

OZ 9 EPISODE 52

NARRATOR

If there's one thing I can't stand, it's unprofessionalism. OK, apparently I *can* stand it because I narrate it on a fortnightly basis, but give the ninecompoops credit, at least they try. The "alarm" voice, on the other hand -- clearly that guy just phoned it in. "Alarm alarm" -- is that really supposed to galvanize someone to action? Sorry, sorry. So, last time we met, the mysterious woman in Le Bichon Frise's room was wandering about the Oz 9, and in their haste to find her, Captain Madeline stepped on something on a control console that would be alarming if the alarm voice weren't so completely tepid.

[interior - Bridge]

MADELINE

Greg? What was that?

GREG

I'm trying to look, Captain, but you kicked some of my mane over my eyes.

MADELINE

Since when do zebras have manes?

GREG

I'm not a real zebra.

MADELINE

Still, a little historical accuracy. Is that too much to ask?

GREG

[mumbling] The one thing she knows...
[normal] Maybe we could get back to the situation at hand?

MADELINE

Olivia, kill the alarm.

[shot]

NARRATOR
Finally. That guy gets on my nerves.

[door]

COLIN
Captain!

MADELINE
Whoa! Look where you're flying!

COLIN
What are you doing up here?

MADELINE
I'm trying to board Greg.

GREG
"Board"?

MADELINE
Would you prefer "mount"?

[gagging noises from all three]

MADELINE
God, I wish I hadn't said that.

GREG
You and me both.

COLIN
Anyway... the alarm went off. What's happened? Is it Glenda?

GREG
The captain here stepped on something on the console. We're not sure what.

COLIN
Well, which button was it?

MADELINE
I don't know. I moved my foot.

COLIN
Why?

MADELINE
Because some of us don't have a hover control, Colin!

COLIN

Oh, god. I have some very close friends in Sweden.

GREG

They are going to start taking it personally.

[door]

LEET

I heard the alarm! What happened?!

GREG

Little issue with the console. The Captain here lost her balance-

[door]

DR. THEO

I heard the alarm, didn't I? It's ... terrible. What's going on?

COLIN

Our commander in chief stepped on a button.

DR. THEO

Which button? Oh, poor Sweden.

[door]

ALBATROS

The alarm went off!

MADELINE

I... nope. Not explaining it again.

COLIN

Leet AND Dr. Theo beat you back here?

ALBATROS

I found the *one part of the ship where my shoe magnets work.*

[door]

LBF

The alarm! She is speaking!

NARRATOR

Ok, Ok, so apparently that stupid alarm actually does work.

[door]

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Goodness, is there a party happening here? Are we going to boogie?

LEET

Captain Madeline set off the alarm. Didn't you hear it?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Zat so weary sounding fellow? He makes me zleepy.

NARRATOR

SEE?

OLIVIA

Could you all please shut up a lot? I'm trying to figure out if Captain ClumsyClogs here just turned another chunk of Sweden into böckling.

COLIN

What is that?

MADELINE

Smoked Baltic herring.

DR. THEO

Sometimes the things you know astonish me.

MADELINE

Oh, come on, everyone knows about böckling. It's a traditional Halloween treat for children in Sweden.

DR. THEO

And we're back.

OLIVIA

The good news is, Sweden escaped this one relatively unscathed. Or un-newly scathed, anyway.

COLIN
And the bad news?

OLIVIA
Some pods have popped open. I think.
But the other good news is they've
popped open quite a ways away, so
chances are the MRDR protocol will
have taken care of them before they
can get to us.

DR. THEO
That is possibly the most mixed good
news since the captain of the Titanic
said "the good news is, we have
lifeboats."

[door]

JESSIE
Did I hear the alarm a bit ago?

COLIN
You didn't exactly rush to get here,
did you? And why are you wearing a
life jacket?

JESSIE
I'm not entirely sure; it just seemed
like a good idea. So what's happened?

COLIN
[takes deep breath in preparation to
tell the story]

MADELINE
NO. Olivia, send Joe, Emily, and the
oth- *Howard* to find the ... guests.
Let's try to keep them comfortable
until ...

JESSIE
Guests? Popped open some pods, did we?

DR. THEO
Did anyone find Frise's guest?

