

NARRATOR: It is a time of great unease. The crew of the Bargarean Jade have finally made it home to their beloved quadrant. But something is different. Wrong. *Wack.*

[thunder booms, music picks up tempo]

NARRATOR: Now, our intrepid heroes must root out the bad vibes, master the three-sided coin of freshness, and face down foes like they've never imagined. On their final... Mission to Zyxx!

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

[sound of bag zipping, drawer shutting]

HORSEHAT: Hey—hey Dar...

DAR: [packing things up] Yeah.

HORSEHAT: Why are we going to Dad's?

DAR: So... I'm visiting with Dad, but you're actually going to *stay* with Dad.

HORSEHAT: Why?

DAR: Well, because right now... the ship isn't the best place for you.

HORSEHAT: Why?

DAR: [packing, zipping luggage] It's just—you know, you're growing, you're *rapidly* growing. In fact, you're just a hair shy of being able to, I don't know, tell secrets? You know, get into all sorts of trouble. And I want you... to stay out of trouble.

HORSEHAT: I—but I want to stay onna ship!

DAR: I... would *love* for you to stay on the ship, and I honestly would love to get to know... *you*. [Dar pauses] Shoot, what was your name again?

HORSEHAT: [giggling] Horsehat!

DAR: Horsehat, right. Horsehat. [nervously] Ha, pfft.

HORSEHAT: [chuckling] What!

DAR: I mean, I should know that. I named you Horsehat. Can't believe I named you Horsehat... [Dar inhales] Sorry. Uh... you know, honestly, there's just... there's some stuff that's gonna happen that I just don't want you to see.

HORSEHAT: Why?

DAR: Well, because... [slightly crazed laughter] *because*, I just— [suddenly serious] It's gonna be dangerous, I don't know what the outcome is going to be, and I don't want you in that line of fire. Okay? That's important to me. That—that is maybe more important than my own personal vendetta. [dragging luggage out to the door]

HORSEHAT: What's a ven-*datta*?

DAR: Ughhh... you know, it's for me to figure out and for you to enjoy some time with Dad. You should ask him to toss you up in the air.

[button switches, hatch opens]

DAD: Where's that little one? Where's that Horsehat?

HORSEHAT: Dad!

DAR: Aww, Dad!

DAD: [laughs] Let me at 'em! [hugging Horsehat, chuckling]

HORSEHAT: [happily] Hey, Dad! I missed you.

DAR: [encouragingly] Aw, see? Ahhh, Horsehat, come on!

DAD: Come on in! I've got a fresh pot of warglorg!

DAR: Okay, nope—no time to catch up. Would love to stay, but I cannot. Okay, bye-bye, bye-bye, bye, byeee.

DAD: Ah, that's a shame. Next time, next time.

HORSEHAT: Let's go play!

DAR: Well, have fun out there! Knock 'em dead, whatever it is you're doin'.

DAR: Thanks, Dad.

HORSEHAT: [already walking off] C'mon, Dad!

DAD: [chuckling] Oh, alright. Bye-bye!

DAR: Bye, Horsehat!

HORSEHAT: Bye, Dar!

DAR: Bye, bye-bye!

DAD: [in the background] Come on, Horsehat.

[Bargie's hatch slides shut]

DAR: [deep sigh] That was... hard, but one less thing to worry about.

[Dar walks back to the rest of the crew]

AJ: Phew. Glad you're here, Captain. I wanted to talk to you about Galactic Leader Nermut Bundaloy... I, uh, noticed—

NERMUT: Yes, present.

AJ: No, not you—no, come on, man. Not you.

PLECK: [laughing] Nermut, c'mon.

NERMUT: Oh...

PLECK: We've been talking this whole time about how we're going to *destroy* that one.

NERMUT: I was elected, and that's an imposter. Yeah, we—we're all on the same page, I think.

AJ: Uh, Bargie, can you pull up the speech of, uh, the leader, Nermut Bundaloy? I was watching that speech and something, uh, y'know, kinda didn't sit right with me.

BARGIE: Playing that clip!

[file playback sound]

GALACTIC LEADER NERMUT BUNDALOY: [over patriotic music] Greetings, citizens. Sorry, I double-scheduled, and I'm having some medals attached to my lapel here, I hope you don't mind...

AJ: Bargie, enhance!

[Galactic Leader Nermut Bundaloy continues rambling in the background]

BARGIE: I don't do that.

AJ: Enhance. Enhance the image.

BARGIE: You just have to go in—you have to go in closer.

PLECK: Yeah, I think just step closer to—

AJ: No, but what I'm asking you is—

PLECK: No, I think—

BARGIE: Just step closer to the screen.

AJ: No, but on a tactical screen, you can actually—you can say “enhance” and the screen... pulls up, it's cool—

BARGIE: Nah, I don't do that.

PLECK: Nah, AJ, you just gotta walk. Just get closer to the screen.

BARGIE: Nah, I don't do that. Nah.

AJ: I just walk over there!?

C-53: It's a standard holoprojector...

AJ: Okay, well, when I say “enhance,” everybody walk toward the screen, alright?

C-53: Okay. Alright.

NERMUT: Okay.

PLECK: Okay.

DAR: Okay.

AJ: Computer, enhance!

[brief pause, recording of Galactic Leader Nermut Bundaloy continues playing in background]

[everyone takes a step forward]

AJ: Just—everybody—

NERMUT: Okay—

AJ: And enhance! Walk towards it again.

[everyone takes another step forward]

PLECK: Can we walk further?

NERMUT: Okay. Uh—

PLECK: No—can we go more than a couple steps—

AJ: No, you have to walk *toward* it.

PLECK: Let's just all get right up next to it.

AJ: No, but—[frustrated sigh]

NERMUT: No, you should do “enhance” a few times or it's not as cool.

AJ: Enhance!

[everyone takes a step forward again]

AJ: Okay. Look at this moment right here.

C-53: Okay.

[Galactic Leader Nermut Bundaloy makes some weird gnawing sounds]

AJ: Yeah, he's like, kinda, chewin' on his pinky?

PLECK: Uh... yeah, he's—

DAR/C-53: Yeah...?/I guess—I guess so...

NERMUT: Do I do that?

AJ: No. That's a protein pinky.

DAR: [confused, skeptical] ...What?

BARGIE: Ahhhhh, I don't like that...

DAR: Why...

PLECK: AJ, what are you talking about?

NERMUT: Oh, wait. There is—you can see a little seam.

AJ: Yeah, look! See the stitches? The pinky's perforated, so you can just crack it off like this. [bones crunching as AJ snaps his pinky off]

PLECK: [disgusted] Augh—stop!

C-53: Ugh... Ayj...

DAR: [disgusted, horrified] Oh, WHAT!? Why!? *Why* would he—*do* that—

PLECK: Dar—Dar—he's done it a bunch of times.

AJ: Dar! I do that all the time.

NERMUT: Dar, he's done that like five times.

C-53: Dar, you've—you've seen him eat his own pinky a bunch of times.

NERMUT: So wait, what are you saying, AJ?

AJ: That Nermut... [dramatic pause] ...is a clone.

DAR: [walking away] I don't think so. That's really far-fetched. I don't—no. No. Ah, nah-nah, nope, sorry. No. Mm-mm. [door shuts behind Dar]

AJ: Listen, I'm tellin' you: I know clones. And *that* is a clone.

C-53: Well, if somebody had somehow gotten a piece of Nermut's genetic material, they *could* actually grow their own Nermut.

NERMUT: Wow.

C-53: He's got these feathers... [C-53 pokes Nermut's feathers]

NERMUT: Ah!

C-53: So...

AJ: Oh yeah, these scales kind of rub off, don't they?

C-53: [scratching Nermut's scales] Uh-huh, yeah, yeah, they flake.

NERMUT: Hey, hey, hey, easy, easy, easy!

AJ: Yeah, he's flaky.

PLECK: Yeah, he molts every, like, three months.

AJ/C-53: Yeah./Yeah, yeah, uh-huh.

NERMUT: I've got a full skin layin' over there.

AJ: And didn't you guys tell me that his tail got cut off once?

PLECK: It got sorta stomped off.

AJ: I'm just tellin' you, this guy's a clone.

NERMUT: So, wait, AJ, if—if this is true, are you telling me that... we could potentially clone an entire band?

C-53: No. Uh, Nermut... no.

PLECK: Nermut... no.

C-53: No.

AJ: I mean, you *can*, but...

NERMUT: Yesss!

AJ: You can clone the band, but it doesn't mean it's gonna be any good.

NERMUT: Ha! Challenge accepted.

AJ: You can't clone chemistry, so.

