

Z.U.P.E.R. Pilot

by

Jana Forkel

Jana Forkel
janaforkel@live.de
+49 1749997336

ACT I

FADE IN:

1 EXT. A BUSY STREET. DAY.

A futuristic city, similar to New York, but in a kind of parallel universe. A caricature of a superhero, BLACK MAMBA, and a super villain, GOLIATH, are hovering in mid-air, ready for their final battle. Everything looks pretty much like our own reality, only with the small difference that no one even bats an eye at the showdown in the middle of the street.

Strangers are passing by, looking at their futuristic high-tech phones or listening to music. Cars don't stop to look at the scene. This is everyday life.

It's the familiar, cliché superhero showdown we've seen a few too many times before. The two are yelling at each other from a wider distance than necessary.

BLACK MAMBA
(yelling)
Give up, Goliath!

GOLIATH
(also yelling)
NEVER!

BLACK MAMBA
Any last words?

GOLIATH
You "superheroes" are all the same!
We're fighting for our right to exist,
for the future of humanity. And then
you come around the corner and destroy
it all in the blink of an eye! The
future of humanity is...
(pause)
Is...

GOLIATH is getting nervous. He holds up one finger to indicate BLACK MAMBA to wait a second and pulls a stack of index cards from his pocket.

BLACK MAMBA
Seriously? You don't even know your
own villain speech?

GOLIATH has sorted the cards and found the right one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GOLIATH
(in normal voice)

Ah!

(overdramatic, yelling again)
The future of humanity has been
poisoned by greed and technology. We
need to go back to our roots. Away
from space adventures and the search
for new planets to inhabit. THIS is
out planet. THIS is...

He holds the cards up further away from his face and narrows his eyes. Then he quickly pulls them back towards his face and pauses, hesitates.

BLACK MAMBA
This is WHAT?

GOLIATH
I can't read it. I don't have my
contacts in!

BLACK MAMBA
You forgot to put in your contacts for
a BATTLE? Are you kidding me?

GOLIATH is still trying to read the card.

GOLIATH
(yelling even louder)
I'm farsighted!

BLACK MAMBA groans.

BLACK MAMBA
Oh my God, give them to me.

He flies towards GOLIATH and rips the cards out of his hands.

BLACK MAMBA
(in normal voice, hovering
directly in front of GOLIATH)
I'm gonna read it myself.

He flies back to where he was before.

BLACK MAMBA
(reading the cards, yelling again)
THIS is, what humans were made for!
Subserviency! Compliance! Humans
aren't made to exist on their own.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BLACK MAMBA (CONT'D)

They're made to subject themselves to
ME! Maniacal laughter.

GOLIATH

Those are stage directions, you idiot!
You're supposed to laugh maniacally,
not say "maniacal laughter."
(mumbling)
Amateur...

BLACK MAMBA

Oh! Sorry!
(clears his throat)
Subject themselves to ME muhahah
(evil laughter)
And that's why I am planning on
preventing any human from escaping!
For this purpose, I have planted a
bomb in the control room of the
federal space center-
(he stops)
Wait, WHAT?!

GOLIATH laughs (maniacally).

BLACK MAMBA

You dick!

GOLIATH

I was just stalling for time ahahaha.
It's impossible for you to stop my
bomb now. Wanna know something else?

He fumbles around in his eyes with his fingers and pulls out
a contact lense, holding it up to BLACK MAMBA, who is way too
far away to see it.

BLACK MAMBA

What's that? I can't see, you're too
far away.

GOLIATH

I didn't even forget to put my
contacts in! I was wearing them the
entire time!

A gust of wind blows the contact lense away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

GOLIATH
(quietly)
Damnit.

BLACK MAMBA
That's it, you're DONE!

BLACK MAMBA sends a pressure wave towards GOLIATH, which hits him and smashes him against the face of a huge building, leaving a crater in the wall. BLACK MAMBA follows him and picks GOLIATH up by his collar.

BLACK MAMBA
How much longer 'til the bomb
explodes?

