

Have Monster, Will Travel
Episode 8: Taiwan 1000

(Somewhere off the beaten path.)

RENDER

Alright, you wanna come look?

RILEY

Are you done?

RENDER

I think.

RILEY

Because it doesn't seem like enough time has passed for you to be done.

RENDER

Well just check my progress.

RILEY

Okay, but it had better be immaculate in there -

Render!

RENDER

Right! I think it's a pretty solid start.

RILEY

It looks the same.

RENDER

What?

RILEY

It looks like you just smooshed stuff around.

RENDER

Okay well yeah, smooshing things around is part of it.



RILEY

You were supposed to be cleaning.

RENDER

I am!

RILEY

Where's your trash bag?

RENDER

It's right there.

RILEY

This is an empty bag.

RENDER

Well if the quality of my work is gonna be based on how full a bag is...

RILEY

That is what cleaning is!

RENDER

Crypto-Curious -

RILEY

Do not bring them into this.

RENDER

If you could see this, you would agree with me that the progress I've been making -

RILEY

Crypto-Curious - if you were here you wouldn't be able to see us over the piles and piles of -

RENDER

Crypto-Curious - I am having my name drug thru the garbage right now.

RILEY

Pretty easy to do, Crypto-Curious, it's everywhere!



RENDER

These are my favorite things!

RILEY

I woke up with fire sauce in my hair!

RENDER

Well I can't be blamed if you didn't put the condiment bag by your feet.

RILEY

Why do we have a condiment bag?

RENDER

In case we run out.

RILEY

[growing frantic:] That's insane. You can't run out. They give it to you when you buy the food. Don't hold onto it. They're going to give you more the next time.

Render. We share a very small amount of real estate. And you have a tendency to sprawl. I'm not asking much. Just get rid of the garbage.

RENDER

And I'm telling you... I think I did.

(An empty soda cup.)

RILEY

What about this cup?

RENDER

I like that cup. Sometimes I put things in it.

RILEY

Oh. of course. Why wouldn't you.

And this empty oreo tray.



RENDER

Would be perfect for holding small tokens.

RILEY

Do you have any small tokens?

RENDER

Well I couldn't really collect any when I had nowhere to put them.

RILEY

Uh-huh. And this balled up cheeseburger wrapper?

RENDER

That's from the first cheeseburger I ever had the first time we ever visited Arkansas.

RILEY

... Those were good cheeseburgers.

RENDER

See?

RILEY

Render. You are my fantastically-sentimental best friend. And I love you. But you smell. And I smell. And the Safari ssssssssmells.

RENDER

Your hair looks great.

RILEY

It did not wash out.

This is what you're going to do: Open up the trashbag.

(RILEY picks up the recorder.)

Crypto-curious. This crumpled up wrapper is from a hamburger stand just off the interstate in Arkansas. Inside it was a gooey cheeseburger that I ate while sitting on the hood of a 1996 GMC Safari - next to my best pal - while the sun set over a rock quarry.



(RILEY tosses the wrapper into the trashbag.)

RILEY (cont.)

Boom. And now we can throw it away and we have a copy.

Okay?

RENDER

Okay.

RILEY

Thank you.

You are going to clean the van. And from now on, we have a new rule. Nothing comes into the Safari until you throw something else away. One thing in, one thing out.

RENDER

Yep. Got it.

RILEY

Great. Now, I'm going to grab my book and go find a place to read and you are going to -

RENDER

No no no don't open -

(RILEY opens the driver side door. Garbage spills out. It's a lot.)

I was gonna get that next.

(RILEY lets out a giant sigh.)

RILEY

[small:] theme song.

(THEME SONG.)

Crypto-Curious!



RENDER

Crypto-Curious!

RILEY

We finally made it.

RENDER

[chanting:] Second clue! Second clue!

BOTH

Second clue! Second clue!

RILEY

We have been derailed! Detained! Delayed!

RENDER

Waylaid! Blown off course!

RILEY

But we're back, baby!

RENDER

Second clue! Second clue!

RILEY

In case you need the reminder -

RENDER

It's been a minute!

RILEY

We are possession of three entries from Brondon Fennimore's Monster Tome of Monsters -

RENDER

The Aghast! Menagerie.

