

EPISODE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY NINE - CHANCE WILL PROTECT US

Original transcript created and edited by Orion

[BEGIN Episode 129.]

INTRO: Hey guys, quick plugs. You know that I stream on Twitch over at twitch.tv/woebegonepod where every Sunday evening I write that week's episode soundtrack and then hang out and play a game. With the spooky season coming up, I'm going to be playing some of the spookier *Nancy Drew* games. So if you don't want to miss out on that, that is twitch.tv/woebegonepod.

Also, I have stickers and magnets available over on my Ko-fi at ko-fi.com/woebegonepod/shop. These are leftover stickers and magnets that were bundled in with the August postcard, and I think they turned out really great, so check out ko-fi.com/woebegonepod/shop. I'll put the link in the description, if you want to check those.

And of course, another way to support the show is on Patreon at patreon.com/woe_begone where you get early access to ad-free episodes, instrumentals, soundtrack albums, Q&A's, directors, commentaries, Movies with Michael, Postcards and more. I have the September postcards, they turned out great. I have a great story in mind, and I'm excited to share it with all of you. Each postcard comes with a handwritten note from one of the characters and these notes, when put together, tell a larger story. And it's great fun getting on the Discord and watching people share their postcards with each other and discovering that story. Also, I will ship internationally. I don't think that everybody knows that. That is patreon.com/woe_begone. Special thanks to my 10 newest patrons, [REDACTED] for supporting the show. Enjoy.

[Warning this episode contains the sound of gunfire. Listener discretion is advised.]

[[Getting Wise](#) instrumental plays over the car radio in the background.]

MIKEY: Okay, uh, according to the GPS, our turn is coming up in about a hundred feet. Oh, uh... yeah, right there, uh, I think. S-See? Take a left, right here.

CHANCE: Take a left where? There's nothing there, Mikey.

MIKEY: Okay, well, according to this GPS, there's a road right there, and we're supposed to turn onto it.

CHANCE: No, ignore the GPS. Just look with your eyes, Mikey. There is clearly no road there.

MIKEY: Okay, but look, we're here, this dot is us, and that intersection way up there is that stop sign, which means that we're here, and this road is the only one that goes where we're going, so we— just-just look at it.

CHANCE: I can't look at the GPS, I'm driving.

MIKEY: Well, you need to stop driving because we need to turn left, right here.

CHANCE: Fuckin' *where*, Mikey?

MIKEY: There, that's it. I see it. It's about ten feet forward. See in the grass there?

CHANCE: Mikey, that is a walking path, at best. The grass is flattened out a little bit. That is not a road for cars to drive on.

MIKEY: Well, it's a road that our truck has to drive on, Chris. That's our turn. It matches up with the GPS instructions perfectly.

CHANCE: It rained yesterday. What if we go off-road, and I get us stuck in the mud?

MIKEY: Aw, is Chris afraid of a little grass? Come on, man, this isn't the Operose grass. It's just normal grass. The reason that we brought Ryan's truck is cause it has four-wheel drive, so just come on, live a little.

CHANCE: Forgive me for not taking advice on *living* from Mikey "Boone Grizzly Babcock" Walters.

MIKEY: You knew that we were going to a long abandoned building in the middle of nowhere outside of Oldbrush Valley. Edgar put it in the mission description. What did you expect? Freshly paved roads the whole way there? Nobody's been out here in 50 years.

CHANCE: I expected there to be *a road*, at least.

MIKEY: Well, it could be on a road because this isn't the end of the directions. We make another turn after this.

CHANCE: God dammit, Mikey, how much longer until we're *actually* there?

MIKEY: The GPS says five more minutes... if we follow the speed limit.

CHANCE: The limit of what? The grass pathway?

MIKEY: Well, it's going to be more than five minutes if you sit here needling me about questions that I don't have the answer to. And there's another car coming up behind us, we're going to look suspicious, turn already.

CAR GPS: [*Ding.*] Turn left, then turn bleft.

CHANCE: That just fucking say to turn *bleft*.

MIKEY: We don't turn bleft for four more minutes, assuming we stay the speed limit. Just turn already.

CHANCE: Fine. I'm turning, Jesus. You-You do know, you do know that if you get us stranded out here or the truck gets stuck, or we get chased by some B-movie horror monster, I'm going to make what Eagle did to you look merciful.

MIKEY: [*Chuckles.*] Oh, Chris, the tough guy. You don't fool me. We bonded during the Hunter Timeline. Remember? When we get stuck, you're going to be cool-headed and resourceful and forgiving. I know you.

CHANCE: *When* we get stuck?

MIKEY: I'm pretty sure I said if we get stuck.

CHANCE: If this is some sort of three-dimensional chess game to do something other than what Edgar sent us out here to do, there will be no more Mr. Nice Guy. Even if it is a chess game with a normal amount of dimensions, just-just no chess, got it?

MIKEY: I don't even know how to play chess, you can ask Michael. We're just out here to do an experiment. No funny business.

