

SCENE 1

MUSIC: Long Road to Nowhere by Glitch.

SFX: A crowd mills about as music plays.

TARI:

Seriously, I think it has to be you!

SU-JIN:

(SIGHS) I don't know...

TARI:

You're the only one who can do it!

CAINE:

Su-jin...

SU-JIN:

I... I...

SFX: The power shuts off. People begin to mutter in confusion.

CROWD MEMBER:

Turn the music back on!

SFX: The music reverses, faster and faster, until—

LOLA:

Vic and I have discussed it in some detail, but we both think the two of you would be the best fit for this particular task.

CAINE:

(SIGHS) Really?

INDRA:

I mean, you've talked with Tari probably more than any of us have.

CAINE:

(SCOFFS) Only because ey keep hanging out with Seb.

SU-JIN:

I'm surprised you're putting me and not Vic up to the task. Tari and Sebastian do get along pretty well and Vic's... kind of similar?

VIC:

Oh, is that supposed to be a compliment? Besides, I'm supposed to be tackling Nell today... if we can ever find her.

INDRA:

She's in the library half the time. I've been tailing her the last few days and that's pretty much her home base.

JET:

And Lola and I will be talking with Ganymede today!

LOLA:

Someone with some robotics expertise might be of some use to him. And I'd like some insight into how this place stays running.

INDRA:

Ganymede's a tough code to crack. He seems pretty practiced at shutting out any direct questions. But Sunn's a pretty smooth talker.

SU-JIN:

Uh-huh.

INDRA:

Oh, shut up, Yi. Anyways, getting Nell to talk about something other than what you reported back is what Vass and I are handling today.

VIC:

And Su-jin and Caine, you're responsible for talking to Tari about—

CAINE:

About joining the cause and all that, I got it.

LOLA:

It's important for us to actually integrate ourselves into the community here and pay attention to what they might actually want from the changes we're trying to make. So listen to what ey say, and don't be offended if ey say no—we can't force people into joining us. It's still dangerous work.

SU-JIN:

Right.

VIC:

Tari seems to be the most open about everything, and ey're pretty popular, so ey'd be a good card to have in our slots. So, good luck, guys. And keep in touch, especially if something goes wrong.

SU-JIN:

We'll call or radio in. Caine, you ready?

CAINE:

Yeah, I'm coming.

SFX: Caine and Su-jin exit.

SU-JIN:

Caine, you doing okay? You don't seem particularly jazzed about this.

CAINE:

When am I ever "jazzed" about anything?

SU-JIN:

(LAUGHS) Alright, well, usually if we're gonna hang out for a whole day, you seem a little more excited.

CAINE:

It's not you, Su-jin, don't get me wrong. I'm just...

Look, I'm not particularly charismatic or anything, so trying to convince anyone of anything is not my strong suit. Kind of makes me feel like I'm not really the right pick for this.

SU-JIN:

Aw, you're okay, man. You know I feel like I'm out of my element pretty much all the time, but we'll be fine. Like Vic, Lola, and Indra said, we're just supposed to get in with the community, gauge how Tari and other people are feeling about all this Zero Zero stuff, and report back. And Tari seems friendly enough.

CAINE:

Mhm, yeah. Though, ey can be a little much, to be honest with you.

SU-JIN:

I'm sure they're not that--

TARI:

Hi!

SU-JIN:

Whoa! Sorry, wow. You scared me!

TARI:

Oh no, I should be sorry! I figured, you two are kinda wandering around, maybe you're wondering, "Place looks pretty empty today!" and I thought I'd fill you both in since I happened to be around!

CAINE:

...Right. Anyway, what's up, Tari?

TARI:

So! You may not know this, but there's actually a lot of artists out here! I hear you're one too, right, Su-jinnie?

SU-JIN:

It's, uh, just Su-jin. And yeah, I guess you could say that.

TARI:

Out here, we have a lot of musicians, so we put on tons of shows—I help a lot of the time—so most of the people here in the southwest wing are getting ready for it! And since

you two are new, I figured it'd be nice if you guys got a chance to come along?

CAINE:

Um... Listen, Tari, that sounds...

SU-JIN:

Come on, Caine.

CAINE:

Good! That... that sounds great.

TARI:

Oh, perfect! You guys can come in with me, hopefully they'll let you in-!

CAINE:

Wait, hopefully?

TARI:

And we'll hang out all night and have a great time! Yeah?

SU-JIN:

Yeah.

TARI:

Awesome! I mean, I don't know how often you guys went to shows or anything when you were in Metropolis West. I didn't spend a lot of time there since I was busy, you know, being "Bunnie" for Glasshouse, but they're loads of fun here. The place we're going to is called "The Hideout." Y'know, I went to some stuff in the Numitron, mostly out in the Toshi station, but none of those shows were really like this one, these are really cool...

CAINE:

Uh... please tell me I don't sound like that when I ramble.

SU-JIN:

Not necessarily. I think you wind down a little faster than Tari does? I'm cool with listening to people though, so I might not be the best judge.

CAINE:

Oh, uh... alright. Thanks.

TARI:

...He was like, eight feet tall, it was crazy. Whew! Sorry, Baz usually stops me when I'm going on and on like that. We'll be a little early if we go in now, but I may as well introduce you to a few people you might wanna know, and then we'll chill in the green room till the show! Oh, and I'll introduce you to all the bands!

SFX: Knocking on a metal door.

TARI:

Knock, knock, knock!

SFX: Metal sliding open.

BOUNCER:

Bunnie.

TARI:

Hiya, Jess! I know I'm here totes early, but if it's not too much trouble, I thought I'd introduce my friends and get them into the scene, you know?

BOUNCER:

Some of those kids from FR3-5N0?

TARI:

No, no, they passed on coming to the shows this month, they're planning a big salvage run from the old district. These are the people that me, Gan, and Nell brought in from Metropolis West!

CAINE:

Hey.

SU-JIN:

Nice to meet you!

BOUNCER:

Eh... I dunno, Bunnie.

TARI:

Please? They're with me!

BOUNCER:

(LAUGHS) You know that's not how it works around here. You're welcome back any time. But people are pretty nervous about your buddies here. You're gonna have to build a little cred before you get 'em in on tonight's show.

SU-JIN:

Nervous about us?

TARI:

But Caine here is Baz's sibling! That's gotta count for something?

BOUNCER:

Rules are rules, Bun. If you get some other attendees to vouch for them, or better yet, a band, then I'll know for sure that things will go smoothly. Otherwise, I dunno if I want people to be getting into tussles tonight. Four show nights have passed since the last fight and I'm still mopping up blood.

SU-JIN:

Yeesh.

CAINE:

It's not like we're not gonna start anything.

BOUNCER:

I'm sure you won't, but someone might wanna start something with you. We don't warm up too quick with strangers here.

