

The Curious Case of Dogless Space Episode 2

Space station noises.

Hench

Commander, have our guests boarded?

Commander 1

Bringing their vessel into the cargo bay now, sir.

Hench

Good. Send word down for an all clear and send them to Star View. I'll meet them there.

Commander

yes sir.

Hench leaves thru an automated door.

CARGO BAY NOISES. AN ALARM PULSES. THE SHIP LANDS AND THE BAY DOORS CLOSE. THE SHIP DOORS OPEN. The EVERFIELD'S enter.

Martin

Oh, this is a big one. So clean, how do you suppose they keep it so clean?

Karen

Hello, we are Karen and Martin Everfield, are you the Commander Hench we spoke to?

Commander 2

On behalf of DLDW Spaceport 15, welcome. You're granted access, sanctuary and all privileges and protections therein. Commander Hench is awaiting you both at Star View, if you'll follow me.

He walks off.

Karen

Terribly formal sort.

Martin

I'm glad we dressed.

they walk off.

Star View room. Calm and pulsing. A door opens.

Commander 2
Commander.

Hench
Ah, Mr and Mrs Everfield, I presume.

Karen
Karen, please.

Martin
Martin.

Hench.
Come in. Thank you, Commander.

Commander 2
Yes sir.

he leaves. the door closes.

Hench
Welcome aboard Spaceport 15.

Martin
very impressive.

Karen
yes, yes, a true marvel. Commander Hench, if you please, I have several questions I'll need answered.

Hench
Did the commander tell you what this room was called?

Karen
He said something about the view.

Hench

It's called Star View. It's our observation deck. Our architects and engineers designed everything on Spaceport 15 with a team of artists. Aesthetic was not sacrificed for function here. This room was built so our compliment could contemplate why we bothered leaving earth at all.

Karen

I see.

Martin

Well I don't. There's no stars to view from what I can see, Commander.

Hench

Correct Mr Everfield. We who stood on for hundreds of thousands of years on the planets surface stargazing, hoping to get just a little closer, we built these ships and this station to live among them. But here we are, on an observation deck with nothing to observe but the impentirable black that defines Dogless space.

Karen

very poetic, Commander, and I'm sure well practised. Perhaps over coffee or cocktails I would sit enrapt at your elbow, but I have a pressing few issues to unravel first and all of this...is superficial.

Hench

I'm afraid it's not, Mrs Everfield. You've heard of Dogless space, I'm sure?

Karen

Of course.

Hench

then you must understand the gravity of your situaiton.

Karen

I am aware of the mythos and legend surrounding this area. I have no intention of becoming a part of it. We will be leaving as soon as our engines are repaired. I trust you will help us repair them?

Hench

I'll have our team take a look.

Karen

Fine. Now I can tell you're just about bursting to lay it all out for us, so why don't you go

right ahead and get it over with so we can move forward?

Hench

Ha HA! I like you. Right to it then. The area here known as dogless space is of unknown size, the borders are constantly in flux. We can see no stars or planets, nor can we escape. The red worm hole that brought you here is a one way street. The hard truth is you'll have to acclimate to life on the station now. We'll make the transition for you as easy as we-

Martin

What did he say?

Karen

Which part dear? He tends to go on.

Martin

Red worm hole? I don't recall any red worm hole. Did I miss all that?

Karen

No no no.

Martin

I would have liked to have seen that. I enjoy red things so much.

Karen

I know dear, but you didn't miss it at all. The commander misunderstands our conveyance.

Martin

ah. wonderful. Please continue commander.

Hench

You...didn't get here through the wormhole?

Martin

Apprently not.

Hench

Then...how *did* you get in?

Karen

we hopped in!

Martin
our brass hop engines, you know.

Karen
our little ship isn't terribly fast, but we so wanted to see the cosmos. We developed a way
to sort of jump from place to place.

Martin
We made an emergency hop without charting a course. Ended up here.

Hench
By the cosmos! You two are full of surprises. But I don't know that you'll be able to "hop"
out the way you hopped in.

