



Episode 2

Written by Amelia Stubberfield

CHARACTERS

ROSA

She/her

17-19. Female. Energetic, driven, bright, eager, and idealistic

FINN

They/them

Late teens, AFAB trans masc, a bit cheeky

Distant eerie melody underscore

We hear a voice (she/her)

This series contains swearing, references to alcohol, smoking and drugs, and contains some listeners may find claustrophobic. For the full binaural experience, please wear headphones.

Fast beat builds, with bassy crashes, as the underscore builds into more of a techno track and then cuts out as we move into...

1.

We hear the same track from the opening now in the scene, in the distance.

We're in the smoking area. We hear voices in the background and the sound of someone lighting up.

The sounds of uneven steps as ROSA enters the smoking area.

ROSA sounds a little low.

ROSA

Hi...

FINN

Oh hey....

ROSA

I'm ROSA

FINN

I'm FINN... how's it going?

ROSA

It's ummm, yeah, fine, you?

FINN

Yeah I'm good, I'm good. Some great sets tonight right?

ROSA

Yeah, listen I just wondered if/

FINN

My mate Ash is doing one in a bit, it's gonna be sick

ROSA

Yeah? Well I'm really into Jumble so I'm loving it...

FINN

You're into what?

ROSA

Jumble....

FINN

Oh wow (*chuckling/ finding her mistake hilarious*)

Well you're gonna love his set then... he likes to mix things up and drop some Jumble Sale tracks you know...

ROSA

Oh great can't wait (*not getting the joke/ realising her mistake*) ...I just wanted to ask... sorry to, I don't wanna um...Have you got a spare joint by any chance?

FINN

Ah right ... yeah sorry, not got any spares... you can buy one though...

ROSA

Yeah ok yeah, cool...

FINN

For a tenner...

ROSA

Ok a ... what? A tenner?

FINN

If you don't want it, no worries, all the more for me...

ROSA

No, no, it's fine... (*rummages in her bag to try and find some money*) ah I don't have any cash, you got Monzo?

FINN

Monzo? *(Laughing)* Listen don't worry about it... this one's on me...

FINN hands over a pre-rolled joint to ROSA and lights it for her. ROSA takes a deep inhale and then starts to cough and choke

FINN

You alright?

ROSA

Yeah I'm fine, I'm fine I just... *(coughing and spluttering)* I just... I think it just went down the wrong pipe... *(more coughing)* or something...

FINN

So... what's your plan tonight then? Who you here with?

ROSA

My best friend dragged me along because she wanted to hook up with some guy and needed a wingman. One of the perils of having a straight best mate I suppose...

FINN

Is anyone even straight anymore? Don't worry it's probably just a phase... It's gonna be a messy one tonight .. last ever rave here.... The cave party to end all parties...

ROSA

Yeah messy sounds about right... let's just hope people don't totally wreck this place in the process...

FINN

Oh my god you sound like one of those 'eco warrior hippies'

ROSA

Oh do I?

FINN

Listen I get it, they're trying to do good and all that, take care of the caves, preserve the environment blah blah blah'

ROSA

Why is that a bad thing...?

FINN

Cos we're here for a good time, not a long time... it's not the end of the world.

ROSA

Except it is. You lot don't think about what you're doing. You don't stop to think about the havok you end up wreaking on the caves' ecosystems, the environment. You just do whatever the fuck you want.

There is a loud rumbling sound underneath them. We hear FINN and ROSA calling out, trying to understand what's happening as the floor collapses, and they shout out as we hear rubble falling.

2.

There is a sudden and total engulfing silence, it is pitch black. The only audible sound is the drip of water in the caves

FINN

Oh shit... shit...shit. It's fine Finn just stay calm, you got this. It's just a dark space which is fine, like totally, totally fine, cos you're not scared of the dark anymore are you? No. Because you're an adult.... It's just a dark unknown cavernous space... which is totally fine.... Because that doesn't phase you does it? Because you are a legend and it's just mind over matter... It's just a dark unknown cavernous space, that is terrifyingly silent so the only things you're left with are your thoughts... Right just breathe. In for 3... 2/

ROSA

/One

FINN jumps out of their skin

FINN

Oh my god... Jesus!

ROSA

No, sadly not...

FINN

Who.. who's there!? How did you get down here?

ROSA

It's Rosa the 'eco warrior' remember? And the same way you did I'm guessing. Are you alright? Are you concussed or something?

ROSA's footsteps as she moves around

FINN

No. Why?

ROSA

Well... you were... talking to yourself...

FINN

No, no, I'm fine, I'm cool, that's just my "vibe"

ROSA

Right your 'vibe'. Don't worry I used to be scared of the dark too...

FINN

Ah thanks

ROSA

When I was 6 ... but not anymore cos I'm a badass

FINN

Yeah the kind of badass that's blatantly never been to a rave before

The sound of footsteps as the two of them move around the space

ROSA

Well I/

FINN

/Orrrr smoked a joint/

ROSA

/Actually that's not/

FINN

/And throws a strop because people are having a good time? But anyway here we are back together again. Must be fate you know

ROSA

Yeah fate OR years of heavy bass and thousands of people causing irreparable damage?

