

Episode 37

Narrator: If you've ever had a mold problem, you'll know it can be persistent. For example, the mold on the Oz 9 has been persistently banging on the door to the bridge, presumably trying to get out, and sending out soft sprouting tendrils through the many cracks where the door doesn't really fit all that well. Joe has stationed himself outside the door with a pair of scissors, and is, for the moment, keeping the mold at bay.

Joe: Take that! [snip] And that! [snip]

[sound of hooves approaching]

Albatros: Goodness, you are busy, aren't you?

Joe: And that! [snip] Just trying to limit the mold to the bridge for now, until we figure out how to get rid of it. Stay well back. This plant is a beast. It has a mild sting if you let it touch your skin. Really puts the "ass" in "aspergillus." [snip snip]

Greg: Colin's nearly recovered from his burns, so we'll get him here as soon as he's out of the pod.

Albatros: Have you been doing this long?

Joe: 'Bout an hour. Every time I [snip] cut one off, another shows up [snip]. I hope Colin's good to go soon, because the rate this thing is growing, it'll bust through that door before long.

Albatros: Seems to me if you've been doing this nearly an hour, you'd have a pile of clippings at your feet. And yet, I see none.

Joe: What? I haven't had a chance to look down. You're telling me there aren't bits of dead mold all over this floor? [snip]

Greg: Well, that's truly unfortunate. I was looking forward to trying a bit of it. It smells delicious. At least, I think it does. I'm not sure what smelling is.

Albatros: So, here's a concern: that bit you just snipped off is caterpillaring itself off that away. Quite rapidly, I might add. I fear you're not so much keeping it at bay as helping it spread.

Joe: Well, then. We might be needing Colin a bit sooner than anticipated. Can you hand me that bucket? Maybe I can contain them in there.

Albatros: The way that last frond just scuttled up a featureless wall over there, I'm going to assume the bucket will be largely ineffective. Perhaps if we put something in it? Like bleach? One's coming this way. Greg?

[chomp, gulp]

Greg: I think that was tasty, but I don't have much to compare it to.

Albatros: I actually meant for you to stomp on it. Do you think eating it was wise? I remind you of the unfortunate Olive Incident.

Joe: That olive incident may end up saving us all.

Albatros: Greg? Are you all right? You're shaking.

Greg: My eyes are watering and my face feels odd. I think it's odd. Maybe it was odd before, and this is normal? [sneezes] What was that?

Joe: That was a sneeze.

Greg: Oh, good. I've heard of those. Those are normal, right? I thought they came in pairs, though? Hang on.... [pause] Nope, I guess that one isn't ripe yet. [sneezes] Good grief. Is that how this works?

Joe: Normally sneezes don't involve a freezing spray, but hey, that seems to have stopped the mold tendrils for a moment.

Albatros: Bless you. I say that both out of politeness and as one who prefers not to be wrapped in mold tendrils and hung up like a deli chicken. Now, do we assume that zebra body has always had freezing nose spray capabilities — which would be just like G2 — or is that the result of eating the mold?

Greg: Honestly, it could be either. There's a lot in here I haven't figured out yet.

Joe: Can you generate the spray on command, or does it have to be a sneeze?

Greg: Hang on, let me see what I can do... [snort]

Albatros: Hmmm.... That... didn't work as hoped. Perhaps a little more freeze, a little less ... mucus?

Greg: Apologies, Miss.

Joe: Sure, apologize to the lady hitching a ride and not the guy who has to clean it up. [sound of squeegee]

Albatros: So what should we conclude from this experiment?

Joe: We may need to ration the pepper.

Albatros: Making a robot zebra sneeze is not regulation use for pepper.

Joe: I think in this particular circumstance, we might make an exception on acceptable use of condiments? You know, when lives may depend on it?

Albatros: I'm very uncomfortable with this.

Greg: "Wrapped in mold tendrils and hung up like a deli chicken...."

Albatros: You make a convincing argument.

[jumps off Greg's back, runs away and back again]

Albatros: Here you are. That should hold you for a while, and I've stashed the rest away in a secret compartment I just found. That's inexplicably full of some very large shirts.

