

Crash of the Mellifera
Episode 12, Day 28: First Encounter
By Morgan Lane

Scene 1- Exterior, planet Lemarck outside of the ship.

1 Tomer

FX: CHILDREN CLAMORING

Okay, okay, everyone settle down. We've got about thirty boxes of crayons, so some of you are going to have to share.

2 Child

I WANT THE BLUE ONES!

3 Tomer

There's not a box with just blue. It's a bunch of different colors, that's how crayons work.

4 Ashford

Could I have some warm tones?

5 Tomer

(exasperated) For the last time, these are for the kids Ashford.

6 Ashford

Yeah, well I want to help with the coloring. It'll make me feel better.

7 Tomer

If there's enough and they feel like sharing, you can join in, okay? Otherwise—

FX: FOOTSTEPS

(sigh) What is it Savannah?

1 Sierra

(bad mood) That engineer seems to think I work here, they're sending me to run errands.

2 Tomer

Oh, does Ray need me?

3 Sierra

If they *needed* you, I'm sure they could have got up to get you themselves instead of sending a *passenger*. Do I look like an errand-runner? Am I wearing a little uniform?

4 Tomer

Savannah, there aren't passengers and staff anymore. We're all just survivors.

5 Sierra

(taken aback) Oh. But that doesn't mean—

6 Tomer

Could you watch the kids for me while I go talk with Ray, please? I need someone to keep them in line, and Ashford isn't going to cut it.

7 Sierra

(bristling) I'm not here to watch kids any more than I'm here to run errands!

8 Tomer

No, you're here for the same reason I am. The ship crashed. And if we don't all look out for each other, we're not going to make it. You understand me?

1 Sierra

But—!

2 Tomer

I said, *do you understand me?*

3 Sierra

...yes, I understand you.

4 Tomer

Good. I shouldn't be too long, and even if I am, the kids' parents should be done cleaning up the cargo bay soon.

FX: FOOTSTEPS AS TOMER WALKS AWAY

5 Child

Lady?

6 Sierra

Ugh... what do you want?

7 Child

(lowers voice) I had a accident.

8 Sierra

...TOMER GET BACK HERE!

FX: THEME PLAYS

9 V. O.

Crash of the Mellifera, by Morgan Lane. Episode 12, Day 28: First Encounter.

Scene 2- Exterior, planet Lemarck

1 Winnipeg

FX: FOOTSTEPS AS THEY TRAVEL. THEY COME TO A STOP.

Okay, I could really use a break. Let's sit down for a minute.

2 Worker B

If you must, you must. Despite the human body plan being well suited for endurance walking, I recognize that it is difficult for organics to discern between *wanting* to rest and *needing* to rest.

3 Winnipeg

Oh I could keep going if I needed to. I'm going to sit down anyways.

4 Worker B

Of course you are.

(pause)

You know, Apis Industries professionals hold themselves to a high degree of accountability. Not continuing a job when you can could be considered time theft.

5 Winnipeg

So I get a break *and* I'm stealing from Apis? Sounds like a win-win situation.

6 Worker B

You are incredibly disrespectful to the man who gave you this job!

7 Winnipeg

He didn't *give* me this job.

1 Worker B

You expect me to believe you earned this somehow?

2 Winnipeg

(laughs, kind of bleak) You know what? Yeah. I did earn it. Everything that's happened to me so far, me being here and all of it, I earned that fair and square. But that's not something I'm going to discuss with you.

3 Worker B

Your word choice is confusing.

4 Winnipeg

And you being in love with Apis is confusing. Cool. We can confuse each other all the way to the research station.

5 Worker B

My dedication to the company isn't confusing at all to someone with any work ethic, Captain.

6 Winnipeg

Yeah?

7 Worker B

Yes! This company is the reason I exist. Therefore, I wish to further its goals and prove to all those organics within the network that I am useful.

8 Winnipeg

Because the second you're not useful, you're scrap.

1 Worker B

(clearly caught off guard) Ah—! There is more to my service than self-preservation! I want to be efficient! Everyone wants to be efficient!

2 Winnipeg

Keep telling yourself that.

