

CHAP Masks 6 – The Grey Box

Content Warnings

- Physical violence
- Restraints
- Social anxiety & awkwardness
- Discussions of: food
- Mentions of: alcohol, imprisonment & policing, bombs
- SFX: background chatter, vehicles & sirens (distant), whirring & beeping, brief misophonia, clicking, eating and drinking SFX

[Show Theme - Intro]

THE ETERNAL TAVERN KEEPER

Rusty Quill presents Chapter and Multiverse

[SFX: Interdimensional Tavern ambience]

Hello, hello! Come on in! Make sure to take a look at our new specials menu, there's a cocktail on there that I think you'll enjoy. It's called the Pincushion - it has a very pleasant tingling sensation and a very fresh aftertaste. But enough about that, you'll want to know what happened to Mini, Morgan, Joseph and Adeeb, won't you? Well, after handily dealing with the brash young supervillain known as the Green Needle, they soon discovered that he was part of something much bigger than they had initially realised...

[SFX: Portal whoosh]

MADDY

Hello and welcome to Chapter and Multiverse, the actual play podcast where we explore the same city across multiple parallel universes. I am your game master Maddy Searle, my pronouns are she/her, and today we are continuing our campaign of Masks: a New Generation, which is designed by Brendan Conway and allows our players to take on the role of young superheroes. But before we go any further I must introduce our wonderful and talented players. Could you please let me know your name and pronouns and your character's name and pronouns, starting with Lydia.

LYDIA

Hi! I am Lydia Nicholas, pronouns they/she and I am playing Mini Smithson, a total human with the hero name Solartrix. Don't read anything into having a hero name, totally a human. She/her, yeah - for the character, yeah, cool. I am smooth.

MADDY

And Ahmed.

AHMED

Hi, I'm Ahmed Aljbray and I am stoked to be here. I'll be playing Adeeb bin Yeslam, aka The Turban. Pronouns are he and him.

MADDY

Wonderful. And Lowri?

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LOWRI

Hey. I'm Lowri Ann Davies and I am playing Blodeuwedd Morgan. Both of us are she/her and her superhero name is Syphon.

MADDY

Awesome. And Pip?

PIP

Hello, I'm Pip Gladwin and I will be playing Joseph Teller aka Zenith, or Ze-nith, whatever you're feeling on the day. Actually a human and er-

LOWRI

Oh!

LYDIA

Yeah!

LOWRI

Strange things, yeah.

LYDIA

Cool.

(Group laughter)

PIP

We are both he/him.

MADDY

Brilliant, OK. Last we left off you had just completely humiliated the Green Needle.

LOWRI

Aw!

AHMED

I'm sorry, "Pincushion".

MADDY

[laughs] Yes, the Pincushion, yeah, absolutely.

(Group laughter)

[SFX: Mall ambience, traffic from outside]

MADDY

And held him in place while Adeeb punched him in the face and then Mini shone scary lights in his face and he just completely buckled under the

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pressure and called off all his minions. So. Now you have him in your clutches, what would you like to do?

LYDIA

Can deliver him to the justice system outside and then, as has been established, completely fix the prison industrial complex-

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Which is now Mini's aim.

AHMED

I make sure there's like a ribbon tied on top of his head, like a gift wrap. **[SFX: Fabric noises as ribbon is tied]**

LYDIA

Oh!

LOWRI

Yes!

MADDY

[laughs]

LOWRI

What about the minions, are you gonna wrap them up as well?

AHMED

Of course, we have to hand them properly to the authorities.

LOWRI

That's true.

AHMED

As a gift. **[SFX: Fabric noises as ribbon is tied]**

LYDIA

No, Your Honour, we didn't, like, kidnap them and tie them up, no, it's not legally defined as false imprisonment, they were gift wrapped.

LOWRI

[laughs]

LYDIA

Not, not handcuffed or handbound. Yeah, that's how that works.

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

Morgan will put like, I don't know, however many she can carry, maybe five, she is losing some strength so only five minions over her shoulders. **[SFX: Picks up minions]**

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

And carry them to the Police downstairs presumably.

MADDY

Nice. Yeah, absolutely. And er, I think Adeeb would be the one to notice this as someone who is well-acquainted with fabrics but you can see that the Green Needle has a kind of subtly-concealed fanny pack or bum bag in his costume and er, it clearly has some stuff in it, so you can-

LYDIA

LOOT!

AHMED

[laughs]

MADDY

Yeah, you can either have a look or just leave it be, whatever you, whatever you prefer.

AHMED

With my ribbons, I pull them off him and hand them over to Zenith. **[SFX: Powers resonance, hand over bum bag]**

PIP

I'll open it up and just kind of tip it out, tip it out onto the ground. **[SFX: Unzip bag and tip out objects with a clatter]**

MADDY

You find a Pez dispenser in the shape of a cactus.

LYDIA

[laughs]

LOWRI

Oh my god.

MADDY

But also, more importantly, you find a piece of paper which appears to be some kind of invoice or official correspondence **[SFX: Unfolding paper]** with a company called Clearvision Trading. And it's very clear from this document that the Green Needle has been paid a vast sum of money to raid this mall. It doesn't give any reason why this might be the case but it's very clear that this wasn't his idea, someone else put him up to it, and the only name you have is Clearvision Trading.

LYDIA

I love this universe! The clues are just like - "Hi, I'm a clue and this is what I say!" It's cool.

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

Is that not directly comparing it with anyone else who may have GM-ed for you recently?

LYDIA

I mean, yeah, like it's cool, you might have to wait 7 years for the pay off of a joke, but um-

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

That's fine! Whereas here we made a decision - this is the clue. This is what it says.

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

I love it.

LYDIA

Deal with it. This is the name of the person that sent it. Your decision.

AHMED

Is this an organisation or a person?

MADDY

It's Clearvision Trading, it's an organisation. There's no people's names associated with this document and there's not even an address or anything, it was just a receipt of money.

LYDIA

You say that but it would, like Mini would be picking up from the others that this is not the name of a person, because Clearvision Trading could like-

LOWRI

Reasonable name!

LYDIA

That could be someone's given name, yeah.

LOWRI

Yeah.

MADDY

Yeah. Andrew Trading.

LYDIA

Yeah - just, daughter of, I dunno, Jimbob Trading and Stanley Trading.

LOWRI

Murky Glasses Trading. Yeah.

LYDIA

Named for **[laughs]** their maternal grandmother! Clearvision Smith!

(Group laughter)

AHMED

To be clear, is it like saying - for your payment here is a good location to hit, or: do this hit then you'll get paid?

MADDY

It's "do this hit, you'll get paid". It's all kind of obfuscated in corporate language, but once you've kind of gone beyond the lawyer speak it's pretty clear what's going on here.

LYDIA

Are any of us capable of going beyond the lawyer speak?

LOWRI

[laughs]

LYDIA

Is that something that Zenith was training?

MADDY

I feel like Zenith would, would be able to.

PIP

Yeah I've got, I've got specific abilities, yeah.

LYDIA

Oh the, the files thing, yeah.

PIP

I mean I don't need to take the paper, I'll make a note of the name of the company.

LOWRI

Presumably you can take a photo of it with the inbuilt camera in your helmet?

LYDIA

Yeah.

PIP

I mean all of this is being recorded anyway, so I don't even need to take a picture of it, I can just refer back to the recording later. I'll nod and I'll like, sort of, pick up the Pez dispenser and like hand it to Adeeb. **[SFX: Picking up Pez dispenser and throwing it over]**

PIP (as ZENITH)

I'll look into this. Here - souvenir!

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Oh! Thank you. Actually that's a good idea, I should start collecting souvenirs.

LOWRI

Morgan standing with five people over her shoulders and is like-

(Group laughter)

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Er, you wanna, like, be careful with that? Like, that's a superhero. What if it's like a bomb-Pez-dispenser.

LYDIA (as MINI)

Yeah.

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LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Or like-

LYDIA (as MINI)

Tiny bombs!

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

This was a supervillain we just got it from.

PIP

I will look at the Green Needle. From the Green Needle back to Morgan. And just be like:

PIP (as ZENITH)

No it wasn't.

LYDIA

[laughs]

MADDY

Yeah, you see a deep look of shame come across the Green Needle's face as he's restrained.

LYDIA

Aww!

MADDY

He was just - he was just like:

MADDY (as THE GREEN NEEDLE)

I thought it was funny.

(Group laughter)

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Right, OK. So um, shall we take these people to the Police I guess?

LYDIA (as MINI)

Yep.

MADDY

Yep, and er yeah, you can head down the escalators and er, the minions on the ground floor all kind of part like the Red Sea and let you pass, seeing that their leader has been taken out.

LOWRI

Oh yeah, I forgot about the people on the ground floor!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

It seems like that's what they wanted.

(Group laughter)

PIP

Are they just submitting or are they trying to run?

MADDY

There are some who are just like - OK, we've been caught. There are a few who are just kind of backing away slowly, trying to look around for exits and see if they can find their way out.

LOWRI

Going into clothes shop, grabbing anything that isn't green to put on!

(Group laughter)

MADDY

Yes!

LYDIA

Oh, there's a hostage! Look, I'm wearing orange!

MADDY

They're going into Lew Nook and getting some non-green things.

LOWRI

Oh...!

PIP

I think of the group if there's something that are like backing off and looking like they're trying to get away, I think Zenith is going to make an example of one of them so the others don't do that.

[collective sharp intake of breath]

LOWRI

Gosh!

PIP

Whether you want me to roll for that or not I don't know, but I have the angry condition and in order to clear the angry condition I need to hurt someone, so...

LYDIA

Oh!

LOWRI

Oh gosh!

PIP

So I'm gonna make an example of one of these minions if they're trying to escape.

MADDY

Go for it, yeah. No roll necessary.

PIP

I think if there's like three or four of them like, kind of backing away looking like they're gonna take a run, like go for the fire exits, you know, whatever whatever. And I will fling out the end of the chain **[SFX: Whooshes, chain rattling]**, wrap it around the leg of one of them, pull it sharply like with my, like, whole arm and elbow so that this guy kind of goes down **[SFX: Yank backwards, fall with a thud]**, like face-first into the ground and then through a vocoded mike in the helmet-

LOWRI

Oh! **[laughs]**

PIP

Zenith is just gonna say:

PIP (as ZENITH)

[through vocoder] Don't.

LOWRI

Nice.

MADDY

Yeah.

PIP

So I will clear my angry condition, I'm feeling better already.

MADDY

Yeah, for sure this minion is er, is not gonna be running away any time soon.

AHMED

I am going to tap on Morgan's shoulder **[SFX: Tap shoulder]**, she got the insecure condition.

LOWRI

Yeah.

AHMED

So I am going to say:

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Thanks for helping me back there, for holding him. I probably would have hid there if you hadn't stepped in back then.

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Yeah, er, th- thanks. You were er, you were great. I mean that was, that was actually really funny, I don't know how you think of things so quickly!

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Yeah, I mean I, I saw how you took down the, that guy. You were really conscious not to get people badly hurt. I noticed. You're making a lot of effort in that and I respect that.

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Aw, thanks. Thanks Adeeb, I trained quite a lot with - we have these like, old rugby pad things that my uncle, well he can't hold it because I'd hurt him, but you know we kind of have them strapped up and I practice a lot. Thanks.

AHMED

Do I need to roll for this or-?

MADDY

Yes, please roll +Mundane to see if you can clear the condition.

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AHMED

(ROLL) OK, so I got a 6 and a 5 and a 3. So-

PIP

Wahey!

LYDIA

Oh dang you are SO comforted!

LOWRI

I feel great!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Hardcore comforted!

AHMED

Nice!

LOWRI

I think it does make sense as well because Morgan is impressed by Adeeb, so I guess has influence on her as well actually.

MADDY

Yeah. So you might even have like a +1 to that as well. So that's a - that's a monumental roll!

LOWRI

Morgan's flying high!

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

So secure!

MADDY

Insecure? Never heard of her!

LOWRI

[laughs]

MADDY

Brilliant. So yes, you manage to corral the Green Needle and some of the minions out to the law enforcement that is waiting.

LYDIA

Mini remembers to put her feet on the ground and stop hovering [**SFX: hover down, land on ground**], like JUST before we go out. Like - oh yeah!

(Group laughter)

MADDY

Yeah.

AHMED

And one last thing because I think it's really gonna be funny. I will be having like a, my ribbons like a leash on them, like you know a dog walker?

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

Yeah, absolutely.

MADDY

Amazing!

LOWRI

100%!

PIP

Amazing!

AHMED

And before we head back and I ask Zenith:

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Should we run from a different direction so we don't get asked by law enforcement what stuff we're -

AHMED

I'm new at this, usually I run away!

[SFX: Muffled press talking loudly outside]

MADDY

There is a lot of press out there as well, just to let you know, as well as the Police kind of doing a perimeter there is a lot of press.

PIP

If you're asking Zenith this you're asking it like before we've got to the doorway-

MADDY

Mm. Mm.

PIP

Because there is absolutely no way I'm going out there!

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

Yeah!

PIP (as ZENITH)

Um, it's not really my style.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Let's sneak back from where we once came, find our car hopefully still there?

LYDIA (as MINI)

OK, actually yeah, it might annoy my boss, both my bosses if I am seen, involved in these kind of shenanigans.

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Yeah.

LYDIA (as MINI)

So you know, I wanna keep my shoe shop job without any complications so yeah, how, how about we nip out the back?

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PIP

I have a pitch. A pitch I need to ask Maddy for a thing on. I have a vehicle at my disposal.

MADDY

You do.

PIP

Would that vehicle get us all to the base?

MADDY

Hmm...

LOWRI

Please turn into a motorbike...

(Group laughter)

PIP

Yeah, that's my superpower is I turn into a motorbike.

LYDIA

[laughs]

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PIP

A motorbike that can carry three people, it's got two, like two sidecars.

(Group laughter)

PIP

Like a sidecar either side and then - no, that's a nightmare!

PIP (as ZENITH)

Let's go to the roof.

LYDIA (as MINI)

Yeah, the view's lovely I'm sure.

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

I would prefer my location not be known.

PIP (as ZENITH)

I think um - yeah, I've got something for that.

PIP

I'll lead the team to the roof.

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LOWRI

I guess Morgan will just put the five people down. **[SFX: Thud as she puts them down]**

LYDIA

Shove 'em through the door!

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

Er Adeeb, do you wanna like maybe tie your leashed ones to them?

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Oh yeah, good idea.

AHMED

So I start tying them to the same group. **[SFX: Powers, fabric wrapping]**

LOWRI

Just a pile of people!

AHMED

And then shoo them to the door.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Go on! Go on! Don't be scared!

PIP

[laughs]

LYDIA

Yeah.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Just walk out the door.

LYDIA

If they look like they're not sure about whether they're gonna go out, Mini's gonna do the hovering, glowing thing again **[SFX: Hover vibrations, otherworldly sounds]**. Like, which is kinda fun.

[SFX: Outside the Mall as if from a drone, drone buzz, traffic, sirens]

PIP

I've got a lovely image of like a drone shot from above, you know like a semicircle of Police, guns out, like around the entrance to the mall and then all these guys staggering out all tied together!

(Group laughter)

MADDY

Yeah, that's exactly what happens!

[SFX: Rooftop ambience, traffic, sirens]

PIP

Yeah, I'll lead the team to the roof and as we're kind of coming up the last little set of stairs to the doorway that leads to the roof I will tap a couple of things on a little matte sort of wrist computer **[SFX: Beeps]** that I have and I'm guessing in a negligible amount of time, less than a minute I'm guessing, a jet's gonna appear.

LOWRI

Ooh!

[SFX: Quiet jet flying]

PIP

Moving extremely fast and extremely quietly. I'm kind of thinking of it basically just looks like an arrowhead, more or less.

LYDIA

Is it invisible?

PIP

It's not invisible.

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LYDIA

Ahh.

PIP

But it is, it is very, very quiet.

LOWRI

Mini can work on that.

PIP

Yeah!

MADDY

Mm hm.

AHMED

While we're waiting and seeing it coming around, I want to talk to Zenith.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Hey Zenith, can I ask you something?

PIP (as ZENITH)

Er, sure.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

So far I've been extraordinarily lucky that nobody took a clear picture of my face. And I have been, well, nudged that this mask that I'm using is not doing well.

PIP

Looking at the domino mask like... yeah.

(Group laughter)

AHMED (as ADEEB)

And I can't wear a helmet like yours because the whole thing is my turban here. So if you ever come up with any ideas to help me out, I would appreciate it. Because I really don't want people to know who I am.

PIP (as ZENITH)

I mean - you're the guy with all the fabric, right?

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Yes but you know, the *other* who I am.

PIP

I guess I'll like - you're wearing a shawl, like there's a sort of shawl or scarf component to-?

AHMED

Yeah it's er, it's, there are two shawls. The blue one on my head is on like a turban wrap.

PIP

Mm hm.

AHMED

Actually I still wearing it in the Amazigh style like, so only my eyes are seen now.

PIP

Oh yeah. If it's that mask rather than like a, than a domino mask which we kind of discussed beforehand then I feel like you're pretty well covered.

AHMED

I pull it down and say, and you can see me. This is very uncomfortable for me, like it, it takes a lot of confidence for me to wear it like that.

PIP

Sure.

AHMED

And it's not something that I, you know, I, I'm always up for it kind of thing. It just happens sometimes. Like this style is kind of the thing that you would

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wear when you're running into a storm, not like going from one place to another, it just feels not normal for me.

PIP (as ZENITH)

Well er, if I think of anything I'll let you know.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Yeah, I appreciate it.

[SFX: Jet flies over and slows]

PIP

And I think the, the jet's gonna come in in like a wide arc and then sort of swoop down over the top of the mall low and then drop like a little ladder down **[SFX: Air locked door slides open, ladder drops down]**. I'll start climbing the ladder **[SFX: Starts climbing]** and then kind of turn back to you guys:

PIP (as ZENITH)

You coming?

LOWRI

Morgan's going:

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Er... is this a TARGE jet?

PIP (as ZENITH)

No. No, it's mine. Let's go.

LYDIA

Mini's gonna walk in like it's nothing, like it's just a normal car. It's cool.

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

Morgan's gonna walk in, awed.

MADDY

Cool. Right, so I have a question about the jet. Has it autopiloted itself here?

PIP

Yes.

MADDY

Incredible, yeah.

PIP

I think it has like a limited, like it can do an A to B on autopilot, I don't think it can do - if there was a lot of stuff in the way from A to B, you know it couldn't do through tunnels and-

MADDY

Yeah.

PIP

-stuff, but you know within the city it's, it's got like a limited, yeah, ability to go from one place to another.

MADDY

Nice. Great. So yes, you all climb aboard this stealth jet. What does it look like on the inside?

PIP

On the inside it's got like there's a very small, probably space for about four people, two benches facing each other like a little sort of personnel carrier area. And then ahead of that a door to a cockpit like this, it's not really built to carry a lot of stuff or a lot of people either, it's just a, a very stealthy and a very fast sort of point-to-point vehicle. Again, nothing ostentatious. You could argue that a lot of the stuff in here is just standard military that's been like, painted matte black basically.

MADDY

[laughs]

PIP

There's no insignia on anything, it's all just, you know, there's two benches and then harnesses for you to strap yourselves into. I'll sort of gesture to the benches and head into the cockpit. **[SFX: Cockpit door slides open]**

[SFX: Jet Interior, jet engine noise]

MADDY

Absolutely, yeah. So you can now make your way in a stealth jet to the helipad on top of the TARGE HQ, because of course they have a helipad.

LYDIA

I'm gonna assume this thing can land on a helipad then? So it's a, it's a jet-copter.

MADDY

Yeah, yeah.

LYDIA

I'm loving it! I wanna be able to visualise all the different blades and jets and stuff that are coming out of it, so, yeah.

(Group laughter)

AHMED

I'm assuming the jet just starts to change orientation and starts hovering down.

LOWRI

Yeah.

LYDIA

It's pretty cool.

PIP

Yeah, it's got like a vertical take off and landing capability. Honestly, I mean we can change this, but honestly Maddy I wasn't thinking of the TARGE HQ, I was thinking of mine. I was thinking of mine.

MADDY

You were thinking of Exoplanet Corp?

PIP

Yeah, but if that goofs up anything that you had plans for-

MADDY

No no no.

PIP

-then I'm happy to change it.

MADDY

No I'm very happy for you to head to Exoplanet Corp if that's what your plan is.

PIP

Perfick.

MADDY

So yes, as you get into this incredible jet you speed off towards Zenith's personal HQ.

LYDIA

Ooh...

MADDY

So what is the ingress to this HQ like?

PIP

I think in order to enter there is a, I guess it's gonna have to be on the roof. There is no helipad on top of this building, or at least there's no visible helipad on top of this building, it's like come around, **[SFX: Jet lands]** land on the top and then there's like a, you know, the lift comes down and is replaced over the top and, and the jet's kind of dropped down a, quite a short elevator and then

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from that landing platform [**SFX: Jet dropped down to platform**] there's a, like a walkway that leads to the er, the actual base. Which is again not a gigantic - I'm not gonna say Batcave because you know like, nothing to do with The Batman, shut up.

[**SFX: Zenith's base, ticking clock**]

(Group laughter)

MADDY

Amazing, yes. So yeah, you can see all the er, the panels and buttons and flashing lights of surveillance equipment [**SFX: Beeps from surveillance equipment**] and er, the tall backed chairs that swivel around dramatically, all this kind of thing. So yeah, what would you like to do now that you're in this base, this is - and you would recognise as you were flying in that this is the Exoplanet Corp skyscraper which is very prominent in the Chapter skyline.

LOWRI

Morgan's gonna be like:

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Er, is Exoplanet with TARGE?

PIP (as ZENITH)

No. Well I mean I guess I am now, but the corporation isn't.

PIP

And I'll click a couple of little catches and take my helmet off. **[SFX: Click catches off and take off helmet]**

LYDIA (as MINI)

[gasps]

PIP

I mean you've seen my face already, like when we met.

LOWRI

Yeah.

LYDIA (as MINI)

Oh yeah!

(Group laughter)

MADDY

Just walks into a coffee shop fully helmeted!

LYDIA

Well I dunno, it was just in my head that like - ohh no, been helmeted the whole time but no!

AHMED

Oh wait, we've seen him!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Incredibly normal face, yeah.

PIP

Yeah, just SO dull.

MADDY

Yeah, the shock is that you'd forgotten what his face looked like.

PIP

The shock is you'd forgotten how mundane his face is.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Just shockingly mundane!

PIP

Fascinatingly mundane!

LYDIA

[laughs]

MADDY

Oh yeah, Mini would be all over this I assume!

LYDIA

Taking notes, making sketches! **[SFX: Writing and sketching]**

LOWRI

Mm. Oh so that was a genuine intake of breath!

(Group laughter)

PIP

My god, he's so normal looking!

LYDIA

[laughs]

PIP

There is almost nothing memorable about him!

(Group laughter)

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Do you not think we should have reported to TARGE?

PIP (as ZENITH)

We can do that remotely, right?

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Oh, we have the tablet thing.

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Sure.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Can we call them?

MADDY

Yeah, you can, you can take out the tablet [**SFX: Take out tablet**] that you had the CCTV on and bring up a video call [**SFX: Video call connection tone**] with Vera Constantine who's like:

MADDY (as VERA CONSTANTINE)

(over call) Oh, where are you right now? Did it all go down successfully? I'm getting good reports back from the law enforcement, er, where are you right now?

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Where are we now?

PIP

I'm kind of eyeing Adeeb a little bit, if it's a video call I'll step in sort of to the side of him.

PIP (as ZENITH)

Just in a secure location. Mission was successful.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

We are in a *secure* location.

LYDIA (as MINI)

And the mission... was successful.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Yes, we have extracted the [unclear]

AHMED

I do a lot of winks.

(Group laughter)

AHMED

I'm assuming this is how code works!

LOWRI

Morgan's just standing awkwardly in the background at the back of the shot, just like...

(Group laughter)

MADDY (as VERA CONSTANTINE)

So great, so the hostages are all safe and the Green Needle has been apprehended?

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Yes. We caught them all, and we did er, first aid to whoever needed it and we handed them over to the authorities.

MADDY (as VERA CONSTANTINE)

Great, OK! Well done! Honestly, yeah, great job. Thanks so much for stepping in, it's been really quite wild here recently, there's just been so many new reports coming in all the time of supervillain activity, it's been very hard to keep on top of. But yeah, so really appreciate you stepping in.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Not to add too much work on your team - we left the car.

(Group laughter)

MADDY (as VERA CONSTANTINE)

Oh! That's fine. That happens all the time, no worries.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

This is why they're an under-resourced government department, they're just leaving cars everywhere!

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

So many tickets!

PIP

The city's just swamped with like unmarked black SUVs everywhere.

(Group laughter)

AHMED (as ADEEB)

If there are any tickets for our parking just let me know and I'll gladly pay it.

MADDY (as VERA CONSTANTINE)

Oh no, don't worry about it. It's all right, it's all right. We get certain benefits, it's all good.

LYDIA

[laughs]

MADDY (as VERA CONSTANTINE)

Any information on why this raid went down?

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Oh yes!

AHMED

And I, I pull out the - wait I don't have it, I didn't take it. I think we gave it to the authority. I only took the, the pez case?

LOWRI

The Pez dispenser. **[laughs]**

PIP

Oh the little - the Pez dispenser, yeah, the little cactus. Amazing.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

There was a note - Zenith, can you help me out with this because I don't remember what it was saying.

PIP (as ZENITH)

Yeah, I've got it here.

AHMED

I take a couple of Pez... pieces of candy. [SFX: Pez dispenser]

(Group laughter)

PIP

I love the idea of them being like - was there any evidence or did you find anything out and you're like: Pez dispenser?

LOWRI

Which I'm eating!

PIP

We've got some Pez!

(Group laughter)

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Ah, yeah! I wonder if I can fit some dates in this thing...

LYDIA

Tiny dates! Maybe some dried olives.

PIP (as ZENITH)

Nothing concrete yet but we've got some leads we can look into.

MADDY (as VERA CONSTANTINE)

That's good. Would you be willing to share them with me, your supervisor who needs to report back to her superiors...?

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

This is so awkward, how have we made a government debriefing so painfully awkward? **[laughs]**

PIP

Yeah.

LYDIA

I suppose they do hire teams, so...

MADDY

Yeah.

PIP

For Zenith here it's like, obviously natural instinct in every situation more or less apart from you know the sort of moment to moment if there's something very dangerous happening or something that needs to be actioned immediately is like - wait to be told what to do by Aquila.

MADDY

Mm.

PIP

So like 100% he knows she's watching, he's waiting for her to basically say: yeah, sure, you can give them the lead that you found. And the whole point of this is that she doesn't trust them so I don't trust them either. So I'm basically waiting on like a thumbs up emoji from...

(Group laughter)

PIP

Or whatever the sterile equivalent of that is from Aquila!

MADDY

As you're kind of reticent to explain what went on, you do hear a little voice in your ear saying:

MADDY (as AQUILA)

[SFX: Comms connection tone] (as if through comms) I don't think this lead is very significant, feel free to divulge. **[SFX: Comms disconnection tone]**

PIP (as ZENITH)

Clearvision Trading. I think were paying this idiot to hit that particular mall, we don't know why.

MADDY (as VERA CONSTANTINE)

Right. OK.

PIP (as ZENITH)

It's wrapped up in a lot of legalese so I don't know that any of this would stick but maybe you can do some digging on it.

MADDY (as VERA CONSTANTINE)

Thanks for that, I'll definitely pass that on to our intelligence teams but if you have any of your own investigations you wanna carry out, feel free. It would be a massive help to have some more eyes on this.

PIP (as ZENITH)

Understood. Anything else?

MADDY (as VERA CONSTANTINE)

At the moment, well that was a very busy first day for you. Feel free to come by to TARGE HQ when you're ready to finish up your orientation I suppose, and I can show you around the training facilities and all that kind of stuff, but otherwise, yeah, you must be knackered after that. **[laughs]** So if you wanna go back home and rest up that's also completely fair.

AHMED

Adeeb's stepped out of view from the camera, he's texting his sister like – **[SFX: Texting]** "how to make dates fit into a Pez dispenser"

(Group laughter)

AHMED

And they're discussing what kinds of dates would work well in this, like how to work it out. So just texting away!

PIP

Well once we've signed off from the call- **[SFX: Call disconnection tone]**

MADDY

Yep.

LYDIA

Wait - once the call ends-

PIP

Yep.

LYDIA

Mini is gonna turn to Zenith and be like:

LYDIA (as MINI)

Are, er, are you holding us prisoner here?

LOWRI

[laughs]

PIP (as ZENITH)

No.

LYDIA (as MINI)

Because we - you know we, you just flew us here and um, it's sinister.

LOWRI

[still laughing]

LYDIA

Mini looks to Morgan and Adeeb.

LYDIA (as MINI)

Er, would you describe this as er, you know this un-named opening door, the jet, silent jet coming in and then being not sure where we are, like - sinister? Is that the right, am I, am I coming up with the right, that's the right word, right? This is quite sinister?

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Maybe a little. I feel like we should have gone back to TARGE now I, that was quite a bit thing that we er just did.

LYDIA (as MINI)

Is there like a reason that we are here, and how do we get out? Are we allowed out?

PIP (as ZENITH)

Yeah, there's a - an elevator, take you down to the bottom floor, you can leave through the main lobby. I can - I just thought like-

LYDIA (as MINI)

Is there like hot cocoa here, you know, we could, we can chill? Is that why we're here?

PIP (as ZENITH)

Yes er, one second.

PIP

And Zenith is gonna disappear into one of these doors [**SFX: Door slides open**] and come back with like bottled water and like you know, some juice and maybe some snacks.

MADDY

[laughs]

LOWRI

Cool.

PIP

Put them on one of these like far-too-low glass kind of coffee table thing in front of a-

(Group laughter)

PIP

-really angular sofa that doesn't make any sense. Yeah, all the furniture here is extremely expensive and uncomfortable.

LYDIA

[laughs]

MADDY

Yep. Yeah.

PIP

And will - so kind of like an armful of stuff **[SFX: Crinkling of snacks in Joseph's arms]** and just kind of drop it on the table and just be like- **[SFX: Dropping drinks and snacks on glass table]**

LYDIA

Are all of the snacks, like in my head from what you've described I just assume that they're all in matte black, kind of, you know like-

LOWRI

Protein.

PIP

[laughs] Yeah yeah yeah!

LYDIA

You know like a variety of snacks but they're all like sleek, black, monochrome.
Yeah.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

So it just says something like "snack bar"-

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

-in like sans-serif font on a grey packet or like "crisps" on a black bag.

LOWRI

Morgan's gonna grab a soda. **[SFX: Grabbing soda]**

LYDIA

It just says "soda" on it.

LOWRI

Yeah.

LYDIA

Like no - no details! **[laughs]**

LOWRI

Sit on the sofa and be like – **[SFX: Sit, leather creaks]**

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

So, um, have you got a TV?

PIP (as ZENITH)

Er, yes.

LYDIA (as MINI)

You got any games?

PIP (as ZENITH)

No, I don't think so. Not yet. There's, I haven't - this place was not been used for um - I just thought we could maybe up, we're gonna be a team so we could use this place as, could be our base?

LYDIA (as MINI)

It's definitely more convenient than the shoe shop.

LYDIA

Mini's gonna weird discuss this in the - so it's awkward and tense, like Mini's just gonna take a grey cup that just says "milkshake" in tiny very formal font.

[SFX: Take the cup]

PIP

[laughs]

LYDIA

And kind of stick a straw **[SFX: Stick straw in cup]** through the, and just slurp while maintaining eye contact, like just incredibly earnest.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA (as MINI)

Cool! **[SFX: Slurping]**

PIP

[laughs]

MADDY

Perfect! And on that slurp we will take a short break and be right back.

(Group laughter)

- [BREAK] -

MADDY

And we're back. So we have just established a new base for the superhero team in Exoplanet Corp with some very awkward snacks dumped on the table in front of the team.

PIP

I don't know other people!

(Group laughter)

MADDY

Relatable content. So what are you doing, are you just having a nice little bonding session.

LOWRI

Morgan will have suggested that like maybe we watch a film or something, or put TV on. Like if there aren't any games. In my head we're having like a little slumber party even though it's still day! **[laughs]**

PIP

Aw!

MADDY

Yeah, it's probably like 3pm or something.

PIP

There's definitely a far too large television that will like fold out of the wall.

[SFX: TV Folds out of the wall]

LOWRI

Mm.

LYDIA

[laughs] Like the petals of a flower.

[SFX: News TV programme theme music plays]

PIP

Yeah!

LYDIA

But sinister...

PIP

Yeah yeah yeah. Yeah.

LOWRI

Can we just watch daytime TV like some kind of design programme or something? **[laughs]**

[SFX: Design programme theme plays]

LYDIA

Yeah, and Mini will be taking furious notes.

PIP

On my extremely uncomfortable sofa, yeah.

LOWRI

Yeah!

PIP

Yeah.

LYDIA

[laughs]

MADDY

Right so yeah, as you continue this extremely awkward bonding session watching some kind of like antiques programme on this extremely fancy TV-

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

Morgan will probably fall asleep as little as well. Like she absorbed a lot of energy and she's losing it, and it's, you know, it's taken its toll a bit.

LYDIA

Mini will like, around 6, 7 o'clock suddenly jump up [**SFX: Jumps up from sofa**] and be like:

LYDIA (as MINI)

Oh! I've gotta file a story! How do I get out?

PIP

I'm like - we've all been sort of I guess like chatting vaguely and sitting in silence watching an antiques show for a while.

AHMED

[laughs]

PIP

I'll jump up and I'm moving off to get something. [**SFX: Jumps up from sofa**]

PIP (as ZENITH)

Sorry, I'm, I'm just grabbing something.

AHMED

I'm just asking her:

AHMED (as ADEEB)

What kind of story do you need to...

LYDIA (as MINI)

What? Um, no. Nothing, er, absolutely, I just enjoy er filing stories. It's just, er, for fun.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Oh so you're like making a connection of short stories or-?

LYDIA (as MINI)

Yes. Gotta go.

LYDIA

Mini's going to rush off because it's the deadline Specmarkalon stories and there's been some really cool stuff happening today like for instance she had a milkshake, and that definitely needs to be described.

AHMED

[laughs]

PIP

As you're rushing out I will, I will hand you a, a lanyard with a visitor's pass
[SFX: Hand over lanyard] on it for the building and functionally this will allow
you to take any of the elevators in this building to, actually no it would
probably just be one specific elevator, to this floor.

LYDIA

Oh cool.

PIP

Which is inaccessible by, by anybody else. So it's a fake visitor's pass that
allows access to this floor.

LYDIA

Mini will arrange it alongside the soy sauce capsule and other things. **[SFX:
Arranging lanyard]**

PIP

Yes.

LOWRI

[laughs]

LYDIA

And it somehow like just really fits as a sort of jewellery, a collection of accoutrements.

PIP

A moment here where this fascinating tiny, so weirdly dressed but like it all works is just standing in front of his boy who is effectively grey.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Personified. Yeah.

PIP

[laughs] There's this, just this moment of just like - huh.

LYDIA

To Mini, like it absolutely doesn't look that way. Like to Mini, like this is the peak of human-ness.

PIP

[laughs]

LYDIA

Like you have nailed it, you know how to human and it's so cool. So yeah. The feeling of awe at the strangeness of a creature that is so like you and yet so different is felt on both sides to an equal degree, let's say.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Mini dashes off and needs to go and do her third job, I think. **[SFX: Elevator door opens with a ding]**

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

Sell shoes, save hostages, inform the aliens.

(Group laughter)

PIP

Yep. Yep yep.

LYDIA

Busy life.

MADDY

Absolutely. What's Zenith, Morgan and Adeeb doing now that they're, they're a trio?

LOWRI

If Mini has started the exiting, Morgan's gonna be like:

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Well um, I guess I should actually probably check in with my uncle and let him know I'm OK and how today went so, um...

PIP (as ZENITH)

Oh yeah, er sure. Take, take one of these.

PIP

And I'll give you a visitor's pass and I'll give one to Adeeb as well. **[SFX: Hands over lanyards]**

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Oh thanks.

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Thanks. And do we need to like - how do we-?

PIP (as ZENITH)

Just walk in the building, elevator number 3 and you scan this pass on the reader once you're inside the elevator, just don't do it when there's anyone else in there with you.

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Do we need to let you know, how do I - have you got a phone?

PIP (as ZENITH)

Yeah, we, I guess we should exchange numbers, huh?

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Maybe we could make a group!

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Oh yeah.

PIP (as ZENITH)

Sure.

PIP

Three people standing with phones, awkwardly making a-

(Group laughter)

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AHMED

Exchanging them!

PIP

Exchanging numbers!

LOWRI

[laughing] What's WhatsApp in this world?

AHMED

Oh, you can just scan the QR here!

PIP

Yeah. [laughs]

MADDY

Yeah, I think my, my first letter swapping's not gonna work for WhatsApp so let's just say it's WhatsApp! [laughs]

(Group laughter)

AHMED

It's WhatGram!

LOWRI

WhatGram!

MADDY

Yeah! WhatGram, that's perfect. It's like a Telegram, but what is it?

LOWRI

Yeah! WhatGram!

PIP

Excellent.

LOWRI

What do we title it? I'm asking the important questions!

PIP

I will leave that to someone with an imagination.

AHMED

[laughs]

LYDIA

Mini will title it "Human Friends" and have like just a stock image of smiling people that aren't us as the chats.

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(Group laughter)

PIP

One of those stock images of just like somebody dressed as a builder who definitely isn't a builder-

LYDIA

Yeah yeah yeah!

PIP

Kind of going... thumbs up!

(Group laughter)

PIP

Hi, I have a clipboard!

LYDIA

Yeah!

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

"Human Friends", I love it.

MADDY

And so yeah, is everyone going their separate ways at this point?

AHMED

What time and day is it again? It's Saturday, it should be?

MADDY

Yeah, this is Saturday, probably about 7pm at this point if you've been hanging out for a few hours.

PIP

Cool.

LOWRI

Is that OK with you Lyd, because you said 6, are you gonna be late?

LYDIA

Argh, I don't, I don't mind. I've slightly lost track.

LOWRI

I was just wondering if Lydia had an *actual* deadline there.

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

No. Like well it just needs to be - it needs to be filed by the right time because it's just cheaper for the radio signals to go through the wormholes.

LOWRI

That's fair.

LYDIA

When the planet is in a certain orientation-

LOWRI

Yeah.

LYDIA

So they all have to submit their stories by 8.15.

LOWRI

Fair.

LYDIA

It's just - it's annoying.

AHMED

[laughs]

LYDIA

Different on, er, some parts of the lunar cycle when the moon's in the way, you know? Um, obviously.

LOWRI

Yeah, course.

LYDIA

So yeah, yeah, course. Mini heads off at like 6.

MADDY

Grand. So yeah, it is about 6 currently.

PIP

I will stay here in this big, grey penthouse by myself.

LYDIA and LOWRI

Aww!

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

Oh Zenith!

PIP

Don't be sad for him.

AHMED

I am assuming there are no video games, it's just all weaponry and training stuff.

PIP

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I didn't give you the tour unfortunately. Probably should have done that, but I don't interact with humans very often.

LYDIA

[laughs]

LOWRI

Not many of us do!

LYDIA

What? All the time! Sh!

PIP

Yeah, this place is set up but it's not set up as like a place for-

LOWRI

Comfort?

PIP

Sort of, four twentysomethings to hang out, like it's not set up for that, yeah.

(Group laughter)

PIP

So there's not a lot of fun stuff to do here unless you like hitting things.

[Calm transitional music]

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Yeah, we should hang out more.

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Mm.

PIP (as ZENITH)

Yeah, definitely. Well we'll - we've got the group so we'll, I guess we'll meet back at TARGE at some point.

LYDIA

If you imagine like the end of Sex and the City things where, like, I actually have never watched a full episode but I have seen clips of at the end where like, she's typing up things that contain sort of moral lessons?

LOWRI

Yes, yes!

LYDIA

It's like: "So, about being a rich person in New York..." Type-y, type-y, type type type. "I like my hair." And other things that were radical at the time but uncomfortable now. Type type type. But Mini is kind of doing that: **[SFX: Typing]** "So, to be a friend with a human involves talking a lot, and sometimes saying things that neither of you understand, but then you laugh. And it's great."

LOWRI

Aww!

(Group laughter)

[SFX: Ordinary Human Flat, generic electronic pop music]

LYDIA

Type-y type type type type type. Yeah. All the while her ex is in the other room on the phone with their new partner.

LOWRI

Obviously already filed their report.

LYDIA

And that's fine, yeah. They've already filed their stories because they've only got two jobs. Or three jobs. It's very annoying. Benson McDichael is frying up some frozen peas for dinner.

(Group laughter)

MADDY (as BENSON)

Like these human dishes, they're so fascinating, I just, I can't get my head around how, like - how would you think to make something cold and then hot again? Just why?

LYDIA (as MINI)

It's just a weird way round to do it, yeah.

LYDIA

And they all eat them by like skewering each pea individually with a fork.

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LOWRI

[laughs]

LYDIA

It's a delicacy! Love it.

AHMED

[laughs]

MADDY

Benson's very, very keen to grill you on all the things you've learned about humans that day and anxiously waiting at the precise time-

LYDIA

Aww!

MADDY

-that you're gonna file your story to make sure that it's submitted.

LYDIA

Cool. He's a supportive boss.

[Calm transitional music]

MADDY

What's Adeeb doing?

AHMED

Adeeb, after exchanging the - our WhatGram numbers!

(Group laughter)

AHMED

Would head out, and in the elevator he would change his clothes to normal, normal jeans and a shirt and a sweater. He would head out home, probably picking some pastries along the way because this is the first day of the weekend and every first day of the weekend there's a, a family gathering with a lot of relatives. He needs to go pick up pastries and stuff like that before heading home and changing into traditional thobes and normal turban, not the blue turban.

[SFX: Adeeb's suburban family home ambience]

MADDY

Excellent, yeah. **[SFX: Door opens]** As you get in your mum greets you warmly **[SFX: Hug]**, gives you a big hug and shoos you off to get changed and make sure that you're all ready and there are already like various aunts and uncles and cousins all kind of milling around. **[SFX: Family gathering hubbub]**

AHMED

Yeah, my mother and sister would already be wearing their traditional djellaba, I assume my sister would be wearing a Moroccan style because it has a hoody and that's very cool!

LYDIA

Aha!

LOWRI

Nice.

AHMED

I would head in starts wearing my thobe, my long white shirt thingy.

MADDY

As the gathering is starting to get underway, Amal kind of takes you off to the side and tries to surreptitiously be like -

MADDY (as AMAL)

How did it go, how did it go?

AHMED (as ADEEB)

It was awesome like, working with people?

MADDY (as AMAL)

[gasps]

AHMED (as ADEEB)

It's like - I don't have to worry! And it's so much fun.

MADDY (as AMAL)

Oh I'm so glad, that's amazing!

AHMED (as ADEEB)

They have so many amazing abilities, like one of them, she could punch a wall, and the other one is just literally - and I told you about Zenith, this guy? I met him a few times on the street. Amazing, he knows everything.

MADDY (as AMAL)

That's so good, I'm so happy for you, that's amazing.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

I'm really excited, like I kind of like it.

MADDY (as AMAL)

So what did you do, what did you do? Like, tell me you did some cool stuff?

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Did you see the news, the mall thing? That was us, we took care of that.

MADDY (as AMAL)

Really?

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Er, the cactus thing guy.

MADDY (as AMAL)

Oh that's so cool. Ohh, I just, I wanna scream and like tell everyone in this room but I know that you don't want that and... nnggh!

AHMED (as ADEEB)

No no no, please don't! Just keep it to yourself.

MADDY (as AMAL)

Yeah.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Hey er, when is your next gig because I, I'm thinking because they're really cool people, maybe we could meet up and watch you play?

MADDY (as AMAL)

That is a really great idea. We actually have a gig on like, it's a really terrible timeslot, it's like 11pm on a Monday night, it's the worst timeslot but it's at this

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bar that's really cool, and yeah. It would be really cool if you came along. It would be really nice.

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Yeah, absolutely. And you are helping us with our studies for college because you're a few years ahead of us?

MADDY (as AMAL)

Yeah, sure! I have some really great research techniques that I can impart to you!

AHMED (as ADEEB)

Yes!

MADDY (as AMAL)

In the method of song.

(Group laughter)

AHMED

Reset my turban again and just go:

AHMED (as ADEEB)

I'll see you later.

AHMED

And I just go and mingle with my dozens and dozens of cousins.

MADDY

Excellent. And er, your, your dad is very kind of loudly boasting about your, how well you're doing in your engineering course and how it was like the best decision he ever made in his life to become a civil engineer and how much he supports his family and all this kind of thing.

AHMED

[laughs]

MADDY

And it's just yeah, it's just like, you hear it every single week, he does it every time. So yeah - and what's Morgan doing?

[SFX: Zenith's base, ticking clock]

LOWRI

So Morgan, just before leaving if it's OK with Zenith would be like:

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Err... actually do you have like a hoodie I could borrow because this is quite obviously armour that I'm wearing. Like this is just the superhero outfit I was, er, in.

PIP (as ZENITH)

Oh, um. Sure. Er, yeah, give me a second.

PIP

I will, I guess like, I've definitely got like just baggy workout clothes.

LOWRI

Yeah.

PIP

But stuff that fit me wouldn't fit Morgan, 'cos Morgan is ripped.

LOWRI

[laughs]

PIP

Not that Joseph isn't but he's smaller, he's a bit more compact.

LOWRI

How tall are you, do you know?

PIP

I've probably said this in an earlier episode.

LOWRI

Oh, OK.

PIP

I almost - I probably wrote it down somewhere, but you know, come at me if I get it wrong! I'm imagining Joseph at about 5'8"?

LOWRI

Oh OK, so Morgan's just an inch taller than you.

PIP

Yeah.

LOWRI

We'll probably fit. I'll probably fit.

PIP

Whatever the most nondescript height is. That's the height that Joseph is.

(Group laughter)

PIP

Exactly average. I'll pull like-

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LOWRI

Thanks, so just like a grey tracksuit basically?

PIP

Yeah, I mean I 100% have that here.

LOWRI

Yeah, cool.

PIP

So many, I think you - like he goes into another room and then there's like a big, partially, like a frosted glass wall with a little handle, and it slides apart and then there's just this massive like walk-in closet and- **[SFX: Slides door open]**

LYDIA

All grey?

PIP

-all that's in it is like grey tracksuits.

(Group laughter)

LOWRI

Amazing! Amazing! Cool.

PIP

There's just grey workout gear just, just - you know, grey shoes, grey, everything is grey. I bring you a hoodie and like some sweatpants if you would like those also.

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Yes please. Er, thanks.

PIP (as ZENITH)

Yeah that's, that's fine.

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

I'll um, see you soon I guess.

PIP (as ZENITH)

Sure.

LOWRI

[SFX: Morgan puts on clothes and tucks in lanyard] Morgan will just put them on over and um tuck her little new lanyard under the hoodie and it's like nestled against her like – “oh, friend!” And will go back to her home, I guess catch the bus back to her home and then have a bit of a walk because the bus doesn't go past.

[Calm transitional music]

MADDY

It's in a bit of an out of the way place, yeah, for sure.

LOWRI

Yeah, and we'll just go to let her uncle know she's still, she's OK and how her day went.

[SFX: Owain's mansion ambience, crackling fireplace]

MADDY

Yeah, he will be, as soon as hears you coming through the door **[SFX: Door opens and closes]** he's gonna rush up and say:

MADDY (as OWAIN)

How did it go, how did it go? Was it all good?

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Um yeah, I think er, we fought a villain! I don't know if it was like maybe a test or something because they just like chucked us in there immediately, but um.

MADDY (as OWAIN)

Wow. That's, that's amazing. How did your powers work out, did it, did it all go OK?

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

The training, yeah, I, I tackled this woman and like I did as we'd practised and I did it really safely, you know it wasn't too high or anything and um, I knocked her into some shelves but she was OK and like, so obviously that's going well. And I, I did it, I took energy from people and they just fell asleep and you know, I managed to stop. But then I got a bit afraid because I was like - well what if you know, it was, it was quite a lot of energy and I got really, really strong, and-

LOWRI

She's just gonna babble, and tell him the story of what happened.

MADDY

Yeah.

LOWRI

And probably round off with like-

LOWRI (as MORGAN)

Um, yeah. Um... I think this was a good idea. I think um, like they're really nice and it was good to have people who you know, had my back.

MADDY (as OWAIN)

That's amazing sweetheart, I'm so glad. That's wonderful.

MADDY

While you were kind of rambling he's just like, he's ushered you into the kitchen, sat you down in a chair, got you a cup of tea. **[SFX: Pours a cup of tea]**

LYDIA

Aww!

LOWRI

And loads of food, because she's just eating without thinking.

MADDY

Yeah, yeah!

LOWRI

Because she is starving!

(Group laughter)

MADDY

Yeah, he's just like brought out a whole roast chicken from the fridge, just plonks it in front of you.

LOWRI

Yeah! **[laughs]**

MADDY

So yeah, and you have a lovely little dinner together.

LOWRI

I would like to say that she's probably going to go and like end her night in her greenhouse, **[SFX: Greenhouse ambience]** just to like have some of the calm energy of the plants. Like not necessarily absorb that much, but just be around them and tend them a bit.

LYDIA

Aww!

MADDY

Lovely.

PIP

No 3am workout tonight!

LOWRI

No, she doesn't need it tonight, she's pretty out - she is out like a light at, what 10 past 10?

(Group laughter)

MADDY

Excellent. And just before we wrap up this episode, how is Joseph spending the rest of his evening?

[SFX: Zenith's base surveillance room ambience, frequent beeping]

PIP

Yes.

LYDIA

In his grey box...

PIP

In my grey box!

LYDIA

Aww!

PIP

Joseph is sat at the swivelly high-backed chair looking kind of too small for it-

LOWRI

Aww!

PIP

-with these, all these monitors in front of him but he's just using the sort of smallest one that's closest to him, there's still like security camera footage and like other stuff, news, there's the news sort of reel going on on one of the screens and just lots of stuff going on, but he's focused on one of these screens, a smaller one in front of him. And he is typing up his report. **[SFX: Typing]** And we see entries for each one of the other player characters and he's just writing up, I think there's a - we see a little entry for Adeeb, The Turban and it says: "Fascinating, unique power set, heart in the right place but raw, untested." And then we see one for Blodeuwedd Morgan - Syphon - a few bullet points. "Energy absorption. Super-strength, but seems potentially dangerous, absorption takes a physical toll. Nervous. Uncertain of her own abilities."

LOWRI

Pretty accurate.

PIP

And then we have Mini Smithson **[laughs]**

LYDIA

NOT a human. Pretty sure.

PIP

And then it's just like "I think, as you suspected, extra-terrestrial in origin."

(Group laughter)

LYDIA

If Mini like was aware -

LYDIA (as MINI)

Damn! I thought I'd nailed it!

(Group laughter)

PIP

And then just like a, a few bullet points and sort of listings of like, what I've seen Mini do, just trying to get a handle on, on what exactly that they can do but I guess that's been like pretty broad so far. We've had like light-bending, you've shifted density, you can fly.

LYDIA

Make a disco!

PIP

That list is quite long.

LYDIA

Her real power is style.

LOWRI

Ahh!

PIP

Yes, yes! [laugh] True power: style, no deletes it, deletes it. She's...

(Group laughter)

PIP

And then a summary of the mission after that, and yeah. It's not glowing, particularly on a personal level.

MADDY

I think once you've submitted it and it's been a while, it's probably given Aquila enough time to read it, you get a message back **[SFX: Message tone]** saying: "Report received. Appraisal attached. Good work."

LYDIA

Oh! OK.

LOWRI

Oh!

MADDY

Which is - which is not as bad as you'd thought. "Good work" is like, pretty good from her. But then when you look at the appraisal it's just all these really, really nitpick-y things about your combat style and there's an especially long section about when you dropped it from the ceiling and got hit by the shovel. So yeah, it's a mixed bag from old Aquila this time.

PIP

I will sit back in the chair **[SFX: Chair creaks]** and, while I'm reading that, and open a, a plastic bottle of water that just has a grey label that says "water" on the side of it. **[SFX: Unscrew bottle cap]**

(Group laughter)

PIP

And I think that's where we'll leave.

MADDY

Yeah. On that note, a grey bottle with water in it, we'll end the episode there! So thank you so much for once again listening to Chapter and Multiverse and our Masks campaign, and I would like to ask our lovely players where we can find them on the internet and if they have anything to plug, starting with Ahmed.

AHMED

Hi! You can find me everywhere @mr_aljbray especially on Twitter where I share Arab tidbits for your TTRPG characters and world building. You will recognise me with the character wearing the turban on my picture.

MADDY

Wonderful. And Lowri?

LOWRI

Yes, you can find me @LowriTweets and that's pretty much it! Oh - and on other Rusty Quill shows! Listen to Enthusigasm!

MADDY

Yeah! And Lydia?

LYDIA

I'm on Twitter, @LydNicholas and @urbanhooks and I am on other podcasts as well sometimes. Town Whispers, in that one. And this one. And things in the past. And possibly in the future. Yeah that's, that's where we're at.

MADDY

Nice. And Pip?

PIP

I'm Pip Gladwin, you can find me @Pip_Gladwin on Twitter. I can also be heard in other Rusty Quill productions, which ones you'll have to find out by checking.

LYDIA

[laughs]

PIP

Also Realms of Peril & Glory podcast, I do a bunch of stuff with them and timings of this again very confusing, and I think it's too late for me to plug this, but if you haven't already check out Doctor Who Redacted on BBC Sounds.

LYDIA

Yay!

PIP

I'm in that and it's well good.

LYDIA

Super cool.

MADDY

It's so good! All right. You can find me on Twitter and Instagram @maddy_abstract where there are links to all the various things that I do. And

CHAP Masks 6 – The Grey Box

we hope to see you next time on Chapter and Multiverse but until then, from all of us here in the space between worlds - goodbye!

EVERYONE

Goodbye!

[Show Theme - Outro]

THE ETERNAL TAVERN KEEPER

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