

GOD OF OBSIDIAN—TRANSCRIPT
EPISODE ONE

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VOICEOVER (Jordana Williams): Please note that while *God of Obsidian* contains no physical violence or sexual assault, it does depict a psychologically abusive gaslighting relationship. Listeners should proceed at their own discretion. And if you're experiencing domestic violence or questioning unhealthy aspects of your relationship, we encourage you to call 1-800-799-SAFE. That's 1-800-799-7233. Or go to thehotline.org.

[A transition of ascending chimes.]

ALICE (Rebecca Comtois) (voiceover): I always imagine them starting in the fall. Hansel and Gretel, Little Red going to Grandma's, Rapunzel in the window. I don't know if it says specifically in the stories or whatever, but I always picture autumn leaves. It's not scary if it's spring or summer, and if it was winter they just wouldn't have left the house.

[A light breeze blows and crows caw. The crows continue to caw intermittently under the dialogue.]

ALICE: Holy shit.

NATHAN (Mac Rogers): Right?

ALICE: You were not kidding.

NATHAN: Is it like you pictured it?

ALICE: That's what's messed up, it's exactly like I pictured it. You were like "You have to cross a bridge to get to my house," so I immediately pictured this old, gnarled, Brothers Grimm-type action. But then I was like, "I'm building it up too much, it's gonna be a concrete slab," but now I'm here, and...

NATHAN: Old, gnarled, Brothers Grimm-type action.

ALICE: Like whoever made this bridge was plagiarizing from my brain.

NATHAN: For me, I'm just focusing on...

ALICE: ...what?

NATHAN: That all week... you've been thinking about coming here.

ALICE: So is it all rickety? Am I gonna plunge to my death?

NATHAN: Okay, it is rickety at first, the first time's a little tricky—

ALICE: Okay I was kidding. Is it seriously rickety?

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NATHAN: But, but—it gets easier every time. By the 10th or 11th time you don't even notice.

ALICE: Um, Nathan?

NATHAN: What...

ALICE: Are you saying you want me to cross your bridge 10 or 11 times?

NATHAN: Oh, I...

ALICE: (laughing) You are so easily shocked, it is the best! I'm gonna ride roughshod, you poor kid!

NATHAN: Oh, that's...

ALICE: Let's bridge this shit.

[Alice's footsteps crunch on the leaves.]

NATHAN: Oh, maybe I should...

ALICE: Huh.

[Alice pauses.]

NATHAN: What?

ALICE: Do... none of the other houses on this street have bridges?

NATHAN: Just mine. Everybody else just has, I guess, lawns.

ALICE: How does that even work?

NATHAN: Not sure. Mine's the last one before the woods, so maybe...

ALICE: That's a lot of woods.

NATHAN: It is, I think it's all woods.

ALICE: Do you ever come out in the summer when everyone's mowing their lawns and be like "Afternoon, neighbors, guess I better join you in mowing my—oh right! Sorry bitches!"

NATHAN: (chuckles) I have not done that.

[They both laugh.]

ALICE: How have you not done that? That's what I would do first.

NATHAN: Well, if you stick around 'til summer...

[They both laugh nervously.]

ALICE: Let's try the bridge first. Go from there.

NATHAN: (backing onto bridge) Why don't I... I can sorta... spot you.

[As they begin to cross, the bridge creaks with their footsteps.]

ALICE: Okay so...

NATHAN: So like you can grab onto me if you feel like...

ALICE: Oh, so you're saying I can "grab on to you," is that—

NATHAN: Not—not—like grab onto my hands—

ALICE: (laughs) You are fish in a goddam barrel, my friend.

NATHAN: All right.

ALICE: Fish in a barrel.

[The bridge creaks a few more times.]

ALICE: It's all about the first step, I guess.

NATHAN: Yeah, like once you're on, it's really...

ALICE: Okay, this is...

[Their steps begin to fall into a slow, steady pattern.]

NATHAN: You're good, you're—

ALICE: I mean it is a little rickety but I feel like it's... manageable.

NATHAN: Do you want me to help you?

ALICE: No, no, never live that down...

[Alice pauses and takes a series of creaking steps.]

ALICE: Look at this thing. Like there has to be a troll, right? Tell me there's a troll.

NATHAN: Not that I've...

ALICE: Whoa!

[Alice takes a stumbling step, and something falls off the bridge and plops into the water below.]

NATHAN: You're fine, you're totally fine, you're nowhere near falling.

ALICE: Actually maybe if I could um...

