

## EPISODE ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY EIGHT - NOSTINKY

*Original transcript edited by Noveltea and Theo*

*[BEGIN Episode 198.]*

**INTRO:** Hey, guys, welcome to the Season 17 mid-season finale. There will be an intermission next week. In the meantime, quick plugs. I'm still streaming on Twitch over at [twitch.tv/woebegonepod](https://www.twitch.tv/woebegonepod), where every Sunday I write that week's episode soundtrack, and then we hang out and play a video game. This past Sunday was the juggling stream to celebrate 1,000 followers. It was a ton of fun; I am very sore. My neck, my back, my... other areas, but it was an incredible experience to juggle for all of you, and we should do it again sometime. I wrote a seven-song album to juggle to for the stream. If you would like that, you can get it on my Bandcamp at [woebegonepod.bandcamp.com](https://www.bandcamp.com/woebegonepod) for free.

And if you'd like to support the show, you can do so on Patreon over at [patreon.com/woe\\_begone](https://www.patreon.com/woe_begone), where you'll get early access to ad-free episodes, instrumentals, soundtrack albums, Q&As, director's commentaries, Movies with Michael, postcards, corkboards, and morkboards. There has been a ton of long-form content on the Patreon recently. I sat down with Ben Rowe to do a commentary on *The Felix Chronicles* for ten-dollar-and-up patrons, I just did the March Q&A for two-dollar-and-up patrons, and I did the behind-the-scenes for Episode 192, both the writing and the production, which is available to all patrons. You can also check out a promotional juggling video I did for the juggling stream, which is public so anyone can see it over on Patreon. That's [patreon.com/woe\\_begone](https://www.patreon.com/woe_begone).

Special thanks to my ten newest patrons: [REDACTED] for supporting the show. Enjoy.

***[Warning: This episode contains depictions of amputation, psychedelic experiences, blood, and violence. It's not as wacky as it sounds, but listener discretion is advised.]***

*[We hear the sounds of Bluster cantering.]*

**TEX:** Alright, TXDawg. We're almost there. Now, once we get 'im into the warehouse, we're gonna need to get him prepped fast. He's already bled too much for my likin'. And the bumpy ride here ain't been good for him, neither.

**TXTXDAWG:** We're taking Stinky to the warehouse? Do you think that that's a (**TXDAWG:** spiritually advisable/**TEX:** spiritually advisable) idea?

**TEX:** It ain't a good idea if that's whatcha mean, but it's the only idea I got. We cain't just leave him at the Outpost, and we cain't bring 'im home. What do you suggest we do, pard?

**TXTXDAWG:** I didn't suggest that I had a solution, pilgrim. What (**TXDAWG:** about/**TEX:** 'bout) my Outlaw's house?

**TEX:** Outlaw don't got no place to do it. Plus he's gonna have work of his own to do. This is the only place we got. I'll deal with the consequences later.

**TXDXDAWG:** Whatever you say, Tex. They (**TXDAWG:** will be your/**TEX:** will be your) consequences, though. *[We hear Bluster halt and snort.]* They ain't mine.

**TEX:** That's what I said, pilgrim. We're here. *[Dismounts.]* Bluster, let's get 'im in there and sat down on that table in there.

*[We hear the warehouse door start opening. Bluster walks inside.]*

**TEX:** Yep, right through there. You're doin' good, Bluster.

*[Sound reverberates in the warehouse.]*

**TEX:** Alright now. Set 'im down. Gentle-like.

*[Bluster gingerly sets him on the table. Stinky grunts.]*

**TEX:** Great job, Bluster. *[Warehouse door finishes opening. Tex approaches the table.]* How are you holdin' up, Stinky?

**STINKY:** *[Takes a breath.]* D— Where are— Where are we? What are you gonna do? Why— Why aren't we in the Outpost? *[Distressed breathing.]*

**TEX:** We're gonna getcha all patched up, pard. Sorry we couldn't stay at the Outpost. Them Michaels still want your head.

**STINKY:** Head...? No— No. No—! That poster said to turn me in to Sheriff Tex. Aren't you Sheriff Tex? The poster spelled "Sheriff" wrong, by the way...

**TEX:** Them folks want ya dead, pard. No "dead or alive" about it. Now you got a mess of 'em killed back at the Outpost, they want your head on a plate. I couldn't even pay 'em a reward to get 'em to stop at this point. They ain't gonna rest 'til you're worm food. I'll try and talk 'em down, but they're fired up right now.

**TXDXDAWG:** Stinky, the Numbered Michaels aren't going to stop until you are a ghost. And if you're a ghost, only me and MDawg will still talk to you. The other iterations don't even try to talk to ghosts, despite (**TXDAWG:** how many they/**TEX:** how many they) know. It's a might rude of 'em.

**TEX:** And them folks don't know 'bout this place. T-The Michaels, I mean. Not the ghosts. This warehouse is for highly classified operations only. I trust that you'll keep my secret for me,

Stinky. If not, I'll have no choice but to grab a Calculator off o' Outlaw, and you can learn for yourself who can and cain't talk to ghosts.

