

Episode 18: Storming The Castle

Description:

Content warning: Gunfire, human experimentation, classism, imprisonment, fantasy racism, death, violence, and threats of mass murder via acidic gas.

Today's episode was written by Brenna Anderson-Dowd in collaboration with Frederick Elmore. Performed by Brenna Anderson-Dowd as Hazel, Keith Baldwin as Malcolm, Noelle Rose as Rosemary "Nana" Thornton, and Frederick Elmore as Julia and Dr. Winthrop aka Frank. Sound design by Frederick Elmore. Music production by Kevin Elmore.

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INTRO: Kerfuffle and Chaos Productions presents Care and Feeding of Werewolves.

Episode 18: Storming the Castle

MUSIC (1): THEME SONG

SCENE ONE: OUTSIDE THE LAB

HAZEL: I know we're invisible and silenced, but I still feel exposed.

JULIA: I know what you mean. Like those nightmares where I'm naked in school.

HAZEL: At least there aren't any worms.

(mutter) What if someone skipped their usual cup of coffee? What if they're not all coffee drinkers? What if he changed his mind? What if we're caught trying to get in the back? Are there any other security measures Malcolm wasn't aware of? What if Nana isn't even here? What if she-?

JULIA: Stop overthinking shit. Get your head in the game.

HAZEL: You're not gonna give a pep talk, are you?

JULIA: Naw, I forgot my cheerleading outfit and pompoms at home.

HAZEL: Now there's an image.

JULIA: We're here.

SOUND (1): KAREN

SOUND (2): FACILITY ALARM

HAZEL: I knew that was coming and I still jumped.

JULIA: Ready?

HAZEL: Stop asking stupid questions and keep moving.

SOUND (2): VAPORIZING/DISPLACING STEEL DOOR. ALARM CUTS ABRUPTLY

SOUND (3) BUZZ OF FLUORESCENT LIGHTS

SOUND (4) RESIDUAL MAGIC

HAZEL: OK, I've got to narrow my protective spells a bit. My depth perception's going to be off while I concentrate, so you're our eyes, Julia.

JULIA: Clumsier than usual. Got it.

HAZEL: Bite me.

SOUND (1): FOOTSTEPS ECHOING IN A HALLWAY

JULIA: I gotta hand it to the bastard, he planned this well.

HAZEL: Yeah. I can't shake the feeling the other shoe has yet to drop.

JULIA: Spidey senses?

HAZEL: Not sure.

JULIA: Here's where we're supposed to go right. What're you thinking?

IN UNISON: Left.

HAZEL: Ok Frankie, come out, come out, wherever you are.

SOUND (2): WALKING THROUGH EMPTY STERILE HALLWAY, DISTANT SOUNDS OF FIGHTING?

JULIA: It's too-

HAZEL: Don't say it.

JULIA: -quiet.

HAZEL: What have I told you about the forbidden word?

SOUND (3): FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING

MALCOLM: (STAGE WHISPER) There you are. You're supposed to be in the north wing, not the south.

HAZEL: I have a terrible sense of direction.

MALCOLM: We can cut through here. Winthorp's in a lab up ahead to the left.

SOUND (4): BEEP OF KEYCARD BEING SCANNED OR HAZEL VAPORIZING THE DOOR

JULIA: That the elevator down?

HAZEL: The prisoners-

MALCOLM: Will have to wait. They'd just end up getting in the way and getting hurt.

SOUND (1): FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING

GUARD: Malcolm? What're you-?

MALCOLM: *Curses and shoots*

SOUND (2): HAZEL'S THROWN INTO THE SHALLOW ALCOVE OF A DOOR AS MALCOLM FLATTENS

HIMSELF AGAINST THE DOOR IN FRONT OF HER

SOUND (3): GUNFIRE AS SHOTS ARE EXCHANGED

JULIA: You guys ok?

HAZEL: Yeah.

MALCOLM: (FRUSTRATED) Dammit, never freeze in a fight. This is why I don't take civilians. Ok, change of plan, you hide in the supply closet-

HAZEL: Oh, shut up and hold still, you're bleeding all over the place.

MALCOLM: Where were you keeping those bandages?

SOUND (4): BANDAGING UP A WOUND

HAZEL: Mary Poppins' oh shit kit. There. Now take me to your leader.

MALCOLM: He's not mine. Hurry up, that'll have alerted the others. Our window of opportunity just got narrower.

JULIA: What, he's got a big red self-destruct button?

MALCOLM: He'll gas the prisoners.

HAZEL: H-he'll what?

