

PHIL 1

~~ARC PRINCESS~~

~~Screen memories. For a flaming wreck that never was. Do not look too deep, Ambassador, at what you think you see.~~

~~EQUIVERTÉ~~

~~They aren't just cards, are they?~~

~~ARC PRINCESS~~

~~A nightcap first? Before we begin?~~

START

• • •

The Remedy; Sky Page has entered

SKY PAGE

Call for Phil Socket.

PHIL

Socket here.

SKY PAGE

Call on the... Princess Line.

PHIL

Princess Line?

SKY PAGE

Call to... adventure.

Phil starts to lift receiver
[song "Call to Adventure" begins]

CHOR [*sings*]

Call to Adventure

It's such a trip

Such a trip

Phil sets receiver down; music stops;

starts to lift it again; amusic resumes

CHOR [*sings*]
Call to Adventure
Think a starship
A starship

*sets receiver down again; music stops;
starts to lift it again; music resumes*

It's Adventure calling
And in the nick of time
On the Princess Line
Adventure calling
To leave home
On your own
It's a Call to Adventure
And it's on the - Princess Phone

*Phil puts the receiver to his ear
Dirk appears, elsewhere in the galaxy,
the System of Seventeen*

DIRK
Hello? Has this call been re-routed?
There was some kind of static, singing.
I must reach Antonus Equiverté.

PHIL
Off-maps hub. Trying to leave with the family on
vacation.

Transit hub. Then this is not the
Consulate?

I... consult for Transworld Electro.

Please. I'm calling from the System of
Seventeen.

BILLIE
Dad!

I've a message I'm told is important.
For Ambassador Equiverté.

PHIL
Go on.

Tell him < Ud-dos Ai-ram >

Ud-dos Ai-ram.

DIRK

Some kind of ancient incantation.

PHIL

Not... familiar with ancient incantations.

It can... seat evil onto a starship.

Kind of a... boarding pass.

Why would I want to seat evil onto a starhip?

BILLIE

Dad – it could be some kind of space tribute!

The Council is divided...

PHIL

That's it? Ud-dos Ai-ram?

phone call has ended

MILLIE

Dear, who was that?

PHIL

Space will play an important role in all our lives, Son...

END

• • •

~~Starhip Saturn, Equiverté's quarters~~

~~— a Dancer has floated in a drink~~

~~ARC-PRINCESS~~

~~An eau de vivre, avant dormir.~~

~~EQUIVERTÉ~~

~~To ease the pain. You're too kind.~~

~~— a dancer, masked, behind the abassador~~

~~HER FAMILIAR~~

~~Readings on a level four dark emergence...~~

~~ARC-PRINCESS~~

~~First card...~~

Dancer displays a card

PHIL 2

The Return of Devices

* *_*_* * * || * * * * * *

CHOR + DANCERS
|: The Return of
Devices :|
Song three of six on
the jukebox...

CHOR + DANCERS
|: **The Return of
Devices / It has to
be... continually
tuned** :|

CHOR
| tones |

• •

The Remedy

MILLIE
Phil, have you seen Billie? He's wandered off.

PHIL SOCKET
Let the boy explore.

MILLIE
I don't know that an unfamiliar Transit Hub
is the best place for a young boy to –

SKY HOP
The kid found it in back. It was an older model,
hadn't been decommissioned, but the kid slid a
nickel in and it sprang to life.

[song "Baby Bae" intro]

CHOR [*sings*]
||: doo doo doo doo doo
doo doo doo doo :||

[speaking over intro]

PHIL SOCKET
It's a jukebox, son.

BILLIE
But is it some kind of portal?

PHIL SOCKET

They made them in the 50s, son. The 1950s. They played songs.

BILLIE

Cool. What are the 50s?

PHIL SOCKET

Though I guess a song could be a kind of a portal. In the poetic sense.