CAINE:

Yeah, I noticed.

BOUNCER:

While you're out, Bunnie, you mind picking up some stuff for the green room? Last night's band tore apart the place looking for something to eat.

TARI:

Almost everyone's on limited rations till either our darn plants or cell cultures grow or our next supply run, but I'll see what I can do.

BOUNCER:

Good on ya, and my thanks.

SFX: They close the door.

TARI:

Shoot, that didn't go as planned. Always used to work when I was back in Glasshouse.

CAINE:

Oh, well, I guess we can't go. Tragic.

TARI:

No, no! Don't despair, Caine and Su-jin! Like Jess said, building up cred is the way to go, and you're with Tari de Whitte, cred-builder extraordinaire! And besides, this is way more fun than just hanging out in a room. I'll get to show you around, like I probably should have done when you guys first got here!

CAINE:

Oh, great. Getting dragged around a mall. Again.

SU-JIN:

Come on, it might actually be pretty fun! Not like we got to go to any malls together in Metropolis West. And we'll be keeping up with the mission. You with me?

SFX: Cloth rustle.

CAINE:

Uh, I... uh, yeah. Yeah, I'm with you.

We'd probably better gay. I mean, go. Um, because look, there goes Tari.

TARI:

Woo-hoo, shopping spree!

SU-JIN:

(LAUGHS) Yeah, let's go.

SCENE 2

SFX: Pages turn quietly.

VIC:

(CLEARS HIS THROAT) Um, so. This is what you had Su-jin doing a few days ago, huh?

NELL:

Yes. But there's always work to be done, hence—more sorting.

SFX: Indra pushes a cart over to the two.

INDRA:

How many more carts full of books do you even have?

NELL:

I think only two more to organize, which means we're due for another supply run.

VIC:

Guess we must have interrupted your last one.

NELL:

As a matter of fact, you did.

VIC:

Uh-huh.

SFX: Indra sits down and sorts.

VIC:

Indra, you got a second?

INDRA:

What? I *just* sat down.

VIC:

Literally one second, come on.

SFX: Vic and Indra walk away.

VIC:

What the hell, man! We've been sitting and organizing for an *hour* and I can barely get her to say anything. I thought she'd at least want me to like, have a conversation or something.

INDRA:

Your charisma's wearing off, huh?

VIC:

Yeah, sure. But what are *you* doing to get Nell to spill? You're just being the muscle. Just hauling all the boxes around the place.

INDRA:

I'm not as impatient as you are. I'm biding my time. And you could stand to at least observe her instead of talking her head off.

VIC:

(SCOFFS) I *am* observing her. See?

Okay, here's what I can tell you: she's biding her time with *us*. She's clearly done this before if she's so familiar with the library and she's lingering on some of those books that are clearly water damaged as an excuse to watch both of us. She's antsy. And everyone here is nervous about us, especially her. And she's drumming her fingers every five seconds. Could be a psychological tactic to make it seem like we're taking too long back here, or more likely, that's her being bored out of her mind, like I am. And here's what else I can tell you: she clearly likes Su-jin. I mean, everyone likes Su-jin, they're super friendly, which seems to be the more effective approach. Add that to how she got spooked by Lola being super direct and you have me, trying as hard as I can to be friendly and forthcoming about us and not scare her off of talking with any of us forever.

INDRA:

Wow. Okay, so maybe you *were* watching her.

VIC:

Yeah, charming people's not just about winking at them and expecting them to swoon into your arms. You have to actually pay attention.

INDRA:

So what's slowing you down?

VIC:

We're on her territory no matter where we go, especially here. We're at a disadvantage.

INDRA:

Let's go level the playing field then.

SFX: Indra strolls over.

VIC:

Hey, wait up!

NELL:

That was quite a long second you two took.

INDRA:

Yeah. We're bored. You are too, apparently.

SFX: Vic elbows Indra.

INDRA:

Ow, *Vass!*

VIC:

Haha, I'm sure you're busy, Nell! I don't want us to drag you out of here if you've still got work to do. We're supposed to be helping you, not distracting you.

INDRA:

Sure, but I get the feeling you haven't stopped working since we got here. Let's go get some food or something?

NELL:

But—!

INDRA:

I clearly don't have any problem with lifting stuff. I'll cover you and Vass's work hours. Or I'll cook something.

VIC:

I didn't know you could cook.

INDRA:

Yeah, well living in Metropolis West without any cryptos sort of severely impacted my ability to buy anything but fast food.

VIC:

Point taken.

INDRA:

So what, you wanna come or am I just taking Vass out for lunch?

NELL:

I... may as well.

INDRA:

Good answer. Meet me at my apartment in thirty minutes. I'll be waiting.

SFX: Indra exits.

NELL:

What just happened?

VIC:

I... don't know.

Oh, wait, do you know where xe lives?

NELL:

Tari's the one who set up your living arrangements.

VIC:

Right. I'll take you there in a sec here. Let's at least finish this batch. (SIGHS)

SCENE 3

SFX: A clothing store.

TARI:

Well? What do you think?

CAINE:

Um... I just think it looks bad.

TARI:

You won't totally know that till you try it out!

SFX: Caine emerges from behind the curtain, the chains on their outfit jingling with each step.

CAINE:

Okay, for sure the goggles are not working. I... I don't know why people keep trying to make that a thing for me, it's just not...

SFX: Su-jin snickers.

CAINE:

This is humiliating.

SU-JIN:

Sorry, they... they do look a little ridiculous.

CAINE:

Exactly, Su-jin, thank you.

SU-JIN:

At least the chains look cool! That could actually work for you.

CAINE:

Easy for you to say, you're already fashionable.

TARI:

Chains are very in. So are the spikes! I honestly think they look better than the studs you had on your old outfit.

CAINE:

Hey, Tari, no offense or anything, but... I mean, I think this is all a bit much. Like, is it really necessary?

TARI:

Of course it is! Cred building has to start somewhere, and a great first impression starts with dressing well. Learned that back when I was a Glasser.

SU-JIN:

I think what Caine means to say is we've been doing this for... a while and without many results.

CAINE:

Yeah, and we're kind of burning daylight.

TARI:

Oh my gosh, I didn't even know we spent almost two hours doing this! Time flies when you're having fun.

SU-JIN:

I agree, but we could use a little less fashion montage and a little more chatting with people to build our cred? At least, that's what... what's her name... Jess said?

TARI:

Ooh, you remembered her name! And yes, I agree, but some of these bands won't even look at you if you're not dressed right. Getting on the ground gossip is our next step, obviously.

SU-JIN:

And chatting. You know, not *just* gossip.

TARI:

The only problem is that Caine's a little hard to coordinate a look for.

CAINE:

(SIGHS)

TARI:

If you'd lose the scarf...

CAINE:

Not gonna happen.

