

The Adventure Zone: Steeplechase - Episode 4

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Krystal: Hey, friends. It's Krystal with a K here, with another Steeple Watch. Sticky Finger Paul Pantry made the sweetest speech today about the heroic actions of Beef Punchly, in pugilistically protecting the Prize Pantry's perfect pin party!

And can we say, seeing Mr. Finger Paul Pantry in his retro purple and yellow striped jacket, brought a little tear to our eye. On a lighter note, the hole is finally fixed! We've had a little fun at Denton's expense as they struggled to fix the mysterious hole in the sky of Ustaben. But those beautiful vistas are finally clear again.

I know, I know, a lot of you goofballs had a running gag about seeing people inside the hole. Sorry to burst your bubble. [laughs] You all crack me up! I guess, just like Dentonic, you eagle eyed Steepies never know when to stop dreaming.

[Steeplechase theme song plays]

Griffin: It's been a while since we recorded—

Justin: [in old-man voice] Hello, children.

Griffin: ... And I have thought of nothing else but Sticky Fingers Paul Pantry in the interim. And I just want you to know that, Justin. I'm really excited for the canon to expand.

Justin: [in old-man voice] Oh... Hello, I'm so—

Travis: Oh, boy.

Griffin: Oh, sorry.

Justin: [in old-man voice] ... Pleased to have you here. It seems there are storms have come early this evening.

Griffin: He needs this.

Travis: Yeah. Griffin, do you know what I'm looking forward to?

Justin: [in old-man voice] Chuckles!

Travis: What?

Justin: [in old-man voice] Chookles, to my lap.

Griffin: Shookles to your lap?

Travis: Did you change his name halfway through that?

Justin: [in old-man voice] Cat Bart.

Griffin: What?

Justin: [in old-man voice] He's my cat.

Griffin: You cat's name is Shookles?

Justin: [in old-man voice] Bart Shookles.

Travis: Bart Shookles...

Griffin: [laughs] Okay, all right...

Justin: [in old-man voice] Shh, quiet down, Shookles. I must spin the rune once more. [laughs]

Griffin: Okay...

Travis: Now, you called the cat—

Justin: Hi everybody and welcome—

Travis: Hey, now hold on. On the cat's behalf, you called the fucking cat over and then shushed it?

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: That's bullshit, dude.

Justin: That's true. That's kind of shitty of me... Welcome to TAZ, The Adventure Zone: Steeplechase.

Travis: I look forward to, eventually there will be an episode where it's just gonna be... 'Cause I've watched enough like long-running series... Where there's gonna be just a whole episode about that guy.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Welcome to the show. Let's not waste any time. You remember what happened. Sticky Finger Paul Pantry burst into your abode at the— What is your arcade called?

Griffin: It's called Poppy's Place.

Justin: Poppy's Place. So, before we get into this bit... Just to help me understand a little bit, tell me about the area that we find ourselves in. It seems like it's gonna be a little bit of an operating base for y'all for a little bit. What does it look like?

Travis: Well, I assume, just knowing his whole deal, he's probably hanging out by the— Like, we probably found him by the prize redemption center, right?

Griffin: Mm-hmm, who? Sticky Finger Paul Pantry?

Justin: Do you have a— But is there like a back area and a front area? This is what I'm saying. Is there a, you know... Arcade where people are doing arcade things, and you have a separate little place of your own and what that looks like.

Clint: Well, Emerich has to have a workshop.

Justin: Perfect.

Griffin: Right.

Justin: I think that's definitely part of this area.

Clint: That's gonna be back there with the work— you know... Sort of like you know, Max Workshop, in my life. You know, where I take all my stuff—

Justin: Yeah, Max Workshop. [laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, Max Shop, as we call it.

Justin: Yeah, he made himself a little stone out of stone, and it says Max Place. And it's so cute, he did the etching work himself and...

Clint: That was the only thing I made!

Travis: I like when he changed his— he changed his mind on the name halfway through it and marked out. It says, "Max plu—" And then he marked that out, and then itched in 'shop' underneath it.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: It's Maxplu Shop.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: I can't—

Justin: No, dad doesn't have skills. That's—

Travis: Yeah, the name of the is important to know.

Justin: [laughs] Dad has no applicable talents, which is why he's a podcaster.

Travis: Yeah, man. Justin does woodworking, I do metal, Griffin... I guess can solder stuff pretty good. Dad just putters.

Justin: Dad raises... dad raises humans.

Griffin: Dad raises workers. Salt of the Earth.

Justin: Dad raises workers. Dad's more of a managerial type. Okay, dad. So, I can kind of imagine Emerich's lab. Tell me about what else is in this room you guys got. You know what? I wanna open it— I'll ask Griffin first. Griffin, tell me the room that's in your mind.

Griffin: I think the main Poppy's area is very sort of 80s arcadey. Like, neon trim around the walls and it's pretty dark in here. I'm not imagining a Dave & Buster's situation, where there's a prize like exchange thing. Mostly because the Prize Pantry's right next door and I do not think that Sticky Fingers Paul Pantry would allow that.

But our little space where we do our simulations, our simulations of the good life, I do not think are particularly well adorned or anything like that. Just given the nature of the fact that it's all sort of illusory. It's just... We just have a big room that is not immediately accessible.

Justin: That is so cool, Griffin. Thank you for bringing the listener in to your third eye. [laughs] So, there's a big room. Travis, I can't imagine there's any more room on this palette. But is there anything you wanted to add?

Travis: I'll see if I can scrape any colors together.

Justin: [laughs] You did balance— You were there—[laughs]

Griffin: Yeah, I know. I'm out of 'em.

Justin: That was the same Griffin.

Griffin: I'm out of ideas.

Justin: [laughs]

Travis: You used that all up.

Justin: Well, yeah. So, guess why I'm doing it? Okay, go ahead, Tarv.

Travis: Can I tell you what's fucking me up? I don't know if this happened to you guys. But because of the nature of like growing up in Huntington where there was like the one arcade at the mall, I just... For a long time, I just assumed every arcade on Earth had like a— You know, it's like a mine themed...

Justin: Yeah, it's like a mine themed arcade.

