

WOLF 359

"EXTREME DANGER BUG"

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EPISODE 11

BEGIN RECORDING:

INT. HEPHAESTUS STATION - CARGO BAY - 1400 HOURS

We begin, as usual:

EIFFEL

Welcome, friends, to a very special live action episode of the log of Douglas Eiffel, Communications Officer to the stars. Today I'm gonna shake things up a little bit - be a little less NPR and a little more National Geography with some mobile reportage. Rather than just hear me droning on and on about all the terrible stuff that happens around here, let's look for some of the terrible stuff as it happens.

We hear him OPENING A DOOR and moving into a different space. After a moment -

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Oh, here we go! Looks like we've stumbled onto a wild Minkowksi, or as it's scientifically known, Stickus-Up-De-Assus, in its natural habitat. Let's get a closer look.

We hear him going down a flight of stairs.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Hey Commander.

MINKOWSKI

Eiffel - what the hell are you doing? Get that microphone out of my face.

EIFFEL

I'm documenting life on the station for future generations.

MINKOWSKI

Eiffel, this is really -

EIFFEL

Shh, shh.
(clears throat)
(MORE)

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Here we see the Minkowski in a rare moment of symbiotic cooperation with one of its neighboring species, the Creepus Maximus. Any words for posterity, Doctor Hilbert?

HILBERT

Not now, Eiffel, this is very delicate.

EIFFEL

Eloquent as always, such a lovely, delicate species.

MINKOWSKI

Would it... kill you... to stop messing around... and give us a hand?

EIFFEL

Oooof, sorry Commander, but as a documentarian I have a sacred duty to observe without perturbing the natural order of things. So, no can do.

(clicks his tongue)

But anyway, what is this thing you're both hauling? Some kind of tank?

MINKOWSKI

What - What'd you mean "What is it?" It's one of the nitrogen tanks for the station's fuel rotation.

EIFFEL

You say that like it's supposed to mean something to me.

MINKOWSKI

It should - you were supposed to depressurize this thing this morning.

BEAT.

EIFFEL

Oh.

MINKOWSKI

You do remember me asking you to do that, right?

EIFFEL
... yeeeeessss.

MINKOWSKI
And you did depressurize this tank,
right?

EIFFEL
... yeeeeessss.

MINKOWSKI
Is that, "Yes, I did it" or "Yes, I
have no idea what you're talking
about but I don't want to get in
trouble?"

EIFFEL
... yeeeeessss.

MINKOWSKI
Goddammit, Eiffel!

HILBERT
Do you have any idea how dangerous
an improperly regulated nitrogen
tank can be?

EIFFEL
Oh, c'mon, how bad can it be? This
thing looks super solid.

We hear him gently KNOCKING on the TANK.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
See, safe as hou-

Halfway through that word, the top of the nitrogen tank FLIES
OFF. The AIR SHOOTs OUT OF THE TANK in a concentrated stream,
sending the tank FLYING THROUGH THE AIR.

MINKOWSKI
Get down!

Three bodies HIT THE FLOOR. The room explodes into CACOPHONY
as tank flies every which way, BOUNCING OFF WALLS, KNOCKING
THINGS OVER, etc. It's LOUD. It's FAST. It's DANGEROUS.

Finally, the tank hits a wall and, with a sickening CRUNCH,
goes STRAIGHT THROUGH IT. It finally settles on the floor,
it's contents spent.

For a beat, all we hear is DEBRIS and BITS OF HEPHAESTUS
knocking around. Finally -

MINKOWSKI (CONT'D)
All right, anybody who's not dead
say, "Ow."

Ow.

EIFFEL

Ow.

HILBERT

MINKOWSKI (CONT'D)
Eiffel, one of these days I am
going to **actually** kill you.

EIFFEL
Honestly, Commander, I may well
beat you to that. Jesus, did that
thing just go through that wall?

MINKOWSKI
Hera, tell me that tank didn't hit
an electric line or something. Is
anything going horribly wrong?

HERA
Umm... Hard to say, Commander. Ask
again later?

MINKOWSKI
Hera. Sit rep. Now.

HERA
Uhhh, well, it seems the tank went
through one of the station's
exterior walls.

