

## Bluff City 33: To Be Young Near the Shore Pt. 02

Transcriber: robotchangeling

**Austin:** The sound of static pervades the air from outside your clubhouse. It's as if the world around you is...not flickering, not turning on and off, but is kind of wavering. And on top of that it's an overcast wintery day, and for at least a second it feels like the sky has taken on the character of static.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Guys, the sky! The sky is like, goofed up.

[music begins: [\*To Be Young Near the Shore\*](#) by Jack de Quidt]

**Austin:** You can tell that the saxophone is coming from beyond the old creepy boathouse. And as you get closer, that effect, that static seems to halt as you get closer to it.

**Jack (as Frankie):** I'm not going in there. I'm gonna get...if I go in there, I'm gonna get killed or something.

**Keith (as Nolan):** That'd be scary.

**Jack (as Frankie):** But one of you should.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Which one?

**Dre (as Ronny):** I'll go. I'll go!

**Jack (as Frankie):** Dang, that was quick. You just agreed.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Yeah, that was quick.

**Jack (as Frankie):** [yelling] Get out of there! Go, go, go! Someone's coming! Everybody roll out! I warned you all! [Keith laughs] I told you we'd all get murdered!

**Sylvia (as CC):** Oh man, I'm too young to get chainsaw massacred. I'm outta here.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Everybody go!

**Austin:** You walk far away from the edge of the creepy boathouse, you chart a path for your friends, and so yeah, you're able to get to that grove. As you get closer and closer, the sound of the saxophone comes to a stop, and it's looking past the trees, you can kind of see there's light coming from deep inside the grove. The saxophone comes to a stop, and then you hear the sound of clapping, as if someone is praising a performance. You tilt your head out to get a better

view, and it is two people. They are both in black and white. They look like projections from a TV screen, like lifted out of watching Nick at Night or something. Bright black and white, as if they are free floating figures from the television. And the one on the left, the one who is clapping, is a middle aged woman with dark hair whose body is doing the thing that you saw in the distance from before, the sort of wavering effect. It's as if it's a tracking error on a VHS tape.

**Jack:** Hmm.

**Austin:** Her whole body is kind of wavering back and forth in that way, as if something is unaligned with reality and herself. The child does not seem to have this same effect at this point.

**Jack (as Frankie):** [hushed, urgent] Television ghosts! There are two black and white television ghosts. One of them's a woman and she's all goofed up, and one of them's a kid. I've never seen anything like it. It's amazing.

**Keith (as Nolan):** We have to go.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Can we take a picture?

**[Music ends]**

**Austin:** Welcome to *Friends at the Table*, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends. I am your host, Austin Walker. Joining me today, Sylvi Clare.

**Sylvia:** Hey, I'm Sylvia. You can find me on Twitter at [@sylvibullet](https://twitter.com/sylvibullet), and you can find my podcast *Emojidrome* wherever you get your podcasts.

**Austin:** Andrew Lee Swan.

**Dre:** Hey! You can find me on Twitter at [@swandre3000](https://twitter.com/swandre3000).

**Austin:** Keith Carberry.

**Keith:** Hi, my name's Keith J. Carberry, you can find me on Twitter at [@keithjcarberry](https://twitter.com/keithjcarberry), and you can find the Let's Plays that I do at [youtube.com/RunButton](https://youtube.com/RunButton).

**Austin:** And Jack de Quidt.

**Jack:** Hi, I'm Jack. You can find me on Twitter at [@notquitereal](https://twitter.com/notquitereal), and you can buy any of the music featured on the show at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](https://notquitereal.bandcamp.com).

**Austin:** Today, we are continuing our game of *Tales from the Loop* designed by Nils Hintze and based on the world and stories of Simon Stålenhag. Our principles, or I guess the principles of

the Loop as it were: “Your hometown is full of strange and fantastic things. Everyday life is dull and forgiving. Adults are out of reach and out of touch. The land of the Loop is dangerous, but kids will not die. The game is played scene by scene. The world is described collaboratively.” That’s the big stuff. Do people remember where and what we did? So, I’m just gonna say this outright. It has been...

**Jack:** Hmm.

**Austin:** Does anyone have a guess at how long it’s been? Without having checked.

**Jack:** I think it’s been—

**Keith:** Two and a half months.

**Jack:** Between three and four months.

**Austin:** Two and a half months? Between three and four months. Anyone else have guesses?

**Sylvia:** Yeah, I was gonna say that felt like a January recording.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** That is correct. It was a January 8 recording, which if I check my calendar here may have been...

**Keith:** Just over three.

**Austin:** Which yeah, that’s just about three. But the thing I was gonna say was also just about the time or the day...right around the day I got COVID, so that’s fun.

**Sylvia:** God damn.

**Dre:** Ah, yeah.

**Austin:** So, let’s just say I barely remember. I would barely remember anything, except I actually do remember most of it, because I got the chance to listen back to it, but it does mean that if we are a little sloppy on rules, if we’re a little “hey, I gotta look this thing up,” hey the structure of this maybe isn’t as straightforward as the game asks us to be, blame the fact that we decided to launch a season instead of finish this game, which it turns out took all of our attention.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Also people moved.

**Keith:** And then I moved, which delayed us for like another three weeks.

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly. Yes, exactly, so it is what it is. We're back now, and we are getting ready to play. Who wants to help summarize...actually, let's start with just characters. That sounds like a good way to ground ourselves. Let's go around here. Sylvi, you go first. Tell me about your character. Give me your name, your age, your drive, your problem, your pride, and let's say your iconic item.

**Sylvia:** I will do this the second my web page starts responding, so maybe someone else should go first.

**Austin:** Okay, let's go with Jack.

**Sylvia:** Sorry.

**Jack:** Hello, I am playing Frankie "Frank" Already.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** She is eleven years old, and her Drive is that she wants to be in a magazine. Frankie is the Bookworm character class, which is built to be the person who finds solace and comfort and excitement in reading. The thing that Frankie absolutely loves is reading television guides and paper magazines and comics and scandal mags.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Her Problem is that she keeps appearing in late-night television adverts that she knows she has not recorded. Just sort of, you know, look meaningfully up at the camera and sell some Hungry Hungry Hippos or something.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Her Pride is that she was on Jeopardy. I don't think she won, otherwise I would have written "*won* Jeopardy." [Sylvia laughs] But she got to shake hands with Alex Trebek, which was great. Her Anchor is that her mum and her watch television together. My Iconic Item which I can use to get a bonus on rolls is an irascible dog called Tiny. [Austin chuckles] who loves me very much but doesn't express that particularly...doesn't express that particularly.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah, that's it. That's the sentence. [Keith, Sylvia, and Dre laugh]

**Jack:** Shall I go over my Relationships, or should we wait?

**Austin:** Uh, sure. Go ahead.

**Jack:** I think that Sylvi's character CC is going to be a star. I don't much care for Keith's character Nolan, but Tiny loves him. Ronny—that's Dre's character—and I are building a treehouse. I think Pastor Hess from the local church has been replaced by a double. And Miss Maxwell, the school librarian, keeps talking about "inter-library loans" in a way that suggests there's something mysterious going on.

**Austin:** Mmm, who could say? Alright, let's—

**Keith:** I have no memory of that. What does that mean?

**Austin:** We know— it hasn't come up in play.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** But it could, and you could look into it. Let's go to you, Keith.

**Keith:** Sure. My character's name is Nolan Pearson. He's the Popular Kid class. He's ten years old. His Drive is...hmm. This Drive is not worded like a Drive. That's fine. My friends in class love stories about my outside friends.

**Austin:** That makes sense. Remember, you're younger than everyone, so.

**Keith:** Right, yeah.

**Austin:** So the reason you go off on adventures is to get stories to tell your class friends.

**Keith:** Yeah, yeah, I remember that now.

**Austin:** It's part of how you're the cool kid, right?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Because that's the type you are. You're the Popular Kid. Actually, wait, Frankie, what are you?

**Jack:** The Bookworm.

**Austin:** The Bookworm, okay, yeah.

**Keith:** Okay. My Problem is that I'm grounded until further notice, but my Pride is that I know the fastest way to all the best spots in the neighborhood. Iconic Item: an especially large but not *too* large rare marble.

**Austin:** Yeah, great.

**Dre:** Oh, I forgot about the marble.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** And my Relationships here are: CC didn't like me, but I'm really good at finding dropped picks; for Christmas, my grandma got me an collection of encyclopedias and Frank likes to borrow them and sometimes trade me snacks for them; Ronny is still outside when everyone else has gone in, so I can always go there. And then for NPCs, it's: Mr. Garrett took my cassette player and is using it for himself; and Old Ben at the pawnshop knows my mom, and she said he'd call if anything cool came in, and if it's not fragile I can play with it, but sometimes he charges me a dollar. [Dre laughs]

**[Timestamp: 0:10:13]**

**Austin:** [amused sound] Great. Sylvi, you good to go now?

**Sylvia:** Yeah. So, my character is named Cori Curtis, but she goes by CC, pronouns she/her. She is the Rocker, is her playbook.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** She's twelve. Her Drive is that she wants her big brother to think she's cool. Her Problem is that her family is about to move away. I think we elaborated a bit on that in the first session too—

**Austin:** Y'all were—

**Sylvia:** That there's like a new job situation for her parents.

**Austin:** Yeah, in one of the other towns, and then there was—

**Jack:** One of the magical towns, right?

**Austin:** Presumably.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** One of the other tri-city towns, yeah, yeah.

**Sylvia:** Her Pride is that she can play guitar. Her Anchor is the cool lady at the music store that lets her hang out after school, hang out there after school. And my Iconic Item is my electric guitar, which is a beat up Stratocaster specifically. Relationships are: Frankie's lived nextdoor for

as long as I can remember; I'm worried Ronny is going to replace me; Nolan's annoying, but he makes me laugh; my big brother—who we have a name for, so I'm going to add Theo in there...

**Austin:** Theo, yeah, Theo.

**Sylvia:** My big brother Theo has been sneaking out at night ever since Mom said we were moving; and Mr. Garrett keeps calling my music noise!

**Jack:** Fuck that guy!

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** Fuck that guy.

**Austin:** And...

**Keith:** We all hate Mr. Garrett.

**Austin:** We do. And you have an item, right?

**Sylvia:** Oh, I think I mentioned that already.

**Austin:** Oh, you said that one already? Okay.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, I mentioned it before Relationships for some reason.

**Austin:** Okay, gotcha. No worries. And that leaves us with Dre.

**Dre:** Yeah. I'm playing Ronny Lee Highsmith Jr. He/him. And his type is the Hick. He is eleven years old. My Drive is I just want to make friends. My Problem is my dad is sick but doesn't want to admit it. My Pride is I ain't stupid! My Relationships are: Frankie was the first person who didn't look at me funny because of my accent. I want to learn the trumpet to impress CC. [someone laughs softly] Yep, mm-hmm, I want to join CC and do a ska band.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Dre:** Forgot about that.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Dre:** Nolan is teaching me the lay of the land. For NPCs: Mr. Garrett let me eat lunch in the band room before I made any friends.

**Austin:** [sympathetic] Mmm.

**Dre:** And my aunt Josie has asked me to help out around the house more, because her new job makes her work weird hours. My iconic item is my leatherman multitool.

**Austin:** Awesome. Okay. So, does anyone remember the high level of what happened last time?

**Jack:** We went—

**Keith:** I relistened to I'm gonna say 90% of that last episode, so I have a pretty good idea. I know Jack, you were also listening to it, right?

**Jack:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Keith:** So, I could give it a shot, and then someone can fill in the blanks for what I missed.

**Jack:** The further 10%.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** Okay, so, we were on our way back from a band competition where did win, but on the way back, something happened, I don't remember what it was, and that is when Dre's character heard a secret saxophone solo that was on a recording of the band thing that no one else heard or had any evidence of, despite all of us having recordings. That is when we went to our hideout to just chill, and the sky got all goofed up, [Sylvia laughs] and we started hearing aforementioned sax solo coming through the woods. We went to investigate, got distracted by a basically unrelated but creepy-looking houseboat, which—

**Austin:** Nope, not houseboat. Boathouse.

**Dre:** Boathouse, right.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Boathouse.

**Austin:** Different thing.

**Sylvia:** Very different things.

**Keith:** Sorry.

**Austin:** No, that's fine.



**Keith:** And while investigating the boathouse, we were interrupted by the resident of the boathouse, who chased us away and scared us. Scared us all the way to the source of the saxophone playing, which was...and this is where my real memory kicks in and not the relisten. I'm pretty sure a missing and forgotten student was like a black-and-white superimposed figure of herself like ripped out of a VHS tape or something, playing the saxophone to some other creepy ghostly captor, who I'm...older ghost. Olivia McGowan it says here, I just noticed that.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. Ollie. [Sylvia laughs]

**Keith:** Britney Namor, the younger uniformed ghost, and Olivia McGowan, her applauding ghostly...instructor? I don't know. I can't remember who Olivia McGowan was.

**Austin:** No one knows who Olivia is.

**Dre:** Yeah, i don't think we knew.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** To the additional stuff here, a couple of you remembered Britney at this point.

