

**C-RED-IT5:** This is C-RED-IT5, with a very special announcement. Mission to Zyxx is returning to the stage for a live show! That's right. Join us on Sunday, October 3rd at the Bell House in Brooklyn, New York for a fully improvised, fully sound designed episode created live before your eyes and ears. We know October is a ways out, but we are excited and we want to give everyone time to plan their cross-galaxy trips to NYC. Find info and tickets at [missiontozyxx.space](http://missiontozyxx.space). Did we mention we're excited?

**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 song plays]

[Bargie's doorbell rings: someone's at the door, someone's at the door]]

**PLECK:** Hey, Nermut!

**NERMUT:** Hey!

**PLECK:** Welcome aboard! Good to have you back on the ship!

**NERMUT:** Well thank you! Good to be here. I had to- had to come check out C-53's new frame.

**PLECK:** Oh yeah. Check him out. Look at him...

**C-53:** I don't- i don't know that you need to do that.

**NERMUT:** Whoa! Are you serious? I mean, I heard about it, but whoa, you look like a... just like a dude!

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**C-53:** Yep, I look like a dude.

[C-53 can be heard preparing a sandwich]

**PLECK:** Isn't it crazy hearing that voice come out of that face?

**NERMUT:** I know!

**BARGIE:** Watch this, watch this! Hey, C! Eat a sandwich!

**C-53:** I... you know, you're joking, but I- I have a sandwich in hand right now because I have to.

**BARGIE:** HA-HA-HA-HA

**PLECK:** Yeah, it's funny because he is eating a sandwich.

**C-53:** I'm hungry all the time. I hate it.

**PLECK:** Well, whatever the reason, Nermut, it's great to have you back on Bargie.

**NERMUT:** Yeah, I wanted to see you guys, check out C's frame, they made me leave my office, but it's good to see...

**PLECK:** Wait. They made you leave your office?

**NERMUT:** Yeah, consensus was I was spending a little too much time in the Refractorium. It's fine.

**PLECK:** Oh.

**NERMUT:** Yeah.

**PLECK:** How much is-

**AJ:** How much time were you spending?

**NERMUT:** Uhh. All... I haven't- uhm, left it. There's- You can make a bathroom in there, so...

**PLECK:** Oh, Nermut.

**C-53:** Oh. Nermut.

**PLECK:** Yeah, you had a lot of sort of rich inner life about what all of those fake office buildings were and did.

**NERMUT:** Oh, yeah. OptiSoft went through a lot of, like, a round of layoffs, and it hit my team really hard, and it was just a rough...

**C-53:** Nermut, those aren't real companies.

**PLECK:** Those aren't real companies.

**C-53:** Those are imaginary.

**NERMUT:** Well, it's barely a company anymore after two of our competitors merged, and, like, just we're undercutting our prices.

**PLECK:** No. No, Nermut, Nermut. The buildings in a Refractorium are procedurally generated. They- they don't sell a product. They don't have employees.

**NERMUT:** We were not selling enough. That's for certain.

**PLECK:** Oh. Okay.

**NERMUT:** Yeah.

**PLECK:** All right.

**NERMUT:** So, you know, they thought, Nermut, you deserve/definitely need a break from this.

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**AJ:** Day off.

**NERMUT:** Yeah.

**AJ:** Seems like we don't work as much as we used to, right?

**DAR:** We don't. They have a three-day work week here.

**PLECK:** Yeah, you know, I'm kind of a fan, honestly. It gives us a chance to, you know, check out the Synergy and hang out with each other a little bit.

**DAR:** Uh, you're not bored?

**PLECK:** I don't know. In the Zyxx Quadrant, I felt like we did missions every day.

**BARGIE:** I'm busy.

**DAR:** I'm sorry, what?

**BARGIE:** I'm very busy. I don't even have time for you.

**DAR:** How are you busy? What?

**PLECK:** Bargie, you've been in the hangar this whole time.

**BARGIE:** That's what you think. But you never check in. You never ask me, "Bargie, what it is that you do every single day?" Do you ask me that?

**C-53:** To- to be fair, Bargie, you typically get very angry when we ask personal questions like that.

**BARGIE:** I get- No, how dare you ask me that? See? You don't know me.

**PLECK:** Yeah, that's a good point.

**C-53:** Well, no, I don't know you because we're both discouraged from asking you about your life, and you never tell us anything.

**BARGIE:** I'm a complicated character.

**DAR:** Oh, Bargie, look at that. You're making C sweat.

**C-53:** Oh, it's so- do you do this all the time? It's so gross.

**PLECK:** Yeah, it's- it's a common thing.

**AJ:** I don't. I was bred not to.

**NERMUT:** I molt.

**PLECK:** And, you know, C-53, I gotta say, it feels good, you know, you finally understand what I'm going through when I sweat and cry and bleed.

**NERMUT:** Right, but C's frame, like, that's even more sweat than average. Like, you got kind of a lemon there.

**C-53:** I'm very clammy right now. You don't sweat this much.

**PLECK:** Yeah. Even I don't sweat this much.

**C-53:** Touch-

**PLECK:** No.

**C-53:** Touch- touch my forearm.

**PLECK:** No, I'm not doing it.

**C-53:** Touch it.

**DAR:** Of course I will. Thank you.

[Dar rubs C-53's arm]

**DAR:** Eugh. Eugh!

**C-53:** It's- yeah.

**NERMUT:** Whoa, Dar's turning off?

**C-53:** You know, it makes one long for the elegant simplicity of the midnight shadow.

**PLECK:** Oh, yeah?

**C-53:** Or even the workaday simplicity of the ambassador frame.

**PLECK:** Oh, yeah.

**NERMUT:** That was a nice-

**PLECK:** I like that guy.

**NERMUT:** Yeah.

**BARGIE:** Why are you talking about the past when you can be focusing on my future right now?

**C-53:** You're- you're right. Bargie, what it is that you're up to?

**BARGIE:** What it is that I'm up to is I've returned to my roots. I've become an acteur. I've returned to the stage. Bargie's back, baby, and she's a theater acteuress.

**PLECK:** Wow.

**C-53:** That seems hard to pronounce.

**PLECK:** Bargie, how are you an actor? There are no other sentient ships in the galaxy. You'd be acting opposite just a bunch of sentients.

**AJ:** I have an even more pressing question. What do you feel is the main difference between hollow and theater? Like, where are you finding yourself?

**PLECK:** AJ, what?

**BARGIE:** You know, you really become the character.

**AJ:** Really?

**BARGIE:** And every single day's a different experience. Same lines, different emotion, different energy from the crowd. I have not been in front of a crowd yet. I'm just in training.

**NERMUT:** So it's more varied because you repeat everything over and over.

**C-53:** Yeah.

**BARGIE:** Exactly. Anyway, I'm on my way right now to a workshop. And you guys are coming along.

**NERMUT:** What?

**PLECK:** What do you mean Bargie?

**NERMUT:** Wait a second.

**PLECK:** We've got to stay on the ship-

**DAR:** What do you mean Bargie, that means.. Bargie that means we're all on our way.

**C-53:** We're ALL-

**PLECK:** Yeah- Bargie we left?

**BARGIE:** I mean, if you want to come, it's up to you.

**DAR:** No, it's not up to us.

**C-53:** It's not up to us, we have to come.

**NERMUT:** My day off was still going to be not in the- what-

**PLECK:** You've got to keep those windows open when we're on the ship. Otherwise, we don't know if you're going anywhere.

[Nermut sighs]

**PLECK:** Well, Nermut, guess you're coming with us on this one.

**NERMUT:** I was going to sneak back in the Refractorium.

**PLECK:** No.

**DAR:** No, I mean, honestly, this is fine. Would have loved to have hung out with Horsehat. But they're kind of going through that phase where uh- it's uncool to hang out with your old parent.

**PLECK:** Oh Dar.

**DAR:** [obviously crying] I'm not crying.

**NERMUT:** You look like you are.

**AJ:** I think you are.

**PLECK:** I was going to head to the Arboretum and see if I could pick out a new wood saber. But I guess I'll-

**DAR:** You're going to break a branch off a tree in the Arboretum?

**PLECK:** I am going to allow a branch to meet me. And then I shall wait until nobody's looking, take it, and turn it into a new wood saber.