TARI:

It's just tough to pair that print with anything.

CAINE:

Well, you're not taking it, okay?

TARI:

Sheesh, I won't, I won't.

SU-JIN:

Maybe we could just do makeup or something?

TARI:

Ooh, that could work. I'll lend you some makeup, but I haven't got any eye makeup, and you know you're not supposed to share that.

SU-JIN"

I think I have you covered there. Mose from the South Wing gave me some kajal to try since I got some stuff there, but I haven't actually used it yet. It's yours now, Caine!

CAINE:

Oh, thanks! I haven't worn makeup in... actually, I haven't ever really worn makeup.

SU-JIN:

No worries, I've done makeup plenty of times. Uh, do you mind if I...?

CAINE:

No, yeah. G-go right ahead.

SFX: Su-jin leans closer.

SU-JIN:

Oh yeah, your eye shape is good for a more downturned liner. I've got monolids, so I'm used to doing a little more to make my eye makeup work for me. But I can probably get away with doing yours more simply. That'll be faster.

CAINE:

Yeah, sure. Take all the time you want. I mean, need. 'Cause, y'know, we're in a bit of a rush, so, uh... I mean, not that you have to rush, if you like... it's, um—!

TARI:

I think a simple look would be great! Plus the outfit right now, it'll sell it. I'm sure.

SU-JIN:

You got it. Alright, Caine, close your eyes real quick. And tilt your chin down a little bit. Yeah, that's it.

SFX: The shop bell rings.

TARI:

Oh my gosh!

CAINE:

What? What happened? Did someone come in?

SU-JIN:

Hang on, eyes closed for a second longer, this side is uneven.

TARI:

Not just someone, multiple someones!

SU-JIN:

And there you go. Alright! You look great!

CAINE:

Uh... thank you.

SU-JIN:

Heh. You should let me do your makeup more often.

CAINE:

I mean, if you want to, you can. I like the way you do it.

TARI:

Oh my gosh, you guys are totally missing them!

SU-JIN:

Who?

TARI:

The Holy Terrors!

CAINE:

(NARRATING)

I looked over Su-jin's shoulder to see what all the fuss was about. Three people stood in the doorway, chatting with other customers. A person with bright blue hair and a beanie pulled roughly over it chatted animatedly with the crowd gathering around them, smiling to reveal a gap-toothed grin. To their right, a tall scrawny man with locs adjusted the guitar sling on his shoulder, a serious expression on his face as he occasionally answered questions. And right in the center of the newly formed crowd was a woman with sandy yellow hair that stuck out in all directions, freckles smattering every inch of skin that was visible. She had a skateboard she'd scraped together resting at her feet that she occasionally flipped up into her waiting hand. None of those people looked particularly holy or terrifying, but I figured by the adulation everyone was radiating, they were the headliner act for tonight.

ASTRA:

Tari!

SFX: Astra skates over.

TARI:

Astra, oh my gosh, hi babe! I'm so so SO excited to see your show tonight!

ASTRA:

Excited for you to be there, Bunnie. What about this crew, who're you rolling with?

SU-JIN:

I'm Su-jin, they/them. This is Caine, also uses they/them.
We're—!

KATZ:

New here. I can tell.

ASTRA:

Aw, Katz, be nice to them.

KATZ:

Not saying anything mean, it's obvious. De Whitte taking
you out for some shopping?

CAINE:

Yeah. Don't think it was working out very much.

ASTRA:

I'll say.

KATZ:

Now who's being mean?

HARLAN:

We should be keeping it chill.

KATZ:

What's up, Harlan? Didn't wanna contend with the crowd
without us?

HARLAN:

Eh, just thought I'd see who you were talking to. Newbies!
We're the Holy Terrors, in case it wasn't totally obvious.

CROWD MEMBER:

I LOVE YOU, HOLY TERRORS!

HARLAN:

Yeah. I'm Harlan, any pronouns, that's Katz, he/him, and
Astra, she/her or he/him.

SU-JIN:

Nice to meet you all.

KATZ:

Good to meet you too. Been hearing a lot of whispers about new kids. Uh, you're from FR3-5N0, yeah?

CAINE:

No. We're from Metropolis West.

ASTRA:

Oh, so these are *those* newcomers. Interesting!

CAINE:

What's that supposed to mean?

KATZ:

It's not all that often we get such a large group of you from Metropolis West. Hm. It was really surprising that, what, like six of you? All arrived at the same time.

HARLAN:

I think the biggest group we had before y'all was five at once? And two of those were bots.

SU-JIN:

Hm...

ASTRA:

Guess that means we won't be seeing you at the show tonight. Sorry.

TARI:

Oh, come on Astra! They didn't do anything but show up! You guys can't—!

HARLAN:

You're the one that said some people are just bad press. And I've hardly gotten to sign an autograph! I don't wanna give it all up now.

KATZ:

We obviously think the world of you for promoting our band, but every little thing can't be changed for you.

TARI:

Promotion, that's it! Caine, Su-jin. How good are you with instruments?

SU-JIN:

I can keep a beat?

CAINE:

Uh, I technically know how to play guitar. It's been a while though.

TARI:

Good enough! We'll bill this as a jam session right before the show. Tons of people wanna see the Holy Terrors up close and personal, so a crowd will up your reputation massively—and I'm talking about both Zero Zero and the Holy Terrors! What do you guys think?

HARLAN:

Eh...

ASTRA:

Um...

KATZ:

Guys, we should do it.

HARLAN AND ASTRA:

Wait, what?

KATZ:

Come on, guys. We should give them a chance. After all, we once were just a couple of weirdoes who played the abandoned water parks. Maybe they've got the chops too.

TARI:

We won't let you down!

CAINE:

What have we gotten ourselves into...?

SCENE 4

SFX: Tools rattling.

JET:

Disconnect wire 15a—that's the green one—from socket 4,
then remove the casing.

And then... oh, okay. Run the voltage on section 8
independently by diverting it from section 3.

GANYMEDE:

Alright, gotcha.

SFX: Ganymede flips some switches, but nothing happens.

GANYMEDE:

What in the... that should be working now, right?

LOLA:

You're still running power to section 2. Here.

SFX: Lola flips the correct switch.

JET:

Diagnostic check running... section 8 is now optimized. All
systems are fully functional. Good job USER: Ganymede and
USER: Lola!

GANYMEDE:

Couldn't have done it without you two. Honestly, optimizing
things like this takes forever—way easier with an all-
purpose bot, even if it is a couple generations old.

LOLA:

Jet's been a very valuable member of the team.

GANYMEDE:

Well, he's a valuable part of this team too. Thanks, pal.

JET:

Oh, it's really no problem! What should we work on next?

LOLA:

You've been trying to keep busy, haven't you?

