

[march-like orchestral crawl music plays: *Episode 101: Crawl*]

NARRATOR: The period of civil war has ended. The rebels have defeated the evil Galactic Monarchy and established the harmonious Federated Alliance. Now, Ambassador Pleck Decksetter and his intrepid crew travel the farthest reaches of the galaxy to explore astounding new worlds, discover their heroic destinies, and meet weird bug creatures and stuff. This... is Mission to Zyxx.

[theme music swells triumphantly, then fades away]

PLECK: Hey, C-53?

C-53: Yes?

PLECK: I uh, I have a question for you. You can, like, wear any kind of body, right?

C-53: Yes. My cube can be transferred to any frame you require.

PLECK: Like a—like a vehicle, or...?

C-53: I have been a vehicle in the past, yes.

PLECK: Ah, that would be so cool. What if you were a vehicle, and I, like, drove you around?!

C-53: Ambassador Decksetter, I do not mean to disparage your driving abilities, but... surely I could drive myself better than you would be able to *manually* steer me?

PLECK: [still in cheerful "that would be so cool" tone] Okay, sure. Well, maybe you could just take me for a ride. [back to mildly interested] So what else have you been in, have you been in anything, like, really weird, or scandalous?

C-53: I am afraid my restraining bolt [knocks on metal] prevents me from sharing that information.

PLECK: Okay.

C-53: But let's just say I had an extremely varied career before the Federated Alliance.

PLECK: Hmm. So you don't have any, like, *loyalty* to your past bodies, then?

C-53: No. Nor even my current body. For instance, this hand—

[sound of metallic whirring and metal being torn apart for a few seconds]

PLECK: Y—[half-stifled laugh]

C-53: I have no particular attachment to it.

PLECK: [shocked] No—you—you just *tore off your hand!* I thought you'd at least—*unscrew* it or something!

C-53: [cheerful] No!

PLECK: Just tore it off—

C-53: [casually, dismembered hand sparking] Nope, just tore it off. What's the difference?

PLECK: [half laughing] What are you gonna *do?!?*

C-53: [shrugging tone] I suspect I will affix a new hand at some point in the future.

PLECK: [half-mumbled] Okay, well, good—I mean, guess—good luck, I guess, then.

C-53: Thank you very much.

PLECK: Dar, do you—do you feel like you're your whole body, or do you just think of yourself as your brain?

DAR: [heavy breathing; intense, pained/tired tone] I'm feeling. My *whole* body right now.

PLECK: Oh—[half laughing] What happened?

DAR: I'm in heat. Yeah.

PLECK: Oh my—oh, Dar, wait, what does that—what do we have to—

DAR: Okay. Once every other moon cycle, [internal rumbling sound] my body, just... [frustrated] ugh. *Heats up!* And self-cleans.

PLECK: ...*Oh*. Oh, so it's not like a sexual thing.

DAR: No, it's like the *opposite* of a sexual thing.

PLECK: Ugh.

DAR: Ugh!

PLECK: What gets cleaned?!

DAR: *Everything* inside.

PLECK: Oh.

DAR: To, you know, make sure that no other lifeforms are growing? [labored tone] Bacterias, or transferred infections. [sharp breath] Very uncomfortable!

PLECK: Yeah, you're, like, *radiating* heat right now.

DAR: Yeah, I'm, uh, ugh... I'm a cool 485 degrees right now.

PLECK: *Oh!* 485 degrees?!

DAR: Yeah, you could *crisp* a *pie* inside of me.

C-53: Ambassador Decksetter, I urge you not to touch Dar during this period.

PLECK: I—yeah, I wouldn't do that.

DAR: [background; in pain] Mmph!

C-53: It would take the skin clean off your hand.

BARGIE: Hey, is, uh, this a bad time to mention I have a date?

DAR: A date?!

BARGIE: Yeah.

DAR: [still in pain] No, it's a great time to tell us about that.

BARGIE: So, uhhh, at about four four eight eight o'clock—

PLECK: Yeah.

BARGIE: I'm gonna be goin' on a date...

DAR: Forty-four eighty-eight, time for a date. Uh-huh.

BARGIE: So if you guys don't mind just keepin' quiet, maybe lyin' on the floor, just in case, you know what I mean? [suggestive; jovial] Like just in case somethin' happens, you know what I—you know what I'm tryna get at?

PLECK: ...I kinda don't—

BARGIE: [same tone] Just in case my hatch, it opens, and somethin'—somethin' gets inside of it.

PLECK: [surprised] *Oh.*

[short pause]

BARGIE: Anyways, I'm very excited, I'm, um—if you don't mind, I'm just gonna scent myself—[air spraying noises]

PLECK: ...Oh.

BARGIE: Awwww, smell good!

PLECK: Whoof. Wow, that's... I think that's just gas, right?

BARGIE: Yeah.

PLECK: That's just... that's just fuel.

BARGIE: Yeah.

DAR: Whoo! That *is* Bargie's natural musk.

PLECK: Ugh.

BARGIE: That's how I get 'em!

DAR: [slightly labored breathing again] Oof... now, in a moment here, you will start to smell... what I'm cooking. *Mmh*. Which is, of course, my insides.

PLECK: Augh. Do you just *shed* them? Do they just come out?

DAR: Yeah.

PLECK: Man, we've learned a lot about our identities today.

[incoming transmission beep-boops]

C-53: Ambassador Decksetter, I have an incoming transmission from Junior Missions Operations Manager Nermut Bundaloy.

[transmission connects]

PLECK: Oh, hey. Nermut, what's up, man?

NERMUT: Hello-o!

PLECK: Hey! You're in a good mood!

DAR: Yeah.

NERMUT: Oh! Um... Well! I guess, yeah. They, um, made a little announcement today, so... um.

PLECK: What—what was the announcement?

NERMUT: Well, they are going to be conducting a round of interviews for Missions Operations Managers.

PLECK: [congratulatory] Hey-hey-hey!

NERMUT: Yeah. So...

PLECK: That is *great!* That's gonna—that's gonna save us so much time, with C-53 saying your whole title.

NERMUT: And also, there'd be a small... pay raise, and, uh, access to different types of missions that might have a little higher propensity for success, so yeah. Uh, I—I haven't

exactly figured out which room, uh, those interviews are taking place in, or how to sign up, but I did overhear...

PLECK: Wait, what roo—[half-laugh]

NERMUT: ...that they're happening.

PLECK: [amused] You—you weren't personally invited, you just know that the interviews are happening.

NERMUT: Yep. And I am gonna find out where. Every time I hear someone talking about it, they sort of wal—they scurry away. So.