Karen
why is that?

Hench
I'll rotate the Star View and show you. Look.

he presses some buttons. The room rumbles and revolves.

Hench
We can't see any stars or escape because of the red wormhole's gravity well. It's the only
thing we can see in here. Our only compass point.

Martin
Good heavens! It's stunning!

Karen
Oh dear, I see. Red wormhole is just a colloquialism, isn't it commander?

Hench
Yes ma'am. It's a black hole.

Martin
a red hole.

Hench
that's just our visibilty screen. Black holes are of course not on our visual spectrum.

Karen
and the artists who designed your screen put a bit of flair on it. Yes I see.

Hench
I'm sorry.

Karen
Oh don't be silly. I have no intention of staying. I'm not worried about your silly
wormhole.

red alert

Hench
There's more out there than our silly wormhole, ma'am!

door opens and he runs off. they follow.

Karen
Hang on, I still have questions for you. What's all this ruckus?

Hench
Heart of Oak, Mrs Everfield! You've drummed up some extra attention, I'm afraid.

muffled impact.

Martin
oh my!

Karen
From whom?

muffled impact.

Hench
The pirates of Dogless space.

Martin
Those aggressive types who kept laying on the bell when we hopped in!

Karen

I expect so.

a door hisses open. We're on the bridge (beeps and boops. people chattering)

Hench
Report.

Commander 3
The usual ruckus, sir.

Hench
Pearl and Cutthroat?

Commander 3
No Cutthroat yet, sir. So far it's Pearl, Rudder, Server 88, and Chasm.

Hench
Chasm? That's unusual.

Karen
Commander, are these "pirates" the sort-

Hench
Beg your pardon ma'am, but I'm going to have to ask you and Mr Everfield to sit tight while we handle the situation.

Karen
oh!

Hench
Guns armed.

Commander 4
So armed!

Hench
fire a warning spread.

Muffled laser sounds.

Commander 3

They're still coming sir.

Hench

Rotate axis, show 'em our belly and keep us moving.

Commander 4

Rotating 3 degrees interval push, second access at stand by.

Hench

Fire warning pulse every 10 seconds.

Commander 3

Sir, it looks like...Commander I believe they're engaged in a coordinated attack pattern.

Hench

What?

Commander 3

See for yourself.

Hench walks over and hits some buttons on a thing.

Hench

Is that Pearl taking point?

Commander 3

yes sir.

Hench

What the hell, hail her please.

bloop.

Pearl

Commander Hench!

Hench

Pearl, what the hell are you doing?

Pearl

We are storming your station, commander! And this time you won't stop us!

Hench

What's this 'us' stuff? Since when do you all engage together?

Pearl

If you value your lives, you will stand down! Or taste our guns!

Hench

I feel like you're not listening Pearl, how did you and Rudder get Chasm to play nice?
That shark doesn't even bother hailing when he raids you.

Pearl

Chasm has a cruel heart, but a keen mind! He knows an opportunity when he sees it,
same as all of us!

Hench

Opportunity?

Karen

She means us, I'm afraid.

Martin

Our ship.

Hench

eh?

Pearl

give us the ship, Commander, and we'll leave you and your crew to die when the void
wills it! Stand in our way and suffer now!

Hench

Close channel.

Commander 4

Closed sir.

Hench

They think your ship can get them out of Dogless space.

Karen

It can.

Martin
well once it's working.

Hench
Let's go have a look at your ship then. Keep firing and stay on full rotation until they
wave off. If they get within range of the inner rings, direct hits.

Commander 4
Sir, we have a problem.

Hench
Launch it.

Commander 4
3 more ships just showed up.

Hench
who?

Commander 3
Looks like Jade, Saver, and The Overload twins.

Hench
Whats the-

MUFFLED LASER BLASTS AND IMPACT. THE ALARM SOUNDS. STEAM
SHOOTS OUTTA SOMETHING.

Hench
REPORT!

COMMANDER 3
SIR WE'RE SURROUNDED, OUR GUNS CAN'T HIT THEM ALL. 5 DIRECT HITS.

