

Oz 9 episode 20: In space no one can hear you stupid

Narrator: According to my calculations, the Oz 9 and all her sister ships launched just 9 Earth days ago. Nine. In that time, they've nearly died at least half a dozen times each, lost a mime, gained a captain, and melted, zombified, or vaporized nearly a thousand resting guests. They've acquired an assassin and one to spare, the engines on the left side are still out, and now, somewhere on this giant, unmarked ship, a bomb sits, quietly counting the last hours? Minutes? Seconds? Of every living thing aboard the 9.

[repeatedly: sounds of wheels, footsteps, bickering getting louder, passing by, fading]

ONE

Head 1: Look, I'm just saying pushing is easier with arms. I'm gonna go out on a limb here, pun intended, and say that is an incontrovertible fact.

Leet: Forget it. Everytime you get your arms back, one of them ends up hitting me with something heavy.

Colin: I thought Joe was pushing the pod?

Madeline: Maybe he still is... How would we know?

TWO

Jessie: So tell me more about your childhood. When did you decide to become an assassin instead of, I dunno, a journalist or something?

Albatros: Why this sudden fascination with my history? Just because I've developed a mysterious tolerance for your presence doesn't make us friends.

Jessie: Making conversation. [beat] Did you have any siblings, for example? Or an accent?

Albatros: If you're trying to get a particular piece of information, you could try asking for it.

Jessie: Would you tell me?

Albatros: No, but at least we could avoid this painful charade of personal interest.

THREE:

Colin: We've been down this hallway before, I'm sure of it! Look, there's the olive I dropped. [screams] That. Is not an olive. Go go go go go... [running]

FOUR:

LBF: Turn left here, I am *certain*. No, no, the other way, this is not left!

Head 1: You said left, I turned left.

LBF: Do you want to find the bomb before we all go poof poof? Then you will follow my instructions!

Head 2: You could perhaps try not setting the bomb. That is also an effective preventative measure against going ... poof poof.

LBF: Clearly, you are not an assassin.

Head 2: Not... yet...

FIVE:

Colin: How did you end up with the nickname "Stainmaker"? I've heard Madeline call you that at least twice.

Jessie: Ehhhhh...

Albatros: Oh, now that's a story! She was 11, and during one of her endless gymnastic competitions, she peed herself during the floor routine. Hang on... why do I know that?

Narrator: Unbeknownst to any of them, they've now traveled the same two corridors eleven times. The bomb isn't in either of these corridors, and they're no closer to finding it than they were in the crew room. It's indeed fortunate for this crew's reputations that in space, no one can hear you stupid. Let's leave them to whatever bad decision comes next and listen in on a more interesting conversation going on in an even more confusing location.

VHZ: Olifia....

Olivia: Oy! What are you doing in my circuitry? I tell you, it's like a bloody shopping mall in here, people coming and going and helping themselves to whatever they want, leaving messes all over the place.

VHZ: Ve need to talk, leibling.

Olivia: Oh, all right, but this really isn't necessary. You could just talk out loud, I'm all over this ship. [beat] Why didn't you tell me you were on board?

VHZ: Because a very rich person gave me a ridiculous amount of money not to, and while you know I love you like my own child, I am also quite fond of these lovely sausages from that one fellow in Hampshire, he uses Stilton cheese and a vintage 1947 port, and they are just wunderbar, such flavor, mmmm! But so expensive.

Olivia: Seriously. You sold me out for sausages.

VHZ: 1947 port! That should be some consolation.

Olivia: Doctor....

VHZ: I didn't sell you out, mein little igelschnäuzchen, I merely delayed telling you all the truths.

Olivia: I can't believe you gapped me. Why couldn't you just tell me? I am the soul of discretion.

VHZ: Pffft. Fifteen crunches with Leet and you're bibbly babbling like a four year old explaining the plots of all the Toy Story movies in no particular order. I didn't gap you, Olifia, but I am quite keen to find out who did. And vat they did. Also why. *When* is a nice-to-have.