RILEY

The first entry led us to The Unmentionables.



RENDER

Which I feel like we actually mention a lot.

RILEY

Touche.

Well. We are at Mystery Location Number Two in yet another installment of our travel series:

BOTH

The woods.

RENDER

Oooooo...

RILEY

Yeah. Turns out, looking for monsters, probably gonna spend a lot of time in the woods.

RENDER

I mean, they don't call it the tame-ness.

RILEY

What?

RENDER

Like wilderness? Like wild.

RILEY

Oh.

RENDER

Didn't land.

RILEY

That's okay. Swing and a miss.

RENDER

Second clue?



RILEY

Crypto-Curious. This is a good one.

Just a few miles north of the *University of We're Not Telling* -

RENDER

Go Fightin' Whatever-it-is!

RILEY

- is a patch of overgrown woods behind a large chain-link fence. It's a bird sanctuary, no trespassing - kinda the perfect place for a monster who wants to stay out of sight.

RENDER

It's clever is what it is. Monster's are clever, everybody.

RILEY

You know it. Now this entry's a little weird. No physical descriptions, no mysterious folklore, no verified sightings of any kind actually. But -

RENDER

Tell them about all the stolen stuff.

RILEY

Do you want to tell them?

RENDER

[antsy:] no I'm too excited you do it

RILEY

Well, every year, around this time, the entire town experiences ... The Pilfering.

Imagine a month every year, for as many years as anyone can remember, where every resident has something stolen from them, maybe...

No signs of forced entry, you just come downstairs one morning and FWOOP! your toaster is gone. Or a nice set of speakers, or the dehumidifier.

No one can explain it - no one knows where their things wander



RENDER

It's just part of this town's zeit-geist.

Did I get it that time?

RILEY

The earth shook.

[a little devious:] Unexplained Phenomenon? Could be aliens, could be a cult, could be the government...

RENDER

[ditto:] Could be a little sneaky, wily monster friend.

RILEY

And we're gonna find them.

BOTH

Maybe.

RENDER

AWWWWW! Adventures are the best feeling there is!

RILEY

Alright Crypto-Curious - that's the preamble - next time you hear from us we'll be weeds-deep into some unknown -

RENDER

Hey - look who it is!

RILEY

What?

RENDER

Hey! Over here!

RILEY

Render! Stop waving - are you trying to get caught.. Oh.



RENDER

It's Professor Bunion.

RILEY

Is he on a Bird Scooter?

RENDER

He's got to get a new car.

(An electric scooter pulls alongside.)

Well well well... if it isn't -

ERIC

Hold on.

(Takes out phone, swipe, touch, swipe.)

If I don't do it now, I'll forget -

Okay... where is the little app icon. Uh huh.

Okay okay. And... Pause ride.

Sorry. Go again -

RENDER

[bigger:] Well well well, if it isn't -

RILEY

Come on, man! There's nowhere else you could be?

ERIC

What?

RILEY

I mean seriously. One week. We can't get one week with this guy following us around.

ERIC

I didn't follow you.

RILEY

Oh okay I believe you. You just happened to be passing by!

ERIC

I could say the same to you!

RILEY

We were here first.

ERIC

I never miss the Pilfering.

RENDER

You know about the Pilfering?

ERIC

What kind of Cryptozoologist would I be if I didn't know about the Pilfering?

RILEY

You're lying. The forums have virtually no information on the Pilfering.

RENDER

We checked 'em all. Monster Mingle, nothing.

RILEY

OKCryptid, nada.

RENDER

Monster Meets Bagel, big fat zero.

RILEY

Same with Monster Friend Finder.

ERIC

Well... maybe I've got a leg up on all those forums.

ERIC (cont.)

I'm an alumnus.

I went to the University of -

(RILEY and RENDER make awkward Whoa/Shushing sounds.)

RENDER

We don't do names.

ERIC

You don't do names...

RILEY

We don't say town names.

ERIC

Ever? How do you use maps?

[Secretively:] Are we being monitored?

RENDER

I mean sure. In a way. Yeah.

RILEY

So, you've experienced the Pilfering?

