

BADGER'S WORLD



Volume 1

The Complete Scripts

by  
Nick Edwards

**Episode 1. Reasonable**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 6)

**Episode 2. Philosophy**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 7)

**Episode 3. Deja Vu**

(from The Signal season 3, episode 8)

**Episode 4. Conversations With Drunk People**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 9)

**Episode 5. Anxiety**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 11)

**Episode 6. Revenge**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 12)

**Episode 58: Antique**

(unpublished episode, never recorded)

**Episode 7. Dirt**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 14)

**Episode 501\*: Slings and Arrows**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 12.5\*)

**Episode 8. Food**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 16)

**Episode 9. Prodigal**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 18)

**Episode 10. Teef**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 19)

**Episode 11. Laydeez**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 20)

**Episode 12. Special Delivery**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 21)

**Episode 13. The End?**

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 22)

**Permanent Waves Episode 57\*\***

(from The Signal, season 3, episode 23 Holiday Special)

(\*originally released as Episode 2 of Summer of Serenity)

(\*\*originally released on The Signal Season 25, 2029 via timeslip)

Additional Material:

**Badger's World "Bible"**

**Badger's World Volume 1**

**Written by Nick Edwards**

**Edited By Jill Arroway**

(Permanent Waves edited by Nick Edwards)

Cast:

Announcer - Kevin Bachelder

Burt - Nick Edwards

Harry - Les Howard

Chen - Miranda Thomas

Susan - Kari Haley

Delivery Kid - Elanor Edwards

Mystery Woman - Carolyn

Parkinson

\*\* Permanent Waves

Brad - Kevin Cummings

Janet - Larissa Myhowych

Producer - Ben Edwards

Fund Spokesperson - Joy Edwards

Reaver Representative - Nick Edwards

Badger's World Theme:

Eavesdown Docks

by The Bedlam Bards

Badger's World is inspired by Joss Whedon's Firefly and is a non profit fan production.

The Signal podcast's homepage:

<http://serenityfirefly.com>

## Introduction

Where to start? Well I'd mostly direct you to the Signal article, What's in a Signal: Badger's World that can be found in the Badger's World Volume 2 scripts collection as that details most of the genesis of this particular Signal audio drama segment. It can also be found as part of The Signal, season 5, episode 1. That pretty well sums up the history and development of Badger's World as well as giving full series credits to everyone involved. They have my heartfelt thanks.

The listing on the second page is adapted from some Badger's World Volume 1 audio CDs that I generated and made up. I was able to present one to Mark Sheppard at the Serenity Complete Convention 2008 and he signed my own copy and one that I gave to Lioness of the Toronto Browncoats for auctioning in their 2008 CSTS fundraising event. Other copies were given away to friends or went as auction items at the Warwick 2008 CSTS event.

I *may* have been somewhat drunk at some point during the convention. Mark certainly addressed me as "Oh, hello whiskey drinker!" at a photo session the following morning ☺

The Volume 2 scripts have a similar listing taken from the double CD of Badger's World Season 2 that has also been auctioned off at a 2009 CSTS event. It had to be a double CD as the episodes had got that long that they would not all fit onto one! A couple of extra articles were included. If you look carefully enough at The Signal website, you may be able to find the artwork and individual segments such that you could make your own CDs – should you be so inclined ☺

The episode scripts are presented in the order and style that they were originally written in, covering the period March to December 2007 for Volume 1 of Badger's World and January to December 2008, with some additional scripts going up to November 2011 for Volume 2. There was also one final hurrah for the very last episode of The Signal itself at the end of 2014. I have also added a few notes and comments along the way, but make no claim to have detailed every reference that I may have intended at the time ☺

It was a **lot** of fun.

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 1

“Reasonable”

[Voiceover] The ‘Verse is a dangerous place. In the wake of the most devastating war humanity has ever known, fortunes were made and lost, amazing advances were made on some planets, while others were nearly blasted back to the stone age...or worse. Rumours circulate of monstrous creatures preying on folk out on The Rim and of who is really running things behind the scenes. Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two shadowy figures meet to decide the fate of worlds.....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Burt] So I says to ‘im, I says “I don’t care if you’re the bleedin’ king of Londinium, you ‘ave that suit ready for Mister Badger by tomorrow, or you’ll become intimately acquainted with my associates, Mr Lead Pipe and the firm of Pain, Pain, Agony and Pain!”

[Harry] And what did he say?

[Burt] I dunno, he just sort of whimpered.

[Harry] But he took the hint?

[Burt] Ho yuss! Mister Badger was well pleased with his new whistle. Just right for Sunday best.

[Harry] (laughs) I never took Badger for a church going man!

[Burt] Mister Badger goes to church regular like.

[Harry] And just what is his take of the collection these days?

[Burt] Harry, I’m shocked. Shocked and stunned that you should even imply such a thing. Mister Badger never, never ... takes more than 20 percent off the top.

[Harry] That’s very reasonable Burt.

[Burt] Well, he’s a very reasonable man Harry.

[Harry] Unless you touch one of his hats.

[Burt] Unless you mess with ‘is ‘ats, yes.

[Harry] Or his fruit.

[Burt] Very particular about his fresh produce is Mister Badger yes.

[Harry] And about a lot of other things too, clothes mostly

[Burt] Well, he’s a man of substance is Mister Badger, got to keep up appearances

[Harry] And he don’t like it when folks mess him around. Remember that bloke who gave him some cheek the other day. You had to explain the error of his ways by handing him his kneecaps.

[Burt] <slightly apologetic> Well, the bloke was well out of line. Mister Badger just wanted that pointed out to him firmly.

[Harry] And then there was that *Huan dahn* that stubbed his cigar out on Badger's rug.

[Burt] <sounding unsure> Terrible the way the guy's warehouse burnt down the way it did.

[Harry] And then there was the time Lao Che missed one of his payments and you had to remind him.

[Burt] <regretful> Nice old fella is Lao Che. He was only in the hospital a few days.

[Harry] And remember when you had to hand Billy his teeth just because he sniggered when that girl called Badger a short arse before she was shipped out.

[Burt] <slight pause> Well, maybe that was a trifle excessive.

[Harry] And Buddha forefend if you ever bring up how long he really did time for back home, like Murphy did. Just the one time as I recall...

<pause/beat>

[Burt] He's not very reasonable at all is he

[Harry] No Burt

[Burt] Tetchy is what he is

[Harry] Tetchy, yeah

[Burt] Downright touchy about lots of stuff

[Harry] Oversensitive.

[Burt] With a nasty streak to go with it.

<pause>

[Harry] Still, the money's good.

[Burt] <cheerfully> That's just what Mei Rhand says

[Harry] My Rahnd?

[Burt] Cheers very much mate. Mine's a pint....

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss the intricacies of interplanetary finance...

[Harry] He wanted how much?!

[Burt] More that wot you can afford you tight git!

<end>

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 2

“Philosophy”

[Voiceover] The ‘Verse holds many secrets. Some are the key to wealth and power. Others can cause the downfall of a dynasty or make many men your enemy. Sometimes, just knowing the right question to ask is all that it takes to unlock them.

Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two shakers of worlds meet to discuss the works of Shan Yu.....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Burt] So after I put the fifteenth spike in, he decided that he’d *really* had enough.

[Harry] Just couldn’t take the pain any longer?

[Burt] Yeah, I guess a camping trip woz a stupid way to try and get him to talk.

[Harry] So what did it the end?

[Burt] Got him to a local hostelry with clean sheets and got ‘im drunk. He was so grateful, he told me everything.

[Harry] You bought him drink till he spilled his guts?

[Burt] Well, that wasn’t till a lot later.

[Harry] But you *bought* him drink?

[Burt] Not as such, he seemed happy to foot the bill, ‘specially after I showed him what could *also* be done with a tent peg and the right philosophical approach of course.

<pause>

[Harry] You stuck it up his nose didn’t you.

[Burt] <grinning> It’s amazing how far up it will go if you get the angle *just* right.

[Harry] <laughs> Bet he thought he was gonna see the color of his gorram brains!

[Burt] Humph! You didn’t find it that funny when I did it to you!

[Harry] Yeah, well, couple a years down the line lets you see the funny side. Especially as I seen you do it to all them others since!

[Burt] It’s a very effective way of getting someone’s attention Harry.

[Harry] Plus for some reason, Badger always finds that trick hi-larious.

[Burt] Yeah well, doesn’t hurt to keep Mister Badger in a good mood.

[Harry] You got that right. That Reynolds fella got him awful ticked off the other day.

[Burt] He does have that effect on people, I've noticed. I dunno why Mister Badger keeps usin' the bloke.

[Harry] 'Cos he's cheap?

[Burt] I s'pose so

[Harry] Anyway, getting that inside information should keep Badger sweet for a bit.

[Burt] Yeah, though why he wanted to know that particular titbit of info without resorting to outright violence or threats is beyond me.

[Harry] Badger's always working some angle. I'm sure we'll get to practice our particular skills soon enough.

[Burt] Yeah, my brass knuckles are almost starting to go rusty, if you know what I mean.

[Harry] So what's Badger going to do, now he knows that there's going to be....

[Burt] <interrupting and stern> Harry! *Nee Tzao Se Mah?* Watch yourself! You let that slip in public and it'll be more than my brass knuckles you have to worry about. Mister Badger'd be wantin' you to have a long philosophical discussion with... The Accountant.

[Harry] *Ta ma duh* Burt! I weren't gonna say nuthin' stupid. There's no need to mention that cold hearted, sadistic, baby eatin'....

[Burt] <cutting him off again> Alright, alright, keep yer hair on! Just a gentle reminder, *Dong Ma?*

[Harry] <sulky> Yeah, OK, didn't need to lay it on so thick.

<slight awkward pause>

[Burt] <coughs, changing the subject> Anyway, I hear there might be a bit of a bonus coming your way from one of your little side lines.

[Harry] <impressed> Just how the heck do you find this stuff out Burt?

[Burt] <cheerfully> It's all down to the U.M.T factor my son.

[Harry] UMT? <said more like "you empty?">

[Burt] I am as it 'appens. I'll have the same again, thanks....

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss modern techniques of animal husbandry...

[Harry] <exasperated> I tell you Burt, trying to get an advance out of Badger is like...it's like...like...

[Burt] Trying to squeeze a tune out of a weasel?

[Harry] Yeah!

<pause>

[Harry] What's a gorram weasel?

<end>

The astute or downright surreal among you may notice the slight reference to Eddie Izzard's Definite Article tour there.

Please do not try the tent peg trick at home unless you too want to see what your brains look like.

