

## Bluff City 41: America's Playground Pt. 05

Transcriber: robotchangeling

**Jack (as Melinda):** I can get it from Dad, but it's...I can't take very long, because we got this whole thing going on, Cattie. And, you know, I was hoping you'd sort of help me with that, but I'm prepared to do a favor for you. And then we can sort of see how it goes from there, right?

**Janine (as Cattie):** Look, if this is about the watch thing, the watch thing can wait. This is way more important. He is not going to stick around, and he pays us a lot, and this is very important. If we don't get that puppet, he's gonna...I don't know. He'll find another puppet. He's threatened before.

[music begins: "America's Playground"]

**Jack (as Melinda):** Wow. Are you okay?

**Art (as Marlon):** I'm not okay.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Oh! Oh my god. Um, sit down. Let me get you some...let me get you a glass of water. What happened? Where's the doll?

**Art (as Marlon):** The doll is perhaps my most incredible success.

**Jack (as Melinda):** [surprised] Oh.

**Art (as Marlon):** Of my entire life. But you can't...you can't look at it.

**Jack (as Melinda):** What?

**Art (as Marlon):** I'm not sure it's safe.

**Jack (as Melinda):** To what?

**Art (as Marlon):** To be perceived.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Uh, why?

**Art (as Marlon):** It's an immortal doll.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Mm. Mm. Yeah. No, I understand. But, I mean—

**Art (as Marlon):** [shaken] You don't understand.

[cut]

**Austin (as Eloise):** [panicking] Melinda! Melinda!

**Jack (as Melinda):** Why are you attached to the balloon?

**Austin (as Eloise):** I'm trying to pull it down, but I'm not heavy enough!

**Jack (as Melinda):** You're not heavy enough!

**Austin (as Eloise):** Just like...I think someone said this before, but I don't remember who suggested it! I'm trying to reel, but it's not helping!

**Jack (as Melinda):** Do you want me to pull the rope up?

**Austin (as Eloise):** Yes!

**Jack (as Melinda):** Okay, hold on as tightly as you can! Weird family, we need to pull the rope up. My friend has gotten stuck to the balloon!

**Austin (as William):** Oh. Everyone, grab a part of the rope. Like the time we won the tug of war Olympics.

**Jack (as Honeybear):** Come on children, we beat Greece!

**Art (as Muscles):** Ah yes, Father, our stunning patriotic win. [Jack laughs]

**Keith (as Federati):** I'll clutch the rope in my teeth!

[cut]

**Art (as Pomp):** [sighs] My friends really want to do this, and this is my last chance. I'm gonna go north to...well, ironically, Princeton. And, but, you know. And then I'm not gonna...I'm not gonna be on the boardwalk anymore. I mean, the boardwalk's probably gonna fail. But this moment for me is over. And I need this connection. I need this...I need this moment to carry me through that time.

**Janine:** I think the horse is convinced.

[song ends]

**Art:** You know, I think we get lo— we poke around the woods a little more, and we arrive at the clearing just in time for the rest of the whoever is gonna show up here.

**Austin:** Oh, which we don't—

**Art:** Whatever's gonna make sense after the next scene.

**Austin:** Oh, okay. Yes.

**Art:** That's who walks into the clearing, as Pomp and Princeton the Powdered Sugar Horse come in.

**Austin:** Well, I think we're at that next scene, then, which I feel like has to be a Sank scene.

**Keith:** I do feel that way.

**Austin:** Because of literally Sank being the only person who hasn't done a scene in this set of scenes, right?

**Keith:** Yeah, despite having been in about half of them.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** I've been moving, moving around.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** Putting work in.

**Keith:** So. I mean, I've got to go back to Robbin and the Bat Man.

**Austin:** Yeah, this has to be this time.

**Keith:** This has to be finally Robbin and the Bat Man's time. And I think I'm still trailing them, seeing what they're doing. The trucks have to be here. There's nothing else to do, besides resolve that.

**Austin:** Yeah, it has to be go time, at this point, right?

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And so, I think we get the...do we want to do a coin flip to see if the, you know, heads, the inexperienced person is in...?

**Austin:** We think it's 50/50? We think that's what the odds are that we've established?

**Keith:** Well, that the inexperienced driver is in the truck with the...

**Austin:** Oh, right, right.

**Keith:** That's definitely 50/50. And then maybe that gives—

**Austin:** Yeah, that's 50/50 for sure.

**Keith:** I kind of almost feel like Robbin and the Bat Man have to do like a roll roll.

**Austin:** Yeah. Agreed.

**Keith:** And they...

**Austin:** They get a bonus if it's the rookie.

**Keith:** Right. Yes. And they're helping each other.

**Austin:** All right.

**Keith:** So it's two dice.

**Austin:** Let's do a—

**Keith:** Or three if they get this.

**Austin:** [laughs] Right.

**Janine:** What are Bat Man— the Bat Man— sorry, Robbin and the Bat Man's Corp slash Cred stats at?

**Austin:** Good question.

**Keith:** I think they're—

**Austin:** We'll get there. Let's—

**Keith:** It's gotta be three, right?

**Austin:** Yeah, they're just regular folks. Right? They're making—

**Keith:** It's their first scene, so they're three/three.

**Austin:** [laughs] That's right. They didn't do a setup scene. I don't know, you don't think they've done a setup scene by deciding to rob a... [Jack laughs]

**Keith:** Okay. Okay, sure. They're two Corp, four Cred.

**Austin:** Yeah, and this is definitely a Cred scene. Let's do the one, let's do the coin flip. One is it's the rookie.

**Keith:** I'll do it. [typing] Unless someone else has it.

**Austin:** I got it.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** Hey, it's the rookie!

**Keith:** It's the rookie!

**Austin:** So.

**Keith:** This is three D6.

**Austin:** Wait, wait, wait. Let's set it up.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** Let's slow. Let's hit the brakes, like the rookie had to. Axle goes flying off the side of the car, or the wheel does.

**Keith:** Yep. Been there.

**Austin:** Wheel falls off the axle. You're like, "Oh, god." The other truck doesn't realize it at first, you know, pulls ahead, stops about three or four blocks away, realizes what's going on, and is like trying to do a K turn to turn around, and that's like a whole thing. In these streets that are not built for trucks, by the way. And the rookie gets out and is very, like:

**Austin (as rookie):** Aw, crap. Geez.

**Keith:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** And is like trying to figure out what's going on. And then they get their roll. Is there another guard in this— is it just the rookie? It's the rookie plus a guard, right? We've established.

**Keith:** Yeah, we've got a guard and a rookie.

**Austin:** All right.

**Keith:** Presumably—

**Austin:** Rookie's like:

**Austin (as rookie):** I'll handle it.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin (as rookie):** Don't worry about it.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin (as rookie):** I'll get the winch.

**Austin:** Not the winch. The, uh... [Keith and Austin laugh] The rookie says "winch," and the other guy's like, "Uhh..."

**Keith:** Well, maybe this is—

**Austin:** "Do you mean the jack?"

**Keith:** The jack, sure. So, but here's the question. Okay, there's no tow trucks. That's out of the question.

**Austin:** Yeah. Oh, no, absolutely.

**Keith:** But we did get the intel from the mechanic who's like, the trucks break every like 50 trips, and they have to come here. So maybe there—

**Austin:** That was not a mechanic. That was— the person who had that piece of info was the person who loads and unloads the trucks.

**Keith:** Oh, okay.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** I'm just misremembering. Okay, yeah.

**Jack:** Oh, right. That extremely untrustworthy woman.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh huh.

**Keith:** But she was right, 'cause they were all right.

**Austin:** They were all right.

**Keith:** All right. So we're looking for under a four.

**Austin:** Three D6. Under a four.

**Keith:** Three.

**Austin:** That's a three. That's a success! [Austin and Jack laugh]

**Keith:** Woowee.

**Austin:** So, what does Sank see?

**Keith:** I think— [laughs] Okay, so you have... [laughs] You have the Bat Man, who goes up with a bat. Oh!

**Austin:** Mm-hmm?

**Keith:** Do we remember if it was Legs or Stick that was the Bat Man?

**Austin:** Stick became the Bat Man.

**Keith:** Stick became the Bat Man.

**Art:** Stick became the— yeah.

**Keith:** Okay, so Robbin runs up. And I think it is exactly what he said he would do. He just runs up and hits him. [laughs] He's just like—

**Austin:** [laughs] Oh my god!

**Keith:** It's what he said he was gonna do!

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** He had not been given an additional tool by Sank. He followed through on the scheme.

**Keith:** No, he refused every suggestion that he take a weapon, because then he wouldn't be Legs. But what—

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** But he did happily rename himself Robbin.

**Keith:** [laughs] Robbin.

**Austin:** Afterwards, 'cause it was fun.

**Keith:** Right. [laughs] But—

**Austin:** The Bat Man has traded out the stick for a baseball bat.

**Keith:** For a bat, and instead of hanging back, is up with Robbin.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Keith:** And is gonna take care of the guard in the back.

**Austin:** The guard who is now producing a gun, but is surprised? Is like...

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** Unaware or distracted, because of the the tire situation, the wheel situation.

**Keith:** Right. Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And I, you know, I think it's a sort of thing where it's like, sure, I'm a guard, but I didn't actually expect to have to guard anything.

**Austin:** Right. We're almost there. We're at the final stop. Come on.

**Keith:** Right. And the tire fell off, so it wasn't— we're having a situation, and it wasn't an emergency situation.

**Austin:** Right.



**Keith:** It was just the tire, which always happens.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Keith:** And there's no way this information could get out.

**Austin:** [chuckles] No.

**Jack:** This is this poor fuck's first day in Bluff City.

**Austin:** Yep. So, what's...how does Sank respond?

**Keith:** I think they start struggling with the box, the boxes of watches. And Sank comes up and says— oh, okay, here's the question. Here's a question for me.

**Austin:** Oh, I thought that was what Sank said. I was like, oh boy.

**Keith:** No, no. Uh, sort of out of character. That wasn't my roll. That was their roll.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** What's going on with the...with the hot air balloon?

**Austin:** Well, I don't know!

**Jack:** That's a great question.

**Keith:** Did Eloise and Melinda untie the rope that they tied wrong?

**Austin:** Oh, yeah! There you go. Sure.

**Jack:** Oh.

**Austin:** We untied it so it dropped all the way down to the ground now.

**Keith:** Right.

**Jack:** Or near enough to the ground, right?

**Austin:** I would imagine all the way down.

**Jack:** Thumping across rooftops. It's being dragged, you know.

**Austin:** Yes. Yeah. Because if it was supposed to reach all the way out here to be tied down to begin with, it's long enough for it to drop straight down from here, you know? Like, if it was able to reach at an angle.

**Jack:** Somewhere down on the street, someone carrying like a milk truck cart, the rope spooks a horse and...

**Austin:** And this is heavy rope. This is nautical rope.

**Keith:** Right. Yes.

**Austin:** So it's just land— it's just hitting, yeah, you said fruit carts, and it's just causing a big—

**Keith:** It's knocking things over. [laughs] Breaking windows.

**Austin:** [laughs] Yes. As these people begin to rob this truck.

**Keith:** And so, I have introduced that I'm trying to help them.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Keith:** And so I think, I think that what I'm going to try to do is just be like, "Okay, give me the boxes. I'll tie 'em off." And they're just gonna let me do it, because they think I'm helping them.