Joe: Well, this is odd.

Albatros: Is there really any point in saying that aboard the Oz 9? As if there's ever a moment when something isn't profoundly odd?

Joe: Fair point, but this is specifically odd. The mold has stopped trying to get out. In fact, it's gotten pretty quiet in there.

Greg: Maybe my frost breath spread backwards up the tendrils and killed the plant?

Albatros: You haven't been conscious very long, have you. Nothing ever works that way aboard this ship. It's like we're in the hands of a demented demi-god.

Olivia: Has anyone seen Colin? He's disappeared off my sensors.

Greg: Last time I saw him, he was in the healer pod.

Olivia: Yes, but if he's not there now, that's not terribly helpful, is it?

Albatros: Have you asked Leet? He's often wherever Colin is.

Olivia: Leet's on the phone at the moment. Any more utterly pointless ideas? No? All right, I'll just keep doing everything on my own, then. I wonder how crew 8 is doing...

Albatros: Did she say Leet is on the telephone?

Greg: How is that still working? We're a long way from Earth by now.

[distant door opens]

Joe: The way we've been zig zagging all over space, who knows where we are. I worry about that guy. The other day he asked if I could give him dulcimer lessons, then got confused when I said I didn't have one.

Greg: Do I hear beeping sounds from the bridge?

Joe: Oh, it always beeps like that. That's how you know it's the bridge.

Albatros: No, Greg is right. Those are new and different beeping sounds. What controls does it have access to?

Joe: All of them.

Albatros: Could it, say, decide to flood the ship with carbon dioxide?

Greg: Olivia?

Olivia: Busy!

Albatros: Surely you can do more than one thing at a time?

Olivia: One thing. Do you really think the only thing I'm doing is looking for Colin?

Colin: I'm right here.

Albatros/Greg/Joe/Olivia: Jesus!

Albatros: Oh, lord, not again. I thought we were finished with this. Who was that?

Colin: What do you mean, who was that? It was me, obviously.

Joe: Colin?

Albatros: Are you in the ventilation system? That's not very hygienic.

Olivia: Why aren't you on my sensors?

Greg: Where exactly are you?

Colin: What are you all babbling about?

Joe: You sound like you're right here.

Colin: I *am* right here. No. Don't tell me.

Albatros: Not even a heat signature. Now, that's odd — does anyone else detect heat signatures?

Greg: I do. Or maybe auras. Can't tell what I'm looking at. But you're right: Colin doesn't have one. Or a body, for that matter.

Colin: What are you saying? I'm a ghost?

Joe: Ghosts leave cold spots. If you have no heat signature, you're room temperature.

Colin: What does that mean? So I'm not a ghost?

Olivia: Well, you ought to be dead, but dead people usually don't talk.

Joe: What about Lady Nibble Biscuit?

Olivia: Oh, yeah, she was quite chatty for a dead person. Until she was all goopy, anyway.

Colin: You're not helping!

Olivia: If you're dead, I don't suppose there's much we can do, is there? Can you pick up that bucket?

Colin: Really? I'm dead, but you still want me fetching things like the help?

Olivia: I want to see if you're corporeal. I could test it by trying to zap you....

Colin: No! Never mind. I'll pick up the bucket. Dear god. I'm... I'm afraid to try. [picks up bucket] There.

Joe: You did use your hand, right?

Colin: Well, of course I did, what else? What do *you* pick up buckets with?

Joe: I meant as opposed to your brain or something super powery.

Colin: Don't be absurd.

Albatros: You're invisible, Colin. There's mold taking over control of this ship, and our zebra friend here sneezes ice. We left absurd behind some time ago.

Colin: So, this isn't a joke. I'm actually invisible. Even to you, computer?

Olivia: Yeah, well, I can still tell when you're flicking me the Vs, so steady on, mate.

Colin: By the way, I'm fine, thank you for asking. Other than being invisible. So I guess I'm not fine. My god. I don't even know if I'm fine or not.