**TXTXDAWG:** The ghosts definitely know about this place, Tex. (**TXDAWG:** You are lucky/**TEX:** You're lucky) that you cain't hear 'em.

**TEX:** Yeah, yeah. It ain't your place to judge me for what I do in my free time. You should be grateful that this varmint has a table he can lay his dang head on. Ain't that "bodacious" or whatever? Now, there's a bonesaw in that cabinet [**STINKY:** Ah—! A what? Uh, Tex!] over yonder. Can you get that for me while I prep him?

**STINKY:** A-A— A bonesaw!?

**TEX:** The leg's gotta come off, Stinky. Surely you know that.

**STINKY** [*shouting*]: I sure as hell did not know that, Tex. I thought you were taking me here to save my leg! Uh— TXDawg, you have to stop him! He's gonna steal my leg!

**TEX:** There ain't no leg left to steal, pilgrim. Plus I got my own right here. [*Taps his left leg.*] It's better.

**TXTXDAWG:** Tex is right, Stinky. Not even a real doctor could save that leg. (**TXDAWG:** It's barely/**TEX:** It's barely) hangin' on.

**TEX:** Hey, now. I take umbrage to that. I am a real doctor. I got my degree in Cowboy Medicine.

**TXTXDAWG:** Would you like to tell Stinky who gave you that Cowboy Medicine degree? Would (**TXDAWG:** you like to tell him/**TEX:** you like to tell 'im) which critter gave it to ya?

**TEX:** I'll have you know it was the smartest donkey in town.

**STINKY:** You can't hack my leg off because some donkey said it was okay! Uh— Shouldn't I be... anest— uh, anest— anestoftized or something?

**TEX:** Hey, TXDawg. Check that cabinet for some whiskey while you're locatin' that bonesaw. Might calm my nerves some. Stinky can have some, too, if he wants to anesthetize him.

**STINKY:** Uh, whisky? Tex! Is that gonna to be enough? It already really hurts.

**TEX:** Nope, it sure ain't. But I gotta get this done fast and get back to the Outpost. I still got a poker game to run. If I don't show, they'll come lookin' for me, and I can't take a chance on 'em findin' this place. So I got about ten minutes to get down to business. Which is why I need that dang bonesaw, TXDawg! You got it yet?

**STINKY:** No, no, you can't do this to me! W-W– Can't we do a-a correction? Like, before the bar fight? Before I-I got here, or– jus– just make it so Tex doesn't take me inside. Anything!

**TXTXDAWG:** That is a bad idea, Stinky. We try not to do corrections if we can help it. There are too many variables. Things are volatile right now. We don't know why these strange consolidations are happening or who is doing them. We (**TXDAWG:** have to get a/**TEX:** gotta get a) handle on who is up to what before we start issuin' corrections or we could correct ourselves right into a corner.

**TEX:** Yup, even a literal corner. I don't know if you ever been bisected by a wall, Stinky, but it ain't a fun way to die. We could end up in a timeline much worse than you losin' your leg. Maybe once this all shakes out 'n we understand what's goin' on, we can take another crack at it.

*[We hear TXTXDawg move something in the cabinet.]*

**TXTXDAWG:** (**TXDAWG:** I found the bonesaw, Tex.)(**TEX:** Fresh outta whisky, though.)

**TEX:** We gotta make do then. Plus there are some hungry critters back at the house. There's a couple days worth of meat on that leg.

**TXTXDAWG:** Don't tease Stinky, Tex. He is already freaked out. His vibrations are... disconcerting. He's wiggling (**TXDAWG:** like it ain't/**TEX:** like it ain't) nobody's business.

**TEX:** I ain't got a clue what you mean, pard. I ain't teasin' no one. Alright, here we go.

**STINKY:** TXDawg, you can't let him do this to me. I-I can't–! The pai– W-What happens if it hurts so much I die!?

**TEX:** You ain't allowed to die, pard. I got beaucoup questions for ya.

**TXTXDAWG:** I have something (**TXDAWG:** I can give/**TEX:** I can give) him, Tex.

**TEX:** Then what in sam hell are you holdin' out for?

**TXTXDAWG:** It's nasty stuff, pard. Stinky, if I give this to you, it's going to numb the pain, but it is also going to set your mind free. More free than it has ever been. Like standing in Times Square naked, fully exposed. You (**TXDAWG:** won't be/**TEX:** won't be) participating in this realm for two... maybe three days? Your consciousness is gonna fully transcend. And ya ain't gonna like whatcha see.

**STINKY:** I don't– I don't want to fully transcend. What if I don't take it?

**TEX:** I got a belt you can bite down on. Just... ignore them other bite marks. Last guy I did surgery on didn't make it.

**STINKY:** Okay, f-fine, I'll transcend, whatever, just give it to me.

**TXTXDAWG:** Be careful not to spill it. *[Uncorks a vial.]* You (**TXDAWG:** need the whole/**TEX:** need the whole) dose.

*[The audio begins to distort from here until the end of the scene.]*

**STINKY:** *[Sputters.]* Ugh, gross! *[Coughs and dry heaves. Takes several breaths.]* ...That's horrible.

**TXTXDAWG:** I know. We'll see you in a couple of days, Stinky. Be careful in there. You won't be dead, and you won't be conscious to hold your breath, so it will (**TXDAWG:** be hard to/**TEX:** be hard to) meet with ya in the astral plane, but I'm gonna try. The dream dimension's a whole 'nother beast.