GOLIATH
(struggling for air)
Ten...minutes.

BLACK MAMBA drops him and flies way, leaving the defeated GOLIATH behind. GOLIATH is breathing heavily, obviously in pain. There's a WOMAN in the building across the street who has watched the whole spectacle through a window. She doesn't seem very impressed by what she just saw, as if she had seen it a dozen times before. The WOMAN rolls her eyes and sighs.

COLLEAGUE
(off-screen)
Who was it this time?

WOMAN
Black Mamba. Again.

KOLLEGE
What a drama queen. I guess he's found
nothing better to waste his time on.

The WOMAN shakes her head, annoyed at having to deal with this, and calls 911.

- INTRO -

2 INT. Z.U.P.E.R.-OFFICE. DAY.

Inside the office of Z.U.P.E.R., the local superhero insurance agency, we meet ELLI (25). She's leaning back in her chair, arms behind her head, counting pieces of gum on the ceiling. On the other side of the office sits JENNY (20), focused on spitting her own gum high enough to have it stick to the ceiling. It lands on her forehead instead. There

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

doesn't seem to be much going on in this office. Everything in this office is far from high-tech or futuristic and seems out-of-place in a modern superhero world. It's clear to us which parts of the city are invested in and what the city government tries to save on. Then, ELLI'S phone rings. She flinches and immediately sits up, picking up the (old-fashioned) telephone.

ELLI
 (overly friendly)
 Zuper-Insurances(spoken like „super“
 but with a „Z“), this is Elli Kazakov.

She grabs a piece of paper and a pen from her desk and puts the phone between her ear and shoulder, writing down the name "Black Mamba" and a fictitious address.

ELLI
 Mhm. Yes. When can you be there?

While waiting for an answer, she draws a sketch of Black Mamba, making him look as stupid as possible.

ELLI
 I can come over right away. Okay, will do. See ya.

ELLI hangs up and writes "Black Moron" next to her drawing, then puts the note in her pocket. She's about to get up and leave, as DONNA (47) enters the room, with FLIP (26) behind her.

DONNA
 Ah, Elli, you're here. Great.

ELLI
 Actually, I was about to leave.

DONNA
 Even better, you can take Philipp with you.

She points to FLIP next to her. He reaches his hand out to greet Elli.

FLIP
 Hi. Philipp. This is my first day here. You can call me Flip.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELLI
 (a little overwhelmed)
 Uh, hi. Elli.

She shakes his hand and immediately turns back to ROSA.

ELLI
 I'm really busy right now, I gotta
 work a case.

DONNA
 So? Where's the problem? Take him with
 you, he doesn't bite.

FLIP
 I promise I don't.

ELLI contemplates the idea. She really doesn't want to spend
 time on explaining things to the new guy.

ELLI
 Wait here. I'll be back in a second.

ELLI walks right into the office of her boss, NORMAN LESTER
 (60), and knocks on the half-opened door.

3 INT. NORMAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

NORMAN
 (from behind the door)
 Come in.

ELLI enters and stops, as she sees what's going on inside the
 office. NORMAN is decorating a cake with a pastry bag and
 icing.

ELLI
 um.. Mr. Lester?

NORMAN doesn't seem to realize the absurdity of the
 situation.

NORMAN
 You want a piece?

ELLI
 Uh, no thanks. I gotta leave in a
 minute anyways.

NORMAN doesn't pay any more attention to ELLI and keeps
 peacefully decorating the cake. ELLI impatiently waits for

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

his attention, but nothing seems to happen.

ELLI
 (tries again)
 Actually, I'm here because nobody told
 me that we were gonna get a new
 colleague today.

NORMAN looks up.

NORMAN
 We are?

ELLI
 (impatiently)
 Yes, he's literally right there.

She points to FLIP, who is standing outside the glass door.
 Upon noticing that she's pointing at him, he smiles and
 waves.

NORMAN smiles and waves back.

NORMAN
 Oh, right. That guy. What's his name
 again? Chip?