GANYMEDE:

(LAUGHS) Let's slow down and take a break, huh? We've been kicking around this optimizing puzzle for a while, I think we need a breather. Plus I think some of the plants in here could use a drink.

SFX: Ganymede goes to turn on the faucet.

LOLA:

I was meaning to comment on your garden, by the way. It's very beautiful. I didn't know anything could really grow out here when we first were travelling.

GANYMEDE:

Land seems pretty scorched, huh? Ronan and I have been working on this thing for years now, soil cycling and nutrient reintroduction. It's not impossible to help rejuvenate something that seems like it's been dead for a long time. But Ronan's got the brains for it, and I've got the experience, so we're making progress. He's the one who got all the oxygen cyclers in this place running, otherwise we'd all be wearing gas masks in here too.

JET:

Oh, USER: Lola had a garden back in Metropolis West! It was lovely too. Maybe I could show you some pictures? It might take some time, I'll have to pull it up from my, uh... my memory banks.

GANYMEDE:

That's alright, Jet. I suppose you'll be going back and taking care of it again once you're through here?

LOLA:

Ah, I was meaning to talk with you about that too. I heard Nell told Su-jin that she means for us to leave as soon as possible.

GANYMEDE:

That sounds about right.

LOLA:

With the car repaired and the road clear, we could very easily head back. But I don't think we intend to, not yet at least.

GANYMEDE:

Waiting for something to happen?

LOLA:

Trying to make something happen, if I'm being honest. And I don't think it would be right for us to come into your community and not at least pay back some of the hard work you've done for us.

GANYMEDE:

I didn't come to Cair Mallplex to get paid back, really. I came here to be safe. From all the things that can happen out there, in the world controlled by POTEN Co. and its subsidiaries. It's got its hands in everything but our little world here. And it may not be a perfect world, and it may be hard living, but it's less dangerous than what's out there.

MUSIC: Night of Chaos by Kevin MacLeod.

JET:

It's not all bad in the Metropolis. That's why we want to change it.

GANYMEDE:

I appreciate you saying so, and I mean no disrespect to your home, but I don't even think you wanna face some stuff that's happened to you in the Metropolis.

JET:

What? What do you mean?

GANYMEDE:

I mean look at you. I've never seen a little bot like you work so hard to avoid accessing your memory! You got a big memory card in there, but you clearly don't wanna think about some stuff, otherwise you wouldn't be trying to distract yourself every other second.

JET:

That's not—it's not what it looks like—!

GANYMEDE:

No shame in it. We all have some stuff we'd rather leave in the past.

LOLA:

Yeah, I can agree with that.

GANYMEDE:

But what I'm saying is... that sort of stuff is exactly what I don't want anyone I care about to have to go through again. This place is a community of hurt, Lola. Hurt that we're all trying to heal from in one way or another. And I don't know if we can do that by putting ourselves in the line of fire.

LOLA:

I don't want to ask anyone to do that.

GANYMEDE:

Happens whether you want it to or not. No matter how many times you put yourself between your team and danger, bad things might still happen to them. And you're a charismatic leader, Lola. People wanna protect you, same way I wanna protect Nell and Tari.

Honestly, in some ways, I'm glad neither of you are spending time "observing" Tari today.

JET:

Caine and USER: Su-jin are just spending time with Tari.

GANYMEDE:

(LAUGHS) Same way Tari's "spending time" with them. Don't think I don't know that y'all are on about, the whole Zero Zero thing. Tari couldn't stop running eir mouth about it. And ey like you—both of you. I think you remind em of eir old home.

JET:

Ey did say I seemed familiar...

LOLA:

So you're the reason why I haven't gotten a conversation in with Tari one-on-one.

GANYMEDE:

Been asking Tari to avoid it, if possible. With the way ey idolize you, I think ey might run off and join you without thinking about it. And if left alone with this little bot, I think it would make Tari remember all the stuff ey're probably better off leaving in the past.

JET:

...Do you really dislike what Zero Zero is trying to do that much?

GANYMEDE:

I get why you want to do it. But I'm only being real with you when I say I think you don't realize how much danger you're putting us all in every day you stay here. I've got a healthy dose of suspicion about you six. Jet's not the only bot with GPS capabilities. And those truck operators will probably have a hell of a time with what they saw of you. If you wanna stay here, stay. We're not kicking out anyone who genuinely wants a new home, a new life. But if you're just here to be a tourist? I think we might all be better off if you leave when you're finished poking around.

LOLA:

(SIGHS) I understand your suspicion and your doubts, Ganymede. I'm not just saying that to convince you of anything. I only wanted to say that I get it, too. And I appreciate that you felt like you could tell me that honestly.

GANYMEDE:

There you go again, charming me. I don't even think you mean to do it, that's the most interesting part.

You're some kinda leader, Lola.

LOLA:

I'll take that as a compliment.

GANYMEDE:

I meant it to be one.

SFX: Ganymede walks over to the faucet and refills his canister.

JET:

Should we get back to work?

GANYMEDE:

Eh... not yet pal. I think we could do with a bit more time not lunging at each other's throats. (LAUGHS) I get a little ahead of myself sometimes.

JET:

O-oh, but I...

LOLA:

Jet, is there something you want to talk about?

JET:

Oh, no, trust me! I'm fine! Or at least, I'm going to be fine as soon as we start doing something again.

I... I promise.

SCENE 5

SFX: A door opens.

MUSIC: Cyan by Patchworker f.k.a. [friendzoned].

TARI:

Welcome to my place here in Cair Mallplex! Pretty fancy,
no?

SU-JIN:

Uh... yeah.

CAINE:

(NARRATING)

Pretty fancy was right. Tari's place was filled with little knick-knacks that looked way too fancy and too new to have been picked up in the scrap out here—they were clearly taken from Glasshouse, probably when Tari first got out here. A lava lamp, a computer with three monitors all playing a cutesy screensaver, pillows with what I recognized as a logo for "Bunnie" when ey were still an influencer. Their couch, probably from the department store near the south entrance, looked more like a nest with all the blankets Tari had tossed on top of it, albeit a very cozy nest, which ey gestured towards.

TARI:

Sit wherever you want on The Pile! And feel free to move some stuff around if you want, I'm not picky.

SFX: Su-jin sits.

CAINE:

Thanks, but I think I'll stand for now.

TARI:

That's fine! I keep a lot of fun little things around when no one else wants them, so I'm *pretty* sure I have some instruments around here. Hang tight, if you need anything just yell and I'll come straight back in here!

SFX: Tari walks into the other room.

SU-JIN:

Hm...

CAINE:

I thought you'd be more excited about the lava lamp.

SU-JIN:

It's a good lava lamp. I guess... I feel a little weird looking at all the stuff Tari kept from Glasshouse.

CAINE:

Calls emself an ex-Glasser but ey kind of still have the same mentality.