[Dar's door opens]

DAR: [nervously] Well, y'know, clone or not, we should get to Quantaris ASAP, and just see what the deal is, y'know? No need to overthink it! Alright, off we go, uh... Ship, take us away!

BARGIE: What did you call me?

DAR: Uhhh, haha... [nervously stroking their goatee]

AJ: You're sweating a lot, Dar.

NERMUT: Stroking that—strokin' that goat.

PLECK: Yeah, you—do you always stroke your goatee like that? I don't feel like I've ever seen—[Dar grabs Pleck] Ack! Owww...

DAR: Oh, well you know, with this guy... [Pleck chokes] Haha! Just can't help... kidding around! [Dar continues lightly strangling Pleck] Right? Right?

AJ: He's turning blue...

[Dar lets go and Pleck dusts himself off]

PLECK: Oh, man. Dar, you know, if it hadn't been for the several times that we've saved each other's lives, told each other we loved each other, shared, y'know, friendly moments, and formed years of camaraderie... I would think you hated me right now.

DAR: I couldn't hate you—[Dar grunts and punches Pleck, he flies across the room and crashes]

PLECK: Ow!

AJ: Oh. Whoa.

C-53: Oh boy.

PLECK: [calmly dusting himself off again] I-I mean, you are right, though, Captain Dar. You know, the other Nermut could be a hologram, or a robot, or just a—y’know, plain old imposter! We—we don’t really know what we’re up against here.

C-53: Listen, Pleck, I would know if this new Nermut Bundaloy is a bot or not, okay? Uh, but if we really want to know if it’s a clone, we should just go to the galaxy’s foremost cloning expert—you know, our friend, Ms. Janelle Fitzmeyer.

AJ: [gasps excitedly] Yes!

NERMUT: No...

AJ: What a great idea—let’s do that! Ms. Janelle *rules!*

BARGIE: I love her, she’s great. She sends me a note every other month.

PLECK: Guys, I—I don’t know. I mean, Ms. Janelle’s been nice to us over X-Marse letters she sends to each of us individually, and—

NERMUT: Yeah!

AJ: The boots!

NERMUT: Totally!

PLECK: —out of the blue holo calls, and... you know, the occasional care package, but we sabotaged her entire CLINT production operation with my DNA!

C-53: But Pleck, all you need to look at is the needlepoint that she sent you last X-Marse.

PLECK: [thoughtfully] Yeah.

C-53: What does it say?

PLECK: “Y’all are always welcome at Ms. Janelle’s house.”

C-53: I mean, how much clearer could she have been?

NERMUT: Yeah!

AJ: Let’s do it!

DAR: [hesitantly] Ahhh...

AJ: Dar got to see Dad, why can’t I go see Ms. Janelle?

NERMUT: Yeah.

PLECK: No, you’re right. We do have to go confront Nermut Bundaloy, but the more information we can get, probably the better.

C-53: Exactly.

AJ: Yeah. If he's a clone, we have a tactical advantage. Because every clone... except for me... have weaknesses. Like, some are dumb—not me. Some are un-self-aware. And we can, like, use that, 'cause they're all like, "Whaaat?"

NERMUT: Yeah, AJ, you're talking to a holograph of us.

AJ: What?

NERMUT: Turn around.

[Pleck starts laughing]

AJ: What? Huh? Oh, sorry. Sometimes when you guys walk out, I don't remember.

PLECK: We should take that down. [laughing] We should take—it's very confusing.

NERMUT: Yeah, yeah—

PLECK: Yeah, this happens a lot.

C-53: No, this was a nice moment we shared! Look at this holograph. Every time I do, it makes me laugh.

AJ: Yeah, so what I was saying to... the holograph, but really to you guys, is that clones might have some weaknesses that we can exploit.

PLECK: Sure. Sure.

AJ: Right?

NERMUT: Sure. And it'd just be fun to see Ms. Janelle.

C-53: Oh, man. If she makes her special lemon bars—

[AJ gasps excitedly again]

C-53: I can finally eat them! [insectoid buzzing]

NERMUT: Oh, look at his little mouth things—what are those called?

C-53: Pedipalps.

NERMUT: Oh, yeah, look at 'em go.

AJ: Yeah, they're really just... movin'.

DAR: [not at all suspiciously] Yesss... all the memories we have of C-53's *pedipalps*. His most... defining feature! ...since all of this... started.

NERMUT: Uhhh...

PLECK: Bargie, is there a gas leak on the ship?

BARGIE: Ugh! I wish!

[transition music]

BORDOFF: Well, Councillor Joey Joey, I, Bordoff, hope you are quite pleased with this new archive facility. Heavily guarded data backups of every Federated Alliance droid, all here beneath the sparkling, bustling streets of Palace City, the crown jewel of Quantaris! Where we—

JOEY: [distracted] Wh—what's that you're going on about?

BORDOFF: Hm?

JOEY: No, this is a—this is a nice building. Um... is it a building?

BORDOFF: Quite, yes.

JOEY: [printing off a script] Oh, actually, Bordoff, can you run lines and film for me, little ol' Joey Joey? I need the self tape for this commercial audition.

BORDOFF: I'd be most honored, Councillor. I'm actually a great lover of the theatrical arts, because when I was in—

JOEY: Great, you're playing Jichael. Camera up here?

BORDOFF: Oh! Yes.

[camera starts recording]

JOEY: This is Joey Joey, reading for the part of Slonk. Seeking representation. [Joey clears his throat] “Hey, Jichael, how was your workout?”

BORDOFF: Oh, uh—[script rustling] “Honestly, Slonk, very pleasurable.”

JOEY: “Well, pal, it's time to seek out pleasure in every area in your life, from how you start your mornings to how you wind down at night, and everything in between. You deserve to enjoy it all. Dipsea Stories wants you to find joy and confidence in—and out—of the bedroom.”

BORDOFF: [script rustling] “Throws towel over shoulder.”

JOEY: Uh, you did—

BORDOFF: Oh, okay, that's a stage direction.

JOEY: Mm-hmm.

BORDOFF: Um—uh—“Tell me more!”

JOEY: “Dipsea Stories is an app full of sexy audio stories, and now, they even have brand new written stories! No matter who you're into or what turns you on, Jichael, Dipsea helps bring the stories to life, anytime, anywhere. There are hundreds of stories to choose from, and they release new content every week, so there's always more to explore.”

BORDOFF: “I need to run to get a healthy smoothie before clocking in. But quick, Slonk, how do I get on board with Dipsea?”

JOEY: “You're in luck, Jichael, because Dipsea is offering an extended 30-day free trial when you go to dipseastories.com/zyxx. That's 30 days full access for free when you go to D-I-P-S-E-A stories, dot com, slash Zyxx.”

BORDOFF: “Dipseastories.com/zyxx. Got it.”

JOEY: Aaand cut. Thank you. *Nailed* it.

BORDOFF: Oh, certainly. Oh, and here, of course, you see a platoon of Enforcer Droids who patrol the facility, that—

JOEY: No, no, no. I have, actually, another self tape for you to help me with.

BORDOFF: Oh, well, of course. Do you think *I* have a shot?

JOEY: You're better *behind* the camera.

BORDOFF: Oh, thank you.

[scene glitches out]

[transition music]

[crew walking to the cloning facility]

PLECK: Man, this place has a lot different vibe when it's not CLINTillion. It's a lot more sort of... cold, and severe.

AJ: No, this is...

C-53: Yeah. Pretty industrial.

AJ: This is different. Y'know... Ms. Janelle had, like, doilies and stuff.

[whooshing, crash as a trooper charges in]

TROOPER: [sounding suspiciously like Pleck if he was aggressively macho and had a helmet on] Get down on the ground! [racks rifle]

AJ/PLECK/DAR/C-53: Whoa!

TROOPER: [blaster charging up] Get down on the ground right now!

[more assorted whoa's from the crew]

TROOPER: Get down on the ground.

PLECK: Yeah, jeez, relax.

C-53: Whoa, hey, okay!

NERMUT: I am down on the ground.

AJ: Hey, whoa! Nobody tells *me* to get down on the ground.

[trooper fires a shot]

AJ: Ow!

PLECK: Whoa!

AJ: What the juck, man?

TROOPER: That's right. That's right.

PLECK: You just shot AJ!

TROOPER: [racking rifle again] That's right. I will shoot you, and I just did. Give me your identification right now.

AJ: [annoyed] AJ-2884!

TROOPER: ...Are you an original CLINT?

AJ: [smugly] Yeah. I'm an OC, man.

TROOPER: Ughhh.

AJ: Welcome to the OC! [AJ starts punching the air and missing] Hah! Huh! Hah!

