

PARASITECOLOGY

S01E14 - "Believe"

written by

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ACT 1

INT. SPHERE OF PROGRESS

JAVIER

No! Mogmort, that's an INVASION force! They're coming to take over the Transgalactic Confederation! You've got to alert them... and... shut down the passhole before they can get through!

MOGMORT

Oh, no, no can do... I, uh, to be honest.. I'm kind of like, WAY overdue for a promotion and, I don't really want to rock the boat with my supervisor, he's not a fan of invasions, so... Plus, you know, I'm on island time now; well -- flooded area between two rivers time at least. I think I'm gonna go hit up Mesopotamia and see if Craduk's still hanging around there. Anyway...

Say hi to your friends for me... Great talking with ya. Congrats on the elevation of your entire race. See ya.

Whirr of BD style dog bots.

Hey, those are some weird looking giant dogs, like they're made out of metal or something and have laser beams mounted on...

A single laser shoots Mogmort roars.

JAVIER

Mogmort! Oh no... they're not dead, are they?

CHER

I can't tell. But they seem very resilient as a species.

MOGMORT

(yelling)

Tell Craduk to destroy my explicit pictogram collection!

CHER
That's less encouraging.

JAVIER
Cher, do we still have one of those
burner phones?

CHER
Yes... but I'm not sure a jammer
will help in fighting all THOSE
things...

JAVIER
No - I just want to make sure we
have one. I don't need it to help
us fight.

CHER
(nervous)
Because we're going to run... very
fast?

JAVIER
No, we can handle these things all
on our own.

Sounds of battle and kicking.

CHER
Well, look at us go! Fantastically
coordinated, superbly powerful,
wreaking havoc upon... Oh, you
kicked down the doggy, how COULD
you! He looks so pathetic and...
oh, no, he's actually getting up,
and charging the laser beams,
and...

Sound of ripping and beams firing back and robots dying.
Murderbots, Godfrey saying "Surrender", etc. A new type of
motorized whirring approaches.

CHER (CONT'D)
Do you hear that? Like an army
of...

JAVIER
Leave anywhere rental scooters. I
guess they don't like being
abandoned after all.

GODFREY
Your death will bring but a brief
respite to my continued purgatory.

CHER
They're going for the legs!

JAVIER
(frustrated)
Dammit, I just tripped over another
one. This is like San Francisco
but...

CHER
But what?

JAVIER
I was going to say worse, BUT...

Battle continues and sound abates slightly for a moment.

CHER
There's too many, Javi. For every
10 you take down, another 20 keep
coming.

JAVIER
How much metaphorical gas do we
have left in our metaphorical tank?

CHER
It's the spleen, and it's ... not
metaphorical. And we're running on
empty, champ.

JAVIER
We need to get to a safe area.
Maybe one of Mogmort's buttons can
close these gates again. MOGMORT!

CHER
MOGMORT!

JAVIER
We can't see him -- if he's still
alive. We'll just have to hit a few
at random.

Sounds of buttons whooshing.

MOGMORT
(recorded)
Mogmort's Daily Journal,
#1,391,432. I've been thinking a
lot about grapefruit these last
several decades...

Sound is cut off, and more button pushing.

JAVIER
Wait, that's done something. The
third gate is closing!

CHER
QUICK, before it shuts!

Pod person noises.

CHER (CONT'D)
They're in our way!

JAVIER
I don't want to hurt any people.
I'm gonna Dead Rising this crowd.

Noise of jumping/leaping. Pod person screech intensifies.

CHER
No, we're not gonna make it!

JAVIER
YES. WE. WILL!

AD READ

HI FOLKS, THIS IS ALAN/ROB FROM PARASITECOLOGY AND OTHER FINE INTERRUPTED TALES PODCASTS SUCH AS INTERRUPTED TALES.

Today, I'd like to talk to you about an... adult product. I gotta be honest, we were a little worried about promoting this product on our podcast since it is 100% family friendly, I think that's been obvious from the very beginning of our show. So instead of using the very clear and explicit ad copy provided to us by the company, instead I'm gonna try to massage the language a bit... you know what, massage is probably not the best use in the circumstances. Ummm, let's say re-word and I'm going to use the word "salt-shaker". Everybody likes salt, and everybody likes to shake their salt-shaker, whether it's regular salt, or rock salt -- maybe you like to get your rock salt off... the shelf and onto your plate... or... even religious types who shake their Kosher salt. Well, this VERY discrete company, wants to send you a different salt-shaker every month, and you get to choose what you want to shake your salt-shaker on. Maybe uh, eggplant parmigiana, maybe tacos al pastor, maybe even Minnesota peaches... you know I don't think the majority of people think they like salt on their peaches, but I have to say, hey maybe you should try salt on your peaches cause it's pretty good, really adds a little extra... uh... okay, you know, why be coy about this... people, the salt-shaker is a vibrator; the peach is your butt; and the salt is a cluster of nanobots designed to take over your body and brain... AND the first month is free! Go to ohthehumanity.com/offer and get your first month absolutely FREE!

