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BLACK.

JAKE'S VOICE

Where would we be without inventions?

FADE IN:

INT. TRADE FAIR - JAKE'S EXHIBIT

Jake presents his invention, the Door-Locker, in his booth with himself and three other people.

JAKE

I present to you: the Door-Locker. This object, which, uhhh, w-which fits on your keychain . . . it . . . it locks your house doors, both front and back, like a set of car keys. . . . I-I mean . . . with a handheld device, now you can just go, *beep!* And lock your house doors.

The few people who are at this booth walk on.

JAKE

For a - a p-p-pretty low price of \$35.99. Which is, of course, basically \$36.

Nobody is interested. He sighs.

JAKE

Damn it. Nothing ever happens.

BILL

Just keep trying, Jake: at some point, this Door-Locker invention will be major.

JAKE

(sigh) Any time in my lifetime, though?

One person approaches, who seems interested.

JAKE

Uhhh - a-ahem. YES! I see you're . . . ahem. Excuse me. I s-s-see you're interested . . . in this . . . this Door-Locker.

PERSON WALKING BY

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Not for 36 bucks I'm not.

And he walks on.

Jake sighs again.

JAKE
Man, I hope I die.

Bill puts his hand on Jake's shoulder.

BILL
At least you tried.

JAKE
Yeah. Well. I guess JSI really *will* have to downsize.
Question is . . . can the company stay afloat at all?

INT. JSI HEADQUARTERS - HIGHER FLOORS - EVENING

Jake, Bill, and Winsor Hampton are all
discussing the situation.

JAKE
I didn't want to have to say this, but . . .
the company will definitely have to be
downsizing again. The profits have been . . .
well, they've *not* been. No one's buying.
The Door-Locker was not the hit I dreamed
it would be. After the downsize . . . we really
have to focus JSI on *growing* upward again.

He points to the enormous JSI logo on the wall.
It's the upper part of planet Jupiter, with a red
rocketship that has flown from left to right to leave
behind a trail of fire, over which the words read:
JUPITER SUN INDUSTRIES.

JAKE
6 years we've managed to stay afloat. During some of
the worst economic years of the past several decades.
Please, *please* let's not let us all reach total collapse now.

INT. COURT BUILDING - MIDDAY

"6 Months Later"

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Jake and Winsor Hampton, 63 years old,
are walking together through the court.

JAKE

Hey, thanks again for being here with me.
It's a real chore, but . . . oh well.

WINSOR

I've got to be here.

JAKE

Still. JSI is . . . (*sigh*) it's going to bankruptcy.
Total bankruptcy.

WINSOR

Bankruptcy is not the end of all things, Jake -
it means that, for some time, you're going to be -

JAKE & WINSOR

- protected from creditors.

JAKE

Yeah, yeah. Finally, we can wish the collectors away.
Still . . . still, the company's always going to be post-
bankruptcy from now on.

WINSOR

And what, uh, what again was the final name
chosen for the new company?

JAKE

Jupiter *System* Industries. We're a *system* now.

WINSOR

Ahhh. One day, these bastards will all be
sorry they doubted you. Really.

JAKE

I guess good sales are gonna need more than
just a Door-Locker.

WINSOR

Well, then, what is necessary to create?

INT. JAKE'S CAR - FRONT SEAT

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Jake drives, with Winsor as his passenger.

WINSOR

No - really! What else is necessary,
that you could create?

JAKE

Hmm. Maybe something that . . . tricks bill collectors
into thinking they've reached a line for -

WINSOR

Something *legal*. What is legal, and *necessary*,
for your anxious hands to craft?

JAKE

. . . Has to be legal?

WINSOR

Preferably.

JAKE

I don't know. I don't know what else I *could* invent,
in a world that already has it all.

WINSOR

Well, give it time.

JAKE

See, things exist, which have only existed for the
last 10 years - and yet now we can't imagine life
without it. GPS. E-mail, texting. How long ago was
Starbucks Coffee invented? Or the Internet? Or the
laptop? Today, big businesses could not go without
computers, laptops, Internet. These days, you apply
for a job at a restaurant and the whole application is
on the Internet. Well . . . what about the 1980's? They
didn't have any Internet. But job interviews these
days can't go on without Internet. You know?
. . . Sorry, I guess I'm just talking a lot again.

WINSOR

No, no, I heard you. The . . . GPS.

JAKE

What else HAS to be invented?

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INT. LIGHT CITY - EVENING

Jake takes a walk with his dog down
the sidewalk.

A motorcycle flies by, making a very loud sound
as it tears down the road.

JAKE
. . . Hmm.

INT. LIGHT CITY - STREETS - IN JAKE'S HEAD

We FOLLOW THE MOTORCYCLE as it flies
down the road, slowly ROTATING AROUND it.

JAKE'S NARRATION
A motorcycle is pretty dangerous. Plenty of
crashes can happen on a motorcycle. But . . .
what about an auto-balancing motorcycle?

FADE TO a security officer riding a Segway vehicle
down the sidewalk, standing up straight, holding
the handle of the auto-balancing device.

JAKE'S NARRATION
The auto-balancing Segway was invented, what,
15 years ago? Why not find out how to apply
that auto-balancing feature to a motorcycle?

INT. JAKE'S HOME - NIGHT

Jake is on the phone with Winsor, in a 2-WAY
SPLIT-SCREEN VIEW.

JAKE
Has that already been done before? It might
have already been done before.

WINSOR
I don't know. I've never heard of it before.
The auto-balancing motorcycle.

JAKE
You think it would be worth investing all this time,

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and all this money, into building the Auto-Balancing Motorcycle project? We're gonna have to sink our money a lot deeper in, if we expect to climb up anywhere higher.

WINSOR

(rubbing his temples) Jacob, Jacob, Jacob, what you're telling me, is that you want to sink ALL our money . . . not just SOME, but ALL of our collected, pooled-together money . . . and have us ALL sink it into this GREAT new motorcycle idea, which MIGHT be a hit, or MIGHT be a miss.

JAKE

Let's . . . count how many people are in for it, and how many people are not for it. I'm in. That's one vote. That's one. What about you?

WINSOR

NO I'm not in for it! You expect me to sink every little thing we've got left into a new project which might just . . .

JAKE

Just what?

WINSOR

Just FLOP AGAIN!!

Jake sighs.

JAKE

Okay, I understand. You're delirious, you're tired, you're over-worked. You know what? Take a week off. Yeah! Take a week off. Really!

WINSOR

If you think giving me a week off will give you your chance to slip your Perfectly Balancing Motorcycle idea . . .

Winsor stops.

WINSOR

. . . Perfectly Balancing Motorcycle?
. . . Everyone who owns a motorcycle
should . . . Upgrade to this.

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JAKE

Exactly, I like the way you're thinking.
I hope that you would be on board with
me for this.

WINSOR

I'll . . . I'll see what I can do. You know -
to count how many people would go for it.
If a large enough number of people would
go for it . . . okay.

INT. JSI HEADQUARTERS - BOARD MEETING

Jake presents his pitch for the Auto-Balancing Motorcycle.

JAKE

What if you had special powers? The power to
always balance your motorcycle, perfectly, forever?
Well now that's a reality. The auto-balancing
motorcycle takes elements of both the regular
motorcycle, and the auto-balancing Segway,
into a new invention, which . . . which . . . (*ahem*)
which keeps your motorcycle perfectly balanced, always.

He looks around the room.

Generally, everyone is shaking their heads *no*.

JSI MAN 1

I just don't think this would really go anywhere.
I'm sorry, Jake, but JSI is still falling on hard times,
even after re-emerging from the bankruptcy. We
just don't have enough extra cash laying around to
fund such a self-indulging thrill.

JAKE

Self-indulging thrill?? I . . .

He breathes slowly.

JAKE

I don't even *drive* motorcycles.

People begin to murmur and chuckle.

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JAKE

I don't. Really. I don't. But that's not the point.
The point is, there's thousands of people . . . no.
Millions of people that *do*. What do they ride?
A motorcycle. What do they end up in? . . . Crashes.
What do they NEED? . . . This . . . thing.

JSI MAN 2

Jake, listen: regular, average Joe, who can afford the
\$600, the \$800, for a normal motorcycle, cannot
necessarily afford twice that much for extra upgraded
technology. Anyone who drives motorcycles will
tell you - they like it the way it is.

JAKE

Fine. Fine, so, suppose we cater more to the
rich crowds, the rich neighborhoods, the people
with those gigantic mansion-houses right off of
the beach and ocean. Do you not think they would
pay a reasonable sum of money for . . . get this . . .
the Perfectly-Balancing Motorcycle.

JSI MAN 3

(sigh) You make it sound like it's got a decent shot.
But a decent shot does not warrant the money it takes
to produce this on the mass scale of all those Door-
Lockers that flopped and weren't sold.

JSI MAN 4

Yeah, plus, Jake, look at it like this. How can you
really call this YOUR invention if it's just a normal
motorcycle with a couple bits and pieces from the
Segway put into it? And you just call it your own?

JAKE

. . . Well, thanks for the support, guys . . .
how about this. If you let me build one . . . just
one, that works . . . and I show it off at a demon-
stration exhibit . . . and *if* I can get enough people
to say they would buy one . . . could I just do that?

JSI MAN 3

. . . Fair enough. We've got enough budget to make
ONE functioning motorcycle, to be shown off at the
exhibit. Or, however many have to be built if one
model doesn't work.

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JAKE
Thank you so much!

INT. LIGHT CITY - LYONS ROAD

“6 Months Later”

A man wearing a helmet tears on down the road,
driving an auto-balancing JSI motorcycle.

Jake has his hands on the backs of both his kids
as he walks with them through the city.

JAKE
See that, kids? That man is driving the auto-balancing
motorcycle, of MY design.

RYAN
How do you know it's yours?

JAKE
The logo. It's got that JSI logo right on it.

ZACK
Wow!

JAKE
So, now, mothers don't have to worry so much
about sons that drive motorcycles.

ZACK
That man just ran right through a red light!

JAKE
Well . . . he's not supposed to do that.

A quick flash of white light goes off.

JAKE
See that? Now he's getting a ticket.

RYAN
How?

JAKE

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How what?

RYAN

How is he getting a ticket?

JAKE

Well, it's simple.

The camera FLIES OVER TO the traffic light.

JAKE

See that traffic light? It's got a camera mounted to it. When the light is red, anyone that passes by its motion sensors . . . photographed.

