

STL 59 — Censuses and Couplets

Content Warnings

- Emotional abuse
- Bullying / taunting
- Alcoholism
- Discussions of: arson & burns
- Mentions of: childhood trauma, death & mass mortality, explosions, suggested animal death, self-harm & needles, self-recrimination

TREXEL

Special thanks to Qalmlea – if you can't find a fault, make a fault, then pretend it's their fault!

[Show Theme – Intro]

IMOGEN

Rusty Quill presents: Stellar Firma.

[Theme continues]

IMOGEN

[Beep] Historical census data. Caution – High levels of file corruption, only partial information recovered.

DAVID

Hmmm, not much about clones in here...

IMOGEN

[Beep] Clones would not be counted in census data because—

DAVID

Yes, because clones aren't people, you wouldn't count hammers in a census...

Thank you. Yes, I get it.

IMOGEN

[Beep] I am trying to help you.

DAVID

Are you? Because... Standards seems to think so, but you've also threatened me with death quite a bit too so I'm, I'm getting really mixed signals here.

Imogen are you using me as part of a plan?

IMOGEN

[Beep] Further census data recovered.

DAVID

Oh Board, this is—

[Writing noises]

DAVID

Hmmm, okay, so the seed population escaped from Earth on the original Stellar Firma ship was 69,000. Nice. And that grew to about 7 million by about a hundred years ago. But, but the last hundred years there were huge population crashes. Millions of people dropping off between census, and now

there's, uh, uh, oh where is it? Um... 102,000. Not much bigger than it was a thousand years ago. What happened?

IMOGEN

[Beep] Warning – Consultant approaching.

[Door whooshes as Trexel enters, sounding very crispy and crackling]

TREXEL

Ah-oh. Okay, okay. David, David, have you got a soft chair?

DAVID

Hmm? Oh, um...

TREXEL

(Wincing) Ooh. Ahh.

DAVID

Sure, just start kicking panels, I'm sure one'll pop out.

[Noises of discomfort from Trexel, then panel kicking and whirring]

TREXEL

Ahh, there we go, there we go.

[Unpleasant fart-like noise as Trexel sits]

TREXEL

(Relaxing) That's, that's nice. That's nice.

DAVID

Trexel?

TREXEL

Yes?

DAVID

Um, obviously I don't... spend much time... outside, that isn't in a vent.

TREXEL

No, you're not allowed.

DAVID

(Hesitantly) Um, do you think that Stellar Firma is the right size for the number of people in Stellar Firma?

TREXEL

Do I think that Stellar Firma is the right—? **(bubbles)** I don't really know— They, just, sort of, is. There are people, we know them, they live in places, there's large areas of the ship that they turn the power off to. I don't know what you want from me, David. Th-There's just some people.

DAVID

Right. So, but, it, it kind of seems to me, like maybe... the station—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) Oh yes?

DAVID

—was built for far, far, far— like millions of people.

TREXEL

Mmhmm.

DAVID

And now there are only... well... you know, a, a few left.

IMOGEN

[Beep] I cannot wait for Trexel's insightful take on this topic.

TREXEL

Well, I mean, David, in a very real sense, I don't know or care, but what I can tell you, is that when I lived in my first out-of-parental-home home, you know, that exciting heady time where you're out on your own with only a large stipend and all of your meals provided. And when I was there, I was put in a room that was two miles away from anyone else. So, you know, it's a roomy ship!

DAVID

Hmmm.

TREXEL

You look perplexed. You look perplexed, pensive, uh, pugnacious, uh, like a penguin. Like a puppy. Like a pog. Have you seen a pog? It's a little disk that, uh, Old Earth seemed to think was the most valuable currency alive.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Before the trading card renaissance, also known as the Yugiopolicpokemagicciangathering.

DAVID

Right? Um, yes, no, sorry, yeah, yeah, no, no, no. Anyway, uh, you're looking quite, um, used to be on fire. Charred.

