

## **The Kingery, episode 12x08 “Playing Against Type”**

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

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[Masque enters.]

MASQUE

We have another six in the Army of the Evolved that have abandoned us because of Arkell's... dramatics. If this continues, there will be further consequences. Others are going to feel demoralized and no amount of promising further augmentation is going to keep people here. And you would know all of this if you had been there to assure the Army that you'd take action against Arkell!

AISOCKS

And I am taking action, but it isn't in our best interest to immediately go to war with her. Not over your own... "dramatics."

MASQUE

Arkell had clearly decided that we were guilty before we even stepped into the room! If I hadn't positioned my people, I would be dead –

AISOCKS

Ms. Arkell is a great many things, but she isn't a hypocrite. If she had wanted a rival dead, you would be dead.

MASQUE

“Rival?” None of them are my rivals! They are unevolved, organic meatbags that let their biological impulses run everything! They aren’t worthy of the term “rivals”.

AISOCKS

You keep trying to take the Arkell family out, but I thought it was clear that this is a war of attrition. Money talks.

MASQUE

Ah, of course money talks. But, I never see this money. The Spider’s Den turns quite the profit, but when was the last time we received a shipment of cybernetic implants? We have a waiting list that used to be in the hundreds and it is dwindling every week that we don’t deliver on those promises.

AISOCKS

Then don’t waste the next bunch on shit security next time.

MASQUE

I see what’s happening here. You care more about your Airmid than any of your superior technological components. You like your disgusting biological impulses. You’re growing soft –

[Al Socks stands up and slams her hand on her desk.]

AISOCKS

Enough. I will not have this slander in my office. You owe everything you have to the Spider’s

Den. To us. In order to evolve, the biological components of my body have to live, you idiot. Or have you forgotten the Thesian Paradox?

MASQUE

I will not engage in pointless philosophical debate. The Thesian Paradox is a child's game, the idea that the more we evolve, we somehow lose what made us unique Individuals. I won't be jumping off that cliff any time soon, but it isn't because I'm afraid. It's because you keep delaying our shipments! But maybe that's what you want. Are you seriously implying that you value your biological components more than your cybernetic ones?

AISOCKS

The biological system that I rely on still has to function. My AIRMID is a contingency plan.

MASQUE

If you hadn't bought that stupid single dose of your miracle drug, you could have equipped the entire Army with new eyes.

AISOCKS

Why would they need those when they have your unblinking ass to completely miss what Arkell was laying out right in front of you? Figure out your shit, Masque.

MASQUE

(huff) Oh, I will. I will... but you should take your own Advice. You don't sound

like yourself these days. I wonder where such... crass language comes from. Certainly doesn't seem very evolved. Certainly low intelligence.

AISOCKS  
Get out.

[Masque leaves, the door shuts behind them.]

MASQUE  
Better be careful what you wish for. If I get out, I will take everything with me.

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[Arkell and Major are walking, surrounded by a group of others.]

ARHELL  
Jesus fucking Christ, is this necessary, Major?

MAJOR  
Yes, yes, it is, Andrea.

ARHELL  
You know, when you say it like that, I like this name even less.

MAJOR  
Say it like what?

ARHELL  
Like I'm being a fuckin' Mean Girl or some shit. And not just trying to walk –

[She bumps into a member of security.]

ARHELL

How long have you been doing this job?! Seriously?! Just let me fucking walk! Back up, six feet! Goddamn, I don't need an entourage. You know this makes me even more obviously a target, right?

MAJOR

Well, you won't stay in your office, you won't let me bust the fuckin' heads I need to –

ARHELL

Yeah, because this is a finesse job. I'm not telling you anything you don't already know, Maj. But as it stands, I can't see shit for the wall of himbos ahead of me.

MAJOR

Hey, they're not all himbos. Boris has a Masters in Mechanical Engineering.

ARHELL

And he's working my security detail... why?

MAJOR

Because he uses that masters to build really fuckin' nice guns, boss. It's field testing.

ARHELL

Uh-huh.

