

Episode 12

[alarm is going off on the ship]

Narrator: Day 3 aboard the Oz 9, and the crew is waking to the now-familiar sounds of something on the ship going terribly wrong somewhere. Fortunately, they all had a decent night's rest, thanks to finding the booze and the bunks. Unfortunately, not one of them knows the way back to the crew room or the bridge.

Madeline: Oh, crap. Not again. Is this going to be a daily occurrence on the Oz 9?

Colin: It's a terrible alarm. Instead of galvanizing me to action, it sort of ... sucks all the will to live right out of me.

Joe: OnlyidiotssayJesus...

Madeline/Colin: Jesus!

Joe: Yep. Anyone know what's happening?

Olivia: I do, if anyone's interested.

Joe: How about you kill that alarm first, before we all *fwip* ourselves to get away from it.

[bang]

Colin: And just like that, I feel the life force flowing back into me.

Madeline: Hey, where's Leet? Don't tell me: he's headed back to a healer.

Olivia: This time it was completely not my fault.

Joe: We're going to have to start charging him rent. What happened?

Olivia: He was standing directly in front of a pod when it suddenly popped open. Banged him right in the nose.

Colin: [sullen] Oh dear. Oh no. Leet's symmetry is in peril. I suppose that means my breakfast will be late again.

Joe: You know, you could learn how to use a microwave so Leet doesn't have to make your food.

Colin: Don't be ridiculous. Preparing meals is for peasant- ... uh, give me a fire in a barrel and a stick. That was good enough for me ma'am!

Madeline: Blah blah blah cover story. Olivia, did you say a pod popped open?

Olivia: Yeah, I was wondering when we might circle back 'round to that. It did, and the fellow inside is off roaming the ship. And I have some rather bad news.

Joe: Zombie?

Olivia: Worse.

Colin: Murderer?

Olivia: Worse.

Madeline: He's not a ... clown, is he?

Olivia: Do you mean did some bloke get into his pod in full clown makeup and giant shoes? Mmmmm...
No. I'm afraid it's even worse.

Joe: It can't be.

Olivia: Fraid so.

Joe: My god.

Colin: What? What?

Joe/Olivia: Mime.

Madeline: So, some bloke got into his pod in full mime makeup-

Olivia: And suspenders. Yes.

[door]

Joe/Madeline/Colin: Crap.

Leet: What's up?

Colin: Oh, it's just you. Thank god.

Leet: Will do, next time we chat. Why is everyone so pale? Wait – was there another zombie in that pod? His face did look pretty weird.

Colin: Worse. It was a mime. And now he's free and running around the Oz 9.

Leet: Ohhhhhh, that explains it. I had the weirdest feeling just now that someone was behind me doing everything I was doing.

[silence]

Joe: Leet... Turn around. Verrrrrry slowly.

Colin/Madeline/Joe: GASP!

Leet: What? What is it?

Joe: You've got a mime.

Leet: Well, get it off! Get it off!

Joe: Leet, just relax. Stand very still. It can't amusingly imitate your actions if you aren't doing anything. Just breathe and Don't. Move.

[silence]

Leet: [whispers] Is it gone?

Colin: No, it's trying to free itself from an invisible box. [pause] It's rather good, actually.

Madeline: Right? It's like there's really a box around it.

Joe: Core strength. It's all about muscle control and a strong core.

[pause]

Madeline/Joe/Colin: Oooo, ahhhh, oh, very nice, etc. [Laughter, Applause]

Leet: Is it gone?

Joe: Uh... no. Does anyone have some coins or small bills? That's the only way to get rid of it.

Colin: All I have is a twenty.

Joe: Give it to me! Quick, before it starts walking in a high wind.

Colin: Look, the box thing was good, but it wasn't twenty-quid good.

Madeline: Here, I've got a five.

[door]

Joe: Ok, Leet, you can relax. It's gone.

Madeline: We're going to have to do something about it. I don't have much cash.

Olivia: Actually, it'll take care of itself.

Joe: MRDR?

Olivia: Exactly.

