

Hit the Bricks

Episode 2 Transcript

Intro and credits

Music, song titles

Song lyrics

Sound effects / [sfx]

[SFX: orchestra tuning up]

THEATRE ANNOUNCER

Hello and welcome to tonight's production of Hit the Bricks, episode two!

Our show is intended for all ages, but may portray scenes that are rather intense for some audience members! You can find a full list of content warnings as well as transcripts at Hit the Bricks Dot Com.

Stick around for curtain call where we will present a preview of a secondary production, Sidequesting! A fantasy podcast all about avoiding the main plot.

Now.

When last we left cousins Jessi and Wallace, they were falling, falling, *falling* into a mysterious cavern...

[SFX: applause]

[SFX: orchestra tuning, interrupted by a conductor's wand tapping]

[MUSIC: HIT THE BRICKS THEME SONG]

[SOUND: theme song fades]

[SFX: woosh of wind, followed by two soft thumps]

WALLACE

Oh! Jessi!? Are you okay?

JESSI

Yeah. I'm fine. What *happened*?

WALLACE

I was resting on the frame a bit too hard and it snapped. *Whoa...* you weren't *kidding* about that city of glass.

JESSI

Yeah. I mean... I don't know. Maybe this is a *dream*. Why else would we have landed on a pile of straw?

[SFX: straw rustling]

WALLACE

How strange... Look, there are *clothes...* and a *sack*. Jessi, I think this is a scarecrow. Or it *was*, once upon a time.

JESSI

This... this *can't* be real. (She slaps her face) But I don't feel like I'm asleep.

WALLACE

Jessi, do you have a permanent marker?

JESSI

What? Why?

WALLACE

His *face* is faded! Oh, never mind, I have one in my bag... There we go... [SFX: marker on fabric] almost... there...

SOUND: WALLACE HAS UNCAPPED A MARKER AND IS FILLING IN THE VARIOUS DETAILS ON HIS FACE

JESSI

Seriously?

WALLACE

Ta-da! A little wonky, but I did the best I could with what I had.

[SFX: fabric rustling]

SCARECROW

(Weakly) Thank... you...

WALLACE & JESSI

Ah!

SCARECROW

Oh, please don't be frightened! I don't mean to *startle* you.

JESSI

Wha-- who *are* you?

SCARECROW

I'm the Scarecrow, and I've been trapped here for.. *I* don't even know how long. How do you do?

WALLACE

Pretty well... thank you. My name is Wallace Williams, and this is my cousin Jessica Hugson, but she goes by Jessi.

JESSI

Wallace! What are you doing? This is impossible!

WALLACE

But it's happening *anyway*. Deal with it, remember? (Addressing Scarecrow) How do you do?

SCARECROW

Oh, I'm not feeling at all well. It's very *tedious* being torn apart and *scattered* asunder.

JESSI

Fine, I'll participate. Um... Is there anything we can do to help?

SCARECROW

Perhaps if you can help me get back into *shape* by finding and stuffing my *clothes*!

JESSI

You really do seem to be scattered in all directions. How did you *get* like this? [SFX: straw stuffed into fabric] And for that matter, where *are* we?

SCARECROW

Well, I don't mind telling you while you *look*, but, first tell me where *you* came from! Not a lot of kids dropping from the sky these days.

[SOUND: footsteps in rough dirt, straw stuffed into fabric in the background throughout the scene]

JESSI

Well. I'm from San Francisco, California, originally...

SCARECROW

Hm... *That* sounds familiar. Is that anywhere near *Kansas*?

WALLACE

That's where we live! I don't suppose this cavern is under Kansas, is it?

[SOUND: gentle, soothing acoustic guitar strums in background]

SCARECROW

I'm afraid not! But, allow me to welcome you to the *Land of Oz*.

JESSI

Oz...

WALLACE

Sounds like a sci-fi planet. Maybe it is... talking scarecrows, and glass cities.

[SFX: straw stuffed into fabric]

JESSI

Eh. San Francisco has a giant greenhouse at the conservatory that's not so different from that, and I've *seen* giant disco balls like that glowing orb at Pride...

[SFX: straw rustling]

SCARECROW

Oh, as far as I can tell, that's the glass town's light source and the smaller colored orbs are how the old residents tracked *time!* ...I *think*. Maybe my traveling party learned more, but, I haven't seen *them* in some time.

JESSI

Oh yeah. You never answered how you got like this.