C-53: Wow, that trooper's not even flinching.

AJ: Whoa, uh... [continues punching and missing]

C-53: AJ's givin' him both barrels right now. Nothin'.

TROOPER: Oh, shit! K'hekk landing on the planet! [trooper starts pushing buttons] Everybody—take—

C-53: Oh... no, no no no no, uh...

NERMUT: It's just one K'hekk.

C-53: Yeah, it's just—just the one K'hekk, and I'm not really—

TROOPER: Hey, listen. I'm a PLINT 2.0, okay? I'm not like one of those idiots that came before me, alright?

NERMUT/PLECK/AJ: You're a PLINT?/Uhhh.../Whoa. You're a PLINT?

PLINT 2.0: There's never—there's never just one K'hekk.

C-53: Okay, can we slow down for one second? You're a PLINT 2.0...

PLINT 2.0: Yeah.

C-53: What... is that?

PLINT 2.0: Well, you know how 1.0 juckin' sucks?

PLECK: Wow. Okay.

PLINT 2.0: And 2.0 is juckin' better?

AJ: Hey, Papa, these guys are like you, only like, yoked.

PLECK: [laughs] Yeah—[laughs again] I mean, maybe. I guess they—do they—

AJ: No, they're like, huge. Yeah, I'm trying to hit them, and it's—

PLECK: I don't think they're anything like me. They're sorta—I don't know, I guess—

AJ: They *sound* like—

NERMUT: His bicep is the size of your waist!

PLINT 2.0: Alright, hold on a second. You guys are gonna have to explain your situation here. We got a K'hekk—red alert. We got an original CLINT—blue alert.

AJ: [quietly] Welcome to the O.C.

PLINT 2.0: And we got an original PLINT, 1.0 here! Out of uniform! Pink alert!

PLECK: Actually, I'm not—I'm not a PLINT, I'm just actually—

PLINT 2.0: Shut up! [punches Pleck]

PLECK: Ooh! Ow!

AJ: Whoa...

PLINT 2.0: Listen, I'm gonna have to call in the boss here.

[brief pause]

NERMUT: Yeah! That's great, actually.

C-53: Oh! Great, that's actually who we're here to see, so that's kinda perfect.

AJ: Yeah, we're here to see Ms. Janelle, so that's... great.

C-53: Yeah.

PLINT 2.0: Wait, what?

AJ: Ms. Janelle Fitzmeyer?

PLINT 2.0: Uh, Ms. Janelle's not the boss.

NERMUT: What? Wait, a-actually, can we get up off the ground?

PLINT 2.0: No! What? Did I say you could get up off the ground?

NERMUT: Sorry, sorry, sorry!

PLINT 2.0: [gasp of realization] Oh my Rodd. Oh my Rodd, it's the leader of the galaxy. I am s—

NERMUT: Oh!

PLINT 2.0: I am *so sorry*.

NERMUT: You *should* be, okay?

PLINT 2.0: I—I am.

NERMUT: How dare you?

PLINT 2.0: I am. [hurriedly] W-we've been hard at work for you! We just sent all of the elite strike teams to Quantaris to guard the—the palace!

NERMUT: Great. That's excellent—

PLINT 2.0: Just like you asked!

NERMUT: That seems... not... bad at all, right? [under his breath] Uh—jeez.

PLINT 2.0: We are *vigilantly*, uh, on the lookout for the imposters. We will find them, my liege. I'm so s—I didn't—I'm so sorry, I didn't recognize you.

NERMUT: [inspirationally] You *can* redeem yourself.

PLINT 2.0: [nervously] Yeah, a-anything. Any—I'll do anything.

NERMUT: Where is Ms. Janelle Fitzmeyer?

PLINT 2.0: Sh-she doesn't work here, she retired! She—she lives in the Vista Palms Resort!

NERMUT: Oh, boy...

AJ: Where's that?

NERMUT: Where's—where are we gonna have to fly to? What planet?

PLINT 2.0: Well, it's just over—it's just down the street.

AJ: Oh.

NERMUT: Oh, you can see it.

C-53: Oh, there's something else on this planet other than the—

PLINT 2.0: You see all those palm trees over there? That's the Vista Palms Resort.

C-53: Okay, that makes sense, yeah.

NERMUT: As you were.

PLINT 2.0: Thank you. Thank you, sir. Thank you, your honor. Thank you, your liege. My liege.

NERMUT: Mm-hmm. Thank you.

C-53: Sounds like they're still settling on that title.

NERMUT: No, I liked it. I liked it, how it was... long.

PLINT 2.0: Your grace.

[Dar punches the PLINT 2.0]

PLINT 2.0: Ow, oh—

AJ: Oho, Dar still took a swing at him! [impressed chuckling]

[the PLINT 2.0 groans]

[transition music]

C-53: Oh, ah... it's got one of those automated gates. Um...

GATE: [voice quavering robotically] Welcome to this gate.

C-53: [laughing] Yes...

PLECK: "Welcome to this gate?"

NERMUT: Oh. We're really back in Zyxx, folks.

C-53: Yeah. It's a real matter-of-fact AI.

PLECK: Uh—hi, we're—we're here to see Ms. Janelle Fitzmeyer, please.

GATE: What code is Janelle Fitzmee?

C-53: That's a great question. Um...

AJ: Not even the right name.

GATE: Please enter four numbers or else you are will be locked out.

PLECK: [laughing] We're already locked out...

AJ: Yeah.

NERMUT: We're already—we're locked out now, it seems—

PLECK: You mean we'll *continue* to be locked out.

GATE: Welcome to this gate.

NERMUT: Oh.

PLECK: Oh, boy.

C-53: Pretty limited loop here.

GATE: What code is Janelle Fitzmee?

NERMUT: Did she have a favorite CLINT?

PLECK: Certainly not, right?

AJ: Well, let me try... [punching buttons] 2-8-8-4...

GATE: Yes.

[gate pings, slides open]

AJ: Ohhh!

PLECK: Oh, hey!

C-53: Wow, AJ!

PLECK: AJ, wow! I guess you really—

C-53: Wow, you must really be her favorite.

PLECK: You really *were* her favorite!

AJ: I always knew it. I always knew it.

GATE: Yes. All of the numbers are her favorite.

C-53: Oh, I see. So if I just hit [punching buttons] 1-1-1-1.

GATE: Yes.

C-53: Okay.

GATE: The gate is now aeopen.

PLECK/AJ/C-53: Oh—oh, thank you./Thanks, gate./Oh, thank you. Yeah.

NERMUT: That, we can see.

[the crew enters]

NERMUT: Okay.

C-53: Wow, this place is nice!

PLECK: Look at all these golf carts!

C-53: Yeah, lotta carts.

PLECK: Wow, this is such a serene place, all these water features... It looks like there's sort of, you know, like a real community here! There's a couple shops up there... Oh hey, look, it's Tactical Footwork Tuesday at the bingo hall!

AJ: Hey, there's a store that just sells bad mystery novels.

C-53: Or weird military-focused thrillers.

NERMUT: The VOPW is havin' a, uh, social.

PLECK: Oh.

NERMUT: Veterans of Off-Planet Wars?

PLECK: Wow. I never knew what that stood for.

[snatches of conversation as the crew walks past a bunch of old CLINTS: "if you show 'em your FAIC, you get the salad for free!" "...I don't know *when* was the last time I mind wiped!" "You know what? [something something] tube of blue liquid..." and so on]

C-53: Wow, this is super weird. Look at all these out-of-uniform... old CLINTs.

AJ: Yeah, ha. Weird.

C-53: They all look like... old Rolphus Tiddles.

AJ: Yeah. Well.

OLD CLINT 1: [in the background] I had... a *second* butt gun! I was goin' at 'em with TWO butt guns!

OLD CLINT 2: [in the background] I was there, that didn't happen!

C-53: In, like, polo shirts and cargo shorts.

PLECK: 'Scuse me—'scuse me, sir. Excuse me.

OLD CLINT 1: [proudly, as Pleck approaches] I had two butt guns! That was me, that's why they called me Ol' Two Butt Guns 1129!

PLECK: Are—are you a—are you a CLINT?

OL' TWO BUTT GUNS 1129: I—I used to be... [proudly] but now, I'm captain of the shuffleboard team.

PLECK: Oh, congratulations.

OL' TWO BUTT GUNS 1129: Eh, I'm kinda the best here at shuffleboard.

C-53: Yeah, okay. Yeah.

PLECK: I'm sorry, I guess I don't really understand—uh, you were a CLINT—how old are you now?

OL' TWO BUTT GUNS 1129: Must be... I guess... eight?

PLECK: [laughing] Wow...

