

## STATION ARCADIA OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

### Episode #18: A Comedy of Mishaps

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**BRONWYN.** Hey, Bronwyn here, we really appreciate your continued support of Station Arcadia. If you haven't already, consider donating to our patreon at [patreon.com/stationarcadia](https://patreon.com/stationarcadia) or sharing the show with a friend. Thanks, and enjoy, episode 18: A Comedy of Mishaps

#### INT. STATION ARCADIA

**KASS.** Welcome, anyone. Don't get lost in the big picture; details can be... vital. You're listening to Station Arcadia.

#### [THEME SONG]

**KASS.** Well, I hope everyone had as good a Night of Stars as we did here at the Station. We've only *just* finished eating all of the leftovers from Jo's big feast. I've been trying to convince him to make another one for the turn of the year, but he's not sure we'll have enough spices or fresh produce.

Did you know the Turn of the Year is called Trickday in Hardizan? There's apparently this whole mythos surrounding a "Grinning Trickster"... person? No... uh, Monster? Well, I think there are little figurines involved somehow? And masks? I admit I didn't fully understand Jo's explanation. Sorry.

In other news, Marvin left this morning. I told him he could stay as long as he liked, of course, but he's committed to his job. Said he had business to attend to in Camnesse. I thought about giving him some sort of message to pass on to the revolution in Steveston, but what would I even say? "Hi, I've been listening in on your conversations and broadcasting them over this thing called radio?"

I don't know. Let's just get into it.

#### [TWO CLICKS]

**KASS.** The show is winding down. The performance is in its final moments. On the stage there are two people dancing. Just inside the wings, there are another couple of people playing drums.

Hester, for his part, is one of the people playing drums as Laurel and Olive dance. This particular dance is based on a traditional ceremony in honor of the sun. It's the last of four movements, and arguably the

most exciting. All the critics have been raving about the latest performance by the Firefly Dancers, and this audience is watching with rapt attention. Everything is going off without a hitch, but Hester is getting exhausted. It's a long show, and he and Callum have to keep perfect focus so they don't miss a beat.

The performance carries on for a few minutes longer before ending in a flourish. The music has ceased and the dancers freeze in their final pose.

After a moment of silence, the crowd breaks out into thunderous applause. Hester flashes a smile at Callum, before the other members of the troupe, Giles, Flint, and Beatrix, come out to the stage and join them in dramatic bows. It's another show done, just one of many, but it's always a good feeling to know people enjoyed it.

When the crowd finally starts to disperse, Hester heads backstage along with the rest of the troupe. Everyone exchanges congratulations on another great show night. At one point, Callum pulls Hester into a hug, saying his drum playing was brilliant as always.

Fifteen minutes later, after the brief celebration, they begin to pack everything up to be taken to their next destination. Half the group shares a round of drinks before turning in, but they keep it quick, knowing they'll be hitting the road early the next morning. They're a traveling theater troupe; it's what they do.

[TRANSITION]

INT. AXEL'S OFFICE

[DOOR OPENS]

**SORREN.** I come bearing gifts.

**AXEL.** Are the gifts food? Because I could eat a whole oarfish.

**SORREN.** Okay, I don't really know what that is, but I do have tea and sandwiches.

**AXEL.** That works too.

[SORREN SETS THE CUPS DOWN ON THE TABLE]

**SORREN.** While you're eating, now would be a great time to quiz you on talking points for that interview later today on GN-5.

**[AXEL GROANS]**

It's nothing hard, just you, the interviewer, and the camera crew. You don't have to worry about Hayyacynth getting in your head.

**AXEL.** I'm not sure about this, Sorren. You've seen how bad I am at interviews.

**SORREN.** It'll be fine! Just picture the interviewer as me or one of your constituents. Even better, the interviewer *is* one of your constituents, they've gotta cast a vote too!

**AXEL.** I... *guess* that makes me feel better?

**SORREN.** That's what I'm here for. It's all going to be fine, Axel. At this point, how could we possibly be thrown for a loop? We've seen it all.

**AXEL.** Your confidence frightens me.

**SORREN.** Someone's gotta stay positive! Look at us, balancing each other out.

**AXEL.** *(sounds tired)* Sure, sure. Start the little pop quiz.

**[TRANSITION]**

**KASS.** Welcome back.

The troupe sets off bright and early the next day. Hester only barely manages to grab a quick breakfast before the bus departs. The city of Aristaeus, located on Island 6, is the next major stop on the troupe's tour of the islands, but they'll be performing in two small towns on the way there. Hester is sure performing in the towns will be just fine, but Aristaeus is what he's really looking forward to.

Traveling has always been Hester's favourite thing about being part of the Firefly Dancers. It's allowed him to see so much more of the Islands than the village he grew up in. Experiencing all the different places, from the towns to the cities, their cultures, and even the different environments themselves, makes all the hardships of life on the road worth it.