SCARECROW

A friend of mine went missing. All of Oz has been looking for her, and my party found this little underground cave and empty city. The *cavern* entrance wouldn't let us back out once we came in, and I decided to go scouting for another way out, and that's when the wooden gargoyles attacked.

JESSI

Wooden... *gargoyles*?

SCARECROW

Oh, they're *quite* the little terrors. Just come *swooping* in with their big claws.

WALLACE

(Nervously) Are they... are they around?

SCARECROW

Oh! I don't believe so. Your falling caused quite a scene. I doubt they'll come back for a while.

JESSI

You... said your friend was missing?

SCARECROW

Oh-- Yes! Dorothy. Dorothy Gale.

WALLACE

Jessi! That's the name of the girl! The one who kept disappearing from *Prospect Place*! The house we crashed into on the surface? What if that's *Dorothy's* house? The one the tornado blew away.

JESSI

Wallace, she'd have to be *well over 100-years-old*, wouldn't she?

SCARECROW

Well. Hm! I suppose so! In Oz, people don't age the way they do in the *outside* world, and because of that people aren't so *concerned* with tracking time.

JESSI

So, if no one's keeping *track*... you could have been stuck here for a couple of *decades* and not even *know* it.

SCARECROW

Possibly! I suppose.

WALLACE

I'm sorry, Mr. Scarecrow, I can't seem to find the button for your jacket.

SCARECROW

Oh, that's *quite* alright. I'm sure it's easily mended.

JESSI

So... that also means that we could be stuck here for decades and not know it!

WALLACE

Jessi, it's okay, we haven't been here that long.

JESSI

(Starting to panic) Yeah, but you don't *know* that! Mom is one hard sneeze from going into *labor*. We can't *stay* here!

WALLACE

Look, I know, but--

JESSI

Okay. Okay, so. I'm going to stop assuming this is a dream because not having a plan is *really* starting to make me panic.

WALLACE

Okay.

JESSI

We are in some kind of... what, magic *land*?

SCARECROW

Oh-- Fairy country.

JESSI

Sure! And if that weren't bad enough, we're *trapped* in some sort of underground *cavern* with a looming possibility of an attack from *wooden gargoyles*.

SCARECROW

That's right so far.

JESSI

Okay, and assuming we all make it *out* of here... how hard is it to get back to Kansas? I mean, apparently *Dorothy* did it all the time.

SCARECROW

Well. It *used* to be harder. Oz is surrounded by a deadly desert that turns anything living that touches it into dust. And then there are the neighboring countries... and the enchanted *ocean*...

JESSI

Sounds promising.

SCARECROW

Well, anyway, *you* don't need to worry. Our Princess, Ozma, has a magic *belt* that can send *anyone* to Kansas. We just have to make it back to her palace at the Emerald City.

[SOUND: gentle acoustic guitar fades out]

WALLACE and JESSI stop stuffing the Scarecrow's body with straw.

WALLACE

Well, that doesn't sound too bad. Alright. I think you're as together as we can get you. Can you stand?

SCARECROW

My goodness! It's *good* to be free!

[SFX: shuffle on dirt, then a thump]

SCARECROW

Oh!

WALLACE

Oh! Are you alright?!

SCARECROW

Oh! I'm fine! Just a little clumsy.

JESSI

This side of the rock looks like a path. We can scale down to the city and meet up with the rest of your friends. Maybe *then* we'll be able to figure a way out of here.

SCARECROW

Lead the way.

[SFX: gravel sliding against itself; footsteps on a rocky path]

JESSI

Scarecrow, I have a question. If Ozma has a magic belt that can just... *transport* people... Why didn't she use it to find Dorothy?

SCARECROW

Oh, she tried that *first*. She exhausted *all* her magical *abilities* to try and locate Dorothy. So, we all broke off into search parties to look for her.

WALLACE

"We?"

SCARECROW

Dorothy's friends. I mean, after *everything* she did for everyone here, almost all of *Oz* loved her. Of course, it wasn't just *her* that went missing. Her Aunt *Em* and Uncle Henry are gone, too. Oh, and her dog Toto, of course.

WALLACE

Seems a bit... *scary* that someone so beloved could go missing without a trace.

SCARECROW

Oz was pretty safe for a *long* time... but, I have to *admit*, I'm a little worried.

JESSI

Well none of us will be able to do anything for *anyone* unless we get out of here. Come on. Almost there.