C-53: Wowwww.

NERMUT: Ooh, AJ. Yeesh.

C-53: Ooh, that's an accelerated timeline.

AJ: What?

NERMUT: The future is *bleak*.

AJ: [nonchalantly] I'm not gonna end up like that guy, you kiddin' me?

PLECK: AJ, you're *seven*, remember?

AJ: Not me.

PLECK: We had your party at the Synergy's roller rink!

AJ: I'm not gonna—come on. That's not gonna be me. I'm not gonna get old.

PLECK: Uh, excuse me, shuffleboard captain—

OL' TWO BUTT GUNS 1129: Yes.

PLECK: You're eight years old, uh... how is that possible? You look... so much older than our friend here.

OL' TWO BUTT GUNS 1129: Well, seven and a half, it really... takes a turn.

C-53: Oh boy.

OL' TWO BUTT GUNS 1129: It's kinda like a half-life, and you just sort of—

PLECK: [laughing] Oh, no.

NERMUT: Oh, yikes.

OL' TWO BUTT GUNS 1129: Yeah.

[pause]

OL' TWO BUTT GUNS 1129: I... do have to get to shuffleboard, because I—

PLECK: [laughing] Okay—sure, yeah—I'm sorr—I'm so sorry, I don't wanna keep you.

C-53: [crosstalk] Sorry, we apologize for holdin' ya up, yeah, yeah.

OL' TWO BUTT GUNS 1129: I'd love to talk about how old I am, and how much time I have left, but I'd like to get to shuffleboard. [Ol' Two Butt Guns 1129 motor-scooters away]

C-53: Okay. Alright.

AJ: [conspiratorially] Hey.

PLECK: Huh?

AJ: Just for the record?

NERMUT: Yeah.

AJ: I would destroy that guy in shuffleboard.

PLECK: Okay, that's not really—

AJ: *Destroy!*

PLECK: That's not really—

AJ: *Dominate!*

PLECK: I just—that's not really the mission.

NERMUT: This is the captain of the team, so... I don't know. Like—

PLECK: How would that help?

MAILBOT: [buzzing past, beeping] Mail delivery for Ms. Janelle!

C-53: Oh, wait, wait wait—did you hear that?

MAILBOT: Mail delivery for Ms. Janelle!

PLECK: Let's follow this little—this little zippy robot on a single wheel.

AJ: Sounds good.

MAILBOT: [beeping horn and saying “beep” at the same time] Beep beep beep beep beep beep beep! Mail delivery for Ms. Janelle! [horn beeps again]

AJ: Is he gonna beep the whole way?

MAILBOT: [beeping horn and talking] Beep beep—

C-53: Yeah, seems like it, yeah.

AJ: Alright.

[transition music]

[crew walks through pleasant neighborhood with sound of lawn sprinklers and an ice cream truck]

[Mailbot beeps and comes to a stop]

AJ: This is it! Stopped here at this house.

C-53: Wow, what a nice little bungalow.

AJ: Yeah.

NERMUT: Oh, look at this welcome mat.

AJ: Okay, how do I look? Do I look good? I look fine, right? My armor's in good shape. Okay.

C-53: Well, it does have the scorch mark from where you got shot earlier.

AJ: Well, that wasn't *my* fault.

C-53: Well, I know, but I'm just sayin'.

AJ: That guy was a... *douche*. I respected it.

MAILBOT: Ding-dong! [doorbell rings]

NERMUT: [quietly] Dar, are you—you okay? You've been kinda quiet, just kinda like, tapping your fingers together.

DAR: Oh, uh... yeah, no, I just—it—it feels like we've been here so long, maybe we should just like—y'know, get back on the ship and get going...

MAILBOT: Ding-dong!

AJ: [excited whisper] Here she comes, here she comes, here she comes!

[doorbell stops ringing, front door creaks open]

JANELLE: [gasps] Now, what do I have in front of me?

AJ: Oh, hey, Ms. Janelle, hey.

JANELLE: [warmly] AJ-2884, what a sight for my eyes. Oh, how wonderful to see you! What a lovely surprise. [Janelle gasps again]

PLECK: Hi, Ms. Janelle.

JANELLE: Oh, hello, Pleck! Ohhh, come here and give me a hug. Every single one of you, I hope, has a hug for me.

MAILBOT: [buzzing over] Me too! Me too! Wait—[indistinct]

AJ: [chiding] Oh, Mail—Mailbot—come on, Mailbot, jeez, get—get out of the—

NERMUT: Come on, Mailbot.

MAILBOT: Let me hug! Let me—I want to hug now!

NERMUT: Oh, boy.

JANELLE: I will hug you, Mailbot.

[clank as Ms. Janelle hugs Mailbot]

[Mailbot makes a pleasant buzzing strangled sound]

JANELLE: Next?

C-53: Ms. Janelle, I'm so happy to see you're so welcoming. I—you know, a lot of people are sort of thrown off by my... new exterior.

JANELLE: [understandingly] Oh... Yes. Because you look like a bug?

C-53: Yeah, yeah. It's—that's—

PLECK: Well, he is a bug, actually.

JANELLE: I look into your eyes and I see the real you, C-53. And that's a wonderful person.

AJ: Whoa...

C-53: [touched] Ms. Janelle, it is—I will gladly accept this hug. Oh.

JANELLE: I do love extra arms. [releasing C-53 from the hug] I remember you, Dar. I will have to say, there is something slightly different about you. Have you—

DAR: [hurriedly] Let's get in that hug!

JANELLE: Okay. [hugging Dar] Well, let me whisper in your ear. [quietly] If you've gone through heartbreak, you'll get through it. [Ms. Janelle pats Dar's back]

DAR: Oh! Thank you.

JANELLE: Well, you know what, why don't y'all come on in.

[Ms. Janelle opens the door, everyone walks inside]

JANELLE: And I just finished making some, uh, lemon bars.

AJ: Yesss!

PLECK: No. Way.

C-53: Ohhh boy!

NERMUT: We were just talking about them.

DAR: We *were* just talking about that, yes.

NERMUT: We didn't want to ask.

JANELLE: Oh! Nermut? Well, this is such a treat!

NERMUT: Aww, that's so nice. Can we—yeah, get one of those famous hugs?

JANELLE: Of course! And—

NERMUT: Aghh—

JANELLE: Sorry, my bosoms are big.

NERMUT: Oh, that's, uh, just, uh—

JANELLE: I do wanna say congratulations on your promotion. That's really, really wonderful.

NERMUT: Oh, leader of the galaxy? Yeah... thanks. Thank you.

JANELLE: That's not easy to achieve.

NERMUT: No! No. Thanks.

JANELLE: So you should be proud of yourself.

NERMUT: [proudly] I am.

JANELLE: You know, to win by write-in is *really* an accomplishment.

NERMUT: I know, right? I mean, I wasn't even *running*.

JANELLE: Ah, well, that says a lot about you and your person. You know, I heard so many wonderful things from Dar.

NERMUT: Yeah? Aww.

JANELLE: Just went on and on about your character.

NERMUT: [touched] Dar!

DAR: [flatly] Yeah, and I meant every word that I said.

NERMUT: We—okay—

JANELLE: There is something different about your eyes. Somethin' a little... well, hm.
[redirecting] Have a lemon bar, everyone!

AJ: Yayyy!

C-53: Oh, I am so excited to try one of these with a real mouth.

JANELLE: Well, come on through the atrium.

AJ: Yes, this is so nice!

JANELLE: Thank you.

NERMUT: [under his breath] Wow... so cool.

JANELLE: Over here is my studio in which I do a lot of my arts and crafts. But—look at—wh—sit down... Oh, can I show you my scrapbook? I went on a river cruise, um—
[crew takes seats]

AJ: A river cruise, cool!

JANELLE: Mm-hmm! Yes, I did. Gary and I went, and, uh, I have a—a scrapbook, if you will, and I would *love* to go through it and tell you all the sights and everything.

NERMUT: Sure. Sure.

JANELLE: [paging through scrapbook] Oh my goodness, you should have seen the flora and the fauna.

PLECK: A river cruise is sort of a one-way thing, right? Or do you go back up the river at the end?

JANELLE: Well, on Zenublatt, we do go both ways.

PLECK: Oh! Okay!

AJ: Oh, wow! Which is more fun, down river or up river?

NERMUT: Good question.

JANELLE: Oh, well, I would have to say down river.

AJ: Okay.

JANELLE: Yes, everything is a little bit more fun when you're getting' down.

[transition music]

JANELLE: [pouring iced drinks] Oh, I am so sorry it is so loud right now. Gary is out in his wood shop. He makes my embroidery hoops.