FX: GETS UP

Well that wasn't restful at all, but we can keep walking.

3 Worker B

Hmph. Fine.

FX: WALKING WITHOUT CONVERSATION FOR A BIT. B CHIMES.

ERROR: UNSUPPORTED FORMAT.

4 Winnipeg

It's not going to let you play the files. Give it a rest.

5 Worker B

But it doesn't make sense! I should be able to share any and all stored data faultlessly, and for the most part I can! See?

FX: B PLAYS A RECORDING

6 Apis

“—swing by the house on Enfys, right? ...*(scoffs)* What do you take me for? We've got *people* to take care of jaguar-bats, and the golf course is—”

7 Worker B

“Pardon the interruption Mister Apis!”

1 Apis

“B, I’m on the phone! You have a camera in here; use it!”

2 Worker B

“I can see that, sir, but the DOR inspector really is insistent on speaking with you.”

3 Apis

(annoyed sigh) “Yeah, it’s *her* again. I’m gonna have to let you go Todd.” *(pause, laughs)* “Right, like I’d marry something that follows me to work and can’t cook.”

FX: RECORDING ENDS

4 Winnipeg

Ew.

5 Worker B

That was just one small section of memory from my database chosen at random, and as you can see both audio and visual displays are functioning perfectly. It’s just strings of data regarding this planet that don’t want to cooperate!

6 Winnipeg

Apis is kind of a jerk to you.

7 Worker B

(annoyed) Yes, you would feel that way. You already don’t like him by proxy, so of course you’re going to interpret anything he says in the most negative light. It was, quote, “a joke,” end quote.

8 Winnipeg

He must joke about you a lot.

1 Worker B

That's beside the point! I didn't show you that for a pointless moral judgment!

2 Winnipeg

Well–

FX: THERE IS A SLIGHT NOISE OF DISTURBED EARTH

(intake of breath, softly) Don't move.

3 Worker B

(whisper) What is it?

4 Winnipeg

Just behind your feet– don't look, okay?

FX: QUIET MOVEMENTS, SOME MUFFLED INSECTOID CLICKS

There's a kind of gap opening up in the dirt like a trapdoor. I can see some legs poking out of it.

5 Worker B

Oh dear.

6 Winnipeg

Yeah. Don't panic.

7 Worker B

(panicky) I'm a machine, I can't panic!

1 Winnipeg

Cool, good. I'm going to throw a rock at it as a distraction. When I do, run forward as fast as you can so it doesn't grab you.

2 Worker B

Yes. Okay.

3 Winnipeg

Okay. One. Two.

4 Worker B

FX: THUNDEROUS NOISE AS A LEMARCK CHARGES ONTO THE SCENE

CAPTAIN, BEHIND YOU!

5 Winnipeg

SH- (*creative censoring FX*), RUN!

6 Worker B

Oh dear! Oh dear! Oh dear! Oh dear!

FX: RAMPAGING LEMARCK, CLICKS OF THE THING IN THE SOIL, B AND WINNIPEG RUNNING

7 Lemarck

AAA... PIIIS...!

Scene 3- Interior, ship's bridge

1 News Anchor Jessica

FX: FADES IN

–celebrate today as the inhabitants of Norric’s moon decide to party like it’s 1337 on the old calendar.

2 News Anchor Nathan

Really? What are they celebrating Jessica?

3 Jessica

(chuckles) Well Nathan, they’ve decided to revert their colony’s governance back to feudalism in a vote that resident Vernon Kirk called “revolutionary, in a backwards sort of way”.

4 Nathan

Sounds a little like living at a ren faire.

5 Both

(chuckle)

6 Jessica

Not everyone’s thrilled, of course. A resident that wished to remain anonymous claimed that the current governor, Ferdinand Rossi, gerrymandered the voting lines so a very small parcel of land owned by the Aldous family consisted of its own voting district. Here is that source now.

7 Anonymous Source

FX: DISTORTION TO HIDE VOICE

Look, the deal was that if I was your source, you’d get me out of these stocks, yeah? I’ll give a full interview, but first– SOMEONE’S COMING, ACT NORMAL!

