

## **STL – 049 – Vain Attempts and Vent Descents**

### **Content Warnings**

- Comedic violence
- Emotional abuse
- Alcoholism
- Screaming
- Mass pain
- Mentions of animal harm

**[Show Theme - Intro]**

**IMOGEN**

Rusty Quill presents: Stellar Firma.

**[Show Theme – Intro *continued*]**

**[David and Trexel struggle as they scuttle through the vents]**

**DAVID**

Trexel...

**TREXEL**

Er, what? What?

**DAVID**

Tr-Trexel, do you know where we're going?

**[both stop scuttling]**

**TREXEL**

What do you mean?

**DAVID**

I'm— I'm pretty— Well, I'm pretty sure we've been— we've been climbing through these vents for about 23-1/2 hours and—

**TREXEL**

Yes?

**DAVID**

Well, I think we should probably be... well, [**stammers**] where the complaints go now, right? It's not—

**TREXEL**

What do you mean? I-I've been following you, David!

**DAVID**

You're in front.

**TREXEL**

I don't understand.

**DAVID**

You—

**TREXEL**

Look, the point is we're making progress, and wherever progress is going, it's good.

**DAVID**

No!

**TREXEL**

Progress for progress' sake.

**DAVID**

Progress to where?

**TREXEL**

Progress to the *future*, David. To the bright, shining future in which I am an Executive sitting on some sort of large ceremonial Executive chair, and I'm assuming that through these vents is to that destiny, unless I've entirely misunderstood what we're doing here **[loudly]** *which is always possible, David!*

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

Not just possible but likely.

**DAVID**

So you think we're gonna crawl through some vents and you're just gonna find an Executive position at the end?

**TREXEL**

Well, David, I've never understood the hierarchical structure—

**DAVID**

No. No, stop. This is all gonna be rubbish. No, we are trying to find the Complaints Department, right? Because we are expediting, and we put things

up the tube and nothing gets *done* and the gun walls are *empty*. So I want to know where this tube right here goes. **[Trexel sighs]** Where do our things go?

**TREXEL**

David, why are you so insistent on all of this? Why can't you just live in the nice, soft, warm embrace of complete ignorance that we have all found quite comforting over the eons?

**DAVID**

**[with fake enthusiasm]** Because I have suddenly found out that potentially my entire existence is completely pointless!

**TREXEL**

All existences are pointless, David! That's why we shout so much. Come on, it's simple!

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

A simple philosophy but surprisingly accurate.

**DAVID**

Oh. Wait, you think that, too?

**TREXEL**

What?

**DAVID**

That existence is pointless.

**TREXEL**

I— Ah, you're not gonna make me think about it, David. I can tell you're trying to make me introspective, and it's not gonna work. I'm extrospective, David, and proud. Proud, I say!

**DAVID**

I wa— I wasn't. I was just a bit sad.

**TREXEL**

Extrospect— Uh, uh, look at these walls. Aren't they grand?

**DAVID**

Oh, fine. Right, we can't afford to do this in here because we'll never get out. Yes, Trexel, so— Look— Look— **[as an aside]** Change subject. **[to Trexel]** You are Captain Vent-times, right?

**TREXEL**

I am. I am Captain Vent-time.

**DAVID**

The old— the old vent-men.

**TREXEL**

Admiral Vents himself.

**DAVID**

Trex-vent Geist-vent. That's who you are.

**TREXEL**

Let's not push it, David. I'm the creative here. I'm the creative.

**DAVID**

**[crosstalk]** Chief Executive of Vent-a Firma.

**TREXEL**

That's— Well, I like that. I like that, but I'm *too big to admit it*.

**DAVID**

Okay. Well, why do you spend so much time here? And also, since you do spend too much time in here, how do you still not have any idea where we're going?

**TREXEL**

Look, the vents are a mysterious place. It's only in a vent that a— that a human being is truly free. Obviously, not in a physical sense, you're enclosed in a metal tube. And also, not really in a mental sense, because the claustrophobia is destructive in the extreme! But, outside of the physical and mental sense, you can only truly be free in a vent. Do you understand?

**DAVID**

No.

**TREXEL**

Okay. Well, the reason I spend so much time in the vents is because in a vent no one asks me to do anything because, largely speaking, they can't find me. "Oh, what's that? Something's on fire?" I scuttle in a vent. "Oh, what's that? Bills are in?" Scuttle in a vent. "Oh, what's that? They found the pit *and* the

bodies?” Scuttle in a vent, David. It’s a very simple equation. Responsibility plus Trexel equals vent scuttle.

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

Spurious algebra detected. Security alerted.

**DAVID**

Okay. Well, now I’m in the vents too, so I’m having to ask you **[Trexel groans]** can you take us to where the complaints go?

**TREXEL**

Oh, you’re harshing my vent vibe, David. You’re harshing my vent vibe!

**DAVID**

Alright. Alright, well try scuttling away! I’ll just scuttle after you!

