

Bluff City 13: When Justice Is Done Pt. 1

Transcribed by Ril (@kaorukeihi)

[MUSIC *When Justice Is Done* by Jack de Quidt STARTS PLAYING.]

AUSTIN (as Hector): Do you hear that, Bluff City? Listen. Listen close. That is the warmth of the radio wave washing over you on this cool summer night. Your ears, your skin, your car's antennae—all being bathed in the powerful glow of the wave. It connects us. Do you feel it? Do you sense it? Do you hear it? Do you—oh wait, one second, that is... that is actually... that's the sound of a call coming in. This is Hector Hu, who do I have on the line?

JANINE (as the caller): It's Maggie. First time, long time.

AUSTIN (as Hector): Thank you for calling in, Maggie. How can I help you on this fine evening?

JANINE (as Maggie): So, I deal with other people's money all day, and I'm really sick of seeing the people with the least putting up with the most shit while the people with the most seem to get all the slack they want.

AUSTIN (as Hector): That is the truth, that is the truth, Maggie!

JANINE (as Maggie): Is there anything we can actually do about this or are we just stuck with it?

AUSTIN (as Hector): Well, first and foremost, thank you for calling in, Maggie, it is good that you see through them, through their boutique masks and their soft-pedaled lies. It is you who they wrote about in Proverbs. "The rich man is wise in his own eyes but the poor that has understanding searcheth him out." People like you, you see the delusion, you see right through 'em. And it is people like you, people who do the work despite all the odds weighing against you that gives hope, those who submit to the holy path, they say, those who are just in the face of inequity, those are the ones who will find truth, they will find God consciousness. Keep struggling through those thorns, Maggie, we need you, we need you badly. But to your question—Is there anything we can do about those who take, take, take, and will never give back any? That's what they do, isn't it? They take. You hear people call them by other names—the rich, the wealthy, the 1%. But these are all masks they wear, they love masks, that's a thing they love, let me tell you... But what they really are is takers. It's not the haves and havenots. It's the takers... and the taken. And so, Ms. Maggie, here is what you must do if you wish to drive them away and usher in an age of justice. Refuse to be taken! They will tell you your house is crumbling so that they may take you in chains from your home and into theirs. Instead, have faith and courage and your own balance and reject their offer of stability in service. They will take your plate and tell you that you will starve, so that they may feed you on their

poison and lies. Instead, join with your kin and your companions alike and feast on love of camaraderie. They will tell you they have your best interest at heart, but what does the Prophet Amos say they will do? They will take your innocence and sell you for silver. They will sell the needy for a pair of sandals, they trample on the heads of the poor as the dust on the ground and deny justice to the oppressed. What else does Amos say about these takers, what does he say? “Though you so-called rich have built stone mansions, you will not live in them; though you have planted lush vineyards, you will not drink their wine.” Destroy their mansions, Maggie. Take their wine. Be the bringer of justice! And know that others bring it too.

[MUSIC COMES TO AN END.]

AUSTIN: Welcome to Friends at the Table an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I'm your host, Austin Walker, and joining me today... Keith Carberry.

KEITH: Hi, my name's Keith J Carberry. You can find me on twitter @keithjcarberry. You can find the let's plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton.

AUSTIN: Art Martinez-Tebble.

ART: Hey. You can find me on twitter @atebbel. And you can listen to One Song Only featuring Austin and Ali and also still me. And you can find that on twitter @onesongpod.

AUSTIN: Jack de Quidt.

JACK: Hi, you can find me on twitter @notquitereal, and buy and of the music featured on the show at notquitereal.bandcamp.com.

AUSTIN: And Janine Hawkins.

JANINE: Hi! You can find me @bleatingheart on twitter.

AUSTIN: Today we are going to pick up—finally [he laughs] after [JANINE laughs] honestly, way too long—our game of Masks which we did character creation for forever ago, I wanna say in... June maybe?

ART: I think we did it on St Patrick's Day?

AUSTIN: That's it. St Patrick's Day 2016. [Soft laughter.] Before Bluff City even launched, we were... we were on it, you know? Masks is a game by... I don't have the pdf in front of me, because I'm bad at this job sometimes! I had the real book in front of me a moment ago, but that's over on my bed, not where I am... And also does this edition not have... There it is, by

Brendan Conway. Thank you! By Brendan Conway. What I do have in front of me are my Principles, and those are:

To make Bluff City feel like a comic book;

To make the player characters' lives superheroic;

And to play to find out what changes.

And then I wanna go over really quick—the top four things that are true about you as a group.

You've all chose to be here. You aren't killers. You aren't illegal or openly hunted yet. But also you are not beloved. Unless your character is "I'm the one who is beloved", like I think Jack's character is.

Speaking of characters, before we dive in, I'd love to go over your character sheets one more time. Because it has been so long that I wanna make sure we're all on the same page with your characters, your Bonds, like, all of that fun stuff. So who wants to go first? We can do reverse intro order. Janine, I'm picking you. [He laughs a bit.]

JANINE: Crap.

AUSTIN: Which Playbook do you have?

JANINE: My Playbook is THE PROTÉGÉ.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: Um...

AUSTIN: What is your character's name and their superhero name? Both of them, their hero name and their real name.

JANINE: Her real name is Chanti Park. Her hero name is Grouse. Chanti's short for Chanticlair.

AUSTIN: What's their... Give me their look, and their abilities, and... I don't think we have to, actually, we don't have to get into specific... Give me the high level on.... When I say abilities I mean like superpowers you have, not the whole like...

JANINE: Not the whole list. So, she dresses really fashionably, very on-trend, lots of like chokers and velvet... She has sort of slightly looser curled hair. Colorful costume... Her costume is colorful... sort of, it's like brown-black-white but lots of texture and stripes with a fluffy white shoulder/neck thing.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: Her ability stuff is like half-shared with her mentor...

AUSTIN: Who is?..

JANINE: Go... Goldfinch?

AUSTIN: Waxwing. [overlapping] I'm pretty sure she's Waxwing, Goldfinch is the one who... Oh yes.

JANINE: [overlapping] Waxwing, the other one, right! Waxwing. [She laughs a bit.] Right, right, it's been a while. So. Her shared ability is stealth, her own ability is bird telepathy/telekinesis...

AUSTIN: Great phrase!

JANINE: Yeah. Mentor's ability is weapons and gadgets.

ART: [laughing] Moving birds with her mind.

KEITH: Yeah, it is bird telekinesis, not just telekinesis in general?

JANINE: [laughing] It's specifically bird-related telekinesis, yes.

AUSTIN: You know, maybe with some training you can broaden that out... and get some reptiles as well...

JANINE: There's a lot of things... There are a lot of things that are like birds, you know.

AUSTIN: It's true.

JANINE: Like badminton birdies.

AUSTIN: That has the word "bird" right in it.

JANINE: Yeah!

KEITH: Uh-huh.

JANINE: Cat toys.

KEITH: Um...

ART: Is cock not in the name?..

KEITH: Is cock?.. Wait, shuttlecock is the official name, but it is birdie.

JANINE: Whatever.

AUSTIN: Sure.

JANINE: No one wants to say that.

KEITH: A cock is also a bird, though. So.

AUSTIN: A cock is also a bird. Relationships! That's the last thing I want to get from everybody.

JANINE: Um. So I have here: You and The Champ teamed up a few times before the rest of you came together.

AUSTIN: Great, it's Art's character, The Champ.

JANINE: Yep. My mentor is cautious and asked me to keep an eye on Paternoster who is Jack's character.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool. Alright, speaking of Jack, speaking of Paternoster. [He tries different pronunciations.] Paternoster? Paternoster?

JACK: I'd say Paternoster, [JANINE: Hmm.] but⁶ but I don't know if that's an accent thing.

AUSTIN: It's not a word we use here at all, so.

JACK: I don't know if it's a word we use here, [AUSTIN: Oh.] other than to describe like a specific...

KEITH: I'm... also, I'm willing to say "Paternoster".

JACK: [overlapping] Thanks, Keith!

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah. That's fine, even if we wouldn't say it that way.

KEITH: [overlapping] You're welcome. I'll bite that bullet.

JACK: You bite that bullet. [KEITH laughs.] Okay, so I'm playing Paternoster...

AUSTIN: Listen, Google says "Paternoster" here, so, you know.

JACK: Oh, nice.

AUSTIN: That works.

JACK: ...who's an alias of Hilda Quick. They are a white woman with a broad smile, designer clothes, and a stylish costume.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: The kind of reference that I keep coming back to is Emilia Clarke is *Solo*.

AUSTIN: Oh right, yes, the Han Solo movie...

JACK: The Han Solo movie.

AUSTIN: Not the 199-whatever Solo, not the 1997?..

JACK: Not the nineteen ninety whatever.

AUSTIN: 1996!

JACK: I don't think Emilia Clarke is in there.

AUSTIN: Mario Van Peebles, no, not that one?

JACK: Oh God, Mario Van Peebles! Every time I hear that name it's like a gift to my ears!

AUSTIN: Same here.

JACK: Her powers are strange wings/light control. She has wings that are made out of stained glass. I'm looking at my Beliefs... Oh, my...

AUSTIN: Your Bonds, your Relationships.

JACK: My Relationships! Chanti...

AUSTIN: Oh wait, what is the actual Playbook, again?

JACK: Um, the Playbook is THE STAR.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: I'm just sort of like a weird superhero/celebrity-type thing.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: I figure, like Iron Man press conference sort of situation.

AUSTIN: Right, rights-right-right.

JACK: I'm an exchange student, I came here from London. Chanti might wind up being more of a star than me someday. And The Champ would be a great sidekick; I should keep them around.

AUSTIN: Great. As just one more set of things for your character specifically, what is your audience? What's up with your audience?

JACK: So, I have a much wider audience that I would have otherwise.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Like, before it's like a small audience, versus like... Bluff City knows who you are.

AUSTIN: Right. This is not just like a bunch of people on the Internet in Bluff City. It's like, Bluff City knows who you are.

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: Full stop.

JACK: And I have a PR agent to help me with this, her name is Amanda Dialect.

AUSTIN: Great name. Write that down.

JACK: Unfortunately, my audience requires... Amanda Dialect is from Bluff City, I wrote down she's a Bluff City original.

AUSTIN: Okay, great [laughing]. She calls herself that all the time.

JACK: [JACK laughs.] My audience, however, requires constant stimulation, and they require bouts of drama.

AUSTIN: Okay. Alright, cool. Let's go next with the Champ. Art Martinez-Tebbel.

ART: Yes, that is... I've not pulled a Keith, though, and made that the name of the—

AUSTIN: No.

ART: —character...

AUSTIN: What is The Champ's?.. Did we get a real name for The Champ before?

ART: We didn't, I have one now. The Champ is Elena Flores.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: When she was a boxer her nickname was La Flor Letal...

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: And I'm sorry for my poor Spanish pronunciation now and in the future, [AUSTIN laughs.] I'm trying my best. My wife coached me on this and I'm still doing badly. Let's just get through it together.

AUSTIN: God.

ART: She is Hispanic—just going through the look elements on a character sheet—with...

AUSTIN: Yep.

ART: —calloused hands, baggy clothing and a simple costume. The Relationships in it... Oh, THE BULL has a—

AUSTIN: You've a special.. .Yeah.

ART: —special Relationship thing,

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: which is a Love and a Rival. And my Love is Paternoster, and my Rival... I just have "Keith"... Did Keith not have a name last time?

AUSTIN: We knew Franklin Bano was the name of the character, we don't know...

KEITH: Yeah, I have an idea for a hero name, but I'm gonna have to pitch it first.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Alright, so it's still just "Keith". [He laughs.] I guess it could be Franklin, but...

KEITH: You could put in Franklin.

AUSTIN: Yeah, put down Franklin for now...

ART: It's weird to have a codename and not a codename.

AUSTIN: Put down Franklin for now. What is the role you commonly fulfill for your love and rival?

ART: Oh shit!

AUSTIN: Great.

ART: Hold on! Just fill for a second. [He laughs.]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. There are four options, defender, friend, listener or enabler.

ART: That's not what was happening. Uh, I accidentally fullscreened something I didn't intend to...

AUSTIN: Gotcha.

ART: I believe I... Did I pick this last time? I thought I had friend for love and enabler for rival.

AUSTIN: I think you pick one.

ART: Oh, it's one?

AUSTIN: It's "choose a role you commonly fulfill for your love and rival".

ART: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: It's a check.

ART: Then I'm gonna go with defender.

AUSTIN: "When you leap to defend your love or rival in battle, roll + Danger instead of + Savior to defend them." Cool. And you're just like a tough, you're tough, that's your superpower?

JACK: What's your power called?

ART: THE BULL.

JACK: Oh, THE BULL.

ART: The two moves I picked from it were Punch everyone and Thick and thin skinned.

AUSTIN: Perfect. The abilities for THE BULL are like... Most of the abilities in this game are like... There's a checkbox, check off two things that fit for you, and THE BULL's is just like "Someone or something changed you, made you into a perfect weapon: superhumanly tough, incredibly strong, and uniquely skilled at fighting. Decide how each of those abilities manifests." And I think when you pitched it, it was just like... strong, right?

ART: Yeah, it was a mafia experiment to create a perfect boxer gone wrong.

AUSTIN: Right, perfect. [KEITH laughs.] Good.

ART: So like...

AUSTIN: So, beef with the Verandas, then?

ART: Beef with the Verandas, but also like... There's a bit of *Rocky 4* in this,

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: ...like what if we got just a little more... What if Ivan Drago went rogue?

AUSTIN: Love it, great. But rogue in a good way?

ART: Yeah, rogue in a good way, because he was a bad guy.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Rogue like the superhero Rogue.

ART: Yeah, rogue like Rogue from X-men.

[00:15:00]

AUSTIN: Alright. Franklin Bano [bon-oh]. Bano [ban-oh]?

KEITH: Bano [ban-oh].

AUSTIN: Bano.

KEITH: So, here's my... I have a pitch for my hero name, let's get this out of the way first.

AUSTIN: Let's do it.

KEITH: So, my... for no real thematic reason, my character is semi-named after a principal that I had when I was a kid.

AUSTIN: That happens. That's fair. Yeah.

KEITH: And so I thought...

AUSTIN: Not Principal Osborne though, that's a different principal?

KEITH: No, I thought maybe I could name my hero name after the Vice Principal that I had at the same time whose name was Mr Good. [He laughs a bit.]

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Mr Good is a pretty funny...

JANINE: [overlapping] Mr Good is an amazing hero name.

JACK: [overlapping] That's incredible.

AUSTIN: Especially for this character who is... You're playing THE BEACON?

JACK: [laughing] Oh, that's amazing

KEITH: Yes.

AUSTIN: As the Playbook?

KEITH: I'm playing THE BEACON as the guy who wants to be a fucking hero so bad that he doesn't care that it's really unhealthy for him [AUSTIN: Right.] basically.

AUSTIN: You pitched this during character creation which I listened to again today, as someone who's... you're the person, the kid who's like "I'm gonna prove that Super Saiyans are Real"...

KEITH: Yes, [JACK laughs.] I'm the Super Saiyans are Real guy mixed with Samurai Flamenco, that's who I am.

AUSTIN: Right. Perfect. Great.

ART: It's also very like bold that you would call yourself Mr Good as like, a child.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: Like, I wasn't comfortable being called Mr until like... eight months ago. [AUSTIN and JANINE laugh.]

KEITH: Yeah. I'm not, I'm not comfortable being called Mr.

ART: Well, I'm more than 8 months older than you.

AUSTIN: Yeah. You'll hit it. Give it a few more months.

KEITH: Um, yeah.