I mean it.



“Badger’s World”  
Episode 3

“Deja Vu”

[Voiceover] The ‘Verse has it’s fair share of mysteries. Some travelled with us from Earth That Was while others have grown in the years since the age of the Terraformers. Who knows what unlikely holes to the past or indeed the future have been opened by humanity’s tampering with the natural order of things.

Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two giants in the world of high energy particle physics debate their latest theories....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Burt] I still say, you’d have been better off just using a bit more of the sticky.

[Harry] I disagree Burt, that TDX charge cut through like a knife.

[Burt] But you were only supposed to blow the bloody doors off! <yes he IS channelling The Italian Job>

<pause>

[Harry] Burt?

[Burt] What? Sorry Harry, just for a minute there I had the strangest sense that my name was Charlie for some odd reason.

[Harry] <shouts> Chen! What the hell you been puttin’ in this *shiong mao niao*?

[Chen] <in background> *Da Shiong bao-jah-shr duh la doo-tze, what else!*

[Burt] Ask a stupid question...

[Harry] Oh cheer up Burt. We got the goods back that Badger wanted didn’t we?

[Burt] Only after picking ‘em up from over a block away! Mister Badger wasn’t best pleased with them being a bit singed.

[Harry] Yeah well, can’t always do things exactly the way he wants. He’s the one forever sayin’ the situation is always “fluid”.

[Burt] Well, there’s fluid and then there’s blasted to bleedin’ smithereens Harry!

[Harry] I already said I was sorry didn’t I? You know Burt, you can be as grumpy as old Badger himself sometimes.

[Burt] Mister Bridger prefers that things go smooth is all. Then ‘e bends my ear ‘ole like you wouldn’t believe when they don’t.

<pause>

[Harry] Don’t you mean Mister Badger?

[Burt] Sorry Harry, touch of the deja whatsits again, don’t know what’s wrong with me tonight.

[Harry] You want to look after yourself Burt,

[Burt] Don't you worry about me Harry, I'm me own bleedin' "self-preservation society".  
<almost sung>

<pause>

<FX: chair being pushed back as Burt stands>

[Burt] <bellows> Chen! What mutant gorram strain of yeast you brewing this junk up with?

[Chen] <in background> Just the usual Mister Burt, just the usual.

[Harry] Well, that 'aint sayin' much!

[Burt] <sitting back down>Humph! Better than that wood alcohol tea Mister Badger favours anyways. That *go se* is good for de-greasing weapons only in my humble opinion.

[Harry] Got that right. I couldn't see straight for near on a week after I had some.

[Burt] But that was nearly a whole pot you dozy bugger! The trick is to sip it, genteel like.

[Harry] Uh-huh <unconvinced>

[Burt] And then tip it straight into your boot when Mister Badger 'aint lookin'. Does wonders fer yer bunions actually.

[Harry] It's a wonder Badger can see at all, the amount he drinks when he's "entertaining"

[Burt] Well, just between you and me, 'ees got a stash of these fancy de-tox pills from a deal a while back. Gives 'im the advantage like when he has to put other folk at their ease...or ill at ease as the case may be!

[Harry] Badger's a sly one all right

[Burt] And don't you forget it! Pays your wages fair enough and luckily he can be talked into overlooking the odd "explosive indiscretion" as long as everything's accounted for. Just don't make a habit of it!

[Harry] I guess so. I probably owe you one Burt

[Burt] Nah, that's alright, I ought to cut down a bit anyway

[Harry] Humph! No, I didn't mean a drink. A favour, OK?

[Burt] Well, as soon as you've done your chores then.

[Harry] What chores?

[Burt] Oh, ta very much, I'll have a pint of the black stuff....

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss the finer points of automotive history...

[Burt] <rattling on> So I says, “Rozzer’s havin trouble with his differential” and they all laugh and someone says “it must be bent”, and he says all cross like, “I’ll give you bent!” and then Mister Bridger says <Noel Coward voice> “Everyone in the world is bent” and its all looking a bit dicey, so I says “Hang on a minute lads, I’ve got a great idea. Err..”

[Harry] <worried sounding, almost cutting Burt off> Burt, you’re really startin’ to scare me!

<end>

Oh, where to start? References to The Italian Job (the original Michael Caine, Noel Coward one) all over this episode, from Charlie Croker to Mr Bridger.

“I’ll have a pint of the black stuff” is a line uttered by cycle courier Tyres in Spaced.

TDX is a \*really\* obscure one for the Sci-Fi Trufans amongst you.

Plus of course, the first appearance of bar owner Chen!

Played wonderfully by Miranda Thomas and intentionally modelled on bar owner Rosie from M\*A\*S\*H, Chen quickly became a central character and allowed the segment to start developing a little away from it’s original limited sketch based roots.

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 4

“Conversations With Drunk People”

[Voiceover] The language of the ‘Verse is rich in variety, both of mother tongues and dialects and strange combinations of both. Raised to a high art by those ancient scribes of Earth That Was and furthered by the artistic endeavours of the core worlds and poets far and wide, language may be humanity’s greatest achievement.

Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, a familiar pair of distinguished patrons teeter on the very edge of incoherence ....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Burt] <burps loudly and crudely> Buddah! Thash better!

[Harry] Phew! Thash didshgusting, Wahhdaya been eatin Burt?

[Burt] It’s not what I bin eatin’. Bin drinkin innit.

[Harry] S’ funny, so have I!

[Burt] We both ‘ave. Bin drinkin. Lotsh ackshirley.

[Harry] Well, s’ a shelebration! Did a good deal today didn’t we.

[Burt] We shirtainly did. <stands, chair goes back, shouts> Chen! Bring us the finest wines known to humanity! <sits>

[Chen] <in background> Go home Mister Burt! You had enough!

[Harry] I don’ think he’s got any left. You drank it all.

[Burt] Me! What, all on my loneshome?

<beat>

[Harry] I may have helped a little

[Burt] I’ll shay! You helped a lot....not jush wiv the drinkin though <chuckles> Yer done good today Harry!

[Harry] I never seen Badger in such a good mood

[Burt] Well, it is known to ‘appen from time to time. Mishter Badger told me he appreciated your efforts.

[Harry] Makes a change

[Burt] Now now, don’ come all shinic...no...peshimish....no.....oh wash the word....

[Harry] Grumpy?

[Burt] Churlish! Thash the one!

[Harry] The one what?

[Burt] Word, Harry, word!. Wordsh ish very usheful fings. Lesh you do all sortsh of stuff

[Harry] Uh-huh.

[Burt] I mean, where would we be wivout wordsh?

[Harry] Shmufshlden < or something similarly incoherent – on the verge of passing out>

[Burt] Exshacterley my point! <brief pause> Wha whash that you shaid Harry?

<pause>

[Burt] <Louder> Harry! HARRY, wake up!

[Harry] <starts> I'm good, I'm good, jush gatherin' m'thoughts is all

[Burt] Well best of luck mate

[Harry] <loud burp>

[Burt] Ay ya! What **is** that you're drinking?

[Harry] Sh'called Muddersh Milk I think

[Burt] <shudder> I s'pose you can get a taste for anything if yer thirsty enough

[Harry] It's shupposed to be good for you

[Burt] Full of all yer vitamins eh? Riboflavin, Thaimin, Algettamin....

[Harry] Allgettamin?

[Burt] Oh, thatsh very good of you Harry, I'll think I'll stick with the beer though!

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance

[Harry] I musta tried for near on half a day to get that goram engine running!

[Burt] I'm guessing shooting it didn't help much

[Harry] It was asking for it! Gorram pile of *Go Se!*

[Burt] Very enlightened approach I'm sure

<end>

Mainly a Buffy reference in the title. And spending so long in the pub...well, it would be a little unlikely if Burt and Harry didn't sometimes end up "as the newt" ☺

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 5

“Anxiety”

[Voiceover] Human beings are a resourceful species. They have survived the exodus from Earth that was, built new worlds, developed incredible technology and once again have even survived the devastation of war. This survival ability is not without it’s price however. Stress is something we all have to deal with.

Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, a discussion of the relative merits of different relaxation techniques is underway....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Burt] For the last time, will you **please** calm down!

[Harry] <yelling> I am calm! If I was un-calm you could tell by the being dead already!

[Burt] <placating> Now Harry, I know you don’t really mean that. You just need to relax is all. I’m sure this all just some... misunderstanding.

[Harry] You. Ran up. A 20 platinum tab. Here.

[Burt] Well, a man needs a relaxing drink or two, I’m sure we both agree on that

[Harry] <yelling>20 platinum! In my gorram name?

[Burt] Well, in a manner of speaking...

[Harry] In the manner that you told Chen 2 months ago that *I* had the whole thing covered?

[Chen] He’s right, Mister Burt, you told me “My esteemed colleague over there will deal with any financial arrangements”

[Burt] I did?

[Chen] Uh huh. On at least 3 occassions.

[Harry] Explain that away Burt

[Burt] Well, I must have been referring to someone else. I’m sure Mister Badger will cover any reasonable expenses.

[Harry] You call 20 platinum reasonable?

[Chen] And since when has Badger ever been reasonable? I'm not changing my arrangement with him just to satisfy your intemperate habits!

[Harry] She's right Burt. Legitimate expenses while we're on a job is one thing. Badger knows how it works. That's business. This 'aint. You know how he is when folks take liberties.

[Burt] Entertainment expenses is all part of the job you know....

[Harry] <cutting Burt off> You wanna go explain that to the Accountant!?

<uncomfortable pause>

[Burt] Look, we're all a bit over wrought, why don't we all have a quiet sit down tomorrow and sort this out after we've had time to relax.

[Harry] Burt, you get so relaxed some nights I need to carry you most of the way home. You **are** heavy and you 'aint my brother!

[Chen] I don't care who pays, but this bill gets settled *tonight* or the pair of you are out, *dong ma?* For good this time! <stomps off>

[Harry] So, Burt, what's it going to be?

[Burt] Harry I... Look, go over to our usual table, sit down, read the Cortex, while I have a quiet word with our host over there.

[Harry] You'll pay up?

[Burt] I'll get it sorted. C'mon Harry, you know I've knack for sorting out problems. I'll just go and have a quick word in Chen's shell like. <walks away>

[Harry] <muttering> better have it sorted...aint talking me into eatin' 20 platinum... even if I did drink some of it.

<pause>

[Burt] <returning, placing 2 shots down on the table> There. All done, and a shot of good cheer on the house.

[Harry] <taken aback> What the hell did you say to her? You didn't pay her, I was watching.