END

song "Baby Bae"

~~CHOR [sings]~~

~~Whoa Baby Baby,~~

~~Whoa Baby Bae,~~

~~Guess you had to go~~

~~Had to get away~~

~~But when I look up at the stars in the night~~

~~I'm feeling you could make any wrong a right~~

~~Whoa Baby Baby,~~

~~Whoa Baby Bae,~~

~~Guess you had to go~~

~~Had to get away~~

~~*Sky Hop speaks over song outro*~~

~~*— a Dancer Arc Princess enters*~~

~~SKY HOP~~

~~No, you don't see Arc Princesses much on Earth.~~

~~But I remember one long night, the night of a strange spring blizzard, when our red neon sign, through the unremitting flakes, looked oddly poetic, an Arc Princess came in.~~

~~All our view ports in the Metaverse went dead.~~

~~All flights out were delayed. Even the red neon Remedy flickered. She'd come in for a cup of coffee, then left in the storm... But while she was here I had seventeen poetic insights...~~

~~Though all I could remember afterward was something... something about Pennsylvania...~~

*Proctor-Chaperone and ASDU Lord 1
have entered*

~~PROCTOR-CHAPERONE
Car serivee for Mr. Mayhem.~~

~~ASDU LORD 1
Ambassador. Here I presume to negotiate the
Celestial.~~

~~DARK AMBASSADOR
Something like that.~~

~~ASDU LORD 1
An enterprise of ~~caution yield right~~ ~~futility.~~~~

START

Phil has entered

PHIL SOCKET
Phil Socket here. Pardon the intrusion. Seem to
have breached the Metaverse. Message from Dirk,
though.

DARK AMBASSADOR
Dirk? A space-message?

PHIL SOCKET
If you're Ambassador Antonus Equiverté.

DARK AMBASSADOR
The Ambassador and I are one. What is the
message?

PHIL SOCKET
Ud-dos Ai-ram

DARK AMBASSADOR
Ud-dos Ai-ram?

DARK AMBASSADOR	CHOR	CHOR
Ud dos...	Long have they lingered in	 tones
	your lore...	.
	And still sometimes	.
Air am...	swoon...	.
	As for a treasured pagaent	.
	passing	.

the Dark Ambassador has vanished

ASDU LORD 1

This is some charmed intervention. Proctor-Chaperone, access the Sylphen Dream Network!

PROCTOR-CHAPERONE

Your Car-ship, you know our technology has not yet –

ASDU LORD 1

So, the Saturn has returned.

PHIL SOCKET

Has it? With the family. On vacation. Serious re-route though. Seem to have entered Metaverse via jukebox.

parentheses = thoughts spoken aloud

ASDU LORD 1

I presume you are with their crew. An absurd attempt to extract – (caution, merge left) – our Celestial! (Bard Mayhem) Where is this in the Hierarchy of Importance!?

scenelet 6 can begin sparsely

PROCTOR-CHAPERONE

Indeed, Lord-ship, it –

PHIL SOCKET

Where exactly am I?

ASDU LORD 1

Newsylvia. Let it be a learning experience.

PHIL 4~~the embrace breaks off~~~~BRAD MAYHEM~~~~— My god, I _am_ Brad Mayhem!~~~~the Sky Hop slaps him~~~~SKY HOP~~~~That's so you stay awake. In other
dimensions.~~~~MILLIE SOCKET~~~~Oh my goodness, who was that?~~~~SKY HOP~~~~An All-Benificent Celestial Being,
Ma'am, having an identity crisis.~~~~MILLI SOCKET~~~~Well, he seemed like a nice
young man. My husband and
son have disappeared through
a jukebox!~~

.

START*Newsylvia;
Office of Underground Parking
at the Sylvanstar*

ASDU LORD 1

You have the look of a Specialist.

PHIL SOCKET

Transworld Electro specializes in Advanced
Services

ASDU LORD 1

Transworld. Is that some kind of code?

PHIL SOCKET

Do the transceivers on meta-circuits

ASDU LORD 1

Metacircuits. How you... say you < got here >
...How large is the crew?

PHIL SOCKET

Well, Billie, Millie...

ASDU LORD 1

Of your star vessel!

~~CHOR~~

~~Millie?~~

ASDU

Do you know what this is?

~~Yes, Millie~~

PHIL SOCKET

Sort of electro-optical device.

~~Millie?~~

ASDU

A rear-view mirror. Sometimes I like to look
back. The old days. Before the Great
Awakening. ...We've come so far, Mr. Socket.

~~Yes, Millie~~

I've brought you here... the Office of Underground
Parking, Mr. Socket... not only to ask questions
but because... there's a certain romance to such a
place.

Is that not correct?!

