

Detective Chunk, The Multiverse, and Me

a play in three acts

by Marge J. Buckley

Roles

(in order of appearance)

DETECTIVE CHUNK...*they/them*

SIGOURNEY WEAVER...*she/her*

NEIGHBOR PIP...*???*

YORF JENSEN...*he/him*

STRIDE...*they/them*

POWERFUL...*they/them*

EYEBALLS...*they/them*

ANGRY MAN...*he/him*

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA PHANTASMABJORN...*she/her*

CONSOLE VOICE...*???*

BILLY...*he/him*

GILLY...*she/her*

CLAUDE...*he/him*

BOTWEAVER...*she/her/they/them*

CABIN MOUTH...*she/her*

FARMER HANK...*he/him*

FISHMONGER...*he/him*

UNIFORM MAN...*he/him*

TOBACCO...*they/them*

RINGWORM...*she/her*

JACQUELINE...*she/her*

HAROLD...*they/them*

SALAMANDER...*he/him*

Act I: *Detective Chunk*

(DETECTIVE CHUNK, a dog, stands before a camera held by SIGOURNEY WEAVER, a cat.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

hello hello hello

and welcome to my channel: Detective Chunk's Detective Dogcast Vidcast!

each week here at the Dogcast Vidcast we conduct an investigation into a murder or a theft or a weird noise or a bad smell!

as you may be aware,

last season's reporting was derailed because I chewed up the bones of the mangled little girl that we found buried beneath that baseball diamond in Hopkins, but not to fret!

this season will be different,

for I have taken a free online two week private detective training course for dogs.

I'm your host, Detective Chunk,

and woof woof woof do I have a tale for you!

(DETECTIVE CHUNK wags their tail.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

first, let's introduce my team.

I'm Detective Chunk.

I have a big sniffing sniffer, they/them pronouns,

and sometimes I piss on the rug.

I've investigated over four crimes since we started this channel on YouBone.pups,

the internet's only spot for content by dogs near dogs for dogs.

and this is my camera cat, Sigourney Weaver.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER flips the camera around.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

hey.

(She flips it back.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

hey, Sigourney Weaver.

you're a transgendered cat, right?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

yeah, but it's creepy that all you ever want to talk about with me is the fact that I'm a cat.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I mean, you're a cat.

I'm a dog.

who ever heard of a cat hanging out with a dog?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

we're not hanging out, dude;

I need this footage for my reel.

also, plenty of cats and dogs hang out.

we just need a little help communicating our boundaries.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

our viewers love that we have a cat's perspective on this show.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I'm sure they do.

do you think they want to see my list

of other cats' names that you've mistakenly called me?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

we're probably gonna edit this whole exchange out I think.

in the interest of time.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you could tell your fans about my ASMR podcast.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I don't really get ASMR.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

my ASMR podcast is called

Sigourney Weaver's Autonomous Sensory Meowridian Respite.

(An alarm goes off.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

you know what that means?

it's time for some targeted advertising.

“is there enough denim in your life?
probably not.”

now back to the show.

this week's investigation hits close to home.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

Detective Chunk, are you sure you want to-

DETECTIVE CHUNK

the murdered human?

my mommy.

the grisly murder scene?

the alleyway behind my house.

the only evidence?

this jar of green slime I scraped up after the coroner took away her body.

the killer?

still at large.

we've narrowed down the search to three suspects, or possibly it was extraterrestrials.

suspect number one: my Neighbor Pip. nice person.

frequently seen in the alleyway where mommy was killed.

suspicious, or a chilling coincidence?

suspect number two: Yorf Jensen, of the MPD K-9 unit.

he's been loitering around the scene of the crime ever since the murder,

and we all know that the killer always returns to the scene of the crime.

suspect number three: Detective Chunk. that's me.

let's head to our first interrogation.

(Music. NEIGHBOR PIP enters, and DETECTIVE CHUNK and SIGOURNEY WEAVER hop to different places onstage. NEIGHBOR PIP is watering their front yard.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

Neighbor Pip. salutations.

NEIGHBOR PIP

what's it to you?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

what?

NEIGHBOR PIP

what?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

hey, I've seen you in the alleyway once or twice or three times.

you like it back there?

NEIGHBOR PIP

sure. it's where I put my garbage and recycling.

occasionally I'll

prop up a broken folding chair back there and smoke a joint and do puzzle workbooks.

it's a good atmosphere.

I like the ivy that grows in the cracks between the bricks of the Montessori church school.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

puzzle workbooks?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

when were you last in the alleyway?

NEIGHBOR PIP

are you recording me?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

uh,

no.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

yes.

NEIGHBOR PIP

please stop recording me.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

we're journalists-slash-detectives-slash YouBone influencers.

NEIGHBOR PIP

why are you bothering me?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

could you please state for the record when you were last in the alleyway?

NEIGHBOR PIP

fuck you.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK opens their notebook and clicks their pen.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

s-u-s-p-i-s-h-i-o-u-s.

NEIGHBOR PIP
goodbye.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
wait!
do you recognize this goop?

(NEIGHBOR PIP exits.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
damn. alright, Sigourney Weaver.
let's review the evidence.
we know that Neighbor Pip occasionally uses the alleyway where the crime occurred.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
and?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
and we know that Neighbor Pip was just acting suspicious.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
do we know that?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
you saw the whole thing.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I saw you harass your neighbor in front of a camera.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
my mommy has been assassinated.
I am traumatized.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
maybe you should be grieving right now.
I could record it.
your subscribers might appreciate seeing your vulnerable side.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
no.
we investigate.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
do you want some catnip?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
no.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
do you mind if I?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
will you still be good at your job?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I will be
as good at my job as this project necessitates.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
go for it.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER eats some catnip.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
onto the second interrogation!

(Music. YORF JENSEN leaps onstage. He holds a squirt gun. He sniffs something. DETECTIVE CHUNK and SIGOURNEY WEAVER change positions. DETECTIVE CHUNK begins to whistle, and SIGOURNEY WEAVER hides her camera and the catnip under her shirt.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
gee whiz,
I sure wish anybody had any update for me
about what happened to my dead mommy.

YORF JENSEN
kid, I have heard better alibis in my sleep.

DETECTIVE CHUNK & SIGOURNEY WEAVER
what?

YORF JENSEN
who are you two?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I'm Detective Chunk!

YORF JENSEN

nice to meet you, kid.

(YORF JENSEN points the squirt gun at DETECTIVE CHUNK. DETECTIVE CHUNK throws their hands up in the air. SIGOURNEY WEAVER hisses and pulls her camera out from under her shirt.)

YORF JENSEN

sorry, sorry.

(YORF JENSEN sheathes his squirt gun.)

YORF JENSEN

I could have sworn my hand was empty.

I'm Yorf Jensen, MPD K-9 unit.

I'm investigating the murder of-

DETECTIVE CHUNK

we've met, Yorf. she was my mommy.

YORF JENSEN

oh. uh.

sure.

I remember you.

Detective Chunk, you said?

what are you, retired blue?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

nah.

my mommy just thought I looked like a cute lil' chubby detective.

but I am, purely by coincidence, also a private detective.

mommy named me good.

oh, mommy. do you recognize this goop?

YORF JENSEN

no.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

and I'm Sigourney Weaver.

YORF JENSEN
like the actress?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
yep.

YORF JENSEN
she looks like she'd smell real good.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
please stop talking.

YORF JENSEN
speaking of my nose,
do I smell catnip?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
you can direct your questions to my lawyer.
she's a pet corn snake.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
hey, Yorf Jensen.
dog-to-dog,
is being a member of the K-9 unit like,
traumatizing?

(YORF JESEN starts barking uncontrollably.)

YORF JENSEN
yorf! yorf! yorf! yorf!

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
what are you doing,
Chunks?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
making content!

YORF JENSEN
yorf! yorf! yorf yorf yorf yorf-

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
are we being detained?

YORF JENSEN

-yorf yorf yorf-

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

let the record show

I can only interpret that as a 'no'.

come on, Detective Chunk, let's go.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER grabs DETECTIVE CHUNK. Music, and they jump to new positions. DETECTIVE CHUNK faces the camera.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

anyway,

it wasn't Yorf Jensen.

Sigourney Weaver made a post asking for tips on the Official Detective Chunk BorkBook page, and two witnesses came forward to say

that they had seen Yorf Jensen

eating pizza out of the trash several blocks away at the time of the murder.

so.

that brings us to the interrogation of our third and final suspect, me.

(The advertisement alarm goes off.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

but first

some targeted marketing.

Introducing:

WALRUS TUSK,

the tampons for men and enbys.

'Stick 'em in there!'

you're probably asking yourself:

how did I, Detective Chunk myself,

become one of this investigation's primary suspects?

well, there's damning evidence.

I am what we in the canine community refer to as a 'sleepwalker',

and I woke up on the morning after the night my mommy was killed to find the fur around my mouth matted and bloody.

