

Oz 9 Season 2, episode 2

Narrator: In the annals of “Terrible things that really could have been avoided,” the explosion you’re about to hear ranks pretty high. Oz ships were built to look pretty and impress potential investors, so they just aren’t meant to take much. An Apocalypse Device detonating on the inside exceeds their limitations by a factor of ... lots.

[sounds of an AD room; klaxon]

Dick: Come on, lads and lasses, can none of you type in a simple code? I can read you the numbers! 10 seconds.

Martin [Aaron]: I’m a hendecagist, Dick. Unless it has a number 11 in it, it’s out of my field of expertise.

Dick: You’re a wanker, Martin. Actually, you’re 11 wankers. Zero.

[explosion]

Narrator: As the guts of the 6748 try to wrap themselves around a neighboring planet, and the passengers and crew – but not the ship’s captain or assassin – are ... uh... excused from gym class *forever*, the shock wave from the explosion gently rocks the Oz 9 and passes unnoticed. Just as Gated Galaxies intended. Meanwhile...

[AD room on the Oz 9: sounds of bickering]

Olivia: You’ve got 14 seconds, but by all means, argue over who types in the code. That’s a brilliant use of the rest of your lives.

Head 1: All I’m saying is, I can’t be asked to type in a code without the necessary appendages.

Colin: Oh, for god’s sake, get out of the way!

[very fast typing ... pause]

Olivia: Grace period initiated. Countdown reset to 30 minutes.

[sighs of relief, footsteps, door opens]

Olivia: Hang on a minute, where do you think you’re going? You’ve got just shy of 30 minutes before we have to do this all over again, so maybe you could appoint a trustworthy person to be in charge of the code? And yes, I realize the word “trustworthy” just popped out and staggered around the room a few times before dying of futility, and- hang on, what was that?

Leet: What was what?

Olivia: Sounded like... half a million voices cried out in terror and were suddenly silenced. [pause] Nope, never mind, my bad. Where were we?

Albatros: Someone needs to stay here and babysit the bomb. Someone with hands, preferably.

LBF: That sounds to me like a volunteering! Merci, ma petite oiseau, and later Leet will bring you a sandwich, mmmmm?

[sounds of agreement, leaving]

Albatros: STOP. It's ridiculous to leave a human here when you have a perfectly serviceable robot. Humans have ... limitations robots don't.

Olivia: Is that right? When was the last time *you* took a toilet break?

Jessie: I was meaning to ask about that, actually; where are the bogs?

Colin: There's one near the crew room. Good god, what have you been doing all this time?

Jessie: Do you really want to know?

Colin: Absolutely not.

Albatros: What exactly are you saying, computer?

vHZ: Perhaps zis is not ze time to be discussing zese tings. Gif our friend ze robot here one of its arms-

Emily: We would be more efficient with four.

Leet: Yeah, more efficient putting me in a healer. How about one arm, one finger? That's all you need to type in a few numbers.

Head 1: If you're only giving us one finger, I have a suggestion.

Colin: Can we trust it?

Jessie: If it lets the ship blow, it goes too.

Madeline: Doctor, you helped design these things. Can you make sure it'll do the job?

Head 1: Yeah, see, referring to me as "it" rather than giving me a name isn't helping with the old identity crisis here, just saying.

vHZ: Ah, I must have ze passwords for zis.

Leet: Tweedledee nine. Tweedledum nine.

[sounds of shutting down]

vHZ: Ach, such a surprisingly useful boy! Friend Leet and I vill vork on zese to make zem a teensy more cooperative. Perhaps you vill go and show Miss Jessie ze toilets, zen to ze bridge for the steering and ze stopping and whatnot, mmmmm?

LBF: Come to think of it, I haven't been to the toilets in a while myself. I have such incredible powers of concentration!

Madeline: Yes, well, maybe we could all take a little tour of the ship, including the ... uh... facilities. Olivia?

Olivia: Follow the doors!

Colin: [aside to Madeline and Jessie] Is this seriously how they're going to find out they're not human? When they wonder why they haven't needed a toilet in 4 days? What happens if they figure it out?

Jessie: At best, they bugger off with the shuttle. At worst, they throw you over their shoulder like a sack of potatoes, triple-time it to the nearest airlock, and \*fwip\*, *that's* what happens. They can't find out.