ELLI
 Flip.

NORMAN
 Right. Glad we got that sorted out.

NORMAN returns to his cake and ignores ELLI again. ELLI
 decides to give up on trying to get anything out of NORMAN.
 She sighs and looks back to FLIP, who smiles and waves again.

ACT II

4 EXT. THE STREET WHERE THE BATTLE TOOK PLACE. DAY.

As ELLI and FLIP arrive at the scene, CHRIS (early 30s) from
 the salvage crew, responsible for cleaning up the mess left
 behind, awaits them. ELLI's face lights up upon seeing CHRIS.

CHRIS
 (happy to see her)
 Ayy, look who it is!

CHRIS and ELLI hug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLI

I didn't know you were back on the team.

CHRIS

(smiling)

Back and better than ever. I guarantee you, there's no-one who loves this job more than I do.

As he says this, a tower crane in the background drops a car, loudly crashing it into the street.

CRANE CONDUCTOR

(dry)

I hate this job.

ELLI and FLIP flinch at the sound of the car crashing, but CHRIS doesn't move a muscle.

CHRIS

Hey, I haven't seen your face here before. I'm Chris.

CHRIS puts his hand out to FLIP, who is still in shock from the car dropping. Slowly and carefully, he reaches out to shake Chris' hand.

FLIP

(quietly)

Flip.

ELLI

So, what do we have here?

The three walk over to the building where GOLIATH crashed into the wall.

CHRIS

Well, seems like someone crashed into this building.

FLIP

(in disbelief)

Someone? You mean, a person made this?

ELLI laughs.

ELLI

You haven't met our clients yet.

(to Chris)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELLI (CONT'D)
Whatcha think?

ELLI nods towards the hole in the wall. CHRIS inhales sharply, preparing for an answer.

CHRIS
Half a million maybe? We haven't checked out everything yet.

ELLI writes something down on a notepad.

FLIP
What does that mean?

ELLI
(annoyed)
It means, that it costs about half a million to re-build this.

FLIP
Sheesh. Who's gonna pay for that?

ELLI looks up at FLIP as if he just asked her what 2+2 equalled. FLIP looks back in confusion.

ELLI
We are.

FLIP
What?! Why do we have that kinda money?

ELLI
That's what insurances are for, you genius. Superheroes give us money so that we pay for their mess. Have you never worked in an insurance company before you got this job?

FLIP
I - uhh - have gotten money from them before. Does that count?

ELLI
No.

FLIP
Then no. How can those heroes even afford all the damage they're causing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ELLI

Government funding. So, technically, you and I are paying for it with our tax money.

FLIP

That...doesn't sound fair.

ELLI

Really? I think it's totally fair that we have to pay for the personal entertainment of arrogant, self-absorbed meat-flies in tights who destroy people's homes to boost their egos.

CHRIS

(leaning over to FLIP)

She's not the biggest fan of superheroes.

FLIP

(slightly disturbed and scared)

I can tell. Why would you work a in a profession that helps people you hate?

ELLI

Because I like to remind people of their mess.

CHRIS

It's only the ones who are useful enough to the public that work in the hero business, anyway. Most people with powers work normal jobs or have made money with their talents in other ways.

(remembers something)

Oh, also: A woman told us that she overheard them talk about a bomb in the federal space center. You should probably check for damage there, as well.

ELLI writes it down on her notepad.

ELLI

Thanks, Chris. Glad, you're back on the team. I missed you.

They smile at each other.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CHRIS

You know, without this chaos, we'd both be out of a job. They're not all bad.

ELLI shrugs her shoulders, indifferent.

ELLI

They'll still have to convince me of that.

ELLI and FLIP start walking away from the scene, while ELLI is searching something on her phone.

FLIP

(Beat)

Can I ask you something?

ELLI

(still looking at her phone)

Uh-huh.

FLIP

What made you hate superheroes so much?

