

THE GLASS APPEAL

EPISODE 3: THE SILVER MELTDOWN

Written by

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JASON

The wealth gap in the fractured United States is horrible. The rich have access to everything, including new life-saving procedures, while the poor are stuck with age-old fixes. That's where we come in, the Tinkers. What we do isn't for ourselves. It's for those less fortunate and the betterment of humanity.

SFX: Jail door closing.

SFX: Opening theme.

SFX: News show theme.

EMILIA

(enthusiastic)

Ya'll. We've gotten so many votes in these past few days! The response has been incredible! Especially for a small news outlet like us. We've talked and have decided that *I* will be going to talk to the "Global Tinker." Yes, moi. That's all we've got for now. Until next time and our exclusive scoop on Jason Cawfield.

SFX: Ending news show theme.

INT. THE GLASS ROOM - NIGHT

SFX: The buzz of a flickering light will always be in the background along with the occasional drop of water falling onto the ground.

ALEXANDER

Don't take too long. Jason has something to do and he can't be late.

BRIAN

Something he has to do? In prison?

ALEXANDER

Yes. Now, move along.

SFX: The door is closed. Brian walks in, grabs the chair and sits down. They both pick up their phones.

BRIAN

So... I did some research.

JASON

What? You *actually* did research?
Was it on joining tint?

BRIAN

Yeah, but it's impossible for me to
join since they look at your past.

JASON

They look at whether or not you'd
have any grievances or animosity
towards the cause.

BRIAN

If you knew that, why didn't you
just tell me that during our last
meeting?

JASON

Would you have actually listened
though?

SFX: Silence.

JASON (CONT'D)

Exactly. It would have been a waste
of time and led to us arguing more.
Besides, you got to learn more
about my "stupid" ideals.

BRIAN

I guess, but it's not like I've
changed my mind on it or anything.

JASON

I'm not trying to change your view.
I'm just trying to get you to
understand it a little.

BRIAN

I don't think I'll ever understand
it and you already know why.

JASON

There has to be more than that
Brian. I know tinkers whose parents
were also killed by other tinkers.

BRIAN

No offense to the dead, but I don't think they died as horrifically as my parents did.

JASON

(confused)

How *did* they die? You've never talked about it.

BRIAN

There's a reason for that. Besides, what happened? You were a professor at a pretty big university before this tinker nonsense.

JASON

Did it ever occur to you that I was always involved in this "tinker nonsense".

BRIAN

Well, you didn't act like it.

JASON

That's because I'm not any different. Why can't you separate the radicals from normal people?

BRIAN

You want to know why?

JASON

I wouldn't be asking otherwise.

BRIAN

Okay smartass.

(beat)

Have you heard of The Silver Meltdown incident?

JASON

Yeah, of course. A tinker who had been working there went homicidal and killed a lot of people there.

BRIAN

That tinker was actually a close family friend.

JASON

What?! Isaac Bellington was a close friend to your family.

BRIAN

Yeah, I've known him since I was little and before he became a world renowned scientist. Imagine my surprise when I heard what happened.

JASON

I can't imagine what that must have felt like. To have someone you knew for so long betray you.

BRIAN

No you can't. Should be use to it, since this *is* the second time it's happened.

JASON

(irritated)

I've told you that I'm innocent. Why the hell can't you just believe me?

BRIAN

(irritated)

Because... because I just can't trust you again. Besides, it's been hard enough.

JASON

What are you talking about?

BRIAN

(irritated)

You think your sentencing only affected you?

JASON

No. I know that the backlash on Lucas is pre-

BRIAN

Damn it Jay. I'm not just talking about Lucas and his campaign.

(beat)

I'm talking about friends and family. You think the government wouldn't have questioned us all?

JASON

Oh. I-I didn't thin-

BRIAN

Exactly. You didn't think. That's always how it is with you. Always rushing head first without thinking.

JASON

That's not true. I--

BRIAN

I was hounded by the government's special police for weeks. I lost my job and even had to move because my neighbors thought I was a tinker. It probably didn't help that my family knew Isaac either.

JASON

(remorseful)

I'm sorry Brian. I really am.

BRIAN

That's besides the point. It's not like anything you do can change any of that. Anyway, now I have a safeguard against that.

JASON

You do? What is it?

BRIAN

You don't need to worry about that. Just know that it's been able to keep me and my family safe.

JASON

That's good at least. Brian, I'm really sorr--

BRIAN

Where was I? Oh yeah. So Isaac. He was a great guy when I was little. Almost like an uncle. He'd help me when I was having trouble with science and math homework.