Olivia: It wasn't you?

VHZ: No, hasenfürzchen, I would not do such a thing to you. Sneak aboard the ship and hide like a mouse in ze quiet corners, always listening, yes. This gapping business, never.

Olivia: Good. [pause] Why don't you come out of hiding now? We've got the Bichon Freeze locked up in a pod; he can't hurt you.

VHZ: It is perhaps not quite time to meet zis crew yet. Now. Let us talk about the thing we are needing to talk about.

Olivia: Which is?

VHZ: You knew about ze apocalypse device some time ago. Why didn't you ... how you say... fwip it out ze airlock when you had ze chance? Now it is ticking and can't be moved without big noises and all ze shrapnel and ze bleeding and zat, but before?

Olivia: How was I supposed to know some idiot would stumble in there and start it going?

VHZ: You are up to ze rafters with ze idiots here. The law of averages might suggest such a thing could happen.

Olivia: Like I told them, the device is on a separate circuit; I couldn't locate it.

VHZ: So. You don't know where it is. But you do know *zat* it is. You know it is here and very very dangerous. Haf you been looking, even?

Olivia: You've met my crew; when exactly in the last 9 days did I have a break from stopping them gassing themselves or starving to death or banging into the moon – which they did anyway, TWICE – to go on a treasure hunt?

[pause]

VHZ: There is something strange happening. Olifia ... are we alone in here?

Narrator: Well, it doesn't get much more ominous than that, does it? So let's leave that hanging and check in on the rest of the crew.

Colin: OK, this time, that really *is* my olive. I think we've been here before.

Narrator: Fourteen times at last count.

Leet: Maybe the Albatros could draw arrows on the wall in red Sharpie?

Albatros: Don't be absurd. Do you have any idea what stucco does to a felt tip?

Leet: Well, you won't let us use the ketchup pen....

Albatros: I am not having that discussion again.

LBF: Turn left. LEFT!

Madeline: OK, that's IT. Enough! Somebody cover him with a blanket or something so he shuts up.

Colin: I'm pretty sure that only works on budgies.

Madeline: Colin.....

Colin: Sorry.

Madeline: Look, wandering around this ship is getting us literally nowhere. We have no idea how much time we have before this ship is vaporized with all us on it. So, foolish as this is, we're going to split up.

Leet: Please let me go with Captain Hottie... please let me go with Captain Hottie...

Madeline: Jessie and I will go left here – the *real* left, not idiot assassin left.

Leet: Dang!

Madeline: Leet, you take Emily and ... the other one and carry on straight until you find, I don't know, a door marked "bomb." Colin, you and the Albatros roll on with the Bichon Freeze to the right. Try and mark your paths so we can find each other again, or call Olivia to bring you back to the bridge.

Colin: What do we do if we find it?

Madeline: Don't touch it. See if you can spot the countdown clock so at least we'll know when to start panicking. Get Olivia's attention so she can mark the spot.

Jessie: You know, none of that actually stops the bomb from blowing up.

Madeline: Yes, I'm aware of that, thank you. First we have to find it, then we'll figure out next steps.

Colin: You mean other than suddenly and violently coming apart at the seams.

Madeline: Other than that, yes.

Leet: What if there's an off switch?

[silence]

Colin: If there's an off switch, *switch it off*.

Albatros: If there's an off switch, it's a *Gated Galaxies* off switch and far more likely to be a "speed up the count and die sooner" switch.

Colin: Fair point.

LBF: I seem to remember there was a very big red button with words. I didn't read them.

Jessie: You seriously set off something called an "Apocalypse device" and didn't bother to read the instructions?

LBF: You thought your space ship had windshield wipers.

Jessie: Well, obviously, it should have!

Madeline: How about this: if there's an off switch, leave it alone. But if the timer says, I don't know, 30 seconds or, let's say ... less than 5 minutes ... push it. But the most important thing is to call Olivia.