[Burt] I told you it's all sorted. C'mon, drink up

<both do the "gulp...bleauueaaurgh" thing like in Buffy>

[Harry] That'll put hairs on yer chest

[Burt] Or make 'em all fall out!

[Harry] Heh! I don't get it Burt. I was all fired up at you 'bout that bar bill thing, yet you're as cool as an Ice Planet the whole time.

[Burt] It's all a matter of positive attitude to avoid stress.

[Harry] Huh?

[Burt] If I wasn't positive I had the drop on you first if you were dumb enough to touch metal, I'd be in the wrong business...and you'd be unconscious.

[Harry] You sure about that?

[Burt] <confident and a little menacing> Positive.

[Harry] OK. <this settles it quite happily for Harry, at least for now> So, what was that you were saying about working on your uncle's farm years ago?

[Burt] Oh yes. So there I was, knee deep in whadleyooave.

[Harry] Whaddleyooave? <said “what’ll you have?”>

[Burt] I’ll have the same again thanks very much....

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss the increasing problem of unwanted junk mail

[Harry] What does it mean when it says “in only 86 easily manageable instalments?”

[Burt] That’s just credit company speak for “just give us your cortex ident and we’ll do all the rest for you.” Problem solved.

[Harry] It says here “you were recommended to us as a sound credit risk by a friend” You wouldn’t happen to know who that was now would you Burt? <beat> Burt?

<end>

My main anxiety at this point was being on the verge of running out of “blagging a pint” gags with which Burt could dupe the increasingly wise to it Harry.

The Accountant was a vague reference to a shady looking character (surprise, surprise) hovering over an adding machine seen briefly during the pilot episode of Firefly in Badger’s...ahem...offices. I used the threat of someone who it was implied could give Adelai Niska a run for his money in terms of torture as a hobby, several more times over the life of Badger’s World.



“Badger’s World”  
Episode 6

“Revenge”

[Voiceover] In the complex play of interplanetary commerce between the many worlds and moons of the ‘Verse, there is also a darker undercurrent of illegal trade. Some tread these waters lightly, on the edge of legality, while others dive head first into it’s murky depths. And some, never emerge. Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two minnows in this metaphorical river ponder how best to avoid the tightening net of Alliance interest in their activities ....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Burt] Look, you were the one who said it would be a simple job!

[Harry] Well how was I to know that the damn purplebellies used the place for grabbing some unofficial R&R?!

[Burt] I’d have thought the armed troopers stationed outside would have been a dead giveaway!

[Harry] They weren’t there both times that I checked before!

[Burt] Both? Harry, didn’t I always tell you that if you must case a job on your own to always suss it out at least half a dozen times and to have a legit reason for being in the area? That way when it goes down and if questions is asked, you can explain it away if someone spotted you around earlier.

[Harry] I know Burt, but Badger said that...

[Burt] <cutting him off> It doesn’t matter what Mister Badger said about it. Job like this, you get your own intelligence as well. Mister Badger calls it “showing initiative”. I call it bleedin’ common sense!

[Harry] So how come you didn’t check it out yourself?

[Burt] ‘Cos sometimes I’m too trusting to follow my own advice! And now look at me! Dressed up like somebody’s bleedin’ Aunt Mabel!

[Harry] <almost sniggering> I dunno, the colour actually suits you

[Burt] Oh give it a rest Harry, I had enough grief from Billy when he overheard Mister Badger tell me to “disappear” for a few days and then suggested how to do it.

[Harry] Just lucky Badger had a shipment of fancy frocks in for the girls over at Madame Zizu’s

[Burt] Lucky?

[Harry] Well, lucky some of ‘em are pretty well built Burt, else you’d never have fit in that thing.

[Burt] Oh Buddah!

<slight pause>

[Harry] So, we gonna stand here at the bar all night then?

[Burt] We sit at our usual table, people are bound to take a closer look, this is more anonymous. 'Sides <embarassed> I can't sit down in this gorram thing!

[Chen] Hey Harry, you gonna buy your...lady friend here a drink?

[Burt] Oh don't you start as well. Look. I'm supposed to be incognito, you go drawing attention like this and I might as well hand myself in at the garrison and explain that their 2 boys didn't just trip over and bump their heads.

[Harry] Ya bumped 'em kinda hard Burt

[Burt] I was rushed. You didn't want them spotting you sneaking out the back with the goods did you?

[Harry] No, but I expected something a bit more subtle than "Mornin' Officers, might I trouble you for the time?" and then WHACK.

[Burt] I said I was rushed didn't I? 'Sides, I was a bit miffed that Mister Badger had given the go ahead for your little venture. Whether they are in the wrong or not, you just don't want to mess with the law.

[Harry] Well, they was and we did and you got ID'd fair 'n square

[Burt] Partial ID, Harry, partial ID. At least they ain't gonna complain about the missing cases, seeing as how they were also there illegally

[Harry] Whatever

[Burt] I just want to keep me head down for a bit

[Chen] Mister Burt, there's so many midnight cowboys round this part of the docks, nobody's gonna notice or care what you look like. That's what Badger is counting on. Though you might do better business a few blocks east of here. <grinning>

[Burt] Oh thank you soooo much for that vote of confidence, <Chinese: wtf have I let myself in for>

[Harry] Look Burt, nobody 'cept me and Chen have spotted that it's you yet

[Chen] And Lee and Chang, maybe Susan and Sharrol as well

[Burt] Doormen I can handle. Used to be one, they know the score, As long as nobody else spots it...

[Harry] Relax Burt. It's only a couple of days till Badger can get the Cortex files altered so's you're in the clear. Pretty routine stuff.

[Burt] Easy for you to say Harry! Meanwhile, I'm the one having to fend off the odd amorous advance from.... Look, someone is gonna lose teeth over this at some point. There's only so much a fella can take

[Harry] <smug> Shame Badger insisted that you still be on hand to sort out any problems that might arise

[Burt] Mister. Bleedin'. Badger, presumes too much on our friendship sometimes.

[Harry] There is an alternative.

[Burt] Oh? And what might that be?

[Harry] You could always say you had an urgent family commitment in Nexwansahnmi ("next one's on me")

[Burt] <puzzled> Nexwansahnmi?

[Harry] <triumphant> And about gorram time Burt! I'll have a triple Widow Maker. HA!

[Burt] Oh I don't bloody believe this...OK OK, a triple is it? Well it's your ruttin' head....

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss the concept of limited retaliation

[Burt] <disgusted> Bet it took you a week to come up with that one. Perfect end to a perfect bloody day!

[Harry] <still triumphant> It was worth it Burt, the look on your face!

[Burt] You are so gonna pay for this Harry, I swear...

<end>

Men in frocks. A fine theatrical tradition. Plus Harry finally cons a pint out of Burt.

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 58

“Antique”

[Voiceover] The relics of Earth That was command a high price in the ‘Verse. Collectors and historians compete for the few items that from time to time become available. Not surprisingly, there is a thriving black market.

Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two experts in this lucrative field discuss items of early 21<sup>st</sup> century provenance...

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Burt] So anyway, why don’t we fence the stuff with Mr Badger’s usual antique dealer?

[Harry] Heh, heh. <pause> Oh that’s good. <pause> Well I never knew that.

[Burt] What the hell are you on about Harry? <beat>. Harry? <beat> HARRY!

[Harry] What? Hang on a moment while I pause it

[Burt] While you what? What in the name of Buddah is that you’re listening to?

[Harry] Oh, er sorry Burt, it’s this thing. ‘S called an ee-pood (iPod mispronounced) or some such.

[Burt] <sternly> Harry, you know you’re not supposed to mess around with the merchandise like this. That thing is “not-quite priceless”.

[Harry] It’s OK Burt, I won’t hurt it. Gorram thing is solid state.

[Burt] Yeah, and so’s your head! Mr Badger catches you doin’ anything to potentially lower the value to a client and it’ll be more than not being able to hear what I’m saying that you’ll have to worry about.

<pause>

[Burt] <curious> So what was you listening too anyway?

[Harry] It’s called Firefly Talk

[Burt] Who’d want to talk about one of those old rust buckets? Other than that Moonbrained Mike geezer who’s always advertising his junkers on the Cortex that is.

[Harry] No Burt, it’s kinda like a wave, but with no pictures.

[Burt] Don’t sound so very interesting so far

[Harry] I know Burt, but it’s weird. Conjured I’d just have a quick listen to see what all the fuss was about

[Burt] What fuss?

[Harry] Oh this “pood-cast” won an award apparently. Way back, folk voted for it on the ancient version of the Cortex ‘cos they liked it and it won an award.

[Burt] So?

[Harry] That's the weird thing, I never held no truck with ancient history, but this Firefly Talk thing...it gets a hold of you and you just want to keep on listening. Heh, even feel like I'd want to vote for it if I lived way back then. But it's mostly just folk talking

[Burt] About Fireflies?

[Harry] Well, not just that, there's music and articles and questions and trivia and interviews and recordings from things called cons and...

[Burt] <interrupting> All right all right, I get it now. <beat> You've been at Mr Badger's Wood Alcohol tea again haven't you!

[Harry] What? No Burt! Look, I'll just finish listening to this episode.

[Burt] Well, on your head be it. If that thing is busted when we make the deal later, your life won't be worth *go-se*! Oh, evening Chen.

[Chen] What's the matter with him?

[Burt] I think he's finally cracked, he's become addicted to something called Firefly Talk and won't shut up about it

[Chen] Well, it did win an award you know.

[Burt] Oh not you too!

[Chen] What, you got no interest in your culture Mr Burt?

[Burt] Only culture I'm interested in is the mutant one you've been using to brew up this stuff we're drinking. Think it's affected his brain

[Harry] <laughs> oh that's very good.

[Burt] See what I mean?

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] comment on voting period?? FFT bumper??

<end>

The observant among you may have noticed that this episode was never recorded! This was intended as a "push for votes" promo for Firefly Talk, the de-facto "sister" podcast to The Signal (Miranda Thomas and Kevin Bachelder were crew on both shows). This was to be aired during the voting period for the 2007 Podcast Awards. The Signal having won in the Best Produced and Peoples Choice categories in 2006, in order not to split the Browncoat vote, we got right behind Firefly Talk for the same categories in 2007.

However, throughout the history of The Signal, we have had a few unwritten (but generally unbreakable) rules. One of them was that we should never break “the 4<sup>th</sup> wall”. That is, if writing “in ‘Verse” we should not refer directly to the present day or, in this case, have characters set in the Firefly ‘Verse, listening to a podcast **about** the Firefly ‘Verse. So we dropped it. Which is a shame in a way, as I was quite pleased with the script, but this is just how it goes sometimes. What was actually used in the end for pushing for the 2007 Podcast Awards voting period was Episode 501, the darts episode for which I should thank my wife Joy for giving me the idea.

