

EPISODE ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY FOUR - CHANCE EVANS

Original transcript edited by Theo and reviewed by Jenah

[BEGIN Episode 194.]

INTRO: Hey, guys. Hope you're enjoying Season 17. Here are some quick plugs. I'm still streaming over at Twitch at twitch.tv/woebegonepod, where every Sunday I write that week's episode soundtrack, and then we hang out and play a video game. We are very close to getting 1,000 followers over there, and I have promised a juggling stream. So if you've ever wanted to see me juggle, go and follow me over there at twitch.tv/woebegonepod.

And if you'd like to support the show, you can do so on Patreon at patreon.com/woe_begone, where you can get early access to ad-free episodes, instrumentals, soundtrack albums, Q&As, director's commentaries, Movies with Michael, postcards, corkboards, and morkboards. This week I will be finishing Season 12 of the commentaries with Episode 144. Doing the commentaries for the big season finales is always a lot of fun; there's always so much work that goes into that sort of thing. And so if you wanna peak behind the curtain, you can sign up at the \$10-and-up level at patreon.com/woe_begone.

Special thanks to my ten newest patrons: [REDACTED] for supporting the show. Enjoy.

[Turns into Michael voice part-way through reading the episode warning.]

[Warning: This episode contains a depiction of violence. Listener discretion is advised.]

[Opening theme plays.]

[We hear a loud crash into glass.]

TROY: Ow! Ugh! My buttcheek.

[We hear the time travel noise as MDawg and Stinky arrive back at Base.]

[Chance Evans is in the living room, alone. Chance and CANNONBALL's voices crossfade back and forth during the conversation.]

CHANCE EVANS: Oh, hey! You're back. How did the trip to the Ice Lair go?

[We hear broken glass on the floor.]

MDAWG: Hey, Chris. Uh, it went... quasi-bodaciously. Uh, did something happen here? Uh— Did someone else master moving subsonic waves with their mind?

STINKY: Yeah, I feel like this room used to have a coffee table in it, and now it's got this broken glass? I don't know if I like this.

CHANCE EVANS: Oh, heh. Just a little spat about the Stinky Device. You know how it is. Tensions are high right now. Troy got carried away.

STINKY: Troy broke the coffee table about that?

CHANCE EVANS: In a sense, yes? Edgar was telling us about his new plan to root out edited members of Base. Uh— There should be information about it on your work calendars.

MDAWG: Yes, I can see that with my third eye and my regular eyes, uh... You're scheduling meetings?

CHANCE EVANS: The long and the short of it is that Ryan believes that he's found a way to use the Stinky Device in order to figure out who is a part of Project Cannon. But it involves everyone going *into* the Stinky Device.

MDAWG [*barely losing cool*]: W-Wait, uh— Chris. I don't know that I'm copacetic with this. We're all going into the Stinky Device? Because this note on my calendar says that my "session" is scheduled for this afternoon. I-I have yoga then. Sorry to lose my cool.

CHANCE EVANS: You aren't the only one to lose your cool. We drew straws to see who would be the very first subject. Troy tried to step up and be the first to draw a straw. You know how he is these days. He's tryin' to be a tough guy 'cause he's trying to get a job in Tier Three with Charlie?

STINKY: Yes, I do know. He's been so mean to me recently. Like, anytime he beats me at chess, he just gloats and gloats. I don't like what this Tier Three stuff is doing to him.

MDAWG: Troy needs to realign his soul with his goals. I have several self-help books with rhyming aphorisms like that at his level that I can recommend.

CHANCE EVANS: He elbowed Marissa out of the way—

STINKY: Oh, no...

CHANCE EVANS: —and Marissa put him right through the table.

MDAWG: That explains it. Troy's blood is an unhealthy color. I need to speak to him about his diet.

CHANCE EVANS: ...And she still drew the short straw. She's in there right now. I don't know how it's going, but it's been pretty quiet in the house ever since. We're all just waiting to see

what happens. Except Troy. He took off, and now he's... "training" the other two iterations in the mansion, whatever that means.

STINKY: Uh— Training just means jumping on the trampoline. He calls that training.

CHANCE EVANS: *[Sighing.]* Of course he does. Everyone is going to have a meeting with Edgar and Ryan in the next few days, assuming that everything goes according to plan. I know that none of us trust Ryan, but Edgar's overseeing the whole thing.

STINKY: MDawg looks scared. Do I need to be scared about this?

CHANCE EVANS: If ya haven't been edited, then you have nothing to worry about. You haven't been edited, have you, Stinky? Are you part of Project Cannon?

STINKY: What!? N-No, uh, I-I— I don't even know who CANNONBALL is! ...is how not I am of it.