LOUD CLANKING AND SCRAPING.

MARTIN
WHAT IS THAT?

COMMANDER 4
2 SHIPS HAVE LATCHED THEMSELVES TO OUR OUTER HULL. ANOTHER 2
ARE ZEROING IN OUR OUT INNER RINGS. SIR, ITS A FULL RAID.

KAREN
SURELY YOU'RE EQUIPPED TO HANDLE THIS SORT OF THING,
COMMANDER?

HENCH
FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING. LOCK OFF ALL EXTERNAL PORTS. MOBILIZE
SECURITY, FIRE ON ANY SHIP YOU CAN HIT. I'M TAKING THE EVERFIELDS
TO HAVEN, MAINTAIN ALERT.

COMMANDER 3 AND 4
YES SIR!

HENCH
EVERFIELDS, ON ME!

They head to the door. it hisses open.

Cutthroat
COMMANDER HENCH!

HENCH
CUTTHROAT! SECURITY ALERT, INTRUDER ON THE BRIDGE!

laser shots! running!

Cutthroat
Take the bridge boys!

pirates yell and run in. laser blasts!

Karen
look out dear!

Martin
Oh!

Cutthroat

hahahahah hahaa! everyone stand down! STAND DOWN! Or I'll light up the tourist.

Hench
Let him go, Cutthroat!

Cutthroat
I bet I only need one of them to get that fancy ship of theirs working. Put your guns down, or kill us both, Hench!

Karen
Commander, PLEASE!

Hench
Stand down. Every one lower your weapons.

Cutthroat
Good man.

Martin
Agreed.

Cutthroat
shut up. YOU! Call Pearl.

beat.

Hench
go ahead commander.

bloop.

Cutthroat.
PEARL!

PEARL
cutthroat, did you take the bridge already?

Cutthroat
Of course, you freeze dried useless sack! I've got what I came for, so stop firing damn it all!

Pearl
Got what WE came for! Open the bay doors.

Cutthroat
Worried I'll leave you here to rot, Pearl?

Pearl
worried, no. Certain, of course. Chasm already has his people on board. So don't try anything.

Cutthroat
We're coming. Prepare the ship. Cutthroat out!

bleep.

Cutthroat
Come on, men!

Karen
Martin!

Hench
Mrs Everfield, no!

Martin
Stay back dear!

Cutthroat
All of you stay back! He's coming with us to work the ship! We'll kill the next person who takes a step towards us.

Martin
It'll be alright, dear. Stay put. I couldn't bear it if anything happened to you.

Karen
Stay safe, darling. I won't let anything happen to you.

Cutthroat
Touching. If I see anyone try and follow us, I'm gonna shoot him in the gut and figure the ship on my own. MOVE OUT!

the pirates march out, growling and muttering. the doors hiss closed.

Hench

Contact security, tell them to give the pirates a clear path to cargo and DO NO ENGAGE!

Karen

But Martin!

Hench

I know these pirates, Mrs Everfield. I've been locked in here a long time with them. If they think your ship is a way out, there's nothing they won't do.

Karen

This Captain Cutthroat person is dangerous then?

Hench

Not as dangerous as Chasm or the Overload Twins, but I believe Martin is in danger, yes.

Karen

right. What's our plan of action then?

Hench

We'll handle this ma'am. We're trained and familiar with combat. We'll get your husband back safely.

Karen

Commander Hench, if you'll forgive me for saying so, that is an unusual level of confidence coming from a man who just lost my husband, my ship, and very nearly his own station. If you won't cooperate with me, I'll have to take matters into my own hands to retrieve my husband. I think it will go much more smoothly if you assist me, but I am ready to take on these pirates alone.

beat

Hench

What did you have in mind, Mrs Everfield?

Karen

have you any spacecraft here?

Hench

We do, but it may not be ideal.

Karen
anything spaceworthy will do. And walk-suits?

Hench
of course.

Karen
Then, commander, let's go get back my husband from those damned pirates!

Hench
yes ma'am.

space mountain music swells!