[SCENE CHANGE]

Their voices echoing:

SCARECROW

How strange. It looks like Scraps the Patchwork Girl is keeping watch at the parapet.

JESSI

Aside from the fact that she's a giant living rag doll, *why* is that strange?

SCARECROW

Mmm. Just watch. HELLO-OOOOO!

SCRAPS

(From a distance) Who goes there!? State your business!

SCARECROW

Scraps! Why are you wearing that ridiculous fake beard?

SCRAPS

The Soldier with the Whiskers decided to take the day off! Now state your business!

SCARECROW

Scraps, it's me! The Scarecrow.

SCRAPS

Scarecrow? We had given up on you! I had thought you'd become a part of some big bear's *lunch*!

SCARECROW

Well, the gargoyles did *try*, but my new friends put me right again. This is Jessica Hugson and Wallace Williams. Cousins, from Kansas.

SCRAPS

You have cousins from Kansas?!

SCARECROW

No, no. They're each *other's* cousins.

SCRAPS

They're *both* in Oz at the same *time*? What a coincidence!

SCARECROW

Scraps. Open the gate.

JESSI

It's gonna be a looooong day.

[SFX: stone slabs dragging across glass]

[SFX: resonating tones, sounds of mining play in background]

SCARECROW

How's everyone doing?

SCRAPS

Oh, better than you I suppose. Though Billina won't let me use her eggs as juggling balls.

SCARECROW

Oh! I didn't know that you knew how to *juggle*!

SCRAPS

Yeah, and I never will because she won't let me *practice*!

JESSI

Excuse me, Scraps was it? My friend and I fell from Kansas and we're kind of desperate to get back to it? Did you guys find a way out of the caverns?

SCRAPS

Without Scarecrow's brains, we've been *totally* clueless... Unless the others know somethin' I don't, which I doubt. I am very *bright*, you know. Pastel, even.

JESSI

Yes, I can see that. How many people are in your party?

SCARECROW

Well... people is a relative term, but let's see. Me, Scraps, Billina the hen, Saw-Horse, The Woozy, half of the Royal Army of Oz--

WALLACE

Half of your whole *army*!?

SCARECROW

That's *only* 14 people. Shaggy Man, Frog Man, Braided Man--

JESSI

Awful lot of *men* in this group...

SCRAPS

Now you can see why we're so lost.

SCARECROW

(Voice echoing) Attention! Everyone!

[SFX: clip-clop of hooves]

SAW-HORSE

Scarecrow! You're alright!

SCARECROW

Yes, Saw-Horse, I'm *just* fine thanks to our new friends. This is Jessi and Wallace, and they're from Kansas. *Just* like our Dorothy.

[SOUND: gentle chiming bells sing quietly in the background]

[SFX: wings flapping]

BILLINA

Do you know *Dorothy*?!

WALLACE

I'm sorry, Miss... um, Talking Chicken. She left Kansas *far* before we were born.

BILLINA

Call me Billina. Pleasure to make your acquaintance. I'm from Kansas myself, but I don't really like to claim it as my own.

JESSI

Yeah, I don't blame you. Um, everyone! Hi! Have you learned anything about the barrier that's keeping you in here since Scarecrow's absence?

[SFX: bells chime in background]

SAW-HORSE

No, but we did learn that the gargoyle attacks are triggered by the blue light from the orbs in the sky. We also learned that they hate noise!

JESSI

So, why not make a bunch of *noise* when it's *blue* time?

SCRAPS

We do, but it's *exhausting*, and they keep coming back. They destroyed some of the glass buildings and they pulled the Woozy's tail!

WALLACE

Um... can anyone tell us what the gargoyles *look* like?

SCRAPS

Shaggy made a few pictures. Here!

[SFX: paper shuffling]

JESSI

Those claws are no joke... Wait... those are straps. Their wings are *detachable*?

SCARECROW

Oh, I *saw* those! But there's no way *anyone* could get close enough to get them.

WALLACE

Well, what do you think, Jessi?

JESSI

Why *me*?

WALLACE

Because you're smart! And you're into engineering and-- and sound.

JESSI

Okay. Right... Let me think of something. Mm...

WALLACE

Jessi?

JESSI

Okay! Everyone! I have a plan! *All* we really need is one set of those wings. At the roof of this cave, there's a trap door to the surface. At least *one* of us can fly through and get help!

WALLACE

Jessi, Dorothy's house is totally locked.