NATHAN: (stern) Just a second.

ALICE: I feel like I wanna get it over with in one quick—

NATHAN: (his tone intensifies) But just give it a second.

ALICE: (voice slightly trembling) Okay...

[The bridge stops creaking as they stand still.]

NATHAN: I heard a story once. A billy goat tries cross a bridge. He sees a troll. He tells the troll a whole story about how he should wait to eat his bigger and juicier brother-goat who's coming along soon. Troll interrupts him: "Why do you assume I wanna eat you?" Goat says, "If you don't, why are you under a bridge?" Troll says, "Maybe I just wanna meet a goat."

ALICE: (still nervous) Is there... is that water below us?

NATHAN: We're in the dead center now. The lowest point, the least stable part of the bridge.

ALICE: Okay, that's not... (laughs nervously)

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NATHAN: But what that means? Is that from here on, it only gets better. Every step, the ground only gets firmer. Sometimes I stop here for like minutes at a time, just because I like thinking that so much.

[They kiss.]

ALICE: Weird, I...

NATHAN: What?

ALICE: I forgot the bridge was rickety for a second.

[Beat.]

NATHAN: We're supposed to meet your friends later—I think Shey and...?

ALICE: Shey and Connie.

NATHAN: Shey and Connie.

ALICE: Maybe we don't have to.

NATHAN: Maybe we don't.

[Brief transition. A door closes.]

NATHAN: Can I take your jacket?

ALICE: Excuse me, I think you mean my Power Blazer.

[They both laugh.]

NATHAN: Can I take your Power Blazer?

ALICE: Totally, good sir.

[She takes off her blazer.]

NATHAN: What makes it a Power Blazer? That it's red?

ALICE: (scoffs) "That it's red"?

NATHAN: Well I don't know.

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ALICE: Shoulder pads, my friend. All about the shoulder pads.

NATHAN: Ahh.

[Nathan hangs up the blazer.]

ALICE: Whoa. When did it start snowing?

[Brief transition as a series of chimes plays.]

NATHAN (voiceover): I love watching snow fall from inside this house. How it piles up on the bridge, but then on either side it just drifts down into darkness. No one else on the street has that.

[Ice cubes clink inside a glass.]

ALICE: You know you want it.

NATHAN: If I even attempt to drink that—

ALICE: You're just making sounds with your mouth. You're making mouth sounds. You're, you're embarrassing yourself.

NATHAN: Well, I mean, I don't wanna do that, so—

ALICE: Take the drink.

[The ice cubes clink against the glass as Nathan takes the drink.]

NATHAN: We are never getting to Shey and Connie's at this rate.

ALICE: Yeah...

NATHAN: Which... is fine with me, just, I know we've blown them off a couple times...

ALICE: Hey can we sit on the bridge? We can dangle our feet, watch the snow...

NATHAN: It's cold.

ALICE: I'll snuggle you. I'm a super-heated snuggling machine.

[Rustling as she snuggles against him.]

NATHAN: I can speak to that from experience.

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ALICE: So...?

NATHAN: I don't think it's a good idea.

ALICE: Or is it the best idea?

NATHAN: I think that would be overstating—

ALICE: Or is it the greatest idea?

NATHAN: (insistent) Shey and Connie.

ALICE: Hey what's in this trunk?

[A rustle as Alice sits up.]

NATHAN: Alice...

ALICE: Is it blankets? We could wrap up in blankets and—

NATHAN: (a sharper tone) Alice.

ALICE: Yeah... I'm probably gonna need to... mend some fences or whatever...

[Rustles as Alice settles back down.]

NATHAN: I mean it's none of my business—

ALICE: But you know what? You know what? It's my turn.

NATHAN: For...?

ALICE: For not returning texts 'cause I'm getting laid a lot.

NATHAN: Ah.

ALICE: I mean it's like... okay: Shey and I basically locked into being best friends like literally a week before her first date with Connie. Like, we're good friends, then better, then better—

NATHAN: Then bestest.

ALICE: Bestest! And then she meets the love of her life. You know how hard it is to have a best friend who's in the first two months of something like that?

NATHAN: I'm guessing she didn't answer a lot of texts.

ALICE: She probably couldn't spare the fingers. Okay that's shitty.

NATHAN: It's fine.

ALICE: But you know what? I stepped up! I made friends with Connie!

NATHAN: I believe you.

ALICE: I did! Okay, like a good faith gesture at first, but then I really did! And she's genuinely awesome.