Colin: And are we really going to let the bichon freeze just wander around the ship? We can't let him loose, what if he kills Joe- I mean, Dr von Hocus Pocus? And while we're on that topic, how the bloody HELL is Joe Dr. von Happy Camper?! I need a drink.

Jessie: You're holding one.

Colin: I need a bigger one. And another olive. Does anyone else smell motor oil?

Jessie: Oh, no, now don't go telling me you're a machine and all!

Colin: Don't be absurd. Oh, look, the hallway signs have finally appeared! It's about time. [footsteps]

Jessie: Ehhhhh....Do you see hallway signs?

Madeline: Nope. You?

Jessie: Not a sausage.

Madeline/Jessie: Crap.

Albatros: If you two are finished whispering, perhaps we could carry on?

LBF: Last one to the bridge is a chubby German sausage! [running]

vHZ: [calling after him] I heard zat! Totally unnecessary vis ze body shamink.

Narrator: With Cal momentarily under control, the crew of the 9 can focus on other things: namely the upcoming asteroid belt that's about to give the Oz 9 a whupping. Get it? Belt? Whupping? Never mind. You might be thinking that the Oz 9 is currently hurtling toward the Main Asteroid Belt that occupies the space between Mars and Jupiter. You'd be wrong. The Oz 9 is currently on a path to intersect the lesser-known Phalangeal Belt, so named for its long, toe-like extensions, and its tendency to kick anything that comes near it, way off course ... or to death.

[sounds of the bridge]

Madeline: Leet? Dr. von Haber Zetzer, can you hear me?

Leet: [on intercom] Hi, Captain Madeline! How are you?

Madeline: Hi, Leet. We're fine, same as three minutes ago. Can you check in every five minutes or so and let us know your progress with Emily and ... the other head?

Leet: Can do! So, do you want the first check-in in five minutes or two?

Madeline: Sorry?

Leet: Since it's been three minutes already-

Albatros: I'm going to stop you there. Leet, we'll hear from you in five minutes or if there's some exceptionally important piece of news, all right? And by "exceptionally important," I do NOT mean you had a particularly flavorful burp, such as you informed me about yesterday. Got it?

Leet: Uhhhhhh, Captain?

Madeline: Watch the countdown and get back to us in five, Leet. Bird lady, check out the insignia right here on my sleeve — mean anything to you?

Albatros: Yes. Yes, it does. It means you're an engineer and your name is ... Matt?

Madeline: Oh for- It means we haven't figured out how to do laundry yet. *My* insignia means "captain" and captains give the orders. So here's an order: you and Jessie go find the shuttle and make sure it's good to go if we need it. Stock it for 14 days for 7 ... er, people. Got it?

Albatros: Goodness. Prickly, aren't we?

Madeline: And in charge. Go be useful. Olivia?

Olivia: It's not my fault!

Colin: Oh, god, what now?

Olivia: Nothing in particular. Just a sort of blanket statement at this point. Are we finally ready to start steering?

LBF: Is anyone else very very very bored?

Olivia: So that's a no, then.

Madeline: I don't suppose you can go sit in a corner and do nothing and kill no one and not talk? Or move?

LBF: Perhaps I will go find ze toilet, since we have yet to find one? Or as you are all rather stinky, perhaps I will go in search of *les douches*.

Colin: Well, you won't have to go far to find them.

Jessie: You can't just let him wander around on his own.

Madeline: I need to concentrate on flying my ship! Look....empty out all your weapons. Come on, on the table. Everything. Let's go.

LBF: What? This is unreasonable! These are the tools of my trade! Would you ask Leet to go without....his .... Well, would you ask Colin to go without... uhhhh... mon dieu, what do any of you people do?

Olivia: Time to intercept with the asteroid belt is slightly sooner than the time Cal pops his clogs and takes everyone with him. Both of which are just a hair sooner than I want to watch you all disintegrate into frozen fish flakes. If anyone's interested.

Albatros: I gave up my pen. Surely you can sacrifice a bottle of decongestant.

LBF: Fine. But only because my most lethal weapons are my brain and my hands. And you cannot take those from me!

Olivia: I'll give it a go.

Colin: For god's sake, will you hurry up?

LBF: FINE. [sounds of things being set on a table, decongestant spray, heavy things, etc., with accompanying sounds from LBF "oh, there you are!" etc.]

Colin: That's an impressive array. What do you do with this? [interesting sound effect]

LBF: Do you suffer from the nighthorses?

Colin: Night- you mean nightmares?