Travis: You know, a lot about gold mining in there. I'm going to say that back here, in the back, this is where we have a lot of like half-fixed machines. A lot of the stuff that's like wheeled back. So, along with Emerich's workshop, there's also like you know, Skee-Ball machines half dismantled... I'm gonna say that there's like three—

Justin: Stuff to fiddle with. Are you a fiddler? Like, you're fiddling with this stuff while you're kind of hanging around? Like, grab a Skee-Ball, toss it around.

Travis: Yeah... I think it's probably also a little bit of like, they cycle through because they're not gonna like... Because of the nature of it being nostalgic, like it's not like we can constantly put new games in.

So, I think there's a lot of like, "Okay, we're gonna take the Skee-Ball game back and we're gonna redo the design." So, now, instead of being like a circus themed, it's now like an ice mountain you know, fight the Yeti kind of Skee-Ball game.

Justin: Yeah...

Travis: And then, it's gonna be like an alien based—

Griffin: That'd be a fuck'n badass Skee-Ball game.

Justin: That'd be cool, y'all.

Griffin: You just, instead of trying to get it in holes, you just have to roll it so hard and fast, to smash a Yeti's face at the back.

Travis: Yeah, man.

Griffin: Yeah. I like that.

Justin: Dad, what do you see when you think about Emerich's lab?

Clint: I think it would be... He's very secretive. So, I think he would... If it's not a separate little back closet or something, I think he's got up like partitions of some kind, or screens... you know, of some kind.

Justin: Is it sort of like a vibe of like making the sausage? Like, if people saw how you did what you did, it would be a little bit disconcerting for them?

Clint: Well, I think he's trying to... He's in the back... I don't think he wants anybody to see what he's doing. I just think he's a very creepy, you know, secluded kind of guy. I would add one thing to the other side. I would say that, in our area, we've gotta have like some couches...

Travis: Oh, yeah!

Justin: Oh, yeah.

Clint: Because there are gonna be times where we're gonna be pulling all-nighters, planning the perfect heist.

Justin: That's right, Dad. A great point.

Clint: So, we need a place to crash.

Travis: Yeah, I'm gonna say that I've got— Beef's got a big, comfy recliner. Very broken in. Very much the dad from Fraiser, a broken in chair.

Justin: Oh, I like that, yeah.

Travis: And then, like a small-ish TV.

Justin: Mm-hmm!

Travis: That like with Emerich's help, we've wired to get some like outside signals. So that I can watch—

Justin: I love that. I'm not sure that— I'm not sure you do have outside signals. I have to think about that.

Travis: Well, here's... The only reason I want it is so that he can keep up with like the... the National Armwrestling Federation, the NAF.

Justin: Maybe he does have a streaming channel of that. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Okay.

Travis: Maybe we've just hacked into the—

Justin: So, this is gonna fuck you up—

Griffin: And there's a hat rack— There's a hat— Let me get in on it. There's a hat rack.

Justin: [laughs] Look! Ladies and gentlemen, welcome back—

Clint: Good!

Travis: He's back!

Justin: Welcome back, Mr. Heat himself!

Clint: The juices are flowing!

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: There's a hat rack.

Justin: [laughs] Oh!

Clint: [laughs]

Travis: Wait, is this a different hat rack, or the same one?

Griffin: There's two hat racks.

Justin: [laughs] How many hats do these guys have?

Clint: Are there any hats on them?

Griffin: No.

Justin: This is actually gonna tick you off, Trav. Because he's sitting in your chair.

Travis: Ah, you son of a bitch.

Justin: I know, you just created it and look who's getting the first sit. Leaving his butt dimples behind—

Travis: Well, I have to assume I've sat in it before this moment? I mean...

Justin: You see Sticky Finger Paul Pantry there. Do you... take a seat? Do you... How do you react to that? How unusual is that?

Travis: I think he's like, "Hey, get out of my Sit Boy."

Beef: Hey! Excuse me, Paul? Sticky... May I call you Paul?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: I'd rather you didn't, it's Sticky Finger Paul Pantry.

Beef: Okay. Mr. Pantry, would you please get out of my Sit Boy?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Oh, this is special to you, is it? You know how I— You know what I feel that way about?

Beef: Cereal?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Prize Pantry! My store that you robbed from, just a few moments ago.

Beef: No, I believe that we attempted to stop that robbery, Mr. Pantry?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Take a seat, let's talk.

Beef: I would, but you're...

Justin: He stands up and kind of puts his hands behind his back.

Travis: Justin, I'm sorry. I have the most important question.

Justin: Yeah?

Travis: Are his fingers actually sticky? Did he get sticky fingers on my Sit Boy?

Griffin: That's an excellent question.

Justin: He's got gloves on. They're purple velour gloves.

Griffin: Okay, thank God.

Justin: Presumably, to preserve his ever-sticky fingers.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Montrose: Mr. Sticky Finger Paul Pantry, first of all, I must say, I'm a huge fan. As a former practitioner of the mascotery arts, I think that you are a pioneer in this—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Well, we don't have any mascot. You know, we should work on that. I guess I'm as close to a mascot as we get over at the Prize Pantry.

Montrose: I was thinking the same thing. But I am afraid there has been a point of confusion here. We intercepted this robbery and prevented it. We did not conduct any sort of illicit affairs on your premises.

Justin: He pulls out like a phone, or like a small... A small phone. It wouldn't be a phone, it would probably just be like an overall sort of communications device. 'Cause they wouldn't have it in the outside world but it's—

Travis: Like an iPod Touch.

Justin: Yeah, there we go. But it's definitely got in-park communications. He holds it up. And when he holds it up, you see a video clip that is clearly from security cameras. And he's fucking got you dead to rights. [laughs]

This is like— He has edited together like a greatest hits of all the dumb shit that you just did to fuck him up. He's got you. There's no doubt in your mind, looking at this, that he's got you.

Travis: Hey, Justin, can I just say, I wanna take a moment to appreciate your story weaving. Because you have just introduced to me the very concept of, if a mascot... Like, if Mickey came to life, would Mickey know that he was a mascot?

Justin: We're gonna get a little bit deeper into that. So, you need to hang with me, bud...

Travis: Oh, boy. Okay.

Justin: I won't pontificate too much.

Clint: While this is all going on, Emerich is like throwing tarps and stuff over his workbench and—

Justin: [laughs] I love that! I love that.

Clint: ... And sheets. And saying:

Emerich: Oh, please! Go on. Please, yes. Tell... Uh-huh? Yes? Sure.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: So, it was... I mean, it was good. You got— I mean, you'll grant me, I've reviewed the footage. You got extremely lucky, right?

