

Here Be Dragons - Episode Three

"Scavengineering"

by

Jordan Cobb

Black Lace and Laser Beams
Productions

SCENE ONE

INT. Ops - U.S.S. Rusalka - DAY

Harper stands by the helm, her attention torn between the screen in front of her, and Pippa, who is underneath the station with a tool box. We hear her banging around a bit, before she pops her head out.

PIP

Okay! Try it now.

HARPER

Rodger dodger.

Harper types something into the interface. The station does not respond.

HARPER

Nothing.

Pippa slides back under the station and we hear her banging around again.

PIP

Now? Try turning her... um... 20 points to the... left.

HARPER

Points?

PIP

That's nautical, isn't it?

HARPER

(typing) Hello, Rusalka interface!
Uh... please turn 20 'points' to the- My left or yours?

PIP

I don't know! Left! Starboard!

HARPER

Left is port, Pip.

PIP

Whatever! Just see if she turns!

HARPER

Okay (resumes typing) 20 points to Port. Aaaaaand...

(CONTINUED)

The computer lets out a horrible high pitched screeching sound. Harper claps her hands over her ears. Pippa yelps and bangs her head on the underside of the station.

HARPER (cont'd)
Shut it off!

PIP
You shut it off!

Harper scrambles to turn off the machine, as Scarlett enters Ops.

SCARLETT
What the hell is going on in here?!

HARPER
Pippa!

Flustered, Pippa grabs a handful of wiring from the underside of the station and rips it out. The screeching noise dies instantly... so does the computer.

HARPER (cont'd)
Oh no... Pip...

PIP
I... I...

SCARLETT
What... the hell... do you two
IDIOTS think you're doing?
(spotting the wires in Pippa's
hands and the toolbox) What did you
do to my ship?!

HARPER
(slightly awed) I think she just
ripped out the central processing
system...

PIP
And the auxiliary controls...

SCARLETT
WHAT?!

PIP
I... It was an accident...

SCARLETT
An ACCIDENT?!

She rushes over to the helm.

SCARLETT (cont'd)

An accident is spilling coffee, or hitting the switch for the central heating system. THIS (She kicks the toolbox, sending things flying)
I-... You SLAUGHTERED my ship! I...
I... Out. OUT. BOTH OF YOU. Out.
NOW.

HARPER

Where are we supposed to-

SCARLETT

I don't care. Out of this room. Out of this ship! I don't care! Just...
Out of Ops. NEVER in Ops. You two are BANNED. BANNED.

HARPER

What?! You can't ban us!

SCARLETT

Oh-ho-ho you wanna bet? (points at Pip) You! Banned! (and Harper)
Banned! Banned, banned, BANNED! Now get out!

HARPER

We were just trying to help! See Pippa had this idea-

SCARLETT

(trying to calm herself down) Stop talking.

HARPER

We were just trying to connect a few of the systems! Sort of like an update for the auto-pilot-

SCARLETT

I said stop talking!

HARPER

But it's a good idea! She was just trying to help-

SCARLETT

I DON'T NEED YOUR KIND OF HELP. I don't need you touching things, and breaking my ship, and getting lost! What did I say to you two on day one, huh? What did I say? I am not

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SCARLETT (cont'd)
 your mother. I am not here to
 babysit you two! I can't turn my
 back on you for a second without
 you two getting into trouble, can
 I?

HARPER
 We... we're sorry.

SCARLETT
 (glaring at Pippa) What, she can't
 speak?

PIP
 (about 1 mean word away from
 jumping ship and swimming home)
 I... I...

HARPER
 (gently, to Pip) It's okay... We'll
 fix it. (to Scarlett) We'll fix it.

SCARLETT
 Then fix it. ... NOW.

Harper and Pip both jump and scramble for the station. We hear them rattling around, while Scarlett paces back and forth, trying to cool down.

PIP
 (slightly muffled) Umm... I-...
 um... o-okay... So... If we
 just-... If you just pass me those
 pliers there... And I'll just put
 this back here... And if I just-

There's a strange, buzzing sound and the lights flicker and abruptly die. Everyone freezes, and goes deadly quiet.

Scarlett starts to laugh. It's not a nice sound. It's the laugh of a soon-to-be-serial-killer.

SCARLETT
 (Why God? Why me?) Well. ... Well!
 That's... that's perfect, Pippa.
 Really. I... What can I say? You
 fixed it!

Pippa starts to cry. It's soft, but there's no doubt about it.

SCARLETT (cont'd)
(taken aback) I-... Pippa...

Pip's crying louder now, utterly panicked and upset. Harper wraps an arm around her. Scarlett, meanwhile, doesn't have a clue what to do, but oh here comes that guilty feeling...

HARPER
Pip... Pip, it's okay. Hey, you're okay.