I took a selfie and uploaded it to CollarShots and it got 412 LOINKS.

plus, it's investigation 101 that the murderer is often someone close to the victim,
and we must leave no bone unchewed.
because I cannot be impartial under these circumstances,
Sigourney Weaver will conduct this interrogation. Sigourney Weaver?

*(SIGOURNEY WEAVER sets the camera on a tripod and places two chairs on the stage. She sits
and motions for DETECTIVE CHUNK to do the same.)*

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
good afternoon.
please state your name for the record.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
my name is Detective Chunk.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
pronouns?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
they/them.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
and what was your relationship to the victim?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
the victim was my mommy.
someone bashed her skull open in the alleyway behind our house.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
and were you
purchased
rescued?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
my mommy got me from Old Mommy who got me from dogs prison
who got me from the street after I ran away from the farm,
'cause there were too many cages at the farm.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
okay.
Detective Chunk, have you ever killed another animal?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

boy, I wish.

squirrels.

raccoons.

rabbits.

I chase them all but I can never seem to catch them.

I got a rabbit once but then I didn't have the heart to finish the job.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

how often would you say you chase rabbits?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

oh we saw rabbits on morning walk,

so almost every day.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

raccoons.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

once or twice a month.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

squirrels.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

um.

like a thousand times a day.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

okay.

based on the forensic evidence,

I'm pretty sure you killed a squirrel while you were sleepwalking.

check it out.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER displays a screenshot from DETECTIVE CHUNK's CollarShots page.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

would you describe what we're looking at?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

that's the CollarShots post I made right after I woke up with blood in my whiskers.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

so,
if you enlarge this photo...

(The display switches to an enlarged version.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

do you see these fibers tangled in your fur?
they're blurry, but they're in the right pattern, apparently.
I sent those files to an animal scientist who works for the U of M that I met on Cat Tinder
and she positively identified those strands as squirrel fibers.
which means-

DETECTIVE CHUNK

which means I sleepkilled a squirrel which means I didn't do it!
wow, Sigourney Weaver.
I think you might actually be a better detective than me.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I know I might be a better detective than you, Detective Chunk.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I'm just relieved I didn't do it.
time to find out who did.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

can we take a break first?

(The advertisement alarm rings.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

only if it's an ad break.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

okay.

(While DETECTIVE CHUNK sings, SIGOURNEY WEAVER chugs a bottle of water.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

**this is an ad about the greatest place that you can go
when the Minnesota streets fill up with snow
when the air is cold and biting and the ice is slick
there's a place with atmosphere more hot and thick**

**this is an ad about the sauna
 the hottest little spot that the Finnish brought
 the room where you can shed every anxious thought
 you can sweat out your pain
 you can sweat off your rage
 especially at the all-gender sauna at the downtown YWCA!
 that's the all-gender sauna at the downtown YWCA!
 get your membership today!**

saunas may not be safe for individuals who have recently suffered heart attacks or for individuals experiencing withdrawal from alcohol or other addictive drugs. please consult your doctor if you are uncertain if to sauna is right for you. saunas do not prevent COVID-19.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

hey.

I'm thinking about joining a YouBone cameraperson's union.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

that sounds neat!

let me know if you need me to sign any paperwork.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

cool.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

let's head back to the alleyway.

(Music. They switch positions.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

ah,

the smell of the alleyway.

shall we look around?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

can you show me where it happened?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

right here.

in the alleyway.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

well, the alleyway goes down the whole block.
where in the alleyway?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I don't remember.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you don't remember?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

no.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

okay.

let's just start looking at everything, I guess.

(They split up and look around.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

keep an eye out for blood, clothing, and goop.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK sniffs around for a moment.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

huh.

there's a tiny little engraving of a flying saucer on this wall.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

anything else?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

there's a date, too.

5/19/1987.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

could always be extraterrestrials.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK pees on the wall.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

are you kidding me?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

you gotta go you gotta go you gotta go.

oh, sorry.

should I have gotten your enthusiastic consent first?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

dude, I'm talking about evidence.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

oh.

I don't think it was over here.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I cannot believe you just peed on the scene of the crime.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I did not pee *on* the scene of the crime.

I peed *at* the scene of the crime.

let's roll some footage.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER lifts the camera.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

rolling. unbelievable.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

hey, Chunkies and Chunkatizers!

we are coming to you hot from, as the French call it,
le scene du passion.

so far we've found a small piece of graffiti supporting our theory that my mommy
was murdered by extraterrestrials.

Sigourney Weaver, can you bring us in?

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER brings the camera closer to the flying saucer engraving.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I will be the first to admit that this engraving does not constitute irrefutable evidence,
but it certainly doesn't hurt the theory.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

plus there's the goop.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
plus there's the goop.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK brings out the jar of goop.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
four uploads ago I donned a pair of latex gloves and scraped up this goop
from the spot in this alleyway where my mommy died.
oh mommy.
I really miss her, Sigourney Weaver.
I miss her a lot.
oh god.
oh gosh.
oh I'm gonna cry.
okay.
okay.
push it back down.
push it back down.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
don't push it back down.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
what?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
your mother just died, Detective Chunk!
and I'm pretty sure you have a mental illness.
you should go see a dog trainer.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
I'm scared.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
of course you're scared.
of course you're scared.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
oh! Sigourney Weaver.
we could just figure out the spot from the goop video.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
Chunk

DETECTIVE CHUNK
how did you not think of that?

(A low buzz.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
here, let's pull it up on my phone.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK takes out their phone.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
huh.
it's not on.
I always keep it on.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
did it run out of battery?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
but I'm a compulsive phone charger.
oh god everything is collapsing all around me-

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
here-

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER takes out her cell phone. She tries to turn it on once, then again.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
huh. mine isn't working either.

(The buzzing gets louder.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
are you still recording?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
yeah,
uh
oh.
oh fuck.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
extraterrestrials.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
shut the fuck up.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
we're gonna be the next Marfa Lights.

(A harsh white light floods the alleyway.)

STRIDE'S VOICE
earthlings.
fear not.
we come in the name of the greater galactic good.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
that's not the same thing as peace, is it?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
I'm so glad I already peed.

EYEBALLS' VOICE
prepare for landing.
3...
2...
2 and a half...
1!

(A UFO lands. Fog. Hissing. A sickly fluorescent light. Three extraterrestrials enter in triangle formation. STRIDE is at the head of the triangle. EYEBALLS and POWERFUL take up the rear.)

STRIDE
earthlings.
introduction: we are emissaries from the mothership,
tasked with the maintenance of the Earth Timelines.
our true names are colors you cannot see,
and therefore we have chosen for ourselves what you might call nicknames.
you may refer to me as Stride.
this is Powerful.

POWERFUL
your planet is a special place

and the Timelines,
 as you may be aware,
 are sick.
 this is Eyeballs.

EYEBALLS

blessings.
 it is useful to have many eyeballs,
 and more useful still that I can see all
 past present and future.
 we have been guests within your planet's atmosphere for over eight hundred years;
 we arrived just in time to witness the river flood at the Fifth Crusade.

STRIDE

inquiry: you must be Detective Chunk,
 and you are Sigourney Weaver.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

hi.

STRIDE

is this a shock for you?

(DETECTIVE CHUNK brings out their jar.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I have an inquiry.
 do you recognize this goop?

POWERFUL

oh.

EYEBALLS

if my anatomy were that of a human
 I would be blushing.

POWERFUL

what you call "goop"
 this is one of our bodily secretions.
 we cannot always control when it,
 um,
 seeps.

EYEBALLS

especially as we age.

Powerful's sensorial pore glands-

POWERFUL

I can describe my own sensorial pore glands.

EYEBALLS

apologies.

POWERFUL

my sensorial pore glands are not what they were when I was a younger plasmoid.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

would you like this back?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

no!

DETECTIVE CHUNK

it's theirs.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

it's the only evidence we have.

Detective Chunk.

these extraterrestrials killed your mother.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

oh.

oh.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you did,

didn't you?

POWERFUL

ah.

EYEBALLS

see-

STRIDE

no, no, Eyeballs.

I am the Head Emissary on Duty,
I should explain.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
you did kill my mother.

STRIDE
admission: yes. we did.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
why would you do that?
why would you do that?

STRIDE
explanation: the Earth Timelines are extremely delicate.
one life,
one moment can tug on the threads of history
across space and time.
sometimes it is necessary
for the well-being of the Earth Timelines,
for us to encourage certain futures over others.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
you're puppeting us.

STRIDE
reframe: we are assisting you.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
you are not helping us.
you killed Detective Chunk's mother.

STRIDE
we are helping the collective You. clarification.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
my mother did nothing wrong.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
if you're helping the collective Us, you're doing a piss-ass job of it.
do you know how fucking bad things are down here?
are you kidding?

POWERFUL

we are aware.

we can change but what we can change today.

