

BIG THINGS
(Episode 3)

"Pressure Drop."
By Byron Dunbar

Big Things Created by David Hill and Byron Dunbar

EXT. SKY - DAY

TITLE: "I say when it drops, oh you gonna feel it; know that you were doing wrong." - Toots and the Maytals

TILT DOWN TO:

CLOSE-UP: The face of MERYL. Clouds drift behind her head, and she looks very frightened. The camera TRACKS OUT to reveal that Meryl sits alongside ZACK on FRANK's back. They're in the MILITARY BASE.

EXT. SKY - ESTABLISHING - DAY - CONT'D

Frank LEAPS over HUGE OBSTACLES. Meryl holds onto Frank tight, as Zack gleefully films everything on his VIDEO CAMERA. On the ground, GIBSON AND CHLOE take notes.

ZACK

'Kay Frank, put a little extra thrust into this next jump, or ya might trip on your way over!

MERYL

Tri-trip?

Meryl looks ahead, and SQUEAKS in fear as she sees the final obstacle. It's the tallest one yet! She covers her eyes, as Frank leaps over it with ease. Next, Frank approaches Gibson and Chloe.

CHLOE

Nice work, Frank!

On Frank's back, Meryl quivers and her eyes remain covered.

ZACK

(to Meryl)

If you're not even gonna look, why bother coming along for the ride?

MERYL

Buh-but, I-I... I didn't wanna!

Zack looks down at Gibson and Chloe. No one notices as a small BAT appears in the distance. It hovers in midair, and wears a camera around its neck. It uses this camera to SNAP A PICTURE of Zack, Meryl, and Frank.

Chloe WAVES up to Zack and Meryl.

CHLOE

(calling up to Zack/Meryl)
You must be hungry! Why don't I cook ya up some chocolate ham dumplings, with peanut butter 'n jam on top?

GIBSON

Darling, one wouldn't trust you to cook a piece of toast.

CHLOE

C'mon! I cooked for a whole army once. I mean, it was an army of goldfish, and they all ended up dying. But still!

GIBSON

(sighs,
looks up at Zack)
I must say, I'm shocked how obedient that creature is when you're around. If only he'd listen to us.

IDA ULRICH walks ON-SCREEN.

IDA ULRICH

That's something I hope to rectify.

Everyone turns to face Ida.

GIBSON

Um, good morning General. What brings you here?

IDA ULRICH

Sonar machine's acting up again. Get on that, and I'll take over here.

GIBSON

Er... after this, I was hoping to get back to work on the H.R.V. unit. We, um, we need to protect-

IDA ULRICH

That's precisely why the sonar machine's a priority. We need to know when there's incoming attacks! Now, if you'll excuse me...

(calls up to children)

Get down!

Zack and Meryl exchange a look, then SLIDE DOWN Frank's back, and onto the ground.

ZACK

(arriving on ground)

Why?

IDA ULRICH

I want to see if I can get Frank to respond in your absence.

(Zack makes a face)

Uh, just in case you're ever unavailable. So why don't you run along and-

ZACK

No way! I wouldn't leave Frank for anything! He's my best-

Ida hands Zack some MONEY.

ZACK (CONT'D)

Wow, money! Seeya Ida!

MERYL

Um, uh, Z-Zack, this seems kinda-

Meryl can't finish. Zack GRABS her by the arm, and runs away!

ZACK (CONT'D)

Let's grab some snacks at Buttgerreit's Chocolate Shoppe!

Up in the air, the bat snaps a final photo. Then it flies away.

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The bat flies over a mountainous area to an OPENING in the TALLEST MOUNTAIN, where the DEMONIC CREATURE is waiting. The bat PERCHES on the demonic creature's shoulder, and hands it the photographs. The demonic creature looks at them, then NODS.

DEMONIC CREATURE

They're ripe for attack. Tell my second-in-command to prepare...

INT. BUTTGEREIT'S CHOCOLATE SHOPPE - DAY

TYLER, DORIS, and JALEEL sit at a table. The others drink soda, while Jaleel sips coffee. And next to Jaleel, there sits an absurdly high STACK OF PAPERS. Behind a counter, a cook named JÖRG prepares SUNDAES. He smiles when ZACK AND MERYL ENTER. Save for Jaleel, the other children smile as well.

DORIS

(to Zack)

Hiya kid! Done training with Frank already?

TYLER

Looks like he was hanging with Meryl instead! You tryna ditch your duties for a little dating session?

Zack looks defensive. He lifts his VIDEO CAMERA from his backpack.

ZACK

No way, I've got video to prove it!

TYLER

Dude, chill. I was kidding.

JALEEL

Suggestion: Next time you crack wise, try being funny.

JÖRG carries a tray of SUNDAES out to the children, and speaks in a thick GERMAN ACCENT:

JÖRG

Now, vat haff vee here? A little *kritik* on Jaleel's part, yah?

(places tray on table)

I vas going to zerve zese on ze house. But ve wouldn't vant zem to put ze **freeze** on your zense of humor!

Jörg bursts out LAUGHING. Jaleel remains stone-faced.

JALEEL

Too late; that gag left me cold.

Meryl is visibly upset by Jaleel's attitude, but no one notices. Jörg passes Tyler and Doris their sundaes. They CHEER, and greedily grab at them. Then Jörg places a sundae in front of Jaleel, and hands the remaining sundaes to Zack and Meryl as they take a seat.

ZACK

What's with the free treats, Jörg?

JÖRG

Zack, you're a true *mensch*! You spend hours training wis Frank to keep New Havenfield zafe; a reward for you und your *freunde* is ze least I can offer.

