

## EPISODE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY TWO - HOSTAGE/CORPSE

*Original transcript edited by Theo and reviewed by Jenah*

*[BEGIN Episode 162.]*

**INTRO:** Hey, guys, quick plugs. Welcome to the Season 14 mid-season finale. Somehow, there are already six episodes in Season 14, so I'm taking a week off; there will be an intermission next week. But I will still be streaming over at [twitch.tv/woebegonepod](https://twitch.tv/woebegonepod), where every week I write that week's episode soundtrack, and then we hang out and play a video game. The past two weeks, we've been playing the *Logical Journey of the Zoombinies*, a children's game that gets very hard very quickly. So if you'd like to come put me in frog jail, that is [twitch.tv/woebegonepod](https://twitch.tv/woebegonepod). And if you would like to support the show, you can do so on Patreon at [patreon.com/woe\\_begone](https://patreon.com/woe_begone), where you can get early access to ad-free episodes, instrumentals, soundtracks, Q&As, director's commentaries, Movies with Michael, postcards, and more. Five-dollar-and-up patrons get Bandcamp download codes for all of my albums, including all future albums. That'd be a weird thing to say if I wasn't teasing something. That's [patreon.com/woe\\_begone](https://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.]***

*[Opening theme plays.]*

*[We hear the sounds of highway driving.]*

**CHANCE:** Hey, Michael? Where are we goin'?

**MICHAEL:** That's for me to know and for you to find out, pard. Just hang tight.

**CHANCE:** Well, I thought I knew where we were goin', but you need to get over if we're gonna take that exit.

**MICHAEL:** What dang exit could you possibly mean, pard?

**CHANCE:** That one, right there! We need to get in the left lane.

**MICHAEL:** You mean the bleft lane, pard?

**CHANCE:** If "bleft" just means "left," then yes.

**MICHAEL:** Nah, you're talkin' 'bout the bleft lane. That's completely different. "Bleft" and "left" are not the same. You're new to all of this, you'll figure it out eventually.

**CHANCE:** Well, we just blew past the dang exit, so I reckon we ain't headin' that way after all.

**MICHAEL:** And how'd you wind up so sure you knew where we was goin'?

**CHANCE:** That's the exit for Oldbrush Valley Energy and Resources. I figured that's where we was goin'. You're claimin' to be a time traveler, and we just so happen to wind up right beside this big, shadowy government agency? I put two and two together.

**MICHAEL:** And how the hell do you know about O.V.E.R.?

**CHANCE:** It sounded familiar, so I looked it up. Turns out, I heard of it before when that buildin' blew up.

**MICHAEL:** You still have your *phone* with you?

**CHANCE:** Why wouldn't I have my phone?

**MICHAEL:** No, no, no. You need to ditch that shit *pronto*, pilgrim.

**CHANCE:** Michael, I'm not gonna get rid o' my phone.

**MICHAEL:** That weren't a suggestion, Chance. These are extenuating circumstances. You saw! I blinked out o' goddamn existence! I dang ol' blunk! So you oughta pipe down, and listen to the expert here. Now toss the phone out the dang winder.

**CHANCE:** I ain't tossin' my phone out the winder!

**MICHAEL:** Toss it out the winder, Chance!

**CHANCE:** You're right. These are extenuatin' circumstances, which is why I need to have my phone *on* me. What if somethin' happens, and we get stuck and need help? Or if someone starts lookin' for me? I don't want people thinkin' I've gone missin'.

**MICHAEL:** You have gone missin', Chance. It's about time you understood that. We do not exist anymore. It's important that no one know I exist. It would help if people forgot you existed, too. You were right about one thing, though. I really was plannin' on headin' over to O.V.E.R., and seein' if I could get a read on the temperature there. But that was before I blunk. Plans changed.

**CHANCE:** You can just... go inside of O.V.E.R?

**MICHAEL:** I didn't say that.

**CHANCE:** I'll make you a deal. I'll toss my phone out the window if you open up that mysterious box o' yours and show me what's inside.

**MICHAEL:** No deal, pard. Those ain't equivalent. It's dangerous to show ya. I got a plan, and it require not openin' that dang box till we get where we're goin'. Which means that you can't see it till the time's right.