RYAN

How do they get the ticket?

JAKE

The camera gets a photo of the license plate. Police officers use their *laptops* and *computers* that they just *cannot do without*, to look up a person's license plate number, and they pull it up on a database, connected to the DMV - the Department of Motor Vehicles - to get the person's plate number, their name, photo, address. Then, they send a ticket to that person in the mail.

ZACK

So it comes in the mail?

JAKE

Yep. And you see *that*? That invention is called a "no right turn on red" sign. As you can clearly see, the sign says, no right turn on red. BUT! But! The intersection of Military Trail and Spanish River Boulevard does NOT have the "no right turn on red" sign. And . . . if you turn right on red, even though there's no sign there, they ticket you \$120.

ZACK & RYAN

\$120??

JAKE

Oh, yes. They don't want to put up a sign there.

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They leave that area with no sign, and they collect money from people who “violated” by turning right. So, they make a lot of money this way. So, you see? There are inventions everywhere around us.

INT. TRADE FAIR - JAKE’S EXHIBIT

“8 Months Later”

JAKE

I present: the Crash Suit. Worn from neck to foot, the Crash Suit . . . looks kind of like a wet-suit, for water-skiing. However, it allows you to endure a fall from a motorcycle. When you wear this Crash Suit, you can easily survive a motorcycle crash. . . . And, look! A Door-Locker! Oh, what’s this? Oh, well, only something that would *lock your house doors with a keychain!* Huh? Huh?

A few people approach, ready to buy one.

CROWD GUY 1

I could use a Crash Suit.

INT. LIGHT CITY - JSI HEADQUARTERS

Jake sits at the table with Winsor.

JAKE

Awesome. Awesome. Sales are finally up. Even the old Door-Locker is starting to see its rise in sales. Perhaps the world is finally ready.

WINSOR

You should still try to come up with more.

JAKE

Hmm?

WINSOR

More! Don’t stop now! If you stay stopped for too long, you’ll find yourself falling into total silence - and, eventually, more financial danger!

JAKE

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Right. Right. I have got to be *on the ball* for inventions that people need. I've been saying it since I was 6. And nobody ever believed I could do it.

WINSOR

Never mind what people said, or thought. The Door-Locker is indeed seeing its rise in sales. So . . . what comes next?

JAKE

What comes next? Well, what came previously? The Crash Suit. The auto-balancing motorcycle. Now, what we need is . . .

WINSOR

"Is" what?

JAKE

. . . Remote-Controlled Rollerblades.

WINSOR

What?

INT. LIGHT CITY - STREETS - EVENING

Jake thrusts his right foot forward and Rollerblades on down the road. Then he thrusts his left foot forward and rides.

JAKE'S NARRATION

Rollerblading. It takes so much effort. It takes so much work to throw your feet forward. So, in an effort to reduce the energy needed to do work . . . it would be Remote-Controlled Rollerblades!

BACK TO the present, with Jake and Winsor talking.

JAKE

Remote controls would let you fly ahead, slow down, come to a stop. You could, in theory, stand *still* and continue to roam ahead through remote control. This would make transportation quick, easy, painless. No gasoline burned. Less fuel used. Purely electronic.

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WINSOR

Remote-Controlled Rollerblades? *Absolutely not.*
Rollerblades alone are dangerous. To add remote
controls . . . no.

JAKE

What about the Crash Suit?

WINSOR

Hmm?

JAKE

With the Crash Suit, they'd be okay.

WINSOR

. . . That's the only "spin" on this that would work.

INT. LIGHT CITY - STREETS

"3 Months Later"

Jake shows Winsor the pair of remote-controlled
Rollerblades, a model that works, which he now
sets down on the ground.

JAKE

3 months of time - and it was worth it.
This model works! Check it out!

He presses the controls. The right Rollerblade
takes off in flight. The left one does not.

JAKE

Well. (*ahem*) Sure, there may be some glitches,
some bugs, to work out.

"3 Months Later"

JAKE

I would HOPE this thing works by now!!

He finishes putting his left foot into the Rollerblade.

JAKE

Risky. Risky. Dangerous. But that's

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what being an inventor is all about.

He uses the controls to force himself to
ride forward.

JAKE
Whoaaaaa!

He presses the yellow SLOW-DOWN button.

His speed slows down, and he nearly falls,
but thrashes and struggles to keep his balance.

JAKE
Dear God. I have done it. I've made it
possible to Rollerblade without lifting a foot.

Now we FOLLOW JAKE as he activates the
remote controls again, flying forward down the
street.

He continues to slide ahead, as though in an ice-
skating rink, using the remote controls to get around.
He moves faster than anyone could ever run.
He exerts himself with less energy than it takes
to drink water. He continues to seamlessly float
around the streets of Light City.

CUT TO an aerial angle of the action.

JAKE'S NARRATION
Do you know when the cell phone was invented,
Winsor? Do you know what year? . . . 1973.
Yes - back in 1973, the cell phone existed. But it
was large. It was clunky. Heavy. The signal did
not last forever. How long did it take for the world
to stop laughing, and be ready for a big commercial
cell phone? . . . Not till like 20 years later. Today,
I'm Rollerblading around, like the one guy with a
cell phone in 1973.

A car is approaching. He presses the
remote's yellow SLOW-DOWN button.

JAKE'S NARRATION
Then again . . . they had satellites put in

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space back in the 50's, and earlier. They had rocket power in the 40's. They had all kinds of high-tech stuff.

INT. OUTER SPACE - IN ORBIT AROUND EARTH

A metal satellite orbits around the planet.

JAKE'S NARRATION

Well, let's see. Satellites were built, invented, placed up in space. Now . . . I don't want to *build* any new satellites. But, perhaps I could tap into some of them.

INT. JSI HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY

JAKE

JSI used to have office space in two floors of this building. Now we have office space in only one floor - but that's great. It's perfect. All we need is one, really. Everything is still a little more compact, a little less elbow room, but hey. Now, we still need to invent the next wonderful thing . . . and it will involve *satellites*.

WINSOR

You have lost your freakin' mind.

JAKE

You see this?

He holds up an iPad.

JAKE

The iPad. Map view. I can see a map of . . . pretty much the whole world. But it's all still images, still pictures, taken by many different satellite cameras, and stitched together like a puzzle. What if the exact same thing could be pulled off using satellites that display live video feed?

WINSOR

You want to, what? Build a video-camera satellite and send it up to space?

JAKE

I just want to find out if they already exist, and if they do, I want to hack into them, and use their

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camera abilities to stitch together a live video-map
image of one's current location.

WINSOR
You're insane!

JAKE
Check it out. Still images. What about when day changes
to night? My "present location" gets all thrown off when I
walk around. Imagine a video feed that changes from day
to night. Or . . . or imagine . . .

WINSOR
This sounds a little bit too large-scale, Jake.
But . . . I've seen you through so many times.
I'll see you through this, too.

INT. RADAR-MAP COMMERCIAL - FULL-SCREEN VIEW

SARAH
Ohhh, my God! I can't BELIEVE I've gotten LOST again!

A winged angel lady appears by Sarah,
basking in shimmering, heavenly white light.

ANGEL
Sarah . . . Sarah . . . take this Radar-Map.

SARAH
Radar-Map??

The angel hands it over to Sarah: a Radar-Map
rectangular device, consisting of a square glass
screen and handles on the left and right sides for
gripping.

ANGEL
See? Now you can see some of these majestic
sights that, so far, only us angels could see!

SARAH
But - but what about Brad? Where's Brad?

The angel types some buttons on the Radar-Map device.

ANGEL

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You can call his cell phone from right here!

Riiing! Riiing!

BRAD'S VOICE
Hello?

A red triangle pops up on the glass screen!

SARAH
There you are!

BRAD
Where are you? I'm so lost!

SARAH
It's okay. Stay right there. I'll find you!

So Sarah runs.

Seconds later, she turns a corner.

She runs. Runs. Runs.

And throws her arms around Brad, who had been lost.

The angel lady is smiling.

Heavenly white light builds up over the angel.

INT. JSI HEADQUARTERS BUILDING - JSI FLOOR

PULL BACK from the TV.

Jake is smiling.

JAKE
This is GREAT!

JSI MAN 1
NO!

JAKE
Why not? Why not?

JSI MAN 1

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Heaven? Angels? Angelic light? NO!
You put this on TV, and we'll be getting
angry calls from people that no longer
want anything to do with our products!

JAKE

Oh, come on. It . . . it gives you that
great feeling. You know?

JSI MAN 1

What about separation of church and state?
Separation of church from company? This
isn't a religious chapel, Jake. The angel has
GOT to go.

JAKE

COME ON! This is THE commercial
that people will LIKE! THIS, in the middle
of this year's Superbowl, *it's gonna be big!*

JSI MAN 2

No. Our job is not to shove religion down people's throats.

JAKE

How about . . . we make a bet? A bet that
my way, would work in the Superbowl?

JSI MAN 1

. . . Well, still take out the white
shimmering light at the end!

JSI MAN 2

Yeah - seriously, that's GOT to go!

JAKE

All right. All right.

INT. JAKE MUSKEN'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Jake, his wife Amanda, and both kids,
Ryan and Zack, are watching TV together:
the Superbowl game.

JAKE

I can't believe it. Finally, the game is on,
where, at SOME point - at SOME point,

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they're gonna play my commercial. Mm.
I'm so nervous.

They wait for it. The football game is still going on.

JAKE

So many inventions. TV. Computer. Telephone.
I just don't know WHAT else I could EVER do
again to "fix" up the world.

The football game goes to commercial.

RYAN

Awww! Already!

On TV, the commercial shows a firefighter putting out
some flames by the brick wall on the outside of a building.

BURNING MAN

Ahhhh! Ahhhhh!

The firefighter shoots fire-extinguishing chemicals
at the man, who soon has his fires put out.

He holds up a Chocolate Longbar.

BURNING MAN

It was just that good!

Jake seems to have an idea.

JAKE

Hmmmm . . .

INT. JSI HEADQUARTERS - JSI FLOOR - R&D ROOM

Jake gets to work, sketching his ideas.

Images fly past his head. The fire-extinguisher,
which soon sprays a stream of nitrogen. The
motorcycle. The Segway. A brown coat.

What he is sketching is a coat wired with
fire-fighting technology.

