

MAX EVERDRIVE

"The Beginning of the End"

Episode #5

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## COLD OPEN

### EXT. CHANNEL 6 TV SATELLITE

The Channel 6 TV Satellite floats gracefully through space like a plastic bag in a worn-out parody of 1999's American Beauty. The cylindrical segments rotate, the exterior lights flash meaninglessly. There's even a little space traffic nearby. If Dick Dickinson were still alive, he'd be proud, but thankfully, he is dead.

### INT. MAINTAINENCE AREA

In a small chamber, far away from biological habitation, a small robot comes to life. The robot is approximately Roomba shaped, with a vacuum nozzle, dustpan, brush and litter picker attachment. It accelerates forward on small wheels, and jauntily makes its way through a maze of ductwork, barely larger than itself, swinging around corners and climbing vertical shafts. It exits somewhere within information services.

### INT. INFORMATION SERVICES

The robot continues on its merry way, dodging the footfall and occasionally picking up lost screws and washers. Once its rounds are done, it exits through a small, cat-flap shaped hole in the main door, and makes its way through the central plaza.

### INT. PLAZA

The Plaza, while not exactly busy, is livelier than before. The robot makes its way past the Museum of Earth Culture. Inside, aliens look bemusedly at jars of mayo and rugby balls. It comes to a halt inside the one and only restaurant on station, an ungodly fusion of multiple Earth restaurant chains, McWetherBucks Bell. Sensing dirt, it heads inside.

### INT. RESTAURANT

Immediately, the robot begins vacuuming and picking up stray snacks that have fallen from the bar. The restaurant itself is an odd affair, somewhere between a pub, a coffee shop, and a bad fast-food eatery. The robot spies spilled drinks and discarded wrappers on a low coffee table, adjacent to some couches, but can't quite climb up.

A nearby patron notices and picks the robot up so that it can clean the table, then puts it back down afterward. The robot's blocky LED screen displays a graphic of a love heart. It continues on its way.

INT. PLAZA

Back in the plaza, the robot makes its way toward the residential area. It comes to the central hub, a tall room with a hexagonal footprint, dominated by lifts heading up and down the length of the station. Instead of getting in the elevator, it mounts a rail on the wall and begins to shoot upward at speed. A few floors up, it dismounts the wall, and heads in a direction marked 'residential'.

INT. CORRIDOR

The robot comes to the very first room, room 101 - Dog's apartment - and lightly taps on the door with its brush arm. Dog grunts from inside, and after a few seconds, the door opens. Cans of beer and green glass bottles spill out of the doorway. The room is an ungodly mess. Dog, Zoltran and Merrick are stooped over the kitchen table, nursing extreme hangovers.

DOG  
(hangover)  
What?

The cleaning robot turns around and wheels away.

INT. DOG'S KITCHEN

DOG  
Oh god, my head. What the hell was I drinking last night? Some kind of horrible alien beverage that melts your eyeballs off, no doubt.

He rummages around the pile and removes two bottles.

DOG (CONT'D)  
Gin and WKD? Ah, fuck me.

Merrick stirs and goes through approximately the same mental process.

MERRICK  
Oh god, what kind of horrible Earth beverage was \*I\* drinking last night?

They too look into the pile.

MERRICK (CONT'D)  
Olive Oil? Oh no, extra virgin...

**END OF COLD OPEN**

**ACT ONE**

INT. DOG'S KITCHEN

Dog is checking his emails. Merrick is dutifully picking up all the cans and putting them into the correct holes in the recycling. Zoltran, as usual, is doing nothing, and has somehow acquired an ice pack and a glass of seltzer water.

MERRICK

Zoltran. You're a computer.

ZOLTRAN

(accusatory)

You're a computer.

MERRICK

What do you need Seltzer water for?

ZOLTRAN

Oh yeah. I forgot.

For a minute, Zoltran's screen goes blank, then the text 'UNINSTALLING HANGOVER.EXE' appears, a progress bar fills up, and then Zoltran's face reappears.

ZOLTRAN (CONT'D)

Whoah. I feel like a million bucks!

DOG

Do you think Tau Ceti are looking at my application? I still haven't heard anything. I wonder if I should maybe contact them, remind them about it.