**CHANCE:** Too bad. That's my offer. I toss my phone if you open the box.

**MICHAEL:** *[Groans.]* I can't do that, Chance! *[Pause.]* Can you at least turn your phone off? I'm worried about folks trackin' us with the signal.

**CHANCE:** Who's "folks"? The folks at O.V.E.R.? Or is there someone else?

**MICHAEL:** Could be O.V.E.R., could be any number of folks. I would be a hot commodity if people found out about me, Chance. Plenty of folks would like to know my location, and they ain't plannin' a friendly visit. Which is why we can't take the risk of havin' cellphones on us. So, I'm askin' ya again, can ya *please* turn it off?

**CHANCE:** *[Sighs.]* Fine. If it'll make you feel better, I'll turn my phone off. But I'm not handin' it over! It stays with me.

**MICHAEL:** I'd rather ya hand it over, but... I guess I'll begrudgingly oblige.

**CHANCE:** I reckon I deserve more respect from you, Michael. I'm doin' everythin' you ask, even though you have some harebrained scheme that you won't even let me in on. I'm lettin' you drive my truck, and I got you out of the Outpost before you could get tarred and feathered. All because you look like my friend Tex.

**MICHAEL:** Oh, so Tex is your "friend" now, huh. I thought you thought he was a snake oil salesman.

**CHANCE:** Look, if you ain't willin' to make friends with unsavory types, you ain't gonna have many friends in Bluster's Grove.

**MICHAEL:** For what it's worth, I am treatin' you with respect, and I'm doin' you a hell of a favor, pard. I'm dealin' with stuff you can't even fathom. I'm gonna have to put in a lotta legwork in order to get this timeline back in order. Everything that's happening—Tex and Bluster dyin', the Blink—it's all symptoms of a much larger problem. And the longer the symptoms go on, the more advanced the disease gets. If it goes on too long, there ain't nothin' that can treat it. I'm the antibody. And you're, uh... I reckon you're like the— the medicine guy from *Osmosis Jones* or somethin'.

**CHANCE:** Oh, yeah. Let's talk about "The Blink," while we're at it. What the fuck was that? I know what I saw. You disappeared, there was a buildin' that appeared on that vacant lot, and I was in there! And I... or he was talking to you? Or MDawg? Do I have that right, Time Traveler? That was us?

**MICHAEL:** Put it outta your mind, pard. Whatever happened durin' the Blink didn't happen.

**CHANCE:** Well, it did happen. I saw it; I remember it. Don't you be gaslightin' me, Michael, it did happen!

**MICHAEL:** I'll gaslight, I'll gatekeep, and you better believe I'll girlboss if it means it gets us closer to my goals. You're still learnin' the ropes. Ya need to know that not everything you see or remember actually happened, especially nothin' you saw in the middle o' somethin' like that. I would advise you not to treat it as reality. As long as I'm here, unblunked, it never happened. Got it?

**CHANCE:** What, are you sayin' it was a different... timeline? Did we travel through time? Or, d-did they travel to here?

**MICHAEL:** It ain't as simple as forwards and backwards through time. You didn't travel nowhere. Somethin' happened to me earlier in time, and it made our current situation unstable. And the longer we go without fixin' the root cause, the more unstable it's gonna be until I ain't around anymore.

**CHANCE:** So, what does it mean for me if we don't "fix this" before you ain't around anymore?

**MICHAEL:** I'm still tryin' to figure out who you are, but... I reckon nothin' good. Hell, right now, I'm drivin' your truck, so we better hope we're a little stable. If I blink out, you're only gonna have a second to grab the wheel.

**CHANCE:** What!? That's possible!? Why the hell aren't I drivin'!

**MICHAEL:** Cause you don't know where we're goin', dumbass!

**CHANCE:** And you can't tell me, even though we're gonna wind up there eventually?

**MICHAEL:** I cain't, cause I don't know where we're goin', either, pard. I know it keeps gettin' more complicated, and I'm sorry 'bout that. I'm tryin' my hardest to get us where we're goin', but I'm also tryin' hard not to know where I'm takin' us. I can't know where we're goin' if we're gonna get there safe and sound.

