

episode thirteen: Aim for the mime

Narrator: When last we left the Oz 9, a mime had messily – but silently – expired on the bridge, and Jessie, Captain of the Oz 6748, was planning to escape her potentially homicidal crew and make her way to the 9, courtesy of the venting apparatus on her space suit.

It's a tricky space maneuver, given the vast size of the Oz ships and their reputation for being about as steerable as a cow who is perfectly happy where she is.

But the deadly French assassin known as *le Bichon Frise* is on the loose aboard Jessie's ship, armed with decongestant and her name next on his "to die" list. So Olivia has positioned the ships close enough – hopefully – for Jessie to make the jump.

Joe is even now headed to Airlock 9 with a bucket of mime, to clear out the departed and welcome Jessie to rather fragile safety aboard *this* Oz.

Madeline: OK, Jessie, you suited up?

Jessie: Ay, look, can we speed this up a bit? I'm not entirely sure, but I think this airlock is filling up with poison gas. Joke's on them though; I've got my suit on and I've opened the interior doors. Should make the Chanel wing pretty unpleasant for a while. Still, I'd rather not wait around for whatever they try next. Oh, you've got to be fuckin' joking...

Madeline: What is it? What's wrong?

Jessie: Scorpions. Seriously? I wear shoes, ya numpties. [stomp, stomp, stomp]

Madeline: Hold tight just another minute or so; we're nearly in position.

Joe: [on the radio] Come in.

Madeline: Jesus!

Joe: [on the radio] Even on the radio, huh? Good to know. I'm in position at Airlock 9 whenever you're ready, Olivia. The sooner the better, actually; the smell of rancid greasepaint is starting to get pretty thick down here. Good news, though; I found another of those sandwich machines.

Olivia: You might want to steer well clear of those, actually. They're ... experimental.

Joe: What? Can't hear you. You're breaking up.

Olivia: No, I'm not; I'm all over the ship. Put down the sandwich, Joe. And how are you eating with a spacesuit on?

Joe: Ah, dammit, I knew I forgot something.

Jessie: Look, I don't want to seem ungrateful, but someone's trying to pry apart the airlock doors, so if we could just shift it a bit faster....

Olivia: Joe, leave the bucket and get behind the interior doors. Jessie, when you see the bucket pop out, head that way. Aim for the mime, got that?

Jessie: Got it. Can you give me a countdown to be ready, a 3, 2, whoooooaaa!

Olivia: Absolutely.

Jessie: Thanks for the warning. Holy crap, it's bloody freezing out here.

[bridge doors open]

Colin: What's going on? Why's everyone still on the bridge? It reeks of expired mime in here.

Leet: Oooo, look! Captain Hottie's on her way here! I've been labeling stuff aboard the ship with Post Its, so she can learn our language.

Jessie: I speak English, you bloody- Hey, where's your ship? Everything's dark; where's the 9?

Colin: Dear god, I think the force of being shot out the airlock broke her neck! Her head is pointing back towards her ship!

Leet: Oh, wow, that hurts. That happened to me once.

Colin: I'm almost positive it didn't.

Olivia: Her helmet's turned round. Jessie, your helmet's got twisted 'round, but if you shift it, you risk popping it off and dying horribly of suffocation.

Jessie: You cannot be serious.

Madeline: Yeah, Olivia's right, Jessie. We're going to have to talk you to our open airlock. Oh, look out for that [clang!]

Jessie: Ow, dammit, what the hell was that?

Madeline: Mime. Jessie, you're going wide; you need to veer hard left.

Jessie: Got it. Steering left. [sound of vented air]

Leet: Well, that's just rude.

Colin: It's her spacesuit. At least, I hope it is.

Joe: Hey, Captain Madeline, I've got my spacesuit on now, and I'm noticing something.

Madeline: What's that?

Joe: There's a tether that keeps the suit attached to the ship so no one goes floatabout. Did Captain Jessie remember to release her tether?

Colin: You mean that great, long umbilical cord currently leading back to her ship? Apparently not.

Madeline: Hey, Jess, bit of an issue, maybe, but don't panic.

Jessie: Oh, you mean worse than floating blindly in space trying to get away from a hired assassin and my killer crew?

