

EPISODE ONE HUNDRED AND FIVE - THE BOULDERS

Original transcript edited by Orion and Tony

[BEGIN Episode 105.]

INTRO: Hey guys, quick plugs. As usual, I am streaming every Sunday on Twitch at twitch.tv/woebegonepod, where I write that week's episode soundtrack and play video games. Maybe if I announce here that I'm playing a Nancy Drew game on Sunday, I will actually go through with it. That is twitch.tv/woebegonepod.

And if you'd like to support the show, you can do so on Patreon at Patreon.com/woe_begone, where you can get early access to ad-free episodes, instrumentals, Q&As, soundtrack albums, director's commentaries, Movies with Michael, postcards, and more. March's postcards just went out and I am very excited for everyone to receive them. Each postcard comes with a handwritten message from one of the characters and all of the messages combined tell a larger story. So patrons get together in the Discord and share their postcards and try to unlock more of what has happened. And so, if you want April's postcard, sign up at the \$15 level before the end of March. Again, that's Patreon.com/woe_begone. Special thanks to my 10 newest patrons: [REDACTED] for supporting the show. Enjoy.

[Warning this episode contains a depiction of violence. Listener discretion is advised.]

[Whispered conversation.]

MIKEY: Mike. Hey, Mike. Are you asleep?

MIKE: *[Sighs.]* No. What's up?

MIKEY: Do you trust Michael? Do you think he's telling the truth? Is he going to correct this for us?

MIKE: I don't know, Mikey. After the last Michael we ran into stranded us here, I'm not blindly putting my trust into any cowboy anymore. He does seem to want his boyfriend back though, so maybe it's a win-win? No matter what he wants, we get what we want.

MIKEY: I'm starting to have second thoughts. This place is *weird*, Mike. Remember when we got lost on the way here? I don't think that that was us walking in a circle. In fact, I think it's impossible to get back to where we were walking in a circle. Reality shifted around us, just out in the open like that, automatically. Who knows what's possible in here. What if that isn't even Michael?

MIKE: I wouldn't go that far. I think it's pretty clear he's one of us. But, who knows what he wants.

MIKEY: It's daylight in a couple hours. What if he leads us into a trap? Killing us or turning us over to someone. We don't know what the Boulders do, we don't know why he's bringing us there.

MIKE: Yeah, but we're stuck here, in *his* time. Other Michael took the Calculator, that's why you dragged me here. This was *your* idea.

MIKEY: No, my idea was to go to O.V.E.R. I didn't know that they'd wave us into Tier Three and Michael would be here waiting for us. And we can still use O.V.E.R. to get out of this. I know that H has access to some Tier Two security buildings. They use the technology in there to surveil Tier One from inside of Tier Two. At least that's my understanding. We could sneak in. I'm sure that our badges would get us in, they got us in here. And then we just point the program at ourselves and go home.

MIKE: And abandon trying to retrieve the previous iteration?

MIKEY: Michael isn't our only option. There's Ty, remember? Sure, he hasn't sent me anything useful, but he did establish communications. And he wants to return to the previous iteration just as badly as Michael does. And he's also got the power of a giant institution under him. He's not my favorite guy, but it is possible to work with him. And it could come in handy.

MIKE: And we *could* always forget about this and go back to our regular lives, you know. I don't care about Edgar or August. It'd be nice to have Matt back, but I already made peace with that.

MIKEY: Well, I gotta get Ty to stop cutting my fingers off for that to happen. But we'll figure something out. What do you say? Door's right there, we could just walk back the way we came, stroll into Tier Two, and find our way home. H can help us deal with the rest.

MIKE: My one concern is that H might pop me out of existence.

MIKEY: We still don't know that H did that to Michael. And I sure as hell don't believe the Michael that told us that he was dead. Now, are we getting out of here?

MIKE: *[Sighs.]* Yeah. Look, I'm scared of what Michael might do. Even if he was telling the truth about everything, he said that if we fail we'll be fully erased from existence. And the more I think about that, the more scared of it I am. And all for what? For a relationship that never happened.

MIKEY: Alright, then it's settled. Let's get out of here.

[Background music ends as the scene transitions.]

MIKEY: Alright, that is just as easy as I said it would be. Uh, start looking for a computer that's unlocked, I guess? There's got to be one.

MIKE: Alright, I guess I'll start with the one right in front of me. Uh, *[Typing.]* let's see here. Let's just... guess 'password.' Nope. Uh, so what do we do after this? Do you think Michael's going to retaliate?