AUSTIN: So yeah, that's good, that's a good like, when you were 16 or 15, and first started doing this, and were like "And they're gonna call me Mr Good."...

KEITH: Oh, this drawing's at 12, like eight 12...

ART: They call me Mr Glass...

KEITH: Mr Good. You're shorter than me... [AUSTIN laughs.]

AUSTIN: It's a very. it's like a very... what do you call it? My Hero Academia style name. Mr Good feels very much like...

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Mr Good knows All Might, 100%.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Awesome.

KEITH: The same person told them that their first name was a bad pick.

AUSTIN: Right. Can I get...

JACK: [overlapping] What's your surname? Sorry.

AUSTIN: Bano. Bano? [KEITH: Bano.] B-A-N-O.

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: Can I get... What do you look like, and what are your abilities? And then, what are your Relationships?

KEITH: You know, as soon as it occurred to be, I couldn't stop being the Super Saiyans are Real kid.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: So like, him but... not disillusioned but like pushing it, pushing disillusioned.

AUSTIN: Okay. Can you describe who that is for people who have not seen...

KEITH: He's like a, I would say a slight, early teens black kid.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: T-shirt and jeans... Who really believes in something.

AUSTIN: He's just very... Yes. Thin dude...]

KEITH: He's really, truly sincere. What?

AUSTIN: But like... I said, thin dude, kind of nappy hair. I... he reminds me a little bit of Earl from Odd Future. He's just like such an everyday kid which is why his belief in super... in the truth of Super Saiyans is so powerful.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: What are...

KEITH: He made it real for himself.

AUSTIN: So what are your abilities? There are some here that you can check the boxes off, which are they?

KEITH: Yeah, so I went and I did all that, and I can't find it.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: I went to where we were doing this like three weeks ago.

AUSTIN: Might have been longer, but yes.

KEITH: Oh yeah, it was a full month. It was a full month ago.

AUSTIN: Your options are bow and trick arrows, camouflage and stealth, [KEITH: I...], phasing, swords, martial arts, and acrobatics.

KEITH: I am 100% sure for this one that I'm martial arts and acrobatics, so.

AUSTIN: These... So, one more thing, you also need Relationships, and the other big one for you is Drives, which are a special things for THE BEACON which are things that you are trying to pursue, and when you do one of them, you get to mark Potential which is like, get XP, clear a Condition, or take Influence over someone involved, they're kind of like dares in a sense. So. There's a list of those in your Playbook, I need what the four of those are. If you could add those to your Playbook in roll20 that'd be great.

KEITH: Yeah, yeah. Well so, for Relationships, I know that I didn't pick this to begin with, but I do wanna change what I picked,

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: ...anyway. I think that I had The Champ as my original, my the first one for "The Champ is awesome, and I take every chance you get to hang out with them." 'cause I thought that's funny 'cause I'm their rival, but don't like that anymore, that seems annoying.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: I don't wanna be an annoying person in an extra way.

ART: But that's not like they mean rival in this, I think it's important to note.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, the rivalry there... We... I think we ended up talking through it as being a little bit more—and I'm not saying you have to change back—as being more Legolas/Gimli in terms of like friendly rivalry, who can outdo the other one, not like We're gonna fight. And

maybe you would fight eventually, you know, but it doesn't start like, sniping at each other, you know?

ART: Yeah, it's a sort of like... They like go in the book that the love doesn't have to be like a romantic love, and the rival doesn't have to be someone you don't like, it's like...

KEITH: Okay.

ART: And like the idea is of course Jean Grey and Cyclops if the Bull is Wolverine.

AUSTIN: Right. Right-right-right.

KEITH: Okay. Yeah, I don't mind that anymore.

ART: Don't let me talk you out of anything, I'm just like...

AUSTIN: If you'd better ...

KEITH: That actually doesn't seems as annoying—

AUSTIN: [laughing] Okay.

KEITH: —as I was remembering it, so I'm gonna stick with that. And I have to prove myself to... jeez, is that Paternoster, is that what it is?

AUSTIN: It is.

JACK: Yeah, it is.

KEITH: Okay, great. ...before I feel like a real hero. I think that's like... Paternoster's like... I don't think that... I don't think that Franklin Bano is... I think he's excited to be around a famous here, is I think of this.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: Like, you're the real deal.

AUSTIN: You can fly. Like straight up.

KEITH: You have tons of followers on Instagram.

JACK: I have tons of followers on Instagram and I can fly! [JACK laughs.]

AUSTIN: It's true.

JACK: What a combo though.

AUSTIN: So then... I'm gonna give you a second, Keith, to look over drives and pick those, but I am gonna talk one thing over, which is we should go over Influence one more time, because I'm looking at people's Influences and so far I don't... I think maybe Jack has everything there, but I think everyone else is missing something. So, I'm gonna go through these from the top. Janine, can you read from your Playbook's, from THE PROTÉGÉ's Influence thing and make sure whoever you gave it to has it?

JANINE: Uh, I don't think I gave influence to anyone.

AUSTIN: Okay, then...

KEITH: [overlapping] Mine is super quick, it is...

JANINE: I recall this being a thing, sorry, of just like there's a thing that I felt bad about not giving influence to anybody,

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yes! No, you're right, if you chose business...

JANINE: ...but it didn't make sense.

AUSTIN: You chose business instead of playful, so you gave no influence.

JACK: Oh yeah, that was great!

AUSTIN: Um, Paternoster, can you go over yours?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Just to make sure.

JACK: ...So the whole team has Influence over me because I think they're great.

AUSTIN: Great.

JACK: And...

AUSTIN: I think it's the most important one for everyone, for everybody else's Playbooks, so. Everybody has Paternoster Influence, so write that down, because it means that you get +1 to all rolls that target Paternoster. The other one here is everyone should have it over Frank because I'm pretty sure, unless I've misunderstood.

JACK: Franklin.

AUSTIN: Yeah, Franklin... Sorry, over Mr Good, because [JACK laughs] the Influence write-up there "You are so excited to be here. Give Influence over you to three of your

teammates.” So that’s everybody, so everyone should have Influence over Mr Good. And then I don’t know The Champ’s is. What’s up with The Champ? Is it love and rival?

ART: My love and rival should both have Influence over me.

AUSTIN: Alright. So, so that’s... who is that, it’s Paternoster and [ART: Mr Good.] should Good. Mr Good.

ART: Should we be looping... Should Janine be more looped into the system? I feel like...

AUSTIN: No, Influence should... So, if you look at your core moves, like, you can get Influence over someone [ART: Okay.] in a number of ways, but also, uh, I think it reflects the truth of who Grouse is, in a way? If that makes sense?

JANINE: Yeah.

ART: Alright, I was just making sure that we’re not being... jerks.

AUSTIN: Right. And also really quick, Franklin is he/him and everyone else is she/her, is that correct?

ART: That’s correct.

AUSTIN: Okay. Cool. Do you wanna tell me about your Drives, Keith?

KEITH: Sure! Hold on...

AUSTIN: [typing] Put this on the map layer...

KEITH: Okay, so I picked almost the exact same ones that I picked when we originally did them.

AUSTIN: Okay, it’s good. It’s a good sign.

KEITH: Yeah, I have this light change on one or two of them, but my first one is “help a teammate”... Is Janine here?

JANINE: Yes.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I think so.

KEITH: Yeah. "Help a teammate when they most need you." "Take down a threat all on your own." "Stop a fight with calm words," and "reject someone who tells you "you shouldn't be here".

AUSTIN: Can you read those one more time for me?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Sorry.

KEITH: "Help a teammate when they most need you." "Take down a threat all on your own."

AUSTIN: Hmm.

KEITH: "Stop a fight with calm words," and "reject someone who tells you "you shouldn't be here".

AUSTIN: Cool. Awesome. So whenever you do one of those, you will be able to get a benefit. And those benefits are mark potential which is basically get an XP, clear a condition which you can see on your sheets—on the top right hand side there are these conditions for afraid, guilty, insecure and hopeless, and those kinda give you negatives to certain actions—or you can take Influence over someone involved. And then if you mark our all four of those things, you choose four new ones. But you don't get to choose new ones as you complete them, you get to choose new ones after your complete your full set, if that makes sense. I'm also gonna rename your character sheet here to Mr Good. There we go. Alright. I'm also going to just give us this big index cards for our Influence tracking because otherwise it's gonna be a pain to see who has influence on who if that makes sense. That should probably be... Unless, do the sheets do Influence nicely? Yeah, they do. They do. That's fine, we'll just use those. I don't need this, I can just check your sheets. Okay. Now before we start... You know what I'll do, I will put that index card back down, and write how much Team you have on it. This is your Team pool. And then I'm gonna give you 1 Team. Let's see... What's a good Team token?

JANINE: Like a hand? Like two hands shaking?

AUSTIN: Handshake, good. Let's see. [typing]

JACK: [laughing] Two hands shaking...

AUSTIN: I want like a handshake silhouette... or like a... I don't want a business handshake.

JANINE: How can you tell? It's just hands, touching.

ART: What's a business handshake?

AUSTIN: It is like two white dudes.

JANINE: Oh.

JACK: [laughing] Classic handshake.

AUSTIN: This is the real one, but the one I was looking at is this one, which absolutely a business handshake [He laughs.]

JANINE: Oh man.

JACK: Oh yeah, totally.

KEITH: "Good work, team."

AUSTIN: "Handshakes." [laughs.]

JACK: "Handshakes, Mr Good."

[KEITH laughs.]

AUSTIN: Here, I know what to do. I know what to do. I did a search here for the word "superhero"...

JACK: "Team."

ART: I did a search for "handshakes".

AUSTIN: Boom.

JANINE: Nuh-uh!

JACK: No! No!

AUSTIN: [laughing a bit] What, you don't like this?

JACK: It was a bad drawing of a superhero.

AUSTIN: Thank you.

JACK: For the podcast listeners.

AUSTIN: Y'all have a name, right?

JACK: The Notion.

AUSTIN: That's not it, you can't do that one, sorry. [JACK laughs.] Here we go! Boom! That's a Team token. It's like a flower, do you see it?

JANINE: Why is the middle the moon?

KEITH: A flower with irregular seeds.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I don't know what's going on there. We had... We did those for InSpectres, I think...

JANINE: It looks sick.

AUSTIN: I mean, you have a choice, it could be that or it could be this. [He laughs. ART and KEITH laugh.]

KEITH: Yeah, looks great!

JANINE: Great.

AUSTIN: Alright, back to ghost tokens! Alright. Contempt! "At the beginning of the game, the GM adds a Team to the pool." So here is Team. Team is like Gambits in Scum and Villainy.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Alright. I think we are actually, truly ready to begin this game. Does that sound good?

KEITH: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Alright. So.

AUSTIN: There are two major avenues that run down the entire length of Bluff City. One is one block away from the beach and the Boardwalk, and one is two blocks away. And there are other avenues and many, many streets, but those two are the big ones. It's Red Avenue and Black Avenue, named for the colors of a deck of cards. And on Black Avenue, which is the further away one... it's a little more residential, right? Red Avenue is that one important block closer to the casinos, and the Boardwalk, and the beach. And so, all along it are shops, and stores, and retail, and bars and bus stations, and all that. But the one further back, Black Avenue, is a little bit more in line with where people are living all through the city. And obviously there are still shops, and still grocery stores, and bodegas, and you know, VHS rent... not VHS rental stores, I don't know why I said that.

KEITH: Yeah, VHS rentals!

AUSTIN: VHS rental stores, just one,

ART: VHS rental stores!

AUSTIN: ...we'll get there, we'll get to that one VHS rental place still at some point in this game. Maybe in this game, who could say? And it's there that we begin. I think probably in a fairly, in a very residential neighbourhood, it is like... You know, there's a bodega on the corner, it's a lot of apartment buildings, like, three-floor or four-floor tall apartment buildings, some completely stand-alone houses with like, if you're lucky, a tiny yard. And I imagine that y'all are on top of one of these apartment buildings, you're on like the rooftop. And you're all looking down and watching the road. It's around 2 or maybe 3 a.m. at night, and you're here because Grouse got a tip from a source who is also someone who has some powers or seems to be that sort of person. It is...

[00:30:00]

AUSTIN: There is a character who, I would say, as people who are superheros in the city and who grew up in that age of Waxwing and Goldfinch, you know this person as someone who has been on both sides of the law, so to speak. I wouldn't go so far as to say antihero, but someone who... I don't think he's... he's never been arrested, he's never been caught, he's been someone who kind of phases in and out of various heroic lives and causes trouble or gives solutions. But you've never dealt with him before directly until now. And his name is Mister E. Masque. M-A-S-Q-U-E.

ART: Love it.

AUSTIN: Mister - space - E. And he's told you, as a show of good faith, that there will be an armed robbery happening here in the middle of the night, [He laughs a bit.] on a sticky, hot August evening, a little past evening, right? It is like 93 degrees even at night, it is the... You're getting a little bit of the ocean breeze 'cause you're high up, but it's so humid, it's just the fucking worst.

KEITH: Oh, love a hot wind...

AUSTIN: It's the worst!

KEITH: Just the wet hot wind.

AUSTIN: It's the worst. [AUSTIN laughs a bit.] And so far, no one has shown up. What is the mood and how are you all doing? Let's start with... Who was the... Let's start with Paternoster, who—tomorrow morning you have a signing at the Walk—no, I can't do the Walk, the Walk is a real thing from Atlantic City [JACK laughs.]—at the... What's a good name...

JANINE: The Stroll?

AUSTIN: Huh? I need a...

JANINE: The Stroll?

JACK: Run?

AUSTIN: The Stroll, The Run... It's like an outdoor mall, what's a good name for an outdoor mall with boutiques and stuff?

KEITH: The Step.

AUSTIN: The Step, yeah, you've a signing at the Step which is a collection of like boutique purse stores, and like a Nike store, and a Burberry place, you know? Like you're meeting some fans at like 9 a.m., and it is 3 a.m. now, so I'm curious, Paternoster, how are you feeling right now?

JACK: I'm lying on my back on the roof...

AUSTIN: [laughing a bit] On your wings?

JACK: With my wings folded over my face.

[AUSTIN laughs. JANINE also laughs a bit.]

AUSTIN: Great. Let's just get an image of all of you as you do this stakeout. Uh, Grouse, what are you doing?

JANINE: Um, I need to really quickly Google night birds of Jersey... [typing]

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: [overlapping] Oh, Night Birds of Jersey is my favorite Mountain Goats album.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] I've seen them open for...

[All laugh.]

JACK: Same joke, different directions!

AUSTIN: Yeah, definitely.

JANINE: Uh, I need to... umm...

AUSTIN: Uh-huh?

JANINE: None of these... This might actually be a band, is the problem. [She laughs a bit.]

AUSTIN: It is. Night Birds from New Jersey, yeah. 100%.

JANINE: [typing] "Nocturnal birds of Jersey"... These are mostly owls. Okay, well, that's something I already knew. [She laughs.] Yeah, okay—

KEITH: I've heard of owls.

ART: Yeah, he knows about owls, the bird expert over here. [AUSTIN laughs.]

JANINE: There's a lot of different kinds of—short-eared owl, long-eared owl, screech—I think she's, I think the thing Grouse is doing is like probably like... off to one side like... near a bird, probably not even like directly talking at it, but near a bird, doing some bird telepathy to be like "Do you see any shit?", like "Do you see any shit, do you feel any shit?"... She is in reconnaissance mode.

AUSTIN: [overlapping] It's a seagull, [JACK laughs.] and the seagull is like... complaining to you, I think.. The seagull is like...

AUSTIN (as the seagull): Bored! I'm bored! [KEITH laughs.] I'm bored! Bored! I'm bored!

ART: It's a rude fucking seagull.

