

STL 63 — Crushing Tables and Crushing Dreams

Content Warnings

- Emotional abuse
- Bullying / Taunting
- Discrimination / prejudice
- Snakes & poison
- Gaslighting
- Discussions of: animal attacks, extinction & environmental collapse, animal cruelty, mass death
- Mentions of: alcohol, violence, war, death, arson, prison, blood, children in peril, knives

TREXEL

Special thanks to Maria in Lyon. Close your eyes. Imagine you're flying. Oh no, a goose! Kaboom.

[Show Theme – Intro]

IMOGEN

Rusty Quill presents: Stellar Firma.

[Theme continues]

[Door whooshes]

TREXEL

(Sings) Oh, there's a man that I know,
And he has to go

DAVID

Tre—

TREXEL

To the town to buy some gin for me!

There's a man who is worth

Even three other men,

His name is

DAVID

Trex—

TREXEL

Trexel Geistman!

There is a plan that he has for us all,

It involves rolling on the floor in a small ball,

And saying 'Oh, Mr. Geistman, you are the best

DAVID

Trexel—

TREXEL

that we... know!'

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Trexel!

TREXEL

Chorus line.

DAVID

(Singsong but stilted) Trexel we've got to do our jobs right now, and did you know that there more clones that people on this station?

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) David. David, can you please stop messing around?

DAVID

Wh— No— Okay, fine, but—

TREXEL

The song time was earlier, and now it's done.

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

Let's get to work.

DAVID

But, as I was... singing, um, look—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) Singing? Singing?

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Di-di-di— Yes, but, b— Look— No, but— Trexel! Trexel!

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) Sort of talk singing. Sort of that kind of singing where people who are in the audience being, like, ‘This is a cop-out. You could have put rhymes in here but you haven’t bothered.’

DAVID

(Interjecting) Trexel, I’ve got big news!

TREXEL

Oh, big news!

DAVID

Big news!

TREXEL

Is it about me? Have you got me a gift? What is it? Is it a hen? Have you bought me a lovely hen, laying eggs for my brekkie?

IMOGEN

[Beep] Yes, the big news is that the clone who isn’t allowed to leave this room has bought you a hen! Well guessed.

DAVID

No.

TREXEL

Well, thank goodness, because again, David, we're only allowed to eat slurry. If you give me a hen, and I've got contraband eggs, that'll put me in danger. That's not a gift, David! That's a threat!

DAVID

Well I haven't... done that.

TREXEL

Good

DAVID

(Whispering) Look. Imogen has just, just told me—

TREXEL

Why are you whispering?

DAVID

Cos—

TREXEL

There's no one else in here, David.

DAVID

(Normal voice) I, uh— fine, okay. Well, Imogen has just told me that there are more clones on this station than there are citizen-employees.

TREXEL

Yes?

DAVID

So, clones **outnumber** citizen-employees.

TREXEL

A-As do shoes, what's your point?

DAVID

Look, see this— see that table?

TREXEL

Yes. With the crush marks in it, from where you've grabbed it to—

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Yep, well—

TREXEL

—demonstrate your **immense strength!**

[David destroys the table easily and noisily]

TREXEL

Oh, okay, ah— y— and now you smashed it. Yeah, okay.

DAVID

So.

TREXEL

Alright. You're a strong clone—

DAVID

So, well—

TREXEL

—what, what, what do you want, what do you want, what do you want, a cookie?

DAVID

What, no—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) You're not **allowed** one, David, you're only allowed slurry! We always come back to this.

DAVID

Yes, no, sure, but— So there are more clones than citizen-employees.

TREXEL

Yes?

DAVID

I'm a clone.

TREXEL

Yes?

DAVID

And I did that.

TREXEL

Yes?

DAVID

What if **more** clones can do that? And then we ask really nicely that you don't blend us so much?

TREXEL

David, if you're gonna start a clone war, you're gonna have to pay a lot of royalties.

DAVID

To who?

TREXEL

The Department of War! You can't start a war without paying the tithe!

