

The Guild
Season 5
by
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WGA REGISTERED

FADE IN:

INT. CODEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Codex talks into her webcam. There are clothes strewn about the bed behind her, messy, an open suitcase lies behind her.

CODEX

Almost finished packing! I Don't want to brag, but I am *really* good at it. When I was twelve, I rolled the score over on an arcade Tetris machine, sooo... Anyway, we're leaving tomorrow for the Gaming Convention! The Guild is carpooling in Vork's creepy van, so as long as there's not an Amber alert out, we should arrive tomorrow, ready for a weekend of... I'm not really sure, I've never been to a Nerd-stravaganza before, but getting offline and out of my element will be awesome. Give me some space to work out my chaotically aligned feelings about Zaboo. Am I into him? Do I wanna do the nasty with him?

(ponders for a beat)

The idea isn't *repulsing* me, but... Whatever. ROAD TRIP!

Cut to Codex continuing to pack her suitcase on the bed in the background. She sings the Tetris theme with gusto.

INT. VORK'S VAN - DAY

The Guild is packed in like sardines. Boxes are piled to the ceiling, suitcases, computers and monitors as well. Vork is in the driver's seat, Zaboo in the passenger. Bladezz is behind them in the middle, Tink to his right, playing a handheld game. Bladezz keeps edging closer to bother her. She elbows him away. Clara and Codex are further back. Vork is driving SUPER SLOW. Cars pass, horns blaring.

ZABOO

I spy with my little eye...oh, a family of six, flipping us off.

Bladezz watches Tink game. He indicates to her breast area.

BLADEZZ

Tink, that looks like a very fun game, but, if you could lower this a bit so I can see *this* area better.

TINK

Back. Off! God, why did I agree to go on this trip! Vork!! Do something!

VORK

Bladezz, stop doing whatever it is you're doing to Tink.

ZABOO

Hey, it's that family again! Still-still givin' us the bird, hehe.

VORK

(yells out window)
I'll have your license, fiend!

Vork lets go of the steering wheel, grabs a pen and paper to write down the license. Zaboo grabs the wheel.

ZABOO

Dude! How am I driving'd! Helloo?

Clara calls out to the front of the van as she watches a video on her cell phone. Codex sits opposite her doodling hearts and "Zaboo & Codex" experimentally on some papers.

CLARA

Are we there yet? Are we there yet?
Are were there yet? Are we there yet?
Are we there yet? Are we there yet?
Are we there yet?

VORK (O.S.)

Clara! Don't make me pull this Guild over!

Clara giggles, still watching her phone. Codex leans over.

CODEX

Are you watching that video I made you?

CLARA

Oh my God! You made High School Musical?

CODEX

No. I recorded your kids saying goodbye to us. It was super cute.

CLARA
 (paranoid)
 They noticed?! Now they're going to
 tell Wiggly I left! Fudgenuts!

In the front of the van, Zaboo starts pointing out cars.

ZABOO
 I spy with my zombie eye...

TINK
 My fist coming towards your face if
 you don't shut the EFF up!

ZABOO
 Come on Tink, everyone loves a car
 game!

Tink leans forward, clocks Zaboo, then leans back again.

ZABOO (CONT'D)
 Ow! Ooo, ah, oo, okay. Punch
 Buggy'd. Good one.

Codex has made her way up to the front of the van.

CODEX
 C'mon you guys, we're gonna have
 so much fun at this convention. I
 mean, we're going to play The Game,
 get to know each other better!
 (awkward flirty)
 Right, Zaboo?

Zaboo turns around, now wearing a foam rubber Munchkin Mascot
 helmet and clutching a stack of Munchkin game boxes.

ZABOO
 Yeah! Midnight Munchkin Madness!
 Alliterate'd.

TINK
 Screw that! LET ME OUT!

Codex holds Tink back, lifting up her stack of printouts,
 (the doodle page aimed at Tink.) Vork turns to Codex.

VORK
 Psychological studies show that
 rats, housed in uncomfortably close
 proximity, become overly aggressive
 and gnaw each other to death.

CODEX
 We may be close.

TINK
 (points to printouts)
 CODEX! What the HELL is this?!

CODEX
 Oh, it's... nothing, really...

ZABOO
 What are you guys talking about? I
 wanna be involved in everything
 that you talk about.

Tink hides the brochure, pulls Codex to the back of the van.

TINK
 Conference in the south wing. Now!

Tink yanks Codex to the very back of the van, behind some big
 brown boxes. They whisper fiercely, Tink holds up the paper.

TINK (CONT'D)
 That better be a suicide note!

CODEX
 I was just...I dunno. What do you
 think about it? Him and me?

TINK
 Huhn! You've gone from hot stunt
 guy to kilted Guild Leader to
 ZABOO? Your relationship patching
 system is seriously going the wrong
 direction!

CODEX
 He is not a DOWNGRADE! I mean, look
 at him, what- what's wrong with
 him?

Codex and Tink turn as Zaboo yells loudly.

ZABOO
 Oo, oo, ooo! The license plate
 game! The winner gets a lesson from
 me in Fortran!
 (burps then sniffs)
 Oh, and it's gonna smell like
 burrito! So...

CODEX
 (back to Tink)
 Maybe I just want someone who's
 nice to me for a change. And
 Warlock/ Priest combo is killer,
 right?

TINK

Middle-Earth to Codex: That's not real life!

CODEX

Well, maybe it can be. Does it hurt to try?

TINK

Yes!

Codex makes her way to the front of the van, Tink follows. They pass Clara, who's yelling into her cell phone.

CLARA

...but you knew the convention was happening sometime this year-ish, why are you acting so surprised?

Codex and Tink arrive where Bladezz and Vork are now yelling at each other. Tension in the car is super high.

BLADEZZ

You can't mess with Kevinator! The dude hooked us all up, with rooms, and tickets! I'm a "Special Guest," remember, with air quotes!

VORK

That little bastard deprived me of my hard-earned capitalist-funded Guild Hall! I intend to report him to the heads of The Game personally!

ZABOO

BEFORE THIS CAR STOPS I WANT TO PLAY THE LICENSE PLATE GAME!

CODEX

Oh, boy.

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER - EVENING

Vork's van pulls up in front of a mid-sized convention center. Attendees mill about, there is a CONVENTION VOLUNTEER, in a blue polo shirt standing at the curb, clipboard in hand, satchel over her shoulder. Her name tag says "RACHEL", with flowers drawn around it in highlighter. Vork rolls down the window. Lots of arguing wafts out of the van from all the Guildies.

VORK

Polo shirt-clad woman! We're here for the festivities.

CODEX

Please let us out!

RACHEL

Welcome to "Mega Game-o-rama Con!"
We're only taking registration
tonight, the convention opens
tomorrow, but-

BLADEZZ (O.S.)

Excuse me! Hey, Vork, tell her
you're chauffuering a Special
Guest.

VORK

I think she got that.

RACHEL

Oh, wow! A Special Guest?! Are you
kidding?! Follow me!

Rachel immediately takes off running full speed down the
road. Inside the car Vork and Bladezz watch.

BLADEZZ

Yep, already loving this.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Rachel runs up, out of breathe. She bends over and points to
the parking slot next to her. Vork's van pulls in.

RACHEL

(out of breathe)

I am officially- authorizing the
use of this- parking...

The Guild jumps out of the car (partially jettisoned).
Luggage and boxes fall out as they clamor to the ground.
Tink starts to pull her pink luggage out of the car.

Rachel approaches Clara and Tink, semi-recovered.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

We are so honored to have you
attend our convention!

Bladezz barges over, shades on. It's dark outside and he
trips over Tink's luggage.

BLADEZZ

AHEM! Excuse me, hi, I'm the
Special Guest! What kind of VIP
treatment is this?!

RACHEL

Oh my God. I'm sorry! Did I just insult you?!

Rachel bursts into tears. Codex approaches to comfort her.

CODEX

Oh, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, no-calm down, it's okay, you can't know everyone, right?

BLADEZZ

Oh, excuse me! I'm not just EVERYONE! I'm the Cheesy Pirate Kid. I'm a MEME!

Bladezz pulls out a Finn Smulders headshot from nowhere.

RACHEL

I'm sorry, I'm sure lots of people are really excited you're attending, I mean not that I'm not...

ZABOO

(walks up)

Oh, wow. I think we found someone more neurotic than you, Codex, heh!

CODEX

(flirty)

Uh, yeah! I told you this would be a great weekend!

ZABOO

Wow are you- uh- having spasms or something? 'Cause your face is twitching.

BLADEZZ

Okay, look. We have rooms, and badges, under the name Finn Smulders, okay? I don't want stalkers showing up to my door, offering me their bodies, unless they're double D certified, got it?

RACHEL

(checks clipboard)

I have you here for six badges, but as for rooms, we don't provide those to guests.

ALL TOGETHER

(BEAT)

What?

BLADEZZ

Okay... Kevinator told me that he'd hook me and my Guildies all up.

TINK

So you just assumed everything was taken care of under the classification, "hook up"?!

BLADEZZ

That's how the leet speak!

CLARA

We don't have any rooms? At all?

VORK

We're homeless. I knew this would happen. Mama.

Two SLACKERS pass by the van. They yell out to Bladezz.

SLACKER 1

Is that- oh! It's Cheesy Internet Pirate Cheesy Dude!

SLACKER 2

You rock Cheesy!

BLADEZZ

(to Rachel)

See? Do you really want to deprive the convention of THAT?!

RACHEL

Okay! okokokokok...uhhh...let me see what I can do?

ALL

Okay.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

The Guild stands inside a tiny hotel room with one double bed. Rachel is with them. She gestures awkwardly.

RACHEL

One room. Everything else in town was taken!

ZABOO

Sweet! Aw- floor bed! Ah! Let's check out the view!

VORK

First one to flatulate, sleeps in
the hall.

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 2:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Codex's webcam is set up in the corner of the hotel room. Behind her, various Guild members argue, push each other, maybe a few pillow fight moments. At a certain point Vork should cross behind her unfurling "Do Not Cross" tape.

CODEX

Never trust an egomaniacal teenager to plan ANYTHING. We arrived at Mega-Game-o-Rama-Con: No free rooms and all the hotels were sold out! FUN TWIST! The convention worker, Rachel, stopped hyperventilating long enough to discover that another special guest, Don Lufgren's stunt double's assistant from "Beef Soldier 4," cancelled last minute, so she snagged his room for us. One room. Six people. Unbelievable. I networked all our computers together, thought we could raid, soothe some tempers, maybe grab a little chat time with Zaboo, but...

TINK (O.S.)

Die in your sleep, Bladezz!

BLADEZZ

What the Hell! That's the last time!

CODEX

Tomorrow we'll look back and laugh.
IF we survive the night.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Hotel bed. There's police caution tape down the middle. Vork and Bladezz share it. An alarm rings and Vork sits up, throws off the covers and stands, fully dressed in his suit.

VORK

GUILDIES, RISE! STRATEGY MEETING
AT EIGHT! I WILL SEEK SUSTENANCE.

He heads out. From around the room, Tink and Clara rise groggily from roll-away beds, Codex pops up from the couch, Zaboo sits up from the coffee table, convention booklet placed on his face. Groaning from everyone.

ZABOO

Ugh, coffee table, not comfortable.
No sleep. Convention time?

INT. HOTEL BATHROOM - LATER

Clara and Codex put on makeup in the bathroom mirror. They are wearing matching "Knights of Good" t-shirts.

CODEX

It was so sweet of Zaboo to get these t-shirts made with our Guild crest on them, right? Heh. He's so great. Isn't he?

CLARA

Yeah, like we need more t-shirts, but sure. I hate my morning face.

CODEX

(blurts)

I'm gonna tell him I like him this weekend.

Clara ignores Codex, tries to pull up her face.

CLARA

Do you think I'll need a face lift after the baby's born? Can they do both operations at once?

CODEX

Clara, did you not hear me?! I said that I'm gonna go after Zaboo! In a romantic way.

CLARA

What?! Why didn't you say anything? Do it! Now! Worst idea EVER!

CODEX

If you think it's a bad idea, why are you so happy about it?

CLARA

Well, because he'll jump all over it! You'll get together for like a week, and then it'll go SO wrong you'll have to end it, but he won't take "no" for an answer, you'll have to change your name, move, he'll be so devastated I'll have to talk him off the ledge of a high-rise!

(MORE)

CLARA (CONT'D)

I'll be in the paper as a "suicide-whisperer," get invited on "Ellen", we'll DANCE...

CODEX

Clara! I need real advice here!

CLARA

Okay, alright! Are you hot for him?

CODEX

Enough?

CLARA

"Enough"? No, wrong answer.

BLADEZZ (O.S.)

This is some juicy lady-talk I showered into.

The shower curtain flings back and Bladezz stands suavely in a towel, shower cap on. Maybe his towel slips for a second, Codex and Clara recoil in disgust.

CODEX AND CLARA

Ew! Ew!

CODEX

Gross, Bladezz. Now cover that up!

Bladezz strolls over, shoves Codex and Clara aside to get access to the vanity and mirror. He primps while he talks.

BLADEZZ

Alright, my opinion: He'll take you. Used and all, but- a guy's not going to pass on anything with a lady hole. Oh! Can you pass me my mousse, my cologne, spray, vanishing cream, baby oil and rosewater?

CLARA

Ah, what?

Clara hands Bladezz a bottle as Codex leaves the bathroom.

CODEX

Forget I said anything.

CLARA

Whatever.

BLADEZZ

No way.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

(to Clara)

I think I need pirate eyeliner.

CLARA

Oh, just a smidge.

Tink barges into the bathroom dragging a big duffel bag.

TINK

My turn!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A half-second later, Bladezz and Clara get thrown violently out of the bathroom. The door slams after them.

CLARA

Rude! I love you!

They join Codex, who is about to take a seat at a small table. Vork stands near it like a butler. Plates of food are set out. Zaboo is already eating and making notes in a convention brochure, engrossed.

VORK

Breakfast is served.

Clara rushes over. Bladezz grabs a piece of breakfast burrito and leaves to get his pirate outfit on.

CODEX

(flirty to Zaboo)

Is that seat taken?

ZABOO

Nope.

He doesn't look up. Codex sighs and sits.

CLARA

Ah, thanks for the breakfast, Vork!

Vork pours coffee from one cup into several small hotel cups.

VORK

The food was gratis, thanks to my ingenuity. Up and down the hallway, people left vast quantities of food right outside their rooms!

(MORE)

VORK (CONT'D)

Look at the breadth of bounty I've scavenged! Never say I do not provide for my tribe.

Codex lifts up a pancake: It has a bite taken out of it.
Bladezz pulls out a cigarette butt from his burrito.

ZABOO

Uh, I dunno about used food, dude.

VORK

Reminder: this room is not free. In order to make it through this horrendous cash-strapped weekend we must employ what I am coining an emergency "C-D-S" strategy!

BLADEZZ

Can't Digest Sausage?

ZABOO

Curry Diarrhea Soup.

CLARA

Ah, Koalas Drunken-

VORK

"Conserve, Divide, Scavenge!" We must pool our efforts, physical and mental, in order to survive!

BLADEZZ

Okay, so, pick up all shotgun shells and first-aid packs we come across. And if one of us falls behind, leave them to save yourself.

CLARA

(munching Doritos)

Let's just eat what's in our little kitchenette, you guys. Snacks are yummy!

CODEX

Clara, don't eat from the mini-bar!
That goes on our room tab!

CLARA

(mouth full)

They're not free?

VORK

Anything but!

CLARA

(mouth still full)
My fetus made me do it.

BLADEZZ

(finishes dressing)
You guys, don't even worry about it, alright? I've got this covered. Once I hook up with Kevinator, we're going to smooth it all out, VIP-style.

VORK

The Kevinator is the scourge of the gaming earth! If it turns out there is no presence of The Game whatsoever here, I would not be phased. I would prepare a lawsuit and hate crime charges.

ZABOO

(head in brochure)
No worries, dude. The Game's right here. Booth 451. Oh man, this convention is amazing! They've something scheduled every hour for three days straight!

Codex, leans over, a little flirty, to look at the book.

CODEX

That's so exciting! What are we going to do together?

ZABOO

(pushes her away)
Yeah, your hair is kind of obscuring Sunday. Thanks, Codex.

CODEX

Well, we should spend a lot of time in our Game's booth, right? Guild bonding and all, right Zaboo?

ZABOO

(ignoring her)
They have a whole seminar on the physics of Krull! How am I gonna do all this?! Glave'd!