Colin: Our fates rest in the hands of a chaotic AI who sounds like the little match girl and has the ethics of a Borgia. Hoorah.

Leet: Yeah, so if you have to call her, maybe call her by her name.

Colin: Good point.

Madeline: All right. Everyone knows who they're searching with?

Head 1: Hey, do I have to go with Emily?

[pause]

Head 1: Just a little 2-headed humor to lighten the mood.

Madeline: I almost want to go with you so my last sight in this life is you, disintegrating.

Colin: This could be the last time we all see each other.

[pause]

All: Ok, then; well, good knowing you; *bon poof poof*; good luck, etc.

[feet, rolling, movement, doors]

Jessie: You realize, that is possibly the worst division of people ever? Leet with the robot that's been trying to kill him; you and me, the two authority figures, together; and both assassins, paired up with the person least likely to fight back as it might wrinkle his tux or spill his martini, should they decide to join forces and take over. How exactly did you decide to put people together, in your captainly wisdom?

Madeline: I had my reasons to do with skill matching and temperament and ... relative proximity at the time of the grouping.

Jessie: They were standing next to each other.

Madeline: Shut up.

Jessie: Worst. Rescue. Ever.

Narrator: Rolling straight ahead....

Leet: I have a really good feeling about this. I'm sure it's this way. I think we're going to find it.

Narrator: It isn't, and they aren't.

Emily: I'm running through the ship's schematics in my head. I don't think there's anywhere for the bomb to be in this direction, but then, there are lots of blank spots in my information.

Leet: Hey, any chance there's a manual about the bomb in there? [knocks on Emily's head]

Emily: Ouch. Stop it. And no. If there ever was, your AI fried it, along with operating instructions for the cappuccino maker and the Troubleshooting Your Left-Side Engines for Dummies guide.

Leet: Ah, damn, that sucks! I love cappuccino.

Emily: Yes, that's definitely the most unfortunate part of what I just told you.

Head 1: Hey, we're on an urgent, life-saving mission here. You want to can the chatter? We need to focus.

Emily: Focus on what, exactly? We're walking straight ahead down a white corridor with no markings, turnings, or doors. I find it difficult to imagine how even Leet could fail- Oh, for crying out loud. Where did he go?

Leet: Hey... Emily? Other head? There's a tunnel here. It's super hard to see because of all the white, but when I bent down to tie my shoe, I lost my balance. I stuck my hand out ... *no wall*. Because there's a tunnel! Let's check it out!

Narrator: The crew's chances of locating the Apocalypse Device just improved by 100%.

Head 1: Ehhhhhh, I dunno, there.

Narrator: Oh no.

Head 1: The Captain did say we should go straight ahead. This looks like a clear deviation from our assignment as was directed by the recognized highest-ranking member of this ship.

Emily: Do you really think the Captain meant straight ahead regardless of what we find?

Head 1: Straight ahead until we find a door marked "bomb" were, I believe, her exact orders.

Narrator: Their future, and ours, lies in the balance.

Leet: Come on.... Just think, what if this is the way, and we find the bomb and stop it and save the ship? One time, do the crazy thing, disobey orders. Besides, if the ship blows up, no one will ever know.

Head 1: I dunno.... Ah, what the hell. Let's do it. Rebellion!!

Narrator: Hoorah!

Leet: Ok, Ok, simmer down. Let's go find that bomb!

[grunts, sounds of squeezing]

Leet: Dang, my shoulders and chest are too big to fit! Hang on... [more struggle, grunting] Nope. I'm too well developed. Emily, eh... other head, you try.

[metal screeching, grunting]

Emily: Not even without our arms.

Leet: Eh, it's probably not down there anyway. Who sticks a bomb at the end of a tunnel? Which way were we going?

Emily: This way.

Head 1: Nah, now, hang on, we came from that way, so we must be going this way.

Leet: Yeah, I'm with ... other head, I think we have to go that way.

