

Ep 89: Adorable and very merchandisable

Shannon Perry

©Gated Galaxies

EPISODE 89 - NARRATORS' BRIDGE

NARRATOR

1       The revolutionary known as "Freedom  
Dude" is probably preparing to  
overthrow the wobbly-at-best, full-on-  
finger-quotes "leadership" of Captain  
Madeline and take over the helm of the  
Oz 9. Possibly soon, probably  
violently. But let's not talk about  
that right now.

N2

2       Side quest! Side quest!

NARRATOR

3       Correct. Former captain Jessie can no  
longer evade the quest given to her by  
Stagecoach Mary clear back in episode  
86.

N2

4       Which is available for a re-listen on  
the podcatcher of your choice.

NARRATOR

5       Oy, Two, we have enough ads already.

N2

6       Just sayin'.

NARRATOR

7       The only clue our ghostly pianist gave  
Jessie was the tune "Into the Swamp"  
by Thomas Golding.

Let's put Into the Swamp under the next few seconds of  
dialog.

N2

8       You really don't want to ignore a side  
quest that comes from a ghostly player  
piano.

NARRATOR

9       Why not?

N2

10      Huh?

11 NARRATOR  
Why is a side quest from a player  
piano particularly dangerous to  
ignore?

12 N2  
I don't know. I'm building tension.  
Can we move on, please?

13 NARRATOR  
Sure, but you brought it up.

14 N2  
Armed only with a sgian dubh [skene-  
dhu] and a bad attitude, Jessie heads  
for the bioswamp to see what adventure  
awaits.

15 NARRATOR  
Ouch. When Mississippi and Scotland  
collide. *Skene do.*

16 N2  
That's what I said. *Skene do.*

17 NARRATOR  
Dude, you open your mouth and a  
crawfish jumps out.

18 N2  
I know. Awesome, right?

19 NARRATOR  
*Skene do.*

20 N2  
*Skene do.*

They can back-and-forth a bit while we fade out to...

THE BIOSWAMP

21 JESSIE  
Apart from deciding to board the Oz 9  
rather than die in a mercifully quick  
explosion, this is the stupidest  
decision I've ever made.

22 COLIN  
It's YOUR side quest. Why am I here?

JESSIE  
23 I'll take "eejit questions" for four  
hundred, Alec. You're invisible and  
you fly, ya numpty. You might actually  
prove useful for once.

COLIN  
24 ONCE? May I remind you-

loud growl somewhere in the distance

JESSIE  
25 Look, we're here to help a pregnant  
alligator generate a few more lethal  
swamp lurkers because a ghost told us  
to via a player piano in an old-time  
western bar on board a spaceship.  
There's enough haverin' doolally in  
that sentence alone for a lifetime, so  
could we just get on with it?

COLIN  
26 I really wish someone else had eaten  
that accursed olive.

JESSIE  
27 So do we all, mate, but we're stuck  
with you. Hit the skies, fly boy, and  
see if you can spot our Albert.

COLIN  
28 Very well. But you owe me.

Colin's voice comes over a headset now.

COLIN  
29 Test. Test. Can you hear me?

Sound of the click of a radio before and after Jessie or  
Colin speaks.

JESSIE  
30 Yes, I can hear you. And so can  
everyone within a 100 yards, so clam  
up, over.

COLIN  
31 (whispering) Right. Over.

JESSIE  
32 Do you really think whispering helps?

Don't answer that. Over.

COLIN  
33 I see Albert. Over.

JESSIE  
34 Congratulations! Now how about telling  
me where?

COLIN  
35 Over there.

JESSIE  
36 Where?

COLIN  
37 I'm pointing. There!

JESSIE  
38 Colin.

COLIN  
39 What? Why aren't you moving?

JESSIE  
40 You're invisible. How exactly am I to  
know where you're pointing?

COLIN  
41 Yes, I know, thank you. Look up. See  
the single egret feather? The one  
clearly pointing in that direction?

JESSIE  
42 Oh. Right.

[sound of walking through swamp brush, marsh, etc.]

JESSIE  
43 Ehhhh, do ya think an egret feather is  
the best idea?