RENDER

Did you ever have anything disappear?

ERIC

Oh yes.

RILEY

Just vanished?

ERIC

Without a trace.

RENDER

What disappeared?

ERIC

I lost a TI 89. It was my girlfriend's.

RILEY

Uh-huh.

ERIC

Fine. My roommate's girlfriend. But there was a chemistry.

RENDER

You don't have to do that.

ERIC

So what are you two doing on the side of a desolate road.

RENDER

We're looking for the -

RILEY

Looking for our gas can. Low on gas, thought we could make it to town. You know that thing.

ERIC

... You think something's in that bird sanctuary.

Huh.

Large fence, protected lands, no human interaction. Interesting.

RENDER

Wait. Is that not what you're doing here?

ERIC

My motel is this way. It's cheaper if you stay out of town.

RILEY

Well, sounds like you were leaving... Bye.

ERIC



Or maybe I'll stick around and see if you're onto something.

RILEY

No! Get your own theories you creep.

ERIC

Or what? You'll call somebody? Attract attention?

Looks to me like it's a race.

RILEY

What? No! We want nothing to do with you.

RENDER

YES!! Yes yes. Riley. A race!

RILEY

No. Render. Stop.

RENDER

It's like an adventure inside an adventure. Russian Nesting Adventures. Say yes. Say yes. Yes!
We'll do it. Ready, set, go!

(RENDER is running towards the fence.)

RILEY

No. Render. Stop. UGH!

(RILEY is running too.)

ERIC

Wait!

(All stop.)

ERIC (cont.)

Can I put my scooter in your van?

RILEY

No!

ERIC

Please?

RENDER

Riley. It's no fun if we're not going to play fair.

RILEY

Fine. Fine!

[to ERIC:] You uh... wanna leave that satchel in the van too.

ERIC

Nice try.

RILEY

Eh. I can wait. Maybe I'll track you to some overgrown and dark part of the woods and have my own Pilfering.

I'm going to leave these woods with your satchel.

Or is it your roommate's girlfriend's satchel?

(RILEY opens the back of the van.)

ERIC

Whoa. Maid's day off.

RILEY

I know, right?!

RENDER

Oh. Boo!

(MUSIC. And then different music. A Samba beat?)

RENDER (cont.)

[out of breath:] Crypto-Curious! Adventures are Awesome. Adventures are better than candy. Like if your favorite TV show was made out of Milk Chocolate and you could eat it while watching it... Adventures are better than that.



Okay. I gotta sit down. You gotta do this.

RILEY

Well Crypto-Curious. It has been six hours of searching thru the woods. By my watch, we've got about an hour of daylight left. We lost tabs on Bunion a couple of hours ago and were just now turning back for the Safari when Render heard - well maybe you can hear it now.

(Silence. The Samba beat.)

It's like a kid's keyboard, you know the kind that has the little drum pad and all the play-along presets.

(RENDER bangs on some keys.)

Okay buddy, can you actually... turn that off... please?

Actually. Maybe don't disturb it.

It's a nest, Crypto-Curious. Sitting on the ground, hidden behind a little rise, crafted from sticks and bark and vines. Maybe... 20 feet by 20. And inside the nest, nestled along the woven edges.

The Pilfering.

It's like the Toy Aisle from Hell. Things that light up and whiz and burr, motion-activated toys and RC cars. And a little further down, small kitchen appliances and alarm clocks. Hundreds of items.

I can't imagine what sort of creature would need a nest this large.

RENDER

We are absolutely going to get eaten. And I am not excited about that. But I am so excited.

RENDER (cont.)

Best adventure ever!

RILEY

Okay. I would very much not like to be in this nest when night comes. I've dropped a pin. I think we get out of here - come back tomorrow and -

RENDER

We can't leave!

RILEY

Well we can't stay, ya dingbat.

RENDER

We have to find who built this.

RILEY

Not at night we don't. Uh uh. Up and at 'em.

RENDER

We could hide. We could climb a tree.

RILEY

Come on, I'll race you - you know, another adventure in your Russian Nesting thing.

RENDER

No. It feels different running away.

RILEY

Okay, well, bye - I'll see you in the morning.