DAVID

Okay, well, uh, fine! So we'll start a clone war, we'll pay the tithe to the War Department—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) But that's a department p— that's a department run by Stellar Firma, David. You gonna alert them? Being like, 'Hey, could I have the war

tithe?’ and like, on the line where it says who you’re declaring war against, you write ‘Stellar Firma’—

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Oh, you’ve got a pretty—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) and then who’s doing the war, you write ‘clone’?

DAVID

Oh! Well, in which case, we’ll just— we’ll just **do** the war, and we won’t pay the, the royalties.

TREXEL

Oh, so you don’t care about process and paperwork now? All the— all the hard times you’ve given me about my maverick attitude, and it turns out that you’re the maverick, David! You’re the clone war loving maverick!

IMOGEN

[Beep] To be fair, that would be quite hypocritical.

TREXEL

And anyway, it’ll never work.

DAVID

Why?

TREXEL

Cos clones are rubbish.

DAVID

Wh— How dare you! I'm not rubbish!

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) Weak-willed, floppy—

DAVID

Hey!

TREXEL

—stupid.

DAVID

Hey!

TREXEL

You ever met another clone, David?

DAVID

Well... n-no. But—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) No, you haven't. So how d'you know they're all like you? You're an aberration. A weirdo.

DAVID

But— Well no, but— there's gotta— **(David burbles for a moment)** But there's gotta be—

TREXEL

You're the only clone that survived in **my** company for, for, for more than a few days—

DAVID

No. Wha—

TREXEL

and why do you think that is, David? Because the other clones do exactly what they're told, and that's great. But you just do other things, and for some reason that means you're alive. I haven't worked it out, but I'm very cross about it.

DAVID

Wh— No, but there must be— there **must be** others. Ah, or, or, or, or I must be—

TREXEL

Why? Why must there be, David? Why?

DAVID

Because—

TREXEL

Because you want it to be the case?

DAVID

Well—

TREXEL

Because you'd really **hope** to start a clon— Is it because you want to be a clone leader of a clone revolution, and you can wear a big clone revolutionary hat with all these points on it?

DAVID

Well—

TREXEL

And then have a sword, and point, and say, 'Ab— Onward, clones!' When actually, all the other clones are crap. It's a pipe dream, David. A sad pipe dream.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Dream crushing detected; Security despondent.

DAVID

Let's not worry about that, I guess, then, if you're not gonna be— Fine.

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) Oh, let's, let's not worry about the thing that completely contradicts your plan. Okay, fine, let's move on!

DAVID

Well—

TREXEL

Because let's not think about it because David—

DAVID

Oh—

TREXEL

—can't accept his reality.

DAVID

Wh— okay, okay, okay Trexel—

TREXEL

Fine, okay. How is *TimeBots* going, by the way?

DAVID

Look. We have—

TREXEL

Have you got a pilot?

DAVID

Approximately, around about, fifteen minutes to get this brief in.

TREXEL

Yeah, but I'd just like to hear just a quick outline of the pilot of the first episode of *TimeBots*.

DAVID

(Crosstalk) No! No, no, no, no, no, because—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) You have the theme tune!

DAVID

No, because you're— no, because you're— No, you're not interested. You're not interested in **(stammering)** in my extra-curriculars, so, right, we're just gonna—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) David, are you withholding your script for *TimeBots* because I said clones were rubbish, and it would be a bad revolution?

DAVID

Look, I think—

TREXEL

Are you that petty?

DAVID

I think— Oh, look! Oh, look!

[Pneumatic tube hissing]

TREXEL

Release the files, David!

IMOGEN

[Beep] Initiating.

DAVID

No, oh look, here's the brief, here's the brief.

TREXEL

Oh.

TREXEL

Oh, look, oh, it's from— it's from Antoinette-Marie. She is "External Seeking Wisdom", and she's writing to us from the Happy Earth Zoo.

TREXEL

Ooh, that's new! Have you seen the adverts?

DAVID

No.

TREXEL

(Toneless, staccato singing) Come here there's a zoo,
It's the Happy Earth Zoo!

