

The Pack Episode 1

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THE PACK EPISODE 1: THE TOWER REBUILT

Radio fuzz...

CHIEF

We are here, broadcasting from Pack Central Station, Oldenburg. Testing 3-2-1. Calling broadcast stations. Bandolier, check in now.

Static and then...

WW BUSHMAN

This is the village of Bandolier, checkin' in for the first time in sixty years!

Applause from the village of Bandolier.

CHIEF

We read you, Bandolier. Leslie, check in now.

SCARLET BLUE

This is mayor Scarlet Blue checking in for all of the colours of Leslie.

Polite clapping from the richer residents of Leslie.

CHIEF

Five by five, Leslie. Bonepatch, your turn.

DICK WINTERBODY

Bonepatch here. A dire vulture attacked our transmitter. I never saw anything like it. I had to strangle it with my bare hands. Now it's dead and I'm not.

(interrupted)

I'm being told that I'm making The Bonepatch sound dangerous. It's not. You should re-settle here. We got a lot o' empty houses.

CHIEF

Thank you, Bonepatch. Dustown next.

BILLIE DANIELS

Billie Daniels callin' in from Dustown. We'd like to give y'all a big ol' Dustown salute. Yick-a-boo! Yick-a-booooo!
We had a promblem with our ant-tenna, but we just ran some copper wire up a stashball pole.

CHIEF

Thanks. I'm not picking up any more signals. Bill's Pit, Russett, Mutantown, do you read?

Radio static.

CHIEF

I guess not. Alright, I'll begin. My predecessor, John Djettpac the third, upon the fall of the radio tower sixty years ago, noted: When people communicate, they ARE each other. And when that communication ends, they are each other no longer." Never have more fitting words been spoken.

Today, we raise our radio tower again and aliven our great Accord. I know many of you have heard my voice. My name is David Verney and I am chief of the Jet Pack Cops. It has been our honour and duty to protect you for almost two centuries. And now we will also provide a voice for all of the corners of the Accord.

We go now to Oldenburg Town Square, where the tower dedication ceremony is already underway. Our leader Matris Remillard is about to give a speech.

Bad marching band music.

MATRIS REMILLARD

I. was born. 82 years ago. When the transmitter still stood. Which allowed our voices. to travel through the air. Like the the Jet Pack Cops. travel through the air. 200 years from now. when people walk past this tower. They will feel the waves of radio. warming them from inside. I remember when I was a little girl. On cold nights we would stand by the tower. And though we couldn't hear the signal. we were warmed by its energy. Thank you.

Applause.

MATRIS REMILLARD

Now to speak on behalf of the Jet Pack Cops, Officer Cliff Danger.

Applause.

CLIFF DANGER

Let's be candid. Things are not good in the Accord. Our ability to defend and maintain order has been limited. When things go wrong, and they will, radio technology will make us more responsive. And things will get better. But we will need your help. We need you to report and report quickly. The law is all of our concern.

Mild applause. Radio static.

MR. SALTZMAN

This is Russett. We had trouble with our transmitter, do you read?

CHIEF

We read, Russett.

MR. SALTZMAN

Did we miss the speeches?

CHIEF

I'm afraid you did.

MR. SALTZMAN

Oh.

Sounds as a stronger signal cuts over.

BROTHER MATHIAS

Hello, hello? Can you hear now? We've been trying to send for an hour.

CHIEF

We've only been up for a few minutes.

BROTHER MATHIAS

Yes, we've been trying and trying to respond. Then we found that our transmission wire had been snipped.

CHIEF

That's terrible.

BROTHER MATHIAS

It is.

CHIEF

For those of you who don't know, you're hearing the voice of Brother Mathias, leader of Mutantown.

BROTHER MATHIAS

Yes, and the voice of my people has been quiet too long.

CHIEF

Well, everyone can hear you now. I'm gonna give you the same ten seconds I gave everybody else.

BROTHER MATHIAS

I, Brother Mathias, intone the Infinite Spirit of Holy Loving Light to bless this broadcast network. I ask all persons to join me in prayer:

We are a disgusting blight on your glorious, magnanimous creation. Please forgive us ignoble wretches of our unworthy state.

Sound marking that the Chief has cut off Brother Mathias.

CHIEF

Thank you for that. To honour the history of radio, we bring you one of its proudest traditions: the ad.