[crew 'aww's simultaneously]

PLECK: Oh, that's so nice.

C-53: That's so sweet of him.

JANELLE: He is a real maker—he is a real maker and a doer, and he's always busy.

NERMUT: That's... amazing, they're so cheap to just buy, that's so nice of him.

JANELLE: Mm-hmm. I give him his privacy. I have—

C-53: [crosstalk] That's not what it's about, Nermut.

JANELLE: —no idea what else he's doin' out there, but—oh, Gary's good.

AJ: That's good.

JANELLE: You know, we have been learning a new language as well.

AJ: Oh, that's great.

JANELLE: Mm-hmm. We have been learning Juntawa.

PLECK/C-53/NERMUT: Oh!/Oh!/Oh, wow!

PLECK: Notoriously difficult.

NERMUT: Yeah.

JANELLE: Juntawa, juntawa, juntawa.

PLECK: Wow.

JANELLE: Did you hear what I just said to you? I said, "Ta ta, love love, kiss kiss, hug hug."

AJ: Aww.

PLECK: Wow.

NERMUT: That's so nice.

C-53: Even in Juntawa. So sweet.

JANELLE: Well, that was the first thing I wanted to learn, that and "I love you," and "I love you" is "juntawa."

AJ: Oh, right.

NERMUT: Oh.

C-53: Yeah, of course, yeah.

PLECK: Ms. Janelle, I just want to say, uh, congratulations on your retirement! Last time we saw you, you were still the manager of the cloning facility.

JANELLE: [wistfully] Oh, yes, those were good days, and—I have to say I enjoy my retirement, but it wasn't exactly on my terms, if you know what I mean.

C-53: Oh, dear!

AJ: Wait, what? *What?*

JANELLE: Well, you know, these things get complicated, but... I indeed—may I tell you something private about myself?

PLECK: [setting drink down] Of course.

JANELLE: Come in closer.

C-53: Absolutely.

AJ: Sure.

[everyone moves in closer]

AJ: Enhance! Let's—

PLECK: [laughing] AJ, no, that's not—

C-53: AJ, that's for holos, buddy.

AJ: Okay.

PLECK: Yeah, that doesn't apply here. Is this too close, or?

JANELLE: No. Nothing is too close for me.

AJ: Well, we can't get *that* close just because of, y'know, the bosoms.

JANELLE: Yes. You know, as I worked there towards the end, I felt like I was really doing some wonderful things, and really turning out top-notch clones, and... before I knew it, something—something was happening behind my back. And I didn't do anyone wrong, as far as I could tell—

AJ: You couldn't. You couldn't, because you're perfect, Ms. Janelle.

JANELLE: Oh, well, that is so sweet of you to say. [Ms. Janelle pats AJ]

AJ: Well, it's the truth, and if anyone says different, then I'll rip their throat out.

C-53: AJ, maybe—maybe just let her tell the story.

AJ: I'm just saying, are you saying—what, who's saying anything about her?

C-53: Nobody said anything, AJ.

NERMUT: AJ, dehance. Dehance.

AJ: Okay.

JANELLE: All I'm saying is, when I got my notice, my pink slip, there was just a bad taste in my mouth. I had no idea that they were downsizing, and my job was just on the cutting block, is what they told me. And I had to pack my bags, and my boxes, and take my codes, and I took a little bit of light software with me, and a little bit of hardware, and I packed up my desk palm that had really grown quite a bit over the years I was there, they *did* let me take that... and I left.

AJ: Did you get a party or something?

JANELLE: Not *one being* said goodbye to me.

AJ: *What!?*

PLECK: Well, you know, Ms. Janelle, if it helps any, uh, we're pretty convinced that some pretty evil shit is going down in the galaxy right now.

AJ: Don't say sh—don't say that in front of her!

PLECK: I'm sorry. Evil s—

AJ: Don't say the s-word in front of her!

PLECK: Evil *stuff*.

AJ: What's wrong with you!?

PLECK: I'm sorry.

JANELLE: Well, you know, I don't mind cursing all that much, but I will have to say that the other day, I was walking by the facility, and there was a PLINT, and he said the word [whispering] "jucking." Ooh—

AJ: [horrified whisper] What?

JANELLE: A few times too many. [pouring tea] And, uh... I just thought, "Those are not quality PLINTS. Something is going on over there!"

NERMUT: Did that PLINT happen to be, like, really—

AJ: Just like, yoked?

NERMUT: Yoked?

JANELLE: As the young people say, "swole" or "yoked." [pouring more tea]

PLECK: [laughing] Yeah. I think we met one of those guys. Uh...

JANELLE: Or "jacked," I have heard that.

[sound of tea being sipped]

C-53: Sort of an older generation, but yeah, sure.

AJ: Yeah.

JANELLE: Would you all like to play bunco? [opening a drawer]

[silent laughter]

PLECK: Uh, I don't think I've—

AJ: Uh...

C-53: Um... S-sure, yeah.

DAR: Yes.

PLECK: I don't think I've ever played bunco.

AJ: Uh, yeah, um, sure.

JANELLE: [getting dice, returning to the table] Okay. Well, I love it because it was originally a confidence game.

NERMUT: [impressed] Oh. Wow.

[more stifled laughter]

JANELLE: And I like confidence.

PLECK: A confidence game, you say?

JANELLE: Mm-hmm. That's why I like it. [rolling dice] Or we can all just do embroidery. Whatever would be fun for all of us to do together as friends would make me the happiest.

AJ: Aww, Ms. Janelle...

NERMUT: Oh, that's... so nice. I mean, we were kind of hoping to figure out something about how the other Nermut was cloned, and what my place—

DAR: Let's play bunco!

PLECK: Uh—

JANELLE: What did you say?

PLECK: Uh, basically, Ms. Janelle, the reason we're here is that we have reason to believe that Nermut Bundaloy, the leader of the galaxy, is actually a clone of, uh... this guy!

NERMUT: Mm-hmm.

[Ms. Janelle gasps]

PLECK: We should've mentioned that earlier. This is not the Nermut Bundaloy you've been seeing on—on holos, and uh—y'know, hearing in speeches.

AJ: [barely contained excitement] Because I actually—because I actually, like, looked at the holo, Ms. Janelle—so I looked at the holo?

JANELLE: [indulgently] Mm-hmm. Yes.

AJ: And, uh, I did this thing where I was like—

NERMUT: He's hopping from foot to foot.

AJ: I—I figured it out because I was all like, "Oh, the pinky." The pinky was perforated. It was a perforated pinky.

JANELLE: [gasps] Oh my goodness gracious. You are right, AJ, there is no doubt about it! That Nermut is a clone made with my technology!

NERMUT: Wait, does that mean that someone basically hijacked the cloning facility in order to place that imposter in my rightful throne?

JANELLE: There was a new gentleman who came to work at the facility about two weeks prior to me being retired. And he was... a very surly fella. He never smiled. And I tried to hug him, and he recoiled, which is so—

AJ: [horrified whisper] What!?

JANELLE: —unusual.

C-53: Now that is, honestly, very unusual.

JANELLE: Well, I had to respect his boundaries, but... I did think something was a little off.

AJ: What did he look like?

JANELLE: Well, he was more machine than man.

DAR: Maybe—do you have any more of these lemon bars? Uh...

PLECK: Dar, you've eaten all but two of these lemon bars.

JANELLE: He looked very mean.

AJ: Mm-hmm.

JANELLE: I—I would not trust him in a knife fight. Um...

NERMUT: Uh...

AJ: Yeah, but that's a classic thing Ms. Janelle already says, like, "When you're in a knife fight, the key is trust."

NERMUT: Okay, I guess...

JANELLE: That is the number one rule of knife fighting.

AJ: Trust the process.

JANELLE: Oh well. I don't know what happened to that gentleman.

AJ: Do you know his name?

JANELLE: What was his n... Park—Park—Parkour Velour?

PLECK: Parkour Velour?

DAR: Oh yeah, that—I mean, that sounds like a name.

NERMUT: Someone named Parkour Valour cloned me?

DAR: Sounds pretty evil. Sounds highly possible.

JANELLE: I don't know!

PLECK: That truly sounds like somebody that Bargie would star in a movie with.

C-53: Well, Bargie was in *Big Bop at the Ship Stop* with Parkour Satine.

PLECK: Oh really?

C-53: Yeah.

PLECK: [laughing] Oh. Alright.

JANELLE: Well, I apologize. I—it just is not coming to the mind right now.

[door creaks open]

CENTURION TIDDLE?: Grandma!

JANELLE: Oh well, hello, Centurion.

CENTURION: Grandma!

JANELLE: Would you like to meet my friends?