(normal voice) Bad advert. Don't— I don't know what they were doing. There's like just one note in it? And it just, it's just flashing different images of animals, and just like words.

DAVID

Fine. Yeah, no—

TREXEL

And they want marketing advice, I assume. Right. They should replace that theme tune with this one.

(Sings) Whoa, whoa, whoa!

Da da da da da da, no, no, no!

Da da da da da, those animals don't exist anymore!

How can you have a goat and a horse?

Happy Earth Zoo!

Happy Earth Zoo, bringing extinct animals to you!

Happy zoo.

DAVID

No, that theme tune's stupid and it'll never work.

(Trexel begins repeatedly muttering the word 'petty' as David speaks)

Anyway, **(reading)** "Happy Earth Zoo consists in recreating extinct Earth animals from a long time ago, and put them in a sort of zoo-slash-museum where people can have a full Earth experience."

TREXEL

Is there a petting zoo there? Because you're very petty.

DAVID

“We tried to recreate the animals based on a few ancient documents. The problem is, we don’t really know which animals were dangerous, and some people have been eaten since the zoo first opened one week ago.”

TREXEL

Ah, okay. That’s a, that’s a quick opening-to-eating ratio. Normally, with our things, it’s like two or three months before something bursts out of the floor like a giant sandworm.

IMOGEN

[Beep] All hail Habertrimus Rex.

DAVID

Yes, what a, what a stupid thing to happen, it’ll never wor— **(reading)** “I would really like your advice on how to not be arrested, and also how to know which animals can eat people. Thanks.”

TREXEL

Well, I can help with one of those: how to not be arrested. I am the not-being-arrested king. I’m emperor of an empire known as ‘Not Enough Evidence, Your Honour!’

DAVID

Right.

TREXEL

Burn it down.

DAVID

Th-the whole z—

TREXEL

You can't prosecute what's on fire.

DAVID

The whole zoo?

TREXEL

Burn it down. What's that? You've opened a zoo and people have been eaten?

Burn it down. Do not let people out first. Those are witnesses.

DAVID

That's a stupid plan, it'll never work.

TREXEL

David, are you gonna do this to everything I say for the entire day?

DAVID

Well, I, I will if they're stupid plans that will never work. The point is that A-Antoinette-Marie o-owns the Happy Earth Zoo, so if she burns it down, she doesn't have the Happy Earth Zoo anymore.

TREXEL

Has she got insurance? That's the point of insurance. You get it just before things mysteriously burn down because you burnt them.

IMOGEN

[Beep] This is exactly why we blacklisted Trexel from getting insurance. It's a genuine safety concern.

DAVID

Well no, the reason— The specific reason that it's a stupid plan and that it'll never work is because it sounds like Antoinette Marie wants to keep the Happy Earth Zoo open.

TREXEL

Well, I mean, there's two things here. There's 'not going to prison', and then there's 'keeping your zoo open', and they are diametrically opposed because your zoo is eating people.

DAVID

Oh, so—

TREXEL

Unless they sign a disclaimer that says, 'Hey! Chomp on my leeegs!'

DAVID

Right, well, I was about to say it's a stupid plan, and it'll never work, but actually—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) Yeah, ah-ah.

DAVID

—making them sign a disclaimer's probably... a good...

TREXEL

Disclaimers solve everything. Now, the thing you've got to worry about is claimers. Sometimes you're signing things, and then it's like, 'Hey, you're responsible for deaths that weren't actually your fault!' And you're like, 'Ah no, I've signed a claimer!' A disclaimer, on the other hand, that's your friend. You gotta get them into every contract, David. When you're ordering food, at a bar—

DAVID

Yes?

TREXEL

—because they're doing some food because you've drunk so much. And they're bringing over your plate of hot steaming slurry, and they're like, 'Can you sign the receipt?' and then you give them a large contract that says they're responsible for all your past debts, and you're like, 'Y— I can, but only if you sign this,' and they're like, 'Well, I'm busy, there are other orders,' sign it, oh no, they've signed a claimer! And now that barmaid is responsible for **(chuckling)** a lot of debt. Ah, so much debt.