Major, is this maybe not about me? I mean, not that I'm not appreciative and a little flattered that you think I need an entire squadron of bodyguards, but where was this paranoia last week?

MAJOR

Oh, hey, woah, we don't use that word.

ARKELL

Nothing suggests I'm a target. The murders haven't been leading up the organization's food chain, so this seems –

[She bumps into another guard.]

ARKELL

Six foot radius. As in on all sides! This feels like I'm in a fucking funeral procession.

MAJOR

Oh, come on, boss, can you not with the F-word right now?

ARKELL

I know you didn't just tell me to watch my fuckin' language.

MAJOR

Not that F-word. The other one.

ARKELL

... Funeral.

MAJOR

Yeesh, no, stop, come on!

[The procession of security comes to a halt as Arkell does.]

ARKELL

Okay, that's it. What is going on with you?

MAJOR

I haven't

heard from 'Lock since before the Thunderbird op. At first, I thought maybe we just keep getting our wires crossed, missing each other, y'know? But, he's stopped leaving me voicemails. And now I'm just... what if he's pissed at me? No, fuck that, what if something is wrong. Have you heard from your sister?

ARKELL

No, but she's been trying to run her business and I'm trying very hard to find out who keeps killing people, so we haven't had a lot of time to bond. Which is a shame, she still hasn't taught me how to do that really bitchin' side braid thing she does...

MAJOR

Okay, but, see, what if I missed something? What if she's not talking to you because she can't? What if something's gone wrong and – look, I have to find out. I have to know that 'Lock's okay. He can't be... But whoever's behind this could have targeted him if they're trying to get to the family.

ARKELL

Are you asking for permission here, or...

MAJOR

I.... am... not. I am... telling you. I need to go find him.

ARHELL

Sounds like you've made  
up your mind. Well... if you think that  
you need to go find Kaylock, then  
you'd be leaving my security  
detail. So I'd have to assume you  
need all of this brute squad, not  
me, right? Security detail goes  
with head of security.

MAJOR

What? No. In fact, I'm... I'm gonna  
call in the Beta team, too. Boris  
is gonna run point.

ARHELL

Are you shitting me –

MAJOR

Hey! Listen up!  
I've gotta take care of some  
business, you're gonna stay here  
with the Boss. And if anything –  
and I mean anything – happens to  
the Boss, then when I get back I am  
gonna have Boris here use all his  
fancy booksmarts here to make me  
the biggest, nastiest gun that I  
can surgically insert up your asses  
so that you're puking fireworks,  
you fuckin' understand me?  
Good. Now, I gotta catch a  
transport. Thanks, Andrea.

[Major starts to walk away.]

ARHELL

That's it!  
No one's calling me Andrea again!  
You ruined it!

[She bumps into another security guard.]



ARKELL

So help me, I will  
rip your ponytail off, dude, I  
can't even breathe, the fucking Eau  
d'Douchebag smell coming off all of  
you... You know gas warfare like that  
is considered a war crime in  
several sectors, right?

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[Blips as Maddie looks through pictures on a console.]

GIB

I had this exact nightmare once.

MADDIE

This makes the disaster site seem...  
tame, actually.

JACE

Yeah, I don't think I'm ever going  
to feel clean again.

CORRY

Honestly, Jace. Were we ever?

HOOKS

I think  
there was a playwright that Tythia  
used to talk about a lot that  
wanted to have body parts raining  
down from the stage. Literal body  
parts.

MADDIE

The fuck, Hooks.

HOOKS

Well, to be fair, I don't think  
anyone ever staged that play, but I  
wouldn't really know...

GIB

And you two... Corry and Jace. you found this beneath the spaceport?

CORRY

Unfortunately.

JACE

Found a two-headed hamster, too, but I don't think anyone's gonna remember "Rodentia Jace" in the wake of... this.

GIB

You found a horror show of body parts and viscera, no, the hamster isn't a priority. This has to be the AI. Not the one we have in custody, but Ms. Buisson.

