

comedy4cast #738
Batter Days
Chapter 7: Powerful Problems

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Episode released - June 8, 2022

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comedy4cast #739: "Batter Days", Chapter 7, "Powerful Problems"

CHAPTER 7: INTRO

SOUND: COMEDY4CAST STING

MUSIC: STORY MAIN THEME IN AND UNDER.

CLINTON

This is comedy4cast, episode 739, "Batter Days," Chapter 7. Brought to you by the comedy4cast patrons on Patreon.com. Thank you. Please consider joining Barry, Amy, Chuck and the other fine, upstanding individuals who support the show for as little as a dollar a month.

This year's original 31-chapter story is called "Batter Days" To hear it from the beginning, just go to comedy4cast -- all one word, with the number 4 -- .com/2022.

Now, here's Chapter 7, "Powerful Problems"

NARRATOR

Previously in our story, Buzz "Scoop" Crackerjack Thomas had a disagreement with the new Editor-in-Chief of the Middling Fair Courier Times Roman Bold

(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

Italic. Buzz insisted that there must be something headline worthy going on inside the underground artists community known as The Tunnels. Now, Buzz's very job depends on finding such a story.

CHAPTER 7, SCENE 1: INT. TUNNEL RECEPTION DESK - EARLY MORNING

SOUND: BIRDS CHIRPING.

NARRATOR

As this chapter begins, it is early morning on what will be another bright, sunny day in Middling Fair. But we cannot linger on the grass; we're headed back underground, into The Tunnels.

MUSIC: "MUSIC OF THE SPHERES", PARTICULAR TO THIS AREA, REPLACES THE SOUNDS OF BIRDS AND PLAYS IN THE BACKGROUND.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS ON GRAVEL.

NARRATOR (cont'd)

Buzz is walking up to the makeshift desk at the tunnel entrance, only to get an unpleasant surprise.

BUZZ

Great Meanderings of Walt Mossberg! It can't be!

DANNY

Hi! Danny Hillcrest here! And who are you?

BUZZ

Hillcrest, it's me, Buzz "Scoop" Crackerjack Thomas, ace investigative field reporter for the Middling Fair Courier Times Roman Bold Italic. Uh, I mean "private citizen" "nothing to see here" Buzz Thomas.

DANNY

Wow! I must say, the two of you look so much alike!

BUZZ

I heard that anyone can set up a studio in this place. For free. I thought I would set up a...a sort of radio station just for The Tunnels. You know? By The Tunnels, for The Tunnels and all that. It's just for a hobby, so stop asking so many questions!

DANNY

I love it!

BUZZ

Great. Where do I go?

DANNY

Maybe that Chunnel Tunnel in Brexit
France?

BUZZ

No. I mean here.

DANNY

Oh. I wish I could assistingly help you,
clone Buzz, but we don't have any
studios available. We fillingly occupied
the last one yesterday.

BUZZ

But you don't understand! Which is not a
shock to anyone. I need to set up this
studio! Not that my job depends on it.
And I already asked you to stop asking
all these questions!

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS ON GRAVEL FADE IN.

DISGRUNTLED ARTIST

(approaching DANNY, very
dramatic, full of mock
anguish)

That's it! I want out of here! How am I
supposed to write my epic post-
apocalyptic mutant-hunting love poems in
this "place"!? Everyone in here is so...
positive! I want no part of it! It
stinks!

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS ON GRAVEL FADE OUT.

BUZZ

(to himself)

Thank you, ghosts of newspapers past!

DANNY

What was that, private Buzz?

BUZZ

Oh, nothing.

(slyly)

Are you sure there are no studios available?

DANNY

Nope. None except the one that just opened up 10 seconds ago. Hey! Would you like that one?

BUZZ

Perfect.

DANNY

All right! It's Studio 254. Oooh, it's super nice, too. It has a giant big window that faces right out onto the Underdome.

BUZZ

Underdome?

DANNY

That's our name for the largely huge, round middle area in The Tunnels. We turned it into a cool renaissance fair marketplace. Huzzah!

BUZZ

I can ignore that. How do I get there?

DANNY

Easy! You just walk a few miles down this main tunnel.

BUZZ

Miles?