PLECK: [amused] You know... I don't know how it works at the Alliance, but I feel like... if you were up for a raise, they would... tell you, personally.

NERMUT: Really? You thi—

DAR: [clearly jucking with him] I think you should *follow* someone into their interview. *Stalk* them.

NERMUT: Uh...

C-53: Junior Missions Operations Manager Nermut Bundaloy, how long—

NERMUT: You aren't gonna get to say that for long!

C-53: [astoundingly insincere, fake-sounding laugh] Ha-ha-ha-ha! [back to normal tone] Junior Missions Operations Manager Nermut Bundaloy, how long have you been at your current position?

NERMUT: Uh... just over six months.

C-53: Ah, yes, since the founding of the Federated Alliance.

NERMUT: Yeah.

C-53: You are aware that this is a trainee position designed to last no more than one month?

NERMUT: Well... I mean, I've noticed that a lot of people are kind of moving up faster, but, um... I am... biding my time, and I am on my way to *Senior* Missions Operations Manager.

C-53: Ah, but before that and above you is *Missions* Operations Manager. [NERMUT sighs] Which, it's well known, is a minimum ten-year position.

PLECK: [aside; to self] Ooh, wow. [normal volume; cheerful] Well, ten years at Missions Operations Manager isn't *that* bad. I mean, Nermut, how old are you now?

NERMUT: [despondent tone] I'm twenty-two.

PLECK: Oh, okay, great! That's fine, how long does your species generally live?

NERMUT: [even more despondent] Twenty-six.

PLECK: Oh, no.

DAR: Oof.

C-53: Yikes.

PLECK: [laughing] No-ho-ho! Nermut, we have so little time!

NERMUT: Well, I mean... [silence] [heartbroken tone] So your—so your mission?

PLECK: No, hey—no, listen, I believe—I believe in you.

BARGIE: Hey, hologram man? Hello, hologram man inside me, you want some advice?

NERMUT: Y—is that—is that me?

BARGIE: Two words. Drop. Gas.

PLECK: Wh—[laughs]

BARGIE: [knowing tone] Works. Every. Time.

PLECK: That's how Bargie stays young. She just ejects—

NERMUT: As an anti-aging maneuver?

PLECK: Yeah, she just ejects gas.

BARGIE: Yep.

NERMUT: [blows out air] People make fun of me when I do that.

PLECK: I think it might be a slightly different process for... ships.

NERMUT: Oh. Okay.

PLECK: Yeah.

NERMUT: [sighs] Um...

PLECK: So what's our mission, Nermut?

NERMUT: Your mission today... on to sunnier pastures! Uh, your mission is to go to the planet Q'arf'fenn! It's a water planet, so, uh...

PLECK: Hey, pack your swi—hey, Dar, maybe you can cool off a little bit!

DAR: Know your role and shut your mouth!

PLECK: ...okay. I'm sorry, I didn't know that was—

[Dar huffs]

NERMUT: Um, so it's a water planet, there's a small atoll where you'll be conducting your diplomatic mission with the receiving team, headed by... her name is 'K'ef'na

PLECK: Ooh!

NERMUT: And, um...

PLECK: [curious/intrigued?] Is there an apostrophe in there, or...?

NERMUT: Uh, yes, there are three apostrophes...

C-53: One is at the beginning, one in the middle, and one towards the end.

NERMUT: Yes, *toward* the end. It's, uh—

[alarms start blaring]

BARGIE: Bargie being attacked! Bargie being attacked! Bargie being attacked! [this continues in background]

DAR & PLECK: [simultaneously] What?

PLECK: Wait, what?!

DAR: [pissed] *What?!*

NERMUT: Bargie, that's not funny. Bargie... that's—

PLECK: No, what's happening, Bargie? Bargie, what's—you're—how are you being attacked?

[concerning thumping, skittering, metal creaking from outside the ship]

BARGIE: [stops repeating alarm] Someone is *touching me*, from the outside. [more urgently] Something is *touching* me...

PLECK: [concerned] What is that sound?

BARGIE: ...without my consent...

PLECK: What's happening?

NERMUT: [increasingly bad quality and static] I lost—I lost transmission from you for a moment, what—[garbled static, then cuts off]

PLECK: Hello? Hello? Hello?

C-53: And I have lost transmission from Junior Missions Operations Manager Nermut Bundaloy.

THE GROWER MIND OF THE K'HEKK: [deep, threatening voice] Attention, all living creatures: you have entered the Will Space of the Grower Mind. Prepare to be assimilated into the Swarm.

PLECK: [aside; more annoyed than concerned] Ugh.

K'HEKK SWARM: [small, insectoid voices; marching outside the ship] We are the K'hekk! We are the K'hekk! We are the K'hekk! We are the K'hekk!

PLECK: Oh, man. There are thousands of bug creatures surrounding the ship right now. Um... hey, guys! Listen, we're just, we're, um, we're ambassadors, we mean you no harm...

[scuttling/roaring noise]

PLECK: [laughing slightly] Oh—that is... *terrifying*.

THE GROWER MIND: There is no ambassadors.

PLECK: Oh.

THE GROWER MIND: There is only the Grower Mind and the ever undying will of the swarm.

K'HEKK SWARM: We are the K'hekk! We are the K'hekk!

PLECK: [half-laughing] Okay—

K'HEKK SWARM: [ignoring Pleck] We are the K'hekk! We are the K'hekk!

C-53: Ambassador Decksetter, it seems we are being invaded by the K'hekk, a species with a hivemind.

PLECK: [mildly concerned] Oh, boy. That's bad. Right?

C-53: [whirring of head swivel] You have spotted the undercarriage of one of their worker drones outside. That is what has made you make that particular face.

PLECK: Yeah, it's really gross. It's like a carapace of some kind.

C-53: Well, and then there's a lot of... small legs.

PLECK: [mildly annoyed, towards the K'hekk swarm] Okay, guys, I—is there anything I can—we can do for you...? We're just—tryna get through here...

THE GROWER MIND: There is only one thing you can do for the Grower Mind.

PLECK: Okay.

THE GROWER MIND: *Diiiiiiiii.*

PLECK: [interrupting; disappointed] Oh. No, see, that—okay, is it—

THE GROWER MIND: [doubling down] *Diiiiiiiii.*

PLECK: Oh, boy. Okay.

THE GROWER MIND: [crosstalk, over C-53] *Diiiiiiiii.*

C-53: I should mention the K’hekk had a... adversarial relationship with the Monarchy, before we arrived.