DAVID

Oh.

IMOGEN

[Beep] I think we may have gone off topic.

TREXEL

What were we talking about?

DAVID

Um. The Happy Earth Zoo.

TREXEL

Oh, yes, so. Prison-wise, don't worry about it.

DAVID

Okay, fine.

TREXEL

Now, there is the other thing of, it's very, very difficult to sort out all of these forms again and again and again, and it's very boring, David, and I don't like doing it, so sometimes I just run away. **(inhales)** But if you're at a zoo, and you can't just— run aw— Yeah, it's, it's a place that people know where it is. So, the other point is trying to work out which animals are the chompers, and which animals are the huggers, and which animals hug you, and then chomp you. Because there's a Venn diagram central bit there that contains a cuddle, and then murder.

DAVID

Right.

TREXEL

So how do you know, especially when you're dealing with Old Earth animals when you don't really know much about them? You don't really know much about them, David, **(Trexel burbles for a bit)** Ah, it's hard to say.

DAVID

Okay, w-well **how** do you work it out?

TREXEL

Okay, well, first all: face. Does it have big teeth?

DAVID

Okay, yes.

TREXEL

If there's big chompers in the mouth gap, then it's probably time to run away. Have they got them in cages, or are they all just wandering about? This is something I didn't ask.

DAVID

Um—

TREXEL

Is this like a big open safari situation, or is this sort of like, y'know, the box kind?

DAVID

Um, s—

TREXEL

It's a whole, it's like a whole Earth zoo, so you'd think it'd be pretty big.

DAVID

Yeah, I mean, it's, it's— **(sighs)** It, it's sort of unspecified. They, they say **(Trexel gumbles)** that where people can have a “Full Earth Experience”, so I, I guess it depends if on Earth, did they, did they keep the animals—

TREXEL

Some of them.

DAVID

Right.

TREXEL

Some of them. And increasingly small numbers were they allowed outside into the general world. Unless they were delicious, in which case there were loads of them! In fact, more than there should be. It's kind of the reason the Earth died. It's complicated, David, and it involves a lot of beef.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Some people claim that the beef death of the universe is inevitable. Mostly when they are hungry.

DAVID

Right. So they made a lot of beef animals...

TREXEL

Yes. And then they basically farted themselves into extinction. **(David scoffs)**

But no, there were other animals just wandering around.

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

Like, you'd be, you'd be in a forest, and bang, lion eats your face.

DAVID

So were the beef animals dangerous? Is that the problem, they'd been making too many—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) No, the beef animals weren't actively dangerous. They were just really stupid. So sometimes they'd kill you by accident, because they thought you were an evil bush.

DAVID

Right, so—

TREXEL

Or like you'd wave, and they'd be like 'Oh, no!' and then they'd kick you in the face. Or squish you with their big round sides. Cows are dicks.

DAVID

So they're co— Okay, so the beef animals are cows.

TREXEL

Sorry, did I not specify that? Or like a beef blimp, um, meat lumpers—

DAVID

Right.

TREXEL

—uhh, mobile dinner hogs—

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

—we think. These are all, these are all things we found on something called 'Red-ite'.

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

We just downloaded the whole thing. They, they would call it— They'd be like, 'oh, this is a snake, oh, isn't it a long, scary rope?' They'd just be like, laughing, and y— That's not funny. Snakes are dangerous.

DAVID

Suppose they were. Especially if they were in a Happy Earth Zoo and just kind of roaming about, eating people. Can snakes eat people?

TREXEL

Oh, yes. Depending on the size of the snake, and the level of its unhingeable jaw.

DAVID

(Alarmed) They have unhingeable jaws?

TREXEL

Oh, yes. Well, some of them. I mean, not all of them. There was more than one snake, which seems confusing. Like, if you're designing animals, and you're like,

DAVID

Yeah.

