

Season 2 Episode 3

Narrator: You know how, sometimes, you're watching your favorite vid feed and realize you have no idea why the characters are suddenly wearing coonskin hats and go-go boots? It's because it's a flashback and you weren't paying attention and missed the bit where they told you "25 years ago...". This is that bit. If you're, I don't know, shellacking or hoovering or something, stop for a minute and listen up: Six months ago....

[flashback noise]

Glenda: Pack it in, Jessie. You'll never get to be a captain. They'd never make someone with a nose like yours Captain.

Jessie: Ha! That's where you're wrong! I made the list! Look, I just got the letter today: "candidates for captain." See? Right there? Jessie James.

Glenda: Let me see that. Oh. Oh, dear. Oh, that's ... wonderful. Oh, how absolutely smashing.

Jessie: You're happy for me? What's actually happening right now?

Glenda: Look closer, dear, daft sister. This is the "candidates for *captives*" list for their Hostage for Hire service.

Jessie: Wut. You're making that up. Give me that letter.

Glenda: Apparently your stunning ability to die so a more valuable person doesn't have to has caught someone's attention. Congratulations!

Jessie: Crap.

[flashback noise, fade on Glenda laughing]

Narrator: Paying attention? Hey! Ready? Three days before the launch of the Oz ships from Earth ...

[flashback noise; sound of a window going up, night noises]

Glenda: Happy birthday, sister dear.

Jessie: GAH!!!! [pause] My god, would you stop crawling in my window? I have a bloody front door, you know.

Glenda: I know, but I assume from your recent weight gain that being surprised by my popping in your window in the middle of the night is the only cardiovascular exercise you're getting these days. I come bearing gifts.

Jessie: If it's another box of chocolates based on an old Monty Python sketch, I'll pass, thanks very much. I still get nose bleeds, you know.

Glenda: I think you'll actually like this one. May I come in?

Jessie: Considering I'm on the 8th floor without a fire escape, I suppose you better.

[noise – suction cups, Glenda grunting slightly]

Glenda: Are you still grasping on to the outlandish idea that someone someday will be foolish enough to put you in charge of a ship?

Jessie: With a childhood full of this, is it any wonder I grew up with such a robust sense of self worth and confidence? Yes, Glenda, I am still grasping at that particular straw, why?

Glenda: I may be in a position to help you. And as a bonus, get you off Earth and out of my life. Are you familiar with Gated Galaxies' Oz 8000 program?

Jessie: All right, I know you're not fond of me, but are you actually trying to get me aboard one of those floating death traps? The Oz 8000 is about as flight-ready as a ... a ...

Glenda: Still working on our similes, I see.

Jessie: Zebra! It doesn't help there's only about 11 species left to choose from. I'm not getting aboard an Oz for love nor money, no matter how desperate I am to fly, thank you.

Glenda: Well, first, the Oz ships have been quite elegantly retrofitted for long-haul. I saw the plans myself. They're perfectly space-worthy now. Second, I have it on good authority that the current captain of the 6748 is about to have a freak and fatal accident.

Jessie: "About to"?!

Glenda: Oh. I misspoke. Had. Recently.

Jessie: I've not heard anything of this. How recently?

Glenda: Tomorrow.

Jessie: What?

Glenda: Sorry. Yesterday. Yesterday he will have been bitten by an extremely toxic and ill-tempered spider. Or possibly fall down some stairs. Fell. Not sure yet.

Jessie: What?!

Glenda: Look, do you want the job or not?

Jessie: Just because the current captain died, doesn't mean they'll make me captain. That's not how it works.

Glenda: "How it works" is entirely up to me. Have you not learned that by now? "Captain Jessie James." How does that sound?

Jessie: It'd sound a lot better if you'd stop rolling your eyes when you say it.

Glenda: I'm trying. Well?

Jessie: Nobody gets hurt? It's all totally fair and legal?

Glenda: [laughing, stops abruptly] Oh, you're serious. Yes, of course. Apart from the poor captain accidentally stabbing himself with a shampoo bottle-

Jessie: WHAT?

Glenda: Not sure yet. But apart from him, no one gets ... got hurt and it's totally fair and legal.
[snickering]

Jessie: Well, in that case... "Captain Jessie James." All right. Make it so.

[flashback noise]

Narrator: And so, in the last remaining hours before the launch of the 400 Oz 8000 ships on that fateful Tuesday in 2142, the official captain of the 6748 suddenly and mysteriously choked to death while tying his tie. Oddly but fortunately, he was donning his uniform directly under the booster rockets on the launch pad, so his sudden, accidental end required no clean up. And no investigation. Jessie, her tie properly sized for her neck, stepped into the Oz 6748 Crew One captain's pod and, she thought, into the future she'd dreamed of.