**Sylvia:** I think it's just me, actually, if I remember—

**Austin:** No, it's not.

**Sylvia:** Was it— okay.

**Austin:** You know Britney, actually *know* know Britney, because—

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** Her older sister dated your brother.

**Sylvia:** Okay, because I remembered a thing where it was like...or maybe they needed convincing to remember her. Maybe that's what I'm remembering.

**Austin:** It's only you and Nolan remember.

**Sylvia:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** Both succeeded on that roll.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** Nolan remembered her, but just doesn't have as many memories.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Austin:** Remembers her as being part of band, remembers that she played the sax at your concert in Bluff City.

**Dre:** Mmm.

**Austin:** Or, in Blough City, from the...the episode opened on y'all coming back from that concert the day before.

**Jack:** We got a photo of them, right?

**Austin:** Yes, and you got photos of both of them.

**Keith:** Yes, you did.

**Austin:** Including nametags which featured...which were like nametags from the Bluffington Airfield, which is just north of your school, you know, little tiny small plane airfield, basically. And they both had these nametags on with their names, Olivia McGowan and Britney Namor. And you got spooked and ran away, [laughs] and now you have this mystery in front of you, which is: what happened to your classmate and bandmate, Britney Namor, to make her into this sort of TV ghost? And also, I think maybe...there was more to this, which was could what happened to her happen to you? You know, because this seems to have happened after this trip. Could this happen to you also? That's spooky to think about.

**Keith:** No one wants to be a TV ghost.

**Austin:** In the woods, in the marsh woods. Yeah, uh huh.

**Keith:** Mm-hmm.

**Dre:** That sounds bad.

**Austin:** It does not sound good, certainly. Are there any other bits? Also, everyone had introduction segments in which we met your families a little bit. Ronny's dad was clearly sick and tired, as Ronny established with—

**Keith:** Literally sick, not sick and tired like how parents say sick and tired. [Sylvia laughs]

**Austin:** "I'm sick and tired!" The opposite, really, right? It was actually, you know, very affectionate towards Ronny, but also...

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** But also too tired, too fatigued to be up and about in a traditional parental way. We met CC's brother Theo who snuck in through the window and gave his little sister some tips on how to convince their parents that it was okay that she hadn't been packing, about prioritization. Nolan lied to his mother about what he was in trouble for, to get out of being further in trouble.

**Keith:** Oh yeah.

**Austin:** And...Frank looked out at the Upper Crust, the giant pizza casino [Keith laughs] in downtown Bluff— or, downtown Atlantic City. Not in Bluffington, in Atlantic City proper. And also...what else did you get up to? That's kind of it, right?

**Jack:** Did I have a very big family?

**Keith:** Commercial project.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Your big weird family, yeah.

**Jack:** They're all watching television.

**Austin:** All watching televisions across every room, including the bathroom.

**Jack:** And yeah, I got—

**Austin:** You were working on some sort of booklet or something? What was your...

**Jack:** I'm just doing a research project. I had ordered a VHS tape of a load of nineties commercials.

**Austin:** Right, right.

**Jack:** And I'm like looking through it, being like, "What did people in the nineties like? This will be useful to help maybe sell CC as a band leader to a record label or something in future," you know? [Sylvia laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah. Mm-hmm. So, at this point, we are in the third phase of a game of *Tales from the Loop*. At this point, we slip into what is the heart of it: solving the mystery. We've introduced the kids. We've introduced the mystery. Now we are solving the mystery. [reading] "This is the biggest part of the mystery where most of the scenes will take place. The kids visit locations and talk to people, looking for clues, overcoming trouble, and trying to solve the mystery. You set scenes about the mystery and everyday life, alternating between the two. In most scenes, all kids should be present if possible. If the kids have been split up for one or more scenes, you

should set up a scene where everyone is present. You can simply ask the kids: where do you meet up, and what do you do? You may improvise new trouble in a scene: a caretaker shows up or a guard dog spots the kids. A core feature of phase three is a map that depicts part of the Loop area where the mystery takes place. The map should be put on the table for everyone to see. Most often, there is one map for the players and a secret map for the Game Master with all locations marked. In most mysteries, there will be at least three locations to visit during this phase. This is a good number of locations for a one evening mystery. When you write down your mysteries, you may plan more or fewer locations.” You know, each of the locations ends up having some clues. So you already know for a fact, for instance, that there is...you've been to the old creepy boathouse. You've been to the grove. I would say there's probably more clues at both of those. There's a secret tunnel entrance that you might remember from character creation but that didn't come up last time, that goes into some sort of places I think tied to the tunnel. There will be stuff there. The airfield, obviously, is now a place that would have some shit or you, because you saw those nametags, right? Also, I think you have one connection to the airfield. I wanna say...Ronny, is it your Aunt Josie? Do you have an Aunt Josie?

**[Timestamp: 0:21:16]**

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, your Aunt Josie works at the airfield and asked you to help out more around the house, because her new job makes her work weird hours. She works nights at the airfield. She also left a note for you, which was a small detail at the beginning of last game, that neither you nor your father saw, left it on the fridge, that asked you to give her the tape recorder she bought you back, that she gave you the wrong one or something like that, basically.

**Dre:** Hmm.

**Austin:** Which, you know, maybe worth noting, given that you're the one who heard the weird saxophone.

**Keith:** I accidentally gave you the airport's secret decoding cassette tape player!

**Austin:** Cassette player, uh huh! Seems like. Seems like maybe!

**Jack:** Fuck! That we got from the Russians! [Sylvia and Austin laugh]

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. So, do you want to start with a mystery scene or with an everyday scene? Where are y'all at? And again, everyday scenes are kind of the ways in which we can explore what it means to be kids in this world. There's obviously potential overlap between the two. And everyday scenes don't need to be especially long necessarily, but they help us stay grounded in the thematic and tonal space that we want to achieve by playing a game about kids, right? Who like have classes...

**Jack:** I have an idea for a...

**Austin:** Sure.

**Jack:** For an everyday scene.

**Austin:** What's up?

**Jack:** I would like—and anybody is more than welcome to come, because we're about to make a lot of money—to sell these pictures to the newspaper!

**Keith:** Wow. [Dre laughs] And if there's more kids there, it'll help sell it, I think.

**Austin:** This is an everyday scene and not a mystery scene?

**Jack:** I feel like the mystery is what's going on with the fucking VHS ghost. This to me seemed everyday because the kids are trying to interact with adults.

**Austin:** Sure. So you go after school the next day or something?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah, after school. I think in the back of the bus I say like:

**Jack (as Frankie):** Don't get off at your stop. We're gonna ride it into the city, and we're gonna get off it, and then we're gonna go to the newspaper HQ, and we're gonna make \$50.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Whoa.

**Keith (as Nolan):** I thought it just goes to the school bus yard.

**Jack:** Oh. [chuckles] Right, yes, Americans. [Sylvia laughs]

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. Well, yeah, uh huh.

**Jack:** Uh huh.

**Austin:** You could get off at a different stop, right?

**Jack:** Yeah, that's true. We get off near the...

**Austin:** Your school is all the way down here. So for people who are just listening to us, which is everyone, their school is kind of—

**Jack:** They know this.

**Austin:** —at the southern southwestern end of Bluffington or of Atlantic City. It's kind of on a little mini island between the mainland and the island that Atlantic City itself is on. And presumably that bus route would take you back up into the city and go slowly north all the way up to Bluffington Beach at the north end. So if you wanted to get off somewhere else to go to, you know, the Atlantic City press building.

**Jack:** What's the big paper? What's the like...

**Austin:** It's the Atlantic City Press.

**Jack:** The Atlantic City Press, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah. Which is actually not in...it's actually...I mean, that building is actually...it's very funny, I can just show you where it is, because it's actually the other direction in real life. [laughs softly] It's like *here* in real life, which is fun too.

**Jack:** Oh, I mean, look, we're playing in Atlantic City, so part of me's just like, no, let's just put it there. Let's, you know.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Jack:** So we'll go out that way.

**Austin:** Totally, yes.

**Keith:** Ooh.

**Austin:** You can see this much different but still basically the same map of what we've...

**Keith:** Octopus lake. I love that.

**Austin:** Yeah, isn't that fun? I didn't really do that here, but I guess that would be here-ish more or less.

**Dre:** Hmm.

**Jack:** Oh, it does look like an octopus, doesn't it?

**Austin:** It does look like an octopus. Yeah, in the kind of Atlantic City bay. As you can see, your HQ is up near the Borgata. I just tried to ping this image I just sent you, and it doesn't make any

sense. [Sylvia and Dre laugh] But you know, it's up there somewhere. Anyway, yeah, you would—

**Jack:** We have a fucking Rockstar Games version of Atlantic City going on here.

**Austin:** A thousand percent. A hundred thousand percent.

**Jack:** This is the Los Santos to 1960s Los Angeles.

**Austin:** [laughs] Uh huh. So yeah, you could go to Atlantic City Press. You could take...you know, there are definitely students who come to this high school or to this middle school, y'all are mostly all in middle school I would imagine, right?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Who's the oldest?

**Sylvia:** I think thirteen, right?

**Austin:** Twelve or thirteen.

**Keith:** Is everyone twelve except me?

**Dre:** Yeah, 'cause I'm eleven.

**Sylvia:** I'm twelve.

**Jack:** I think I'm eleven, so it might be CC.

**Austin:** Twelve and eleven, yeah, yeah, yeah. Mm-hmm. So yeah, you're in this middle school here. There is the high school across the way, and I'm sure you share a library or something maybe, you know? But yeah, there's definitely students from the mainland, but this kind of close to the high school part of the mainland that come to this school instead of going to another one. So yeah, you can get on one of their buses, which is kind of a weird experience. You get on the wrong bus home, which maybe one of Theo's friends is gonna come pick you up after or something, you know? You've made arrangements to get home. Well, maybe you haven't. Maybe I'm wrong about this. [laughs] We can circle back around. But yeah, you go to the press, you go to the Atlantic City Press, which is a big..it's a wide black mirrored building, you know what I mean? It's a low building. It's only two or three floors, but it's the size of...it's one of the...it's a big square building, and you just don't see many big square imposing buildings like that in your lives, and so it feels kind of spooky to walk up to it. And you know, there's glass doors up front, and people are walking in and out, and it's probably 2:30, 3:00. It's probably 3:00

by the time you get there. So there's people coming in and out, people who are taking late lunches going back in. There are...I forget what time of year this was when we did this, but I think it was cold. I think it was kind of chilly out.

**Dre:** That sounds right, yeah.

**Austin:** So...

**Sylvia:** We were playing it as like winter, I think.

**Austin:** We were, yeah, so. So yeah, I think it's winter out, and it's...people are all bundled up, and there's the four of you outside this building. What do you do?

**Jack (as Frankie):** [sighs] Okay everybody, play it cool.

**Dre (as Ronny):** ...What does that mean? [Sylvia laughs]

**Jack (as Frankie):** Well, I mean, they don't get many kids coming in and trying to sell them a picture of a ghost. But we have a picture of a ghost. I mean, this is a copy. This isn't the original. I'm not gonna give them the original.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Sure, yeah.

**Jack (as Frankie):** That one's for the Library of Congress.

**Keith (as Nolan):** If anything, having it come from a bunch of kids would make it *more* valuable if they don't get a lot of kids.

**Jack (as Frankie):** See, this is the argument that we should be making, yeah.

**Sylvia (as CC):** But that like we're the..."Intrepid Kids Find Ghost" is the story?

**Jack (as Frankie):** Yeah.

**Sylvia (as CC):** Okay.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Well I mean, it's not the story. We're the intrepid kids, and we found the ghost. You know?

**Dre (as Ronny):** Hmm.

**Jack (as Frankie):** And I think we should decide...my mum always says when you're bargaining you settle on a number, you know? We should have a number in our heads before we go in. Now, bear in mind—



**Keith (as Nolan):** Any number?

**Jack (as Frankie):** Well, a reasonable number. Bear in mind that this is a picture of a ghost. How much should we be asking for here, do you think?

**Dre (as Ronny):** Oh, I thought you had done this before.

**Jack (as Frankie):** [sighs] I thought I'd involve everybody.

**Keith (as Nolan):** I don't want to say how much I think, because I think it would make me sound stupid, so someone else needs to decide.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Mmm...\$20.

**Sylvia (as CC):** I was gonna say at least 50.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Oh, okay. Wow, that...okay.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Ronny, I don't mean to be rude, but that number is crap to me. I think we should ask for 50.

**Dre (as Ronny):** [disheartened] Oh. Yeah, okay.

**Jack:** Steps forward and the automatic doors...or is it a rotating door?

**Keith (as Nolan):** 50 each?

**Austin:** It's not even rotating doors. This is a small...this is a suburban town in New Jersey. These are doors you open with your hands.

**Jack:** [laughs] Okay.

**Austin:** They're big glass doors, you know what I mean? But you gotta open it and walk in.

**Jack:** Uh huh. Aragorn opening the doors in *Lord of the Rings*, except it's an eleven-year-old blonde-haired girl in a pink puffy jacket storming in to...