**C-53:** Pleck, I don't know if it's a good idea to-

**PLECK:** Listen, you can't stand between a Zima knight and the weapon that chooses him.

**C-53:** Okay. Really, my only plan for today was to bathe myself, but it sort of seems like that's pointless.

**PLECK:** Not so easy, is it?

**AJ:** All I was going to do was like, try to see if I could help C like, experience pain. Y'know, like we-

**PLECK:** What?

**DAR:** Is that something that C volunteered for?

**AJ:** No, but it's part of it.

**C-53:** AJ, if you could stop flicking my earlobe.

**AJ:** It's part of it.

**C-53:** It's very- it's very annoying.

**PLECK:** AJ, relax.

**AJ:** The fear is part of it.

**C-53:** Hey, hey-

**AJ:** The fear is part of it.

**PLECK:** But wait, so Bargie, we're going to one of your shows?

**BARGIE:** We're going to a workshop, which is the show before the show.

**PLECK:** So a rehearsal?

**BARGIE:** No, it's- it's more like a pre-rehearsal before the rehearsal.

**PLECK:** Oh no.

**C-53:** Okay, that sounds pretty far back in the process, Bargie.

**BARGIE:** But it's with, apparently, the premier directeur of the galaxy. I don't know how this happened. They connected with me, you know? I think even in a different galaxy-

**AJ:** You got it.

**BARGIE:** -people know, sentients know, that I have a star quality.

**AJ:** It's in.

**BARGIE:** Y'know. That's something that never changes. Also, yes, I am the only ship here that can speak.

**C-53:** I mean, that alone is—

**PLECK:** It's got to count for something.

**C-53:** -a real-

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**DAR:** Really.

**AJ:** Everybody has a gimmick.

[ad break begins]

**GRAND KULA:** My loyal Honor Guard. I, the Grand Kula, hereby present the morning announcements. First, in just moments—

[Guards grunting]

**GRAND KULA:** Okay. Alright. Alright, let's try to focus up here. Thank you. In just moments, we will receive and humiliate those Federated Alliance diplomats you see over there struggling to set up that projector. They shall never dare return to Flurp. Next, an HR note. It's come to my attention that we have a little morale issue. As Honor Guards, your job is harsh, violent, and underclothed. You must put the life of me, the Kula, ahead of your own, here on Flurp.

[Guards grunt more]

**GRAND KULA:** Okay. May I continue? Yes. Yes. Here on Flurp, it is finally okay to talk about our mental health. And I am excited to announce that BetterHelp is now available to all members of the Guard. 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. That's shorter than the sensual entrails dance we do after bursting an adversary. Ha-ha-ha. And remember, you don't need a traumatic event to benefit from therapy. Personally, I use BetterHelp to get perspective on any issues with my heir, the precious yet super-argumentative Kulata. See if it's for you. Get 10% off your first month at [BetterHelp.com/zyxx](https://www.betterhelp.com/zyxx). That's [BetterHelp.com/zyxx](https://www.betterhelp.com/zyxx).

[Guards mumbling]

**KULA:** Okay, right. We know how to put an address right.

**GUARD:** <https://www->

**KULA:** You don't even have to-

[Guards mumble more]

**KULA:** Alright. Ah, the wretched ambassador's approach. Fingers on your triggers. Let me get a load of this chump.

**PLECK:** People of Flurp, greetings. My name is Ambassador-

[transition sound]

**PLECK:** Bargie, Is that the theater you're performing in?

**BARGIE:** Yes.

**PLECK:** That theater's barely big enough for you to fit in.

**C-53:** Uh, yeah, Pleck, I don't know if I'd lead with that.

**PLECK:** No, I'm just- just how is it-

**AJ:** It's intimate. It's intimate. You're right there. That's the whole point.

**PLECK:** Thank you, AJ.

**AJ:** In the mid-space.

**BARGIE:** And Pleck, as you know, I am dealing with my size right now, so that was, in a way, a very sensitive question.

**AJ:** Whoaaa. Chasis shaming. Yikes.

**PLECK:** Okay, you know what-

**BARGIE:** I just think you and I really should have a one-on-one fairly soon.

**PLECK:** Okay, all right. Yeah, just let me know, I guess. I'm not- not looking forward to that.

**NERMUT:** So, yeah, Dar, it was super cool. I was watching this marathon about hoarding.

**DAR:** Okay, see, Nermut, the thing is, when you're told to take a break from technology, you actually also shouldn't talk about it when you're not using it.

**NERMUT:** Yeah, yeah, one second. So in the Refractorium, you can build your own world, but you can also just watch programming. And you can not only watch the

programs, you can keep as many as you want in the memory card of the Refractorium, so you can just keep so many episodes about hoarding.

**BARGIE:** Hey, Barfitt, Barfitt, the director here is very much against any sort of technology, so please do not embarrass any of our acteurs here.

**NERMUT:** I'm so sorry.

**AJ:** It's not part of the process, guys. It's not part of the process.

**NERMUT:** Yeah, yeah, I'm here. I'm in it. I'm in it for the workshop. When's it done?

**C-53:** Yeah, Nermut, this isn't the right attitude to be approaching this.

[Bargie's hull alarms as they exit]

**PLECK:** Wow, look at this whole theater. It's so cool.

**C-53:** Hmm. It's, um, it smells, I think the correct attitude is musty in here.

**PLECK:** Yeah, that's right.

**C-53:** It's uh- got a real-

**NERMUT:** Yeah, nailed it C-53. Good.

**DAR:** That's right. What's it like to experience must for the first time, C?

**C-53:** Ahh. Not- not good. I don't care for the smell. It's- it's pretty...

**PLECK:** Ah, that's the theater, C53.

**C-53:** And people go to these willingly?

**DAR:** Not really anymore, no.

**PLECK:** No.

**ELLO:** Greetings.

**PLECK:** Oh.

**C-53:** Oh, hello.

**ELLO:** Salutations.

**NERMUT:** Both. Wow.

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**ELLO:** Expectations.

**PLECK:** That one I don't- yeah, I guess probably.

**ELLO:** Does that make you uncomfortable?

**PLECK:** Uh, what, expectations?

**ELLO:** Let me tell you something about the theater. When you project on stage, very often spittle ejects from your lips.

**AJ:** That's right.

**ELLO:** Sometimes rains gently on the audience.

**C-53:** Oh, it's- I'm getting-

**ELLO:** A sign of projection.

**C-53:** Yeah.

**ELLO:** Commitment.

**DAR:** Mhm, sure.

**ELLO:** Did you get some just now when I said spittle?

**DAR:** Oh, yes.

**C-53:** Yeah, that was it.

**PLECK:** Oh, yeah, wow.

**DAR:** Mhm.

**ELLO:** Does that make you uncomfortable? Leave your discomfort at the door here at Theater Max. Hello.

**C-53:** Very well.

**ELLO:** I am Ello Max, directeur and acteur. Oh, is there a Bargie here?

**BARGIE:** Yes, it is me, Bargie,

**ELLO:** Ah, Bargie.

**BARGIE:** the Bargarean Jade. I am formerly Ship of the Stars.

**C-53:** Are you an A.I.?

**BARGIE:** I am a spaceship.

**ELLO:** But your intelligence is artificial.

**BARGIE:** I guess I never really thought about it that way.

**ELLO:** You are welcome here, for theater is artifice.

**BARGIE:** Wow.

**ELLO:** Intelligence inside artifice.

**BARGIE:** Yes.

**PLECK:** Wow, yeah, that's-

**ELLO:** Bargie, you are the essence of theater.

**BARGIE:** Yes, definitely, absolutely, yes. I don't know exactly what your deal is, but I can already tell that you're something special.