Zack smiles, and eats. Meryl hasn't touched her sundae. Instead, she watches the others eat. Doris gobbles her sundae with particular vigor, and hardly even stops to breathe.

MERYL

A-Aren't you guys, aren't yuh-y-you, gonna, say, s-say th-thank... th-

ZACK

(interrupting Meryl)

Doris, slow down! You'll make a mess!

After Zack interrupts her, Meryl turns to Jörg.

MERYL (CONT'D)

Th-Thank you Juh-Jörg.

Jörg LAUGHS merrily, and pats Meryl on the head.

JÖRG

Dankeschön, little Meryl.

Jörg walks OFF-SCREEN, in the direction of the counter.

MERYL

S-say you guys, m-m-maybe you should go up to J-Jörg, an', an' say... th-

TYLER

Yo Zack, can I see the video ya shot today?

Zack GRUNTS, and places his video camera on the table. He shows the footage he shot at the military base.

ZACK

See? Told ya I trained Frank today! I did!

TYLER

Why aren't ya still hanging out?

ZACK

Well, Ida has to get Frank to respond when I'm not there. Just in case I'm busy. Y'know, in case I'm busy.

TYLER

Busy with what?

ZACK

Uh, school I guess. I dunno.

JALEEL

Or eating sundaes?

DORIS

(through a full mouth)

Buh ith Saturday.

Zack looks nervous, and averts his gaze. This causes him to look straight at the stack of papers beside Jaleel.

ZACK

Say uh, Jaleel, what're those?

Jaleel grows excited, and passes Zack one of the papers.

JALEEL

These're some plans I've been drawing. They're for-

DORIS

(interrupting)

-a treehouse at Frank's cliff!

ZACK

Why's Frank need a treehouse?

TYLER

We can use it to talk to him face-to-face while we're chilling.

JALEEL

That better not have been another ice cream pun.

(to Zack)

So, got any cash to help us buy tools?

ZACK

(sticking hand in pocket)

As a matter'a fact...

Zack whips out Ida's money. The children GRIN.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

The camera PANS over still water. Suddenly, a pair of EYES pop out of the ocean. They're propped up by two VINES, resembling stilts. The eyes BLINK, then NOTICE something: The camera TRACKS OUT to REVEAL the coast of New Havenfield. The eyes stare at the city.

The eyes RISE from the ocean, revealing that they belong to a THIRTY-FOOT TALL CREATURE. Except for his eyes, this PLANT MONSTER is comprised entirely of leaves, grass, and other plants. He SWIMS toward New Havenfield...

INT. MILITARY BASE - DAY

GIBSON and CHLOE are repairing a SONAR MACHINE, located below an inactive MONITOR. Gibson looks irate.

CHLOE

Something wrong, sweetie?

GIBSON

Repairing the H.R.V. unit is of far greater prudence than this malarkey.

CHLOE

Stay positive hon! We'll be back to fixin' Harv before ya know it!

The sonar machine BEEPS!

CHLOE (CONT'D)

See? We've got it working already!

GIBSON

(turns on monitor)

Perhaps. Let's take a look.

EXT. BEACH - SAME TIME

As the plant monster arrives onshore, it DISSOLVES into an inert mass of FOLIAGE.

INT. MILITARY BASE - DAY

Chloe and Gibson TURN ON the monitor, and see the foliage.

GIBSON

Look, nothing! Blasted machine **still** isn't running properly.

CHLOE

Hold on a sec... those plant thingies weren't there before. We should-

GIBSON

(sarcastic)

Oh yes, sporadic plant growth; **quite** the pernicious threat! Seriously Chloe. Let's conclude our business here, then focus on the H.R.V. unit.

Chloe reluctantly returns to work. The camera TILTS UP to the monitor, where the foliage is visible SEEPING into the ground. Then the camera TRACKS THROUGH an open window-

EXT. NEW HAVENFIELD - DAY - CONT'D

-to show VINES begin CREEPING UP New Havenfield's buildings...

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

Jaleel examines trees as the children follow him. Jaleel carries the pile of floor plans, while Zack carries a BUCKET filled with tools, and the others carry WOODEN BEAMS.

JALEEL

(to Zack)

Is that bucket too heavy for ya?

ZACK

No, it's fine, it's-

Jaleel DUMPS his pile of paper into Zack's arms. Meryl SQUEAKS.

JALEEL

Perfect! You can carry the floor plans too.

ZACK

So, what do you carry?

JALEEL

(pats pocket)

I've got the nails.

The children look annoyed. Then they arrive at a tree.

MERYL

S-So, uh, uh, Jaleel, h-how about, about this one?

JALEEL

Hold it! See that fungi? It's diseased for sure.

Doris notices another tree. It looks very healthy.

DORIS

This tree looks **stupendous!**

JALEEL

Those branches aren't in a Y-shape; they'll break.

ZACK

Looks pretty sturdy to me.

JALEEL

No, they have to be in a Y!
(runs ahead)
Like this one!

The children SIGH with relief as Jaleel RUNS OFF-SCREEN.

JALEEL (O.S.)

If only it was taller.

The children GROAN and DRAG their supplies after Jaleel, as he examines yet another tree.

ZACK

Okay, what's wrong with **this** one?

JALEEL

Look at its shape! There's no way...
(pauses)
There's no way it could be better!

ZACK

Finally!

Tyler takes a plank from Meryl, as Doris readies a hammer.

DORIS

Okay Mr. Know-It-All, pass me a nail.

JALEEL

(sticks hand in pocket)
Sure, they're in my...

Jaleel's face TURNS PALE. He finds nothing in his pocket.

TYLER

Don't tell me you forgot 'em!

JALEEL

Uh... no! I've uh...
(wiggles fingers)
I've got nails! Heh.

