

[pipe organ music starts up, possibly an ad, but it's distorted and fades out again quickly]

RECEPTIONIST: Shouldn't be much longer. Not longer at all.

DERF: You see these doctors, they always make you wait outside. And then you gotta wait again in the room. Fortunately, I have my recorder. I can take good use of the time. But, you know, your skin is important. Words from Derf. Get your skin checked. Because here's the thing, you remember that mole that floated out of my butthole? Like a hot air balloon? That is a *red flag*. That is, they're not supposed to do that. So, you know, I am functionally immortal, but I still have to get the old up and down checked out. You know what I mean? And so I'm here at the dermatologist.

Anyway, where was I? So we had just escaped Chunnelston. And I mean, well, I didn't. I was murdered as usesh. And I'll tell you what, folks, you know what really roasts my raspberries? When people don't understand history. I was reading a history book the other day. You know, just flipping through because I'm, you know, a part of the literati. And they gave Twinkle credit for killing the princeling, which destabilized the Monarchy and would eventually lead domino-fall after domino-fall to the end of the Monarchy, when Twinkle didn't do that at all. Twinkle just killed me. He killed me! Derf. The actual destabilization happened with the fateful bedpan emptying. And that should be the title of the chapter in the history book. It's not like I assassinated the prince. He self-assassinated in a lot of ways. But that's what started it all: Derf! Who do you have to talk to, to change history? Is there an email, or how do you get to history?

DERMATOLOGIST: Mr. Dinkelson. Okay, let's see. Oh, you don't have—you can keep the gown on, actually.

DERF: This is a gown? Oh, I thought it was like a cape.

DERMATOLOGIST: Yeah, wow, okay.

DERF: It's flowing windy in here, and my eyes are up here. You're really glancing at my moley hog. Where was I? Oh, Twinkle.

[the easy-listening music of the dermatologist's office fades into the ambient background noises of an old transport ship just as an incoming transmission connects]

TWINKLE: Shae, GOOD_E, Derf.

DERF: Twinkle.

TWINKLE: The mission at Chunnelston was more impactful than we could have ever hoped. You sowed such chaos, and with the princeling out of the picture, the Monarchy's diplomatic channels are fading. Their grip on the outer planets, it's loosening.

SHAE: I mean, I guess that's a good thing?

TWINKLE: Yes, which means Talbot might owe us. I'll try to get word to him, see if he can ease off the pressure on you.

SHAE: Okay, yes.

DERF: Who is Talbot, anyway? You guys keep talking about him.

GOOD_E: He's a dangerous crime lord.

TWINKLE: He's a ripped Flarn. Until you hear from me, lay low. Talk to no one.

MORGUE BOT 3: Greetings.

SHAE: Oh, Derf has also snuck aboard two more sentients for our little trip.

MORGUE BOT 3: It is a pleasure to meet you. You are not dead.

DERF: Yes, we have a high-power Zima warrior.

ZAPZOP: Hello.

DERF: And a morgue bot with dreams.

MORGUE BOT 3: And a pilot.

TWINKLE: Talk to no one... but them. Avoid crowds. Avoid cameras. Stay far away from large lights.

MORGUE BOT 3: Oh, I can see the Holowood sign.

TWINKLE: Ah, juck my butt.

[transmission disconnects]

GOOD_E: Oh, he hung up.

SHAE: Oh, oh.

GOOD_E: That was rude.

ZAPZOP: Well, listen, Derf, I don't know what you hope to achieve here on Holowood, but you seem willing to follow anyone but me. So maybe it's time I follow you.

DERF: Oh, man, I can't believe it worked. Alright, ZapZop's in. We got ourselves a crew. We are rolling deep.

ZAPZOP: Yeah, well...

DERF: I've got a nose for the Space, and the Space is bringing us right here where we need to be. The world of cocktails and dreams. The Space wants you here.

ZAPZOP: Okay...

SHAE: Remind me how you two know each other?

DERF: I die, and then I see him, and he's always like, "Come to my house, come to my house. You have to come—"

ZAPZOP: It's not my house. It's an entire planet where the wisdom of generations is stored.

DERF: He's sort of like my Space dad in a lot of ways. This is ZapZop.

SHAE: Oh.

ZAPZOP: No.

SHAE: He's your Papa.

DERF: Papa. Yeah, that's it.

ZAPZOP: No. That title will be reserved for me when I earn the privilege.

SHAE: Wait. I guessed correctly?

ZAPZOP: Technically, yes.

SHAE: Hmm.

ZAPZOP: Yeah.

SHAE: I don't see any signage. No meters. So this must be a perfect place to park. Alright. Everybody out of the ship.

MORGUE BOT 3: I am so honored that you chose to join me here in Holowood. Everything wonderful is made here.

ZAPZOP: Like garbage.

DERF: And this entire planet is one big studio? Is that how it works?

MORGUE BOT 3: Correct.

DERF: Making comedies, dramas, dramedies.

MORGUE BOT 3: Cramas.

ZAPZOP: Cramas are crime dramas.

MORGUE BOT 3: My processor is all aflutter.

TINY PRODUCTION ASSISTANT: Hey, hey, sorry. Sorry, you're on an active set and your voices carry. If you don't mind being a little quiet, we're in the middle of filming a pretty big deal film right now.

MORGUE BOT 3: I'm so sorry.

SHAE: What? No, this is your chance, Morgue Bot. He's got a great script.

MORGUE BOT 3: Are you interested in reading a 44-minute pilot?

TINY PA: I'm sure it's amazing and great, but I'm just a lowly little six-inch PA.

[A voice yells "Cut!" and a bell rings]

STEVE BAJANKLES: Alright, we're coming through, everybody. Hey, hey, what's everyone standing around for? Come on, come on.

[Everyone mumbles and complains as they get out of the way.]

DERF: We just got here, so we're not actually working in Holowood.

BAJANKLES: [mockingly] "Oh, we just got—"! We all just got here, *buddy!* If you're going to be on this lot, you're going to work. Now you, with the wristwatch.

SHAE: Me? Oh, no. I'm just here to fade into the background. I don't want to pull any focus.

BAJANKLES: Oh, a writer, huh? Alright. We need pages. Go over there.

