

ODOZ 9 EPISODE 43

NARRATOR

When last we escaped from this random assemblage of fools, the crew had just come to the realization that the plants in Gated Galaxies' Indiana-based greenhouses weren't originally from Earth. Where did they come from and what are they doing there? I realize these are probably rhetorical questions, but let's listen in and see if anyone has a clue.

Bridge sounds.

MADELINE

Explain what you mean by "not from Earth."

NARRATOR

So, that's a "no" for Captain Madeline.

THEO

Which part is confusing you? "Not"? "Earth"? Also, please let go of my arm. I can't feel my fingers.

COLIN

So, alien, then. From another planet.

THEO

Yes.

JOE

But aren't they the same plants we have down in 1344?

LEET

B.

JOE

Can we just assume the "whoms" and the "Bs" from now on?

LEET

Sure!

COLIN

But Earth must be full of plants you don't know. Deep in the rain forests, or engineered in someone's lab. Perhaps it's a graft of some sort, like ivy combined with, with,

THEO

With what? A tyrannosaurus rex? I don't know every plant, but I know the basics of Earth plant life. That isn't it.

ALBATROS

Perhaps we might return to Joseph's question? What, exactly, is growing in 1344?

LEET

Not saying it.

ALBATROS

I beg your pardon?

LEET

I'm not saying the letter I'm not saying.

ALBATROS

Did you take a ride in Dr. von Haber Zetzer's centrifuge again?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Leeeeeet. How many times am I tellink you-

LEET

Sorry.

JOE

1344. B. Are they the same alien plants as the ones on Earth?

MADELINE

But they came from earth. How can they be alien? They can't be alien, can they?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Not exactly. Yes and no. Sort of.

ALBATROS

How very helpful. And reassuring.
Doctor, what do you actually know
about these plants?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

A great deal more than I would like to
know, and a great deal less than I
need. Ach, zis is zuch a puzzle we are
building here! Zo many peezus, even I
do not have zem all.

MADELINE

Let's start with what you do have.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Very well. You are correct that these
plants are not from Earth. Ve belief
zey are from a distant galaxy called
Periculum-Somnum-Exterreri.

COLIN

What does that mean?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Nothing special. It was named for ze
undergraduates who accidentally found
it during a rather boozy party at ze
obzervatory: Shanice Periculum, Alice
Somnum, and Natee Exterreri.

THEO

If I could just extricate myself from
the captain and Leet here ... please
...disengage! Thank you. What makes
you think these plants are from
Periculum-Somnum-Exterreri?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

If you do not mind, young fellow, I
will explain in ze order? My mind, it
gets zo tangled with ze higgledy unt
ze piggedy, as you say.

LEET

Who says that?

MADELINE

Sssh.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Ven I zay zese plants are from Periculum-Somnum-Exterreri, or let us zay "PSE" for ze shorts, hmmm? Or ve vill be here forever, chust saying ze "Periculum Somnum Exterreri" over unt over.

OLIVIA

Doc-

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Yes, thank you. Ven I zay zese plants are from ze PSE, I mean *originally*, you zee. They've been in Earth for perhaps many millenia.

THEO

That's impossible. They would have been discovered.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

I think you were not listening with zuch care, mein Doctor fellow. Or mein fellow doctor! HA! Zo gut! I said "in" - not "on."

OLIVIA

Could we speed this up, please? Jessie and Freeze are still AWOL, as is Greg, and I really don't want to have to sit through this three more times. Being omnipresentish has its drawbacks.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Yes, yes. The plants - unt "plant" is a very inexact word, you are understanding? Ve only know Earth plants vis the leafs unt the roots unt the being green and zat. And because these have leafs unt rootish things unt greenness, we also call zem plants. But zey are not. On zere world, zey are ze masters, you see?

THEO

So they're sentient.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

And very zmart. And destructif. Very many zenturies ago, there was a war on their home planet in the PSE galaxy. Many died. Zum escaped and flew far, finally landing here, on Earth. Well, over zere actually.

COLIN

How do you know all this?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Ve haf pieced it togezer from what they tell us.

MADELINE

Wait. "Tell"?

COLIN

I can see my finger.

LEET

Congratulations! Show me! Hey!