TREXEL

'Okay, This one's long and bitey at one end, also there's **bloody loads of them!**' Like, loads of different types. Some of them squish you with their bodies, some of them bite you with their poison faces. Some of them are fine, and pets, for some reason. This one's got a rattle on the end of it. Why? No one can say.

DAVID

For keeping babies calm?

TREXEL

Could be. Give a baby a snake and see what happens.

DAVID

Maybe it gets eaten.

TREXEL

Could be a lawsuit.

DAVID

Maybe it gets sleepy.

TREXEL

First thing we've done, is that we've established that there should not be a snake creche at this Happy Earth Zoo.

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Mmmhmm.

Unless there should be.

TREXEL

Unless there should be, but we don't know.

DAVID

Yeah.

TREXEL

Because we don't know what kind of snake it is. We're going round in circles, David. I can feel we're circling the drain.

IMOGEN

[Beep] A literal ouroboros.

DAVID

Right.

TREXEL

We need to establish a set of criteria by which they can evaluate each animal, and decide if it's a 'yes' or a 'no' in terms of whether or not it eats people. So let's, let's go down the list. We've already done one, David. 'Has it got big teeth?' If it has—

DAVID

Yes.

TREXEL

Eh, just put it out of your mind.

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

Don't worry ab— **Don't** keep this animal around, cos those big teeth are for things.

DAVID

What if it's just a really big animal, and like, relative to the animal the teeth aren't big, but relative to us the teeth are big?

TREXEL

Yes, but you've fallen into another trap there, David. If an animal's too big, it'll kill you by accident just cos it doesn't know that you're there.

DAVID

Ah.

TREXEL

So if it's so big that it's got big teeth anyway, also no.

DAVID

Okay, so, small teeth, has to be smaller than your average sized... Trexel.

TREXEL

Trexel-sized. Let's put it on the Trexel Scale. If it's more than one Trexel—

DAVID

Yeah.

TREXEL

—then be careful. If it's got big teeth, absolutely not.

DAVID

Nought point nine Trexels, maximum.

TREXEL

Yes.

DAVID

Uhh, no big teeth.

TREXEL

Now, is it full of poison? It's key that you check this, David. If something is full of poison, it wants to put that poison into things.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Arguably this would make Trexel ineligible for preservation. I fully endorse this system.

DAVID

Hang on a minute. So, I thought— But, poison's only dangerous if you eat it.

TREXEL

Ah. Not unless they inject the poison into your veins.

DAVID

Ah, well—

TREXEL

And then it's called something else.

DAVID

It's called—

TREXEL

It's called **(shouting)** 'Oh no, I'm dying!' **(normal voice)** It's a weird name, but there it is.

DAVID

Right. So, either it's poisonous, it's... oh-no-I'm-dying-onous?

TREXEL

Exactly. Because it's emb— injected right into you— right into the red stuff.

DAVID

Okay, so if it's, if it's an oh-no-I'm-dying-onous animal, that's bad.

TREXEL

Now, does it have big lovely eyes? If it does, it's fine. Keep it in. Nothing with big lovely eyes is ever gonna hurt you.

DAVID

(Crosstalk) What if it's got big lovely eyes and also big teeth?

TREXEL

Mmm. Good point. What if it's got big lovely eyes, medium teeth, but is also quite big and might sit on you? In that case, keep it, but like, keep a long stick with you, so you can jab it away.

DAVID

Right. So we have to give all guests a long stick as well?

TREXEL

Oh, yes, sorry, did I not mention this? On Earth, everybody had a big, eight-foot stick to keep things away they didn't want. You know, like aeroplanes, or stale sandwiches, or maybe the concept of ennui.

DAVID

Okay, so ev— okay, so ev-everyone gets a big stick.

TREXEL

Everyone gets a big stick. Hey, 'Welcome to the Happy Earth Zoo—

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Have a big stick, yeah?

TREXEL

—here's your very long stick. Also, don't, don't look in that house, the House of Dangerous Animals, that's just, you know, for disposal reasons.'

DAVID

Yeah, shouldn't we— Why, why have a house? Shouldn't they just thrown into a big pit or something?