SHAE: Oh.

BAJANKLES: Yeah, get in the engine room. That's where all the writers are, cranking out pages for the movie. No one will notice you, talk to you or think about you in there.

SHAE: Sure, sure, sure.

BAJANKLES: Now, get to work!

TINY PA: This is Steve Bajankles. He's the director of the lot.

BAJANKLES: That's me.

TINY PA: He gives out jobs to everybody.

BAJANKLES: I give out jobs as the director of the lot.

DERF: Checks out.

ZAPZOP: Listen, we're sort of here on what kind of feels like a side quest, so we'll just get out of your way.

WARDROBE: Wardrobe cart coming through!

ZAPZOP: Oh, geez, I'm right in the way. Front flip!

DERF: Whoa!

BAJANKLES: What the?

ZAPZOP: You think the back flip is where it ends? The back flip is where it begins, my friend.

DERF: Wow.

BAJANKLES: You're perfect. Hey, wardrobe, turn the cart around. Get him—Get over here!

ZAPZOP: Hey, let go of me. Hey, hey, stop.

WARDROBE: Hi, uh... just follow me this way.

DERF: Wow

BAJANKLES: Oh, yeah, go that way.

DERF: That's how it happens, ZapZop. Good luck. You're famous.

ZAPZOP: I don't want this.

BAJANKLES: Alright, you. Scruffy one. Scruffy guy.

DERF: Yes?

BAJANKLES: Head over to Crafty.

DERF: What's Crafty? Is that where you go and you craft the story of the film? Or is it someone like I'm building a set out of raw wood and parts that the greatest actors may tread in front of?

BAJANKLES: It's a table where we keep the food.

DERF: Oh!

BAJANKLES: Go on. Get out of here. Right up that ramp.

DERF: Oh, it's inside of a ship. Cool.

BAJANKLES: Go. Get out of here. [points at Morgue Bot 3] Alright, you.

MORGUE BOT 3: Welcome to the morg—Oh, no, I am so embarrassed. We are no longer in the morgue. Thank you for having me.

BAJANKLES: Shut up. Have you ever shoveled orse shit?

MORGUE BOT 3: I am not familiar.

BAJANKLES: We got seventy-five orses on this picture. You got to get over there and shovel that shit.

MORGUE BOT 3: Oh, it is a dream come true.

BAJANKLES: Shut up.

[transition. Old Holowood score plays]

GAFFER: Oh, there you are. I mean, wait, who's going to open these prepackaged donuts for me?

DERF: Yeah, I guess me. I'm the Crafty guy on this. What kind of holo is this? Is this a big-time feature? Is it space gangsters or anything?

BIT-PART PLAYER: Are you trying to talk to us?

GAFFER: Unwrap the donuts.

DERF: I'll unwrap them for you. I don't know if we're just a couple sentient beings standing near each other. Just a table separating us.

BIT PLAYER: There's a table separating us for a reason.

DERF: Are you stars, or why are you being so mean?

GAFFER: I'm a gaffer.

DERF: Oh, cool.

BIT PLAYER: Look, if we were the stars of this production, and I'm saying this as if I were a friend, you should know not to even make eye contact.

DERF: Alright, I'll just look at the floor and hand you blazing hot liquids.

OPEN-MOUTH COFFEE LOVER: Speaking of, how long does a guy have to sit here with his mouth open until someone pours coffee in it.

CRAFTY-SERVICES SHIP: Oh, that would be me.

OPEN-MOUTH COFFEE LOVER: [gulping] Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.

CRAFTY-SERVICES SHIP: Wow.

OPEN-MOUTH COFFEE LOVER: Oh, wow, that's good.

CRAFTY-SERVICES SHIP: He drank that up quick.

DERF: Oh, so the ship is also working Crafty? I've never really worked inside of a co-worker before, but okay.

CRAFTY-SERVICES SHIP: [enthusiastically] I'm on my first day of work.

DERF: What's your name, ship?

CRAFTY-SERVICES SHIP: [shyly] Oh, me? You asking little old me? Ha-ha. Well, my name is the Bargarean Jade, but you can call me Bargie.

DERF: The name sounds fake, but that's cool. Did you just get off a larger ship that pulled into Holowood?

BARGIE (CRAFTY-SERVICES SHIP): Sure did. From a little small town called Ohiostan.

DERF: Ohiostan? Really?

BARGIE: Yeah. I'm new to town. This is my first day on this job. Isn't it grand? Isn't it great?

DERF: Yes.

BARGIE: Wide-eyed and bushy I am.

DERF: Bushy?

BARGIE: So excited.

DERF: I'm Derf. Pleasure to get Crafty with you.

BARGIE: It's just a simple little job, but I'm so excited to be here. I'm Bargie! Bushy-eyed tail. Positive. Not a care in the world!

DERF: I know. You're excited. I feel the same way. I'm so excited to be here.

BARGIE: [naïvely] I heard stories. I don't know if this is true, that sometimes some scandals can happen in Holowood, but not for me. I'm only here for positivity and for sparks and for glittery joy stuff.

DERF: Yeah, we all got big dreams here. I'm here to track down my murderer, maybe.

BARGIE: Oh, wow. That's dark. I've never seen a murder happen in my life.

DERF: Really?

BARGIE: No!

DERF: I've been on the business end of a couple. You know, it's what you expect, and it's bad.

BARGIE: [optimistically] Well, all I care about is making my friends laugh and looking up at the stars in the sky and saying, one day, I'm going to be there, too.

DERF: Yeah, I love your positivity. You're such a dreamer. Did you grow up in a sort of a sheltered shipyard of some sort?

BARGIE: Something like that. I used to be an elevator.

DERF: You used to be an elevator? What happened?

BARGIE: Well, I got older, that is.

DERF: Like puberty for a ship? You start as an elevator?

BARGIE: Well, what are your dreams? What do you want to do?

DERF: My dreams? I don't know. I feel like destiny keeps knocking on my door. Because, you know, I love—I love snacks. And I love giving them to people in small doses, you know?

BARGIE: Yeah.

DERF: So that's why I think Crafty's a great landing spot for me.

BARGIE: Yeah.

DERF: But, you know, I don't know. This other guy was telling me to go to another planet and become, like, a messiah? But... feels like a lot of homework.

