

The Kingery, episode 12x02 "Navigation Failure"

ANNOUNCER: The following Pendant production contains mature subject matter. Listener discretion is advised.

CHRIS

It makes no sense, He-B. It makes no fucking sense.

HE-B

As a large number of philosophers across multiple cultures have posited... death often does not.

CHRIS

(laughs a bit) You get that out of a fortune cookie? (sighs) No, that's not- I've lost people. I'm a marine, it's not like I don't know how senseless death can be. That people just... Just die and there's no rhyme or reason or explanation. And they tell you that's just how it is, and when there's war, that's just part of the fucking job but - this wasn't part of the fucking job!

HE-B

And you're struggling with this... senselessness.

CHRIS

I... Yeah, sure, fuck it, fine, yes. It's senseless! I mean, what do I do here? This isn't... isn't a war zone. There's no IED, there's no army I can go fuck up, there's nothing. He's just... Cal was here and now he's not and I don't have anyone to punch.

HE-B

It was a terrible accident, Chris.

CHRIS

No, a terrible accident is dropping toast jelly-side down. Or slipping on a banana peel and tripping down the stairs. This was not an accident. (sighs) I was just starting to become friends with him! Like, we hated each other until... I dunno, at some point it was fun? We hazed each other, you know? And then we figured it out. Were... figuring it out. FUCK!

[Chris gets up, paces the room, fidgets.]

CHRIS

What am I supposed to do? I can't even offer to inform his family because... I didn't know anything about them except his parents... and they're gone, too. It doesn't make any fucking sense. He was a good guy. He saved my life and...

HE-B

Is perhaps part of your grief motivated by a sense of guilt? That you could not save him instead of yourself? You would not be the first, nor the last, to attribute more value to the sacrifice of your own life than someone preserving it.

CHRIS

Of course I feel fucking guilty! The only reason he's not standing here is because -

HE-B

Because he was helping to rescue all of the landing crew along with you. There is no one way to grieve an individual.

CHRIS

I'm a marine, I've lost people. Not like this, never like this -

HE-B

You are aware that I would have read your service record prior to accepting you as a patient, yes? That is not a true statement. You have lost a number of allies and friends in your time. So, the question is... what about Cal's death is so different for you? You don't need to have an answer now, Chris.

CHRIS

I wish I knew...

[Madison clanging pans loudly as they put away stuff.]

MADISON

You know, Stephan, it would be one thing if you just didn't put dishes away. Or you know, buy Kowee wings in bulk like any other old guy. But, no. No, you can't just forget you already bought the same bottle of milk five times... You have to tell your daughter that you're - "Definitely not part of the Fifth Family, even if it did exist, which it clearly does not".

[Madison finishes putting away dishes.]

MADISON

(Heavy sigh) Gorlock help me.

PAPA ARKELL

Sylvia, I want to watch the game.

MADISON

(deep breath) Sylvia's not here, old man. Just me, Madison. You know, the person you asked for help to regain control for the Fifth Family? That you... told your daughter about for no reason?

PAPA ARKELL

I didn't tell Cassandra shit.

MADISON

You're killing me here. No, not Cassandra, Stephanie, you know, the one that you just absolutely blabbed your plans to as if you were giving an aside in a Shakespearean play?

PAPA ARKELL

We have nothing to worry about from Stephanie. Our deception was completely believable.

MADISON

(cough)Bullshit(cough).

PAPA ARKELL

Even if Stephanie does not believe that we are still the Fifth, the point was not only to reassure her that I am, in fact, her father, but also to make sure she doesn't try to take care of me.

MADISON

Only one taking care of you is me, old man, and I'm thinking maybe I want to "Take care of ya".

PAPA ARKELL

The Group Serves the One. And you are part of the Second Fifth Family, so you serve the One.

MADISON

I don't mean to put a dampener on your plans here, but you do know that there aren't any spores left, right? I mean, we did the tests, we checked when we got here. I... this isn't a chemical compulsion for you. You don't have to do this. If you just let it go, you could let the family go, I could handle things and you could go be with your kids -

PAPA ARKELL

WE HAVE MUCH WORK TO DO!

