

OZ 9 EPISODE 44

NARRATOR

1 I'd say "welcome back to Oz 9," but that makes it sound like I'm happy to be here. It also acknowledges that you have a life that goes on when you're NOT here, you lucky, lucky... Ahem. Sorry. When last we left- Look. Do you really need a recap? You could just go back and listen to 43 again. Oh, dammit, that stupid contract. OK: Jessie and le Bichon Frise crammed a powered-down Greg into a cave in the bioswamp. Mrs. Sheffield, Julie, Ben, and Donna were taken prisoner by Tiberius and Felonius and are being frog marched to their deaths in some tunnels under French Lick, Indiana. The crew in space are trying to figure out if they're in danger, and I think we can all comfortably say the answer is yes. All caught up? Good.

sounds of the bridge. door opens

THEO

2 Oh, excellent. Did you get the mold samples?

JESSIE

3 I got 'em. Jesus! Is that a chin?

LEET

4 Colin's coming back! Well, sort of. Bits just keep appearing and disappearing.

JESSIE

5 Well, that's disgusting. And when's the last time you shaved?

COLIN

6 This morning.

JESSIE

7 I mean your face.

COLIN

8 Well, obviously. What did you think I meant? Have you ever tried to shave

9 something you can't see?

JESSIE
10 Ever seen the underside of your left
knee?

COLIN
11 Well, no...I guess...

JESSIE
12 Men. Get over yourselves.

THEO
13 THE SAMPLES. Please.

JESSIE
14 Yep, right, got 'em here. Something
odd, though - the sides of the mold
don't match.

LEET
15 Oh no! That poor plant!

MADELINE
16 Calm down, Leet. Symmetry isn't that
important to everyone.

THEO
17 What do you mean? Leet, it's difficult
to talk to Captain Jessie with you
standing directly between us.

LEET
18 But worth the extra effort, don't you
think?

COLIN
19 What do you mean they don't match?

JESSIE
20 Well, look, this bit came from the
right side, and this bit from the
left. See how that's dark green, but
on this side, it's almost yellow?

THEO
21 Did Greg happen to eat from both
sides?

JESSIE
22 He did, but hadn't burped up the

23 results when-

24 MADELINE
When?

25 JESSIE
Ehhh..... Albert interrupted. I took
off for the door, but he chased Greg
into the woods.

26 LEET
Someone needs to save him!

Heroic running music fires up. **Shout the next few lines.**

27 THEO
What the hell is that?

28 COLIN
It's his "heroic running" music. The
computer fires it up any time Leet
runs off to save someone.

29 JESSIE
Don't worry. It doesn't happen often.

30 LEET
Hey!

31 JESSIE
Can the theme song, Olivia! Greg's
fine.

32 OLIVIA
Are we sure? Leet does a lot of
rippling when he runs.

33 THEO
Please, Olivia.

34 OLIVIA
Oh, all right then, but no dashing off
without your theme music, dearest.

sound of tape rewinding, **end of shouting**

35 THEO
You're right, Jessie; the mycelium of
each sample is completely different.
Leet, why am I being cradled like a
baby?

36 LEET
It's nice, isn't it?

37 THEO
Not really. It's very hard to do
science in this position.

38 LEET
What if I rock you?

39 THEO
How about you put me down. For
science.

40 LEET
OK. Can you science better now?

41 OLIVIA
Yes. He can.

42 THEO
Yes, thank you.

43 MADELINE
We probably ought to find Greg. He
could be in trouble.

44 COLIN
He's made of metal. You don't think
Albert's that desperate?

45 MADELINE
I don't think Albert's that
discerning. Olivia, get Joe and, uh...
the Albatros, I guess, to track him
down and bring him back, will you?

46 JESSIE
I'll just toodle along with them,
then.

47 THEO
I could use your help here, actually,
Captain Jessie. I'd like you to
describe exactly what you saw.

48 JESSIE
Ehhh...I didn't see much. Mostly the
back end of a zebra. You know, Freeze
was in the bioswamp as well. Maybe
send him along to look?

49 MADELINE
What was Freeze doing there?

50 JESSIE
Who knows? Probably looking for poison
dart frogs to milk for his bloody
decongestant bottles.

51 THEO
I assure you, there are no
Dendrobatidae here.

52 JESSIE
Glad to hear you're free of dendroff,
there, mate, though not sure how
that's relevant. If there are no
poison dart frogs, what's this?

53 THEO
GAH! Where did you find that?

54 JESSIE
Snug as a bug in the mold, actually.
I'm pretty sure there was at least one
black mamba and a couple of coastal
taipans curled up in there as well.

