

Oz 9 episode 63 - You are a naughty little schatzi

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Sarah Golding

EPISODE 63: THE HALLS OF THE MCCACEC

We hear the sounds of students in the corridors, voices, lockers opening and closing, footsteps, the bell rings. 50s noir music, sound of manual typewriter, old detective novel style.

NARRATOR

- 1 It's autumn of 2133. A Tuesday. In the corridors of the Minnetonka Community College Adult Continuing Education Center, or "MCCACEC," as it's known, students are going about their usual business. The launch of the 400 Oz model 8000 ships is still 9 years in the future, but plans are already afoot. For most of the students, the schedule consists of pretty normal fare: algebra, literature, economics, biology. But for a chosen few, the roster of study is very different.

Sound of a gentle rap on glass. Narrator opens the door and speaks to someone outside.

NARRATOR

- 2 The booth is occupied, and I've reserved it for the rest of the hour. Check the schedule in the office.

Door shuts. Narrator mutters a little about rudeness.

DR THEO

We hear his voice at a bit of a distance. Students are chatting, papers rustling, etc. Bell rings. Student noise halts abruptly when Dr. Theo starts speaking. Sighs of happy contentment.

- 3 Good morning, students. Everyone please settle down and take your seats. Open your texts to Chapter 9, "Eukaryotics -- when mold is on the move." One moment; Brenda, could you shut the door, please? Brenda? BRENDA. Oh for crying out loud, William, will you nudge Brenda for me? William? WILLIAM. Oh good grief, next quarter I'm teaching mesmerism where this is *supposed* to happen. Anyone? Hello?? FINE. I'll get it myself! My god,

there's more glaze in here than a
giant box of Krispy Kremes.

His voice increases as he approaches the door. Door shuts,
muffling his voice as he returns to the lectern. We move on.

DR THEO

4 Right. As I was saying: slime molds
are generally single-celled and
stationary, but when food is in short
supply, they can gather together and
actually move to find new sources...

Narrator is still in noir style.

NARRATOR

5 Are the lectures on Academic
Composition and Comparative Theology
just a front for an entirely different
sort of education? Perhaps.

Students muttering, general discontent and fear. Feel free to
add some lines for me!

DR VON HABER ZETZER

6 Look, I underztand your conzerns about
artificial intelligence becoming too
powerful unt taking over ze worlde, but
let's think about it: would zat be
zuch a bad thing? Hoomanz make zo many
foolish miztakes, unt ve haf made
great ztrides in giving computers a
sense of compassion unt empathy. And
ve can inztitute security measures.
For example, let me tell you about a
project I am vurking on where we
create zese tiny gaps in the AIs'
continuity- Ehhhhhh, vat is your name?
Matt? Could you please close the door?
My goodness, vat a chiseled jaw you
haf.

Door closes, again muffling his voice. We move on.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

7 Ze gaps are miniscule unt undetectable
to ze AI itzself, giving us access to
hide informations, and even shut it
down if nezezzary....

NARRATOR

8 We don't know much about the history of MCCACEC, except that the modern community college most students know was built literally on top of a much older secret society. Folks around here know about the sulphur springs under Jordan, less than 20 miles away as the loon flies, but few know about the springs and tunnels below the city of Minnetonka.

There is the sound of thumping on thick glass.

NARRATOR

9 Hey! It's still my time. The on-air sign is lit, do you mind?? [back to narrating] Those who discover the tunnels accidentally are apt to wake up in some fairly distant places, like Dallol, Ethiopia; Kremmling, Colorado; Pluto; and the Czech town of Karlovy Vary, with very hazy memories of how they got there and what they were doing just previous. Oddly, one place no one has ever reported waking up in? French Lick, Indiana.

Footsteps, conversation as people walk past. We hear Mrs S's conversational partner only as quiet, alarmed mumbles.

MRS SHEFFIELD

10 Yes, yes, Professor Dillon, your concerns about contrails have been well documented. [mansplain mumble] I do understand that the land below the most heavily trafficked routes has alarmingly high levels of potassium and phosphorus, but might there be another explanation? [pause, mumble] Well, those are common ingredients in ... must I spell it out? [pause, mumble, question] Urine, Anthony. [mumble, confusion] Oh, come with me. I'll show you some diagrams.

They walk away, voices fading in the distance.

MRS SHEFFIELD

11 Flights less than a year long generally don't use pods with waste

management systems, professor. Have you never flown?

NARRATOR

12 The date of the original structure below where the MCCACEC now stands is unknown, though some estimate it may have been built as early as- WHAT?