INT. TRADE SHOW - JAKE'S EXHIBIT

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JAKE

Presenting: the Fire-Extinguishing Suit. FES, for short.
FES. Foreign Exchange Student? Or Fire-Extinguishing
Suit? YOU decide!

One man stands with a scowl.

INT. JSI HEADQUARTERS - JSI FLOOR - HALLWAY

Jake's landlord, San Marco, walks
through the hallway: tall, thick, bald,
the same man who earlier wore a scowl.

SAN MARCO
Jacob, Jacob.

JAKE
Yes?

SAN MARCO
You know you'd better have your
rent money on time, right?

JAKE
I always have been. Haven't I?

SAN MARCO
Whatever. You used to rent out TWO floors,
now you've got one. You planning on staying
around?

JAKE
Yes! Of course.

SAN MARCO
You sure this one floor's not gonna just collapse too?

JAKE
No, no. It won't collapse.

SAN MARCO
Pff. Whatever, kid - just have your money on time
and there won't be problems.

JAKE

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I always have.

San Marco walks on, shaking his head in disgust.

SAN MARCO

Loser.

JAKE

Dick.

Winsor approaches.

WINSOR

Jacob, I'm afraid there's some good news,
and some bad, as well.

JAKE

(sigh) Well . . . get it over with. Bad news first.

WINSOR

The bad news is, one of the FES units,
apparently, has been stolen.

JAKE

The Fire-Extinguisher Suit?
Somebody stole one instead
of buying it?

WINSOR

. . . Umm, I should also add, the man who stole
the FES has replaced its nitrogen cartridges with
something highly flammable. That is, errr . . .
instead of a fire-extinguishing suit, now it's a
flame-thrower suit.

JAKE

Now it's a flame-throwing suit??
Dear God, who would do that?

WINSOR

Whoever he is, he's taken to calling
himself "Scorch". He's apparently been
starting fires here in the city, with this suit,
for about 36 hours now.

Winsor drops onto a table

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today's newspaper.

PYRO-CRAZED "SCORCH"
LIGHTS UP LIGHT CITY,
reads the front-page headline.

WINSOR
Shall I read it?

JAKE
(sigh) Just get it over with.

WINSOR
Very well, then. *(ahem)* by Jonathan Wondrite.
His name is Scorch. He's dressed in a modified
FES, painted red. The FES is a Fire-Extinguishing
Suit. It was meant to blast nitrogen to combat fire,
yet now instead it acts as a flame-thrower suit which
can be worn around the back and arms.

JAKE
Is there a "good news" anywhere in this?

WINSOR
Scorch remains out at large, after setting
fire in the Lower East Side of Light City.

JAKE
Oh, of course. The good news.

WINSOR
2 people were hospitalized thus far,
and zero were reported killed - but the
man remains out at large, according to
eye-witness Sarah Marshall, 29.

JAKE
Okay, enough of the news.
This is just getting depressing.

WINSOR
(putting the paper away)
Wouldn't be much of a news story if it wasn't.

JAKE
So a . . . a . . . a flame-thrower suit is out there.

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“Scorch” is out there, and it’s all my fault.

WINSOR

Now, now. You must not blame yourself.
Your intentions were pure; you wanted to
create a fire-extinguishing suit.

JAKE

I was stupid. I should have just left it alone. I should
have just let people keep their fire-extinguishers and
firefighters. My stupid ambition to help things has
instead only created this “Scorch” . . . monster.

WINSOR

Exactly, sir: he’s the monster. Not you.

JAKE

I should have remembered to think about how
other humans would behave, with this. I guess
you can’t trust a *human* with *anything*. Not a
spoon, a fork, a knife.

WINSOR

Well, this should make you feel better, then:
stopping the man. Phoning 9-1-1 on him.

JAKE

Winsor . . . he’s already been in the newspaper.

WINSOR

And?

JAKE

He’s already made the *front page!*
How is me dialing 9-1-1 supposed
to make a difference?

WINSOR

Well who else are you supposed to call?
The Easter Bunny?

JAKE

. . . Maybe I will. Okay. Just give me a little time.
I’m not quite sure how to tell 9-1-1 about this.

WINSOR

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If you need me to do the talking, that's fine.

JAKE

No, I . . . I can do it.

INT. JSI HEADQUARTERS - LATER

Jake's phone is dialing out to the police.

A SQUARE PANEL POPS UP
to show the police phone line operator.

OPERATOR

9-1-1. What is your emergency?

JAKE

Yes, hello. Uhhh . . . I'd like to report that there's this criminal, named "Scorch", who is running around with a flame-thrower suit, starting fires.

OPERATOR

What is the phone number you're calling from?

JAKE

What?

OPERATOR

What's the phone number you're calling me from?

JAKE

Oh, right, uh . . .

Seconds later, the operator is typing quickly on a keyboard, while Jake is still pacing around.

OPERATOR

Now, what is your complaint, again?

JAKE

A man named "Scorch" is walking around with a flame-thrower suit, starting fires!

OPERATOR

Did he do anything to *you*?
Touch you? Strike you?

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JAKE

No . . . but he . . . but he's been starting fires.

OPERATOR

How do you know this?

JAKE

I read about it in the paper.

OPERATOR

. . . I'm sorry, you . . . "read this" in the "paper"?

JAKE

Yes. It's in the newspaper.

The operator laughs.

OPERATOR

You're making a complaint based on reading
a newspaper article?

JAKE

Listen. I can explain. There's a man starting fires.
They *mentioned* that in the paper. The man who
starts fires, his name is "Scorch" . . . or, his nickname.

OPERATOR

Did he touch you, strike you, or threaten to hurt you?

JAKE

. . . Uhhh . . . well, well, no, but . . .

OPERATOR

Are you afraid that this man will hurt you in the future?

JAKE

. . . *Yes*. I am *very* afraid he will set fire to
my house next. Now - now listen - I can
explain something real quick - his flame-thrower
suit, that he wears, is a flame-thrower suit based
on the design of my fire-extinguisher suit, that I made.

OPERATOR

Well - we're sending someone to the scene.
We have to anyways. However, based on the

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information given, I don't think your case is very solid.

INT. LIGHT CITY - IN FRONT OF THE JSI HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

A police car slowly pulls up to a stop,
and Jake approaches the car.

SOON:

JAKE

(holding up the newspaper)

See this? Scorch. Now - the reason I'm calling is,
I was the one who made the fire-extinguishing suit
that this guy made his technology from.

OFFICER

You read this in a newspaper.

JAKE

Yeah.

OFFICER

Okay. Well. What do you want *me* to do about it?

JAKE

. . . I don't know, maybe . . . stop the guy?

OFFICER

Based on YOU saying you read about this guy in a paper.

JAKE

It was *my* fire-extinguishing suit that he built his things from.

OFFICER

(sigh) I didn't come here to have my time WASTED!

JAKE

This is *not a waste of time!* Officer - this - this
"Scorch" guy - he's out at large! With a flame-thrower!

OFFICER

All right, why don't I just place YOU under arrest,
for wasting my time with this childish nonsense?

JAKE

This isn't childish nonsense. Not at all.

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OFFICER

Oh yeah? Get up against that wall. UP AGAINST THE WALL!

JAKE

All right. Jeez. I was the one that called!

OFFICER

Yeah - and I can see why! You call 9-1-1, you make a complaint, just to draw our attention all onto this guy, this "Scorch" - just to draw our attention away from YOU. Don't think you're fooling anybody. Obviously you've got tricks up your sleeve you want to distract us from.

JAKE

No! No, man - I - I was the one that called!!

The officer is searching Jake.

OFFICER

Just tell me now. Tell me where the DRUGS are. The MARIJUANA. Hmm? TELL ME WHERE!

JAKE

I don't have any on me right now!

OFFICER

You look like a stoner. How many concealed weapons you got on you?

JAKE

Zero.

OFFICER

Bullshit! Bullshit. I know I'll find something.

JAKE

Officer, a man is running around RAMPANTLY with a flame-thrower.

OFFICER

Shut up.

JAKE

I haven't done anything. I know my rights.

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I haven't done anything you can charge me with.

OFFICER
Except for loitering.

JAKE
I'm not loitering! I just stood here and waited
for your call.

OFFICER
Well, you're loitering NOW. So if you don't STOP,
then you'll have that charge on you. Loitering.

JAKE
This is rid-

OFFICER
You want more, tough guy?? Hmm?

JAKE
. . . No.

OFFICER
Listen. I can't quite charge you with anything right now.
But *I've got my eye on you*. I know you're up to
something. Something major. But in the meantime,
stop wasting our time with your childish, petty shit.
. . . Go. Leave.

So the officer leaves.

INT. LIGHT CITY – NW 2nd AVE – EVENING

We FOLLOW JAKE'S CAR as it drives on
in the rain, from JSI to back home.

NARRATION
Some day . . . SOME day, these bastards will
use my inventions. The bastards.

INT. LIGHT CITY – JAKE'S NEIGHBORHOOD – SOON

We FOLLOW JAKE'S VEHICLE some more as it enters
his home neighborhood, slowly approaching his house.

INT. JAKE'S HOME – SOON

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The door opens. Jake enters.

His two kids, Ryan and Zack, run to him.

RYAN & ZACK
Dad's home!

ZACK
Dad!

JAKE
Yeaah! Dad's home. And soaking wet.
What's for dinner?

INT. JAKE'S HOME – DINING ROOM – SOON

Amanda sets Jake's drink down onto the table.

JAKE
Thank you.

AMANDA
You're welcome.

JAKE
Boy, after everything that's been going on lately,
it feels real good to just . . . just sit down and
have a nice, *normal* dinner, with the family.
You know? . . . Nobody does this anymore.
Everybody's busy.

ZACK
Everything that's been going on?

JAKE
Work has just been a *nightmarish headache*
ever since this whole Scorch scandal. Life has
been such a headache. Now, I don't know!
I don't know *what* will happen! I don't know
if the FES will actually stay public after all!
A mass recall . . . a mass recall MIGHT happen.
MASS recall. It would take a HUGE hit out of the
company. But, that's okay! That happens some-
times. You have to do it, for safety.

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RYAN
Mass recall? *No!*

AMANDA
Perhaps a little less dreary of a subject, now.

JAKE
Yeah, I guess so. Hmm. So, Zack.
You're, like, 9 now, right?

ZACK
11.

JAKE
11? Really? . . . Huh. So, then, Ryan, you're 12.