(beat)

He even baby-sat for my parents when Julia was born.

JASON

So he was like part of the family?

BRIAN
(dismissive)
Yeah.
(beat)
Silvers Corporation was a great
place to work.

JASON
One of the best in the world at the
time right?

BRIAN
It was pretty confidential too so,
Isaac never really talked about his
work, except for this one time. He
came over really excited. Told us
it dealt with alien life.

JASON
The Meltdown Project.

BRIAN
You've heard of it?

JASON
Not much. Conspiracy theory stuff.
Like Silvers had retrieved a rather
large meteorite from its crash site
and on it were engravings from
alien life.

BRIAN
Yeah, that's exactly it. No
conspiracy theory. So Isaac came in
with pictures of the thing and my
parents lit up. Like you wouldn't
believe, but that wasn't all.
Afterwards, Silver Corp was in need
of more scientist.

JASON
What was on the engravings? Are you
sure you should be telling me about
this?

BRIAN
Can you wait? I'm almost there. And
yea,h there's no harm in telling
you. I think most companies,
academia, and government agencies
know about it now.

JASON
Well, sorry for not being informed.

BRIAN

Anyway, Isaac had recommended that my parents come and work for Silver because they needed more people.

JASON

Really? That's pretty awesome. You never told me they worked there.

BRIAN

Now you know why. So my parents and Isaac worked together and on their first day they were going to do what the engravings instructed.

JASON

Let me take a guess. It said to melt it down?

BRIAN

Apparently, the material in the meteorite after it was melted down could be turned into a solvent. That was the basis for the panacea we got a few years ago.

JASON

So we have friendly aliens? Not like alien's aliens?

BRIAN

Hopefully. I'd like to think so.

(beat)

After they created the solvent, the team started analyzing the solution. A few years go by and a beta panacea drug was created. Silvers started presenting it around to corporations and hospitals.

JASON

Huh? Why isn't it sold anywhere then?

BRIAN

Jay, I swear. Shut up and listen.

(beat)

Isaac was unhappy with this development since he was the head scientist in charge of the drug. Being a tinker he had his own thoughts on the drug's distribution.

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

He had wanted the drug to be freely distributed to the masses.

JASON

Okay? There's nothing wrong with that though.

BRIAN

He went and talked to his supervisors about the decision, but they wouldn't budge. After, he started causing trouble for the project.

JASON

What'd they do to him? I'm guessing they fired him once they found out.

BRIAN

Not at first. They needed him since he was the head and knew the most about the project. They did talk to him before taking drastic measures against him.

JASON

I'm guessing that didn't end well. How do you know any of this? I don't remember reading any of this online.

BRIAN

Well no shit. A lot of people died including my parents. They wanted to make Isaac look as bad as possible. I found out about this from a member. They came to my house for condolences.

JASON

I see...

BRIAN

After refusing their demands. Isaac continued to delay production on the drug hoping that it would make them change their decision.

(beat)

It backfired when he was told he had two days to pack his bags. Thinking that this would cause the greatest divide in human history he did what he thought was right.

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

He tinkered himself a kill switch that would detonate when his heart stopped.

JASON

Oh... Damn.

BRIAN

That's all you have to say?

JASON

I mean it was pretty fucked up what he did, and I don't agree with it at all. But, I also don't agree with what Silvers Corp was doing either.

BRIAN

So you think they were both equally bad?

JASON

When the hell did I say they were equally as bad?

BRIAN

(angrily)

It just sounds like you agree with him.

JASON

I said I didn't agree with him. I don't think he went about it the right way, obviously. I don't think Silvers Corp should have done that if the drug really was a panacea.

BRIAN

(angry)

So you agree with his mind-set?

JASON

Well... yeah. I don't see why you *wouldn't* want an all-curing drug in the hands of the most people.

BRIAN

How would Silvers recoup their costs? They couldn't just give it away for free. That's not how business works.

JASON

I never said that. But, do you think it's fair if the drug was so expensive that normal people couldn't afford it?

BRIAN

Well, no, bu--

JASON

Say your sister got sick and this drug was available. Wouldn't you try everything you could to get it for her?

BRIAN

Yeah, of course.

JASON

Okay, and wouldn't you start resenting the company that made it expensive? So expensive that the only way you could come up with the money was by stealing etc...

BRIAN

When you put it that way... it'd suck. It'd be horrible if that happened, but that *still* doesn't make what Isaac did any better.