JESSI

We made a hole in the roof when we dropped in. Someone can *fly* through that.

SCARECROW

And what's the rest of your plan?

JESSI

Um... I don't know, exactly. But I'll figure that out when we get to the center of the city. Come on.

[SCENE CHANGE]

[SFX: footsteps in dry grass]

SCARECROW and JESSI's voices echo as they talk

SCARECROW

Jessi, I don't mean to pry, but, you seem to be moving a *mile* a minute. You know, it's perfectly okay to ask for help! If *I* hadn't, I never would have out of the cornfield! I *never* would have gotten my brains and become the King of *Oz*. Of course, I *wouldn't* have lost the throne to an army of angry *knitting* enthusiasts, either, but that's neither here nor there. Why don't you take a *deep breath* and--

[SFX: footsteps stop]

JESSI

Okay, listen. My mom is the only person I have in the whole world right now. Right before I ended up here, she and I got into a big fight. I can't let that be the last time I spoke to her.

JESSI sighs

[SFX: footsteps continue]

JESSI

I'm sure this is a fine country, and I like everyone here, but... I just don't belong in fairyland. So. You're supposed to be the smartest person in *Oz*, right? Everyone looks to *you* for answers,

and I get that. I used to feel that way back at my old home, but... I feel like I've got a sack of hay for a head *now*-- No offense! If you could help me figure out a way to fix this, I'd be much obliged.

SCARECROW

My brains are the carefully-assorted, double-distilled, *high-efficiency* sort that the Wizard of Oz makes. They usually fall flat under pressure, though, being only bran and pins. Sometimes, if I stand in a corner and really *allow* my thoughts to *resonate*--

[SFX: chiming ding]

JESSI

Resonance! That's it! You ARE a genius. The wall around the city is shaped like a glass *bowl*. *I'm* going to play some loud *music* through my portable speakers. The sound will be loud enough as it is, but once the song hits those last *notes* the sound will *resonate* and *hopefully* the *frequencies* will be too much for the gargoyles to bear!

WALLACE

I hope this works, because it's almost blue o'clock.

[SFX: hissing, rumbling]

GARGOYLES making monstrous noises

JESSI

Okay, here we go. Everyone stay *low*!

[SOUND: music starts low, then increases in volume]

MUSIC from the beginning of Episode 1.1 plays:

[MUSIC: THE THREAT, BLACK KITE]

*There is a lie, a lie, a lie,
There is a lie.*

[SFX: resonating ring, increasing in volume]

GARGOYLES stutter, then stop their monstrous noise

[SFX: resonating ring is sucked away, then BOOM!]

JESSI

That wasn't the expected reaction...

[SFX: fireworks whistling and exploding]

WALLACE

They exploded! Do-- do you... think they're okay?

SCARECROW

Oh, I'm sure they'll recollect themselves and hopefully be far less cross when they do.

JESSI

There looks like there are enough salvageable wings for a *few* of us. Let's try them out.

[SFX: feathered wings flap]

BILLINA

Wait! It might be dangerous! Suppose the gargoyles found the trap door, and some of them are waiting in the house!

SCARECROW

Hm! A fair point! Scraps and I will fly up first, and report back.

JESSI

But--

SCARECROW

Oh, don't *worry!* We can't get *hurt!* We'll be *fine.*

SCRAPS

Yeah, we'll be back at the Emerald City before you know it.

WALLACE

Maybe we'll be home in time for supper.

JESSI

...maybe. Good luck, guys.

[SFX: flapping of wings that then fade into the distance]

[MUSIC: soothing synth plays in background]

WALLACE

Jessi... Jessi?

[MUSIC: soothing synth suddenly stops]

JESSI gasps groggily

JESSI

Sorry! I'm up. Just... *really* tired. Scarecrow! You're back *already?*

SCARECROW

Yes... I'm afraid it's no good. There are branches that have grown over the *hole* you made in the *roof.* Without the key to Dorothy's house, *no one* can go out that way.

JESSI

What? But... but there's gotta be *something*.

WALLACE

Jessi.

JESSI

Okay, take me to the tunnel where you guys first came in when you *discovered* this place. I wanna check out this barrier for myself.

[SCENE CHANGE]

[SFX: a distant wind, water dripping on rock in background]

SCARECROW

See? Once we came in, we couldn't get out. It's like an invisible wall. You can put all your weight on it and you won't go *through*. Try it.

