

JESSE: Hey folks, it's Jesse, the founder of MaxFun. Since we postponed our annual MaxFun Drive in mid-March, we have gotten a lot of questions about if and when we'd be rescheduling it. And, honestly, we've been asking ourselves the same thing. Well, now we have an answer for you. The 2020 MaxFun Drive will start on July 13th. That's coming up soon. We decided to have the drive now because it's always brought a lot of joy and excitement to our community, and certainly, to us. And to be totally honest, it's also the main source of income for some of our hosts. Like pretty much everything right now, this year's drive is gonna be a little different. We'll still be bringing you very special episodes, fun community activities, premium thank you gifts; but we also know it's a weird time, and for some folks, a really difficult one. Some people are in a position to become new or upgrading members, others can't right now, and that is okay. We'll have ways for you to support MaxFun at every level, including some ways that won't cost you anything. We're also gonna run the drive for four weeks instead of two. We didn't think it was a good time to be rushing anybody, and having a longer drive lets us be a little more low-key in our drive pitch. It also gives us more time to do fun stuff, like the weekly livestreams we'll be putting on for charity throughout the drive. Most importantly, we want the 2020 MaxFun Drive to highlight all the ways we support each other and our communities. We also want to show how grateful we are to *you* for making all the work that we do possible. Stay safe. We'll see you July 13th for the MaxFun Drive.

[orchestral main theme music begins]

NARRATOR: It is a time of chaos. Without a ruler, the galaxy is paralyzed by lawlessness, unrest, and of course, the colossal Allwheat... which looks like a star, except instead of radiating light, it radiates a hangover. Now, Captain Dar and their intrepid crew must survive the looming threats, reunite a fractured galaxy, and meet weird bug creatures and stuff. This... is Mission to Zyxx.

[theme music comes to a climax, then fades out]

[sound of Pleck eating chips]

AJ: Hey, uh, Papa.

PLECK: Uh, yeah, what is it, AJ?

AJ: So do you still, like, believe in the Space, or what?

PLECK: Do I believe—yeah, of course I believe in the Space. What are you talking about?

AJ: Well like, you know, like, are you still practicing, or what?

PLECK: Yeah, I—yeah, I sti—I convene with the Space every day. And you know what, actually, I'm glad you mentioned that, because now I've been trying to think more about the Stuff.

AJ: Yeah, I haven't really... you know, I haven't really been kinda, doing it. Talking about the Space and doing stuff. Remember how I used to open portals with my hands?

PLECK: Yeah, what happened to that?

AJ: [ashamed] Yeah, I'm, uh, haha... I just stopped doin' it.

C-53: Yeah, well—also, Pleck, you used to hang out with all those guys from Zima Prime...

PLECK: Yeah, well, y'know, the—those guys have not really been contacting me lately... um, and, uh... I logged in, the forums are sorta dead, so.

AJ: Yeah.

PLECK: You know, I kinda thought, y'know, maybe this is kinda my... my journey, y'know?

BARGIE: Pleck, what about the *journey* to complete the job I gave you?

PLECK: Um... yeah, I'm about to get on it. 'Bout—I'm just almost—done—through—finishing that job. For you. [Pleck continues eating chips]

C-53: What job did you get? From Bargie?

BARGIE: Yeah, what job?

PLECK: I d—I—I... [Pleck eats another chip]

AJ: Oh, you guys don't remember your jobs that Bargie gave you?

C-53: Wait, me? What's yours?

AJ: Oh, I'm swabbing.

BARGIE: Yep.

C-53: Swabbing!?

PLECK: Swabbing?

AJ: [swabbing sounds] I swab the floor. I swab the deck.

C-53: Hmm. Okay.

DAR: [entering the room] Alright, Bargie, I'm all done.

BARGIE: Great.

PLECK: Dar, what was your job?

DAR: Isn't it obvious? Look around.

AJ: [swabbing] Uh, Papa, lift your foot up.

PLECK: Okay.

AJ: Gotta swab.

PLECK: Alright.

AJ: Swabbin'. [AJ swabs busily]

PLECK: Was your job also swabbing, Dar?

DAR: Yeah. What—what do you mean “also?” Who else—who else was swabbing?

PLECK: I think AJ was swabbing, and I think maybe C-53 and I were both also supposed to be swabbing.

AJ: Wait, did we double swab this?

PLECK: I’m sorry, what is “swabbing,” exactly?

DAR: Pleck, swabbing is obviously when you put those little dust catcher sheets underneath your feet, and then you shuffle around on Bargie.

BARGIE: [crosstalk, agreeing with Dar] Yeah. Yup. Uh-huh.

PLECK: Is that what you guys are doing!?

AJ: [energetically] “I’m swabbin’!” You know, like, really goin’ after it.

BARGIE: Yeah.

[incoming transmission sound]

BARGIE: I have an incoming call from my free advice... ager.

PLECK: Oh, Nermut!

C-53: Normally I announce those, that’s fun.

PLECK: Hold on, C-53—

BARGIE: Whenever they’re giving me free advice, I get to announce it.

[call connects]

DAR: Hey, Nermie.

BARGIE: What do you think I should do, huh? Should I take the job? Or should I... stick it to him?

NERMUT: Sorry, Bargie, I know I owe you a couple free advice calls, but this is a regular mission call.

BARGIE: What!? Ughhhhh. Shouldn’t have picked up. Wasted *minutes* of my life doing someone else’s job.

NERMUT: What? Oh, saying that I called? Seems like... not that much work.

BARGIE: You can get the next one, C, I’m sorry.

C-53: Well, fair enough.

NERMUT: Okay, whatever. Guys, listen: huge mission today, very exciting, you’re going to a... zombie planet!

AJ: [excitedly swabbing across the room] Yesss. Let’s do this! [crushes a can]

PLECK: Okay, Nermut—Nermut, what does that mean? Does that mean that the—you know, the molten core has stopped moving, or...

AJ: No, this rules. It's wave after wave of enemy that you can mow down without feeling any remorse. I *love* it!

C-53: A-AJ, that's probably not what Nermut means.

NERMUT: AJ's got it. Yeah, it's zombies. It's literal zombies. This is obviously a great opportunity. [opportunity button sings "opportunity"] Seesu hasn't done the most important thing that a candidate has to do, which is obviously...

DAR: Announce what their platform is.

NERMUT: Okay, that too, but also...

PLECK: Pick a running mate.

NERMUT: Sure, that—well, she did, and then we had a problem, but, uh...

C-53: Make sure the infrastructure exists for safe and fair elections.

NERMUT: Yeah, those are kinda details, but the big thing...

BARGIE: Figure out what sort of government exactly will be in place afterwards, 'cause honestly, I have no idea what sort of... election this is, or for what...

[crew all starts talking at once over Bargie]

DAR: [crosstalk] Ooh! Y'know, that's a really good one, Bargie!

PLECK: [crosstalk] Yeah, that's a good point. Yeah, no, good, Bargie.

C-53: [crosstalk] Sure, yeah.

AJ: Text me back!

NERMUT: All great ideas, but obviously not as important as just straight up saving a planet. And what better kind of planet to save than one that's overrun by zombies?

PLECK: Alright. Nermut...

NERMUT: Yeah.

PLECK: Just—just so we're clear. When you say "zombies"...

NERMUT: Yes.

PLECK: You mean corpses that have been reanimated...

NERMUT: Wha—

DAR: This isn't just, like, some slang term that you're using for... deadbeats...

NERMUT: Zombies, yes. Is the transmission breaking up?

PLECK: "Zombies" isn't the name of a species we're not familiar with.

DAR: Oh! Yeah, good question, very good question.

