



# Deep Blue Stars

## Episode 3: To Quantify Life Seems Unlikely

**Captioned YouTube Video: TBA**

Transcription Notes: Please note that as of the original upload date, this transcript is not accurate to the posted episode. Edits will be made as soon as possible for accuracy. Thank you for your patience

[Museum Theme begins.]

### CURATOR

Welcome to the Museum of Mysteries Archival Audio Records. What you are about to hear is the voice recordings of Dr. Indigo Pigeon Hale, donated to the Museum with generous support by Opal Hale and Seraphim Feldman-Rodriguez, as well as generously underwritten by the Lavender Lemonade Collective. This is the third installment, titled "To Quantify Life Seems Unlikely." We'd like to inform you this episode contains the sounds of thunder, as well as an in depth analysis of the usefulness of people, which can be triggering to some. We will link the timestamps in the description. We hope you enjoy your visit!

[The recorder starts. Indigo is walking while recording.]

### INDIGO

He roars, up she rouses  
He roars, up she rouses  
He roars, up she rouses  
Early in the morning!

Put 'im in the guardroom till he gets sober  
Put 'im in the guardroom till he gets sober  
Put 'im in the guardroom till he gets sober  
Early in the morning!

What do you do with a drunken sailor?  
What do you do with a drunken sailor?  
What do you do with a drunken sailor?  
Early in the morning



He roars, up she rouses  
He roars, up she rouses  
He roars, up she rouses  
Early in the morning!

I can't remember another verse  
well, I can but I am not going to sing it  
The verse about the captain's daughter  
Early in the morning!

It's rude. Um - oh, I forgot I turned the recording on, whoops.

Onward. As we talked about yesterday, I have made plans to explore the cave. I imagine that would be a serendipitous spot to find a shell, abandoned deep in a cave.

I've also come across the problem that I should've overcome earlier, perhaps before setting out on this expedition. I don't have any real knowledge of many of the physical attributes of the shell I'm looking for, and as I'm on a beach, there are a multitude of possibilities. I imagine I should gather as many shells as I can find and then, tonight, point them at the stars, to see what I can make of it. I have committed the film of Milly and Prudence Kaufman to memory and thus, I feel relatively sure I could copy their movements to test the shell. And I know, if I've seen this video, I should be able to identify the shell, however one grainy black and white film does not offer much in terms of a description of a small shell.

This is what I do know. It is about palm-sized in Milly's hand, and goes up to Prudence's first set of knuckles. Unfortunately, we can only guess these things and a guess is not as good as a fact. It is a spiral shell, with several sharp points on it. Unfortunately, we cannot decipher a color, though some tales suggest it's blue and others suggest golden. Though when ancient texts say gold that could be anywhere from yellow to true gold, to yellow tinted brown. So, we will see what the true color is. I think repeating the motions is what's going to be best.

So, off we go! Isn't it fun?

[Indigo trips.]

Aff. What on Earth?

[Indigo picks up their phone.]



Crab, I have an adventure planned, I'm afraid there will be no beachcombing today!

[A disappointed chitter.]

Come now, I'm sure you can't go to the cave. It's... Well, I'm not sure what it's like. I haven't been myself yet, you see? But you are much more persnickety about your environment, aren't you? Objectively, humans are more adaptable than crabs.

Is that true? I feel like it might be- though, I suppose we can't simply remove our shell when our soul gets too big to fill it. Crabs seem like funny creatures. And I believe you to be the funniest crab yet.

[A chitter that seems to say "Rude."]

Forget it. Once again, I am sorry little crab, but I have things to do. I cannot simply lay about the beach. I have already become more sand than human. It is time for me to go on, you understand, don't you?

I will return.

[Walking continues to play under the rest of this, until it stops.]

I fear the crab has become too fond of me. I wish this was not the case, as I am in no shape to be a crab parent. Or a crab friend. Perhaps give me a few days, or a few hours. The middle of the night is when I become my loneliest. I sit up in my little campsite in the dead of night, and I'm struck by how wide and empty the ground is. I'm also tormented at the thought of being struck by literal lightning. It seems the sunny days of the past are gone. Rain looms over the horizon. I imagine I may have to sleep on the boat to avoid getting wet, but the thought of sleeping in water in the middle of a rainstorm gives me anxiety and while I have a small supply of Zoloft to keep me going, I don't know if it could stave off a panic attack that monstrous. So, we may see if this cave is dry enough to build a shelter within.

Hopefully this doesn't upset my crab friend too much. Zoloft notwithstanding, I do feel a certain sense of loneliness that the crab is helping with. Sure the crab does not understand me like my partners, but her personality is a remarkable one. Somehow all at once I feel understood, and removed from a situation and while it is my responsibility to leave things that belong here as they were, this crab does not have the same responsibility to leave me unchanged.