MERRICK

I have no idea.

ZOLTRAN

A watched kettle never boils.

MERRICK

(impressed)

Nice analogy. Very nice.

Dog clicks further through his emails. His eyes widen.

DOG

Email from yesterday. It says they detected a launch of a shuttle from Earth's surface.

ZOLTRAN

That's good, right?

DOG

There's more survivors. I thought I'd seen the last shuttle weeks ago.

MERRICK

Launched from Earth? Now I feel bad, we should've given them a lift. I had no idea that anyone could still be down there.

Merrick shoots a sideways glance at Dog.

MERRICK (CONT'D)

Dog, don't get your hopes up.

DOG

I know, I know.

ZOLTRAN

When is it?

DOG

This morning.

ZOLTRAN

This morning? Well hot ziggedy, we'd better get out of here. Good thing I feel so great!

Zoltran jumps out of their chair, clicking their heels, and heads out the door, whistling. Merrick starts gathering the last of the cans. For a moment, nobody says anything.

MERRICK

If you do get relocated... Tau Ceti is a long way away. I guess you won't be able to come visit.

DOG

No. I guess not.

MERRICK

You know, my people constantly excrete lipid vesicles into the air around us.

DOG

What's a lipid vesicle?

MERRICK

It's like a little bubble of grease.

DOG

Oh. So that's why I always have to clean the kitchen after you're been here.

Merrick throws the last can into the recycler.

MERRICK

Well, there's a reason for that. When I'm with another member of my species, we exchange these vesicles with one another. We slowly diffuse into one another. I have a little piece of everyone I've ever met, with me. It means that... we never really have to say goodbye.

Dog looks down at his computer.

MERRICK (CONT'D)

I'll see you in the hangar, yeah?

DOG

Yeah. See you.

INT. DOCKING BAY

There's a small gaggle of aliens in the docking bay, and one of the walls has a banner on it saying 'welcome humans'. Merrick and Zoltran arrive and join the crowd. There's a small monitor in one corner showing the shuttle's ascent. It can't be more than a few minutes away.

MERRICK

Who do you think it is? I hope it's Mozart.

ZOLTRAN

Mozart is dead.

MERRICK

(upset)

What? When did this happen?

ZOLTRAN

I dunno, like a thousand years ago.

MERRICK  
(still upset)  
That's so sad...

INT. DOG'S KITCHEN

Dog is sitting at his computer, just hitting the refresh button on his email over and over. But no new emails come in. He groans, and with some considerable exertion, turns around to look at his Tau Ceti postcard. He can still hear the sound of waves, lapping at the shore, as if they're right outside the window.

INT. DOCKING BAY

The shuttle approaches and begins the docking procedure. After a moment, a green light appears on the wall.

ZOLTRAN  
Why do you always greet the humans?

MERRICK  
I always volunteer. Why, do you  
want to greet the humans?

ZOLTRAN  
Yes. I've always wanted to say 'Hi,  
I'm Zoltran, and I own this place.  
Gimme 20 bucks in feudal dues and  
you may pass'.

MERRICK  
Well, go greet them, then.

Zoltran goes over to the shuttle door. Merrick gives what they think is a thumbs up, but it's hard to tell, because they don't have any thumbs. The airlock mechanism starts up, and there's a hiss as the pressure equalizes. Then, the door opens.

On the other side is a repulsive, inhuman creature. Dressed in tattered clothes, partly-decayed. Its head seems shrivelled, its eyes sunken, body malnourished. Lumps of flesh and folds where they shouldn't be, skin marked with holes, pores and pustules, withered features twisted into taut expressions somewhere between pleasure and pain. And, of course, the hair. Writing, twisting, billowing from every orifice. Glistening and perfect.

Barely a second passes. The creature screams like a discordant choir, and lunges forward with surprising dexterity, towards Zoltran.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Dog is sitting in a deckchair upon the white sand of a beautiful beach, looking out toward a boundless blue ocean, cocktail in hand. Everything is perfect. A seagull caws in the distance. He looks around, confused for a moment.

DOG

I'm... here? I made it?

There's no answer, only the coming and going of the tide. There's nobody around for miles. Dog gets out of the chair, and walks toward the ocean. While he's paddling in the surf, he notices something coming in with the tide. It's green. It's a turtle. A turtle washes up, on its side, then rights itself, shaking the wet sand from its shell.