MADDIE

No, Gib, something about this doesn't add up. I mean, sure, maybe this is some more of that weird cybernetic horror show, but we have bodies for the prior murders.

CORRY

I mean, murders normally involve bodies?

MADDIE

Intact bodies. Not people soup.

CORRY

I think I need some air.

MADDIE

No, you know what, we'll take it from here. You can't help with this part. Thanks, Hooks - Jace, Corry, you should ask him for a day off,

you could use it - For bringing this to us, I'll get CSI down there to finish forensics.

HOOKS

Let us know if you need anything else, Captain Grey.

[The wrenches leave.]

MADDIE

Stop looking at me like that. The M.O.'s not the same.

GIB

Of course it's not the same. The AI's goals are changing. It's not about obtaining raw materials, she doesn't need that. If it was just that, money does the same thing and there is an ample supply of that at the Spider's Den. This is about power now. Removing people close to the various families so that they destabilize.

MADDIE

I don't like it... (sighs) Okay, fine. If I give this theory some credence and we run that lead down, will that satisfy you?

GIB

I don't generally find myself satisfied with much of life, but... sure.

MADDIE

If you're so convinced that the AI is at the bottom of this, then let's get someone into the Spider's Den and find out. Let's get an asset in, do some recon.

GIB

Great. I'm on it.

MADDIE

Hell, no. Socks knows you way too well. You'll be made the moment any of her security cameras spot you. I'd be surprised if you made it twenty feet inside front door. We need someone else entirely.

[Erin walks in.]

ERIN

Hey, Cap, I've got the range for an hour if you wanted to... Sorry, didn't realize you were in the middle of something.

MADDIE

Erin, you are exactly the person I was looking for.

ERIN

I am?

GIB

Oh, I see where this is going.

MADDIE

How do you feel about going undercover?

ERIN

I.... uh... I don't really do that.

MADDIE

It would mean closing the loop on some of our open questions regarding the murders. If we can rule out –

GIB

Or rule in –

MADDIE

Yeah, or rule in, the AI at the Spider's Den, then we might be able to find something to bring them in.

ERIN

Uh, no, sorry. Sorry, I just. No. I can't. I'm not... I wouldn't be comfortable with that.

GIB

Why not?

ERIN

Why the fuck would I tell you that?

GIB

Seemed like a normal question to me.

MADDIE

Hey, Gib, can you grab me a cup of coffee from the break room?

GIB

Right now?

Right now. Great. I know a thinly veiled dismissal when I see it, Captain.

[Gib leaves, door shuts behind him.]

ERIN

Shit, I didn't mean to snap at him.

MADDIE

Yeah, you did. He asked a question that clearly would've pushed you further out of your comfort zone.

Talk to me. What's going on?

You're not the squeamish type, and I figured you would have jumped at the opportunity to nail Chris's killer.

ERIN

It's not that. I am... I am so fucking ready to find that piece of shit. But, you have... no idea what you're asking me to do.

MADDIE

So, tell me.

ERIN

Okay, so... I spent way longer than I want to admit struggling with who I am. I wasn't always Erin. I had to find her. Because I knew I wasn't like the way my family and my friends expected me to be. But, being the person they wanted felt like... putting on this costume that felt all wrong and too tight and too loose in all the wrong places. And it felt like wearing shoes on the wrong feet. Or like that dream every actor tells you about where like, they fucking show up for a play and don't know their lines. That. Only all the time. It took me years to take that costume off. To be me. Erin. I like Erin. She's pretty fucking awesome. And she's fucking pretty and she's a woman. She is me.

MADDIE

Of course she is. Erin, you know this isn't the first time I've had these conversations, right? Arkell wasn't –

ERIN

Her journey isn't mine. She didn't have to go through the hormones and the body sculpting and she... (little laugh) Okay, maybe I'm a little bitter about that. But who wouldn't be? She got to just... flip a switch. Doesn't work that way for everyone else.

MADDIE

I know. But, she didn't know why she liked swapping into women for a while. Did you? Ever go to a SOL and body swap, I mean?