PIP
I'm sorry!

HARPER
I know... I know... It's okay.

PIP
I d-didn't... I didn't m-mean to!

HARPER
I know you didn't, Pip. It's okay.
Accidents happen. You're okay...

Uncomfortably, Scarlett turns her back on the pair and pulls her walkie-talkie from her belt. We hear the device beep musically to life.

SCARLETT
(into the walkie) Atlas. This is
Commander Scarlett to Dr. Atlas.
Atlas, can you hear me?

A brief pause, and then...

ATLAS
(over the walkie) Is someone up
there playing a bloody joke?
Where'd all the lights go?

SCARLETT
Just the Wonder Twins at work
again. Can you make it up to Ops in
this? Officer Campbell will need
your help in repairing one of the
stations.

ATLAS
Of course. Tell Pippa I'll be there
in a minute.

(CONTINUED)

SCARLETT

Copy that.

Scarlett switches off the walkie and turns to Harper.

SCARLETT (cont'd)

Bennett. You're with me.

HARPER

What?

SCARLETT

Do you hear the engines?

Harper listens. Scarlett has a point. The ship is eerily quiet.

SCARLETT (cont'd)

Yeah. Neither do I. Which means we're either dead in the water, or they're running and not connected to anything, which means they're over-heating. You're going to help me make sure they've been properly taken offline.

HARPER

I... But Pip-

SCARLETT

Pip stays here to think about what she did, and fix the ship. No aux-controls means we're sitting in a submarine that can't be steered, and doesn't currently have an air filtration system. Do you like breathing Officer Bennett? I sure do!

HARPER

Yes, but-

SCARLETT

She's a big girl. Look, see? She's cried it out. Atlas will be here in a minute. She's going to be okay. Now hurry up.

Scarlett leaves the room without a backwards glance. Harper hesitates, then gives Pip a quick hug, before following the commander.

(CONTINUED)

HARPER

I'll be back before you know it.
It's... it's gonna be okay. You've
got this.

FADE TO:

2

SCENE TWO

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

Scarlett leads the way down the hall with a flashlight.
Harper is struggling to keep up, and glaring at the back of
the commander's head.

HARPER

You didn't have to be such a bully,
you know.

Scarlett doesn't respond.

HARPER (cont'd)

She was doing her best. Just trying
to be helpful. What exactly was
yelling at her supposed to do?

SCARLETT

(eyes on the ground) Watch your
step.

HARPER

Are you going to answer me?

SCARLETT

I'm your commanding officer. I
don't have to answer you if I don't
want to.

HARPER

Well, I'm not in the army. Which
means nobody's my commanding
officer. I don't answer to you.

SCARLETT

You sure about that?

Harper falters. Scarlett sighs and shakes her head, and they
move on in silence.

SCARLETT (cont'd)

(after a moment) It's not like I
WANTED to make her cry.

(CONTINUED)

HARPER

Well, you did.

SCARLETT

(snapping) I know I did! Thank you, Officer Bennett, I am VERY aware that I made a subordinate officer cry! I know that! (beat) I... didn't think I was that scary.

HARPER

(not unkindly) You are.

SCARLETT

Yeah. Evidentially. (under her breath) Shit. (beat) Well. Maybe it'll teach her not to screw around so much. The ship was fine the way it was.

Harper gives her a look.

And even if it wasn't, there are PROTOCOLS for that sort of thing! You two colossal screw ups might know that if you'd ever been on a sub before.

HARPER

Well we haven't. Are we supposed to just magically know this stuff?

SCARLETT

It's called common sense? I don't just go into your room and rip the circuits out of the walls. Aren't you supposed to be the brainy one? Pick up a book.

HARPER

Or you could learn to communicate properly, like a real leader, instead of just screaming at people all the time.

It's like Harper has slapped Scarlett in the face. The commander glares at the younger woman for a moment, then turns away.

SCARLETT

Well maybe, if Killian had given me a proper crew, I wouldn't need to.

They've reached the engine room by this point, and Scarlett pulls open the door.

(CONTINUED)

SCARLETT (cont'd)
Come on. Let's get to work.

FADE TO:

3 SCENE THREE

INT. Engine Room - U.S.S. Rusalka - Moments Later

Scarlett is already busy checking one of the engines.

SCARLETT
Check the pressure gauge on that engine, there. If it's still in the white, then we're okay.

HARPER
Yeah. Fine.

Harper moves to the other engine. The atmosphere is tense. Neither woman has said half of what she'd like to, and it's just a matter of who will break the silence first.

SCARLETT
This one's okay. Looks like it was a clean shut down, with the rest of the systems.

Harper doesn't respond.

SCARLETT (cont'd)
I'll say this for your friend... she... appears to know her stuff. She didn't kill us, anyway.

Still nothing.