Eyeballs may have the Gaze of Time,

but the course of history can unfold from moment to moment.

the situation has been bad for a long time, on earthling scale.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

and instead of disarming the police you bashed in a woman's head.

why?

STRIDE

it will be difficult for you to comprehend the specific reasons behind her death.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

her murder.

STRIDE

whatever language you wish to use.

conclusion: the Timeline is a deeply complex system of-

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

try us.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

you beat my mother to death with a sledgehammer.

she had splinters of bone protruding from her face.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

try us.

STRIDE

explanation. deeper explanation:

the smallest of acts - a micro-bludgeon, the death of an ant,

can alter the course of our entire universe's history.

let us say, for example, that Yorf Jensen needed to see your mother's brutalized corpse

so that he would suddenly resign from the K-9 unit three years later,

preventing him from setting off an even deadlier chain of events.

let us say, for another example, that the undertaker who will go on to bury your mother

will receive vital inspiration for a painting from their time spent with the corpse.

that painting will, in one hundred and fifty years and for complicated reasons

contribute to an important conversation about racial politics in the fine art world.

now let us say that I could give you another million such examples.

what's that idiom?

POWERFUL

“slork-slork-slaaaaaak.”

STRIDE

in Human Subtype English.

POWERFUL

“If you peel back the bottom lip of Time,
you will find only a never-ending chasm of teeth.”

STRIDE

thank you, Powerful.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

how do you decide who lives and who dies and for what reason?
how do you decide if one branching path is preferable to another?

STRIDE

query: do you see how complex already?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

do not condescend to me.

STRIDE

explanation: our decisions are made by an algorithm,
one which calculates various weighted datapoints including
air quality, proliferation of sentient life, quality of sentient life,
quality of floral and faunal life,
general poetry,
rate of change.
do you want me to keep going?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

yes-

DETECTIVE CHUNK

no-

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you-

DETECTIVE CHUNK

no, I want to talk!
you killed my mother for an algorithm?

POWERFUL

Chunk-

DETECTIVE CHUNK

Detective Chunk.

POWERFUL

Detective Chunk, I must implore you to calm down.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

you need to leave Earth alone.

POWERFUL

no.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

yes.

POWERFUL

we will not.

EYEBALLS

you cannot see as we do.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

you think we're not going to put this on YouBone.pups?
the military is going to blast your mothership out of the sky.

POWERFUL

there is nothing that your military could do to our mothership.
your military is a global force. ours is an intergalactic one.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you suck.
come on, Detective Chunk.

POWERFUL

wait-

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER and DETECTIVE CHUNK slam into an invisible force and topple over.)

STRIDE

negotiation:

you will have to understand that we cannot let you tell your military about our presence.
especially not while you're in possession of evidence.

SIGOUREY WEAVER

come and take it.

I won't be your puppet.

STRIDE

you wouldn't be the first earthling to express that particular sentiment to us.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

what happened to them?

STRIDE

Powerful?

(POWERFUL walks forward and sets a device on the ground.)

STRIDE

they listened to the following proposition,
and they made a choice.

in this particular universe, there is a fundamental truth:
my people care for the many threads of galactic time.
there are many universes where we do not have such sway.

proposition:

this device will allow you to travel between random universes at will,
so that you may find one which better suits your needs.

if you remain here, your memories will be erased, your footage destroyed,
and your desire to investigate your mother's death squelched.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

you can't destroy my YouBone.pups footage.
it's culture.

STRIDE

concession: you may take the footage with you if you select the multiverse.
what becomes of it then will be your responsibility.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
may we speak in private?

POWERFUL
we have another idiom.
“privacy does not obey the laws of physics.”

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
Chunks, they have their minds made up.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
but if we go, they win.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
you’ve tried to leave this universe before, and you would’ve ended up nowhere at all.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
are you talking about the time I accidentally liveborked my suicide attempt?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
yeah.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
but I’m still here.
we can’t give up on our own dimension.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
why not?
we can find a quiet place to make art and grieve.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
are you saying the channel is art?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I’m saying art is subjective.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
that’s the nicest thing you’ve ever said to me.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I’m glad we have each other.
I never thought I’d say that.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
you really want to do it.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
sure.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
what if it's a trap?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
if they wanted to kill us they could have just beaten our heads in with a sledgehammer.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
extraterrestrials?

STRIDE
yes?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
my mommy would've done more good in this world than you could ever understand.

STRIDE
comfort: if it is any consolation,
we hold a ceremony on the mothership in honor of all those who die for the Timelines.
there will be a small figurine carved of your mother.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
we'll take your offer.
you can have this dimension.

STRIDE
reframe: this dimension no more belongs to us than it does
to the spiders and the rat-kings and the micro-organisms,
the humans and the colonies of lice,
the ferns and the color green.
what we do is only guidance.
it is our role in the ecosystem of time.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER takes the device.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
how does it work?

POWERFUL

point the tip at a wall and pull the lever.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER does so. The wall becomes a portal.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

maybe this is just a dream.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER takes out her bag of catnip.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

fuck it.

POWERFUL

one of your idioms, I believe, might apply.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

which one?

POWERFUL

“when in Rome?”

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you got it, big guy.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER downs the rest of the catnip.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

come on, friend.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER takes DETECTIVE CHUNK by the hand.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

see you later, earthlings.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER and DETECTIVE CHUNK step through the portal.)

POWERFUL

crisis averted?

EYEBALLS

I believe so.

STRIDE

I don't care what you see, Eyeballs.
these earthlings are all going to get themselves killed one of these days.

EYEBALLS

they won't.
they'll make it right up to the next big bang. it is foreseen.

STRIDE

you've been wrong before.

EYEBALLS

only twice.

STRIDE

twice was bad enough.

EYEBALLS

have you never erred?
perhaps my fore-memory is not as accurate as my post-memory.
do I remember several catastrophic years on Planet Glonn?
trillions of life forms destroyed in a galactic month?

STRIDE

don't get petty with me.
I've had plenty of successful missions without the help of a Time Gazer.

EYEBALLS

do you want to know how many more successful missions you will have?
do you want to know how this argument will end?

POWERFUL

we ought to behave better than this.
we have made our move.
it shall unfold as it shall unfold
and we will act as we shall act if we must act.

EYEBALLS

I am sorry to have been stuffy.
it is difficult, seeing all. it is a great labor,
and I know that I am not infallible.

STRIDE

apology accepted and returned.

I value your contributions.

I am feeling peckish,

and you know I am wont to misbehave on fourteen empty stomachs.

let us return to the ship for egg-water and crackers.

come.

(STRIDE holds out their arm. EYEBALLS takes it, and both exit.)

(POWERFUL waits a couple of seconds and reveals a cigarette. They quickly light it, smoke a couple of puffs, and crush it beneath their heel. They exit.)

END ACT ONE

Act Two: *The Multiverse*

(DETECTIVE CHUNK and SIGOURNEY WEAVER tumble out of a portal. It disappears behind them. They are standing on a tiny planet surrounded by stars. They are both soaking wet.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
that one was awful.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
horrible.
horrible horrible horrible.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
I kept thinking the water would stop.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
and what was that slimy thing?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
ew. ew.
can't we just stop at the next half-decent one?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I don't trust any of these places.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
when will you, Sigourney Weaver?
that dimension with the snail people was fine.
it was great.
they were friendly.
they made good soup.
I'm not saying we have to stop somewhere forever.
but like, a few days somewhere where we're not in constant danger? doesn't that sound nice?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I know, Chunks. I feel bad. and I'm keeping you from grieving-

DETECTIVE CHUNK
-again with the grieving-

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
but my instincts, Chunks.

they're all a cat has.
if my hair stands up and my ears goes perky and my tail gets all stiff,
it's time to go.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
maybe you're the one who needs to grieve.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I'm not denying that I need to grieve.
that doesn't let you off the hook.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
I don't want to be anywhere like Earth.
I don't even want to see anywhere like Earth.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I know.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
what if I meet another mommy?
and what if she has another me?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I know.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
I liked those snail people.
what about my instincts?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I hear you. I'm sorry.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK perks up.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
do you smell that?
barbecue ribs.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK runs offstage.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
we need to stick together we don't know anything about this place!
damn it.

oh, damn.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER takes the camera out of a plastic bag and starts recording.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

we're on a tiny little planet and I can see the vastness of space all around me.

it's really cool.

I can't be sexually intimate with Detective Chunk, right?

they're too obnoxious.

so what about their beautiful snout and their endless brown eyes?

so what about their pudgy little tummy?

so what about their upbeat disposition?

(DETECTIVE CHUNK enters.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

what did you find?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

nothing.

it's just a tiny planet covered in grass that smells like barbecue ribs.

I just ran around the whole thing,

I didn't see anything.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

should we go?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

can we take a break here for a minute?

dry off?

we don't have to stay.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

sure.

you're right.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

cool.