MDAWG: It seems like Stinky should be edited, but if he were, then he and CANNONBALL would have sabotaged everything back when he first got here.

CHANCE EVANS: Alright, Stinky. *[Teasing.]* You get a pass for now, but watch your back. *[Sensible chuckle.]* So, that's what you missed. How was the Ice Lair? Did you guys find anything interesting?

STINKY: I thought there'd be more stuff in it. It's huge, but it's mostly empty.

MDAWG: There is a large machine in the main room, but it's the only thing in there. If there were anything else, then we didn't find it.

STINKY: We thought we heard a polar bear out there, but we didn't open the door. They wanted to open the door, and I said no, because I don't like polar bears. They roar too loud.

MDAWG: Something about the air felt disturbed in there, like there had been a psychic disturbance recently. I did mind echolocation to discover the source of the disturbance, but I never found it. It is possible that time travel clogged up my spiritual sinuses, and I was feeling that. That gets much worse when it's cold out. *[Sniffles.]*

STINKY: MDawg, we have spiritual s-sinuses? I can't s-spiritually smell anything. Why is there so much stuff that I didn't know I should be worried about?

MDAWG: It's nothing serious, but if they are clogged, you can't see ghosts anymore.

STINKY: Uh— I can't see ghosts now. U-Unclog them— No, keep them clogged, I want them clogged.

MDAWG: Okay, but that means you won't be able to see the good ghosts, either. Anyway, I apparently have a meeting with Edgar and Ryan in just a few hours. And I can feel the tension in my body. I'll be in the Yoga Palace doing my stretches if anyone needs me.

CHANCE EVANS: Good luck, MDawg. Have fun... unclogging your chakras?

MDAWG: That's not what I'm doing, but I appreciate you trying. Bye, Chris.

[MDawg leaves the room.]

CHANCE EVANS: I voted against the Yoga Palace, by the way. I know that we're building all kinds of new rooms and basements and wings onto Base, but it still feels wasteful to have a whole room just for MDawg's hobbies.

MDAWG *[calling out from the other room]:* The Yoga Palace isn't just for me! You can come stretch right now if you want to!

CHANCE EVANS: *[Calling out to MDawg.]* Yeah, may– maybe some other time! *[To Stinky.]* ...I didn't know he could still hear me.

STINKY: I did yoga with MDawg in the Yoga Palace once, and I pulled my abductor muscle or whatever he called it. Ugh– I don't– I don't like it, it's tingly.

CHANCE EVANS: Well, maybe you can put your fancy, new O.V.E.R. supercomputer from the Ice Lair in there. It'd be a better use of the space. *[Pause.]* Okay, cool, he didn't hear that. We're safe to talk. Come here, Stinky. Have a seat on the couch. Let's have a chat.

STINKY: Um... Okay...?

[We hear Stinky sit on the couch. He exclaims in pain as he sits on a shard of glass.]

STINKY: Ow– Ow, my buttcheek! There's glass in the couch.

CHANCE EVANS: Oh. Sorry about that. Hey, Stinky. Can you tell me something? ...What do you think about MDawg?

STINKY: M-MDawg? W– Uh– Well, MDawg's an iteration. Uh– He's my friend. Uh– I don't always understand him, but I'm not going out of my way to understand things, so, uh– he's alright with me. Uh, he's gonna make it so I can see the good ghosts, I guess? Why are you asking?

CHANCE EVANS: Well, he is an iteration, so you know him better than I do. Which is why I was wondering... do you think he's been edited? Do you think he's part of Project Cannon? He seemed really stressed about meeting with Edgar and Ryan later today.

STINKY: What—? No way! I-I mean, he— he did kind of hog the machine when we were in the Ice Lair, but it's not like I could understand what was on the screen, and so I just kept looking for more clues. I-I don't think he's edited. It— He's just— He's stressed because it's a stressful situation. He wasn't put into the— the— the Me Device, was he? He wasn't at the fight in Tier Three, so he couldn't have been put in there.

CHANCE EVANS: No one is completely safe, Stinky. That's why they're meeting with everyone. MDawg wasn't in Tier Three, but that wasn't the only time he could have been edited. We don't know what CANNONBALL was up to before he crossed our path or how long he had the Stinky Device. He could have been up to anything at any time.

STINKY: I mean, that's— that's true, I guess, he could have the Stinky Device back in time and messed with people then, not just when we were in Tier Three. But if that's possible, how can we be sure that anyone isn't edited? He could have edited all of us.

CHANCE EVANS: I guess we could all theoretically be part of Project Cannon and not know that the others are. So we're pretending to be unedited when there aren't actually any unedited people left to fool. How funny would that be!

