

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

EPISODE 208

NARRATOR

Let's begin.

So, October and Fish are riding the Agatha with a bunch of Giant Insects. They are on their way to Sandlantis to find the Elemental Creature of Earth. Uh, only October and Fish are looking for the E.C., the others have their own stuff going on. But they've been tied up in this murder mystery side quest for a while. Brody Body died, Fish couldn't save him and got a little edgy, October investigated very slowly and poorly, but with commitment. Now we reach... the denouement.

THE DENOUEMENT

NARRATOR

The cargo hold. It's damp here and there, with seaweed hanging from one porthole. October is perched on the wettest crate, weird move, flipping through her notes and muttering. Fish finishes a headcount of everyone. Wasington looks amused, leaning against his Mothia crate near the wall. The secretive cast of characters range along the room: Chirpy and Shelldon standing together, the captain escorting the Duchess to a seat. Mandy lingers timidly by the door.

HUMPHREY HUMMER

Miss Jones, I hope this farce won't take long. That storm could blow up again at any moment, it's dangerous to leave the Agatha unhelmed.

DUCHESS ANTINGBURG

Too right, Captain, this creature has been under-limbed and overstepping since we boarded.

FISH WITH LEGS

The storm may have been my fault. My B.

HUMPHREY HUMMER

Your fault?

CHIRPY SINGER

October, why did you bring us all here? Has there been a development in the case?

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

Miss Jones, you've cracked the nut?

NARRATOR

October hops down from the crate.

OCTOBER

This does indeed concern the case of the disappearance of the unfortunate Mr. Brody Body.

HUMPHREY HUMMER

Miss Jones, we have been over this. It was an accident.

DUCHESS ANTINGBURG

Indeed, the captain has declared it an accident. And besides, why are you making such a fuss about some dead servant?

MANDY MANDEL

He wasn't just some servant.

OCTOBER

No. He wasn't. Now let's begin.

NARRATOR

Hey, that's my thing. October starts pacing with indulgent suaveness.

OCTOBER

So. Chirpy and I were on the upper deck yesterday when Mr. Body fell overboard. And despite what the captain would have you believe, it was no accident. The duchess and Fish were in the dining room. Lord Spottingham was in his cabin. Mandy and Professor O'Connell were down here in the hold, and Captain Hummer was climbing to the main deck. These being the facts, who then pushed Mr. Brody Body? I intend to answer that question here today. Fish?

FISH WITH LEGS

Yes! Helping. Exhibit A! The voices.

OCTOBER

Chirpy and I heard two voices arguing, as did the professor, the captain, and Shelldon.

SHELLDON

Lord Spottingham, please. I am a member of the--

OCTOBER

Fish?

FISH WITH LEGS

Exhibit B! The pause.

OCTOBER

There was a conspicuous pause between the argument and the sound of Brody falling overboard. This was enough time for myself, the captain, and Chirpy to rush forward to the front of the ship and witness him go over the railing. Chirpy saw

(MORE)

OCTOBER (cont'd)
someone fleeing the scene, but Captain Hummer insists he fell alone.

HUMPHREY HUMMER
He did.

CHIRPY SINGER
Oh, but I saw someone! I swear I did!

FISH WITH LEGS
Exhibit C. Me!

OCTOBER
After the splash, everyone gathered on the deck and Fish with Legs dove in to rescue him. And yet she emerged alone. The Elemental Creature of Water couldn't find a beetle who fell overboard less than one minute beforehand.

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM
But there could be any number of reasons for that.

CHIRPY SINGER
Yes, perhaps he sank.

OCTOBER
Perhaps. But I have a different explanation.

FISH WITH LEGS
Exhibit D: Brody was hiding something!

OCTOBER
Not unlike both Duchess Antingburg and the Spottingshams, Brody Body was in debt.

DUCHESS ANTINGBURG
Excuse me!?

OCTOBER
It turns out Brody shared something in common with the duchess and Shelldon's late brother. An affinity for gambling. Specifically on tiger beetle races.

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM
Was he killed over his debts like my brother?

OCTOBER
Not quite. But he was a very suspicious character. He wore nothing but head-to-toe black, even in hot weather. He had a surly attitude, and avoided others whenever possible. Not to mention he worked on a boat with a reputation of employing the desperate and criminal.

HUMPHREY HUMMER

Pardon me, Miss Jones?

OCTOBER

Clearly, he was hiding something. Or hiding from someone. Fish?

FISH WITH LEGS

Exhibit F! The letter!

OCTOBER

Exhibit E, Fish with Legs.

FISH WITH LEGS

Exhibit E! The letter!