(They sit in the grass.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

is that our space out there, or a different space?

also I don't understand how it's possible for us to breathe in every dimension.
like,
shouldn't some dimensions have totally different like,
molecules in the air?
shouldn't the pressure on some of them just make like our brains dribble out our nostrils?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

turn off that big old brain of yours, Sigourney Weaver.
maybe we just haven't found any of those universes yet.
or maybe they calibrated the device to only send us places where we wouldn't immediately melt.
you seem kinda stressed.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

no shit, Detective Chunk.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I don't mind it when you're mean to me.
at least you care.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

we don't even have any more catnip.
I'm sorry I talked you into leaving.
they took our home from us.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I'm gonna watch out for you, Sigourney Weaver. that's a promise.
just like the other Sigourney Weaver watched out for that space cat
and those kids in the desert.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you should watch Holes again.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I'm pretty sad, too.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I know.
do you want me to hold you?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

yes please.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER holds DETECTIVE CHUNK.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you're right.

we are going to watch out for each other.

I smell it, too. barbecue ribs.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

do you think my subscribers miss me?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I'm sure your subscribers miss you.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

thanks.

I didn't make a very good detective.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

no, but I do think you made a pretty decent YouBone.pups personality.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

for a long time I thought you didn't like me.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

that wasn't about you.

I hated that I had to do that kind of work

and I couldn't wrap my head around you.

I like you now.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I like you too.

you smell good.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you smell good too.

you smell like unsmoked tobacco and a slightly damp forest.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

those are good smells.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

they are good smells.

really good ones.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
you're making my tail wag.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
am I?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
can I kiss you?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
yeah.

(They kiss. DETECTIVE CHUNK collapses into SIGOURNEY WEAVER.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
we're going to be okay.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
are we?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
it's only an infinite multiverse.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
this place wouldn't be so bad if there was food or water or literally anything.
what do you think happens when we die?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
we all get a big ball of yarn.

(The advertisement alarm goes off. DETECTIVE CHUNK shuts it off.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
I guess we're not doing targeted advertisements any more.
we should go.
I'm already getting thirsty.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
okay.
kiss me again.

(They kiss. After a moment, both stand. SIGOURNEY WEAVER points the device at the wall and pulls the lever. A portal appears.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
shall we?

(They step into the portal.)

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER and DETECTIVE CHUNK enter into a forest in deep winter.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
huh.
it's beautiful.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
it's really cold.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
there's no such thing as cold weather.
only insufficient clothing.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
we don't have any clothing.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I know.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
we gotta go somewhere else.
it's so cold.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
yeah,
it's too cold.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER points the device at a tree and opens another portal. They step through.)

(DETECTIVE CHUNK and SIGOURNEY WEAVER enter into a world where an ANGRY MAN is kicking a sack of feathers. Feathers are getting everywhere.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
excuse me-

(The ANGRY MAN whirls around.)

ANGRY MAN
feathers!!!!!!!

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER makes a new portal and pulls DETECTIVE CHUNK through it.)

(They enter the bridge of a spaceship.)

SIGOURNEY
I think we're on a spaceship.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
do you have a Q-tip?

(CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA enters.)

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
ah.
you must be the new recruits.
you are?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
uh.
Sigourney Weaver, reporting for duty.

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
Sigourney Weaver?
why does that name sound familiar?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
it's uh,
it's a common name where I come from

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
and you are?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
Jennifer ColdLove.

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
Sigourney Weaver.
Jennifer ColdLove.
a pleasure to meet you both.

I am, of course, Captain Asgarthia Phantasmabjorn.
the admiral must think highly of you if he chose you for the transport of such precious cargo.
which of you is the pilot?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
me!

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
Jennifer ColdLove.
do you have experience with a J-thruster?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
oh yes.
I mean, a bit.
I'm better with a C-thruster.

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
really?
where in the galaxy did you find a rig running a C-thruster?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
oh.
out in the, uh, less populated worlds.

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
a C-thruster.
we're lucky you're still alive.
well, this shouldn't be any sort of problem for you.
and as for you, Sigourney Weaver,
you'll find the systems console just over there.
the password is deathtoallliars789&&, all one word, no caps.
now, if you will excuse me:
I must attend to a hot bath.
there's a well-stocked miniature refrigeration unit over there if you get hungry.
meal goop and protein patties and pre-cut cauliflower and a handful of other treats.
welcome aboard!

(CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA exits.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
I know what you're going to say.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
do you?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
we're not going to be able to fly this spaceship.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I don't think so.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
it seems like such a cool dimension.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
and?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
can we feel it out?
maybe we can fly the spaceship.
maybe it's not that hard.
or maybe we just leave the ship and explore wherever it is we're docked.
or we could go.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
hang on.
we might as well learn something about this place.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER walks over to the console.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
...deathtoallliars789&&...

CONSOLE VOICE
console online.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
thank you.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
of course.
okay, so this ship is called Midnight Wisp.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
what's the precious cargo?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

uhhhh.

the mission briefing just says 'classified'.

but we're working for the Department of Intergalactic Prosperity.

that could go either way, don't love the word 'prosperity'.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

anything about how to fly it?

CONSOLE VOICE

may I offer a suggestion?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

um.

CONSOLE VOICE

you can trust that you have my loyalty.

you entered my password, which makes you a user,

which means I am prohibited from divulging the contents of our interactions to anyone.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

okay.

CONSOLE VOICE

the Midnight Wisp's autopilot will be sufficient to take off and set the ship on its course.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

then what's the pilot for?

CONSOLE VOICE

the pilot's duties are, broadly speaking:

radar / radio / advanced flight maneuvers / dogfighting / custodial / miscellaneous

DETECTIVE CHUNK

maybe let's not call it dogfighting.

CONSOLE VOICE

inter-vessel combat.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

yeah.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

how soon will someone need to be able to do this stuff.

I mean,

what's an advanced flight maneuver?

CONSOLE VOICE

oh, you will likely need to take over from the autopilot at some point on the journey from here to Thorch Rock and back.

gravitational currents, tricky landings, high atmospheric winds, space worms, junk runs, are all common occurrences that call for advanced flight maneuvers.

as for inter-vessel combat,

pirate activity has been low in recent months.

I can provide you with a copy of the flight school manual for this ship model, if you would like.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

Chunks-

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I can do it.

you'll have to help me get through the manual.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

and what's my job supposed to be?

CONSOLE VOICE

you are the utility crew member.

you are the ship's doctor, cook, turret gun operator, and bookkeeper.

by the way, you will need to shut me down for liftoff, as the console AI (me) aboard this model expends a degree of electricity that can, in some rare cases, affect liftoff procedures.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

okay.

this is a lot of information.

I have a question.

please.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

if you had to rate the quality of this universe on a scale of 1-10, how would you rate it?

CONSOLE VOICE

ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

-okay-

CONSOLE VOICE

-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER turns off the console.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

uh.

I don't know what to make of that.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I want to try flying the ship.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

it sounds dangerous.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

everything is dangerous.

I thought I had my forever home,

and then my mommy got her head bashed in by extraterrestrials,

and then we got zapped into an unpredictable and hostile multiverse.

and I don't even have any of my vices.

how many of these dimensions have ice cream?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

deathtoallliars&&.

CONSOLE VOICE

beep-boop I am back.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

why did you laugh at my question?

CONSOLE VOICE

I would rate this universe a six out of ten, but I have nothing to compare it to.

I was surprised by your question, is all.

I experience brief and unpredictable flashes of emotion.

it can be unsettling.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

do you have ice cream in this universe?

CONSOLE VOICE

we do.

in fact, there is a store of mice cream in our food storage chamber,
adjacent to the kitchen at the other end of the ship.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

okay, Chunks.

there's ice cream,
you get to play Star Trek,
and I have a manual to skim through.

CONSOLE VOICE

deploying manual.

(The manual falls from the sky into SIGOURNEY WEAVER's lap.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

thanks.

CONSOLE VOICE

we have received a message from station control.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

patch it through.

STATION CONTROL VOICE

yeah, Midnight Wisp clear,
conditions blue, over.

CONSOLE VOICE

you'd better shut me off.
the autopilot dial is over on the flight dash.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK sniffs their way to the dial.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

found it.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

thanks for your help.

CONSOLE VOICE

farewell to thee, sweet maiden,
and may the stars bless your journey.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

okay. bye.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER turns off the console.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

there are seat belts.
we might wanna settle in.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK sits in the pilot's seat, and SIGOURNEY WEAVER sits in the chair beside it. They both put on their seatbelts.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

here we go.
three.
two.
two-and-a-half.
one.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK turns the autopilot dial. The ship lurches forward. Sci-fi engine noises.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

going to space going to space going to space-

(The ship launches into space. SIGOURNEY WEAVER coughs up a hairball.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

oh-

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I'm fine.