COLIN

I can't help which finger it is. It just showed up.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Communication is, as you may imagine, rather awkward, az our underzstanding of zere language is poor. Plus there is the eating.

THEO

They eat people.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Yes. Being a tranzlator is nearly always fatal. We are not sure if our tranzlatorz haf said zumthing inzulting or if ze plant is merely hungry.

COLIN

Is that my elbow?

LEET

I think it is. It's the right distance from your finger. But there's just space in between, see?

COLIN

Ouch! That's not "space," you idiot,
that's invisible me!

LEET

Oh, right. Sorry.

ALBATROS

So they escaped the war on their
planet and came here. Landing at that
place where Julie and Mrs. Sheffield
are?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

No. Ve are not zure where zey landed;
at least ve did not know zis ven I
left earth rather unexpectedly. Ve
vere down to ze one translator who
wasn't very gut. Got a lot of tings
wrong, actually. Was quite a relief
ven zey ate him.

MADELINE

Gah! What the hell is that?!

LEET

I think it's a tongue.

MADELINE

What's it doing there?

COLIN

Seriously?

OLIVIA

OY. There are some serious plot
details here, pay attention!

MADELINE

OK, but Colin, could you grow some
skin or something? That thing just
flapping there is really gross.

COLIN

"Grow some skin." Do you understand
how invisibility works?

ALBATROS

The only tongue that should be flapping right now is Doctor von Haber Zetzer's. But seriously, Colin, could you stand behind a screen or something? That's just unpleasant. Doctor?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Danke. Zese creatures need a particular atmosphere to zurvive, just as ve do. Back zen, zey needed zulpher. And a great deal of it. Many more died while zey were searching for a zuitable atmosphere.

THEO

The sulpher springs.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Precisely. Does anyone haf zum crackers, perhaps? I could use a little nibble.

LEET

I could eat.

COLIN

There are sulpher springs in Indiana?

THEO

Yes. There used to be some quite fancy resorts scattered around the state where people came for the supposed health benefits of the water. Apparently the waters were quite helpful for ... constipation. Among other things.

LEET

So, what did these plant guys do? Just stand around pretending to be decorative topiary, or something?

MADELINE

"Topiary"?

LEET

I know things.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Goodness, no. Can you imagine? "Come haf a good poop and zen be one?" I don't think zis is the best marketing slogan, eh? No, zey followed ze springs deep below ground to ze source. And stayed there, in caves and tunnels, for thousands of years. It is only recently they have been coming to ze surface.

MADELINE

Why now?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Zis is the 64-dollar question, is it not?

ALBATROS

What's changed?

JOE

We have. Humans.

COLIN

What, we're tastier? More nutritionally dense?

JOE

One tongue, one, two, three molars and a canine. That's just disconcerting. Oh, and a uvula.

LEET

But Colin's a boy.

ALBATROS

Stop right there.

COLIN

Would you all stop commenting on my visible...ness?

JOE

If you wouldn't do it all piecemeal like this, that'd help. Like having just the coif without the rest of your hair is... I don't even know how to describe it.

COLIN

Do you really think I'm in control?

MADELINE

Is that an eyebrow or half a mustache?

LEET

It's pretty far below the coif, so I'm calling it a mustache. It's looking a little bushy there, Colin.

COLIN

You try to trim your mustache when you're invisible!

JOE

Oh, yeah, I'm seeing part of a band-aid.

COLIN

You have no idea the grooming challenges.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Zo? We are finished vis the talkink on ze important things, hmmm?

MADELINE

No, of course not, doctor, we're sorry. Ew. The hairs but not the nose? Classy, Colin.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

Mein Got. I'll be in my lab.

COLIN

Again, NOT IN MY CONTROL.

NARRATOR

If you live in the town of French Lick, Indiana, we'd love to hear from you. Have you noticed strange plant life or maybe odd rumbling noises from deep underground? Perhaps your sleepwalking cousin disappeared one night and you found their fillings in a compost pile? Contact us at crew at oz dash 9 dot com. Meanwhile, Jes-Sorry, *Captain* Jessie and Le Bichon Frise are continuing their conversation in the dark of the

bioswamp at night.