BARGIE: I know what you mean. I had a little dream in my head the other day that said, "Hey, give up, Bargie. Don't do it. It's only going to ruin you and make you feel negative and stress you out. And you fall into drugs and hard alcohol and sexual deviance."

DERF: Hard alcohol? Oof.

BARGIE: But then I thought, nah I'm gonna do what I'm gonna love And that's gonna be here, working beside you in Crafty Hey, who wants some gas? Who wants some gas?

DERF: Yeah, put a little gas in the coffee Let's mix it up

BARGIE: Alright, here you go: Dumping gas! Dumping gas!

AVERAGE-SIZE PA: And that's snack break everyone Let's get the entire cast and crew to rush Crafty Let's get an onslaught. We got eight minutes to get everyone sated.

CREW MEMBER IN A HURRY: Eight minutes, quick!

BARGIE: There you go. Oh, hey, oh. There you go.

DERF: Alright.

BARGIE: Hey, hey, hey! Slow down, it's okay!

GLUTEN HATER: Do you have any gluten-free pastries?

BARGIE: No.

GLUTEN LOVER: Do you have any pastry-free gluten?

BARGIE: No.

GLUTEN LOVER: Just a sack of gluten?

DERF: A lot of requests here.

GLUTEN HATER: Hey, you and I ought to hang out together, buddy.

GLUTEN LOVER: Boy, between the two of us, we can do anything.

GLUTEN HATER: Yeah.

CREW MEMBER IN A HURRY: I need you to chew my food and spit it in my mouth.

DERF: Thank you, folks. We appreciate all of your dietary requests. but like all Crafty tables, we'll ignore them completely and serve you dusty nuts.

[transition. Old Holowood score plays]

OVERTHINKING WRITER: Oh, I don't want to break Act One.

HEAD WRITER: Think! Think, you idiot. Think!

GOOD_E: Oh, wow. Everybody here looks nervous and sad.

WRITER 3: Okay, okay, okay, okay. But, but, but, but. What if, what if...

[Writer 3 takes out a marker and starts scribbling ideas furiously on a whiteboard.]

WRITER 4: Uh-huh, uh-huh? Yeah?

WRITER 3: ... the florist and the architect are long-lost twins?

SHAE: That's a terrible idea.

HEAD WRITER: Jucking idiot. Are you jucking out of your mind?

WRITER 3: No, please, please, please don't throw me out. No, please, please.

[sound of writer 3 being defenestrated]

SHAE: GOOD_E, do you see what's happening here?

GOOD_E: Uh, I think they're—

SHAE: You have a bunch of sweaty, pale losers who don't believe in their own ideas.

OVERTHINKING WRITER: I have an idea.

HEAD WRITER: You, go.

[The overthinking writer uncaps the marker and scribbles furiously on the whiteboard, erasing writer 3's ideas.]

OVERTHINKING WRITER: Okay, so maybe in Act One, the protagonist is actually the antagonist. So the whole time, the audience is like, I believe in the protagonist. So by the movie ends, it ends. I don't know. Maybe someone dies?

SHAE: GOOD_E, watch this.

[The head writer throws the overthinking writer out of the window with a frustrated shout. The overthinking writer sobs dejectedly.]

GOOD_E: It doesn't seem right to treat people this way. And they haven't broken any story.

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG (WRITER 3): Okay, okay, okay, okay, okay, okay.

GOOD_E: The guy they threw out has just come back.

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: I just broke my leg. I'm fine, I'm fine. But I've got a new take on the script.

[The writer with a broken leg gets redefenestrated.]

SHAE: You know it doesn't seem right, **GOOD_E**, but the vibe? I think I'm gonna thrive in here

GOOD_E: But Shae I thought we were supposed to keep a low profile

HEAD WRITER: Hey!

SHAE: Oh

HEAD WRITER: What are you two talking about over there?

SHAE: Uh uh well the watch was just about—

HEAD WRITER: The watch has a pitch? Alright let's hear it.

GOOD_E: Uh okay, yeah. Yeah, here's a pitch: What if... what if everybody just treats everybody nicely in the story and just nobody does anything wrong and so there's no conflict

WRITER 4: Thought you had a pitch!

SHAE: Does anybody other than me want to tell this guy why that's a bad idea

WRITER 4: I don't think he's gotten to the idea.

[The writer with the broken leg re-enters the room.]

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: No we don't... Did we hear the idea?

GOOD_E: Oh no the idea is that there is no conflict, that everyone gets along and everyone does the right thing

HEAD WRITER: In the whole script?

GOOD_E: Yeah, the whole script.

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: What is this, your first day in Holowood? Great idea, genius.

GOOD_E: It is my first day.

WRITER 5: Someone needs to break that watch's spirit.

GOOD_E: What?

HEAD WRITER: Hold on a second. So you're suggesting that the florist... just sells flowers?

GOOD_E: Yeah. Instead of... it says here that you guys have him keeping a secret for the first act.

HEAD WRITER: So it turns out there's no murder at all then?

GOOD_E: No, I hope not.

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: There's just scenes of people buying flowers?

GOOD_E: Sounds pretty good to me

WRITER 4: This sounds like something my mother, my aunt, my sister, and my silly dad would like! And all my stupid neighbors! All of them would love this because nothing's happened. Oh, and my nephew would love it and he's stupid!

HEAD WRITER: Okay, you want to write a movie that people go see to *relax*?

OVERTHINKING WRITER: Yeah, you're trying to get a bunch of people to just go to it

WRITER 4: What, you want everyone to go to it?

HEAD WRITER: Hey, hey, this guy wants to write a family-friendly blockbuster over here

OVERTHINKING WRITER: Family-friendly!

SHAE: If not GOOD_E's idea to make a feature that has a mass appeal, who do you wish to appeal to?

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: We're trying to win B'Boskars over here.

SHAE: Wouldn't you all rather just sell out and make a bunch of kroon?

GOOD_E: And do the right thing?

WRITER 4: Now that's a movie title.

GOOD_E: *Do the Right Thing?*

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: No, no, *Sell Out and Make a Bunch of Kroon*. What a title.