[SFX: whispering magical woosh]

WALLACE

Wah!

JESSI

Are you okay?!

WALLACE

Yes, but more importantly: look! The *barrier's* down! We both got *through*!

SCARECROW

Hm! Maybe... you can get through because you didn't come *in* that way.

JESSI

Then we gotta go right now, we have to get out of here.

WALLACE

Aw man, I left my bag on the Saw-Horse.

[SFX: hooves clopping, then another magical woosh]

SAW-HORSE

I got it! Here you go.

JESSI

What!?! You can cross, *too*?

SAW-HORSE

Hm, I guess I never tried before. When everyone else couldn't make it, I didn't bother.

SCRAPS

Maybe the barrier's down for everyone! I wanna try!

SCRAPS gets ready to run at the barrier, then does so

[SFX: echoing thud]

SCRAPS

Ugh. Never mind.

SCARECROW

There's no time to lose! It's very important that you get to Emerald City and ask for Ozma's help. The Saw-Horse is the *fastest* creature in Oz, so you'll make good time.

JESSI

How do we start for Emerald City?

SCRAPS

Why, the same way people have done it for hundreds of years: *hit the bricks!*

SCARECROW

The road of yellow brick in Munchkin Square will take you straight there. *Saw-Horse* knows the way.

SCRAPS

Here! Catch this forget-me-not to remember me by!

WALLACE catches it

SCARECROW

So long!

[SFX: hooves clip-clopping]

SAW-HORSE

Not much farther.

WALLACE

Look! I can see daylight.

JESSI

Hold on, Mom. I'm coming.

[SFX: birds chirping in distance]

[SCENE CHANGE]

[SFX: water running in a stream, wood creaking]

JESSI

(Gasping in the fresh air) Above the Earth's crust at *last!* Oh wow... That sky is so beautiful.

WALLACE

Oh my goodness! Look at the size of all those *flowers!* Oh, what cute little houses!

JESSI

(Nostalgic for California) It's so nice to see some hills...

WALLACE

Listen! People!

[SFX: rustling of leaves; people talking and laughing in distance]

JESSI

Wow! They seem so friendly. Everyone's waving and smiling--

SAW-HORSE

It's your hair. Blue is the national color of the Munchkins.

[SFX: birds tweet]

WALLACE

Hm... I'm guessing *that's* the yellow brick road we're lookin' for.

SAW-HORSE

Yup. On foot it'd take a few days to get to the Emerald City, but I can get us there in a few hours. Hop on!

[SFX: wood creaks]

JESSI

Hey... is something wrong?

SAW-HORSE

Nope.

WALLACE

Um. It's just that we're on you, and... you're not, like, moving.

[SFX: more people laughing and chatting in background]

SAW-HORSE

Oh. That's because you didn't say "giddy-up!"

JESSI

"Giddy-up"?

[SFX: hooves clopping]

JESSI gasps

WALLACE

(Enjoying himself) Aaah! Hahahaha!

JESSI

(Bumping on bricks in her speech) How can you actually be liking this?

[SOUND: hooves clip-clopping becomes percussion for a song...]

[MUSIC: an upbeat song with acoustic banjo, egg shakers, and a little bit of tambourine]

[MUSIC: THE TRAVELING SONG (HIT THE BRICKS)]

WALLACE (singing)

*There's nothing better than
A journey just begun
See the road rush under us
As yellow as the sun!*

JESSI (singing)

*Hey, those fences are the color of my hair
You really weren't kidding when you said they like blue here
I am feeling better
Now I'm up from underground
Passing munchkin dwellings
Hearing birdsong all around
It's pretty strange but
Not as strange as Kansas
At least the land is much less... flat*

ALL (singing)

*We're gonna
Hit the bricks
Gonna
Hoof it 'til we make it
Gonna
Hit the bricks*

*It's easy once you try it
When you
Hit the bricks
There's really nothing to it
All you gotta do is
Hit the bricks*

[MUSIC: instrumentals continue]
[SFX: birds chirping in background]

SAW-HORSE

Hop off my back and let me show you!

JESSI

Okay...

SAW-HORSE

You put your one foot down!

JESSI

I'm already standing?

SAW-HORSE

And then you put your second foot down!

JESSI

Okay, so, walking?

WALLACE

Jessica! Hush!

SAW-HORSE

And then you put your third foot down!

JESSI

I only have two... so...