**[Timestamp: 0:29:45]**

**Austin:** Uh huh, yeah. [laughs] Exactly. And, you know, there's a reception area, and you can hear the sound of phones ringing in the distance, and it's kind of an old blue carpet with red flecks in it, and the receptionist is on a phone right now. He's a young man in a blue dress shirt

and kind of...probably no tie, just a nice dress shirt, maybe a darker blue blazer on. He puts up his hands, like “one minute,” and he’s talking into the phone. He’s like:

**Austin (as receptionist):** Yep, mm-hmm, that’s right. We close at 5, that’s right. Alright. Bye bye. [to kids, uncertain but friendly] Hello. Are you looking for one of your parents?

**Jack (as Frankie):** Uh...

**Jack:** Glances between the three others.

**Jack (as Frankie):** No, hello. My name is Francesca Already. And we have a photo that we would like to sell you. To sell the paper, not you.

**Austin (as receptionist):** To sell the paper. Can I ask you what the photo is of?

**Jack:** Another glance between the three people.

**Sylvia:** A shrug. [laughs]

**Jack (as Frankie):** We took a picture of a ghost!

**Austin:** And this is...I’m gonna name this character. This is...oh, I already have a Theo. This is Bryan. Bryan Myers. Bryan says...just like smiles as if now he knows what he’s dealing with and says:

**Austin (as Bryan):** [friendly but patronizing] Oh, you have a ghost picture. Oh, that’s exciting. How ‘bout this? You give us the ghost picture, and then I’ll give each of you a candy bar.

**Sylvia (as CC):** [offended] We’re not six.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Don’t patronize us, Bryan.

**Jack:** (??? 0:31:41)

**Keith:** I open up my bag, and it’s full of candy bars.

**Austin:** [laughs] Right, you do run a fake school shop, right? Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin (as Bryan):** [sighs] I’m sorry, we just...is this a photo you took?

**Jack (as Frankie):** Yes.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Yeah, we didn't steal a photo.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Of a ghost.

**Austin (as Bryan):** Wh...can I see the photo?

**Jack:** I think Frank takes the...it's like a Polaroid, it's like a big square instax type thing.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** And she puts it face down on the table. [Sylvia and Dre laugh]

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** With her hand on it.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** And she says:

**Jack (as Frankie):** First, I'd like to discuss our fee.

**Austin (as Bryan):** [hesitates] I'm...

**Dre (as Ronny):** [softly] Frank is so cool! [Austin laughs]

**Austin (as Bryan):** There's a screening process. Before I could pass you onto our photo submission editor, I have to take a look at this and make sure that it's something that the paper would be interested in. You understand.

**Keith (as Nolan):** What is your title here?

**Austin (as Bryan):** Uh...that's none of your business.

**Jack:** Frankie nods.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Yeah, do you have that process in writing? My dad always said I should get it in writing.

**Austin (as Bryan):** [sighs] Children.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Adult.

**Austin (as Bryan):** [forced patience] I'm happy to put you in contact with our photo editor, but first I need to confirm that I won't be wasting her time. I'm sure you're very busy, and so is she. So.

**Austin:** And then reaches over to take the photo and look at it. How convincing is this photo?

**Keith:** It's real, right?

**Austin:** Yeah, but eh, real photos.

**Dre:** Did we roll to take the photo?

**Austin:** You rolled to take the...you rolled to sneak but not to take a good photo. You rolled to...

**Keith:** Okay, here's my argument.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Keith:** We took a photo good enough...

**Austin:** Yes.

**Keith:** ...that we got the names on the nametags.

**Austin:** Totally, yeah.

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** But what's it...what would...if I showed you that picture of Elaine that I showed you—

**Jack:** I was thinking about this.

**Austin:** —to say "This is a photo of a ghost," would you say, "Yeah, okay, you made that on photoshop."

**Keith:** But they wouldn't say that, because we are in the '80s.

**Jack:** So—

**Austin:** We're not in the '80s. We're not in the '80s at all. We're in the future, actually.

**Jack:** There's that great Mitch Hedberg joke where he's like, "What if Bigfoot is blurry?"

**Austin:** Uh huh. Yes. [Austin and Keith laugh]

**Jack:** He's just a blurry guy.

**Sylvia:** That's such a good joke.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** And I've always wondered what it would be like if you just got a clear picture.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** How would people have to respond, you know? They definitely...I feel like the response wouldn't be, "That's a picture of a ghost," but "That's fake or it's some kind of..."

**Austin:** Right. As a reminder, this is the future of Bluff City.

**Dre:** Mmm.

**Austin:** We are in the 2030s or the 2040s or something. There is a '90s resurgence, because the city and the world is falling apart.

**Jack:** Mmm.

**Austin:** And instead of having an '80s touch—

**Jack:** Oh, and also in the game?

**Austin:** Yeah, and also in the game, yes. One of the first things I described when we were coming back into the town through the bus, through the tunnel, was that a lot of buildings are deserted, and the economy is falling apart, and we're moving towards a sort of...for me, the touchstone here is yeah, we *had* MP3 players, but now CC has a CD player, because the wealth has been extracted from this place. That's part of what's happening with the tunnel project. And the...but you know, photoshops still seem to exist, or edited photos...

**Jack:** Or deepfaking or...

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Edited photos existed in the '80s and the '90s for sure, you know what I mean?

**Jack:** Mmm.

**Austin:** We definitely had...you definitely had your Weekly World News bat boy stuff, you know? [Sylvia laughs] through the '90s in a big way, and I think that that's...I think that this person looks at this, and he says:

**Austin (as Bryan):** This is really well done. You said one of you took this photo?

**Jack:** Frankie, realizing that this is starting to slide away from her, just gives a tight-lipped nod.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Austin (as Bryan):** Well, you might have us confused for one of the tabloids. I can give you contact information if you'd like to pursue publication with a paper that, you know, tells this sort of story. Again, I just don't want to waste the photo editor's time.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Let me ask you a question, Bryan. [Austin laughs softly]

**Keith (as Nolan):** This ought to be good. [Jack laughs]

**Jack (as Frankie):** If someone came to you with an actual picture of a ghost, an *actual*, like a real picture of a ghost, and you printed it, you would be the first newspaper in America to print a picture of a ghost, right? The first newspaper in the world! But I don't know, maybe they did it in France or something. [Austin laughs softly] But the first newspaper in America, wouldn't you?

**Austin (as Bryan):** If we ran a picture of a ghost, we might also alienate— upset a number of our readers.

**Jack (as Frankie):** I know what alienate means, Bryan.

**Sylvia (as CC):** She was on Jeopardy, Bryan!

**Jack (as Frankie):** I came third.

**Austin (as Bryan):** I knew I recognized you! You lost! [Keith laughs] Bad!

**Jack (as Frankie):** Screw you, Bryan!

**Dre (as Ronny):** No, she came third!

**Keith (as Nolan):** But it was impressive that she was there! [Austin chuckles]

**Austin (as Bryan):** The point is we would upset a lot of people, and we would ruin our reputation, because we have to report on real things like city corruption and local sports.

**Jack (as Frankie):** [mocking] City corruption and local sports. [Sylvia laughs]

**Dre (as Ronny):** What if it's a missing person and that's who the ghost is?

**Jack (as Frankie):** Yeah.

**Austin (as Bryan):** Missing person, huh? Who is it? Who's missing?

**Keith (as Nolan):** They got nametags.

**Austin (as Bryan):** Nametags...

**Austin:** He looks closer.

**Austin (as Bryan):** [incredulous] They have nametags? These are ghosts, they have nametags?

**Keith (as Nolan):** I don't know.

**Jack (as Frankie):** I don't know.

**Keith (as Nolan):** How many ghosts have you seen without nametags?

**Jack (as Frankie):** Mister, we're not here to discuss ghosts with you. We're here to sell you a picture of one.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Well, we are here to discuss the ghosts per the photo.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Yeah.

**Austin (as Bryan):** Let me...

**Austin:** Someone...we're at a point where I think if you want to convince this person to kick you up the chain, you're gonna need to roll some dice.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Dre:** Mmm.

**Austin:** Because he has to call someone in this building—

**Jack:** And say... [laughs]

**Austin:** —who's having a busy day, and say, "I have four children here who have a picture of a ghost to sell you."

**Dre:** That or we just sneak past him and try to go to someone's office.

**Austin:** Totally, or you do that, totally. I think what you see is...when you said missing person, it's as if there might be a line there where you can push, you know?

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** There is someone who handles that sort of thing, and maybe his expression was such that he was like "maybe I can pass them off to her," you know? So yeah, if you wanted to sneak past him and try to find that person, that would be one thing. If you wanted to push on him and say something to try to move this, you could say something else. But yeah.

**Jack:** I mean, I could make an Empathize roll here, right?

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Which let's me...

**Austin:** I agree with that.

**Jack:** ...ask two questions, and I could use those questions to kind of move forward.

**Austin:** Yeah, I agree with that. Um, I agree...hmm. I think that you would...that's gonna be one of those things that I give you information and you have to do something with it. Empathize alone...

**Jack:** Charm might be better.

**Austin:** Charm would be better. Charm would make him make the call, whereas Empathize you could ask me "what's his weak spot?" or "how can I make him do this?"

**Keith:** Mmm.

**Austin:** And that's, you know, then you'd have to do the thing to get him to do it, you know?

**Jack:** Yeah. Alright, I'm prepared to make a Charm roll. So, I take...

**Austin:** Mm-hmm?

**Jack:** Three—



**Austin:** What is your...yeah.

**Jack:** Heart.

**Austin:** Three, four Heart. Yep.

**Jack:** Plus one.

**Austin:** And then what is your Charm? Yep.

**Jack:** It's Charm, so I'm rolling four dice?

**Austin:** Four dice. Do you have anything to help you with this? Is anyone helping, for instance?

**[Timestamp: 0:40:02]**

**Keith:** I could help. How does helping work, again?

**Austin:** Good question. [laughs]

**Keith:** I have Charm. Charm is one of my two skills.

**Dre:** Let's see. [reading] "One kid may help another overcome trouble if it seems plausible to help."

**Austin:** There you go.

**Dre:** "You describe what you do, and then your friend gets one extra die to roll."

**Austin:** There you go! Easy.

**Jack:** Oh, great!

**Austin:** So yeah, how you helping, Keith? How is Nolan helping?

**Keith:** Well, let's...did Frank have an idea for what is the mode of your Charm here?

**Austin:** [brief pause] I don't think she did.

**Jack:** Yeah, I do have an idea, actually.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Jack:** Which is...you know, I—

**Keith:** Austin is just like this clerk here, making assumptions all over the place. [Sylvia and Dre laugh] Who does and doesn't have ideas.

**Austin:** An idea had not been spoken yet, so.

**Keith:** [laughs] I know. [Jack and Dre laugh]

**Jack (as Frankie):** You know, every night, my mum and I, we watch that new television broadcast you do, you know, where you sum up the top stories of the day, and a lot of—

**Austin (as Bryan):** *Stories of the Day*? Yeah, I remember. I know it.

**Jack (as Frankie):** *Stories of the Day*, yeah. And a lot of people say that, you know, moving into television's not what the press should be doing, but I think it's great. I really like the host. And I was...

**Jack:** What does she do? She mentions a case that they have been following that hasn't been getting attention, that hasn't been being picked up, being talked about by other people.

**Austin:** Mmm, mm-hmm.

**Jack:** It's not a missing persons case. It's a...god, what is a story that a local paper would try and get its teeth into that wouldn't go anywhere?

**Austin:** I feel like—

**Jack:** Despite their best attempts to make it a thing.

**Austin:** I think when I think about the history of Atlantic City, it's almost always something tied to the casino business, right? It's just a town marked by...or marred, rather, by big business and frankly the state government basically fighting each other. Or slipping money back and forth between each other [laughs] and screwing over local people. So it's things like reporting on weird real estate purchases and things like construction. The tunnel project is complete at this point, so it's not that.

**Jack:** And presumably people talked a lot about that.

**Austin:** Yeah, definitely. Couldn't stop it. You know, neighborhoods got demolished to build it.

**Jack:** So I think over the next—

**Austin:** What else could it be?

**Jack:** I think Frankie gives some kind of (??? 0:42:51) version of this, where she has a grasp of it from watching it with her mum, and she doesn't have a particularly great grasp on it—

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Because, again, she's like eleven, and this is often real estate deals.

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** But it's clear that she genuinely cares about watching the television and cares about this weird little program that they've been putting out.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. Yeah, sure.

**Jack:** And tries to make a ham-fisted alignment between that and this missing persons case.

**Austin:** Oh, you know what it is? We've already talked about there being this place called the Cove, which is...

**Jack:** Oh, sure, the shopping center or whatever.

**Austin:** Which is the shopping center that's on the bay side instead of the shore side, and it's some sort of local reporting about the negative environmental effects of having built a shopping center right up against the bay like this on top of there already being a train station there and how this is supposed to be a nature reserve. Remember, your hideout is on a little nature reserve area?

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** And so, yeah, totally.

**Jack:** Wistful elbow on desk.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** Frankie being like:

**Jack (as Frankie):** You remember that bit about the ducks, Bryan?

**Austin:** The herons, remember? [laughs] [wistful] Remember, Bryan? Yeah.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Remember the ducks, Bryan?