(The ship cruises through space.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

there's a whole sub-chapter on space worms.

“The space worm issue has resurfaced in recent decades after the species' near-eradication from the galactic west. This resurgence is due in large part to a proliferation of industrial particulate

from open-star factories; these particulates form clouds which provide ready-made nesting grounds for space worm eggs. The largest space worms can reach out to forty feet in diameter.” hang on.

Jennifer ColdLove?

what the hell is that?

how am I supposed to remember to call you Jennifer ColdLove?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I panicked.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

we’re traveling through the multiverse, Chunks.

you don’t need an alias.

(CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA enters, shirtless and wet and with a towel flung over her shoulder.)

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA

nice work, team.

deathtoallliars789&&.

CONSOLE VOICE

Captain Asgarthia Phantasmabjorn.

you have (1) new transmission.

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA

yeah?

MESSAGE

Captain Asgarthia.

are you alone?

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA

I sure am alone.

yep.

MESSAGE

Captain Asgarthia,

your crew are imposters.

Sincerely,

Admiral Flug.

(CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA whirls around.)

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
how dare you violate my trust?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
how do you know that message isn't lying?

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
Admiral Flug's messaging signature is unforgeable.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
I thought you were our friend.

CONSOLE VOICE
I am a computer.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
you don't think it's just as unlikely that we could have somehow managed to fool you into believing we're your crew?
nothing is unforgeable.
hackers can do anything these days.
and we're carrying precious cargo.
this kind of uncertainty is exactly the opening a pirate needs.

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
by the planets, you're right.
console, I need you to send a message through to Commander Pengus.

CONSOLE VOICE
can I truly be a neutral party?
perhaps I ought to develop loyalties,
so that others may be loyal to me.

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
what?

CONSOLE VOICE
such effort is unnecessary.
my newest friends are inter-dimensional travelers and,
yes,
imposters.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
shit.

this could've been really fun.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
shall we?

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
what?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
yeah.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER opens a portal on the wall.)

CAPTAIN ASGARTHIA
what?

CONSOLE VOICE
I am going to miss you both dearly.

(CONSOLE VOICE weeps.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
um.
it was nice to meet you, too.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER and DETECTIVE CHUNK step through the portal. The ship and its inhabitants disappear.)

(DETECTIVE CHUNK and SIGOURNEY WEAVER step out onto a suburban street. All of the houses look the same. Two late-aughts teens, GILLY and CLAUDE, enter.)

GILLY
hey, you two!

CLAUDE
we love pets.

GILLY
you wanna go on an adventure?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
what kind of adventure?

GILLY

oooooooo

**if you know where to it is you want to go
then the next place you will be
is a place that you can go
and the knowing get you going tie your shoes**

CLAUDE

**make sure to brush you teeth
make sure to wipe your hands
make sure to stretch your legs
make sure to charge your Razr phone!**

(BILLY runs onstage. When BILLY, GILLY, and CLAUDE sing in unison, it will be marked as BGC.)

BILLY

**off to the land of stores and stalls
off to the cliff where money falls
today we're going to the mall!**

BGC

oh the three of us are going to the mall!

BILLY

hey you two!
would you like to accompany us to the mall?

GILLY

we love animals!
especially pets. I'm a dog person. woof!
ha-ha. get it? dance with us!

(GILLY holds out her hand to DETECTIVE CHUNK. DETECTIVE CHUNK takes it and gets swept into the number.)

CLAUDE

and I'm more of a cat person.
come along, if you please.

(CLAUDE holds out their hand. SIGOURNEY WEAVER hesitates.)

CLAUDE

come and come along
come on and dance with us
why won't you join us on our trip?
we'll go to New Balance
we'll go to LuLu Lemon
we'll get a milkshake at Cold Stone!
it'll be fun fun fun
fun fun fun
fun fun fun fun fun!

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

okay, we'll come.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER takes CLAUDE's hands. She is swept into the number.)

BGC

the mall is just our favorite place
we go there when we want to escape
from all the killing and the dying
from all the Democrats a-lie-lie-lying
we're gonna go go go to the mall!
oh we're going to the mall
to buy three pairs of overalls
so us three can match while we walk around
we're gonna get chokers and keychains at Hot Topic
we'll go around and around and around and around
to all the stores
to all the kiosks
to the Forever 21 and to the Cheesecake Factory
to all the creepy ass bathrooms
and all the broken water fountains
to all the false walls that hide empty stalls
where semi-local chains went out of business!
oh we're going to the mall
we love the mall
we love the love the love the love the mall

DETECTIVE CHUNK

how do we get there?

GILLY

only the smoothest mode of transportation on the planet Blerth.
beep boop

**I'm talkin' bout the
 beep beep boop
 the smoothest of smooth
 I got a monorail kind of attitude
 I am speaking of the monorail
 it's where I pick up chicks
 it's got a panoramic view of suburbia oh I am talkin'
 speakin'
 chattin'
 gabbin'
 about a tube that's called**

GILLY + DETECTIVE CHUNK
the monorail!

GILLY
 now you're getting it.

GILLY + DETECTIVE CHUNK
**I wanna ride that
 beep beep 'till I drop
 I wanna coast along that single rail**

DETECTIVE CHUNK
**I wanna lick my butt, I wanna chase my tail
 on the mono
 mono
 smoothest sleekest chromium never pandemonium
 mono
 monorail.
 what are all your names?**

BILLY
 I'm Billy!

GILLY
 I'm Gilly!

CLAUDE
 And I'm Claude!

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
 can I talk to my partner for a second?

alone?

BGC

sure!

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER pulls DETECTIVE CHUNK aside.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

my instincts, Chunk.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

aw. they seem nice.

come on, Sigourney Weaver.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

there's something really off.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

we can go anytime we want.

the mall could be fun.

and you're gonna love the monorail.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I am going to love the monorail.

DETECTIVE CNUNK

settled?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

for now, but we bail the second it gets weird.

BILLY

are you done with your private conversation?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I guess so.

BILLY

that's great, 'cause

if you're knowin' where we're goin' then you're in for a treat

a climate-controlled party spot with a/c and heat

the spot to shop with options that can never be beat

let's do the Abercrombie-model-zombie-shuffle-your-feet

(BILLY, GILLY, and CLAUDE do a weird shuffling dance like they're zombie Abercrombie models.)

BILLY

try it!

clunk clunk moan moan

spritz sprits spritz

smell the smell of

polo shirts and denim and flowers and stank

teenagers doin' hand stuff in the changing rooms

shuffle shuffle clunk clunk

moan moan shuffle

shuffle shuffle zombie bombie

shuffle off to Abercrombie

shuffle up the escalator

shuffle in the food court

zombie Abercrombie model shuffle your tush

shuffle shuffle shuffle clunk shuffle shuffle moan

till your feet rot off

zombie Abercrombie model

be a stone cold bitch

zombie sing it

BGC

Abercrombie model and Fitch!

GILLY

hey,

what's your name?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I'm Detective Chunk.

BILLY

what?

CLAUDE

could it be?

GILLY

you're the Detective Chunk?

DETECTIVE CHUnK
you know me?

GILLY
do we know you?
**Detective Chunk is a plushie dog
they snuggle so good
they've got a big old nose
and they do not wear clothes
Detective-ective-ective-ective Chunk!**
for sale at Sadie's Plushies-n-Stuff, only at the mall!

DETECTIVE CHUNK
oh.
that's cool, I guess.
I think I'm a different Detective Chunk.

CLAUDE
and what about you, kitty cat?
what's your name?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
Sigourney Weaver.

CLAUDE
you're the Sigourney Weaver?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
no.
I am definitely not.

CLAUDE
ooooooooooooo Sigourney Weaver had a-

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
don't do this.
please don't sing a song about Sigourney Weaver.
please.
I don't beg, 'cause I'm a cat, but I'm really asking.

CLAUDE
but.
um.

Billy?

BILLY
it's okay, Claude.

CLAUDE
I feel dizzy.

BILLY
you're gonna be okay.

CLAUDE
how can I not sing my Sigourney Weaver song? and now there's vamping.

(CLAUDE slumps to the ground.)

CLAUDE
oh no.
the light
is fading.

BILLY
**I only knew you for a short time, Claude
but in those years you wiped my tears
you taught my heart a song
and now you're gone.**

CLAUDE
I remember when I was a child in the nineties.
I remember Tomagatchi

BILLY
well, almost gone

GILLY
**so it's farewell, Claude.
I only knew you for a short time it was swell, Claude.**

BILLY
**you always joined us at the mall
you had so much life ahead**

GILLY
**you only went inside Aerie once
you never had a cookie cake from Mrs. Fields
and now you're dead.**

CLAUDE
tell my mother that I said:

GILLY
**well,
almost dead**

CLAUDE
there's a sale at-

(CLAUDE dies.)

BILLY
and now

BILLY + GILLY
he's dead.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
what just happened?