COLIN  
44 Why not?

JESSIE  
45 They are a bit ... amorous. What if  
they think you're one of them?

COLIN  
46 They're birds. I think I'll be fine.

Albert is down. I repeat, the  
alligator is down.

47 JULIE  
(breaking in on another radio) They've  
got really short legs, Colin. They're  
always down. I told you to come get me  
when it was time!

48 JESSIE  
Where are you?

49 JULIE  
(on radio) Right behind you.

Julie and Jessie speak normally from now on. Colin is on  
radio.

50 JESSIE  
Whoop! Jesus, woman, is it smart to  
sneak up behind someone trying to be  
stealthy?

51 JULIE  
That was "stealthy"? I've been more  
surprised by marching bands.

52 JESSIE  
You *volunteered* to be here?

53 JULIE  
Of course I did! This isn't supposed  
to be happening. Alligators are  
oviparous.

54 JESSIE  
Ah yeah. Naturally you'd want to see  
it ...oviparating.

55 JULIE  
That's just it. Albert appears to be  
giving live birth.

56 JESSIE  
And you expected....

57 JULIE  
Eggs. I expected eggs.

58 JESSIE  
You forgot your frying pan.

JULIE  
59 What? NO! Not for *eating*. Ew.

JESSIE  
60 Excuse me, Missy, but having one  
ravenous alligator aboard this boat is  
enough of a skelpit to the arse,  
thanks.

JULIE  
61 I'm just gonna get that one from  
context.

JESSIE  
62 Fair dos. Which way, Colin?

COLIN  
63 FOLLOW THE FEATHER.

JULIE  
64 Looks like we need to go that way.

JESSIE  
65 Do y'ever think to yourself, I'm  
following a feather held by an  
invisible flying toff

COLIN  
66 Excuse me?

JESSIE  
67 pointing me to an alligator giving  
live birth in a bioswamp on a space  
ship?

COLIN  
68 We've already had this rant.

JESSIE  
69 I'm having a reflective sort of day.

JULIE  
70 I try not to have those thoughts.  
Speaking of thoughts I try not to  
have, do you really think your side  
quest is to play doula to Albert?

JESSIE  
71 Not a clue. Whatcha got there?

JULIE  
72 Oh. I sort of hit up Greg's mushroom  
stash. Thought he might have some  
species in there that would help  
Albert. Or get him good and stoned to  
keep him from attacking us.

JESSIE  
73 What did you find?

JULIE  
74 Well, he had a fair amount of *Hericium*  
*erinaceus*-

JESSIE  
75 Right. Gonna nip this nonsense in the  
bud: one more bit of show-offy Latin,  
and I'll force feed you your own fancy  
tongue, all right?

JULIE  
76 [spooked and conciliatory] Lion's  
mane. See? Natural pain relief.

JESSIE  
77 Is it meant to be florescent yellow?

JULIE  
78 Not that I've ever seen, but we're  
going with what we've got.

COLIN  
79 Ladies, I don't mean to nag, but you  
might want to pick up the pace.  
There's a great deal of grunting  
happening now.

JULIE  
80 Come on. I don't want to miss this!

JESSIE  
81 Hang about. Do you see that glow?

JULIE  
82 No, and you're looking the wrong way.  
Albert's over there.

JESSIE  
83 I don't think I'm here for Albert. You  
go on and feed him some mushrooms and  
tell him to breathe or whatever. I'll



catch you up.

COLIN

84           Ehhhh... I'm as close as I care to be,  
             and this is a marshy swamp, but it's  
             possible Albert's water just broke.

JULIE

85           On my way!

Sounds of Julie's footsteps and Colin's flying fade. Jessie  
heads off in a different direction, alone.

JESSIE

86           Right. Glowing that only I can see.  
             That's not a problem, right? Still,  
             might want to stop snacking on Greg's  
             mushrooms. (pause) Ha! Who am I  
             kidding? Glad I packed a few extra!

Jessie snacks as she walks.