EIFFEL
WHAT?

HERA
But - but sensors show that the
room you're in isn't losing air or
pressure, soooo... umm... Yay? I'm
really not sure what's happening
here.

MINKOWSKI
(getting up, dusting
herself off)
Hand me that flashlight.
(flashlight clicks on)
Hera, what are you talking about?
This isn't an exterior wall,
there's a room right here.

HERA

No, there's not. Commander, I'm looking at the station schematics and at all my sensory inputs, there's nothing there.

MINKOWSKI

And I'm looking through this hole and telling you that there's a room here. Look, if I just step through this hole -

HERA

No, don't!

MINKOWSKI

There, see? Where am I showing up on the station's sensors?

HERA

(how do I say this
delicately...?)
... Outer space, Commander. The station's positioning trackers are indicating that you're outside the station.

A beat as Eiffel, Minkowski, and Hilbert take this in.

EIFFEL

Hilbert? Any idea on how that works?

HILBERT

Well... I suppose it's possible that Hera's sensory input hardware was calibrated to exclude this particular section of the spaceship.

EIFFEL

Annd why the hell would they want to do that?

MINKOWSKI

Let's find out. Come on.

We hear the sound of TWO MORE FLASHLIGHTS CLICKING ON as Eiffel and Hilbert join Minkowski in

INT. HEPHAESTUS STATION - SECRET ROOM - CONTINUOUS

EIFFEL

Whoa, how big is this place?

MINKOWSKI

Looks like it's at least the size of the observatory, maybe a little bigger. Look, over there. That's the outline of a door frame, but it's been walled up.

EIFFEL

Anybody see a lightswitch?

HILBERT

Over here.

CLICK. No lights come on. CLICK. CLICK. Nothing.

HILBERT (CONT'D)

Must have been disconnected from the power grid. Hera would have noticed if circuits were flowing to a non-existent room.

EIFFEL

Oh great.

MINKOWSKI

Doctor Hilbert, over here. Look at all these jars, and the tools in this drawer. It looks like -

HILBERT

Like a medical facility, yes, Commander. This is a laboratory.

MINKOWSKI

What's it doing in the -

EIFFEL

AHH!

Minkowski and Hilbert whirl around towards the sound of Eiffel's scream.

MINKOWSKI

Eiffel, you all right?

EIFFEL

No! Commander, there's a dead spider in that jar. A **huge** spider!

MINKOWSKI

Oh. Is that it?

EIFFEL

Is that it? Look at this thing! Its legs are so hairy, and, Jesus, look at that stinger, it's gotta be at least as big as my thumb.

(shudders)

I hate spiders, creepy little...

HILBERT

It's not just over there, Eiffel. Look, there's more of them in those jars. Whoever owned this lab must have been running genetic experiments on arachnids.

EIFFEL

To make them **bigger**? What was the objective of that? To spice up my nightmares?

Behind Eiffel, there's some MOVEMENT.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Umm, did anybody else hear something just now?

HILBERT

It's not unheard of to put together large space stations by amalgamating individual parts from smaller crafts. If the Hephaestus was assembled in such a way, this room could just be a vestige from an older mission.

EIFFEL

I don't know Doc, that still feels like a stretch. Why go through the trouble of walling up Charlotte's Lab instead of just clearing it out?

We hear the sound of a MACHINE BOOTING UP.

MINKOWSKI

Hey, looks like this computer terminal's still working. Must be running on emergency power. Let's see... Umm, I've got the log of one... Doctor Elias Selberg. Entry number #653. "

(MORE)

MINKOWSKI (CONT'D)
 Alpha Test Series has yielded mixed results. Specimen growth and development extremely promising, but extremely high levels of toxicity unintended side effect. Contact with live specimens extremely dangerous, as shown with recent exposure trial."

Again, we hear some MOVEMENT.

EIFFEL
 Uhh, guys...

MINKOWSKI
 "Captain Lovelace has ordered termination of all samples. Shame to lose months of work, but hazard undeniable. Will have to proceed with extreme caution if hope to--"

We hear the COMPUTER SHUTTING DOWN.

MINKOWSKI (CONT'D)
 Out of juice. That's it for storytime.

