

The Credible Adventures of October and Fish: Episode 105

Episode 105

train station

NARRATOR

Okay, you remember where we were in the story? Fish with Legs is a magical fish with legs who is wanted by some evil snakes. She plans to go warn the snakes' next target and teamed up with October Jones to do so. They lost their steed and need a new way to get to the human capitol where we recently learned October plans to betray Fish. Yeah. Human girl equals duplicitous. Fish equals naive.

They are now walking into a human town, presumably the one October mentioned last time, Moist Bog. The whole settlement sits on top of a lichenous platform, keeping it high above the moist wildlife below.

Merchant tents and stalls line the large concourse at the centre of town, forming a bustling marketplace. The shops are all run by humans, but there are a few mystical creatures among the haggling shoppers. Mundane crickets the size of breadboxes hop around and get in the way of people's feet.

October cuts through the market dragging Fish behind her. They head straight for an official-looking building sitting prominently to one side. Beyond it, stairs lead to boarding platforms populated by impatient human travellers and Herovian guards, getting in and out of wagons resting on the back of a giant centipede.

FISH WITH LEGS

Oooh! Look at that giant bug! Are we riding a giant bug?

OCTOBER

(distracted)

Mhmm... We're taking a centishuttle...

NARRATOR

October sizes the place up. Fish with Legs walks toward a supremely small booth jutting prominently out of the building's side. Within, there's a board with painted squiggles on display behind a regular-sized human attendant who watches passersby balefully.

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FISH WITH LEGS

A ticket to Herovia City on a... millitread is... 12 pearls. But the... centishuttle is 14 pearls and 3 seeds. (beat) Is pearls money? October? October?

NARRATOR

Fish looks around, seeking her wayward something-or-other. But where-? Oh. October is nonchalantly boosting herself over the low wall and into the boarding area.

FISH WITH LEGS

October! Over here! They sell the tickets here! Is pearls money?

NARRATOR

Fish with Legs' yelling draws attention to October. She freezes as a guard approaches her, blue feather bobbing forbiddingly.

OCTOBER

Oh... I... thought you could just... I'm lost?

NARRATOR

He stares her down, arms folded. October puts both feet on the legal side of the wall and sheepishly slithers past him and back to Fish with Legs.

FISH WITH LEGS

You have to buy a ticket or you can't go in.

OCTOBER

Yeah. Obviously. Brain fart, y'know... It just... slipped my mind.

FISH WITH LEGS

Is pearls money?

OCTOBER

Yes.

FISH WITH LEGS

And seeds?

OCTOBER

They're just smaller pearls.

FISH WITH LEGS

Do you have 12 pearls times 2? That's how much it costs to get to Herovia City. Or, it would be... 3, plus...

OCTOBER

No, I have zero pearls times infinity. My parents pay us in Jones Bucks, which are only redeemable within the factory.

FISH WITH LEGS

Wow your family is...

OCTOBER

Yeah, yeah... Mildly neglectful, mildly terrible, let's move on.

FISH WITH LEGS

So, if you don't have real money how were you planning to get on the train?

OCTOBER

Well, in retrospect it seems obvious that I should have anticipated this situation.

FISH WITH LEGS

Yeah, you really seem off your game today, October.

OCTOBER

(meaningfully) Maybe we can find some other way on...?

FISH WITH LEGS

I know! Let's head into town and try to make some money!

OCTOBER

What? How are you planning to make money?

FISH WITH LEGS

Um... I know! Maybe we could start an elaborate chain of bartering? I'll earn a simple acorn by tap dancing and then I'll sell the acorn for some beans and then trade the beans for a book, but it'll turn out the book is magical! And then we won't even need to get on the train because you'll learn how to be a witch and--

OCTOBER

Whoa! Fish with Legs, don't say witch. Herovia isn't super into witches. Or magic. Humans don't do magic.

FISH WITH LEGS

You're right. That wasn't a great idea. Let's just go. Something will work out. Bad things usually don't happen to me.

OCTOBER

What? You're wanted by a two headed snake!

FISH WITH LEGS

Back home, with the Glbglb, I'm considered a good luck talisman. People bring me offerings of food and riches in exchange for blessings of good fortune. (beat) Do you want me to bless you?

OCTOBER

You know what? Let's go. I'm sure I'll find a way to get some money.

MOIST BOG

NARRATOR

October and Fish with Legs step into the spiral-shaped market and start browsing counter-clockwise. Fish is strolling cheerily. October is opportunistically scoping things out at her side. They travel slowly inward as they walk the single corkscrew aisle that ends in the centre of the market.

Merchants of every human shape and colour hawk their wares, similarly diverse: fresh produce, preserved produce, clothes, weird bones, ...other stuff. You get the idea.

OCTOBER

Fun fact about Moist Bog, it was actually called Warm Puddle before Herovia expanded their territory here.

FISH WITH LEGS

Oooh! They have capes over there! Can I get a cape?

OCTOBER

No. Another fun fact: you can thank the domestication of native giant manypedes for this market here.

FISH WITH LEGS

Oooh what's that! Looks shiny!

OCTOBER

Before we harnessed them to advance our lines of supply, Moist Bog was merely a small, unpleasantly wet piece of land of very little value. But now it's a centre of trade for the whole region!

NARRATOR

October notices that Fish with Legs has wandered away from her boring monologue, most likely in search of something shiny. October looks around for her.

OCTOBER

Fish with Legs? (sigh) This stupid, valuable fish...

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, \*zzp\* a few aisles over, Fish with Legs is speaking to an extremely symmetrical humanoid. I would say human, but the colours are way off. Fish's friend is slender like the pale, silvery wood holding up their silky, luminous tent, garbed in a flowing robe, also silver, and masses of iridescent hair that drape like water. Fish is presented enticingly with a platter, silver, of bread rolls.

ELVEN MAIDEN

Please. Try a piece.

FISH WITH LEGS

Oh thank you! You're so generous. And so pretty.

ELVEN MAIDEN

Why thank you. And I must say, the shine of your scales reminds me of the silver hair of the moon goddess Kuyu.

FISH WITH LEGS

(bashful) Oh. Thank you. (chews)

Oh my moon goddess! This tastes amazing! And I'm so immediately full.

ELVEN MAIDEN

Truly a miracle, isn't it?

FISH WITH LEGS

I'm in! I'm so in!

ELVEN MAIDEN

How wonderful. Now all you need is--

OCTOBER

Hey! Fish with Legs--

FISH WITH LEGS

October! You need to try this bread! One bite is enough to fill the stomach of a grown man!

OCTOBER

Oh no... Don't buy the elven bread.

ELVEN MAIDEN

Greetings. Can I interest you in a very exciting business opportunity?

OCTOBER

No.

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FISH WITH LEGS

October, listen to her! All you need to do is purchase this starter kit which includes ten loaves of bread, your very own elven gown and the sales-maiden's handbook. Then recruit two friends and soon enough you will have the financial freedom to become your own boss.

OCTOBER

Fish with Legs, I know this lady is--

ELVEN MAIDEN

Would you like to try a piece?

OCTOBER

No-- Actually is that a free sample?

ELVEN MAIDEN

Of course.

NARRATOR

October takes as many bread rolls as she can fit in her little fist, and stuffs them, unwrapped, into her bag.

ELVEN MAIDEN

Excuse me--

OCTOBER

I know this lady is beautiful and charming, but don't listen to her.

FISH WITH LEGS

But we can make some money with this! We can use it to buy our tickets!

OCTOBER

Did you already buy the starter kit!?

FISH WITH LEGS

No--

ELVEN MAIDEN

But we were about to--

OCTOBER

Good.

NARRATOR

October grabs the platter from the elf, dumps the rest of the bread in her filthy bog-water bag, and drops the platter to grab Fish's fin and tug her briskly away from the ethereal marketing scheme.

(CONTINUED)

OCTOBER

She was scamming you.

FISH WITH LEGS

What!?

OCTOBER

You buy that starter kit, she gets your money and you get stuck with ten loaves of bread you'll never sell.

FISH WITH LEGS

But that bread is so perfect! It--

OCTOBER

It's a pyramid scheme, Fish with Legs. She was trying to take advantage of you. Now quit wandering off.

FISH WITH LEGS

Thank goodness you're here to keep me away from dishonest people.

OCTOBER

Right... I'm glad that--

FISH WITH LEGS

Because I really thought that bread was a great idea.

OCTOBER

Just to be clear, I only have the best of intentions. I want what's best for everyone and I--

FISH WITH LEGS

You're such a good friend, coming to my rescue like that.

OCTOBER

Right. Okay. You just do nothing and let me handle... getting the money...

FISH WITH LEGS

What? What are we looking at?

NARRATOR

A fruit tent, where a human male merchant sells a punnet of cranberries to some other irrelevant human for a handful of pearls. The customer leaves, and the merchant drops the pearls into a big, lidless bowl, wide-mouthed and wide open to wandering hands. Yep, October's smiling.

OCTOBER

Hey Fish with Legs, you like cranberries?



FISH WITH LEGS

I don't know... Back home, with the Glbgclb, we don't really grow berries. We have coCONut trees... pineAPPLE trees... oh and oRANGE trees and--

OCTOBER

Well, there's no time like the present.

FISH WITH LEGS

That's a very good point.

OCTOBER

Why don't you go ask that guy if you can try a cranberry?

FISH WITH LEGS

You know what? What the heck! I'm trying so many new things today!(as if listing things) I tried that bread, I tried...

OCTOBER

Cranberries?

FISH WITH LEGS

Yes! CranBERRIES let's add that to the list!

NARRATOR

Fish with Legs approaches the fruit merchant's tent. October trails evilly behind her.

mario nera

NARRATOR

The tent is narrow but long, with fronts on both the adjoining aisles. Skinny wooden tables blooming with a cornucopia of ripe fruits narrow it to a single file passage. The merchant is perched on a stool near the middle of the tent, in the gap between tables, his till bowl next to him. Fish marches boldly in. He shoots up and walks forward with a welcoming yet timid air.

MARIO

Greetings, I am Mario Nera. This is my fruit tent. Would you like to purchase some fruit? I have all kinds of fruit, blueBERRIES, blackBERRIES, strawBERRIES, gooseBERRIES, raspBERRIES... and also things other than berries.

FISH WITH LEGS

Hello. I'm Fish with Legs. I'm a fish with legs. I'm the Elemental Creature of water and I have never tried a cranBERRY.

(CONTINUED)

MARIO

I have heard legends about you, Fish with Legs.

FISH WITH LEGS

All good things, I hope...

MARIO

Of course! You defeated Mamamorbus!

FISH WITH LEGS

Yes! Yes I did! Sort of. It's nice to get some recognition, did you know you're the first person to congratulate me on that since I was kidnapped?

MARIO

Oh, well I have... Um... fringe interests.

FISH WITH LEGS

You should meet my best friend! You two would definitely get along. She's all about conspiracies and Mamamorbus and--

MARIO

Oh, no need to further discuss... uh... this. Uh... These... You said you wanted to try a cranBERRY?

NARRATOR

Mario leads her into the tent to the cranberries. October is... somewhere, I lost track.

MARIO

Here.

FISH WITH LEGS

Mmm. This cranBERRY is delicious!

MARIO

Why thank you! My family and I grow them ourselves. We've lived in Warm Puddle for generations, on a small farm out in the bog.

FISH WITH LEGS

That's lovely. Oh, hi October!

NARRATOR

Wha? Oh. It seems October was under the table. She has her hand on her face.

FISH WITH LEGS

You should try these!

OCTOBER

Oh... I'm okay.

FISH WITH LEGS

That's my best friend October Jones. She also knows about Mamamorbus. Did you drop something down there?

OCTOBER

...Yes. I dropped something down here, oh, here it is.

NARRATOR

October, her questionable infiltration on hold for now, crawls out from under the table and stands with Mario and Fish.

MARIO

Oh, wonderful to, uh... How long were you--

FISH WITH LEGS

This is my new friend Mario Nera.

NARRATOR

Mario awkwardly nods to October, who awkwardly nods back. They both look desperate to avoid conversation with each other.

OCTOBER

Hey, Fish with Legs, why don't you check out the jam behind you. We could use it for the elven bread.

FISH WITH LEGS

Great idea! (to Mario) October always has great ideas.

NARRATOR

Mario and Fish head to the far end of the tent to examine a tiered display of jams by the second tenthole. Some flies and bees buzz around humidly, attracted by Mario's wares. Mario waves them away.

MARIO

Sorry about the bugs. What are you gonna do? It's a bog.

NARRATOR

As Mario gets out a bunch of little wooden sticks so that Fish can try the jams, October busily feigns interest in an apple while inching closer to the bowl of pearls. She replaces the apple with a mango, keeping an eye on Mario. He is unscrewing one of his little artisanal jam pots.

October creeps up to the bowl of pearls and sneaks a hand in while the other thoughtfully pulps the fruit.

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NARRATOR (cont'd)

The pearls don't make a sound as she slithers her greasy rat fingers around--

MARIO

Excuse me, Miss!

NARRATOR

October freezes, caught pearl-handed. Mario spins around and stares her down with the confidence of man who has no confidence.

MARIO

Unhand my pearls, please.

NARRATOR

October yanks her hand out of the bowl and holds it up innocently by her face, which is also looking innocent. She points at the mango and wiggles it a little, distractingly.

OCTOBER

Is this a mango?

MARIO

I would very much appreciate it if you would leave.

OCTOBER

What? Why?

MARIO

I think that, uh... we both... know--

OCTOBER

I'm just asking if this is a mango. You should be able to identify your own fruit.

MARIO

I saw you trying to steal my pearls!

FISH WITH LEGS

October!

OCTOBER

What? I didn't--

MARIO

I saw you.

FISH WITH LEGS

I'm so disappointed... I swear she's never like this.

(CONTINUED)

OCTOBER

You were looking in the opposite direction! How can you be sure?

FISH WITH LEGS

Well, he's a shrimp.

OCTOBER

What?

FISH WITH LEGS

I don't want to sound prejudiced or anything, but... everyone knows shrimp have amazing eyesight. More cones in the eyes.

MARIO

I'm not a--

OCTOBER

What happens in your brain? I really don't understand.

FISH WITH LEGS

Look at him. He's obviously a shrimp in a human suit.

OCTOBER

If he's a shrimp then I'm--

MARIO

Alright.

NARRATOR

Mario drags the nearest tentflap closed and crosses to the other end, stepping over Fish and squeezing past October, who recoils from the contact. He anxiously closes the other flap. October nervously drops the mango and holds her hands up placatingly.

OCTOBER

Listen, we can work th--

MARIO

What gave me away?

FISH WITH LEGS

Was it a secret?

OCTOBER

Uh?

NARRATOR

Mario peeks out the front of the tent and flips the sign outside from open to closed. He turns to face October and Fish with Legs and gropes at the back of

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

his neck. He gets a hold of his skin and pulls, oh ew, and peels off his face. Except it isn't his face, it's a mask or something, because wouldn't you know it, he actually is a shrimp. Complete with shrimp face. This guy is a human sized shrimp in a human costume. The human skin stuff dangles upsettingly from his hand slash human glove. It looks like it's screaming.

OCTOBER

...What!? This guy is a shrimp!? For real??

NARRATOR

Apparently.

MARIO

Please don't report me.

FISH WITH LEGS

Why would we report you?

MARIO

Well...

OCTOBER

(returning shakily to her conniving self) Because... non-humanoid mystical creatures can't get food licenses in Herovia.

FISH WITH LEGS

Oh. I did not realize this was like a thing... I thought it was obvious you were a shrimp, my B.

MARIO

Please. I beg you! I need this fruit stand! It's--

OCTOBER

Uh uh. Listen here. Me and my friend need a centishuttle to Herovia City. And this big bowl of pearls is more than enough for two tickets, so what do you say we cut a deal?

MARIO

Please! I need that money! It's for my children!

OCTOBER

I'm not interested--

FISH WITH LEGS

October 19th 104 Jones! Shame on you! Are you trying to blackmail this shrimp?

(CONTINUED)

OCTOBER

Fish with Legs, have I ever steered you wrong?

NARRATOR

Yes.

FISH WITH LEGS

Well, best friend... There's a first time for everything.

OCTOBER

Come on--

FISH WITH LEGS

This shrimp works very hard and grows very delicious cranBERRIES and he earned all those pearls. I will not let you take them!

MARIO

Thank you so much, Fish with Legs. Seventeen of my fifty-two children have asthma and I'm saving up to buy them all inhalers. We have health care underwater, but... Asthma is very rare among shrimp...

OCTOBER

Yes. Logically.

FISH WITH LEGS

Oh my goodness, 52 babies. And to think you were going to steal his money. My heart. My little fishy heart.

OCTOBER

Why do you have so many children!?

MARIO

I'm a shrimp! We have a lot of eggs in a clutch!

OCTOBER

Well maybe you shouldn't have any eggs if you're not prepared to take care of the children that come out.

MARIO

I do take care of my children! They're my world! I would do--

FISH WITH LEGS

She comes from a large neglectful family, so I wouldn't--

OCTOBER

I am not projecting.

(CONTINUED)

FISH WITH LEGS

I didn't even say the word.

MARIO

I need inhalers, so I came to the surface where there are inhalers--

OCTOBER

To take advantage of the Herovian medical system.

MARIO

I went to the local clinic to buy the inhalers, but they turned me away because I'm a shrimp. So I went back wearing this human suit. But the doctor examined me and... she noticed I was a shrimp in a human suit. She said I could only buy them for fifty times their actual price.

FISH WITH LEGS

She refused to give you inhalers for your babies!? The shame!

OCTOBER

Oh come on... You're buying this?

MARIO

I opened this fruit stand so I could earn human money and buy those inhalers. I'm nearly there. It should only take another month or two.

FISH WITH LEGS

Don't worry, Mario Nera. We'll help you.

OCTOBER

Excuse me?

FISH WITH LEGS

I said we'll help him as an apology for trying to steal his pearls and outing him as a shrimp.

OCTOBER

Fish with Legs. Do you not remember how we urgently need to get to Herovia City? And the impending doom regarding Mamamorbus and a two headed snake?

FISH WITH LEGS

Think of his 52 babies, October!

OCTOBER

I don't--

(CONTINUED)



FISH WITH LEGS

And you're the one who wants to go to Herovia City for supplies! I wanted to go straight to the Plains of Breezil!

OCTOBER

Fish--

FISH WITH LEGS

And if you don't come up with a brilliant October plan to help this kind shrimp father, then as your liege I decree that we shall go directly to Breezil, and forget the Herovia side quest!

OCTOBER

What? Why...? How did this happen?

MARIO

Please... I'm a good parent, but ever since my wife died... It's been very difficult. I spend all my time here while my children work on the farm back in the bog...

FISH WITH LEGS

He's a single father, October!

MARIO

I just want to spend time with them and keep them healthy.

OCTOBER

(sighs) Fine.

FISH WITH LEGS

Yes!

MARIO

Thank you so much!

OCTOBER

But then it's straight to Herovia!

FISH WITH LEGS

Okay, so adviser time! Come on bestie. Advise us. Me and Mario need some advice. Give us the best advice in the world. Number one plan! Brand new! Mint condition!

OCTOBER

Okay! I'll go to the clinic and pretend I have asthma. The doctor will examine me and realize I'm not a shrimp in a human suit and she'll give me an inhaler and you can take it and give it to your stupid kids. Happy?

(CONTINUED)

MARIO

My whole family thanks you.

FISH WITH LEGS

You're welcome, Mario Nera. That's what Fish with Legs and October Jones do. We help people.

OCTOBER

(sighs)

NARRATOR

October, now trapped in the middle, turns away from Mario and shoos Fish in front of her to the other end of the tent. She moodily stomps through the flap and out into the weak bog sunlight, begrudgingly ready to being their side quest. What's that? Yeah sure. Go to the bathroom. Actually, want to just stop here? Alright. Let's stop.