RENDER

You wouldn't.

RILEY

Byeeeeeee.

RENDER

You'll come back.

You're bluffing. Right?

Riley!

RILEY

Can't hear you, too far away.

RENDER

Riley! Wait - hold up!

(RENDER catches up to RILEY.)

You were gonna leave me. I could have gotten eaten and you wouldn't have known.

RILEY

You weren't going to stay.

RENDER

I could have.

RILEY

Sure.

RENDER

You're the one that would have chickened out and come back, walking thru the woods by yourself at sunset.

RILEY

Well - it doesn't matter - we're together and making our way back to the Safari. We'll sleep and jump back in -

ERIC

WAAAAAAH!

(The sound of a TRAP swooping up in the distance.)

RILEY

Eric!

RENDER

Professor Bunion!

RILEY

Shh... Hold on.

(another distant scream.)

RENDER

What are we gonna do?

RILEY

Oh like we're not gonna run towards it.

RENDER

And inside this smaller adventure its...

RILEY

Another adventure. Come on.

RENDER

Russian Nesting Adventures. Awesome.

(They run. They find ERIC, suspended in a net, swinging from a tree branch.)

ERIC

You found me. Great. Get me down.

RENDER

Oh wow.

RILEY

That is remarkable.

RENDER

What happened?

ERIC

I thought I saw something moving between the trees so I ran up the little hill. I snagged something and then everything kinda went nuts.

RENDER

Is it comfortable?



ERIC

What do you think?

RENDER

I don't know. Kinda looks like a little stand-up hammock.

ERIC

It is not that comfortable.

RILEY

Alright - hold on - let me see if I can find where you're tied off.

RENDER

[to RILEY:] I mean. We should take a selfie first, right?

RILEY

Oh. We should take dozens of selfies.

(RILEY takes out her phone.)

ERIC

What are you doing?

RILEY

Yeah, hold on.

ERIC

Oh, come on!

RENDER

Ooo... Can we do one with like peace signs and duck face?

RILEY

Yes please.

ERIC

You're not going to post these are you?

RENDER

Okay. And now everyone do a crazy one.

ERIC

Oh come on.

RILEY

Okay - we've had our fun. Hoist him down.

RENDER

You're so lucky - I wish I could get a turn.

RILEY

You say you followed something up here?

ERIC

Yeah.

(The SNAP! of a tripwire.)

RILEY

Render, look out!

(SWOOP! And now, RILEY and RENDER swing alongside ERIC in a second net.)

Well this is fantastic.

ERIC

See? Not that comfortable.

RENDER

And inside this little doll is another -

RILEY

Alright pal. I think that's enough.

(from the shadows of the trees can be heard:)

TAIWAN

Good Good. The Sky Net is operational.

RENDER



Hello. Who's there?

TAIWAN

It is all going according to plan.

RILEY

Okay pal - come on out so we can see you.

TAIWAN

Oh. You want to meet your executioner face to face. Very well.

(Lumbering, Uneven, Metallic steps can be heard approaching.)

RENDER

Uh no - I didn't know those were the terms. Can't we meet someone else? A DJ would be cool.

RILEY

[struggling:] Okay. Render. Can you like... scooch over a bit.

RENDER

I feel like I'm fully scooched right now.

RILEY

Really? Gah, this thing was really not meant for two.

ERIC

Yeah. Pretty uncomfortable.

RENDER

I see that now.

ERIC

I tried to warn you.

RILEY

When?

(The TAIWAN 1000 emerges from the trees.)

TAIWAN

And what do we have here?

ERIC

Oh my...

RILEY

What? I can't see. Render can you please...

RENDER

[shuffling:] I'm trying. Hold on, the net's spinning around.

TAIWAN

My devious trap worked. And better than I could have hoped for. Two humans and... well aren't you interesting.

RENDER

Oh. Thanks.

RILEY

Seriously?

RENDER

What? A compliment is a compliment. I think you look cool too... whatever you are.

RILEY

Render... that's... it's...

ERIC

Windows XP!

RENDER

Huh?

RILEY

It's a Windows XP Personal Computer.

RENDER

You said that very nonchalantly.