Montrose: I mean... That's mean, what you just did. Trying to diminish our great efforts.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: I'm just saying it's clear you haven't been around, and that's what I need.

Beef: Has anyone else reviewed this footage?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: No, I... I know the game. I kept it to myself. And I deleted it from the main servers. I got the copy. Safe. Right where I need it. And that's funny, because that's here I have... you.

See, I don't care about the pin. But I know that Dentonic would care very, very much. So... Here's the way it's gonna work. You wanna preserve your image? You wanna keep Poppy's Place going? Of course, you're gonna do a little favor for me.

Montrose: You should know that we are largely ambivalent about the wellbeing of Poppy's establishment. He has made some business decisions that we find... questionable.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yeah, he's miserable.

Travis: When Paul brings into threat like, legacy, that kind of thing... Beef is gonna stand up to like full height in front of him. And say:

Beef: So... Just so that I get this clear, you're here in our private room, with no one around. And the only person who has seen this footage is you. And you've deleted it. And you think you have us where you want us?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yeah, that's exactly right.

Justin: And you see his finger like hovering over a send button. [laughs]
Like...

Montrose: Real quick. Hey, Beef, are you gonna kill Sticky Finger Paul Pantry?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: They will come looking for me.

Beef: Oh, I'm sure they will. There's lots of places... lots of places in this park.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: You know what? I don't think you're the right guys. 'Cause I thought you were smart. And right now, you're acting like someone who is not smart. So, I... I'm gonna go.

Justin: And he starts walking away.

Emerich: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait... Hold on, just one moment. I would like to maintain that at least 33 1/3, and perhaps 66 2/3% of our organization is smart. And you're not gonna find ratios like that in too many places.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: I'll tell you what—

Emerich: Please, please... let us hear out what you want. And I'm sure Beef can be little more hospitable.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: I'll give you all 30 seconds to talk about it.

Montrose: Hey, Beef? In the future, if you could not threaten to murder someone unless you are willing to follow through with that act. That would be sort of strategically advantageous for us an organization.

Beef: Just listen to me, hear me out for two seconds before—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: [mumbles in background]

Beef: ... He starts talking. I have been down, not this exact road, but a similar road before.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: [mumbles in background]

Beef: You guys have to trust me. You do one thing and then the person knows that you've done it. And then they pressure you to keep doing more and more. And pretty soon, you can't remember how you got to the place that you're in. And you're not in control anymore... And it just leads to trouble.

Montrose: Thaaat's capitalism. So, let's get on in there and—

Emerich: Let's hear him out. And if you don't like it, you can murder him. Okay?

Beef: I don't—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Time's up. What's it gonna be? Threats or a little bit of thrills, huh? Threats or thrills? That's good... Hold on, let me write that down.

Montrose: I choose thrills.

Emerich: I think we all are in agreement that we would like to hear the possibility of thrills. Just hear— Just hear him out.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Beef?

Beef: Yes, we are listening. Just to clarify, if you give us this pitch and then we say no, you're going to release the video. Right, that's the threat?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Well, no... The threat was you saying you were gonna kill me?

Beef: No, I understand that. But I was answering—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: You remember that, right?

Beef: I was answering a threat with a threat.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Oh... Let's all be friends. Let's start fresh, huh?

Montrose: Oh, I would love that, so much.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Beef, would that be okay? I'm Sticky Finger Paul Pantry, everybody's my friend.

Clint: [laughs]

Beef: Okay, yeah. I'm listening.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: So...

Justin: He gets, at this point, kind of distant look in his eye. Like he's kind of like looking beyond you.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: You know... I haven't always been Sticky Finger Paul Pantry... I used to be... friends...

Justin: And he starts raising his eyebrows.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: *Friends* with Short Doug, up in Gutter City.

Justin: Now, you know... you've been around long enough to know that Lifers, sometimes, will refuse to admit that they have played a different character within Steeplechase. And instead, will refer to that character as their 'friend.'

Travis: Yes. And is Short Doug another character that we know of?

Griffin: Do we recognize the name of Short Doug?

Justin: I don't know... Yeah. I mean, yeah. You've heard about Short Doug in Gutter City.

Griffin: Okay. What do we know about Short Doug?

Justin: You'll find out.

Griffin: Okay.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: You know what? Let me drop the pretense, 'cause this is gonna get confusing, okay?

Justin: And he goes and like shuts the door. Okay...

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Okay, so, I was Short Doug—

Beef: [gasps]

Montrose: [gasps]

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: In Gutter City. But eventually, I got too old for the game. It's kind of strenuous. I had a brief stint as Old Doug, but it never fit quite right. Nobody wants a short, old Doug. So, I got the new gig. And it's great, I love being Sticky Finger Paul Pantry. And honestly, Short Doug's a rough one. The guy gets into a lot of scrapes, he gets man handled... It was a tough gig.

But I do miss one thing... See, there used to be a big getaway scene, right. After the Stealswell Diamond, the crooks would come in and they'd steal it from the Dusk Hotel. And then, you got the crooks, right... And the guests and staff, and they're all crooks and they flee the scene. And they find a laundry parking lot. And then Short Doug, he's driving it, right. And they're like, "Short Doug, take the truck!"

And that was me, I got to drive it, the truck. And it looks like all the other laundry trucks, right, but it's not... It's the only one that actually drives. 'Cause it's not just a laundry truck. I mean, this baby purrs! Nothing in that world could touch her once the getaway started. I mean, by design, literally, there's not a vehicle that's faster in all of Gutter City. 'Cause what kind of chase would that be?

Beef: So... Sorry, Sticky Fingers Paul Pantry, you miss... not the diamond?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Oh, no. No, no, no...

Beef: You miss driving the laundry truck?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: The fastest truck in the entire layer. It was amazing. I used it for the getaway every night, when they got that far. Sometimes they wouldn't make it to the laundry truck. But when they would, I would do the getaway. And I called it The Clean.

Beef: Mm-hmm... Like a clean getaway.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: And it's a... it's a laundry truck.

Beef: Yeah.

Montrose: Yes. It works on a couple of levels.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yeah, I told my direct supervisor. At the time, I told him about it, the idea. And I said they should make it... they should call it that. And they... they said it was a good idea. They said they couldn't change it, but they said that I was allowed to call it whatever I wanted to.