**PLECK:** And uh, Mr. Max, is that correct?

**ELLO:** Please call me Ello. We eschew formality here at Theater Max. First names only.

**PLECK:** Okay, but- well the theater's the name with your last name then?

**ELLO:** Yes, because that's the name of the theater.

**PLECK:** Wouldn't it be Theater Ello? Okay, all right, it's fine, I apologize.

**BARGIE:** Pleck, do not embarrass me.

**ELLO:** Bargie.

**BARGIE:** I'm so overwhelmed, I'm so sorry. It's just you have this amazing presence, and I don't want to toop it up.

**ELLO:** Bargie, you have acted before?

**BARGIE:** I have.

**PLECK:** Yeah, Ello, Bargie, where we're from, is famous. You've had a decades-long career of A-list holos.

**C-53:** Well, and some B-list and C-list.

**PLECK:** Oh, sure, yes, of course.

**BARGIE:** Let's uh, let's see a clip!

**C-53:** Oh, Barg, I don't have a projector anymore.

**BARGIE:** It's okay, I do, I do.

**PLECK:** Oh, wow, okay.

**C-53:** Oh, big screen.

**ELLO:** Can you set this up for us?

**BARGIE:** It's called "Ships on the Line." It's the last performance to change.

[Bargie continues talking, and the clip plays in the background]

**DAR:** Do you want to cut out of here and go fool around somewhere?

**NERMUT:** I mean, Dar, normally, 100% yes, but just, like, I'm freaking out because I, like, I recognize this guy.

**DAR:** Okay, a simple no would have been enough.

**NERMUT:** It's like I've seen him over and over and over somewhere, you know what I mean? Does he work at OptiSoft?

**DAR:** I changed my mind. I think I want to be a part of this workshop more than I want to go fool around.

**NERMUT:** I totally understand, so let's just figure out how I know this guy. Dar?

[the clip ends]

**ELLO:** Bargie, are you proud of this performance?

**BARGIE:** Uh, you know, not really.

**ELLO:** And yet you showed it to us. You were quite eager to show it to us.

**AJ:** She does that a lot.

**PLECK:** Yeah, we've seen a lot- we've seen a lot of real short clips of Bargie's films.

**AJ:** Shows it, and it's like, "I hate it," and we're like, "Okay."

**ELLO:** Bargie, you come to me a fully formed actor.

**AJ:** Wow.

**BARGIE:** Wow.

**ELLO:** Fully formed. Encrusted with bad habits.

**PLECK:** Oh.

**ELLO:** Encrusted with them, like barnacles.

**BARGIE:** Right.

**ELLO:** On a- on a ship.

**PLECK:** I mean, sure, yeah.

**C-53:** Sure, yeah.

**ELLO:** It's a metaphor.

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**ELLO:** Are you willing to chip away at those bad habits and perhaps find the actor underneath?

**BARGIE:** Yes. Change me.

**ELLO:** Marvelous.

**AJ:** Wow.

**ELLO:** Are you all here to participate in the workshop?

**PLECK:** Oh.

**DAR:** Oh.

**C-53:** No, we're just Bargie's colleagues. We're envoys for the coup. I'm C-53. This is Pleck, Dar, AJ, and Nermut.

**ELLO:** All right. Hello.

**C-53:** We won't be taking the workshop, thank you.

**ELLO:** Really? Let me tell you something about the theater.

**BARGIE:** Yes.

**ELLO:** Do you know what one calls the theater?

**AJ:** The theater.

**C-53:** I think he was asking for a different-

**AJ:** Oh.

**ELLO:** We also call it a space.

**PLECK:** Wait, hold on.

**ELLO:** This is the space.

**PLECK:** Now, the space, now the space I like. I like that.

**AJ:** It's a great space.

**PLECK:** I can feel the space in this space.

**ELLO:** And you are space explorers. It's perfect.

**AJ:** It's perfect.

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**AJ:** No, it's perfect, you guys. Get on board. It's perfect.

**DAR:** Okay, okay.

**C-53:** All right.

**AJ:** This rules.

**ELLO:** Yes. Yes, we're going to do a group workshop, my favorite kind. We'll connect with each other. Everyone hold hands right now.

**PLECK:** Oh, boy.

**AJ:** Let's do it!

**C-53:** Okay.

**BARGIE:** Extending my arms. Extending my arms.

**PLECK:** Wow, Bargie, I didn't know you had those.

**C-53:** Okay, Barg, I've got one of your manipulator arms here.

**DAR:** And I have C-53's other very clammy hand.

**NERMUT:** Okay im just gonna hold on to- C-53's ankle.

**C-53:** I'm sorry, I don't have control over that.

**BARGIE:** Please do what you want to the sentience I have brought with me.

**PLECK:** Wait, what?

**BARGIE:** To make me a better acteur.

**PLECK:** Bargie.

**ELLO:** Thank you. We're going to improvise. Do you know what that is?

**AJ:** Yeah, it's like, you know, kind of like messing around, but you like spend a lot of time on it, being really serious about imaginary stuff, and then you're wondering, like, am I actually just too lazy to write? And then by that time you sunk like a ton of money into it, so you're like, well, I better keep doing it. It's improv. It's like stupid, right?

**ELLO:** There's an aspect of it that's stupid.

**AJ:** Right.

**ELLO:** But the stupidity is actually very intelligent.

**AJ:** Oh, Okay. Yeah. I can do it.

**ELLO:** AJ, here's what we're going to do.

**AJ:** Okay.

**ELLO:** I will play the king, and you are my enforcer.

**AJ:** Okay, yeah, I think I can do that.

**ELLO:** Pleck,

**PLECK:** Uh, yes.

**ELLO:** You are my fool.

**PLECK:** Uhh- uh-

**ELLO:** Dar.

**DAR:** Yeah.

**ELLO:** You are a lady in waiting.

**DAR:** That's fun.

**ELLO:** C-53, you are a guard.

**C-53:** Okay.

**ELLO:** If I call for guard, that's you.

**C-53:** Alright, I will be ready.

**ELLO:** Yes. Oh, and young Nermut.

**NERMUT:** Yes.

**C-53:** He's not that young, but-

**PLECK:** I mean, for his species, he's got one foot in the grave.

**ELLO:** Really?

**C-53:** Yeah.

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**ELLO:** Because I was going to cast you as boy, a boy of the court.

**NERMUT:** Uh, okay.

**C-53:** I mean-

**ELLO:** Here, we have this wig. Just hold on. I have a box here. Let's put this wig on.

**NERMUT:** That's so good. That's so good. It's over my shoulders.

**AJ:** Oh yeah, that's a really good wig.

**PLECK:** Oh, that's very nice.

**AJ:** Yeah, that's a boy.

**C-53:** It's pretty convincing.

**ELLO:** Blonde ringlets.

**PLECK:** That's very adorable.

**ELLO:** Now, let us begin. Let us begin the scene.

**BARGIE:** Oh, wait, sorry to interrupt. Do I have a part as well?

**ELLO:** Oh, did I not assign you one?

**BARGIE:** No. I mean, unless that was the whole thing.

**ELLO:** Bargie, you are a prisoner. You are a prisoner of the king.

**BARGIE:** Okay, got it. Understood. Thank you.

**ELLO:** You are chained in the middle of the room.

**BARGIE:** Fantastic.

**PLECK:** I feel like he gave us all roles that are just super low status compared to him.

**AJ:** Shut up, fool.

**PLECK:** Okay.

**ELLO:** Very distracting, all this muttering.

**AJ:** Yeah.

**PLECK:** Okay, sorry. I apologize.

**AJ:** Can we get room tone? Let's do this. Come on.

**ELLO:** This is not film.

**AJ:** I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry.

**ELLO:** What happens, happens. We embrace the noises.

**AJ:** I'm so sorry, Ello. I'm so sorry. Go to one, everyone. I'm sorry.

**ELLO:** As the- as the curtain rises, the king speaks. Fool!

**PLECK:** Yes?

**ELLO:** Sing for me.

**PLECK:** Okay... [singing] Well, the tale of Bali the ballroom cat is one that might excite.  
With a tee and a ho and a nonny-tee-ho, Bali went into the night.

**ELLO:** Fool!

**PLECK:** Yeah?

**ELLO:** Stop singing.

**PLECK:** Yes, my.. liege.

**ELLO:** Lady in waiting.

**DAR:** Yep?

**ELLO:** You can start giving me a back massage.

**DAR:** Uh-huh.

[Dar aggressively massages his back]

**ELLO:** Ah, very good. Very good. Does that make you uncomfortable?

**DAR:** Massaging you? No, not really.

**ELLO:** Yes. Well, try to find the discomfort.

**DAR:** ...In your back?

**ELLO:** In your soul. You don't like this. Who are you? Where did you come from? Why are you a lady in waiting? Why are you not the queen?