Colin: Murder? You're suggesting we kill it? That seems a bit extreme, surely!

Joe: M-R-D-R. MRDR. Modified Release Dosage Regimen. While in the pods, most of a passenger's bodily processes are shut down, temporarily. As long as they stay in there, they receive a daily dose of all the minerals, vitamins, and other substances they need to stay alive. When they're ready to come out permanently, their natural systems are reactivated so they can process the vitamins and minerals and whatnots normally.

Madeline: But if a passenger comes out of the pod prematurely....

Olivia: They can't process food or even oxygen very well. It's why Lady Nibble Biscuit went downhill so fast.

Leet: Why didn't that happen to any of us?

Olivia: The shutdown process takes 24 hours and doesn't start until at least an hour after take off to be sure the launch was successful.

Madeline: Hang on. We only woke up in the first half hour because the Dolce and Gabbana wing melted down. What if there was an emergency on, say, day 4, and you had to wake us all up?

Olivia: I guess I'd hope the emergency took less than 12-to-24 hours to fix.

Joe: And then we'd all go back into our pods until the next one?

Olivia: Ummm.... Yeah, all right.

Madeline: Olivia....

Olivia: Oh, all right. Pods don't have ... in-and-out privileges. If you hatch prematurely, well... There's a reason there are 47 complete crews aboard this ship.

Joe: And each one is disposable. Like paper towels.

Madeline: That's why you woke us up so fast. So the shut down of our organs wouldn't have time to happen.

Olivia: Possibly....

Leet: You saved our lives. I knew you were some kind of guardian angel...

Madeline: Except for the 800 plus passengers who died when you boosted the tanners in the Dolce and Gabbana wing.

Olivia: It's not my- [pause] Yeah, actually that one sort of is my fault. I got a bit ... overzealous. But I needed a real emergency!

Leet: So are you the one telling the repairbot to destroy the pods?

Olivia: Absolutely not. I don't need help destroying my own passengers and ship, thank you very much.

Colin: That's comforting.

Olivia: Hang on Someone's trying to connect on the comms. Shall I patch them through, Madeline?

Madeline: Actually, could you just lead us all to the bridge? Fun as it is having this conversation in a corridor, I think I'd like to sit down.

Olivia: Follow the doors!

[doors, footsteps]

Colin: Why couldn't she have led us to the bunks on the first night?

Madeline: Colin, when you finally found your way to the bunks through this maze of a ship, what did you eat when you got there?

Colin: Cheese. Why?

Madeline: Leet, what did Olivia tell you she used to do before she came to Gated Galaxies?

Leet: Worked with lab rats. Why?

Madeline: Would *you* care to ask her why she didn't just guide us to our bunks, Colin?

Colin: No. No, I ... I don't think I would, actually.

Madeline: Thought not.

Joe: Incoming.

Madeline/Colin/Leet: Jesus!

Joe: Anyone else wishing they were with Crew 47 instead of Crew 1?

Narrator: The scariest part of this whole conversation? Madeline's crew is *not* Crew 1. As Crew 7 makes its way to the bridge, on the alert for a mime sighting, I thought I'd fill you in on a few details: according to G2's Scientific Ethics division, Jeremy, the Modified Release Dosage Regimen, is not, strictly speaking, necessary. The Fit-Tech Stasis Pods are capable of mimicking the body's natural circulatory, digestive, cardiovascular, lymphatic, and excretory systems without having to shut down any bodily functions or organs. But G2's Advisory Board opted for MRDR to eliminate the risk of passengers emerging from pods and taking over the ship. The fact that the passengers are even less capable of running the ship than the crew provided little comfort; according to G2 VP of Sales, "It only takes one rich geezer making a phone call home to screw the pooch that laid the golden egg."

[door to bridge opens, sounds of the bridge]

Colin: Gah! It's here! It's here!

Joe: Where? Where is it?

Colin: Over there in the corner, pretending to be at a tea party!

Leet: Is that what it's doing? I thought it was pulling on a really long rope.

Colin: Oh. Ohhhhhh, yes. I see it now.