**CHANCE:** Somehow, I still can't shake the feelin' that I'm gettin' jerked around here.

**MICHAEL:** I ain't jerkin' ya around, I'm tryin' to explain ya: it's a big, complicated subject. It's like the Law o' Gravity. Gravity's a big concept that us humans have thought a lot about. It started out easy: everything you drop heads towards the ground at the same speed. But decades passed, and more people thought about it, and, all of a sudden, it weren't that simple. Suddenly,

we're talkin' about particles and bendin' spacetime and quantum this-that-whatever. You can't explain it in an afternoon to some feller from Bluster's Grove who's lettin' you drive his truck.

**CHANCE:** Michael—

**MICHAEL:** I know, that ain't fair. I know you're smart. But that's how time travel is. It's somethin' ya have to watch and learn. It takes time.

**CHANCE:** Michael?

**MICHAEL:** And time travel ain't been around that long from a linear perspective, but people been thinkin' about time travel for decades that ain't existed yet, and some of that information worms its way back here to us. You can glance at the concept, but you can't ever see the whole thing at once. So we got some ways that we learned to act that we think produces results. Like me not knowin' where we're goin'. It's sorta superstition. [**CHANCE:** Michael.] Now, if'n you want, I could go into—

**CHANCE:** Michael! Shut up for a second! There's someone behind us.

**MICHAEL:** They can go around like everyone else. I'm followin' the dang speed limit today. I'm a wanted man. I ain't takin' chances by actually breakin' the law. ...Plus, this truck don't got no get-up-and-go.

**CHANCE:** No, you idiot. I think we're bein' followed. They're actin' strange.

**MICHAEL:** Oh, I get it. Your first time on a time travel mission. You're paranoid. We're on the highway, pard. It's a straight shot the next two hours. Everyone's goin' the same way.

**CHANCE:** And everyone else is drivin' around us, cause we're goin' 60 on the highway. They've been behind us for 15 minutes now. They keep slowin' down so that they're just far enough away that I can't make out their face.

**MICHAEL:** You looked up O.V.E.R. on your dang phone. You musta read some stories about 'em, and then heard me jaw on and on about time travel. Now you think there's spies after us.

**CHANCE:** You're the one that said that you were afraid of people tracking' us!

**MICHAEL:** Right. And so I ain't afraid o' people who ain't trackin' us, like them folks back there.

**CHANCE:** And how do you know?

**MICHAEL:** It's called cowboy's intuition.

*[Chance unlocks his phone.]*

**MICHAEL:** Hey! I thought I told you to turn that off!

**CHANCE:** I'm on airplane mode! Slow down. If I get closer, I can use the camera to zoom in on their face.

**MICHAEL:** What good's that gonna do, pard? You ain't about to make a positive identification of their face.

**CHANCE:** Michael, that's *me!* That's who I saw in the house! That's the copy o' me.

**MICHAEL** *[dismissive]:* That isn't you, you dingus. Look, we've had a real long couple days, and your adrenaline's been all over the place. You're seein' shit that ain't there.

**CHANCE:** Bullshit. I know what I look like. That's *me*. We ain't too terribly far from where you blinked and I saw him. I'm positive. Here. I'll take a picture. *[Pause.]* See? That is me.

**MICHAEL:** That ain't you. You're seein' whatever it is you wanna see in a blurry picture. Could be Big Foot.

**CHANCE:** I thought you said he wouldn't be around in the same timeline as you. So why is he here? Why is he lookin' for me?

**MICHAEL:** No one is lookin' for ya, Chance.

**CHANCE:** Then why are we takin' an exit all of a sudden?

**MICHAEL:** I was already plannin' on takin' this exit.

**CHANCE:** He's takin' the exit, too. We should pull over, and see if he pulls over, too. He knows somethin'. Maybe he knows somethin' about the "stability of the timeline," or whatever it is you were talkin' about. Look, he's tryin' to get our attention, just pull over.