TREXEL

(Still crackling as he moves)

Charred. Crispy. Um, well-done.

DAVID

Singed?

TREXEL

Singed, oh yeah. Well, there was a little— now you'll remember, you'll remember, David, because you were there, that there was a little fire—

DAVID

Mmhmm.

TREXEL

—that I started at the Astral Bar, and I just— You know, it's something about me, I just, I just couldn't, couldn't leave anyone behind.

DAVID

So, wait. So you saved the wait staff?

TREXEL

The wait staff? No, the bottles, David—

DAVID

Oh.

TREXEL

—there were so many delicious bottles full of, of, of tasty alcoholic unguents, and guess what they are? Highly flammable David! So even, even avoiding the flames, a couple of things did explode in my arms.

So... uh, bit charred, bit burned. I've got some creams and salves. I have eaten most of the creams and salves, but some of them made it on my skin, and they are soothing me.

DAVID

Well, at least your insides are very, um, well, they're not going to be burned, I suppose.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Other than by the caustic, non-potable liquids he insists on using in cocktails.

TREXEL

No, just sort of, lightly broiled?

DAVID

Hmmm.

TREXEL

Like, I brought my intestines to a light simmer. I'm assuming that's fine. I mean, I smell great. Delicious, even!

IMOGEN

[Beep] Like a dumpster fire pot roast.

DAVID

Oh, um...

TREXEL

Thing is I'm marinated. I'm pre-marinated, David. You know how you might p-pour— if you were an idiot, you might pour a bottle of whiskey over a condensed slurry cube to give it that, sort of, aromatic flavour before you held it over a bunsen burner. Well, in my case, I'm just full of booze!

DAVID

Right. Sure. Anyway, should we, uh, w-we, we should, we should, we should do the brief, right?

TREXEL

Probably.

DAVID

Okay. Uh, right, yes, no. Uh, **(softly)** something to take my mind off— **(louder)**
Anyway, yes. Okay.

[Panel clicks and machinery whirrs to deliver the brief pod]

IMOGEN

[Beep] Initiating.

DAVID

So, here it is... So, right, this is coming to us from, uh, Corthinos the Perplexed, uh, pronouns xe/hir. Xe is an “External Seeking Wisdom” and xe is writing to us from the Placaters of Planetary Puzzles.

And xe says, “We are called upon to placate those whose planets puzzle them, and find ways of helping them learn to live with, and even love, their planet of residence. Normally, this is quite enjoyable as we get to show people the hidden gems of their world, and give them a new appreciation for all the things that surround them. However, we’ve—”

TREXEL

Wow, what a twist! I thought xe was just saying, ‘Hey, I do this thing. It's nice. We're having fun. Anyway, everybody gets to go home, and Trexel can start drinking again.’

DAVID

No...

TREXEL

Damn!

DAVID

Well, in that case, I don't think xe would have written to us, would xe?

TREXEL

Well, I suppose— No, if you want apply logic to— **(mocking)** Oh, David 7, with his little logic hat on. 'Ooh, this isn't right, that ain't right. Ooh, however, comma.' Got to put the comma in, haven't you, haven't you?! Or you get flunked from Mrs. Gelkin's class!

IMOGEN

[Beep] You *were* flunked for that. And also, for trapping another class in a time loop for either two days or 10,000 years, depending on who you ask.

DAVID

"However, we have been less successful of late making this work for certain newish planet—" Oh, I see what's coming. "—some of which were produced by Stellar Firma."

TREXEL

(Chuckling) Oh, this is me, isn't it?

DAVID

I'm gonna guess.

TREXEL

I like to be involved. Well—

TREXEL

You know what? Some people might say, ‘Oh no, my things have gone wrong again, and people are cross’, but I just— Being in trouble is also a kind of having attention. So I'm fine with it. On you go. On you go.

DAVID

Yeah. Also, it's not, not new. Anyway, “As, uh, they are your planets, we thought that perhaps you would be able to tell us what aspects of your planets would, perhaps, placate people puzzled by them, both helping us to satisfy our mission statement and producing good press for your own business.”