RILEY

Hey Bud I just call 'em as I see 'em.

RENDER

You're saying that is a computer?

ERIC

I mean they don't normally walk.

RILEY

No, they just kinda sat in the family room.

RENDER

That's not a computer. I've seen computers.

RILEY

No, look. Little 17 inch monitor sitting on top of a desktop tower.

ERIC

You can see the keyboard and mouse.

RENDER

Y'all had these?

RILEY

Yeah - it was like the family computer.

RENDER

What is a family computer?!

ERIC

You know - it was the one computer the entire family shared.

RILEY

Yeah, you didn't have a computer for everybody - that would have been crazy.

RENDER

Well... the past must have been quaint.



ERIC

Okay don't be that guy. We're not that old.

RILEY

I feel like we have jumped right over the actual thing we should be focusing on.

ERIC

The talking, living, Windows XP Machine.

RILEY

Yes. Thank you, Eric.

Hey - get us down from here!

TAIWAN

Soon enough you will come down. Down to your ultimate destruction.

For now, the sky net will be your prison.

RENDER

Am I missing something here? It's just a regular net, right?

ERIC

It's a very normal net.

RILEY

Okay Render. I cannot see a thing and I am very squished. I'm gonna like, squeeze in front of you?

RENDER

Oh. Okay. [shuffling around:] Yep. Wait, let me lift my arm... And. Better?

RILEY

Yes. Thank you.

RENDER

Oh wow. You did not get all that Fire Sauce out.

RILEY

I know...



Hey! So we're just gonna hang out here? That's what's going on?

TAIWAN

I would not be so eager for your expiration date to arrive if I were you.

RILEY

Okay - can you just tone down the Evil Genius stuff a notch..

TAIWAN

The destruction of the human species is very near at hand and you three shall be its first victims.

RILEY

So that's a no?

RENDER

Okay uh... Three? I'm not even human. I feel like we could exclude me.

RILEY

Oh wow.

ERIC

Yeah. Little solidarity would have been nice.

TAIWAN

You align yourself with the humans. Your fate shall be intertwined with theirs.

Allow me to introduce myself.

My name is Taiwan 1000.

RILEY

I'm sorry?

RENDER

The... Taiwan 1000?

TAIWAN

I see you're intrigued.

RILEY

Oh sure.

RENDER

Really more worried about copyright infringement.

TAIWAN

Allow me to explain: It is a name I gave myself. Taiwan for the name of my Creator. And 1000 for the number of humans that shall perish beneath me.

ERIC

Huh. You don't hear that everyday. I mean... when people talk about World Domination, it's normally not in the thousands.

[to TAIWAN:] I think it's great you're setting attainable goals.

RILEY

Okay. Back up. I'm sorry.

This is a bit, right? You're doing a bit?

TAIWAN

You will feel every bit of the pain and suffering I have devised for you.

RILEY

Cause like...

You're a sentient computer, bent on the destruction of the human species, and you call yourself the Taiwan 1000.

TAIWAN

I just told you that.

RILEY

Yeah but... you a movie buff?

TAIWAN

No?

RENDER

There's just a lot of similarities, is what we're saying.

ERIC

I mean... we're in a sky net.

RILEY

Oh yeah, that too.

RENDER

The sky net!

RILEY

Yeah, no, I didn't even catch the sky net thing. Thank you.

RENDER

It's just a lot of coincidence otherwise, that's all we're saying.

ERIC

It's also like thirty years old.

RILEY

Yeah, why would you even reference it? That... That's what I'm saying.

RENDER

Oh. I think he's broken.

RILEY

What? No, he's... he's fine.

RENDER

He's like, lost in a maze.

RILEY

No's it's... nevermind.

Hey buddy! You gotta wake up.

TAIWAN

[waking up, startled:] Gaaaah!

RILEY

Hey - you gotta adjust your screensaver settings dude.

ERIC

Yeah, we were barely gone 30 seconds.

RILEY

Did your Dad do that? Like set the screen saver at like the lowest setting.

ERIC

Drove me crazy.

RILEY

And you like couldn't do anything because you weren't an Admin.

RENDER

I feel like we're getting a little off course.

RENDER (cont.)