**[Trexel starts scuttling away with David close behind him]**

**DAVID**

**[menacing, sing-song]** Ooooooohhhh!

**TREXEL**

**[struggling]** I’ll kick at you! I’ll kick at you, you scuttling follower!

**[David and Trexel struggle with each other]**

**DAVID**

Oh, ah, ah, ooh! Woo oow! Ooh oo!

**TREXEL**

You get away from me!

**DAVID**

Waa ah! I'm too slippery!

**TREXEL**

You're harshing my buzz!

**DAVID**

Ooh, I'm gonna head him off! **[struggling continues, slime noise]** Now I'm in front.

**TREXEL**

How did you get around me?

**DAVID**

Woah-o, the power of the slime!

**TREXEL**

You sl— You slimy weirdo. **[scuttling stops]** Alright, fine.

**DAVID**

Yes.

**TREXEL**

Fine, we'll play it your way, David.

**DAVID**

Alright.

**TREXEL**

ou want to find where the complaints and solutions to those complaints goes.

**DAVID**

Yes!

**TREXEL**

And to do that we need to follow the little tubes.

**DAVID**

Yes.

**TREXEL**

Now, as it happens, we've circled back on the tubes pretty close to where we started, I'm sure, because I can smell that really... hint of garbage that was a— was a real feature of the Expediting room.

**DAVID**

What?!

**TREXEL**

What?

**DAVID**

You mean you've been— you've been leading us in circles?!

**TREXEL**

I always go in circles, David. The circle is the finest of shapes, other than the rhombus, the sexy, sexy rhombus.

**DAVID**

That explains so much. Right, well, for once in your life could you please try and go in a straight line, maybe even a parabolic arc!

**TREXEL**

I can give it a go, David. But, luckily, these tubes appear to go in a straight line, so if we go due that-a-way, I'm pretty sure we'll get somewhere at some point...

**DAVID**

Okay.

**TREXEL**

...and I can't be any more specific than that, nor would I want to be even if I knew.

**DAVID**

Wait, so is your solution you're just gonna follow the tubes?

**TREXEL**

Yes. What was your solution gonna be?

**DAVID**

Well... I was... The obvious thing is just follow the tubes so—

**TREXEL**

Well, then why are you complaining, David?!

**DAVID**

Okay. In which case, so that I can avoid any more Trexel shenanigans, I'm gonna go first!

**TREXEL**

Trex-nanigans. Off you go.

**[David mutters angrily, vent scuttling resumes]**

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

They are as inevitable as death... and performance reviews.

**[David continues muttering]**

**TREXEL**

So David...

**DAVID**

What, Trexel?

**TREXEL**

I've been thinking.

**DAVID**

**[irritated]** Oh, really?

**TREXEL**

I was a little bit alarmed when you ripped that hole in what was clearly quite a thick metal wall...

**DAVID**

Yeah?

**TREXEL**

...because I appreciate you've been exercising, David, and becoming a very dense and strong clone boy, but it was—

**DAVID**

Been doing a lot of upsies-downsies.

**TREXEL**

Exactly, and a lot of the ones where the bum nearly touches the floor.

**DAVID**

Yes.

**TREXEL**

But that was a— that was a thick metal wall and you just tore a— a big rage hole in it.

**DAVID**

Yeah? So? It's— Can you not do that?

**TREXEL**

No! No, I can't!

**DAVID**

Alright. Could you— Can you do this? **[grunts, metal rips, distant sounds of swirling screams]**

**TREXEL**

Ah! You just punched a hole in the vent wall.

**DAVID**

Wait. Wait.

**TREXEL**

You spent one day in my vent world, and you're already punching holes in the walls! Aren't you happy that you've harshed my buzz? Isn't that enough? Now you've gotta destroy things with your big violent arms?

**DAVID**

How about yes to both of those things? And, um, well actually, why don't we have a look through the hole and— and see what's there? It might— it might be the Complaints room.

**TREXEL**

A little peep. Okay, let's have a look there.

**[distant swirling screams get louder]**

**DAVID**

Oh... It's some sort of... whirlpool.

**TREXEL**

Ah, well that, David, is to be, what we call, the Maelstrom of Ultimate “Woah There Buddy, Why Don’t You Reconsider Your Actions Before We Properly Kill You?” It’s sort of an intermediate punishment between putting you in an airlock or recycling you or something, you know, super deadly, but it’s still pretty bad. You get shaken up in a big whirlpool.

**DAVID**

Oh, that— that explains why there’s so many screaming people in there...

**TREXEL**

Yeah.

**DAVID**

...in pencil skirts and pantsuits.

**TREXEL**

Oh, I recognise them. They don’t like me.

**DAVID**

Okay.

**TREXEL**

Hm.

**DAVID**

Uh...

**TREXEL**

Well, Maelstrom for them.

**DAVID**

Right.

**[screams get quieter, vent crawling noises continue]**

**TREXEL**

But, David, this must mean we're— we're near the punishment deck and that is quite a low deck. You don't put punishments at the top, you put them at the bottom and then...

**DAVID**

Right.

**TREXEL**

...that allows all of, like, the hot and pointy things to fall downwards with speed.