NATHAN: But...

ALICE: But nothing, there's no but! Okay there's a but.

NATHAN: You don't have to tell me if it's private.

ALICE: Well like...

NATHAN: Let's talk about something else.

ALICE: No it's like... sometimes I'll know they're doing something and I'll just assume I'm tagging along and I'll send like a super-casual text about it... and then I'll get back like this carefully worded text about how they were thinking this time it would be a whole couple thing, but we'll all totally hang out next week, and it's like... "Do you think I'm thrilled to be tagging along? Do you think I'm psyched to be the one out of the three of us who's not fucking?"

NATHAN: Sure.

ALICE: So then the next time they hit me up to do something—because they just automatically assume I'm free, right?—I always wanna be like, "Actually, sorry, I'm having a deeply intimate evening of whatever, and it would just be weird if you were there." But a single person can't say that to a couple.

NATHAN: Huh.

ALICE: And this is my whole life, right? Like at work: when they need me, they're used to assuming I'll be there. 'Cause what else is Alice doing?

NATHAN: Right.

ALICE: But then when they don't need me... I'll find out that some meeting happened, or some people went to lunch... Oh my god, I am trashing this evening!

NATHAN: How would you be trashing it?

ALICE: I'm so trashing it. I'm so trashing it!

NATHAN: This evening is whatever it needs to be. We don't have to try to control it.

ALICE: I'm just using you like a rock to grind my axes on.

NATHAN: Grind on me all you want—and now hearing that out loud.

ALICE: All I want?

NATHAN: In my head it sounded—

ALICE: Actually that'd be a great new term for it: "grinding the axe."

NATHAN: Grinding the axe.

[Beat.]

ALICE: It's just... now they've been together for a while, and maybe they don't fuck quite as much as before, and now that maybe they need me a little bit more as a break from each other... maybe it's not so bad if I go dark. Maybe it's my turn to be unreachable for a while.

NATHAN: I hear that.

ALICE: And not that—and I'm not—like just giving myself carte blanche to your place whenever I need to.

NATHAN: You're not?

ALICE: (concerned) You would tell me if I'm at your place too much, right? You'd tell me.

NATHAN: I mean...

ALICE: Oh my god, I am.

NATHAN: No, that's not what I'm—

ALICE: Oh shit, I am!

NATHAN: No, if you just let me—

ALICE: You're being nice, and I'm just walking all over—

NATHAN: (suddenly harsh) Why don't you stop interrupting me?

[Beat.]

ALICE: Sorry, I'm...

NATHAN: I heard a story once about a man, who after half a lifetime of searching, found the perfect house. Except it wasn't perfect somehow, and he couldn't figure out why. So he decided to do a full sweep, room-to-room, to try to figure out the reason. But in the living room it was like, "No, it can't be that sofa, when I sit in it, it feels perfect." And in the kitchen it was like, "No, that stove heats my soup just right." And in the bedroom it was like, "No, that bed is always perfect when I get in it, not too hot, not too cold, and my feet never stick out from the sheets." So he spent the whole second half of his life going from room to room never finding the one thing that was missing. Your question puts me in a weird place because I'm scared of what you'll think about my answer.

ALICE: Well... I mean... you kinda have to say it now.

NATHAN: You're not here enough. You're not here enough.

[A brief transition of two chimes.]

NATHAN (voiceover): I think seasons change without you noticing. You think to yourself, "I'm gonna be late, I'll zip up my coat on the way out to the car." And then ten hours later you're walking through the parking lot back to your car and you realize: "I still haven't zipped it up. I haven't needed to."

[The breeze blows and crows caw. Alice takes creaking steps across the bridge.]

NATHAN: Ha, perfect timing!

ALICE: Perfect timing for what?

NATHAN: You got to dodge the whole thing! I figure: celebrating tonight, unpacking tomorrow, what do you think?

[Alice steps off the bridge onto solid ground.]

ALICE: Unpacking what?

NATHAN: What do you mean?

ALICE: Wait, you mean—my stuff? Like all my stuff?

[Their footsteps crunch as they walk across the leaves to the house.]

NATHAN: I mean I wasn't gonna let them keep any of it.

ALICE: Wasn't that happening in like an hour from now?

NATHAN: They said they could bump it up, so I said go for it. Figured, spare you some hassle.

[The door opens, and they step inside the house.]

ALICE: But... they got all my stuff in?

NATHAN: Of course.

ALICE: And you...

[The door closes.]

NATHAN: What's wrong?