**MICHAEL:** I sure as hell ain't gonna pull over, pilgrim.

**CHANCE:** Michael, this is my truck, and that's me in there. Pull over!

**MICHAEL:** Chance, if you put your hand any closer to the steering wheel, it's gonna be the last thing you ever do.

*[We hear Chance roll down the window.]*

**MICHAEL:** What are you—?

**CHANCE** *[yelling]*: Hey! Hey, it's me! I'm in here! Mi—!

**MICHAEL**: You get your ass back in the car! And quit shoutin' about me. What the hell do you think you're doin'? You're gettin' us in a heap of trouble. I gotta lose this iteration 'fore you get us killed. Or worse.

**CHANCE**: Iteration? Of me. So he *is* me.

**MICHAEL**: Yeah, go ahead and pat yourself on the back for that. You don't even know the mistake you just made. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

**CHANCE**: Go figure that I'm interested in the *actual copy* of myself that is followin' us around.

**MICHAEL**: If ya knew what was good for ya, you'd be helpin' me lose him. Now, you got any nails or anything? Somethin' we can throw behind us to pop his tires.

**CHANCE**: Are there evil clones of us, or somethin'? Is that's what goin' on?

**MICHAEL**: It ain't clones. I don't know nothin' about 'im. And he don't know nothin' about me, and that's what's important. It's a propagation risk. Him gettin' close enough to see me could get me killed.

**CHANCE**: Well, what if I decide that I trust myself more than I trust you?

**MICHAEL**: You can trust me, or you can die. Them's the breaks, pard. I don't wanna get trigger happy. I... promised I wouldn't. I promised a bunch o' good folks I left those days behind me. But I need to get the hell out of here, and nothin' is gonna stop me. Not even you. We need to get where no one can find us. We'll find us somewhere out in the middle of the woods, and set up camp for the night. Maybe the road'll be less dangerous tomorrow.

**CHANCE**: You're describin' a hostage, Michael. I'm a hostage.

**MICHAEL**: A hostage or a corpse. Take your pick. *[Takes a breath.]* I think we lost him. He didn't see which way that we turned. So from here it's just out into the woods until we're deep enough no one'll find us.

**CHANCE**: Whatever you say.

**MICHAEL**: That's damn right. Whatever I say.

*[Scene transition.]*

*[We hear the tepid crackle of a small flame and the ambient sounds of night.]*

**CHANCE:** Michael? Hey... Michael? *[Michael stirs slightly.]* Michael.

**MICHAEL** *[murmuring]:* Yeah, just gimme five more minutes, Edgar...

**CHANCE:** Huh?

**MICHAEL:** Y- I'm awake! I'm awake.

**CHANCE:** *[Brief chuckle.]* I don't think you were.

**MICHAEL:** I just had my eyes closed for—I was plannin'.

**CHANCE:** Who's Edgar?

**MICHAEL:** W-Where did you hear about Edgar?

**CHANCE:** In your sleep just now.

**MICHAEL:** Edgar is none o' your business, pard.

**CHANCE:** Well, you fell asleep, Mr. Night Watchman. It's time to trade shifts.

**MICHAEL:** I'm sorry, Chance. I fell asleep without even realizin' it. It's been a hell of a week. But you can— you can head on back to bed, it's okay. I'm awake now. I'll put some coffee on the fire.

**CHANCE:** You were asleep standin' up, Michael. I don't think coffee's gonna be enough to keep you awake. You aren't gonna be able to protect us until ya get some rest.

**MICHAEL** *[drowsy]:* Maybe it's cause of the dream I just had, but... I'm sorry I drug us all the way out here, pard. We was gettin' followed, and I got scared, and I didn't know what else to do.

**CHANCE:** It's okay, Michael. I was mad, but... I'm less cranky now that I've got some sleep. And you'll feel better if you get some sleep, too. Now, go on in the tent, and I'll wake ya up in the mornin'. Okay?

**MICHAEL:** Are you gonna be okay out here in the woods on your lonesome?

**CHANCE:** Yeah, no problem. I used to be a game warden. I've been alone at night in the woods tons o' times. It'll be a breeze.

**MICHAEL:** Right. I keep forgettin' 'bout that. Alright, well, you holler if you need anything at all. And I mean anything. And come wake me up at civil dawn. That's when it's startin' to get light out, but the sun ain't up yet. And you can get yourself a couple more hours o' sleep.