SU-JIN:

Yeah. I had a lot of run-ins with people from Glasshouse back before Zero Zero. And they all used to do the whole "lean really hard on your name and fame" thing.

CAINE:

Yup.

SU-JIN:

I don't wanna judge, though. I mean obviously, Lola had a lot to learn when she left. Vic always jokes about how she acted the first time she was in Kvadrata. So maybe we're, y'know, seeing someone who isn't as far along?

MUSIC: Thanks by Patchworker f.k.a. [friendzoned].

CAINE:

Why even keep some of these though? If I had something that reminded me of something I'd rather forget, I'd probably just toss it.

SU-JIN:

Maybe ey don't want to forget?

CAINE:

You got a point there.

TARI:

I FOUND A TAMBOURINE! DO YOU WANT THAT, SU-JIN?

SU-JIN:

That sounds fine!

TARI:

OKAY!

SFX: Tari returns shaking the tambourine.

TARI:

Ta-da! And hey, Caine, I know you said you play the guitar, so I managed to find this!

SFX: Tari offers up a guitar.

CAINE:

What? Someone threw this away?

TARI:

Someone built it! Someone you know, in fact.

SU-JIN:

That's pretty impressive, Tari.

TARI:

Oh, haha, no, not me! I couldn't have made this. Baz did!

CAINE:

Did he now? And he gave it to you, right?

TARI:

Yeah, he was trying to teach me how to play, but I'm just not very good at it. Even Astra gave up on me eventually and she's probably the most patient person here.

SFX: Caine tunes up the guitar.

CAINE:

Well. Good to know.

SFX: Tari turns off the radio while Su-jin shakes the tambourine.

SU-JIN:

When did you learn how to play, Caine?

CAINE:

Uh, when I was 15, maybe? My dad played guitar and then he taught Sebastian. Valeria ended up singing most of the time so when Seb got bored with the guitar, I picked it up. But of course, I got rusty. I don't think I've played since... I dunno, maybe when my dad sold the guitar.

TARI:

I'm glad you can play now! I feel bad, I totally dropped playing guitar after like, the first couple tries. It's hard for me to stick to something I'm not very good at.

SU-JIN:

Well, you gotta be bad at something before you're good at something.

SFX: Su-jin shakes their tambourine to punctuate the sentence.

TARI:

(LAUGHS) You're funny.

CAINE:

Uh, so, Tari, what exactly are we supposed to do? No offense, but I don't know why people would wanna see me and Su-jin up against the Holy Terrors considering neither of us are in a band.

TARI:

Hey, you're not the only ones playing!

SFX: Tari pulls out a stylophone and plays a few notes.

TARI:

Not like any of us have been in a band, but I'm not gonna put you at the mercy of the crowd.

SU-JIN:

Aren't we sort of banking off your fame a little?

TARI:

Just a teensy bit! I mean, the Holy Terrors are a big deal here so otherwise, you'd be two absolute strangers.

CAINE:

I mean, I guess they were strangers too till you put them on. I heard them say that you helped make them famous.

TARI:

Pfft, Katz credits me too much. They're serious musicians, all I did was... well, basically what I always did when I was in Glasshouse.

CAINE:

Uh...

SU-JIN:

Which was...?

TARI:

Marketing, pretty much! Being an influencer is basically all selling people's products for them. Y'know, put on some moisturizer, say it's the best thing you've ever used, smile on camera, and everyone gets cryptos, yay! And I know I'm just whining about how lucky I was, but, um... it was kind of hard being fake about stuff all the time. I like that if I'm talking about something here, I really believe in it.

CAINE:

Hm.

SFX: Caine plays a chord. Tari plays stylophone over it.

TARI:

You nervous?

CAINE:

I don't think I've played in front of anyone except for my family. And some family friends that one time...

TARI:

I'm friends with Baz! That practically makes us family friends too, right? Right?

SU-JIN:

Uh, that aside, we're not gonna judge you. Let's just get a little practice in before we go out there later, yeah?

CAINE:

Yeah, let's go.

SCENE 6

SFX: A door opens.

VIC:

Wow. It's, uh... very sparse in here.

NELL:

You haven't been inside?

VIC:

Indra's a fairly private person so, no. I just know where it is.

INDRA:

Took you guys long enough. What, you got lost or something?

VIC:

No, we were just finishing off the work you could have helped with.

INDRA:

Too busy picking up ingredients. I didn't know what you wanted, but it was slim pickings. Sounds like you're short on everything.

NELL:

We usually have food growing but it's been slow going these last few times. Our last batch of growth medium didn't synthesize correctly.

INDRA:

Hm. Too bad.

SFX: Indra puts down a few bags.

INDRA:

Choose what you want from these and I'll cook something.

VIC:

Am I included in this?

INDRA:

You're not usually choosy from what I've seen.

VIC:

Could at least give me the illusion of decision.

INDRA:

Fine, fine.

NELL:

Do you know how to make mechado? I think you have everything for it here.

INDRA:

What is it?

NELL:

Basically just tomato stew. Let's see, you have garlic, onions, and potatoes. Plus synthesized beef.

VIC:

Here, catch. That's tomato sauce, that probably works.

INDRA:

Sounds easy enough. Vass, you wanna help?

VIC:

Yeah, why not? I'll peel potatoes. Got a knife?

INDRA:

Uh, always.

VIC:

Thank you.

SFX: Indra hands a knife over. Vic peels potatoes.

NELL:

Do you need me to help?

INDRA:

Nah. You just sit tight. You were working all day.

VIC:

(SCOFFS)

SFX: Indra draws another knife out threateningly.

INDRA:

Vass.

VIC:

Yeah, yeah.

So Cair Mallplex is obviously pretty developed. How long since you started this place?

NELL:

Oh, I'm not the founder. Sort of the de facto leader after other people came and went. Somebody has to stay.

VIC:

Whose idea was it to build a place to live out of the local mall?

NELL:

It was sort of the purpose of this place, actually. Post-Incendiary, a lot of malls that were started in this area were supposed to double as both shopping centers and apartment complexes. Like this apartment. It was already mostly furnished. I assume that's why you didn't decorate, Indra.

INDRA:

Why should I?

VIC:

I dunno. Makes the place feel more like home.

INDRA:

I've never really settled down anywhere.

NELL:

Are you planning on settling down here?

INDRA:

Why? You want me to?

NELL:

Uh, no, it's—I mean, I...

(SIGHS) I'm just curious.

VIC:

I heard you're not super keen on us staying.

NELL:

Not if you're drawing so much attention to this place.

INDRA:

Uh, you're the ones sending out signals. Figured you wanted people like us to come here.

NELL:

Usually people who come out here never plan on going back.

VIC:

Ever?

NELL:

Why would they?

VIC:

To fix things.

INDRA:

Or at least try to.