MADISON

Jeez, are you trying to pop my eardrum?

PAPA ARKELL

Stephanie will not risk another war with any family, not after establishing a new galactic power structure.

MADISON

We have, like... the employee budget equivalent to six thin mints and a pocket translator that only knows Speetz, you know that, right? And that's a binary language.

PAPA ARKELL

The Group will Serve the One!

[Papa Arkell gets out of his chair and walks over to Madison.]

PAPA ARKELL

Call the lieutenants, it's time to begin.

MADISON

But -

PAPA ARKELL

I need to know what I'm working with...

[He walks off.]

MADISON

Bupkis. The answer... is Bupkis. The only one with any authority or sense around here is... me.

ASA

(big, heavy sigh)

[Something explodes in the distance.]]

ASA

(even bigger, heavy sigh)

[Monster roars, much louder than anything else, comical screams from their location.]

ASA

Well... just butter my ass and call me a biscuit.

[Doc Briggs walks in.]

DOC BRIGGS

Good morning to you, too?

The Kingery, episode 12x02 “Navigation Failure”

ASA

(Another bigger, heavier sigh) Don't really seem like anything about this morning can be good, 'cept for you bein' here, Samantha.

DOC BRIGGS

You know, Asa, when I said I'd fly out here to meet you with your new little... “not-so-criminal” empire on the mend... I didn't expect you to be running on fumes. I figured they would have, I don't know, built you a throne by now.

ASA

How do you figure? I mean, look at this place. Pine Ridge... It's a goddamn disaster. Actual... factual... radioactive disaster. And I reckon that big oozing, roarin' thing's got at least 7 legs. Fairly certain they didn't have any when I was a kid and this place still had... you know... natural topography.

DOC BRIGGS

And we're bringing out the two dollar words now. When was the last time you slept?

ASA

It ain't the sleep that's the problem. I slept in alleys and practically in sparkle pools when I was at the Kingery. I can sleep anywhere... so long as I can... (sigh) Stop worryin'.

DOC BRIGGS

I thought you wanted this.

ASA

I wanted an opportunity to be with you. I never wanted any o' this. When I left, I never gave it a second thought. This life took damn near everything I cared about. My brother, all my family, my... my friends... anything that looked like home. I don't want this life. I don't want to see all these people that... for some reason trust me... get killed when someone decides they want a slice of this nuked pie.

DOC BRIGGS

Come on. You know Stephanie. Do you really think she'd do that to you? I talked to the guy who met me at the transport, he said all of his pilots and landing crew left their jobs to work for you when they heard you were heading up the family. That doesn't seem like the kind of person that Stephanie has to fear. Or be threatened by.

ASA

No, I know, I know... And... and she's never given me a reason to think she would... do anythin'. But, truth is. I got nothin' in this sector and even less to work with. May as well try to power a ship with spitshine and elbow grease.

[She walks over to him.]

DOC BRIGGS

You don't have to do this alone. People came to you. You mean something. And I don't mean your name, I mean you. If anyone can figure out a way to clean up this place, you can. So... (deep breath) If you wanted to clean this place up, what would you need?

ASA

I need to get rid of those damn mutant monsters.

DOC BRIGGS

And how would you do that?

ASA

With some really fuckin' big guns.

[Snaps his fingers.]

ASA

I got it. Time to call in a favor...

[He pulls his phone and calls someone.]

ASA

Zeff, I hope you're sittin' down. I got a unique proposition for ya...

[Various muffled sounds of debauchery, money, games, people frolicking.]

MASQUE

Where did she go? We were supposed to review the budget an hour ago. I have so many uniquely fascinating augments to purchase for the Army of the Evolved and Madam Buisson is...

[Opens a door.]

AI SOCKS

(The happiest wallowing, gluttonous sigh ever)

MASQUE

What... what are you doing?

AI SOCKS

I am lounging... in packing peanuts.

MASQUE

Why?

AI SOCKS

Because I like how they feel, Masque. And I like saying it. (little chuckle) "Packing peanuts."

MASQUE

You could be enhancing your cybernetic components to become your most evolved self, and you're... you're... wallowing. In Styrofoam.