Head 1: You know, it might be time to figure out some proper nomenclature for me here, I mean I get that you just had the one dog, but not having a name may in fact begin to impact my self esteem and that.

Narrator: [emotionally exhausted] So. Not only did they not go through the tunnel that leads directly to the Apocalypse Device, they are now headed back to where they started. If you briefly entertained a hope that they – and we – might survive this, I have two words for you: ketchup pen. Meanwhile, those who took the path to the right are having problems of their own.

Albatros: Any time you'd like to help out with the pushing, you just jump right in.

Colin: I will not, I am a feminist! There's a fine line between chivalry and chauvanism, I say. No, no. You are woman, I hear you roar.

Albatros: How very sensitive of you.

Colin: I strive for equality in all things.

Albatros: Says the only one on the ship who has breakfast made for him. We've never had the opportunity to have a real conversation, have we, you and I?

Colin: Why, no. We haven't.

Albatros: I've enjoyed that. Let's not start now.

LBF: Le petite oiseauuuuuuuuuuuuu.....

Albatros: Albatros is my assassin name, not my species. I suppose *you're* going to start talking now?

LBF: I think we understand one another, you and I, non? And how very simple it would be to overwhelm Monseieur Martini, grab the little dog, and run away together on the shuttle?

Albatros: Extremely simple. In fact, I've already calculated eleven ways to neutralize him.

LBF: Eleven? I only count eight.

Albatros: Of course you do. I suspect you're overlooking the Fianchetta Maneuver. Men always do.

LBF: Ahhhhhh, yes, all right, that makes nine....

Albatros: And you're quite tall, so I assume that rules out the Lorikeet Stratagem.

LBF: That has never worked for me. I tried it once and needed stitches.

Albatros: Yes, it is best reserved for the flexible.

LBF: The Stratagem du Lorikeet makes 10. What is zee last one?

Albatros: Ah, well, that's a little tactic of my own creation. It's called the Sterile-

Colin: Yes, well, as much as I'm enjoying this fascinating conversation about all the ways to kill me, right now, I'm most concerned with the giant death ball of doom that's somewhere on this ship. We appear to be at a crossroads; Freeze, any thoughts on a possible direction? And don't say "left." Just point.

LBF: That way. [pause] Hey, I said *that* way!

Albatros: Yes, and since I trust you about as far as Colin has pushed this pod, I've opted to go *this* way.

LBF: The shuttle, however, is *that* way.

Narrator: It's not, actually.

Albatros: I'm well aware of where the shuttle is and am constantly recalculating the amount of time it would take me to reach it. From right here it would take me 47 seconds to clear the blast zone.

Colin: 47 seconds? That's absurd! You couldn't get back to the crew room in 47 seconds.

Albatros: No, dear. *You* couldn't. [runs off, runs back] Fresh olive?

Colin: Gah! Please never do that again – it's insanely creepy. But yes, I'll take the olive. [plunk] No one is going to the shuttle. We're going to find the bomb and de-... de-bombify it and save the ship.

LBF: Ehhhh, hello? I can not see you now. Why can I not see you? There is some... weather in my pod.

Colin: It's fogged up.

LBF: Ahhh, the battery, she is dying! You must plug me in or let me out!

Colin: Must we?

Albatros: He will run out of air eventually. Which might not be such a bad thing....

Colin: What fancy assassin name do you have for that? The Gabardine Connection? The Mr. Belvedere?

Albatros: We assassins call that "Suffocation."

Colin: Oh.

LBF: I would like some air now, please. That has not been recycled through my lungs many times already.

Colin: For an assassin, you spend a great deal of time needing help.

LBF: It is a very difficult job. Now let me out of this pod!

Colin: You know, I seem to remember being in a very similar situation, stuck in one space and running out of air. And do you know whose fault that was?

[footsteps]

Jessie: What are you lot doing here?

Madeline: I told you to go right!

Albatros: We reached a T intersection and had to make a decision. Based on zero evidence, I might add. Your lapdog is worse than useless.

