

**1 NARRATION**

**1**

NARRATOR

Chaika is created for an adult audience and features depictions of emotional distress. Please review the shownotes of this episode for specific content warnings.

INTRO MUSIC, starts, then fades to low

NARRATOR

Chaika. Episode 4. Stripped off the foliage.

INTRO MUSIC, up to full volume

**2 INT. SPACE SHIP EVENTYR - CHAIKA'S LOG**

**2**

CHAIKA's quarters.

Beep.

CHAIKA

Personal log.

Beep.

CHAIKA

Solarin, Chaika. Year 2089, month 9, day 8.

Beep. Long beep.

CHAIKA

I've been up all night again. I probably should accept the sleeping aids, but... Took those a few years ago, and... I don't like how they make me feel. All woozy and distant. Feel like I need a clear head for this journey.

(beat)

Not that I can do much. HYGGE does all the navigation and steering... All I can do are these therapy tasks LEQU sets me... And sleep.

(small snort)

Not that *that* is working very well...

(beat)

Ugh. Our days and nights here are artificial anyways, so what does it matter if I am awake all night and sleep all day? Not like I have any useful skills. Linguistics and ancient pop culture references won't really cut it. I should have studied something useful. Like medicine. Or agriculture. Or... engineering...

(sighs)

It's like... I've always had ambition. Wanted to do something, be something, make a difference... But I feel like I never really tried to get on that path, I just had all those dreams but never did anything to achieve them. Always felt like all that was far into the future, and I was still a child, learning... Like there would be time for all of that later.

(lets out breath)

Not a child anymore. And this \*is\* later. Much later. Guess I need to grow up real fast. I just... I don't know if I can...

(almost in tears)

I am so tired...

End log.

Beep.

**3 INT. SPACE SHIP EVENTYR - AFTERNOON**

**3**

Eventyr control room.

Doors whoosh open, CHAIKA walks in.

HYGGE

(pleased)

Good afternoon, Chaika!

CHAIKA

(weak smile)

Hi HYGGE.

HYGGE

How can I brighten your day?

CHAIKA

You'll never stop asking that, will you?

HYGGE

I will not stop wanting to brighten your day, so, well, no. Unless you want me to?

CHAIKA

No. It's fine.

(beat)

It's nice.

HYGGE

(happy)

Good! I am plotting some attitude corrections, almost done... There.

Distant sounds as solar panels move.

HYGGE

(cheerful)

I am all yours!

CHAIKA

(exhausted)

Thanks. I'm... Seems I am always coming in here saying I'm tired.

HYGGE

(matter of fact)

Perhaps you are not getting enough rest?

CHAIKA

I guess.

(sighs)

HYGGE...I- I can't stop thinking about earth. I know it was so long ago now, but I still have no idea what happened. Do you?

HYGGE

Regretfully I do not. As you know I was in stasis at the time, and waking up all I could gather was the point in time when communications ceased.

CHAIKA

So ten years ago...

HYGGE

Yes! Ten years, five months and- Oh!  
(excited)

We are heading for Mars, we should start using the Mars calendar! That

would-

CHAIKA

(interrupts)

What do you think happened?

HYGGE

(thinks)

The communications stopped, but the computer systems are all still running, which would indicate either that there was mainly damage to humans and not to buildings or infrastructure, \*or\* that there were so many fail-safes and secure backup systems that they could not be affected.

CHAIKA

How could there be damage to humans and not buildings?

HYGGE

(enthusiastic)

Oh, there is a plethora of possibilities! Although the TellUs military retired all nuclear and thermonuclear weapons many years prior to this event, there is of course a possibility that they could have been built in secret, and certain types do less damage to buildings than to flesh and blood creatures. Then there could be some form of biological warfare - microorganisms like virus, bacteria, fungi, or other toxins, deliberately designed to kill humans. Or an effect from the climate changes. Possibly a gas of some sort. The curious thing is that communication seems to have ceased from all hubs during a span of seven minutes and fifty-seven seconds. This would suggest a coordinated attack, or an extraordinarily contagious virus, or both.