LBF
Yes, it is about time we are returning
to this. Who has found her?

DR VON HABER ZETZER
Perhaps it is time to be certain we
are looking for who we think we are
looking for?

DR. THEO
Whom.

DR VON HABER ZETZER
You know, the negative conditioning has
proved very effective in cases such as
yours. Just a little pinch-

DR. THEO
OUCH! Was that really necessary?

MADELINE
Could someone possibly help me down
from here?

COLIN
We've stopped searching. We need to be
searching!

ALBATROS
QUIET. Dr. von Haber Zetzer has a
point. Frise, whom are we looking for?

DR. THEO
To be truly correct, the preposition-
OW!

COLIN
We know who we're looking for!

DR. THEO
[struggling] Mmmmmmm.

DR VON HABER ZETZER
You see? It is working already!

LBF
I cannot tell you.

ALBATROS
Why not?

LBF
It would spoil the surprise.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

I am thinking perhaps the surprise is
already out of ze pod, zo to zpeak,
hmmmm?

LBF

Ehhhh... Not exactly....

COLIN

Look, she's still wandering around
alone, and we all know how impossible
it is to navigate this endless
nightmare of a ship.

OLIVIA

Not really.

LEET

I even did heroic running, and I
couldn't find her. Heroic running
always works.

COLIN

Olivia, can't you get a lead on her?
Track her body tag.

OLIVIA

She was in pod bay 3, remember? Above
my pay grade.

COLIN

Well, track her heat signature!

OLIVIA

You're joking. Do you know how big
this ship is? I reckon only the plants
can- oooooo.

COLIN

WE HAVE TO SAVE HER!

LEET

The baddy is locked up, remember?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Colin is right, ve must find our
"guest" and make her velcome. Unt zen
ve must zend her home.

LEET

Send her home? How?

DR VON HABER ZETZER
Perhaps zis iz my surprise, mmmm?
Captain? Would you like to ztep down?

MADELINE
What, and put Jessie in charge? I
don't think so!

DR VON HABER ZETZER
Actually, I meant ztep down from ze
console before you jettison our
biozwamp or zumthink, mmmm?

ALBATROS
Jessie is next in line? Really?

JESSIE
I've had training!

ALBATROS
I'm ... Scottish!

JESSIE
Aye, look who you're talking to!

COLIN
That's it. If none of you will help,
I'll find her myself.

MADELINE
No. No one goes alone with those
plants on board. Colin, take Freeze
with you. Dr. Theo, you're with me-

GREG
I thought I was with you.

MADELINE
How about you go with Dr. von Haber
Zetzer.

DR VON HABER ZETZER
I am perfectly happy to accompany Dr.
Bromance. We could perhaps "talk
shop," as you Americans say? Or "talk
lab," eh? Zis is my joke for today.

DR. THEO
Yes, I think that's the best
arrangement. Since you're still up
there, Captain.

MADELINE

FINE. Albatros, you get Leet. Ready, Greg?

GREG

For ages.

[vague saddling up noises]

JESSIE

I'll stay here on the bridge.

COLIN

And do what, exactly?

JESSIE

We're on a space ship. In space. Sometimes I think we lose track of that.

ALBATROS

You're going to sit in the captain's chair and make pew pew noises, aren't you.

JESSIE

Don't you have somewhere less important to be?

GREG

All righty, then. Let's yippie ki yay.

LEET

I'm pretty sure there's more to that expression.

COLIN

GO.

[sounds of footsteps in the corridor]

LEET

I think we're looking for a dog.

ALBATROS

Do you? Why do you say that?

LEET

Apparently Freeze used Greg's kidneys to call Southers back on earth and tell him he had his dog. He Freeze and

his Southers dog.

ALBATROS

Frise called Southers?

LEET

Yep. Said he had the dog and wanted to know how to get the dog back to him. Him Southers.

ALBATROS

Yes, I think I can follow the pronouns, thank you. What did Southers tell him?

LEET

He didn't. They got interrupted. There was a bear.

ALBATROS

A bear.

LEET

Big animal, furry, lots of teeth.

ALBATROS

Yes. I'm well aware of what a bear is.

LEET

There was a bear so he had to hang up.

ALBATROS

He Southers?

