

FINDER'S KEEPERS

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. DOCTOR COMBINE'S LAB - DAY

DR. FRANK COMBINE, a tall and lanky man with sharp features, is working in his lab.

PUSH IN on flasks of chemicals with Bunsen burners boiling their contents.

CAMERA PANS to reveal arms and legs scattered across gurneys with wires attached to them as they twitch. Doctor Combine speaks aloud to his body parts in a "baby talk" voice.

DR. COMBINE

Yes, you are my little Empty Vessel,
aren't you?

The doctor picks up a twitching arm.

DR. COMBINE (CONT'D)

And your owner wasn't using you
anymore, was he? All I need to do is
stitch you together, insert my cloned
organs, and VOILA!

The doctor sets the arm down with a slight frown and an almost sing song voice:

DR. COMBINE (CONT'D)

If I only had a brain...

TELEPHONE rings. The doctor's hand grabs the receiver and lifts it to his ear.

DR. COMBINE (CONT'D)

Hello?

INT. MARS INTERGALACTIC SPACEPORT/LUGGAGE AREA - DAY

SHALLOW CHARTREUSE, a robot with a human brain, holds a cell phone up to his domed head near where his ear would be if he had one. He speaks with a voice reminiscent of Peter Frampton's guitar.

SHALLOW

Dr. Frank Combine?

INTERCUT DOCTOR COMBINE/SHALLOW

The doctor looks at the clock.

DR. COMBINE

Ahhh, Mr. Chartreuse, right on time.

SHALLOW

So you have my body?

DR. COMBINE

It is nearly complete, R2.

SHALLOW

What?

DR. COMBINE

Nothing. I'll be there within the hour. You'll be dancing the Harlem Shake in no time.

SHALLOW

YES!

Shallow hangs up his phone and dances happily, or at least he tries. His robot body squeaks and clunks as he trips over his own feet, crashing to the floor.

PUSH IN on the television in the background.

TV NEWS ANCHOR

Be on the lookout for this criminal. He is considered to be armed and dangerous. If you see him, please notify the authorities immediately.

On the screen is the picture of the wanted criminal.

INT. COMMERCIAL SPACECRAFT - DAY

EMBER STRYKER, and intergalactic bounty hunter, boards the spacecraft, heads to the back, and enters the lavatory.

LAVATORY

Ember rips the mirror from the restroom wall and places it over the sink. He pulls a vial from his pocket

INSERT: VIAL - NANO-COCAINE

BACK TO SCENE

Ember dumps a powdery substance across the mirror in a thin straight line.

MIRROR

Ember's nose slides across the mirror making a sucking sound as the powder disappears up his nose.

OUTSIDE RESTROOM

Ember exits and comes face to face with a tall, wiry, and very FLAMBOYANT FLIGHT STEWARD. The Steward notices the mirror has been ripped from the wall. He speaks with a lisp.

FLAMBOYANT FLIGHT STEWARD

Excuse me thir, where you doing
drugth in the lavatory?

Ember glares a burning stare into the steward's eyes. The steward, unaffected, reaches for Ember's wrist.

FLAMBOYANT FLIGHT STEWARD

You're going to have to come with me.

Ember, with lightening quick speed, grabs the steward by the throat and slams him against the women's restroom door, knocking it in.

WOMEN'S LAVATORY

A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN sitting on the toilet, scream and attempts to cover herself up. Ember peeks around the steward for a better look, and then concentrates his stare back on the steward.

EMBER

I don't think we have a problem here,
do we?

The steward tries to talk, but can't. All he can manage is a headshake. Ember loosens his grip and lets him drop.

EMBER (CONT'D)

Good.

Ember walks back to his seat, making a suggestion over his shoulder.

EMBER (CONT'D)

You might want to get the door looked
at as long as you're fixing that
mirror.

EMBER'S SEAT

Ember sits down in his seat and looks out the window. Beside him sit's a LARGE WOMAN. She is chewing her gum like cud. Ember

spins his head in her direction and stares at her. She speaks with an annoying accent.

LARGE WOMAN
Business or plezya?

Ember continues to stare, unblinking, eyes piercing hers. She continues to speak as she chews.

LARGE WOMAN (CONT'D)
Myself, I go to Mars for relaxing
volcanic steam baths. Don't you just
love--

Ember, with lightening quick speed, punches her in the face knocking her out cold. Ember smiles from ear to ear and settles into his seat. He pulls out a picture from his pocket.