**Austin:** So, but is that the roll? Is the roll then...

**Keith:** I think that's the roll. The roll is that they trust me.

**Austin:** Do they trust— the roll is do they trust you.

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** Okay. Yeah, that makes sense. You're a conman. That's plus one.

**Keith:** I'm a con— yeah, that's the confidence in confidence man.

**Austin:** It is.

**Jack:** I feel like we're not necessarily— like, the balloon hasn't quite reached you yet. I think it would be too easy to just be like, "And the balloon's right there and ready to tie off!" but yeah, I agree. I think that's the roll.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** You're like—

**Keith:** Yeah, maybe I have to push it backwards a little bit. Maybe it's...

**Austin:** Or like, yeah, or like get all the...

**Keith:** I've got like a dolly.

**Austin:** ...boxes into something that could be tied to a rope. You know what I mean? Like, you're putting them all into a big bag or something, you know? or a...something that could be easily tied to a balloon rope.

**Keith:** Mm. I was sort of thinking that it loops under.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** And then tied at the top.

**Austin:** Of the truck?

**Keith:** Oh, no, of the boxes.

**Austin:** But like, won't they slip? How big are the boxes you're imagining?

**Keith:** Very big.

**Austin:** Oh. See, I imagined them—

**Keith:** Crate. It's a crate.

**Austin:** It's a crate. A single crate?

**Keith:** Two crates? I'm thinking two crates.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Keith:** Let me, with my hands. Three. Three by three by three.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Keith:** Twice.

**Austin:** Three by three by three twice. Gotcha. So yeah, you're gonna convince them to let you tie it. That makes sense. That seems like a Cred roll to me. This is—

**Keith:** So I've got two?

**Austin:** I think so.

**Keith:** No one's helping me, but this is my job.

**Austin:** No. This is your job. And they're like:

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Wait a sec. Wha...

**Austin:** You should make the case a little bit here.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** We gotta get out of here, kid!

**Keith (as Sank):** Yeah, I got this balloon (??? 12:13). It's gonna take— it's gonna— this is the getaway balloon.

**Art (as Robbin):** I run in. I run out. That's how it goes. [Jack laughs]

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** I already agreed with the bat thing, but this is a whole 'nother level. Talking about balloons.

**Keith (as Sank):** Yeah, to get away. How are you gonna get away with the boxes?

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** He's real fast.

**Art (as Robbin):** Check it out. And starts running away with one of the boxes and stops like 10 feet away.

**Austin:** It's very heavy.

**Jack:** [laughs] I love that he demonstrated

**Keith (as Sank):** Quick, quick! Quick, run it back if you can, and I'll tie 'em up!

**Art (as Robbin):** What? I'm 10 feet further this way. You come here.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Yeah, let's move this box that way. That makes more sense.

**Keith (as Sank):** Okay.

**Keith:** And then it takes both of us to do it.

**Austin:** Yes! [Keith and Austin laugh] It's very heavy.

**Keith:** It's very heavy.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Ah, geez!

**Keith (as Sank):** Yeah, it's super heavy! So, I got the balloon.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Hey, this is a heavy... [breathes with exertion] I thought a little watch, fits right in my pocket. I didn't realize you put a bunch of them together it would be this heavy.

**Keith (as Sank):** Yeah, yeah, yeah. It adds up.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Where'd you get a balloon?

**Keith (as Sank):** Ah, don't worry about it. I know people.

**Austin:** All right, give me a roll. That's a success.

**Keith:** That's a success. It's a three and a two.

**Austin:** Firm success. Yeah.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** All right, listen, Robbin.

**Keith (as Sank):** It's just Robbin.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Rodman?

**Keith (as Sank):** Robbin!

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** I said, "Listen, Robbin."

**Keith (as Sank):** No, you said Brobbin.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** No, I said Robbin. [Keith laughs softly] I said, "Listen, Robbin."

**Keith (as Sank):** No, you're right. Okay. No, that's fine.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Robbin. I think we should take advantage of what the kid has to offer.

**Art (as Robbin):** All right.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Just tie it up. Where are we dropping— where are we picking 'em up? I guess we could go up with them. That makes the most sense. We'll go up with them.

**Keith (as Sank):** Oh, no, it's not— it's too heavy.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Why?

**Keith (as Sank):** We've gotta meet them at the drop off.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** All right. Where's the drop off?

**Keith (as Sank):** The old school.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Ah, yeah, the old school.

**Keith (as Sank):** No one's there. It's summertime.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Perfect place to meet up.

**Art (as Robbin):** No one's there anyway. It's closed. It's the *old* school.

**Keith (as Sank):** Oh, no, they still use the old school. It's just the worst school.

**Art (as Robbin):** They still use the old school? That's fucked up.

**Keith (as Sank):** Yeah, it's fucked up.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Oh, we don't need to use language like that. It seems a little out of place.

**Keith (as Sank):** Sorry, The Bat Man.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Thank you. Alright, let's get tyin'.

**Keith:** I almost feel bad.

**Austin:** [laughs softly] They're gonna go to prison for nothing.

**Keith:** [laughs] They hit a guy with a bat and punched another guy.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Oh, we should check to make sure there are watches in there. And maybe we should wear one. Take one for now, so we can all be synched up on time.

**[0:15:00]**

**Art (as Robbin):** Mm.

**Keith (as Sank):** That's a great idea. I would love that. Here, take two each.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** I only need the one. Two seems excessive. [Keith and Jack laugh]

**Art (as Robbin):** Yeah, I don't wanna be greedy. [Keith and Austin laugh]

**Keith (as Sank):** Okay. No, you're right. And just to make it fair, just so I know you aren't going to run off with them, maybe you should each give me 10 bucks. [Austin laughs]

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Just to hold onto.

**Art (as Robbin):** Neither of us have 10 bucks.

**Keith (as Sank):** It's only fair. Here, you each give me 10 bucks, and I'll give you each five bucks, 'cause there's two of you and one of me.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Yeah, that adds up.

**Keith (as Sank):** That adds up. [Keith laughs]

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Yeah.

**Art (as Robbin):** I don't have 10 bucks. You took all my money earlier. [Keith laughs] That's why I'm here now.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** I got you. I got you. I got you. I'll cover. I'll cover you. You get me back later. [Keith continues laughing] What a lucky day we had running into this kid.

**Keith:** I literally...I can't—

**Art (as Robbin):** Absolutely.

**Keith:** I'm lightheaded from that laugh. [Austin laughs] I like can't hear what you were saying.

**Austin:** Don't worry about it. It's fine. They give you the money.

**Keith:** Okay.

**Austin:** And we're good, and...I just realized a really— okay. So, that's the end of this part of the day. And it ends with what happening? Because the balloon can't lift. It doesn't have— we established it doesn't have like height control, right? It fills up. [Keith and Jack laugh] Janine, you had some balloon facts for us when we first started this.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And like, they don't have the igniter. There's no igniter up there, right?

**Janine:** Yeah, the thing that lets you control in the air how high and low and stuff you are.

**Austin:** Uh huh?

**Janine:** They didn't have that yet. To my understanding, the thing that they had was like...

**Keith:** For like seventy years.

**Janine:** When you're on the ground—

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Janine:** You can heat up the air in the balloon, and then you like, you can tie it off, and then you have like ballast on the basket, I guess?

**Austin:** Right.

**Janine:** You might have like sandbags.

**Austin:** Right. So that's the thing.

**Janine:** Maybe there's like a way to let the air out a little bit or something? I'm not super sure, but like...

**Austin:** We must start to drop some of the sandbags at this point.

**Jack:** We do also have Federati on board, which I think gives us a real bonus to ballooning skill.

**Austin:** Oh, true. Right.



**Jack:** A virtuoso child balloonist.

**Austin:** Yeah. I mean, we should just roll into that scene, if you're good for it, Melinda.

**Jack:** Yeah, no, 100%.

**Austin:** The balloon is like barely moving at this point because of how it's anchored to the ground.

**Jack:** Melinda is just like jumping up and down in the— but sort of like gently in the basket, just going like:

**Jack (as Melinda):** [excited] Yes! Yes! Yes! It's attached! Yes! Did you see, Eloise?

**Austin (as Eloise):** Shh, shh, shh, shh, shh!

**Jack (as Melinda):** [quieter] Did you see?

**Austin (as Eloise):** [hushed] Emma, Emma, Emma.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Sorry, Emma, Emma. Did you see?

**Austin (as Eloise):** Yes. We have to...the balloon seems to have stopped in place. How do we keep it moving?

**Jack (as Melinda):** Mm.

**Keith (as Federati):** It seems like someone tied something down there. I don't understand what's going on.

**Austin (as Eloise):** It must— maybe it was Luce, who had to do—

**Keith (as Federati):** Does that man have a gun?

**Austin (as Eloise):** Oh. I hope not.

**Jack (as Melinda):** No, I don't...I don't see why. Um, which one of you is the one who's good at the balloon?

**Keith (as Federati):** Oh, me!

**Austin (as William):** That's my Federati!

**Keith (as Federati):** Mm.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Uh, how do we—

**Austin (as William):** Princess of the balloon circuit!

**Keith (as Federati):** And snarling bear monster.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Yeah, why are you dressed like that?

**Keith (as Federati):** Photos.

**Art (as Muscles):** We were taking photographs.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Oh, do you know Cattie?

**Keith (as Federati):** She took an excellent photograph of us.

**Austin (as Eloise):** She's very good at photos. I...she's very good.

**Keith (as Federati):** Is she a friend of yours?

**Austin (as Eloise):** Yeah.

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

**Jack:** Also, I've just realized: Janine, feel free to play Mrs. Neighbor, since I was playing Mrs. Neighbor in the photo shop.

**Austin:** Honeybear, please.

**Jack:** Honeybear, yeah. [laughs softly] I was trying to remember.

**Art:** Honeybear Neighbor.

**Janine:** What were her qualities? Was she just like a...

**Jack:** Just like spectacularly—

**Janine:** Glowing.

**Jack:** Brusque, a fan of her children.

**Austin:** Also a fan of, uh...

**Art:** President William Henry Harrison.

**Jack:** President William Henry Harrison.

**Austin:** [laughing] President William Henry Harrison.

**Janine:** Right. [Art laughs]

**Austin:** Currently dressed as, yeah.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Are you dressed like President William Henry Harrison?

**Janine (as Honeybear):** Why aren't you? Everyone should be.

**Keith (as Federati):** What other possible president would someone be dressed as?

**Art (as Muscles):** Why *aren't* you?

**Jack (as Melinda):** It's hard to...

**Keith (as Federati):** Yeah, seems a little suspicious to me, now!

**Austin (as William):** Now, family, they must have heard of the severe breakdown I had in the Arvo and Stacks Photography Studio, when I was consumed by grief thinking of the untimely death of our late great president William Henry Harrison. And they must have changed out of their costumes out of respect and support. Let's cut them some slack.