The children are unamused. Meryl looks concerned for Jaleel, as Zack THROWS the bucket and floor plans to the ground.

JALEEL

(scrambling to retrieve plans)
Hey!

ZACK

Oops.

Jaleel looks up at Zack, shocked by his attitude. A moment passes.

JALEEL

Alright, so I forgot the nails, but
it's not the end of-

ZACK

Look, you've been acting superior
all day, then **you** mess up!

The others lower their wooden beams to the ground. Meryl grows more uncomfortable. Suddenly, two familiar EYES appear on the tree! They're same ones that belong to the PLANT MONSTER. None of the children notice them. The eyes watch Meryl, noting her discomfort.

JALEEL

Maybe, but yelling won't get us back
to the store any faster, so-

ZACK

I can't believe you think **we** should
go too! You're the one who forgot!

Meryl SQUEAKS with discomfort.

TYLER

Chill man, Jaleel doesn't hafta go
all alon-

ZACK

We're not going with him! No way!

JALEEL

Pfft, forget this. I'm heading home.
(walks OFF-SCREEN)

ZACK

Fine! I- We don't **need** you!

Zack sits down on the grass, sulking amongst the scattered floor

plans. The eyes on the tree SCOWL at Zack, then look back to Meryl, whose heart rate increases. Doris and Tyler don't notice. Instead, they look uncomfortable and stare at Zack.

DORIS

(feigns enthusiasm)

Well uh, better get a move on Zack ol' boy! 'Cause, uh, if we don't build Frank's treehouse, no one will! And um, we wouldn't want him to be destitute! He needs a **stupendous-**

ZACK

Do you **have** to talk like that?

Doris is taken aback. Meryl SWEATS, and Tyler grows angry.

TYLER

I'm getting sick 'a your attitude.

ZACK

Aw, just shut up Tyler.

TYLER

Don't talk to me like that!

INSERT: Meryl's eyes dart from child-to-child, looking frantic.

DORIS

Calm down fellas!

TYLER

(to Doris)

Stay outta this!

Meryl SHUTS HER eyes, and SQUEALS as if in pain. The eyes on the tree continue watching, and grow sad.

ZACK

Both of you, just SHUT UP!

Meryl SQUEALS AGAIN, and falls over! Everyone ignores her, except for the eyes on the tree. The tree's ROOTS LIFT out of the ground and walk forward, as the tree RECONFIGURES and the children argue.

DORIS/TYLER

NO, YOU SHUT UP!

ZACK

(gets up)

THAT'S IT!

The tree finishes RECONFIGURING into the thirty-foot PLANT MONSTER! It ROARS as it approaches Meryl, who has curled into a fetal position. The kids stop arguing, and turn to look. The plant monster SCOOPS Meryl up in his leafy hands, and RUNS AWAY! Tyler GASPS, and tries to run after the plant monster. Zack GRABS him by his shirt collar. Tyler struggles.

TYLER

Hey, lemme go!

ZACK

No! He'll crush you! He will!

Tyler reluctantly stops struggling.

TYLER

So, now what?

ZACK

We...

(thinks)

We need to get Frank.

EXT. NEW HAVENFIELD - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Zack, Tyler, and Doris return to the city and are SHOCKED to find that it's overrun by an ever-thickening JUNGLE, encased in vines with giant THORNS.

TYLER

I bet the thing that got Meryl did this.

ZACK

That's not all. Look.

Zack has found an UNCONSCIOUS JALEEL, lying near one of the giant thorns. Doris GASPS, and runs to Jaleel's side.

DORIS

Gee whillikers! Is he hurt?

ZACK

Doesn't look like it, but he got pricked by these thorns. Maybe they-

Zack can't finish; a MONSTEROUS ROAR drowns him out! The children turn, to see ZIRA arriving on the beach. The bat is perched on her head, and notices the children. It points at them with its wing, and SCREECHES at Zira. Zira nods, and CHARGES at the kids! They frantically pull the unconscious Jaleel away, narrowly avoiding the SLASH of Zira's claw.

Zira's strike causes her to be PRICKED by the thorns. She grows sleepy, and wavers back and forth. The bat looks confused, and FLIES OFF of her head. The kids stop to watch Zira. Then they SCREAM as Zira shuts her eyes, and TOPPLES OVER. All three kids DRAG Jaleel out of the way, while Zira CRASHES DOWN behind them, UNCONSCIOUS. From the sky, the bat snaps a photo and FLIES AWAY.

The kids regroup near the jungle. First, they HIDE Jaleel within some tall grass. Then they study the vines.

ZACK

I... I think we've all figured out what these thorns do.

DORIS

They buy ya a one-way ticket to snoozeville!

ZACK

Yup, and the vines've gotten twice as thick since we've been here. Even if we warn Frank, soon it'll be impossible to avoid 'em.

TYLER

(points forward)

But take a look at the jungle, it's like, uber-thick man! We'd never get through there unless we climbed the vines, an' then-

DORIS

-we'd be pricked and fall from snoozeville to doomsville.

Zack LOOKS UP the vines, and squints.

ZACK

Not if we're careful... and quick.

TYLER

What're ya- **whoa!**

Zack is already climbing the vines, and is careful to slip BETWEEN the thorns without touching them.

ZACK

(calling back)

C'mon if you're coming!

Doris and Tyler GULP, then follow.

EXT. MAYTALS BAY - DAY

The plant monster FLOATS through the bay, as Meryl lays on a BED OF LEAVES he's grown for her. She's still curled up in a fetal position. The vines that prop up the plant monster's eyes move CLOSER to Meryl, looking concerned. Meryl peeks at the eyes. She NEARLY GASPS, but COUGHS instead. Then she buries her face in her arms, and SHIVERS.