JESSIE

87           You don't really realize how big this  
             swamp is when you're not trying to  
             escape something. Oooo, speaking of,  
             where is that big bad plant? Maybe I  
             should've stayed with Julie and Colin.  
             Pfft. Why? So Colin could give it a  
             sore throat from wing draft and Julie  
             could talk it to death?

Rustling sound nearby

JESSIE

88           Ah hell, what's that now? Right –  
             listen up! Just letting you know I'm  
             armed. So claws or fangs or spines or  
             wee wiggly whiskers of death, I'll  
             have ye!

Rustling gets louder

JESSIE

89           Aw, quit yer rustly skulking in the  
             bushes, ya bastard, and come on out!  
             Ooooo, I reckon you're the big bad  
             plant, ain't ye? Well, come on! I been  
             in a pod before, and I'll be in one  
             long after you're plant food. Aw hell,  
             you're making a mess of my threats.

JOE

90               Hello.

91 Jesus! JESSIE

JOE  
92 You should probably be quiet. There's  
something in those bushes.

JESSIE  
93            Then don't sneak up behind me!

JOE  
94 Wait. Do I hear something?

95 JESSIE  
Rustling. Skulking. General sneaking-  
about-in-bushesness.

JOE  
96 No... I hear... hold music?

97 GREG All right, all right.

Sounds of muzak and "your call is very important", faint.  
Greg emerges from the bushes.

JESSIE

98       What the hell you doing hedgehogging  
          around in there?

GREG  
99 Trying to figure out what - or who -  
keeps nicking my mushrooms.

JOE

100-101 Oh, ehrrrrr.... any signs?

JESSIE

Ehhhhh....See anyone?

GREG  
Nothing yet.

102

103 VOICE  
Your call is very important to us.

JOE  
104        Sounds like your kidneys are on hold,  
             there.

JESSIE  
105 Och, speaking of. We need some bloody  
porta-loos out here. I'm burstin' for  
a wee. Back in a tic.

Jessie jumps into the brush.

GREG  
106 Figured while I'm out here, I might as  
well unsubscribe to a thing or two.

JOE  
107 That's just weird, son. And what were  
you subscribed to?

GREG  
108 Magazines, mostly: *Detonators Weekly*,  
*Wicks and Fuses, Have a Blast-*

SEXY VOICE (MRS SHEFFIELD)  
109 Thank you for calling "*You're a Dirty*,  
*Dirty Bomb*"-

Greg hastily and clumsily tries to hang up.

SEXY VOICE (MRS SHEFFIELD)  
110 Are you ready for an *uncontrolled*  
explosion?

Finally manages to hang up the kidney phone.

GREG  
111 Well, that's weird. Lines must've  
gotten switched.

JOE  
112 I don't judge. Say, did that voice  
sound familiar?

GREG  
113 Come to think of it....

MRS SHEFFIELD  
114 Oh! Hello, there.

GREG  
115 GAH! Mrs Sheffield!

JOE  
116 Mrs Sheffield, what are you doing out  
here?

117 MRS SHEFFIELD  
Oh, uhhhhhhh.... just taking a walk.

118 JOE  
What you got there? Some sort of  
communication device? Looks like a  
phone...

119 GREG  
Oh dear Babbage.

120 MRS SHEFFIELD  
This? Oh heavens no. It's a ... device  
for ... identifying ... plants. Bloody  
useless, really.

121 JOE  
All righty then. Mrs S, how long on  
average does it take a lady to pee in  
the woods?

122 MRS SHEFFIELD  
What an oddly random yet specific  
question.

123 JOE  
It's just that Captain Jessie ducked  
into the bushes for a wee.... wee, and  
it's been a bit. Don't want to invade  
her privacy, but-

124 MRS SHEFFIELD  
Well, if we're a man down, I suppose  
we should investigate. Which way,  
Gregory?

125 GREG  
Hard tellin' in here, but I think that  
way?

126 NARRATOR  
As Greg, Joe, and Mrs Sheffield head  
off in entirely the wrong direction...  
Oh, hang on. This is probably a good  
ad spot.

