

The Pack

Episode 3: Heatwave

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THE PACK EPISODE 4: HEATWAVE

Radio fuzz...

CHIEF

We are here, broadcasting from Pack Central Station, Oldenburg. It is too damn hot to speak. And it's probably too hot to listen. So, thank you to anyone who is listening.

A community announcement from North Leslie: last night Miss Lavender Taupe spilled black ginger marmalade all over her a-line chiffon evening gown. And I'm happy to report that the dress will be fine.

Also, from the South Side of Leslie we are sad to announce the following deaths: Mip Hedrogingham, Pance Du Bareleau, one of the Joe's [we're not sure which], Umballa Kimdekchi, Hope Pardustit, and what could either be Old Man Johnson, or a leather waistcoat. We don't know, it's so dried out. We'd like to remind you that in these times of extreme heat, please check on your neighbours. High temperatures can be lethal.

SCARLET BLUE

Please excuse me, Mister Chief. This is Mayor Scarlet Blue of Leslie. I'm ever so sorry to interrupt your broadcast.

CHIEF

It's no problem. Please continue.

SCARLET BLUE

Thank you. I've just received some terrible news. This devilish heat is getting to our pigment supply down in the Pigment Vault. My people tell me the whole thing might go critical if someone doesn't go down there.

CHIEF

I'll send Cops right away.

SCARLET BLUE

Why thank you, Chief.

CHIEF

Officer Frankie Huangse, Officer Sarah Bugra, please report to the Roost immediately.

Frankie and Booger jet pack in.

CHIEF

Frankie, Booger, go down to the Leslie Pigment Vault and run the cooling cycle.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

That's supposed to be automated.

CHIEF

Well, it's not working, so you should go immediately.

BOOGER

Chief, if things have gotten this bad, we should just let the pigments go.

Frankie gasps.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

You wouldn't!

CHIEF

You swore to protect The Accord and its way of life. And in Leslie, pigments are that way of life.

BOOGER

Oh, I know all too well. Chief, take me off the case. Send Tapa Raslav, she's dying to see the tunnels down beneath the pigment factory.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

I can handle this on my own.

CHIEF

Listen, I got two Cops from Leslie, and an emergency in Leslie. Get outta here.

BOOGER

Yes, Chief.

Frankie and Booger jet pack away.

CHIEF

And now, here's Billie Daniels.

BILLIE DANIELS

Yick-a-boo, y'all. This is Billie with your Council mandated culture section. I was gonna talk to y'all about the annual heatwave, but this situation reminded me of a great old song I'd like to share with you.

Billie plays a song.

BILLIE DANIELS

Now, folks from Leslie'll know that song, but if yer from otherwheres, it needs some explaining. In Leslie, there're two kinds of people. You got yer Chromes, and they use pigment to colour their skin beautiful bright shades. They live in big houses and wear fancy clothes. Then ya got yer Blands. Good hard workin' folk. They keep things simple 'cause they gotta.

Yeah, bein' a Chrome is a real special thing. You gotta be from one of the shareholder families that own the pigment plant. You know, it might be nice if everybody got to wear their own bright colour, but maybe that's what keeps it special. Thanks for listening.

CHIEF

Frankie and Booger, check in.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

This is Frankie. We are in the Leslie tunnels, on our way to the Pigment Vault.

CHIEF

Booger, what are you seeing?

BOOGER

I see a long tunnel ending with a door. There are two metal... things.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

Those are code terminals, honey. The codes will be written on top. We gotta say 'em for the door to open.

BOOGER

Cool.

FRANKIE HUANGSE
I'll take this terminal. And my
code is, "Ochre, gold, tawny or
tanned."

A computer makes a bleep sound.

BOOGER
Hmmm.

FRANKIE HUANGSE
You gotta read your code, sweetie.

BOOGER
Chief, I'm not reading this.

CHIEF
Why, what's the code?

BOOGER
I can't tell you the code without
reading the code.

FRANKIE HUANGSE
We each need to say our part at a
terminal, but I can help you sound
it out if you're having trouble
with the words.

BOOGER
I can read it, I just don't want
to.

CHIEF
Booger, you're in a tunnel that's
about to go critical and blow up.

BOOGER
Fine.

FRANKIE HUANGSE
"Ochre, gold, tawny or tanned,"

BOOGER
"Anything is better than bland."

The door opens.

CHIEF
Good work, team.

FRANKIE HUANGSE
We're heading in.

Industry noises.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

You're seeing something very special, Miss Booger. The Leslie Pigment Factory was entirely automated before the end of the world. And the machines are still running right before your very eyes. Why, in my granddaddy's day, you wouldn't have been allowed to set foot in a tunnel like this.