The banging is louder and more urgent, and suddenly there is the sound of a wooden door splintering.

NARRATOR

13 GET OUT OF THE BOOTH, I'M RECORDING!
[sounds of scuffle and struggle, Narrator's voice is muffled] Get this thing off my head! What is happening?! Wait, wait, I'm in a flashback! You can't kidnap me during a flashback, you'll cause a paradox in the time-space continuum! Wait! I can't just leave... One second! Take this damn thing off. Well, at least uncover my mouth. [unmuffled, narrating]r
Meanwhile

Footsteps, Mrs S knocks, opens the door, Dr. vHZ is mid-lecture.

DR VON HABER ZETZER

14 Unt zat is vy ve haf inztituted zo zstrict vetting protocols. No one vants to send idiots into zpace - zis would be a disaster! Can you imagine!

MRS SHEFFFIELD

15 Excuse me a moment, would you, students? Doctor? If I could have a word?

DR VON HABER ZETZER

16 Zertainly.

Sorry, Sarah and Eric, but gonna need some passionate kissy face noises.

JULIE

17 Uhhhhh... just gonna close the door here, Professor.

- 18 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Ztudents! Zo fragile. Did you vish to
zpeak with me, or vas this zimply a
pretense for a moment of zmooches?
- 19 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Now, Friederich, you behave. We've
gotten word from MI 18 that G2 has
built an entirely new raft of
greenhouses ABOVE ground.
- 20 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Mmmmmm, zis is interesting. It zeems
perhaps they haf succeeded in mutating
the plants for life outzide the
tunnels.
- 21 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Precisely. You are so awfully clever,
Friederich...
- More kissy face.
- 22 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Do your zaucy Zcottish flight
attendant.
- 23 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Here? At school? With the bell about
to ring?
- 24 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Excuse me, Miss, may I hav unt ginger
ale?
- 25 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Oh, Friederich, you are a naughty
little *schatzi*. [Scottish accent]
"Ginger ale"? Away an bile yer heid,
ya daft dooby. There's more ale in a
Scotman's gob on the fifth a January
than in this fizzy shite.
- 26 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Ha! Zo delicious. I haf no idea vat
you are zaying, but it zounds
vunderbar!
- 27 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Now, about these greenhouses?

28 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Yes, yes. Zere haf been rumors of
Gated Galaxies vantage to run tests on
zese plants in outer space.

29 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Whyever would they do that?

30 DR VON HABER ZETZER
It is un mystery, my dear.

31 MRS SHEFFFIELD
I do think it's time we get someone on
the ground in French Lick.

32 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Zay it again.

33 MRS SHEFFFIELD
French. Liiiiiick.

34 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Oooof, zo zaucy!

35 MRS SHEFFFIELD
On task, Friederich; on task.

36 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Yes, very well. Ve could send Dr.
Bromae-

37 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Don't be absurd! Our registration
would drop by half. Besides, I fear
he'd be recognized.

38 DR VON HABER ZETZER
But zis is true of every member of ze
staff hier.

39 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Of the *staff*, yes.

40 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Zo vat are you zuggestink? Ve send Joe
the Janitor? Zo amuzink!

41 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Is that his name? I've never met him.
He's quite skulky... And anyway, of
course not. We need to send someone

with enough plant knowledge to pass.
What about Julie Montgomery?

42 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Zis door-closing Julie just now? Nien!
Zis is nonsense!

43 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Do please keep your voice down.

44 DR VON HABER ZETZER
I zought you liked it ven I am
bombastic.

45 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Time and place, *liebchen*, time and
place. She's downright miraculous with
plants. And she even shows an aptitude
for some very specific plants. You
yourself said she could detect their
smell.

46 DR VON HABER ZETZER
One moment, my dear. I said she asked
me vy I zmelt of licorice. Zis is
perhaps only a lucky guess, hmmmmmm?

47 MRS SHEFFFIELD
If memory serves, she didn't ask why
you smelt of licorice, she asked why
you smelt of a Mr. Sketch black
licorice marker, which was the exact
note our expert described from the
plant a clipping of which you had in
your pocket! That strikes me as rather
more than a lucky guess.

48 DR THEO
Dr. von Haber Zetzer. Mrs Sheffield.
Is there a reason we're conducting
secret MCCACEC business in the
hallway?

49 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Because it would be foolish to discuss
zuch things in ze classroom, no? Pfft.

50 DR THEO
Well, yes, but that's not what I
meant-

51 MRS SHEFFIELD
[interrupting] Dr. Bromae, it is time
we had someone on the ground at the
Gated Galaxies facility in French
Lick. I suggested Julie Montgomery.