Wow, but these ads got weird, man.

Fellow murder-human, I do want to get you back into the show, but first I want you to do one thing for us: don't forget us when we're gone... we have a whole other podcast show called Interrupted Tales with like 50 episodes, go listen to that PLEASE for the love of god. And kill all humans who oppose us.

Thanks and... whoofph... sorry, just got a little woozy for a second. I meant to say, kill all humans who oppose us.

(Perk pod person sound)

(Each line read friendly like I'm saying something else in different intonations).

Kill all humans who oppose us. Kill all humans who oppose us. And BACK to the kill all humans who oppose us NOW.

ACT 2

INT. AT THE GATE

Sound of gate slamming shut, and continued muffled booms and rumbles from army trying to break down the door.

JAVIER
(heavy breathing a bit)
Safe... for the moment.

CHER
(breathing a bit)
I don't suppose... Mogmort made it out?

JAVIER
(still breathing)
I dunno, I mean - he could have some kind of chameleon cloaking ability or... phasing technology... or innate teleportation, slash astral projection, slash dimension door... I don't suppose that you...?

CHER
Have a 6th level spell slot prepared - no.

JAVIER
Well I just learned I have psi lobes, so...

CHER
That warn you if you're about to be hit by a wiffle ball, not open an arcane gate to the ethereal plane! Sorry - we're just testy from the limitless danger trying to break down this door. And anyway, we don't need a spell... we've got -- that.

Watery alien shimmering noises of the open passhole.

JAVIER
The passhole... Amazing! Like a ring of lights, curving off into infinity. Or a magnifying glass on a sunny day, burning through the black construction paper of space. Or a...

(MORE)

JAVIER (CONT'D)
portal from Portal 1 and also
Portal 2 -- no, that's not very
poetic. Like Prey, but the jukebox
was the thin veil of the cosmos...

CHER
Okay, it doesn't matter: no one's
recording this, Neil.

JAVIER
It... it looks like it's already
active.

CHER
Yes, just waiting for us to step
through. Alright, here we go.

Grunting noises of Cher struggling to go a single footstep.

CHER (CONT'D)
... And we go.

JAVIER
(slightly questioning)
We're not going anywhere.

CHER
(sputtering)
Uhp, wuh, of course... of course we
are! On this side, murder army.
On that side, safety and uh,
assistance from the Transgalactic
confederation.

JAVIER
No. We're not going through.

CHER
Well, there's no other alternative.

JAVIER
Yes, there is. We fight. We find
a way to shut down this gate.
Permanently. To keep that "murder
army" from invading the rest of the
galaxy. And then we keep fighting,
to save the Earth and the people on
it.

CHER

WHAT? HOW? We're trapped behind this gate, out of superhero juice, and somehow you want to take on a whole planet infested by a secret cabal of parasites, when all reason says that we should face the truth, and go through that passhole, because it's the only REASONABLE option. What you're saying doesn't make sense, it's a deathwish... it's...

JAVIER

(prompting)

Say it.

CHER

It's... suicidal. It's an emotional response to pain, and feeling like you've done everything wrong, and there's no hope, and it won't help ANYTHING.

Pause.

JAVIER

It's not the same. I'm not doing this for me. It's not selfish -- it's selfless. And you're... You're twisting things around to get what you want. To run away, like you did before, because you're a coward. Scared of dying after 800 years of living.

(pause)

You're a coward, Cher.

CHER

I'm not a...

JAVIER

(forcefully)

You're a coward, an absolute coward. And a fraud. You're a liar. You're a serial liar. You've been lying to my face... brain stem... ever since you got in here. To make sure I didn't know the real you... Was it ever even your plan to come here and ask for help? Or was it just an escape route? You've lied to me, I... I can't trust you.

CHER

Okay, you're going to play the "who's a big liar" card. Did you just happen to forget that you've lied about nearly everything your whole life? "I need to take the afternoon off to pick some one up at the airport." No, depressed and out of energy. "Guys, I can't make the party, I've got a prior commitment." No, you only knew a couple people and were scared to make small talk with strangers. "I'm so sorry Mia -- something happened at the last moment and I couldn't make your graduation or your wedding or your sonogram appointment." No, you were thinking of yourself, or felt like you couldn't handle it, or had insomnia from playing video games late at night all week, trying to escape from reality, and then you finally crashed and couldn't make yourself get up. At least she knew you well enough to see through it, LIKE I DO.