WHISKEY P. TURTLE

Well hey there! I'm Whiskey P. Turtle, and I like colouring, and shapes, and counting to five!

DOG

Whiskey P. Turtle! Look! I made it! I'm at the beach!

WHISKEY P. TURTLE

Well, that's great news, Dog! Do you know how many sides a rhombus has?

DOG

Uh, we're at the beach, dude. Don't you ever clock out?

WHISKEY P. TURTLE

No!

Dog sips the drink while watching the ocean.

DOG

I got all the way here. Why am I not happy? Why do I feel the same way I felt before?

WHISKEY P. TURTLE

It's because there's something wrong with your brain, Dog! Something in your brain's busted now, haha!

(MORE)

WHISKEY P. TURTLE (CONT'D)

If your brain was a car, it'd be  
scrap metal right now. Can you  
spell broken? B - R - O - K-

Just then, another head emerges from the other end of the  
turtle. It's... dog's former psychiatrist.

PSYCHIATRIST

(interrupting)

That's a bunch of crap, Whiskey P.  
Turtle. Dog is clearly just  
thinking wrong. If he were thinking  
about being happy instead of being  
sad, he'd be fine right now. The  
simple fact is, he's choosing to be  
like this. Who could be sad while  
sitting on such a beautiful beach?

DOG

Fuckin' turtle. What the hell do  
you know?

WHISKEY P. TURTLE

I know every sound that an animal  
makes! The cow goes moo! And the  
cat goes meow! And the dog goes  
'I'm so sad! I'm so sad! I'm gonna  
be sad forever!'

PSYCHIATRIST

If you start feeling sad, just  
think about something that makes  
you happy. And if there's nothing  
that makes you happy, then go out  
and find something that makes you  
happy. And if you can't find  
anything that makes you happy-

The psychiatrist head is interrupted when Dog picks up the  
turtle and throws it into the ocean with all his strength.

WHISKEY P. TURTLE

Whheeeee!

At that moment, the horizon darkens and clouds fill the sky,  
the sea becomes dark and angry, and a howling wind whips up  
clouds of sand. Dog turns away from the wind, covering his  
eyes, struggling to see, and staggers away from the ocean. He  
walks along the beach for a time, shivering in the cold,  
until he spots something - steps, leading down to a metal  
door. Seeking refuge, he descends the steps and opens the  
door.

## INT. PASSAGEWAY

The door opens to a cold, dark concrete passageway. He steps inside, the door slamming behind him. The passageway is a few feet across, and almost pitch dark. There's a noise, off in the distance. A kind of laboured breathing. Abnormal. As Dog walks, his surroundings change - the floor becomes carpet, the walls acquire wallpaper. There's a door at the end of the hallway. He can feel something on the other side. There are colourful veins of mold all along the walls and floor, all leading toward that doorway. A horrible network of them, like blood vessels, gently undulating. And the sound, it's sickening, it's like the sound of wet meat, but there's something human in it as well. Something alive. There's something just through the doorway, but dog slows down, he's too afraid to go through. It's right there, he can feel it-

## INT. DOG'S KITCHEN

Dog wakes with a start, to the sound of a loud alarm, like a klaxon. He's still sitting in the kitchen, slumped over the table. The lights are dim and red. The intercom makes a long buzzing noise, then a pre-recorded voice message plays.

INTERCOM (V.O.)

Hi. I'm Richard Dickinson, VP of Channel 6. I am sorry to announce that there is currently an emergency. Please refrain from legal action. Dickinson Space Industries and Channel 6 Incorporated are not responsible for property damage or loss of life during this emergency.

Dog tries to ignore his headache and goes to the door. It won't open via the button, but he can push it upwards with his paws. He squeezes through the gap and heads outside. The alarm is still sounding.

## INT. CORRIDOR

Everything's red here, too. Dog doesn't see anyone else around. It's eerily quiet, or at least, it would be if not for Dickinson's irritating pre-recorded messages.

INTERCOM (V.O.)

I wish to apologize to all who have been affected by this emergency in the strongest possible terms that I can without admitting responsibility for this incident.