SCARLETT (cont'd)
Look, I-... I'm sorry, okay? I know you guys all think that I'm some sort of... raging bitch, or whatever, but in case you haven't noticed, somebody has to be. I'm just trying to make sure nothing catastrophic happens where we all end up dead, and you guys aren't exactly making it easy for me!
(beat) Not that... that's your fault. We're barely into the first leg of this thing, and... (sighs)
Look, I don't LIKE to be the bitch, okay? It's not like I'm always like

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SCARLETT (cont'd)
this. I don't get my kicks
terrifying small children, and
yelling at my crew mates. I don't
want to be the bully. I HATE
bullies... I don't WANT to be
the big, mean, scary bad guy
everybody hates... but I will. If
it means everybody comes through
this thing in one piece, then I
will. No questions asked.

beat.

HARPER
(slightly chastened) We don't hate
you.

SCARLETT
(Doesn't believe her, and
pretending not to care with a HEAVY
layer of sarcasm) Just maybe shout
a bit less, yeah?

HARPER
It couldn't hurt.

The buzzing hum of the fluorescents fills the room as the
lights suddenly come back on, quickly followed by the low
burr of the engines.

HARPER (cont'd)
Hey! And Pippa said, let there be
light! (grins) See? Just got to
have a little faith.

SCARLETT
(hiding a smile) Yeah, yeah. Nobody
likes a smartass.

Scarlett pulls out her walkie again and heads for the door,
Harper at her heels.

SCARLETT (cont'd)
(into the walkie) Atlas. I'm
guessing everything upstairs is in
working order?

ATLAS
(over the walkie) Ahh... well...

SCARLETT

What is it?

ATLAS

Well the lights are back on,
commander, and the central
computers are running but...

SCARLETT

But?

ATLAS

You'd better come see for yourself.

CUT TO:

4 SCENE FOUR

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

Everyone is gathered around the helm.

SCARLETT

What do you mean, no?

AUTO

I mean no.

SCARLETT

I'm sorry. I'm confused. Who is
hell this, and why the hell won't
he let me access the navigational
drive?

PIP

(still a little shaken) He... he's
the ship's interface Harper was
helping me to install... His name
is Auto... And we can't access the
navigational drive because um...
because we don't... we don't...

SCARLETT

(sighing) Because we don't HAVE a
navigational drive anymore... Is
that it?

PIP

Umm...

(CONTINUED)

AUTO

Correct.

SCARLETT

Right. Of course we don't. Because it's just that kind of day, isn't it?

PIP

I-I'm sorry commander.

SCARLETT

It's... not your fault. We just lost all of our mapping technology, and possibly our ability to steer, but it's no one's fault. It's... it's no one's fault.

PIP

You're mad.

SCARLETT

No. I'm not mad.

ATLAS

Commander, do you need to sit down?

SCARLETT

I'm not mad. I'm fine.

HARPER

Are you sure? You don't look so good.

SCARLETT

I'm fine!

AUTO

Perhaps a glass of water? But not from around here! Fun fact: Salt water makes up about 71% of the Earth's surface! It's fun to swim in, but deadly to drink! If you tried, you'd die of dehydration!

SCARLETT

... did that thing just... spit an ocean fun-fact at me?

PIP

It works!

(CONTINUED)

ATLAS

That was intentional?

HARPER

(laughing) Oh my god.

PIP

I... I thought it would be nice if we could interface with the ship from places other than Ops... in case something went wrong and we couldn't get to the bridge... Auto can follow basic instructions, and he can indicate when something is wrong. A lot of the ship's existing systems are outdated, and I knew there had to be a better way to cope with them all. So I developed an interface program to monitor everything and perform certain tasks around the ship. This boat's meant to be crewed by WAY more than four people. Auto can serve as all the personnel we don't have. But I think I overloaded the ship's systems, and that's why everything shut down... But now we have Auto, and it's not like he's, you know, actually sentient or anything, so he can't, you know... go HAL 9000 on us.

AUTO

I'm standing right here.

PIP

You can't stand, Auto, you don't have legs.

SCARLETT

But how did you-

PIP

Those fun fact buttons were all over the place, so I just connected them to the central computer system-

ATLAS

(impressed) You did what? How?

(CONTINUED)

PIP

It wasn't hard... But... You know, now we have access from everywhere, and we can have fun facts whenever we want!

Everyone stares at her.

PIP (cont'd)

Don't you guys like fun facts?

AUTO

I do.

SCARLETT

Okay. Fine. How do we get this thing to reload the navigational files?

ATLAS

Have you tried turning it off and turning it on again?

SCARLETT

Don't you have some catheters to count?

ATLAS

No, but I'd be happy to set up an enema if you'd care to relax?

SCARLETT

I AM RELAXED! (beat) ... I mean... I am relaxed. I'm fine. See?