CENTURION: Sure.

PLECK: Wait a second, Centur—Centurion, you're *here*?

CENTURION: ...What?

NERMUT: You were in the other galaxy!

CENTURION: Who're you? Grandma, we're out of fluffer butter!

JANELLE: Oh, well you know what, sweetheart? I had just come back from the market and there is a bag in the back seat of the speeder, and it has some new fluffer butter in it.

CENTURION: Okay. Thanks, grandma.

JANELLE: Don't fret. You're welcome. Go ahead and put that on a cracker.

CENTURION: [walking away] I will. I love you, grandma.

JANELLE: I love *you-u*.

CENTURION: Is Gary back there? Is Gary near the speeder?

JANELLE: Uh, Gary is out in his woodshop.

CENTURION: He better not like, be asking me about stuff, grandma.

JANELLE: Oh, well, maybe he's just trying to get to know you better.

CENTURION: [teenage annoyance] Aughhhhh! I'm gonna get the fluffer butter...

[Centurion leaves, door creaks shut]

PLECK: Uh, Ms. Janelle, is that a clone of Centurion?

JANELLE: Why... yes it is. That's my grand—

CENTURION 4: [opening door] Grandma!

JANELLE: Uh, yes?

CENTURION 4: Where's the fluffer butter?

PLECK: Oh, no.

C-53: Yeah, yeah.

JANELLE: It is in the back seat of my speeder, Centurion 4. I just went to the market, sweetheart.

CENTURION 4: Okay. Is—is Gary in the garage?

JANELLE: Last time I checked, he was out in the woodshop.

CENTURION 4: [dramatic sigh] I don't wanna deal with Gary, grandma!

JANELLE: Well, maybe he's just trying to get to know you better, and you could spend some time with him.

CENTURION 4: Uaghhh! Whateverrr.

JANELLE: [quietly] Okay.

CENTURION 4: [opening door to leave] Love you, grandma.

JANELLE: I love you, too. Y'all, all have to excuse me, it's just teen angst and—you know... you know teens.

NERMUT: So, the light software you stole...

PLECK: And hardware.

JANELLE: Well, I do have to admit, for... my own selfish reasons, I dabble in at-home cloning. [Ms. Janelle takes the cloth covering the cloning apparatus]

PLECK: Oh, wow! You have a tube of blue liquid just right next to the fridge here.

JANELLE: Well, yes, I—it can be messy, so I like to keep it all in one room where it's easy to clean up, but—

[door opens again]

CHILL CENTURION: Grandma!

JANELLE: Uh-huh, Centurion.

CHILL CENTURION: Grandma, is there fluffer butter? I can't find any.

JANELLE: Well, I just went to the market, and it—there is some in the back of my speeder, and if you just—

CHILL CENTURION: Okay, great. Wait, is Gary in the garage?

JANELLE: Honey, he is out in the wood shop last time I checked, okay?

CHILL CENTURION: Oh, awesome! Will he let me use the lathe?

JANELLE: I imagine he will if you ask nicely.

CHILL CENTURION: Okay, cool, cool. [walking out the door] Love you, grandma.

PLECK: Oh, wow, that Centur—that Centurion likes Gary.

JANELLE: Mm-hmm, yes.

C-53: So, the clones are not—

JANELLE: They all have a little bit of personality. That was the tweak I... I took with me.

AJ: That makes sense, 'cause, I mean, I'm—you know, most of the clones I know and me kinda march to the beat of our own drums a little bit...

C-53: We can't all be individuals, AJ.

AJ: Well. There are a lot of drums that we're marchin'... to.

C-53: Yeah, that sounds like a cacophony.

AJ: [profoundly] Well, maybe it is. Maybe that's what freedom is... brother.

NERMUT: Well, clones, instruments—I'm on board.

PLECK: ...Okay.

JANELLE: [helpfully] I can whip up a clone.

C-53: Oh, no, that's not a word. No, that's okay. That's probably fine.

NERMUT: Especially just one that can beatbox.

JANELLE: Oh, sure. [typing slowly]

AJ: Beatbox??

NERMUT: I don't always have a keyboard, and then we can just get that—get this—

AJ: You want someone to—

C-53: Nermut, come on.

NERMUT: —get the click track—

PLECK: Nermut—go stand—

C-53: We're not gonna do that, Nermut.

JANELLE: You want someone to lay down a beat? [short pause] Because I can.

AJ: Wait, you can?

JANELLE: Uh-huh! Yes, yes. I dabble in, uh, beatboxing, if you will.

C-53: Really!

NERMUT: I mean, we definitely need to hear you do that now.

JANELLE: Mm-hmm. You ready?

NERMUT: Uh-huh.

C-53: Couldn't be more.

JANELLE: Okay...

[brief silence filled with barely suppressed giggling]

[Ms. Janelle starts beatboxing, a messy approximation of bass and snare set to a basic rhythm]

[Ms. Janelle approximates record scratches via heavy breathing, then continues beatboxing even more haphazardly]

[more repressed wheezing, laughter]

PLECK: [quietly, laughing] Exactly what I expected.

AJ: Whoa, that was awesome, Ms. Janelle!

JANELLE: Isn't that fun?

PLECK: Could not have been better.

JANELLE: Well, thank you. I enjoy doing that all—uh, in the evenings, for fun. I just stay up late and I beatbox.

PLECK: Wow!

JANELLE: Sometimes I do that with Gary. Um, that's something fun that we do... together. Anyway, I hate to be a party pooper, but—

C-53: Oh, no, Ms. Janelle—

AJ: No, it's fine!

JANELLE: [standing up to go] I unfortunately have a—have an appointment because I have some corns... on my feet.

PLECK/NERMUT/AJ/C-53: Oh! Okay./Oh./Oh!/Oh. Well.

PLECK: You gotta get those checked out, yeah.

JANELLE: I do have to have those looked at by the doctor. And I have loved—*loved* catching up on good times.

PLECK: You know, Ms. Janelle, I—I really feel like you've made the best of your retirement here, and I'm sorry it happened under, you know, less than ideal circumstances, but... what a great place! You've got—you've got your significant other, you've got your grandchildren visiting you all the time.

JANELLE: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

PLECK: And thank you for the help with *our* mission. We're gonna find this Parkour Velour, and we're gonna—

NERMUT: Yeah.

PLECK: We're gonna set things right.

JANELLE: Ohhh, that is too much and too kind. C'mere, gimme a hug. [hugging everyone]

AJ: Oh. Yeah, thank you.

JANELLE: Oh...

AJ: Thank you.

JANELLE: I am blessed to know each and every one of you. Please come back and visit me sometime soon, okay?

AJ: You got it! We absolutely will.

NERMUT: Totally!

C-53: Ms. Janelle, that's a guarantee.

[door creaks open]

NERMUT: Oh, Dar's already outside.

[transition music]

BORDOFF: [in the distance] And then it's just through here—okay—

ARCHIVE FACILITY INTERN 1: [in a squeaky voice] Oh my Rosh, did you see that?

ARCHIVE FACILITY INTERN 2: [in a deep voice] Wha?

INTERN 1: That guy that just passed us was Lieutenant Toady Bordoff! And he was carrying *Councillor Joey*!

INTERN 2: Are you serious? What an honor!

INTERN 1: When I took this internship at the compound, I dreamed about maybe seeing a councillor in person, but I never thought it would happen!

INTERN 2: Totally, and Joey Joey is the coolest one, too. He—he's almost a working actor!

INTERN 1: I know! He had an under-five in *Days of Our Nights*!

INTERN 2: I know, and he's so well-dressed, especially considering he's like, a puddle of liquid. I-I could never pull off looks like his.

INTERN 1: Well, why not shop at a store that's personalized for your size and style?

INTERN 2: I mean... how?

INTERN 1: At Stitch Fix Freestyle, a shop built just for you.

INTERN 2: Just for me?

INTERN 1: Yeah!

INTERN 2: What a... terrible business model.

INTERN 1: Well, it's built for you, and also everyone else—

INTERN 2: Oh.

INTERN 1: Individually! Stitch Fix Freestyle intelligently curates items for you based on your style, likes, and lifestyle!

INTERN 2: Well, what if my lifestyle is, uhhh, “intern who never leaves the compound because my hours are an affront to my fundamental rights as a person?”

INTERN 1: No problem!

INTERN 2: Oh. Well, what if my style is, “I own one professional outfit which I bought the day I graduated, and it's the only thing I've ever worn to work?”

INTERN 1: They can help with that!

INTERN 2: Oh, okay. Uh, uh, what if my likes are work, talking about work, and flattering slim fit distressed denim?