Hester settles in for the trip next to Olive, who is reading a book she picked up last night, and decides to look out the window for a while. He prefers to watch the landscape go by, rather than distracting himself with a book or a card game. Callum is driving,

Laurel and Beatrix are still sleeping, and Giles is telling Flint a story from when he used to live on Island 5. Hester has only been with this troupe for a year, but has come to regard them all quite fondly. Life as part of the Firefly Dancers hasn't been anything like he had predicted, but it suits him. On the whole, Hester is happy.

But life can't always go smoothly for a traveling theater troupe. As with most things, it's always full of ups and downs.

Later that day when they stop to get something to eat, Laurel misplaces a prop and uses for one of their scenes. Hester recalls having done something similar when they first joined the troupe and as Laurel apologizes, Hester assures her that it's alright; sometimes things like this happen and they'll just have to do without.

When the troupe arrives at their next stop the following day, a coastal town they'll be performing in before they take the ferry over to Island 6, Callum breaks a stage light while helping unload the bus. Hester ends up getting sent on an errand to try and find a replacement. He does find a place that sells what he's looking for, but unfortunately they're out of stock. The next few shows will just have to be a bit darker. The search does, however, allow Hester to discover that the village where the troupe has stopped is a charming one. It has a lovely seaside landscape that inspires Hester to do a painting. Later that day, Hester joins Beatrix and Olive as they go around trying different breads with cheeses and herb oils.

Beatrix gets sick while they're taking the ferry between islands, though that's not much of a surprise. She never did like boats much; they all know this. Giles looks after her during the crossing, and Hesper thinks it's an adorable sight when she ends up using him as a pillow. Flint helps too, making sure she has water and such. It's just another example of why Hester is so fond of the troupe; they take care of each other.

After the troupe gets to Island 6 they travel inland; heading into the forest. When they get to the open-air theater at their next stop, the young woman showing them around lets them know that their village, Bridgewater, is one of the largest producers of maple syrup in the Gannon Islands. Flint immediately lights up, and starts eagerly explaining the process of making maple syrup to the rest of the group. That night, despite a sense of foreboding on Hester's part, the show goes smoothly and seems to be positively received by those who attend.

And then, the next morning, the troupe moves on to the big city.

**KASS.** Let's go to another break before the troupe gets to Aristaeus. I'm interested to hear how Axel does in the interview.

**[TRANSITION]**

INT. TV INTERVIEW SET

**INTERVIEWER.** Welcome to the show, Miss Moore.

**AXEL.** *(Forced and awkward)* Yea, hi.

**INTERVIEWER.** No need to be so tense, we're not going live. Any really embarrassing flubs we'll take out in post, hm?

**AXEL.** Thank you.

**INTERVIEWER.** Your credentials and qualifications have already been discussed over and over again by people worried you're less experienced than Madame Russel, so let's talk more about your policies, shall we?

**AXEL.** That would be lovely.

**INTERVIEWER.** There have been some disagreements between you and Russel as to how we should continue forward with our energy programs, would you care to elaborate on your stance?

**AXEL.** Well, Madame Russel is very concerned about progress, it's not that I disagree with her, but we can't endlessly chase progress if it will set us up for failure down the road. Our islands have already been through so much, and it's our job to take care of them as much as they take care of us.

**INTERVIEWER.** It's interesting you bring that up, because it leads into my next question. What do you think about Madame Russel's isolationist policies?

**AXEL.** ... I'm sorry?

**INTERVIEWER.** Madame Russel has recently made it very clear that if she is to take office, she will cut off the stream of war refugees coming in from The Empire. What are your thoughts on this?

**AXEL.** Well, *stream* seems like a bit too aggressive of a word to describe the amount of refugees we're receiving, and I didn't know that Madame Russel-

**INTERVIEW.** I would appreciate it if you would answer the question, Miss Moore.

**AXEL.** Right. Well, The Empire really- that is to say, I don't think the people should-

[PAUSE]

[DEEP BREATH]

I don't think the people from The Empire are a problem at all.

The Empire is in shambles right now. It's dangerous to go outside cities, and it's dangerous to be inside them. It's no wonder that some people want to come over here, where there isn't the threat of death hanging over their heads. I don't think they even fully realize how many people they're losing every day.

And if refugees do come over, it's hardly any skin off our backs. Community gardens need tending to, our renewable energy systems need people to maintain them, and the more people who come the more hands we have to work with. Plus, I know we like to pretend they don't, but The Empire has worthwhile cultural exports as well! And even if, for the sake of argument, we say they're weaker, or don't have anything "worthwhile" to offer, they're not hurting anyone. Our society is built upon lifting each other up.

So, I think that while we should be *incredibly* careful when dealing with their government, we should not be concerned over small groups crossing over.