TREXEL

Okay, David, um, let's just look at the optics of this. You've created a load of animals.

DAVID

Yes.

TREXEL

Just sort of at random from old documents without checking much.

DAVID

Mmmhmm.

TREXEL

Some of them turn out to be dangerous to, uh, to people.

DAVID

Yes.

TREXEL

And so you stick them in a big pit where the children can see and hear the screaming and deathly results. Is that what you want, David?

DAVID

You could b— you could build a roof over the pit.

TREXEL

Oh, so j— out of sight, out of mind? That's your—

DAVID

Well, uh—

TREXEL

I didn't realize you were so cruel to animals, David. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

DAVID

(Crosstalk) (affronted) Okay, no, I, I, okay, Trexel— If we want to get on our high dinner hogs about this, then, how many have your planets have you— have blown up?

TREXEL

I mean... most of them.

DAVID

And how many of them had, y'know, beings on them?

TREXEL

Most... of them.

DAVID

Okay. And how many beings were there on average?

TREXEL

I—

DAVID

We're talking like, millions, aren't we?

TREXEL

Easily.

DAVID

Okay, so that means that **you**, personally, have caused the deaths of—

TREXEL

Yes.

DAVID

—of, of tens of millions—

TREXEL

Yes.

DAVID

—of beings.

TREXEL

Yes.

DAVID

And you're getting on **my** back about putting some dangerous, which have eaten people—

TREXEL

Absolutely.

DAVID

—in a pit.

TREXEL

Because, again, David, you're forgetting it's about optics and scale. If you cause the death of a that many people, it's just like, 'Whoa, I can't even conceptualise this! Maybe they're Napoleon or something and it's fine.'

(David expresses frustration)

If you kill one beautiful-eyed dinner hog? And a single tear runs down a child's cheek? You are cancelled, my friend.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Please stop taking advice from historical murderers. It is a bad look.

DAVID

Who's Napoleon, and what did they do?

TREXEL

Oh, Napoleon was this tiny little boy who found out a way of turning lives into currency, and then was like 'I spend lives every day, I've got a big pointy hat.' And then the Earth ended.

DAVID

Wow.

TREXEL

Yeah.

DAVID

Okay. Um. A little bit like how, y'know—

TREXEL

Mmmhmm.

DAVID

—clones are— **their** lives are being spent.

TREXEL

Yes.

DAVID

By Stellar Firma.

TREXEL

Except that animals are worth something, and clones are weak-willed milksop beings of no value.

DAVID

Okay.

DAVID

(Crosstalk) I'm just gonna...

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) You see the difference, David?

DAVID

Just gonna... **(sighs)**

TREXEL

You try and kill a dinner hog, and it fights back. You try and kill a clone, and it goes, 'Okay, I'm sorry I couldn't be more help.' It's sad, David, it's really sad.

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

I don't even like doing it, and I'm not nice!

DAVID

Unrelated to anything, if we just wanna pay attention to the remains of this... table.

TREXEL

Okay, so—

[David hits the table]

TREXEL

We— ah—

[David hits the table again]

TREXEL

Oh, okay— Uh—

[David hits the table a final time]

TREXEL

—okay, David, we don't have more tables, you know? You've destroyed the—

DAVID

(Crosstalk) (slightly winded) I know, that's why I'm using the broken, that's why I'm using the broken one.

TREXEL

No, but you've destroyed, you've destroyed our backup table, now.

DAVID

Well—

TREXEL

What if something happens to this table? What are we gonna do, work on the floor cross-legged? Criss-cross applesauce? No!

DAVID

Maybe. Fine!

TREXEL

Maybe I'll stand and point. Maybe you lie on the floor, but, like, with your legs in the air, like you're at a slumber party. And you're writing the brief with crayon, and I'm leaning up in the corner all cool, with sunglasses and a cigarette that I light and then realize that I don't smoke cigarettes, and flick into a corner and start a small fire. And then we fight the fire, and it's dangerous, but we bond over it. And then later we're walking out in the

moonlight and I say, 'It's here to eternity, baby,' and you turn round to me and say, 'Clark?' Cos I'm dreaming, it's a dream, David, you're not allowed out of this room.