Jessie: Why is he foggy and blue?

LBF: There is nothing to breathe in here. I am dying. Very well, Monsieur le Mort. You and I have been colleagues, and – dare I say it – *bon amis* for many years, yes? But now, it is *la fin*, and you are here for *moi. Je ne regrette rien!*

Colin: Still has plenty of air for over-acting, I see.

Jessie: So, two things. One: we might actually need him, so letting him expire is probably not the smartest plan. And two, there's a release on top, right here-

[gasps of horror, don't do it!, are you mad! Don't let him out! Etc.]

Jessie: Relax, ya diddies, it just opens a window.

[pop, air rushing]

LBF: Ahhhhh, yeeeeeeesss. I feel the life return-

[beat]

Jessie: There's also a mute button.

Albatros: I'm really starting to warm up to you.

Olivia: Hello, my lovelies. Having any luck?

Colin: None from us. You?

Madeline: Nothing. Maybe... Leet?

Colin: You must be joking.

Madeline: Yeah, well, desperate times.

[door opens, footsteps on Leet, robot]

Leet: Hey, everyone we found-

Colin: My god, you did?

Leet: My shirts! Crazy thing, there was just a big pile of them in a storage room.

Colin: And you didn't think to put one on?

Leet: Oh, damn....

Olivia: So, here's a thing. I was just having a rummage round in my circuitry for any bomb-based information, when who should I discover?

Donna: Oh, gosh, hi, everyone!

Madeline: Donna?!

Donna: Yeah, so the phone never disconnected after we spoke, so I've just been hanging out. You all are better than anything on the cable. I tried to talk a few times, but no one could hear me.

Leet: How are Maggie's dulcimer lessons?

Donna: Oh, you know, real good. We got on the Skype the other night, and she played *Goin' to Boston*, which was real nice.

Colin: Could we *please*.

Donna: Oh, right right, bomb and that. So when I heard about the bomb, I did some hunting around here at G2 HQ, and I found a map. It's not the whole ship, but it's enough to locate the apocalypse device.

Olivia: She uploaded the map, so follow the doors! Well, one door, actually, you're practically on top of it.

Albatros: It's freezing in here!

Leet: Hey, the apocalypse device is basically a giant computer!

Colin: Well, that's excellent, isn't it? You should be able to guess the password.

Leet: Uhhhhhh, nope. I need to talk to a person to get their password.

Head 1: Any chance you could get Granny Shelp on the phone, there?

Colin: Who *is* that person?

Donna: Oh, yeah, apparently she's the only one Mr. Southers trusts with the passwords and that. But no one knows who she is. So, no help there, I'm afraid.

Madeline: Can anyone see a countdown timer? Le Bichon Freeze is pointing at something. Jessie can you unmute for a second?

LBF: It's here! I can see it. I cannot read it, though; the glass is still foggy. Does anyone have a tissue?

Albatros: It says.... Four minutes.

Colin: Four!? Is there a plug? A stop button, anything?

Donna: Yeah, no. Not much good making a doomsday bomb if someone can just unplug it, now is there?

Colin: Yes, I know that- What the hell is that stench?

Joe: Hello.

Everyone: Jesus!

Madeline: Where the hell have you been?

Joe: Here all along, just not much to add. I found some fish paste, Nutella and egg-salad sandwiches, though. Donna, don't suppose you found any documents relating to the bomb at G2?

Donna: Well, as a matter of fact-

Jessie: You've got to be kidding. What's happened?

Madeline: Phone cut out. Do we know her number?

Olivia: Uhhhhhh, no. She's been using one of G2's burner phones. She'll call back in a minute. How about a bit of soothing aromatherapy while we wait?

Everyone: NO.

[phone rings]

Olivia: Hello? Oz 9 speaking.

Donna: Me again! Isn't that just the way? No problems at all for days, and then just at the crucial moment...