Beef: Oh, nice.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yeah, so... I mean, I don't wanna brag, but... But here's the deal. I miss one thing from Gutter City... It's a big, stinking pile of trash, but I do miss one thing. I miss driving The Clean. And that's what I want from you. I want you to steal The Clean.

Beef: Whew... Now, you saw, in that video, the issues we had stealing a tiny pin, right?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yeah.

Montrose: The thought of what swallowing a laundry truck could do to the inside of my body... It gives me a terrible feeling.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yeah, I wouldn't swallow it. But—

Beef: Let me write that down. Hold on, let me write that down.

Montrose: Yeah, let's take notes.

Beef: "Don't swallow this one."

Montrose: "Do not swallow the laundry truck." Okay.

Beef: "Unless absolutely necessary."

Montrose: Unless we need to. Or shrink it down with some sort of magic beam.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Well, that won't be necessary. No magic beams required. It's Hard Light.

Emerich: [gasps and shudders] Someone constructed a vehicle of Hard Light?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: That's right. And that's what I want. I want the prism that powers The Clean. And I want you to get it for me. Now... I know that the last job didn't go exactly as you planned. At least, Christ, I hope not. But you're the baddest guys I know. So... And also, I got the leverage. You remember the leverage? So, what do you say?

Emerich: We'll do it! Oh, we'll do it. We'll do it.

Beef: Now, wait. Hold on.

Emerich: A Hard Light vehicle?

Montrose: Yeah... could we get just another 30 seconds, if you do not mind, Mr. Sticky Finger Paul Pantry?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Take your time.

Montrose: Just a 30 second... We gotta at least negotiate for some payment—

Beef: Yeah!

Montrose: ... Other than just extortion. Do not just be so eager. I need you to go back in there and say, "Actually, this sounds scary and dangerous. And we'll need lots of up-front capital if we—" Do you understand?

Beef: What if you offered to just program The Clean for him here?

Montrose: That would also save us a great deal of effort.

Emerich: I know, fellas. But I have to tell you, to actually program a moving vehicle of Hard Light... It delights me to think of it, but that's beyond my capabilities. We would have to have some kind of... some kind of guide that'd show me. I need to get my hands on this prism as well.

Justin: It's also, one thing that you would know, Emerich, is that Hard Light and the prism are interconnected. You can't replicate a Hard Light pattern on a different prism, because of the way the light refracts differently in each prism. You have to hard code the programming to that specific prism.

Griffin: Right.

Travis: So, he could make another vehicle, hypothetically. But it would be different than this one.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: And all the work that he would be doing, you know, he would just be like making it again. And it wouldn't be his, that's the whole point. I mean, the point is that that's what... It wouldn't be the same.

Travis: Nostalgia, what a turd. Okay...

Beef: Hey, real quick, I have a question for you, Mr. Sticky Fingers Paul Pantry.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Please, call me Mr. Paul Pantry.

Beef: Okay. The diamond you—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Please, call me Mr. Fingers Paul Pantry.

Beef: Yes, Mr. Fingers Paul Pantry.

Justin: [laughs]

Beef: The diamond you mentioned, is it—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Oh, the Stealswell Diamond?

Beef: Yes. Is it unique or valuable in any way?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Trash. [laughs] They go through three or four of the things— We used to at least, go through three or four of the things every month. I mean, they can replicate that, it's a 3D printed little stone. People would take it for a souvenir or... They just lose it sometimes.

Beef: Okay... So, listen... As mentioned, obviously, I'm the big, dumb one. But here is my question for you, Mr. Fingers Paul Pantry... If we don't do this—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yes?

Beef: ... You release the footage, yes?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Well, I mean... I didn't think— I thought we had taken threats off the table? I thought we were friends working together?

Beef: Yes, but I'm just... I'm just establishing baseline. This is... heat removed. And then, if we fail while trying to do it, we're gonna get in serious trouble.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Honestly, if you fail while you're trying to do it, we're fine. Because... I don't wanna get tied up in any of it and—

Beef: No, no. So, this is why I'm saying... So, if we get caught trying to steal a truck, we get in trouble.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Oh, boy... You shouldn't be even out of your layer. It'll be bad.

Beef: Right. And if we succeed and get you the truck, we're just back at zero. We're just back at neutral.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Well, there's damages, there's hurt feelings to consider. It very much pained me when you stole my pin at my very exciting party that I planned.

Montrose: Not as much as it pained me, I assure you. Listen...

Beef: I guess the point that I'm trying to make... And Montrose, I think, can take over from here...

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: You'd like that, wouldn't you? [laughs]

Beef: What is in it for us?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Oh. Hm... Well, I mean, your rep won't be ruined. What do you want, money?

Montrose: We do... Joking aside, we are friends here. And you have come to us with this ask, because you recognize a spark of talent in us. Or else, I assume, you would've gone to one of the many other disreputable

organizations present here at Steeplechase. You know us as consummate professionals. And when you deal with consummate professionals, you must—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: There's no— You have done nothing to assure your status as a consummate professional.

Griffin: I look down at his screen and I say:

Montrose: Why, yes. I suppose that you do have a video of us screwing the pooch, so to speak. You, however, do not seem to have any evidence of our other criminal activities. Maybe... maybe you're assuming the wrong thing about us?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Oh, a little bit of mystery, huh? I love that. Okay...

Justin: Griff, are you trying to persuade him to pay you?

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Okay. You will get paid for this job, because it's a job and this is Blades in the Dark, and you do jobs for money. I would normally say this would be a six suite job, which is a standard score, descent loot. But because of the blackmail and whatever, I think he's gonna... he's leaning more towards four coin. So, if you can persuade him to, I'll cut you a little bit extra. I'll get you the six.

Griffin: Okay.

Justin: But I'm gonna need a... Consort, I guess, right? When you're swaying people in a way that is not...

Beef: Montrose, can I talk to you for just a second?

Montrose: Yes.

Beef: What if we took the standard pay, but asked him to connect us with some of these people in Gutter... what is it, Gutter City? Gutter Town?

Justin: Gutter City, Gutter City.

Montrose: I mean, Gutter City... that's a bunch of people play acting at criminal activity. I believe at the Buttercream, we saw where the real, real stuff happens. I am not concerned about making friends in Gutter City.