**STINKY:** Mm, I feel... weird in my chest...

**TEX:** That cain't be somethin' new for you, pard. You are weird.

**TXTXDAWG:** (**TXDAWG:** You need to relax, Stinky. Follow the feeling wherever it takes you.)(**TEX:** Tex and I are gonna take care o' ya.)

**TEX:** Yup, and taking care o' you ain't a euphemism for killin' ya like it usually is. ...Wait, wait, wait! Stinky, uh, what color leg you want?

**STINKY:** What... c-color leg, what?

**TEX:** I'm havin' Outlaw make ya one, so what color? [**STINKY:** Leg? Leg...] You like gold or silver or what?

**STINKY:** Leg... Leg... Leg... *[Continuing in the background.]* Leg... Leg... Leg...

**TXTXDAWG:** He isn't going to answer you, Tex. He's entering the dream land. (**TXDAWG:** Get/**TEX:** Get) some rest, Stinky.

**TEX:** Alright. Dealer's choice, I guess. Here goes nothin'. Stay out of the splash zone, TXDawg. Here we go.

*[We hear the bonesaw start up and run for a short moment as...]*

*[Opening theme plays.]*

*[We hear Stinky's voice panning, distorting, and echoing as he is dropped into the dream.]*

**STINKY** *[disoriented]: [Breathing heavily.]* Huh? Uh– U-Uh, Tex! Uh–... MDawg! What– What–? Ah, my leg, my leg, my leg, my leg! It's– It's here... *[Sighs in relief.]* Where am I? Hello? This... isn't the warehouse. Wait– This... This is– This is my bunk... What–? D– Was... Was that a dream?

*[Distortion ends.]*

*[We hear an unnatural screeching of animals in the distance.]*

**STINKY:** Fuck! The– The chickens! Uh– I– Fuck. Something's in the coop. I– I told 38 he needs to build a better coop! Fu– Ah, what do I do? Man, I hate chickens! *[Screeching ends.]* ...But I can't let them get eaten! But... I-I– I guess I gotta go get 38? T-There's no time! There's, uh–! Ugh! Fuck.

*[Stinky opens the door to the outside.]*

**STINKY:** *[Calling out.]* Hey! Whatever's out here, you need to leave the chickens alone. 38 has a gun, and he's gonna shoot you if he comes out here and you're in the chicken coop! *[Grumbling.]* And if he finds out that I've been feeding you, he's going to shoot me, too, you idiot. I told you over and over again, there's food on the far side of my bunkhouse, away from the chickens for a reason. I smuggled in dog food for what, nothing? Goddamnit.

*[Stinky walks through mud, approaching the chicken coop.]*

**STINKY:** Hello, uh... E-Ember, if you're out here, *scram!* ...Where are you, buddy?

**NOBODY:** Ember, huh?

**STINKY:** Who's there?

**NOBODY:** Did you get that name off of a fox name generator?

**STINKY:** No, I picked it 'cause his fur is red, where are you, who are you?

**NOBODY:** What is 38 doing keeping you out here?

**STINKY:** N-No– Nobody? I-Is that you? Show yourself!

**NOBODY:** Keep squinting into the darkness. Surely you will find me there.

**STINKY:** I-I– I don't even know you yet! I-I'm still on the farm with 38, I haven't been to Texas!

**NOBODY:** Then how do you know my name?

**STINKY:** I-I- I-I don't- I don't know. ...Did you hurt my fox? Because I swear to God, if you hurt him-!

**NOBODY:** The fox isn't here. I called you out here for a very important purpose.

**STINKY:** You know what? I'm gonna go get 38; he's gonna come out here with a shotgun, maybe a grenade. We'll blow up the whole forest if we have to in order to find-

**NOBODY:** That won't be necessary, Stinky.

*[We hear an atypical time travel noise. Nostinky has been formed.]*

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** *[Groans.]* What? Ugh... What? What, wha-

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** I'm right here.

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** *[Grunts.]* How did I... think tha-?

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** We are going to lay some groundwork. Don't worry. You won't remember a thing, innocent little Stin-

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** What are you doing to me, why can I hear y-?

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** Because I am speaking to you. Keep walking. We are going to wake up 38. *[Starts walking.]* That's what you wanted, ri-?

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** No, s-stop! How are you doing that? A-Are you controlling me!?

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** It's like hypnosis. I'm not doing anything that you wouldn't have done-

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** That's not-

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** -yourself.

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** -true! I-I want to stop! I want you out of my hea-!

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** If that is what you want, then stop me.

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** I'm *trying*. Why can't I stop you?

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** You must not be trying hard enough. Shut up and let me do the talking.

*[We hear the door to 38's cabin open up.]*

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** I'm gonna tell him, and as soon as 38 knows what's going on, he's gonna—

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** *Quiet.*

*[Nostinky walks into the cabin. 38 awakens, startled.]*

**38:** Wh— Wha—? Uh— S-Sti— Stinky! *[Exhales.]* Jesus. Who let you in? I thought I locked the dang door.

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** There is a fox in the henhouse, 38. You should go take care of it.