LEET

Exactly!

ALBATROS

So... you're saying there's a way back to Earth?

LEET

Freeze seems to think so. And he thinks Southers knows what it is.

ALBATROS

It's probably just a shuttle. This is a very big ship; we haven't explored more than, what five percent of it? If that?

LEET

Joe has.

ALBATROS

That's true.

[they walk for a bit without talking, Leet whistling]

LEET

You like Colin.

ALBATROS

I beg your pardon?

LEET

You like Colin.

ALBATROS

Are we going somewhere with this? I also like cheese and Tom Stoppard plays.

LEET

Mmmmm, not "like" like cheese and ... that other thing. I mean you like him like you might make him your password, like him. I'm guessing that means you probably don't want to find Glenda. His wife, Glenda, not evil Jessie's sister, Glenda. And I don't mean evil Jessie, I mean Jessie's evil sister. Glenda. And by his I mean Colin's. I'm kind of tangled now.

ALBATROS

[laughing] I understand you. Which is alarming, honestly.

LEET

That's why I said it was a dog. Not a Glenda. Unless the dog is named Glenda, which I really hope it isn't.

ALBATROS

Agreed. And thank you for considering my feelings, Leet.

[they walk a little farther]

LEET

You didn't say no.

ALBATROS

Didn't I? Was I supposed to?

LEET

When I said you liked Colin. You didn't say no.

ALBATROS

No, I didn't, did I.

LEET

So you do like him.

ALBATROS

Let's say... slightly more than cheese, but a bit less than Tom Stoppard plays. Please don't tell him?

LEET

Nope. But I think he'd be happy to hear it.

ALBATROS

First, let's make sure it's a dog.

LEET

That's fair.

[they walk on, Leet whistling]

NARRATOR

Having wasted a not-inconsiderable amount of time, the crew are back to searching for *whomever* was recently freed from their pod. And, as expected, former-Captain Jessie has leapt into the Captain's chair and is making pew pew noises. On earth, having been freed by a ... let's just say "frisky" demi-god, our would-be heroes are legging it out of the tunnels to try and figure out what plan is afoot. Or ahoof. Whatever.

[Exterior - outside the tunnels]

DONNA

Dang it! We lost Southers and Glenda.

MRS SHEFFIELD

I must say, I assumed our time

enjoying Southerners' loyalty would be short, but that was microscopic. However, in terms of hostages, I think we've rather traded up.

FELONIUS

"Hostages"?

BEN

Works for me. Come on, Felonius. Let's hear it. What's the plan?

FELONIUS

I'm sure I have no idea. I'm simply a lackey, remember?

JULIE

Wait. Where's Pluto?

FELONIUS

He is unable to leave the tunnels now. I'm afraid you're on your own.

DONNA

Oh, yeah, like he's been such a big help so far. What do we need him for? Spill it before I spill something of yours. I mean blood, in case that's not clear.

MRS SHEFFIELD

I find threats are rather more threatening if you don't then explain them.

DONNA

I was afraid he might think I meant his chocolate milk or something.

FELONIUS

I don't have any.

JULIE

Any what?

FELONIUS

Chocolate milk. I'm unlikely to assume that's what you meant when I don't have any.

DONNA

That was just a "for example."

FELONIUS

It's a bit ridiculous, isn't it? I mean, the only liquid I have besides my own would be the Yoo-hoo I brought for Pluto.

DONNA

Joke's on you, then; Yoo-hoo IS chocolate milk.

FELONIUS

Not really....

JULIE

I'd interrupt, but I'm kind of fascinated by how off-topic this is. How far do you think they can go?

BEN

We were recently frozen by an ancient god with one hoof, gold shorts, and a sweet tooth, and we're running from giant, alien plants.

JULIE

And?

BEN

No and. Sometimes I just have to say it out loud in hopes someone will shout "April Fools" and it'll all be over.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Is Yoo-hoo like Horlicks?

DONNA

Well....

MRS SHEFFIELD

NO. STOP. Never mind. We want to hear the plan. Either you tell us now, or we throw you back in there with Pluto and the plants and track down Tiberius. Dammit, I usually wave my cane around for emphasis at this point in my ultimatums, but I don't seem to have it. Anyone see where I left it?