**DAR:** Which one of you is the queen?

**ELLO:** There is no queen.

**PLECK:** Sorry, just to be clear, are we still holding hands at this point?

**BARGIE:** Yes.

**PLECK:** Okay, alright. No, I just wanted to check.

**AJ:** My hand's getting pinched, Bargie.

**NERMUT:** My hand kind of.. Slipped off C-53's ankle.

**ELLO:** Hold hands.

[transition sound]

[piano playing]

**BARGIE:** [singing] And I did it Bargie's way. Dedicated to everyone who tried, and failed.

**ELLO:** Does anyone else here have any experience in the theater? Besides Bargie.

**BARGIE:** Thank you.

**AJ:** I do. I do.

**ELLO:** Tell.

**AJ:** One time when I was on the strike force-

**ELLO:** Yes.

**AJ:** -there was a crowded theater full of dissidents. We locked the theater and set it on fire.

**PLECK:** AJ, what?

**C-53:** AJ, that's not-

**AJ:** What?

**C-53:** -experience in the theater.

**AJ:** Well, I mean, sure, I wasn't in the theater, but it was around the theater.

**C-53:** Yeah, I got- I got the story. It's just pretty grim.

**ELLO:** You're a bit of a critic, AJ. If I may.

**AJ:** Ah, y'know. I guess so. You know, I like what I like. And I didn't like those dissidents.

**ELLO:** But were there- were there difficult times when you weren't getting gigs?

**AJ:** Oh, Ello it was never easy, but it was worth it. It was always worth it, no matter how hard it got.

**ELLO:** I want you to access the bad feeling.

**AJ:** Oh, okay.

**ELLO:** And I want you to take all that bad feeling, and I want you to yell at Pleck.

**AJ:** Okay.

**PLECK:** What, me?

**ELLO:** Yes, it's a scene.

**AJ:** Okay.

**ELLO:** And you're going to pretend that Pleck is your daddy. And Pleck, you are the daddy. Defend yourself.

**BARGIE:** This is a classic acting exercise.

**PLECK:** Oh, uh-

**ELLO:** But we don't say action in the theater. We say go. Go!

**AJ:** I hate you, daddy!

**PLECK:** Wh- oh- uh-

**AJ:** What do I hate you for? For what you did! Well, listen to me, daddy.

**ELLO:** Slap him, AJ.

**PLECK:** I don't-

**ELLO:** Slap him.

[AJ slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow! Am I still the Jester at this point, or am I his daddy?

**ELLO:** You're the daddy now.

**AJ:** Yeah, daddy.

**PLECK:** Okay.

**C-53:** That's a different scene, Pleck. Keep up.

**PLECK:** Okay, I'm sorry to pull over here, but I feel like all of these exercises are just designed to make us feel bad.

**ELLO:** Does that make you uncomfortable?

**PLECK:** I mean, yes.

**DAR:** I think I just realized what's making me feel uncomfortable. It's that Pleck just made us stop when I felt the impulse to slap him in the scene.

**PLECK:** What?

**ELLO:** Follow that impulse.

[Dar slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow! Wait, you're in the scene?

**ELLO:** That's a good impulse.

**PLECK:** I thought it was just a scene with me and AJ.

**AJ:** It's an improv. It's a walk-on.

**PLECK:** No.

**BARGIE:** My mechanic arm could also slap too.

**PLECK:** No!

[Bargie slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow! This isn't acting, right? Is it?

**ELLO:** Silence, fool.

[Ello slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Oh!

**AJ:** Whoa, he really got in there.

**PLECK:** So it is the same scene.

**ELLO:** Now let me explain something. Yes, we are slapping Pleck. And yes, it's painful for Pleck. But we are on a stage. So we're protected by that. We're not really angry at Pleck-

**ELLO:** If- if-

[Ello slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow!

**ELLO:** -we stood in a line. Line up.

**BARGIE:** Sure. Yes

**C-53:** Okay.

**ELLO:** All right, next slap. Slap, go.

[everyone starts slapping Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow!

**ELLO:** Next, next.

**PLECK:** Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow! My knee! Nermut!

**NERMUT:** Sorry.

**ELLO:** Now let me ask you something. Are we all really angry at Pleck? Of course not.

**BARGIE:** Yes.

**ELLO:** But on the stage, in the imaginary circumstance of our rage, we do this.

[Ello slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow! What's the difference?

**ELLO:** The difference is people pay to see it.

**PLECK:** Oh.

**BARGIE:** Clap, clap, clap, clap, clap, clap, clap, clap, clap.

**ELLO:** What is a clap but a slap?

**C-53:** Oh, wow.

**AJ:** Whoaa.

**DAR:** Wow.

**AJ:** Wow.

**DAR:** Mind blown.

**C-53:** If anything, it's two slaps at the same time.

**ELLO:** Now you're getting it.

**C-53:** Mm, well, profound.

**ELLO:** Now you're getting it.

[Ello slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow! I need to be further away from you, I think.

**ELLO:** Well, go sit in the house if you want, Mr. Fussbudgett.

**PLECK:** Okay, Okay.

**AJ:** You heard him.

**ELLO:** Let me tell you something about the theater. We call the audience the house. But we on stage are the players. We play. Now does that language make you uncomfortable, Pleck?

**PLECK:** Uhh.

**ELLO:** Do you think it's infantilizing for me to say we play up here?

**PLECK:** I- I would say it's not as infantilizing as being slapped repeatedly.

**C-53:** You would never slap a child. That's absurd.

**ELLO:** Exactly. There are laws about that.

[Pleck and Ello talk in the background]

**NERMUT:** [whispering] Dar, Dar. A strange thing popped into my head.

**DAR:** What is it, Nermut? What are you trying to stage whisper to me?

**NERMUT:** One of the series I was watching in the Refractorium—

**DAR:** Oh, no, please don't talk about something you've been watching.

**NERMUT:** No, no, Dar, this is important. It's not like the earlier one about hoarding, which is also amazing. This one is—

**DAR:** That sounds exploitative, honestly, but fine.

**NERMUT:** This— I was watching a 27-part true crime series on this galaxy's most nefarious criminals. Four of those episodes focus on Jawn the Malevolent. When the Kuzgalactic Tribunal laid out all the charges against him, all he would ask is, does that make you uncomfortable? Over and over.

[Ello, to Pleck: Does that make you uncomfortable? Does it make you uncomfortable?]

**DAR:** [sarcastically] [gasp] Nermut. Nermut, [gasp]

**NERMUT:** Yes?

**DAR:** What is your point?

**NERMUT:** Oh, Dar, come on. That's what he's saying. I think Ello is Jawn,

**DAR:** The director?

**NERMUT:** Yes.

**DAR:** It's— you sound a little far-fetched at the moment. Okay, so—

**NERMUT:** No, I am near-fetched, as near as fetching can be.

**ELLO:** Excuse me, we really can't get any work done if everyone just pairs off and mutters.

**NERMUT:** Sorry, sorry, sorry.

**ELLO:** What's going on here?

**NERMUT:** Oh, nothing.

**ELLO:** Well, perhaps you'd like to share with the rest of the class.

**AJ:** Share it. Share with the rest of the class, guys. That's what we're here for.

**NERMUT:** It was unrelated—

**ELLO:** Like they say in school.

**NERMUT:** Sure, fine. I was just telling Dar that um- I think I recognize you, so I probably just have seen you in something.

**DAR:** Nermy specifically thinks you look like one of the villains from one of his little holo programs. What was it again, Nermut? Jawn the Malevolent?

**NERMUT:** No-

**ELLO:** Jawn the Malevolent, yes, yes, yes. I vaguely recall who was killed by his people. Very unfortunate, very unfortunate. There were photographs of his burned body.