55 COLIN
What are those, cocktails?

56 JESSIE
Venomous snakes, ya burk. That plant
is a walking ecosystem of deadly
stuff.

57 THEO
Interesting. Given the company it's
keeping, we should probably give the
mold a wide berth for now. And you
should wash your hands before you eat
anything, Captain Jessie. Leet, please
stop petting me.

58 LEET
OK!

59 JESSIE
Anything else, or can I go help find
Greg now? I feel a bit responsible,
since I was with him when the egrets
attacked.

60 COLIN
I thought it was Albert.

61 JESSIE
Oh, eh-h-h, him too. They've joined
forces, apparently.

62 LEET
I'll go with you! [pause] Hey, no
music?

63 OLIVIA
Not if she's going with you. I don't
have proper hero-plus-idiot-sidekick
music.

64 JESSIE
Watch it.

65 THEO
I'll come along as well. I'd like to
get a closer look at the mold. Do we
have any hazmat suits on board?

66 MADELINE
That's cute. How about you go along
too, Colin?

67 COLIN
Why me?

68 MADELINE
Because if everyone goes but you and
me... I'm sorry, but I just can't work
with one eye and a bottom lip looking
over my shoulder. It's just too
creepy. And stop pouting.

69 COLIN
I'm not pouting!

70 MADELINE
I can see your bottom lip, and it is
clearly in pout position.

71 JESSIE
Do we really need this many people in
the bioswamp?

72 THEO
We need Greg. He's our only connection

73 to the people on earth.

JESSIE
74 What if we don't find him?

THEO
75 Honestly? Everybody dies.

NARRATOR
76 Wait - *everybody*? How did we get from
"ha ha, he's a slide projector" to "if
we don't find him, everybody dies"?
Fine, well, I can't watch the clown
school dropouts running around the
bioswamp with our fragile lives in
their clumsy, meaty, thumbless paws.
Let's check in with the crowd on Earth
and see if they're dead yet.

DONNA
77 Ya know, we have a sulphur spring in
Minnesota. Oh sure, Mudbaden, down
there near Jordan. Oh, it's real nice
- listed on the National Register!

MRS SHEFFIELD
78 You have a national register of
excruciatingly dull trivia?

JULIE
79 Apparently.

FELONIUS
80 Quiet!

DONNA
81 Oh, come on now. It's always nice to
find out the things you have in
common.

FELONIUS
82 We have nothing in common. By noon, I
will be dining in the summer room,
sipping champagne from crystal
stemware, eating roasted duck from a
plate created by Brunello Cucinelli
[coo-chi-neLLi]. You will be dead.

DONNA
83 See, now there's another thing we have
in common!

84 FELONIUS
And what is that?

85 DONNA
We each think the other one will be
dead by lunchtime! Funny how the world
works, doncha think?

86 BEN
What is she doing?

87 MRS SHEFFIELD
I'd say she was threatening him, but
it's so hard to tell with Minnesotans.
They are relentlessly pleasant.

88 BEN
Glenda!

89 MRS SHEFFIELD
Where?

90 BEN
Well, no, not here. But maybe soon?
She could save us.

91 JULIE
From what I've heard, I wouldn't count
on it. She's not the saving type.
Plus, it's a long drive from the
nearest zoo.

92 BEN
When we get out of here, I really want
to know why you think she's at the
zoo.

93 MRS SHEFFIELD
Trust us, Ben; you really don't. And
I'm afraid Julie is correct. We can't
count on Glenda.

94 BEN
Dammit. [pause] I heard them say
something about "the Others." It
didn't sound good.

95 JULIE
I've heard them use that phrase a few
times since I've been here. Usually
followed by nervous laughter and

96 occasionally signs of the cross.

FELONIUS
97 I said be quiet!

DONNA
98 Oh, come on. What a waste of good
acoustics! How much farther down are
we going?

FELONIUS
99 Until I say stop.

DONNA
100 Ned! You remind me of my Cousin Ned.

MRS SHEFFIELD
101 Is Donna entirely sane, do you think?
And are all Minnesotans so ...
resourceful?

BEN
102 Does it matter? We're about to die.

JULIE
103 We can't die. I am NOT letting your
mother raise my child.

FELONIUS
104 And just how am I like this Ned of
yours?

DONNA
105 Well, two ways: One, he has a real
nice singing voice. I suspect you do
too. I can tell from the diaphragmatic
control behind all that shouting.

