

The Curious Case of Dogless Space Episode 1

Martin

Darling, have we run thru the milk?

Karen

Pardon dear?

Martin

I say HAVE WE RUN THRU ALL THE MILK?

Karen

are you serving tea *again*?

Martin

I am, I suppose. Isn't it time for it?

Karen

it's only been 2 hours.

Martin

Is that all?

Karen

Why are you all a tither, dear?

Martin

because I can't smoke my pipe, I suppose.

Karen

you can smoke you're pipe if you like!

Martin

no, no. I know you don't care for it.

Karen

I just worry after your health is all.

Martin

I'm running low on my shredded tobacco, anyhow.

Karen
oh, you!

Martin
Should we stop for some basics? Resupply ourselves?

Karen
if we're out of milk, we may as well.

Martin
I'll have the 'banks chart a course to the nearest planet.

Karen
I'll engage the engines. Full brass!

space mountain music begins.

Karen (into a PA system)
BARRINGTON! FULL BRASS TO THE ENGINES, WE'RE MAKING A HOP!

Barrington(a robot)
Yes Mrs.

Martin
Banks have the chart, ready?

Karen
LET'S HOP!

the ship jumps, steam billows, and the space mountain music kicks in full tilt boogie.

The ship re-enters normal space like a freight train.

Karen(pa system)
Barrington? BARRINGTON!

Barrington
Yes Mrs?

Karen
How are the engines?

Barrington
Glowing, Mrs. I don't recommend another hop until they cool.

Karen
Use the water reserves to cool them, collect the steam for future speed pops.

Barrington
Yes Mrs.

Karen(not on PA)
Martin, dear, do the 'banks say where we are? is it on the charts?

Martin
it's on the charts, yes. A barely industrial planet called Finnalast 2. but there I can't find almost any references in the Space Catalogue.

Karen
how perfectly queer. Did you check Clovis Dardentor?

Martin
I did, but it's no good.

Karen
Nothing to do but ring them, I suppose.

Martin
Oh, no! We can't ring them!

Karen
Whyever not?

Martin
I haven't dressed.

Karen
Don't be silly.

She winds up an old fashioned telephone. It rings like an old bell.

Martin

At least turn off the videoscope!

with a clunky click, someone answers.

Parim

This is Parmin Parumponen speaking for the Parumponen household, who is calling?

Karen

Look, see, they don't even have videoscopes yet. You worry wart.

Parim

I'm sorry?

Karen

Hello darling! I am Karen, with me is my husband, Martin-

Martin

Hello.

Karen

We're the Everfields, don't you know, and we are out of milk and some other such sundries. Does your planet have milk?

Parim

My...planet?

Martin

ask about the tobacco leaves.

Karen

Yes, I will dear. Yes your planet. Do you have milk or tobacco leaves? I think we're also short of cakes. Tea cakes?

Parim

I don't....who-who is this?

Karen

heavens, we're the EVER-fields. from EARTH. A planet, oh quite far from here actually.

Parim

another planet? Is this Phentom? Phentom are you pressing my buttons for fun?

Karen

Goodness. Is there anyone else we could speak too? Someone a little sharper maybe?

An old klaxon sounds. Barrington breaks in.

Barrington

Sorry to bother, Mrs. But another ship has jumped into near orbit.

Martin

Oh, company! Huzzah! I'll go dress.

Parim

Huzzah?

Karen

Who's jumped in, Barrington? Is it a leisure craft like ours, or something with a bit more
zazz?

Barrington

I'm afraid it's a Geist tankship, Mrs.

Martin

Surely not!

Karen

Oh really? What are the odds, you know it's almost like seeing a Southern Dandy without
his sunday linens at a picnic.

Barrington

Yes Mrs.

Parim

Souther dandy?

Karen

Yes, thank you, Parim. Nevermind. Send my best to Phantom.

Parim

what?

Karen hangs up.

Karen

If you're going to dress, Martin, go dress. I'm ringing the Geist.

Martin

Is that a good idea, dear? I've heard they're quite vicious.

Karen

Barrington says we can't hop, so we may as well have a chat. I mean what's the point of taking a galactic safari if we're only ever going to get milk from strange planets?

Martin

Hard to argue with that.

Karen

Good lad.

She rings the Geist.

Geist

Floating vessel...we are here by choice. You will not impede us.

Karen

Heavens darling, we're here by choice as well! This is Karen Everfield, who am I speaking with?

Geist

...we are the Geist. We have many titles, but we are called by none to you.

