

Float City 13: Dark Disputes and Artful Teasing

[Transcription by Estevan H. Phillips]

[Transcriptions note: IC denotes in character speech, OOC denotes out of character]

[00:00:00] [**Intro Theme begins**]

> **Molly Templeton / "Artemis":** [IC] In the far future, faster-than-light travel is possible via portals called Stiffworks. Human and alien civilizations travel this way for millennia. Trade, war, and technology proliferate. Countless societies rise, thrive, fall, and vanish. Eventually, almost everyone forgets the secrets of the Stiffworks. Almost.

Three hundred years ago, the Worshipful Company of Stillfleeters is formed on Spindle, a space station of unknown origin. They send Fleeters into the void using Stiffworks in search of profit.

It is one hundred million years in the future. Welcome to Float City.

[**Intro Theme ends**]

[**Main Theme begins**]

> **Mike Rugnetta / G.M.:** Previously on Float City, the crew is tasked by The Saffron Anax, an extra-dimensional trade lord headquartered on Rigamont A, with looking into the activities of Zeshdano Navelle, high-level factor for the Co., who has, he says, been delaying his paperwork. After some escapades on the Snakeman mall-planet, Gnarcossa, they crash-land on Kakudun: the politically tense, single-continent world which Zeshdano calls home. They road-trip to the central region, The Jash, and its largest city, Nolaster. There, they find Navelle dead in her apartment. Vynos decides to Reweave: travel back in time to learn the identity of the murderer. Two days earlier, he sees Zeshdano menaced by her apparent colleague, a Mulruk man she calls Boo. And try as he might to resist the temptation, he cannot. Vynos intervenes, springing from his hiding place, and kills Boo with a shotgun blast to the back.

We join the rest of the team now, two days in Vynos' future, in Zeshdano's apartment, in front of her dead body just as he begins his Reweave.

[**Main Theme ends**]

> **Mike / G.M.:** Beta, as you are watching Vynos, waiting for him to disappear, the surroundings around you, the color from them starts to drain.

[**Mysterious music begins**]

> **Mike / G.M.:** And it sort of starts to become metallic? And the surface of everything begins to shimmer as though it's slightly liquid-y. Everything becomes fluid, kind of bulbous, like it's kind of sagging and growing under the weight of its own contents. So like, you know, the shelves and the bookshelf kind of start to sag, but so do the books. And they grow, and they get kinda—they sorta start to look like, almost balloons filled with water or something, like there's some weird imperceptible membrane that's holding everything in shape as it expands and starts to fill with liquid. And as it all sags, it also all starts to congeal and become one big undifferentiated mass. All the colors are leaking into one-another. You can see where all of Zeshdano Navelle's dresses were kind of start to bleed into the posters that were on the wall, and all the books start to bleed together into this weird, brown mass. And then it all kinda forms together, and the colors just

fade, and you're looking at this dull, infinite, semi-reflective grey. You recognize this surface from when you were underground at Zenthra.

You then feel, for a moment, like you often do in a dream, like you're falling but you [finger-snapping] catch yourself immediately. The grey goo becomes perfectly reflective, like you're looking at a mirror again. And you see yourself, as you did when you were underground in Zenthra. Except, instead of facing yourself like a mirror, you're looking at your own back.

[**Mysterious music ends**]

> **Mike / G.M.:** [Ambient Spindle noise begins to play continuously in the background] You and your reflection are facing in the same direction. And instead of an infinite, hazy grey plane, like what you saw when you did The Quartering, you can see that you are—or your avatar, your reflection?—is in a room, on Spindle. You hear the hiss of the air circulators in Spindle. You hear the rumble of the power system. You can feel the floor is rough underneath, as the floors on Spindle all are. You can see, to your right, a long moss wall. The room is big. There's a set of free-standing bookshelves to your left. And the far wall is covered in mechanical clocks. There are dozens of them, in various sizes. They're all set to the same time, they're all ticking along happily. Towards the right of that wall, there's a small desk with tools and several disassembled timepieces. Next to it, closer to you, a set of shelves covered in small diorama. And under those shelves, a similarly sized bench of tools. You can see tiny figures of a man and a woman, they stand on a small bridge overlooking a small pond.

You see yourself seeing these things. You are not looking at these things yourself, it's almost like you are looking through the eyes of yourself, almost like what we might describe as like, it's almost like virtual reality? You feel like you can control this avatar of yourself. Like you can ask it to do things, you can speak as or through it, however you would like to imagine it. Sort of like you're playing a game of, of life, that you are one step removed from. What do you do?

[00:05:59] > **Shannon Odell / "Beta Commobot":** [**OOC**] I look over to my left where the dioramas are, and I get a closer look. What are these dioramas of?

> **Mike / G.M.:** They are all scenes from romantic comedies. So, whatever you have spent your time working on in Spin, it's here. I'm not well-versed enough in romantic comedies - [Shannon laughs] - to be able to pull scenes, like right from memory. There's -

> **Taylor Moore / "The Bad Boys":** It's gotta be, it's, it's gonna be people meeting with friends out of airport gates from the beginning and end -

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yeah.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** - end of "Love Actually" -

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [**OOC**] Yeah.

> **Jenn de la Vega / "Merkis Imeldar":** [**OOC**] Mhmm.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** It's gonna be the Space -

> **Mike / G.M.:** There's John Cusack and -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Yes.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [**OOC**] Yeah.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yeah, there's John Cusack and, I forget her name, both going for the gloves at the same time at Bloomingdale's.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** There's the, the, the Space Needle rendezvous with Meg Ryan -

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yeah.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** - and Tom Hanks.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yes.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] And again Meg Ryan, Tom Hanks, in Central Park with a golden retriever on a bridge. [Shannon laughs]

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Yeah.

> **Mike / G.M.:** There's the train, there's the train scene from, "Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind."

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** There's the deli scene from "When Harry Met Sally..."

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Yes, Katz's Deli. Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** So there you go, that's, yeah they're all, they're all here -

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] All there -

> **Mike / G.M.:** - arranged very nicely -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Some of the dresses from "27 Dresses." [all laugh]

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] Yes.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Yes.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Was it twenty-seven?

> **Mike / G.M.:** A couple, a couple of the dates -

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] That was correct.

> **Mike / G.M.:** - from "50 First Dates." [all gasp, Taylor stifling revulsion]

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Oh that one, that one's a, that one I didn't like. [Jenn laughs]

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] Um -

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yeah you recognize that they are all definitely your work.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] And then she turns over to the, the, the moss wall.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yeah.

> **Shannon / "Beta": [OOC]** And then she's like putting the pieces together of where she is - and her stuff being there, and then she goes and looks at - there's a picture frame you said?

> **Mike / G.M.:** You go over to the, like section of the bookshelves that has like more stuff on it and fewer books. And there are some stand-up pictures of a woman you don't recognize, who's older. She's got like, sort of purple skin, and she has her arm around a younger man, who also has purple skin, and he's got a very square jaw, and he has like very neatly quaffed silver hair. And as you are looking at this, you see him, that same man, but a much older version of him, walk through a door that has been cut into the black rock of Spin from another room in this arrangement of room-blobs. Same purple skin, you can't see his chin anymore because it's got a thick layer of almost microscopic beetles on it. He still has that silver-grey hair, it is tall, it is shiny, it is slick. And he smiles big when he sees you, and he hands you a warm cup of green liquid with a long, thin piece of metal sticking out of it. And he says - **[IC as Algar]** Dear, you look as though you're lost. Having another one of your, what did you call them last time? 'Visits?'

> **Shannon / "Beta": [OOC]** And then, so I can still kind of control her, I pour, I pour the liquid on myself, on my avatar -

> **Mike / G.M.:** **[IC]** Oh! Whoop -

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Whoopsies!

> **Mike / G.M.:** **[IC]** Whoopsie-doo - **[Mike laughs]**

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Whoopsies! Oh-ho! **[Shannon faltering, laughing]** Can I get a napkin? I'm so clumsy!

> **Mike / G.M.:** As if like, to predict what you're going to do, as you say "whoopsie," so does Algar, who you are standing in front of. And he looks at you, sort of like shakes his head, and he's like - **[IC]** You know, you don't need to do that anymore. **[Shannon laughs]** We've been together long enough, you no longer need to play the games. - **[OOC]** And he runs back, he goes back into the kitchen and comes back with a towel and starts cleaning up. **[Jenn laughs]** And he says, he looks at you, and he says - **[IC]** I told you that you don't have to get upset anymore. What you did was right! It's okay!

> **Shannon / "Beta": [OOC]** Now how much am I feeling like I'm in there versus like in a dream-like state. Like, how much do I feel like, that Beta would be actually like, feeling like she was in control of things?

[00:09:58] > **Mike / G.M.:** You have total agency, but recognize this as something that is happening at a remove.

> **Shannon / "Beta": [OOC]** Mhmm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** So the way that I would describe that is, you feel as though you are in control, but that it is unlikely you would get physically hurt, if that makes sense.

> **Shannon / "Beta": [OOC]** Mhmm. So, so Beta's recognizing that this is part of The Quartering, this is one of, one of her "visits," so she is extremely excited, right? Because she loves Algar - **[Jenn laughs]** - and she's not sure if this is predicting the future or if it's just showing what she wants in the future, but she doesn't care. So, she looks straight at Algar, and she goes - **[IC]** Oh - many years! Many years together! **[Jenn and Mike laugh]**

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Yeah, it, what, it's been, maybe five at this point? Are you -

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] Five years -

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] - Are you sure you're feeling alright? Would you like to lie down?

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] No, no, I would not like to - wow, okay, we kept the moss wall, I see! [all laugh] What did you just say before, you said I did the right thing?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Yeah - I mean, I know how much guilt - you've told me several times how much guilt you have over what happened to your, your colleagues, whatever you would like to call them, and I just - you know how I feel, but it bears repeating that I don't think it was your fault, and I think you did the right thing, and I mean really - not to sound like a broken record, but what were you going to do? Were you going to stay a Fleeter your whole life? Were you going to consort with people like Remy and that Jalasti child? I don't think so. Look at you now! You're an Archivist, you have terminal access -

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] Wow. And you - are my boyfriend? [all laugh]

> **Mike / G.M.:** He leads you through the wall that he just walked through and you see a very modest Spin kitchen, and then he leads you through another hole in the wall in that room to a modest Spin bedroom, and he just sits you down on the bed, and he sits next to you, and on one of the end tables you see a little picture of you and Algar in front of like, a weird, black kind of trellis thing? And there is an Unhuman standing between you, and you are wearing whichever famous - [Shannon laughs] - rom-com wedding dress you would like to wear -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Julia Roberts' dress from "Runaway Bride," please -

> **Mike / G.M.:** There we go - [Mike and Bijan laugh] -

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] - Yeah. With the sneakers.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Yeah! [Shannon laughs]

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** On a horse. [Mike and Shannon laugh]

> **Mike / G.M.:** And it's weird that's how every wedding on Spin is. [Jenn and Shannon laugh]

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Oh, I hope that's canon.

> **Mike / G.M.:** He, he says, he sits you down and he says - [IC] I never know what to think when you get this way. I - sometimes you act like you don't know what has happened, or like you would like for things to be different, and - I just, I think that, for me at least, I am very glad that Chragcht and The Anax saw things our way, and that you made the choice that you did. You know, if there's one thing that we learn as Archivists, it's that you have to put yourself ahead of the pack, no one will do it for you, and, and look at the life that we have made. We have, we have nothing to regret, and you don't need to be ashamed of any of it.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] Beta's taking this all in. She can't get over that they're married. [Jenn and Nick laugh] She's trying to process the information that she maybe did something, left her Fleeters behind. And she goes, and she leans into Algar and she goes - [IC] And we, and we kiss? [Jenn and Nick laugh]

[Dreamy, mysterious music begins]

> **Mike / G.M.:** Algar grabs your head in his hands - [Jenn and Nick laugh] - He, he puts both of his hands on either, either sides of your head -

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] - And we kiss.

> **Mike / G.M.:** You close your eyes, and it's not black, but dull grey. The feeling of Algar's presence in front of you, gets cold? Like it's not gone, but it kinda like, gets sort of chilly, and then it gets light, and then it fades. And, there's like a dull, kind of almost wind. Like a breeze. And you start to hear, like the sound of the air circulators changes, and it gets kind of cold. Not just like a cool breeze on your face, but like your body is now a little cold. And you open your eyes - [a gently blowing breeze replaces the constant ambient hum of Spindle; seabirds squawk, waves lapping] -

It's morning. You are in a seaside village. You are on a beach. There is a fire in front of you that has been, either put out or has gone out, sometime in the last several hours. The memory of what just happened is dim. It's like a dream, you know, like you have it clear now, but you can feel it retreating. The last thing that you remember clearly is sitting down with Remy and Vynos to take some weird drug that apparently makes you see stuff that had actually or would actually happen. And now, here you are. On this beach. Sitting across from you is Remy. There is no Vynos in sight.

[00:16:00] > **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] Whoa. Remy?

> **Bijan Stephen / "Remy Tester":** [IC] Yo, what's up? You look a little, uh, green. I mean, not actually, just - [Shannon/Beta sighing] seem kinda green, 'cause I know your face isn't really a - you know what I'm saying.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] Yeah, yeah, yeah, I don't, I don't, I don't have any color to my face. Um - [Mike and Nick laugh]

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] It's, it's perfectly silver, I don't understand it. [Jenn laughs]

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] I, uh, I need a piece of paper. I need, I need paper! Do you have paper? Do you have pens, paper?

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] [Bijan/Remy stammering, stalling] Uh, uh, uhm - [OOC] Remy's rummaging through his pack, um -

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yeah, there are, you have some pens and, yeah you have like something that approximates a notebook and some pens, a pen in there.

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [OOC] Sure, yeah and he hands it over.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] Beta is scribbling down any detail that she can remember as she feels it slipping away from her.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Roll Will.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] Oh, a six.

> **Mike / G.M.:** You have written down a pretty good approximation of what you saw. You get, if not it exactly then a very faithful rendition of it.

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Good there, bud?

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] [sighing] What? I just - [chuckling nervously] - I just saw, a lot!

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Yeah, tripping, tripping pretty hard, huh? [Remy laughs along with Beta] Yeah, it's cool, drugs are cool.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] [exasperated sighing] How was, how was your experience?

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Oh, yeah, it was pretty, I mean it was, it was an experience, for sure, you know?

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] Huh - [OOC] To them, do they know what day it is - what, where are they? Like, I guess I'm getting lost in like what is known as - [Nick laughs] -

> **Mike / G.M.:** You are -

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] Yeah -

> **Mike / G.M.:** - back at the village in the northwest of Kakudun, where the Big Drink Wranglers live.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Where you put the old lady in the playground -

> **Mike / G.M.:** Where you put the old lady in the playground.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Where you were exactly two days ago.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Two days ago.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] And do I have any recollection of a Quartering?

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** No.

> **Mike / G.M.:** You do not -

> **Shannon / "Beta":** So I - [Jenn oohing] - have no memory of The Quartering, but I'm like - [partially IC, to herself] I was just on a drug with Remy -

> **Mike / G.M.:** You took some, you took some weird drugs, yeah.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] Okay.

> **Mike / G.M.:** At least the lore of the drugs is that it shows things that have happened or will happen. Does that make sense?

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] That makes sense.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Enough? [Mike laughs] Enough sense?

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] [laughing] Yeah, yes. Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Great. It's morning, about - just about - two days previous to when you were in Zeshdano Navelle's apartment where you found her dead. The last thing you remember is taking

drugs the night before. In your memory, Beta, and in your memory, Remy, you have not yet gone to Zenthra, you have not yet gone through The Jash, you have not arrived in Nolaster. None of that has happened yet.

> **Shannon / "Beta": [OOC]** Did gunch happen?

> **Mike / G.M.:** I mean Remy is addicted to gunch -

> **Shannon / "Beta":** Okay, Remy -

> **Mike / G.M.:** - yes, yes -

> **Shannon / "Beta": [OOC]** - I just wanted to know, we're pre-gunch or post gunch.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yes - [Jenn laughs] - Remy is addicted to gunch, yes.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** But no, we are, we are back on the beach. We have not -

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yep, we are -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** - we have not found, we have not finished digging out the dune buggy from the sand or anything. [Shannon makes sound of realization]

> **Mike / G.M.:** Correct, actually I believe Oat and Merkis had spent last night putting the finishing touches on the ambler, loading it up with some red plant and getting all of their things ready, like now that it's morning, you all have basically agreed to go.

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** Merkis is walking up and fanning his underarms - [IC] [exasperated] I'm, I'm still not even recovered from the red plant I tried yesterday. I don't know how all of you are trying new, new substances. How do you, how are you feeling, Beta?

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Ho - I, I'm gonna have to check back in with you on that.

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [IC]** What was it like?

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** It was great. It was great, but maybe also bad.

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [IC]** You didn't get stuck anywhere, did you?

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** No, I did not get stuck anywhere. And, yes, I am still in love with our Refactor.

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [IC]** Ohhh.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC as Oat]** Well, you're about to be in love with - this breakfast I got from the little store in the town over there! Hey everybody, that's right, I'm back, it's me, Oat at the top of the dune! [Mike and Nick laugh] No, look at me up here, hello! Look, I found this, it's some kind of, uh, I think it's a kind of bread they get hot in some way.

[00:20:10] > **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Yo, hot bread? Let me in on that.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Well, I, you're gonna want to - whoa, Vynos isn't back yet?

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [IC]** Yeah, where is Vynos?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Huh, I don't know. He was here, but uh, you know how he is, he's uh, he's got his, uh - he doesn't call it magic, but we know it is. [Mike and Nick laugh]

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Wait, did he -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** No, I mean - when I, I figured he just, went for an early morning walk when I got up this morning, I didn't see him. I bought him some of the hot bread in case he'd be back, but uh, I guess he's not. Kinda worried about the guy.

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** I don't know, I was zonked.

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Huh, but Vynos took the same amount as us, didn't he?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Maybe he got stuck.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Oh, no...

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [IC]** Hmm.

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Look, I'm not worried at all. Like, we know that Vynos can, like, do things like travel through time and shit. Like he, he's -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Oh, do you think this is hell science?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** It's gotta be, right? Like I mean, hey look, if he got stuck, some when, some where and some when, I'm pretty sure he'd be able to get back, right? Like he's, he knows what he's doing. [Merkis and Beta sigh]

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** Merkis is scratching his tummy, thinking really hard - [IC] I wonder if he can talk to Deep River this way.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Okay, I mean, you've known him longer than I have, so I'm gonna take your word for it that everything is alright, but uh -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Hey, Beta, should we be worried? I don't think we should be worried. [Beta prolonged, concerned hemming]

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** This doesn't feel good to me.

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Huh, I mean, I think let's give him the morning and if he doesn't show up, maybe then worry.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Alright, that means more hot bread for each of us!

[Intermission theme begins]

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** It's your girl, Jenn, and I'm here interrupting the show to tell you about Patreon. If you're loving our story, production value and god damn incredible sound design, become a Chummer for just five American dollars per month. That's four point two-eight Euros, five hundred and twenty-three yen or a hundred and six pesos. For point zero zero zero three-seven bitcoins, you get access to Fun slash Float Chatty, our inside baseball show about every episode, an invite to our Discord which has channels called "chumblr" and the "the cone of bonus cone-tent," and top secret cold storage archive and cyberpunk themed Spotify playlist that

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[**Intermission theme ends**]

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [**OOOC**] [ambient beach sounds] Beta is sort of - she's out of it, and she's thinking about, you know, what Algar said and talking about like, you know, leaving the team behind and, you know, the Anax looking favorably on her, and she's seeing Vynos is gone, she just is like a little unsettled, and she's looking at the ground for footprints, and she's like - [**IC**] Uh, there are no footprints here.

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [**IC**] That's really weird -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [**IC**] So I guess he did do the hell science vanish sort of thing.

[**Contemplative background music begins**]

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [**IC**] He must've, right? [Shannon / "Beta" sighs]

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [**IC**] Yeah, you know if we need some answers, we ought to get to a Company outpost.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [**IC**] Yeah.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [**IC**] Perhaps Vynos knows to go there.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [**IC**] Sure. Yeah.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [Voice-over] The crew sits on the beach. In the rising sun, and around the smoldering fire, their breakfast is somber, and they perk up at any sound of snapping twigs or approaching footsteps, but none of them belong to Vynos. They briefly canvas the town, quietly calling their disappeared team member's name, as the sea folk rise from sleep to begin their grueling day. They pack up the ambler. Remy rides shotgun, Beta is on the roof, and Oat in a bumper seat. The engine whirs to life, and the on-board navigation system asks for a destination. Merkis keys in Company Embassy, Nolaster, The Jash, and it plots a course. On their way out of town, a nice, old Big Drink Wrangler informs them that the rest of Kakudun isn't as safe as the village, and they should be careful. But the driver, a young, skittish Jalasti, speeds off before he can say how best to avoid The Bonesnatch--raider country.

[**Contemplative background music ends**]

[**Fast electronic action music begins**]

[00:24:54] > **Mike / G.M.:** Back at Zeshdano's apartment, slightly earlier in the morning, Vynos, you have just killed a Mulruk that was going to kill Zeshdano Navelle. It falls over on top of her, you wrestle it off of her, and she scrambles for - she like, is moving her arm around, and you can see that she's reaching into a pocket on the side of her pants -

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [**OOOC**] Uh oh.

> **Mike / G.M.:** - and she moves her arm around the Mulruk, who's kind of still leaning on her, and she brandishes this long, like curved, bright, shining, silver knife at you - from the ground, she's still on her back, she's just, she's holding it up and pointing it at you, and she shouts - [**IC as Zeshdano**] And who the fuck are you?!

> **Nick Guercio / "Vynos Lysumptuara":** [IC] Okay, [Mike as Zeshdano panting heavily] I'm - I understand this is strange, um, I'm not a person that lives in your closet, it's the first time I've ever been there, I uh - it's not a habit [players chuckle] I -

> **Mike / G.M.:** She's backing up, and she's pulling her legs out from underneath the body, and she's got her back up against the back of her couch.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [OOC] Um, I still have a shotgun in my hands, so this is probably not helping -

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yep.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** - but I'm like - [IC] Uh, Vynos Lysumptuara at your service - [OOC] And just as he kind of does a small bow, he notices the shotgun in his hand and he says - [IC] Oh, excuse me, I'm sorry, I'm from the Company - [OOC] And he holsters his shotgun.

> **Mike / G.M.:** She is still holding her knife up, and she says - [IC] I can see that, you are wearing a standard-issue Spin exosuit. Why are you in my apartment?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** Well, it is a long story, but it did involve time travel, and I did change time. I don't know if you know the rules of changing events past.

[**Electronic action music fades and ends**]

> **Mike / G.M.:** She starts to put the knife down, and she looks at you and she says - [IC] You're a Tremulant.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC as Zeshdano] How far ahead should you be?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Two days time.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] And - [OOC] She's looking at the dead body and she's looking up at you - [IC] What was, what was gonna happen?

[**Resonant, inquisitive chime plays and then fades**]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] This person was going to succeed in his aim.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Where you come from - when you come from - [Shannon laughs]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] - I'm dead?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Shit.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] And I'm afraid we don't have much time, before whoever this person was working for finds out that he was not successful, we must make haste.

> **Mike / G.M.:** She stands up and she puts her knife back in her, like weird side-tool pocket thing, there's like a little holster in there. She walks over to her desk, she puts her head in her hands, and she's like, you can tell she's thinking really hard. She's clearly trying to get a grasp on the situation. She turns back around and she looks at you and she says - [IC] In your time, does Millen know that I'm dead?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] No one knows of your death except for myself, now.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] When you found me were you alone?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] I was not. But they now know what they do now. [Mike laughs]

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] What?! [All laugh]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] They now know what they know now! Not what they knew then, in the future!

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Right. That timeline has been obviated.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes. Here's how I see the situation. There are many ways to approach problems in time. This one involves a few factors. One of them is our only allies are on the trail here. I know all of the details of their trip up to this point. If no new information or events are to lead them astray from that path, I don't know who involved in the Company is conspiring with the people that tried to kill you, so they can know nothing. No one can know anything about my travel in time, or my interception. Only us two can, and you must take it to your grave. You must follow me to where we were a day ago, to The Quartering. Cover your face, and let's make haste, now.

> **Mike / G.M.:** As you're saying this, she's looking at you and she's regarding you with a bit of skepticism, and she says - [IC] You're gonna have to forgive me, I am not jumping to leave my apartment with a man who has time traveled into it.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] I realize that you have saved my life, and for that I am greatly thankful. I think there's a few more things we need to get out of the way before we talk about what happens next. I've been in your shoes before - not your shoes, I've never traveled through time, but I have done field work, so I -

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Right, yes -

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] - I have some experience dealing with -

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] - field work, yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] - things like this.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Okay, yes, field work.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] You said that someone was working with Boo - [OOC] And she points at the dead Mulruk on the ground.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] No, I said someone could be working with Boo.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Ah.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] I'm afraid I don't have much information, and that's why we must keep what I've done a secret. It's why we can't talk to anyone. And that's why, for all intents and purposes you must be dead to the world for the next two days, because you have been dead to the world for the next two days, is that understood? Do you understand the problems that can come from you being seen or heard or known about in the next two days?

[00:30:11] > **Mike / G.M.:** Yes, to which I would say, we can't leave. Do you have any reason to believe that your coworkers would go anywhere else than here, and not arrive here at the time that they are - [OOC] And she does quote fingers - [IC] supposed to?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes, I am not there, 'cause I am here, so there were some trials on the way to find you, and I was involved in those trials, so the closer we can get from their start of journey, which they were beginning this morning, the safer we will be. The only other reason why I would say we cannot stay here is that I don't know if Boo is alone in his mission. I doubt he is. Maybe you could tell me about that? Um, but any suspicion you have could be wrong as well, and more could come to kill you, and us.

> **Mike / G.M.:** She looks at you, and she says - [IC] Absolutely not. We have already made too big of a change in the timeline. You have killed someone. We have no idea what things he should be out in the world doing.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Hmm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] The best we can hope is that the wound that I gave him with my knife - [OOC] And she points at the body, and you can see that it's like, there's a lot of blood coming out from the side of him - [IC] That he hobbled out of here with that, went back to wherever he lives, and died in his chair. Didn't go out to meet his friends, didn't go out to kill anyone else. It's too risky for us to leave. We can stay here for two days, can wait for your friends to arrive. We will be sure at that point that the timelines are aligned and we are safe to plan and think about what we are doing next. Are we gonna have to stay in this room with a dead body for two days? Yes. Are we going to have to potentially fight someone off who comes and checks on Boo? Possibly.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Mm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] But I think those chances are better than us going out into the world and obviating more timelines. If my experience is any indication, we're gonna waste tons of time and energy trying to find your friends, and then - I imagine - trying to find who engineered all of this. Eventually if they think nothing's wrong, and I admit that this is a big if, they'll come to us.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] I have been dead for two days, I have to be dead for the next two days.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] You speak with wisdom. I suppose the plan that flashed in my eyes, of calling you my sister Barbara and leading you around like a - [Shannon laughs] - simpleton was maybe made in haste. I should have composed myself before speaking.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Well, get ready to compose yourself again, because you're staying with me.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Okay. Okay, well then -

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] I can't have you out there causing more trouble, making things happen, changing stuff. We have to trust your team that they're gonna stay on the course, and that they'll be here when they're supposed to be here. We need things to go as close to exactly as they went then, now. So -

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] - no brain talking. No Howling Lamp stuff. Don't pick up the phone until they're here. They can't know.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] I understand. There are dangers in staying here. There are dangers in leaving.

[Ominous music begins]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] But the ones in staying here, I see clearly in my mind. I mean I hope that everyone is more complimentary of Beta, obviously, during her Quartering. And there's also a matter of a frog man with a cannon. But - I do trust them. So we must remain. Please, tell me your tale.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Uhhh, it's kind of a long story, but I guess we have some time?

[Ominous music ends]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] That's perfect. [OOC] Uh, Vynos shows himself to the kitchen, he begins preparing some popcorn, he puts on some tea - [all laugh] - he's looking through her clothes to see if she's got some, like a warm robe or something -

> **Mike / G.M.:** There is, yeah, there's something, there's like a nice sort of caftan, open caftan in there.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [OOC] He looks at her, kind of, she's looking at him a little bit askance, he says - [IC] Do you mind?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Uh, no? I guess not.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Okay, great. How do you take your tea, dear?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Uh, just black is fine. [Mike laughs]

[00:35:00] > **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Okay. [Shannon laughs]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] So, uh, you're sure you can keep a secret?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes, it's kind of my whole life. [Mike laughs]

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Boo is a pirate - was a pirate.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Mm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] I've been working with the pirates to divert shipments of guns coming into Kakudun through the Company, and through a few other trade routes. And I've been doing that for a couple years in an attempt to, I don't know, buy some time, I guess. Do what I can.

While everyone is just getting all sort of hot and bothered about what's happening in the southeast. [**OOOC**] And she looks at you, like sort of quizzically like she's forgotten something, or like she's sorry, she's like - [**IC**] Sorry, you're not from around here, the whole continent is on the brink of war.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [**IC**] Yes. Seems to be the pirates versus the, versus the governing body here?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [**IC**] Well, um - [Mike as Zeshdano sighs] - so there are two countries in the southeast. One of them is called Hauktik, and the other one is called Thwoolf. And it's an ancient - it's like a very, very old conflict that's been going on for a very long time, and I mean the long story short is that it's kind of just pervaded all of Kakudunais culture. That what side you're on is part of who you are, part of the state that you are citizen of - everybody has their take on the conflict, why it's lasted as long as it has, who is the - who is in the right, what sort of demilitarization tactics can and should work, and the pirates are part of this larger puzzle. Sometimes they cause trouble, but mostly they just are trying to benefit from the conflict.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [**IC**] Mm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [**IC**] Um, and the one's that I work with - there's a bunch - the one's that I work with are very trustworthy, I mean as long as you can keep paying them, but I work for the Company, so I can. You know, they've actually done a lot of good in making sure that weapons don't get into the hands of people who are just gonna start a war with them.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [**IC**] Ah, but you're also arming the pirates, correct?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [**IC**] Um, they've done actually a really good job of just keeping them in a storehouse on Graffa.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [**IC**] Ah.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [**IC**] I mean yes, there is - we have now, over the years, given them a large enough storehouse that some of them are skimming off the top and selling them, but that's hard to control and also honestly a much lower, lower influx of weaponry than would be the case otherwise, so I'm fine with it.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [**IC**] Ah. And how does the trade between The Lovers and Kakudun come into this?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [**IC**] Why are you asking about The Lovers? I mean I have an answer for you, but -

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [**IC**] It was the reason we were sent here to speak with you, is to understand why the trade was being blocked or at least met with some resistance. It's part of my mission.

> **Mike / G.M.:** She is sipping her tea that you have handed her, she has both of her hands around the mug, and she's squinting at you - [**IC**] Who sent you?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [**IC**] Well - [Nick as Vynos sighs, Shannon chuckles] - It is complicated. Um, this is kind of a favor we're doing to protect ourselves, but as long as we're keeping secrets - [Nick laughs] - in truth it wasn't the Company who added this to our mission but rather, we are trying to protect our safety in visiting you. And when I say me, I mean me and my team, we are being blackmailed by The Saffron Anax. [Bell chimes] We don't aim to get in any way of you or the Company, we were simply requested to get information, and that's what I attempted to

do. If you're saying it's inconsequential to our safety here, or your dealings with the pirates, then I'm happy to leave it.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] You were sent here on the night I was killed -

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Mhmm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] - by The Saffron Anax?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] No, he didn't - it wasn't the same night, we've been doing other Company work for several days now.

[00:39:25] > **Mike / G.M.:** She's looking into her tea, and she's like shaking her head, and she says - [IC] No. This isn't a coincidence. I - hm. [OOC] She gets up, and she goes over to her desk, and she starts rummaging around on her desk, and she's like flipping all the papers around, and she's looking for something. She pulls up this big, like stapled printout that's got a big cover on it, and you can see, you know, it's got some like red lines on the front of it, and she's flipping through it, and you can see all these notes in it, and she says - [IC] I - I've been delaying this paperwork because it's just - I don't like it.

It's really fishy, and I figured that the archivist who was pushing it had like a skim operation or something going on. And, you know, it's not an uncommon thing, you see it a lot. Some comfortable pet of, you know, the guys in charge at Spin, they set up a bloated contract, they divert goods from places where they're needed to places where they'll fetch more money, they cram it in and around all these other deals, and then of course, because they're powerful they get to approve their own paperwork, so you know, it's easy to hide, if no one looks at it. But I mean, that's my job - to look at the paperwork.

But they had to have known that. And, I mean they definitely know that there are ways for them to just ram this through approvals without having to deal with me. They have every other time. And every other time they've done it without so much as threatening me, let alone trying to murder me. If you said The Anax himself sent you to come check on me, this is about way more than this trade deal, it absolutely has to be. He said to you, "Zeshdano Navelle"?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes. He wants to know why you're blocking the trade between The Lovers and Kakudun.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] I - I don't, I don't like that.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Who is the archivist that is putting through this paperwork?

> **Mike / G.M.:** She throws the stack of papers to you, and it like flutters and flips in the air, and when you catch it and sort of put it all back together, you can see that the main signatory is Archivist Chragcht. [Bell chimes]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes, yes. We spoke with Chragcht recently. He had some interest that he didn't quite express in our travels. [OOC] And Vynos continues to look through this, is there anything in here that would be something that would just, you know, be way outside the norm in terms of what the, you know, an archivist or what the Company would typically want, approve, you know, try to push through in terms of trade?

> **Mike / G.M.:** I think it's hard for you to tell because you don't necessarily look at this kind of paperwork that often.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** Mhmm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** This is a huge trade deal between the Company directly and it seems like The Saffron Anax, so you know, whatever his holding company on Rigamont B is.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** Mhmm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** And, so yeah, you don't really know, but looking through you definitely can see that in the manifest, the things that are being traded to Kakudun, there are a lot of weapons. There is just a lot of - there are a lot of finished goods, and a lot of them are clank rifles, laser pistols, and various other armaments.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Hmm. Son of a "thorn-weave-vaiyoozeh" - [Shannon, Jenn, Mike laugh]

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** This -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Oh no he didn't!

> **Bijan / "Remy": [OOC]** Jeez.

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** Oooh!

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Take it back!

> **Mike / G.M.:** Zeshdano looks shocked that you'd say that in her house. [Mike and Jenn laugh]

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** This bastard is working with him. It's plain as day. And look at these weapons, this is enough to start a whole war!

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] What did they say, what did they tell you to do? You weren't supposed to kill me?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** No. We were supposed to simply get information from you - an understanding, a basic understanding of what your objection would be to standard trade that had gone on for a while, as it was described to me.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] If they wanted to go around me, they could.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Hmm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] So something's going on here.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** If they wanted to go around you, and they could, why didn't they?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] It seems, I mean, pardon the pun, overkill to send someone to off me!

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** I think what we know is that they want their machines to move, and you do not. And if you saw that they weren't around you, you could raise suspicions. You maybe knew too much, and showed that by objecting.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] So then just kill me! Why send you? Did they know I was gonna die, and you're just going to confirm that I'm dead? They could have anybody planet-side do that. They

don't need to extort someone from Spin and make them go on this - what sounds like a sort of involved journey.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Hmm. Maybe they seek to pin the crime on us.

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC]** Mmm, But why?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** If I could back up a bit, why did this Boo want you dead?

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC]** You got me. He came in, he said he didn't care about the deal - [Mike as Zeshdano sighs] - If I were to guess, I mean, I know that some of the pirates don't agree with what we're doing, and they don't like being told to store the weapons so that people can't use them. And I know that many of the pirates who feel that way are Mulruk and Fex and Desmudu, the indigenous sapients, because they - they want all of the provincial civilizations here to fall.

[00:45:08] > **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Ah.

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC]** 'Cause this is their home. And we have taken it. Uh, and I can't - I mean -

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** So, a war -

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC]** - I can argue with them, I don't want to - yeah.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** So a war between these two nations means that even if they both lose, the indigenous peoples win.

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC]** Some of the, what you might call accelerationist freedom fighters, they sometimes call themselves anarchists, they want to hasten conflict because they think that all of us fighting one another will ultimately benefit them. I don't know that I think they're right, but I don't have a good argument either way, I just know that I don't want to see people shooting at one another. I'm trying to do what I can within my power - which is just as some refactor on the subcommittee for Kakudun. What can I do? I can divert shipments of things. I guess up until recently, I thought that I was doing that without arousing suspicion. I have a number of people who are working with me in the Company and some of the pirates. I thought we were doing it quietly, but -

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Hmm. Seems to me that you are the finger in the dyke of war.

[Uneasy organ music begins]

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Seems that The Saffron Anax - and with him perhaps member in the Company itself? - these two great nations and even perhaps some contingent of these pirates all are thirsting for it, clawing for it.

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC]** And there's a dead Mulruk in my apartment.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Well, yes.

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC]** No, I mean - politically this looks very bad, I am a high up Company employee.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Right.

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC]** And there is a dead, indigenous, Kakudunais sapient in my apartment.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Well, if it makes you feel any better, I shot one in the head - [stifled laughter] - a few days ago, but I'm not gonna do it now, obviously. And know that the reason I went back in the first place was not to save you, unfortunately, but to see the killer, so that we could prove our innocence. In a moment of weakness, I did save you, and I'm glad I did now, but it does make our lives more complicated.

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC]** I don't know that I would describe that as weakness, but I understand where you're coming from. Well, um, we are gonna have plenty of time to maybe puzzle more of this out over the next couple days, how do you feel about crossword puzzles? [Shannon laughs]

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Ooh, boy goody!

> **Mike / G.M.: [Voice-over]** Zeshdano approaches her large bookshelf and pulls out a thick, worn tome. She flips to an unsolved puzzle towards the back and thuds it down on her modest kitchen table. She gets two perfectly sharpened pencils from her desk. Over the next days, Vynos and Zeshdano read, puzzle, and puzzle over their situation. Vynos sleeps on the floor or simply doesn't. Once or twice, Beta calls, she tries to Aetherspeak with Vynos, and it takes every ounce of concentration for him to empty his mind until she disconnects, which is not soon. He worries what she must think, calling into what seems a dead line.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** So um, you know, I think that maybe the second day or end of the first or something, we decide it would be better if we could move this person somewhere else in the apartment to get him out of the way.

[Uneasy organ music ends]

> **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** When I do that, we realize that this is a freshly killed person, nobody's gone through anything, and so we look through his pockets and see things, and do I find anything on Boo?

> **Mike / G.M.: Yeah, he's - I mean his pockets are basically like full of garbage. Like, he's - he had a holster for his knife. He's got another shorter knife on the other side of his belt. His pockets are full of, he's got guilders, he's got coin. He's got what seems like loose tobacco or like a loose smoking plant of some kind. There's a couple bottle caps. His vest that he was wearing that has like patches on it and stuff has a lot of pockets, and you go through them, and you find pens and pencils, and you find wood shavings, and you find small, smooth stones, and you find some gunch, and in one of the pockets you actually do find something that's a little characteristic, and it's a folded up - it's like a very neatly folded up, yellow piece of paper, do you unfold the piece of paper?**

[00:49:59] > **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.: It unfolds to like, probably about like half of a standard eight and a half by eleven A4 sheet, and it's a very crudely photocopied - or like mimeographed, however they would do it here, maybe like a block print of some kind - flyer that says in big letters at the top, "The Co. is lying." It's the Company seal, but it's drawn in the middle in such a way that it looks, it looks more spiny and more sort of vine-y and aggressive than you, I think, would normally think of it as being, looks much more threatening. And there are a lot of small blocks of text that are ostensibly like claiming to describe the true intentions of the Co. on Kakudun, and it all basically amounts to: they want you subjugated. They are modern slavers. They do not have the interest of Kakudun at heart, and letting them become more powerful will only result in greater turmoil for the masses. And, you know, there's some stuff that like, I think maybe doesn't make a lot of sense to you, because you don't fully grasp the bizarre geopolitical**

situation. But it seems like it's suggesting that if the Co. becomes more powerful, then they are going to become an entrenched and unstoppable, basically world government on Kakudun.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** Right.

> **Mike / G.M.:** And it seems like most of these things are written for pirates.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** So, um, this kind of piques Vynos' interest, and he uses Speak with Steel to figure out who made it and who last used it. I have to burn a grit, or three health, and then touch the object, and then I roll reason and I add my level. My reason is twelve, and my level is two right now, right?

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yes, that is correct.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** So I rolled a nine.

> **Mike / G.M.:** So which do you wanna know, who last used it, how it came to exist, or how it really works, yeah?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** Vynos determines that it's most likely going to consider the person who last used it would be Boo, because all you have to do is read a flyer to use it -

> **Mike / G.M.:** To be a user, yeah -

> **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** So I think that the only real thing of interest here is, learning the details of how it was made.

[Synth music begins]

> **Mike / G.M.:** You are holding the piece of paper, and you sort of start to focus in on it to try to speak to it, and from surprisingly close - a lot of times when you talk to things, they - it's as though a voice is coming at you from the void or like it's approaching from a distance, but this one right away is right up front, and it goes - [**IC as the flyer**] [echoing reverb] Yeah hey, what's up?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Hello.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Yeah! What uh-hh, what can I do for you, my friend?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Hey, well I was interested in knowing who made this flyer, and how it was made.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Who made yours truly? This guy, the one you're talking to?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Yeah, yes, you, sorry, you, sorry, I apologize, yes -

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Who made me?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Ummm, that is a great question. I came from a print shop, you know what a print shop is?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Yes, it's a shop where things are printed.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] You got! - Oh, it's not my man's first time talking to a flyer.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes, yes, yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Uh, run by this guy, he's real nice, real great guy, he's a - do you know what a Big Drink Wrangler is?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] No, I don't. Please, refresh my memory.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] It's like a Wetan. They're from, they're from Kakudun in the northwest.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** Oh yes, yes, that's right, yes, a Wetan, yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Yeah, he runs a shop in, on Graffa. You know Graffa?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] I have heard of the name, yes. Graffa, yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Yeah, the pirate island, in the Dark Sea.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes, well what was his name?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] I'm not sure that I know.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Hm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] You know, people not walking around just saying their name to the objects that are nearby.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Sure, well you know the name of the shop -

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] I guess it is strange that I know the name of the shop, yeah, and the island that - okay, you make a convincing argument -

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Hold on, let me, this is just generating a name for a Wetan just takes a second.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [partially IC] Yes, it does, it's not an instant -

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Ah yeah, his name's Crispy Mold Slider.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Ah yes, Crispy Mold Slider, I'm sure he comes from good stock. Ah, okay. And what was the name of the shop again?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] As you might come to find out if you deal more with pirates - seems to me like it's maybe my man's first time dealing with pirate stuff - not a lot of business names.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Ah, I see. Yes, he's just, he's the print shop. [Nick as Vynos laughs] A simpler time, yes, that's great! Alright, well how are you? Are you feeling okay? Do you need anything?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] I mean it's great to be out of that pocket, uhhh, and looking around here, it looks like there's a lot of space for paper goods on the walls, so if you wanted to hang me up in a

place of honor, I would not complain.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** Right, well I'll talk to the owner about that, but I promise to put in a good word for you.

[00:55:00] > **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Oh, that means a lot.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Okay, alright well thank you very much, and until next time.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Until next time - [OOC] And the voice fades into the void.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [OOC] Yes. - [IC] Hmm.

[Synth music ends]

> **Mike / G.M.:** Zeshdano looks at you, and she's like - [IC as Zeshdano] What, uh, what are you doing?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Oh! Sorry, yes, this paper, well we probably need to put it up on the wall. Yes, it was printed in a pirate print shop on Graffa owned by a man named Crispy Mold Slider.

> **Mike / G.M.:** And she takes the paper and flips it around and she says - [IC] Oh, yeah, a lot of the pirates, there are these campaigns that happen that they're doing that are like anti-Co. They're, you know, there are people trying to convince them that like, the Company is in a way, a stabilizing force, which like we talked about, they don't like. They would rather things be destabilized, 'cause they think it's gonna hasten sort of a return to a more natural state. So yeah, there are these flyer campaigns that, you know, sort of push this anti-Company agenda. This is - I mean, it's really disappointing to see this on Boo, like he was so much smarter than this stupid conspiracy shit.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] So am I correct in understanding, in my understanding that the Company is not involved in any sort of colonial, uh, over-reach into this planet?

> **Mike / G.M.:** She gives you a look like you know the answer to that question, and you know that the answer is complicated. [Nick as Vynos sighs]

[Scene transition music begins]

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] Again, I realize that there are counterarguments, but in my book, stability is not bad.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** Ah, stability! That's the, that's the answer for number nine down on the crossword!

> **Mike / G.M.:** [Mike as Zeshdano exclaims] She runs to the desk and starts scribbling in the book. [Nick laughs]

[Voice-over] They alternate meal-prep with the supplies in Zeshdano's kitchen. They leave the apartment only once, to visit the shared apartment complex facilities in the dead of night. They talk about the set-up. Zeshdano is convinced there's more to this than her delayed paperwork. She's confused but not surprised by Boo. Vynos wonders, why them? And if somehow, whoever is behind this can know that circumstances have changed, and if so, their hopes about staying put might be in vain. As is often the case, only time will tell.

[Scene transition music ends]

> **Mike / G.M.:** [Birds chirping] Merkis, Beta, Oat, and Remy, you leave the embassy and you go, you walk back to the car, and you type in the address, and yeah, it's far enough away that it will roll you there on the tracks that surround Nolaster, and it drops you off at the widest part of Gnöss, which is sort of northeast of the city. Sure enough, it like, points to an intersection between a set of roads where ostensibly Zeshdano Navelle's flat is. It's more residential here, on Gnöss, this is one of the two residential peninsulas. It's starting to get kind of late, the you know, sun hangs low, it's getting a little golden. It's actually kind of nice on the bayou. It's the way that it like, hits the tall grass, and the rippling leaves, and you can hear, sort of the shipping channel in the distance and some of the boats.

The streetlights blink on as you're walking through this neighborhood. People are, people are out walking around, and you take a left and a right and a left and a right, and you get to what you think is Zeshdano Navelle's apartment. It's on the second level of a five-level arrangement of skiffs. It is painted mostly grey, kind of like very dark, almost-black grey. You can see on the door there's also a mail box, and there's a few letters inside of it.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] The lights are on, you said?

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] We're here!

> **Mike / G.M.:** There's a single window that peers in, and it's got a heavy black curtain that's drawn so you can't see inside -

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Merkis wants to open the mail box. Can he open the mail box?

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yeah, absolutely. It might be a little tall, but yeah, you can get it. Yeah.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Yeah, just reaching in, like, tiny arm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yeah, there's a single letter inside, it's in, it's got a hand-written address on it, and it says Zeshdano Navelle, and the address that you're standing in front of.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [IC] This is the right place.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] Well -

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [OOC] Alright, well, Remy fuckin' knocks on the door. [Shannon laughs]
[knocking on a rickety door]

> **Mike / G.M.:** It rattles, and you can hear the rattle sort of like ring through the apartment, but there's no answer.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] Beta whispers to the group - [IC] So are we storytellers or we're just who we are this time, right?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [OOC]** Alright guys, I'ma do the thing that I should've done before, and Remy closes his eyes and uses Open Mind.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Ooh, what's Open Mind? [Bijan laughs]

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** What's that? What's that?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [OOC]** So Open Mind is, "You may burn four grit to communicate with any being intelligent or not, biological or informatic, for one minute. If you do so, the ancient things beyond time and space see you and send one minor emissary to meet you within twenty four hours."

[01:00:11] > **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Oh shit!

> **Mike / G.M.:** Great. [Taylor and Bijan laugh]

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** This game is wild!

> **Mike / G.M.:** Does it say anything about having to know who or where the person -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [OOC]** It does not.

> **Mike / G.M.:** - you are trying to - [Bijan laughs] - Great, okay, perfect.

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** Whoa.

> **Bijan / "Remy": [OOC]** Yeah, I - Remy has a bunch of stuff that I just haven't used yet. And I guess, I guess you guys just see nothing. He just closes his eyes. [**IC in Remy's mind**] [reverberating] Zeshdano! Where the fuck are you?

> **Shannon / "Beta": [laughing]** Oh my god, Remy!

> **Mike / G.M.:** For a second, you don't hear anything.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC as Oat]** Should we knock?

> **Mike / G.M.:** For another second you don't hear anything. [Momentary silence] You maybe hear Oat knocking from what feels like a great distance, but then, you hear a voice, a female voice, like it's inside your own head, and it goes - [**IC as Zeshdano in Remy's mind**] [reverberating] I'm inside, but don't come in just yet. Not yet.

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC in Remy's mind]** What are you doing in there?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [**IC in Remy's mind**] This is - this is, just hold on. This is weird, I know it's weird. I - I'm with Vynos, he's fine. [Shannon gasps] He speaks very highly of you -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC in Remy's mind]** So you have him!

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC in Remy's mind]** Uh, I need you to use your Charge power to blast open the door.

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC in Remy's mind]** Okay, how do you know I can do that?

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC in Remy's mind]** Vynos told me and I'll explain when you're inside -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC in Remy's mind]** He shouldn't be telling people that. [Shannon laughs]

> **Mike / G.M.: [IC in Remy's mind]** - but you did it before, so you have to do it again now.

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC in Remy's mind]** Oh!

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** Merkis is leaning over to Beta - [IC] What's happening? I have no idea. I have - do you know what Remy's doing right now?

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Oh, no. That I don't. But I think we're deciding what type of knock we should knock on the door with - [Nick laughs] - you know, like a stern one or a light knock, is that right, Oat?

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Yeah, I think like just a standard knock, we want a knock that doesn't say anything -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC in Remy's mind]** Alright, Zeshdano -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** - doesn't commit us to any sort of attitude -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC in Remy's mind]** Alright, Zeshdano, I'm gonna let you go, uhhhhh - [all laugh] - bye? [OOC] And I guess Remy gets up and blasts the fuckin' door open.

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** [laughing] As we're talking about what kind of knock we're gonna do - [sound of energy charging up and blasting] [wooden door exploding to splinters]

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Ho! Whoa! -

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [IC]** Whoa!

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Well, that's one way to open the door -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** - Remy! Holy -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Knock, knock!

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** - Shit!

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [IC]** Oh, uhh, oh -

> **Mike / G.M.:** You all walk in through the front door. This is Zeshdano Navelle's apartment. It is small, the walls are covered in posters and artwork. There's a small writing desk directly in front of the door. There's a bed in the middle in the back, and a small kitchen all the way to the left. There's a kind of brown tarp? Mound of some kind? Piled up in the back left of the room, near a jeweler's desk. It doesn't smell great in here, and you can see in the center of the room, there's what looks like a large, dried blood stain. A medium-sized darker skinned woman in a baggy blazer and black work pants stands behind the huge blood stain. She's got long, scraggly dark-black hair with these wide patches of grey. She has her hands up - not in surrender, but in kind of like, celebration. Like - welcome, it's good to see you, even though you've never seen this person before. Nick where's Vynos? What's Vynos doing when everybody comes in?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [OOC]** Vynos is at the table, waiting, finishing, you know a couple of things in the crossword puzzle, just double-checking. He's actually, you know, really relieved, and he's like - [IC] Oh, good! I knew you'd be here! Ah, yes, are all of you okay?

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Yes, we - [Taylor laughs]

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Vynos!

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Nooooo -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Vynos! -

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Vynos!

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Oh ho, my man!

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Ah!

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** Merkis is stern, pursing lips, and goes to shut the door. [door remnants clunking]

> **Bijan / "Remy": [OOC]** There's no door! [laughter]

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** Oh, you blasted it, oh, sorry.

> **Mike / G.M.:** There's a door - it just, it -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** You can still go to shut it!

> **Mike / G.M.:** - you could still close it, it's just, you know, not gonna like fully shut. It's not gonna click.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Okay, yeah, Merkis just makes any kind of attempt to conceal what's going on inside. [door slamming] And just makes his way over to Vynos, grabs his elbow like a Lord of The Rings handshake - [Nick chuckles] - Merkis looks very visibly different. He has five o'clock shadow, he's standing up straight, kind of has a serious hardened face now. [Jenn laughs]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Merkis?

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [IC] [deeper voiced] Vynos. We were worried about you.

[Electronic action music begins]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Merkis! What happened to Merkis?! Are you a viking now? [all laugh]

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [IC] I am Merkis!

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Vynos, uh - [OOC] Remy's crouching over the blood stain - [IC] Yeah, Merkis became a man, dude. [Mike laughs]

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [IC] I've seen some things!

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Merkis killed a guy! Merkis fuckin' killed a guy! [Shannon laughs]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Oh my goodness -

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] I was so proud.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [IC] Indeed, it's true. But, I am just very glad to see you, and that you had followed some kind of protocol! We were expecting that you were going to meet up with us at any Company outpost, but I guess you're here.

[01:05:01] > **Mike / G.M.:** [IC as Zeshdano] Sorry, that's my fault. I told him that we can't leave, we couldn't leave, until you got here.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [IC] I don't understand at all, I'm just so glad you're alive man, come here, give me a hug! [Vynos whimpering] - [OOC] And Vynos, as Oat goes to hug you, you see that his tux jacket - the shoulder of his tux jacket on his right arm is in tatters, blood-stained tatters, and where his right arm used to be, there is a sort of mechanical plug that has been grafted into his shoulder, and hanging out of that plug is a sort of wildly waiving, chaotic Wetan arm. There's a bug-man arm sort of flapping there out of that metal plug, and he goes to hug you, and the hand instead just sort of slides up your face a little bit - [all laugh] - and then lands on your shoulder.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Goodness, gracious. Oh, oh! Oat, what is this new appendage that

you've graced my face with?

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** [whispering] I almost died, Vynos!

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Oat, I'm so sorry -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** It was incredible! I got shot with a canon!

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Oh, god -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** And it took my arm off! It was just - we were all breathing pink mist for a minute. [Nick as Vynos shudders] And Remy ate a guy! And Beta saved my life! And then, Merkis! Merkis, Merkis is the reason we got out of there alive, I think. It's been tough without you, man. Oh, put her there!

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Oh, wow! - [OOC] Vynos gives him another big hug - [IC] Well I'm - at least you're all still alive, I had many worries about not being there to help. We had some time difficulties, and things happen, but I'm glad that we're all together now.

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** So we're calling them -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Why did you vanish?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** - we're calling them time difficulties now? [Mike laughs]

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Yeah, what? I had to lay unconscious the whole day while the put the socket and the bug arm on me. [Nick as Vynos exhales]

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [IC]** Yes, you disappeared from the beach.

> **Shannon / "Beta": [OOC]** Beta slowly is walking up to Vynos very slowly and stops like inches from his face, and says - [IC] [angrily] Where were you?! [Mike laughs]

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Beta, what is this? How did - how did your Quartering go?

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** What?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [OOC]** Uh, Remy runs up and pulls Beta back - [IC] Don't do it, Beta, it's not worth it! He's not worth it! [Mike laughing in the background]

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Wha - Quartering?! You think we were going around having fun and games at festivals?! We were looking for you!

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Well, I couldn't come back, I just have to tell you that the way things unfolded in time required a few wrinkles, and the best I could do to keep us all safe was to stay here with Zeshdano. I hope that my absence wasn't too much of an inconvenience, and it looks

like it was, and I apologize for that.

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [IC]** Hold up a minute, Beta was in The Quartering?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Um -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [OOC]** Would we know about The Quartering?

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** I mean, from town, yeah.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yes, yeah -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [OOC]** Okay.

> **Mike / G.M.:** - the man at the front, at the border would have had - you would have had roughly the same conversation, and there still would've been a bunch of people around, and yeah.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Well, no, I was inquiring about what happened with The Quartering. I - it could've gone any number of ways.

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Hold on, back up, back up, back up -

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Yes?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** - you said time difficulties. What exactly, in your perception, happened?

> **Mike / G.M.:** Zeshdano, who has been watching this reunion from afar realizing that she does not have a part in this, and that she should let these friends see one another for the first time in a couple days after what have apparently been some harrowing events, arguably on either side, has taken a seat at her writing desk, at her work desk, and when you ask, sort of, what they mean by time difficulties - what Vynos means by time difficulties - she stands up and she says - and she walks over to Vynos, kind of pats him on the shoulder, looks up at him 'cause he's much taller than she is, and she says - [IC] Your uh, your friend Vynos disrupted causality to save my life.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Well next time, leave a note! [all laugh]

> **Bijan / "Remy": [OOC]** Can't beat that logic.

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** Really cannot beat that logic. [IC] Vynos. Vynos, Vynos, Vynos. You made a change in time?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Well - [stammering] - who did what, doesn't matter, does it? What matters is none of us can tell anyone about it, let's promise that to each other now, okay?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** So you're not going to tell us what happened in the other timeline, the one that you disrupted?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** The timeline I disrupted doesn't exist, and never existed.

> **Shannon / "Beta": [IC]** Okay -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Is this some weird way -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Wait, what?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** - is this some weird way of saying y'all have just been doin' it this whole time? [Nick laughs] Is this like a -

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** No, this isn't me covering up for us doing it, alright?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** I don't know! Look -

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** The smell in this apartment is that of a dead body -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** - you disappeared!

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** - not of two days of coitus! [Jenn laughs hysterically]

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** You disappear for two days, I call out to the universe, risking my fucking brain, blast a door open, and you're just here, and it smells bad! I was worried - Oat, hold me back! [Mike laughs]

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Okay, well obviously -

> **Mike / G.M.:** Oat, Oat flaps -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** - yeah, Oat is trying to hold you back, the arm is literally going backwards behind him. [Shannon, Jenn, and Mike all laugh]

[01:10:02] > **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Honestly, all of you, I'm glad that you're relatively safe and unharmed. I can only tell you that there are much, much, much, much, much worse things that could have happened doing what I felt I had to do at that time. It sounds like you met those pirates and you handled them, and even grew a bit - [OOC] He winks at Merkis - [IC] from that experience -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** I liked Merkis before!

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Well I did too, but I also like him like this!

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** Merkis has his arms crossed and spits on the ground. [Mike

laughs]

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Now he's like us! That's fucked up!

> **Mike / G.M.:** Zeshdano, Zeshdano looks at Merkis like who's this punk?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** I, you know, of course this was gonna happen to Merkis eventually, right?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Do you wanna know how it happened?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Mhmm?

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Merkis, tell him.

[Ominous music begins]

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** It was brutal. I loved it.

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [IC]** [Jenn as Merkis makes an exasperated sigh] I had, I had no choice! I had no choice! I was hiding in the footwell of the ambuleer, and I heard the canon go off, and Oat was just on the floor in a pool of blood. I had to do something! So I grabbed the sheet, the metallic sheet that got covered over the ambuleer and ran at the Mulruk, enveloping him like a little cigar and tackled him and beat him with my bare hands.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Oh goodness gracious! Merkis, wow!

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** It was so bloody!

> **Jenn / "Merkis": [OOC]** And now, Merkis, I don't know if - Merkis has like a torn piece of fabric tied around his forehead like Rambo.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Oh my goodness gracious, Merkis, you really have grown quite a deal. I'm sorry that you had to do that, but I can only tell you that that Mulruk only had murder in his heart. He tried to kill me once before in the past at the same time.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Okay, look, I don't understand twenty percent of what is going on here, but can we just have this lady sign the paperwork and then go home?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Well, I'm afraid, Oat, it's more complicated than that. There is a chance even -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Ahhh, I - that sucks! [Nick and Mike laugh]

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Yes well, Oat I understand it sucks, okay? We've been living here for two days with a dead body, alright? I'm sure it doesn't smell good -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Oh, I'm sorry! Have you had to stay inside for two days?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Okay, you're right - [Nick, Shannon, and Mike laugh] - that's fair -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** The arm is going like - [Taylor makes servos whirring mouth sound]

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** That's fair, that's fair. I'm looking at your arm now and I understand that that's - that's definitely fair, and I apologize.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** I don't - I don't hate it. I love having a Wetan arm! There's actually, there's a lot of cool stuff about it too! And, you know, once I get control of it, like it looks sexy, like I look like I'm cool, but like, you know? Maybe I would've preferred to stay in a room for two days! Let's just let her sign the paperwork and then we can go home.

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Well now that it's out, I'll just say that the only other thing - the only alternative was Zeshdano would've been dead, and we would've been possibly framed for the crime of her murder!

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Hold on, Donna?

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Zeshdano.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** Oh, they have a nickname for each other.

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Those are pet names, I heard a pet name!

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Okay, that's enough of that, alright? We've had -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** Oh no, it's not even enough! You dis -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** They did coitus!

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** You, you -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys": [IC]** They did coitus!

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** We didn't -

> **Bijan / "Remy": [IC]** You left our - you didn't just disappear, you left our timeline! [Jenn chuckles]

> **Nick / "Vynos": [IC]** Yes?

> **Shannon / "Beta": [OOC]** Beta is once again up to Vynos' face and said - [IC] [

accusatory] You got a girlfriend?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] I don't -

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Oh, Beta, oh. Merkis is restraining Beta now. [Jenn as Merkis shushing Beta]

> **Mike / G.M.:** Zeshdano is, as you are re-arriving at the romance subplot, she is laughing and shaking her head like this is ridiculous, and she says - [IC] Friends, he is not my type. [Mike, Jenn, Shannon chuckle]

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Not even once?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Look, we have -

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] There was a dead body, that's sexy! [all gasping and laughing]

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [IC] Oh ho, wait a minute!

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] That isn't sexy to anyone but you, okay, Remy?

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] Whoa, Remy!

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Remy, that's not sexy to -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [IC] The energy has shifted in the room!

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [IC] Oh, uh -

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] I felt it too, Oat.

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] What did you do with a dead guy anyway, why does it still smell so fuckin' bad in here?

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] It's a dead guy, alright? Everybody else thinks it smells bad.

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Yeah, but where is he? I see a blood stain.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] We shoved him in a corner and covered him with some coats, okay? We were tired of looking at him.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Zeshdano puts her arms up and says, and says - [IC] Okay, just to be clear, I assume that you are here because of the trade deal that -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [IC] Yes.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] - that I have been holding up, and when you say, “she should sign it, and you can go home,” what you are referring to is this trade deal. - [OOC] And she holds up a stack of papers from her desk that Vynos, you have flipped through, you know well. And she says - [IC] What I can tell you for sure is that I’m not signing this. I was not gonna sign it before, I’m definitely not gonna sign it now that it seems like someone is trying to kill me. I’m not going to tell you all what to do with your lives. If you wanna leave here and you wanna wash your hands of this, that’s fine. But I wanna know why someone wanted me dead for a trade contract that - yes I was providing some, you know, difficulty in having it progress, but there are a lot of other ways they could’a done this. So there’s something that they’re trying to do. I don’t know what it is. If you wanna help me figure it out, that would be great, but if you don’t, I understand.

[01:15:07] > **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [IC] Um, my friends, you know uh, I think The Saffron Anax said he was gonna do some really bad stuff if you didn’t get her to sign the paperwork or whatever.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Well technically he only asked us for information. We didn’t have to have the deal go through.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [IC] Wasn’t there an implied threat?

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah -

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yes -

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Oh, definitely there was an implied threat.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] There’s definitely an implied threat, but my understanding of it was we were supposed to find out why she wasn’t signing the papers, not necessarily deliver him signed paperwork.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [IC] Oh, okay.

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Okay, so, so, ‘Dano. So Vynos has absolutely made it clear what our position in this is, and why we can’t just let it go, right? You’ve been here two days, he’s presumably told you what was going on?

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] He let me know that you have effectively been blackmailed as I understand -

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] That’s the word.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] - by The Saffron Anax, yes. And that is why you were sent here to find out what was going on with me, but that you were - in another timeline that I know you have not experienced, so it’s hard for me to convince you that this is important, you might not have a strong reaction to this, but in another timeline, you came and I was dead. To me, that sounds like

you've been set up twice.

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Hmm.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [IC] Hmm.

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [IC] Hmm.

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] The double setup.

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] Yeah.

> **Mike / G.M.:** [IC] And if I were you - and I'm not, so fair's fair - I would wanna know who put a target on my back, maybe twice.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [IC] Yes.

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] I mean, look. From - personally, I don't care which way this goes, I'm just happy to be here. This has been fun. You know, if it's gonna get a little freaky, if we're gonna do some detective work, I'm into it. If you just wanna murder her and get back to the Spin thing, I'm down for that too. But just let me know what we're doing.

> **Mike / G.M.:** I just want to say from the GMing perspective, all of these are viable options. You could, you could just kill Zeshdano now that you've met her, you could just leave.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Merkis has been contemplating, like a serious Sean Connery face, and pulls the letter out from a pocket and says - [IC] This arrived for you - [OOC] And before he offers it to her, he says - [IC] Paperwork. It looks like, so far on this trip we've disobeyed paperwork. How do we get out of this, everyone?

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] I mean, like I said, we could murder her, we could also murder the people who were trying to murder her, we could also go back to The Saffron Anax and try and murder him. I feel like there's gonna be a murder, and I, you know, could - Beta, what do you think? I mean this could go either way. I personally - we're already here, she's alive, it feels like inconvenient to make her dead, and I'm kind of interested to hear about -

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] No one else is thinking that we should murder her, alright - [all laugh]

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] I'm just exploring -

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [IC] - so you can just remove that from the table.

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] - all the possibilities - [Nick as Vynos sighs] - but it seems like we are getting set up. So we might wanna explore that.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [IC] Wait, how are we getting set up?

> **Mike / G.M.:** As if in answer, the front door of the apartment - [Jenn gasps] - rockets open, just gets pushed in violently - [door slamming open] - it clatters against the wall and you can see the top hinge even separates a little bit -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Mike, the door had already been blown open.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yeah, I know, but it's -

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Okay. [Taylor laughing]

> **Mike / G.M.:** - but like, Merkis had pressed it shut.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [still laughing] Okay.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Right.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Yeah.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Did I understand that correctly?

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** [OOC] Yes.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Sure, yeah. Rock and roll.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Yeah, so now, so now the door has been double-molested, yes. [all laugh]

> **Nick / "Vynos":** [OOC] Twice baked.

> **Mike / G.M.:** Twice baked.

> **Jenn / "Merkis":** Double jeopardy.

> **Mike / G.M.:** It is a twice baked door, yes. [Jenn laughs]

[Threatening music begins]

> **Mike / G.M.:** Three Nolastrian guards come in, and you recognize their dress from having seen them when you went through the checkpoint entering Nolaster. There is a Human, a Mulruk, and in the front a HNNH, which I don't think you all have seen yet.

> **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** Mm-mm.

> **Mike / G.M.:** They're exceedingly rare. HNNH is a kind of semi-indestructible sapient, ceramic, clockwork murder-robot made ten thousand years ago by - nobody knows. [all chuckle]

]

> **Shannon / "Beta":** [OOC] Of course.

> **Mike / G.M.:** There seems to be a finite number of them, and they show up every once in a while, and they are all canonically insane. [Shannon and Nick laugh] The HNNH is up front. She has a laser pistol drawn, and the two behind her have clank rifles leveled. They enter very quickly, the Mulruk shuts the door behind him again. Their guns stay up, and the HNNH asks - [**IC as the HNNH guard leader**] [modulated] Someone from the Company called a report in. There is apparently a missing Fleeter murdered here. Does anyone know anything about that?

> **Bijan / "Remy":** [IC] Uhhhh.

[01:19:35] > **Taylor / "The Bad Boys":** [IC] Oh, that's how we're getting set up! I, uh, we're not armed! - [OOC] And Oat's left hand goes up, and his right hand goes right down to the floor. [Jenn and Nick laugh]

[**Threatening music fades out**]

[**Main Theme begins**]

> **Mike / G.M.:** You are now leaving Float City. Thanks for listening. If you like the show and you want to help us keep making it, head on over to patreon.com/FunCityVentures. Five bucks a month gets you access to a whole other show we do called Fun Chatty. It gets you access to our rad as heck Discord full of very smart, very nice, very weird nerds. It gets you access to music playlists and more. It is a wild deal. You know you want to, get on in here. patreon.com/FunCityVentures. And of course, thanks to all of our current Patrons for help keeping this ship afloat.

[**Main Theme ends**]

[**Outro Theme begins**]

> **Bijan:** Hi, I'm Bijan Stephen, and I play Remy Tester on Float City. You can find me online on Twitter @bijanstephen, B-I-J-A-N S-T-E-P-H-E-N, on Twitch at the same name, and on Instagram @bijancakes, B-I-J-A-N cakes.

> **Jenn:** I'm Jenn de la Vega, I play Merkis Imeldar. You can find me on Twitter and Instagram @randwiches, that's the word sandwiches but replace the S with an R.

> **Shannon:** This is Shannon Odell, I play Beta Commbot. You can find me on social @shodell.

> **Nick:** Hello, this is Nick Guercio, and I play Luxe on Fun City and Vynos on Float City. You can find me @nicholasguercio on Twitter and @nguercio on Instagram. You spell Guercio G-U-E-R-C-I-O.

> **Taylor:** I'm Taylor Moore, and I play all the cool, interesting characters. You can follow me @taylordotbiz. [sinister laugh]

> **Mike / G.M.:** My name is Mike Rugnetta, I am your G.M., and you can find me on twitter and Instagram @mikerugnetta.

You can find the show on Twitter and Instagram @FunCityVentures. Float City is played in a soon-to-be-released system called Stillfleet, which you can find on Twitter, Instagram and Patreon @stillfleet. This episode of Float City was recorded at various locations around Brooklyn, New York. It was produced, edited, and sound-designed by me, Mike Rugnetta. Pixlriffs, come hither and see the opening morn, image of truth, newborn. Doubt is fled, and clouds of reason. Fun City's music is by Sam Tyndall. Remy's flute playing is by Jake Fridkis. Our art is by Tess Stone. Our Discord mods are Olivia Gulin, Kelly McKew, Kit Pullium, and Kestrel. And the voice of Artemis is Molly Templeton.

[01:22:52] [**Outro Theme ends**]