Oh and Firefly Talk did win the 2007 Best Produced and Movies and Films Podcast Awards. Browncoats, doin’ the impossible as usual. And just to prove that point, Browncoats voted The Signal to win the Movies and Films category again in 2008 ☺

We also submitted a compilation piece to the Parsec Award committee for 2007 that included Badger’s World episode 1, “Reasonable”.

Both awards have pride of place on my mantelpiece. (As does a 2010 Parsec for The Signal again, one I was able and very proud to receive with other Signal crew at Dragon Con 2010)

~

The next episode saw the locations and plot get a bit more ambitious...mainly because I had run out of gags with which Burt could scam a pint out of Harry.

"Badgers World"  
Episode 7

"Dirt"

[voiceover]The many worlds of the 'Verse have taken generations to develop and the process is at an early stage on some. Only the core worlds truly resemble Earth That Was in their diversity. Out on the rim and border planets, many things taken for granted in the core gain an unexpected value.

Meanwhile, in Chen's Throat Emporium...

<FX: sound of record scraping/changing track noisily>

er...Meanwhile, in a little visited corner of the Eavesdown Docks' bonded container depot.....

<FX: Burt and Harry walking/footsteps underneath following 5 lines, outside footsteps, on gravel?>

[Harry] Burt, are you sure this is where Badger arranged for the stuff to be dropped? This part of the storage yard hasn't been used in years.

[Burt] 'Course I'm sure Harry. When has Mr Badger ever had problems with a bit of simple customs evasion?

[Harry] Well, there was that one time you and Billy...

[Burt] <cutting him off> Yeah, yeah, you're never going to let me forget "that" little incident are you!

[Harry] <grinning> Well, "you" wouldn't if it had been me that bribed the wrong corrupt official.

[Burt] Humph. No. I suppose not. Ah. Here we are. <Footsteps stop. Outside ambient noise, quiet>

[Harry] So, where's the stuff?

[Burt] Right there

<beat>

[Harry] What? Between those 2 old Type 47 containers?

[Burt] That Mr Badger legitimately owns by the way. Right there! I'm pointing right at it.

[Harry] What, buried under that big old pile of dirt?

[Burt] No, Harry. Look closer

[Harry] I am. It's still just a humpin' big pile of dirt

[Burt] Exactly

[Harry] Huh?

[Burt] Not just dirt Harry, topsoil. 2 containers worth of highest quality, fertile, well worked, naturally built up over a century with only organic compost, topsoil

[Harry] Again, I say. Huh?

[Burt] Harry, I despair of you sometimes. Do you have any idea what this stuff is worth? Well, clearly not. Here, it's just more dirt in a huge yard full of the stuff, I grant you. But out on the rim, that's another story.

[Harry] They have soil processors don't they, what's so special about this dirt?

[Burt] Time. Love. Care. Vastly superior, naturally developed and stable soil ecology... and an export premium you wouldn't believe.

[Harry] OK, so it's worth something to them that needs fertile dirt where there 'aint none. What are we doing here?

[Burt] Moving it into the containers. Which can then be legitimately removed when the storage limit expires tomorrow. Only this time, they're full.

<pause>

[Harry] You're kidding right? There must be 50 standard tons there!

[Burt] And there's a pair of recently acquired level 4 mass shifters in the right hand Type 47. And I have the keys. C'mon, shouldn't take us more than an hour. <FX: sound of padlock unlocked and rusty door creaking open...fade to>

<FX: sounds of Chen's Throat Emporium, Burt and Harry arguing at the bar in raised voices>

[Harry] An hour he says! More like 4! I got dirt in places I never knew I ""had"" places!

[Burt] If you hadn't shorted out that power converter on the door...

[Harry] You said you'd secured it...

[Burt] And you said you could drive a mass shifter...

[Chen]<breaking it up> Gentlemen please! You're disturbing my other customers...and that's saying something. Go. Sit. I bring you something.

[Burt] <brightening> On the house?

[Chen] Don't push it buster!

<FX: walking over to table, sitting down>

[Harry] Hell, Burt, I don't mind workin' hard for good coin once in a while, but this 'aint what I signed on for. Badger better be makin' a damn tidy profit on all that dirt, 'cos I earned my cut

[Burt] Ah. I was hoping you wouldn't bring that up. Er...there won't be any cut other than our usual extra duties bonus. Mr Badger isn't making a profit from this one. Quite the opposite in fact.

[Harry] Now I ""know"" you're kidding me. Badger? Take a loss without a gun to his head so to speak?



[Burt] Mr Badger has his reasons

[Harry] Well, they're as clear as mud to me

[Burt] Ha! Very good Harry. Clear as mud. Like it, and we've just been...clear as... oh never mind <Harry doesn't realise he just made a pun> Ah, Chen, what have you got for us then?

[Chen] Here.

[Burt] What's this?

[Chen] 2 vouchers for the bath house. <brightly> My brother owns it. <sternly> Now go get cleaned up, you making my place look like a flop house!

[Burt] You know what this means don't you?

[Harry] What?

[Burt]<disgustedly> It means we'll miss last orders an' all!

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss the 3 body problem in celestial mechanics

[Harry] Well, I say we just bury all 3 of 'em on one of the moons.

[Burt] Keen to get your hands dirty again already Harry?

[Harry] I know a guy

[Burt] You'd need to, the way you handle a mass shifter!

<end>

I went for a touch more science fiction in this episode, plus an astronomy reference. While this worked well, the extra sound effects and location shifts made a lot more work for the editor – in this case Jill Arroway. This was something I was to appreciate much more (and occasionally regret) when I took over editing for season 2 of Badger's World. Without Jill's fantastic groundwork in creating the whole feel for the segment though, I'd have had a much harder job when it came to my turn.

## Badger's World

Episode 501

Slings and Arrows

VOICEOVER: Recreation is something all humans need to engage in. Some activities and games have remained unchanged since the dawn of recorded history, while others, sometimes involving the juggling of domestic fowl, are peculiar to specific worlds of the 'Verse. Meanwhile, in Chen's Throat Emporium, grandmasters of one of the oldest of games, engage once more in that timeless battle of wits...

(FX: sounds of pub, music and voices) (FX: sound of darts hitting dartboard 3 times)

HARRY: 60! Not too shabby Burt, if I do say so myself.

BURT: Humph! Beginners luck is what I call it

HARRY: Well, let's see you do better

BURT: Step aside Harry and give me some elbow room then.

(FX: single dart hit)

HARRY: Miss!

BURT: Oh bugger. Look, you're putting me off, hovering like that. Mister Badger was always doing that as well when we used to play. Got right on my wick it did.

HARRY: What about your supposed nerves of steel then?

BURT: Oh *biz zhuay*

(FX: single dart hit)

BURT: Double top! That's more like it

HARRY: Thought you were supposed to finish on a double. Hey Chen.

CHEN: You two still playing that?

HARRY: Yeah, ah got old Burt here on the run

BURT: In your dreams Harry

CHEN: (*looking over Burt's shoulder*) No, he's right, You're humped Mr Burt! You still on 320, Harry can finish in 3 darts if he's lucky.

BURT: Well thank you so much for that vote of confidence.

(FX: single dart hit)

BURT: (*disgusted*) Treble 4, *ay ya!*

HARRY: Ha! And I thought you said that you and Badger used to hustle playing this game. So, Chen, what do I need?

CHEN: Hmm, 15, treble 20, bull should do it

HARRY: Burt, you never told me I could finish dead centre!

BURT: You never asked!

HARRY: OK then.

*(FX: single dart hit)*

BURT: *(trying to put Harry off)* One hundred and eighty!

HARRY: *(annoyed)* Burt!

BURT: Sorry, got carried away

HARRY: And ya can't count. That's 60

BURT: Oh yeah

*(FX: single dart hit)*

BURT: 15. You'll never make that bull

HARRY: Wanna bet a round?

BURT: You know we already did!

HARRY: Double or quits?

BURT: Yer on!

*(FX: single dart hit)*

HARRY: Yeeeeeess!

CHEN: *(simultaneously)* Oh nice shot!

BURT: *(disusted)* I will be dipped in sh... *go se!*

HARRY: So, how was that Burt? Two rounds you owe me now!

BURT: *(beat)* Mister Badger's been coaching you on the quiet hasn't he?

HARRY: *(grinning)* Well I wouldn't say that exactly, but yeah, he showed me the basics

BURT: I might have known. Oh well, Chen, two pints of your finest synapse killer for my sneaky, underhanded, devious *huan dahn* of a friend here.

HARRY: Cheers Burt!

*(fade through pub music to end title/credit)*

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 8

“Food”

[Voiceover] Everyone in the ‘Verse has to eat. The fertile worlds of the core provide all manner of fresh produce for their inhabitants and for them as can afford to purchase imported goods. For many though, protein bars and nutritional supplements are an essential part of the diet out on the rim and border worlds, while some of those beyond the rim are said to prefer Long Pig! Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two noted epicures, debate the latest fashions in *haute cuisine*...

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background:Burt and Harry are at the bar>

[Burt] <groans>

[Chen] You OK Mr Burt?

[Harry] Naw, he’s sufferin’ in “not silence” today!

[Chen] Why? Someone gut punch him?

[Burt] <groans again, sounds really rough> ‘S what it feels like. Chen, be a sweetheart and get me some fizzy good

[Harry] Some what?

[Burt] Some fizzy good. Yer know, fizzygoodmakefeelnice

[Harry] Oh, I get it! Chen, he needs some of your patented “Mornin’ After” mix and some antacids

[Burt] Oh ghod <groans yet again>

[Harry] Better make it a **double** dose of the antacids

[Burt] ‘S last time I let Mister Badger talk me into trying his “experimental cooking”

[Harry] Oh I dunno Burt, it weren’t that bad

[Burt] Harry, Londinum Veggie Curry doesn’t include Dog last time I checked, I don’t care how good they are, it just ‘aint right.

[Harry] Meat is meat, far as I’m concerned. Badger wants to treat us to some stuff he cooked up his own self, I ‘aint gonna turn it down.

[Burt] Ay ya Harry, you sound like one of them bloody Reavers we keep hearin’ stories about. Hear they ‘aint too fussy ‘bout what meat they eat either...’long as it’s alive and kickin’ when they start.

[Harry] Oh quit complainin’ Burt. You’re just jealous of my iron constitution.

