

SEMINAR EPISODE 109: THE APPLE PIE PARADOX

**{SEMINAR Intro Music 0:00-1:16}**

NARRATOR: There was once a ship called The Ark of Humanity where the last known remnants of Earth's people were instructed in the history of human civilization. Confined and categorized, none could leave...but one made a daring escape. Cut loose from all she knew, with a holographic student as her only companion, she crash-landed on a nearby planet: the planet of the Zarrak.

Now as a new lifeform, the half-human, half-Zarrak survivor meets an organization of galactic species and accepts the job of continuing to teach about humanity. This time, not to other humans, but to aliens from every corner of the galaxy.

Seminar episode 109: "The Apple Pie Paradox."

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**WRAPPER #1 BY V.C. MORRISON**

NEW'S CLASSROOM

{Subtle keyboard music}

GALOORM: (Deep voice) Oh, they're late.

GRILL: (Sarcastic) And that's Galoorm saying that. Anyone else find that absolutely hilarious?

LIMIN: I'm worried. Rektek Olun sounded pretty mad. Maybe they were-

GRILL: Fired?

LIMIN: I was going to say eaten, Grill. But that works, too.

HEX: Footsteps analogous with Teacher New approaching.

[New walks in, right to their desk and sits on a corner.]

NEW: Hi, everyone! Sorry I'm late. It's...been a bit of a day.

BOB: Where's Thomas?

NEW: He's busy, Bob. So, let's...let's um...

LIMIN: Are you all right, New?

NEW: Fine, Limin! A little hungry, but...oh! That's it! Food. Let's talk about how humans think of and write about food. We can start with...

[New taps keys on her desk console, which beeps as she tries to bring up a story.]

NEW: Sorry. Thomas usually handles...ah! Here. "Grandma's Apple Pie."

**{Seminar segue music 2:20}**

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**THE GRANDMA'S APPLE PIE PARADOX By Adam Blanford**

FALLACY RESTAURANT

{Soft jazz music}

{Patrons chattering, glasses and dishes clinking}

BERWIN: I hope you had a great meal here at Fallacy, where our cuisine defies explanation!

PATRON 1: Uh, Berwin, is it? We'd like to try one of your desserts! They're all the rage on non-temporal media.

BERWIN: Tonight, we've a lovely chocolate souffle made with beans from the last cacao tree, cultivated in 2368-

PATRON 2: We've heard amazing things about your apple pie!

BERWIN: Oh...that's a 'specialty dessert' so you'll have to sign a waiver absolving Fallacy of changes in the timeline as a result.

PATRON 1: Is it baked in the heat of the Big Bang or something?

BERWIN: No, that's the Baked Alaska. Our culinary temporal physicists searched the timestream to find the most perfect

apple pie ever. Temperature, sweetness, flaky crust, and the rarest form of apple on Earth: The Bardsley apple from the UK.

PATRON 2: Sounds marvelous!

BERWIN: Some staff are "Pie-stafarians" who worship it as a deity. It's perfection incarnate. Believe me, I know pies. You could say it's in my blood...have you ever had a faint memory you thought was important? Something about apple pie keeps nagging at me...

PATRON 1: But why the waiver?

BERWIN: This pie is famous for its perfection. It's stopped wars and spawned religions. But when we pull it into the future and consume it, we remove its perfection from the timeline. But because it was consumed and it's no longer famous, it exists in the past and we can go back in time to consume it-

PATRON 1: The Grandfather paradox.

BERWIN: The "Apple Pie Paradox." It's in all the scientific journals and back of our menu. Our paradox shielding gives us some protection from changes in the timeline...

PATRON 2: We'll each have a slice.

BERWIN: Sign here then. [Scribbling as they sign] Coming right up.

[Berwin walks away]

BERWIN: (sighs) Tracy, two slices of apple pie, please.

TRACY: Uh-uh. I'm short-handed. Two staff are out sick. I don't have anyone to spare. Look, I need you to take care of it.

BERWIN: Me? I'm not trained in procurement.

TRACY: If they can afford the Paradox Apple Pie, I can afford to look the other way while you get it.