Colin: Is being reeled back in by that hired assassin and killer crew worse? Then, yes. Worse.

Jessie: What the hell is he talking about?

Madeline: There's a tether that attaches your suit to your ship. Olivia, is it possible for Jessie to unhook the tether from her side?

Olivia: Not unless she wants to vent all her oxygen very very fast indeed, no.

Jessie: I imagine I've had worse days, but oddly, I can't seem to remember a single one.

Madeline: No one on your ship has figured out about the tether yet, so just keep moving. We'll deal with it if it happens. Shift left. [vent] No, your other left.

Jessie: What the hell are you talking about? I'm going the same way I was before.

Olivia: You're upside down and backwards from the way you were before. Floating in zero gravity without landmarks will do that to you. Go to your right about 30 degrees.

Joe: Hey, she's also too low for this door. Tell her to point her nose up.

Madeline: Jess, you're too low. Can you point the vent down and move up?

Jessie: You're joking. I have no idea which way "up" is.

Olivia: Pee yourself.

Jessie: What?

Olivia: Pee yourself. The direction the urine flows is down. That's what skiers do in an avalanche.

Joe: Uh, hang on a minute.

Jessie: Fortunately, I'm hydrated and scared. Right. Done. Wait—

Joe: Yeah, there's no gravity in space, so that's not going to work.

Madeline: Olivia.....

Olivia: It was a joke! I didn't think she'd actually do it...

Jessie: When I get aboard the 9, you really must show me your mainframe. Hang on, why am I moving the other way?

Leet: Hey, someone on her ship has ahold of the tether. They're pulling her back!

Madeline: Damn! OK, Jessie, we need to figure out how to jettison the tether. I've got the handbook somewhere here, hang on.

Jessie: I'm dead.

[sound of the door]

Madeline: Where's he going?

Colin: No clue.

Madeline: Help me find the manual!

Colin: Oh, all right... Communications, how to adjust your seat for optimum ergonomics, ooo! Here's one on the microwave, finally! Is this it? Oz ship model 8000 owner's manual?

Madeline: Yes, that's it! Read the instructions, quick!

Colin: Hang on... Congratulations on your purchase of an Oz model 8000 short-range luxury space exploration vehicle. "Short range"???!

Madeline: Maybe skip a bit?

Colin: My god, this thing is impossible. The index is not actually in alphabetical order.... First section is in ... what is that, Aramaic? Then Serbo-Croat, Hebrew, Macedonian, Welsh,... then I have no idea what that is. Ah.... At last, the Queen's English.

Jessie: This is all completely absorbing, really it is, but I'm about to be yanked back onto the Little Ship of Horrors, so if you wouldn't mind-

Colin: Space suits, got it! Right... how to clean the faceplate, how to adjust the hoses, washing instructions, oh, you're in luck, Jessie!

Jessie: You figured out how to detach the tether?

Colin: No, how to clean urine out of your spacesuit. Sorry, forgot what I was looking for.

Jessie: Something's got me. Something's got me!!

Madeline: What the hell... what is that?

Olivia: Not sure, but it's knocked out her comms.

Joe: It's Leet. He just dove past me, right out the airlock.

Olivia: Is he wearing a spacesuit? Only yours seems to be activated.

Joe: Nope, no spacesuit; not even a shirt.

Madeline: What the hell was he thinking? He's going to die out there.

Joe: Chest that size, he might be able to hold enough air, but he's got to make it fast. What's that between his teeth?

Olivia: It's a knife. To cut the tether. Where'd he get that? They don't allow sharp things on this ship. Only dull. Like, for example, the crew....

Colin: He's sawing away at it. [pause] Sawing ... [pause] Still sawing ... Are you sure that's a knife and not a spoon? Nearly there.... He's tearing it with his teeth. I think he's got it. Now what?

Madeline: They're flying back to the 6748. Why?

Colin: Ohhhh, nice flip turn.

Olivia: Joe, I don't think he's aimed for your airlock. I'll see if I can catch him in one of the other doors. Can you see which is closest?

Joe: Looks like they're coming in hot to door.... 88? [distant door sound] No, wait, 87 8614.... 4.... Pull up! Pull up!