**38:** Not that fox you was feedin', I hope.

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** The chickens are in danger. I ran here as fast as I could. (**STINKY:** 38, I don't know what he's doing, but you're in—) Chickens scare me because of their beaks.

**38:** Yeah, well, now he's gettin' a midnight snack. You stay right here. Ol' 38's gonna take care o' everything. And don't feed no more critters, okay? This is why you ain't allowed to do that. Causes mayhem every time.

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** You do what needs to be done, 38. (**STINKY:** Help.) I will stay right here.

**38:** You're darn tootin', you will. I'll be back. I'm serious. Wait here. *[Loads and cocks shotgun.]* Even if you hear a gunshot. I got enough to wrangle with out there without you.

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** Understood, 38. I will be waiting.

*[We hear the cabin door close.]*

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** What are you doing, Nobody? Why are you here, why me?

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** I am putting it all together. Everything has to be coordinated just so, or none of this is going to work.

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** None of it does work! Y-You're dead, they killed you. Uh— Base did. T-They wiped you off the face of the Earth!

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** That is in the future. What we are doing here hasn't propagated yet, because it hasn't happened yet.

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** So this is all some plan to c-correct that? How do I know anything? How do I know who Base is? I-I'm still here at the farm. That hasn't happened yet, I haven't met them.

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** You were never any good at thinking, Stinky. But you don't need to be good at thinking anymore. All we have to do now is lock the door and wait.

*[Nostinky locks the door.]*

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** Any second now.

*[38 starts jiggling the lock.]*

**38 [outside]:** Stinky? What the hell is goin' on? There weren't no fox! Let me in! What the hell is goin' on?

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** 38, it wasn't me—

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** Quiet, Stinky.

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** Why can't I—

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** Quiet.

**38 [outside]:** Son of a bitch! Locked me out of my own home. *[Stops jiggling lock.]* You better be ready for a whoopin', boy.

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** I think you know what happens next.

*[38 yells in pain as he steps in the bear trap.]*

**38 [outside]:** Oh. Oh! Fuck. My foot! Oh. Oh. Stinky. *[Continuing in the background.]* Stinky! Stinky! Where are you!? Ah! Help! Ah. Ah, my foot! *[Yells in pain for a moment.]*

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** What did you do to him?

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** I delivered him. He is exactly where he is supposed to be. And so are we.

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** What does that mean? What does 38 have to do with anything? What are you—?

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** Quiet. It is time to get to work.

*[Nostinky exits the house, and 38 stops yelling.]*

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** Isn't the silence beautiful?

*[Nostinky walks around to the side in the mud.]*

**38:** *[Groans and growls.]* Stinky...

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** 38? What are you doing out here?

**NOSTINKY (STINKY):** Listen. Nobody is up to something, and I—

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** What's goin' on, Cowboy? Oh, no. You're... really hurt.

**38** *[distressed breathing]:* What do you mean, "what's goin' on"? You told me there was a damn fox out here. You locked the door. I stepped in this here trap 'cause I got startled while I was walkin' around back.

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** I have no idea what you're talking about, 38. (**STINKY:** It's Nobo—) I was in bed in the bunk house, and I heard you howling. (**STINKY:** It's Nobo—) You must have been sleepwalk— (**STINKY:** Nobody—) Maybe you heard your own cries reverberating across the farm. (**STINKY:** —s controlling m—) Come on. Let's get you out of here.

*[We hear the trap open up.]*

**38:** *[Sighs in relief.]* I'd say thank ya, but I ain't got no clue what's goin' on.

**NOSTINKY (NOBODY):** The trap (**STINKY:** 38—) was just (**STINKY:** Help me—) a warning.

**38:** Stinky? W-What the hell do you mean, "it was just a warnin'"?

*[We hear another typical time travel noise.]*

**STINKY:** Ugh, what, uh... O-O— Oh, god, uh, 38, you're hurt. Uh— Let's— Let's get you inside. Uh— What's a— a bear trap doing on the side of the house?

**38:** You tell me, Stinky.

**STINKY:** What? I—I— I don't understand. You think I—I did something? Uh— I-I heard the fox. Uh, and I— I guess I came and got you, uh... That wasn't a dream, was it?

**38:** It sure as hell weren't, pilgrim. Why'd ya lock the door on me?

**STINKY:** I-I- I didn't do that, why would I do that? Uh, I-I guess I came and got you? Uh- Maybe I- I fell asleep again? Like on your bed? A-Are you okay?

*[Things start getting hazy again.]*

**38:** I sure as hell am not, pard. I need a doctor. I'm gonna have to call someone out here in the mornin'.

**STINKY:** Okay, well there's a first aid kit under the sink. Uh, we'll get you bandaged up, uh, and until then, just- anything you need, uh, tell me and I'll get it for you. And *[Sighs.]* I-I'm sorry, I-I was feeding Ember. I-I'm gonna stop, I promise.