EIFFEL
 Okay, this place is officially giving me the creeps. Why would anyone go through the trouble of walling up this place just to keep us out?

HERA
 Umm... I have an alternative theory, Officer Eiffel, but I don't think you'll like it.

EIFFEL
 What?

HERA
 The walling in... it might not have been a way of keeping you out. It may have been a way of keeping something **in**.

A BEAT. And then again, something SCUTTling.

EIFFEL
 Comman-

MINKOWSKI

That time I heard it, Eiffel.
Everyone with me, back away from
walls, tables, cabinets, anything
that could be used as cover. We're
going to back out of this room.
Quickly, quickly.

HILBERT

Hera, can you pinpoint the location
of the other creature in this room?

HERA

Doctor, I can't see anything going
on in that room. I can barely even
hear you right now.

EIFFEL

How is this thing even alive? We've
been here for over a year and a
half, how is it still alive? What
has it been **eating**?

MINKOWSKI

Less questions, more getting out of
- Hilbert, look out!

HILBERT

Gah!

We hear the sound of the SCUFFLE as Hilbert jumps out of the
way of the SPIDER. It lets out a SHRILL CHITTERING sound.

MINKOWSKI

Doctor are you -

HILBERT

Fine, Commander, but I don't know
where the spider went.

EIFFEL

Where is it? Where is it? Where is
it?

A beat as they look around, flashing their lights over the
various walls. We hear SCUTTLING, CHITTERING.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Is... is it gone?

A BEAT.

MINKOWSKI

I'm... not sure. Let's just get out
of this room before it comes back
and - EIFFEL, YOUR SHOULDER!

EIFFEL

AHHH!

We hear EIFFEL THRASH ABOUT, KNOCKING OVER SOME JARS in a
nearby table.

MINKOWSKI

Light, light, get me some light
here!

Everything is STILL and quiet again. Eiffel HYPERVENTILATES
SLIGHTLY.

MINKOWSKI (CONT'D)

... Eiffel, are you okay?

EIFFEL

N-no.

MINKOWSKI

Did it sting you?

EIFFEL

No... not yet.

MINKOWSKI

Yet? What do you mean? Did you see
where it went?

EIFFEL

It... It... It...

MINKOWSKI

Eiffel, stay with me. Where did the
spider go?

EIFFEL

It... Commander, it ran down my
shirt. It's standing on my stomach.
Oh God oh God what do I do?

A horrified BEAT.

MINKOWSKI

Are you sure?

EIFFEL

Oh, I'm sure. I can feel it **walking**
on my **skin**.

(MORE)

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

It's hairy *and* slimy, it's hairy
and slimy, oh God, **why** is it hairy
and slimy?

HILBERT

Eiffel, listen to me.

Hilbert speaks in a low, steady, urgent WHISPER. Until further notice, so does Minkowksi.

HILBERT (CONT'D)

Whatever you do, you must remain
calm, okay? Don't let go of that
wall, don't float away, don't make
any sudden movements. It won't
sting you unless it's frightened,
but you have to remain completely
still, okay?

(beat)

Eiffel, did you hear me?

EIFFEL

Yeah, yeah, yeah, I heard you. No
moving. Who needs movement? Not me.
No, I'm too scared to move.

HILBERT

Don't talk. Not unless you have to.
Keep your stomach relaxed. I'm
going to go now.

EIFFEL

WHAT?

HILBERT

Just for a moment, just to my
laboratory. I'm going to retrieve
an antivenom, and I'll be right
back. Then, we'll find a way to get
the spider off you, okay?

EIFFEL

Okay... okay.

HILBERT

I will only be gone a moment.
(to Minkowski)
Keep him still. Don't let him move.

We hear Hilbert exit the room.

MINKOWSKI

Eiffel, don't worry, everything is
going to be all right.

(MORE)

MINKOWSKI (CONT'D)

This thing is probably more scared of than you are of him.

EIFFEL

While normally I could get onboard that train, I assure you that in this case I am definitely the more terrified party. I **hate** spiders.

MINKOWSKI

It's just a bug. It's just a big bug.

EIFFEL

It's *huge* bug. And weren't you paying attention to what you were reading? "High levels of toxicity"?! "Extreme danger"!? It's an Extreme Danger Bug!

