

Encapsulated Season 4 Episode 5

FADE IN:

EXT. LOS ANGELES DOWNTOWN - DAY

We see various long-shots and panoramic views of the city: buildings, traffic, fog, all in black and white.

COLE (VOICE)

Los Angeles. 1922. Restless. Corrupt. Broken.
City of angels. But the only angels here are-
(dramatic pause)
Fallen.

Switch to a shot of Murray, with a nice suit, a fedora, and a cigar. Also in black and white. He's brooding and leaning against a bridge railing.

COLE (VOICE)

But what truth lies beneath this lifeless shell?
What secrets wait, buried in the filth?
(dramatic pause)
And can the city be redeemed?

MURRAY

No. No it cannot.
(looks at the camera)
Not yet.

Switch viewpoints to show that Cole was filming him with his video camera. Cole chuckles, stops filming, and puts the lens cap on. He's also wearing a suit and a fedora.

COLE

Perfect. I think I've got enough.

MURRAY

You sure? This whole freaking noir thing won't last forever. Gotta enjoy it, man.

COLE

Well, I suppose if you had a Tommy gun, we could work that in... Do you?

MURRAY

Do I look like I have a Tommy gun?

COLE

I don't- I don't know, actually, to be honest,
it could go either way.

MURRAY

Fair.

(takes a puff of the cigar)
I don't, by the way.
(hands him the cigar)
You wanna try?

COLE

Nah, thanks.

MURRAY

Suit yourself... Ha. Suit.

They chuckle as they stroll through the grayscale city.

MURRAY

Hey, isn't this gonna be... What's the word...
Having modern cars and shit in the video?

COLE

Anachronistic?

MURRAY

Yeah. Cause it's supposed to be 1920, so...

COLE

I know. It's called art. Sir.
(he chuckles)
Come on. I got the interview.

MURRAY

Oh yeah, shoot. Let's go.
(they walk quietly for a bit)
Hey, do you mind if I- Can I crash it? If not,
that's totally fine.

Cole thinks it over, then smiles mischievously.

INT. COLE'S STUDIO - DAY

Cole and Murray are wearing their fedoras, suits, and sunglasses while sitting across from the INTERVIEWER.

Murray is still smoking his cigar. The interviewer seems confused by their getup.

INTERVIEWER

I'm sorry, who are you?

COLE

He's my broker. We call him... The Breaker.

MURRAY

Pleasure to meet me.

(the interviewer isn't sure how to react)
I'm just making sure you don't flip his switch,
if you catch my drift.

INTERVIEWER

No...

MURRAY

(to Cole)

You want me to knock off this broad?

COLE

(takes off his sunglasses)

Do I- what? No! This is- No!!

(to the interviewer)

I'm sorry about my friend. He's not housebroken.

MURRAY

Yet.

INTERVIEWER

Are you two doing this because everything's in
black and white?

There's an awkward, comical silence.

COLE

No...

MURRAY

Please... What are we, SIX?

(takes a puff of the cigar)

Let's just do the interview, toots.

He blows smoke rings, then leans back, relaxed. Cole just smiles politely at the interviewer, who rolls her eyes.

INTERVIEWER

Are you ready?

(Cole nods)

Alright. Let's get this over with...

(she turns on her recorder)

I'm here with Cole Richardson, a local artist, discussing the latest anomaly: the world turning to black and white.

MURRAY

Plague. They're plagues, you fricking-

(Cole cuts him off)

Geez... Sorry, continue. 'Anomalies'... Pff...

INTERVIEWER

Cole is accompanied by his...

(she glances at Murray)

I'm not really sure what...

(Murray raises his eyebrows at her)

I'm gonna cut that part out.

MURRAY

You better...

INTERVIEWER

(back to Cole)

Anyways... Cole. Tell me. As an artist, you have a unique perspective on the... Psychological impact of not seeing colors anymore.

COLE

Why?