ELLI stops walking and looks up. She stays silent for a moment. Then, finally:

ELLI

I think that's a little too personal to tell a guy I just met today.

FLIP

Oh. Sorry.

ELLI

(Beat)

No, it's fine. I got the number for the space center. Let me call them real quick.

She taps on something on her phone and holds it up to her ear. Some inaudible voice picks up.

ELLI

Hi, yes, this is Elli Kazakov from Z.U.P.E.R. insurances, I'm calling because of a case we're investigating. I was wondering if you could tell us if there was any damage done by the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

ELLI (CONT'D)
 hero "Black Mamba" today?
 (waits for an answer)
 I was told he was trying to deactivate
 a bomb in your control room.

FLIP watches ELLI, who suddenly falls silent. Her facial
 expression turns dark as she sits down on a window sill.

ELLI
 Oh, I see. Thank you, Sir. Goodbye.

She hangs up the phone and puts her hands down in her lap.
 FLIP looks at her, impatiently waiting for her to talk.

FLIP
 So?

ELLI looks up, confused.

ELLI
 There was no bomb in the space center.

FLIP
 What? What does that mean?

ELLI
 It means that something's up.

FLIP
 What do we do now?

ELLI
 We go and find that Black Mamba Guy.

5 INT. Z.U.P.E.R. OFFICE. LATE AFTERNOON

ELLI drops a bunch of papers on FLIP's desk.

ELLI
 I can't get a hold of the guy, but it
 looks like he's been in some trouble
 before this. Small businesses, family
 homes, this dude doesn't hold back in
 his fights.

FLIP
 At least he's winning.

ELLI
 Well, that's the thing. I don't think
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLI (CONT'D)

he's even doing that. If there was no bomb in the space center, what was the threat? What is there to win if you can't save anyone? That's the point of being a superhero.

FLIP

Yeah, but didn't Chris say that some people use their powers in different ways to serve the community?

ELLI

Less expensive ways, that's for sure.

The doorbell rings. ELLI and FLIP look up, surprised. FLIP looks at his watch.

FLIP

Who's that?

JENNY turns around in her chair.

JENNY

Oh, this guy who owns the building that got destroyed in the fight called. He wants to talk to you.

FLIP

When did he call?

ELLI

There's no point in asking that.

FLIP

Why?

ELLI

Jenny doesn't know how time works. Watch.

(to Jenny)

Close your eyes.

JENNY closes her eyes. ELLI waits about 5 seconds.

ELLI

Now open them.

JENNY opens her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELLI
How long was that?

JENNY
I don't know, like, a minute?

ELLI looks over to FLIP, giving him a "told you" look.

ELLI
(to Jenny)
It was 5 seconds.

JENNY
Dang it.

The office front door opens and DAVID EISENBERG enters in a semi-expensive suit. He is tall, bulky and wears a (pretty bad) toupee. He seems upset about something. Something about him looks familiar.

ELLI
(overly friendly)
Good afternoon, Sir. Welcome to ZUPER Insurances.

DAVID EISENBERG
Yes, hello. I called 2 hours ago and didn't get a callback.

ELLI side-eyes JENNY, who just shrugs.

ELLI
I'm so sorry about that. What can we do for you?

DAVID EISENBERG
I'm David Eisenberg, I own the building that was damaged during that hero battle.

ELLI
I see. Mr. Eisenberg, I'm sorry about your building.

DAVID EISENBERG
Well, someone told me that the insurance of that hero guy will pay for it. I can't run a business without a building. When can I expect to get paid for the damage?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ELLI

I can't tell you anything about that yet, Mr. Eisenberg, but we're on the case.

DAVID EISENBERG

I know you insurance companies try to draw it out as much as you can, but I won't sit around for months in a building with a gaping hole in its wall.

FLIP realizes that ELLI is getting nervous and steps in.

FLIP

Listen, Mr. It hasn't even been a day. We're doing our best here, but unlike the guy who destroyed your building, we don't have superpowers. So, please let us do our job so you can continue to do yours.