**Dre:** Ah, I love Family Guy, yeah. [Sylvia and Jack laugh]

**Austin:** Mmm. Boo. [Dre laughs]

**Jack:** So I'm gonna roll five d6, and if I hit one six, that's a success. With more sixes being good, increasingly good.

**Austin:** How is...I need to know how Nolan's helping.

**Jack:** Oh, yeah.

**Keith:** I'm gonna add to this story of seeing duck families disappear.

**Jack:** Ha!

**Keith (as Nolan):** I used to be able to go every year and see the ducklings walking across the thing, and I went this year—

**Jack:** Like in the book from Boston. Like *Ducklings on Parade*.

**Keith (as Nolan):** I brought bread from home to feed them, and they weren't there this year.

**Jack (as Frankie):** It was really sad.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Yeah.

**Jack:** And then Frankie, just taking an opportunity to give a dig to Nolan, is like:

**Jack (as Frankie):** He cried.

**Austin:** Oh my god. [Keith laughs]

**Keith (as Nolan):** I cried. I miss the ducks. [Dre laughs]

**Keith:** I lean into it, because I don't get that it's a dig, I think it's part of the show.

**Austin:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Jack:** [laughs] Yes, that's what the thing.

**Austin:** Five dice. Hey, one success! Yeah, one, two, three, four, six.

**Jack:** Six!

**Austin:** Yeah, skip that five. You got your six. I think he goes like:

**Austin (as Bryan):** Hmm. [exasperated] Yeah, okay, give me a second.

**Austin:** Picks up a phone. Beep boop boop beep beep.

**Austin (as Bryan):** [can't believe he's going through with this] Angie. [sighs] Yeah, hey. Are you...do you have any time? I got some...some... [sighs] There's some kids here with some photos of what they say might be a missing person.

**Jack (as Frankie):** [whispering] It's a ghost.

**Austin (as Bryan):** And that's— [to Frankie] shh. And that's why I thought maybe you would be interested. Should I send them up? [pause] I would say they're like nine, ten. They're little. They're like little children. [Keith laughs loudly]

**Sylvia (as CC):** [outraged] I'm twelve!

**Jack (as Frankie):** She's twelve!

**Austin (as Bryan):** This one— one of them says—

**Keith (as Nolan):** I'm ten.

**Austin (as Bryan):** Ten, yeah.

**Jack (as Frankie):** I'm eleven.

**Austin (as Bryan):** They're ten. [pause] Yeah, they seem...they watch the news is what I'll say, so. Alright. Should I escort them— alright. [pause] Alright.

**Austin:** And hangs up the phone and says:

**Austin (as Bryan):** Alright. I'm gonna send you to Angie. Angie works in the basement level. Do you see right around this corner there is an elevator? You get in the elevator, and you hit the big B, and you go down into the basement, and then you go straight, and then you turn right at the second right, and you turn left at the second left. You got that?

**Dre (as Ronny):** Second right, second left.

**Austin (as Bryan):** In the basement.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Yeah.

**Austin (as Bryan):** Okay.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Bye, Bryan.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Bye, Bryan.

**Austin:** Slides the photos.

**Keith (as Nolan):** We really do love the news.

**Austin (as Bryan):** And the news loves you. [Keith laughs]

**Jack:** Oh, that's the slogan!

**Austin:** [laughing] Yeah, you walk past the sign, and it's the slogan! We love the news, and—

**Jack:** What's the slogan, Austin? The full slogan? [laughter continues]

**Austin:** Yeah, uh...it's "You love the news, and the news loves you: the Atlantic City Press." Press of Atlantic City, whatever it's called. Uh huh.

**Jack:** It's a man holding a newspaper and pointing.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. Ahh.

**Keith:** There's an image of a man getting married to a newspaper. [Austin and Sylvia laugh]

**Austin:** God.

**Sylvia (as CC):** Oh, *that's* reportable but the ghost isn't, okay.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Duh.

**Austin:** God. I think that the actual motto for the Atlantic City Press is just like, "Southern New Jersey's most popular newspaper!" or something like that.

**Jack:** God. [Keith laughs] Great.

**Keith:** Way worse.

**Dre:** Incredible.

**Austin:** Ugh, terrible. Anyway. So yeah, you follow those directions as best you can.

**Jack:** No! I mean, maybe—

**Austin:** Oh. No?

**Jack:** I think we should do a split contingent, right? [Sylvia laughs] We've just been given free range of the...

**Austin:** I mean, okay, yeah, sure. Why not?

**Jack:** The Atlantic City newspaper. Like, there's an opportunity to do some mystery shit here. I think that we should split our strengths.

**Austin:** This is what I meant, by the way, when I was like, this is not an everyday scene. This was a mystery scene. [Jack laughs] It's fine, but this is what I meant.

**Jack:** Well, the good news is it doesn't actually matter, right? So long as we alternate.

**Austin:** Uh huh, yes. [Austin and Jack laugh softly]

**Jack:** In the elevator.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Alright, what's the plan? That went amazingly. Nolan, thank you. You really sold it.

**Keith (as Nolan):** You're welcome.

**Dre (as Ronny):** I thought the plan was to go straight and then take the second right and then take the second left?

**Jack (as Frankie):** Well, you see, Ronny, that's what *I'm* gonna do and maybe someone else. But like... [hushed] we're in.

**Dre (as Ronny):** [understanding] Oh.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Into what?

**Jack (as Frankie):** [hushed] In the newspaper building!

**Keith (as Nolan):** Yeah.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Yeah, we're into the basement.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Yeah, we're in the basement in the newspaper building.

**Austin:** Ding! Yeah, you're in the basement now. I'm guessing you took the elevator? It sounded like?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** Alright. Door's open.

**Keith:** You said ding, is what... [laughs] That's what it sounded.

**Austin:** That was me assuming. Yeah, uh huh.

**Dre:** Is there—

**Austin:** In front of you is the basement, and let me just give you the quick...what you can see from this elevator as you're about to make a decision...

**Dre:** Uh huh.

**Austin:** You know, you can see, one, it's very dark down here. A lot of the lights don't work. You can hear the sound of some squeaky wheels as someone pushes a cart around somewhere. Again, the fluorescent lights are doing that thing where they're flickering, and some of them are just not on at all. There's a long, wide hallway going forward and then some stacks and stacks of old papers line the near wall, the wall that's shared with the elevator. And then there's kind of what you can assume are larger rooms, not offices, based on the type and spacing of the doors, right? These are not little office rooms. These are presumably archives down here, basically. And then there is some signage that does say like, you know, "Obituaries this way" and you know, "Environmental reporting this way." You know, this is where they put the people who don't have a lot of resources, you can tell. [laughs softly] "Culture this way."

**[Timestamp: 0:50:31]**

**Jack:** Video games. [laughs softly]

**Austin:** [laughs] Uh huh, yeah.

**Jack (as Frankie):** [hushed] Okay. Newspapers, they keep all kind of stuff in newspapers, and stuff that's like secret and stuff. We should look in the archives for...what was her name? Olivia, um...Olivia...

**Jack:** I'm trying to find my clues area.

**Keith (as Nolan):** [hushed] Look at the picture.



**Sylvia (as CC):** McGowan?

**Jack (as Frankie):** Olivia McGowan. Yeah.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Yeah.

**Jack (as Frankie):** The woman we saw. And maybe see if Britney's name is somewhere around, I don't know. And then also just anything we could sell, I suppose. [Austin chuckles] I'm gonna go talk to Angie, and anybody's welcome to come with me.

**Dre (as Ronny):** I'll go look for the archives. If it's like in a computer, I could probably figure out how it works.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Oh, it might be! I don't know what their funding situation's like. But you can figure that out.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Or if it's like a...the microfiche that's at the library.

**Jack (as Frankie):** I don't know what one of those is. [Austin chuckles]

**Jack:** Oh, no, I'm a magazine person. I absolutely know what one of those is. [Jack, Austin, and Dre laugh]

**Jack (as Frankie):** Alright, three, two, one, break.

**Sylvia (as CC):** I wanna— okay.

**Jack (as Frankie):** No, go on!

**Sylvia:** Yeah, I'm going with Frankie, because I want to ask about Britney.

**Austin:** Does that leave Ronny and Nolan as the poke around with other stuff people?

**Keith:** I can poke.

**Sylvia:** We could also poke first and then go.

**Austin:** That's true.

**Sylvia:** If you don't—

**Keith:** Or go first and then poke, because Angie's expecting us.

**Austin:** Angie is expecting you.

**Dre:** Mmm.

**Austin:** Wise. Up to y'all.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Angie!

**Jack:** Frankie calls, standing outside the elevator.

**Austin:** Oh my god. There's no response.

**Dre (as Ronny):** She's like far away. It was...

**Keith (as Nolan):** Yeah, it's several doors down.

**Sylvia (as CC):** There's at least two turns.

**Jack:** [laughs softly] Off down the corridor, reaches an intersection.

**Austin:** Uh huh. So you do go? So wait, who's doing what? Are you all going at once or...I need to know what you're committing to doing.

**Jack:** Are we all going at once? That seems like a...

**Dre:** Yeah, that...yeah, that sounds good. Especially—

**Keith:** Safety in numbers.

**Dre:** Right.

**Austin:** Okay. So then, yeah, you take the second right. You again hear the sound of the squeaky wheel of someone in some sort of maintenance cart being pushed around, or pushing some sort of maintenance cart around, and then you take the second left, and you come to the end of a long hallway where you see a door that says Angie Flores. And it's like...you know, this back corner of this place is not particularly well kept. The doors feel like...you know, you see a couple of doors where the handles have fallen off and they just haven't been replaced. There's lots of old cardboard boxes piled one on top of the other blocking certain doors entirely, as if the interior storage has just spilled out into the hallway and no one's figured out what to do with whatever these files are, and they're just like, "Put it next to the fucking door. Who cares?" And then finally, in a back storage room that has been converted into an office, it says "Angie Flores, Curiosities and Investigations." And the doors open for you. If you knock, she says:

**Austin (as Angie):** Come in!

**Austin:** And inside is a middle aged woman who has kind of salt and pepper dark hair up, glasses down on her nose, kind of a big nose, Latina, with I think a very good brown suit jacket or blazer with a yellow button up shirt. A very kind of professorial but professorial from the wrong decade for where you are.

**Jack:** Mmm.

**Austin:** Very 1970s vibes. If we've been in the '90s, she feels of the '70s. Her glasses have the chain around the back of her head, do you know what I mean?

**Jack:** Mmm.

**Austin:** So that if they fall, they'll hang from her neck. On her brown blazer—I'm imagining it as a corduroy blazer—there is a red cherry blossom pin. I actually have an image of it. Where is it? Here it is. Boom. And she looks over at the four of you, and says:

**Austin (as Angie):** Well, he wasn't lying. You're kids. I'd say take a seat, but I only have the one chair, so just stand by the desk, I guess. How can I help you?

**Keith (as Nolan):** We found a ghost.

**Austin (as Angie):** You found a ghost. He said it was a missing person.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Well, it's a ghost, but it's of a missing person.

**Austin (as Angie):** A ghost of a missing person. Okay. Well, let me see here.

**Austin:** Holds her hand out.

**Jack:** Frankie thrusts the picture out, like showing someone a wanted poster almost.

**Austin:** You know, she takes off those glasses and reaches into a pocket and pulls out different glasses to put on. [Sylvia laughs] And pulls the photo up close and takes a look and says:

**Austin (as Angie):** Okay, yeah, well. I could see why you'd say this is a ghost. How much do you want for the photo?

**Jack (as Frankie):** \$80.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Each.

**Austin (as Angie):** \$80 each? Kids, take a quick look around at what you got here.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Got a big building.

**Austin (as Angie):** Yeah, and they put me in the ass end of it. I'm lucky I got a chair, I'm not sitting on boxes. The lights in here—

**Keith:** Nolan laughs at the word ass.

**Austin:** Yeah, of course, yeah. [Dre laughs]

**Austin (as Angie):** I had to switch the lights. I had to bring my own bulbs in here, and it goes out every three months, and they won't fix the electricity in here, so I'm gonna just keep buying myself bulbs. That's the sort of life I'm living here now. They have me down here as a sort of a joke. \$80 is out of the question. \$80 a person is an insult. I'll give you \$70. Total.

**Jack (as Frankie):** [quickly] Done.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Deal.

**Austin (as Angie):** Alright, done.

**Austin:** Reaches down, opens up a drawer, looks at you as if to say look away, you know what I mean? As if to say you're not allowed to look in this drawer while I'm getting my money out please, thank you, it's rude.

**Keith:** Can I peek a little bit?

**Dre:** Ronny looks away and also takes his hat off.

**Austin:** Good.

**Dre:** Because he realizes it's rude to be wearing his hat right now too.

**Austin:** Thank you, good. Someone else said something?

**Keith:** I said if I could take a peek anyway.

**Austin:** Yeah, it's money and pens and some folders with files in them and shit.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** And produces \$70. She says:

**Austin (as Angie):** Alright, who's taking it? It's three twenties and a ten.

**Jack:** Frankie puts her hand up. This is more...this is a lot of money when you're eleven.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Dre:** Oh yeah.