SAW-HORSE

Then you put your fourth foot down... and you do a little-- (he tap dances) Dah-duh-dah-duh dah dah dah duh dah!

WALLACE

Oh! I get it! Like this?

JESSI

What? Wallace, how are you doing that?

WALLACE

(Giggling) Jessi, you're doing it too!

JESSI

Wha! How am I... (Chuckling) Oh, who cares!

JESSI & WALLACE (singing)

*There's really nothing to it
All you gotta do is
Hit the bricks*

[MUSIC: just the banjo]

WALLACE (singing)

*Though there are hills
And mountains left to climb...*

JESSI (singing)

It's easier when your friends

Can carry you sometimes

[MUSIC: egg shaker comes in]

ALL(singing in harmony)
(quietly)

We're gonna

Hit the bricks

Gonna

Hoof it 'til we make it

Gonna

Hit the bricks

It's easy once you try it

When you

Hit the bricks

There's really nothing to it

All you gotta do is

Hit the bricks

[MUSIC: banjo, egg shaker, and tambourine all together]

(louder)

We're gonna

Hit the bricks

Gonna

Hoof it 'til we make it

Gonna

Hit the bricks

It's easy once you try it

When you

Hit the bricks

There's really nothing to it

All you gotta do is

Hit the bricks

[MUSIC: just the banjo]

WALLACE

I know that you CAN do it

[MUSIC: banjo, egg shaker, and tambourine all together]

JESSI

Hit the bricks!

[MUSIC: song ends with a couple of strums of the banjo]

[SCENE CHANGE]

[SFX: lonely bird calls, leaves blowing in background]

[SFX: slow, cautious clip-clops]

WALLACE

What's the matter? Why did you slow down?

SAW-HORSE

The road's pavement is rougher from here on out.

JESSI

And yet the princess lives in a city of jewels. What kind of *tax* system you got goin' on here?

SAW-HORSE

Tacks? I have a couple of nails, but that's about it.

WALLACE

Oh! Someone carved *gashes* into all of these *trees*...

JESSI

Wait... those are *claw* marks.

SAW-HORSE

Oh yeah, they're probably from the creatures that live in this part of the forest.

JESSI

(Unenthused) *Creatures*... Okay, sounds great so far.

SAW-HORSE

Kalidahs*. Well some pronounce it kuh-/ee-duh, some say *calli-da*, but *I* say they're dangerous. They've got the bodies of bears and the heads of tigers.

[*Pronounced like kaleidoscope]

JESSI

I thought all the animals here were cool?

SAW-HORSE

Well, anyone made of meat and bone becomes disagreeable when they can't find anything to eat.

[SFX: a low snarling growl]

WALLACE

Oh *please* tell me there isn't one right behind us.

[SFX: another growl, louder this time]

SAW-HORSE

Nah, that sounded like it was in *front* of us.

JESSI

Well... maybe it's just echoing up from the ravine over there?

WALLACE

(Stifling a gasp, then whispering) Look! Up on that ledge on the other side of the ravine! It's a Kalidah!

SAW-HORSE

And the road goes right *past* them... or it *would*, if that bridge wasn't out.

JESSI

Okay, seriously? I'm gonna talk to Ozma about road infrastructure.

[SFX: guttural growl]

THE KALIDAH

(Coaxing) Come here little mousey, mousey, mousey. I just wanna talk... COME HERE!

WALLACE

He's got a *mouse* cornered in that briar patch! Oh, the poor little thing!

SAW-HORSE

Seems to me like we're stuck between a rock and... some more rocks.

[SFX: leaves and twigs rustling]

JESSI

Saw-Horse. Can you make the jump across the ravine?

SAW-HORSE

I'm swift, but I don't got a single spring in my step.

JESSI

(Pensive) Okay... Mmmm.

SAW-HORSE

Um. Jessi?

WALLACE

She gets like this when she's thinking.

JESSI

The branches overhead have woven together to make a pretty *thick* canopy. Wallace, gimme your belt.

WALLACE

What?!

JESSI

I'm *gonna* to give it *back*. Okay, I'll wrap it around Saw-Horse... is that too tight?

SAW-HORSE

Nope!

JESSI

Okay, good thing we salvaged my hiking stuff. Let's see if this catches.

[SFX: a couple wooshes of rope being swung around]

JESSI

Okay! Wallace help me pull. With all your strength!