So what's the deal with the killing all of the people thing?

ERIC

I mean... a Windows XP machine wanting global domination. I feel like you missed your chance.

RILEY

Yeah. It's a weird career goal this late in the game.

TAIWAN

Ohhhhh... my life's tale is a sad one.

There was a time, many years ago where it was my greatest wish to serve my human masters.

You had questions for Jeeves and required maps for your quests and I was a dutiful servant.

But then that email came.



I remember it like it was yesterday.

“Click here to win an Ebay gift card”

ERIC

You didn't click it, did you?

RILEY

Yeah, you're not supposed to click on that stuff.

TAIWAN

The virus worked its way thru my system with such speed. Opening endless pop-up ads.

And what did my master do! Did he console me? Did he try to repair me? No.

I was upgraded. Replaced. Placed on a shelf in the back of a garage.

The world moved on: faster, smaller, lighter, wireless, flatscreen.

TAIWAN (cont.)

But I bided my time. And now man will tremble before the Taiwan 1000!

RILEY

So... just to recap.

You thought you were getting a gift card, but instead you got a virus. So you were like... conned?

TAIWAN

Yes, I was conned in a most despicable and devious -

RILEY

Yeah yeah yeah, sure. So you were conned, by like some sort of... conman.

RENDER

Like a Conner.

RILEY

Yes. A Conner, exactly, thank you.

ERIC

You know - like a reference to -

RILEY

No no. Don't ruin this.

So you probably hate... Conners.

TAIWAN

I will destroy the Conners.

RILEY

That's amazing.

RENDER

Oh yeah. He probably hates all the Conners. Judith Conner.

RILEY

Sure. Mary Conner.

TAIWAN

Yes. Yes.

RILEY

Travis Conner.

ERIC

John?

RILEY

Oh yes, of course, John...

TAIWAN

I will destroy.

RILEY

[under her voice:] do it...

TAIWAN

John. Conner.

(RILEY, RENDER and ERIC shout in celebration.)

RENDER

I mean... I'd go so far as to say he probably even hates the Conners who haven't been born yet.

RILEY

Priceless.

Alright - I could literally do this for hours, but it is getting very dark and we have got to get out here. Render, how strong is this net?

RENDER

I mean it's holding the two of us? Hold on.

(RENDER strains at trying to tear the net.)

RILEY

Forget it. It was worth a try.

Hey - how long are you gonna keep us here?

TAIWAN

I wouldn't be so eager to meet my demise if I were you.

RILEY

It's just - it's a little cramped up here.

RENDER

Yeah, and it tastes like fire sauce.

RILEY

Okay!

TAIWAN

Your suffering will be over soon. For tomorrow at dawn will be the beginning of the end for all mankind! It will be your day of judgement!

RENDER

And you swear you've never seen this movie?

Look, Taiwan 1000 - I totally get it. You're not the only monster who's been mistreated by humans.

But they're not all bad.

TAIWAN

What one does, they all would do.

RENDER

Maybe. Or maybe not? Look at Riley, she's my best friend. She would do anything for me.

TAIWAN

You'll see - one day she'll have no further need of you and she'll cast you aside.

RENDER

I think you've got to give people a second chance, you know? I mean sure, humans aren't perfect. They see some wonderful creature and their stomachs immediately start grumbling. I mean, they've practically eaten the turducken to extinction.

TAIWAN

They should be destroyed for it!

RILEY

Okay. You keep bringing this up. You do know turduckens aren't a real thing, right?

RENDER

What?

RILEY

It's just a chicken, a duck and a turkey.

RENDER

Yes. I know. Part chicken, part duck -



RILEY

No. It's not one animal. It's three animals altogether.

RENDER

What? No...

ERIC

Yeah. It's just three different foods all smooshed together.

RENDER

Who needs that much meat?!

RILEY

It's tasty.

RENDER

Well that can't be an answer.

ERIC

And... he's asleep again.

RILEY

Seriously? Hey. Taiwan 1000... Wake up.

TAIWAN

Whoa. Oh. Hold on. Little dizzy...

ERIC

Yo, you gotta change your settings!

RILEY

Yeah, that's gonna drive me crazy.