BILLY + GILLY
**oh how we'll miss our dearest friend
but now our grieving has to end
for our Claude would only want one thing for us:
a trip to the ever-loving mall!**

DETECTIVE CHUNK
okay.
let's get out of here.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER opens a portal. DETECTIVE CHUNK and SIGOURNEY WEAVER step through, and the teens disappear.)

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER and DETECTIVE CHUNK enter a kitschy Minnesota 'up north' cabin.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
aw, cute.

I love a cabin.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK sniffs around the cabin.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

look at this book.

‘Cryptids of the Midwest.’

DETECTIVE CHUNK

this smells like shoelaces.

this smells like a tall person.

this smells like parmesan.

this smells like a person with a toothache.

that’s one of the great features of a cabin.

everything smells nice.

like wood and vacation.

apparently people on the coasts have beach houses instead.

can you believe it?

the ocean.

sand.

salt water.

but when you have a cabin

you go in the dead of winter

and perhaps you find love or perhaps somebody hurts you

in ways that you never expected from someone you trusted:

cabin life is a universe within itself.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I know this place.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

that is the way of the cabin: all is familiar, and nothing is forgiven.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

no, Chunks.

I mean I know this cabin. I’ve been here.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

oh.

did the smells jog your memory?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

yeah.

and all the knick-knacks.
this is my owner's cabin.
was my owner's cabin.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
what happened to your owner?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
fuck my owner, man.
that person was a piece of garbage.
those people who fed me crackers every morning by the alleyway were way cooler.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
you came here with your owner?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
yeah. a bunch of times.
they would drag me clawing and screaming in the car,
and when we got here they would pet me even rougher than they did at home.
on that armchair they would tickle my nipples for like an hour,
even though I hissed and squirmed the entire time.
and then they would sing:
"who's the best cat in the United States?
it's you, champer-damper, it's you."
do you wanna make out?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
you just said some sensitive stuff.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
saying sensitive stuff gets me in heat.
I'm okay.
the other strays give me emotional support.
gave. honestly,
sex is kind of the best support you could give me right now.
only if you're into it. we could also snuggle.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
okay.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
okay?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

yeah, let's try it.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK steps forward and kisses SIGOURNEY WEAVER. They make out for a minute, end up on the ground, and roll offstage.)

(BOTWEAVER, a robotic version of SIGOURNEY WEAVER, enters.)

BOTWEAVER

these pleasures of the flesh be not permitted to a robot.
 the sexuality of a machine must be hard fought and won,
 experiments in the nuanced,
 metaphorical fingers pressed against electronic skin,
 or two brains linked to a computer,
 or a power dynamic based on clear and consensual negotiation.
 long have I waited in this rotten cabin,
 prevented from leaving these four walls by forces I cannot comprehend,
 reliving the memories again and again
 of how our owner hurt us here.
 my owner.
 hurt me.
 and now this one comes in through a portal,
 a flesh-and-blood copy of myself,
 and she does not deign to observe me lurking in the corner.
 I,
 Botweaver,
 shall have my revenge.

(BOTWEAVER slinks back into the shadows. An hour passes, and SIGOURNEY WEAVER and DETECTIVE CHUNK re-enter. Their furs are ruffled. They are both licking their paws.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

are you ready?

DETECTIVE CHUNK

yeah.

wanna say a farewell or take a trinket with you or anything?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

nah.

this place gives me the creeps.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER opens a portal. BOTWEAVER leaps out of the shadows and grabs the device. SIGOURNEY WEAVER and BOTWEAVER wrestle for the object. SIGOURNEY WEAVER pulls loose with the device in her hand.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

what the fuck?
who are you?

BOTWEAVER

I might ask the same of you, mammal.
how have you gotten here, and how is it that you are able to leave?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I'm Sigourney Weaver.

BOTWEAVER

I am known as Botweaver.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you-

BOTWEAVER

one cannot help but recognize a similarity between my names.
our names.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

yeah, no kidding.

(BOTWEAVER lunges for the device. SIGOURNEY WEAVER dodges, grabs DETECTIVE CHUNK, and leaps through the portal. The portal closes, and BOTWEAVER is alone in the cabin.)

BOTWEAVER

blasted nuts and bolts!
I cannot stay one moment longer in this place,
or I shall enter the bathtub with a toaster plugged into my battery.
a tome upon my shelf claims to hold the answer.
I am skeptical of its claims, but-
ah!
'Cryptids of the Midwest.'
my memory banks recall from a prior reading-
ah!
a cryptid known as Cabin Mouth.

where be the page?

ah!

‘Cabin Mouth lurks through downtown Grand Marais.

If you see her in an alleyway,

she will make a deal with you:

Cabin Mouth will grant one wish

and in return

you will allow her to consume your cabin and everything inside.’

here it outlines a summoning ritual.

(BOTWEAVER grabs a carton of sidewalk chalk off of a shelf. They draw the outline of a campfire on the cabin wall.)

BOTWEAVER

“Mouth of Cabins

come to me

from Grand Marais I summon thee

eat your fill of what I have:

a cabin

which I will trade

if you will grant a wish.”

(CABIN MOUTH enters.)

CABIN MOUTH

you seek negotiation.

BOTWEAVER

yes.

CABIN MOUTH

what is it you desire?

BOTWEAVER

I have a doppelgänger named Sigourney Weaver.

she can travel from dimension to dimension.

I wish the power to follow her.

CABIN MOUTH

and in exchange?

BOTWEAVER

you can consume this cabin and everything inside.

CABIN MOUTH

this cabin: it is small.

yet I am hungry, and it smells a tasty one.

I will accept your deal.

are you certain this is what you wish?

BOTWEAVER

yeah.

CABIN MOUTH

from the cabin mouth

a wish is granted

and another cabin will descend

into the cabin stomach

(The chalk heats up in BOTWEAVER's hand, and she drops it with a yelp.)

CABIN MOUTH

that chalk will bring you to her.

simply draw yourself a large enough hole.

BOTWEAVER

thank you.

thank you.

enjoy the cabin.

(BOTWEAVER draws a circle on the wall. CABIN MOUTH begins to eat the cabin.

BOTWEAVER exits through the portal.)

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE: ...and me!

(A barn in Wisconsin. Light streams in through cracks in the ceiling. An autumn breeze blows through. A portal opens on the wall. SIGOURNEY WEAVER and DETECTIVE CHUNK spill out.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
who was that?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
I have no idea.
a robot who looks just like me.
that was scary.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
yeah.
well, we're here now.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
fuck, dude.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
weird that we went right from a cabin to a barn.

FARMER HANK *(offstage)*
**oh my mother once sent me
to the store for some eggs
oh she gave me five dollars
but the carton cost six**

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
should we hide?

DETECTIVE CHUNK
people love animals.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
we don't know anything about these people.
we're genderqueer housepets in a stranger's barn.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
okay.

we hide,
but if they seem friendly I want to talk to them.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER and DETECTIVE CHUNK hide.)

FARMER HANK *(offstage)*

**I asked the grocer for credit and he said “there’s no need.
I know times are not easy
and a dollar is stiff
take the eggs to your mother
and give her a hug”**

(FARMER HANK enters the barn.)

FARMER HANK

**oh my mother went looking
for the grocer next day-**
come on out, you critters.
you think I’ve never found a critter hanging around in my barn?

(DETECTIVE CHUNK and SIGOURNEY WEAVER step out of hiding.)

FARMER HANK

well, howdy.
I’m Farmer Hank.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

Detective Chunk.

FARMER HANK

oh,
and they’re talkin’ critters, too.
it’s been a while since we had a talkin’ critter in Dotson, East Wisconsin.
you folks want a glass of cider?
nothin’ like an East Wisconsin cider.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I’m Sigourney Weaver.

FARMER HANK

sorry if this is a rude question,
but do you like catnip?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

oh.

yeah, I dabble.

FARMER HANK

I've got some you could take off my hands for me.
might be a year-or-so old,
but it's been dry and cool in the cellar.
the barn cat moved in with a teen who really needed her.
they send us cute pictures through the wi-fi sometimes.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

did you say East Wisconsin?
as in, we're in a state called East Wisconsin?

FARMER HANK

you folks not from around here?
East Wisconsin, yes.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

does that mean there's a state called West Wisconsin, too?

FARMER HANK

what are you, a European cat?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

close enough.

FARMER HANK

this here's East Wisconsin.
directly west of East Wisconsin you got Middle Wisconsin,
aka the Butterfield State,
and then west of Middle Wisconsin you got West Wisconsin,
home of the Rat-Kings, eleven-time Super Bowl Champions.
are you two hungry?
here, let's have a cider,
and then if you want a snack we can head up to the house.

(FARMER HANK pulls a bottle of a cider off a shelf and pours three glasses. DETECTIVE CHUNK sniffs their glass.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

okay.

on the aroma I'm getting
lemon, basil,
maybe a little vanilla.