MINKOWSKI

Shhh, easy. Don't talk. Keep your breathing slow.

EIFFEL

Commander, I can't do this.

MINKOWSKI

Quiet. Yes, you can.

EIFFEL

No, I *can't*. I can't deal with this thing *walking* on me. Maybe... maybe if I can just squash it...

MINKOWSKI

No, stop.

EIFFEL

Just one quick blow. Just wham, and then it's gone. I can do this.

MINKOWSKI

What if you're not quick enough? What if it stings you before it dies?

(beat)

Eiffel, put your arm down.

LONG BEAT.

EIFFEL

Okay, okay, you're right.

HILBERT

Eiffel?

MINKOWSKI

(massive sigh of relief)

Oh good, doctor. You're back.

HILBERT

Eiffel, this is going to be delicate, so I need you to prepare yourself. First, I am going to give you a dose of antivenom, in case the specimen stings you. I have to administer the serum intravenously. You're going to feel the prick, but you can't flinch, you can't move at all, all right? Don't contract the muscles in your stomach, just stay relaxed, okay?

EIFFEL

And then I'll be okay, right? Even if it stings me, it'll be okay?

HILBERT

I... I can't guarantee that, Eiffel. This is very good antivenom, but without knowing the exact makeup of the spider's poison, cannot be certain that it'll neutralize it completely. Still, better than nothing.

EIFFEL

Oh dear God. Okay, let's get this over with.

HILBERT

Commander, help me to roll up his sleeve... Slowly, slowly, careful... Okay, Eiffel, I am going to insert the needle now. Don't react. Don't flinch. Don't tighten your abdomen. Don't -

MINKOWSKI

Would you just do it before he has a heart attack?!

HILBERT

Right. Okay... three... two... one...

We hear Eiffel GRUNT slightly as the needle plunges into his arm. We hear the spider CHITTERING.

HILBERT (CONT'D)

Good... good, you're doing great.
Aaaand, there, all done. Excellent
job, Eiffel.

MINKOWSKI

Hilbert, what are we going to do?
How are we going to get that thing
off of him?

HILBERT

I'm thinking, Commander, I'm
thinking.

MINKOWSKI

What if we just shoot the damn
thing? We could find where it is in
Eiffel's clothing, put the gun
right up to it, aim away from his
body, and just shoot the spider
clean off.

HILBERT

Too risky. The sound alone... What
if you miss? Even if you don't, the
spider's reflexes might be fast
enough to -

EIFFEL

Commander!

MINKOWSKI

What?

EIFFEL

I think... ah... I'm going to...
ah... sneeze.

MINKOWSKI

What? Don't!

EIFFEL

Well it's not like I have a say in
the matter! I'm - I'm - ahhh-

He is STOPPED SHORT. We hear the spider CHITTERING. After a
moment -

HILBERT

Breathe through your mouth, **slowly**.
I will let go of your nose in a
moment.

Eiffel BREATHES HEAVILY. After a moment, the breathing
subsides.

MINKOWSKI

Okay, we need to do something, and
fast.

HILBERT

Agreed, Commander. But what?

Fade out...

LATER -

EIFFEL

I... I just want the record to show
that I think this is a *terrible*
plan.

MINKOWSKI

Yeah, well, it's the best one we've
got, and you're not going to last
much longer.

EIFFEL

How is this going to work again?

HILBERT

We need to kill the spider without
striking it, or we risk your life.
Solution is simple. Living
organisms still need oxygen, so we
just remove all air from the
environment. No O2, no spider.

MINKOWSKI

Soon as we're ready, Hera'll pull
the oxygen from the room, taking
care of the bug problem.

HILBERT

You'll wear this oxygen mask, pump
air directly into your mouth, you
breathe normally. But we can't give
you a full suit for this to work,
so you have to be ready. Without
the air, it's going to get **very**
cold here. But you can't move, not
until the spider is dead.

MINKOWSKI

We'll be right here next to you,
okay? Are you ready?

EIFFEL

If I die, Hera gets all my toys.

MINKOWSKI

I'll take that as a yes. Ready
Hera?