LBF: Hello, little people! I have brought you...string.

Greg: Is it just me, or does le Bichon Frise seem... stupider than normal?

Joe: What? Nah, if anything, it's the reverse. He seems sharper, more astute-

LBF: Ass toot? That is very funny! What is the English word for this?

Greg: Is he ... drunk?

Albatros: He seems totally fine to me. Well, not fine, but normal. Well, not normal, but ... I give up. There is no language for life aboard this ship.

LBF: There is that butterfly again! It has been following me all the day. I think it is very fond of me because it likes to sit right here beneath my nose.

Colin: That's your mustache.

LBF: GAH! This butterfly, she is speaking! Also, I am surprised it has such a very deep voice.

Colin: It's me. Colin.

LBF: Oh, this is funny. We already have a Colin, I think. Fly away now, little one. [spinning] Why will you not fly away? Why are you sticking to my face?! Let go of my face now, Colin!

Greg: Still think he's totally fine? He thinks his mustache is a talking butterfly named Colin.

Albatros: To be fair, Colin is invisible.

LBF: Helloooooo, I have forgotten! Why am I spinning in circles? May I stop now?

Albatros: Please do.

LBF: Have I stopped?

Colin: Not quite. There. Now you've stopped.

LBF: I am hearing the snooty English fellow, and I am smelling vinegar and smugness, and yet I do not see him. Hello, snooty English fellow! Are you invisible?

Colin: I appear to be.

LBF: You mean, you "disappear" to be. HA! I have made the funny! Ooo! A bucket is flying in midair! Can I have a flying bucket?

Colin: Let go, you idiot, it's me.

LBF: Can I have a flying, talking bucket? With a less snooty accent?

Jessie: [intercom] Can everyone high tail it to the bridge, please?

Greg: You know, I never minded the expression "high tail it" before, but now I think it's kinda speciesist.

Joe: Why does Captain Jessie want us to go to the bridge? We're already here. Or as near it as we can be.

Albatros: Is she in there? With that ... thing?

LBF: That wasn't Jessie.

Albatros: Oh, do be quiet, lapdog. I think that butterfly may be about to sting you.

LBF: What?! Get it off! Get it off! [weird noises of him trying to get his mustache to fly away. You're on your own, Aaron!]

Greg: That was a bit cruel.

Albatros: Thank you! Now, is Captain Jessie in there?

Olivia: Actually, the lapdog was correct. Sort of. That wasn't Jessie speaking, just now. Not exactly. But it did come from the bridge.

Joe: Was it Jessie or not?

Olivia: It was.

Joe: So, she's in there.

Olivia: No.

[pause]

Albatros: Is there any possibility you're getting ready to explain this more clearly?

Olivia: You're all still confused? Gosh, is it scary being so slow to comprehend, or is there comfort in being ignorant? I mean, you rarely see a scared cow...

Joe: Olivia....

Olivia: That was a recording of a previous announcement.

Greg: Is it trying to lure us to the bridge?

Olivia: Probably. Oh, and it gets worse.

[Sound of bridge door opening; everyone but Colin gets pulled onto the bridge. There is much shouting, door closes]

Colin: What the hell just happened?

Olivia: It's not my fault!

Colin: Is that helpful right now? Where are the others? We need to find the Captains and Doctor von Haber Zetzer-

Olivia: Hey, you said his name right!

Colin: I did, didn't I. Remind me to congratulate myself at length later. Also Leet. Where are they?

Olivia: Sausage room!

Colin: Wait. You know about the sausage room?

Olivia: Oh, Colin, don't you know by now? There's very little I don't know. Follow the doors!

Narrator: I'm glad someone has a grip on the facts, because I'm completely bewildered. To recap, le Bichon Frise, the Albatros, Greg, and Joe are trapped on the bridge with the mold. Captain Madeline and former Captain Jessie, Dr. von Haber Zetzer, and Leet are all crowded into the tiny sausage room because there's a telephone in there. Is that everyone? I think that's everyone.

[metal footsteps]

Emily: With me, with me!

Head 1: Do I have any other choice?