Beef: Now, wait. Hold on...

Justin: "I'm not concerned about making friends in Gutter City?" [laughs] I mean, it's called Gutter City.

Montrose: Yeah... Listen, I know that this is about much more than just a truck to you, right? It's about the thrill you felt—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: That's true...

Montrose: ... When you piloted that beautiful vehicle down the streets, making hairpin turns to evade Johnny Law. What if—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: I mean, there's no streets. But yeah, absolutely.

Beef: There's no streets in Gutter—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: It's all alleys.

Beef: Where's the gut— Well, those are—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: It's all alleys.

Beef: Paul...

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: It's a city of alleys.

Beef: But then it's just... Aren't the alleys then becoming streets?

Montrose: This is a semantic argument, Mr. Fingers Paul Pantry. Listen, in exchange for fair—

Beef: So, wait. Is Sticky your first name?

Justin: Yeah, Sticky—[laughs] I don't know, Travis. It's all make up— make 'em ups. So, I don't know. [laughs]

Travis: [laughs]

Justin: What do you want from me? It's not a real guy, you goof.

Travis: His real name is Sticky Fingers, but then his mom, Mary Fingers, married a man named Paul.

Justin: His name's Sticky Finger Paul Pantry, please continue.

Travis: Okay.

Montrose: Listen, in exchange for fair compensation, preferably a number that is cleanly divisible by three, we can not only deliver you the truck, Mr. Sticky Finger Paul Pantry, we deliver the thrill. We can take you along with us, bring you under our protection. Secure your anonymity.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Hm...

Montrose: And you can be the getaway driver of a real deal heist.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Well, that sounds great. I am... I have less than zero interest in that, because I do not want to be arrested and/or go to jail. And I want no actual danger for myself, whatsoever. But I will— I will... Okay, we can work something out.

Travis: That was also Justin in his head going, "I don't wanna do this voice."

Justin: I'm not doing this voice.

Travis: "I'm not doing this voice for like four more episodes, you kidding me?"

Clint: [laughs]

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: 100%.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: I'm gonna stay in this room. [laughs]

Travis: "And go on vocal rest."

Clint: [laughs]

Justin: Okay, Griff. Let's try Sway here. Let's Sway him, let's see how that goes.

Griffin: Okay. I'll go risky standard.

[sound of dice thrown]

Griffin: That's a 5.

Justin: Okay.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Okay... I'll make you a deal. I'll give you six suites. But I need a little help from you once you're back, to hold on to it for a little while for me. A little bit of storage. Can you add that to your list of services?

Emerich: Yes! Yes, yes. Oh, yes. We will need time to... to... store it for you.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: You are such an odd duck. Sometimes I feel bad I haven't gotten to know you better, 'cause you're so close.

Emerich: I prefer it that way, actually.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yeah, I think I do too, actually. [laughs] Okay, good. We got a plan. Here's the way it's gonna have to work, though... It's a big room full of the same laundry truck. And you won't know which one is The Clean, until they go to steal it, until the getaway starts. So, in order to get to that point, you gotta make sure whoever's doing the heist pulls it off.

Montrose: Christ...

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: But they can't know you're helping, or else they'll complain. You just gotta... you gotta steal the gem without doing anything to steal the gem...

Beef: Okay, interference.

Montrose: No, not so much interference. It sounds like we are going to be angels in the outfield.

Beef: This is what I mean, we're running interference, right? So, as things would disrupt the heist, we're just gonna bump 'em.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yeah, that's a really nice way of putting it. And then, you have to steal everything from them. And then you have to steal the truck. And it's easy, it's clean.

Beef: Yes, very... Good play on words. Okay, so, Paul— Mr. Fingers Paul Pantry?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yeah?

Beef: How the heist, the play-acting heist works, can you run through that for us?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: I couldn't dream of it. I mean, it's been years since I was friends with Short Doug. I mean—

Beef: Right, right, right.

Montrose: Is there a new Short Doug?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: I don't know. I'm here, in front of you?

Beef: Okay. One thing though. Did you mention that the participants in the heist are both guests and the workers of Gutter City?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Yeah, they're cast and guests.

Beef: And how— Are the guests selected or is it everyone who's a guest there gets to go?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Well, the people that have wanted the experience of pulling off a heist in Gutter City. I mean, it's a dream! The smokey alleys and the shadows, and you never know who's behind you, and the twists and turns. It's really an amazing place, if you can get past the smell.

Emerich: Ah... Oh... I have been laboring under a misconception this whole time. I thought Gutter City was a bowling-oriented level... You talked about gutters and you talked about alleys... Oh.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Oh, yeah. It's an uncommon mistake.

Emerich: Oh!

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: But I suppose these things do happen.

Emerich: This will be more difficult than I actually imagined. Maybe we need eight suites?

Beef: Bold.

Montrose: That's... Hold on, let's— Obviously—

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Because it's not a bowling—[laughs]

Montrose: We can talk as out loud and—

Justin: You would know— By the way, you're pretty close to Gutter City.
[laughs] You would know it's not a bowling themed world.

Montrose: We can speak out loud in front of Mr. Finger Paul Pantry and say that he is of course not going to give us eight suites.

Justin: [laughs]

Montrose: But Emerich, I really appreciate the effort that you have shown in trying to walk back your earlier unchecked enthusiasm for the job.

Justin: [laughs]

Montrose: I think, with your next client, I think that will benefit us greatly. I think the ship has sailed.

Emerich: I should do it earlier in the process.

Beef: Mm-hmm.

Montrose: I think that's great, yeah. Wouldn't you agree, Mr. Sticky Finger Paul Pantry?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: I phased out.

Montrose: Oh.

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: So, you're in, this is great. I can... I don't know anything about the job, but I can point you in the direction of somebody that does.

Emerich: Will they have an easier voice to do?

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: God, I hope so.

Griffin: [laughs]

Sticky Finger Paul Pantry: Okay... Listen, I'm gonna get back to the Pantry before people start to miss me. Because they love when I'm around. You should change though. Remember, only black and white.

[theme music plays]

[ad break]

[theme music plays]

Darla: I remember every moment of it, like I'd written it myself. The rain drizzled down like a dirty sheet sliding off a hotel mattress. It was a slow night in Gutter City. Which isn't as nice a town as the name might make it seem. My name's Darla Davis. And for the worst part of my life, a private eye for people who can't afford one of the better-connected dicks.