JANINE: [laughing a bit] I feel like at some point she'd find a better bird to talk to than that one.

AUSTIN (as the seagull): I'm awake.

[KEITH laughs.]

JANINE: [laughing] Okay.

KEITH: Birds have a rich internal life.

[AUSTIN and ART laugh.]

AUSTIN: Mr Good, what are you doing?

KEITH: I'm lookout, I'm doing lookout, I've got binoculars, I am hanging upside down by my legs from the side of the building.

AUSTIN: [with a sigh] Okay.

KEITH: Are we on a building? Are we on a roof?

AUSTIN: [overlapping] You're on a building, you're on a roof, you're on a fourth floor, yeah...

KEITH: I've got my legs like hooked at a right angle, and that's how I'm... lookouting.

AUSTIN: Great.

ART: And that's how you're lookouting.

AUSTIN: And Champ, how about you?

ART: I think just a really... a more relaxed pose, like, I'm picturing a way I've sat in real life, you know... Like leaning back, one leg is like dangling off the edge, one leg is like perched, [AUSTIN laughs a bit.] and like the arm—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: —lazily over the... non... the... up leg? I'm spending a long time describing something like everyone already has in mind. [JACK laughs.]

AUSTIN: Everyone gets it.

ART: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Wait, is your leg dangling off the side of the building, you're saying?

ART: Yeah, one leg off the side.

AUSTIN: [laughing] So we do just get the picture of Mr Good's face, and then next to it is one of your legs, just kind of kicking in the wind. It sounds like... So, here's what happens. It sounds like, uh, I don't know, a truck coming around one of the corners, coming down from... towards the shore. And I think you spot immediately that it is an armored truck, it is an armored van, right? It is a money-moving van. It says on the side of it—I'm looking at the wrong document, I'm like looking at the old Bluff City document going "why is the name of this company not here?" [JACK chuckles.]—It says, um—where did I write this? Here it is.—MoneyWard, which is the name of this armored truck company. And I think immediately you probably all are able to be like "Oh, here we go. That's the shit right there. MoneyWard, someone's gonna rob this money truck." But it sounds like you are probably the most just straight-up *watching* watching, Mr Good, so give me... It sounds like what you were doing was assessing the situation, [KEITH: Hmm.] so roll + Superior. On 10+, ask two. On 7-9, ask one. And take +1 while acting on the answers. What is your Superior?

KEITH: My Superior is... uh, 0.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Hm.

KEITH: Yeah, none.

AUSTIN: Great.

KEITH: Sorry, it does... I wanna, for people listening, it does go negative, so.

AUSTIN: It does, it does.

JACK: Okay.

KEITH: Yeah. So, Superior 0...

AUSTIN: Oh, look at this rolling system!

JACK: Oh wow, it's great!

KEITH: [overlapping] Oh, look at that! I missed, but it does is so I missed in style!

AUSTIN: You did, you a 100% missed. Um. [He laughs.] That's a good-looking system though, I love it. It looks like Comic Sans.

JACK: [laughing] It looks like speech bubbles with Comic Sans. God, that's so good.

AUSTIN: So you missed. I don't... is there just straight-up a help move? Um. I don't think... Well, I guess Influence is that, you're spending Influence to do that. Um, which says "when you have Influence over someone, take +1, [various thinking noises]..."

KEITH: What was I... I was rolling to assess, so I...

AUSTIN: To assess the situation, yeah, I just wanna make sure no one can help you here which could be a thing that happens... No, you can... you can... yeah, you could surrender... No, you only do it to like hurt them,

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: or... basically you spend Influence to get a +1 to target someone

KEITH: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: or to do bad things to them, but I don't see anything that's like

KEITH: That's fine.

AUSTIN: you know, aid whatever. In any case...

KEITH: I just don't get any of these questions.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So the thing is, well, you don't just not only get... I get to make a move as hard as I want because that's how PbtA games work... So, here's the thing that happens. You don't notice it until it's a little too late, you're like watching the truck carefully, and then the next thing you know, it's been lifted off the ground, and slammed into a side of a building. And that makes you feel like... you were paying attention, you were paying super-close attention, why did this fall apart? And so you're gonna take the guilty condition. [KEITH: Ugh.] Because you feel like you let people down here. Um.

KEITH: How do I resolve a condition?

AUSTIN: So, if you take a look at the playbook, oh, not the playbook, the move guide in front of you. "You can always clear a condition by taking a certain action. At the end of any scene in which you take the corresponding action, clear that condition." So for guilty it's "make a sacrifice to absolve your guilt." "You can also clear a condition when someone else comforts or supports you, or when you defend someone." So that is how you clear a condition. The way that condition works—

ART: I'm sorry, where is that listed?

AUSTIN: Straight in front of you, right? Are you not on that right page? You should be.

ART: What? What... Huh...

AUSTIN: On roll20.

KEITH: [overlapping] It's called Clearing conditions, yeah, it's on...

ART: Oh, it's not on the conditions section of my character sheet. I'm sorry.

AUSTIN: No, it's just literally... I put all the moves, all the basic moves and peripheral moves right in front of you. Um. So yeah. So, make a sacrifice to absolve your guilt or have someone comforts or supports you, or you can defend someone, and when you do that you're able to clear a condition. Um. And so, what you see in front of you are maybe... I think you all hear this [laughing a bit] armored truck slam into the side of this building. And, you know, there's car alarms going off now, you can hear... you can see the lights going on in windows, and you see [he laughs], you see two things—classic, I know—one, the reason that the truck flipped over is 'cause someone pushed it over from below, and that something is... seems to be a woman who looks like a shark person. [Some indistinct overlapping sounds.] She has like... Uh-huh, what's up?

KEITH: She looks like...

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: Like a shark person looks or she looks like a shark?

AUSTIN: She looks like a shark... who is a person.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I'm curious, I'm still trying to figure out if anyone has fought this person before. The big thing to know is that she has... It's two things, one, she has kind of gray skin with like... gray with white features, you know what I mean, where her face is kind of like light around the face and then like it turns gray and her hair is kind of silvery, like silver blue I guess I'd say. She has like fins on her arms, she has big, like, sharp teeth, but the thing that is actually, um, cool about her is that she has this tail. And I need to remember... One second. Why did I not write this down? I think I wrote one thing down and then I changed it, and now I'm mad at myself. Um, right. So. Did you know what a threshers shark is?

JANINE and KEITH [in perfect unison]: Yes.

AUSTIN: Okay. So she has a threshers—

ART: What? Everyone knew this? Hold on, I have to look it up. [KEITH laughs] Okay, listen...

JANINE: They have like very long fancy tails.

AUSTIN: [with satisfaction] They do.

KEITH: Yeah, they have incredibly fancy tails.

JACK: [typing] threshers... shark...

JANINE: They're like half tail.

ART: [overlapping] Oh, that's what they are!

JACK: Oh wow.

KEITH: And they have very little surprised-looking faces too.

AUSTIN: Right. And so...

ART: [overlapping] This is the Honda Civic pimped out by the guy in your college dorm of the aquatic world. [JACK and JANINE laugh.]

AUSTIN: [laughing] It is! Do you think you need to put a bigger muffler on it, bro?

KEITH: This thing has a very... This shark has a very loud engine.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Exactly. And so she has one of those coming up from her back, and she... It's like... looks sharp and shiny. And this is Thresher, this is the supervillain Thresher. And I think, you know, the reader of the comic in this panel, you know, she like stands... we'll just get like: the dust clears, and Thresher has kind of like jumped out of the hole in the ground. So that's the first thing that happens. Um. She like immediately is turning her... she like raises the blade of her back fin, her blade. basically, to start cutting into the armored truck. And the second thing that happens is a squad of dudes... um, maybe not all dudes, definitely not all dudes, a squad of like back up—

KEITH: People.

AUSTIN: ...people.... There's another word I'm looking for...

JANINE: Lackeys?

AUSTIN: Lackeys is a better, what's a good...

KEITH: Toadies.

AUSTIN: Better than... Toadies is great. These are all great words. There's another word here, it's fine.

KEITH: Possum Kingdom¹?

AUSTIN: Grunts I said, I think.

ART: Henchmen?

AUSTIN: Henchmen, that's what I was looking for! [JACK laughs quietly.] But that does have "men" in it, let's go with toadies.

ART: I don't know that there is a gender-neutral term...

AUSTIN: HENCHpeople!

KEITH: HENCHperson.

AUSTIN: HENCHperson.

ART: Doesn't henchpeople mean...

KEITH: [overlapping] Hedgepeople, by the way, is a different...

ART: HENCHpeople sounds like it's a Tolkien villain. [AUSTIN and JACK laugh.]

¹ A song by *Toadies*.

AUSTIN: It sure does, Art.

JANINE: Lackey is gender-neutral also.

AUSTIN: What is?

JANINE: Lackeys.

AUSTIN: Lackeys is also... Some...

JACK: Some of these lackeys are toadies.

AUSTIN: It is lackeys, toadies and grunts.

JANINE: What about lapdogs?

AUSTIN: And one or two lapdogs. Some of them...

ART: And they are henchmen.

KEITH: And they are mostly bootlickers.

AUSTIN: They're all bootlickers. And they all also have on masks that are shark masks [JACK laughs.] that are just... It's a shark's head going straight up, like a great white shark looking up, [JACK is laughing again.] it's from Bluff City Aquarium. And then just like... Here... I wanna be clear, they're just sharks, like rubber sharks looking up, and then the face is just open, and so they also have one just like a knit mask under that so that you can't see their faces. And they also have... what they have is submachine guns. [He laughs a bit.] And so they fan out and surround Thresher and are watching for the cops as she moves in to start opening this truck up. What do you do?

ART: Well. I am gonna charge into a fight without hedging my bets.

AUSTIN: Is that?.. What is that?..

JANINE: Uh...

AUSTIN: 'Cause it sounds like you're doing a thing. Well, also tell me what that looks like in a comic.

ART: Yeah, of course. Um. I just wanted to start off because I should probably go first with that.

AUSTIN: Yeah, alright...

JANINE: I also have a... I have a move that affects before we enter a fight that might be good.

AUSTIN: Sure.

ART: Or maybe that should go first.

JANINE: [laughing a bit] I don't know if it's before I enter the fight or before we all enter the fight.

AUSTIN: Well, what's it... what does it say?

JANINE: "When you assess the situation before entering into a fight, you may ask one additional question, even on a miss."

AUSTIN: Oh, that seems like... I think that would be when you... it seems like a thing that you will be doing.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: But what does happen before this starts is a thing over on the left side of our moves list which is... or actually that's not on the left, it's right in the middle. "When you enter battle against a dangerous foe as a team, add two to the Team pool." Though maybe that hasn't happened yet either, maybe only... maybe that fires when—

JACK: When we're all in.

AUSTIN: ...you're all in, yeas. Because I think that this Champ thing is definitely specifically about you charging into a fight without hedging your bets, right?

ART: Yeah. Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: So. "Whenever you charge into a fight without hedging your bets, you can shift your Danger up and any other Label down." Are you doing that?

ART: Yeah. How do I do this?

AUSTIN: You just hit "up" on Danger, and "down" on something else. Put your mouse over and you'll see it.

ART: Yeah, yeah. So, I think this looks like... Just, you know, it starts to happen, and you know, from that like sort of like quasi-reclining position it's like she sits up, puts her hands on the edge of the roof...

[00:45:00]

AUSTIN: Yep.

ART: ...and you see them like kind of glow a little bit. I think that's what it kind of looks like, this... power.

AUSTIN: In the comic, yeah. What color is the glow?

ART: The glow is kinda like a yellowy orange.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: I think it's like an 80s glow. I think it's also a 60s glow, but I'm getting...

AUSTIN: Right. I get you.

ART: Comics colors are cyclical, and the 90s would be like black.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: And just like, pushes off and just jumps down to the street.

AUSTIN: So do we get this great panel of you like, you're there, and the next panel is you're not, and we just get Mr Good's like eyes looking down at you, and like looking over at where you used to be?

ART: Yeah, does Mr Good have one of those like masks, the masks where like the eyes are white and when they go like wide it looks really cool? Or is it like a different mask?

KEITH: Sorry, can you explain what kind of mask is this?

AUSTIN: Like the one on the character sheet, on the actual sheet, like the Playbook.

KEITH: Oh! That kind of mask. I do like that, that is a good-looking mask.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Just like a domino mask, yeah.

ART: Like a domino mask, but like magically no one can see the pupil of your eyes.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Right. Perfect.

ART: And I think that we're like... It's magic, it's a very low-level magic.

KEITH: Yeah, it's a type of really unimpressive magic.

AUSTIN: Cool. Great.

ART: And then the image... and then it's like... Hm. It is at street level or an overhead shot of just like the landing and the tiny little crater that leaves.

AUSTIN: Right. Uh-huh.

ART: And then I'm going to directly engage a threat...

AUSTIN: Wait, did you shift your labels yet?

ART: No, I haven't, so I'm gonna

AUSTIN: You should do that.

ART: put Danger up 1, and I will put Mundane down 1.

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah, that makes sense. You're getting into some shit.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: As a reminder for people playing and people listening, labels are the way you see yourself, and the way you kind of think the world sees you, and the way that those two things kind of combine. People who have Influence over you can kind of try to push you and change that either through action or through speech. And you as a player can shift your labels when... kind of like when challenged, basically, or when someone tries to take advantage of that Influence and stuff like that. So. Alright, so now it sounds like you are directly engaging.

ART: Yeah, with just a wild haymaker toward Thresher. Like, I'm counting on the...

AUSTIN: So, you jump right in, moving past the incoming...

ART: I think I jumped past the layer of lackeys but if you're saying I didn't, I can...

AUSTIN: No, you can do that. Um. I think maybe that is a situation where to do that would be to... No, I think that'd be something that's fictionally important depending on your roll, right? If you successfully directly engage your threat, then yeah, you've jumped over them, but if you don't then... boy, that could go bad, you know?

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: So go ahead and give me a Danger. And that is a 7. "When you directly engage a threat, roll + Danger. On a hit, trade blows. On a 10+, pick two. On a 7-9, pick one. Either resist or avoid their blows, take something from them, create an opportunity for your allies, or impress, surprise, or frighten the opposition."

ART: I am going to create an opportunity for my allies.

AUSTIN: What's that look like?

ART: I think everyone is looking at the lady who just jumped down and started attacking their boss.

AUSTIN: So like... So the thing that ends up happening is you jump over them, they all turn their guns on you, and they start to fire at you but then they have to stop for a second, because they are gonna also shoot Thresher if they do that. But that incoming fire distracts you for a second, and you know, maybe what it is is you've never fought Thresher before, and you think it's gonna be like a hand-to-hand fight and the two panels are definitely the two of you like eyeing each other up, and her taking a fighting stance, and then it's her long fucking silver tail like coming at you from the back and catching you in the shoulder. Because it's so long it comes basically in from off panel, right?

ART: Oh.

AUSTIN: It's the third panel, it just drops straight down as if it was behind you or above you already.

ART: Right.

AUSTIN: So. That means that you are going to take some damage which is not a thing that like... you know what, I actually think it might be a condition here. I don't know if it was a powerful blow. I think it was just a condition. So take... Let's see, um... This game doesn't have like HP in the traditional sense which is supercool.

ART: Is this taking... Am I... Is this taking a powerful blow, are we doing?..

AUSTIN: No, I'm saying it's not taking a powerful blow, I think this is marking a condition. Which is... you're taking those blows, but those blows are not a powerful blow which is a special different type of thing basically, right?

ART: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Um, yeah, yeah-yeah-yeah. Because like, take a powerful blow can make you mark two conditions or take or remove you out of the fight altogether. This is just mark, um, [He sighs.] let's say... I don't think afraid or angry... you're not angry yet, I don't think. You've done the thing you set out to do, so you know what I mean? So.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: Actually, you know what? I guess.