TREXEL

Now, luckily, David, you've stumbled upon a rich vein of delicious gold!

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

(Dramatic) I... am known to some as... The Puzzlemaster!

[Click and mysterious music begins]

TREXEL

Ooh, smoke drifting, smoke... add a shimmer here and there. Come, come into my cave of wonderment, for I am The Puzzlemaster.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Warning – Mystery cave detected; Security steering clear.

DAVID

O-okay. And what—

TREXEL

What question have ye supplicant?

DAVID

Uh...

TREXEL

Genuflect to I, the Puzzlemaster, and I shall solve them with my bendy brain!

DAVID

Uh...

TREXEL

Curves! Angles! U-turns!

DAVID

Okay. Okay, your En-bendy-branded-ness. Um, so, what aspects of Stellar Firma's planets would placate people puzzled by them?

TREXEL

(Intones) Two steps west and five steps east,

DAVID

Oh.

TREXEL

Cover your face in active yeast,
Bake it in an oven, browned,
Until you find what's underground.
Puzzlemaster!

[Click and mysterious music ceases]

IMOGEN

[Beep] That is not a riddle. **That** is a crime against words.

DAVID

Okay. Now, did that, did that mean anything, or did you just make up something that sounded like a riddle?

[Click and mysterious music resumes]

TREXEL

(Intones) The astral map is long and hard,
But you've eaten far too much chard.
A rumbly tum rumbles rumbly-hum
And you have the answer inside your bum.
Puzzlemaster!

[Click and mysterious music ceases]

DAVID

Okay. One of those, one of those lines was just the word 'rumble' in various ways. Are you just coming up with these on the fly, or...

TREXEL

No! These are pieces of ancient wisdom passed from bendy-brain to angle-mind for generations! Do not defy our wisdom! Puzzlemaster!

IMOGEN

[Beep] It will be quite an achievement to defy wisdom that does not exist.

DAVID

Okay. Uh... well, my final question is: how do we do this in a way that both helps the Placaters of Planetary Puzzles, uh, to satisfy their mission statement, and produce good press for Stellar Firma?

[Click and mysterious music resumes]

TREXEL

(Intones) A planet's surface makes no sense,

The people dying and, yet, hence,

A call goes out to the Placaters of Puzzles.

Ooh, they can't fail or they'll all be muzzled.

Ask the master of puzzling time,

DAVID

Done that.

TREXEL

Whose intellect cross aeons does shine,

DAVID

Hmmm.

TREXEL

How shall we defend these planetary shapes?

DAVID

Mmhmm.

TREXEL

How will we explain your designatory japes?

DAVID

Mmhmm?

TREXEL

Puzzlemaster!

[Click and mysterious music ceases]

DAVID

No. Okay. Hang on a minute. I asked for, I asked for a solution, and you just re-explained the problem, but rhymed it.

[Click and mysterious music resumes]

TREXEL

(Intones) Answers are what we do seek!

No time—

DAVID

Yes?

TREXEL

—now for us to be meek—

DAVID

Yes.

TREXEL

We must yell and shout—

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

—with voices loud

DAVID

Yes?

TREXEL

To get the answer and lift the shroud—

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

On mysteries, generations past—

DAVID

Yep.

TREXEL

—But don't forget you need your bus pass—

DAVID

You're still talking—

TREXEL

—To get on the bus of knowledge bound—

DAVID

Right.

TREXEL

—For a land, with an intellectual hound.

PuzzleDog!

[Click and mysterious music ceases]

DAVID

No, but you would just— You just talked **about** the problem not—

TREXEL

No, David! We need to ask the PuzzleDog.

DAVID

Oh, uh... who's the Puzzle— Where is the PuzzleDog?

TREXEL

(Incredulous) You don't know—? Sorry, sorry, David, sorry.