DAVID EISENBERG is at a loss for words, foaming with anger. We can see the fear in ELLI's eyes and FLIP can't hold up his confident facade much longer. Finally, DAVID EISENBERG breaks.

DAVID EISENBERG

Fine. Just hurry up with the money.

On his way out, he looks for something he can knock over to demonstrate his anger. He finally decides to just knock a cup with a few pens inside off a counter and stomps out. ELLI shakes her head and FLIP throws his arms up in disbelief.

FLIP

What a dick.

JENNY

(from the back of the room)
I thought he was kinda hot.

FLIP and ELLI try to ignore JENNY's comment.

FLIP

Actually, that guy gave me an idea. Maybe we shouldn't just look into the hero, but into the villain as well.

ELLI smirks, pleasantly surprised at the idea.

6 INT. Z.U.P.E.R. OFFICE. THE NEXT MORNING.

As DONNA enters the office, there is a line of old ladies waiting in front of NORMAN's office. Surprised and confused, she tries to make her way through the line of grandmas into NORMAN's office.

7 INT. NORMAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

Inside, NORMAN has managed to turn his office into a whole bake-sale, with cakes stacking up on his desk and coffee table. NORMAN is giving out pieces of cake, when he notices her.

NORMAN

Donna! Good morning! Care for a piece of cake?

DONNA

Norman, what the hell is going on here?

NORMAN

I'm turning my hobby into income.

DONNA

You're supposed to turn your JOB into income, Norman. You remember your job, right? The one where you are the boss of this company?

NORMAN

I have all the company I need in here, am I right, ladies?

The old ladies cackle.

OLD LADY

Oh Norm, you jokester!

DONNA

(mockingly)
Norm?

NORMAN

That's my nickname. Come on Donna, lighten up a little. As Marie Antoinette famously said: let them eat cake!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DONNA

Well, she ended up getting beheaded,
so, maybe you're right.

DONNA is about to leave the office. Almost out of the door,
she adds:

DONNA

Also, it was never proven that Marie
Antoinette actually said that.

But while she is saying this, the old ladies are already
shoving her out of the room, as the line moves along.

8 INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT. DAY.

FLIP is talking to a few police officers, holding a pen and
notebook and taking notes. The police department doesn't look
any more modern than the insurance office, using outdated
technology and looking all too familiar to us.

POLICE OFFICER

We don't really have a lot. The bad
guy vanished right after they reported
the damage. I think that guy is a
little bit out of our league, anyways.

FLIP

Did you talk to any witnesses?

POLICE OFFICER

We talked to the people working in the
building across the street, but they
didn't see much. Fights like that
happen every other day. It's not much
of a spectacle for them anymore.

FLIP

And nobody saw the guy?

POLICE OFFICER

The woman who called us did. She said
he wore a suit with a big red spot on
the chest. And he had the letter G
written on there. Apparently a pretty
big guy, as well.

FLIP writes down "Big", "G" and "Spot" in his notebook.

FLIP

Can I get the number of that woman?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

POLICE OFFICER
 Sorry, we can't give out any number.
 That's against our privacy policy.

FLIP
 (Under his breath)
 Privacy policies - America's biggest
 villains.

POLICE OFFICER
 What?

FLIP
 (quickly)
 Nothing.

POLICE OFFICER
 We can call her for you, though and
 ask for more information.

FLIP
 That would be great, thank you.

9 INT. Z.U.P.E.R. OFFICE. DAY.

FLIP enters the office, excited to show ELLI what he found
 out, but immediately bumps into an old lady.

OLD LADY
 Watch where you're going, kid!

FLIP
 Oh, I'm sorry, Ma'am.

He rushes over to ELLI.

FLIP
 (whispers)
 Why are there a bunch of old ladies
 here?

ELLI
 Boss is having a bake sale.

FLIP
 (not too surprised anymore)
 As one does.

He pulls out the note from his pocket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FLIP
Look, what I found.

He hands ELLI the note saying "big G spot".