INTERVIEWER

Because- I'm sorry, I didn't mean- wait, yeah, because you're an artist. Wait, I'm confused.

COLE

So am I. See, your EXPECTATION is that I'd have some hidden, exclusive wisdom as to the effects. You're treating me like the mystical artist, as if I'm the only one qualified to comment.

(she motions for him to continue)

I'm saying, YOU react. YOU have an opinion on it. People are allowed to react however they want. They shouldn't wait around for someone like me to TELL them how to feel.

INTERVIEWER

But wouldn't you say that, perhaps, you're even MORE profoundly affected? It would be like, hmm... Let's say you worked as a butcher, and suddenly, all the animals disappeared.

COLE

Except in that case, I would be out of a job. See, art is more than just colors. It's irony. It's metaphor. It's raw, unfiltered THOUGHT, expressed however you want. Color is a tool, certainly, but it's not the ONLY one.

INTERVIEWER

I see. But what about- I guess, like you said, instead of asking you to speculate on how the general public is responding psychologically... How are YOU responding? What's YOUR reaction?

COLE

Oh I love it. I think it's rejuvenating, and, to quote a very influential Youtuber: it's the sort of 'Perspective Reset' that we all need.

MURRAY

Amen.

INTERVIEWER

But aren't you concerned that the colors will never come back? What if we're permanently stuck in a black and white world? Already, there are reports that people with depression and other mental health struggles, they're-

MURRAY

Fricking snowflakes... Grow up...

COLE

What The Breaker means to say is... In the grand scheme of things - heck, even compared to the other 'anomalies' we've been having lately - this is such a non-issue, that I find it almost artistic in and of itself that we're even HAVING this interview. It's trivial.

INTERVIEWER

Mr. Richardson, with all respect, doctors say that the psychological trauma of being deprived of color could lead to a drastic increase in suicidal attempts over the next few days.

MURRAY

It's just COLORS for Christ's sake! Geez...

COLE

Not to- And I don't want to minimize the-
(looks at Murray)

No. No, he's right.

(back to the interviewer)

It's just colors. And if it's anything like the others this week, it'll be over by tonight.

(he chuckles)

Alright, here's your soundbite: Local artist gives people permission to not panic. Says that, if HE can survive the loss of color, you can too.

MURRAY

Amen.

(turns off the recorder)

I think we're done here.

INTERVIEWER

And I think you both need help.

(she gets up)

That was certainly... Enlightening...

She leaves abruptly. Once she's gone, Cole and Murray burst out laughing.

EXT. DOWNTOWN PARK - DAY

Some time later, Cole is sitting by himself on a bench, taking sketches of the trees in grayscale.

Then something catches his attention: the mother and son from the previous episodes, walking toward him down the dirt path. He watches them curiously - the mother seems especially on edge.

SON

What about DOGS?

MOTHER

Yes, they're black and white too.

SON

What about CATS?

MOTHER

Yep, ALL the animals are black and white.

SON

Why?

MOTHER

I don't know, sweetheart.

They're getting closer to Cole. He's still observing them, as if he knows them already.

SON

But when will it go back to-

MOTHER

I DON'T KNOW! I DON'T KNOW WHY IT'S LIKE THIS OR WHEN THE COLORS WILL COME BACK, OKAY?!

(she sees Cole watching them)

What?! You gonna call CPS?! Cut me some slack.

(Cole is still watching, mesmerized)

The hell do you want? What, what is it, do you think I'm a bad mother?

(she scoffs at him)

YOU try having a fucking kid...

Cole does a double take. Suddenly, he's seeing a different mother/child, not the ones from the other episodes. He is immediately apologetic.

COLE

I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to- you reminded me of someone else, that's all.

MOTHER

Sure.

(grabs the boy's arm)

Come on.

She angrily and protectively hurries away with the son. Cole is embarrassed and curses to himself.

COLE

It's NOT her. It'll never BE her. Get out of your head...