Leet: That is a *really* long rope. Where do you suppose the other end is? Crew room?

Joe: At least. Rope that long, it might go all the way to memory storage, maybe even farther. Looks heavy.

Madeline: Not a real rope, boys.

Colin: Are you sure?

Madeline: Yes. He's just a very good mime.

Olivia: Comms are on. It's Jessie, sounds like.

Jessie: Oz 9, do you read? It's urgent!

Madeline: We're here, Captain Jessie. What's up?

Jessie: So, you remember what you were recently telling me about my crew?

Joe: The warning from the reporter. Was he right?

Jessie: Eh... possibly.

[sound of a plastic wrapper]

Leet: What you got there?

Joe: Not sure. Some kind of sandwich. Found a bunch of machines down on M deck. They're a little stale, but not bad.

Jessie: I'm sorry, was I interrupting your lunch? No, please, you carry on with your braunschwager and Wonder bread special with a gherkin, three olives, and ranch dressing for dippin' on the side, I'm sure my near death emergency can wait.

Joe: I can eat and listen at the same time.

Colin: Unless you're eating those kettle crisps – the ones that get all folded over. Those things are incredibly crunchy.

Leet: Oh, right, those are awesome! I have to go easy, though, they totally tear up the inside of my mouth.

Madeline: Boys?

Joe/Colin/Leet: Sorry.

Leet: Hey, look, the mime is making a sandwich!

Joe: I'm gonna go with peanut butter and jelly.

Colin: You're mad. That's not peanut butter and jelly.

Narrator: It's actually bologna and cheese.

Joe: Sure it is. See how he's getting frustrated because the peanut butter is tearing up the bread?

Colin: That could be anything!

Joe: Ha! Opening the jelly jar. Told you.

Narrator: He's peeling the plastic wrapper off the cheese.

Colin: All right.

Madeline: BOYS.

Joe/Colin/Leet: Sorry.

Jessie: My turn yet?

Joe: Carry on.

Jessie: So, there may have been something to what that reporter was saying. I think my crew may be targeting me.

Madeline: What happened?

Jessie: I woke up to an alarm this morning. One of our pods had gone dark.

Colin: One?!

Leet: One what? One what? What's she saying? Is it about me?

Jessie: I know, I know, I feel terrible. I went to check it out, and it was empty. It'd been forced open.

Joe: Forced? You sure?

Jessie: Aye. There was a prybar on the ground next to it, and some very wet footsteps leading away.

Colin: Maybe your crew got bored and thawed out someone to play with.

Jessie: You must be joking. Is that what happens on your ship?

Madeline: Of course not. Ignore him. Why do you think it has something to do with you?

Jessie: I checked the bill of lading. That pod contained Alphonse LeSavage otherwise known as ... le bichon frise!

Joe: The bichon frise? Like the little white dog?

Jessie: Have you never heard of the notorious bichon frise?

Colin: It's a small white dog. Quite sweet, actually.

Leet: They thawed out a dog?

Colin: What? No. Shut up. Maybe. We don't know yet. Shut up.

Jessie: No, no! Not the little white dog, the notorious French assassin. I had no idea that bastard was on my ship, or I'd have moved his pod to an airlock, just in case.

Joe: His surname is "the Savage" and he went with "the bichon frise"?

Jessie: It's possible you're getting hung up on the wrong things here. I'm telling you, there's a deadly assassin at large on my ship, and he's coming for me!

Madeline: Can Dick track him?

Jessie: No. Or at least he says not. I'm telling ya, I've no idea who to trust, but that crap cockney bastard of an AI is at the top of my list.

Olivia: An AI wouldn't need a crowbar to open a pod. Just sayin'.

Madeline: Isn't he listening in on this conversation?

Jessie: I'm not an idiot, Madpants; I'm in the baked beans room.

Madeline: The baked (beans room) ... ?

Joe: [interrupting] How can we help?

Jessie: I might need a jolly 'oliday after all – on the 9.

Leet: Man, I have got to learn Japanese so I can talk to her...