BEN

Southers and Glenda can't have gotten far. Let's chase them down.

JULIE

No. No offense, honey, but that's not a great idea. We've got one bad guy to keep track of; let's not have three.

FELONIUS

"Bad guy"? Me? I must say, I find that oddly flattering.

DONNA

You're not the Big Bad Wolf, honey. More like the naughty puppy who tinkled on the rug. I'm with Julie. Straight to the source, do not pass Go.

BEN

OK, so what's our next step?

MRS SHEFFIELD

I remember I had it at the campground... Didn't I?

JULIE

Mrs S, maybe concentrate here?

MRS SHEFFIELD

It's a very important cane.

BEN

It's a stick with a fluorescent light on it.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Yes, and your house is where you keep your underpants, but that's not ALL it is, is it?

FELONIUS

Whatever you think of me, you won't find Tiberius. He's long gone, as the plan dictated.

DONNA

So you do know the plan!

FELONIUS

Well, I- [hastily] He has Maggie.

JULIE/BEN

WHAT.

FELONIUS

I know where he's taken her. I can take you to her.

JULIE

You realize I can call her right now to verify.

FELONIUS

All right, he doesn't have her. But it's only a matter of time before he thinks of it. Or someone smarter does. Like Glenda.

BEN

He's right. We've got to get to Tiberius before she does.

FELONIUS

I know a short cut.

MRS SHEFFIELD

To his office? Why would there be a shortcut to his office? It's not through the jungle, it's just over there.

FELONIUS

FINE. I have a key to the back door. We won't have to get past Argus. That jacket is who? Men's Wearhouse? You'll never get past Argus in that.

JULIE

No idea who Argus is, but if this is faster, let's do it. Felonius...

FELONIUS

What.

JULIE

You use my daughter as a pawn again, for real or not, and I will feed you to Gertie. Then I'll give her the Heimlich and feed you to her again.

Are we clear?

BEN

Yeah.

MRS SHEFFIELD

No, Ben- [sigh] I really must do a course on the proper application of threats.

DONNA

Oh, I took a class like that at MCCACEC. It was called "How to scare the bejeezus out of your arch nemesis and minor nemeses."

MRS SHEFFIELD

And how did that go?

DONNA

It was cancelled when I was the only student to show up for the second class. Actually, the professor didn't show up either. But I still got an A... Huh.

JULIE

Shall we?

FELONIUS

This way. Follow me.

NARRATOR

The ground crew finally have a plan -- or something plan-like, anyway. So, as the long, dark, frankly endless night stretches on for as long as the plot dictates, they creep as quietly as possible from the tunnels, across the golf course, and to the rear entrance of the French Lick Springs resort. The night is silent but for crickets and a single, distant rifle shot.

[Exterior - night, outside the resort]

DONNA

Oh, good, sounds like someone untied Charlie.

JULIE

Is everyone all right? No one's bleeding?

MRS SHEFFIELD

Good lord, we're all fine. I don't think he's even trying any more.

BEN

Hang on, I think Felonius is bleeding.

FELONIUS

My god! Charlie managed to hit someone?!

JULIE

Hang on. [sniffs] Chocolate. You must have broken the Yoohoo bottle.

FELONIUS

Thank goodness. I thought I was done for.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Why did you even hire him? He has about as much chance of hitting someone as I do of....

BEN

Of?

MRS SHEFFIELD

Hang on, I'm trying to think of something I can't do.

FELONIUS

We didn't hire him, we inherited him. He's part of the old Showertorium gang.

JULIE

The what? Keep moving.

FELONIUS

The Showertorium. In the days before the resort was built, there was a sort of underground society of mad, old, rich men who met here.

BEN

How is that different from now? Ok,

we're here. Give me your key.

FELONIUS

I am perfectly capable of opening a door.

BEN

Give me the key or you won't be.

MRS SHEFFIELD

There, you see? Now THAT'S a threat. Well done, if ... unexpected.

BEN

Gee, thanks.

[door creaks open; they're in; sneaky, low voices]

JULIE

OK, which way from here?

FELONIUS

To jail, I think you'll find. You've set off the alarm!

[pause to listen]

MRS SHEFFIELD

Uhhhh. I don't hear anything. Anyone?