CHANCE: You said we're five minutes from the building?

MIKEY: That's five minutes going the speed limit, which the GPS says is 25 mph.

CHANCE: [*Scoffs.*] We are not going 25 miles an hour. Not even close. So we've got a while?

MIKEY: Guess so.

CHANCE: Do you want to practice the song again? We need to practice if we're going to have it down by your date... anniversary... party thing.

MIKEY: It's the Edgarversary. It's the day that I met Edgar inside of 116E.

CHANCE: That... that wasn't a romantic meeting. Was it?

MIKEY: What's more romantic than manipulating a twink into accidentally sharing top secret government codes? I'd like to hear it.

CHANCE: Well, Ryan and I met at the 24-hour diner. We started working at O.V.E.R. on the same day, and then he saw I was sitting alone and he was sitting alone, so he asked to join me.

We sat and talked for must have been like five or six hours. We didn't even notice when the sun went. Down pretty ding-dang romantic, if I do say so myself.

MIKEY: It's not a competition.

CHANCE: Well, look, do you want to practice Tiger Mountain Peasant Song or not?

MIKEY: The Fleet Foxes song?

CHANCE: Huh? Yeah, Tiger Mountain Peasant Song. The... song that we've been practicing together.

MIKEY: Oh. Duh, sorry. Things have been so hazy since the failed compound mission. I got shot, and they put me on a bunch of painkillers at the compound, so I've been forgetful recently. Tiger Mountain Peasant Song, of course I remember.

CHANCE: Please tell me you're not on painkillers while we're out here on a mission.

MIKEY: Oh, no. No, no, no, no. I'm not on them anymore. Ty got me healed up and good as new, almost. Just a little scar where it happened, so no pain. Some of my memories are just cloudy, is all.

CHANCE: Are you sure you're good to be out here? Cause we're doing some heavy lifting today. I don't want you duplicating a wall and then dropping it on our heads cause you couldn't focus.

MIKEY: I'm fine, I promise. I just had a forgetful moment. Nothing more. You trust Edgar, right? He evaluated me himself. He wouldn't send me out in the field with you if he thought I was gonna get hurt, would he?

CHANCE: Eh, I guess he wouldn't. Keeping you healthy is Edgar's top priority. Especially when half the Base manual's inspired by your injuries.

MIKEY: I do tend to get hit in the head a lot.

CHANCE: Oh, you can say that again.

MIKEY: Say what again?

CHANCE: Alright, so Tiger Mountain Peasant Song, shall we?

MIKEY: Yeah, sure thing. Let's do it.

[Pause.]

CHANCE: ...Are you gonna... start us off?

MIKEY: Oh, I'm doing the first verse?

CHANCE: You... I mean, you always have before.

MIKEY: Oh, right. *[Clears throat.] [Singing, unsure.]* Wanderers this morning came by. Where did they go? Gracefully in the morning light to banner fair. Something, something. The Cold mountain air.

CHANCE *[singing]:* Through the forest, down to your grave, where the birds wade and the tall grass is wave. They do not know you anymore.

CAR GPS: *[Ding.]* Turn bleft. Your destination will be on the bleft.

MIKEY *[singing]:* Turn bleft.

CHANCE: What the fuck is bleft?

MIKEY *[singing]:* Bleft. Look bleft.

CHANCE: You're pointing at a tree.

MIKEY *[singing louder]:* No, I'm pointing between two trees. See, look past them, there's a building.

CHANCE: The truck is not going to fit through there,

MIKEY *[singing]:* I think it will, if we fold mirrors down.

CHANCE: No, it's still not gonna fit. That is way too narrow.

MIKEY: Then get out and I'll drive. It's no big deal once you get in there, it's just a straight shot right to the back.

CHANCE: Absolutely not. If you crashed Ryan's truck, he would kill me. And then I would kill you.

MIKEY: Not in that order, I assume.

CHANCE: I mean, hey, anything's possible with time travel.

CAR GPS: *[Ding.]* Turn bleft. *[Ding.]* Turn bleft. *[Ding.]* Turn bleft.

MIKEY: Can you just turn bleft already?

CAR GPS: *[Ding.]* Turn bleft.

CHANCE: Fine, Mikey, have it your way.

MIKEY: Hey, don't forget to turn on your blinker.

CHANCE: Why the f— there's no one anywhere near us. Because this *isn't* a road. *[Sighs.]* This experiment had better be worth all this hassle.

MIKEY: Luckily for us, I didn't design the experiment, Edgar did, and if we can get the calculators working like he thinks that we can, we'll be a hundred times more powerful in the field. Think about it. The other organizations are doing so much more than time travel. This could be our thing. We could perform huge construction projects on the fly. We could turn Base into a proper facility and not just a house where Anne used to live. We can build safe houses wherever we need them. We can generate cover during shootouts. It will be like *Fortnite*

CHANCE: Does *Fortnite* even still have building in it?