**CHANCE:** I can already tell that I'm not gonna need anythin', but thank you for the offer.

**MICHAEL:** Alright. Stay safe out here. Goodnight, Chance.

*[We hear Michael lumber off.]*

**CHANCE:** *[Sighs.]* I don't think I'm ever gonna understand that man. *[Michael impression.]* "Oh, I'll just brew some coffee on the fire." *[Stops impression.]* What fire, Michael? These little bitty embers? You're the one that said to keep the fire down to a minimum so no one spots us out here. I swear... *[Pauses, then sighs.]* It's quiet out.

*[We hear Michael begin to snore.]*

**CHANCE:** ...And off he goes. Perfect. Let's see if I get any reception out here. *[Unlocks phone.]* Yup. Three new messages. Looks like someone missed me after being gone for two days. Let's see here... *[Typing.]* "Y'all don't worry about me. I'm on one of my classic Chance adventures. Don't know where I am, but I'll be back soon, I reckon. Can't wait to tell the story. Heart emoji." Now let's see if I can figure out what the deal is with that dang horse. If I can get enough bars... Maybe if I stand over here? ...There we go.

**BLUSTERTOK 1:** Is Bluster a Hollowed Earth horse? TikTok detectives have discovered that the gigantic horse has a connection to Oldbrush Valley. Here's how Bluster could have built the pyramids.

**BLUSTERTOK 2:** With grain analysis of the wood in Bluster's house. What we can learn from locally sourced building supplies. As you can see, the wood is wood.

**BLUSTERTOK 3:** Y'all varmints better watch your backs for Bluster the Gigantic Horse. The faster gunslinger in the whole dang Wild West.

**CHANCE:** He ain't shootin' that shotgun. Why are you so important, Bluster? What do you have to do with time travel?

**BLUSTERTOK 4:** We tracked down the horse dentist that made Blusteer's gold tooth. Here's what he learned about his last known whereabouts.

*[We hear the time travel noise which cuts off abruptly, then a thump.]*

**CHANCE** *[calling out quietly]*: Hello...? Is someone there? Show yourself. We have a gun. Come out, and I won't shoot.

*[We hear some branches crunch as someone approaches.]*

**CHANCE:** Shit, shit. Don't come any closer. Or come out with your hands up. No sudden movements.

*[We hear some more branches crunch.]*

"**CHRIS**": Shh! Hey, it's me. Come over here, away from him.

**CHANCE:** You're... the one that was followin' us.

"**CHRIS**": Now! Over here! We don't have time to waste, and *be quiet*. Don't wake him up.

**CHANCE:** You followed us out here?

"**CHRIS**": Thank god I was able to find you. He didn't make it easy. You are not safe driving around with that wannabe cowboy, Chance. Michael might be the single most dangerous man on the planet. He's definitely the most dangerous man to you and me at this very moment.

**CHANCE:** Michael is? Who is he? All I know is that he's related to Tex down in Bluster's Grove. He's a copy, or somethin'? He says he's a time traveler. Is he tellin' the truth?

"**CHRIS**": Michael is a lot of things, but that isn't what's important right now. Has he said where he's going?

**CHANCE:** He says that not even he knows where he's goin'.

"**CHRIS**": Does he have something with him? Some sort of device? Maybe some technology that you don't recognize?

**CHANCE:** He's got a mysterious metal box that he won't open until we get to where we're goin', wherever the hell that is. We dug it outta the ground in Oldbrush Valley the night I saw you.

"**CHRIS**": You need to get that box and its contents away from him. This is your top priority now. Get the box, and make sure he doesn't see you take it. Once you have it, you need to get as far away from him as possible before he realizes that it's missing.

**CHANCE:** What's in the box? Is it... time travel? Is that how you're here? Is that how you're a copy of me?

"**CHRIS**": If we do our jobs correctly, you're gonna go back to having no idea about any of this.

**CHANCE:** Are you talkin' 'bout timelines? We're gonna alter the timeline like what he's tryin' to do?

**"CHRIS":** Get the box, and get the hell out of here as soon as you can, Chance. Once you do that, I'll take care of the rest.