NERMUT: No. [Nermut sighs]

AJ: Why are we asking so many questions?

NERMUT: Yeah!

AJ: It's a planet of zombies, we take our guns out, and we just go to it. Let's lock and load!

NERMUT: Right.

PLECK: Only one of us has guns. What are we doing?

BARGIE: I will say this, and I'm gonna say it, okay? Zombies love me. It's not gonna be a problem.

C-53: [laughing] Zombies love you?

BARGIE: Well, that zombie holo that I did honestly portrayed them in a way that... Most holos have them as stereotypes, but it showed them as very three-dimensional, complicated characters.

C-53: Right, the climactic scene of *Starship of the Dead* was mostly just zombies talking about being really dehydrated.

BARGIE: Exactly. It would finally be nice to go somewhere where I'm appreciated for a change.

C-53: Hmm.

PLECK: Hmm.

[sound transitions to Nermut's end of the call]

NERMUT: So just all the people who are not zombies, save 'em. Seesu gets the credit.

SEESU: I'm so excited!

NERMUT: Look who's been just off-camera here, everyone!

SEESU: Hi, crew! It's me, Seesu Gundu.

AJ: [awkwardly] Hey...

PLECK/C-53: Hey!/Hey.

SEESU: [clapping in time with her words] Is everyone excited to go to a zombie planet?

C-53: Uhhh...

AJ: Yeah!

SEESU: If you are, let me hear you say "Hyaaah!"

AJ: Hyaaah! Let's do this!

NERMUT: I think they all said it.

DAR: Nermut, we clearly—clearly, no.

SEESU: Okay! Well, I have to go. I got a couple of hands I gotta shake, if you know what I mean. I'm *literally* gonna be shaking hands with *many* sentients, so... [walking away] Okay, goodbye!

AJ: Text me back!

NERMUT: [cheerful] Thanks, Seesu!

C-53: Hm.

[Nermut skitters back to the call]

NERMUT: [desperately] Before you all die, I want you to know I love you.

PLECK/DAR: What? Wait—Nermut!/Nermut!

NERMUT: What? O-Obviously you're gonna die on the zombie planet, and I don't—
[crew starts questioning Nermut from the other end of the call]

NERMUT: [near tears] I'm so sorry! I ha—I'm so sorry! I'm so sorry! I'm just playing it cool in front of Seesu.

[door opens]

SEESU: Just checking back in!

NERMUT: [suddenly cheery again] Oh! Yep! Have a fun, guys! Bye!

[call ends, sound transitions back to Bargie and the crew]

C-53: I think the pressure might be getting to him.

PLECK: Yeah, he's...

[Dar sighs]

PLECK: He's gotta learn to stand up to Seesu.

C-53: Mm-hmm.

AJ: Did he tell us to "have a fun, guys?"

PLECK: [laughing] I think he did.

[transition music]

[crackling, distant sirens, sound of hordes of zombies moaning and growling]

SURVIVOR: [whispering] Shh! On three. One... Two...

[zombies attack, snapping and snarling]

[Bargie lands, hatch opens]

AJ: Look at 'em, it's just... a huge horde of 'em.

C-53: Yeah, just... a roiling mob.

AJ: Yeah, you don't get to see a horde that big, that's pretty great.

C-53: Well, if we're gonna search for survivors, we'll need to move stealthily, and—

BARGIE: [over outside speakers] Attention, zombies! The Bargarean Jade has returned!

[zombies immediately get much louder and more chaotic]

C-53: No, Bargie... I don't know if this is the best...

PLECK: Bargie...

BARGIE: I am so excited to be back. Bargie is here.

DAR: You're eliminating the s—the surprise of us, uh, arriving.

AJ: But you know what? Zombies love a comeback. That's kinda their whole thing.

PLECK: That's... that's true, AJ. That's a good point.

C-53: Well, technically true, yeah.

DAR: That is true, yeah.

BARGIE: Hello, zombie! Hello! Hi!

PLECK: No, Bargie—no. You gotta close your hatch—

C-53: These zombies are just gonna run right up into the ship if you just sit here like this—

AJ: Ohh, let's go! Let's do this! I'm gonna go meet THEM!

ZOMBIE 1: Bargieeee...

AJ: They're swarmin'! Let's go, C! [AJ racks rifle]

C-53: I'm just gonna follow AJ here, I'll make sure he doesn't get—

AJ: [running away] Let's go! [AJ whoops happily]

C-53: [indulgently] Nah, he's—he's having so much fun, look at him.

DAR: C, are you on that?

C-53: Yeah yeah. No, I'll... get behind him.

DAR: Okay, uh... Pleck, come on, you and I, we're—

PLECK: Dar—you gotta—

DAR: [taking charge] We're doin' this. Come on.

PLECK: [panicking] You gotta save me, you gotta protect me—

DAR: I—I've got your back, buddy. Now, we just gotta... gotta link hands here, and just—

PLECK: [still panicking] Wow. Those are literal zombies, they are...

DAR: Yeah, yeah, and we're just gonna get right out—

PLECK: Rotting corpses, animated once more...

DAR: [firmly] We're gonna walk right off of Bargie, and we'll be *fine*.

ZOMBIE 2: [messily, rasping] Can I have your autograph?

[Pleck whimpers]

BARGIE: Ahh, of course.

PLECK: Wow, they really *do* love Bargie.

ZOMBIE 2: Just—please write it out—"To... Gothnklrr... love... Bargie."

BARGIE: Ah, wonderful, yes. Bargie's back—

ZOMBIE 2: My second favorite ship after... Tiny Toots. [the zombie makes a raspy choking sound]

BARGIE: What?

ZOMBIE 2: Tiny Toots?

ZOMBIE 3: [growling] Tiny Toooooots! Tiny Toooooots!

BARGIE: What? What?

ZOMBIE 2: Tiny Toooooots. Tiny Toooooots.

BARGIE: Oh, right, Tiny Toots did a big mega blockbuster of a zombie movie that definitely did really well. Alright, cool! We're done here. Alright, uh, loading up my hatch...

PLECK: Don't close it, there are zombies on the ship—

DAR: Wai-wai-wai-wai-wait!

PLECK: Bargie, there are zombies on the ship!

DAR: W-w-w—

[Pleck makes a strangled yelp]

ZOMBIE 2: Don't worry, I made it on.

ZOMBIE 4: I didn't, I'm half in, half out. [zombie groans]

BARGIE: Since somebody brought up T.T.'s name, I'm going into dark mode.

[sound of internal electricity powering down]

PLECK: No—Bargie, keep the lights on, please!

ZOMBIE 4: Tiny Toots is darker.

BARGIE: [annoyed] Urrrrrhhhh...

PLECK: Oh...

DAR: Okay, well now they're just baiting her. Okay, okay, it doesn't matter. Pleck, I can't believe I'm saying this, but we need to split up.

PLECK: What? No! Dar, you need to pr—protect me! This is a terrible idea!

DAR: [intensely] Pleck, listen to me. It's too dangerous for you to be with me. I'm...
[dramatic pause] too sexy to these zombies.

PLECK: What?

DAR: Pleck, come on, you've seen a zombie holo. The sexy one is the first to go, and how could the zombies resist [luxuriously] *all of this*?

PLECK: I—

DAR: Zombies aren't gonna come anywhere near you. And they're gonna be *all* over me.

PLECK: Yeah, no, that's—no, that's definitely fair.

DAR: I mean—and plus, it couldn't hurt if, y'know, we tried to find weapons.

PLECK: Of course, of course! The dinglehopper's in my room, I'll go get that!