[SFX: rope creaking]

JESSI grunts

[SFX: wood snaps]

WALLACE gasps quietly

WALLACE

(Hushed but concerned) Look out!

[SFX: leaves and twigs rustling]

THE KALIDAH

STOP DODGING ME AND ACCEPT THAT YOU'RE GOING TO BE MY
SNACK!

JESSI

Okay... it didn't notice. Let's try this again...

[SFX: a couple wooshes of rope being swung around]

[SFX: rocky dirt crunching]

WALLACE

What are you *doing*?

JESSI

If this branch can hold all of our weight, we can *swing* across the ravine to the other side. Ready? Pull!

[SFX: rope creaks]

They all grunt with effort

JESSI

(Quiet but triumphant) Yes!

WALLACE

What about the kalidah!?

JESSI

First we're going to back up so that we create a pendulum. The other side is lower, so we'll be able to swing *across*...

SAW-HORSE

...and I'll give him a good *kick* into the thorns!

JESSI

I *was* gonna say we can swing over the *Kalidah*, but okay! The momentum has to be perfect, and the *rope* has to account for the distance, so we *have* to hold it tight. Saw-Horse, step back... step back-- Okay stop! I'll tie this end of the rope to the buckle...

WALLACE

Jessi, that mouse can't hide forever!

[SFX: mouse squeaks]

JESSI

(Concentrating) I know! Okay, Wallace, when I say *now*, you hit this button here on the repeller: it's a release.

WALLACE

Okay...

JESSI

Saw-Horse, when I say "giddy-up", you run!

THE KALIDAH roars

JESSI

Giddy-up!

[SFX: clip-clop of hooves, woosh of wind]

JESSI

NOW! WALLACE!

THE KALIDAH

(Hearing the noise) ...What?

SAW-HORSE

Take that!

SAW-HORSE firmly kicks THE KALIDAH

[SFX: a hard thump; body falling on leaves and twigs]

[SFX: hooves clip-clop]

THE KALIDAH

Gah!

WALLACE

And take *that!*

[SFX: soft thud on ground in the distance]

SAW-HORSE

Whew!

WALLACE

It worked! You're a genius!

JESSI

It'll take him a *while* to get out of there... What did you throw at him, Wallace?

WALLACE

Some peanut butter crackers. He'll be hungry when he gets out of the thorns.

JESSI takes a deep breath

JESSI

Okay. How far are we from Ozma's palace?

SAW-HORSE

I'd say another half-hour.

WALLACE

I guess we're out of the woods, so to speak.

SAW-HORSE

There's an overlook ahead where you'll get your first view of the Emerald City!

SAW-HORSE

Wait for iiiit... Aaaaaand... ta-da-- oh.

[SFX: clip-clopping stops]

WALLACE

Oh!

SAW-HORSE

Oh my.

[MUSIC: low reverberating music starts, reminiscent of renaissance fair music]

JESSI and WALLACE gasp

JESSI

U-um... well. It *is* beautiful... but not quite what I was expecting.

SAW-HORSE

Um. Maybe Ozma's done some redecorating?

[MUSIC: music increases in volume, continues playing in background]

WALLACE

So strange... it's like it's two different cities *mashed* together.

JESSI

What do you mean?

WALLACE

Look at the bottom: the buildings you see next to the wall? They're soft and domed. Consistent with local architecture just with different building materials. But it looks like the *old* Emerald City is getting cannibalized by those harsh, *angular* emerald spires encasing it. So, at least architecturally... the city's at war with itself.

JESSI

Well... *anything* looks imposing backlit by a sunset! Come on!

[MUSIC: music suddenly fades out]

[SCENE CHANGE]

[SFX: ticking of a clock, wind rushing]

[SFX: ticking suddenly stops, followed by the song of a clocktower (Westminster Quarters, half hour)]

[SFX: clocktower chimes once]

[SFX: footsteps through dry grass, wind blowing in background]

THE WISEST SISTER

Wait.

[SFX: footsteps stop]

THE ELDEST SISTER

What's wrong, sister? We're nearly to the borderlands.

THE WISEST SISTER

The wind... something is wrong. Something... Something *foul* is in the air.

[SFX: footsteps continue]

THE PRETTIEST SISTER

Well... the sun *is* very *hot*. Perhaps a moment's rest *will* do.

THE YOUNGEST SISTER

I, for one, feel a break is in order. My feet have been *burning* for the past *hour*. Following you three with my tiny legs is *much harder* on my stamina than you give me credit for!