STINKY: I guess it would be funny if we were part of Project Cannon.

CHANCE EVANS: And so, if you and I were both edited, we could just drop all this suspicion and actually start getting to work.

STINKY: Uh— Chance— Chris— I'm— I'm n-not... y-you— you don't th— you— I'm— you aren't— I'm— 'cause I'm not— you—

CHANCE EVANS: I'm just teasing you, Stinky. MDawg's right. If you were edited, you could have stopped us from getting to CANNONBALL pretty easily. I think that I can trust you. And you can trust me, of course.

STINKY: So, what happens if they figure out that someone is part of Project Cannon? Can they just... unedit them?

CHANCE EVANS: It's unclear? It seems possible, but if Edgar and Ryan have cracked the code, they haven't announced it to the rest of us. I'm sure it's a propagation risk. And even if the Stinky Device can't help us out there, we've got that fancy, new Tier Three device you and MDawg found in the Ice Lair. CANNONBALL had to have acquired it for a reason.

STINKY: Me and MDawg and Mikey, you mean.

CHANCE EVANS: Huh? Mikey was at the Ice Lair? I thought he was on a mission with Satellite Base.

STINKY: Yeah, Mikey showed up after us, and he said that the mission was a failure and that they couldn't even find Boris. So, I don't know what they're doing.

CHANCE EVANS: Ooh, I do not think Edgar's gonna be happy about that. So, you don't think that MDawg is edited, but what about Mikey? Does he pass mustard?

STINKY: Um, Chris, I think you mean "pass muster"? And... I don't know! It felt like he was pumping us for information, maybe. And he was inside of the Me Device. But I know he just got reconsolidated, and then Charlie had to put all of his memories back together, and I forget things all the time, too. Like, uh... *[Pause.]* Uh– B– Uh– But there is something that could help us figure it out.

CHANCE EVANS: And what would that be?

STINKY: Mikey was keeping a journal when he lost his memories. I don't know what's in it, but I know that he had it in his cell with him when you put him in there after he lost track of Marissa. Mikey got iterated by CANNONBALL, and so the journal got iterated with him. And that's the copy he has. I think he gave it to Michael? Or whatever they're calling him. I think they're arguing about that. But that means that there's an iteration of the journal that is still down there.

CHANCE EVANS: Ooh, there could be valuable information in that journal. Has he talked to you about what he went through before we found him at Sly's house? 'Cause he hasn't said anything to the rest of us.

STINKY: He hasn't said anything to me, either. And it might not be anything, or it could be a little something, or it could be a big deal. I don't know. I just know that the journal is probably down there.

CHANCE EVANS: Well, everyone is preoccupied at the moment. Marissa, Edgar, and Ryan are in their meeting, Troy's at his mansion with his iterations, Shadow's at work, and MDawg's in the Yoga Palace.

STINKY: Chris, are you saying that you wanna go look for the journal? I mean, I guess you do know your way around down there better than I do.

CHANCE EVANS: Let's do it. Meet me at the entrance to the Detainment Wing in an hour.

STINKY: I'm not sure we should be calling part of our house the Detainment Wing, that sounds kind of sinister.

CHANCE EVANS: That's because it is. One hour, Detainment Wing. We'll find the journal.

[Scene transition.]

[We hear the iteration driving to an unknown destination.]

[He stops the car and gets out.]

[Something was supposed to be where he is now, and it is not there, which causes him concern.]

[He pulls out his phone and relays this information to an unknown person via voicemail.]

ITERATION: Howdy. Wish ya'd pick up. I know you're there. It ain't here anymore. I don't know what they're doin' over there, but it ain't what we thought. I drove all the way out here, and it ain't even here. I'm still gonna invoice ya for the full payment, though. Ugh. I'm... drivin' back to Rugby now. And if I don't hear from ya before then, we're gonna have a problem. Alright, bye.

[The iteration sighs. We hear him get in his car and leave.]

[Scene transition.]

[We hear Stinky and Chance Evans descending the stairs into the Detainment Wing and into a quiet hallway on the way to Mikey's former cell.]

STINKY: So, why do we even have a detainment wing? It's scary down here. I don't think we should have one.

CHANCE EVANS: I don't know. Edgar, I guess? Construction has always been one of his areas of study. I learned about it with the rest of you, though, when Mike took over. Could've been him. Any time someone asks about what's going on down here, it's always "propagation risk" this and "need-to-know basis" that. It all feels... very familiar.

STINKY: Well, I wanna know who did it, because I-I wanna know whoever did whatever they did to whatever Troy iteration was down here. That was creepy.

CHANCE EVANS: Kind of makes it hard to claim the high ground against the Compound, doesn't it? Sure, "it's just Troy," but everything starts somewhere. Look around. There's room for plenty more Troys and whoever else we might want to experiment on.