**Keith (as Federati):** Rest in peace, William Henry Harrison, the greatest president to have ever almost done the job. [Jack laughs]

**Austin (as William):** That's right.

**Jack:** Something is dawning in Melinda's eyes, like a light is coming into her eyes.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Oh! Are you the weirdos who wanted the immortal doll?

**Keith (as Federati):** Oh, I'm still torn to pieces over that doll.

**Art (as Muscles):** That poor doll!

**Keith (as Federati):** That poor doll.

**Austin (as William):** What we did to that doll was unforgivable.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Huh.

**Keith (as Federati):** Makes me sicker than William Henry Harrison was.

**Art (as Muscles):** Anything bad that happened because of that is only to undo our bad thing and therefore completely morally fine, and anyone involved in it should feel okay with themselves.

**Keith (as Federati):** And I wish there was any possible way that we could make it up to Cattie Pontecorvo.

**Austin (as William):** Yes.

**Keith (as Federati):** And her excellent photographing skills.

**Austin (as William):** Given the situation, I feel like we owe her and any of her friends a big favor.

**Keith (as Federati):** A debt of gratitude and a debt.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Wh—

**Keith (as Federati):** A personal debt.

**Austin:** Eloise looks at you.

**Art (as Muscles):** And the Neighbors always pay their debts back.

**Keith (as Federati):** Tenfold.

**Austin (as William):** That's our motto. [Jack laughs]

**Art (as Muscles):** It's much longer in Latin. I'm not sure why. I'm very young. [Austin and Keith laugh]

**Jack:** Glancing at Eloise.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Uh, okay, two things. Can you make the balloon go up so that that box— I don't know what it is, but maybe it shouldn't be on the ground, and maybe it should be in the air with us. 'Cause we could cut the rope, but, uh, that's off the table. I want to make that clear.

**Austin (as Eloise):** It's not our rope. We're not allowed to.

**Jack (as Melinda):** No, we're not allowed to.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Luce said that we need to keep the rope on at all times.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Yeah, absolutely. And our word is our bond. Just like, uh, what's that motto of yours, Emma?

**Austin (as Eloise):** That's not— no, that's our good friend, the motto of the Salt family.

**Jack (as Melinda):** The motto of the Salt family.

**Austin (as Eloise):** The Pepper family, of course, has a different motto, which I'm sure—

**Jack (as Melinda):** And that is...

**Austin (as Eloise):** Well, I would say that the Neighbor family, as good friends of the East Peppers, probably know it too. And so, we don't need to go over it here.

**Keith (as Federati):** It's "Watch your back."

**Austin (as Eloise):** That's right.

**Keith (as Federati):** It's "Always watch your back."

**Art (as Muscles):** We've memorized all of our neighbors' family mottos. It's part of growing up a Neighbor. [Austin, Jack, and Keith laugh]

**Jack:** Pointing at the hill as it rises above Bluff City with a forest on it. You know, there's probably a hill near Bluff City with a forest on it, right, Austin? I can't imagine the landscape around Atlantic City when it's not flat, watery land.

**Austin:** I mean, it is mostly flat watery land and then woods, at this point in time.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** It's lots and lots— it's miles and miles and miles of woods in every direction.

**Keith:** The whole country's woods.

**Austin:** Yes. Yeah.

**Jack:** Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, absolutely.

**Austin:** So. And there's some like light elevation, but it's not a lot of hills at this— down near the sea.

**Jack:** Points out in that direction.

**Austin:** I can think of a couple of hills, but that's it.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Can we put the balloon down, like, say, in that wood, for example?

**Austin (as Eloise):** Maybe that clearing!

**Jack (as Melinda):** Maybe the distant clearing in the wood.

**Keith (as Federati):** Oh, I specialize in clearings.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Oh, incredible. Um, well. Chocks away, weirdos! Let's go.

**Jack:** I'm gonna make a roll. You want to help me here, Austin?

**Austin:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Jack:** My background doesn't give me shit here. I'm trying to marshal four weirdos to...

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Jack:** One, two, three, four weirdos.

**Keith:** You are...you do sell things. Does bullshit count as things? [Austin and Jack laugh softly]

**Jack:** I think if I was explicitly trying to sell them things to look at fish.

**Austin:** Oh. Do you know, there is a way to do it. But it would be to admit who you are and say that your father is the one who repaired the doll.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Which is a hell of a gambit.

**Jack:** [laughs softly] Ah. Okay. I mean, yeah, is there some—

**Keith:** Well, it's not a gambit if you believe that it's not a crime.

**Jack:** [laughs softly] Is there some— but I am very frightened of the doll. Um, okay. Yeah, I think that, you know, she closes her eyes leaning against the thing, and suddenly imprinted on the inside of her eyelids, she sees the dolls eyes open. And the doll just says, “Tell them, Melinda!” [Austin and Jack laugh] And Melinda just sits down suddenly in the base of the balloon and says:

**Jack (as Melinda):** I know you said that you would take responsibility, but I think that...I think that it was my family that made the doll immortal. And I have to confess to that. I think he might be here in the balloon. [Austin and Art laugh]

**Art (as Muscles):** Nonsense. I can see everyone in the balloon.

**Jack (as Melinda):** My dad is Marlon Guppy, spelled with an O. And I went back to his workshop, and I saw him construct...I'm telling them. I am telling them.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Wait, wait. Wait. What are these nets? What's in those nets?

**Jack (as Melinda):** Oh, sticky things.

**Austin (as Eloise):** No, there's a shape in there. Did you go fishing?

**Jack:** Peers over the side of the...

**Austin:** And in the sticky net is something long and elongated and wet.

**Jack:** [laughs softly] Oh, god.

**Austin:** And gregarious.

**Jack:** Is he also in the Pontecorvo— in Arvo and Stacks? I don't want to take him away from Janine in Arvo and Stacks.

**Austin:** I don't— [Janine laughs]

**Jack:** It could be that this doll is now in both places, but...

**Austin:** I thought you said that the doll was here a second ago, but maybe you only...

**Jack:** The doll...maybe she imagined it.

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** She is closing her eyes and seeing the doll and can't distinguish between whether that's her imagination or if the doll is actually here, I think due to some cursed effect. But if Janine's fine with it, the doll could also be in the balloon.

**Austin:** It could be in multiple places. This is an immortal cursed doll.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Janine (as Honeybear):** Why, isn't that the doll that we left with Marlon Goppy?

**Jack:** [laughs softly] Just...

**Janine:** You said it was with an O.

**Jack:** [laughing] Just a scream from Matilda, scrambling backwards.

**Keith (as Federati):** It looks different, but it *fee/s* the same.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Let me— I'll lift it up for everybody. Oh, it's much heavier than I thought a doll would be.

**Jack (as Melinda):** [distracted] Put the balloon down. Please, god.

**Keith (as Federati):** It's getting longer.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Put the balloon down.

**Austin (as Eloise):** I keep pulling the net up, but—

**Art (as Muscles):** Oh, so long.

**Austin (as Eloise):** But it's still down there.

**Art (as Muscles):** I feel like I can't see it all at once. [Austin laughs]

**Keith (as Federati):** I feel like I can only see it.

**Janine (as Honeybear):** Is there some sort of spigot on it? It's just dripping constantly.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Please, I'm begging you. I'm begging you. Please. Please.

**Austin (as Eloise):** No, no, no, Melinda. Er, um, mmm...I forget what name you gave me.



**Jack (as Melinda):** [quietly] Belinda.

**Austin (as Eloise):** It's fine.

**Art:** Belinda.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Belinda. It's fine. I, you...

**Keith (as Federati):** No, aren't you the Pepper? You're the Pepper.

**Austin (as Eloise):** I'm the Pepper. I'm Emma Pepper.

**Keith (as Federati):** You're Emma Pepper.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Good friend of Belinda Guppy. And this—

**Austin:** Hoist.

**Austin (as Eloise):** —is the doll.

**Jack (as Melinda):** [distressed] Yeah.

**Austin:** Big smile. Arms out for a hug.

**Keith (as Federati):** It's deliciously sickening.

**Austin:** Why is the doll— why are the doll's arms so wide? So it can hug the whole family at once.

**Janine:** Aww.

**Keith (as Federati):** I hope one day it learns to hug the whole world.

**Austin (as William):** I hope we learn to hug the whole world.

**Jack:** Okay, I'm gonna roll three.

**Art (as Muscles):** It sure looks like it's growing actively as we look at it. [Austin and Janine laugh softly]

**Jack:** The doll is just like staring dead into the eyes of Melinda. [laughs]

**Austin (as William):** Longer by the second.

**Jack:** Uh, okay.

**Austin:** Three.

**Jack:** Three, because I brought these weirdos on board.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** This is...

**Austin:** Or the doll specifically. Yeah, uh huh.

**Jack:** Is this Corp because I am trying to land a balloon— mm. Or is it—

**Austin:** It's when you do good work, impress a customer or deal with management or follow the rules.

**Jack:** Oh. I am impressing a customer. [laughs]

**Austin:** [laughs] Cred is when you fit in with other employees, do something sneaky, abuse your power, or break the rules. I think this is impressing a customer. I think you're right.

**Jack:** That is the worse outcome, isn't it? But...

**Austin:** It's doing something sneaky at the same time.

**Keith:** Which part of it is sneaky? I guess we—

**Austin:** The part where we're forcing them to help us do a heist.

**Keith:** Yeah, she technically wasn't honest about the watches.

**Austin:** No, she knows exactly what's happening here.

**Keith:** The irony is I don't think the Neighbors would care. Or they'd be interested and excited by it.

**Austin:** The thing is, I'm very afraid of the Neighbors milkshake ducking because of their president of choice. [Austin and Jack laugh] At all moments.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** They might be terrible people. Like...

**Janine:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** They do believe that they could be neighbors to the whole world, but only in exactly the most imperial sense. Do you know what I mean? [laughs]

**Keith:** Oh, yeah, they're bad. I mean, I've sort of been thinking of them as like the Addams Family this whole time.

**Austin:** Yeah, sure. But, and you know what, the Addams Family would probably be okay with a watch heist. In fact, they... [laughs] [typing]

**Keith:** Which is to say that an important part of the Addams Family is that everything about them is impossible. And so like, in a real sense, these people would probably be terrible, but they're weird cartoons and so, I don't know.

**Austin:** They might believe the thing that Melinda said, convinced Eloise of, which is that if something is not in a place it's not stealing.

**Jack:** Nobody owns it.

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

**Jack:** A fairly radical idea of ownership from this child.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** In that case, I think— [sighs] I think it's being sneaky, because I think if I was trying to impress a customer—

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Jack:** I wouldn't be able to get the extra dice from them. You know?

**Austin:** Right. Right.

**Jack:** I'm rolling three D6, because I got one extra die, because they're on board because of the doll.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** And I think if I wanted to claim that I was trying to get into their good books, I then would have to roll two D6, because I had not gotten into their good books. So I'm gonna roll three D6, and I am looking for anything below a four.