MUSIC: Weightlessness by AlexChernykh.

NELL:

I don't know if there's any fixing Metropolis West. That place is all bits and pieces, disparate parts that don't fit or don't want to go back together.

INDRA:

Nothing's ever too broken to at least salvage something from it.

That's why you kept building this place, isn't it? Whole place is made out of damaged parts you put back together.

VIC:

Yeah, maybe it won't ever fit back the same way, but just because one part doesn't work doesn't mean that it's all bad.

NELL:

That's the thing though—it's not just a broken machine, it's a broken system. Poverty, greed, warfare against its own citizens. How do you fix that?

SFX: Indra slices a vegetable on a cutting board to punctuate xir point.

INDRA:

You don't. That's the part we have to destroy. But all the people back there, people like me...

I wouldn't have made it here without Zero Zero. I didn't even believe that something better than the life I was living existed. Not for me at least. Shouldn't you think about that? That even this place, as great as seems, still isn't helping the people who need it the most? Getting out here means risking your life, sure. But are you gonna risk your life if you have friends who need you? Family who wants you stay? How exactly are you gonna get here without hijacking a car or a truck? 'Cause face it, if you come out here, you basically have a death wish. But we put our lives on the line. And we're risking it again to go back and help people who don't have anyone. Just like I didn't have anyone.

VIC:

As great as I think we are, Zero Zero started as a union. Which, in short, just means we can't do this alone.

NELL:

I get what you're both saying, but it just doesn't sound like it's anything but a dream right now.

You're right, Indra—not everyone can make it here. And you're also right in saying that most people come here, believing that they may die before they ever arrive. If it even exists. But now that they've gone through that, I don't want people to have to do it again. I couldn't live

with myself. It sounds very brave, what you're doing. But just by being here, you put a target on us.

VIC:

What about Tari? Ey were an influencer—and way more recently than Lola. What makes em special enough to stay here without you telling em to go back where ey came from?

NELL:

Because Tari's already dead to Glasshouse.

INDRA:

Wait, really?

NELL:

Ey faked eir death before ey came here.

VIC:

Well, shit. That's more hardcore than I was expecting out of em.

NELL:

No one comes looking for a dead idol. So, unless you can disappear silently enough for no one to miss you, or with such a huge bang no one can deny your death, then being here is being a beacon for all kinds of trouble. I don't know if we can afford that.

VIC:

...That's fair.

INDRA:

So the conclusion we've come to is that we should all think long and hard before we decide on anything. Sound good?

VIC:

I guess so.

NELL:

Mm.

INDRA:

In that case, I'm going to keep cooking. May as well think on a full stomach.

SFX: Indra resumes chopping vegetables. Vic follows suit.

SCENE 7

SFX: A crowd chatters. Instruments tuning up.

KATZ:

Harlan, how's your sound?

SFX: A couple keys on the synth.

HARLAN:

Could you turn up my in-ear? I can barely hear myself.

KATZ:

Got it, taking it up a couple clicks.

HARLAN:

Astra, how's your bass guitar?

SFX: Astra plays the bass a little.

ASTRA:

Ready to go. Check, check, ch-check. (LAUGHS) One two, one two... And so's the mic, though I'm not gonna be using that as much for this.

KATZ:

Think we're ready to start, Astra.

SFX: Someone taps on the mic.

ANNOUNCER:

Good evening everybody, welcome to our little get together, our little pre-show, if you will.

HARLAN:

Who's that?

ASTRA:

Tari said we should get an announcer. I just snagged someone like ten minutes ago who said they'd be down.

ANNOUNCER:

Don't even think I need to ask, but how are we feeling out there tonight?

SFX: The crowd cheers and claps.

ANNOUNCER:

Nice, nice. You all know the crew—Astra Kilby, Katz Delany, and Harlan Turingson. Give them a big welcome!

ASTRA:

We're the Holy Terrors! We're playing tonight at the Hideout, obviously. Who's going?

SFX: People clap.

KATZ:

Hey.

SFX: The crowd goes wild.

KATZ:

Haha, thanks y'all. We're gonna be playing just a little bit here before we rock the show tonight. Astra's gonna be on bass 'cause she's not supposed to throw her voice out, so be nice to her, she's rusty.

ASTRA:

Hey!

KATZ:

I kid, I kid. Real fans will know she played bass for The Epochalypsies a couple years ago.

ANNOUNCER:

Holy Terrors are gonna play a little ditty before the next group comes up to jam.

SFX: A whoosh to backstage.

MUSIC: The Soul-Crushing Monotony Of Isolation (Instrumental Mix) by Punch Deck.

SU-JIN:

How're you feeling, Caine?

CAINE:

(NARRATING)

It wasn't the biggest crowd I'd ever seen, sure, but knowing it's a crowd full of strangers who whisper about you behind your back... that kind of blows. The strap of my guitar dug into my shoulder and the clothes Tari had chosen for me hung heavy and foreign on my body. I couldn't stop gritting my teeth. And I felt that same old itch in my brain I got whenever things got bad: the itch to just run away from a bad situation, 'cause who's gonna notice if you're gone? But then I felt Su-jin's hand slip into mine.

SU-JIN:

Hey, hey. You're okay. We're gonna be fine.

CAINE:

Yeah, definitely. It's gonna be fine.

SFX: We switch back to front stage as the Holy Terrors finish playing. People cheer loudly.

ANNOUNCER:

Alrighty, this next group of rockers for our battle of the bands is our outsiders plus one person you might know better. On the stylophone, here's Tari de Whitte!

TARI:

Happy to be here!

SU-JIN:

Wait, what did they just say?

CAINE:

What? Are we supposed to be competing against them? That's not what we—!

TARI:

Just go with it!

ANNOUNCER:

Su-jin Yi on the tambourine!

SU-JIN:

Hiya, folks!

CAINE:

Tari—!

ANNOUNCER:

And on the guitar, Caine Reyes!

CAINE:

Hi everybody.

ANNOUNCER:

Well, you three? Show us what you got!

SFX: People awkwardly clap.

SU-JIN:

Like I said, we're gonna be fine.

CAINE:

Yeah. Totally.

SFX: Caine plugs in their guitar.

MUSIC: Caine, Tari, and Su-jin's Jam.

SFX: People start to clap as they play.

TARI:

I think they like you guys!

SU-JIN:

Really?

TARI:

Yeah! Look at them, they're totally hype!

CAINE:

You sure it's not just the fact that you're here?

TARI:

No, it's you guys!

SFX: Some small cheers from the crowd.

SU-JIN:

Hey, not bad.

CAINE:

Not bad yourself.

SFX: The crowd gets more excited.

CAINE:

(NARRATING)

It was weird, watching the crowd change so quickly, looks of confusion or even disapproval changing into excitement. I doubted Tari was totally correct in saying it was us—the Holy Terrors put on a good show. But we weren't totally failing or anything, which was, not gonna lie, what I was expecting. Out of myself, at least.