**THE GRANDMA'S APPLE PIE PARADOX By Adam Blanford**

BERWIN: Ugh. Fine.

TRACY: Thank you! The time portal is next to the paradox shield controls. It's already set. Slip in, grab the pie, get back. And *don't* snoop around. Ignore *everything* but the pie. Changes in the timeline could result.

BERWIN: (sighs) Fine.

[Berwin enters commands into a terminal. Time portal activates]

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JACUSE RESTAURANT, 2013

[Berwin materializes]

BERWIN: (quietly, to himself) A restaurant, huh? Wow, these old kitchens were primitive. There's the pie! Oooh, it smells amazing. (pause) This place is...familiar. Like-like I've seen it in old holophotos or something...Oh crap!

[Clattering as Berwin hides; Footsteps as Grandma enters]

GRANDMA: (humming quietly)

[Berwin Jr. enters]

GRANDMA: The critic will be here soon. This pie is my ticket to the big time! Guard it 'til I call for it, all right, Berwin dear? Can you do that for me?

BERWIN JR.: Will do, Grandma!

[Footsteps as Grandma leaves]

{Mysterious music}

BERWIN: (quietly) Why is this place so familiar? Let's see...

[Computer noises as Berwin accesses his computer]

BERWIN: Oh. My. God. Now I know why Tracy didn't want me to snoop! This restaurant belongs to my ancestor! Fallacy's been stealing *her pie*! And the echoes...I'm remembering the timeline changes! Bastards!

{Fast big band music}

BERWIN JR.: Hello? Who's there?

BERWIN: Crap!

BERWIN JR.: Stranger! Stay away! Don't make me...call for Grandma!

BERWIN: No need to be drastic. Uh...I'm with the Pie Police. Yes! I'm here to make sure that Grandma's pie is safe until she serves it. She needs to...uh...fulfill her destiny.

BERWIN JR.: Really?

BERWIN: See the uniform?

BERWIN JR.: You look like a waiter.

BERWIN: Perfect cover for the Pie Police. But Grandma must never ever know, okay?

BERWIN JR.: Uh...

BERWIN: Okaygoodtalkseeyoubye!

[Running footsteps as Berwin approaches the time portal, dematerializes]

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FALLACY RESTAURANT

[Patrons chattering in the background]

TRACY: Oh my god-Where's the pie? The patrons are getting restless. (pauses) And this bitch yelled at me!

[Berwin walks, enters commands into a terminal]

TRACY: N-n-no, Berwin, you're shutting down the paradox shielding!

[Alarms sound]

BERWIN: My great-great-great-something grandma made that pie. Fallacy took it and deprived her of fame and fortune. I'm restoring things.

TRACY: No! Stop! The timeline-!

BERWIN: Sorry. Fallacy's gonna be under new management now.

[Paradox shield collapses; time resets]

BERWIN: Hi! I'm Berwin, owner and manager of Fallacy. How may I help you today?

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**{Seminar segue music 8:17}**

**WRAPPER #2 BY V.C. MORRISON**

NEW'S CLASSROOM

{Upbeat guitar music}

LIMIN: What's an apple pie?

NEW: Oh, right. You wouldn't know that. It's a pie made with apples. It's a very common fruit in many regions on Earth. In

some areas, an apple pie made by a matronly sort of relative is symbolic of the spirit of being "home."

LIMIN: Oh! So the main character really did go home, literally and figuratively.

BOB: I knew that! About apples. I wish I could taste a real one. I keep trying to make up these cosplay apples. They just don't taste the same, probably! What if I'm spot on? What if my apples are perfect? Like, what if it tastes like the real thing, and I have no idea because I have no basis of comparison? Ugh.

GALOORM: So the apple pie was a life-forming as well as life-changing experience for this human. Interesting.

NEW: Isn't it? Let's move on to our second story...there! "Time Warp."

[New taps keys on their desk console.]

**{Seminar segue music 9:26}**

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**TIME WARP by Lisa Michaud**

ON THE SIDEWALK

{Upbeat music}

CHRIS: How about this place? (singing) "Let's do the Time Warp." Maybe it's themed on Rocky Horror?