ELLI inspects the note, turns it around to see if there's something written on the back, then sighs and looks up to FLIP.

ELLI
Flip, I'm happy that you found the G-spot. But how is this helping the case again?

FLIP
Right. Context matters.
(Beat)
That's a description of our villain. Big dude, with a red circle on his chest and a "G" inside of it.

ELLI
Okay, well. Good. We still don't know who he is.

FLIP
I'm on it.
(mocking superhero-voice)
To the crime scene!

He pretends to flip his shirt up like a superhero cape, bends forward and "flies" outside the door.

ELLI
(shouts after him)
Don't trip on your way out!

She shakes her head and scoffs, turning back to her computer. As FLIP runs outside, he almost bumps into DONNA, who is on her way back into the office, a coffee in her hand.

DONNA steps out of the way and laughs.

DONNA
(to Elli)
He's nice, isn't he?

ELLI
I don't know. Something seems... off about him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DONNA

Off? How?

ELLI

I haven't figured it out yet. It's just a feeling I got.

DONNA

You should give him a chance.

ELLI

How did he even get hired?

Right as she asks this, JENNY comes out of the kitchen with a tray of cookies in her hand.

JENNY

(yelling)

Hot cookies coming through!

JENNY tries to squeeze through the mass of old ladies, but no-one seems to notice her.

JENNY

They're melting in my hands as I speak!

They still won't let her go through.

JENNY

(desperate, in pain)

I'm literally burning my hands on the tray!!

Finally, the crowd lets her pass through.

DONNA

You think he's less qualified than the employees we already got?

Beat.

ELLI

No, he's...actually doing pretty well.

DONNA

How's the case going?

JENNY comes back into the office with an empty tray.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ELLI

We have nothing. Black Mamba, or, if we wanna call him by his legal name, Jamal Edwards, is nowhere to be found and neither is the other guy.

JENNY

Oh, I know someone who could help you. Mrs. Garrison bakes cookies for the local Hero-Meetup twice a week. Maybe she knows the guy.

She points towards an elderly woman giving out cookies in NORMAN's office.

10 INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT. DAY.

FLIP is talking to the same POLICE OFFICER as before and seems pretty annoyed.

FLIP

So you made me come here again, because you withheld information from me.

POLICE OFFICER

I'm sorry, man, we're just the normal people police. Super-stuff isn't usually our territory. Why don't you go ask the big guys for help if you need it so desperately?

FLIP

Because we don't have any big guys who could help us right now. And I think the police do an important job.

POLICE OFFICER

Non-super people rely on us, they need us. Heroes can't replace everybody. In the end, it's small David who defeats the giant Goliath, right?

FLIP's eyes light up.

FLIP

Say that again.

POLICE OFFICER

It's David who defeats Goliath?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FLIP
Goliath. Could that be the guy?

POLICE OFFICER
I'll check the database.

11 INT. NORMAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

MRS. GARRISON is carefully placing cookies on a plate. ELLI waits next to her.

MRS. GARRISON
I bring them cookies every Tuesday and Thursday. They're such nice people, always so eager to help!

ELLI looks away and rolls her eyes.

ELLI
They sure are. Have you ever seen a hero named Black Mamba there?

MRS. GARRISON
Black Mamba...
(thinking)
Is he a...you know.. a darker gentleman?

ELLI
(Slightly annoyed)
He's black. Yes.

MRS. GARRISON
Yes, I think I've seen him around. We don't get too many of those.

ELLI
Excuse me?

MRS. GARRISON
Oh, homosexuals!

ELLI is confused and a bit uncomfortable.

MRS. GARRISON
He sometimes brings his boyfriend. His boyfriend, he's very tall and muscular. I think that's what the gays (she says "gays" as if she's referring to a nation, like "The German")

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MRS. GARRISON (CONT'D)
call a "bear".

In the background, JENNY, who has been overhearing the conversation, chokes on her drink. NORMAN pats her back as she keeps coughing.

ELLI and MRS. GARRISON pay no attention to what's going on in the background.