The plant monster's eyes TILT TO THE SIDE, confused. He grows a TREE BRANCH, and uses it to NUDGE her. Meryl just curls up tighter. The plant monster retracts his eyes, and closes them for a moment. Then he opens them, and looks INSPIRED.

Flowers begin GROWING OVER Meryl, and she lifts her head. Upon realizing what's going on, Meryl leaps to her feet. Then she becomes confused as the flowers form a BEAUTIFUL DRESS. Next, a VINE crawls up to Meryl like a worm, and snakes up her body. The vine wraps across her forehead, and BLOOMS into a crown of flowers.

Meryl takes a step back, and smiles timidly. The plant monster leans back slightly, and CLAPS its LEAFY HANDS together, like a sea otter.

MERYL

Um, who-who're you...?

A LOG forms across the bed of leaves. It's covered in moss. Within the moss, a miniature version of the plant monster appears. It WAVES at Meryl, then DISINTEGRATES.

MERYL

Uh, yea-yeah. You're uh, a pla-pla-plant monster. Um. I guess that shoulda bin... should've been, um...

A WOODEN SIGN grows out of the moss, with the words "OBVIOUS?" written on it. Meryl looks astonished.

MERYL (CONT'D)

G-golly, you s-sure are smart, huh?

The plant monster closes his eyes, and LIFTS his head in a charmingly pompous manner. He opens his eyes again as the sign DISINTEGRATES. Meryl GIGGLES.

MERYL

Th-this is a r-really, um, real pretty dress. My uh, my daddy, he can't um, can't afford, uh..., um...

(composes herself)

Th-thank, thank you...

The plant monster PATS Meryl on the head with one of his leaves.

MERYL (CONT'D)

S-so, are uh, are you uh, are you from the C-C-Cove?

The plant monster SHAKES his head, and a GLOBE grows out of the moss. It is made out of flowers and leaves; water is designated by blue flowers, while land is designated by green leaves. On one continent, a miniature version of the PLANT MONSTER sprouts up. Meryl squints her eyes, and leans in CLOSER. Then she BEAMS!

MERYL

Juh-Jamaica! You're from Jamaica!

The plant monster NODS.

MERYL (CONT'D)

Buh-but w-what, uh, what brings ya way out here?

TWIGS grow all over the continents, forming FACTORIES. These factories SMOKE. Tiny VENUS FLY TRAPS sprout on the continents and COUGH. Little flecks of wood appear in the ocean portions of the

globe, and then take on the shape of GARBAGE.

The MINIATURE PLANT MONSTER GASPS when it sees the pollution all over the globe! Then it looks determined, and moves from continent to continent, healing the pollution. Once it does so, the Venus fly traps stop coughing and begin to CHEER! Then the globe DISSOLVES into the moss, along with everything on it.

MERYL

W-Wow! S-so like, you um, you go a-
aroun' the world, avenging the Earth
from all the garbage, an' pollution,
an' toxins an' stuff?

The plant monster NODS, and Meryl grins.

MERYL (CONT'D)

I-I think I'll call ya 'Toxie.'

That excites the plant monster, now known as TOXIE.

Toxie BOUNCES Meryl up and down as she giggles. While in the air, Meryl notices something, and GASPS! Toxie stops bouncing Meryl, and looks confused. Meryl points OFF-SCREEN, and looks up at Toxie.

MERYL

P-please Toxie, lift back me up!

Toxie complies. As he lifts Meryl, it's REVEALED that she's pointing toward the jungle encasing New Havenfield.

MERYL (CONT'D)

D-did you, did you do that?

(Toxie nods)

Buh-but why?

Toxie places a large LEAF before Meryl. It's rolled up like a scroll, but immediately unravels. As it does so, two-dimensional DRAWINGS arise, like illustrations in a POP-UP BOOK. They're made out of leaves, and depict New Havenfield and Forbidden Cove.

A miniature plant-version of ZIRA grows out of the Forbidden Cove illustration, and walks toward the New Havenfield illustration. As the mini-Zira approaches, a THORNY JUNGLE grows over the New Havenfield illustration. The miniature representing Zira is PRICKED by the thorns, and falls asleep.

Meryl looks suspicious, then stares back at the real jungle. The real Zira is still there, sleeping by the thorns. Meryl GULPS, and looks up at Toxie.

MERYL

I-I, I'd like to believe ya Toxie...
buh-but even I do, the army guys,
they, um, they wouldn't, uh...

Toxie looks SAD. Meryl grows concerned.

MERYL (CONT'D)

I get why you uh... why you r-ran off
with me. 'Cause I was uh, I was... I
was, uh, y'know. Under pressure.

(beat)

And um, if you were um, if you were
mean, you uh, probably wouldn't d-d-
do that... but still, the army,
they...

Toxie's eyes moisten. Meryl pouts sympathetically. Then she SIGHS,
closes her eyes, and HUGS Toxie.

MERYL (CONT'D)

W-Well. W-we can explain when they
get here... I'll uh, I'll wait with
you.

This pleases Toxie, and he gently nuzzles Meryl.

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE - DAY

The camera TRACKS THROUGH Forbidden Cove, and into a mountainous
area. The BAT APPEARS, still wearing the camera around its neck.
The bat also holds TWO PHOTOS in its mouth, and flies toward an
OPENING in the TALLEST MOUNTAIN.

INT. TALLEST MOUNTAIN - DAY - CONT'D

The bat enters the mountain, where the DEMONIC CREATURE sits at a
DESK. The creature gestures over a small ROCK. The rock CHANGES
into the shape of a DRAGON'S WING! The demonic creature continues
gesturing, and the STONY WING FLEXES. Then the BAT CLEARS ITS
THROAT. The demonic creature turns to face the bat.