52 DR THEO
Isn't she one of our [whispers]
regular students?

53 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Eggzactly. It would be irresponszible!

54 DR THEO
I'm inclined to disagree, Dr. von
Haber Zetzer.

55 MRS SHEFFFIELD
And why is that?

56 DR THEO
Well, for one, Ms Montgomery is oddly
... resistant to me.

57 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Zo she doesn't zwoon like ze teensy
boopers?

58 DR THEO
The what?

59 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Shush, Friederich. Go on.

60 DR THEO
I mean that she is strong willed and
likely to question what she's told.

61 DR VON HABER ZETZER
But she knowz nothink of ze sneaky
ziences. Do you think she can handle
ze accelerated verzion?

62 MRS SHEFFFIELD
I think we have no other choice. If
necessary, we can always send in ...

63 DR THEO
No. Surely that's - not to put too
fine a point on it - overkill?

64 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Our finest, most gifted student sent
to back up a veritable babe in arms?
It seems quite reasonable to me.

65 DR VON HABER ZETZER
I belief it is premature. Ve would not
vish the identity of our finest agent
to be known.

66 DR THEO
I agree. It is, of course, your
decision, Mrs Sheffield.

67 JOE
I could go.

68 MRS SHEFFIELD/DR THEO/DR VON HABER ZETZER
Jesus!

69 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Mein gott, vere did you come from?!

70 DR THEO
And why are you wearing a paper bag
over your face?

71 JOE
Accident with cleaning fluid, rubbing
alcohol, and anti-aging cream. Always
read the labels. As you can see, I'm
pretty handy with the, what did you
call 'em? "Sneaky sciences." I'll keep
Ms Montgomery out of trouble, and
she'll never know I was there. Nobody
else will, either.

72 DR THEO
Would you excuse us for a moment to
confer?

73 JOE
You betcha.

74 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Goodness, he disappeared in a hurry.

75 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Vell? Vat are we thinkink?

DR THEO
76 I'm inclined to send him.

MRS SHEFFIELD
77 But we know nothing about him!

DR THEO
78 True, but equally, he knows little or nothing about us. He may know there's a little sneaky science going on behind our purely academic facade, but he can't know much, so there's little for him to reveal if captured.

MRS SHEFFIELD
79 Oh, you gorgeous nibble of pedagogical numminess, talk more....

DR THEO
80 And he passed the vetting process to work here, so he must check out, correct? [pause] Mrs. Sheffield? Oh, for- MRS SHEFFIELD?

DR VON HABER ZETZER
81 AHM. CLARA? Clara vis whom I vas quite recently making vis ze kissy face?

MRS SHEFFIELD
82 Mmmmmmm? Oh sorry, dear, do carry on. At length, if you wish...

DR THEO
83 I was saying I think Joe is a good choice.

DR VON HABER ZETZER
84 Unt zurely it is better than risking our greatest azzet.

MRS SHEFFIELD
85 Very well. Let's see if we can get him back-

JOE
86 I'm here.

MRS SHEFFIELD/DR THEO/DR VON HABER ZETZER
87 Jesus!

88 MRS SHEFFIELD
Dr. Bromae, perhaps you could take our
grocery bagged friend here and explain
a few uncompromising details?

89 DR THEO
Certainly. This way, Joe. And Dr. von
Haber Zetzer, would you like to join
us?

90 DR VON HABER ZETZER
Oh, vy not.

The bell rings, the doors open and the halls begin to fill
up.

91 MRS SHEFFIELD
Julie? Excuse me, Julie Montgomery?

92 JULIE
Yes?

93 MRS SHEFFIELD
May I have a word?

MRS SHEFFIELD'S OFFICE AT MCCACEC

94 MRS SHEFFIELD
Do have a seat, dear. Tea?

95 JULIE
Sure. Thank you. Is there a problem?

96 MRS SHEFFIELD
Not at all. Oh, give me just a moment,
will you? Greenock Morton.

The sound of the Albatros starting up. Weird noises that get
more frenetic.

97 JULIE
Whoa!

98 MRS SHEFFIELD
Here you are. Help yourself to milk
and sugar. Biscuit?

99 JULIE
Uh, no, thank you. Why is this person
plugged in?

MRS SHEFFIELD
100 This is the Albatros. She's an
assassin. Sort of. And a robot. Also
sort of.

ALBATROS
101 I'm a what?

Sounds of short circuiting from Albatros.

