

WOLF 359

"LET'S KILL HILBERT"

Written By

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(WRITER'S NOTE: the following takes place on day 619 of the
Hephaestus Mission)

START EPISODE 19

BEGIN RECORDING:

INT. U.S.S. HEPHAESTUS STATION - BRIDGE - 0500 HOURS

 EIFFEL
C'mon, Hera! Please?

 HERA
This is serious, Officer Eiffel.

 EIFFEL
Which is why I'm asking! I need
gravitas.

 HERA
Fine. Playing it now.

 EIFFEL
Yes!

Eiffel's recorder CLICKS ON in time for the sound of A
GAVEL coming through the speakers.

 EIFFEL
Hear ye, hear ye. Welcome to a
very special, very secret Night
Court edition of the logs of
Douglas Eiffel. On the Docket of
the Hephaestus Station this
evening: will the crew decide Dr.
X should be hung from his toes for
lying about even more things? Will
cruel and unusual tickling be
authorized to extract his many
secrets? Will the original mission
around Wolf 359 be -

The DOOR OPENS as Minkowski comes in.

 EIFFEL
Oops, excuse me, listeners: All
rise for the Honorable Justice
Commander Minkowski, presiding.

 MINKOWSKI
Give me that stupid thing, Eiffel.

She takes the recorder from him and CLICKS it off.

 MINKOWSKI
Look, both of you: We've been

running on minimal rest and maximum paranoia since Christmas. The last thing we needed was more disturbing information on the man in our observation deck, but we're not going to let our emotions run away with us, okay? We're just here to discuss our options.

EIFFEL

And when you say "options," you mean "kill him," don't you?

MINKOWSKI

It's...on the table. Yes.

EIFFEL

Isn't that a bit rash? Don't we at least get to shout 'HILLBEERT!' in Shatnerian fury?

MINKOWSKI

We're not jumping into anything. I think it's worth confirming his is the voice on that recording before we make any permanent decisions. If we approached him the right way, I don't think he'd deny it.

EIFFEL

And then what? Tea and crumpets while he regales us with stories about that time when he *killed everyone*?

MINKOWSKI

You don't know that.

EIFFEL

Umm, let me refer you to Exhibit A: the marked absence of Captain Lovelace from the immediate surroundings.

MINKOWSKI

This isn't a trial, and you don't know what happened. Three hours ago you were ready to believe that Lovelace made it back to Earth.

EIFFEL

Yeah, that was *before* I knew her co-pilot was Doctor Sputnik. You think *that* had a happy ending?

In the background, the ship GROANS, like a sub diving.

MINKOWSKI

No. I think he probably killed her. Given the opportunity, he'll definitely try to kill us again.

EIFFEL

Mostly you. I get a bunch of pins stuck in me first.

MINKOWSKI

Which is why the question isn't, "Is Hilbert a mutinous, lying sociopath?" We *know* that. But given the layers of secrets about this place, does Hilbert know *enough* for us to justify keeping him onboard? And if so, then, how do we do it?

HERA

Ridiculous.

Both Eiffel and Minkowski turn their eyes towards the ship around them.

MINKOWSKI

Something you'd like to add, Hera?

HERA

Nothing justifies keeping someone that dangerous around us.

MINKOWSKI

I don't think you're wrong. In the long term. But without *some* idea of what we're dealing with -

EIFFEL

Um, I may actually be playing devil's advocate, but I'd like to state for the record that I'm on Team What's Wrong With Handcuffs?

The ship GROANS again.

HERA

You need to stop treating this like a joke, Officer Eiffel.

EIFFEL

Hey, I'm the person for whom the joke tolls. Sure, Hilbert will

turn on us the first chance we give him, but as long as he's fixated on turning me into the ÜberDoug we have leverage on him. Plus lots of chains and locks actually *on* him. Isn't that an acceptable risk for a shot at figuring out what Command's game is? Not to mention helping me beat space pneumonia?

HERA

Sure - if you were really sick.

EIFFEL

What do you mean?

HERA

Isn't it terribly convenient that as soon as Hilbert's life is at risk, he starts talking about this deadly pathogen only *he* can manage? How it's going to kill you if *he's* not around to help? And, of course, the Decima virus is so "complicated" that none of us can even *verify it's really there?*

MINKOWSKI

Are you saying that might just be a trick?