CLARA

I dunno about you guys, but I have one more weekend until I get all huge and bloated with this new baby bump. I'm gonna have as much fun as federal warning labels allow!

BLADEZZ

Are you still eating from the mini-bar?

CLARA

(mouth full of nuts)

Aw, nuts! I forgot again. Oh-Nuts.

The bathroom door opens. Tink stomps out wearing a bedazzled Anime sailor outfit with big glasses. She is unbelievably adorable, but her face is as hostile as ever.

TINK

Let's go.

Bladezz, now in his pirate outfit, looks her up and down.

BLADEZZ

And-uh- who are you supposed to be? Little Bo Peep on X?

TINK

I am an anime character you wouldn't be aware of, because you're an idiot!

CODEX

What about this being a contemptible nerd fest?

TINK

I grew up in this stupid town! I don't want any losers from my past spotting me, wanting to "catch up," Ugh!. Better to go incognito.

Codex looks skeptically at Tink's outfit as Zaboo checks his cell phone.

The Guild crowds around. Dozens of people are arriving at the convention. Zaboo waves the schedule desperately.

ZABOO

According to the schedule, I've missed the first ten minutes of "Star Wars in Macrame!"

CODEX

That sounds awesome! Let's all go!

VORK

Negative. Macrame is the devil's handicraft.

CLARA

Making things? Gross. That's like working, and working is un-fun to the max!

TINK

(lifts brown box)

We're not here to have fun, Clara! We have five-hundred tees to off-load on spend-happy nerds.

CLARA

Is that why you brought those? Businessing? Let's do that tomorrow.

TINK

Are you kidding?! UGH!

Tink stomps out of the hotel room with the box.

ZABOO

K, fine! You guys don't wanna expand your geek minds? Then I'll go solo! Han Solo'd.

CODEX

Well, no! I mean, I'll totally go with you- wait! Wha...

ZABOO

Outie Five Thousand.

Bladezz and Clara walk past, cut off Codex.

BLADEZZ

Nonono, wait! I need the Guild to be my entourage, to be a buffer from fans and keep me from getting mobbed by podcasters!

CLARA

Ah! I'm gonna find an artist to draw my head of the body of a unicorn! CLARACORN, HA!

Codex stays in the hotel room as everyone heads out.

He grabs his badge and rushes out with the con schedule.

CODEX

Oh, fine! Everyone just go their separate ways! No one spend any time together, our first official outing as a Guild!

VORK

I don't need your sanction, but
you've accurately stated the
actuality. Aloha.

He leaves. Codex looks around the room, it's totally empty.

CODEX

I didn't MEAN IT!

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 3:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Codex talks into her webcam from an empty hotel room.

CODEX

I cannot believe my Guildies just jetted off, LEAVING me! Oh, and Zaboo! How more obvious could I be? My vagina was practically in my hand! We need more towels, please. What am I supposed to do, go downstairs ALONE? I've seen wildlife specials, cheetahs always go after solo stragglers first! Whatever.

Codex freezes. In the background, the Maid is staring at her. She turns, the Maid quickly goes back to cleaning.

CODEX (CONT'D)

I'm going to go down there and explore the things that I'm interested in! Like...what are those things? What...do I like? "The Game" has a booth down there, right? Oh, can I have some more of those little shampoos? Oh... a packet. That's convenient.

INT. CONVENTION LOBBY - MORNING

The elevator doors open, Codex steps out. There are a LOT of people. She makes her way across the room, loud sounds, she gets disoriented, people jostle her. (Mean Streets shot).

CODEX

Oh, uhh, excuse me, do you know where the... uhh... Hi! I'm looking for booth 451? Excuse me...

A leering FURRY cos-player turns towards her (WE WILL SEE HIM AGAIN). She shrinks, goes opposite way. She's sweating.

CODEX (CONT'D)

(small and sad)
Where do I go please?

Way across the room, Codex spots Vork's bald head.

She makes her way slowly through the crowd towards him.

INT. CONVENTION LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Vork is in line at a booth for free "Sir Loop-A-Lot" hats. He has 15 HUGE bags over his shoulders. (THE INSIDE OF THE BAGS ARE GREEN-SCREEN GREEN). As his turn approaches, he puts some neon sunglasses on and walks up to the table. A SURLY TEEN gives him the evil eye.

SURLY TEEN

Look, I've told you three times already. One per person.

VORK

(weird high-pitched voice)
I've never been here before.

SURLY TEEN

You're weird enough looking to where I remember you. Again and again.

Nearby Vork spots a KID nearby, about six, eating an ice cream cone in another line going through a set of double doors. Above the door is a big sign: AUTOGRAPH AREA.

VORK

It's not for me, it's for, uh... my son.

(to Kid)

Uh, here, Timmy, hubby, d'uh, scoriacis... BOY!

The Kid walks over. He has ice cream all over his face.

VORK (CONT'D)

(fake nice)

There you are! My son. Ask the nice man for your hat.

(to Teen)

He's shy. And has several attention deficit disorders.

PARENT (O.S.)

GRAYSON! Why'd you get out of line?

The PARENT of the Kid rushes up, grabs his hand.

SURLY TEEN

Grayson? Seriously?

PARENT

Robin's real-life name, from Batman comics before Bruce's son Damien assumed the role? Previously known as Nightwing, now known as Batman?

Vork and the Kid nod in agreement.

PARENT (CONT'D)

(to Kid)

Okay, we don't have time to go to the end of the line again, so you can just forget about getting Darth Vader's autograph, okay?

VORK

He's giving away autographs?

PARENT

No. Twenty dollars each. In the Autograph Area.

VORK

People foolishly pay celebrities to sign items for them?

PARENT

They also take pictures with you.

VORK

(to Kid)

Pray you become an orphan. Bruce Wayne would never be so fiscally irresponsible!

The Parent and Kid leave as Codex rushes up.

CODEX

Vork, hey! Come with me to the Game booth?

Vork points slowly to Codex and raises another eyebrow at the surly teen, who reluctantly hands over a hat. Vork puts it on.

VORK

Absolutely.

They exit.

INT. CONVENTION HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Busy. Doors lead to different conferences: "It's All Coming Up Whedon", "Star Trek Cupcake Contest", "DC Genealogy", etc). Vork and Codex talk as they walk.

VORK

I was able to obtain fifteen complimentary human-sized bags.

(MORE)

VORK (CONT'D)

If Bladezz can't get the room free, we're now able to manufacture a tent city to avoid hotel expenses.

CODEX

Ah, good idea. How would you like me to visit your house more often?

VORK

I'm going to choose option b, not visit at all.

CODEX

Ah, it's just I might be seeing Zaboo- a lot. That is, if things go how I'm planning.

VORK

Ah. You intend to fling your femininity at him in a copulatory manner? Tread carefully. Letting biology rule is a dangerous thing.

CODEX

Biology's not RULING me! What I...THINK I feel for him is real emotion!

Codex frowns and turns. The FURRY from the last scene is following her, then turns away.

VORK

Codex, Codex. You're a woman reaching the end of her fertile cycle. This desperate biological imperative is driving you to seek a genomic legacy, nothing more.

CODEX

That is ridiculous. Haven't you ever been in love? It's more than just genome!

VORK

No. Love is nothing more than bastardized biology, have you not seen "March of the Penguins"?

CODEX

I don't care what you or anyone in The Guild says, Zaboo is most probably, certainly, almost the man for me...maybe.

Codex trails off as they stop in a Panel Room doorway.

INT. CONVENTION PANEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

At the front of the room, WORKOUT NERD, a guy in his early 30's with wire-frame glasses (held on with an eyeglass bungee) leads the group through an aerobics class. He's wearing hiking shorts and boots, knee-high socks and a tee-shirt that says, "Hard Body Nerd". He mimes using a pickaxe.

WORKOUT NERD

Crit, crit, lightening bolt,
lightening bolt. Okay, let's ride
into battle, everybody get on your
mount and let's ride into battle.
We're riding into battle, we're
riding into battle, and now

In the back, Zaboo works out, totally sweaty. He's wearing Macrame Yoda ears. He spots Vork and Codex, waves.

ZABOO

Oh, hey, dudes! MMO workout.
Calisthenic'd!

WORKOUT NERD

Hey! Mister! You better start
paying attention to the workout!

ZABOO

Sorry.

INT. CONVENTION HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Vork and Codex move on.

VORK

You were saying?

WORKOUT NERD

Alright, now we're going to kill
all these orcs with a fireball!

INT. CONVENTION FLOOR - DAY

Where the magic happens: The convention floor. Booths line the floor, small and large. In one corner of the convention hall is booth 451. Banners for "The Game".

EXT. GAME BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Closer on "The Game" booth. Computers are set up in long rows, a line of fans is queued to get in and play. The front of the booth is manned by a few guys, including CRAVEN, a low-energy slacker. Bladezz, in Cheesy pirate garb, approaches.

BLADEZZ

Yo, I'm looking for Kevinator. His Pirate awaits! ARG!

CRAVEN

ARG! Haha, sorry buddy, Kevin got fired. Messed up too many Guild Halls. So the player complaints took him down.

BLADEZZ

But...the dude was gonna hook me up!

CRAVEN

Was he now? You know, he's said that to a lot of guys like you. Hey, Floyd!

Craven yells over to FLOYD, high-strung and neurotic guy in his early 40's, who's working deeper in the booth.

FLOYD

Yeah?

CRAVEN

We got another Kevinator joke invite!

FLOYD

Hey! The pirate kid! Hey, go, say it! Say the line!

BLADEZZ

Ahem. "Taste My Pirate Paddy."

FLOYD

Pretty cool.

Floyd goes back to work. Craven is not impressed.

CRAVEN

Uh, the big boss over there really loves internet memes, you know. He's been down lately, so I guess Kevin wanted to cheer him up.

BLADEZZ

Okay so wait. Do you still want me to sign stuff and pose with people? Um, you can pay for my hotel room, right?

CRAVEN

No.

Craven looks behind Bladezz and sighs. TAY ZONDAY walks up.

TAY ZONDAY
Pardon. Who am I serenading?

Craven gestures for Tay to follow him into the booth.

CRAVEN
Do you know the "Double Rainbow"
song?

TAY ZONDAY
Ohohoh! Let's do it!

CRAVEN
Let's do it, man. That came from
the heart.

Craven and Tay exit, leaving Bladezz fuming.

INT. CONVENTION LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Tink stands in the convention lobby, brown tee-shirt box open beside her with a scrawled sign, "Shirts \$20 BUY ONE!"

TINK
Tee-shirts, twenty dollars! Baby
with a gun, what's not to love!

A GUY stops to take a picture of her with a disposable camera. Tink grabs it, throws it down, stomps on it.

TINK (CONT'D)
HEY! Buy something first!

The Guy exits as Rachel approaches Tink warily.

RACHEL
Hello! Remember me?

TINK
Barely.

RACHEL
Okay. Do you have a permit to sell
those?

TINK
Why?

RACHEL
I'm sorry, but you have to have a
booth or a table to sell things.
It's rules and all.

TINK

I'm a girl. Rules in Geek-ville
don't apply to us, right?

RACHEL

Nooo. I'm gonna have to ask you to,
um, pack up?

TINK

Make me, squirrel.

Two STORM TROOPER security guys come to loom over Tink.

TINK (CONT'D)

Stormtroopers? Whatever.

She grabs her t-shirt box and drags it away to exit.

EXT. GAME BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Bladezz stands near the Game Booth. He's offering head shots
of himself to passersby. No one stops. He's pitiful.

BLADEZZ

Free photo! Free photo! You? Thank
you, very good. Okay. Come on,
completely free! Yours, yours. Can
I sign your face?

An ATTENDEE takes a photo, then immediately throws it in a
nearby trash can. Codex and Vork walk up to Bladezz.

CODEX

Why aren't you at the Game booth?
Aren't you a special guest?

BLADEZZ

Stupid Kevinator screwed me over!
I'm nothing but a punch line for
him, AND, get this, he was fired
before the convention so I can't
even yell at him now.

VORK

Someone drank my sweet juice glass
of justice? They must re-hire him
so I can have him re-fired! I
demand it!

CODEX

I can't believe they'd...ooh! A
free play spot!

Codex runs into the Game Booth. Bladezz holds out a picture,
pleading, to another passerby. They ignore him.

BLADEZZ

I will sign this for you, totally free!

VORK

Bladezz, you have no appeal to anyone with signature or picture. Your currency is being a fool and you're worth less than a dollar.

BLADEZZ

But I said I'd take care of the room situation. How am I gonna pay?

Vork looks down at his huge bag, the green screen part. He gazes off, preoccupied as dollar signs float around his head.

VORK

Create value where there is none. Something Mrs. Zaboo taught me. Bladezz, go upstairs and retrieve your laptop! Does your phone do video? Etc, etc, etc. I just had a dozen dollars idea.

INT. CONVENTION LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Tink drags her box towards the elevators. The doors open up and Clara exits, towing her suitcase, upset.

TINK

Clara! Where are you going?

CLARA

I'm leaving! This whole stupid being pregnant thing is the anti-fun! They won't let me do the convention zipline, breakfast martinis are totally out, and five people have asked me, "When is the baby due?" This place is awful!

TINK

So what, you're gonna walk home?

CLARA

Well, I didn't think it through that far!

TINK

Forget fun, help me off-load these tees! We gotta find a booth to let us sell them using their permit. When you wipe, get back up again!

CLARA

I guess. Fun me wanted tho. Sad.

TINK

(reluctantly)

And when you pop that kid out of the Dutch Oven, we could do a girl's weekend away. Agree now, I'm not offering more.

CLARA

Okay, sounds GREAT! You're like my sister from another brother-in-law!

TINK

Huh?

CLARA

I love you.

TINK

Whatever.

CLARA

Give me a hug.

Tink drags her box away, Clara follows.

INT. CONVENTION PANEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zaboo, still sweaty from workout class, rushes to the very end of a line that's slowing moving into a panel room. He almost makes it in, but is blocked by a DOORMAN VOLUNTEER.

DOORMAN

Sorry, panel's full.

ZABOO

But, but...I gotta be part of this! It's "Interpreting Middle-Earth Topography into Vegetable Arts"? I was gonna make Broccoli Ents!

DOORMAN

Most panels, you're going to want to wait in line for an hour, sometimes two. Saw a guy do six in '98.

ZABOO

Yeah, but maybe I can just stand in the back or something?

DOORMAN

Can't.

ZABOO

Can you just keep the door open and I'll watch it from-

DOORMAN

Whole point of the doors is that they shut.

ZABOO

I just came form the MMO workout, okay? I just- how can you do both panels at once? I mean, it's ridiculous.

DOORMAN

Socks and sandals: DTP buddy.

ZABOO

I do not know what DTP means.

DOORMAN

Defeats The Purpose. It's like wearing a t-shirt under a bikini. Alright, I'm sorry.

ZABOO

There's a lot of things that you could improve on...

The Doorman shuts the door in his face.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

Must have it all! MUST HAVE IT ALL!
(to passers-by)
Yeah, I'm talking to myself. Stop looking at me.

INT. GAME BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Codex plays the Game at one of the demo computers. She looks annoyed, keeps playing. Floyd, the manager approaches.

FLOYD

How's the demo? Great changes, huh?

CODEX

No. They nerfed "Rising Faith"?!
Are they smoking-crack-crazy?!

FLOYD

Well, a lot of us worked really hard to get this demo ready for the con. You know, I haven't slept in a week, personally, getting it ready for everybody to enjoy.

CODEX

Well, these changes are moronic! I mean, they get rid of "Gleaming Cross" but keep "Aurora's Veil"?

FLOYD

Well, you know, uh, the creator oversaw all these changes personally.

CODEX

Without "Gleaming Cross," these warlocks are gonna eat our lunch in PvP! They throw out this new "Demon's Voice" ability? Boom. One-shot. The Creator needs a reality check.

FLOYD

(breaks)

Seriously?! I mean, like, HUNDREDS of us worked for like MILLIONS of hours to get this ready for the con. And then you... you spend TWO minutes on it and you start to TEAR IT APART! Do you even THINK before you type stuff and criticize or say things? I can't believe I'm getting TROLLED to my own FACE! Why don't you create an imaginary world?! It'll probably be like FRESNO or something! Screw this! I need an Kale smoothie!

Floyd exits, upset and still ranting to himself. Craven, who's been orbiting, approaches.

CRAVEN

Wow. You just tore a new a-hole into Floyd Petrowski, the creator of our Game. Bravo.

Craven exits. Codex stares in horror for a beat, then starts pounding her keyboard.

CODEX

"Time Warp" spell! Work! PLEASE!