[awkward pause]

[Dar clicks their tongue]

DAR: Yeah, sure. Okay, you go find the stick in your room.

PLECK: Yeah, uh—The Dinglehopper, yes.

DAR: And I'll go find a *blaster*.

PLECK: Sure.

DAR: [relishing the coolness of the situation] Gonna lead a parade of zombies through Bargie.

PLECK: Oh, boy.

DAR: [dramatically] Follow me, boys!

[zombies growl, snarl, one somewhere in the crowd does the Wilhelm scream]

[scene transitions to C-53 and AJ]

[zombie groans are now up close and personal, blaster shots fire, sirens in background]

C-53: [parentally] Hey, AJ, don't go too far ahead, buddy. Okay? I want you to wait at the corner for me.

[AJ fires off more shots]

ZOMBIE 5: Brains! Must.. eat... brains!

AJ: Pull your eyeballs out! [AJ rips out the zombie's eyeballs]

C-53: Wow.

AJ: Let's go! Let's go!

C-53: AJ, did you ever have, like, a specific anti-zombie class that you took?

AJ: Uh, yeah.

C-53: 'Cause you seem very prepared for this.

AJ: I mean, I audited it, but... yeah, still took it.

[zombie snarls]

C-53: Oh. Got one on my shoulder here. [zombie is tossed away]

AJ: I've got survivors! I've got survivors in a two! There's survivors in a two, I'm making my way to 'em! There are two [indistinct] right over there!

C-53: Yeah. Uh...

AJ: Fear not! We are here to save you.

[door opens]

DR. GRANDPA: Hey, what are you drips doin' to our zombies?

C-53: Uh... I'm sorry, did you say *your* zombies?

DR. MERRILLYN: Yeah.

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah.

DR. MERRILLYN: These are our friends. Uh, this is our community. Hi. Uh, who exactly are you?

[AJ continues punching and shooting zombies in the background]

C-53: Oh. Uh... yeah, sorry, I'm C-53, this is AJ-2884. Uh, we were sent 'cause we were told this was a zombie planet and it needed saving.

DR. MERRILLYN: Okay, okay. Well, you know what? Half right. It *is* a zombie planet.

AJ: I'm taking this guy's head off. Should I... put it... back on...? Or should I...

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes! Please!

AJ: [attempting to stick the head back on] Sorry. I'm so sorry.

[zombie tries to say something, AJ makes a skeptical, grossed-out noise]

C-53: Yeah, it just... toppled right off his body as soon as he took a step, now.

DR. GRANDPA: It's okay, he'll be fine. He'll be fine.

C-53: What do you mean when you say they're "your zombies?" Who—who are you?

DR. MERRILLYN: Uh, I'm Dr. Merrilyn Wirehouzer, uh, and this is my husband, The Grandpa.

DR. GRANDPA: Dr. Grandpa Wirehouzer.

DR. MERRILLYN: Known to me as "The Grandpa." Y'know, we're deep in love.

AJ: Aw. That's nice.

C-53: Well, that's beautiful.

DR. GRANDPA: It's a little pet name.

C-53: Okay, but—

DR. GRANDPA: 'Cause I'm wrinkly.

AJ: Right.

C-53: Oh, okay. I can—I sorta see it now.

ZOMBIE 5: Must. Eat. Brains.

C-53: Oop. Okay. Just gonna... push you away from AJ here.

AJ: [hesitantly] Yeahhh, I really don't want it...

DR. MERRILLYN: Susan, leave him be, Susan, leave him be.

DR. GRANDPA: Susan!

ZOMBIE 5 (SUSAN): Okay. Okay, goodbye.

AJ: Oh, they have names? Eugh.

C-53: Eughhh...

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah. Everyone has a name.

DR. MERRILLYN: Everyone has a name.

C-53: Well, sorta the thing with zombies is that they're like a faceless mass that...

AJ: Right, you don't have to feel bad when you cut through them, you just kinda...

C-53: They don't have identities so much, anymore...

AJ: Yeah...

DR. GRANDPA: Wow, stereotyping.

DR. MERRILLYN: Wow. Truly, truly stereotyping.

DR. GRANDPA: [emphatically] Wow.

C-53: Oh boy.

DR. MERRILLYN: Just—just because, y’know, a zombie doesn’t have dreams and hopes and opinions, doesn’t mean they’re still not a person. Alright?

C-53: I guess that’s technically true...

DR. GRANDPA: I mean, it means they’re not a person. It means they’re a zombie.

DR. MERRILLYN: Right, but they still—there’s an identity, a unique zombie identity to each one of them.

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah, there’s something called zombie culture, people.

DR. MERRILLYN: Right.

AJ: Oh, okay. Yeah.

C-53: Okay. You know what, that’s on us for not doing the research before we got here.

SUSAN: [stilted] Must. Eat. Brain. And also, teatime is ready.

DR. MERRILLYN: Ooh!

C-53: Teatime.

DR. MERRILLYN: It is teatime, if you’d like a cuppa. We will be just sitting with some of our friends, just connecting.

ZOMBIE (REGINALD): [bursting through a door, growling] Sorry I’m late with the biscuits.

DR. MERRILLYN: Honestly, it’s alright, Reginald.

REGINALD: Here you go.

AJ: Whoa.

C-53: Yeah, no, we’d love to come to tea here and figure out exactly what the deal is.

AJ: Yeah, that’d be good.

REGINALD: [chains clanking] I’m slow...

DR. MERRILLYN: Yeah. Come to tea...

AJ: Tea, with all these zombies...

DR. MERRILLYN: Become a zombie, it’ll be great.

C-53: Uh, oh... uh—

AJ: Uh, what?

C-53: Sorry, what was end of that? Did you say “become a zombie?”

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah.

DR. MERRILLYN: Yeah yeah yeah.

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah.

DR. MERRILLYN: Yeah. I assume that’s why you’re here, right?

C-53: [mildly horrified] Nooo. No no.

DR. GRANDPA: Why else would you come to a—a planet of only zombies?

C-53: You know, make a fair point there with that question. Are you familiar with Seesu Gundu? She’s, uh, running for leader of the galaxy?

DR. GRANDPA: I think I saw an ad somewhere.

C-53: Okay, yeah. Yeah yeah yeah. Good. That’s great! Actually, if you could tell us where you saw the ad, where you saw it, like...

AJ: C, I don’t know if this is...

C-53: Well, I just—this seems like a good marketing... [C-53 trails off into a mumble, then changes his mind] Y-You know what? We’ll—we can talk about it later. Um... we were sent here to sort of eliminate all the zombies and save this planet.

DR. MERRILLYN: Wow, that is bold. That is *bold*, okay? We are two *scientists*. We are two—honestly, I’ll say it! Geniuses. Grandpa, you’re a genius.

DR. GRANDPA: Thank you. So are you, Merrilyn Wirehouzer.

DR. MERRILLYN: Thank you so—

DR. GRANDPA: We are peace merchants, if you will.

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes, we are, alright?

C-53: Okay. Alright.

DR. MERRILLYN: We are—look at us. Healthy, thriving.

C-53: Yes, very—

DR. MERRILLYN: Our love has never been stronger. We have a universal mission—maybe given to us by Rodd himself.

AJ/C-53: Wow.

C-53: Um... and just to be 100% transparent about this, your mission is to turn everyone in the galaxy into a zombie?

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes.

DR. GRANDPA: I would say universe.

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes. Yes yes yes. Correct.

C-53: Oh, okay. Okay.

AJ: Whoa.

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah, galaxy, that's, uh... small beans, buddy.

DR. MERRILLYN: Yep. Yep.

C-53: Ahhh—

AJ: Weh...

C-53: Hmm.