1 Nathan

FX: NATHANIEL'S VOICE FADES A LITTLE AS TOMER'S FOOTSTEPS
SOUND HER ENTRANCE

(polite little news reporter laugh) Well as they said in the old world, thaaaat's politics!

FX: BOTH REPORTERS LAUGHING, THEN THE NEWS CHANNEL STINGER

2 Tomer

Listening to the news again?

3 Ray

Oh, yeah.

FX: SWITCHES THE RADIO OFF

Nothing came up about Apis looking for us, but I figure it's good to stay informed of how things are going out there.

4 Tomer

Good, huh? You look a little sick.

5 Ray

(imitating Nathan) Thaaaat's politics.

6 Tomer

...you know, you could just take a break from that stuff while we're stranded. It's not like we can vote or protest or whatever right now.

7 Ray

I'd rather not come out of this with no idea how the world's falling apart out there.

1 Tomer

And I'd rather *you* didn't fall apart because you're worried about something besides the problems right in front of us.

2 Ray

I'm *fine*, Tomer. Listening to the news sucks, but it's a chore I have to keep up with.

3 Tomer

Fine, just. Take care of yourself, alright? We're counting on you.

4 Ray

(weakly) Right.

5 Tomer

(takes a deep breath) So we've got two hours until standard noon when we have to contact Yannis. The only idea I have for dealing with her is holding the U-Radio really close to the receptor and having Winnipeg talk to her that way.

6 Ray

I mean, he should agree to do it, if he's fine with lying to Yannis about still being here.

7 Tomer

If he's not... well, she'll still want to save him, so even if we're caught in the lie I can't see it going too badly.

8 Ray

Alright, let's do it.

1 Tomer

FX: PULLS OUT U RADIO AND PRESSES BUTTON

Arthur? (*pause*) Arthur, are you there?

2 Winnipeg

FX: NOISE OF GIANT ARTHROPOD PURSUIT IN THE BACKGROUND AS WINNIPEG PRESSES HIS BUTTON TO TALK

KIND OF BUSY, TOMER!

3 Tomer

(*alarmed*) What's that?

4 Winnipeg

B AND I ARE GETTING TO KNOW THE NATIVES!

5 Lemarck

AAAAAAAAA... PIIIIIS!

6 Winnipeg

THEY ALREADY KNOW ABOUT US THOUGH! WEIRD, RIGHT?

7 Tomer

Do you have any idea of your location?!

8 Winnipeg

NOT A CLUE! OH F--

FX: U-RADIO IS HIT OUT OF HIS HAND AND HE IS CUT OFF

1 Tomer

ARTHUR!

FX: HITTING THE U-RADIO BUTTON REPEATEDLY

2 Ray

Oh god. *(beat)* Think he'll be alright?

3 Tomer

Nothing we can do about it if he isn't. *(shaky sigh)* Well... on to plan B.

4 Ray

What's plan B?

5 Tomer

We've got about two hours to figure that out.

Scene 4- Exterior, planet Lemarck

1 Lemarck

FX: SOUND OF GIANT ARTHROPOD ROOTING THROUGH VEGETATION,
GETTING FURTHER AWAY

...huuuumaaanssssss...

2 Winnipeg

(quiet) Okay. We can move on if we're quiet and careful. It's lost us.

3 Worker B

This is fascinating.

4 Winnipeg

Yeah, my favorite part is where we're not being eaten.

5 Worker B

I mean that, well, Charles's research indicated that they have poor eyesight and navigate largely through chemical receptors on the antennae, but this one is barely using its antennae at all! I wonder if it's injured.

6 Winnipeg

Who's Charles?!

7 Worker B

He was from the research station, so I can't show you.

8 Winnipeg

(dismissive) Right. Come on.

FX: BOTH MAKING THEIR WAY THROUGH THE GRASS

1 Winnipeg

It'd be helpful if you could remember stuff about where the station is instead of random people that used to work there, assuming they're even real.

2 Worker B

I can hardly conceptualize a glitch in which my processor would fabricate that sort of data. I doubt I have the capability.

3 Winnipeg

Right.

4 Worker B

And anyways, what about Unit 9-146? Have you seen any more signs of its movements?

