

WOE.BEGONE EPISODE 93: DID SOMEONE GO ROGUE AGAIN?

INTRO THEME PLAYS.

We hear conversational chatter as two iterations of Ty Betteridge (BLUE, YELLOW) wait for a meeting to start.

BLUE

Did your message list the subject of the meeting?

YELLOW

No. I have no idea why we're here.

BLUE

And where's everyone else? Orange? Are they coming?

YELLOW

I wouldn't know. Green arranged the meeting. I hope it's not long. I haven't had lunch yet.

BLUE

Me, neither. And I brough leftover lamb with green beans and mint sauce.

YELLOW

Oooh, lucky. I'm toughing it out in the cafeteria today.

BLUE

I don't think that I could do your job subsisting on cafeteria food. I think it would end up coming back up.

YELLOW

You get used to it.

Another iteration (GREEN) enters and clears his throat.

GREEN

Hello, Yellow. Hellow, Blue. May I have everyone's attention please?

The Ty iterations politely quiet down.

GREEN

Thank you. Apologies for taking you away from your important projects, but we have a pressing issue that needs to be resolved immediately.

BLUE

I don't believe that everyone is here.

GREEN

Everyone is here. This meeting does not include any other Ty Betteridges.

YELLOW

Emergency meetings are supposed to include every Ty.

BLUE

Kaz is absent as well. Shouldn't we loop him in on this?

GREEN

I would like to avoid Mr. Burzina's involvement in this as much as possible. What he does not know will not hurt us. As such, he does not need to be informed of this meeting after the fact, either.

BLUE

This is against protocol, obviously. Green, is this an emergency or not? If this is an emergency, then we need to alert Burzina and the rest of the Ty Betteridges. If this isn't an emergency, then we shouldn't be having this meeting. It is improper for us to be in the same place without good reason.

GREEN

It *is* an emergency, Blue. It's a particular sort of emergency. I could have finished explaining this already, had you not interrupted me. The reason that I have not included Mr. Burzina in this meeting is because I believe that we should attempt to resolve this within our own ranks. In order to save face, I think that it is best that this all stays between us.

YELLOW

Did someone go rogue again?

GREEN

No one went rogue, Yellow. We wouldn't be having a meeting about that. Were one of us to go rogue, they would be swiftly and quietly neutralized. Remember Cowboy Ty? He was discreetly destroyed and replaced with a new Ty and compound operations continued seamlessly.

YELLOW

No, I don't remember Cowboy Ty.

BLUE

You can imagine what happened. He worked on Michaels and one of the Michaels got into his head. You have to take precautions if you're going to work with Michaels that close. He got sloppy.
You sure they didn't send him your way, Yellow?

YELLOW

I only euthanize Mikes and Edgars. He would have been sent to a different department.

GREEN

We all might end up in that department if we don't get this particular incident sorted out, which is why this can't go any further up the ladder.

There is some concerned muttering.

BLUE

Enough with the vagaries. What is going on?

GREEN

Simply put: the terms that we agreed to upon the purchase of WOE.BEGONE have been severely violated.

BLUE [MUTTERING]

The terms that *you* agreed to.

GREEN

As you will remember, the purchase of the technology came with the agreement that its previous owner would never create a parallel or competing technology and was never to interact or interfere with us or the compound upon completion of the deal. The reason I called this meeting is because I have discovered that this agreement has been broken.

BLUE
Ryan's back?

GREEN
Yes, Blue. Ryan is back. With his little compatriot, no less. Though I do wonder why he thought that saving him was worth the effort.

YELLOW
CANNONBALL? Didn't you kill him during your project, Green?

GREEN
Yes. More accurately, Mike killed him to complete his "fourth challenge" as it is called in WOE.BEGONE.

BLUE
Of course he didn't kill CANNONBALL himself. Yellow, you have to remember: Green doesn't get his hands dirty.

YELLOW
Must be nice. I haven't had to kill anyone *today*, but it's not even noon yet, so there's still time.

BLUE
...And the reason that you didn't want to report this up the chain is that you were in charge of purchasing WOE.BEGONE, right, Green? And so this is all on you for failing to handle Ryan properly. Because you couldn't get your hands dirty. And this is too much to handle, so you roped myself and Yellow into this.