[transition. Old Holowood score plays]

[old Holowood score distorts into noise. When the noise settles back into music it is a different tune, but simple and soothing, like a baby's mobile.]

MONICA KASSU: Victory is within our grasp! I haven't felt hope like this since the last of the Behbeh refugees narrowly escaped an enormous Armedian Destroyer, almost exactly 100 years ago. [sneezes] It was on that day I became Queen of the

Behbehs, and I swore I would make the Monarchy pay for what they did to our people! [shakes her rattle]

We all contribute different things to the Council. General Trink - you bring military genius, of course. Arcuri brings his expertise in taxation and economics. And Joey brings the lovable charm and comic relief only a dimwitted failed actor can provide.

And although I am the oldest member of the Rebel Council, I like to think I bring a childlike innocence to the dynamic between us. That is why I decorated our rebel hideout with mobiles and white noise machines, and have instituted mandatory books and naps every two and a half hours whether the rebels need them or not.

But some things you can't trust a baby to control! Like, for example, your personal finances! That's why I use ROCKET MONEY. Rocket Money is a personal finance app that helps find and cancel your unwanted subscriptions, monitors your spending, and helps lower your bills so you can grrrrrow your savings!

Rocket Money helps me keep track of subscriptions I didn't even remember I had, like formula, which I haven't eaten in decades, and a monthly Montessori toy box! Those wooden toys don't make me smart; they just make me angry!

Now I can get REAL TIME ALERTS for large purchases, upcoming bills, refunds and low balances. And since I'm a Behbeh and don't understand money, they really come in handy!

Let Rocket Money help you reach your financial goals faster. Join at RocketMoney dot com slash ZYXX. That's RocketMoney.com/ZYXX. RocketMoney dot com slash Z-Y-X-X.

[the royal nursery door opens]

NANNY: Oh no, Your Majesty, there's yogurt everywhere!! Why did you throw it on the walls?!

KASSU: I want to! I can! I will! I'm rrrroyalty!

NANNY: [patronizingly] Of course you are. Let's get you in the bath.

KASSU: I'm going to make it hard for you!!! Uh-oh! Not getting in!

[white noise, then a distorted voice transitions into old-Holowood romantic music]

BAJANKLES: Director Bleez! Bleez? Bleez? Mr Director! You're never going to believe who I found. Look at this guy: the perfect stunt double for LaCraine Lacrosse! The picture is saved!

BLEEZ: Eh... Hello?

ZAPZOP: [uncomfortable] Hi. Yeah, listen, if you're not into it, I don't have to be into it either. I got dragged here.

BLEEZ: Would you pardon us one second, Mr. Whoever?

ZAPZOP: Yeah, sure.

BLEEZ: He's much shorter than LaCraine. Different kind of hair.

BAJANKLES: Yeah. One hundred percent.

BLEEZ: Different gait.

BAJANKLES: Yeah.

BLEEZ: Different number of ears.

BAJANKLES: Yeah, LaCraine has three ears, but watch it when I throw this wrench at his legs. Ha!

ZAPZOP: Front flip! What the heck are you doing over there?

BLEEZ: Oh, goodness. You're in the picture.

ZAPZOP: I didn't even ask to be in the picture. What are you talking about?

BLEEZ: And that's why you're perfect. LaCraine Lacrosse has not even been in his own films for years. We can barely get him on the set.

BAJANKLES: Sir, LaCraine Lacrosse is suffering from...

BAJANKLES: & BLEEZ: [simultaneously] Exhaustion.

BLEEZ: Caused by alcohol.

BOTH: Yes.

BAJANKLES: By excessive amounts of alcohol.

BLEEZ: Yes.

ZAPZOP: Okay, listen, I've got some important business to attend to, so if you just...

BLEEZ: Yes, you do.

BAJANKLES: Let me put the hat on.

ZAPZOP: What is this hat? What's going on here?

BLEEZ: Okay. Oh, my rodd.

BAJANKLES: Honestly, the hat really does a lot of the work. We call it LaCraine LaHat. [laughs insincerely] Some Holowood humor.

BLEEZ: Yes.

ZAPZOP: I don't know if I get it.

[A car drives up and a starlet gets out.]

MARLIN FORFOR: LaCraine, is that you? It's me, Marlin Forfor.

BAJANKLES: How about that? You get to smooch with Marlin Forfor. Not bad.

ZAPZOP: Yeah, listen, I've sworn an oath that I'm not supposed to...

BAJANKLES: Well, you're on studio property, buddy, and if you don't do what we say, you could be executed. That's the studio system. That's the studio system.

ZAPZOP: Wow. Okay.

MARLIN FORFOR: Well, I'm going back to the tank because I'm half fish.

[Marlin galumphs back to her tank.]

ZAPZOP: Okay.

BLEEZ: Yes, you are. Yes, you are, my darling.

ZAPZOP: What kind of picture is this?

BLEEZ: It's called the *Sound of Water*. And LaCraine Lacrosse is the—

ZAPZOP: *Sound of Water?*

BLEEZ: —architect who falls in love with the half-fish

BAJANKLES: Yeah, it's about a florist, and uh... and uh... they're still working a lot of it out, but uh...

ZAPZOP: But you know there's a half-fish person in it?

BAJANKLES: Well, yeah.

ZAPZOP: You got a script or something I can look at?

BAJANKLES: Well, we're still working on pages. These are what we've got so far.

ZAPZOP: These are receipts from a soup restaurant, it seems.

BAJANKLES: Other side, other side.

ZAPZOP: Oh, okay.

BLEEZ: And everyone, roll sound.

ZAPZOP: Oh, sorry. What's happening?

BAJANKLES: We're rolling sound, people! [screaming] Room tone. Quiet for room tone!

ZAPZOP: Hey, you can't. Don't take that. I need those robes, okay? And that st—be careful with that stick, alright? That's a wood saber. Don't.

BLEEZ: Let me get the cue cards up and... Action, whoever you are.

ZAPZOP: [reads with inflection] Boy, it'd be nice to meet somebody, but I'm just too busy with my architecture job and my two adorable children. [out of "character"] You sure you want me to say these lines? Like, aren't I the stunt double?

BLEEZ: And cut. Perfect. Alright, we're turning around.