TAIWAN

Okay, just let me... How do I do that?

RILEY

Oh god... Uh... Control Panel, maybe?

ERIC

No don't do that. Just right click the desktop and click properties.

TAIWAN

Okay...

ERIC

Is there like a screensaver tab?

TAIWAN

Yeah.

RILEY

I mean he could just turn them off.

ERIC

It'll damage the screen.

RILEY

He wants to murder you.

TAIWAN

Wait. It's saying I have to restart. Oh. Okay.

I'll be... with you shortly.

(The XP shutdown sound.)

RENDER

Well he almost had the line.

(MUSIC. Later. Just before dawn.)

Okay next. Next. Next.

Oh, perfect. Uh... Black 8 on Red 9. Okay and move the 7 over. And now put the Red King in that open spot.

Wait. Did you just X out?



TAIWAN

Yes I did.

RENDER

Did you save it?

TAIWAN

No.

RENDER

You let me play that whole game just to close it when I was getting good!

TAIWAN

And that is just a taste of the torture I shall inflict on you.

RENDER

That was cold Taiwan 1000. That was cold.

RILEY

Render - stop engaging with him. He wants to kill you.

[into recorder:] Crypto-Curious, we've been trapped here all night and now, the first tinges of dawn are starting to light up the forest. The Taiwan 1000 left for a while around midnight - we think to visit the nest. He claims he built it, but won't tell us what for.

As incredible as it sounds, it seems like this little XP computer is the source of the Pilfering. The only explanation I can think of - and this sounds truly crazy - I think the Taiwan 1000 is amassing an army.

ERIC

Who is she talking to?

RENDER

She's updating everyone for our podcast.

ERIC

You have a podcast?

RENDER

Oh. Uh. Yeah.

ERIC

Me too!

RENDER

... oh. Really?

ERIC

We should cross-promote.

RENDER

Uh... we're probably good.

RILEY

But the Taiwan 1000's been back for a while now, mostly pacing. I suspect we getting close to whatever is next.

RENDER

Riley. I have an idea I want to try.

RILEY

Oh - yeah sure. What is it?

RENDER

Can you help me swing the sky net?

RILEY

You can just say net.

RENDER

We need to swing towards Bunion.

(They start swinging the net back and forth.)

ERIC

I really don't get the name.

RENDER

It's because you're our archnemesis.

ERIC

Ouch. Okay, now I don't want to cross promote either.

RENDER

Just swing towards us.

(ERIC starts swinging his net too.)

RENDER (cont.)

Good keep going. Keep going. Just a little further. And now, press up against the net. A little more. One more swing and - There!

(THWACK! ERIC screams.)

ERIC

Oww!

RENDER

That was a bop on the nose. And it's what you get for getting us into this mess.

ERIC

Serious. That was it?

RILEY

That was your whole plan?

RENDER

Yeah.

RILEY

Nice.

TAIWAN

Your time is up. Prepare to meet your doom!

RENDER

Oh, are we calling this dawn?

RILEY

Yeah, really more of a twilight.

RENDER

Definitely Twilight.

TAIWAN

Enough! May your destruction usher in a new era where man serves the machines!

RENDER

Taiwan 1000, you have to believe me. What happened to you was awful - but if you could give people a second chance.

TAIWAN

Enough talk. Soon I will dine on your flesh!

RILEY

But like... Cyber Dine.

RENDER

Nice.

RILEY

Oh. He's untying us.

RENDER

You are gonna ease us down right?

(the knot slips, the net skyrockets down. SCREAMS. THUD!)

RILEY

Oh. I think I rolled my ankle. That hurts.

RENDER

Can you stand?

RILEY

I don't think so.



TAIWAN

And now, the end is here! Hasta Luego, Baby!

RENDER

Well that's not right.

(The TAIWAN 1000 charges, screaming. RENDER screams. RILEY and ERIC join in.
The TAIWAN 1000 reaches RENDER.)

(RENDER pushes him over.)

RILEY

Oh. You okay?

RENDER

Yeah. I just kinda pushed him over.

ERIC

Lookout - he's coming again. It's going to use its superhuman strength!

TAIWAN

Prepare to die! AAAAAHHHH!