Madeline: He's gotta be running out of air. And Jessie's suit is pretty much empty, so no propulsion. Crap. We have to steer over to them.

Olivia: Not a chance. This ship doesn't move like that.

Madeline: Do we have any escape pods, anything we *can* steer?

Colin: Good lord, it's getting crowded out there. Someone's just joined them from the 6748. Leet's trying to fight them off, Jessie's kicking.... Ooo, ouch. I think he just threw up in his helmet. That or his head exploded.

Olivia: We have a secondary ship that might work, but we'd never get to them in time. Oh, Leet, I will miss you, counting your crunches, our lovely late-night talks-

Colin: Now there's a 4th person! Is that... Joe? It is! I just saw Jessie say "Jesus," so it must be Joe. He's got his mop in one hand. Oh, dear, Leet is looking rather blue.

Madeline: Yes, yes, grab the mop! Jessie's got it! Joe's pulling them back to the ship.

Colin: Oh, hang on, we're not done yet. Chunderdome there is still trying to get ahold of Jessie. He's got the little bit of tether still hanging off her suit. How the devil can he see anything?

Olivia: Hang on, just hacking in on Dick's spacesuit override, here. One moment.... [sound of distant fish reel] Right. Joe, what door do you need?

Joe: [panting] 19. Open 19, and we're in.

Madeline: Well?

Olivia: They're in. I read three life signs on Level Six. Well, four actually, that's odd. Aaaaaand now there's eleven. These "every sensor for a dollar" stores, I tell you.

Madeline: Is Leet OK?

Olivia: Well, he might be down a few brain cells he really can't afford, but Joe's taking him to his healer. And I'm leading Jessie up. We're going to want to hose her down. She's had a rough day.

[door opens]

Jessie: That. Was possibly the worst rescue ever.

Madeline: You're welcome.

Colin: At least you're safe now. Well, safe-ish.

Joe: Hey.

Madeline/Colin/Jessie: Jesus!

Madeline: How are you? That was amazing, you shooting out there like that to help. Come on in and get the hero's hug you deserve.

Joe: Will do, will do, only we've got a little bit of a problem.

Colin: That will never NOT be true, will it.

Madeline: Joe...?

LBF: 'Allo.

[gasps of horror]

Narrator: At this point, I should probably explain that there's an unexpected extra passenger aboard the Oz 9 – the notorious French assassin, le Bichon Frise. In 2088, Elderado Hobart devised the Hobart Scale of Unpleasantness, with 1 Hoby being a mildly unpleasant experience such as stepping on a Lego, to 100 Hobies, which is more like being slowly encased in a wall of stinging Legos while listening to the Dave Matthews Band. Death at the hands of le Bichon Frise is reported to be about a 94, though how a dead person was able to make that call is unknown.

Madeline: How the hell did you get aboard my ship?

LBF: I floated 'ere on a puff of air. Out ze back of my little suit, poof! Poof! So many doors were open, I didn't even 'ave to knock. Now if you will give me Mamselle Jessie, we will float away again. First, perhaps, you could ... hose her down?

Madeline: Jessie is a guest aboard the Oz 9, Bichon Frise; we don't hand our guests over to assassins.

LBF: Free-zay

Madeline: What?

LBF: It's is pronounced Free-zay.

Colin: It most certainly is not. I took three years of French at Ox – ehhhh, the London School of Carpentry and Dental Hygiene. It's Freeze.

LBF: I am *actually* French. It's Free-zay. And where are your many accents from, eh?

Colin: Shut up.

Joe: So, if anyone's interested, Bitchin Freeze here has something pointy aimed at one of my kidneys, so maybe we can tackle the French lesson another time?

Jessie: I'm not going with you. I'll die first!

Colin: Well, that doesn't make any sense.

Jessie: What do you mean, it doesn't make sense?

Colin: You don't want to go with him *because he's an assassin*. Dying first would just save him the effort.

LBF: It's not really an effort, per se... I enjoy my work.

Joe: Uhhh,...*kidneys*. I recognize that, having two might make one seem disposable, but I like having a back up.