**AJ:** Wait, who, wait, who was he though?

**PLECK:** Wait, he was killed by his people?

**NERMUT:** Jawn the Malevolent is- I mean was a authoritarian ruler here in this galaxy who-

**ELLO:** He was an authority? That doesn't necessarily make him an authoritarian. He was an authority on ruling.

**NERMUT:** I'm just saying that Jawn the Malevolent was responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths.

**ELLO:** Let me ask you this.

**NERMUT:** Yes.

**ELLO:** Is being an authority a bad thing?

**AJ:** No.

**BARGIE:** No.

**NERMUT:** No, not-

**ELLO:** Perhaps this conversation makes you uncomfortable. Does it make you uncomfortable?

**NERMUT:** Okay, well, now you're just saying Jawn the Malevolent's famous phrase.

**ELLO:** Let me tell you something about the theater. The theater is not a democracy. In fact, I am something of an authoritarian. I tell you what to do. If I wish to slap Pleck-

[Ello slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow! Im sitting in house now! Im sitting in house.

**ELLO:** I do it. Because we're on stage. Because we're on stage.

[Bargie slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow bargie!

**BARGIE:** I don't know. I'm just following orders.

**ELLO:** Let me tell you something about the theater, Pleck. Sometimes you can walk off stage, go into the house, but you're still on stage.

**PLECK:** Okay. I don't know. This all sounds a little high concept for me so, I don't know.

**AJ:** I think what you mean is this is immersive theater, and I think you should get into it.

**PLECK:** I don't like that at all. Guys, I'm not sure this workshop is for me.

**NERMUT:** I mean, I don't think this workshop should be for anyone. I don't think this guy is who he claims to be.

**C-53:** Do you think he hasn't called for the guard yet because the scene hasn't called for it, or does he just not think I'm much of an actor?

[the theatre doors close]

**ELLO:** I have sealed the doors. Because I get the sense that some of you want to leave?

**DAR:** What? No.

**C-53:** Oh, I was just saying that nobody has even spoken to me in this scene, so I haven't had a chance to say anything.

**ELLO:** Oh, so lines are what make a role significant.

**C-53:** Oh, no. I- you know I didn't mean to imply that you need to have a lot of-

**ELLO:** Oh, you didn't?

**C-53:** N-No.

**ELLO:** Well, what did you mean to imply?

**BARGIE:** Wow.

**AJ:** Sweating so much..

**C-53:** I guess I just thought... Pleck, do you feel this nervous when people talk to you? Is this-

**PLECK:** Every time. Every single time.

**C-53:** Wow. This is horrible. I hate this.

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**ELLO:** I tell you what. Here, take this, where's- here. This broom. I want you to imagine that it's uh, a lance.

**C-53:** Okay. Yeah, sure.

**ELLO:** Now I want you to also imagine a shield over your face with a slit in it-

**C-53:** Oh, okay.

**ELLO:** -for your eyes. It's very scary looking.

**C-53:** Okay. Yes. Very good.

**ELLO:** Let me ask you a question now. Is this man more threatening or less threatening if he speaks? I know the answer. Do you?

**C-53:** Ooh, less threatening if he speaks. I got to agree.

**ELLO:** High five.

**C-53:** Oh.

**AJ:** Oh, all right. High five.

**ELLO:** It's another form of slap.

**AJ:** Yeah.

**C-53:** Now this is a slap I can get behind. Alright.

**PLECK:** Can I have one of those?

[Ello slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow! Ow! That was not- on my hand, on my hand.

**NERMUT:** Very high five.

[ad break begins]

**KULATA:** Why won't you text back, Croy? I can see that you read it. You said even though we're going to different colleges, we would go steady forever. Oh, the three little typing dots. Croy, you are my everything. Wait, where'd they go? Oh! Daddy, I want you to kill my boyfriend.

[Grand Kula continues talking to Pleck]

**KULATA:** Oh, everybody's so busy. Oh, I'm the Grand Kula I'm so busy. Dearest diary, what a day. If only I were a spaceship that could blast off into space and fly far, far away. I'm just thankful that even though, like, no one even loves me, I have Dipsea. I so need an escape, but those can totally be hard to come by right now. But, like, enter Dipsea. It lets me get lost in a world where good things actually happen and where my pleasure is the only part of that. Do you hear that, Croy? My pleasure! Because Dipsea is literally an audio app full of short, sexy stories designed to turn you on. And if you need to wind down, Dipsea also has wellness sessions, sensual bedtime stories, and soundscapes to help you relax before you drift off. Like if you're worked up because your dad's always shooting visitors or whatever.

[Grand Kula can be heard shooting at the crew]

**KULATA:** And, diary, you know what's totally amazing? Dipsea is offering an extended 30-day free trial when you go to [dipseastories.com/zyxx](https://dipseastories.com/zyxx). That's 30 days of full access for free when you go to [d-i-p-s-e-a stories.com/zyxx](https://d-i-p-s-e-a-stories.com/zyxx). Oh, wait. Is that... Is that the Bargarian jucking Jade? I can sneak on and literally escape while also figuratively escaping using this audio app. [Dipseastories.com/zyxx](https://dipseastories.com/zyxx)!

[ad break ends]

**AJ:** Bargie? Bargie?

**BARGIE:** Yeah, what's up, AJ?

**AJ:** Do you feel like you're becoming a better actor because of all this? How you hit Pleck and yelled at C and...

**BARGIE:** I mean, to be honest, to be an actor is about making you uncomfortable, right? And making you second guess every training that you've ever had. So, in a way, I feel uncomfortable. I feel low status. I feel unheard. I feel like perhaps this was a mistake. So, I think it is working?

**AJ:** Yeah, I think it is.

**ELLO:** I couldn't help overhearing.

**AJ:** Oh, so- so sorry.

**BARGIE:** Right, I'm very loud. I can't do asides, honestly. It's just a speaker system.

**ELLO:** It's wonderful that you're feeling low status. That's very important. Now, I want you to... feel even lower. What I'm trying to find is what we in the theater call substitution. So, if your job in the play is to suffer, but the circumstances of the play have no meaning to you, you'd know nothing of kings and authoritarians. What know you of such things?

**BARGIE:** Right.

**ELLO:** But you can relate to something personal.

**BARGIE:** Right.

**ELLO:** Like the death of a pet. Or perhaps a time that I don't know you needed oil or something.

**BARGIE:** I think I know exactly what you mean.

**ELLO:** Alright, now I want you to go there and I want you to tell the fool. Get back up here. Fool.

[Ello snaps his fingers]

**PLECK:** I think I may be retired.

**AJ:** I got him. I got him. I got him, I got him Ello dont worry!

[AJ runs down, grabs pleck and throws him onto the stage]

**PLECK:** Ow!

**ELLO:** No one retires from Theater Max.

**PLECK:** ...Okay.

**ELLO:** Alright, now I want you to dig deep inside and in your own words, tell the fool how much he's disappointed you. Right. And go.

**BARGIE:** Hey, Pleck Decksetter.

**PLECK:** The fool's name is Pleck Decksetter?

**ELLO:** You may call him by that name. You may call him by that name. We all know it's just pretend.

**AJ:** It's all pretend.

**ELLO:** We all know we're on stage. We are playing.

**PLECK:** No, that's my real name. That's my real-

**ELLO:** We're playing.

**PLECK:** Okay.

**ELLO:** The language of children. We are playing. But really give it to him.

**BARGIE:** Wahhh. Pleck, you've hurt my feelings the past couple weeks.

**PLECK:** Really?

**BARGIE:** Yeah. You no longer ask me what my day's, what I'm up to's, the things's that I'm doings's. You're starting to look at me the same way you look at the other ships here. Like they're nothing. They're nobodies. They're not sentients like the way I am.

**PLECK:** No, no, Bargie.

**BARGIE:** Do you know what I've had to do to be here today? How much I sacrificed for you, Pleck, Eugiaen Decksetter.

**AJ:** Eugiaen..

**C-53:** I'm not sure that's right.

**BARGIE:** I gave up my son. I gave up my friends. You know why? Because, I care about you. But do you care about me?

**PLECK:** Ye-

**BARGIE:** [gasping]

**PLECK:** If-

**BARGIE:** [gasping] You don't care about me. Do you know how much I bleed for you? Let the oil come out.

[Bargie opens her oil tank]

**BARGIE:** Is this what you want? Pleck Dork-Thunder?

**PLECK:** No.

**C-53:** That's way off.

[Ello starts clapping]

**AJ:** Whoa.

**PLECK:** Wow.

**ELLO:** That was marvellous. You did it. You did it. I believed you. Did everyone believe Bargie?

**AJ:** Yes.

**NERMUT:** Dar, Dar, Dar.

**DAR:** What? What is it now?

**NERMUT:** That slow clap... The cadence of that clap was exactly the same as Jawn the Malevolent's slow clap right before he threw his advisors into a pit.