ART: THE BULL gets bonuses for being angry, so.

AUSTIN: I'm actually gonna say mark insecure here.

ART: Alright.

AUSTIN: Right? This is a prize fight in a sense, right? Like, you're going one on one right now with someone who's very powerful, and you realize, as everyone turns their guns on you, that you are alone. You're a team player who's been left alone, you're near your love, you're not near your rival. So.

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: So. You are afraid. Um. Let's go to Grouse. It sounded like you wanted to assess things before everyone jumps in. Or before you jump in.

JANINE: Uh-huh. Yeah.

AUSTIN: What's that look like, and what are you doing?

JANINE: Um, this is probably a... I mean, this is... You know, Grouse has stealth, so I imagine this is... I could do stealthy things.

AUSTIN: Yep.

JANINE: I imagine this is kind of like a... sort of moving around in the shadows kind of like around sort of like a crescent shape, like get a better sort of angle on what's happening.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: But like moving in the shadows to try and... see more.

AUSTIN: Okay. Cool. So go ahead and give me an access the situation, which is roll + Superior. What is your Superior?

JANINE: Uh, 2.

AUSTIN: Okay. It's a pretty good Superior.

JANINE: Yeah. [clicking]

AUSTIN: So, an 8, alright! On a 7-9, ask one. Unless you have a... Do you have a... Wait, you have a special thing that lets you ask...

JANINE: [overlapping] That's my special thing, yes. I get to ask two. Um, which is good. I would like to ask, uh... What here can I use to the group? As a blank there.

AUSTIN: Okay. Sure.

JANINE: And... Well, yeah, we'll do that first.

AUSTIN: I think the thing that would disperse them quickly is, um... Let me think... Um, you could [thinking noises]... There's a couple of things. One, I think you could—I'm gonna give you a few options—you could do anything that feels like it's super dangerous, like dropping powerlines, or opening and directing a fire hydrant at them, you know, in a big wave, stuff like that. But the other big one is just like—they will flee the second the police are here, or are coming, so the second that like sirens sound close by. And so from one perspective you could definitely run to where you can see from your perch, a cop car a couple of blocks away... It's like a parked cop car but maybe you could go there and just turn on that siren. [JANINE laughs a bit.] And you can tell this because they're very jumpy, you maybe even hear them say like...

AUSTIN (in character): We gotta be quick, we don't want the fuzz getting here!

AUSTIN: And there's also the VHS store, you can see the blinking alarm light. So maybe if something broke that alarm it might... It might set them off. Two?

JANINE: Um... That actually kinda answered the other question I was gonna ask, so I should ask a different one.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Okay. That's how it works, that's one you get answers one at a time.

JANINE: It is. Yeah. Um... Who here is most vulnerable to me?

AUSTIN: Um, the toadies. Like...

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: They could be mopped up pretty easily, um, that's really what it comes down to. Uh, plus The Champ. right? [He laughs a bit.] But I don't think that The Champ is necessarily, uh, someone who you're targeting, you know. Alright. So now it sounds like your crew is going to get in all together. "When you enter battle against a dangerous foe as a team, add two to the Team pool." So here is one question. Who is the team's leader?

JACK: Uh... Is it me?

ART: I think it is.

JANINE: I kinda think it is too.

ART: You would have my vote.

JACK: I've been asleep until moments ago.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Good leadership. [JANINE laughs softly.]

JACK: But I'm awake now.

KEITH: Okay, I'm fine with that.

AUSTIN: Okay, so everyone agrees with who the leader is which is good. [JACK laughs.]

ART: But like Mr Good definitely has a vision board at home with like...

AUSTIN: Oh yeah.

ART: "TEAM LEADER" on it.

AUSTIN: Oh, 100000%, right? Okay, so. Entering a battle against a dangerous foe as a team is a moment when the team is about to start fighting, so you're not... you alone couldn't trigger this move, Art. I asked who the team leader is, there's no dissent... I love this line though, "If there's dissent, the GM makes the final call but that's a good sign the team members might mistrust the leader of the team." [JACK laughs.] So, one: you do not... Or do you? Wait, I think you do, actually. It says, "If the leader has Influence over every teammate..."

JACK: I don't have Influence over... I don't think I have Influence over Grouse.

KEITH: No, you have... Everyone has Influence on you.

JANINE: [overlapping] No.

AUSTIN: Oh, you're right.

JACK: I have Influence over The Champ and Mr Good, but not Grouse.

AUSTIN: Okay. "If everyone has the same purpose in the fight, add another Team." Is there any dissent over what your purposes are? What are your purposes?

JACK: [chanting] Stop! The! Crime!

KEITH: Stop Thresher.

ART: Stop Thresher, yeah,

JANINE: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Okay. There is.. so, here is their example from the book which is really good. “Mild variation’s fine, the difference between “Beat the bad guys” and “Beat Vortex” is negligible, but the difference between “Beat Vortex” and “Save my mom” is significant.” Right?

JACK: Hmm.

AUSTIN: But it sounds like everyone is “Beat Thresher” here, or “Beat the bad guy”, “Stop the crime”, that’s all fine. “If any team member mistrusts the leader or the team, remove a Team.” Sounds like no there, right? Everyone trusts Paternoster?

JACK: Thank you.

JANINE: My Mentor doesn’t trust Paternoster, [JACK laughs.] but I don’t think I have feelings right now.

AUSTIN: Okay. You don’t have mistrust feelings, okay. “If your team is ill-prepared or off-balance, remove a Team.” Sounds like you expected a fight here, right? You’re not...

JACK: We could be more ill-prepared, I think.

AUSTIN: Yes, I think that’s true. So. “The leader of the team can mark a condition to avoid removing a Team from the pool.” Which didn’t happen. “Anyone working with the team can spend Team”, so, this is the help system, duh, “Anyone working with the team can spend Team one for one to help a teammate; give them +1 to their roll. Team members can also spend Team to act selfishly. When you act selfishly, say how your actions ignore or insult your teammates, remove one Team from the pool, and shift one Label up and one Label down, your choice. You can use this option after rolling to alter the Label you’re rolling with. Whenever time passes, the GM will empty the Team pool and restore it to one Team.” Alright, so, Paternoster, what are you doing as team leader as things kick off?

JACK: Um, I think just leaping to my feet and unfurling—Is that a word you use for wings?

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure.

JACK: Unfurling?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: —um, unfurling my wings, and I think we get that like classic comic book shot of like a view from the street up to the building

AUSTIN: Hm. Uh-huh.

JACK: ...and like superhero silhouetted, except instead of a silhouette, it's like...

AUSTIN: Your wings are huge, right?

JACK: ...light through the wings. Yeah, they're like massive.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: I don't know, like a big... they're like angel wings, they're...

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: ...or like Victoria's Secret wings, right?

AUSTIN: [laughing] Right.

KEITH: Like huge, like gigantic.

JACK: [overlapping] Well, not like super...

AUSTIN: Angel's or Victoria's Secret wings, the two types, yeah.

JACK: [with a smile in their voice] Right, yeah, exactly. [ART laughs quietly.] I don't see anything controversial here, the two wings. Um. And then I think that like, um, yeah. I think I look over at Mr Good, and say

JACK (as Paternoster): Franklin, you ready to go?

KEITH (as Mr Good): Yeah, yeah, ready! Super ready, let's go!

JACK: And then I think, if you're up for it, Keith, I'd like to like pick you up by the shoulder and like swing you down into the fight. [AUSTIN and JANINE laugh a bit.]

KEITH: Yeah, let's... I'm into it!

AUSTIN: Yes! Um. Cool.

JACK: I think what... I think... Can I segue this straight into an attack?

AUSTIN: Sure! Keep it on, yeah.

JACK: So I think I drop Mr Good down behind a toady, you know, well placed behind a lackey.

KEITH (as Mr Good): Throw me!

JACK: [laughing a bit] Yeah, I think I fling him and then just go like, boots together into the back of another toady.

AUSTIN: Perfect.

JACK: That's the plan at least.

AUSTIN: You don't need to roll for that.

JACK: Oh dang! Why?

AUSTIN: So like, that's... Because they're toadies.

JACK: Oh, because they're toadies!

AUSTIN: That's not what this game is, right? Like directly engage says...

JACK: So we're just whopping toadies left and right!

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, I'm gonna, I'll read this from the book to help make this super clear. So. "Directly engaging a threat is the move for straightforwardly duking it out with something: a monster, a villain, whatever. If you're playing a bit of rope-a-dope, hoping to tire your enemy out, you're not directly engaging, so the move isn't triggered. [Quiet laughter.] If you're up against something or someone that isn't actually all that dangerous to you, they are not a threat, and the move isn't triggered."

JACK: Oh damn, that's so good!

AUSTIN: So I guess maybe actually what this is is an opportunity for a conversation which is: are they a threat to you? Where are you at as superheroes? Is six, seven, or eight people with submachine guns actually a threat to you? Because if it is then we should roll directly engage a threat.

JACK: Um...

AUSTIN: Well, for Wolverine that's not a threat, but for Paternoster and Mr Good that might be a threat still.

JACK: I think of them in the way that like... once you've played enough of the Arkham games—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: ...people with machine guns are a problem, but they're not like a Problem.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: They're more of a problem than just your regular guy, but...

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: They're also just like "Okay, I'll have to think a bit harder about this, but I'm much more concerned about the like... mini-boss," or something.

AUSTIN: So my question here for you is: is this the beginning of the game, where you don't have the ability to like grab their gun with a grapple hook or a web-shot? [JACK laughs.] Or is this?.. Are you deeper in where you're like "oh yes, some mooks with guns, who cares."

[01:00:00]

KEITH: I mean...

AUSTIN: And I mean this for the table, not just for you as individual characters. Keith?

KEITH: Um, I don't think that they're a threat.

AUSTIN: Okay. The rest of the table feels similarly about this? This is really a tone question for the game.

ART: I think it's like one of those... you have to pay attention, but you're not like...

JANINE: Yeah, uh...

AUSTIN: I wanna be clear, they could hurt you, you could fail a roll...

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: ...and take damage or harm, you know?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That did just happen.

KEITH: I'm kind of thinking of... I've been playing a lot of the Spiderman game, and it's sort of like anybody with a gun could hit you and maybe kill you, but the amount of them that you take down before...

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: So...

KEITH: ...before you get hit in a bad way again is like... It's dozens or more.

JANINE: Yeah...

AUSTIN: Janine, what were you gonna say?

JANINE: This way kinda my thinking when I was like “how do we scatter them?”. It’s like they seem like they should be a threat in a group,

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think that’s fair.

JANINE: ...but when they are broken apart in a way where they can’t immediately react to something happening to another one then they shouldn’t be a threat.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: [overlapping] At least that’s my thinking.

AUSTIN: I think that makes sense. So let’s say that right now them as a group IS a threat, but once they are... And you know, here’s the other one. There are certainly a threat to The Champ right now, right? So I think that that is maybe the thing: we should think about this—

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: In a very fluid sense.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Sometimes a group of people can be a threat, and sometimes they can be scattered to the wind. So yes, let’s say that this is directly engaging a threat. Paternoster, it sounds like you are rolling Danger here, or are you... Is this a fastball special? Are you throwing Mr Good at them? Or are you dropping Mr Good off so that HE can directly engage a threat?

JACK: Um... Is there any way I could drop Mr Good off and try and draw fire away from The Champ? As like one move?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally! Yeah, dropping off Mr Good I’m just going to let you do, that’s fine, like, that’s not... It’s not hard for you to fly around [He laughs a bit] and pick people up and drop people off, right? That’s not...

JACK: Sure, sure.

AUSTIN: ...that’s not unleashing your powers to overcome an obstacle or reshape the environment, right? So, but it’s... How are you helping The Champ?

JACK: So, I think it’s like when you’re watching like snowboard halfpipe or skateboarding,

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: ...and you see people come over the lip of the pipe, and when they are in the air they almost seem to move slowly,

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: ...as if they're in the water or something. I think I drop Mr Good off and then like arch upwards in the air, upside down into like a backflip,

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: and the toadies are just like "Oh my God!" and [AUSTIN: Right.] like pull their guns on me instead of the...

AUSTIN: Upwards. Yeah. So "when you defend someone or something from an immediate threat, roll + Savior. For NPC threats: on a hit, you keep them safe and choose one." Um, so, yes, that is an NPC threat, not a PC threat, you are not trying to stop a player character, you're trying to stop NPCs. So. Go ahead and roll your + Savior.

JACK: And I don't get +1 Influence here, because I'm not acting *on* The Champ, or do I get it?

AUSTIN: No, you're defending The Champ, so yes, you do...

JACK: I do get +1.

AUSTIN: ...Get that +1.

JACK: Alright, here we go.

AUSTIN: What is your Savior to begin with?

JACK: Uh, 1.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: With a +1 making it 2.

AUSTIN: Cool.

JACK: [overlapping] I got a 9.

AUSTIN: That is a 9. Does anyone want to spend a Team to help? I guess I should read what the results are here. "On a 7-9, it costs you: expose yourself to danger or escalate the situation." Otherwise I think it's "add a Team to the pool; take Influence over someone you protect..."—wait, why is it broken down like this? One second.

JACK: That's so weird! I don't know what they're saying here.

AUSTIN: Yeah, let me take a look at the actual... let me take a look at the core book breakdown for this... [typing] One second.

KEITH: Um, so I've lost ... is this for the defend move?

AUSTIN: Defend, yeah. Here we go. "When you do this move...", yep-yep-yep, hm... Oh! No? I thought I understood this... "Keeping them safe" means that you prevent the danger you acted against. If you're keeping up an energy shield..." blah-blah-blah, okay, "On a 7-9, you must expose yourself to danger or escalate the situation, your choice. Exposing yourself to danger leaves the danger up to the GM"... Um... I think you are also just getting the ability... I think you're also... "On a hit when defending against an NPC threat, you always get to choose one option from the list." So.

JACK: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: You're opening yourself up to danger, but you can also choose one. "add a Team to the pool; take Influence over someone you protect; or clear a condition".

JACK: I'm gonna add a Team to the pool.

AUSTIN: Alright! So you're up to 3 Team. But you are put under threat immediately, they begin to shoot up at you. Uh, so, I think, I mean, you've to expose yourself to danger unless someone else steps in here to help, some of your wings are gonna get shot through. Which...

JANINE: I can help.

AUSTIN: What's that look like?

JANINE: Uh, I know exactly how...

AUSTIN: How are you continuing this defense streak? [JACK laughs a bit.]

JANINE: I think the thing that... the helping situation here is like that... that really bored seagull.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: I think, you know, as Grouse is still sort of doing her crescent walk around to like, see the angles and stuff, she sees someone who like has a shot... She sees the person who has a shot on...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: ...Paternoster, and tells that seagull, like:

JANINE (as Grouse): Hey, go fucking fly into that guy's back. Or just like into the back of his head or some shit like that. Fuck him up a little bit.

AUSTIN: Great. Alright, so give me a defend, again, + Savior. Do you have Influence over?.. You don't have Influence over... Oh yeah, you do!

JANINE: Yeah, I have Influence over...

AUSTIN: You have Influence over Paternoster, so you get +1 to this roll.

JANINE: Savior, right?

AUSTIN: Yep.

JANINE: Okay... [clicking] ...And then +1...

AUSTIN: Oh, that's a 6!

JANINE: Cool, that's not good.

AUSTIN: Do you want to spend a Team?

JANINE: I... uh...

AUSTIN: I don't think you can spend a Team, right? Someone... anyone working with the team can spend...