**CHANCE:** Not that I don't trust you, but a lot of folks have been givin' me a lot o' orders recently.

**"CHRIS":** I'm "you from the future," okay? Michael is using you for his own goals, and I'm telling you what our goal is. I would never hurt you, because anything that would hurt you would hurt me. Which is why it's important that you do exactly what I say.

**CHANCE:** If you're really me—

**CHANCE AND "CHRIS" [singing in tandem]:** Wanderers this morning came by / Where did they go, graceful in the morning light? / To banner fair, to follow you softly / In the cold mountain air

**"CHRIS":** Yes, I'm you. I knew that you were gonna do that; you need to trust me.

**CHANCE:** Fine. I'll do it.

**"CHRIS":** State you intentions clearly and in a self-contained sentence.

**CHANCE:** Why would I do that?

**"CHRIS":** Because we think that intentionality has an effect on time travel outcomes, just say it. Say you are going to steal the box and abandon Michael.

**CHANCE:** I am going to steal the box and abandon Michael.

**"CHRIS":** That's exactly what I wanted to hear. I'll see you soon.

**CHANCE:** Once I have the box, where do I go to drop—

*["Chris" disappears, and we hear the time travel noise.]*

**CHANCE:** What have I got myself into?

*[We hear Chance unlock his phone.]*

**CHANCE:** *[Typing.]* "I'm in the middle of somethin' dangerous. If I do not message again in the next 24 hours, come lookin' for me. Last known location: Oldbrush Valley." Send. *[Sighs.]* This has better work.

*[Scene transition.]*

*[It's morning. We hear Chance and Michael taking down camp.]*

**MICHAEL:** Mornin', Chance. 'Bout time you got up. Hope you were able to get a little more shut eye. I saved some squirrel for ya if'n ya want it. It's hangin' over by the fire. I let ya sleep in for a little bit as thanks for takin' over my night shift. But we need to get goin' soon if we're gonna make good time today, I reckon.

**CHANCE:** *Squirrel?* You killed a squirrel.

**MICHAEL:** Yup. Went on a little hunt this mornin' after the sun came up. I ain't got no salt or pepper or nothin', so it's a little bland and gamey. But it's better than nothin', and I don't wanna make no pit stops till we're far away from here.

**CHANCE:** I... I don't think I want any squirrel meat. But thank you, I guess.

**MICHAEL:** More squirrel for Michael, then. You gonna be ready to head out soon?

**CHANCE:** Just about. Are we gonna be able to stop in civilization today? I'm dirty, and I would like to change clothes and brush my teeth.

**MICHAEL:** I'm feelin' about the same way, pard. We'll figure somethin' out. Surely somewhere safe to stop today. Or maybe we can make it all the way to where we're goin'. Who knows. But first things first, I need to head off into the woods a moment, and conduct some business, if'n you catch my drift. You wanna put the fire out, and start packin' out the tent? I'll be back in a couple minutes.

**CHANCE:** Can do. Take your time.

*[We hear Michael lumber off. Chance goes back into the tent, humming "Tiger Mountain Peasant Song" nonchalantly.]*

**CHANCE:** Well, shit! He left the box. Keep goin', Michael. Go as far into the woods as you need. *[Pause.]* What the hell is in this dang thing?

*[Chance shakes the box.]*

**CHANCE:** Is Michael actually gonna get me killed? How am I gonna get this away from him?

*[We hear Michael approach the tent again.]*

**MICHAEL:** Gotcha! I knew you was tryin' to steal my box, you lowly varmint!

**CHANCE:** I didn't mean to! You told me to clear out the tent, and it was in the tent.

**MICHAEL:** Alright, then, Chance. Hand it over.

**CHANCE:** Uh– I...

**MICHAEL:** Come on, now.

**CHANCE:** No. ...No, I'm takin' the box, Michael.

**MICHAEL:** Over my dead body; come here, you ingrate!

*[A scuffle ensues.]*

**CHANCE:** Michael!

**MICHAEL:** Give me the goddamn box!

**CHANCE:** You cur!

**MICHAEL:** You– can't call me a cur, *you're* cur.

**CHANCE:** I'm taking this box, Michael!

**MICHAEL:** Give me that. I thought we had an understandin'. Are you tryin' to get both of us killed, dipshit? I need to get this here box to where we're goin', or things are gonna be worse than you could ever imagine!