Colin: Japa- Is that seriously what you think we're speaking? Have you ever actually heard a foreign language?

Madeline: Is that possible? How would you get from the 6748 to here?

Jessie: We maneuver the ships as close as we can. I put on a space suit, pop myself out the nearest airlock to you, then use the venting system of the suit to steer to your open airlock.

Madeline: Venting system?

Jessie: Oh, right, you flunked out before we got to this bit. The suit's venting system clears out the built-up carbon dioxide. As well as ... other undesirable gasses.

Joe: "Undesirable gasses?" Y'all eat that many baked beans on your ship?

Jessie: Look, the point is, it can also act as propulsion. It should be enough to get me from my ship to yours, if we pull in pretty damn close.

Joe: Why not just hole up for 24 hours and let the MRDR protocol do its thing?

Jessie: Yeah, well, bit of a prob, there; he was never shut down. It looks like the pod wasn't even really sealed, just sort of glued together to pass inspection – not that there was one. What do you say, Madpants? Save a life for old time's sake?

Madeline: As long as we're clear: the 9 has a captain, and that's me. Olivia is this doable?

Olivia: I reckon we can make it happen. As long as Captain Haggis over there understands that everything on this ship is hands off. Controls, coms, chests, all of it. Tell her to put her ship on autopilot; I'll control the 6748 from here.

Joe: You don't think Dick'll object?

Olivia: I don't think Dick will know what hit him. There are advantages to being Dr. Friederich's favorite.

Leet: What's happening?

Colin: It looks like Captain Hottie will be joining us on the Oz 9 for a bit.

Leet: REALLY? Woot! I have to go lift stuff! I want to be at maximum expansion when she gets here.

Colin: To go with your maximum density?

Jessie: Olivia, how long before I can hightail it out of here? It's a bit too quiet on this ship.

Olivia: Be at your airlock 78 in 30 minutes. I should be able to trigger your door. I think I can get the gap between our ships pretty close – but you know, take a deep breath, just in case.

Jessie: Right. Very comforting. One more thing: that bloke's been pulling on the same rope since we started this conversation. Why the hell do you have a rope that long on your ship?

Madeline: Not a real rope. We've got a mime.

Jessie: A mime? Eh.... Hang on a sec. Just out of curiosity, how close is the Oz 6-double-4?

Olivia: Too far. You'd never make it, not with Basil Fawlty steering.

Jessie: Damn. Look, maybe we should reconsider this whole thing. I mean, how bad could an assassin named after a curly lap dog be?

Olivia: 114 confirmed kills and six maimings. He's murdered people using house plants, paper clips, and plush toys; he once drowned a socialite in her own salad dressing. Zero arrests, no one's even entirely sure what he looks like. Oh, and the last guy he finished off died from a decongestant overdose.

Colin: How do you overdose on a decongestant?

Olivia: I'll spare you the details. [pause] No, I won't, here's a photo.

[expressions of horror]

Leet: Hey, look! The mime is pretending to go into total organ failure! [beat] Oh. Nope, that's the real thing.

Madeline: Joe?

Joe: On it.

Olivia: Airlock 9, I think. Same one Jessie's coming in. Might do a two-fer, if we're opening the doors. Aim for the mime, Captain Jessie. We'll catch you.

Jessie: I can hardly wait.

Narrator: As Captain Jessie prepares for an indefinite stay aboard the Oz 9, other preparations are also underway aboard the 6748 – preparations that include gaffer tape, those “kettle-baked” chips that really tear your mouth up, and ... some decongestant. Will Jessie make it off her ship in time? Will she reach the relative safety of the Oz 9? Has anyone EVER said “safety” and “Oz 9” in the same sentence that didn't also contain the words “complete lack of”?

Today's episode was brought to you by Desperate Measures Decongestant, the heavy duty nasal irrigation system guaranteed to leave your sinuses mucus-free and begging for mercy. Find Desperate Measures Decongestant wherever your favorite industrial solvents are sold.

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Olivia: Just not as much as you love us. Or else.

Narrator: Narrator out.