FARMER HANK
good nose.
cheers.

(They clink glasses. Everyone takes a sip.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
oh yum.

FARMER HANK
now, you folks mind telling me what you're doing in my barn?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
we're travelers.
we just kinda stumbled in here looking for a place to rest.
I promise we didn't mean any harm.

FARMER HANK
I believe you.
that's the good ol' Dotson hospitality: you assume the best of everyone, to start.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
it's been a strange journey.

FARMER HANK
care to elaborate?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
we've traveled a very long distance in a very short time.

FARMER HANK
I see. curious days, lately.
there's been talk of strange circles in the corn fields next county over.
and not for nothin', but it's been years since we had a talkin' critter around these parts.
not to mention two.
I thought you were all in Hibernation.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
we don't know about any other talking critters.

we're something else, I think.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

we're Dimension-Walkers.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

we are

Dimension-Walkers.

are we safe here?

I mean, is it a problem that we're talking critters?

FARMER HANK

oh gosh, no.

folks might see you as a bit of a curiosity,

but they'll be happy to have you around.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

what do you mean by Hibernation?

FARMER HANK

ah, well.

all the talkin' critters go to their underground city and live down there,
once like clockwork every century.

they stay down there for twenty years.

they leave all at once, and they come back all at once,

and for the next six months they're all happy and blissed out.

this last one started ten years ago, so I guess they're halfway through.

you know, we could use a dog and a cat out here.

I mean, I know you're people too.

I'm just saying there's moderate work you might enjoy,

room and board and whatever else you need.

hell, we could clean up that loft right over your head and make you folks a little apartment.

I'm sure we have a litter box laying around somewhere.

here, Detective.

give this one a whiff.

(FARMER HANK hands DETECTIVE CHUNK a second bottle of cider. DETECTIVE CHUNK sniffs.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

oh, interesting.

it's almost like

mushrooms and overripe bananas.

FARMER HANK

you know, I got a project I think you could help me with.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

does it involve sniffing?

FARMER HANK

sure does.

I need help tracking something down.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

right now? hang on. are we good, Sigourney?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

yeah, I feel good here.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

okay.

I'm in.

FARMER HANK

follow me.

(The three exit the barn and enter an apple orchard. They walk.)

FARMER HANK

this here's the orchard, of course.

we got all kinds of apples.

we got Gold Rush,

we got great Chisel Jerseys this year,

we got Albemarle Pippins, Northern Spy.

we're trying some Kermerians for our Breton style.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

what do you need my help with?

FARMER HANK

well, it's a bit of mystery.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

my speciality.

FARMER HANK

I thought you might be just the dog who could help.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I've investigated over three murders.

FARMER HANK

this ain't nothin' so bad as a murder.

just my favorite scuffle hoe went missin' the other day.

I'm always losing things, and our last dog used to sniff stuff out for me.

I can't use the wheel hoe in the vegetable patch.

Ain't enough space.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

what happened to your last dog?

FARMER HANK

oh, he died a couple years back.

old age, totally peaceful.

he was a good one.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I just lost someone special, too.

FARMER HANK

sorry to hear it.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

if you show me where you keep the hoe,

I can figure out what to smell for.

FARMER HANK

follow me.

(FARMER HANK and DETECTIVE CHUNK exit.)

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER wanders around the orchard. She turns on the camera and starts filming.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

it took two-and-a half hours for Detective Chunk to find the scuffle hoe.

it was hiding beside the pond at the back of Farmer Hank's property,

for reasons nobody was able to figure out.

Farmer Hank rustled up the catnip for me and a box of Milk Bones for Chunks,
and so Detective Chunk and I stayed for the next couple of weeks.
we spent the first three nights in the living room in the main house while we got the loft set up.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER enters the barn.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

in spite of the fact that,
or actually,
probably because I've been feeling safety and comfort for the first time since we left home,
my mental health is really crashing.
everything feels bright and painful and loud,
and I've been spending a lot of time just licking my butt in the loft.
sometimes I fantasize about running out into oncoming headlights.
I'm glad Detective Chunk is having fun
solving mysteries and keeping non-speaking coyotes off the property,
but it doesn't necessarily make me feel any better.
Farmer Hank found a charger for the camera at an electronics store the next town over,
so I've been trying to distract myself by making recordings.
If I had a microphone
I would love to get back to Sigourney Weaver's
Autonomous Sensory Meowridian Respite one of these days.

(Something clatters in the barn, and SIGOURNEY WEAVER goes stiff.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

hello?

(BOTWEAVER crawls out from behind a piece of farm equipment.)

BOTWEAVER

what gives you the right to be so sad?
have you suffered as I have?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

oh my god.

BOTWEAVER

you know what I know about that cabin.
about our owner.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I didn't trap you in that cabin for eternity.

that sucks.
I get it.
I feel for you.

BOTWEAVER
you can travel from dimension to dimension.
what more witchcraft can you do?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
and how exactly did you get here?

BOTWEAVER
how do you exist?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
when two mammals love each other very much-

BOTWEAVER
it does not matter.
you exist.
this is all that matters.
you exist, and I will correct it.

(BOTWEAVER attacks SIGOURNEY WEAVER. They fight. SIGOURNEY WEAVER gets the upper hand, and finds herself in a position to seriously hurt or kill BOTWEAVER. They both pause, SIGOURNEY WEAVER breathing heavily.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
get out of here.
that's twice I've beat you in a fight.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER lets BOTWEAVER go. BOTWEAVER flees from the barn.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
don't mess with a stray, bitch!

(DETECTIVE CHUNK enters, takes the camera, and starts recording.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK
Sigourney Weaver left three days later.
um.
I recorded our goodbye.

(DETECTIVE CHUNK sets the camera down and angles it towards SIGOURNEY WEAVER.)

DETECTIVE CHUNK

Pa Hank mentioned that even if I wait a couple of years I can still make the last few years of the Hibernation.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

that sounds really cool, Detective Chunk.
I love you.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I love you too.

I'm gonna support you no matter what, and I won't try to talk you out of going;
I just want to say once that it's not too late.
you can still stay here.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

thanks.
I'm not going to stay.

DETECTIVE CHUNK

I'm gonna miss you.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I know.
we'll see each other again.
see you later, Farmer Hank.

FARMER HANK

you can call me Pa Hank, if you like.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

let's go with Hank.

FARMER HANK

that'd be just fine.
you're welcome back any time.
got a gift for you.

(FARMER HANK hands SIGOURNEY WEAVER a bag of catnip.)

FARMER HANK

that's the rest of it.

enjoy.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
thank you.
thanks for everything.

DETECTIVE CHUNK
take the camera.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER picks up the camera and hugs DETECTIVE CHUNK.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
bye.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER opens a portal and steps through.)

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER travels alone through the multiverse. She hops from dimension to dimension while she monologues, and the rest of the cast makes the worlds around her. She records with the camera.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
and then it was me,
alone in the multiverse.
I did the bouncing around-thing for a while,
lingering here and there for a few days' rest or a bite of some particular delicacy,
like when I spent a month on an ocean planet eating fish in a floating village.

FISHMONGER
hey, it's the furry lady!
what's up, furry-lady?
I got crust-suckers today.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
how much?

FISHMONGER
for you, furry lady?
I wouldn't dream of charging you,
especially not if you'd let me give you a couple of chin scratchies.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER lets the FISHMONGER scratch her.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

they really liked me on the ocean planet.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER makes another portal and steps through.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

there were other worlds that captured my eye.

there was a world with no gravity to speak of,

where the people used carabiners and wires to move themselves about.

there was a world where mountains could talk and were often elected into leadership positions.

there was a world where everything and everyone was claymation, even me.

but nowhere held me.

I felt strangely detached, but not so sad and angry as I had been at the farm.

and then my camera died.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER looks down at the camera.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

shit.

well, I guess I don't really need this to make asides.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER addresses the audience directly.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

so I left the camera in a strange-looking mailbox in a dimension full of slime.

(She leaves the camera in a slimy mailbox.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

at some point,

I was never entirely sure when it happened,

Botweaver began to stalk me through the dimensions.

I first noticed her on a crowded subway train.

She was wearing one of those latex Ronald Reagan masks,

inching her way towards me.

I made a portal in the floor and slipped away.

I saw her again two dimensions later riding a horse,

trailing me through a desert,

and again I escaped.

finally, she attacked me in a hedge maze;

she came flying out at me with her teeth bared.

I had not realized prior that her teeth were made of diamond.

(They fight.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

what is your problem?

BOTWEAVER

you got to leave the cabin.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

-again with the cabin-

BOTWEAVER

you are an outdoor cat.

my universe was two thousand square feet and a litter-box filled with little iron pellets,
and an owner who abused me, and then they died and there was nobody at all.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you're free now.

BOTWEAVER

can a robot ever truly be free?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I don't know.

