

Season 3: Episode 4

“Backdraft”

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how it ends



NETWORK INTRO

Rusty Quill Presents...

STEPHANIE [Voiceover]

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**[INTRO MUSIC FADE IN]**

MICAH [Voiceover]

That feeling when you hear someone call your name and you turn, but no one's there, and shiver runs down your spine. When something moves just out of vision and it sets in. The sense that someone, or something is watching you. Do you know that feeling? Good. It means you're paying attention.

I'm Micah Jones. My friends and I started this podcast to explore my dreams and nightmares and to help me finally deal with my dad's death, even after all this time. Instead, we stumbled onto something much darker, something we were never meant to find out. My dreams aren't just dreams. They're memories. Warnings. I should have paid closer attention. And my dad? He's at the center of it all.

The How it Ends Podcast is no longer releasing in real time. We can't. It isn't safe. But if you're just finding us, start at the beginning. Thank you for listening.

**[INTRO MUSIC FADE OUT]**

[Voiceover]

The events that are about to unfold occurred at the end of February 2020.

**[SCENE TRANSITION]**

MICAH

I've had this before. Someone made me drink it. And... and now I think I remember. Aimee, they weren't smiling. There was- there was no one smiling at me. They were- they were all wearing masks.

[Pause]

AIMEE

What do you mean, they were all wearing masks? Who was wearing masks?

MICAH

The people in the woods.

ELIA

[Sighs]

Oh... no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

DEVON

Elia, let me help you.

AIMEE

What people, Micah?

MICAH

I... I can see them, sort of. Um. Whatever this stuff is, this- this drink? It's the smell.

AIMEE

Okay. Um. Can we take a couple steps back? Just please, try to explain what you mean.

MICAH

[Deep breath]

There were three of them. Um. The one in the middle was really tall. I- I don't know. They had- They had masks on.

DEVON

You're saying you saw people wearing masks? But when? Like, recently?

MICAH

No. Uh... The day we went to Duke Island Park. I hiked by myself.

AIMEE

Yeah?

MICAH

Yeah. It- It's like the dream. I- I was walking by the water. I- I was looking around at the trees, and- and I was mad at you for leaving and then I heard someone behind me. I remember thinking that it was you for a second. You know, feeling bad about bailing. I turned around to say something and then... I go blank.

The next thing I remember is three people, I think? Standing in front of me, wearing masks.

DEVON

What kind of masks? Halloween masks?

MICAH

Almost like a... Like surgical masks...? No. Uh... That's not right. Like... Like cloth covering their mouth and nose and I think there was some kind of symbol on it.

AIMEE

Could you draw the symbol?

MICAH

[Sighs]

**[SOUND OF DRAWING ON PAPER]**

It... Um. I think it looks like this. Um... It's kind of fuzzy. I- I can't be sure.

DEVON

When you said one of the people you saw was tall.

MICAH

Yeah. Um. The one in the middle. But... I... I think I might have been on the ground? Or... Or in a chair? I don't- I don't think I could move.

DEVON

The one in the middle was wearing a mask with something that looked like this symbol?

MICAH

Yeah- Yes. I think so.

DEVON

The Grinning Man.

AIMEE

What?

DEVON

The Grinning Man. Way back, Elia found that book in Salem. We were flipping through it and joking around. And Micah got all freaked out about one of the entries. It was called The Grinning Man.

AIMEE

Okay.

DEVON

Well, look at that symbol again.

AIMEE

It sort of looks like a warped Amazon logo.

DEVON

Which looks a bit like a smile. A big one. Micah, maybe this is why you reacted the way that you did. You know, you read about the tall man with the strangely wide smile and... What if you're remembering a tall person wearing a mask with this symbol on it? Your subconscious somehow made that connection.

AIMEE

When did that happen again? When did you see this book?

MICAH

Right when we started this whole thing. You know, when I was having *The Dream* over and over.

AIMEE

Wait. I remember listening to that. Isn't that around the same time that your apartment was broken into and the kitchen was trashed?

MICAH

Yeah.

DEVON

Someone left that message. "You've been warned."

MICAH

Yes.

DEVON

Is that what they were warning you about?

AIMEE

But how... Wait. Didn't you release all that information at the same time? You found the book, and the break-in was the same night.

MICAH

Yeah. And?

AIMEE

So how would someone have known about you finding the book and having a memory triggered if you hadn't even released the episode yet? How could someone warn you about something that you hadn't aired? How would they know you found the book? How would they have information to even want to threaten you?

ELIA

Because we were already being watched.