DUCHESS ANTINGBURG

What are these words you're listing!?

FISH WITH LEGS

It's the human alphabet. October can't read Ant.

DUCHESS ANTINGBURG

Of course she's illiterate...

OCTOBER

Wait. Should we switch to numbers? Is this confusing for you guys?

CHIRPY SINGER

No, tell us about the letter!

OCTOBER

Oh, E is like... eeeeeee. But sometimes ehhehh. Actually I have no idea how to describe a letter.

FISH WITH LEGS

No, the letter!

NARRATOR

Fish waves the piece of paper in October's face.

OCTOBER

Oh right! We found this letter in Brody's room. It's a death threat from the moth criminal organization known as the Mothia. Brody was already in hot water...

FISH WITH LEGS

Exhibit F, for real this time!

OCTOBER

This is the big one. Brody Body and Baldwin Spottingham, presumed dead, are in fact one and the same.

ALL
(gasps)

OCTOBER (CONT'D)
His turtlenecks hid his spots and his demeanor did the rest.

MANDY MANDEL
Brody was...?

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM
My brother is alive!?

DUCHESS ANTINGBURG
Well not after this second murder.

CHIRPY SINGER
It can't be! Your brother... But we...

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM
Are you certain he was my brother, Miss Jones?

OCTOBER
Yes. And that brings me to my next piece of evidence.

FISH WITH LEGS
Exhibit G!

OCTOBER
Baldwing Spottingham faked his death. Multiple times. Right, Professor?

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL
When I met him his name was Norm L. Beetle. We did a job together and he faked his death to get away.

MANDY MANDEL
You're certain it was Brody?

OCTOBER
Yes, he lived quite the life before meeting you.

CHIRPY SINGER
So, Baldwing has been alive this whole time...?

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM
This is... Shocking news.

OCTOBER
Well that makes sense, considering...

FISH WITH LEGS
Exhibit H!

OCTOBER

Chirpy Singer and Baldwin Spottingham were lovers, once upon a time.

MANDY MANDEL

Brody and Miss Singer?

OCTOBER

Which leads me to my conclusion...

CHIRPY SINGER

Oh Shelldon, how could you?!

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

Eh?

CHIRPY SINGER

Were you really that jealous? You know you're the only one for me!

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

Chirpy, surely you don't mean to say that--

DUCHESS ANTINGBURG

I knew it! I knew it all along!

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

Preposterous--

HUMPHREY HUMMER

So he was indeed murdered, then? Intentionally?

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

No! I didn't kill my brother! I mourned him. If I'd known he survived I would have...

OCTOBER

Don't worry, Lord Spottingham. It wasn't you.

HUMPHREY HUMMER

So it wasn't a murder then?

OCTOBER

As a matter of fact, Captain Hummer. It wasn't.

CHIRPY SINGER

What?

OCTOBER

Chirpy Singer, you colluded with Brody Body to frame someone on this boat for his murder in order to elope together, fleeing his debts and your relationship to start another
(MORE)

OCTOBER (cont'd)
life somewhere new. Captain Hummer was right: Brody wasn't pushed. He jumped.

HUMPHREY HUMMER
Thank the Eternal Flame...

OCTOBER
You lied about seeing someone running away. When I came out on the deck to speak with you yesterday, you were in the middle of checking on your plan. Brody was at the bow ready to fake his death, so you brought me to the back of the boat. That way I wouldn't see him throw himself overboard.

CHIRPY SINGER
What--

OCTOBER
You were distracted when you boarded the Agatha. You recognized Brody as Baldwin right then. At some point later you must have met with him privately. The two of you decided to pin it as a crime of passion by framing Baldwin's jealous brother.

So, during tea time, you asked Shelldon to fetch your purse, an excuse for Shelldon to be on the main deck alone with Brody. You knew he'd gladly take a chance to escape the Duchess. And if Brody paraded in front of him he was bound to react. But Shelldon didn't bite. He didn't even recognize his brother. All he saw was a servant. Brody had to improvise: he faked a second voice and jumped.

CHIRPY SINGER
Absurd. This is an absurd story. Shelldon, I didn't do any of this. I don't know what she's talking about!

NARRATOR
Shelldon is sitting very still, deep in thought.

OCTOBER
What's worse, me and Fish weren't biting. When we talked to you again this morning, we clearly had a pet suspect. So you nudged us toward Waspington, thinking you could get us to claim a Mothia hit.

CHIRPY SINGER
No. I didn't--

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM
Miss Jones...

CHIRPY SINGER
Darling, if you--

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

If Baldwin and Miss Singer intended to frame me, then... My brother is definitively still alive.