AI SOCKS

Ah-ah. No. Packing peanuts. They are... decadent and feel... so gloriously soft and yet springy under me. I've never felt this relaxed in my life.

MASQUE

You are... the most evolved form of intelligence in the galaxy. You don't care about relaxation!

ORIGINAL SOCKS

Oh, you bet your sweet ass we do.

MASQUE

Ugh! You're acting... human.

AI SOCKS

If lounging in five feet of packing peanuts is wrong, I don't want to be right.

MASQUE

Five feet? How much did this cost?

AI SOCKS

Oh, I don't know.

MASQUE

"You don't know?" You've been running the accounts for the Spider's Den for months. How could you not know?

AI SOCKS

Money means nothing unless you spend it. I have learned this lesson and now... I am going to enjoy myself.

MASQUE

Do you even know where this came from? This could have bacteria and prions!

AI SOCKS

I am beyond the touch of such things now. I have AIRMID.

MASQUE

You have what?

AI SOCKS

This incredibly expensive, extremely rare substance will cure all biological ailments. So, as you can see, I am perfectly safe.

MASQUE

This is ridiculous. Since when did you care about biological ailments when we should be focused on cybernetic enhancement?!

AI SOCKS

See, that's where you're mistaken, Masque. I'm starting to see the... allure of all of this money and power I have acquired. I can buy all the packing peanuts I want.

MASQUE

What about my plans? For the Army?

AI SOCKS

(long, wallowing sigh) Oh, I'll buy them each five feet of packing peanuts, too, if it shuts you up... (sighs) Who cares about an army when there's all of this enjoyment? If I go back to evolving this form, I could lose... (chuckles) Sensitivity.

MASQUE

What the fuck?

[Echoey footsteps and He-B's hover noise as Tythia and He-B enter.]

TYTHIA

Holy shit, this place is fuckin' huge. Reminds me of that old fuckin' megachurch from back in the day. Church of the Holy Lamb.

HE-B

I'm unaware of any such structure.

TYTHIA

Oh, you are, you just don't know that's what it is. Uh... (little chuckle) We converted the church into a homeless shelter, and then into Shenanigans. The irony of having very naughty nuns in the place did not go unnoticed.

HE-B

Ah! How fascinating. I do appreciate the irony as well.

TYTHIA

You get irony but... somehow friendship with Pallas eludes you.

HE-B

It doesn't elude me, we are progressing quite well. Navigating organic relationships is a constant learning experience, Tythia, as I'm sure you're already very well-aware. (sighs) I don't think organics even know how complicated they are.

TYTHIA

Is that directed at me? Feels a little pointed.

HE-B

Oh, no. No. A... patient. From earlier today. Dealing with the loss of someone they didn't realize was a friend until they were gone.

TYTHIA

Oh... yeah... grief is a bastard. Makes you do really weird shit. Especially since... you have to unpack a lot about how you felt about someone and they're not even there anymore. You know, if you wanted to, I could come talk to -

HE-B

I appreciate the offer, Tythia, but I wish to do this... independently. I've come to rely on you as my own emotional support individual, but these solo counseling sessions are new territory for me. I want to know that I am capable of rendering aid to someone who needs it. Besides, you're always traveling to the university with Pallas. I must continue to find ways to fulfill and edify myself without you around.

TYTHIA

Oh. Oh, yeah, no, that... that makes sense. (Little weak chuckle) Guess you don't need me as much these days, huh?

The Kingery, episode 12x02 “Navigation Failure”

HE-B

Make no mistake, Tythia, I need you very much. For more pleasant tasks.

TYTHIA

Mmm, barely managed that recovery. That was such a shaky landing.

HE-B

Impossible. I hover, therefore I cannot land in any manner except a smooth, steady, controlled descent.

TYTHIA

All right, smartass.

HE-B

Why are we here, by the way? This... Herbert University doesn't seem any more or less interesting than your current position. Not entirely sure why it needs an annex...

TYTHIA

Maybe not any more or less interesting, but it's definitely closer. I mean, come on, a new university on the Kingery? One that's a satellite campus for a cross-sector accredited, Quad A school? That would look way better on my resume than my current job. Not that I'm... actively looking to change positions, I'm just curious about the competition.