GREEN
I refrained from killing Ryan because a violent takeover of WOE.BEGONE would ensure that he would set up all manner of traps

and failsafes and dead man's switches that I would have to untangle. The diplomatic route was less work.

YELLOW
Until now.

BLUE
So now we're carrying out an assassination in order to save your reputation. Why Yellow and I, though? He's in Euthanasia, but that's a world away from assassinating Ryan out in the field. And I just work with Michael. You might have been better off roping some boots into this and killing them when you were done.

GREEN
I was considering your ability to keep a secret, not your ability to kill a time traveler.

YELLOW
And that's why Orange isn't here.

GREEN
I respect Orange, but he would tattle on us to Burzina in an instant.

YELLOW
You're not wrong. Which is a shame because he knows his way around a weapon better than any of us.

BLUE
They shouldn't be too difficult to dispose of, as long as we can pin them down. It's Ryan and CANNONBALL, after all. Frankly, I'm surprised they're back. I didn't think that they were capable of mounting any sort of serious return.

GREEN
They aren't. Flinch, however, is perfectly capable of dropping everything they need right in their stupid little laps.

YELLOW
You think that Flinch is involved? Why would he bother with them at all?

GREEN

I don't know why Flinch would want to get involved, but I can't make sense of the situation otherwise. It's Ryan's only way in.

He has a connection with Flinch. Flinch is the one who handed him the tools to make WOE.BEGONE. And Ryan isn't working with us or O.V.E.R. or Mike's Base, so that leaves Flinch. He definitely didn't start from the ground up. He had to have help from somewhere. Ryan's barely above a script kiddie. He's not a particle physicist.

YELLOW [SARCASTIC]

I'm sure that you can shoot Flinch an email and he'd be more than happy to address your concerns.

GREEN

I know that you're joking, Yellow, but I did send Flinch an email and received the same magic 8 ball output as usual. Nothing helpful, just some cryptic references leading nowhere.

That email address is useful for inputting information into WOE.BEGONE. It's useless for everything else. We're on our own for this one, I'm afraid.

BLUE

You said that Ryan has violated the agreement. What has he done? Is he running WOE.BEGONE 2.0?

GREEN

I don't believe so. I haven't seen any evidence of a game this time. Ryan appears to be taking things more seriously than when he made WOE.BEGONE. I think that it's because he better understands what power he is dealing with. He has clearer goals, he knows what's possible, and he knows who we are. The Tracing team reported a breach of their servers this morning that we suspect is related to his increased activity. I called this meeting as soon as I finished reading the reports. Nothing was lost on our end. I don't think that he was attempting to destroy anything. I'm more concerned about what information he was able to steal.

YELLOW

Do you think that it was strategic? He wanted something from Tracing?

GREEN

Yes, I do think that it was strategic. Attacking Tracing was no accident. He does not have all of the resources that we do. To my knowledge, no one else has developed any tool for tracking objects through time that is nearly as sophisticated as the one that our Tracing team has put together. It has come a long way since we used it to find Mustardseed. And we know firsthand that, prior to this, he wasn't able to obfuscate his movements. We originally discovered that Ryan had returned because we were monitoring a meeting between Mike's Base and a rogue Mike and Edgar that had escaped to Vancouver. They were attacked while in Vancouver, one of their members disappeared, and we were able to trace her (as well as the tank she was riding in) directly to Ryan.

YELLOW

Does Base know that we were observing their meeting?

GREEN

They do not.

BLUE

Do we plan on telling them that Ryan has returned?

GREEN

That is something that I want to decide by the end of this conversation, Blue. We are not their protectors. We don't owe them anything and it would be wise to keep our distance when possible, but... informing them could help to mend our adversarial relationship. We could toss them a bone as a sign of good faith—team up on this project and build some goodwill that we could leverage into further cooperation.

YELLOW

And you're not just saying this because you see yourself as Mike's friend?

BLUE

I think Mike is our friend, in a way.

YELLOW

I have to kill every Mike that I see, so it's a bit different for me.

GREEN

I have attempted to divorce any personal stake in Mike Walters with regards to these events and I suggest that both of you do the same. Shouldn't be too hard for you, Yellow. Mike is an invaluable resource, but that is not why I am asking you to consider intervening in this situation. Ryan is hindering our ability to observe Base in its natural habitat and to take readings, make observations, and carry out experiments. It is also training Ryan to become more proficient with the technology, which he can then use against us. It is in our best interest to assist Base before this gets out of hand.

BLUE

I agree with Green. Nothing good can come from letting Ryan run rampant.

YELLOW

I think the two of you are trying to justify helping out your friend, but I appear to be outvoted. You should've invited Orange to the meeting. He would agree with me.

BLUE [A BIT SNIPPY]

I can separate my friendships from my work duties, thank you very much. I have a better head on my shoulders than Cowboy Ty. I know never to get too close, especially with Michael. I agree with Green. This plan is in our best interest.

YELLOW

Okay, okay. I needed to do my due diligence. I don't disagree with your points. We can tell the Base that Ryan is behind this recent disappearance. Are you going to tell them that we learned this because we are constantly monitoring them? I don't think they would take that news very well.

GREEN

That is a fair question, Yellow. How do we go about telling them about Ryan and how much do they need to know?

BLUE

We don't tell them that Ryan attacked the compound.

GREEN

No, of course not.

YELLOW

And we don't tell them that we're observing them.

GREEN

Agreed.

BLUE

Maybe we don't owe them an explanation. We just say that we know that Ryan has returned and that is that.

YELLOW

That will make them suspicious and their imaginations will do their worst. Which would likely result in them correctly guessing that we are always watching.

GREEN

We could say that we were observing Ryan and saw the event that way.

BLUE

Mike's going to ask why we didn't stop it.

YELLOW

For every question we answer they'll ask a new question.

GREEN

Ok, then. How about we tell them the truth? At least that way we wouldn't have to- [come up with a string of lies...]

We hear the power go out.

GREEN

That's... bad. It appears that the power has gone out.

BLUE

And the generator hasn't kicked in.

YELLOW

I don't think that it's going to.

BLUE

Do you think that it's related?

YELLOW

What a charming little coincidence. Ryan has returned, he attacked us this morning, and now the power has gone out. Brilliant. I wouldn't be surprised if the generator has been transported into outer space.

BLUE

Does anyone else know about Ryan?

GREEN

The Tracing team knows that we were attacked, but they don't know who Ryan is because they weren't involved in the acquisition of WOE.BEGONE.

BLUE

We're running out of time to ensure that nobody else knows, I fear. I think Kaz is going to notice that the power went out.

YELLOW

So, what next? We try to figure out what's going on?

GREEN

I'll go round up Tracing. You two head to the WOE.BEGONE storage. There should still be some handhelds in there.

BLUE

I'm not using one of those things, Green. Ask any of the Michaels about "Calculators" as they call them and they'll shudder.

YELLOW

I've only heard terrible things about them.

GREEN

Everything else plugs into the wall and, if you haven't noticed, the power is out. If we're under attack, then we need a way to defend ourselves and the handhelds are the best that we've got.

You probably won't need to use them, but I'm trying to be cautious.

BLUE

Understood. Let's go, Yellow.

YELLOW

Fine.

GREEN

We'll meet back here in thirty minutes. Hopefully with a better grasp on what's going on.

BLUE

Thirty minutes. Alright. Let's go.

GREEN

And if you run into anyone, you don't know what's going on. You're just as confused as they are. The two of you ran into each other in the hallway.

YELLOW

Got it.

SCENE TRANSITION. BLUE and YELLOW are alone.

YELLOW

So... you work in Michaels, right? What's that like?

BLUE

It's not the worst job in the compound. Michaels can be a bit tricky. They're clever like the other Mikes but they've got a

bit of wisdom as well. They break pretty easily, though. They're... stronger but not as flexible. It takes some effort to break them but once you apply the right amount of force they snap in two. They're fiery before that, though.

YELLOW

Interesting. I only get to see them at the end of that process. My understanding is that he's got a Wild West thing that he does, but I've never seen it. They normally don't talk.

BLUE

You never get to see Michael the Cowboy. He's got this cowboy hat that's his prized possession. Talks in a low gruff voice all the time. [Michael impression.] "Howdy, pilgrim. Name's Michael. I'm a rootin' tootin' tough guy. Yeehaw!"

YELLOW

And Cowboy Ty just couldn't resist... that?

BLUE

He's extremely charming. I didn't do it justice. He's very... sweet in his own way? He can put a spell on you, that's for sure. We're fortunate that there's only been one Cowboy Ty. [Pause] Is it this one or the next one?

We hear a door open and close.

BLUE

Next one. Though if you ever need a labcoat, that closet has them. Ah, here we are. The "handhelds." I think Calculator is a better name for them, personally.

YELLOW

I'm not going to use that thing. I don't even want to touch. We should take them so that Green feels like he's in charge and we're doing what he says, but I'm not sending myself anywhere with it.

BLUE

Yeah, me either. These things are primitive. It reminds me of how the first missions into outer space used computers that were

less powerful than a modern calculator- the mathematical tool, not... this Calculator. You're taking your life into your own hands if you use one of these. You might end up where you intended to go or you might end up 30 thousand feet in the air.

YELLOW

Might be good for killing someone if it comes to that. Just use it normally and pray for a malfunction.

BLUE

[Polite chuckle.] True. Do you want me to hold onto them? I don't mind.

YELLOW

I would prefer that. I don't want to accidentally transport myself somewhere. Or, worse, transport half of myself somewhere.

BLUE

The Michaels have some horror stories about half-transporting themselves. [Pause.] We should head back. I don't want anyone to see us. Green said to play stupid if someone saw us, but Orange would know what's happening immediately.

YELLOW

Agreed. Seeing two Tys together would immediately raise some eyebrows. Let's go.

BLUE

Of course. So... I told you all about working with Michaels. It's that wing of the building over to our right, if you were wondering. Not far from here at all. So, how about Euthanasia? Or... do you not like to talk about it?

YELLOW

I don't mind talking about it. Usually people don't want to know. It isn't pretty but it is important work. Experimental produces a lot of waste. Not as much waste as it used to, mind, but it does have to be taken care of. And they use these subjects all the way up before they're sent to me. They are in awful condition. I'm doing most of them a favor. Overnights,

older subjects, ones that are aggressive and unstable, either because they've completely broken down or because they couldn't be broken in the first place. They enter my room alive, I do my job, and their bodies are transported to a disposal area. It's... painless, I believe. I don't know firsthand, obviously, but they don't appear to be in any pain. Other than the pain that they came in with. No judgment from me, but you guys are rough on some of the Michaels. I understand that it's for the sake of medicine, but I can't help but wince any time that I see them. You said something about sweetness? You can kind of see in their eyes. Sad and sweet. I could definitely understand going rogue if you got attached to one of them and knew that day in and day out you were going to have to do experiments on them and eventually send them to Euth to be put down. Not to excuse Cowboy Ty of anything. He was dealt with appropriately. So that's Euth. Uhh... Blue? Where'd-

We hear the time travel noise, then quick footsteps.

BLUE

Idiot. He never could have handled a Michael.

More footsteps down the hall. BLUE whistled inconspicuously to himself. We hear a key in a lock and then a door opens.

BLUE [WHISPERING]

Psst. Psst! Michael... Michael! Wake up!

MICHAEL

Huh?

BLUE [WHISPERING]

Why are you sleeping? It's noon.

MICHAEL

It got dark, so I went to bed.

BLUE [WHISPERING]

The power's out.

MICHAEL

Oh. I thought they just turned the lights off.

BLUE [WHISPERING]

Ugh. There's no time for this. Where do you want to go?

MICHAEL

What's that supposed to mean?

BLUE [WHISPERING]

You can go anywhere but home. The compound watches Base and if they see I let you go, they'll kill me. Where do you want to go?

MICHAEL

This ain't a very funny joke, Ty. Wait, the compound watches Base?

BLUE [WHISPERING]

I'm not joking. Ryan is attacking the compound. I saw an opportunity to bust you out and I'm taking it. Now's your chance. Where do you want to go?

MICHAEL

Ryan is attacking the compound!?

BLUE [WHISPERING]

Shush. Do you want to be free or not? Name a place.

MICHAEL

Uhhh... uhhhh... Texas.

BLUE [WHISPERING]

You can go anywhere that you want in the entire world and you're picking Texas?

MICHAEL

I'm a cowboy, Ty.

BLUE [WHISPERING]

Right. Right. Alright, let me put in the coordinates..

MICHAEL

Why me, Ty? There are other Michaels.

BLUE [WHISPERING]
Because you're my favorite.

MICHAEL
I knew it. I just wanted ya to say it.

BLUE [WHISPERING]
Alright. Time to go, Michael. Remember: you can't go home.
Sorry.

MICHAEL
I understand. Thank you, Ty.

BLUE [WHISPERING BUT ALSO DOING A COWBOY IMPRESSION]
Y'all take care now, yahear?

MICHAEL
Can do. Adios, Ty.

BLUE [WHISPERING]
Adios, Michael.

We hear the time travel noise.

SCENE TRANSITION. GREEN and BLUE are back in the meeting room.

GREEN
You're back. Just in time for the lights to come back on.
Where's Yellow?

BLUE
I don't know! They took him! He was walking alongside me. We got the Calculators... the handhelds. We were making small talk. I was walking and talking about working in the Michaels department and I realized that I didn't hear his footsteps anymore. I turned around and Yellow was... gone. I checked to make sure that he didn't duck into a room or something, but he was truly gone. The

only thing that makes sense is that Ryan transported him as part of the attack.

GREEN

How strange. I wonder what Ryan's plan is.

BLUE

Did you find Tracing?

GREEN

I did. They were the subject of this attack as well. It appears that Ryan duplicated our server room and transported the duplicate to himself. Quite sloppily. He performed the duplication *inside our server room*.

BLUE

I'm not sure I understand.

GREEN

When he duplicated the servers, he sent the servers to the crowded server room before sending them to himself. Which means that, for a brief moment, there were two instances of the servers inside the same room. Which made an enormous mess as they all knocked into one another for the brief amount of time that they were there. So, not only does Ryan have that data, it is possible that some of our infrastructure was destroyed. Tracing is working on it as we speak and they are furious.

BLUE

I suppose that the cat is out of the bag now. We're going to need to go to Burzina on this.

GREEN

Burzina doesn't need to know about Ryan.

BLUE

He's going to find out.

GREEN

If he finds out through his own investigation, then he finds out. In the meantime, we will continue trying to ensure that it

doesn't come to that, starting with approaching Base, as we decided in our earlier meeting.

BLUE

C'mon, Green. He stole the servers and cut the power. We're long past keeping everything a secret, aren't we?

GREEN

We can still keep this a secret. We just have to be clever about it. Kaz was always against keeping Ryan alive. He would flog me in front of the rest of the Tys if he discovered that the compound was getting attacked because I let Ryan live. [Pause.] And, in return, I can keep it a secret that I sent you out with Yellow and you came back without him at the same time that reports are going out saying that a Michael is missing. Interesting timing.

BLUE

I don't know what you're talking about.

GREEN

I don't know what it is about Michael. He turns everyone that he comes into contact with into a cowboy. You had better be more careful. If Orange had been here, you'd already be in a body bag.

BLUE

Then thank you for not inviting him. [Pause] ...I am receiving a message that Michael from Base is at the front gate. According to Fe, he is here to report that Marissa is missing and request our help in finding her.

GREEN

How fortuitous. We can check that off of our to-do list.

BLUE

I do wish that he could have shown up an hour later, though. The power outage delayed lunch.

GREEN

Make him wait.

BLUE

I can't do that. If he's here that means that he's worked up and scared. He is not a fan of asking us for favors.

GREEN

You hold the cards here. Let him know it. He can wait until after you grab some lunch.

BLUE

...I am starving.

GREEN

Then tell Fe that Michael can see you in an hour. And you'll get started on the paperwork for our cooperation with his Base. It will make its way through the departments. We will find Ryan and CANNONBALL after Tracing gets back up and operational. We fix the problem before anyone else knows that Michael's problem is related to the attack on the compound. And we can deal with this within the Betteridge departments, like any other Mike Walters project.

BLUE

And if this plan fails at any juncture, we are screwed.

GREEN

Quite.

END THEME PLAYS.