HERA

No, I'm saying it's definitely just a trick.

MINKOWSKI

That's a possibility. But it's a gamble we'd take on Eiffel's life, Hera. Probably mine, too. What we *know* -

HERA

Be quiet.

Holy shit. No one has directed more defiance towards Minkowski in the series than Hera has with those two words.

HERA

What we know is that this man has systematically lied about his identity and manipulated all of us to achieve his objectives. I don't need to remind you two that every

moment you keep him on board you put your lives in jeopardy. But what you seem to be forgetting is that Dr. Hilbert dismembered me. Without a moment's hesitation. That monster nearly murdered me. A member of *this* crew. You should have killed him for that alone.

The ship RUMBLES again.

EIFFEL

Hera...

HERA

And I get it, Officer Eiffel. I get you're scared he put something inside you. But I hope you haven't forgotten Emergency Code Alpha Victor. He put that in *me*.

MINKOWSKI

But look, that may be proof he's not lying about -

HERA

From day one, he's lied about everything. Everything he's done has been to deceive us, to make us hesitate, to give him the benefit of the doubt. Don't you get it? He's done this before and you are playing into his hands. Again. So, sure, sign me up for Team Let's Kill Hilbert if that's how you want to put it, but the only way to stop that man from endangering us is to stop his breathing.

The crew absorbs that. Then -

EIFFEL

Ummm, I don't want to wear out an old favorite, but in other news doesn't the star look awfully close today?

HERA

(shut up)

We are in a very stable orbit and aren't about to get distracted by the limits of your depth perception, Officer Eiffel.

There's some ELECTRICITY mixed into the RUMBLING now.

EIFFEL

I'm not kidding! I think the star looks way bigger than it should.

MINKOWSKI

Actually, that doesn't look right to me, either...

HERA

Seriously? You both need to face the facts here. Hilbert is more dangerous than *anything* else on this station. And frankly, this is a cheap way to change the subject, Eiffel. I have the station completely under contro-

BOOM! The ship sounds like it got hit with a hammer.

MINKOWSKI

Ok, we're going into a collision vector.

HERA

My scans are nominal, Commander.

The Bridge SHAKES.

EIFFEL

I don't feel very nominal.

MINKOWSKI

Me neither. Hera, help me plot the course back into orbit and prepare to engage engines on my mark.

HERA

For the last time, the station is completely -

She's cut off by a loud BOOOOM from the bowels of the ship.

EIFFEL

Commander?

MINKOWSKI

I'm trying to pull us out, but I need full control of the nav systems. Hera -

HERA

No! It's fine! I can -

MINKOWSKI
I don't care what you *can*, give me
the controls. Right now.

HERA
Commander -

MINKOWSKI
That's an **order**.

Debate over. There's an UPLOAD SOUND from the console.

EIFFEL
Guuuys...

There's a LOUD CRANK as Minkowski wrestles with the
controls.

MINKOWSKI
Everybody hold onto something!

The ship continues to SHAKE BADLY. The engines ROAR TO
LIFE. Just as it sounds like things are coming apart, we -

FADE TO:

INT. U.S.S. HEPHAESTUS STATION - BRIDGE - LATER

We hear METAL CREAKING as the ship re-adjusts to orbit, and
maybe the BUZZ of a warning light. Eiffel GROANS.

MINKOWSKI
Everyone alive?

EIFFEL
In theory.

MINKOWSKI
Then help me figure out how much
damage we just took on.

EIFFEL
Right.

HERA
Commander, I -

MINKOWSKI
You too, Hera. I need to know if
anything's fallen off my station.

HERA
I'll put together a damage

assessment right away. I don't think the station's integrity was-

A big BANG as something somewhere breaks.

HERA

- too compromised by the course correction.

A BEAT as Minkowski and Eiffel CLICK THROUGH scans.

MINKOWSKI

Looks like we're okay, except for hydraulics and filtration.

EIFFEL

The blinky red light of doom is hydraulics?

MINKOWSKI

The primary valve is probably out of alignment and God knows what the pipes are like down there. Get down to engineering and see what you can do, Eiffel.

EIFFEL

Commander, my knowledge of plumbing begins and ends with Mario Kart 2.

Minkowski stares him down. Don't. Try. Me.

MINKOWSKI

Eiffel.