**DAR:** This is a stretch and I think we can both agree that you should drop it.

**AJ:** Hey guys? uhm-

**NERMUT:** Yes.

**AJ:** Excuse me. uhm-

**NERMUT:** Yes.

**AJ:** Ello is trying to work with Bargie right now on a very tough scene. He asked me to come and make sure everyone was being quiet so I'm just asking you guys, in respect for the work, could you guys just take it down a little bit? Just a little bit.

**NERMUT:** Fine. AJ, where did you get the all black outfit?

**ELLO:** Ello gave it to me because stage managers always wear black and we're also doing a cue-to-cue in a few minutes, so.

**NERMUT:** A what?

**ELLO:** Excuse me.

**AJ:** I- I tried.

**ELLO:** I've had enough. If this muttering continues-

**NERMUT:** Ah- Ju-

**ELLO:** Nermut.

**NERMUT:** Yes.

**ELLO:** You keep staring at me. If you people keep muttering behind my back, I'm going to throw you into the pit.

**NERMUT:** Oh my Rodd.

**ELLO:** That's the pit here where the orchestra plays.

**NERMUT:** Dar, what did I tell you about the pit? He threw his people into it. Now he's going to do the same thing to us.

**ELLO:** I beg your pardon, speak up.

[Nermut groans]

**ELLO:** I'm fully aware that Jawn the Malevolent threw his people into a large pit. It was not an orchestra pit. There was nary, a violinist there.

**DAR:** How do you know that?

**ELLO:** Well, you know, I don't know that. I don't know that. I'm a man of the theater. I'm not an authoritarian exile pretending to be a man of the theater! That's absurd.

**NERMUT:** So you've always gone by the name Ello.

**ELLO:** Weeeeeaaaaaaaauu- Of course. I am Max the I- I mean, I'm Ello Max. Theater director.

**C-53:** A little... little bit of a delay on that.

**AJ:** We all get our names wrong from time to time, right? We all sometimes don't say our names right. Come on.

**DAR:** Okay. Yeah, Nermut. I would say I am suspicious now.

**NERMUT:** Yeah, you think? He stumbled on his own name, not to mention locked the doors earlier?

**ELLO:** Nermut, get in the pit. Get in the pit right now.

[Ello throws Nermut into the pit, he lands on a piano]

**ELLO:** It's an orchestra pit! Will you relax?

**NERMUT:** It still hurt. Landed on a timpani.

**C-53:** Could do a lot worse than landing on a timpani.

**PLECK:** Sort of like a little trampoline.

**ELLO:** Hey, be careful with those drums, please.

**AJ:** Careful with the drums, people.

[Nermut plays a sad trombone: wah wahh]

**ELLO:** Nermut, put down that trombone.

**NERMUT:** Sorry, it's just-

[Nermut plays a xylophone]

**ELLO:** Stop that!

**NERMUT:** I call that little solo Malevolence in Spring.

**AJ:** Can we get back to the work? You know, it's everybody's time here. And we can- we can talk about who is or who is not a genocidal dictator all day long. But I think we want to get back to the work.

**PLECK:** AJ-

**AJ:** Who's with me?

**ELLO:** I have an idea. Let's all do some table work. Okay, by which I mean, let's make a table. Now, yeah, there's some wood over here and here.

**BARGIE:** Okay.

**PLECK:** Wait, you want us to build a table?

**ELLO:** We got some tools in the wings here. If uh, here you go. Can you take that?

**AJ:** We're close.

**PLECK:** Okay, hold on, no, this can't be-

**ELLO:** Can you- AJ help me organize this? You look like a man who's built a table.

**AJ:** I built a bunch of tables.

**PLECK:** This can't be part of it.

**ELLO:** Let's focus on this table work right now.

**BARGIE:** Right, right, right.

**ELLO:** Ok

**PLECK:** Hey, hey, Bargie, Bargie.

**BARGIE:** Yes. Pleck.

**ELLO:** Pleck, Hammer that nail. Come on.

**PLECK:** Okay. Okay. Yes. Hold on. Ello. This is all been great. All the slapping has kind of made me need to go to the bathroom. Can I just do that real quick? Take a quick one.

**ELLO:** Fine. Yes. Right through the-

**PLECK:** Okay.

**ELLO:** -the left wing there.

**PLECK:** Oh, yeah. I'll just use Bargie's it's uh-

**ELLO:** All right. Leave the hammer, please. Where are you going?

**PLECK:** Okay. Yes. Here you go.

**ELLO:** Leave the Hammer.

**AJ:** You got a hammer. Thank you, hammer, hammer on set.

**PLECK:** Hey, Bargie, Bargie.

[Bargie singing inside her hull]

**PLECK:** Hold on, Bargie, is this just the sound you make when nobody's inside of you?

**BARGIE:** [singing] No one's inside, ba-ba-da-ba.

**PLECK:** No. Bargie, Bargie. It's Pleck, it's Pleck in here.

**BARGIE:** Oh, sorry. It was my inside voice.

**PLECK:** Your inner monologue-

**BARGIE:** what do you want, Pleck:?

**PLECK:** -plays inside when we're outside.

**BARGIE:** What do you want?

**PLECK:** Listen, Bargie, I think something's going on with Ello Max. I need your help. You're the only person who can help us.

**BARGIE:** I know. Ello keeps focusing on everybody else, even though this workshop was supposed to be for me. I don't feel like I'm progressing as an acteur. If anything, I feel like I'm worse.

**PLECK:** Yes, exactly. Exactly. Exactly. Bargie, I need you to make this workshop about him. You're the only person who knows the business like he does. You need to get him

somehow to tell his story. It just it seems like he might be a really bad guy. And- and if so, we- we need him to slip up and admit that.

**BARGIE:** You want me to make him uncomfortable?

**PLECK:** I guess so.

**BARGIE:** Only if you apologize, Pleck.

**PLECK:** Oh, Bargie.

**BARGIE:** What I said was true before.

**PLECK:** You know, Bargie, listen, I'm so sorry if you feel like I've been ignoring you or- or that you feel lost or alone. I know we're all here because of something that I did. But I promise you we will find a way back to the Zyxx Quadrant, somehow. Because if my destiny is to save the galaxy, but I can't save my friends? I can't accept that.

**BARGIE:** I don't know, Pleck. I uhh.. I'm just kidding! Alright.

**PLECK:** Wow.

[Bargie slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow!

**BARGIE:** Yes, Pleck, I'll forgive you.

**PLECK:** Wait- how did the arm get inside?

**BARGIE:** You want me to destroy this director, you want me to destroy him? I'll destroy him. Is that what you want? I will crush him. I will crush him. It's like he never existed.

[transition sound]

**ELLO:** Alright. Very good. Now that's a table. Good work, everyone. Give yourselves a hand.

**AJ:** Pretty good.

**BARGIE:** Uhm, director, Ello. I was wondering when we would get to the part of the session where we get to ask you questions.

**ELLO:** Well, I'd be happy to. Why don't we all- Everyone pull up a chair. Let's all sit at this table. Anything you want to ask. That's what table work is about. It's about a back

and forth where we discuss the uh, subtextual aspects of what we're working on. Wonderful.