RYAN
I'm 13, Dad.

JAKE
Oh. Hmm.

He continues to eat his dinner.

JAKE
Did your voice change, or something?

RYAN
Yeah.

JAKE
Huh.

RYAN
I heard about the flame-thrower suit guy
already. They told us about it in school.

JAKE
Really?? They did?

RYAN
Yeah. The teacher had us read the newspaper
today. *Scorch* was on the front page.

JAKE
Yeah. How bout it.

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RYAN

He's still out at large, is what it says -
with the modified . . . F . . . FES.

ZACK

They *have* to find the guy.

JAKE

Hmm. Yeah. I'll say.

Jake resumes eating his food.

After his first few bites, he starts to
have trouble with his food.

JAKE

But suppose they *don't* go after the guy.
Suppose the cops instead just *yell* and scream
at wonderful people like me, then *don't* go
after Scorch, cause "Oh I'm a cop, I'm *so*
powerful, I'm *so* powerful" -

AMANDA

Jake!

JAKE

All right.

AMANDA

Just let the proper channels do their thing.
The police will find this guy. Give it time.

JAKE

Give it TIME. Yeah. And how many more
fires can be started from now to then?

AMANDA

There are proper channels for everything!

JAKE

Well . . . well, you invent something, it changes
things. Laptops. Computers. Internet has
COMPLETELY changed the "proper channels".
So maybe these "proper channels" are getting
remade. Rewritten.

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A moment of silence.

JAKE

I'm sorry, I'm just still quite upset about it.

AMANDA

Clearly!

EXT. JSI HEADQUARTERS BUILDING - SUNRISE

Another morning for the JSI headquarters building,
which actually only houses JSI in one floor.

INT. HEADQUARTERS BUILDING - JSI FLOOR - HALLWAY

We FOLLOW JAKE as he walks with Winsor.

JAKE

I say I track this guy down myself.
I'll get involved where the police didn't.

WINSOR

"Track him down" and what? Kill him?

JAKE

. . . No! . . . Why, what EVER would make
you . . . I'll fucking kill him!!

WINSOR

Calm down, Jake. Then the police will arrest YOU.

JAKE

Fine, I won't kill him. BUT - that doesn't
mean I can't taser him. Taser. Another
invention that changes and rewrites the rules
of the world. Give me one taser, and I could
take on this guy.

WINSOR

JAKE, STOP IT! I've heard enough of your
crazy rants. I'm sorry, Jake, I know you're
upset, but that's it. You're still fresh in the
middle of it all. You haven't given it a week
of time, to come back, think again . . .

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JAKE

A WEEK OF TIME? Are ya crazy??
This guy could torch every building in
the STATE by then!

WINSOR

Jake . . . DON'T track the man down.
DON'T go after him. DON'T attack him.

JAKE

. . . Yes, all right. You win.
I will not do those things, no.

INT. LIGHT CITY - STREETS FROM A HIGH AERIAL ANGLE - MIDDAY

Many buildings make up Light City, seen from
a far, distant view.

JAKE'S NARRATION

What a mess things have become. I started to
see some products turning successful. But any
time I find myself finally up at that high point
. . . then, somehow, everything just goes to ruin.

INT. JAKE'S CAR - FRONT SEAT

JAKE'S NARRATION

It was stupid of me anyway. Oh . . . a fire-extinguisher
. . . well I'll change its shape into a suit . . . it's not
necessary. It wasn't needed. Especially since people
like Scorch can turn it into flame-throwers any time
they want.

INT. JSI HEADQUARTERS BUILDING - R&D ROOM

Jake is holding his rectangular Radar-Map device.

On the enormous-screen desktop computer,
Jake eyes the list of all registered Radar-Map users.

319 MATCHES FOUND, says the flat
computer screen. There are 319 people's
names registered to their Radar-Map units.

Jake looks through the names of the people.

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His eyebrows scrunch. He continues to look.

SCORCH. That name is on the list.

His eyes open wide.

He leans closer to the computer screen.

Scorch's location - that of his Radar-Map unit - now shows up on the desktop computer as a red triangle over the live video map image.

Jake is shocked.

JAKE

Forget the police, I've solved this case myself!

INT. LIGHT CITY - STREETS AND SIDEWALKS - EVENING

Jake and Winsor run together, as Jake shows his old friend the Radar-Map device, with a red triangle to spill Scorch's location.

JAKE

I am HERE. Scorch is HERE. Apparently he *does* have a Radar-Map unit . . . bought, legitimately, I guess, and registered with his name as SCORCH. The bad news? I don't know his real name. The good news? SCORCH is the only name I need right now - and his location. I can see his house from here.

WINSOR

Then, can he track you as well?

JAKE

He would need either my cell phone number . . . which I would then disconnect, and change . . . or he would need the privately-owned JSI software, which is privately owned, and so, he most likely could never get his hands on it.

WINSOR

What if he hacks into . . . either some hard drives, or just some encrypted online information, and tracks *your* location to *your* Radar-Map?

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JAKE

I would say that's . . . one percent possible.
NOT everyone can do that - it's not like
video-taping a movie screen.

WINSOR

Well, then, I'll tell you what to do. You drive to
his location. You get near him. But DO NOT talk
to him, or provoke him. Phone the police, and
get them over.

JAKE

Oh. Well, I . . . already . . .

WINSOR

Hmm?

JAKE

Ahh, nothing. You're right. You're right.
I'll do it your way. I'll go there! And I'll -!

WINSOR

You'll NOT talk to the man, OR provoke him
in any way! You instead will let the police
handle it!

JAKE

. . . Right, yes, of course.

INT. LIGHT CITY - 4TH AVE - SUNSET

Jake's auto-balancing motorcycle drives on down
4th Avenue, in search of Scorch.

JAKE

Winsor. Do you copy?

A SQUARE PANEL POPS UP, in which Winsor
adjusts his cell phone's mic-and-earpiece set.

WINSOR

I copy. Your motorcycle is *awful* loud - but I copy.

JAKE

Yeah. Hmm. Maybe I'll invent some kind of

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silent motorcycle or something.

WINSOR

What? I can't hear you.

JAKE

I said - maybe I'll have to invent a silent -

WINSOR

I *still* can't hear you!

Jake drives on. Soon enough, he has to slow down behind a stopped car, as he gets to a red light.

JAKE

What about now?

WINSOR

I can hear you better now.

JAKE

I'm ready to go after this guy.

WINSOR

You'll go to the door, and alert the police. They are the ones for the job. They're the ones with the training.

The traffic light goes green. Jake goes back into motion.

JAKE

Let me know when to turn!

CUT TO Winsor's view of the desktop computer's enormous monitor. Only two triangles are displayed on the map on the screen: JAKE and SCORCH.

Jake's triangle is still moving quickly.

WINSOR

Not for another good mile yet. Just keep going the way you're going.

JAKE

Good.

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We FOLLOW JAKE'S MOTORCYCLE as he flies out of his lane, and speeds ahead on his own.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! He passes by several cars.

JAKE

Sorry, guys - I've got important stuff to get to!

WINSOR

What? What are you saying?

JAKE

Huh? Oh. Nothing.

The motorcycle speeds on ahead. He looks left, and right, quickly, scanning the area to see what might hit him.

JAKE

Tell me when to make that left turn!

Winsor looks at Jake's triangle moving across the electronic map.

WINSOR

Still not yet.

CUT TO Jake - over a mile later, when he makes a swift but careful left turn from 4th Ave onto River Blvd, as his motorcycle maintains perfect balance.

JAKE

What about now?

WINSOR

He's still a little farther south, actually - but you're getting warm.

SOON - Jake's motorcycle slows down to pull over and stop at the sidewalk. He takes a second to get off his motorcycle.

He takes the lid off the storage compartment, removing from inside the Radar-Map device.

He takes a moment to get it up and running, and back to a live map image.

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He sees a map image of JSI headquarters.

It takes a few seconds for the image to refresh.
Now he sees his present location.

He zooms the image in deeper. A yellow triangle stays at the center of the screen, where he stands, pulled over on the sidewalk. Another yellow triangle in the nearby area represents Scorch.

He studies it closely.

JAKE

Winsor, correct me if I'm wrong. This Radar-Map . . . it does have north, east, south, and west correct?

WINSOR

It . . . should. I'm afraid I don't exactly understand the question.

JAKE

Okay, so . . . wait . . . *south* of here . . . got it. I think I've got him.

Jake lowers his head, still fixed on the Radar-Map screen. He looks closer.

The yellow triangle for Scorch is so close now. He's just trying to figure out the route to get to him.

Jake looks up, at all the buildings, the streets. He tries to think about how his route would apply in these streets. So he looks down at the Radar-Map screen again, to check it over one last time.

He puts it back into the storage compartment. Then, he puts the lid back on, and climbs back on to go back into driving.

WINSOR

You have got to invent a silencer for that motorcycle.

JAKE

Sounds a little difficult.

He takes a right turn, going south again.

Jake drives on down the road, but comes to a stop

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and turns left in between two buildings. Driving on, he approaches two long trucks on his left side. He is coming to the back end of a bunch of buildings.

Slowing down to a stop, again, he hops off the cycle and checks out his Radar-Map device one more time.

Scorch's yellow triangle is right there.

Jake looks up. He's at the *back* end of the warehouse. Scorch is more in the front.

JAKE

I seem to have found the back of the warehouse.

WINSOR

You do understand that trespassing is against the law, Jacob. So is loitering, and breaking and entering - and if the police *do* come, well, depending on which selection of law enforcement comes to you, they may choose to charge you as all three.

JAKE

Yeah, why don't you save it, for the guy who's running around starting fires? Why don't you save it for the thief who broke in and stole an FES and turned it into a giant flame-thrower? Why don't you save the "such an asshole" speeches for him?

WINSOR

There's no need for rage, Jake. I am just saying, don't later say I didn't warn you about the laws.

JAKE

Yeah, well, if any police do show up . . .
I don't know. I'll explain it to them myself.
I'm hanging up now.

Jake hangs up, and the square panel with Winsor disappears.

Jake finds, in the storage compartment, the two masks of the FES. One is a white mask that covers the mouth and nose, to keep all poisons out of the human system. The other mask is a hood around the head, to keep one's head fireproof.

Now his FES attire is complete.

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He stashes the motorcycle's keys away in an FES pocket. Then he gets started, walking around the building to approach its front side.

