

Episode 2-14

SFX: Knocking on door

CLAIRE

(yelling) Come In!

SFX: "Word Disassociation" by Lemon Demon is playing, and Claire is singing along.

JACQ

Hey Claire can I talk to you for a minute?

SFX: Turning music off.

CLAIRE

What's up?

JACQ

Um. So. I've been thinking about what happens...
when Geneva leaves?

CLAIRE

Oh! Yeah, I hadn't really considered that. Hm. Isn't
she going to be staying for a while? I thought she
had a lot of research to do here.

JACQ

I mean - theoretically, yeah.... There's also the
possibility that she goes home to get together
another expedition and we never get the portals
open again. And then we're... what?
interdimensional long-distance until we can't deal
with that anymore? I don't... know what to do about
that.

CLAIRE

Okay, yeah. I can see where you're going.

JACQ

LIKE... Chel isn't like she's in...fuckin, Des Moines or
like, I dunno, Amsterdam, or something. It's not

about saving up for a visit or. Making the time.
Getting a passport.

CLAIRE

Yeah. That's really rough. I know people who do the long distance thing, but they can at least visit, and you don't know if that will be a possibility.

So... have you talked with Geneva about this?

JACQ

Noooo....

CLAIRE

Why not? You two talk about everything.

JACQ

I think we both kind of just don't want to think about it?? Like... I know it's crossed her mind, too...

CLAIRE

Well... okay. Well I only see two solutions to this really.

JACQ

You do?

CLAIRE

Either Geneva stays here, or you go with her.

JACQ

Geneva can't move here!! She has a real career. And - I'm... kinda scared? To go somewhere unfamiliar where I KNOW I'm gonna be treated like a second-class citizen. And like a fuckin... curiosity.

CLAIRE

That's...very fair. I know how that feels.

JACQ

Ah - yeah, I guess you probably do. Sorry.

CLAIRE

No, it's fine.

JACQ

It's kinda not! I am being a shitty white friend right now.

CLAIRE

I mean, yeah, it's not fine! It fucking sucks!
That shit's been shoved in your head all your life.
But at least you're trying to unlearn it, so we're cool.

If that's how things are over there, then yeah, it's going to suck. But I can't say it wouldn't be worth it. I've seen how the two of you look at each other. You just have to do what you can.

You two love each other, sometimes that can be enough. Sometimes it isn't. I can't tell you "yeah you should go!!" because... I don't know. But it's something to think about.

JACQ

(nervous laughter) I mean yeah I like her a lot. Chel, and Geneva's city, sound amazing too. They have goddamn magic, yeah? But I'm kinda like, I'm too old to learn a whole new life.

CLAIRE

Dude, you're like...not even 30. And I mean look at you. You're a total nerd, right?

JACQ

HAH! I don't know what being a nerd has to do with it.

CLAIRE

How long have you been playing RPGs? Creating whole worlds, and learning about them as you go?

JACQ

Ugh! All that stuff is based on Earth folklore and my own little... political machinations. But, I—I guess so?

CLAIRE

Look. You're smart and adaptable, plus you love this shit, right? It might not be a bad move. I think you could definitely handle it, despite whatever racist or homophobic bullshit they've got going on over there.

JACQ

That's a whole other thing, like—dealing with transphobia without a community backing me? How many fights am I gonna get into the first month because some orc gawked at my girl?

CLAIRE

(laughs) Sorry, sorry. You're just really cute, you know that? That love! That fierceness! That's the stuff.

Yeah, it might be dangerous, but all the orcs **here** seem alright. Maybe it's not as bad as you think it is, and if it is, maybe this crew will be willing to help.

JACQ

I guess I could talk to them about it. Maybe it's not as bad as Geneva thinks it is.

CLAIRE

If she's the one being oppressed, then she's probably right

JACQ

Shit! Sorry.

CLAIRE

(tone shift to quote Yoda) "You must unlearn what you have learned."

JACQ

God. Now who's the nerd.

CLAIRE

Takes one to know one.

JACQ

(laughs) I don't think that's really true, but thanks.
Still don't know what I'm doing, but that helped.

CLAIRE

No problem. Now get out. I'm checkin' out this album.

JACQ

That album's over 10 years old!

CLAIRE

Well it's new to me. Now out!

SFX: song resumes. Door open/close. Static transition. Scene has walking sounds and ambient park noise.

JACQ

Ohhh, it's a shame they had to close down the park.
I used to like coming here when I was a kid.

GENEVA

Heh. I bet you were cute.

JACQ

Maybe. *(pause)* I bet you were cuter though. What did you like to do as a kid?

GENEVA

Oh, you know the usual stuff. Reading books, going to the museum.

JACQ

So you've always been a dork then?

GENEVA

Duh! Like, a dweeb to the max.

JACQ

Oh gosh. Your obsession with our culture is really annoying sometimes.

GENEVA

(laughs) Sorry, but you're just so fun to tease.

JACQ

(sighs) It's not the teasing I mind. It's the torture!

GENEVA

Well... I'll try to back off on the old references but really 30 years or so isn't—

JACQ

Yeah, Yeah. I know. It isn't long, especially to an archaeologist.

Ahh I think I can see the portal! It's uh, wow does it always look like that?

GENEVA

E-yup.

JACQ

It looks like some membrane grew over it? That's really weird.

GENEVA

It is! I haven't read anything like this! Either the portals are on, or they're off! They don't have weird green membranes blocking them.

JACQ

Huh. Have you, like, poked it with anything?

GENEVA

Jacq. I'm a trained scientist. Of course I've poked it.

JACQ

(laughs) I suppose that's true.

GENEVA

I'm not sure what to do with it anymore really.

JACQ

That's okay! That's why you have another pair of eyes. So why don't we go over what you do know about it first. And then we can work from there.