ATLAS

Uh-huh.

PIP

A few of the systems still haven't come back online yet. Maybe Auto just needs a bit of time to warm up?

ATLAS

If that were the case, then the navigations system would show up here (she indicates the screen). You can see all of the systems that are malfunctioning, or booting up, or offline. Navigation isn't one of them. It's just... gone.

(CONTINUED)

HARPER

So we don't know where we're going?

ATLAS

We don't even know what direction we're pointed in. We're flying blind.

SCARLETT

Pip, that thing doesn't happen to have a GPS, does it?

PIP

Uhh, no, commander.

SCARLETT

Well, looks like we're doing this the old fashioned way, then. (she takes the helm) Harper, didn't you say something about a library?

HARPER

Yes...

SCARLETT

Think you can find it again?

HARPER

Well, maybe...

SCARLETT

Yes or no, Officer Bennett...
(deliberately gentle) It's okay to say no.

HARPER

No, I-... I mean yes! Yes. I can find it, commander.

SCARLETT

Good. Take Dr. Atlas with you, and bring me every map and star chart you can find.

HARPER

Star charts?

SCARLETT

You heard me. Can't know where we're going if we don't know where we are. Constellations should be enough to give us a rough fix. So we'll surface, cut the engines, and wait until dark.

(CONTINUED)

HARPER

You know how to do that?

SCARLETT

Sure. And I suggest bringing snacks. We'll be out there a while.

ATLAS

Oh! And blankets! I have the perfect book to read.

HARPER

Sounds like a party.

PIP

And... me, commander?

SCARLETT

You? You stay here, and help me figure out how to work this... (she glances uncomfortably at the transformed helm) ...thing.

AUTO

Auto.

SCARLETT

Auto...

PIP

Yes, commander.

SCARLETT

You have your assignments, ladies. Hop to it!

Harper and Atlas leave. Scarlett turns to Pip.

SCARLETT (cont'd)

So. We have an auto-pilot now...

PIP

He's... less of an auto-pilot... more of a ship's interface. I mean, he COULD steer the ship... if he wanted to... but he's mostly just... here to help.

SCARLETT

Yeah, I don't like... Technology and I don't really... Get along. But this is... I mean... (beat) Good job, Pippa.

(CONTINUED)

PIP
Commander-

SCARLETT
No, I mean it. You... This-... You
did a good job.

Pippa smiles.

beat.

SCARLETT (cont'd)
I don't suppose... you could see if
you could do something about that
thing's voice, could you? I was
kind of enjoying the all-girl's
thing...

PIP
Yeah, sure.

SCARLETT
Of course... you'd need access to
the bridge... and I can't exactly
run Ops without my Chief
Engineer...

PIP
What about Harper?

SCARLETT
I... might be persuaded that you...
need an assistant. From time to
time. So long as you warn me before
you start on any new projects.

PIP
(smiles) I'll see what I can do.

FADE TO:

5 SCENE FIVE

EXT. U.S.S. Rusalka - Evening

Waves crash against the hull of the Rusalka. In the far
distance, birds wheel and cry out. The crew is seated
together around the escape hatch, wrapped in blankets as the
sun sets over the water.

(CONTINUED)

ATLAS

(reading) "Stretching directly from the strange olden ruin on the far islet to the waning moon, my eyes seemed to trace a beam of faint quivering radiance having no reflection in the waters of the bog. And upward along that pallid path my fevered fancy pictured a thin shadow slowly writhing; a vague contorted shadow struggling as if drawn by unseen daemons. Crazed as I was, I saw in that awful shadow a monstrous resemblance--a nauseous, unbelievable caricature--a blasphemous effigy of him who had been Denys Barry."

HARPER

... Okay. THAT was freaky.

ATLAS

Well, Lovecraft was a freaky guy. The Moon-Bog isn't even half of it.

SCARLETT

And you read this for fun? You're gonna give the Wonder Twins nightmares.

ATLAS

(teasing) I thought you weren't going to be acting as anyone's mother? If they don't want me to read any more, they're old enough to say so...

SCARLETT

You're enjoying this, aren't you?

ATLAS

VERY much.

PIP

I see one!

Pippa is pointing straight up at the sky. Out of the gathering purplish blue, there shines a single point of light. The first star of the evening.

(CONTINUED)

HARPER
Score one for Pippa!

SCARLETT
Better head down and let Auto know.

PIP
Actually, commander? She prefers
Ophelia.

SCARLETT
Right. Well... let Ophelia know.

Pip climbs back down into the Rusalka, and heads for Ops.
She seats herself at the helm.

PIP
Ophelia? You awake?

There is a brief pause, before the central computer system
boots up with a musical chime.

OPHELIA
Good evening, Pippa. What can I do
for you today?

FADE OUT.

END.