**Austin:** Yeah. Ah.

**Jack:** Oh, look at that.

**Austin:** Two, two, one. Look at that.

**Jack:** Two twos and a one.

**Keith:** Beautiful roll. You would have succeeded no matter what with those.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**[0:30:00]**

**Jack:** Bizarrely, Federati starts doing things with this balloon that you should not be able to do to a balloon for another 70 years. [Austin chuckles] The wind moves around it in a particular way. I don't think that it's necessarily magical, although I imagine that the doll on board is probably having some effects. I think that, you know, Federati is absolutely *The Royal Tenenbaums*-style child or the *Rushmore*-style child of just being like, how the hell is she doing this?

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah. Mm-hmm. She has—

**Janine:** Mistress of the skies. Mistress of the skies.

**Austin:** She has like hot air jars on deck, ready to like give it a refill.

**Jack:** [chuckles] Yeah. Yeah, and the balloon begins to move in the direction of the forest clearing. And I think, you know, depending on how fast we want to go, begins to sort of set itself down.

**Austin:** Yeah, and there—

**Keith:** Extremely fast.

**Austin:** And there's Pomp. We probably roll right into it. Pomp is there with Princeton. Oh, do you change a stat there, do you think?

**Jack:** Um...uh, yes. This is...there is something that is deeply unsettling, and the reality of what is happening is beginning to sink in to Melinda.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Jack:** So I'm gonna lose one Cred and gain one Corp, as I begin to realize that we have done an armed robbery on a watch truck and I'm trapped in a balloon with the Neighbor family. And, uh...

**Austin:** Yeah. Given that we had no plan, I do think we've perfectly executed a plan.

**Jack:** Yeah. Uh huh.

**Janine:** Can I, um... [laughs] I don't think I'll have another opportunity to use this. I just, after taking control of Honeybear, I was like, I need to find a good president quote, just in case.

**Austin:** Ah, good. Yes. [Jack chuckles]

**Janine:** And I don't think I'll be able to use this. But I want to imagine that at some point during the balloon ride, she busted out this chestnut from eighth president Martin Van Buren. "Railroad carriages are pulled at the enormous speed of 15 miles per hour by engines, which in addition to endangering life and limb of passengers, roar and snort their way through the countryside, setting fire to the crops, [Jack laughs] scaring the livestock, and frightening women and children. The Almighty certainly never intended that people should travel at such breakneck speed."

**Jack:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** And that's why a balloon—

**Austin (as William):** And that's why the balloon is the preferred method of travel for the Neighbor family.

**Janine (as Honeybear):** Exactly. Precisely.

**Austin (as William):** Hm. Yes.

**Janine (as Honeybear):** It doesn't snort at all. Or burn anything except gas.

**Keith (as Federati):** If even the weak-willed Martin Van Buren said it. [Jack, Janine, and Austin laugh]

**Austin (as William):** Anyway, we'll be off now.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Wait—

**Austin (as William):** Federati, take us up!

**Jack (as Melinda):** You're just gonna leave? [Janine laughs]

**Austin (as William):** We have places to go and people to see. And we have the doll.

**Art (as Muscles):** Have balloon, will travel! That's what it says on our family signet ring.

**Austin:** [laughing] And we all produce the ring at the same time! Yeah, uh huh.

**Keith:** And it's four pieces of one giant—

**Austin:** [laughs] Yes! [Jack laughs]

**Keith:** A giant mega ring that says that on it.

**Austin:** Uh huh. They're out of—

**Janine:** The light glints off of them in such a way where you can't tell if it's just the sun hitting a certain angle or some sort of magic being triggered.

**Austin:** [laughs] Yes, a hundred percent.

**Janine:** Like *Captain Planet* rings.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** Just—

**Austin:** They're out of order at first, but then we move our hands around and get them in the right order. It's very cute. And powerful.

**Jack:** Utter bemusement on Melinda's face, just like a wide eyed look to Eloise as the balloon begins to lift off, the Neighbor family on board waving down.

**Austin:** Yes. Floating into the distance.

**Austin (as Eloise):** [relieved] Oh, thank god you're here, Pomp and...is that Princeton?

**Art (as Pomp):** Yeah, it's Princeton the Powdered Sugar Horse.

**Austin (as Eloise):** I didn't think Princeton would want to be part of something like this.  
[Keith laughs]

**Art (as Pomp):** Well, Princeton and I had a talk.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Did you explain that this isn't a crime? Technically speaking.

**Art (as Pomp):** I...I did explain that, yes.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Okay. Well, as long as we're all on the same page.

**Janine:** Princeton rolls his eyes. Princeton knows it's a crime. Princeton doesn't give a shit.  
[Jack chuckles]

**Austin (as Eloise):** All right. Well, I guess we should start...there's a lot of watches here.

**Jack (as Melinda):** We—

**Art (as Pomp):** It's like two whole crates.

**Jack (as Melinda):** How are we gonna...?

**Austin (as Eloise):** There's too many watches to put on Princeton.

**Art (as Pomp):** Also, there's too many people to put on Princeton. I don't know what I was thinking. [Keith laughs]

**Austin (as Eloise):** Well, we can get on the powdered sugar cart.

**Art (as Pomp):** I didn't bring the powdered sugar cart.

**Austin (as Eloise):** It's not around here somewhere? I thought you would have brought it.

**Art (as Pomp):** No, just me and Princeton!

**Austin (as Eloise):** How are we gonna move these crates of watches?

**Art (as Pomp):** The cart was full of powdered sugar!

**Austin (as Eloise):** Take it off!

**Art (as Pomp):** And then—

**Austin (as Eloise):** We dealt with the ropes perfectly. [Austin laughing] We did exactly what we said we would do.

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

**Austin (as Eloise):** And here we are, with—

**Jack (as Melinda):** You tell him, Eloise.

**Austin (as Eloise):** With the watches.

**Art (as Pomp):** And here I am with a horse!

**Austin (as Eloise):** But the horse can't carry the watches! They're too big!

**Jack:** I'm gonna open one of the boxes.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** What's inside?

**Austin:** Well, we know that at least one of the crates does have watches. Is there something different in the other crate?

**Jack:** Well, it's a watch truck. Is it a carriage clock?

**Austin:** Well, it's a truck.

**Jack:** [laughing] Is it like a large gold clock?

**Austin:** A single clock! The other crate is just a big clock.

**Jack:** Oh my god. Um...

**Jack (as Melinda):** We should have just used the balloon as our— we should have just used the balloon as our getaway vehicle!

**Jack:** Shit.

**Austin (as Eloise):** We don't have...

**Janine:** I have a...if we want a suggestion, I have a spooky one.

**Jack:** [intrigued] Oh.

**Janine:** If we want to work through this in other ways, then that's okay too.

**Jack:** Yes.

**Austin:** What's your spooky suggestion?



**Janine:** Well, is the— so, what are the crates full of again? Are they—

**Austin:** One of them is watches.

**Janine:** One is watches.

**Austin:** Because we already established that because of Keith's scene.

**Janine:** Mm-hmm. Yes.

**Jack:** Loads and loads of watches.

**Austin:** I guess we should note...we should note we are in Closing: last customers, final thoughts, changing your mind.

**Janine:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** Slash After Hours: finally off the clock, last chances, calling it a day. My guess is at this point we play until we think we're done.

**Jack:** That makes sense to me.

**Janine:** Mm-hmm.

**Art:** So just one more session after this? [Jack laughs]

**Austin:** No. [laughs softly] I would love to wrap tonight.

**Janine:** My suggestion was that the puppet, which we've established has been getting longer, but I presume also stronger, because I want—

**Austin:** [displeased] Mm.

**Janine:** I want the puppet to have some autonomy and to not just be a tangle of limbs that's trapped forever. You know, I want that puppet to be able to be extremely creepy but also gregarious.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** Well, it didn't seem that trapped, if it traveled from—

**Art:** Remember, it is immortal, so you can always bring it into any future Bluff games.

**Austin:** Oh, I hate it. It's actually already been in other Bluff games, if you go back and listen.

**Art:** Mm.

**Janine:** You know the spider guy in *Spirited Away*?

**Art:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** [typing] I don't. I have to look up the spider guy. It's been a long time.

**Keith:** Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. The boiler room man.

**Janine:** Controls the...

**Austin:** Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. This guy. Yeah.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I have to rewatch this movie.

**Janine:** I think the puppet is a bit like that, in that like, his limbs are too long. And he's like a puppet, so his joints aren't very...are very like loose and stuff. So it's probably difficult for him to do the like perfectly upright thing, like...

**Austin:** Mm.

**Janine:** Nothing should be able to walk upright, honestly. Humans shouldn't be able to do it.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** It's physically really weird that anyone can. But I think— so, I think the puppet is sort of walking more like a spider.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** And is also... [sighs] So, I think under his suit, I think Cattie has customized a suit for him. Or not, she didn't have time to like customize it. But she's like used one of the costume suits and like pinned it so it fits him a little better. But underneath it, there is this sort of like metallic flashing, I guess you would call it? Like thin metal sheets that she's attached. And they're magnetic. So I think the thing that the puppet does is it goes up to the box of watches and starts pulling them out and sticking them to itself.

**Jack:** [laughs softly] Oh my god.

**Janine:** Until, just one by one, just covering itself with all of these watches. Until it's like a mechanic— it's covered in watches. It's like, it is now not just long, but also bulky with watches.

**Austin:** Oh, I— yeah, uh huh.

**Janine:** And it's like a sort of clattering, ticking, shuffling, scraping spider puppet sort of thing. And it waits politely for people to decide how they want to move the rest of the stuff, but hey, it'll take care of this much for you.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Why is it helping us?

**Jack:** Says Melinda.

**Art (as Pomp):** [horrified] What is that horrible thing? [Janine laughs]

**Jack:** The horse just screams in fear. [Austin and Jack laugh]

**Austin (as Eloise):** It's fine! It's fine! It's fine!

**Jack:** Foaming at the mouth.

**Austin (as Eloise):** It's just a puppet. It's just a puppet. It's actually really nice, I think. You're pretty nice, right?

**Austin:** [brief pause] I guess I was the puppet before.

**Janine:** You were.

**Austin:** And it lifts its face up, and the watches on where its face are form a smile, as if magnetically arranged into a smile shape. [Janine laughs]

**Art (as Pomp):** Oh my god! [Jack laughs]

**Jack (as Melinda):** My—

**Jack:** [laughs] Okay. Goes to— pulls Pomp aside by the arm.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Okay, right. My...those people in the balloon broke the doll at Cattie's. I took the doll to my dad, asking him to make it immortal, which is what the people in the balloon apparently wanted, and my dad did it. I don't know how he did it. It's ended up here. I...yeah. I'm with you here, Pomp.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Maybe—

**Art (as Pomp):** I'm never gonna forget this.

**Austin:** [laughs softly] That's the summer you'll never forget.

**Jack:** You want to see a body?

**Austin (as Eloise):** Maybe we can put...maybe we can put the puppet on the— on Princeton.

**Jack:** [laughing] Princeton's eyes rolling back in his head. [Janine and Austin laugh]

**Austin (as Eloise):** Well, what else are we gonna do?

**Jack:** Uh, looking to Sank now, her confidence in the—

**Austin:** Oh, is Sank here now? Did Sank show up?

**Jack:** Oh, I don't know. Sank?

**Keith:** I didn't think that I was here yet.

**Austin:** Yeah, I also don't.

**Keith:** But I also—

**Austin:** Maybe you could get here now. The puppet turning with this big smile and bowing to welcome you. [laughs]

**Keith (as Sank):** [yelling, terrified] Everybody get away! What is that?! Oh my god!  
[Austin, Janine, and Jack laugh]

**Jack:** [laughing] Wait, no. Are we all afraid of the puppet?

**Austin (as Eloise):** No! I think the puppet's quite nice!

**Keith:** Well, this is the first time seeing— I heard about a puppet. This is not a puppet. This is a giant monster—

**Jack:** [laughs] Covered in—

**Keith:** —that I think that I— I think that Sank thinks has crawled out of the bin, the watch bin.  
[Austin and Janine laugh] 'Cause it's some horrible giant watch monster.