MUSIC starts very softly.

CHAIKA

(shocked)

An attack? But, from who?

HYGGE

(enthusiastic)

I don't know! Interesting, isn't it?  
Could be an attack gone wrong,  
perhaps? Where the attackers got  
caught in their own plan?

CHAIKA

(upset)

But HYGGE, that is awful! I always  
thought it was some sort of  
accident.

HYGGE

(a little more subdued)

It very well could be. I simply  
don't have enough data to  
extrapolate the chain of events.

CHAIKA

Couldn't you... I don't know...  
Request data from the systems on  
earth?

HYGGE

(thoughtful)

Sadly not. TellUs's system is  
completely closed and does not  
acknowledge incoming communication.

CHAIKA

But that... What does that mean?

HYGGE

(matter of fact)

Probably an automated security  
measure. Still. Makes it much harder  
to understand what happened.

CHAIKA

But if there... If there *\*are\**  
survivors of... whatever-it-was...  
Could they communicate- could they  
get a message out?

HYGGE

It is possible. But long-range  
communication would be difficult  
unless they could access one of the  
CosmiCorps hubs.

CHAIKA

Wha-

HYGGE

(happy)

This is all conjecture, you understand. I like facts, myself. All this guesswork is making my synapses itch.

CHAIKA

(slight laugh)

I get it. Do you think- Surely there must be survivors down there?

HYGGE

(matter of fact)

Could be. Could not be. It depends on what happened.

CHAIKA

I see... HYGGE, do you- Are you religious at all? Believe in a higher power?

HYGGE

(matter of fact)

No. I think religion is a fascinating area of study, but I hold no personal belief.

CHAIKA

All right.

HYGGE

How about you, Chaika?

CHAIKA

I don't know. We didn't... I mean I wasn't raised in any sort of faith, but...

(near tears)

I want to believe there is some sort of purpose to all this, you know?

HYGGE

(gently)

What kind of purpose?

CHAIKA

Like... A purpose for why so many have died, and I live... I mean, what's the point?

HYGGE

(gently)

Can't help you there I'm afraid.

CHAIKA  
                  (near tears)  
I know.  
                  (beat)  
I'm glad you're here.

                  HYGGE  
                  (gently)  
Me too, Chaika.

MUSIC increases in volume, then fades out.

**4 WORD OF THE DAY**

**4**

Ding.

                  HYGGE  
Word of the day.

Ding.

                  NARRATOR  
The word of the day is trost, which is German, and means consolation, or comfort when someone is sad. It stems from the Proto-Germanic trausta, meaning trust or shelter, and is related to the Old Norse traust, meaning confidence, trust, security, help, shelter or safe abode, both ultimately derived from the Proto-Indo-European deru-, dreu-, drū-, meaning to be firm, to be solid. Trost is also in use as a surname, of German origin.

Ding.

**5 INT. SPACE SHIP EVENTYR - DAY**

**5**

Eventyr lounge.

                  LEQU  
All righty then, what's on your mind today?

                  CHAIKA  
                  (subdued)  
Um. Feel pretty useless actually.

                  LEQU  
                  (energetic)

Useless in what way?

CHAIKA

Not like I can do anything around here. Can't contribute in any meaningful way. I feel-

(raises voice)

Why me? Why the [swears] tharp am I alive when so many are dead? So many useful, clever, competent people! And here I am, just a spoiled kid who never did anything, never discovered anything, or innovated- Like that engineer, what was her name? The one who created you?

LEQU

Lone Møller?

CHAIKA

Yes! Lone Møller! I bet when she was 18 she'd already made breakthroughs in AI tech, right?

LEQU

Yes, I believe so. But-

CHAIKA

(wildly)

See? Why am I alive instead of her? Instead of any number of people who DESERVE to be alive, who are WORTHY of being alive? I-

LEQU

(gently)

Chaika.

