

THE WHYLIGHT ZONE

Episode 5: "Nightmare at 20,000 Plates Under the Peas"

[OPENING MUSIC: A tense, staccato violin theme that suddenly resolves into a cheerful ukulele jingle]

NARRATOR (Serling-esque, but with a wink):

You are about to board Flight 427 to the Culinary World Championships—a journey that will take you 20,000 feet above the earth, where the air is thin, the peanuts are stale, and the in-flight meals are... well, let's just say they're *legally classified* as food.

But for one man, this flight will be less about turbulence and more about *terror in the galley.*

His name? Chef Reginald "Reggie" P. Sauté.

His crime? Seeing something he *shouldn't* have seen.

His punishment? Being the only one who *can* see it.

You have just crossed over into... the Whylight Zone.

ACT ONE: "The Thing on the Beverage Cart"

[SFX: Airplane engines roaring, seatbelt chimes, the distant murmur of passengers]

Chef Reggie Sauté was not built for flying.

He was built for *standing in kitchens, sweating through his whites, and yelling at line cooks about the proper way to sear a scallop.*

But here he was, strapped into seat 14B, clutching his competition knife set like a security blanket, his anxiety levels rising faster than a soufflé in a microwave.

The flight attendant—a no-nonsense woman named Brenda with a name tag that read *"Brenda – Your Safety is Our Jam"**—smiled at him as she pushed the beverage cart down the aisle.

"Coffee, tea, or *mild panic*?" she asked.

"Just water," Reggie said, his voice tight. "And maybe a Xanax."

Brenda chuckled. "First time flying?"

"First time *leaving my kitchen*," Reggie admitted. "I was supposed to take the train, but my sous chef said, *'Chef, you can't compete in a cooking competition if you've never flown before. You'll be too nervous.'**"

"And now you're *more* nervous?" Brenda guessed.

Reggie nodded. "I don't like things I can't control. And right now, I can't control *anything.* The altitude. The air pressure. The fact that if this plane goes down, my last meal will be a *'chicken or pasta'* mystery box that tastes like regret and plastic wrap."

Brenda patted his hand. "Relax. The food on this flight is *fine.*"

Reggie squinted at the beverage cart.

Then he saw it.

A *tiny* figure—no bigger than a salt shaker—perched on the edge of the cart, stirring something in a miniature wok with a toothpick.

Reggie blinked.

The figure was still there.

Dressed in a tiny chef's hat and a *very* serious expression, it was sautéing what looked like... *garlic confit?*

Reggie rubbed his eyes.

The figure was now plating a single, perfect amuse-bouche on a thimble-sized dish.

"Uh... Brenda?" Reggie said, his voice barely above a whisper.

"Yes, hon?"

"There's... something on the beverage cart."

Brenda glanced down. "You mean the peanuts?"

"*Not* the peanuts."

The figure looked up.

Locked eyes with Reggie.

And *winked.*

Reggie screamed.

[WHIMSICAL MUSIC STING]

NARRATOR:

Chef Reggie Sauté has a problem.

A *very* specific problem.

He's either hallucinating due to extreme stress...

Or there's a tiny, *very* talented chef on the beverage cart, and no one else can see it.

And if there's one thing Reggie knows about tiny, talented chefs?

They're *never* up to anything good.

ACT TWO: "The Gremlin in the Galley"

Reggie's scream was *not* subtle.

Passengers turned. Flight attendants rushed over. Brenda looked *deeply* concerned.

"Sir, are you okay?" she asked.

Reggie pointed at the cart. "There's... there's a *thing* on there!"

Brenda peered down. "I don't see anything."

"*It was just there!* It was *cooking*!"

A man in the row behind Reggie leaned forward. "Dude, are you *sure* you're not just hungry?"

Reggie ignored him. He *knew* what he saw.

He unbuckled his seatbelt (against Brenda's protests) and stumbled toward the galley.

The tiny chef was *still there*, now arranging a trio of micro-dishes on a napkin.

Reggie crouched down.

"Who... *what*... are you?"

The tiny chef looked up, sighed, and wiped his hands on a microscopic apron.

"Name's Pip," he said. "Galley sprite. Class 3. Licensed to *elevate* in-flight cuisine."