He jogs for a short time to run around the building, to follow the walls until he arrives at the front end of the warehouse.

Three men are standing there, with their arms folded, blocking the front of the warehouse.

JAKE
What in the Hell?

GUARD 1
Look at this guy.

GUARD 2
Looks kind of like . . . our boss.

GUARD 3
HEY! YOU THERE! Turn back! Get off my property!

JAKE
"Your" property?

GUARD 3
This here is OUR shit now! We OWN this building now!
We OWN it! Now YOU ain't allowed here!

JAKE
I'm here to talk to Scorch.

GUARD 3
Scorch? You ain't talking to nobody like that.
You turn around right now, and get off my
property, or I *will* be calling the police.

JAKE
This is NOT "your" property. Now excuse me -
I'm here for Scorch.

GUARD 3
What's wrong with you? What part of
"you're not allowed on my property" are

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you not processing?

JAKE

I'm friends with Scorch.

GUARD 3

What?

JAKE

Yeah. I'm an old friend of Scorch's.
We . . . knew each other a long, long
time ago. Yeah. I'm here to speak with him.

GUARD 3

You knew Mannino? No way.
What do you say, boys? We beat his ass?

GUARD 1

(hitting his fist) We beat his ass.

Now three guards are coming at Jake. He raises an arm and sprays fire-extinguishing nitrogen at them. At first, Guard 3 is startled. But he soon realizes it's harmless, and he moves in for the kill.

Jake moves swiftly to avoid the punches. He can't take on all three of them. But what he can do is spray nitrogen at them. He sprays the chemicals, and they stagger back a little.

Jake races to the front entrance of the warehouse, and he dashes inside, while they're still distracted by that.

INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT ENTRANCE

Jake runs inside the building, to find a warehouse that clearly used to house a lot of business, but which has not been in official use for a long time.

FIRST-PERSON POV: Jake looks all around the area. He gives the building a complete 360-degree sweep with his eyes, examining the ceiling, the floor, the walls.

BACK TO a third-person POV. We FOLLOW JAKE

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as he walks up to the three large crates that are on fire.
Jake approaches one of them, on foot, and gets himself ready.

The pyromaniac Scorch is nowhere in sight, yet.
But first, Jake approaches the crate, raises both
arms, and sprays nitrogen all over it, dousing the
fire with the chemicals to put it out.

At first, he seems to put out part of the fire,
but it heals and spreads again. So he sprays
it down with two streams of nitrogen, from head
to toe, and once he's done he quickly circles
around the crate to bathe the other sides in the
nitrogen as well. It will take a short while to
put out this crate's fire.

Finally, he is done, and the fire is out. It still
seems likely to come back. So he douses
the crate in even more chemicals. At last,
it's out completely.

Jake walks around, and begins putting out
the fires of the second crate.

Scorch walks up to Jake from behind.

SCORCH
HEY. You.

Jake turns to look at Scorch. The criminal
who inhabits this warehouse is wearing a
modified FES, painted red instead of yellow,
and the twin masks. He lowers his white
mouth-covering mask.

SCORCH
You're on my property. Leave.

JAKE
Are you "Scorch"?

SCORCH
This ain't your property.
It is MY property. Now leave.

JAKE

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This is “your” property?

SCORCH

I’m in the building, aren’t I? So it’s MINE.

JAKE

This is not *your* building.

SCORCH

I slept here overnight - so that makes it my legal residence. That’s how the law works. It’s how I’ve taken this entire building for myself. And there’s not a thing the cops can do about it, and not a thing YOU can do about it.

JAKE

You can NOT just go around starting fires!

SCORCH

Bitch, make me stop! MAKE me!

Scorch walks up to Jake.

Then Scorch swings a series of punches at Jake’s head.

SCORCH

Bitch, get out! Get out, you little bitch!
This is MY warehouse! These are MY
boxes! MY crates!! Face it: you’re
just mad that I beat you at your own game.

All 3 guards from the outdoor front entrance are back.

GUARD 3

Boss! Wanna rough him up, *all* of us?

SCORCH

I got this. I wanna do it myself.

The guards hesitate, then turn away.

Scorch aims his flame-throwers at Jake,
firing two streams of fire at once.

Jake leaps away, and continues to run,
but Scorch follows him with the fire.

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SCORCH

AHHHHH ha ha haaa!! What's the matter,
boy? Can't take the heat?

Now Jake gets angry. He runs forth and
swings a punch at Scorch. It does very little.

Scorch punches him in the side of the head.

SCORCH

What now!! I own the rights to this building.
And after this fight . . . I'll own the rights to
that fire-extinguisher suit of yours too!!

Jake aims the fire-extinguisher at Scorch's face,
hoping to catch him while he's still talking.

Scorch closes his eyes and mouth, turning away,
still screaming with his mouth closed.

Fwhooom! Scorch sprays more fire, this time aimed at
the floor, near Jake's legs. The floor is fireproof. But
the fire quickly hits the floor and bounces away, moving
closer to Jake, who quickly and frantically operates
two streams of nitrogen at once to deal with the fire.

Scorch sprays more fire at Jake, who fires another
blast of nitrogen to fight the fire.

Fire and nitrogen collide. For now, they reach a stalemate.

The fire and nitrogen both die down. They both
sit there with their weapons, not sure what to do.

Scorch approaches Jake, who walks up to him as well.

Jake grabs Scorch's face-mask, and rips it off.
Jake quickly rips all the gear off his head and face,
leaving everything above the neck exposed.

SCORCH

Yeah? What do you think you -

Pow! Jake punches him in the face with his right fist.

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Pow! He punches him again.

Scorch raises both arms, ready to blast Jake lethally.
But Jake grabs the man's wrists, squeezes them,
and pulls them away. The fire does come out,
but at Scorch's bare, exposed face, instead.

SCORCH
GAAAAAAH!!

JAKE
You shoulda listened to your Mom,
about playing with fire!

He sprays Scorch in the head and face with nitrogen.

SCORCH
(muffled) MMMMMMMM!!

Jake punches the man another three times,
until he is certain the man is down, having
fallen backward to land on the floor.

He's not dead, but he's out of the fight.

Jake stands up and looks all around himself.
Many crates are still on fire. So he runs forth
and sprays some nitrogen at the fires. Slowly,
he gets the situation under control.

SOON – the last of the fires are put out.
Smoke is still thick and heavy in this room.

SCORCH
Ohhhhh . . . assault and battery charges . . .

JAKE
What??

He approaches Scorch, who's still laying on the ground.

Scorch rises, starting to stand up.

SCORCH
I'll have you charged . . . as assault and battery . . . on me - WHOA!

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Jake grabs him by the throat with his right hand, gripping him tightly.

JAKE

I've got questions for you, "Scorch".
Why did you do this??

SCORCH

Why did I do what?

JAKE

Why did you start these fires??

SCORCH

I . . . I just . . . I was just having fun. You know?

JAKE

You what? You were just having fun?
Look at what you did here!!

SCORCH

I don't give a FUCK. What's your name, bruh?

JAKE

My name?

He looks around.

A crate is still burning. So he aims his arms at it and fires away with nitrogen, with his left hand. After 5 seconds of coating it, the crate seems to be okay.

Near the fire, the nitrogen particles look a little bit like dust, as they continue to float through the air.

JAKE

Dust.

SCORCH

What?

Jake turns back to Scorch.

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JAKE
“Dust” is my name.

SCORCH
Ehhh, eh hh. “Dust.”

JAKE
Give me that suit.

Scorch hesitates.

JAKE
GIVE ME THAT SUIT, OR ELSE DIE!

SCORCH
No!

Jake growls angrily. Then he sprays Scorch
in the eyes with nitrogen.

SCORCH
Ahhh! You psycho!

Jake takes advantage of Scorch’s temporary
immobility, spraying him again in the face.
Scorch squirms away.

Jake steps forward and gives Scorch a hard push
by the shoulders to land on the floor.

JAKE
Now hand over that suit!

SCORCH
Never!

JAKE
HAND IT OVER! Or you die!

SCORCH
All right! All right!

SOON – Jake holds the flame-throwing suit in his hands.

JAKE
So you thought it would be “fun” to

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just run around starting fires? Huh??

He takes a look at Scorch's cell phone,
which is now confiscated.

JAKE

Here's your cell phone, "Scorch". I'm gonna
need a minute now with this.

SCORCH

You ain't touching anything!

Jake looks over the phone. It's a non-flip phone,
with a small square of paper taped over it, with
the name SCORCH written in ink on the paper.

JAKE

Why is the name Scorch on your phone?
I guess you want to keep it separate from your
regular, personal phone.

SCORCH

Oh, you're *so* smart! Nothing gets past you!

JAKE

Hey, shut the Hell up! What's your real name, anyway?

SCORCH

Not telling you.

Jake shakes the FES suit, and removes from it a wallet.

He reads the name off a driver's license.

JAKE

Huh. So Andrew Mannino is your name.
Andrew Man-ni-no. Hmm. Let's see, "Scorch".
Let's see who your accomplices and bosses are.

SCORCH

You can't touch my phone! That is MY
property! You touch my phone, and I'm
taking you to court! You hear me?? I'm
filing legal action against you in court!

JAKE

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Hello? Hello? Winsor? . . . *Damn* it!
Come on! Come on. All right. Try again.
Winsor?

WINSOR
Hello?

JAKE
Winsor?

WINSOR
Speaking.

JAKE
Yes. It's me again, Jake.

WINSOR
Oh! Jake! Back so soon?

JAKE
Wait a minute, wait a minute. Write some numbers
down, please - right now - just in case the phone runs
out of battery or some nonsense.

WINSOR
What? Oh, yes. Right. Let me get ready, then.

SCORCH
You don't touch my property. Give me back
my cell phone NOW.

JAKE
Oh, shut up.

WINSOR
I've almost got it. Give me one moment.

JAKE
Right. Right.

SCORCH
"Dust". That's what you are, a little piece of dust.
A speck of dust.

WINSOR
Got it. What's the number?

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SCORCH

You little bitch-nigga. You're a bitch-nigga.

JAKE

"Corrosia" is the first name in the phone.

WINSOR

Corrosia?

JAKE

703. 555 . . .

WINSOR

One minute. One minute.

JAKE

. . . 6941.

WINSOR

6941. Interesting number.

JAKE

The next number. Gray Goat.

Area code, 482 of course . . .

Mr. Rabbit. 482 . . .