DEVON

Wait. What?

ELIA

It- It's because we started this whole thing. You know, we started airing our lives and putting everything out there... We were fucked from the moment we started to do this thing. They... They've been watching us the whole time. And... It's my fault.

AIMEE

But why? Why would someone be watching you? And who's they?

ELIA

Micah, I'm... so sorry. I- I made you start doing this show and- and I pushed... pushed everyone to start recording and--

AIMEE

No. Elia. You already had a bad feeling. You guys were going to stop. You knew it wasn't right. This all could have ended, but then I showed up. You told me you were done, and I pushed you all to keep going.

MICAH

Yeah, but if... If someone was watching us from the very beginning, I'm the one who gave them access to us. The podcast was just supposed to be about dreams and- and tarot, you know? And-and- and I flipped the script super early on. I started recording our lives, our- our hangouts. [Ragged breath] Our locations.

DEVON

Okay. Okay. Y'all need to stop taking blame for this. This isn't anyone's fault. Really, the only person or people to blame here are the ones who've been... I don't know. Doing whatever this shit is. These boxes. Following us, apparently.

AIMEE

If something that happened to Micah as a child is so relevant to someone right now that they're trying to silence us? Silence her?

Wait. Didn't you have a second break-in?

DEVON

Yeah. An attempted one, anyway. Thought it was some kids just playing a prank. Possibly because... They'd heard the podcast and wanted to have some fun with us.

MICAH

No. It- It wasn't an attempt. I told you. Someone tried to get in. And- and I know when everything was happening, that... You know, it sounded like I was accusing you, but- but I wasn't. I was just... Someone was about to walk through the door. And whoever it was, wasn't you.

DEVON

They probably heard me running down the stairs and took off. Because I didn't see anyone.

ELIA

And... remember you told us what happened to those cameras you installed?

DEVON

Oh, right. The camera in the front hallway malfunctioned. So there wasn't a recording of who might have done it.

AIMEE

Micah, remember when we met up at Riff Raff? And you told me someone sent you the recording of the first break-in?

MICAH

Mm-hmm. (affirmative)

AIMEE

Like of you breathing, of Mulder meowing. The kitchen being destroyed.



MICAH

Yeah.

AIMEE

That was another warning. They were reminding you that they could get to you.

MICAH

Yeah, I mean. You said as much. You bought me a baseball bat. But, you know, the file was sent to me when we were playing D&D in New Jersey after--

ELIA

After we found out about Schrade.

MICAH

Yeah, but... I didn't... I didn't listen to it fully until Luke called. Which was weeks later.

[Pause]

AIMEE

What if it actually wasn't a prank? What if, truly, all of this is connected? I mean, we've only been focusing on the packages. You all just wrote off the other stuff.

DEVON

Well... Micah didn't. Initially, anyway.

MICAH

I mean, around that time, I definitely thought everything had some big meaning, that it was all... you know. Part of a bigger story, but after I met with Mark and he told me about my dad's accident, I don't know... I- I just let it... I let it go.

ELIA

I think we're all still forgetting the fact that, you know, Luke just popped up out of thin air, right when this started happening. You know, like a fucking creep? It was really convenient.

MICAH

I don't... know how Luke fits into any of this, but m-my gut feeling is that he wouldn't do anything to hurt us.

ELIA

He literally threatened me. Like...

[Pause]

And what does any of this have to do with the liqueur? Like, how did this trigger your memory all of a sudden?

MICAH

I-I- I don't know. How the fuck does olfactory memory work? I- I just- I smelled it and- and I remembered.

ELIA

Well. What about it made you remember? You know, there's a ton of herbs in it? Any wild herbs grow in Duke Island Park? You know, any that would connect to your memory?

MICAH

I have no idea, Elia. I just... I just... I lifted it up to my face, and bam! Memory. I- I... I haven't been to that park in decades and I definitely don't know what grows or used to grow there.

ELIA

Okay. Well. You said you had something like it before? Um... have you ever had Jager? Uh... It's similar. Has Jager ever done this to you?

MICAH

No. Never. Also, yuck.

AIMEE

Micah. I think we need to slow down and spell out what this could mean. You came to Luke's house with a head injury. If your memory's right, that means these people hurt you. They hit your head with something. That's fucking scary.

ELIA

Yeah, see? See? And Luke was there that day, too, so... Who else would know all of this--?

MICAH

[Interrupting]

Elia.

[Pause]

Okay. Maybe Luke is involved, maybe not. But be realistic, here. Luke was with Aimee all day. He doesn't know any more than she does. He was also fourteen years old. Just because you want something to be true, doesn't mean you can force it to be true.