**Jack:** I mean, it's a lot of money. \$70.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh huh.

**Jack:** But just like...I think Frankie is a little awed that this has worked.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Just takes the money very carefully and says like:

**Jack (as Frankie):** Thank you.

**Jack:** Folds it and puts it in her pocket and then says:

**Jack (as Frankie):** That sucks what they've got you doing. And you're down here working really hard.

**Austin (as Angie):** You know, I appreciate it, kid. That means a lot. And I appreciate the photo here. You know, maybe it'll help crack a case.

**Sylvia (as CC):** Huh?

**Jack (as Frankie):** You uh, got a case that you're looking to crack?

**Austin (as Angie):** Don't worry about it. You know, always old cases, they stick with you.

**Sylvia (as CC):** But like...do you only get old stuff, then? Or you wouldn't have heard if somebody reported someone around our age missing or something?

**Austin (as Angie):** Someone *your* age missing?

**Sylvia (as CC):** Like the girl in the picture. Like have you heard anything about Britney Namor? I don't...

**Austin:** No reaction to that, but then she picks up the photo again.

**Austin (as Angie):** Which one of these? The girl, the young girl's Britney?

**Austin:** She says.

**Sylvia (as CC):** Yeah.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Looks closer. Sees the nametag.

**Austin (as Angie):** It does say Britney.

**Keith (as Nolan):** She went to our school, but she's gone, and no one remembers.

**Austin (as Angie):** How long has she been gone for?

**Dre (as Ronny):** We're pretty sure...

**Sylvia:** Out of character, do we know that?

**Austin:** Two days?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Dre:** She was with us at the jazz concert, right?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, the jazz concert was two days ago, yesterday was the stuff out in the marshland, and then today would be the third day.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You saw her two days ago.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Sylvia (as CC):** It's just been like two days, but everyone's being really weird about it, so.

**[Timestamp: 1:00:02]**

**Keith (as Nolan):** We forgot. We literally forgot.

**Austin (as Angie):** You forgot about what?

**Sylvia (as CC):** They forgot.

**Keith (as Nolan):** We forgot about her.

**Austin (as Angie):** About this girl? You...she disappeared and you forgot about her?

**Keith (as Nolan):** Yeah, until we saw her.

**Austin (as Angie):** Huh.

**Keith (as Nolan):** As a ghost.

**Austin (as Angie):** And this other one? You know this other one too? What's this say? I can't...

**Jack (as Frankie):** Olivia. No, we don't know who she is, either. And she looked...so we were in the—

**Austin (as Angie):** McGowan, okay. Huh.

**Jack (as Frankie):** We were in the woods, and we heard this saxophone music.

**Jack:** This is a moment where...I think this is extremely weird, and Frankie has sort of...it's been in this bubble of them experiencing it—

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** —and then them trying to sell the photo. And I think it starts flowing out, like this is the first adult that has at least listened.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack (as Frankie):** And we heard the saxophone music, and we followed them out there, and they were just there in the woods. The older one was listening to the younger one, and she was clapping, and they were all...they looked like they did in this picture, and we took a picture, and then we ran away, and then—

**Keith (as Nolan):** Tell her about what the sky did.

**Jack (as Frankie):** The sky was like...it didn't look good. It was like..

**Jack:** Just makes a sort of a shaking gesture with her hands.

**Sylvia (as CC):** Pretty goofed up.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Also there's a weird guy living in the boathouse out there.

**Austin:** Oh, that was a woman who was living in the boathouse.

**Dre:** Oh, you're right. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Keith:** And she just seemed to be living there. Although, now I'm remembering that she was in the woods...

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** It seemed like she had investigated what was in the woods and was not afraid of it.

**Austin:** Completely nonplussed. Completely like, yeah okay, whatever. Was more upset about you being there than whatever she had seen in the woods.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Jack:** She said "This place isn't safe." I'm not saying that, but she did say that.

**Austin:** She did say that, yeah. Yeah. I think that at this point, you see...can someone give me an empathy check here? Who is the best at empathy here?

**Sylvia:** I feel like I have a decent skill.

**Dre:** Not me.

**Keith:** Oh, I lost my Roll20. There it is. I don't think it's me.

**Jack:** I have a one in empathy.

**Austin:** It might be CC. CC is...

**Sylvia:** I have two in Empathize, yeah.

**Dre:** What are you—

**Austin:** And four in Heart, right?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.



**Jack:** There's like a tide has...

**Dre:** Yeah, I have one in Heart.

**Austin:** Empathize is Heart, right?

**Jack:** Something has shifted here, and I would like to...

**Austin:** Oh, actually Empathize is Mind, not Heart, which is...

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Dre:** Oh, I have three in that.

**Jack:** I have four in that.

**Dre:** [impressed] Mmm.

**Austin:** So total, CC has three, four five.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Someone can help with this, obviously it's just...you know, I'm gonna say it's probably Frankie helping, or Frank helping, because of having said something has changed here. Go ahead, CC.

**Keith:** Should I have refreshed my luck, by the way?

**Austin:** No, it's once a mystery, I believe.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Sylvia:** So that's...

**Austin:** I'll double check it, but...

**Sylvia:** How many dice? Six with the assist? Or...

**Austin:** It's whatever Mind plus Empathize plus one.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, okay. So, that would be...yeah.

**Jack:** Ooh.

**Austin:** No successes.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, damn.

**Austin:** Hate that. That's rough. Six d6, no successes. You can push if you'd like to. Which...you have to remember how—

**Keith:** Two ways to do that?

**Austin:** There are two or...I remember saying that in the podcast we both just listened to today. [Keith laughs]

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Let me see here. Yeah, here it is. Buh buh buh, nope. Failed rolls, here you go.

**Dre:** It's page 69 in the book.

**Austin:** Yeah. Thank you. [someone laughs]

**Sylvia:** Alright.

**Austin:** [reading] "When you push a roll, you must first check a condition. Pick any condition you feel fits the story, then reroll all the dice except those showing sixes. If the reroll is successful, the game master describes what happens. If the reroll also fails, you may not push again, but you can use a luck point or your pride. If the trouble came at a threat of a condition," which in this case I don't think...this did not. Then you may have to check two conditions if you push the roll but still fail. So in this case, if you'd like to, you could take a condition here in order to reroll these dice. There are a bunch of conditions, which is...they're minus one on any of the rolls, and they are somewhere in the book. They're not on this cheat sheet we have.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, I'm looking for them, but they don't seem to be listed on the Suffering Conditions page.

**Keith:** [interrupting] Scared. Broken.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's weird that they're not, right?

**Keith:** If you control F broken, which I remember is one, you'll probably...

**Austin:** Broken's like the big one, right?

**Keith:** Yeah. Yeah, it is.

**Dre:** Mmm.

**Keith:** It's like the one you get after you've gotten all of the other ones and haven't healed them.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah. That I remembered.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, the fail state one.

**Keith:** The other one we talked about was scared.

**Austin:** Oh there it is. Upset, scared, exhausted, injured.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Oh, you know what I bet they are? I bet they're all on your sheets. I bet we can just open your sheet here.

**Sylvia:** I looked. I didn't see them, but...

**Austin:** Oh, huh.

**Keith:** I think it's all the way at the bottom.

**Sylvia:** Oh yeah, no, they are.

**Austin:** Yeah, there they are. There they are.

**Sylvia:** I just missed it.

**Austin:** Yeah, mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** It's right under your stats.

**Austin:** So yeah, do you think it would make sense to mark one of these and reroll? Or do you want to not?

**Sylvia:** Um...

**Austin:** You could just take the failure here and not get any insight into what she's up to. Or you could spend your Pride. Not your Pride. Yeah, your Pride. I don't know how playing guitar would help here! [laughs]

**Sylvia:** Yeah, I don't think that would work here.

**Austin:** Or you could...do you have Luck points?

**Sylvia:** I have three, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, you have three Luck. So you could also spend a Luck to reroll, I believe, right?

**Sylvia:** And is the Luck rerolling all the dice or just one extra?

**Austin:** It's all the dice. It's all the dice, yeah.

**Sylvia:** Okay. I think I'll use—

**Austin:** Yeah, a Luck point lets you reroll failed dice, yep.

**Sylvia:** I think I'll use that, just because I don't know if a condition fits the scene we've been playing so far.

**Austin:** Sounds good. Yeah, go for it.

**Sylvia:** Alright.

**Austin:** Six d6.

**Sylvia:** [shocked] Buh!

**Austin:** Oh, brutal!

**Sylvia:** Worse.

**Jack:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** Brutal! No successes.

**Sylvia:** Wait a minute.

**Austin:** What's up?

**Sylvia:** I think I rolled the exact same numbers.

**Austin:** Three, four...

**Sylvia:** No, there's another four in the first one.

**Austin:** No, there's a four...

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Uh huh, that's the difference, yes. Uh huh, you got an extra three here.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** It would have been incredible.

**Sylvia:** One of the fours became a three in my second roll.

**Austin:** Yeah. It would have been incredible to have gotten it the exact same roll. That would have had to have been some some sort of success in my mind, no matter what.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So yeah, I just think...and the thing I'm gonna say here with that is that you get this blink of...there's something else...you feel like you've missed something in this moment.

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** And you feel like the opportunity for having seen it is closed, because she...and this is noticing something at the same time. I am still giving you something. One is she writes something down and puts it away, and then more importantly, her attitude just sort of shifts a little bit. And the openness that she had a moment ago kind of starts to retract. And you don't know how to...the answers you don't have are: What is her weak spot? How can I make her do something? What does she feel? What does she want? What will she do? Is she lying? You do not have any of those things.

**Dre:** Mmm.

**Austin:** So this is the most "Oh she's an adult, and I don't know how to read adults" moment you've had yet.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** She says:

**Austin (as Angie):** I really appreciate this, and I actually...could you wait right here? I have a quick phone call to make, but this is really...I don't know anything about your friend, but I do have to make a quick call, and I will let you know if I hear anything, and I'd like for you to just stay here, if that's okay.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Oh yeah, we'll wait.

**Austin (as Angie):** Great.

**Austin:** And she steps outside to the hallway.

**Sylvia (as CC):** We're not gonna wait, right?

**Keith (as Nolan):** [hushed] We've gotta listen in.

**Keith:** No.

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Keith (as Nolan):** [hushed] We have to listen in! Obviously, she knows something.

**Austin:** You hear her footsteps as she goes down the hallway. She's not just like right outside the door. She actually steps away away. You can peak out the door, and you see her take that turn, in fact.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Keith (as Nolan):** We have to go, and we have to be extremely quiet, and we have to listen to this.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Be really careful.

**Austin:** So what's that look like?

**Dre (as Ronny):** What are we listening to?

**Keith (as Nolan):** The phone call, to overhear...

**Dre (as Ronny):** Oh, okay, okay, okay, okay.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Because she was lying to us.

**Austin:** [soft laugh] That sounds like a sneak check to me.

**Dre:** Mm-hmm. That's body, right?

**Austin:** I believe that's body.

**Dre:** I think—

**Austin:** Let me double check.

**Dre:** Yeah, I think Ronny has felt not very useful for this so far—

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Dre:** And I think would be like:

**Dre (as Ronny):** Oh okay, yeah, I'll go follow her. You all wait here. I'll follow here. I'm gonna listen to what she does.

**Austin:** Wise. What is your...give me your sneak roll. What do you have in body? What do you have in sneak?

**Dre:** I have four in body, and I have...oh, I have zero in sneak.

**Austin:** [laughs] Okay. [Keith laughs]

**Dre:** Well.

**Austin:** Yikes!

**Keith:** Do you want help? I can help on this.

**Jack:** Four isn't bad, you know.

**Austin:** Eh, you need a six.

**Jack:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** So you could help. The two of you could sneak out together. That could be...

**Dre:** Okay.

**Austin:** One of you could be looking over their shoulder to make sure the maintenance person doesn't show up and fuck up the...

**Keith:** I have three in body but zero in sneak.

**Austin:** Oh, geez. Can you even...can you help without the skill?

**Keith:** Yeah, I think you can.

**Austin:** You can just help with just the thing?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Alright. Then go ahead and give me your...

**Dre:** That's a five d6.

**Austin:** Five d6, yeah. Hey, there's a six!

**Dre:** Yay!

**Austin:** There you go. You sneak slowly out. There is a moment where you do hear the maintenance person push the cart past, and Nolan is there to hold you for a second and wait for that to go by, and then you sneak around the corner, and you see her on the phone, on a cell phone. [chuckles] You realize now, or maybe the camera or the audience at home realizes, she has to do this to get to the one place in the basement that there's cell service. [Jack laughs]

**Dre:** Mmm.

**[Timestamp: 1:09:54]**

**Austin:** And she's...you can tell that also the connection is bad. And she's holding the photo that you gave her and looking close at it, and you hear her say:

**Austin (as Angie):** Yeah, McGowan. Yeah. Years. [pause] Yeah, they're in my office. Yeah, I'll keep them here. Who are you sending? [pause] Yeah, I mean, a little heavy handed, but... Yeah, I can...this could be a big break. [pause] Yeah. [pause] I don't think it'll come to that. Alright. Be safe.