I try to set myself apart by being a fair dealer, right down the middle. I'm no whippoorwill, mind you. I've given plenty of mugs their final belly button piercing. But I've never put down someone who didn't deserve it, except for... once.

And that one time is why I keep my whiskey bottle closer than a mama hen and her chicks. That last metaphor was thirsty enough to put me in the mood for another drink. But after two twists of the knob, that's when... they walked in.

Justin: So, what do you guys look like?

Travis: That was so good, Justin.

Griffin: [laughs]

Travis: I especially loved the part about better connected dicks.

Justin: Thanks.

Travis: You're welcome.

Justin: What does Darla Davis see?

Travis: I'm gonna say, Beef has gone like, full Dick Tracey thug.

Griffin: Oh...

Travis: So like, square shoulder trench coat. Like, beat up fedora. Scuffed shoes. You know, just like... Clearly is like, this guy is cut and paste from, [in Brooklyn accent] "Ey, what do you think we're doing here, boss? Eh..." That kind of guy.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Travis: You know what I mean? He's going for that kind of dumb thug look.

Justin: Dad, I have a person that is in my mind that I imagine when I hear from Emerich. But I'd love to hear from you before I bias everyone.

Clint: You mean his physical appearance?

Justin: Yes, I mean his physical appearance.

Clint: Very... He's very thin. I think I've used the term waspish before. And he is, in this instance... He has a mustache.

Justin: Mm-hmm!

Clint: He has a mustachio.

Travis: We love that.

Clint: His only affectation to fashion, I guess, or to stand out, is it's a really beautiful mustache.

Travis: [chuckles]

Clint: Curled up on the ends. And he loves to wear coveralls. So, he's wearing black coveralls with like a cowl, like a hood over it. That's also black. And some black goggles, like welder's goggles.

Justin: Okay, cool.

Travis: Justin, I'm just gonna add to my load. Reflective vest, to keep Emerich safe at night, walking through the streets.

Justin: Oh, good. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, glow tape for Emerich.

Travis: Glow tape, yeah. Maybe one of those— A flashing headlamp, for Emerich.

Griffin: Yeah. I'll make mine easy for you, Juice. I'm human Darkwing Duck.

Travis: [laughs] Wait, Darkwing Duck's not human?

Griffin: Travis, come on... Don't waste my time. Got a cape, the cape has two colors. The inside's a different color than the outside. It's a lot of purple, wide brim fedora—

Travis: Now, he did say black and white.

Griffin: Oh, okay... Well, it's a purplish black.

Justin: [laughs] It's that black that's so black that it's almost purple.

Travis: You get it.

Clint: Almost an aubergine, yes.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: [laughs]

Griffin: And no pants. No, there's pants.

Travis: [laughs]

Griffin: There's definitely pants. I think the cape is what makes it definitely sort of stand out. The belt too, a big Gucci belt buckle, right in the middle of it. Maybe Chanel, I forget which one has like the big letter on it.

Justin: And so, Darla sees all that.

Darla: And each—[laughs] And each one of `em more beautiful than the last. With legs that go all the way. I could tell they were sizing me up too. Dark brown skin, hair cut short enough so that no heavies can get a handful. And a long grey jacket with enough pockets to hold a lot of economy class tickets to the mortuary. And of course, a matching black turtleneck and dungarees, rain or shine.

Travis: Are economy class tickets to the mortuary bullets?

Justin: Yeah. Or guns, or knives or whatever.

Travis: Oh, okay. Got it, got it, got it. And where are our legs going to?

Justin: All the way, baby. [laughs]

Travis: [laughs] They connect at the middle and the floor.

Montrose: It's also— It's been a while since I have visited Gutter City. Do we often have to describe out loud what we're wearing up here or is that sort of a personal characteristic?

Justin: No... Oh, who are you— Are you talking— Is that what you're— Oh, this is her saying— This— No. I asked you guys, that's why I said it like this.

Griffin: Oh, okay.

Justin: And that's why you answered like my brothers and my father. That was just to sort of establish what you guys look like.

Griffin: Right, right, right.

Justin: I had been imaging Philo from UHF for dad.

Travis: Oh, yeah.

Griffin: [laughs]

Justin: So, I'm happy to know that this— Okay.

Darla: So, not that I don't appreciate the eye candy, boys. But what exactly brings you into my office today?

Montrose: Crime.

Travis: [chuckles]

Darla: Crime... You know that I am Darla Davis, private investigator, right?

Montrose: Yes.

Darla: So, what crime do you need me to stop?

Montrose: The crime of... The crime of... Let's start over. Not crime, not crime. That was a joke. We are here as representatives, of a sort, of what I believe is a mutual acquaintance. One Short Doug.

Darla: Short Doug?

Montrose: Yes—

Darla: Did you say... Short Doug?

Montrose: I think you know that is the name I said, 'cause you repeated it.

Darla: How does he look? I mean, when he... Last time I saw him, he still looked the exact same, face of an angel. Head just as bald as a newborn baby. How's he looking?

Montrose: He is looking rather... sticky and excitable.

Darla: That's Short Doug for you. You know, the nights are a lot longer without Short Doug around to light things up with a little smile from time to time. So, what do you need from me?

Montrose: Well, we don't need anything, so much as Short Doug needs your assistance.

Darla: Well, with what? I'm listening.

Montrose: Does someone else wanna step in here? 'Cause I feel like I've been doing all the talking.

Travis: Beef, during this time, has been studying her reactions to this. I wanna try to determine, much like we just had that conversation with Paul and being a friend of Short Doug and all that. Beef wants to figure how like bought into this private investigator role she is.

Justin: Here's what I would say. From your time there in Steeplechase, you should assume that everyone— Like, that sort of like dropping of the mask slightly, that Sticky Finger Paul Pantry did, in even reflexively putting the mask back up. That is— That— So, we don't have to have this conversation repeatedly. Which I know that I just opened the door to.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: It's safe to assume everyone's completely bought in.

Travis: Okay. Then let me put it a different way. I'm studying this private detective to see how, let's say scrupulous, she is.

Justin: Hmm! Okay.

Travis: Because if Short Doug was on the crime side of things and driving the getaway vehicle, and she is— feels positive towards him. Is she like, "I'll do anything for a dollar." Or like, "At the end of the day, I'm still gonna like uphold the law."