JULIA: Ya kinda forgot to mention that part.

MALCOLM: He'll only use it as a last resort. Doesn't wanna destroy his "creations" too soon. In here.

SOUND (1): BEEP OF KEYCARD BEING SCANNED OR HAZEL VAPORIZING THE DOOR

GUARD: Hey!

SOUND (2): GUNFIRE

JULIA: I don't feel-

SOUND (3): JULIA FALLS TO THE FLOOR UNCONSCIOUS

SOUND (4): BASEBALL BAT ROLLING ON LINOLEUM?

HAZEL: JULIA!

SOUND. (MAGIC CRACKLE)

HAZEL: (calmly) No. I'm not having this.

SOUND (5): CARRIE SCENE

HAZEL: (calmly) You. And You. And You. You. Stop running... You and you.

(NORMAL) Please don't be dead, please don't be dead, please don't be dead.

SOUND (1): HEALING

Come on, Cupcake, come back to the land of the living.

MALCOLM: What the hell? Are they...?

HAZEL: Dead? Yes.

MALCOLM: I thought we weren't killing everyone?

HAZEL: They'd've been just as dead if you'd shot them. Besides, my friends up front would've fixed their oxygen habit anyway after they were done killing us.

MALCOLM: I could've taken out their legs.

HAZEL: Leaving them free to shoot us from the ground, brilliant strategy. There you are, big guy.

JULIA: (GROANS) That's gonna leave a mark, I just know it.

HAZEL: Oh please, gimme some credit.

JULIA: Help me up.

HAZEL: You don't have to come with us, you can stay behind.

MALCOLM: (GRUNTS AS HE HELPS JULIA UP)

JULIA: Thanks, man. Naw, I'm good. (BEAT) Jesus, Hazel, did you do this? You ok? They didn't hurt you, did they? (VOMITS?)

HAZEL: Does everyone have all their limbs or at least all the body parts they had five minutes ago? Ok, good.

SOUND (2): FOOTSTEPS

MALCOLM: I don't have access.

HAZEL: I got it. Stand back.

SOUND (3): GRAVEDIGGER DISINTEGRATES THE DOOR

SOUND (4): DART

HAZEL: Ow! What-? A dart? What am I, a freaking dog?

FRANK: I see the villagers with the torches and pitchforks are here.

JULIA: You!

FRANK: Ah, ah, ah, stay right where you are, beast. One press of this button and all the test subjects downstairs will be exterminated.

SOUND (1): SPELL FIZZLES

HAZEL: I-I can't... I have no magic! What was in that dart?

FRANK: An experimental treatment. A gift from a colleague.

MALCOLM: You intend to hold the prisoners hostage until reinforcements arrive.

JULIA: You, ok?

HAZEL: Yeah, just- I'll be fine.

JULIA: Hey fuckface, whatever you shot her with, is it permanent?

FRANK: Tell me, what does it feel like to suddenly find yourself human?

HAZEL: Why? Unfamiliar with the concept of humanity?

FRANK: It's an experimental treatment and I haven't yet had a chance to record the effects on a being capable of speaking English. And Malcolm, I truly expected more of you. I am very disappointed.

MALCOLM: The feeling's mutual.

FRANK: All great medical advancements came from some type of suffering or another, boy. Ultimately more lives were saved by-

HAZEL: Yeah, you're never gonna have the moral high ground there, buddy.

FRANK: You believe you're morally superior when you're out for my blood? If you can even do the deed.

If it weren't for methods that you find distasteful, there wouldn't be a hepatitis B vaccine, the speculum, or the lumbar puncture. It's the dirty secret of the scientific community: people like me have always been necessary. If it wasn't for farming the cells of Henrietta Lacks, we wouldn't have a polio vaccine and cancer research would be 20 years behind where it is now. You, yourself used them in med school, my

dear doctor; the entire world has benefitted from them. Imagine where we could be if we weren't held back by fear disguised as ethics. The possibilities are endless when you throw off the shackles imposed upon scientific advancements.

HAZEL: Sorry, I'm still stuck on the shackles metaphor because you literally have people imprisoned in your basement. Reasonable boundaries like no, you may not butcher me alive are not a hindrance to the greater good! They are a part of the greater good you claim to serve.

FRANK: You know very well that prisoners have been used for centuries. They are the perfect subjects, as proper science demands control of the variables. Without the ability to control all the variables, this research would be impossible. It's pure science. Pristine. Untouched and unsullied by petty emotion. You with your self-serving morals, your hypocritical ethics. With this sacrificial few, I would elevate humanity to godhood. You would keep us as ignorant as animals, howling at the moon! How much of your moralizing do you truly believe, how much of it was imprinted upon you from a young age?