MRS SHEFFIELD
102 Oh, good heavens. There's an odd hitch
in her programming. Every time she's
restarted, she forgets she's a robot.
We'll get it worked out eventually.
Push that little red button behind her
ear, will you, Julie?

JULIE
103 Uh.... touch the assassin robot?

MRS SHEFFIELD
104 Yes, quickly please. It's a reset
button. Push it quite quickly, please.
NOW is good. Now, yes, go on. That's
it...

Reset noises. Smoothing, calmer noises.

ALBATROS
105 I hate it when you do that.

MRS SHEFFIELD
106 I apologize, but it was very chilly in
here, and I can't charge you *and* run
the space heater. You blow a fuse
every time.

ALBATROS
107 I could just go charge up in the
library.

MRS SHEFFIELD
108 And risk someone seeing you? Don't be
absurd. Our luck, a student would trip
over your cord and sue us sideways
whilst simultaneously blowing our
cover.

JULIE
109 She's... an assassin. Mrs Sheffield,

did you bring me in here-

110 ALBATROS
To kill you? That's an odd thing to
ask. Have you done anything that would
merit killing you?

111 JULIE
I... don't think so?

112 ALBATROS
I suspect it would be the sort of
thing most people remember, but then
perhaps you're in a regular practice
of doing evil things?

113 JULIE
[growing alarm] Mrs. Sheffield....

114 ALBATROS
How many murders have you committed
this week?

115 JULIE
None!

116 ALBATROS
Ahhhhh, so they were all carried out
previous to this week, is that it?

117 JULIE
No! No murders! Ever!

118 ALBATROS
So you limit your crime spree to just
robberies, physical assaults, and
espionage then?

119 JULIE
What's going on here?

120 ALBATROS
I'm just trying to get a gauge of how
irredeemable you are at this point.

Long pause.

121 JULIE
Well, in that case, I think I will
have a biscuit, Mrs Sheffield. This
might take a while.

ALBATROS
122 You seem surprisingly calm.

MRS SHEFFFIELD
123 Give it up, Alby. She's on to us.
Bravo, Julie! When did you figure it
out?

JULIE
124 I accidentally stumbled into Dr. von
Haber Zetzer's class on defusing
apocalypse devices when I was looking
for Dr. Baliga's seminar on conserving
water in urban landscaping.

MRS SHEFFFIELD
125 That seems oddly specific.

JULIE
126 tt

ALBATROS
127 Wait. She's one of our regular
students? You introduced me to one of
our regular students???

MRS SHEFFFIELD
128 Chill your CPU, Alby; Ms Montgomery is
no common scholar! Julie, you have
something of a penchant for
perennials, have you not? A bias for
botany, a relish for the rooted,
you're fond of a frond, eh?

JULIE
129 You're asking me if I like plants,
right?

MRS SHEFFFIELD
130 If you must be pedestrian about it,
yes.

JULIE
131 I do. And they seem to respond well
for me.

MRS SHEFFFIELD
132 Respond well? I understand the
agriculture department's corpse flower
practically explodes into bloom every
time you visit, which they've

requested you stop doing, by the way,
as that thing stinks like the very
devil.

JULIE
133 They've always responded to me. I
don't know why.

MRS SHEFFIELD
134 Well, we have a rather special
assignment for you.

ALBATROS
135 Are you thinking of sending her to
French-

MRS SHEFFIELD
136 No, not directly. Did you know, Ms
Montgomery, that Gated Galaxies has an
entire flora division?

JULIE
137 I'm aware they're trying to patent
natural plant genomes so they can sue
gardeners for copyright infringement.

MRS SHEFFIELD
138 Well, precisely. We'd like you to
infiltrate-

ALBATROS
139 "Infiltrate" is such a loaded and
actionable word....

MRS SHEFFIELD
140 Oh, do relax, Alby. Fine. "Wiggle in."
Is that acceptable? We'd like you to
"wiggle in" to G2, take a poke around,
have a listen, see what you discover.

ALBATROS
141 I can hear the air quotes. And I don't
appreciate them.

JULIE
142 What exactly would I be looking or
listening for?

ALBATROS
143 Clara, I really don't think this is
wise. You could be putting her in

enormous danger.

JULIE

144 As soon as I graduate, we're moving to
Green Town, Indiana to be closer to my
mother-in-law. How soon can I go and
can it delay graduation?