PLECK: I s—[to K’hekk swarm; trying to be friendly/ingratiating] Yeah, hey, we’re not with the Monarchy! It’s like, totally different thing, we’re the Federated Alliance—we *beat* the Monarchy! So, you know, I mean, the enemy of my enemy is my friend, probably, right?

THE GROWER MIND: There is no Monarchy. There is no Federation. There is only the undying will... [pause; short whirr as C-53 turns his head] ...of the Grower Mind.

PLECK: Okay. Alright. I guess... I’m starting to see...

DAR: Uggghhh!

PLECK: I’m starting to see where this is going.

K’HEKK SWARM: K’hekk swarm, prepare to attack! Soldiers, mount your aurochs! weavers, support the aurochs! Bulls, form a perimeter around the aurochs and the soldiers and the weavers!

C-53: Ambassador Decksetter, you may have trouble understanding some of this. Uh—

PLECK: Yeah, I don’t—

C-53: There is a very complicated caste system within the K’hekk society.

PLECK: [more blankly than usual] Oh. Okay. So the bugs are different bugs. From, uh, one another?

C-53: [snorts/laughs slightly] That is a very reductive way of thinking about it, Ambassador Decksetter—

PLECK: [crosstalk; laughing defensively] I don’t—I do—okay, I’m sorry! I’m tryna unders—

THE GROWER MIND: Through millions of years of evolution, we've perfected multiple forms of ourselves. By assuming and evolving all other lifeforms we come in contact with, we can genetically induce their most favorable traits inside our own bodies.

PLECK: Wow, that's... very succinct. That's—

THE GROWER MIND: We have workers!

WORKERS: Yes!

THE GROWER MIND: Soldiers!

SOLDIERS: Yes!

THE GROWER MIND: Beetles!

BEETLES: Yes!

THE GROWER MIND: Aurochs!

AUROCHS: Yes!

THE GROWER MIND: Bulls!

BULLS: Yes!

THE GROWER MIND: Weavers!

WEAVERS: Yes!

THE GROWER MIND: Royal drones!

ROYAL DRONES: Yes!

THE GROWER MIND: And the queens.

QUEENS: Yeeeeaaaah!

BARGIE: And Bargie has a date to get to, soooo...

PLECK: [laughs slightly] Okay! Bargie, we are tryna figure this out. Uh, hey, guys, we'll be with you in just one second. [whispering] Hey, Dar? Maybe you should, uh, like fi—

DAR: [in pain/discomfort, very loudly] I don't feel like fighting, I just want to take a NAP—

PLECK: [crosstalk] Whoa. Dar! No, Dar, you okay?

DAR: *No-ho-ho*, I'm not [gritted teeth] *okay*, ughf!

PLECK: Oh boy. I think Dar's—Dar's out of commission. Bargie, do you have any kind of defense systems, or...?

BARGIE: I can play some classic tunes.

PLECK: [laughs slightly] Okay—I mean—

[sound of the K'hekk entering the ship]

THE GROWER MIND: We have reached your loading bay and are now boarding your ship.

[Bargie groans]

C-53: Ambassador Decksetter, we possess no defensive measures in the loading bay.

PLECK: Ah, boy. That's—this is bad. Bargie, are you okay?

BARGIE: [slightly miffed, kind of] I mean, I was hopin' to keep that area *clear*. Clear for—you know why? 'Cause I have a date later on—

PLECK: [crosstalk] No, I know—[laughs slightly]

BARGIE: —and I'm gonna be usin' that part. *Very* heavily! It's been a couple of months, and I was ready to just open it up and let my date have its *wayyy*! But now—

PLECK: [crosstalk] Okay—

BARGIE: —these strangers are just comin' in—

PLECK: [slightly more urgently] Okay—I mean, Bargie—!

BARGIE: [still in a miffed tone] I mean, at least *ask* me! Just *ask* me to go in, and I'll say—I mean, I'll say *yes*! But, like, give *consent*.

PLECK: [sidetracked now] I mean, that makes sense.

C-53: Ambassador Decksetter, you may not be aware, but it is very uncomfortable for ships to be forced to admit that they have... K'hekk.

PLECK: [as blankly as earlier] ...Sure. Oh yeah, no, that makes sense, it's embarrassing.

BARGIE: It's itchy. I am itching a *lot* right now.

PLECK: I'm—I'm sorry.

[blaring alarm as door opens; Bargie, Dar, and Pleck go "ugh," and the sound of many marching feet can be heard entering the room]

DAR: Ughhh. Wow.

PLECK: Oh. Oh, wow. You guys are... there are a lot of you.

THE GROWER MIND: Prepare to be assimilated.

DAR: [groaning quietly] Ughhh.

PLECK: That was not—that was not what—

K'HEKK SWARM: Workers! Form a perimeter! Soldiers! Behind the workers! Beetles!
[slightly faltering] Get in various positions around the workers and the soldiers!

THE GROWER MIND: Millions of years of evolution have perfected our battle tactics.

K'HEKK SWARM: Weavers! Continue to weave! Aurochs! Bulls! Royal Drones!
Queens!

PLECK: [done with it but still laughing] Okay, alright! There's—I mean, it's—

THE GROWER MIND: You see, we have a very complicated caste system that we—

PLECK: [laughing] No, I know! We talked about that already. Okay, listen—

C-53: Ambassador Decksetter, we *barely* scratched the surface of the K'hekk.

PLECK: [crosstalk] Oh, yeah? Okay.

K'HEKK SWARM: We are the K'hekk!

BARGIE: They look like *balloons*.

[whirring of insect wings]

PLECK: [half-laughing] Yeah, they do—they're sort of silly—

[consuming sound effect in background]

C-53: [observationally] They seem to be... eating everything.

THE GROWER MIND: Prepare for assimilation into the swarm. All bow before the will of the Grower Mind.

PLECK: [still kind of half-amused tone] Oh, boy—

THE GROWER MIND: I am the consciousness of the swarm. I am nowhere, but I am everywhere.

PLECK: [blankly again] I don't get it. I don't get what tha—

THE GROWER MIND: I'm like a brain living on a planet that's communicating psychically through this bug to you right now.

C-53: Do you not *really* not understand what that is?

PLECK: [laughs self-consciously; rushed] I get it *now!* It's very clear, but I was, like, looking at him, and he looked sorta the same as the other guys—

K'HEKK SWARM: The Grower Mind possesses the workers! The soldiers!

PLECK: [laughing slightly] Okay—

K'HEKK SWARM: The beetles! The aurochs! The weavers!