Emily: Why is this so difficult for you. We simply have to applecart-

Head 1: Alternate

Emily: Our steps. My right, your left, my right.

Head 1: It'd help if our heads were on the same side as our legs. I keep forgetting which one's mine. Right. Here we are. Where is everybody?

Emily: Isn't that just like this crew to summon us and then disappear. They know we don't have an arm with which to push the button and open the door.

Head 1: Hey, are those... tendrils?

Emily: Where?

Head 1: Coming through the cracks in the door. What the hell's going on in there?

[door opens, they're pulled in, shouting]

Narrator: Right, now we've got everyone.

Jessie: Could you move your giant chest, there, Brawny Osmond? You're taking up all the room in here.

Leet: There *is* no room in here. And I can't turn sideways. This is the only way I fit.

vHZ: Zere are captains everywhere! Vy are zere zo many captains on zis ship?

Madeline: Could you take a step back? All I can see is mustache.

Julie: [on phone] Hello? Is anyone there? Hello?

Leet: She's back! She's back! Sssssh! Julie? It's Leet.

Julie: Oh, hi, Leet. [pause] Could you remind me who you are?

Leet: Sure. Uhhhhh....

Jessie: This is Captain Jessie of the Oz 6748. Who's this?

Madeline: Excuse me! This is Captain Madeline, who is still a captain and still has a ship. We're talking to you from the Oz 9.

Julie: Wait. You're calling from an Oz ship?

Leet: Yeah! We're like astronauts. Sort of. I talked to Ben once a while back.

Julie: Oh, right! The night of the unexplained asteroid shower.

Madeline: That had nothing to do with us.

Jessie: Pffft.

vHZ: Please, zere is not enough room in here for zarcasm.

Julie: Is Ben still on the line? Or Mrs. Sheffield?

Leet: No, they had to run for their lives, so we got disconnected.

Julie: WHAT?! Are they OK?

Leet: I think so. Mrs. Sheffield knocked out the tough guy-

Julie: Buck, right?

Jessie: Buck?

Madeline: Do you know him?

Jessie: Eh... Well, ... My... uh... My sister worked with him!

Julie: Your sister? What's her name?

Jessie: Glenda James.

Julie: Glenda- the assassin? THE ALBATROS?!

Jessie: Does everyone know everything but me?

vHZ: Of course. Zat is vhy zey make you captain, you zee.

Madeline: What?

Jessie: Beg your pardon?

Julie: We heard she died in one of G2's secret labs.

Jessie: Tragically, no. And we've got her robot double up here.

Julie: [giggling, then laughing] I'm sorry. This really isn't funny. The Albatros is alive and probably with my husband down here, and her double is up there with you. Man, you can't make this stuff up.

[pause]

Leet: Ben's coming for you, but he's not sure where you are. Where are you?

Julie: I'm in-

vHZ: Ah ah ah! Zis iz a Gated Galaxies line. I don't zink it would be wise to say your location on here.

Jessie: Ouch! Whose elbow is this? Oh, never mind.

Leet: Are you safe?

Julie: Just between us? No. But Ben doesn't need to know that. I'm not sure why I'm telling *you*, but here we are.

Madeline: Can you tell us what's going on? And can we help? I know we're a long way away...

Julie: You are, but as far as I can tell, you're right in the thick of it. Have you noticed anything strange on your ship?

Narrator: I'm just going to jump in and save your ears. There was a lot of very loud laughter that went on for several minutes, until they had to open the door to the sausage room because they realized they'd nearly used up all the oxygen.

Madeline: ...and we're still trying to get control of Colin's eye lasers. I think that's it.

Julie: Wow. How are you all still alive?

Jessie: We start every day with that question. And end every meal with it, for that matter.

vHZ: Now, a qvestion for you, young lady: who do you work for?

Julie: That's a more complicated question than you might think.

Jessie: So, which side are you on?

Julie: Yeah, that's more complicated too. It's not so much a two-sided thing as it is like gaming dice with the 20 sides, you know the ones? I'm one of the good people, though; I can tell you that. We're sort of like a resistance movement.