[flashback noise]

Buck: Well, there she goes. You gonna miss her?

Glenda: Don't be talking bollocks. I lose fifty quid if she makes it out of earth's atmosphere.

Buck: You bet against your own sister?

Glenda: Mate, she couldn't qualify to captain a ship that's intended to blow up in deep space. Smart money says she'll slam into the moon or another ship and save G2 the trouble of activating Paco.
[pause] But on the off chance she doesn't, give it a day or two then call and tell her I'm dead. Tell her it has something to do with her stealing the 6748 and it's all her fault. She'll go mad!

Buck: She's gonna be dead in a few days. What's the point of freaking her out?

Glenda: I'm her older sister. Freaking her out is what older siblings do. I'm just exceptionally good at it.

[flash back sound]

Narrator: Back aboard present day Oz 9, things are astonishingly calm. For now, Emily and ... the other head are taking care of Cal's countdown; the ship is still racing ahead, destination unknown, but at least not on a collision course with anything in particular; and both assassins are unarmed and uninterested in killing anyone right now. It's unfortunate that Colin's unconscious, as he'd really appreciate this island of peace in the usual swirling chaos of life aboard the Oz 9.

LBF: [running] GAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

Narrator: I knew it. I knew as soon as the word "peace" came out of my mouth....

[sounds of the bridge, muffled scream from LBF coming forward, door opens, LBF on bridge]

LBF: GAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA-

[sound of electric shock, thump]

Leet: What did you do that for?

Olivia: Stopped him shouting, didn't it?

Leet: Well, yeah, but now we don't know why he was shouting.

Olivia: Does it matter?

Leet: It might.

Olivia: He'll come round in a minute. It's your move, dearest. Do you know, you even ripple picking up a checker piece? Do it again!

Leet: Hmmmm.

[sounds of checkers dropping]

Olivia: I won!

Leet: Where? I can't see anything ...

Olivia: Here, diagonally.

LBF: [from floor, so away from mic] GAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHH!

Olivia: There, you see? Told you he'd come round. What's got your moustaches in a twist, then?

LBF: It is... monstrous. Horrible! Do not ask me questions! It is not to be spoken of!

Olivia: All right, then. One more game?

Leet: He's really scared. What scares a trained killer? What happened?

LBF: All right, I will tell you!

Olivia: Thought you might. Go on, then.

LBF: I was looking for the little doggy... are you certain it is not on your records somewhere, *ordinatrice*?

Olivia: I told you, there's no record of that dog anywhere on this ship.

Narrator: That's entirely untrue, of course. She knows exactly where the dog is. It's in one of a small handful of pods that are pretty much guaranteed to survive.

LBF: FINE. I will continue to search on my own.

Leet: So what did you see?

LBF: I AM GETTING THERE. I happened to walk past the memory storage, only to glimpse the Albatros watching some of her memories.

Olivia: What? Her memories? She doesn't have- Leet, get to memory storage right now and unplug her. GO! I have to find Madeline. How did I not know she was in there? Damn Leet and all his lovely ... ripply ... bits ... Hang on, most of my sensors are off line! [intercom] Madeline!

LBF: I didn't even get to the scary part yet! She was watching a memory of when she assassinated the ice cream man. The fellow parked his ice cream truck outside her window and played "Bicycle Built for Two" for over an hour. It was ... brutal. She is not human.

Olivia: You don't know the half of it, mate. And hopefully neither does she. [intercom] Captain Madeline to the bridge please, and leg it; it's an emergency! [to LBF] Go distract her. Get her off that machine!

LBF: You just sent Leet to do that. Why do I have to go?

Olivia: You've met Leet; do you really expect him to find memory storage on his first try?

LBF: Fair point. But I don't want to talk with her. She is very scary.

Olivia: You're an assassin!

LBF: This is true. However, I have never managed to arrange someone's insides on their outsides.

Olivia: Do you want an up-close and very very personal look at what she can do?

LBF: GAAAAAH-

Olivia: Shut it. So it behooves you not to let her remember too much of her past ... activities, yes? Get a shift on! [intercom] Seriously, Madeline, not kidding here.

[in corridor]

LBF: What are you still doing here?

Leet: I'm here again? Damn it! I even wrote myself directions from the bridge to memory storage. Out of bridge, take a left. At the first corridor, turn right. Then right at the first door, then right at the first turn, then one more right and it's on your left.

LBF: You must have made a mistake. Let's try it. So, left here, non?

Leet: Uhhhh.... I guess. But your left or mine?

LBF: Well, they are your directions, so I suppose that means your left.

Leet: That makes sense. Heroic running!

LBF: Hang on, no no no no. I am an assassin, I cannot run to this sounding. Nefarious running!

Leet: Whatever. Come on!