FELONIUS
106 Well, I am classically trained,
actually.

starts to burst into song

GUARD

frantic whisper

107 Sir! The Others! They'll hear you!

FELONIUS

choking noise as he abruptly stops singing; strange noises rise up from far away, then settle

108 Good god, that was close. And the other way I resemble this Ned fellow?

DONNA

109 Oh, I'll keep that to myself for now.

FELONIUS

110 I believe you mean you'll take it with you to your grave. Halt! This is as far as I go. Guard, carry on until you see the blood stains, then blow your whistle to bring the Others. [shiver] Understood?

GUARD

111 Yes, Sir. Then back the way I came?

FELONIUS

laughs a little, then stops, realizing

112 Uhhh, yes. Back the way you came, certainly. On you go now.

BEN

113 They took our phones. We can't even communicate with the Oz 9.

JULIE

114 What could they possibly do from space?

BEN

115 I don't know... beam us up?

MRS SHEFFIELD

116 Even if they could, do you imagine you'd be any safer there? [pause] Mmmm. Didn't think so. You know, Dr. von Haber Zetzer used to work here, not long ago.

GUARD

117 You know the Doc?

118 MRS SHEFFIELD
Well, yes, a bit. Cordially, in passing. Not at all biblically or anything. Ahem. Do you?

119 GUARD
Oh, sure. He spent a lot of time down here. He was the only one to come down the tunnels this far and make it out alive.

120 MRS SHEFFIELD
You might want to think about that for a moment or two.

121 GUARD
Uhhh... sure. OK. [pause] Why?

122 JULIE
What are you thinking, Mrs. Sheffield?

123 MRS SHEFFIELD
That Dr. von Haber Zetzer always builds in an escape hatch.

124 DONNA
Like the 30-minute grace period for the apocalypse device!

125 BEN
You think there might be a way out of this?

126 MRS SHEFFIELD
I suspect so. Keep your eyes peeled.

127 JULIE
It's almost pitch black.

128 MRS SHEFFIELD
Well, yes, quite. *Almost*. But not completely. Why not? There are no lights, no torches, certainly no windows, this deep underground.

129 DONNA
It's the walls.

130 JULIE
You're right! It's mold. Covering the walls - it's a bioluminescent mold.

GUARD
131 Radioactive, actually. Scientists
brought it here from Chernobyl because
it eats radioactive stuff. They wanted
to line space ships with it, but it
turns out it makes a better
flashlight. It's super dangerous
though, so anyone working in the
tunnels has to wear a special suit.

MRS SHEFFIELD
132 Do they.

GUARD
133 Sure do!

MRS SHEFFIELD
134 But not this time? No suit for you?

GUARD
135 Guess not. I'm super glad, though.
It's really hot.

MRS SHEFFIELD
136 Hmmm.

BEN
137 Did anybody hear that?

DONNA
138 Did you ever come down here with the
Doc?

GUARD
139 Just one time, and we didn't come this
far.

JULIE
140 Did you see him doing anything strange
or unexpected?

GUARD
141 You know, come to think of it, I did.
About every six feet, he'd dig a
little hole in the wall and stick
something in it.

DONNA
142 OK, everyone, start looking!

143 JULIE
The mold will have grown over it by
now, so feel around.

144 BEN
If this is radioactive, should we be
touching it?

145 JULIE
It's not. It's ordinary *Panellus*
stipticus. It's naturally bio-
luminescent.

146 GUARD
Von Haber Zetzer lied to me?

147 MRS SHEFFFIELD
One thing you should always remember:
the doctor lies.

148 BEN
There's that sound again. Seriously,
no one hears it but me? Hey, I found
something!

149 DONNA
Me too!

150 JULIE
What is it?

151 BEN
It's a firework. The kind we told
Maggie not to throw at the cows,
remember? They bang and make a bright
flash if they hit something hard
enough.

152 GUARD
OK, now, I think we should put those
back and move along. I feel really
sorry about this, but I gotta lead you
to your deaths and hightail it outta
here.

153 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Still haven't quite cottoned on, have
we? You're not leaving here either.

154 GUARD
I'm not?

155 DONNA
Oh, heck no. Think about it: just one guard, with no weapon, no special suit. Bet they didn't set you a place at the dinner table.

156 GUARD
But I work here. I'm one of these guys, not ... you... guys. I'm the feeder, not the ... feedee!

157 MRS SHEFFFIELD
I believe the word you want is "food." And yes, you are one of the baddies, but do you really believe the Others know the difference?