**Austin:** And she hangs up. Meanwhile, back in the room, what are you two up to? Are you just sitting patiently?

**Sylvia:** I mean... [laughs softly] There was that drawer she didn't want us to look in.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Sylvia:** But like...

**Jack:** I mean, I think it's just gonna be money.

**Keith:** Oh, I glanced in there. It was just money and pens.



**Sylvia:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** You're not there.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Yeah. I mean—

**Austin:** I said it was money, pens, some files, stuff like that. But there was not like...

**Sylvia:** Okay.

**Keith:** You did say files. Hey, that's true.

**Austin:** I did. I did say files.

**Jack:** Frank is now afraid.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** But I think if, you know, if CC wanted to do a little desk investigation, [Austin laughs] Frank would be happy to keep point by the door.

**Sylvia:** I think I'm okay waiting for the others to get back, honestly.

**Austin:** Okay. [laughs]

**Sylvia:** Knowing that it's just pens and money, you know.

**Keith:** And files! I was wrong—

**Sylvia:** Files, fair.

**Jack:** There's something weird about her, you know?

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Jack:** I could be talked into checking the desk if you didn't want to check the desk.

**Keith:** Out of character...

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** This is extremely like...she seems like a Fox Mulder to me.

**Sylvia:** Fair.

**Jack:** I'm g—

**Keith:** Like, the guy at the front desk...

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Keith:** She's in the basement. She's doing weird investigation stuff. The guy at the front desk tried to turn us away like "this isn't a tabloid."

**Jack:** And then she saw it.

**Keith:** And then seemed to send us to the tabloid employee.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** That's my read, so maybe there's some cool stuff in this.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, I'm gonna dig through this desk.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Jack:** You know what I'm getting?

**Sylvia:** Would that be investigate? Or...

**Jack:** I'm getting Concern vibes. I'm getting big Concern vibes from this lady. [Austin laughs softly]

**Keith:** She is concerned or we should be concerned?

**Austin:** No, *the* Concern.

**Jack:** She works for *the* Concern.

**Keith:** Oh, *the* Concern.

**Jack:** Or she is adjacent to the Concern.

**Dre:** Mmm.

**Austin:** You begin to look through the fold— what are you looking for? Actually, this again sounds like an Investigation roll to me.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Find hidden objects, understand clues, break puzzles, survey a place or a situation.

**Sylvia:** I think specifically, and I have—just to get the numbers out of the way—a one in Investigate and then another three in Mind, so I'd be rolling four.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** I think specifically CC's looking for any file that might have one of the two names of the people in the photo on it, you know?

**Austin:** Uh huh. And then are you also getting help from Frank? Frank, are you helping with this?

**Jack:** Yes. I am keeping an eye out for...well, we've got people in the corridor to do that, so actually I think I am going to, after warily standing by for a second, join in. I am looking for anything that matches the pin that she was wearing, like a piece of symbology or a piece of...

**Austin:** Good, yeah, mm-hmm.

**Jack:** You know. I read magazines. There's lots of hidden messages.

**Austin:** [laughs] Yes. You do lots of puzzles.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Do you want to actually make the roll, Frank? Because you have way higher on this, I think. [Sylvia laughs] You have four Mind and three in...this is the thing you do, Frank. You have seven in Investigate plus Mind, whereas I think CC only has...

**Sylvia:** Four.

**Austin:** Four. So.

**Keith:** You're the snoop.

**Jack:** Sure.

**Austin:** You're the snoop.

**Jack:** I mean, this is Frank, right? I'm frightened of this, and I don't want to do it, but I'm really good at it, so I'm going to.

**Austin:** But if you do it— yeah. And if you do it with me, then I am confident enough to do it in some ways. So yeah, give me eight d6.

**Jack:** God, we've gotta roll an fucking six here.

**Austin:** I would hope.

**Jack:** [gasps]

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Keith:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** Not one. Not a single six.

**Sylvia:** Wow!

**Austin:** What's your Luck situation like?

**Jack:** I have enough...let me just pull up my character sheet. I definitely have enough Luck to reroll.

**Austin:** Yeah, you have Luck. You've got Luck. And you have Pride. Your Pride is "I was on Jeopardy." I don't know that that, again...this isn't a trivia situation.

**Jack:** There is a funnier way to deploy that as well, I think.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Jack:** I'm gonna take one luck away, and I'm gonna roll eight d6 again. Now listen, dice.

**Austin:** Uh huh. [Dre and Keith laugh]

**Jack:** Yes! Okay.

**Austin:** There you go.

**Dre:** There you go.

**Keith:** You got one.

**Austin:** Phew! Only one.

**Keith:** One six out of...what was it? Sixteen dice.

**Jack:** Sixteen dice.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh. Wild. Odds are just like that. So, questions. On a success, you can ask two questions: What is hidden here and where is it? What does it mean? What has happened here? How can I get into/out of/past something? What threats can I perceive here? and Where is it?

**Jack:** Hmm.

**Austin:** You define what "it" is here.

**Jack:** Okay.

**Austin:** Uh, you already said you were looking for something with the blossom logo thing on it, right? The cherry blossom pin that she has on.

**Jack:** Oh, the blossom pin, huh?

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm!

**Jack:** [slyly] I've heard that name before.

**Austin:** You sure have.

**Jack:** [laughs softly] Okay, yeah, so I am going to go: what is hidden here and where is it?

**Austin:** So, the first thing you notice as you're about to open that drawer, and let's say that this is the part of the two of you helping each other. Whoever is taking the lead on opening that drawer is like, wait a second, I've seen in a movie once that there can be alarmed drawers. [Sylvia laughs]

**Jack:** Hmm, hmm!

**Austin:** And you find a button underneath that you have to press to deactivate an alarm as you open the drawer. [someone whistles]

**Jack:** Oh, that's a good save.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So phew, good save. That was gonna go off if you'd failed both of these rolls. That would've been great. And inside, you find way more money. There's like \$500 in cash, or let's say \$430 in cash here now. And then a bunch of folders and some nice pens, and the folders are...there's a lot to...the folders are weird. It's weird stuff folders. It's—

**Keith:** Oh, these are weird stuff folders?

**Austin:** A blurry folder of a UFO.

**Keith:** Nice.

**Austin:** It is a sketch of some sort of creature. It is a... [chuckles] It is a photo of a lion.

**Keith:** Huh.

**Austin:** It is... [Sylvia chuckles] Yeah, uh huh.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** That is who this is, by the way. I don't know if...

**Sylvia:** I thought so. The name sounded familiar.

**Austin:** Uh huh. Angie Flores first—

**Keith:** You're saying that she is a lion?

**Austin:** She's a lion. No. [chuckles] She has a mighty roar.

**Sylvia:** We don't know what her fursona is, so.

**Jack:** That's true.

**Austin:** We don't know what her fursona is, no, that's true. She showed up in the Catch the Devil game that kicked off this season. Or it didn't kick it off. It was the second game in this season, when she was much younger, when the Bluff City Studios compound was flooded. She was there investigating it undercover.

**Dre:** Oh yeah!

**Austin:** Was a much more up-and-coming reporter at the time, was not shoved in the back corner of a basement. Seems like the ensuing years have not been positive for her.

**Keith:** [voice???] This is where they put you when you know the truth.

**Austin:** When you— yeah, uh huh. Hundred percent that. And there is...you know, that is the sort of stuff that's here. And it's a lot of notes. A lot of notes abt the tunnel project, but not...nothing new. These are the notes of a resigned conspiracy theorist who still believes but doesn't believe that pursuing any of it will get anywhere. There is a photo of her with a bunch of other people smiling. All of them are in nice suits. Again, old, twenty years ago, fifteen years ago. But you do find letterhead here. You find a letter here from someone...the letter is on an investigation...it says Blossom Investigations with the same logo and has an address, and the address is on the Black Horse Pike, which is the turnpike that runs right...that your high school, your middle school is on basically. You would guess it's, you know, kind of close to where your middle school is. In fact, if it's...neither of you know this, but I would say that if you share this information later with Ronny, he would recognize it as the airfield that his aunt works at. It's the airfield's address. And it says: "Need to go for a little while. We were wrong about who it is. -H." And that's it. And that is tied to some sort of, again, investigation firm, private eye company.

**Jack:** Based near the airport? Based at the airport?

**Austin:** At the airport, it seems?

**Jack:** [laughs] You know, you get your magazines, you get the little over-expensive cushion—

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** You check in with the supernatural investigators.

**Austin:** Uh huh, exactly.

**Keith:** And you pick up your extremely fancy cassette deck.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** Mmm.

**Austin:** And then, you know what, I'm gonna give— so, what question was that? Which question do you think that was?

**Jack:** That was...

**Austin:** Was that what here is hidden?

**Jack:** Yeah, what here is hidden and where is it?

**Austin:** And where is it?

**Jack:** I think so, yeah.

**Austin:** So, you see that, and actually I am gonna give you a second thing, which is you also get a...you find a cashed check. You know, probably she deposited it via digital...you know what I mean? It says “void” on the front of it. She did the deposit via an app.

**Jack:** Sure.

**Austin:** And then kept it instead of destroying it like she was supposed to. And it's written to her from a group...you don't know how to pronounce this. You've never seen this word before in your life. It is O-L-L-E-R-N-S-H-W. Ollerenshaw? Requisitions. I guess you were on Jeopardy, so you can read requisitions.

**[Timestamp: 1:20:24]**

**Jack:** The second word is...

**Austin:** But you've never read...yeah, but Ollerenshaw is a weird word. And so you know she's been paid by this group called Ollerenshaw Requisitions.

**Keith:** Have they come up before?

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Keith:** When did they come up? What was that from?

**Jack:** Ages ago.

**Austin:** A few times. They came up in the first Hector Hu arc, Noirlandia.

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** They are tied to the Concern. They are a group that moves stuff. They used to, at least.

**Jack:** They're like a shipping company, right?

**Austin:** They move stuff between Bluff and Blough, in the past. And I think that they have a Bluff City address. So when you look at the thing, it's a Bluff City address.

**Jack:** And of course—

**Austin:** So she's being paid— yeah, go ahead.



**Jack:** You look at a Bluff City address if you're from Atlantic City, and you go like: oh, a cute way of referring to Atlantic City.

**Austin:** No, at this point, the tunnels are operating. You know that Bluff City is a different place.

**Jack:** Oh shit, you're right. Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. You have never lived in a time when there were not the three cities.

**Jack:** The three cities, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, you're that young. You are the first tri-city generation.

**Jack:** So there's actually kind of a (frisson??? 1:21:28) there, right? Of it being like—

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** "Oh, huh, Bluff City's involved."

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah, uh huh. Or like "what the fuck's that mean?" [laughs] Do you know what I mean?

**Jack:** Yeah, totally.

**Austin:** What would you...this feels like seeing a check from someone in Minneapolis or something. ?ou know what I mean? Like, okay, weird.

**Jack:** Why...also, I'm eleven. This is hard for me to understand.

**Austin:** And also you're eleven, right, exactly. Us, outside...players at the table, this is someone who had a connection with...I mean, I guess I won't give the whole thing. What I'll say is that the letter from whoever H is seems much more dated and was deeper in the pile than this Ollerenshaw check. It seems like this check from Ollerenshaw is more recent. In fact, it has a deposit date on it or whatever that was probably like a year ago, and again she should have destroyed this check but just didn't. So yeah, you're...there is a story here. I don't know that it's a story that these kids have the context to understand, but it's very much about someone who believed and then fell into resignation, and alliances changed and shit like that. And we don't need to slow this down, because that's not the story of these kids and these missing people, but that is the story that you've stumbled into, because you went to the press where I knew this character existed, even though the press is not even on this map [laughs] and I did not prep anything. [Keith laughs] But if I have to play honestly, I have to tell you about this woman who used to have one allegiance and now has another one, so. So yeah, what's your second question?

**Jack:** I would love your input here, Sylvi. I am thinking “what threats can I perceive here?” because again, I'm concerned.

**Sylvia:** Ooh.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** No pun intended. [Sylvia laughs] But if you were aiming for something else there, I would also go for that.

**Sylvia:** No, I think that works out of the questions that we've got listed here.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** Yeah. No objections.

**Austin:** Yeah. I think there's a...what do you call a board? Like a pushpin board? And you're moving things around on it and looking under things. It's one of those things that's just covered in flyers and photos and a million other things. And you see a photo of a fifteen-year-old girl, and scrawled, or with an index card attached to it that says “Ollie McGowan,” and you remember Ollie is short for Olivia on the nametag. And it says underneath it, you know, “If you see any sign, call OSR.” Which just sounds like Old School Renaissance, but is actually Ollerenshaw Requisitions. But then underneath, it says: “Detain anyone who has seen her.” And maybe “detain” is underlined or something like that.

**Jack:** Shit.

**Austin:** And maybe this is the moment at which the other two rejoin you.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Dre (as Ronny):** We gotta go.

**Sylvia (as CC):** Yeah, we got...

**Dre (as Ronny):** She called somebody. They're coming to get us. We gotta go.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Yeah, we gotta go. They're gonna detain us.