PROCTOR-CHAPERONE

Yes you Car-ship. I mean Lord-ship.

ASDU LORD 1

We're... not ashamed of our heritage. Far from it. I like to keep mementos.

*a Dancer has floated in
a car headlight*

Once upon a time we were known for our backseats.

Millie

...But where does all this stand in the HierarcHy of Importance?

Yes, Millie

The Nadirins have reached the ludicrous conclusion that the Celestial we have been tasked to keep is in the Evil Dual of an entangled pair. They wish to repair with him to Earth. To introduce Mr. Bard Mayhem to the verdant pastures of Earth would be akin to sticking your uninsulated finger into an electric socket.

PHIL SOCKET

Not sure I'm following.

ASDU LORD 1

Not following? What better proof positive that Mr. Bard Mayem needs constraint than the unilateral damage he has inflicted on the native population – the Sylphs of Newsylva.

PHIL SOCKET

...Little constrained here myself

ASDU LORD 1

He has reduced all but outliers to crises in student-hood. Their own shape-shifting – shape-shifters of the Sylvan night – turned against them. Where is that in your Hierarchy of Importance?!

PROCTOR-CHAPERONE

Truly it --

ASDU LORD 1

Where?!

PHIL SOCKET

Thinking pretty important to find Billie.
Millie's bound to be worried. Millie -

ASDU LORD 1

Ah, your crew. Mr. Law visited once before. With calamitous consequences. Now he's back. Perhaps the memories of that first misadventure have been wiped - turn left - from his subsystems. He is easily monitored. Access the **Sylphen** Dream Network.

PROCTOR-CHAPERONE

Your Car-ship - Lord-ship - as you know our technology is not yet -

ASDU LORD 1

Then access our Sentient Web!

END

o o o . o

Starship Saturn; the bridge

~~DREAM GUARD~~

~~Captain, permission to speak freely?~~

~~BUCK LAW~~

~~Dream Guard, you may.~~

~~DREAM GUARD~~

~~It was noted in our brief that the ASDU have achieved a certain level of monitoring technology.~~

PHIL 5

~~Even a Princess Dreams~~

~~* * * * * || _ _ * * * * *~~

~~CHOR + DANCERS~~

~~|: Even a Princess~~

~~Dreams :|~~

~~Dream one of six before
night ends...~~

~~CHOR + DANCERS~~

~~|: **Even a Princess**~~

~~**Dreams**~~

~~/ **Which button to
push... :|**~~

~~CHOR~~

~~|tones|~~

• •

The Remedy

MILLIE

Phillip H. Socket, where have you been?

PHIL SOCKET

Well, Millie, it was paramount to other-worldly.

MILLIE

And where's Billie?

PHIL SOCKET

Well, I – he was with me a moment ago, covered in
slime, there was a ray-gun fracas... I passed
out... the field, darkness, fresh air –
It comes now like a dream –

MILLIE

Well if you passed out you can pass back in
– and find Billie.

PHIL SOCKET

Billie. Yes. Thinking... Alien jukebox.
Metaverse via retro songs. 50s design.
Fins. Possible UFO connection.

MILLIE

Please, Phil, you know I don't understand any of that.

PHIL SOCKET

Problem. Which button to push?

MILLIE

Which button? I don't know what songs kids listen to these days.

PHIL SOCKET

Racking brain. Which button...

MILLIE

What about this one? < Halo 9 Infinite Nightmare >

PHIL SOCKET

< Halo 9... >

MILLIE

It sounds like something Billie might – Or how about this one?

PHIL SOCKET

< The Casa Mezca >

MILLIE

Yes. < Casa Mezca >...

MILLIE

Please, Phil, you know I don't understand any of that.

PHIL SOCKET

Problem. Which button to push?

MILLIE

Which button? I don't know what songs kids listen to these days.

PHIL SOCKET

Racking brain. Which button...

MILLIE

What about this one? < Halo 9 Infinite Nightmare >

PHIL SOCKET

< Halo 9... >

MILLIE

It sounds like something Billie might – Or how about this one?

PHIL SOCKET

< The Casa Mezca >

MILLIE

Yes. < Casa Mezca >...

PHIL SOCKET

The Casa Mezca...

Racking brain...

Racking brain...