DAVID

So if I break this table, you're going to immediately fall asleep and dream a dream.

TREXEL

Dream a dream of you. So, you're welcome.

DAVID

Okay...

[David destroys the table and Trexel begins to snore]

IMOGEN

[Beep] It's like putting a blanket over the cage of an awful bird.

TREXEL

(Sleep mumbling) Come on, David, we'll go up to... Make-em-Ups Canyon, and look at the stars. **(continues snoring, makes a bird noise, then snores again)**
Let me back in the house, Daddy.

DAVID

(Sighs) He's almost... cute.

TREXEL

(Sleep mumbling) I'll kill you—

DAVID

Okay, maybe not.] I'll kill you for loving me, Bathin... **(snores)**

DAVID

Okay, that... yep.

TREXEL

(Sleep mumbling) I made you a cake... the cake is full of regret. **(continues to snore)**

DAVID

(Softly) Very introspective when he's asleep. Guess that's where it all goes.

IMOGEN

[Beep] Is there any chance this could stop?

DAVID

(Scornfully) "Weak-willed milksop". "Applesauce". **(Trexel mumbles)** I'll show him applesauce. I'll... cross his legs behind his own head, and then make him... eat his knees.

TREXEL

(Interjecting, impassioned) I was nowhere near at the time! **(slowly waking up)** Ah, whoa, I— Did I drop off there, David?

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Uhhh...

TREXEL

Ah, what's happened to the second table?

DAVID

(Immediately) Oh, you smashed it.

TREXEL

Did I?

DAVID

Yeah, you fell asleep and fell on it, a-and it broke.

TREXEL

Gosh, I'm strong. Gosh, I'm strong. Well, it turns out I'm gonna have to lean up against this wall for rest of this—

[Hits wall panel, drawer with bottles deploys]

TREXEL

Oh, that opened something. Hang on. Lean up against this section of wall, ah—

[Panel clunks, machinery whirrs]

TREXEL

Is there any part of this wall that doesn't deploy a function of some kind?

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Well, o-only if you don't want it to. If you're trying to find something, then nothing, nothing does anything.

TREXEL

Is this room razzing me? Is this a razz room? Am I getting razzed by this room?

Well, hang on a minute.

[A clunk, followed by the whirring of machinery]

TREXEL

Ah. Okay, well, this panel did deploy a third backup table. So... so... convene around this smaller table now?

DAVID

Yeah, I'll just, I'll just push the, the other table sort of into the hall.

[Sounds of broken tables being pushed across the floor]

TREXEL

And I'll just drag the chairs a little bit.

[Sound of chairs scraping on floor]

TREXEL

This table is sort of smaller, and the chairs are too big, so I feel like a child.

DAVID

Well, I feel like a sort of giant.

TREXEL

I miss the old tables, before they were smashed by my... proud and hefty form.

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Yeah, I'm just gonna bend down here to write the rest of that—
augh, oh, that is just slightly too low to be comfortable.

TREXEL

But anyway. So, what's, what's our Venn diagram looking like so far? So, big:
no.

DAVID

Yep.

TREXEL

Teeth: no. Full of poison: get it outta here. That's, that's most of it, isn't it
though?

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Full of— full of no 'oh-no I'm,' if they're 'oh-no-I'm-dying-onous,' as
well, you can't have that.

TREXEL

Exactly. All of it. None of that.

DAVID

Uh, big— But big eyes. Fine.

TREXEL

Lovely, good, love 'em, tasty. Does it sound nice?

DAVID

Well, what sounds nice? They're like a— Would you say a sort of dinner hog? Is that nice?

TREXEL

Uh, yeah, yeah, it makes sort of like a rhythmic squealing noise, and also smells great when it gets too hot—

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Okay, snakes—

TREXEL

—so that's fine. Uh, also, nice birds, not snakes, full of poison. Or, too hefty because of their crushing bones.