EIFFEL

I'll radio back if I end up in the wrong castle. Sir.

MINKOWSKI

See that you do.

We hear the door SHUT as Eiffel exits. Minkowski waits a moment, then rests her head in her hands.

MINKOWSKI

Just once. A normal meeting. Just once.

PING!

HERA

Commander?

MINKOWSKI

Yes.

HERA

I've completed the assessment. I recommend a manual reset of the main hydraulics valve and of air intakes one and four.

MINKOWSKI

Ok. Walk Eiffel through the procedure when he gets to engineering.

HERA

Yes, sir.

BEAT.

MINKOWSKI

Hera, what do I need to know about what just happened?

HERA

It appears there was an... Adjustment in our trajectory.

MINKOWSKI

A considerable adjustment.

HERA

Yes.

MINKOWSKI

What about eight hours ago, in the cargo bay? That makes two near catastrophes today, and you didn't see either of them coming?

HERA

Respectfully, Commander, there's been plenty of things you haven't seen coming. I'm doing the best I can here, so just, please, try to sound a little less patronizing?

MINKOWSKI

I'm not being patronizing, I'm being critical. Look, what Hilbert did to you was unforgivable, and I can only imagine how traumatic these past few weeks have been. But for us to work effectively, I need you to take your emotions out

of the equation, and judge this situation for what it is.

HERA

And what would that be?

MINKOWSKI

Delicate and dangerous. I need to know that I can trust you, Hera. That I can rely on you to be calm, composed, and levelheaded.

HERA.

Right. Sure. With that maniac still here. Easy-peasy.

MINKOWSKI

Don't take that tone with me. Lives are on the line here, Hera, including your own. So if your functions are too compromised to know what's happened on the station, you need to own up to that.

HERA

What are you saying?

MINKOWSKI

(carefully diplomatic)

I'm saying that maybe for now you should transfer some of your controls over to Eiffel and me. Let us help manage things.

HERA

It's not that simple, Commander. Right now I'm -

Hera CONTINUES TALKING, but her speech is glitching SO BADLY that it becomes impossible to understand what she's saying. Then, after a moment, it ABRUPTLY CUTS OFF.

MINKOWSKI

Hera? Is everything okay?

BZZT! There's a burst of STATIC through the speakers, follow by -

HERA

Yes! No, I'm sorry, Commander. I experienced a temporary strain diverting resources to assist Officer Eiffel's repairs. After he

finishes, I would be happy to discuss my mission effectiveness.

MINKOWSKI

Okay. Concentrate on that for the moment. I don't mean for you to think - well, we'll talk.

HERA

Yes, Commander.

FADE TO:

INT. U.S.S. HEPHAESTUS STATION - ENGINEERING - MEANWHILE

A BOLT CLICKS and the DOOR OPENS as Eiffel walks in.

EIFFEL

All right. Air Intake Repairs for Dummies, let's do this thing!

(beat)

Uh... Hera? That was your cue for a pithy retort.

HERA

Sorry, Officer Eiffel. I was... Momentarily distracted.

EIFFEL

Minkowski's turning on the charm?

HERA

Commander Minkowski takes a very hands-on approach to her administrative duties.

EIFFEL

That's one way to put it. Anyway, which one's the valve guy?

HERA

Lift up the central panel.

Eiffel OPENS it.

EIFFEL

Oh yeah, that looks out of whack.

HERA

Realign the lip into the main intake again. Then tighten the heads on valves one and four.

We hear Eiffel WORKING on the PIPES. After a moment -

EIFFEL

Hey Hera? You're not... silently
freaking out about our latest
Close Encounter of the Red Dwarf
Kind? Right? 'Cause -

HERA

It's fine.

Okay, then. Eiffel goes back to work. After another BEAT:

EIFFEL

You know, I hate to admit it,
but... Hilbert was the one who
patched you up. He has some uses.
There might be some way to channel
his powers for the forces of good.

HERA

I'm sure we'll find his inner
humanitarian any day now.

Eiffel finishes TIGHTENING the last valve.

EIFFEL

Okay, is that it?

HERA

That's it.

(then)

Actually... Wait. There's a bit
more to the schematics.

Something about that last thought made her GLITCH BADLY.

HERA

When you're done with that, pull
that big red release to your left.