MIKEY: I don't know. I stopped playing *Fortnite* because I got wrapped up in a mysterious and violent online game called WOE.BEGONE— *[Grimaces.]* Oh, careful. There goes the mirror.

CHANCE: Oh, f— I told you that would happen. We don't fit. Fuck! You better have a clever way to fix this with the calculator, Ryan is going to kill me.

MIKEY: Ryan isn't going to kill anyone. The guy lets flies out the back door instead of swatting them. Besides, we fit now, don't we? No use letting that go to waste, and it'll be easier to squeeze back through when we're done, and we'll consolidate the mirror back on somehow, no problem.

CHANCE: We *should* have just teleported here in the first place.

MIKEY: That wasn't an option. This is an Edgar project, meaning this is *not* a Ty Betteridge approved project. We would like to stop being Ty's little play things eventually. And that means that we need some power that he doesn't know that we have. The Compound is the best in the world at tracing, and we don't want him picking up the smell of our little experiment here, so we can't transport from Base. Hence, the alibi. You and I are heading out of town for a night of camping.

CHANCE: *Camping?* We're not actually *staying* out here tonight, are we?

MIKEY: I... brought stuff to make s'mores.

CHANCE: Did you bring a tent? Because I sure didn't, because someone didn't tell me we were camping.

MIKEY: Uh, not telling you was an OPSEC precaution. Uh, need to know.

CHANCE: You forgot to tell me, didn't you?

MIKEY: We'll sleep in the back of the truck under the stars. It'll be awesome.

CHANCE: I told Ryan that I'd be back for dinner. He's making Steak Diane! And we don't have cell service.

MIKEY: Steak Diane? Are you 90 years old? Besides, I'm sure Edgar told the rest of the Base where we're going.

CHANCE: You do realize that this is the first act set up to every single horror movie ever made?

MIKEY: Not all of them, just the bad ones. But hey, we're here, see?, all in one piece. So it's smooth sailing from here on out.

CHANCE: No, we are not "all in one piece". We lost a mirror. *[Sighs.]* But we're here, so let's just get our measurements and do the experiment and get this over with.

MIKEY: Right. Get this over with *[Claps.]* fast, which will give us more time for s'mores. I agree. So, let's turn one dilapidated building into two dilapidated buildings and one of them has an unfinished basement, for science! Are you ready, Chris?

CHANCE: Begrudgingly, yes.

MIKEY: That's the spirit! And there are plenty of trees to get kindling to make a fire for the campsite when we're done. Uh... do you know how to build and start a fire? I'm not very good at it. Michael always ends up doing it when we go camping.

[Chance sighs.]

[Opening theme plays.]

[Someone clicks a pen.]

CHANCE: What the hell is this place?

MIKEY: Dunno, some sort of general store, I think. You know Oldbrush Valley used to be like an actual thriving town before all the industry dried up and the government took over because no

one lived here. The town actually used to stretch all the way to the lake, but all the jobs left, so now there's this whole stretch that used to be Oldbrush Valley and is now unincorporated territory. And that is the story of how we ended up in the little village with the sexier Area 51 and two restaurants and two grocery stores. It's sort of sad. If you think about— shit!

[Something falls and hits the ground.]

CHANCE: What are you doing over there?

MIKEY: Fuck. Scared me. Nothing, sorry. There was a horseshoe on top of that shelf and I accidentally knocked it off. You know, there used to be a lot of horses around here. Michael and Sly would have loved it. We're not terribly far from where the first Borax mines were located, you know, like the cleaning compound. Those mines are in some really rough country. If you think the Valley is desolate, go poke around there for a while and see how long you last. There was always demand for fresh horses to go to and from the mines, and Oldbrush Valley was a place where you could get some. I'm not saying that this old horseshoe is a valuable artifact or anything. It's just a cool tidbit that I heard about.

CHANCE: Thank you for the guided tour, Mikey. I'm sure that that would be very interesting if we weren't here to get work done. And also, if I cared even a little bit about the history of Oldbrush Valley. Can we just hurry up and get this checklist done and get out of this old building? I feel like it's going to fall down around us any second now.

MIKEY: Relax. It's been here like a hundred years. If it hasn't fallen down already, it's statistically unlikely that it's going to fall down in the ten minutes that we're inside of it.

CHANCE: You know that's not how statistics work, right?

MIKEY: Yeah, but I don't care. Anyway, go over there and measure that interior wall against the blueprint that Edgar gave us. It's probably a little different because the building is settling all the time. If we go off the blueprint data and it's wrong and we try to duplicate the building, then the duplicate building will be structurally unsound and collapse in on itself the moment that we make it. The second building is the one that you should be worried about falling down.