JULIE

Nope.

FELONIUS

It's a silent alarm!

DONNA

Anything to do with this bit of wire here?

FELONIUS

What?! How did you- What did you-

DONNA

Oh, come on, I know an OptaSense fiber optic cabling alarm when I don't see one.

BEN

Don't see one?

DONNA

The cable is buried 12 to 18 inches deep to avoid detection.

JULIE

Then how exactly did you detect it?

DONNA

The OptaSense is an acoustic system that listens for footsteps, so ya gotta put all your noisy stuff a minimum distance away so it doesn't drown out what that little dickens is listening for. I figured when I saw that all the resort's ice machines were no less than 15 feet from the exterior walls, and the HVAC boxes were spaced so far apart, that's got to be the alarm system they're using. Just common sense.

BEN

And you know how to disable it?

DONNA

Guess we'll find out! But let's hurry, just in case.

JULIE

Lead on, Felonius. Any more tricks like that, and you lose a finger.

BEN

Julie?!

JULIE

He threatened our daughter, Ben.

BEN

Right. True. OK.

MRS SHEFFIELD

I must say, you lot are quick learners when it comes to being threatening. Keep an eye out for my cane, will you? I can't remember if I had it when Glenda and I came in earlier.

JULIE

So, the Showertorium...

BEN

Why do you care?

JULIE

There's more going on here than we know of. I'm just trying to figure out how far back it goes.

FELONIUS

I don't know much more, only that the Showertorium was just that, at first: a place where very rich men could come take a shower in natural sulfer waters. They thought it would make them live longer and be more virile.

[creaky door opens]

FELONIUS

Down these stairs.

[door shuts behind them, can go to normal voices]

BEN

Holy cow, how far down do these stairs go?

DONNA

Pfft. Remember G2HQs parking garage? Keep talkin', Felonius!

FELONIUS

Fine, but please stop stepping on my heels. I wouldn't expect someone in Red Wings to know this, but these shoes are very expensive.

DONNA

Ooo, you wanna watch it with that kinda talk, Mister.

FELONIUS

The stalls are still in place, underground, and occasionally some of the old boys still come around to use them.

MRS SHEFFIELD

How long ago was the Showertorium built?

FELONIUS

Well, they're not aquaducts, if that's what you mean. But some of the oldest showers date back centuries. The original French Lick resort was built in 1845, and I believe the showers were quite old even then.

JULIE

How far underground are they?

FELONIUS

Far. Tiberius claims the Showertorium was built by a relative of his, and therefore it belongs to him and his brother.

JULIE

You don't agree? Where exactly are we going?

FELONIUS

According to some records I've found, Tiberius comes of humbler stock. I believe his ancestor was the janitor. But as no one is disputing his claims, he'll probably end up with it.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Surely it's not worth much? How much will people pay nowadays to be infected with ancient athlete's foot?

[sudden stop by Ben, "whoa!" from Mrs S/Donna/Julie]

BEN

I don't like this. I feel like we're walking into a trap. A very dark, deep-underground trap.

JULIE

I think Felonius here knows that leading us into a trap would be the last thing he'd ever do.

DONNA

You just hang in there, Ben. Remember, we're doing this for Maggie.

BEN

Maggie. Right.

[they continue descending]

FELONIUS

The Showertorium itself isn't of particular value, other than as a curiosity. The value was its ... discretion. The men who came here were men of power, and they came to talk with one another, privately.

DONNA

What, like kings and presidents and that?

FELONIUS

Of course not. Kings, presidents, generals, CEOs -- that's not where the power lies. This was the seat of true power: the viziers, the lieutenants, the right-hand men, the men who sit behind the throne and rule from the shadows.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Running around naked and flipping each other with towels, no doubt. Not so much the "seat" of power as the "shower of power," then. Bit off-putting, isn't it? Empires rising and falling depending on whether some bored second son gets the lemongrass soap or his Ivory doesn't float?

BEN

What do you think goes on in men's shower rooms?

MRS SHEFFIELD

Ben Benny Ben Ben, I know precisely what happens in men's shower rooms. How often must I remind you that I am a master of disguise?