**Austin (as Eloise):** No!

**Keith:** It's definitely not a puppet. It's not a haunted puppet.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Sank, it's fine! It's just the— this is— Marlon, Melinda's dad fixed it.

**Keith (as Sank):** That is impossible! That is not a imm—

**Austin (as Eloise):** It's fine! He's an inventor. He's an inventor! He makes things.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Uh...

**Keith (as Sank):** There's... [adamantly] He doesn't create life.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Why not?! Why couldn't he?!

**Keith (as Sank):** Because he's not Frankenstein!

**Austin (as Eloise):** Why? Why isn't he? You don't know that!

**Keith (as Sank):** Because it's a book!

**Austin (as Eloise):** You don't know!

**Keith (as Sank):** This thing is horrible!

**Austin (as Eloise):** It's not!

**Janine (as Cattie):** It's not horrible. [laughs]

**Austin (as Eloise):** It's been very...gregarious. [Austin, Art, and Janine laugh]

**Keith (as Sank):** It's wet! It's dripping!

**Austin (as Eloise):** Sometimes you go for a bath! And you get a little wet!

**Keith (as Sank):** Did you go for a bath with the puppet?

**Austin (as Eloise):** I don't know! I didn't know where it was before it climbed into the basket with us. Maybe it was in the bath.

**Jack (as Melinda):** No.

**Austin (as Eloise):** The point is it's helping. We can't get out of here with all the watches.

**Keith (as Sank):** It looks like it's taking the watches.

**Austin:** I look at the puppet. Is the puppet taking the watches? Someone who's not— I guess Janine? Is it looking to like run away with the watches? [laughs]

**Janine:** No. It's like waiting. I was gonna say I think maybe this is also when Cattie shows up.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** [laughing] Oh my god, Cattie.

**Janine:** For this entire game, for this entire game, I've been pitching it like, Cattie really likes a bicycle suit.

**Austin:** Oh, right, sure.

**Jack:** Oh, yeah.

**Janine:** With, you know, like the, you know, puffy pants. I don't know if the timing quite works. I think those might have been out of style at that time. But I don't care.

**Austin:** It's fine. Bluff City's like that.

**Janine:** Yeah. So I think this is like, you know, the photography studio's closed up. Cattie is in her cool, you know, tweed bicycle suit on her bike. She's got like a, you know, she did think to get like a little wagon on the back of her bike.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Janine:** It's not of a particularly useful size, but it's something.

**Austin:** Could you fit a puppet on there?

**Janine:** Eh, probably. Yeah. Why not? I mean, it's...in a way, I think of it as it's—

**Keith:** In my mind, this puppet is 15 feet long at this point. Am I wrong? [Janine laughs]

**Austin:** But it could fold up really tight.

**Keith (as Sank):** Just drag it from the back of the horse. It's immortal.

**Austin (as Eloise):** No! That would hurt.

**Keith (as Sank):** Do you get hurt, puppet?

**Austin (as puppet):** [high-pitched, pitifully] Mm-hmm.

**Keith (as Sank):** Oh. Okay.

**Janine:** Anyway, I think Cattie shows up to protest and save the puppet.

**Janine (as Cattie):** The puppet's— I sent the puppet. I told the puppet to get in the balloon, because I knew something bad was gonna happen, and I didn't want anyone to get hurt. I knew the puppet could help.

**Austin:** Eloise's eyes begin to well up.

**Austin (as Eloise):** [touched] Cattie. I thought you didn't want to do the heist. I thought you weren't in. But you sent the puppet to save us.

**Janine (as Cattie):** I wasn't and I didn't, but I also don't want y'all to die in a hot air balloon.

**Austin (as Eloise):** We didn't. It all worked out exactly like we planned, beat for beat.

**Janine (as Cattie):** [lightly sarcastic] Exactly. Beat for beat.

**Austin (as Eloise):** You don't know that it didn't.

**Janine (as Cattie):** [laughs] I mean...

**Keith (as Sank):** No one planned for the puppet.

**Austin (as Eloise):** The puppet was—

**Janine (as Cattie):** It was contingent on a...yeah, it was contingent on a...mm, enchanted puppet?

**[0:45:03]**

**Austin (as Eloise):** You don't know that! All you know is that we're here with our crates.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Uh huh.

**Austin (as Eloise):** It all worked.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Well, I brought my wagon. Where's yours?

**Austin (as Eloise):** Well, exactly.

**Keith (as Sank):** Yeah, Pomp. Where's the, uh...? I see Preston— Princeton. Sorry, Princeton. Where's the powder wagon?

[someone imitates horse snort]

**Janine:** Preston is the brown sugar horse.

**Austin:** Preston is the— yes. [laughs]

**Keith:** 'Cause it compacts, you mean.

**Austin:** Right. Uh huh.

**Janine:** Yeah. [Jack laughs]

**Keith:** You can press it.

**Janine:** Pressed-in.

**Austin:** Pressed-in, the brown sugar horse.

**Janine:** Per hour.

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** It doesn't really— [laughs softly] yes, thank you. Good.

**Keith (as Sank):** Anyway, where's the wagon?

**Jack (as Melinda):** [exasperated] He doesn't have the wagon.

**Art (as Pomp):** I didn't bring the wagon. It's full of powdered sugar.

**Jack (as Melinda):** It's full of powdered sugar.

**Keith (as Sank):** [laughs] Why didn't you bring the wagon?

**Art (as Pomp):** It's full of powdered sugar. I don't know how to... [Keith laughs]

**Austin (as Eloise):** Why didn't you—



**Janine (as Cattie):** Well, you could have dumped it out and replaced it with watches.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Yeah.

**Art (as Pomp):** No, you can't just dump out powdered sugar.

**Keith (as Sank):** Isn't it part of your job to unpack that thing anyway?

**Art (as Pomp):** Yeah, but it had powdered sugar for other people.

**Keith (as Sank):** Oh.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Oh, so that's their sugar, but the watches...the watches are—

**Austin (as Eloise):** Well, that's their sugar. It's already— it's with Princeton. Princeton's holding it for them.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Princeton has the sugar.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Yes.

**Janine (as Cattie):** [disagreeing] Mm...

**Jack (as Melinda):** How many times do we have to— do Eloise and I have to explain this to you?

**Austin (as Eloise):** [sighs] You're gonna get tested on this one day, and I hope you remember the rules.

**Jack (as Melinda):** I want to be a lawyer.

**Austin (as Eloise):** In Civics class.

**Austin:** [laughs] Yes.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Listen, I can take my puppet and go home.

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

**Keith (as Sank):** Please.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Well, no, because the puppet has the watches, and we...

**Jack (as Melinda):** The puppet has the watches.

**Austin (as Eloise):** And we would like its help.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Well, we would like the watches.

**Austin (as Eloise):** We *would* like its help to help us move the watches back.

**Jack (as Melinda):** Okay.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Well then, you should show the puppet a little bit more gratitude.

**Austin (as Eloise):** I've been! I like the puppet!

**Janine (as Cattie):** Okay.

**Austin (as Eloise):** The puppet and I are friends.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Everyone else, broadly.

**Keith (as Sank):** I'm very new to the puppet situation.

**Janine (as Cattie):** All right. I just don't want to hear any slander.

**Keith (as Sank):** Why do you like this puppet more than you like us, after four minutes?

**Janine (as Cattie):** Um, I don't know that I like him *more* than I like you, but I do like him.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Can we have this conversation once we get back to the boardwalk with the watches?

**Janine (as Cattie):** I guess.

**Austin (as Eloise):** I'm just worried that a bear or a ranger or something is gonna come out here.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Eh, the puppet could take a bear.

**Austin (as Eloise):** What about a ranger?

**Janine (as Cattie):** I don't think the ranger would stick around.

**Keith (as Sank):** A bear could take a ranger.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Mm.

**Janine (as Cattie):** That's true. Bear takes out the ranger. No. Wait. Yeah, no, bear takes out the ranger, puppet takes out the bear.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Then we'd have a lot—

**Keith (as Sank):** Oh, but ranger takes out puppet, like rock paper scissors.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Rock paper scissors. This is the problem.

**Keith (as Sank):** Okay, so I guess everybody get a handful of watches.

**Austin:** Take as many as I can. Are we like moving them to...putting them in my pockets but also putting them in like a bag and just spilling out from everywhere.

**Keith:** Yeah, we just gotta move 'em.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine (as Cattie):** If, I mean, the ones that get left behind, we could like unpack them but then like put some pine boughs or something over them so people won't see 'em and then come back later.

**Austin (as Eloise):** We can come back and get them. Yeah.

**Keith (as Sank):** We can fit some in the...

**Art (as Pomp):** Mm.

**Janine (as Cattie):** And re-up, yeah.

**Keith (as Sank):** We can fit some in the wagon. We can each carry—

**Austin (as Eloise):** There's no wagon.

**Janine:** I have a little wagon.

**Keith:** No, no.

**Austin:** Oh, your—

**Keith:** Yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** Okay, right, right, right.

**Keith:** On the bike, yeah.

**Austin:** I thought you meant the powdered sugar wagon, which we do not have.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Keith (as Sank):** So, between the puppet—thank you, puppet.

**Austin (as puppet):** Mm-hmm.

**Keith (as Sank):** The wagon, the pockets, and the horse...we're gonna have to walk back, but I think we got it.

**Austin:** Also, to be clear, the puppet can't speak, but now that it's covered in watches, it can make the move in such a way that it produces sound.

**Janine:** Yeah, like cicada shells, right?

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

**Keith:** Like rattles them around?

**Janine:** Like cricket legs.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Art:** Horrible.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** He's nice.

**Art:** Utterly horrible.

**Jack:** It spoke in Matilda's— Melinda. [laughs] Matilda.

**Austin:** Matilda. [Jack and Janine laugh]

**Jack:** It spoke in Melinda's mind, but that wasn't with its actual mouth.

**Austin:** Right. But that's— right, exactly. Yeah.

**Keith:** Right. It just can—

**Janine:** That says more about Melinda than the puppet.

**Keith:** It can just appear in people's minds and then appear in reality in front of them. And when it does that, it gets bigger and stronger.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Melinda has the Shining. [Jack and Janine laugh] Uh, we didn't mention this until now, for the same reasons as Stephen King does this shit.

**Jack:** Neglects to.

**Austin:** [laughs] Yes.

**Janine:** Also, it got bigger because it was being perceived by so many people at once, right?

**Austin:** Oh, right. Yeah, sure. Of course.

**Janine:** Yeah, that's why you don't look at it.

**Austin:** That's why— mm.

**Janine:** If you don't look at it, it doesn't grow.

**Austin:** [laughs softly] And this is what Marlon was trying to warn us about.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Okay, so...