CHANCE: I hope you know that you're the one who's gonna be pushing the button on the calculator when the time comes. I'm going to be as far away as possible. I know how those calculators move things around. I have been transported plenty of times and every single time I've been an inch or two off the ground and ended up falling down. Every. Single. Time. I don't want to be within the blast radius if this building gets duplicated a couple inches above where it's supposed to be and comes smashing down to earth,

MIKEY: Oh, you don't have to worry about all of that. Someone else has already worried about all of that, and his name is Edgar. He figured out why the calculators always do that. He says that it's because they don't have enough data to reliably get the exact position of our target

location. And so we're traveling to an approximation. Ty always lands on his feet because they're using a different system inside of the Compound and they have the Compound mapped out perfectly. They use some sort of proprietary coordinate system and also some sort of measurement technology to keep everything perfectly up to date.

CHANCE: And... how would you know *anything* about how the Compound handles transports?

MIKEY: Uh, because... that's the way they would have to do it in order to get that result. Normal GPS data isn't precise enough because it isn't built for this kind of thing. Remember when our GPS told us to turn bleft?

CHANCE: I'm not used to you knowing so much stuff. It's not like you. What changed?

MIKEY: What can I say? I'm a new man after the Great Correction. And I've been listening to a podcast about what Oldbrush Valley was like in the decades before the government took it over. It's really interesting and entertaining, but I also can't recommend it to anyone. It starts off inauspicious enough, but six episodes into the twelve episode series, both of the hosts reveal that they believe that the Earth is hollow and that there's an entrance to the Hollow Earth inside of Tier Three, where a superior species of hollow-earthmen live and are supplying O.V.E.R. with futuristic technology. I guess they got the futuristic technology part right, but there's so much conspiracy bullshit that they'll never get anywhere near the truth.

CHANCE: I stopped listening to the Hollow Earth bit. This corner is collapsing. The blueprint listed is 90 degrees, and it's actually... 85.4.

MIKEY: That's why we're in here. Write that down in that little box on our checklist. We'll put it all into the Calculator when we get back outside into the daylight. My corner is warped, too. I think the building might be falling down the hill ever so slightly. I used to live in a place like that. Half the doors wouldn't close because the house had shifted since they were fitted. But this was all to be expected. That's what Edgar's modification to the calculator program is for. It accounts for all of this.

CHANCE: Makes sense. He did successfully put that basement under his cabin, so I guess he found something that works. Should we move on to the next room?

MIKEY: Yep, just one more room and we are done.

[Mikey whistles softly.]

MIKEY: So, um, how's Shadow doing?

CHANCE: Sorry, what?

MIKEY: Uh, R-Ryan, I mean, how's he holding up? Between being at Satellite Base and trying to work out my own problems I haven't really been able to have a real conversation with him since the Great Correction.

CHANCE: It hasn't been easy. I'm not that shaken up about it, which is ironic because I'm the one of us that died, but he's been taking it pretty hard. Sometimes he's jumpy for no reason, and that... that never happened before. And the recurring nightmares. A few nights ago, I caught him staying up to, quote, "get some work done," but I could tell it was cause he was afraid to go to sleep.

MIKEY: I know that move. I've been there before. All of the Mikes have actually, especially Michael. Hey, Chris, how cold are your feet?

CHANCE: Excuse me?

MIKEY: I've been having recurring nightmares since before I met Edgar, so we've been dealing with it together for a long time. Whenever he can tell that I'm having a bad nightmare, he gently wakes me up by pressing his freezing cold feet against me. He must have some sort of twink circulation issue for his feet to get that cold, but that's neither here nor there. And after he wakes me up, he wraps his arms around me and he tells me, "It's okay, Mikey. You're in my cabin with me. We're at O.V.E.R. I've got you. Nothing is going to hurt you," and we lay there for a little while... until I believe him.

CHANCE: Huh. And that actually works?

MIKEY: It hasn't stopped the nightmares, but I usually can get back to sleep for the rest of the night. And that's a hell of a lot better than I do without him.

CHANCE: Huh, I'll have to try something like that. Thanks, Mikey.

MIKEY: What can I say? I'm just full of useful knowledge today. So do you have your side of the wall measured? Because if so, then we can finish up and get the hell out of here and get started on the actual experiment.

CHANCE: Yep, all done. Let's get the fuck out of this building.

MIKEY: After you, scaredy-cat.

[Door opens.]

CHANCE: You know, something really is different about you today. You seem more... I don't know, self-assured than usual. Really, what-what happened?

MIKEY: I'm trying this new thing called acting. *[Chuckles.]* I'm-I'm terrified. Things have been rough and it feels like everything is spiraling out of my control. But someone has to have a level head out here. We can't both be afraid and have no idea what's going on, so I'm taking the reins. Michael taught me this method. He calls it *[Cowboy voice.]* sheepdoggin'. *[Normal voice.]* Was that a good impression?

CHANCE: Well, hey, it's a good look on you. Just don't turn into a cowboy, okay?

MIKEY *[cowboy voice]:* Wouldn't dream of it, pard.

CHANCE: *[Laughs.]* I'm serious. Let's get out of here.