FINN

You are SUCH a buzz kill... you need to chill. And news flash the bulldozers are coming tomorrow to block off the caves forever anyway, so what's the stress?

ROSA

Ok I can't even... *(Takes a big deep breath to calm herself and footsteps as she moves around)* Talking of which we literally don't have time for this. We need to get out of here before any more caves collapse and end up crushing us to death, or we get blocked in here forever....

FINN

Yep fair play, absolutely, good plan

ROSA

Yeah

FINN

Cool

ROSA

So....

FINN

So?

ROSA

Any ideas ?

FINN

About ?

ROSA

How we go about actually doing that ?

FINN

Oh right yeah cool.... Deffo...umm I think we should -

ROSA

-Yeah?

FINN

I saw this thing in a film once...

ROSA

Right

FINN

So... apparently, if you get stuck underground, you can figure out where you are by how the sound bounces around, it's based on echoes. It tells you which direction the tunnels are, that will take you back to the surface.

ROSA

... Right

FINN makes the owl sound 'twit twoo' and waits for an echo back. They do this a few times more. Within this we then hear the mycelium network faintly stirring, like electricity

ROSA

Hang on... what was that?

FINN moves towards a tunnel

FINN

I think we need to go this way, can you hear how it's reverberating? I think we need to take a left up here, come on, move towards my voice...

FINN makes an owl sound again moving as they do

ROSA

No, no, not you, that other sound

FINN makes an owl sound again

ROSA

Shhh....sh one sec will you

We hear the faint mycelium network sound again. ROSA starts to move in the opposite direction to FINN

ROSA

Oh wow... is that what I think it is?

FINN

Rosa? Rosa where are you going?

FINN

Don't go without me!

ROSA

If you're gonna follow me, can you at least do it QUIETLY

Running footsteps

3.

As the scene progresses the sound of the network gets louder and it is more glowing suggesting that they are moving in the right direction and drawing closer to the centre/ fruiting body.

ROSA and FINN are new lifeforms in this otherwise undiscovered cave that the network is reporting through the sound.

ROSA

Ok... I've never actually seen it in real life... so maybe it's just some funky moss or something but....

FINN

What exactly are you doing? We need to get out of here...

The sound of footsteps as they follow the sounds

ROSA

Shhh will you I'm trying to figure something out...

(sings, faint echo) "The Hum and The Glow is way down below..."

What was it grandma used to say at the end of our bedtime stories? "Always follow the glow and the hum that takes you deep within, and leads you to the beating heart of life itself"

The distant sounds of the tune of 'the hum and the glow'

FINN

Seriously have you lost the plot? And you thought I was the one with a concussion....

ROSA

No... it's I think... I think this could be our way out.

ROSA progresses through the tunnels following the glowing moss, as she does it begins to get louder and brighter FINN follows

ROSA

This is so... crazy. My grandma used to tell me about it when I was a kid, but I didn't think it was actually real. We've fallen way further into the cave networks than people normally go. I've not seen anything like it before. I thought they were just made up stories, or at least an exaggeration...

Their footsteps continue as they walk, the sounds of the mycelium coming to life, gentle and faint

FINN

So you're telling me this weird glow in the dark kind of mossy stuff that your grandma told you stories about is our way out of here?

ROSA

Yes

FINN

Woah this is trippy, it's like something out of Star Trek man! Whatever you're on I want some... aaaand, no offence, but I'm gonna split, because I don't know if you've noticed, but you're leading us deeper into the caves?

ROSA

No you cant go I ... I need your help, and anyway it's dangerous for us to be on our own in the cave system... it's so vast.

Twinkly sounds as the mycelium comes to life

FINN

ROSA, what if we follow this stupid moss and it leads us nowhere? We could get trapped under here forever, if the bulldozers beat us to it, and then whoever dies first will get eaten by the other one...

ROSA

I know it must sound strange, but trust me The Hum and The Glow is special, and it's leading us to something amazing...

FINN

What like a million quid?

ROSA

The fruiting body.

FINN

... the what now?

ROSA

The fruiting body! Mushrooms! The ones this particular mycelium network produces are rare.

FINN

Mushrooms? What, like magic mushrooms?

ROSA

No... well I guess they are kind of magical...The potential is massive, we could learn so much from them. It's my last chance to harvest some to take above ground before the developers block off the caves forever. It's now or never. If we can keep following it and find the fruiting body, the hum and the glow will show us a way out of here I'm sure of it

FINN

How rare are they?

ROSA

Very. We don't have any samples at all above ground, they've been buried too deep for so many years that no one could find them.

FINN

Oh so they'd be worth a lot then? To collectors?

ROSA

Two years ago in Denmark they used one to remove boat fuel pollution, and in the Amazon they found one that can break down plastics. But, I'd never be interested in selling them to some millionaire private collector, however much they wanted it. You won't be able to put a price on what they can give us. Their ability to knit together the lives of plants, animals, and the Earth itself, it's ... it's kinda mind blowing, what it teaches us about life...

The low, irregular sound of the mycelium network as their footsteps continue

FINN

So are we like scientific explorers now? Do you think we'll get famous? Ok I'm in.....
The sound it's making, is it kind of likea rumbling... bass?