JANINE: I had kind of thought that was the thing we were doing.

AUSTIN: What's that?

JANINE: It was like spending a Team to get... to get Paternoster's...

KEITH: No, this is a defend move.

AUSTIN: No, you were doing the move defend.

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: "Anyone on the team can spend a Team out of the pool to give a teammate +1 on a move after the roll."

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: "To do this the spender has to be able to actually help. If you're in a completely different place from your teammate, then you can't spend Team to help unless it makes sense in the fiction (a telepathic connection, maybe)." So, I think in this case it's like, that seagull is just like... The reason this is a 6 right now is that seagull is just too tired to pull this off, and is like flying but like, kind of lackadaisically. It's just like not gonna get there in time, basically.

KEITH: Um. I was gonna spend a Team to help, but would it make more sense for Jack to spend the Team, 'cause, uh, his character is like right there? And also is being helped?

AUSTIN: You're all right there. At this point...

KEITH: Can you... Okay.

AUSTIN: It's the three, it's The Champ, it's Paternoster, and it's Mr Good all kind of in this melee of let's say seven people with these guns plus Thresher. And the armored truck, and there are people inside the armored truck who are currently trying to open the doors and get out.

KEITH: Yeah, I'll spend one then.

AUSTIN: Okay, tell me what that looks like.

KEITH: Um... What is the danger that Grouse is in now?

AUSTIN: So... You know, at this point Paternoster is the one who is in the most danger, it's these six people about to... or seven people aiming like... A halfpipe flip is a cool trick, but it's a little slow. [He's laughing a bit.] And she's about to get lit up here. Proving in fact, that as a unified group they are a threat.

KEITH: Okay, yeah. So I guess I'm just gonna, um... I'm gonna try to disarm them.

AUSTIN: Okay, so yeah. It's the same one who the bird... You like... I think you get the gun long enough for the bird to slam into it. You kind of like tussle with them a little bit,

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: and the bird slams into them, the gund goes flying out of their hands, and so there's one less of them with a gun in hand. But it's still... they're still a threat, right? Like, this is not... That failed first attempt here... I guess it was just the defense actually still hasn't gotten rid of the threat, no one has actually engaged them as a threat yet, so. They are still on the table as a potential threat. Um, I will also say, Janine, you should pick: either add a Team to the pool, take Influence over someone you protect, or clear a condition.

JANINE: Add a Team to the pool.

AUSTIN: Alright, move that one back in. There we go! Alright. [JANINE laughs a bit.] We should... at this point, Mr Good, you and The Champ are the two who are in the mix

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: ...on the ground. Let's start with Mr Good and then wrap back around to The Champ.

KEITH: Okay. So, I've got that section of the toadies sort of...

AUSTIN: They are now tussling with you I think, as we get a couple of panels of Thresher and Champ duking it out.

KEITH: Okay, yeah. I would like to... I just wanna get rid of the toadies, I wanna be done with them.

AUSTIN: Alright, so that sounds like... What are you doing to do that?

KEITH: I would like to get rid of them as a threat, which means I want to engage enough of them to where they're not a threat.

AUSTIN: Right, just what's it looks like on the panel in the comic? What does Mr Good do here?

KEITH: I wanna throw one of them at another one of them.

AUSTIN: Okay. That's like a lot... So, you're like, strong, you're like strong enough to lift a person?

KEITH: I am strong enough to lift a person, I also am a martial artist, and so I guess I'm using their momentum against them, that's the sort of thing I'm doing.

AUSTIN: Fair. Got you. Cool. And it's just gonna... I mean, give me a directly engage a threat roll, right?

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Which is your Danger. What is your Danger?

KEITH: [laughing a bit] I think it's -1.

AUSTIN: Okay, great, good. Yikes.

[clicking]

KEITH: 4.

AUSTIN: Well, that's a 4, which is low. [He laughs a bit.]

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Again. some people can spend... If you wanna spend all of the Team here, you could theoretically... Or can you only spend one Team per..?

KEITH: No, I'll just get hit.

AUSTIN: Okay. Um, so I think the thing that actually happens here is, you like [He laughs a bit]... So you do that throw, you do the kind of like martial arts toss of using their momentum against them, and that knocks two of them out for a second. But a third one just catches you in the chin with like the rifle butt, or like the butt of their gun, and another one just shoots you, and like catches you in the arm. And there's like gunfire happening, and you manage to pull back around the corner of this armored truck, but you're bleeding from the arm immediately.

KEITH: Hm.

AUSTIN: And then we get a panel that moves up and looks up to the... on the side of the armored truck... and they're like... not like holding you, pinning you down, I'm seeing it like Frozen Synapse, so it's like if you move from this corner, they have the fucking aim on you right now. Um. So, you're bleeding and your arm is there, so take the condition... actually it's, I think, take a powerful blow here. So roll + conditions, which is 2d6 + however many conditions you have. Which is 1, I think.

KEITH: Uh, sure.

AUSTIN: Right?

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: 6.

AUSTIN: Alright. On a 6...

KEITH: Lower is better for this.

AUSTIN: So, when you take a powerful blow, low is good. Yes. Lower is good. "On a miss, you stand strong. Mark potential as normal, and say how you weather the blow."

KEITH: What is... How does marking potential work?

AUSTIN: There's just the little four of five dots here... Yeah, you've got it. Boom.

KEITH: I just... Okay.

AUSTIN: That's it. Yep. How do you weather this..?

KEITH: [overlapping] So, how do I...

AUSTIN: Yeah, you've kind of been like hit in the face and shot in the arm.

KEITH: [overlapping] I've been shot a bunch of times, that's how I weather it. Getting shot is like usually not a big deal, I probably have...

AUSTIN: Oh, it's like a panel of, it's a shot of...

KEITH: Oh, you know what I do?

AUSTIN: Yeah, go ahead.

KEITH: I have... my armor is segmented...

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: ...and a section, a part of the armor will become a tourniquet.

AUSTIN: Oh, interesting.

KEITH: Like, I can like turn something like a... Like, I don't think it's motorized, but like I twist, like I turn like a knob, and then like right above the... I was shot in the forearm? Arm arm?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I was thinking bicep, actually. Yeah.

KEITH: Bicep? Okay, yeah, so, there's a thing on my shoulder,

AUSTIN: Like low bicep.

KEITH: ...and I turn it, and like part of the armor sort of cinches tighter on my skin and it stops the bleeding.

AUSTIN: What's your armor like? I hadn't actually pictured you in armor. Which is my own fault.

KEITH: I, um, it's a... I think it's like a classic superhero style, I think it's like... It looks like regular material,

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

KEITH: ...it looks like it's a spandex thing, but it's like strong, it's like a woven...

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: It's like woven carbon fiber whatever

AUSTIN: Right, bullshit.

KEITH: ...superhero shit that is going on these days.

AUSTIN: Cool. Okay. And there's like a knob or like a thread or..?

KEITH: Yeah, I think there's knobs, I think there's like at different points on the segments there's like a small dial that I just switch on.

AUSTIN: Okay, cool. And it tourniquets up.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That's brutal. Um. [He laughs a bit.] It's like... it says a lot about who Mr Good is. Um. Champ. You are on top of this armored car at this point.

ART: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: I think we get like... we get a shot of either you jumping up after Thresher, or her throwing you up there, I'm not sure, but. You're on the top of that, and—you're probably just jumping up, you didn't take a powerful blow, um—and she like takes a fighting stance again, and this time you can see that she's like pulled her tail back a little bit, so can see where it is, as if she's like... There's a little bit of like playful respect giving here, right? She's like "Look, I'll show you my toy", like "here we go, let's have this fight". And then... before that she says like... What are you wearing, Champ? What's your costume look like?

ART: Okay, so. The top of it is like sort of like between a flak jacket and a sleeveless hoodie.

AUSTIN: Okay. Right.

ART: Yeah. And the... Okay, I wanna be a little controversial with the bottom of this costume.

AUSTIN: O... kay.

ART: 'Cause I'm gonna say that it's sort of like Gambit's pants...

AUSTIN: Okay.]

ART: But like you know how his boots are just bonkers?

AUSTIN: His boots ARE bonkers, his boots are like... Are we talking about like classic pink shirt Gambit, right?

ART: Yeah, yeah. 'Cause I want those like... kind of like... you know, the tight pants, but the purple hashes on the side? Love it. Steel boots with big kneecaps? Not here for that.

AUSTIN: [smiling] No, not feeling that as much? [JANINE laughs.]

ART: No, so...

KEITH: Wait, wait, sorry, you cut out for me. What is the kneecaps thing?

[01:15:00]

ART: Hold on, let me just...

AUSTIN: I got you. I can copy and paste this. Um... that's business... here we go. Boom. Gambit.

KEITH: Oh, so it's like...

AUSTIN: So not the big steel knees.

KEITH: He's wearing a suit of armor up to his knees.

AUSTIN: It's very goofy.

ART: Uh-huh. So what if we like... Let's say that's like, on a 1 to 10 that's like an 11 for weird metal boots...

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: What if The Champ's metal boots are more like a 3?

AUSTIN: Okay, sure. They come up to like less than the knee.

ART: Yeah, there's no kneecap at all,

AUSTIN: Okay.

AUSTIN: It's just...

AUSTIN: Great.]

AUSTIN: No kneecap at all.

AUSTIN: Okay. So I think, Thresher, before you can even like get into the next step of the fight... Is your face showing? Do you?.. Is your face visible?

ART: Oh yeah. Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: Like a 100%, right?

ART: Yeah, come find me.

AUSTIN: Okay. [ART laughs.] Um, she's like

AUSTIN (as Thresher): Why are you protecting casino money? Get out of here!

ART: [quietly] It's a great question, honestly. [JANINE laughs. ART also laughs a bit.] Why ARE we protecting casino money?

KEITH: A weirdo told us is why! A weirdo told us that this was gonna happen.

ART: Yeah. Um. I just, [A short laugh.] she's just gonna be

ART (as The Champ): You know what? Shut up! [AUSTIN laughs.] That's why. [JANINE laughs.]

AUSTIN: She says... and she's like, kind of circling you a little bit, and like... She's in like a boxing stance also... Um, not a real boxing stance, you're a boxer, you know what a boxing stance is, you know what I mean? She's like in a "I watched boxing on TV and I've gotten into real fights in my life" thing. So it's like a little... She's kinda teasing you with her stance a little bit.

ART: Sure. Probably just that hands aren't high enough up, you know.

AUSTIN: A 100% that! Yeah, exactly. But they're high enough up for real fight, you know what I mean?

ART: Hm.

AUSTIN: For just like a fight on the street with other people who don't know how to fucking fight. Um, she says

AUSTIN (as Thresher): Tough girl like you, you should be swinging on my side of things.

ART (as The Champ): Nah, I don't do that.

AUSTIN: She is... So she has Influence over you because she is older than you, she's an adult.

ART: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: And she's like a young adult, she's like low twenties, you know what I mean? ...We should actually... What are character ages here? Just so we're all on the same page. How old are...

KEITH: Mr Good is 19.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: Um... Hold on, let me... How old do you have to be to be in the Golden Gloves?

AUSTIN: Good question.

ART: Uh, 16 or older, so let's say 17.

AUSTIN: Okay. Grouse and Paternoster.

JACK: I think I'm also 17.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: I think Grouse is also about 17.

AUSTIN: Okay, so that's all... It's like people going into their senior year, or in, you know, or whatever, and also Mr Good who's at community college which we talked about, right? Or who was at... who know? But just out of high school. She is like 22. Yeah, and she's like

AUSTIN (as Thresher): Little sis, like... You're fighting for the wrong people.

AUSTIN: What she's trying to do is use her Influence over you to tell you who you are and how the world works. And she's kind of trying to say "You're little people, you should be fighting with me." Actually she probably just says.

AUSTIN (as Thresher): You're little people. You should be fighting with me.

AUSTIN: And you can either accept what they say or reject their Influence. "If you accept what they say, the GM will adjust your Labels accordingly; if you want to keep your Labels as they are, you must reject their Influence."

ART: And in what way am I..? What Label?

AUSTIN: I would be lowering your Danger here. And raising your Mundane.

ART: No, I'm going to reject that.

AUSTIN: Okay. "When you reject someone's Influence, roll. On a hit, you successfully hold to yourself and tune them out. On a 10+, choose two. On a 7-9, choose one."

ART: Um, I'm just rolling... just 2d..?

AUSTIN: Just 2d6, I'm pretty sure... Unless you have a special thing that says that. I'll double check though. [typing] "Reject... someone's..." How does it not show up there? [more typing] Is this not...? No, it's reject. Here we go. Here we go. Page 76. "Rejecting someone's Influence is the moment when you realize what someone just said to you and you question whether you should really be listening to them. It's about pulling yourself free of someone else's opinions for better or worse. It requires a flat roll unmodified by any Labels, but if you have Influence over them, you add a +1 bonus to the move." Which you do not, so. 2d6, flat.

ART: Alright. I rolled a 4 last time, so I'm due.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. That's a 10!

KEITH: That is a 10, you were due!

AUSTIN: "On a 10+, choose two. Clear a condition or mark potential by immediately acting to prove them wrong; shift one Label up and one Label down, your choice; cancel their Influence and take +1 forward against them." You get two of those.

ART: I will clear my condition...

AUSTIN: Good call. Not afraid anymore.

ART: And I will cancel her Influence.

AUSTIN: And take +1 forward.

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright. With that +1 forward, what do you do?

ART: I... I think I'm gonna punch real hard. Um, I think this is like... I'm gonna use the fact that, um, I can see that she's not a real boxer.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: And she's trying to like... be in this boxing stance with me 'cause she's trying to like put on this air of knowing better than me...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: So I'm gonna do like that... I'm gonna do a quick feint and then just like a real nasty hook,

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: A real nasty left hook.

AUSTIN: Sounds like directly engaging a threat to me.

ART: Yeah, I was trying to get to... Yeah. Let's directly engage a threat.

JANINE: Does she have a shark head? Like a shark face?

AUSTIN: She has like... I think she has a shark face. She still has human hair.

JANINE: Does she have a shark nose? You're supposed to punch sharks in the nose, so this is actually really appropriate.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: You're not supposed to do that!

JANINE: Oh, you're not?

ART: I've just found this out. Most people try to punch a shark in the nose, and they're putting their hand in the shark's mouth.

JANINE: Yeah, guess that makes sense...

KEITH: You're supposed to punch it's eyes, that's...

ART: You're supposed to go for the eyes and the gills.

JANINE: Or it's gills? Yeah.

AUSTIN: That makes sense. She does...

ART: But I go for the jaw, because big jaw = big punch.

AUSTIN: That's what they say.

KEITH: [overlapping] Thresher sharks also have pretty small mouths.

AUSTIN: Yeah. She just has a big shark face like... that's...

JANINE: [overlapping] Also she's probably not gonna eat you. Like, that's probably not her thing, right?

AUSTIN: She does have big shark teeth

JANINE: But does she eat people?

AUSTIN: Well, you know...A little... She's out here. ...That is an 8. "On a 10+, pick two. On a 7-9, pick one."

ART: These have been very low rolls, I have +3, so getting a 7 and an 8 have been low...

AUSTIN: Yeah, you rolled a 2 and a 3 on this.

ART: Uh... Pick one... I will resist or avoid their blows.

AUSTIN: Okay, but you're hitting... you are... Okay, good. So. You get a good hit in, and I think you see that it crosses her face that she is, um... I think she gets angry when this happens. You just like knock her fucking hard. So, the way HP works for villains is very similar to you which is they have conditions. Um, and she takes the angry conditions here. So you see... the panel is you just like... She completely buys into your feint, you know what I mean? She like...