DEMONIC CREATURE

Welcome back. Did Zira manage to defeat that deserter?

The bat SHAKES HIS HEAD, and SPITS the photos onto the desk. One depicts the thorns pricking Zira; the other depicts her asleep.

DEMONIC CREATURE

Mm. This isn't our doing.

(stops to think)

But it may prove advantageous...

Summon Hunch and the spiders!

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

Five six-foot tall SPIDERS are riding on HUNCH'S back, as he swims toward NEW HAVENFIELD. Soon, he arrives onshore and walks toward the jungle.

INT. JUNGLE - DAY - CONT'D

Once Hunch arrives at the jungle, the spiders crawl off of his back, and onto the vines. They avoid the thorns and enter between the vines. Hunch BURROWS under the vines, and into the jungle.

INT. JUNGLE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Doris and Tyler follow Zack as he makes his way through the jungle, and repeatedly blows on his WHISTLE.

ZACK

C'mon Frank! C'mon boy! Where ya at?

Zack continues blowing on the whistle, as Doris looks back the way they came. Tyler notices.

TYLER

(teasing)

Feelin' scared, Doris?

DORIS

(continues staring)

Hmm? Oh.

(turns to face Tyler)

No way buster! I just uh, well, I thought I heard something and... well, it made me remember Jaleel! Maybe we should'na left 'im. He could

be in a whole mess 'a danger! Maybe
if one of us-

TYLER

(turns to Zack)

Check it out Zack, I think Doris has
a crush on-

(notices Zack has a fearful
expression)

Huh?

ZACK

(points behind Tyler/Doris)

Look!

Doris and Tyler turn, and see the SPIDERS coming after them! Tyler and Doris BOLT PAST ZACK. Zack tries to follow, but trips and drops his whistle. It bounces toward a FRESHLY DUG DITCH. This ditch is clearly Hunch's work.

Zack's whistle is about to fall into the ditch, but Zack dives forward and CATCHES IT! However, Zack loses his balance, and FALLS into the ditch, YELPING the whole way down. Doris hears, and turns to look. Then she grabs Tyler by the shoulder.

DORIS

(pointing at ditch)

Slow down Ty, lookit what happened
to Zack!

Tyler and Doris run toward the ditch, and peer over its edge. Below, they see Zack lying on a giant MUSHROOM, which has cushioned his fall. Near the mushroom, there is a large PIPE. Roots have broken it in two. This pipe is also covered in PLANTS, ROCKS, AND BOULDERS, revealing that the sewage system is mixing poorly with the jungle.

TYLER

(calling down)

Zack! You okay?

Zack opens his eyes, and then looks TERRIFIED. The spiders are about to get Doris and Tyler! Zack grabs the nearby rocks, and HURLS them up at the spiders.

ZACK

Run guys!

The spiders grow annoyed, and turn their attention to Zack. They crawl into the ditch, as Zack frantically looks around. He sees the pipe, and realizes it's just large enough for him to squeeze into, yet too small for the spiders.

Zack slips his whistle into his pocket, and CRAWLS inside the pipe as the spiders catch up. One of them sticks a leg inside the pipe to grab at Zack. Zack crawls deeper inside, and the spider's leg just manages to BRUSH the end of his foot.

Zack continues crawling, when he sees a LIGHT at the end of the pipe. He looks hopeful, until he sees two spiders waiting outside. One of them shoots a WEB at Zack and pulls him forward. Zack GRABS a BRANCH growing through the side of the pipe, but the branch BREAKS. Zack continues holding onto it, and GRABS a rock he passes as well.

When the spider finishes pulling Zack outside, Zack POKES it in the eye with the stick, and then SMASHES the rock over the other spider's head. Then Zack RUNS, as the spiders pursue him. Zack arrives at the end of ditch, but it's too high for him to climb.

DORIS (O.S.)

Zack, up here!

Zack LOOKS UP. Doris and Tyler are diagonally lowering a LOG into the ditch.

ZACK

I thought I told you guys to run!

TYLER

Chill man! Use this to climb outta there!

DORIS

Yeah, we'll hold it steady!

Zack points to the spiders, who have nearly caught up to him.

ZACK

But they'll get you too!

TYLER

It'll fall over without our-

ZACK
JUST GO, I CAN DO THIS!

Doris and Tyler reluctantly run away. Zack BOLTS up the log, narrowly avoiding the clutches of a spider. The log FALLS OVER, just as Zack scrambles out of the ditch.

Zack has no time to catch his breath. The spiders are already climbing out of the ditch. Zack FLEES. As he bolts through the jungle, Zack takes out his whistle and BLOWS INTO IT!

ZACK
Frank, c'mon! Where are-

Zack's sentence is cut short as he BUMPS into Tyler and Doris. He gets up, annoyed.

ZACK (CONT'D)
Guys? I thought I told you to-

Doris GRABS Zack by the head. She THRUSTS him forward, so that he's staring directly at a newly formed RIVER. Its current is moving rapidly, and blocks their path.

DORIS
This river wasn't here before; the environment's still changing! Oooh-
wee, we've got one awful mess on our hands!

Zack is perplexed, and looks around. He sees some STEPPING STONES leading across the river, about a yard from where the kids stand. Zack grins, and runs toward the stones as he points at them.

ZACK
C'mon! Maybe if we hurry, we can-

Hunch BURSTS ABOVE GROUND, blocking Zack's path! He snarls, as Zack STOPS RUNNING! However, Zack's been going at too quick a pace, and is still SCREECHING towards Hunch. Hunch CACKLES, opens his mouth, and waits for Zack to slip inside his jaws!