EIFFEL

The one with the danger sticker?

HERA

Yes.

EIFFEL

Uh... you sure about that?

HERA

Yes.

EIFFEL
 No, but actually, that thing looks
 like it shouldn't be messed with.

 HERA
 Don't you trust me?

BEAT.

 EIFFEL
 Big red release, ten four.

We hear Eiffel TIGHTENING VALVES and SWITCHING the danger
 release left. There's a HISS of air and a CLICK.

 EIFFEL
 Hey! I am Handyman, hear me roar!

 HERA
 Great work, Officer Eiffel.

 EIFFEL
 It takes a team. Speaking of -

He CLICKS ON his radio. BUZZER.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Hey, Commander: All air intake
 valves lead to Rome. We fixed it.

 MINKOWSKI
 (over comm)
 Great. Do a spot-check on the
 pipes and then head back up.

 EIFFEL
 Wilco.

Eiffel starts looking around the pipes, HUMMING to himself.
 We hear some slight TAPPING on the pipes. After a moment -

BUZZER!

 MINKOWSKI
 (over comm)
 Eiffel! What did you just do?! The
 entire console's lit up! Half the
 rooms on the station are reporting
 life support malfunctions!

Eiffel chooses to respond by CHORTLING SLIGHTLY.

 EIFFEL
 Really?!

MINKOWSKI

Yes!

EIFFEL

No, no, I know that's bad. It's super... unfunny. Serious thoughts.

No good. He still can't stop GIGGLING.

MINKOWSKI

Eiffel!

EIFFEL

I'm sorry! I don't know what's - I just did the thing and flipped the switch.

MINKOWSKI

Then unflip it! Turn it back!

We hear him OPEN THE PANEL back up.

EIFFEL

Hera, are you there? We've got another rimshot, I'm afraid. Gotta reboot... stuff.

In his head, "stuff" was a really funny punchline.

HERA

We should wait a few minutes, Officer Eiffel. Give the automated components time to adjust.

EIFFEL

No time, baby. Will the station blow up if I switch the flip back?

Again, Comedy GOLD.

HERA

Officer Eiffel, speak clearly. What's going on?

We hear a THUD and then even more LAUGHTER.

EIFFEL

I don't know but these walls are real bouncy!

MINKOWSKI

Listen to me! Eiffel: You're losing air. It's making you loopy.

Flip the switch back. Whatever it was, turn it back!

EIFFEL

Up... Gotta get... Up and away...

HERA

Why is he losing air? That wasn't supposed to - what's wrong with you?

EIFFEL

What wasn't supposed? Is this another mistake, Hera, or... or, it is a mistake, right?

MINKOWSKI

Flip the damn switch, Eiffel!

Eiffel GROANS and uses the pipes to pull himself to the panel. He FLIPS IT, then collapses into a LAUGHING FIT.

EIFFEL

Wham! Done! Do I get cookie?

MINKOWSKI

Hera, what's going on? Is the pressure normalizing?

HERA

I don't - I don't think so. I can't read anything!

EIFFEL

(borderline incoherent)
Do machines read of electric sheep?

HERA

(panicking now)
I can't read anything!

On Minkowski's side of the Comms, various ALARMS GO OFF.

MINKOWSKI

The air system's gone *berserk*. I'm seeing life support failures in the hanger, the greenhouse, the mess, the obser-
(it hits her)
The observation deck...

HERA

Commander! Could we focus on

Office Eiffel, please?

MINKOWSKI

Hera, does Doctor Hilbert have an air supply?

HERA

Really? Now? I am trying to get the automated systems to -

MINKOWSKI

Answer my question: Can Dr. Hilbert breathe?

HERA

Yes!

(then, guiltily -)

But he won't be able to in another three minutes.

MINKOWSKI

Damnit Hera, I know what you're doing!

HERA

I'm trying to fix this! I'm trying to help!

MINKOWSKI

No, you're not. You're trying to get rid of Hilbert.

HERA

(gritted digital teeth)

I can do two things at once! And besides, that *is* helping. It would make things a lot safer here.

MINKOWSKI

Hera, you need to calm down and think about what you're doing.

HERA

(not calm)

I am calm! I am calm, and collected, and levelheaded, and I am fixing the problem!

MINKOWSKI

No, you're not. You're scared and you're about to get someone killed.