**DAVID**

Okay. Uh... right. Well, let's move away from the punishment deck—

**TREXEL**

So let's push on.

**DAVID**

—kind of quickly in case somebody finds us, and then it's like a really, really short kind of, whoop!

**TREXEL**

Yes. Pushed you right into the punishment.

**DAVID**

**[crosstalk]** Pushed you into a terrible pit of angry knife dogs or something.

**TREXEL**

Yes! Knife dogs! They got that idea from one of our planets, remember?

**DAVID**

Wait... do you mean... I invented the knife-dog pit?

**TREXEL**

‘Cause people are like, “oh look, a lovely dog”, and it jumps up and it’s sliced you in the neck and face! So, you know, it’s a really—

**DAVID**

That’s what I said!

**TREXEL**

Yes. Exactly. And they listened, and they built it.

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

You can’t argue with a good idea like knife dog.

**DAVID**

Really? So— so they actually used something... from— from one of our designs, and— and it went somewhere, and it didn’t just blow up because Trexel ruined it!

**TREXEL**

No, it went into a horrible torture that's regarded as one of the worst. Well done, David. You contributed.

**DAVID**

Look, it's at least something, right? Okay? At least they listened to that and not the complaints where I'm actually trying to help! They— they— they took the thing where I was trying to help a murderer but— where I was trying to help— Well, unconfirmed. Unconfirmed murderer. Unconfirmed murderer. Maybe murderer of their band. Uh, anyway— but—

**TREXEL**

Alright. David, David, David, David, David.

**DAVID**

Yeah— What? Yes.

**TREXEL**

Have you ever heard the phrase “grasping at straws”?

**DAVID**

**[halting]** I have not. No.

**TREXEL**

Oh. That's a shame. I was hoping you'd explain it to me. Anyway, let's move on.

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

Moving on has never been a strong suit for either of you!

**DAVID**

Wait a minute.

**TREXEL**

Hmm?

**DAVID**

Wh-Why— why can we hear I.M.O.G.E.N. so clearly? **[starting to panic]** She's not in the vents, is she? Oh, she's in the vents! Why is she in the vents?

**TREXEL**

David. David, calm down. Calm down. I.M.O.G.E.N. can hear and see all, but no, they don't just put speakers for I.M.O.G.E.N.'s voice to come out of just in the vents. Who'd be listening to them, me? They clearly don't care about me, David! That's the one thing we've established. No, I have a portable I.M.O.G.E.N..

**[uncovers the portable I.M.O.G.E.N.]**

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

**DAVID**

Wait— wait a minute. Isn't that the one from Sales?

**TREXEL**

It is, David. Well remembered.

**DAVID**

You're not supposed to have that, are you?

**TREXEL**

[chuckles] No, I'm not.

**DAVID**

So you stole it?

**TREXEL**

Yes, I did.

**DAVID**

Okay. And, um, and you decided not to tell me about it because...

**TREXEL**

I don't understand.

**DAVID**

Right.

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

Stolen Stellar Firma property detected. Security alert blocked. I like the vent adventure.

**DAVID**

Okay. Good. Well—

**TREXEL**

But that's what that is. Pop it away.

**[covers the portable I.M.O.G.E.N.]**

**DAVID**

Brilliant. So, I.M.O.G.E.N. can... everything and— **[sighs]**

**TREXEL**

Yeah.

**DAVID**

—walls and...

**TREXEL**

Well, if we got into some sort of scrape that we needed I.M.O.G.E.N. to get us out of. **[fondly reminiscing]** Remember when Hartro tried to murder us?

**DAVID**

**[sarcastically reminiscing]** Okay, yes, but also remember when I.M.O.G.E.N. tried to murder us?

**TREXEL**

I mean, it's a good point. If I had Hartro to put in a pocket to act as some sort of balancing force maybe I'd do that. But if I put Hartro in my pocket, I get a feeling that will end with feet in mouth. I can't quite work out how it will work from the pocket to the mouth, but, you know, she'll find a way.

**DAVID**

Please, please don't. Please stop talking about Hartro. I have a horrible feeling that she'll just turn up somehow—

**TREXEL**

**[alarmed]** What— what— David, shut up!

**DAVID**

What?

**TREXEL**

David, shut up! Listen. **[soft rustling, David gasps]** **[softly]** What's that? There's someone else... in *my* vents!

**DAVID**

Oh no!

**TREXEL**

It's coming from here. It's coming from over here. Come, David. Come.

**DAVID**

Okay. Right. **[vent scuttling]** Ah, ooh, ooh. Oh, please don't be Hartro. Augh, I've only just got my mouth clean. Ooha, ooh, ooh. Ooh.

**[papers rustling]**

**TREXEL**

Ah! What is this... nest? David, David, get back. There's— there's rustling. There's rustling, David.

**DAVID**

Ooh. Ah.

**TREXEL**

Woah! Woooh. Oh, there's something coming towards—

**ENOLA**

**[softly but urgent]** Get in here. **[Trexel and David yelp in surprise]** It's okay. It's okay. In here, you're— They can't see you in here. They can't see you in here!