CRASH JOHNSON

I'm Crash Johnson star knifer for the Russett Sting Rats. In the game of stashball I get knifed a lot every time I get knifed I get a affection. Then my coach gives me Grandma Murray's Willow Concoction and then I don't got a affection no more. Grandma Murray's Willow Concoction's got real willow bark and white mold to kill all the critters. Grandma Murray's, if your neighbours aren't dead they're already using it.

Transition noise.

HANNAH HAWK

I'm Hannah Hawk, and tonight on Biography in Profile, I present the story of the Jet Pack Cops. We think of them as keeping the peace, but are they keeping a piece... for themselves?

It was not long after The End and a savage bandit king called Sinn Yu was terrorizing the land. He was so evil they say he strangled a puppy just so no one else could have it - a man so wicked they would bury you

(MORE)

HANNAH HAWK (cont'd)
 alive for saying his name.

One night after betraying and murdering his own men, and their families, he found himself wandering through the wastes alone. A bolt of lightning struck him out of the clear sky. Badly burned and disfigured, he crawled his way to a nearby cave where he discovered twelve jet packs. That night he was visited by visions of an heroic force.

He traveled the land, searching for those worthy enough to don the pack and fight for goodness. Within a generation, the Jet Pack Cops had stabilized the region enough for civilization to bloom again. The Oldenburg Accord established us as a nation under the protection and guidance of the Jet Pack Cops.

But who are the Jet Pack Cops today? I spoke with each of them to get a sense of who they are and what they do.

Sound that marks the beginning of Hanna's pre-recording.

HANNAH HAWK
 The newest Cop is Sarah Bugra. Only 18 years old, Sarah grew up in a poor family in the village of Leslie.

BOOGER
 I'm just here to help.

HANNAH HAWK
 (confrontational)
 Are you?

BOOGER
 Yes.

HANNAH HAWK
 Tell me, what do the other Cops call you?

BOOGER
 Booger.

HANNAH HAWK
 Booger.

BOOGER

I don't mind. My name's Bugra. It sounds the same.

HANNAH HAWK

Last year's recruit, Rook Stoltz, is another fascinating person. He grew up outside of the Accord, in a small village west of the Great Mountains. There, he says mutants attacked in the night. All were killed except for Rook, who crossed the mountains alone without supplies or equipment. He found shelter here in the Accord and a place in the Jet Pack Cops.

(to Rook)

Did mutants really kill your family, really?

ROOK STOLTZ

Yes. I hate mutants.

HANNAH HAWK

Rocky Dhakar is a Cop well-known for his good looks and charm. From the mining town of Russett, Rocky is a champion knife-thrower.

ROCKY DHAKAR

We got a good team here.

HANNAH HAWK

Burt Pollino was just a farm boy from Bandolier before he became a Jet Pack Cop and in many ways, he hasn't changed.

BURT POLLINO

I had to apply a lot of times to be a cop. But, you know, that's just me, I don't give up. Burt Pollino.

HANNAH HAWK

Horrace Yusif comes from one of the most prestigious families in Oldenburg. Many were surprised when he became a Cop.

(to Horrace)

People say you're the brain of the Jet Pack Cops.

HORRACE YUSIF

I'm probably the most well-read, but we have a lot of brains here. And the job is also very physical. When the other lads in my finishing school were practicing their

(MORE)

HORRACE YUSIF (cont'd)
 curtsy, I was learning to re-string
 a crossbow.

HANNAH HAWK
 The resident mechanic, Tapa Raslav
 keeps the Cops' equipment running.

TEPA RASLAV
 If it can burn, I can blow it up.

HANNAH HAWK
 Frankie Huangse has been a Jet Pack
 Cop for ten years now. And in that
 time she's developed a reputation
 for being fair and equitable.

FRANKIE HUANGSE
 It's just great working in the
 villages. You meet all sorts of
 nice people.

HANNAH HAWK
 On the more veteran side, Clemence
 Fiddledown has worn the pack for
 over twenty years.

CLEMENCE FIDDLEDOWN
 I love bein' a Cop. Ain't much good
 at anything else.

HANNAH HAWK
 As has Harriette T'Kembe, often
 described as the most lethal woman
 in the Accord.
 (to Harriette)
 Officer T'Kembe, do you enjoy
 killing people?

HARRIETTE T'KEMBE
 I don't know what you want from me,
 lady. I have a job. I do it.

HANNAH HAWK
 And probably the most well-known
 Jet Pack Cop of all is Cliff
 Danger. Cliff had a difficult
 childhood, growing up on the
 streets of Oldenburg. He says he
 was saved from a life as a petty
 thug by the Jet Pack Cops.