ELLI
Thank you, Mrs. Garrison, that helps a lot.

MRS. GARRISON
Oh, one more thing! This boyfriend, he always wears this strange wig. A pretty bad one, I must say. Even Lorna's wig looks more authentic than his.

She nods over to another elderly woman standing around in the office. LORNA turns around, angrily.

LORNA
My hair is 100% real.

MRS. GARRISON
Lying won't make you any younger you old hag!
(Beat)
(To Elli, very friendly)

MRS. GARRISON
Cookie, dear?

She offers ELLI a cookie.

ELLI
(smiles, a little intimidated)
No thank you.

12 INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT. DAY.

The POLICE OFFICER is still looking for names on his computer.

POLICE OFFICER
Nope. No-one named Goliath in here.

FLIP
Dang it, I was so sure it was Goliath.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

POLICE OFFICER

Maybe he just doesn't have any registered offenses yet. Sometimes they fly under the radar.

FLIP

And sometimes they just don't exist.

POLICE OFFICER

I still requested the box of evidence, maybe you can find something in there.

Right at this moment, CHRIS from the salvage crew enters the police department.

CHRIS

Ayy, I know you! New guy!

He gives FLIP a way-too-rough pat on the back. FLIP gasps for air.

CHRIS

Officer.

POLICE OFFICER

Chris. Did you bring the box?

Chris heaves a box full of plastic bags onto the counter. Most of it is filled with rocks and small pieces of the building that came off.

FLIP glances into the box, disappointed at the collection of rocks he finds in there.

CHRIS

Oh, and I found this on the street. Thought it might be interesting.

He pulls a crumpled-up piece of paper out of his back pocket and hands it to FLIP. It's a receipt.

As FLIP takes a closer look, he realizes that it's a receipt for a toupee. His eyes widen.

Right as he realizes, who they were looking for the whole time, his phone rings. It's ELLI.

We see the two talking to each other through a split-screen.

ELLI

I got news for ya.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FLIP
Me, too.

ELLI
You go first.

FLIP
Okay, so -

ELLI
(interrupting)
No wait, I'll go first.

BOTH
David Eisenberg is-

FLIP
(at the same time as ELLI)
Our villain.

ELLI
Black Mamba's boyfriend.

Beat.

BOTH
Wait, what?!

ELLI
Sounds like a classic case of
insurance fraud. I can't believe I
didn't get that sooner.

FLIP
What are we gonna do now?

ELLI
We'll ask Mister Mamba to pay us a
visit.

ACT III

13 INT. Z.U.P.E.R. OFFICE. DAY.

ELLI and FLIP wait for BLACK MAMBA at the office. ELLI rubs her arm and shivers.

ELLI
God, it's freezing in here! I hate
this building.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She puts on a jacket, as BLACK MAMBA enters the office, wearing Bermuda shorts and a short-sleeved button-up shirt, clearly too light for the season. He wears an unnecessary pair of glasses as it's completely cloudy outside.

ELLI

Mr. Edwards! Good to see you.

BLACK MAMBA

(nervous, in a rush)

Why did you call me here? Can't we do this over the phone?

ELLI

Oh, we wanted to review your case with you in person. You seem like you're in a rush? Is something wrong?

BLACK MAMBA

I actually am kind of in a rush.

FLIP

Heading to the airport?

BLACK MAMBA

(surprised, a little nervous)

How did you know?

FLIP

Bermuda shorts and sunglasses? Lemme' guess, Fiji?

BLACK MAMBA

Bahamas.

ELLI

Is Mr. Eisenberg coming with you?

Beat. BLACK MAMBA's eyes widen. He swallows audibly.

BLACK MAMBA

(nervously)

Whaaat? Hahaha - why would Oscar-nominated actor Jesse Eisenberg come to the Bahamas with me? I mean, he was great in "The Social Network", but he's not exactly my type.

ELLI

What's your type then? Scammers?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FLIP

(quietly, to himself)

He was good in The Social Network...