ALICE: You tipped them?

[Nathan laughs at her.]

ALICE: Sorry, sorry, I'm sure you did—

NATHAN: I mean, at the level I felt like they—you know, what was appropriate.

ALICE: I'm sure you did, I'm sure you did, I don't know why I—

NATHAN: Oh, can I show you one quick thing? It's sort of weird, it's just—

ALICE: I mean... seems like it's a little late for that now—

NATHAN: Oh, no, no, nothing like “Aahhh!” just a stupid thing—um, can I get you to not, whatever, open this trunk? [he taps the lid of the trunk twice] Just this trunk, open anything else you want to, the whole house.

ALICE: Okay... um...

NATHAN: It’s just, like, some, crap, or...

ALICE: But you don’t want me to open it.

NATHAN: If that’s... if that’s not a...

ALICE: Like... forever?

NATHAN: Oh! Oh my god, no, not forever, just... (pauses) I wanna share all of me with you. I know it’s goofy to just say it, but, yeah. That’s how I feel. All of me. Just not this yet.

[They hug.]

ALICE: Aww. Li’l guy.

[They kiss.]

ALICE: They brought in everything?

NATHAN: Last time I looked in the truck it was empty.

[A brief chime transition plays.]

ALICE (voiceover): (rattled) It was a really close call. There’s this incredible wooden lattice that hangs over Nathan’s balcony—beautiful in the fall, but twice as much in the winter because it grows like a whole colony of icicles. Like if you flipped them over, they’d be... the towers of an ice kingdom, where like the Ice Princess reigns. And of course today, as I’m about to step grandly onto the balcony and wave to all my Ice Subjects, there’s the tiniest breeze and like seventy percent of the icicles shear off and come crashing down onto the balcony floor. I guess it’s spring.

[Dishes rattle against each other as Alice puts them away. She continues to put them away as they talk.]

NATHAN: Don’t lie.

ALICE: I totally wasn’t thinking that. I totally wasn’t thinking that!

NATHAN: Why not? It's after 9 p.m., do you see any presents?

ALICE: I'm not like one of those people who's all, "Oh my god, the whole world must stop for my birthday." Let's just hang out.

NATHAN: Maybe I think the whole world should stop for your birthday.

ALICE: Well, then, that's stupid. (laughs) Let's just spend time together.

NATHAN: Oh. See what you did?

ALICE: What?

NATHAN: You guessed.

ALICE: Okay, what did I guess?

NATHAN: As of the end of last week, Rootkit became the official vendor providing installation and IT services—

ALICE: You landed Emyrean?

NATHAN: Well, of course, now you're interrupting me, so...

ALICE: My bad, my bad—but did you land Emyrean?

NATHAN: Providing installation and IT services for Emyrean Solutions—

ALICE: Yes! Boom!

NATHAN: ...throughout the contiguous United States.

ALICE: And there it is. Congratulations, babe.

[They hug.]

NATHAN: And so today they brought me in to talk about the bonus.

ALICE: Wait, there's a bonus?

NATHAN: Of course there's a bonus.

ALICE: It's not just "For he's a jolly good fellow"?

NATHAN: No, there's a bonus.

ALICE: God, I don't think they've even heard of bonuses at my job. Just the word "bonus" sounds like this thing that used to happen in the 80's.

NATHAN: Do you wanna ask how much it is?

ALICE: No, or—[she stops putting away dishes] do you want me to?

NATHAN: We live together, you can ask how much it is.

[She resumes putting away dishes.]

ALICE: Um...

NATHAN: The point is, it's enough to, you know, do something interesting.

[She stops putting away dishes.]

ALICE: Okay—wait.

NATHAN: Like I was looking at the—not a check, it was a direct deposit confirmation, and I was like, this is an opportunity to really do something. And as it happens... someone is having a birthday.

ALICE: Okay, I swear to God—

NATHAN: And at first it was like, "Clothes? Jewelry?"

ALICE: Oh God please, no clothes, no jewelry—

NATHAN: But then I was like, "What's better than any of those things, better than the most luxurious gift in the world?"

ALICE: Okay this is freaking me out, if you like got me a car you need to—

NATHAN: Time. Having more time.

ALICE: You got me... time. For my birthday?

NATHAN: I looked at the number on that piece of paper, and I divided it by 12. And then I divided it by 24, and it was still good. And then I factored in utilities and groceries and it was still good.

ALICE: Twenty-four what?