CHAIKA

(yells)

What?

LEQU

Life is not something you earn.

CHAIKA

(calmer but still upset)

What the [swears] tharp does that mean?

LEQU

Life is simply something you have.

CHAIKA

(giving up)  
Well I don't deserve it.

LEQU  
You don't have to deserve it. That's  
the glory of it.  
(in Mandarin)  
生活, 就 "是" [shēng huó, jiù "shì"]  
[Life just \*is\*]

CHAIKA  
(dubious, repeats in  
halting Mandarin)  
生活, 就 "是" [shēng huó, jiù "shì"]  
[Life just \*is\*]  
(in English, slowly  
working it out)  
Life... just... is...?

LEQU  
(delighted)  
That's right!  
(serious)  
And you are only 18. Who knows what  
you will do in the future? Maybe all  
of that 'worthy' and 'deserving'  
will happen later for you?

CHAIKA  
(small voice)  
What if it doesn't? What if I never  
achieve anything worthwhile?

LEQU  
(matter of fact)  
Then you don't.

CHAIKA  
(repeats hesitatingly)  
Then... I... don't...

LEQU  
And you live on, for whatever time  
you have, and then you die.

CHAIKA  
Right...

LEQU  
(serious)  
You can only do your best with what  
you have. That is all.

CHAIKA

But I don't think I have. Done my best, I mean.

LEQU

Only you can know that.  
(teasing)

However I do think there is a pretty good chance you are being too hard on yourself.

(gently)

Doing your best doesn't have to mean you excel at everything. Sometimes doing your best means being kind to yourself, allowing yourself to rest and recharge, and sit with your feelings.

CHAIKA

I- That- Um. I never thought about it like that.

LEQU

Well, maybe it's time you did.

CHAIKA

(thoughtful)

Yeah. maybe it is.

(beat)

Hey LEQU?

LEQU

(almost sings)

Ye-es?

CHAIKA

Maybe I should try those sleep aids you've been talking about?

LEQU

(delighted)

You've got it!

CHAIKA

(small laugh)

Fade out.

**6 POEM OF THE DAY**

**6**

Ding.

HYGGE

Poem of the day.

Ding.

MUSIC

NARRATOR

Wedded to home  
I home forsake,  
Fearful of change  
I changes make;  
Too fond of ease  
I plunge in toil;  
Lover of calm  
I seek turmoil:  
Nature and hostile Destiny  
Stir in my heart a conflict wild;  
And long and fierce the war will be  
Ere duty both has reconciled.

MUSIC fades

**7 INT. VALEN'S APARTMENT, EARTH - EVENING**

**7**

Click.

VALEN

Initiate personal message. Secure  
comm code 121514-5. [one-two-one-  
five-one-four-dash-five]

Beep.

VALEN

(quickly)  
Solarin, Valen. Year 2069, month 3,  
day 13.

Long beep.

VALEN

Hi Elle. Valen here. But you know  
that. I hope you are settling in  
well at the new place. I get that  
you can't tell me about it, at least  
not yet, but I hope wherever you are  
it is comfortable and allows you  
rest. I worry about you, you know?  
(beat)  
I wish I could talk to you directly!  
I have news. Big news. And I don't  
know who to tell now that... well  
you know.  
(sad sigh)

Remember how we talked about getting away from it all? I am doing that. More than you. even... I'm going to the moon, Elle. They need an engineer for that shiny new moonbase they built, and... I submitted on a whim. After... You know. I just wanted to flee. Now, maybe not as much, though of course it is still a factor. But also... I am worried about... I was all for the TellUs global governance - [swears] tharp, I even voted for it - but now... I think going a little bit out of reach is a good idea. Like you did. So I'll be doing that too.

(deep breath)

I feel guilty, though. Like I'm running away? Running away from concerned questions and - even worse - that panicked expression folks have when they can't think what to say. As if they're afraid my loss will rub off on them or something.