**38:** You shouldn't have given the goddamn fox a name, pard.

**STINKY:** I know! I know, I wanted to help him, but if he's out there killing chickens, then tha- that's my responsibility now. I'm- I'm sorry, 38, I'm just- You know, I'm- I'm lonely out here. Jus- I-I wanted a friend, and... fucked everything up...

**38:** I don't understand what the hell is goin' on with you tonight, pilgrim.

**STINKY:** I just... I don't- I don't think I'm cut out for farm life.

**38:** No kiddin', pard.

*[Scene transition.]*

*[The iteration drives, eventually arriving at the Shadow Base that we saw at the end of last season.]*

*[He gets out of his car, walks to the door, and rings the doorbell.]*

*[No answer. He opens the door, then looks around. No one is there, and he looks around for an item.]*

*[He calls his employer.]*

**ITERATION:** It ain't here, pard. And it's too damn hot in here to keep lookin'. *[Pause.]* Yup, I know. That means someone's already been here. Ain't a good look for ya. Pilgrim, I hate to break it to ya, but if this here project goes belly-up, then so does the whole timeline. There's a great correction on our horizon. *[Brief pause.]* Now if'n your lookin' to prevent that, it's time to get serious. Give me the resources I'm askin' for. *[Pause.]* Yeah, you're damn straight we're gonna meet at the rendezvous point. *[Pause.]* I don't care about none of that. No more jerkin' me around. *[Brief pause.]* I'll see ya there. Tomorrow. Sunup. And if'n ya don't show, we might not exist by sunset. *[Hangs up.]*

*[The iteration leaves through the door and walks back to his car. He starts driving.]*

*[Flash's radio show from Episode 168 plays.]*

**FLASH** *[via radio]*: You're live with us on 103.3 KOBV, the valley's only talk radio station. Thanks for calling. Do you have a story about paranormal happenings in Oldbrush Valley?

**BRITCHES** *[via radio]*: What? Flash, it's Britches. I don't wanna be on your dang radio show! I called your personal number!

**FLASH** *[via radio]*: Well, howdy, Britches. Uh, it's all the same number. What's up? ...While I have you, could you at least tell the audience about that time you saw a ghost at the diner?

**BRITCHES** *[via radio]*: Listen, Flash! We don't have time for this. We opened Skinner's box and got their... device out of it. We used it on Python, and somethin' very bad happened. We're goin' to get help right now.

*[Radio turns off.]*

*[Scene transition.]*

*[We hear Stinky's voice panning, distorting, and echoing as he wakes up.]*

**STINKY**: Nobody... *[Sharp inhale.]* Uh! Fuck. E-Ember, uh. Nobody... What-? No, no-? Okay... Ugh. Fuck, my head. Oh! Ugh! Okay. Where the fuck... Tex! Uh... MDawg! TXDawg, MDawg, TXDawg, Tex! Uh- ...Fuck!

*[Distortion ends. Sound reverberates in the warehouse.]*

**STINKY**: *[Sits up.]* ...No! No, no. ...I-It's- It's gone. No! No! *No!* No! ...Is it-? It's... bolted into me? *[Pause.]* Is that a- a screen...?

**LEG**: Hello. I am Leg. I have detected heavy breathing. Would you like to activate marathon mode?

**STINKY**: Uh- What-? ...No? Marathon mo-? Is that, like, fast? Like, 'cause, like, what if my other leg isn't as fast?

**LEG**: That is not my problem. Would you like to take a moment to register me?

**STINKY**: What-!? No, why does it talk? Fuck. Tex, where are you!?

*[We hear clangs as he starts walking around.]*

**STINKY:** Uh– Fuck, that feels weird. *[Huffs.]* Tex? ...TX– TXDawg? I'm awake? Uh– How long was I– Was I out for two days like you said? Uh– Where am I, what is this warehouse? W– ...What is this? W-Where are you guys? I can't see anything, the lights are off.

**LEG:** Entering flashlight mode. Would you like to take a second to register me?

**STINKY:** *No!* Ugh, fuck, that's blood! Who– Whose– Whose blood is that!?

**LEG:** If you step in the blood, I can perform an analysis.

**STINKY:** I'm not going to do that. Could you stop talking forever, please?

**LEG:** Would you like to take a second to register me?

*[We hear the warehouse door start opening.]*

**STINKY:** *[Quietly.]* Fuck, the– Fuck, the door's opening. *[Aloud.]* Uh, whoever it is, uh, whichever one you are, uh... *[Stops walking.]* Sheriff Tex says that he's not going to give you the million dollars if you kill me. He needs me now, because, uh– I–... it's– I– I-I don't know, he gave me a leg! *[Taps Leg.]* Like, that's proof, right?

**LEG:** If you try to harm Stinky, I will shoot a poison dart with TenPoint precision into your heart, killing you instantly.

*[The warehouse door finishes opening. Bluster walks in and nickers.]*

**STINKY:** Oh, my god, Bluster. O-Oh, my god, what– what happened? W-Where are Tex and TXDawg? How do I make the leg stop talking?