158 BEN
Help us find more of these, and we'll all get out of here. Those sounds are definitely getting closer.

159 JULIE
How do you think it works?

160 BEN
They're afraid of the noise or the flash or both. Right? It's gotta be.

161 JULIE
Worth a shot. How about we start heading back the other way, fast. We can grab more of these as we go.

162 GUARD
Firecrackers? We have FIRECRACKERS? I've heard the screams. LOTS OF SCREAMS. You think stupid little firecrackers you give to your kid are going to scare them?

163 BEN
OK, now come on, tell me you heard that!

164 MRS SHEFFFIELD
We've been hearing it all along, Ben, we just don't like to dwell on it. Let's move, everyone, at a trot, hup hup!

Sounds of something big coming towards them, very fast.
Strange, scary, alien noises

BEN, DONNA, JULIE, MRS SHEFFIELD, GUARD

Please give me some shouting, hollering, character-appropriate lines. This should be pretty chaotic with the running, banging of fireworks, growling of critters. GUARD, gonna need a dying scream from you. Conversation comes in gasps, as you're still running.

JULIE

165 There! I see daylight! Go go go!

BEN

166 The guard! He fell!

DONNA

167 Keep moving, Ben. I reckon the only thing left of him are those Red Wings.

BEN

168 I'm out of firecrackers. We're not going to make it!

MRS SHEFFIELD

169 Benjamin, are you dead yet?

BEN

170 No...

MRS SHEFFIELD

171 Have I ever let you be killed?

BEN

172 Well, no-

MRS SHEFFIELD

173 Then do CALM DOWN. You young people have no faith, when did you get so cynical? Get behind me, everyone.

JULIE

174 What are you doing?

MRS SHEFFIELD

175 MI 18 hasn't left me without a thing or two up my sleeve. Or on my cane... Behold!

sound of faulty fluorescent light

176 BEN
That's it? The light on the top of
your cane is... fluorescent?

177 MRS SHEFFIELD
It's working, isn't it?

178 BEN
Well, yeah, but it's hardly Gandalf,
is it.

179 JULIE
What are those things? I see flowers,
but also spines, glochids, pileus,
annulus, trigger hairs,... are
those... gills?

180 BEN
Like a mushroom?

181 JULIE
No, like a fish!

182 DONNA
They're really big, carnivorous plants
that are even bigger and wilder than
the ones in the greenhouse. I'm
guessing as a botanist, they're very
interesting, but given what just
happened to the guard, maybe we head
on out, okey doke?

183 BEN
What's it doing now?

184 MRS SHEFFIELD
I do hate to be all doom and gloom,
but I think it's preparing to strike.
Calm and still, everyone. Calm. And.
Still.

185 GUARD
I MADE IT!! I'M ALIVE!!

oops. screams and hollering

186 NARRATOR
GAAAAHHHH!! HOLY CRAP!! OK, OK.
Ohmigod, that was bad. That was *really*
really ugly with blood and bits flying
around bad. Oh man, be glad you

COLIN
195 I'm very glad. Thank you.

ALBATROS
196 Certainly. Oooo. Did Leet just lose an ear?

COLIN
197 His own?

ALBATROS
198 No, the one he borrowed from Joe yesterday, of course his own! Never mind, it was just that bit of sandwich he insists on tucking behind his ear.

COLIN
199 Well, if anything can slow Albert down, that would be it.

ALBATROS
200 It's the perfect microcosm of life aboard the Oz 9, isn't it? Chaos, shouting, and imminent, utterly stupid death.

COLIN
201 We're not going to survive this, are we.

ALBATROS
202 Oh, I don't know. Ignorance and denial have gotten us surprisingly far. Life is a slow but relentless assassin, Colin. Perhaps it's best to just enjoy it while you have it.

COLIN
203 Enjoy *this*?!

ALBATROS
204 Why not? Albert is currently burping up froth from Leet's sandwich, and Jessie faceplanted in some quite rancid-looking bog water. It's not completely without amusement value. Or you can just stare at Dr. Theo...

pause

205 Do you miss her?

COLIN
206 Miss whom? Oh. Glenda? Yes. Sometimes
I think I don't, but then I realize
I've taken four ibuprofen to rid me of
heartache. It's been so long now, I
don't always know where the pain is
coming from. It's an improvement, of
sorts.

ALBATROS
207 Colin, I-

DR VHZ
208 What ever are ve vatching vis zuch
fazination? Oh, goodness, that is a
kerfuffle.