ROSA

No... well I guess, yeah, kind of

FINN

I was thinking too much raving had finally burst an eardrum. So how come your grandma used to tell you about all this stuff?

ROSA

I've just been around it since I was a kid, it was passed down in my family...

FINN

Aaah right. So you're one of the original dwellers then? Born here?

ROSA

Yep

FINN

That explains it...

ROSA

Explains what?

FINN

Why you're such a mega nerd.... I mean, sorry enthusiast... all the activism and that. You must hate the council then? Selling off this area to developers to build The Orchard? Blocking up the caves?

ROSA

I... yeah, it's.. awful... We protested, wrote letters...

FINN

Yeah

ROSA

But... surprise surprise the council care about profit not people so here we are, we have no choice but to leave... my mum is heartbroken...

A slight pause and the sound of footsteps, dripping in the caves

FINN

I was in a guardianship down the road, an old pub with no hot water, but at least it was cheap. We got evicted last week cos of all this. But I live out a suitcase anyways, I'm never anywhere for very long... So how's this glowing space moss supposed to help us get out of here if it's taking us deeper?

ROSA

The thing about the network is... oh god you're going to think I'm such a weirdo

FINN

Already do, so...

ROSA

This is going to sound *crazy* but you just have to trust it. It's living and breathing, just like us. My parents, grandparents, great grandparents, great great grandparents, they've gained all this knowledge about mycelium networks like this one over the years by tending to the ground, exploring the caves. Passing it down to the next generation so we can carry on the legacy, build on what they gave us.

The sound of flowing water emerges, and the more regular low throbbing beat of the mycelium, it's a bit ominous...

FINN

So why were you at the rave then? If you hate partying so much?

ROSA

I don't hate parties, I hate people disrespecting the caves for "fun".

FINN

Shame you've missed out on some epic queer clubnights we've been having down here...

ROSA

I didn't even realise they were happening...

FINN

Well you know us queers, we're sort of like these mushrooms. We just pop up anywhere and expand, taking over any underground spaces we can get. All fabulous and glowing. You should come on some nights out with me, if we get out of here alive obv...

The sound of water gets nearer

ROSA

Oh shit! I think we're nearly there judging from how loud the network is now... but how are we supposed to...there's no way we can get across to the next cave when the chamber is filled with water like this. There must be a way to bridge the gap... I just need to think. If the distance between here and the next cave is three foot and we're approximately six foot above it, then we need to be at a perpendicular angle in order to/

A splash and the high pitched wiring of the network

Then FINN emerges from the water with a gasp, splashing

ROSA

What the fuck?

FINN

Wow, ungrateful. I just got rid of our problem, why are you fuming?

ROSA

That was/

FINN

/Genius?

ROSA

Deranged. Just diving into the water like that? Are you mad? There could have been anything down there... You could have hit your head and died or/

FINN

Well, I didn't, did I? What actually happened is I dislodged a tonne of rocks that were causing a blockage and voila! No more water. Problem solved! YOLO ROSA, YOLO! Come on!

ROSA (*disgruntled*)

Remind me to NEVER go caving with you

FINN

No danger of that, once we're out of here it's no caving just raving baby!

5.

The mycelium is crackling, humming and throbbing to life irregularly

FINN

Wow these are some SICK beats... Maybe I'll get some sound recordings while we're here... my kind of mushroom sample.... Get it?

ROSA

Umm... yeah sure...

FINN

And the way the mushrooms glow like that... it's like there's legit electricity down here or something! You know what, maybe this was worth nearly drowning for!

Harmonising sounds of the mycelium network

ROSA

Yeah, this is mind blowing. I wish my grandma could be here to see it. So the question is how to harvest them in a way which doesn't upset the ecosystem, we only need a relatively small sample to be able to cultivate them above ground... and we've got to be careful not to damage the root structures when we take it, so here's what I'm thinking... Finn if you can...

The sound of a bag unzipping,

ROSA

FINN? FINN where did you go?

Footsteps of FINN running away, the mycelium crackles and whirrs, ominous low sounds and the sound of spraying/smoke as ROSA coughs

ROSA

Finn what the, you can't just//What the fuck Finn? (*Coughing as she speaks*) Hey, hey where are you going?! You can't just steal a load of mushrooms like that Finn, FINN!! Look what you've done to the network, so much damage! Finn... FINN!

– End –

Eerie melody swells back in

We hear the same voice as the beginning (she/her)

You've been listening to Beneath Our Feet - a Jump Spark and no more superheroes. production funded by Arts Council England. This episode was directed by Tash Hyman and written by Amelia Stubberfield. This episode was developed through a collective writing process between Zia Ahmed, Subika Anwar-Khan, Sam Grabiner, Ellie Kendrick, Tiwa Lade and Amelia Stubberfield - with Janina Matthewson as lead dramaturg and Ella Watts as consultant producer. With sound design on this episode by Munotida Chinyanga and music by Oliver Vibrans.

Starring Jetsun Lama as Finn, and Francesca Amewudah-Rivers as Rosa.

Thank you for listening.