NATHAN: Months. Twenty-four months. Of your half of the rent. Of your share of utilities. Of your share of groceries. Two years of your life expenses, bam, covered.

ALICE: But... it doesn't need to be covered. I have a job.

[She starts putting away dishes again.]

NATHAN: That's what I'm saying: not anymore.

ALICE: But... yes anymore, I still currently have a job.

NATHAN: Which you hate.

ALICE: Well, not hate, it's more like—

NATHAN: You do, you hate it. They take you for granted, they go to lunch without you, they don't notice when you save everyone's asses—

ALICE: Well sure, but everybody gripes about their j—

NATHAN: They don't give bonuses. You just said. They don't incentivize good work.

ALICE: Okay, yes, those things are true, I guess what I'm saying is—

NATHAN: So quit. Give notice. Or just walk out, what do you care? You're covered.

ALICE: Well I don't think I can just...

NATHAN: Of course you can. Why not? You're covered. You don't need severance, you don't need another penny from those assholes, I've got you.

ALICE: I mean I don't know if they're assholes, I mean we—

NATHAN: Haven't you told me, like on numerous occasions, that they always expect you to save the day and then never appreciate it when you do?

ALICE: Sure, I've said that—and that definitely happens—

NATHAN: I'm not trying to tell you how it is, this is you telling me how it is.

ALICE: But it's like... even on bad days... we all have these jokes, we have these fun rituals, we go out to Chimichanga—

NATHAN: But that's how they get you. Right? That's how they get you.

ALICE: How they get me?

NATHAN: That's how they get you. It's like, "Oh, such-and-such complimented me, I have a running joke with such-and-such, such-and-such bought me a margarita, I guess I owe them all my energy for the rest of my life." What I'm saying is: What if you don't owe anything to anyone but yourself?

[Alice stops putting away the dishes.]

ALICE: I can't just let you support me.

NATHAN: Why not?

ALICE: I've never let anyone support me, I've always—

NATHAN: You think this is a burden to me?

ALICE: I've always taken care of—yes, of course it would be a burden!

NATHAN: How can you say that?

ALICE: Because paying all my expenses... would be a burden. I mean, right? What am I missing?

NATHAN: It would be the total opposite of a burden, are you kidding? To know that you could finally take some time for yourself?

ALICE: (starting to yield) But, like, I have no idea what I'd do with the time—

NATHAN: Don't you want to find out? Don't you want to find out who Alice is away from all that crap?

[She starts putting away the dishes again.]

ALICE: But like... I can't even picture it. My alarm would go off in the morning, and then what?

NATHAN: Don't—don't set your alarm! Why would you set your alarm?

ALICE: You want me to just... sleep... until...

NATHAN: I want you to do whatever you want. I want you to have all day long to do whatever you want. You know how happy it would make me to be at work, dealing with whatever bullshit, to think of you here at home just doing whatever you goddam want? It would light up my heart like a Christmas tree.

ALICE: I'm not saying it doesn't... mean a lot... that you want this for me.

NATHAN: I think you want it for yourself.

ALICE: But like... I can't just walk out on them.

NATHAN: Give them two weeks' notice.

ALICE: There's way more than two weeks of... we're in the middle of so many things right now.

NATHAN: There again, right there, that's how they get you. You're always in the middle of things—you notice the choice of words? They want to keep you in this permanent middle that never quite comes to an end, and that binds you to them. It's wrong. It's wrong, and I love you, and I can't stand it.

ALICE: I'd have to... like write everything down so they know what to...

NATHAN: So write everything down.

ALICE: And call in sometimes to make sure—

NATHAN: Maybe once. Maybe once. Any more than that and they start pulling you back in.

ALICE: I just...

NATHAN: Right now your life is theirs. I want your life to be yours. And today is your birthday. Please let me give this gift to you. Please let me show you that I love you this much.

[They kiss.]

ALICE: Okay, but, for like six months. That's all I think—

NATHAN: We have enough for two years.

ALICE: Yeah but I don't think I could stand—

NATHAN: Let's compromise, let's say one year. One year for you. One year for Alice to be Alice.

[Chime music begins playing under credits.]

VOICEOVER: *God of Obsidian* by Mac Rogers. Directed by Jordana Williams and featuring Rebecca Comtois and Mac Rogers. Sound design by Bart Fasbender. Produced by Sean Williams. *God of Obsidian* is brought to you by Gideon Media and was recorded in its entirety in Astoria, New York. *God of Obsidian* is dedicated in loving memory to George Comtois.