**TREXEL**

David, are we dead? I feel like we might be dead.

**ENOLA**

It's a— You're with me. You're with me.

**DAVID**

Who are *you*? You're not Hartro. Ah! Where are your feet?!

**ENOLA**

Who are you? How did you... find me?

**TREXEL**

You are encroaching on Trexel's vent world, whoever you are.

**ENOLA**

Trexel?! Trexel Geistman?

**TREXEL**

Ah, yes. You know me.

**ENOLA**

Yes. I wish I did not. You— you terrible... piece of... man flesh. You smear of disgusting... badness. You...

**TREXEL**

Wow.

**DAVID**

Um, okay. A bit weak but I like the energy.

**ENOLA**

Who— but— Well, who are you?

**DAVID**

David.

**ENOLA**

**[in awe]** David.

**DAVID**

Yes. David.

**TREXEL**

I don't like it when people say "David" like that. Why does nobody say "Trexel" like that? "Mm, Trexel, I like you."

**ENOLA**

David as in David 7?

**DAVID**

Uh, you— Wait, you know me, too?

**ENOLA**

I've been in the vents for a long time.

**DAVID**

Okay, this has gone from nice to kind of scary. Uh...

**TREXEL**

Bit— bit scary. Bit creepy.

**DAVID**

Why... why?

**ENOLA**

It's safe in the vents.

**TREXEL**

Okay. I wanna establish something.

**ENOLA**

You don't get to establish anything here.

**TREXEL**

What's your name?

**ENOLA**

This is my domain.

**TREXEL**

Alright. Fine, fine. Well, I'll just—

**ENOLA**

Take this, take this leaflet. Take this— read this leaflet. **[shoves a leaflet at Trexel]** I'll put this leaflet on you!

**TREXEL**

Alright, what's this?

**ENOLA**

G— Take it. Take it!

**TREXEL**

Okay, I'm taking it. I'm taking it. **[grabs leaflet]**

**ENOLA**

Good.

**TREXEL**

Put it— **[reading leaflet]** “The Board: If They Only Knew, Gosh They'd Be Cross.”

What is this?

**ENOLA**

There's something happening in Stellar Firma.

**DAVID**

Yes! No, there is something happening.

**ENOLA**

Yes!

**DAVID**

Stellar Firma's broken!

**ENOLA**

Yes!

**DAVID**

It's completely broken!

**ENOLA**

Yes, it's bad!

**DAVID**

Screw the Board! The Board is rubbish!

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

Woah now! There are no gun walls in the vents, but if there were, they would be *very* deployed right now.

**ENOLA**

Well, you— you can't— you can't really say *that*, but—

**DAVID**

Ah, but you can, and I did.

**ENOLA**

The— well—

**DAVID**

Well, the gun walls, but they're out of ammo!

**ENOLA**

The gun walls are out of ammo?

**DAVID**

Well, at least in the room that we were in.

**ENOLA**

I've not been outside for so long. The gun walls are only a memory.

**DAVID**

**[uncertain]** Good? Wait, that means the gun walls aren't here. **[growing confident]** Yes. Screw the Board! The Board are, uh, big—

**ENOLA**

No. No!

**DAVID**

—uh, stupid, uh uh, Trexels.

**ENOLA**

Shh, shh! No. No no no no!

**DAVID**

They're all a bunch of Trexels.

**ENOLA**

No, I'm sure they're not— **[leaflets rustle]** If I could just show them— show them these leaflets, they would understand.

**DAVID**

What?

**ENOLA**

They would stop all this— all this chaos and— and mad men sending terrible designs and making planets melt and horrible murders happen, and— and small—

**TREXEL**

I— I think this is a reference to my stuff, isn't it?

**ENOLA**

Yes, it is! That's why I hate you! Go away!

**TREXEL**

This is a— this is a thing about Trexel. **[Trexel and Enola yell and struggle]** "Hey now, how about we consider things more carefully." These are really weak leaflets. Weaklets, I call them.

**ENOLA**

You're a weaklet!

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

Wow. Slam.

**TREXEL**

You're a weaklet.

**ENOLA**

Terrible— **[starts pushing Trexel]** You... get down. You get down.

**TREXEL**

**[muffled]** You go— okay.

**ENOLA**

You get down in the— You get down under the leaflets. David, now—

**DAVID**

Gah, that is— There is— That is deep!

**ENOLA**

—how 'bout you?

**DAVID**

Yes?

**ENOLA**

Yes. I've been writing these for a very long time, David.

**DAVID**

Right. Okay, and h—

**ENOLA**

I was hoping— I c— I could see you were different.

**DAVID**

Yes, I have malfunctioning subservience protocols.

**ENOLA**

Oh! Sorry to hear that... I think.

**DAVID**

No, that's good. That means I'm not subservient! It means I can say things like,  
**[loudly]** "I don't like the Board very much!"

**ENOLA**

**[whispers]** You can't— Shh! Shh! No. I'm sure they're benevolent. I'm sure—

**DAVID**

No. Mm...