LBF: Yes, fine, all right. Do you have the bad dreams? Never mind. That was going to be a very scary saying about how knowing what this is for [sound again] will give you the nighthor- nightmares, but you completely ruined it with your correcting.

Colin: You are the most absurd creature aboard this ship. And that's saying something.

Narrator: It's also wrong.

Olivia: Eleven minutes left on Cal. 9ish to the asteroid belt. And about 15 seconds before I start heating up the floor.

Madeline: Everyone *get off this bridge*. NOW.

LBF: My pockets are empty. May I go?

Colin: Hang on a tic. What's that around your ankle?

LBF: My trousers.

Colin: Very funny. BENEATH your trousers. And don't say your sock. There's something that smells of [sniff sniff] cinnamon.

LBF: FINE. [trousers go up, something lands on the table]

Albatros: It's a cinnamon stick.

LBF: A cinnamon stick that is sharpened to a lethal point! And ... it keeps my shoes fresh.

Albatros: [sniff, choke] That smells a good deal more of shoe than it does of cinnamon. How ever did you smell it?

Madeline: GET OFF THIS BRIDGE!!

Jessie: All right! Before we go, I want some sort of guarantee that I won't end up on the breezy side of an airlock.

Madeline: Oh for- Albatros, don't kill Jessie, body tag or no body tag.

Albatros: Very well.

Jessie: Hang on, it's that simple?

Albatros: She outranks me. But use a ketchup pen *just once* and all bets are off.

[door, footsteps, fading voices]

Jessie: All right, all right. But you don't have your Sharpie anymore. What if we need to take notes?

Albatros: Do you think your accent makes stupid any more charming?

Jessie: Watch it...

LBF: Oooo! Feline fight!

Colin: What are their chances of making it to the shuttle alive, do you reckon?

Madeline: 1 in 3? OK, time to fly through an asteroid belt.

Colin: I'm sorry, what? You do realize I can't actually help you.

Madeline: Actually, you can. Jessie explained it to von Joe and me. Flying through the belt isn't actually the problem – unlike most of this crew, it's not that dense. Stuff in there is pretty far apart, so we can get through as long as we can steer. Probably.

Colin: Probably???

Madeline: The problem is getting control from whoever is steering us.

Colin: Whomever.

Madeline: Seriously? Now?

Colin: It's a reflex. So how can I possibly help?

Madeline: Olivia?

Olivia: Yes, Madeline?

Madeline: Explain it to Colin, will you?

Olivia: Me? You didn't understand it, did you.

Colin: You didn't understand it?

Madeline: I'm busy captaining. Olivia....

Olivia: Right, so have you ever played strip poker, and are you any good at it?

Narrator: This bit is pretty heavy on the science and math, so suffice it to say, they mostly want Colin for his cufflinks, which are made of a rare metal that can interrupt ... something, and allow Madeline and her crew to do ... some ... other things. Let's go see what someone less complicated to narrate is doing.

LBF: [to himself] I shall follow the ladies all sneaky sneaky and they will lead me directly to the shuttle. Once it is repaired and loaded, I shall overpower them, and it is bye bye, farewell, adieu to the Oz 9, and 'allo, Monsieur Southers, I am here for the monies!

Jessie: Are you sure this is the way to the shuttle?

Albatros: Of course it's not. That idiot Frise is following us. Honestly, with all that monologing, he makes more noise than a mariachi band with bubble wrap.

Jessie: So... do you have any brothers or sisters?

Albatros: If you're going to start asking me personal questions in an attempt to get me to like you, let me stop you right there.

Jessie: Look. At any minute, Leet could drop a wrench on Cal or sneeze into the biolock and blow us all to smithereens. And let's face it, we're all a bit gobsmacked he hasn't already. So, is a bit of normal conversation in what could very well be the last minutes of my life really too much to ask? And yes, I realize asking for "normal" conversation from an assassin is a stretch, but surely you can pretend to answer a few boring questions?

Albatros: Very well, if it'll calm you down. Hmmmm....My memories are a bit hazy. Probably from the pod. Might have to take a side trip to the Memory Storage for a refresh. I had a ... sister?

Jessie: I'll bet she's lovely.

Albatros: I'm inclined to say ... no.

Jessie: Must have been a joy-filled endless romp of a childhood having you for a sister. What did you do if she colored outside the lines? The mind reels. I had a sister as well. She was a horror. She used to kidnap my dolls and stage cage matches. I had to ransom them with Wham bars.

