

C-RED-IT5: This is C-RED-IT5. Thank you to *everyone* who signed up to support the show during the MaxFun drive. The MaxFun member-exclusive enamel pin sale is on for just a few more days until May 28th. Proceeds benefit Everyone On, an organization that connects families in need with low-cost internet services and devices. Go to maximumfun.org/pinsale for more info.

[orchestral main theme music begins]

NARRATOR: Space. Some is chill. Some is tooped up. All is part of the great, infinite, cosmic ballet. The venerable starship, the RSS Synergy, forges ever deeper into uncharted regions of their galaxy, growing the Coalition Of United Planets in the name of science, benevolence, and peace. Now, Lead Envoy C-53 and his intrepid crew explore new worlds, forge alliances, and search for a way back home to finally fulfill their... Mission to Zyxx.

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

AJ: So, uh... quick question.

PLECK: Yeah, what is it, AJ?

AJ: We're gonna be on Bargie.

BARGIE: That's me.

PLECK: Yeah, we're on Bargie now.

AJ: We're gonna... do missions.

PLECK: Yeah.

C-53: That seems to be what they've laid out for us, yeah.

AJ: Yeah, so how is this... I mean, this is just what we were doing in Zyxx, right?

BARGIE: Well, for one, I'm no longer a very popular holostar. No one here seems to know me.

PLECK: That's a good point.

DAR: That's a big difference, that's a big difference.

BARGIE: I feel out of all of you, I am losing the most here.

C-53: Uh, well, Bargie, although I am lead envoy, I don't seem to have any access to an actual droid frame, and am still trapped inside a toaster. So... I sorta feel like *that* might be more of a net negative than what you're talking about.

DAR: I mean, *I* have no complaints. I'm free from captain duties, *and* I get free childcare during the day.

C-53: Oh, wow, really?

DAR: Mm-hmm.

PLECK: Yeah, they have like a whole daycare center set up.

BARGIE: Wait, Dar, you were supposed to... if I say a bad thing, then C says the bad thing, and you were supposed to also say the bad thing, I don't—

DAR: Oh... I just—it's really hard, because I feel like this society really prioritizes, like, a really healthy work-life balance.

BARGIE: I don't understand what that means.

DAR: Like, all of our medical expenses are covered...

AJ: Okay. We've lost some things, but we've also gained some things, and now we're just kinda... doin' our thing. [AJ crushes a can]

BARGIE: Yeah, I guess so.

PLECK: It's almost as though the more things change, the more they stay the same, right?

AJ: What—what does that mean? How's that possible?

PLECK: Never mind. It... doesn't matter.

DAR: Hey, Pleck?

PLECK: Yeah.

DAR: Um... Nermut told us to all go “hang out in the hangar.” He was really proud of that one. But... did he say what we were doing today?

PLECK: [opening a bag of chips] Yeah, I feel like we asked him to give us the mission, and he was like, very coy about it. He just told us to wait here.

[sound of incoming transmission]

C-53: Lead Envoy C-53, I have an incoming transmission from Missions Operations, Missions Assignments, and Missions Envoy Associate Nermut Bundaloy.

[incoming transmission continues to beep in the background]

PLECK: Did you just—

BARGIE/DAR: What?/Huh?

PLECK: Did you just announce that to yourself?

C-53: Well, as protocol and diplomatic relations officer, obviously I need to announce incoming transmissions so that we're prepared to make contact, *but*, as lead envoy, they're also *for me*, so...

DAR: Smooth operator.

AJ: [crosstalk] Wait, are there two of them?

PLECK: I just feel like it's not necessa—you could just be like, "Hey, guys, guess what?" Phone call co—"

C-53: Hmm. Nooo.

PLECK: No? Okay.

BARGIE: I like that it's formal, you know? I like that things just—stay the change.

PLECK: You like it, Bargie?

BARGIE: [struggling] I like that things change, just stay the cha—you know? Hold on—

PLECK: Are you trying to say "the more things change, the more they stay the same?"

BARGIE: I—the more things change, the more C stays the same.

PLECK: Uhhh... actually, I feel like C has maybe changed the most out of any of us.

C-53: Yeah, I was gonna say...

PLECK: He's a toaster.

BARGIE: Since day one, they've been that sassy toaster I've learned to love and respect.

C-53: No—

PLECK: I don't know... I don't think that's right.

AJ: So it's not two. Okay.

[incoming transmission sound]

PLECK: Yeah, we should pick up the call probably, right?

C-53: Oh, yeah, yeah, definitely.

[call connects]

PLECK: Hey, Nermut!

NERMUT: [proudly] Hey, crew. Hello, *envoys*.

PLECK: New title, huh?

NERMUT: Yes!

PLECK: What's that title again?

NERMUT: Missions Operations, Missions Assignments, and Missions Envoy Associate. Nermut Bundaloy.

C-53: Oh, really—loaded your plate, over at COUP.

NERMUT: I think it sounds good.

DAR: MOMA MEA, that's a mouthful.

NERMUT: No, it's not—

C-53: Yeah, that'd be silly.

NERMUT: It never needs to be an acronym!

PLECK: Yeah, well... if they spell somethin'... we're sayin' it out loud.

[Nermut huffs in frustration]

PLECK: Wait, hold on, though, Nermut. You could have just given us the mission when we saw you earlier today. Why did you have to call in?

NERMUT: Why? Look!

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

PLECK: [over the comms] Yeah—yeah, you're in an office now?

NERMUT: Mm-hmm. But look at... *this*.

[Nermut presses a button, there is a whooshing sound]

PLECK: Oh.

AJ: Oh, it's a different office. Whoa!

PLECK: Wait, Nermut—is your office *in* one of the reflectoriums?

NERMUT: [excited] Mm-hmm. I can literally go *anywhere* in this thing. So, watch, I can change—you think this office is cool? Check *this* out.

[button press, whoosh sound]

PLECK: Yeah, that's just a larger office.

NERMUT: [happily] Yeah. Yeah, it is.

PLECK: Nermut, your office is in a reflectorium. Why don't you just change it to, like, the cliffs of Filem, or—or a—a sunny beach?

NERMUT: Uh, excuse me, do you see *this*? [tiny motorized buzzing]

PLECK: It's a sta—yeah, you got a standing desk.

NERMUT: Yeah, uh-huh! [motorized buzzing of the desk lowering]

PLECK: [unimpressed] You conjured a standing desk.

NERMUT: [satisfied] Exactly. Yeah. Living the dream.

PLECK: No, but Nermut, turn around, look. You've—you've made an office where out the window is another office building.

NERMUT: Yeah!

PLECK: Surely, at least, put something interesting out the window!

NERMUT: What do you mean? Do you know what goes on in that office?

PLECK: No. Nothing! It doesn't exist, it's a fake place.

NERMUT: It's a software-as-a-service company.

PLECK: What is that?

AJ: Oh, cool!

NERMUT: Enterprise software.

AJ: Cool!

PLECK: Enterprise Software.

NERMUT: Yeah. So...

PLECK: That's the least interesting business it could possibly be.

NERMUT: Well, if you have a startup with ever-growing server needs, Pleck, you're gonna eat those words.

AJ: No, it's B2B, it rules. That jucking rules.

NERMUT: Yeah. AJ's with me.

BARGIE: So, why are you here? What's happening?

NERMUT: I'm gonna assign a mission!

[missionator startup sound sings "Welcome to the missionator"]

AJ: [stoked] Alright! Just like what we always do! Yes! Yes!

PLECK: [annoyed] Yes. Yes, AJ. Nermut, what's the mission?

NERMUT: Okay, so... the Tarbassians and the Perganos are *this close* to signing a peace accord on planet Talcus. But... they're at an impasse. So... don't worry, you do not need to negotiate this impasse.

PLECK: Okay—

C-53: That's great, because we've never heard of the Tarbassians or the Perganos.

PLECK: Yeah, we don't know any of those people.