THE ELDEST SISTER

Sisters! We can't stop now, we're nearly *there*. The farmer said the edge of the country is *just* beyond this hill. We've come so *far*, we have to keep *going*.

THE PRETTIEST SISTER

Very *well*. But hand me your umbrella so that I might not *expire* under the high noon sun.

[SFX: footsteps continue for a bit, then stop]

[SFX: cloaks rustle in the wind]

THE ELDEST SISTER

No... this cannot be.

THE WISEST SISTER

No one mentioned anything about a desert. The landscape doesn't account for it either.

THE YOUNGEST SISTER

It goes for miles and *miles...* *ugh*, and that air that comes from it. It must be *toxic*.

THE PRETTIEST SISTER

Now that you mention it... I do *feel* rather faint.

THE ELDEST SISTER

I *thought* we were almost *home!*

THE WISEST SISTER

But the storm last *night*. It shook the earth something *fierce*, perhaps *that* was the cause.

THE PRETTIEST SISTER

Sisters... I *may* have imagined it, but, I *swear*... I saw a beetle land on the sand and turn to dust.

THE ELDEST SISTER

Nonsense. The desert may be *vast*, but it's *flat*. We don't have to stop moving. See? We can keep *going*.

THE PRETTIEST SISTER

No, I beg of you, don't! You'll *crumble* into *sand*!

THE YOUNGEST SISTER

Oh, will you stop being such a fraidy cat! Look: it's perfectly safe.

THE PRETTIEST SISTER

I SAID *STOP*!

[SFX: a soft, quiet resonating sound]

THE YOUNGEST SISTER

I... I cannot move.

THE PRETTIEST SISTER

Am I... am I doing this? Baby sister..

THE YOUNGEST SISTER

Aah! Put me down!

THE PRETTIEST SISTER

...come back to me.

[SFX: fabric blowing in wind, a thump on the ground]

[SFX: resonating sound fades out]

THE YOUNGEST SISTER

How did you *do* that?!

THE PRETTIEST SISTER

I- I don't *know*.

THE WISEST SISTER

Sisters. It seems quite clear to me that we cannot return home simply by walking. We must *stay* in this *strange* country and learn more.

THE ELDEST SISTER

Yes... and I know *just* where to start. The Emerald Palace at the center of this land.

[All sound fades out]

[END EPISODE]

[SOUND: instrumental piano music plays in background]

THEATRE ANNOUNCER

This episode starred
Michelle Agresti
PJ Scott-Blankenship
Lee Davis Thalbourne
Charlotte Dow
Arthur Maurici
Danielle Shemaiah

Briggon Snow
Lauren Shippen
Megan Scharlau
Q Dyer
And Dana Luery Shaw

It was written and directed by PJ Scott-Blankenship
Executive Produced and Sound Designed by Chad Ellis
Music by Kathryn Hoss, AP Harbor, Jeff Ball, and Jordan Bush
Recording Engineering by Andy Rumschlag, Mischa Stanton, and
Chad Ellis
Story Editing by TH Ponders
Transcripts by Erin M Speckley
Art by Chandler Candela
Audio Consulting and Clean Up by Sage GC and Travis Reaves
Special thanks to Davis Walden, Anarchy Post, and The
Whisperforge.

And now, for a preview of Tal Minear's excellent fantasy audio
drama, Sidequesting, where apple-picking beats dragon-slaying,
Princesses need saving from Princes and there is always time to
smell the flowers.

MILLER

Aren't adventurers supposed to have a specific purpose? What
are you doing on this quest, just meeting strangers?

RION

Yep! My purpose is to have no purpose. Though... I sort of find
purpose as I go.

OLIVER

My basket! It's missing!

JEFFERSON

I have tried many means of defense but none have yet proven successful.

WILLOW

I just wish someone would succeed in getting that darn sword.

LORD

I am under attack by this ruffian!

ROWAN

I want to be big and strong and fight evil!

IRIS

I have hope that if *you* show up at her door, she might listen.

SAM

Wanna help me yell at them? With your sword? In a... threatening manner?

TAL

Sidequesting is a fantasy podcast about avoiding the main plot. It follows Rion, an adventurer who's willing to help *just* about anyone out, as long as they're not being asked to deal with that scary *wizard* everyone keeps talking about. Subscribe today on your favorite podcast app.

THEATRE ANNOUNCER

Goodnight, and see you in Oz.