INT. COLE'S STUDIO - DAY

The world is still black and white. Cole has spread out a large canvas on the floor, and is splattering paint on it. His hands, arms, and clothes are covered in paint. He's not using any brushes, he's just flinging it with his hands.

The paint is all gray though, and he's torn off the labels with the names of the colors. So far, the painting is a dull, flat, grayscale Pollock-esque mess.

Also, he's listening to Gnossienne No.1 (the looping song) and humming while he works. Lord knows why.

Suddenly, the color returns. Cole stops painting. He steps back in awe at the transformation: the painting is now a PSYCHEDELIC Pollock-esque mess.

Even so, Cole smiles proudly, impressed and mesmerized by his creation. After admiring it for a bit, he goes over to the sink to wash the paint off his hands. Once he's done, he stops the music, then continues admiring the painting.

INT. DOWNTOWN BAR - NIGHT

Amidst the flashing lights and bass-boosted EDM, Murray has a beer, and is flirting at the bar with JENNA (38).

JENNA

I like your outfit!

He's still wearing the suit and fedora, even though everything is in color again.

MURRAY

Thanks! It was my friend's idea, sort of a, pretending to be in an old movie. Lame... I know...

JENNA

You're so funny! You're like Weird Al!

(she laughs)

So do you-

MURRAY

Al Capone.

JENNA

What?

MURRAY

The gangster is Al Capone. Weird Al is a singer.

JENNA

Yeah, no shit... But you're fucking weird, and you're dressed like Al Capone... So...

MURRAY

Oh, okay. I gotcha. So it was a-

JENNA

It was on purpose. Yep.

(awkward silence)

I'm not as stupid as I look.

MURRAY

(chuckles)

Wish I could say the same.

Suddenly his phone buzzes. He's happy to have a way out.

MURRAY

One second.

Jenna rolls her eyes. Murray winks, turns the other way, and answers the phone. He doesn't notice her leave.

MURRAY

Yo.

COLE (PHONE)

This is The Falcon, calling for The Breaker.

MURRAY

What? The what?

(it clicks)

Oh. OH. Yeah, this is The Breaker. What's up?

COLE (PHONE)

Couldn't resist. Hey, you have a sec? There's a new video up, it's throwing me off, I can't-

MURRAY

Cool! Yeah, I'll check it out later, I'm kinda in the middle of something.

COLE (PHONE)

No worries, but yeah let me know what you think. It's pretty cryptic. Most of it is his typical 'capitalism is bad' shtick...

MURRAY

Uh-huh...

(finally notices that Jenna is gone)

Shit... Not you, sorry, listen... I'll call you back after I've had a chance to-

COLE (PHONE)

Oh, yeah I'll be quick. The thing he said was, 'this judgment wouldn't be so bad, if it weren't for the wealth gap'. I can't figure it out, so, if you think of anything that it could-

MURRAY

Yeah man, for sure. I'll hit you up. Wealth gap.
Could be anything...
(chuckles)
Guess we'll find out tomorrow, right?

COLE (PHONE)

I know, I know, I just want to get a jump on it,
maybe there's something we could do to prepare,
so it doesn't catch us off guard.

MURRAY

Don't overthink it, man. Gotta go. Later.

He hangs up abruptly, looks around, notices that he's still sitting alone, and sighs.

Finally, he turns toward the bartender.

MURRAY

(chuckles)

Artists... So fricking demanding, right?

BARTENDER

My wife's an artist.

MURRAY

Of course she is...
(the bartender glares at him)
And I'm sure she's very talented.

He quickly looks away, finishes his beer, then starts roaming the dance floor despondently. Finally, he makes eye contact with a random woman and approaches her.

MURRAY

Evening. The name's Capone.
(she looks him over and giggles)
Are you spoken for? Or should I speak... Easy...
(she giggles again)
And I'm gonna stop talking now.

They both laugh, smile coyly at each other, then dance and grind to the music together.