CLIFF DANGER
 That was a long time ago. But yes,
 I was on a bad path. Desperate
 people do desperate things. I try
 to remember that every time I break
 an arm or stab someone in the neck.

HANNAH HAWK

Are the Jet Pack Cops a force for good?

CLIFF DANGER

Yes, Hannah. We are.

HANNAH HAWK

How do we know what you're doing when you're...

Sound of signal being cut.

CHIEF

Sorry, I'm going to have to cut this segment. We're getting a signal from Bill's Pit. Bill's Pit, come in.

BURT POLLINO

This is Officer Burt Pollino, in Bill's Pit. We are under attack. I got maybe forty cannibals attacking from the West and they look mad.

CHIEF

All Jet Pack Cops, all Jet Pack Cops, proceed immediately to Bill's Pit. Be advised, forty cannibals from the West. To any residents of Bill's Pit, take cover immediately. Help is on the way.

ROOK STOLTZ

This is officer Rook Stoltz, I'm already airborne heading to Bill's Pit. Booger is with me.

CLIFF DANGER

This is Danger. Hold back, Stoltz and Bugra, I am inbound.

BOOGER

But we're almost there!

CLIFF DANGER

Hold at the town's edge, rookies. Let me handle the cannibals.

BOOGER

Yes, sir.

BURT POLLINO

This is Burt Pollino. There's way too many of 'em. I'm gonna have to retreat and find the rookies.

ROOK STOLTZ

We see you, Pollino. Keep heading East.

BOOGER

There are so many cannibals!

CLIFF DANGER

No. They're all one cowardly cannibal with a thousand faces. Don't worry, this'll be over quick.

ROOK STOLTZ

Chief, I can see Cliff passing overhead now.

BOOGER

He's jet pack-ing right into the group of cannibals.

BURT POLLINO

Yep. He's gonna spear their leader. That'll break them up and send them running.

Sound of Cliff spearing a cannibal.

BURT POLLINO

And there he goes. Man, a direct hit at full speed.

ROOK STOLTZ

Cannibal never saw it coming.

BOOGER

They don't look intimidated.

ROOK STOLTZ

They're not. Something's wrong.

BURT POLLINO

They're all over Cliff!

ROOK STOLTZ

Chief, we gotta go in there.

CHIEF

Affirmative, engage the cannibals. But stay safe.

ROOK STOLTZ

Roger.

Sounds of jet packs. Booger hoots with excitement.

CHIEF

Uh, I guess we don't need the airwaves until there's a

(MORE)

CHIEF (cont'd)

development. So, we now return to our regularly scheduled program.

BILLIE DANIELS

Yick-a-boo, y'all. This is Billie Daniels and I've been assigned by the Council of Elders to enact their Cultural Support Initiative. I'm gonna bring you songs and stories from The Accord and beyond so that these traditions are remembered.

Seeing as we just got a new broadcasting tower up, I thought we should tell the story of how the old tower came down. I have with me here one Mister Jefferson Squibbly. He watched the tower come down sixty years ago with his own eyes. Mister Squibbly, what's the story?

JEFFERSON SQUIBBLY

Well, it was the Great Storm of '72 and the worst Spring Duster we ever got. That wind come down from the North and it got so bad you had to lick your fingers and poke two holes to see where you were going.

I remember it was a day thick as night, what from the dust. I was plowing my fields and the dust kept filling up my furrows. Eventually, it just got so bad I felt I couldn't breathe, so I headed back over to my dust shelter.

I could tell the dust was getting real bad because the light on the broadcast tower, there used to be this red light right at the top, it was getting dimmer and dimmer. Then all of a sudden it got brighter and bigger. I didn't know what to make of it, then the tower came flying past me.

BILLIE DANIELS

The wind had picked up the whole tower?

JEFFERSON SQUIBBLY

Yessir. It went no more than an arm's length right past my face.

BILLIE DANIELS

Wow.

JEFFERSON SQUIBBLY

Yup. Worst storm we ever had. When all the dust settled, we couldn't find where the tower got blown. And it's never been found.

BILLIE DANIELS

Where do you suppose it is now?

JEFFERSON SQUIBBLY

Buried somewhere, I suppose. Folks tried to build a new one, but they couldn't figure it out.

BILLIE DANIELS

What was life like after the tower came down?