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 4:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Codex looks sick into her webcam. The hotel room is empty.

CODEX

Good thing I only had two bites of pre-owned frittata this morning. I can't believe I insulted Floyd Petrowski. To gamers, he is the Itzhak Perlman of violinists, the Oprah of middle-aged women, the...whoever of surfing and/or golf! Floyd Petrowski INVENTED the MMO, in his dad's basement at sixteen! He's the guru epic drop of RPGs and I called his ideas moronic, to his face! Okay. I created the anxiety dream that will haunt me for the rest of my life. Except my brain will make it worse, so I'll be insulting him while naked, falling off a cliff, holding a dead kitten. Blerg, frittata.

INT. AUTOGRAPH AREA - CONTINUOUS

Medium-sized room. Celebs are signing behind tables. Fans are queued up, but Vork and Bladezz are set up in a corner and have the longest line! A sign above: "Cheesy Pirate Internet Kid". A makeshift green screen hangs (from the con bags interiors) and Bladezz acts like an idiot in front of it as Vork manages the camera and the money. EAGER FAN approaches.

FAN

Can the pirate put me in a headlock with a pro-wrestling background and say, "To the plank with ye, matey"?!

VORK

Five extra liability dollars.

They complete their transaction.

BLADEZZ

Alright! Roll up, buddy, let's do this! Whats your name?

GUY

Donald, with a "G" (?)

In the booth adjacent, Grant Imahara watches in disbelief with BRENT SPINER.

GRANT IMAHARA
Who is that kid?!

BRENT SPINER
Some internet pirate. This viral video stuff is just a fad. Thank you, there you go. Great.

GRANT IMAHARA gives him a skeptical look. Back at Bladezz's booth, Rachel approaches with two FRIENDS.

BLADEZZ
Money well-spent! Well, lookie who it is. Are you in the wrong "Special Guest" line? Because the fifth vampire corpse from "Twilight" is in the opposite corner, yo.

RACHEL
I finally caught up on your body of work. BLOWN AWAY! How did you invent your character? What inspired you?! How could I have missed your genius?!

BLADEZZ
Okay, now you're asking the right questions. When I was four...

VORK
Bladezz! Ben wants you to swim with him in the underwater kingdom of the Snorks!

BLADEZZ
Okay, uh...Rachel, is it? How 'bout you and your homies meet this pirate in the lobby tonight and we'll catch a soda...discuss my process?

VORK (O.S.)
WE HAVE A RAID TONIGHT! Fornicate at a later date.

BLADEZZ
Tomorrow?

RACHEL
Ok! Lobby, seven tomorrow! SQUEAL!

Rachel and her friends scurry off. Bladezz smiles slowly.

BLADEZZ

Alright! Bladezz got Groupies.

INT. FOOD COURT (OR OUTSIDE CURB) - AFTERNOON

Codex and Zaboo sit, sharing a plate of dark chocolate cookies. Codex nibbles, Zaboo is intent on his phone.

CODEX

Oh, and then I said, "Creator guy needs a reality check," TO the creator, and then I just...ah, these cookies are really good, thanks.

ZABOO

Don't thank me, thank my "Genre Recipes" class. Those cookies are from episode 7 season 3 of Battlestar. They got frakadamia nuts.

CODEX

Well, thanks for rushing over.

ZABOO

I'm glad I caught your message. I had to switch to a group texting app, just to keep up.

Zaboo starts to get up and leave, Codex stops him.

CODEX

Who's texting you?

While Zaboo talks, Codex catches sight of the FURRY nearby, drinking boba through his mask with a very long straw.

ZABOO

Like everyone at the convention! You know how you can't get into panels because the lines are so long, but you CAN save a seat. So I started pooling people's numbers, and I created a network of fans who save each other's seats for them! All you gotta do is snag an extra seat, and text the network, and boom! The the guy at the other end of the network goes, "Oh, hey, my friend says there's a seat in row x," no waiting. I call it "Seat-Savers-The-Buddy-System-For-Making-New-Friendships-And-Watching-Your-Favorite-Panels-Organization-Inc."!

CODEX

Wow, that's awesome! I mean, the name really doesn't work.

ZABOO

Right.

CODEX

But hey, cool concept.

Codex glances back and the FURRY is gone again.

ZABOO

(?) Good thing you're in my favorites, your message went right to the top.

CODEX

I'm in your favorites? Wow.

ZABOO

Yep. Obvious'd. Well, next panel starts in ten, gotta fly.

Codex reaches out and puts her hand on Zaboo's.

CODEX

Wait. Let's do this. Together.

ZABOO

You wanna go to "Hot Girls from Other Worlds"?

CODEX

No, no, mean,um. I, uh...I think I like you. In a "you know" kinda way.

INT. CONVENTION FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Clara and Tink walk down a row of booths with their t-shirt box. Clara is covered in bracelets, Tink is wearing an awesome slave Leia costume. Another Slave Leia passes by.

TINK

Skank badger.

COSPLAYER

Aren't you a little short for a Slave Leia?

TINK

Mine is home-made.

CLARA

I love booth hopping! And everyone takes charge cards!

TINK

You spent more money on bracelets than we'll ever earn on these t-shirts, and STILL no one will help us sell our stuff! I'm showing a lot of skin for nothing!

CLARA

Well, it doesn't make sense for these vendors to cut in a middle-man, Tink. Their narrow profit margin barely covers their booth rental AND travel cost so they'd have to charge 90% of our wholesale to justify a partnership. Ooh! SHINY!

Clara darts away. Tink follows, exasperated.

TINK

Wait! You sounded smart for a minute!

ZABOO

Um...I'm feeling light headed. Why now? What changed?

CODEX

Why do people keep asking that? I mean, do I need a reason? Do people analyze how magnets work?

ZABOO

Yes, in physics class. Like all the time.

CODEX

Well, that's just stupid! I mean, sometimes you just have to go with things and not think about them-really go... Or...I dunno...

ZABOO

Do you like sports games?

CODEX

Sportsgames? No, ew.

ZABOO

Like, let's say you got a free one.
And you're just sitting there and
you're super bored.

CODEX

I mean, I guess I MIGHT try it...

ZABOO

But you'd probably hate it! And
now it's used! And the resale is
totallyblown! Think about how the
game might feel?!

CODEX

Well, I mean, the economics are
pretty clear, but I don't thnk a
game feels...ooh. This is an
analogy.

ZABOO

Look. I worked really hard to be
your friend. And now that I know
you, I like you. As a friend. But
when I meet that special someone, I
want lightning to strike on both
ends.

CODEX

Yeah, but, are you sure there's
nothing's striking here?

ZABOO

Is it a crit for you? Or is it
just a lightning spell that does
zero damage 'cause of your
emotional resist armor?

CODEX

I guess your stats are right. I'm
sorry.

ZABOO

Okay, let's not let it be awkward,
okay?

CODEX

Too late.

ZABOO

Okay. You've already gutted the
creator of our Game.

Codex looks downtrodden, then spots Floyd rushing through the crowd, checking something on his phone. He exits quickly.

CODEX

Oh, there he goes right now. Stab me in the heart. Dead kittens, dead kittens, dead kittens...

ZABOO

Go! Talk to him! I mean, apologize! To his face.

CODEX

What? No, then he'll reject me like you just did and then I'll wanna vomit and then... okay. Can you come with me?

ZABOO

I can't. Duty calls, you know, for the, uh, Seat Savers. The buddy system. For Making Friendships and...

CODEX

Okay, see you later. Bye.

ZABOO

Alright. Go get 'em!

They rush off in opposite directions.

EXT. STEAMPUNK BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Clara rushes up to a booth full of Steampunk items. Clothes, baubles, all intricately made, fascinatingly sepia. She stares in awe, like a kid in a candy store.

CLARA

What is this strange stuff?! I've never seen anything like it!

ALINA (O.S.)

If you don't know, you should probably move on.

ALINA, a slim and proper Asian girl approaches. She's head to toe in Steampunk and looks awesome. Tink drags her box up.

TINK

It's Steampunk. The Euro-trash of nerd-dom.

ALINA

Princess Leia. How original.

CLARA

Can we sell our shirts in your booth? We're desperate. Whatever cut you want you can have!

TINK

Clara where did the smart words go?

ALINA

I'm sorry, but do those look like they match our color palette?

CLARA

I don't know what that means...

ALINA

The answer is no. Would you like to purchase something? If not, kindly clear the aisle. Thank you.

Alina pulls out a tiny fan that is Steampunked out and fans herself. Clara points to a row of Steampunk goggles.

CLARA

But I wanna know what those goggle things are!

ALINA

They're called *goggles*.

CLARA

(fascinated)

NEAT! Do you guys have baby clothes?

ALINA

A gas mask perhaps...

Tink starts to tug Clara away.

TINK

Come on, Clara, let's go!

CLARA

But I wanna know more about the clocky windy stuff!

TINK

That's not gonna help...oh my God.

Tink looks across the room at another small booth. A mid-west portly couple in their 50's, EDITH AND JOHN, are perusing the wares. Tink spins around, hiding her face.

TINK (CONT'D)
Emergency bail alert!

Tink yanks Clara away through a nearby Emergency Exit door, leaving the t-shirt box in the booth. An alarm screams. Alina looks down at the box like it's full of insects.

ALINA
Uh, pardon. Ew.

INT. CONVENTION BAR AREA - EVENING

Codex stumbles into a small bar area, face buried in a map of the convention. Her map is marked all over with Red "X"s. She looks around. Couples snuggle. She gets a bit down, then spots Floyd with CHET GRANWALD across the room. Slick and oozy in a suit, Chet sticks out like a sore thumb.

She "X"s out literally the last place on her map and works her way across the room. As she nervously circles Floyd's table, she makes out some of their conversation.

FLOYD
Y'know, I really tried to get excited about this demo, but no one's responding. The fans think the changes are moronic. And maybe they're right. We could can try a new angle on the force powers, we could tweak the party mechanics... Do you know that Soundgarden is no an oldies band?

CHET
No matter what you do, you're gonna get dogged for it. Cash out, man! Move on! Don't worry about your baby. RTX promise.

Floyd stands, anxious but resolute, throws back his drink.

FLOYD
Ok. You know what? Maybe it's time. Huzzah! To the kingdom! Draw up the paperwork.
(gasps)
GAH! Whiskey bleck! (?)

Floyd exits. Codex tries to stop him in vain.

CODEX

Wai-wat a second!

(to herself)

Did he just say he's gonna sell our
game?!

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 5:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Codex talks into her webcam, speaks hushed and urgent. Clara and Tink are behind her, setting their computers up.

CODEX

Ok, eaves-trapolation: Floyd is gonna SELL OUR GAME! That guy he was with, his name was Chet Grunwald. I clocked his badge. Yes, I used the word "clocked", I've been watching a lot of detective shows lately. I looked him up, and he works for RTX, the end-game, big-bad of corporate gaming! RTX takes indie games and sucks them up, and spits them out with marketing and glossy graphics, and they put the characters on fast food cups, and it just- ew! Floyd looked so down and depressed and I'm SURE he was referring to me with the "morons" comment. Man, I'm such a perp.

TINK (O.S.)

Hey Codex! You and Zaboo do it yet?

CLARA (O.S.)

OMG! Did you? Did you do it here? Oh! What about on the table?

CODEX

(offscreen)
I dont want to talk about it!
(into camera)
Oh, yeah. There's that, too.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

The Guild plays on their computers (sans Zaboo).

CODEX

(histrionic)
I'm NOT being histrionic! "Draw up the paperwork"? What else could that mean? *Strength buff.*

VORK

In a daytime syndicated court of law, I don't think speculation of this sort would be admissable evidence. *Take down the orcs, Clara! Use frost!*

CLARA

Well, he could have been talking about anything! Like, maybe he ordered a bride from the Baltics! *Popcicle baddies incoming! Pew, pew!*

CODEX

No! It was definitely BUSINESS-Y. The suit guy, he works for RTX. He stood out at the con like Darth Vader at a baby shower! *Bladezz, you're drawing aggro! Shielding!*

TINK

Who cares if he sells the game? It's been around five years, no one's gonna screw with it. *Stunning shot on the Shaman. CRAP! I'm down.*

BLADEZZ

Big companies are fine. What harm have they ever done, except being big? *I'm down.*

VORK

A more ignorant statement I've never heard. Remind me to lend you "Atlas Shrugged." *Codex! Heals!*

CODEX

But if they shut down the game... *Guys we just wiped! And It's like you don't even care! Zaboo!*

Widen out. Zaboo is moving post-it notes around on the wall in an elaborate hand-made time grid. Two MASTER CHIEF cos-players stand beside him.

ZABOO

Alright alright! Master Chiefs, we'll re-convene at twenty-one hundred hours!

The Master Chiefs salute and exit.

CLARA

What's the deal with your helmet friends? Did they bring snacks?

ZABOO

Naw, my "Seat Savers" organization has gotten so big that I've had to recruit help just to run it. Found those guys sneaking an old lady into a Malcolm McDowell look-alike contest. Good peeps.

VORK

Are you forming a cabal? That interests me.

ZABOO

I don't know what that means. But, I did rework my schedule so I could fit in 48 screenings and panels, just this weekend. Just gotta stay up and do it all.

(he drinks a Mana Energy
Potion)

First up: "Fable: Tickle Your Way to the Monarchy"!

(sits)

So where are we, Veil Stone Gulch? Let's do this, I got 14 minutes!

CODEX

14 minutes? We have another hour to raid!

ZABOO

I'm overbooked this weekend. That's why I got the Master Chief assistants!

CODEX

I cannot believe you! The Guild is more important than your stupid Butt Warmer group. Are you trying to tear us apart?

ZABOO

Over dramatic'd.

TINK

See, Codex? Why would you be into him?

BLADEZZ

You just need to do it already. I'll watch.

ZABOO

Wait. You told them about our thing?

CLARA
EVERYONE.

VORK
(to Zaboo)
She's quasi-semi-partially
attracted to you. It's a genetic
fool's errand.

CLARA
Are you guys gonna have BAYBEEZ?!

CODEX
NO! It's just... we... I don't want
to talk about it.

ZABOO
We agreed it wasn't gonna work.
Dead end'd.

CLARA
So you guys kissed, made sure it
was okay?

Codex and Zaboo look at each other.

CLARA (CONT'D)
Well there's only one way to find
out: you gotta download the demo
to make sure!!

Clara takes the two and shoves them into the bathroom
together.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Codex and Zaboo stare at each other.

ZABOO
Well, at least she didn't throw us
into the closet. That would've been
a weird analogy.

CODEX
Yeah...

ZABOO
Hey...

CODEX
(BEAT)
Okay, so, we're, uh, here.

ZABOO

Well, maybe we don't have to do this at all. You know, we could just kinda like pretend...

CODEX

Oh, no, no. I think we should try it out, you know, definitively decide, one way or another, right?

ZABOO

Cool. I'm game.

CODEX

Okay.

ZABOO

Maybe we should do, like, a count-down.

CODEX

Oh, good idea!

ZABOO

Three, two...

CODEX

One, two...

*

*

ZABOO

Okay, you're gonna go from.. Okay. Alright, here we go.

CODEX

Three, two...

ZABOO

One, two... alright.

*

*

CODEX

Okay. Three.

ZABOO

Two.

CODEX

One.

Zaboo and Codex lean in and kiss: BIG MUSIC and...it's like kissing cardboard. For both of them. They withdraw.

ZABOO

Um...

CODEX

It's not good-

ZABOO

I'm gonna stop kissing you now.

CODEX

It was...

ZABOO

I mean, it wasn't horribe. It was...

CODEX

It just was like cardboard, a little bit.

ZABOO

Right. Friends.

CODEX

Yeah.

ZABOO

We're friends.

CODEX

Okay! Done.

ZABOO

Yeah, alright.

CODEX

So, uh... That's it, right?

ZABOO

Hey, remember that time we got shoved into that bathroom and then we started, like, totally makin' out? Like, hardcore, and it was... Too soon'd?

CODEX

Too soon'd.

ZABOO

Okay.

They smile, nod and exit.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zaboo and Codex step out of the bathroom.

CODEX

So...it didn't work out, Zaboo and I are definitely not compatible, we...hello?

The Guild is gathered around Bladezz' laptop, ignoring her.

ZABOO
 (walks over)
 What are you guys looking at?

BLADEZZ
 Oh, Vork here talked us into the fancy celebrity autograph area. Currently watching the fruits of our labor. Oh, this crap is paying for our room rental, by the way.

ZABOO
 People actually pay you to sign stuff?

BLADEZZ
 Better. Check this out.