DANNY

Or, you can wait for Princess.

BUZZ

That old converted 1976 Tiara Megacoach tri-axle school bus? The one Kalamity got from the Pentagon when he ordered an assault vehicle? That Princess?

(waits for response.
then...)

Hillcrest?

DANNY

Sorry, I zoned out there for a second. Backstory. Am I right? Anyway, the bus is now codingly programmed to go from here, down the main tunnel, through the

(MORE)

DANNY (cont'd)

Underdome, through another tunnel and end up at Cindy's office, which is also the library. Then it turns around and comes back, through that corridor, through the Underdome, through the other corridor,...

BUZZ

I get the idea! Sorry. Exposition makes me cranky.

DANNY

You must hear a lot of it! Anyway, here she comes now.

SOUND: BUS ELECTRIC MOTOR HUMS.

SOUND: WHEELS ON GRAVEL.

MUSIC: IN THE BACKGROUND WE HEAR OLD MAN SPOONER PLAYING A GUITAR -- POORLY.

SPOONER

(singing)

*Let's go crazy
on Wakiki.
Run with scissor along the beach
at old Maui.*

*It's you and me,
absurdily,
in old Hawaii.*

*Let's touch lava
the Kilauea.*

(MORE)

SPOONER (cont'd)

*Then stare into the Sun down at
Hanalei Bay.*

*It's you and me,
abysmally,
in Old Hawaii.*

*We could listen to the ocean
while we shun our sunscreen lotion.
Even catch a little rip tide
when we're through*

*We could luau by the pool bar
Order our pork to be served raw
trichinosis is the best in Honolu!*

*Let's go crazy
and have a ball.
Do it in a big way, no,
not Midway Atoll.*

*It's you and me,
infirmary,
in old Hawaii.*

*Yes, you and me,
disorderly,
in Old Hawaii*

*Just you and me,
absurdily,
in old Hawaii.*

DANNY

And you're in luck, Old Man Spooner is
riding on the flatbed trailer.

BUZZ

Old man Spooner?

DANNY

Yeah, he ridingly travels back and forth all day long on that trailer he attached to Princess. Him and his dog, Cuddles.

BUZZ

(uninterested)

Wonderful. I'll be sure to interview him. When I run out of anything else to do.

DANNY

I love it!

MUSIC: SHORT TRANSITION STING.

CHAPTER 7, SCENE 2: INT. PRISON CAFETERIA - MORNING

SOUND: GENERAL CAFETERIA NOISES.

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, during breakfast in the inmate's cafeteria at S&H Green Stamps prison --

SOUND: RUSTLE OF PAPER

NARRATOR (cont'd)

Hold on. Now it's the "Studebaker Automobile State Penitentiary." Disgraced former Little Wicker Baskets executive, Brax Higgins, is attempting to eat his meal in relative peace and
(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

quiet, away from his cellmate, Bad Note Billy.

SOUND: GENERAL SMALL CHATTER IN BACKGROUND.

SOUND: TRAY FULL OF FOOD LANDS ON TABLE.

HIGGINS

Finally, a break from that incessant singing. How can one man sound like an entire pack of howler monkeys? And his hygiene!

(shivers)

What "treat" do we have on the menu this morning? Ah, yes -- Drab. And a dirty spoon. Time to break out the towel.

SOUND: SQUEAK OF RUBBING FORK CLEAN.

BAD NOTE BILLY

(yelling, searching)

Brax? Brax? Where are you, roomie?

HIGGINS

(to himself)

By all that is sane, not again. Maybe if I don't move, the creature won't be able to see me.

BAD NOTE BILLY

Oh! There you are.

SOUND: TRAY SLAMS ONTO TABLE.

BAD NOTE BILLY (cont'd)

Didn't you hear me calling you, roomie?
If I did not know better, I would think
you were trying to avoid me. But that
can't be true, can it?

HIGGINS

(through gritted teeth)

Of course not, Billy.

BAD NOTE BILLY

That is good. I was just worried because
I once had a roomie who didn't like my
singing. Can you believe it? Of course,
he's gone now. But they never did find
that body. Hey, look! I snuck you an
extra piece of, uh, murky?