*[Bluster vocalizes.]*

**STINKY:** I-I don't know what that means. Do– Do you want to go with you? I-I don't know what's going on. I-I don't know where Tex and TXDawg are, but there's blood on the ground now, and–

*[Bluster neighs.]*

**STINKY:** But the Numbered Michaels are probably looking for me, and Mike is still– **(NOBODY:** Go with him.) *[Starts walking.]* Um... O-Okay, I... I-I guess I'm going with you.

*[Stinky mounts Bluster.]*

**STINKY:** *[Sighs.]* Alright, Bluster. Let's ride.

*[Bluster neighs and starts walking.]*

**TEX:** After the break, *Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show*. But first, "Verdigris."

*[Verdigris plays.]*

*It transcends  
A means to an end  
And falls apart  
A heavy head  
And an equally  
Heavy heart*

*I'm swallowing my silver tongue  
The verdigris is in my lungs, so*

*Take care  
Because none of you are here  
And if I cannot see you  
Then you do exist*

*Called a bluff  
Held Aloft  
And under wing  
Signing off  
From up here  
I don't know what I've seen*

*Choked down an asymmetric curse  
I can't tell which side is the worst so*

*Take care  
Because none of you are here  
And if I cannot see you  
Then you do exist*

*I cannot see you.*

*[Scene transition.]*

*[Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show theme plays.]*

*It's Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show!  
It's Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show!*

*It's Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show!*  
*Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show starts now!*

*It's Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show!*  
*It's Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show!*  
*It's Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show!*  
*Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show starts now!*

*[Muffled office ambience. Skinner searches through a clothes rail while whistling to the tune of "Son of a Preacher Man."]*

**SKINNER:** *[Stops whistling and grunts.]* Fuck's sake, Helen, why do you have so many fucking coats, how am I supposed to find anything in here? *[Resumes whistling.]*

**LISA** *[outside the office door]:* Oh, Mrs. Hartley! Um, *[Continuing in the background.]* I know you said not to let anyone in your office when you aren't here, but they were very insistent, and—well... given the way they were dressed, I thought it might be best to tuck them away.

**SKINNER:** *[Stops whistling.]* Aw, shit. Uh... Okay, that was— *[Trying to return items to their proper place.]* that was over there, and this... I *think* was *here*, I— Damn. Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, *uh...* fuck it. Fuck it. Fuck it.

*[Skinner pulls out and sits down on a chair. Thump of kicking feet up on the desk.]*

**HELEN** *[outside the office door, confused]:* "The way they were—"? Lisa, what are you talking about? Who was insistent? My next meeting isn't until 2:30.

*[Door opens.]*

**HELEN:** Skinner?

**SKINNER:** Hey there, Helen. Nice seeing ya again, Lisa! Love the hair!

**LISA:** I'll just leave you to it. *[Polite laugh.]*

*[Door closes.]*

**HELEN:** Skinner, I already told you, I have never met anyone by the name Magnolia. Last time you were here, we spent hours looking through my high school *and* college year books, for goodness' sakes.

*[Flashback harp.]*

**SKINNER:** *[Laughing.]* Oh, my god. *[Continues laughing extremely hard.]*

**HELEN:** Okay, it's not that funny! The bouffant was a wildly popular hairstyle. Look, look. *[Turns page.]* All the girls had it.

**SKINNER:** *[Still laughing.]* Oh, my god, Helen, stop! I won't survive this. I can't, I can't! I'm sorry. *[Wheezing.]* **HELEN:** It was the late sixties, and I was a huge fan of Dusty Springfield.] Oh, my god. Oh. I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I get it, I get it. It was fashionable at the time. I'm not– I'm not saying it wasn't, I just– *[Laughs.]*

**HELEN:** Are we looking for clues about Magnolia or not?

**SKINNER:** *[Tries to stop laughing.]* Okay. I'm sorry. *[A laugh escapes. They clear their throat.]* I'm really not even– *[Gulps.]* I mean, it looks good! It's just, eheh, it's so different from how you look now. I mean *[Brief laugh.]* the clothes, you know?

**HELEN:** Hey! I clean up nice!

**SKINNER:** *[Laughing but earnest.]* Wai– Uh– No, you do, you do! I was just– I've never seen you all glammed up like that, you know? I just– I'm just– *[Chuckles for a moment.]*

**HELEN:** Well, I can't exactly wear gogo boots to work. *[We hear Skinner turn the pages back.]* Hey, what are you doing?

**SKINNER:** Taking pictures for when I need a good laugh.

**HELEN:** Oh, har har.

**SKINNER:** I'm kidding. Flash is obsessed with historic fashion trends–

**HELEN:** Skinner, I can't be that much older than your parents' age. I'm not riding in buggies, wearing bonnets, and attending balls.

**SKINNER:** Hey. I'm a time traveller. Maybe I was actually born in the year 5084 *[We hear a page turn.]* and this is ancient history to me.

**HELEN:** *[Scoffs.]* Sure. *[Page turn.]* So who is this Magnolia person you're looking for anyway?

**SKINNER:** Oh, come on, Helen, keep up. If I knew, I wouldn't be looking into them.

**HELEN:** "Them" like singular "them"...? Like you? Or like how there's at least a baker's dozen of Walters out there?

**SKINNER:** Oh, uh... both, actually. I meant in the baker's dozen sense, though. *[Page turn.]* Several baker's dozen.

**HELEN:** Are they dangerous?

**SKINNER:** According to Eagle, yeah.

*[Beat.]*

**HELEN:** ...Oh.

*[Turning pages.]*

**SKINNER:** Oh ho ho. Who's Donna?

**HELEN:** Who? *[Fondly.]* Oh, Donna.

**SKINNER:** "Can't wait to shake the dust of this crummy little town off our feet and see the world together. Love, Donna."