ALEX: The decor is a little too mundane for that - on the outside, at least. No menu outside to look at...and no windows.

CHRIS: It's an adventure! Look, we've done everything else this month; I'm in the mood to try something different.

ALEX: (skeptical) All right... but if it's nasty inside, I'm leaving. And if it makes us sick, I'm throwing up in YOUR shoes, Chris.

CHRIS: Thanks SO MUCH for that image just as we're about to eat.

[Door opens]

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INSIDE TIME WARP

{Groovy music}

[Patron chatter, electronic noises]

HOST: Welcome to the Time Warp. Two for dinner?

CHRIS: Does it pass inspection, Alex? Can we stay?

ALEX: Um.... yeah, I think it's OK. Clean, if still kinda generic and boring. No offense.

HOST: None taken. I'll take you to your seats.

[Footsteps as they approach their seats. Chairs sliding out. Strange electronic noises in background]

CHRIS: So, what kind of food do you serve here? There wasn't a menu outside.

HOST: We don't have a menu.

ALEX: Oh, is it one of those places where there aren't any choices?

Everyone gets the same meal for the evening?

HOST: Oh, no, you can have anything you want. This is your table here.

ALEX How does that work? Surely you can't make ANYTHING.  
(beat) Um, how come no one here is eating anything? And - what are they wearing?

[Electronic noises]



**TIME WARP by Lisa Michaud**

HOST: Those are the patented Time Warp headsets. If you'll take a seat, you'll see that there is one at each place setting. Fully sterilized between customers, of course. Here at the Time Warp, we serve you any meal you have had before. All you need to do is to don one of these, and then think of your favorite food memory. The headset will focus on that memory, and then bring you back to it - and you will experience it again.

ALEX: This entire restaurant doesn't involve actually eating? You just REMEMBER eating?

CHRIS: Must be great for dieting.

HOST: No, you will actually experience that same meal again. Once you think of the meal

[Electronic noises]

CHRIS: (interrupting) Holy shit - that woman just appeared out of nowhere!

HOST: She must have finished her meal. And if you watch that couple over there, who just donned their headsets

[Electronic noises]

ALEX What - where did they go?

HOST: They're starting their meals, of course.

ALEX: I thought you said that you REMEMBER your favorite food, and -

HOST:

And you experience it again. Not as a memory. You go back to that moment, and you get to eat it again. Hence the name of the restaurant.

CHRIS: Fuuuuuuuuuuck.

HOST: So, if you'll just have a seat and consider what you are interested in tonight, I see that someone else needs to be shown to a table. You can pick up the headsets at your own convenience.

[Host walks away]

CHRIS: (laughs) Time travel. Time warp. I picked a good restaurant, yes I did!

ALEX: World-changing science fiction technology. To eat food.

CHRIS: To eat your favorite food from your favorite memory. Can you think of a better application for it?

ALEX: Are you seriously thinking of trying it?

CHRIS: Alex, are you seriously thinking of *not* trying it? Look around. Look at the faces of the people coming back. Do you see anyone who isn't happy?

ALEX: No. They look... They look really pleased. What...What would you pick?

CHRIS: Are you kidding? Has to be my dad's apple pie. I haven't had - I mean, I haven't any like it since he's been gone.

ALEX: Apple pie isn't dinner.

CHRIS: I'm an adult, and I can eat dessert for dinner if I want to. How about you?

ALEX: I don't know. Maybe... maybe one of those chili dogs. You know, from the cart on Main Street, that one summer?

CHRIS: What?? We never knew why those things didn't KILL us from the lack of food safety practices. Why that?

ALEX: Life was good then. It was simple. My parents were together, and things hadn't...you know.

{Quirky music}

CHRIS: Yeah.

ALEX: Do you think you'll see him? Your dad?

CHRIS: I hope so. Ready?

[Alex and Chris grab headsets]

**TIME WARP by Lisa Michaud**

ALEX: No. But... but I'm going to do it anyway.

ALEX: Yeah. See you when we're back. And, Chris - say hi to your dad for me.