127 N2  
Good call. I'll hit the freeze button.

**AD SPOTS HERE. Just leave a second or two for placement.**

N2

128 And... unfreeze! Oooo. Maybe next time  
we let Jessie get her pants back up  
before we hit freeze.

JESSIE

129 Hang on there, mate. You stay right  
where you are. Bloody jumpsuit!

The sounds of struggle as **Jessie** gets her jumpsuit back on.  
Long zipper and velcro sounds.

JESSIE

130 Sweet polony on toast, who the hell  
designed this nightmare of a garment?  
RIGHT! Now let's sort you out. OY!  
Where the hell did you go?

Colin flying noise.

COLIN

131 Jessie!

JESSIE

132 Jaysus!

COLIN

133 What the hell are you doing out here?  
Albert's all the way over there!

Distant squawking sound, coming closer.

JESSIE

134 What's all that squawking?

COLIN

135 Oh, these damn egrets keep following  
me around. Apparently I'm performing  
some sort of mating ritual. Gotta fly!

He flies away, hollering and chased by a rowdy flock. Jessie  
shouts after him.

JESSIE

136 Hang on! Do you see a- Haggis, neeps  
and tatties, could I possibly get some  
answers?! That does it. Wherever you  
are, don't get too comfortable. I'm  
coming after ye!

N2  
137 Meanwhile....

Joe, Greg, and Mrs S are making their way through the swamp.  
Distant sound of a dial tone.

JOE  
138 What's that sound?

139-140 Oh eh.... MRS SHEFFIELD GREG Uhhhhhh....

Shuffling noise as both try to turn off phones.

GREG  
Should we be hollering for Jessie?

Flock of egrets approaches; we can just hear **Colin** yelling "get away!" "leave me be" etc. They pass over.

142 MRS SHEFFIELD  
Mmmmmmm, best not. Rather a lot of  
alarming things in here. [pause for  
egrets] Good heavens, what's got the  
egrets all in a fluster?

Julie busts through the bushes, breathless.

143 JULIE  
Gator babies. Everywhere!

JOE  
144 How many we talking?

JULIE  
145 (gasping) Dozens. I've never seen  
anything like it. And they're not...  
just gator.

GREG  
146 "Not just gator"?

MRS SHEFFIELD  
Should we be running? Climbing a tree,  
perhaps?

148 JULIE  
(still gasping) No use. Wings.

GREG  
149 Wings.

JOE  
150 Gator babies. With wings.

MRS SHEFFIELD  
151 Half gator, half....

JULIE  
152 Egret.

GREG  
153 How the hell does that happen?

JOE  
154 Did they attack you?

JULIE  
155 Follow me!

She jumps back into the bushes; the **others** follow with "hang on!" "are we in danger?" "can they already fly?" etc.

NARRATOR  
156 Meanwhile...

N2  
157 I just said that.

NARRATOR  
158 I know, but everyone's all over the bioswamp, and we keep having to switch around. If you have a better idea, you let me know.

JESSIE  
159 There you are, you big green bastard. Finally awake, eh? Well we've had about enough of your lot, so how's about you follow me to the nearest airlock, all right? Come on, you chlorophyll-sucking disaster area, follow along. That's it, come on now.... Last one to the airlock's a shrub!

Exit, pursued by a plant.

NARRATOR  
160 (in the distance) Julie, Joe, Greg, and Mrs Sheffield... Oy. I'm over here! (up close) Julie, Joe, Greg, and Mrs Sheffield are with Albert, who is

snoozing peacefully after a hard morning's labor.

N2

161 I see what you did there.

NARRATOR

162 Yes, I'm very clever. Hush. The trees and bushes surrounding them are filled with tiny alligrets.

N2

163 I thought we were going with egators.

NARRATOR

164 Come on, look at them. They're totally cute. Alligrets is much better.

N2

165 Yeah, you're right. No bigger than a human hand, with delicate, multi-colored, translucent wings, huge eyes, and a long scaly tail, the alligrets are adorable and very merchandisable, should anyone want to take us up on that.

As we rejoin Mrs S, Greg, etc., we hear the sounds of tiny peeps from the alligrets.