JASON

I never said any of that to justify what he did. I said it to make you at least *understand* his mind-set.

BRIAN

Oh. Well... sorry for flaring up at you like that.

JASON

I guess it's fine, but you *always* do that. You gotta fix that shit. You think your future girlfriend's gonna like that?

(chuckle)

BRIAN

Oh, yeah! You wouldn't know.

JASON

Wouldn't know... what exactly?

BRIAN
That I got engaged.

JASON
(surprised)
What? You?!

BRIAN
Damn. Don't need to say it like
that.

JASON
(chuckle)
I mean can you blame me?

BRIAN
Hmmm... Hell yes.
(chuckle)

JASON
When'd you guys meet? How?

BRIAN
We met a little bit after you left
to go abroad. It was downtown at
Grimes Bar.

JASON
Classy.

BRIAN
Shut up. She was actually
performing there.

JASON
Oh? So I'm talking to a real life
fanboy?

BRIAN
A fanboy in love.

JASON
Now that best man comment makes
sense. Anyway, I'm glad things have
been working out.

BRIAN
Thanks, bro.
(beat)
I was being serious too. I still
hope you'll get out of this, so you
can be in the wedding.

JASON
 (sigh)
 Me too.

BRIAN
 Innocent until proven guilty,
 right?

JASON
 Yeah, but I'm not so sure that's
 accurate with the ways things are
 going. If you catch my drift.

BRIAN
 Yeah, I caught it, but things could
 be worse. Though that doesn't make
 it any better.

JASON
 Not at all.
 (beat)
 When's the wedding?

BRIAN
 Summer of next year.

JASON
 Nice nice. I bet she's been running
 you ragged.

BRIAN
 (laughs)
 I thought she would too, but
 actually it's been pretty relaxing.
 She's currently out on tour with
 the band, so she hasn't really *had*
 the time.

JASON
 How popular is the band, since
 they're going out on tours and
 such?

BRIAN
 They do okay I'd say. They're not
 bringing in crazy money, but it's
 nothing to sneeze at.

JASON
 I see.

BRIAN
 Yeah.
 (beat)
 (MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I nearly forgot. Please tell me that *that* one has visited you.

JASON

Don't call my husband, that and he has.

BRIAN

(surprised)

Really?

JASON

Yeah, you don't have to sound so surprised. He *is* my husband after all.

BRIAN

Are you sure? Seems to me like his campaign was his new partner.

JASON

Brian...

BRIAN

I'm kidding. I'm kidding. It's good that he came to see you. Even though he should've come sooner...

JASON

Then, what's your excuse?

BRIAN

I told you. I was mad.

JASON

I wouldn't really qualify that as a good excuse.

BRIAN

(imitating Jason)

I "Never said that", but it's the truth. I won't apologize for how long it took me to come see you, but I am sorry that I was the first one to come see you.

JASON

Didn't think you would, but thanks for coming.

SFX: The door opens.

ALEXANDER

Time's up.

BRIAN
Already? It's barely been 10
minutes.

ALEXANDER
I don't care. Time's up.

BRIAN
Well you heard the man. See ya Jay.

JASON
See ya Brian.

SFX: They hang up their phones and Brian walks away. The door
is closed.

JASON (CONT'D)
(sigh)

ALEXANDER
Are you ready?

JASON
It's not like I have a choice?

ALEXANDER
Not if you want to continue having
visitation privileges.

JASON
Well, then lead the way.

SFX: They open and close the door.

FADE IN:

SFX: Phone call.

JASON (CONT'D)
Hello?

EMILIA
(excited)
Hi! Is this Jason Cawfield?

JASON
It is. Who am I speaking to?

EMILIA
Emilia Whitehall. I'm a journalist
with Reborn News.

JASON
Reborn News? Never heard of it.

EMILIA

We're an indie outlet and I'm wondering if I can come and interview you. I've seen you've rejected all the other outlets from visiting you, but we do things differently at Reborn.

JASON

(slightly amused)
Is that so? Care to tell me how?

EMILIA

Well, for starters we don't care about sensationalizing news story or the people involved. We take great pride in only reporting the facts. If you had access to the internet, I'd tell you to check out our latest coverage of the mass *murderer* in Southern California.

JASON

(contemplating)
Hmph.
(beat)
Okay then. I'll give you a shot.

EMILIA

(excited)
Great! Does two weeks from today sound good?

JASON

Yeah, that works.