Justin: Here's what I imagine Sticky Finger Paul Pantry would've told you before you departed. Which, by the way, I wanted to ask you... I wanted to jump into the world to try to set this like noir tone. But I did wanna ask you, do you all— How did you all get up to Gutter City?

Griffin: Sticky Finger Paul Pantry had to coordinate that for us, right? Like, moving between layers is not free and easy. So, I assume—

Travis: Well, and we've already— We've gotten a taste of it, right. With the Buttercream sled.

Griffin: Yeah, but I also—

Justin: The Undercarriage.

Griffin: Yeah, I also think—

Travis: I liked mine better, frankly. But... The Buttercream sled.

Griffin: I think the Undercarriage is a last resort means of transport for us?

Justin: Oh, you would like that, wouldn't you? But no, the Undercarriage is pretty much the main sneaky way.

Griffin: Shit.

Justin: It's extremely painful. [laughs] It's extremely painful and dangerous every time.

Travis: I'm just saying, picture like some little like Borrower-asscharacters like on a tiny sled, sledding down a cake of Buttercream. Right?

Justin: Yeah, it's amazing, it's amazing.

Griffin: It's fun.

Justin: But you're up here now.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: Wait, what was I on before you guys got me—

Travis: And you were talking about Paul Pantry would've told us about—

Justin: Oh, would've told you... Darla Davis is a private investigator. And as a private investigator, she is someone who is comfortable in the grey. Between good and bad, she's got her own moral code. But she, you know... If the cops are on one side and the crooks are on one side, she's her own side.

Travis: Okay, great. Since we jumped into it and didn't have time for like discussion ahead of time—

Justin: Mm-hmm?

Travis: ... Does this call for a flashback or can we just say like, "There was a discussion between the three of us."

Justin: What, specifically?

Griffin: How much we're going to tell—

Clint: Figure out our approach.

Griffin: Yeah.

Justin: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Travis: Yeah.

Justin: Oh, that's a great idea. I love that. I love that. Let's do a flashback. And you three are walking up to Darla Davis's office, where Sticky Finger Paul Pantry told you it would be. You notice, by the way, as you're walking through, that Paul Pantry was not exaggerating.

These are alleys, they're not buildings. As far as you can tell, this is all like— Imagine a city of back entrances. Of you know, hanging lights, encircled by mosquitos, fire escapes, that kind of thing. But no like grand entrances. It's all alleys.

Travis: I have to imagine to you, a lot of over usage of like 'dead end' and 'no exit' signs.

Justin: Yes, absolutely.

Travis: Like, we get it. Okay, you've set— Yeah, we get it. It's a double entendre, it's a dead end, okay.

Montrose: So, before we head on up there, if we could just have a quick team meeting. I do think we should not volunteer that we are criminals now.

Beef: Mm-hmm, we shouldn't mention anything about crime.

Montrose: Do not mention crime, whatsoever. We are just trying to find out— trying to get the lay of the land, so to speak.

Beef: Here's what I'm thinking. If this is, you know, we think about it as experiential for a guest, right. What if we say it's like a VIP, we're hiring Darla to help with the heist, to make sure that this guest who's participating in the heist, who's gonna drive the getaway vehicle—

Montrose: Salm dunk. Slam dunk.

Beef: ... Has a good experience. Maybe we say it's like a friend of Short Doug or like a friend of Paul Pantry who's here. Or you know what I mean, like a friend of Denton maybe? Or somebody who'd like, we wanna make sure we really like, grease the wheels.

Montrose: I think that's exceptional.

Clint: Wonderful. Wonderful idea.

Mean Doug: Hey, gentlemen. How you doing?

Justin: You just walked past a guy and he's holding—[laughs] He looks kind of down on his luck, but he's holding a saxophone.

Mean Doug: Can I treat you gentlemen to a song?

Montrose: Yes.

Beef: Hell yeah!

Montrose: Play it right now.

[comedically bad saxophone plays]

Griffin: [laughs]

Beef: Do you know Baker Street?

[bad sax continues]

Griffin: [laughs]

Mean Doug: That'll be five coins, gentlemen. [laughs]

Emerich: All right. Now, I assume that was you warming up. How about that song?

Mean Doug: Hey!

Justin: And he pulls out—

Beef: Do you need to tune a saxophone? I'm not sure how that works.
[laughs]

Justin: [laughs] He pulls a switch blade out of the end of the saxophone.

Mean Doug: Hey! I said that's gonna be five coins. I run an honest business here and you said you wanted a song. Now, are you all gonna start digging into your pockets, or am I gonna start digging into your guts?

Beef: Okay. We're gonna go.

Montrose: Yeah, we're just gonna-

Mean Doug: Hey! I want my five coins!

Montrose: Well, here's the issue, sir. We know that we are not stabbed in the future. So, this threat that you are trying to establish is...

Clint: [laughs]

Mean Doug: All right, you guys are trying to confuse me with a bunch of highfalutin brainy guy talk. Sure! I went to a city college. But I'm not ashamed of it. Okay, you three, get on out of here!

Beef: Wait, which one?

Mean Doug: Sorry?

Beef: Which city college?

Mean Doug: Gutter City College!

Beef: Oh, you know... My friend, Derrick, went to Gutter City College. Do you know him? He was a communications major?

Mean Doug: Yeah! And I hated him.

Beef: Yeah, he said he hated you too.

Mean Doug: Well, I'm glad to know where I stand. And I wanna know where you all are standing, and that's far away from me. Get moving, you—

Montrose: If you don't mind, play us off with another one of those beautiful melodies.

Mean Doug: Oh, you're really pushing your luck, pal!

Emerich: Traveling music? Any traveling music?

Mean Doug: [laughs] Luckily I just got warmed up.

[comedically bad saxophone plays]

Griffin: [laughs]

Mean Doug: All right. Only the first two were free. Get moving.

Clint: [laughs]

Darla: So, how can I help you beautiful gentlemen?

Beef: Do you know a guy who plays saxophone outside? [laughs] What's his deal?

Clint: [laughs]

Darla: That's Mean Doug.

Beef: Got a lot of Dougs...

Montrose: Yeah. Listen, we are here to facilitate a memorable experience for a certain VIP, if you catch my drift. This sort of job—

Darla: Ah. A big chunk of cheese.