[Electronic noises]

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{Seminar segue music 14:18}

**WRAPPER #3 BY V.C. MORRISON**

NEW'S CLASSROOM

{Synth music}

GALOORM: There's that apple pie again.

GRILL: What's "Rocky Horror?"

NEW: (Laughing) Oh, that's a subject for a whole other class! Maybe a whole curriculum. What did you think of the story?

HEX: Posit: The point of the restaurant is not to experience the food but the events surrounding the food.

NEW: Yes! Food is very much a part of human culture. There are festivals and holy rites surrounding food. Experiencing the same meal again would mean experiencing what you encountered during the meal again. Is this something you'd want to try?

HEX: Food is of little importance to us beyond the sustenance it provides.

BOB: I would! In fact, our people have something like it: memory patches. You can relive little slices of your life. But you have to have recorded them first. You can sell them, too.

NEW: Wow. Porn must be amazing on your world!

BOB: Oooh, what's porn?

[New enters commands]

NEW: Uh...moving on to our last story..."The Things We Do For Love."

**{Seminar segue music 15:34}**

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**THE THINGS WE DO FOR LOVE by Sarah Palmero**

{Nighttime music}

TALYSS: If you love him, you'll eat that.

ADRIA: *That's* not fair You know I love him. He does too.

TALYSS: (playful) Maybe. *Maybe*. But that doesn't change the rules. If marriage, and a happy one, is the outcome you desire, you must make that choice now, in this moment. Delay too long and the opportunity passes you by. Now is guaranteed. Tomorrow may not be so you must follow the rules.

ADRIA: The rules. The rules. Right.

TALYSS: You agreed to them when he started courting --

ADRIA: When we started *dating*. "Courting is so stiff and outdated.

TALYSS: (patiently) We *are* an ancient people.

ADRIA: And *I'm* from Detroit. So sue me for wanting to get out and take a chance on something new.

TALYSS: Do you regret your choices?

ADRIA: What, falling in love with a space man? Being treated like a princess? Learning how to be a queen? No. [Food squirms wetly]Not until now, anyway. Do they *have* to squirm like that?

TALYSS: It's a good sign! Enthusiastic motion is a sign of a fortunate marriage.

ADRIA: (under her breath) *That's* what she said.

TALYSS: Yes?

ADRIA: (chuckling) Never mind. (A deep breath) All right, here we go.

{Quirky music}

ADRIA: Oh my god, it's got my tongue! Talyss, what do I do? I can't chew like this!

TALYSS: Think calming thoughts.

ADRIA: With my *mouth*?!

TALYSS: (proper, not amused) No, no, listen. Take a breath. With your nose.

ADRIA: It's not gonna crawl up there?

TALYSS: It will not. I give you my sincerest word.

ADRIA: Okay...

TALYSS: Good. Now. Calmly...Are you in pain?

ADRIA: Uh-uh.

TALYSS: Are you afraid?

ADRIA: Well...

TALYSS: Do you have any real reason to fear? You have not been injured. You are much larger than your prey and you--

ADRIA: Do you have to call it prey?

TALYSS: Fine. You are much larger than your meal. And *you* have all that you need to complete the task at hand and in your control.

ADRIA: (mouth still full) You're not really helping.

TALYSS: Adria.

ADRIA: Fine. Okay. I'm in control.

TALYSS: Yes. Now. Breathe calmly, and chew.

[Crunch of a shell]

**THE THINGS WE DO FOR LOVE by Sarah Palmero**

TALYSS: Better?

ADRIA: I...guess. I mean, I can move my tongue.

TALYSS:Yes. And?

ADRIA: And what?

TALYSS: Was it to your satisfaction?

ADRIA: Seriously?

TALYSS: Well, if that one didn't please you, we can try again...

ADRIA: No! This one was...perfectly fine. It was great! No complaints.

TALYSS: Excellent. Then we should move on to the next course.

ADRIA: Next...course?

TALYSS: Yes. The fruits of fertility.

[Lid lifted off the platter. Chirping of alien birds]

TALYSS: Each one that you consume ensures a healthy offspring. Please try to eat at least two as a matter of security.