NERMUT: Uh, their dispute is one of the central interplanetary conflicts of the sector.

PLECK: What sector, Nermut?

NERMUT: *This* sector.

PLECK: What—we don't know what sector this is! What are you talking about!?

NERMUT: Fear not, your ignorance is actually immaterial, because you will not be negotiating this peace yourselves.

PLECK: Okay...

NERMUT: You will be escorting Ambassador Thar Jucko to do so.

[AJ laughs loudly]

C-53: Wait—

PLECK: Wait, what?

DAR: No, that can't be his name.

AJ: Yes! *YES!*

NERMUT: You will be escorting Thar Jucko. The el—

DAR: No!

PLECK: That can't be his real—

C-53: The *last name* is Jucko?

PLECK: His last name is Jucko?

NERMUT: It's not Toopo.

PLECK: Hmm.

C-53: Oh, right. Here, Toopo would be very rude, but Jucko is innocuous.

NERMUT: Guys, come on. Thar Jucko is a galactic elder statesman of diplomacy. He's the father of Fenknesh Jucko?

[AJ wheezes]

PLECK: Who—what—

C-53: That name is also meaningless to us, Nermut.

DAR: What!?! How would we know that?

NERMUT: The cousin of Biltonk Jucko?

PLECK: [laughing] Come on, Nermut—who are you talking about?

C-53: Nermut, you can't just keep listing Juckos like it matters to us!

DAR: We *just* got here!

PLECK: We—

C-53: Nermut, we haven't even been here for a full 24 hours, okay?

PLECK: [still laughing] Yeah!

C-53: Give us some context.

NERMUT: Grand... nephew... of...

PLECK: I—okay.

C-53: If this ends in Jucko, Nermut, just stop right there.

AJ: [crosstalk, laughing] If it does...

NERMUT: Willa Pensch.

C-53: Okay.

NERMUT: [whispering] Jucko.

PLECK/C-53: Okay./[sighing] Ahh, Rodd.

AJ: Yeah-heah! Yeahhh!

NERMUT: Who, of course, negotiated the peace between northern and southern Tegnia on the battlefield.

PLECK: What the—what does that *mean*?

DAR: Have you *slept*?

NERMUT: Who can sleep when you're... [Nermut starts hitting the button, rapidly changing offices]

PLECK: Stop—

NERMUT: [continuing to press the button] Different office. Different office.

PLECK: Literally the only thing that's chang—I can see one computer screen in the background changing. That's the only thing that's changing.

C-53: Nermut, have you been doing this the entire time?

NERMUT: I've been reading about the Juckos and switchin' offices, babyyy. [Nermut switches the office one more time]

C-53: Oh boy.

PLECK: Okay, alright.

NERMUT: Anyway. You will be escorting Thar Jucko to mend the age-long war between the Tarbassians and the Perganos. You just gotta get him there.

PLECK: That sounds like a—

NERMUT: It's a big first mission!

PLECK: I was gonna say, that sounds like a lot of responsibility for us in our fir—

NERMUT: It is!

PLECK: We've never done anything before with these guys.

NERMUT: I've been talking you guys up.

C-53: Really handing us the keys to the kingdom our first time out.

DAR: What have you been saying that would earn us this distinguished mission?

NERMUT: Good luck, guys!

[Nermut ends the transmission, scene shifts back to Bargie and the rest]

BARGIE: He left.

C-53: Hmm. Alright, well, he did send coordinates, so... as soon as we get Thar Jucko on board, we can—

AJ: [laughs] Oh, man.

C-53: AJ, you gotta—you gotta—

AJ: It's funny every time. It is!

C-53: I know, but you gotta bottle it up now.

AJ: Alright, okay.

[transition music]

[front door creaks open]

REALTOR: And oh, my! Here you have the grand double staircase ascending from the foyer, flanking what I assure you was an ornate floor-to-ceiling crystal chandelier, the crown jewel of Wiggles Manor!

WIFE (SHRIMP LADY): I can picture it!

HUSBAND (PROSPECTIVE BUYER): Must have been nice.

REALTOR: Now watch your step over the shattered sconces and mouse droppings.

WIFE: Okay.

REALTOR: That's right, this way. This pile of moldy lumber was a championship-grade billiard table.

WIFE: I like this place! What was the price again?

REALTOR: 18 million kroon, though it will surely go over asking.

HUSBAND: Well, now hold it right there, I want a place for romantic weekend getaways as much as you do, honey, but that's beyond our budget.

WIFE: Loud sigh!

REALTOR: You know, I really shouldn't do this, but how about I let you in on a little secret?

WIFE: Littler the better!

REALTOR: [as if beckoning] Well, closer.

WIFE: Yes?

REALTOR: Everyone needs an escape, but those can be hard to come by right now. Enter Dipsea!

HUSBAND: Well, now you're yellin' the secret.

REALTOR: Who needs a sprawling ruined palace where you can get lost in a world where your pleasure is the only priority? Dipsea is an audio app full of short, sexy stories designed to turn you on.

HUSBAND: So it's like real estate, except it's sensual narratives?

REALTOR: Yesss.

WIFE: [cheekily] What turns me on is napping... away from my husband.

REALTOR: Ba-dum-dum. Then you're in luck. Dipsea also has wellness sessions, sensual bedtime stories, and soundscapes to help you relax before you drift off.

HUSBAND: The thing that titillates *me* most is a bargain.

REALTOR: Well, then loosen those suspenders!

HUSBAND: Well, they are fixed length, I'm afraid.

REALTOR: No, but you've got the little... metal tabs. You lift them—

HUSBAND: Decorative.

REALTOR: What? Well, Dipsea is offering an ex—

HUSBAND: I didn't make the suspenders.

REALTOR: Alright. Dipsea is offering an extended—

HUSBAND: Just to be perfectly transparent, I do make suspenders, but I didn't make these, these are the work of a colleague.

REALTOR: Alright. Anyway, Dipsea is offering an extended 30-day free trial when you go to dipseastories.com/zyxx.

WIFE: Lemme write that down!

REALTOR: That's 30 days of full access for free when you go to D-I-P-S-E-A stories dot com slash Z-Y-X-X.

WIFE: My notebook has cute little shrimp on the cover.

REALTOR: Hahahaha! [Dipseastories.com/zyxx](https://dipseastories.com/zyxx). Or, you know, buy the manor. [the realtor opens another door] Oh, look, look! A fountain filled to the brim with larvae!

[transition music]

JUCKO: Ah, as I see, we have entered the atmosphere. May I retire to some private chambers to prepare for what is to come?

DAR: [hospitably] Of course. Feel free to use that, uh, closet without the mattress as your chambers.

PLECK: [quietly] Uh, that's actually my room, uh—

JUCKO: Thank you, Envoy Dar.

AJ: Thank you, Ambassador... Juck-ooooo.

C-53: Yes, Ambassador... Jucko, it's been a pleasure, uh, transporting you. We'll let you know when we've touched down.

AJ: Yes, Ambassador Jucko, what a pleasure it's been!

JUCKO: Why are you smiling?

PLECK: AJ, why don't you go look out the window or something? We're about to land.

AJ: Okay, okay, Papa. [AJ opens the window cover] Ooh, look at that!

PLECK: Oh, wow.

AJ: [in quiet awe] Oh snap, it's a snow planet!

PLECK: I don't know if this is a snow planet, I think it may be just a planet where it snows sometimes.

AJ: Uh... well, no, it's snowing, so it's a snow planet.

BARGIE: Uh—hold on, putting on my snow hat.

PLECK: Oh, wow, Bargie, cool!

BARGIE: Putting on my snow hat.

AJ: Bargie gets it. It's a snow planet. That's usually how planets are, it's just like, one thing.

DAR: Eh, judging by how disgruntled the people are here, I'd say this is not a snow planet.

PLECK: [laughing] Yeah! Look at those commuters. They look—that guy with the briefcase, he looks so angry that it's snowing.