Montrose: A big old hunk of Swiss. But it is vital that we do so from the periphery, from the shadows, so that the experience is left untainted for the participants.

Darla: So, you're wanting to make something go real smooth where it might be a little bit rocky?

Montrose: That is precisely our intent.

Darla: May I offer you boys a cigar?

Beef: Yeah, sounds great. Yeah.

Darla: Real nice. Two for a quarter.

Beef: Okay, yeah. I'll take one.

Justin: And Darla takes one and sort of effortlessly tosses it in her mouth and lights hers.

Darla: And did you want— Do you want one, Beef?

Beef: Yeah.

Darla: Okay, here you go.

Justin: She tosses you over a cigar and light.

Travis: He bites the end off. You know, in that like—

Justin: Very cool, very cool.

Travis: Yeah, very heavy.

Beef: Pft! You gotta bite through the gap.

Darla: Mm-hmm. There's just nothing like that first, smooth, satisfying hit of tobacco. Mm-hmm!

Clint: Can Emerich do—

Travis: Hey, can we finish the cigar?

Justin: Yeah, we're... That's it. [laughs] She just lit the cigar—

Travis: I haven't lit mine?

Justin: Okay. No, she already tossed you the match. Go light yours in private. Yeah, dad. Go ahead. [laughs]

Clint: Emerich would like to survey this office and see if there is any Hard Light work going on.

Justin: Hmm... Hm... Hm...

Beef: Ah, the match went out.

Justin: [laughs]

Emerich: Give him another match. God!

Justin: Okay, Dad. Go ahead and give me a survey.

Clint: Okay. Not risky. Controlled?

Justin: Yeah. Yeah, we can do it controlled.

Beef: [cigar smoking sounds]

Justin: Controlled... By the way, I was reading and stuff, trying to get a better clarification on that. Controlled, here's a good rule of thumb, is that if you don't pull off your roll in controlled, then you can take it again. So like, to me, I think that's probably a good metric for controlled. Is like, could you do it again if it didn't work.

Travis: But the second time is risky, right?

Justin: Yeah, exactly. But like—

Travis: Okay.

Justin: I think that's a solid. Like, could you do it twice with no issues.

Travis: Right, right, right. So like, taking a swing at someone, is like, they're not gonna stand there and let you take a second swing.

Justin: Right, right.

Travis: Okay.

Justin: Right, right, right. And if it's a high-pressure situation, like last time we were like looking for the bad dudes, right? Like, that is in the crowd and the Prize Pantry. Like, that is something that you would probably get one shot at. Like, you wouldn't... because it's a shifting situation and you know, that kind of thing. But go ahead.

[sound of dice thrown]

Justin: Well, dad, you rolled a 2.

Clint: Yup...

Travis: Mm-hmm, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Griffin: Great.

Justin: Not great.

Travis: Actually, while you're looking around, you get something in your eye. [laughs]

Justin: The good news though, dad, is... You have failed this Survey roll. And that is sad for everyone. But you can take it... You can do it again.

Clint: I would like to try it again.

Travis: Woah.

Clint: This time, risky.

Justin: This it it'll be risky, 'cause you've been looking around for a while, I guess, and Darla might get suspicious.

Travis: Yeah, she's gonna catch you.

[sound of dice thrown]

Travis: Well...

Griffin: Christ.

Justin: Well, you've rolled a 1 this time, Dad. And I... Here's what I will say. You are unable to tell, if this is Hard Light stuff, then it's brand spanking new. Or it may not be at all. But as far as you can tell, no Hard Light present.

Which does not, I should clarify, it does not mean that there is Hard Light present. So, you may be right about that. You just have no more certainty about it than you did before. How's that?

Clint: Gotcha, gotcha. Okay.

Montrose: Darla, if we did want to surreptitiously implant ourselves in the proceedings, what do you think would be the best sort of window of opportunity for us to do so?

Darla: Hm... Well... Are you all talking about the diamond? Just so we can all be on the same page.

Beef: Sorry, can I have another match real quick? It's just this... it's a real pain in the ass.

Darla: Oh, sure, sure.

Beef: I just can't... Do you have like a lighter or...

Darla: Oh... Just matches. I'm... lighter... What, lighter, did you say? No, just matches.

Beef: Yeah—

Justin: And she digs into her drawer, and she's got like probably 150 match books. And she takes another one out and throws it to you.

Travis: Is there anything written on the cover, Justin?

Clint: Oh, that's what I was gonna ask! [laughs]

Darla: Let me take care of it for you.

Justin: And Darla stands up. And in like... a pretty condescending way, lights your cigar for you. And kind of shields it from the wind, and then goes and sits back down.

Griffin: Like she's lighting a cigar for a baby.

Travis: Yeah....

Justin: Yes.

Travis: Okay. Okay. Okay. When that happens, Beef is gonna play it like:

Beef: Well, thank you. I couldn't have done it without you.

Travis: A little flattered. He's gonna play into the condescension. I'm gonna say Beef likes detective novels, maybe.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And so, if she's gonna play the, like they walked in, legs all the way to the ground kind of thing, he's not gonna not play into it.

Justin: Okay. We'll do that.

Beef: Ah, well... It sure is nice to depend on you know, someone to take care of you. Thank you so much. Make me feel safe.

Darla: Well, you're real smart to know what side your bread is buttered on. Now, tell me, are we talking about the diamond?

Emerich: The Stealswell?

Darla: The Stealswell Diamond, that's right. You're the smart one of the group. The real sharp tack.

Montrose: That is, I would say, undecided at this point. We have not really established roles that firmly. But yes, it's the diamond. That's it, that's the diamond, you know it.

Darla: The Stealswell. Well... Hm... Let me think on that... See, I would love to help you all with your proposition. Whatever it may be, you want it to go one way, you want it to go another. But I like to run a real clean table here.

So, I don't like to get my hands as warm as things tend to get around the Stealswell Diamond. But let me think, for a friend of Short Doug... All right. Here's what we'll do. You want my help ensuring that the theft of the Stealswell Diamond goes real smooth, I need your help with something first.

Montrose: We are neck deep in favors already. But...

Darla: Well then, certainly, one more won't hurt.

Montrose: Yeah, toss `em on by.

Darla: And mine's... mine's real easy too. I simply need you three to buy me a great deal of pornography.

Griffin: [laughs]

[theme music plays]

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