ZAPZOP: Sorry, what? Listen, I'm on a sacred mission here. I'd love to just skedaddle.

BAJANKLES: Let's move, people!

BLEEZ: Aren't we all, fake LaCraine, aren't we all?

ZAPZOP: My name is ZapZop.

BLEEZ: Oh, you're ZapZop? I am pleased. With a name like this, you could be a director.

ZAPZOP: I'm not interested in the whole studio system. Okay? I'm just...

BLEEZ: Somebody chain up ZapZop between these takes. He seems like a runner.

ZAPZOP: Okay, no need to do that.

BAJANKLES: Welcome to Holowood, baby.

BLEEZ: Welcome.

BAJANKLES: Where are my orses? Where are my orses?

MORGUE BOT 3: I have successfully put all of this shit back onto the orses.

BAJANKLES: Wait, what? What the juck? We're getting the shit off the orses.

BLEEZ: Can you believe we were worried about robots taking our jobs? They can't even shovel shit the right direction.

BAJANKLES: Bleez, I am so sorry. [to the morgue bot] Go back there and take the shit off the orses.

MORGUE BOT 3: Understood.

[Marlin's tank is wheeled over. It has a squeaky wheel but the airstone is bubbling enthusiastically.]

MARLIN: Are you ready for my line?

BAJANKLES: No, Marlin, we're not ready. Stay in the tank.

MARLIN: Okay.

[transition. Old Holowood score plays]

DERF: [singing to himself] ♪ Choppin' this cheese, choppin' up cheese, choppin' up cheese, makin' it smaller, Smaller cheese is better cheese. Feeds more actors. Actors are happy. ♪ Ha! This is fun.

BARGIE: Hey, can I tell you something?

DERF: Yes, please.

BARGIE: Even though we just met, I feel like I can open up to you and be honest, you know?

DERF: I feel very close to you, despite the fact that we're different in almost every single way.

BARGIE: Well, I've never told anyone this before, but I've always wanted to be... an actor!

DERF: What? And give up all of this serving food to people who hate you? I'm just kidding. Of course you'll—you could be an actor. Easy.

BARGIE: But how?

DERF: You're right here. You just go out there and lie. You just lie. Lie almost constantly. And that's how you become a star.

BARGIE: Lie? I thought it's about reading lines and being a character and having a certain point of view.

DERF: You can't have lines without having lies. It's right in the beginning of the word. So, like, we're sort of acting right now. I'm acting like I know what I'm doing and that I'm not just putting little different dyes in the same hummus to make it different colors. [Derf squeezes hard on a bottle to get the last of the dye out. The dye makes a wet farting noise.] That's why there's a rainbow of dips here.

BARGIE: Well, I don't think I could ever be an actor. I mean, I wish I could, but I—

DERF: Of course you could! Of course you could.

BARGIE: I-I-I-I-I've never lied before.

DERF: What?! You've never lied before. It's easy to lie. You just say what you're thinking and you don't care about the consequences.

MARLIN'S PA: Excuse me. Excuse me. Excuse me.

DERF: Yes. Yes.

BARGIE: Yeah?

MARLIN'S PA: I'm Ms. ForFor's personal assistant. She has severe dietary issues.

DERF: No problem.

MARLIN'S PA: I just want to make sure that this box is actually hers. I need you to tell me, one hundred percent.

DERF: Yep. It's hers. It had her name on it a second ago.

MARLIN'S PA: Okay. Are you sure? You're not messing with me?

DERF: Rodd be with you, that's the box. I would never mess with you. One hundred percent guaranteed.

MARLIN'S PA: Her food allergies are severe!

DERF: Her feet allergies?

MARLIN'S PA: Food. She doesn't have feet. She has a tail. She's part fish.

DERF: No judgment. Go be whatever you want. And that's probably it. So good luck.

MARLIN'S PA: Okay, thank you.

BARGIE: Have a good blessed day. [the PA leaves] Was that a lie?

DERF: Bargie, that was all lies. That was all lies.

[Derf resumes adding different dyes to the hummus. All the bottles are nearly out of dye.]

BARGIE: What?

DERF: None of that was true.

BARGIE: How did you do it?! I couldn't tell. [pause] Hey, Derf?

DERF: Yes?

BARGIE: Can you, can you teach me how to lie?

DERF: Teach you how to lie?

BARGIE: I've only ever told the truth. Like how much I love everyone I ever meet.
[laughs endearingly]

DERF: Uh, alright, if you wanna learn to lie, let's take it from the top. So, what's your name?

BARGIE: Bargie.

DERF: And lie. No? No, no. So what you wanna do is lie. So I'm gonna say, what's your name? And you tell me something that's *not* your name. Ready?

BARGIE: Bargarean Jade.

DERF: Hey. Nope. Just wait. Just give me a sec. I'll ask the question and you say the not truth. Don't say the truth. Say something. Anything. Could be anything that's just not true. Ready? Hey, what's your name?

BARGIE: Not Bargie.

DERF: That's too close. You can't have the truth be right after the lie part. You have to just fully lie. No truth. No truth at all. Ready? Ready? What's your name?

BARGIE: Barzy.

DERF: Darcy? Did you say Darcy? Or did you say Bargie but a little quieter? Because lying isn't just quietly saying the truth. You have to loudly just say something else.

BARGIE: Do another one. Do another one.

DERF: Another one that's not your name?

BARGIE: Yeah. Another prompt.

DERF: I mean, you haven't successfully lied about the first one. But I appreciate you want to just try to go into a different direction.

BARGIE: Let's go.

DERF: Okay. Let's see. Where are you from?

BARGIE: Space. [pauses, and then panics] Ohiostan.

DERF: Nope. No, no. So you started with a lie and then you panicked and said, not a lie. You just say the lie. Or you can say the truth in your head. That's actually helpful. If you say the truth in your head and say the opposite in your mouth. Ready?

BARGIE: Okay.

DERF: Where are you from? [the sounds of Bargie struggling to produce a lie] What? It's good. There's steam coming out of your vents. That's good. That's good. It means there's a lie cooking.

BARGIE: Kitchen.

DERF: Huh?

BARGIE: Kitchen.