C-53: Yeah, I would describe the driving on this planet as “aggressive.”

AJ: Wait, they can't be—they're happy, they're on a snow planet! I bet it's X-Marse all the time here!

BARGIE: Oh, wait. Hey, hey!

PLECK: What is it, Bargie?

C-53: Yeah, Barge, what's going on?

BARGIE: There's a problem.

PLECK: What's the problem?

C-53: We haven't landed yet.

BARGIE: Yeah. I'm just letting you know there's a problem.

C-53/PLECK: Okay./Uh...

DAR: What is the problem?

BARGIE: I don't know, you tell me.

PLECK: Oh—Bargie—

C-53: Bargie, are you having trouble navigating in all this snow? It's a pretty—

BARGIE: I love snow. I love rolling in snow, I love flying in snow, I used to date a sentient being made of snow once, didn't work out, they melted, it was very sad.

C-53: Oh, well.

[Dar snickers]

C-53: Gotta be clear of those engines.

BARGIE: Well, I've landed, and I'm still sensing a problem, which I *still* won't describe to you. [Bargie pauses mysteriously] I'm mysterious.

PLECK: Okay.

DAR: Bargie, we'll—we'll go outside and take care of this... “problem” that you're having.

[Bargie's hatch opens, crew heads out]

PLECK: Oh, wow. This—

C-53: Yeah, quite a storm.

PLECK: This snow is really pilin' up, except for right here.

AJ: Look where we landed, it's all dug out.

DAR: [impressed] Yeah, Bargie, sweet parking spot.

JUSTINE: No. No, no, I *don't* think so.

DAR: Oh—uh, who—?

JUSTINE: Turn around. Back where you came from. This is my parkin' spot.

PLECK: Uh... oh.

C-53: Oh.

PLECK: Yeah, we're actually just dropping off an ambassador, so, uh—

JUSTINE: [matter-of-factly] Yeah, and I'm actually just about to rearrange your face, so...

C-53/PLECK/AJ: Oh. Uh—/Whoa. Okay./Whoa...

JUSTINE: Back in there.

PLECK: Alright. Hey, listen—

BARGIE: [singsong] Told you, problem.

PLECK: Sorry, are we not allowed to park here?

JUSTINE: Well, you're—*you're* not allowed to park here. We had, like, snow squalls this mornin'. I dug out my spot, and lo and behold, I look out my window, and your dinky ol' boat is parkin' in my spot.

C-53: Oh. Well, that's... uncharitable.

PLECK: That's a ship, first of all.

C-53: That's—

BARGIE: What'd you call me? Hold me back. Hold me back, hold me back.

C-53/PLECK: Okay. Barge, it's—/Bargie, Bargie—

BARGIE: Hold me back.

C-53: Barge, we're going to work this out. It's okay.

PLECK: L-Listen, I'm sorry. We're sort of new to this, uh, culture, a little bit, so, uh—

JUSTINE: Are you—are you makin' fun of me, sayin' "culture?" Are you trying to say that I don't have culture, is that what this is about?

PLECK: Uh... no, I don't—

C-53: Oh! No no, we meant no offense, uh...

JUSTINE: Sorry, is that a toaster? Is that—is that a toa—is he lookin' at—?

PLECK: Uh—yeah, sorry—

C-53: Uh, yeah, I'm—normally, I'm in a frame, uh, but currently—

PLECK: Well, he's actually our lead envoy *and* a toaster, so.

C-53: Sort of a two-for-one.

PLECK: Yeah.

JUSTINE: Yeah, I don't care if you're a toaster or not, but you're lookin' at me like you've got a problem with me.

C-53: Okay, that is a—the ocular sensor on this toaster is a little lacking.

PLECK: It's sorta angry looking, yeah.

C-53: Yeah.

PLECK: It's true.

C-53: Listen, just—if there's anywhere else to park, we're happy to just get out of your way.

JUSTINE: I mean, you're free to look. This whole neighborhood has become *crazy*. It's really hard to park.

AJ: Yeah, but you didn't, like—this isn't, like, your space. You know what I mean? Like, how is it your space?

[Justine laughs]

DAR: I'm sorry, just—just one quick aside?

PLECK: Yeah, sorry, just one second.

DAR: Just super quick.

[the crew moves aside]

DAR: Listen, crew, we will not be bullied. This is our first assignment. We parked fair and square.

C-53: Okay, good point.

DAR: And this is where we're gonna stay.

C-53: I mean, if you look at the sign posted here, it says, “no parking only on Scornsday,” and it's Wogsday, so—

PLECK: Yeah...

AJ: [walking back to Justine] So we're gonna stay, because, y'know, it's no takesies, d'you know what I mean? You didn't mark the place.

JUSTINE: Uh, yeah, I did. I had, uh, three armchairs down there, and you just landed right on top of 'em.

C-53: Oh, we did crush those armchairs.

DAR: Well, now I—now we don't—C, come on! [feigning innocence] I don't see any armchairs.

C-53: Well—I just—I—well—there—

AJ: How does an armchair even mark it? Do you know what I'm saying?

DAR: Am I supposed to be intimidated by, like, a super tall, beautiful, model-esque being? And there's like an ethereal light about you? No?

JUSTINE: Whatever. Feel free to drive around the—the neighborhood and try to find a spot. Ever since all those envoys showed up here trying to, like, drop off their delegates and whatnot, it's been totally impossible to find a spot.

AJ: I think it's "ahn-voy," but.. y'know, whatever.

PLECK: AJ...

JUSTINE: Are you makin' fun of me?

AJ: No, I'm just saying—

C-53: Oh, AJ, ahh... not a good time.

AJ: I'm just saying, like, I think it's "ahn-voy," right?

PLECK: AJ—

AJ: 'Cause when I say stuff that's not right, everyone corrects me, so—and they love me, so I'm just—doin' the whole thing, you know?

PLECK: Well, AJ, that's—that's different. We're on sort of part of the same crew...

AJ: Oh, okay.

PLECK: We don't know anything about this person.

AJ: Yeah, what's your name?

JUSTINE: Not that it's any of your business, but my name is Justine.

PLECK: Okay. Alright, Justine.

C-53: Justine.

PLECK: Listen, we were just here to drop off an ambassador. We'll be on our way, so like—

C-53: Actually, Pleck, I think we sort of have to chill here until they're done with the negotiations.

PLECK: Hmm.

C-53: Justine, we are a crew of envoys here on behalf of the Coalition Of—

JUSTINE: I'm sorry, I'm not goin' through this again. This happened before with the Floopians vs. the Montclairs, and the Sherberts versus the Sherbets...

[stifled laughter]

JUSTINE: Like, you know, I had to walk, like, eight kilomeets to get home after work. And I'm not doing that to my mom. I woke up early this morning, 'cause it's my mom's anniversary of her bein' sober, and I dug out her car for her in order for her to go shopping 'cause we're running out of Talcan cheese. So, maybe it's a special day for you, but guess what? It's also a special day for me. I just happen to live in the neighborhood where youse are havin' your negotiations, that's not my problem.

PLECK: Okay, yeah.

C-53: Yeah, you live literally right across from the big compound here.

PLECK: Yeah—Justine, I mean, how long have you lived next to this palace?

JUSTINE: Well, I've been here since I was born, and it's rude to ask a lady her age. I don't know how it is on your planet—

PLECK/AJ: Nah, it doesn't—that's not—yeah./Yeah. No, it's rude there. It's rude there.

DAR: It's rude on our planet, too.

[AJ, Pleck, C-53 agree]

JUSTINE: Thank you.

BARGIE: It's rude. I'm... listening.

JUSTINE: Um... but what I will say is, it—it comes and goes. Sometimes it's like a rec center for the senior citizens. But then, like—

PLECK: It's not even a palace all the time!?

JUSTINE: No. It's just, sometimes it's just like, “oh, great, envoy time.” Like, everybody—

AJ: It's *ahn-voy*, but...