ERIN

Yup. Spent every last credit on shore duty I had for that. But that didn't feel right, either. Because I still knew that wasn't me. I wasn't going to stay like that. But, I finally got where I want to be.

MADDIE

And asking you to go undercover is asking you to suppress yourself all over again. I... I get it. And I apologize for putting you in that position. I honestly didn't know.

ERIN

Oh, my old therapist probably just felt the greatest sense of accomplishment just now.

MADDIE

Thank you for telling me. (sighs)  
And... fuck it, forget about the op.  
We'll figure something out.

ERIN

Like what? Why did you even need to  
go there?

MADDIE

Gib's convinced that the AI at the  
Spider's Den is responsible for the  
murders. I'm not. But, I do think  
that there's something really  
fucked up happening there, and I  
was hoping to get an inside woman  
there to see what she could find.

ERIN

Doing... doing what?

MADDIE

Being a high roller. Bank exec,  
that kind of thing. We'd get you  
set up with department assets,  
untraceable stuff that we've seized  
over the years, and send you off to  
gamble. The AI technically doesn't  
have a type other than, um... Hooks  
being sad, I think, but Socks? Oh,  
she does. A pretty, confident woman  
will absolutely turn her head. You  
might be able to go places no one  
else can.

ERIN

And I would be able to find out for  
sure if they had anything to do  
with Chris.

[Erin takes a deep breath.]



ERIN  
I'm in.

MADDIE  
Yeah?

ERIN  
Yeah.

[Gib comes back in.]

GIB  
Okay, here is your coffee from your thinly veiled dismissal. Erin, got you a cup, too. Don't know how you take it, so, just, uh... I assume sugar. Not everyone here drinks their coffee black as tar.

MADDIE  
Erin's in.

GIB  
Shit, maybe I should walk out more often.

MADDIE  
We need to get her an ID. And...  
How do you feel about purple hair?

ERIN  
... Is it too late to back out?

MADDIE  
Yes. But only because I think the purple would be fun for you.

ERIN  
You know what? Sure. Purple works.

MADDIE

Great. Follow me, we need to work with our data guy to get you the credentials you'll need...

[Maddie and Erin walk out of the office and shut the door behind them.]

GIB

That's fine. I'll just stay here. With six packets of sugar and creamers. And... three cups of coffee. I'm sure that can't backfire.

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[Pallas is pacing.]

PALLAS

You know, considering the rampant amount of hedonism, debauchery, and alternative lifestyles at the Kingery, you'd think they would know to treat synthetics with a bit more compassion than this.

PALLAS

Nabarit says the cops can't keep He-B past a 72 hour hold, but that, of course, is assuming they don't try some last-minute fuckery to say that because he's not organic, those laws don't apply. Because, you know, screw synthetic welfare, right? Fuck the ethical treatment of people who aren't the standard, boiler-plate quote-unquote majority.

PALLAS

I mean, who the fuck arrests a therapist? Because of his supposed affiliation with the Fifth? A group that he very clearly said he was no longer a part of, and he has spent the last, what, year? Trying to make sure that you know that every single chance he gets. And the fact that they're just gonna keep him here when they have absolutely no proof, no evidence, and they won't even talk to us.... What.

TYTHIA

I really love this side of you, Pallas, I gotta say.

PALLAS

Oh, fuck off.

TYTHIA

No, I mean it. I thought I was pissed, but you've just been on a crusade for Synthetic Rights for the last day and I just... it's nice. It's really nice.

PALLAS

The problems I have with He-B have nothing to do with him being a synthetic, Tythia.

TYTHIA

Oh, I know that. I'm just glad you know that.

PALLAS

Yeah, I have problems with him being a self-righteous try-hard who tried to steal my girlfriend –

TYTHIA

There it is...

[The door opens and He-B hovers in.]

PALLAS

Hey. Finally. I thought I was going to have to start busting heads.

HE-B

I admit I am quite surprised that you're the one to say that.

