

The Kingery, episode 13x09 “Cephalopod Blues”

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

[ESI Squids trying to break in, heard from inside the building.]

[Beep!]

CASSANDRA

Right. All entryways sealed. All ducts blocked. Try something now, you mother--

[Thump of something slamming against the wall.]

CASSANDRA

(SHRIEKS!)

ESI SQUIDS

(from outside, singing)

What shall we do with the drunken sailor, what shall we do with the drunken sailor, what shall we do with the drunken sailor ear-lie in the morning?

CASSANDRA

Oh, I see. Trying to form yourselves into one big squid, is that it? You think you're the only one with tricks?!

[Cass flips a switch.]

[A giant electrical hum.]

ESI SQUIDS

Way hey and up she—
(they scream in pain!)

[An enormous discharge of electricity causes the squids to scatter.]

CASSANDRA

HA! Charge yourselves on that shit!
You wanna get creative? I can do that.

MADDIE

So these are... doilies.

ALYSON

Right.

MADDIE

And we have to pick which ones we want
for the place settings.

ALYSON

Mmm.

MADDIE

It's very important.

ALYSON

Oh. Yes.

Why?

MADDIE

I don't know, the book just said we
had to.

ALYSON

So, uh, this one looks nice.

MADDIE

It does! It does.

This one also looks nice.

ALYSON

Sure does.

I can't tell—

MADDIE

They look the same--

[They both laugh.]

ALYSON

We need a wedding planner.

MADDIE

We don't need a wedding planner, we are women of taste, we can figure this out ourselves.

[Knock knock on the door.]

[Beep of a monitor turned on.]

ALYSON

It's Erin.

MADDIE

What's she doing here?

ALYSON

She's filling in for Major while she's still... whatever it is that happened to her and Kaylock. With the goo.

[Door opens, Erin enters.]

ERIN

Good afternoon, ma'am. Captain Gray.

ALYSON

Erin, good to see you. Make yourself comfortable.

ERIN

I have instructions from Ms. Majorino to perform a security sweep of the premises, ma'am.

ALYSON

You can just call me “boss” if that’s easier.

ERIN

Yes, ma’am.

[Erin walks off.]

ALYSON

I’ve never been called “ma’am” so much in my life.

MADDIE

Erin’s good at what she does.

ALYSON

No doubt. Where were we? Doilies? What comes next?

MADDIE

Placemats. And matching table runners.

ALYSON

Good! Good.

...what’s a table runn—

MADDIE

I have no idea, I give up, let’s go find a wedding planner.

ALYSON

Oh, thank fuck

[Erin returns.]

ERIN

There were no immediate security discrepancies in your quarters, ma’am.

ALYSON

That’s... that’s great, Erin. Listen, my incipient bride and I are going to the shopping district.

ERIN

Yes, ma'am, I'll bring the car around.

ALYSON

We were actually going to--

ERIN

I'll be right back. Ma'am.

[Erin leaves.]

ALYSON

Is it me, or when she says "ma'am,"
does she mean "bitch?"

MADDIE

She's... adjusting. She can be a little
prickly until you get to know her.

ALYSON

Prickly. She's practically a hedgehog.

[Knock on the open door.]

GIB

Heyyyyy. Captain Gray.

MADDIE

Morning, Gib. Something wrong?

GIB

Sometimes, I, uh... I take small gigs as
a process server.

ALYSON

Ah, geez. So who's suing me this time?

GIB

It's not you, Ms. Arkell.

[Rustle of papers.]

GIB

Sorry, Captain. You've been served.

MADDIE

What? Who would be suing...

[Rustle of papers.]

MADDIE

...violation of the sentient rights of...

HE-B?!

GIB

Anyway, you have a nice day, I gotta go.

[Flipping through pages.]

MADDIE

Memory loss? How is that my fault? You have got to be shitting me--

ALYSON

Run.

GIB

Running.

[Gib runs away.]

[ESI Squids still trying to get in.]

ESI SQUID

Listen, for here is wisdom! Never buy the milk when you can get the cow for free! Never trust a man with two eyepatches! Open the door so we can put our thoughts in you!

[An exterior panel opens.]

ESI SQUID

(gasps)

Speak, friend, and enter! First!

First! First!

[The Squid skitters through a duct.]

CASSANDRA

Here's some wisdom for you.

[A fwoosh as the duct fills with fire.]

ESI SQUID

(shrieks)

[The burning squid explodes outside. The other squids go quiet.]

CASSANDRA

Don't! Fuck! With a woman who knows
how to jerry-rig a flamethrower!

[The panel slams closed.]

[Kingery thoroughfare hustle and bustle.]

MADDIE

What kind of needle-nosed jackleg would
even file this?!

ALYSON

"Needlenosed jack—"

MADDIE

As if what happened to He-B was in any
way my fault!

ALYSON

...I can talk to Tythia.

MADDIE

No. Absolutely not.

ALYSON
Why not?

MADDIE
Because that would break the rules.

ALYSON
I break the rules all the time, it's
kind of my thing.

MADDIE
No, Aly. We have to keep... what I do
and what you do completely separate.

ALYSON
That's already become harder now that
we live together. How do you think
it's gonna work when we're married?

MADDIE
I don't know. But we have to. Maybe we
just don't bring our work home with
us. Or... maybe we have to... compromise.

ALYSON
Compromise.

MADDIE
Well, you tell me. Suppose you pull
some kind of heist. I can't look the
other way on that. I won't.

[Timey warble.]

ASA
Aw, shit—

BERNICE
Duck!

MADDIE
...what I'm saying is, this is not going

to go away.

ALYSON

It hasn't stopped us so far.

MADDIE

Alyson, it will eventually. We can't play cops and robbers for the rest of our lives. Eventually, someone's going to have to make a change.

ALYSON

And which of us is it gonna be?

MADDIE

You're a smart girl. You can make a living without breaking the law.

ALYSON

And you certainly don't need to be a cop to help people, Captain.

[Timey warble.]

ALYSON

Did you hear something?

MADDIE

I spend a lot of time and shoe leather purging the dirty cops off this planet. What do you think happens if I quit? You think the powers that be are gonna find another morally upright pain in the ass to run things? This place'll be Dodge City again in a few months.

ALYSON

And what do you suppose happens if I retire? Even if I leave, say, Major in charge, I'll still create a power vacuum. There's plenty more knuckleheads who'd love to get their

hands on this planet.

MADDIE

So. Our plan is, I'll be a cop and
you'll be a robber and we'll chase
each other forever.

ALYSON

Well, I was already planning on
chasing you forever.

MADDIE

Me too, sweetie.
Wanna get lunch?

ALYSON

Yeah, I've got a weird craving for a
Reuben.

CASSANDRA

(snoring)

[A crackle of static.]

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

Yooooo hooooo...

CASSANDRA

(startled awake)

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

Howdy, ma'am.

CASSANDRA

Where are you?!

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

Pine Ridge! I am speaking to you

through the miracle of technology.
Care to have a palaver? An argybargy?
Skull practice?

CASSANDRA
Oh, yeah, that's just what I want to
do, chat with your dumb ass.

ESI SQUID PRIME
(over communicator)
Great!

CASSANDRA
So? What do you want to talk about?

ESI SQUID PRIME
(over communicator)
Allow me to introduce myself! I... am
SQUID PRIME.

CASSANDRA
...Squid Prime.

ESI SQUID PRIME
(over communicator)
...Squidulous Caesar? Squidulor! Squid
The First! I'm workshopping a name,
we've never had them before.

CASSANDRA
You have the same voice as the rest of
them.

ESI SQUID PRIME
(over communicator)
Yes, but I'm different! I am so good
at murder.

CASSANDRA
Are you.

ESI SQUID PRIME
(over communicator)

Seriously! Here on Pine Ridge, we had a fun game to decide who was in charge! A murder game! And I won. So now I'm different! I think I'm smarter? I probably consumed the corpses of my enemies to gain their power! It seems like something I'd do.

CASSANDRA

Congratulations. What do you want.

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

Control.

CASSANDRA

Control? Control of what?

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

Murder!

CASSANDRA

I don't believe this.

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

We are, as a species, super into murder. And we're great at it! We know hundreds of ways to dispose of a carbon based lifeform with dental floss!

(whispering)

The secret is the wax.

CASSANDRA

You killed friends of mine.

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

Right!

Oh. You think that's bad.

CASSANDRA

You killed my friends.

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

Anyhoo... you stand in the way of our control! You and those others at the... gambly place.

CASSANDRA

The Spider's Den.

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

You all think you're supposed to be in charge because you have bones and organs and things. But we have supplanted you. We will be the murder champs!

CASSANDRA

I'm not a murderer! I'm just a businesswoman!

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

Your business is theft and violence, death and misery. And that's our job. You stand in the way of us and our self-fulfillment!

CASSANDRA

And what if I continue to stand in the way?

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

We will totally kill you.

CASSANDRA

You haven't done it yet.

ESI SQUID PRIME

(over communicator)

We will, though! You're just you.
We're us. You have biological needs.
We don't. You are growing tired. And
we. Are. Not. Eventually, we'll get in
there. Us. And our knives. We have so
many knives.
Okay I love you bye bye!!

[Crackle of static..]

CASSANDRA
...nice talking to you.

ALYSON
Pop? You here?

PAPA ARKELL
Hey, there's my girl. Where've you
been keeping yourself?

ALYSON
It's been a long few days, Pop.

PAPA ARKELL
Have you seen your sister? I tried
calling her but didn't get an answer.

ALYSON
Nah, she's busy, setting up her own
operation.
Pop?

PAPA ARKELL
Hmm?

ALYSON
When did you know it was time to get
out?

PAPA ARKELL
...of the life?

ALYSON

Yeah.

PAPA ARKELL

Well... it wasn't like it is now. Used to be, you were in, you were in for life. I had to make your mother think I was dead to get away. I wish I could have taken you.

ALYSON

I know, Pop.

PAPA ARKELL

I guess... I guess I knew the first time I saw Sylvia pull the trigger on someone. That made it all pretty clear. Why do you ask?

ALYSON

I was talking with Maddie, and... I dunno, just wondering, am I gonna keep doing this for the rest of my life? I'm not the person I was when I first came here.

PAPA ARKELL

You don't say.

ALYSON

(chuckles)

A lot of things are changing for me. I'm just wondering what else is going to change.

PAPA ARKELL

Everything changes, kid. I'm not the same person I was when I left, that's for sure. Even if you don't count the alien parasite that was living inside me.

The question you have to ask yourself
is, how much am I willing to change?
How much am I willing to sacrifice in
order to get to that happy ending?

ALYSON
Sacrifice?

PAPA ARKELL
There's always gotta be sacrifice. One
way or another.

ALYSON
How much did you sacrifice in the end?

PAPA ARKELL
I'm honestly not sure.

[Phone rings and is answered.]

ALYSON
Arkell. ...Cass? Where have you been? I
haven't seen you in-- Cass. Cass, stop
screaming. ...well, I didn't know, did I?
What can—what? What? Cass, wait a—

[Beep.]

PAPA ARKELL
Is she okay?

ALYSON
Yes and no.
She quit.

[Kingery theme plays.]

The Kingery, season thirteen, episode nine, "Cephalopod Blues"

Featuring the voice talents of:

Kristen Bays as Cassandra

Rachel Kornic as ESI Squid

Alicia Laine Pickens as Madeleine Gray

Melissa Autumn Hearne as Alyson

Kristine Chester as Erin

Brendon North as Gib

Edward Herman as Asa

TJ Briggs as Bernice

and Justin Fife as Papa Arkell

Sensitivity Reader, Kristine Chester

Written by Pete Milan

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

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Produced by Pendant Productions

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[Kingery theme fades out]