(snort)

Not like it's contagious!

(sigh)

Anyways. Let me know if you think we can have a live call before I go. Once I'm up there I'm not sure it will be possible. And I'll be gone for

(incredulous)

four years... A very long time. Hopefully the situation back here on earth will be more stable once I'm done.

(slight laugh)

I'll probably long for people at that point - these past few months I feel like I can't stand anyone... Should be good for me to be a hermit for a while.

(beat)

There is one thing... It's a bit weird, but... CosmiCorps are offering a pretty hefty bonus if I try to get pregnant up there. Seems a strange time for it, but... Birth rates are down, so I guess they're trying to encourage us to 'procreate'... Probably won't be for me, but... Who knows how lonely I'll get?

(slight laugh)  
Take care, Elle. Be safe. I miss  
you.  
(beat)  
End message.

Beep.

**8 CREDITS**

**8**

CREDITS MUSIC

NARRATOR

Please stay around until after the  
credits to hear a teaser for our  
next episode.

You have listened to Danyelle Ellet  
as Chaika, Charlotte Norup as HYGGE,  
Sam Yeow as LEQU and Angelique  
Lazarus as Valen. Chaika was  
written, produced and directed by  
Karin Heimdahl - that's me! - I also  
do the narration.

Chaika's theme is by Chris Gregory,  
please check out his audio fiction  
anthology podcast, Alternative  
Stories and Fake Realities as well  
as his sci-fi podcast, The Dex  
Legacy. Additional music by  
ArchesAudio.com and Kevin McCleoud,  
please see the shownotes for a  
complete music list. Poem is 'The  
Missionary' by Charlotte Brontë, and  
word-of-the-day definition is  
adapted from wiktictionary.org

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[y2kpod.com/chaika](https://y2kpod.com/chaika), that's C-H-A-I-K-  
A.

We will return in two weeks with  
episode 5, Time does not bring  
relief; you all have lied, where -

among other things - you will hear  
this:

CREDITS MUSIC fade out

Extract from episode 5 fade in.

CHAIKA energetic footsteps.

HYGGE  
(happy)  
Chaika!  
(in Danish)  
Velkommen. [Welcome]  
( in English)  
How can I-

CHAIKA  
(interrupts, high energy)  
Not sure you can brighten my day,  
today, HYGGE. Not having a very good  
one.

HYGGE  
Oh?

CHAIKA  
I'm just so... I don't know. Like I  
want to smash something, you know?

HYGGE  
(enthusiastic)  
Perhaps you could try some exercise?  
There are-

CHAIKA  
(interrupts)  
Tried that. Didn't help.

HYGGE  
(matter of fact)  
Very well.

CHAIKA  
Can I... Can I help you with  
anything? Like, I don't know,  
navigation or something?

HYGGE  
(thinks)  
Well, navigation on Eventyr is very  
automated, all I do is  
calculations... Not sure that would  
be a job for you.

CHAIKA  
(sighs)  
Probably not.

HYGGE  
Would you like to talk about it?

CHAIKA  
(uncomfortable)  
I don't know...  
(beat)  
It's just... What's the point?

HYGGE  
(interested)  
The point of what?

CHAIKA  
Everything!

OUTRO MUSIC

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**Pronunciations**

Carson [CAR-sun]

Curie [q-REE]

Chaika [tCHEY-ka]

CosmiCorps [COS-me-CORE]

EVENTYR [EH-ven-tier]

FIKAMAD [FEE-kuh-mat]

HYGGE [HIG-eh]

LEQU [luh-CHU]

Lone Møller [LOAN-eh MEL-er]

Solarin [suh-LA-rin]

Tharp [thARp]

TellUs [TELL-us]

TROST [tRAWst]

Valen [VALE-un]

Valentina Tereshkova [vall-en-TEE-na tuh-RESH-co-vah]