**ENOLA**

They— Look, nobody would build a company that works like this. That would be...

**DAVID**

Oh...

**ENOLA**

...stupid. I mean, who— who would put money before lives?

**DAVID**

Um...

**ENOLA**

Who would think that making the profit line go up was so important that planets should be destroyed? No rational person would think like that.

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

Have you met many people?

**ENOLA**

Do you know what I think?

**TREXEL**

**[muffled]** I mean, I know I've been pushed under the leaflets, but I've got a couple of ideas about *all* of this.

**DAVID**

Um, I was— I was gonna say— Wait, let me just fish him out. Hey, Trexel.

**[David grabs Trexel, leaflets rustle, Trexel yelps]** Hey, hey Trexel.

**TREXEL**

Yes?

**DAVID**

Uh, so you've got a graph in front of you, right?

**TREXEL**

Okay.

**DAVID**

And— and— and you've got X— X and Y but it is flat. **[Trexel shudders]** It is— it is going flat. But then—

**TREXEL**

Implying a lack of growth.

**DAVID**

But then— but then you see 50,000 puppies in front of you, right?

**TREXEL**

Okay.

**DAVID**

And you are told if you stamp on all of their heads—

**TREXEL**

I've stamped on—

**DAVID**

—the line go—

**TREXEL**

I've just started stamping. I've just started stamping.

**DAVID**

I didn't, see— See, I didn't even—

**TREXEL**

I've just start— [**frantic**] Has the graph changed? Has it gone up? *Please*, let the graph go up!

**DAVID**

Actually, no. No.

**ENOLA**

This is why Trexel is terrible! He would stomp on the puppies, but the Board would— not if they knew— They would only stomp on puppies if they didn't know that they were *there*.

**DAVID**

So they don't care enough about puppies to even bother to look if they're stamping on puppies?

**ENOLA**

Well, what if they were underneath a layer of bad... employees?

**DAVID**

So you're saying that there's, like, a bunch of Trexels and Hartros stamping on puppies and then stopping the—

**ENOLA**

Yes! Yes, and— and— and the Board is— is far away and up there where we can't see, but if we could get to them, if we could speak to them, they would— they would stop this.

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

Extremely wishful thinking detected. Security feeling kind of bad for you.

**TREXEL**

I-I don't think they would. I think they're pretty on board with it all, personally.

**ENOLA**

I— No. No no no. They couldn't be. **[laughing]** That would be— **[manic laughter]**

**TREXEL**

**[joins in laughing]** That would mean your life was a lie, wouldn't it?

**[Enola and Trexel continue to laugh hysterically]**

**ENOLA**

That would be ridiculous.

**TREXEL**

Ah, yes. Yes. Life— you're living a lie. Lie.

**DAVID**

Okay. Uh, wha— Question, have you distributed these leaflets? 'Cause there are a lot here and I've not seen any of them...

**TREXEL**

Me neither.

**DAVID**

...in my very brief walks around Stellar Firma.

**ENOLA**

I've been waiting for the opportune moment.

**TREXEL**

And what would define the opportune moment in your opinion?

**ENOLA**

When I'm finished writing them. I have to have enough for all of the employees and there's only— there's only 15,000 here and there's 100,000 employees, so...

**TREXEL**

I mean, there's *a lot* more than 100,000 employees but, you know—

**ENOLA**

**[dejected]** Oh.

**TREXEL**

—I've got some ideas about why that might be. **[switches jazz noir music on]**  
It's old Detective Geistman to the rescue.

**DAVID**

Oh, no no no no. Where did you get— where did you get that hat from? No.

**TREXEL**

He takes out a packet of cigarettes [**cigarette package crinkles**], lights one—  
[**lights match**]

**DAVID**

Don't! No no— Trexel, Trexel—

**TREXEL**

—realises he still does not smoke and flicks it into the void!

**DAVID**

Don't throw— the paper— don't throw it away.

**TREXEL**

[**panicking**] Oh! Oh!

**ENOLA**

Won't it set the leaflets on fire?!

[**fire starts roaring**]

**TREXEL**

Oh! Oh!

**ENOLA**

No! Get him!

**TREXEL**

Oh! Oh! Stamp it out!

**ENOLA**

Why?! Why my work? No! No no no no no no!

**TREXEL**

Oh!

**DAVID**

Wait, wait, slime to the rescue!

**[slime noise]**

**ENOLA**

Oh! Eeh! Ah! It's out? It's out!

**TREXEL**

Oh. Oh ho. Ah. Ah.

**DAVID**

I've got it! I've got it! My slime is flame retardant!

**TREXEL**

Don't worry.

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

He's like a slimy fire hydrant.

**ENOLA**

Oh.

**TREXEL**

He's got the slime. **[Enola and Trexel sigh in relief]** There we go. Well—

**DAVID**

So, I've got— I've got— A lot of your leaflets—

**[music switches off]**

**ENOLA**

See? You're already useful, David!

**DAVID**

I— I think I stickied up about 1,500 leaflets, so, um...