## INT. DOCKING BAY

Dog enters the docking bay. It's dark and empty. There's no sign of the aliens. The shuttle from Earth is still there, door unlocked, empty. Dog sees something on the ground. He walks to the middle of the docking bay. It's Zoltran. Smashed to pieces, glass screen broken, the floor strewn with plastic pieces and fragments of green printed circuit board. Zoltran is dead.

Dog just stands there for a minute. It doesn't feel real, it's not going in.

He snaps out of it. He heads immediately for Merrick's office, near adjacent to the museum of earth culture. He starts running.

## INT. PLAZA

The Plaza, too, is deserted, and the shutters on all the shops and amenities are down. It's unusually dark - a lot of the emergency lights were removed to make way for other things. Dog, panting, out of breath, spots a public telephone. He stops, and looks around. He doesn't see anyone. He grabs the phone and begins frantically dialling. It rings for a second, then is answered.

## PHONE

Thank you for calling the space police hotline. Your emergency is very important to us. If you are calling our non-emergency hotline, press 1.

A long pause.

## PHONE (CONT'D)

If you are looking for sexy police singles in your area, press 2.

A second, even longer pause.

## PHONE (CONT'D)

If you are calling our emergency hotline, press 3.

Dog pushes the button. Another agonizing pause.

## PHONE (CONT'D)

If you are calling about livestock theft, press one. If you are calling about regicide, press two.

(MORE)

PHONE (CONT'D)

If you are calling about illegal whaling, it's three. For sodium-related crimes, it's four. For any other emergency, press five.

Dog goes to press five, but his finger slips from nerves and he pushes two instead.

PHONE (CONT'D)

For absolute monarchs, press one. For constitutional monarchs, press two. For pretend kings, such as the Burger King, press three.

DOG

(under breath)

God dammit.

Somewhere in the distance, dog hears something. An inhuman howl.

PHONE

Before we continue, we need your name and account number. Please state your name in a non-Scottish accent after the tone.

DOG

Dog.

PHONE

You said 'Doug'. Is this correct?

DOG

No.

PHONE

You said 'yes'. Is this correct?

DOG

(slightly too loud)

No.

PHONE

We are currently experiencing a high volume of calls. Please stay on the line, your call is important to us. A regicide dispatcher will be with you as soon as possible.

The phone begins to play a tinny rendition of 'I Fought The Law' by The Clash.

DOG  
(under breath)  
God fucking dammit!

Suddenly, and without warning, Dog is attacked by the spore man. It lunges at him and screams at the top of its lungs. Involuntarily, he falls, scrabbling backwards across the tiled floor, dropping the receiver.

SPORE MAN  
(screaming, inhuman)  
I love you!

Dog immediately bolts in the opposite direction, trying to get away.

**END OF ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

INT. PLAZE

Dog is running again. He can hear the spore man breathing heavily in the distance, yelling and running after him. Its movements are chaotic, it stumbles and falls, as if it can't quite control itself. Dog heads into a corridor, off the main plaza, and looks back. There's no-one. He can hear the spore man cursing, but it sounds far away. Up ahead is the door to Merricks's office. He pushes the buzzer. No response. He bangs on the door.

DOG  
(panicked)  
Merrick? Are you there?

Nothing.

DOG (CONT'D)  
(voice cracking)  
Please! Open the door! Please!

Still nothing. He tries to force the door open, and eventually gets it wide enough to squeeze through.

INT. MERRICK'S OFFICE

The office is a mess. The door from the museum of earth culture is open. The place has been trashed. The walls and floor are covered in grease. At the thickest point lies the garish tie Merrick always wore. Dog picks it up. It's damp.

DOG  
(crying)  
No, no no no no....

He hears uneven footsteps in the corridor outside, and freezes.

SPORE MAN  
I know you're out there. I can...  
feel your sadness.

The spore man begins to come toward the door. Dog rushes over and tries to force it down. He turns around, looking for a way out. He runs through to the museum of earth culture.

## INT. MUSEUM OF EARTH CULTURE

He heads towards the seminar room. There's an exit that leads to the maintenance area. A normal door. He pushes, and to his relief, it opens. He can hear the spore man trying to force its way into Merrick's office.