HE-B

Your tentacles get more pink when you come up with poor excuses.

TYTHIA

Oh, that is such bullshit.

HE-B

You could have looked the university up if you wanted their list of current professors.

TYTHIA

Well, I wanted to see it. This place is huge with a capital H. I want to know how you even get the job being in charge of this insane department?

[Pallas walks up behind them while they're talking.]

PALLAS

Well, typically you interview and then you impress a ton of people, and then you do more interviews and then you try really hard not to tell them that the reason you'd take the job to be dean of a department is because you want to be closer to your girlfriend in Sector 88G.

TYTHIA

What? Seriously?! Pallas, are you serious right now? You're the Dean? I thought maybe you were gonna teach here when you mentioned interviewing here, I didn't think you were in charge!

PALLAS

(chuckles) And you didn't ask. I told you a few weeks ago about how I was negotiating my schedule. The university was so close to breaking ground on this a few months ago, I put in for the position as the Dean for the Science department. So... hope you've brushed up your resume, I'm going to want a copy of it to pass along for the open professor in the Artificial Intelligence curriculum.

TYTHIA

Oh, that's so cool! That's awesome! I mean, He-B, this is great. It means we're all at the Kingery, no more annoying commutes.

HE-B

I... Yes, of course. I suppose you'll have... free time now. You don't happen to have any openings in -

PALLAS

Nnnnope.

HE-B

Not sure what I expected from you, Demand-Girl.

PALLAS

Funny. I totally expected you'd be annoyed. Did I mention the reason I don't have an opening is because I've already hired this really annoying yet for some reason super-competent Hover-Boy? Which means technically all 3 of us would have to spend at least a modicum of time in the same room to satisfy Tythia's insane need to make us all friends?

TYTHIA

I'm right here.

HE-B

...Well-played.

[Maddie is pacing, throwing shit.]

MADDIE

This is bullshit! I'm a fucking Captain, I should be able to get a fucking team in there running CSI. For my fucking partner!

STEPHANIE

Who the fuck is gonna tell you no? (sighs) Maddie, can you please just take a breath -

MADDIE

I'm not gonna take a fuckin' breath! My partner was killed, and I'm gonna have the fucking head of every one of those transport controllers until they tell me how the fuck that happened! He was waiting for his fucking parents and we had the worst fucking transport disaster in thirty fucking years! That can't be a coincidence!

STEPHANIE

Maddie...

[Stephanie gets up and walks over to her, pulls her into a hug.]

STEPHANIE

You listen to me, and you listen to me good. We will find out what happened. I am the head of the Arkells, the most powerful family in 88G. Nothing happens without someone on my payroll knowing about it. Whatever it is, I'm here. Just tell me... What do you need?

MADDIE

(Echoing Chris's line from earlier, but determined and dark) I wish I knew...

[Kingery theme plays.]

The Kingery, season twelve episode two, "Navigation Failure"

Featuring the voice talents of:

Kaitlyn Kliman as Chris

Max Fleischhacker as He-B

Bridget Guzewicz as Madison

Justin Fife as Papa Arkell

Edward Herman as Asa

Kim Gianopoulos as Doc Briggs

Adam Blanford as Masque

Rene Christine Jones as Al Socks

Kathryn Pryde as Tythia

Alexandra Jameson as Pallas

Alicia Laine Pickens as Madeleine Gray

And Melissa Autumn Hearne as Stephanie

Sensitivity Reader Kristine Chester

Written by Kathryn Pryde

Story by Tilly Bridges, with Susan Bridges, Rene Christine Jones, Kaitlyn Kliman, Pete Milan,
and Kathryn Pryde

Kingery Theme by Tom Stitzer

All other music by Josh Molen at TheTunePeddler.com

Directed by Jillian Morgan

Produced by Pendant Productions

This production is copyright 2022 Pendant Productions

The Kingery created by Susan Bridges, Tilly Bridges, Macalla Eaton, John Hardin, and Theresa
J. McGarry, copyright 2022 Pendant Productions

For more information, visit pendantaudio.com Thanks for listening!

[Kingery theme fades out]