**BARGIE:** Um, sure.

**ELLO:** Please don't be shy. Anything you want to ask. I'm- I'm all ears.

**BARGIE:** Number one, how do you hype yourself up for a day on the stage?

**ELLO:** I do a jog right before I have to get to the theater.

**BARGIE:** Do you like lunch or dinner better?

**ELLO:** Lunch. Sometimes I don't even have dinner.

**BARGIE:** What's your deepest darkest secret?

**ELLO:** I don't like peanuts.

**BARGIE:** Go darker.

**ELLO:** I had issues with my father.

**BARGIE:** Go deeper.

**ELLO:** I was Jawn the Malevolent-

**C-53:** Wait-

**PLECK:** Whoa. What?

**BARGIE:** Go deeper and darker.

**PLECK:** No, no we don't need.

**DAR:** That's pretty dark.

**BARGIE:** Oh, okay. Sorry.

**JAWN:** There was an uprising. I instituted martial law. And then I threw those people into the pit. I burned a body and said it was me. I had my- my officials lie to the public and then I fled.

**AJ:** Wait, you're Jawn the Malevolent?

**JAWN:** Yes, and Bargie made me inadvertently confess.

**AJ:** Someone in the entertainment industry is.... bad?

**JAWN:** I- I can't believe I'm telling you this. This is the most profound table work I've ever been a part of.

**BARGIE:** I have a follow-up about the lunch?

**PLECK:** Bargie!

**JAWN:** Bargie! You have become a director.

**BARGIE:** What?

**JAWN:** You pulled something out of me that I didn't want to pull out, that I was afraid of. It made me uncomfortable to talk about this. It made me uncomfortable.

**BARGIE:** I made you uncomfortable.

**JAWN:** Thank you.

**BARGIE:** I'm a director now.

**JAWN:** Yes.

**BARGIE:** I'm a director now! I'm a director now!

[Bargie slaps Pleck]

**PLECK:** Ow!

**JAWN:** Let me just tell you that the Directors Union has very good health care.

**BARGIE:** Is it a very expensive join-in or?

**JAWN:** Yeah, I'll give you some of the literature.

**BARGIE:** Oh, right, yeah, just like to send it over, yeah.

**C-53:** Okay.

**JAWN:** Look, I- I was an authoritarian and now I'm a director. The only killing I do is when I murder an audience through a great performance, metaphorically.

**AJ:** Hahahahaha!

**PLECK:** AJ, AJ, relax.

**AJ:** No one else got it? It's great.

**PLECK:** No, we all got it. We all got it.

**C-53:** Yeah, it's a little inappropriate.

**AJ:** Okay.

**NERMUT:** Dark, given his past.

**AJ:** Alright.

**JAWN:** You know, when I played Jawn the Malevolent...

**PLECK:** Hold on.

**C-53:** Wait a minute, what?

**AJ:** Huh?

**NERMUT:** You played yourself in the docu-series.

**JAWN:** Did you see this reenactment?

**NERMUT:** Yes, that's where I recognized you from!

**AJ:** Twist.

**DAR:** Oh, it was you.

**JAWN:** Yes.

**DAR:** I knew it all along.

**NERMUT:** Why would you ever play yourself in a docu-series about how you were an evil monster?

**JAWN:** Well, I had given up my kingdom, I had to make money, I became an actor, I joined the union, and the audition came up. What was I supposed to do, turn it down?

**NERMUT:** It just seems like a risk.

**PLECK:** You were a fugitive.

**JAWN:** Frankly, I thought I was a very good fit for the role. And it was actually between me and another guy.

**PLECK:** Really?

**JAWN:** Yes.

**C-53:** I kind of wonder what happened to that other guy.

**NERMUT:** Yeah, what happened? Did you dare ask?

**DAR:** Did you kill him?

**JAWN:** No, he's doing very well, he just got a series.

**DAR:** Oh.

**BARGIE:** Oh, I know that feeling, yeah.

**AJ:** Oh, good for him. Good for him.

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**JAWN:** Yes. When I played Jawn the Malevolent, I was in a TV studio being filmed. Someone else had written the lines. It was a challenge. I couldn't just walk in and be me. I was acting.

**NERMUT:** And you had to regrow the mustache.

**JAWN:** The mustache was fake. They- they gave me a false mustache because of the flashbacks from when I was a boy. Which I also played quite effectively.

**PLECK:** You played- you played yourself as a boy?

**NERMUT:** Oh, this is the wig from the docu-series!

**JAWN:** Yes, yes.

**BARGIE:** That's really impressive.

**NERMUT:** Wow.

**BARGIE:** Honestly, very impressive.

**AJ:** Wow.

**JAWN:** Look-

**BARGIE:** Yeah.

**JAWN:** I know it's hard to believe, but when I was young, I had very luxurious blonde hair.

**AJ:** Hahahaha!

**PLECK:** AJ.

**JAWN:** Right, AJ?

**C-53:** AJ, it's not even a joke.

**JAWN:** Well, I suppose your plan is to arrest me and call the authorities, eh?

**NERMUT:** Uhh, yes.

**JAWN:** Yeah, you've solved the case.

**PLECK:** We were- we didn't know.

**C-53:** Yeah we're- that's, we're going to do that.

**JAWN:** You'll be all over the universe now. Heroes.

**NERMUT:** Yeah, we can call that number they show at the end of the docu-series, that said like if you have tips.

**JAWN:** Well, that's not going to happen.

**NERMUT:** Huh?

**JAWN:** AJ.

**AJ:** Yes, Ello?

**JAWN:** That suit I gave you has a phaser in the pocket.

**AJ:** Oh, oh yeah, it does.

**JAWN:** Command them to go into the pit.

**PLECK:** What?

**AJ:** Guys. Yeah.

**C-53:** AJ.

**DAR:** AJ..

**AJ:** What can I say? I got bit by the theater bug.

**DAR:** AJ!

**BARGIE:** Wait, wait, wait. I'm going to direct you on now. Alright? I'm going to directeur, AJ?

**AJ:** Yes, Bargie.

**JAWN:** Silence.

**BARGIE:** AJ.

**AJ:** Yes?

**BARGIE:** Look in my hall.

**AJ:** Oh, okay.

**BARGIE:** Focus on it.

**AJ:** Uh-huh.

**BARGIE:** Remember who you are.

**AJ:** I'm AJ.

**BARGIE:** And don't do it.

**AJ:** Oh, yeah, I shouldn't be doing that, right? Because I'm–

**C-53:** Yes, good.

**DAR:** Yes.

**PLECK:** Good, AJ.

**JAWN:** AJ, you have something to prove. What you want to prove is that you're a good man. So throw everybody into the pit now.

**AJ:** Oh, yeah.

**JAWN:** Prove your goodness.

**AJ:** You guys have to go in the pit. Sorry.

**PLECK:** No, AJ.

**DAR:** AJ!

**AJ:** You guys got to go in the pit.

**BARGIE:** AJ.

**AJ:** Huh?

**BARGIE:** AJ, repeat after me. Munique Mew York, Munique Mew York. Don't do it.

**AJ:** Munique Mew York, Munique Mew York

**BARGIE:** Don't do it.

**JAWN:** Say, Mona Lalavaza. Mona Lalavaza. Mona Lalavaza.

**BARGIE:** AJ, pass the clap or bring it back and be good.

**AJ:** I'm just going to pass out. I'm passing out! I'm passing out!

**C-53:** And he's down.

**PLECK:** Oh, boy.

**JAWN:** Your direction is too good. You've become too good!

**C-53:** And I'll take this phaser, Ello.

**NERMUT:** It slipped right out of his hand.

**JAWN:** You'll never take me alive. I know every inch of this theater.

**PLECK:** Oh, he's climbing up- he's climbing the catwalk.

**BARGIE:** Oh, he's going up- going up the catwalk.

**JAWN:** Yes, I'm climbing up.

**NERMUT:** Wow, scrim came down and counterweighted that perfectly.

**JAWN:** I'm in the catwalk! You'll never take me alive!

**C-53:** Ello, to be honest, it's sorta hard to hear you up there.

**DAR:** Yeah, what- why are you yelling down at us?

**JAWN:** Do I make you uncomfortaaaable?

[Jawn falls from the catwalk]

**BARGIE:** Oh no!

**NERMUT:** Ohh.

**PLECK:** Oh no!

**NERMUT:** That was high..

**PLECK:** Right into the pit.

**C-53:** Ooh, you don't wanna land on a timpani like that.

**PLECK:** Yeah.

[Nermut plays 'badum tch' on the drums']

**C-53:** Nermut.

[transition sound]

**C-53:** Pleck, you know- uhm, we feel pretty bad about slapping you so much on the orders of a deposed dictator.

**BARGIE:** Yeah.

**AJ:** Sorry bout that-

**C-53:** So, uhm-

**PLECK:** Would you have felt better about it if it had just been a regular weird director?

**C-53:** A little bit.

**DAR:** Probably.

**BARGIE:** Yeah.

**C-53:** I feel like I would have believed it was more part of a process, y'know.

**BARGIE:** Tiny, tiny bit.

**C-53:** But by way of an olive branch, I thought I'd, y'know- you didn't get to go to the Arboretum to get an actual branch, but I- I did hold onto this broom from Ello's props.