[Burt] You wait, Harry. Might take a bit longer in your case is all, concrete stomach or not!

[Harry] You wanna watch it Burt, you complain about Badger's cooking too much and you'll end up in his Black Books!

<FX: glass being set down, possibly fizzing>

[Chen] There you go Mr Burt. That'll teach you to trust Badger's skills as a chef!

[Burt] <gulp> <sigh> Oh, Buddha, that's better

[Harry] Just can't take it like a man Burt. Badger will be right disappointed you didn't appreciate the spread he put out.

[Burt] Oh *biz zhway*, you. I noticed you studiously avoiding the alleged "Silverhold Salsa" dip though

[Harry] It smelled funny. Didn't look much better

[Burt] <drinks again> Well, yeah, I gotta agree with you there. Even Billy avoided it

[Harry] Heh! That kid can't have half a taste bud left since he...I mean when he...I..er...<groans> <Harry dries up with a worried look on his face, implying imminent digestive disaster>

[Burt] Harry? Harry! What's the matter with you?

[Harry] Um...I, er... <groans> 'Scuse me Burt, I suddenly got an urgent appointment elsewhere

<FX: running steps as Harry bolts for the restrooms>

[Chen] What's the matter with him?

[Burt] I think his "iron constitution" just developed a bad case of corrosion!

[Chen] Well, he better not mess up the john any more than usual! <beat> You looking a bit more human now Mr Burt

[Burt] Amazing what the sufferin' of others can do to your view of the world, innit? Plus some powerful herbal medicine with a bit of fizz, cheers Chen! <pause> Oh look. Harry's forgotten his pint <grinning>

[Harry] <staggering back> Hey, not so fast Burt! That was a false alarm. I'm fine, just a bit of gas is all

[Burt] Five

[Harry] What?

[Burt] Four

[Harry] Burt, what the rutting hell you on about?

[Burt] Three

[Harry] <sounding slightly worried now> Burt?.....

[Burt] <cheerfully> Two

[Chen] <catching on> Harry, undo your belt, it'll save time and my floors

[Burt] One

[Harry] This is just...stupid...I...er...what I mean is...<beat>.uh oh! <he bolts for the restroom again: same effect>  
<beat>

[Burt] I think he may be some time. Won't be wanting his pint after all then. <picks up pint, gulps> Waste not, want not eh? Cheers!

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss logical positivism and sheep dip....

[Harry] I tell you Burt, that Fruit Punch of Badger's was more like stuff you'd dunk livestock in

[Burt] Didn't stop you though.

[Harry] I figured the wood alcohol might kill the taste!

[Burt] And that would be better how exactly?

<end>

Black Books and Monty Python references in this episode. Plus toilet humour of course.

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 9

“Prodigal”

[Voiceover] Family is as important in the ’Verse as it has always been on Earth That Was. Sometimes, the family that folk make around them is as important as the one they were birthed with. True for so many in the aftermath of the war. For others though, the wish to be able to choose one’s family is almost overpowering. Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two commentators on the social fabric of life are about to learn something that they **really** wish they hadn’t....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Burt] Well, that’s another good days henching under our belts.

[Harry] I dunno Burt, I kinda prefer it when they **don’t** hit back ‘cos they’s intimidated. Makes the job a whole heap easier.

[Burt] How **is** the eye then?

[Harry] Still sore. That *huan dahn* came out of nowhere with that chair leg.

[Burt] Well, he won’t be doing that again in a hurry. Not after Mr Badger and the Accountant have a word with him when he regains consciousness.

[Harry] Shoulda shot the poor bastard!

[Burt] That’s as maybe, but Mr Badger was very specific on that particular point: no deaths if avoidable. One, dead men don’t talk and two, it’s not good for business at the moment. “Low profile” I believe were his exact words.

[Chen]<off mic> Hey, Mr Burt, there’s a wave for you. You want me to switch it over there?

[Harry] Who the hell can that be?

[Burt] Dunno. <answering Chen> If you would please Chen.

[Chen] OK, here it comes.

<FX: audio signal bleep>

[Burt] Hmm. Audio only with a privacy request. Now where’s that ear piece...ah...Eww! This better be important. <to caller, sounding a bit annoyed> Yes, what is it? <pause> Oh. Sorry.<pause> yeah it’s me <pause> no <pause> You sure? <pause> terr-iffic <longer pause> I guess so. Later then. *Sai djin*.

<FX: audio beep>

[Harry] So?

[Burt] That was Badger.

[Harry] And?

[Burt] Keep this quiet Harry, *dong ma?* Seems our prodigal son is about to grace us with his delightful presence. Won't that be lovely? <sarcastic>

[Harry] Sorry Burt, you lost me

[Burt] <quietly> Mr Badger's elder sibling? You **do** remember his half brother? I don't want to mention names, Chen's no snooping policy notwithstanding

[Harry] <penny drops> Oh. Oh! *Go se!*

[Burt] Oh crap indeed matey. So much for "low profile" eh?

[Harry] So what does Badger want us to do about it?

[Burt] Meet him tomorrow morning. There's a passenger transport coming in from Ezra

[Harry] What the hell's he been up to there? I though he'd been occupied with being banged up on Athens

[Burt] Seems that rumours of his much deserved incarceration were exaggerated. He's been on Ezra the last 8 months apparently. And now he's headed back here.

[Harry] But he's got outstanding federal warrants for stuff that make Badger's business look like it's the Southdown Abbey!

[Burt] Alright! Keep it down Harry. That's why we need to meet him, get him outta sight PDQ before the body count starts to rise. And I don't plan on it including us!

[Harry] Ya think he's still mad about the time you did the tent peg trick on him?

[Burt] Or when you cold cocked him for putting Mr Badger in a headlock. Not the most auspicious of ways to meet the boss's family!

[Harry] How the hell was I supposed to know...

[Burt] <cutting him off> Yeah, yeah, look, I think he's on more pressing business than giving us payback

[Harry] You think he's forgotten then?

[Burt] <morosely> Not a chance

[Chen] <coming up to their table> Boy, you two really look like you could use a drink. And that's saying something!

[Burt] I need to think

[Harry] And I need to drink

[Chen] So, what'll it be then? I got other customers too you know!

[Burt] You still got that bottle of Syrian Panther Sweat?

[Harry] *Ta ma duh* Burt! I don't need it that bad



[Chen] You need to pay for that up front and by credit chip.... so I can prove it was consensual if you...

[Burt] <cutting her off> Yeah OK OK. Here. And what ever Harry wants. <beat> Oh, and a packet of peanuts

[Harry] You feeling alright Burt?

[Burt] Well, you can't take it with you. Drink up Harry, we're about to live in "interesting times"

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss survival strategies in the face of overwhelming odds

[Harry] I'm a fan of "Run away and live to maim another day" myself

[Burt] Sometimes Harry, the best thing is to do is just brass it out and hope. <optimistic> Just think of the bonus if we live to tell the tale!

[Harry] I was afraid you'd say that.

<end>

Mild Red Dwarf and Stainless Steel Rat references here. (The favourite tippie of Harry Harrison's Slippery Jim diGriz character, otherwise known as The Stainless Steel Rat, was Syrian Panther Sweat.... at some 200° proof!)

I also wanted to get Badger into at least one episode of the segment and not having Mark Sheppard on speed dial, I settled for the old "have them on the other end of a phone conversation" trick.

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 10

“Teef”

[Voiceover] Dental hygiene is as important in the ‘Verse as it has always been. Truer still on Border and Rim worlds where modern dentistry comes at a price. And yet, even on developed worlds, there is still call for more traditional methods of treatment, particularly if one wishes to avoid being identified by security systems in an Alliance facility as being wanted for questioning in relation to various... “incidents”.

Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two amateur practitioners in the art of teeth re-arranging discuss their latest misfortune....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Harry] What was that Burt?

[Burt] <somewhat indistinct: his jaw is wired up> I shaid, would you pleesh go and ask Chen for a bleedin’ shtraw!

[Harry] OK, Ok, Burt, shoulda said when we ordered.

[Burt] I’m tryin to avoid shaying much at all at the moment, or hadn’t you notished all the ironmongery I’m currently modelling on my face? OW! Ay ya!

[Harry] Still sore huh? Well, shouldn’ta let him come at you with that iron bar

[Burt] “They” ‘Arry. “They”. ‘Ee ‘ad a load of matesh wiv ‘im

[Harry] What?

[Burt] There was shix of the barshtards! Ow!

[Harry] Oh, right. Sorry. Oh, here’s Chen. Hey, there ya go, she put a straw in your pint already Burt.

[Burt] Oh Chen, thanksh shweetheart

<beat>

[Chen] What did he just say?

[Harry] He said thanks...I think

[Burt] You know damn well what I jusht!...ow Ow. Buggerit! <FX: slups beer noisily through straw>

[Chen] So what happened this time?

[Harry] Take a guess.

[Chen] Don’t tell me, Badger got you to try and stop whatever his brother was up to this time?

[Burt] <mutters> Shun ofa bitsch...ow <FX: slurps>

[Harry] Yeah, whatever Burt. That's about the size of it Chen. Seems he had an idea he could raise some funds quickly without Badger's say so. So Badger had me and Burt head him off. Trouble is, we had to split to cover 2 entrances and he turned up at Burt's.

[Burt] "They" 'Arry. I keep bloody tellin' you.

[Harry] I guess there **was** more than one, 'cos by the time I came around, old Burt here's doing his best to disarm the *huan dahn* by usin' his face.

[Burt] That's cosh I kicked some sherious *pi gu* on the others first. He only got me from behind after that. Bloody unshportshmanlike.

[Harry] Well, so's a shotgun shoved hard in your ear, but it seemed to get his attention right quick

[Chen] Well, as long as he stays out of here. That trouble I **don't** need! <leaves the table>

[Burt] Sho, whatsh the shod doing now?

[Harry] What?

[Burt] Where. Ish. He?

[Harry] Oh. Explaining his side of things to Badger. He's playin' nice 'cos the Accountant was hanging around looking...hopeful

[Burt] He'll have more that the Accountant and Mishter Badger to worry about when I get hold of 'im

[Harry] Now, now Burt. You're always the one telling me not to be too hasty. 'Sides, he'll most likely be back to Ezra before you're in shape to do anything to him, way him and Badger were talkin'.

[Burt] You were there then?

[Harry] 'Till I came to fetch you from the dentist, yeah. Badger wanted a gun on him the whole time. Not obvious, but he knew why I was still there.

[Burt] Hmm. Didn't I hear you shay you had a relative workin' that new skyplex at Ezhra? Few weeksh back it wash.