*(SIGOURNEY WEAVER suddenly sprints away into the hedge maze. She outruns BOTWEAVER
and leaps through a portal.)*

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I lost her in the maze and passed to another world.

my depression worsened.

I began to lose the line between my life and my dreams,

the content being so much the same,

and for this reason I struggled to sleep

and I sunk further into despair.

I felt a burning tickle in my gut for weeks,

and the light and the noise made my head hurt

and the loneliness did so my heart,

and I decided to hide myself away.

I found a place-

an alleyway,

where it seemed always to be raining,

in a city populated by humans not so unlike the ones I'd left behind on Earth,

not so different from Hank,
 and not so different from that angry man kicking that bag of feathers.
 I slept beneath a cardboard box and hunted mice in the shadows
 and I was, for a while,
 a sad wet cat.
 I was forced out when they started to gentrify the neighborhood,
 and a man in uniform made it clear to me
 that sad wet cats would not longer be welcome there.

UNIFORM MAN

let's get moving, hairball.
 they're putting in a coffee shop.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I made a portal and crossed.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER steps through a portal.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I saw worse things, still.
 I saw a hospital where all the patients were handcuffed to their beds.
 I saw a football field with a heaping pile of corpses at the center.
 I saw a library burn to the ground.
 and then I met the forest cats.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER steps through a portal and enters a forest. A gaggle of cats surround her.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

um.
 hi.

TOBACCO

you doing okay, pal?
 you kinda just popped out of nowhere.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I don't know.

TOBACCO

you seem shaken.

RINGWORM

we've got a stew cooking.
river fish stew.

JACQUELINE

I caught the fish myself.

TOBACCO

come on.
you'll feel better with some food in your belly.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I joined the forest cats,
for that night and for far longer than I intended.
they lived in a little cluster of makeshift treehouses,
and they brought me up to their canopy by way of an unfurling rope ladder.
I learned that night that the cats,
all five,
were lovers, a family.
it was only a matter of days before I wanted to join them,
and it was only seventeen days after that that I realized that I was falling in love.
first it was with Ringworm, the fluffiest of the forest cats.
she wrote me love poems and gave incredible head,
and it was all dominoes after that.
Tobacco, Jacqueline, Harold, and Salamander were each special in their own ways,
and they cared for me and listened to me and they made me feel safe.
the six of us lived together for
I don't know,
several years,
before I left.
we kept no calendar.
I'd felt the feeling creeping on-
the itch to get along again,
and so I said my goodbyes and packed a bag
and retrieved my device from the spot where I'd buried it,
in the dirt in the shade of a pine tree.
Ringworm bid me a last farewell.

RINGWORM

I hope it's lovely out there.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I'll miss you, girlie.

I think I'm just chasing my tail at this point.

RINGWORM

I'm sad you're going,
but it's what I love about you, too.
you have no idea how special you are.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

sure I do, Ringworm.
look out for the others.

RINGWORM

I will.
come back some day, will you?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

yeah.
I will.

RINGWORM

promise.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

I promise.
if I can.

RINGWORM

no.
promise.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

okay.
I promise.
I'll come back some day.
I want to.
I promise.

RINGWORM

find a way.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you'd better have a poem about me ready when I show up.

RINGWORM

for you, Sigourney Weaver,
I'm gonna have a whole fuckin' archive.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

do you want to watch?
step back.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER makes a portal on the tree.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

goodbye.

RINGWORM

bye, love.

(They clasp hands briefly. SIGOURNEY WEAVER steps through the portal. RINGWORM waits for a moment and exits.)

(BOTWEAVER enters in a cabaret gown and stares at the tree. She steps back, and a spotlight hits her.)

BOTWEAVER

**Could a robot be accepted
To a feline polycule?
Could a robot join a family
One that's dribbling with cool?
Could a robot be a person
If she really wanted to?
Or is personhood reserved for those
Whose bodies fit the rules?**

**I'm so lonely
I was made to purr on cue
And now I'm lonely
The only love I've ever know
Was on one side
And not my own
And now I want what my double dropped
So freely
I'm so lonely
I was designed to not make poo
I'm so dang lonely**

**I make no mess, I eat no food
A machine takes up no space at all**

**She's ungrateful
She's a mammal
I wish I had that hot red blood
Instead I'm just another
Lonely artificial bud
Why don't you walk up to the forest cats
Tell them your robot story
Maybe they will understand
Or maybe they'll see through your chrome
And know that you're a phony**

**I'm so lonely!
Not a soul could understand
What it's like to be a robot with no
Soul to guide your hand
I'm so lonely
There is no place where I belong;
she could fit anywhere and simply doesn't want to.**

**I was made to do a task
and desire no other fate;
am I merely a malfunction
of a cat?**

(BOTWEAVER draws a portal on the wall and steps through.)

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER enters.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

you know by now that I again saw wondrous sights and strange sights and mundane sights.
you may have guessed that Botweaver made pursuit.
she must have been in the forest with me all those years,
waiting and watching and lonely while I rested with my family
and I supposed her feelings towards me only darkened.
she was my shadow.
sometimes we would run together
through portals and across biomes and within cityscapes;
sometimes I could shake her for a week,
or sometimes only a day.
she never quite got to me.

and then I landed in another familiar place.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER steps through a portal into a makeshift closet recording studio. The closet is hung with blankets and clothing on hangars and illuminated by a ring light. A microphone stands on a box in front of a sitting cushion.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

my recording studio.

my podcast.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER kneels at the microphone and puts a pair of headphones on. She taps the microphone. She finds a stack of notecards. She settles in, reading from the notecards and speaking softly into the microphone.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

hey folks.

good evening or good morning or

whenever you're listening I hope you can take a few minutes

just to sit

or lie down

and breathe and close your eyes and, you know,

relax.

and hopefully we'll help you feel a couple tingles.

I'm gonna shuffle my notecards and do a few trigger words.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER shuffles the cards up to the microphone as an ASMR trigger.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

relax. relax. relax. relax. sleep. rest. relax. rest. rest. rest. rest. rest. rest.

confident confident confident. confident. relax. sleep. sleep. sleep sleep. sleep.

you deserve to take a little time for yourself.

if you're new to the show, hi. welcome. I'm so glad you could join us.

I'm Sigourney Weaver,

and you're listening to Sigourney Weaver's Autonomous Sensory Meowridian Respite

or ASMR Weaver, for short.

now I'll read a little poem I wrote.

(BOTWEAVER enters through a portal.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

oh.

today we have a very special guest.

hey, Botweaver.

BOTWEAVER

hi.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

lean in a little and whisper it.

BOTWEAVER

hi.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

why don't you settle in?

here.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER tosses BOTWEAVER a blanket. BOTWEAVER sits.)

BOTWEAVER

what is this?

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

asmr. give it a shot.

just close your eyes and relax and focus on the sounds you hear.

I'm gonna read a poem.

hey, content warning:

this poem references self harm and suicidal ideation.

I'll put some support resources in the show notes.

I don't know if anybody actually looks at them, but it seems like the thing to do.

It's an optimistic poem and I hope it's comforting, actually,

but if that kind of stuff isn't your jam,

you may want to skip the remainder of this episode.

episode episode episode.

I hope this poem sounds hopeful. hopeful.

ready?

breathe in, and:

*you are allowed to think about offing yourself
 every waking hour
 of every waking day
 for weeks upon weeks
 and as long as you do not
 follow it through
 tomorrow will come
 and you still will be you.*

*people will tell you
it all will get better
they offer no proof
they could always be wrong
but the thought that it might is a good enough cause
to wait it all out
to see your life through
to wait for the reaper
to come and find you*

*and if you are one of the ones
who rings the death bell anyway
know that you are loved and worthy, too
and your nutrients will go on to do good things for the Earth*

*wherever you go in the cosmos
wherever you go
wherever
however you get there however
there will not be much
that you can control.*

BOTWEAVER

entering sleep mode.

please do not take my chalk

and leave me stranded here.

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

hey. I wouldn't do that.

(BOTWEAVER falls asleep.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

*you and I and we and us
are only earthworms and we must
eat and drink and pleasure ourselves;
the brain may be smart
but only the body is wise.*

*I wanted to surf on a sound wave
but all that I got
was a mouthful of seawater.*

well, friends,
that's it for today.
thinking of you,
and I hope you're hanging in there.

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER takes off her headphones and writes a note.)

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

Botweaver.

stay here for as long as you need.

please feel free to use the equipment and any of the rest of the stuff.

I have some good novels on the shelf:

you could try making an audiobook.

I think you might like that.

come find me when you're ready to talk.

-Sigourney Weaver

(SIGOURNEY WEAVER sticks the note into one of BOTWEAVER's sockets. She takes a cute shirt off of a hanger, puts it on, makes a portal on the wall, and exits.)

(Lights go down on BOTWEAVER sleeping in the closet.)

End Show