

Encapsulated Season 4 Episode 10

EXT. DOWNTOWN AREA - DAY

As the sun rises, the mother parks her car at a meter, then starts walking around.

Her face looks empty, like she's numb, wandering aimlessly among the parks and buildings.

INT. COLE'S STUDIO - DAY

Cole looks equally numb, sitting at the table, staring longingly out the window.

Suddenly, he sees the mother walking past the window, and his eyes go wide.

COLE

Elena??

He rushes to the door, opens it, and calls after her.

COLE

Elena!

(she turns)

Hey! It IS you!

She recognizes him and seems to snap back into reality.

ELENA

Cole??

COLE

Yeah! Hey!

They walk toward each other and embrace briefly.

COLE

Good to see you... Do you want to come inside and catch up? If you're busy, that's totally-

ELENA

No, no yeah, I've got- yes. Let's catch up.

INT. COLE'S GALLERY - DAY

They're seated at the table; Elena is admiring the room.

ELENA

This is a nice place.

COLE

Thanks. I also live here.

(she looks confused)

In the back. It's like an apartment.

ELENA

Ah. Is this supposed to be ironic, that there's no paintings on the wall?

COLE

(chuckles)

No. I'm just, I'm working on a new exhibit.

ELENA

Got it.

(pause)

You still single?

COLE

Yeah. I prefer it though. You know how I am.

(they chuckle)

And you're with - I'm so sorry, I feel bad that we haven't kept in touch since graduation.

ELENA

I don't think ANYONE from our group did...

(they chuckle)

And yes, I married David.

COLE

David. Right. I liked him.

ELENA

Yeah... We have a... HAD a son, Jacob, but...

(she sighs)

I'm sorry, it's- I lost them both, yesterday, during the...

COLE

Shoot... I'm so sorry...

He moves his chair closer and consoles her.

COLE

I didn't realize that- If you need to go do-

ELENA

No, no I'm-

(tearing up)

I don't know WHAT to do. I was literally just... This morning I woke up and I thought...

(she starts crying)

It's like I'm suffocating, and I'm underwater, except I'm not even SWIMMING, like I'm not even TRYING to escape. I just... I've given up, and I didn't even choose to. It just happened.

(she wipes the tears away)

I'm so sorry to unload that, that's probably not what you're- Sorry...

COLE

No, no it's okay. I actually, I also just lost... He wasn't family, so I can't even imagine, but, we met when this all started, and we got to be pretty close...

ELENA

I'm sorry, that's...

(she sighs)

What do you even say? Like, with everything that's been happening, what's the 'right thing' to tell people?

COLE

Well, my go-to is 'thoughts and prayers'.

(they both chuckle)

It's both compassionate AND generic.

ELENA

Right, yeah it conveys sympathy for ANY tragedy, without any specificity that requires you to actually CARE about the person.

COLE  
It's basically perfect.

ELENA  
I agree.

They both laugh, like a pressure valve being released.

ELENA  
You have not changed at all...

COLE  
Should I be offended?

ELENA  
(chuckles)  
Nah. I needed cheering up. Thanks.

COLE  
Same. I needed that too.

They chuckle some more, then Elena gets up and starts perusing the gallery. Cole joins her.

ELENA  
Alright, so what's your next-  
(she notices the tape on the wall)  
Oh. Plague ten. Okay. So, you're doing like, paintings of the plagues?  
(she pauses)  
Sorry, ANOMALIES.

COLE  
(chuckles)  
Yeah. It's like a, imagine if the plagues were unleashed in ancient Egypt. I'm doing a different painting for each one.

ELENA  
Okay, interesting. Seems redundant, but...

COLE  
(confused)  
Why's that?

ELENA

(brushes it off)

Never mind. I'm just being a critic.

(she chuckles)

So like, are you doing anything abstract, or modern with it? I feel like your projects always had some pull-the-rug-out irony to them.

COLE

Well, the irony is that it's like the original plagues of Egypt, but with the modern ones.

ELENA

Right, that's why it's redundant...

COLE

Why? I still don't follow...

ELENA

Because they already had the plagues.

COLE

Right, no yeah, but not THESE plagues. Not what WE experienced.

Now Elena is confused. She stops and turns toward him.

ELENA

Okay, if we're splitting hairs, you're right, they weren't LITERALLY the same exact plagues. We didn't have the SAME locusts or the SAME hail or the SAME frogs...

COLE

What are- no. No, those were the ones from the original story. I'm putting in the ones that-  
(catches himself)  
Sorry. I'm probably just not explaining it well.

ELENA

No, I think I get it. I'm just-  
(she finds the label for the first plague)  
So like here. The first one. What will your painting look like?

COLE

So for that, it'll show Egyptians who are all passed out and asleep.

ELENA

Why?

COLE

Because that was the first one...

Elena stops again, and glares at him this time.

ELENA

Okay, be honest, is this supposed to be part of the exhibit? Like, you gas-light people into misremembering the plagues?

COLE

What? No. No, that's- the first one was when everyone fell asleep.

(Elena rolls her eyes)

Okay, Elena, I swear, I'm not gas-lighting you. This isn't a trick. I promise.

ELENA

Okay... So what were the other ones?

COLE

So let me see... We had the sleep, the overflow in the stores, everything in black and white...

(Elena is puzzled)

What did YOU have?

ELENA

Blood. Frogs. Flies. Locusts. Hail...

COLE

Okay. So, you're saying, you remember that those happened to YOU?

(she nods)

The same ones from Exodus?

ELENA

So far.

COLE

So far?

ELENA

Well, we've only had the first nine...

(she sighs)

And to think, I was so worried about the tenth...