ELIA

Okay. Well. Even if he wasn't part of the group of people who hurt you... All I'm saying is maybe he has some kind of interest in digging this up.

AIMEE

So much changed after that day.

MICAH

Yeah?

AIMEE

We stopped being friends. You isolated yourself. It was already kind of happening a bit, after Nolan... But that day sped it up. First, you stopped talking to me. You never came over anymore, and when I'd stop by your house you either weren't there, or your mom said you were busy. And then high school started--

MICAH

We were at different schools.

AIMEE

Yeah. But... we lived on the same street. We knew all the same people in our neighborhood. Our other friends never saw you anymore, either. I asked. I remember thinking how crazy it was to live in the same small town as someone, right down the street, but never, ever see them. It was like you were a ghost.

[Pause]

MICAH

I just wanted out.

AIMEE

Yeah. But... Did anything else like this ever happen to you again?

MICAH

Hmm. No. I don't think so. I kept my head down. Studied. And then I moved here for college.

AIMEE

Yeah. Maybe that's why--

DEVON

The thing that bothers me most... is it's hard to tell what has meaning and what's coincidence. Obviously, something terrible happened to Micah then. Something is definitely going on now. But how much of that... stuff that happened last year is connected to that? How much are just looping in because it's weird, you know? Weird shit happens all the time.

ELIA

Uh... Micah. When's your next session with Billie?

MICAH

I'd have to check my calendar. Why?

ELIA

I don't... I just think you need to talk to them.

MICAH

[Laughs darkly]

And say what, Elia? That I've been stalked my whole life? Or... uh... or that I was kidnapped by people in masks when I was a kid, but no worries! I'm good now. Or- Or that I think that someone manipulated me and that they're doing it again. Yeah. Right away. Please hand me the phone.

ELIA

[Sighs]

Micah. I don't know. They care about you. They'll try to help.

MICAH

Okay. Sorry. Right. But they also might think that I'm having hallucinations. I agree, I need help. But I don't think Billie is where I'm going to get it.

ELIA

Well, you don't have to tell them everything, you know? Maybe just... talk more about... like your life after... that day. And-and what it was like to leave New Jersey. And... and living here before you met me and Devon.

MICAH

What do you think we talk about?

ELIA

I don't know. I just... I... maybe they can help you remember more.

AIMEE

See, that's it. That part. You're remembering things. You started the podcast because of the recurring dream you were having. The idea was to unpack it all, do tarot readings. Interpret it until it went away, right? This is a dream you've had for how long?

MICAH

I think since I was a teenager.

AIMEE

And you said at the beginning that you started to have the dream more and more. Like it was impacting your health. You couldn't sleep a night through. You were always exhausted.

MICAH

Yeah.

AIMEE

That's the part that's bothering me.

[Pause]

If it's a dream you've had for this long, what triggers it? Is it being in Somerville? Is it the time of year? Do you only have it after you hike? Like, what else is significant?

Also. Elia, you said that the only way anyone would know that Micah might be on to something with this dream, or that her response to the Grinning Man thing could cause her to remember the people in masks... The only way someone could know that is if they were already watching her. Watching all of you. But why?

DEVON

Micah. Wasn't that year a big anniversary of when...?

MICAH

My dad died.

AIMEE

Yeah. It was 25 years. You started the podcast that year. You started pushing on that bruise, you know? You started thinking and talking more about your dad. And you never talked about him after he died. You just shut down.

But because you all started this show, we found out you were in the truck that night, which is something that only a handful of people knew. Something that could change the story of what really happened that night.

Micah, your gut told you that this is connected to your dad. No one else could make sense of why you felt that way.

DEVON

That's true. I mean... I was definitely trying to support you, but... it didn't make sense to me.

AIMEE

But maybe she was right. Maybe there is more to the story. Maybe the night of Nolan's accident...

MICAH

Wasn't actually an accident.

DEVON

And you're the only person who knows what really happened.

AIMEE

No. That's wrong. Someone else knows what happened that night, too.

**[SCENE TRANSITION]**

AIMEE

After everyone left this morning, I couldn't stop my brain from going over everything we talked about.

I think Micah's been right all along. She was right even before she knew there was anything to be right about. I think this all has something to do with Nolan. The accident, the packages, the dream. The people in the masks and whatever they did to Micah that day. I think it's all connected. I don't know the locations or the symbols fit together, but they do. I'm almost sure of it.