Karen

I see, how eccentric! Well Mr Geist, how would you like to join us for tea?

Geist

for....tea.

Karen

Yes, only Martin, my husband Martin, he's run through all the milk. On a bit of a consuming track just now as he's trying to give up on smoking his pipe. Quite

unsuccessfully trying, but the effort is what makes up the habits, you know.

Geist

....you will not impede us!

Karen

no, no, darling. I'm asking you over for tea? Do you understand? Come over here and drink some tea with us? Maybe have a chat?

Geist

"Chat"?

Karen

there he is, yes dear. You pop over and we'll swap stories over a nice hot drink. I can tell you some real hum dingers about some of the places we've been to.

Martin re-enters.

Martin

Have you told them about the planet where the trees were all living monsters?

Karen

Oh, stop it! You've spoiled the end, he's always doing that.

Martin

It's true, I speak ahead of my brain half the time. Are you going to join us for tea uh, Mr..

Karen

I think it's just 'Geist'.

Martin

Mr Geist?

Geist

We chart these bodies and spheres. We do not accept your command to..."chat".

Martin

Oh, isn't that a shame.

Karen

Alright then, Mr Geist, suit yourselves.

Barrington
Mrs, another ship is entering normal space.

Martin
What a busy planet.

Karen
and to think that silly Pharim or whatever didn't even know if she had milk.

Martin
Who's come calling now, Barrington?

Barrington
It's a ship of the Spacial Planetary Union.

Karen
Oh, them. This'll take forEVER now.

Barrington
They're hailing us, Mrs.

Karen
very well, Bye now, Mr Geist. Enjoy charting your spheres.

Geist
We have-

She hangs up. Her phone rings.

Karen
Hello, you've reached Karen and Martin Everfield, to whom are we speaking?

Briggs
This is Briggs, captain of the Ibn al-Haytham. Please identify yourselves.

Karen
well, as I just said We're Karen and Martin Everfield.

Briggs
...of?

Martin
New England.

Karen
We aren't affiliated with any organization captain. We're just on safari. Seeing what's
beyond the perverbial horizon, as it is.

Briggs
What's the name of your vessel, Evergreens?

Martin
Everfields.

Briggs
You're safe, SS Everfield. We've been tracking the Geist tankship across the sector. We'll
handle it.

Karen
That's fine captain Briggs, but we were perfectly safe all this time. We'd just invited the
Geist over for tea.

Click.

Martin
I think they hung up.

Karen
Rude.

Martin
At least it was short.

Karen
We'd better go. There's likely some shooting to be done soon.

Martin
but the milk!

Karen
Oh they don't have any milk here. (pa) Barrington!

Barrington
Yes Mrs?

Karen
We'll need to hop now.

Barrington
Mrs, the engines haven't cooled sufficiently to complete a safe hop.

Karen
We're not out here to play it safe, Barrington. We're out here for adventure.

The ship is rocked by a laser blast

Martin
oh!

Karen
and it appears the battle has begun. There is no safe option any longer, Barrington.

Barrington
Yes, Mrs.

Martin
Shall I have the 'banks choose a chart for us?

Another laser blast. Steam starts shooting out of pipes.

Karen
I'm afraid it's going to have to be a blind hop, darling.

Martin
That sounds terribly dangerous.

Barrington
The Geist ship is positioning us between itself and the Haytham.

Martin
That rogue!

Karen

LET'S HOP!

She hits the hop button and they steampunk away!

This next bit takes place during the jump, so everything sounds crazy.

Karen
wooo-hooo!

Martin
we've never jumped blind before! we could wind up inside a planet for all we know!

Barrington
Unlikely, sir. Even jumping blind, the first law of the 'banks operating power will not let us emerge in a fatal position.

Karen
there, you see Martin? Perfectly safe! That's probably far enough, don't you think Barrington?

Barrington
If you say so, Mrs.

Karen
quite.

She cranks a lever and they fall out of the hop.

Martin
My stars! Where are the stars?

Karen
Switching to port-prism.

Martin
Nothing.

Karen
Dorsal-prism. Aft. Hm. (pa) Barrington!

Barrington

Yes Mrs?

Karen

Are the viewing prisms working?

Barrington

Yes Mrs.

Karen

Are the screens in here working?

Barrington

Yes, Mrs.

Karen

Barrington, if everything is working, where are the stars?

Martin

Where are WE, for that matter?

Barrington

Unkown. Scopes and screens are operable. Short wave radio operable. Hop engines inoperable. Long wave radio inoperable.

Karen

Goodness.