COLE

The tenth... The tenth... Oh, the death of-

(it clicks)

Right. Sorry... I'm really-

(he's still confused though)

What about the Modern Moses?

ELENA

You mean Lynn? I don't know, I haven't followed the news lately.

COLE

Lynn?

ELENA

Duvall. And Pauline Simon? The modern Moses and Pharaoh back-and-forth that never actually made any progress?

(Cole looks at her blankly)

Jesus, Cole, this isn't funny anymore.

COLE

I'm not- Sorry. I'm not... That's not what I remember happening. And I...

(he has an idea)

Okay. Please don't freak out. I don't mean to be disrespectful, I'm just trying to make sense of-

ELENA

What? Just say it.

COLE

Well... What if the... The trauma from losing your husband and son was so intense, your brain... Re-remembered the plagues in a way that you were familiar with? Like a coping mechanism?

ELENA

Unbelievable...

(she starts to leave)

You really HAVEN'T changed. It is SHOCKING how detached you are. Honestly.

COLE

(follows after her)

Wait, wait wait- I'm sorry.

(she stops)

Maybe I'M doing that. Maybe it was YOUR plagues, and I'm just misremember-

(suddenly the lightbulb goes off)

Oh... Ohhhh...

ELENA

What?

COLE

I think this is the last one... It's like...

(he's suddenly in awe)

It's like everyone had their own version, and now we're all in the same reality again.

ELENA

What do you mean, the same reality?

COLE

That's insane... So, okay, so YOU really DID experience the Moses plagues. In YOUR reality. Maybe other people did, too... Maybe there were groups for different sets of plagues...

(Elena is intrigued)

And in MY reality, I experienced something else. But now, we're- We're re-combining...

ELENA

So... Would the effects carry over? Would the-

(she suddenly pulls out her phone)

You better be right...

Cole is confused. She turns toward the window, dials her husband's number, and waits. It rings, no answer, and Elena starts pacing anxiously. Then somebody picks up.

DAVID (PHONE)

Elena? Where are you?

ELENA

David?

(she almost drops the phone)

Are you at the house? Are you okay?

DAVID (PHONE)

Yeah, I'm fine. Why, is there-

ELENA

Is Jacob there?

DAVID (PHONE)

Yeah. He's asleep.

ELENA

(gasps)

Can you- can you wake him up?

DAVID (PHONE)

Okay... Yeah, just a second...

She paces and waits for him. Cole is starting to realize what's happening.

JACOB (PHONE)

Mommy?

She drops the phone, stares at Cole, then runs outside and sprints to her car.

Meanwhile, Cole looks up Murray's name. He checks their text message history: it's blank. Then he checks through their call history: nothing, no calls.

COLE

No, no no no no...

(he dials the number)

This can't be happening, this isn't...

MURRAY (PHONE)

Hello? This is Murray.

COLE

Murray! Hey! It's Cole! You're-  
(he starts hyperventilating)  
You're, do you- How's it going?

MURRAY (PHONE)

Good... Cole, Cole... I can't place that... I am  
severely hungover though...

COLE

(laughs while hyperventilating)  
Cole, Cole! The artist. We uh-  
(pacing frantically)  
We met on the plane, from Portland, it was...  
Maybe two, three weeks-

MURRAY (PHONE)

Cole! Yeah, I remember. Hey, man! Good to hear  
from you again! What's up?  
(Cole can't talk)  
Hey, shit, you're the guy with the glass gallery  
aren't you? Did you get that fixed?

COLE

Did I- No, no I, why? What do you mean?

MURRAY (PHONE)

From the glass breaking! Wait, let me remember...  
(pauses)  
Yeah. Because, I gotta get the order right...  
(chuckles)  
We had the one where we SHRANK. Thank God I was  
in a restaurant for that one, could you imagine?  
Where were you? Anyways... Cause yeah, THEN it was  
the glass breaking. Because after that was when  
everything FROZE, which fricking SUCKED, because  
all the WINDOWS were broken, and people couldn't  
replace them fast enough...  
(Cole collapses on the ground)  
Actually man, is your gallery open right now?  
I'm leaving town soon, but I'd love to stop by  
and see you before I go. I'm moving to Orlando,  
got a flight out tomorrow... What's it called?  
Wait, I can probably search for 'glass gallery...'

FOR THE REST OF THE EPISODE, THE ONLY SOUND IS FROM  
GNOSSIENNE NO. 1 (THE LOOPING SONG).

Elena is driving as fast as she can back to her house.

Cole's phone is setting on the table - Murray is still on  
the call, but Cole is outside, painting the window.

Out in the woods, at Modern Moses's trailer home, the FBI  
arrives with several armored vehicles. They break inside:  
he's nowhere to be found.

Elena pulls up to the house, and sees the truck, undamaged,  
parked in the garage. She gets out and runs inside.

Pauline and several other CEOs are at a press conference,  
making promises and pledges for long-term changes - though  
the crowd doesn't believe them, and they storm the stage.

Murray is driving through the downtown area. None of the  
damage, destruction, temporary shelters, guards, or impact  
from either reality have carried over. It's like the city  
reset itself back to before it all started.

It actually catches Murray off guard - he's especially  
confused that so many windows are intact.

David is holding Elena tightly. Jacob comes downstairs,  
and Elena runs over to him and embraces him. David joins  
the group hug. Elena is sobbing with relief.

Finally, Murray arrives at the gallery. A small crowd has  
gathered out front.

On the window, in blood-red letters, Cole has written:  
If Nothing's Real, Then Nothing Matters.

Murray pushes his way to the front. Cole is on the ground,  
passed out from the blood loss: he cut his wrists with a  
shard of glass. But there's a tourniquet around his arm,  
and a passerby is trying to resuscitate him..

FADE OUT.