JEFFERSON SQUIBBLY

Quieter. Less distracted. Got more work done.

BILLIE DANIELS

How do you feel now that the tower's back?

JEFFERSON SQUIBBLY

I hate it. They say it's gonna connect people together more, but it's not. I know. It'll drive people further apart, just you watch. Man, I'm ready to die.

BILLIE DANIELS

Thank you, Mister Squibbly. Now we come to the musical portion of the program. I'm joined here by Ramblin' Jack, best guitar player in The Accord. We're gonna play a song you probably know, but never gets tired. This is about the oldest song we got and it tells the story of how the Jet Pack Cops got started. This is Sinn Yu Changed for Good.

They play the song.

BILLIE DANIELS

Thanks, Jack.

MR. SALTZMAN

SALT!

You need it, we got it.

SALT!

Every time you do anything, you lose

(MORE)

MR. SALTZMAN (cont'd)

SALT!
 Blood, sweat, tears,
 SALT!
 Here at the RUSSETT SALT CO-OP we
 got all the salt. We're a salt
 mine. Are you a salt mine? No. We
 got all the salt.
 RUSSET SALT CO-OP.
 SALT!
 We trade what you need
 SALT!
 For what we need
 MONEY!

Sounds of tinkering as Tepsa Raslav breaks her way into the
 Jet Pack Cop Armory.

CHIEF

We return now to... XT, what's that
 sound? Officer Raslav, what are you
 doing?

TEPSA RASLAV

What does it look like I'm doing,
 Chief? I'm breaking into the
 armory.

CHIEF

Why?

TEPSA RASLAV

To get the Wave Cannon
 Electrolyzer.

CHIEF

You're off the rails, Raslav.

TEPSA RASLAV

Bill's Pit is my hometown. I'm
 going to vaporize those cannibals
 before they can do any more damage.

CHIEF

There's a limited number of charges
 left in that weapon. Once they're
 gone, that's it.

TEPSA RASLAV

I don't care!

CHIEF

Drop that weapon. That's an order.

TEPSA RASLAV

Fine.

CLIFF DANGER

This is Danger. The cannibals are fighting hard. They brought torches.

BOOGER

They're lighting the tar pits.

ROOK STOLTZ

Confirmed, I see four fires on the Northwest side.

TEPA RASLAV

How about now, Chief?

CHIEF

Alright, you get one charge. Make it count.

The sound of Tapa jet pack-ing away.

CHIEF

All units, all units be advised, Officer Raslav is inbound with the Wave Cannon Electrolyzer.

BOOGER

The W.C.E.? We gotta get outta here.

CLIFF DANGER

Negative, Bugra. We have to stay and keep the cannibals within the target zone.

BURT POLLINO

He can't be serious.

TEPA RASLAV

I'm afraid so, folks. This is Raslav. I've only got one shot with this thing. If I'm going to take out the cannibals AND put out those fires, you'll have to pack 'em up tight.

CLIFF DANGER

Stoltz, Bugra, form up and push in from the East.

ROOK STOLTZ

No problem, Cliff. I think I've got a maneuver that'll do the trick.

Battle sounds.

BOOGER

Raslav, where are you?

TEPA RASLAV

Just a second, the cannon is almost charged.

BURT POLLINO

I can't hold 'em much longer!

TEPA RASLAV

Alright, fly clear now! I'm firing.

Lots of noise.

CHIEF

Cops, report. Cops, do you read?

TEPA RASLAV

Direct hit, Chief. The fires are out and the cannibals are no longer a problem. I didn't zap any of you guys, did I?

CLIFF DANGER

This is Danger. I'm okay.

BURT POLLINO

Burt Pollino. I made it out too.

CHIEF

Rook, Booger, do you copy?

ROOK STOLTZ

Yeah Chief, we got a little cooked, but we're both okay.

BOOGER

Tepa, you owe me two eyebrows.

TEPA RASLAV

Sorry, Booger.

CHIEF

Alright, team. Do an area sweep and then report back for debriefing. Drinks are on me.

Given the circumstances, I'm concluding our broadcast day. Please tune in next time for further broadcasts.

It is our mandate to broadcast within The Accord and also to spread culture to areas beyond. If you received our broadcast, we'd like to hear from you. Send us a message at packcentralstation@gmail.com. We appreciate all of your questions

(MORE)

CHIEF (cont'd)
and comments. The Jet Pack Cops
already get plenty of fan mail, but
they always appreciate more.