DERF: Kitchen? That's good. That's good. Now we gotta put the—where the rubber meets the road. There's gonna be people coming up and you gotta lie to them, okay? You already nailed it when you said you're from Kitchen. You said you're from Kitchen! That's a lie!

COFFEE DRINKER: Hi, hello. Could I just get a cup of coffee and definitely not a cup of gas?

BARGIE: I have coffee. I am not a ship. My name is Darf.

DERF: Stay on target. Just one lie at a time. One at a time. You don't need to lie about everything. Just one.

COFFEE DRINKER: Alright, sure. I'll just take a cup of coffee. Thank you.

BARGIE: Alright, here it goes.

COFFEE DRINKER: [splutters, gags, and spits out the coffee] That's the worst coffee I've ever tasted.

DERF: Sorry, it's Zenk coffee. Get out of here. Go back to your job.

COFFEE DRINKER: You're right.

GUY WHO POINTS OUT FIRES: Hey, hey, everybody. The generator's on fire. Where's the fire extinguisher?

BARGIE: I have one. I have the fire extinguisher on me because I am very... I have it.

DERF: Here's the other thing, Bargie. You don't need to get so creative.

GUY WHO POINTS OUT FIRES: Well can you give it to me or...?

DERF: Just say the first thing. You don't need it. It's not a story. It's just a lie.

GUY WHO POINTS OUT FIRES: Oh, the fire's spreading to the scenery.

BARGIE: Would you like to have some of the fire extinguisher that I definitely have?

GUY WHO POINTS OUT FIRES: Yes! Oh!

COFFEE DRINKER: It burns! Oh, it's gas!

[transition. Old Holowood score plays]

SHAE: Okay, okay. So, in the next scene, to get revenge, the florist tries to kill the architect by poisoning a batch of brownies, and the architect dies on the steps of his brownstone after setting fire to the flower shop. Okay. And GOOD_E, if you were to process that?

GOOD_E: Oh, they just tell each other plainly what they need from the other person and apologize if necessary and then move on. And so we would actually cut the brownies and they would just have, I think, a pleasant afternoon.

WRITER 4: Smaller brownie.

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: Maybe the knife could snag on one of the brownies?

SHAE: No, no, no. No, no, see, that's too good. That's too good of a payoff. We want this to be lower stakes.

HEAD WRITER: Let me see if I'm understanding this. [The head writer uncaps the marker and summarizes on the whiteboard]

Act One: The florist, who is half fish, moves to the big city and opens up a flower shop across the street from the architect's office.

Act Two: They meet. The florist is single. The architect, single.

Act Three: The girl's a great baker. She makes brownies. They cut perfectly. No snags. End of story. Is that right?

SHAE: Yep.

GOOD_E: It's just pleasant.

WRITER 4: It makes so much sense because in my life, I don't want conflict. Why would I want it in my art?

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: Yeah.

OVERTHINKING WRITER: Is there a song?

GOOD_E: Yeah, there could also be a song. I mean, there's no wrong ideas. There's just morally wrong ideas.

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: No... wrong ideas?

OVERTHINKING WRITER: Boss, I just put this through the focus group that we keep in the basement, and they seem to really like it.

HEAD WRITER: You know what? Maybe the goal we've been working towards is perfectly balanced drama, intense character studies.

WRITER 4: Seventh act reversal?

SHAE: Yeah, yeah, yeah. You don't want to make art. You want to make kroon. Say it with me. [The writers repeat it with Shae.] You don't want to make art.

ALL THE WRITERS: You want to make—

[Bajankles enters dramatically, slamming the door and walking across the room.]

BAJANKLES: Everybody stop the work! Stop the work! Marlin Forfor is dead! Scrap everything. The script's out the window. We can't shoot it now. The lead actress is dead. What are we going to do?

[Bajankles exits just as dramatically.]

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: Okay, okay. What if we replace the lead actress with a cuddly CGI character?

SHAE: Okay, now that's a step too far for kroon.

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: I thought there were no bad ideas.

SHAE: No, there are no wrong ideas.

GOOD_E: But there are bad ideas.

WRITER WITH A BROKEN LEG: Okay, I think I get it, actually, yeah.

[transition. Old Holowood score plays]

BLEEZ: Oh my goodness. The picture is ruined. We has nothing. How can we proceed? Oh yes, we found this perfect replacement for my drunken star. But now, my beautiful half-fish is dead.

BAJANKLES: Let's get you to Crafty, sir. Let's get you to Crafty.

BLEEZ: It's over! I should have never stopped directing industrials.

BAJANKLES: Excuse me?

DERF: Hey, sad man, would you like a sausage twist?

BLEEZ: Yes. Stuff the sausage twist in my mouth, why not?

DERF: Fresh out the microwave.

BAJANKLES: Alright, we're going to get down to the bottom of this. Miss Forfor is dead because she ate something from this Crafty spot. And I'm here with the director, Bleez, and we're going to get to the bottom of it. Believe you me, heads will roll.

DERF: Hey, I'm sorry. We just make the food. We don't put it in their mouths. So, you know.

BARGIE: No, yeah, we're just here to enjoy life and look at this beautiful holo-making experience.

BLEEZ: It is over! Everything is ov—Wait a second.

DERF: Yes?

BLEEZ: What is this angel voice I hear?

DERF: That's me, Derf. Are you talking about Derf? Right here, me?

BLEEZ: No, scraggly man, step aside.

DERF: Okay. Backflip.

BARGIE: I'm just going to sing a song to myself. ♪ Bargie's feeling happy. Bargie's in the sky. ♪

BAJANKLES: Why am I crying?

BARGIE: ♪ Bargie's feeling happy. She's never going to die. ♪

BLEEZ: It's so beautiful.

BARGIE: ♪ The stars are shining for Bargie. ♪

DERF: That's nice.

BARGIE: ♪ The ocean's feeling hot. When Bargie's feeling happy, together we are not. ♪

BLEEZ: Lot Boss, are you feeling what I am feeling?

BAJANKLES: I've never felt this before in my life. I've only felt anger and repulsion.

BLEEZ: Just moments ago I was in the depths of my sadness, but now: gleaming, this green ship is... You are a star.

BARGIE: Wait, wait.

BLEEZ: Tell me, angel, what is your name?