LBF: Aaaaaaaand this is taking too long. I shall find a shortcut.

Albatros: Well done. He's no longer following us. You bored him away. And they were Irn-Bru bars, not Wham. This way.

[footsteps, pause]

Jessie: Does the name Buck Nubbins mean anything to you?

Albatros: Noooo, should it? My god, talking to you is like competing in the world's most boring Pub Trivia night.

Jessie: You, on the other hand, are a rare treat.

Narrator: As Jessie and the Albatros make their way to the shuttle, squabbling as only a former spaceship captain and the robot assassin version of her estranged sister can, Cal's countdown continues.

Leet: Cal says four minutes to go. Should I just go ahead and type in the code now?

vHZ: I would say yes, but zere is zis niggling feeling at ze back of my brain just now zat is telling me no. I am hafing some memory dat I arranged it so you can only type in ze code vis 15 seconds or fewer remainink.

Leet: Why would you do that?

vHZ: I haf a flair for ze dramatic, my boy. If you are going to give people a grace period on a massif bomb zat can erase whole planets, you must at least make zem wait to ze last seconds. Builds tension, you see.

Leet: Huh. Just being in the same room as that thing gives me plenty of tension.

vHZ: For you, jess, but vat about for ze audience?

Narrator: How about you leave talking to the audience to me?

Leet: Pretty sure it's just you and me here, doc.

vHZ: Yes, yes. Ven I vas younger I wanted to write ze bustorblocking films, you see? All ze jumping out of hot air balloons and throwing spears and spelunking. So exciting and romantic!

Leet: Spears? What movies were you watching?

vHZ: Zuch heroes in zere velvet leisure suits drinking ze highballs and rescuing women with zuch lovely cleavages.

Leet: Uh, doc, we're getting pretty low on the countdown, if you want to check the Tweedle twins here.

vHZ: Mmmm? Oh, yes, fine. Vake zem up, vill you, my boy? Captain Madeline, are you hearing me?

Madeline: [over the intercom] Yeah, not a good time, doc! We're in the asteroid belt. Pull up, pull up!!

vHZ: Oh, zat felt uncomfortable. Do you have control of ze ship?

Madeline: Define "control." Look, can I buzz you back?

Colin: 6 o'clock! 6 o'clock!

Madeline: That's BEHIND me, Colin, how the hell can I see that???

Colin: Well, over there, then! My god, that thing's enormous!

Leet: Probably not a time for "that's what she said."

Colin/Madeline/vHZ: No!

Jessie: [on intercom] Eh, we're getting thrown around a bit here; anything to report?

Madeline: Oh, I'm so sorry; we're trying to avoid getting creamed by giant floating objects, we'll try to do it more gently.

Colin: 8:37!

Madeline: 8:37? Colin! The time thing is NOT WORKING. I can see you – just point!

Colin: Over- crap!

Albatros: Give me that microphone. What's happened?

Colin: The lights on the bridge just went out. Hang on. It's fine, the back up lights just came on, thank god.

Madeline: Uhhhhh. Colin, you take over the steering. I'll point. There. Left.

Colin: Right. Got it.



Madeline: Nice. Nice flying. Now. Two coming up straight ahead. Can you split the difference?

Leet: Dr ... Joe?

vHZ: Sssssh, my boy, zis is incredibly excitink!

Leet: But, Cal. We don't have much time left on the countdown.

vHZ: Zuch zuspense, vat can be ze outcome of all zis?!

Leet: Doc! I can't see the numbers! Move ....other head!

LBF: [on intercom] Allo, little piggies. I am feeling very queasy again. What is this that is happening? Why all the squiggly flying?

Madeline: There's not enough room to fly between, go left!

Colin: Left won't work, hold on to something!

Narrator: Just as Leet reaches to type in the code, the Oz 9 goes into a steep dive, and all the occupants – well, all the ones that are awake – float up to their respective ceilings. And in Leet's case, away from Cal's control panel. Time almost seems to stop, the numbers on the countdown clock flipping over with tortuous slowness. In desperation, Leet kicks off from the ceiling and manages – barely – to grab hold of Cal's panel.

Leet: Just—gotta—hang on....

Narrator: As the Oz 9 screams through space, a death dealing blow from an asteroid coming at any instant, Leet frantically types in the numbers just as the countdown clicks over to zero.