(Shrieks with baffled laughter)

David, you don't know who the PuzzleDog is?

DAVID

Uh, no...

TREXEL

It's like, it's like, you've never been out of a few rooms, David!

DAVID

Yes.

TREXEL

I'm a Puzzlemaster. We all know that. The Placaters of Planetary Puzzles, they're Puzzlemasters too. But the true puzzle, uh, godhead, as it were—

DAVID

Uh-huh.

TREXEL

—is the Intergalactic PuzzleDog.

DAVID

Right. And how—

TREXEL

They are a very large basset hound, whose head is 3000 miles across. Their body? The size of a regular basset hound.

DAVID

Right.

TREXEL

Now, the people of Old Earth didn't realize that basset hounds were quite as intelligent as they were, but they were always pretty darn intelligent, always solving riddles. Where's the kibble? Where should I do a plop? Shall I bark? Yes, no, answer yes. I can smell things real good, with my brain nose. All of these things... they just didn't appreciate it. And so when we, we *released* certain dogs into space, and when I say released certain dogs into space, I do mean that one of the dog storing modules exploded. Guess who survived?

DAVID

The, the puzzle dog?

TREXEL

No, basset hounds in general.

DAVID

Oh.

TREXEL

We were all so shocked. All these basset hounds, all of a sudden, had these helmets on, how was that— And anyway, since then, they've become more and more intelligent, and combined into one central being – the PuzzleDog.

IMOGEN

[Beep] A shocking amount of that is true. Although I can confirm, no doggos were harmed.

DAVID

Okay. And how do we contact the PuzzleDog?

TREXEL

It's an eight week journey, and it's illegal to go there.

DAVID

Okay. And we have... about eight minutes.

TREXEL

About eight minutes? I see the problem. Who could solve this problem?

Perhaps some sort of... Puzzlemaster!

[Click and mysterious music resumes]

TREXEL

(Intones) The road is long, but time is short.

Oh no! I forgot to pack my jorts.

I'll make them from the jeans I have.

Ooh, a stave! Do you need the lav?

Go fast—

DAVID

Okay—

TREXEL

—go quick before you travel

Cos we're not stopping again!

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

I'm not stopping at another services!

[Click and mysterious music ceases]

IMOGEN

[Beep] Historical jort construction videos are available from the staff archives, under code BDG-Two-Seven-Oh-Four-One-Nine.

DAVID

Okay, okay, Trexel, I'm just gonna—

TREXEL

Puzzlemaster!

DAVID

Yeah, no, let me just— I-I'm going to try to reframe the problem.

TREXEL

Okay.

DAVID

Alright. Corthinos has this problem.

TREXEL

(Softly) Puzzlemaster.

DAVID

How do we help here?

TREXEL

Okay. Okay, David. As a Puzzlemaster, it is my duty to help. And so I will, try my best to not enter another rhyme scheme

[Click and mysterious music resumes]

TREXEL

(Intones) long and rhyme scheme hard,

(David sighs)

Do you still have that bag of chard?

DAVID

That's... never existed.

TREXEL

Your rumbling tum has rumble-bum,

Bumble-rumble, humble-hum

Buzz, buzz—

DAVID

Tre-Trexel.

TREXEL

—click, click, clang, clang, ding dong!

DAVID

Trexel, these are just—

TREXEL

(Intones) Hey! Do not buy any relations a thong. It's weird. They don't like it. It makes Christmas awkward.

Oh look a bird! It's angle is squawkward.

[Click and mysterious music ceases]

IMOGEN

[Beep] Failure to stick the landing detected; Security holding up three points across the board.

TREXEL

(Strangled) Puzzlemaster.

DAVID

Right. Puzzlemaster.

TREXEL

(Weirdly voiced) Mmmm, Puzzlemaster!

DAVID

Okay. Trouble is, I'm not really getting any answers here. Just more, sort of, questions. And—

TREXEL

The question is the answer, and the answer is the question. Think about it.