Narrator: Meanwhile, in the bunk marked "Colon"....

Colin: [waking up] Ugh... where am I? What's happened?

vHZ: Velcome back, my boy. Haf you had a gut sleeping?

Colin: It's still so strange to hear you speaking with a German accent.

vHZ: Vell, next time you choose to be zis chimney sveep again, you can borrow my concealer. Such an accent you vere hafing, oy! Zo painful. I am ready to stuff you back up ze chimney zumtimes!

Colin: Yes, all right, all right. I still think someone's trying to kill me.

vHZ: A great many people are tryink to kill you, but you soldier on, gut fellow.

Colin: What? What do you mean?

vHZ: Ze entire crew off Gated Galaxies, for ze starters. Well, perhaps minus dat luffly Donna lady, but zen she's a temp. Vat do zey know?

Colin: Oh, well, yes, I suppose G2, but they're trying to kill everyone. I meant me specifically. Why are you in my bunk? Actually, why am I in my bunk?

vHZ: You had ze swoonink on ze bridge. Do you remember?

Colin: Vaguely. I remember.... My god. I remember flying the ship. But it wasn't me. I mean, not *me* me. I can't fly a ship. To be honest, I can't actually drive a car; that's what poor people with hats do at the front of limosines. What's happened to me?

vHZ: Yes, vell, zat might be a tiny bit my fault, you see.

Colin: Oh god.

vHZ: Zo, back on Ears, I vas doink many experiments in ze secret Innovations Lab at G2 HQ.

Colin: Go on....

vHZ: I could not leave my experiments behind for fears zey would fall into ze hands of zum very nasty peoples. I packed zem all up nice and safe and brought zem on board ze 9 vis me.

Colin: What did you do to me?

vHZ: I am not entirely sure, you see. I was developink a set of zuper peoples with some very powerful skills. Zum had great eyesight to make use of vizual spectrums ze human eye cannot, zum could smell a mosquito vis poor digestion on a windy day, zum are very strong vis ze lifting and ze bending of big things. You understand?

Colin: How did they get these skills? Injections?

vHZ: Zo many different ways! Zucking on ze boiled sweets, listening to a particular piece of music, zmellig a luffly little scent I developed, eating an olif ... I like to tinker.

Colin: But that's what the Albatros gave me. An olive. I ate your olive?

vHZ: It's ... olif-ish.

Colin: I ate something olive-ish that gives people super powers. My god. What's going to happen to me?

vHZ: Yah, zis is my question as vell, actually. Ze olif zat you ate vas von of a kind. Ze other experiments had just one power, perhaps two small ones, but zis one is different. I put all of ze tings in zis one.

Colin: All the things???

vHZ: It vas a Friday, I vas feeling playful.

Colin: I'm going to die.

vHZ: Ach, you are zo negativ! Vat sort of childhood did you have to make you like zis? But yes, probably.

Colin: WHAT?

vHZ: Vell, I vas not intending for a human to eat zis one.

Colin: THEN WHY DID YOU MAKE IT?

vHZ: I had to get all ze technology I developed out of zat lab. It was not long before ze launch, and I did not wish to leave anysink behind. Zo I zmuggled it all out in my lunch, you see? I vas zo clever – it vas a sunny day, I said I would like to eat in ze park, and to quote our funny French friend, poof poof, I and all my ideas are gone.

Colin: How long do I have?

vHZ: [laughing] Oh, dear, zis is zuch a silly qvestion aboard ze Oz 9, no? If we all make it to the next breath, zen we are zo lucky. I am very fond of our captain, but I zink on Ears she would probably get ze scissors vis ze rounded ends, you know?

Colin: Can you tell me anything? I can hear Leet breathing, and I don't think he's anywhere nearby. I can smell the Bichon Freeze's cinnamon socks, I can tell that you used to smoke vanilla-flavored cigars but gave it up, what, 5? 6? years ago? It's maddening. When will it stop?

vHZ: Here. I am giffing you zis notebook which vill contain all ze informations...

Colin: Oh thank god-

vHZ: ...once you write zem down. Just fill it in as you go, all right? I didn't expect to haf a human subject so qvickly, I am a little giddy!

Colin: What's that smell?

vHZ: Zis is perhaps me, zo zorry. I haf had one of ze sandwiches today.

Colin: No, not that, though the smoked blueberry and sea urchin ones are doing you no favors. No, this is quite distant. I smell.... Sausages?

vHZ: Ohhhhhh, zis is a problem. Let's go, my boy, before all our zauzages are cooked!

Narrator: For such a large ship, things are getting a bit crowded in one small section. The Albatros is in memory storage, attempting to regain memories that aren't actually hers, while others are converging on memory storage to try and stop her. Well, I say "converging," but mostly they're running around trying to find her.