ART: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: ...You do that little light feint and she like starts to guard that way, and you just come back around with that hook, and it's like BOOM, you know, spit coming out of her shark mouth... We go like full Fight Night, you know, 2006 slow motion. [He laughs a bit.] Um, and she like drops to a knee for a sec, she almost like falls, I think you knock her off the back of the truck... And then you see like her thresher tail stab into the truck, and she like flips back up, and she spits out blood, and her eyes are just like burning red with anger. And she... The way this works is that villains do stuff when they get conditions. Um... I actually think what she does is, uh... She just like stands in front of you, and then like her... One, her blade thing just immediately... instead of being into the side of the truck, goes into the truck's side door and just rips it off, and then picks up one of the guards and lifts them in the air, and just holds them there. And she just like... she's basically threatening this person's life. And she says

AUSTIN (as Thresher): Get out of here. You don't want more people really hurt.

KEITH: Um...

ART: Uhh...

AUSTIN: We can like pause there, and we'll jump back, that's like the cut from that page, turn the page, what do we see? Who else has stuff? Well, Paternoster's getting... was shot at. Like, at this point this group is still a threat, but they've pinned down Mr Good. So, Grouse and Paternoster, let's start there, as this group continues to kinds of... I think they split into two groups of three, and each of them is coming around the two different sides of the armored truck to kind of like catch him in a crossfire. So, Paternoster and Grouse, what are y'all up to?

JANINE: Um, I wanna try and... I have a relatively quick idea of trying to disperse the dudes.

AUSTIN: Sounds good.

JANINE: By... I want to, uh, basically call... telepathically call a mockingbird over to make police siren sounds. [JACK laughs.]

AUSTIN: Great! Good. Um.

ART: This is a fantastic job you're doing, Janine. [JANINE laughs.] I want to publicly recognize this.

AUSTIN: [laughing] What's that look like in the panels? How do you show that?

JANINE: In the panels this is probably one of those things where it's like... There is like a closed eyes, hand on the temple thing, because she has to reach a little farther than the immediate area...

AUSTIN: Right, I was gonna say...

JANINE: ...to like get that mockingbird.

AUSTIN: I don't know where the nearest mockingbird is, probably a little bit further away. It's definite they exists in Jersey, but...

JANINE: Yeah, and I mean, if there's one in the city it probably knows what a police siren sounds like. [She laughs a bit.]

AUSTIN: Totally. You know, I actually like... it's like a panel of you looking down from above and seeing the group of six kind of moving around the armored truck as The Champ and Thresher on the top... and then two groups of three guards coming around as Mr Good cinches his arm, and then yeah... I love the hand on head closeup.

ART: They call it the Aquaman. [JANINE laughs.]

AUSTIN: [in a whisper] Oh my God... What's.. .Is there a visual effect in the comic for when you do this? Is it like weird lines?

JANINE: I imagine it's like those squiggly lines that kind of radiate outward. Like...

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: It's one of those things that like... in reality in person there's no like good... there's no obvious sign of that, there's no obvious difference between doing that and having a headache or whatever. [AUSTIN laughs.] But in the sort of visual art narrative it's probably like weird squiggles or like maybe the background has that like heat effect of like...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: It just gets all like woobly.

AUSTIN: Right, totally.

JANINE: I read a lot of comics. Woobly.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: You know.

ART: Woobly. [He laughs a bit.]

AUSTIN: Let's see. What is this? What do you think this is? I think this is...

JANINE: I think it's unleash your powers, would be my guess, but I'm not sure.

AUSTIN: It's overcoming an obstacle, I guess... I guess... Let me read from that section, because

JANINE: Extend your senses...

AUSTIN: It's a bit of an overarching move. "When you're trying to punch a titanic monster it feels like you're unleashing your powers but that's directly engaging a threat..."

JANINE: Yeah, that's the thing that there's nothing direct about this.

AUSTIN: Um... Yeah. I'd say this is... Let's go ahead and say this is unleashing your powers. I'm a little... I kind of wanna hold that to be big stuff, but this is a big thing, I guess. It's just a little thing because of what the powers are, you know?

JANINE: Yeah...

AUSTIN: Um, so yeah, go ahead. I'm down with it. [JANINE: Okay.] So that's roll + Freak. What is your Freak score?

JANINE: Uh, 0. Let's see this go bad.

AUSTIN: Okay let's roll 2d6. Or do you have...

JANINE: I have nobody...

AUSTIN: You don't have... Oh, you do have Influence over Mr Good, so +1.

JANINE: Oh.

AUSTIN: So, 8.

JANINE: Okay.

AUSTIN: Um, okay, so. When you... "On a 7-9, mark a condition or the GM will tell you how the effect is unstable or temporary." I think just mark a condition. Um... Let me think, what is the... Let's see, what the condition is. Um... So, the police siren... the mockingbird starts making the police siren, you see them begin to scatter, um, but the...

JANINE: I have a suggestion for a condition.

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure, what is your suggestion for the condition?

JANINE: My suggestion would be insecure because she is the only person who hasn't actually revealed herself to this fight, like, she's been hidden this whole time.

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah. I think that that's a good call. I like that a lot. Which is like, yeah, you disperse these people but like... when people who are watching this from the windows say that the crime was busted, you will not have been involved.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So yeah, take insecure, I like it a lot. Cool. The six remaining guards + the on who lost their gun before are like

AUSTIN (as one of the guards): Cheese it! We gotta get out of here! [JANINE and JACK laugh.]

AUSTIN: And quickly hop down into the hole that had been created in the ground from when Thresher like street sharked her way up into place. And, uh, you see that Thresher is like

AUSTIN (as Thresher): Shit!

AUSTIN: But still has this person up in the air. Paternoster, what are you doing now?

JACK: Um, I think I'm going to... If I wanted to make a move to like... um, Thresher's attention is on The Champ right now, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: I think I wanna try and like knock them down, like flatten them.

AUSTIN: Yep. Just like slam into them?

JACK: I think what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna go shooting up into the sky.

AUSTIN: Hm.

JACK: And then just come down like spinning with my wings rolled around me [AUSTIN laughs a bit.] as like colorful sort of meteor coming down.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I love it. Great.

JACK: And I think because I got kind of shot at, there's like colorful glass is coming around me as well...

AUSTIN: Ooh, love it.

JACK: And I think I just wanna like hit Thresher as hard as I can from like 200 feet.

AUSTIN: Okay, that is directly engage a threat absolutely, [JACK laughs quietly.] roll your Danger.

JACK: Okay. Um, can I take a +1 Team on this roll? No, 'cause I don't...

AUSTIN: Someone else does that.

JACK: Oh, I see, someone could help me. Alright, fine. We could do that after I roll?

[01:30:00]

AUSTIN: And you could do that, you could spend it yourself if you're acting selfishly, but it does not seem like that.

JACK: I don't think I am, I'm just... so. Okay. My Danger is -1,

AUSTIN: Alright.

JACK: so get ready with your, you know,

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: Team trigger fingers here.

ART: Yep.

JACK: Um... Oh dear!

[All laugh.]

AUSTIN: [breathless with laughter] That is...

KEITH: It says "Oh dear!" on the thing!

AUSTIN: It does say "Oh dear!"

KEITH: It says "Oh dear!"

AUSTIN: Ooooh my God...

ART: I screenshoted that.

AUSTIN: Fuck...

JACK: I think Hilda says that as well as she falls, I think she sees something as she comes down that makes her realize that impact is gonna be [AUSTIN sighs.] different to how she intended it to be.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I think... I mean, I think it's... Do you play... People here play Street Fighter ever?

JACK: I have.

KEITH: I have played it ever, yeah.

ART: I have too.

AUSTIN: You know how when you first start... You know, when I started playing Street Fighter, what I did a lot was I did a jump kick, was like... I'll do a jump kick, and then I'll land and do a sweep or like a punch or something.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And then I played people who knew how to play Street Fighter you know what happened to me EVERY time was I got a Dragon Punch or a Flash Kick

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: ...or something like that that would knock me the fuck out of the sky. This is one of those. Which is like... yes, you're very good normally, Paternoster, at doing this divebomb, because most people are as tall as people are.

JACK: Hmm.

AUSTIN: Thresher has a giant knife-tail [JACK laughs.] that's much taller than she is and that she seems to be able to use like independently.

JACK: Oh my God.

AUSTIN: The good news is, she... I mean. I think in dropping the police, or, the, the armed guard, the security guard, he gets cut, he like slides down her tail...

JACK: Oh, like her tail.

AUSTIN: ...Not like into it, she's not impaling anybody here, right? But like it does cut him down the chest, and he's like coughing, and he's hurt. But then like she's charging forward at The Champ, and then jumps and just does like a cool tailwhip at you.

JACK: Oh God...

AUSTIN: And uses it the way threshers use it, not as a stabbing thing, but as just this slap, and just catches you in the fucking side, just like HARD side-slams you with it.

JACK: And I just change direction in mid-air.

AUSTIN: Totally! And then comes down like on the other side of The Champ and is now behind The Champ also.

JACK: Oh God...

AUSTIN: She kind of like uses the tail to... she doesn't just hit you with it, she's using it to fling herself up into the air. And like almost do like a dolphin dive over The Champ and behind him. So, you take a powerful blow.

JACK: I sure do.

AUSTIN: Roll + conditions marked. Which you don't have any yet, right?

JACK: Uh, no.

AUSTIN: Just 2d6.

JACK: So I probably just... just hit that button.

AUSTIN: Yep.

ART: Hey!

AUSTIN: And that's an 11. On a 10+, choose one.

ART: Where was that the first time?

AUSTIN: I don't know! [JACK laughs.] You must remove yourself from the situation—

ART: Oh no, it's bad!

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's terrible!

JACK: Oh no...

AUSTIN: —flee, pass out, etc.; you lose control of yourself or your powers in a terrible way; or choose two options from the 7-9 list. Either you lash out verbally: provoke a teammate to foolhardy action or take advantage of your Influence to inflict a condition;

JACK: [laughing] Holy God.

AUSTIN: ...you give ground; your opposition gets an opportunity, or you struggle past the pain; mark two conditions. So you can pick two of the final three or one of those top ones.

JACK: Oh God... Um...

AUSTIN: It's just like... And also the sound effect is just like SLAP, that's what it just says on the panel. [AUSTIN and JACK both laugh a bit]

JACK: Oh dear.

AUSTIN: [laughing] It says that on the roll, it's so good!

JACK: Also what's great is all of the other ones have been like, capitalized and punctuated, and this is just all lowercase in Comic Sans, it's so good.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's so good! It's very good.

JACK: Um, okay, right. I'm just trying to like, parse the sentence "provoke a teammate to foolhardy action or take advantage of your Influence to inflict a condition."

AUSTIN: So that's one of the things that make more sense I think, in a conversational sequence, right?

JACK: I...

AUSTIN: When you have... there's a move that you can do which is "take advantage of your Influence over someone, surrender the Influence you hold over them to choose one to give them -2 on a move they just made (after the roll); inflict a condition on them; or take an additional +1 on a move targeting them (after the roll)." So I guess you could. You could...

JACK: Okay, no. I think what I wanna do is I'm gonna give ground,

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: ...my opposition gets an opportunity.

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: And I'm gonna lash out verbally, provoke a teammate to foolhardy action.

AUSTIN: What are you doing and saying?

JACK: I think what happens is Hilda just sort of like pulls themselves up on the tips of their wings

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: ...like birds of prey do, and just screams at Elena and says

JACK (as Paternoster): Elena, I have a signing tomorrow!

{JANINE laughs.}

AUSTIN: Oh my God! So. You are... what condition are you giving?

JACK: I'm provoking to foolhardy action,

AUSTIN: Oh, foolhardy action, good.

JACK: I think, rather than inflicting a condition. As a sort of like “get us out of here, Elena” in a way that’s like foolhardy.

AUSTIN: Great, good. I actually have a question here. I have to figure out if that’s just a fiction thing of if that means that you’ve successfully done the provoke move which is a different thing.

JACK: Oh my God!

AUSTIN: So. Let’s see...

JACK: I’m sorry, Art.

ART: That’s okay.

AUSTIN: No, this is what loves do, right? That’s... what makes it so interesting...

JACK: Sure.

ART: Gee! I know!

KEITH: I don’t think this is provoke someone, I think it just works, right?

AUSTIN: No-no-no, I’m not saying it roll, I mean do we resolve the effects of provoking a PC? Do you see what I’m saying?

KEITH: Oh, yeah-yeah-yeah.

AUSTIN: So... One second here, um... “Lashing out verbally”... [Pause] “Take a powerful blow”, we got that... I’m gonna say it is, because “when you provoke someone susceptible to your words, say what you’re trying to get them to do”... And in this case it’s like “get this person”, right? [He clears his throat.] And it’s... the way it works, when you’ve successfully provoked a person, a player character, you tell them to do a thing, and if it’s on a 10+, if they do it, add a Team to the pool, and if they don’t do it, they mark a condition.

JACK: [laughing a bit] Oh wow.

AUSTIN: So, there is some stuff there. And I wanna say that using those specific terms to me suggests actually using that move, and I’d like to incentivise this mechanically if possible. So, yeah. And also the other half of this was that you gave ground, your opposition gets an opportunity. After doing that backflip, Thresher uses her tail to like finally cut through the rear doors of the... the...

JACK: Oh, of the...

AUSTIN: armored truck, and rips out like one of the... a couple of the bags of the take from that night, [JACK sighs.] which are just big duffle bags that are now hanging on her tail. [He laughs a bit.] And she actually is—here is the real thing she's doing—is leaving. She like starts running away from y'all and towards the hole in the ground she came out off.

JACK: Oh God.

AUSTIN: So, Champ, you're provoked. What do you do?

ART: I think there's like this desire to like be impressive right now, because of the relationship, of the Bull's heart...

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: So I think I'm gonna unleash my powers.

AUSTIN: Okay. To do what?

ART: Um, I think you get that like... What's like around? It's like there's the truck, is there anything else?

AUSTIN: There's the truck, again, there's some shops nearby, but there's mostly residential stuff, there is, you know, signage, there's, you know, a mailbox... There are like some newspaper stands... like newspaper holders, you know what I mean? Vending machines, the newspaper vending machines...

ART: Yeah.

AUSTIN: There's like a trash can... Um, it's a city street. Like, imagine we're playing Hero Clicks. [He laughs a bit.]

ART: Alright. Okay. I think you get like the glowing effect on her foot, and what she does is she like stomps the ground real hard, and all those little things kind of like... pop up,

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

ART: ...and she like just starts battering them at the fleeing... So, I'm reshaping my environment.

AUSTIN: I think that's directly engage a threat.

ART: You do?

AUSTIN: You're fighting. If you're trying to hit someone that is fighting, that is engaging a threat. If you're trying to punch through a wall, that's unleash your powers, if you're trying to, you know, create a distraction or... even that might be provoke someone, you know what I mean? But...

ART: Sure. Is provoke the right thing?

AUSTIN: I don't know, how do you mean?

ART: Are they susceptible to my words?

AUSTIN: No, they are not.

ART: I mean... what if I'm really good at trash talk? [AUSTIN laughs quietly.]

AUSTIN: They could be down the line is what I'll say.

ART: Alright, well, then I'll do the thing where I chuck a lot of junk at them.

AUSTIN: Okay. So give me a directly engage a threat then. ...Hey, that's an 8! Does anyone wants to help?

ART: That! It's still a really bad roll for +3.

AUSTIN: It's still... another 2+3.

KEITH: A lot of really bad rolls today.

AUSTIN: They're rough out there. Does anyone wanna help with this?

JACK: Can I help?

AUSTIN: Anyone who's nearby who is on the team can spend a Team to help, yes.