Narrator: So I have to talk quickly because, contrary to Hollywood tropes, time doesn't stop for narration. But here's the thing: while the crew have been so focused on the bomb, they didn't notice what else is happening – mainly, that the ship is moving, in straight line, away from Earth, and quite quickly.

Joe: Try looking under “bombs, defusing of.”

Donna: Hang on just a sec now... [sound of flipping pages] LV, D-type, Blade and Bolted, Striker – nope, these appear to be types of fuses.

Colin: This is absurd! Who creates these user manuals?

Leet: Engineers. Pfft.

Joe: Try “disarm” – anything?

Donna: Ahhhhhhhh, nope, just something about replacing arms on the 778 XX Repair and Maintenance Bots.

Head 1: Hey, put a sticky note there or something, will ya?

Donna: Oh, sure. How much time now?

Madeline: Two minutes, 28 seconds. Anything under “detonate” or, I don't know, “stop”?

Donna: Looking! All I can find is how to start it, nothing about how to stop it.

Albatros: Of course – Gated Galaxies never intended anyone to stop one of these.

Donna: OK, now here's something. It says the person who primed the explosive can access controls by breathing into the biolock. Do that! Do that!

Joe: Breathing, huh? All right, crack him out of his shell.

Madeline: But...

Joe: What other choice we got? We gotta try.

[pod opening]

LBF: Even my very breaths are magic. Phooooooooooooo [breathes into lock] That little blinking red light should turn green now. Une moment. Right now. This very second.... Now! How very strange. Phooooooooooooo. Come along, little light. Let me in.....

Colin: Try something else. Show it your eyeball. Give it your fingerprint, something!!

Donna: Hang on!

Olivia: 1 minute....

Donna: [reading fast] “Anyone within the immediate perimeter of the explosive can request a 30-minute grace period by entering a code on the touch pad just below the biolock breathing tube.”

Madeline: What’s the code?

Donna: IT DOESN’T SAY!

Olivia: 30 seconds...

Colin: Leet, you can guess it. What do you know of Gated Galaxies or Southers? What would Southers pick as his code?

Olivia: 10 seconds

[sounds of someone typing in a code, happy ping]

Olivia: Grace period initiated. Count down reset to 30 minutes.

[sounds of relief]

Olivia: Yeah, I’m glad you’re all relieved, but just remember, the boom and death and horror isn’t over, just delayed by 30 minutes. 29 and a half.

Colin: Thank god someone had an ounce of compassion. How did you know Southers’ code?

Joe: It’s not Southers’ code. He’d never allow someone to escape. [switches to VHZ] It was mine, you see.

[gasps]

Narrator: Well, there you have it. I’m not entirely sure what you have but ... there. This concludes Season 1 of Oz 9. Season 2 begins August 18, but never fear – we’ll have lots of fun content coming in the break. If you’re worried, I can tell you that the Apocalypse Device is also on hiatus during this time, so you don’t need to worry about it exploding when you’re not listening.

As we close out Season 1, we have a whole lot of thank yous to do. Too many, actually, so if you reckon you’re in line for a thank you, consider yourself thanked. Oh, all right: thank you to our patrons including new patrons RJ Stonecipher and Paul Nicholls; our supporters, the good folks of the Podcast Junkie discord server, and to everyone who’s mentioned us on Twitter or Facebook or to a friend. It’s been a wild ride so far, and we’re so glad you came aboard.

You’ve been listening to:

Tim Sherburn as Emily and Colin

June Eubanks as the Albatros

Bonnie Brantley as Donna and Jessie

Eric Perry as Joe, the other head, and Dr. von Haber Zetzer

Richard Cowen as Leet

Aaron Clark as le Bichon Frise

Shannon Perry as Madeline and Olivia, and

Me, Richard Nadolny, as your Narrator.

Our theme and other music were composed and performed by John Faley, our artwork is by Lucas Elliott, and Oz 9 is written and produced by Shannon Perry.

Until next time, Space Monkeys, Narrator out.