**Austin:** Alright, this seems like a roll to load it up and load it out. Get back with all the watches, safely.

**Jack:** I am explicitly not helping. I am, you know, staying as far away from this puppet as possible.

**Austin:** I don't— whose scene are we in? It doesn't matter, particularly.

**Jack:** Cattie's, maybe? [Janine laughs]

**Keith:** I think it's...

**Austin:** Sure.

**Keith:** I think it's got to be mine, because it was my heist.

**Austin:** Yeah, it's your heist. Yeah, I agree.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I'm helping.

**Keith:** Right. And I think—

**Austin:** This is three.

**Keith:** [laughs] Unfortunately, this is...I think this is Corp.

**Austin:** Why is it Corp? Is it Corp? Want to do good work, impress a customer, deal with management, or follow the rules?

**Keith:** Well, uh, I guess it's not, maybe not. But it's not Cred.

**Austin:** Fit in with other employees, do something sneaky, abuse your power, or break the rules.

**Keith:** Yeah. I guess it feels like I'm following the rules, even though technically we're trying to take this stuff home.

**Austin:** Well, this is the thing I'm talking about, right? This is the disconnect, where you could—I think you could roll Cred on this and then still get Corporate from it, because this would be perfectly executing a plan.

**Jack:** Right.

**Keith:** Right.

**Austin:** Whereas it's not finding success in chaos or impulsiveness.

**Keith:** Fair. Yeah.

**Austin:** Do you know what I mean?

**Keith:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. That makes sense. Okay.

**Austin:** So.

**Keith:** So let's roll Cred.

**Austin:** Three D6. Try to get under a...

**Keith:** Three D6.

**Austin:** Under a five, right? Or are you at four?

**Keith:** Yeah, I'm good. Yeah, we're good.

**Austin:** Okay, yeah. You say that now.

**Keith:** This would be— if I get three sixes here, it would be the worst roll in *Friends at the Table* history.

**Austin:** It would be.

**Keith:** I think.

**Austin:** And it would have to be the— it's also the best roll in *Friends at the Table* history.

**Keith:** Right, yes. [laughs]

**Jack:** Like, at that point, the puppet just catches fire or something.

**Keith:** Yeah, or just kills me. [Jack laughs]

**Austin:** [laughs] Yes.

**Keith:** I'll agree. Yeah, I'll agree to that.

**Austin:** We just start playing a different game. [laughs] Yeah, uh huh.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** We just start playing *Ten Candles* or something. [Keith laughs] We've shifted.

**Keith:** Right, we would not end the game, and we would instead play *Ten Candles* for three sessions.

**Austin:** Yes. All right, there we go. There's a one. There's the full success.

**Keith:** Almost made me hope for three sixes, 'cause that would have been outstanding.

**Austin:** Oh, I was definitely hoping for it. That would have been so funny. I would have screamed. I would have *screamed*, and it's 10 p.m., so that would have been a problem.

**Keith:** [laughs] So, we pack it. We get it. We get all the stuff in the thing.

**Austin:** Yeah, load it all up.

**Keith:** The Puppet is, you know, trying to stick more bits on. [Austin laughs softly] I can carry 35, easy, in these pockets.

**Austin:** Easy. Easy! Easy peasy. We all start walking back as the sun sets. Where are we leaving them? We all taking some of them?

**Keith:** I think we're taking all of them.

**Austin:** Yeah, but I mean, where are we...are we each taking some back to our private homes?

**Keith:** Oh. Um...

**Keith (as Sank):** I don't know. Maybe we should take them to my place?

**Austin (as Eloise):** Nope! No. [laughs softly]

**Jack (as Melinda):** No.

**Keith (as Sank):** But I'm the only one that doesn't have parents.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Mm...

**Jack (as Melinda):** I don't know that my dad is going to be there when I return. [Jack laughs]

**Austin (as Eloise):** Oh, that's true. I think we should all take some of them, at least. That way if—

**Janine (as Cattie):** I've got another mouth to feed now, so.

**Keith (as Sank):** It eats?



**Janine (as Cattie):** Well...

**Keith (as Sank):** What does it eat?

**Janine (as Cattie):** Oil. Wax? Polish? I don't know.

**Austin (as Eloise):** When does it eat?

**Janine (as Cattie):** I don't know. We're gonna figure that out. I don't know yet.

**Jack:** [laughing] *Who* does it eat?

**Austin:** Who does it eat? [laughs]

**Keith (as Sank):** You're just— so you're just assuming that it eats.

**Janine (as Cattie):** *Why* does it eat is the most important question.

**Keith (as Sank):** Right. If I was immortal, I would only eat for fun.

**Janine (as Cattie):** That's a valid reason to eat.

**Keith (as Sank):** Right.

**Janine (as Cattie):** I'm not gonna deprive it of that.

**Austin:** When will you wear wings? [Keith, Austin, and Art laugh] Sorry. People should look up Elijah Wood being asked about wigs. That's all. [Austin and Jack laugh] It's very good.

**Keith:** And you can buy his NFT somewhere, I'm sure.

**Austin:** Ah, yeah. That part of it fucking sucks. That part sucks so bad.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** I think he did distance himself when he found—

**Jack:** From the racist one.

**Keith:** Oh, really?

**Austin:** Well, from the racist one.

**Keith:** Oh, there was a racist one?

**Jack:** Oh, yeah.

**Austin:** [laughing] Oh, would you believe that the guy who made the apes one, that his dad was a super racist political cartoonist?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Art:** Yes, I would believe that.

**Keith:** Hey, I believe that *that* guy was a racist political cartoonist!

**Austin:** Yep! Uh huh! Anyway. It seems—

**Keith:** And there was a whole— the apes that are everywhere, that's a whole different ape than the ape that was just a scam ape, right? There's just multiple different ape ones.

**Art:** Yeah.

**Austin:** There are multiple apes.

**Jack:** [wearily] They're all scam apes.

**Austin:** They're all scam apes.

**Janine:** Evolving ape was the scam one, I think.

**Keith:** And the one that was a— sorry, the one that was openly revealed to be a scam ape.

**Austin:** [laughs] Yes.

**Keith:** Even by the people who buy NFT's.

**Austin:** Yes, yes.

**Keith:** And those ones were just the most outrageously racist ones of all time, obviously.

**Austin:** Yes, correct. Anyway.

**Keith:** Just the worst.

**Austin:** It's bad out there.

**Keith:** So, yeah, Elijah would go back to, you know, being the weird TV counterpart to Daniel Radcliffe's movies.

**Austin:** Is that—?

**Art:** Wow, that's a sick fucking burn.

**Austin:** Yeah, goddamn.

**Jack:** Got him.

**Art:** For someone who was like the star of the *Lord of the Rings* movies.

**Keith:** No, this is a— I meant that as a compliment.

**Austin:** Fucking Frodo.

**Keith:** I meant that as a compliment.

**Austin:** Tell it to Frodo.

**Keith:** Frodo, I mean it as a compliment.

**Austin:** Tell it to the Bagginses.

**Keith:** I think, you know, they both ended up doing interesting stuff. It's just Daniel Radcliffe did it in movies, and the other— and uh, you know, whatever his name is did it in TV.

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Keith:** Which is just as important. [Janine and Austin laugh]

**Jack:** Like a slow—

**Art:** Holy shit.

**Jack:** Is it like a slow horrible parade out through the woods with the...

**Austin:** It must be.

**Jack:** God, I know who's at the back, and it is Melinda, you know, walking a frightened Princeton. [Jack and Austin laugh softly] Like, by holding him by the reins. And then is the puppet taking the lead? I don't know.

**Austin:** Oh, we have to have the puppet in the mix, in the middle somewhere.

**Keith:** Yeah, puppet doesn't even know the way.

**Janine:** Mm-hmm.

**Austin:** I feel like it's too risky to—

**Art:** The puppet's probably riding Princeton.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Oh. [laughs] I don't know that Princeton would allow that.

**Austin:** No?

**Janine:** Horses are so easily spooked.

**Austin:** Yeah, fair enough. Fair enough.

**Keith:** But you know where you...

**Janine:** I do like the idea of the puppet being in the middle, because I feel like Cattie would be close to the puppet and would also want to be far enough back that she could be like:

**Janine (as Cattie):** Melinda, you wanted me to help. I told you I would— I told you I'd be ready to help in a way that I could help, [Jack laughs] and I did, and now you're being weird about it.

**Jack (as Melinda):** I think my dad's gonna go to hell. [Keith laughs]

**Austin (as Eloise):** [hushed] No! The puppet's nice. Friends don't go to hell. Only enemies.

**Keith (as Sank):** I guess the question is: do you think that Dr. Frankenstein went to hell?

**Austin (as Eloise):** No.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Yeah.

**Austin (as Eloise):** No! [Janine laughs]

**Keith (as Sank):** Well, I guess there's a real debate now.

**Janine (as Cattie):** I think that's a different question.

**Keith (as Sank):** Well, the puppet hasn't killed anyone yet.

**Janine (as Cattie):** I think Dr. Frankenstein very poor job of supporting the life that he brought into the world, and had he done better...

**Austin (as Eloise):** Wait a second.

**Keith (as Sank):** I don't think that— I don't think that Marlon Guppy is doing a very good job of supporting this puppet.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Melinda, are you upset because you have a sibling now and you wanted to remain an only child?

**Jack (as Melinda):** What are you all talking—? No! This is not my sib—

**Austin (as Eloise):** Well, because your dad, the way that we're talking about it, it's like your dad had another kid.

**Jack (as Melinda):** No, he didn't. He made a...no he didn't!

**Austin (as Eloise):** He made a baby.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Are you worried he made you this way?

**Jack (as Melinda):** What?

**Janine (as Cattie):** Are you worried that this is how you happened?

**Jack (as Melinda):** What? [Janine laughs]

**Austin (as Eloise):** Well, no, because—

**Keith (as Sank):** Are you upset because he lied about this not being a crime to you?

**Austin (as Eloise):** This wasn't a crime. If he could have done this, he would have known how to do it already, and then it wouldn't have been such a big deal. So if he'd already done it with Melinda, it would have just— he would have just done it, and it wouldn't have been a big deal. But he had to work really hard, and he was very upset about it, right? So that means it's probably different.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Well, maybe before, he didn't do with like wood and stuff. Maybe before, he did it with like meat.

**Jack (as Melinda):** No! Look, I don't...let's just go home. [Janine chuckles] Let's just put the watches in place. I'm not gonna see the doll again. We're done.

**Austin:** Wait, wasn't there also a clock? Didn't we say that one of these crates just had a big clock?

**Jack:** I've got the clock.

**Janine:** Like, a big clock.

**Keith:** Oh, I thought that was a joke.

**Austin:** Oh, I thought it was real.

**Jack:** I'm hefting the big clock.

**Austin:** You're hefting the big clock like a weird *Bloodborne* weapon.

**Keith:** Oh. I took it— I thought we were just joking about what else could be in the...

**Austin:** [laughs] Did you unlock, you know—

**Jack:** Clock.

**Austin:** Ludwig's holy clock? [muffled laughter] The gilted grandfather.

**Jack:** You click on it, and it's like, "Great warriors from the east long spent time perfecting their technique with Ludwig's Holy Clock, until the ambassadors from..."