Codex and Zaboo join them to see videos of Bladezz, dressed as Pirate, fooling around with awkward fans in front of green screen. The videos have weird clip art landscape backgrounds. Bladezz makes a fool of himself, the fans are loving it.

VORK
 For a small fee, Cheesy Pirate Kid will debase himself in a video of your whim.

BLADEZZ
 Meme on demand, at your service.

TINK
 You're whoring yourself out for money?

BLADEZZ
 Hey, if the name fits, I'll wear it.

CODEX
 Guys, we gotta figure out what's going on with the game, guys! Does anyone want to take time out of their BUSY schedule and adventure game this with me tomorrow?

Tink walks over to the closet.

TINK
 I'll go with you, Codex. I have to go pick up that box of shirts Clara and I left at the snotty Steampunk booth too.

CLARA

Oh no NO! Let me get the shirts!
I want to help with our business!!

TINK

You just wanna go stare at the
clockwork stuff again.

She opens it to reveal a plush outfit version of herself, big head and all. Clara nods eagerly.

CLARA

I know, you guys! So there's this
new thing that I'm totally into!
There's clock pieces and brown and
shiny bits and top hats and
corsets, it's like my new favorite
thing! I'm gonna go to the booth,
get our shirts and me and the
pretty girl are gonna become best
friends!

Everyone murmurs, encouraging but confused.

VARIOUS

Yeah... awesome... great story.

CODEX

How can you guys be calm about
this!? I mean, we're talking about
our game's existence! What else do
I have? I mean, I'm unemployed,
clearly my personal life is a
disaster - and I just, I don't
think...

BLADEZZ

You've been a big weeping
vagina all weekend!

VORK

You're engaging in conspiracy
theory speculations!

TINK

Nothing real has happened
yet.

CLARA

Did you guys kiss already? I
forgot to notice.

Zaboo pulls out a whole Ginseng and starts gnawing on it.

ZABOO

Guys, the game stuff can wait,
okay? This con is basically the
epitome of living life! Must stay
up! Ginseng'd!
(phone buzzes)
Oh, hey!

(MORE)

ZABOO (CONT'D)

Anyone wanna go to a Superhero party with me for 36 minutes? One of the bouncers is on my "Seat-Saver's" list.

Tink and Bladezz spring up enthusiastically.

BLADEZZ
Hell yeah!

TINK
Oh yeah, PARTY! Ew, Bladezz, please don't go.

VORK
Absolutely not.

Vork lays on the bed, immediately goes to sleep. Clara pouts.

CLARA
I'm not gonna go just to WATCH you guys having raving and boozing and all-night pill popping fun! I'm gonna stay here and eat room snacks!

From the bed, Vork calls out, strict.

VORK
No you will not!

CODEX
We cannot part when the very fabric of our social existence is threatened, I mean...

Tink, Zaboo and Bladezz grab her and exit.

INT. CONVENTION PARTY - NIGHT

Corner of a party. Nerdy guys stand on the sidelines, drinking awkwardly. A few people in superhero outfits dance through to "Geek Out" by Beefy. Bladezz stands with a Jones Soda in-hand near Zaboo, who's dancing and simultaneously falling asleep.

BLADEZZ
I can't believe they carded me. Don't they know who I am?!

ZABOO
(phone buzzes)
Dude, I gotta go to like ten more parties tonight! Ugh, so exhausted. I need an energy drink...

Out of nowhere, one of Zaboo's Master Chiefs hands over a huge can of Whoopass energy drink. Zaboo starts to chug.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

Good stuff. Master Chiefs, clear a path.

Zaboo exits as Tink dances over to Codex, passing by Bladezz.

BLADEZZ

Oh, hey Tink!

Tink ignores him and walks over to Codex, who's standing in the corner super drunk and sad. Over her shoulder stands the FURRY. She doesn't even notice.

CODEX

Drunk isn't helping me. My life is just really...empty, you know? What will I do without the game? Loneliness.

TINK

Codex, you take everything so seriously. I mean, just...

Tink spots two BLONDE GIRLS, twins, late teens, walking their direction. She panics, and throws her arms around Codex.

TINK (CONT'D)

Pretend to kiss me.

CODEX

Okay...

Codex drunkenly goes in to kiss Tink, hits her cheek.

TINK

PRETEND! YOU PERV!

CODEX

What are you hiding from? Oh, the pretty girls? I really like your eyelashes.

TINK

Yeah, the blonde chicks. Can't let them see me!

CODEX

Why?

TINK

They're MY SISTERS!!

Off a surprised Codex, they bury themselves in a fake kiss. Bladezz drinks as he looks over at Tink and Codex, then does a spit take.

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 6:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Codex groggily stares into her webcam. Everyone else is still asleep.

CODEX

What the heck happened last night?
My eyes are super puffy underneath,
probably from the drinking and
crying combo. I vaguely remember
Tink's face being like, *this close
to me*, super smooth skin, and then,
I think... that can't be right.
I'm so confused! Bottom line, this
trip is giving me perspective, but
it is NOT the good kind. I have no
idea how to steer my life. I keep
grasping for things that are not
good for me, like Fawkes, and
Zaboo, and the game... Why am I so
out of control right now? Why
can't I just be NORMAL?!

(BEAT)

And why are Tink's sisters white?
What's up with that?

EXT. STEAMPUNK BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

A rope blocks entry to the Steampunk booth. Clara stares in, excited. Alina sits with two other people: GERALD, a tall, thin man in a top hat, waistcoat and crooked fake moustache, and LIZETTE, a burly lesbian cross-dressing as a man, very dapper. They sit around an antique table sipping tea.

CLARA

Hey, hey!

They take a slow, condescending beat to look over at her.

GERALD

Yes?

CLARA

Oh, my God, you guys look so
amazing together!

(bad accent)

OY! Spot of tea with you, maties?

ALINA

You'll notice the rope: We are
having tea. Please return later.

CLARA

Oh, but Tink and I left our tee-shirts here yesterday.

ALINA

Ah yes. Gerald.

GERALD

Alina.

ALINA

Be a love, extract her dry goods from under the sideboard? I quarantined them because the synthetic fabric choice was absolutely ghastly.

GERALD

Right, right.

He gets up and crosses back into the booth.

CLARA

You know, to be honest, I woulda come back anyway. I think you're booth is just the coolest! How can I join your club?

LIZETTE

Called it a club, did she? Cheeky.

ALINA

We are not a club, dear. We are aficionados of the Steampunk genre.

CLARA

Whatever it is, I wanna be a member!

LIZETTE

Steampunk is not just a whim, girl! It's a way of life!

ALINA

It is a VAST wardrobe commitment.

CLARA

Oh I have commitment! I'll buy whatever. The husband never sees the credit card statements, I have the kids hide them, it's a game! Look, I had a crummy time until you guys got here, it would just make my con! Pretty pretty please?

LIZETTE

You're giving me... ennui.

CLARA

Uh, the bathroom's that way.

Gerard comes back carrying the tee-shirt box.

CLARA (CONT'D)

Ooh, you're so strong!

(adjusts Gerald's
moustache)

Come here...let me just get this...
for you. You're so cute!

GERALD

My thanks. Lizette-

LIZETTE

Gerald.

GERALD

We could use a fourth for the
costume contest. Losing Pete to
that steam-powered pogo stick
incident was bad luck all around.

LIZETTE

THAT is no Pete.

ALINA

Our reputation must be maintained.
As costume champions for two years
straight, we have standards to
uphold. To train her in but a
day's time...

LIZETTE

Can you wear a corset?

CLARA

Uhhh, well it may squeeze my baby's
head into a weird shape...but it'll
pop back! Sure! Sew me up!

INT. CONVENTION PANEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zaboo walks down the edge of a packed panel room, Master
Chiefs at either side. He's extremely jittery, circles under
his eyes, pounding an energy drink as his Master Chiefs hand
him schedules. Think West Wing shot.

ZABOO

Alright, tell hackysack45 that there are no openings available in "Vampire Anatomy" panel, but we can get him a slot in "Kevin Smith on Kevin Smith hosted by Kevin Smith" at 3pm. Oh, and put out an all-points for "Global Warming in Thundera: An Inconvenient Tooth" we need a seat there. One of our elite members is offering a handshake with Jewel Staite in exchange. Probably could upgrade that to a hug, if necessary, but let's keep that as negotiating capital, alright?

Zaboo approaches the front row. As he arrives, MAIDMARION nods, and lifts up a big purse holding a seat next to her. Zaboo makes a show of being best friends.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

Thank you, non-stranger MaidMarion!
(whispers)
Got a seat for you in "The Science of Supernatural" right after this.

MAIDMARION

Thank thee!

ZABOO

Been up 48 hours straight, and yet the method is still holding, hahahahahaah!

Zaboo turns to sit, but suddenly, a WEASELY FAN steals his seat.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

Uh, dude, that's my seat.

WEASELY FAN

I'm sitting in it.

ZABOO

Right, but she was saving it for me.

WEASELY FAN

I waited in line, it's legit. It's mine!

ZABOO

Move now!

WEASELY FAN
MAKE ME!

MAIDMARION
Boss, don't let him break the Seat
Savers!

All around, a dozen ATTENDEES stand in solidarity. Zaboo looks around, spots the Master Chiefs. An AHA moment.

ZABOO
Indeed. Master Chiefs? Lend a
gauntlet?

Zaboo hands Master Chiefs a comic from Weasely Fan's Convention bag.

ZABOO (CONT'D)
Oh, look at that, Rubbergirl, first
edition eh?

The Master Chiefs indicate the start of ripping it...

WEASELY FAN
Handle that gently!

ZABOO
They won't.

WEASELY FAN
Alright, fine I'm leaving. A pox
on you!

The Weasely Fan grabs his comic and leaves. Master Chiefs follow after. Zaboo slowly takes a seat.

ZABOO
Already got chicken pox once, so I
can't get it again.

EXT. GAME BOOTH - DAY

Codex and Tink stake out the game booth, silent and awkward next to each other. Tink is wearing the plush version of herself. Pull out to see the FURRY standing on the other side of Codex. Codex turns and starts.

CODEX
You are so creepy!

The Furry takes off into the crowd.

CODEX (CONT'D)
(to Tink)
So, did you, you know...

TINK

I warned you upstairs! Don't bring last night up!

CODEX

I was gonna ask you: Did you make your costume yourself?

TINK

No, someone was selling a replica of me. Total coincidence.

CODEX

Well, it looks nice.

(BEAT)

About last night...

TINK

I TOLD YOU! Don't bring it up!

CODEX

I just... wanna know because I don't really remember what happened. I mean, was there skin to skin?

TINK

Cheek skin, yes. Lip skin, no.

CODEX

Okay good. I mean, Angelina Jolie is one of my five, You know, people you can have sex with even if you're in a relationship, but I consider her the exception. I don't really- why are your sisters white?

TINK

You can't help yourself, can you?! How about you go and do something interesting with your OWN life so that we'd be remotely interested in snooping in YOUR business?

Tink stomps off, running into everyone in her path with her big costume. Codex calls after her.

CODEX

(hurt)

If I could to do that, it would be on the agenda, believe me! I'm sorry!

INT. AUTOGRAPH AREA - CONTINUOUS

Bladezz talks to a fan.

BLADEZZ

So we're shooting a commercial, and she just wants a line. And some people ask me, what is a pirate paddy? And, you know...

VORK

FINE!

Vork, piqued, approaches Bladezz with NATHAN FILLION in tow.

VORK (CONT'D)

Bladezz. There's another individual claiming to be *somebody* who wants to cut line to speak to you and won't pay for a video.

NATHAN FILLION

Hi.

BLADEZZ

(just like Rachel)

Holy CRAP! Vork, do you know who this is? Okay, I'm BLOWN AWAY! I mean, how did you invent your character? What inspired you?! How could I have missed your genius?!

NATHAN FILLION

Calm down. I'm just a guy, doing same thing you're doing.

VORK

With half the business.

NATHAN FILLION

So, I am really impressed with your operation.

BLADEZZ

Yeah, the whole video thing, it's mostly Vork's idea, but I bring the artistry, so it's this a killer combo.

NATHAN FILLION

Yeah, well, it works, it's great-Vork, is it? Is there a story behind that name?

VORK

Not for you.

NATHAN FILLION

So, I was wondering, if maybe I could take you guys out to lunch, you know, just talk a little internet strategy, I really want to get in on the mind of today's youth. Or the mean Lex Luthor behind that youth.

BLADEZZ

Lunch with you? Oh my god, that would be...

VORK

Untenable. We have a full schedule now move along, we have PAYING customers waiting!

NATHAN FILLION

(miffed)

Alrighty then.

He leaves. Bladezz is aghast.

INT. GAME BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Codex catches up to Floyd.

FLOYD

Took out the whirling blades from the play-test because it was ineffectual against the warlocks-

CODEX

Floyd! Yes, I know who you are now. I just wanted to apologize for what I said yesterday. It was rude and it was mortifying. Well, for me, actually...

FLOYD

You know what, it's fine. You were right, we're going to put the Gleaming Cross back in. It's going to be in the next play-test.

CODEX

Oh, well that's great...
(deep breath)
Are you really gonna sell the game?

FLOYD

Hey... come on, this way...

Floyd looks around panicked, then drags Codex into a corner.

FLOYD (CONT'D)

Look, I can tell from your snarky attitude that you probably play my Game. A lot.

CODEX

That would be accurate. And that's why I'm begging you! Please, don't sell!

FLOYD

My doctor says my cholesterol is so high, that my veins are like gummy worm solid. I gotta change my lifestyle. You know, I think it's time for me to cash out, walk away, let them forget about me, you know what I mean? I mean the Game will be fine. It'll be better. They might ruin it. But I mean, no, it'll be alright.

CODEX

What about your fans? This game...this game is my life!

FLOYD

It's not real.

CODEX

(BEAT)

Wow. You're right. Tink is right too. I need to get a life. You're gonna quit...maybe it's time for ME to quit too.

Codex exits.

FLOYD

Aw... you were right about the Gleaming Cross. That's back in. They'll probably take that out, though.

INT. AUTOGRAPH AREA - CONTINUOUS

BLADEZZ

Vork! That's like the fifth celebrity you've blown off today! I wanna hang out with them to say that I hung out with them! Stop driving them away!

VORK

Bladezz, fame is not something to court or aspire to. It creates a modern-day class system! These people live in a world of false perfection, create images that everybody wants, and no one can attain. I can't think of anything admirable about someone like an actor who, who gets bussed to work, given lines to parrot, having their every whim catered...

As Vork rants onward and gestures into the Autograph Area, the crowd parts and across the room Vork sees MADELINE TWAIN, early 50's and gorgeous, signing. He stutters to a stop.

VORK (CONT'D)

Charity Mannix from "Time Rings"?!
Sweet J-J-Jehoshaphat.

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 7:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Codex stares into her webcam from an empty hotel room.

CODEX

Big decisions, big life decisions.
 The past few years... you've heard
 me whine, you know they haven't
 been great. Finding The Game and
 The Guild was a life-saver for me,
 it was a safe place where I didn't
 feel like collapsing all the time.
 But lately I just... I've been
 drifting. And if I quit the game,
 will the Guildies be my friends
 anymore? Was Floyd right? Were
 they even real to begin with?

(cut to sobbing)

Without Codex, who am I?

(cut to recovering)

That's what I have to find out.

(cut to sobbing again)

I hate being adult.

(not sobbing)

I'm hungry. I might order room
 service.

(sobbing again)

Why is room service so expensive!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Codex sits at her computer, staring limply. Tink enters,
 holding her costume head under her arm. Codex doesn't turn.

TINK

Oh. Whatever.

Tink starts to throw costumes on the bed. EVERY TIME WE CUT
 TO TINK THROUGH THE SCENE SHE'S WEARING SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

TINK (CONT'D)

Too many people mistaking me for a
 the Asian girl from ANY show. Gonna
 change, I'll be outta here quick.
 What next?

Tink stares at the costumes for a long beat.

TINK (CONT'D)

I made all these myself.

Codex, for the first time, focuses on Tink.

CODEX
Are you kidding?

TINK
Pretty good for a pre-med student,
right?

CODEX
(walks over)
Yeah.

TINK
I'm not pre-med anymore. I've been
getting a Costume Design degree for
the last five semesters.

CODEX
Wow.

TINK
Yeah, but CATCH: My parents have
been paying for a pre-med degree
for two years. They have no idea I
switched majors.

CODEX
Why don't you tell them?

TINK
I'm adopted! I can't be the screw
up, that's like a bad indie film.