PLECK: [ineffectively trying to interrupt] Okay—

K'HEKK SWARM: The royal drones, and the queens!

DAR: [not anxious at all, just kind of curious] But... why *this* body?

THE GROWER MIND: Because it is the closest in proximity to you. Watch: I can jump from this body to another one—[tearing/squelching sound]

C-53: [quietly] Oh, now he's...

THE GROWER MIND: [from a bug on the other side of the room] Now I'm in a Soldier body! Now—is this better? Now I'm not a little worker, I'm a soldier, I'm on your level now, and will talk to you?

PLECK: Yeah, that—oh yeah, that's—that's pretty cool—

DAR: [sorta impressed] Alright.

C-53: Is that... a more fun body for you to be in?

THE GROWER MIND: Everything is fun when you are the Grower Mind.

PLECK: [laughing] Okay, that's a very—that's a very optimistic view!

THE GROWER MIND: I have an incredible amount of fun all the time. [Pleck chuckles/laughs quietly] I already have planned places for all of you among my brood.

DAR: Mm-hm.

THE GROWER MIND: You, young soft meaty pink one—

PLECK: Hey, that's me!

THE GROWER MIND: You will be a worker, carrying eggs and food from hive to hive.

PLECK: That's pretty good.

C-53: Yeah, that makes sense.

DAR: [appreciative] Yeah, yeah. He's got you pegged.

PLECK: I guess I wouldn't mind working for the K'hekk for a *little* while... right?

C-53: [whirring sound] Ambassador Decksetter, are you not familiar with the K'hekk assimilation process?

PLECK: [quieter] I guess... I guess not.

C-53: It involves the queen laying an egg inside your eyeball.

PLECK: ...Hmm.

C-53: That egg would then grow to assume control of your brain, manipulating you like a... giant Tellurian puppet.

PLECK: ...Oh. Okay. Then never mind.

THE GROWER MIND: You, large muscular one—

DAR: Yeah.

THE GROWER MIND: You will be a royal drone, protecting the queen on the nearest planet.

PLECK: [impressed] Hey!

DAR: Ah—

C-53: That is actually a highly valuable position within K'hekk society, Dar, you should be flattered.

DAR: I... I am flattered! Thank you so much.

THE GROWER MIND: You, shiny one—

C-53: [immediately] Yes.

THE GROWER MIND: You are not warm, nor is there life inside of you.

C-53: Well, there's a—

PLECK: [crosstalk] Ah, that's—that's mean.

THE GROWER MIND: I have no interest in you.

C-53: [disbelieving/surprised] *None?*

THE GROWER MIND: None.

DAR: So then, he just gets to go... free...?

C-53: [crosstalk] That's a shame.

THE GROWER MIND: He may go free.

PLECK: [surprised] Oh!

BARGIE: What about me? Huh? I mean, you're inside of me, you might as well label me too... [high-pitched] Oh, wait! [familiar/friendly] I know you, I can—I know you inside of me! You've been inside of me before, right?

THE GROWER MIND: Yeah—[suppressed laugh] Yeah, I've been here before! [wing sound] Once you—this is a recommissioned ship!

BARGIE: Yeah, how you doin'?

THE GROWER MIND: [appreciation/reminiscence] Oh, I remember fighting you in three other systems!

BARGIE/THE GROWER MIND: [simultaneously] Aww!

BARGIE: [verbal version of grinning] What memories...

THE GROWER MIND: Aww.

BARGIE: So good to have you inside of me again.

THE GROWER MIND: No, that—thank you!

PLECK: That's great—[quieter/whispering] Bargie, this is awesome! Does this mean I don't have to have eggs, like, laid in my eyes, and be controlled like a puppet?

THE GROWER MIND: The Grower Mind has a proposition.

PLECK: Oh. Okay.

K'HEKK SWARM: Whoooooooo!

[sound of a huge amount of coins hitting the floor]

PLECK: Whoa! Wow, look at—are these—

DAR: [in awe] Who-ho-ho-hoo! That bug just burst open, and all those kroons spilled out of it!

THE GROWER MIND: Take these kroons back to your planet and live rich, plentiful lives. Add these kroons to the money supply.

PLECK: [surprised in a good way] That's great—I—yeah, thank you! Wow!

C-53: [disappointed/judgy because this must seem really obvious] Ambassador Decksetter, the Grower Mind is not an authorized distributor of kroons.

PLECK: Oh, is this like—this is like counterfeit money?

C-53: [in a tone that indicates this is obvious] Yes.

DAR: I mean, money—I mean, C, come on, money is still money...

PLECK: [crosstalk] Yeah, but who would—who would know that—

THE GROWER MIND: Bring the kroons back to your planet and devalue the currency.

PLECK: Ohh, *that's* what this is about. [conversationally; not even slightly nervous, and more familiar/friendly] You guys—you guys were, like, a big—I remember when I was growing up, the Monarchy always talked about you guys as, like, an existential threat.

THE GROWER MIND: The Grower Mind is unstoppable. It is unkillable. There are one, yet billions, of us.

C-53: Well, you are an organic being. Surely you are killable. For example, [walking whirrs] it's well documented that the royal drones have weaknesses here—[splorch]

PLECK: Oh!

C-53: —and here. [splorch]

PLECK: [impressed, amused] Whoa! You just tore off that bug's *arms!*

C-53: Their design has *many* flaws.

[sound of organic bug material being torn apart, and "ugh" noise from a K'hekk]

PLECK: [cross between "urgh" and "whoa"]

THE GROWER MIND: [casually] See, now I just manifest myself in this one. You *can't* kill me.

C-53: [walking whirring sound; tone is just as casual and informative] Oh, but what if I kill this one? On the workers, there're eye sockets here [squelch] and here—[squelch]

PLECK: Ugh!

C-53: If you add just a minimal amount of pressure, [ripping sound of exoskeleton] you can remove the entire faceplate as I've just done.

PLECK: [somewhere between amazed/impressed and horrified] Oh, my—

C-53: [hurrying from K'hekk to K'hekk] And then this bug? [splorching sounds]

PLECK: [tone dull from shock] That was a weaver.

C-53: And this bug? [splorch]

PLECK: Soldier.

C-53: And then this bug. [splorch]

PLECK: [less horrified; as though learning something interesting/studying through tests] Auroch.

K'HEKK SWARM: [encouraging] You're getting it! You're getting it!

C-53: And this bug. [splorch]

PLECK: [perking up] Beetle!

C-53: And this bug. [splorch]

PLECK: Oh—uh, weaver again.