TARI:

Alright, think it's about time to wrap this thing up.

SU-JIN:

Huh?

TARI:

I mean *exeunt stage*, see ourselves out? Blow this popsicle stand, and pronto.

CAINE:

But isn't it a good thing that they just started cheering for us?

TARI:

Leave 'em wanting more! Get to the good stuff then stop before it gets bad, you know? Just trust me on this, okay?

SFX: They start closing out the song.

SU-JIN:

Thanks everyone! You've been a fantastic audience!

CAINE:

(NARRATING)

It wasn't really in my nature to back down once I got serious about something. 'Cause if you're going to go up to the line, you may as well go all the way. But I figured it was more important to keep our eyes on the goal. And despite backing down, I was proud of myself: for not running away the second something freaked me out. Honestly, even without the crowd cheering for us, I still felt pretty good about that.

ANNOUNCER:

Well? Who do you think did better?

SFX: The crowd cheers.

CROWD:

I love you Katz Delany!

Astra! Yeah, Astra!

Harlan, I would die for you!

Holy Terrors! Holy Terrors!

ANNOUNCER:

There's your winner, folks. Astra Kilby, Katz Delany, and Harlan Turingson! And you'll see them tonight at the Hideout! Good night, y'all! Good night!

SFX: The crowd begins to disperse.

HARLAN:

Great job, you three! You took that mix-up in stride.

KATZ:

Come swing by our show tonight, yeah?

ASTRA:

Just tell them you're our guests! Now come on, y'all, we need to pack up our gear.

SFX: The Holy Terrors depart.

TARI:

Well? Did I tell you that was gonna get you cred or what?

CAINE:

Alright, I'll give you that. You were right.

Were they not gonna like us if we won?

TARI:

You proved you could step up to the plate and compete with them! Y'know, as popular as the Holy Terrors are, they're still a new band! And proving they're not a flash in the pan means also stepping down and letting them shine. *That's* marketing.

SU-JIN:

Wait, are you the one who told that announcer to call it a battle of the bands?

TARI:

Oh no, that actually surprised me too! But as a public figure, sometimes you just gotta roll with it. Like Harlan said. And you guys rolled with it pretty well! Especially you, Su-jin.

SU-JIN:

Uh, thank you?

TARI:

Oh! Before the show starts, I gotta run and pick up all the stuff Jess asked me for! I'll catch up with you guys there, okay?

SU-JIN:

See you... okay, and they're gone.

TARI:

And save me a spot at the front!

SCENE 8

SFX: In the music venue.

MUSIC: East Street by | e s c p |.

SU-JIN:

You see Tari anywhere?

CAINE:

No, but ey kind of have a habit of just popping up anywhere.

SU-JIN:

True. But that means we probably should talk about what we're going to say to em now.

CAINE:

Do you think Tari's going to want to be part of Zero Zero? Or are ey just going to treat it like another advertising gig?

SU-JIN:

If this is a bust, we're in good company. Indra called and told me both xe and Vic couldn't hack it with Nell, and neither could Lola or Jet.

CAINE:

Awesome. Probably won't be able to get Seb on this either, huh?

SU-JIN:

You think so?

CAINE:

Well, since Tari and Sebastian are apparently joined at the damn hip, if ey don't say yes, we're probably doomed.

SU-JIN:

I mean it's not all lost. We should probably give it a go before we say it is. And Caine, I could kind of tell that you weren't one hundred percent on this *because* of the whole Tari and Sebastian situation. But no one can really replace family.

CAINE:

...Thanks. Really.

Yeah, let's just tell em about Zero Zero, ask em what ey think, and if it doesn't work out, then... I'm sure we'll think of something else.

SU-JIN:

We always do.

TARI:

Always do what?

CAINE:

Ah, Jesus! Hey, Tari.

TARI:

Hi! What were you guys talking about?

CAINE:

Uh, well, actually... it's about something that involves you.

TARI:

Oh, for real?

SU-JIN:

Tari, you already know that we're part of Zero Zero, along with Indra, Jet, Vic, and Lola. And we came out here because we want to bring people together to fight POTEN Co. and Glasshouse.

CAINE:

I know that a lot of the people here, probably you included, got screwed over in some way by POTEN Co. so... we just wanna know if we have your support.

TARI:

Well, duh.

CAINE:

Hang on, seriously? You do know what we're talking about, right?

TARI:

Okay, actually, first I should come clean about something. Ganymede actually sent me to watch you guys. You know, um... try to convince you two to leave.

He said Caine, you'd be harder to get to leave since Sebastian's here, but that if I could show you that Baz wanted to stay here that you might be convinced to go without him.

CAINE:

Leave without my brother?

TARI:

And Su-jin, you'd be the easiest, since you already told me you're not planning on staying here long-term. You must have something you want to go back to in the Metropolis.

SU-JIN:

I... yeah, I guess I did say that.

TARI:

But I didn't want to do that! I don't want to make you leave Baz behind, Caine. He's like my big brother too, but... you risked everything on the hope of seeing him again. I mean, you both risked a lot to come here and for a good reason. Truth be told, ever since Lola told Nell she wanted people here to join Zero Zero, I've been waiting for someone to ask me!

When I was living in Glasshouse, first thinking about leaving, I wanted to get away from everything. That's how POTEN Co. talks about Lola Sunn, you know—that she was just being selfish, trying to get away from her responsibilities. But the more I learned about her... the more I learned about myself... I guess I just realized it's no good if only people like me get to escape. Everyone deserves freedom. And no one's gonna get it until we bring everything down.

CAINE:

Well, then. Well... Welcome to Zero Zero, Tari. Gotta be real, I had my doubts. But I was wrong.

TARI:

Water under the bridge, man. No big deal! I don't mind helping you get Nell, Ganymede, and as much of Cair Mallplex behind you guys. I gotta ask though, why didn't you start with the Metropolis?

SU-JIN:

Think it was mostly a matter of our team currently being a disgraced genius, ex-gang leader, knife-happy hothead, and a getaway driver and bot who have gained some infamy now, so... I think it was just generally safer to stay underground and build up reputation somewhere where our actual reputations weren't gonna haunt us.

TARI:

Points made and taken. But you can't stay underground forever! I mean, some revolutions start with a whisper, sure, but trying to keep it on the down low *and* get traction? Hard game to play. See, the whole marketing thing... I'm good at it. I like it, even! And it's the only thing I know, but if that's what I can give Zero Zero, that's what I'll do. Someone's gotta rally the troops! I'm pretty good for it out here, sure. But, uh, in the Metropolis itself, you're gonna have a pretty tough time using "Bunnie" as the first face of Zero Zero.