**INTERVIEWER.** A very thorough response, Miss Moore. Now, what are your plans for cross-island...-

[FADE-OUT ON LAST LINE, TRANSITION]

[INT. STATION ARCADIA]

**KASS.** I'm really glad to hear that Axel will help Empire immigrants if she gets elected. Maybe she could even work with the Steveston revolution. I'm sure that, as premier, she would have lots of contacts and information that might be able to help them?

Hmm. I'll have to think on that. In the meantime, back to the story.

**KASS.** The Firefly Dancers arrive in Aristaeus on a cold but sunny afternoon. It's been a nice day so far, Hester thinks, and he's spent most of it looking out the bus windows. Where Island 5 was mostly hills and grassland, with wind and solar turbines dotting the landscape, Island 6 is all deciduous forest. Traveling through this kind of environment is fun as well; full of snow covered trees, though Giles assures him it's much more beautiful in the fall.

This time, they get everything unloaded without issue. During the process, the equipment is handled with exaggerated care, in an effort to avoid a repeat of what happened to the stage light on Island 5. It's when the show is starting to get underway that things start to go sideways.

Hester is assisting Giles with setting up some of the props behind the half-stage curtain. He gets one in place and turns to grab another just in time to see Giles trip over a misplaced prop and crash to the ground. Hester prays the audience didn't notice, and rushes to help Giles up.

Giles nearly falls again when he stands up, and Hester realizes they're about to have some problems. Giles must have twisted his leg when he tripped over the prop. Now, he's not one of the dancers or drummers, but someone still has to fill his place as the stagehand. Flint volunteers, but that would mean someone has to fill xer spot on the third dance, and no one knows xer part well enough. Callum could cover for Flint when needed, which would leave Beatrix to take his spot on the drums in the fourth act. Beatrix can play the drums well enough, and has done so before, but it's Callum that Hesper's more concerned about. He's been on drums for most of this showing, so he knows the musical cues much better than the stage cues.

But the show must go on, right?

The troupe does what they can to get things back on track. Nothing much changes for Hester except having Beatrix on the other drum instead of Callum. Everyone who was switched takes their new positions, and at this point, they can only hope for the best.

The performance begins with some introductory dialogue from Flint, which transitions into the first dance when he's done. Hester tries to hide a wince as it takes Callum a second to recognize the cue. He snaps into action a moment later and begins dancing. Hester and Beatrix pick up on the drums. He manages it well enough and they get through the scene without further issue.

Another problem occurs when Beatrix finds a rip in her costume, five minutes before her entrance. It must have gotten caught on something while in transit. Flint starts digging around in the other costumes for some sort of substitute, and Beatrix desperately attempts to fix it with needle and thread. After a few heart-pounding minutes, Beatrix

manages to sew the tear in her costume so that, with the addition of a brightly coloured shawl, the audience shouldn't notice a thing.

A few scenes later, Olive and Laurel make their first appearances. Normally there shouldn't be any concern with those two... until Laurel gets their lines mixed up and tries to correct it. Olive gets thrown off a little by this and skips ahead a line. Hester's heart catches in his throat, but they quickly sort themselves out. Hester spares a glance at Beatrix, who just shrugs. Nothing seems to be going right tonight. Giles is probably miserable; both at being stuck on the sidelines, and because of all the missteps that have happened.

It doesn't stop there. At the intermission of the performance, Hester misplaces a small prop for a brief scene he's in, and it takes nearly all of intermission to find it, buried under a few costumes. And then Flint spills water on the soundboard xe's working with, causing the effects to stop working. Great.

Once the intermission ends, everyone resumes their positions and tries not to let the downwards trend of the show affect their performances. Hester does his scene with Callum and returns to the drums. There's one more slip up because, once again, Callum freezes for a second before recognizing a specific cue, but they manage to carry on until, after what feels like an eternity, they get to the final scene and the closing dance with Olive and Laurel. Hester keeps expecting something else to go wrong. Nothing does, but at this point Hester just wants to get this over with. It really hasn't been the troupe's best night.

Once it's over, once all the dancing and music stops, Hester looks around at his friends. Beatrix gives him a smile, but it looks unsure. Olive and Laurel are frozen where they are, still smiling for the audience.

So many things went wrong over the course of the show, beginning when Giles took that fall. Beatrix's costume malfunction, Laurel and Olive's line mixup, any time Callum was late on a cue, and Flint spilling water on the soundboard. All of that together made for a truly terrible show, and Hester braces for the audience's reaction.

And yet... the crowd breaks out into thunderous applause and cheers.

Hester can't help but laugh with relief.

**KASS.** You know, I was a bit of a theater kid myself, back in the day. I wasn't part of a *troupe* or anything, I just took part in the Pomegranate Society plays, but I think I was alright. I'm glad to know even professional theater groups aren't immune to slip-ups. I once spilled an entire can of peach party pep-up on my costume at intermission and I didn't live it down for years.



Word to the wise - don't drink a bright pink energy drink over a white ghost costume. It won't end well.

Stay safe, stay moving, and stick close. You've been listening to Station Arcadia.

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