PALLAS

Yeah, well, it wouldn't have been literal busting. I would have ripped someone a new one with vicious rhetoric and legal threats. Nabarit gave me the arsenal they had until we can get you a hearing.

TYTHIA

You talk to Nabarit at all?

HE-B

Oh, yes. I've had ample opportunity to speak to the attorney. And they're quite certain there isn't enough evidence to hold me here. I would know, I've had a number of police officers in and out of this holding cell speak with me. Did you know there is no full-time therapist for the station personnel? Given the gratuitous amount of violence and vice that they deal with, one would think that shouldn't be the case. At least I've been able to help some of them. I think I might have picked up a few patients for once I'm out of here.

TYTHIA

So... then let's get you out of here and tell Maddie that she's gonna have to do better than a fly-by-night op to the university if she wants to catch the person who murdered Sarah and Cal.

HE-B

I'm afraid that is not possible, Tythia. Even if I wished to, I am unfortunately unable to leave the premises of the station without my hard drive suffering a catastrophic failure.

TYTHIA

Holy shit, they fitted you with a Proximity Mag-Lock? That's... He-B, that's... this is so not okay. Why are you so calm about this? I'm definitely not fucking calm about all of this.

PALLAS

That's it. I'm gonna call Nabarit again. This is so unfair, you didn't do anything.

HE-B

I appreciate and... and I am quite touched by your passion for my situation, but I do not think the police force has the same appreciation for your tone as I do, Demand-Girl.

PALLAS

They're gonna start to appreciate it when Nabarit comes in here and points out all the various protocols and synthetic rights they're violating –

HE-B

That is not necessary, I assure you. Both of you. I understand that you are both concerned, that this must be frightening. But, I am aware that they have a reasonable suspicion. If a synthetic individual is responsible for these crimes, then I am willing to participate in whatever investigation required. I will answer any questions they have because I have nothing to hide. This will only end with my exoneration. And if it does not, then feel free to unleash fists and legal threats.

TYTHIA

You  
bet your ass we will.

HE-B

I don't like seeing either of you upset. It brings me no joy, especially when I know that it is a frustration over something neither of you can control.

[Pallas sits across from He-B.]

PALLAS

I've given you a lot of shit in the past. You haven't deserved it. I'm sorry, Hover-Boy.

HE-B

Apology accepted, although I believe the saying is that I've given as good as I've gotten.

TYTHIA

It took me growing hair out of my eyeballs and him being accused of murder for the two of you to finally settle your shit.

HE-B

Well, this therapy program has given me ample opportunity for personal growth. It's quite helpful. In fact, had I not created the ESI Squid for Geppi using the therapy program as a basis for the AI, progress would not have been as rapid.

PALLAS

Did you say...

TYTHIA

You gave that ESI Squid an AI? I thought that it was just a recursive algorithm.

HE-B

No, I had given it a full artificial intelligence matrix. I had assumed it would be rudimentary, focused entirely on the therapy sessions, helping Geppi with triggers and anxiety spirals. But, as I'm sure you're aware, Tythia, an AI grows exponentially and, well, at this point, I'm not entirely sure what it can do.

HE-B

I... I think we may want to reach out to Attorney Nabarit again.

PALLAS

Yeah. I think we might want to.

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[Kingery theme plays.]

The Kingery, season twelve episode eight, "Playing Against Type"

Featuring the voice talents of:

Adam Blanford as Masque

Melissa Autumn Hearne as Arkell

M Sieiro Garcia as AI Socks and Major

Shawn Taylor as Gib

Alicia Laine Pickens as Madeleine Gray

Brady Hendricks as Jace

Kirsty Woolven as Corry

Perry Whittle as Hooks

Kristine Chester as Erin

Alexandra Jameson as Pallas

Kathryn Pryde as Tythia

And Max Fleischhacker as He-B

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](http://TheTunePeddler.com)

Directed by Jillian Morgan

Assistant director Kaitlyn Kliman

Produced by Pendant Productions

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[Kingery theme fades out]