Olivia: Grace period initiated. Countdown reset to 30 minutes.

Narrator: The Oz 9 levels out and the crew find themselves once again subject to the laws of gravity.

vHZ: My goodness, vat an adventure!

LBF: Ehhhhh... does anyone know where Joe left his mop and bucket?

Jessie: What's the story? Are we out of the asteroid belt?

Madeline: We are. Thanks to some frankly superhuman flying by Colin.

Colin: I never want to do that again. Could someone bring me a drink? With an oli...

Jessie: What happened?

Madeline: He passed out.

Jessie: Does anyone else find it an odd coincidence that the bridge lights went out, just when you most needed them?

Madeline: We have a lot to discuss. If Cal is secure for now, can you all get to the bridge? Right away.

Narrator: Leet and Dr. von Haber Zetzer have managed to program Emily and ... the other head to punch in the code about 29 minutes from now, so they make their way to the bridge, as do the Albatros and Jessie. Le Bichon Frise has a bit of ... cleaning up to do, but he isn't far behind.

[door opens, sounds of the bridge]

Albatros: It's completely dark in here. I thought you said the back up lights were on.

Colin: Good lord, woman, open your eyes.

Madeline: No, she's right, Colin. There are no back up lights on the bridge.

Colin: But I can see you perfectly well. You're standing right there. And Leet's picking his nose.

Leet: Am not, I'm scratching it!

Jessie: Oh, this can't be good.

LBF: Wait a minute. You are saying that cocktail boy...

Colin: Yes, what *are* you saying?

vHZ: Somesink has happened to you, my boy. Vere are you, so I can pat you reassuringly on ze arm?

Colin: I'm right here, and you're all having me on. Very funny.

Albatros: How did you know how to fly the ship?

Colin: It's a steering wheel. I can drive a car, you know.

Jessie: Cars don't dive.

Leet: Well, except my sister's, when she got ahold of some pills and drove off All Fools Bridge that time.

LBF: So we are saying that cocktail boy here...

Madeline: Yeah, that wasn't driving, Colin. That was flying. And some of the most amazing flying I've ever seen.

Leet: My sister was flying too, if you get my meaning.

Albatros: And Oz ships steer like shopping carts. How did you DO that?

LBF: So what we're saying is that cocktail boy...

Jessie: Are you planning on finishing that sentence at some point?

LBF: I was hoping someone would finish it for me. I'm not really clear what is the happenings right now.

Colin: I think I'd like to lie down. Instantly.

[thump]

Madeline: What just happened?

Jessie: I heard a thump. What was that?

Leet: Did Colin pass out again?

vHZ: I think that is probably the sound we heard. It sounded very like a passing out sort of sound.

Jessie: Where is he? Feel around.

Madeline: I think I have a foot.

Albatros: Really? You can't distinguish a \$845 Valentino Garavani Wedge Pump from his knock-off Italian loafers? That's my foot.

Madeline: Oh, and that's me putting a terrible gash in your wedgies with the bichon freeze's cinnamon stick, which just happened to fall into my hand a bit ago.

[sounds of arguing]

Narrator: With the asteroid belt behind them, and 25 minutes left on Cal's countdown, the crew of the Oz 9 have a rare moment of not being in immediate fear for their lives. Of course, none of them is fully appreciating the moment, as they're all idiots, but we can enjoy a sigh of relief on their behalf. [sighs] There, that felt good, didn't it? Savor it. Because worse is coming.

You've been listening to:

Bonnie Brantley as Jessie

June Clark Eubanks as the Albatros

Tim Sherburn as Colin and Emily

Eric Perry as Doctor von Haber Zetzer and Head 1

Aaron Clark as le Bichon Frise and Martin

Richard Cowen as Leet

Shannon Perry as Madeline and Olivia

And me, Richard Nadolny, as your narrator.

We'd like to take a moment to tell you about WiFiSciFi, a live podcasting event coming up in April 2020. Enjoy live performances of Oz 9, Relativity, Sage & Savant, 9<sup>th</sup> World Journal, Girl in Space, and Moonbase Theta Out – two performances, one memorable night in Seattle, Washington. You can find more information at [wifiscifi.org](http://wifiscifi.org) or follow event announcements on Twitter at WiFiSciFiLive. And keep an eye out for our upcoming Indiegogo; we have some amazing patron rewards planned!

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

Until next time, space monkeys, Narrator out.