HAZEL: Good gods, it's like arguing on the internet. You really took that fine line between genius and insanity and use it like a jump rope.

SOUND (1): FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING

GUARD 1: Stand down, Malcolm. I don't wanna shoot you.

MALCOLM: I got this. It's over, Roberts, we're going to let these people go.

GUARD 2: Evacuate, Dr. Winthrop! We got 'em covered!

SOUND (2): SOUNDS OF GUARD & FRANK LEAVING

JULIA: Frank's getting away!

HAZEL: Dammit, I can't stop him!

GUARD 1: That witch's brainwashed you.

MALCOLM: No, I'm done with the brainwashing.

SOUND (1): MALCOLM FIRES

SOUND (2): WEREWOLF GROWL

JULIA: He's a freaking werewolf?!

SOUND (3): FIGHT SOUNDS

HAZEL: You were right, I should've taken the taser!

JULIA: Say it!

HAZEL: You're right, you're always right!

SOUND (1): MALCOLM FIRES & WEREWOLF GUARD DIES

HAZEL: We could just leave him here.

JULIA: You couldn't walk away from someone bleeding out.

HAZEL: He might make it.

JULIA: Maybe. And someone might assume he was a loose end. You might go berserk to protect someone, but you can't kill in cold blood. And neither can I.

HAZEL: Fine. Help me get the body off of him.

MALCOLM: (GROANS) Why're you helping me?

HAZEL: It's rude to leave someone to bleed out. I need to borrow your belt.

SOUND (4): BELT UNBUCKLED

MALCOLM: Least buy me dinner first.

HAZEL: You've finally developed a sense of humour. Must be the acute blood loss. Fair warning: this is going to hurt.

MALCOLM: *GROANS*

HAZEL: If you start to lose feeling or movement in your hand, use your safeword. I can stop the bleeding, but I can't do anything about the bites. My abilities are gone, I don't know how lycanthropy will react to you.

MALCOLM: Understood.

JULIA: Let's get you up. This ain't gonna be comfy, Malcolm.

MALCOLM: Get on with it.

JULIA: Upsy-daisy.

MALCOLM and JULIA: *GROANS and GRUNT*

HAZEL: Let's go find Sage and help with the rescue.

SCENE THREE: OUTSIDE LAB

HAZEL: Get to the bus! Sage! Has anyone seen Sage! Oh my gods, Nana? Nana! Are you ok? You're pale as a sheet!

NANA: It's been a busy day, and I'm old. Sage was killed, dear heart, may she rest easy with Owen. Give me a hug, quick, and let's get out of here. Stop crying, Julia, you're a snot factory and you're getting it on a patient.

MALCOLM: (DISGUSTED) Ugh!

NANA: Oh it's you. Well, you can shut the hell up. Snot away, Julia.

HAZEL: Nana, I can't tell you how much I've missed you. I promise, the Garden's still standing, although there's this dragon, I'll explain later. Gods, Sage, I can't believe... the kids? (HAZEL continues on as voice fades out)

SCENE FOUR: PERTHRO INC

SOUND (1): SMALL FOUNTAIN

SOUND (2): INTERNATIONAL PHONE RING, MURMUR

SOUND (3): INTERCOM BEEP

SECRETARY: Mr. Merkstave, Dr. Winthrop on line 1.

MERKSTAVE: Report. Did he now? The entire facility, I see. No. Denied. You will stay to clean up your mess, Winthrop. You will do it quickly. You will not be allowed to fail twice.

SOUND (4): DIAL TONE

MUSIC (1): THEME SONG

CREDITS:

Thank you for listening. Today's episode was written by Brenna Anderson-Dowd. Hazel was performed by Brenna Anderson-Dowd, Julia and Dr. Winthrop performed by Frederick Elmore, Guard 1 by Kevin Elmore, Guard 2 by Mike Dowd, The Secretary by April Hergert, Mr. Merkstave by Colin Hergert, and Nana by Noelle Rose. Sound design by Frederick Elmore. Music by Kevin Elmore.

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Henrietta Lacks was a Black cancer patient whose genetic material was harvested without her knowledge or consent, neither of which were required at the time. Her cells are still in use in cancer research, drug manufacturing, and resulted in over 11,000 patents that have profited everyone involved except for Henrietta, who died from cancer. HeLa cells can be purchased online at \$615USD per vial. As of April 2022, her estate is still battling for compensation.