DAVID

Hang on a minute. Actually... Yeah!

TREXEL

What?

DAVID

Well, that, that's the thing. The Placaters of Planetary Puzzles, they're spending too much time actually trying to make sense of things, instead of just *confusing* their clients, until they assume that they're just too stupid to work out what the planetary puzzles are saying.

TREXEL

And nobody wants to admit to being stupid, so they just say, 'Oh e— Oh yeah! Yeah, yeah, no, I see now, I see now. Oh, I see. Well, we'll all go back now, because we all see, because we all get it, because we all— because we're smart— because we're li— because I get it. I get it, personally. Me. **(burbles)** Okay, bye! Bye!' And then they walk backwards out of the door, and they're sweating.

DAVID

Okay. Alright. Fine. No, that's great. So, so in, in which case, um, let's, let's give Corthinos, right...

TREXEL

Yes.

DAVID

Let's give 'em, uh... some, some examples, right?

TREXEL

Okay.

DAVID

So, so I'm, I'm going to come at you—

TREXEL

Okay.

DAVID

—with some planets.

TREXEL

(Excited) Is this role play?

DAVID

It is role play, but not yet—

TREXEL

Ah, give me the role play!

(David makes noises to shut Trexel up)

DAVID

—I'm still explaining.

TREXEL

(Sullen) Okay. Okay.

DAVID

But then we'll give them—

TREXEL

Now!

DAVID

—multiple ones— Ba! So Cortinos—

TREXEL

Now.

DAVID

—can listen back to this, and this will give hir some guidance.

TREXEL

Okay. Okay.

DAVID

Right. Say the words.

TREXEL

(High and fast) Role play holovision activate!

IMOGEN

[Beep] Role play holovision, initiated.

[Holovision activates]

DAVID

(Adopting voice) Hallo—

TREXEL

(Disgusted) Oh Board.

DAVID

Ah, What, what? What, what, what, what?

TREXEL

What is this grotesque homunculus creature you've become? Sort of, crouching and waving your arms?

DAVID

Not— Well, I mean— It's just not me.

TREXEL

It's disgusting, David!

DAVID

What? No, hang on a minute. I'm, I'm, one of the, the, the, the— What are they called? The You-Shouldn't-Touch-That Society.

TREXEL

Ah, fine, I suppose so. I mean—

DAVID

(Musing) Who are they?

TREXEL

I know, I know this is role play holovision, but that's, that's— You're, you're a gross actor.

DAVID

Oh.

TREXEL

A gractor! Right, on you go. On you go, you hobgoblin.

DAVID

(Sighs)

(Adopts voice) Hallo.

TREXEL

(Disgusted) Urgh. Yes?

DAVID

I've, I've, I've got a planet from Stellar Firma—

TREXEL

Urgh. You smell.

DAVID

And, uh, it's a big lava planet.

TREXEL

Yeah?

DAVID

And, uh, it killed all of us—

TREXEL

Don't sit on my chairs!

DAVID

I'm sorr— Okay, doh, doh, but it's killed all of us. And you need to sort it out!

TREXEL

Well...

DAVID

What's wrong with Stellar Firma's rubbish planets?

TREXEL

It's a great question. And the answer is this:

[Click and mysterious music resumes]

TREXEL

(Intones) A burning ball of lava fun.

Don't go so fast; hold up, hon!

Put on your pants of chaffling heat,

Do not allow the over-cooking of wheat.

Your buns have burnt, your bread's ruined.

Oh, look a pub! They do brewing.

Get drunk! On four and five and twenty.

No, not twenty-five, twenty's plenty.

And if you seek the answers there,

You'll find them dangling in a maiden's hair.

[Click and mysterious music ceases]

TREXEL

You see?

DAVID

That— What?

TREXEL

And if you don't see, you're a, you're, you're a stupid box.

DAVID

Oh. Oh well, I guess— Oh. Hmm. Okay. I'll guess I'll put on my asbestos underwear, and go to the pub to go and grab a lady's hair.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Do **not** grab anyone's hair.