OCTOBER

Yes. After he jumped, he used the barnacles on the hull to climb up and came in through that window, leaving behind the seaweed.

NARRATOR

She points to the seaweed covered porthole.

OCTOBER

And then he hid in this very crate.

NARRATOR

October taps the damp crate she was sitting on.

OCTOBER

Isn't that right, Chirpy?

CHIRPY SINGER

Fine! You're right. You're right about it all.

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

You tried to frame me?

DUCHESS ANTINGBURG

But why? Why would you throw away your chance to marry a lord? Albeit a foreign one, but a lord nonetheless.

CHIRPY SINGER

That's exactly why I did it! To get away from all of this. All of you! To restart with Baldwin... Somewhere no one would judge us.

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

I see...

CHIRPY SINGER

Baldwin never cared where I came from! He loves me for who I am.

OCTOBER

Well I think it's about time we reunite the two of you...

NARRATOR

October pulls out her boot knife and steps up to the crate. The others all watch as she uses her knife to pry the lid open.

OCTOBER

Voil-- What?

NARRATOR

He strolls out to the hallway. October abandons the disappointing wet crate and runs after him, the others trailing behind her like an uncoordinated meteor trail. He's leaning in Mandy's open doorway, his left arms propped against the frame.

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

I think you missed something.

OCTOBER

In Mandy's room?

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

The conspicuously large pile of laundry didn't strike you as odd? She keeps the entire boat clean and her room is spotless, except for this one corner?

OCTOBER

So...?

NARRATOR

October looks at the pile. It's considerably smaller now... and significantly less black.

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

Well if you had looked through it, you might have noticed a certain beetle in there. Hiding from you.

FISH WITH LEGS

We had the right room! I knew it! My luck always works.

OCTOBER

Wait so he was in here--

CHIRPY SINGER

Where is he now!?

OCTOBER

How did you know?

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

What can I say? I'm just that good. Also, I watched your person of interest and his girlfriend sneak out of here and run away while you were monologuing.

OCTOBER

What?!

CHIRPY SINGER

What?!

NARRATOR

October looks around the small crowd in the hallway. Chirpy, Fish, Shelldon, Hummer, the Duchess... No Mandy. October bolts for the stairs. Everyone but Waspiington chases after.

MAIN DECK

The rain has died down. It's only lightly misting, but there's still an ominous fog. October and the gang look around the deck.

OCTOBER

Where are they? We need to search.

HUMPHREY HUMMER

The lifeboat is missing!

FISH WITH LEGS

You only have one lifeboat?! Maybe this really isn't the premiere vessel of the Reddorblack Sea...

NARRATOR

October runs to the railing and looks out toward the sea. Rocky cliffs from the near-ish shore come in and out of sight as the boat steams along.

OCTOBER

I can't see a thing through all this fog, they could have landed anywhere along the beach.

CHIRPY SINGER

He's... gone.

OCTOBER

We need to go after them. Captain Hummer, take the helm!

HUMPHREY HUMMER

Politely, Miss Jones: no. We're nearly to port and it's not worth it.

OCTOBER

Brody must have been interested in faking his death, but not interested in reuniting with Chirpy, so he double-crossed her and made a second plan to flee with Mandy! Now, we need to hurry if we want to catch them!

HUMPHREY HUMMER

Why? Neither committed any sort of crime --besides perhaps some light identity fraud, but who hasn't-- so I feel no urgency in pursuing them.

OCTOBER

But... They're your crew.

HUMPHREY HUMMER

I've replaced crews before. And catching them would probably lead to an investigation even you couldn't deem necessary.

OCTOBER

But--

HUMPHREY HUMMER

Now, I will be returning to the helm, but only to set us back on schedule. We have nearly reached Casamanta. Your grace.

NARRATOR

Humphrey bows briefly to the duchess, then goes up the stairs.

DUCHESS ANTINGBURG

It's all well and good to solve the little mystery, but life goes on.

NARRATOR

She leaves. Chirpy looks over to Shelldon, who stares into the sea.

CHIRPY SINGER

Sweetheart, I--

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

How could you?

CHIRPY SINGER

Sweetheart--

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

When Baldwin died, I was heartbroken. I lost my only brother... The heir to my family. And with him, his fortune. There was so much pressure to step up... And I thought you were there for me. To help me through it. But clearly you never loved me. You were only there for my family's dwindling wealth.

CHIRPY SINGER

I didn't want your money. I never wanted your money.

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

What was it then? The prestige?

CHIRPY SINGER

I wanted Baldwin!

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

I see...