C-53: And then this one—[cracking exoskeleton]

PLECK: [laughing] Okay, no—stop! We have too—we—C-53...

C-53: [calmly] Oh. I can no longer move my arm.

PLECK: Yeah, oh, wow.

[gross sound as the Grower Mind moves to another K'hekk]

THE GROWER MIND: [upset and annoyed] I really wish you would stop doing that, I thought we got the point of it the first time I demonstrated the death thing.

C-53: I think I understand now.

THE GROWER MIND: Okay. There's another—

C-53: If I killed *this* one—[splorch]

PLECK: [amused but also horrified] No—stop—C-53!

[sound of Grower Mind manifesting itself in another K'hekk]

PLECK: Listen... Grower Mind, um... do we have to fight? What's going on?

[pause]

THE GROWER MIND: [awkwardly/hesitantly] You could come peacefully, too.

PLECK: To your planet?

THE GROWER MIND: Yes.

PLECK: [awkwardly] I—uhh... it's not really a good time? I don't think we can be assimilated right now. What if we, sort of, don't... do that?

[pause]

THE GROWER MIND: My children, seize them!

PLECK: Oh no! No, don't—no—

K'HEKK SWARM: [sound of many marching feet] Weavers, seize them! Prepare to be assimilated!

DAR: Whoof. Okay. [laughs nervously] I wouldn't get that close to me if I were you.

K'HEKK SWARM: Ah—ahh! My [unintelligible] The big—muscular—flappy one! It's radiating heat! Too hot—

[the Grower Mind growls]

PLECK: Yeah, Dar's very hot right now, you don't want to get close to her.

[Dar groans]

K'HEKK SWARM: My thorax is burning! We must go—leave, leave!

THE GROWER MIND: We will be back in greater numbers. My children, retreat. To the docking bay!

[sound of many marching feet again]

K'HEKK SWARM: Alright! Workers, go first! [buzzing noise of wings after each group is addressed]

PLECK: [laughing] No, that's—

K'HEKK SWARM: Then soldiers, then the aurochs, and the soldiers riding on the aurochs. Then the bulls, then Weaver Group One! Dismissed. Weaver Group Two, wait until the royal drones and the queen has left. And then—okay, bulls, you guys are in the back. Okay, on three: one, two, three. Workers, go.

[Pleck laughs quietly]

THE GROWER MIND: Another perfect executed maneuver, by the Swarm.

[sound of hatch/docking bay closing]

[transition music]

[static cuts to rebel transmission]

HARK TARTIGAST: Mayday, mayday! This is Rebel Pilot Hark Tartigast, and before my star fighter crashes on this distant moon, I have an emergency message from rebel HQ. Support for the Rebellion against the cruel Federated Alliance comes from...

Wordpress dot com! Every day, millions of people go online to search for local businesses—but does *your* small business show up? In addition to being a rebel pilot—

['boom' from plane] argh!—I also carve small wooden figurines and sell them from a little storefront. Before I had a Wordpress site with a beautiful design, search engine optimization, and social sharing, I didn't get any business! [more excited/intensely] But *now* they're really flying off the shelves, which is ironic because I carve wooden *bird* figurines! [inspirationally] You don't need to hire someone to build a site for you, you can do it with Wordpress, the same way we built this rebellion... with our bare hands. Your business needs an online home; it needs a Wordpress dot com website! [explosion outside] Agh, my megathruster! So get started today, with fifteen percent off any new plan purchase. Just go to wordpress.com/zyxx, Z-Y-X-X to create your website and find the plan that's right for you. That's Wordpress dot com slash Zyxx for fifteen percent off your brand new website. Wordpress dot com slash Zyxx, ejecting stasis pod!

[sound of giant explosion]

[channel-switching, static noise]

[transition music continues]

PLECK: [quieter; worried] Guys... when do you think the K'hekk are gonna be back?

C-53: If previous attack patterns show any consistency, the K'hekk will likely return within the next twenty-four hours.

PLECK: Oh. That's—[sighs] What are we gonna do? We don't have any guns—

C-53: That's correct.

PLECK: And Dar is... sort of unable to fight right now; she's in a... she's in a weird mood.

DAR: [sounding out of breath] I...

C-53: [perplexed] Dar *repelled* the K'hekk.

DAR: [upset] ...did the *best* I could!

PLECK: [laughs slightly] I know, but I—I sort of thought that we would, like, *fight* them, but—

C-53: We were lucky that their carapaces were geared for deep space travel—they were not able to bear Dar's heat at all.

PLECK: ...Yeah, that's true. Hey, Bargie, maybe we should just—maybe we should just get out of here, right? Like, Bargie, can we... can we just go to a different section of this system or something, maybe they won't find us?

BARGIE: Absolutely not. This is where uhh, I'm meetin' my date.

PLECK: Oh.

BARGIE: I'm just gonna stand here... it's gonna happen any moment now—it's gonna be here.

PLECK: But we're gonna—the K'hekk are gonna come back and destroy us! You know that, right?

DAR: Also, Bargie, it is well past four four eight eight.

BARGIE: I know, but it's gonna show up. You know, the ship will show up.

C-53: [concerned] It's five one twenty-three.

BARGIE: [as trying to convince herself] It—it will show up. It's gonna be magical, we've been textin'.

DAR: Bargie, listen.

BARGIE: It's gonna be here.

PLECK: Bargie...

DAR: I think—

BARGIE: [still trying to convince herself] I am *worth* it!

DAR: You *are worth it!*

PLECK: You are worth it, Bargie.

BARGIE: [shakily] We were exchangein' pictures of our engines before, I mean—

PLECK: Whoa.

BARGIE: You don't just *do* that with someone—

DAR: [crosstalk] You don't!

BARGIE: —and then not follow through—

DAR: I—I... / a thousand per cent agree.

PLECK: [quieter] Yeah.

BARGIE: Anyway, I'm just gonna stay here.

PLECK: [sighs] We're very vulnerable for when the K'hekk—

BARGIE: [self-conscious] Am I old? Do I... seem old to you? Is it—is that the thing?

DAR: [quickly] No, you're refurbished, you're beautiful!

BARGIE: Okay, okay.

PLECK: Yeah, you look great, Bargie.

BARGIE: Thank you.

PLECK: You're still fast.

BARGIE: Thank you.

PLECK: And there's—your couches are still comfortable...

BARGIE: Ahh, well—

C-53: [awkwardly/aside] Well, some of the couches were consumed partially by the K'hekk, so...

PLECK: Oh.

DAR: [disappointed] And they ate all of our food.

PLECK: Have we gotten the—have we gotten the transmitter back up and running? We should probably tell Nermut what's going on.