JACK: Yeah, I'll spend a Team to help.

AUSTIN: What's that look like? And also, and also, really quick, Champ, you should mark... or I'm gonna add a Team to the pool, that's actually what it is, because you've done the thing that was told... that she told you to do, so. Four Team in the pool.

JACK: And I'll immediately spend that.

AUSTIN: Okay. How are you helping in this attack?

JACK: I am helping in this attack by... She's aiming for this hole...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Uh...

ART: We're all agreeing I should have just picked up the truck, right?

JACK: [laughs a bit] And you're kind of like flinging stuff at her?

ART: Yeah.

JACK: Um...

AUSTIN: Wait, did you do the truck?

ART: No. I didn't do the truck.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay. I was worried, I was like "Wait, what?"

JACK: No, I think what I might try and do is... Yeah, I think we get... the panel is from the side, we can see the stuff kind of being flung in the direction of Thresher, and we get like two panels of Paternoster running in the direction of Thresher,

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: and then like one panel of her in the air sort of flapping around Thresher's head, I guess? Kind of like Grouse tried to make the seagull do?

AUSTIN: [with glee] Uh-huh.

JACK: The seagull and I, we're both tired...

AUSTIN: You both have a signing in the morning... It's a very popular seagull!

JACK: Seagull signing! They've got places to be, seagulls!

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Unless they're eating chips. ...No, I'm going to just like flap around Thresher's head

AUSTIN: Good.

JACK: ...and destabilize her.

AUSTIN: Okay, we need one more to make this a full success. Mr Good, you're on the ground, you're nearby, are you helping here?

KEITH: Yeah, I guess I can help.

AUSTIN: What's that look like?

KEITH: Well... I'm on the other side of the truck I think, so...

AUSTIN: No, you're... In my mind you're still on same side of the truck. She like hopped...

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: So, Champ—I keep almost saying “Grand”, it's so hard to break this habit—Champ is on, was on the rear side of the armored truck...

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: ...and Thresher jumped... did the Dragon Punch with her tail and then like flapped off of that to jump behind The Champ,

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: ...get the money and start running that way. So she literally landed in front of you and sprinted away.

KEITH: Okay, I think I have a very clear picture of what I wanna do, and it's: I'm going to grab and restrain Thresher at the moment when one of The Champ's projectiles connects...

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: ...that's like my chance.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: So I am in pursuit.

AUSTIN: Okay. So you're like chasing... you're like physically chasing after her?

KEITH: I'm physically chasing after her, yeah.

AUSTIN: I think you get... I think we see you grab her tail, but then you realize it's sharp, so you get a little cut on your hand. But you're able to do that full directly engage a threat, so now that has succeeded. So, on a 10+, Champ, uh, pick two: resist or avoid their blows; take something from them; create an opportunity; or impress, surprise, or frighten.

ART: Well, I guess I sort of have to take resist or avoid their blows

AUSTIN: Yeah. it seems to have happened here.

ART: ...since we're in the fiction of running away...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Um... I think it's... I think it's another "create an opportunity". I'm trying to create an opportunity for my allies to put this down.

AUSTIN: Okay, and so I think the thing that happens here then is... the opportunity is immediate and it's for Mr Good, right? Like...

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Mr Good is now in position, has her... It's like... I wanna say maybe you're even able to cut her off, and get between the exit hole and her. And so it's like, one-on-one, here you go. What do you do? She's like

AUSTIN (as Thresher): Get out of the way!

ART (as The Champ): Don't listen to her.

KEITH (as Mr Good): Oh, don't? [He laughs.]

ART (as The Champ): Don't do that.

KEITH: I'm trying to decide if... I don't think this move works here, but I do have a move... But it could, I guess it depends on how much danger I'm in by just standing in between where she wants to go and her.

AUSTIN: What's the move?

KEITH: I have a move Suck it, Domitian, which is "When you stand strong while dramatically under fire, roll + Savior instead of + Danger to directly engage a threat." Which is a better move for me.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah. I'd say it is...

KEITH: I guess it depends on how dangerous the thing that I decide to do is. And the thing that I'm going to do is try to get in close and like fight her hand-to-hand in a way that...

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'll say yes here. I'll say yes. I think it's super dangerous, you're not a superhero, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

KEITH: Like, this will not go well for you if you fuck up. So directly engage using Savior. What is your Savior?

KEITH: 3.

AUSTIN: Wow, 13! Alright, pick two: resist or avoid their blows; take something from them; create an opportunity; or impress, surprise, or frighten.

KEITH: I think I've got to... I'm gonna take the money.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: And I'm going to create another opportunity for my allies.

AUSTIN: So you're not resisting their blow?

KEITH: No.

AUSTIN: Alright, take a powerful blow. Roll + conditions. And we'll just narrate what that looks like then.

KEITH: Okay. ...Oh, I defended someone earlier, right? I did that so I'm not guilty anymore.

AUSTIN: No, you spent a Team token to help someone else's defense roll, you did not roll defense.

[01:45:00]

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Unless I didn't...

KEITH: No, I can see that you're right.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, you still have that condition.

KEITH: So, 2d6 +1.

AUSTIN: 2d6 +1, yeah. [typing] You want this to be low.

KEITH: Yeah, I do. 12!

AUSTIN: That's a 12, that's really high!

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So, on a 10+ you must remove yourself from the situation: flee, pass out, etc.; you lose control of yourself or your powers in a terrible way;

JACK: Wow, this one is rough.

AUSTIN: ...or two options from the 7-9 list: lash out verbally; give ground; struggle past the pain.

KEITH: What do you think “you lose control of yourself” means to someone, to a hero with no powers? [JACK laughs.]

AUSTIN: Um... I mean... I think it means... I think for me...

KEITH: In a terrible way.

AUSTIN: ...it's I think you get really badly hurt.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: I think losing control of yourself given what you've told us about who Mr Good is—

KEITH: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: —that you stay in that fight longer than you should and you get hurt bad. Because the thing that you're good at is staying in combat past when you're supposed to, right?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So I think it's like broken bones, it's bad lacerations, it's not like... and then... You know, for someone like, for Grouse it might be “and then a huge flock of birds slams into a, you know, a window and breaks it, and, you know, alarms start going off, and people are hurt”,

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Or for The Bull it might be... Or for The Champ it might be like, you know, hurting something, destroying a statue or whatever. In this case it's hurting yourself.

KEITH: Yep.

AUSTIN: At least in the current situation.

KEITH: I know what I'm doing.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: So, I got the money.

AUSTIN: Yeah, so I think it's like...

KEITH: I created an opportunity, and now I'm fleeing. I flee.

AUSTIN: What's that fleeing look like?

KEITH: Um...

AUSTIN: So, you're like... grab the money from... from her tail basically.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: She slaps you the way that she slapped Paternoster, and then like you do like a cool hand saw and like "I'm out of here, I've got the money."? [He laughs a bit.]

KEITH: Yeah, yeah, I definitely like, recover like "Oh, you moved me away from you, perfect, I'm gone with it. "

AUSTIN: And then you're like in the alleys... That means that you're out of the scene, I wanna be clear. Like that is not a...

KEITH: Yep.

AUSTIN: You don't get to come back into the scene at this point.

KEITH: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: So. Mr Good has left the scene. [He laughs a bit.] But she is now wide open. And also, because that was a complete hit on her before, she is also afraid. And that means that she is going to... um...

KEITH: So she's now angry AND afraid?

AUSTIN: Yeah. She's already kind of fleeing... Um. No, I think that that's, I think that that's... She... Huh. So. She is going to continue to flee, but she's running in such a way that's like... There's still an opportunity here, because she is not like covering her tracks at all. In fact I think the thing that... one of the opportunities that's revealed is... So, she jumps down into that hole, right? And you see that it turns into a regular manhole cover as she jumps in. And all of the destruction of the ground seems to vanish. And something about her, and her powers are not what they seem to be, is what I will say. Like, she didn't run away by diving headfirst into the ground and sewer-sharking, you know, swimming through concrete. She jumped down a manhole cover, that's a thing you can actually follow her with. So the opportunity is still there, she's not like swimming through concrete in a way that you could

never follow her, she's just running through a sewer system. So, what do the rest of you do at this point?

ART: Ugh. Are we like...

ART (as The Champ): How are we all doing? For running through a sewer right now?

JANINE (as Grouse): I'm fine.

JACK (as Paternoster): I... I... I have a signing tomorrow.

[All laugh.]

JACK (as Paternoster): But! But... you know.

JANINE: Can I propose something that would be less... mmm... I can propose it. So, sewers sometimes have like bigger liddy grate things, and we have an amphibious car.

AUSTIN: You do.

JANINE: Could we just like cruize at her?

JACK: I'm sorry?

JANINE: We have an amphibious car.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you have an amphibious car, you maybe even remember...

JANINE: My boss mom gave us an amphibious car.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Waxwing...

JACK: Ooh... I had gone by that point, so I think that [JANINE laughs quietly.] the sheer majesty of having an amphibious car... had been lost on me.

AUSTIN: That's fair. You know.

JACK: We do have an amphibious car. So we want to just like cut her off at the pass?

AUSTIN: I... This is a now or never, like... you're not gonna get into the car,

JANINE: Hm. Yeah.

AUSTIN: ...try to find out where she...

JACK: Oh, yeah, sure.

AUSTIN: Like, she is going to vanish the way supervillains do at this point, you know what I mean? Like, she's not here to fight you,

JANINE: Sure, yeah.

AUSTIN: She's gonna... that's why she's fleeing.

JACK: Yeah, I mean... This is the thing, right, of like... Yeah, I think we have to go for it, right? Because if there's one thing I know about teenagers, it's that they stay up late... [amused] says the person awake at 3 o'clock in the morning...

AUSTIN: [laughing] Uh-huh.

JACK: And also... I feel like getting the money might not necessarily be enough for these people.

AUSTIN: I do wanna remind you of two specific things... Or one specific thing which is... Two specific things. One. You should be... you're probably hurt kind of, Paternoster, from this hit.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And two, someone is cut down the middle of their chest and is bleeding. And I only bring that up—

JACK: Yep.

AUSTIN: —because you're good characters, as far as I know who...

JACK: No, you're right. Abandoning that would...

AUSTIN: I think it's worth thinking "what does my character care about here?" Because for some of your characters I do think giving chase to Thresher might be the right call. But for others I'm not sure.

JACK: Yeah, no. I don't think this is the... I think this is the case of like knowing when we're kind of beat? We got the money.

AUSTIN: You got the money. You stopped the robbery.

ART: Yeah. And I took defender, so I should probably stay here while my rival's hurt.

AUSTIN: Is that... What's defender do again?

ART: It doesn't do anything, I'm just using what the word says.

AUSTIN: Oh. Okay.

JACK (as Paternoster): Yeah. You're right. Let's let... Look. There'll be another opportunity to take out Thresher. Maybe.

AUSTIN: And also you don't even know where Mr Good is. Mr Good left. [He laughs a bit.] Presumably...

JANINE: Yeah. We're down one, we got hurt people...

AUSTIN: Just, to be fair, I'm not draggin Mr Good for that, I'm just saying.

JACK: No, Mr Good got out with the money, he completed the mission.

KEITH: I did, I got the...

AUSTIN: Yes, totally.

JACK: Um, can I call him?

AUSTIN: Mr Good?

JACK: Yeah. I think... What's your ringtone?

AUSTIN: Good question. Good, great question, honestly.

KEITH: Um... It's like a cheap tune, [singing a tune], [All laugh quietly.] it's like that.

AUSTIN: Do you just have like a flip-phone? Like, what's your situation?

KEITH: No, I just like that one.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: [laughs a bit] Yeah, I gonna call you.

KEITH: [overlapping] They don't make—sorry, Jack—they're not making good ringtones anymore, I don't know if you've noticed.

JACK: No, they don't make good ringtones anymore!

KEITH: Ringtones on phones are all bad now.

JACK: What is my ringtone? I think my ringtone is the def—we can't do this.

AUSTIN: No?

JACK: I think my ringtone is just a phone ringing. [AUSTIN laughs quietly.]

KEITH: Right? They're not good anymore. I'll play mine.

JACK: Oh God.

KEITH: Oh, is this really what it is right now? I just got a new phone, so mine's even worse than usual. [A ringtone plays.]

AUSTIN: Yeah, okay. Great.

JACK: So I call you.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JACK: Are you running, are you..?

KEITH (as Mr Good): Hello?

JACK (as Paternoster): Are you okay? Where are you?

KEITH (as Mr Good): I'm shot, I have the money though.

JACK (as Paternoster): No, where are you? Speak clearly. You keep breaking.

KEITH (as Mr Good): Alley, in... I mean in... alley...

JACK (as Paternoster): No, I can't... it's... where?.. The signal is clear in the city, I swear...

[AUSTIN is laughing quietly.]

KEITH (as Mr Good): I got shot but I'm digging it out with a knife, so...

JACK (as Paternoster): No, don't, no! That's not good! We can help you here, just hang on. Can you hear me? If you can hear me...

AUSTIN: [laughing] Can I just insert a shot, a panel, this one panel that is just... It's a map of the area, and [JACK laughs.] it's one arrow pointing at Paternoster, and the... It's like a, you know, blue and black map of the neighbourhood, one arrow pointing at where Paternoster is, like "Paternoster here". [Jack laughs.] There's a flipped over truck icon, and then just like the alley next door, like right there, like down one alley, then another is where Mr Good is.

KEITH: Yeah. If we hung up the phones we'd be able to like hear each other.

AUSTIN: A 100%

JACK (as Paternoster): No, he... He hung up. Elena, I can't hear him anymore. I think... The signal's really bad, I think he's...

KEITH: I call Paternoster back.

JACK (as Paternoster): Okay, hi! Can you hear me now?

KEITH (as Mr Good): Hello?

JACK (as Paternoster): Oh Jesus, alright, okay. Spread out, we're gonna find you.

[KEITH laughs.]

AUSTIN: Grouse, you can absolutely hear Mr Good say...

JANINE: Yeah, I was just gonna say, can I? I'm like on a roof.

AUSTIN: You're still high up, yes!

JANINE: Yeah, I'm still high up, so it's like... I just walk across this roof, and look down, I see one half of this conversation; I walk across the roof, look down, see the other half of the conversation.

AUSTIN: [laughing] Oh, it's like a family circus comic with the dotted line...

JACK: You just like wave us over, like "he's over here"... [laughing]

AUSTIN: Perfect.

KEITH: I'm sitting on the money and I'm like digging...

AUSTIN: Let's... I think we cut this scene and we come back...

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: ...at base or something, do you know what I mean?

JACK: Yeah-yeah-yeah, just like, bruised but semi-triumphant at having gotten the money...

AUSTIN: And a bag of money on... What do you do with the money? And also do you call an ambulance for this person?

JACK: Yeah, 100%.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Oh, I bet we've got a bunch of burners. And we just leave... we call an ambulance and we just leave a burner like, with the guy.

AUSTIN: That's pretty funny. I kind of like that. Conceptually.

JACK: Yeah, and there's just a phone ringing next to this man.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Just some Android phones, some just like... Maybe that's your flip-phone, actually.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah, it's like a...

AUSTIN: God.

JACK:...phone that you could pick up at like a... \$20.

KEITH: CVS will sell you a flip-phone.

JACK: Yeah, exactly.

KEITH: Can we buy them in bulk?

AUSTIN: In fact you don't even need the data, if you're just calling the police, or like the ambulance, that's free, you don't even need any minutes...

JACK: Oh yeah, you don't need a card or anything,

JANINE: Hm.

JACK: Right?

AUSTIN: No.

JACK: It just goes.

AUSTIN: I think maybe Waxwing just gives you... Like, just showed up one day to your base...