MUSIC: Long Road to Nowhere by Glitch.

CAINE:

Why?

TARI:

Quite a few reasons, I'll fill you in later. Because I have a proposition for you, Su-jin.

SU-JIN:

Me?

TARI:

Yes, you. 'Cause when you did your little list earlier, you mentioned Lola, Vic, Indra, Caine, and Jet. So you do *not* have a reputation there. Or at least your "titles" fit really well for the face of a revolution. What was it you

said? "Information terrorist, a rogue scrapper, union sympathizer, a threat to the Metropolis, and of course, a scoundrel of a graffiti artist?"

SU-JIN:

Word travels fast, it seems.

TARI:

Call me a little bird on Nell's shoulder. But all that, that's not stuff that's landed you in jail or anything. That stuff makes you sound like a hero! Plus you're good at rolling with the punches, super genuine, everyone likes you-hell, even Nell does, and she can be pretty icy sometimes. You'd be a star!

SU-JIN:

But I haven't really told-!

TARI:

Seriously, I think has to be you!

SU-JIN:

I don't know...

TARI:

You're the only one who can do it!

CAINE:

Su-jin...

SU-JIN:

I... I...

SFX: The power shuts off. People begin to mutter in confusion.

CROWD MEMBER:

Turn the music back on!

SFX: Elsewhere in Cair Mallplex, Indra flicks on a lighter.

INDRA:

Well, I guess the dishes can wait. Everyone okay? Palomo? Vass?

VIC:

Seems like the power just got knocked out. (HE SNIFFS THE AIR) And it also kind of smells like smoke—I mean, not in here. Outside?

NELL:

That's... not good. Indra, come light my way to the door, we'd better hurry.

INDRA:

Something wrong?

SFX: Elsewhere in Metropolis West...

LOLA:

I've got a flashlight built into this prosthetic—one moment.

SFX: She clicks it on.

JET:

USER: Ganymede? Everything okay?

GANYMEDE:

(WORRIED)

Ronan and Adina. They're back home—we all live on the South Wing, everything there's powered by electricity including the oxygen cycler.

SFX: Lola tries the door.

LOLA:

And a little more immediately pressing, I think some of the doors are too.

GANYMEDE:

Right. I see that, I will put that on my to do list at some point. Um, there should be an emergency exit door around here. Come on.

SCENE 9

SFX: People filing out of their apartments and stores.

PEOPLE IN THE CROWD (VARIOUS):

Grab your mask, I think the oxygen cycler's down.

Kind of seems like all the power is down.

Does anyone know what's going on?

Sorry, this is Rendezvous Point 6, if you're looking for Point 7 it's down that hallway, here, take a light.

GANYMEDE:

Ronan? You and Adina okay in there?

RONAN:

I'm okay, sweetheart, we're both alright for now. Di's not too happy with how dark it is, but we're managing. Feels a bit claustrophobic though, I'm not gonna lie to you.

GANYMEDE:

I know, I know. Get your masks on and I promise I'm getting you out of there as quick as I can.

SEBASTIAN:

Ganymede, I'm glad I found you. Are Adina and Ronan—!

GANYMEDE:

Fine for now. Where's everyone else?

NELL:

Here. Thank you, Vic and Indra for getting us here.

VIC:

No problem.

SEBASTIAN:

Where's Tari?

SU-JIN:

Lola, Vic, Indra!

INDRA:

Reyes, Yi. Good to know you're not stuck behind a door.

CAINE:

Is Jet with you?

JET:

I am!

TARI:

Hi everyone! Quite the party, isn't it?

SEBASTIAN:

Oh, Bunnie, there you are. I'm glad you're okay!

SFX: Sebastian hugs Tari.

TARI:

Ah, you're squeezing the life out of me, man!

SEBASTIAN:

Sorry, sorry.

NELL:

Power's out, obviously. Anyone have a report on what's gone wrong?

SEBASTIAN:

It's not the building generators, I went around and checked all of those before I came back up here.

GANYMEDE:

Probably the fire then. Dammit. We'll need to suit up and head out there, fast. Garage doors are probably jammed if the backup's out.

TARI:

I can come with you! We're almost finished with the truck—!

GANYMEDE:

Not finished yet. No vehicles...

SEBASTIAN:

Not totally true. I moved Caine's car to the outside parking to make room for some parts. We could probably manage driving out there with the new heat-resistant engine.

TARI:

I can still come!

SEBASTIAN:

No. It's too dangerous out there. Caine, you'll drive us, Ganymede needs an extra pair of hands, so I'll go too.

NELL:

And besides, Tari, I need as many hands as I can here to keep things calm. Su-jin, Indra, Vic, Lola, would you mind helping?

LOLA:

Not at all.

VIC:

Happy to help out.

INDRA:

Alright, I'll come too.

SU-JIN:

Let's do it!

TARI:

(SIGHS) Okay, I'll stay.

SEBASTIAN:

Alright. Caine, pull the car up front and we'll meet you there.

CAINE:

Well, Jet's coming too. I need my guide.

GANYMEDE:

I wouldn't leave him behind. He might be able to help with the diagnostics out there too.

TARI:

Good luck, guys. Get the power back on soon!

GANYMEDE:

Roger that.

END EPISODE.

Hi, Eli Ramos here, creator and editor of Under the Electric Stars, an Aster Podcasting Network production. If you liked this episode, please share it with your friends and rate and review it wherever you're listening to us. You can find us on our website at undertheelectricstars.com, or on social media: we're @utes_podcast on Twitter and undertheelectricstarspodcast on Tumblr. You can also find us on Patreon at patreon.com/mxeliramos, that's M-X-E-L-I-R-A-M-O-S. You can support Aster Podcasting Network at different tiers and get rewards like early access to episodes, annotated scripts, commentaries, behind the scenes posts, art, and even merch! That's not just for Under the Electric Stars, but all the shows on the network. The money you give directly goes to supporting our editor, showrunners, and actors who make these shows possible. Please support us if you have the means. Any amount helps.

Our voice talents are as follows: Philomena Sherwood as Tari de Witte, Christine Kim as Su-jin Yi, Rhea Anne as Caine Reyes, Chaitrika Budamagunta as Lola Sunn, Rey Angel Yoali Olachea Martinez as Indra, Kevin Paculan as Vic Vass, Katriel Charoite as Nell Palomo, Rue Dickey as Ganymede Moreno, Maganda Marie as Astra Kilby, Clinton Vance as Katz Delany, Brandon P. Jenkins as Harlan Turingson, and Bridget Guziewicz as Ronan Moreno.

Additional voices were provided by yours truly.

Attributions for sounds and music used can be found in the show notes. Thanks to Ezra Lee Buck and Audrey Pham, our \$20 Patrons on Patreon. And to everyone, thanks for listening, and see you in Metropolis West soon.