Suddenly, a GIANT PURPLE CLAW CLAMPS HUNCH'S MOUTH SHUT! Another one scoops Zack up!

The camera TRACKS OUT, to REVEAL FRANK placing Zack on his back, as he holds Hunch's mouth shut. Zack CHEERS, and looks down from

Frank's back. The spiders are about to get Tyler and Doris!

ZACK (CONT'D)

Look at the spiders! They'll-!

Frank doesn't need to hear the rest of Zack's sentence. With his free claw, he SCOOPS Doris and Tyler up just in time, and then uses Hunch to WHACK the five spiders into the river. The spiders are then swept away in its current.

TYLER

(calling to spiders)

Whoo hoo! How d'ya like that?

Tyler notices Hunch, struggling to get free of Frank's grasp.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Aw, but what're we gonna do about that thing?

Zack rubs his chin, and GRINS mischievously.

ZACK

I've got an idea...

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Everything is calm... until Hunch SMASHES through the thorny vines, creating a large OPENING in the jungle! Frank uses to it exit, with Zack, Tyler and Doris riding on his back.

Zack observes Hunch, who is sprawled near Zira, UNCONSCIOUS.

ZACK

(sarcastic/confident)

So, guys. What do you think the odds are that thing got pricked?

TYLER

(notices something in distance,
taps Zack's shoulder)

Um, check out Maytals Bay...

ZACK

What?

(looks ahead,
eyes widen)

EXT. MAYTALS BAY - DAY

Toxie floats along, his eyes looking down at Meryl. Meanwhile, Meryl rides on the bed of leaves in the water, talking to Toxie.

MERYL

...yeah, it's uh, it's a l-lot like that. S-see, the other kids, they aren't too uh, aren't t-too nice to each other. S-so th-that's why we weren't able to get that, that tr-treehouse made.

Meryl stops talking, when she notices Frank CHARGING toward the beach.

MERYL (CONT'D)

Oh no, tha-that's them! An' they're bringing, b-bringing Frank!

(looks up at Toxie)

L-lift me up onto y-your head! Then we'll go meet 'em. But go real slow, so they don't... um, don't... uh...

(concentrates)

So we can tell 'em you don't mean any... tell 'em that you're friendly!

The bed of leaves RECONFIGURES into a STAIRCASE. Meryl uses it to climb up onto Toxie's head. Then a BRANCH grows out of one of Toxie's leafy hands, which sprouts a FLAG made out of WHITE ROSES.

The stairs DISSOLVE, as Toxie WAVES the flag and approaches the shore. He reaches land at the precise moment Frank arrives on the BEACH. Frank GROWLS, as Zack points at Meryl.

ZACK

(to Toxie)

Let her go!

MERYL

W-wait guys, I, um, he's, I mean he's-

ZACK

(speaking over Meryl)

It's not listening! Okay Frank, let

him have it!

Frank immediately PUNCHES Toxie in the face. The impact sends Toxie sprawling backward. Meanwhile, Meryl is flung forward. Frank leans back to catch her. He JUST MANAGES to do so, as Zack, Tyler, and Doris CLING to his back to avoid falling off.

Nevertheless, Frank loses his balance! The children continue holding on tight, as Frank is about to fall over onto his back.

Then just in time, VINES WRAP AROUND FRANK! They pull him forward, until he's standing upright. The camera PULLS BACK to REVEAL that the vines belong to TOXIE!

Frank immediately scoops the children off his back, and places them on the ground, followed by Meryl. However, Toxie hasn't released Frank from the vines. Frank looks to Zack for direction.

ZACK

(to Frank)

What are you waiting for? Get him!

MERYL

S-s-s-Stop! You d-d-don't uh-
under... understa-

DORIS

(speaking over Meryl)

Wow, that's one nifty dress, y'got
there Meryl! Who's your tailor?

Frank GRABS Toxie's vines, and uses them to SWING HIM AROUND. Then he TOSSES Toxie over the ocean! Toxie grows GIGANTIC ROOTS that PLUNGE into the ocean. He uses the roots as legs, to CHARGE at Frank! As Toxie charges, he grows two HUGE CACTI over his arms, which are covered with the same THORNS that surround the city.

Upon arriving onshore, Toxie SWINGS his cacti at Frank, who dodges. This nearly causes Toxie to TRIP, but he manages to stay balanced. Instead, he turns around to face Frank, who is circling him. Frank motions to CHARGE at Toxie, when...

ZACK

(calling to Frank)

Slow down!

Frank stops and looks at Zack.

ZACK (CONT'D)

Those thorns are the same ones that're surrounding the city! Make sure he doesn't hit ya!

MERYL

I-if y-y-you'd just luh-listen to me, Toxie wouldn't, he wouldn't have to h-hit, wouldn't have t-t-t...!

TYLER

(speaking over Meryl)
Wait Zack, we should run!

ZACK

(looks to Tyler)
Wha...?

TYLER

Look how big that thing is. One blow from those thorns'll take Frank out! I say the five of us book it, and wait until the military-

ZACK

NO!

Frank looks at Zack, surprised. Then he looks back at Toxie, who is poised in a defensive position. Frank GULPS, and looks back at Zack. Then Frank offers his hand for the children to walk onto.

ZACK

(to Frank)
No way! Stay 'n fight!

Frank looks uncertain.

MERYL

Buh-but this is all un-unnecess-

DORIS

(speaking over Meryl)
Y'know Zack, maybe ol' Tyler has himself a point, see I-

ZACK

(interrupting Doris)

C'mon Frank, FIGHT!

Frank NODS, and turns away from Zack to face Toxie. Frank rips two TREES out of the ground, and CHARGES at Toxie.