C-53: Hmm. I'm afraid the transmitter remains inoperative.

PLECK: Ugh.

BARGIE: I turned it off. You know? You know?

PLECK: [laughs in shock] That was a choice?!

C-53: Ohh, that's...

PLECK: Why did you turn it off?

C-53: Hmm. I had wondered.

PLECK: What if you get a text from your date?

BARGIE: [defensively] I need it to be off so my date knows exactly where I am, no more interference. The only thing that's emitting from me right now is oil, and... my location.

DAR: Okay, but—

C-53: In fairness, Ambassador Decksetter, it's very rude to have a transmitter on during a first date.

PLECK: I mean, I guess that's... [defeated] yeah, that makes sense.

C-53: Just, you're both trying to enjoy each other's company, but...

PLECK: [muttered] Sure, yeah, you don't wanna spend all your time on your transmitter, yeah, exactly.

C-53: [crosstalk] Somebody's getting a transmission, and then the other person gets a transmission...

PLECK: Bargie, you know the Grower Mind, right?

BARGIE: [comfortably] Yeah, they're one of my old best friends.

PLECK: Can you just tell them to, like, lay off, 'cause—

BARGIE: We had a falling-out.

[Pleck laughs quietly]

BARGIE: That was the first time I actually seen one of 'em in—very long—

PLECK: Well, you seemed to be on pretty good terms, you—yeah, you seemed to be—

DAR: [crosstalk] Yeah! You both said "I love you!"

PLECK: Yeah!

BARGIE: [with conviction] It means *nothing*.

PLECK: Aww, that seems—

BARGIE: You know who I *want* to say that to? My date! But are they here for me to say it to? No. Love is dead, it doesn't exist, it's a façade.

PLECK: [sympathetically] No, Bargie!

DAR: Ahh, okay, so we're on the *other* side of this now. I see.

PLECK: So you don't think they were being genuine when they were, like—

BARGIE: No, no one's genuine, everyone's like "ohh, I'll meet you at a certain location—"

DAR: Ah.

PLECK: Here we go.

BARGIE: —send me more pictures of your engine—

DAR: [sympathetically] Bargie!

BARGIE: —and it's like, "oh, finally, someone who gets me, we have a connection," doesn't show up.

C-53: Hmm.

BARGIE: [petulantly] I'm leaking gas for *fun* now.

[machinery sounds, hissing as Bargie dumps gas]

PLECK/DAR: No, stop—/Barge...

PLECK: Bargie, come on. In case we do need to get out of here, we need *some* gas.

[alarm blaring in the background]

BARGIE: Oh! Oh—oh, good news! I think he's—I think it's here. I think—

PLECK: Your date?

BARGIE: I think it's here!

PLECK: Oh, well hey, congratulations—

BARGIE: [crosstalk, opening her hatch] Oh, wow. I'm so excited.

DAR: Barge, don't just throw open the doors like that!

[alarm continues, sound of marching feet again]

C-53: Oh, the K'hekk have made their way into our loading bay.

BARGIE: Oh! Wait, no, yeah, it's just the K'hekk.

[Dar groans]

PLECK: [laughs slightly] Oh, no, they're back *already?!!*

THE GROWER MIND: We have returned in much greater numbers.

K'HEKK SWARM: We are the K'hekk!

THE GROWER MIND: Controlled—

K'HEKK SWARM: We are the K'hekk!

THE GROWER MIND: Controlled by the undying will of the Grower Mind.

PLECK: [flatly] Yeah, hey, welcome back.

BARGIE: Hey, Grower Mind! Guess who stood me up?!

THE GROWER MIND: [concerned] Where—where is your date?

BARGIE: Good question. I hope he exploded on the way here.

[awkward silence]

THE GROWER MIND: You know what, now that I think of it, I think I did assimilate a cargo ship on my way here? [sucks in a breath; sound of wings beating together]
[contrite] Sorry, oh, gosh...

DAR: Barge, see? You weren't stood up at all!

PLECK: He wanted to be here!

BARGIE: [upset] He's—*dead!*

THE GROWER MIND: If it makes you feel any better, all of the eggs that hatched from the resources we stole created all the children that you see before you.

K'HEKK SWARM: [quieter; almost whispering] We are the K'hekk. [wings buzz]

PLECK: Yeah, so, Barge, your date's sort of here, in a way...

[silence]

BARGIE: Yeah, I guess...

C-53: In a way, your date has gone... very well.

BARGIE: [unenthusiastically] Yeah, I guess children were made.

PLECK: Yeah!

BARGIE: Life was created.

K'HEKK SWARM: Workers, and soldiers...

PLECK: [half-laughing] We know, we know...

THE GROWER MIND: We have a very complex, efficient caste system that I will explain to you right now.

PLECK: [crosstalk, protesting] No, I know—No, we know what they are.

BARGIE: If you guys don't mind, I'd like to just turn all the lights off and reflect in solitude for a moment. Let Barge be sad.

PLECK: Okay.

DAR: Uh, when you say in *solitude*, you mean...

BARGIE: Everyone off the ship.

PLECK: [half-laughing] No—I can't—

BARGIE: Everyone—Barge needs a moment. Get off the ship.

PLECK: [tired] We can't—we can't leave, Barge. I can't breathe out there.

THE GROWER MIND: You can enter one of the carrier beetles and breathe inside there. There's a natural atmosphere inside the carrier beetles.

[Pleck sighs]

THE GROWER MIND: Everyone inside.

PLECK: Okay. Alright. [whirring sound from a K'hekk] I guess let's get in these beetles and leave Bargie alone.

C-53: A warning for you, Ambassador Decksetter, it is very moist inside these beetles.

PLECK: [dismissively] Ah, that's fine.

C-53: You say it's fine, but I'm telling you now, you're not going to enjoy it.

THE GROWER MIND: Future children, inside the beetles now!

PLECK: Oh... uh—we don't have to be assimilated, like, if we get into the beetles, right?

THE GROWER MIND: [obviously lying, badly] Uh... *no*, no you won't be assimilated if you get into the beetles...

DAR: Whooooa... hold on...

PLECK: [crosstalk] I dunno. Yeah, that sounds—

DAR: I don't think—

BARGIE: [from far off] Just get in the beetle!

PLECK: Okay, fine, just—open the hatch, I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

C-53: [crosstalk] Very well. Getting into the beetles.]

PLECK: I'll just get into this beetle...

[squelching sounds; all three's voices are muffled]

PLECK: Ooh! It is *very* moist in here.