Perhaps I am beginning to feel sunsick. Onward still! Ideally, this cave will keep me out of the sun. Some people can spend their days in discomfort, but I am not one. I am a brittle scientist, with brittle scientist bones.

No, a joke. Scientists, as a species don't all have brittle bones.

The sun is hot though, and my phone is hot in my hand. Until I reach the cave, I'm going to turn the phone off. I'd like to avoid turning my hands red and wet.

Should I have a sign off? We can workshop some, I suppose. I have time.

Signing Off,

Dr. Indigo Hale

Good bye,

Dr. Indigo Pigeon Hale

[The recording stops.]

[The recording starts again.]

I am now at the mouth of the cave; I had forgotten how far away it was. According to the watch, it has been about a fifteen minute walk, though it felt like hours. I tried running it a little, to make the time pass. But this tweed, which is a light tweed mind you, is not optimal for running. Aesthetical joys make practical woes, I always say. Besides, I'm not very good at running. I get winded.

[A strange and collected chitter.]

You again? I swear, this is hard to believe with no visual, but I'll see if I can try and get a picture of these godawful crab. Because it's the same crab as before, of that I'm positive. Why are you following me?

[Chittering, an explanation.]

I'm not the one who can reach you the best crab. If I were you, I'd go and follow someone who's less likely to go somewhere that will hurt you. Inside this cave could be very dangerous for the both of us. I'm going in now.



Indigo takes a step into the cave.  
The crab walks in too.

Is your intent to go with me?

[The crab chitters resolutely.]

Fine, but it is your own fault if this goes south. Not that you really understand me, but either way.  
(into the recording)

I want it known that this crab went in on their own; I can't just spend my day trying to force a crab not to join a project, so in we go.

I suppose if I'm going to befriend her, she'll need a name. I have reconciled wanting to name her, an adult crab, with believing she has definitely named me. Or perhaps she is a higher lifeform who has moved beyond the need to use names. I however, need a name for you, crab.

Perhaps we shall call you Cora.

No, it invokes the name of maybe a mermaid, or sea creature. But nothing that is worthwhile.  
The crab has a full personality.

Oh, let me describe the cave. I had gotten so distracted, I had forgotten of it. The inside of the cave is a few degrees cooler than outside, which is nice. Unless it is unbearably damp, I will be moving into this cave. It's far from the boat, which will worry me, but I'm already walking that much throughout the day. So I think, I can manage the extra fifteen minutes a day, if so only I can try and curb some sun sickness. My skin only remains free from blisters because I wear long sleeves.

The cave is cavernous, obviously. It's deep, everything is made of limestone I think. It doesn't smell murky in here, which I had worried about, though I'm only just a few feet in. The walls have a few cocoons, which makes me think this might be a moth breeding ground of sorts. Which is going to be embarrassing to sleep in. There's no pooling water or creepy echo, so, so far, it's a wonderful place for me. I don't see any fragmented shells in this part of the cave, but I imagine they'd have to be deeper. In we go.

Back to the dilemma at hand.



I don't like the name Crab, because it's too impersonal and I could be talking to any crab. Blue is funny, but only because I am Indigo. But it's only a feature; I despise people calling me Brown Eyes or anything of the sort.

[Indigo stops walking.]

I have a name!

Okay, you might not like this, but hear me out. Or don't, you're a crab. I'm talking to you, because talking into a recorder makes me feel less alone, but the fact is until I know where the shell is and until I know I'll be able to sail home, all I've got is you to talk to. This recorder may never be found.

Apple is a good name for a crab.

Yes, Apple is it. That's the most perfect name. I will hear nothing more of it.

[Apple chirps in delight.]

The name is Apple approved! So it seems.

[The skitter deeper into the cave.]

As we head deeper, I'm starting to see from fragmented shells, though none of them are in the same basic shape as was seen in the Kaufman tape. Pointed, color unknown, etc.

The cave offers a new experience in that the deeper we go, the more connected I feel to the island. I've traversed most of it, and I'm fairly certain that this island has no other people on it, and only the bare minimum in terms of wildlife. The flora has begun to bustle, but the fauna has remained mostly crabs and cranes. I believe this island must be fairly recently formed. The mountain may be a volcano, though I'm not entirely sure; that is not my area of expertise. These are just some preliminary conclusions I've drawn up based around what I can see.

The island is alone, and so am I.

I mean, I have my traveling companion, one crab I have assigned human-like characteristics to, made anthropomorphic of my own need to communicate. An entirely human response to a situation that is somewhat scary. To be lost is one thing; to be alone another.



[Apple chitters off.]

Apple has gone off on her own. No, she stopped moving. I think I'm following the crab now.

This could be a murder trap; perhaps Apple is a murder crab higher lifeform. Granted how can one measure a life? What quantifies life into higher or lower? According to some, it's usefulness to society. This is how functioning labels for autistic individuals came into the vernacular, and the community has pushed back against those for my entire life. Just because I don't fit your definition of useful, does not make me lower or less.