Frank uses the trees to deflect the blows from Toxie's cacti, and then HEADBUTTS him. This causes Toxie to FALL BACKWARD, although Toxie manages to maintain his balance. Frank RUSHES AT Toxie, when he notices Toxie DISINTEGRATE.

Suddenly, the two trees Frank is holding RECONFIGURE into the left and right halves of Toxie! Frank PANICS, and tosses the two halves away. They continue GROWING, and MERGE together into an even LARGER version of Toxie, complete with even larger cacti!

Toxie LUNGES at Frank once more. Frank RUNS, and grabs a BOULDER which he uses to deflect Toxie's cacti blows. Toxie swings again, and Frank LEAPS OVER his head, and then BASHES the rock over Toxie. Immediately, Toxie DISINTEGRATES.

Frank holds the rock up over his head, and looks around, anticipating his next blow. Then he hears something, and looks up. There's MOSS under the rock, and something is FORMING within it! Before Frank can toss the rock away, a THORNY CACTUS grows out of the moss, and STRIKES HIM! Its thorns PRICK Frank!

Frank immediately drops the rock and FALLS OVER, unconscious. Meryl slaps her forehead, while the other children look TERRIFIED! Meanwhile, the cactus that burst out of the moss RECONFIGURES into the thirty-foot version of Toxie. Now he has leaves for hands instead of cacti, and walks over to the children.

The other kids RUN, but Meryl stands still, looking exasperated. Soon, Toxie stands next to Meryl, and places his leafy hands to his sides. In turn, Meryl CROSSES her arms, and turns to face the other children. Both Toxie and Meryl sternly stare at the fleeing kids. The children notice Meryl isn't with them, and look back. When they see her with Toxie, they stop running and appear baffled.

MERYL

D-do you wanna try, wanna try luh-
listening to me, now?

ZACK

Uh...

MERYL (CONT'D)

Th-this is T-Toxie. He uh, he was protecting N-New Havenfield. That's why, why he built that uh, that jungle thingie, so the Cove monsters couldn't get in, couldn't-

TYLER

Wait, isn't he from the Cove?

MERYL

No! H-he's been going all over the world, healing all the pollution, and now that's what he's doing here.

A small LEAF pokes Meryl, and she looks up at Toxie. Toxie has grown a sign that reads, "NOT HERE. NOT ANYMORE."

MERYL

Wha? B-but-

Without any warning, Toxie DISINTEGRATES. Then the jungle surrounding New Havenfield RECEDES. As it does so, bits of the jungle FALL OFF. These bits HIT Zira and Hunch, waking them up. They look fearful upon seeing the jungle DISINTEGRATING above them, and RUN toward the beach. The kids HIDE behind a boulder, and watch as Hunch and Zira enter the water, then SWIM AWAY.

TRANSITION TO:

Zack, Meryl, Doris and Tyler all sit on Frank's back, as he SNORES. Meryl seems very disappointed. The others look ashamed, especially Zack. There is an awkward silence. Zack becomes increasingly uncomfortable. Finally, he speaks:

ZACK

Guess I was kinda, uh, kinda thoughtless back there, huh?

MERYL

(staring into her lap)

Yeah.

Zack is taken aback. Another awkward pause follows, until...

MERYL

I just wanted, wanted one, one friend who is-isn't... isn't...
(coughs)

S-s-s-sel-s-s-
(closes eyes,
sighs)
N-never mind.

ZACK

Well, for all we know, maybe 'Toxie' was lying about the pollution. I mean, why'd there be pollution in New Havenfield? We came here to get away from all that.

Meryl grows ANGRY, but doesn't say anything. Doris and Tyler look uncomfortable.

TYLER

Say uh, we should, we should, um...
(looks to Doris)
Hey Doris... do you wanna go check on-?

DORIS

Check on Jaleel? Oh, oh yeah! Good ide-, uh, I mean, **stupendous** idea Ty! Yeah, uh...
(glances at Zack/Meryl,
looks back to Tyler)
Stupendous idea...

Tyler motions to Doris to FOLLOW him, and the two children SLIDE off Frank's back, and scamper away. Zack turns to Meryl.

ZACK

Don't be too mad... whether or not Toxie was telling the truth, I still think things would've been better if I did whatever it was you did. But uh... well, um... what **did** you do?

MERYL

(avoids eye contact)
I-I dunno, I just...
(tightens lips,
looks up at Zack)
I just... I just listened to what he had to say.

ZACK

But weren't ya scared? Didn't ya wanna leave?

MERYL

I, well... s-sure I was. B-but...

ZACK

(prompting Meryl)

But...?

MERYL

(stutter disappears)

I guess I just thought listening to what he had to say was more important than getting what I wanted.

Meryl stares into Zack's eyes. Zack looks guilty. He averts his gaze toward the cliff, and notices something.

ZACK

(looking over Meryl's shoulder)

Hey, what's that?

Meryl turns to look. Her eyes nearly pop out of her head, when sees a WONDROUS TREEHOUSE on FRANK'S CLIFF!

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

Zack and Meryl RUSH toward the treehouse, while Doris and Tyler DRAG a weary Jaleel along behind them. Jaleel's clearly just been woken up.

JALEEL

(half-asleep)

W-wha'happen? Wha'did I miss?

Zack and Meryl stop before a built-in LADDER, leading up to a DOOR in the treehouse. They STARE UP at it in awe. The treehouse is skillfully built, yet seems to have grown naturally.

MERYL

T-Toxie did this...

The kids exchange curious glances, then climb up the ladder.

INT. TREEHOUSE - DAY

The kids are astonished upon seeing the interior of the treehouse. It's perfectly furnished, with a kitchen, cupboards, windows, and

all the comforts of home. Then Meryl sees something hanging on a wall. Meryl covers her mouth, and her eyes WATER.