JACK: With like one hundred...

AUSTIN: with like a thousand flip-phones. [KEITH and JANINE laugh.] You know? She's rich, so...

JACK: They cost total \$40.

AUSTIN: Right. And as a reminder, your home base is the basement of an amuse...

JACK: An arcade.

AUSTIN: An arcade, on a rebuilt amusement, like, pier. Where you'd beat the Eel King. And the cult of the Eel King. A couple of... you know, see Bluff City Masks, issue 1, you know? [JACK laughs.] So yeah, you're all back there... Unless, actually, really quick, maybe I should actually wait. Do you wanna investigate the crime scene at all, is there anything else you wanna do after those people are taken care of and safe? After she gets away?

KEITH: Am I allowed to participate in this?

AUSTIN: Yeah, this is a new scene.

JACK: Can I take a look at the manhole cover?

AUSTIN: Totally. It's a manhole cover. Um...

JACK: There's nothing weird about it at all?

AUSTIN: There was... I... you know, if there is, maybe you should... Let me see if the assess questions really make sense, or if there's stuff that I should just... Um... The assess questions don't really make sense here, I think I'm gonna just... There's a big dent in the bottom of it, it's clear that she, like, punched—and maybe there's a hole in it even—she used her tail to punch up through that manhole cover and flip the car.

JACK: Hm. Okay.

AUSTIN: Um, she was not emerging as if Jaws from—

JACK: [laughing] From a sewer.

AUSTIN: ...a sewer, no. So. That's weird. But also that tail is clearly real. That part of it is clearly real.

KEITH: Well, the toadies went down that same hole, so it wasn't like a magic hole to begin with, right?

AUSTIN: No, it was just a hole in the ground that turned out just to be a manhole cover that went down into the sewer system. Um. I'll say... there really isn't anything here that's like... look for clues, right? So I think I'm just gonna give you some stuff here which is... I'll give you one thing which is... You like go back down—maybe it's the next day, maybe it's that

night, I don't know—I guess, though, here's my question. Who is the one who ends up going into the sewers to try to do some investigation if anyone?

KEITH: I'll do it, I'll go in the sewers.

AUSTIN: That same night, or is it a different night?

KEITH: Well, I don't have any signings or anything so...

AUSTIN: [laughing quietly] Oh my God. Okay. Um, anybody else going with, after the money... And also, do you return the money or do you keep the money?

KEITH: It's casino money, right? How much do we get to keep? What's our cut?

AUSTIN: Maybe this is a conversation we should actually have. Maybe this is a conversation at base.

JACK (as Paternoster): I mean, it's casino money, right?

JANINE: It feels so early in this game for us to be stealing money we're supposed to protect.

JACK (as Paternoster): We don't need to steal all of it.

ART (as The Champ) This feels... this feels anti...

JANINE: They're gonna know, that's not...

KEITH (as Mr Good): All I said was do we get paid for being heroes? Who do we ask— who do we ask [JANINE laughs a bit.] how much of this is ours?

ART (as The Champ): No, we don't get paid...

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Me, and it's none.

AUSTIN: And Waxwing comes into your base.

JACK (as Paternoster): Okay, right, we were dealing in hypotheticals...

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Hypotheticals are dangerous.

KEITH (as Mr Good): I was dealing in theticals, hypertheticals. Because I have to go to the doctor. [JACK laughs.]

JACK: [laughing] "I have to go to the doctor" is a fucking incredible superhero catchphrase.

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Send me... send me your doctor bill. We don't get to make calls like that. We don't get to skim any off the top. We don't get to take a little for ourselves. All we do is give. That's what it means to be a hero in Bluff City. Because let me tell you, everybody else out there is already taking enough from these people.

KEITH (as Mr Good): From the casinos?

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): It's not the casino. It's the drivers, the dealers, it's... who gets the blame if that money goes missing? It's not the Verandas. One night? Not even the whole take, one truck? They won't even miss it. But they have pride, and so someone will miss something. If it's the right Veranda, maybe all they lose is their job. If it's the wrong Veranda? A hand... Something worse.

KEITH (as Mr Good): Who is Veranda?

[JANINE sighs.]

[02:00:00]

AUSTIN: Is that an in character question? Or an out of character question?

KEITH: Let's call it both.

AUSTIN: Okay. [KEITH laughs.] I think... I suspect Franklin Bano knows the Veranda crime family—

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: —which runs The Menagerie...

KEITH: Oh! Yeah, okay.

AUSTIN: And is the active mafia family in the city.

KEITH: I was thinking it was some word for a casino that I didn't know.

AUSTIN: No, no, no.

JANINE: Or a porch-based villain. [AUSTIN laughs.]

JACK (as Paternoster): They cut someone's hand off?

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): They've been known to... cut all sorts of things.

JACK (as Paternoster): Oh Jesus, that's horrible!

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Yeah, they are the mafia!

KEITH (as Mr Good): Oh wow, they're the mafia? That's horrible!

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Oh my God...

AUSTIN: I think she walks over and picks up two of the duffle bags. And she says

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Bring these upstairs, I'll go deliver them. [Pause, sigh.]
Grouse, bring these upstairs. I'll go deliver them.

JANINE (as Grouse): Yeah, I got it.

AUSTIN: She like gives you a look with that tone... [KEITH and JANINE laugh.] Um.

KEITH (as Mr Good): Do you have thread?

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Excuse me?

KEITH (as Mr Good): Do you have thread?

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Yeah... the...

AUSTIN: And she points to a... she points to a drawer next to like a supercomputer. [KEITH laughs.]

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Third drawer on the left.

KEITH (as Mr Good): Cool.

AUSTIN: Um... And I think, Grouse, when you're upstairs with her, she puts the bags down on like a table, and then like hits a button on her wristwatch, and a little bird drone flies over... or a few of them fly over... and pick up these bags, and then like begin to fly up through a window in the roof to like take them back to the armored car or whatever. Um... and she's like

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): How'd it go tonight?

JANINE (as Grouse): Uh, you know... I'd call it mixed results.

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Good mixed? Or bad mixed?

JANINE (as Grouse): Well, you know how it is when you get your way in one thing, and don't quite get your way in another.

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): So what did you miss? Let's start there.

JANINE (as Grouse): The...

JANINE: I don't wanna say "perp", "perp" seems... doesn't seem like a Grouse-y word. ...Maybe it does. Maybe... Does Waxwing say "perp"?

AUSTIN: Waxwing doesn't say... Uh, Waxwing... Hmmm...

KEITH: I think a perp is a toady. But I don't think a supervillain can be a perp.

ART: Oh, but perp is a... Hm.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: I mean, technically it's anyone who perpetrates, but...

AUSTIN: I don't think Waxwing says perp. I don't think Waxwing says perp, no.

JANINE: What would Waxwing say then?

ART: Very copyy.

AUSTIN: Waxwing would say... who are you referring to?

JANINE: Thresher.

AUSTIN: Thresher specifically. Um... I think she would say... not target... not tango... Quarry, probably.

JANINE: Ew.

KEITH: Bogey.

AUSTIN: I don't think she's say bogey. But I do think she'd say quarry. Like... you know.

KEITH: Villain. Or just villain.

AUSTIN: Villain she would say. Or like...

JANINE: I think in this case... I don't like any of those words, I think Grouse would probably just say like "their leader". Or "the leader".

AUSTIN: Sure. Yeah.

KEITH: The shark.

JANINE (as Grouse): Yeah. That's you know... and that's the one you probably wanna capture more than the henchmen... generally.

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Who was it?

JANINE: Did she actually like announce her name?

AUSTIN: I guess she may not have, but you have a move for this.

JANINE: I do. Uh...

AUSTIN: Which in retrospect you should've rolled at the beginning of that fight.

JANINE: I rolled a different move at the beginning of that fight.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I know.

JANINE: That was also good.

AUSTIN: It was also good, I'm just saying in general, it's also a move that you could leverage here.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So actually I kind of like that here, which is like "Who was it?" And you go "Maybe that's Been reading the files." It's like Oh, right.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Do you wanna roll that?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It says "You've learned about the superhuman world through your mentor's resources. When you first encounter an important superpowered phenomenon (your call), roll + Superior." Your Superior is 2 right now. On a hit, which you got, you got a...

JANINE: I haven't rolled yet.

AUSTIN: Oh, that wasn't your 12 just now?

JANINE That's a wrong one.

AUSTIN: Okay. "On a hit, tell the team one important detail you've learned from your studies. The GM will tell you what, if anything, seems different from what you remember. On a 10+, ask the GM a follow-up question; they will answer it honestly. On a miss, the situation is well

outside your base of knowledge; the GM will tell you why.” So, go ahead and give me your roll.

JANINE: That’s 12 anyway.

AUSTIN: That is a 12 anyway.

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So. On a hit I’ll leave you what you already know for sure and... which will confirm something. That was Thresher, who is a recently empowered supervillain (?). Does lots of smash-and-grabs, hits casinos, hits banks. Tends to hit people who have money, has robbed celebrities while they were in town, once robbed the prize pool to a prize fight, the night that the fight happened while the fight was happening. And the thing that... recently empowered by the kind of the meteor shatter that we described during character creation, where the Eel King was destroyed and the meteor went up in the sky and broke into like a hundred pieces... She’s someone who got one of those pieces. And she’s like in the database of people who have gotten those pieces. You know that her powers are... That she has that cool tail and some like shark attributes, but she’s also an illusionist. She has like weird misdirection powers and illusionary stuff. She can make things look different than what they are. She’s like a con artist in a sense. So that is what you know about her. And you can share those details. ...I think you might even be able to invent a detail here? Like, the way this is written is “tell the team one important detail you’ve learned from your studies.” And you can also ask me a follow-up question.

JANINE: Uh... Yeah. Okay, the description to this move is written weird. Um.. A follow-up question... Uh... Do we know anything about who she was before?

AUSTIN: You don’t know. She’s like... despite being this like thief, Waxwing has not ID’d her yet. So that is a thing you still have to figure out.

JANINE: I guess if she’s an illusionist she can totally hide all that stuff like... in daytime.

AUSTIN: That’s a big thing. Yeah. Do you wanna add anything here? Because the way, again, Been reading the files works, is that you can tell the team the most important detail you remember, but you have a responsibility to stick to the fiction of whatever has already been established in the world and about that character.

JANINE: Uh... I don’t know, it feels weird like inventing a thing ‘cause I don’t know what like fits here. It feels like we kind of already have pieces,

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: ...so I’m not really sure what to add there.

AUSTIN: If you think of something, let me know. Like it's totally your... that is part of the job for you is to be willing to take that characterization leap, or that... Does she have another ability we don't know about that she didn't use? Does she have a... Was there a previous specific crime that like got her added to the database to begin with? Did she beat Waxwing one? You know, stuff like that is all—

JANINE: Hmm...

AUSTIN: ...stuff that is in your wheelhouse, or under your command a little bit. But the thing that happens here is... So you say it was Thresher?

JANINE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And I think she can tell by the way you're looking, that maybe you didn't do that like... you didn't share that information at the time, you didn't do that move. Right? You didn't go like "Oh, here's who she is and here's what she can do!"

JANINE: Uh-huh.

AUSTIN: And she's like

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): [sighs]

AUSTIN: She knows your name, right? She know you as Chanti?

JANINE: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Chanti, not... it's SH-sound?

JANINE: Yes, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): Chanti... I know you're not the leader of that team... But you know things that those kids don't. You have a responsibility to be on the ball, and to share that information... to pull it out as soon as possible, and let them know what they're getting into, because they're gonna charge... You know, Elena is gonna charge...

AUSTIN: I guess, I don't know if she knows who Elena is.

AUSTIN (as Waxwing): The Champ is gonna charge headfirst into anything, especially when Paternoster and Mr Good are around. You're a... a special person. That means something. Alright?

AUSTIN: And she is trying to shift your Labels. She is trying to make your Superior higher, I think. Um... Yeah, she's trying to raise your Superior and reduce your Mundane.

JANINE: So is that a thing of like accept or reject?..

AUSTIN: Yeah, do you accept or reject?

JANINE: Um... I think that's in line with like... stuff that Chanti would want to hear right now, or would...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JANINE: So I think she's just accept.

AUSTIN: Okay. Cool. So shift up your Superior and shift down your Mundane. Your Superior is now 3 and your Mundane -1. Great. Um. Cool. Alright, let's do other business there... And let's end on maybe one last little bit here. Um... which is looking through the sewers. Maybe it is the next... Maybe it's later that night, and in which case it's like... Mr Good, are you just like "I'm gonna go back out"?

KEITH: Yeah. I gonna go tonight.

AUSTIN: You just literally just stitched up this bullet wound?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Does anyone have anything to say to Mr Good as he's doing this?

JANINE: Did he already cut the bullet out? Before we...

KEITH: Yeah, I cut it out in the alley, I already got that out in an alley.

JANINE: Okay... If he hadn't done it, I was gonna suggest like you know, there are a lot of... There's a lot of like... Water birds that have really long fine beaks,

AUSTIN: Uh-huh.

JANINE: I don't know, we could have done something precise there, but if you went ahead and did that, that's fine.

AUSTIN: [laughing] That'd be really weird.

KEITH: To get... I would... I have a lot of practice, but I also am up for... If it comes to that, I would let a bird stitch me up, yeah.

JANINE: No, it would just get it out, they don't... Birds can't sew.

KEITH: Oh, not to help stitch, just to get it out!.. [All laugh.] Okay, I'll do that too,

JANINE: Some birds weave, but birds can't sew.

KEITH: That's fair.

AUSTIN: Not with that attitude. [KEITH laughs.] Alright, so no one stops Mr Good from getting back out, no one joins? Okay. So. We just get this shot in the sewer, we get the panel in the sewer, of you kind of like tracing Thresher's steps, and you find... You start to find like the shark masks from her crew, thrown away... and like... some of them are in the water, and some of them are just tossed into a corner, there's some cardboard boxes... You know, I'm kinda picturing one of those sewers that have like walkways and then also like a stream that's gross... You're not like in the stream, you're just up on a little walkway, um... And you find where... You find their staging area, basically, which is like a little alcove with like a furnace or something in it. And inside, you know, it's a stash of some of their equipment, and it's also like their changing area, and near a coat rack you find a business card. Um, it's not a business card, actually, it's like a... It's the shape of a business card, and you go to pick it up, and go like "oh hell yeah, it's gonna have like a name on it", but it doesn't. It's actually like a hard cardboard coupon for \$2 off at Royce's Rollcarts which is... Rollcarts are like carts that you can get in and have someone push you around on the Boardwalk. And so you get a \$2 off coupon at Royce's Rollcarts, and underneath is kind of like... a sketch of one of these rollcarts, it says "If you're "rolling" it's "gotta be" Royce." And "gotta be" is in quotation marks, the whole thing is in quotation marks, [KEITH laughs.] and then also "gotta be" is in quotation marks... [He laughs.]

KEITH: In another quotation... Okay.

AUSTIN: And also "rolling" is in quotation marks. So, that is your clue for who might be involved in this. Um. I think last couple of panels in this comic is... So we get that. And then we get a panel of the... Of Thresher talking to a figure. The figure is silhouetted, right? We just get Thresher, and she's like angry pacing back and forth, and she like punches a wall, and she's like...

AUSTIN (as Thresher): I can't!.. You know I need this money! Those fucking kids... There's gotta be another score, there's gotta be something big.

AUSTIN: And then the final panel like is the reverse shot, and it reveals that she's talking to Mr E. Masque. And he says

AUSTIN (as Mr E. Masque): I think I have something in mind.

[MUSIC *When Justice Is Done* by Jack de Quidt PLAYS ALL THE WAY THROUGH.]