5 Winnipeg

The trail's all mixed up with the tracks from that giant bug now, but they were heading this way. We're just going to have to sweep back and forth until I pick it up again.

6 Worker B

We'll be careful.

7 Winnipeg

No more talking. It's still too close.

FX: CAREFUL MOVEMENTS THROUGH THE GRASS. AFTER A MOMENT, THE NOISE OF THE LEMARCK REASSERTS ITSELF AS THE CREATURE CUTS BACK TOWARDS THEIR LOCATION.

(quiet) Get down!

1 Lemarck

FX: STILL CRASHING THROUGH VEGETATION

2 Worker B

(sharply) What's that on its antennae?

3 Winnipeg

Quiet! Wait... is that...?

4 Worker B

Captain, that is a black bowtie. A bowtie identical to the uniforms of wait staff aboard the *L.T.S. Mellifera*. A uniform which Unit 9-146 was wearing when it was last seen.

FX: LEMARCK BEGINS TO SLOWLY MOVE AWAY FROM B AND WINNIPEG

5 Winnipeg

...okay new plan: we follow this thing. Maybe it'll lead us to Barkeep, and maybe he'll still be functioning.

6 Worker B

Even if it isn't, we should be able to recover the processor.

7 Winnipeg

Sure. Just stick close and keep quiet.

FX: THE LEMARCK, B, AND WINNIPEG STALK OFF, MOVEMENTS FADING BEHIND THE OUTDOOR AMBIENCE

Scene 5- Interior, ship's bridge

1 Tomer

Let's make sure we've got this straight: he *just* ran off.

2 Ray

Yeah, he left to go scouting without telling anyone; anyone who knows Arthur would believe that.

3 Tomer

And if he doesn't come back, we don't know anything. We're sending a search party out for him first thing, but there's no telling exactly how long it'll take or even if he's okay. We're trying. That's it.

4 Ray

Okay. (*sighs*) ...do we need to wait for her to call us, or...?

5 Yannis

There is no need to contact me.

6 Tomer

F— I mean, don't do that!

7 Yannis

Apologies, but one may find that humorous.

8 Ray

How much did you overhear?

9 Yannis

Almost nothing. Now. Is Arthur with you?

1 Ray

Oh... well...

2 Tomer

He took off about half an hour ago without saying anything to us. We think he was scouting.

3 Yannis

...curious. Did you not tell him about this meeting?

4 Ray

He forgot?

5 Yannis

(tense pause) That is believable. How much time do you estimate will pass before his return?

6 Tomer

Um... *(choosing words carefully)* we're not really sure. He's not great at keeping track of time, so even if he remembers—

7 Sierra

FX: DOOR SLAMS OPEN. SMALL DOG NOISES THAT CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE SCENE.

TOMER!

8 Yannis

Who is this new voice?

1 Ray

How long have you had a dog?!

2 Sierra

You left me watching children for over two hours! I don't care if '*we're all just survivors now*', that is unacceptable!

3 Tomer

Okay, but where did the dog come from?!

4 Sierra

Some brat got into my purse when I was resting my eyes and scared Amelie Bavarian Creme Dancing for Victory! They chased her all around the ship, it was dreadful!

5 Yannis

That is a ridiculous name.

6 Sierra

EXCUSE ME! I don't know who you are, but she is descended from a long line and won best of breed at Eastminster last year!

7 Tomer

Dogs aren't allowed– you know what? I don't care. I don't. Just get out, you and Amelia–

8 Sierra

AMELIE BAVARIAN CREME DANCING FOR VICTORY!

1 Ray

Sierra, we are busy trying to work something out so we can get rescued. We have contact with the outside, see?

2 Sierra

It's about time! I thought this cruise was run by complete clowns after the captain ran off with B!

3 Tomer

Sierra!

4 Sierra

Though it was almost worth it for a few days without that stupid AI bullying us! The only thing worse than dying on a deserted planet is dying on a deserted planet and having commercials yelled at you!

5 Ray

(sighs)

6 Yannis

...from this new person's statement, one might be led to believe that Arthur has been missing since before our first contact.