DAVID

Oh no. Now I am rhyming!

[Click and mysterious music resumes]

DAVID

(Intones in silly voice) For you see,

I really, really need to wee.

[Click and mysterious music ceases]

[Holovision deactivates]

DAVID

(Back to usual voice) Oh yeah, no, that actually did work. Alright.

IMOGEN

[Beep] ‘Worked’ is definitely a relative term here.

TREXEL

Go forth in puzzlement—

DAVID

No, no.

TREXEL

—for you have been given—

DAVID

Trexel! Trexel!

TREXEL

—the blessing of the Puzzlemaster!

DAVID

Okay, okay, fine.

TREXEL

(Sings) Oh a box of gears, and a box of joy,

Turning round to the puzzle boy.

What's this here?

It's a hidden number system.

What's that there?

It's a concealed piston!

Open up mechanical box of dreams with the Puzzlemaster.

DAVID

So, was that—? Wait, hang on a minute. Was that—? Was that a puz—?

TREXEL

No, that's just our national anthem.

DAVID

That's just— Okay. Oh that's the Puzzlemaster's national anthem.

Okay. Well, look, let's just do one more.

TREXEL

One more.

DAVID

So Corthinos has a bit more to go on.

TREXEL

Okay, fine, right. Off you go.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Role play holovision, initiated.

[Holovision activates]

DAVID

(Adopts gravelly voice) Hullo. I have a planet that is quite puzzlesome as well.

[Click and mysterious music resumes]

TREXEL

(Intones) A mist descends—

DAVID

I haven't even explained it yet.

TREXEL

—on dappled vale.

DAVID

Wait, no, but, you don't know—

TREXEL

In coming to us, the question already contains your fail.

DAVID

Wait, what? Oh, what?

TREXEL

The knife of blemishment stabs into your heart.

DAVID

Oh.

TREXEL

Even before you have time to start,

The very fact of your presence here

Tells me that your doom is near.

Vacate the premises—

DAVID

Ah, ooh, uh.

TREXEL

—tout suite

Or your head will touch your feet—

DAVID

Ah, oh.

TREXEL

Folded in a pretzel of death!

Eat it now—

DAVID

Uh.

TREXEL

—or be bereft.

[Click and mysterious music ceases]

DAVID

Well, if I, if I eated the, the— Wait. If I, if I—

TREXEL

Questions will cause more death!

DAVID

Ohhh! Oh... um, uh... Well thank you very much, goodbye!

[Holovision deactivates]

DAVID

Okay, yeah, no, that one, just, just spooked ‘em. Spooked ‘em right away.

TREXEL

Yeah, you’ve gotta spook ‘em, spook ‘em right up! Now, obviously you need a lot of dry ice for this to work, but it's, uh, very easy to find.

DAVID

Alright, so Corthinos—

TREXEL

You just heat up some ice, and it becomes dry ice.

DAVID

Dry ice? Alright. Well, I think that's probably enough, isn't it?

TREXEL

I don't know David.

[Click and mysterious music resumes]

TREXEL

(Intones) If the answers fill your brain,

Is it time for us to explain

That the end of session now begins?

That's right... I've got...

[Click and mysterious music ceases]

TREXEL

(Sighs wearily) I'm very tired—

DAVID

Wind.

TREXEL

David. I'm very tired; I've got so much wind.

IMOGEN

[Beep] We are, all of us very, **very** tired.

TREXEL

I think the burns are affecting me more than I thought. I j— You know. I try and push through them, but, uh...

DAVID

Oh wait, s— One thing.

[Beep and whirr of machinery as brief is put away]

IMOGEN

[Beep] Submitting.

DAVID

Ah, right, brief away.

TREXEL

Oh.

DAVID

Um, so, well, I mean, we were, we were hitting time, so—

TREXEL

Sure, sure. I just... I'm just starting to think that maybe I should drink, y'know, more liquids, and less, you know, emulsions.