Elia took the stuff that came in the packages home with her. She's going to try and find a link. It's there. We're just not seeing it.

[Pause]

[Sigh]

I hope Micah doesn't hate me for this, but I think I need to talk to Ava.

**[PHONE RINGS, OUTGOING]**

AUTOMATED VOICE

Your call cannot be completed as dialed. Please check the number and dial again.

AIMEE

Strange. Maybe she changed her number? It has been a while. I'll see if my mom has it.

**[PHONE RINGS, OUTGOING]**

GAIL

Hello?

AIMEE

Hey, mom.

GAIL

Hello, Amelia. To what do I owe the pleasure?

AIMEE

[Sighs]

GAIL

I just mean that it's been some time since we've spoken.

AIMEE

Right. Yes. I'm sorry. It's just been... I've been busy.

GAIL

Hmm. Too busy to call your mother?

AIMEE

Okay. You made your point, mom.

GAIL

I'm teasing. I'm so busy with work, book club and the gym, I'm hardly ever home anyway. You just happened to catch me, actually.



AIMEE

You know, mom. The point of having a cell phone is for people to be able to reach you wherever you are.

GAIL

Oh, you know. I don't like to feel like I'm on a leash. If I have someone I need to call, I turn it on.

AIMEE

But what if someone wants to call you? What if there's an emergency?

GAIL

Amelia, please. I don't want to argue with you.

AIMEE

[Sigh]

Okay. Well. Anyway, the reason I'm calling is to see if you have Ava's phone number? I just tried calling her, but it's out of service or something.

GAIL

So this isn't a social call, then?

AIMEE

Mom.

GAIL

What do you need to speak to Ava about? Do you even talk to Micah anymore?

AIMEE

Yeah. I do. Well. Now I do--

GAIL

I'll look for it. Well, while I do, catch me up. What's going on in your life? How's your practice? Are you good with money?

AIMEE

Work is... good. Yeah. I mean, I actually lost like four patients last week, which was weird. Three of them were long-term ones,

too. But um.. it's not too bad of a hit. Money's still fine. Really, I was overbooked anyway.

GAIL

That's too bad. These things happen, though. I'm sure you have nothing to worry about.

AIMEE

I don't.. think I said I was worried.

GAIL

I was just saying, Amelia.

AIMEE

Just saying what? I called--

GAIL

We don't talk on the phone very often and this is how we start our conversation?

AIMEE

Okay. How are things with you?

GAIL

You know, mostly the same. Taking yoga classes, walking a few miles a day. My friend Christine needed help going through a backlog of paperwork at the police department, so I picked up a couple more hours per week helping her.

AIMEE

In Somerville?

GAIL

Oh, no. Hillsborough.

AIMEE

Oh, well that's pretty interesting--

GAIL

Hmm. What else? Oh, that reminds me. You sent me a picture of your bedroom the other day after you got new bedding.

AIMEE

Oh. Yeah, I didn't know if you got that... because you didn't respond.

GAIL

I didn't have anything to say after I saw it.

AIMEE

Okay, but you--

GAIL

I did wonder where you purchased your lamps. The ones on your side table. I need something like that for the guest room.

AIMEE

Do you mean Brenden's room?

GAIL

Amelia, it's a guest room.

AIMEE

Well, when did you change it?

GAIL

I can't say I know what you mean. It's a guest room. Where are the lamps from? I opened my laptop just now, I'll search for them.

AIMEE

Oh, well, I found them at a thrift store, actually.

GAIL

Oh. So I can't buy them online?

AIMEE

Probably not.

GAIL

That's disappointing.

[Pause]

AIMEE

How's dad?

GAIL

Like I said, I'm so busy. It truly feels as though I'm only home to sleep these days. But he's fine. I see him in the evenings and we have dinner at the club on Sundays.

AIMEE

Well. I guess I'll let you go.

GAIL

Thanks. I do have to run, actually. I have a meeting at the club in an hour. I need to get myself ready.

AIMEE

Okay, well I'll talk to you--

GAIL

Bye, dear. Thanks for calling.

**[CALL DISCONNECTS]**

AIMEE

...to you later. Shit. I forgot to get Ava's number. Do I even bother calling old Gail back again?

[Sigh]

No. I'll wait. Maybe it's a sign that I shouldn't be talking to Ava anyway. I'm sure Micah would be really pissed at me if I did that.

[Sigh]

Nolan is at the center of this. But there's something bigger going on. I can feel it.

**[SCENE TRANSITION]**

[OUTRO MUSIC]

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Transcribed by [Evelyn Archer](#)