MIKEY *[typing]:* He can't retaliate against us too badly because he's us, right? Assuming that he is us. But I've been changing my mind all night, ever since Michael left us here. I think I'm just going to figure out a way to tell H about Ty. In a way that doesn't get my fingers cut off and then let him sort it out.

MIKE *[typing]:* Yeah, considering everything that's happened in the future, I agree with you. I'm worried about Michael having disappeared, but I don't know that returning to the previous iteration is the way to solve that problem, anyway. Oh, uh. We're in! *[Typing stops.]* Someone made their password 'password.'

MIKEY: You gotta love office workers, man. Do you see the program?

MIKE: Yup. Right here on the desktop, it is called 'Security,' let's go. *[Pause.]* I said let's go. Uh, it's not responding.

MIKEY: Then reboot it, I guess?

MIKE: Oh! There we go, we're in. Uh, let's take a look here. Looks like we got tabs with maps, we got fields for coordinates. That sounds perfect. Uh, let's see, we are in Tier Two in this building and I believe those two little dots are us. And so we can click those— Oh! It autofilled the coordinates for us, isn't that convenient. Okay, so we are there and the Hunter Hartley Base coordinates are... *[Typing.]* That. Uh, can you double check that for me, Mikey?

[Brief time travel noise.]

MIKE: Uh, Mikey? Mikey? Uh, fuck. Uh... I didn't send you somewhere by accident, did I? *[Fumbling for words.]* Fuck. What happened? D-Did I do that? Uh. Uh...? Now what?

[Time travel noise.]

[Opening theme plays.]

MIKEY: *[Laughs.]* Okay, so, I was having this dream about the Bear. I-I promise this isn't a scary story, it's funny. I wouldn't bring the mood down like that. I was having this dream about the Bear, and in the dream he was pinning me down at the shoulder with his enormous paws. Not hurting me, just holding me there. And I remember thinking, in the dream, 'Uh, why is he just pinning me down? He's still got his teeth, why doesn't he rip my head off?' And I was scrambling, just trying to get out from under him, and flapping around and he was about to tear my head off and then... I woke up. And what do you know, both of my arms were asleep.

MIKE: What? How do both of your arms fall asleep?

MIKEY: *[Titters.]* I have no idea! But I was on my back and my arms were *asleep*. Past asleep. They didn't feel like they were full of radio static, I couldn't feel them. Which is scary when you're ripped into the waking world and disorientated and... you have our history with arm-related catastrophe. So, I wake up, I'm flailing around, I'm trying to sit up. I don't know if you've ever tried to sit up without using your arms, it's really hard.

MICHAEL: Mikey, that's called a sit-up. You can't do one sit-up?

MIKEY: I can do a sit-up! You can't just spring it on me like that. So, I go to sit up, and my arms don't work and I end up flopping around on the bed like a fish. I'm trying to get my arms to hold me up and I flop my left arm over and clobber Edgar right in the nose.

MIKE: *[Laughs.]* Oh no.

MIKEY: So, now Edgar wakes up, and his nose is *bleeding* and he doesn't know what's going on. And my arms are doing a little bit better, and by that I mean they feel so much worse because now I *can* feel them and they *do* feel like they are full of radio static. And for all Edgar knows I just punched him in the face. Or rather, he *would* think that it was me that punched him in the face if he knew that it was just me and him in the room, but our lives are so dangerous that he thinks that we're under attack. And so, he goes for the gun on the nightstand. My gun of course, his is safely put away. And Edgar's not all the way awake yet either so he points the gun at me and *[Laughs.]* he yells, 'Hands where I can see 'em, motherfucker!' *[Mike laughs.]* And I'm yelling, "It's me! It's me, it's Mikey! I can't put my hands up, they're asleep! ...Did you just call me a 'motherfucker?!'" And then, this motherfucker made him breakfast in bed because I felt so guilty about scaring him.

MICHAEL: *[Chuckles.]* Well, I'm glad he didn't shoot ya, Mikey. That ain't a fun type of correction.

MIKE: Edgar would have never shot Mikey, he's a professional.

MICHAEL: Well, what if Mikey deserved it?

MIKE: Well then, yeah he'd do it no problem.

MICHAEL: Yeah, and I would too, so don't step out of line, Mikey.

MIKEY: I'm not scared of you, *old man*.

MICHAEL: Am I old or am I grizzled and tough and full of grit?

MIKEY: Old. I'm gonna go with old.