PLECK: Okay, AJ—AJ, please, please.

C-53: AJ—I—this is, like, not a great time for that.

PLECK: This is—yeah.

AJ: I'm just sayin'!

PLECK: I think it's just a dialect, AJ. I think it's just a regional... sorta dialect.

C-53: [pronouncing “neither” both ways] And I think this also might be a neither/neither situation where, y'know, technically—

JUSTINE: No, this happened with the Nee-thers vs. the Nye-thers, too.

PLECK: Oh, no. Oh no.

C-53: Okay.

JUSTINE: All of a sudden, everybody's like, “here we go again, cancel the block party.”

JUSTINE'S MOM: [honking the car horn, yelling out the window] Justine! Justine!

JUSTINE: There she goes.

JUSTINE'S MOM: Justine!

JUSTINE: Yeah, ma.

JUSTINE'S MOM: What's that big ol' thing in my space?

JUSTINE: Uh, I don't know, mom, but I'm sorry, it's—there ain't no room for your, uh, Regon Elantra, for some reason. I don't know, maybe *you* should have a conversation with these jokers.

JUSTINE'S MOM: [shouting out the window] I'm on the edge, Justine, I'm on the edge!

JUSTINE: I know. You've gotta understand, she can not be put through stress right now, okay?

PLECK: No, I understand. I understand.

C-53: She seems—she seems agitated, that's for sure.

JUSTINE'S MOM: [honking the car horn] Alright, I'm just gonna circle the block again, Justine.

AJ: Oh, wow, yeah. No, I see there's a resemblance with you and your mom. You're both tall and—um, what was the word, Dar? Eth-ree—

DAR: Ethereal.

AJ: Yeah. Both those things.

JUSTINE: Everyone keeps callin' me that. Never understood what it meant. I assumed it's an insult.

C-53: Yeah, “ethereal” sort of refers to the way that every time you turn your head, your hair sort of, like, whips out gently in slow motion.

PLECK: Slow motion, yeah.

DAR: As if there were a fan blowing it.

JUSTINE: [dismissively] Oh, yeah.

C-53: Or you yourself and your beauty had the power to slow down time?

JUSTINE: Oh, yeah, I get that from my dad.

PLECK: Oh! Cool.

AJ: Oh, where's he, is he in the picture?

PLECK: How's he doin'?

JUSTINE: Um... he's in prison. Okay?

C-53/PLECK: Oh.

JUSTINE: If you need to know, my dad's in prison.

PLECK: Wow, I'm so sorry.

JUSTINE: Because he works there.

AJ/C-53: Oh! Okay.

JUSTINE: As an inmate.

AJ/C-53: Oh...

JUSTINE: Undercover.

PLECK: Oh, okay. Oh—

AJ/C-53/DAR: Oh!

JUSTINE: But he was arrested.

PLECK: Uh—

JUSTINE: For impersonating a prisoner.

PLECK: Uh...

JUSTINE: So we're not quite sure where he is right now, in—in the process.

C-53: Yeah, wow, that's real—

PLECK: Yeah, that seems—that's a lotta—

DAR: That's a lot of twists.

PLECK: Yeah, who knows? That's thorny.

C-53: Yeah, I sorta—I lost the thread at one point there.

JUSTINE: Thank you.

PLECK: Justine, I'm sorry, just one more quick aside, and then we will leave you alone.

[crew steps aside]

PLECK: Crew—I know that, like, she's just some random person. And, like, we have, like, a big job to do, but, like, surely we could find another... spot.

C-53: Yeah, or maybe we could just let the ambassador off in the middle of the street, and then we could—

PLECK: Yeah, maybe one of us should just go get him and then come down—

DAR: *What did I say earlier—*

PLECK: Dar, why are you taking this hard line?

DAR: We flattened—we *flattened* those three armchairs *fair and square!*

C-53: Dar, I don't know. This—it feels—

AJ: The thing is, I always get corrected when I say stuff.

PLECK: No, AJ, let it go!

AJ: So I don't understand why I don't get to correct somebody, do you know what I mean?

PLECK: Let it go!

C-53: AJ, because culturally, they might just pronounce it diff—

PLECK: Also, AJ, we have translators in our noses! She's not even speaking a *remotely* recognizable language to us. The—it's just what the translator is putting into our brains!

AJ: Well my nose worm is broken, then!

PLECK: Maybe! Well, I mean, it did sound like “ehn-voy” to me, though, too, to be fair—

AJ: Okay! Okay!

PLECK: [crosstalk] Okay! But I—but I didn't take issue with it! I didn't say anything about it!

AJ: [crosstalk] We all thought it was “ehn-voy!” We all thought it was “ehn-voy.”

DAR: AJ! AJ! Hold on, hold on. AJ, AJ.

C-53: AJ! AJ!

JUSTINE: Good for you, good for you.

AJ: [combatively] Oh, yeah! It is good for us. It's *real* good.

JUSTINE: It is—it—you—I'm—I like your energy, dude. What's—what's your name?

AJ: [calmly] Oh, I'm AJ-2884.

JUSTINE: [slightly flirtatious] Oh, nice. Hey.

AJ: Hey, what's up?

JUSTINE: Hi.

PLECK: Wait, what—what is happening?

AJ: I don't know, I thought we were fighting.

[quiet laughter]

BARGIE: Oh, somethin's happening right now...

C-53: Wow, that energy... turned *fast*.

BARGIE: Well, I'm watching *this*.

JUSTINE: Oh, man.

PLECK: She's, like, squeezing his biceps.

C-53: Uh, listen, Justine, the peace between the Tarbassians and the Perganos may depend on Ambassador Thar Jucko getting in there, so... you have the opportunity to really help the peace process.

JUSTINE: Look, that's not my job, okay? What I do is I throw out the ice at the rectory. That's my job. My job is not negotiating peace, or whatever. I stay out of politics, I don't care. But... what I do know is, I have my own patch of land on this crazy planet, and youse are parked in it.

PLECK: Wow, okay. You know, Justine, we totally respect that. So... I think our best move is to just—find another pla—

DAR: Stay put and not move.

PLECK: No, Dar—

C-53: Dar...

AJ: We're not movin'!

PLECK: Okay! Stop! Stop, stop.

[Bargie's hatch opens]

JUCKO: Jucko is ready to emerge.

PLECK: Oh...

C-53: Uh, Thar, we're just doing a...

BARGIE: Wowwww. I've heard *that* before.

C-53: Uh, Thar, we're just doing a light negotiation of our own. We'll—we'll have ya in there in just a minute.

JUCKO: Oh, the clock is, um, ticking, sort of. You just have to escort me in and then hang out here for, mmm, six, seven hours, so—

[Justine's mom starts yelling for Justine and honking in the distance]

DAR: Right. The thing is, uh, *Jucko*, we're just figuring it out—

JUSTINE: Mom, just circle one more time. Mom, circle one more time. I am handling this, I promise.

JUSTINE'S MOM: Okay!

JUCKO: Okay, so just, um—if you could just, um—

JUSTINE'S MOM: [driving away] I'm just going in circles!

C-53: She seems really stressed out.

JUCKO: If you could please just settle this, just, promptly, thank you. I will go back into my chambers.

C-53: Ambassador, we promise it will be—

PLECK: Ambassador, we will do our best.

C-53: Absolutely.

JUCKO: Yes.

[Bargie's hatch closes]

AJ: What do we gotta do, Justine? What do we gotta do to make this right?

PLECK: I think—[laughing] AJ, I think we have to just go and give her her parking spot.

AJ: Oh, I just—it just makes me wanna flex in frustration! [AJ grunts and stretches] Get all the muscles, now!

JUSTINE: Well, I mean... [Justine pauses] She's still circlin', so we could still—y'know, we could still be talkin'. It's not—she's not here right now. Could... keep...

DAR: It kinda seems like Justine is on team not-move-Bargie.

AJ: Is that the team?