[Harry] Oh yeah. My cousin, Vinny. Doin' some legal *go se*. Nothin' fancy, but he's doin' OK.

[Burt] Harry. Think carefully. Mister Badger and his "soon to be in at least as much pain as I am" brother. When they wash talkin', did the name Adeli Niska come up at all?

[Harry] Guy that owns the 'plex? Yeah, a few times. Seems Badger's brother and he are all buddy buddy. Actually, Burt, Badger looked kind of worried when that came up.

[Burt] I'll bet. All pally with Mister Niska is it? Hmmm. Your cousin. Been there long?

[Harry] Pretty much since start up, dealin' with Alliance regs and how to get around them. Why?

[Burt] Just a hunch Harry, but I think I might be wantin' you to shend a wave. Might be an answer to our current difficulties if I'm right.

[Harry] And if you're wrong?

[Burt] Well, I try to be a glass half full kinda guy. Sho....

[Harry] So we shouldn't worry about it and.....

[Burt] And make shure our glasses aren't half empty, that's very decent of you Harry. Shame again please.

[Harry] I **knew** this was too good to last!

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss dietary requirements during convalescence

[Harry] You hungry Burt?

[Burt] Shtarvin' Harry, but I'm already shick of shoop

[Harry] What of what?

[Burt] Shick of...oh, never mind

<end>

"My Cousin Vinny" reference, very mild Terry Pratchett inspired use of "Buggerit!" and a set up of at least a vague connection to Niska for future use.

Acting this was...interesting.

And slightly damp by the end of it.

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 11

“Laydeez”

[Voiceover] Life is full of ups and downs. This can be especially true when folks make their living on the borders of legality. In the ‘Verse, Alliance Law can be a stabilising influence, but it is unwise to fun afoul of it. There are however, worse people in the ‘Verse to be wanted by, than the Alliance.

Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two desperate men are noticeable by their apparent absence....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Chen] Where are those 2 deadbeats? <pause> Hey Susan? You seen Mister Burt and Harry come in yet?

[Susan] I only just came on shift Boss. Sharrol might know. <calls> Hey, Sharrol, you seen B ‘n H this evening?

[Chen] Where’s she pointing? I can’t see from here and I got too many customers to go look. I just want to know where they are when they aren’t at their usual spot or the bar. Never can tell what Badger might have them getting up to!

[Susan] Far corner booth Boss.

[Chen] And they haven’t ordered yet? Something’s not right. Lee, take over here. Susan, you keep an eye on the door.

<pause, fade to Harry and Burt talking quietly...with barely restrained hilarity>

[Harry] I wish I coulda seen his face though

[Burt] Oh that would have been something to see. I’m never gonna get tired of Mister Badger telling this one to the boys.

[Harry] Well that’s good, ‘cos I don’t think he’ll be giving up telling it anytime soon <snigger, barely restrained laugh>

[Burt] Try and maintain some sense of decorum Harry, or people might think we had something to do with it <also barely keeping a lid on his laughter>

<beat: SFX Chen comes up to the booth>

[Chen] There you are! Why are you two behaving more suspiciously than usual?

[Burt] and [Harry] <both collapse into hysterical laughter, giggling, snorting, getting the odd word out>

[Harry] .....Chen, we.....

[Burt] .....Oh *mei mei*, it was beautiful....

[Chen] <cross> Don’t you little sister me Mister Burt. You tell me right now what *kuh wu* plan you two are hatching or...or... you’ll never get a drink in here again!

[Burt] <almost instantly becoming serious> Now, Chen, I know you wouldn't do that to us

[Chen] Don't bet on it Buster

[Burt] OK, OK, Harry, calm down, Look we should tell her, she did help get hold of the dress.

[Harry] <just about bringing himself under control> Yeah...OK Burt. She'll love this <almost loses it again>

[Chen] I'm waiting....

[Harry] <deep breath, calms down> Chen, you know I asked you to get hold of that frock that Burt had to use a while ago.

[Burt] The one I said I never wanted to lay eyes on again

[Chen] My nephew works the door at Madame Zizu's and Cynthia wasn't keen on keeping it after Mister Burt had bust half the seams. I thought he needed to lie low again!

[Burt] Not how you think. We had something...and someone else in mind

[Harry] I gotta cousin works the skyplex above Ezra. Badger's brother had been sayin' he was all up cosy with the guy that runs it. Said he had a business proposition for Badger and that Badger needed to buy his way in.

[Chen] Why would he do that?

[Burt] Because the fella that runs the Skyplex is one Adelei Niska...ah, I see the name rings a bell. Not a man to cross or refuse a deal with is Mister Niska by all accounts.

[Harry] But my cousin told me that Badger's brother was actually on the run from Niska. There's even a reward.

[Burt] So, someone's been telling porkie pies. Mister Badger can't turn in his own half brother...not in keeping with his pillar of the community standing, family values and all that. But he doesn't like being conned by his own flesh and blood neither

[Harry] Yeah, but what he **can** do, after we've filled him in, is let his brother **think** that Niska knows he's on Persephone and that a termination squad is on the way.

[Burt] And it just so happens that Mister Badger has a quick way out of the docks this evening. One way ticket, but it's elsewhere fast and his bro' 'aint too fussy now he's been rumbled and **thinks** Niska's after him

[Harry] So there just **happens** to be this dress lying around and the ticket off planet just **happens** to be...

[Burt] <cheerfully> On a ship full of "ladies of negotiable virtue" heading for the Terraforming crews finishing up on Newhall!

[Chen] So you mean.....He must look worse in a dress than you do Mister Burt!

[Burt] What can I say, Terraformers 'aint that fussy! <almost loses it again> Look, we need to try and keep this quiet in public as we don't want the story **actually** getting back to Mister Niska.

[Harry] But we do have a copy of the fake ID Badger had run up. Wanna see?

<beat>

[Chen] You gotta be kidding me! Makeup too? <giggles? That's...that's....so cute!

[Burt] <barely restrained> I know...<loses it>

<All 3 collapse into new round of uncontrollable laughter>

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss the role of alcohol in a modern business setting

[Harry] So Burt, how come we didn't get a drink when we first sat down

[Burt] Harry, we were barely keeping it together as it was, can you imagine Chen's brew coming down your nose when we lost it again?

[Harry] Well, it might clear your sinuses!

<end>

Blokes in dresses is a fine theatrical tradition of course...again..., but yes, this does owe at least a little to Little Britain's rubbish transvestite Emily Howard.

The name of the non speaking bouncer, Sharrol, is a vague reference to a minor character of Larry Niven's; Sharrol Janss who ended up as Beowulf Schaeffer's lover after picking his pocket (See Flatlander, short story by Larry Niven. She also was the mother of Louis Wu, one of Niven's main protagonists.)

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 12

“Special Delivery”

[Voiceover] Transport of goods is the bread and butter of much of the economy of the ‘Verse. Uncountable thousands of vessels ply their trade between worlds and moons, many of them carrying produce and materials unique to their last port of call and thus in demand elsewhere. Not all of these goods however, are of a legitimate nature. Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two entrepreneurs in the less official economy of the ‘Verse, debate their latest acquisitions.....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Burt] Nah, I prefer something with a bit of heft to it

[Harry] Oh c’mon Burt, the Callahan Ceramic Special’s a classic. Light, accurate <beat> don’t show up easy on weapon scans

[Burt] But it costs an arm and a leg and when they jam...and you know they’re prone to that Harry... you’re left with something too light to smack someone on the head with

[Harry] Only if you’re dumb enough not to be carrying a backup. Anyways, you got to be close enough to hit ‘em for that to be an issue. It’s a good choice. Folks will pay over the odds for ‘em, even if I didn’t.

[Burt] <drinks> Well, I still say you’re wasting that bonus Mister Badger give us for getting shot of his brother. And as for investing the rest in more of ‘em, I dunno, even if you say you can get a case at less than cost!

[Harry] I told you, I know a guy

[Burt] I must be mad trusting your business acumen <drinks>

<SFX: in background, a beeping alarm of some sort over at the bar. It’s Chen’s explosives sensor>

[Harry] What’s going on over there? Some kid just came in and the door sensors went off.

[Burt] Hmm. Not sure. Susan’s frisking the kid and Chen’s talking to him. She doesn’t seem too worried

[Harry] She don’t look too happy either.

[Burt] Neither do I when my glass is empty. C’mon Harry, it’s your shout, especially if you want me to go along with your little scheme

[Harry] <grumpy> Yeah, OK, OK, <SFX: gets up and goes to bar>

[Burt] <to himself> That boy’s got a lot to learn about wooing potential investors. Ah well, at least things is nice and quiet for a change.

[Harry] <from the bar, calling over> Hey Burt! You expecting a special delivery?



[Burt] <to self> Ah, I was wonderin' when that would turn up. <louder to Harry> What's the message with it?

[Harry] <from the bar, calling over> Skeezy.....whatever the hell **that** means!

[Burt] Yep, that's the one. Bring it on over.

[Harry] <approaches from Bar. Chen and the kid are with him> Same again I take it Burt? <puts down glasses>

[Burt] Ah, that's the ticket.

[Chen] Now see here Mr Burt. I don't take kindly to unknown substances coming into my place

[Burt] It's OK , Chen. I take it you double checked it's stability rating

[Chen] Of course. It's not explosive, but it presents like that initially, which is what set off the door. I don't like making my customers nervous!

[Harry] What the hell is it Burt?

[Burt] You'll see. Now then young fella, how's about handing over my package?

[Kid] I'm a girl, moonbrain! And it's a cash for delivery deal, *dong ma*?

[Harry] <grinning> I like the kid's attitude

[Burt] I do beg your pardon *mei mei*. <mutters> Must need my bloody eyes testing. How much then?

[Kid] A hundred silver

[Burt] 50's the going rate <pause> 75? <pause>Hmm, I can see we'll be here all day. OK OK, 100 then.

<SFX: jingle of coins and package being put down>

[Harry] As I said, I like the kids's attitude

<SFX: kid departs>

[Chen] So what the hell is in the package?

[Burt] Something very special and rare. I just need to check it.

<SFX: paper ripping off package and tin opening while he speaks>

NOTE: following lines all more or less together as folks react to the appalling stench coming from the tin

[Harry] *Ta ma duh* Burt!

[Chen] Oh my god! What is that smell?

[Various nearby patrons] What is that? Oh gross! I feel ill! Phew! Ugh!

[Burt] <sniffs deeply> Ah, finest Dyton Blue. A true monarch among cheeses.

[Harry] *Ay yah* Burt! What the hell is that stuff? Close the gorram tin! NOW!