AJ: Yeah, I mean, I guess I just thought since everything was sort of, like, abandoned, and sorta spooky-looking, and you guys are sort of like, here with all these zombies that maybe you wanted to be... rescued? Is that just me with my preconceived notions of this?

DR. MERRILLYN: Very much.

DR. GRANDPA: Yes.

C-53: Were you projecting a little bit?

AJ: Oh, okay.

DR. MERRILLYN: You think it's creepy. You know what I like? I like a muted palette.

AJ: Yeah.

[zombie noises and crashing get louder]

DR. MERRILLYN: [cocking a gun and firing it] I find it relaxing. I find it very soothing. You know, honestly, I don't want this tea to get cold. Let's go. Let's go inside.

AJ: Yeah, let's do this.

C-53: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, no, we'd love to.

[the group goes inside, the door shuts]

DR. GRANDPA: You guys like rooibos? Rooibos? Is that how you pronounce it?

DR. MERRILLYN: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, red rooibos.

[sound of tea pouring, zombies banging on the door]

C-53: I don't want to put a damper on anything, this—this all looks lovely, but, uh, I am a droid. I don't—I wouldn't be able to drink any of this.

DR. GRANDPA: Huh.

DR. MERRILLYN: Okay.

DR. GRANDPA: Huh.

DR. MERRILLYN: Okay, okay.

DR. GRANDPA: What if we could, uh... make you, uh, organic somehow?

C-53: That would be... pretty impressive, I—I... I think.

DR. GRANDPA: And then turn you into a zombie.

AJ: Yeah, okay.

C-53: Okay. I think, respectfully, I will have to decline that offer.

DR. MERRILLYN: Okay. Well, uh, you know what? You haven't heard the full pitch. Okay?

C-53: Oh! Okay.

DR. MERRILLYN: You seem, uh... a little uptight.

C-53: Hm.

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah, like you got a metal rod up your, uh... up your ol' bum.

[AJ laughs]

C-53: Well, I mean—technically—I'm a loader droid, technically I do. It's—it's there for stability's sake.

AJ: You guys got him pegged. It's great.

DR. MERRILLYN: Well, *you* have a lot of intensity, too, that I think could be dialed down.

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah.

DR. MERRILLYN: Sir.

AJ: [with an air of superiority] Listen, I was bred with a bunch of faceless clones, like... I'm not a zombie, alright? I'm part of the mindless horde that *fight*s the zombies, you know what I mean? [AJ racks rifle]

DR. MERRILLYN: I mean, this just takes me back. Oh! Nostalgia. What a drug.

DR. GRANDPA: Speaking of drugs... can we put a zombie drug in your tea?

[sound of tea pouring]

C-53: I—I—I mean, you could, I'm just not gonna drink the tea.

AJ: I'd feel weird, because I feel like I'd have to be polite. But then I'd realize—

C-53: Yeah, AJ, you don't—you don't have to say yes to this.

AJ: Okay, cool. Thank you. Thank you for giving me the out. I was worried.

C-53: Uh—Dr. Merrilyn Wirehouzer, can I ask: how recently was this planet *not* a zombie planet?

DR. MERRILLYN: You know, uh, we really came into our... comfort, about seven months ago. Don't you think? Seven months?

C-53: Wow—oh, wow. That is recent, is—is what I'm gonna say.

DR. MERRILLYN: [sighs] It took a while. It took—

DR. GRANDPA: 211 days, to be exact. I have a... sobriety counter I use.

DR. MERRILLYN: Well, Grandpa's been clean.

AJ: Wow. Congratulations.

DR. MERRILLYN: That's really helped us get to where we wanted to be. With our mission.

C-53: Hm.

DR. MERRILLYN: Let go and let Rodd.

C-53: I don't know that Rodd would be *cool* with this.

DR. MERRILLYN: Huh! Huh. Well, uh... that's where you're wrong. Rodd wanted—what did Rodd want?

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah.

DR. MERRILLYN: *Peace.*

DR. GRANDPA: Before—before you two drips showed up, did you see any fighting outside?

C-53: Uh...

AJ: Well, I guess... no.

C-53: No, I guess... no, they all sorta moved as one.

DR. GRANDPA: Oh!

DR. MERRILLYN: As one!

DR. GRANDPA: As *one*.

DR. MERRILLYN: It is beautiful to watch a common goal.

AJ: Should I take this tea and become a zombie?

C-53: Don't—AJ, don't—

DR. GRANDPA: Yes!

DR. MERRILLYN: Drink up.

C-53: I'm just gonna tip this cup of tea—

AJ: Okay, okay.

C-53: I'm just gonna knock it outta your hand...

[the tea spills on the ground]

AJ: Ope. Knock it out of my hand, alright. Fine.

DR. GRANDPA: Can we get another—can we get another cuppa over here?

DR. MERRILLYN: Reginald!

REGINALD: I mean, I'm normally on biscuit duty, but it's—okay.

AJ: I mean, he's in a—he's in a tuxedo, so.

C-53: Yeah. I mean... it's stained horribly by his rotting flesh, but...

REGINALD: Put down the biscuit tray... get the rooibos.

C-53: Um... did the people that you turned into zombies have a say? Like, were you being gracious with them the way you're offering us the chance to become zombies, and we're kindly but firmly saying "no?"

AJ: But also keeping it on the table.

C-53: [quietly] AJ...

DR. GRANDPA: How many people have a say in—in their destinies?

DR. MERRILLYN: You know, this wasn't a question as much as an opportunity.

DR. GRANDPA: It wasn't a question, it was an exclamation mark.

C-53: Okay—

DR. MERRILLYN: [lovingly] Wow... Grandpapa, you are a *poet*. I will tell you this. Yes, of course, some people are resistant, just like you.

C-53: Yeah.

DR. MERRILLYN: However, as they watched...

DR. GRANDPA: I would say **all** people were resistant.

DR. MERRILLYN: Granted, granted.

C-53: Okay. Mm-hmm.

DR. MERRILLYN: However, as they watched everyone around them... as they watched everyone around them succumb to freedom, succumb to peace—

AJ: [crosstalk] Succumb to...?

DR. MERRILLYN: [laughs] I mean, you know, it just became a no—it just became a no... [laughs] no-brainer. Ha! Sorry for the joke.

C-53: Okay. Well, that's—that seems a little...

DR. MERRILLYN: [quirkily] Sorry, I just—it's been seven months.

C-53: It's a little insensitive, there's some people out there—I can see some corpses.

DR. GRANDPA: Ultimately, is death not the greatest—"Rest in Peace." Is that not what it says?

AJ: [thoughtfully] I—maybe I should drink this. I'm kind of—

C-53: AJ, would you put down—stop picking up the tea.

AJ: [defensively] Okay, sorry. [AJ sets down the tea with a clink]

[scene transitions back to Bargie]

PLECK: [urgently, typing] I need to get back to my room. I need to get back to my Dinglehopper.

NEW ZOMBIE: Hello.

PLECK: [stumbling] Hello?

NEW ZOMBIE: Me. Want. Brain?

PLECK: Y—uh—oh, is that a question?

NEW ZOMBIE: ...Me new to this.

PLECK: Oh... Then no, I—I don't think so.

[sound of incoming transmission]

PLECK: Oh—

DAR: [over comms] Pleck, I've made it to the sub-basement. How are you doing, have you made it to your bedroom yet?

PLECK: No, actually, I—I ran into a zombie and we're just kinda discussing something.

[zombie groans]

DAR: I feel like there has to be an old-timey nostalgic blaster, even if it was just a prop from a movie.