JUSTINE: I—I didn't say *that*.

AJ: Do you, like, talk to people a lot, Justine, or what?

JUSTINE: Do I talk to people a lot?

AJ: Yeah, seems like you're, like—you don't, or whatever.

BARGIE: Ope. Here we go.

JUSTINE: No, it's just—can I—can I come with you? Like—

[Justine and AJ's conversation fades into the background]

[**JUSTINE:** I dunno, just, like... see how fast this thing can go, maybe I can like, show you—show you around...]

AJ: Oh, the most fun thing is with Bargie, 'cause... go...

JUSTINE: [laughs]

PLECK: Dar... is Justine flirting with AJ?

DAR: I'm sorry, you want me to be part of this aside? I wanna watch this sexual tension play out!

PLECK: Okay, alright. I just—I just wanted to make sure I was clear—it's hard because with AJ's helmet on, it's just hard for me to tell what he's thinking at any given time—

C-53: Oh, you can tell if you're really watchin'.

AJ: [nonchalantly, doing push-ups] Oh, yeah, they're upside down push-ups, so I'm like, doin' a headstand-stand. I'm, like, pushing up while I handstand.

JUSTINE: Oh, man.

AJ: Yup! And I can do one-handed, too, so it's just kinda—yup!

JUSTINE: You got some strong hands. Hey! Do—me and my mom, we're gonna throw potatoes at the delegates later. Do you wanna stick around and—

AJ: Oh, that sounds awesome, yeah, I totally would do that. Can we do that? Are we allowed to do that?

C-53: AJ, no, we can't—

PLECK: AJ, no, we're—we're part—we're sort of part of that thing, you know, we're kinda—represent...

DAR: I don't know, I think I'm gonna be team watch-AJ-throw-potatoes-at-delegates on this one.

BARGIE: Hey, hey! Can I interrupt for a brief moment?

C-53: Yeah, Barge.

BARGIE: I keep hearing everyone discussing, “should we move Barge, should we not move Barge? Should we move Barge?” No one's asked *Bargie*... if Barge wants to be moved.

PLECK: Uh...

DAR: Well, I just assumed no, Barge. But if you wanna decide which side you wanna be on, I—you have free will.

PLECK: Yeah, are you on team you-wanna-move?

DAR: Dar, as you know, one of my greatest pet peeves is when someone *assumes* something about me, okay? I have a full life, everybody. I make decisions myself.

PLECK: Alright—

BARGIE: But my decision is recognizing right now that nobody wants Barge around—

PLECK/C-53: No, no, Barge.../No, Barge, that's not...

BARGIE: [getting progressively more upset] Nobody wants to talk to Barge. Barge was never good enough for the roles, or for that relationship, or for her own son. I recognize that's happening right now—

PLECK: Whoa! Whoa, Barge, that's too deep, yeah.

C-53: Barge, this [indistinct]'s getting far past...

BARGIE: —and I'm unloading it onto all of you. So I'm just...

PLECK: No, you don't have to...

DAR: Ah, I don't think this is about *this* anymore.

BARGIE: [engines humming] Oh, don't assume, Dar! I'm leaving.

PLECK: No! No, Bargie, come back!

BARGIE: [takes off] Toot toot. Buh-bye.

PLECK: Oh...

C-53: Well, this complicates things.

JUSTINE: Thank you. Oh, well, this is embarrassing because she moved, but my mom's... my mom's not back yet, so we're just standing in an empty parking spot with three flattened armchairs.

DAR: Well, also, Thar Jucko has to get off of Bargie.

[scene transitions to inside Bargie]

JUCKO: [trying to remain calm] Um, I've heard that the Tarbassians are brandishing arms, and, uh, the negotiations have broken down, so we could—why are we in the air?

BARGIE: Ohhh, I just need a moment. Wowww.

JUCKO: Toop.

BARGIE: Wow.

JUCKO: Toop!

BARGIE: Just takin' a walk around the block.

JUCKO: Well, toop Jucko!

[transition music]

REALTOR: [distantly] Or, you know, buy the manor. Oh, look, look! A fountain filled to the brim with larvae!

MOUSE: Squeak, squeak! Tell us again about how you were brought here from the past.

GUY BROUGHT BACK FROM THE PAST: It's a funny story, actually. So one minute, I'm trying to eat some guy's leg as a sandwich, and next, I'm here in Wiggles Manor with you lot. You mice tell me I'm in the future. That's good enough for me.

MOUSE: You're impressively adaptable, squeak!

GUY: Nothin' to it, really. If we can't change with the world around us, we're *all* living in the past, innit?

MOUSE: Squeak, squeak.

GUY: Well, yeah, and plus, I've benefited hugely from therapy. Because here in the future, it's finally okay to talk about our mental health! That's why I'm excited about the sponsor, BetterHelp. See, mouse, BetterHelp is customized online therapy that offers

video, phone, and even live chat sessions. They'll match you with a therapist in under 48 hours, they will.

MOUSE: So squeakin' fast!

GUY: Right? Back when I'm from, before Dame Wiggles time snatched me, the only thing you could hope would be fast is your demise at the executioner's blade.

MOUSE: Bleak!

GUY: But remember, my rodent friend, you don't need a traumatic event to benefit from therapy. Maybe you're feeling anxious or depressed, or your stress feels like it's too much to manage.

MOUSE: I'm anxious about going to an office again—squeak!—after working from decayed chateau for so long.

GUY: Makes sense. So why not get some tools to cope and make your life just a little bit easier? And by the way, BetterHelp is way more affordable than in-person therapy, but can be just as effective. Plus, you can get 10% off your first month at betterhelp.com/zyxx.

MOUSE: Squeak!

GUY: I didn't even know what a percent was before, let alone think I'd get 10 of 'em off. That's Better H-E-L-P dot com slash Zyxx.

MOUSE: Have you considered wearing something under the tunic, squeak?

GUY: Nope. That's one part of the future I'll never participate in.

MOUSE: Okay...

[transition music]

C-53: [calmly] Crew, I am lead envoy, the responsibility falls to me. I assure you, I can handle this.

PLECK: Okay, yeah.

C-53: Justine... [C-53 pauses, then continues kinda desperately] Please, please, please give us this parking spot. I mean, the—the ramifications for this sector are enormous. Bargie needs to land again.

DAR: [intoning dramatically] Heavy are the lips that blow the captain's horn.

[laughter]

JUSTINE: Um... well, I'm going to need some insurances.

C-53: Uh—well, Justine, I'm sure I could deliver you a holographically notarized document on behalf of the Coalition of United Planets that would ensure that you and your mother, of course, would be guaranteed to—

AJ: Or... what if we, like, park Bargie for a while, and then pile in your mom's car, and then you drive us around your depressing neighborhood? Sounds... fun.

JUSTINE: Yeah, I mean, I wasn't even going to suggest that, but that's smarter.

DAR: Is it smarter, though?

AJ: Yeah, I'm pretty sure it is.

BARGIE: Alright, I cooled off. I'm ready to come down.

C-53: Okay. Alright, Barge, you are clear to land.

[Bargie lands]

[car horn honks]

AJ: Oh, and here comes Justine's mom.

JUSTINE'S MOM: What? What the toop!? [honks car horn]

JUSTINE: Mom, it's fine.

JUSTINE'S MOM: What the toop!

JUSTINE: It's fine, I said they could. I said they could.

JUSTINE'S MOM: You're toopin' with me!

JUSTINE: Just... chill.

C-53: Ma'am, your daughter has been kind enough to loan us your parking spot, and as collateral, we will all be getting into your station wagon while the negotiation is pursued.

JUSTINE'S MOM: Ugh, just get in the car, but nobody smell my cheese!

JUSTINE: Okay, guys. Guys. Um... that's my mom.

C-53: Yeah.

JUSTINE: Don't—please don't smell her cheese.

AJ: Now I *want* to.

PLECK: I don't know what even that would—

AJ: I want to, now that I can't.