**Austin:** [laughs] Yes.

**Keith:** Is this a thing that I should know about? What is this?

**Austin:** This is just how *Dark Souls* is written.

**Jack:** This is how *Dark Souls* works. "Lost, the wanderers moved west."

**Austin:** [laughs] You may have spoken over me saying that the image of Melinda having hefted the clock over a shoulder reminded me of a *Bloodborne* weapon. [Jack laughs softly]

**Keith:** Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I didn't hear that.

**Keith (as Sank):** If it's not a crime, then why do we need an alibi?

**Jack (as Melinda):** 'Cause they'll— 'cause the—

**Austin (as Eloise):** 'Cause other people don't understand the law, and...

**Jack (as Melinda):** 'Cause the adults will think it's a crime, yeah.

**Keith (as Sank):** Isn't that all that makes a crime a crime?

**Austin (as Eloise):** No.

**Keith (as Sank):** Is that the police say so?

**Austin (as Eloise):** Well, the police can be, uh, can be misled.

**Keith (as Sank):** Right, but then—

**Austin (as Eloise):** That's what injustice is.

**Keith (as Sank):** You still end up in jail.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Right, but it's not a crime.

**Keith (as Sank):** So you just—

**Austin (as Eloise):** But they might not figure it out for years, and then we would have spent all that time in jail, and we would have lost that time. It's not worth the risk. So it's important to have an alibi, even when you're— [Austin chuckles, shifting out of character voice] Even when you're not doing anything wrong, you should never talk to the police.

**Austin:** Says Eloise Salt, tryhard.

**Keith:** Shut The Fuck Up Friday. It's Friday today.

**Austin:** Yeah. Shut The Fuck Up Friday. [laughs]

**Jack:** What's the first thing you say? "Am I being detained?" What's the second thing you say? [Austin and Jack laugh] "Am I free to go?" What's the third thing you do? You shut the fuck up!

**Austin:** Shut the fuck up! I don't know that there's a roll. We're just talking, and we got back. I think we get back. Are we all going our separate ways for the night?

**Keith (as Sank):** I think that this stuff makes— it's the safest at my place.

**Jack (as Melinda):** I'm not giving it to you.

**Austin (as Eloise):** It's not— we're not giving you— you might— you can keep the big clock if you want.

**Keith (as Sank):** This was my idea!

**Austin (as Eloise):** And we got the rope and the balloon.

**Keith (as Sank):** And I—

**Austin (as Eloise):** We don't need to argue about this.

**Keith (as Sank):** I got the watches!

[1:00:00]

**Austin (as Eloise):** We don't have to argue about this.

**Keith (as Sank):** No. I just don't like the implication.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Because we all already have a number of watches, and we're gonna keep the watches that we all have, 'cause I'm going to sell them, and with the money, I'm going to renew our lease on the pier so that it stays open next year, so that when Pomp comes back from Princeton—not you—comes back from Princeton the school, there's gonna be a pier here, and he's gonna show up, and he's gonna get a nice big thing of funnel cake, and it's gonna be delicious, and we're all gonna hang out just like we did this summer. And to do that, I need these watches.

**Art (as Pomp):** Yeah!

**Jack:** Dry leaves sticking to the feet of the puppet as it walks through the forest. [Jack and Austin laugh] The sun has set now.

**Austin:** Yeah. Eloise at this point is like speed walking ahead as like a way of punctuating that outburst.

**Keith (as Sank):** All right, keep the watches. Fine. Just don't get mad at me if you get in trouble.

**Jack:** Okay. Where do we pick it up?

**Austin:** I don't...is it the next day? Is it— I mean, I guess it's technically supposed to be the end of the thing, but I don't know that we even need...I guess we need closure on certain things. We



need closure on, for instance, does Cattie get a promotion? We need to wrap back around to that. We need to wrap back around to Melinda's dad. I think those are the big questions I still have.

**Jack:** I would like to know what's going on with Luce, because the last we saw, her balloon was being stolen by the Neighbor family.

**Austin:** Yes. Yes. Yes.

**Keith:** It seems like that was cool, though. Like, that Luce is fine with that.

**Janine:** Yeah, she like volunteered it.

**Austin:** Right. True.

**Janine:** Remember, she saw Federati and was like, "Oh, I need to like..." You know, she'd been at that balloon all day.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** With probably no breaks or minimal breaks, and was like, "Okay, Federati's here. Federati is a balloon aficionado par excellence. We are on the same level. [laughter] Federati's family wants to go up in the balloon. This weird girl wants to go up in the balloon. Fine. One hand washes the other. I'm gonna go get a snack."

**Keith:** Yes. One way or another, the Neighbors will find this balloons way back to me.

**Janine:** Yeah.

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

**Janine:** And then, yeah, then the Neighbors bring it back perfectly fine. The girl's not there, but...

**Austin:** That's fine.

**Janine:** You know, sometimes that happens.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Oh, I sort of gotten the impression that the Neighbors took the balloon to do their own thing.

**Austin:** I think that they left, yeah. I think that they left, but it'll find its way back when it's time for it to come back.

**Jack:** Go menace some other East Coast beach city.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Yeah. Totally.

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly. Luce will get a call to like go man the— Luce is gonna get a call in two days, or telegram, that's like, "Well, the balloon showed up here for your next assignment, but you're not here yet." And is like, "Ah, I guess I gotta go up to Seaside. Okay."

**Jack:** Ah. I guess it doesn't have to be by the sea. I don't— [laughs softly] But.

**Austin:** Well, Sea— sorry, Seaside Heights is a specific place that I was naming. So yeah, I guess doesn't *have* to be by the sea, but there are, you know, it's a shore-based economy. Anyway.

**Jack:** Do we want to start with Cattie and her promotion or...

**Austin:** Yeah, Cattie, where do we...

**Jack:** What order do you want to do this in?

**Austin:** I don't know.

**Jack:** Do you have thoughts, Janine?

**Janine:** Um...so, I mean, Cattie's goal...this isn't a thing I think— well, it feels like this wouldn't be resolved the next day, right?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Like, Cattie's thing was like, *if* I participate in watch theft, and *if* I get a little bit of money from that—

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Janine:** Then the thing I want to do is publish my own photography book. And then I'll have a little more clout.

**Austin:** Yeah, do we want to just do the sort of *Fiasco*-style final scenes? Not like the go around in a circle, so not *Fiasco*-style, but you know what I mean. Like, that doesn't have to be tonight

necessarily. It can be like...like that one season we did where we jumped ahead [laughs] and had images of different characters and little micro scenes of them various times in the future.

**Jack:** And we can't say what season that was.

**Keith:** *Animal House*. You want to do *Animal House*.

**Austin:** [snorts] I'm not saying it. But you know, like a week later, a month later, a year later. You know what I mean? Like, I think mine is very easy, and it is that Eloise a year later is like cutting the ribbon on a refurbished version of the Kingfish Pier that like has been repainted. It's still not as good as the golden million or whatever pier.

**Jack:** The gold standard.

**Austin:** The whatever.

**Keith:** Well, but it's got heart.

**Austin:** But it's got heart, and it's like, there's all new games. It's all new prizes. We've got a bigger Somers wheel than ever before. We've got like a little roller coaster, you know, but like—

**Keith:** Is the Somers wheel bigger than—

**Austin:** It is bigger than ever before. Yeah.

**Keith:** Not— but is it bigger than the other pier's...

**Austin:** Somers wheel.

**Keith:** Somers wheel. Did they at least get the biggest Somers wheel?

**Austin:** Yeah, but by like two centimeters. Do you know what I mean? Like, we—

**Keith:** Hey, if it goes on the sign, it goes on the sign.

**Austin:** It goes on the sign. It goes on the sign. That's right. And they have to deal with that, don't they?

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And so that's easy. Like, I don't need more than that from Eloise. I think Eloise's big outburst a second ago kind of summarizes the character, at this point, you know? So. I know I'm handwaving having fenced hundreds of watches. I don't care. I don't care.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Art:** I don't even care a little.

**Austin:** Let 'em know. Yeah.

**Janine:** Yeah, it's a little harder to track that kind of thing back then, you know?

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah. True, true.

**Janine:** So, I think the thing happens for Cattie is that like, it's probably within a few months that she sort of gets her materials together for that book. And I think it maybe...there's like highs and lows at Arvo and Stacks in terms of like who she's in favor with and who she's out of favor with.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** I think it changes with the wind.

**Austin (as Arvo):** These faces are a little small, Miss Pontecorvo!

**Keith:** [laughs] The changing of the faces. [Jack laughs]

**Janine:** Sometimes they're too small. Sometimes they're too big, you know.

**Austin (as Arvo):** You're gonna publish a book, you better have the faces the right size: big!

**Janine:** That's the other thing too, is I bet when she's working on her book, she's like following her own sort of instinct.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Janine:** And she's not necessarily listening to Arvo and Stacks, so. They maybe convince themselves they have a little sway, but then they'll see something that's like, "Well, that's not how I would have told her to do it." [Austin chuckles] But, you know, throughout it all, she has the puppet.

**Austin:** God.

**Janine:** And the puppet is like a...is a good, you know, it's a good cheerleader to have in your corner. Like, he's gregarious. [laughs]

**Austin:** Oh, yeah. Uh huh.

**Keith:** He's wet.

**Janine:** He can help you like get stuff off of shelves, probably. He can probably act like a tripod if she's in a pinch and like needs to stabilize the camera or like hold up a backdrop or something.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Janine:** You know, he's...he is a tremendously good sidekick and is also immortal, so a lot of the concerns that one would have about a sidekick and...and I don't know.

**Keith:** Well, like, if they might die?

**Austin:** [laughs] Yeah, for instance, if they might die. [Janine and Keith laugh]

**Janine:** She doesn't have to worry her sidekick is gonna die.

**Keith:** I've been thinking of getting a sidekick, but I don't think I can handle it when they inevitably die. [Janine laughs]

**Austin:** How are Bat Man and Robbin? How are the Bat Man and Robbin doing, by the way? Speaking of dead sidekicks. [Art laughs]

**Keith:** Um...I think that they're still bumbling.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Keith:** I don't know if they would get caught for this crime that they committed. That they almost committed.

**Austin:** But they don't have—

**Keith:** They did take some evidence, but so did we.

**Austin:** Right. All they— and it's easy for them to be like, "Ah, what, where are the rest of the watches? I have this watch. This is my watch."

**Keith:** Right. But they...obviously, Robbin is still indebted to both his father and to the Bat Man.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** I don't know. What...I sort of just feel like, why should they face consequences? I did send them to the old school. Nobody's at the old school.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Certainly they didn't have, you know, 200 watches to fence.