San Marco. 482. 555 . . .

Teardrop. 482. 555 . . .

WINSOR

I must say, each name there is more interesting than the last.

JAKE

Now, read all that back to me, please.

WINSOR

First, we've got a Corrosia, one 703-555-6941.

Then, we've got the Gray Goat, Mr. Rabbit,

San Marco, and Teardrop. All of them are

using the 482 area code but Corrosia.

JAKE

Yeah, but she probably still lives around here.

Phone numbers do that sometimes. Well,

I've got a LOT of leads now, a LOT of
names and numbers.

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WINSOR

I'm sure the police would love to have them.

JAKE

Yeah, I'm sure the opposite. I'm sure they would yell at me, and scream, and ask me if I'm mentally retarded. I say, I don't need the abuse - I'll go take matters into my own hands instead.

WINSOR

You're tracking down . . . each and every single one of these costumed criminals . . . yourself.

JAKE

Exactly.

WINSOR

It might be difficult to prove who is who in this list of numbers - who was his accomplice, who was his personal friend . . .

JAKE

Nonsense. They're all his colleagues. Co-workers that work for the kingpin.

WINSOR

Who is the kingpin?

JAKE

That's what I'm trying to figure out. It's most likely someone in that list. I vote Teardrop.

WINSOR

Slow down, Jacob! Slow down!
You're going too fast for me.

JAKE

Hmm. Well, there's also two numbers for Chinese food in this phone.

WINSOR

Two?

JAKE

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Maybe they're . . . codenamed Chinese food.

WINSOR

. . . Give me the numbers. I'll look them up.

JAKE

Gotcha. Chinese Food: 482. 210 . . .

Chinese Food 2: 482. 514 . . .

Okay. Now we've got a complete list of suspects.

CUT TO Winsor, typing on a keyboard.

WINSOR

I'm looking up the phone numbers on a public search engine as we speak, sir.

JAKE

Awww, you don't have to call me sir. Heh heh.

WINSOR

Looking it up, right now. A-ha! It seems that number does, in fact, belong to a Wok In restaurant somewhere in Light City. I'm checking the other number now.

Let's just see here. Let's just see. Yep.

It belongs to the Great Panda restaurant.

JAKE

All right. Well, save the numbers for me anyway. The rest is all suspects.

WINSOR

Will you be having steamed dumplings, or white rice, tonight, sir?

JAKE

What? Oh. Uhhh . . . neither! . . . Crispy noodles.

WINSOR

What worries me, in this list of names, is the name San Marco. You don't suppose it's . . . the San Marco that you and I know?

JAKE

Highly doubtful. I hope it's not. Nahhh. No way.

WINSOR

It's an unusual name.

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JAKE

It's . . . plenty common of a name. Who knows.
The Chinese food turned out to be innocent, right?

WINSOR

Yes, perhaps true.

JAKE

So I bet San Marco will be . . . not the guy that *we* know.

WINSOR

Very well, then. Is there anything else you
need me to do?

JAKE

No, I'm good. Thank you. It's much appreciated.

WINSOR

No problem. Anything for justice. Just. You know.
Don't say my name to the police.

Winsor hangs up.

Jake drops the red flame-thrower suit onto the floor,
with the phone still in its pocket.

JAKE

What's up with all those numbers in your phone? Huh?

SCORCH

You have no right to search and seizure.

JAKE

You have no right to be *breathing!*
Who's Corrosia? Huh? Who's San
Marco? Who's Teardrop?

Scorch won't talk, at first.

Jake starts to remove his fire-extinguishing suit.
Like Scorch, he's wearing regular clothes
underneath. Soon enough, both Scorch and Dust
are simply Andrew and Jake.

Now Jake starts to hold the suit in such a way that

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he can activate the arms' flame-throwing mechanisms
without putting the suit on.

ANDREW

Hey - hey, what? What do you think you're doing?

JAKE

I'm taking your little fire toy.

ANDREW

I didn't say you could! HEY!

Jake aims the Fire Suit's right arm at Andrew
and fires away at him.

ANDREW

You'll see. I will beat your ass. You hear me?
You little nerd? That's what you are. You're a nerd.

Jake fires some more fire at Andrew,
who finally steps back.

JAKE

Now, unless you wanna get set on fire,
you'll tell me who Corrosia and Teardrop are!

ANDREW

I ain't telling you!

JAKE

Who's San Marco?

ANDREW

Not telling!

So Jake/Dust sprays fire right at Andrew Mannino.

JAKE

WHO IS HE??

ANDREW

All right! All right. Let's talk.

JAKE

Exactly, LET'S!

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ANDREW

San Marco is . . . the boss. He pays me.

JAKE

Pays you how much?

ANDREW

20 an hour.

JAKE

20 an hour, to do all this.
Jesus Christ, even I don't
make 20 an hour.

ANDREW

Yeah. What's the matter, bruh, you jealous?
You jealous that I'm succeeding in life and
you're not?

JAKE

He pays you 20 an hour to do *this*?

ANDREW

He pays me 20 an hour to be his bodyguard.
I work 12-hour shifts, 5 days a week - with no
break. But that's straight. But, *this* . . . this
warehouse . . . this is just what I do when I'm
off work.

JAKE

So, San Marco is your boss. Is he also
. . . a real estate agent? And a landlord?

ANDREW

I ain't telling you.

JAKE

Whatever, I've got his location anyway
from the cell phone. I'll figure out what's
going on here.

Jake starts to walk away, holding the
Fire Suit tightly to his body.

EXT. SCORCH'S WAREHOUSE - SOON

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Scorch's three friends are still guarding the front entrance tightly. Dust steps outside.

He starts to aim fire at all 3 guards.

One guard still approaches Dust, but he stops after one more burst of flame. Now all 3 guards are running away, leaving Scorch behind.

SOON - Jake gets done removing the Fire Suit from his body. He leaves it on the ground.

SOON - he leaves the warehouse again, now holding the fire-extinguishing suit in his hands. He repeats his walk to the back end of the warehouse buildings.

SOON - with everything over, and Jake left covered in sweat, he starts to make the motorcycle drive out of here, and back home.

JAKE

So - Scorch is down. But there are four others - four more bodyguards who work for San Marco.

WINSOR

I don't suppose you're going to track down each and every single one of them.

JAKE

I don't see why not.

WINSOR

This is what they have the police for.

JAKE

He wouldn't talk much about anyone. But that's okay. I've got their phone numbers. That's all I need - then I can track their cell phones' locations, even after they change their number.

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WINSOR

So you've got *locations* for everyone on that list - from Corrosia to Teardrop.

JAKE

- to Teardrop. He's the first one I'm going after.

WINSOR

Why is that, exactly?

JAKE

Because he's the last one on the list. Something tells me he's the mastermind of all this - the kingpin.

WINSOR

What is your plan, to go after Teardrop?

JAKE

I can start by tracking down his cell phone's location. Where is he now?

Looking at Scorch's confiscated phone, we look at the name TEARDROP on the phone's screen, as we slowly DRIFT TOWARD the phone . . .

FADE TO:

INT. LIGHT CITY - 2ND AVENUE - MID-MORNING

The rain is coming down fiercely.

After slowly LOOKING AROUND the area, we PULL BACK to see the sight out the window in an indoor room.

INT. JSI HEADQUARTERS - HIGHEST FLOOR

San Marco, tall, thick, and bald, stands up, looking out the window.

SAN MARCO

Uhhh – Teardrop. Come with me.
(*motioning him over with one hand*)

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Teardrop walks over to San Marco.

SAN MARCO

Come. Look out into the rain with me.

They both look out the window.
Out there: the city is covered in rain.

SAN MARCO

I like to look out into the rain sometimes. It really helps to clear my head. The world, life, just gets so busy, you know . . . the world needs a little rain every now and then.

TEARDROP

Hmm. Yeah. Water is my element. But . . . I sense you wanted to tell me something, besides the rain.

SAN MARCO

You are correct. There is big news, indeed.
Good news and bad news.

TEARDROP

Okay. Good news first.

SAN MARCO

Good news is, it will help the real estate market.

TEARDROP

Bad news?

SAN MARCO

Thousands of people die.

Both people stop talking. The rain continues to pour down. Lightning strikes.

TEARDROP

Explain to me how “thousands” of people die.

SAN MARCO

A new kind of cigarette.

TEARDROP

A what?

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SAN MARCO

A new kind of cigarette - a new kind, which hits the market as soon as possible. A new kind of cigarette, which kills a person in 6 to 8 months.

TEARDROP

Oh.

SAN MARCO

Look out there. How many people, out there, do you think would fight, for their right to smoke? How many people do you think I could convince - willingly - to buy my new kind of cigarette? To smoke something that kills them in 6 to 8 months?

TEARDROP

How do you know it kills people in 6 to 8 months?

SAN MARCO

The chemical composition has been shown to do this, in the past. It was re-engineered deliberately.

TEARDROP

What do you mean? You mean if you smoke one pack a day, you die in that time?

SAN MARCO

Teardrop: if you smoke *one single cigarette* a day, from this new kind, you would die in 6 to 8 months.

TEARDROP

Oh. Uhhh - but I don't understand why, exactly. Are there specific "areas" of Light City you want to eradicate?

SAN MARCO

No. I just want to sell my cigarette to anyone that would buy it. Anyone that would pay money for something that's gonna kill them. After they die, I still have the money in my accounts; and I am the one who ends up laughing.

TEARDROP

Why are you telling me all these incriminating details?

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SAN MARCO

Just a reminder - because I like you. So that's why I'm letting you know, *don't* buy this brand once it hits the market. This is what I've been telling all the men.

TEARDROP

Gotcha. What day does it get released?

SAN MARCO

It was going to be 2 months ago. Then it was going to be last week. It will still take a matter of weeks until it's out in the public market.

TEARDROP

Hmm. But . . . I mean . . . aren't people gonna complain after long enough about the side effects?

SAN MARCO

Once this product hits the market, 8 months later, it won't matter *what* they say about the side effects. Enough people will be dead, that it will be too late, by then. Yet more people will continue to pay top dollar for these things - months, even years, down the line.

TEARDROP

Hmm. How long, again, does it take, to die?

SAN MARCO

6 to 8 months is what we project as death.

TEARDROP

Gotcha.

SAN MARCO

When the people start dying, this overpopulated, over-congested mess of the Light City real estate market will begin to clear up. Homes will be emptied. Houses and apartments will open up to new buyers, new tenants - *thousands* of them. Everyone will be able to find a home. In fact, I expect to break the back of Light City's economic struggles. We will *all* be doing a lot better . . . once we get these losers *out* of the picture.

TEARDROP

Hmm. What about the victims' families?

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SAN MARCO
What about them?

TEARDROP
They could take you to court, and say
your product caused the death of the people.

SAN MARCO
Oh, the Hell with it. What are they gonna do –
bring thousands of people back to life?

He turns around.

SAN MARCO
You see, this is a business strategy
that's better than Jake's. People will
continue to buy my new kind of cigarette
repeatedly, over the years. It will be far
more of a hit than that "fire-extinguisher
suit", or the "Door-Locker".

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RYAN

I heard about it in school. Dusty beat up Scorch.

ZACK

It's not Dusty, stupid, it's DUSK. With a K.

RYAN

Shut up! *You're* stupid! It *is* Dusty!

JAKE / DAD

Kids! Kids! Will you stop it? . . . It's DUST, in fact.
And yes - he stopped the criminal who was *nicknamed*
Scorch.

ZACK

Yeah, and he's DEAD now.

RYAN

He is NOT dead. He's just in jail.

ZACK

My friend said he was dead.

RYAN

Your friend wasn't there!

DAD

Your brother is right, Zack -
he's not dead, he's just in jail.

ZACK

What?? How do you know?

Although my movie script, "Dust", is not yet finished, this is what I've got of it so far.

And here's a summary for the rest of the script.

1

Meanwhile, out in Light City, a man named Herman is riding his bicycle past the warehouse, which still has much smoke rising, when he stops for a moment and finds the flame-thrower suit on the ground. Laughing, he picks it up, and looks it over. He carries it around with him, but everybody who sees the costume panics as they tell him that it's Scorch's outfit. The man who found the suit is perplexed, having never heard of Scorch before. He walks away, and puts the costume on, then tries to teach himself how to use the flame-throwing devices through a few minutes of self-taught training sessions. This thing is absolutely amazing. Now he will live out the life of Scorch.

A cell phone rings, and Herman is puzzled to find San Marco calling, on a phone labeled SCORCH with paper, ink, and tape. He answers the phone, and San Marco asks him what in the world is going on. Herman explains that he found this flame-thrower outfit just laying around somewhere, and so he took it for himself, and found this phone in the pocket. San Marco understands. He explains that both the suit and the phone belong to Scorch. He was working for San Marco, as a bodyguard, making him \$20 an hour. Now that he's been arrested, San Marco is looking for a replacement bodyguard. The second Scorch accepts the offer. He gives his name as Herman Tallman. He asks him where to meet. San Marco gives him directions to the JSI headquarters building. Herman can't wait to meet him, to discuss the exciting new job prospects.

The deal is simple. San Marco is a real estate mogul. He's also the landlord of the building that Jake Musken uses for his JSI headquarters. Floor 23 is the designated floor of San Marco's operations. Being that he's the landlord, he has spare keys for the building, so he can enter and leave as he sees fit, and he can distribute JSI's technology to his selection of workers. He's hiring private security: five men, all using different JSI technology to guard San Marco, and keep him safe and protected. Herman Tallman drives over to meet with him, to discuss a new job. San Marco explains that Scorch is gone now, having gotten himself arrested, and so Herman will replace him as Scorch II. He just has to promise to be more together, and loyal to the team, than Scorch I. At a game of poker, Herman meets the others: Teardrop, the Rabbit, the Gray Goat, and Corrosia, all working for the master of operations, San Marco. They're all a little insane here, the Rabbit says. They're all so insane, they might all just end up killing *each other!* They also happen to all be playing with toys that came from JSI. They all own Radar-Map devices, so that they can all navigate perfectly anywhere. Now they will use them to own Light City.

Herman is now one of five men to work for San Marco, as Scorch II. For 12-hour shifts, he hires 2 people per day, at \$20 an hour for everyone, scheduling the hours to be distributed evenly. All five men will be living the good life now. It costs San Marco \$480 a day to hire so much security, or \$175,200 a year. But it is worth it, he says. Now that he's got five bodyguards, there will always be someone on duty keeping him safe. He will never be killed now. His plans for the city will go on without interruption.

Back at home, Jake questions the cell phone numbers he recently inputted into his phone. He has a written list of the names and numbers for Corrosia, the Gray Goat, the Rabbit, San Marco, and Teardrop. He inputs all of their phone numbers into his modified Radar-Map unit. Now he can see all of their locations across Light City at once. This is nice. But he can only go after one at a time. Scorch said that these were the others who work for the Master. So Jake can start with Teardrop.

2

Teardrop receives a phone call from an 800 number. It tells him to press 1 to disconnect, or press 2 to hear about a new vacation opportunity. He presses 1 to disconnect, and when he does so, his phone's location shows up as a yellow triangle on Jake's map. Now he's got the location of Teardrop's work phone, permanently. Soon, he has five triangles in his allowed list of exceptions at once, and he can narrow it down to one at a time when he chooses to. For now, he narrows the list down to just Teardrop. Perhaps he won't stand a chance against everybody at once. But already the group is one member weaker. Soon, the group will be down by two members.

Winsor reminds Jake that he can't just run headfirst into a burning building and always expect to come out alive. What he's done so far was a major gamble. He has to think this through. Dust will be the new persona, he decides. He draws some experimental sketches of outfits for the person named Dust to wear. Winsor suggests hiring the experts at outfit production. Jake wants to wear a black and red suit, with the name Dust written over the chest. But he's not sure if he wants that, or the silver-and-blue Dust outfit, which makes him feel nostalgic about winter time as a kid. Another possibility is green and brown, like camouflage colors. Finally, one is black, white, and blue. He wants at least 5 copies made of each cloth outfit, or 20 total. It may cost a lot of money, but this is something he has to do, for a short while. He compiles a list of 10 possibilities for clothing experts to hire.

As it turns out, the next day, it takes his 7th attempt to find the company that can do it for him. He sets an appointment, and has to wait for 4 days. He wants 4 kinds of outfits made, with 5 of each kind, for 20 total. They can be simple cloth outfits, which can be worn over the Crash Suit, or without one. Once he makes his appointment, he arrives and hands his sketches to the man, asking that all of them be made for whatever it costs. Soon, Jake clears an entire room of his house of everything in it, and he keeps all 20 Dust outfits in here, as well as a few FES suits and the one flame-thrower Scorch suit. This is the room of the superhero Dust.

Jake goes back to his Radar-Map device, and sees the locations of all the men in this network of criminals: Teardrop, the Rabbit, the Gray Goat, Corrosia, and San Marco. It's time to go after everybody – Teardrop first. Jake suits up as Dust, wearing the red-and-black outfit, over a Crash Suit, to go after Teardrop. Dust drives his auto-balancing motorcycle down the road, tracking down Teardrop's yellow triangle on the digital map. Driving down Federal Highway, he stops into a neighborhood and drives on for another half-mile to find Teardrop's yellow triangle. Now, Dust has arrived to find an empty car, and upon closer inspection, Jake realizes that Teardrop left his work phone inside his car. Now he's not sure what to do.

Soon enough, Teardrop steps outside, holding a water gun in his hands. He tells Dust that he has 5 seconds to leave his driveway. Jake recognizes the water gun. It was a product of JSI's design, although Jake himself had nothing to do with it. It's the same kind of hose that firefighters use to put out fires. But this portable device can also be used as a weapon. Indeed, water can be used as a weapon just as much as anything else, Teardrop says. Now he's going to tear him apart with it. Dust leaps away as the water comes crashing through the air.

Teardrop can stay in the fight for a long time. But his water eventually runs low. Finally, he throws the empty weapon to the floor, and continues the fight with his fists. A fight breaks out down the street of the neighborhood, and finally to the sidewalks of Federal Highway. Both men exchange punches and blows, and finally Dust wins the fight. Teardrop still insist that Dust has no business here.

3

Dust demands to know more information about the Master - San Marco. Teardrop denies knowing anything, but Dust explains that he's already gotten some information out of Scorch, like everybody's names. Now Dust threatens to kill Teardrop unless he talks. Teardrop confesses that he is just a bodyguard for San Marco. The man is actually planning on killing thousands, possibly millions, with a new kind of cigarette that kills people in 6-8 months. There are five bodyguards total, Teardrop explains. There's no way Dust could ever take on all of them. He'll either succeed or die trying, Dust says.

Now he demands to know who the Rabbit is. Teardrop hasn't talked to him in days, he explains. But he does know that the Rabbit can be found in the White Rabbit's Lounge on Tuesday nights. Today happens to be a Monday. Dust explains that he's taking down San Marco's entire network of thieves. He's already taken down Scorch. Now he's beaten Teardrop. He'll get everyone else, too. Now the police are arriving. Dust runs away, and the police quickly detain Teardrop, and yell at Dust to freeze. He continues running until he reaches his motorcycle. He begins to drive away, but first grabs Teardrop's water-based weapon into his own possession. Quickly, he makes his getaway, trying to lose the police. Two cars are still coming after him once he's left the neighborhood, so he drives faster, and darts across the street just before a barrage of traffic comes at him, making a chase impossible. He drives on, away, and eventually gets home. Once he gets home, he puts the water gun into the same room as his Dust outfits, and the Scorch suit. Now, he has added one more trick to Dust's arsenal: water-based attacks.

Now Jake is learning that Scorch, with his flame-throwing suit, was just the beginning. San Marco, the master of these bodyguards, really wants to kill thousands, if not millions, of people in the city. Is it the same San Marco that he knows from JSI, or not? This is maddening. Jake calls up the Rabbit. The man answers the phone, but Jake doesn't talk. The Rabbit continues to ask who it is calling. Finally, Jake hangs up. It's frustrating, not being able to go after him yet. Tonight is Monday night.

Tuesday. Jake is exhausted and sore all day, but by the evening time he's ready for more. The White Rabbit's Lounge is hot and happening on Tuesday evening, just as it is all other days of the week. People drink and smoke freely inside the club. Strobe lights are on, along with fog, multi-colored neon lights, and fast-moving lasers. Dust enters the club in his green-and-brown Dust costume. He's talking to Winsor through the wireless headset connection. The advantage here, Winsor explains, is that the Rabbit may have been led to expect a man wearing red and black, but not a man dressed in green and brown. Dust checks out the scene of youths, some of whom are dressed in costumes or masks. Several sexy girls are wearing pink rabbit ears. But Dust isn't here to pick up girls.

The Rabbit is soon visible, just as the club's lighting scheme goes black-and-blue. The Rabbit is dressed in a full-body white rabbit outfit, with tall white-and-pink ears. Walking through the rave, the Rabbit greets all the friends he knows here. Then Dust approaches him, face-to-face, and begins to fight him. While listening to incredibly loud club music, with strobe lights flashing on and off repeatedly, Dust and the Rabbit do battle inside the club, quickly invoking the anger of security guards. There is a police presence outside, and two officers begin to walk inside the club. Dust is still fighting the Rabbit. Before he knows it, he's fighting a few ravers, then a security guard. Meanwhile, the Rabbit makes a quick escape to the building's roof, and Dust follows him to escape the cops, climb the ladders, and get up high.

4

The Rabbit tries an insane, daring stunt by using a ladder to establish a bridge from roof to roof, so that he can climb his way from one place to another where no other humans can reach. As the police storm the area outside, he makes his getaway, much to Dust's shock and disbelief. After seeing that it works, and the ladder doesn't fall, Dust follows the man quickly, from roof to roof. Soon enough, the Rabbit gets to the second roof, to the inside of a building, to his car, calling for the reinforcements of his friends. Once he gets to his car, four friends are there, so all five men clear the car's insides and climb inside. Dust runs away and makes himself lost. He gets inside his own car, and keeps the Radar-Map on his lap, still keeping a grip on the Rabbit's location as a yellow triangle on the radar.

Inside the Rabbit's car, his four friends begin putting on their rabbit masks and gloves. An intense car chase breaks out, which becomes a devastating car crash, leaving all the rabbits injured and Dust nearly killed. But he climbs out of the car and starts fighting the Rabbit. Soon, Dust finds himself surrounded by five rabbits, and an intense melee combat session begins, with five rabbits beating him up at once. Although he takes quite a beating, he manages to overpower four out of five of them, and the final one, the leader, gets pinned up against the wall and interrogated.

This is the third man to work for San Marco: first Scorch, then Teardrop, and now the Rabbit. Dust demands to know where San Marco is. He demands to know just what it is the man is planning – what he wanted to steal all this JSI tech for. The Rabbit explains that San Marco just wants to stay well-protected with bodyguards on duty at all times. The new kind of cigarette will kill thousands of people, clearing up the real estate market for the people who are still left. The whole city will benefit from the openings of houses. But it goes deeper than that. San Marco plans on revealing to the public a new sports drink, called Good Feeling, which actually contains the chemicals that cause severe depression. Dust's head spins as he realizes that he absolutely has to stop San Marco. Now, after beating up the Rabbit, he intends on tracking down the Gray Goat.

Jake's car is damaged. He removes the motorcycle from the trunk, and drives away on it. On his wireless headset, Winsor explains to him about his next target, the Gray Goat. Years ago, he stole an RPG weapon from the U.S. Army and terrorized Washington, D.C. with it. Now he's come all the way to Light City to get his hands on more advanced JSI technology. Jake feels terrible about this. But then, he remembers that the Gray Goat had been stealing weapons years earlier, when there was no JSI. This proves to him that there are simply always thieves around, somewhere. So he gets suited up in his silver and blue Dust outfit, ready to track down the Gray Goat, around midnight. Again, the Gray Goat may expect a man in red and black, or a man in green and brown, but never a man wearing silver and blue.

Using the Radar-Map device, Dust tracks down the Gray Goat, who is also driving an auto-balancing motorcycle. The man's choice of weapons to steal has grown quite advanced. He's not had his hands on an RPG grenade launcher for years. But now he's stolen an extremely expensive laser beam device, which was intended to cook food, not to be used against a person. Like in the case of Teardrop's weapon, this technology was not created by Jake, but by others across JSI. Winsor remarks that it's terrifying to imagine this man wearing the modified FES. So Dust fights the Gray Goat, in the middle of the streets, fighting him with the water-based weapon.

5

Soon enough, Dust wins the fight. Dust demands to know where exactly San Marco is. The Gray Goat explains that he will still never stop the man. What he's planning is too big to be stopped. The massive openings of the housing market will keep the public both busy and happy. In the meantime, the Gray Goat is just a hired bodyguard, armed with a weapon. Dust disarms him of his laser, stopping the Gray Goat and delivering one last blow. Now Dust only has one more bodyguard left to track down: Corrosia. After that, he can go directly for San Marco, once all his bodyguards are down.

Now the silver and blue costume is torn and beaten up. He has 4 others like it left, but now he dresses up in the black, white, and blue outfit to go up against Corrosia, 24 hours after stopping the Gray Goat. Tracking the woman down, Winsor does some research and tells Dust what he knows. This is the same electrician that Jake had fired from JSI two months ago. If there's one thing the woman knows, it's electricity. Now she seeks to make electricity her weapon. She is capable of creating temporary power outages in a one-mile radius for 20 seconds at a time, and she wears night-vision goggles when she does so. Dust tracks Corrosia to an area closed by metal fencing, with a NO TRESPASSING sign, to a new shopping plaza just being built. Dust fights Corrosia while wearing similar night-vision goggles in the black, white, and blue costume. They fight in the darkness, and Dust wins his fight with water again.

Now there's only one criminal left to fight: San Marco. Dust has taken down Scorch, Teardrop, the Rabbit, the Gray Goat, and Corrosia, but one final man remains. This is almost too good to be true. Then Jake gets a call from Winsor. It sounds like Winsor is scared. He puts someone else on the phone, who reveals himself to be San Marco, who now explains that he's holding Winsor for a ransom of \$100 million. In case Dust is thinking of contacting the police, surely they would love to learn that Dust is really Jake Musken, the inventor. If Jake involves the police, the police will be told that Dust/Jake threatened San Marco, and he also threatened young children, and San Marco has 15 witnesses lined up who will swear to the story. Jake has no way out of this – no way out except supplying the money. The phone call ends. Jake sees San Marco's location on his Radar-Map. There's only one thing he can do. He just has to stop him.

At last, Dust follows the yellow triangle on the map to San Marco's headquarters building. He approaches the door to find that it is locked. So he uses the Gray Goat's own choice of the laser device to blow the door up, and step inside. He is wearing the red-and-black Dust outfit. First, he makes it his objective to survive the walk to the elevator. San Marco has been pouring insane amounts of money into private security lately, hoping to kill Dust. On an evening when everybody was let out of work early, the entire building is rigged with deadly traps and hired snipers intended to stop Dust. He's wearing a Kevlar vest underneath his costume, just to be cautious, but death is still very possible here.

First, he avoids dozens of gunshots from gunmen, and takes down many snipers by wetting the floor, and he makes it safely to the elevator. In the top floor, he encounters Scorch II, the second man to wear the flame-thrower suit. Dust fights the man with water. Teardrop and the Rabbit both show up at once. Dust fights both of them and wins. Dust then fights the Gray Goat, firing away with his stolen JSI laser, and Dust disarms the Goat before fighting him to a point of defeat. Dust beats up Corrosia again, using the Gray Goat's tools, but this time Dust steals Corrosia's tools too.

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San Marco steps into the room to take Dust on himself. Dust causes a temporary power outage, using Corrosia's tools, then runs about with night-vision goggles. This will not get him far, San Marco insists. The power comes back on just when Dust is standing before San Marco, who knocks him back with one strong punch to the chest. San Marco pins Dust down to the floor by standing on his chest with his heavy foot, and applying pressure to it. His two older brothers always used to do this to him, he recalls. He learned how to deal with them: by attacking the shins and causing imbalance. So he knocks San Marco down to the floor, then comes at him with everything he's got.

Dust has taken down all the men who worked for him, he reminds San Marco. He has taken on five men and won. Now it's time to give it up forever. San Marco insists that it will never happen, and he aims a gun at Dust, who uses water pressure to knock the gun out of his grip, then more water to slide the gun far away. Dust takes a terrible beating from San Marco, but he finally wins the fight, stops his plan to kill thousands, and rescues Winsor. Dust and Winsor make their escape out a window just as the cops start to arrive, and they climb their way to the building's roof, then try to figure out a way down from there. Using a very long ladder, Jake and Winsor make their way from one roof to another, and then they climb that same ladder down to the ground. Climbing the ladder with so little support is dangerous, but Dust does it, slowly and cautiously, only to find more police at the ground-level, their guns drawn, ordering Dust to freeze. Winsor soon arrives, explaining that he is a rescued hostage. Dust is the superhero who just saved him.

Many hours later, back in his home, Jake and Winsor reflect on how the evening went. They refused to believe Dust's story of being a superhero. Winsor insisted on having no knowledge of Dust's real name, and they still ended up thinking him to be an accomplice to a criminal. Jake is afraid that the police, misguided to attack the wrong men, will eventually overwhelm him by outnumbering him. But, for now, the important thing is that he saved perhaps the entire city from certain destruction. Jake questions that phrase, certain destruction. Winsor explains that, a few days ago, destruction looked absolutely certain. Jake understands now. Winsor explains that criminals will either use a knife, a gun, a JSI laser device; whatever it is they can get their hands on. The recent string of crimes was not his fault. He has done far more than enough, literally risking his own life many times, to set the crisis straight. He has earned himself some rest.

He hangs up his Dust outfit. From the dust, it was created, and to the dust it returns, for now he's done being Dust, forever. He looks at 5 battle-ruined outfits of 4 color schemes. Now he has 15 costumes left that have not been worn yet. He goes back to his wife and kids, and promises to be more of a family man from now on. He can't tell his kids that he was Dust, yet – he can't afford the risk of the word spreading around. For now, the important thing is that the life of Jake Musken is back.

Later on, Jake and Winsor play card games while standing near the four outfits of Dust. Winsor asks Jake if he's ever intending on suiting up again, and going back to action as Dust. Absolutely not, he remarks. He has plans for the next six months which don't involve Dust at all. The important thing for Winsor, also, is enjoying himself and not letting his recent bad experiences ruin him. Scorch, Scorch II, Teardrop, the Rabbit, the Gray Goat, Corrosia, and San Marco are all down for the count. From now on, Jake will let the police handle matters of thieves who steal JSI technology. Still, it is something of a thrill to know that, for some time, he had been the vigilante Dust.