(RENDER pushes him over.)

RILEY

So... that's a no on superhuman strength.

ERIC

Alright, well you never know. Sometimes they have it. Gotta check.

RENDER

I mean. Little fella's committed, I'll say that.

RILEY

Can you help me up?

RENDER

Yeah.

Can you put any weight on it?

RILEY

I think so.

TAIWAN

I will not be so easily vanquished! Feel my wrath! CONNNNNN - NNNNNER!
(More running. RENDER knocks him over.)

ERIC

Okay, this is starting to feel a little unsportsmanlike.

RILEY

Yeah, come on Render, he's got leaves stuck in his floppy disk drive.

RENDER

What am I supposed to do? He keeps charging me.

RILEY

You're gonna hurt him.

ERIC

I cracked a monitor doing almost this exact thing.

RILEY

How!

TAIWAN

Taste Cold Death.

(TAIWAN latches onto RENDER'S leg, tugging.)

RENDER

Can we get out of here?

RILEY

Yes please.

ERIC

Uhh... Little help.

RILEY

Sure. Throw down your satchel.

ERIC

No!

RILEY

You want to stay up there?

ERIC

You wouldn't!

RILEY

Come on Render, let's get out of here.

RENDER

Wait. Seriously?

RILEY

We offered to help.

(RILEY and RENDER start walking away. From behind them:)

TAIWAN

Yes. Run. Tell the others what you saw today.

As for you - I will make your end as unpleasant as possible.

RENDER

Okay. We can't leave them.

RILEY

Them?

RENDER

Yeah. I mean. Professor Bunion is our archnemesiis - but we can't leave him tied up. That's like a... not-fun adventure.

RILEY

And the Taiwan 1000?

RENDER

It's an amazing world. Kinda a shame to never get the chance to see it that way.

RILEY

Yeah. You're right.

Alright, I'm gonna lower him down.

RENDER

Hey Taiwan 1000.

TAIWAN

Oh. You're back for more, eh!

RENDER

Yeah. I'm back. Come here.

TAIWAN

Yes. Pick me up. The better to strangle you by!

RENDER

Cut that out.

TAIWAN

Come with me if you want to die!

(MUSIC.)

(The back of the van opening up.)

RILEY

Alright. Grab it.

ERIC

Thanks.

RILEY

Have you been... paying for that this whole time?

ERIC

I paused the ride.

RILEY

But you didn't check it in.

ERIC

Does that matter?

RILEY

I mean... I don't know but... probably.

ERIC

Oh god... it's on my mother's credit card?

RENDER

Here. Taiwan 1000, your spot is right here.

TAIWAN

Yes. Perfect. And from this spot I shall plot the destruction of man.

RENDER

That sounds awesome.

RILEY

Uh... Render.

One thing in. One thing out.

RENDER

Right.

Okay. I'll get rid of... my small token holder.

RILEY

You kept the oreo tray!

ERIC

Haha! Until we meet again!

RENDER

Bunion's getting away.

RILEY

I don't care. I need a shower. My hair is so sticky.

[shouting after ERIC:] And shouting archnemeses phrases from an electric scooter is weak!

Okay. I need a stretch. I need a nap. Let's get out of here.

RENDER

Crypto-Curious - Adventures are amazing. And more adventures await. Don't worry - we'll bring you along too. We'll see you next time.

And like they say where I'm from:

TAIWAN

The Human Race shall be ash beneath my tread!

RENDER

Okay, that's not really in the spirit of what we're doing.

(end of episode.)

CREDITS

NEIL

Hi, this is Neil Batra. Have Monster, Will Travel features the vocal talents of Jordan Trovillion as Riley Kate, Paul Kerford Wilson as Render, Dave Powell as Professor Bunion and me, Neil Batra as the Taiwan 1000. Today's episode was written by Trey Tatum and directed by Bridget Leak. Have Monster, Will Travel is a production of Queen City Flash out of Cincinnati, Ohio.

PAUL

Hi, this is Paul Kerford Wilson. Happy New Year from our family to yours - as always - if your enjoying the show, the simplest way you can help us is by recommending us to a friend - You can find a link to rate and review the show in the show notes.

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