<SFX: tin being shut>

[Burt] <slightly hurt> Just a taste of home. Thought Mister Badger would like some for his birthday

[Harry] That was 3 months ago Burt. Cheese? What...you mean....people actually eat that *go se*?

[Burt] Well, admittedly, not usually by choice. It's a bit of an acquired taste

[Chen] And you can acquire yourself a new local if you're going to open that tin again! I don't believe even Badger would enjoy eating that

[Harry] Well, it would explain why his cooking is so ruttin' awful.

[Burt] No, he's just not very good at it. Look, sorry about the, um, aroma Chen. It's a bit ripe I grant you

[Chen] Well that's the understatement of the year. No. More. Cheeses. *Dong la ma?*

[Burt] Of course, it goes lovely with a bit of port

[Harry] & [Chen] BURT!!!

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, Burt and Harry discuss moral equivalence in relation to financial gain

[Harry] Well, I felt good about making some coin out of the deal

[Burt] Yeah, but you feel good about pummelling some poor sap's face in...as do I so it happens if the circumstances warrant it, but gun running is a whole other set of ethics.

[Harry] Just as well that none of 'em will work then isn't it!

<end>

Yes, another obscure Buffy reference, this time to the "skeezy cheeses" that Anya likes in "Once More With Feeling". And it meant I could cast my daughter Elanor as the delivery kid. It was also a setup for the final episode of this season of Badger's World which I wanted to out with a bang...

“Badger’s World”  
Episode 13

“The End?”

[Voiceover] For those in the ‘Verse whose lives have been touched by conflict, the desire for peace or for “the quiet life” is particularly strong. Even among those whose business involves the application of force, the appreciation of less stressful periods is no less genuine. Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium, two exponents of this particular career path, debate their current good fortune....

<FX: sounds of pub, music and voices in background>

[Burt] I don’t know what you’re complaining for Harry. This has to be one of the cushiest gigs Mister Badger has ever landed us with.

[Harry] I guess. It’s just....

[Burt] Just what?

[Harry] Well, with Badger off planet and it being the middle of the month, we ‘aint exactly got a lot to do. No payments to collect. No heads to break...

[Burt] Harry, I’m shocked. Are you developing some sort of work ethic?

[Harry] No, it’s just...well, not even any of the street gangs are trying to muscle in on the small stuff the way they usually do.

[Burt] Look, Mister Badger made it very simple for us. He got a few things sorted out with the Triads before he went. Buried the hatchet so to speak. Nobody else feels like upsetting them at the moment, which means things is also nice and quiet for **us** as well. We’re getting a bonus just for minding the shop if you like.

[Harry] I know, but it’s been days now and...

[Burt] And you’re bored ‘cos you’ve not had to so much as act all intimidating, let alone actually thump someone. If you want a good old fashioned bar room brawl, why don’t you head over to Ziggy’s? That’s always a regular den of iniquity, especially on a Friday

[Harry] Nah, they got them fancy Alliance stunners rigged up now. Soon as a fight lasts more than a few seconds, everyone within 3 meters is zapped, thrown in the tank and they sort it out in the morning. Where’s the fun in that?

[Burt] Well at least you’ve got enough sense not to start something in here. Chen would never stand for it.

[Chen] <approaching the table> What wouldn’t I stand for? What are you too up to now?

[Burt] Nothing at all Chen. I was just pointing out to Harry the benefits of your zero tolerance policy as regards bar fights.

[Harry] Well I know that! Hell, we done broke up enough of ‘em in the early days when we just wanted a quiet drink. <sigh> **I miss that!**

[Chen] Look, I got too much tied up in this place now to let some inebriated *huan dahn* and his friends wreck it just because someone spilled his drink. Though, I didn't mind so much back when Badger held the title!

[Burt] That's because you didn't have to pay the bills! I sometimes wonder if you didn't encourage the enthusiastic remodelling of the place of a Friday night just to get Mister Badger to let you buy him out.

[Harry] Yeah, funny how it got all quiet and cosy once you bought the majority share.

[Chen] Badger still does very well out of his cut with the way I run things now. He's never complained.

[Burt] Nor should he. And nor should we Harry. There's a lot to be said for a nice quiet pint, especially the way things have been this year. I for one am enjoying the relative calm.

[Chen] So, are you two going to order food tonight?

<SFX: the door alarm (same sound as from BW12) goes off and continues sounding>

[Harry] Burt, you didn't go and order some more of that disgusting cheese again did you?

[Burt] Look, just 'cos you lot wouldn't know a fine cheese if it came up and bit your *pi gu*, don't go...

[Susan] <calling over, cutting him off> Boss! You better get over here and see this <Chen departs>

[Harry] What now?

[Burt] Dunno, but looks like you got your wish for a bit of excitement <beat> I don't like the look of this. Harry, you carrying?

[Harry] Of course I'm....

[Burt] <cutting him off> No time! Make as though you're going to the restrooms and then drop into that booth with the clear line of fire to the main door and watch for my signal.

[Harry] Got it. What signal?

[Burt] If I want you to shoot someone, I'll, I dunno, pick my nose and flick it at them!

<both get up>

[Harry] Subtle! I like it.

[Burt] Go. <Harry leaves, Burt walks to the bar entrance where Chen, Susan and a Stranger are arguing> Now, lets keep this nice and neutral. <To himself>

<almost simultaneously>

[Chen] I don't care who ripped you off, you gotta leave now

[Susan] Mister, I don't wanna hurt you, but you better go while you can

[Stranger] Don't make me do this! Don't make me do this! I mean it!

[Burt] Now, now people, what seems to be the problem

[Stranger] You need to back off bub, and I mean now! <SFX: coat being opened, revealing explosives strapped to the Stranger, along with a beeping detonator> I'll do it, I'll blow this whole stinking joint the way of Serenity Valley you come any closer!

[Chen] & [Susan] gasp, oh god etc

[Burt] Oh *go se!* <surprisingly calmly> Well, you certainly have my attention, Chen would you be a dear and mute that bloody door alarm, I'm sure our friend here would appreciate that. <alarm ends, just the quiet beeping of the bomber's detonator and an erie silence as the rest of the bar realises what is going on>

[Burt] Now, then, I'm sure you don't really want to blow yourself and all these fine people up

[Stranger] You don't know **what** I want!

[Chen] Mister Burt! What are you doing?

[Burt] Just having a quiet word. I see you are a connoisseur of the classics. What is that? C4? That really is one from the history books, and a radio frequency dead man's trigger, another oldie but goldie.

[Stranger] What are you talking about? I am a ruttin' bomb and you want to debate my choice of explosives? I'm in charge here and you'll do exactly what I...hey...are you even listening to me? Are you picking your nose?!

[Susan] Oh gross Burt!

[Burt] <menacing> No, you listen to me. I make one slight gesture and your gorram brains are all over the entrance courtesy of my friend in the back with the high velocity rifle. He's a very good shot.

[Stranger] Aren't you forgetting moonbrain, I'm holding a dead man's trigger which will....

[Burt] <cutting him off> Do precisely **nothing** if you let go. Door systems like this one damp any RF signal deader than you'll be and besides.....

[Stranger] What?!

[Burt] C4 needs a percussion type detonator, not an electrical impulse. You're about as dangerous as....

[Stranger] <annoyed> Look, you figured it out, OK? I get it. No blowie uppie. So I'd better make an exit for now at least. But, as I can't have you following me...here! <SFX: sound of several small metal somethings hitting the floor behind the bar>

[Susan] oh my god, **Grenades!** <SFX: screams and people diving for cover>

<beat>

[Burt] Oh bugger!

<SFX: KABOOM!!!!>

<fade through pub music to end title/credit>

[Voiceover] Next time, in what is left of Badger's World...

[Harry] You OK Burt?

[Burt] I'll live. Nobody died, but look what she did! She blew up **all** the booze! Mister Badger is **not** going to be happy!

[Harry] Well at least that'll be back to normal!

<end>

There is a very slight vibe from "Speed" in there, but it's hardly noticeable.

The final episode of The Signal Season 3 in 2007 was our Holiday Special. Here, all bets are off as regards all our unwritten rules for normal shows and we can have a bit of fun with the format. This time, we imagined The Signal 20 odd years hence, in a world where we got our Big Damn Trilogy, where there had been spin off series and where even Badger's World had been made into a real Firefly drama. So we needed something a bit different to go where Badger's World would have been.

Permanent Waves was the result, a kind of satire on Broadcast News, with big nods to The Day Today and Brass Eye by Chris Morris and a weird crossover with The Rocky Horror Show. Somehow, it worked.

## Permanent Waves

by Nikolaj Ambrose, starring Kirk Sloan and Daisy Morland\*

[Voiceover] Permanent Waves. Episode 57.

<"Brass Eye" theme tune: 30 secs: fades to allow presenters to announce themselves>

[Brad] Hi, I'm Brad Majors.

[Janet] And I'm Janet Weiss.

<theme fades up to annoyingly loud climax>

[Brad] In the 'Verse today: <news item noise, possibly News at Ten type "Bong"> Parliament finally approves the Shadow resettlement treaty despite fierce opposition <people/MPs booing/"order, order!">

<Bong>

[Janet] The Aries Commonwealth announces a new Lottery <clip of people cheering >

<Bong>

[Brad] We have a report on the controversial Reavers' rights bill <clip of people screaming>

<Bong>

[Janet] And in financial news, the Red Sun Corporation's market share moves to a record high <Kerching! Money sound clip or similar>

[Brad] But first, this recorded report on today's top story. <Brass Eye snippet sound or similar>

[Producer] And we're off air. 30 seconds people. <studio type sounds in background, possibly the news report – use something from Day Today or Brass Eye>

(Note: These 2 former sweethearts **hate** each other, but work well together)

[Brad]<continuing conversation, switching from macho anchorman to bitchy camp> So anyway, there's this article on the Most Holy Order of the Knights of Niska that they wanted me to comment on...

[Janet] Like anybody would really want your opinion on those psychopaths

[Brad] Actually Janet darling, people are queuing up to hear my take on things, the Order is an interesting sociological phenomenon for your information, so I feel that...

[Janet] <cutting him off> That you just have to give your opinion because you once did a module in Psycho-History at the University of Osiris, oh Brad, you're soooo predictable!

[Brad] Well at least I don't have to keep my job by boinking the news director whenever she can't afford a Companion!

[Janet] Asshole!

[Brad] Slut!

[Producer] OK, can it you two! And we're back in 5... 4...3...2....