**Austin:** And you start heading back out the door?

**Sylvia:** Yeah, but should we look for another exit? Like should we look for a staircase or something?

**Jack:** Mmm.

**Austin:** Yeah, because she's coming back the way you came.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You know, she was out by the elevator, and if you go back the route that you took, she will see you.

**Jack:** Yeah. An alternative route, I think.

**Austin:** That sounds like a sneak to me.

Yep.

**Keith (as Nolan):** We could just bowl right past her.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Yeah.

**Jack (as Frankie):** [sighs] I don't...there's something going on here, and I want to get out of here. You know. She might catch us. You know, what if she catches us?

**Dre (as Ronny):** Mmm. I mean, she can't catch me. Maybe I run towards her, and she follows me, and then you all get out of here.

**Austin:** Ooh.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Also, we could start screaming. No one likes a screaming kid. This is not a place where kids are supposed to be screaming. I don't think she can risk that sort of attention.

**Sylvia (as CC):** Are people gonna hear us screaming down here?

**Dre (as Ronny):** Yeah, I don't know if there's anyone else down here.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Yeah, there's other people down here. Probably there's other people. [pause] I'm pretty sure there would be someone else down here.

**Sylvia:** It's just the ominous hum of the empty hallways and the lights. [Keith laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You remember screaming her name and it just falling into nothing.

**Jack:** I mean, I'm up for trying that.

**Austin:** Trying what? There were a bunch of ideas.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, which idea?

**Jack:** A combination of the running and screaming. [Sylvia and Keith laugh loudly]

**Dre:** Mmm, okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** Uh huh, uh huh, uh huh.

**Sylvia:** Oh, great.

**Austin:** So what do you do? Who's doing what? Who's rolling what? Who's doing what?

**Keith:** I'm gonna roll for...wow, what do I roll for this?

**Austin:** And I think you all may need to roll this to get out of here safe individually.

**Keith:** This would be Body Move, right?

**Austin:** Depends on what you're doing.

**Keith:** Running and screaming.

**Austin:** Running and screaming feels like—

**Keith:** Well, if someone tries to grab me, I'll scream.

**Austin:** Right.

**Keith:** But I'm just gonna do a run.

**Austin:** If you're just trying to run, then that's Body and Move. If you're trying to sneak around, that's Body and Sneak. I think if you're trying to...I guess I can imagine Lead working here as a way of giving everyone bonus dice, right? Actually, I don't know if you have time to prepare for a difficult situation in this situation. But yeah, it's probably one of those two.

**Keith:** Maybe we have already rehearsed a getaway, because we are mischievous children.

**Austin:** Yeah, you've never been in this place before though. I feel like that throws any sort of preparation out. I think it's Move or Sneak. I think that's what makes the most sense here. Charm if...maybe Heart Charm is screaming to get away if it comes to that, but step one is Move or Sneak.

**Keith:** Presumably, if we have to...if we do the move, it's gonna...like, are we all gonna pick the same one? I'm fine with that, if that's what we're doing.

**Austin:** I don't think you have to.

**Keith:** Okay. So the good movers can move and the good sneakers can sneak?

**Austin:** I think so.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** I think that that makes sense to me. Again, maybe I'm wrong about that, but I think that that's...

**Keith:** Okay. Yeah, I'm slightly better at move, so I will do that.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And you're looking for a back stairwell or something, right, basically? Instead of going down the...or are the movers trying to barge past her and into the elevator, and the sneakers are looking for a way out, a sneaky way out?

**Sylvia:** Oh man.

**Dre:** Yeah, I was gonna be barging.

**Sylvia:** I guess a better question here is: is Move better for all of us? Are we all going to want to roll Move? Because if that's the case, then maybe we should just try and run past her.

**Austin:** Yeah, I don't even know if anyone has sneak.

**Sylvia:** I don't have any, yeah.

**Jack:** I'm gonna be real. My situation here is not good any way I cut it.

**Austin:** Yeah? Oh yeah, your Body's a one! Yikes!

**Keith:** Maybe you—

**Sylvia:** She's a little nerd! Leave her alone!

**Austin:** A little nerd, a little fuckin' nerd. [Jack and Dre laugh]

**Keith:** Do you think maybe you could Investigate your way out of here?

**Austin:** No, I don't think it works like that.

**Jack:** I could use my Iconic Item, but I only get to do that once!

**Austin:** I don't think that's true, is it? Is Iconic Item— also, wait, we have not talked about you having your dog with you.

**Jack:** Yeah, bringing it to the...we wouldn't have got in really, yeah.

**Austin:** From school, yeah, uh huh.

**Jack:** No. Flashback to my house, and Tiny is just absolutely destroying a book on the floor.  
[Austin and Keith laugh]

**[Timestamp: 1:30:00]**

**Austin:** Yes, definitely.

**Keith:** And a particularly expensive book.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Maybe it was signed. [Jack and Austin laugh] If I know one thing about rowdy animals, it's that they somehow always target the one thing that's the worst thing for them to have targeted.

**Austin:** [laughs] Yep.

**Jack:** At that point, I can start cashing in my Luck or taking Conditions or whatever, you know.

**Keith:** It's your Pride that you can only use once, I think, not your...

**Austin:** Pride is once, that's correct.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, for sure. You know, maybe if someone else gets bonus successes and can give success to another kid, that's possible.

**Keith:** Okay. Since we're talking items...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Can I use my Iconic Item, roll it at her feet, [Sylvia laughs] cause her to slip, and then we all run past her? Thereby Leading, a Heart action which I am quite good at.

**Austin:** Yeah, I'd allow that. But the thing is, if it fails, you might not get that marble back.

**Keith:** It won't fail. [Sylvia laughs]

**Austin:** What's your Lead? You don't have Lead, do you?

**Keith:** I do. I have two Lead and four Heart.

**Austin:** Oh, you have two Lead. Okay, that's six.

**Keith:** Plus two from the Iconic Item. That's eight.

**Austin:** Yeah, that's eight!

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Okay. We certainly haven't just recently seen an example of more than eight dice not giving you...

**Jack:** Oh.

**Keith:** And I have four luck left.

**Austin:** Okay, yeah, you're gonna be fine.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, let's do that.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** What's Lead say? Just for the record, Lead is not explicitly written like this, but I'm gonna allow it. [reading] "The ability to make your friends work together to help them focus on the task at hand in difficult situations and soothe them when they are scared. If you have time with the other kids, you may inspire and prepare them for a difficult situation. You roll to overcome the trouble, and your successes become a dice pool. You may in the upcoming

scenes distribute bonus dice to the other kids when you roll to overcome troubles, but only if they do as you say. [laughs] You cannot give these dice to yourself. If you fail to Lead, you must check a condition and ask the other kids how the relationship has been hurt.” [someone whistles] The thing is, I think maybe Lead maybe might not be the thing here, because the thing...you could do Lead to do this thing.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** Get dice for other people.

**Keith:** Right, okay.

**Austin:** Each die you get gives a bonus. Serious dice. If you get one success, you give everyone two dice. If you get two successes, you give everyone four dice. If you get six successes, you give everyone six dice, which is incredible.

**Keith:** That sounds like a lot.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And so Luck allows me to reroll everything that isn't a six, so I could spend a Luck just to go for extra six. I love it.

**Austin:** A hundred percent, you could do that, yes.

**Keith:** Alright, let's go for it.

**Austin:** Also, wait, wait, wait. Wait, wait, wait. I want to make sure I read that right, in terms of the dice pool. Your success becomes a dice pool that you can distribute bonus dice to the other kids. It's not two per, it's a total thing. So if you get three successes, that's six dice total, so that is how you would give everyone a bonus of two dice, so that's not as good as what I just said.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** But it's still not bad.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** The alternative—

**Keith:** If I can help at least Frank, that would...because Frank is the only one I think that's really not good at this.



**Austin:** Yeah. The alternative that I was gonna say is we could just do a direct roll to try to knock her over with the ball, with the marble somehow, or make her trip on the marble, but I don't even know what the hell that would be. I think that would be Move?

**Keith:** That would be Force, I think. That would be Body Force.

**Austin:** You're right. That would be Body Force, which maybe you're not as good at?

**Keith:** I'm okay. I only have four.

**Austin:** You're okay at it.

**Keith:** That's still fine. Plus two is six.

**Austin:** Plus two is six. That's alright. I would say—

**Keith:** Well, and then what would happen? Would it not be a roll for anyone because she's on the ground?

**Austin:** Yeah, 'cause she's on the ground for sure for sure, whereas I think the—

**Keith:** That sounds more efficient but less...

**Austin:** That's more efficient.

**Keith:** Yeah, it's more efficient.

**Austin:** It's more efficient, but it's riskier. You still have Luck.

**Keith:** It's riskier in that there's more of a chance that I would have to use Luck, but I was probably going to use Luck anyway to get as many sixes as I could. So let's just do it. Let's do that.

**Austin:** Alright. Yeah.

**Keith:** Slash roll. Six d6.

**Austin:** Yep.

**Keith:** Oop, not rool. Not R-O-O-L. Roll. Boom, three sixes.

**Jack:** Whoa!

**Austin:** Three sixes! So you get two bonus effects.

**Dre:** Damn.

**Austin:** Give a success to another kid; impress, frighten, or humiliate; pin your opponent; take something from your opponent; your opponent is knocked unconscious—

**Sylvia:** Oh my god.

**Keith:** Holy moly.

**Austin:** You don't need to roll to overcome the exact same trouble in the future; or you avoid any collateral damage.

**Keith:** Wait.

**Austin:** You get two of those bonus effects.

**Keith:** Okay. So one of them is I can do this trick again for free later?

**Austin:** You don't need to overcome the exact same trouble in the future.

**Sylvia:** Okay. [laughs]

**Dre:** So if she shows up to chase us later.

**Austin:** So if she shows up to chase you again, yes, a hundred percent.

**Keith:** Okay, that's maybe a little more...

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** But like if someone else...if a cop showed up, you would not suddenly be able to do this again.

**Sylvia:** That would be so funny, though, if you could.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Keith:** Okay, alright, I'm leaning towards one of these. Alright, I'm not gonna pin her. I don't need to do that.

**Austin:** Two of them! You get two of these!

**Keith:** Yeah, yeah. I'm not gonna pin her. [Sylvia laughs] Okay, I know what I'm gonna take. Okay, okay. Knocked unconscious, don't need it.

**Dre:** You don't wanna go full Home Alone here?

**Keith:** Okay, I'm going to impress her.

**Austin:** Uh huh?

**Keith:** And also take the \$500 that was in the drawer. [Sylvia laughs loudly]

**Austin:** God. Alright, so you're like, alright, okay, step one: and you take the \$500 in the drawer.

**Keith:** Yep.

**Austin:** You're like, alright, step two: I'm gonna fling this marble. [laughter continues]

**Jack:** Wait, has she appeared here?

**Austin:** And then you're like, step three...

**Sylvia:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** I mean, this is happening, right, as I'm narrating I guess, right?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I guess it's just, with three successes it definitely works. Trips on the marble— sees the four of you and is like:

**Austin (as Angie):** Where are you go—

**Austin:** And then by the time she can finish her sentence, has tripped on this marble, which bounces behind her into the open elevator. Someone else has just come down through the elevator, so it's open, and the four of you run into it, hit the button to go up, and you're out. Yeah. How are you getting home? Because now I've just realized you haven't called for a pickup or anything at this point. You didn't set up a time that would have been exactly at this moment, probably.

**Jack:** [laughs] And we have \$570. [Keith laughs]

**Austin:** And you have 500...no, no, you have 500 total.

**Jack:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** It's 500 total. It was...she had like a \$500 slush fund she'd been saving for moments like this just in case, you know, and she gave you 70 from it.

**Jack:** This poor woman.

**Austin:** And now you have the rest of it. Uh huh. And now you're upstairs. I think the receptionist looks at you and says like:

**Austin (as Bryan):** Thanks for coming in.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Thanks, Bryan.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Can you call us a cab? [Austin and Keith laugh]

**Austin (as Bryan):** Yeah, of course.

**Jack (as Frankie):** We were supposed to...our mum was supposed to come and pick us up, but she didn't. Or something.

**Austin:** He says:

**Austin (as Bryan):** One second. I have a number.

**Austin:** And calls, beep boop boop beep beep, and...

**Austin (as Bryan):** Um, I need a cab here at the press. Yep. Alright, eight minutes. Great.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Thank you. And you can charge that to...

**Jack:** No.

**Austin:** No. [laughs] He says:

**Austin (as Bryan):** [incredulous] No.

**Keith:** Worth a try.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith (as Nolan):** It would be really nice if you had done that.

**Austin (as Bryan):** It's not a thing I can do.

**Dre (as Ronny):** We'll go ahead and wait outside for the cab.

**Jack (as Frankie):** Let's go.

**Austin:** Ding! As you leave the front door, the elevator is here again. How are you gonna—

**Jack:** We should like dive into a bush, hide behind a trash can or a newspaper dispenser. We just have to hide for...eight.

**Austin:** Eight minutes.

**Jack:** We have to hide for eight minutes.

**Austin:** I'm being very generous. I've gotten cabs in New Jersey before, in South Jersey before. Eight minutes is very generous.