INSERT: PICTURE

It's the face of person being shown on the news.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. MARS INTERGALACTIC SPACEPORT/SECURITY - DAY

RYOKO OHAI, female security guard, physically fit, checks passengers as they debark the spacecraft. She stops Dr. Combine to examine his patchwork body.

RYOKO
What's this?

DR. COMBINE
That's my Empty Vessel.

RYOKO
Uh huh. It looks like a body to me.

A television over Ryoko's shoulder is broadcasting the wanted criminal. She looks up at the screen, then at the face of Dr. Combine's body. The body has the same face as the criminal.

RYOKO
You got paperwork for all these body
parts?

DR. COMBINE
Of course.

The doctor produces the paperwork. Ryoko again looks at the face of the body and again back at the television.

RYOKO

How do I know you're not tryin' ta smuggle a criminal past me?

DR. COMBINE

My dear, officer, this is but a mere empty vessel. This body has no brain.

RYOKO

Uh huh. I'll be the judge of that.

Ryoko produces a cattle prod-like device and ZAPS the body with it. It doesn't even twitch.

DR. COMBINE

See? I told you.

Ryoko motions for the doctor to continue through.

RYOKO

Keep it movin'.

INT. LUGGAGE AREA - DAY

Shallow is still trying to dance as he flings luggage at the conveyor belt, some of them actually landing on it. Shallow sees the doctor approaching with his new body and plods happily toward him.

SHALLOW

Dr. Combine! You made it!

DR. COMBINE

Yes...

The doctor seems puzzled as to what to call Shallow.

DR. COMBINE (CONT'D)

Tin man, I'm here.

Shallow jumps up and down and claps his metal hands like a child. The doctor smiles, pats him on the head, and sets up a makeshift operating room. Shallow jumps up on an operating table while the doctor sorts his tools.

INT. SPACEPORT CUSTOMS - DAY

AMOS MORTON, a 500-year-old shape-shifting alien customs agent, checks passengers for transporting illegal substances across planetary lines. Ember is next in line.

AMOS

Well, well, if isn't Mr. Nose Candy.

Ember stares at Amos blankly. Amos reaches out to frisk Ember. Ember reacts quickly, deflecting Amos' approach with his forearm.

AMOS (CONT'D)

You feelin' froggy today?

Amos reaches with the other hand. Ember blocks him again. Suddenly the two are trading blocked advances like Neo and Morpheus.

Eventually Amos pins Stryker against the wall with his arm pinned behind his back. Amos shape-shifts into something resembling Charlie Sheen and leans in close to Ember's ear.

AMOS (CONT'D)

I'm a rock star from Mars with tiger blood and Adonis DNA. Don't mess with me.

Ember breaks free from his hold reversing hit, pinning Amos to the wall.

EMBER

I'm just a simple man trying to make my way through the universe.

As the last word leaves his lips the muzzle of a blaster appears at the back of Stryker's head. Ryoko is at the other end.

RYOKO

Don't move, Jedi!

INT. SPACEPORT LUGGAGE AREA - DAY

Dr. Combine is dabbing glue onto Shallow's new skullcap.

DR. COMBINE

A little dab here and a little dab there...

The doctor presses the skullcap tightly over Shallow's exposed brain and holds it in place.

DR. COMBINE (CONT'D)

One thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand... Oh, that's good enough.

The doctor slaps Shallow's face.

DR. COMBINE (CONT'D)

Wake up!

Shallow doesn't respond.

DR. COMBINE (CONT'D)

Hmmm, I must have given him too much
sedative.

The doctor slaps him harder this time. Shallow's skullcap flies off, rolling on the ground like a bowl. It sounds like a spinning quarter.

DR. COMBINE (CONT'D)

Well, I guess it wasn't good enough.

The doctor retrieves the skullcap, but before replacing it, examines Shallow's brain. He picks up a lancet and pokes Shallow's brain in a very specific area.

Shallow bolts upright with his eyes wide open. The doctor places the skullcap back on Shallow's head. Shallow snaps his head in the doctor's direction.

SHALLOW

What? Who are you?

DR. COMBINE

Relax, Scarecrow. I need to make sure
this stays on tight this time.

The doctor peels off tape from a roll and tapes down the skullcap.

DR. COMBINE (CONT'D)

There, that should do it!

SHALLOW

Do what? Who are you?

DR. COMBINE

Oh dear. Perhaps I touched the wrong
lobe.