STINKY: But Troy is different, right? People keep talking about "figuring out what his deal is." I— Uh— He's just One Of The Guys to me, but all of the other Mikes seem to think there's something... I don't know... "threatening" about him?

CHANCE EVANS: I hate to break it to you, Stinky, but people say the same thing about you. People know that story that the Yellowknife Michael told about you. It could just as easily be you down here getting experimented on to figure out what makes you tick.

STINKY: We're not still doing it, are we? There's not someone down here right now, is there?

CHANCE EVANS: As far as you and I know, no. But we didn't know that iteration of Troy was down here. And Ryan and Edgar are up there conducting tests right now to determine who's a part of Project Cannon. What happens when they find someone? What are they gonna do with them? They're gonna stick them right down here, that's what. And once you've marked someone as a Prisoner, it becomes easier to justify doing what you want to them, believe you me. What's a little pain and confinement if it means figuring out what Troy's "deal" is? "The data could be extremely valuable." Hear what it sounds like?

STINKY: Yeah. It sounds exactly like that chemistry class that we flunked out of in college.

CHANCE EVANS: Exactly— No. Stinky. Like Ty Betteridge. Did you not...? See, this is why people wonder what *your* deal is. And I appreciate that about you. You're unique. You have clear preferences and morals that make you your own person, even though there's other iterations of you running around. But when shit hits the fan, standing out becomes dangerous. You need to look after yourself. Because you're an easy target to be sent down here and hacked apart.

STINKY: "Hacked apart"? They— They didn't do that to Troy, did they? There's not a Troy they hacked apart? How much longer is this hallway?

CHANCE EVANS: Ryan and I keep our heads down. We don't have a "deal." And when we do have a deal, we don't tell everyone about it. We were so embarrassed when Mikey discovered our band. Ryan pitched the idea of doing a correction. I don't know how serious he was, but you'll notice there's only one of me and one of him, and we are never the topic of these sorts of discussions.

STINKY: I-I guess you're right, but I-I can't think about my life that way, can I?

CHANCE EVANS: I'm afraid it's gonna be hard to think any other way. I think it was... this one, right?

[We hear Chance Evans open a door.]

CHANCE EVANS: Yep, this is it. Welcome to Chez Mikey. Do you know where this journal is supposed to be? I don't see it anywhere.

STINKY: Well, I've never been in here before, but I just know it's supposed to be in here. He probably hid it. He didn't want you to find it. Like, because you were running Base.

CHANCE EVANS: Alright, I'll check his desk. You check over there. If it's here, we should be able to find it pretty quickly. This place is pretty small. There aren't too many places he could have put it.

[We hear them rummage while they talk.]

STINKY: Hey, so... you know that you put Mike and Mikey down here, right? Like, not Mike, not Edgar. You did that. So, you're clearly fine using this place for its intended purpose.

CHANCE EVANS: Hey, now. You can ask them what it was like down here. I gave them everything they asked for. I was only keeping them down here so that I could get a handle on what was going on, and if I had ever gotten that, I'd have set them free. But Charlie led us into a fight with CANNONBALL instead, and my leadership at Base was over as quickly as it began.

STINKY: Alright, but I really am going to ask them. Uh— I checked everywhere; the journal isn't over here.

CHANCE EVANS: It's not in the desk, either.

STINKY: *[Sighs.]* Let's see, then... What about the mattresses and the pillows? He could've ripped them open and stuffed it inside.

CHANCE EVANS: You check the bed, then, and I'll check the bathroom. And if it isn't in either of those places, then I don't think it's here, Stinky.

STINKY: Can do. Wait, that door? I thought that was a closet. There's a bathroom in here?

CHANCE EVANS: Of course there's a bathroom. He wasn't allowed to leave. He had to go somewhere. That's the real engineering feat of this place. It's one thing to build a basement or a building that stands on its own, but this place has plumbing that connects to the original plumbing of Base. That is so much more complicated than building a square room with four walls.

[We hear Stinky check the bed.]

STINKY: Huh. I don't think I've ever thought about plumbing in my whole life. Anyway, the pillows and mattresses don't have any holes in them. Uh, nothing. There's— There's nowhere the journal could be.

[We hear Chance Evans take the lid off the toilet.]

CHANCE EVANS: Oh, hey! I think I found it! I think this is it? It's in a plastic bag. He hid it in the tank of the toilet.

STINKY: Gross. Uh, are you sure that it's a journal and not one final "fuck you"?

CHANCE EVANS: Definitely. It's his handwriting and everything. And someone else's—? *[Stinky slashes at him with a piece of glass.]* Ow! My buttcheek! God, Stinky, what the hell was that!?