**PLECK:** Oh, oh wow.

**NERMUT:** Pleck, it's a broom from the space.

**PLECK:** Hey, this is-

**C-53:** Yeah, it is from the space, so in many ways, seems like this is your wood saber.

**DAR:** Here, I'll just break off the-

**C-53:** Yeah, get the bristles out of there.

**PLECK:** Oh.

**C-53:** And then, yeah.

**BARGIE:** It's like that old weird stick you always had.

**PLECK:** Yeah, thank you, Bargie. Yeah.

**DAR:** Okay, but just be careful, 'cause this is the pointy side, you know?

**PLECK:** It's just got a- got a nice heft to it. It's pretty good. All right, thanks, guys. Wow, this is really-

**AJ:** Don't put your eye out.

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**C-53:** Yeah, you might wanna sand down that end, 'cause uh-

**PLECK:** No, no, no, the splintery end is what gives it a little bit of, you know, a little intimidation power.

**AJ:** By the way-

**NERMUT:** Yeah.

**AJ:** You saved the day, Lizardman, with your crippling addiction to the Refractorium.

**NERMUT:** Yeah, yeah.

**C-53:** Nermut, if you hadn't alerted us to the fact that Ello Max was actually Jawn the Malevolent, I mean, we would've just had a pretty good theater workshop.

**NERMUT:** You know what? I'd kinda nailed this one on the old mission on the ship.

**DAR:** It's a new, fresh feeling, isn't it?

**NERMUT:** Yeah.

**AJ:** Beats being a nerd, right?

**C-53:** Nermut being effective on a mission. Will wonders never cease?

**NERMUT:** Hey, come on.

**AJ:** Yeah.

**C-53:** Well, you know.

**AJ:** Beats that dumb stuff about-

**C-53:** Your track record is-

**AJ:** Opti-Sophomore, right?

**NERMUT:** Too soon, A.J.

**AJ:** Oh, and Bargie?

**BARGIE:** Yeah?

**AJ:** I gotta say, I've taken orders from a lot of people. A lot of people.

**BARGIE:** Yeah, you have.

**AJ:** But you, you got something.

**BARGIE:** Me? I guess I could use all my years of experience of being bossed around, made to perform, be a little- little monkey on set, dancing for people as they laugh at me and make fun of me. I could turn it around.

**PLECK:** And be better.

**BARGIE:** I could use them-

**PLECK:** Oh.

**BARGIE:** -for my benefit.

**PLECK:** Okay.

**BARGIE:** I could be a director.

**C-53:** That's the spirit?

**NERMUT:** Gotcha. That's what you took away?

**BARGIE:** Well, to be honest, I'm still a little tooped off because I paid a lot of Kroon for this workshop and it doesn't seem to be a refund.

**DAR:** Wait.

**BARGIE:** So much.

**NERMUT:** Is that the right- Is that the right use of tooped?

**DAR:** Why did you pay Kroon? There's no money in this galaxy.

**PLECK:** Yeah, Bargie, they don't use- they don't use Kroon. They don't use any money here.

**C-53:** Yeah, hang on.

**BARGIE:** What do you mean?

**C-53:** They don't even know what Kroon is.

**BARGIE:** But I gave them all of the Kroon that was on the ship.

**C-53:** Oh, Bargie.

**PLECK:** Bargie.

**BARGIE:** That they said I would get.. Okay, well, now I have even more motivation to become a director and to use people. Huh. Yep, Bargie has a mission now and it's called revenge.

**PLECK:** Ow!

**DAR:** Oh, you got a splinter?

**PLECK:** Yeah.

**DAR:** Does that make you uncomfortable?

[theme music starts but slowly glitches out]

**PLECK:** If that's the Dar that's been on the ship, that's the Dar that's been with us this whole time. That's you, you're that Dar. From before. I, oh, my nose is bleeding.

**DAR:** Oh, no, now everyone's nose is bleeding.

**KOR:** Ah, yes. Hello there. Do not worry, precious Dar. You shall have a second lease on life. A better life, a fulfilling life, a Wack life. Come on. Okay, phew, you're a big fellow. Okay, maybe from here, maybe I'm gonna try and. No, that's not gonna work, that's not gonna work. Oh, you know what? If I use the staff like a lever, I can- Wow, you are totally dead. There is no- no movement to help. Well, juck me. What do I sort of do here? Okay, you know what? I'm just going to fix you here right now. Let's see, okay, just pull that. Wow, that is still hot. Ugh, gross. Couple of these right here, screw that. Yeah, that's- that's supposed to go on the head now, right? Okay, and that's it. Boom, boom, boom, there we go.

[Dar gasps awake]

C-RED-IT5: This is C-RED-IT5, credits and attributions droid commencing outro protocol. Pleck Decksetter was played by Alden Ford. Lead Envoy C-53 was played by Jeremy Bent. Dar was played by Allie Kokesh. Bargie the Ship was played by Moujan Zolfaghari. Nermut Bundaloy was played by Seth Lind. AJ was played by Winston Noel. Jawn the Malevolent was played by special guest James Urbaniak. James is the voice of Dr. Venture on The Venture Brothers. Arthur on Hulu's Difficult People and Grant on Comedy Central's Review. With Brie Williams, he created the scripted podcast series Getting On with James Urbaniak and their audio feature, I Will Never Lie to You, is coming soon to Audible. This episode was edited by Seth Lind with sound design and mix by Shane O'Connell. Theme music composed by Brendan Ryan 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. Don't forget about our live performance on October 3rd at the Bell House

in Brooklyn, New York. Info and tickets at [missiontozyxx.space](http://missiontozyxx.space). Mission to Zyxx is a proud member of the MaximumFun Network.

[promo: Stop Podcasting Yourself]

GRAHAM: Hi, my name's Graham Clark and I'm one half of the podcast, Stop Podcasting Yourself. A show that we've recorded for many, many years. And at the moment, instead of being in person, we're recording remotely and you wouldn't even notice. You don't even notice the lag.

DAVE: That's right, Graham. And the great thing about this, go ahead.

GRAHAM: No, you go ahead.

DAVE: Okay, and-

GRAHAM: Okay, go ahead.

DAVE: And you can listen to us every week on [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org).

GRAHAM: Or wherever you get your podcasts.

DAVE: Your podcasts.

[promo: Round Springfield]

ALLIE: Hi, I'm Allie Gertz.

JULIA: And I'm Julia Prescott.

ALLIE: And we're the hosts of Round Springfield.

JULIA: Round Springfield is a Simpsons adjacent podcast where we talk to Simpsons folks about non-Simpsons things.

ALLIE: That's right, so in the past, we've gotten to talk to legendary showrunners and writers like Al Jean, Bill Oakley, Josh Weinstein, Dana Gould, Mike Reese, and David X. Cohen.

JULIA: Voice actors like Maurice LaMarche, Maggie Roswell, and Yardley Smith, the voice of Lisa Simpson herself.

ALLIE: Hell yeah. So we've been away securing guests for our final five episodes. We won't tell you everybody, but we'll let you know that the last episode was kind of a big deal. We got Matt Groening.

JULIA: Homer's dad!

ALLIE: We got Homer's dad.

JULIA: Check out new episodes of Round Springfield starting June 21st. - On Maximum Fun or wherever you get your podcasts.

ALLIE: Smell you later.

Maximumfun.org. Comedy and culture. Artist owned, audience supported.

[outtake]

**JAWN:** I can't believe I said that. Are you all mad at me now?

**ALDEN:** That's great. I think that's really funny.

**C-53:** Not personally, but on a, you know, ideological level. Yes, very.