MICHAEL: We can take this outside, if'n you're wantin' a rebuttal.

MIKEY: Don't make me embarrass you in front of Mike on his big day.

MIKE: Guys, you're both being embarrassing.

MIKEY: So, what do ya think Mike, should I tell that story at toast? Should I... talk about me and Edgar at all? *[Worried noises.]* I'm scared I'm gonna get everyone confused, cause me and Edgar isn't you and Edgar. I don't think that everyone will have the toolset to understand so it's up to you, Mike.

MIKE: You can say whatever you want at the no-family reception, Mikey. They're all O.V.E.R. They'll get it. And hopefully everyone will be good and drunk by that time of night. So hopefully they'll forget whatever embarrassing things you and Michael drag up.

MICHAEL: Oh, I got one that's good and embarrassin', alright. I'm gonna tell the double-date story. *[Mike laughs.]* The one with me and Sly.

MIKE: Oh god, Michael. That one's even more embarrassing for you, you know that, right? You're willing to do that to yourself?

MICHAEL: I sure am, pilgrim. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

MIKEY: I don't think I know the double date story.

MIKE: It's the snake story, from the restaurant.

MIKEY: Okay, now I *know* that I don't know the double date story.

MIKE: Well, don't worry about that, because by the end of the night, everyone's gonna know the fucking double date story.

MICHAEL: If it's got you that tore up, then I won't tell it, Mike. It's your special day.

MIKE: Well, the problem is, it's extremely funny. So... *[Sighs.]* fuck it, tell 'em, I'll leave the reception hall if I have to. Tell 'em the story.

MICHAEL: Hell yeah, partner. It's going to be fun, you'll see.

MIKEY: I can't wait to hear a story that makes Mike make that face. *[Mikey laughs.]* Oh man, what-what did he do?

MICHAEL: Oh, it's a doozy, that's for sure. Mike, uh, your-your cheeks are gettin' red.

MIKE: Can we change the subject, please? It's T-minus one hour to the big moment and uh... I'm starting to get nervous and I'd rather not talk about this.

MICHAEL: Ain't nothing to be nervous about. It's just the beginnin' of the rest of your life, is all.

MIKEY: And if everything doesn't go according to plan, we can just correct it.

MICHAEL: We ain't correcting Mike's big day, Mikey.

MIKE: Well, let's see how the snake story goes fir—

[Time travel noise.]

[Mikey gasps, Mike whimpers.]

MIKEY *[breathing heavy]*: Mike? Where was that?

MIKE: That was my wedding, Mikey.

MIKEY: Why would I remember—? Did you remember that before just now?

MIKE: No, of course I didn't. Oh. *[Groans.]*

MIKEY: My head is killing me. Where was that... Edgar. Edgar. Mike, Edgar.

MIKE: I know, I know. Oh god, Mikey. Mikey.

MIKEY *[whimpering]*: No, no. Who did this to us?

MIKE *[consoling]*: Mikey, Mikey, Mikey, Mikey, Mikey, Mikey, no, no, it's okay, it's okay.

MIKEY *[in shock]*: They made me— they made me... they made me kill Edgar.

[Mikey breathes heavily, near tears.]

MIKE: I know, Mikey, but we're going to fix it. We're in Tier Three. Michael's going to help us. Just take some deep breathes. Calm down. We're going to do this, okay. I'm going to go get Michael and explain what happened to us, okay? Stay with me, buddy. It's all going to be okay. I'll be right back.

[Door opens and closes.]

[Mikey sobs quietly.]

MIKE *[from another room]*: Michael! Michael! Something happened, um, me and Mikey... remember. And, uh... Mikey.

MICHAEL *[from another room]*: He still in the bedroom?

MIKE: Yeah.

[Door opens, Mike and Michael enter.]

MICHAEL: Mikey, I'm here. I heard what happened. Look at me. Look at me. It's all going to be okay.

MIKEY: Did you do this to me so that we'd go on your mission?

MICHAEL: You were already goin' on my mission.

MIKEY: You overheard us last night. You heard me and Mike talking about having second thoughts and trying to find another way home **[MICHAEL: No.]** and then you did *this* to us **[MICHAEL: No sir.]** so that we have to do everything you say.

MICHAEL: I wouldn't do that. I'm here to sheepdog ya and having you in a frenzy ain't helping me at all.

MIKE: Then what the fuck just happened, Michael? You said that no one could touch us here.

MICHAEL: Well, did you run off last night, like you was talking about?

MIKE: No, we're still here, obviously.

MICHAEL: Well, someone outfoxed me somehow. Maybe they thought they was helping me, but... look at the state of him. How much do y'all remember exactly?

MIKE: It's hard to tell. It feels like what I remember the most is the baseline feelings of how things were, me and... Edgar. I can see a few moments as clear as day. The wedding, me and Mikey both saw it. Or a snippet of a conversation the three of us were having. What is going on, Michael, why don't we remember everything?

MICHAEL: The process that preserves things like that and me is complicated. I don't understand it and what I do understand I'm not allowed to tell y'all about. If'n I were to guess, I'd say that someone wanted y'all to remember, so they pulled some trickery to make it work. My theory is y'all did run away, but they set you back here with no memory of it happening. That would explain how they got ahold of ya.

MIKE: But who would do this?

MICHAEL: Well, there's another Michael out there running around, could be him. We don't know what he's doing or what he wants. And then there's the usual suspects. Ty Betteridge, for instance. Maybe they wanted some insurance that Mikey wanted it bad enough.

MIKE: Or maybe the Boulders didn't go like *you* wanted it to and so a future you is doing this?

MICHAEL: Could be. I don't think so though. Like I said, I don't see how wrecking Mikey like that helps me get anything done. We gotta go to the Boulders *this* morning and I'm gonna need him to focus. What we're doin' is dangerous and is without the authority of O.V.E.R. Mikey, we need ya to be ready soon. Can ya do that?

[Mikey sobs quietly in response.]

MICHAEL: *[Sighs.]* Tier Three is tricky, even just walkin' around. And we need you to be focused and ready. Can you do that?

[Mikey stammers.]

MIKE: He clearly can't, Michael. Hell, maybe someone was trying to use this to sabotage us. Can we do this tomorrow, maybe? Let him get some rest and synthesize all this new information?

MICHAEL: No, we can't. The longer we plan this out, the more likely something goes awry. Even more awry than this. We could even get attacked again. I picked this mornin' cause it was the earliest time that that we could do anything. I had to get my affairs in order and find an opportunity to strike while the iron was hot. This is our best chance. If we don't do it today, there's a mighty fine chance that y'all just remembered what y'all lost with no way of gettin' it back. We gotta do it, now. D'ya understand?

MIKE: Mikey, did you hear all that? We're saving Edgar, today, right now, just we need you to push it down and help us. Can you do that?

MIKEY: I-I can't save Edgar, I killed him in cold blood.

MIKE: Well, now we're unkillin' him in hot blood, Mikey. The best way to make amends is to make it so that this never happened. Most people don't have that option, don't miss your chance.

MIKEY: Okay, I need a minute.

MICHAEL: Well, we got *a minute*, but we ain't got much more than that. Get your stuff together. We're heading out in 15.

MIKE: Let's do it, Mikey, Let's get ready for the Boulders.

[Scene transition.]

MICHAEL: Alright boys, we're here. As you can see, the Boulders have a very rudimentary electronic input system that accepts keys like this'n, right here. In official O.V.E.R. operational circumstances, these keys are custom-made for each use case and can send specific messages to specific iterations and time periods. Unfortunately, I ain't a key maker, so we'll have to make do with this'n that I was able to steal.

MIKE: So the Boulders can talk to other iterations? How? I thought that once something had been corrected it was effectively erased from existence?

MICHAEL: Can't say that I understand either. Ain't as simple as you thought but it also ain't as simple as consistent alternate universes either. It's like tapping into a bubble of potentiality.

MIKE: So, we're back to retrocausal pockets?

MICHAEL: Aliza Schultz ain't real, Mike.

MIKE: So, how do we know that this prefab message will get to a place in time that will help us return to the previous iteration?

MICHAEL: You leave that to me, pilgrim. In order to communicate usin' the Boulders, there must simultaneously be someone at a second location, authorizin' and directin' the signal. And that's what I'll be doing. I have a classified confidant who understands that any message received like that from me is a signal to undergo a deep correction. Once we're free from this iteration and can start changing things, I can start to set things up to happen the right way.

MIKE: So, you're leaving me and Mikey alone here and going somewhere else? What are we supposed to do?

MICHAEL: Well, one of ya gotta jam the key in the device port when I give the signal. It's gonna shock ya like hell, so get ready for that. And ya gotta hold on til I say let go. Other one of ya gotta be on lookout and get ready to shoot anyone who spots you.