SOUND: SOMETHING VERY SOLID GETS DROPPED ONTO PLATE.

HIGGINS

(trying to hold it
together)

Thanks. But, listen, Billy, I was hoping
to just sit and have a relaxing meal.

BAD NOTE BILLY

(sad)

Oh. I get the picture. You do not have
to tell me eight or nine times.

HIGGINS

Thanks, Billy.

BAD NOTE BILLY

I did not have a chance to prepare a song for your mealtime enjoyment, but I can make one up. No problem!

HIGGINS

No! That's not what I meant.

BAD NOTE BILLY

(yelling to the room)

Listen up good, everyone! My friend Brax Higgins has requested that I sing a song, so he can have a nice quiet meal!

SOUND: CROWD MUMBLES IN ANGER.

HIGGINS

(to the crowd)

No! I didn't ask...

SOUND: WHISTLE.

BAD NOTE BILLY

(yelling to the room)

So shuddup!

SOUND: CROWD QUIETS.

BAD NOTE BILLY (cont'd)

That's better. This goes out to you,
Brax, old roomie.

(singing)

*Mealtime is the bestest time
To have a meal to eat
You should eat a meal with hands
Instead of eat meat with feet*

HIGGINS

(to himself)

How does he manage to make a song less
appealing than this slop?

MUSIC: TRANSITION STING

CHAPTER 7, SCENE 3: EXT. HATCH ENTRANCE - LATE MORNING

SOUND: OPEN FIELD SPACE WITH SOME TRAFFIC SOUNDS IN THE
DISTANCE.

NARRATOR

As morning rolls on, Detective Haartte
enters The Tunnels, through a hatch not
far from the Venus Arms Hotel and
Towers.

SOUND: HATCH OPENING.

SOUND: RECORD SCRATCH STOPS BACKGROUND ATMOSPHERE.

CAP

Oh! The hotel! Does that mean Giles and me get a scene to do?

NARRATOR

No, Cap. Not right now.

CAP

Dang it! Well, make it happen soon! Giles isn't getting any younger, you know!

CHAPTER 7, SCENE 4: INT. LIBRARY/CINDY'S OFFICE - LATE MORNING

MUSIC: "MUSIC OF THE SPHERES" PARTICULAR TO THE LIBRARY SLOWLY FADES IN, BUT REMAINS IN THE BACKGROUND.

SOUND: CLIMBING DOWN METAL LADDER.

NARRATOR

The hatch, known only to a select few, provides direct access to the library in The Tunnels. Cindy has asked to meet with Detective Haartte in an attempt to figure out where the Waffle Batter sphere is hidden. Time is of the essence, as Mayor Rory has given Cindy a deadline to put an end to the power and water problems the spheres are causing.

CINDY

Like, we have to figure out where the Badger People put the sphere.

HAARTTE

Now that's a sentence that might seem a bit ridiculous if it wasn't for just one thing.

CINDY

Like, what's that?

HAARTTE

It's on this show.

NARRATOR

Just then, the door to the library swings open and Buzz stumbles in.

SOUND: LARGE DOOR SWINGS OPEN.

SOUND: IN THE DISTANCE, WE CAN BARELY HEAR THE SOUND OF PRINCESS, AS SHE DRIVES AWAY

MUSIC: ALSO IN THE DISTANCE, WE CAN BARELY HEAR OLD MAN SPOONER SINGING THE "DRAGONCON 2020" SONG.

BUZZ

Great portals of Pauline Fredericks! How is an ace investigative reporter supposed to eavesdrop when these doors open so easy?!

HAARTTE

Were you spying on us, Thomas?

BUZZ

Poppycock! An investigative journalist doesn't spy. They inconspicuously listen. Detectives stoop to "spying."

HAARTTE

What is that supposed to mean?

CINDY

Like, everyone be cool. I have to, like stay focused. Come on in, Buzz. Maybe you can help.

BUZZ

Yes. There's a rumor going around that you were discussing the newsworthy power and water issues plaguing Middling Fair.

HAARTTE

Where did you hear that rumor?

BUZZ

I was listening at the door, remember?

CINDY

Like, that makes sense.

HAARTTE

(surprised)

It does?

BUZZ

(surprised)

It does?