~~SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA~~

~~And we're not~~

~~you know?~~

~~...We're just~~

~~Channeling the~~

~~fiction fields~~

~~to manifest belief~~

~~SYLPH DOUBLED~~

~~really changing~~

~~...We're just~~

~~fiction fields~~

~~that surround us~~

~~to manifest belief~~

~~BUCK LAW~~

~~(It was a party trick alright. One straight out of the subconscious.)~~

~~SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA~~

~~A sylphen secret, Mr... Law. Now where were we?~~

~~BUCK LAW~~

~~I'd... come in from the storm.~~

START

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA

The storm or the stars? And our chūkai-sha seemed to know you! ...The house will stake us to its limit?

CHŪKAI-SHA

Bien sur, Madame. And may I say, sir? ...It is good to have you back at the tables.

BUCK LAW

Then I... _have_ been here before?

CHŪKAI-SHA

Indeed, sir. And, may I say? Manners make the man.

BUCK LAW

I didn't know what to say. Or think. A beautiful shape-shifting sylph. An elegant croupier. So I had been here before. Or maybe it had been a dress rehearsal. But how?

CHŪKAI-SHA

Perhaps, sir, the device.

soundscape halts

BUCK LAW

Device?

CHŪKAI-SHA

I see it carries with it concealed coordinates.

BUCK LAW

(He was right. The Princesses' gift stored coordinates I'd been tasked to forget.)

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA

I imagine, Mr. Law, you must be on a mission.

BUCK LAW

That much I recall.

soundscape resumes

SYLPH OF CASA MEZCA

Dark-ops, no doubt?
Double agents and the
like?

SYLPH DOUBLED

Dark-ops, no doubt?
Double agents and the
like?

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA

Do you play at other games, Mr. Law?

BUCK LAW

What could be better.

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA

...Cards, perhaps. ...The Deck of Dreams.

BUCK LAW

Deck of Dreams.

CHŪKAI-SHA

The Demon Deck, sir.

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA

Designed to help a man remember, Mr. Law. Things once upon a time forgot.

BUCK LAW

(The deck the chūkai-sha prepared wasn't one you'd find just anywhere. Psion cards of immutable foretelling. A.K.A. the Deck of Dreams. The Demon Deck.)

Just one question, if I may. Before we start.

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA
Of course.

SYLPH DOUBLED
Of course.

BUCK LAW

What exactly am I trying to remember?

soundscape halts

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA

Why, your big plan, Mr. Law. You do have one, don't you?

CHŪKAI-SHA

We've always had, sir, the utmost confidence in your plans.

soundscape resumes

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA
First card, please.

CHŪKAI-SHA
– Voici le première carte –

SYLPH OF CASA MEZCA
Destruction by Electrocution.

BUCK LAW
Is that a good card?

soundscape halts

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA
It could be.

CHŪKAI-SHA
If I may, sir. It may refer to your anticipated exchange. Your agreement to trade places with the Mayhem.

BUCK LAW
I'm to trade places with Mayhem?

CHŪKAI-SHA
Why, yes sir. A... quantum exchange. Of entangled states.

soundscape resumes

BUCK LAW
So that was it...

CHŪKAI-SHA
I believe it can be viewed, sir, as a <learning experience >

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA
Commander, is everything alright?

BUCK LAW
Splendid. I —

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA
Perhaps after you save Earth you can gallantly
save the Sylphs as well. We're in need of saving
too, Mr...

BUCK LAW
Law. ...Buck Law.

CHŪKAI-SHA
Indeed, sir, the ASDU curators have run amok.

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA
And it's our planet, Mr. Law! New-sylph-ia. Our
tangled-over midnight bloom! ...Second card, please.

CHŪKAI-SHA
— Voici le deuxième carte —

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA
The Knave of Six Despairs.

BUCK LAW
Is that a good card?

soundscape halts

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA
I can be.

CHŪKAI-SHA
If I may, sir, perhaps it refers to your plan to
employ a sylph. To evade capture.

BUCK LAW
My plan to use a sylph...

CHŪKAI-SHA

Why, yes sir. Shape-shifting. And thereby
access their Network of Dreams.

BUCK LAW

The Dream Network. Yes, of course...

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA

Third card, please.

SYLPH DOUBLED

Third card, please.