CHIRPY SINGER

I fell for you after we lost him... You were so kind to me back then. But I quickly realized you're nothing like your brother.

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

My whole life I've been a poor replacement for Baldwin.

CHIRPY SINGER

Don't make me pity you. Baldwin treated me with decency. I never had to prove myself to be part of his world. And he never made me feel lesser because of where I come from. Unlike you.

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

Until you realized you were just another pawn in one of his schemes.

I would never have abandoned you, Chirpy. I'd have died by your side.

CHIRPY SINGER

I know.

SHELLDON SPOTTINGHAM

Clearly all we ever had in common was our love for Baldwin.

I will be taking the next boat back home to Atlanta, Miss Singer. Alone. You will not be welcomed back into Spottingham Manor. Please consider our engagement resolved.

NARRATOR

He walks away. Chirpy stares out at the stormy sea ahead. October joins her.

CHIRPY SINGER

It seems like whether you'd meddled or not... I wouldn't have gotten away with it.

OCTOBER

Sorry.

CHIRPY SINGER

So it goes...

[beat]

OCTOBER

Hey... Can I ask you a question?

CHIRPY SINGER

Um... Sure?

OCTOBER

It's just something I've been thinking about since we had our talk by the water wheel...

(MORE)

OCTOBER (cont'd)

Um... Is it... Is it true that the Immortal Queen bathes in the blood of her own children to stay alive?

CHIRPY SINGER
(chuckles)

What?

OCTOBER

It's just a thing that I... Heard at some point.

CHIRPY SINGER

No. That's not true.

OCTOBER

Yeah, yeah... Okay. I figured.

[beat]

CHIRPY SINGER

Despite how everything turned out... I'm glad I met you October Jones.

OCTOBER

Me too.

NARRATOR

Chirpy gives her a weak, but warm smile then wanders toward the back of the boat, pausing to admire the water wheel.

October leans on the railing and stares out at the grey, rainy sea. Fish with Legs waddles up beside her.

FISH WITH LEGS

How's it going?

OCTOBER

Fine... I guess. I mean I didn't really solve the case.

FISH WITH LEGS

You got pretty close though. And you learned to be less racist!

OCTOBER

Yeah. I guess it was... Um... interesting getting know some bugs-- I mean Giant Insects-- I mean. Anyways. How are you? Are you feeling better?

FISH WITH LEGS

Me? Fine. Why do you ask?

OCTOBER

I mean with the clouds and mist...

FISH WITH LEGS

Yeah! The rain's finally dying down! Isn't it great?

OCTOBER

Right.

FISH WITH LEGS

Trust me. I am feeling way better. I am newly refurbished Fish with Legs. Fully decorated. Restored to original emotional state. Now 100% guilt free.

OCTOBER

You sure?

FISH WITH LEGS

Yeah, Brody didn't die, so crisis averted. Close one, am I right?

OCTOBER

Well... Yeah. But, maybe we still wanna acknowledge that whole... spiral you went down?

FISH WITH LEGS

No. I don't think so.

OCTOBER

I think I remember you saying something about your loved ones dying... and not being able to save them because your love isn't strong enough...

FISH WITH LEGS

No, that doesn't sound like me.

OCTOBER

You said almost exactly that.

FISH WITH LEGS

(sighs)

NARRATOR

Fish leans against October's leg and hugs it, looking out at the view ahead.

FISH WITH LEGS

I don't wanna talk about that. Not yet.

OCTOBER

Oh. Okay.

NARRATOR

October puts an arm around Fish, holding her close against her hip.

FISH WITH LEGS
(deep, soothing
breath)

NARRATOR
The rain stops. It's still cloudy, but the sea is calm. A few little sunbeams peek out through the clouds.

OCTOBER
That must be Casamanta.

NARRATOR
Hazy in the distance, just peeking through the lingering mist, a bright spire of white stone pierces the sky from the shore. It shines in the emerging light of the sun.

OCTOBER
Alright. Let's get back on track.

FISH WITH LEGS
Yes! Plan time. What time is it? Half past plan. Your plan is way overdue. Let's get this plan on schedule. Choo choo! This plan is leaving the station. Next stop, October's brain! Wait... No... We're leaving October's brain. Uh... Next stop my brain!

OCTOBER
Well the Elemental Creature was last seen in the Temple of Durt, which hasn't been seen--

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL
Excuse me.

OCTOBER
(mousey noise)

NARRATOR
That's one sneaky wasp. Not sure when he snuck up, to be honest.

FISH WITH LEGS
Hey there, Professor.

NARRATOR
He tips his hat.

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL
Miss With Legs. Nice work back there, kid.