STINKY: Give me the notebook, Chris.

[Chance Evans hands over the notebook.]

CHANCE EVANS: Fine! Jesus! What did you just cut me with? That really hurt!

STINKY: It's glass from the coffee table. Stay back!

CHANCE EVANS: I'm staying back!

[Stinky slams the bathroom door closed between them.]

CHANCE EVANS *[muffled]:* Christ, Stinky. What the hell are you doing?

STINKY: I'm barricading you in the bathroom, idiot! You're edited!

CHANCE EVANS *[muffled]:* Wait. Stinky. You're not edited? I was so fucking sure you were!

STINKY: No, I'm not edited! I'm Stinky! I'm not Project Cannon! I'm just me. You're the one that's Project Cannon!

CHANCE EVANS *[muffled]:* God, I thought I had you figured out. My theory was that you've been edited ever since the first time we met you, and you'd been sent back to before I got the Stinky Device. That's why you were so creepy to the Yellowknife Michael. And you were biding your time to strike once the rest of us showed up. Was I wrong?

STINKY: Yes, you were wrong! You're CANNONBALL! Shouldn't you know this?

CHANCE EVANS *[muffled]:* Not if it happens in the future. So maybe I am right, and you just don't know it yet. It all has to originate from somewhere.

STINKY: I don't know if that makes any sense, and I don't care. You lost, Chris. Or should I say... Chris? I'm pushing this desk *[We hear Stinky moving the desk.]* in front of the door; you aren't going anywhere until I can figure something out.

CHANCE EVANS *[muffled]:* What's the plan, Stinky? You might not be Project Cannon, but everyone else is. They're gonna figure you out and edit you when you go back upstairs to tell them about how you captured me. You can't trust anyone. And as soon as they know I'm down here, they'll set me free.

STINKY: Then I'm not gonna tell anyone you're down here!

CHANCE EVANS *[muffled]*: They'll know I'm missing. I'm on the work calendar.

STINKY: *[Mockingly.]* "I'm on the work calendar." Fuck you!

CHANCE EVANS *[muffled]*: I have a meeting with Edgar and Ryan tomorrow. I'll be down here for a few hours at most before everyone starts searching for me. And you'll be the odd man out, Stinky. They'll sniff you out immediately. This is pointless.

STINKY: I guess we're going to find out, aren't we? I don't have any other options. I've gotta figure something out. And I got what I came for. So thank you for helping me find the journal, CANNONBALL. It might prove useful. I'm leaving.

CHANCE EVANS *[muffled]*: Wait, Stinky— *[Pause.]* It was because I knew the machine in the Ice Lair was from Tier Three, wasn't it? I knew that Chris didn't know that as soon as I said it, but there was no way for me to take it back. I've been kicking myself about it, but since you didn't seem to notice, I thought that was even more proof that you were Project Cannon.

STINKY: So it *is* from Tier Three. When did you say that? I-I don't remember that. I knew you were Project Cannon because you were acting weird. You beckoned me over to come sit on the couch with you? Chance wouldn't do that, because I call him "Chance." You were being weird and chummy even though I accidentally knocked your toothbrush on the floor and then lied and said an earthquake did it, and you know I was lying. You've been cold to me ever since that. I knew that the real Chance would never be that friendly to me! Also, I think you called Shadow "Shadow" once? Uh, Chance would definitely not do that.

CHANCE EVANS *[muffled]*: What? That was because we were talking about the other Ryan. That wasn't Project Cannon, that was just a coincidence, you fucking idiot!

STINKY: Yeah, but was it a coincidence that I didn't know that it was a coincidence, CANNONBALL? ...Whatever. You could be right about the others. I'm going to go see for myself. Smell ya later.

CHANCE EVANS *[muffled]*: Oh—! You're just gonna drop a one-liner and leave? Good luck, Stinky. This isn't a movie. You might feel cool right now, but you just signed your death warrant. They're going to eat you up there. MDawg is gonna know what happened, and he's gonna come down here and save me. Ryan is gonna come looking for me. Both Ryans!

[We hear the door to the cell close.]

DYLAN: After the break, *The Samantha Chronicles*. But first, "The Bones In My Ears."

[The Bones In My Ears plays.]

*Even now
I'm thinking about how I could use you
I might have to sabotage myself
Hey, didn't we used to make music?
The bones in my ears
Are swinging back and forth
And back and forth
They think that you should hear this
Hey, didn't we used to make music?*

I'm confused.