Some biologists define higher life forms by their status on the food chain, but even still the food chain crumbles without one piece. If I, at the top am killed, I take down nothing with me, because nothing needs me to survive. If suddenly all insects disappear, then most life on Earth could be reduced to nothing.

This has become a tangent, but I digress.

I've caught up with Apple now; she's surrounding a pile of shells... There are a few here that might fit my description!

[Indigo sorts through a pile of shells.]

Thank you, Apple.

[The recording goes out. It turns on again. Waves, quiet and tired yell. A crack of thunder.]

It is night now. My watch claims it's 4 AM but it's only been dark a few hours. Certainly it can't be that late. I do not know what time of course, but it's dark. With me, I have all the shells I gathered in the cave, as well as my camp packed back up in a bag. I'll be moving into the cave, to see if this works. Ideally, everything goes as planned and tomorrow I can focus on how to get home.

It might not work that way, I know that. Of course, I know that. But today has been fun in that, I haven't spent it wondering when I'll get home. I did something productive. I got to find shells, and maybe I've found the Star Shell.

This island has provided me so much. There is food, there is Apple, but this is not where I live. This is not a bed with Opal and Pim. There's no one here to hold me through thunder. And I



think that is reason enough to want to go home. Besides, I've set out with what I needed to prove.

[They pick up a shell and aim it in the sky during the next piece.]

Perhaps I have not been fully honest.

Listener, now that I am on the verge of something wonderful, it is time to fill you in on something that I have been hiding.

One of the reasons I could set out on this mission alone, was that I got fired from my job. Not for anything of my own doing, at least, not that I think. I was told that people were unable to take me seriously. Which did wonders to my self worth.

How am I not serious enough? The more likely answer is there wasn't enough funding to keep my project and blaming it on me made it easier. Especially because the lab I worked at kept Opal.

I had gotten my doctorate. I didn't understand why I was the one getting fired! But honestly, I suppose it makes sense. I had gotten my doctorate, but the Star Shell had remained missing. The perks of this, as I have to remind myself, is that I am no longer attached to a lab. My findings are all my own, no one else can lay claim.

However, my costs incurred and the damages to my body are also my own. So I have begun trying to be careful. I did the math. I didn't know how long I'd be gone, so I forgo the crew. I told my wife it was because the crew was ridiculous and tried to make it an easy thing for her. But let's be honest, I'm sure this is not easy for her.

This shell is not changing the stars. So we should try another. The way it was done by the Kaufman girls, Milly lifted the shell over her head and threw it once, twice, three times. Then she waved it left, right... No, the stars look the same. I have three more shells here, so not to be discouraged.

They attempt this with another shell.

I think ultimately, I just want my discovery to take me home. I want to laugh in the faces of those who had no faith in me and I want to make it up to Opal and Pim that I've been out of contact for almost a week. I left a voicemail to them. Before the stormy sea, I felt like a pirate. But I am not



a pirate, brave and proud. I am shipwrecked; not even that. I am on a deserted island, trying to recenter myself.

This shell didn't work either. Two more.  
They throw out the other shell and try another.

I suppose I should be proud by that. I avoided the shipwreck that could've come by instead docking myself. But, at the same time, I feel like there's no way to move forward. And no way to move back. At least, if my star reader is right, I will be able to find my work. And what then?

Perhaps I'll be rewarded for my discovery. The Museum of Mysteries is where I intend to send the shell; the museum is one of the best in terms of upkeep and preservation. The Golgi Archives is admittedly a little better at preservation, but the Golgi Archives is currently run by the homophobic Hilda Stants, who leaves much of the important work to interns who are overworked and underpaid and I'm part of a group that is boycotting the Golgi Archives till they remove her and pay their interns a living wage.

This one doesn't do anything.

They throw the shell on the ground and break it. It frightens them.

Maybe no one else cares about this work, and I'm just doing it for nothing. Maybe I'll fade into obscurity. I'd like to think that if I do, I'll at least have a cult following; or one devoted child finds my research.

Either way. It will not be tonight. This shell is not it either.

Apple chitters sadly.  
(heartbroken)

I wanted it to work too. But, we will not lose spirit. We will just try again. Tomorrow.

Apple whines.

Don't be sad, Apple. We will persevere.  
(singing)  
He roars, up she rouses  
He roars, up she rouses  
He roars, up she rouses  
Early in the morning.



A deep, resound sigh. A crack of thunder. A fearful cry. Silence.

The museum theme.

CURATOR

Thank you for coming along! We will be releasing the next excerpt on September 16th. If you want to continue to support "Deep Blue Stars", please go to [deepbluestars.com](http://deepbluestars.com) or donate to our patreon, [patreon.com/lavenderlem](http://patreon.com/lavenderlem). This exhibit was put together by Mik Koats. Please make sure to visit our feature exhibit The Stinging Symphony: Jellyfish Instruments.