OCTOBER
Oh... Uh... Me?

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

I was impressed.

OCTOBER

Really? What impressed you? How I didn't solve the case? Or how I didn't catch the culprits?

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

Don't be down on yourself. That was good detective work.

OCTOBER

Really?

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

In the real world, results matter. But for a test run like this, it counts that you showed your work. Trust me, this was a quality investigation.

OCTOBER

Oh. Okay. Thanks!

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

I do have a question though. What exactly do you need the Elemental Creature of Earth for?

FISH WITH LEGS

Oh, we're going to save the world.

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

The whole world? Tall order.

FISH WITH LEGS

We need to stop all the Elemental Creatures from falling into the metaphorical hands of two evil snake heads, their snake body, some bees in a trench coat and a muscular giraffe who are all trying to unite the Four Elemental Creatures to release Mamamorbus!

OCTOBER

They already have the Elemental Creatures of Fire and Air, so we need to find this one before it's too late.

FISH WITH LEGS

But we don't know where to look.

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

Alright. I have a proposal for you two. No offense, but you stick out like a fish in the desert. And I've got a hunch you have no idea what you're getting into in Sandlantis, but... I've got a network in Casamanta, and a lifetime of knowledge on all sorts of interesting subjects. Maybe we can help each other out?

OCTOBER

What's in it for you?

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

Fortune and glory, kid. And of course information, just like you.

I noticed a couple of enticing notes in that book of yours. Anyone who can write stuff like that is someone I want to work with.

OCTOBER

Yeah... I... This is my book. I wrote it. It's my research journal.

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

So if you let me pick your brain a bit... I'd love to help you out. I've written my fair share of papers on the Guardians of Durt, the Temple... I think I could be of service.

OCTOBER

Sure! Awesome!

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

Great.

NARRATOR

Waspington holds out a spiky, clawed hand. October shakes it without hesitation.

WASPIGTON O'CONNELL

Meet me back here when we get to port. I've got an idea for a lead.

OCTOBER

Sounds good.

NARRATOR

Waspington walks away.

OCTOBER

Lucky we met this guy, right?

FISH WITH LEGS

Uh... October. You didn't write that book.

OCTOBER

I wrote some of it.

FISH WITH LEGS

But not most of it.

OCTOBER

Um... No. But... I have a... Plan. It's all part of my plan.

FISH WITH LEGS

Oh. A plan!? Why didn't you say so!

OCTOBER

Now let's go pack. Our room is a mess, and no one works here anymore.

NARRATOR

Wow. That was some summation. It was Shelldon, then it was Chirpy, then it was Mandy! I tell you what, that was a conclusion. Sooo conclusive. Except...

[Zzzzp. Zzzzp.]

Searching... Searching... Beachcombing club, don't fail me now... Got 'em! Aha!

TAG

NARRATOR

On the outskirts of Casamanta... lies a remote drinking establishment. It's a rough sort of place. Fugitives Brody Body and Mandy Mandel are at a table in the back, pressed together. It's mostly empty except for a small group of mantises crowded in a corner booth, whispering amongst themselves over the schematics for some kind of tower, and some assorted arachnid toughs drinking grimly alone and arm wrestling and doing macho stuff.

MANDY MANDEL

I was sure they were going to find you. And you scared me to death with that stunt! Promise not to fall off any more boats?

BRODY BODY

Don't worry, Mandy. We made it out without a scratch. Except for that horrible old duchess. Are you okay?

MANDY MANDEL

I'm fine. Believe it or not, she's not the worst customer I've ever had.

BRODY BODY

There was never a chance that fish and her human would figure it out.

MANDY MANDEL

She was close.

BRODY BODY

Not close enough.

NARRATOR

They lean in, antennae brushing tenderly. Mandy takes his hand and tilts to kiss him, but a mysterious figure drifts up to their table and looms. They tower ominously over Mandy and Brody, cloaked head to toe with a hood drawn up to obscure their face. Brody sneers.

BRODY BODY

Beat it, creep.

MANDY MANDEL

Don't be rude. Can we help you?

MANFRED SPLAINER

Tell me more about this fish and her human...

NARRATOR

Brody stands.

BRODY BODY

Yeah? Why should I?

NARRATOR

The figure pulls back their hood, revealing a massive hat with an absurdly huge feather...

MANFRED SPLAINER

Because I am a very powerful, attractive, and dangerous man...

NARRATOR

He grabs Brody by the neck and drags him in close.

MANFRED SPLAINER

And because my iguana is hungry... And she loves bugs.

NARRATOR

Brody looks terrified. Mandy looks small. Manfred looks... intense. Let's stop.