**HELEN** *[fondly]:* It's a quote from *It's a Wonderful Life*. The summer after high school we went on a road trip together. It was one of the best summers of my life.

*[Page turn.]*

**SKINNER:** Heh. Oh, I bet it was.

**HELEN:** *[Confused laugh.]* What?

**SKINNER:** Hmm? Ah, nothing. Nothing.

*[Page turn.]*

**HELEN:** She was my best friend.

**SKINNER:** Hey! I didn't say anything.

**HELEN:** *[Scoffs.]* Uh-huh. ...*Sure.* *[Page turn.]* Let's just move along, shall we?

*[Flashback harp.]*

*[Muffled office ambience.]*

**SKINNER:** Not gonna lie, that may have been a total bust in terms of my Magnolia investigations, but it was *fun*. Heheh. Flash loved the pictures, by the way. They used them for some glitch art that they posted on Instagram to promote this live séance that they plan to do on

their radio show. Don't worry, though, they cropped out your face and replaced it with a skull emoji, so it's not like anyone would know it's you. I guess their followers are eating it up. So you, my friend, are an influencer.

**HELEN:** Sometimes, when you say things, it's like you're speaking an entirely different language.

**SKINNER:** Just know that they're gonna try and get your old Dusty Springfield hairstyle trending again.

**HELEN** *[amused]*: Speaking of style choices, what on earth are you wearing this time?

**SKINNER:** Hey, what are you talking about? This is a perfectly period-appropriate outfit. Plenty of people dress like this. I modeled this after a photograph in a newspaper clipping from 1979, so there.

**HELEN:** I wasn't suggesting your outfit is anachronistic.

**SKINNER:** Okay, so what's the problem?

**HELEN:** You're dressed like an anti-establishment punk while inside a secret government facility.

**SKINNER:** Oh... That.

**HELEN:** *[Laughs.]* Yeah, that. So, what were you searching my office for this time?

**SKINNER:** Hey, what makes you think I was searching your office?

*[Objects sliding around on the desk.]*

**HELEN:** These belong over here, and the stapler should be on top of the left desk drawer.

**SKINNER:** Hey, you should've seen the office before ya got back. I didn't do so bad.

**HELEN:** Well, get those big black boots of yours off my desk and get out of my chair, small fry.

*[Chair moving and footsteps.]*

**SKINNER:** So, uh... How's lil' Jerry? And, you know, the husband and all.

**HELEN:** *[Laughs good naturedly.]* They're good. Um... Jerry just found out about dog shows and is trying to train Rusty for a junior showmanship competition.

**SKINNER:** Ugh. That's just so—

**HELEN:** Adorable? Fun?

**SKINNER** [*with disgust*]: Wholesome.

**HELEN:** What's wrong with that?

**SKINNER:** Nothing, it's just... it's fucked up. Ya know?

**HELEN:** How on earth is a small child training their dog messed up? Have you ever seen a four-year-old set up an agility course? Because it's objectively charming.

**SKINNER:** What's fucked up is how you have this, like, entire wholesome life, and somehow the allure of time travel was still irresistible. [*Slight chuckle.*] I mean, what hope do the rest of us have?

**HELEN:** I hate to break it to you, but having a kid doesn't stop you from being a human being, Skinner. Who wouldn't want to make their lives easier?

**SKINNER:** [*Cackles.*] Easier how? [*Brief chuckle.*]

**HELEN:** Skinner, I work full-time. I raise a child. I organize church potlucks and clothing drives; I would kill for time to just... be an adult.

**SKINNER** [*genuine*]: Naw, I get that, I wasn't judging, I'm just... You really think that time travel is gonna help with that?

**HELEN:** If I still had Walters' Calculator, I could fit in *hours* of errands and chores on my lunch breaks. Or better yet, I could spend those hours on hobbies, like horseback riding.

**SKINNER:** [*Snorts.*] Okay. Heheh...

[*Beat.*]

**HELEN:** I suppose you think it's selfish.

**SKINNER:** What? No. Nonono. I— [*Scoffs.*] Or— I dunno. Maybe it is selfish, but, like, whatever. Selfish doesn't have to be a bad thing. ...I mean, come on. Everyone needs fun, right?

**HELEN:** Then what's the problem?

**SKINNER:** Oh, come on. You're smart, Helen. Clever, too.

**HELEN:** How is it that even your compliments sound like insults?

**SKINNER:** Alright, come on. How long were you in the future?

*[Helen lets out a bitter laugh.]*

**HELEN:** I... I have no idea. ...I'm not sure I want to know.

**SKINNER:** Shit, sorry, I... shouldn't have brought that up.

**HELEN:** ...It's fine.

*[Beat.]*

**SKINNER:** Come on. You've seen behind the curtain of all this time travel bullshit. ...You tell me. What's the problem with what you're describing, Helen? I know you. You know the answer to this.