BOOGER

Shut up! I don't care! All this pigment? Colouring everything? It doesn't matter! It doesn't make you any better! Why can't you just shut up and do your job?

FRANKIE HUANGSE

You're being very rude, little miss.

BOOGER

Every night my father came home with his hands stained from working as a servant for you people. He wasn't allowed to hug me, or it would ruin my clothes. One day, he spilled some coffee. Twenty years of work, and he was fired on the spot. And after you get fired by a Chrome, you never work in Leslie again. He drank himself to death. We had nothing. I became a Cop to forget.

CHIEF

You're on the air.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

I'm sorry, Chief. Booger, you've clearly been through a lot and I respect that. I'm glad you're here to help.

BOOGER

Let's get this done.

CHIEF

Alright, we now go our friend Dick Winterbody.

DICK WINTERBODY

This is Wasteland Wisdom and I am your host, Dick Winterbody. I'm a survival expert, because I've been surviving since birth. My mother died of exposure before I was born.

(MORE)

DICK WINTERBODY (cont'd)

I had to claw my way out of her, birth myself, to come into this existence.

My first look at the world was to find myself in a dry, barren waste. And my second first look at the world was right in the eye of a king rattlesnake. He wanted me dead, but I had a grip on survival and a grip on his neck. I killed him, but I kept his ghost with me as a guide. He didn't speak our human tongue, save for one word: "Survive." And I did. And he also spoke one more word: "Heatwave." That's what I'm talking about today. How to stay alive in the heat.

TIP ONE: If you're wearing a sweater, you should take it off. Unless it's a material that really breathes.

TIP TWO: Find a screech owl and boil its blood. Drink the blood while it's still steaming. This will trick your brain into feeling cooler. This also works with any other hot drink, but I prefer screech owl.

TIP THREE: Travel by night. It's cooler, and it's easier to see ghosts by moonlight. It gives them a flattering glow. It's really quite lovely.

TIP FOUR: A heatwave is a great time to make jerky. Cut any meat into thin strips and hang it out in the sun. This will attract more meat in the form of buzzards. TIP FIVE: If you start to feel dizzy, and you look into the waste and see a beautiful, shining city, it means your brain is overheating and it's starting to steam. You gotta let off that pressure - nobody wants an exploded head. I keep a little rock hammer in my belt to knock a hole in my skull every now and then.

TIP SIX: This time o' year the razor geckos are headed back West to their breeding grounds. If you

(MORE)

DICK WINTERBODY (cont'd)
 can grab one and give it a squeeze,
 about half the time you can suck
 out some eggs. If you get a bitter
 taste, spit it out and try another
 one. Be careful not to cut your
 lips. They are razor geckos.

I'm Dick Winterbody and this is my
 wasteland wisdom: SURVIVE, Survive,
 survive...

FRANKIE HUANGSE
 Alright, we're passing into another
 chamber.

ROBOT
 INTRUDER DETECTED.

BOOGER
 Look out!

Robot fighting sounds.

FRANKIE HUANGSE
 This robot is choking me!

BOOGER
 Take that!

The robot is smashed.

FRANKIE HUANGSE
 Thank you.

BOOGER
 He never saw it coming.

FRANKIE HUANGSE
 Of course! Why, these robots are
 here to stir the pigment. They're
 only built to see bright colours.
 And you're so drab, they don't see
 you at all.

BOOGER
 Great.

FRANKIE HUANGSE
 Honey, you can slip right on by and
 go start the cooling cycle and they
 won't bother you at all. It's like
 you don't even exist.

Booger sighs.

BOOGER
 Alright.

Booger walks through the plant.

BOOGER

I'm here at the control panel. It looks like it was tampered with, but it isn't damaged. I'm starting the cooling cycle now.

Industrial noises. Booger walks back.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

See? Having no colour worked out for you. You saved the day.

BOOGER

You just don't get it. Your nice, is not nice. You have air conditioning. This factory gives your people air conditioning! People die from the heat on the South Side of Leslie and you don't care.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

If I didn't care, right now I'd be at a cotillion in a nice dress instead of standing here in a Cop uniform. I know there are problems, that's why I'm trying to help. But I didn't make things this way and I can't change it all on my own. We all have to work together. It's not black and white.

BOOGER

We're all shades of grey. I'm sorry I yelled at you.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

It's quite alright. I'm very sorry about your father.

CHIEF

Cops, I need you to investigate that machinery. See if you can figure out who tampered with it. Then do an area sweep and head back to the Roost for debriefing.

FRANKIE HUANGSE

Yes, Chief.

CHIEF

This ends our broadcast. Please tune in to further transmissions.

It is our mandate to broadcast within The Accord and also to

(MORE)

CHIEF (cont'd)

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 and comments. The Jet Pack Cops already get plenty of fan mail, but they always appreciate more.