**Jack:** Austin, are you gonna start an eight step clock to the cab arriving?

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Sylvia:** God.

**Jack:** Yeah, I think some sort of hiding.

**Austin:** Someone has to find a hiding spot here, for sure. I'll let this be a single roll, since you have a moment here to find a spot, but who's trying to lead this sneak effort? Again, I don't think anyone's particularly sneaky, but...oh boy.

**Keith:** I think it might be Ronny.

**Austin:** With four Body?

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Four Body and one Sneak. Do you have one Sneak?

**Austin:** No Sneak.

**Dre:** I have no Sneak.

**Keith:** Oh, just four Body, okay.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Jack:** But with some help and possibly some Luck if needs be.

**Austin:** Yeah, with some help.

**Dre:** Yeah.

**Keith:** I can't believe I have the second highest Sneak with zero.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Keith:** And three Body. [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah. Alright, well that's four, five with help.

**Jack:** Yeah, I'll help. I'll help.

**Austin:** Ay, six! There we go. There it is. Where do you hide? Where do you find hiding spots here, Ronny?

**Dre:** Ohh.

**Austin:** It's like a parking lot with some bushes.

**Dre:** Yeah, they just have a big planter that's way overgrown.

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh. So you just hide behind it?

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** As a group. You see her rush out and look around in every direction, and you hear her go back inside, and she says:

**Austin (as Angie):** Where'd those kids go?

**Austin:** And Bryan says:

**Austin (as Bryan):** Oh, they got a cab. It shouldn't be here yet, though. They should just be outside, you know?

**Austin:** And she says...at this point, the door's closed, but you hear her asking another question, and her voice is a little loud, and then she comes outside, and she's like:

**Austin (as Angie):** [under breath] Fuck. [sighs] God damnit.

**Austin:** And takes her phone out again and calls a number and says:

**Austin (as Angie):** How far away are you? [pause] Alright. Yeah, they may have...little brats. [sighs] Yeah. Alright.

**Austin:** And hangs up.

**Keith:** I can tell she's impressed.

**Austin:** Very impressed. [chuckles]

**Dre:** Or concussed. [Jack laughs softly]

**Austin:** Yeah. Waits by the door, looking out across the parking lot, and then your cab pulls up, and pulls up right in front of the front door, and I'm gonna say I'll let it ride. You're able to rush to the cab quickly, before she can...she's not gonna tackle one of you, but she is like:

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin (as Angie):** Hey! Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey! Stop! [Jack laughs]

**Keith (as Nolan):** Hurry, an adult is chasing us. [Austin and Dre laugh]

**[Timestamp: 1:40:01]**

**Austin:** And in fact, as you get in, and there's kind of a...what's this cab driver like? Does anyone have a good cab driver on deck? [Sylvia laughs] I actually want to say...go ahead, Sylvi, what's up?

**Sylvia:** No, I had the friendly skeleton from Halloweentown. I don't have anything. [Jack and Dre laugh]

**Austin:** Not...no, sorry, not, yeah.

**Sylvia:** Yeah, it's all good.

**Austin:** It's fine.

**Jack:** He's not friendly (??? 1:40:22) though.

**Keith:** What was that guy's name?

**Jack:** What is that guy's name? Uh...

**Sylvia:** Benny? I think it's Benny.

**Jack:** Benny, Benny.

**Keith:** I think it's Benny.

**Austin:** [sighs] I don't have this guy on deck. I don't have Benny from...

**Sylvia:** Don't worry about it.

**Austin:** I feel bad about it. I mean, I haven't seen it in such a long time.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Anyway. You know, looks over his shoulder. I want to say he's like a middle aged dude with a big mustache, balding, you know, classic cab driver shit. Says:

**Austin (as cab driver):** [Jersey accent] Ah, four. One of you gotta get up front.

**Dre:** I think Ronny scrambles over the...

**Austin:** Like across the middle.

**Dre:** Yeah. [Sylvia laughs]

**Austin (as cab driver):** Hey, get out! You walk around! Oh, kids, I swear. Where are you going?

**Austin:** And, you know, he's already pulling out, but as he pulls out of the press place, a black town car pulls in, and you see Angie get in the backseat of it, and it turns around and begins to slowly pursue you very casually.

**Jack:** Fuck.

**Austin (as cab driver):** So where are you kids going?

**Keith:** Um...we shouldn't head straight home. We should go somewhere.

**Dre:** Yeah, what time of day is it?

**Austin:** Like 4 p.m., 5 p.m.



**Dre:** Is it...

**Austin:** The newspaper's shutting— yeah, probably like 4 p.m., because you got here at like 3:30 or something, right?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And you didn't spend that much time here.

**Dre:** I know what we do.

**Jack:** We got here at 3:30, stole \$500.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Dre:** We go back to school, because I know that Mr. Garrett works late on whatever day this is.

**Austin:** Love it. Yeah, sure. And you know the school, right?

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** You could hide in the school a bunch of places, probably. So he says:

**Austin (as cab driver):** Alright, yeah. I'll take you to the Atlantic City Middle School.

**Austin:** Gets on the Black Horse Pike, starts going east towards the city.

**Keith:** Can we tell him to try and give them the slip?

**Austin:** You can try!

**Jack:** If a child...if I was a taxi driver, and a child said to me, [muffled laughter] "That nondescript town car behind me is following me. Give them the slip," I would go like, [disbelieving] "Oh, yeah, uh huh."

**Austin:** Like I said, you could try!

**Jack:** "Such a good imagination."

**Keith:** I'm gonna try.

**Austin:** What are you rolling? What's going on here?

**Keith:** What's his name?

**Austin:** You see a nameplate that says...

**Jack:** Oh, like a license? Like a laminated...

**Austin:** Yeah, one of those laminated...one second, I got a good...one second here.

**Jack:** On the sun shield.

**Austin:** Exactly. It says...uh, that's a boring name. One second. Damn, getting nothing but boring names here.

**Keith:** John Car-drive.

**Austin:** John Car-drive, that's...

**Dre:** Mm-hmm.

**Sylvia:** Benny Skellington.

**Austin:** Oh, here— [Dre laughs] Here we go. I got one. Fucking Cameron Castle. Cameron B. Castle.

**Dre:** Oh, that's good.

**Keith:** Cameron B. Castle and we know that.

**Jack:** And he *doesn't* work for the Concern?

**Austin:** [laughs] Uh, you know, who could say? Maybe he used to, right? I do think Castle is one of the Concern names. Yeah, Cam. Yeah, on top of having the license there, he also has just a big thing hanging from his rearview mirror that just has his name. It says "Cam!" It says "Cam," and it's like the Irish flag colors there, so. [Jack laughs]

**Keith:** Okay.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Uh, excuse me, Cam.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Yeah, what can I do for you?

**Keith (as Nolan):** I don't mean to...there's some adults that have been bothering us, and I think they're following us.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Adults bothering you, that's no good. What, I should call the cops?

**Keith (as Nolan):** Um...no.

**Austin (as Cameron):** I got the car phone here. I could dial 'em up for you.

**Keith (as Nolan):** No, we're...that's...

**Austin (as Cameron):** Built right into the console, that way you never lose it.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Oh, wow.

**Jack:** Frankie leans forward.

**Keith (as Nolan):** We're afraid that that might draw unwanted attention. Could you just maybe give 'em the slip?

**Austin (as Cameron):** Ah, I get it. Kids don't like cops these days. Not enough role models in the cops these days. They gotta make shows again about cops. Cops'll help you. [Sylvia laughs] What, uh, give 'em the slip?

**Keith (as Nolan):** Yeah, give 'em the slip.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Cops'll...hmm, whoof, that's a little risky.

**Keith (as Nolan):** There's an extra 20 in it for ya if you give 'em the slip.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Extra 20, that adds up. That'll add up. Uh...I get 20 per slip?

**Keith (as Nolan):** Yeah, if they find us again, and you need to re-slip...

**Austin (as Cameron):** A double slip, 40.

**Keith (as Nolan):** I will give you another 20, yes.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Mmm, risky. 25.

**Keith (as Nolan):** 25 per slip. Deal.

**Austin:** Actually, give me a roll. Give me a roll. Give me a roll.

**Keith:** Okay. [laughs] I thought he was asking for a roll of cash, like, give me...

**Austin:** Give me a... [all laugh]

**Keith:** No, not 25, I want a whole roll.

**Austin:** I want a whole roll. Give me the whole roll. 500, actually. [laughter continues]  
Coincidentally. What are you rolling? Is this charm?

**Keith:** Yeah, I guess it's charm, yeah. What happens if I just click on here? It says Bonus Dice: zero. Is that gonna automatically add my Heart?

**Austin:** I don't...click on where? I don't see the thing you're talking about.

**Keith:** If I click the word Charm? It goes...

**Austin:** Oh, try it. I don't know.

**Keith:** Okay, so let's see how many dice this rolls.

**Austin:** Oh! Look at that! [laughs] Zero successes! [Jack laughs]

**Keith:** Nice. Great. I like that style of doing it.

**Austin:** That's fun.

**Keith:** I am gonna use a Luck and reroll.

**Austin:** Yeah, sounds good.

**Keith:** One.

**Austin:** One success. There we go. I hate not being able to see the dice here?

**Keith:** Yeah, I don't like that.

**Austin:** So let's not do this.

**Keith:** I will not press that reroll again, but we...

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Sylvia:** If you mouse over the part where it says the number and successes, you can see.

**Austin:** Oh.

**Keith:** Oh, okay.

**Sylvia:** It's like when we would use it in Dungeon World.

**Dre:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** Oh, good, good, good.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** Yeah, this is fine. I like this. This is real pretty. Alright.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** He goes:

**Austin (as Cameron):** Yeah, 25. 25, we got a deal. I'll slip 'em. Give 'em a slip.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Alright, thank you Cam.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Slip 'em up, slip 'em out. Yep, hand's out, money in. Hand out, money in.

**Keith:** Alright, I do it.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Thank you. Slip!

**Austin:** [laughs] And gets onto the...turns off the main road here and starts going down a side road, a side...what do you call it? Just like a suburban, you know, into the neighborhood here, into what is Pleasantville, New Jersey. And like goes around a weird curvy road and then goes down a little place and then pulls into a garage, like a house garage and closes the garage door, and he says:

**Austin (as Cameron):** Everyone be quiet.

**Dre (as Ronny):** [quietly] Wait, do you live here?

**Austin (as Cameron):** Shut up, kid. [Keith laughs]

**Keith (as Nolan):** Hey, we paid you.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Shh!

**Austin:** And says:

**Austin (as Cameron):** One second.

**Austin:** And hits a button, and his rearview mirror turns into a video screen.

**Jack:** [laughing] This guy!

**Austin:** And the video screen is like his nest camera out front, his home security camera that's watching outside, but it's being projected into his rearview mirror as if it's a TV screen or a monitor or you know a phone screen or something.

**Dre (as Ronny):** Whoa.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Shh. I said shut up.

**Dre (as Ronny):** [whispering] Sorry.

**Austin:** And you see the black town car drive past. And then there's another beat. And he opens the garage door again, and he slowly backs out.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Yeah, I happen to live in the neighborhood. I figured I'd just drop in, give us a little cover.

**Keith (as Nolan):** A little slip?

**Austin (as Cameron):** A little slip. So, single slip, that's 25 so far. [Jack laughs]

**Austin:** And begins to make his way back to the...

**Jack:** He's not confident.

**Austin:** The main road. Yeah, uh huh. [Sylvia laughs] And goes back to your school and drops you off.

**Sylvia:** Sorry, no, he's looking out for any other black town cars—

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Sylvia:** —so he can pretend it's the same car.

**Austin:** Yeah. [laughter]

**Austin (as Cameron):** Yeah, that's a second slip right there.

**Sylvia:** Yeah.

**Keith (as Nolan):** Hey, that's a different license plate!

**Austin (as Cameron):** Eh, triple slip. That's gonna be 75.

**Jack:** What's this guy's second trick? If his first trick is going to his own garage. [laughter continues]

**Austin:** Eh, you'd have to...just go into someone else's? He has like the Watchdogs button that lets him hack any garage door opener, and he can go in.

**Jack:** This guy's gotta be from Bluff City, right? This is a Bluff City taxi driver.

**Austin:** Almost certainly. He's like retired here, yeah. His name is Cameron Castle, a hundred percent. [Jack laughs]

**Austin (as Cameron):** Yeah, this is all Bluff tech. You know, I felt like moving back to...I'm from Atlantic City. I moved to Bluff. I did some work there. Came back, got a bunch of stuff, started a family, you know, settled down, normal stuff. Got my own cab company. I do some work for the press every now and then, don't worry about it. Anyway, here's the school. Give me my money. [Jack laughs]

**Keith (as Nolan):** Okay.

[music begins: [\*To Be Young Near the Shore\*](#) by Jack de Quidt]

**Austin:** It's like \$13. It's not a far ride, so he's very happy he made that \$25 tip, so.

**Keith:** Okay, well, we'll give another 25, total for 50.

**Austin (as Cameron):** Oh, I love it. Thank you.

**Austin:** And lets you all off at the middle school.