CODEX
Oh, you're adopted? That's why you
have white sisters. Not that there
were a lot of other options...

TINK
They were so excited that I was
gonna be a doctor, I don't wanna
disappoint, so every time I get a
text message asking, "Does this
mole look cancerous, dear?", I
have to press the "Ignore" button.
That's why I was avoiding Lara and
Tara last night. Check out my GaGa.

CODEX
Glamorous. Lara and Tara? Twins
that rhyme? Ew.

TINK
Yeah, ridiculous.

CODEX

Nice Chun Li. You should tell them.
I mean, hard decisions are hard to
decide, but... they make you feel
better after. Kind of.

TINK

Are you kidding? I've been
basically stealing from them! No
thanks. Lying and avoidance is
better.

Tink grabs a sexy Lizard costume with face mask from the bed,
heads into the bathroom to change, then stops.

TINK (CONT'D)

I didn't mean to tell you to get a
life earlier.

CODEX

No, no, you're right. I need to
live life less-sadly. I just don't
know what that is.

Tink enters the bathroom and shuts the door. Codex gets a
determined look on her face and starts searching in Tink's
purse. She pulls out a cell phone and takes a breathe.

INT. AUTOGRAPH AREA - AFTERNOON

Vork is perspiring, trying to keep the camera on the green
screen setup, but he keeps gazing over at Madeleine Twain.

BLADEZZ

Hey, Vork! Buddy! You're filming
the wrong thing! Magic's happening
HERE!

Vork starts, realizes he's filming Madeleine, not Bladezz.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

Dude, your gaze-on for miss MILF
over there is hard as a coconut.

VORK

Madeleine Twain was, and is, a
goddess of the small screen! She
played the intrepid assistant,
Charity Mannix to Chuck Boswell's
Professor in the seminal sci-fi
adventure series "Time Rings." 1992-
1997!

BLADEZZ

So, before even my Mom's time.

VORK

(stares at Madeleine)

I was the head of her mail-order fan club, it consumed my early twenties. Then she betrayed us all and quit. Her departure was so abrupt they couldn't compensate canon-wise. Her character, Charity, was simply abandoned in a Roman-era episode, never to be referred to again. "Time Rings" was cancelled half a season after. Curse you, Madeleine Twain!

BLADEZZ

So you hate her? Why are you trembling?

VORK

She is still...so...beautiful.

Bladezz nods, then heads directly towards Madeleine.

VORK (CONT'D)

Wha...freeze! FREEZE, boy!

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL CAFE - EVENING

Evening. A dark and shady corner. Zaboo sits behind a dining table. He's eating whole packets of sugar and raw coffee beans, jittery from staying up so long. A freebie stuffed animal cat is in his lap that he pets. Master Chiefs stand either side of him. Across, a sad comic writer, NEIL GAIMAN, begs.

NEIL GAIMAN

Look, "Sandman" finished 14 years ago, these kids have no idea who I am. The convention's given me the biggest room in the place, this is going to be embarrassing. Your Seat Savers network is my only hope.

ZABOO

Sure, sure, sure, you know... you're stuff's okay if you like universally acclaimed awesome graphic novels and such but I don't know, a few million Twitter followers is not going to get Megagame-o-ramacon excited about a writer...

NEIL GAIMAN

Look, "Sandman Zero" is coming out next year. I'll get you a signed set. Personally signed, to you.

ZABOO

To exploit the network... for a panel? Gotta run! So much to do, so much to see, so many things going on, you know...

NEIL GAIMAN

I'll put you in the comic!

ZABOO

(intense)

Cover. And give me muscles.

NEIL GAIMAN

It's not that kind of a comic-

ZABOO

Make it that kind of comic. Okay, maybe like special thanks or something?

NEIL GAIMAN

Yeah, we can do that.

ZABOO

Two PM tomorrow? Room 5A?

NEIL GAIMAN

Two PM tomorrow. Room 5A.

ZABOO

(typing on his phone)

I'll alert the network. JUST THIS ONCE.

NEIL GAIMAN

Look, I'm really grateful. Thank you so much.

ZABOO

It's a new convention, comic man. And the Seat Savers rule it. Spread the word. *Quiet-like*.

Zaboo pats Neil Gaiman's cheek.

NEIL GAIMAN

Don't - don't do that.

ZABOO

Sorry Neil Gaiman.

Zaboo crosses out with his Master Chiefs in tow.

INT. AUTOGRAPH AREA - AFTERNOON

Bladezz walks up to Madeleine, Vork is hot on his heels.
Madeleine turns and smiles.

BLADEZZ

Hey sexy, my handler would love to meet you. We're the guys in the popular corner.

VORK

(stutters)

Bladezz! Stupid pirate...

MADELEINE

You boys are so busy, I mean, the enthusiasm of the fans is admirable.

(smiles, but sadly)

One can't help but miss being that popular.

BLADEZZ

Oh, well, it's not that hard... and, you know what? I think Vork could hook you up in return for a little face time, if you know what I mean, chickie.

Vork tries to form words, but he can't he just starts braying like a donkey. RICHARD HATCH walks up, suave.

RICHARD HATCH

Hey Madeleine, good to see you again. Hey guys. Tell me how this Tweeter thing works and how is it good for ME?

VORK

Uch.

BLADEZZ

Can I get a photo with you for MyFace? My gay aunt will FLIP!

RICHARD HATCH

MyFace. Know what that is! Met a woman on there once, DEFINITELY not your aunt... could be? Why don't you guys come hang with us tonight!

BLADEZZ

Did you mean "us" like... other faces I recognize? And "hang out" like... talking and coolness?!

MADELEINE

Uh-huh! I would love to learn about this "new technology frontier" and you guys are the experts.

BLADEZZ

Vork won't go. He's not impressed by the "puppet" people, no offense guys...

VORK

Aaaaaaaaah. Madeleine there? Be together, same room... lady? Ahhhhhh....

BLADEZZ

Uhhh, might be a yes?

RICHARD HATCH

Sounds great, Suite 304, at the Westin across the street, 7pm!

Vork just stares at Madeleine, mouth open, a bit of drool.

BLADEZZ

Okay, let's go back to our corner, get you wiped you off. And we'll see you guys tonight!

Bladezz takes Vork's arm and leads him away.

INT. STEAMPUNK BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Clara sits in the Steampunk booth, very nervous, wearing a top hat and goggles. She has her eyes closed, pen on paper, scribbling. Morse code is beeping in the background. Pull out to see Lizette operating a telegraph machine, quizzing Clara.

CLARA

Didit-Didit-Didit, sounds like a woodpecker. I said wood! And pecker!

LIZETTE

Hmph. No talent there.

In the background, Gerald sips from a vial of blue potion in front of an antique chemistry set. He gags.

GERALD

And she cannot mix a proper
 laudanum either. Disastrous.

Alina sits up from the floor, handkerchief over her face.

ALINA

And her chloroform... ineffective.

LIZETTE

No response on Ouija board, and
 because of the PREGNANCY, opium and
 absinthe sipping are out.

GERALD

'Tis a right shame, pip. But you're
 absolutely unqualified in any of
 the poseur fields. Won't do for a
 costume contest, simply will not
 do. We must create a respectable
 mise-en-scene, understand?

CLARA

Um, how difficult can it be? Get
 costume, act all snooty, done and
 done!

ALINA

Are you trying to undermine our
 faith? Steampunk is a unique LOOK
 and lifestyle, and it...

Alina starts to hyperventilate. Lizette runs to her.

LIZETTE

Alina! Your stays, your stays.

GERALD

Steampunk is steampunk!
 Describable only by the word
 itself!

Lizette loosens Alina's corset.

ALINA

Thank you, darling. I owe you a
 tonic at dinner.

(to Clara)

I'm sorry dear, though your efforts
 are admirable... if you don't GET
 it, you just can't be a part of it.

Alina pats Clara's face and glides off. Clara nods stands
 and leaves the Steampunk booth, head hanging low. There's
 sepia tone to the picture, and silent movie-era sad music
 that plays as she takes off the top hat and trudges away.

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL BAR - CONTINUOUS

Tink is wearing her full sexy lizard costume, mask over face. Codex takes Tink's elbow, steers her through the crowd.

CODEX

Like I was saying, I've been disillusioned about the Game and the Guild... but your confiding in me upstairs, it really meant a lot, as a friend. So, I wanted to do something for you, not about me.

Codex starts to hug Tink with one arm: Tink shrinks away.

TINK

Walking greeting card much?

Codex stops her in front of a table and yanks off Tink's mask. At the table, sit Tink's sisters, Tara and Lara, and Edith and John (middle-aged couple from episode 4). They stand and hug her. Tink is horrified.

JOHN AND EDITH

April Lou!

LARA AND TARA

Eeee! We're so excited to see you!

EDITH

Look at you, as pretty as EVER!

CODEX

April Lou?

Tink stares venom at Codex.

TINK

(hisses)

I take it back. You're not ok.
YOU - ARE - DEAD!

On Codex's smiling, but uncertain face...

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 8:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

CODEX

Tink's name is April Lou? That was super weird to hear.

(MORE)

CODEX (CONT'D)

So, what spurred me to be a rascally meddler and invite Tink's family, who I just discovered the existence of, to a buffet-style intervention? This weekend has been crisis after crisis for me. The Guild scattered, the game threatened, my first impulse was to just abandon everything and run away. But I realized after talking to... April Lou, that my connection to my Guildies is more than the game, we are friends. And I wanted to reach out... human-ly, to prove to myself that... wait a second. This was all about me? So much for the profound feel-good speech part. Ugh. April Lou? It's stupid...

INT. CONVENTION HALLWAY - NIGHT

It's late, the halls are empty. Clara walks, dispirited, and spots Zaboo and his Master Chiefs in a corner. They're beating someone up, we can't see who. Zaboo, on an insane sugar high, pounds Pixie Stix. Comical punch sounds. Comic book graphics like "POW!" pop up. Clara rushes over.

CLARA

Zaboo! Oh my gosh, I'm so happy to see someone I know. This has been the worst day EVER!

ZABOO

Yeah, that's life. And that's the con. And con is life. Life is con. Con-Life, Life-Con....

CLARA

Everyone in The Guild was having fun without me, and I was sad, but then I found those Steampunkers, and I was happy...

ZABOO

It's good, good good good good!

CLARA

But I couldn't pass their tests and now they don't want me, and I'm sad again because I really wanna be a part of their whatever-it-is sooo bad!

From off-screen a voice calls out. It's KEVIN SORBO.

KEVIN SORBO (O.S.)
 I'll never give in! Tell your
 goons to back off, little man!

Cut to a Master Chief posing with a drawn back fist. Kevin Sorbo is being held by the other one.

ZABOO
 All we need is the whole front row
 to your panel: "Talks with Hunky
 Legends". Don't make me tell my
 guys to punch lower!

KEVIN SORBO
 Like that's gonna hurt. I'm half
 god from the waist down!

CLARA
 Hold up! What is-What's going on?

ZABOO
 We're just having a friendly little
 negotiation with Kevin Sorbo for
 the Seat Savers. No problem. No big
 deal, he's just a brawny, elegant,
 buff bastard! But he'll bleed just
 like the rest of 'em, WON'T YOU
 HERO?!

KEVIN SORBO
 No no no no... not the fine
 chiseled jaw!

ZABOO
 UNchisel it!

CLARA
 When's the last time you slept?!

ZABOO
 Sleep? I don't need sleep... fifty,
 hundred hours ago!

CLARA
 Call off your robots! ZABOO! NOW!
 Don't make me get out my Mom voice!

ZABOO
 UGH! But-UGH-Okay. MASTER CHIEFS!
 Pull the plug!

KEVIN SORBO
 Pull the plug he said!

The Master Chief holding Kevin Sorbo lets go. Kevin Sorbo straightens himself like a gentleman. He points at Zaboo, livid.

KEVIN SORBO (CONT'D)

If I had my gauntlets on, and my twelve pound leather pants - that I did all of my own stunts in. And Michael Hurst, who played my amazing sidekick Iolaus-

ZABOO

Oh he's the best...

KEVIN SORBO

You'd be toast. Totally, totally wrecked my jersey! I got this at the Sundance Film Festival! Now you wrecked it. Wrecked it!

ZABOO

Keep walking, Hercules, keep walking.

Kevin Sorbo crosses out as Clara grabs Zaboo by the ear.

CLARA

Okay, you're coming with me. It's time for bed.

(to Master Chiefs)

HEY! Back! BACK!

She yanks Zaboo away down the hall as he protests.

ZABOO

Let go! I gotta run a secret society...

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL CAFE - EVENING

Edith, John, Tara, Lara, Tink and Codex sit around a table.

JOHN

Honey, you been in town all weekend and didn't call?

EDITH

Oh now, don't nag her! Here, have some of my famous Yakisoba!

(to Codex)

I didn't want her to miss out on her people's heritage, so I just put my own spin on one of their native dishes, it's a little ranch dressing and ham cubes!

Edith holds out an unsavory looking noodle dish.

JOHN

Ham!

EDITH

Go on, you love it!

CODEX

That looks delicious... So, Tink-April Lou, would you like to tell Edith and John about...

Tink kicks Codex HARD under the table. Codex yelps.

TINK

No.

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL SUITE - EVENING

A hotel room. CELEBRITIES mingle around, with Madeleine in the mix, drinking, snacking. Bladezz and Vork mingle awkwardly. Bladezz takes cell-phone pictures of the celebrities.

BLADEZZ

OH DUDE! On the LIST! We made it!
Oh my God this place is a complete blast. You know, I bet they do not have any floor beds.

VORK

Bladezz, be cool, man! Be cool!

Madeleine approaches. Vork startles.

VORK (CONT'D)

Charity!

MADELEINE

Madeleine.

VORK

Of course.

MADELEINE

Well, fancy seeing you here.

VORK

(frozen)

I never expected those words to leave your mouth towards my face.

MADELEINE

Well, they have!

VORK
I-heared-that.

BLADEZZ
Uh, okay, I think it's time to find
my rightful place in the Hollywood
elite. You know get some famous-
celebrity-time. Ciao!

Bladezz struts into the room like he's amazingly cool.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)
(calling out to celebs)
Hey guys. Oh whoa, hey man, how you
doing?

MONTAGE: Bladezz tries to, badly, act cool with CELEBRITIES.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)
Nice movie face! Alright, cool,
check you later, man. Oh my god, no
way, you! TOUCHDOWN, right? High
five! O-okay.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zaboo struggles as Clara tries to put him to bed.

ZABOO
UNGGGH! Clara, no! I need to be so
many other places!

CLARA
My Morse code might suck, but whiny
babies I can handle. Arm's up.

Clara changes Zaboo out of his shirt into a PJ shirt in two
fluid motions. Expert Mom, Zip Zip!

ZABOO
Clara, I've been a bad boy here.
Did so many bad bad things.

CLARA
It wasn't your fault. It was the
coffee and robots that made you do
it.

ZABOO
Not robots! Master Chiefs good...
me evil...

Clara strokes his head. He calms down, whining a bit.

CLARA

Oh, there, there. Lemme sing you a lullaby, like I do my kids.

(to a lullaby melody)

"My humps, my humps, my lovely lady lumps"

ZABOO

My empire weighs so heavy on my soul...

CLARA

Oh, we'll make it better in the morning.

ZABOO

Can you sing me another lullaby?

CLARA

Sure.

(sings again)

"Whoomp, dere it is. Whoomp, dere it is..."

CLARA AND ZABOO

"Boom shakalaka shakalaka shaka boom"

Zaboo falls asleep.

CLARA

Gets 'em every time.

(boops nose)

Boop, boop!

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL SUITE - EVENING

Bladezz grabs a cracker from the snack table stands near TOM LENK.

BLADEZZ

Yo, dude. Look at this junk! I mean, we deserve caviar and crap, right?

TOM LENK

No way! These crackers are my favorite. I buy them in bulk.

BLADEZZ

No, get out, dawg. I mean, famous people don't buy bulk!

TOM LENK

Yeah we do. Wanna see my discount card?

-Bladezz talks to COLIN FERGUSON.

BLADEZZ

Hey, buddy. So where are you and I heading off to after the convention? Bikini-lady-ville? Clubtastic-land? Maybe-

COLIN FERGUSON

Actually, I got a leak in my roof, so I gotta go to the depot, get a tarp. Putting in this sorta-

BLADEZZ

Hey, uh sorry, I can't hear you over all the lame.

-Bladezz talks to ELIZA DUSHKU AND RICK FOX, who are holding glasses of smoothies:

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

What you guys got in there, pure grain alcohol? How about you sign me up and we'll get this party started! Ahoogah!