CHŪKAI-SHA

– Voici le troisième carte –

SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA

The Sylph of Second Sleep.

BUCK LAW

The Sylph of... Second Sleep. Then that must be
whom I'm meant to meet.

CHŪKAI-SHA

She's not here, sir. She's at home, in her
bedroom. Getting ready for a prom...

END

~~BUCK LAW~~

~~Well, how shall I <go> ?~~

~~SYLPH OF THE CASA MEZCA~~

~~You have to go nowhere, Mr... Law. Her bedroom
will come to you. In a moment you will find
yourself outside.~~

~~And may be needing this.~~

~~*a dancer floats in a corsage*~~

DAD

~~Sylphs were a little like the Princesses, I guess. Space-time was different for them. They could just... fold it. Like origami. They were in touch that way with the Metaverse.~~

START

~~I didn't have long to wait. There was a crash. Of lightning. Just like in the movies.~~ Suddenly I found myself at her front door. A couple answered. I assumed they were her parents...

DAD

You're a student, are you son?

BUCK LAW

Well I... command the dark-ops mission dispatched to your planet.

DAD

Some sort of after-school program?

BUCK LAW

In a certain sense.

MOM

You must be the < Starship Captain >!

BUCK LAW

Yes, Ma'am.

DYNAMO

Oh wow.

MOM

Part of the tribute scene. Well, don't you look the part! ...I've always wanted to pilot a starship.

BUCK LAW

It's never too late, Ma'am.

DAD

Second Sleep hasn't told us much about you.

BUCK LAW

I am here on matters of some urgency.

DAD

I'm sure you are.

DYNAMO

Just... wow.

DAD

Dang it all, Dynamo. What is it?

DYNAMO

Nothing.

DAD

This is... uh... Mr. ... Second Sleep hasn't even told us your name.

BUCK LAW

Law. Buck Law.

DAD

Mmm.

MOM

This is Second Sleep's younger sister. Dynamo.

BUCK LAW
Hello, Dynamo.

DYNAMO
Hey. I've suddenly decided I want to go to the Prom too.

MOM
Darling, we can discuss it later.

DYNAMO
The tribute scenes. They're, like, to help with your existential crises, right?

BUCK LAW
(I realized, flanked in the doorstep by the lightning and her parents, she was right. She -)

DYNAMO
I think I could - really get into that.

BUCK LAW
Can your sister shape-shift too?

SYLPH OF 2ND SLEEP
When she's in the mood. Though she tends to get stuck. I see you've met my parents.

a dancer "floats in" the corsage

BUCK LAW
This is for you.

SYLPH OF 2ND SLEEP
...Well, how do I look? Like a dream come true?

DAD

PROM. P-R-O-M First four letters of <Promise>.
You kids be back by midnight.

BUCK

Yes sir

DAD

Maybe you had after-parties in mind, with this...
shape-shifter of the sylvan night.

BUCK

No sir.

DAD

Good.

SYLPH OF 2ND SLEEP

Daddy, please.

DAD

Every thousand proms, prom midnight, the
wandering poles of belief flip. Fiction Fields
are no joke, son.

BUCK

No sir.

DAD

Alright then. Have fun, kids.

SYLPH OF 2ND SLEEP

Thanks, Daddy.

MOM

Darling, don't you think you were just a bit...
harsh?

DAD

Mmm... doesn't look like a student. Doesn't look
like a kid, either.

END

◦ ◦ ◦

~~Krung Field;~~

~~BUCK LAW~~

~~Captain's narrative. Using our fake student ID's~~

~~—————Dancer floats IDs in~~

~~my <prom date> and I successfully negotiated the security
cordon at Krung Perimeter.~~

~~—————PROCTOR CHAPERONE~~

~~—————Have fun... Great cosplay.~~

~~—————Dancer floats IDs out~~

~~And the corsage? Engineered as sylphen
protection. Second Sleep would be in close
quarters with the Celestial throughout our
Midnight Op. We didn't want a melt-down.~~

~~And speaking of Mayhem, it wasn't long before we
found him. A moment I'd replay in my mind...~~

~~QINORA ————— TD~~

~~Captain —~~

~~Captain —~~

~~you have returned.~~

~~BUCK LAW~~

~~But there'd be time for that later. Mayhem
himself —~~

~~A2s4 Saturn's Return~~