IMOGEN

[Beep] You don't say!

DAVID

Y-yeah. Have you tried water?

TREXEL

(Unfamiliar with concept) Water? Is that what they mix alcohol with to make drinks?

DAVID

Uh, sometimes.

TREXEL

I don't know, David, it sounds suspicious, but I might try and find some, because I just— I'm just— Every time I try and blink, like the roughness of my eyeballs catches on the roughness of the inside of my eyelid. It's like two pieces of sandpaper. **(slurping)**

DAVID

Mmmm. Um, also, maybe, maybe put the, the salves and unguents **on** your skin instead of into your... mouth?

TREXEL

I try David. I try, but somehow... It's like I'm a snake, and my jaw just unhinges.
And any, anywhere I try and put it, I just find a mouth.

DAVID

Have you tried wrapping your mouth in vent tape so that you can't open it?

TREXEL

Interesting. Take away the culprit!

DAVID

Yes.

TREXEL

Cover the mouth?

DAVID

Yeah.

TREXEL

You know what? Also cover the nostrils, cos I can see myself pumping it up
there.

DAVID

Ah, uh, no.

TREXEL

Cos that goes to the same place.

DAVID

Tre-Trexel, you need to breathe.

TREXEL

The whole system doesn't work, David, if I've, if I've got a— if I've got a stomach-bound orifice, I'm going to put it up it.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Yikes!

DAVID

Okay. Well tell you what, uh... you can cover your mouth and nose, in vent tape—

TREXEL

Okay.

DAVID

—poke some tiny little holes so the air gets through, but it's really difficult to get, you know, sort of sloppy—

TREXEL

Do you mean in my cheeks?

DAVID

No.

TREXEL

Just poke holes in my cheeks?

DAVID

No, in the, in the, in the tape.

TREXEL

And do I, do I jab holes in the tape whilst it's over my mouth and nose?

DAVID

Yes. But you do it carefully.

TREXEL

(Enunciating) Carefully?

DAVID

Yes. With—

TREXEL

Okay!

DAVID

With needles.

TREXEL

Well, luckily I've got a very steady hand. Hang on, what's this vibrating—? Oh no, that's— Hmm, okay, well I'm sure it'll be fine.

DAVID

Well, t-tell you what, tell you what. I've— I think there's a— Hang on. Yeah.

Okay. Look, I've got some vent tape here.

TREXEL

Okay.

DAVID

Just— I-I'll do it for you. And then you can go away—

TREXEL

Oh-ho-ho. You're not getting me that easy. Fool me once by taping my mouth shut, and me giving you a pin, shame on me. Fool me twice by taping my nose shut, and jabbing me with a pin, shame on me. Shame! Shame on me! So much unending shame on me!

DAVID

Oh... Uh, are you okay Trexel?

TREXEL

So, I don't think— No, I don't think that'll— Gimme, gimme that! Gimme that!

[Snatches vent tape]

DAVID

Okay. Right, right, right, right, right. Fine. Fine.

TREXEL

I'll do it myself.

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

I'll see you, next time, David! Next time!

DAVID

O-kay...

TREXEL

I'll be full of water, and there's nothing you can do about it!

DAVID

Alright. Well remember, hopefully, hopefully, hopefully, Hartro will be back with some information... tomorrow, so...

TREXEL

Why?

DAVID

What?

TREXEL

Oh yes! The whole plan.

DAVID

Yes.

TREXEL

You know what? I'm pretty impressed with me. I was convinced I would have told somebody about it, but it turns out, deep down, I don't care. So I keep forgetting. Bye David!

[Door whooshes as Trexel exits]

DAVID

Ah, bye Trexel.

(Long sigh and resumes previous work)

How can the population be so reduced, and yet **he** is still here?!

IMOGEN

[Beep] I believe it's known as 'survival of the thickest'.

[Fades to Show Theme – Outro]

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