JESSIE

Is this why you chose the name bichon freeze? Because you follow people around like a puppy dog?

LBF

Not at all. Am I following for affection? Or because you are my prey?

JESSIE

Neither one is going to work out well for you, FYI. Why did you choose that name, anyway? It hardly inspires terror.

LBF

Exactement. No one expects such a sweet, charming creature to suddenly attack. So when they do, it is deadly.

JESSIE

They don't, though.

LBF

What?

JESSIE

Attack. Ever.

LBF

Of course they do. They are wild beasts!

JESSIE

I don't think they are, actually. They're quite floppy and harmless, really.

LBF

Perhaps we could move on?

JESSIE

I don't have an answer for you, if that's what you're wanting.

LBF

Let me add a bit of fuel to the fire. Dr. von Haber Zibble-

JESSIE
Doctor what?

LBF
von Hubble Zipper-

JESSIE
Ha! So the plant's healing powers have
limits!

LBF
This is irrelevant. Merely a glitch.

JESSIE
Ever thought maybe you were wrong, and
it's not a healer?

sound of rustling

LBF
What is that?

JESSIE
Crap. Albert. He's been creeping
closer and closer every time I come
out here.

LBF
Should we be hiding?

JESSIE
You're an assassin!

LBF
Of humans! Humans do not have row upon
row of huge nasty teeth! Most of my
"clients" have no teeth at all,
actually. There is a surprising amount
of money to be made in killing
toothless old peoples.

rustle, closer

JESSIE
Come on. There's a cave over here we
can hang out in. The entrance is too
narrow for Albert to fit.

LBF
A cave? Aboard a space ship. This is
very strange.

JESSIE

Name me one thing on this ship that isn't. I'll wait. Mmmm hmmm. I'm growing mushrooms in here, so watch where you step.

LBF

Oooo, they are glowing! Are they safe to eat?

JESSIE

No idea. Remember that sandwich I was making earlier? The mustard came from a plant that makes you "return your meal to sender," if you catch me. Which makes my mustard by far the safest thing I've eaten on this ship since I finished up all of Dr. von Haber Zetzer's Tic Tacs.

LBF

You had Tic Tacs and did not share?

JESSIE

They were old. And I don't like you. So what were you going to tell me about the good doctor? Or the bad doctor, since I'm assuming Dr. Theo is actually the good one.

LBF

He was healing me.

JESSIE

Oohhhhkaaaaay. Considering the state you were in when the plant grabbed you, he wasn't doing a very good job of it.

LBF

I was play-acting!

JESSIE

You ate lint.

LBF

I am dedicated to my craft.

JESSIE

You were baked. Or rather, frozen.

LBF

Fine! But I am now restored to my powers, and it is time to discover what Doctor von- the doctor wanted from me. If he is also on my side, we three would be unstoppable!

JESSIE

Is that all you've got? Give up my career, risk my life and my position on this ship, throw away my loyalty to the captain's code to join a half-frozen baguette with a mustache that doesn't match, and a doctor who stores super powers in appetizers?

bursting out of the bushes

GREG

Don't do it, Captain Jessie!

JESSIE

Crap, Greg? Was that you rustling around in there?

GREG

Well, me and Albert, but I gave him a pretty good thump and he left me alone.

LBF

Sacre bleu!

GREG

I can help you, Captain Jessie. Please just give me a chance.

JESSIE

Grevy's boat.

power down, clang

LBF

I beg your pardon? Allo...What has happened to Greg?

JESSIE

Leet and I played a game the other night: guess everyone's password. Come on. Help me move him into the cave.

LBF

Why?

JESSIE

I'm not leaving him here for Albert.

LBF

Albert would solve a most inconvenient problem.

JESSIE

Leet also told me the password to activate your tracker. *All* the settings.

LBF

Perhaps I shall invite Leet for a picnic one day soon....

JESSIE

Just for that, you're on the ass end. One, two, three!

sound of picking up heavy object, shuffling it into the cave.

LBF

We should go. Quickly. We have been spending too much time together.

JESSIE

It's adorable you think anyone's noticed.

LBF

You think I am "adorable," do you? Perhaps we should pretend we are deep in *l'amour* to explain our time alone, mmmmmmm?