GENEVA

Okay. So this should be a functioning portal between Earth and Chel. It instead contains some kind of green membrane which is very resistant to cutting, and doesn't seem to be harmful to touch.

JACQ

You've touched it? Like with your hands?!

GENEVA

Uh, yes.

JACQ

I wanna touch it!

GENEVA

Uh, sure, that should be fine.

JACQ

Really? Oh god I am nervous now. Okay!

SFX: *she walks over and touches it.*

JACQ

Huh, it feels like leather? Very bouncy green leather.

GENEVA

Yeah, I was getting to that it's very stretchy... Jacq.
Jacq?? what are you doing?

SFX: *Running*

JACQ

(*Distantly*) Cannonballlllllllllll!

SFX: sproingong oing oing impact noise

GENEVA AND JACQ

Oof!

GENEVA

Um...hi.

JACQ

Oof! (*at the same time*) hey babe! Thanks for the uhhh... derring do?

GENEVA

That was a little dangerous.

JACQ

I knew you would catch me. Did you SEEEEEE the way it flexed? It was like ... like, uhhh...

GENEVA

Like a what?

JACQ

I can't think. I have seen something like it before, maybe in a movie?

GENEVA

Hmm. Well maybe we can figure it out later, but as you see it is very resilient.

JACQ

It... hold on though. (*Jacq walks up to it again and listens to it, touches it.*) I think this is like, alive. Or is that just because it's magic? Is this what magic feels like? I thought it would be, um, sparkly.

GENEVA

Alive? Magic? I'm not sure I'm following. What makes you think it's alive or you think you might be feeling magic?

JACQ

It just feels like a living thing to me. Put your hand here.

SFX: *Walking, contact sound, silence for a moment*

JACQ

Like it seemed like leather at first, but now I am like... it feels like skin or like, natural, plant, something? Like it's organic, something growing here, not something that was put here. Or built here. Or whatever. It feels like it's... I dunno babe, ALIVE.

GENEVA

(sighs) I didn't bring anyone skilled with plants and animals like that. I guess I could try talking to it, but I don't know. It doesn't look like it can talk.

JACQ

Talking to it like just saying hello? Hmmm. I wish the flumph was (*awkward pause*) still here.

GENEVA

Because of the telepathy?

JACQ

Yeah, it could be like, a translator?

GENEVA

I can do that. I mean not telepathy but I've got this like... universal translator spell? But it doesn't look like it can talk.

JACQ

We could do some tests to see if it can understand? Like, "stomp your foot twice for yes," except, something that a weird green membrane can do?

GENEVA

Well I guess it's worth a shot.

Uh hello there, sorry about my girlfriend bouncing off of you. Can you understand me? Uhh... wobble twice for yes, once for no?

SFX: pause

JACQ

I thought you were going to use a translation spell.

GENEVA

Well I wanted to make sure it didn't speak common first. Don't wanna cast a spell and then find out it understood common the whole time.

JACQ

Very fair.

GENEVA

(clears throat) Lecter po Aspiranda dei

SFX: When casting the spell, there are twinkly noises and Geneva's voice is doubled, the second voice is pitched lower. Her voice is normal again when she speaks in common.

Hi can you understand me now? Wobble twice for yes and once for no.

JACQ

Is the spell working? You just sound normal.

GENEVA

It's a universal translator, what else would it sound like?

JACQ

...I dunno. Sorry, carry on.

GENEVA

Hi, if you could wobble that would be great. Just give me a little wobble so I know you're listening.

JACQ

Hmm. Maybe it can't wobble on its own.

GENEVA

Hmm maybe.

JACQ

Maybe if I touch it, or you do, either way, you can ask it to do whatever it can to let us know it understands?

GENEVA

Okay I'll touch it, it's possible that it communicates through some kind of contact.

SFX: SPANK NOISE

GENEVA

EEEEP!

JACQ

Sorry, just, communicating through contact with you.

GENEVA

Contact with my butt?!

JACQ

It got my message across, no?

GENEVA

(laughs) Loud and clear.

JACQ

Okay, sorry. Back to serious science mode, and I will behave.

GENEVA

Right.

Uh hello there, do you understand me? Please respond in any way you can.

SFX: *Waiting*

JACQ

(*whispering*) is anything happening?

GENEVA

Not that I can tell. If it is alive, I don't think it's smart enough.

JACQ

Mm. Ya win some, ya lose some I guess.

GENEVA

Maybe not. Well I mean I have an idea, but yeah definitely didn't succeed this time.

I might have some books on nature magic. If it's like a plant or animal of some kind, maybe I can find a way to communicate with it.

JACQ

Hm. And none of the others know about plants? What about Elise, she keeps seeecreeetsss.

GENEVA

I mean it's possible. They're really busy with their digging, but I can ask when I next check in.

JACQ

Sounds like a plan, at least!

GENEVA

Yeah, thanks. I wouldn't have thought of talking to it on my own.

JACQ

(*Kissy noise*) No problem babe.

SFX: *spank noise*

JACQ

Eeep!

GENEVA

Want to go back home and communicate a bit more?

JACQ

Yes ma'am!

CREDITS (Therín)

Thank you for listening. Interference is a Land of Chel production. Hazel writes, edits, and does sound design. Therín edits the scripts and keeps everything organized.

- Geneva and Jacq were played by Hazel and Therín Stapp.
- Claire was played by Sheila Morris
- A special thanks to Cole Burkhardt for consulting on this episode
- The song Claire sings along to is Word Disassociation by Lemon Demon

There are links to help you find them in the show notes.

For more information, to read transcripts, or to get in touch, head to landofchel.net, or hit us up on Twitter @landofchel. As always, we thank Jahzzar for the use of their song "Please Listen Carefully" as our theme.