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Okay, okay—

TREXEL

Again, that's how it works, that's how the flow diagram works. So, basically, you've got dogs, and the ones that you can eat, and also some birds. Everything else, get rid. Also, no bugs, cos they're icky.

DAVID

What about polar bears?

TREXEL

Polar bears?

DAVID

Yeah.

TREXEL

Murderous! Murderous!

DAVID

(Crosstalk) What about, what about accountants?

TREXEL

Murderous! Have you met an accountant?

DAVID

No.

TREXEL

Well, on— the only accountants I've ever met are also polar bears, so it's hard to say whether or not their giant claws are a polar bear thing... or an accountancy thing.

IMOGEN

[Beep] We have accountants, Trexel. They just hide from you.

TREXEL

But, do— Why take the risk?

[Writing sounds]

DAVID

Uh, yeah, I suppose. Okay, so, so, uh, dogs, animals that you want to eat, unless they're dangerous, of course, you've gotta run through it, like, unless, cos... uh, what if the dogs have knives strapped to them?

TREXEL

That's fine. That's fine. That's just an accoutrement. That's not the dog's fault.

DAVID

Okay, so, the, the animals—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) The dog didn't want this!

DAVID

The animals can accessorise.

TREXEL

The animals **can** accessorise.

DAVID

Okay, accessories allowed. Give everyone a big stick—

TREXEL

Yup!

DAVID

—and, um, if you— Okay, compromise: if you find an animal that wants to eat you, poke it with your big stick into a hole. Don't put it down the hole **before** it tries to eat you.

TREXEL

Yes. And it could just be an individual hole. We just dig loads of holes everywhere.

DAVID

Okay.

TREXEL

Animal holes.

DAVID

Safety holes, just in case.

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) Safe— We call them safety holes, David.

DAVID

Safety holes, yeah.

TREXEL

We put a lovely sign around them saying 'Safety Hole — Here for your protection'. And we just jab it in.

[Room begins to rumble]

DAVID

(Crosstalk) Okay, I, well I think, I think that's enough. I mean, the room's... weird.

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) It's hard to jab birds out the sky, but if you really want it, you'll find a way.

DAVID

Well, if it's coming— if it's coming at you—

TREXEL

No, you're right David, th-the room's doing a thi— put it in the— put it in.

DAVID

Okay. Right. Yeah. **(muttering)**

IMOGEN

Submitting.

[Pneumatic tube hisses and rumbling fades]

TREXEL

There we go, wonderful. Perfect, perfect. I look forward to visiting the Happy Earth Zoo the next time I get a small employee sojourn. Or just decide to leave, because I'm bored.

DAVID

Great. Fine. Well, good. Well—

TREXEL

And I hope you'll not think any more about that silly clone revolution, David.

DAVID

Oh, yeah, no, now, now—

TREXEL

(Crosstalk) It's a bad plan.

DAVID

Fine, fine. Now, now your business is concluded, then... please leave, and you can take the table that you broke with you, so... here is one bit.

(Trexel grunts as he catches a piece of table)

And here is another.

[David finishes handing off the table bit]

TREXEL

Thank you, okay. And David, I don't want you to think that I'm just totally not on board with, you know, us surviving. I get it, we've gotta do something, but I just really do, from the bottom of my heart, think that clones are so rubbish that this is a bad plan. That's all I'm saying.

DAVID

(Through gritted teeth) Well. Noted.

TREXEL

Okay. Y-You're saying "noted" in a way that suggests to me that you're not noting all that seriously.

DAVID

(Harshly, with a pause between the syllables) Noted.

TREXEL

Good enough for me! I'm gonna go rebuild this table, and then eat a dinner off of it. Bye-bye!

DAVID

Bye.

[Door whooshes]

DAVID

(Muttering to himself) Clones... weak... don't... I'll... show him... stupid Geistman... Trexel... Stupidface.

IMOGEN

[Beep] You sure got him.

[Show Theme – Outro]

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Stellar Firma 63 – Crushing Tables and Crushing Dreams

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