MRS SHEFFIELD

166 Good heavens, what sweet little creatures.

GREG

167 They are cute as heck. Who'd'a thought that would happen? There's gotta be at least a hundred of them. How the hell's Albert going to take care of all these babies?

JULIE

168 I don't think Albert CAN take care of them. This is an entirely new species.

JOE

169 I think that means we get to name 'em, doesn't it? Joelators.

GREG

170 Joelators?



171                   JOE  
Just a suggestion.

172                   MRS SHEFFIELD  
Egretators.

173                   OLIVIA  
"Alligrets."

174                   MRS SHEFFIELD  
Oh, that's nice. Olivia, dear, can you  
spot Jessie anywhere?

175                   OLIVIA  
I could do, if you hadn't pried out  
her body tag.

176                   MRS SHEFFIELD  
I explained that.

177                   OLIVIA  
Yes, I know, but emptying her brain  
was a small price to pay for keeping  
tabs on her.

178                   GREG  
Is the ground shaking?

179                   JOE  
Asteroid belt?

Sound of wings, squawking flock somewhere behind. Colin  
swoops by, breathless.

180                   COLIN  
GIANT PLANT!

181                   JOE, MRS S, GREG, JULIE  
Jesus!

182                   JOE  
We should really get out of here.

183                   MRS SHEFFIELD  
We can't leave the ... what did you  
call them again, Olivia?

184                   OLIVIA  
Alligrets.

MRS SHEFFIELD

185 We can't leave the alligrets behind.  
Poor Albert's in no shape to defend  
them!

JOE

186 They are awfully cute.

Alligrets chirp louder.

GREG

187 And merchandisable. Not that that  
makes much difference. I mean, look at  
me! Those tee shirts should be flying  
off the shelves.

JULIE

188 Seriously, I mean, the mane is  
anatomically inaccurate, but it's  
adorable.

GREG

189 Right?!

JOE

190 So what do we do?

OLIVIA

191 I don't think you have much time to  
decide. Actually, none. Nice knowing  
you all.

Jessie busts in, hollering.

JESSIE

192 Which way to the nearest airlock?!

COLIN

193 Help! I can't keep this up much  
longer!

Swoops by, followed by egrets. Thunderous crash as the Big  
Bad Plant appears.

JOE

194 Damn! When did it get so big?

Alligrets are peeping like crazy, plant is roaring, egrets  
squawking, **everyone's shouting**, it's pandemonium. (Sorry,  
Chrisi!)

MRS SHEFFIELD  
195           Quickly, grab as many alligrets as you  
              can!

JOE  
196           It's too late! The plant is scooping  
              them up by the dozens!

GREG  
197           We have to find some mold!

JESSIE  
198           WAIT! LOOK!

The roaring of the plant and the peeping of the alligrets  
turns to cooing. Even the egrets stop making a racket and  
settle in the trees.

COLIN  
199           What the hell is going on?

JOE  
200           I think you're safe to land, Colin.  
              Might want to drop that feather.

COLIN  
201           My god. I forgot I was holding it.

GREG  
202           Are the little critters safe?

MRS SHEFFIELD  
203           It appears so. It's not eating them,  
              it's ... cuddling them. Good heavens.  
              Is our big bad plant a vine of some  
              sort?

JULIE  
204           She's right! It's producing fruit.

GREG  
205           The alligrets are eating it!

COLIN  
206           Adorably. My god, how merchandisable  
              they are!

JULIE  
207           Spontaneous symbiosis. I've never seen  
              that before.

JOE  
208 So our big bad is some sort of nurse  
plant?

JULIE  
209 Not sure. Those mostly exist in xeric  
environments.

JESSIE  
210 (interrupting) What did I say about  
fancy language?

JULIE  
211 Deserts. Dry places.

Game sound of "mission accomplished."

JESSIE  
212 Ooooo! I got a badge!

JOE  
213 What, like the Girl Scouts?

JESSIE  
214 "Botany" badge. Really? Couldn't be  
"fleeing a deadly plant in a swamp"  
badge?

COLIN  
215 Where did it come from? The badge?

JESSIE  
216 Not sure. Just sort of ... found it in  
my hand.