Martin

Shall we pick a direction and just...travel?

Karen

To what end? No no, I'm not ready to start dithering about some cosmic fish bowl. Perescope!

whirr, click click.

Karen

There's never nothing. In all of space, everywhere we've gone, have you ever seen nothing?

Martin

I have not.

Karen

no, there's something here. Maybe not milk, but something. AH! There you see, look here through the perescope.

Martin

what is...I don't see anything.

Karen

The glinting light there?

Martin

Oh yes! yes I do see! A ship! It's getting closer, it must see us!

Karen

Put a chart in the 'banks, let's meet them halfway. We'll get some answers soon enough.

Martin

can we ring them?

Karen

Barrington, is the ship to ship still working?

The phone rings.

Karen

excellent.

It rings again, then click!

Pearl

HHAAAAAUUURRRGH! Stop your engines there! You haven't anywhere to run! And I've never lost anyone I've run down!

Karen

Sorry, who is speaking?

Pearl

PEARL! THE MOST FEARSOME, FIERCE, AND DEADLY PIRATE YOU COULD HAVE HOPED TO MEET!

Karen

How do you do, Pearl? My name is Karen, and this is my husband, Martin.

Martin

Hello!

Karen

We're not entirely sure where we are, could you tell us?

Pearl

On a path to HELL.

Martin

oh no.

Karen

That's very colorful Miss Pearl, but I meant more in the way of coordinates or...?

Pearl

You'll never see another coordinate again, you and that ship of yours is mine now!

Huuarrgh!

Martin

I don't think that fully makes sense.

The phone makes a beeping tone.

Karen

I'm sorry Miss Pearl, I've got another caller on the line, please hold.

Pearl

What?

Click.

Karen

This is Karen and Martin Everfield, who is calling?

Rudder

THIS IS RUDDER RED, AND THAT BRASSY POINTY SHIP YOUR SAT IN IS NOW

PROPERTY OF THE GASLIGHT GANG! STOP YOUR ENGINES AND PREPARE
TO BE BOARDED.

Martin
Certainly popular today.

Karen
Mr Red, as I told a Miss Pearl not a moment ago, I'm just trying to find out where we are.
None of this silly-

The phone tones again.

Karen
ugh, that's probably Miss Pearl again, please hold.

Rudder
YOU TELL PEARL SHE-

click.

Karen
Yes is this Miss Pearl?

Chasm
This is Chasm. My ship is on an intercept course for you. You will be boarded and taken
in under 7 minutes. If you wish to take your own life, you have that long to do so.

Martin
Oh! How awful!

Karen
Mr Chasm, really, is everyone in this sector so blunt and rude?

Chasm
Chasm out.

Karen
Really!

Barrington
Mrs, visual prism check indicates at least 5 ships closing on our position. Direct course.

Martin
Can we hop?

Barrington
Negative. Brass hop engines too badly damaged. They will need a full repair before we can attempt to leave.

Karen
what is the probability we can make the repairs ourselves.

Barrington
zero, mrs. We will need outside help.

Karen
There's no help out there it sounds.

The phone rings again.

Karen
Hello, Yes?! Who ever this is you can't have our ship.

Martin
It doesn't work anyway!

Hench
Stand down, vessel. This is commander Hench of Space Port 15. Looks like your folks could use some help.

Karen
We've got the situation well in hand, Commander.

The ship is rocked by a laser blast.

Martin
Now Karen, the man's trying to help.

Karen
We are fine on our own.

The ship is rocked again.

Barrington

Mrs, a series of fires has broken out in the brass engine rooms.

Karen

oh, very well. Yes Commander Hench?

Hench

I'm still here.

Karen

In fact, we could use quite a lot of help just now.

Hench

Sit tight, I'm right behind you.

Karen

Aft prism.

Martin

Good Heavens!

The space mountain music plays again. Laser blast! Laser Blast! Pew pew pew!

Karen

That is quite an impressive craft, Commander Hench.

Hench

It keeps the pirates in line.

Martin/Karen

Pirates??

Hench

That's right. You folks hopped right into the middle of pirate country.

Karen

and where exactly is that?

Hench

ha ha! You two are dead center of Dogless Space.

Karen
I've heard of that.

Martin
The space catalogue! It says...oh dear...

last blast! laser blast!

Karen
what is it, love?

Martin
It says here anyone who enters dogless space is never seen or heard from again.

Hench
That's the bad news folks. You're stuck here. Forever.

MUSIC KICKS IN FULL TILT BOOGIE!