BARGIE: Oh, I'm no angel. I'm just a ship. My name is Bargie, short for Bargarean Jade. I just work Craft Services, is all.

BLEEZ: Oh, my goodness. Ees like looking at a baby before it is born.

BAJANKLES & BARGIE: What?

DERF: Yucky.

BARGIE: Yikes.

DERF: What a weird thing to say.

BLEEZ: Sort of came out wrong, but I think you know what I mean.

BAJANKLES: Yeah, well, okay, anyway, be that as it may. Kid, you're in the picture.

BARGIE: Wait, what?

BAJANKLES: We're gonna have to do a rewrite. It's no longer called *The Sound of Water*. What are we gonna call it? Uh... *Ships in Bloom*, something like that.

BLEEZ: Perfect. Lorenzo, get your widest lens!

BARGIE: Wait, wait, wait, I've never acted before. This is crazy.

BAJANKLES: Wait, so you've never—you've never actually acted before?

BARGIE: Never once.

BLEEZ: Oh. Never mind.

BARGIE: What?

BLEEZ: The picture is ruined again!

[Bleez exits, his hopes dashed.]

DERF: Bargie, remember what we talked about?

BARGIE: Oh. That your best days are always behind you?

DERF: No, no. Nope. The other one.

BARGIE: That for some reason all my dreams have me exploding at the end?

DERF: That's weird, but not relevant. No.

BARGIE: That water with cayenne pepper is basically gasoline?

DERF: That's true, but go with the other one.

BARGIE: That you found an extra wart that was inside of your anal cavity?

DERF: That was a mole, and it floated out like a hot air balloon. But no, the basic lesson.

BARGIE: Oh, to *lie*! But I don't know if I can lie here. The consequences are so huge, it might change the trajectory of my life.

DERF: Bargie, listen to me. Slap! [Dorf hits one of Bargie's panels] You have to! Now's your shot.

BARGIE: That didn't do anything. You're so tiny.

DERF: Huh? When do people slap each other in movies, they're not trying to hurt them. They're friends or lovers and they're just trying to say, "Wait a second, pay attention." It's a big moment and in the big moments like this you have to rise up, take the mantle that's placed before you, achieve your destiny and lie like you've never lied before. That's what we all do. Now get out there and lie again; just one big lie, not a lot of little ones or not a truth quietly.

[focus changes to where Bleez and Bajankles are walking back towards the set]

BAJANKLES: Well, Bleez, I guess we better maybe try to find a whole fish to do it. I don't know.

BLEEZ: Yes, something.

BARGIE: Wait.

BAJANKLES: Huh?

BLEEZ: Huh?

BARGIE: My name is Bargarean Jade, and I'm an actor.

BAJANKLES: Wait, but you just told us you weren't an actor.

BARGIE: I've been acting since the day I was born. In the streets of... Kitchen.

BAJANKLES: Whoa. You've acted in Kitchen?

BLEEZ: You're from Kitchen?

BAJANKLES: Good rodd.

BLEEZ: That's one of the most famed acting troops in all of the galaxy.

BAJANKLES: Yeah. We didn't know you were from Kitchen. Yeah, that's just like—

BLEEZ: Oh, my goodness.

BAJANKLES: Jimn Jimnerrar was... He founded Kitchen.

BLEEZ: Yeah. Do you know Ramon Fuinte?

BARGIE: That's my roommate.

BAJANKLES: Whoa!

BLEEZ: Oh, my goodness. Sorry, Whole-fish-we-would-have-found. You're not in the movie.

BAJANKLES: Alright, kid. Get in makeup.

DERF: Good luck, Bargie. We did something important here: killed the bright spirit you had and left behind a dusty old professional. Good luck.

BARGIE: I'll never forget you, Derf. I'll always be grateful for you. And we'll definitely acknowledge our relationship in the future.

[transition. Old Holowood score plays]

[This particular piece of music has played in *Mission to Zyxx* before, in the first act of episode 112]

BLEEZ: Alright, everyone. This is the big one. This is the climactic scene. This is why we all came to Holowood in the first place, is for this moment.

ZAPZOP: That's not why I came to Holowood.

BLEEZ: Okay.

BAJANKLES: Alright. *Ships in Bloom*, Act 11, Scene 27. Take One.

SOUND ENGINEER: Roll sound!

BLEEZ: [whispers] Action.

ZAPZOP: [without any emoting whatsoever] What can I do to make it up to you? I know I'm just a humble space architect. Do you want the moon, Bargie?

BARGIE: [also, wooden] If you get me the moon, I'll let you enter my hatch.

ZAPZOP: Are those her lines?

BLEEZ: Yes, yes, yes.

ZAPZOP: Okay, just making sure.

BLEEZ: The writers have won B'Boskars.

ZAPZOP: Yeah, I just haven't seen the pages.

BLEEZ: No one has.

ZAPZOP: Okay.

BAJANKLES: Let her cook, boy.

ZAPZOP: Alright, then. Initiating space lasso protocol.

BARGIE: Oh, you darling boy, get in here. Get in here.

[Bargie has found her inspiration and is getting into the scene. ZapZop is still completely flat.]

ZAPZOP: Bargie, you won't regret it.

BARGIE: Oh, I love you so much. I love you.

ZAPZOP: I love you, too.

BARGIE: I love you. I love you. I love you.

ZAPZOP: I love you.

[Bargie continues to say "I love you", but it becomes less intelligible every time.]

BLEEZ: Cut.

SOUND ENGINEER: Roll sound!

ZAPZOP: Is that okay, Bleez?

BLEEZ: We got it in one. We got it in one, rodddamn it. This is a wrap, everyone. We did it.

[the cast and crew begin to applaud]

GOOD_E: Wow! Isn't it amazing to see our words come to life?

SHAE: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Words are beautiful but... royalties? Now that's something I think sounds pretty good.

BARGIE: Wow. An honor, thank you. Thank you, everybody!

LACRAINE LACROSSE: It's not a wrap until LaCraine Lacrosse says it's a wrap.

[LaCraine vomits on the set.]

TINY PA: It's LaCraine Lacrosse!

BLEEZ: LaCraine, It's you!

LACRAINE: Who's exhausted now? Did an exhausted guy drive his car through the set?