MIKE: Wonderful. So which one do you want, Mikey? Do you wanna shock yourself half to death, or maybe have to shoot someone?

MIKEY: I don't want to be here.

MIKE: That wasn't one of the options, Mikey. I need you to focus. Pick one.

MIKEY: I... I don't want to kill anyone else.

MIKE: Awesome, you have chosen the shock treatment.

MICHAEL: You take my sidearm, Mike. And you take the headset, Mikey. I'm gonna button in to the location so I'll be there just as soon as ya see me leave.

MIKE: You're gonna button in, as in *the Button*? That's what the button does?

MICHAEL: Button does a lot of stuff, depending on who's using it. Are y'all ready?

MIKE: I'm ready. Are you ready, Mikey?

MIKEY: Yeah, I'm ready.

MICHAEL: Alright. Transportin' in three, two, one.

[Time travel noise.]

MICHAEL *[through an earpiece]:* Alright, I'm here. Uh, check, check. Uh, Mikey, are you at the device port?

MIKEY: Yeah, I'm here.

MICHAEL: Alright, let's not waste any time. I'm entering coordination and iteration information right now. It'll just take a moment.

[Michael types on a keyboard.]

MICHAEL: Alright, we're good to go, Mikey. You ready?

MIKEY: Ready when you are.

MICHAEL: Alright, it is... officially active. Insert the key in three, two, one, now.

[High volt electricity sparks, Mikey grunts in pain.]

MIKEY *[grunting]:* Oh, Michael! Ugh!

MICHAEL: Great job, Mikey. Just a few more seconds, partner. C'mon, you got this.

[Mikey cries out.]

MICHAEL: Just a few—

[Gunshot rings out, power shuts down.]

MIKEY: Hey, uh... Mike?

MIKE *[from a distance]*: Yeah, uh, what's goin' on? Everything okay over there?

MIKEY: No. Uh, I heard a gunshot and then the power turned off.

MIKE *[no longer distant]*: Is Michael okay?

MIKEY: He hasn't spoken through the headset since after I heard the gunshot.

MIKE: Fuck. Now what?

MIKEY: I'm woozy, Mike. I need to sit down for a second.

MIKE: No, I really don't think we're safe here. I think that we need to get out of here—

[Time travel noise.]

[Mikey breathes heavily.]

MIKEY *[sobbing]*: I hate time travel.

MIKE: Well, we're back in the apartment, when?

MIKEY: Phone says it's right after we left.

MIKE: So they put us back? Fuck, did it work?

MIKEY: I don't feel the knowledge of iterations rushing into me, I think we're just back where we started.

MIKE: Who would put us back where we started?

MIKEY: The same person that just killed Michael, one would imagine.

MIKE: Which may or may not be the same person that showed us the iteration.

MIKEY: No, their motivation seemed to be to keep us *with* Michael.

MIKE: Okay, great. Are there any messages from Ty?

MIKEY: Uh, yes actually. He sent me one right as we got here. Uh, lemme look, lemme look, uh. Fuck. It's a picture of an elephant and a dog who are best friends. I don't think it's code for anything, I think he just thinks it's cute.

MIKE: It wouldn't hurt to talk to him. Maybe I go talk to H and you go talk to Ty and see what each of them say? See if we can figure out what's going on?

MIKEY: I have a lot that I can talk to him about now. Though I hold no illusions of understanding. So, that's the next step.

MIKE: Yup, let's get working. *[Long pause.]* Oh fuck, I need to walk Bruno!

[Closing theme plays.]

["true love" plays]

*true love will find you in the end
or at least the end will find you
and you might fall in love with that
fine-tuned images of youth
will follow you to hell and back
fueled by good intention*

*I hear you weeping in your bed
pipe down, we could all use the rest
tomorrow is ruthless*

*and who's fault is that?
Who let the wind steal their whisper?
who's fault is that?
When the time, I wonder who faltered*

*Magnanimous
has never described me less
I know that it isn't healthy to hold on
it's flawed analysis
you can't be serious
how am I supposed to work with kid gloves on
these hairy palms*

*I see the hatred in your eyes
keep them closed lest they keep me up at night
tomorrow is a fight*

*and who's fault is that?
Who placed the wrong point on the map?
who's fault is that?
Who forgot which way the river's running?*

*Sometimes
revenge is just a lie, "just lead a decent life"
but I don't the advisers taking their advice
try harder
clench your fist and turn your hips
you'll land a decent punch
in time to leave your mark*

[END Episode 105.]