ALBATROS
209 Oh! Hello, Doctor. We're either
watching a rerun of the 3 Stooges or
our shipmates being devoured by an
alligator.

DR VHZ
210 Has anyone been poked in ze eyez yet?
Zis is how I usually tell ze
difference between ze idiots - unt ze
stooches.

COLIN
211 Nearly everyone but Albert should be
wearing a cone, so that's no help.

DR VHZ
212 Olivia?

OLIVIA
213 It's not my fault!

DR VHZ
214 Are you sure?

OLIVIA
215 Depends what's gone wrong this time.

DR VHZ
216 All is well, child. Lower the
temperature in ze swamp and turn on ze
sprinklerz. Gatorz are not fond of
cold unt rainy dayz, which is perhaps
why zere are zo few of zem runnink

217 wild in Zeattle, mmmm? Little joke.
Ahhhh, zere we go. He will head back
to his burrow for a little snooze now.

COLIN
218 Cold and rain, of course! Why didn't
we think of that?

ALBATROS
219 I did. Doctor, you've seen our plants
before, haven't you?

COLIN
220 What makes you think that?

ALBATROS
221 Everyone else's heart rate sped up the
minute they laid eyes on those things.
Except the Doctor's.

DR VHZ
222 Ahhhhhhh, I had forgotten about zat.
You know, you were to reserve zese
functions for ze whatchacallums...
hieroglyphics? Calisthenics!

ALBATROS
223 Doctor....

DR VHZ
224 Yes, yes. You are right. Two of those
big fellas, zey are all right. They
are beni-uhhhh... benevolent, healing
plants, like very very big aloe vera.
The last one, though; on Earth, ones
like that big guy were called "ze
Others."

COLIN
225 Other than what?

DR VHZ
226 Huh. That is a very good question to
vich I haf no answer.

OLIVIA
227 Come on, speed it up.

DR VHZ
228 Ah, hello, liebchen. Please to bring
the temperature back up in ze swamp

229 before zere is damage to ze ecosystem.

OLIVIA
230 Already on it. Keep talking.

DR VHZ
231 Very well. As far as ve vere able to
tell, ze Others are ze ... originals.

ALBATROS
232 You mean the original travelers? From
space? My god. How old are they?

DR VHZ
233 Thousands unt thousands of years.
Maybe more. Their numbers unt our
numbers are not ze same numbers, zo
zere is zum confusion, you see. Most
of the plants zere are dezendents: a
little naughty naughty vis the local
plant life, a little natural
evolution, and zey are different from
zere forebearers.

COLIN
234 But how can that be? I thought Leet
grew them all from seeds?

DR VHZ
235 The other two, yes, abzolutely. But
zis one... it vas on ze ship all
along. But why?

ALBATROS
236 My god.

COLIN
237 What? What is it?

ALBATROS
238 It's hitching a ride. We're...taking
it home.

NARRATOR
239 Ohhhhhhhhhhh.... yeah, that makes
sense. In a an-alien-stowaway-plant-
took-over-control-of-my-space-ship sort
of way. So, why would the alien want to return
to a war-torn and destroyed planet? Has it
received messages from home that all's
well? If

- 240 so, why didn't the Other Others
 stowaway on ships as well? And what,
 if anything, do Tiberius and Mr.
 Southers know about this? Or for that
 matter, Dr. von Haber Zetzer...?
 Seriously! Does anyone have ANY
 ANSWERS? Screw the end credits; what
 happens next??
- 241 I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE CONTRACT!
 FINE!!
 You've been listening to:
 David S Dear as Dr Theo Bromae
 Bonnie Brantley as Jessie and Donna
 Richard Cowen as Leet
 Tim Sherburn as Colin
 Shannon Perry as Madeline and Olivia
 Sarah Golding as Mrs Sheffield
 Iri Alexander as Julie
 Kevin Hall as Felonius
 Aaron Clark as Ben
 June Clark Eubanks as the Albatros
 Eric Perry as Dr von Haber Zetzer
 with special guest Scottye Moore as
 the Guard and
 me, Richard Nadolny, as your Narrator
 Oz 9 is written and produced by
 Shannon Perry. This episode was
 directed by June Clark Eubanks. Our
 music is composed and performed by
 John Faley; our artwork is by Lucas
 Elliott.
- 242 Thanks to our new sponsor, Minucci
 Consulting.
- And a special announcement: we're
 inviting patrons to come along for a
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 wait too long. Patreon dot com slash
 oz 9 podcast, all one word. See you in
 two weeks, space monkeys. Narrator
 out!

[TOTR TRAILER]

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