HERA

Air pumps are ready, Commander, and
oxygen is flowing through both your
suits and Eiffel's mask.

MINKOWSKI

All right, helmets on, Doctor.

SNAP. SNAP. We now hear Minkowski and Hilbert through their
helmet comms.

MINKOWSKI (CONT'D)

Start air removal in three...
two... one... now.

We hear the air being filtered out of the room. Like a
massive balloon slowly deflating.

EIFFEL

Oh God, Oh God...

MINKOWSKI

Just hang on for a little bit
longer.

HILBERT

Is the spider reacting at all?

EIFFEL

Still walking around. Damn thing's
on my chest now.

HERA

Oxygen levels down at 75%.

EIFFEL

Okay, it's starting to get a little
nippy here. Nothing I can't handle,
nothing I can't han- AHH!

MINKOWSKI

What?

EIFFEL

This... thing is pressing up against me! It's putting its body up against my chest.

HILBERT

Eiffel, the spider is instinctively reacting to the drop in temperature. It's trying to leech off your body heat. It's a good sign. Let it happen. Just a little further.

EIFFEL

This thing is so gross this thing is so gross this thing is so gross.

HERA

Oxygen levels at 50%.

HILBERT

Steady, Eiffel. Don't twitch so much.

EIFFEL

(through clattering teeth)
Easy... for you... to say!

The sound of ESCAPING AIR grows louder.

HERA

Oxygen levels at 25%, and falling rapidly.

MINKOWSKI

Just one more minute...

EIFFEL

I... I...

Tick, tick, tick, boom. Eiffel SNAPS.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

I CAN'T DO THIS, GET THIS THING OFF OF ME!

We hear the sound of RIPPING BUTTONS as Eiffel tears his shirt apart and YANKS THE SPIDER OFF HIS CHEST.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

GETITOFFGETITOFFGETITOFF AHHH!

HILBERT

Eiffel! Are you okay, did it -

EIFFEL

(huge gasping breaths)
No... no, it didn't sting me. I...
look, it's floating right there.
Totally still. Is it dead?

HILBERT

Hmm... perhaps simply lowering the
O2 levels to this point was enough
to suffocate it. Or maybe the lower
temperature affected it to the
point of -

Suddenly the SPIDER SPRINGS TO LIFE, LETTING OUT ITS USUAL
CHITTERING NOISE COMBINED WITH A SHRILL SCREECH.

EIFFEL

AHH!

HILBERT

AHH!

But no "Ahhh!" from Minkowski. Instead, a split second after
the men's screams, there's a loud KA-BOOM!, punctuated with
an echoing SQUISH. After that echoes for a moment -

MINKOWSKI

I also brought a gun. Just in case.

EIFFEL

Oh.

HILBERT

Right.

EIFFEL

Good thinking.

(beat)

Okay, so now that's taken care of,
if the two of you will excuse me...
I'm going to faint.

As Eiffel loses consciousness -

STOP RECORDING.

RESUME RECORDING LATER IN:

INT. HEPHAESTUS STATION - COMMS ROOM - 2300

EIFFEL

Hi friends. Just wanted to... check
in and let you know that... I'm
okay.

(MORE)

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

I mean, not okay okay, I don't think that I'll ever really be completely okay after what I just went through but... you know, hanging in there.

Minkowski and Hilbert just radioed saying they've finished tearing up that creepy lab apart, and there's no more living specimens down there. Looks like it was just the one. Small comfort, but at least it's nice to know I won't run into another one of those things. Well, except for the new recurring nightmare that I'm going to have from now until the heat death of the universe.

There's also a bunch of weird stuff down there, archives and notebooks, some computer files that they're trying to pull off that terminal, see if we can't figure out where the hell that room came from. Minkowski says that she wants us to go through all that stuff ASAP, but she says I can have some time off on account of the... nightmare death spider. I'm... kind of appalled that I can't think of some way to unfairly exploit this, but... my mind is still kind of back at the... nightmare death spider.

I'm going to go now, friends. I'm gonna go... not sleep. No sleep. Never again sleep. From the U.S.S. Hephaestus Station, this the... newly traumatized Doug Eiffel, signing off.

Good night.

STOP RECORDING.

END EPISODE 11.