BEN

Well, yeah, but... a shower room? I mean, not even you could fake...that.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Oddly enough, it was usually the chest hair that gave the game away. Do you have any idea how hard it is to find a

really high-quality chest matt that sticks in the shower?

BEN

I'm begging you. STOP. I can't even look at you now.

DONNA

She's right, though. Little tip, Mrs Sheffield: oil-based soaps are heck on your average adhesive. So use spirit gum or you'll have to sneak in your own soap. Which can be tricky.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Oh, that's very good to know, Donna. Hang on... how do you know that, by the by?

DONNA

Oh, I'm a temp! You wouldn't believe the jobs they send me on.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Yes, I'm finding it hard to believe already.

JULIE

Finally we ran out of steps. It smells like ... fabric softener down here. Lots and lots of fabric softener.

FELONIUS

A great many freshly laundered and fluffed towels have descended that same staircase. Welcome to... the Showertorium.

SOUTHERS

Well, it's about ding dang time you showed up.

BEN

Oh, come on!

JULIE

You're here?

MRS SHEFFIELD

Oh, good god.

SOUTHERS

Care to try out the facilities? Now this here's my personal favorite stall. I call this showerhead the Flaymaster 5000. Water pressure'll nearly skin you alive, but in the best possible way.

MRS SHEFFIELD

What are you doing here? What are WE doing here?

SOUTHERS

Mrs Sheffield, you have a great many questions. And I have a great many answers but only a handful of patience, so I suggest you select your interrogatories carefully.

BEN

This place is huge! How many stalls are in here?

SOUTHERS

Four hundred and one. The sacred number.

SOUTHERS/FELONIUS

Long may it lather.

JULIE

Excuse me?

DONNA

That was odd. Four hundred and one.

SOUTHERS/FELONIUS

Long may it lather.

DONNA

Four hundred one!

SOUTHERS/FELONIUS

Long may it lather.

FELONIUS

Donna...

DONNA

Four oh one!

SOUTHERS/FELONIUS

Long may it lather.

SOUTHERS

Stop that!

JULIE

What is the sacred number?

DONNA

Four hundred-

JULIE

Yes, I've got that, thank you. I mean, where does it come from?

SOUTHERS

It's... uh... we're not gonna tell you. It's THAT sacred.

JULIE

You mean you don't know.

BEN

Does it matter?

JULIE

Who knows? But it might. Why are the showers so tall?

FELONIUS

As befits the true kings of commerce!

SOUTHERS

Felonius, you talk so much baloney, I'm surprised Oscar Meyer hasn't tried to patent your face.

BEN

Ok, so a lot of rich guys used to shower here and share secrets. What has that got to do with us or Gated Galaxies or the Oz 9 or alien plants?

SOUTHERS

Those aren't just any showers, Ben my boy; only thing coming out of those spigots is sulfur water. And they weren't made tall for the almighty captains of industry. What else have you seen around here that's that big?

BEN

Pluto?

DONNA

Seriously? That many shower stalls for one god? Oh heck, no. So they've been here a lot longer than we thought.

SOUTHERS

Landed with the pyramids, so the story goes. Not that there's a connection. Guests, friends, and appetizers, welcome to the true G2 HQ.

NARRATOR

I know there are a lot of revelations to unpack here, but my brain is still stuck on the Flaymaster 5000. I think it might be baths for me from now on. So. It appears the true power behind Gated Galaxies is plants. Alien plants. Sulfur-loving alien plants under French Lick, Indiana. OK. That's where we are now.

You've been listening to:

David S. Dear as Dr. Theo Bromae

Richard Cowen as Leet

Tim Sherburn as Colin

Sarah Golding as Mrs Sheffield

Eric Perry as Southers and Dr. von

Haber Zetzer

Iri Alexander as Julie

Bonnie Brantley as Donna and Jessie

Kevin Hall as Felonius and Greg

June Clark Eubanks as the Albatros

Aaron Clark as Le Bichon Frise and Ben

Shannon Perry as Olivia and Madeline

and me, Richard Nadolny, as your

Narrator

Our music is composed and performed by John Faley; our artwork is by Lucas Elliott. This episode was directed by June Clark Eubanks. Oz 9 is written and produced by Shannon Perry.

I'm going to go take a bath now. A BATH. Until next time, Space Monkeys, Narrator out.