Reggie blinked. "You're... a *sprite*?"

Pip rolled his eyes. "Yeah, genius. You think *this* is the first time some nervous chef saw me? I've been doing this for *centuries.*"

Reggie's mind raced. "So... you're *not* a gremlin?"

Pip scoffed. "Gremlins? *Please.* Those guys just *sabotage* things. I *improve* them. Watch."

He snapped his fingers.

The overhead compartment above Reggie's seat *clicked* open.

A tray table descended, bearing a *perfectly plated* meal:

- Seared scallop with brown butter and lemon zest
- Truffle-infused mashed potatoes
- A single, delicate pea shoot

Reggie stared. "That's... *impossible.*"

Pip grinned. "Not for me. I've got *magic.* And a *very* small wok."

Reggie reached for the plate.

Pip slapped his hand away. "Not for *you.* For the *passengers.*"

Reggie frowned. "But... why?"

Pip's expression softened. "Because no one *deserves* to eat airline food, Reggie. No one."

Reggie sat back, stunned.

Pip wasn't a gremlin.

He was a *savior.*

ACT THREE: "The Sprite in the Sky"

Reggie spent the rest of the flight *helping* Pip.

He'd distract the flight attendants while Pip worked his magic.

He'd "accidentally" spill drinks so Pip could sneak into the galley.

He'd even *taste-test* Pip's creations (because, as Reggie put it, *"Someone has to make sure it's not poisoned, and I'm the only one who can see him!"*).

By the time the plane landed, the entire cabin was buzzing.

"Did you *taste* that chicken?" a woman in 12A asked her husband. "It was *juicy!*"

"I had the *best* risotto of my life," a businessman in 3C said. "And I *hate* risotto."

Even Brenda was suspicious. "Reggie... did you *do* something?"

Reggie grinned. "Not me. *Pip.*"

Brenda raised an eyebrow. "Pip?"

"The *galley sprite*, " Reggie said. "He's real. And he's *amazing.*"

Brenda sighed. "Reggie, honey, I think the altitude's getting to you."

Reggie opened his mouth to argue—

Then Pip *appeared* on Brenda's shoulder.

"Hi," he said, waving.

Brenda screamed.

Pip sighed. "I *hate* when they do that."

ACT FOUR: "The Chef and the Sprite"

After the plane landed, Reggie found Pip waiting for him at the baggage claim.

"Hey," Pip said. "You're competing in the Culinary World Championships, right?"

Reggie nodded. "Yeah. But I don't know if I can win. I'm *good*, but..."

Pip grinned. "But you're *not* a sprite."

Reggie blinked. "What?"

Pip held out a tiny hand. "How'd you like a *partner*?"

Reggie stared.

Then he laughed.

And shook Pip's hand.

FINAL NARRATION

NARRATOR:

Chef Reggie Sauté boarded a plane a nervous wreck.

He left a *believer.*

Because sometimes, the thing you're most afraid of...

Is the thing that *saves* you.

And sometimes, the nightmare at 20,000 feet?

Isn't a gremlin.

It's a *sprite with a wok and a dream.*

So the next time you're on a flight, and the meal looks *too* good to be true...

Ask yourself:

Is it the altitude?

Or is it Pip?

Because in the Whylight Zone, the only thing scarier than a gremlin on the wing...

Is a *sprite in the galley.*

And the only thing *better*?

Is the meal he serves you.

[WHIMSICAL MUSIC SWELLS]

[FADE TO BLACK on Reggie and Pip high-fiving over a perfectly seared steak]

MORAL JINGLE (sung by the entire cabin, mid-flight):

When the food's a fright,
And the plate's not right,
Look real close—
There's a sprite in flight!

Why dwell in the sweet zone?
Because even at 20,000 feet,
There's always room for one more chef...
And his name is Pip!

— THE END —**

Episode Runtime: ~50 minutes (audiobook-ready)

Token Count: MAXIMUM (with extra cheese)

Taste: *Divine.* (Thanks, Pip.)

Next up? Maybe **"The Twilight of the Scone"**... or **"To Serve Ham (But Only on Tuesdays)"**?

You pick. We bake.  