*Because what is the point
Of what we make up?
What is the point?
Is there something in-between us?
What is the point
Of what we make up?
Is the philosophy stuck in our teeth
Just a way to stave off eternity?
(Yes)*

*Even now
I'm trying to bastardize myself
You probably shouldn't let me do this
Didn't we used to make music?
The bones in my ears
Have never afforded me a decent sleep
They think that you should hear this
Hey, didn't we used to make music?*

*Back and forth and back and forth and
Back and forth and back.*

*So, what is the point
Of what we make up?
What is the point?
Is there something in-between us?
What is the point
Of what we make up?
Is the philosophy stuck in our teeth
Just a way to stave off eternity?
(Yes)*

*What is the point?
What is the point?*

*So, what is the point
Of what we make up?
What is the point?
Is there something in-between us?
What is the point
Of what we make up?
Is the philosophy stuck in our teeth
Just a way to stave off eternity?
(Yes)*

[Scene transition.]

[Time travel noise.]

[Omar appears in a cold, bright, white, empty room. Seconds ago he was at home in his living room. He has absolutely no idea what is going on.]

FELIX *[via intercom]*: Hello.

OMAR: Ugh!

FELIX *[via intercom]*: Are you Omar?

OMAR *[breathing heavily]*: Uh... Uh, what? Am I—? The— Wha—? Uh—! Where the hell am I!?

FELIX *[via intercom]*: Please remain calm. **[OMAR: What?]** Are you Omar?

OMAR: What?

[Omar starts hyperventilating. He is on the verge of tears. He is beginning to think that he might be dead. He starts shouting for his husband.]

OMAR: Stephen. Stephen! *Stephen?* Stephen! Can you hear me?

FELIX *[via intercom]*: Omar, I need you to listen to me. Everything's going to be alright. I just need you to stay calm.

OMAR: What the fuck are you talking about!?

SAMANTHA *[via intercom]*: Felix, this is not going well. Please let me into the room.

FELIX *[via intercom]*: He's quite distressed, i-it's— it's really not safe.

OMAR *[muttering to himself]*: Who is that? What's going on?

SAMANTHA *[via intercom]*: *[Sighs.]* Please just do as you are told and open the door.

FELIX *[via intercom]*: Alright... Omar, please move away from the door.

OMAR: Door? What door? There isn't a door! What are you? Who are you? What— What have you done with Stephen?

FELIX *[via intercom]*: Please just stand in the middle of the room and try to stay calm. Someone is coming in there to check on you.

OMAR: To... check? What?

[The door unlocks, and a panel opens in the wall. Samantha walks in.]

SAMANTHA: Hello, Omar. My name is Samantha. Would you like to sit down? *[Knowing she can be heard.]* Felix, please send us two chairs.

[Time travel noise.]

[The chairs land on the floor.]

SAMANTHA: That's better. Do sit down.

OMAR: Where the fuck did that come from!? What's happening?

SAMANTHA: Omar, please. All in good time. I know this must be very confusing for you. No doubt, you're terrified. But let me assure you, you are not in any danger.

OMAR: Fuck you! What have you done to me?

SAMANTHA *[ignoring him]*: You are Omar Habib. You live in Sunnyvale, California, just along from Ponderosa Park.

OMAR: Wait— Uh, yes.

SAMANTHA: You are married to Stephen Keller, **[OMAR: Stephen?]** a shipping lawyer. **[OMAR: Yes, that's...]** You have a small dog called Luna.

OMAR: But... Luna?

SAMANTHA: You claim that your favourite ever film is Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*...

OMAR: Yes, that's right.

SAMANTHA: ...but it's actually Simon West's *Con Air*.

OMAR: No! It's *Vertigo*! My favourite movie is *Vertigo*.

SAMANTHA: At the end of work social events, when your... overly enthusiastic, unreasonably extroverted colleagues start suggesting that you all go and do karaoke, [**OMAR:** You mean Tim and Dave?] you pretend to be uninterested. [**OMAR:** No, I hate...] But, in reality, it's the only reason you ever stay until the end of any work event.

OMAR: Fine... Fine. Have you been following me? What's the—

SAMANTHA: Omar, [*Sighs.*] I don't say any of this to trifle with your feelings. I promise you, nothing could be further from the truth. I just need you to take me seriously. Please. Just sit down, and I'll explain everything that's happening.

OMAR [*cautiously*]: ...Okay?

[*They sit down.*]

SAMANTHA: Now, Omar. As I said before, my name is Samantha. Thank you for sitting down and for listening to me.

OMAR: I need you to tell me, right now, what is going on. Have you drugged me? Am I under arrest? Do I need to speak to a lawyer? [*Samantha sighs.*] If you have drugged me, I need you to know that I'm allergic to tetracaine, and— [*Samantha sighs again.*] Oh, shit! Where is my EpiPen?