Finally, BLACKM MAMBA succumbs and sinks into one of the chairs.

BLACK MAMBA

(sighs)

How did you find out?

FLIP

Your boyfriend should really consider getting a hair transplant. Or at least investing in a better wig.

BLACK MAMBA sighs.

BLACK MAMBA

He's my fiancé, actually.

ELLI

And he just so happens to cash in on the insurance money he'd get from the two of you destroying his business?

BLACK MAMBA rubs his eyes and face, defeated.

BLACK MAMBA

Being a superhero is more than saving kittens from trees and helping old ladies cross the street. It's pretty exhausting, actually.

ELLI shows little empathy for him, but FLIP seems to understand.

BLACK MAMBA

And the pressure they put on you! It kinda sets you up for failure. I dunno. I'm over it.

FLIP

You know, there ways other than insurance fraud to get out of there.

BLACK MAMBA

Yeah? And what would the public say about that? They'd call me a coward. Weak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ELLI

Would you rather be called a coward or
a criminal?

BLACK MAMBA doesn't answer. The POLICE OFFICER from before
and a COLLEAGUE enter the office. BLACK MAMBA sighs.

POLICE OFFICER

I hope you won't try your hero crap on
us. We came prepared.

BLACK MAMBA

Nah, it's fine. I'm tired of it
anyway.

He holds his hands up in defeat and the COLLEAGUE handcuffs
him. They leave the building. The POLICE OFFICER stays for
another moment.

FLIP

What would you have done if he tried
to escape?

POLICE OFFICER

No idea. I was just bluffing.

ELLI

How did you know that he wouldn't try?

The POLICE OFFICER shrugs his shoulder.

POLICE OFFICER

I just had a feeling, I guess.
Alright, I'll see you guys around.

He signs them "goodbye" and leaves.

ELLI

Did you turn the heating up?

FLIP

I've been sitting next to you the
whole time.

ELLI

How did it just get so warm in here?

FLIP

Maybe you're just overworked. Go home.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

ELLI

I just don't get it. They pretend like they're so noble, these "heroes"
(gestures quotation marks)
But then they don't even have the guts to admit when they're wrong.

FLIP

I can kind of see what they mean. You have a lot of responsibility. And you don't want to disappoint anyone. But not everyone who was born with superpowers was also born to be a hero. Hitler wasn't born to be an artist.

ELLI

Bad example. Really bad.

FLIP

Okay, yes, but you get what I'm trying to say.

ELLI

In a weird way, I do. Still, that doesn't justify it in any way.

ELLI gets up, ready to go home, but stops mid-way to the door.

ELLI

What the - now it's cold again.

She steps back.

ELLI

This spot is warm.

She steps forward again.

ELLI

And if I stand here, it's cold. How is that possible?

FLIP seems unimpressed. He pulls a lunchbox filled with rice out of his bag under his desk and leans back.

FLIP

It's an old building. Stuff like that happens.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

ELLI is still suspicious, but accepts his answer. She's almost out of the door, as she suddenly turns around again.

Beat.

ELLI

I hate superheroes because my Dad died in a hero battle when I was a kid. He was inside our house when it got destroyed during a fight.

FLIP looks up.

ELLI

They wrote him off as collateral damage. Said his death "served the greater good". I have yet to find that "greater good" they were talking about.

FLIP

I'm sorry about that.

ELLI

It's okay. I'll see you tomorrow.

FLIP

See ya.

ELLI leaves. FLIP is alone in the office. He pulls out a spoon and tries the rice. It's cold.

FLIP

Ugh.

He turns around to see if anyone's still there. Once he's sure he's alone, he puts his hands around the lunchbox. Immediately, we can see steam coming off the rice. FLIP smiles and eats a spoon full of the hot rice. He leans back in his chair, arms behind his head and looks up to the ceiling, where the old pieces of gum that ELLI counted in the beginning are stuck.

The last shot we see is his face. His face says something like "what did I get myself into here?"

FADE OUT.