[Scene transition.]

MIKEY: All right. I have punched in all of the numbers. Thank god, I don't have to actually do any math. Edgar's program does it all. I double-checked the input, you triple checked the input, and then I quadruple check the input. Are you ready to blow this building sky-fucking-high, Chris?

CHANCE: You're fuckin' with me, right?

MIKEY: Yes, I am! Are you ready for the most successful experiment that the Base has ever had, probably?

CHANCE: ...I'm going to go stand over there, like, way over there, all the way in the woods.

MIKEY: Suit yourself. There are bears in those woods, though, so it's not any safer. I will also be getting to a safe distance, but I have to kick things off with the calculator first.

CHANCE *[shouting from a distance]:* I can't hear what you're saying. I'm getting to safety. Good luck, Mikey.

MIKEY *[to himself]:* Well, keeping his distance does make my job easier, so go ahead, Chance. All right, I've got everything connected. Recording is on. Let's see if Base actually got this thing to work. Activating the experiment in three, two, one.

[Time travel noise followed by the iterated house creaking.]

MIKEY: Here we go.

[Iterated house settles.]

CHANCE *[shouting from a distance]:* Is it? Is it going to stay up?

MIKEY: I think so. [**CHANCE:** Huh.] It was pretty dicey for a second, but I think we did it, Chris! Ah, we did it!

CHANCE [*no longer distant*]: We really did. Would you look at that?

MIKEY: Ah, You snuck up on me.

CHANCE: We iterated an entire building. It's one thing to know that it's within the realm of possibility, but it is another thing to be standing in front of an entire building that wasn't there a second ago. That's-That's kind of awe-inspiring. Eat your heart out Flinchite Compound.

MIKEY: For real. The Compound uses a whole team in a server room for projects like these. Which is probably a more stable process, but we did it with just two guys in a field. When was the last time Base made this much progress, do you think?

CHANCE: I mean, we did figure out a lot while we were working for H. Edgar learned all that continuous correction stuff, and that's what eventually got us back into this timeline.

MIKEY [*sternly*]: I don't mean when you were working for H.

CHANCE: R-Right. Uh, besides that? I guess it would've been before I started working at a Base. Back when you guys first got started and you were doing all those experiments with the Calculators for the first time and figuring out all the jargon and how everything works. Corrections, conductivity, consolidation. You-You guys sure have a thing for words that start with C.

MIKEY: [*Sighs.*] Those were the days, weren't they? Base was new, our group was new, the sky was the limit. We were doing tiny little missions just to see what happened if we moved things around. We had hamsters that lived in my bedroom. Rest in peace, Chubbums.

CHANCE: We sure have come a long way.

MIKEY: Say it back.

CHANCE: Huh? Say what back?

MIKEY: Rest in peace, Chubbums.

CHANCE: Ah ha, okay. Rest in peace, Chubbums.

MIKEY: Thank you. [*Sighs.*] God, I can't believe we actually did it! I've been so used to failure recently. It's felt like for a long time every move we make is just to keep treading water, but this is all ours. This is why we do it. This is what all that trauma and bloodshed and corrected timelines is all about. I remember now. There's a reason that we started Base. We developed

this power. We stole the technology. Edgar figured out how to use it, and now we're out here in the field, standing next to a building that didn't exist five minutes ago. And we did it with a device that fits in my pocket. No one else can do that. Not that we know of. This is it! *[Claps twice.]* Look, my hands are shaking.

CHANCE: Don't get too shaken up yet, big guy. The experiment isn't over yet. We still need to put a basement under this thing.

MIKEY: Yep, the basement. The pièce de résistance.

CHANCE: So what do you think the over under is on the basement making the whole building fall in?

MIKEY: I'll admit that it's pretty likely. If we successfully put a basement under the building, that would mean that two good things happen to us in one day, which cosmically doesn't feel possible. So I'm riding high and I really want it to work. But I'm also realistic and am emotionally prepared for when the building comes tumbling down when we screw this up.

CHANCE: Guess there's only one way to find out. You want to just... hit the button and get this over with?

MIKEY: Yeah, I think so. Rip the Band-Aid off. No use waiting around. Are you gonna head back to the woods?

CHANCE: Nah. What's the worst that could happen? We iterated the building in the right place, so I know we've got the coordinates right. If we put the basement in wrong, it'll probably collapse, but it's not going to drop on our heads or anything. And we're far enough away that the building imploding won't do *much* except kick dust up in our faces. We'll be fine.

MIKEY: While I agree that we will be fine, there is no need to taunt the cosmos by uttering the phrase, "What's the worst that could happen?" You're setting us up for cosmic justice. You're lucky that I'm here because the only way to avoid that is to call attention to it.

CHANCE: I was just trying to match your optimism. Geez. Are we going to do this or not?

MIKEY: Yep, let's do it. Everything has already been measured and checked. The second phase of the experiment has been primed and ready. It's time to go. All this left to do is push the button.