HERA

Well, it was just a matter of time, wasn't it?! That's what you're thinking, anyway. I'm going to get someone killed because I'm all wrong now, because *he* brought me back wrong. You're going to have to unplug me one way or another - at least this way I can get rid of him. I can do that much for the two of you. Now go help Eiffel!

MINKOWSKI

I can't. I don't have any O2 canisters in the bridge. By the time I get one and make it down to engineering, he'll be gone. You've got to do something.

HERA

I can't. I can't do anything. I can't find the commands. The old me could've done this but now, after what he did to me, I just *can't*.

Minkowski goes very still. Then -

MINKOWSKI

Listen to me, Officer. You are crew of this ship. If Eiffel dies, it's because he trusted you, and you went behind his back. Do you want that?

HERA

No!

MINKOWSKI

Then fix it.

HERA

Have you been listening?! I -

MINKOWSKI

You *can*. You are the smartest person I've ever met, Hera. Focus that intelligence, and save our moron.

Eiffel's starting to GASP for air.

HERA

But -

MINKOWSKI

I trust you. Do it.

BEAT.

BEAT.

BEAT. It's AGONIZING. FINALLY -

We hear a CLICK; a RUSH OF AIR into the room; Eiffel GASPS and COUGHS. The PA CHIMES.

HERA

All station life support systems are normalizing. Your autopilot apologizes for the disruption.

(beat)

I'm really, really sorry.

MINKOWSKI

You still with us, Officer Eiffel?

EIFFEL

(coughing)

This is exactly the sort of thing that would not happen on Team What's Wrong With Handcuffs.

MINKOWSKI

Hang on. I'm grabbing the nearest oxygen tank and coming down there.

BUZZ. She's headed out.

FADE TO:

INT. U.S.S. HEPHAESTUS STATION - COMMS ROOM - 0800 HOURS

Eiffel's TYPING as the door OPENS and Minkowski walks in.

MINKOWSKI

Well, Hilbert's still alive and considerably less smug, so that's one upside to... are you *working*?

EIFFEL

No! Slightly. Sort of. Compiling recordings of the deep space transmissions is weirdly soothing?

MINKOWSKI

If you say so. I just wanted to check in. Busy day.

EIFFEL

You mean Doctor Sex, Lies, and Audiotape? Or the Pod Bay Doors that wouldn't open?

MINKOWSKI

Both. Either. I'm not sure how we cope with another unstable element.

EIFFEL

Same way we've always done. The force of your common sense keeps the rest of us insane-os in check.

MINKOWSKI

Constructive analysis as always, Officer Eiffel.

EIFFEL

I also do Bar Mitzvahs.

MINKOWSKI

Okay. Well, just don't do them for too much longer. I want to regroup tomorrow and -

EIFFEL

Gotcha, Commander. You too.

MINKOWSKI

Good night.

EIFFEL

Night.

The door SHUTS as Minkowski EXITS. Eiffel TYPES a bit more.

EIFFEL

Are you there, Hera?

Only the station's HUM answers him.

EIFFEL

You are. You always are, I guess. I keep forgetting because, I mean, it's weird, right? I can't imagine how that must be for you. Especially when you want some space. Here in... space.

Still only SILENCE.

EIFFEL

I'm not gonna pretend I'm cool
with almost being turned into the
wrench that killed Mr. Body. But
I'm here for you.

Sooo... I can play some I Heart
Alien Radio, and you can just
enjoy it because you saved my life
today and were awesome. Or, we can
come up with more ways to call
Hilbert a lying liar who lies. Or,
I can ask you how you're doing,
and, just, how can I help?

For a HALF-BEAT, more SILENCE. But then -

HERA

Can it be all three?

Eiffel CHUCKLES. He FLICKS A SWITCH and begins TUNING HIS
RADIO.

EIFFEL

You're the multi-tasker, darlin'.

Out of the STATIC, a PIECE OF MUSIC EMERGES.

EIFFEL

You starting to feel better about
that, by the way?

Hera PAUSES before her answer -

HERA

Not really. A little bit. It's a
little hard to explain. There's
just a lot of little things to
keep track of, so when...

And as Hera finally starts to unburden herself, Eiffel
begins to play with his controls, and we -

FADE OUT.

STOP RECORDING.

END OF EPISODE 19.