SAMANTHA: Omar, I can assure you that you have not been drugged. I wish to be open and honest with you. You are currently in a quite secret facility in Latvia. You were transported here with the use of a technology that is in the possession of only a handful of organizations in the world. We specialize in temporal displacement. We can move anyone or anything—like the chairs we are sitting on—through time and space to the moment and location of our choosing.

OMAR: Bullshit!

SAMANTHA: Omar. Please name any single object from your home.

OMAR: What?

SAMANTHA: Name any single object from your home. Better yet, name something that was in your home but has since gone missing. Or perhaps you have given or thrown it away. Think of something precise, with identifying marks. Something that only you would recognize. Name it, and I'll get Felix to bring it here instantaneously.

OMAR: I—... I-I don't understand.

SAMANTHA: It's very simple. Name something you used to own that you would recognize.

OMAR: Er... shit. I-I— I don't know what... Um... Uh... Okay, uh. A dog bowl. Luna's dog bowl. She had it when she was a puppy, but chewed it up a year ago. Stephen wanted to keep it, but I threw it away.

SAMANTHA: What color was it? What was it made of? Any particular way of recognizing it?

OMAR: Uh, black plastic. It had Luna's name printed on the side with glitter paint.

SAMANTHA: Felix? Did you get that?

FELIX *[via intercom]*: Yes, thank you. One moment please. *[Beat.]* Alright. Transporting in three, two, one...

[Time travel noise, followed by the clunk of a plastic bowl hitting the tiled floor.]

OMAR: Who the fuck are you people?

SAMANTHA: I'm trying to explain that. We are an organization that specializes in temporal displacement, and we are in need of your services. You see—

OMAR: My services? ...What—? ...What—? What, what, what, what, what do you *mean*?

SAMANTHA: Please stop interrupting me. [**OMAR:** For fuck's sake!] This will be far easier if you just sit and listen.

OMAR: *[Deep breath.]* Okay.

SAMANTHA: We need your help. We're changing a few things around here. We have had some quite unreliable staff, and we have decided to replace them. We can handle much of the training with our existing staff, but we are missing some in-house expertise, and you have the knowledge and the skills to plug those gaps.

OMAR: You're trying to... recruit me? I already have a job!

SAMANTHA: Yes. You're the executive product manager for one of the world's foremost cloud-based spreadsheet applications. You are exactly what we're looking for. And I promise, it's only a very short-term contract, and your current employers won't even notice you're missing.

OMAR: Listen, I don't have time for this. I have no idea what's going on here. It's very impressive and very convincing, but I'm not the kind of guy that people fuck around with. If I'm not on the seven a.m. all-parties call tomorrow, people are gonna come looking for me.

SAMANTHA: No. They're not. We can make it so that no one will even remember that you ever existed.

OMAR [*dismissive*]: [*Laughs.*] Yeah, whatever. I'm bored of this now.

SAMANTHA: Felix. Please get ready with Stage Two.

FELIX [*via intercom*]: I-I really, really don't think this is a good idea if you're going to stay in the room. Please, please just come back to the control room.

SAMANTHA: Felix. I won't ask again. Are you ready?

FELIX [*via intercom*]: ...Yes.

SAMANTHA: Omar. Please take out your phone and google "Stephen Keller shipping attorney." Got it?

OMAR: Uh-huh?

SAMANTHA: I'm sure you'll see your husband's very impressive profile on his firm's website? Yes? Good. Now look in your contacts; there he is, yes? Listed under "Hubba Hubby." Now look at your camera roll. Thousands and thousands of quite repetitive pictures of your mongrel dog. [**OMAR:** She's a pure breed.] That's your entire life, isn't it? Please put your phone away again. Felix, please implement Stage Two.

FELIX [*via intercom*]: That's done.

SAMANTHA: Ah, there we are. [*Beat.*] Your husband and your dog are dead.

OMAR: What—... do you...? What!?

SAMANTHA: 15 years ago, you went on a wonderful first date with an interesting, handsome, and remarkably successful young lawyer called "Steve." You had a second, third, fourth... tenth... twentieth date with him. And then one day he stopped calling. You tracked him down, and he told you that he had a horrible illness. He told you it couldn't be helped... it was terminal. He told you that he could not bear to be with you another second, as he'd finally met the man he

wanted to spend the rest of his life with... but now he'd learned that that life was too short. He didn't want you to go through that pain. He wanted you to remember him as that great guy who... sadly just stopped calling one day. And then you never saw him again. He wouldn't let you near. You've spent every week, month, year ever since pining for him. Refusing to move on. It was a generational love, it was borderline obscene, and it died with Stephen Keller.