JESSIE

You're going to be deep in le swamp, headfirst and flailing, if you don't step aside.

voices trailing away

LBF

Apres-vous, ma capitaine.

JESSIE

What did I say about following me around, eh?

LBF

I am not following - there is only one door!

faint, muffled, burbly sound of Greg's phone ringing

NARRATOR

As Greg's kidneys ring on, unanswered, those calling the Oz 9 are in a bit of a pickle. Or, more accurately, in a bit of a pod.

SOUTHERS

Well, looky here what landed in our laps. Or is suspended above our heads, anyway.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Southers.

SOUTHERS

Is that Mrs. Sheffield over there in the left-most pod? You're in my favorite plant, so don't you go giving it indigestion, now. I call her Gertie.

BEN

Let us out, you bastard!

SOUTHERS

Dr. Ben Marshall? Boy, do you *like* being eaten alive or something? Seems like you only just got out of one of these.

JULIE

Ben, stop moving around.

BEN

How else am I supposed to get out of here?

JULIE

Certain carnivorous plants exude a hormone that has a sedative effect.

BEN

Like, to calm me down?

JULIE

Well, yes.

BEN

Oh, that's nice.

JULIE

No, it just makes you easier to eat. Stop squirming, but stay awake.

BEN

Oh my god. Julie, my tattoo is gone.

JULIE

Yeah, that's concerning. Hold still, OK? I'll get us out of here.

SOUTHERS

See, now, you say that with more confidence than a hungry pyromaniac at a marshmallow factory, but I tend to think you're the marshmallows in this particular simile.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Metaphor.

SOUTHERS

Beg pardon?

MRS SHEFFIELD

It's a metaphor, not a simile. At best, quite frankly.

SOUTHERS

I guess we'll just have to agree to disagree.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Not at all. I'm right. You're wrong.

JULIE

Actually, I think it's just a comparison.

MRS SHEFFIELD
Is it? Seriously, where is Grammar
Girl when you need her?

JULIE
He's not saying we're actual
pyromaniacs-

SOUTHERS
Marshmallows.

JULIE
Now, hold on. That wasn't the original
statement.

BEN
WHO THE HELL CARES?

MRS SHEFFIELD
I guess that sedative hasn't kicked in
yet, has it?

BEN
We're being eaten alive and you're
arguing grammar?

MRS SHEFFIELD
Being eaten alive is no excuse for
sloppiness, Benjamin.

BEN
Yes! It is!

MRS SHEFFIELD
Oh, very well. Donna? Are you ready?

DONNA
You betcha! No one's answering on the
Oz 9 anyway.

four bangs, four whumps, four grunts

JULIE
What took so long? If I wanted to be
exfoliated, I'd make an appointment.

DONNA
Yeah, sorry, but it's not easy to
reload in there. Now, hang on there,
Mr. Southers. We're not finished.

SOUTHERS

You had a gun?

DONNA

Oh, I have a buncha guns!

JULIE

I don't think he's talking about your collection back in Minnesota.

DONNA

Neither am I, sweetie. How about you have a seat there, big fella?

FELONIUS

What in heaven's name- my god! Gertie!

DONNA

Well, hey again! Looks like you got that hand all bandaged up nice.

FELONIUS

Yes, we have a nurse who lives on the grounds.

DONNA

I was just making conversation, honey; I don't really care.

BEN

Now what do we do?

MRS SHEFFIELD

Where are your other halves? Buck and the fellow with the shoes? Don't hold out now, gentlemen. There are plenty more plants in here who would happily tuck into a pair of meaty fellows like yourselves.

SOUTHERS

Have you no scruples?

JULIE

"Scruples"? Who taught you that word?

SOUTHERS

Reader's Digest. I am increasing my word power.

BEN

Come on, talk! I don't want anyone else sneaking in here and feeding me to an overgrown houseplant.

sound of hissing

JULIE

Careful, Ben. These aren't "plants" by human definition.

BEN

What does that mean?

FELONIOUS

She means they understand you. So please, do go on insulting them. I particularly enjoy it when they fight over a meal.

BEN

Is he serious? They can understand me?