*[Helen drums her fingers and lets out an exhale as she thinks about it.]*

**HELEN:** *[Small bitter laugh.]* I am still aging. *That's* the issue, right? Each time I use time travel to extend my day by a few hours, I'm shaving time off my life.

**SKINNER:** *[Snaps fingers.]* Bingo.

**HELEN:** So I could, I don't know, use time travel to turn my lunch hour into six months of learning French. When I return back to work at the end of my lunch break, for everyone around me only an hour will have passed, but my body will still have aged six whole months.

**SKINNER:** Yeah. That time is still real for you. You aren't gaining time, not really. Do it enough times, and *[Brief chuckle.]* it begins to add up. Before you know it, people who know you well? They're gonna think that you're developing wrinkles and gray hairs overnight.

*[Helen sighs and drums her fingers.]*

*[Skinner chuckles.]*

**HELEN:** What's so funny.

**SKINNER:** Nothing, just *[Brief chuckle.]* I can see it in your eyes. You're trying to solve the problem. You know, figure out how to have both.

**HELEN:** It's not that. ...It's not *all* that.

**SKINNER:** Okay, what is it then?

**HELEN:** Just... I keep wondering how Jerry got involved in all of this? And... was it me? Was... Is it my fault, because I couldn't resist temptation when Walters crossed my path?

**SKINNER:** Hey. Helen. ...Come on.

**HELEN:** Pride is the deadliest sin. Heck, it's the original sin. You can call it hubris if you want. You don't need to be a believer to see why it's so harmful. But a lack of humility is destructive. So much so that it can destroy everyone else around you if you aren't careful. There's examples of it throughout history. Look at the *Titanic*. They were so confident in the ship's design that they didn't have enough lifeboats for everyone when it sank. Hubris is a killer. *[Beat.]* And you still aren't going to tell me how Jerry got involved in this, are you?

**SKINNER:** What makes you think I even know?

**HELEN:** *Now* who's playing dumb?

**SKINNER:** I'm not playing dumb. You're jumping to conclusions.

**HELEN:** You said it yourself. I'm not an idiot.

*[Beat.]*

**HELEN** *[a little impatient]: [Sighs.]* Why are you here, Skinner? If it's not about whoever that Magnolia person is you're looking into, why do you keep coming back to visit me like some ghost of Christmas future?

**SKINNER:** I dunno. ...Maybe I just... feel less alone talking to you? Maybe I just... like being around someone who... understands the existential nightmare of wondering if the rest of my days are gonna be spent in pain and misery until I... start to look forward to the moment when everything goes dark. ...Knowing that it's just gonna start all back up again.

*[Beat.]*

**HELEN:** *[Bursts out laughing.]* Oh, my go— *[Laughs.]* Nice try.

**SKINNER:** *[Snorts.]* You're a stone-cold bitch, you know that?

**HELEN:** *[Chuckles.]* And your insults still sound like compliments.

**SKINNER:** Hey, at least I'm consistent, right?

**HELEN:** ...Do you wanna know what keeps me up at night?

**SKINNER:** What?

**HELEN:** What if O.I. still has other versions of me? Other iterations. Each one of them would be just as determined as I was to get back home. To see Jerry again. To reclaim this life here in 1980.

**SKINNER:** I really don't know if they do, Helen. But, for your sake... and for little Jerry's... I hope they don't.

**HELEN:** Yeah. ...Me, too.

**SKINNER:** *[Clears throat.]* Well, heh. I should, uh... I should let you get back to work. *[They stand up.]* You have a staff meeting in ten minutes.

**HELEN:** *[Brief chuckle.]* I knew you were snooping around.

**SKINNER:** Heh. Guilty as charged.

**HELEN:** Well, I hope you find what you're looking for.

**SKINNER:** Oh, I will. I always do.

**HELEN:** *[Sighs.]* Cheese on rice. Being an anti-establishment punk is no excuse for bad posture. If you want people to buy what you're selling, stand straight up. Take it from someone who makes five star generals shake in their boots.

**SKINNER:** *[Laughs. Playfully.]* Sir, yes, sir! *[Clicks heels together as they salute.]*

**HELEN:** See you around, Skinner.

**SKINNER:** See you around, Helen.

*[Door opens. Office ambience increases.]*

**LISA:** Oh. Don't forget to sign out when you—

**SKINNER:** Yeah, yeah, here's the 20 I promised. You're a star.

**LISA:** Wha—? Uh—! No, I—!

**SKINNER** *[snarky]:* See you around, Lisa!

*[Door closes.]*

*[Closing theme starts playing.]*

**CREDITS:** This has been WOE.BEGONE.

*Skinner's Untitled Crust Punk Show* was written and created by JustJenah. The voice of Skinner was JustJenah, and the voice of Lisa was JustJenah. You can check them out in [400 Words A Horror](#).

The voice of Helen Hartley was Tatiana Geffer. Check out their podcast [Soul Operator](#). I'm a cowboy in that one.

Thanks for playing.

*[Closing theme plays out.]*

*[END Episode 198.]*