[on Dar's end of the call, AJ's tube groans "whyyyyyy"]

PLECK: Are—Dar, do you have AJ's tube?

[tube groans]

DAR: Yeah, it—it lights up!

[tube groans]

DAR: The sub-basement has *no lighting*. I ha—I'm literally feeling around in the dark here.

[tube groans]

DAR: But you have to keep turning it to, y'know, keep the light going.

[tube continues groaning]

PLECK: Okay, listen, I'm—I'm almost back to my room. If I can get back to my room, I can get my dinglehopper and then—I think—

[zombie comes out of nowhere, growling]

[Pleck yells]

PLECK: Dar! [Pleck gasps] It's got my leg!

DAR: [nonchalantly] Oh—Pleck, you're gonna be fine. Just grab your Dinglehopper and then walk out. He's not gonna bother you.

PLECK: [struggling] No, it's pinned me to the ground!

DAR: Wait, what?

[zombie grunts]

PLECK: It's licking its dis—decomposing lips!

[zombie makes wet slurping noises]

DAR: Okay, you gotta get out of there, buddy.

ZOMBIE WITH A CRUSH: Single lip. One lip.

[Pleck yelps]

DAR: Pleck, you gotta get out of there. You gotta go barricade yourself in my room, because I have grossly underestimated how sexy you are to zombies.

PLECK: [strangled] Thank you!

ZOMBIE WITH A CRUSH: He's a nine, minimum.

PLECK: [struggling, laughing] Out of how many!?

ZOMBIE WITH A CRUSH: I don't know math.

PLECK: That's not math. It's just counting!

ZOMBIE WITH A CRUSH: I don't know what math is, it isn't. [zombie noise]

DAR: [exasperated] Pleck, stop flirting with the zombie!

PLECK: [still struggling] I'm not, I swear!

ZOMBIE WITH A CRUSH: Love your room.

[scene transitions back to C-53 and AJ]

C-53: Dr. Grandpa Wirehouzer, can you tell us what supposed improvements you've seen on the planet now that it's all zombies?

DR. GRANDPA: Uh, like, look—over there. Do you see all the zombies swimming in the flesh pit?

C-53: Okay...

DR. MERRILLYN: Back and forth, back and forth!

LIFEGUARD ZOMBIE: No running outside the pool!

DR. MERRILLYN: You know, it's so—meditative, honestly, almost, to just feel like—y'know, there's no destination, there's no hurry, just be in the flesh pit.

C-53/AJ: [crosstalk] Uh-huh./Oh...

C-53: Just to... again, be clear about this, the flesh pit is...

DR. GRANDPA: The flesh of other zombies.

DR. MERRILLYN: Right. You know, as they decompose, it becomes a little, uh, liquid. Uh, and then it just becomes—

C-53: A little soupy.

DR. MERRILLYN: Yeah, a little soupy!

C-53: Okay.

DR. MERRILLYN: And so—but then—y'know, you see what that is, though? That's a silver lining. Taking a soupy mound of flesh and turning it into a pool. That can *only* be done once you are disconnected from the wants and needs of everyday.

[a growling zombie comes up, Dr. Merrilyn Wirehouzer casually loads a gun and shoots it while talking]

AJ: Wow!

DR. MERRILLYN: And look, loose teeth everywhere.

C-53: This is one of the most horrible things I've ever seen.

LIFEGUARD ZOMBIE: Only five more minutes of open swim, then it's lanes.

C-53: Alright, anything other than the soupy flesh pit to support your argument?

DR. MERRILLYN: Do you see that library? Just look up ahead.

C-53: Okay. Yeah.

DR. MERRILLYN: Gorgeous library.

DR. GRANDPA: Not a single person reading a violent book!

DR. MERRILLYN: Also...

C-53: Okay...

DR. MERRILLYN: We got rid of late fees. Alright?

C-53: Okay. What troubles me is the subtext that nobody's reading violent books and there's no need for late fees because nobody can read a book anymore.

DR. MERRILLYN: Well... sure. [Dr. Merrilyn laughs]

C-53: Okay.

DR. MERRILLYN: I think you get it. I think you're getting it. 'Cause basically what we say, y'know—"Don't start nothin', won't be nothin'."

AJ/C-53: Right./Okay.

DR. MERRILLYN: And that's the whole kind of pr—y'know, that's—that's the point of creating this, uh—[Dr. Merrilyn shuts the door] I don't know, would you call it—Grandpa?

DR. GRANDPA: Paradise?

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes, paradise!

AJ: Hey... I think I should probably drink the zombie tea, right? Like—

C-53: AJ... wh—*you* came down to this planet wanting to kill every single zombie on the planet, and now you wanna *become* a zombie?

AJ: I mean...

REGINALD: Don't sleep on the biscuits.

DR. MERRILLYN: [proudly] You see that? You see that?

C-53: Yeah, he's just following us with his tray of biscuits.

AJ: His jaw fell off when he said that, too.

REGINALD: [doing an impressive job of talking without a lower jaw] Push 'em against the upper teeth—

C-53: Alright. Listen... Dr. Wirehouzer...

DR. GRANDPA: You can call me Grandpa.

C-53: I was... talking to your wife. Dr. Merrilyn Wirehouzer—

DR. MERRILLYN: Uh-huh.

C-53: We're still concerned by the fact that you forcibly turned these people into zombies, and now you're wanting to do that to the entire universe, even if they *don't* want that.

DR. MERRILLYN: Okay, but—don't you think really what we're giving people is... a calmness. You know, a comfort. It's not really taking away as much as *giving*.

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah. Yeah, what are people after? Of all creatures—

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes.

DR. GRANDPA: Great and small.

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes.

DR. GRANDPA: Of all stars and stripes...

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes.

DR. GRANDPA: ...of this universe.

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes.

AJ: Brains?

REGINALD: Braaaaaains.

C-53: AJ... [C-53 pauses] AJ, you are just a follower, and that's what you are, and I have to be okay with that.

AJ: You know, I actually think of it as leading, but... just... with another person telling you what to do.

C-53: AJ—

DR. MERRILLYN: You know, Grandpa and I, we—we walk around, we walk around. I love to go into the library, no late fees—

C-53: Yes, you've mentioned.

DR. MERRILLYN: And at the end of the day, we just look over—we look at everything.

DR. GRANDPA: We hold hands, we look. I wipe the dew off of your eyebrows.

DR. MERRILLYN: Oh, there's always morning dew no matter the time of day.

AJ: Whoa. There's a lot—yeah...

C-53: Seems improbable, but alright.

DR. GRANDPA: And we say, "What a wonderful universe we will create."

DR. MERRILLYN: You guys, you did come here on a ship, right? You have the capacity to visit other—

C-53: Yes, we did.

DR. MERRILLYN: Okay.

AJ: Oh, we should let them get on the ship!

DR. MERRILLYN/DR. GRANDPA: Thank you!

C-53: Uh, AJ, they're not coming on the ship, okay?

DR. MERRILLYN: Well, I—I mean, we can—we can carry our weight. We're—we're—you know what? We can swab a deck if need be.

DR. GRANDPA: I swabbed my way through science school!

AJ: You guys are swabbers?

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes, we weren't born with a silver spoon.

DR. GRANDPA: We were born with a wooden swab in our teeth.

C-53: Now, listen, this society sounds very good for the both of *you*, but what if there's a zombie out there that doesn't want to be a zombie? What do you do for that person?

DR. MERRILLYN: Too late, already a zombie.

C-53: Yeah, I guess that's my point, yeah, it's sort of too late.

AJ: If you'll excuse me and my associate here, we would like to just talk for a brief moment.

DR. MERRILLYN: Alright—take your time, alright, AJ? There's no pressure here.