**Austin:** They never came looking for Sank?

**Keith:** Oh, yeah, they did, at the old school.

**Austin:** I meant afterwards, like back to work. But I guess, were you just gone by that point?

**Keith:** Um...I think that Sank quits the small, the like shell game stuff.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith:** And stays at the...stays at the, you know, the pier doing, you know, carnival games. Just, you know, to keep up appearances. And they're a little fun, and I don't need the money, so. But do they come looking for me for revenge? Or just to be like, "Hey, what happened?" Maybe I give them a cut. Maybe I give them a very small cut. I don't know.

**Austin:** They don't know what they sold for.

**Keith:** Right. They have no clue, yeah. So I give them...yeah. I'm like, here you go.

**Art:** And you manage to steal the watches you gave them in the process?

**Keith:** [laughs] Yeah, I think I— I think that's that's how I deal with him. I'm like:

**Keith (as Sank):** I waited at the school for as long as I could.

**Keith:** And they were like, "We were at the school."

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** We went to the school.

**Keith:** And I'm like:

**Keith (as Sank):** You were at the school? I was at the school.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** You went to the old school, right?

**Keith (as Sank):** Yeah, the old old school.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Wait, the old school or the olde school? Was there an E at the end?

**Keith (as Sank):** The old... [Jack laughs]

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Like the Shope. [Keith laughs]

**Jack:** Like the olde shope.

**Keith (as Sank):** Right, yeah, the elegant old school. It has a little class. It's old, but it has class.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** No, we went to the less classy one. We were in the regular—

**Keith (as Sank):** [exaggerated] Oh, no!

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** This is why we were confused when you said that people still used it.

**Keith (as Sank):** Ah, no!

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** We thought it was the one that no one was using!

**Keith (as Sank):** Oh, wow. If you had come one day earlier, I was saving your cut, but I had expenses, and it's gone now. [Austin laughs] I really was saving a cut for you guys for a really really long time.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** You didn't save— you can't even give us a little bit of a cut back?

**Keith (as Sank):** Uh, yeah, I mean, uh, how many watches did you take at the beginning? You took one each, right? [Austin laughs softly]

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** I don't like where this is going.

**Art (as Robbin):** Yeah, we each got one watch.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** But we loaned— but we—

**Keith (as Sank):** Okay, yeah. So your cut would be about two thirds of a watch. [Keith laughs] So I need about half a watch from the two of you. [Austin laughs]

**Art (as Robbin):** Wait a minute. That's not one minus two thirds. [Art, Austin, and Keith laugh]

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** You gotta listen to this guy.

**Keith (as Sank):** Oh, yeah, you're right. Sorry. It's two thirds of a watch. You're right.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** No! That's what we— you owe *us* two thirds of a watch each. Then we're even.

**Keith (as Sank):** Oh, is that what it was?

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Yeah.

**Keith (as Sank):** Yeah, I think you're right. I think I was doing my math wrong. Okay, here you go.

**Keith:** So I give them back each the five bucks that they took.

**Austin:** Okay.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Well, now we're even.

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

**Art (as Robbin):** That's better.

**Keith (as Sank):** Hey, and we're square?

**Art (as Robbin):** I assume so. [laughter]

**Keith (as Sank):** And Robbin, don't you actually owe that to the Bat Man?

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Well, you know. You can pay it back to me in, you know, entries over the course of some time. You let it mature a little bit.

**Keith (as Sank):** Entries?

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Yeah.

**Keith (as Sank):** Entrees, like dinners?

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Like dinners. You pay it back to me in entrees.

**Art (as Robbin):** Yeah, that's how we deal with things in our friendship, is with dinners.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** This has really started—

**Art (as Robbin):** We didn't know each other before the heist, but now we do. And we—



**Austin (as The Bat Man):** But now, weeks later, we've grown very close, honestly.

**Art (as Robbin):** It's touching.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** This is what friendship looks like.

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

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** A new type of friendship for a new century.

**Keith (as Sank):** Honestly? And honestly, with the...I just got some dinky old watches, and you two made a lasting friendship. And I almost feel like...

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** You don't even have a nickname.

**Keith (as Sank):** I don't know, I almost feel like you made off better than me.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Yeah, you didn't even get a nickname out of this.

**Keith (as Sank):** I didn't even get a nickname out of this.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** We got new careers.

**Keith (as Sank):** Gosh.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Different reputations.

**Keith (as Sank):** I almost feel like the two of you cheated me on this.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Yeah, well, keep feeling that way, buddy! [Keith laughs softly]  
Let's get out of here, Robbin, before this guy tries to get more from us.

**Art (as Robbin):** Yeah!

**Keith (as Sank):** Maybe you can buy me an entree.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** All right, but just the one.

**Keith (as Sank):** Just one entree.

**Austin (as The Bat Man):** Whatever you like from the menu, your pick.

**Austin:** I love these guys.

**Keith:** I love them. [laughs]

**Austin:** Ah, it's fun to be gullible.

**Keith:** Every time, I really do mean to not keep doing— like I really keep meaning to give them like a little something, and I just am incapable in the moment of following through. They're the like...they're like the epitome of a mark.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm. All right, we still need Melinda. We still need Pomp.

**Art:** I think Pomp's is easy. Pomp just coming back, wearing a watch or having a nice pocket watch, coming back from school the next summer and just resuming the job at the funnel cake stand on the resuscitated pier.

**Austin:** Mm-hmm.

**Keith (as Sank):** Even though you don't need the money?

**Art (as Pomp):** It's about...it's about hanging out. How are you doing?

**Keith (as Sank):** It's about hanging out.

**Austin (as Eloise):** We're doing good.

**Keith (as Sank):** I've still got like 90% of the watches.

**Art (as Pomp):** Great.

**Keith (as Sank):** Yeah, I just sell 'em off as I need 'em.

**Austin (as Eloise):** I sold all of ours all at once so that we could take care of the pier.

**Art (as Pomp):** Probably flooded the watch market. It was probably pretty bad for a while.

**Austin (as Eloise):** I think they melted a lot of them down.

**Art (as Pomp):** Yikes.

**Keith (as Sank):** Yeah, they were like precious metal.

**Austin (as Eloise):** It's nice to see—

**Art (as Pomp):** Sorry, I haven't gotten to watch crime in school yet.

**Austin (as Eloise):** What's your major?

**Austin:** Do we have majors yet? Is majors— majors is a thing.

**Art (as Pomp):** Classics?

**Austin (as Eloise):** That adds up.

**Keith (as Sank):** They have a watch crime section in classics?

**Art (as Pomp):** No, I was joking. There is no watch crime section.

**Keith (as Sank):** Oh, okay, okay, okay.

**Art (as Pomp):** Yeah.

**Janine (as Cattie):** Sundial crime. [Jack and Austin laugh]

**Austin (as Eloise):** If you thought watches were hard to— not *steal*, but lift legally...then you would be surprised, because sundials are much heavier. That's where that joke, that's what I was suggesting.

**Art (as Pomp):** Yeah, sundials are very hard to steal.

**Austin (as Eloise):** Anyway.

**Art (as Pomp):** And when you steal it, it's hard, 'cause if you put it somewhere else, you still have to like, set it, you know?

**[1:15:00]**

**Austin (as Eloise):** [Austin laughs] Wait, what do you mean?

**Art (as Pomp):** You can't just put a sundial down. You have to like make sure the sun hits it the right way.

**Austin (as Eloise):** I see. Right, yeah.

**Keith (as Sank):** And then you have to wind it.

**Art (as Pomp):** Yeah. Then you have to wind it.

**Keith:** And everyone laughs when I say that.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, we all laughed at it. It was even a funny joke. This has been a hard session, because we've all— we've hit points throughout it that are so high on joke level that regular jokes have— it's like a joke inflation, you know what I mean?

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Keith:** Right. It's sort of like what happened to the watch market.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** [laughs] Yes, exactly.

**Art:** Yeah. I'm not sure I've laughed at like a new TV show in a long time as hard as I laughed at that fucking Mister Ed playing baseball thing. [Austin, Jack, and Keith laugh]

**Austin:** It's so good! Ah.

**Keith:** Yeah.

**Art:** And again, Hall of Famer Sandy Koufax is in that.

**Keith:** Right. Hall of Famer Sandy Koufax is *almost* in the same place as Mister Ed in that scene. [Austin laughs]

**Jack:** [sarcastic] And they really— it looks so real when he hits the baseball and slides into home.

**Keith:** Fantastic.

**Austin:** [sighs] It's so funny.

**Jack:** I think that the tenor is definitely different at Melinda's house than it has been in the past. But, you know, we go on, and we make...we make inventions. I think Dad's a little more cautious. I think I'm pretty stoked that I managed to steal those watches. And I, you know, nice dresses whenever I want them, being able to take a little more time off the stall. I don't think I get to quit, because I think Dad is spending more and more time away from his workshop, which puts the onus on me. I think that, you know, one day I open the door to the workshop and there are just stairs that go down as far as I can see, and they weren't there before, so I just close the workshop door and, you know, Dad's in the diner. But other than that, you know, just uh, it's business as usual on the boardwalk.

**Art:** Yeah, Marlon Guppy has like two ways to go from this, right? Either he becomes like a Lovecraft protagonist who dies or he becomes Blade. You know, it's... [Jack laughs] Oh, I guess we already have a Blade in Bluff City, huh?

**Austin:** Yeah, we do.

**Jack:** Who is the Blade?

**Austin:** We should check back in. Millennium Black.

**Jack:** Oh, shit. You're right, yeah. Wow!

**Austin:** Yeah. It's been a while.

**Jack:** Ah, good on Millennial Black. But yeah, I do think it's like, you know. I'm mostly just a kid on the boardwalk, and sometimes there is a sound from the workshop downstairs.

**Austin:** Yeah. And of course—

**Jack:** Oh, did they manage to make the mayonnaise?

**Austin:** Good question. I mean, they do, but then someone steals it.

**Jack:** [laughs] Just a different group of children.

**Austin:** Their evil cousin, Hellmann. Oh, yeah, sure.

**Janine:** And that person gets arrested.

**Jack:** Yeah, immediately.

**Austin:** *That's* crime.

**Janine:** Because the product is terrible.

**Austin:** Oh, yeah, that too.

**Janine:** Carbonated mayonnaise. [Austin laughs] They try and sell it, and that's the thing that starts the FDA or whatever.

**Austin:** God.

**Keith:** Until someone gets the idea to add just a bunch of simple syrup to it—

**Janine:** [crosstalk] And say it's a vitamin.

**Keith:** —and makes mayonnaise soda.

**Jack:** Oh.

**Austin:** Ew.

**Keith:** Yeah, it's...

**Austin:** I hate it. All right. I don't— I think that that's— is that it? Is that the end? I guess I could have looked. Here, The End: The game ends after the last scene of the After Hours beat. Alternatively, if half of more of the players have maxed out or at any time the game is no longer exciting or interesting, you might want to call it quits. [Jack laughs softly] It's your story to start, finish, or redo it as you see fit. At the end of the game— we've done this. Each player takes a turn briefly describing their character leaving the mall. We've kind of done this.

**Jack:** [laughing] Leaving the mall!

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Jack:** Just destroyed this game.

**Austin:** [laughs] What do you mean? Yeah, you think we— you thought we were just gonna stay in the mall the whole time? *In* the mall?

**Jack:** In the mall.

[music plays: “America’s Playground”]