ELIZA DUSHKU

Actually it's veggie juice, you know, celery, carrots, spirulina...

BLADEZZ

Uh, how is that a party drink?!

RICK FOX

Party for our colons.

Rick and Eliza high five. Bladezz looks on in disbelief.

-Bladezz talks to DICHEN LACHMAN AND BONNIE BURTON.

DICHEN LACHMAN

...and then we're going on a charity retreat, it's a summit about homeless youth...

BLADEZZ

So that's just another way to say "going to rehab" right?

DICHEN LACHMAN

(insulted)

Um, no.

-Bladezz dances up to GRANT IMAHARA AND AMY BERG.

BLADEZZ

Hey, come on you two, let's get
this party started!

GRANT IMAHARA

I've got a touch of sciatica.

AMY BERG

(pointing to boobs)
Recent breast reduction.

-Bladezz is at his wit's end with ZACHARY LEVI, who's holding
his phone out, showing Bladezz pics of his dog.

ZACHARY LEVI

...that's us at the doggie park...
look at that smile, I'm telling
you. This is us in Maui... he loves
surfing! Loves surfing! This is his
new collar I just got him...

BLADEZZ

Okay, so, we're not hot-tubbing
with skanky chicks later?!

ZACHARY LEVI

Well, I don't- I mean, I usually
turn in around nine. And hot tubs
give me eczema. Skin condition.

BLADEZZ

You people are effin' boring!

Bladezz stomps off as Tom Lenk walks up to Zach, looks at his
phone.

TOM LENK

Hey, sweet collar!

ZACHARY LEVI

Hey, thanks, yeah I just picked it
up.

TOM LENK

Oh, do you do pets without borders?

BLADEZZ

SERIOUSLY!

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Back with Tink and family and Codex. Still awkward.

JOHN

Buddy of mine in security got us the passes to this...whatever this is. Personally I don't have any use for all this experimental comics and gaming...

EDITH

Devilspawn.

JOHN

But Lara and Tara, they wanted to see the parade of weirdos. Wow, what a lot of freaks!

TINK

Ok! Well, it's been great catching up...

CODEX

(stops Tink)

So Lara and Tara, did you go to high school with April Lou?

TARA

Yeah, we were in Glee club together...

LARA

Ooh, April. Let's do that Debarge harmony we do so well! Me...

TARA

Meeee....

TINK

(starts to stand)

Time to go, dead walking aka Codex.

CODEX

No. I'd rather stay here, and learn more about you. Friend.

JOHN

Real smart mouth on her. Lot o' sass. Always loved that about my little girl.

TARA

Once, she once slashed the principal's tires because he took jello salad off the cafeteria menu.

LARA

And once, she firebombed the janitor's closet because she caught her boyfriend making out with another girl in there.

TINK
 (to Codex)
 I hate you so much!

TARA
 And once-

TINK
 (blurts to family)
 I'm not pre-med anymore! For five
 semesters I've been studying
 something else! I didn't tell you
 because I didn't! HAPPY CODEX?

TARA AND LARA
 Uh oh.

JOHN
 What are you studying now?

TINK
 Fashion Design.

EDITH
 That thing you're wearin', did you
 design that?

TINK
 Yes.

JOHN
 (LONG BEAT)
 Sure is pretty.

The tension breaks, Edith and Tara and Lara hug Tink.

TARA
 It's just beautiful!

LARA
 Are you a turtle?

EDITH
 My baby's an artist!

TINK
 That's it?! No rage, no screaming?
 You're not going to have me
 arrested?! I've been staying up
 every night for MONTHS dreading
 this, and you're TOTALLY COOL WITH
 IT?!?!

JOHN
 Totally cool.

EDITH

I just have one requirement, honey:
You gotta design Lara's wedding
dress!

LARA

(holds out hand)
Tad proposed to me!!!

Tara and Lara squeal together. Tink stands up, outraged.

TINK

Ridiculous!!! How did I survive
childhood. You people are UNREAL!

Tink stomps off. Edith watches, adoringly.

EDITH

Oh, she used to always stomp off
like that when she was a little
girl.

(calling after Tink)
That's just Salisbury sushi for us!

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

Back at the party. Madeleine is NOT flirting with Vork, they
just have great chemistry together. Bladezz stands nearby.

MADELEINE

Well, I-I don't want to be a
burden...

VORK

(relaxed and confident)
I insist! I can do a Wordpress
install, design a scalable logo
based on your Hellenic profile.
You'll have a custom blog in a
week.

MADELEINE

Oh, I appreciate that so much! I
really do feel like I have
something to share. I'll get photos
and bios to you by tomorrow.

Madeleine touches his leg. Vork looks at her hand on him and
smiles like an idiot.

BLADEZZ

Well, I think Vork already has most
of that stuff, right.

(to Vork)

(MORE)

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

I mean, you were the head of her fan club in the 1890's?

VORK

NINETEEN-nineties, and yes. Your talent is immeasurable.

MADELEINE

That is so lovely to hear. When I quit "Time Rings" I lost a lot of support. Those were hard times.

VORK

Your betrayal was monumental, but, we can do nothing but move on.

MADELEINE

(pauses politely)

Well, I don't think of it as a BETRAYAL. It was merely a job I quit.

VORK

"Time Rings" wasn't a JOB to the fans. It was a religion. When I watched you disembark the "Bravehunt" time vessel, Season 2 episode 16, knowing you would never again grace the vehicle OR the Thursday 8pm time slot, I sobbed for WEEKS, like a BABY!

Frozen beat. The conversation gets tense.

BLADEZZ

Okay, Vork, look at the pretty lady's nice hair-

VORK

(blows off)

Yes, her hair is extraordinary. The color of espresso and rich Belgian chocolate. In the middle of a season, to abandon your character Charity at the height of her conflicted feelings about the Professor...

BLADEZZ

(walks off)

Okay, I'm off this train wreck.

MADELEINE

That story line was going nowhere!
I mean, Charity was a prop for the
writer to hang his sick fantasies
on!

VORK

"Sick fantasies"!? Is that what
you call "Imagine That", that
seminal episode of television,
Season 1 Episode 14, that dealt
with the issue of mixed-race
couples far before it's time?!

MADELEINE

If you call "mixed-race" an alien
gang-bang!

VORK

The Wavanta mated in groups, with
probes! It was their WAY!

MADELEINE

Pardon me. I have found a headache.

Madeleine exits, hurt. Vork calls after her.

VORK

I am entitled to my opinion! And we
haven't finished talking about your
blog yet!

Madeleine passes by Bladezz.

BLADEZZ

(to others at the party)

So, uh, why are you guys famous. Oh
hey Madeleine.

As she passes, Rachel and two GROUPIE friends cross her in
the hall. They spot Bladezz in the doorway.

RACHEL

Hey! We've been downstairs for an
hour!

BLADEZZ

Ooh, sorry about that guys, I'm
just busy as a bee up here. Hanging
out with some people you might
recognize.

He indicates into the room at ZACH LEVI.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

Hey guys! Awesome!

RACHEL

Oh, my God. You're partying with HIM!? What a playboy, right?

BLADEZZ

As long as you catch him before 9pm.

RACHEL

You said you'd hang with us tonight! Can we come in?

Bladezz stops them coming through the doorway.

BLADEZZ

Whoah, invite only, chicky. Really sorry, but I kind of got a better deal here. So, I'm gonna have to see ya in line tomorrow. But you look great, I love seeing you guys, big, happy fresh faces...

He shuts the door in her face and turns back to the party.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

Oh my God, no wonder celebrities have reality shows. DRAMA!

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 9:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Codex speaks into her webcam, hushed. Everyone else is asleep, snoring, talking in their sleep.

CODEX

I can't sleep. Tink hasn't said a word to me since we met up with her family earlier. She came in late, went straight to bed. Or so she's *pretending* to. I'm too nervous to close my eyes. Pillow over the face risk and all.

Behind her in the room, a fart is heard.

CODEX (CONT'D)

And Zaboo's been comatose since I got in. He's been farting what smells like espresso. So...ew? Everybody's being acting so weird. Tomorrow's the last day of the con, but it can't be the last day with my Guildies! I mean, we're real friends, but we clearly we need the game to hold us together. So tomorrow: Plotting!

(looks over at Tink)

I think I'm going to go sleep in the bathtub. I can lock the door.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Guest room hotel floor. Tink, in a sexy superhero outfit, waits for the elevator. Codex rushes out of a hotel room.

CODEX

Tink! Tink! I'll about forget everything, your name, your family, everything. Just, please don't hate me!

Tink glares for a beat, and then hugs Codex. Violently.

TINK

God, I slept so good last night. It's like, biggest relief EVER! I owe you one, stupid.

CODEX

Oh, so we're cool? Awesome.
Listen, even though our game is
about to disappear, I still wanna
be friends with you.

TINK

They're not going to shut it down!

CODEX

Well, maybe you're right, maybe
I've been hallucinating about
everything...

The elevator opens up. FURRY stands there. He exits the
elevator and goes to Codex.

CODEX (CONT'D)

...I've seen and heard this
weekend. But today, you and I are
going to find out one way or
another.

FURRY touches Codex on the shoulders

CODEX (CONT'D)

Ah!

Tink shoves Codex out of the way and kicks the Furry between
the legs. He falls with a scream, and takes his head off.
It's FAWKES.

TINK

Whoah. Wish I woulda known that
before I kicked. Woulda done it
harder.

CODEX

YOU?! YOU have been stalking me all
weekend?! Why?!

FAWKES

Your appearance at this convention
had a touch of kismet to it.

CODEX

Oh, so, you were alone, saw someone
you knew, but you couldn't even say
hi like a real person!

TINK

Nice. Hit him with insight!

FAWKES

The Axis broke up, through no fault
of my own.

(MORE)

FAWKES (CONT'D)

I thought you might be interested in a new guild leader. One who does not smell of moth balls.

TINK

Replacing Vork? Lemme give that a second.

CODEX

No! No, not our Guild. You find your own family!

FAWKES

Codex, I'm a lone, unarmed paladin in a PVP wasteland whose god has forsaken him. We once shared sexy time together. Crit heal my loneliness.

CODEX

Okay, this convention is a perfect opportunity for you to be somebody else. Someone who's less jerky. You might be able to find some friends here. But those friends: NOT us.

A beat. Fawkes kisses Codex's hand and starts to exit.

TINK

Wow. No quote? Maybe he actually listened.

CODEX

I'm just glad the mystery is solved. Last night I dreamed of a FURRY gnawing my face off. It was starting to get to me.

Tink pretend gnaws at Codex.

CODEX (CONT'D)

Please don't do that.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - MORNING

Clara and Zaboo walk towards Vork's van.

CLARA

So yesterday, when I saw you making your robots beat up famous peoples, I knew I had to step in...

ZABOO

Agree'd. I just needed a good night sleep.

(MORE)

ZABOO (CONT'D)

Clara, you helped me regain my conscience. For that, I want to do you a favor.

CLARA

Are we going DANCING?!

ZABOO

Even better!

Zaboo opens the back of Vork's van, and starts pulling out stacks of junk. Clara sips coffee, not helping.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

Ha! I've taken twenty-eight hours of crafts classes over the past two days. So, we're going to build you a costume that's so awesome sausage that those Steampunk guys are going to be begging to take you back.

CLARA

Oh my gosh, thank you so much! Do you need help? Remember, I'm pregnant.

ZABOO

Nope, I've got it all taken care of.

He pulls out a life preserver from the back of the van.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

I don't remember driving up with this thing...

Master Chiefs walk up to the car. Clara turns, startled.

CLARA

Ah! Robots!

ZABOO

My loyal henchman...

The Master Chiefs try to take Zaboo's arm and leave with him.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

No, no no no... this is not why I texted you here today.

(deep breathe)

I'm not going to the "Dragons in Pastel" panel. Nor will I be attending the Android Girlfriends seminar, "Programming Your Own Passion". In fact, I'm not going to be any panels- ever again.

Master Chiefs lift their arms, confused, still silent.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

Although now I can sculpt any alien head in the sci-fi universe from spreadable cheese...

CLARA

How cool!

ZABOO

Yeah, it is cool.

The Master Chiefs silently protest.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

I've done too much mass damage. And now I'm gonna step down from the iron throne. Big speech'd.

The Master Chiefs move to Zaboo.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

No no no no... shhhh... don't speak.

CLARA

They never do...

ZABOO

I've made up my mind! The "Seat Savers Buddy Network for Making Cool Friendships and..." I gotta work on that stupid title. It's dissolved. Been a pleasure serving with you Spartans.

Zaboo salutes the Master Chiefs and they salute him back.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

Dismissed'd'd.

The Master Chiefs turn in unison and leave.

CLARA

I am so proud of you! Hand me that blowtorch! Let's burn things! Now what?

INT. GAME BOOTH - MORNING

Tink and Codex enter the Game Booth. They look around and spot Floyd as he exits into a closed off area in the back of the booth. He's holding a stack of thick legal-sized papers.

CODEX

There he is! There's Floyd
Petrowski! Look at all those
papers. I bet it's the contract to
sell the game! And his SOUL!

They start to follow Floyd, but Craven intercepts them.

CRAVEN

Hey, early birds, huh?
(to Tink)
Look, I didn't plan on hiring booth
babes today, but, uh, for you, I'd
make an exception.

TINK

Um, that's Floyd Petrowski in
there, right?

CRAVEN

Yes it is. Your friend busted his
balls pretty good the other day,
she'll know as well as me.

CODEX

Great. I made an impression.

TINK

I SUPER really wanna meet him. Can
we go back there, say hi?

CRAVEN

Say hello? Hell no. Boss is "deep
busy" today. He's making a really
big announcement after the costume
contest tonight.

TINK

(flirting)

What announcement? Come on, you can
tell us.

Tink and Codex lamely try to flirt

CRAVEN

What are y'all doing? Y'all giving
birth? Cause that's what it looked
like. I'm not just some weird
internet gamer type of dude that's
just gonna go for every single
chick that flirts with me, okay?
That was flirting. I'm gonna stand
right here, in a stance of power.
Cross me if you want to.

CODEX
 (to Tink)
 What are we gonna do now?!

TINK
 We wait that doofus out. In the
 meantime...

Tink takes a seat excitedly at a computer, puts a headset on.

TINK (CONT'D)
 I haven't gotten to play the new
 demo yet.

Codex rolls her eyes, but sits down and puts a headset on.

INT. AUTOGRAPH AREA - MORNING

Vork and Bladezz enter the Autograph area. Bladezz is going over some phrases written on a piece of paper as they walk.

VORK
 Recite to me the copy we wrote.

BLADEZZ
 "Avast ye audience! This be the
 Cheesybeard's Pirate, warnin' ye to
 listen, or I'll cut yer internet
 connection with me cheesy mind!"

VORK
 We may have to offer a discount for
 the accent.

As they walk past a few Celebrity tables, they stop. Rachel and her friends and a few other fans, are holding signs and picketing Bladezz's table. Signs read: "Douche!" and "Squeeze the Cheese"! Bladezz and Vork rush up.

VORK (CONT'D)
 What's the meaning of this? I'm
 giving no one refunds!

RACHEL
 Your Pirate friend blew me and my
 friends off for "more important"
 people! He slammed a door in our
 faces!

The crowd boos.

BLADEZZ

Okay, okay. Ladies, let's be real for a second, we're really on different levels. And hey, if the shoe had been on the other foot...

VORK

I want it on the record that, as his manager, I do not discriminate against anyone who's paying! I am equally un-fond of everyone!

The crowd resumes chanting. Vork pulls Bladezz a few feet away.

VORK (CONT'D)

This is a PR disaster!

BLADEZZ

I'm not doing anything other famous people wouldn't do, alright?

Bladezz calls out to various celebrities in the room. They shake their head, and turn away in turn.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

(calls out)

Right guys? Right? C'mon guys?

(motions to JASON MILLER)

You?

JASON MILLER

SHUT UP!

(to an approaching fan)

Hey, how you doing? What's your name?

Madeleine gazes at Vork from her table.

MADELEINE

Your Padawan learns the hardest lesson: Never invite the wrath of fans.

Madeleine turns away to talk to a fan.

VORK

Charity...er Mad...SIGH.

Bladezz and Vork turn to see Rachel and the crowd tearing down the makeshift green screen and Bladezz's sign.

INT. GAME BOOTH - LATER

Tink and Codex are playing on the computers.

TINK

These changes are retarded! They gimped "Flurry Arrows"?! What am I supposed to do, slash hug them to death?

CODEX

Shh! We don't want anyone MORE demoralized!