INTERN 1: Perfect! Whether you're on the hunt for a look you already love, or to try a new one, at [stitchfix.com](https://www.stitchfix.com) you can shop hundreds of brands personalized to your size and fit!

INTERN 2: This is... amazing! I—I have a four minute lunch break, I'll check it out then!

INTERN 1: That's the spirit! Try Stitch Fix Freestyle today by filling out your style quiz at [stitchfix.com/zyxx](https://www.stitchfix.com/zyxx).

INTERN 2: [Stitch Fix dot com slash Zyxx](https://www.stitchfix.com/zyxx).

INTERN 1: Yeah! Okay. Now, back to manually transcribing every ship's fuel, battery, and technical logs, by hand, in triplicate!

INTERNS 1 & 2: For the Alliance!

[desk chairs roll back, Intern 1 laughs and starts writing]

INTERN 2: Wow, Joey Joey...

[static]

[transition music]

[sound of crew boarding Bargie]

AJ: Justin, you would have loved the mission. There was like—

JUSTIN: What?

AJ: Yeah, there was like, 15 clones of Centurion.

NERMUT: [whispering, skittering] AJ—AJ, don't—

PLECK: Yeah, AJ, don't—it's not—

JUSTIN: Centurion?

AJ: Yeah, Centurion.

[Nermut sighs]

AJ: Weren't you guys in love? Now there's like 15 of him.

JUSTIN: Wait, what?

AJ: Yeah, there's like a bunch of Centurions.

JUSTIN: ...Wait, what?

AJ: Yeah, like, Ms. Janelle cloned a bunch of 'em.

JUSTIN: Wait... *what?*

[Pleck laughs]

AJ: So—oh, there's a bunch of Centurions.

C-53: A—AJ, this is getting a little... maybe...

JUSTIN: Wait, *whaaat?*

AJ: There's a bunch of Centurions. What's happening? Is this a time thing?

JUSTIN: Hold onnn. Hold on!

DAR: Yeah, hold on! This is a lot to process.

AJ: I think he's excited. I think he's happy.

JUSTIN: Hold on! Whoa, it's like you literally think you know someone, and they assdead turn out to be a literal clone. Did they—did they mention me at all, or...?

AJ: No, they—they don't know you exist. Why would they know you exist?

PLECK/C-53: Uh, yeah—uh, Justin, I don't think—/Yeah, that—they're not—

JUSTIN: They don't know I exist? That's, assdead, so mean.

PLECK: Uh, Justin, no, I think—

JUSTIN: That's bad vibes right there.

C-53: Yeah, Justin, that's—it doesn't have really anything to do with *them*...

JUSTIN: You know what? I'm gonna pretend that they don't exist either. None of them.

C-53: That actually might be for the best, y'know?

NERMUT: Is it working?

JUSTIN: Maybe I'm a clone.

PLECK: Yeah, Justin, I—I think these—

JUSTIN: [louder] Maybe *I'm* a clone!

PLECK: [laughing] I—no, Justin, I don't think you are—

JUSTIN: [whinier] Maybe *I'm* a clone!

PLECK: No, I don't think you are a clone.

C-53: Okay...

JUSTIN: You know what's a clone? My *heart's* a clone, 'cause I [end of sentence dissolves into indecipherable sad whiny syllables]

PLECK: Oh, wow. Oh boy, this is bad.

C-53: Oh, it's getting ... pretty unintelligible in here.

NERMUT: Jeez.

AJ: Imagine how many kisses you could get from 15 Centurions!

NERMUT: [reproachfully] AJ...

JUSTIN: [angrily] I'm going back to my room!

AJ: What, I'm trying to be—like, is that good? More kisses!

[Justin shuts the door]

BARGIE: Hey, everyone, I'm sorry to interrupt, but I have some good news.

NERMUT: Oh!

AJ: Alright!

PLECK: Oh, great! What's up, Bargie?

NERMUT: Why are you sorry about it?

BARGIE: There is indeed a gas leak.

PLECK: [laughing] Okay. That makes sense. That's... yeah.

DAR: [relieved] Alright! [triumphant laughter]

AJ: Okay. Yeah, okay.

PLECK: This is all checkin' out.

C-53: Honestly, that explains a lot.

NERMUT: That explains a lot.

AJ: Yeah, the tox screen on my—yeah, okay. I was... kind of ignoring the light on my helmet—

BARGIE: Also, good news. I got a package from Ms. Janelle!

PLECK: Oh! That was quick.

C-53: Oh!

AJ: Oh, wow, yeah, let's open it!

NERMUT: Wow, already!

C-53: We just left.

BARGIE: [whispering/mumbling] Also—also, C, I got a package for us, too, youknowwhatImean.

C-53: Oookay...

BARGIE: [whispering] Also, C, I got a package for us too...

NERMUT: [crosstalk] Oh, don't—wait a second—

PLECK: [laughing] Wait, hold on a second. Bargie, did you—

BARGIE: What?

PLECK: Did you find a way to get more hyper-proton fuel?

BARGIE: [sliding out the package] Wow, look at this package from Ms. Janelle, open it.

NERMUT: Oh boy...

C-53: Barge, to be perfectly honest, I don't know if I can do hyper-proton fuel in a K'hekk body.

BARGIE: [mumbling] Okay, sure, just don't worry about it. Don't worry about it, C, we'll talk about it later.

C-53: I—I'm willing to try, but—

BARGIE: We'll talk about it later, C, we'll talk about it later.

NERMUT: Oh, that bug is bouncin' up and down.

PLECK: Guys, we agreed we were ending the podcast. Cube2Cube.

BARGIE: I already—wow, this package by Ms. Janelle. Open it, please.

PLECK: Alright, let's open it up, let's open it up.

[Pleck opens the box and starts taking things out]

PLECK: Oh, a little—a little message.

NERMUT: Oh, it came with a little holo player.

[playback start sound]

JANELLE: [via holo message] Oh, hello, crew. I know it has only been a short time since your wonderful visit, but I just had to send you one more batch of lemon bars.

AJ: Yesss!

C-53: [happily] Ah!

JANELLE: Since I know Justin was unable to try them.

AJ: Awww...

PLECK: Oh, that's so nice.

JUSTIN: [door sliding open from down the hall] Wait... what?

JANELLE: Justin, I look forward to meeting you someday, and hearing all about the many complex emotions you must be feeling as you grapple with parental loss, unrequited love, journeying through space, and the greatest adventure of all... adolescence.

JUSTIN: Augh.

JANELLE: I am also enclosing a little gift for y'all's journey.

PLECK: Oh, look at this!

JANELLE: It's a device of my own design, which may come in handy.

AJ: I don't see anything!

PLECK: Well, look, it's a little—it's like a remote control, look.

AJ: You're just holding your fingers apart.

PLECK: No, no, no. It—it's right here.

JANELLE: I hope never to use a device like this, but one can never be too careful when dealing with cloning technology that might fall into the wrong hands.

PLECK: You can't see this?

AJ: What... see what?

JANELLE: It allows you to neutralize any clone that has been sent on a nefarious path—

C-53: Oh...

JANELLE: —by opening a vial of toxins that is implanted in the brain of every clone created at the facility.

C-53: Oh, wow. So that's—

PLECK: Wow.

NERMUT: Wowwww.

DAR: That's... aggressive.

AJ: Oh, weird. Did the audio cut out? There's no sound in this part of the letter for me.

JANELLE: Some people might call it a... a kill switch, but I prefer the term... kill *button*. Now, this device only works at close range, so you'll need to get within a hug's distance before you press it.

DAR: Wow. Why don't I hold on to that?

JANELLE: Well—

[recording shuts off]

AJ: So where's—where's the kill switch?

NERMUT: AJ, you—I don't think you can see it.

PLECK: Yeah, AJ—

C-53: Yeah. I think maybe there's something preventing clones from seeing this particular device.

AJ: See what?

C-53: Yeah, Dar, it's probably best this is, y'know, under flap and key.

DAR: [sliding the kill button into a flap] Uh, you read my mind there, buddy. [laughs nervously]

[recording starts again]

JANELLE: Well, I do hope y'all stay safe and continue to be good to each other, while always following your path to happiness. Until we meet again, ta ta, love love, kiss kiss and hug hug. Ms. Janelle Fitzmeyer.

AJ: Awww.

PLECK: Wow.

NERMUT: Aww, so nice.

C-53: So sweet.

JANELLE: [gasps] Oh, I almost forgot to tell you! I remembered the name of that unsavory gentleman I met at the facility. Kor... Balevore!

[playback end sound]

[AJ gasps]

NERMUT: Uhhh...

BARGIE: What?

PLECK: Hmm.