INT. COLE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Cole is laying in bed, eyes closed, talking to himself.

COLE

If it weren't for the wealth gap... This next one wouldn't be so bad, if not for the wealth gap... Weren't for the wealth gap...

He drifts off to sleep. Soon, other voices are audible.

MOTHER (VOICE ONLY)

What is it, do you think I'm a bad mother?

REPORTER (VOICE ONLY)

Reports of widespread disease among livestock, disrupting the supply chain for agriculture on a national level...

PAULINE SIMON (VOICE ONLY)

I think Ms. Duvall has finally shown America how little she cares about everyday workers, who are unable to buy food as a direct result of-

REPORTER (VOICE ONLY)

Another wave of panic buying - what started as a shortage of meat has led to mass shortages of most essential foods and supplies.

LYNN DUVALL (VOICE ONLY)

And I think you, Pauline, have NEVER cared about everyday workers. And it shows, because even the slightest disruption to your 'perfect system' is having DEVASTATING consequences.

MOTHER (VOICE ONLY)

YOU try having a fucking kid!

LYNN DUVALL (VOICE ONLY)

It's all built for profit, but not for stability. It's held together with spit and bailing wire. It was NEVER designed for everyday people, and you know it. Don't blame the spark if the house was made of dry wood.

The voices are replaced by a jackhammer. It's morning. Cole wakes up abruptly, groggy, confused.

He waits for the noise to go away, but it doesn't: it's a loud, obnoxious rattling that's filling the entire room.

COLE

Come on people, it's-
(checks the time. 6:43 AM)
It's not even seven. Mmph...

He gets out of bed, walks barefoot into the gallery space, and is almost blinded by a bright gold light from outside.

He recoils, covers his eyes, then waits a few seconds for them to adjust. The light doesn't seem as bright now, and as he realizes what it is, his eyes go wide.

COLE

Ohhh... That's good, that's REALLY good...

He walks up to the window excitedly. Outside, the street has turned to gold. Solid, smooth, pristine gold.

And already, a few dozen people are out and about with pickaxes, chisels, hammers, and even a jackhammer, trying to get their share.

COLE

Oh, that works on so many levels... Mmm...

He smiles, chuckles, grabs his video camera, and sets it up by the window.

BEGIN TIMELAPSE VIDEO

Cole starts by eating breakfast at the window, watching with detached delight as the crowd outside grows larger. His video camera is recording the gold rush.

As the day goes on, he goes back and forth between observing the chaos outside, and working on paintings in the back area. Each time he watches the crowd, he lingers, amused and fascinated by the frenzy.

The frenzy only intensifies. By noon, half the street has been torn up. The police have set up barricades to try and preserve at least two lanes of traffic (one lane going in each direction).

The layer of gold is about a half-foot deep, so whenever somebody reaches the dirt underneath, they move over to the next patch. Some people are filling buckets with it, while others have wheelbarrows or wagons.

One guy is shoveling it into the bed of his pickup truck, while one of his friends jackhammers, and another one stands guard with a rifle.

Across the street, a vendor is selling pickaxes and chisels for hundreds of dollars, which people are gladly paying. When he runs out, they start fighting and 'bargaining' to get whatever tools they can.

The cops eventually give up - the crowd breaks through the barricades and tears up the middle of the road. Even some of the cops have taken to mining for themselves.

Any cars are simply driving off-road at this point, which is slow-going given how many pedestrians are in their way, and the sound of honking mixed with hammering and fighting reaches a fever pitch.

And then, all pretension of civility snaps. The mob decides to attack the pickup truck crew. The guard shoots at them, and the other men pull out their guns and also open fire.

But they're no match for the hundreds of crazed, desperate, nameless civilians who swarm around them. The mob tips the truck over, and carnage is unleashed as they all fight for the last remaining supply of gold.

And Cole seems happier than ever to sit in the comfort of his studio and watch the anarchy unfold.

FADE OUT.