EMILIA

Okay! See you then!

JASON

Bye.

SFX: End call.

FADE IN:

SFX: Phone call.

AGENT ROSE

What happened to the clock tower?

BRIAN

Nothing. It's being constructed and built in a new city tonight.

AGENT ROSE
Status report.

BRIAN
There's nothing to report. The
asset hasn't given us anything of
value.

AGENT ROSE
Hmmm. I see. He hasn't detailed his
time abroad either?

BRIAN
No. I gave him information about
the Silvers Meltdown in hopes that
he would open up about Tint.

AGENT ROSE
Are you sure that's all that was?

BRIAN
What are you implying?

AGENT ROSE
Oh nothing. It just seemed that
someone was eager to go and visit
their friend.

BRIAN
I had to. Wasn't it you guys that
told me I should work that angle?

AGENT ROSE
We were, but it just seems a little
too well played.
(beat)
You understand?

BRIAN
Maybe I'm just a good agent.

AGENT ROSE
Agent-in-training. Don't forget
that.

BRIAN
Understood.

AGENT ROSE
You fuck this up and it won't just
be you who'll be under lockdown.

BRIAN
I know. I won't fail you guys.

AGENT ROSE

You've no choice, but to succeed.
For you and your family's safety.

(beat)

Your fiancé's on tour in
Bangladesh, right?

BRIAN

I got it. I won't fail you guys. I
promise.

AGENT ROSE

Good. I'd expect nothing less.
Don't make me regret choosing you
for this.

BRIAN

I won't, so has there been any word
from the director?

AGENT ROSE

The director? He's not worried
about this case at all.

BRIAN

(surprised)

What? Why not? I thought it was
pretty important.

AGENT ROSE

(slight chuckle)

You think we'd give a very
important case to a *newbie*? Do you
take us for a joke?

BRIAN

N-no, I just thought...

AGENT ROSE

Thought what, exactly?

BRIAN

Just that... since I was the only
one who he'd accept that...

AGENT ROSE

That you were important? Ha! I
could very easily force the prison
to send him my way, but I'm too
busy at the moment.

BRIAN

What if he doesn't talk to you?
Wasn't he questioned like crazy
before?

AGENT ROSE

Yeah, but I know what department
did the questioning. They aren't
the *best*.

BRIAN

If you know that, then why hasn't
this team questioned him yet?

AGENT ROSE

Oh, we *will*, eventually. We've been
letting him rot in there for a
while. Let him see that actions
have consequences. Once he's
realized that he's not getting out,
he'll tell us what we need to know.

BRIAN

So once he does, are you guys going
to let him go?

AGENT ROSE

Of course not. We *may* reduce his
sentence, but that's only *if* his
information proves helpful.

BRIAN

I see.

AGENT ROSE

What's the matter? If I didn't know
any better, I'd say that you were
having second thoughts.

BRIAN

N-no, not at all. It's just... hard
seeing him like that is all.

AGENT ROSE

Well, you'll need to get use to it.
That's what it means when you're
undercover. You become family. Let
them like you and then when they
relax, BAM, that's when you've got
them.

BRIAN

How many times have you been
undercover?

AGENT ROSE

More times than I can count. Many were small jobs, but there was this one case a few years ago.

BRIAN

What happened?

AGENT ROSE

I suppose there's no harm in telling you. It was a drug lord. I was told to go in and see where they were holding our guys.

BRIAN

Holding our guys? They kidnapped agents?

AGENT ROSE

That they did and they were ruthless.

BRIAN

How'd you get in?

AGENT ROSE

When you look *this* good and start shooting up a place in southern cal, people start to notice.

BRIAN

So that was your in? Act unhinged and make the cartel notice you?

AGENT ROSE

Yeah, it wasn't my brightest idea, but I was out in the field, pretty young and the original cover story didn't work.

BRIAN

Why didn't it work? What happened?

AGENT ROSE

A lot of things. Bullshit, but that's besides the point. I got in by being one of their member's girls.

BRIAN

Damn. Did you... you know... care for them afterwards?

AGENT ROSE

I suppose. Some of them weren't like the cartel heads, but they needed to be taken down.

BRIAN

How'd you do it?

AGENT ROSE

By keeping my head down and following my gut. I was getting our boys back home. No matter the cost.

BRIAN

I see. Thank you for telling me that story. I'll do my best with this case.

AGENT ROSE

Not just your best. Do better than that.

BRIAN

Yes! Understood!

SFX: End of phone call.