(looks around)

Wait a second, we've been playing for two hours!

TINK

Your point?

Codex peers towards Floyd's area. The suit guy, Chet Grunwald, arrives.

CODEX

There's the RTX guy. They're gonna talk business. We gotta hear what they're talking about!

TINK

We can't just barge in there!

CODEX

Well, what then?

Tink looks down the line of computers, which are all full.

TINK

Check it.

Tink walks over to a computer, leans over to flirt with a UBER GEEK who's playing.

TINK (CONT'D)

Hey. Hero.

UBER GEEK

Hurrrm? Hi? Wow!

TINK

Wanna take down the Hydra boss at Wa'llaran Pools?

The Geek gets excited.

UBER GEEK

Yeah.

TINK

Here, join our party and we can chat, too.

UBER GEEK
 Play with girls? Real girls?! Yes!
 Warrior for hire!

TINK
 Cool.

Tink reaches over and types on his computer, then rips off his headset and flings it under the booth barrier, into the area Floyd is talking with Chet.

UBER GEEK
 What are you doing?

She strokes the Geek's hand.

TINK
 Sh! Keep your finger the push to-talk-button. Cool, baby?

Tink rushes back to Codex.

UBER GEEK
 Cool... baby! This is so hot!

TINK
 Finally. Someone who embraces a stereotype.

They put one headset on together, and can hear Floyd and Chet through the other! They listen intently. The Uber Geek calls over.

CODEX
 I can hear them talking-- awesome plan!

UBER GEEK
 Ladies, we ready to jet?

TINK
 In a sec! Keep pressing!

CODEX
 Wait, wait, wait! Floyd just asked for their business plan!

Codex and Tink listen, but after a few beats they get more and more horrified.

TINK
 Oh, my God.

UBER GEEK
 Ladies? You're cute, but I'm kind of dying over here!

CODEX

So are we.

TINK

You gotta be kidding!
 (throws off headset)
 Codex, you were right.

CODEX

We gotta tell the Guild!

They get up and rush out of the booth.

UBER GEEK

Ladies? Ladies?! Awww. Nega-boner.

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 10:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Codex stares excitedly into the webcam. In the background, Guildies mingle, Tink and Vork and Bladezz mostly.

CODEX

I called a Guild SUMMIT! This is so official! I've read a lot about summits in history classes I've taken. I seem to remember that out of one of them, they produced the UN? Oh, and then there's that G-something that European hippies don't like, I'm not stupid, I'm just ignorant about things I don't RSS, and I'm not putting MY summit on the scale od world peace or-uh European hippies, but this is our GAME we're talking about! We gotta get OFF the convention distractions and focus on what matters. I mean...this is SERIOUS! Clara I need you to take minutes. Stop eating from the minibar!

VORK

Clara are you insane? Why don't you throw money in the street!

BLADEZZ

Clara, I have to pay for that crap!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The Guild sit in the hotel room as Codex paces. Tink stands near her. Bladezz is shredding his pirate outfit with safety scissors, Zaboo is whittling a piece of wood into a clockwork piece and Clara is eating. Both are covered in sawdust, oil and metal shavings. Vork is packing. During the scene he packs anything that isn't nailed down. His suitcase is filled with tiny shampoo bottles.

CODEX

The situation is as dire as I
neurotically surmised yesterday.

TINK

Must be a first.

CODEX

Vork, what are you doing?

Vork tries to pry a painting off the wall. It's nailed down.

VORK

Leaving. This has been a horrific
experience, I don't care to keep
existing in this time-space.

TINK

But you're our ride!

VORK

Then I suggest you get packing.

CODEX

We're discussing the future of the
Game and-and-and, forming a
mandate!

CLARA

Besides, we can't leave yet! Zaboo
and I spent all morning making the
most kick ass Costume accessory
ever invented!

ZABOO

Yeah. Clara and I are going to have
a three-way with a trophy later!

They high-five. Clara grabs a jar of nuts from the mini-bar, looks guilty for a second, then starts eating them anyway.

CODEX

Please take that off.

(paces)

(MORE)

CODEX (CONT'D)

The RTX guy says their company wants to make The Game "more accessible"...

VORK

As fans we have no right to criticize what people do with their creative properties!

BLADEZZ

Aw please, you're just sensitive about that chick you were flirting with earlier.

TINK

Vork flirting? Hurl!

BLADEZZ

Yeah, he got smart-mouthed with this MILFY TV star, put his foot in it, and she walked off in a huff.

VORK

I alienated the fantasy love of my life! I could no more heal this wound of mortification than pay full price for miniature golf.

ZABOO

Start dating an S&M chick, then she'll come sniffing around again. Worked for me and Codex.

Codex gives him an evil look.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

Yeesh. Stink eye'd.

CODEX

Listen up guys, they're gonna make the Game "Free to Play!" Appeal to the "casuals"!

ZABOO

(sits up in horror)
Casuals?

TINK

Don't aneurism yet. It gets worse. The game will be free to play, but they're gonna micro-charge for everything! Changing costume colors, BANK SPACE RENTALS...EPIC LOOT DROPS!?

CLARA
 (mouth full)
 I change my colors all the time! I
 need rainbows at my fingertips!

VORK
 CLARA! Is that from the mini bar?

Clara nods her head, "yes", a chip in her mouth.

CLARA
 No.

BLADEZZ
 This morning we were up two-hundred
 bucks in snack charges!
 Your fetus owes me and if we're
 checking out, so do all of you.

TINK
 Why? You're covering the room!
 You're the one who made us come,
 and you made all that money in your
 booth!

VORK
 We were banned from our only income
 source because Bladezz went
 divalicious on the fans!

BLADEZZ
 They overreacted! I was just being
 me, but more fancy!

CODEX
 AHEM! They're getting rid of all
 blood graphic effects. Parents
 demanded it in order to market to
 tweens.

BLADEZZ
 Screw tweens!

TINK
 Weren't you JUST one yourself?

CODEX
 They're censoring all profanity.
 They're getting rid of nipple NPC
 graphics...

Clara lifts an 8-bit baby shirt up to her face to wipe
 chocolate off her mouth.

CLARA

No! Naked centaur chests are the best! I won't let this happen! I'm a mom and I fucking LOVE swearing!

TINK

(gets in Clara's face)
Clara, are you seriously wiping your face with one of our shirts?!

CLARA

Oh, scary villain costume!

TINK

Not only did you DITCH our business this weekend, but you're using an eight dollar face napkin!

CODEX

(waves to get attention)
They're taking death out of the game! Instead, characters will just fall to the ground, and canaries will circle their head for fifteen seconds! Oh, oh! They're making an app...

Vork closes his suitcase and makes for the door.

VORK

Adios. Guadalajara, all.

Codex blocks him physically.

CODEX

Vork! Stop! LISTEN! I ALMOST QUIT THE GAME YESTERDAY! BUT I DIDN'T BECAUSE I LOVE YOU ASSHOLES!

CLARA

Well, that was weird.

ZABOO

Are you serious?

CODEX

Yeah, after the thing with you and the thing with Floyd, I just- I just wanted to quit everything.

BLADEZZ

Well, that would suck. No one lets me harass them like you do.

VORK

And you technically can't quit, I believe I have you under contract.

CODEX

Well...whatever. I'm not gonna, but look at us! This convention has separated us. How are we gonna survive something like the change our UNIVERSE?!

CLARA

(pouts)

Fighting that would be hopeless. I have to abandon Clara and start a new Clara. Poor former "Me-Clara."

TINK

They haven't signed all the paperwork yet. Floyd is totally stalling. He's neurotic like Codex, we can convince him.

CODEX

If we can track him down at the ball, maybe we can show him as a guild how important the game is to all of us and then... convince him not to sell.

ZABOO

Hello'd you guys really need to check out the fine print of the program. It says that costumes are REQUIRED for the costume ball! And I ain't got one.

CLARA

We can use my Steampunk one!

VORK

Gee-Willikers for you, but the rest of us have no spendable income left to purchase frivolous sundry!

BLADEZZ

And I can't wear my pirate outfit, or I'll get clubbed with a thousand light sabers.

Codex looks over at Tink.

CODEX

Fun fact, I know a fashion designer.

TINK

Um yeah, I can design, sure. But
where are we gonna find materials?

INT. COSTUME BALL - NIGHT

People in costume mingle around, there's a small T-stage at the far end of the room with a podium to the right (laptop on it). In the back of the room, there is a curtained area. On the curtains hang sponsor banners, including "The Game". The curtain waves as people move something behind it. Muffled arguments from the Guild members.

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Clara and Zaboo struggle to move a large object covered in white sheets. A few COSTUMED EXTRAS pass through to keep it busy. The rest of the Guild walk up. Tink has an adorable fairy costume on, and Clara looks cute in her Steampunk outfit, but the rest of the Guild are a mishmash. Vork's is a Chewbacca outfit crafted from hotel curtains and objects from a hotel maid's cart, Zaboo is dressed in one of Tink's alt costumes, and Bladezz wears a huge bag made out of sewn-together PRODUCT PLACEMENT bags. Codex wears the superhero outfit of Tink's with tights, but it's way too small for her. She keeps pulling down the skirt, pulling up the top. A COSTUME OFFICIAL passes through.

COSTUME OFFICIAL

Costume Contest starts in ten
minutes! Line up!

BLADEZZ

OK, watch the munchkin outfit,
Tink, alright?

CODEX

Clara, you ready? We gotta go find
Floyd.

CLARA

First check out what Zaboo and I
made!

ZABOO

Yeah, viola'd.

Clara pulls sharply to reveal something tall, but off camera. On the Guild's awestruck looks.

VORK

You must be bleeping me.

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 11:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Codex stares into the webcam. She is in her costume.

CODEX

I had a boyfriend once who stole a traffic cone from a parking garage while we were on a date together. It was the most illegal thing I've ever been a party to, and I panicked every time I heard a siren for like, two years straight. I know the guild's gonna have to break some rules to convince Floyd not to sell the game, but today, I'm willing to go behind the greybar hotel for the cause! That's prison speak for...well, y'know, prison. For once I'm risk-taking!

(pulls up bra)

In everything. I'm wearing an outfit Tink made for herself. I'm in there's danger of slipping nipplage with every step. Viva la revolutione!

Sirens.

CODEX (CONT'D)

Okay, that's not for me.

INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

The Guild stare up in awe at a beautiful Steampunk dirigible. It has a basket underneath that can hold Clara and others.

TINK

You guys made a whole blimp?

CLARA

Yeah, and this is how you operate it!

Clara pulls out an elaborate Steampunk Joystick controller. Vork looks at it in awe.

ZABOO

I didn't take the "Extreme Cosplay" and the "GoBot Robotics" panels for nothing!

Codex shakes her head, goes over to the curtain and peers around into the ballroom. Bladezz and Zaboo follow.

CODEX

Guys, we're here to talk to Floyd, OK? So forget about the blimp thing, and let's go!

VORK

AIRSHIP, Codex! And this creation is...awe-inspiring.

(turns head sideways)

Hey! is that the door to my van?

CLARA

Oh yeah, we got crazy creative!

The Costume Official passes by again, looks at the dirigible.

COSTUME OFFICIAL

(looks at clipboard)

Uh, what number are you?

CLARA

Oooh, we don't have a slot.

COSTUME OFFICIAL

If you aren't on the list, I can't have you walk...er...float in at the last minute. I'm sorry.

CLARA

Oh, but...

The Steampunkers, Lizette and Gerald, saunter up in new, MORE amazing outfits.

LIZETTE

My...my...how quaint?

GERALD

Don't play it off, dear. This thing is frakking amazing!

CLARA

Clipboard lady, I'm with them! They have a slot, right? I'm on their team. I earned it!

GERALD

Lizette...

LIZETTE

Gerald...

GERALD

We ARE short a quorum.

(to Clara)

Alina was taken home with the influenza.

CLARA

The what?

LIZETTE

Bad chicken salad.

COSTUME OFFICIAL

(to Lizette)

So is she with you, or not?

Gerald and Lizette look at each other, then slowly...they start to golf clap.

GERALD

Welcome to the fold.

VORK

It will require my assistance to operate from the ground while you are on stage.

(off Clara's look)

Pretty please. Let me drive it.

Codex calls over from the curtain.

CODEX

Hey guys! I just saw Floyd enter some VIP area, there're burly men guarding it!

The Guild gathers around Codex as she points to the far corner of the room.

ZABOO

Burly me? I'll get 'em.

EXT. VIP TENT - CONTINUOUS

A pair of SECURITY GUARDS is erecting a red velvet rope in front of a VIP area TENT. Floyd and Chet enter the area immediately, the rope falls after them.

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

COSTUME OFFICIAL

(walks away)

Get ready everyone!

TINK

We gotta stall! Floyd is gonna announce as soon as the Costumes finish!

CODEX

Bladezz, they'll recognize you! Go on stage! And stall everyone!

BLADEZZ

What am I supposed to do?!

VORK

Start by begging forgiveness from the fans. There's fodder there.

Bladezz looks frustrated and takes off towards the stage.

CLARA

Vork and I will stay here! Because we're gonna blow some frickin' MINDS!

Tink, Codex and Zaboo lift the curtain and take off.

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Codex, Tink and Zaboo weave through the crowd.

CODEX

They'll let us in the special area, right? No problem.

TINK

Yeah, just bat my eyelashes.

ZABOO

We'll turn on the charm...ow! I'll just bat my wings too. 'Cause that'll... distra-

Suddenly Zaboo is swallowed by the crowd. Tink and Codex turn to see his Master Chiefs towing him away, backwards.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

"Every time I think I'm fragged, they respawn me back in..."

CODEX

Uh...

TINK

It's OK, no loss. Oh, my God.

Tink turns to see her family dressed in matching Japanese outfits: Three kimonos with petticoats and one Samurai.

EDITH

Honey! We all found costumes from your native country!

TINK

No words.

TARA AND LARA

Oh, you!

JOHN

Next year you make us all costumes, peanut.

TINK

HA! Never. Move.

EDITH

Aragato!

INT. BALLROOM STAGE - CONTINUOUS

On stage, the Costume Official takes the mic.

COSTUME OFFICIAL

Thank you all for coming. You look...

Bladezz grabs the mic and passes her.

BLADEZZ

Hey! Excuse me! Ladies and ladies, I might be a face you recognize with fondness...or loathing...

From the crowd, Rachel and her friends turn and start booing. The crowd joins them. He pushes the Costume Official's face away and continues.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

Rachel, con volunteer. I really owe you an apology. I done you wrong, girl, and I'm here to say that I'm...sorry.

Rachel softens, but one of Rachel's friends shouts out.

RACHEL'S FRIEND

What about me? Do you remember me?

BLADEZZ

Yeah and um...what was your name again?

Boos increase. The Costume Official gestures to a few NERD VOLUNTEERS to help her get Bladezz offstage.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

No! No! Back! Alright, does anyone have a laptop?

Someone physically throws one at him. He barely catches it.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

Thank you.

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Vork is fiddling with the dirigible controls when he spots something that makes him hide quickly. Madeleine walks by. She's in a sexy unitard, covered by a flowing skirt and top and has a headdress on. Vork peers after as she leaves.

VORK

Holy butternut, she's wearing her "Time Rings" costume. FATE! Must you rub your Tabasco irony in my tender loins?

EXT. VIP TENT - CONTINUOUS

Tink and Codex walk up to the VIP tent. 2 GUARDS stare over their heads. (Off screen, Bladezz drones on, more booing.)

TINK

Hi! We have famous friends in there.

GUARD 1

Unlikely.

CODEX

But you could always use more hot girls in the VIP area. I watch cable shows. We're like furniture, so...

GUARD 2

Chicks with subtlety... and outfits that fit properly.

Codex looks down. Granny underwear sticks out of her waist.

CODEX

AH! How long has that been out?!

GUARD 1

Move on.

GUARD 2

Now.

INT. BALLROOM STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Onstage, Bladezz has set the laptop on the podium and connected the screen to playback. He scrolls through videos he made with fans during the previous days.

BLADEZZ

This chick was from LA. Hello, Hollywood! Oh! Ashford! Oh, man, you smell like garlic and peanut butter. It's kinda a weird combo but, y'know, I don't judge so-alright.

In the audience, BROCK, an overweight and sweet guy, nods.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

Oh! And Ed! Character name Verandis, right? I remember you told me one time you were so drunk, you peed in your own pantry. That's... that's a good story.

Brock's eyes fill with tears. Elsewhere, Rachel calls out.

RACHEL

Thank you Cheesy! I love you again!