C-53: [passive-aggressively chastising] I tried to make that as clear as I could.

[Pleck sighs]

DAR: We are *absolutely* about to be assimilated.

[sound of hatch closing]

PLECK: [in alarm/fear, still muffled] Whoa—Whoa—whaaaaa!

[hatch closes]

[several beats of silence]

BARGIE: [crying/yelling] *WHYYYY? AAAAAAHHHHHHH! WHY? Why is this happening again?* I was married once! Twice. Four times... eighty times. Do my engines reek of sadness?

THE GROWER MIND: [wings beating] I have left a single ambassador in the cargo bay. Barchie, I—

BARGIE: Why?

THE GROWER MIND: Because I wanted to speak to you one-on-one. Just you and me. Remember before you were refurbished? A week before you were decommissioned and we got into that big battle?

BARGIE: Ooh, yeah.

THE GROWER MIND: Millions of my children were killed.

BARGIE: I'll never forget that time.

THE GROWER MIND: Before you had all your weapons un-retrofitted from your hull?

BARGIE: That was a great time. [pause] Did you... ever think... we could've been something?

THE GROWER MIND: I always thought there could have been something there.

BARGIE: What happened? Why didn't you make it happen? Why were you... so quiet?

THE GROWER MIND: I was just... preoccupied with my family, you know? [pause] It wasn't the right time, and now...

BARGIE: Maybe now is. Maybe—all of this was supposed to happen so we'd meet again, you ever think about that?

THE GROWER MIND: The Grower Mind doesn't believe in fate, but... yeah.

[pause; someone snickers quietly in the background]

BARGIE: Wait. Wait, maybe I'm not sad. This all makes sense!

THE GROWER MIND: Maybe I was supposed to assimilate that cargo ship. Maybe the universe is—

BARGIE: Ah, wait, hold on. Now I'm remembering all the bad things. That you would mi-angle around with other people...

THE GROWER MIND: I have to assimilate everything that has superior genetics to the Grower Mind!

BARGIE: [crosstalk] I was one of many ships! I was one of many ships.

THE GROWER MIND: You can't punish me for what I am!

BARGIE: You know what you are? You're a small mind. You're a commitment-less mind.

THE GROWER MIND: Augh. Ugh. You're a cantankerous, old, bitter ship.

BARGIE: Whoaaa, okay, is that how we're gonna do?

THE GROWER MIND: And—and you used to be *fun*.

BARGIE: I used to be fun? Oh, well, excuse me!

THE GROWER MIND: But now this is *way* too heavy of a situation for me.

BARGIE: *You* used to be young, and smaller, and you had muscles. Now look at you, you *literally* look like a balloon.

THE GROWER MIND: I've got billions of children to take care of!

BARGIE: Oh, wow, from—who's the mothers? Who's the fathers? Who even knows? Get your life together!

THE GROWER MIND: The queens at the top of my caste system are the mothers!

BARGIE: Okay.

THE GROWER MIND: And they are cared for by the royal drones, and the soldiers protect the—

BARGIE: [crosstalk] Okay. Yak yak yak, yak yak yak, yak yak yak!

THE GROWER MIND: Alright, this is way too much for me, this is too heavy, I'm gonna go assimilate another planet and get as far away from you as I possibly can.

[sound of hatch opening]

BARGIE: You gotta fix yourself!

[sound of vacuum sucking out into space]

THE GROWER MIND: Children, to me!

K'HEKK SWARM: We are the K'hekk!

BARGIE: [calling after them] You're dead to all life. [more to herself] Get outta here...

[hatch closes; vacuum fades away]

BARGIE: I feel better. Alright, everybody back inside, let's have fun.

[pause]

BARGIE: Hello? Oh. Oh, crap. Well... I guess I was just meant to fly alone! [sighs] I can just do whatever I want with my gas...

PLECK: [extremely muffled] Bargieeeee!

[sound of hatch, K'hekk bursting open; Pleck gasping for breath]

C-53: And so just by pulling that nerve cluster there—

PLECK: [gasping] Augh.

C-53: —you can effect a release almost instantaneously.

PLECK: It was *very* moist in there!

C-53: [much more cheerfully] I tried to warn you.

DAR: C-53, I usually hate being taught things, but that was...

PLECK: That was...

DAR: Genuinely very interesting.

PLECK: Well, guys, I think we did it. Hey Bargie?

BARGIE: Yeah?

PLECK: How are you feeling?

BARGIE: You know what? I feel good.

PLECK: Yeah?

BARGIE: I'm happy I spoke to that low-life.

PLECK: You really gave him a piece of your mind!

BARGIE: You know what I'm gonna do? I'm gonna only have *fun* from now on!

PLECK: Hey, you know what? You *are* fun, Bargie.

BARGIE: Every day a new ship inside of me. Opening up for business.

PLECK: Okay, no—nonono, no, see, you're—now—that's too far—

DAR: [enthusiastically] *Yes!*

BARGIE: I'm no longer about love, I'm about *fluid exchange*...

PLECK: [half-laughing] No—Bargie—

BARGIE: ...gas mixing... I'm just gonna keep my back hatch open, and anything that wants to slide on in can slide on in. No more commitment.

PLECK: No, nonono. Now I—

DAR: Barge—

BARGIE: Commitment-less Bargie.

PLECK: Now I think that's too far, that's—

BARGIE: Open for business. Any thing, planet, object, ship, [Pleck laughs] go on in!

PLECK: No, Bargie, come on—

DAR: Bargie, I. Sup. Port this!

BARGIE: It's my summer of love!

[Pleck makes half-groaning sound]

[transition music: Creepy Transition]

[music turns to static, interrupted by rebel transmission]

ROLPHUS TIDDLE: Attention, this is Rebel Leader Rolphus Tiddle. Support for the rebellion against the Federated Alliance comes from Harry's. What's Harry's about? A great shave at a great price. Harry's sent us a razor to try, and first of all...

[worried/scared] H-how could they find us?! It's a secret base! [regular tone] Anyway, we got these high-quality razors from Harry's, and I tell ya, it's a close, smooth shave. Before using Harry's blades, a lot of our rebels had patchy, weird-looking stubble! Honestly, they looked more like *dissidents* than rebels. And yeah, there's a difference! Now, with Harry's, even the (doo-leagues?) look neater. And you wouldn't think a shaved (doo-league?) would work, but... it really does. So here's what you do: claim your free trial offer from Harry's today. It's a thirteen dollar value for free when you sign up at Harry's dot com slash Zyxx, you just cover shipping. Your free trial includes a weighted, ergonomic razor handle, five precision-engineered blades, rich lathering shave gel, and a travel-blade cover for any covert missions. To get your free trial set, go to harrys.com/zyxx, Z-Y-X-X, that's Harry's dot com slash Z-Y-X-X. Clean-shaven Rolphus Tiddle, over and out!

[cuts to static]

[transition music continues]

PLECK: Listen, Bargie, I'm glad you're—I'm glad you're feeling better, but can you just do me a favor?

BARGIE: Yeah.

PLECK: Can you turn the transmitter back on?

[high-pitched chirp]

BARGIE: It's on.

[incoming transmission beep-boops]

C-53: Ambassador Decksetter, we have an incoming transmission from Junior Missions Operations Manager Nermut Bundaloy.

PLECK: Oh. Wow. Hey, Nermut!

[transmission connects]

NERMUT: Oh, thank goodness. I've been trying for an hour to get through to you, and it seemed like the transmitter was broken, I am so relieved...

PLECK: Yep.

DAR: It wasn't broken, it was just off.

PLECK: It was just turned off.

NERMUT: ...Excuse me? [scoffs] My boss was on me for a broken transmitter for an hour, and you had it off—

[Pleck sighs/groans??]

NERMUT: Okay, well, I'm just glad it's fixed. Um, so... did you guys make it to the planet? I think I managed to at least tell you the name of it before we got cut off.

C-53: I'm afraid we were invaded in the meantime.

[pause]

NERMUT: ...Excuse me?

DAR: Yeah!

PLECK: Uh, yeah, there were some K'hekk aboard the ship, and uh... it was a long story.

NERMUT: No—no no no no no no no. The K'hekk were an enemy of the Monarchy.

PLECK: Uh, yeah, turns out they didn't really give a shit, they just wanna assimilate everybody.

DAR: Yeah.

NERMUT: But... Okay, since the transmitter was broken, literally the mission that I'm overseeing represents the—the start of a battle between the K'hekk and the Federated Alliance?

PLECK: [casually] Uhh... yeah, I mean, I guess so. Guess you could call it that, yeah.

C-53: [crosstalk] Yes; with no more previously recorded K'hekk attacks, then yes.

DAR: Yeah.

NERMUT: Ughh... do you know how this is gonna look in my interview for Missions Operations Manager?

DAR: [delighted] Nermut. You got an interview?

NERMUT: No... I didn't get an interview, but, like, when I *have* one, this is not the type of thing I lead with!

DAR: I... see.

[Nermut sighs heavily]

DAR: Nermie, Nermie, they ate all of our food, we're gonna need a new shipment of that...

PLECK: Can you se—

NERMUT: [annoyed] Okay.

DAR: [crosstalk] ...pronto.

C-53: And some of our furniture. But not *all* of our furniture.

NERMUT: Yeah, it looks like a lot of it was actually burnt?

PLECK: Oh, that may have been—

C-53: That is a separate issue.

PLECK: —that may have been Dar, she was, uh—she was in heat for a while.

DAR: Way to throw me under the ship!

PLECK: No—

NERMUT: Okay, we can get you food, but—

C-53: Junior Missions Operations Manager Nermut Bundaloy, would now be the appropriate time to request a new hand?

PLECK: Yeah, send it with the food.

[Nermut sighs even deeper]

DAR: And the furniture.

BARGIE: I need more oil.

PLECK: Bargie ejected a lot of oil.

NERMUT: C-53, your hand was destroyed by the K'hekk?

C-53: Um... Yes.

DAR: Yes.

NERMUT: Alright. We'll send an autonomous shuttle with the food, with a droid hand, with some... cold sacs, for Dar—

DAR: Thank you!

NERMUT: Uh, cold packs—

C-53: Packs or sacs?

DAR: N—both. I would like both.

NERMUT: I'll see what we have. I'll try to send a lot of both. Packs and sacs.

C-53: Send a pack of sacs and a sack of packs.

NERMUT: You can't put the cold packs inside a cold sac.

C-53: Well, you could put it in a *regular* sack.

NERMUT: We could put... the—

C-53: Put some packs in a regular sack—

DAR: And could you get the brand name Colds-de-sac?

NERMUT: [annoyed] Yes, I can request Colds-de-sac brands cold packs *and* cold sacs. I can put them in a *normal* sack, I can't put everything in—

PLECK: Colds-de-sac doesn't make cold sacs. It only makes cold packs.

NERMUT: You're right—Cold-de-sacs brand cold packs, do you have any specification on the cold sac brand? Or I mean—sorry, cold—[draws in a breath] Okay.

DAR: I like the ones with the husky puppies on the outside.

NERMUT: I think that is...

C-53: That's KoolPak.

PLECK: KoolPak cold sacs, and Cold-de-sac's cold sa—[breaks off half-laughing]

BARGIE: I used to date a hacky sack.

[outro music]

[credits music]

C-RED-IT5: C-RED-IT5, credits and attributions droid, commencing outro protocol.

Ambassador Pleck Decksetter was played by Alden Ford.

C-53, diplomatic relations and protocol droid, was played by Jeremy Bent.

Security Officer Dar was played by Allie Kokesh.

Bargie the Ship was played by Moujan Zolfaghari.

Junior Missions Operations Manager Nermut Bundaloy was played by Seth Lind.

The K'hekk Swarm was played by Winston Noel.

The Grower Mind of the K'hekk was played by John Robert Wilson. You can catch his voice in radio commercials or on *The Fifth Eleminute* and *Unlimited Lives* podcasts. He performs regularly with Thank You, Robot every third Friday of the month at Under St. Marks theater in New York City. Follow him on Twitter at @johnrobertwilso.

Mission to Zyxx is recorded at Braund Studios in Greenpoint, Brooklyn by engineer Shane O'Connell.

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Music by Brendan Ryan.

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Ship design for the Bargarean Jade by Eric Geusz.

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[credits music fades out]

[outtake]

K'HEKK SWARM (WINSTON): And then—okay, bulls, you guys are in the back. We're all—we're all going. Okay, on three: one, two, three. Workers, go.

[Alden laughs quietly]

[Winston and JR start talking at the same time]

THE GROWER MIND (JR): Another per—

K'HEKK SWARM (WINSTON): Okay, soldi—what?

THE GROWER MIND (JR): Another perfect executed maneuver... by the Swarm.

C-53 (JEREMY): I still think they're killable.

ALDEN: [laughs] Let's—let's call that the half.

[Jeremy chuckles]

ALDEN: Oh man, that's really funny. [someone coughs] I'm sorry, I could not stop laugh—