CHANCE: So push the button, Mikey.

MIKEY: Yep, initializing the basement experiment in three, two, one.

[Time travel noise. Iterated house creaks and settles.]

MIKEY: Oh! Oh! It... looks like it's gonna hold.

CHANCE: Dare you to go inside.

MIKEY: No way. What if there's a ghost in there?

CHANCE: That... that isn't why you should be afraid to go in there.

MIKEY: Hear me out. What if I've already been in there in the future, and I died because the building collapsed on me, and then the time travel technology somehow sent my ghost backward in time, and I go in there and my ghost spooks me and accidentally knock over a beam and that's how the building collapsed in the first place and it's a perfect time loop.

CHANCE: You know, somehow that is a slightly more realistic thing to be afraid of.

MIKEY: Anyway, I'm not going in there regardless of ghost status. The mission instructions actually explicitly forbid us from going in, as tempting as it might be. I guess that Edgar thought that I'd go in there and get crushed and turn into a ghost. He's always so worried that I'll turn into a ghost. So, all that's left to do now is to give the outside a proper once over, make some observations, snap some pictures for the report, that kind of stuff. Do you want to start getting everything ready for the celebratory bonfire while I finish up here?

CHANCE: A bonfire? How big a fire are we talkin' here?

MIKEY: Bon-sized dummy! Big enough to celebrate! Ecstatically huge! We did something remarkable out here today, Chris. I want the size of the bonfire to represent the size of our success. It's not a utilitarian fire. We don't need it for warmth or light or cooking, or any of that, just make it big.

CHANCE: Can do. One *enormous* bonfire coming right up.

MIKEY: Excellent. You go off and do that. I'll get everything wrapped up over here and then I'll head back to the truck and start getting the s'mores ready.

CHANCE: Okat. I'll uh, I'll see you in a few then.

MIKEY: Yep. See you in a few.

MIKEY *[to himself]: [Sighs.]* They did it all right. Edgar finally has a lock on how these Calculators work and what to do with them. Ty's going to have a field day when he sees this. *[Sighs.]* And I am not looking forward to the conversation about what the Compound's going to do about Edgar. He's the reason that base figured any of this out. They would still be fumbling around in the dark if he hadn't made a breakthrough during the Hunter timeline. Oh well, what's

done is done. Unless it isn't because time travel. Say cheese, Oldbrush Valley general store. It's... literally perfect. I measured this wall. It's straighter than it was on the original. He's figured out how to fix structural issues on the fly. Very clever. The sort of fix that would come in handy if you needed to move your base every day, which means that Operose probably knows how to do this too. And finally, let's see here... The basement. Which looks exactly like Edgar's basement and O.V.E.R. at least from the outside. Is this Edgar's basement? I guess the only way to be sure would be to go in and Ty wants me out of here alive, so I'm not doing that. If I had to guess, the basement had to be copied from somewhere, either Edgar's basement or whatever basement he copied. And just a few more pictures and we are done snooping on Base. That ought to do it. Now all that's left is... Uh... How do I plug this stupid thing into the Calculator? I attach a dongle here and it goes into the device. Is-Is this a serial port? What year is it Ty? I'm not saying it has to be USB-C, but this is Stone Age tech here. And so I point the antenna that way to transmit the signal and punch in the coordinates. And here. And we are... transferring. Brutally slowly because of the serial port. Come on, come on, come on. We're in a hurry.

CHANCE: Whatcha doing?

MIKEY: AH! Uh, peeing!

CHANCE: No, you're not.

MIKEY: Yes, I am! Chance, you startled me.

CHANCE: It's Chris.

MIKEY: That's what I said. Chris, you startled me. I'm peeing.

CHANCE: You're up to something out here.

MIKEY: No, I'm peeing. I got all the measurements that Edgar asked us to take, and then I had to pee. So I'm peeing.

CHANCE: Stop saying that you're peeing.

MIKEY: You asked what I was doing, so I'm telling you, I'm peeing.

CHANCE: Just turn around, Mikey.

MIKEY: No, because if I turn around, you're going to see something that you shouldn't see, which is me peeing.

CHANCE: Turn. Around.

MIKEY: I'll pee on you.

CHANCE: I know that you're not peeing, idiot. Turn [*Cocks gun.*] around.

MIKEY: Ugh, we are not doing guns again. I thought that we decided that we were over that after everyone pointed guns at each other all the time in the Hunter Timeline. I thought it was just going to be time travel shenanigans and maybe knives from here on out.

CHANCE: Turn around and start talking.

MIKEY: Chris, you have a choice here. You do not have to wade into this. You can go back to camp and build the bonfire and we'll make s'mores and hang out and celebrate. It'll be a great night and then we can drive back in the morning, and everything can be normal.

CHANCE: Oh, you blew any chances of that when you wandered off to go do suspicious stuff behind the building. Turn around, please.