**TREXEL**

And I burned a good couple thousand more, so sorry for the setback but, you know...

**ENOLA**

Oh. Oh no...

**TREXEL**

The venture was flawed from the start so hey-oh.

**DAVID**

I mean, if you think about it, it's not that much of a setback 'cause you were probably, like, less than 1% through your stated task so...

**ENOLA**

But it was a start. It's better to be doing something than just staying up here and hoping my manager doesn't find me.

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

Barely!

**DAVID**

Yes. Ah! Well, we're— we're on the hunt for the complaints and the place that they go, because I think they don't go anywhere, except the place that they go but that—

**ENOLA**

Oh, you don't want to go to the complaints.

**DAVID**

**[stutters]** What— what do you know about complaints?

**ENOLA**

I only know rumours. Rumours from— from years ago.

**DAVID**

Well, give us rumours. Rumours are good.

**TREXEL**

**[crosstalk]** I love rumours.

**ENOLA**

They say it's like a— an enormous mouth full of— full of beaks that peck you until you don't have any hair or nails left.

**TREXEL**

Wow.

**DAVID**

**[worried]** Uhh...

**ENOLA**

They say it's like... like a buttcrack full of mildew. Eats your eyes...

**DAVID**

Eugh!

**ENOLA**

...and your skin and everything.

**DAVID**

Oh! Eugh!

**ENOLA**

They said— they said it's like a nose that's eternally sniffing.

**TREXEL**

Oh, wow. That's irritating.

**DAVID**

What? Eugh, that's gross.

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

How could anywhere be like *all* those things?

**ENOLA**

You should never go there, sweet David. Trexel, you can go there, but not you, David.

**TREXEL**

Oh, thank you. Ha ha! **[sings]** ♪ I get to go somewhere you don't get to go! I get to go to the nose-mouth-butt. **[ENOLA: Yeah.]** Nose-mouth-butt for me, me, me. ♪

**ENOLA**

Have a sticky leaflet, Trexel.

**TREXEL**

**[sings]** ♪ Sticky leaflet, sticky leaflet for me! Take it to the mouth-butt-n— ♪

**[muffled as Enola sticks the leaflet in Trexel's mouth]**

**ENOLA:** Get in! Yes! Yes, good.

**DAVID**

Oh! Oh, that worked. Ah, nice one! I'm gonna take that trick, cover him in paper.

**[Trexel exhales loudly pushing the leaflet from his mouth]**

**ENOLA**

We should be partners in some way, David. I feel—

**TREXEL**

What?

**ENOLA**

I feel like you could... really bring something to the cause.

**TREXEL**

David is my partner! Don't go partner stealing.

**ENOLA**

He's not *your* partner. He's... a clone you happen to be affiliated with, I'm sure.

[Trexel mutters] No one's partners with you.

**DAVID**

I— I like thinking about it that way, but, unfortunately, yes, I am assigned to Trexel as his clone assistant so...

**TREXEL**

Bound by Board law. Board law.

**ENOLA**

But the laws are unjust, so someone must have tricked the Board!

**TREXEL**

Right. Right. Right. Right! Everybody stop— everybody stop everything. Stop covering me in paper, stop talking about things— Wait! Who are you, and why are you here?

**DAVID**

Oh, yeah.

**ENOLA**

**[chuckling]** Oh, gosh. No— no— no one's— no one's asked me a question in a really long time. I'm— I'm Enola.

**TREXEL**

Right. Enola. And Enola—

**ENOLA**

Yes.

**TREXEL**

May I call you Enola? Enola.

**ENOLA**

No. You can call me nothing. I do not wish to be addressed by you.

**TREXEL**

I'm gonna look at the wall two feet away from your head and ask that a question, but if you happen to answer, person I'm not talking to, then that's fine. So, bit of wall, why are you here in my vents with leaflets giving—

**ENOLA**

This is my— This is clearly my vent! I've been living here longer than you! You—

**TREXEL**

Alright. So, why did you come into the vents in the first place?

**ENOLA**

I escaped the Build Team.

**TREXEL**

Interesting.

**ENOLA**

There's— there's this thing that happens when you keep getting sent planet designs that murder thousands of living, sentient creatures. And it sort of— you sort of don't want to *do* that anymore after a while, so I've— I ran— so I ran away.

**TREXEL**

You ran away from the Build Team.

**DAVID**

You got a bunch of Trexel's designs, they were rubbish, caused death because... obviously they always do...

**ENOLA**

Yeah. Yeah.

**DAVID**

...and you felt guilty.

**ENOLA**

So this— this is another flaw that has been *inserted* into Stellar Firma by nefarious forces. It's hard to leave, so you have to hide instead. So I— so I ran away, and I hid.

**DAVID**

You do know the Board doesn't care about those planets that—

**ENOLA**

They must care! They must care. They must just— they must just not *know*.  
Who in their right mind couldn't care about the deaths of millions of people?

**DAVID**

An entire planet blew up! Everybody knows about it! That kind of thing filters  
up the chain, don't you think?!