JUSTINE: Well, maybe, I mean—you can smell whatever you want, you know—

AJ: Oh! Okay. That's nice.

JUSTINE: But, like, just nobody bring it—nobody bring it up. [Justine opens the car door] C'mon in.

DAR: Everyone cram in!

C-53: Ooh.

PLECK: Wow.

C-53: It's spacious in the back here.

PLECK: Yeah, I can't believe you fit in here, Dar.

DAR: Wow, Pleck. I understood the Regon Elantra had room for the *entire* family, and I *thought* we were family!

PLECK: Yeah, no, you're—I'm sorry, you're right. I'm sorry.

C-53: Uh, actually, one of us will need to leave the vehicle, as someone has to accompany Thar Jucko inside to the actual negotiation.

JUCKO: [cramming into the car] Excellent. So this must be the shuttle to the negotiations?

C-53: Uh—

DAR: Uh, not—not quite?

C-53: No, no, Thar, you're just gonna—

JUSTINE'S MOM: Here we go-ooo! [steps on the gas]

C-53: Oop. Aaand we're going. I promise we'll get you there eventually, Ambassador!

JUCKO: Thank you.

JUSTINE: Mr. Soldier, you wanna sit on—you can sit on my lap if you don't have a place to stay.

AJ: Oh, okay, yeah! There's not much room, so I'm happy to sit on your lap.

[AJ scooches over to Justine's lap, Dar laughs]

JUSTINE: Yeah. Okay, so's—wow. Is that metal?

AJ: Just like, armor.

C-53: Justine, are you sure that's comfortable? He's very heavy.

JUSTINE: No, it's—uh, I'm very strong.

C-53: Yeah, well, clearly.

JUSTINE: In fact, actually, you can see right up there, uh, up on—on the left, is my boxing gym.

PLECK: Oh, wow.

C-53: Yep, there it is.

JUSTINE: Where I, uh, used to box, but I'm not allowed to—I'm not allowed in there anymore, mostly because I was stealin' janitorial supplies. But when I was boxing, I was *very* strong.

AJ: Whoa.

PLECK: Wow. Janitorial supplies.

AJ: What kind of supplies did you get?

JUSTINE: Oh, just, like, napkins and... two mops.

AJ: Uh-huh. Pretty cool.

PLECK: Their faces are so close to each other.

C-53: Yeah, well.

JUCKO: We seem to be driving straight away from the palace, and I've gotten news that the—

DAR: Yeah. Jucko, don't—don't worry about it. We're absolutely gonna go back. It's just that right now, I'm really watchin' this play out with AJ. Um... [Dar laughs] yeah.

[Justine and AJ have another flirtatious background exchange]

[**JUSTINE:** What, like—what setting would you even wash that on?

AJ: Oh, uh... oh, I don't wash it.

JUSTINE: Oh, nice.

AJ: Yeah. Yeah, I don't wash it ever.]

JUCKO: Okay. The Perganos have taken half of the Tarbassian delegation, um, captive? So...

C-53: Oh, that's... pretty bad, um...

PLECK: Oh, boy.

DAR: Sounds like a situation *you* don't wanna be a part of. That sounds dangerous, so we should just—

JUCKO: Uh, but—pretty soon. Anytime.

DAR: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

AJ: Yeah, so the armor's just a simple polycarbon weave. Y'know, it's not—nothin'—pretty standard.

JUSTINE: Yeah. Okay.

AJ: And sometimes I get this, like, paste in my helmet if I eat the food, and it, like, kind of disintegrates in the helmet, and it, like, sticks to my head, and sometimes, sorta save some stuff for later, and...

JUSTINE: Yeah. That's how, like, I get jelly beans in my bra.

AJ: Oh, yeah?

JUSTINE: All the time. Yeah.

DAR: Okay, never mind. This is a soulmate situation.

C-53: How is the paste *working* for him? This is crazy.

AJ: Yeah, well, I mean, uh—where's that cheese? I thought we were gonna... smell the cheese.

JUSTINE: Um—no, uh—we weren't—

C-53: No, we were supposed to *not* smell the cheese.

AJ: Oh, yeah, right. That was a forbidden... thing.

JUSTINE: Sorry, Mom.

JUSTINE'S MOM: It's like I told you to do something, and you didn't listen.

AJ: Hey, hey! What's your name? Lady?

JUSTINE'S MOM: Grustine.

AJ/PLECK: Grustine?

AJ: You need to be nicer to your daughter. Like, I don't know what “being sober” is or whatever, but, like, you need to, like, be nice.

[muffled shriek of laughter]

C-53/PLECK: Wow, AJ./Oh, AJ...

C-53: *Wow*, AJ.

AJ: It doesn't mean that you can be mean to your daughter, she seems cool and nice!

C-53: Ugh...

AJ: She gives good back rubs!

GRUSTINE: *What!?*

[there is a thump, and AJ yells as he flies out of the car]

DAR: Whoa! She just threw AJ out of the car!

PLECK: Grustine just threw AJ out of the car.

[the car door shuts]

PLECK: Wow.

DAR: Family pass at the boxing gym, hmm.

C-53: Oh, hachi machi.

DAR: No no no no no, no no, no no, that's not a captain thing, that is a *me* thing!

C-53: Okay, I immediately apologize.

JUSTINE: Mom, this is not the first boyfriend you've done this to. Every time there's someone I like—

C-53: Boyfriend, already?

DAR/JUCKO: *Boyfriend!?!/Boyfriend, wow.*

GRUSTINE: I just want someone who's good for you, because even though I give you tough love, it's love!

JUCKO: Oh, speaking of, I would *love* to get back to the summit.

DAR: Yeah, we do need to go back.

JUCKO: Oh, thank you.

DAR: ...For AJ.

JUCKO: Uhhh...

PLECK: Oh, no, AJ's actually—

C-53: No, that's—you can—if you look back, you can see him.

[sound of AJ running behind the car, panting]

[Dar snickers]

JUSTINE: Oh my goodness. He's so fast, look at him!

PLECK: [laughing] Yeah.

C-53: Yeah, I mean, that's about as fit as you're gonna get.

PLECK: He's a clone, but he's a clone of a super soldier, so, you know.

JUSTINE: But do you know what that means? You know what I think that means? That means he can run [sad hiccup] that fast away from us, too. Y'know?

PLECK: Oh. Oh...

C-53: I mean, technically that is true.

PLECK: Yeah, but—no, I'll tell you this, Justine, AJ's one of the most loyal people I've ever known.

JUSTINE: Really?

PLECK: Yeah!

DAR: I mean, he defected from his troop to follow us around space...

PLECK: Yeah, I mean, okay, sure, when you look at it that way, but—

[AJ continues running, panting outside the car]

PLECK: Hey, hey, AJ—

AJ: [muffled] Roll the window down!

DAR: Okay—

PLECK: He's making the roll the window down signal.

AJ: [muffled] Roll the window down! Roll the window down!

C-53: No, we can't, she's got it, it's child locked, she controls all the windows, we can't.

JUSTINE: Mom—mom—can you just put the window down, ma?

GRUSTINE: [begrudgingly] Okay... slightly ajar.

PLECK: Okay, that's fine.

AJ: [still running] Listen, you can be a lot nicer to Justine. She does everything for you. Maybe, you know, maybe—maybe the more things change, Grustine, the more things stay the same. Have you thought about *that*?

PLECK: AJ—AJ, that doesn't apply—that doesn't apply in this situation.

C-53: That's not... that's not really how that works, AJ.

PLECK: That doesn't apply in this situation.

JUSTINE: No, he's right, they *do* stay the same. Another man trying to speak for me, not lettin' me have my own opinions.

C-53: [sympathetic whisper] Wow.

PLECK: No, Justine... no.

JUSTINE: I think I've had just as much as I can take of this.

PLECK: Oh, no.