**CHANCE:** No. I'm dead if I don't take the box from you.

**MICHAEL:** Something's goin' on here. I saw human sign in the forest this morning! Why were you out there, pard? And what are you goin' on about now? Did you talk to someone? Who!? When!? Cause someone has clearly put somethin' in your head.

**CHANCE:** Michael, I'm takin' that box with me.

**MICHAEL** *[getting more emotional]:* If'n you try to take that box out of this here tent, one of us isn't makin' it out alive, and I got both the guns. It's just... I don't know who you are, what with the connectivity. Uh, I don't know... I-I don't know what would happen. ...Chance, please. ...Don't make me kill you. Please.

**CHANCE:** You're... shakin'...

**MICHAEL:** Why'd you have to go and mess everything up? *[Frustrated sigh.]* Chris...!

**CHANCE:** Who the hell is Chris!?

**MICHAEL:** I-I mean— Please, Chance. Don't make—

*[Michael blinks out of existence.]*

**CHANCE:** Fuck, not agai— Michael? ...Are you gone? Did you disappear *again*? ...Hello? Hello out there? ...Well. *[Picks up the box.]* Guess I better get the hell out o' here while I can.

*[We hear him walk to the truck, start it, and drive off.]*

**CHANCE:** I hope he was right about this...

*[The truck sounds fade.]*

*[Michael blinks back in.]*

**MICHAEL:** –is, don't make me— Uh—! *Fuck.* Fuck! Uh— Chr— Chance. Uh—! F— Fuck, the box! Uh— Fuck, the truck's gone! Ugh! *[Takes a breath.]* ...Where the hell does he think he's goin'? *[Pause.]* ...Where am I gonna go?

*[Closing theme starts playing.]*

**CREDITS:** This has been WOE.BEGONE. The voice of Chance was Taylor Michaels. Check him out as David in *The Grotto*, which recently joined The Rusty Quill Network, as well as Ares in the mythological romance podcast *Forged Bonds*, releasing later this year. *Forged Bonds* has an ongoing Indiegogo campaign; I will link to it in the description. Thanks for playing.

*[Closing theme plays out.]*

*[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]*

**BLOOPER (DYLAN):** I accidentally left one of Chance's lines in the end where Michael's alone, and this is what it sounded like.

*[Michael blink backs in.]*

**BLOOPER (MICHAEL):** –is, don't make me— Uh—! *Fuck.* Fuck! Uh—

**BLOOPER (CHANCE):** *Squirrel?*

**BLOOPER (MICHAEL):** Chr— Chance. Uh—! F—

*[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]*

**BLOOPER (MICHAEL):** I will gaslight, gatekeep, and girlboss, pard. Cause I'm a boss lady business bitch.

*[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]*

**BLOOPER (CHANCE):** Look, if you ain't willin' to make friends with unsavory types, you ain't gonna have many friends in Bulus– *[Tongue twisted.]* Bluster's Grove.

*[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]*

**BLOOPER (CHANCE):** *[Singing.]* Fo-o-llow you soft– *[Brief laugh. Breaks character.]* To follow you softly in the cold mountain air– Fuck, that's your verse, Dylan! Don't–! Don't make me sing this one, I don't know it!

*[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]*

**BLOOPER (CHANCE):** *Squirrel...* is a word that no longer has any meaning in my brain. Why do we call it that? That's kinda weird. Squirrel? Squ– Sq– Squirrel? S– *[Chuckles.]*

*[Brief start-stop of the closing theme.]*

**BLOOPER (CHANCE):** Keep goin', Michael. Go as far into the woods as you need. *[Faint ambulance siren.]* *[Breaks character.]* Ah, fuck you... ambulance... I mean, I'm sure you're doing work, but also fuck you, I'm recording... *[Ambulance siren continues for a moment.]* There it goes. Okay.

*[END Episode 162.]*