C-53: Wha?

JUSTIN: [from down the hall] What!?

[pause, crew snickers]

[Justin re-enters the room]

JUSTIN: Centurion's a clone???

[end credits music]

[music fades into an echo]

[Kor Balevore pressing buttons, archive facility door opening]

ENFORCER DROID: Hello. I am an Enforcer Droid.

KOR BALEVORE: Ah!

ENFORCER DROID: You should not be here.

KOR BALEVORE: Well, Enforcer Droid—

ENFORCER DROID: That is my name.

KOR BALEVORE: Let me just say this.

ENFORCER DROID: Yes.

KOR BALEVORE: You just passed the test! Everyone give a—a big round of applause for Enforcer Droid. Well done!

ENFORCER DROID: Clap. Who's clapping for me. What is that? I do not hear the claps.

KOR BALEVORE: Well, you won't hear them because you're... being... recorded, and the people clapping for you are watching remotely, that's right! The owners of Federated Alliance Council Compound #5 are themselves viewing you doing your job well. And I get hired to come here and test the security. And *you* just passed!

ENFORCER DROID: Uh, no. Enforcer Droids are here to destroy. And to kill. I destroy and kill you now.

KOR BALEVORE: Well, if you did that, then how would I be able to report back that you had successfully destroyed and killed me?

ENFORCER DROID: You bring up a good point. Let me think. I am thinking. I am thinking. [mechanical humming] I am thinking.

KOR BALEVORE: I hate to interrupt you thinking, but you also are on the *timed portion* of your test, and you actually are *losing points* right now.

ENFORCER DROID: If I do not kill you, you do not die. But I win. A prize.

[pause]

KOR BALEVORE: Sorry, you win a prize?

ENFORCER DROID: Is the prize. Pancake. Are you going to make me a pancake.

[pause]

KOR BALEVORE: Now, is that something—

ENFORCER DROID: I would do anything for a pancake.

KOR BALEVORE: Great, I actually have a pancake from earlier, here. It's cold, and I sat on it.

ENFORCER DROID: Oh.

KOR BALEVORE: But—

ENFORCER DROID: But—

KOR BALEVORE: It's actually—I'm—right now—it's *unreal* that you asked for a pancake, and that I had a pancake. That's—I just—as a moment, talk about the coincidence of that, that's crazy to me.

ENFORCER DROID: It is a very cold pancake.

KOR BALEVORE: Yes.

SCRAM: Allow me to reheat the pancake for you, Master.

KOR BALEVORE: [happily] Scram! Oh, look at this guy! What—

[Scram cackles sinisterly]

[Kor laughs evilly]

[the pancake sizzles]

KOR BALEVORE: Oh, that's piping hot.

SCRAM: Yes, I can't hold it. It's too hot. [chuckles]

KOR BALEVORE: Alright, Enforcer Droid, please take this hot, hot pancake and enjoy it.

ENFORCER DROID: I enjoy a hot, hot pancake. It makes me forget.

KOR BALEVORE: ...Great. That's great for me. I'm gonna duck in here real quick, and I'm just gonna—

ENFORCER DROID: I am going to eat the pancake. I am eating the pancake.

SCRAM: Yes, I—I think you are safe to go, Master.

ENFORCER DROID: [continuing in background] I am going to eat the pancake. I am eating the pancake. Going to put the pancake in my mouth.

KOR BALEVORE: I have a blank cube. I'm gonna—I'm gonna hoof it on in here, I'm gonna get the—

[Scram and Kor walk in, door slides shut]

KOR BALEVORE: [typing] Uh, Tremillion sector... And Zyxx quadrant! [chuckles evilly] C-53's consciousness, soon to be mine. Now, what am I gonna eat for lunch, though? I gave away my pancake I was saving for later.

SCRAM: Well, then, perhaps it's time for you to enjoy a quesadilla, Master!

KOR BALEVORE: Oh, my goodness—Scram!

[Scram chuckles, quesadilla sizzles]

KOR BALEVORE: Un—*unreal!* Absolutely unreal!

SCRAM: This press makes many flat foods hot, Master.

[Kor lets out a textbook evil laugh]

[Scram cackles]

KOR BALEVORE: They say a quesadilla maker's not a multi-tool. They are fools!

SCRAM: You must learn its power!

KOR BALEVORE: MWAHAHAHAHAHA!

[sick guitar riff, "KOR BALEVORRRE!"]

[credits roll]

C-RED-IT5: This is C-RED-IT5, credits and attributions droid, commencing outro protocol. Pleck Decksetter and the Yoked PLINTs were played by Alden Ford. C-53 and Scram were played by Jeremy Bent. Dar and Councillor Joey Joey were played by Allie Kokesh. Bargie the Ship, the Mailbot, Justin Ballwheat, and the Enforcer Droid were played by Moujan Zolfaghari. Nermut Bundaloy and Bordoff were played by Seth Lind. AJ, the Old CLINTs, and the Centurions were played by Winston Noel. Ms. Janelle Fitzmeyer was played by special guest Leslie Collins. Leslie has been involved in comedy for over 20 years, performing and teaching improv and musical improv in New York and Los Angeles. Currently, she performs in Dallas, Texas, and teaches musical improv at the Dallas Comedy Club. Leslie also produces and hosts *Sumo Kaboom*, a podcast all about sumo wrestling. She loves buttercream frosting. For the ultimate deep dive into her career, visit www.lesliemariemcollins.com. With special guest appearances by Frank Garcia Hejl as Dad, and Brennan Lee Mulligan as Kor Balevore. 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. 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.

[Promo: FANTI]

TRE'VELL: Hey there beautiful people, I'm Tre'vell Anderson.

JARRETT: And I'm jarrett hill. We are the hosts of FANTI, the show where we have complex and complicado conversations about the gray areas in our lives. The things that we really, really love sometimes, but also have some problematic feelings about.

TRE'VELL: Yes, we get into it all. You wanna know our thoughts about Nicki Minaj and all her foolishness? We got you. You want to know our thoughts about gentrification and perhaps some positive? Question mark?

JARRETT: Uh-oh.

TRE'VELL: Aspects of gentrification? We get into that too. Every single Thursday, you can check us out at maximumfun.org. Listen, you know you want it, honey, so come on and get it.

[jarrett laughs]

TRE'VELL: Period!

[Promo: The Adventure Zone]

[thunderstorm sound effects]

GRIFFIN: We have wasted this world. Our magic put a storm in the sky that has rendered the surface of our planet uninhabitable. But beneath the surface, well, that's another story entirely. In a city built leagues below the apocalypse, survivors of the storm forge paths through a strange new world. Some seek salvation for their homeland above. Others seek to chart the vast undersea expanse outside the city's walls. And others still, seek... what else? Fortune and glory. Dive into the Ethersea, the latest campaign from The Adventure Zone. Every other Thursday on maximumfun.org or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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[outtake begins]

LESLIE/JANELLE: You smell nice.

[quiet wheezy laughter]

SETH/NERMUT: Uh... wh-who?

JEREMY: Wait, who was that directed at?

LESLIE/JANELLE: Anyone.

ALDEN: Gotta be Nermut, right?

LESLIE/JANELLE: You all smell nice.

WINSTON/AJ: Thanks, Ms. Janelle.

ALDEN/PLECK: Thank you so much!

SETH/NERMUT: Thanks!

LESLIE/JANELLE: You collectively—

SETH/NERMUT: I've never heard someone just say that into a room and mean everybody.

LESLIE/JANELLE: Well, can I tell you a—a real funny story? And this is about when I first moved in with Gary. You know, everyone has their own body scent. And, um, mine is completely unique from Gary's, but the funny thing is, when you put us together, we make the smell of salami. [short pause] That's my funny story.

JEREMY/C-53: That is kind of a funny story.

WINSTON/AJ: [laughs] That's great.

LESLIE/JANELLE: I love jokes and pranks and all those types of things.

WINSTON/AJ: That's such a good prank.

LESLIE/JANELLE: Thank you for being a good—a good audience member.

WINSTON/AJ: That's a great prank, Ms. Janelle. Like, I can't believe when people are like, "What's that salami smell?" It's like, "Oh, it's them!"

SETH/NERMUT: Yeah...

LESLIE/JANELLE: Yes. Have you ever made a strange smell with someone else?

JEREMY/C-53: Uh...

ALDEN/PLECK: Uh...

ALLIE/DAR: Uh...

SETH/NERMUT: That's maybe the most personal question I've ever been asked.

[Jeremy and Alden giggling]

ALLIE: [laughing] I love it.

[Alden giggling]

LESLIE/JANELLE: Well, I'm just a personal kind of person.