LBF: This cannot be right. I have definitely seen that door many times now.

Leet: How do you know?

LBF: I put a mark on one special door each time I run past it. This door has eleven marks, you see?

Leet: Why didn't you say something 10 marks ago?

LBF: How can I be certain this is MY door and these are MY marks? Perhaps they are put here by someone who is trying to trick me, ehrrrrr?

Leet: That's fair. Maybe make a special sneaky mark?

LBF: Ohhhhhh, this is very clever! I shall do this! Look the other way.

Leet: Why?

LBF: Because I don't want you to see my special sneaky mark in case it is YOU who is trying to fool me!

Leet: Oh, right! Smart. OK, I'm not looking! Go ahead.

Olivia: You know, given my vast depth and breadth of knowledge, most humans seem a bit slow to me. You two, however, are exceptional.

LBF: Well, merci.

Leet: Awwww, that's sweet.

Olivia: Yes, absolutely, I meant that as a compliment. My sensors are back, so follow the doors!

Leet: Were we close?

Olivia: Not at all, my darling, but bonus points for effort.

Narrator: Meanwhile, the smell of sausages comes from that small, soundproof, secret room just adjacent to memory storage...

Jessie: Finally! Where the hell have you been? I've been trying to reach you for ages! Look, I don't have much time. Clearly I'm not the only one on this ship that knows this room exists.

Buck: Holy crap! You're alive!

Jessie: Well, yeah. Shouldn't I be?

Buck: But ... your ship?!

Jessie: What about it?

Buck: It blew up!

Jessie: WHAT??

Buck: That's what we heard. It was on the news; blew half a dozen satellites right out of the sky. But if I'm talking to you.... Are you a ghost?

Jessie: Don't be daft. I had to leave the 6748. My crew was trying to kill me!

Buck: So where are you, Jessie?

Jessie: I'm-

Glenda: Buck.... Who are you talking to?

Jessie: Hang on. Is that ... Glenda? She's alive?!

Glenda: Is that ... Jessie? She's alive?!

Buck: Heh. Surprise! Maybe you two would like to talk with each other?

Glenda: I never thought I'd say this, but thank god. Jessie, get your arse back to Earth.

Jessie: What the hell are you doing breathing? Last I heard, someone fished your soggy arse out of the East River! And I don't think coming back to earth is an option, thank you.

Glenda: You have to get back here. NOW.

Jessie: The last time you were so eager to see me, you dangled me out a window until I gave you the key to gran's safety deposit box. What gives this time?

Mr. Southers: I suspect that has to do with a sweet little footnote in G2's captain contracts that says if a ship goes down, the captain is responsible for compensating G2 for the ship and all the families for their hardship and loss. As you can imagine, it's rather a lot of money. And if the captain fails to survive, that responsibility falls on their designated next of kin.

Jessie: Ohhhhhhh, does it now? Well, you should be all right, Glenda. Sadly, I wasn't the captain of record for the 6748.

Mr. Southers: Judging by the expression on your sister's face, I suspect that paperwork was altered for reasons of her own. I'm guessing she ... took out a generous life insurance policy on you shortly before the launch?

Glenda: Jessie, get back to Earth or so help me....

Jessie: You let me think that I stole my ship and you paid the price with your life. Hell, I had that idiot Buck trying to figure out who did it!

Buck: Hey, now....

Jessie: Terrified for days that I'd get found out and ... I dunno, grounded? Pulled back? So here's my choice now: go back to earth so I can face the mountain of debt, or stay up here and imagine my evil heifer of a sister dealing with it. Hmmmmm.... Bye now!

Mr. Southers: Well, isn't this a pretty picture. Young lady, you're going to want to undo these ropes now.

Glenda: Oh, am I? I can ransom you to G2 to pay back my sister's debt!

Mr. Southers: Oh, little missy, if you think I'm worth a dime to G2, you could try that. Or you could untie me and let me tell you how I'm going to make all of us very very rich indeed....

Narrator: Well, that was a hell of a day, wasn't it? So let's recap: nah, let's don't. We get another download if you go back and listen again. Suffice it to say, it's hard to keep secrets aboard the Oz 9. Today's episode was brought to you by Hard Pressed, makers of the square olive. Tired of chasing round, roly olives around martini glasses, countertops, and spaceship corridors? Try an Olive Cube in your next cocktail or amuse bouche. Hard Pressed Olive Cube: the one that *didn't* get away.

You've been listening to:

June Clark Eubanks as Glenda

Bonnie Brantley as Jessie

Tim Sherburn as Colin and Buck

Aaron Clark as le Bichon Frise

Richard Cowen as Leet

Eric Perry as Dr. von Haber Zetzer and Mr. Southers

Shannon Perry as 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. Oz 9 is written and produced by Shannon Perry.

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