 **RAHMANI** 396
I know. But things change. *People*
change. She's not the same person
she was when she left. And you're
not the same person either. This
matter aside, you've shown me a lot
in the short time you've been here.
You've matured. You're growing into
the leader I always knew you could
be.

(MORE)

RAHMANI (CONT'D)

Your feelings about Odessa seem to be the one area where you *haven't* evolved. Yet. But I think you need to if you're ever going to fully grow into the person; that leader. You need to move on. For your sake, for hers, and for the Brotherhood's.

DEREK

397 I don't know how. I spent years 397
 thinking about how I was going to
 make it up to her, and how she'd
 rush back into my arms when I
 finally saw her again. But then she
 didn't.

RAHMANI

398 It took her a long time to move on. 398
 I was concerned about her, frankly.
 But then she met Beth. I've never
 seen two people more perfect for
 each other. I'm sorry, but that
 includes you and Odessa. Beth is
 her person. And if you love her, if
 you're *truly* her friend and not
 just pretending to be so you can
 get her back, you'll both recognize
 and respect that.

DEREK sighs.

DEREK

399 You're right. Of course you're 399
 right.

RAHMANI

400 I know this is hard. And I know it 400
 hurts. Maybe even more than when
 she broke things off. But the hurt
 will subside, as long as you let
 it.

DEREK

401 I'll take your word for it. And 401
 I'll try. I just want her to be
 happy, and I just need to accept
 that doesn't involve us being
 together.

RAHMANI

402 I'm always here if you need to talk 402
 Or even if you just want to.

RAHMANI (CONT'D)

Lieutenant Connors should still be here, make sure you get her and Scribe Navia. Paladin Hewitt, too - he should be in his quarters. I'll radio Beth, Odessa, and Amanda. If this *is* the Untainted, I get the feeling we'll need all seven of us there. Meet me in the courtyard with anybody you can find.

MERRIWEATHER

414

Yes, ma'am.

414

MERRIWEATHER and RAHMANI rush out of the room.