JULIE

Mmmmm, the tone of your voice, certainly, so keep it civil.

BEN

Civil. To a plant. When did everything go so completely wrong?

MRS SHEFFIELD

Perhaps that can be your replacement tattoo?

DONNA

Hey, all, while I really do enjoy the banter and that, sun's going to be coming up soon, and I reckon that means more folks coming along.

JULIE

She's right. The day shift will be here in an hour.

DONNA

All righty, then. I reckon us four need to do a bit of a regroup, so how's about we back out of here nice and slow and go find ourselves a Juicy Lucy.

TIBERIUS

I've no idea what a "Juicy Lucy" is-

DONNA

Oh, it's real good. It's a hamburger with cheese inside the burger. Ya gotta have patience, though, 'cause the cheese gets real hot-

TIBERIUS

You ruined my entrance.

DONNA

Oh, oops. I do that. You go on and start over. You were doing real well.

TIBERIUS

I've no idea what a "Juicy Lucy" is, but perhaps you'll be one- No. Dammit, the moment has passed.

DONNA

Now, I thought that was real good.

MRS SHEFFIELD

I was terrified, personally.

TIBERIUS

Were you? Having to repeat the first line felt so forced.

FELONIUS

Sir?

TIBERIUS

Yes, yes, very well. You're surrounded. And I do mean surrounded. It's wall-to-wall men with guns out there. My god, Felonius, what is our payroll like these days?

FELONIUS

The men do come in handy, Sir.

TIBERIUS

Mmmm. You, drop your weapon.

DONNA

It's not really mine, to be honest.

TIBERIUS

Drop it anyway. You are all my
prisoners. Guards! Take them away.

Mrs. S, Julie, Ben, and Donna, feel free to ad lib some lines
to say as you're being taken away.

MRS SHEFFIELD

Perhaps a little less shoving?

BEN

Get your hands off my wife!

DONNA

Oh, hey now, watch those hands,
mister. Red Wings! Did you know those
boots come from Minnesota? Surely!
Founded in 1905.

JULIE

Can I just take a second to take some
samples? What are you feeding these
big guys? I can help Gertie, if you'd
just let go for a second.

crunch of gravel as Felonius and Tiberius walk outside;
sounds of birds, lawn mowers, golf

FELONIUS

I'll put them in the tunnels, shall I?

TIBERIUS

Yes, fine. Just make sure the gate is
secure. Wait. Leave me the botanist.
Perhaps she truly can save Gertie. And
once she's done that, she can feed
her.

FELONIUS

Are you sure, Sir? I doubt she's
strong enough to throw half a heifer
up that high.

TIBERIUS

No, idiot. SHE can feed Gertie.

FELONIUS

Yes, I did hear that. Ohhhh. SHE can
feed Gertie. With herself. As food.

TIBERIUS

It's not nearly so dramatic sounding when your lackey explains it back to you.

FELONIUS

It was definitely dramatic, Sir. Most chilling.

TIBERIUS

As for the rest, confiscate their weapons and communications. The Others will quickly take care of them.

small sounds of horror from Tiberius and Felonius - shivers, gulps, etc.

FELONIUS

Perhaps we should schedule a horror movie marathon for the guests? To cover up the screams?

TIBERIUS

Yes, all right.

yawns

This is a grotesque hour to be out of bed. I'm returning to my boudoir. Take care of everything, will you?

starts up golf cart, drives away

FELONIUS

Yes, I'll take care of everything, Sir. As usual.

NARRATOR

Briefly freed, Donna, Ben, Mrs. Sheffield, and Julie are once again prisoners of Tiberius and Felonius. But who are these "Others" who live in the tunnels deep below French Lick? And what, if anything, does former NBA star Larry Bird have to do with all of this?

You've been listening to: Shannon Perry as Madeline and Olivia; David S. Dear as Dr. Theo Bromae; Tim Sherburn as Colin; Eric Perry as Joe, Southers, and Dr. von Haber Zetzer; Richard Cowen as Leet and Tiberius; June Clark Eubanks as the Albatros; Bonnie Brantley as Jessie and Donna; Kevin Hall as Greg and Felonius; Sarah Golding as Mrs Sheffield, Iri Alexander as Julie, 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.

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