GRUSTINE: [stopping the car] Justine, what have I always told you about relationships? Men are trash, relationships are trash, you're trash, I'm trash, everything is trash, this car is trash, cheese is trash, these sentients in front of us? All trash... [Grustine pauses, another car honks at them] And I love you.

JUSTINE: I love you too, Mom. I love you so much.

AJ: Justine, you don't have to stay here, y'know, with your weird smelly mom, digging out her parking spot every time it snows, y'know? You could—you could do so much more. Don't you want more? [quietly] Is that what people say?

JUSTINE: You know, guys, every day I go to my own house, and I knock on my own door, and I hope that I'm not going to answer my own door, and that I got outta here. And then I always answer my door, and I'm like, how did I do this again? And I'm like, I don't know. Why—what are you knockin' for? What do you want? And I'm like, I was

hopin'... And I just wanna tell you, just... don't get stuck here. Don't get stuck here in this neighborhood.

AJ: So, we're—we're leaving...

C-53: Wait, so you knock on your own door *every day*?

JUSTINE: Most days, yeah.

DAR: [gasps] What if you *weren't* there to answer it?

C-53: Yeah, that—

JUSTINE: Are youse makin' fun of me?

C-53/PLECK: No, no./Uh, no.

DAR: No, honestly, you've posed a *really strong* hypothetical.

JUSTINE: That's what my mom was addicted to, by the way.

C-53: Hypotheticals?

JUSTINE: Hypotheticals.

PLECK: Wow.

C-53: Well...

PLECK: Wow.

C-53: In theory, they're very dangerous.

PLECK: [laughing] Yeah, in theory—that's true. Thank you, C-53. Y'know, Justine—AJ's right. Your society is interplanetary. You could leave here whenever you wanted to! We could give you a ride to the RSS Synergy, if you wanted.

JUSTINE: No, they don't wanna—they don't wanna meet me. They'll just, like—

PLECK: No, they—they do!

C-53: I think they would.

PLECK: We're not even from this galaxy, and they gave us a job almost immediately.

JUSTINE: ...Really?

PLECK: Yeah!

C-53: Yeah.

JUSTINE: ...They're not gonna make fun of me or think that I'm not fancy enough?

PLECK: I don't think—I mean, I don't think so. Our lead envoy, if you'll remember, is a toaster.

C-53: Yeah.

PLECK: So... I'm just sayin', you know, I think... if you're feeling stuck here, come up to space with us, you know? Maybe you can find a—a reflectorium to hang out in, be a part of the COUP, you know?

JUSTINE: Oh, wow.

AJ: Or the other thing we could do is break into the boxing gym and really, like... really take the—

PLECK: Stick it to 'em?

AJ: Steak—yeah, like—y'know—

DAR: Steal a couple more mops.

AJ: Yeah, mess it up. And then steal all the janitor stuff, y'know?

JUSTINE: Yeah.

AJ: Just a thought. It's one of the two. Either, y'know... join the idyllic, like, society, or—

C-53: New life in a utopian space society, or mess up a boxing gym.

JUSTINE: Let's get that gym. [claps] Let's get that gym!

AJ: Let's do it! That's right!

PLECK: No, Justine, what—really?

JUSTINE: [already running off with AJ] Let's go. Let's go.

DAR: Wow. I mean, they barely let you posit that to them before—

C-53: Yeah, they just ran off.

DAR: —AJ and Justine started *running* towards the boxing gym.

PLECK: Yeah, they're gone.

GRUSTINE: [honking the car horn supportively] You go get 'em, honey!

C-53: Well, the good news is we're back at the palace, um... Ambassador Jucko, we're so sorry it took so long.

JUCKO: [sighs deeply] Several Perganos have defected to the Tarbassian side. It turned out that the Tarbassian leader was secretly harming their own position in favor of the Perganos, so—um...

C-53: This seems—sort of seems like helpful info to have before you go in to negotiate peace.

JUCKO: I could have stopped all of it.

DAR: Are you listening to this, like, on a play-by-play sports radio? How are you...

PLECK: Yeah, how are you—how do you know this?

JUCKO: I have one earbud in.

[quiet snickering]

PLECK: Oh... okay.

[scene transitions to the boxing gym]

YOGA INSTRUCTOR: [slowly, meditatively] Okay, so... everyone, if you could just get into your happy baby.

[deep breathing, student repeating “happy baby”]

YOGA INSTRUCTOR: That's it, you have just completed... your pra—

[door bursts open and a bell dings]

JUSTINE: Guess who's back, ba—wait, what?

AJ: Oh, yeah! We're gonna—oh. Um, is this what boxing looks like on your planet?

JUSTINE: What are you—

YOGA INSTRUCTOR: I'm sorry, this is restorative yoga for the elderly. The boxing gym closed down *months* ago.

ELDERLY PERSON 1: If you're more than 15 minutes late, you're supposed to just not come.

AJ: Oh, shut up!

[AJ throws something, there is a sequence of loud crashes]

ELDERLY PERSON 2: Wah! Ow!

YOGA INSTRUCTOR: Ow! Owww!

ELDERLY PERSON 3: [voice quavering] Ohhh nooo! My mantra's been destroyed!

ELDERLY PERSON 1: I don't *feel* like a happy baby!

AJ: Nobody try to be a hero, nobody try to be a hero. Just give us all the janitorial supplies, that's all we want. Do you guys have plumbing stuff, or, like—we need all of it. Just put it all out.

UNCLE DAVE: Eh, brother, I got all kinds of plumbin' problems.

JUSTINE: Oh, hey, Uncle Dave.

UNCLE DAVE: Hey, Justine, how you doin'?

JUSTINE: Oh, I'm good, sorry about this. I thought it was still a... still a boxing gym.

UNCLE DAVE: I'm workin' on my hip, I got a lotta flexibility issues.

JUSTINE: Alright. Well, yeah. We're estranged. Don't talk to me.

UNCLE DAVE: O-Okay. Well, your boyfriend threw a trash can at me, so I thought we maybe were back, but that's—alright.

AJ: Oh, I'm not her boyfriend.

JUSTINE: He said you were my boyfriend.

AJ: Oh, am I your boyfriend? Well, I guess I should probably tell you this... I'm six years old and I have no genitals.

JUSTINE: Uh-uh. Not again. I'm outta here, I'm outta here.

AJ: Okay.

UNCLE DAVE: Well, that coulda gone over better, buddy.

ELDERLY PERSON 3: *I'm single!*

[transition music]

GRUSTINE: Okay, I found parking, everybody get out.

PLECK/JUCKO: Oh, okay.

DAR: Okay.

PLECK: Uh, thank you, Grustine, y'know, it was a pleasure, uh... Glad you found park—oh, wow, she... parked right under Bargie.

DAR: Huh.

JUCKO: Oh.

DAR: Look at that.

PLECK: We should've thought of that earlier.

C-53: Yeah, that seems like a...

JUCKO: Oh, so your argument was for nothing?

PLECK: Uh...

DAR: Okay, let's see you inside, Jucko.

JUCKO: Well, luckily, only one Tarbassian and one Pergano remain, so it should be a relatively direct—

PLECK: Oh, no. What?

JUCKO: Yes.

PLECK: How many started?

JUCKO: Oh, hundreds.

PLECK: What?

JUCKO: They're at lunch, so they have to leave one...

C-53: Hmm. Of course.

DAR: You made it sound like they had murdered each other. You knew *exactly* what that sounded like.

JUCKO: Hm, you may—you editorialize.

DAR: You wanted us to feel bad!

JUCKO: No?

PLECK: [laughing] You know what—

JUCKO: No, I said just truth.

C-53: Thar, I have to say, for an ambassador... it was a pretty manipulative move.

PLECK: Yeah. You bury a lot of leads.

JUCKO: Um, well, I cannot change your wrong opinion about me.

C-53: Wow, okay.

JUCKO: Um, because, you know what they say, the wronger your opinion about me is, the more it stays the same, so I will not try to change it.