<Brass Eyes snippet noise>

[Brad] And now we go to the latest controversial development in the ongoing Pax scandal

[Janet] Will we ever see the end of this story Brad?

[Brad] Only time will tell, Janet. As the Miranda Relief Fund approaches it's 20th anniversary, a bill has been passed that could open the way to Reavers being in receipt of benefits. A spokesman for the charity had this to say:

[Fund Spokesman] <outraged> While we have always accepted that the damage done to Reavers was originally down to the ill advised use of G23-Paxilon Hydrochlorate, the latest census shows that their numbers have actually increased since the Miranda disaster. Making Reavers eligible for benefits meant for the families of those eaten **since** the disaster, means some less scrupulous folk may actually **choose** cannibalism as a viable lifestyle!

[Janet] We had this reply from a Reaver representative:

[Reaver] <loud and vicious sounding>

WHHAAALLLARAGGRRRRRGGHHHHHGGGGGHAAARARARAARAARARRGHHHHH!!!!

[Brad] And I'm sure we can all agree on that sentiment!

[Janet] Also, our thoughts go out to the family of our reporter Eddie who managed to wave us that response.

<Brass Eye/music segue>

[Brad] After the break:

[Janet] Travel News,

[Brad] How new Plasma Venting surcharges could affect commercial travel around the 'Verse

[Janet] And that all important story on the new Aries Lottery

[Brad] How much could **you** win!

[Janet] <bored sounding> Plus the usual Politics and Money stories

[Brad] Seems we can **never** keep those two separate!

<Brass Eye climax swelling loud – same bit as at the beginning>

[Producer] And we're cut to commercials. One minute. Damn it, Janet, a little less of the "world weary" vibe when you mention politics when we come back, thank you!

[Janet] <stream of Chinese invective: "stupid son of a drooling whore and monkey" type phrase>

[Producer] <tired, heard it all before sounding> And I love you too. 40 seconds!



[Brad] Potty mouth!

[Janet] Oh you're a fine one to talk. I saw that Cortex Bloopers broadcast where you, in not so many words, accused the First Minister of unnatural practices with a goat!

[Brad] Well, they showed that clip right after!

[Janet] Yeah, but you came right out with it on a live feed, way to go Einstein!

[Brad] <justifying tone> The inquiry accepted that it was down to a stress related condition. Turned out to be one of my most popular reports in the end anyway, once it all came out.

[Janet] You are one lucky *huan dahn* sonofa...

[Producer] 10 seconds people!

[Brad] So, you coming along to my little gathering later this evening?

[Janet] I'd rather date a Reaver!

[Producer] And 5...4...3...2

<simultaneously> [Brad]<ultra bitchy> I'll see what I can do for you!

<returning theme: fading to sponsor credit>

[Voiceover] Permanent Waves is sponsored by Red Sun: Making the Verse a bigger place.

[Voiceover] Permanent Waves is brought to you by Yoshida Kendall Captures

\* Fake name and stars (provided by Jill Arroway) for the purposes of this apparently being the Holiday Special from 2029, The Signal, Season 25 ☺

Originally titled "The Verse Today", Permanent Waves was a lot of fun to do. It also enabled me to invite Kevin Cummings and Larissa Myhowich to moonlight briefly from Buffy Between The Lines Season 1, to take the parts of Brad and Janet and to shoehorn my wife Joy and son Ben into the parts of the Miranda Relief Fund spokesperson and the harassed show producer respectively.

And yes, Permanent Waves is a reference to one of my favourite bands (Rush)

## Appendix I

This was the “bible” I put together early in Season 1 of BW (S3 of The Signal) in the expectation that other writers may want to pen a script. Nobody else ever did and in that sense it became mine by default ☺, although Burt and Harry did make several cameo appearances in the “Vote!” series of short comedy segments written by Steve Kaszicki during Season 7 of The Signal. It is rumoured that they may also appear briefly in the Between The Lines Studios next project, Firefly Between The Lines.

As you can see, the series was not originally expected to have a particularly long life, being a one trick pony to begin with, but that’s the thing with characters, especially ones living in the Firefly ‘Verse; they tend to develop a life of their own and some of the jotted down ideas became episodes, by which time, Badgers World was bound to continue beyond season 3 of The Signal. (See Vol 2 Scripts)

# Badger’s World Bible

## Basic Episode Layout (for standard “gag” episodes)

- Kevin opening voiceover, fairly portentous and film trailerish. Initial statement about the ‘verse or something in it, loosely tied to the theme of the episode. Followed by “Meanwhile, in Chen’s Throat Emporium..” and an unrealistic sounding reference to Burt and Harry.
- Bar sounds FX open with initial dialogue (related to opening voiceover comments), usually coming in midway through an earlier conversation the 2 are having.
- Main bulk of episode is the 2 way conversation between Burt and Harry with a general theme (in the title or voiceover) and at least one gag, non sequitur, double entendre or awkward silence. (The piece is essentially always going to be a one joke affair apart from the end section)
- Main bit usually ends with Burt tricking a pint somehow out of Harry (who may or may not get exasperated by this at some point - or even succeed in turning the tables!)
- Kevin’s end voiceover is short and is of the “Next time, Burt and Harry discuss...” form, with an unlikely sounding subject (that will not of course be actually used in the next episode)
- Burt and Harry have a brief exchange related to the above subject, hopefully in an amusing/unlikely way.

## Characters to date

- **Harry** (Les): Typical Jayne type musclebound thug. Favours guns and knives, fairly good shot and can be quiet when needs to. Been working for Badger for a few years (though is cunning enough to have a few sidelines that don’t infringe on Badger’s interests.) Knows his best interests lie with Badger and is loyal though not always respectful (out of

Badger's hearing anyway). Good solid henchman. Gets on well with Burt who he respects as a senior colleague and the 2 work well together.

- **Burt** (Nick): Still a typical henchman, Burt is however better educated than Harry and a lot more experienced. He's been with Badger since the old days and obviously owes some sort of debt to Badger, which, though long paid off if it was financial, results in an unshakeable loyalty to his boss whom he always refers to as "Mister Badger" when speaking of him (though he'll call him Badger when talking to him.) Burt is a tough *Huan dahn* and favours fists, clubs and more unusual tools of the trade that has given him a fearsome reputation. While ruthless in pursuing Badger's interests, he does retain some compassion and though sometimes regretful of causing injury, it won't stop him doing so in a most efficient fashion. Burt likes his beer and never lets go a chance to trick Harry out of a pint, Harry generally tolerates this as Burt has some good stories and a lot of experience that Harry recognises as valuable. (Burt may also once have saved Harry's ass, which is another reason Harry puts up with it, though Burt shamelessly capitalises on this fact). Burt sees a younger version of himself in Harry and gets on well with him, enjoying playing the "elder statesman" role among Badger's Crew.
- Rest of Badger's Crew and misc. characters: **Billy** – who Burt had to discipline one time, **Murphy** – possibly a past (or dead) member. **Lao Che** –elderly local who pays Badger protection money, may harbour a grudge against Burt. At least several other guys are part of Badger's regular crew, but who have not been named yet.
- **Chen** (Miranda): Owner of Chen's Throat Emporium, a low down dive favoured by a number of the Eavesdown Dock's less savoury characters, but fairly respected as a place you can talk without much chance of being snooped. Chen operates a no bugs policy and while the local police pop in from time to time, Chen has an "arrangement" and there is rarely official trouble. Chen knows how to be discreet and clients like Burt and Harry tend to help maintain order in an "unofficial" capacity in support of Chen's doormen **Li** and **Chang** and **Susan** (Kari) and **Sharrol** (who don't speak as a rule). Rowdy types are advised not to upset folk like Burt and Harry trying to enjoy a quiet drink! Chen respects Burt and to a lesser extent Harry and has another "arrangement" with Badger, but it's Chen's place and she'll yell at folk indiscriminately if she wants them out or to slow down. Actually there is a huge amount of Chinese profanity, but we only hear that occasionally. May have a brother who runs a food place down the street. Actually, probably has several brothers, cousins, nieces, nephews etc. Chen sounds like "Rosie" from MASH
- **The Accountant**: Feared "specialist" used by Badger. He does the external accounts too, but also has a nasty interest in torture and pain and while he will use this expertise for payment, he is also suspected to indulge for pleasure. Rumours are probably worse than the reality, but not by much. Mentioned only with a shudder even by rough types like Harry. (May be on the same Cortex mailing list as Niska?) Probably

never a speaking part.

- **Badger:** Always mentioned in every episode at least in passing, but rarely present (unless we can convincingly use Mark Sheppard lines that haven't been already used in the titles). If present, probably silent. Possibly as the "inaudible" voice on the other end of a comlink/phone. Badger buys into the class system that operates on worlds like Persephone, but he doesn't like his place in it. He wants to be liked, but more than that he wants to be respected and accepted. Having to use Mal to make a deal at the Ball rankles, but won't stop him from wanting it to succeed. He's actually a terrible snob. (Wood alcohol tea sure, but it's served in fine china with cucumber sandwiches and there's bound to be a doily somewhere.) Canny and cunning, Badger has built a nice little empire for himself.

### Story Background and Development

- Time: set during Firefly (at least initially), possibly after both Serenity and Shindig, but Mal has had dealings with Badger before the pilot, so could conceivably be set earlier. Almost certainly set before the film.
- Place: Persephone. Specifically, Chen's Throat Emporium in almost all cases.

Possible story ideas/episode hooks:

- Badger's success/failure with the ladies. Maybe a reference to a past Mrs Badger (YoSaffBridg, or is that going too far?)
- Son of Badger? Maybe the "ex" shows up and dumps the lad with his surprised dad, who, unprepared, passes the responsibility to Burt and Harry (kinda a "Splainy Unkie Jayne" take??)
- Burt gets the crap beaten out of him and spends the episode with his jaw wired up, much to the amusement of Harry (and Chen) (see BW10 Teef)
- Harry finally succeeds in conning Burt out of a pint (see BW6 Revenge)
- Chen's brother/cousin/nephew runs the bar one night
- Harry's cousin – who happens to work for Niska turns up with an unexpected offer...

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Note: Harry's cousin is referenced in an episode of BW S2 and also in BW Live II: Notes From The Edge.

The speed with which these characters became established in my head and also on paper, as above, is partly down to the wonderfully solid Firefly 'Verse background (which after all is the inspiration behind any fanfic work such as this) and partly to how well they were portrayed by Les Howard as Harry, Miranda Thomas as Chen and Kevin Bachelder as the ubiquitous voiceover guy.

How could I not continue? Even after blowing up Chen's?

Season 2 was a cert.