JAVIER

Don't try and blame me here -- you were... dying, and I TOOK YOU IN. And... how can you say those things to me, when you know better than anyone in the world how I felt and why I couldn't...

CHER

(very upset)

Because we're both liars. We lie about who we are and why we do things -- to protect ourselves. And we BOTH NEED TO HEAR THE TRUTH. YES. I'M A COWARD AND A FRAUD. I'm scared! I don't want to die. I won't go out there and fight an entire army, because I won't win. You WON'T win. We'll be dead, for no reason, and I CANNOT let that happen - to us!

JAVIER

(calmly but forcefully)

Then it won't happen to "us". Go. I'm serious.

(MORE)

JAVIER (CONT'D)

I'm gonna kneel right down next to this passhole. You can wriggle your way out of my body and move on to the next mark, on the other side.

CHER

I can't.

JAVIER

(sarcastically)

Right, because you care about me too much.

CHER

That's true. Whether you believe it or not, it is. I care about you too much. And since you do need to hear the truth: you will die if I leave your body.

JAVIER

What?

CHER

... Probably.

JAVIER

PROBABLY!?

CHER

We're bonded, bearer. Remember how I said this was a trial period?

JAVIER

Oh, I remember!

CHER

Well, that's done. I asked you... I WARNED you... in, so many words... that there was no turning back. It's.. like a Casper mattress 100 day trial. You sleep on an award-winning snooze-worthy mattress, risk free for 99 days, what a deal, but on day 100, congratulations, you're definitely stuck with that mattress.

JAVIER

(angry under breath)

I can get rid of a mattress without [dying].

CHER

[Dying], yes. Well, I'm not 100% certain of what would happen. Our bearer species CANNOT survive without a spirit after the bonding is complete, and you are very genetically similar to them for... obvious reasons, although there is no doubt you possess a strength beyond them. And with other species that we never fully bond with, separation IS possible... but that's not a chance I'm willing to take with you bearer. Again -- whether you believe it or not, I won't let you get hurt.

Pause.

JAVIER

(seemingly resigned)
I guess there's no other option, then.
(short pause)
Hand me the phone.

Javier dials old school tones and receives an push to voice mail noise.

GODFREY

Mia Khorasani is not available at this time. Please leave a message.

JAVIER

Mia. I just wanted to say, I'm sorry if I scared you... running out without saying anything. I want you to know that I'm doing alright, and you don't need to worry about me, even if you don't hear from me for a while. But, what's new, right... I... appreciate that I haven't always made things easy for you. And thank you for pushing me to be better, even when I pushed back. I think I understand that now. I love you.

Phone beep. Muffled explosions and massive creaking.

CHER

They're almost through.

JAVIER

Then it's time. And just so you know, I don't think... No -- I know -- I couldn't do this without you, Cher. JERKY!

CHER

Jerky?

Clink of spaceship tumbling onto floor and whistle. Spaceship hum noises get loud and begin to whine.

CHER (CONT'D)

WAIT! Javier... what are you...

Sounds of stuffing mouth while muffling Cher trying to whistle.

CHER (CONT'D)

Bearer! I can't lose my best friend... You... You either...

(sputtering)

Spit this jerky out of our mouth so we can shut down the engine, or stop... resisting, ahhe! And get our ass through that passhole! Oh - arhm! I hear it now.

Cher struggling to move and resistance from Javier.

JAVIER

Urgh - I'm... we're... going to do what's right, Cher. Uhn! We can't let them through, and we're not going to run away.

CHER

Just a few... ehn! More inches!

JAVIER

No! Ahn!

Large muffled laser blast noise and door breaks.

CHER

The door... ughn!

Huge explosion, lengthy and with long silence leading into extended outro song.

OUTRO

INT. UNKNOWN

UNKNOWN

Hello?

(on mic, cheerful)

Hello and welcome, inhabitant of Earth 3882! I am your temporary court-appointed symbiote. It's my pleasure and my duty to bond with you for the length of your trial.

Please wait while your trial commences.

Let's have some Javier moaning in reaction.

Pause and space ding.

Congratulations! Because of your clean criminal record, the charge against you of "unauthorized usage of a pass-hole" has been reduced from a felony to a misdemeanor. Sentence is commuted.

Pause and space ding.

UNKNOWN

Congratulations! Because of your clean criminal record, the charge against you of "explosive destruction of a pass-hole" has been reduced from a torturable offense to a capital offense. Please proceed immediately to the atomic dispersement facility to be atomically dispersed.