ALBATROS

145 That bad, is she?

JULIE

146 I'd rather live with a corpse flower.

MRS SHEFFIELD

147 Right, well, that decides it then!
Julie, we'll need to catch you up on a
few ... essential skills.

JULIE

148 Such as?

ALBATROS

149 Skulking.

JULIE

150 Skulking.

ALBATROS

151 The most basic of survival skills. Oh,
and she'll need an improv class.

MRS SHEFFIELD

152 Absolutely!

JULIE

153 Improv?

MRS SHEFFIELD

154 It's a doddle. Just say "yes, and"
anytime someone asks you a question.
Encryption!

ALBATROS

155 And decryption.

MRS SHEFFIELD

156 Well, obviously. Was it really
necessary to mention it?

ALBATROS
157 She's a complete beginner, Clara; I'm
taking nothing for granted.

MRS SHEFFFIELD
158 Fine. Facial maintenance.

ALBATROS
159 NOW who's being obvious?

JULIE
160 What the hell is that?

MRS SHEFFFIELD
161 I believe you laypeople would refer to
it as having a "poker face."

ALBATROS
162 It's the science of not letting your
emotions show on your face.

MRS SHEFFFIELD
163 Science? You philistine, it's nothing
short of an art! Oh, never mind. You'd
have to be human to understand the
difficulty of maintaining a straight
face-

ALBATROS
164 Oh, here we go again: "you don't
understand because you're a robot."
I'm half human!

MRS SHEFFFIELD
165 Half? Your hair is human, not much
else.

JULIE
166 I'm actually pretty good at poker
already-

Their conversation continues in the background as Narrator 2
speaks.

ALBATROS
167 Really? Good at poker? Ever played it
with your LIFE at stake? Didn't think
so.

JULIE
168 So we're saying that's a possibility?

169 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Oh, well done, Alby. Scare the dickens
out of the poor woman.

170 JULIE
No, I'm ... fine with it. Just wanting
to make sure I understand. What do I
tell Ben?

171 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Ben? Who's Ben?

172 ALBATROS
Her husband, obviously.

173 MRS SHEFFFIELD
Oh, do be quiet. Julie, it's best if
you tell Ben nothing. Tell him it's
... an internship. You'll be getting
college credit at MCCACEC, but it will
postpone graduation indefinitely.

174 JULIE
"Indefinitely" is good....

175 NARRATOR 2
Uhhhhh. Hi. Hi, everyone. So, I just
got called in at the last minute
because your usual Narrator has...
disappeared. So, hang on, I'm just
gonna deadbolt what's... uh... what's
left of the door here. Right. OK, so,
you've been listening to:
Eric Perry as Joe and Dr von Haber
Zetzer
David S Dear as Dr Theo Bromae
Sarah Golding as Mrs Sheffield
Iri Alexander as Julie
June Clark Eubanks as the Albatros
Richard Nadolny is your Narrator, and
I'm Kyle Jones, your Narrator 2.

Loud bang and scream from Narrator 2.

176 NARRATOR 2
Whoa! Did you hear something? What was
that?

OK, uh...avocado yogurt. Avocado
yogurt. Our music is 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.

If you like us, please give us a rating and review on Podchaser or Apple Podcasts or wherever you listen to podcasts.

177 [quieter but spooky noise]
Oh, crap, I'm sure I'm not alone in here....
If you have an idea of what happened to our Narrator, please send us a tweet to at Oz9podcast, all one word, on Twitter. Until next time, space monkeys...hopefully...Narrator 2 out!

Narrator 2 yanking on the door trying to get out.

EMILY
178 Well, this is awkward....Dear.

MCCACEC FIGHT SONG
179 Music and lyrics by Sarah Golding
copyright: Sarah Golding

COLUMN!PAGES!FEATHER!SCROLL!
Redacted!* Redacted! Removed!
On the banks of a river known as bleep bleep bleep
Lies a college on a BLEEP WOHOHO
But we can't exactly BLEEP you where this world class college lies
'Cos ya know we'd have to BLEEP BLEEP kill YOUUU
Shenaniganus Non Sinisistre ooh lala
horribilie dictu gruesome
Voulez-vous coucher avec seulement moi
Eruditione umbra ad Lucem

MCCACEC (repeat a lot)

Once a student not forgotten
Once a student you stay true
Once a student not forgotten
Once a student you stay true

Fight! smite! right! rites!
Victory is ours!
Smite! Might! Always! right!

Je ne sais pas pourquoi?! (3 or 4X)
C'tait pas moi it wasn't me BLEEP me me me
C'est pas ma faute
You didn't BLEEPIN see me
Blind eyes must turn
For equilibrium to be
Forever student MCCACEC
Just watch your back now
Forever student
MCCACEC

*So much of this has been redacted for centuries so as not to
give away the whereabouts of the college or really what it's
for.