COLIN  
217 I guess that means your side quest was  
successful?

JESSIE  
218 'Spose so. Whelp, that's me done,  
then. I'm gonna say hello to Linnie,  
then it's off to my bunk for a kip.

Jessie leaves.

MRS SHEFFIELD  
219 Is anyone else concerned about this  
turn of events?

COLIN  
220 You mean the badge just suddenly  
appearing in her hand?

MRS SHEFFIELD  
221 Yes. I mean, hoorah for a good outcome  
and all, but what if Jessie hadn't  
known about the side quest?

COLIN  
222 You mean, what if she hadn't brought  
the big bad to Albert?

MRS SHEFFIELD  
223 Precisely.

JOE  
224 What if all the bad stuff that's been  
happening on this ship is because we  
didn't know about the side quests?

JULIE  
225 Is that possible?

MRS SHEFFIELD  
226 There is a great deal of this ship we  
haven't yet explored. And Joe, you  
still haven't told us what you and  
Lady NibblyBits discovered about the  
sandwich machines.

JOE  
227 Nibble Biscuit.

COLIN  
228 Neville Bickford.

JULIE  
229 WHATEVER.

JOE  
230 The key combinations to choose a  
sandwich do control your destination.

COLIN  
231 But how do we know which sandwich goes  
where? It's not consistent from  
machine to machine.

MRS SHEFFIELD  
232 It's the condiments, isn't it.

JOE  
233 Bing! A hundred points to the lady.

JULIE  
234 What the hell does that mean?

COLIN  
235 Is that why the Albatros was so  
concerned about unapproved ketchup?

MRS SHEFFFIELD  
236 Yes. And it means we have a whole new  
language to learn. Meet me in the  
kitchen in one hour. One hour. Don't  
be late.

GREG  
237 (alarmed) What are you doing?

JULIE  
238 Oh, Mrs S, be careful. It's OK for the  
alligrets, but-

Crunch sound as Mrs S takes a bite.

MRS SHEFFFIELD  
239 It's delicious. [SFX: badge appears]  
And look. A badge just appeared in my  
hand: "Healthy Eater."

JOE  
240 What the actual hell is going on on  
this ship?

MRS SHEFFFIELD  
241 Kitchen. One hour. Come along, Daniel.

JULIE  
242 Who's Dan-...oh. You sure that's OK?

MRS SHEFFFIELD  
243 I don't suppose Albert will miss one.  
Rather makes me look like Daenerys  
without all the extra hair, don't you  
think? Go on, Daniel, have a bite.  
[crunch] There's a good fellow.

COLIN  
244 Kitchen. One hour.

They all depart, we hear their voices and feet fade into the

distance.

OLIVIA

245 Well. That's going to be a problem.

NARRATOR

246 As the alligrets settle in for their first night aboard the Oz 9, our crew are feeling on the verge of finally understanding a thing or two about the ship their lives depend on.

N2

247 Are they right?

NARRATOR

248 Are they ever?

N2

249 Not usually. But there's a first time for everything.

NARRATOR

250 I guess we'll all just have to wait and see. You've been listening to...  
Bonnie Brantley as Jessie  
Tim Sherburn as Colin  
Chrisi Talyn Saje as Julie

N2

251 Eric Perry as Joe  
Kevin Hall as Greg  
Sarah Golding as Mrs Sheffield  
Shannon Perry as Olivia.  
I'm Kyle Jones, your Narrator Two.

NARRATOR

252 And I'm Chris Nadolny Gourley, your Narrator. Our theme and other music is composed and performed by John Faley. "Into the Swamp" was composed and performed by Thomas Golding. Our artwork is by Lucas Elliott. Sarah Golding is our dialogue editor, and Chrisi Talyn Saje is our sound designer. Oz 9 is written by Shannon Perry.

N2

253 Oz 9 is a proud member of the Fable & Folly network! Please support our

partners at fable and folly dot com  
slash partners, and check out the  
other great Fable & Folly shows at  
fable and folly dot com.

NARRATOR

254

Until next time, Space Monkeys, watch  
the stars and try to understand the  
mustard.