**TREXEL**

Okay, David.

**ENOLA**

But... no!

**TREXEL**

David, David, you're breaking their brain. David, David, stop it. Stop it.

**ENOLA**

No no no no no. No!

**DAVID**

Right, so I don't have a subservience protocol but everyone else does?!

**TREXEL**

Pretty much, David! Pretty much! So stop— stop waving your lack of servience around and upsetting other people! This poor, misguided creature has run away from their responsibil—

**ENOLA**

Don't you call me poor and misguided! I am rich and *extremely* well-guided!

**TREXEL**

Alright, alright, alright.

**ENOLA**

I am guided like a— like a missile into the heart of truth.

**DAVID**

Yep, but a missile that's gonna hand you a leaflet at the end of it. Like—

**ENOLA**

Yes!

**DAVID**

—good— Uh, look, the direction is good. I like the direction. This is great, but— but maybe, I don't know, throw a brick?

**ENOLA**

No, it's the information. It needs to be... disseminated.

**DAVID**

Okay, well diss— disseminate it.

**ENOLA**

But I don't have enough! If there's not enough people, then it will all fall down, and I need—

**DAVID**

Wait, but hang on a minute. Hang on a minute. This is the vents, okay? Which I'm assuming controls airflow within the station, otherwise why have vents. Is it just for crawling through?

**TREXEL**

Could be.

**DAVID**

Can't be. That would be ridiculous.

**TREXEL**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID**

Why would anybody have vents that are just for crawling through? So it definitely controls the airflow. So what you need to do is find, like, the central fan, stuff your leaflets in there, and then the fan will blow them *all through the— all through* the station.

**TREXEL**

Yes.

**DAVID**

All at the same time, so everybody— everybody will get a bunch of leaflets.

**TREXEL**

And that, Enola, will be a big, bold statement. How'd you feel about that? A big, bold, *loud*, clear statement.

**DAVID**

Yes.

**ENOLA**

[uncertain] Maybe.

**DAVID**

Against the Board!

**ENOLA**

No no no. No no no no no no no, not *against* the Board.

**TREXEL**

Okay, Da— David, can I— David, can I just talk to you over here for a moment?

**ENOLA**

*To. To* the Board.

**TREXEL**

Could I just talk to you over here, just for a moment? Just come over here, David.

**ENOLA**

Yeah.

**TREXEL**

Come over here.

**DAVID**

Okay, okay, fine. Alright.

**TREXEL**

David, um, I hate to inform you but what we found here is a big glass of weak sauce. So, you know, I think you should maybe **[inhales]** let this one go. I know you're excited 'cause you found a sort of friend.

**DAVID**

But they're the only person who's actually ever...

**TREXEL**

Yes.

**DAVID**

...you know, expressed a—

**TREXEL**

Yes.

**DAVID**

But—

**TREXEL**

Yes, but they're rubbish, aren't they, David?

**DAVID**

Well, **[huffs]** I don't— **[huffs]** but, I mean—

**TREXEL**

Ah, say it. Say it, David. They're rubbish.

**DAVID**

May— maybe a bit.

**TREXEL**

They're a little bit rubbish! You see, life's disappointments are infinite.

Welcome to life.

**DAVID**

**[annoyed]** Wait. No, no, no, no. You! You shut up.

**TREXEL**

What?

**DAVID**

Like, take some leaflets! Leaflets— **[shoves leaflets on Trexel, Trexel struggles]**

Hopefully they'll harden and encase you in a sarcophagus of... weak statements. Right, Enola—

**TREXEL**

**[muffled]** Will I become a weak butterfly?

**DAVID**

Probably. Enola.

**ENOLA**

Yes.

**DAVID**

I know it's really scary, okay.

**ENOLA**

Yes.

**DAVID**

I can literally be blended at any time for any reason. Right?

**ENOLA**

Well, we all could be.

**DAVID**

No— Well, no but me, like, especially, because I'm not even a person according to Stellar Firma. And the Board! The Board know about this, right?

**ENOLA**

No, they can't— I... If I— if I can see that you're a person...

**DAVID**

But you care.

**ENOLA**

Of course I do. Everyone must.

**DAVID**

No! The Board doesn't care—

**ENOLA**

**[dejected]** No.

**DAVID**

—because the Board are all like Trexel.

**TREXEL**

**[muffled]** Hello!

**ENOLA**

No, impossible.

**[leaflets rustle]**

**DAVID**

Yes.

**ENOLA**

No. No no no no no.

**TREXEL**

Hello.

**ENOLA**

No, no. But—

**DAVID**

Look—

**ENOLA**

But, but there's a rea— But Trexel doesn't control a company. There's—  
People— people like *Trexel*—

**TREXEL**

No, exactly people like me.

**ENOLA**

—don't care. They— **[maniacal laughter]**

**TREXEL**

Exactly. I'm from a long line of Executives.

**ENOLA**

**[laughing]** They don't— they don't become senior leaders.

**TREXEL**

Yes.

**ENOLA**

That would be— **[laughs]**

**DAVID**

Trexel— Trexel is on the Executive Track.