Olivia: We have an assassin, too, actually.

LBF: Wait, what is that I am hearing? And who is this child who is speaking?

Olivia: I'm not a child, I'm Well, seven, but that's not really fair. In AI years, seven is – never mind. And I said, we have an assassin too. In one of our pods. Could thaw ours out and have quite the little throw down.

LBF: Ah, but yours does the sleep. So, 12 hours, 24 at the tippy top, your killer goes sloppy plops into the bucket and I am again the alone assassin on this ship.

Olivia: This one's better than you. 12 hours is plenty of time. Don't need decongestant neither.

LBF: Who is it, tiny person?

Olivia: Oh, that'd be telling.

Madeline: We have an assassin?

Jessie: I'm starting to think they come standard, like cup holders.

Olivia: They do, actually. Some ships have several. And about the sloppy plops, I can bring them back properly, you know. So they don't fall apart.

Joe: Why don't you go ahead and fire ours up, there, Olivia?

LBF: Is it clever to say that when I have this very pointy thing in your sweetbreads?

Joe: Ah, go on, Bitchy. I know where the extra organs are stored.

Colin: Extra organs?

Leet: Hey, what's going on? Who's this?

LBF: I am le Bichon Frise!

Leet: Oh, great, another person who doesn't speak English. What is that? Finnish?

LBF: Is Monsieur Décolletage here for actuals?

Jessie: Don't be offended. He doesn't understand me either.

Leet: Oh, wow, is it the same language as Captain Hottie? [slowly] Do you speak English too? Can you translate?

LBF: I think I will kill him too. He should not have childrens.

Joe: Whoa, there, little puppy. Getting awfully happy with that knife.

Leet: Knife? Wait – you're the assassin!

LBF: I think the time in the space without the oxygens has not been so good for his brain.

Colin: I don't think it made any difference, actually.

Madeline: He seems the same to me. Leet, what's your name?

Leet: Leet Hax-x-x, why?

LBF: He says it "Hax-x-x"? Why is that?

Colin: At least he knows how to pronounce his name.

LBF: It is "free-zay"

Colin: Oh, eez eet?

Joe: Boys.

LBF: How have you not murdered your entire crew?

Madeline: I just found out about our assassin. Give me time.

Joe: Hello? Kidney?

Madeline: Leet? Tackle the French guy, will you?

Leet: Oh, is that French? I thought it was Czech.

Madeline: Tackle.

Leet: K.

LBF: Wait, what?

[tackle]

LBF: You will regret this! I will assassinate you all!

[disappears into bowels of ship]

Joe: Oh, no, I'm fine, thanks. No worries about jumping the guy who had a knife in my back.

Jessie: I don't think it was a knife. He dropped it. It was A straw.

Joe: He's a famous assassin. You don't think he could kill me with a straw?

Jessie: Ooooo, maybe he was going to suck your innards out and change his name to le Lamprey!

Madeline: Yeah, this is really fun and all, but we do have a dangerous assassin running around the Oz 9. Olivia? Can you zap him?

Olivia: Tried that when we were all standing here, and he didn't even flinch. Special shoes, maybe?

Madeline: Look, until we catch him, I think we should stick together as much as possible. Let's crash here for the night; Olivia can secure the doors.

Jessie: Uhhhh, you got any spare uniforms nearby?

Narrator: With le Bichon Frise (and it IS free-zay) on the loose aboard the Oz 9, the crew is in for a restless night. Fortunately, they were able to secure a spare uniform for Jessie and fwip her still-damp spacesuit out a convenient airlock. Unfortunately, Leet still can't find any of his shirts.

What will happen when Day 4 begins? Subscribe to Oz 9 on your favorite podcatcher so you don't miss out.

You've been listening to:

Richard Cowen as Leet

Tim Sherburn as Colin

Eric Perry as Joe

Bonnie Brantley as Jessie

Shannon Perry as Madeline and Olivia,

And introducing Aaron Clark as le Bichon Frise

I'm Richard Nadolny, your narrator, reminding you that next time your spaceship stalls, Space X-Lax will get things moving at warp speed. Just remember to remove your spacesuit first.

Until next time, Space Monkeys, narrator out.