AJ: Thank you so much, Dr. Merrilyn Wirehouzer.

C-53: Alright, listen, AJ—

AJ: I think we should let them on the ship.

C-53: No, AJ, what are you talking about!?

AJ: Well, they were talking about how they know how to swab.

C-53: AJ, they're just trying to get aboard the ship so they can turn us into zombies, go to some other planet, and then turn them into zombies.

AJ: Right, but no late fees.

C-53: AJ, you've never paid a late fee in your life!

AJ: No, I've never used a library. I've never been to a library, but—

C-53: Well, you've been to a library.

AJ: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. That's when I dropkicked that—

C-53: You dropkicked the lihbrahrian, yeah.

AJ: Anyway... do you know what I mean? Like, they seem like, cool, and they're, like so in love, and it's like, really awesome.

C-53: They *are* so in love, which means the fact that they want to turn the entire galaxy into zombies much more disturbing. I don't... know what to do with that.

AJ: Right, but did you hear what they were talking about? Like wiping dew off each other's eyebrows? That's pretty great.

C-53: AJ—

AJ: And then they just get to swabbin', and we don't—we just sit back and let them turn everyone into zombies.

C-53: AJ, we're not gonna do that, alright? And I think they're really romanticizing the zombie experience.

AJ: Listen, if we don't take them, it was *your* idea, because I don't want to have to explain it to the crew that we didn't take the people who want to make the universe into zombies.

[C-53 sighs quietly]

AJ: Drs. Wirehouzer, my associate and I here have spoken...

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes, uh-huh.

DR. GRANDPA: Uh-huh.

AJ: And this is not my decision at all. If it were up to me... I would become a zombie, bring you on the ship...

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes.

DR. GRANDPA: Great. Let's do it.

AJ: ...make more zombies.

DR. MERRILLYN: Absolutely.

AJ: But unfortunately, it's not up to me.

DR. GRANDPA: Why not? Why are *you* the one taking orders?

DR. MERRILLYN: Are you saying you're not in control?

AJ: [thoughtfully] Yeah. Yeah!

DR. MERRILLYN: You mean not in control the way this other creature says we're gonna turn them into zombies?

AJ: Yeah! That's right!

C-53: AJ—

AJ: It should be *my* decision to be a mindless zombie!

DR. GRANDPA: Exactly, that's what we're here to do!

AJ: It's my right!

C-53: AJ, put that—

AJ: It's my autonomy to become a—

C-53: [warningly] AJ? Put that tea down.

AJ: [taking off his helmet] I'm liberating myself, because I am tired of being one of, like, a faceless horde of mindless clones. I wanna become a zombie!

[C-53 sighs]

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes. Absolutely.

C-53: AJ...

AJ: Gimme that tea. Please.

DR. GRANDPA: Reginald?

REGINALD: Here you go.

[AJ sips the tea]

C-53: [tired] Oh my Rodd.

DR. MERRILLYN: Oh, it's beautiful. It's beautiful!

AJ: Yeaugh. It doesn't taste good!

C-53: Yeah, no, I bet it doesn't, dummy!

DR. MERRILLYN: Well, it's been sitting around for a couple hours.

AJ: [disgusted] Ohhh...

C-53: That's not a comment on the presentation of the tea!

[AJ continues groaning in the background]

DR. MERRILLYN: It is lukewarm. It is lukewarm. That is, you know.

C-53: I don't think it's the temperature.

AJ: Agh... it is—part of—part of it is the temperature of our...

C-53: Okay, alright.

[scene transitions back to the ship]

[Pleck walks, making scared noises]

[sound of outgoing transmission]

PLECK: Dar. Dar, you have to get up here fast. I think they're in the vents. In the ducts, in Bargie.

[banging and clattering from the vents]

PLECK: Dar!

DAR: I'm—*I'm* in the vents.

PLECK: That was you!?

DAR: Zombies aren't smart enough to get into the vents. *Clearly* it was me.

PLECK: That was incredible! Wait a second—

DAR: Thank you.

PLECK: Hold on... How did you fit into an air duct?

DAR: Ehhh...

PLECK: Bargie's air ducts must be enormous if *you* can fit. I mean, I think of air ducts as being, you know, you sorta army crawl a little bit, like a Tellurian might be able to kinda worm their way through—

DAR: Okay, I don't have time to be offended by this right now, but I promise you, Pleck Decksetter, I'm going to be *very* upset about this later.

PLECK: Okay. I'm sorry. I guess I just—it must just be a cavernous... series of—it must be half the ship!

DAR: Okay, let's—back to the zombie problem.

PLECK: Listen, the—the zombie that cornered me, I—I managed to get out of my room with the Dinglehopper, but I don't know where the zombie is.

DAR: Well, you closed the door, right?

PLECK: N-No, I just ran out.

DAR: Pleck, zombies don't know how to open doors. You *always* close the door behind you.

PLECK: Well, it's—but—you know, every time I see a zombie holo, they're like punching through to, like, grab you as you stand against the—

DAR: Punching through metal? Are they punching through *metal* to grab you?

PLECK: No, it's usually like a—like a dilapidated wooden shack.

DAR: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Okay, well, we have a problem now. Pleck, now we have to be fully prepared for a jump scare.

PLECK: What do you mean?

DAR: Well, it's still out there, we don't know where, so at any point now, they're gonna just jump out and—ooh!—get us.

PLECK: I mean, not if we get them first, right?

DAR: No, no, we don't do the jump scare. The zombies do the jump scare.

PLECK: But what if *we* jump scared *them*?

PLECK: That's just—that's a turn that I've never heard of.

PLECK: Well, then—okay, how do we avoid a jump scare?

DAR: Okay, back to back?

PLECK: Okay.

DAR: And then we're just gonna rotate... Here, actually, if you put these, um, these dust cleaning sheets under your feet, that way we can just...

PLECK: This is—are you trying to get me to swab right now?

DAR: We can just rotate...

PLECK: Are we swabbing right now?

DAR: It doesn't hurt to kill two garfon with one stone, right?

PLECK: I mean, sure, I guess. Okay, alright.

DAR: [narrating under their breath] Okay, just rotate. Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle, shuffle. Okay, oh... Head on a swivel, head on a swivel...

PLECK: If we're really, really quiet, we can probably avoid this jump scare.

[silence]

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[ZOMBIE JUMPS OUT, GROWLS]

[Pleck yells]

DAR: Jump scare!

ZOMBIE WITH A CRUSH: Oh, uh, fancy seeing you again, um...

DAR: My friend isn't interested! Hagh!

[Dar clobbers the zombie]

[scene transitions back to C-53 and AJ]

C-53: Well, this is just great. You convinced this poor young man to become a zombie.

DR. GRANDPA: Yes, you're right, it is great. Thank you for acknowledging it, finally, after this whole time.

C-53: It was sarcasm, I was being facetious.

DR. MERRILLYN: Oof, you know what, we're not used to that.

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah, sorry. Yeah.

DR. MERRILLYN: 'Cause we've been around zombies for so long.

C-53: Yeah. Zombies—very forthright.

DR. GRANDPA: There hasn't been a lot of sarcasm around these parts.

REGINALD: Get it? Parts? Body parts? [Reginald cackles]

C-53: Well, they do seem to engage in wordplay.

DR. MERRILLYN: Yes. Well, puns. Puns are natural. That's a part of the brain that'll never die. Um, so, uh...

C-53: So sad...

DR. MERRILLYN: You know what? This is pretty great. This is pretty great.

DR. GRANDPA: So, you know what, I know why this drip here isn't letting us on the ship. He wants his palm greased.