OMAR [*distraught at this idea*]: What—... What are you talking about? That's... We got married! We have—

SAMANTHA: You... have... nothing. Even your mongrel dog never existed. Look into your mind. Into your memories. You know that everything I'm saying is true. And with every second, it's becoming more and more true. More fixed in your heart. Look at your phone. No "Hubba Hubby" there in the contacts, is there? No law firm profile. Look in your photos... no dog. Your life, as you knew it, is gone. It's over. This was child's play. We can do it to anyone, if we choose to. Your life is gone, and we took it from you.

OMAR: It's... It can't be! What are you doing to me? How are you doing this!? I... What have you done with Stephen?

SAMANTHA: It's remarkably simple. That was your "stick"... and now for your "carrot". If you do exactly as I say, and take on this job, I can undo all of this. Spend the next month or so here assisting with my project and, once we're done, Felix will send you back to where you came from. You will have no memory of ever having been here. It won't even be a dream or a whisper on the wind... it will simply never, ever have happened. You will be back to your husband, back to your stupidly-named dog. Back to your high-flying career. You will still have that smug, satisfied smile every time you think about how perfect your life is and how much you have achieved. To put it in terms you might understand: I will put the bunny back in the box. Do we have a deal?

OMAR: [*Long pause.*] What do you need me to do?

SAMANTHA: [*Smiling.*] Hmm. I need you to teach 200 identical copies of the same eight-year-old girl how to use Microsoft Excel.

[*Closing theme starts playing.*]

CREDITS: This has been WOE.BEGONE.

The voice of Troy was Athan. Check out his podcast [*The Grotto*](#) and the upcoming [*\[REDACTED\]*](#).

The voice of Chance was Taylor Michaels. You can check him out in [*The Grotto*](#), too, as well as [*Forged Bonds*](#).

The voice of CANNONBALL was Nathan Lunsford. Check out his podcast [*The Storage Papers*](#).

The Samantha Chronicles are written, produced, and edited by Ben Rowe. The voice of Felix is Ben Rowe.

The voice of Samantha is Fay Roberts.

And introducing the voice of Omar Habib, Karim Kronfli.

I agree with Samantha. Luna is obviously a cat's name. Thanks for playing.

[Closing theme plays out.]

[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]

BLOOPER (CANNONBALL): "I know this a lie don't DM me." *[Breaks character and quietly laughs.]* I'm assuming that's your note to me and, uh, Tay. *[Quiet laugh.]*

[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]

BLOOPER (CHANCE): I don't know how serious he was, but you'll notice that there's only one of me and one of him. *[Breaks character and laughs.]* "I know this is a lie don't DM me." *[Laughs.]* To clarify for folks at home, that is what is said verbatim in the script. *[Back in character.]* But you'll notice there's only one of me and one of him. I know this is a lie; don't DM me. And we are never the topic of these sorts of discussions.

[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]

BLOOPER (CHANCE): You get a pass for now, but watch your back. *[Brief laugh.]* So, that's what you missed on *Glee!*

[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]

BLOOPER (CHANCE): *[Witch-like.]* Hey, Stinky! *[Laughs.]* Hey, Stinky.

[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]

BLOOPER (CHANCE): 'Ey yo, who up John Carpentering they thing?

[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]

BLOOPER (CHANCE): Huh? Mickey? "Mickey"? *[Mickey Mouse voice.]* Hello! *[Quietly laughs.]* I'm gonna sic a polar bear on ya, haha! Step away from the device, haha! *[Quietly laughs.]* I

work for CANNONBALL now, and we have nefarious motives that I still don't fully understand!
Hoho! *[Laughs.]*

BLOOPER (CHANCE): Huh? Mickey— *[Breaks character.]* Fuck, I can't! *[Laughing.]* Why can't I read this name? Oh, my god, okay.

[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]

BLOOPER (CHANCE): Ooh, I don't think Edgar's gonna be very happy about that. So, you don't think that MDawg is edited, but what about Mikey? Does he pass mustard? *[Breaks character.]* God, I don't think Chance would ever fucking say "pass mustard." ...Oh! Wait. Is that—? Wait. Is "pass mustard" a phrase, or is this a Mustardseed joke? Hang on. Or— Wait, hang on. *[Laughs.]* Okay, wait, actually, hang on. Is it pass "muster" or "mustard"? I don't... Wait, hang on, I don't know if this is intentional or not.

[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]

BLOOPER (CHANCE): Marissa, Edgar, and Ryan are in their meeting, Troy's at his mansion with his iterations, Shadow's at work, and MDawg's in the Yoga Palace. *[Breaks character.]* Oh, I call him "Shadow"! Oh, fuck! Oh, shit!

[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]

[END Episode 194.]