C-53: [sighing] That's... I also don't think that's correct... usage of that, but...

DAR: I don't... think...

JUCKO: Hmm, it's what my tattoo says.

DAR: Did you say there was lunch?

JUCKO: Oh, not for... not for envoys.

C-53: Nah, okay. Alright.

DAR: No? Okay.

PLECK: We work here, sort of.

JUCKO: I mean, let's be honest, it... that was a bad job. Of the thing you were to do.

C-53: I mean, he's not *wrong* about that.

DAR: Mmkay. Yeah.

PLECK: No. Hard to argue with that.

DAR: We did get to see the boxing gym, though.

AJ: [dragging something heavy] It's a yoga studio. It's a yoga studio.

DAR: Whoa!

PLECK: Whoa, AJ!

AJ: I got a trash can!

DAR: Why do you have a trash can?

C-53: Where's Justine?

AJ: Eh, we broke up.

DAR: Oh.

AJ: I didn't know we were together, but then when I kind of suspected we were...

DAR: Oh, you didn't know you were together? 'Cause we *all* knew you were together.

PLECK: Yeah. It was going really well, I thought.

[distant crowd cheering]

JUCKO: Alright, peace brokered. [Thar Jucko dusts off his hands]

PLECK: Wow.

C-53: What?

JUCKO: Yeah.

DAR: *You* did that?

JUCKO: Yes.

C-53: Wow.

JUCKO: Well, here's the thing. One of them—this is crazy, one of the Perganos, his last name is Toop? And then I explained that to the Tarbassian ambassador, and we had a big laugh about it, and then everyone was having such a good time that they just agreed to be friends. 'Cause—[laughing] can you imagine, your name is Toop?

[brief pause]

DAR: No one say anything. It's funnier this way.

[snickering]

[end credits music]

AUCTIONEER: And now, lot 136, two of the late dame's effects. A small embroidered pouch, which contains some sort of blush or setting powder, and this fine walking staff! We'll start the bidding at 15 kroon, 15 kr—

TINY CRIMINAL: 15!

AUCTIONEER: 15 kroon from the small gentleman with the knife.

[the tiny criminal swooshes the knife around and cackles]

AUCTIONEER: Do I hear 20, 20 kroon, 20 kroon—

BARTENDER: 20.

AUCTIONEER: 20 kroon from the gentleman in the apron. We're at 20 kroon, look at this woodwork, friends, look at the stitching! Who's at 30? 30 kroon is a steal for antiques like this! 30 kr—

LADY ON FIRE: 50 kroooooon!

AUCTIONEER: 50 kroon from the lady engulfed in flames. Do I hear 60, 60 kroon, 60 kroon. No! Alright! That's 50 going once. 50 kroon going twice. Going three times—

KOR BALEVORE: [menacingly] Twenty thousand kroon.

[the crowd gasps]

AUCTIONEER: Ehehe, well—sir, the bidding is currently at 50 kroon...

KOR BALEVORE: What can I say? I'm an avid stick enthusiast. See this one? [Kor unsheathes a humming wood saber] Just hoping to add one more to the collecsh.

AUCTIONEER: Uh—

KOR BALEVORE: Short for collection.

AUCTIONEER: Sure, but—heh, 20,000 kroon is—is way more th—

KOR BALEVORE: This is when you say... “sold.”

AUCTIONEER: [coughs nervously] Uh, s-sold. Sold for 20,000 kroon to the, uh, red-eyed cyborg in a cloak. You are the proud owner of the late Dame Wiggles's walking staff and powder pouch.

KOR BALEVORE: [sheathing the wood saber] Yesssss. And I think I'll take them... *traveling*. MWAHAHAHAHAHA!

[sick guitar riff, “KOR BALEVORRRE!”]

[end credits music]

C-RED-IT5: This is C-RED-IT5, credits and attributions droid, commencing outro protocol. Pleck Decksetter and the Auctioneer were played by Alden Ford. Lead Envoy C-53, the Prospective Estate Buyer, and Uncle Dave were played by Jeremy Bent. Dar, the Yoga Instructor, and the Lady on Fire were played by Allie Kokesh. Bargie the Ship, Grustine, and the Shrimp Lady were played by Moujan Zolfaghari. Nermut Bundaloy, Thar Jucko and the Timesnatched Guy were played by Seth Lind. AJ and the Realtor were played by Winston Noel. Justine was played by special guest Christine Nangle. Christine is a writer and producer for *The Simpsons*. Before that, she was a writer for *Saturday Night Live*, *Kroll Show*, and *Inside Amy Schumer*, and head writer for *The President Show*. Follow her on Twitter @nanglish. Kor Balevore was played by Brennan Lee Mulligan. This episode was edited by Seth Lind, with sound design and mix by Shane O'Connell. Theme music composed by Brendan Ryan and performed by FAMES Macedonian Symphonic Orchestra. Orchestra mixing by Danny Keith Taylor. Additional

music by Shane O'Connell. Opening crawl narration by Jeremy Crutchley. Ship design for the Bargarean Jade by Eric Geusz. Audio hosting by Simplecast. Our website is missiontozyxx.space, where you can order magnetic Zalcatron 5000 refrigerator emblems, Hyper-Proton Fuel stickers, t-shirts, and more. Mission To Zyxx is a proud member of the Maximum Fun network.

[Promo: Oh No, Ross and Carrie!]

ROSS: Somewhere between science and superstition, there is a podcast.

[crashing, screaming]

SPEAKER: Look, your daughter doesn't say she's a demon. She says she's the devil himself!

CARRIE: That thing is not my daughter! And I want you to tell me there's a show where the hosts don't just report on fringe science and spirituality, but take part themselves!

[upbeat music]

ROSS: Well, there is, and it's Oh No, Ross and Carrie! on Maximum Fun.

CARRIE: This year, we actually became certified exorcists.

ROSS: So yes, Carrie and I can help your daughter.

[growling]

CARRIE: Or we can just talk about it on the show.

ROSS: Oh No, Ross and Carrie! on maximumfun.org.

[Promo: Tiny Victories]

ANNABELLE: Hi, are you someone who thinks that when one door closes, another one opens?

LAURA: Someone who always sees the light at the end of the tunnel?

ANNABELLE: If you answered yes to one or both of these questions, good for you.

LAURA: We are not those people.

ANNABELLE: Nope, I'm Annabelle Gurwitch, and I'm a "you know that other door opening? It probably leads to a broom closet" kind of person.

LAURA: And I'm Laura House. When I see a light at the end of a tunnel, I assume it's a train headed right toward me!

ANNABELLE: Laura and I have created a brand new podcast for people like us. It's called Tiny Victories. We're sharing personal tiny victories or things we've read or seen that inspire resilience.

LAURA: So if you're looking for a tiny reason to get out of bed each week, subscribe to Tiny Victories.

ANNABELLE: Available on Maximum Fun, or wherever you get your podcasts.

LAURA: Let's get tiny!

Maximumfun.org: comedy and culture. Artist owned, audience supported.

[outtake begins]

MOUJAN/GRUSTINE: Well, get in the car, we're drivin'!

JEREMY/C-53: Oh—oh—okay, alright. We're—oh—

CHRISTINE/JUSTINE: Everybody in.

ALLIE/DAR: Oh—okay—lemme just, uh... phew. Uh...

WINSTON/AJ: It's huge on the inside.

SETH/THAR JUCKO: Is this the shuttle to the, uh, negotiations?

JEREMY/C-53: No, no, Thar, you're just gonna go right across the street.

ALDEN/PLECK: Actually, Thar, you're just—yeah, it's—you're gonna be—should one of us stay and just kinda walk him across the street, or?

SETH/THAR JUCKO: Eh, that would probably be fine. [Seth makes a mouth sound that evokes Thar Jucko being hit by a car]

[various cast members start laughing]

WINSTON/AJ: [through laughter] Nooo!

[laughter starts trailing off]

ALDEN: Uh...

[Christine starts laughing again]