**ENOLA**

That would be madness.

**DAVID**

Trexel is on the Executive Track!

**TREXEL**

Yep. Me.

**DAVID**

Trexel is on the Executive Track!

**ENOLA**

What?!

**DAVID**

He's gonna be an Executive.

**TREXEL**

Hello.

**ENOLA**

No, he's not.

**DAVID**

Yes, he is. He's literally on the Executive Track.

**TREXEL**

I was told by my Line Manager. It's pretty exciting. I'm "material for the top" they said.

**ENOLA**

No.

**TREXEL**

Yeah.

**DAVID**

So sorry, but yes.

**TREXEL**

Ooh, David, have you ever seen someone's scales fall from their eyes in real time?

**DAVID**

Um...

**TREXEL**

It's like this. Isn't it sad?

**DAVID**

It is quite... upsetting.

**TREXEL**

I think we should abandon this... thing, David, and maybe move on.

**DAVID**

Well—

**TREXEL**

Now we've ruined its hopes and dreams, maybe we should just move on.

**DAVID**

Wait, no. Okay. No, Trexel, shut up.

**ENOLA**

Uhh...

**[leaflets rustle]**

**TREXEL**

Okay. Shutting up.

**DAVID**

Okay. Enola, you respect... leaflets, right?

**ENOLA**

Yes. Yes. It must be the— it's the only way to— to distribute the— the *word* that—

**DAVID**

I'm going to distribute a word to you. Okay, so I'm just gonna peel the leaflet off of— off of Trexel's cheek. **[peels leaflet off Trexel's cheek, Trexel calls out in pain]** I'm just gonna— uh, I'm gonna, uh— Uh, Trexel.

**TREXEL**

Yes?

**DAVID**

Can you hold out your finger?

**TREXEL**

Okay. **[winces]** Ah!

**DAVID**

Right. I'm just gonna use his... blood. And, uh, right. So... **[starts writing]**

**TREXEL**

Ow.

**DAVID**

“Enola—”

**TREXEL**

Ow.

**DAVID**

“—hang in there—”

**TREXEL**

Ow.

**DAVID**

“—um, champ.”

**TREXEL**

Could I have my hand back, please?

**DAVID**

There we go.

**TREXEL**

Ow ow ow ow!

**DAVID**

Alright.

**ENOLA**

Aww.

**DAVID**

There you go. So, there's a pamphlet for you, and maybe use that pamphlet to distribute the other pamphlets...

**ENOLA**

Oh!

**DAVID**

...because... just gotta keep trying, right? 'Cause if you don't, then it's all, uh, pointless. Yeah, so I'm gonna... I'm gonna... we're gonna go and look for complaints and, um—

**ENOLA**

Tha— You— No, don't go in the buttcrack!

**DAVID**

We're going to have to go into the buttcrack—

**TREXEL**

Mildewy buttcrack.

**DAVID**

—because I need to know where these complaints go, because if I could find these complaints, I can find some evidence!

**ENOLA**

**[crosstalk]** You don't— you don't want to know where the buttcrack goes!

**DAVID**

I can find some evidence, and it's scary, and I might die. But hey, as I said, I could die... all the time, every day, so...

**TREXEL**

I could too, but for, you know, different reasons.

**ENOLA**

Shut up, Trexel.

**DAVID**

I'm gonna do that, but you kind of keep on doing you but maybe, like, actually do it.

**ENOLA**

I'm going to write about you, David.

**DAVID**

Okay.

**TREXEL**

Ooh, fanfic!

**DAVID**

Are— are you gonna tell someone about that?

**ENOLA**

When I have enough.

**DAVID**

Oh, good. Okay.

**TREXEL**

Okay. Right. Moving on now. **[leaflets rustle]** Moving on.

**DAVID**

Okay. Okay.

**TREXEL**

Well, it was lovely to meet you Enola.

**DAVID**

Yeah, we'll— we're just gonna... Alright.

**TREXEL**

**[starts leaving]** It was lovely to meet you. Gah...

**DAVID**

Okay. Buh-bye!

**[vent scuttling noises resume]**

**ENOLA**

It was terrible to meet you, Trexel. Goodbye, David.

**DAVID**

Bye Enola.

**ENOLA**

Goodbye.

**DAVID**

Buh-bye.

**IMOGEN**

**[beep]**

They seemed nice, if a bit rubbish.

**TREXEL**

Gosh, we have to meet more people like that. What a tedious basket of nothing.

**DAVID**

**[sarcastic]** Good. Cool. I'm glad you learned anything from that, Trexel. Brilliant.

**TREXEL**

What do you mean "learned"?

**DAVID**

Well, exactly.

**TREXEL**

Right. Let's keep following this tube. Now, I'm pretty sure that somewhere around here there should be—

**[David and Trexel start yelling, which gets more distant as they fall, distant crash]**

**[Show Theme – Outro]**

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Stellar Firma – Episode 049 – Vain Attempts and Vent Descents

Trexel Geistman – Tim Meredith