CINDY

And, like, we have to figure out how to make it stop. It's like, ruining everything.

HAARTTE

I'll say. I remember how it ruined a recent case of mine.

MUSIC: HARP GLISSANDO DOWN.

**CHAPTER 7, SCENE 4: INT. HAARTTE'S OFFICE - NIGHT
(FLASHBACK)**

MUSIC: DETECTIVE HAARTTE'S THEME IN BACKGROUND.

WOMAN SUSPECT is playing it sultry, yet innocent, attempting to endear herself to **HAARTTE** and eliminate herself as a suspect. She has to work pretty hard at it though, as the detective seems focused on the case.

HAARTTE

I had invited the key suspect in my latest case to my office last night for a little chat.

WOMAN SUSPECT

Detective Haartte...

HAARTTE

That's two A's, Two T's. Spell it right. Say it right.

WOMAN SUSPECT

(a bit thrown for a second)

Uh. Yes. What in the world makes you think I'm the murderer?

HAARTTE

It's so simple even I can figure it out. The deceased was known to be a sucker for getting his palm read every Thursday night. And you just happen to be a palmist.

WOMAN SUSPECT

So? There must be half a dozen of us in this town.

HAARTTE

That's true. But the victim was left handed. And, as everyone knows, any oracle worth their salt won't do a reading for a left-handed client on a Thursday night. That is, except for you and one other crystal gazer here in Middling Fair.

WOMAN SUSPECT

Then why am I your only suspect?

HAARTTE

The other one is the victim.

WOMAN SUSPECT

(a night and day
difference in persona, as
she drops the act)

Crap! Okay. You got me, Haartte.

SOUND: POWER DROPS.

HAARTTE

What's happening? Another power cut!

WOMAN SUSPECT

Ha! Pefect.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS

WOMAN SUSPECT (cont'd)

I can disappear without a trace!

HAARTTE (IN BACKGROUND)

Not now! Where did I put those candles?

WOMAN SUSPECT

(stops realizing something
she overlooked)

I just need to find that bus ticket...

HAARTTE (IN BACKGROUND)

First I need to find the matches so I
can use them to find the candles.

SOUND: RIFLING THROUGH PURSE.

WOMAN SUSPECT

Let's see. Poison...Gun...Blackjack...
Oh! Here it is.

HAARTTE (IN BACKGROUND)

If only my phone had a flashlight.

WOMAN SUSPECT

Augusta will be the perfect place to
hide. Oh. I sure hope my Aunt Emilia
still lives at 2237 Pine Street. Area
code 706 555-1212.

MUSIC: HARP GLISSANDO UP.

**CHAPTER 7, SCENE 5: INT. LIBRARY/CINDY'S OFFICE - LATE
MORNING**

HAARTTE

So, close. But now I'll never find her.

BUZZ

(dumbfounded)

Uh.

CINDY

Like, that's why we need to figure out
where the Waffle Batter sphere is. Romeo
said it could, like, control the other
spheres and take them to the next level.

HAARTTE

Is that a good thing or a bad thing?

CINDY

Like, yeah.

HAARTTE

I know one thing that will help -- some idea of what we're doing. What clues do you have?

CINDY

Like, none.

HAARTTE

That figures.

BUZZ

Hold on a New York style pizza Friday minute. I think I may have something!

MUSIC: DRAMATIC STING

CHAPTER 7: OUTRO

MUSIC: THEME IN AND UNDER

NARRATOR

What information does Buzz have? Can he even be trusted? And will Bad Note Billy ever sing on key? For possible answers, be sure to come back for Chapter 8, "Let's Make A Deal"

MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT.

CLINTON

In this episode, the part of Cindy was played by Bonnie Kenderdine, the disgruntled artist was played by John Bell, from the Bell's in the Batfry podcast, thebatfry.com, Old Man Spooner was played by Chuck Tomasi, from the Technorama podcast, chuckchat.com/technorama, and The Topic is Trek podcast, thetopicistrek.com, the woman suspect was played by Madison Hatfield. And the Narrator was played by Gary J. Chambers, garyjchambersvo.com.

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But for now, That's it. We're done, done, done, done, done. Bye bye.

MUSIC: UP AND OUT.