DR. MERRILLYN: Ohhh, okay. Okay, okay.

C-53: You think the barrier between me letting you on the ship to zombify the entire galaxy is a few kroon?

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah, or, y'know, whatever we have lying around. A bag of teeth, what have you.

C-53: Bag of teeth!? What am I gonna do with a bag of teeth?

DR. GRANDPA: Uh, put 'em in your own mouth? I don't know.

ZOMBIE: Teeeeeeth!

DR. MERRILLYN: I don't judge what you do with teeth, you know. Some people just like the jingle jangle in their pockets.

DR. GRANDPA: You ever fall asleep to the sound of jingling teeth? [The Grandpa shakes the bag of teeth]

C-53: Absolutely not. I can confirm that has never once happened to me.

REGINALD: Oh, you gotta try it.

DR. MERRILLYN: Oh, a lullaby. That's what it is, I'll tell ya. Now—so you're saying we can't get on the ship, huh? You're saying we can't get on—

C-53: ...No. You can't get on the ship.

DR. MERRILLYN: Okay, okay. Fair enough, because you know what? Our new friend here, a lovely ambassador—

AJ: [zombified] Raaagh.

DR. MERRILLYN: That's an ambassador, yes. So you're gonna get on that ship, and you are going to spread the good word.

C-53: Listen, is there a way to un-zombie somebody?

DR. GRANDPA: Well, yeah, sure. I mean, there's plenty of ways. There's a drug, there's a frequency you can play that just automatically un-zombifies them. Sometimes rain does it.

C-53: [incredulous] Sometimes *rain* does it!?

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah.

C-53: *Sometimes* rain does it!?

DR. MERRILLYN: Well, it depends on the pH.

C-53: Oh my—

AJ: Graaah.

DR. MERRILLYN: You know what? We have our lovely ambassador right here. You know what—

DR. GRANDPA: Yes. Here, take some tea.

DR. MERRILLYN: Take some tea.

C-53: Well, obviously, I approve of the koozie, but nothing else about this.

DR. MERRILLYN: And, you know, go forth. Go forth. It was so good to meet you, and this is just wonderful.

DR. GRANDPA: Yeah. Yeah, Reginald, bring them a biscuit to go. Put it in foil.

DR. MERRILLYN: Oh, please, yeah.

C-53: Reginald, we're fine.

REGINALD: [nearly unintelligible] Okay. Here's—have a biscuit.

DR. MERRILLYN: Reginald, do it. And please, you know, if you have any questions about creating your own zombie community, you just—you know where to find us. You know where to find us. We'll be right here, basking.

C-53: I have no questions about it.

[AJ growls]

C-53: I don't know what his opinion was based on that sound.

DR. MERRILLYN: He agrees with us.

DR. GRANDPA: They all agree with us.

C-53: Listen, if you two love zombies so much, why aren't *you* zombies?

DR. GRANDPA: 'Cause I didn't trust anyone to do the zombie-ing for us. But now we've got this drip, might as well. You know what? I'm gonna call your bluff, robot. [The Grandpa starts pouring tea]

DR. MERRILLYN: [nervously] Well—no, no, no. I, uh—The Grandpa, I don't think, uh—

C-53: Yeah, no no no. No, no, no, Grandpa, make your own decision. I wanna—if you wanna be a zombie, go ahead and become a zombie.

DR. GRANDPA: I've always wanted to be a zombie.

DR. MERRILLYN: Look, um, C, uh—

C-53: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

DR. MERRILLYN: I—uh—I, um—it's not hypocritical as much as I believe there—someone must be focused and present to oversee. To make sure that the flesh pit, you know, uh, is cleaned out every other day.

C-53: Sure. Well, it's awfully convenient that it's the both of you who don't have to be zombies.

DR. GRANDPA: Hey, I said I *am* gonna do it. Alright?

C-53: Oh, yeah? Oh, big talk. Big talk, tough guy.

[The Grandpa sips the tea]

C-53: Oh—whoa.

DR. MERRILLYN: Oh. Well—

DR. GRANDPA: [turning into a zombie] Rrrrr—see? See?

DR. MERRILLYN: Are you happy?

DR. GRANDPA: I hope you—rrrrr—eat—rrrrr—eat... those—I hope you eat those words.

DR. MERRILLYN: Are you happy now?

C-53: On some level.

[The Grandpa continues growling]

DR. MERRILLYN: Get out of here! Get out of here! I have to deal with this!

C-53: Alright. [AJ groans] And similarly, I have to deal with this. Dr. Wirehouzer, Grandpa, it's been... an experience.

[C-53 and AJ walk away]

DR. MERRILLYN: Don't worry, honey, it might rain soon. And depending on the rain, we may fix this.

[scene transitions back to Pleck and Dar with a loud boom]

[sound of zombie horde growling]

PLECK: Quick, Dar! Down the hall! Into the room!

[Pleck and Dar run, panting]

[door slides open, then shuts, everything falls quiet]

[Pleck and Dar breathe heavily]

DAR: Wait, this is—this is my bedroom. Horsehat?

[Horsehat makes happy baby noises]

PLECK: Horsehat! Hey, buddy! How you doin'?

[Horsehat babbles]

DAR: Where did you get that spiked Zi-Ball bat?

[Horsehat babbles busily]

DAR: Did you hammer those nails into it yourself?

[Horsehat makes a sound of acknowledgement, then continues babbling]

DAR: And you know you're too young to be chomping on a cigar like that! Get that out of your mouth.

[Horsehat fusses]

PLECK: Yeah, where'd all these sandbags come from?

[Horsehat makes more happy sounds]

PLECK: Horsehat, you got a real barricade in here, bud.

[Horsehat makes a pleased sound]

PLECK: Man, we shoulda come straight in here, Dar.

DAR: Well, I mean... I knew Horsehat could take care of themselves, but I didn't want to put the pressure on them to have to also take care of *us*.

PLECK: Sure, sure. Oh—they're coming, they're coming.

[Horsehat charges up a blaster, multiple shots fire]

[zombies explode, shrieking]

PLECK/DAR: When did you get a gun?/How did you get a gun!?

HORSEHAT: Baa-gaa.

DAR: [mildly horrified] Bargie... Bargie, did you give my baby a gun?

BARGIE: No, I don't believe in guns.

PLECK: Bargie, where have you been this whole time?

BARGIE: I've been flying the ship. I'm the ship. My name is the Bargarean Jade.

DAR: No, Bargie, we know that.

PLECK: No, Bargie, I know. We were being attacked by zombies in here!

BARGIE: Oh. [short pause] Honestly, I just thought you had some friends over, and I was really excited for you to be, uh, you know, getting new people in your lives.

PLECK: Bargie, we were—

BARGIE: 'Cause honestly, you guys just hang out with yourselves all the time, and it gets me a little worried.

DAR: Bargie, we were *screaming*.

PLECK: Bargie, don't you remember? You opened the hatch and hordes of zombies came on board.

BARGIE: What's wrong with being friends with zombies, Pleck?

PLECK: I don't know—they just—they weren't our friends, they were trying to eat our brains.

DAR: Remember, they all were—they were all clamoring for Tiny Toots?

BARGIE: [whispering] What'd you say?

PLECK: Yeah.

BARGIE: Okay, now that all makes sense. Yeah, I blacked out because as soon as anyone says that name, I go into self-care mode. So I completely shut down—

PLECK: Self-care mode makes you turn—

BARGIE: I'm gonna do it now.

PLECK: No, no—

BARGIE: It's a delayed reaction, but I'm gonna do it. Going into self-care mode—

PLECK: Bargie, don't—don't do it, Bargie!