MIKEY: Okay, I'm turning around now. Is this really what you want, Chance? To catch me? You could have just believed me when I said I was taking a difficult piss behind the general store, and we wouldn't have had to turn this into some kind of standoff. But instead you're out here playing Nancy Drew, pointing a gun at me. Well, Nancy Drew doesn't have a gun, but maybe she should. Is this worth it to you?

CHANCE: What did you plug into the calculator?

MIKEY: It's nothing. It's something that Edgar gave to me.

CHANCE: Bullshit, you fucking traitor. Hand it over!

MIKEY: Chance, if you would just let me explain.

[Gunshot.]

CHANCE: Give it.

MIKEY: Fuck, dude, you could have hit me!

CHANCE: I learned that from you, you know. That night in Jam's cabin. You have to fire a warning shot so that your opponent knows that you're actually willing to shoot. Now, what is this thing that you plugged into the Calculator, whatever it is? I'm disconnecting it.

MIKEY: No, don't! It wasn't—

CHANCE: Is this a transmit—? Are you sending our data somewhere? The coordinates punched into the Calculator are not the coordinates from the project. You had us check those four times over. Where are these coordinates pointing?

MIKEY: I... have... the right to remain silent.

CHANCE: You absolutely do not.

MIKEY: What are you doing?

CHANCE: I have a PDF of the Base manual on my phone. I'm cross-referencing the coordinates you put in against the common coordinates spreadsheet.

MIKEY: You have the manual on your phone? Fucking nerd.

CHANCE: You're-You're sending data to the Flinchite Compound? Mikey, why? You said yourself it would be a disaster if Ty knew that we were developing this technology.

MIKEY: Do you want me to say it, or do you want me to let you get there?

CHANCE: Mikey?

MIKEY: *[Sighs.]* Yes?

CHANCE: No... no, it's not you. Something has felt off this *entire* time. You didn't remember practicing *Tiger Mountain Peasant Song* with me. You knew too much about how the Compound operates. All that turn bleft stuff on the way out here. What did you do with Mikey? Where is he?

MIKEY: Okay, in my defense, the turned bleft stuff was just the GPS acting weird. I don't know why it was doing that either.

CHANCE: Where is Mikey?

MIKEY: H-How the hell should I know? I just go where I am told to go. I didn't decide to replace Mikey or what should be done with him. I was put here to replace him, and so that's what I did. I'm not Mikey's keeper. I assume that he's either dead or he's somewhere in the Compound. Probably in the Compound. Ty wouldn't let a resource like him go to waste.

CHANCE: When did you replace him?

MIKEY: Why the hell would I tell you that?

CHANCE: Because I can shoot you.

MIKEY: [*Scoffs.*] Ty would do a lot worse than shoot me if I told you.

CHANCE: How could you do that— How could you not care about Base at all?

MIKEY: I do care about Base. In fact, the Compound cares about Base, which is why they need to use their resources and knowledge to steer the Base where it needs to go. There are so many competing interests out there, more than you or I know about, Chance. We need to keep Base from accidentally stepping into a trap.

CHANCE: *We?* God, the Compound really has their hooks in you. Disgusting.

MIKEY: I, Mike Walters and working with them to do what I think is right

CHANCE: And they decide what you think.

MIKEY: And what do you think, Chris? Do you think that the best course of action for base to take is to drive out here and perform secret experiments with unprecedented time travel technology without telling anyone? Where do you see that going?

CHANCE: That is for us to deal with, not you. I'm-I'm not entertaining this line of questioning. We're getting out of here. Get ready to transport.

MIKEY: Wha— Transport where?

CHANCE: Three, two, one.

MIKEY: Chris, if you think about it logically—

[Time travel noise.]

MICHAEL: And so I cut open the dang banjo, and there's a squirrel inside of it. [*Laughs.*] No wonder it's out of tune.

MW: [*laughs.*] That's a good'ne, Michael.

[Time travel noise.]

MICHAEL: What the hell?

[Mikey and Chance both grunt.]

MIKEY: Couldn't do a smoother landing? Oh! Uh, Michael, help me, C-Chris has got it in his head that—

CHANCE: This isn't Mikey, he's a fake, they replaced him at the Compound. I couldn't get him to tell me when they replaced him, but this isn't our Mikey. We were doing an experiment in the Valley and he was using this device to send all of our information to the Compound.

MIKEY: No, it's— I-I didn't—

MW: Is this true, Mikey?

MICHAEL: What do you mean, Emdubya? Course it's true. That ain't our Mikey, you didn't notice he was acting different?

MW: I mean, I had a bad feeling, but I didn't want to make assumptions.

MICHAEL: You gotta get better at sniffing 'em out, pilgrim. Chris, good job figuring them out like that. I appreciate your vigilance, but you got to go back and correct this little discovery of yours, pronto. You confronting the fake Mikey about this is putting a lot of my hard work in jeopardy. I've been watching this here varmint for a while, trying to put together a plan for when the time's right, and that time ain't now. So just go back and make sure this low-life thinks that he's still getting away with it, alright?