ADRIA: So...these are supposed to be, like, our future kids?

TALYSS: Not entirely accurate. They are representative.

{More quirky music}

ADRIA: Eight. I get that. What if I don't want to eat any. Can't we just, you know, hope for the best the natural way?

TALYSS: We are an ancient people and the customs of our society have served us well. If you refuse, well...I suppose I can speak to Prince Dayru, but...you said you loved him. I've seen the way you smile when you're together. Have I missed something?

ADRIA: Mo! No. This is just...a lot. Are they going to keep making noise after I...you know?

TALYSS: Oh, enthusiastic motion is a sign of -

ADRIA: Okay! I get it! Please don't say that again. (pause)  
The things we do for love. Come on, cutie. Come to Mama.

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**{Seminar segue music 21:26}**

**WRAPPER #4 BY V.C. MORRISON**

NEW'S CLASSROOM

{Quiet music}

GRILL: Eww. A love story.

LIMIN: You clearly weren't paying attention if that's all you got from that.

GRILL: It was boring, too?

HEX: This unit posits that classmate Grill is correct.

LIMIN: You two really missed the point. It wasn't a story about love at all! It was about sacrifice and making sacrifices for someone you've fallen in love with!

GRILL: Like I said. A love story.

LIMIN: And second, it wasn't boring! Every time she had to eat something new, it was breaking another barrier. Testing who she was. Each taste was a journey!

GRILL: Well then, I guess the story just wasn't to my taste.

HEX: This unit detects humor in Grill's statement. Ha ha ha.

GRILL: See? Hex gets me.

BOB: You two should totally high five!

GRILL: High what?

LIMIN: (Groaning) Unbelievable.

GALOORM: I thought the story was kind of gross. In an exciting way.

LIMIN: Thank you. I'm glad you were paying attention, Galoorm! I think.

BOB: It made me hungry.

NEW: And I've kind of lost my appetite. Well-oh, look at the time. I better go. If you have questions, save them for next time. Bye, everyone!

[Light footsteps as New runs out]

{Ominous music}

GALOORM: There's something going on.

GRILL: Definitely. Where did they say Thomas was?

LIMIN: Busy. I wonder if the school has finally decided what to do with him.

GRILL: Yeah. I thought it was odd that an AI was just free to wander about the place.

BOB: Who wants an early lunch? Oh, come on! Guys, come on, let's go!

GRILL: I'm in.

GALOORM: I'll catch up with you.

GRILL: Somehow, I doubt that. Coming, Limin?

LIMIN: No, I think I'm going to do some research. You go ahead. Have fun!

GRILL: Suit yourself. What about you, insect farm?

HEX: This unit shall accompany you.

BOB: (trailing off) I recently heard about veganism ...

[Bob, Grill, and Hex walk out.]

LIMIN: Busy, huh? Let's see just how busy you really are, Thomas...



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**{Seminar outro theme 23:38-25:53}**

ANNOUNCER:

Featuring the voice talents of: Bridget Guziewicz as New, Sarah Palmero as Limin, Eric Valdez as Bob Johnson, Fae Holiday as Grill, Brady Hendricks as Galoorm, and Em Smith as Hex.

In "The Grandma's Apple Pie Paradox," Josh Click as Berwin, Aubrey Lima as Berwin Jr., Sharon Grünwald was Grandma Juan Cruz III was Tracy, Morgan Keller as Patron 1 and April Kingrose as Patron 2. The story was written by Adam Blanford.

In "Time Warp," Jenna Rose as Chris, Aubrey Lima as Alex, and Max Newland as the Host. The story was written by Lisa Michaud.

In "The Things We Do for Love," Justine Leah Hince as Talyss and Lauren Kong as Adria. The story was written by Sarah Palmero.

Directed by Adam Blanford. Shorts edited by Tilly Bridges. Wrapper written by V.C. Morrison.

Seminar theme by V.C. Morrison. All other music by Josh Molen at TheTunePeddler.com. Produced by Pendant Productions.

Seminar co-created by Kathryn Pryde and Tilly Bridges.

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