7 Ray

Well—

8 Yannis

No, not from you. New person, with this. Amelie cream creature that makes horrible noises.

1 Sierra

She does not—!

2 Yannis

You speak to one who may be able to remove you from the surface of Lemarck, should you cooperate. Remember your precarious position as I ask you, softly and without threat, to recount what has happened to your ship, to your people once you crashed, and especially the whereabouts of your captain Arthur Winnipeg.

3 Sierra

“Should I cooperate”?! You have to tell the authorities and get us off now!

4 Yannis

(chuckle with just a touch of menace) Do I?

5 Tomer

Sierra. Please.

6 Sierra

...well... where do you want me to start?

7 Yannis

Everything that has happened since the crash.

8 Sierra

God, the crash. That stupid AI glitched and turned off everything, *complete* breach of customer trust using faulty software like that! Just about everyone who didn't get to the muster station in time died, no thanks to the captain's horrible job landing us in this god-forsaken field.

1 Tomer

That's a little unfair.

2 Sierra

What's *unfair* is that my husband bled out before your people found him! Then when I recovered his things I found out he was going to *divorce* me— no thanks to Tomer here, who tried to keep me from getting his bags—

3 Tomer

(disgusted) I had nothing to do with whatever was going on in your personal lives.

4 Sierra

I DIDN'T SAY YOU DID!

5 Yannis

Enough. These tawdry details are meaningless to me.

6 Sierra

My life is not meaning—!

7 Yannis

What happened to Arthur Winnipeg since the crash?

8 Sierra

(collecting herself) Something fell on him in the cargo bay, so Tomer took charge of everything. He must have recovered though, because he and that stupid robot ran off together the day before yesterday.

9 Yannis

...he has not been with you for two days. That's interesting and pertinent information.

1 Ray

(sighs) We should have told you that upfront, but like... you get why we didn't, right?

2 Yannis

Perhaps, perhaps not. This Amelie-Owner's haphazard recollections at least tell me that he hasn't been locked away— all the better for you.

3 Sierra

Excuse me, but my name is Mrs. Savannah.

4 Tomer

So it's out in the open. Are you going to help us or not?

5 Yannis

Are you going to continue withholding information from me, *Officer?* Because if I find that any unfavorable treatment has befallen Arthur, well. Your idiom 'heads will roll' may not be just a figure of speech when I arrive. Do I make myself clear?

6 Tomer

(stiffly) Yes.

7 Yannis

(imperiously) Continue to send me information as the situation unfolds. Your trajectory can be traced insofar as my knowledge will allow and your location should be found, regardless of the time it may take. But in return, you will find Arthur and keep him safe, *and tell me all information as it progresses.* Do not lie to me again.

FX: STATIC AS SHE 'HANGS UP'

1 Tomer

FX: CLICKS U-RADIO BUTTON

Arthur? Pick up, Arthur.

2 Ray

...sounds like he actually dropped it.

3 Tomer

Alright. Sierra, get out and take your dog with you.

4 Sierra

Fine, fine, I'm leaving.

FX: LEAVES

5 Tomer

Ray, have James and Vargas make sure our inventory is up to date. I'm going to arrange a search party, and we're going to need our own supplies.

6 Ray

Will do.

FX: LEAVES, CLOSES DOOR BEHIND THEM.

7 Tomer

...(sighs) We're doing it your way Arthur. You better not make me regret this.

1 V. O.

Crash of the Mellifera is a podcast written and edited by Morgan Lane. This episode featured Morgan Lane as Worker B and Ashford, Lukas Martin as Captain Winnipeg and Yannis, Rhianna Orr as Sierra Savannah, Alexandria Young as Security Officer Tomer, Amanda Ju as Ray, Michael Lane as Nathan, Veronica Regolado as Jessica, and Shaun Casey as Mr. Apis

Our theme was written by Sam Kitsch. Credits for other music and sound assets can be found in the episode description. For further information, check out the Mellifera project page on morganlanewrites.com or follow us on tumblr at "melliferacrash". Donations can be sent to our ko-fi page at ko-fi.com/morganlanewrites. Thanks for listening!

END