The other kids look as well. They see a mural made out of leaves hanging in a frame of branches. It depicts Meryl and Toxie happily talking, as they float together through Maytals Bay.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE TO:

EXT. MILITARY BASE - ESTABLISHING - LATER

A CROWD OF SOLDIERS stare up at FRANK. He's awake now, but still looks sleepy. Jaleel sits next to Frank, and is in a similar state; conscious, yet lethargic.

IDA ULRICH emerges from the crowd of soldiers, and looks at Frank, then Jaleel. Next, she turns back to the crowd, and MOTIONS for someone to come forward. GIBSON and CHLOE emerge from the crowd, carrying MEDICAL EQUIPMENT. They use these devices to EXAMINE both Frank and Jaleel.

The camera PANS AWAY from Frank and military personnel, and settles on the ENTRANCE to the military base. There, Meryl sits on a BENCH. She still wears the dress Toxie made for her, and is SOBBING.

Doris stands at Meryl's side, attempting to comfort her. Meanwhile, Tyler paces back-and-forth, impatient. Occasionally, he stops to stare at Doris and Meryl, looking concerned. Zack is also present, standing at the periphery of the other children. He looks very GUILTY.

Zack looks around. Then he slowly sneaks off...

EXT. MILITARY PRISON - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Zack walks up to the military prison. He peeks in through a BARRED WINDOW. Through it, he sees various MONSTERS: they're held in CELLS. These include the SQUID from episode one, as well as CINDER, the fire-breathing pterodactyl that was defeated in episode two. Cinder is wearing a MUZZLE over his beak.

Zack takes his VIDEO CAMERA out from his BACKPACK. Through the window, he starts filming Cinder.

Cinder notices Zack filming him, and attempts to SPIT A FIREBALL at Zack! However, the muzzle prevents Cinder from opening his beak wide enough to do that, so the fireball EXPLODES in his mouth. The

force sends Cinder hurling backward, and Cinder SLAMS his back against his cell wall. Zack is shocked by this, and he takes a step back... and BUMPS into Jaleel!

JALEEL

(to Zack, sarcastic)

We've gotta stop meeting this way.

Jaleel's just arrived at the military prison, along with Chloe, Meryl, Tyler and Doris. Meryl's stopped crying, but her eyes are still red.

ZACK

What're you guys doing h-

CHLOE

Good news, sweetie! Jaleel 'n Frank'll be a-okay! The poison just needs to work its way through their systems.

ZACK

Ummm... cool, cool! But why'd ya follow me?

DORIS

Meryl's still, well, she's still a little sad on account 'a Toxie! So, your mom thought some cookies 'n milk would cheer her up.

ZACK

Huh? Why do you need to go the military prison to get food?

CHLOE

(unlock/opens door,
waves kids inside)

'Cause I always keep snacks on hand for the boys!

ZACK

Wait, what?

The kids look confused, but follow Chloe inside.

INT. MILITARY PRISON - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Chloe leads the kids down a hall of CELLS, each containing a DEFEATED MONSTER. Cinder occupies the last one. Near Cinder's cell is a small kitchen, complete with a REFRIGERATOR and CUPBOARDS.

ZACK/MERYL/DORIS/JALEEL/TYLER

Whoa!

CHLOE

(pointing toward monsters)

Part of my job is looking after the boys! They can get awful hungry.

Chloe opens a cupboard: it's lined with BOXES OF COOKIES! Chloe grabs a box, and pours a HUGE STACK OF COOKIES onto her hand. Then she FLICKS the cookies to the monsters, like she's dealing cards. The monsters open their mouths wide and CATCH the cookies in their mouths... except for poor Cinder! Due to his muzzle, he can't open his mouth wide enough to eat his cookies.

Chloe gives the remaining cookies to the kids. Next, she opens up the fridge and takes out a CARTON OF MILK. Then she takes out some GLASSES from a cupboard, and pours the kids glasses of milk.

CHLOE

(to kids)

None 'a you sweeties're lactose intolerant, are ya?

MERYL

(notices Cinder can't eat)

N-no, buh-but, but lookit um, lookit-

(points to Cinder)

...uh, lookit um, lookit-

Chloe turns, and takes note of Cinder's dilemma.

CHLOE

(pouring milk into glasses)

Aw, poop. That muzzle must be stopping Cinder from getting at his yummys!

JALEEL

Cinder? You mean you named it?

CHLOE

I named him, yeah!

Chloe grabs another glass from the cupboard, as well as some CHOCOLATE MILK from the refrigerator. She pours the chocolate milk into the glass, and places a STRAW into it. Then she sticks her hand through the bars into Cinder's cell, offering him the drink.

CHLOE

Here Cinder, you can have this instead!

ZACK

(panicking)

Mom, are you crazy? That's a-

To Zack's astonishment, Cinder approaches timidly. He even allows Chloe to place the straw through his muzzle, and into his beak. Then Cinder slowly drinks the chocolate milk.

ZACK

(confused but calm)

Hunh.

JALEEL

That's pretty impressive, Mrs. Campbell. What's your secret?

CHLOE

(flicks hand at Jaleel, sweet)

Aw, p'shaw! Ain't no secret to it, you just gotta listen to 'em!

Meryl smiles when she hears that, then nudges Zack.

MERYL

Y-yeah, all ya gotta do is- luh-lis-

Meryl's sentence is cut short when Cinder tries and fails to spit a fireball at Chloe! But just like before, the force from it merely causes him to SMASH against his cell wall! The kids look terrified, but Chloe doesn't notice a thing. She grins at the kids, with her hands at her sides.

CHLOE

What?

FADE TO BLACK.