BLADEZZ

Wow, apologizing feels good.
(scrolls video)

INT. BALLROOM CORNER - CONTINUOUS

The Master Chiefs drag Zaboo over to a remote corner of the ballroom. Zaboo struggles against them.

ZABOO

Guys, where are you taking me? Seriously, I was in the middle of a crisis back there, y'know - and now I'm in the middle of another one...

Zaboo looks into the darkened corner, and sees a seated figure. Legend STAN LEE, is tied up, gagged.

ZABOO (CONT'D)

No! Not Stan Lee! Are you kidding me? No! This is convention suicide, guys!

EXT. VIP TENT - CONTINUOUS

Codex and Tink skirt around the edge of the VIP tent. They pause where the tent meets the wall.

CODEX

We gotta get in there!

TINK

Don't yell at me, I'm not the one who had my elasto-thong sticking out!

CODEX

It has no more structural integrity, I don't know why!

TINK

Forget it, we're toast.

FAWKES (O.S.)

<barking noises>

Tink and Codex turn to see Fawkes/Furry lifting the tent flap for them to enter the VIP area. He's holding hands with a RACCOON furry. As Tink and Codex sneak in past them, Codex looks down at Fawkes' hand holding.

CODEX

Congrats. I think.

Codex and Tink proceed into the VIP area.

INT. BALLROOM STAGE - CONTINUOUS

On stage, Bladezz is hustled off by Officials, the Costume Official takes the mic.

BLADEZZ

(yells)

...I love this one! This guy came in from Japan. Hey! I didn't play Terry's video. She has three kids, And a beef allergy! I remember people!

AUDIENCE

Cheesy! Cheesy! Cheesy!

CONVENTION OFFICIAL

Thank you, Cheesy kid. But, let's
get on with the Costume Contest,
shall we?

(over cheers)

Now, welcome our Mistress of
Ceremonies, someone you'll surely
recognize, Charity from "Time
Rings"!

Madeleine takes the stage, waving.

MADELEINE

Thank you,
(consults chart)
The first costume group is:
"Steampunk Verite"!

The lights dim, music starts. A spotlight shines on the back
of the room. Vork stands next to the stage, with the blimp
controller.

VORK

Pedal to the brass fixtures,
duckies!

The Dirigible emerges from backstage. Clara and the
Steampunk cadre are inside. The blimp floats above the
stage. Slow circle. The audience is awed.

GERALD

Wrist-wrist-arm-arm, wrist-wrist...

LIZETTE

(brokenly)
How my Alina would have loved this
view! Damn thee, chicken salad!

CLARA

I've never been in a parade before!
I shoulda made my hair bigger!

GERALD

Wrist-wrist, arm-arm...

INT. BALLROOM CORNER - CONTINUOUS

Back in the ballroom corner, Zaboo pulls off Stan Lee's gag.

STAN LEE (O.S.)

I'll never sign your comics,
monster! Tell your men to fall
back!

A Master Chief goes after Stan Lee. Zaboo holds him back.

ZABOO

Guys, we can't go back to the way it was! You know, I actually had second thoughts, too, when Codex and I totally made out, but I knew that it wasn't gonna work. I wanna be good and noble in this world and you should too.

STAN LEE

What are you wearing? Did I create that character? Well, you win some, you lose some.

ZABOO

Guys, just think just about who you're dressed as! You're the MASTER CHIEFS! I corrupted you, but you can fight back! You're better than this, Master Chief #1. And so are you, Master Chief #2. You can't capture and tie up Stan Lee, he's a legend.

STAN LEE

I agree.

ZABOO

You know what? I'll untie him, I'm standing right here. Oh- just... slides off.

After a beat, the Master Chiefs nod and untie Stan Lee. The ropes fall off quickly. Stan stands, pats Zaboo's shoulder.

STAN LEE

Oh. I'm free! Son, I've created many a superhero.

Stan Lee waits a beat, nods then leaves. Zaboo calls after.

ZABOO

Stan? That's it? I feel like there's a second part to that sentence that you were...

INT. VIP TENT - CONTINUOUS

Inside the VIP area, Tink and Codex make their way over to Floyd. The whole group, Floyd and the Suits, is distracted by Clara's blimp.

CODEX

Floyd! We would like to talk to you...

The Guards come up behind them and drag them out.

TINK

We encouraged Furry fornication to
get in there.

INT. BLIMP - CONTINUOUS

From the air, Clara spots Tink and Codex being manhandled by
the Guards outside the VIP tent, and dragged towards the
front entrance.

CLARA

Hey! Those are my friends, let them
go! Vork! Full steam ahead!

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

On the ground, Vork starts to mash buttons.

Vork is so startled that he drops the controller. SMASH!

INT. BLIMP - CONTINUOUS

Up in the air, the dirigible starts to go crazy.

LIZETTE

Anyone have a gyro-altimeter handy?
Tally HO,

Vork and Madeline mouth a conversation to each other.

LIZETTE (CONT'D)

We're descending!

GERALD

I do believe we are about to crash.
Ho hum.

FADE OUT:

EPISODE 12:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Codex stares into the webcam.

CODEX

Thinking back on what I vaguely know of history, there is no event involving a dirigible blimp-mobile that has ever gone right. I mean didn't those things famously crash and burn? That's why we invented airplanes because those balloon things were NOT RELIABLE! And in general our whole plan to save the game was just <blows raspberry>. I mean, we would make the worst Scooby Doo team ever. Our van would crash, the bad guys would get away with haunting WHATEVER, and-and we'd lose the dog. Come to think of it, Zaboo did disappear pretty quick off the top. "Zaboo snacks!" That was terrible.

INT. BLIMP - NIGHT

The dirigible, in the air, shakes more violently.

LIZETTE

(yells)

LISTING STARBOARD!

GERALD

Oh, drat! Where's my snuff?!

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

On the stage, Vork sees the dirigible head towards him, with Madeleine standing a few feet away, in the path of danger. He leaps towards her to save her from the crash.

VORK

For the Rings of Time!

CRASH! Screams. Cut to Clara and the Steampunk people sitting in the dirigible wreckage. Smoke steams in the background.

GERALD

Are we still on the continent?

Clara sees that Lizette is trapped under the dirigible wreckage.

CLARA
Wicked ride.

LIZETTE
Indeed.

Lizette and Clara high-five.

EXT. VIP TENT - CONTINUOUS

Near the doorway, the Guards are distracted, Codex and Tink break away, then notice Floyd and Chet leaving the VIP area.

CHET
Good call, Floyd. Let's get this wrapped up before the announcing.

FLOYD
I need to grab my inhaler...

CODEX
(to Tink)
Tink they're gonna go sign something! Zaboo...

Codex gets out her phone and texts.

INT. BALLROOM CORNER - CONTINUOUS

ZABOO
I can't believe I didn't get Stan Lee's autograph, he was sitting right here.

Zaboo immediately receives Codex's text. He reads it and panics, then turns to the Master Chiefs.

ZABOO (CONT'D)
Master Chiefs, we need to mobilize the "Seat Savers" network, one last time. Get out your cell phones, we need to do this for the good of mankind. To recapture that Halo glory!

Master Chiefs pull out phones, remove gloves to text quickly. Zaboo looks to see the Master Chiefs are wearing red and blue nail polish.

ZABOO (CONT'D)
 Who am I to judge, I'm in a
 fricking butterfly costume.

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gradually, people start getting buzzing text messages. A few
 beats and they start gathering in the two exits, and...sit.
 Headed out, Floyd and Chet are blocked from leaving.

CHET
 What's up? This a nerd power trip?

Zaboo and Master Chiefs approach them from outside the
 ballroom and enter through a sea of sitters, full of power.

ZABOO
 Yeah, it is. Intimidated? Huh? I
 can make these guys sit ANYWHERE I
 want. Well, not MAKE, like,
 entreat, or appeal to a higher-
 it's a collaborative, you know...
 you need to talk to those girls!

Zaboo points to Tink and Codex a few steps away. Triumph.

CHET
 Looks like you dweebs got a date
 with security...

Tink calls over to her family, who have converged closer.

TINK
 Mom! Dad! Meet my fiancée!

Tink's family floods around the Chet. Lots of hugging.

EDITH
 You're engaged to my baby?! Welcome
 to the family!

TARA AND LARA
 He's so CUUUUTE!

JOHN
 Son, I'm in waste management.

Floyd tries to sneak away. The Seat Savers block him.

FLOYD
 Ugh, why do I have so many haters!

Floyd spazzes a bit, then exits into the VIP tent. Tink, with
 her family, motions for Codex to follow. She does.

JOHN
Paper or plastic? Opinion?

INT. BALLROOM STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Back onstage, Vork helps Madeleine up. Smoke wafts, Vork clasps Madeleine to his side. It's a cool still that looks like a poster: Vork's actually heroic. He turns to Madeleine.

VORK
I was wrong. So wrong.

MADELEINE
You had your reasons...

VORK
I insist on my wrongness!

Vork leads her off stage as the Costume Official steps around the wreckage towards the podium and grabs the mic.

COSTUME OFFICIAL
Let's continue with the Costume Contest!

Music starts up again. Cosplayers start walking the stage.

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bladezz helps Vork and Madeleine off the stage. Behind them people are walking the stage in costumes for the contest.

BLADEZZ
Dudes! That was epic! I hope someone got that on video! Viral timez!

Costume Official approaches Bladezz.

COSTUME OFFICIAL
We got it all! Do you mind if we use your confessional for our website?

BLADEZZ
Let me just speak to my manager...

He motions to Vork, then does a double-take. Vork has Madeline in a theatrically dipped kiss.

BLADEZZ (CONT'D)

Oh God. Ugh, eyes burning. For the price of our hotel bill and a modest licensing fee, I'm sure we can work something out.

INT. VIP TENT - CONTINUOUS

Codex rushes up to Floyd.

CODEX

Floyd!

FLOYD

Not a good time for fandom right now. I made my decision. Done.

CODEX

I'm gonna talk to you like I talk to my webcam, which never judges me, so this is super, SUPER hard to do. All the crazy stuff that's happened tonight, that's been me and my friends. Because we love The Game that you created so much. It brought us together as a Guild. I would never be friends with so many different kinds of people in real life. Not that I'm racist or ageist or anythingist. I did use the word "Mongoloid" one time thinking it was ok. It is NOT ok. The point is, that, you created something wonderful. Don't allow it to be broken. It would break US apart.

FLOYD

You know, that's a really nice sentiment, but this is my life, it's my future. How would you like every morning to wake up and read things like, you know, "Oh, you look sickly in person." You know? "Oh, I lost my save point, hope you die in your sleep." Wouldn't that make you, like, you know, think about what you do for a living?

CODEX

Look, it is not easy to do what you do, but no one else can do it. You've got to think about it like a game party.

(MORE)

CODEX (CONT'D)

You are the Tank, front and center, and you have to be shielded properly so you can swing your broad sword of creativity across the-- that is so stupid. Please don't rage-quit. Just reconfigure your party. That is, unless you really don't care about your legacy, and the game and the people who play it. But I think you do. I think you care about it as much as I care about my Guild.

FLOYD

I... hate making decisions.

COSTUME OFFICIAL (O.S.)

And that concludes our Costume Contest! Mistress of Ceremonies? Ahem?

INT. BALLROOM STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Madeleine breaks from Vork, rushes on stage, takes the mic and envelope.

MADELEINE

Oh, yes, my turn. Oh, thank you. Whew, it's hot in here. Oh yes, announce the winner. And the winner of the Costume Contest and the \$20 gift certificate for bowling is... Steampunk Verite!

Clara and Gerald rush up to the stage. Gerald snatches the winner's envelope.

CLARA

Yes! Yes! I won something.

GERALD

Ahem...WE won something.

Lysette gives a "thumbs up" from under the dirigible wreckage.

CLARA

(snatches letter)

Back off Sir Ponce-a-lot! You guys were just my accessories! It's mine! I won! Yes! Bowling!

He "Harumphs" and leaves. Clara exits, leaving Lizette still stuck under the dirigible.

COSTUME OFFICIAL

Great, that was very sweet. Thank you. Okay, now a word from one of our sponsors, you know him as creator of an MMO that all of you love and play. Please, hands together for...Floyd Petrowski!

The crowd applauds.

INT. VIP TENT - CONTINUOUS

Floyd looks at Codex indecisively. Applause increases the tension. He leans in and shouts into her ear.

FLOYD

You know what? Who can resist a cute, generic superhero?

CODEX

I agree that I am cute right now.

FLOYD

I'll give it a shot, but on one condition..

Codex looks concerned.

INT. BALLROOM STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Floyd climbs the stage, takes the mic from Costume Official. During his speech Codex makes her way close to the stage.

FLOYD

Hello everyone! I'm Floyd Petrowski... I was going to make some big announcements about changing to The Game, but if you played the demo... it's all there. So, no changes to the game. That's right, Chet. Not gonna change anything.

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Awkward silence. Over at Tink and family, Chet, has a fit.

CHET

You know what? Screw gamers! I'm moving to comic books. They'll work for foodstamps!

Chet exits. Tink sees the crowd lulling, turns to her family.

INT. BALLROOM STAGE - CONTINUOUS

FLOYD

He's not very likeable... So we just thought, let's just keep doing what we're doing, you know? And maybe get a fresh perspective on things. The Gleaming Cross spell for priests is TOTALLY back in... Other than that, uh, yeah, that's it. Uh, thank you.

There's a bit of un-climactic applause. Tink comes out on stage with Clara and a pair of T-shirt shooters. They start shooting 8-bit t-shirts into the audience. Crowd goes wild.

TINK

Who wants some free t-shirts?

Floyd leaves the stage as Tink and Clara continue shooting.

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

In the crowd, Codex celebrates, waves to Floyd. He gives her a thumbs up and exits. Zaboo catches up to her.

ZABOO

We did it!

CODEX

(dazed look)

Yeah! We did SOMETHING...

EXT. UPSCALE HOTEL - DAY

Clara and Zaboo approach the upscale hotel lobby, luggage in tow. (Continuous shot here until end).

ZABOO

This Con is DONE! Can't wait to sit in front of a computer to socialize again!

As they approach the hotel doors, two SUPER HOT GIRLS, cross by with luggage and wave at Zaboo.

MASTER CHIEF #1

Bye Zaboo! See you next year!

MASTER CHIEF #2

For sure! Down with the Covenant!

They exit. Zaboo sees Master Chief helmets under their arms.

CLARA
Are those your robot friends?

INT. UPSCALE HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Zaboo and Clara enter the lobby and approach Tink, who's saying goodbye to her family.

JOHN
Now pumpkin', we were right
disappointed about that fella not
being your real fiancée.

LARA
I wanted a double wedding!

EDITH
Now, you answer the phone from now
on, okay now?

TINK
You know the probability of that.
But... Christmas, it's ON!

EDITH
You make us elf outfits, and we'll
make you teryaki candy canes!

TINK
Okay, don't push it. Please.

CLARA
Break it up! I wanna see my kids!
Wow, did I actually just say that?!

TARA
Oh! April Lou! By April Lou, I'm
going to miss you so much!

Tink's family exits. Bladezz joins Clara and Zaboo. They walk towards the door, Bladezz joins them after a few steps.

CLARA
April Lou?

BLADEZZ
Clara! Your adventures in snacking
cost me half my weekend scratch!

CLARA
What?

Bladezz holds up a multi-page receipt from the hotel.

BLADEZZ

Does the phrase "mini-bar for breakfast" ring a bell?!

CLARA

Oh yeah! Ring-a-ding-ding!

BLADEZZ

Do we have to take you home with us?

The Steampunker Gerald cuts across their path dressed as a HIPSTER, dragging a garment bag. Clara watches him leave.

CLARA

Ew, hipsters! I love that look!

As the hipster passes, Vork and Madeleine walk into view holding hands. Vork walks backwards to join the Guild, but they don't let go of each other. (Vork is towing a dolly with a coffee table and a lamp on it.)

VORK

I'll miss you.

MADELEINE

Call me!

VORK

I will Skype, it's free!

TINK

MOVE IT!

Tink pulls him along. Codex rushes up, buttoning her pants.

CODEX

Hey, we ready to jet?

ZABOO

I am, I just preventative peed.

VORK

I don't know if I can drive after last night.

ZABOO

Why? What happened?

Floyd crosses their path as he exits toward the front door.

FLOYD

(to Codex)

Codex! See you Monday morning, right? Work on those ideas of yours.

The Guild (and camera) stops abruptly and stares at Codex.

CODEX

Uh, yeah. I kinda forgot to tell
you guys something...

FADE OUT: