

Here Be Dragons - Episode Two

"In The Labyrinth"

by

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Black Lace and Laser Beams
Productions

SCENE ONE

INT. Corridor, U.S.S. Rusalka - DAY

We hear the background ambience of the ancient submarine - creaks and groans of metal, and a distant dripping.

Then footsteps... first faint, then growing louder as Harper comes around the corner.

HARPER

Hello? ... Helloooo? ... Anybody home? Pippa? Dr. Atlas? Commander Scarlett? Can anyone hear me? No? Great. That's... that is just... great.

She continues walking. And walking. We get the sense that she has been walking for quite some time now, and it just MIGHT be starting to get to her...

Good morning Bermuda Triangle. What a welcome it's been... Let's see... It is approximately... some time in the morning. I think. There are no clocks anywhere, and I'm underwater, so who knows, ladies and gents... it could still be morning... Brilliant. Day one of our rotation on the U.S.S. Rusalka, and I am already late!

She opens another door.

Hello?

Nothing. She slams it shut again.

(terrible impression of Scarlett)
"Oh look at me, I'm Commander Scarlett! I'm gonna wake everybody up at five in the morning, and make them come up to Ops right-freaking-now for morning meeting, because nobody ever told me that nobody likes a morning person! But did I ever think to, I don't know, hand out a map BEFORE everyone split up for the night? Nope! I'm sure they'll figure it out!" Yeah, great thinking on that one. I know I took a right, and a right and a left... and then there was a ladder... somewhere... Crap.

We hear her open a door.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARPER (cont'd)
 Anybody in here? HELLO? ...No?
 STILL just me? Great. Just making
 sure.

She slams the door shut, frustrated.
 How big IS this place? ... This is
 ridiculous! How is anybody supposed
 to find ANYTHING in this nightmare
 maze? It's just doors and green
 paint, and metal tubes. Everywhere.
 (annoying tour guide voice) And if
 you look to your right, ladies and
 gentlemen, you will see the vast,
 soul-crushing monotony of the black
 ocean void! It just goes on and on,
 ladies and gents, and it just keeps
 getting darker! Who knows where we
 are! And to your left you will
 see... that's right... more ocean!
 Oh! Watch out for those pipes! No
 one knows what they're for, but
 they're COVERED in dust! Don't
 inhale too deeply friends...
 (realizing) ... aaaaaand I'm
 talking to myself. And I have been
 talking to myself for-... Wow. I
 need to get a hobby.

And then we hear something... it's faint, but there's
 definitely something.
 (hesitantly) Uh... Hello?

There it is again. Louder, but still distant. It sounds
 almost like a whine.
 Is... is someone there? ...
 Probably... Probably not. That's
 just... the pipes... cooling. ... I
 should just... go this way. ...
 Yeah...

Harper breaks into a very fast walk. It's fine. She's not
 nervous. She rounds a corner and walks smack into something.

Harper shrieks. So does the "something". There is a mad
 scramble as the two attempt to disentangle themselves.

HARPER (cont'd)
 Pippa!
 PIP
 Harper?!

HARPER

Jesus, don't do that! You scared me!

PIP

I scared you?! You're the one who came sprinting around the corner!

HARPER

I-... Never mind that. What are you doing here?

PIP

I was looking for you! Well... You and everybody else. What are you doing here?

HARPER

Looking for Ops. I left my room an hour ago, but I've just been going in circles... I think...

beat.

PIP

Do you think anybody will notice?

HARPER

That half the crew is missing?

PIP

Yeah...

HARPER

... I'm sure it'll be fine. We can't be THAT late, or someone would have put an announcement over the PA system, right?

PIP

Right! Well, operations has to be somewhere towards the front of the ship and up... So if we just-

HARPER

NO! Not that way. (mildly embarrassed pause) I uh... I just came from that way. It's not that way.

PIP

Oh... Well... I passed a couple of doors a few minutes ago. If we just

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PIP (cont'd)
keep going up, we HAVE to get there
eventually. Come on...

Pip starts walking back the way she came. Harper glances over her shoulder into the darkness of the corridor. Pipes hiss. Water drips. But there's nothing there. So she turns, and follows Pip.

FADE TO:

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SCENE TWO

INT. Corridor, U.S.S. Rusalka - Moments Later

Pip and Harper are coming down a hallway. The hum of the engines is slightly louder in this area of the ship.

PIP
I'm sure the engine room is
somewhere down this way, but I
haven't found it yet... I looked
earlier, but all I could find were
a couple of bathrooms, and a room
with a pool table.

HARPER
A what?

PIP
I know, right? I think it must have
been the old break room, 'cause
there was a coffee maker and a
vending machine in there too.

HARPER
Why would a submarine need a
vending machine and a pool table?

PIP
Well, I guess it would have been
for the docents.

HARPER
Docents?

PIP
Yeah. Dr. Atlas was telling me
about it last night. The Ophelia
used to be a museum. After it
crashed, the German government
decided they didn't want it

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PIP (cont'd)
anymore, plus their Navy was SUPER
broke after the war, so they put it
up for auction. It was bought by
the Naval Museum, and they've been
running tours through it ever
since. Or at least, 'til Mr. Rhys
bought it from them a couple years
ago.

HARPER
You're kidding me.

PIP
Haven't you noticed all the little
blue buttons and information
plaques everywhere?

HARPER
I mean... yeah, but it's not like I
read any of them. I thought the
buttons were for the intercom or
something...

PIP
Nope. Here...

She presses one of the buttons with a 'click'.

COMPUTER VOICE
(sunny and cheerful) Did you know
that the first submarines could
only hold one or two people at a
time? Today, some submarines can
carry over 100 crew members!

HARPER
Whoah...

PIP
Cool right?! I LOVE fun facts.

She presses the button again.

COMPUTER VOICE
Submarines have special tanks
called ballasts to help them
submerge! Going down? The ballasts
will fill with water. And when it's
time to return to the surface, the
water is pumped out, relieving the
boat of the extra weight!

PIP

Huh! The more you know...

And she presses the button again.

COMPUTER VOICE

Torpedos are an important weapon used by submarines. The Ophelia carries up to 50 at a time! But be careful! Many a crew has been lost when a warhead has exploded inside the cabin, causing the boats to flood rapidly, drowning everyone inside in a matter of minutes as the craft sinks to the bottom of the ocean! Uh-oh!

There's a moment's uncomfortable pause.

HARPER

... Soooo... the doors?

PIP

This way...

They walk a little further down the hall, and stop before a set of doors.

PIP (cont'd)

Here.

HARPER

Okay... Let's see what's behind door... number... one...

She pushes open the door and...

HARPER (cont'd)

I-... What on earth?

PIP

Oh COOL!

CUT TO:

INT. Library - U.S.S. Rusalka - DAY

HARPER

(moving inside) We... have a library... Who puts a library on a boat?! Who puts a pool table on a boat? Priorities...

(CONTINUED)

PIP

(following) I've never seen so many books in my life.

HARPER

Not a big reader?

PIP

Oh, I am, it's just my parents didn't really keep a lot of books in the house. We were more a... computer household. I had three in my room.

HARPER

Really?

PIP

Sure. Any tech I wanted, and just about the fastest internet connection money could buy. I had a couple of math and science books, but mostly, I read things online. It's just... Mother and father didn't like to have a lot of paper around.

HARPER

Guessing that's what got you into engineering?

PIP

I mean, it made the most sense. Always being around machines... My parents used to work for NASA, doing research and development projects. But then right before I was born, they moved all their work to the house, and set up shop there, consulting or something like that. They didn't like to talk about it.

HARPER

So you were like, homeschooled?

PIP

... You could say that. They were always showing me the things they were working on, teaching me theorems and data processing techniques. And books just weren't a necessary part of the curriculum.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PIP (cont'd)
But I knew how to take apart a computer down to the circuitry and put it back together again by the time I was six, so I'd say it balanced out.

HARPER
(laughs) Yeah, I guess so.

They step back out into the hallway and close the door behind them.

HARPER (cont'd)
Okay... Let's see what's behind door number...

She pulls open the door, and is immediately hit with a burst of cold air. It's an access tube. A long, rusty looking metal ladder stretches on into the darkness in both directions. The sound of the engines are even louder now.

HARPER (cont'd)
... Two. Uhh... Well, the good news is, we found a ladder? And the bad news is it's rusted straight to hell.

PIP
It doesn't look SO bad.

HARPER
Do YOU want to try it?

PIP
Mmm... Okay!

She starts forward, but Harper grabs her arm.

HARPER
Pip!

PIP
Well what do YOU suggest? I haven't seen a staircase or an elevator lying around anywhere, have you?

beat.

HARPER
(sighing) Okay. But we go one at a time. And I'm going first.

(CONTINUED)

PIP

Aww, I wanted to go first.

HARPER

Well, think of it this way; if this breaks and I die, you get to be Chief Engineer AND Ship's Historian.

PIP

Hmm... Fair enough.

Harper grabs hold of the ladder, looks back and forces a weak smile.

HARPER

See you on the other side!

She heads up the ladder.

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SCENE THREE

INT. Access Tube, U.S.S. Rusalka - Moments Later

HARPER

Okay... Okay... This isn't so bad. Just... climbing a ladder. But if I slip, I fall hundreds of feet to a horrible, mangled death. And if I don't, I'll need about six hundred tetanus shots. Great. Ugh this is disgusting...

She continues to climb. She's starting to get the hang of it when-... What the hell was that?

There it is again. That same, awful growling whine, rattling through the tube.

HARPER (cont'd)

Uh... Pip? That's you, right? Pippa? ... Nope. OKAY! Just the pipes. Just the pipes. Come on, where's the door... where's the door? Door!

There's a large door set into the wall. Harper pulls it open and steps into the new room.

HARPER (cont'd)

Pippa? PIP! All clear... You can come up now... Pip? ... Pip?

(CONTINUED)

There's a moment's silence. And then Pip peeks up into the room.

PIP
Okay, I'm gonna need like, fifty
band-aids. Ow.

Harper helps pull her up.

HARPER
Told you that thing was rusted to
hell.

PIP
Where are we?

HARPER
Well, the paint on the door says
'Deck 1'. So that should put us...

Pip finds a switch, and the room is flooded with fluorescent light.

CUT TO:

INT. Gift Shop - U.S.S. Rusalka - DAY

The walls are lined with shelves of books, posters, and novelty items.

HARPER (cont'd)
... in the gift shop. Of course it
does.

PIP
No warship is complete without one!

HARPER
At least we're on the right level.
Gift shop means end of the tour,
should be a straight shot to Ops
from here. Pip?

Pip's already started to wander around the room.

PIP
You know, despite the fact that Mr.
Rhys seems to have put absolutely
no planning into this trip at all,
I gotta say, some of this could
actually be pretty useful.

(CONTINUED)

HARPER

Oh sure! If we hit a great big rock and sink to the bottom of the ocean, I'm REALLY gonna be grateful for that pool table.

PIP

But we'll never run out of matching commemorative hats and t-shirts. What do you think, Harper? "Lil' Miss Unsinkable," "Master of Disaster," or "I Survived The Ophelia?"

HARPER

They all sound... very encouraging.

PIP

"I Survived The Ophelia." I can just write 'Rusalka' on it with a permanent marker or something. (She puts on the hat) Hey!

Pip races across the room to one of the shelves and picks up a large hardcover book.

PIP (cont'd)

Oh my god! They have "Legends of the Deep!"

HARPER

What?

PIP

"Legends of the Deep: A Complete Guide To the Stories of The Sea. By Dr. Reagan Pierce!" I've heard about this book!

HARPER

You've heard of a book?

PIP

Ha ha, very funny. I'm serious. It's supposed to be the most intensive historical study on water-based mythology ever compiled. I think this is the last compendium she wrote before she started on her novels...

(CONTINUED)

HARPER

Yeah. I know.

PIP

Oh. You've read it?

HARPER

(she eyes the book distastefully)
No. But who hasn't heard of the
brilliant Reagan Pierce.

PIP

Oh, that's right... That
psychological breakdown she had at
the Nobel Awards a few years ago...
Yikes... That was wild.

HARPER

Yeah.

Pip holds out the book.

PIP

You should probably take this.

HARPER

I don't want it.

PIP

Aren't you supposed to be our
historian? Or mythological expert,
or whatever?

HARPER

I...

PIP

Come on... Could be useful. You're
AT LEAST guaranteed an interesting
read.

HARPER

(ANYTHING to get Pip to stop making
that face at her) Fine! I will take
the book! Now can we please just-

We hear a very loud, unpleasant growl.

PIP

Did you hear that?

(CONTINUED)

HARPER

No. Now come on, let's just go,
alright?

PIP

You SERIOUSLY didn't hear that?

HARPER

I don't know what you're talking
about.

More growling. It's definitely coming from the access tube.

PIP

OH COME ON!

HARPER

Pip, SHUT UP!

There's a banging sound coming out of the access tube now,
accompanied by a sort of shrieking that MIGHT be the sound
of tearing metal, but is PROBABLY something much much worse.

PIP

The door!

The girls run and slam the door to the tube shut. They step
back, staring warily at it. The room is utterly silent.

PIP (cont'd)

(whispering) Is it gone?

HARPER

(whispering) I don't know...

PIP

(whispering) Well should we check?

HARPER

(whispering) If YOU want to stick
your head into that shadowy metal
death trap, you go right ahead. Be
my guest.

PIP

(whispering) Well should we tell
the captain?! There's a monster in
the walls, I vote we tell the
captain!

HARPER

(whispering) Oh yeah, because
THAT'S going to go well! Hey

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HARPER (cont'd)
Commander Scarlett! Sorry we're
like, eight hours late to your
precious morning meeting, but by
the way THERE'S SOMETHING LIVING IN
THE ACCESS TUBES!

PIP
(whispering) It's not a something,
it's a monster!

HARPER
(whispering) There's no such thing
as monsters!

PIP
Says the girl on a monster hunting
trip!

HARPER
It's probably just the pipes! Or a
really, REALLY confused fish!

PIP
A fish?!

BANG! Something hits the door with tremendous force.

HARPER
RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!

No sense sticking around to see what it was. Both girls
scream, and make a break for it.

CUT TO:

4 SCENE FOUR

INT. Ops - U.S.S. Rusalka - Moments Later

Commander Scarlett and Dr. Atlas are seated at their
stations.

The door suddenly slams open and Pip and Harper come
bursting into the room, wild eyed and breathing hard.

ATLAS
Three and a half hours late...
That's got to be some sort of
record.

(CONTINUED)

SCARLETT

Oh I cannot WAIT to hear the explanation you girls have for this.

HARPER

Sorry... Sir. Um... We were just... We got lost and-

PIP

THERE'S A MONSTER IN THE ACCESS TUBES!

HARPER

Pippa!

ATLAS

What?

HARPER

We were trying to find Ops. We got a bit turned around, and-

PIP

We were in the gift shop and it was crawling up the tube!

ATLAS

We have a gift shop?

SCARLETT

Alright ENOUGH.

PIP

But Commander-

SCARLETT

I said ENOUGH. Zip it. You know, I have to give you girls some credit! You've set the bar incredibly high for being absurdly late AND ridiculous cover stories. Two for one, and we haven't even gotten started on the day! Unfortunately for you, I'm not in the mood for fairy tales. We've got work to do. Now are you going to waste my time with chit-chat, or are we going to actually get some things done today?

Scarlett looks between the two younger women, waiting for a response.

(CONTINUED)

SCARLETT (cont'd)

Thought so. Well then! Since you two have become so well versed in the layout of our new abode, then you'll have no issue figuring out where the broom closet is. I'm sure we've all noticed the dust problem... Might as well tackle it head on before it gets any worse. And do me a favor, stick to this floor, until I say otherwise? Don't want you falling down a well.

ATLAS

Commander, I'd like to take a look at that access tube... Make sure we don't have any burst pipes, or unexpected structural damage.

SCARLETT

Be sure to bring a bottle of Anti-Monster spray.

ATLAS

Duly noted.

She exits.

PIP

There really WAS something down there.

SCARLETT

Well, then I suggest you get used to it. Anybody on this boat is in it for the long haul. Monster or no. Go on. I've got a course to chart, and these rooms aren't going to dust themselves. Shoo.

Pip and Harper step into the hall, and Scarlett shuts the door behind them.

HARPER

Well. That could have been worse.

PIP

Do you think Dr. Atlas is going to be okay down there? You know... by herself?

(CONTINUED)

HARPER

I don't know...

PIP

You think we should go after her?
Like, back up?

HARPER

Maybe... No. No, she'll be okay. It was probably just-... Nothing. Right? Besides, Scarlett would probably skin us alive. If the doctor needs help- which she totally won't-

PIP

But if she needs us, we'll be there?

HARPER

Yeah, exactly... Yeah. I-... I'm sure she'll be fine. (beat) Hey, cheer up. Come on. Let's go. I bet I can find the broom closet before you do! I'll race you!

PIP

Last one to it has to carry all the cleaning supplies!

They race each other down the hall.

FADE OUT.

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EPILOGUE

INT. Access Tube - U.S.S. Rusalka - DAY

Dr. Atlas is climbing steadily down the ladder. At first, there are only the sounds of her breathing, and the distant rumble of the ship's engines. And then... something growls.

ATLAS

Ahh... There you are.

The thing snarls again.

ATLAS (cont'd)

You're a long way from home, aren't you?

(CONTINUED)

She reaches into her uniform and pulls out a small black communicator. It beeps into life, and we hear static on the other end of the line.

ATLAS (cont'd)
(into the communicator) Killian?
Killian, it's Natalya. Pick up.

More static. And then after another moment, the other end picks up.

KILLIAN
Dr. Atlas... What a lovely surprise. I didn't expect to be hearing from you so soon. How may I be of assistance?

ATLAS
Sorry to bother you, Killian, but we seem to have hit an... unexpected snag, and I don't quite know how to explain it.

KILLIAN
Oh? Try.

We hear another growl.

KILLIAN (cont'd)
What was that?

ATLAS
That is a problem.

FADE OUT.

END.