BARGIE: [powering down] Bargie, you're worth it. You're beautiful. And I'm back!
[powering up]

PLECK: Oh, wow. Shorter this time.

BARGIE: It gets... it gets better as you... as time goes on.

PLECK: Okay, Bargie, could you—could you just, um, like—

BARGIE: You want me to get rid of the zombies. Hey, zombies!

[zombies moaning, growling]

BARGIE: If you wouldn't mind getting into a single line and leaving out of my hatch.

[zombies keep growling]

BARGIE: There they go. Opening up my hatch. [hatch opens] Goodbye.

C-53: No, wait. Uh, Barge, uh, I'm bringing this one on board.

DAR: You're bringing a zombie on board? Why!?

C-53: Well—

PLECK: AJ!

DAR: [disappointed] C... now, come on, we both split up Tellurian responsibilities.

C-53: I know. I know, I know. But what I didn't count on was that AJ would *really* want to become a zombie.

[AJ groans]

PLECK: Oh.

DAR: Yeah, you know, we did not factor that in, did we?

C-53: No, we did not.

PLECK: Yeah, that was—I sorta figured that would be—okay.

C-53: Uh... The good news is that the process, apparently, is reversible.

PLECK: Oh, really!

C-53: Yeah, it's a little indistinct, um... as to specifics, uh, so I'm just gonna have to mess around with this tone generator for a little while.

[AJ continues making zombie noises]

[C-53 clicks something, high pitched tone starts]

PLECK: Ooh. Agh, ooh.

C-53: Did—did that work?

PLECK: Ow.

C-53: Going up, uh... one hertz.

[high pitched tone]

[AJ makes another zombie noise]

PLECK: Oh boy./Oooh.

C-53: Did that work?

DAR: Ooh, ooh! Ooh!

PLECK: Uh, C-53, just to—I don't know a whole lot about hertz. How many hertz do we have to go to get through all of them?

C-53: Well, uh, Tellurian hearing ranges 20 hertz to 20 kilohertz, so... we might be here for a while.

[AJ makes some more zombie growls]

PLECK: Oh. Okay.

[C-53 plays another high pitched tone]

AJ: Oh, ugh.

C-53: Oh! Got it. [laughs]

AJ: Oh, wow. Oh...

C-53: Lucked out.

AJ: Oof. What was that? Wha—how many hertz was that?

C-53: It was, uh... 3.2 kilohertz.

AJ: Oh, alright. Whoa! Ugh. [AJ starts putting his helmet back on]

C-53: Yeah, how ya feeling, AJ?

AJ: Hey, guys, I was a zombie.

C-53: Yeah.

PLECK: AJ, are—I'm—I'm so glad you're okay!

AJ: Yeah.

PLECK: Why did you do that?

AJ: I—just felt like the right thing to do at the time, Papa.

C-53: Did you enjoy being a zombie?

AJ: I didn't hate it.

[Pleck and C-53 stifle laughter]

DAR: Now, I... hate to point this out, but there are zombie guts everywhere, so if we could all get to swabbing?

[end credits music]

C-RED-IT5: This is C-RED-IT5, credits and attributions droid, commencing outro protocol. Pleck Decksetter was played by Alden Ford. C-53 was played by Jeremy Bent.

Captain Dar was played by Allie Kokesh. Bargie the Ship, Seesu Gundu, and the Zombie Who's New At This were played by Moujan Zolfaghari. TEENMOM Nermut Bundaloy, Reginald, and the Zombie With a Crush on Pleck were played by Seth Lind. AJ and Zombie AJ were played by Winston Noel. Dr. Merrilyn Wirehouzer and Dr. Grandpa Wirehouzer were played by special guests Naomi Ekperigin and Andy Beckerman. They host the live show and podcast *Couples Therapy*. Naomi is recurring on the Apple TV show *Mythic Quest* and has her very own Comedy Central half hour. And Andy is the host of the long-running popular interview podcast, *Beginnings*. Follow them @naomiandandy on Twitter and @couplestherapypod on Instagram. This episode was edited by Jeremy Bent, with sound design and mix by Shane O'Connell. Theme music composed by Brendan Ryan, performed by FAMES Macedonian Symphonic Orchestra. Opening crawl narration by Jeremy Crutchley. Ship design for the Bargarean Jade by Eric Geusz. Audio hosting by Simplecast. Mission to Zyxx is a proud member of the Maximum Fun Network. Speaking of, Max Fun Drive starts next week! So ready yourself for a special related release.

[end credits music fades out]

[Promo: Reading Glasses]

BRIA: Readers have a lot of problems.

MALLORY: How do you juggle your holds at the library?

BRIA: How do you decide what to read next?

MALLORY: What do you do when you find out an author you love is a huge trash baby?

BRIA: I'm Bria Grant.

MALLORY: And I'm Mallory O'Mara.

BRIA: And we're the hosts of Reading Glasses.

MALLORY: We're here to solve all your reader problems. And along the way, help you figure out...

BRIA: Your reader wheelhouse.

MALLORY: Which are the things that will absolutely make you pick up a book. Our listener favorites tend to be "magic" and "a woman on a journey."

BRIA: And also birds, for some reason?

MALLORY: Your reader doghouse.

BRIA: Yeah, that's the things that'll make you avoid a book.

MALLORY: Ugh, love triangles stress me out so much. Reading Glasses!

BRIA: Every Thursday on MaximumFun.org.

[Promo: Maz Fun Drive 2020]

MISSION CONTROL: Rocket Ship One, this is Mission Control. Come in.

ROCKET SHIP ONE: This is Rocket Ship One. Go ahead.

MISSION CONTROL: Rocket Ship, what's your status on Max Fun Drive? Shouldn't we have seen it by now?

ROCKET SHIP ONE: Sorry about that, Mission Control. Turns out I miscalculated. Current projected ETA for Max Fun Drive is... July 13. But it looks different. It'll be for... four weeks. So it's longer than expected. But all readings point to... low-key?

MISSION CONTROL: Oh, that'll be good. But can you verify that there are still special gifts for new and upgrading monthly members?

ROCKET SHIP ONE: Verified. Sweet gifts for new and upgrading members, plus amazing new episodes and even special weekly livestreams for charity.

MISSION CONTROL: Copy that. Rocket Ship, can you confirm ETA for Max Fun Drive?

ROCKET SHIP ONE: 90% probability of Max Fun Drive from July 13th to August 7th.

MISSION CONTROL: Did you say 90%?

ROCKET SHIP ONE: There were a couple of decimal places, and I might have carried a zero wrong.

MISSION CONTROL: I'm just gonna pencil in July 13th to August 7th. Mission Control out.

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[outtake begins]

ALDEN/PLECK: No, he—he's got me cornered in my room! He's shambling towards me!

[Seth makes zombie noises]

ALLIE/DAR: Pleck, you're fine. You can outrun a zombie.

ALDEN/PLECK: No, I have no—I can't get past him, my room's too small! He's winking an eye socket and licking his decomposed lips!

ALLIE/DAR: No, Pleck, I promise you, the zombie is not attracted to you, it wants nothing to do with you.

[the zombie begins making noises like a dog hoping you're going to share your food]

ALDEN/PLECK: Wh—what?

[the zombie noises continue]

ALLIE/DAR: He's already had his fill of dog. He's fine. [Allie giggles]

SETH/ZOMBIE: You a dog?

ALDEN/PLECK: No, no.

SETH/ZOMBIE: This take is great.

[Seth, Allie, Alden giggle]

ALDEN: Perfect take. Uh, great.

SETH: Yeah. Alright.

ALDEN: I—I look forward to you having to dig through that.