TINY PA: He's driving his car through the set!

ZAPZOP: Oh, my rodd.

BARGIE: Whoa, watch out.

ZAPZOP: Front flip.

[Everyone screams and rushes to jump out of LaCraine's way.]

DERF: Hey, everyone just thought I'd bring down some hummus bites. Week-old hummus bites, anybody?

LACRAINE: Coming through!

GAFFER: Oh, no, LaCraine Lacrosse just ran over the Crafty guy!

BIT PLAYER: Oh, no, the hummus bites!

[LaCraine's car crashes and explodes.]

MORGUE BOT 3: I am happy to inform you that I have finally done my job. The shit is now back in the orses.

[Bajankles is disgusted.]

BLEEZ: Wait a second, you got the shit back in the orses?

MORGUE BOT 3: It was a difficult job, but I managed it.

BLEEZ: No one's ever done this. You know what? Let me see that script after all.

MORGUE BOT 3: It is packed with jokes, not unlike an orse packed with shit.

BLEEZ: Okay, never mind.

MORGUE BOT 3: Oh, no.

BLEEZ: No, no, I've seen enough.

[End credits roll. The Young Old Derf theme plays.]

[the theme stops abruptly]

DERMATOLOGIST: Oh boy, we got a lot of results on these moles.

DERF: Oh, you've tested all of the moles?

DERMATOLOGIST: Yes.

DERF: The ones I sent in that little baggie that I gave you?

DERMATOLOGIST: Don't ever bring them in a baggie again.

DERF: Oh, what do I put them in a little precious box?

DERMATOLOGIST: Yes.

DERF: I don't know. It just came off.

DERMATOLOGIST: Anyway, mole number one looks pretty good. We're going to watch it.

DERF: I did number them for ease because I'm taking notes here.

DERMATOLOGIST: That, I thank you for. Mole number two: looking okay, but we're going to keep an eye on it. Mole number thr—

DERF: If it's already off my body, what's the danger for me?

DERMATOLOGIST: Well, anything can happen. Mole number three: looking okay, but we're going to watch it.

DERF: Yeah, but does a mole ever come back and want revenge on me? Like it's getting back on my skin?

DERMATOLOGIST: Never before, but I wouldn't count them out. Gotta keep an eye on them. I mean, gosh. Number six, looking okay. Gotta keep an eye on it.

DERF: Do dermatologists ever say, you know what? We're done keeping an eye on it. It's fine.

DERMATOLOGIST: Nope. Turn around. Oh, wow. We missed one. And this one we're going to keep an eye on.

DERF: How many moles are you watching at any time?

DERMATOLOGIST: I actually know this. I actually know. Let me look this up. Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, we have to know this. It's classified.

DERF: Classified. Wow. High stuff. Yep.

DERMATOLOGIST: Have you had any floaters anymore? The floaters out of the butt are the ones we're really worried about.

DERF: Oh, the butthole? Well, let me ask you about that, actually.

DERMATOLOGIST: Lone ballooners.

DERF: Do I have a lot of moles inside my body? Because that one came out. Like, is there a strategic reserve?

DERMATOLOGIST: You have no more than average.

DERF: Okay, cryptic.

DERMATOLOGIST: And rest assured, we're going to keep an eye on them.

DERF: Okay, great. Thank you.

DERMATOLOGIST: The only thing I have left to say is that since our last visit, I am now out of network.

DERF: Oh, no! Oh, no!

DERMATOLOGIST: Yep. Yep.

[The Young Old Derf theme, and the credits, resume.]

TH-33-ND: This is TH-33-ND, Credits and attributions droid, commencing outro protocol.

Young Derf and Old Derf were played by Justin Tyler.

Shae was played by Allie Kokesh.

GOOD_E the ethics anklet, Steve Bajankles (the director of the lot) and LaCraine Lacrosse were played by Winston Noel.

Zima Master ZapZop and the writer who breaks his leg were played by Jeremy Bent.

Morgue Bot #3 and the head writer were played by Alden Ford.

Bleez the film director and Twinkle were played by Seth Lind.

The one and only Bargarean Jade from Ohiostan was played by Moujan Zolfaghari! ... who also played the tiny PA, Marlin Forfor the half-fish actress, and Monica Kassu, Queen of the Behbehs

This episode was edited by Seth Lind and Alden Ford, with sound design and mix by Shane O'Connell.

Old Holowood transition music by Brendan Ryan

Theme song also by Brendan Ryan, performed by Brendan Ryan, Shane O'Connell, Adam Minkoff and Jay Faires.

The Young Old Derf Chronicles is a proud member of the Maximum Fun Network.

[Promo: TV Chef Fantasy League]

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GRIFFIN: Wonderful is a podcast where we talk about things we like. That's hard to sell in a promo like this, so we've enlisted the help of piano rock superstar Billy Joel to tell you about some of the topics we've covered. Take it away, real Billy Joel.

"REAL BILLY JOEL": [to the tune of *We Didn't Start the Fire*] ♪ Daddy Rock's been on Lake Sign, Whirlson Shire of Circle Time, Sega Dreamcast sees a sour tower of annoyed. Keep me up, big time capsules, Wayne's World, Cheese Bulls, Wallace Stevens, Donkey Kong, Fun Size Almond Joy. They didn't start the podcast. Except that's not true. They did, in '22. They didn't start the podcast. No, they actually did. That was a fact of him. ♪

GRIFFIN: Listen to Wonderful every Wednesday on MaximumFun.org or wherever you get your podcasts. Thanks, Real Billy Joel.

RACHEL: No problem, Griffin.

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[outtake] [not edited]

WINSTON: And then maybe like, maybe the scene ends with LaCraine Lacrosse bursting in: [as LaCraine] "I'm fine! Roll camera. Roll sound speed!"

ALLIE: Wait! Can he stumble in very drunk and that's what causes Derf to die? Like he runs into something and—

ALDEN: Oh, he hits him with a Cadillac.

ALLIE: Yes.

SETH: Or just like a. A bunch of—

WINSTON: I love that.

ALLIE: I love that. Drives onto the set, runs over Derf and is like, "Let's go!"

MOUJAN: Oh that's great.

JEREMY: I am returned! Yeah.