MIKEY: But... when did you—?

CHANCE: You knew he was a replacement this whole time?

MICHAEL: Yes, sir, and I wish I could have told you, but this is a mistake. You gotta go back and fix it, Chris.

CHANCE: I don't understand. We can't just let him send our data to the Compound.

MICHAEL: You ain't gotta understand. You just gotta do as I say. Issue a correction.

CHANCE: But why are we letting him—?

MICHAEL: Because a big, burly cowboy told you so.

CHANCE: Okay. I guess. I really thought that I was doing the right thing.

MICHAEL: It's okay, Chris. You were on the right track at the wrong time. Ya couldn't have known.

CHANCE: Alright, then, issuing a correction in three, two, one.

[Time travel noise.]

[Night ambience and fire crackling.]

CHANCE: So I went into the spare room to catch this “big scary rat” that Ryan told me about, and I get in there, and it's just this cute little mouse, all gray, but with one black ear. A couple inches long at most. That's what Ryan was so afraid of that he ran out of the room to come get me. And *[Chuckles.]* it's like, of course, it's scurrying all over the place. It's not like I'm gonna catch it. So I-I-I had to go to the store, I buy a tiny, no-kill mousetrap for it, and it takes about two days for it to finally take the bait. But once it does, I'm able to, you know, release it into the woods behind our cabin, and that's that. Until... it shows up again in the junk room one week later, same mouse, all gray except for one black ear. And that is how Ryan and I came to be housemates with Peter the mouse. Ryan refuses to go into the junk room.

MIKEY: That is so cute! A mouse is a perfect pet for the two of you. I can't really put my finger on why. You're both just... mousey, you know what I mean?

CHANCE: I do not know what you mean, but it's your turn for a story. S'more me.

MIKEY: One s'more coming right up. I think I want to tell a scary story this time. Yeah, a fictional one. Now that the sun is down and the fire is roaring. Once, long ago, there was this village beside a swamp. The villagers had a tale that they told each other about a monster who roamed the swamp and called it home. A huge monster with some of the features of a human, but a feral nature.

CHANCE: This had better not be *Shrek* again.

MIKEY: It isn't *Shrek*! But the monster was misunderstood. And green and played by Mike Myers in the movie...

CHANCE: *[Chuckles.]* God dammit, Mikey.

[Closing theme begins.]

CREDITS: This has been WOE.BEGONE. The voice of Chance was Taylor Michaels. Check him out in the [Department of Variance Somewhere Ohio](#). I totally remembered to record the credits and didn't have to stop the export halfway through to do this, and you can't prove that I didn't. Thanks for playing.

[Closing theme plays out.]

BLOOPER (MIKEY): Oh, you don't have to worry about all that, someone else has already worried *[Fumbles the words, becomes a “British” accent.]* about all that and that his name was Edgah, idnit?

BLOOPER (MIKEY): It's not a utilitarian fire. We don't need it for lor-lormth? We don't need it for lormth, Chris! Lormth! We did something remarkable out here today. Chris. I want the size of the bonfire to represent the size of our *[Laughing.]* lormth.

[Brief start of the closing theme.]

BLOOPER (CHANCE) *[jokingly aggressive voice.]:* Give me. Give me dat. Give me that.

BLOOPER (CHANCE): Are you upset that I housed your burger... Mikey?

BLOOPER (CHANCE): *[Sighs.]* Fine, Mikey, have it your way, buh duh buh buh buh– Fuck, that's McDonald's.

BLOOPER (CHANCE): There's no one *anywhere* near us. Because this *isn't* a road. *[Sighs.]* *[Struggles with saying "this experiment."]* This experiment– this experiment, this ex-per-i-ment, this experiment, this experiment, this experiment. *[Sighs.]* This ex– this asperiment this ass-periment, *[Laughing.]* this asparagus had better be worth all this hassle.

[Brief start of the closing theme.]

[Getting Wise plays.]

*There is plenty to consume
a toxic pond with floral blooms
but long as I can see the sun
I can get along with anyone*

*my temper makes scary friend
I'd rather get the best of him
but if I'm waiting for him to turn his back
I'm wasting time that I don't have*

*an insect, dismembered
appendage by appendage
how long did you think
I would make it
stumbling around on no legs?*

*toss and turn about it
or just go without it
but if you want solace
I wouldn't think about it*

*I think that I'm getting wise
it feels like I'm gonna die
but now I'm telling all the kids
fill me in, I don't get it*

*never was a hypocrite
the thought of lying makes me sick
but now I'm eating everything I've said
please dig in, it's delicious*

*I only give concessions to the weak-
er parts of me
that refuse to speak, the meek
will inherit the low expectations, I'm sure
of a casually pathetic future*

*toss and turn about it
or just go without it
but if you want solace
I wouldn't think about it
and for all your worry
you won't be rewarded
so if you want solace
just don't think about it.*