Leet: Who are you resistancing?

Julie: Uhhhhh... pretty much everybody else. Look, I don't mean to be vague, I just don't know how much time I have to explain. But we're in luck. A guy sneaked aboard your ship who can explain everything. He's one of the leaders of the resistance movement. We pooled our resources and got him a pod. Hang on. Dammit! Shush for a second.

Tiberius: Amadeus, good morning! Did you sleep well last night? [pause, posh mumbling] What?! Your pillow mint was HOW FAR off true north? My god, it is impossible to get decent staff. What room are you in again? [click of communicator] Romulus, who is in charge of housekeeping in suite 77? Very good. Have them shot, will you? Hmmm? Knee is fine, as long as he can still operate a vacuum. And cancel lunch for the staff, they'll be watching the Mint Placement training video again. Tiberius out. [click] I do apologize. We'll refund 50K off your bill or extend your check out time by 15 minutes. Have a profitable day. Ahhhhh, Felonius, what news?

Felonius: No sign of her. I'm guessing she's miles away by now.

Tiberius: Damn. That's unfortunate, right?

Felonius: Yes. Very unfortunate. We don't know how much she knows. Is there any possibility she's tied up with your brother?

Tiberius: Is my brother tied up somewhere?! Excellent! I owe him a few wet willies. Lead the way!

Felonius: Not that kind of "tied up" – I mean *connected*.

Tiberius: Oh, I have no idea. My brother consorts with all types of undesirables. A disgrace to his heritage. Well, have a profitable day.

Felonius: Wait, Tiberius!

Tiberius: Mmmmm?

Felonius: I need your ... approval to expand the search.

Tiberius: Do you? How delightful! Do you have parchment and some soft wax? Grab that peacock over there, will you? I need a quill.

Felonius: What? No, just a simple "OK" will do.

Tiberius: Oh, how disappointing. Very well, expand at will. Is that all? I'm exhausted.

Felonius: It's 11:30. AM. You've been up less than an hour.

Tiberius: Are you... questioning me?

Felonius: No, sir. Not at all. Sir.

Tiberius: Very well. Have a profitable day!

Julie: OK, they're gone.

Jessie: You're the "she" they're looking for?

Julie: Yes.

Jessie: Where are you? Who were those men?

Julie: The stupider one is Tiberius Garrulous. The other one is one of his posh thugs. Look, I've got to keep moving. You need to find my guy. Wake him up properly, please, you're going to need him around. He has all the answers you need, and a few I need.

Madeline: He's not in the Dolce & Gabbana wing, is he?

Julie: No. I can't remember which wing, but it's not that one. Why?

Madeline: No reason.

Julie: He is in disguise, though. It's kind of ironic genius. Just find the guy dressed like a mime. Julie out.

Narrator: Huh. To quote the stupid rich guys, that's ... "unfortunate." Just how unfortunate it is that the guy with all the information went out the airlock in a bucket remains to be seen. The plot, like the mold currently holding more than half the crew hostage, thickens.

You've been listening to:

Iri Alexander as Julie

Bonnie Brantley as Jessie

Aaron Clark as le Bichon Frise

Eric Perry as Joe, Head 1, and Dr. von Haber Zetzer

Richard Cowen as Leet and Tiberius

June Clark Eubanks as the Albatros

Shannon Perry as Olivia and Madeline

Kevin Hall as Greg and Felonius

Tim Sherburn as Colin and Emily,

And me, Richard Nadolny, as your Narrator.

Our music is composed and performed by John Faley; our artwork is by Lucas Elliott – we have new artwork, so be sure to check out the Oz 9 shop in Tee Public! Oz 9 is written and produced by Shannon Perry.

We want all our space monkeys to stay safe and well, so be sure to wash your hands regularly. If that's becoming a drag, check out the podcast Listen, Rinse, Repeat for episodes just the right length for washing your hands. That's Listen, Rinse, Repeat. Be well, space monkeys, and until next time, Narrator out.

[Y2K pod trailer]