## INT. MAINTAINENCE AREA

The maintenance area is a maze of unmarked tunnels and rooms, metal panelled walls and hot, badly-circulated air. Dog takes off, running, taking random forks in his path, trying to lose the spore man. He takes a door to his left, and finds himself at a dead end, inside a small supply closet.

## INT. SUPPLY CLOSET

The spore man is still nearby. The room is dark and still. He decides this is the moment to try that breathing technique his therapist told him to use.

DOG (QUIETLY, WHILE BREATHING)  
In... hold for 5... out. In... hold  
for 5... out. Fuck. Fuck! Why isn't  
it working?

His ears perk when he hears the spore man howling in the distance.

SPORE MAN  
HOOOOOOOOOOW! LOVE ME!

The spore man approaches the supply room and pushes the button to open the door. It scans the room. There are piles of junk everywhere. To his left, lockers. To his right, he spots a dog, about dog's height and build, standing on a podium that says 'taxidermy dog', staring straight forward. He eyes it up for a tense few seconds, then turns and leaves. After a moment, the real dog climbs out from behind a stack of cardboard boxes.

## INT. MAINTAINENCE AREA

Dog is still running, though he's flagging now, and out-of-breath. He's lost. For a few moments, he keeps running. After a while, he begins to recognize his surroundings. Rounding a corner, at the end of a long, narrow corridor, he comes to a door. He opens it, and hot air rushes out. It's the fan room.

INT. FAN ROOM

As he walks across the narrow gantry, Dog can't help but look down over the precipice once more. The fan, more than ever, is calling him. For a moment, all he can hear are the fan blades rhythmically cutting through the air. SWOOSH. SWOOSH.

He gets a grip. He heads to the door on the other side of the room, but to his dismay, it won't open. Not even by force. He turns, goes to double back, but it's too late.

The spore man is standing in the doorway. Not moving, only staring. Dog begins to back away.

SPORE MAN  
Why did you run away?

Dog says nothing.

SPORE MAN (CONT'D)  
I just wanted you to be happy.

DOG  
Fuck off! Don't come any closer!

Dog keeps backing.

SPORE MAN  
I can help you.

DOG  
You think this is helping me? I was getting better - I was getting better, and now it's all fucked up!

Dog reaches the end of the walkway. There's nowhere to go. He looks over the precipice once again, back at the spore man, then back over the precipice. The slowly spinning blades of the ventilation system fan look more inviting than ever.

SPORE MAN  
They're still with me. And you can be too.

DOG  
No!

SPORE MAN  
Join us, Dog. Its like... paradise. Like heaven on earth. All love. No fear. Belonging. You'll finally be happy. You've been so unhappy, Dog.

As the spore man advances, dog pushes his body farther towards the edge. The handrail breaks. He stumbles, momentarily, but regains his grip. He's holding part of the top rail in his hand.

DOG

I said no!

SPORE MAN

Don't you want to be happy?

Dog pauses for a second.

DOG

This is me. All of it, even the bad stuff. It sucks, but that's how it is. If I give it up... I won't be me anymore.

The spore man becomes visibly angry at this. It loses all composure and starts screaming and flailing around. It seems, once more, not to be in complete control of its actions.

SPORE MAN

I'M SO ALONE! I'M SO ALONE! I LOVE YOU! I LOVE YOU!

The spore man tries to grab dog, but he pushes it away. He goes to go to attack it with the rail, but the spore man, still screaming, lunges toward him, pinning him to the ground. He kicks it, and scrambles to his feet. The spore man, momentarily, seems to forget what it's doing. It stops screaming. Dog rushes towards it and starts wailing on it with the rail, hitting it over and over again. Now dog is screaming and the top of his lungs. The sound of the metal caving its skull in reverberates through the empty chamber.

Dog drops the rail and it clangs to the ground. He's panting heavily. He drops to his knees. The spore man is lying, mangled, on the floor in front of him. He can hear its ragged breathing. It speaks, but this time in one voice, softer, quieter, a girl's voice. It struggles to get the words out.

SPORE MAN (CONT'D)

(slowly)

I'm still down here, Dog. We're all still down here. The truth-

It lets out a slow rattle, and dies. Dog starts to cry.

**END OF SHOW**