The doctor flips open Shallow's skull and presses a specific area with his finger.

SHALLOW

Doctor!

DR. COMBINE

Ahhh, that's it.

Shallow hops off of the gurney and falls flat on his face.

DR. COMBINE

You'll find your new body a bit difficult to control at first. Some of those alien body parts might not respond well to your human brain.

Shallow stands. He stumbles like the Scarecrow from the Wizard of Oz. His limbs moving in opposite directions, but he manages to get back to his station.

He picks up suitcases and launches them across the luggage area. Shallow lets out a squeal of excitement.

SHALLOW

Squeeee! I can feel the suitcases!

Shallow raises his hand to his face. Unable to control it, he slaps himself. His hand is still planted firmly against his face. He licks his hand.

SHALLOW (CONT'D)

Squeeee! I taste wonderful!

He pulls his hand from his face. Takes a deep breath. His eyes bulge out of his head.

SHALLOW

FOOD!

Shallow runs/stumbles toward the food court.

INT. SPACEPORT CUSTOMS - DAY

Stryker sits with his hands tied behind his back. Amos and Ryoko stand over him with menacing looks.

STRYKER

I'm chasing a bounty! I have documentation and a picture in my pocket!

Ryoko searches Stryker and finds his papers. She looks at the photo.

TELEVISION

The same face on Stryker's photo appears on the TV.

TV NEWS ANCHOR

...considered armed and dangerous...

PUSH IN tight on Ryoko's face. Her eyes widen as she looks at the picture in her hand.

FLASHBACK

Ryoko looks at the television, then at the face of Dr. Combine's body.

BACK TO PRESENT

Ryoko is staring at the picture in her hand. She hears a commotion towards the food court. She sees Shallow's new body flopping through a crowd of people. Her head snaps back to Stryker. Stryker looks toward the food court.

Stryker breaks his restraints. He stands, pushing Amos and the dumbfounded Ryoko aside. In slow motion, Stryker draws his weapons and sprints towards the food court.

END OF ACT TWOACT THREE

INT. SPACEPORT FOOD COURT - DAY

Shallow is dancing like his body has no bones. He squeals with delight as he approaches a fast food counter. He addresses the CASHIER.

SHALLOW

I'll have a double bacon cheeseburger
with a large fry and coke. Oh! And
I'll have a hot apple pie, too!

CHASIER

Step aside, sir. Your order will be
ready in a moment.

SHALLOW

Squeeeee!

Shallow dance/staggers away from the counter. His eyes lock on Stryker, barreling down towards him, weapons drawn, face in a snarl.

Shallow looks up at the television and sees his new face on the screen. Under the picture is the caption, "DANGEROUS CRIMINAL." He looks back at Stryker who begins to open fire on Shallow.

Shallow's smile fades and his face goes slack. In slow motion Shallow tries to turn and run, but his body is not cooperating. Each limb attempts to go in a different direction.

SHALLOW

Nooooooooooooo!

LATER

Stryker sits at a table in the food court eating a hamburger. He speaks with his mouth full.

STRYKER

I'm really sorry about that, Shallow.
I had no idea it was you behind that
face.

He takes another bite of his hamburger.

STRYKER (CONT'D)

Wow! These have got to be the best
airtight sealed burgers in the
galaxy.

PULL BACK to reveal Shallow sitting across from Stryker in his old robot body. His food order sits on a tray in front of him.

Shallow reaches down, picks up his burger and smashes it against his dome face. He lets out a reverberated sigh.

SHALLOW

You could have at least waited until
AFTER I had my burger.

STRYKER

Listen, I'd been tracking this guy
all over the solar system. He'd
slipped through my fingers twice
already. I wasn't gonna let it happen
a third time.

Burger condiments and cheese drip from Shallow's dome.

SHALLOW

I haven't tasted a burger in over 150
years.

Stryker wipes his face and stands.

STRYKER

Sucks to be you. Anyway, time for me
to get this package back and collect
my bounty.

Shallow drops his face in his food with a THUD.

SHALLOW

So close, yet so far away.

STRYKER

Better luck next, eh Tin Man?

Stryker slaps Shallow on his drum shaped body with a rumbling echo. Shallow lets out a moan. Stryker throws his bounty over his shoulder and heads toward security.

Ryoko calls out over the spaceport intercom.

RYOKO

Shallow Chartreuse to baggage claim.

Shallow Chartreuse to baggage claim.

Shallow sighs again and slumps forward into his food even more.

THE END.